

# Late Medieval Pet Keeping: Gender, Status and Emotions

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**Abstract:** This thesis is a social and cultural history of pet keeping across Western Europe in the late medieval period (and the early modern period where relevant). A central argument is that women and clerics were the majority of pet keepers in the period, and a change towards the acceptability of pet keeping by secular lay men was due to the influence of humanist scholars, who kept pets and eulogised them in their literary compositions. Topics discussed in depth are the display of status through pet keeping, practicalities of pet keeping (such as care and food), the place of the pet in space, especially in domestic interiors, social tolerance towards pets and contemporary criticism of the practice, pet keeping by scholars and elegies written in praise of pets. I end with a discussion of pet keeping at court in the early modern period, concentrating on a case study of pets at the Mantuan court.

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### **Note on Transcriptions**

All transcriptions of manuscripts are my own, unless otherwise noted. Abbreviations are expanded and put in italics; unclear transcriptions are marked by square brackets and accompanied by a question mark when seriously doubtful. I have kept the original spelling, punctuation and capitalisation. Ink stains and other such marks that make letters illegible are indicated by curly brackets (and the possible transcription is placed in the brackets). Inserted words are underlined.

Archival abbreviations:

Archivio di Stato di Mantova: *ASMN*

Archivio Gonzaga: *AG*

busta (file): *b.*

## **Introduction**

### *The state of current historiography*

This work belongs in the field of animal studies and more generally in the fields of social and cultural history. The emerging field of animal studies can be broadly defined as the study of human-animal relationships throughout history. Erica Fudge, in her monograph *Perceiving Animals: Humans and Beasts in Early Modern English Culture*, reminds the reader that animals can only be studied through the prism of the recording human eye. All traces of animals are necessarily those recorded by man from observation and interaction<sup>1</sup>. Fudge notes that for many early modern writers concern about cruelty towards animals was not focused on the suffering of the animals themselves but rather on the belief that a person who is kind to an animal would be kind to a fellow human being as well<sup>2</sup>. This sentiment is already found in Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) who wrote that pity towards animals could provoke pity towards human beings, which would be the ultimate justification of the sentiment<sup>3</sup>.

A history of pets *per se* is an impossible undertaking because of the very nature of the subject: one cannot trace the animal without the human. However, a history of pet keeping, which focuses on the relationship humans

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<sup>1</sup> See the introduction in E. Fudge, *Perceiving Animals: Humans and Beasts in Early Modern English Culture* (Urbana, Illinois, 2000), pp. 1-10. Many of these points are expanded in her chapter "A Left-Handed Blow: Writing the History of Animals" in *Representing Animals*, ed. N. Rothfels (Bloomington, Indiana, 2002), pp. 3-18, where she defends the emerging field of animal studies and again contends that the history of animals is really the history of human attitudes towards animals.

<sup>2</sup> *Perceiving Animals*, chapter two, pp. 34-63, esp. pp. 38-40.

<sup>3</sup> St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* (Turin, 1922), vol. 3, pp. 149-150 (Pars II 2<sup>a</sup> 2<sup>ae</sup>, Quaest. XXV, Art. III: 'Utrum etiam creaturae irrationales sint ex charitate diligendae').

have had with companion animals throughout the centuries and across cultures, is a field that can be studied.

Joyce Salisbury's *The Beast Within: Animals in the Middle Ages* offers a broad overview of the history of animals throughout the Middle Ages, and attempts to understand their relationship to humans through analysing the values humans placed on animals, such as the animal as property or as a metaphor. Salisbury argues for a fundamental change in the perception of the boundaries between the human and the animal from the fourth to the fourteenth centuries, where a previous clear cut distinction between what was animal and what was human was replaced by more ambiguous borders between the two, which could be crossed over with ease<sup>4</sup>.

One field of inquiry that has received a lot of scholarly attention is animal symbolism, in particular the representation of animals in bestiaries, a genre which combines descriptions of animals with related allegorical lessons<sup>5</sup>. Other growing fields include the study of material animal culture and the ecological impact of animals on the medieval landscape<sup>6</sup>

Yet there has as yet been no broad overview of pet keeping in the Middle Ages. Pet keeping is mentioned occasionally in the secondary literature, but there is little analysis of the practice itself. One notable collection of references to pets that does deserve mention is Eileen Power's

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<sup>4</sup> J.E. Salisbury, *The Beast Within: Animals in the Middle Ages* (London, 1994), esp. pp. 1-11 and 167-178.

<sup>5</sup> See for example D. Hassig, *Medieval Bestiaries: Text, Image, Ideology* (Cambridge, 1995), W. George and B. Yapp, *The Naming of the Beasts : Natural History in the Medieval Bestiary* (London, 1991). F. McCulloch, *Medieval Latin and French Bestiaries* (Chapel Hill, 1962), R. Baxter, *Bestiaries and their Users in the Middle Ages* (Stroud, 1998) and D. Hassig, ed., *The Mark of the Beast: The Medieval Bestiary in Art, Life, and Literature* (New York, 1999).

<sup>6</sup> See A.G. Pluskowski, *Wolves and the Wilderness in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2006) and A. G. Pluskowski, ed. *Breaking and Shaping Bestly Bodies: Animals as Material Culture in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, in press).

*Medieval English Nunneries*. Her work even includes an appendix of convent pets in literature<sup>7</sup>. Some works on social and cultural history, especially those focusing on the household and leisure, occasionally refers to the practice of pet keeping<sup>8</sup>.

For the early modern period there is more scholarly literature on the subject, and P. Reuterwaerd's article 'The Dog in the Humanist's Study' is a particularly important contribution. It deals with the symbolism of pet dogs in humanist literature and art. Keith Thomas's *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800* argues for a change in the treatment of animals in the Modern period, asserting that pet keeping was not a generally established practice until the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the 'middle class household'. Thomas does believe that pet keeping existed in the Middle Ages and associates it with the 'well-to-do' and those in monastic orders.

The present study aims to give greater precision to the correlation between pet keeping and status. In doing so, I draw attention to the overwhelming evidence for widespread pet keeping in the medieval period, often by the same kind of people as seen in the early modern period<sup>9</sup>. Nor was pet keeping a medieval innovation. Studies on animals in the Ancient World

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<sup>7</sup> E. Power, *Medieval English Nunneries* (Cambridge, 1922), pp. 305-309, 412-413 and Note E, pp. 588-595).

<sup>8</sup> Pets are also discussed in C.M. Woolgar's *The Great Household in Late Medieval England* (London, 1999), pp. 193-196, and in C. Reeves, *Pleasures and Pastimes in Medieval England* (Stroud, 1991), pp. 124-129.

<sup>9</sup> This should be a corrective to residual notions that pet keeping emerged in the early modern period appears in B. Boehrer, 'Shylock and the Rise of the Household Pet: Thinking Social Exclusion in the Merchant of Venice', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 50:2 (1999), pp. 152-170. See K. Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800*, pp. 109-110.

have shown that it was common to keep pets<sup>10</sup>. In fact pet keeping in one form or another seems fairly universal. Many anthropological studies demonstrate that pets are a feature in most cultures across the globe<sup>11</sup>.

Unsurprisingly, there have been specialist studies of pet keeping in the modern period such as Louise Robbins's *Elephant Slaves and Pampered Parrots: Exotic Animals in Eighteenth-Century Paris* which focuses on the exotic pet trade, keepers of exotic pets and representations in literature (especially in connection with discussions of slavery and freedom) and Kathleen Kete's, *The Beast in the Boudoir: Pet keeping in Nineteenth-Century Paris* which studies the cultural role of pets in connection with contemporary issues such as animal protection societies<sup>12</sup>. I have read these for insights with an interest in methodology and theoretical insights

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<sup>10</sup> See F.D. Lazenby, 'Greek and Roman Household Pets', *The Classical Journal*, 44: 5 (1949), pp. 299-307, J.M.C. Toynbee, *Animals in Roman Life and Art* (Baltimore, 1996) and J. Málek, *The cat in Ancient Egypt* (London, 1997). For an overview on dogs, from the classical world to the early modern period see S. Menache, 'Dogs and Human Beings: A Story of Friendship', *Society and Animals*, 6:1 (1998) and S. Menache, 'Dogs: God's Worst Enemies?', *Society and Animals*, 5:1 (1997). The latter analyses the formal attitudes towards dogs in Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

<sup>11</sup> See James Serpell, *In the Company of Animals: A Study of Human-Animal Relationships* (Oxford, 1986), which dedicates two of its four parts purely to pets (Part I: The Case Against Pets and Part II: An Alternative View). Some relevant general anthropological works on animals are T. Ingold, ed., *What is an Animal?* (London, 1988) and R.G. Willis, ed., *Signifying Animals: Human Meaning in the Natural World* (London, 1990). *Signifying Animals* has an interesting case study on the varied roles of dogs in Nigerian culture in which the animal may serve as a hunting animal, as food, as an ingredient for magical preparations and finally as a pet: J. Olowo Ojoade on 'Nigerian cultural attitudes to the dog', *ibid.* (pp. 215-221). Some modern sociological studies on pets are M. Shell, 'The Family Pet', *Representations*, 15, (1986), pp. 121-53 and E.C. Hirschman, 'Consumers and Their Animal Companions', *The Journal of Consumer Research*, 20:4 (1994), pp. 612-32. The latter analyses the various roles of pets in contemporary culture (ornaments, status symbols, treated as miniature humans, etc.). For a comparative archaeological approach, see L.M. Snyder and E.A. Moore, ed., *Dogs and People in Social, Working, Economic or Symbolic Interaction* (Oxford, 2006).

<sup>12</sup> L.E. Robbins, *Elephant Slaves and Pampered Parrots: Exotic Animals in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Baltimore, 2001) and K. Kete, *The Beast in the Boudoir: Petkeeping in Nineteenth-Century Paris* (London, 1994)

This study is restricted to Western Europe in the late Middle Ages as there is a scarcity of sources for pet keeping before the twelfth century, after which the number of available sources grows exponentially. Nevertheless, the few early medieval sources that I have collected point to the same social groups keeping pets as my study shows for the late Middle Ages. For example, several seventh and eighth-century Irish law texts associate pet dogs and cats with women. One legal passage claims that a lord should have a hunting dog while his wife keeps a pet dog while another refers to cats that are kept indoors by women and allowed to sleep in special baskets or on a pillow on the bed<sup>13</sup>.

#### *Definition of a pet*

This thesis is about pets, non-utilitarian animals that are kept by humans indoors mainly for companionship. A pet is by its very nature an artificial construct as it is an animal that is only accorded this privileged status by its human owner. An animal is not automatically a pet; instead it becomes one on the whim or wish of its owner. Among all categories of animals, pets are possibly the one most linked to human status. The pet is pampered and often treated like a member of the household. If one tried to place them in the Great Chain of Being, pets would seem to belong more in the network of family relationships (from the head of the household down), rather than belong in the chain of animals. The privileged pet is allowed indoors into intimate human space and the boundaries between animal status are often

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<sup>13</sup> See F. Kelly, *Early Irish farming : a study based mainly on the law-texts of the 7th and 8th centuries AD* (Dublin, 1997), esp. pp. 120-122, and F. McCormick, 'The domesticated cat in early Christian and medieval Ireland', *Keimelia: studies in medieval archaeology and history in memory of Tom Delaney*, ed. P.F. Wallace (Galway, 1988), pp. 218-28.

blurred, as the medieval pet is fed and treated with care not accorded to most humans.

Technically pets are animals without spiritual souls. In his 'Quaestiones Naturales', Adelard of Bath (1080-1152) argued that animals have souls since animals have sensation and the judgement to desire or avoid things, they must therefore have souls since judgement could only exist in the soul and not the body<sup>14</sup>. The idea that animals have non-immortal souls was greatly expanded in the thirteenth century by Thomas Aquinas. For Aquinas, like Aristotle, animals souls are not immaterial<sup>15</sup>. Aquinas followed Augustine who held that animal souls are not rational, so that they disappear when animals die. The affection lavished on pets and the grief at their passing does seem to suggest a lack of clarity on this point. A popular theme in pet elegies, as discussed in Chapter Three, is the pet's ascent to heaven.

Pets are thus a subset of the wider set of animals who are objects of emotional attachment on the owner's part. Yet one cannot include emotional attachment as a defining characteristic when searching the sources for medieval pets. Many animals that are not necessarily pets, such as horses, hunting hounds, farm animals, etc., may be the objects of emotional attachment. Owners could have close relationships with animals used outdoors in recreational activities (such as hawks) or animals that were technically utilitarian, such as personal saddle horses, who were often lavished

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<sup>14</sup> Adelard of Bath, *Conversations with his nephew: On the same and the different, Questions on natural science, and On birds*, ed. and trans. C. Burnett (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 110-117.

<sup>15</sup> St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles* (Madrid, 1967), pp. 665-671: Book II Chapter 82 'Quod animae brutorum animalium non sunt immortales'. Also see R. Sorabji, *Animal minds and human morals: the origins of the Western debate* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1993) and P.G. Sobol, 'The Shadow of Reason: Explanations of Intelligent Animal Behaviour in the Thirteenth Century', *The Medieval World of Nature*, ed. J. Salisbury (New York, 1993), pp. 109-122.

with affection and care<sup>16</sup>. For this reason I focus on pets as animals kept indoors.

In *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England, 1500-1800*, Keith Thomas defines a pet as an animal that was kept indoors, not eaten and given a name<sup>17</sup>. On the last point, although we know the names of several medieval pets, pet names do not appear regularly in the sources and are something of a rarity. It is more common for the sources to refer to pets by their species ('the small dog' for example) or by a generic name specifically used for that entire species (for example, Phillip for a sparrow, Gyb or Gilbert for cat, etc.)<sup>18</sup>.

Though I use the English term 'pet' throughout my thesis, there was no comparable term in the medieval period. That need not prevent us from using the term, in the clearly defined sense given above, as an analytical concept (for example, one discusses inflation in connection with economies that didn't have the concept). In most sources that I have examined, both in Latin and the vernacular the pet is identified by a term defining its exact species, such as *canis*, *muriceps*, etc. When more than one species is involved the entire category, animals, may be invoked although overwhelmingly the sources

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<sup>16</sup> P. Edwards, *Horse and Man in Early Modern England* (London, 2007).

<sup>17</sup> K. Thomas, *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England 1500-1800* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 112-115.

<sup>18</sup> The generic names Phillip (sparrow) and Gyb (cat) both appear in John Shelton's poem 'Phylp Sparrow', in J. Scattergood, ed., *The Complete Poems of John Skelton* (New Haven, 1983), pp. 71-106. The name Gyb for a cat also appears in the early sixteenth-century play *Gammer Gurton's Needle*, ed. C. Whitworth (London, 1997). Examples of pets with specific names are Mite, the thirteenth-century cat of Beaulieu Abbey (MS London British Library Add. 48978, f. 47verso), and the little dog with the engraved collar 'Terri' (shortened from 'terrier') on Lady Alice Cassy's effigy in Deerhurst church, Gloucestershire, c.1400, see 'On Certain Rare Monumental Effigies', *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Association*, XXV (1902), p. 99. See P. Harvey, 'After Adam: naming the animals in the Middle Ages and later' and M. Jones 'Animals', both unpublished papers presented at the London Society of Antiquaries, December 2003.

prefer to individualise the species. The English term 'pet' in the sense of a companion animal was not in use until the late seventeenth-century<sup>19</sup>. There is no exact equivalent for the term 'pet' in other modern European languages, which either refer to the species or use a descriptive term such as 'animal de compagnie' or 'animale domestico'. Nevertheless, I will use the anachronistic term 'pet' in this thesis, as it clearly defines the category of animals that I will examine. The Oxford English Dictionary defines a pet as 'An animal (typically one which is domestic or tame) kept for pleasure or companionship', which is very similar to my definition, although without the spatial dimension. The lexicological terminology often reflects the diminutive size of many pets. A pet does not have to be small, but smallness was useful for an animal kept indoors and often be carried around. Many of terms for pet dogs emphasize their small size: *catulus* or *caniculus* in Latin, *chienet* in Old French, *hundchen* in Middle German, *whelp* or *small hound* in Middle English, *cagnolino* in Italian and *perillo* or *blanchet* in Castilian<sup>20</sup>.

### *The argument*

A key argument of the thesis will be that medieval pets, as purely non-functional animals kept only for the owner's amusement, were mainly the province of women of high status and clerics, and later of lay humanist scholars whose example helped make the practice acceptable to other laymen. Before the advent of Humanism, secular men who were married or planned to marry were not usually pet owners. Their preferences were for 'outside'

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<sup>19</sup> L. Spitzer, 'On the Etymology of Pet', *Language*, 26:4 (1950), pp. 533-538

<sup>20</sup> L. Davidson, 'The Use of Blanchete in Juan Ruiz's Fable of the Ass and the Lap-Dog', *Romance Philology*, 33 (1979), pp. 154-60 discusses the Castilian term blanchete and its relation to similar terms in other European vernaculars.

functional animals: hounds, horses and hawks, which do not fall into the interior 'pet' category in that they were non-functional (though of course there were often regarded with great affection). Hunting animals were normally kept outside and cared for by specialists (not the owner) and used for specific purposes (i.e. the hunt)<sup>21</sup>.

Pets played a role in defining the spheres between women, clerics and lay men, as they are prominent in the first two. There is a logic to the ambiguity of the gender categories, as clerics represented as it was a third gender through functional celibacy. Since marriage and fighting, signs of masculinity, were barred to clerics, they become another category of gendered identity<sup>22</sup>

One of the main purposes of pet keeping was to display power, whether economic or social, destined for all or to merely reinforce one's position to others in their same social sphere. However this was only acceptable for women and clerics. If secular married men kept pets, they showed a certain weakness or 'unmanliness' by doing so. A well-known example is the English King Richard II's excessive love for his greyhound, which he even allowed onto his bed, the province of a pet. This was disapproved of as not the right sort of kingly behaviour<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>21</sup> For general surveys of medieval hunting see J. Cummins, *The Hound and the Hawk: The Art of Medieval Hunting* (London, 2001) and R. Almond, *Medieval Hunting* (Stroud, 2003). For medieval manuals on hunting and falconry see Adelard of Bath, *De cura accipitrum* (Groningen, 1937); Frederick II, *De arte venandi cum avibus* (Graz, 1969) and Gaston Phebus, *Livre de Chasse*, ed. G. Tilander (Karlshamm, 1971).

<sup>22</sup> S. Salih, *Versions of Virginitly in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge, 2001), esp. p. 2 and 17; M. Rubin, 'The person in the form: medieval challenges to bodily 'order'', in *Framing Medieval Bodies*, ed. S. Kay and M. Rubin (Manchester, 1994), pp. 100-122 and C. Walker Bynum, *Jesus as mother : studies in the spirituality of the high Middle Ages* (Berkeley, 1982).

<sup>23</sup> Adam of Usk, *Chronicle of Adam Usk*, ed. and trans. C. Given-Wilson, (Oxford, 1997), pp. 86-87: 'Ipsum super lectum suum dormire permittendo; et post depossicionem regis Ricardi,

When non-celibate men did keep pets, they lost power instead of displaying it. Even in the sixteenth century, King Henri III of France's excessive fondness for small lap-dogs was viewed as a sign of his unsuitability to be a king, and symbolic of his lack of 'manliness'.<sup>24</sup> Similarly, the gift of a pet to a secular man was inappropriate. In the tale of King Herla, recounted by the twelfth-century writer Walter Map in his *De nugis curialium*, after a traditional gift exchange of horses, hawks and hunting equipment, the king is given a little pet dog to hold in his arms by his pygmy host. The king and his men are then forever condemned to wander as they cannot dismount until the little dog leaps from Herla's arms<sup>25</sup>.

There are a few exceptions to the rule that secular men did not keep pets. Although the evidence is not extensive, there appears to be a connection between men in urban professions such as medicine and advocacy, and pet ownership. But as with lay humanists, these are exceptions that prove the rule. Socially and economically speaking, the noble 'masculine' pursuits of hunting would have been usually out of their reach and like the scholars discussed in the third chapter, most of their professional life was conducted indoors. When

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ad ipsum idem leporarius ductus, eum alio modo quam unum priuatum sibi incognitum respicere non curauit, quod idem tunc depositus dolenter ferebat'.

<sup>24</sup> See J. Schiesari, "'Bitches and Queens": Pets and Perversion at the Court of France's Henri III' in E. Fudge, ed., *Renaissance Beasts: of animals, humans and other wonderful creatures* (Urbana, Illinois, 2003). Other pet eccentricities of Henri III included the theft of little pet dogs from nunneries in Paris. According to the chronicler Pierre de Lestoile in November 1575: 'Il va en coche, avec la Roine, son espouse, par les rues et maisons de Paris, prendre les petits chiens damerets. Va semblablement par tous les monastères de femmes estans aux environs de Paris faire pareille queste de petits chiens, au grand regret et desplaisir des dames auxquelles les chiens appartenoient.' P. L'Estoile, *Registre-journal de Henri III, roy de France et de Pologne 1574 a 1589* (Paris, 1837), p. 62. Cf. A. Franklin, *La Vie Privée d'Autrefois: arts et métiers modes, mœurs, usages des parisiens du xii au xviii siècle d'après des documents originaux ou inédits*, vol. 25 (Paris, 1897), pp. 57-8.

<sup>25</sup> Walter Map, *De nugis curialium*, ed. and trans. M.R. James (Oxford, 1983), pp. 26-31, esp. p. 28: 'Conducit eos ad tenebras usque pigmeus, et canem modicum sanguinarum portatilem presentat, omnibus modis interdicens ne quis de toto comitatu suo descendat usquam, donec ille canis a portatore suo prosilat, dictaque salute repatriat'.

not visiting patients in their homes, the professional offices of doctors were normally the same as their living quarters so the animal could have been a family pet as well<sup>26</sup>. Men in these professions would often lead an indoors life, so pets could have been part of their daily routine. As for advocates, there is a late fourteenth-century exemplum that specifically chastises a Welsh advocate for excessive affection for his pet dogs. The lawyer only loves his dogs and sleeps alone on his bed with them. He is found dead by his wife and clients and the dogs, unfaithful once he is dead and no longer able to provide for them, are eating the corpse<sup>27</sup>. This exemplum points to the foolishness of excessive devotion to one's pets, a theme that also has parallels in exempla directed against women<sup>28</sup>. Interestingly, as Chapter Two 'Space, Tolerance and Criticism' shows, there is little criticism towards women who sleep with their pets, despite the occasionally mishap such as being smothered by the pet. Doctors also occasionally appear with pets in medieval iconography. An illustration in an early thirteenth-century 'Chirurgia' manuscript depicts a surgeon holding a pair of balances with a small dog on his lap while in an

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<sup>26</sup> In Northern Europe, many physicians would be clerics in minor orders. Surgeons would be lay, following the prohibition of shedding blood. The Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 specifically prohibited subdeacons, deacons and priests from practicing surgery, as they would have to cauterise or make incisions (Sententia 18), in N.P. Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils* (London, 1990), p. 244.

<sup>27</sup> MS London British Library Cotton Cleopatra D.VIII, f. 115recto. The manuscript dates from the end of the fourteenth century. For contents see H.L. Ward, *Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London, 1883), pp. 200 and 249. The manuscript described by H.L. Ward as 'A collection of exempla, moral precepts, etc., mainly extracted from the *Vitae Patrum*. Latin.' The exemplum in question is quoted by Ward in vol. III, p. 641, n<sup>o</sup>25.

<sup>28</sup> See 'Criticism and Tolerance of secular pet keeping' in Chapter Two: Space, Tolerance and Criticism.

early fifteenth century Italian exemplum, doctors visit their patient accompanied by their pet monkey<sup>29</sup>.

Other exceptions in pet-keeping practice are men who succeeded in transforming their keeping of pets into an eccentricity or a characteristic of personal piety compatible with their position. Alfonso X 'The Wise' of Castile (1221-1284) kept a pet weasel which accompanied him everywhere, tied to his saddle in a little cage. However, as a ruler of high reputation who promoted the pursuit of scholarly investigation into various aspects of knowledge, and who showed due reverence to the Virgin Mary, he was exempt from the usual criticisms. In one of Alfonso's *Cantigas de Santa Maria*, in return for his devotion to the Virgin Mary, she even rescues his beloved weasel when it falls accidentally under the feet of his horse.<sup>30</sup>

Pet keeping as an eccentricity is exemplified by the Italian artist Giovanni Antonio Bazzi (known as Il Sodoma, 1477-1549), who kept a variety of pets such as badgers, squirrels, monkeys, doves and miniature donkeys in his house which resembled, in the words of his biographer Vasari, a veritable 'Noah's ark'. The artist even immortalized his pets in a self-portrait in the cloisters of the Benedictine monastery of Monte Oliveto Maggiore in Tuscany,

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<sup>29</sup> MS Cambridge Trinity College 0.1.20 [I, 53], f. 265recto, 'Chirurgia' (possibly by Robert of Parma) the manuscript is from the first half of the thirteenth century, cf. T. Hunt, *The Medieval Surgery* (Woodbridge, 1992), pp. 76-77. The folio in question (265recto) gives instructions for an ointment receipt and has an illustration of a medical dispensary, lined with storage jars, herbs, pestles and a cauldron. The dog is coloured yellow in the manuscript. The exemplum of the doctors and the monkey is in MS London British Library Add. 11872, f. 89 [c. 1400; Italian]. It begins 'Quintilianus dicit, non medicina sanat,' (Declamations, XIX, decl. viii 9). Cf. H.L. Ward, *Catalogue of Romances*, vol. III, p. 694, n. 30.

<sup>30</sup> Alfonso X, *Cantigas de Santa Maria*, ed W. Mettmann, (Coimbra, 1959-72), vol. III, pp. 257-8 (n°354). The king's affection is expressed thus: 'Este pesar foi por hua bestiola que muit' amava el Rei'.

where he is depicted with two pet badgers, one of which wears a red leather collar with silver studs<sup>31</sup>.

The thesis will concentrate on female and clerical pet keepers throughout my thesis. But the chapters on humanist scholars and pets, and the chapter on Mantua, where the material allows for an in-depth case-study, are important in the structure of the argument. Humanists were an exception as a whole class, one which not only proved the rule but eventually led to its suppression. Lay Italian humanists were imitated throughout Europe as cultural role models and their example must have helped make pet keeping acceptable as well.

This thesis is divided into four chapters. The first chapter deals with identity and status. The private and public identification of pets with women and clerics is examined through literature and imagery, while issues of status and the practicalities of pet keeping are examined in the second part of this chapter. Gift-giving, feeding, and the purchase of accessories are covered, issues of status and the keeping of pets are also examined for specific groups, such as those in religious houses. The second chapter deals with space and tolerance. Space is studied in a variety of forms, from interior domestic space to exterior space and urban space. Contemporary criticism and tolerance of

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<sup>31</sup> See PLATE 1 for the self-portrait of Il Sodoma (Giovanni Antonio Bazzi, 1477?-1549?) and his pet badgers in the fresco cycle of the life of St. Benedict in the cloisters of Monte Oliveto Maggiore. For a biographical account of Sodoma's pet-keeping, see Giorgio Vasari, *Le Vite de' più eccellenti pittori scultori e architettori nelle redazioni del 1550 e 1568*, ed. R. Bettarini (Florence, 1966-1987), vol. V, pp. 381-2: 'Dilettosi, oltre ciò, d aver per casa di più sorte stravaganti animali: tassi, scoiattoli, bertucce, gatti mammoni, asini nani, cavalli barbari da correre palii, cavallini piccoli dell'Elba, ghiandaie, galline nane, tortole indiane, et altri sì fatti animali, quanti gliene potevano venire alle mani...Similmente gl'altri animali erano tanto domestici, che sempre stavano intorno allui per casa facendo i più strani giuochi et i più pazzi versi del mondo, di maniera che la casa di costui pareva propio l'arca di Noè'.

the practice of pet keeping is examined here. I deal separately with criticism of secular pet keeping and of clerical and institutional pet keeping. The third chapter charts a change in the social symbolism of pet keeping. It became more acceptable for laymen to keep pets thanks in part to the example set by humanist scholars who play a pivotal role in the argument of the whole thesis as agents of a transformation in attitude. The fourth chapter deals with the issue of pet keeping at court, and brings together many of the issues examined in the previous chapters, such as questions of status, public displays of affection and grief and scholarly compositions on the subject of pets among other issues. Finally, I include an appendix of unpublished material that I have transcribed from archival research and used in this thesis.

#### *Animal species commonly kept as pets*

Any animal could become pet; however certain species of animals were more commonly kept as pets than others. The most popular medieval pet was a small dog; other favoured species were cats, monkeys, and singing and talking birds. Less common pets were squirrels, ferrets and rabbits<sup>32</sup>.

For pet dogs, small size was usually the defining feature, rather than a specific breed. The only specific lap dog breed mentioned in the sources is the small snub-nosed longhaired white 'Melitaeen', which appears profusely in the iconography of noble ladies<sup>33</sup>. The small dogs portrayed in the series of

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<sup>32</sup> For a general overview on these species, see J. Clutton-Brock, *Domesticated Animals from Early Times* (London, 1981), pp. 34-45 (dogs), 106-112 (cats) and 145-149 (ferrets and rabbits, the latter was farmed as a source of food in the Middle Ages). Also see R. Delort, *Les animaux ont une histoire* (Paris, 1993).

<sup>33</sup>The term 'Melitaeen' stems from Classical Antiquity when the breed was presumed to have come from the island of Malta. The poet Martial wrote a hendecasyllabic poem on the death of one named 'Issa' (*Epigrams*, I.109) and the early Christian writer Clement of Alexandria (150?-215?) complained about vain women who 'overlook the chaste widow,

late fifteenth century 'La Dame à la licorne' tapestries at the Musée national du Moyen Age in Paris are prime examples of the type. In the tapestry 'A mon seul désir', a long haired white dog sits facing the audience on a brocade cushion on a bench next to the lady, while in the tapestry 'Le Goût', a long-haired white dog stands on the train of the lady's dress, looking up at her<sup>34</sup>.

Other popular breeds for pet dogs were small hunting breeds<sup>35</sup>. However, the exact breed is usually not mentioned in description of pet dogs, where size and physical marks such as colour are preferred as descriptive terms. In iconography, white is the most common colour of pet dogs, although other colours were occasionally used. Dog coats could be smooth or curly and nose shape could be snub, round or pointed. An iconographic example of this assortment can be seen in an early sixteenth-century manuscript in the British Library, Add. 12531, on the genealogy of the royal houses of Spain and Portugal<sup>36</sup>. In the illuminations of this manuscript, an entire spectrum of small pets appears in very close proximity to their owners. For example on f.4 Doña Inhega holds a smooth haired white dog, on f. 5 Doña Constança pats a curly fine coated brown dog while Doña Ermesenda

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who is of far higher value than a Melitaeian puppy' (*Paidogogos*, Book 3, Chapter 4). On pet dogs in the Ancient World, see J.M.C. Toynbee, *Animals in Roman Life and Art*, (Baltimore, 1996), pp. 108-122.

<sup>34</sup> See A. Erlande-Brandenburg, *La dame à la licorne*, (Paris, 1978).

<sup>35</sup> For example the small scent hound *bracke* was commonly kept as a pet. See J. Cummins, *The Hound and the Hawk*, (London, 2001), p. 47.

<sup>36</sup> The manuscript is dated to c. 1530. There are other pets in this manuscript, on f. 5 Doña Ines holds a small bird while an unnamed lady in the upper right side of the folio holds a caged bird. Numerous monkeys, birds and other petite animals are depicted near ladies through the manuscript. Folio 4 is reproduced in T. Kren and S. McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance: The triumph of Flemish manuscript painting in Europe* (London, 2003), p. 461.

has a grey long haired dog on her lap and Doña Isabel holds a tiny brown dogs in her arms<sup>37</sup>.

Cats were popular medieval pets, although they often held a more ambiguous role since they were kept as mousers as well as pets in many households. However, when it is possible to glean from the source that the cat was being kept for companionship, I would classify it as a pet<sup>38</sup>. Monkeys were an expensive high-status pet. They are called *simia* in Latin texts, although the species kept as pets were usually imported tailed monkeys and not the Barbary ape<sup>39</sup>. Various species of singing and talking birds were kept as pets in cages, such as thrushes, nightingales, blackbirds, starlings, skylarks, magpies and finches<sup>40</sup>. The most exotic bird kept as a pet was the parrot. The only species of parrot known in Europe in the Middle Ages was the green

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<sup>37</sup> MS London British Library Add. 12531, f. 10 has Doña Constança with a different dog, this time a long grey haired little dog, just like the one that appeared with Doña Ermesenda in f. 5. All of the cited folios are available online via the British Library website.

<sup>38</sup> For a general overview on the mainly negative attributes of medieval cats, see D. Gray, 'Notes of Some Medieval Mystical, Magical and Moral Cats', *Langland, the Mystics and the medieval English religious tradition* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 185-202. The phenomenon of animal familiars in early modern witchcraft trials in England and Scotland is beyond the scope of this thesis, although many of the alleged familiars appear to have been the pets of the accused. In one of the earliest trials, Dame Alice Kytler in 1324-5 from Kilkenny, Ireland, was accused of practicing *malificia* and it was alleged that an incubus in the shape of cat visited her. There is an association of cats with heresy in the Middle Ages, during the trial of the Templars (1307-14) they were accused of worshipping a cat. On the association of cats with heresy, see S. Lipton, 'Jews, heretics, and the sign of the cat in the *Bible moralisée*', *Word and Image* 8 (1992), pp. 362-77, and with witchcraft: G. R. Quaipe, *Godly Zeal and Furious Rage: the witch in early modern Europe* (Beckenham, 1987) and A.C. Kors and E. Peters, ed., *Witchcraft in Europe 400-1700: a Documentary History* (Philadelphia, 2001). The latter contains details of a sixteenth-century trial in Chelmsford in which the familiar was a white pet cat called Satan. Familiars were not confined to cats, but also to dogs, toads, bats and other animals. For associations of dogs with the Devil, see B. Allen Woods, 'The Devil In Dog Form', *Western Folklore*, 13: 4 (1954) pp. 229-235

<sup>39</sup> In W. George and B. Yapp, *Naming of the Beasts: Natural History in the Medieval Bestiary* (London, 1991), pp. 91-92, the authors contend that most medieval monkeys would have been African tailed monkeys of genus *Cercopithecus*. For an overview of medieval monkeys, see H.W. Janson, *Apes and Ape Lore in the Middle Ages and Renaissance* (London, 1952).

<sup>40</sup> For details on caged birds, including selected literary and iconographical evidence, see W.B. Yapp, 'Birds in captivity in the Middle Ages', *Archives of Natural History*, 10:3 (1982), pp. 479-500.

Indian rose-ringed parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*) described in John Skelton's satirical poem sixteenth century poem 'Speak Parrot': 'My feathys fresshe as ys the emerawde grene, / Abowte my necke a cerculett lyke the ryche rubye'<sup>41</sup>.

#### *Sources*

In this thesis I use a wide range of sources, ranging from historical (chronicles, accounts, visitation records, etc), literary (elegies, *exempla*, romances, letters) to iconographical. The quantity of potential source material is so large that there could be no question of being comprehensive. My emphasis on English and French sources in the first two chapters should not be taken to imply a lack of material elsewhere. On the other hand, the concentration on Italy in chapter three ('Humanists and Pet Keeping') reflects two phenomena: first, the crucial role of humanists in legitimating pet keeping by laymen, a secondly, the vast quantity of literary material about pet keeping which has no counterpart in the North for the period in question. These two matters are related because humanists generated most of this material. Thus the balance of the evidence is also part of the argument. The final chapter, 'Pet Keeping at Court' concentrates on a case study of the Mantuan court, simply because the material is incredibly rich. Iconography is a particularly useful. Still I take it as a given that images are not automatically transparent guides to social life and often represent an ideal presentation rather than an exact reproduction of the subject in question. The main types of images used come from manuscript illuminations, paintings, misericords and sculpture

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<sup>41</sup> *The Complete Poems of John Skelton*, ed. P. Henderson (London, 1948), 288, lines 16-17. On medieval parrots, see W. George and B. Yapp, *Naming of the Beasts: Natural History in the Medieval Bestiary* (London, 1991), pp. 162-4.

(particularly funeral effigies).

When examining any type of source, it is necessary to determine if the animal is a beast kept indoors, whose only function is companionship – so a pet in the shorthand of this study. This is not always easy to determine. For example in the twelfth-century accounts of a lease of manor at Cuxham (Oxfordshire) there are mentions of one ‘cattus senex’ and of two ‘juvenes catti’. These cats could have been mousers or pets and without any further details it is hard to pinpoint their exact status. However, for the same manor in 1293-4 there is an entry for cheese bought for a cat (‘I caseum comm’ per catum’). Although this cat may have been a mouser as well, the fact that it was being fed specialist food and not left to fend for itself may point to it being a companion animal<sup>42</sup>. In other sources, the pet is easier to spot. For example, in a tale in the fourteenth-century *Livre du Chevalier de la Tour Landry* the female protagonist keeps a magpie in cage. Since all caged birds are pets by virtue of being enclosed, the animal in question is a pet<sup>43</sup>.

After a good deal of reflection I have decided not to use zoo-archaeological evidence. Although animal bones have been found in excavations of medieval domestic sites all over Europe it is difficult to determine whether the bones of animal are those of a pet. Since a pet, by its very nature, is an artificial and subjective category, the mere presence of animal remains of a species that was often kept as a pet is not enough to determine with exactitude whether these animals ever were pets. For example,

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<sup>42</sup> D. Gray, ‘Notes of Some Medieval Mystical, Magical and Moral Cats’, *Langland, the Mystics and the medieval English religious tradition* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 193, c.f. P.D.A. Harvey, *A Medieval Oxfordshire Village, Cuxham 1240 to 1400* (Oxford 1965).

<sup>43</sup> M.A. de Montaiglon, ed., *Le Livre du Chevalier de la Tour Landry* (Paris, 1854), pp. 35-36: ‘...Si fut une damoiselle qui ayoit une pye en caige, qui parloit de tout ce qu’elle veoit faire’.

the remains of dog could belong to a guard dog, a hunting dog, a pet dog, an urban feral scavenger dog and so on<sup>44</sup>. Determining status from the burial of the animal is also difficult. Animals were sometimes carefully buried (though it is not easy to be sure of this) or just put on household waste deposits, but even in the second case one cannot be sure that the animal in question was not a pet. It may have been that once dead, the corpse of the animal was not important and a specialized burial was deemed unnecessary but it is hard to be sure<sup>45</sup>. A rather isolated case of relatively strong archaeological evidence for a pet dog comes from an excavation in Perth, Scotland. On analysis of the reports, Catherine Smith concluded that the remains of an elderly small dog may have been those of a pet, since it had been cared for in its old age and had been buried in a pit rather than on a midden with other rubbish<sup>46</sup>. When the

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<sup>44</sup> The archaeologist Richard Thomas has analysed animal remains from England and discusses the near impossibility of identifying function purely using archaeological data. He suggests that the presence of animal remains without butchery marks or those who show signs of healed bones might be possible indicators of a pet. See R. Thomas, 'Perceptions Versus Reality: Changing Attitudes towards Pets in Medieval and Post-Medieval England' in *Just Skin and Bones? New Perspectives on Human-Animal Relations in the Historical Past*, ed. A. Pluskowski, (Oxford, 2005), pp. 95-104. The author also concluded that the number of cats and dogs found on archaeological sites in England in the medieval and post-medieval period is low. On p. 101 he gives the case of red squirrel bones found on deposits in Dudley Castle. Although a human agent must have brought them in, whether they were kept as pets or used for skinning is uncertain.

<sup>45</sup> Excavations in Verona, Italy, found a large quantity of cat bones, mainly thirteenth century, which suggested that cat corpses were generally thrown away onto a few waste pits. The cats could have had various functions, from being pets to being skinned for their pelts, although there are no butchery or flesh stripping marks on the cat remains in Verona: A. Riedel, *The Animal Remains of Medieval Verona, an archaeozoological and paleoeconomical study* (Verona, 1994) pp. 24-7 (for further details on the age of the animals and their size see p. 25). The author also asserts that the excavated Veronese cats were generally small and slender. Dog remains, although less common than those of cats, were also excavated, and show dogs of different sizes abounded in the city. Excavations in Vác, Hungary, paint a similar picture. Canine remains of different sizes have been excavated but it is impossible to determine their exact function, the same case appears with feline remains. See L. Bartosiewicz, *Animals in the Urban Landscape in the Wake of the Middle Ages: a case study from Vác, Hungary*, (Oxford, 1995) pp. 59-61).

<sup>46</sup> C. Smith, 'Dogs, cats and horses in the Scottish medieval town', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 128 (1998), pp. 869-870, 881.

remains are of an exotic animal there is also a certain presumption that it was a pet<sup>47</sup>.

Despite the lack of usable archaeological evidence it will already be clear that materials for a study of pet keeping are plentiful, and that they have been hitherto very rarely exploited. The social details they reveal are colourful and fascinating. Furthermore they can take us beyond a 'how they lived' kind of social history to arguments about status and gender. In a nutshell, the fact that 'real men did not keep pets' until the rise of humanism changed the symbolic significance of pet keeping. Humanist as models for scholars everywhere in Europe influence the keeping of pets by lay secular men. It remains to provide evidence for these theses.

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<sup>47</sup> Parrot bones have been discovered in fifteenth century deposits in Castle Mall, Norwich while the remains of a small Barbary ape were found during the excavation of a stone tenement house in Southampton belonging to Richard of Southwick, burgess of Southampton (d. c. 1290). See R. Thomas, 'Perceptions Versus Reality: Changing Attitudes towards Pets in Medieval and Post-Medieval England', pp. 97 and 101 and C. Platt, *Medieval Southampton: The port and trading community, A.D. 1000-1600* (London, 1973), pp. 103-104.

## **Chapter 1: Identity and Status**

### **I Identity**

#### *Introduction*

In the High and Late Middle Ages men and women could be identified by the animals they kept. Women and clerics, both the secular clergy and those in religious orders, constituted the vast majority of pet keepers throughout the period in question. Although I use the term 'women' as a generic term throughout this thesis, my sources on the whole concentrate on upper-class women. When examining the sources, it is necessary to determine if the animal in question was a pet, and not a functional animal such as a guard or hunting dog.

It is rare to find evidence for women in the lower orders of society keeping pets, we get glimpses here and there: for instance the manor rolls of Wakefield in 1286 recount a suit carried out by women called Moll de Mora against a William Wodemouse for abuse of a maintenance contract, theft of goods and the murder of her dog<sup>48</sup>. All that can be gleaned from this source is that Moll de Mora owned a dog. The animal was probably a guard dog and not a pet. This is not to deny that animal owners in all levels of society could have had intense emotional attachments to their animals, but affection, although a relevant factor in pet keeping is not its defining quality. Instead it is the lack of utility that defines a pet.

A secular man would keep animals that reflected the very qualities that he wished to be viewed as possessing: strength, loyalty, aggressiveness. These

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<sup>48</sup> W.P. Baildon, ed., *Court Rolls of Manor of Wakefield* (Leeds, 1901), I, pp. 235-6. Cf. B.A. Hanawalt, *The ties that bound : peasant families in medieval England* (Oxford, 1986), p. 256.

animals had to fulfil a 'purpose' that justified their existence<sup>49</sup>. No function is technically required, other than its mere presence as a companion, for a pet kept by a lady or a cleric. Loyalty is replaced by loving devotion, aggressiveness and strength by the capacity to distract and amuse. Like its owner it had no need to 'fight' in the world, which hunting hounds and destriers, heavy war horses, must do or be considered unacceptable specimens.

Since so many women and clerics owned pets, pets became identity markers for these groups, connected with their owners' identity, in both public and private spheres. By being part of their owners' everyday life, sharing in all activities, the pet becomes part of the owner's very persona. Extensive evidence for the connection between pet ownership and identity come from images representing the owners with a pet. Even if the owner in the image can be identified specifically, the portrayal with a pet does not mean that they actually owned one. Instead pets become part of the personal identity of noble women in general, since so many kept an animal that was lavished with attention, affection and high quality food stuffs in return for no functional purpose (other than companionship).

Traditionally, the presence of a dog in images of women has been taken as a symbol of fidelity. I would argue against such a simplistic interpretation. Firstly, it ignores all images that portray women with animals other than dogs;

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<sup>49</sup> In Chapter Three: 'Pet Keeping by Humanists' I will argue that there is a change in role of pets as a sign of gender demarcation in the late Middle Ages due to the spread of humanist education to lay secular men, as a pet becomes a symbol and accepted accessory of the scholar.

although a small dog was the preferred pet species, other animals such as cats, squirrels, singing birds, and so on were not uncommon.

Secondly, fidelity in dogs is more of a masculine virtue; it is not associated with dogs belonging to women and clerics. All literary examples of fidelity unto death are associated with dogs that belong to lay men, such as the tale of King Garamentes rescued by his dogs or the traditional literary motif of the loyal dog identifying his master's murderer, which appears in bestiary lore, numerous tales and exempla<sup>50</sup>.

There are practically no sources in which the chivalrous virtue of fidelity, especially involving death or self-harm, is associated with dogs owned by women and clerics. The qualities praised in women's dogs in written sources are instead affection and close companionship. The presence of the pet, rather than just a symbol of faithfulness, is an identity marker of noble women in general. The pet's presence underlines the status of the owner, rather than being a mere repository of virtue. As so many high class women owned pets, *ergo*, an image of a pet with a woman states that the image is representing a woman of a certain social group. Thus there is a very close

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<sup>50</sup> The most well known story of such a topos is the 'Dog of Montargis', in which after the murder of Aubry de Montdidier in 1371 near Montargis, his dog exhibited great hatred towards the murderer, a man called Macaire. King Charles V of France supposedly ordered a trial by combat between the dog and Macaire, who confessed to the crime after the dog won the duel, and was subsequently hanged. The tale is recounted in the *Menagier de Paris*, a late fourteenth-century text on household management. See G.E. Brereton and J.M. Ferrier, ed., *Le Menagier de Paris* (Oxford, 1981), ch. 7, p. 181. The text includes another popular tale of canine loyalty: the dog of Noirt who refuses to leave his master's tomb and is provided with food by the Duke de Berry, *Ibid*, ch. 8, p. 182. Similar tales of dogs pining for their masters appear in many bestiaries, such as Jason's dog refusing food on his death or the dog who tried to rescue the corpse of his dead master from the Tiber, see a modern translated edition of one manuscript, MS Oxford Bodleian Library Bodley 264, in R. Barber, trans., *Bestiary* (Woodbridge, 1999), p. 2. The bestiary stories of canine fidelity come originally from Pliny the Elder. See Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* (Cambridge, Mass., 1997), Book VIII, ch. lxi, pp. 101-103.

connection between pets, status, and identity, both in public images such as seals and funerary monuments, and in private images of identity, such as donor portraits in manuscripts.

### *Donor portraits*

It must be stressed that portraits of individual women and their pets are not necessarily close reproductions of the owner in question or the pet. Instead their very existence is an interesting indicator of how pets were transformed into a recognizable and necessary accessory of a noble woman. This can be seen in donor portraits in manuscripts and in other portraits of an owner and their pet<sup>51</sup>. The pampered and privileged condition of pets is emphasised in images when they are represented in areas that were forbidden to many, such as private chambers or sitting next to their owners, sharing the same seat and thus status. In an early fifteenth-century French manuscript miniature, Isabeau of Bavaria, Queen of France sits apart from her ladies on a separate cushioned bench, while the author Christine de Pisan presents her book. An attentive long-haired white lapdog with a pointed nose is alone in sharing the bench with the queen, transforming the pet into the queen's equal, above the other ladies who sit notably below, as does the kneeling Christine de Pisan<sup>52</sup>. In a manuscript of works presented to Anne of Brittany there is a full page miniature of the queen sitting down, receiving the book, with a small

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<sup>51</sup> Donor portraits where the owner is at prayer accompanied by their pet will be discussed in Chapter Two: Space, Tolerance and Criticism.

<sup>52</sup> The illumination is in MS London British Library Harley 4431, f. 3recto. The manuscript is a 'Collected Works of Christine de Pisan', dated to c.1410-11. This folio is available online via the British Library's website.

white dog sleeping on the hem of her dress<sup>53</sup>. The animal is seen as a perfectly acceptable companion to its royal owner in this image. Only the queen and her pet dog are sitting down, all other participants in the scene are either standing up, as are her ladies-in-waiting or kneeling like the author. Pets are symbols of their female owners, and their presence in images of women demonstrates how pet ownership is connected to perceptions of female identity. Yet we should not take the presence of the pet as a mere artistic convention of such female identity, for the evidence is overwhelming that a large proportion of noble women owned such pets and kept them as close, both emotionally and physically, as visualized in images. Less than a generation after Anne of Brittany, Louise of Savoy, mother of Francois I of France, would record in her journal the death in 1502 of her little dog Hapeguay who loved his mistress and was very loyal<sup>54</sup>.

The next two sections will focus on two genres of public images in which pets appear: seals and funeral effigies. Personal seals, as legal attestations of authority, were symbols of a public representation of one's identity, and thus are linked to funeral effigies, which similarly fulfilled a function of personal identity. Unlike the many decorative images in manuscripts of generic ladies with their pets, both seals and funeral effigies

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<sup>53</sup> The illumination is in MS Nantes Musée Dobrée 17, f. 1recto. The manuscript is dated to c. 1505. Cf. A. Franklin, *La Vie Privée d'Autrefois : arts et métiers modes, mœurs, usages des parisiens du xii au xviii siècle d'après des documents originaux ou inédits*, vol. 24 (Paris, 1897), p. 35.

<sup>54</sup> 'Le 24. October 1502 mourut à Blevé le petit chien hapeguay, qui estoit de bon amour et loyal à son maistre", 24 October 1502 in the *Journal de Louise de Savoye* in S. Guichenon, ed., *Histoire généalogique de la Royale maison de Savoye* (Turin, 1778-1780), vol. IV (part II), p. 462. Cf. A. Franklin, *La Vie Privée d'Autrefois*, vol 24 (Paris, 1897) p. 46-7. For a debate of the journal's authorship, see M. Dickman Orth, 'Francis de Moulin and the Journal of Louise of Savoy', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 13 :1 (1982), pp. 55-66.

are supposed to represent a certain individual, so the inclusion of a pet becomes a motif in the representation of that person's identity. Representing a pet on the seal or effigy emphasises a certain status through the possession of an animal which was destined only for leisure.

### *Seals*

A seal is a public representation of the owner used to certify documents. When the design of the seal incorporates an image of the owner, the image portrayed on the seal is acknowledged as a legal and accepted representation of the owner of the seal in question.

The presence of pets along with their owners in seals can be seen in many English and French seals belonging to noble women issuing documents<sup>55</sup>. The pet is a symbol of the aristocratic identity of the owner, just as men will be often portrayed on horseback and both sexes often carry falcons, as hunting is one of the provinces of the nobility.

Although pets were non-functional animals they frequently appear in seals with owners, due to the connection between pet ownership and noble women. Iconographically, their connection to their owners stresses the intimacy between the pet and the owner. The most common pose is for the pet, usually a dog, to sit at their owner's feet or to be ensconced in their arms. The pet represents more than just a luxury item which is part and parcel of the

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<sup>55</sup> I have only examined in detail French and English personal seals in the collection of the British Library for this section, due the high number of extant seals in collections across Europe. It would be interesting for future research to examine the presence of pets in seals elsewhere, in order to ascertain any regional variations or motifs. Animals that can be clearly identified as pets appear in approximately 5-10% of English and French personal seals of women.

owner's high status; it is part of the owner's public depiction, to be viewed by all who would deal with the document to which the seal would be attached. I have examined English and French seals from the twelfth to the fourteenth century which represent the owner with an animal. Seals merely depicting animals by themselves will not be analysed since they usually have heraldic implications or reference the name of the owner<sup>56</sup>.

The seal of Isabella, Countess of Gloucester and Mortain, of the late twelfth century, depicts the lady holding a small bird in her hand<sup>57</sup>. The majority of female personal seals involving birds depict the woman holding a hawking bird (easily identified by the jesses attached to the falcon), and seals which, say portray the owner with a small singing bird are uncommon. Seals depicting their owners with hawking birds are a frequent motif in many seals, emphasising the connection between hunting, nobility and authority. Occasionally, both pets and hunting birds, a mixture of the domestic and exterior world, can appear in the same seal, as is the case of the seal of Matilde, countess of Boulogne, dated to 1236 which shows the countess holding a falcon in her left hand while a small dog rests at her feet<sup>58</sup>. As small dogs were the most popular medieval pet, they understandably appear on the majority of seals depicting pets. The seal of Eleanor de Montfort, Countess of Leicester, mid-thirteenth century, has the lady standing with a small dog at her feet<sup>59</sup>. A similar motif appears in the seal of Johanna Aumbesas, c. 1307, of Carshalton,

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<sup>56</sup>For example, the twelfth-century seal of Alicia Capra depicts the lady with a small goat, a clear allusion to her name. British Library Seal LXXVIII.61, W. de G. Birch, *Catalogue of Seals in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London, 1892), vol. II, p. 380 n<sup>o</sup>6606.

<sup>57</sup> British Library Seal XCVI.90, *Ibid*, vol. V, p. 659 n<sup>o</sup>19850.

<sup>58</sup> British Library Seal CXXIX.134. *Ibid.*, vol. V, p. 639 n<sup>o</sup>19811.

<sup>59</sup> British Library Seal LXXX. 18. *Ibid*, vol. II, p. 393 n. 6686.

co. Surrey<sup>60</sup>. Apart from pets sitting at the feet of their owners, they also appear in seals in their owner's arms. Margareta de Nevyle of London, c. 1315, holds an extremely small dog in the crook of her left arm on her seal<sup>61</sup> while Juliana, widow of Richard de Norton (c. 1344, of Long Itchington, co. Warw.) clutches her little dog in both arms<sup>62</sup>.

Both motifs can even be combined, as on the seal of Matilda of Hardredshilla, late thirteenth century (Miles, of Westlinton, co. Suff.) who holds a little dog tightly in arms while a small dog rests at her feet looking up at her<sup>63</sup>. Even if the pet is not physically touching the owner in the seal image, there can still be a connection between the two, which stresses the emotional attachment, affection and intimacy between them. An example of this is the seal of Marie d'Issouidon, Countess of Eu, c. 1256, which depicts the standing Marie holding a fleur de lys as she bends her head to look at her small dog that leaps up enthusiastically towards her<sup>64</sup>. An example of a seal with a non-canine pet is the seal of Dionisia de Monte Canisy, late thirteenth century, who stands with a small squirrel by her feet<sup>65</sup>.

A woman accompanied by a small pet was a popular design for female personal seals, and the motif is never seen in the personal seals of men, although in rare cases a man might use a woman's seal to certify a document.

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<sup>60</sup> British Library Add. Ch. 23355, *Ibid*, vol. II, p. 375 n. 6577.

<sup>61</sup> British Library Seal LXXX.32, *Ibid*, vol. II, p. 394 n. 6691. The same seal is reproduced in the plates section of R.K. Ellis, *Catalogue of Seals in the Public Record Office: Personal Seals* (London, 1978) vol. II, with accompanying text on p. 77 (reference P1805).

<sup>62</sup> British Library, Add. Ch. 21451, *Ibid*, vol. II, pp. 394-5, n. 6692.

<sup>63</sup> British Library, Harley Ch. 83 F.12, *Ibid*, vol. II, p. 388, n. 6658. Cf. P. Coss, *The Lady in Medieval England 1000-1500*, (Stroud, 1998), p. 38.

<sup>64</sup> British Library Seal CXXIX.44, *Ibid*, vol. V, p. 651 n. 19835. See PLATE 2.

<sup>65</sup> British Library Seal LXXX.14, *Ibid*, vol. II, p. 393 n. 6685.

The grantor of a charter in the British Library, Thomas Cursoun (of Eyntre, co. Norfolk), sealed the document with three seals, one of which is an anonymous lady's seal, which depicts a woman with a small dog at her side<sup>66</sup>. But the general rule is not broken in this case; it is still a lady's seal, merely being used here by a man for whatever purpose it served at the time.

### *Funeral Effigies*

Funeral effigies remind the living of the deceased, along with being public representations of personal identity. Although funeral effigies are formal representations of the dead, they are often individualized by details in the carving, by inscriptions, styles of robes or armour, etc. The animals depicted in funeral effigies, normally at the feet of the figure, play a part in the identity of the deceased.

The presence of pets has usually explained in symbolic terms, with many art historians declaring them to be symbols of fidelity in the case of secular women and men, and faith in the case of clerics<sup>67</sup>. But, as argued above, while fidelity could be ascribed to the hunting hounds at men's feet, it is less likely to be a motif with women's dogs. The gender distinction on the use of the animals is quite notable. Men have lions, symbols of bravery and fortitude, or hounds, symbols of loyalty, at their feet. This position on effigies of women is occupied by a petite dog which does not appear to encompass all the

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<sup>66</sup> British Library, Harley Charter 58.C.5. *Ibid*, II, p. 383 n. 6623. The inscription on the small anonymous seal reads VN•BRACHET•OV•MOVN•QVER•EST. A 'brachet' is a small hound, frequently turned into a pet dog and owned by ladies, which makes this inscription an interesting puzzle.

<sup>67</sup> This position summed up by P. Gathercole, *Animals in Medieval French Manuscript Illumination* (Lewiston, N.Y., 1995), p. 5.

qualities of the hound that belongs on masculine tombs. The status of the dog on female effigies as a pampered non-functional pet is usually underlined by the addition of a multi-belled collar on the animal.

Furthermore, women's dogs often appear in pairs, which is very rarely seen on male tombs. The artistic convention for such dogs is to depict small round well-fed specimens, with little belled collars. Belled collars are one of the defining iconographic accessories of a pet and distinct from the uncollared or plain-collared hounds of lay men. On the other hand, small dogs wearing collars covered in bells do appear in the effigies of clerics. As with legal seals, the mere presence of pet dogs is not an indicator that the individual question really did keep pets but does point to the social reality of widespread pet keeping by women. I do not deny that the presence of small dogs could have had a symbolic meaning in effigies of women, but for any such metaphor to work, it requires that little round collared dogs are associated with a lady's identity as a person.

In memorial brasses, for example, these little dogs abound, whether it is an individual brass of a lady, such as the brass of Margarete de Camoys (c.1310) from Trotton, Sussex, which has a small dog at her feet, or joint memorial brasses of couples, such that of Richard Torryngton and his wife Margaret (of Great Berkhamsted, Herts., c. 1356)<sup>68</sup>. The brass depicts an alert lion at Richard's feet while Margaret has two self-absorbed belled collared

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<sup>68</sup> H.W. Macklin, *Monumental Brasses: Portfolio plates of the Monumental Brass Society*, (London, 1953) n° 10. Similar individual brass of a lady appear on n°70, depicting Lady Roos, c. 1390, with her small dog and n°72, c. 1390, of an unknown lady from Holme Pierrepont, Norf., with a small dog half hidden in the hem of her gown.

dogs by her feet, one of whom is curled up asleep<sup>69</sup>. Similarly, this situation occurs in the brass of Robert de Freville and his wife Clarice (c. 1400, Little Shelford, Cambs.) in which Robert, dressed in armour, has both feet on top of a large hound. Clarice's feet do not rest on her two little belled dogs, however. They lie down among the folds of her gown, with one looking upwards towards the lady while the other looks down at something in the distance. Unlike Robert's attentive hound, the little dogs of his wife appear easily distracted<sup>70</sup>.

We find the same on monumental tombs. The tomb of Louis II, count of Flanders (Louis de Male, d. 1384) has a lion at the count's feet while little dogs rest by the feet of his wife and daughter, who are on either side of him<sup>71</sup>. The gilt effigy of Mary of Burgundy (d. 1482) in the church of Notre Dame in Bruges has two little dogs at her feet as does the marble effigy of Anne of Burgundy (d. 1432), wife of John Lancaster, Duke of Bedford and Regent of France, formerly in the Celestine Church in Paris<sup>72</sup>. The fifteenth-century

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<sup>69</sup> *Ibid*, n°37.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid*, n°95. Other relevant plates are n°69, Robert Albyn on a lion and wife, Margaret, with small dog, c. 1390; n° 71, a Northampton civilian and wife, he with a hound, she, with two little dogs; n° 74, John Curteys with hound and widow Aubrey with two little dogs, c. 1391; n°78, Thomas de Topclyff, standing on a lion, his wife Mabel with a small dog on her robe, c. 1291; n°79, Thomas, Lord Berkeley, stands on a lion, while his wife Margaret has a small dog on her hem, c. 1392; n°94, a civilian from Tilbrook, Beds., on a hound, with his wife, who has small belled dog on her hem, c. 1400); n°122, Sir Thomas Skelton, on a lion, with his wives Margaret and Katherine, both of whom have small little dogs on the hems of their gowns. From all these examples one can glean that while the artistic convention may be for men to stand on animals, women do not stand on the animals, which are usually sitting down on the hem of the robe.

<sup>71</sup>The joint tomb was formerly in the church of St. Pierre in Lille. There is an engraving in A.L. Millin de Grandmaison, *Antiquités nationales ; ou, recueil de monuments pour servir à l'histoire de l'Empire Français* (Paris, 1790), V, pl. 4. A similar situation occurs in the fourteenth-century marble effigies of Charles V the Wise and his wife, Joanne of Bourbon, in the church of Saint-Denis. Joanne has two alert round-nosed little dogs at her feet.

<sup>72</sup> In A.M. Roberts, 'The Cronology and Political Significance of the Tomb of Mary of Burgundy', *The Art Bulletin*, 71:3 (1989), pp. 376-400 (with plates), esp. p. 377, the author

double tomb, in Norbury Church (Derbs.) of Ralph Fitzherbert (d. 1483) and his wife Margaret, has a lion sitting at Robert's feet, while his wife is accompanied by an extremely petite dog on the side of her tomb, adorned with the *sine qua non* belled collar. Most all the examples cited previously deal with secular men and women but the tombs of clerics use dogs in the same way as the tombs of women. For example, the tomb of William Courteney (Archbishop of Canterbury 1386-1391) in Canterbury Cathedral, depicts a small dog with short round ears wearing multi-belled collar at his feet. As these animals are symbols of identity for the deceased, they are for the main part anonymous, despite resembling their living counterparts, festooned with bells and well fed. A few have names etched on their collars but this is not a common occurrence. The name 'Terri' is etched on the collar of a dog at the foot of Lady Alice Cassy's effigy in Deerhurst church, Gloucestershire, c.1400<sup>73</sup>, while the dogs on the effigy of the Sir Jehan de Seure (d.1391) at Ozouer-le-Repos, Seine et Marne, are identified by names on their collars, 'Parceval' for the hound at Sir Jehan's feet and 'Dyamant' on the collar of his lady's dog<sup>74</sup>.

I have employed a very wide definition of the term 'funeral effigies' when examining my sources, for I find the same situation in other

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notes the resemblance of the dog on the right of the effigy to the small white dog on Mary's lap in the patroness image in her book of hours and speculates that it might even been the same animal. The Hours of Mary of Burgundy is MS Vienna Österreichische Nationalbibliothek 1857, f. 14verso. The manuscript, from Bruges, is dated to c.1467-80 and this illumination is reproduced in G. Dogaer, *Flemish miniature painting in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries* (Amsterdam, 1987), pl. 14. The marble effigy of Anne of Burgundy was part of a wall tomb commissioned by her brother, Phillip the Good of Burgundy in 1435-6 and is now in the Musée du Louvre (originally in the Celestine Church in Paris). See J.C. Smith, 'The Tomb of Anne of Burgundy, Duchess of Bedford, in the Musée du Louvre', *Gesta*, 23:1 (1984), pp. 39-50 (the dogs are visible in figure 1, which is a reproduction of the effigy).

<sup>73</sup> 'On Certain Rare Monumental Effigies', *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Association*, xxv (1902), p. 99. 'Terri' is a shortened form of 'terrier'.

<sup>74</sup> Details of this effigy were supplied by Dr Malcolm Jones of the University of Sheffield.

commemorative objects whose aim is to perpetuate memory as with traditional funerary monuments such as brasses and stone monuments. In the St William window in the north choir transept of York Minster there is a small white dog with a multi-belled collar at the feet of Lady Margaret Roos (d. 1438)<sup>75</sup>. A similar example appears in a series of late-fifteenth memorial Flemish memorial stained glass panels depicting living and deceased members of the House of Burgundy. The first panel is full length image of Mary of Burgundy, who holds in her right arm a small white smooth-haired dog with folded ears. The dog, whose neck is adorned with a wide collar with gold bells, looks out towards the audience, in contrast to Mary's demure gaze<sup>76</sup>. In another medium, a fourteenth-century misericord in Norwich Cathedral depicts a standing couple standing, identified by the coats of arms in the supporters as a Sir William Wingfield of Letheringham (d. 1378) and his wife Margaret Boville. Sir William has a lion at his feet, while a little dog stands at Margaret's feet<sup>77</sup>. In all of these cases the possession of the pet forms part of one's public identity.

#### *The pet as a symbol of love*

Pets also play a part in a lady's emotional identity, in private as well as public spheres. In romance literature the presence of the pet, mainly confined to small dogs, is very much connected to love and emotional attachment. Here

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<sup>75</sup> C. Platt, *Abbeys of Yorkshire*, (London, 1988); cf. C. Reeves, *Pleasures and Pastimes in Medieval England* (Stroud, 1995), p. 126.

<sup>76</sup>The stained glass panel of Mary of Burgundy (d. 1482), c. 1496, is from the Chapel of the Holy Blood, Bruges and is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Inv.no.C. 439-1918). It is reproduced in P. Williamson, *Medieval and Renaissance Stained Glass in the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London, 2003), pl. 57.

<sup>77</sup> C. Grössinger, *The World Upside-Down: English Misericords* (London, 1997), p. 135, pl. 196.

pets often play a role in the affair but never condemn the action of the lovers. In a *bas-de-page* illustration in a late thirteenth-century book of hours from Maestricht, now in the British Library, lovers embrace as a small dog by the lady's feet looks up as both a witness and onlooker<sup>78</sup>. The pet as a symbol of love is a literary meaning attested in romance literature, in which the pet can play various roles, usually aiding and abetting the lovers.

Certain pets, such as squirrels and rabbits are often transformed into a sexual metaphor, standing for the lover and this is emphasized in much of the secular iconography in which a small pet is closely associated with the lady's body, sitting on her lap, clutched close to her chest or slavishly sitting at her feet in adoration. The small dogs portrayed in the late fifteenth-century 'La Dame à la licorne' tapestry series are vivid examples of the type: in particular the tapestry "A mon seul désir" in which a long-haired white dog sits facing the audience on a brocade cushion positioned on a bench next to the lady, and the tapestry "Le Goût" in which a long haired white dog stands on the train of the lady's dress, looking up at her<sup>79</sup>.

A common role, visible in both the iconography and literature of the romance tradition, is when the pet represents the absent lover himself, taking the man's part as a companion and a comfort to the lady in his absence. The pets are usually love-tokens, given by the lover to his lady. The most famous pet exchanged between lovers is the small magical multi-coloured lapdog from Avalon, Petitcreiu, which features in various versions in the romance of

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<sup>78</sup> MS London British Library Stowe 17, f. 29verso. See PLATE 3.

<sup>79</sup> The tapestries are now exhibited in the Musée nationale du Moyen Âge (Cluny) and reproduced in A. Erlande-Brandenburg, *La dame à la licorne*, (Paris, 1978) [without plate numbers].

Tristan. He is given to Isolde by Tristan for comfort in his absence, as the little dog possesses a magical belled collar that banishes sadness<sup>80</sup>. Petitcreiu's role as a replacement for Tristan is clearly stated in Gottfried von Strassburg's version of the romance:

'He [Petitcreiu] never came out her sight, he was always led and carried where she could see him. Nor did she have this done for any relief it might give her. She had it done (so we are told) to renew her tender love-pangs out of affection for Tristan, who had been moved by love to send her Petitcreiu<sup>81</sup>.'

Thus Petitcreiu becomes Isolde's constant companion, and the focus of her emotional attachment to Tristan, which has been transferred to the dog, although Petitcreiu's ability to assuage her sadness is removed when Isolde takes off his magical belled collar, as she would prefer to dwell in unhappiness. Although Petitcreiu is not present in all versions of the Tristan romance, its presence is ubiquitous in the iconography of the pair. A late fourteenth-century Lincoln Cathedral misericord depicts the lovers meeting while on the right supporter, Isolde's waiting woman carries the small dog<sup>82</sup>. Another fourteenth-century misericord from Chester Cathedral shows the lovers

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<sup>80</sup> The episode is described most extensively in Gottfried von Strassburg's thirteenth century 'Tristan'. See the Middle High German original (with a modern German translation) in Gottfried von Strassburg, *Tristan*, vols. 1-3, ed. K. von Rüdiger and F. von Ranke (Stuttgart, 1998), Chapter XXV, lines 15765-16402. An English prose version can be found in A.T. Hatto, ed. & trans., *Tristan/Gottfried von Strassburg*, (1960), p. 249-256. A study of the dogs in the Tristan romance can be found in L. Gnaedinger, *Hiudan und Petitcreiu : Gestalt und Figur des Hundes in der mittelalterlichen Tristandichtung* (Zürich, 1971).

<sup>81</sup> A.T. Hatto, ed. & trans., *Tristan/Gottfried von Strassburg* (1960), p. 256.

<sup>82</sup> This misericord is dated to c. 1370-80 and is reproduced in C. Grössinger, *The World Upside: English Misericords*, (London, 1997), p. 148, pl. 222. Apart from the little dog in the waiting woman's arm, there appears to be another little dog, probably Petitcreiu, between the lovers in the carving, although this is not very clear in photographic reproductions of this misericord.

accompanied by Petitcreiu who stands at Isolde's feet peering into a small pond that separates the pair<sup>83</sup>. The traditional pairing of the lovers with Petitcreiu is repeated in other iconographic mediums. An early fourteenth-century French ivory casket portrays the lovers sitting under a tree with the small dog on Isolde's lap<sup>84</sup>. Petitcreiu's head is pressed against her chest, thus symbolizing the intimacy of the relationship between the lovers. Although Isolde may not always have Tristan, she does have Petitcreiu, who represents him in both his absence and presence. Despite the prevalence of pets as love tokens in romance, there is little evidence for this practice in real life, where pets, if presented as gifts to ladies, came from acceptable males such as relatives, husbands, fathers, vassals and retainers.

Although pets often accompany their lady in the absence of the lover, they need not always be a symbolic replacement of the lover and can also perform their natural role of offering companionship to their sorrowful owner. Such is the dog, described as a 'chiennet', in the fourteenth-century French

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<sup>83</sup> This misericord is dated to c. 1380-90. C. Grössinger, *The World Upside: English Misericords* (London, 1997), p. 149 pl. 223. As is the case with the Lincoln cathedral misericord, the right supporter depicts a waiting women holding a small dog. Grössinger notes these two as the only known surviving Tristan and Isolde misericords in England.

<sup>84</sup> The ivory casket, carved in Paris, is dated to c. 1325-50 and is now in the British Museum (Department of Medieval and Modern Europe 1856,6-23,166, Room 42, Medieval case 6 n°39). This casket is reproduced in P. Barnet, ed., *Images in Ivory: Precious Objects of the Gothic Age* (Princeton, 1997), pp. 245-48, along with a similar ivory casket from the same period depicting the same scene from the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore. R.S. Loomis, *Arthurian Legends in Medieval Art* (New York, 1938) has plates of other ivory carvings of the same scene: pl. 122 (ivory casket, Metropolitan Museum of New York, 1999, almost identical to the British museum casket); plates 123 (Vatican Library) and 124 (Musée de Cluny) are two ivory mirror cases which have Isolde holding Petitcreiu. An ivory hair parter, pl. 125 (Museo Civico, Turin) has the lovers standing with Isolde tucking Petitcreiu under her arm. All these ivories are French, dating from 1325-1340. In amid-thirteenth-century manuscript of the romance, Tristan displays the small dog on a leash (with the written label 'Pitcrei' above the animal), just before presenting it to Isolde: MS Munich Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Cgm 51, f. 82verso. See the facsimile *Tristan und Isolde: Faksimile-Ausgabe des Cgm 51 der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek, München* (Stuttgart, 1979).

romance, *Le Jugement dou Roy de Behaigne*, who stays with its lady in mourning for her dead lover, as one who can share her sorrows. The narrator describes the situation:

‘I saw a lady approaching along a narrow pathway, thick with grass; she was pensive and all alone except for a small dog and a young girl. Yet in her restrained way she seemed overwhelmed with grief’<sup>85</sup>.

Another role that the pet, as a symbol of courtly love, can play is that of a go-between, and aid to the lovers. Animals frequently play this role, such as the message-delivering swan in Marie de France’s lais of *Milun* but pets, due to the fact that they are always in the company of their owners, are perhaps ideally suited to this role<sup>86</sup>. Such is the case of the thirteenth-century *Romance of the Chatelaine of Vergi*, in which the lady signals to her lover that he may visit her whenever she puts her little dog into the garden<sup>87</sup>. For Michael Camille the aim of the dog in this romance is to: ‘disguise or euphemize the sexual act – to

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<sup>85</sup> Lines 43-48 : ‘Je vi venir par une estroite voie, / Plaine d’erbete, / Une dame pensant, toute seulete / Fors d’un chienet et d’une pucelete; / Mais bien sembloit sa maniere simplete / Plaine d’ennoy’. Guillaume Machaut, *Le Jugement dou Roy de Behaigne*, ed. and trans. J. I. Wimsatt and W.W. Kibler, (Athens, Georgia, 1988), pp. 62-3. Cf. J. Block Friedman, ‘The Dreamer, The Whelp, and Consolation in the Book of the Duchess’, *The Chaucer Review*, 3 (1969), p. 147 on the literary topos of the comforting small dog.

<sup>86</sup> For the swan as a go-between the lovers see the lais of ‘*Milun*’ in *The Lais of Marie de France*, ed. and trans. K. Busby and G.S. Burgess (London, 1999), pp. 97-104

<sup>87</sup> The small dog the ‘petit chienet’, appears in the romance in lines 33-5 (Ne se mouverois d’un anglet / De si que un petit chienet / Verroit par le vergier aler;’ [p. 34]; lines 355-8 ‘Lors li a toutes acontees / Ses venues et ses alees, / Et la couvenance premiere, / Et du petit chien la maniere.’ [p. 60]; lines 379-83 ‘Ou li dus ne fu pas grant piece, Quant il vit le chienet sa niece / Qui s’en vint au bout du vergier / Ou il trova le chevalier / Qui grant joie a fet au chienet.’ [pp. 60, 62]; lines 651-654 ‘Comme apris l’ot du chevalier, / Et comment il fu el vergier / En l’anglet ou il n’ot qu’eus deus, / Quant li chienés s’en vint a eus;’ [p. 82]; lines 715-718 ‘- Je l’otri bien, dist la duchesse, / Més vous estes bon mestresse, / Qui avez apris le mestier / Du petit chienet afetier!’ [p. 86]; lines 735-736 ‘Que ma dame m’a fait regret / Que j’ais afetié mon chienet?’ [p. 88]; lines 879-882 ‘Dont ma dame l’ataïna / Et d’un chienet la ramposna, / Dont li corouz li vint morteus’ [p. 100]; lines 908-909 ‘Neïs du chienet afetié / Dont la duchoise avout parlé.’ [p. 102] in *La Châtelaine de Vergi*, ed. J. Dufournet and L. Dulac (Paris, 1994).

keep it a secret'<sup>88</sup>. The pet is really one of the protagonists, for without him the lovers could not go ahead with their plans and through his actions, they are able to meet. Depictions of this particular romance always show the dog as one of the main protagonists, witnessing the lovers' pledge, sitting with his mistress, being put out into the garden, present at the lovers' embrace and at their final discovery. A British Museum fourteenth-century ivory casket is covered with scenes from this romance, and the small dog is visible in practically every scene, from their first meeting to the lovers' tragic end<sup>89</sup>. He is so much a part of the action that even after being put out in the garden to signal the lover's entry, he is immediately present in the next panel when the lovers meet and then embrace, as if the trio are inseparable. The same romance was also a popular subject for metal badges, depicted the lovers and the lady's small dog who is essential for their meeting. Two lead-tin late fourteenth-early fifteenth century examples, both found in the Netherlands, show the lovers committing adultery while being observed by the lady's kinsman behind a tree. In both badges, the little dog stands in the middle, between the protagonists, looking towards the lovers<sup>90</sup>. To conclude, as in depictions of *Tristan*, in the *Chataleine de Vergi*, the pet is so essential for the

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<sup>88</sup> M. Camille, *The Medieval Art of Love: Objects and Subjects of Desire* (New York, 1998), p. 102.

<sup>89</sup> Ivory casket, Paris, c. 1325-50, British Museum Department of Medieval and Modern Europe 1892,0801.47 (Room 42, Medieval case 12 n°3). Another fourteenth-century French ivory casket that depicts the same Romance is in the Metropolitan Museum of New York (n. 17.190.177) in which the dog appears in every panel. Reproduced in P. Barnet, ed., *Images in Ivory: Precious Objects of the Gothic Age* (Princeton, 1997), p. 242-44. See PLATE 4.

<sup>90</sup> Reproduced in J. Holdeweyj, 'The Wearing of Significance Badges, Religious and Secular: The Social Meaning of a Medieval Pattern', *Showing Status: Representations of Social Positions in the Late Middle Ages*, ed., W. Blockmans and A. Janse (Turnhout, 1999), p. 314. Dogs are not an unusual subject for medieval badges, in the same article (p. 309) the author reproduces the image of another lead tin fourteenth-century badge from France in the form of a dog with a decorated collar and with the motto: 'Bien aia qui me porte'.

dénouement of the story that its presence is an essential part of any iconographic depiction of the tale.

However, a pet may act as a less illicit go-between in courtly literature, and its role is not always as an accessory to adultery. A lady's pet, since it is part of the lady's very own identity and persona, could be used to gain a polite introduction, as demonstrated by the narrator in Guillaume Machaut's fourteenth-century *Le Jugement dou Roy de Behaigne* who uses the pet, ignoring its slight hostility, to introduce himself in a non-threatening or incriminating way towards its female owner:

'When I had come so near them that I could see them quite clearly and openly, the little dog, which didn't know me at all, began to yelp. I noticed that the lady, who well understood proper behaviour, was startled and called to it. But the dog paid very little heed to her call; he approached me barking and sunk his teeth into my robe. I grabbed him and, in his fright, he stopped barking. In my heart I was delighted to bring him back to his mistress, for it gave me the opportunity and occasion to go where I wished; therefore I kept stroking his coat<sup>91</sup>.'

Here the dog plays a role in defending and representing his owner: his presence is the polite method in which a man and a woman in the romance can meet. Although the some of the roles of pets in romances is not indicative

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<sup>91</sup> Lines 1202-1218: 'Et quant je ving si prez d'eulz qu'en appert / Les poy veoir et tout a descouvert, / Le petit chien / Prist a glatir, qui ne me cognut rien, / Dont la dame qui moult savoit de bien / En tressailli – je m'en aperçu bien - / Si l'apella. / Mais moult petit prisie son apel a, / Qu'en abaiant le chiennet m'approcha / Tant que ses dens a ma robe acrocha. / Si le happay / Dont il lessa de paour son abay. / Mais en mon cuer forment me deportay, / Pour ce qu'a sa dame le reportay, / Pour avoir voie / Et achoison d'aler ou je vouloie; / Si que son poil toudis applanioye'. Guillaume Machaut, *Le Jugement dou Roy de Behaigne*, ed. and trans. J. I. Wimsatt and W.W. Kibler, (Athens, Georgia, 1988), pp. 120-121.

of their use in real life, in this romance many of the details appear to be courteous methods of dealing with a stranger's unruly pet, from the lady who knows it is rude for one's pet to bark at strangers, to the accepted intimacy one can have with a small pet, which is used to being picked up and stroked.

Finally, it is possible that the pet attempts to hinder the lady's love affair. In Thomas de Saluces's late fourteenth-century *Le Conte des Trois Perroquets*, a lady is watched by her three pet parrots while her husband is away. She meets with her lover and the next day interrogates the parrots. The first two speak of the affair so she kills them with the help of her maid, planning on blaming their deaths on her cat. The third parrot, deciding that discretion is the better part of valour, keeps quiet and the husband on his return learns of nothing<sup>92</sup>.

In conclusion, whether in public or private representations of personal identity, or as part of one's persona in a romance, the pet is an essential part of a lady's identity, it goes everywhere with her, in life and death, in fiction and real life.

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<sup>92</sup> The text of this tale is printed in E. Gorra, 'La novella della dama e dei tre papagalli', *Romania*, 32 (1892), pp. 71-78 (see also *Romania*, 26, pp. 565-569 and 29, pp 109-112). Literary antecedents and discussion can be found in L.W. Yoder, 'The Late Medieval Tale: The Example of "La Dame e les trois papegaulz"', *The French Review*, 53:4 (1980), pp. 543-549.

## II Status, Conspicuous Consumption, and the Practicalities of Pet Keeping

### *Introduction*

The medieval pet was often symbolic of the possession of luxurious worldly goods, and the manner in which they were kept frequently demonstrates a desire on the part of their owners to emphasise their elevated position in society and show off their material assets. Despite such connotations, care should be taken not to give a purely economic explanation for the association between pet-keeping and the upper classes, nor generalize pet-keeping to merely an extravagance for those who have fulfilled all of their basic needs<sup>93</sup>.

Nevertheless, it is clear that in the Middle Ages one of the purposes of the pet was as a symbol of wealth that could be easily displayed in various ways. Firstly, the owner could purchase an expensive pet, as would be the case of imported apes, exotic birds such as parrots and certain breeds of dogs. Even if one had not expended considerable sums in purchasing the pet, an owner could still exhibit affluence by the mere exhibition of an animal which would be recognized by many as an expensive and non-functional companion of the rich and noble. Even a pet costing a small sum in monetary terms, at least in comparison to the sums expended for horses, hunting hounds, falcons and

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<sup>93</sup> J.A. Serpell in his book *In the Company of Animals* (Oxford, 1986), Part II, Chapter 4 ('Pets in Tribal Societies') discusses several cases of pet keeping by societies living at a subsistence level and concludes that 'the existence of pet-keeping among so-called 'primitive' peoples poses a problem for those who choose to believe that such behaviour is the product of Western wealth, decadence and bourgeois sentimentality' (p. 53). An intriguing factor in the pet keeping by societies discussed by Serpell that parallels much of my research is that women are often the main pet keepers, apart from certain males who occupy specific positions in the tribal society, such as the shamans of the Barasana Indians of Eastern Colombia.

exotic menagerie beasts, could allow the owner to boast of material affluence. This could be important to many female and clerical pet keepers who did not receive their income directly but via intermediaries.

The following sections will examine the practicalities of medieval pet keeping, particularly in regard to obtaining a pet, feeding it and purchasing extraneous accessories as a mark of status and wealth<sup>94</sup>.

#### *Obtaining a pet: breeding and purchase*

There were various methods by which medieval people could obtain a pet. The most common methods would be breeding one's own, purchasing, or receiving a pet as a gift<sup>95</sup>. Although there are few direct sources on breeding pets from one's own animals, because the practice was informal, cases do appear in the sources, of requests for animals belonging to others for breeding purposes. A letter in the Gonzaga archive from Mantua contains a request for the return of a cat that had been taken away from the tenant's house in Castelgoffredo to be sent to the Mantuan court and bred with a cat belonging to Isabella de Este, Marquise of Mantua. The writer wished it to be returned as soon as possible, perhaps fearing that the Marquise would take a liking to the cat and keep it, as the lady owned several cats, including many exotic ones

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<sup>94</sup> Often these practicalities have a status aspect. Although not everything is about status: all pets need to be fed and this issue could only be connected in any way to the issue of status if the animal was receiving expensive foodstuffs.

<sup>95</sup> There are a few stories of pet theft, seen in an exemplum in which a cleric taught a dog to walk on its fore-legs. Another clerk stole the dog, renamed it, and taught it to walk on its hind-legs. Both clerics claimed the dog before the Bishop of Paris who awarded it to the thief because it obeyed him rather than its rightful owner. MS London British Library Add. 18351, f.13recto col. 2. Cf. F.C. Tubach *Index Exemplorum: A handbook of medieval religious tales*, (Helsinki, 1969) and J.A. Herbert, *Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Library*, vol. III (London, 1910), p. 416 n<sup>o</sup>11. This manuscript dates from the fourteenth century although the story exists in thirteenth century exempla compilations.

imported from Damascus<sup>96</sup>. However it is probably safe to assume that animals were exchanged regularly between owners for breeding without such problems or the need for formal written requests.

The second method by which one could obtain a pet was by direct purchase. Similarly however, given the definition of a pet as a non-functional animal, it is possible that many pets did not cost a great deal in monetary terms and did not appear in accounts. The accounts for 1265 of Eleanor de Montfort, Countess of Leicester, detail the purchase and feeding of many animals, from horses to hounds, but there are only two entries that likely refer to her pet purchases<sup>97</sup>. The first was the purchase of a cat in February of 1265, while at Odiham. The entry appears in the same line along with the purchase of milk for her pet chamber dogs. A second entry details payment for another cat in July in the same year in Dover. This cat was also destined for her private quarters ('ad cameram') and probably kept as a pet, although no doubt both cats also fulfilled a mouse-catching function. This last entry also refers to 'small things' ('minutis') for the Countess's chamber, which may be a reference to small animals, possibly birds.

For those living in urban areas, purchase of pets was likely an easier undertaking, particularly in large urban areas where there might be specialist

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<sup>96</sup> Further details on pets kept by Isabella d'Este appear Chapter Four: Pet Keeping at Court. The letter in question is by Iacobo Antonio Stella from the village of Castelgoffredo, dated the ninth of February, 1519 [Mantua, ASMN, AG, b. 2498, n° 236]. The first few lines explain the owner's predicament: 'Illustrissima et Excellentissima Madamma & Signora mia colendissima, hora quattro giorni per el magnifico Domino Antonio de bologna mi fu richiesto el gatto mio per unirlo cum la gatta di Vostra Excellencia ...'

<sup>97</sup>MS London British Library Add. 8877. The Roll of the Countess of Leicester is edited in T.H. Turner, ed., *Manners and household expenses of England in the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries* (London, 1841). The relevant entries are on p. 8 'Pro uno murilego, et lacte ad canes, per Petrum de Camera, ii.d.' (Feb. 1265) ODIHAM' and p. 57: 'Pro murilego et minutis, ad cameram vij.d.' [July 1265] DOVORIA'

pet sellers, although the only clear reference I can find for such a practice occurs in Paris, where from the twelfth or thirteenth century a 'guild' of bird sellers was centered in front of the portal of Saint Geneviève la Petite. The first mention of Parisian bird-sellers appears in the thirteenth-century dictionary of Jean de Garlande, who wrote of tradesmen near Notre-Dame selling both edible birds to city residents and caged birds such as nightingales, parrots, sparrows and starlings<sup>98</sup>.

By 1292 there were five master bird sellers in Paris and in the city tax records there are entries in 1292 and 1313 for those 'qui fait cages', indicating a specialization of craftsmen to make cages for pet birds<sup>99</sup>. But the most common method to obtain a pet found in the sources is by receiving one as a gift.

### *Gift-giving*

The exchange of pets among the wealthy was defined by gender and status conventions. Women could give and receive pets from other women. Depending on the status of the recipient, the pet could be an expensive import.

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<sup>98</sup> M.A. Scheler, ed., *Lexicographie latine du xiii<sup>e</sup> et du xiiii<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Leipzig, 1867), p. 35 n°70: 'In platea nova ante paravisium Dominae Nostrae aves reperiuntur vendendae scilicet : anseres, galli, gallinae, anates, perdices, phasiani, alaudae, passerres, pluviarii, ardei, grues et cigni et pavones et turtures et sturdi.', n°71: 'Auceps insidiatur avibus in nemore, quo capiuntur : fenix et aquila et aucipiter, falco, capus, nisus et erodius, merulus et merula, sturdus, maviscus, sithacus et filomena, lucinia. Et milvium et cornicem, corvum et bubonem et vespertilionem et nicticoracem et pelicanum capere dedignature'. Since Jean de Garlande's work is lexicographical in nature, he mentions practically every Latin term for a species of bird, not just the species sold in Paris. A poem written in 1325 speaks of Parisian bird sellers, H. Bordier, ed., *Les églises et monastères de Paris* (Paris 1856). Cf. A. Franklin, *La Vie Privée d'Autrefois: arts et métiers modes, mœurs, usages des parisiens du xii au xviii siècle d'après des documents originaux ou inédits* (Paris, 1897), vol. 20, p. 223-4.

<sup>99</sup> Tax records for cage makers and bird sellers appear in the *Livre de la Taille de 1292* (Paris, 1837), p. 526, cf. A. Franklin, *La Vie Privée d'Autrefois*, vol. 20, p. 225-6. V. Gay, *Glossaire Archéologique du Moyen Âge et de la Renaissance* (Paris, 1882), vol. I, p. 247 gives various Old French names for bird cages such as cagette, gayolle, geôle, gloriette, etc.

The accounts of Queen Eleanor of Castile, Edward I's queen, record that the Princess of Salerno had sent a gift of parrots in June 1289 and later entries record the upkeep of these birds<sup>100</sup>. Similarly Henry IV's queen, Joan of Navarre, sent in 1419 a 'papegeay' (parrot) to her daughter-in-law, the Duchess of Brittany<sup>101</sup>. Clearly the choice of parrots as a gift was not accidental as parrots were expensive exotica and thus the gift of such an animal reflected the high status of both parties.

Women could receive a pet from an acceptable male, such as husband, father or relative. Additionally, royal women could receive gifts of pets from other rulers or subjects. Four little monkeys were given to the Isabeau of Bavaria, Queen of France, in 1413 by the Duke of Burgundy<sup>102</sup>. The same queen would be given a kitten by a group of children in 1416, possibly at a public event<sup>103</sup>. Marie de Cleves, mother of Louis XII, received three little dogs from a Sir Jean Remon in 1475<sup>104</sup>. Similarly in England, Elizabeth of York received a parrot from a William ap Howell in 1502<sup>105</sup>. All of these examples demonstrate that giving pet animals to noble women was a common and

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<sup>100</sup> Kew National Archives E 101/352/13 m. Cited in J.C. Parsons, ed., *The Court and Household of Eleanor of Castile in 1290: an edition of British Library Additional Manuscript 35294* (Toronto, 1977), p. 112 n<sup>o</sup>172. A payment was made to the servants entrusted to care for these parrots: 'Eodem die ibidem garcioni qui custodivit papengays de dono Regine pro Roba sua cariagium xxij', *ibid*, p. 112 line 20 (11r).

<sup>101</sup> T. Rymer, *Foedera*, vol. IV (The Hague, 1739-45), p. 53. Cf. A.R. Meyers, *The Captivity of a Royal Witch: The Household Accounts of Queen Joan of Navarre, 1419-21*, (Manchester, 1940).

<sup>102</sup> G.L.E. Du Fresne de Beaucourt, *Histoire de Charles VII* (Paris, 1881), vol. I, p. 13. Cf. A. Franklin, *La Vie Privée d'Autrefois*, vol. 20, p. 324, footnote 1.

<sup>103</sup> A. Vallet de Viriville, *Histoire de Charles VII* (Paris, 1862-5), vol. III, p. 277. Cf. A. Franklin, *La Vie Privée d'Autrefois*, vol. 20, pp. 324-5.

<sup>104</sup> M.A.R. de Maulde la Clavière, *Jeanne de France, Duchesse d'Orléans et de Berry* (Paris, 1883), p. 7. Cf. A. Franklin, *La Vie Privée d'Autrefois*, vol. 24, chap. 1, p. 37.

<sup>105</sup> 'Item the same day to a servaunt of William ap Howell for bringing of a popyngay to the Quene to Windesore xij s. iij s' [9<sup>th</sup> of July 1502], N.H. Nicholas, *Privy purse expenses of Elizabeth of York* (London, 1830).

socially acceptable practice, and this ties very closely into the issue of the pet as part of a women's identity, discussed at the beginning of this chapter. If pets are associated so closely with a noble women's lifestyle, it would make sense that they would be viewed as perfect gifts, which would be appreciated by the recipients.

Conversely, if a woman gave a secular man an animal it had to be one of the approved 'manly' animals. We find in the accounts of Queen Eleanor of Castile, mentioned above, that she could receive parrots from the Princess of Salerno, but had to give seventeen stag-hounds to the King of France in 1290<sup>106</sup>. Married men of whatever status could not give any animal regarded as a pet to another secular man. The gift had to be one that reflected the 'right' animal for their gender, such as exotic animals symbolic of princely power to be kept in a menagerie or 'exterior' animals destined for the hunt, such as hounds, falconry birds and horses, preferably destriers<sup>107</sup>. When Floris V, count of Holland, wished to send in 1290 a suitable present across the Channel to Edward I, it is not by chance that he sent a very fine falcon along with his keeper of falcons, as this gift would represent all the noble virtues of loyalty and fierceness<sup>108</sup>.

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<sup>106</sup> Regarding the gift of seventeen dogs for stag hunting by the queen to the King of France, her accounts mention the expenses of the dogs' caretakers: 'xxx<sup>o</sup> die ibidem cuidam garcioni eunti cum canibus quos Regina misit Regi Francie de dono Regine pro Roba sua'. J.C. Parsons, ed., *The Court and Household of Eleanor of Castille in 1290: an edition of British Library Additional Manuscript 35294* (Toronto, 1977), p. 114 line 25.

<sup>107</sup> Notable royal menagerie animals in England include the elephant sent to Henry III in 1254 from Louis IX of France, chronicled and illustrated by Matthew Paris in his *Chronica Majora*, MS Cambridge Corpus Christi College 16, f. 4r, and kept in the royal menagerie in the Tower of London. By the mid-thirteenth century this collection included leopards, lions and a polar bear sent by the Norwegian king Håkon IV. On medieval menageries throughout Europe, see G. Loisel, *Histoire des menageries: de l'antiquité à nos jours* (Paris, 1912).

<sup>108</sup> This gift of a falcon ('ostoir') appears in a letter between the two rulers: 'A trehaut prence et tre noble, a mon chier segnor E. le Roy Dengleterre, Florens cuens de Hollande

There was more leeway for clerics, who could receive pets from a variety of personages, from other clerics, supplicants and parishioners, along with giving pets to other clerics and 'suitable' animals to secular married men. The fourteenth-century English Dominican John Bromyard preached extensively on the high clergy who adored gifts of pets and were pleased when people brought them dogs, birds, fruits and other rich gifts instead of their souls<sup>109</sup>. Although some clerics did hunt, despite the practice being technically forbidden, a great number, especially from the higher orders, kept pets such as small dogs and monkeys, so a gift of such animals would not have gone amiss.

#### *Feeding of pets*

The pet's diet indicated symbolically that, like its owner, it merited a higher quality of life than most. Pets were fed a variety of food, often of the best quality which most people could never access, such as meat, high quality bread, milk (a drink reserved usually only for children), and even imported foodstuffs. Naturally feeding differed depending on the species of pet. Monkeys were usually fed a variety of foodstuffs, in particular nuts. A late

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son cors et quant quil puet a son service tout dis aparellies a tous ces commandemens et a tous ces plaisers. Treschier sire, je vous envoie un ostoir des miendres de mon pais par Williame mon vallet ki warde mes ostouirs, et se vous voleis nule chose ke je puisse faire, tredous sire, si le me faichies asavoir, et je le ferai molt volentiers et nostre sires vos war et en arms et en cors', Kew National Archives, S.C. 1/18, no. 118, in M. Vale, *The Princely Court: medieval courts and culture in North-West Europe, 1270-1380* (Oxford, 2001), Appendix IX, p. 371.

<sup>109</sup> See the entry 'Custodia' in John Bromyard's *Summa Predicantium* (Venice, 1586), p. 170recto 'Ita canes, et falcones, et divites xenia, et fructus afferentes, custodiunt, et pauperes non afferentes, nisi animas, non diligunt'. Cf. in G.R. Owst, *Literature and pulpit in medieval England: a neglected chapter in the history of English letters & of the English people*, (Cambridge, 1933), p. 264. More details on Bromyard's criticisms of pet keeping and his particular abhorrence of lap dogs can be found in Chapter Two: Space, Tolerance and Criticism.

thirteenth-century chronicler recounted how Robert, bishop of Durham (1274-83), kept two spoiled pet monkeys that were fed peeled almonds from a silver spoon. Despite almonds being an expensive imported foodstuff the chronicler merely states that the practice of keeping pet monkeys is customary among high prelates without any censure<sup>110</sup>. The residence and upkeep of pet birds in cages fed with luxury items was described by Geoffrey Chaucer in *The Squire's Tale*:

And strawe hir cage faire and softe as silk

And yeve hem sugre, hony, breed and milk,<sup>111</sup>

The poet John Skelton, in his satirical poem, 'Speak Parrot' describes the exotic bird, 'Daintily dieted with divers delicate spice' being fed import foodstuffs ('Then Parrot must have an almond or date') and kept in an ornate cage with a mirror to keep it amused:

'A cage curiously carven, with a silver pin,

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<sup>110</sup> Richard of Durham's (1201-1297) *The Lanercost Chronicle*, trans., Sir H Maxwell, (Llanerch, 2001), p. 37 on Robert Coquina, Bishop of Durham: 'We have seen this man about whose funeral we are now speaking, in life bountiful enough and merry, also quite facetious enough at table. It occurred to me once to extract a meaning from his sport, by way of example. For instance, he kept in his court, after the custom of modern prelates, as some relief from their cares, a couple of monkeys – an old and a young one. One day at the end of dinner, desiring to be refreshed by amusement rather than by good, [the bishop] caused a silver spoon with whitened almonds to be placed in the enclosure of the younger monkey, the bigger one being kept away [from it]. She [the little monkey], seeing the coveted food, and wishing to avoid being despoiled by the bigger one, made every endeavour to stuff all the contents of the spoon into her left cheek, which she managed to do. Then, just as she thought to escape with the spoil, the older monkey was released, and ran to her, seized the right cheek of the loudly screaming little one, drew out all that was stuffed into the left cheek, as if out of a little bag, and refreshed itself, until not a single [almond] was left. Everybody who saw this burst out laughing but I perceived there an image of the covetous of this world, calling to mind that proverb of Solomon in the twenty-second [chapter]: 'He that oppreseth the poor to increase his riches, shall himself give to a richer man and come to want.'; cf. A. Gransden, *Historical Writing in England 550-1307*, (Ithaca, N.Y., 1974), p. 499.

<sup>111</sup> Lines 613-614, Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales* in *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. L. D. Benson, (Oxford, 1988), p. 176.

Properly painted, to be my coverture;

A mirror of glasse, that I may toot therein'<sup>112</sup>

For pet dogs the staples were bread, often of a fine quality, and milk, occasionally with meat. In the *General Prologue* to Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, Madame Eglentyne, the prioress, is described:

'Of smale houndes hadde she that she fedde

With rosted flesh, or milk and wastel-breed,'<sup>113</sup>

Wastel-bread was one the finest breads available and roasted meat technically was forbidden in the Benedictine Rule, although it is not clear whether the Prioress was feeding her dogs from her table or having food especially prepared for them<sup>114</sup>. These lines have attracted literary critical comment on the implied criticism, as she should care more for the poor than the cares of her spoiled lapdogs, and on the contrast with the pious character of the Second Nun in *The Canterbury Tales*, who does not even own pets, let alone feed them with luxury food<sup>115</sup>.

Household accounts are a useful source, although it is rare to find separate entries for pet food. One such example appears in the accounts of

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<sup>112</sup> The entire text of 'Speak Parrot' appears in *The Complete Poems of John Skelton*, ed. P. Henderson (London, 1948), pp. 288-307. The lines quoted are on p. 288. More on the parrot's diet of imported spices and nuts appear on p. 294: ' Now a nutmeg, a nutmeg, *cum garyophyllo*, / For Parrot to pick up, his braine for to stable, / Sweet cinnamon-stickes and *pleris cum musco!*'.

<sup>113</sup> *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. L. D. Benson, (Oxford, 1988), p. 25, lines 146-147.

<sup>114</sup> Wastel-bread was made of very fine flour and had to be baked in a very hot oven, C.M. Woolgar, *The Great Household in Late Medieval England*, (London, 1999), p. 123.

<sup>115</sup> See J.M. Steadman, 'The Prioress' Dogs and Benedictine Discipline', *Modern Philology*, 54:1, pp. 1-6; R. Rex, *"The Sins of Madame Eglentyne" and other essays on Chaucer*, (London, 1995), pp. 95-169; H.A. Kelly, 'A Neo-Revisionist Looks at Chaucer's Nuns', *The Chaucer Review*, 31: 2 (1996), p. 121; M.L. Dutton 'Chaucer's two nuns' in P. Thompson, ed., *Monasteries and Society in Medieval Britain* (Stamford, 1999) pp. 296-311, esp. p. 298.

John de Multom of Frampton, Lincolnshire, which specifically detail the purchase of bread for 'my lady's dog'<sup>116</sup>. Another possible case occurs in the account for the household of Katherine of Norwich, which has various entries for ferret eggs<sup>117</sup>. Although ferrets were not a common pet, they could be treated as one, kept indoors and accomplish the same function as a cat, offering companionship and rodent-catching. It can be assumed that pet dogs, apart from table scraps, ate much of the food labelled under the general entry 'panes pro canibus'. Bread was the staple, normally made from wheat although other grains could be used<sup>118</sup>. Porridge was also fed to dogs, usually made from oats, bran or barley, often with the addition of peas<sup>119</sup>.

Food for other pets, especially small birds, rarely appears in the accounts, possibly due to the small quantities purchased. The papal accounts for Pope Urban V (1362-1370) mention the specific purchase of bird seed for a parrot by the papal apothecary<sup>120</sup>. There are also general entries for bird seed, all purchased by the apothecary. Bird seed purchased in this manner was very likely destined for pet birds, as birds destined for consumption were

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<sup>116</sup> Magdalen College Oxford Estate Paper 85/2 (Sept 1347-March 1348). The entry is 'Et paie pur I scheine a ma dame pur lez levereres v \ d. /' and is printed in C.M. Woolgar, *Household Accounts from Medieval England* (Oxford, 1992), vol I, p. 240.

<sup>117</sup> The entry is 'ova pro foretto', for September 1336 to September 1337, in MS London British Library Add. Roll 63207 and printed in C.M. Woolgar, *Household Accounts from Medieval England*, vol I, pp. 183 and 186-187.

<sup>118</sup> Examples of the common entry of 'pane pro canibus' can be found in C.M. Woolgar, *Household Accounts from Medieval England*, vol I, pp. 175-7, pp. 264-8, etc. For an entry on bread made from barley destined for the dogs, see C.M. Woolgar, *Household Accounts from Medieval England*, vol. II, p. 526

<sup>119</sup> C.M. Woolgar, *Household Accounts from Medieval England*, vol. I, p. 153 (bran mash), vol. II, pp. 490 and 493-4 (oats) 500, 526, 532 (barley and peas), etc.

<sup>120</sup> Ivan Polancec informed me of the entry concerning payment for the parrot's bird seed by Agapitus Melior, the papal apothecary, on the 30th of April 1364 'Pro 2 libri granorum pro papagallo' in Rome Archivio Segreto Vaticano, I.E. 302, f. 34recto. For a discussion on the parrots of another pope, see H. Dienen, "Die Carera papagalli' im Palast des Papstes", *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, 40 (1967) on parrots as familiars of John XXII.

purchased whole and not fed in the papal court itself<sup>121</sup>. The fact that the bird seed was being purchased by the apothecary, and not by a member of the kitchen staff, is another indicator that the seed was destined for kept birds. Even in comparison to the feeding of other domestic animals, pets were usually fed apart and given a superior quality of food. In Bishop Mitford's household, his dogs, which appear in his accounts from 1406-7, were given at least two loaves of bread per day and often more. These dogs were distinct from his hunting dogs, which were kept and fed outside<sup>122</sup>. The previously mentioned accounts of Eleanor de Montfort in 1265 include entries for her chamberlain purchasing milk for the dogs that lived in her chamber, which the household's hunting dogs that were kennelled outside would not have received, although all of the dogs ate bread<sup>123</sup>.

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<sup>121</sup> K.H. Schäfer, ed., *Vatikanische Quellen zur Geschichte der Päpstlichen Hof- und Finanzverwaltung 1316-1378* (Rome, 1937), vol. VI (Urban V, Sept. 28 1362-Dec. 19 1370). The relevant entries are p. 48 ,1362 a.d. (I.E. 300 f. 146) Agapitus Meliorini, apothecarius pape, Juni 30...4 lb. granorum pro ave 4s. ...'; p. 83 ,1364 (I.E. 305 f. 145verso) Aug. 31 factio computo cum Iohanne Mercerii Ruthen. Dioc., habitatore Auin., recepto pro apothecario pape, pro speciebus, papiro, cera rubea, grana pro avibus, tela incerata et medicinis pro usu hospitii pape a 8. – 31. Aug. : 68 fl. 18s. 6d.'; p. 129 1364 (I.E. 317 f. 115), Aug. 31. computavit Iohannes Mercerii, apothecarius pape....pro 14 lb. grani pro avibus (je 15d.) 15s. 6d. ....pro rebus medicinalibus pro papa 15 l. 16s. 6d. ....' Apart from other entries regarding a parrot, the remaining entries in Urban V's accounts regarding animals refer to those destined for the kitchen (including rabbits and peacocks) and exotic animals such as lions kept in the papal menagerie. There is one entry for the purchase of dogs but it more likely that these animals were destined for guard duty, the entry is on p. 188 '(I.E. 324 f. 44) 1367 ...pro 1 cane 1 fl., pro I bracha sive mastina'.

<sup>122</sup> C.M. Woolgar, *Household Accounts from medieval England*, vol. I, pp. 264-404, 416-17.

<sup>123</sup> MS London British Library Add. 8877, edited in T.H. Turner, ed., *Manners and household expenses of England in the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries* (London, 1841), p. 8 Pro uno murilego, et lacte ad canes, per Petrum de Camera, ii.d.' (Feb. 1265) (ODIHAM). General mention of bread for all the household dogs or for the hunting dogs of her sons appear elsewhere such as on p. 15 'Item vj. bus frumenti de stauro, pro canibus.' (March 1265) (WALINGFORDE); p. 27 'Pro canibus Domini Henrici de Monteforti et Domini Guidonis, per ix. Dies præcedentes; Panis, iiij. quart., pro xlvj. canibus.' [April 1265] ODIHAM; p. 29 'Panis pro canibus, per x. dies, iij. quart. [May 1265] ODIHAM. Cf. M.W. Labarge, *A Baronial*

Although all animals need food, pets were prone to being overfed, perhaps due to excessive emotional attachment towards an animal which was the owner's constant companion or as a desire to demonstrate ostentatiously that they could afford to lavish so much fare on an animal that served no purpose other than to amuse and provide companionship. The rich diet that some pets received could cause grave consequences to their health. The thirteenth-century scholar Albertus Magnus, in his encyclopaedic *De animalibus* which covered the entire animal kingdom, discussed the diseases of all dogs and commented on the consequences of the unhealthy, overly rich diet of pet dogs, specially those that belonged to ladies, as it appears that the later were most prone to spoiling their pets who were then afflicted with gastric complaint:

'This is seen most often in the ladies' small dogs which almost always die of constipation. Let them be given oatmeal that has been steeped in warm water to the consistency of thick porridge. Or else let them be fed with leavened soft bread and let them be given a little milk whey and they will become loosened and become swift and whole<sup>124</sup>.

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*Household of the Thirteenth Century* (London 1965), Chapter 10, 'The Amusements of a Baronial Household'.

<sup>124</sup> Albertus Magnus, *De animalibus*, vol. II, (Münster, 1916-20) lib. xxii, tract. 2 cap. 1 : 'Et hoc saepius videtur in catellis dominarum qui fere omnes ex ventris constipatione moriuntur. Detur ergo eis pasta avenatia distemperata cum aqua calida ad modum spissae pultis, vel cibentur pane avenate molli fermentato : et detur aliquando serum lactis, et liberantur et veloces ferunt et sani'. The translation in the text comes from Albertus Magnus, *De animalibus*, Book 22, Chapter 34, ed. and trans. K.F. Kitchell, Jr. and I.M. Resnick, vol. II (Baltimore, 1999), p. 1463, which adds as a footnote, n<sup>o</sup>113 'Oats would provide high dietary fiber and bulk in the dog's system.'

The stereotypical pet in literature, particularly in sermons, was often fat and spoiled. The fourteenth-century Dominican preacher John Bromyard, along with taking pet owners to task, anthropomorphised the pet into the type of uncaring and uncharitable aristocrat who takes the best of everything and leaves nothing for the poor:

‘The wealthy provide for their dogs more readily than for the poor, more abundantly and more delicately too; so that, where the poor are so famished that they would greedily devour bran-bread, dogs are squeamish at the sight of wafer-bread, and spurn what is offered to them, trampling it under their feet. They must be offered the daintiest flesh, the firsting and choicest produce of every dish. If glutted, they refuse it, then, as though they were infirm, there is a wailing over them’<sup>125</sup>.

Here the pet appears as a callous beast that is overfed and demands only the best of food, even refusing what it considers inferior. There is also a criticism directed at overly emotional owners, who care only about their fat pet’s wellbeing.

Even a concerned father, Geoffroy de la Tour-Landry, in his late fourteenth century manual of instruction, warned his daughters by example of a lady who overfed her dogs with meat and milk and neglected the poor, and was thereby divinely punished by the appearance of two black small demonic dogs on her death bed (the author then compares the unchristian behaviour of

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<sup>125</sup> See the entry ‘Servire’ in John Bromyard’s *Summa Predicantium* (Venice, 1586), p. 362, cf. G. Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England*, (Cambridge, 1933), p. 327. I quote from G. Owst’s translation. Bromyard mentions pets frequently in his sermons but his criticism is not directed at the keeping of pets *per se*, rather at the ostentatious care lavished on them rather than the more needy.

this lady with Blanche of Castile and other noble ladies who gave extensive charity):

'There was a lady that had two little dogs and she loved them so much that she took great pleasure in seeing and feeding of hem. Every day she made dishes of milk sop for them and then gave the little dogs meat. A friar told her that it was not good that the dogs were fed like that and made so fat while poor people were so lean and hungry. The lady was angry at the friar for these words and would not amend her behaviour. When she was dying, there was an amazing sight, for two little black dogs were seen on her bed and as she was dying they licked her mouth, so that by the time she had died, her mouth was as black as coal<sup>126</sup>.

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<sup>126</sup> *Le Livre du Chevalier de la Tour Landry pour l'enseignement de ses filles*, ed. M.A. de Montaiglon (Paris, 1854), pp. 44-46 : 'De celle qui donnoit la char aux chiens. Chappitre XX. Je vous parleray de celle qui donnoit la chair et les bons morseaulx à ses petiz chiens. Une dame estoit qui avoit deux petits chiens. Si les avoit sy chiers qu'elle y prenoit moult grant plaisance et leur faisoit faire leur escuieille de soupes, et puis leur donnoit de la char. Sy y ot une fois un frère mendiant qui lui dist que ce n'estoit pas bien fait que les chiens fussent gros et gras là où les povres de Dieu estoient povres et maigres de faing. Su lui en sceut moult mal gré la dame, et pour ce ne se voult chastier. Sy advint que la dame acoucha aut lit malade de la mort, et y avint telles merveilles que l'en vit tout appertement sur son lit deux petiz chiens noius, et quant elle transit, ilz estoient entour sa bouche et lui lechoient le bec, et, quand elle fut transie, l'on lui vit la bouche toute noire, que ilz avoient lechée, comme charbons, dont je l'ouy compter à une demoiselle qui disoit qu'elle l'avoit veue, et me nomma la dame. Pourquoi a cy bonne exemple à toute bonne dame comment elle ne doit point avoir si grant plaisance en telle chose, ne donner char aux chiens ne les lescheries, dont les povres de Dieu meurent de faing là hors, qui sont creatures de Dieu et fais à sa semblance, et sont ses serfz et ses sergens, et cestes femmes ont pou ouy la parolle que Dieu dist en la sainte euvangille, que qui fait bien à son povre il le faist à luy meismes. Cestes femmes ne ressemblent pas à la bonne royne Blanche, qui fut mère saint Loys, qui ne prenoit point desplaisir ains faisoit donner la viande de devant elle aux plus mesaisié. Et après, saint Loys, sons filz, le faisoit ainsy; car il visitoit les povres et petiz enfanze par pitié, et les nourrir et les vestir comme faisoit la sainte dame qui estoit comtesse du Mans, laquelle nourrissoit bien xxx orphelins, et disoit que c'estoit son esbat, et pour ce fut amie de Dieu, et ot bonne vie et bonne fin, et vit l'en plus grant clarté et planté de petiz enfanz en sa mort; ce ne furent pas les petiz chiens que l'on vit à la mort de l'autre, comme ouy avez.' I have based my translation on the early fifteenth English translation in MS London British Library Harley 1764 and printed in T. Wright, ed., *The Book of the Knight of La Tour-Landry* (London, 1906), pp. 28-9.

Here it is not the feeding nor the affection towards the pet *per se* that was such an object of criticism, rather the excessive feeding and the neglect of one's duty to care for the poor, who are Christian souls while the pet dogs are just animals. Pet owners used the very diet of their animals as an exhibition of their own personal wealth. They ignored warnings of the evils of overfeeding their pets from academic authorities and numerous preachers. However, most of the criticism against fat pets comes from preachers so it is not clear whether overfed pets were the acceptable norm or if such invective against fat pets was merely part and parcel of a preacher's rhetoric against the rich ignoring the poor<sup>127</sup>. Iconography of small dogs often depict them as well-fed specimens without any apparent criticism, although a miniature in a British Library Book of Hours does reflect on the perils of small dogs eating excessively, with a *bas-de-page* miniature in the Hours of the Dead, depicting a fat pet dog eating a bone following by a depiction of a skull and bone, both a reflection for the female owner of this manuscript for herself and her pets<sup>128</sup>.

### *Animal Accessories*

The final item regarding the upkeep of pets that deserves some attention is the use of accessories. An animal could be transformed into a pampered animal of exalted status even if the species chosen as a pet had little intrinsic monetary value in itself, by adorning the animal with elaborate

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<sup>127</sup> For example, part of a thirteenth-century sermon by the Dominican preacher Etienne de Bourbon speaks of a spoilt fat dog whose health improved once its owner realized the folly of overfeeding the animal. See A. Lecoy de La Marche, ed., *Anecdotes historiques, legendes et apologues tires du recueil inédit d'Etienne de Bourbon, Dominicain du XIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1877), n. 191 (from MS Paris Bibliothèque Nationale 15970).

<sup>128</sup> MS London British Library Add. 36684, f.88v. See PLATE 6.

accessories. Such is the case of the squirrel, a popular medieval pet, which is almost always described and depicted as being fitted with a collar and chain, usually finely crafted of silver. This practice can be viewed in the early fourteenth century Luttrell Psalter, in which a lady plays with a squirrel that wears a belled collar while on another folio a lady stands in a coach with a chained and collared squirrel on her shoulder<sup>129</sup>. A portrait by Hans Holbein the Younger, in the National Gallery, London, 'Lady with pet squirrel and starling'<sup>130</sup> shows that the practice of keeping pet squirrels on chains was still prevalent in the sixteenth century,- as observed in a dialogue in John Lyly's play *Endymion*:

Tophas: 'What is that the gentlewoman carrieth in a chain?

Epiton: 'Why, it is squirrel.

Tophas: A squirrel? O gods, what things are made for money!<sup>131</sup>'.

Even specialized accessories were purchased for birds. The aforementioned papal accounts for Urban V give expenses for the cages for parrots and other birds kept at his court and an iron stick which conventional wisdom recommended for training parrots<sup>132</sup>.

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<sup>129</sup> MS London British Library Add. 42130, f. 33r and f.181v, reproduced in J. Backhouse, *The Luttrell Psalter*, (London, 1989), pp. 49 and 60 respectively. For f.181v, see PLATE 9.

<sup>130</sup> The squirrel in this portrait has been viewed by some art historians as possible symbol of the Lovell family, which had squirrels on their coat of arms. Nevertheless, the practice of keeping pet squirrels on chains was well-established. The painting is dated to c. 1527.

<sup>131</sup> John Lyly, *Endymion* (1588), ed. D. Bevington, (Manchester, 1996), Act II, Scene II, lines 147-150.

<sup>132</sup> K.H. Schäfer, ed., *Vatikanische quellen zur Geschichte der Päpstlichen Hof-und Finanzverwaltung 1316-1378* (Rome, 1937) vol. VI (Urban V, Sept. 28 1362-Dec. 19 1370) p. ? (I.E. 335 f. 49v) 1370 Sept. 28 pro 30 brassis de corda prima fina pro ligando tristegam papaguay et pro cortinis dd. camrarii et thesaurarii 15 s. in 7 gr. 12 d.; p. 297(I.E. 335 f. 65v) 1370 Nov. 21 ....pro 1 strumento de ferro facto ad curandum tristegnas avium, 1 gross. 12 d. .... The belief in the use of a little iron bar to discipline parrots dates back from Classical Antiquity, and is mentioned in Albertus Magnus *De animalibus*, Book 23 vol. II, p. 1647 (edited by K.F. Kitchell and I.M. Resnick, Baltimore and London, 1999).

Fine and expensive accessories were a defining characteristic of medieval pets, regardless of the initial monetary value of the latter. While dogs for hunting and guarding were allotted sturdy functional collars, pets tended to wear rather flimsy affairs, made of fine leather, adorned with a multitude of bells, often manufactured of precious substances such as gold or silver. These jewelled collars are a symbol of status and appear in public representations of their owners, such as a stained glass window depicting Mary of Burgundy in which Mary of Burgundy stands with her small short-haired dog tucked under her right arm<sup>133</sup>. The dog's neck is adorned with a large ornate collar with hefty silver bells. Collars with bells are one of the clear signifiers of pets. Although they often can appear with just plain collars or even without collars, a collar with bells is a sign of a household animal, as the tinkling bells would be an obvious disadvantage for any dog taken out to hunt. Ladies could keep their pet dogs on leashes, a sign that the animal is connected to its owner and not used for any functional purpose. In a British Library psalter a lady holds three different coloured dogs on leashes in one hand<sup>134</sup>. Ornate collars were not restricted to dogs. A green parrot in an English bestiary now in Copenhagen sports a collar with golden bells<sup>135</sup>. Pets were given fine cushions to sit on or their owners would order the construction of elaborate private living quarters such as specially made

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<sup>133</sup> The stained glass panel of Mary of Burgundy, c. 1496, from the Chapel of the Holy Blood, Bruges and is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Inv.no.C. 439-1918). It is reproduced in P. Williamson, *Medieval and Renaissance Stained Glass in the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London, 2003), pl. 57.

<sup>134</sup>MS London British Library Add. 24686, f. 13r.

<sup>135</sup>MS Copenhagen Kongelige Bibliotek Gl. kgl. S. 1633 4<sup>o</sup>, f. 33v. The manuscript is available online via the Kongelige Bibliotek's website.

baskets, kennels, squirrel hutches and birdcages. An elaborate kennel is described in the romance of Tristan:

‘Queen Isolde had made a delightful little kennel of gold and precious stones, such as one might dream of. Inside they spread a rich brocade for him to lie on. In this way, Petitcreiu was under Isolde’s observation, day and night, public and in private’<sup>136</sup>.

This description adheres to the conventions of romance literature and it is doubtful whether such ‘jewelled’ kennels were in use in daily life, nevertheless, the use of brocade cushions for pets is well attested in iconography and literature. A fine example of a carefully constructed squirrel hutch can be seen in an initial D of the Sherborne Missal in the British Library in which St Baltildis, in the regalia of a queen, stands by a nut-eating squirrel who is outside its hutch<sup>137</sup>.

At the highest level, these ornate pet collars display status through precious metals and stones. Among the items belonging to the royal couple listed in an inventory at the death of the French king, Charles V in 1380 are several small pet accessories such as a silver collar with bells specifically ‘pour un petit chien’ and a very small ‘collier à chienet’ made with blue cloth adorned with golden fleur de lys with three little golden bells and secured by a gold buckle<sup>138</sup>.

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<sup>136</sup> A.T. Hatto, ed. & trans., *Tristan/Gottfried von Strassburg*, (1960), p. 256.

<sup>137</sup> MS London British Library Add. 74236, p. 412. The manuscript is dated to c.1400. This folio is available online via the British Library’s website.

<sup>138</sup> J. Labarte, ed., *Inventaire du mobilier de Charles V* (Paris, 1879). The items quoted here are : n°1900 ‘Item, ung autre collier d’argent, à sonnettes pour un petit chien’(p. 217) and n°2797 ‘Item, ung très petit collier à chienet, sur ung tissu ynde, ferré à petiz lys d’or, troys clochettes, mordant et boucle d’or; pesant unze estellins’ (p. 297). There are other ornate canine items listed in the inventory, but they likely belonged to hunting dogs. They are

Similarly, a later Queen of France, Isabeau of Bavaria, spent extensively on such accessories. In 1387 she commissioned a collar embroidered with pearls fastened by a gold buckle for her pet squirrel<sup>139</sup>. There were various expenses for her birds, such as green cloth parrot cage covers in 1387 and 1392<sup>140</sup> and silver cage was made in 1402 for her birds<sup>141</sup>. Bright green cloth was not used just for her parrots, her cat had a special cover made from a similar material in 1406<sup>142</sup> The same kind of bright green fabric that made the cage cover for a singing bird owned by a later Queen of France, Anne of Brittany<sup>143</sup>, in 1492, although doubtless she had several cages judging from

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'Item, treize colliers tant à levriers comme à autres chiens, garniz d'argent, tants blancs comme dorez' (p. 216 n°1884), 'Item, ung collier d'un levrier, que monseigneur de Berry donna à la royne Jehanne de Bourbon, garny d'argent, à cynes' (p. 217 n° 1899), 'Item, ung bastonnet petit d'ybenus, garny d'argent, à faire ung couple à chiens' (p. 217 n°1901), 'Item, ung fouet de cristal garny d'argent' (p. 218 n°1905), 'Item, ung colier à chien, d'un veluiaiu bleu, ferré d'argent, dont la longe est de mesmes' (p. 219 n°1924), 'Item, ung fouet d'yvire à troys cordes de soye, à deux boutons d'or' (p. 242 n°2211), 'Item, ung colier à levrier, garny d'or à cloz, et a en chascun clou une fleur de lys entaillée; pesant, à tout le tissu, six onces et demye' (p. 243 n°2221), 'Item, ung fouet d'yvire, à troys pommeaux d'or, esmaillez des armes de la royne Jehanne de Bourbon, à quatre chayènes d'or' (p. 258 n°2390) and 'Item, ung fouet dont le manche est d'or, à troys pommeaux garniz de pierrerie, et au bout dudit manche a ung gros saphir carré, e fait, ledit manche, cadran, et a, en la chassouère, huit boutons à dix-huit perles grosses; pesant deux marcs une once deux estellins maille' (p. 298 n°2814).cf. A. Franklin, *La vie privée d'autrefois* (Paris, 1897) vol. 20, pp. 290-3

<sup>139</sup> V. Gay, *Glossaire archéologique du moyen age et de la renaissance* (Paris, 1882-1928), vol. I, p. 607 '1387 – Pour avoir fait et forgié une petit blouque et un mordant d'or, iceulx esmaillez à K et E, mis et assis en un petit collier brodé de perles, pour l'escureul de madame la royne, 26 s. p. '..... (Compte royal de Guill. Brunel, f° 65verso). Cf. A. Franklin, *La vie privée d'autrefois*, vol. 20, p. 324.

<sup>140</sup> '1387 : Pour quatre aulnes de drap vert, achatté le 21<sup>e</sup> jour de janvier. C'est assavoir, deux aulnes pour faire malettes à mettre et poser les robes de la royne, et deux aulnes pour couvrir la cage au papegay d'icelle dame.' and '1392 : Pour deux aulnes de drap vert de Rouen, pour couvrir la cage du papegaut de ladite dame', A. Franklin, *La Vie Privée d'Autrefois*, vol. 20, p. 325.

<sup>141</sup> 1402 : A Jehan Clerbourt, orfèvre, pour avoir fait pour la royne une caige d'argent à emittre oyseaulx', A. Franklin, *La Vie Privée d'Autrefois*, vol. 20, p. 325.

<sup>142</sup> V. Gay, *Glossaire archéologique du moyen age*, vol. I, p. 324 '1406, - Pour une aulne de vert gay pour faire un couverteoir pour la chatte de la royne 16 s.' (*Argenterie de la reine, 4<sup>e</sup> cpte de J. Leblanc*, f. 141v).

<sup>143</sup> A.J.V. Le Roux de Lincy, *Vie de la Reine Anne de Bretagne* (Paris, 1860), vol. IV [Appendice II – *Extraits des Comptes et des Inventaires*] p. 55 '8. Aud. Jean Georget, pour ung tiers drap

payments for birds in her accounts<sup>144</sup>. She also commissioned velvet collars<sup>145</sup> for both her greyhounds that did not live with her but were housed elsewhere<sup>146</sup>, and for her 'petits chiens de sa chambre', which lived consistently with her, although naturally their feeding and general care was entrusted to someone else<sup>147</sup>. Although cloth collars with bells and occasionally metal ones appear in the iconography, very ornate and jeweled collars might not have been used for everyday wear due to their weight and impracticability. Despite her fondness for ordering such accessories, in a miniature of Isabeau of Bavaria in a British Library manuscript containing the works of Christine de Pisan, her alert little white dog is collarless as he sits

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vert gay acheté de luy le x<sup>e</sup> jour de juillet & livré à Jehan Chaussey, pour couvrir la caige d'une petite linocte chantant en la chambre de lad. dame; au feur de 35 s. t. l'aulne, valent 11 l. 8. s. t.' (*Argent. de la Reine, Fragm. de 1492, Arch. Impér.*)

<sup>144</sup> A.J.V. Le Roux de Lincy, *Vie de la Reine Anne de Bretagne*, [Appendice II – *Extraits des Comptes et des Inventaires*] p. 57 '9. A Loys des Sauvaiges, du pays de Languedoc, la somme de dix livres tournoys, à lui pareillement ordonnée par icelle dame, pour luy ayder à foy en retourner en sa maison, dont il estoit venu apporter plusieurs petiz oiseaulx estranges à voler & prendre mouches, pour le plaisir de la. dame; laquelle somme de dix livres luy a esté payée, baillée & delivrée par ced. tresorier comptant, par l'ordonnance & commandement de lad. dame, le seziesme jour dudit mois de decembre oudit an, comme il appert par la quittance dudit Loys des Sauvaiges cy rendue; pour cecy par vertu d'icelle & du roolle cy dessus rendu, &c. 10'' t. (*Argent. de la Reine, An. 1502-3, Arch. Impér.; Reg. KK, f<sup>o</sup>33recto*).

<sup>145</sup> A.J.V. Le Roux de Lincy, *Vie de la Reine Anne de Bretagne*, [Appendice II – *Extraits des Comptes et des Inventaires*] p. 55 '1. A Guillaume Mantour, tant pour sa façon d'avoir le 11<sup>e</sup> jour du mois de janvier fait d'aune veloux noir deux douzaines de colliers, pour servir tant aux levriers de lad. dame qu'aux petits chiens de sa chambre, que pour les avoir couverts chascun de quatre hernieres & quatre boullons, & de boucles & mordans de laton doré de fin or, au feur de 12 s. 6 d. t. piece, valent l. t. à luy payées comme il appert.' (*Arg. De la Reine, Frag. De 1493; Arch. Imp.*).

<sup>146</sup> See items 2,3, 6 & 7 in A.J.V. Le Roux de Lincy, *Vie de la Reine Anne de Bretagne*, vol. IV [Appendice II – *Extraits des Comptes et des Inventaires*] for expenses relating to the care of her greyhounds, usually housed on her Breton estates.

<sup>147</sup> Le Roux de Lincy, *Vie de la Reine Anne de Bretagne*, [Appendice II – *Extraits des Comptes et des Inventaires*] p. 55 '4. A Thomas Jarnigon, garde des petiz chiens de ladicte dame, la somme de vingt cinq livres tournois que ladicte dame lui a aussi ordonnée pour les causes dessus dictes. Laquelle somme...&c. – Juillet, août, septembre' (*Reg. De Nantes, An. 1498, f<sup>o</sup> 27recto*).

besides her in her bedroom<sup>148</sup>. Possibly the more ornate collars were used in public setting only when a clear indication of status and wealth was required. Thus the pet turns into an ostentatious ‘consumer’ of wealth through its owner, not only by its purchase but also by its upkeep, which involved fine feeding, expensive accessories and living arrangements.

#### *The pet and status in nunneries*

Although most of the details discussed above concern the care of pets and demonstration of social status in secular spaces, pets could also be an issue of status in religious houses, particularly in the case of secular women lodging in nunneries, many of whom would disturb the house with their pets<sup>149</sup>. The flaunting of pets, like dress, was a sign of their secular lifestyle. This made a clear statement to the nuns, who were not supposed to keep pets and therefore quite powerless against a secular woman parading her pets, a practice which they were supposed to do as unobtrusively as possible. This is exemplified by the complaints of the Prioress of Langley in 1440 regarding a Lady Audley who occupied a set of rooms within the priory of Langley: ‘Lady Audley, who is boarding here, has a great many dogs, so many that when she comes to church, her twelve dogs follow, who make great noise in church, stopping the nuns in their psalms, and by this, the nuns are terrified’<sup>150</sup>. In a

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<sup>148</sup> MS London British Library Harley 4431 f. 3. This illumination is available online via the British Library’s website.

<sup>149</sup> Pets in religious space are discussed more thoroughly in the second chapter which deals with issues of space and tolerance.

<sup>150</sup> ‘Item dicit quod domina de Audeley ibidem perhendinans habet magnam multitudinem canum, in tantum quod cum venerit ad ecclesiam sequuntur eam xij canes qui faciunt magnum strepitum in ecclesia, impediendo psallentes, et moniales ex hoc redduntur attonite’ recorded by William Alnwick, Bishop of Lincoln on visiting Langley on the 20<sup>th</sup> of January 1440. The bishop knew that any injunction that he issued would not be applicable to Lady Audeley, as she was not a nun, so declared: ‘Fiat monicio directa commisario ad

similar vein, at Legbourne in 1440, Dame Joan Pavy complained that a Margaret Ingoldesby 'a secular woman, sleeps at night in the nuns' dormitory, brings along her birds, whose chirping breaks the silence and the nuns' sleep is disturbed'<sup>151</sup>.

Although it was technically forbidden, many women in positions of power in religious orders, such as abbesses and prioresses, believed it was their right to keep a pet even if the other sisters could not. When Archbishop Eudes Rigaud of Rheims in 1268 told an ex-prioress at Villarceux (Villarciaus) to remove a bird whose squawking disturbed some of the older nuns, she replied, to quote the archbishop, in a manner 'which greatly displeased us'. Evidently the ex-prioress, Eustachia, had tolerated no complaints about her noisy bird during her tenure<sup>152</sup>. Similarly, many an abbess or prioress would display an exotic and expensive animal while those below them would have to be content with mere dogs and cats. The abbess Marie de Bretagne of Fontevrault had a parrot listed among an inventory of goods made at her death in 1477<sup>153</sup>.

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monendum dominam de Audeley de amouendo canes ab ecclesia et choro' ('Let an admonition be made to the commissary to warn Lady Audeley to remove her dogs from the church and quire'). A.H. Thompson, ed., *Visitations of religious houses in the Diocese of Lincoln*, II (London, 1929), pp. 175-6.

<sup>151</sup> 'Domina Johanna Pavy...Item dicit quod Margareta, mulier secularis, iacet de nocte in dormitorio inter moniales, adducens secum volucres, per quorum strepitum silencium rumpitur et quies monialium turbatur', recorded by William Alnwick, Bishop of Lincoln on visiting Langley on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July, 1440. A.H. Thompson, ed., *Visitations of religious houses in the Diocese of Lincoln*, II, p. 185.

<sup>152</sup> 'Eustachia, quondam prioressa, avem quamdam habebat, quam tenebat in nocumentum et displicenciam quarumdam monialum antiquarum, propter quod eam precepimus amoveri, et ipsa, propter hoc, nobis minus discrete et reverenter locuta fuit, quod nobis multum displicuit, Th. Bonnis, ed., *Regestrum Visitationum Archiepiscopi Rothomagensis* (Rouen, 1852) p. 602.

<sup>153</sup> 'Item VIII serviecttes en une aultre piece, led. linge estant en ung coffre de cuir bouilly, en la chambre ou est la papegault', A Jubien, *L'abbesse Marie de Bretagne et la r forme de l'ordre de Fontevrault* (Angers-Paris, 1872), p. 156.

*Pets as a status symbol for the clergy*

This study is concerned only with 'normal' clerics, so I will not be analysing the numerous medieval tales of saints and the wild animals they miraculously tame, which is an attribute of saintliness, rather than an indication of a desire to turn wild animals into companions<sup>154</sup>. The only notable exception to this general rule is mythical: it appears in the *First Vita of St Brendan* in which St. Brendan encounters an aggressive giant sea-cat (*muriceps*) whose origin as a small pet cat is explained by the surviving monk on the island: 'We came in a boat with our very friendly cat who grew very large from eating fish, but Jesus Christ, our Lord, has never allowed it to harm us'<sup>155</sup>.

The clergy, both secular and monastic were not immune from using pets as a status symbol, for display and companionship. Ostentatious exhibition was the order of the day for many clerics who owned monkeys, an expensive and imported pet, as Hugh St Victor complained in a sermon in the

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<sup>154</sup> On saints and wild animals, for early Christian saints see M.A. Tilly, 'Martyrs, Monks, Insects, and Animals' in *The Medieval World of Nature: a book of essays*, ed., J.E. Salisbury, (New York, 1993), pp. 93-107. For a collection of pre-Franciscan saints see H. Waddell, *Beasts and Saints* (London, 1953). For later medieval saints see P. Bognioni, 'Il Santo e Gli Animali nell'alto medioevo' in *L'Uomo di fronte al mondo naturale nell'alto Medioevo*, vol. II (Spoleto, 1985), pp. 936-993 and D.H Farmer, *St Hugh of Lincoln* (Oxford, 1985) for details of St Hugh's pet swan.

<sup>155</sup> 'Nobiscum in naui duximus vnum catum nobis ualde amabilem, qui creuit multum deuoratis piscibus, ut dictum est; sed Dominus nostri Iesus Christus non permisit eum nocere nobis', C. Plummer, ed., *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae* (Oxford, 1910), p. 138. Medieval Irish monks had great fondness for cats, attested most famously by the poem 'Pangur Ban' written by an unknown eighth-century Irish monk in Carinthia on the margin of his copy of St Paul's Epistles, extolling his playful white cat, R. Flowers, trans. 'Pangur Ban', E. Hull, ed., *The Poem Book of the Gael* (London, 1912). For a general survey on this phenomenon see F. McCormick, 'The domesticated cat in early Christian and medieval Ireland', *Keimelia: studies in medieval archaeology and history in memory of Tom Delaney*, ed. P.F. Wallace (Galway, 1988), pp. 218-28.

early twelfth century: 'Even though the ape is a most vile, filthy, and detestable animal, the clerics like to keep it in their houses and to display it in their windows, so as to impress the passing rabble with the glory of their possessions'<sup>156</sup>. The previously mentioned spoiled almond-fed monkeys of Robert Coquina, Bishop of Durham would fit such a mould here as well<sup>157</sup>.

These characteristics were especially prevalent in the upper reaches of the clergy. The early Franciscan chronicler Salimbene de Adam quotes his contemporary Brother Hugh rebuking cardinals: 'The whole day long you spend in your chambers idly, lazing about slothfully. You take delight only in little lap dogs and rings and sleek horses and yours kinsmen', thus compounding the vices of slothfulness along with pet keeping<sup>158</sup>. Such a situation was illustrated by Lorenzo Lotto (1520) in his drawing 'Prelate in his Study' in which a young cardinal sits in an elaborately furnished room, surrounded by antiques and books, while a tiny dog sits on a cushion on a small table near the cardinal's chair<sup>159</sup>. The fourteenth century preacher John

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<sup>156</sup> '[Simiam] que licet vilissimum et turpissimum et horrendum sit animal, tamen heu! maxime clerici in suis domibus hanc habere et in suis fenestris ponere solent, ut, apud stultos qui pertranseunt, per ejus aspectum gloriam suarum divitiarum jactitent', L. Bourgain, *La chaire française au xii siècle d'après les manuscrits* (Paris, 1879) p. 12, footnote n<sup>o</sup>4 from an unpublished sermon (MS Paris Bibliothèque Nationale Lat. 14934, f. 82). I have used the translation in H.W. Janson, *Apes and Ape Lore in the Middle Ages and Renaissance* (London, 1952), p. 30.

<sup>157</sup> Richard of Durham's (1201-1297) *The Lanercost Chronicle*, trans. Sir H Maxwell, (Llanerch, 2001), p. 37.

<sup>158</sup> *The chronicle of Salimbene de Adam*, ed. L. Baird, G. Baglini and J. R. Kane (Binghamton, N.Y., 1986). For the Latin text see 'Cronica Fratris Salimbene de Adam', ed. I. Holder-Egger, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores*, vol. xxxii (Hannover, 1826), p. 304d under the chapter heading 'Quod frater Hugo cardinales durissime increpavit apud Lugdanum Gallie civitatem' in which 'Postmodum tota die estis ociosi in cameris vestris et marcetis ignavia et delectami cum caniculis et anulis et nepotibus vestris et equis quadratis'.

<sup>159</sup> London British Museum Department of Prints and Drawings n<sup>o</sup>1951-2-8-34, c. 1510-30. See PLATE 7. Another portrait by Lorenzo Lotto, 'Cardinal Pompeo Collona', shows a cardinal by a table with his hand on a small white dog who sits on the table.

Bromyard accused priests of loving their dogs more than their parishioners, adding more fuel to the fire that pet keeping distracted the clergy from their true obligations<sup>160</sup>.

### *Conclusion*

To conclude, although pets were kept for affection and companionship, they were also connected to status. Pets are identity markers for women and clerics, since so many of them owned pets. Thus in iconographic and literary representations, a pet is a normal accessory, and is as much a part of the owner's identity as the wearing of fine clothes. Since the pet is part of a lady's identity, the companion animal is always on the scene, providing comfort and affection, as portrayed in many literary sources. Pets are treated markedly different from other animals; they often eat special food, are adorned with expensive accessories and kept inside. The stereotypical medieval pet is often overweight, a subtle sign of status in itself, as the owner affectionately lavishes excessive food on a beast that fulfils no useful function and only serves to amuse. The possession of a pet often demonstrates a desire on the part of their owners to emphasise their elevated position in society and show off their material assets. This was not restricted merely to lay women, as the display of status through pet ownership occurs in clerics, particularly members of the higher clergy, and with nuns. It should be said that there are considerably more sources that deal with women's pets than those that refer to clerics. There are many possible explanations for this, although I believe

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<sup>160</sup> See the entry 'Custodia' in John Bromyard's *Summa Predicantium* (Venice, 1586). Cf. G.R. Owst, *Literature and pulpit in medieval England: a neglected chapter in the history of English letters & of the English people*, (Cambridge, 1933), p. 264.

that it may be a question of acceptability, in which pets were seen as suitable companion for women, while the situation is less clear for clerics <sup>161</sup> . Nevertheless, it is clear that pets were part of their owners' everyday life, forming part of their identity, used to display status and lavished with care and affection. Other aspects connected to living with pets will be examined in the next chapter, which deals with issues of pets in public, private and institutional space and questions of tolerance and acceptance of pet-keeping.

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<sup>161</sup> This phenomenon will be examined in detail in the next chapter, when I discuss criticism and tolerance of pet keeping by women and clerics.

## **Chapter Two: Space, Tolerance and Criticism**

### **I. Pets in Secular Space**

#### *Introduction*

Medieval pets resided in enclosed domestic space, which was their true milieu. The medieval pet differed from other animals on which care was lavished, such as fine horses, hunting hounds and hawks, all of whom would require specialized attention by trained caretakers and reside in purpose built accommodation (stables, kennels or mews). The animals of secular medieval men were mostly kept outside, in separate accommodation from their owners, and expected to work and live outside. Pets on the other hand, rarely ventured outside and if they did, it would often be under supervision. The medieval pet, like its owners, did not belong to the 'outside' world which was the provenance of secular married men. Both women and clerics were excluded from the 'outdoors', and were expected to inhabit a nominal 'enclosed' space. By the concept of 'outdoors' I refer to a lifestyle rather than to a spatial context in a literal sense. An 'outdoors' lifestyle was one of fighting, farming and hunting. It was a life in which theoretically women and clerics should not participate. While many clerics, such as bishops, travelling papal legates, wandering friars and students participated in a spatial exterior, they were not expected to live an 'outdoors' lifestyle. Similarly, although some clerics disregarded the canonical prohibition on hunting, the very existence of a prohibition emphasizes hunting as part of an 'outdoors' lifestyle which they

should not share<sup>162</sup>. Although many secular women did hunt, they were limited in this respect, often being allowed to hunt only with certain birds such the small sparrow hawk and normally hunted under close supervision. The conspicuous difference in size between the animals belonging to secular men and those of women and clerics is another indicator of the different spheres of action of both the owner and the pet<sup>163</sup>. The diminutive size of such animals would exclude most functions other than companion, although certain species, such as cats, performed other roles such as ridding the household of vermin.

#### *Pets in interior domestic space*

Unlike other animals, pets were given a free rein in domestic space, accompanying their owners in all aspects of their life, playing either with them or with other pets. Exterior animals were occasionally allowed to mix with pets inside the household space on special occasions, such as feasts, although this was not without tensions as a *bas-de-page* miniature in an early fourteenth-century book of hours from Artois, now in the British Library, illustrates: a large lean hunting hound bites the back of the small fat little dog who in turn nips the hound on the nose<sup>164</sup>. Dogs and cats are very visible in iconography of feasts and other portrayals of domestic interiors which

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<sup>162</sup> Canon 15 of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) forbade hunting and the keeping of hounds and hawks to all clerics: 'Venationem et aucupationem universis clericis interdicimus, unde nec canes nec aves ad aucupandum habere praesumant', N.P. Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the ecumenical councils* (London, 1990) vol. I, p. 243.

<sup>163</sup> Hunting dogs were available in a variety of sizes in accordance with their assigned role during a hunt. For a description of some of the different hunting breeds, see Gaston Phebus' fourteenth-century *Livre de Chasse*, ed., G. Tilander (Karlshamm, 1971).

<sup>164</sup> MS London British Library Add. 36684, f. 79 verso.

appears to reflect their place in such spaces. The animals are usually quite petite specimens, which makes it likely that they were pets, even aside from other contextual evidence. A common motif is the dog and cat fight or hostile exchanged glances between the pair, who are ignored by the humans in the scene. This motif is frequently found in images of the Annunciation or the Last Supper, in which the animals play no textual role but instead underline the domesticity of the scene. In a miniature of the 'Annunciation' in the early fifteenth-century London Hours, a tabby cat fights a small smooth-haired dog, who wears a collar covered in bells. The pair tussle in the middle of a tiled floor in between the Virgin Mary and the Archangel Gabriel, but are not themselves relevant to the scene from the Gospels<sup>165</sup>. Animals can also appear individually at such a scene. In an early sixteenth-century 'Annunciation' by Lorenzo Lotto an alarmed tabby cat runs away from the Archangel Gabriel and towards Mary, as if the domestic animal perceives the presence of the angel in the room<sup>166</sup>. In Cosimo Rosselli's fresco of the Last Supper (1484), in the Sistine Chapel in Rome, a small dog and slightly larger cat snarl at each other in the central foreground, in front of the table, while on the far left a very small collared white dog stands on two legs in front of two men<sup>167</sup>. By contrast, in Pietro Lorenzetti's Last Supper in the Basilica of St Francis in Assisi, the two animals studiously ignore each other: the cat sitting by the fire as the small dog licks a plate of leftovers on the ground<sup>168</sup>. The distinction

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<sup>165</sup> MS London British Library Add. 29433, f. 20recto. See PLATE 8.

<sup>166</sup> The painting is in Santa Maria sopra Mercanti, Recanati. The image is reproduced in J. Bonnet, *Lorenzo Lotto* (Paris, 1996), p. 111.

<sup>167</sup> F. Zeri, *La Pittura in Italia: Il Quattrocento* (Milan, 1997), vol. II, p. 430 n°605.

<sup>168</sup> The cat and dog are a small detail of the fresco, c. 1320, in the San Francesco Basilica. The image is reproduced in C. Frugoni, *Pietro and Ambrogio Lorenzetti* (Milan, 1993). Another

between a pet and other domestic animals is underlined in a fourteenth-century fresco of the Wedding at Cana in the baptistery of Padua cathedral. Here two hounds gnaw bones next to the servants while a small long haired grey dog sits on the high dais next to Jesus, a reflection of its elevated status<sup>169</sup>. Pets are visible in more private dining scenes as well, in an illumination in an early sixteenth-century breviary, a well-fed grey cat pounces on a mouse in front of a small dining table on which a couple are dining<sup>170</sup>.

Despite the widespread practice of having animals in close contact with diners, by the fifteenth century many courtesy manuals claimed it was not genteel for animals to roam around the dining hall or sit on the table, fed by hand or patted by owners. This applied both to exterior animals occasionally allowed in the hall and to pets, the animals that concern us here. Books of courtesy take this practice to task:

‘Yf thy nown dogge thou scrape or clawe  
That is holden a vyse emong men knawe.’  
‘Where-sere thou sitt at mete in borde,  
Avoide the cat at on bare worde,  
For yf thou stroke cat other dogge,

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notable images of animals present in the Last Supper are Stefano d’Antonio Vanni’s fresco in Sant’Andrea in Cercina, c. 1434 which depicts three grey cats in the foreground; Jaime Huguet’s painting, c. 1450-60, in the Museu Nacional d’Art de Catalunya (Barcelona), with a single cat under a bench; Domenico Ghirlandaio’s fresco in Museo di San Marco, Florence, c. 1482 (lone cat in foreground): all are reproduced in *Ultima Cena* (London, 2005), pp. 62-3, 75, 84-5 respectively.

<sup>169</sup> The fresco is by Giusto de’Menabuoi and reproduced in *Padua: baptistery of the cathedral* (Padua, 1994).

<sup>170</sup> The miniature is in the Breviary of Ercole I d’Este (1502-4) in MS Modena Biblioteca Estense Lat. 424 (V.G.11), f.1recto. The image is reproduced in G. Malacarne, *Sulla Mensa del Principe: Alimentazione e banchetti alla Corte dei Gonzaga* (Modena, 2000), p. 51.

Thou art lyke an ape teyge with a clogge<sup>171</sup>

Pets abounded in both public and private interior spaces, from courtyards and halls to private chambers; their presence is taken for granted. In the early fifteenth-century Bedford Hours, in an illumination depicting the legend of the Fleur de Lys, a small brown long haired collared dog stands at the feet of court ladies, looking up at the king dressed in armour<sup>172</sup>. Similarly, in another illuminated fifteenth-century manuscript, a round, long-haired dog with a curled tail follows the trains of the court ladies as the legendary King Henry of England bids farewell to his wife Helen (a slightly large hound type dog is also present at the scene)<sup>173</sup>.

Pets appear in more intimate domestic spaces as well, in Lorenzo Lotto's early sixteenth-century painting of 'Husband and Wife' a fashionably dressed couple sit in a luxurious room, with fine surroundings (an imported carpet lies on table). The man points to a tame squirrel on the table as the lady holds a white long haired dog, with a short snout and collar, in her left arm<sup>174</sup>.

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<sup>171</sup>*The Boke of Curtasye*, lines 87-88 and 105-107, in F.J. Furnivall, ed., *Early English Meals and Manners* (London, 1868). See M.W. Labarge, *A Baronial household of the thirteenth century* (London, 1965), pp 183-4 and T. McLean, *The English at Play in the Middle Ages* (Windsor Forest, 1983), p. 139.

<sup>172</sup>MS London British Library Add. 18850, f. 288verso.

<sup>173</sup>MS Brussels Bibliotheque Royale 9967, f. 39recto. Reproduced in G. Dogaer, *Flemish Miniature Painting in the 15th and 16th centuries* (Amsterdam, 1987).

<sup>174</sup>The finished oil painting, dated to 1523, is currently in the Hermitage, St Petersburg. The image is reproduced in J. Bonnet, *Lorenzo Lotto* (Paris, 1996), p. 75. As the man is holding a piece of paper with the inscription 'Homo numquam' ('man never') as he points to the squirrel, Bonnet interprets the squirrel as an animal that chases the female away when food is scarce 'according to a medieval legend' and thus is in direct contrast to the sentiments displayed by the man's parchment. In the preparatory sketch by Lotto for the portrait, in pen and ink (now in the Rijksmuseum, the Netherlands) it is not clear whether the artist intended there to be squirrel or another little dog on the table. The preliminary sketch is reproduced in P. Humfrey, *Lorenzo Lotto* (New Haven and London, 1997), p. 72. The preparatory sketch by Lotto for the portrait, in pen and ink, is in the Rijksmuseum (The Netherlands).

In the background of a top-left corner roundel in Hieronymus Bosch's oil panel 'The Seven Deadly Sins', a dying man in bed is attended by priests and other religious figures, while two women sit at a table, with a grey cat by their feet<sup>175</sup>. In a miniature in a book of hours from either Bruges or Ghent, a man warms himself by the fire, a woman sets the table and in front of the table a well-fed grey cat stares at the cosy scene<sup>176</sup>. The pets in these images are not the focus of the compositions, but they are accepted and common companions in the domestic spaces which they inhabit.

Pets had free access to sleeping quarters, the most intimate physical space as a mark of their status as favoured animals<sup>177</sup>. In a misericord in Seville Cathedral (1464-74) a kneeling woman pats a small dog in a decorated room<sup>178</sup>. In Lorenzo Lotto's early sixteenth-century drawing 'An Ecclesiastic in his Study', the prelate sits by his desk. In front of the desk is a smaller bench on which a very small collared dog, his presence taken for granted, sits on a plump cushion with his head turned towards the young cleric<sup>179</sup>.

Pets resided in private chambers at ease, either at the foot of the bed, the main item of furniture, or on the bed itself. In Vittore Carpaccio's 'Dream of Saint Ursula' (1495) a small short-haired dog with a collar lies at foot of St

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<sup>175</sup>Now in the Prado, Madrid. Reproduced in M. Bussagli, *Bosch* (London, 1967).

<sup>176</sup>The illumination is in MS London British Library Add. 35313, f. 1 verso. The manuscript from the South Netherlands is dated to c. 1500 and is illustrated by Gerard Horenbout. See PLATE 10.

<sup>177</sup>This is a situation which also concerned fifteenth-century courtesy books. Huge Rhode's *Book of Nurture*, suggests that on preparing a chamber one must 'auoyde the dogs, and shutte the doors' and similarly John Russell's *Boke of Nurture* requests that one 'dryve out dogge and catte, or els geue them a clovt'. F.J. Furnivall, ed., *Early English Meals and Manners* (London, 1868).

<sup>178</sup>E.C. Block, *Corpus of medieval misericordss: Iberia* (Turnhout, 2004).

<sup>179</sup>London British Museum Department of Prints and Drawing n<sup>o</sup>1951-2-8-34. The Italian drawing is dated to c. 1510-1530.

Ursula's bed, looking towards the viewer. The same dog (along with another which does not appear in the final version) is in a preparatory sketch as well, underlining the importance of a contented small dog as an accessory in depictions of bedrooms<sup>180</sup>. In a fresco of the 'Annunciation' by Pisanello in the church of San Fermo Maggiore, Verona, (1426), the archangel Gabriel stands on the left, while on the other side, the Virgin sits on a long bench in an elegant and well-furnished bedroom. In the foreground, a small white dog with a belled collar stands near the Virgin's feet, and looks towards the angel<sup>181</sup>.

Pets might sleep on or even in the bed with their owner, as attested by the poet John Gower (1330-1408) in his *Confessio Amantis* when he describes the little dog and birds in his mistress' bedroom:

'I pleie with hire litel hound

Now on the bed, now on the ground,

Now with hir brides in the cage;' <sup>182</sup>

There is a topos in short narratives of dire results occurring from letting pets sleep in or on beds, although the practice itself is not condemned. Usually the tales involve mistaken identity. For instance a thirteenth-century exemplum tells how a knight, on returning home, stabs his wife when he sees a shape under the sheets besides her. On uncovering the sheet he discovers

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<sup>180</sup>The painting is part of a series on the life of Saint Ursula, tempera on canvas, now in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice. The preparatory sketch is likewise dated to 1495 and is in the Galleria degli Uffizi (Florence). Both are reproduced in J. Lauts, *Carpaccio* (London, 1962), pl. 22 and 23 respectively.

<sup>181</sup> The fresco is around the tomb of Niccolò Brenzoni and is dated to 1426. It is reproduced in B. Berenson, *Italian Painters of the Renaissance* (Oxford, 1948), plate 544.

<sup>182</sup> John Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, ed., R.A. Peck, Liber Quartus (lines 1889-1991) (Toronto, 1997), p. 207.

that she has merely been sleeping with her dog<sup>183</sup>. In another, a knight kills his mistress in the dark of her bedroom, mistaking her for her dog, which had previously bitten him<sup>184</sup>. A slightly different tale involving animals in the bedroom has a knight who is rejected by a lady. He returns disguised and lets her cat scratch him. On viewing his discretion after this incident, she becomes his mistress. The knight then refuses to marry her, claiming that he is afraid of her cat<sup>185</sup>. Although the closeness between owners and their pets in sleeping quarters forms part of the story, such intimacy is not condemned but seen as normal.

Pets are thus allowed into spaces that had limited or forbidden access to many, apart from chosen servants and retainers. They are present in numerous representations of women in childbirth. The scene of childbirth was out of bounds for men, but not for pets, natural associates of women. We see this in many depictions of the birth of the Virgin or John the Baptist. In a miniature of the birth of the Virgin in the mid fifteenth-century Hours of Catherine of Cleves, a striped cat sits on the tiles by the fire licking its paws, as St. Anne is handed the swaddled Virgin Mary<sup>186</sup>. Pets abound in the scene of the Birth of the John Baptist in the early fifteenth-century Hours of Milan. In the foreground a small long-haired white dog eats a bone at the foot of the

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<sup>183</sup> MS Dijon Bibliothèque Municipale 526. Cf. P. Ariès and G. Duby, ed., *A History of Private Life: Revelations of the Medieval World*, (London, 1988), p. 146.

<sup>184</sup> A.G. Little, ed., *Liber Exemplorum ad usum praedicatorum* (Aberdeen, 1908) n° 205a and 205b (De luxuria), cited in F.C. Tubach, *Index Exemplorum. A handbook of medieval religious tales* (Helsinki, 1969) p. 139 n°1704.

<sup>185</sup> A. Wesselski, *Märchen des Mittelalters* (Berlin, 1925) n. 26; cited in F.C. Tubach, *Index Exemplorum. A handbook of medieval religious tales* (Helsinki, 1969), p. 72 n° 893.

<sup>186</sup> The manuscript is dated to c. 1440 and is now in MS New York Pierpont Morgan Library 917, f.20verso. Reproduced in facsimile in J. Plummer, *The Hours of Catherine of Cleves* (New York, 1975).

bed while next to the dog a mother cat imitates the pose of St Elizabeth in the bed with the infant by leaning protectively over its kitten<sup>187</sup>. Similarly, in a miniature of the birth of the John the Baptist in the early sixteenth-century Grimani Breviary, a well-fed (possibly pregnant) grey cat looks up as St Elizabeth is handed the baby<sup>188</sup>. This motif is not confined to religious scenes; a miniature in an Alexander Romance in the British Library has one woman in a bed, another swaddling the baby, while a dog chews a bone<sup>189</sup>.

Pets were distinguished by occupying the very close personal space of their owners. This close degree of physical proximity between the owner and pet was an indicator of accepted intimacy between the two. Diminutive size, although not an absolutely necessary requirement of pet, would made proximity easier, and thus the vast majority of animals kept as pets are those that are highly portable, such as small dogs, birds, squirrels and others. Close contact is an attribute of iconographic representations of pets in which the pet inhabits very close personal space, often being held in the arms or lying by the owner's feet. Two illuminated initials in a British Library book of hours illustrate this intimacy. On f. 100recto a nun is depicted inside an initial D holding a small white collared dog in her arms, an almost identical pose adopted by a secular lady inside an initial S in a later folio (f. 184recto)<sup>190</sup>. In a

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<sup>187</sup> F. 93verso of the manuscript *Heures de Milan*, early fifteenth century, and now in the Museo Civico, Turin, inv. n. 47. Reproduced in M. Meiss, *French Painting in the time of Jean de Berry. The Limbourgs and their contemporaries* (London, 1974), plate 645.

<sup>188</sup> The Grimani Breviary is MS Venice Biblioteca Marciana Cod. Marc. Lat. I. 99 (2138), f. 593verso. The breviary is from the Ghent-Bruges school and is reproduced in facsimile in *Breviario Grimani* (Milan, 1971), pl. 70.

<sup>189</sup> MS London British Library Royal 20 B.XX, f. 86recto. The manuscript dates from the fifteenth century,

<sup>190</sup> MS London British Library Stowe 17, f. 100recto. See PLATE 11.

miniature in the Manesse Codex that links exterior space with the interior, the poet Dietmar von Aist, disguised as a peddler, sits on a donkey outside as his lady stands at the threshold as she examines his goods on offer with her small white dog carefully tucked up under her arm<sup>191</sup>.

The pet's presence in its owner's personal space even extended to prayer space. Pets are frequently close to women in prayer, incongruous though this may seem. They are involved in the scene in a variety of ways. This is particularly evident in the iconography of 'patroness portraits' in personal Books of Hours, in which the pet can mimic the pose of the owner in prayer in an attitude of reverence or merely act as a companion at the scene. Although pets do not appear in all patroness images, they are a common motif, forming part of the identity of the patroness, who might have had pets in real life.

In the thirteenth-century Hours of Yolande de Soissons, her little black dog looks up the statue of the Virgin and Child in worship, as does Yolande herself<sup>192</sup>. More conventionally, the pet also accompanies its owner without any reverence or participation in the religious scene. The pet, unlike its owner, may be distracted by the cares of the secular world, possibly a warning to all. A prime example of this appears in an early fourteenth-century book of hours

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<sup>191</sup> MS Heidelberg Universitätsbibliothek Col. Pal. Germ. 848, f. 64recto. The Manesse Codex is from Zürich and dated c. 1300-1340. A facsimile is available online at the University of Heidelberg's website.

<sup>192</sup> This book of hours, from Amiens (France) is dated to c.1280-90 and is now MS New York Pierpont Morgan Library M.729, f. 232verso. The full page miniature is reproduced in R.S. Wieck, *Painted prayers: the book of hours in medieval and Renaissance art*, (New York, 1997), p. 11.

in the British Library<sup>193</sup>. This French book of hours, owned by an unknown lady, is notable for the presence of many pets illuminated throughout the manuscript along with other animals and hybrids (dog-headed grotesques are particularly prevalent). It is possible that the artist, knowing that his patron was a lady, decided to illuminate the manuscripts with many images of pets or that he was under instruction from the patron to do so. Parrots and other caged birds abound. On f. 6verso a parrot with bright green and blue wings flies out from a small cage which has a wooden perch (an empty bird wooden cage appears on f. 9recto). More parrots, notable for their orange beaks and green wings, are depicted on f. 42recto and f. 121verso. A small well-fed little dog is present throughout the manuscript, sometimes in the scene as the patroness-owner of the manuscript prays and sometimes by itself, over-eating or annoying other animals. The scenes in which this dog appears without its owner are on the following folios: f. 6verso, wearing a belled collar stands on his hind legs (this is the only time in which the animal is coloured brown, in the rest of the depictions, he is grey). On the *bas-de-page* of f. 34recto a small grey male dog stands on hind legs grasping and chewing a very large bone almost as high as he is, a possible allusion to spoiled pets. This fat bell-collared animal is very different from the hunting hound on f. 24recto which is long, leaner and has a plain collar. As noted in the previous chapter, a belled collar is one of the iconographic markers of a pet dog and judging from entries in accounts, was a common accessory. On the *bas-de-page* of f. 64verso the fat

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<sup>193</sup> MS London British Library Add. 36684. The manuscript is of Northern French production, possibly from Théroutane and is dated to c. 1330. The calendar section comprises of St Omer saints.

little grey dog appears by himself, with his head curved towards his body. One f. 79verso (*bas-de-page*) a large lean hunting hound bites the back of the small fat little dog which is biting the bigger dog on the nose. On *bas-de-page* of f. 88verso, in the section of the Hours of the Dead, on the left the fat little grey dog crouches greedily over a big bone, while on the right of the page sits a skull and the same bone, a possible reflection on mortality, which is common in illuminations for the Hours of the Dead<sup>194</sup>. On f. 106 verso (centre of the *bas-de-page*) is the small grey fat dog with belled collar, looking right. On f. 121verso, the little grey dog, wearing a red collar, sniffs at a bush.

The most interesting illuminations however are those in which the patroness and the pet dog appear together as the lady prays<sup>195</sup>. In all of these illuminations the dog is very distracted, unlike his devout owner. On f. 39recto, to the side of the main illuminated initial depicting a religious scene, a wimpled woman in a grey vier-lined gown lined with a red collar, prays in the direction of the initial, with her hands in a position of reverence. Next to her, her fat grey dog sits curled up, with his eyes facing downwards towards the actions of the hybrids on the *bas-de-page*, a contrast to his lady's eyes which are firmly directed towards the religious scene.

On f. 49recto the lady (now in a blue gown with white collar and red sleeves) prays towards the Gospel scene in the initial. On the right her small fat dog sits on the grass and leans on a tree, his bored face turned towards the

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<sup>194</sup> MS London British Library Add. 36684, f. 88verso. See PLATE 6.

<sup>195</sup> There are four illuminations of the lady owner praying in the presence of the pet dog, compared to two (f. 43verso and f.46verso) in which she prays alone towards the illuminated religious scene without her dog.

main action<sup>196</sup>. Further on, in f. 56recto the lady (in a white gown with red sleeves) prays towards the religious scene in the initial. A dog, which appears to be the portly grey specimen who normally accompanies her, is directly below her on the *bas-de-page*, completely out of the prayer space, leaping in the direction of a green bird drinking from a fountain. On f. 60recto on the centre right, to the side of the main square illuminated initial, the lady (in a yellow gown with blue sleeves), has her book of hours placed in front of her, while her leaping little grey dog is behind her, jumping on the hem of her gown. Like all of the other illuminations of this pair, the animal is playful and not remotely in touch with the solemnity of the occasion. The frivolous pet forms a marked contrast with the devotion of its owner. Similarly, in an early sixteenth-century painting by Lorenzo Lotto depicts 'Christ taking leave of his mother', the religious action takes place in the centre of the canvas but on the lower left hand side a lady prays with her book of hours, while a small curly haired dog toys with the folds of her dress, without reverence or awareness of the religious scene<sup>197</sup>.

The pet can even interact with the potential reader of the book, as in the Hours of Catherine of Cleves, in which the dog looks out at the viewer (i.e. the reader of the book, presumably the owner herself) while the patroness

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<sup>196</sup> MS London British Library Add. 36684, f. 49recto. See PLATE 5.

<sup>197</sup> The oil painting is dated to 1521, and is now in the Staatliche Museen, Berlin. The painting is believed to have been commissioned by the Tassi family in Bergamo and the woman has been identified as Elisabetta Rota, the wife of Domenico Tassi. The painting is reproduced in P. Humfrey, *Lorenzo Lotto* (New Haven and New York, 1997), p. 56. which also gives details on the sitter.

observes the scene of the Crucifixion<sup>198</sup>. Similarly, in the Hours of Mary of Burgundy, as Mary of Burgundy reads her own book of hours, the dog on her lap looks out towards the audience<sup>199</sup>. The pet, an emblem of the secular world, can be separated from its owner as she prays, or from the religious scene by a physical barrier, visible in a Flemish manuscript titled *Traites de Morale*, in which Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy, prays at an altar. Her little pet dog can be seen in the next room, separated clearly by a wall<sup>200</sup>. In the same way, the *Hours of Margaret Tudor* has a miniature in which the small smooth haired dog is below on the earthly plane, sitting in front of the altar, while above it the Virgin and the Child in halo look down on the praying Margaret Tudor<sup>201</sup>.

#### *Pets in exterior space*

If a pet was taken outside in the fresh air, it was usually confined to an enclosed garden and kept close to its owner, either sitting near the owner's

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<sup>198</sup> The manuscript is dated to c.1440, from Utrecht and is now MS New York Pierpont Morgan Library M.917, p. 160. See the facsimile: J. Plummer, *The Hours of Catherine of Cleves* (New York, 1975).

<sup>199</sup> MS Vienna Österreichische Nationalbibliothek 1857, f. 14verso. The manuscript, from Bruges, is dated to c.1467-80 and this illumination is reproduced in G. Dogaer, *Flemish miniature painting in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries* (Amsterdam, 1987), pl. 14.

<sup>200</sup> MS Brussels Bibliothèque Royale 9272-76, f. 182recto. The manuscript is dated to c. 1475-9. In an illumination of another manuscript owned by Margaret of York, she kneels in front of the Risen Christ while the foreground a dog sleeps unaware of the significance of the scene, in MS London British Library Add. 7970, f. 1verso. Both folios are reproduced in T. Kren and S. McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance: The triumph of Flemish manuscript painting in Europe* (London, 2003), p. 161 and 216.

<sup>201</sup> MS Vienna Österreichische Nationalbibliothek 1897, f. 243verso. The manuscript is dated to c. 1503 and was made in Ghent or Bruges. This illumination is reproduced in C. de Hamel, *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts* (London, 1994), pl. 148. The iconographic scheme is similar to an illumination in the Breviary of Eleanor of Portugal, as Eleanor prays to the Virgin alongside her dog in MS New York Pierpont Morgan Library 52, f. 4. The manuscript is from Ghent, c. 1500-10. This folio is reproduced in T. Kren and S. McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance*, p. 323.

feet, held tightly in the arms or on a leash. In the iconography of garden scenes, pets are paraded around, in the constant company of their owners. A fourteenth-century French ivory mirror in the British Museum shows a woman holding a little dog in her left arm as she stands in a garden with her lover<sup>202</sup> while an ivory comb in the Victoria and Albert Museum depicts three pairs of lovers. On one side a lady sits in a garden patting a small dog while the reverse shows a lady standing with the dog in her arms<sup>203</sup>. In a fifteenth-century miniature in a manuscript at the Bibliothèque de l' Arsenal, a couple sit on the grass while a smooth-haired red-collared dog sits next to them<sup>204</sup>. It is very common motif in depictions of couples to have a small dog (the favoured petite animal) next to the lady as the conversation goes on. In a folio in the Queen Mary's Psalter in the British Library there is a marginal image of two couples on a bench in which lady on the far right has a small dog on her lap<sup>205</sup>. Similarly, an early fourteenth-century manuscript of the Romance of the Saint

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<sup>202</sup> London British Museum BM Ivories 1856,0623.105 (Location: G42/dc6/no41). Cf. O.M. Dalton, *Catalogue of the Ivory Carvings of the Christian Era with Examples of Mohammedan Art and Carvings in Bone in the Department of British and Mediaeval Antiquities and Ethnography of the British Museum* (London, 1909), p. 374.

<sup>203</sup> Victoria and Albert Museum (A. 560-1910). French (Paris manufacture, 1320-30). Reproduced in P. Barnet, ed., *Images in Ivory: Precious Objects of the Gothic Age*, (Princeton, 1997), pp. 222-3. Other relevant fourteenth-century French ivories are a panel in the Stroganoff Collection (Rome) in which a lady sits with her falcon on one arm and patting a small dog (who is standing on his forelegs) with the other. In a panel of a couple under a threshold (in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin) the man holds up a hawk while the lady holds a squirrel under her arm. A mirror back in the Martin Le Roy Collection (Paris) depicts a standing couple with the lady holding a small dog under her arm. In a similar mirror back in the British Museum of sitting couple on a bench, a bird sits on the lady's hand. Also see chapter one on ivories depicting Tristan and Isolde in a garden setting which follow a similar theme.

<sup>204</sup> MS Paris Bibliothèque de l' Arsenal 5072, f. 71verso. The illuminator was Loyset Liédet. Reproduced in M. Gousset, *Eden: le jardin médiéval à travers l'enluminure, XIIIe-XVIe siècle* (Paris, 2001).

<sup>205</sup> MS London British Library Royal 2B.VII f. 200verso. This illumination is available online via the British Library's website.

Graal has an illumination of Lancelot talking to a lady on a bench. The lady pats the head of a small black and white collared dog that sits in her lap and looks at Lancelot<sup>206</sup>. In another medium, a mid fifteenth-century misericord in Gloucester Cathedral represents a lady standing in a garden with a small dog at her feet looking up at her<sup>207</sup>.

In a miniature in an early sixteenth-century Flemish book of hours, ladies oversee the construction of a garden while holding small dogs in their arms. On the next folio, a pair of lovers wander in a garden as a small brown curly tailed dog stands nearby<sup>208</sup>. In another early sixteenth-century manuscript, the Grimani Breviary, the miniature for the month of April has a lady sitting on the ground cradling a small brown and white spaniel-like dog on her lap. Another little dog, which appears to belong to a group of ladies and gentleman who are walking along, sits on the lady's skirt, barking at the dog in her lap<sup>209</sup>. The little dog in the *Romance of the Chatelaine of Vergi*, is let out alone into a garden for exercise as a sign that the lover of his owner may visit her but this appears to be the limit of the animal's freedom<sup>210</sup>. Gardens, the outside province of the pet share many of the same characteristics. Both are products of a tamed and artificial nature, destined only for amusement and distraction.

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<sup>206</sup>MS London British Library Royal 14E III, f. 146. This illumination is available online via the British Library's website.

<sup>207</sup>G.L. Remnant, *Catalogue of Misericords in Great Britain* (Oxford, 1969), p. 50.

<sup>208</sup>MS London British Library Add. 24098, f. 20verso (construction of garden) and f. 21verso (lovers in a garden). Both illuminations are available online via the British Library's website.

<sup>209</sup>The Grimani Breviary is MS Venice Biblioteca Marciana Cod. Marc. Lat. I. 99 (2138), f. 4verso. The image is reproduced in facsimile in *Breviario Grimani* (Milan, 1971), pl. 7.

<sup>210</sup>R.E.V. Stuij, *La Castelaine de Vergi*, (The Hague-Paris, 1970).

When venturing further afield, as would frequently happen with noble households which changed lodgings regularly, the pet travelled with its owners in a closed wagon, inhabiting a movable domestic space, a practice visible in an image from the early fourteenth-century Luttrell Psalter. One of the ladies in this scene has a chained squirrel perched on her shoulder as she looks out of the back of the carriage while another lady is handed a small but portly collared dog by a servant<sup>211</sup>. A large guard dog walks underneath the carriage, in marked contrast to the pampered animals inside, illustrating the difference between the lives of the pet, a non-functional animal, and the working dog. This situation had not changed two and half centuries later when John Caius wrote his seminal *Of Englishe Dogges: The diversities, the names, the natures, and the Properties* in 1570 and spoke of pet dogs: ‘These puppies the smaller they be, the more pleasure they provoke, as more meete play-fellowes for mincing mistresses to beare in their bosomes, to keep company within in their chambers, to succour with sleep in bed, and nourish with meate at bourde, to lay in their lappes, and licke their lippes as they ride in their Waggones’ which indicates the intimacy associated with small pet dogs, who are kept in private chambers, allowed on beds, overfed with meat and taken everywhere on their owner’s laps, including in ‘waggones’ and even allowed to lick their mistresses lips<sup>212</sup>.

If travelling without one’s pets, the animal could be sent for if needed. In particular, this was the case with birds, an animal relatively easy to

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<sup>211</sup> MS London British Library Add. 42130, f.181verso. See PLATE 9.

<sup>212</sup> *Of Englishe Dogges: The diversities, the names, the natures, and the Properties*, translated by A. Fleming (1576) [from *De Canibus Britannicis*], p. 21. Facsimile edition (Amsterdam, N.Y., 1969).

transport in cages. The accounts of Isabeau of Bavaria, Queen of France, reveal that her own birds were sent for when she was on the move. In March, 1416, she asked for her turtle-doves and little birds to be sent from Paris, while later that year, in July, she had her little birds taken from Vincennes to Saint-Germain en Laye. While in Troyes in 1420, during treaty negotiations with the English, she sent for her little singing birds of various species, for her 'plaisance et esbatement'<sup>213</sup>, a sign of her emotional need for these animals. Marie de Anjou, wife of Charles VII of France, kept many animals, particularly during her long stay in Chinon and, in November 1454 made a payment to her valets who brought her pet starling and parrot. These animals were not a gift from a third party but are specifically stated in the accounts as being 'de ladicte dame'<sup>214</sup>.

When outside the acceptable limits of either a garden or a carriage, the pet was kept under close surveillance, or held firmly by its owner. This situation is apparent in a miniature in an early fourteenth-century British Library book of hours in which a lady rides pillion behind a man, holding her little white dog in her lap<sup>215</sup>. In a painting by Bounamico Buffalmacco, 'The Triumph of Death', c. 1350 in Campo Santo Monumentale (Pisa), among the members of a hunting party there is a lady riding with one hand cradling a

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<sup>213</sup> A. Franklin, *La vie privée d'autrefois: arts et métiers modes, mœurs, usages des parisiens du xii au xviii siècle d'après des documents originaux ou inédits* (Paris, 1897) vol. 20, pp. 326-7.

<sup>214</sup> 'A deux jeunes compagnons qui on apporté, le xvii<sup>e</sup> jour de novembre [1454], les estourneau et papegault de ladicte dame', A. Franklin, *La vie privée d'autrefois: arts et métiers modes, mœurs, usages des parisiens du xii au xviii siècle d'après des documents originaux ou inédits* (Paris, 1897), vol. 24 chap. 1 p. 5

<sup>215</sup> MS London British Library Stowe 17, f. 106recto. The Maastricht Hours is dated to c. 1310-1320.

small white dog<sup>216</sup>. In a *bas-de-page* illumination in the early fourteenth-century Macclesfield Psalter a lady stands between a man on horseback on the left and a Wildman on the right. In her right arm she cradles a small grey dog that looks up at her, its small size and close position emphasising its physical proximity and intimacy, and like the lady, providing a civilizing domestic contrast to the ill-kempt Wildman<sup>217</sup>. The presence of the pet and lady as a symbol of the distinction between the untamed and the tamed is apparent in a full page manuscript illumination from a fifteenth-century French manuscript of *Le Livre de échecs armoureux moralisées*<sup>218</sup> in which a lady (with the label 'Nature') stands guard with a key at the entrance of an enclosed garden (which is carefully cultivated and occupied by three other ladies bearing the labels 'Venus', 'Juno' and 'Pallas' (from the 'Romance of the Rose') The lady 'Nature' has a tiny white dog at her feet. The pet, a product of an artificial and tamed nature, like the garden itself, looks outwards with the lady towards the untamed rocky and forested wilderness outside of the garden, and at the two men standing in the wilderness looking in. One of the men hold a large hunting hound by a chain, an animal which is perfectly at ease in its surroundings, in stark contrast to the tame and gentle little dog that belongs in the enclosed garden, like its owner. This is because of the artificial nature of

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<sup>216</sup> Apparently the artist Buffalmacco had problems with pets even when painting this fresco, as recounted by the early fifteenth-century Italian writer Franco Sacchetti (in his *Novelle*, 47) which tells of a pet baboon owned by Bishop Guido of Arezzo, who had commissioned the artist. In Sacchetti's story, the baboon starts playing with the paints and smears them all over the previously painted frescos. F. Sacchetti, *Opere*, ed. A. Borlenghi (Milan, 1957).

<sup>217</sup>The illumination is from MS Cambridge Fitzwilliam Museum 1-200, f. 58 recto. This folio is reproduced in S. Panayotova, *The Macclesfield Psalter: a Window into the World of Late Medieval England* (Cambridge, 2005)

<sup>218</sup>MS Paris Bibliothèque Nationale Fr. 143, f. 198v. Reproduced in M. Camille, *The Medieval Art of Love* (New York, 1998) p. 72.

the pet, which like the garden in which it is kept, is tended, watched and enclosed.

*Pets in urban space*

Although the discussion of space in this chapter concentrates on clerical and especially on female owners, small animals which can be identified as pets appear in various iconographical representations of urban life. They usually do not play a major role in the iconographic scheme as a whole, but instead add interest to the pictorial narrative. In urban scenes the animal, usual in a playful mood, appears in the foreground on the scene, adding lightness and domesticity to it.

Pet animals are common in depictions of urban crowd scenes. In a fresco by Filippino Lippi representing St John resuscitating Drusiana, a crowd of women and children stand in the background to the side of the miracle, observing the event<sup>219</sup>. In the foreground of this group, a small spaniel tugs at the sash of one of the children, lending a playful air to the serious religious scene. Similarly in Vittore Carpaccio's oil painting 'Miracle of the True Cross on the Rialto', crowds are depicted near the Rialto bridge in Venice, with the streets overflowing with spectators and the Grand Canal full of gondolas<sup>220</sup>. In the foreground on the right a small dog sits in a gondola. This dog with his tail hanging over the side of the boat, is made eye-catching through the use of bright white paint. He sits quite apart from the rest of the occupants of the gondola and like the crowd, bears witness to the miracle. Among many other

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<sup>219</sup>F. Lippi (1457-1504), the fresco is in the Strozzi Chapel in Santa Maria Novella, Florence.

<sup>220</sup>The painting by Vittore Carpaccio (1460-1526) is now in the Galleria dell'Accademia, Venice. The image is reproduced in J. Lauts, *Carpaccio* (London, 1962), p. 54.

examples, Tommaso Masolino da Panicale's painting of 'St Peter Healing a Cripple and the Raising of Tabitha' shows a monkey sitting on a window ledge in the buildings in the background, oblivious to the crowd below watching the miracle<sup>221</sup>.

Animals also appear in less crowded urban scenes. In a full page miniature depicting St Barbara in a Book of Hours in the British Library, St Barbara is shown in conversation with her father in a city street with tall buildings on either side. In the foreground, two small dogs fight; whether they belong to either of the pair is unclear. Their symbolism is also uncertain, are they there to add animation and lightness to the scene or is their small-scale fight representative of St Barbara's discussion?<sup>222</sup>

Pets appear in urban professional interiors, such as the jeweler's shop depicted in a Parisian manuscript<sup>223</sup>. In this scene, the husband attends to a couple and the woman to a male buyer. In the foreground a monkey and medium sized white hound collared dog sit on the tiles. On the counter itself, among the displays of costly jewels sits a small short-haired collared dog, which appears to be quite at home. The little dog represents the domesticity of this urban shop and its presence as a quality animal emphasises the luxury of the goods on sale in the shop<sup>224</sup>.

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<sup>221</sup>The fresco, dated to c. 1427, is in the Brancacci Chapel, Santa Maria del Carmine in Florence.

<sup>222</sup>MS London British Library Add. 38126, f. 145verso. Dated to c. 1485-1490, from Bruges. This folio is reproduced in T. Kren and S. McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance*, p. 174

<sup>223</sup>MS Paris Bibliothèque Nationale Fr. 9136, f. 344 and is titled 'Livre des symples Medichines'.

<sup>224</sup>A little dog sits in the lap of a doctor in a depiction of a medical dispensary in MS Cambridge Trinity College Library 0.1.20, f. 265recto. Reproduced in T. Hunt, *The Medieval Surgery* (Woodbridge, 1992), pp. 76-77

Pets also appear in domestic family interiors, interacting with family members or merely sleeping contently. It is not clear to which family member the animal belongs; it appears to be often associated with children. In a Bodleian Library manuscript, a domestic scene of family life is played out as a woman cooks on a fire, while one of her children places more firewood in front of her<sup>225</sup>. In the foreground one child bends over while another rocks a cradle with a swaddled baby sleeping inside. A smooth haired collared dog with a curling tail sleeps on the right. On the verso side of the same manuscript, a similar scene is enacted. The room seems full of children: one sits on a chair, another stands in a stroller, a mother cradles in her arms a swaddled baby, a man, possibly the father or a servant, warms a sheet in front of the fire, while a child on the left offers a piece of bread to little white smoothed haired dog, who sits up, his ears alert. Similarly, the full-page illumination for the January winter scene in an early sixteenth century manuscript, the Grimani Breviary, depicts a family sitting inside a small house warming themselves by the fire<sup>226</sup>. A grey-haired striped cat sits on the door ledge of the open door. Cats were common pets in urban environments due to their skill as mousers and because they could adapt themselves easily to living in close quarters. The thirteenth-century Franciscan chronicler, Salimbene de Adame, recounts how many pet cats, abandoned in sacked towns in north-central Italy, were captured by an enterprising man for their fur: 'He had caught in his traps twenty-seven fine cats in the burned-out cities, and he had

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<sup>225</sup>MS Oxford Bodleian Library Douce 276, f. 110brecto-verso. Both folios are reproduced in N. Orme, *Medieval Children* (London, 2001), pp. 61-3.

<sup>226</sup>MS Venice Biblioteca Marciana, Cod. Marc. Lat. I. 99 (2138), f. 2verso. Reproduced in facsimile in *Breviario Grimani* (Milan, 1971), pl. 3.

sold their pets to furriers. There can be little doubt of this, because in peace time they had been pet cats in those cities'<sup>227</sup>.

In the case of urban or village families, in which the entire family lived and worked together, it is not clear who the exact owner was if an animal was kept as a pet, as it appeared to live with the family. If it left the household, it could cause distress to all members, as is clear when Iacobo Antonio Stella, from the small town of Castelfreddo in Italy, wrote a plaintive missive in 1519 to Isabella d'Este, Marquise of Mantua, asking that his cat not be taken away at the request of the Marquise who wanted it for breeding purposes. He appeals to the Marquise, speaking of his seven children, his worries for that cat and even suggests that he would be happy to take care of the Marquise's female cat so that they might breed without his family suffering the loss of his beloved cat:

'Most Illustrious and Excellent lady...Don Antonio de Bologna has asked for my cat so that it might breed with your female cat...I told him that the cat was indisposed...my seven children depend on this cat...would your Excellency send your cat so that great danger not befall my cat...'<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>227</sup>These were towns sacked by Frederick II in 1247. Salimbene writes that he was told the story by the trapper himself while residing in Imola. J.L. Baird, G.Baglivi, and J.R Kane, ed., *The Chronicle of Salimbene de Adame* (Binghamton, N.Y., 1986), p. 182. Salimbene later recorded a great plague that affected only cats in 1284, *ibid*, p. 614.

<sup>228</sup>The entire letter is ASDM, AG, b. 2498 n° 236 [19th of February 1519]: *ILustrissima et Excellentissima Madamma & Signora mia colendissima, hora quattro giorni per el / magnifico Domino Antonio de bologna mi fu richiesto el gatto mio per vnirlo cum la gatta di Vostra Excellencia: Io li rispose che quello era indisposito : gia noue giorni : Et che da quello pendeua el uicto de septe filioli che mi Trouo et In questo dubitaua non pochochel non mi manchasse, Et che sua M supplicasse ad Vostra ILustrissima & Excellentissima Signoria non uolesse Tal damno mio:, hoggi ditto Domino Antonio mi ha richiesto. cheio Contenti che predicta Vostra Excellencia mandi qua la gatta: vnde auenga che Conosca grandissimo*

Theft of pets also brought to the surface the affection in which they were held. Centuries before the aforementioned case, the record of a 1294 court case in Chalgrave, England, states 'William Yngeleys complains against John Saly and Christina his sister because they detain a certain cat to William's damage, which damage he would not willingly have borne for 6d'<sup>229</sup>. Children would grow up with pets in their houses and no doubt play with the animals as fifteenth-century schoolbooks show. One speaks of a family dog called 'Whitefoot'<sup>230</sup>, and a fifteenth-century poem written in a grammar school boy's text mentions the presence of little dog in a house, kept in special quarters, and cared for by the lady of the house:

Clim, clam, the cat leapt over the dam

My dame hath in a hutch at home

A little dog with a clog<sup>231</sup>;

Hey dogs, hey!<sup>232</sup>

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*periculo die l gatto per la Indisposicion Sua son Contentissimo che Vostra Illustrissima Signoria mandi qua la gatta, che per me gli sara usata ogni diligiencia in Custodirla In semma pero cum quella persona che mandara Vostra Excellencia per gouerno de epsa.: Quanto sij per le spese dela gatta , et damno patiro del zibetto, me rimetto ad quanto parera et piacera a Vostra Illustrissima et Excellentissima Signoria.: Humilmente et diuoto suplichando quella se per questo achadesse chel gatto mi manchasse se digni auerme per ricomandato. Ala cui bona gracia de Continuo me Ricordo: Dato In Castelzuffredo, adi 9 febraio. 1519. De Pieta Illustrissima et Excellentissima Signoria. Diuoto seruitor Iacobo Antonio Stella'. This transcription is mine, although a variant transcription (with a great of errors and emendations by the author) appears in A. Bertolotti, 'I gatti e la gatta della Marchesa di Mantova Isabella d'Este', *El Mendico* (16 aprile 1889), ix, n°8. I have found no traces of any answer to this letter or the resolution of the situation in the Mantuan archives.*

<sup>229</sup> M.K Dall, *Court Roll of Chalgrave Manor: 1278-1313* (Streatley, 1950), p. 32. Cf. B. A. Hanawalt, *The ties that bound: peasant families in medieval England* (Oxford, 1986), p. 256.

<sup>230</sup> N. Orme, *Education and Society in Medieval and Renaissance England* (London, 1989), pp. 80, 83, 85; N. Orme, 'The Culture of Children in Medieval England', *Past and Present*, 148 (Aug. 1995), p. 81; D. Thompson, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Middle English Grammatical Texts* (New York and London, 1979), p. 150 (c.f. Orme, *Medieval Children* (New Haven and London, 2001), p. 68)

<sup>231</sup> *Oxford English Dictionary*: Clog: A block or lump tied to anything for use or ornament; e.g. to a key to prevent its being lost.

A similar poem written in a schoolboy's text, either as an exercise set by the master or an original creation of the student speaks of a pet jay ('At my house I have a jay') that lives in the boy's house. It is a situation that the student takes as completely normal: he uses the poem to describe the different sounds of the bird compared to other animals<sup>233</sup>. Another creation, perhaps written by an older boy or by the master himself in a schoolbook from Winchester demonstrates ownership of an affectionate dog ('My dogge wylle dye for tene [grief]')<sup>234</sup>.

Although pet keeping on the whole was confined to women and the clergy for most of the period, this rule falls away often in close urban spaces. Perhaps the exception really proves the rule associating lay men with functional animals and the outside. Only in towns was the home the centre of most lay men's work.

#### *Criticism and tolerance of secular pet keeping*

Treating a pet as a spoiled equal may explain much of the contemporary criticism. Contemporary medieval critics objected to ostentatious pet keeping, viewing it as both a question of extravagance and

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<sup>232</sup>See E. Relle, 'Some New Marginalia and poems by Gabriel Harvey', *Review of English Studies*, 23 (1972), pp. 401-16. cf. Orme, *Medieval Children*, (New Haven and London, 2001), p. 137.

<sup>233</sup> 'At my house I have a jay / He can make mony diverse leye / He can barking as a fox / He can lowe as a noxe / He can crecu as a gos / He can remy as a nasse in his cracche / He can croden as a froge / He can barken as a dogg / He can cheteron as a wrenne / He can chatern as a henne / He canne neye as a stede; / Such a byrde yt were wode to fede.' MS London British Library Harley 1002, f. 72recto. Text quoted from N. Orme, 'The Culture of Children in Medieval England', *Past and Present*, 148 (Aug. 1995), pp. 81.

<sup>234</sup> 'Flowres in myn herber, / Thay growe grene; / But yff my ladye luffe me wele / My dogge wylle dye for tene [grief]'. It is the second of three short verses, either scraps of popular songs or original creations. E. Wilson, ed., *The Winchester Anthology* (Woodbridge, 1981), f. 76verso Cf. N. Orme, 'The Culture of Children in Medieval England', *Past and Present*, 148 (Aug. 1995), p. 83.

distraction from one's duties and obligations, such as charity to the more needy. This may explain why pets are markedly absent in any tales or depictions of 'Famous and Virtuous women' such as those written by Boccaccio or Christine de Pisan as such elevated ladies surely should have no time for frivolous pets. The authors of such texts, nevertheless, can appear without reproach with their pets in iconographical images<sup>235</sup>. In a manuscript of her works, Christine de Pisan writes in her study accompanied by a small white dog with a red leather collar covered in bells<sup>236</sup>. A similar image appears in a manuscript by the Cité des Dames Workshop in which Christine writes while a medium-haired small dog sits down on the tiles in front of her<sup>237</sup>. In a Huntingdon Library manuscript the poet Boccaccio sits on a bed with a tabby cat nearby as he converses with an apparition of Petrarch while in a Glasgow University Library manuscript depicting the same scene, Boccaccio is accompanied by a dog wearing a blue collar. In another folio of the same manuscript, Boccaccio addresses Manutius and followers with an attentive dog at his feet, now wearing a red collar<sup>238</sup>.

If a virtuous lady had to keep pets she should not spoil them, preferably she should keep their numbers to a minimum and she should not be distracted from her devotions or duties such as charity. One author, the

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<sup>235</sup> *De Mulieribus Claris* and *Cité des Dames* respectively.

<sup>236</sup> MS London British Library 4431, f. 4verso. This illumination is available online via the British Library's website.

<sup>237</sup> MS Munich Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Gall. 11, fol. 2; reproduced in M.Meiss, *French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry, The Limbourgs and their contemporaries* (London, 1974), pl. 13.

<sup>238</sup> MS San Marino Huntingdon Library HM 268, f. 153 and MS Glasgow University of Glasgow Library Hunter 372, fol. 65r and 104v respectively. The first two illuminations are reproduced in K. Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts* (London, 1996), and both illuminations from Hunter 372 are available via the University of Glasgow's website.

fifteenth-century *Menagier de Paris*, in fact stressed that it was the duty of a good wife to take good care of her 'chamber animals such as little dogs and birds' when he wrote his book of instruction for his young wife, stressing how she should enlist the aid of her housekeeper in making sure that the pets were well cared for<sup>239</sup>.

Much of the criticism comes from sermon literature. The fourteenth-century English Dominican preacher John Bromyard had much to say on the subject of pets, which he considered as useless over-fed sycophantic accessories of the rich who benefited while the poor went hungry<sup>240</sup>. In the entry 'Servire' in his *Summa Predicantium*, over-feeding was perceived as an over-emotional attachment to an animal ('if gluttoned they refuse and there is great wailing over them') and a rejection of one's duty to the poor ('the poor are so famished that they would greedily devour bran-bread, dogs are squeamish at the sight of wafer-bread, and spurn what is offered to them')<sup>241</sup>. Thus spoiled pets, like their owners, become uncaring and uncharitable creatures. The clergy are also an object of his wrath for loving and protecting people who bring them dogs among other fine gifts (birds, fruit, etc.)<sup>242</sup>.

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<sup>239</sup> 'Item, que ladicte dame Agnes vous fachiez principalment et songneusement et diligemment penser de vos bestes de chamber: comme petis chienctz, oiselectz, de chambre', G.E. Brereton and J.M. Ferrier, ed., *Le Menagier de Paris*, (Oxford, 1981), p. 130.

<sup>240</sup> In his entry for 'Eleemosyna' in his *Summa Predicantium* (Venice, 1586), p. 229recto, he puts lap-dogs in the same category of *histriones* and prostitutes, who get fine food and presents on demand, while the poor leave empty-handed. Cf. G. Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England*, p. 11.

<sup>241</sup> Cf. G. Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England*, p. 327

<sup>242</sup> In the entry for 'Custodia' in *Summa Predicantium*; cf. G. Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England*, p. 264. Bromyard, in the entry for 'Furtum' also vents his wrath on the lay who are concerned only with horses, dogs and apes.

Contemporary criticism was not usually directed at the mere possession of the pet but towards some of the possible pernicious side effects of pet keeping, such as neglecting one's duties and obligations, for example, charity and prayer. It was recognized, at a social level, that women and even clerics, might 'need' pets, for reasons of companionship, and as a remedy against loneliness and melancholia. Some medical texts even recommended clutching a small pet dog to one's chest to ward off stomach pains<sup>243</sup>. The chronicler Richard of Durham (1201-1297) tells, without censure, how Robert, bishop of Durham (1274-83) kept a pair of monkeys 'to ease the burden of his worries'<sup>244</sup>. The early sixteenth-century traveller Oleas Magnus, who visited Iceland and noted the small white dogs kept by women and the clergy there and defended their use by members of the clergy:

'In Iceland, however, a true land of ice surrounded by the Ocean, though dogs of various kinds live there and of any breed you could desire, yet among the pets of distinguished ladies and prelates are very white dogs with thick fur, as though they were formed of a mass of tangled wool. The blessed Chrysostom allowed bishops and prelates to keep such dogs for their solace, as puppies, that is, but not greyhounds, or bulldogs, alias hellhounds, for these

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<sup>243</sup> On the classical origins of this belief see Pliny the Elder, *Historia Naturalis*, Book XXX, Chapter 42 'Hi quoque quos Melitaeos vocamus stomachi dolorem sedant adplicati saepius', trans. as 'Those puppies too that we call Melitaeans relieve stomach-ache if laid frequently across the abdomen'. *Natural History*, ed. J. Henderson and trans. W.H.S. Jones, (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1975), pp. 304-5.

<sup>244</sup> Richard of Durham, *The Lanercost Chronicle*, trans. Sir H. Maxwell, (Cribyn, 2001), p. 36-37

never cheer those who watch them, but dull the sensibilities with their offensive exhibition'<sup>245</sup>.

A fifteenth-century manual on angling and hunting, attributed to the abbess of Sopwell, Juliana Berners, even gave a practical purpose to pets, claiming that: 'smale ladies popis that beere away the flees and dyueris smale fawtiers'<sup>246</sup>.

There were many *de facto* compromises on pet keeping. Permission was given for ladies' pets to stay in spaces that were strictly off-limits to all other animals such as the royal court, as is apparent in the ordinances made at Eltham in 1526 which stated that [*italics mine*]: 'The King's Highness alsoe straightitly forbiddeth and inhibiteth, that no person whatsoever he be, presume to keep any grey-hounds, mastives, hounds, or other *then som few small spaniells for ladyes or others*, nor bring or leade any into the same, except it be by the King's or the Queen's commandment; but the said grey-hounds and doggs to be kept in kennells, and other meete places, out of court, as it is convenient, soe as, the premises dewly observed, the house may be sweete, wholesome, cleane, and well furnished, as to a prince's honour and estate doth apperteine'<sup>247</sup>. Provisions were even made for ladies in captivity to keep pets. The accounts of Henry IV's queen, Joan of Navarre mention payments

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<sup>245</sup> Olaus Magnus, *Description of the Northern Peoples*, Book Seven, Chapter Six, ed. P.G. Foote (London, 1996-1998), p. 848. The quotation from John Chrysostom appears to be spurious as it is not found in any of the saint's writing and may be a creation by the author.

<sup>246</sup> A facsimile edition (1486) of the text appears in R. Hands, ed., *English Hawking and Hunting in The Boke of St Albans*, Oxford 1975), p. 80.

<sup>247</sup> Anon, ed., *A collection of ordinances and regulations for the government of the royal household made in divers reigns, from King Edward III to King William and Queen Mary. Also receipts in ancient cookery*, (London, 1790), p. 150 on the Ordinances made at Eltham in the XVIIth year of King Henry VIII (1526), Chapter 43, transcribed from MS London British Library Harley 642.

made in 1420 , when she was imprisoned for witchcraft, for the purchase of a cage for her 'jau' (probably a jay or parrot)<sup>248</sup>.

*Tolerance and Criticism of Pets Owned by those in Religious Orders*

Perhaps the best evidence of the prevalence of pet keeping in religious orders is the constant criticism of the practice. The main argument put forward by religious authorities against those in religious orders keeping pets in enclosed institutional space was that pets had no place in such a sacred space. There was no functional role for them, and they had a negative effect on both the owner and the surrounding community by distracting them from religious duties and disrupting contemplative life. The pet-keeping secular clergy could more easily ignore such prohibitions, however, as they were not bound to an institutional rule that governed those in the monastic life.

Pet keeping was not encouraged in the mendicant orders either, even though they had a more external ministry than monks. The thirteenth-century Franciscan chronicler Salimbene de Adam differentiated between love of wild animals (so much a part of the image of the order's founder) and criticism of pet keeping by members of the order. He saw the former as a commendable trait of the saint and the latter as a frivolous pursuit which caused the pet-owner to lose the respect of his fellow-friars: 'I have seen in my own order, which is the order of the blessed Francis and the Friars Minor, some lectors who despite being highly learned and of great sanctity, nevertheless had a blemish on account of which they are judged by others to be frivolous men..

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<sup>248</sup> Public Record Office Exch. Accts. 406/30, printed in A.R. Meyers, *The Captivity of a Royal Witch: The Household Accounts of Queen Joan of Navarre, 1419-21*, (Manchester, 1940).

For they like to play with cats, little dogs and little birds, but not as the blessed Francis played with a pheasant and a cicada while delighting in the Lord' <sup>249</sup>. Here the criticism stems from delighting in animals for one's own pleasure, rather than communicating with wild animals to celebrate the Divine Creation.

Pet keeping was not seen as an ideal practice for those in religious communities, which may explain why there is very little iconography on this topic. This is in marked contrast to imagery of secular women, in which the keeping of pets is presented as a normal and acceptable practice. In an early fourteenth-century book of hours from the Netherlands (now MS London British Library Stowe 17), however, there are two unusual images of nuns with pets. On f. 35recto a nun in black habit works with a distaff while on her right, a white cat catches and plays with the spool. On f. 100recto, inside an initial D, a nun in brown habit clutches a little white dog. This manuscript is full of images of animals and people in topsy-turvy situations and religious people pictured are often engaged in subversive activities, possibly representing a

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<sup>249</sup> 'Sic in ordine meo, qui est ordo beati Francisci et fratrum Minorum, vidi aliquos lectores optime letteratos et magne sanctitatis, et tamen aliquam merditatem habent, per quam leves persone iudicantur ab aliis; libenter enim ludent cum murilego vel cum catulo vel cum avicula aliqua, [sed non] sicut beatus Franciscus cum fasiano et cicada ludebat et delectabatur in Domino', *Monumenta Germaniae historica: Scriptorum* (Hannover, 1826) vol. 32, p. 146. The General Chapter of Narbonne ruled in 1260 that only cats and certain birds could be kept by members of the Order. For a study on wild animals in the legend of St Francis, see R.D. Sorrell, *St Francis of Assisi and Nature: tradition and innovation in Western Christian attitudes towards the environment* (Oxford, 1988). For a collection of tales from hagiographies concerning saints and wild animals, see H.J. Waddell, *Beasts and Saints* (London, 1934)

gentle criticism of members of the clergy along with depicting common practices of pet keeping as documented in other sources<sup>250</sup>.

There was no universal canonical prohibition against pet keeping (as there was of hunting), but many individual houses or some entire orders enacted regulations against keeping animals of any kind, although some forbade all animals and others only certain species<sup>251</sup>. For example, the Cistercian order in their first *Instituta Generalis Capituli* banned the keeping of animals for pleasure<sup>252</sup>. Pet keeping was nevertheless widespread among men and women in religious orders despite numerous efforts to stem the flow by individual ordinances, injunctions and sternly worded letters after visitations, these were concerned mostly with distraction from duties and the presence of pets in the sacred space of the church itself.

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<sup>250</sup> Such as f. 38 which has a friar playing bellows with a distaff as a nun dances. Other folios show less illicit activities, such as f. 191 (when a monk hears a nun's confession) and appear to be simply descriptive of monastic life. The manuscript is from the South Netherlands, c. 1310-1320 and was probably owned by a woman (f. 19recto depicts a patroness in grey robe with red cloak lined with vier, praying). Like British Library, Add. 36684, female ownership may explain the popularity of pets among the images. On f. 29verso a couple embrace as the lady's little fat dog looks up while a very fat little white dog sits alone with red belled collar and bell on f. 254verso.

<sup>251</sup> An example of a prohibition against all animals is found in Walter Map's *De nugis curialium* regarding the Order of Grandmont (Grandimontines): 'Nemo solus exeat; nichil extra possessionis habeant; nullum animal intra preter apes, que uicinos non ledunt' ('None of them might out alone; they might not have any outside property; and, inside, no creature except bees, which do no harm to neighbours). M.R. James, *De nugis curialium* (Oxford, 1983) p. 52-3 (Dist. I. C. 17).

<sup>252</sup> 'Quod animalia viciu[m] levitatis ministrantia non nutriantur. Certum est, nos qui miliciam monachilem arripuimus, debere in cenobiis honeste gravitati ac regularibus, non levitatibus aut jocis vacare, et ob hoc horum forment viciorum a sanctis locis elongari oportet scilicet cervos, ursos, grues, ceteraque talia levitatum irritamenta', J. Leclercq, ed., *Analecta sacri ordinis cisterciensis*, VI (Rome, 1953), p. 26. Cf. J. Morson, 'The English Cistercians and the Bestiary', *The Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 39 (1956-7), pp. 149-50, which also quotes St Aeldred from his *Speculum Charitatis*: 'Inde etiam in claustris monachorum grues et lepores, damulae et cervi, pisces et corvi ... non quidem Antoniana et Machariana instrumenta, sed muliebria oblectamenta; quae omnia nequaquam monachorum paupertati consulunt, sed curiosorum oculos pascunt'.

Sometimes specific houses tried to issue strict ordinances on the matter. The ordinance of Abbot Walter of Wenlock, of Westminster Abbey in 1295 firmly stated that: 'We wish that no one of our household should have a dog or bird, and if anyone does bring in a dog or bird and keeps it for three days, it is our ruling that he gives it to whomever we please'<sup>253</sup>. William Alnwick, Bishop of Lincoln, wrote to Daventry Priory after his visit in July 1442 and listed among the practices which he believed should be stopped: '(Against all) Also every monk keeps dogs on his own account, by which the alms of the house, as in the broken meat of the table, are wasted'<sup>254</sup>

Injunctions against pet keeping are particularly a phenomenon of nunneries. Thus Hugo Seton, Archdeacon of Ely, after visiting Chatteris in 1345, issued injunctions against dogs and birds being kept by the abbess or any nun, especially when the animals were put under the choir bench during divine services<sup>255</sup>. He issued an almost identical injunction against Ickleton priory in the same year<sup>256</sup>. Similarly, Archbishop Greenfield visited two Yorkshire Cistercian houses in 1314-5, Keldhome and Rosedale, and the nuns were subsequently forbidden to take their small dogs into sacred space. In Keldhome (1314) the prioress was strictly instructed to exclude little dogs

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<sup>253</sup> M. Thompson, *Cloister, Abbot and Precinct* (Stroud, 2001), p. 142.

<sup>254</sup> ([Contra] omnes) Item quilibet monachus habet per se canes, per quos elemosina consumitur domus, vt, in fragmentis mensarum', A.H. Thompson, ed., *Visitations of Religious Houses in the Diocese of Lincoln*, vol. II, (London, 1969).

<sup>255</sup> 'Inhibemus eciam (sic) ne aves, vel canes, seu aviculae, per Abbatissam aut Monialem quamcumque habeantur infra septa monasterii et infra chorum maxime dum occupatio habet fieri in divinis', W. Dugdale, ed., *Monasticon Anglicanum*, II, (London, 1846), p. 619 (from Registro. Episcop. Elien. MS Cole, vol. xxiii, f. 162).

<sup>256</sup> 'Especially against having or keeping "canem seu caniculum", dog or puppy-dog, in the choir of the church' (MS Cole XXIII, f. 96), quoted in A.R. Goddard, 'Ickleton Church and Priory', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society*, Vol. V (Cambridge, 1904, published in 1907), p. 190.

(*caniculos*) from the choir, cloister and other places<sup>257</sup>. Nuns who disobeyed this injunction were to be punished' while in Rosedale (1315) the Prioress and sub-prioress were ordered to forbid little dogs from the choir or church, as the animals would 'impede the service and hinder the devotion of the nuns'<sup>258</sup>.

Bishop William of Wykeham issued a stern injunction in 1387 to the nunneries of Romsey, Wherwell and St Mary's Winchester against a variety of pets being taken into church. The species listed included birds, rabbits and dogs, which were judged as frivolous distracting creatures<sup>259</sup>. A set of reformed rules enacted in the nunnery of Langendorf (Saxony) in the early fifteenth century, insisted that 'cats, dogs and other animals are not to be kept by nuns as they distract from seriousness'<sup>260</sup>.

Eudes Rigaud, Archbishop of Rouen, listed in his register pet keeping as one of the scandalous conditions, such as the wearing of secular dress or eating costly food, in monastic houses He visited St. Sauveur, Evreux (Sancti Salvatoris Ebroicensis) in 1250 and ordered the nuns to get rid of their small

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<sup>257</sup> York. Archiepis. Reg. Greenfield, f. 101b. Cf. W. Page, ed., *The Victoria History of the Counties of England: Yorkshire*, III (London, 1907-1925), p. 168

<sup>258</sup> York. Archiepis. Reg. Greenfield, f. 107b. Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 175.

<sup>259</sup> 'Item, because we have convinced ourselves by clear proofs that some of the nuns of your house bring with them to church birds, rabbits, hounds and such like frivolous things, whereunto they give more heed than to the offices of the church, with frequent hindrance to their own psalmody and that of their fellow nuns and to the grievous peril of their souls; therefore we strictly forbid you, all and several, in virtue of the obedience due unto us, that you presume henceforward to bring into church no birds, hounds, rabbits or other frivolous things that promote indiscipline; and any nun who does to the contrary after three warnings shall fast on bread and water on one Saturday for each offence, notwithstanding one discipline to be received publicly in chapter on the same day...' [from MS Oxford New College ff. 88a and 88b], cited and translated in G.C. Coulton, *Social Life in Britain from the Conquest to the Reformation* (Cambridge, 1918), p. 397 n° c.

<sup>260</sup>The 'Ordinarius' is in MS Dresden Sächsische Landes- und Universitätsbibliothek L. 92. Cf. L. Eckenstein, *Women under Monasticism*, (Cambridge, 1896), p. 415.

dogs, birds and squirrels<sup>261</sup> but had to issue the prohibition again in 1258 against the very same practice<sup>262</sup> and yet again in 1269<sup>263</sup>. Similarly the sisters of Holy Trinity in Caen (Sancti Trinitatus Cadomensis) were forbidden from keeping larks and small birds in cages in 1250<sup>264</sup>, but the birds were still there when he returned in 1256<sup>265</sup>. On visiting St Léger des Préaux (Sancti Leodegarii) in 1257 he merely noted the presence of two small dogs and three squirrels<sup>266</sup>. All of these cases from visitation records underline the common practice of keeping pets and demonstrate the variety of species kept, from assorted singing birds to rabbits, squirrels and dogs. It appears that those in monastic orders might have considered any small tame animal a suitable pet.

The wording of the complaints against pet-keeping often stresses the excessive number of pets kept and the taking of animals into inappropriate areas, especially sacred space. Presumably if pets were kept at all, they should be confined to the cloisters. As long as the owners kept only one quiet animal in control and still managed to perform all their devotions, a blind eye would be turned to such behaviour. It is fairly clear that pet keeping was a common feature of monastic life that was only occasionally officially condemned, and generally tolerated<sup>267</sup>. There are numerable sources to support this. In the

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<sup>261</sup>'Item, ibi sunt canes parvi, escurelli et aves; statuimus ut omnia huiusmodi tollantur. Non profitentur regulam', Th. Bonnis, ed., *Registrum Visitationum Archiepiscopi Rothomagensis*, (Rouen, 1852), p. 73.

<sup>262</sup>'Iniunximus eis quod canes, aves, escurellos non haberent, et habitos amoverent', *ibid*, p. 305.

<sup>263</sup>'Inhibuimus ne canes, aves, escurellos haberent;', *ibid*, p. 624.

<sup>264</sup>'Aliquando nutriunt alaudas et aveculas in cagiis; precepimus huiusmodi aveculus removeri', *ibid*, p. 94.

<sup>265</sup>'Iuniores habent alaudas...hoc inhibuimus', *ibid*, p. 261.

<sup>266</sup>'Habebent duos parvos canes, tres escuriolos, *ibid*, p. 295.

<sup>267</sup> H.A. Kelly, 'A Neo-Revisionist Looks at Chaucer's Nuns', *The Chaucer Review* vol. 31 no. 2 (1996), p. 121

margins of Beaulieu Abbey's thirteenth-century account book there is a small rough drawing of a pet cat with the name of 'Mite' inscribed above<sup>268</sup>. At Westminster Abbey, where Walter of Wenlock had passed statutes against pet keeping less than a century before, a collar was bought in 1369 for a dog by the name of Sturdy, who was owned by the abbot himself<sup>269</sup>. Animals appear throughout monastic grounds in the fresco cycle of the life of St Benedict in the monastery of Monte Oliveto Maggiore (Tuscany) begun by Luca Signorelli (1497–1498) and completed by Sodoma (1502 or 1505). Two are particularly interesting; one depicts Benedict presiding over the monks as they eat their frugal dinner, in the foreground in front of the tablecloth a dog and cat snarl at each other, apparently fighting over table scraps<sup>270</sup>. Their presence is not presented as anything out of the ordinary in the fresco. In another fresco of this cycle a group of prostitutes try to enter the monastery and seduce the monks. They are preceded by their dog, which like them is an overly ornate specimen, a small curly-haired breed, whose luxurious coat reflects the women's fine clothing. Here the dog performs another function, acting as a representative of the frivolous secular world intruding unwanted into the monastic world<sup>271</sup>.

A late fourteenth-century exemplum tells of a little girl who is brought up as nun. She begins by loving the dog and bird of her abbess, but later

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<sup>268</sup> MS London British Library Add. 48978, f. 47verso. The Account Book of Beaulieu Abbey is dated c. 1270) and the pen drawing is on in green ink appears in the top left hand margin. Many thanks to Professor Paul Harvey of the University of Durham for supplying this information. Another image of a monastic pet is depicted in a fourteenth-century book of hours (MS London British Library Stowe 17, f. 100recto) in which a nun clutches her little white collared dog. See PLATE 11.

<sup>269</sup> M. Wood, *The medieval English house* (London, 1965), p. 27.

<sup>270</sup> See PLATE 12.

<sup>271</sup> See PLATE 13.

decides to love the Christ Child with all her heart after viewing his image. Although the abbesses' pets are not the focus of the story, their presence is not condemned. Instead the young girl's devotion to them is seen as lower form of love in comparison to the love she will later feel for the Christ child<sup>272</sup>.

Similarly, John Skelton's (1460-1529) elegy 'The Book of Phillip Sparrow' is centered on the death of a pet sparrow called Phillip<sup>273</sup>, slain by a cat called Gyb<sup>274</sup>. The bird belonged to a Jane Scrope, from the Benedictine nunnery of Carrow (near Norwich). The poem has echoes of Catullus' 'passer' poems (*Carmina* II and III) and the service for the dead:

'For the sowle of Philip Sparowe, / That was late slayn at Carowe,  
/ Among the Nones Blake, / For that swete soules sake, / And for all sparowes  
soules, / Set in our bederolles, / Pater noster qui, / With an Ave Mari, <sup>275</sup>'

Later lines express Jane Scrope's sorrow at the death of her pet:

I wept and I wayled, / The tearys downe hayled; / But nothings it  
awayled / To call Phylyp agayne, / Whom Gyb our cat hath slayne<sup>276</sup>.

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<sup>272</sup> MS London British Library Cotton Cleopatra D. viii, f. 109recto-verso (beginning with the title 'Quedam pulla corperali visu Christi in altari'). The 'canem abbatisse et auem' are mentioned on f. 190verso. The manuscript is dated to the end of fourteenth-century. Cf. H.L.D. Ward, *Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London, 1961-2), I, pp. 200 and 249 and vol. III. pp. 638-9.

<sup>273</sup> A common or generic name for sparrows in medieval England.

<sup>274</sup> A common name for a cat, from Gilbert. The cat in the sixteenth-century English play *Gammer Gurton's Needle* is also called Gyb. C.W. Whitworth, ed., *Gammer Gurton's Needle* (London, 1997).

<sup>275</sup> Lines 7-14 (of a total of 1382). The entire poem is edited in J. Scattergood, ed., *The Complete Poems of John Skelton* (New Haven, 1983), pp. 71-106 under the title 'Phylyp Sparrow'.

<sup>276</sup> Lines 23-27, *Ibid.* There are other notable medieval literary works on the death of nun's pets. Cuono of St Nabor's 'The Peacock and the Owl', c. 1000, deals with an albino peacock, see J.M. Ziolkowski, *Talking Animals: Medieval Latin Beast Poetry, 750-1150*, (Philadelphia, 1993), pp. 244-5. A beloved donkey belonging to Alfrâd of Homburg is killed by a wolf in one of the eleventh-century Cambridge Songs. See K. Breul, *The Cambridge songs.: The*

Despite the occasional injunction against them, pets appear to have been part of monastic life, especially in nunneries. Many regulations, instead of banning them entirely, tolerated pets as long as they were reduced in number and quiet. The prioress of St Helen's Bishopsgate in the fifteenth-century was ordered by the local Dean Kentwood to remove most of the dogs, keeping one or two<sup>277</sup>. Similarly a letter was sent by the bishop's chancellor in August 1520 to the prioress of Flixton, Elizabeth Wright ordering her to remove all dogs within a month apart from the one that she would prefer to keep<sup>278</sup>.

In some cases, as long as the pet was confined to a certain species such as a cat, or permission had been given, the pet could stay. In the *Ancrene Riwe*, a guide for anchoresses, a ruling stated: 'Unless need compels you, my dear sisters, and your director advises it, you must not keep any animal except a cat...Now if someone needs to keep one, let her see to it that it does not annoy anyone or do any harm to anybody, and that her thoughts are not taken up with it. An anchoress ought not to have anything which draws her heart outward'<sup>279</sup>. Cats had the advantage of being an example of an animal whose presence could be justified on practical grounds. It could be kept under the

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*Cambridge songs : a goliard's song book of the XIth century* (Cambridge, 1915), p. 62 and E. Powers, *Medieval English Nunneries* (Cambridge, 1922), p. 589 for a translation.

<sup>277</sup> Hist. Mss. Com. Rep. IX, app. Pt. I, p. 57. Cf. E. Powers, *Medieval English Nunneries* (Cambridge, 1922), p. 307.

<sup>278</sup> 'Cancellarius injunxit prioresse quod infra mensem proximum sequentem amoveat canes extra monasterium excepto uno quem maluerit', A. Jessop, *Visitation of the diocese of Norwich* (London, 1888), p. 191.

<sup>279</sup> M.B. Salu, ed. and trans., *The Ancrene Riwe*, Part VIII [External Rules] (London, 1955), p. 185. For a general overview of medieval cats, see D. Gray, 'Notes on Some Medieval Mystical, Magical and Moral Cats', *Langland, the mystics and the medieval English religious tradition: essays in honour of S. S. Hussey*, ed. H. Phillips (Cambridge, 1990), p. 185-202

official guise of a destroyer of vermin and thus become a pet 'through the back door'<sup>280</sup>. This would explain why cats which were often relegated to a lowly status of mousers outside monastic walls, become a very familiar pet among those in religious orders<sup>281</sup>.

### *Criticism and Tolerance in University colleges*

The following section will examine the situation of clerics keeping pets in university spaces. Most of the evidence comes from regulatory statutes which are negative in character. However, as noted previously in connection with regulations against pet keeping in nunneries, the fact that they were issued in the first place shows that pet keeping was a common practice that therefore needed regulated. Secondly, regulations were frequently reissued, which suggests that the prohibitions were ignored or were futile attempts to curb an established practice. Although pets would have been more suitable for a life dedicated to study in interior quarters in urban areas some students still had ties to practices associated with the lay world, and kept hunting animals

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<sup>280</sup> Actually literally in the case of the 'official' cats of Exeter Cathedral, where there are entries in the accounts (from 1305 through 1467) for the *custoribus et cato* (to the keepers and the cat) and *pro cato* (for the cat), amounting to a penny a week (to supplement the animal's diet, apart from the pests it was supposed to control). There is still a cat-hole in the door of the north transept wall. N. Orme, *Exeter Cathedral as it was, 1050-1550* (Exeter, 1986). For examples of some cathedral cats still *in situ*, see M.M. Howard, 'Dried Cats', *Man*, 51 (1951), pp. 149-151.

<sup>281</sup> On rare occasions there might even been danger in keeping a cat, as when as a prioress at Newington was apparently smothered by her cat while she slept. 'Et postea contingit quod prioressa eiusdem manerii strangulata fuit de cato suo in lecto suo noctu', G.J. Turner and H.E. Salter, ed., *The Register of St Augustine's Abbey Canterbury commonly called the Black Book*, I, (Oxford, 1915), p. 283. Cats, like rabbits, were a rather ambiguous category of pet, as born out in an injunction of Archbishop Eudes Rigaud of Rouen (who issued many against pet-keeping), against the nunnery of St Armand (Sancti Amandi Rothomagensis) in 1258, which speaks of cat fur being used in the sisters's garments and bedclothes: 'Utuntur camisiis, culcitrīs et lintheaminibus, et pelliciis cuniculorum, leporum, catorum et vulpium; interdiximus eis omnino pellicias cuniculorum'. Th. Bonnis, ed., *Regestrum Visitationum Archiepiscopi Rothomagensis*, (Rouen, 1852), 16.

so many university regulations ban the keeping of hawks along with caged birds<sup>282</sup>.

In England, the statutes of various colleges of Oxford and Cambridge suggest that the authorities were fighting against the importation of hunting animals in the colleges, (symbols of the students' previous secular lives) and the keeping of small animals as pets, a reflection of the students' predominantly interior lifestyle. In the wording of the statutes it appears that the keeping of animals was considered a distraction to scholars who were forbidden to keep them either in the public areas or their private chambers.

The statutes of Peterhouse (Cambridge) forbade the keeping any type of dog, which might encompass a pet or hound along with hunting birds<sup>283</sup>.

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<sup>282</sup> University students might interact with animals in other ways than pet keeping or hunting. Students often used animals in riotous games. The animals in questions were likely to be animals picked up off the street and used in student pranks. An exemplum by Jacques de Vitry tells of a group of Parisian students playing with a cat by making it throw a die they had placed on its paw: 'Item mundis ludit cum multis sicut scolaris cum murilego capto, qui ponebat sibi decium in pede et quando jactabat catus plura puncta, pascebat eum clericus et dabat ei morcellos et quando pauciora jactabat, excoriabat eum. Sic mundus permittit plura puncta jactare et lucrari et pascit eos et in fine excoriabat eos et auferet pellem temporalium et eciam propiam', T.F. Crane, ed. *The Exempla or Illustrative Stories from the Sermones Vulgares of Jacques de Vitry* (London, 1890) p. 53, n°194, cf. J. Mielton, *Miracles de Notre Dame* (London, 1885) p. 43 and F.C. Tubach, *Index Exemplorum* (Helsinki, 1969) p. 72 n°887. The story also occurs in *La Tabula Exemplorum secundum ordinem alphabeti* ed. J. Th. Welter (Paris/Toulouse, 1926) (vol. III of the series *Thesaurus Exemplorum*).

<sup>283</sup> Peterhouse: 37. *Ne Scolares canes teneant vel falcones* 'Cum Domûs prædictæ Scolares non canibus vel avibus, sed suis lectionibus & Actibus scholasticis in quibus proficiant, teneantur pro viribus continuato studio intendere diligenter : Statuimus prohibendo, ne eorum aliquis infra septa Domûs dictæ, etiam suis sumptibus propriis, canes teneant vel falcones seu nisos; ne per hoc Sociorum turbatio vel studendi distractio quævis fiat; nam si unus hoc licenter facere possit in Domo, singuli ejusdem Scolares ratione parili possent illud idem, et sic murmuratio inter eos (saltem tacita) de facili oriretur, & distractionis occasio studentibus præberetur. Facientes vero contrarium, per Magistrum & Decanos Domûs arbitrariè puniantur; & si in suâ rebellionem persteterint, tanquam inobedientes & perjuri a Domo amoveantur omnino, prout de Sclaribus rebellibus est superius ordinatum.' *Documents relating to the University and Colleges of Cambridge*, vol. II (London, 1852), p. 29 (Ancient Statutes of St Peter's College, Cambridge [1344]); A. Cobban, *English University Life in the Middle Ages* (London, 1999), p. 203.

New College and All Souls (both Oxford) had the same prohibition, but added the keeping of ferrets, an animal that could have been kept as a pet or used to catch small game<sup>284</sup>. Apart from the problem of the animals being a distraction, the statutes of New College also railed against giving bread to dogs instead of the poor. King's College (Cambridge) not only followed New College's line regarding the distribution of bread to dogs but also attempted to cover almost any possible animal that could be brought into college premises, and in addition to banning all types of birds and dogs, added monkeys, wolves and bears, among others<sup>285</sup>. Singing birds, which by their nature are always pets,

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<sup>284</sup> New College: R. 25. – Quod nullus scholaris vel Socius teneat canes aliquos, aut aves accipitres, ludatve, sagittet, jaciet, vel alias exerceat, infra collegium vel extra, per quæ damnum eidem collegio eveniat quovismodo.

Et quoniam non congruit pauperibus, et præsertim de eleemosyna viventibus, dare panem filiorum hominum canibus ad manducandum, scriptumque reperiatur alibi, Væ sit iis in peccatum qui in avibus cœli ludant, statuimus, ordinamus et volumus, quod nullus scholarium vel Sociorum dicti nostri collegii leporarium teneat, aut canem alium quemcunque, ferrettos, nisum, vel aliam avem accipitrem qualemcunque. *Statutes of the Colleges of Oxford* (London, 1853) vol. I ch. 5, p. 48: Statutes of St Mary's College of Winchester or New College, 1400]

All Souls: Cap. 20 – Item, statuimus, ordinamus et volumus, quod nullus scholarium vel Sociorum dicti Collegii leporarium teneat aut canem aliam quemcunque, ferrettos, nisum, aut aliam avem accipitrem qualemcunque .... *Statutes of the Colleges of Oxford* (London, 1853) vol. I, ch. 7, pp. 44 [All Souls, 1443]. Cf. *English University Life in the Middle Ages*, pp. 203

<sup>285</sup> King's College XXV: Et quoniam non convenit pauperibus et præsertim de eleemosyna viventibus dare panem filiorum hominum canibus ad manducandum: Scriptumque reperiatur alibi, Væ ! sit eis in peccatum qui in avibus cœli ludant, statuimus, ordinamus, et volumus, quod nullus Scholarium vel Sociorum, Capellanorum, Clericorum, vel Ministrorum quorumcunque Collegii Regalis prædicti, teneat vel habeat canes retia ad venandum vel piscandum, vel ferettas, nisos, vel accipitres, aut venationem vel piscationem exerceat, neque inter se in collegio nostro Regali prædicto simium, ursum, vulpem, cervum, cervam, damam, aut taxum, seu aliquas alias rapaces bestias sive aves hujusmodi insolitas seu raro visas, quæ nec proderunt nec prodesse possunt, habeat aut teneat ullo modo. Taxillorum insuper, alearum, ac pilarum, omnemque ludum noxium, inordinatum, illicitum, et inhonestum, et præsertim omnem ludum causam vel occasionem perdicionis monetæ, pecuniæ, rerum, seu bonorum quorumlibet ministrantem, infra Collegium nostrum Regale prædictum, vel alibi in Universitate prædicta ubicunque, ipsis penitus interdiciamus et etiam prohibemus expresse. Contrarium vero prohibitioni huic nostræ facientes, si super hoc convicti fuerint, pœnam Scholaribus et Sociis dicti nostri Collegii extra Universitatem devillantibus in proximo capitulo præcedenti superius limitatem incurrere statuimus et volumus ipso facto. Volentes et etiam prohibentes firmiter et expresse ne quisquam

were banned, along with other animals, in Oxford at both Magdalen and Corpus Christi colleges<sup>286</sup>. Corpus Christi, perhaps like King's College Cambridge, fearing that students would try to break the rules, tried to encompass most species of singing birds in their list and specified thrushes, blackbirds, starlings and nightingales. Along with criticising animals as a distraction for students and bread being given to animals instead of poor people, Queen's College (Oxford) also claimed that the animals might infect the air around the students as well.<sup>287</sup> Oh the continent, similar rules were

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Sociorum prædictorum, ministrorum, vel aliorum quorumque jaciat, sagittet, vel projiciat lapides, pilas, ligna, terram, seu alia quæcunque, aut aliquos ludos vel jactus faciant vel exerceant, faciat vel exerceant aliquis eorundem, nec ab aliis fieri permittat infra Collegium Regale prædictum claustrumve [p. 543] clausum vel horum ejusdem vel extra, per quæ vel eorum aliquod Ecclesia, Aula, vel domus aliæ, seu ædificia dicti nostri Collegii in fenestris vitreis, muris, tectis, cooperturis, vel alias qualitercunque infra vel extra, superius vel inferius, fracturas seu læsiones au damnum aliud patiantur seu habeant quomodolibet vel jacturam. Et si quis in hoc casu deliquerit, et super hoc convictus fuerit, pro damno per ipsum sic illato satisfaciat competenter : et nihilominus per subtractionem communarum suarum per quindenam ad minus vel alio modo juxta discretionem et ordinationem Præpositi, Vice-præpositi, Decanorum, Bursariorum, et sex aliorum seniorum dicti Regalis Collegii juxta qualitatem delicti acriter puniatur sine favore quocunque ne perpetrandi similia cæteris audacia tribuatur. *Documents relating to the University and Colleges of Cambridge*, vol. II (London, 1852), p. 542 [15<sup>th</sup> cent. Henry VI]; cf. *English University Life*, p. 203.

<sup>286</sup>Magdalen College: 'Item, statuimus, ordinamus et volumus, quod nullus scholarium vel Sociorum dicti Collegii leporarium teneat aut canem aliam quemcunque, ferrettos, nisum, aut aliam avem ancipitrem qualemcunque, mavisum aut aliam avem cantatricem...' *Statutes of the Colleges of Oxford* (London, 1853) vol. II, ch. 8, p. 42 [in 1479]. Corpus Christi College : 'Ut ea propulsentur omnia quæ studio literario sunt adversantia quæque ad miram et incredibilem trahant voluptatem, cui nimium dediti efficiuntur suæ honestatis et commodi immemores, statuimus ut nullus Socius, scholaris vel discipulus, aut minister sacelli nostri Collegii, deditus sit venationi et aucupio; canemve habeat aut nutriat venaticum seu alterius cujusvis generis, aut viverram, ferretum appellant, cujuscunque generis, accipitres qualescunque aut aves aucupii, aut cantatrices, ut turdum, mavisum vocant, lusciniam, sturnum aut merulam, intra Collegium vel extra' *Statutes of the Colleges of Oxford* (London, 1853), vol. II, ch. 10, p. 68 [1517]. Cf. *English University Life*, pp. 203

<sup>287</sup>Queen's College [statutes from 1340] 'Et quoniam non congruit pauperibus præcipue de eleemosyna viventibus dare panem filiorum hominum canibus ad manducandum, væque sit euis imprecatur qui in avibus cæli ludant, nullus scholarium dictæ aulæ in eadem vel locis conjunctis leporarium teneat, canem venaticum vel alium privatum, accipitrem, vel avem reclamatoriam aut aliam qualemcunque'....'Et quoniam aëris puritas affert studii facultatem, volo quod infra mansum scholarium prædictorum nullum sit equorum stabulum, seu retentio vel educatio aliorum animalium infectionem

enacted with birds and beasts being banned in Paris<sup>288</sup> and a statute of 1453 in Heidelberg forbade the keeping of animals and birds (specifying 'little birds' among the forbidden animals)<sup>289</sup>.

Although it is difficult to ascertain how strictly these regulations were enforced, the need to enact them suggests that animals were frequently bought into college and there may have been degrees of tolerance in individual cases or colleges. The regulations provide a comparable case to the injunctions and regulations in religious houses, and like them, have as their aim an attempt to rid the inmates of distractions and cares of the secular world.

### *Conclusion*

This chapter investigated issues of space and acceptability. Medieval pets flourished in an enclosed domestic space. Like their owners, medieval pets did not belong 'outdoors', the province of secular men. The freedom allotted to the pet inside domestic space differentiates it from other animals, which are normally barred from many areas. In contrast, the pet, as it accompanies its owner everywhere and all the time, appears in sleeping quarters, enclosed gardens, etc. Additionally, unlike other domesticated

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qualem cunq̄ue causantium'. *Statutes of the Colleges of Oxford* (London, 1853) vol. I, ch. 4, pp. 18-19. Cf. *English University Life*, pp. 204.

<sup>288</sup> 'Nec etiam teneant bestias vel aves immundas vel alias nocivas', D. Lobineau, *Histoire de la Ville de Paris*, III (Paris, 1725), p. 39. Cf. H. Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, III (Oxford, 1936), p. 421.

<sup>289</sup> Heidelberg: 'Item quod nullus capere presumat aviculas, aves seu feras quarumcunq̄ue specierum, seu capcioni illarum intersit, sub pena vnius floreni et confiscationis captarum' (statute of 1453) in J.F. Hautz, *Geschichte der Universität Heidelberg*, II (Mannheim, 1862-4) p. 393. Cf. H. Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, III (Oxford, 1936), p. 419.

animals, pets occupy the close personal space of their owners. They abound at the feet or in the arms or lap of their owners. However, there are restrictions. When venturing outside of enclosed space, the pet is kept close to the owner, on a leash, held tightly or placed in a carriage. This situation reflects their owner's situation, who is also often subjected to restrictions of movement when abroad and is another example of how a pet becomes part of their owner's identity. Although this chapter, like the previous one, concentrated on women and clerics, the situation of pets in urban space has also been discussed, as an exception proving the rule especially in regarding to the 'family pet' and connections between pets and children. The second part of this chapter dealt with criticism and tolerance of pet keeping. For secular women, although spoiling a pet was often singled out, on the whole, contemporary criticism permitted pets as long as they do not lead to distracting the owner from their duties or was lavished with an extravagance inappropriate for an animal. For example, feeding a pet is an acceptable action, but stuffing with food until it grew obese while neglecting to feed the poor would be a criticised action. Pet keeping was rife by members of religious orders, despite the numerous injunctions against them. This was not because they were clerics but because of the nature and functions of the institutions to which they belonged. Their presence was viewed by many authorities as a distraction for both the owner and the community. Although some house and orders banned pets altogether, others reached a compromise and allowed pets as long as their numbers were kept to a minimum or their owners did not bring them into sacred spaces. In a final case of institutional space, pets were

banned from many universities, although like the regulatory statutes enacted in religious houses, the very existence of such prohibitions points to widespread pet keeping and perhaps to an underlying social tolerance of it.

### **Chapter Three: Pet Keeping by Humanists**

#### *Introduction*

The growing acceptability of pet keeping by secular men in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries would seem to have been due to the influence of scholars. Scholars, educated in the humanist tradition, kept small animals as companions that better fitted their interior lifestyle than large hunting dogs, horses and hawks<sup>290</sup>. Pets appear as a motif in representations of humanists, both in iconography and in verse, and I will focus on these two source genres in this chapter. The ubiquity of companion animals in these genres argues for the social reality of pets in the company of scholars behind their presence in literary compositions and iconography: the theory that we are dealing only with an artistic and literary motif cannot be maintained. I am not suggesting that art and literature merely mimic life. Nevertheless, there is a great deal of evidence to suggest that pets, as portrayed in iconography, verse and letters, formed part of scholarly domestic life and these sources signify that the practice, which received little criticism, was widespread. The iconography suggests that pets became an artistic motif common to scholars, while verses written by scholars eulogising their pets often received acclaim, and were widely imitated. The strong emotional attachment of scholars to their pets was not seen as an eccentricity but rather as a typical response to owning a companion animal. Although there may be an element of self-deprecating humour in some of these elegies, the emotional sentiment portrayed should

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<sup>290</sup>'Interior' lifestyle should be understood here in a literal spatial sense of the scholar spending most of his time in doors.

not be taken as mere literary exaggeration or stylized convention. Furthermore we know from other sources, such as letters, tombstones and contemporary accounts that pet keeping was widespread among scholars. There was a humanist tradition of mock-eulogies on all species of animals; however, personal household pets are a different category to the parody of an animal species for which there is no emotional attachment. For example, there is a wealth of difference between the fifteenth-century humanist Leon Battista Alberti's *Muscae encomium* (Praise of the Fly) and his *Canis*, which praises a dog he actually owned<sup>291</sup>.

The evidence for scholars keeping pets mainly comes from their letters and literary compositions, and above all, elegies and epitaphs written on the death of a pet, marking the owner's emotional attachment to the animals<sup>292</sup>. These works have other functions, such as an exhibition of the writer's skill through the use of the Classical model of elegy. Latin was the primary literary language of most of them, although the vernacular was used at times (284)<sup>293</sup>. The most influential classical authors for this genre were the recently discovered Catullus, Ovid, Statius, Martial and the *Planudean Anthology*, an

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<sup>291</sup> Alberti's *Muscae encomium* is based on Lucian's *Musca*. Although there is doubt now regarding the attribution of this work to Lucian, during the period in question it was accepted as part of his canon. Cf. A.H. Tomarken, *The smile of truth: the French satirical eulogy and its antecedents* (Princeton, 1990), which discusses the genre of mock-encomium, from its classical origins, through the works of the Italian Neo-Latinists to members of the French Pléiade.

<sup>292</sup> The epitaphs and elegies that I will discuss are those that appear to refer clearly to a pet. Thus I am not examining certaining dog poems in which the function of the dog is in doubt, such as Francisco Cameono's *Epitaphium Bandere*, which describes the dog as a 'venatrix' (hunter) or the Veronese John Cotta's *Epitaphium Canis* for a dog called Caparion which emphasizes the dog's qualities as a guard-dog rather than as a companion. See *Carmina Illustrum Poetarum Itolorum* (Florence, 1719), vol. III, pp. 115 and 496-7, respectively.

<sup>293</sup> For example, in Cesare Orsini's 'Alla gatta uccisa', a mixture of Latin, Italian and Latinized Italian (Italian with Latin declined endings) is used. O. Targioni Tozzetti, ed., *Antologia Della Poesia Italiana* (Livorno, 1916), p. 624.

anthology of Greek epitaphs collected by the Byzantine scholar, Maximus Planudes, in the fourteenth century<sup>294</sup>.

Few epitaphs and elegies of pets survive that were composed during the High Middle Ages by clerics, partly because there was not a long-standing tradition of pet epitaphs. One of the few extant examples is the long elegy composed by Thierry, Abbot of St. Thronde in the late eleventh or early twelfth century on the death of his dog Pitulus, who is described as a little dog (*sed canis exiguus, sed brevis et catulus*) with white fur and black eyes (*albicolor nigris faciem gemmabat ocellis*) whose only purpose was to be loved by his master and amuse him (*Quod fuit officium? Numquid fuit utile uel non? / Ut paruum magnus diligeret dominus / Hoc fuit officium, domino praeludere tantum*)<sup>295</sup>. Thierry

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<sup>294</sup> Catullus's *Carmina* II and III (both regarding Lesbia's pet sparrow) were used as a model for pet elegies. Catullus was rediscovered in the early fourteenth century and his poems were widely imitated by Italian scholars and poets. A good survey is provided in M. Morrison, 'Catullus in the Neo-Latin Poetry of France before 1550', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, xvii, 1955, pp. 365-394. Regarding the other classical authors, their most influential texts for the genre of animal elegies were Ovid's *Amores* (Book II.6 on Corinna's dead parrot), Statius's *Silvae* (Book II.4, on his friend Atedius Melior's dead parrot) and Martial's *Epigrams* (Book I.109, on Publius's little dog Issa). For a study on the first two, see J. S. Dietrich 'Dead Parrots Society', *American Journal of Philology*, 123:1 (2002), pp. 95-110. The *Planudean Anthology* was first printed in Florence in 1494. J. Hutton, *The Greek Anthology in Italy to the year 1800* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1935) traces the influence of the *Planudean Anthology* (and the later *Palatine Anthology*) on the works of Italian scholars. There are several sepulchral epitaphs (mainly Hellenistic) for animals (on dogs, tame partridges, etc.) that served as inspiration for scholars knowledgeable in Greek when composing elegies. See W.R. Paton, ed., *The Greek Anthology* (London, 1916-18) vol. II, book VII, for numerous examples.

<sup>295</sup> Thierry of St Thronde, died c. 1107. See M. Jean Préaux 'De Culex de Virgile a son pastiche par Thierry de Saint-Thronde', *Présence de Virgile: Actes du colloque* (Paris, 1978) on the influence of Virgil's *Culex* (attributed to the poet from the first century a.d.) on Thierry's elegy. Nevertheless Thierry's deep sentiment of loss and personalization of the dead animal makes the poem more than mere imitation. M. Jean Préaux's article supplies the Latin text of the eulogy. The elegy contains various classical references such as Ovid's parrot and Virgil's gnat. For an English translation, see J.M. Ziolkowski, *Talking animals: medieval Latin beast poetry, 750-1150* (Philadelphia, 1993), pp. 272-273. Another example of a clerical pet poem, although without the use of classical antecedents, is the ninth century 'Pangur Bán', written in Old Irish by a monk on the margin of a Latin manuscript in Carinthia which describes the author writing accompanied by his pet cat. Translated by R. Flower in *The*

appears to be a model of the clerical pet keeper examined in the previous chapters. The pet keepers and authors of the works that will be examined in this chapter on the other hand are overwhelmingly secular scholars, who adopt the genre of the classical elegy to express grief at the loss of their pet.

*Petrarch as a model of a humanist pet-keeper*

Francesco Petrarch (1304-1374), although a cleric in minor orders, deserves special attention as the prototype of the pet-keeping humanist<sup>296</sup>. Many later lay humanists, when writing about their pet or those of their fellow scholars, would refer back to Petrarch and his love of dogs, possibly finding justification for their pet-keeping by the knowledge that Petrarch shared this characteristic.

Petrarch kept several dogs, as evidenced in his letters. The first mention of a dog appears in a letter dated to 1338 written to Giacomo Colonna, when he was living in Vacluse. In the letter he defended his reasons for living so isolated in Vacluse, affirming that he had no other companions apart from his faithful dog and servants<sup>297</sup>.

A long letter in verse composed in 1347 for his patron, Cardinal Giovanni Colonna, describes how a dog that the cardinal had given him was settling down to life in remote Vacluse. The dog, a royal gift from Spain for the

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*Poem-Book of the Gael*, ed. E. Hull, (London, 1912), pp. 132-33 (under the title 'The Student and His Cat').

<sup>296</sup> M.G. Bishop, *Petrarch and his World* (London, 1964) and N. Mann, *Petrarch* (Oxford, 1984) concisely trace his life and works.

<sup>297</sup> D. Rossetti, ed., *Petrarchæ Poëmata Minora* (Milan, 1829-1834), vol. III, p. 214, lines 160-161: 'Villicus est servus; mihi sum comes ipsi canisque, / Fidum animal; reliquos locus hic exterruit omnes,' (the letter is numbered 'Epistolæ Metricæ I. 6, pp. 202-223). Many of the letters quoted in this section are translated in E. Hatch Wilkins, *Petrarch at Vacluse : Letters in verse and prose* (Chicago, 1955).

cardinal, once accustomed to living in a royal palace, eating fine food and sleeping on a 'purple bed' is now used to eating plain simple food (Petrarch uses the adjective 'Romulian' to contrast the dog's present food from his previous fine fare). Petrarch believed that the dog's new surroundings delighted the animal, now very content with his new life<sup>298</sup>. The cardinal gave the dog to Petrarch when the latter was visiting him at Avignon, to be a 'source of comfort and companion' (*Solamen comitemque*) underlining that the animal was kept as a pet, rather than a hunting or guard dog. On receiving the dog, Petrarch put a chain around the animal's neck, affirming ownership although he commented that the dog had been brought down in social station, from being owned by a cardinal to being the pet of a minor cleric and poet, an interesting reflection on the status of the animal being connected to its owner's position<sup>299</sup>. Petrarch continues with the theme of how the dog likes his new life, away from the enclosed halls and fine foods, being content with bread, water and Petrarch's small home (*nam panis et unda / Sufficiunt ac parva domus*). The dog is now free to do a great deal of exercise, running about and swimming in the nearby pools of water. Due to swimming the local waters, the dog is now cured of mange which Petrarch claims was due to the unhealthy environment of Avignon (*cecidit scabies in fonte salubri / Torpenti contracta situ*). The dog now carries his head proudly and his neck is more

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<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. III, pp.38-46. The letter is numbered 'Epistolae Metricae III 5 (Ad Iohannem de Columna), and begins: '1 Cuncta dies minuit: tua munera tempore crescunt / Atque usus meliore facit. Tibi regius aule / Assuetus menseque canis somnosque superbos / Purpureis captare thoris, transmissus ab ora / 5 Occidua, patrios mores hispanaque raptim / Limina romuleis opibus somnumque cibumque / Posthabuit, sortemque novam meliorque cernens / Omnia, tranquilla letus statione quievit.'

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 38, lines 9-13: 'Hunc michi digressus supremaque verba paranti / 10 Solamen comitemque vie largiris: at ille / Sublimi de sede licet venturus ad imam, / Parat, et iniectis mestus dat colla catheris, / Et sequitur, nec spernit heri mandata minoris'.

muscular<sup>300</sup>. He still wears the Cardinal's livery, a collar with a disk and a cloth belt made of red fabric with the heraldic embroidery of the Colonna family (white columns on red) and proudly chases away any villagers that come to annoy the scholar with their petty concerns<sup>301</sup>. But this dog, despite his apparent brawniness, is not a guard dog but a pet, albeit a rather large one, a fact that Petrarch emphasizes when describing the dog as a constant companion (*comes assiduus*) who informs his master that he has slept too long by whimpering and scratching on the door. The dog is always happy to see and follow him on his walks. If Petrarch decides to lie down, while strolling, the dog lies down as well but turns his back so he may face whoever might pass by<sup>302</sup>. As Petrarch rests in a favourite spot, between the rocks, the dog protects him with his large body and is prepared to bark if anyone intrudes. Rather than acting as a guard dog, here the animal performs the duty of assisting the scholar in his quiet contemplation. Petrarch even anthropomorphizes his pet's character, claiming the animal's behaviour is

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<sup>300</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. III, pp. 38 and 40, lines 14-23 'Paulatim minus atque minus meminisse relictas / 15 Delitias. Iam prata iuvant, iam lucida transans, / Flumina mordet aquas, ludique in gurgite puro, / Fercula iam sibi nostra placent, et libera curis / Otia. Deserti non ampla palatia Regis / Anteferat variasque dapes: nam panis et unda / 20 Sufficiunt ac parva domus. Iam membra refulgent / Lota feri, cecidit scabies in fonte salubri / Torpenti contracta situ; iam vertice toto / Altior it solito cervixque thorosior extat.

<sup>301</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 40, lines 24-30: 'Iamque tumet phaleris, iam via monilia mulcent, / 25 Amplaque zona rubens niveisque intexta columnis, / Seque fuisse tuum recolens secum ipse superbit, / Multa minax. Fugit nostro de gramine pastor / Seque suumque gregem procul abdidit. Atria custos / Formidatus habet: plebs importuna procaxque / 30 Hactenus obsessum metuit contingere limen.'

<sup>302</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 40, lines 31-44: 'Liber ago: meus assertor michi scilicet unus / Est comes assiduus. Quotiens lassata diurnis / Sub noctem curis thalamo mea membra silenti / Composui facilemque oculis dedit hora quietem, / 35 Excubat ante fores. Quotiens me longior equo / Somnus habet dexam, queritur, solisque reversi / Admonet increpitans et concutit ostia plantis. / Illicet egressum vultu plaudente salutatur, / Meque preit, loca nota petens et lumina volvens / 40 Sepe retro. Levi sed postquam in margine ripe / Procubui et solitis curis insistere cepi, / Vertitur huc illuc, aditus circumspexit omnes / Candida tum viridi proiectus pectora terre, / Tandem terga michi obvertit, venientibus ora'

similar to human senses (*Si quis cuncta notet, sensus vestigia nostri*). And like any faithful companion, although he might be aggressive to foes, he is all friendliness with Petrarch's friends, dropping his ears submissively and cheerfully wagging his tail<sup>303</sup>. Petrarch mentions again how the dog keeps worldly and annoying distractions away, symbolized by the queries and requests for advice from local inhabitants which disturb the 'peace of the Muses' (*Musas turbare quietas*), thanks to his fearsome large size and his habit of lying in front of Petrarch. Petrarch thanks the Cardinal for this gift that gives him such peace<sup>304</sup>. Despite being a very large dog, probably of a hunting breed, Petrarch underlines the fact that his pet is not at all good for hunting. He describes the dog running around in the woods, with a high pitched bark (like that of singing child). His pursuit of the local wild geese is described as a game, not done in anger. The dog refuses to harm weak animals and is as 'gentle as lamb' (*mitior agno*) towards sheep, goats and kids. On viewing a hare the dog is afraid, while he would cheerfully try to bite the ears of a sow or a bull<sup>305</sup>. In short, the dog is a placid gentle beast, suitable only for

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<sup>303</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 42, lines 45-54 '45 Est inter fontes gelidos locus, undique solis / Pervius altibus scopulis et flumine cinctus. / Hac gressu trepidante feror manet ille, viamque / Occupat et magno tegit artum corpore saxum, / Latratu exiguo conspectos nuntiat ante, 50 Inde ruit, nisi forte vetes; nam plurima servat, / Si quis cuncta notet, sensus vestigia nostri. / Iussus inardescit; strictis lentescit habenis, / Torvus ut adversus reliquos, sic blandus amicis / Auribus abiectis tremulaque occurrere cauda.'

<sup>304</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 42, lines 55-62 '55 Prospicit hunc medio transversum calle tremiscens / Rusticus, et legum nodos perplexaque iura / Consiliumque domus inopis, connubia nate / Me percontari solitus, velut Appius alter, / Acilius ve forem, et Musas turbare quietas; / 60 Nunc secum sua solus agit: michi, maxima vite / Commoditas, mecum esse licet; que cuncta fatebor / Muneribus debere tuis. Solatia Mille.'

<sup>305</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 42, lines 63-77 'Preterea: saltu colles amnemque fatigat, / Arguta pueros imitatur voce canentes / 65 Et risus motura facit. Penitusque vadosis / Anseribus gravis hostis adest, per littora et altos / Insequitur scopulos: fundo nec tutior imo est / Aliger infelix: medio nam flumine presum / Extrahit et pingues cenas nolentibus offert. / 70 Sepius atque epulas venatibus ornat agrestes. / Sed iocus est aut ira levis, seu grata natanti / Preda est, seu strepitu offendunt: nam mitior agno. / Esse solet parvis. Numquam, mihi

companionship, not for the rigours of hunting for which he lacks the temperament. Petrarch tries his best to defend his dog's gentle nature, claiming that Alexander once rejected a dog that would not hunt, before realizing that the dog, a noble gift from abroad (like Cardinal Colonna's dog), would only hunt prey worthy of him (i.e. that was exotic and 'noble', such as lions and elephants)<sup>306</sup>. Petrarch uses this story defend his dog's curious gentleness towards animals, by claiming that although a little dog could bite him with impunity, he could quite easily attack a lion if needed and reminds the cardinal of how the dog once barked loudly at the caged lions in the papal menagerie<sup>307</sup>. But this appears to be a humorous defense of the dog's gentle

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crede, vel haedum / Vel fragilem tentabit ovem, profugamque capellam / 75 Occursu trepidi leporis quasi territus haeret: / At foetas laniare sues validosque iuencos / Audet, et arreptas convellere morsibus aures.'

<sup>306</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 42 and 44, lines 78-89 'Moribus his quondam diversi a finibus orbi / Missus Alexandro canis est, et regius idem / 80 Et contemptor erat, quem non plebeia moveret / Bellua: non damas, non apros ille, nec ursos / Tangeret, alta suos servans in vulnera dentes. / Quae male cum praeceps novisset dona tyrannus / 85 Mox generosum animal, meritum meliora, peremit / Mittitur hinc alius saevos mactare leones / Doctus, et everso tellorum elephante sub actam / Concutere: hunc iuvenis tandem miratus amavit, / Erroremque suum novit, serumque perempti / Poenituit, quem non digno prius hoste probasset'

<sup>307</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 44 and 46, lines 90-98 '90 At mihi nota mei virtus. Impune catellus / Mordeat hunc lactens, quem non gravis ira leanae / Terreat, orbatae nec fervens tigridis ardor. / Tu praesens, nisi fallor, eras quando alta supremi / Atria Pontificis subito completa tumultu / 95 Movit ubi intonuit, villisque rigentibus horrens / Ibat, ut ostensi laceraret claustra leonis. / Vix inde ab ductus moerens, magnumque dolorem / Testatus gemitu rauco longisve querelis'. For further details on the papal menagerie, see G. Loisel, *Histoire des ménageries de l'antiquité à nos jours* (Paris, 1912). There are numerous references regarding food purchased for the lions and other exotica in the papal accounts in K.H. Schäfer, ed., *Vatikanische quellen zur Geschichte der Päpstlichen Hof-und Finanzverwaltung 1316-1378* (Rome, 1937). For example, there are multiple entries concerning payments to a Bernard of Casamonte, Clement VI's keeper of the lioness, for mutton which was fed to the animal. One such entry from 1346 is in vol. III, p. p. 332 (I.E. 247 f. 173verso): 'Aug. 31 facto computo cum Bernardo de Casamonte, custode leonisse, solvimus pro 74 quarteriis mutonum receptis per eum pro leonissa a die 19. Iunii ad 31 Aug. (74 dies), pro qualibet die 1 quarterium, ad rationem 4 s. 6 d. pro quarterio, 16 l. 13s. monete Auin.'. Similarly, vol. VI, p. 493 of the published accounts has an entry from 1373 on payments for bread for the wild animals and peacocks kept at Ponte Sorgie under Gregory XI: '(Collect. 466 f. 39) 1373 April 28 de mand. pape cum cedula thesaurarii Bertrando de Falgayrassio, serv. arm. pape et

nature: Petrarch claims that the dog, of a supposed hunting breed, who refuses to attack defenseless creatures, would hunt animals that unfortunately are not be found in the wilds of southern France. The letter in verse ends with a polite note that Petrarch would be happy to return the dog to Avignon if the cardinal so wished<sup>308</sup>. This appears to contradict Petrarch's earlier statements of the dog's pleasure at his new life in Vaucluse (and improved health) but can probably be understood as a polite formality towards his patron, the original owner of the dog. The cardinal might have been quite relieved to give the dog away to Petrarch, since such a large energetic animal might not have suited his lodgings in Avignon and the dog's lack of aptitude towards killing smaller animals would have precluded giving him to someone who hunted. Petrarch, a scholar residing in the wide spaces of Vaucluse, might have seemed the perfect recipient for the awkward present.

This letter in verse contains the longest description of an individual dog in all of Petrarch's correspondence, in which canine references are usually short. Despite the dog's large size, which would not have been a problem in Vaucluse, the animal appears to be the perfect scholar's dog, fulfilling the function of companionship along with keeping people away from annoying the scholar and distracting him from study and rest although still with the ability to recognize suitable scholarly friends. The large white dog, who is

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castellano palatii Pontissorgie, pro 10 saum. Bladi grossi pro pane facto seu faciendo pro animalibus feris et pavonibus, recipiento pro ipso d. Iohanne Michaelis presb. Uticen. dioc., 12 fr.'

<sup>308</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. III, p.46, lines 99-105 'Sed multum res parva tenet: sit finis, ut unum /100 Non sileam. Si forte aliquem videt ille tuorum / Seu casus seu iussa ferant (quod scilicet absens / Semper adesse tuis non desinis), incipit aulam / Suspirare tuam, vallesque et rura perosus / Fortunaque memor veteris. Sors libera detur: / 105 Mallet ad excelsam merito remeare Columnam'.

never named, is described as a close companion, who wakes him up, follows and guards him during his walks and, like Petrarch himself, is fond of nature (and very adverse to killing other creatures).

Petrarch would never be depicted posthumously in iconography with a large dog. Instead all of the dogs in images of the poet are small specimens, despite the lack of direct references to small dogs by Petrarch in his correspondence. It appears that later readers had a fixed notion of Petrarch owning a small dog, which would be more in keeping with a scholar's lifestyle.

The next mention by Petrarch of a dog appears in a letter written to his friend Matteo Longo, Bishop of Liège, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of August, 1351. Like many of Petrarch's letters, it was crafted with care and often long after the event in question. The epistle centres on eulogizing dogs. The scenario that precedes the event is that Matteo Longo, had left behind his dog in Vaucluse shortly before Petrarch arrived. Petrarch begins by describing the dog as blacker than pitch, fast of foot, and more faithful than the average dog<sup>309</sup>. The dog appears to have been an energetic sort, running around the countryside<sup>310</sup>. Petrarch then describes how the dog, after roaming despondently in search of his previous master, returned to the house. Petrarch notes it is not in the nature of dogs to live without man<sup>311</sup>. He continues with a long digression on the

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<sup>309</sup> V. Rossi, ed. *Le Familiari* (Florence, 1933-1942), vol. III, p. 91 (Epistolae Familiares XIII. 11) 'Ad Matheum Longum Pergamensem, archidyaconum Leodiensis ecclesie, de natura et fide canum. / Canis tuus pice nigrior vento levior cane fidelior te digresso Substitit erravit ne via, / [5] quod de Creusa Virgilis ait; nam quod sequitur, lassum resedisce non suspicor.

<sup>310</sup> *Ibid*, vol. III, p. 91 (Epistolae Familiares XIII. 11) 'Nullus eum cursus, nulla difficultas viarum, asperitas nulla lassaret qui volucrem soleat ac pendentem in aere leporem incredibili celeritate prevertere; generosa quidem animali labor alit, immodica [10] quies necat'.

<sup>311</sup> *Ibid*, vol. III, p. 91 (Epistolae Familiares XIII. 11) 'Sic igitur errore proculdubio, non labore retractus ex itinere, et amissis indiciis qua te sequeretur, ignorans quid mestissimus ageret, iret in silvas victum sibi proprio studio quesiturus – facile id quidem nulloque poterat

fidelity of dogs, drawing on classical sources, in particular Pliny the Elder's *Historia naturalis* and Solinus's *De mirabilibus mundi*. Classical lore on the faithful dog had already been disseminated throughout the medieval world centuries before Petrarch in abridgements and refashioning of the material. Petrarch repeats well-known tales on canine fidelity, such as one in which a dog throws himself into the Tiber to stay with the corpse of his executed master<sup>312</sup>. After this long digression, Petrarch speaks of the dog's loneliness and despair of finding his master gone and how, full of misery, he leapt around in front of the closed door, so that everyone nearby was sad for the

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labore – nisi natura parens obsisteret, que est ut hoc [15] animal procul ab homine non vivat. E cunctis enim animatibus que sub obsequio hominis sunt, nullum cane fidelius, ut fama est, nullumque quod serius ab homine divellatur.

<sup>312</sup> *Ibid*, vol. III, pp. 91-92 (Epistolae Familiares XIII. 11) 'Accepimus quasdam gentes in preliis canum acies pro stipendiariis habuisse, qui quotiens opus esset, fidelissimam [20] operam navantes nunquam detrectaren; legimus quosdam canes morti se pro dominis obiecisse et alios quidem suos strenue ac feliciter ab iniuria defendisse; alios non minus fideliter sed minus fauste protexisse tandiu donec ipsi confoderentur, ut nisi cane perempto nullus [25] peragende iniurie locus esset; alios quoque superstites, dominis interfectis, sed afflictos vulneribus perserverasse tamen et quando ab hominum nequivissent, dilectum corpus a ferarum saltem ac volucrem iniuria defendisse; quosdam dominorum interitum vindicasse; quosdam vero dominos humi [30] obrutos officiosos ungibus effodisse et interfectores turbe spectantium immixtos et morsibus crebris et flebilis latratus indicio detexisse et ad fatendum coegisse; alios extinctis dominis cibo usque ad exitum abstinuisse; quod Patavi nuper illi viro optimo cuius non modo anime sed cineri [35] memorieque multum debeo, post crudelem illum et lacrimas renovantem vite finem suus canis michi plane notus prestitit; nonnullos audivimus sepulchri saxo pertinaciter inhesisse, nec ante divulsos quam inedia perirent; alios ardentium dominorum rogos insiluisse atque arsisse cum illis. [40] Mirum a Plinio Secundo ac Solino scribitur, Garamantum regem ab exilio ducentorum canum pro se contra adversarios decertantium obsequio redisse. Miserabilius quod Rome actum dicunt, canem damnatum dominum, cum egre posset excludi, in carcerum prosecutum; ac deinde percusso [45] domino canem ingenti ululato dolorem proprium fuisse testatum; demum cum populo miserante ad esum invitaretur oblatum cibum ad os domini sui retulisse; postremo iactatum in Tyberim cadaver, innatando seque dilecto honeri subiectando sustentare nisum esse, non immerito quidem, ut [50] ipsius Plinii verba utar, « effusa multitudine ad spectandam animalis fidem ». Innumerabilia sunt canine ut ita dixerim fidei argumenta.' The references from Pliny the Elder are in his *Historia naturalis*, Book VIII. Petrarch's line 40 is a reference to Chapter LXI.143 while line 50 is a reference to Chapter LXI.145. Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, vol. III, Book VIII (Cambridge, Mass., 1940), pp. 101-103.

abandoned dog and the departure of his owner<sup>313</sup>. Petrarch explains that after speaking kindly to the dog, the animal came to him, wagging his tail and now accompanies Petrarch in his walks. Petrarch ends his letter by reminding Matteo Longo that despite the fact that the dog is now happy in his new household, he could be returned, if needed, to his previous owner<sup>314</sup>. Interestingly, like Cardinal Colonna's dog's, Matteo Longo's abandoned dog also appears to be a large specimen. In both cases, Petrarch takes care of a dog that is unwanted by his previous owners but writes to the previous owners on the notable virtues of the animals that they have decided not to keep and rather entrust in Petrarch's care. Petrarch's tone in both letters is not critical despite his claims at the end of both letters that the dogs would be perfectly happy to return to their previous owners, it appears that he assumed the ownership and care of these animals, placing greater value on the companionship of a dog than his correspondents.

Although there are no other letters solely dedicated to the subject of dogs in Petrarch's voluminous correspondence, he does mention them occasionally in his letters. In a letter written to Francesco Nelli in 1352, while spending the summer at the Sorge Fountain, he describes his simple lifestyle,

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<sup>313</sup> *Ibid*, vol. III, pp. 92-93 (Epistolae Familiares XIII. 11) 'Te igitur amisso, quo se se verteret canis tuus, qui nature dominique memor hinc solitudinem horreret hinc alienigene cuiuslibet dedignaretur imperia? quod [55] unum restabat misero, notam domum repetiis, ubi sub te lete vixerat et quo laudati cursus palmam sepe retulerat, sepe cruentos capreolos leporesque remiserat; nec ullo tuorum illic reperto, clauso ostio miserabiliter insultans, omnium astantium misericordium tuique desiderium excitavit.'

<sup>314</sup> *Ibid*, vol. III, p. 93 (Epistolae Familiares XIII. 11) '[60] Tum primum damna nostra sentire cepimus teque quem presentem putabamus, abesse perpendimus. Ut me autem ille conspexit, infremuit; mox tremula blanditiis cauda vocantem sponte consequitur; nunc mecum vadit in silvas, sub me militat, meis auspiciis ruit in beluas et michi saepe [65] gratissimas predas agit, paratus ille, si iubeas, ad te venire, letus tamen quod fortuna illum ad amicum limen appulerit. Vale / Ad fontem Sorgie, VIII Kal. Septembris.'

living with 'only one dog and two servants' (*cum cane unico*)<sup>315</sup>. The phrase 'with only one dog' occurs in other letters and appears to be connected with the notion of solitude, where one can be alone, lost in one's thoughts or troubles, accompanied by a dog for company. His missive in 1338 to Giacomo Colonna on his solitude at Vaucluse speaks of living with only one dog, and in a letter written in 1353 to his brother Gherardo, a Carthusian monk, he describes how his brother had buried all of his fellow-monks, dead of the plague, with only one dog to keep him company as the sole survivor of the monastery<sup>316</sup>. For Petrarch, all the diligent scholar needed was peace and quiet, a few servants, and one dog for company, a theme he explains in 1353 to his friend Ludwig van Kempen, also a chaplain to Cardinal Giovanni Colonna and nicknamed 'Socrates' in Petrarch's correspondence, where he lists the elements of his simple life: clothes to wear, servants, a dog for company, a horse to ride, a roof and a bed<sup>317</sup>.

There is a short Latin epitaph to a dog which appears in many Petrarch manuscripts and often attributed to him, although it does not appear in official collections of his work. The epitaph, two lines on the death of a little dog, has slight variations in different manuscripts (*parve* instead of *care*, for the first word for example):

Dear Zobot, your house was small, your body small

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<sup>315</sup> *Ibid*, vol. III, pp. 84-87 (Epistolae Familiares XIII. 8), p. 86 lines 75-76: 'Quid de habitaculo dixerum? Catonis au Fabritti domum putes, ubi cum cane unico et duobus tantum servis habito'.

<sup>316</sup> *Ibid*, vol. III, p. 177-179 (Epistolae Familiares XVI.2), p. 178 lines 45-46: 'solum te ad ultimum cum cane unico remanisisse'.

<sup>317</sup> *Ibid*, vol. III, p. 179-182 (Epistolae Familiares XVI.3), p. 180 lines 36-38 '...quid vestiam, qui michi serviat, qui me sotiet, qui me vehat, quo tegar, ubi iaceam, ubi spartier.

Your tomb is small, so take this short song.

*Care Zobot, tibi parva domus, breve corpus habebas*

*Et tumulus brevis est, et breve carmen habe*<sup>318</sup>

Petrarch's mentions of dogs in his letters are usually brief, the only two long descriptions are of Matteo Longo's energetic black dog and the one he received from Cardinal Colonna, which is described as a very large white specimen (albeit of a very gentle nature). Not once does he mention a small dog that the attributed epitaph alludes to by the use of adjectives (*breve, parva*).

The Italian early sixteenth-century naturalist, Ulysses Aldrovandi, appears to have had doubts on the correct provenance of the epitaph, and in a list of canine epitaphs, past and present, in his monumental work of natural history, *De animalibus quadrupedibus digitatis viviparis*, he calls it a Roman epitaph and used a variation which does not include the name Zobot:

'Non multum dissimile est illud epitaphium catelli, quod Romae habetur, et unico continetur disticho:

Parue canis tibi parua domus, & corpore paruus

Et brevis est tumulus, & breue carmen habe<sup>319</sup>.

Despite there being no mention of a dog named Zobot (or any variation of the name) in any of Petrarch's correspondence, the little dog Zobot passed into legend as Petrarch's dog. This epitaph probably contributed to the association

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<sup>318</sup> A list of some of the manuscripts with variations of this epitaph are mentioned in F. Rico, 'Perro(s) de Petrarca', *Patro de letras/La rosa als llavis* (Barcelona, 1984), pp. 125-128. F. Rico attempts to associate 'Zobot' with the dog given to Petrarch by Cardinal Colonna, which apparently came from the Spanish royal court but this seems unlikely from the emphasis Petrarch puts in *Epistolae Metricae* III 5 on the dog's large size, which does not concord with the description of little 'Zobot'.

<sup>319</sup> U. Aldrovandi, *De quadrupedibus digitatis viviparis* (Bologna, 1537), p. 525. This is the same version that appears in K. Burdach, *Aus Petrarca's ältestem Schülerkreise* (Berlin, 1929).

of Petrarch with small dogs in all subsequent iconography and many imitative elegies, however, some of which even mention Zobot by name. Later scholars, who due to reasons of space and urban living may have been restricted to keeping only small dogs, may have liked to imagine their prototype keeping a small pet.

An example of an imitative elegy to Petrarch's pet was written by the poet Rapello in the early sixteenth century. It was one of the many epitaphs composed on the death of Borgettus, the beloved little dog of the humanist poet Antonio Tebaldeo (1453-1537). The epitaph describes the affectionate relationship between Antonio Tebaldeo and his Borgettus<sup>320</sup>: Here lies Borgettus, queen of dogs

Who on earth was Tebaldeo's living idol  
 Just as Cabat was to the divine Petrarch  
*Qui giace Borgieta de i can monarcha,  
 che dil Tibaldeo in terra idol vivo  
 fu, qual Cabat al so divo Petrarcha*<sup>321</sup>

Thus Petrarch, the arch-humanist became a model for all future pet keeping scholars. Because of his enthusiasm towards dogs, a later tradition emerged in the sixteenth century that Petrarch was a keen cat-owner as well, despite there being no mention of cats in his correspondence at all. The mummified body of a cat still resides at the poet's final home in Arquà, with a plaque calling it the poet's cat (*Petrarchae Murilega*), followed by an elegy by

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<sup>320</sup> Printed in *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, 17 (1891) pp. 395-6

<sup>321</sup> 'Varieta: Jacopo Corsi e il Tebaldeo', *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*, 17 (1891), pp. 395

the early seventeenth-century poet Antonio Queringhi engraved underneath. It is usually presumed to be a byproduct of the sixteenth century interest in Petrarch and visits by tourists to his house<sup>322</sup>. A cat would not be out of the ordinary as the companion of a scholar, so it is understandable how a cat could become entwined in Petrarchan lore. Indeed, epitaphs about cats by scholars are not uncommon in the sixteenth-century: Francesco Coppetta, Cesare Orsini and Joachim du Bellay all wrote elegies to their pet cats. Antonio Queringhi's elegy to the mummified cat at Arquà is a poetical invention, with humorous touches, and it was clearly meant to amuse the reader rather than provoke any feeling of grief. The poem is from the cat's point of view, who claims that of the poet's two loves, the cat was loved more than Laura (*Maximus ignis ego; Laura secundus erat*) and asks not to be mocked as he drove mice away, stopped them nibbling on his pages and was faithful to the poet<sup>323</sup>.

Similarly, although nominally a canon, the eminent fifteenth-century humanist architect and scholar Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472) also provides a model as a pet-keeper. He wrote a long panegyric to his dog under the title of *Canis* in 1441-2, described by a modern scholar as a 'tongue-in-cheek eulogy

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<sup>322</sup> J.B. Trapp, 'Petrarch's inkstand and his cat', *Il passaggiere' italiano: saggio sulle letterature di lingua inglese in onore di Sergio Rossi*, 1994, pp. 23-40. J.B. Trapp reproduces some manuscript illuminations depicting Petrarch in his study with cats, pp. 37-39. See PLATE 14.

<sup>323</sup> Antonio Queringhi: *Etruscus gemino vates ardebat amore: / Maximus ignis ego; Laura secundus erat. / Quid rides? Divinae illam si gratia formae, / Re dignam eximio fecit amante fides. / Si numeros geniumque sacris dedit illa libellis / Causa ego ne saevis muribus esca forent; / Arcebam sacro vivens a limine mures / Ne domini exitio scripta diserta darent / Incutio trepidis eadem defuncta pavorem, / Et viget examini in corpore prisca fides.* Cf. J.B. Trapp, 'Petrarch's Inkstand and his Cat', *Il passaggiere' italiano: saggio sulle letterature di lingua inglese in onore di Sergio Rossi*, 1994.

for his dog'<sup>324</sup>. After a discussion on elegies in general, the dog is described as coming from a distinguished lineage (his father had the name of *Megastomo* or Big Mouth) and is compared with famous classical canines from the past. The work is often treated as a similar product to Alberti's *Musca* and viewed as written in 'over-blown Latin'<sup>325</sup>. But it need not be considered a mere mock funeral oration<sup>326</sup>. Alberti may have written the work from a satirical viewpoint, however, it is clear that he considered his great affection for this dog would not provoke surprise among his contemporaries. He presupposes that an elegy for a beloved dog would not be out of the ordinary and describes the deceased dog as the very best and the most loved (*quod defuncto Cani meo canum omnium optimo et mei amantissimo debeo*)<sup>327</sup>. The long discussion that follows on the virtues of dogs in Antiquity is not extraordinary, as it follows accepted lore (mainly from Pliny the Elder) on the faithfulness of dogs, and is comparable to Petrarch's letter to Matteo Longo on the virtues of dogs. Nor is the stress on the dog's lineage is unusual, as noble lineage is remarked in many poems on male dogs, just as chastity is praised in female dogs, although it appears to be poetical hyperbole in the case of *Canis*, as Alberti praises his pet as the most noble of dogs<sup>328</sup>. Despite the elegy's elevated style,

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<sup>324</sup>M. Jarzombek, *On Leon Battista Alberti, His Literary and Aesthetic Theories*, (Cambridge, Mass., 1989), pp. 90. 'Canis' is also mentioned in J. Burckhart, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (London, 1944), vol. I, p. 180.

<sup>325</sup>J. Gadol, *Leon Battista Alberti: Universal Man of the Early Renaissance* (Chicago, 1969), pp. 7 and 220.

<sup>326</sup> See A.T. Tomarken, *The Smile of Truth: French Satirical Eulogy and Its Antecedents* (Princeton, N.J., 1990). The author groups 'Canis' along with all other animal mock-encomia although acknowledging that 'the praise of household pets is not of necessity comical', p. 76.

<sup>327</sup> 'Canis', pp. 142-169, Leon Battista Alberti, *Apologhi ed elogi*, ed. R. Contarino (Genoa, 1984), p. 144.

<sup>328</sup> 'Etenim ortus est Canis noster parentibus nobilissimis, patre Megastomo, cuius in familia vestustissima pene innumerabiles clarissimi principes existere....Matrem autem habuit

exaggerated emphasis on heritage and frequent use of classical allusions, it expresses emotional attachment to a dog who delighted his owners with his games and joy (*qui iocus et festivitas esse nostra consueveras*)<sup>329</sup>.

*Elegies by lay humanists*<sup>330</sup>

Most of the elegies and epitaphs examined in this chapter refer to dogs and cats, which were the most popular species of pets. Many scholars wrote elegies for birds, but unless there is evidence of genuine bird-keeping by the author, one must assume that the majority, especially on those sparrows, are were literary exercises imitating Catullus's 'passer' poems (*Carmina* II and III) which were highly regarded at the time<sup>331</sup>. However it is possible that, like their canine equivalents, some of the avian epitaphs eulogize an actual pet, such as J.S. Scaligar's elegy to a tame thrush (*Ad Turdum Suum*), which is written in a very affectionate style, as Scaligar writes of the delight the thrush's singing brought him, refreshing his cares (*Asperas animi levare curas*) and making him forget old evils (*Cantiuncula ut inquietiore / Oblitus veterum*

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pietate insignem ex eadem et amplissima familia ortam', Leon Battista Alberti, *Apologhi ed elogi*, ed. R. Contarino (Genoa, 1984). p. 146.

<sup>329</sup> Leon Battista Alberti, *Apologhi ed elogi*, ed. R. Contarino (Genoa, 1984), p. 168.

<sup>330</sup> This chapter will examine only pet poetry written by lay scholarson their pets or those of their fellow scholars. Elegies written by humanists for patrons will be examined in the chapter on animals at court. Although a few clerics, educated in the humanist model, wrote epitaphs, as this chapter is devoted to secular scholars, their works will not examined. An example of a pet epitaph by a humanist cleric-scholar is 'Catelli Epitaphium' by Pietro Bembo (1470-1547, cardinal from 1537) on his little dog Bembino: *Nil tibi non dominus tribuit , Bembine catelle , A quo nomen habes , et tumulum et lacrymas*, P. Bembo, *Carmina* (Turin, 1990) p. 58, no. XXXVII. Similarly, I will not examine poetry describing women's pets, such as Janus Anysius, *De catella Intimillae*, in Janus Anysius, *Varia Poema et satyrae, etc.* (Naples 1531), p. 41.

<sup>331</sup> Nightingales are also a popular subject for elegies, as are parrots, following Ovid and Statius. An example of Catullan influence are epitaphs on his lady's sparrow by the early sixteenth century French poet Nicholas Bourbon, see M. Morrison, 'Catullus in the Neo-Latin Poetry of France Before 1550', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 27 (Geneva, 1955), p. 379. M. Morrison emphasises the influence of Catullan style (hendecasyllables and iambics) on many poets, with some mannerisms such as the frequent use of terms of endearment.

*miser malorum*)<sup>332</sup>. Nevertheless, despite the profusion of poems dedicated to nightingales, parrots, starlings and sparrows, it is difficult to determine if such a work was composed in memory of a particular individual bird, so it is safest to concentrate on elegies for dogs and cats. Individuality is more common in these compositions and it easier to get a sense of whether they were written for an actual living pet. Although elegies and epitaphs are my main sources for pet keeping by scholars in this chapter, there is often additional literary evidence on the direct keeping of pets, such as Justus Lipsius' numerous letters that mention his dogs, as well as the poems in their honour. Occasionally, we have mentions of scholars keeping pets in the writings of their contemporaries, such as the Dutch physician and scholar Johann Wier (1516-1588), who wrote that his teacher, Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa (1486-1535), author of various magical and astrological treatises, kept two dogs, a black male called Monsieur and a bitch called Mamselle. Agrippa was very affectionate towards Monsieur, who was allowed to eat beside him and sleep on his bed. Such conduct was not unusual for a scholar, and many of the elegies which I will examine in this chapter speak of similar behaviour. Nevertheless, due to Agrippa's work on magic, the dog was viewed by many contemporaries and later commentators as a familiar demon<sup>333</sup>. Despite the unusual circumstances

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<sup>332</sup> 'Ad Turdum Suum / Dulci Turdule docte gutterillo / Asperas animi levare curas, / Cantellans modulos minutiores: / Condite mihi pectoris medullas / Cantuuncula ut inquietiore / Oblitus veterum miser malorum / Mentis improbus acquiescat aestus / Da mi blandula murmurilla mille, ...Dulci Turdule docte, gutturillo' J.C. Scaliger's *Poematia*, cf. M. Morrison, 'Catullus in the Neo-Latin Poetry of France Before 1550', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 27 (Geneva, 1955), p. 380.

<sup>333</sup> Johann Wier, *De Praestigiis Daemonum et Incantationibus ac Venificiis* (Basel, 1583), II, 5, pp. 165-166. L. Thorndike, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, V (New York, 1941), pp. 136-7, cites other authors who claimed that Agrippa's pet dog was his familiar.

of this case, the basic premise of a scholar spoiling a pet and letting it intrude in his personal space (at the table or on the bed) was commonplace. In fact, as will be shown by the literary evidence in this chapter, treating one's pet otherwise would be more cause for comment.

*Antonio Tebaldeo and his circle*

In an epitaph composed by the Italian poet Antonio Tebaldeo (1463-1537) on death of his dog, Borgettus, is it possible to discern genuine emotion, an attachment to the 'most charming little dog' (*Scitae Catellae Blandissimae Antonius Tibaldeus*) behind the somewhat inflated language. The little white dog animal is elevated to almost human status, described as faithful, pure and beloved (*Candida tota pilo, candida tota fide*). There is an appropriation of human funeral rites for the animal, which is buried by its owner (*Quod posui tibi bella catella sepulchrum*) and placed in a stone urn (*Candenti e lapide hec tibi conuenit vrna fuisti*); the adjective '*candida*' suggesting the use of white marble. As both the terms 'urn' (*urna*) and 'tomb' (*tumulus*) are used, it is unclear whether the ashes of the animal are contained in the urn or the entire little corpse was put in the funerary urn. The former is the most likely, as the tomb for this particular little dog was displayed publicly. There is a further attempt to anthropomorphise the deceased dog, who is described as worthy of heaven (*Digna magis Coeli munere, quam tumuli.*) although the author and ex-owner concedes that dogs might not be allowed into Heaven (*Si Coelum, ut quondam canibus patet, haud tua terras*) and requests therefore a shining star *in memoriam*

of his dog (*Incedent, sed ver stella perenne dabit*)<sup>334</sup>. The final hope of a new star imitates many classical epitaphs.

Although it might be easy to consider the mention of urns and ashes as a poetical topos, following classical precedent, in the case of Tebaldeo and others there is evidence for mourning rituals such as tombstones. The naturalist Ulysses Aldrovandi claimed that Tebaldeo's epitaph for Borgettus was incised on a tombstone in Tebaldeo's garden (*In Hortis domesticis Eminentissimi Aldrobrandini hoc legitur canis epitaphium*) and nearly a century later, the Flemish scholar Justus Lipsius would erect tombs in his garden for his dogs<sup>335</sup>. Burying the pet or placing it in a urn in one's garden kept the memory of the lost pet close to home and naturally, by being a secular space, would avoid any criticisms attached to official burial space.

The practice of placing the animal in a tomb or urn does not appear to have been unusual judging from an earlier epitaph by the scholar Flavio Biondo (1392?-1463). The animal in question was a small dog, whose limbs are curled up in death (*Corporis exiguo a cura dum cogor in artus*) and was very young, judging from a reference to maternal milk (*Subducto matris lacte, miser perii.*). Even though the dog was clearly a puppy, the poet still feels sorely the loss and laments the cruel fate that took away his pet (*Ne tamen, et fati nomen*

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<sup>334</sup> SCITAE CAPELLAE BLANDISSIMAE ANTONIVS TIBALDEVS: Quod posui tibi bella catella sepulchrum / Digna magis Coeli munere, quam tumuli. / Candenti e lapide hec tibi conuenit urna fuisti / Candida tota pilo, candida tota fide. / Si Coelum, ut quondam canibus patet, haud tua terras / Incedent, sed ver stella perenne dabit. U. Aldrovandi, *De Animalibus Quadrupedibus Digitatis Viviparis*, p. 524.

<sup>335</sup> U. Aldrovandi, *De animalibus quadrupedibus digitatis viviparis*, (Bologna, 1537), p. 524. Tombs in gardens for pets were not uncommon or restricted to scholars' pets. To this day, it is possible to view the tomb of a dog named Orsina in the gardens of the Ducal Palace in Mantua while Aldrovandi (*Ibid*, p. 524-6) gives the text for the marble tombstones for three other Mantuan court dogs: Viola, Rubino and Bellina, which have not survived. This will be discussed in more detail in the 'Pet Keeping at Court' chapter.

*vis aspera tollat*), ending with a mention that the animal's ashes were placed in an urn (*Leucippi cineres haec canis urna tegit*)<sup>336</sup>.

Not only owners wrote epitaphs for a lost pet, it was a common practice for scholarly acquaintances to share the owner's mourning for the loss. This can be seen by the contributions of Tebaldeo's friends and fellow-scholars, mourning the loss of Tebaldeo's dog as well. Rapello's little Italian epitaph for Tebaldeo's dog Borgettus, compared to Petrarch's Zobot, has already been discussed; two other compositions deserve comment. The first is Hercules Stroza's rather elevated elegy to the dead Borgettus (*Carmina Borgetti canis*), which eulogises the dog in 213 lines. Apart from the introduction, which asks who should hold back a tear at the funeral of such a faithful and beloved dog (*Quis cohibere iubet lacrima in funere fidi, / Dilectique canis?*), it quickly descends into a long digression on funeral monuments and faithful animals of Classical antiquity, from Corinna's parrot (Ovid), Lesbia's sparrow (Catullus), Odysseus's Argos, King Garamantes's dogs (Pliny the Elder) to Cerberus in Hades. Only occasionally does it return to the subject with a brief mention of the burial of Antonio Tebaldeo's beloved Borgettus, now a cold corpse in stone tomb (*Et vetet Antoni quisquam te frigida cari / Corpora Borgetti saxo tumulare decenti?*). As with Tebaldeo's poem, there is a query regarding the dog's afterlife, seen here as a life with Cerberus in the underworld, unable to wander the gardens of living (*Vel si forte canes sub inania tendere regna, / Ad Stygias simulac descendit Cerberus undas, Divetuere, tuos habitat non visilis hortos*).

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<sup>336</sup> Flavio Biondo (also known as Flavius Blondus): *Corporis exiguo a cura dum cogor in artus, / Subducto matris lacte, miser perii. / Ne tamen, et fati nomen vis aspera tollat, / Leucippi cineres haec canis urna tegit'* U. Aldrovandi, *De animalibus quadrupedibus digitatis viviparis* (Bologna, 1537), pp. 524-5

It ends by claiming that Tebaldeo and his friends will commemorate the dog each year by pouring precious oils onto the tomb (*Usque novum Burgette tua ver fragret ab urna, / Et pretiosa fluant liquenti succina busto. / Teque Poetarum celebret pia turba quotannis*<sup>337</sup>). Although Tebaldeo did commemorate Borgettus with a tomb in his garden, it is unlikely that such an obvious classical ritual would have been adopted, and like the rest of the long elegy, this motif owes little to reality. Hercules Stroza may have been trying to impress his fellow-scholars with his use of Latin and compositional skills, but his contribution appears emotionally detached in comparison to the other elegies to Borgettus, which are highly personalized even though they are shorter.

More indicative of the emotions attached to the keeping of pets by scholars is the Venetian Andre Navegero's elegy for Tebaldeo's Borgettus<sup>338</sup>. *In obitum Borgetti catuli* (on the death of the little dog Borgettus) begins by describing Borgettus as a 'charming little dog with winning ways' (*Borgettus lepidus catellus ille, / Cuius blanditias proterviores,*), who played games for his master and was dearly loved and will be missed (*Et lusus herus ipse tantum amabat, / Quantum tale aliquid potest amari*) and in return loved his master as a two year girl loves her mother (*Nec mirum; dominum suum ipse norat, / Caram bima velut puella matrem:*). This maternal metaphor is taken from Catullus's *Carmen* III in which Lesbia's sparrow knew its mistress as a girl knows her

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<sup>337</sup>Hercules Stroza, CARMINA BORGETTI CANIS in *Carmina Illustrum Poetarum Italarum* (Florence, 1917) p. 181-187, lines cited 1-2, 103-4, 191-3, 208-210.

<sup>338</sup> The influence of the *Greek Anthology* in Andre Navegero's work is discussed in J. Hutton, *The Greek Anthology in Italy to the year 1800* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1935), pp. 189-192. Hutton however does not discuss *In obitum Borgetti catuli*, which appears to be influenced mostly by Catullus's *Carmen* III. D.F. S. Thomson, ed., *Catullus: A Critical Edition* (Chapel Hill, N. Carolina, 1978), pp. 74-75.

mother (*in nam mellitus erat suamque norat ipsam tam bene quam puella matrem*). Nevertheless, by using this classical allusion, Navegero makes Tebaldeo's real affection for his little dog appear highly domestic, a far cry from the aggressive and 'manly' world of hunting dogs. There is an emphasis on close physical contact between the owner and the animal with descriptions of the small dog sitting in his master's lap (*Et nunc illius in sinu latebat*) and jumping around near his master (*Nunc blande assiliebat huc et illuc / Ludens, atque avido appetebat ore*). These lines again recall Catullus's *Carmen III* in which the sparrow jumps around on Lesbia's lap (*nec sese a gremio illius movebat, sed circumnsiliens modo huc modo illuc*). The dog's habit of begging for food at the table while standing on his hind legs is described as normal and uncensored behavior (*Erectis modo cruribus, bipedisque / Mensae adstabat herili, heroque ab ipso / Latratu tenero cibum petebat*). The last line underlines the owner's affection for the dog (*Ut saepe & dominum tuum requires! / Cui pro deliciis, iocisque longum / Heu desiderium tui relinquis*) and the little dog's unexpected and quick departure to the Underworld is greatly lamented (*Nunc raptus rapido, malosque fato / Ad Manes abiit tenebricosos. / Miselle o canis, o miser catelle, / Nigras parvulus ut timebis umbras!*). Catullus's *Carmen III* is once again imitated in this final section on the departure to the Underworld. Navegero repeats almost verbatim the phrase '*o miselle passer*', merely changing the species<sup>339</sup>. Andre

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<sup>339</sup> Andre Navegero (Venice): *In obitum Borgetti catuli*. 1 Borgettus lepidus catellus ille, / Cuius blanditias proterviores, / Et lusus herus ipse tantum amabat, / Quantum tale aliquid potest amari. / 5 Nec mirum; dominum suum ipse norat, / Caram bima velut puella matrem: / Et nunc illius in sinu latebat / Nunc blande assiliebat huc & illuc / Ludens, atque avido appetebat ore. / 10 Erectis modo cruribus, bipedisque / Mensae adstabat herili, heroque ab ipso / Latratu tenero cibum petebat. / Nunc raptus rapido, malosque fato / Ad Manes abiit tenebricosos. / 15 Miselle o canis, o miser catelle, / Nigras parvulus ut timebis umbras! / Ut saepe & dominum tuum requires! / Cui pro deliciis, iocisque longum / Heu desiderium tui relinquis.' *Carmina Illustrum Poetarum Italorum*, vol 6, pp. 494-5. See D.F. S.

Navegero's elegy for Borgettus is in marked contrast to Hercules Stroza's elevated panegyric. Domesticity, affection and emotion all come into play in his vision of the relationship between scholar and pet.

*Elegies by other scholars*

Begging at a table is a topos of domesticity and it is used again in an epitaph by Pietro Gherado in his '*Epitaphium Catellae*'. The small dog here is unnamed but many of the affectionate emotions described are similar. The little multi-coloured smooth haired dog is first physically described (*Parva capit, variata pilo, caudaque decora / Lenibus curas, fida Catella, meas*). The dog's habit of barking at guests is not reprimanded but instead considered as behaviour done 'in a winning manner with a charming face' (*Et blande hospitibus latrabas ore venusto, / Ludebasque tuo suave nitente pede*). Like Antonio Navegero's description of Tebaldeo's Borgettus, this dog also begs at the table by standing on two legs (*En mensae astabas erecto crure, bipesque*:). Even his barking in the house was considered a delightful characteristic (*Et sueta es longos ducere iussa choros. / Et tereti collo gestans crepitacula, totam/ Mulcebas grato blanda sonore domum.*), and his dominance at the table and sleeping on the bed is remembered fondly (*Iam te dignavi mensa, tepidoque cubili*). In the same fashion as the small dogs in the previously mentioned poems, his remains are enclosed in an urn and the poet plans to preserve the memory of his lost pet with this short description (*Qua nunc pro teneris includere lusibus urna, / Et volui titulo condecorare brevi*). The final line speaks of a marble inscription (*Nunc ego*

*te dono marmore carminibus*), so possibly a formal tombstone was planned alongside the funeral urn<sup>340</sup>.

From both Pietro Gherardo and Andre Navegero's poems, it is clear that these pets were allowed to inhabit their close physical space, be that sitting on laps, sleeping on beds or being fed at the table. A very intimate domestic arrangement between the scholar and his pet is described in the late sixteenth century by Cesare Orsini's epitaph to his cat, (*Alla gatta uccisa*), written in a mixture of Latin, Italian and Latinized Italian. Epitaphs for the dead cats are not common and this one is interesting. The cat is described as his light and dearest companion (*Te meus ardor eras , mea lux , mea sola cotala / Campagnia dico, qua nunquam carior altra* ), who is always around day and night (*Noctes atque dies, mecum bene fida manebas*). Even when the owner is called to supper, the cat wanted to give 'a thousand caresses' and coaxed tidbits from the dishes. (*Tu, quando ad mensam me pro disnare ponebam , / Tu , quando ad coenam me Franceschina vocabat / Pressus semper eras, faciens mihi mille carezzas, Blanda domandabas tunc sgnalando vivandas,*)

The cat is described as constantly following him, whenever he steps into the hall (*Quando per hanc salam me passeggiare videbas, / Tu pariter mecum legiadris passibus ibas*) and is ready to lie down in front of the owner whenever the cat detects melancholy on his part (*Si me pensosum cernebas supra cadregam,*

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<sup>340</sup>Pietro Gherardo: *Epitaphium Catellae* '1. Parva capit, variata pilo, caudaque decora / Lenibus curas, fida Catella, meas. / Et blande hospitibus latrabas ore venusto, / Ludebasque tuo suave nitente pede. / 5 En mensæ astabas erecto crure, bipesque: / Et sueta es longos ducere jussa choros. / Et tereti collo gestans crepitacula, totam / Mulcebas grato blanda sonore domum. / Qua nunc pro teneris includere lusibus urna, / 10 Et volui titulo condecorare brevi. / Iam te dignavi mensa, tepidoque cubili; / Nunc ego te dono marmore carminibus.' *Carmina Illustrum Poetarum Italarum*, vol. 5, p. 291.

*/ Fronte malanconico nec non prostrata iacebas*). The ability to recognize an emotional state is a rather intriguing attribute for a cat.

The cat follows him into his study, prowling and pawing around his books and letters (*Si legere interdum, aut gaudebam scribere versus / Tuo quoque apud studium faciebas leta dimoram; / Quin ego saepe videns doctos te volvere libros / Atque sottomoram voltare volumina vatum,*). It thus becomes the perfect scholar's companion, rousing him from melancholy, and sitting on his desk and leaping over his books to provide amusement. A long digression on the physical closeness between the owner and his cat follows. The cat leaps into his lap with gentle paws (*In nostros saltare sinus, pedibusque leggeris*), climbs up his shoulders (*Tota humilis lenisque meas ascendere spallas*), licks his face (*Sive meam pulchro frontem basare bocchino / Sive meas dulci lingua leccare ganassas*), purrs to the delight of his owner's ears (*Sive meas grato orrecchias implere susurro*) and playfully bites his hand (*Sive meam leuiter morsu perstringere destram*). Orsini ends his elegy by mentioning the cat's constant happy disposition which always cheered him up (*que laeta frequenter / Dulci mihi fidei segnum praestare solebas*)<sup>341</sup>.

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<sup>341</sup>Cesare Orsini (1570?–1640?): *Alla gatta uccisa* 1. Te meus ardor eras, mea lux, mea sola cotala / Campagna dico, qua nunquam carior altra. / Noctes atque dies , mecum bene fida manebas / Tu, quando ad mensam me pro disnare ponebam, / 5 Tu, quando ad coenam me Franceschina vocabat / Pressus sempre eras, faciens mihi mille carezzas, / Blanda domandabas tunc sgnalando vivandas, / Quando per hanc salam me passeggiare videbas, / Tu pariter mecum legiadris passibus ibas. /10. Si me pensosum cernebas supra cadregam, (a) / Fronte malanconico nec non prostrata iacebas . / Si legere interdum, aut gaudebam scribere versus / Tuo quoque apud studium faciebas leta dimoram; / Quin ego saepe videns doctos te volvere libros / 15 Atque sottomoram voltare volumina vatum, / Sperabam te posse etiam dediscere letteras / Inque poetinae formam transire galantam / Saepe subit mentem cum tu vezzosa solebas / In nostros saltare sinus, pedibusque leggeris / 20 Tota humilis lenisque meas ascendere spallas / Sive meam pulchro frontem basare bocchino, / Sive meas ducli lingua leccare ganassas, / Sive meas grato orrecchias implere sussurro / Sive meam leuiter morsu perstringere destram / 25 Sive tuam drizare covam (b) que laeta

Another feline elegy is the Italian poet Francesco Coppetta Beccuti's (1509-1553) '*Canzone nella perdita d'una gatta*'. Coppetta's long elegy (in 157 lines) focuses on the individual cat itself. After lamenting the cat's death, Coppetta quickly speaks of intimacy, remembering how the cat slept on his feet at night (*Chi or da le notturne m'assicura topesche insidie o chi sopra il mio piede le notti fredde siede?*), and how he has lost his beloved treasure (*Anzi ho perduto l'amato tesoro*). There was a very close relationship towards the cat and its owner: the cat would playfully bite his foot (*ecco ov'ella scherzando il pie mi morse*), leap on his chest (*quivi saltando poi dal braccio al seno*) and then go to sleep on his shoulder (*posarmisi dormendo sempre in collo*), presumably while the poet was writing at a desk. The cat even attempted to pull off his master's gloves (*allor, trattosi l'uno e l'altro quando da le mani e inarcando ambe le ciglia*). Apart from such tricks, he also kept mice in check, and these now wander freely around, annoying the poet, to his great despair (*o Dio, che crudeltà! per tutto il letto vanno giostrando a mio marcio dispetto*). Coppetta concludes with a request for monument in the stars for his lost pet, but instead of Antonio Tebaldeo's request for one star, Coppetta asks for two new and shining stars, that will represent the beloved cat's eyes for ever (*perché si vede in cielo / due stelle nove e piú de l'altre ardenti / che son gli occhi lucenti de la mia gatta, tant'onesta e bella*)<sup>342</sup>.

A.H. Tomarken has pointed out several similarities between the Italian poet Francesco Coppetta Beccuti's '*Canzone nella perdita d'una gatta*' and the

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frequenter / Dulci mihi fidei segnum praestare solebas . O.T. Tozetti, ed., *Antologia Della Poesia Italiana* (Livorno, 1916) p. 624.

<sup>342</sup> F.Coppetta Beccuti and G. Guidiccioni, *Rime*, ed. E. Chiorboli (Bari, 1912), pp. 307-310, Lines quoted respectively are 16-18, 31, 64, 70, 75, 80-82, 128-130, 146-149).

sixteenth-century French poet Joachim du Bellay's *Épitaphe d'un chat* and argues that the latter imitated Coppetta's elegy when composing his own work for his cat Belaud<sup>343</sup>. Additionally, both are written in the vernacular. While the members of the French Pléiade<sup>344</sup> overwhelmingly wrote their compositions in French, Copetta's poem, written completely in Italian, is quite a rarity in comparison to other Italian poets and scholars of the period who wrote the majority of their pet elegies in Latin.

The trend for scholars to write elegies continued throughout the sixteenth century and early seventeenth century. The Italian scholar and physician, Julius Caesar Scaliger (1484-1558), wrote a personal elegy for an individual dog called Balbina (*De Catella Balbina*) in which he lamented the loss of the little barking dog, whose loss had affected him greatly<sup>345</sup>.

Perhaps following the example set by Tebaldeo's circle to commemorate Borgettus, the friends and fellow-scholars of Girolamo Aleandro the Younger

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<sup>343</sup> A.H. Tomarken, *The smile of truth : the French satirical eulogy and its antecedents* (Princeton, N.J., 1990), pp. 205-208.

<sup>344</sup> The Pléiade was the group of sixteenth-century French writers associated with Pierre de Ronsard. For further scholarship on animal poems by members of the Pléiade, many of them not specifically related to recognizable pets, see H. Nais, *Les animaux dans la poésie française de la Renaissance* (Paris, 1961) and A. Lytton Sells, *Animal Poetry in French & English Literature & the Greek Tradition*, (Bloomington, Indiana, 1955), pp. 56-75.

<sup>345</sup> J.C. Scaliger: 'De Catella Balbinae: Non erat hoc, mea Lux, furti quod conscia nostri / Latrabat gressus nota catella meos : / Ignotum tibi sed canis haec latrabat Amorem / Quo duce unquam pectora nostra vacant', in Caspar Dornavius, *Amphitheatrum sapientiae Socraticae joco-seriae joc est encomia et commentaria autorum* (Hannover, 1619) p. 529. Caspar Dornavius' book is a huge compendium of animal encomia, elegies and other poetical compositions among other subjects. He includes J. Moshaim's fifteenth-century long encomium on dogs and John Caius's work on English dogs, among others. Many of the elegies previously discussed appear in Dornavius's compendium (such as A. Navegero's epitaph to Borgettus). Others pet elegies that for reasons of space will not be analyzed but can be found in Dornavius are Johanne Plazzon Servallensi's *De Catella Mortua ad Sirum*; Jo. Joviano Pontano's *Elogiam Canis*, and Joannis Posthii's *De Obitu Bellinae catellae*. Other pet elegies can be found in the individual collections of sixteenth-century scholar's works, for example, among Aonio Paleario's compositions is one for a little dog called Ursula (*De Ursulae catello mortuo*) in Aonii Palearii Vervlani, *Opera* (Jena, 1728), pp. 715-718

(1574-1629) would do the same when his little dog Aldina passed away. Aleandro wrote a long elegy (*Epicedium Aldine catellae*), using many classical allusions and an elevated style to praise his dog who despite the effusive praise is individualised (even including such negative details as the dog having one foot longer than the other, '*etenim pede longior uno / Cum vix illa foret*')<sup>346</sup>.

Other elegies by Aleandro's fellow scholars all come from the Netherlands, and were possibly sent by letter him<sup>347</sup>. To the best of my knowledge they currently only survive in a manuscript of assorted poetry in the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana in Venice. In the manuscript the first two elegies are by the scholar Gerhard Johann Vossius (1577-1649) for Aldina, the sweetest of little dogs (*Dilectissimae Catellae*) who made her master happy in the view of his friend (*Ipse etiam felix ( dominum si forte beare / Blanda Catella potest ) mecum Aleander erat*). The second elegy ends with the common motif of a memorial star for the dead dog (*Visa est Aldinæ stella nouella Canis*). In the same manuscript, there is an elegy for Aldina by the Dutch philosopher, jurist and poet Hugo Grotius (1583-1645), beginning with stating how the dog's little soul was crossing into the underworld (*Trepidula canis animula Styga subito petiit*) and that he bids farewell to such a good little dog (*bona catula bene vale*). Finally, there are seven short elegies by Justus Ricquio, the first

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<sup>346</sup>Aleandro's elegy for his dog appears in collections of his work. *Carmina Illustrum Poetarum Italarum*, vol. I, (Florence, 1719), pp. 105-110. Only Aleandro's work is published. Regarding the contributions of his friends for Aldina I have not found them in any collections of their work. My citations here come from MS Venice Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana Lat. Cl. XIV Cod. XLVII (n°4705), ff. 90 recto-99 verso.

<sup>347</sup>I have not determined the exact date of the composition of these elegies and so am uncertain on the exact whereabouts of Aleandro at the time, possibly in Rome, when he was at the service of Maffeo Barberini (later Pope Urban VIII in 1623).

comparing Aleandro's love of Aldina to that of the Flemish scholar Justus Lipsius affection for his dog Saphyrus (who died in 1601) while the remaining six elegies praise the dog in a similar elevated manner to the other contributions. Thus the practice of composing pet elegies for oneself or one's friends was a pan-European phenomenon, even if there might be differences in terms of style and language. This trend among scholars of different backgrounds and nationalities is exemplified by a small work by the French Calvinist scholar, Theodore Beza (1519-1605), who spent most of his life in Switzerland. He wrote 'On the domestic delights of a little dog' (*In Catelli Domesticas delitias*), a highly personal portrait of his dog, without resorting to any direct classical references. His dog has a snub-nose and squint (*Catelle, simule, mi Catelle paetule*), little eyes that show his love (*Loquaculis spirans amorem ocellulis*), and with short curly ears (*Catelle, crispulis decenter auribus*). If angry he quickly calms down (*Catelle, cuius ipsa etiam iracundis / Sedari quaeuis protinus ira queat*), his wagging tail softens his master's sorrows (*Catelle, cauda blandientis verbere / Omnem abogens / domini pectore moestitiam*) and he is, all in all, a beloved companion<sup>348</sup>. Beza's descriptive and unidealized elegy clearly underlines the deep emotional affection felt by a scholar for his pet. His short composition is not an exhibition of his skills in Latin (an additional motive in many long pet elegies) but rather a loving tribute to his animal companion.

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<sup>348</sup> Adeodati Sebae (Theori Bezae): *In Catelli Domesticas delitias. / Catelle, simule, mi Catelle paetule / Quo nec delitiae sunt mage delitae : / Loquaculis spirans amorem ocellulis, / Queis nec blanditiae sunt mage blanditae / Catelle, crispulis decenter auribus / Tristitias omnes exhilarare potis. / Catelle, cuius ipsa etiam iracundis / Sedari quaeuis protinus ira queat. / Catelle, cuius dominus iram et gaudium / Ipse tuo unius temperat arbitrio. / Catelle, cauda blandientis verbere / Omnem abogens domini pectore moestitiam. / O si illecebra forte carminis pari, / Va, possem illecebras aequiparare tuas! / O si ipse potius homo creatus non canis, / Esse Deo possem quod mihi tute canis!*. Caspar Dornavius, *Amphitheatrum sapientiae Socraticae joco-seria joc est encomia et commentaria autorum* (Hannover, 1619), p. 529

Similarly, in England, where poets and scholars joined the tradition of writing about their pets in epitaphs, the seventeenth-century English poet Robert Herrick's (1591-1674) 'Upon his Spaniell Tracie' expresses the same emotional attachment of the previously discussed authors:

Now thou art dead, not eye shall ever see,  
For shape and service, Spaniell like to thee,  
This shall be my love doe, give thy sad death one  
Teare, that deserves of me a million'.<sup>349</sup>

In the next two sections, I will analyse the compositions of two influential pet-owners: the French poet Joachim Du Bellay and the Flemish scholar Justus Lipsius.

*Du Bellay, French poet and cat owner*

Joachim du Bellay (1522-1560), a French poet, critic and member of the Pléiade, wrote in the 1540s a poem which laments the loss of Belaud, his small grey cat<sup>350</sup>. Du Bellay's *Épitaphe d'un chat* begins with an elaborate physical description of the cat in question. 'This is Belaud, my little grey cat' (*C'est Belaud mon petit chat gris*), although he proceeds to specify that the cat was not

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<sup>349</sup> J. M. Patrick, *The Complete Poetry of Robert Herrick* (New York, 1963), p. 398 [Hesperides 967]. Herrick writes another possible pet poem, 'Upon the death of his Sparrow. An Elegie' (Hesperides, number 256, p. 143-144) which follows the genre of sparrow poems in the tradition of Catullus's *Carmen* III and thus is not included here due to the difficulties of determining a sparrow as a pet rather than as a literary motif.

<sup>350</sup> Joachim du Bellay, *Diverses Jeux Rustiques*, ed. by V.L. Saulnier (Lille & Geneva, 1947), 'Épitaphes' XXX, pp. 104-110. Du Bellay wrote several other poems connected with pets, such as 'Épitaphe d'un chien' (pp. 21-22). His 'Épitaphe d'un petit chein' was Du Bellay's contribution to a small poetical competition against Olivier de Magney for elegies praising a dog called Peleton who belonged to the French ambassador in Rome, Jean d'Avanson. As these two are not personal compositions written for oneself or a fellow scholar, they are not discussed here, although 'Épitaphe d'un petit chein' falls into the category of pet poems written as a means of securing patronage, an issue which will be analysed in the next chapter. His 'Épitaphe d'un chat' on the other hand, is clearly a poem for his own pet cat.

entirely grey (*Ne fut pas gris entièrement,*) but fine satin-like silvery grey fur (*Couvert d'un poil gris argentin, / Ras et poly comme satin,*) with a small white patch (*Et blanc dessous comme une ermine*). Further individual details are given: Belaud had a little muzzle and small teeth (*Petit museau, petites dens*), short ears (*courte l'oreille*), a black nose (*nez ébenin*), a silvered chin (*Une barbelette argentée*) and delicate paws (*Gembe gresle, petite patte*)<sup>351</sup>. The close relationship between the two is emphasized by the cat being allowed to sleep on the bed and even steal food from his master's plate (and mouth) (*Ou soit que ce petit coquin / Privé sautelast sur ma couche, / Ou soit qu'il ravist de ma bouche / La viande sans m'outrager, / Alors qu'il me voyoit manger*), reminiscent of the intimacy between master and pet described by Italian poets<sup>352</sup>. Belaud normally sat on a chair by the table (*Belaud n'estoit pas ignorant: / Il sçavoit bien, tant fut traictable, / Prendre la chair dessus la table*) and had a fondness for cheese (*Et ne fait onq plus grand dommage / Que de manger un vieux fromage*). In a rare note on animal hygiene, Belaud is commended for being clean (*Aussi n'estoit-ce sa nature / De faire par tout son ordure, / Comme un tas de chats, qui ne font / Que gaster tout par où ilz vont*). The cat is not without his uses as he does get rid of mice (*A combattre rats et souris. / Belaud sçavoit mille manières / De les surprendre en leurs tesnières*), especially those that nibble at Du Bellay's ears and verses (*Les rats me mangent les oreilles : Mesmes tous les vers que j'escris*)<sup>353</sup>. Two lines clearly sum up Belaud as the beloved companion of his study, bed

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<sup>351</sup> Joachim du Bellay, *Diverses Jeux Rustiques*, ed. by V.L. Saulnier (Lille & Geneva, 1947), pp. 104-5. Lines quoted respectively are 12,20, 23-24, 26-28, 34-5, 38, 41.

<sup>352</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 106. Lines quoted are 80-84 respectively.

<sup>353</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 106-8 Lines quoted are 116-118, 125-126, 137-140, 109-111 and 166-167 respectively.

and table (*Belaud estoit mon cher mignon, / Belaud estoit mon compagnon / A la chambre, au lict, à la table*) and as an animal that participates in all of Du Bellay's life. He even insists that a cat is more suitable pet than a spoiled little dog, perhaps because Belaud assists Du Bellay's in his work but does not constantly need attention or care. (*Belaud estoit plus accointable / Que n'est un petit chien friand*)<sup>354</sup>. In several lines Du Bellay laments the incomparable loss of his cat, (*quel malheur! ô quelle perte, / Qui ne peult estre recouverte!*) and later on regrets that the cat had no offspring (*Aussi le petit mitouard / N'entra jamais en matouard: / Et en Belaud, quelle disgrâce! / De Belaud s'est perdu la race*).<sup>355</sup>

A.H. Tomarken suggests that 'such expressions of acute grief became so conventionalized that it is difficult to judge their 'sincerity'<sup>356</sup>. I would dispute this. Parody is definitely evident in animal elegies in which there is no personal or emotional attachment to the animal. Members of the Pléiade wrote various *blasons* (short descriptive poems) on animals (such as the numerous elegies of flies, donkeys, etc.) but in the case of personal pet elegies, when the animal is personalized and individualized, there is definitely a portrayal of emotional attachment in the composition, no matter how conventionalized. Naturally just because the animal in question is a common species of pet, the elegy need not be a personal statement of grief. Pierre de Ronsard (1524-1585), the leader of the Pléiade, wrote a lengthy poem on cats entitled '*Le Chat, à Remi Belaux*' which is historical description of cats and a rather impersonal piece (Ronsard disliked cats intensely and once proclaimed

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<sup>354</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 109-110 Lines quoted are 183-187 respectively.

<sup>355</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 106 and 110. Lines quoted are 57-58 and 191-194 respectively.

<sup>356</sup> A.H. Tomarken, *The smile of truth : the French satirical eulogy and its antecedents* (Princeton, N.J., 1990), pp. 205-208.

'*Et jamais Chat n'entre dedans ma chambre*')<sup>357</sup>. In this case, it is definitely not an elegy to a personal and beloved pet.

However, a work like du Bellay's '*Épitaphe d'un chat*', like many of the contributions of the Italian Neo-Latinists, is not a mere exercise in literary sophistry in which the chosen subject is a pet. Instead, despite its length, it demonstrates the affection of a scholar-owner towards his pet. In fact, despite being over two hundred lines long, Du Bellay seldom rambles into an exhibition of classical allusions but stays focused on his description of delight in his deceased pet. Du Bellay proudly proclaims to his readers his affection and grief at the loss of his pet, a personal loss now publicised. There are no attempts to mask affection or to defend the ownership of the pet. Owning a pet for a scholar is seen as a common occurrence, nothing to be commented on, apart from possibly being eulogized in verse. Du Bellay's *Épitaphe d'un chat* influenced other feline epitaphs by French poets such as François Maynard's (1582-1646) *Plainte sur la mort d'une chate* which laments the passing of his cat (*C'est grand dommage que ma Chate / Aille au país des Trépassez*), a fluffy black and white animal admired by all (*J'auray toujours dans le mémoire / Cette peluche blanche et noire / Qui la fit admirer de tons*)<sup>358</sup>.

#### *Justus Lipsius and his pet dogs*

The Flemish humanist Justus Lipsius (1547-1606) not only kept pet dogs like many of the authors scholars analysed previously, but wrote about them

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<sup>357</sup> Ronsard also wrote on a epitaph on Courte, Charles IX's lap-dog (a genre that will be discussed in the 'Pet Keeping at Court' chapter). Many other members of Pléiade wrote similar poems for patrons, along with numerous compositions on birds.

<sup>358</sup> M. Leroy de Gomberville, ed., *Les Œuvres de François Maynard* (Paris, 1646).

in his letters and made them part of his life. He claimed that only his love of books was above his love of dogs and gardens<sup>359</sup>, lectured with them by his side at the University of Louvain<sup>360</sup> and had them painted and included in engravings of his portrait on much of his published work<sup>361</sup>.

Four dogs are named in his correspondence: Melissa, Saphyrus, Mopsus and Mopsulus although he may he have owned more. Melissa is first mentioned in his letter collection *Epistolicae questiones* (published in 1577) in which he mentions the death of the little dog and requested that his friends write poems in its memory. He defends such behaviour, claiming that since the Italian scholar Celio Calcagnini (1479-1541) had erected monuments to his dead cat, he wished to do the same for his little dog<sup>362</sup>. As in the cases of Antonio Tebaldeo and Girolamo Aleandro the Younger, soliciting

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<sup>359</sup> Justus Lipsius, *Epistolarum selectarum centuria miscellanea*, V (Antwerp, 1605-7) p. 62 (letter to Gaspar van Dieman, 12 Nov. 1605) 'Post libros duae sunt avocationes, vel solatia: Hortus et Canes.' Cf. Jan Papy, Lipsius and His Dogs: Humanist Tradition, Iconography and Rubens' Four Philosophers', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, vol. 62 (1999), p. 167.

<sup>360</sup> A. Miraeus, *Vita Iusti Lipsi sapientiae et litterarum antistitis* (Antwerp 1609), p. 62 'Pictores et calcographi Mopsium prae ceteris dilectum ipsi nonnumquam adpingunt, quod illo comitatus, etiam ad Athenaeum seu professionis publicaelorum prodire sit solitus'. Cf. 'Lipsius and His Dogs' p. 167

<sup>361</sup> See previous footnote and J. Papy, ed., *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae*, XIII (Brussels, 2000) (*Epistolarum Centuria ad Belgas*, Antwerp, 1602, I.44), p. 65: 'Pauci versiculi sunt canum meorum laudi sive memoriae facti. Tres eos habe, ut scitis, gradu quodam magnitudinum discretos: parvum, maiusculum, magnum. Eos depingi in tabula iussi et notas ac carmen cuique praescribi aut subscribi'. Cf. 'Lipsius and His Dogs', p. 167

<sup>362</sup> *Epistolicarum quaestionum libri V, in quis ad varios scriptores, pleraeque ad T. Livium, Notae* (Antwerp, 1577), p. 95 (III.5) letter to Ludovicus Carrio 'Melissa mea, delictum illud caniculae, pessimo furto mihi periit. Prae cuius ingenio et fide, ille Ulyssis, Lysimachi aut Sabini canis, merae nugae. Amabo te (dic Lernutio dic Modio) Hendecasyllabos parent.' .... 'Ridibis et "numquam te tam Maccum credidi" inquis. Sed tamen ego melius quam Caelius ille Calcagninus. Cui feles in deliciis fuit, idque publicis monumentis testatum reliquit'. Cf. 'Lipsius and His Dogs', p. 172. Regarding Celio Calcagnini, I have not found mention of any feline epitaphs or monuments in his scholarly works or in collections of his verse. In fact the only pet elegy by Celio Calcagnini that I have found is one he wrote for Isabella d'Este, Marquise of Mantua, on the death of her dog Aura in 1511 (which will be discussed in the next chapter).

compositions from one's fellow scholars was a common practice among scholars on the death of a pet. He shortly received an contribution, in Catullan style, from Victor Giselinus called '*In caniculum Iusti Lipsi*' in which, along with the typical classical allusions, described the little dog as very playful, even with the household cat, possibly another one of Lipsius's pets (*Obisse iussa, voce, sive numine / Catam monere, sive utroque ad omnia / Iocosa, seria incitare ceperat*)<sup>363</sup>.

More details on Lipsius's dogs Saphyrus, Mopsus and Mopsulus (all living at the time) appear in a long letter written to his students in January 1600<sup>364</sup>. Although this letter can be construed as a rhetorical exercise for his students, it fits into the genre of encomia on dogs, a *laus canis* (on the virtues of dogs). Lipsius's aim in this epistle was to persuade his students that a dog is the ideal companion of a scholar, quoting many authors such as Pliny the Elder, Strabo, Aelian, Diodorus Siculus, Plutarch and Sextus Empiricus<sup>365</sup>. Lipsius explains that since the dog is the perceptive and clever companion of Mercury, who is the patron of the arts, then surely a dog is ideal for those who study the arts<sup>366</sup>. Lipsius then announces that dogs have four qualities which the ideal scholar should share: resolve (*robur*), cleverness (*ingenium*), vigilance

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<sup>363</sup> Sixtus Octavianus, *Phaselus Catulli, et ad eum quotquot exstant paroediae, cum annotationibus doctissimorum vivorum. Accesserunt alia quadam eiusdem generis* (Antwerp, 1579), pp. 33-4. Cf. 'Lipsius and His Dogs' p. 172 which furnishes a translation.

<sup>364</sup> J. Papy, ed., *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae*, XIII (Brussels, 2000), pp. 51-67. First published in *Epistolarum Centuriae ad Belgas* (Antwerp, 1602), I.44.

<sup>365</sup> Sextus Empiricus is quoted to demonstrate the Stoic traits of dogs: their virtue, their ability to find useful things and heal diseases. J. Papy, ed., *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae*, XIII (Brussels, 2000), pp. 66-7.

<sup>366</sup> 'Iam Graeci eosque secuti Romani Mercurio canem comitem sive adstitem dederunt, quia, ut Pluto ait, sagax et et ingeniosum hoc animal conveniebat facundissimo et promptissimo deorum. Si autem Mercurio, id est atrium nostrarum, assiduus ille comes, cur a nobis arceant qui artibus istis operamur?' J. Papy, ed., *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae*, XIII (Brussels, 2000), p. 53

(*vigilantium*) and faithfulness to their work (*fidem*)<sup>367</sup>. Lipsius proceeds to explain each one of these characteristics with classical examples and his own personal anecdotes<sup>368</sup>. When discussing their cleverness (*ingenium*) he adds their ability to divine matters<sup>369</sup>.

All in all, Lipsius proposes that dogs are ideal for the scholar, serving as both an example to follow and as a companion. After speaking of dogs and their qualities in general, near the end of the letter he writes two little poems for each of his three dogs. These little compositions are highly individualistic, describing each dog and their life with Lipsius<sup>370</sup>.

Saphyrus is the first, described as a little Dutch dog with white fur and a purple-brown head and ears (with a little white wedge on his head). Saphyrus at thirteen years old is quite ancient at although he was very beautiful and charming in his youth<sup>371</sup>. A little poetical elegy follows, narrated

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<sup>367</sup> Quatuor ex iis seligam: robur, ingenium, vigilantium, fidem et levi atque extemporaneo sermone diducam. J. Papy, ed., *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae*, XIII (Brussels, 2000), p. 55. They are similar to the canine virtues lauded by Rudbert von Mosham (1493-1543) in his *Encomium canis* which were memory (*memoria*), aptitude (*docilitas*), sagacity (*sagacitas*) and loyalty (*fidelitas*), which could also apply to the scholar.

<sup>368</sup> For example on faithfulness (*fides*), Lipsius mentions his grandmother's loyal little terrier, who would not leave her deathbed and after her death, in its grief, dug a hole and tried to bury itself in the garden. J. Papy, ed., *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae*, XIII (Brussels, 2000), p. 62. Lipsius uses his dogs Mopsus and Mopsulus to exemplify cleverness '*ingenium*' (*ibid*, p. 58 and 60 respectively).

<sup>369</sup> J. Papy, ed., *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae*, XIII (Brussels, 2000), p. 60 and footnote 189.

<sup>370</sup> Apart from appearing in printed collections of his letters, this short little compositions on his dogs also are printed in Franciscus Sweertius's *Selectae Christiani orbis deliciae urbibus, temples, bibliothecis et aliunde* (Cologne, 1608), pp. 481-3, which includes a large collection of assorted canine elegies, in the same manner as Caspar Dornavius, *Amphitheatrum sapientiae Socraticae joco-seria joc est encomia et commentaria autorum* (Hannover, 1619), which includes Lipsius's elegy on the death of Saphyrus.

<sup>371</sup> SAPHYRUS CATELLUS, GENTE BATAVUS, CORPORE ALBIT, CAPITE AURIBUSQUE PURPURAT, DISCRIMINE TAMEN ALBO A SUMMO EO INTER AURES CUNEATIM AD OS DESCENDENTE. SENECIO NUNC EST ET TREDECINNIS CUM IN FLORE PULCHERRIMUS ET LEPIDISSIMUS CATULORUM. A J. Papy, ed., *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae*, XIII (Brussels, 2000) (Ad Belgas 44), p. 65.

by Saphyrus who claims that he is the jewel of all dogs in Belgium due to his beauty and charm. Saphyrus adds his cleverness, one of the attributes that dogs share with scholars according to Lipsius, and ends on a humorous note, with Saphyrus claiming he is a little bit like a human because he drinks wine and has gout<sup>372</sup>. As the eldest, Saphyrus is first, the other two little dogs follow. Mopsulus is next, described as a gift from Lipsius's friend, Arnolfo Borcourt, a lawyer from Antwerp. Mopsulus has a white body with one yellow eye, a short and blunt red muzzle speckled with white, with a snub-nose and a cunning and snappish temperament and is two years old<sup>373</sup>. Just as with Saphyrus, a little poem follows narrated by Mopsulus, describing himself as his master's companion who shares his bed. In fact, the dog claims he really is the master's master (*Domini dominus*) who is greatly loved, even though he admits he is not the best-looking of dogs<sup>374</sup>. Here Lipsius, without any self-censure, shows the high position his dogs had in his home, spoiled and treated almost as equals.

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<sup>372</sup> 'Gemma dedit nomen. Sum vere gemma, catellum / Quotquot terra habuit Belgica, habebit, habet / Tale decus vultus, talis venus. Adde lepores / Ingenii, humanum qui sapiant genium. / Et sane est aliquid mi hominis. Vis argumentum ? / Vino bibo et vino nata me habet podagra.' A J. Papy, ed., *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae*, XIII (Brussels, 2000) (Ad Belgas 44), p. 64

<sup>373</sup> MOPSULUS CATULUS, DOMO ANTVERPIA, DONUM A CL[ARISSIMO] V[IRO] ARNOLDO BORCOUTIO, AMICO VETERI, ET I[URIS]C[ONSUL]TO IS CORPORE ALBET, CAPITE, AURIBUS, ATQUE ALTERO OCULO SUFFLAVIS. ROSTRUM E RUBRO ALBICAT, BREVE ET OBTUSUM, ET NARE PRORSUS REPANDA, CRASSULUS, ARGUTUS, MORDAX EST, AETATE BIMUS. A J. Papy, ed., *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae*, XIII (Brussels, 2000) (Ad Belgas 44), p. 65-66

<sup>374</sup> Mopsulus ast ego sum, domini conviva. Quid ultra? /En etiam lectum participo domini. / Estne aliud? Domini dominus, si dicere fas est: / Usque adeo formae huic iungitur improbitas. / Sed formae, quae rara cluet, si examine iusto / Pendor, quod nec ames est mihi, plus quod ames.' A J. Papy, ed., *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae*, XIII (Brussels, 2000) (Ad Belgas 44), p. 66

The final two little poems deal with Mopsus<sup>375</sup>. The descriptive poem begins by informing the reader that Mopsus is of Scottish origin. His fur is a solid chestnut colour, although he is speckled with golden hairs around the edges of his eyes, mouth, inner paws and thigh and under his tail, along with two little golden spots over his eye. He has a wide and upright chest, scattered with white spots, is three years old and very handsome<sup>376</sup>. The poetical composition 'narrated' by Mopsus follows, which speaks of his beauty, large body (unlike the previous two little dogs, described as 'catellus', Mopsus is a medium sized dog, called a 'canis'), endearing to the lord, lady or maid-servant, full of honesty and simplicity and quite deserving of heaven<sup>377</sup>. These six compositions personalize each dog, both by detailed physical description and by remarks on their personality and are a clear testament of Lipsius's affection for all three.

The following year, in 1601, his elderly dog Saphyrus accidentally fell into a cauldron of boiling water. In a letter to his friend Philip Ruben, Lipsius

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<sup>375</sup> As mentioned previously, Lipsius's biographer claimed Mopsus accompanied Lipsius when he was lecturing. A. Miraëus, *Vita Iusti Lipsi sapientiae et litterarum antistitis* (Antwerp 1609), p. 62 'Pictores et calcographi Mopsum prae ceteris dilectum ipsi nonnumquam adpingunt, quod illo comitatus, etiam ad Athenaeum seu professionis publicaelorum prodire sit solitus'.

<sup>376</sup> MOPSUS CANIS GENTE SCOTUS. COLORE CRASSO SPADICEO, SED CIRCA ORAS AURIUM, ET IN IPSO ORE DILUTIVUS FLAVO. SUPER OCULUM UTRUMQUE ORBICULI AEQUALES DUO, ITIDEM FLAVI. IDEM COLOR IN PEDIBUS INTERIORIBUS, INTRA FEMORA, SUB CAUDA, ET IN ANO. AT PECTUS LATUM ET HONESTUM, PANTHERINA PRORSUS SPECIE, ALBUM ET MACULIS SPADICEIS SPARSUM. TALES IPSI IMI PEDES. ANUM AGIT TERTIUM, AD INVIDIAM PULCHER. A J. Papy, ed., *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae*, XIII (Brussels, 2000) (Ad Belgas 44), p. 66

<sup>377</sup> Mopsus ego forma qui vinco saecla canina; / Quod nolim, in magno corpore nil habeo. / Quodque velim, dominum, dominam, ancillamque volentes / Conciliat probitas, simplicitasque mihi. / Ille canis redeat, meruit qui caelica templa: / Si certet, terra hunc, me sibi caelum habeat. A J. Papy, ed., *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae*, XIII (Brussels, 2000) (Ad Belgas 44), p. 66

wrote both an epigram and an epitaph, the latter was for the dog's tomb in his garden, a not unheard tradition to commemorate the death of a pet, as mentioned before. In the epigram, he describes Saphyrus as 'a true small jewel, not a little dog', a play on the dog's name (*Ille gemmula vera, non catellus*), dead at the old age of fifteen (*Haec te post tria lustra mors manebat?*). The sad circumstances of the dog's death are recounted (*Morte est praecipiti malaque functus, / In vasum miser incidens aenum, / Efferventis aquae, miser catelle*). Lipsius speaks of the affectionate relationship between the two, how the dog would wag his tail (*Quis nunc blanditias movente cauda*), waiting for him at the threshold, bouncing about and barking, demanding attention and entertaining Lipsius with his games (*Hero ultra faciet? quis obsidebit / Osti limen, et ingredi parantem / In se gestibus atque voce vertet? / Quis lusu recreabit?*). The elegy ends with a supplication to the spirits of the underworld to be kind to the dog, especially the dog Cerberus, whom as a fellow canine would show sympathy, and Pluto's wife. This last supplication is interesting, as it portrays the scholar's dog in the same category as a woman's dog. It is not Pluto who will take care of the little dog, but his wife, who by virtue of being a woman, is accustomed to pet dogs. (*Sit tibi benignus / Frater Cerberus, ipsa Ditis uxor / Sit fautrix (et aberro?), sit patrona; / Illi delictum novum pararis*)<sup>378</sup>. The epitaph for the tomb in the garden, written in an epigraphically format, and erected in

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<sup>378</sup> *Epistolarum Centuriae ad Belgas*, Antwerp, 1602 III.89 'In Saphyrum meum / O luctum et lacrimas! meus Saphyrus / Ille gemmula vera, non catellus, / Morte est praecipiti malaque functus, / In vasum miser incidens aenum, / Efferventis aquae, miser catelle, / Haec te post tria lustra mors manebat? / Quis nunc blanditias hiantem rictu, / Quis nunc blanditias movente cauda, / Hero ultra faciet? quis obsidebit / Osti limen, et ingredi parantem / In se gestibus atque voce vertet? / Quis lusu recreabit? o miselle, / Non ultra facies, abisti ad Orci / Nigri limina. Sit tibi benignus / Frater Cerberus, ipsa Ditis uxor / Sit fautrix (et aberro?), sit patrona; / Illi delictum novum pararis.'. Cf. Jan Papy, 'Lipsius and His Dogs', p. 168.

Lipsius' garden announces the name of the dog, Saphyrus of Holland (*SAPHYRUS DOMO BATAVVVS*) and how the dog was Lipsius' his delight and known for his intelligence, charm and physical appearance (*DELICIVM LIPSI, DECVS CANVM, / INGENIO LEPORE, FORMA*). The sad circumstances of the death appear along with the age of the dog (*TRISTI FATO EREPTVS, / ET FERVENTIBVS AQVIS MERSVS, / CVM VIXISSET LVSTRSA PLVS TRIA*). More lines lamenting the dog follow<sup>379</sup>.

Although elegies and tombstones for scholars' pets were commonplace, not all agreed on their propriety. The early seventeenth century Jesuit writer François Garasse found such things blasphemous and placed both J. Du Bellay's *Épitaphe d'une chat* and Lipsius's epitaphs and monuments to his little dogs in this category<sup>380</sup>. Nevertheless such censure was not the norm; Lipsius' situation was in no way unique or eccentric, we have seen that well before his time, the keeping of a small dog had become part of the scholar's lifestyle.

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<sup>379</sup> *Epistolarum Centuriae ad Belgas*, Antwerp, 1602 III.89: *HECATAE SACR / SAPHYRUS DOMO BATAVVVS / DELICIVM LIPSI, DECVS CANVM, / INGENIO LEPORE, FORMA, / H.S.E. / TRISTI FATO EREPTVS, / ET FERVENTIBVS AQVIS MERSVS, / CVM VIXISSET LVSTRSA PLVS TRIA. / O HERI DOLOR! / TVVM, LECTOR, ADDE / QVISQVIS LIPSIUM AMAS, IMO / QVISQVIS ELEGANTIAM AVT LEPOREM AMAS, / QVORUM ISTE THESAVRVS ERAT. / ABI, FLORES SPARGE, / SI NON LACRIMAS. / PLANGEBAT ET PANGEBAT, / LIPSIVS OLIM, HEV, DOMINVS, / V. KAL. SEPTEMR. MDCI*. Cf. Jan Papy, 'Lipsius and His Dogs', p. 168.

<sup>380</sup> F. Garasse, *La Doctrine curieuse des beaux esprits de ce temps, ou prétendus tels* (Paris, 1623), pp. 903-4 (VIII.17) : "ie dis qu'il y peut avoir de l'impieté à dresser des Épitaphes en deux ou trois façons, la premiere peut estre, faisant des Épitaphes honorables á des bestes, la seconde dresser parmy la Chrestienté des Mausolées, qui ressentent le paganisme, et la troisieme, qui est la plus meschante de toutes, faire dire des blasphemes au marbre, ou aux plaques de bronze qui couvrent notre corps. Quant à la premiere, quoy qu'il y ait et des gens de bien et d'honneur, lesquels pour esgayer leur esprit, ont fait l'Épitaphe de quelques bestes, neantmoins ie ne sçauois approuver cet abus, et par consequent ie ne trouve point bon que [René] Rapin ait dressé l'Épitaphe de l'Asne qui fuit mangé à Paris durant le siege, que Ioachim du Belay ait fait l'Épitaphe de son chat ou de son barbet, que Iustus Lipsius ait dressé des Mausolées à ses trois petits chiens' Cf. Jan Papy, 'Lipsius and His Dogs', p. 169.

Strong emotional attachment to the animal concerned does not appear to have been an object of criticism, instead it was viewed as an unremarkable result of sharing close domestic space with a pet. Similarly, many of the elegies and epitaphs stress how well the pet fits into the scholar's lifestyle, as it cheers up its master when he is sad, amuses him at all times, shares his desk (and table and bed) and provides a welcome distraction from study<sup>381</sup>.

*Iconography of the scholar and pet*<sup>382</sup>

The presence of small domestic animals in iconographic representations of scholars is a common motif and is taken as a symbol of intellectual keenness and fidelity<sup>383</sup>. It seems clear that despite such symbolic connotations,

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<sup>381</sup> Writing elegies for one's pet is a practice that even today has not disappeared completely in scholarly tomes. Two volumes of Alfred Franklin's monumental work *La Vie privée d'autrefois* (Paris, 1887-1902) which deal with animals (vol. 20 and 25) are dedicated to 'the memory of my dog Toby, my dear and faithful friend for fourteen years' (*'à la mémoire de mon chien Tobie mon tendre et fidele ami pendant quatorze ans'*) while Nona C. Flores, the editor of the collection of essays *Animals in the Middle Ages* (London, 1996) writes in the preface that 'This collection is dedicated in memoriam to Homer, a dachshund 'of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy'.

<sup>382</sup> For a general overview of canine symbolism, particularly in regard to the virtue of fidelity see B. Rowland, *Animals with Human Faces* (London, 1974), pp. 58-66. Apart from intellectual keenness (the dog seen as hunter for further wisdom, spaniels are particularly associated with this trait) and association with the planet Mercury, dogs are also occasionally associated with melancholy and the corresponding planet Saturn (see C. F. Hefferman, 'The Dog Again: Melancholia Canina and Chaucer's Book of the Duchess', *Modern Philology* (1986), pp. 185-190). Notable depictions of Melancholy accompanied by a canine companion are Durer's engraving 'Melancholia' (1514), reproduced in G. Bartrum, *German Renaissance prints, 1490-1550* (London, 1995), pp. 46-8, no. 33, and Lucas Cranach the Elder's 'Melancholia' (1528 in a private collection in England and a copy from 1553 in the Le Musée d'Unterlinden de Colmar, Colmar, France).

<sup>383</sup> The small dog as a humanist motif is explored in P. Reuterswaerd, 'The dog in the humanist's study', *Konsthistorisk tidskrift*, 50, (1981), pp. 53-69. Reuterwaerd argues that the symbolism of the dog in regard to intellectual keenness and fidelity derives mainly from Basil of Cesarea (on the reasoning of dogs) and Horopollo's *Hieroglyphica*. See Basil of Caesarea's Homelia IX.4 in *Homelies sur l'Hexaameron*, ed. and trans. S. Giet (Paris, 1950), p. 501. See also K. J. Hölting, 'Clever Dogs and Nimble Spaniels: On the Iconography of Logic, Invention, and Imagination', *Explorations in Renaissance Culture*, 24 (1998), pp. 1-36, on verbal imagery and the iconography of the dog, representing logic, dialectic, invention and imagination. P. Reuterswaerd also discusses the belief of canine supernatural awareness, observed previously in Lipsius's *laus canis* when he writes of *divinatio* power of dogs.

the presence of a pet in depictions of scholars portrays the social reality of widespread pet keeping by scholars, in keeping with their interior lifestyles. From evidence previously presented in this chapter there is reason to think that it was a general phenomenon: that a pet was a normal accessory of a scholar in his study along with a desk, writing implements and books. Similarly the animal kept as a pet did not always have to be a dog, replete with all the varied canine symbolism. Cats also appear in the imagery of scholars, and despite the traditional negative symbolic connotations of cats, I would argue that their function in much of the imagery is akin to that of small dogs, a sign of contented domesticity and an acknowledgment of their presence as pets. Cats do not share the virtue of intellectual keenness so often ascribed to dogs, any negative symbolism of the cat would be out of place in a quiet scholar's study. As observed in the feline elegies discussed, having a pet cat is not seen as extraordinary, in fact the cat, because of its small size and agility, often occupied a closer physical proximity than dogs (by sitting on desks, for example). The diminutive size of the animals reflects their presence as interior animals, in which companionship is their role. Again, this is evidenced in pet elegies in which the dog in question is invariably a small one.

The domestic space of the scholar and the small animal is normally the private sphere. The scholar normally sits at his desk alone, in an interior physical landscape either reading or writing. The animal is usually asleep, curled up in a tight position, on the other side of the desk. When the animal is awake it is in order to acknowledge the presence of others who are entering

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Reuterswaerd does not deny that the depictions of dogs could also be representations of pets.

the room or to note the presence of an extraordinary event. The animal's sleeping pose may reflect the desired for tranquillity of the scholar. The following images may serve as example<sup>384</sup>. A manuscript illustration of the author in a manuscript of Petrarch in the State Library of Darmstadt depicts him sitting at his desk in a closed study, with a small curled up dog, his head away from the poet, on the right side of the desk, in the foreground of the image<sup>385</sup>. Cats also appear in depictions of the author, despite the lack of any contemporary evidence for the ownership of cats by Petrarch. Although cats do not fit into the traditional topos of 'scholar and his dog', in practice they were kept by many scholars, so their presence in such an image is not unusual. It is difficult to find the negative meaning typically given to cats to these animals found in images of the poet<sup>386</sup>. It is more likely that the artist added the cat as a symbol of quiet domesticity which would promote study. In a manuscript in Milan the illuminator Francesco di Antonio dei Chierico depicts Petrarch at his desk deep in thought, as a striped cat sits in profile by his feet, head turned towards Petrarch<sup>387</sup>.

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<sup>384</sup> Petrarch, as the arch-humanist, appears in the majority of the images here.

<sup>385</sup>MS Darmstadt Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Cod. 101, fol. 1verso . The prose is very similar to the depiction of Petrarch in the Sala dei Giganti, Padua, from which it was probably copied. The latter is set in an open balcony while here the setting is a closed study. The dog adopts exactly the same position. The image is reproduced in T.E. Mommsen, 'Petrarch and the Decoration of the Sala Virorum Illustrium in Padua', *The Art Bulletin*, 34: 2 (1952), pl. 5.

<sup>386</sup> For the general symbolism of cats (association with heresy, the Devil, etc.) see B. Rowland, *Animals with Human Faces* (London, 1974), pp. 50-52 and K.H. Rogers, *Cats and the Human Imagination* (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 2001), pp. 45-48.

<sup>387</sup>MS Milan Biblioteca Trivulziana 905, f. 1verso. The image is reproduced in J.B. Trapp, 'Petrarch's inkstand and his cat', *Il passaggiere' italiano: saggio sulle letterature di lingua inglese in onore di Sergio Rossi*, 1994, pl. 6, p. 37.

The motif of the sleeping dog can be seen in an illumination of the Flemish scholar Jean Miélot in his study<sup>388</sup>. On other side of his desk is a medium-sized sleeping dog, head in the direction of Jean Miélot, with its head resting on its paws. In a section of the frontispiece to Conrad Celtis' *Amores*, 1502, there is also a small long haired dog, curled up by his feet, with the name-tag of Lachne printed below its face<sup>389</sup>. Both of these images emphasise the pet as a quiet and unobtrusive companion of the scholar.

A fresco of Petrarch in his study by Altichiero, in the Sala dei Giganti (Padua, 1379) shows him sitting at his desk on an outside balcony<sup>390</sup>. Although the background depicts the countryside, Petrarch appears to have merely transplanted his study outdoors, as he is shaded by an overhanging ledge, sits at his desk and has a small brown dog curled up by the desk. This small dog appears in exactly the same position in another fresco by Altichiero da Zevio, in the Oratory of St George, Padua, where it is depicted at the bottom of a flight of small stairs<sup>391</sup>. Above the dog stands Petrarch, at the top of the stairs, at the extreme left. The scholar is firmly closed off by the balcony. The domain of the scholar and his pet are the interior, and the exterior is seldom depicted.

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<sup>388</sup>P. Reuterswaerd, 'The dog in the humanist's study', *Konsthistorisk tidskrift*, 50, 1981, p. 55 has a reproduction of this image (current whereabouts of manuscript unknown).

<sup>389</sup>P. Reuterswaerd, 'The dog in the humanist's study', *Konsthistorisk tidskrift*, 50, 1981, p. 55 reproduces this image and quotes the author's instructions to the artist. These include the inscription 'my dog' for the animal that appears in the engraving. The same article reproduces several images of scholars with dogs such as fig. 12, an engraving of the astronomer Tycho Brahe with his dog in his *Astronomiae instauratae mechanica* (1598).

<sup>390</sup>The fresco is reproduced in T.E. Mommsen, 'Petrarch and the Decoration of the Sala Virorum Illustrium in Padua', *The Art Bulletin*, vol. 34, no. 2 (1952), pl. 3.

<sup>391</sup>The fresco depicts 'St George drinking the poison' but includes portraits of many contemporary scholars. The detail of Petrarch in the fresco is reproduced in D. Bobisut and L. Gumiero Salomoni, *Altichiero da Zevio. Cappella di San Giacomo. Oratorio di San Giorgio* (Padua, 2002), p. 57.

When it is, the scholar is shown enclosed on a closed balcony, thus turning the exterior into an artificial interior space.

Wakeful pets occur when a third party interferes with the scholar's repose. In a manuscript in the Huntington Library, the humanist poet Boccaccio, lying on his bed, views an apparition of Petrarch coming through the door, as the cat at the foot of his bed looks towards the viewer<sup>392</sup>. Similarly, when the calligrapher, translator and compiler, David Aubert is surprised by Charles the Bold, in a miniature of *Histoire de Charles Martel*, his two dogs adopt differing poses<sup>393</sup>. The smallest dog, a white collared specimen, continues to sleep by the feet of the scholar, while another slightly larger dog greets the visitors. Thus in conclusion, the lone scholar's pet is usually asleep while a scholar with company has an alert animal. The imagery of scholar and pet can also appear in a public interior, in which the protagonist is in the company of other scholars. The animal in this case is normally alert. It performs the role of the audience and appears to be actively listening to the debate going around it.

### *Conclusion*

To conclude, pets were a ubiquitous accessory of late medieval and Renaissance lay scholars, serving as beloved companions to those engaged in solitary study. Their presence is visible in iconography of scholars, in which

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<sup>392</sup> MS San Marino Huntington Library HM 268, f. 153. This illumination is reproduced in K. Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts* (London, 1996).

<sup>393</sup> MS Brussels Bibliothèque Royale 8, f. 7recto. The illumination is attributed to Loyset Liédet, before 1472. Reproduced in J. van den Gheyn, *Histoire de Charles Martel: reproduction des 102 miniatures de Loyset Liédet* (Brussels, 1910)

the portrayal of a pet was not considered amiss in the depiction of the scholar engaged in his labours. In fact, due to the proliferation of pet keeping by scholars, their presence near a desk was accepted as ubiquitous as the presence of inkwells and quills. Similarly, their portrayal in epistles and poetry by their keepers demonstrates the reality of pet keeping by this sector of society. Pets were more than just an addition to the scholar's lifestyle; affection and care were lavished on them. The outpouring of grief at their passing, as depicted in their owner's lachrymose elegies, points towards a strong emotional attachment towards these animals. As the pet was often the only companion of the scholar as he toiled in his work, it is possible to see how a great deal of time was spent in the company of the pet, which explains the often intensive emotional attachment.

In the previous two chapters, I examined pet keeping by women and clerics, who comprised the vast majority of pet keepers in the late Middle Ages. Nearly all of the sources on pets refer to female and clerical owners. However, as shown by the evidence presented in this chapter, there is a change in the role of pets as a sign of gender demarcation in the late Middle Ages. Pets become acceptable companions of lay secular men, due to the spread of humanist education: the pet becomes a symbol and accepted accessory of the scholar, and the scholar is increasingly a layman. The pet remains the province of those whose lives are spent primarily indoors, but now lay male scholars join women and clerics as the ubiquitous pet keepers.

## Excursus:

### Pets in the iconography of scholarly saints

Although scholar saints are not laymen, they appear with small dogs in many representations, which seem to reinforce the idea of the small dog as an attribute of the scholar, and gives these images an affinity with the images of humanists discussed in this chapter. In these cases, the dog's presence is not related to saintly behaviour, as would be the case of St Cuthbert and otters or St Francis with wild birds or wolves. In an unearthly visitation, in which the pet is alert, Vittore Carpaccio's depiction of the vision of St Augustine shows St Augustine receiving the illuminated wisdom, witnessed by his small curled haired dog, who sits in profile looking towards to the divine source of light and participating in the scene<sup>394</sup>. In this case, Augustine is alone. Augustine mentions the keeping of hunting dogs in his *Confessions*, but the petite long-haired white dog portrayed is unmistakably of the kind destined solely for interior companionship. However, there is iconography of Augustine as a scholar with company in which he also has an alert dog. In the fresco 'St Augustine reading Rhetoric and Philosophy at the School of Rome' by Benozzo Gozzoli the saint appears in a classroom of scholars<sup>395</sup>. In the centre foreground sits a small brown dog, with alert ears. Similarly, as St Augustine preaches in the Flemish 'Scenes from the life of St Augustine', a small brown

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<sup>394</sup> Vittore Carpaccio (1460?-1525/6), 'Vision of St. Augustine' (1502-8) in the Scuola di San Giorgio degli Schiavoni, Venice. The painting is reproduced with further details in H.L. Roberts, 'St. Augustine in "St. Jerome's Study": Carpaccio's Painting and Its Legendary Source', *The Art Bulletin*, 41:4 (1959), pp. 283-297.

<sup>395</sup> Benozzo Gozzoli (d. 1497), 'St Augustine reading Rhetoric and Philosophy at the School of Rome' (c. 1463-5), in San Agostino, San Gimignano. See PLATE 15.

dog sits looking out towards the viewer under St Augustine's lectern<sup>396</sup>. Thus several scholarly saints are commonly depicted with small animals that are clearly represented as pets, even though none of these saints are associated with the keeping of small animals in their hagiographies<sup>397</sup>. Often, as the saint in question needs his identifying animal (such as the case of St Jerome and his lion, and the animals that symbolically represent the Evangelists), the two animals will be depicted together, and the symbolic animal of the saint adopts the resting attitude of the pet. In Dürer's engraving of St Jerome in his study (1514) both the lion and a small dog are asleep in the foreground of the image. Similarly, a cat appears in the study of St Jerome (along with the lion), in the painting of the saint by Antonello da Messina<sup>398</sup>. A manuscript image of St Luke in a copy of the Acts of Apostle and the Apocalypse at Hatfield House shows him with his traditional ox along with a short haired collared dog, which looks up at the writing saint<sup>399</sup>. Although saints are often depicted with wild animals, to emphasize their power of taming a wild beast, depictions of saints and small animals commonly kept as pets occur only with saints who are assumed to be scholars. Although the saints mentioned are not the lay humanist scholars who are the focus of this chapter, they deserve to be noted

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<sup>396</sup> Master of St Augustine (Bruges) 'Section of Scenes from the life of St Augustine' (c. 1490) in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Cloisters Collection, New York.

<sup>397</sup> Saints associated specifically with dogs in the hagiography are St Dominic and St Roch. However, saints are both out of the sphere of the present discussion as they were not lay scholars. St Dominic's mother dreamed of a dog holding a flaming torch before his birth (*Legenda Aurea*) while St Roch's sole companion is a dog as he wanders infected with plague.

<sup>398</sup> 'Saint Jerome in his Study' (c. 1475) by Antonello da Messina (d. 1479) in the National Gallery, London, inv. NG1418. The image is reproduced in R. Weiss, 'Some Van Eyckian Illuminations from Italy', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 18 (1955), pl. a.

<sup>399</sup> MS Hatfield House Cecil Papers 324, f. 4recto. The manuscript was illuminated by either Lucas or Susanna Horenbout in England and is dated to c. 1528-33. This folio is reproduced in T. Kren and S. McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance: The triumph of Flemish manuscript painting in Europe* (London, 2003), p. 425

because the images date from the same period under discussion and reinforce the idea of the scholar as a pet-keeper, when the mere presence of a pet, like a desk or writing implements are symbols of a scholarly nature.

## **Chapter Four: Pet Keeping at Court**

### *Introduction*

This chapter examines pet keeping at court, bringing together many issues discussed in previous chapters, such as status, pet-keeping practicalities, public and private displays of affection and grief, and scholarly compositions on pets. It focuses on a case study of a pet dog named Aura who died in 1511 and was owned by Isabella d'Este, Marquise of Mantua<sup>400</sup>. The case is examined through numerous surviving letters and elegies by a variety of scholars and courtiers. It is due to the richness of the surviving material in the Gonzaga archive that it is possible to map out this case in detail. After this case from Mantua has been examined, I will review pet keeping at other European courts in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance.

### *Pet keeping in the Mantuan court*

Isabella d'Este owned many pets throughout her life, specializing in small dogs and cats. They were lavished with attention and their deaths provoked extensive private and public displays of grief, comparable to the death of child. The early sixteenth-century Mantuan author Mateo Bandello

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<sup>400</sup> Isabella d'Este, b. 1474 (Ferrara) – d. 1539 (Mantua), was the daughter Ercole I d'Este, Duke of Ferrara, and wife of Francesco Gonzaga, Marquis of Mantua. The death of Isabella's dog Aura in 1511 is mentioned in J. Cartwright, *Isabella d'Este, Marchioness of Mantua, 1474-1539. A study of the Renaissance* (London, 1903), vol. II, pp. 56-6 and discussed in A. Luzio and R. Renier 'La coltura e la relazione letterarie di Isabella d'Este Gonzaga', *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana* (Turin, 1899), pp. 44-7. The latter was a useful introduction to the case, as it quotes lines from archival sources (albeit without any citations) from letters and a few elegies. It also mentions the death of Isabella's cat Martino in 1510 and Federico Gonzaga's little dog in 1526. A very good general article on pets at the Mantuan court is C. Cottafavi, 'Cani e gatti alla corte di Gonzaga', *El Ceppo* (Mantua, 1934) which similarly lacks archival notes. R. Signorini, 'Two Notes from Mantua: A Dog Named Rubino', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 41 (1978), pp. 317-320, is a good introduction to material relating to animals in the Gonzaga archive. Although there no complete catalogue of material in the Gonzaga archive, A. Luzio and P. Torelli, *L'Archivio Gonzaga a Mantova*, 2 vols. (Ostiglia and Verona, 1920-1) is very helpful, particularly vol. II: 'La Corrispondenza Familiare, Amministrativa e Diplomatica dei Gonzaga'.

used the Marquise's pets as a way of telling that Isabella d'Este herself was nearby, as she always appeared with them. In one story, light conversation among the courtiers and ladies-in-waiting come to an end when they rise to attention as: 'The sound of little dogs barking was heard, a sign that madama [Isabella] was coming in'<sup>401</sup>.

There are many references to Isabella d'Este's numerous pets in her extensive correspondence. The earliest references are requests to her agents in Venice for cats imported from Syria. Isabella liked the best of everything, whether paintings or pets, and many of the mentions of cats in her correspondence refer to imported 'Syrian' cats (the term 'Persian' is also used intermittently through the sources). In 1496 Isabella sent a letter to Antonio Salimbeni, a Mantuan in Venice, asking him to find her three or four Syrian cats, as she had a problem with rats in her chamber<sup>402</sup>. Two years later, Isabella was still on the look-out for cats and received a letter in September, 1498, from a Brother Paulino in the monastery of San Antonio in Venice. He had heard of the Marquise's desire for two Syrian cats and assured her that he would do his best to fulfill this request<sup>403</sup>. A month later, Tolommeo Spagnolo,

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<sup>401</sup> Mateo Bandello, *Novelle*, ed. G.G. Ferrero (Turin, 1974), p. 282: 'si sentirono i cagnoletti abbaire; segno che madama era venuta fuori.' Mateo Bandello (1480?, Castelnuovo Scrvia, Lombardy -1562, Fregos) is the author of the 'Novelle', a collection of popular tales of a highly secular nature, despite the author being nominally in the Dominican order. He stayed in Mantova from 1515-1522. For a brief biography see *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, pp. 667-673

<sup>402</sup> ASMN, AG b. 2993, Libro 5, n°42 (Copialettere Particolari d'Isabella d'Este n°7 : 27 aprile – 29 agosto 1496) 'Antonio. vogliamo che tu uedi de ritrovare tri quatro gatti che gli ne sia de maschio et femina cioe de quelli listati che vengano de Levante da pigliare ratti Et ce li mandi perche non a lassano uiuere in casa...' [the letter continues with requests for soap and a viol]. Cf. C.M. Brown, *Isabella d'Este and Lorenzo da Pavia* (Genève, 1982), pp. 245-6 (one line is partially transcribed). There is no trace in the archives whether Salimbini was successful in this mission.

<sup>403</sup> ASMN, AG b. 1438, n°350: 'I.H.S.:Illustrissime et excellentie domine pax tibi de Celo etcetera. Essendo stato per nostro cugnto messer Federico da Casalmazor auisato imo constreto ex uostra Illustrissima signoria haueria apiacer deduj gatti surianj et Io hauendo Insteso questo come seruidore de uostra Illustrissima Signoria subito andaj dalquanti amici nostri zentilhominj

a Mantuan courtier on a visit to Venice, recounted how he saw ‘a most beautiful Syrian cat’ sitting in a window wearing a little collar adorned with bells. The cat was wearing an accessory more commonly found on pet dogs, as there are few references to cat collars<sup>404</sup>. Spagnolo found the owner, ‘the oldest woman I have ever seen’, who refused to part with her pet, despite Spagnolo’s offer of money and mention of Isabella’s name. Spagnolo even tried to negotiate with the lady’s son, but similarly he declined to give up his mother’s pet cat. In his frustration, Spagnolo concluded that the pair were both asses, although his letter is a clear demonstration of the devotion of pet owners towards their animals<sup>405</sup>.

Spagnolo also mentioned how he had visited the monastery of San Nicolo with Giovanni Gonzaga. The latter had stolen a ‘Syrian or Persian’ cat from the ‘poor brothers’ but had unfortunately later lost the animal. Isabella

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constringendoli mene Facessino auere ecosi Incerti monasterj datuti fome risposo non hauerne dequelli che uostra Illustrissima signoria forse haueria apiacere cioe che fosseno zoneneti, ma tuti mano promeso che altempo cioe quando sarano nati me seruirano e lo desideroso di Far cosa che sia In piacer de uostra Illustrissima signoria Faremo haueti el uostro Intentu epiu presto sara possibile: alquale sempre mericomando e saro seruidor che uostra Illustrissima signoria...ex monasterio nostro sancti Antonij de Venetijs 1 4 9 8 die ·8· septembris El fidel seruidor de uostra Illustrissima signoria Frate paulino mantuano’. This letter is partially transcribed, with greatly modernized and standerized spelling and punctuation in A. Bertolotti ‘I gatti e la gatta della Marchesa di Mantova Isabella d’Este’, *Il Mendico* (16 aprile 1889, Mantova), ix, n°8.

<sup>404</sup> See the subheading ‘Animal accessories’ in Chapter One: Identity and Status.

<sup>405</sup> ASMN, AG. b. 1438 n°351-2 ‘Siamo stati a Santo Nicolo de Lio, o ue lui fece robare a quelli poueri frati uno gatto suriano, quale è perso, si che la signoria vostra a nome de cui lera robato, li hauiera obligatione et non haueria il gatto. Vnaltro chio ho robbato spero serra grato ala *Excellentia Vostra*.. uedissimo uno bellissimo gatto suriano ad una finestra che haveano alquanti sonagli al collo, unde io smontato per vederlo di hauere per la *Excellentia Vostra* ben che li fossero che estimaua chio andasse per parlare a certe damigello che erano a quello finistre, battei al uscio et uennemi incontro la piu uecchiaza che vidi mai, da laquale per mia disgratia non pote mai cauare una bona parola ne mi ualse nominare la *Excellentia Vostra* ne il offerire dinari, alfine, dicendomi che uno suo figliolo non se ne uoleua privare: ho anche facto motteggiare lui non non e lui mancho asino che la matre sia asina....’ Cf. C.M. Brown , *Isabella d’Este and Lorenzo da Pavia* (Geneva, 1982) [the letter is partially transcribed and slightly modernized on p. 246]. The letter is dated the 13th of October 1498.

was obviously expecting a cat. In a letter written a day after Spagnolo wrote of his fruitless attempts, she reminded him to bring a 'little Syrian cat' on his return as this would please her<sup>406</sup>. In 1501, she was expecting a cat from Alvise Marcello, another correspondent in Venice. Marcello gave the cat to Francesco Trevisano, another Mantuan in Venice, to deliver to the Marquise. Unfortunately, the cat escaped out of the balcony of Trevisano's Venetian home and was lost. Trevisano wrote a long letter to Isabella, explaining the fate of the cat. To avoid the 'scandal and words' which would happen when this 'inconvenience' reached Alvise Marcello's ears, Trevisano asked her to write to Alvise Marcello and pretend that she had actually received the cat that he had lost<sup>407</sup>. Isabella complied and wrote to Marcello, assuring him that she had received the cat from Trevisano, and replied to Trevisano, informing

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<sup>406</sup> ASMN, AG. 2992 Libro 9 n°82 verso: 'Ptolemeo...Se ne portarai el gatino suriano ne farai cosa grata...'

<sup>407</sup> ASMN AG b. 1439 n°409 [25 June 1501] '*Illustrissime e excellentissima domine...per tri altre mie per auanti scripte a Vostra Excellentissimi Signoria Illustrissimma madona mia lho riverentemente pregata et di Special gratia adimandata e cussi per questa Fazo quello medermo che essendo occorso lo Infortunial Caso che essendomi dato In custodia per ILmagnifico miser alvise Marzello Compatre de Vostra Illustrissima Signoria et mio Una gata suriana per dover mandar adonar a Vostra Illustrissima Signoria e Intervenuto che per malla fortuna essendo in amore la nocte de quello medemo Giorno io lhebi salto Zoso di balchoni quam vix altissimi de una de le camare de la mia caxa doue lera serrata e riserbata per Vostra Signoria et essene fuzita in tal horra che mai piu Facta ogni diligente Imquisitione ho potuto sentir noua alcuna de lei et perche Io me ritrouo desideroso emendare lo Interuenuto errore cum Vostra Signoria radopiando la posta in duplum et azio etiam tal Inconueniente non vadi ale orecchie dil nostro dabene miser alvise marcello prego Vostra Signoria mi faci digno et Contento di vno specificato Donno qualle riconischa Da Vostra Signoria per euitar ogni scandollo et parolle che sopra dicta gatta potesse ocarrer : che Vostra Illustrissima Signoria Scriva una littera drizata o alui o me cum dimostrar che rengratiate Sua Magnificentia di tal Duono qualle a Vostra Signoria state molto gratto : et Io oltra che restaro Schiavo de Vostra Signoria fin pochi Zorni li faro cognoscere non esser villano ne di lagata persa ne del richiesto Servitio a Vostra Illustrissima Signoria et questo prego Vostra Signoria Sia preseto per esser rizerchato da luj di tal cossa : dicendo elmi par strannio che la Illustrissima madona non me dagi auiso de la riceuuta gatta : al qualle Io sempre li ho dicto haverlla mandata per uno de vostri da governo.... Cf. C.M. Brown , *Isabella d'Este and Lorenzo da Pavia* (Genève, 1982) [transcribed and slightly modernized on p. 245].*

that she had done as asked<sup>408</sup>. Trevisano's loss of the animal is perceived as distinct loss of face, which he attempts to remedy by appealing to Isabella.

Syrian cats also figure in the correspondence between Isabella d'Este and her Venetian instrument maker, Lorenzo de Pavia. In November 1498, Lorenzo da Pavia informed Isabella that he had sent the very best Syrian kitten he could find, although he would try to find a prettier one, if possible<sup>409</sup>. Unfortunately the kitten died prior to its arrival in Venice and Isabella had to write to Lorenzo da Pavia asking him to look for another one, hopefully a 'pretty one with 'lots of spots' <sup>410</sup>. Another correspondent in Venice, Antimacho, assured Isabella that they were looking for such a cat for her<sup>411</sup>. In March 1499, Lorenzo da Pavia was successful and managed to send Isabella 'a most beautiful female Syrian cat from Damascus who was very charming', adding in his letter that it had taken great effort to find such a beautiful animal<sup>412</sup>. In 1501, Lorenzo da Pavia, still aware of Isabella's predilection for

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<sup>408</sup> The letter to Alvise Marcello is ASMN AG b. 2993 libro 12 ff. 61verso-63: [27th of June 1501] 'Domino Aluisio Marcelo: Receuessimo li giorni passati per uno nauarolo una gatta suriana isieme cum littere di messer Francisco Triuisano: per lequale ne signigicaua mandarce essa gatta a nome de la *Magnificentia Vostra...*' Cf. C.M. Brown, *Isabella d'Este and Lorenzo da Pavia* (Genève, 1982) [the letter is partially transcribed and slightly modernized on p. 246] and the letter sent to Francisco Trevisano (30th of June 1501) is ASMN AG b. 2993 libro 12 f. 63recto: 'Messer Francesco: Se non hauemo resposto perma cella littera *vostra* circa la perdita de la gatta et proceduto che non hauerimo hauuto le precendente quale dicati hauerene scripto...'

<sup>409</sup> ASMN AG b. 1438 n°359 [27 November, 1498] '...Del gatesino soriano quale mandai, non pote' maie trovare de melo. Farò la diligencia averene uno pù belo se 'la sarà possibile...' in C.M. Brown, *Isabella d'Este and Lorenzo da Pavia* (Genève, 1982), pp. 47-8, n°21.

<sup>410</sup> ASMN AG b 2992. n°90 [30 November, 1498]: '...El gattino suriano che ne mandasti, quel tristo del nochiero ha lassato morire in nave, che molto n'è rencresciuto, però bisogna che di novo faciati practica per trovarne une che sia ben machiato et bello, che ne fareti cosa grata...' in C.M. Brown, *Isabella d'Este and Lorenzo da Pavia* (Genève, 1982), p. 48, n°22.

<sup>411</sup> ASMN AG b. 1438 . n°257: '...Non lasso trasto afare per ritrovar uno bello gatto – ma f[?] que non li ho ventura...Antimachus'. The date of this letter is unclear, possibly from October 1498, at the time when Lorenzo da Pavia was looking for a cat.

<sup>412</sup> ASMN AG b. 1438 n°614 [March 19, 1499]: 'Inlustrisima Madona, per el portatore di questa ve mando una belisima gata soriana portata da Damascho et è molto piasevele. Ò fato grande

these animals, mentioned that his brother had returned from Damascus with a Syrian cat, although lamenting that it was not the prettiest of the two the brother had purchased, as one was stolen on the galley as he returned home<sup>413</sup>. Two years later, Lorenzo da Pavia sent a young Syrian cat to Isabella, which his brother had brought back on another trip to Damascus<sup>414</sup>. In 1508 Isabella asked for Lorenzo's brother to bring back male and female Syrian cats on his next trip<sup>415</sup>. Although most of the references on cats in Isabella's correspondence refer to imported animals sent as gifts or purchased, she was not above 'borrowing' a cat if she wished, as evidenced by a plaintive letter sent by Iacobo Antonio Stella from Castellgoffredo in 1519, asking for the return of his family pet which had been taken to Mantua for breeding purposes<sup>416</sup>.

Isabella kept these exotic cats as pets, although they may also have fulfilled the secondary role of killing mice in her chambers. A cat called Martino who died in 1510 was greatly mourned. The noted humanist and courtier Mario Equicola took care of the burial, and delivered a sermon at the

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diligencia per trovare dita gata che fose bela...' in C.M. Brown, *Isabella d'Este and Lorenzo da Pavia* (Genève, 1982), p. 48, n°23.

<sup>413</sup> ASMN AG b. 1439 n°310-311 [August 3, 1501]'...Mio fratello è venuto da Damascho e à portato uno gato soriano. Io l'averia ben mandado ala Signoria Vostra ma non è niente belo : ie n'aveva 2 in galeia ma el pù belo li fo robato...' in C.M. Brown, *Isabella d'Este and Lorenzo da Pavia* (Genève, 1982). There is no letter from Isabella confirming that she decided to keep this cat

<sup>414</sup> ASMN AG b. 1140 n°293 [17 June 1503] : '.....E ancora mando un gato soriano, el quale à portato da Damascho, ch'è goveneto...' in C.M. Brown, *Isabella d'Este and Lorenzo da Pavia* (Genève, 1982), p. 74, n°75

<sup>415</sup> ASMN AG b.2915 Libro 201 n°21verso [13 August, 1508] '...Da vostro fratello non volemo altro se non che 'l ni facci havere dui gatti soriani belli et da soreci buoni, ma uno maschio et una femina, et vadesi alla bonhora...' in C.M. Brown, *Isabella d'Este and Lorenzo da Pavia* (Genève, 1982), p. 115, n°143

<sup>416</sup> ASMN AG b. 2498 n° 236 [9 February, 1519]: '*Illustrissima et Excellentissima Madamma & Signora mia colendissima*, hora quattro giorni per el magnifico Domino Antonio de bologna mi fu richiesto el gatto mio per unirlo cum la gatta di Vostra Excellencia ...'. This letter is also referenced in Chapter One on the discussion of acquiring a pet.

grave<sup>417</sup>. The Marquis's secretary, Battista Scalona, sent a letter of the proceedings in Mantua to Isabella's son, Federico Gonzaga, in Rome. Scalona acidly commentated that such deeds were above the Marquise's secretary Calandra's 'pious office'. Epitaphs were composed for the deceased, and Scalona mentioned that he had presented three epitaphs to Isabella. Two pet dogs, Isabella's Aura and Federico's Ribolin were present at the funeral<sup>418</sup>. In this letter it is interesting to note that the practice of an elaborate burial for a pet is not seen as out of the ordinary. There is an appropriation of funeral rituals (the sermon, the tomb, etc) along with the presence of acquaintances of the deceased, which in this case takes the form of other pets being taken to the funeral to 'mourn'. Equally, the concern of courtiers to please Isabella with epitaphs of the dead cat is not seen as a purely altruistic endeavour but as a

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<sup>417</sup> Mario Equicola (1479, Alvito-1525, Mantova) was a humanist scholar and courtier. He was employed by several patrons until his appointment in 1508 as Isabella's tutor. Equicola also had other roles: He went on diplomatic missions and continued composing his own literary works. See S. Kolsky, *Mario Equicola: The real courtier* (Geneva, 1991)

<sup>418</sup> ASMN, AG b. 2479 (Lettere ai Gonzaga da Mantova e Paesi dello Stato ) [28 November 1510]: 'IlLustrissimo Signor mio : credo che non debba manchare amisi di qua a vostra Signoria: Senon per altro , che pel diligente officio di messer Amÿco alqual me Riporto : Sol mi occorre : Essendo manchato questi si il pouero Martino di bona memoria con vniuersal dolore della corte : lha dato ampla materia alli ingegni Mantovani di celebrarlo : Messer Mario di alto spirito fa le Exequie sue con honore in Pompa: ne credo cheL virtuoso calandra manchara di pietoso officio: vn vostro Seruitor di tenue vena ha fatto lo Epithaphio , Toccano dilla Nation, virtu , e condicion dil Morto : Et perche gli Interuiene Ribolin vostro, et Aura Delicie hereditarie dilla Gentil fratilla : non mi e parso Indecente di presentare questi trei Epigramme alla Signoria Vostra: qual so che per il suo Nobil ingegno non sol capiragli senza altro Interprete: ma anchora sapria migliorargli , et degnerassi di Legerli per spasso , in memoria de quelli suoi fideli corteggiani : AL seruo vio serra bastante Mercede et gratia, non hauerui fastidito con le Ineptie sue : Dio vi conserue et acreseba in felicità Signor mio: vtque Regas orbem cum Seniore Senex : Mantue xxviii Novembris . M . D. X . Seruitore bapTista Scalona che bascia le mano , a vostra signoria .' The letter is mentioned by A. Luzio in 'La coltura e la relazione letterarie di Isabella d'Este Gonzaga', *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana* (Turin, 1900) pp. 44-7 and partially transcribed and modernized (with various errors) in C. Cottafavi, 'Cani e gatti alla Corte dei Gonzaga', *El Ceppo* (Mantova) 1934 [no page numbers].

way to gain favour by assuaging their patron's grief, along with exhibiting skill in composing such elegies.

The next mention of Isabella's little dog Aura is in a letter from her secretary Gian Giacomo Calandra in Mantua to her eleven-year old son Federico Gonzaga, who was a hostage of Pope Julius II in Rome. The letter, dated the 21st of April 1511, recounted how a little dog called Fanina gave birth to puppies. Isabella decided that the last puppy was to be reserved for her young son Federico, when he returned from Rome. Calandra described the puppy as 'the most loveliest and appealing in the world', of a reddish colour, with patches of white around the neck, tail and feet. Calandra explains that the little dog has been named Zephyro in allusion to Aura, Isabella's little dog (both being the names of winds in Ancient Greek mythology). He ends the letter by assuring Federico that he will have a well-trained and sweet 'bel cagnolo' who is the prettiest of all (as is due to Federico's position)<sup>419</sup>. The birth of puppies by the family's pets was a noteworthy item of news; in a letter dated the 28th of March 1512, Calandra informed Federico that one of his mother's little dogs, called 'Mamia', had just given birth to puppies (two

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<sup>419</sup>ASMN, AG b. 2482 n°111 [21 April 1511] [excerpt]: '*...Signore La Fanina gli di passati partori tre figlioli una cagnolina uiua dui maschi morti la cagnolina hebbe la signora donna Hippolita et gli post nome Fratilla. poi la damma nha fatti quattro. la Illustrissima signora uostra madre racordandose de vostra signoria me ne ha dato uno per lei il pui bello et piaceuolino dil mondo rossetto sfazato de peza bianca in mezo la fronte in mezo el collo unaltra ha il collo quasi tutto intornoiato de circulo bianco gli piede tutti balzani la punta de la coda bianca tutto allegro con bel musino Io con consentimento de la parta Madama gli ho posto nome Zephyro alludendo ad Aura de madama. Credo che la signoria vostra hauera un bel cagnolo. io non gli manca de diligenza per alleuarlo ben accostumato et piaceuolo . Zorzino ha hauuto una sorella, messer Benedetto Lacioso laltra messer Francesco Cantelmo el terzo ma quel de vostra excellencia e il piu bello di tutti come era debito...*'

born dead and two alive), ending the letter with the note 'Mamia was pregnant by your Zephyro'<sup>420</sup>.

In Chapter One: 'Identity and Status', I examined the methods by which pets could be obtained: gift-giving, purchase and breeding one's own. All three methods are visible in the Gonzaga correspondence, from Isabella's requests to Lorenzo da Pavia for an exotic cat that she might buy to the puppies born from pets and destined to be kept or given away to family or close associates.

Although Isabella owned many pets, her little dog Aura was especially beloved. On the 30<sup>th</sup> of August, 1511, her secretary Calandra wrote to Federico Gonzaga regarding the animal's death:

'My illustrious lord. There was a great misfortune here yesterday. Your mother went to the casa di Bagni to visit Count Bacarino of Canossa's wife. When her Excellency wanted to set off, Aura and Mamia (the two little dogs of her ladyship) started chasing each other as there was enmity between them for the love of Alfonso's dog. Finding herself on a high outcrop of earth, about twenty-two arms-length high, poor beautiful Aura fell from that outcrop onto the forecourt, and died at once. It is not possible to speak of Madama's grief; there is so much of it. Anyone who knows the love she bore the dog can well imagine it.

And much was deserved as Aura was the prettiest and most agreeable

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<sup>420</sup>ASMN, AG b. 2485 [28 March 1512]: '...Questi di la Mamie cagnolina di *madama* uostra madre partori prima doi cagnoli morti poi uno cagnolino et una cagnolina dopplicati cioe gionti insieme tutti gemini ex cetto che hauano una sola testa morti. Questo credo *non* habbia scritto messer Amico che in tutti lo altre cose me remetto a lui: La ditte Mami era grauida chel uostro Zephyro. Il fidelissimo servitore Jo. Iocamo Calandra.'

little dog that ever there was. Her ladyship was seen crying that evening at dinner, and she couldn't talk about it without sighing. Isabella cried as if her mother had died and it was not possible to console her. I cannot deny that I too have shed some tears. Madama [Isabella] quickly had a lead casket produced and put the dog in it. And I believe she will keep it there until she can put it in a beautiful tomb in the new Hungarian house, for which her Excellency will lay the first stone with her own hand at the twentieth hour by astrological calculation. In the meantime, epitaphs will be written for the noble Aura. Your Zaphyro has lost a friendly companion. My lord, there was very bad weather the night following the unhappy day of the cruel death of Aura...'<sup>421</sup>

Calandra's description of the elaborate funeral and the composition of epitaphs echo Scalona's description of Martino's funeral a year earlier. Calandra furnishes details of the funeral, such the burial of the dog in the lead

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<sup>421</sup> ASDM, AG, b. 2482 n° 115 and 116 [Excerpt]: [30 August 1511]: 'Ilustrissimo signore mio Heri laltro accadeti qui una grande disgratia: che essendo andata la Ilustrissima madama uostra madre a casa di Bagni per uistare la moglie del Conte Bacarino da Canossa paiolata: et uolendose partire sua Excellentia Aura et la Mamia cagnoline de sua signoria se appizonno insieme per essere stata grande inimicia tra loro per amore del cane de Alfonso et ritrouandose su un poggiolo in capo de la scala alto da terra forsi uintidua braza la pouea bella Aura cadde da esso poggiolo su la salicata de la corte , et subito morite. con tanto dolore de Madama che non se potria dire: lo puote ben imaginare ogniuno che sa lo amore che la le portaua: et quanto meritamente per essere stata la pui bella et pui piacuole cagnolina che fosse mai. sua signoria fu ueduta piangere quella sera a tauola : et mai la non ne parla che la non sospira, La Isabella piageua come se le fosse mortu sua madre et non se puo anchora ben consolare. non posso gia negare che anche io non habbi giettata qualeche lachrima. Madama subito fece dare una cassetta de piombo : et ui lha fatta ponere entro: et credo la tenira cosi fin che la se possi mettere in una bella sepoltura alla casa noua de ungoria che sua Excelentia fa fare de la quale hoggi sua signoria ua a mettere de sua mano la prima pietra a xx hore per calculo astrologico. Fra tanto se attendera a fare acrsi et Epit. per la nobile Aura. Il uostro Zaphyro ha perduto una gentil compagna. Signore la notte seguente il giorno infelice de la crudel morte de Aura fu un malissimo tempo qui...'

casket and the construction of a tomb. Isabella's grief was displayed both publicly, as shown by the funeral and the request for compositions of epitaphs for the dog, and privately, as she mourned the animal in her rooms. There is a great deal of anthromomorphism in the letter, for example the reason for Aura's death is blamed on a fight caused by jealousy and how Federico's little dog Zaphyro has lost a 'companion'<sup>422</sup>.

The first condolence letter came from Bernardino Prospero, Isabella's informant in Ferrara (her home town) on the 25<sup>th</sup> of September 1511. He wrote that Mario Equicola, Isabella's tutor, had told him of the death of 'the sweet little dog of your ladyship'. His reaction, on hearing the sad news, was to compose two epitaphs, even though he claimed, in a self-deprecating fashion, that they were not of the very best quality. Bernardino added that Alessandro Guarini and another scholar would be sending other epitaphs to Mantua as soon as possible, and these would be of a better quality<sup>423</sup>. Only after offering his condolences and a pledge to send more epitaphs did Bernardino Prospero mention other events, such as the plague in Ferrara<sup>424</sup>.

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<sup>422</sup> The elegy that Calandra mentions composing for Aura is probably the one found under his name in a manuscript that collected many of the compositions dedicated to the dog ASMN, AG, Serie Autografi, Cassata n°10, File n°356 f. 3recto). Calandra also wrote a long literary work titled 'Aura' that is now lost, which may have been based on the Marquise's dog as well although there is no further evidence apart from the title to confirm this. See A. Luzio and R. Renier, 'La Colture e la relazioni letterarie di Isabella d'Este Gonzaga II. Le Relazioni Letterarie: I. Gruppo mantovano', *Giornale Storico della Letterature Italiana* (Turin) 1899, n.35, pp. 49- 54.

<sup>423</sup> Battista Guarino (1435-1513), the noted Ferrarese scholar (see *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, p. 333-4). The other is called 'Messer C' and I cannot pinpoint with certainty his identity. He could be either Girolamo Cusatro or Celio Calcagnini, since we know that these two Ferrarese scholars sent elegies. The epitaphs they composed were possibly sent with Bernardino's letter, as Isabella thanks him on their part in her reply.

<sup>424</sup> ADSM, AG 1243 n°188 [25 September 1511] 'IILustrissima Madama : hauendome scripto Messer Mario de la dolce Cagnolina de vostra signoria che era morta e chio uedesse farli Componere a quisti modi qualche Epitaphio , ne parlai cum alcuni donde me hano dato Li duo introclusi , cioe per panizato e lo azaiolo quali se raccomandano ala S. V. assaj excusandosse se non sono de la

Isabella's reply was swift, within a few days she replied to Bernardino, excusing her tardiness and thanking him for the elegies, which were 'most pleasing', asked him to thank the composers in her name and said that she would be delighted if they could send some more<sup>425</sup>. Other elegies were sent to Isabella by Antonio dall'Organo in Ferrara and she thanked the author in a letter in January 1512, as she found the verses charming in 'honouring our little dog'<sup>426</sup>.

The next letter to arrive in Mantua regarding Aura was sent by her son, Federico Gonzaga, on 25th of January, 1512 from Rome<sup>427</sup>. As with all other correspondence where the dog's death is mentioned, it is the first matter of business. Federico informed his mother that he had received some verses in praise of 'the little dog Aura of your ladyship' by Fillippo Beroaldo, a poet and the keeper of the Vatican Library<sup>428</sup>. In the letter Federico added that Beroaldo had written the poems to please her since doing 'pleasing' things

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dostima che Lei meretaria de hauere . IL Guarino et Messer C cho mi da promesso de darmi mehor Loro li fuoi , quali haueti ge li remettere...'

<sup>425</sup> ADSM, AG, b 2996, Libro 29, n°59 recto [30 September 1511] 'De Bernadino Prospero Soprascritto v. Gli Epitaphij de la nostra Aura che ci haueti mandati ni sono stati gratissimi et ni ringratiareti gli compositor in nome nostro et se altri se ne faranno ne piacera che ci gli mandati...' Isabella's letters to Bernardino Prospero and Antonio di Organo (both in Ferrara) and to her son in Rome [ADSM, AG, b. 2996 Libro 30 N°8] are quoted in 'Varietà Archivistiche e Bibliografiche CCLXXXIX. Necrologie di una cagnuola marchionale', *Il Bibliofilo*, 9:4 (1888-89), p. 56 [no mention of author but probably A. Luzio].

<sup>426</sup> ADSM, AG, b. 2996 Libro 29 n°82verso [10 January 1512]: 'Antonio Organo ferrariensi...Hauemo receuuti gli uostri uersi che ni hauete mandato de la nostra Aura quali ne sono stati gratissimi per esser dotti beli conformi al nostro gentil ingegno el tenemone molto honorata la nostra cagnola. Ve ne ringratiamo molto et a tutti gli nostri comodi ne offerimo. Mantuae x januarii MDXIJ'

<sup>427</sup> This letter is in Stazio Gadio's hand, although it is signed by Federico. Stazio Gaudio was Federico's tutor in Rome.

<sup>428</sup> Filippo Beroaldo (often referred to as iunior due to being the grandson of Filippo Beroaldo senior, another scholar). Born in 1472 (in Bologna), died in Rome, 1518. He also wrote an elegy for Leo X's elephant Hanno, when this beloved animal died.

was a way of showing her that he was a great 'servitor'<sup>429</sup>. Beroaldo's desire to commend himself to Isabella with these pet elegies was very likely a motive shared by all of the authors. Apart from an attempt to seek patronage, another motive for the authors would have been the chance to demonstrate their literary skills, particularly in Latin. There is no evidence that there was ever a formal literary competition on the subject of Aura, although many scholars or courtiers must have written their contributions with the knowledge that others were also attempting to ingratiate themselves via the composition of elegies for the Marquise. Additionally, since so many writers were involved, the decision to write Latin and Italian elegies for this specific dog may have become quite a popular pastime. Finally, it should be noted that these elegies were not intended to be mere literary exercises nor read as parody. Isabella's grief for this animal was well-known and all of the elegies intend to commemorate the dog in a serious fashion<sup>430</sup>.

Federico wrote another letter on the 16th of March. Unlike the previous letter, this is a short missive written in his own hand, instead of his tutor's

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<sup>429</sup> ASDM, AG, b. 1894 n° 57 [Single folio] [25 January 1512]: 'IlLustrissima et Excellentia Signoria mia matre et signora obsezimma. Hauendo fatto Maestro Philippo beroaldo alcuni uersi in laude di Aura cagnolina di vostra signoria mi li ha dati acio che in suo nome li mandi a quella hauendo lui inteso da statio che li fara piacer a vostra signoria Eperho qui alligati le li inuio che credo per quanto mi e detto , non le spiacecano, egli li ha fatto molto uoluntieri per far cosa grata a Vostra Excellentia mostrando di esserle gran seruitor: Quella adunche li acceptara, et legera con lieta fronte che lamoreuole prompteza sua lo merita : spero ben di mandarle anchor de altri de diuersi poeti:...Dil resto sto bene et sano et solcito igno di Nostra Signoria et basandole la mane sempre me raccomendo Rome xxv Ianuarij M D XIJ Obedientissimo fileolo et seruo Federico Gonzaga'. A few lines of this letter and Stazio's letter to Isabella in April [ASDM, AG, b. 860 n°29] are quoted in A.Luzio, 'Federico Gonzago ostaggio alla Corte di Giulio II', *Archivio della R. Società Romana di Storia Patria*, vol. 9, 1886, pp. 536.

<sup>430</sup> I believe that the elegies on the subject of Aura were viewed as a serious literary works. A dissenting view can be found in L.K. Regan 'Ariosto's Threshold Patron: 'Isabella d'Este in the Orlando Furioso'' *Modern Language Notes*, 120.1 (2005) footnote 30: 'One might take the proliferation of humanistic poetry in Latin in memory of a dog as amusing proof of the disingenuousness of much of the poetry produced by these courtiers to please their patrons.'

hand. Even though Aura had been dead for several months, Federico still believed that Isabella would be pleased with even more elegies and he said that he would send them to Mantua<sup>431</sup>. Isabella was delighted by this last letter and in her reply she spoke of her great pleasure in reading a letter in her son's hand, praising him for sending the poems. She had found all of the elegies 'beautiful' and 'elegant', especially the one written by Blosio Paladio (1470 - 1550), a famed humanist in Rome<sup>432</sup>. The next letter from Rome came from Gadio Stazio, Federico's tutor, in April 1512. After informing Isabella of her son Federico's progress, he mentioned a dinner he had attended with Fillippo Beroaldo, Marco Cavallo and Pietro Bembo, all of whom had written epigrams for the 'little angel of your Excellency'<sup>433</sup>.

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<sup>431</sup> ASDM, AG, b. 1894 n°60 Single folio, written in Federico Gonzaga's own hand. [16 March, 1512]: 'Illustrissima et Excellentia signora mia matre et signora obsezimma... apresso perche uedo che vostra signora piglia piacer de uersi Fati per la cagnolina ho procurato di farmi componer de le aleri, ulera quelli dil Beroaldo, quali qui alligati serano che credo non le dispiacerano...Obedientissimo filio et serue Federico Gonzaga'.

<sup>432</sup> ASDM, AG, b. 2996 Libro 30 n°8 [28 March 1512] *Illustre* Federico de Gonzaga , primogeno . Isabella. Con grande piacere hauemo lectra la lettera del Tua mano de xvj. del Instantij. Intendendo per essa il Tuo benstare, et memoria che serui de noi : che ben ni hai ragione: peroche cosa pui hauemo al core di te. Laudamoti anchora di liuersi che ni hai mandati, composti per la morte de la nostra cagnolino che Tutti sono belli: et elleganti: maxime la silua de quello messerm Blosio: volemo che ringracij, o , facci ringratiarlui et tutti gli altri da nostra parte cum gionta de quelle offerte ti pareranno conuenire... '. Unfortunately, Blosio's elegy for Aura is not included in the elegy collection for Aura and I have not been able to discover it in the Gonzaga archives. It does not appear in any published collections of his work.

<sup>433</sup> ASDM, AG, b. 860 n°29 (in a folder titled 'Roma 1512 Stazio Gadio') [4th April 1512]: 'Illustrissima et Excelentissima signora mia vnica:...(he speaks of how Federico is progressing, then mentions a dinner) Hozi il signor Sigismondo da camerino lha uisitatio : et molti altri sono uenuti questa matina ad disnar seco, como ogni di ui ueneno diuersi gentilhomini laltra matina uenero domesticamente al improuiso chel uolca andar a tauola : ad disnar seco messer Petro bembo, messer Philippo beroaldo, messer Marco cauallo quel che fece lo epigramma del cupidine di vostra Excellencia con tre altre persone uirtuose et docte et dal signor Federico furno honorati...Di vostra Excellente seruo fidelissimo Statio'. Pietro Bembo (1470-1547) was a notable Venetian humanist and later cardinal (1539). Among his other compositions is a small elegy to his own dog, Bambino, see P. Bembo, *Carmina* (Turin, 1990), no. XXXVII, p. 58.

Later on that year, it appears that Isabella, while still grieving for Aura, was also devoting time to pet cats. In late July, her son Federico sent three kittens, hoping they would please her<sup>434</sup>. In mid-August, her secretary Calandra wrote about the success of this gift, as Isabella favoured one of these cats greatly. Calandra praised Federico for sending such a beautiful and delicate animal which had 'no other home than in the arms and breast of her Excellency'. The kitten stayed in Isabella's room and amused her. She was very grateful for the cats' company, and even Calandra comments with amazement on how happy the little cat has made her, a measure of the grief for Aura that lasted for months. Isabella lavished this kitten with affection; Calandra noted how she could not stop kissing it and praising it with the 'sweetest little words in the world'. A specially made little bed, probably a basket of sorts was made to accommodate the kitten<sup>435</sup>. Calandra may be

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<sup>434</sup> ASDM, AG, b. 1894 n°89 Letter in Stazio's hand, signed by Federico Gonzaga to Isabella d'Este, with a note on the top of the page by a later archivist: '1512 25 Luglio Roma'. '...Mandare a vostra Excellencia tutti tre li gatini che ho per messer Federico cataneo. Eso le piacerano, de vostra Excellencia baso la mano...Federico Gonzaga'

<sup>435</sup> ASDM, AG, b. 2485 [14 August 1512] *Illustrissimo signore mio Heri guinse messer Federico Cattanio tanto ben ueduto da ogniun ma principio da la Illustrissima madama uostra madre quanto fosse possibile per el bon noncio del ben stare di vostra signoria Hon potrei scriuere con guanta allegrezza Sua Excellentissima accetto el nobilissimo patre di vostra signoria la quale di essere certa che la non poteua mandare cosa che fosse pui grata per la bellezza ne pui mirabile per la sua rarita di quel bello animalens. Fu forza che esso messer Federico differisse molto in longo a fare la sua ambassata fin che madamma se succiasse alquanto in mirare et andare quel animalino delicato: el quale fin qui non ha altra allogiamento che la manica et seno di sua Excellissima gli altri doni di vostra signoria sono ben stati grati ma per albora et per bon pezo non forno guardati estimandosi solamente la bellezza di quello uiene ma el tempo loro: che come se fossero guinti pur adesso, se mirano et laudano. Vno di gattini cioe il masebio non ha potuto guingere uiuo la gentiliza del piccolino recompensa el danno di quello Madonna gattina sta in la camera di madamma in delicie et feste di ogniuno per essere cosi piacquolo. ma beato chi puo toccare el bellino. La pietra anticha e una bellissima cosa et molto laudata da ogniuno. la signoria vostra lha anche honorata dun bello repositorio come lo animalino d'una bellissima gabia et il gentilissimo animo di quella e, stato molto laudata che in ogni cosa mosta splendideza et virtu. a coroneine et agnusdei sano state accettissima a madamma. insumma da la presentia di vostra signoria in fori quella non postua donni a sua Excellentissima cosa piu grata di questi presenti. de*

exaggerating when he claims that her love for Aura was nothing like this, instead it seems that Isabella finally decided to devote attention to another pet. Perhaps after all the elegies, the best present was another pet. In his next letter, Federico said that he was greatly pleased to hear how well Isabella liked the kittens<sup>436</sup>. These events tally well with issues of the practicalities of pet-keeping, analysed in the first chapter. Like many pet owners, apart from feeding and keeping their pets indoors, Isabella obtained accessories, such as the cat bed mentioned in Calandra's letter. Additionally, although Aura had died nearly a year before this letter was written, Isabella's grief at the loss of her pet is still noted as normal and expected behaviour. As in all of Calandra's descriptive letters, Isabella's deep affection for her pets is vividly represented.

#### *Elegies for Aura*

All of the letters discussed mention the composition of elegies along with offering condolences. Presumably these elegies were sent with the letters themselves to Isabella, although they do not survive in the Gonzaga Archive with the letters themselves. However, a large collection of elegies to Aura by a multitude of authors survives in a small paper folded booklet, in different

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che la ringratia infinitamente. La signoria vostra non potrie credere la cura che madama parta continuamente che quel animalino repossa mollemente et mangi cose che gli piacia: ma non se scia di basarlo et fisteggiarlo con le piu tenere paroletti del mondo. Lo amore de la sua Aura era niente appresso questo. la gli fa fare una lettica bellissima da alloggiarlo: ma ui stara poco: per che uolo be io che lo alloggiamento suo ha esse ella istessa. La morte del gatino e stata per che santo famiglio di messer Mario amalo a Siena et iui resto: onde el gattino bisogno caualcare un cauallo da sua posta minato a mano...*Mantua?* xiiij Augusti M.D.XIJ Il fidelissimo seruitore di vostra signoria Zo Iacabo Calandra.

<sup>436</sup> ADSM, AG, b. 1894 n°96 Letter in Stazio's hand, signed by Federico Gonzaga to Isabella d'Este, 28 August 1512: '...Grandissimo piacer ho receuuto che le siano sta grati li gatini che li ho mandati...'

hands<sup>437</sup>. For each composition, the author's name is placed first, followed by the title and then the poem. Due to the neatness of such an arrangement and the fact that the compositions come from authors based in a variety of locations (Ferrara, Rome, Mantua, etc.), the poems must have been copied from the original versions, which were presumably on loose sheets<sup>438</sup>. The manuscript collects most of the numerous elegies that would have been sent to Isabella from her correspondents across Italy and from her courtiers in Mantua. The paper manuscript itself is a very plain, with no decoration at all. It was very likely prepared in Mantua as all of the hands that I have identified palaeographically come from Mantuan courtiers and scholars. It is a rather rough manuscript, there are numerous blots, one elegy is even crossed out, several pages are blank, etc. I cannot determine whether there was an intention to commission a high quality manuscript copy of the collection from the paper booklet, if there were any plans to see some of the poems to music, or if Isabella was happy with this simple manuscript. The first possibility seems likely. Additionally, none of these compositions survive outside this collection. The authors are varied, some are those mentioned in correspondence with Ferrara and Rome<sup>439</sup>; others are written by Mantuan

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<sup>437</sup> See the edited texts titled 'Elegies for Isabella d'Este's dog' at the end of this thesis for all the references to the elegies.

<sup>438</sup> Additionally there are a few corrections in the manuscript. The hands vary, sometimes one hand will write the elegies of several authors, then another hand will take over, and so on. In some cases where I have been able to determine the possible authorship of a hand, I make a note.

<sup>439</sup> For background information on some of these scholars and their connections to the Mantuan court, see A. Luzio and R. Renier, 'La Colture e la relazioni letterarie di Isabella d'Este Gonzaga: II. Le Relazioni Letterarie', *Giornale Storico della Letterature Italiana* (Turin) 1899-1901, n. 35-8. The scholars mentioned are Mario Equicola, Gian Calandra, Francesco Vigilio, Antonio Tebaldeo, Antonio dall'Organo, Alessandro Guarini, Niccolò Panizzato, Pietro Bembo, , Girolamo Avogadro, Marcantonio Flaminio, Filippo Beroaldo and Gaultiero di San Vitale. However there is no discussion of this particular manuscript.

courtiers and scholars, so there would not have been a need. Although the style of the elegies differs from one author to another, all have common ground in commemorating Isabella's pet in lavish praise, often emphasising Isabella's current grief or the very deep affection she had for the dog.

The booklet begins with contributions by the Mantuan scholar Carlo Agnello. I have analysed Agnello's elegies in more detail than the rest of the poems in the collection, as I feel that they are representative of the collection's style, with their emphasis on grief and the closeness, both physically and emotionally, between the owner and pet. His first contribution is a 'Hendecasyllable' of the death of the little dog Aura, the beloved of Isabella d'Este<sup>440</sup>. In style, as with most of the elegies, it resembles the elegies examined in chapter three. The little dog is praised for being faithful (f.1r, lines 1, 6), virtuous (f.1r, 11) and resides now in her new home in the Elysian Fields (f.1r, 8). The pet will be remembered for years, and was so well-behaved that it never needed to be punished with either a stick or Isabella's hand (f.1r, 17-18). The elegy claims that everyone loved the little dog, who was so charming who was stroked with caresses and had her lovely little face kissed (f. 1v, 25-27). At the end of Agnello's poem, he laments that evil day in which the delightful Aura died (f. 1v, 35-6). His next poem in fourteen lines ('by Carlo as well') is titled 'When the lady cried for the death of the little dog'. He begins again by lamenting the little dog who was so beloved (f.2r, 1-3) and over whom tears are being shed. Then he talks of the circumstances of the

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<sup>440</sup> In a neat Italic hand, Latin in 36 lines, from f. 1 recto- f.2recto. Carlo Agnello was a Mantuan scholar and courtier who often represented the Gonzaga in Rome. See *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (Rome, 1960-), pp. 416-17.

dog's death, of a 'shameless, impudent, and daring dog' whose passion for the 'chaste Aura' resulted in her fall from the cliff and subsequent painful death (f. 2r, 4-14). Here the author refers to the dog that Aura and Mamia, Isabella's other pet dog, were fighting over when she fell. Carlo Agnello's next poem in this section (f.2v, 1-8) is 'To the owner of the little dog so that she might hold back tears', in which he implores Isabella to restrain her great grief<sup>441</sup>. The first ten-line poem is very similar to his composition on f. 1r-v, and again laments the death of the sweet Aura, who was always so beautiful and charming (f. 2v, 1-3) and was kissed a thousand times (f. 2v, line 4), until fate caused the dog's death, which was followed by tears (f. 2v, lines 5-6) and poems to the late animal (f. 2v, line 9).

On the same folio (f. 6v) there's a short two line elegy to Aura. The short elegy is addressed to the dog itself, assuring the animal that it will not be forgotten and will be buried in a marble tomb (f. 6v, titled 'Eiusdem', 1-2). On the next folio (f. 7r) is Carlo Agnello's suggestion for a formal and traditional epitaph which might have also been designed for the planned tomb. There are several epitaphs which would be suitable for a tomb throughout the collection of epitaphs in the manuscript; but there is no indication which one was finally used. Agnello imitates the model of classical epitaph and declares that tomb is for 'Aura Parthenie the charming and playful puppy, whose bones now rest here'. The Parthenie reference is one of the many references to the little animal's chastity that appear in the elegies. It appears to be a reference to the fact that the little dog died while fighting with another little

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<sup>441</sup> The manuscript continues with poems by other others, but the work (and written in the same hand) of Carlo Agnello's returns on f. 6verso.

dog for an unfulfilled 'love'. The epitaph ends with the traditional classical salutation 'Ave viator' and details of Isabella, the owner. The final contribution of Carlos Agnello is a 13 line poem which refers to classical elegies of pets, rather than another praise of Aura. He points to Martial's epigram for a little dog owned by Publius (f. 7r, esp. 3), Catullus's poems regarding Lesbia's pet sparrow (f. 7r, 4-5) and Corrina's dead parrot in Ovid's *Amores* (f. 7recto, 10-11 esp.)<sup>442</sup>.

After Carlo Agnello's first contributions, there is a short elegy by Francisco Vigilio (f. 2v, in 9 lines), concerning 'the dear little pet of Isabella over whom tears are shed' (the dominating theme of all of the elegies). Calandra, Isabella's secretary, also wrote an elegy (f. 3r, 1-6) on the playful Aura's ascent to Heaven, and how she will join the star Procyon. Since Aura is a little dog, connecting her to Procyon (Alpha Canis Minoris) the luminary of Canis Minor, is very fitting.

Various contributions by the courtier and poet Mario Equicola follow. He starts with a short four line (f. 3r, 1-4) elegy to the 'very small dog by the name of Aura' and follows this with a fourteen line poem (f. 3r-v, 1-14) that speaks of the heavens howling with grief, the stars and the Egyptian dog-headed diety Anubis.

After the first section of Equicola's contributions, there are two other poems by Equicola in the booklet. The first one (f. 5r-v, 1-7) is about about the grief of Isabella Lavagnola, one of the Marquise's ladies in waiting, on the death of Aura. This poem has been crossed out, whether on instructions of the

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<sup>442</sup> Martial's *Epigrams* Book I.109, Catullus's *Carmina* II and III and Ovid's *Amores*, Book II.6

author or not I cannot determine<sup>443</sup>. Equicola wrote the next elegy (f. 5v-6r, 1-36), taking the voice of Isabella, who laments the loss of Aura, 'the delight of her eyes' (f.5v, 1-2), who would wag her tail and nibble Isabella's fingers (f.5v-6r, 14-17). Equicola even adds a mention of Isabella's other little pet dog and Aura's companion, Mamia (f. 6r, 19-20). More protestations of grief follow, along with references to 'your Mario' (Mario Equicola, the author of the piece on f. 6v, 33) and Calandra, Isabella's secretary, who was also contributing an elegy (f. 6v, 36). Here Equicola personalises the elegy, adding details such as the dog's habits and references to various courtiers. In the final elegy by Mario Equicola, he refers to Antonio Tebaldeo's 'Borgettus' (f.10r, 3). As discussed in the previous chapter, Tebaldeo, along with fellow scholars, wrote numerous elegies to commemorate the loss of his pet<sup>444</sup>. The collection of elegies centred around Borgettus may have provided inspiration for a similar effort for Aura, albeit on a much wider-scale.

After Equicola's first contributions (on f. 3v) there is an elegy by Pietro Borignano, which is one of the few written in Italian (f. 3v-4r, 1-12), which laments the loss by her 'beautiful lady' of the 'faithful Aura'<sup>445</sup>. There are two more elegies on this folio (f. 4r): a four line elegy by Girolamo Vigilio and a eight line elegy by Mario Benedicto. The later mentions the sculptured marble tomb of the little dog (f. 4r, 7). The elegies that follow are by Battista Scalona,

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<sup>443</sup> See S. Kolsky, *Mario Equicola: The real courtier* (Geneva, 1991) for details of a literary quarrel between Mario Equicola and Antonio Tebaldeo, both of whom wrote elegies for Aura, concerning the circulation of anonymous sonnets against Isabella Lavagnola in 1513.

<sup>444</sup> See Chapter Three: Pet Keeping by Humanists, under the subheading 'Antonio Tebaldeo and his circle'.

<sup>445</sup> See S. Kolsky, *Mario Equicola: The real courtier* (Geneva, 1991) pp. 137-139, regarding literary disputes between scholars in 1512-1513 on the use of the vernacular.

the Marquis' secretary, who had previously composed elegies for another of Isabella's pets: Martino the cat in 1510<sup>446</sup>. There are seven elegies by Scalona, most of are short two-line elegies on grief and the loss of the dog. For example one remarks how the little tricks of Aura that once delighted Isabella, will now amusing the Muses.

On f. 7v there are four four-line elegies by the Ferrarese scholar, Alessandro Guarini that were initially sent to Isabella by Bernardino Prospero in Ferrara (for which she gave thanks). They follow a similar pattern to all of the elegies in the manuscript. The first one speaks of Aura's burial, as does the second, which underlines Aura's role as a beloved companion to Isabella while the following speaks of the dog's new place in heaven. The next folio contains Girolamo Cusatro's two elegies<sup>447</sup>. The first one praises the dog, always so pleasing to her mistress and devoted to following her whether inside or out (f. 8r, 9-10), until her death by falling from a precipice and ends this elegy with a mention of the marble tomb (f. 8r, 15). The second elegy, in four lines, also speaks of Aura and her tomb (f. 8r, 4). The next collection of verses lauding the dog is also by a scholar from Ferrara, Antonio Tebaldeo (f. 8v-10r) who had experience in writing elegies for lost pets<sup>448</sup>, followed by a short Latin elegy by Battista Carmelita. Antonio dall'Organo, another

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<sup>446</sup> On f. 4verso-5recto, until the second section of Mario Equicola's contributions start again. They are in the same hand.

<sup>447</sup> F. 8recto, first elegies composed of 16 lines, the second of four lines.

<sup>448</sup> See Chapter Three: Pet Keeping and Humanists for a discussion on poems about Antonio Tebaldeo's pet dog Borgettus. The hand changes in the manuscript here, and is possibly Calandra's.

Ferrarese scholar is mentioned in Isabella's correspondence as the author of elegies for Aura, composed two poems in Italian (f.10v-11r)<sup>449</sup>.

Although the majority of the elegies are in Latin, Isabella's fluency in the language is debatable. She employed the scholar Mario Equicola to tutor her in Latin and help her translate into the vernacular<sup>450</sup>. Therefore it is unclear if Isabella could read all of the Latin elegies without assistance, although the compositions in Italian would have been immediately accessible.

The manuscript also has elegies are by Filippo Beroaldo from Rome (f.11recto-verso) and Giovanni Benivolio (f.11verso-12recto), and two elegies in Italian by Galeazzo de Montechiaro (f.11v) and Aemilo Brixienis (f.11v-12v)<sup>451</sup>. Other writers include Mario, Pietro and Celso Melini (f. 12v-14v)<sup>452</sup>, Marcantonio Flaminio and Fabio Calvio (f. 15v). The latter may be the author of six epitaphs which appear on the following folio (f.15v-16r) although the labelling is not clear. These epitaphs could have been suggestions for the dog's tombstone. All of these short epitaphs would have been suitable for a stone tombstone. For example one proclaims: 'Aura the little puppy / the darling / of Isabella of Mantua / by her mistress in an urn / she has been buried'. There is no indication of authorship for the three elegies of varied length that follow (f. 16verso-19recto); after that come elegies by Giovanni Muzarello and by an

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<sup>449</sup> AD5M, AG, b. 2996 Libro 29 82verso [10 January 1512]

<sup>450</sup> S. Kolsky, *Mario Equicola: The real courtier* (Geneva, 1991), pp. 103-108, 121. Kolsky suggests that it may have been Equicola's suggestion that scholars and courtiers compose elegies for Aura, but this is not verified in any of the sources that I have found.

<sup>451</sup> Aemilio Bixiensis's Italian poem is followed by two epitaphs. I have not been able to determine the author who is labeled as 'D.B. Capelle. C.R. Princip Apostolo. Canonici' on f. 12verso.

<sup>452</sup> Mario Melini's contribution is a long elegy (12v-13v) while Pietro Melini wrote eight two lines epitaphs for Aura and Celso Melini wrote three epitaphs that would have been suitable for a tomb. They are followed by two elegies and an epitaph by 'siculi regionis transtiberinae professoris' and one by 'siculi sacerdotis cuiusdam'. I have not been able to identify the authors of these compositions.

Antonio 'visdomini bonon' (possible a reference to Bologna, f. 19v-20r). Gualterio da San Vitale wrote a short Italian poem, praising the faithful and good 'Piccol can de Isabella' (f.21v). Three long elegies by 'Magistro Alexandro' (uncertain authorship) follow (f.21v-23r). Niccolò Panizzato wrote three elegies (f.23v-24r) and Girolamo Avogadro one in praise of the little dog<sup>453</sup>. From Ferrara, the notable scholar Celio Calcagnini also send an elegy, lamenting Aura's presence now in a the grave (f.24v)<sup>454</sup>. The manuscript ends with three elegies by Carlo Maffei (f.24v-27v).

There are common themes in all these elegies: laments for the dead animal, descriptions of the the dog (size, character, etc.), the owner's grief, the use of classical allusions and models, references to graves and tombs, how the dog will be remembers in the stars, etc. They are very similar to the elegies examined in Chapter Three, which should come as no surprise, since both were written by secular humanists, although in the case of the 'Aura' elegies, these were for a patron rather than for the authors themselves or one of their close friends.

Isabella appears to have influenced her son, Federico Gonzaga, where the keeping of animals was concerned. He would continue to keep little dogs as pets for the rest of his life. Apart from 'Zaphyro', the little dog mentioned

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<sup>453</sup> Girolamo Avogadro degli Azzoni (1467, Treviso- 1519, Venice) was the Podestà of Mantua in 1511. See *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, pp. 710-11

<sup>454</sup> Celio Calcagnini (1479, Ferrara-1541) was a scholar, canon of the Cathedral of Ferrara and chair of rhetoric in the Studio di Ferrara. See Q. Breen, 'Celio Calcagnini' *Church History*, 21 (1952), pp. 225-238, and A. Lazzari, *Un enciclopedico del secolo XVI: Celio Calcagnini* (Ferrara, 1936). A brief biographical sketch can be found in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, pp. 493-499. As mentioned in the previous chapter, a letter by Iustus Lipsius speaks of Celio Calcagnini's epitaph and momument to his pet cat, but I have not found any traces of this in his published words. J. Lipsius, *Epistolicarum quaestionum libri V, in quis ad varios scriptores, pleraeque ad T. Livium, Notae* (Antwerp,. 1577), p. 95 (III.5)

in the 'Aura' correspondence which he kept when he was in early teens, at the age of 26 as Marquis of Mantua he commissioned a tomb from the architect and painter Giulio Romano for a little dog which had died in childbirth. Federico wanted a 'beautiful marble tomb with an epitaph' and asked Giulio Romano to send two possible designs<sup>455</sup>. The epitaph can be found in Ulysses Aldrovandi's monumental *De quadrupedibus digitatis viviparis*. Aldrovandi devotes an entire page to canine epitaphs on tombs in the Gonzaga palace in Mantua. (Unfortunately, Aldrovandi does not give an epitaph for Aura, so it not possible to determine which epitaph was finally chosen for Aura's tomb from the many that were sent to Isabella d'Este for her approval). The epitaph for Federico Gonzaga's little dog Viola, laments the death of this playful and loyal dog while giving birth and insists that the dog now resides in heaven<sup>456</sup>.

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<sup>455</sup> ASMN AG b. 2930 n. 51 [15 October 1526]: 'A. Julio Pictor. Messer Iulio pictor. Mi e morta una Cagnolina di parto La quale uoressimo far sepelir in una bella sepoltura di Marmore con un epitaphio , pero uolemo che facciati dui dessegni che siano belli che li faremo far di Marmore , Et fatti essi dessegni mandatemli o, portatemeli uoi quanto piu presto poteti , bene valete Marmioli XV Octobris 1526'. The letter is also transcribed, with some modernizations (and a few errors) in A. Bertolotti, 'Curisità Storiche Mantovane: Una magnifica tomba per una cagnetta', *El Mendico*, 4:18 (1884), p. 6. Cf. C. Cottafavi, 'Cani e gatti alla Corte dei Gonzaga', *El Ceppo* (Mantua, 1934) p. 10.

<sup>456</sup> Ulysses Aldrovandi, *De quadrupedibus digitatis viviparis libri tres et de quadrupedibus digitatis oviparis libri duo* (Bologna, 1637). p. 525. Aldrovandi introduces this section by stating 'Mantuae in Palatio olim Serenissimi Ferdinandi Gonzagæ hoc legitur Catellæ epitaphium'. Viola's epitaph is the first: 'CATELLA VIOLA / LUCINAM INFAELICITER EXPERTA HIC SITA SVM / HOC LVSVS, HOC FIDES MERVIT MONVMENTVM / QUID MIRARE? / FIDES IPSA CANES COELI INCOLAS ACIT.' The two other Mantuan canine epitaphs Aldrovandi includes are one for a little spaniel called Bellina that also died while giving birth and another for a dog called Rubino. Rodolfo Signorini has concluded that both of these animals belonged to fifteenth-century Marquis of Mantua, Ludovico II Gonzaga, see R. Signorini, 'Two Notes from Mantua: A Dog Named Rubino', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, vol. 41 (1978), p. 317-320, which discusses Ludovico II's dog Rubino. The epitaphs follow the conventional form for canine epitaphs. Rubino's epitaph is: 'RUBINUS CATVLVS / LONGO ET FIDO AMORE PROBATVS DOMINO / SENIO CONFECTVS SERVATA STIRPE HIC IACEO / HOC ME HONORE SEPULCHRI / HERVS DIGNATVS EST.' Bellina's epitaph is the following, affirming that the charming and pretty little dog was the best and unfortunately died while giving birth: 'BELLINÆ / CANUM FLOSCVLO BELLISSIMO SVAVISSIMO / IN DOMINI DOMVSQ. DELICIIS OLIM / HABITÆ / QVÆ PRIMO VENERIS CONGRESSV LVCINAM LÆVAM / EXPERTA /

Viola, or perhaps her successor, appears in a portrait of Federico Gonzaga by Titian, completed in 1529. This portrait is a rarity in sixteenth-century male portraiture, as it portrays Federico with one hand on a small white long haired 'Melitian' type dog sitting on a cushion on a table as it places a paw on Federico's waist<sup>457</sup>.

*Other Italian elegies written for patrons*

The elegies for Aura, despite their number, are not unique. As discussed in the previous chapter, elegies for pet animals were a popular subject of fifteenth and sixteenth century poetry. Similar elegies for the pet of a noble patron were composed a generation later at Ferrara by Torquato Tasso, for Barbara of Austria, the duchess of Ferrara (1539-1572, the second wife of Alfonso II d'Este, Duke of Ferrara). Both are written in Italian and titled 'Weeping on the death of Violina, the little dog of the most serene Duchess of Ferrara'. The first one speaks of the tomb of the little dog, where it rests 'in holy peace among the sweet violets. The second elegy speaks from the point of view of the duchess who laments and weeps at the loss of her dog<sup>458</sup>.

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DIFFICULTATE PARTVS INTERIIT / HEV BREVEM VOLVPTATEM LONGA MORTE PERSONLVENS'. The only canine epitaph still extant in Mantua today is on a marble plaque in the hanging garden in the Ducal Palace for a seventeenth-century little dog called Oriana, which is in similar format to the earlier Mantuan epitaph: 'ORINAE CAPELLAE COELESTI / CANICVLAE FORMA FIDE / IOCIS PRAEFERENDAE / MEMORIAE ERGO .P.' Oriana's tombstone is reproduced in C. Cottafavi, 'Cani e gatti alla Corte dei Gonzaga', *El Ceppo* (Mantua, 1934), p. 10. R. Signorini, 'A Dog Named Rubino', p. 318, suggests that the anonymous canine tomb still extant in the Palazzo Te is possibly the tomb for Federico Gonzaga's Viola designed by Giulio Romano, and reproduces it on pl. 46a.

<sup>457</sup> The portrait is reproduced in C. Hope, *Titian* (London, 2003) p. 81, pl. 41. It is in marked contrast to Titian's portrait of Charles V (1536?, now in the Museo del Prado, Madrid) in which the Emperor is painted with a large hunting dog (p. 91, pl. 46) and is more in keeping with female portraiture, such as Titian's portrait of Eleanora Gonzaga della Rovere (1537-8), in which the sitter has a small spaniel nearby.

<sup>458</sup> Torquato Tasso (1544-1595) was an Italian poet and author of *La Gerusalemme liberata*. Both of these elegies are edited in T. Tasso, *Poesia*, ed. F. Flora (Milan and Naples, 1952), p. 890 CXXII *Piange la morte de la Violina cagnolina de la serenissima signora Duchessa di Ferrara: Fior che sovente*

Similarly, the poet Seraphino de Aquila (1466-1500) wrote two canine poems in Italian for a clerical patron, the influential Cardinal Ascanio Sforza (1455-1505). Unlike the elegies in this chapter, both of these poems are for a living dog and written in a light and jocular manner, for example, the first line of one imitates a dog barking 'Hau, hau, hau, I cannot speak'. One of the elegies is titled 'Attached to the collar of Ascanio's dog' which may refer to a light-hearted presentation of the poem to the Cardinal. Both elegies emphasize the kindness of the owner and the animal's devotion<sup>459</sup>.

Other notable examples of Italian animal elegies were composed in praise of Pope Leo X's white elephant. This animal arrived as part of a delegation from Manuel I, King of Portugal in 1514, as part of the tradition of gift-giving, in which exotic animals were popular. The animal was not strictly a pet, since it was kept in a special enclosure on the Borgo Sant'Angelo and

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nasci / a' bei sepolcri intorno / in cui la morte alberga e fa soggiorno / oh! come tu somigli / il desiderio mio che 'l piè trasporta / dove la bella Violina è morta : / dove riposa e giace / fra dolci violette in santa pace!' and CXXIII *Nel medesimo argomento*: Pianto soave, pianto / di luce più soavi e più tranquille / di chiare stelle, vaghe e pure stille, / quai lamenti o quai lodi / fecer sì lieto mai l'estremo fine ? / quai lagrimette dolci e cristalline, / o mesti e cari modi / ond'ebbe Violina ampia mercede, / onorata la morte e la sua fede?

<sup>459</sup> M. Menghini, *Le Rime de Serafino di Ciminelli dall'Aquila*, vol. 1 (Bologna, 1984), p. 125 LXXXVII: 'Attaccato al collo de un can d'Ascanio' / Hau, hau, hau, parlar non so, / Intendami pietà si regna in te, / Io vengo sol per impetrar mercé / De tanta servitù che sí pers' ho. / Bu, bu, bu, bu, bu, io morderò / Chi vorà del poltron mandar vèr me, / E qua se monstra el bel servir con fé, / Per le ferite che sofferte io ho. / Non guardar quel ch'io so, ma quel che fu', / Per ben che son disposto piú che ma' / Se non del corpo, del consiglio piú. / Per questo, signor mio, credo ben sa' / Che son sbandito e messo al fondo giú / E di gran bastonate ognun mi dá. / Questo non merità, / Ma ver che chi fa in corte el tempo so' / More in la paglia e disperato po'. The other elegy is on p. 126 LXXXVIII. 'Seraphin per un can de Monsignor Ascanio' Ch'è qui, che'è là? – Su, monsignor te vole. / - Che vòl? – Non so. Non sa'? – Non so per certo; / Forsi te vorrà dar qualche bon merto / De tanta servitù ch'ognor ti dole, / - Ah ah, ah ah. – Tu ridi? – E' son parole. / -Perché? – Ch'io so, che par che'l veda aperto; / E l'è pur liberal, io parlo esperto, / In me benignità mostrar non sole. / - Scoprigli adonque le tue piaghe al tutto. / - Ohimè, piú volte n'ho pigliato impresa, / Ma di gran martellar fabro non cura. / - Non desperar ch'al fin n'avrai bon frutto. / - Spento è per me nel mondo ogni difesa, / E cosí va chi al tutto si assicura. / Parmi fuor di misura / Che vivi apresso lui sí disperato / Se sol con cigno ti può far beato.

used for spectacles. However, Leo X was extremely fond of the animal, which was called Hanno. When the elephant fell ill in 1516, physicians were summoned and when it died in June, it was buried in the Cortile del Belvedere. The artist Raphael, assisted by Giulio Romano, was commissioned to paint a large fresco of the elephant. Leo X wrote an epitaph for Hanno, which was put in Latin hexameters by Filippo Beroaldo, the Roman poet who also composed elegies for Isabella d'Este's Aura<sup>460</sup>. Just as Antonio Tebaldeo would write elegies for his own little dog, Borgettus, and for Isabella's Aura, Beroaldo could compose animal elegies to please his grieving patron or notable figures.

#### *Pets in other European courts*

One of the most notable early sixteenth-century pet elegies written in a court context is Jean Lemaire de Belges' *Les Épîtres de l'Amant Vert*, composed in 1505 and published in 1511<sup>461</sup>. In these two French epistles in verse, the author adopts the voice of the recently deceased parrot of his protectress, the newly widowed Marguerite of Austria<sup>462</sup>. In this epistle, Jean Lemaire de

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<sup>460</sup>See S.A. Bedini, *The Pope's Elephant* (Manchester, 1997) which extensively details Hanno's career. For poems by various authors commemorating the elephant's arrival, see pp. 60- 62. Giovanni Battista Branconio, the privy papal chamberlain, wrote an account of the elephant and a fresco of Hanno appears in the Branconio's family chapel in San Silvestro in L'Aquila (Abruzzo).

<sup>461</sup> Jean Lemaire de Belges, *Les Épîtres de l'Amant Vert*, ed. J. Frappier (Lille and Geneva, 1948). Like all parrot elegies, it draws heavily on Ovid's *Amores* (Book II.6 on Corinna's dead parrot) and Statius's *Silvae* (Book II.4, on his friend Atedius Melior's dead parrot). For a survey of three literary works from the fifteenth and sixteenth century on parrots, see M.T. McMunn, 'Parrots and Poets in Late Medieval Literature', *Anthrozoös*, 12:2, 1999, pp. 68- 75 which discusses the Arthurian romance *Le Chevalier du Papegau*, *Les Épîtres de l'Amant Vert* and Sir David Lindsay's *Papyngo*. For the representation of parrots in seventeenth-century literature, see B. Boehrer, "Men, Monkeys, Lap-dogs, Parrots, Perish All!": Psittacine Articulatory in Early Modern Writing, *The Modern Language Quarterly*, 59:2 (1998), pp. 171-193.

<sup>462</sup> Marguerite of Austria (1480-1530) daughter of Maximilian I, Holy Roman Emperor and Mary of Burgundy. Widowed (for the second time) on the death of her husband Philibert II, Duke of Savoy in 1504.

Belges attempts to comfort Marguerite, who had lost both her parrot and husband, by presenting the theme of the loss of a loved one and their state in heaven.

In the first epistle the parrot Amant Vert is left alone by Marguerite, as she leaves the château of Pont d'Ain to meet her father in Strasbourg. The narrator/parrot then explains how, overcome by despair at his owner's abandonment, he is going to throw himself into the jaws of a dog (Marguerite's parrot was eaten by dog in 1505). He finds a mastiff, who waits for the bird to finish his poem. The epistle ends with an epitaph for Amant Vert<sup>463</sup>. In *The Smile of Truth: The French Satirical Eulogy and its Antecedents*, Annette Tomarken remarks that despite the use of a Petrarch love poem as a model, the work is not a parody but instead the author's sincere contribution for his patron<sup>464</sup>. Marguerite was pleased by the epistle and suggested that the poet write another.

In the second epistle, the parrot/narrator travels to paradise, guided by Mercury. In paradise, the parrot is greeted by 'L'Esprit Vermeil', a parrot who had been the pet of Marguerite's mother, Mary of Burgundy (1457-1482). The parrot proceeds to describe his life in the Elysian Fields, which is populated with animals from history, literature, hagiography and myth. The inhabitants include Catullus's sparrow, the geese that raised the alarm when the Gauls attacked Rome, the she-wolf that suckled Romulus and Remus, the cockerel

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<sup>463</sup> Jean Lemaire de Belges, *Les Épîtres de l'Amant Vert*, ed. J. Frappier (Lille and Geneva, 1948) lines 1-380, pp.1-7. The first epistle ends with the four line epitaph: 'Soubz ce tumbel, qui est ung dur conclave, / Git l'Amant Vert et le tresnoble esclave, / Don't le hault cueur, de vraye amour pure yvre, / Ne peut souffrir perdre sa dame, et vivre'.

<sup>464</sup> A. Tomarken, *The Smile of Truth: The French Satirical Eulogy and its Antecedents* (Princeton, 1990), pp. 200-201.

that alerted St Peter, St Anthony's pig, St Roch's dog and St Jerome's lion, among others<sup>465</sup>. The epistle ends by assuring Marguerite that her pet, like all the departed, is happy in heaven. Both epistles present serious themes of devotion, loss, and eventual contentment after death, in a light-hearted manner.

Apart from Marguerite of Austria, other readers were similarly delighted. Anne of Brittany, Queen of France and ruling Duchess of Brittany, who would later become Lemaire's patron after he left Marguerite of Austria's service, adored the parrot epistle and made the effort to memorize it. The influence of *Épîtres de l'Amant Vert* may also be seen in a portrait of another court lady: Marguerite d'Angouleme, sister of François I and Queen of Navarre (1492-1549). The artist Jean Clouet painted her portrait c. 1530, and depicted Marguerite d'Angouleme with a green parrot on her finger<sup>466</sup>. The parrot could be an allusion to love and devotion, themes developed in the *Épîtres* by the talkative parrot/narrator. Apart from the possible symbolism of the representation of the parrot, Marguerite d'Angouleme may have merely requested to be painted with one of her pets, as shown by another a portrait of Marguerite by François Clouet (son of Jean Clouet). In this pastel portrait she holds a small spaniel in her arms<sup>467</sup>.

However, most animal poems written for a court patron did not have the length or scope of Jean Lemaire de Belges. Like the Latin elegies

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<sup>465</sup> Jean Lemaire de Belges, *Les Épîtres de l'Amant Vert*, ed. J. Frappier (Lille and Geneva, 1948) lines 1-576, pp. 18-37.

<sup>466</sup> The oil painting is now in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool (accession number: WAG1308).

<sup>467</sup> This pastel portrait is now in the musée Condé Chantilly, with the inventory number MN 44.

composed for Isabella d'Este to eulogise Aura, many were short in length. For example, the French poet Clement Marot (1496-1544), at the court of François I, wrote a poem for the queen, Eleanor of Hapsburg. It is a short descriptive *blason* that eulogizes Mignonne, Eleanor's little pet dog. Unlike many pet elegies, it praises a still-living pampered pet, who accompanies her mistress everywhere, sleeps in a specially prepared area and whose owner makes sure that her pet is always treated well<sup>468</sup>. The idea of the pet as a spoiled companion who is permitted greater liberties than anyone else at court is underlined by an entry in the journal of Jeanne d'Albert, Queen of Navarre, in which she remarked that her little dog had eaten a letter that she was writing to the King of Spain<sup>469</sup>. At the French court there was even a baker specializing baking bread for little white pet dogs<sup>470</sup>. By the sixteenth-century, as observed in the previous chapter, pet keeping by secular men whose duties were mainly confined to the interior was not out of the ordinary. At court, pets could be kept by royal or aristocratic men, although keeping hunting animals remained the norm. The French king Charles VIII (1470-1498) kept a variety of pets without censure. In his accounts are entries for the purchase of parrots, two covers for bird-cages (which contained an albino blackbird and two

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<sup>468</sup> Clement Marot, *Œuvres* (La Haye, 1731) vol. III, p. 152: 'Sa maistresse, en un beau tableau / L'a fait peindre à Fontainbleau. / La Royne en sa couche parée / Luy a sa place préparée. / Et dort la petite follastre / Dessus la gorge d'allebastre / De sa dame, si doucement / Qu'on ne l'oit suffler nullement.'

<sup>469</sup> Le Baron de Ruble, *Mémoires et Poésies de Jeanne d'Albret* (Paris, 1893), p. 35: 'd'où ceste petite chienne avoit apporté la dicte lettre.' Cf. A. Franklin, *La Vie Privée d'Autrefois*, (Paris, 1897), vol. 25, p. 25.

<sup>470</sup> A. Franklin, *La Vie Privée d'Autrefois*, (Paris, 1897), vol. 25, p. 51 details an entry from one of the registers: '16 novembre 1547, à Anthoine Andrault, boulangier des petits chiens blancs, 30 escus' Cf. *Magasin pittoresque*, vol. 42 (1874), p. 164. Details of lavish expenditure for pets at the French court in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were discussed in Chapter One, in connection to the purchase of accessories for pets

turtledoves) that resided in the king's chambers and cloth purchased for a cover for a pet marmot<sup>471</sup>. Nevertheless, excessive public affection for pets was still frowned upon. Scholars might be able to avoid censure by keeping pets in private quarters and only eulogising their virtues to fellow scholars but in a public area, there was a need to be more circumspect. Henri III's devotion to small lap-dogs, formed part of contemporary criticism on his character, as it was seen as 'unmanly' to be so affectionate towards pets<sup>472</sup>. Henri III would carry his little 'chiens lions' everywhere and spent much time in pampering them and trying to find more little dogs. In contrast, female devotion towards pets at court was viewed as a normal occurrence and even a worthy subject of literary composition. There are few elegies written in praise of secular male patron's pets, and most of them stress the animal's devotion to their master, with little mention of the owner's affection towards the animal<sup>473</sup>.

### *Conclusion*

This chapter has examined pet keeping at courts in the late medieval and early modern period, concentrating on the court of the Gonzagas in

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<sup>471</sup> A. Franklin, *Le Vie Privée d'Autrefois*, vol. 24, chap. 1, pp. 30, 31-33: 'A Raymond de Dezeit, tailleur, pour deux couvertes de drap vert gai, pour les cages d'un merle blanc et de deux tourterelles blanches estant en la chambre du Roy...'. The entry for the marmot 'appareil' is: 'Una habillement fait d'ung quartier de veloux rouge et d'ung quartier de veloux tanné pour servir à une des marmottes d'iceluy seigneur'

<sup>472</sup> See Juliana Schiesari, "'Bitches and Queens": Pets and Perversion at the Court of France's Henri III' in E. Fudge, ed., *Renaissance Beasts: of animals, humans and other wonderful creatures* (Urbana, Illinois, 2003). Apart from little dogs, the king appears to have been fond of parrots and monkeys, according to the chronicler Pierre L'Estoile. P.L'Estoile, *Registre-journal de Henri III, roy de France et de Pologne 1574 a 1589* (Paris, 1837), p. 72: '14 Juillet 1576 : Le Roy et la Roine, sa femme, arrivèrent à Paris, revenans du pays de Normandie d'où ils rapportèrent grande quantité de guenons, perroquets et petits chiens achetés à Dieppe.'

<sup>473</sup> For example, see Pierre de Ronsard's 'Courte, chienne du Roy Charles IX'. In a similar vein, Joachim du Bellay, wrote 'Epitaphe d'un petit chien' for Jean d'Avanson (1511-1564), Henri II's ambassador to Rome. Cf. A.Tomarken, *The Smile of Truth: The French Satirical Eulogy and its Antecedents* (Princeton, 1990), p. 205. Joachim Du Bellay's 'Epitaphe d'un chat', in praise of his own pet cat Belaud, was examined in Chapter Three.

Mantua. In many ways, the evidence presented in this chapter reinforces ideas presented in the previous three chapters. In letters and poetry, pets are pampered in lavish interiors and guarded while outdoors, showered with accessories, sharing their owner's personal space, and great affection is seen as commonplace as are displays of grief at their deaths, with the elegies by humanist scholars to mark their passing. Humanists were well placed to write such poems because they had themselves as a class broken through the conventions that non-clerical men should not keep pets. In a court milieu such as Mantua's the appreciation of pets by women and lay humanists come together. Since courts tended to be points of diffusion for manner and social conventions generally, this must have promoted the practice of pet-keeping outside its habitual sectors<sup>474</sup>.

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<sup>474</sup> See N. Elias, *The Court Society* (Oxford, 1983).

## Conclusion

This thesis has examined pet keeping throughout late medieval Western Europe through a variety of prisms. Due to the vast amount and the variety of available sources and the wide geographical compass, it can only be a preliminary introduction to the subject. Nevertheless, this wealth of evidence and the paucity of previous historiography has made it impossible not to advance understanding of social and cultural history significantly.

The most interesting and important finding is my contention that pets were gender markers in the late Middle Ages. Pets were kept by women and clerics and not by secular lay men. A pet is a normal companion for a lady or a cleric and in literature and iconography both are commonly identified with pets. In the first chapter, I paid special attention to the portrayal of pets in iconography such as seals, funeral effigies and donor portraits, in which the pet is an accepted part of the owner's identity.

Pets were treated with care: they often ate specially prepared food and were adorned with accessories, and, unlike other domestic animals, pets were kept indoors. In the second chapter, I examined such practicalities, including purchasing pets, gift-giving, and details of accessories such as collars, pillows, etc. Lavish expenditure on pets was often a reflection of the owner's desire to exhibit their wealth and position in society, as the pet is an animal which fulfils no function other than companionship. In many sources, pets are often portrayed as being overweight, an indication of their status as an indulged animal.

Their place indoors is a clear marker of their privileged status. This is connected to their role in society. Like their owners, women and clerics, pets are not technically supposed to belong 'outdoors', which was the world of secular lay men. The pet has many freedoms in interiors, as it allowed to roam in all spaces, such as sleeping quarters. Pets also occupy the close personal space of their owners, as they sit on laps or by the feet. In exterior space, the pet's freedoms are curtailed, and it is kept on a leash, in an enclosed garden or held tightly in its owner's arms. Tolerance for pet keeping was nuanced, pets were often forbidden to those living in institutional space, such as monasteries and universities, since they were perceived as a distraction. But some religious houses reached a compromise, and allowed pets as long as they were few in number and did not enter into sacred space. In general, pet keeping was accepted as long as the owner did not lavish their pet with excessive care nor neglect their duties.

Although I have portrayed pets as commonly kept by women and clerics, I chart a social change in the relation of pet keeping to gender. Eventually, pets become acceptable companions of lay secular men, thanks to the influence of humanist education. In the third chapter I analysed extensively pet keeping by scholars. Pets become part of the identity of the lay scholar, as a fitting quiet and small companion for one's study. Literary compositions eulogising a personal pet were a popular genre, and emphasise the ubiquity of the pet in a scholar's lifestyle.

Finally I have examined pet keeping at court in the early modern period, focusing on a the pet keeping of Isabella d'Este, Marquise of Mantua, a case

study for which the evidence is exceptionally rich, and includes many humanist literary compositions celebrating the lives, and mourning the deaths, of beloved pets. Here many issues discussed in previous chapters were exemplified, such as the practicalities of obtaining a pet, lavish expenditure on the animals, and the expression of owner's affection towards their pets, and grief at their loss.

### Edited Texts: Elegies on Isabella d'Este's dog:

The manuscript is a paper booklet of twenty-seven folios. Its archival details are: Archivio di Stato di Mantova, Archivio Gonzaga, Serie Autografi, Cassata n°10, File n°356 (inside a folder titled: 'Poesie manuscritti di diversi autori', n°1360-1385, 1-35). The poems are written in numerous hands, the script is usually cursive Italic with copious slashes.

#### Folio 1 recto

#### Caroli Agnelli<sup>475</sup> De morte Aure Catelle habite in delicijs ab Isabella

#### Estensi. Endechasillabum

- 1      Hec te extrema dies fidelis Aura  
           Ignotam tenebris tenebricosis.  
           Preclaris sine honoribus recondet:  
           Quin te tota dies. *ubique* totam
- 5      Eternos veneretur *usque* in Annos:  
           Hoc fides tua plurima. Hoc bene acti  
           Tot dies sine Labe. Iam Marito  
           Pertino Elisios tenente campos:  
           Cui dum tu comes ire non recusas.
- 10     Et cernis penitus mori priusquam  
           Tantillum e probitate tam pudica  
           Te uiua patiaris inquinari:  
           Oblita es domina Catella, et illas  
           Oblita es varias Ioca{t}iones

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<sup>475</sup> All of the poems from folio 1 recto to the middle of folio 3 recto are written in the same hand.

15 Vestras continuas, modo has, modo illas  
 Nam uanas modo mortificationes  
 Furtim se domina admouens, dolose  
 Aut virga, aut niuea manu irritabat.

**Folio 1 verso**

Latratu temeri. at ipsa seuianti<sup>476</sup>  
 20 Ille sam innocuo ore territabas  
 Mox dum prelia longiora tecum  
 Diu ferre nequit. timetque. uere  
 Ne quis te furor improbus lacessat.  
 Totam te tepido sinu inuolutam  
 25 Totam te fouet Aura: blandulisque  
 Mulcet blandicijs: et ore pulchro  
 Per mille. (aut super) oscula osculator :  
 Minaturque alijs malum. ob probam te :  
 Hinc Pax exoritur beata, et hinc tunc  
 30 Surgunt delicie recentiores  
 Sic mense, appositas dapes Catella  
 Sic libare datur tibi, o Catella  
 Quicquid pro domina tua paratur :  
 Que mestissima nunc perenne luget<sup>477</sup>  
 35 Et noctes misera, et Dies peremptam:

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<sup>476</sup> The third letter 'r' in this word has been crossed out. It was originally 'seruianti'.

<sup>477</sup> The word 'premne' is underlined and in the margin, corrected to 'perenne' by another hand.

At tu Aura egregie perempta uiuis:

**Folio 2 recto**

**De eadem Iambum . ubi Domina deflet Casum Catellae . Eiusdem Caroli**

- 1      Catella amata *tam* diu, o Catellula,  
          Amata, amanda, et flenda *quam* diu licet  
          Auara, que te sic mihi abstulit dies:  
          Quis improbus: quis insolens omnium ille
- 5      Inuerecundus, impudens, Audax Canis  
          Qui sic repente Amoribus captus nouis  
          Temptare id ausas, quod cupidi sponsi solent:  
          At tu proba, et pudica, pre omnibus probis  
          Oblita nusquam Thalami, ac viri boni,
- 10     Dum furta uitas turpia. et nexus malos.  
          Culmine ab alto examinata funditus  
          Duro, deorsum: proh dolor, cadis solo:  
          Crudelis, his me deserens solam modis  
          Hoc, quod pudica, hoc quod proba es meres Aura,

**Folio 2 verso**

**Ad Dominam Catelle ut cohibeat Lachrimas: Eiusdem Caroli**

- 1      Bella *Issabella*. Iam iam lachrimas parcas tuis  
          E gemitu sat *questa*<sup>478</sup> desistas tuo:  
          Heu quam licet sollicites ultra deos  
          Ne dum *vhementi*<sup>479</sup> nimium, ac grauil luctu

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<sup>478</sup> For 'questa', read 'quesita'.

<sup>479</sup> For 'vhementi', read 'vehementi'.

5 Licentiosa immeritos defles canes.

Here necessum acerbius fiat:

Quamuis nec ipsum ad decumam (ut retur miser)

Si pereat *baisim*<sup>480</sup> Alexandrum fleres:

**Mari Francisci Vigilij**

1 Auram delicias tua sabella

Extinctam domine nouo decori,

Caue ne lacrymis sequare: nam mi

Que Mere<sup>481</sup> rabiem estuantis anni

5 Restinguens magis: ac magis sabellæ

Prodessem: locus est datus Catellæ

In cælo: Ioue sic Iubente summo:

Sic quæ delicæ fui Iabelle

Nunc eius niteo fauens saluti

**Folio 3 recto**

**Io. Jacobi Calandre .**

1 Que coeli pietas olim donauit honore

Ipsamque Erigonen: Erigonesque canem:

Nunc eadem ante diem raptam coelo intulit Auram

Lusum et delicias Auram Isabella tuas

5 Iam Procyon licet usque tuum deseuiat astrum:

Quæ leuet ardores nunc erit aura tuos

**Marij Equicolæ<sup>482</sup>**

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<sup>480</sup> Meaning of 'baisim' uncertain..

<sup>481</sup> Corrected in margin, replacing the original word 'Pere'.

- 1 Hic est Parua Catella: Nomine Aura  
 Estensis fuerit *quam* Isabellæ  
 Lusus, Deliciæ, Iocus voluptas  
 Loco [?] hoc ubi *condita: est uideri*

**Eiusdem**

- 1 Occidit Aura, canum reboet celum et resonet ululatu<sup>483</sup>  
 Aurea latratus excitet Aura Nouol  
 Occidii aura, nouo date florea sarta Sepulchro  
 Et uiolam, et paphie Lilia mixta rosæ

**Folio 3 verso**

- 5 Hec facienda dea est , deus est latrator anubis  
 Et gemini fulgent Sydera bina canes  
 Qui cupis esse canis velox, qui nare sagaci?  
 Optas fulmineos Sternere quisquis Apro  
 Concipe vota Auræ, vota audiet illa precantum
- 10 Sit modo certa fides, posse Iuuare deam  
 Aura faue. facio tibi sanguine, primus et *aram*  
 Imbuo, et ad tumulum do pia Thura tuum,  
 Cultrum affer *francisæ* , focis tu sancte ministra  
 Ut cadat Equicoli victima prima canis.

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<sup>482</sup>This poem and the following are written in another hand, with a thick nib.

<sup>483</sup> The word 'resono' is inserted by an 'o' placed above 'celum' and 'ululatu' with the note 'reson' in the right hand margin.

**Petri Bartgnani**<sup>484</sup>

- 1 Che non turba la morte.  
 Et festa e gioia. al fin *questa*, e, pur sola  
 Ch' ogni piacer ne inviola  
 L'aura fedel ch'a la sua Donna bella
- 5 Soleua esser diporto  
 Fra quei fastidij onde la vita, e, piena

**Folio 4 recto**

- Ecco morte n'ha tolto, e, par ben chella  
 Sol di nostro sconforto  
 Sappaghi, e, uiua pur di nostra pena
- 10 Aura loda tua sorte.  
 Et sel morir te increbbe : hor ti conforta  
 Se chi una uiua t'amó t'ha pianto morta.

**Hieronyini Vigilij**<sup>485</sup>

- 1 Quis nouus hic splendor Venerem comitatas? an Aura  
 Aura equidem est caelo reddita dante Ioue<sup>486</sup>.  
 Cur Veneri comes est: *dominam* ne deserat: hic *nam*  
 Et Venus et *domina* sidera clara dabunt .

**Mari Benedicti Teriace**

- 1 Vt quas nunc struis . edibus sit Aure .

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<sup>484</sup> One of the few elegies in Italian. In a different hand.

<sup>485</sup> This poem and all those following up to the first third of folio 6 verso are written in the same hand. The hand appears to be that of Isabella's secretary Calandra, judging from examples of his hand in previously examined letters.

<sup>486</sup> A long slash functions as an abbreviation mark throughout poems in this hand. When I am not sure of the expanded abbreviation, I have placed a slash in square brackets.

Homen conueniens loco uirenti:

Vtque Auram uideat : leuet Aura

Miret *que* simul tria hæc viator:

5 Hec nec est Isabella causa mortis.

Oro ne dolens suavis hera

Sculpto hoc mamore sublatens catella:

Nam tres mors simul una iunxit Auras.

#### Folio 4 verso

#### Baptiste Scalona

1 Dum nimio capitur studio cognominis Aure

Se temere aerijs credidit Aura plagis:

Illa cani indignans tantum in sua regna licere

Turbat ab excelsa precipite specula,

5 At morere: unius nix estus pellere possum:

Sat*que* super*que* inquit qui tenet astra canis.

#### Eiusdem

1 Vre age, finde canis sitientes improbe terras:

Additur Aura, æstus *que* leuet Aura tuos.

#### Eiusdem

1 Te spirante iubar domine turbauerat Aura

Nulla: sed æterno uero erat exul hiems

Facta leuis nunc Aura diem tu nubibus atris

Obduxti, et pulso uere hiemem reuehis,

Quin domine *et*, lachrimis [ni age?] spiras *perpetuum* Ver

Quodque illi lachrimæ, tot ceciderit rosæ.

**Eiusdem**

- 1 Spirabas modo ver, et lenia flabra Favoni:  
Fert hiemem te nunc Aura silenti nothus.

**Folio 5 recto**

**Eiusdem**

- 1 Delicie et lusus ut eram prius Aura Isabelle  
Hunc iter ad musas et pia sacra fero.

**Eiusdem**

- 1 Aura Ioci, lususque Isabelle principis olim  
Nunc ad Musarum seria monstro gradum .

**Eiusdem**

- 1 Sum comes assiduus Domine Canis, Astra ualete,  
Ipsa oculis celum uincis et astra suis  
Celicola ille suo tantum modo notus ab æstu est:  
Ast ego deliciis nota catella meis  
5 Aura quoque eternum spiro. quam fata negaruns:  
Carminibus uitam grata repondis hera.

**Marij Equicole: Fletus Isabelle Lauagnole in Auram**

- 1 Liquerat Herculei flammantia terga leonis  
Iamque sub<sup>487</sup> Erigones agitabat sidere currum  
Phoebus: et autumnum nam referebat fibrises annus

---

<sup>487</sup> The second word 'pro' is crossed out and replaced with 'sub'.

**Folio 5 verso**

Immeritam uisum superis eum abrumpere uitam

5 Aura tibi: et das lachrimis turbare penates:

Quas Isabella dedit quondam meus ignis alumne<sup>488</sup>

**Nenia**

1 Me miseram Aura mea uita mihi carior ipsa

Aura mea: Aura meis carior Aura oculis.

Hanc ne ego et aspicio: membra ista tenellula luxa

Et uideo a propius ossa remota locis.

5 Te ne ferox potuit tam bellam perdere fatum:

Inijcere atra manus heu tibi mors potuit:

Cui tantum de te licuit: quis casus ademit:

Tam docilem quis te substulit Aura mihi:

A me cur aberas: si me casura nocasses:

10 Issem ego en auxilium uel moritura tuum .

Reddiit uitalem Auram Aura que cessit: Auras,

O superi o facite hoc pro pietate mea.

Aura meos mihi redde meos Aura [mea?] lusus .

Aura locos a te iure reposco meos.

**Folio 6 recto**

15 Fac mihi blanditias cauda: pete morsibus ora

---

<sup>488</sup> This entire poem is crossed out. The last line has been crossed out by another pen. It might be something like 'Flebiles hic tristi dum mea Nenia uersa'. There is a marginal note in another hand which may be a correction note for the entire line: '[dicere Flebilibus mea nenia dicere uerbis']'.

- Oscula da mea mi sunt mea, redde mea  
 Morde age do *digitum*: in *girum* te uolue citatis  
 Passibus : in *nostras* [i] *que* redique manus  
 Aurcola Aura ueni te te mea blande *Mammia*  
 20 Te te bella uoco bella *Mammia* ueni .  
 Aura siles immota manes: et frigida toto  
 Corpore me miseram quo decor ille abiit:  
 Via hera nulla tuis post hac requiescet in ulnis  
 Aura, Aura illa tuo digna fauore incet<sup>489</sup>  
 25 Iam que te obtutu aspiciet: precedet euntem  
 Hac illac saliens que tibi fida comes:  
 Cui tua dextra leget pappam: dapibusque remotis  
 Per mensam que sic altera ludet erit:  
 Que solamen erit: curas que leniet Aura:  
 30 Que tibi iam risus Aura mouere potest:  
 Aura uale *Eternum*: cape dona extrema dolentis  
 Amplexus, lachrimas, oscula, et hanc animam

### Folio 6 verso

- Tuque Mari<sup>490</sup> penitus si non calor ille refrixit,  
 Dum mecum lachrimas: da pariter gemitus.  
 35 Tu quoque non alias Auras celebrato: sed istam.  
 Fac uiuat cantu docte Calandra tuo.

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<sup>489</sup> 'incet' replaces 'peret', which is crossed out.

<sup>490</sup> Followed by an abbreviation mark that is unclear.

**Caroli De Agnelli<sup>491</sup>**

- 1 Lenibat cuas *domina*, dum uixit, Elisa  
     Lusibus Aura canis Blandicijsque suis  
 Cui pro blandicijs et lusibus illa decoro  
     Et [rosco] ore suo basia mille dabat
- 5 Inuidet his Fatum, et miscet candentibus atra  
     Aura obit: illa Auram prosequitur lachrymis  
 Et tamen, ut forti hæc inuicta est pectorem acerbum  
     Vulnus Apollinea protinus arte Leuat  
 Dat vates Auram cantum, et dat pondera cantu
- 10 Vt decima est musis addita Elisa nouem

**Eiusdem**

- 1 Auram Catella tui obsequij *non* immemor *unquam*  
 Marmoreum hunc tumulum ponit Elisa tibi.

**Folio 7 recto**

AVRAI Parthenie catelle uenustulæ  
 Et lepidule ossa Heic sita sunt  
     Have viator :

MONV: SABELLA ATESTINA. BENE  
 MERENTI LVGENS: .P.

---

<sup>491</sup> The following poems (from f. 6verso to the first half of 10verso) are all written in the same hand, which appears to be the same hand for the poems in f. 1recto to the middle of f. 3 recto. Both sections begin with elegies by Carlo Agnello.

**EIVSDEM**

- 1 Si fleuere tuam Pontani Lumina mortem  
     Luscula qui orator quique poeta fuit  
 Si maduere gene publi pro te issa catella  
     Cæsare qui uiuo consul in vrbe fuit
- 5 Passerem et extinctum uoluit si flere cattullus  
     Romuleæ lingueæ non mediocre decus  
 Si Examinem vates plorauit stella columbam  
     Si gemuit chari funera pardus itrj
- 10 Psittacus eoismoriens si captus in oris  
     Turbauit magni cæsaris ora ducis  
 Cui mirum lacrimas si foemina tingis ocellos  
     Auriole ob mortem clara Isabella tuos

**Folio 7 verso****Alexandri Guerini**

- 1 Illa diem extremum Gonzage Principis Aura  
     Clausit: et hic Cineres ossaque terra fouet.  
 Nunc Dolor, Ast olim dominæ pergrata uoluptas  
     Et Jocus: et requies Delitiumque fuit:

**Eiusdem**

- 1 Defunctæ Requiem dedit hoc Isabella sepulchro  
     Auræ: quod custos hæc fuit atque Comes:  
 Nec mirum, si diua Canem veneratur, amatque.  
     Grata Canis Triuiæ nam solet esse Deæ .

**Eiudem**

- 1 Si Canis Aeterna cœli est in parte receptus:  
 Qui fuerat Custos prolis Agenoreæ  
 Aureolam quali dignam censemus honore:  
 Cum fuerit Casti Corporis usque Comes.

**Eiusdem**

- 1 Quid Canis Europe Custos per sidera fulget:  
 Munere cœlesti merito dignabitur Aura:  
 Eia Age peccatum tu corrige Jupiter ipsum  
 Pelle Canem: Aureola ut Tanto succedat honori

**Folio 8 recto****Heromie cusatri**

- 1 Cui gratum dederas nomen leuis Aura: cadenti  
 Se quoque debueras supposuisse Comi.  
 Non erat ut lacrimis Tot mestra per ora profusis  
 Extinctam sparsis fleret elisa comis.
- 5 Hærebat domine lateri fidissima custos  
 Inter virginios ipsa pudica choros.  
 Lambebat teretes domine formosa pupillas:  
 Lambebat niueas officiosa marmis  
 Blandula Heram, comites que iocis Lusu que terrebat:
- 10 Siue domi semper seu foris illa comes.  
 Heu heu precipiti moritur delapsa finistra :  
 Improbuli amplexus dum fugit aura comis:

Casta *que* dum rapti flet adhuc noua funera sponsi,

Trifauci comes it ad phlegetonta comi.

15 Marmoreum corræ Tumulum *quam* grata catellæ

Pro tanta mærens ponit elisa fide.

**Eiusdem**

1 Aura licet nomen dederit mihi: defuit Auræ

Vis *tamen*: et summo culmine lapsa peri .

Forma fides amor obsequium lususque iocique

Vt flet: et Tumulum ponat elisa iubente

**Folio 8 verso**

**G. Antonij Thebaldei:**

1 Qui transis longa*que* uia defessus et æstu

Siste, Auræ canis hic ossa sepulta iacent.

Candidus in lenem mutatus spiritus auram

Circum busta memor corporis us*que* uolat

5 Delicæ ac lusus Isabellæ principis Aura

Hic iacet , in nomen uersa catella suum.

Qui*que* odor insolitus cælo diffunditur isto:

Hunc illi *dominæ* labra sinus*que* dedit

O factum bene: Si terras canis urit et astra:

10 Et releuat terras torrida *que* astra canis

Ventarum Hippotades numerum dum forte recenset.

Insolitum regno sensit inesse suo

Miratur , quæritque, canem tandem ille sabellæ

Mutatam a superis comperit esse: et ait

15 Felix : quam charitas et Musas auxit: et auget

Cuius nunc populos Aura catella meos.

**Folio 9 recto**

Hic canis Aura tegor miraris: at hæc quota pars est:

Et quæ tantum homines torqueat inuidia

In gremio iacui, tetegique la bella sabellæ:

20 Hæc homines, ipsos sollicitentque deos

Hic canis Aura iacet dominæ Aura insignis in Auras

Que canis impulsu decidit alterius.

Aura ferox quod erat parue supponere pennas :

An sociam in dominæ pectore ferre nequis:

25 Sed pateris poenas tenebris latet abdita cecis:

Nec tibi dat solitos moesta sabella sinus .

Quæ dominæ uiuens leuis fuis Aura sabella.

Aura repentino est fauore facta Nothus.

Aura sub hoc saxo est moriens quæ multa reliquit

30 In niueis dominæ flamina pectoribus

**Folio 9 verso**

Deliciæ hic *dominæ* tegitur canis Aura: suum quæ  
 Impleuit nomen, æstu abeunte abijt.

Aura sinum *dominæ* tenui, nunc astra catella  
 Anceps qua dicar sorte beata magis.

35 Vrat humum, canis ille: ille umbras tereat: at tu  
 Cara Aura hoc nulli noxia munus habe.

Aura iacet : magnæ dilecta catella sabellæ:  
 Quæ dabit illa homini si dedit ista cani:

Hic canis Aura : inter potuit que sidera poni :  
 Proxima sed *dominæ* maluit esse suæ .

**Domini Magistri Baptiste Carmelitæ**

1 Blandula quod fuerit sanctique pudoris imago  
 Hunc Aure tumulum fæcit Elisa suæ

**Folio 10 recto**

Cum foret: Intestus summo in discrimine: se se  
 Ex alto in *duram* precipitavit humum

5 Hoc opus *innuptæ*, precor, hoc attendito nupte  
 Plus timuit crimen *quam* sua fata canis.

**D. Marij Equicola**

- 1 Ante diem paulo: has uoces his auribus hausi  
 Quas Irata mihi uisa Thalia loqui:  
 Ille Thebaldei Borgettus ad æthera cantu  
 Altisono euctus stroza poeta<sup>492</sup> Tuo
- 5 Quis putet hoc: Collis radices uagit ad Imas  
 Et queritur *nostram* flebilis usque fidem  
 Ille esset Equicoli niger horridus horribilisque  
 Stat prope et aonium<sup>493</sup> sperat adire nemus  
 Marchetti ecce autem *Guzum* per uulnera mille
- 10 Interfectum ad nos detulit una charis

**Folio 10 verso**

- Precipitem subito dedimus: quin una sororum  
 Ausa sequi, posset si Jugalare alios :  
 Ergo his *quam* primum musarum nuntius Ito  
 Et die ut reuocent in sua busta Canes
- 15 Nulla nisi aura sacras heliconidos ebibat undas  
 Nisi amor, uentus *nisi*, et aura fauor  
 Nil dominæ comune tuæ debetur ut ipsa  
 Nil Triuiuale sapit vnica et extra *aleam*

**Di Antonio del Organo .**

- 1 Leggi viator : e pensa se mai fato

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<sup>492</sup> Followed by the word 'suo', which has been crossed out.

<sup>493</sup> Meaning of word uncertain.

Fu si benigno o corso alcun di stella

A qualita creata : come a quella

Aura : qual giace qui confin si grato :

5     Hebbe morendo e in uita lieto stato

Latrare fu il suo ydioma : e tenerella

Posta a seruire quella vnica Isabella

Che chi la serue unico fa e beato

Quiui fu lieta : Eundi perbere piu raro

10    Gli cadde inanzi : E mentre ella finiua

Quei lumi santi ascuitti non restaro

#### **Folio 11 recto**

O exequie excelse ad ogni cor preclaro

Ma questo epui: che essendo d'alma priua

Lei l'ama ancor : e in la su mente e uiua :

#### **Dialogus**

1     Amor: se questa fu stirpe di bruti

Vnde hebbe ingegno tanto rationale

Ch'eran uerso Isabella conosciuti -

I sai costumi dhuom Non danimale:

5     Se humana fu : perche non conceduti

Gli furno imembri el ragionare equale:

Lhumano e linhumam fu gionto insieme

Per fare opre per lei: qual lei supreme:

#### **Phillipi Beroaldi**

- 1 Et lugens merito Auram : et querens fata caniculam  
 Isabella Tuæ: non similis uulgo animalium  
 Bruto pectore erat: sed sapiens nostrum hominum genus  
 A caro lateri numquam aberat peruigilans Tuo .
- 5 Si te mestities forte animi : et conficeret dolor  
 Latratu hæc hilari subsiliens huc modo et huc modo .  
 Vt nubes aquile cælo abigit sudificus graui

**Folio 11 verso**

- Si curas animo hæc depulerat sollicitas Tuo  
 Nunc, iram simulans rixam agere acrem et fere prelia
- 10 Nunc pacem facere et scita manum lambere eburneam  
 Multis inuidiosa: Boream ipsi inuidiosior.  
 Qui tecto arripuit precipitem per caput et pedes  
 Indignas tenuem auram facie ista atque oculis frui.

**De Galeazzo de Montechiaro**

- 1 Ecco c'hai fatto morte, crudel Morte  
 L'Aura n'hai tolto leggiadretta et bella:  
 L'Aura bella n'hai tolto, o dura sorte,  
 L'Aura ne la sua uerde eta nouella:
- 5 Ahi doloroso amaro caso et forte  
 Com'hai ciascun piacere spento con ella.  
 Hora di te si dole, et per te piagne  
 Madonna acerbamente, e le compagne

**Ioannis Beniuoli**

- 1 Miraris Domine lachrymas: et frontis honoræ  
 Turbatum ob Catulæ funera parua: decus:  
 Que tulit heculeæ discrimina sortis: *Et Instar*  
 Marmoris, in fracto fregit acerba animo:

**Folio 12 recto**

- 5 Duriciem ingenitam saxis spectamus, et Isdem  
 Currere perpetua cernitur amnis aqua.  
 Quod Natura negat Pietas facit: Ipse Catellæ  
 Candor in has Dominam compulit heu Lachrymas

**Aemilij Brixienſis**

- 1 Dum pianto ſol appago I miei deſiri  
 Viator non piu ſuſpiri:  
 Se non ti dol ch'io uiua, et ſia le mia oſſa  
 In ſi tranquilla, et honorata foſſa.
- 5 Aura gia fui, animal fido, et tale  
 Pianſe l'ultimo di di mia partita  
 Ch'ame poi fu primiero,  
 Di piu famoso ſtato e non mortale.  
 E mi fe chiara, e piu che chiara in uita:
- 10 E a mal grado dil tempo ingordo lſpero  
 Eternitate a la mia bella ſorte  
 Che perch'ei ſtrugga ogni terrena coſa:  
 Non triumpha di fama glorioſa

Gloriosa fu, seno m'inganna il uero:

**Folio 12 verso**

15 Che mi fece Immortale col suo pianto.

Inuidiosa morte

Perche mai mi l'assasti in uita tanto:

Se piagner mi douea che si m'ha pianto .

**D.B. Captelle C. R. Princip. Apostolor. Canonici**<sup>494</sup>

1 Aura Catella fui dum vixi, lapsa per auras

Stella Color paphiæ Blanda ministrat Deæ

**Eiusdem**

1 Aura Catella fui Helysabet nunc rapia *sub umbras*

*Sum blandus stygie ludus amoræ Deæ*

**Meliorum puerorum D. Marij Melmi C. R. filiorum et pr. D.**

**Hieronymelini .S. Jo. later [canonici] Consolatio ad Ill. Helysabet Mantuæ**

**Marchionis uxorem Ferici eius filij nomine.**

1 Huc ades huc uenias passis Citherea capillis

Huc ades incompta meste cupido coma

**Folio 13 recto**

Huc veneres properate gradum cum luctibus atris

Et date supremo Dona suprema rogo

5 Occidit Infelix si quidem. miserabile dictu

Dum Dominam properat aura uidere suam

Que Domine poterat magnos auferre labores

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<sup>494</sup> The name 'Emiluis Emiluis' is crossed out and replaced by this rubric.

Queque nouis lætam reddere blanditijs  
 Quam fuit illius niveæ prestantia forme  
 10        Tam ualuit luis gratia rara sui  
 Fida comes fuerat *Dominæ*, siue illa pararet  
           Carpere iter, seu se continuisse Domi  
 Atque latus lateri, Iungebat, cunctaque Helissæ  
           Nosse videbatur u{i}ta catella sue  
 15    Hec Concessus amor , *Domineque* hæc summa uoluptas  
           Hec requies fessæ grata laboris erat  
 Denique non sæuæ meruit succumbere morti  
           Que vivens fuerat gloria prima canum  
 Ergo Iure doles . merito fata aspera defles  
 20        Auræ, Que moriens cura dolorque fuit  
 Sed supra tanto genetrix exurge dolores  
           Atque animum firma quo potes usque Tuum.

**Folio 13 verso**

Augusti perijt coruus. sua magna uoluptas  
           At gemitu posito. maius adiuit opus  
 25    Heu cunctos mors atra uocat: properamus ad unam  
           Que trahit ad leges omnia nata suas  
 Illa rapit Iuuenes: et ineuitabile fatum est  
           Cuius Iura puer. fæmina virque timet  
 Quo Circa Genetrix tantos iam comprime luctus  
 30        Non poterit lacrymis illa redire Tuis

Nam mortalis erat. non est reuocabilis aura

Vlterius. stygias post ubi adiuit aquas

**Petri Melini**

1 Gratus amor perijt custosque IILustris Helysse

Nuper in Aeteræam versa catella Canem

**Eiusdem**

1 Dum petis aura sue Domine repetitque lacertos

Interijt, summo lapsa catella loco

**Eiusdem**

1 Formosam Domine fata eripuerè catellam

Cuius forma fuit inuidiosa Ioui

**Folio 14 recto**

**Eiusdem**

1 Cum Domina vt uidit ludentem Iupiter auram

In lusus subito transtulit ille suos

**Eiusdem**

1 Ludebas Gremio Quonian prestantis Helyssæ

Nunc Te lugentem regia solis habet

**Eiusdem**

1 Heu lachymis ciues et Tanto parcite luctu

Nam sedet in cæli letior aura plagis

**Eiusdem**

1 Hic Aure ossa Iacent, sed spiritus astra petiuit

Lumine quæ fecis lucidiora suo.

**Celsi Melini**

- 1 Siquis hoc Auræ catellæ  
 Sepulcrum leserit numina  
 Diuorum omnium, ac huius loci  
 Genium iratum habeat.

**Folio 14 verso**

**Eiusdem.**

- 1 Aure Catelle ob summa fidem  
 Helyssa mantuaæ Domina sua quoque præmia  
 Viuis. ac mortuis fidelibus, omnibus  
 redditura fecit.

**Eiusdem.**

- 1 Aure Catelle  
 Si quis delicijs  
 Helyssa reguli  
 Mantuam coniunx  
 Posuit:

**Siculi regionis transtiberine Professoris.**

- 1 Aura Catella feræ; cum effugi uerbera Caudæ  
 Effugi aura tremens, aura, sed aura fui  
 Cinthia me uidit. rapuit delapsa per auras  
 Aura sequor, magne fulgida stella Deæ

**Eiusdem**

- 1      *Elisabæ solamem eram. Dum terra Tenebat*  
                  *Nunc sum Deliciæ coniungis aura Iovis.*

**Folio 15 recto**

**Eiusdem**

- 1      D.M.  
                  *Hic aura Catella Deliciæ*  
                  *voluptas leuamen Do*  
                  *mine aura uiuens*
- 5      *moriens aura*  
                  *fuit mortua*  
                  *Aura Ia-*  
                  *cet.*

**Siculi sacerdotis cuiusdam**

- 1      *En aura Ætthereas Deduxi nomen ad auras*  
                  *Quæ Dominæ placui norma pudicitie*  
                  *Nam canis insilijt Deformi cuspide Dum me*  
                  *Effugi, et preceps sponte necem subij*
- 5      *Quod fera perfecti uos o ratione uigentes*  
                  *Exemplum hoc homines sumere non pudeat.*

**Folio 15 verso**

**A. Flaminij Gymnasij Romani professorum primi**

- 1      *Aulai Delicie Fida Catella*  
                  *Domine exemplo pudica –*

Tenerem a Tersata aura

Delapsa Fenestra

5 Tritiai numine

tertius honor

Astris<sup>495</sup>

accesit

**M. Fabij Calui . C. R .**

1 Catullinis manibus

Aura Catella

Hic deditus

**Dis Catullinis**

1 Elissa Mantuani

Principis uxor

Auram catellam

suas delicias

hic sepeltiuit,

**Folio 16 recto**

**D.C.<sup>496</sup>**

1 Aura Catella

O viator

Hic laudor

mortua

**D.C.**

---

<sup>495</sup> Followed by an 'at', which is crossed out.

<sup>496</sup> Abbreviation for 'Dis Catullinis'.

1 Aura Catella

Delicium

Elisse Mantuæ.

*Domine vrna*

5 Hac tegitur

**AVRA CATELLA AD ISABELLAM MARCHIONISSAM MANTUAE**

1 Avra, catellarum decus o Isabella tuarum,

Uiva lepos Dominæ, mortua facta dolore

**Folio 16 verso**

Melicet Elisijs Proserpina pascat in aulis,

Simque Deæ ut fueram nunc *quoque* Grata deæ,

Quod tamen ob me vnam *quereris* noctesque diesque:

5 Huc feror a lachrimis sollicitata tuis.

Hanc mihi te propter tribuit proserpina lucem,

*Et queritur* longam diua relicta diem.

*Atque* vtinam integris huc ferrer, ut arctubis olim:

Quæ feror huc Auræ uix leuis aura tuæ.

10 Uterer Aura iocis dominæ, quibus ante placebam:

Lingua daret solitos Caudaque mota iocos.

Et modo saltu agili, modo uoce, leuique latratu,

Testarer Dominam sedula serua meam

Sic *quoque* nuda tue ne reijce uerba Catellæ,

15 Blandirique Auram nelle nequire puta:

Ec quis erit finis lachrimarum Isabella tuarum,

Nulla ne fluminibus meta reposta tuis:

Iam satis ah satis est indultum Isabella dolori,

Satque datum affectu est offitio *que* tuo.

20 Ah pigeat nimio corumpere lumina luctu,

Lumina, quæ ut cælo sidera, in ore micant

Optaram riuos, tu flumina larga dedisti,

Vna satis fuerat Guttula pandis aquas.

**Folio 17 recto**

Ex quo me boreas de culmine dispulit alto

25 Precipitemque auram fortior aura dedit,

Quique suo cælum flatu, terraque serenat,

Flabra tibi boreas quum tenebrosa tulit,

Inde doles, dominamque piam geris ubera fletu,

Labitur, e *que* oculis plurima gutta tuis.

30 Iamque nec uberibus niueat te mincius undis

Nec celer effusa qui padus vndus aqua,

Hæc, Isabella, precor: tantum hæc extrema reposco

Hos opto titulos: hec mihi Iusta placent.

At tu sæue nimis Borea, qui me inde reuellis.

35 Vnde rapi nollem in sydera, et ella Iouis.

Sæue nimis borea, qui me seiungis<sup>497</sup> ab illa,

Qua sine nil mi, et cui me sine dulce nihil.

Scilicet hos de me præfers operose Triumphos,

---

<sup>497</sup> The third letter, an 'm' has been marked, presumably a correction.

Perque Getas narras funera nostra tuos

40 Egregiam nero laudem, rapuisse Catellam:

Et tenuem ex alto præcipitasse loco,

Iam potes Acteis nostros præuertere raptus:

Egregijus modica de cane nomen habes:

Sed quid ego hæc de te quecor: an non semper acerbus:

45 Semper atrox, et trux, semper iniquus eras:

**Folio 17 verso**

Tu pandioniden orbasti sæuus Erichtæum:

Attica te propter Tum lachrimosa fuit.

Tu licet usque tuis depellas nubila terris:

Das tamen hec alijs, hac quoque parte nocens.

50 Flumina flante rigent te: te flante alta tumescunt

Aequora: læthiferas Nauta que sentit aquas.

Rara dies, qua non adigas tu in tartara mille,

Nec flatu peltis sæuior ulla tuo est.

Scilicet excelsa coeli in regione locatus,

55 Acrior ex alto lapsus in imma<sup>498</sup> ruis.

Quid quod et arboribus frondes, et lilia pratis

Decutis: et pomis, pomiferisque nocet:

Quid quod adoratis infindis labra puellis.

Pectoribusque nocet, queis micat almus amore.

60 Denique ne numerem tua tot: de fratribus alter

---

<sup>498</sup>The word 'imma' is repeated in the margin.

Non æque ferus est, sanguineusque tuis.

Ergo etiam nocitura mihi tua flabra tulisti,

Que fluuijs, que homini, Delitijsque nocent.

Ergo ab hera seruam potuisti auellere dulci,

65 Quam, plusquam uitam linguere moesta fui.

Vna uno que digna uiro est, qua femina nulla

Castior, aut melior, nec mage pulcra nitet.

**Folio 18 recto**

Parcuis amnicolæ sua fata queruntur olores,

Quam mea tu: mea quæ postquoque fata doles

70 Quæque olim exhausta est fraterno in funere: præle,

Præque tuis Lachrimis sicca putanda soror.

Et quid erit, pro vna liquære Isabella Catella:

Quæ leuis, et digitis uix tribus aequa fui :

Da lachrimis mea Diua modum, metamque dolori:

75 Turpe nephasque, diu flere , dolere Deas.

Digna quidem fueram, tanto quæ lumine fleret:

Sic mea sedulitas, promeruitque fides

Sed tamen ut modicus rigat, ingens obruit arua

Riuus: ita a lachrimis obruor ipsa tuis.

80 Quæque futura bono, modo si moderata fuissent

Iusta , premunt manes nunc Isabella meos.

Ipsa tuos mihi iam exprobrat Proserpina luctus:

Imaque flet superam Diua dolere<sup>499</sup> deam  
 Quique deus nigror Pluto niger Imperat aulæ,  
 85 Me miseram increpitat, luctificamque vocat.  
 Quare ego si qua tuæ superest tibi cura Catellæ,  
 Te rogo: Iam lachrimis atque dolore uaca .

**Folio 18 verso**

Dum lachrimis mea Diua uaces, tum cætera solui  
 Iusta sinam: Titulos: marmora: Carmen amem  
 90 Pone meo titulos fidæ, lepideque, sepulchro:  
 Quodque tibi omni auro carior aura fui.  
 Vtque facis doctos in carmina coge poetas:  
 Et lapidem haud uno nomine conde meum.  
 Et mea uel dictam stellæ uictura columbam.  
 95 Lesbïæ auem, et uiridem Psittacon, vrna micet.  
 Quoque in morte lesbia erat , minor Asteris et te:  
 Sic me sit passer, sitque columba minor.  
 Tum tibi commendo Catulos mea pignora dulces.  
 Ne tu alij, tibi quam , seruitio esse sinas:  
 100 Heu boreæ credas: Boream mea Diua caueto:  
 Ne ferat hic titulis meque meosque suis,  
 Tum Zephyris errare sinas, Eurisque, Notisque:  
 Non ita trux damnis cetera turba meis.  
 Clara viri titulis, et stemmate clara parentum,

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<sup>499</sup> The letter 'o' is crossed out and replaced with an 'e'.

105 Clara benigno animo, clara pudicitia.  
 Digna Maroneis ornet quam Mantua palmis,  
 Cui Marco, cui tenui Guttare cantet olor.

**Folio 19 recto**

Cui longum merito, et fælix ne uere sorores,  
 Cui tarda esta Lachesis, tardior est Atropos.  
 110 Que lepidos, pulcrosque dedit ceu sydera natos,  
 Qui referunt matrem corpore, Patrem animo.  
 Queis etiam longum et fælix neuere sorores  
 Tarda quibus Lachesis, Tardior est Atropos -  
 Hec, Isabella : meis absint ne pondera verbis:  
 115 Scito per Elisias ne didicisse domos.  
 Quo feror: et nolens rapior: mea Diua valetio.  
 Et tantum a lachrimis atque dolore vaca.

**Eiusdem Tumulus**

1 Delitias Isabella tuas quum cerneret Auram  
 Inuidit Boreas , præcipitemque dedi.  
 At tu Auram miserata, illi das carmen et vrnam  
 Vi rapta ut Boreæ, Munere uiuat heræ

**Mirs**

1 Præcepta deiecta loco Borealibus auris  
 Aura, fruor donis nunc Isabella tuis.  
 Ito iterum si uis Borea, et me deijce tecto.  
 Trux mihi sit Boreas, Dum pia sit Domina

**Folio 19 verso****Ioannis Muzarelli**

- 1 Dum moreris parua Aura canum blandissima , dumque  
 Interitum mæret pulcra Isabella tuum  
 Quas non traxisti lachrymas in funere tecum.  
 Tecum elata omnis dicitur inuidia.
- 5 Quin etiam fama est atram tum denique mortem  
 Luxisse, et facti poenituisse sui.

**Antonij visdomini bonon.**

- 1 Lælapa saxum habuit. Canis Erigonius astra:  
 Vtrumque ex meritis manus utrique datum.  
 Gratus Auræ quidem saxoque astresque sepulchrum hoc:  
 Quod structum Dominiæ sit pietate sue.
- 5 Quæ ueteres tantum virtute heroidas aufert.  
 Ingenio hæc reliquas quantum et amore canis

**Eiusdem**

- 1 Firma fides, lepidum murmur, lenesque susirri,  
 Suauoli lusus, blandidulique Ioci,  
 Me Bellæ gratam fecerunt semper Elysæ  
 Mortuam apud manes, uiuam et apud superos.
- 5 Humani possunt quid ab hac sperare clientes:  
 Quæ noluit cassam lumine humare canem.

**Folio 20 recto****Eiusdem**

- 1      *Aura meæ fuerim Dominæ gratissima quam: sat  
hac in parte domus, qua tegor, urna probat .*

**Eiusdem**

- 1      *Aura quid hic tumuler, mirum fortasse uidetur:  
hoc duo dignantur corpus honore meum,  
Mirus amor meus in Dominam: mira huius in omnes:  
Ne dum in me, mira eum pietate fides.*
- 5      *Vtræque res equidem mira est, Et foemina Diuis  
Proxima, et humanis moribus usa canis*

**Eiusdem**

- 1      *Aura Canis Dominæ vivens quam blanda voluptas,  
Iam dolor intensus mortua, condor ibi*

**Folio 21 recto<sup>500</sup>****Gualterij de Santo Vitali**

1.      *Aura le, qui sempre, ben qui senza fiato  
Piccol can de Isabella e gia gran spasso  
Hor a delicie, e, suo riposo passo  
Speri chi serue a un cuori gentile, grato .*

**Magistri<sup>501</sup> Alexandri**

- 1      *Scripta palatinus non plura legabat Apollo,*

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<sup>500</sup> Folio 20verso is in blank.

<sup>501</sup> The word 'Carmen' is crossed out and replaced with 'Magistri'.

Quam tu flens aura funera Diua tuæ.

Grandia [dehaci] cecinerunt carmina vates:

Et tulis alternos flens elegia modos.

5 Hic phalecum: scazonta alius dedis ille trimetron:

Naenia non uno carmine dicta cani est.

Cum se præcipitem ægit odora Canicula tempus

Aptius hoc nullum obfecerat esse neci.

Unde ego tot uates ueritus prodire timebam

10 Sed uetuit Marius nos Latuisse diu

Scribe ait: Archiloco non una est gloria iambi

Nec fidibus nocuis Pindarus aolijs

Altiloquo mundus quamnis adsurgas Homero:

Non tamen Argiui continuere tubas

**Folio 21 verso**

15 Nec latum sacri post troica bella Maronis

Obticet: at sumum possidet ille locum.

Serus ab hijs monitis facundo scripta negare

Non potui Mario qualiacunque habui.

Nescio an extremis post plena sedilia uatum

20 Ullus pieria detur in æde locus

Quid refert. satis est animum mouisse Libelli

Diua pio intenti qualibet officio.

**Eiusdem epicedion auræ**

1 Delicias dominæ noua quæ [i] rapuere Catellam

Fata: quis insolitus solatia casus ademit

Ex oculis optata nimis: cupiendaque rursus

Sed rursus *Dominæ* non vestituenda querenti.

5 *Namque* per obscuras si quem videt iste tenebras

Denegat atherias Orcus remeare sub auras

O sæuas leges: o duri scita Tyramni:

Non potuit senio *tam* bella canicula sumi:

Tam blanda: et comis: comes una cibique : *uiæque*

10 Imbuta humano sensu: si dicere fas est:

Sed fas est: neque enim degebat more ferali

At quæ Gargaphia *speculatum* in ualle Dianam

### Folio 22 recto

Pube tenus: secuere canes Acteona: nudam

Uixerunt: et quæ rapuere Thasumque: Linumque

15 *Quæque* cothurnati federunt membra poetæ:

Innocua Aura peris quo fraudata iuuentæ:

Aura iaces : *populoque* : et toti flebelis aulæ

Flebilior *Dominæ*: at lachrimas prudentia solens

Excutit: introrsum latitat sub pectorans uulnus.

20 Quod si lex sineret: lachrimas sequeretur euntem

Inferiasque daret pario sub mamore clausæ.

Seu phrygio: et Lybico: aus saxo te gerere Laconum

Funere fælici nec tu spoliata iaceres.

Relligio uetuis meritæ *tamen* æmula Laudis

- 25 Plusque sit canibus licitum dari honoris habeto.  
 More sue solito *dominæ* ut functura ministri  
 Officio comitata gradus ascenderat altæ  
 Festinans tabulata domus: gremioque relicto  
 Reginae: prodire audet: gaudetque parumque:
- 30 Capta Loco: thalamisque uagans huc currit et illuc  
 Interea dispar canis olfacit: illa minantem  
 Uim: uitiumque offere fugit: tactusque procaces  
 Deuitat: ceu casta uiro deuota priori

**Folio 22 verso**

- Iurata in uiduo mulier dormire: cubili
- 35 Uota precesque proci temnit: cæcosque recessus  
 Lustra uoluptatis metuens declinat ut hostem.  
 Cauta petit lucem: incæstas exosa Latebras  
 Insequitur canis: ac Auræ connubia sperat  
 Blanditijs: et ui: (fuerit si uiribus usus)
- 40 Uentum erat ad podium: nec adhuc secesserat ardor  
 Nequitiæ: tum certa mori: quam perdere nomen  
 Aura canis castæ: specula se misit ab alta  
 Et moribunda solo uersans ter Lumina: penne  
 Isa uale mea bella tuæ non immemor auræ
- 45 Dixit: et aura auram uitalem effudit in auras  
 Haud ego crediderim huic mentem ingeniumque fuisse  
 Cælitus: humanum quicquid custodia uincit

Tanta pudiciæ nostris quod mentibus olim

Hereat exemplar: liceat si magna pusillis:

50 Aut conferre homini ratione carentia uero:

Num Laudanda magis foret hyppo: gloria sexus

Dorica fæminei: quæ se demersit in æquor

Preripiens nautis dare quod dissuasit honestas.

Theutonica matres quid plus meruistis amaro

**Folio 23 recto**

55 Guetura nodatæ Laqueo : ne romula pubes

Uestra Libidinibus uitirent corpora fædis:

Et quid ad hanc veræ prostrata lucretia famam

Laudis habet: satius fuerat cui spernere uitam

Casta mori ut posset: nam quæ post furta uirili

60 Fata manu inuenit: forsan suffusa rubore

Rumores populi dextra sopire Loquacis

Maluit: intactum quam conseruare pudorem

Morte adita: sed quam mors occupat ante nephandos

Contactus: iugulat corpus: uiuacia donat

65 Secla pudiciæ: repetens unitaten ab aura

Dulcis Mama uale mellitis gestibus: eheu.

Non fera te rabies: non toxica dira tulerunt

Sed pudor illæsus transenna trusit ab alta:

Mors rara: et casu, proh casus rarior omni.

70 Hæc (fateor) uoluens Lacrimas inhibens paratus

Flere canem didici: pauloque ante ille seuerus  
 Fata gemo canis ereptæ: lugubria furtim  
 Threnodas inter cynicas per uerba relabor .

**Folio 23 verso**

**Nicolai Mar. paniciat:**

- 1      Aura hoc marmore conditur Catella  
           Olim delictum sacre Isabelle  
           Manitonæ Domine Decens venustum:  
           Moratum: lepidum: procax: iocosum:
- 5      Insignes Melitæ premens alumnos  
           Dignum nomine: Regiamque cura  
           Flatu mobilis citatiusque  
           Aurai Zephyritidis, susurro et  
           Suauis suauis estuante celo
- 10     Heu Mors ferrea: Duriorque ferro  
           Bellam heroidis optimæ Ministram  
           Perbella veneresaque deuorasti:  
           Hoc solatiolo manus potentes  
           Orbas pessima: vivet usque vivet
- 15     Felix gloria candidæ Catelle:  
           Ornant puniceæ Rosæ sepulchrum:  
           At manus tenue: et quidem pusillum  
           Quantum hoc, quod lachrymis heræ madescit:

**Folio 24 recto**

**Aeriaioli**

- 1      Aura mihi nomen fuerat. Non quod Celer auras  
           Curendo agrestes Insequererue feras  
           Sed quoniam In gremio *domine* blandita *sinuque*  
           *Curarum* dulcis aura *quiesque* fui:

**Eiusdem**

- 1      Miraris Tumulum lector structum esse Catelle  
           Plurimaque in Tumulo carmina fixa meo  
           Si *domine* lachrimas questusque in morte notasses  
           Pro meritis dicas illa fuisse nihil

**D. Hieronymi Auogari**

- 1      Aura fuit Dominæ Canis Aurea Tota beate  
           Et Domine fuerat Aura Beata Iocis  
           Vno agitur fato felix sors Ista. Duarum  
           Perdidit hæc vitam: perdidit Illa Iocos
- 5      Ardet Amans Auram dulcis: Conatur Amantem  
           Huius In amplexus flectere ruffa suos  
           Spreta dolet: Ter plusque dolens Irascitur Auræ  
           Spernentemque non ledere possit Amans  
           Forte dies fuerat sotios qua ludere morsus
- 10     Allicit hanc Celans Ruffa Inimicitias

**Folio 24 verso**

Ecce altas Inijt properans moritura fenestras  
 Aura, vnde heu miseram deijcit hostis humo

Aure vita gemens puris Euanuit Auris

Et nudum nomen mobilis Aura sonat

15 Stat resonans Etenim vox Aura: sub edibus Aureis

Eccho vbi *Iam* facta est vocibus e Domine.

### Celij Calcagnini Ferrarensis

1 Aura tegor tumulo: Tumulos brevis urna uocetur

Hoc scio blandicijs me meruisse meis.

Sueta manum *Dominæ* Lasciuo Lambere. morsu

Ad nutusque iocos, et dare, et accipere.

5 Hinc functam charites: Tritonia me inde ciebat:

Certatum ut facerent me sibi delitium

Linquite me dixi: grata me linquite in urna:

Nolo pati imperium deterioris here.

Quid nisi uos charitas, quid te nisi Pallada norim:

10 Isabella una est Pallas, et una charis:

### CHAROLI MAPHEI

1 Quid solatiolum nostrum modo subripis Auram

Atropos et nostræ Delitias dominæ

### **Folio 25 recto**

Ast seuum facinus, meruit non bellula mortem

Membra que tellure ponere candidula

5 Non venerem nouit Non dignum bella maritum

Comperijt similem paruula nec Catulum

Non desiderio uentris commota nec oris

Est sedes ausa reddere coprotinas.

Non *dominam* aut aliquem *seruorum* Lesit eburno

10 Dente ut latratus edidit horrissonos

Sed *Domine* depasta sinu placido ore quieuit

Aut manibus cepit languidas *omniculum*

Si pedibus compressa fuit uel uerbere *cæsa*

Lachrimulas mittens fugit heræ in *gremium*

15 Causa latet misere cur Rumpas Filla Catelle

Hoc scelus impulsa ni facis inuidia

### Eiusdem

1 Dulcior ambrosia, O, et nectare Dulcior Aura

Marmore Candidior candidior *que* niue

### Folio 25 verso

Læuior Aegoreis conchis et Læuior Auro

Mollior Et pluma quam tenet albus olor

5 Suaior et uentis Aestate et suauior igne

Hymbrifer[o] cæl[o] *quum* Trhait<sup>502</sup> Auster aquas

Heu domine quantas lacrimas moriendo relinquis

Heu quantum de te curia *nostra* dolet.

Fereus ille quidem: qui te *non* semper amasset:

10 Quid*que* tuos ludos blanditias *que* tuas .

Qui ne*que* Laudasset mores et dulcis ocellos

Munditias *que* tuas basiola*que* tua

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<sup>502</sup> 'Trhait', read as 'trahit'

Emoreris Uideo variantia lumina monstrat

Lumina que phoebe lampadis instra erant.

15 Pes tremit et teneras extendit pallidus unguis

Pes naturæ orte factus et ingenio

Ingemis, ah, misere tibi cur natura negauit

Posse loqui: et *dominæ* dicere tristis ego.

### Folio 26 recto

Dicere et extremis lacrimis uelantibus [inquos]<sup>503</sup>

20 Mi pretiosa diu Bella sabella uale

Annuis ipsa tamen nutu quoque uerbula signas

Et pedibus moriens corpus inane quatis

Corda nec cedunt paulatim et deficis, heu, heu,

Expiras redolet flamine tota [zomus]

25 Hoc solamen habes liceat mihi dicere uerum

Ingenij equabas calliditate hominem

Hoc solamen habes latias te duxit ad oras

Sors tua et hesperie Barbara dormis humo

Hoc solamen habes regali Pocula mensa

30 Sumpsisti et lectum stragula vestis erat

Hoc solamen erat quod censeo. dulcius omni

Seruisti tantæ Parua catella Dee

Hoc solamen habes *Domine* tu nocte dieque

Delitium ludus fabula visus eras

---

<sup>503</sup> Possible scribal error for 'inquires'.

35 Hoc solamen habes curru te uecta *per urbem*

Gestauit gremio Diua isabella suo

**Folio 27 recto**<sup>504</sup>

Hoc solamen habes *quod* donec uiua fuisti

Ipsa suis manibus fercula digna dedit

Hoc solamen habes *quod* *sucos*<sup>505</sup> *atque* sapes

40 Vt tibi uita foret tradidit hippocrates

Hoc solamen habes lacrimis impleuit ocellos

Dulcis hera et gemitus misit ad astra graues

Sorte tua contenta potes requiesceret *in vrna*

Auriola Auriola chara catella uale

**EPITHA: AVRE**

1 Candidula ossa iacent et mollicella catellæ

Auriolæ hoc pario mamore languidule

Fleuit *iuncta* duci mantu[ae] Diua sabella

Et dedit extinte Dulcia sauola

5 Hanc hera si temuit tales sitantus ocellus

In maduit tantum pectus et indoluit

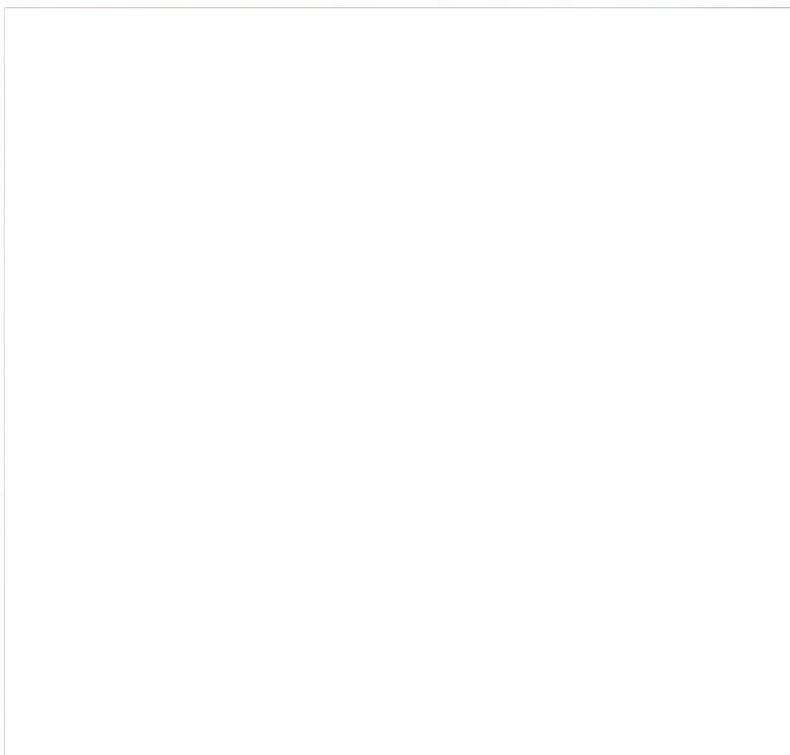
Eius munditie ludi gemitus *que* iocosi

Nequitia et quales *quidque* fuere puta

---

<sup>504</sup> Folio 26 verso is completely blank.

<sup>505</sup> An extra 'c' in 'sucos' has been crossed out.



**PLATE 1: Self  
portrait with pet  
badgers by Il  
Sodoma (Giovanni  
Antonio Bazzi) in  
Monte Oliveto  
Maggiore, Tuscany.**



**PLATE 2:  
London British Library  
Seal cxxix.44**



**PLATE 3: MS  
London British  
Library Stowe  
17, 20verso**

**PLATE 4: British Museum, Chataleine de Vergi ivory casket**



**PLATE 5: MS London British Library Add. 36684, f. 49**



**PLATE 6: MS London British Library Add. 36684, f.88verso**



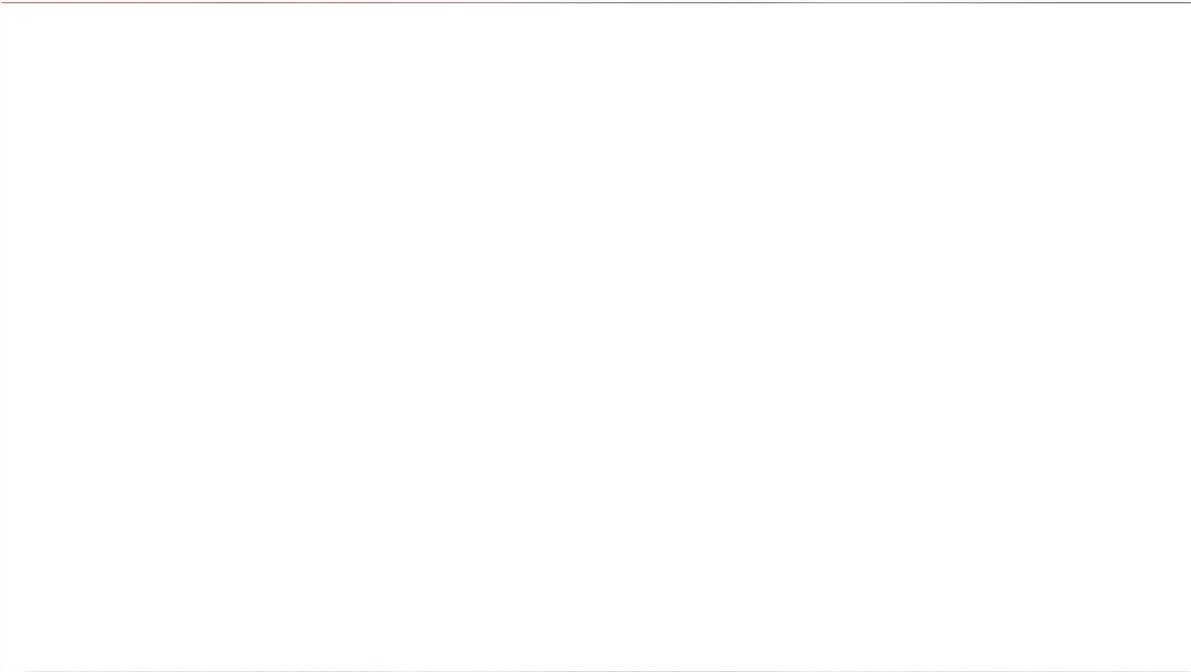
**PLATE 7: British Museum, Lorenzo Lotto, *An Ecclesiastic in his Study***



**PLATE 8: MS London British Library Add. 29433, f.20**



**PLATE 9: MS London British Library Add. 42130, f. 181verso**



**PLATE 10: MS London British Library Add 35313, f. 1verso**



**PLATE 11: MS London British Library Stowe 17, f. 100recto**



**PLATE 12: Fresco by Il Sodoma (Giovanni Antonio Bazzi) in Monte Oliveto Maggiore, Tuscany. Scene from the life of St Benedict (St Benedict dines with his fellow monks).**



**PLATE 13: Fresco by Il Sodoma (Giovanni Antonio Bazzi) in Monte Oliveto Maggiore, Tuscany. Scene from the life of St Benedict (the monks are tempted by visiting women).**



**PLATE 14: Petrarch's 'cat'. Arqua Petrarca, Italy.**



**PLATE 15: 'St Augustine teaching in Rome' by Benozzo Gozzoli in the church Sant'Agostino (San Gimignano)**

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<sup>1</sup> Directly or on microfilm.

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<sup>2</sup> Available through the institution's website.

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