

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910781736703321
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Titolo	The royal hunt in Eurasian history // Thomas T. Allsen
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Philadelphia : , : University of Pennsylvania Press, , 2006
ISBN	1-283-21139-4 9786613211392 0-8122-0107-8
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (x, 406 pages) : illustrations
Collana	Encounters with Asia
Classificazione	NW 3060
Disciplina	639/.109
Soggetti	Hunting - Political aspects - Eurasia - History Animals and civilization - Eurasia - History Eurasia Kings and rulers Social life and customs
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Bibliographic Level Mode of Issuance: Monograph
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- 1. Hunting Histories -- World Histories and the World of Animals -- Pursuing Protein -- Pursuing Profit -- Pursuing Power -- This Hunting History -- 2. Field and Stream -- Who Hunted? -- Where Did They Hunt? -- How Often Did They Hunt? -- How Did They Hunt? -- On What Scale Did They Hunt? -- 3. Parks -- The Paradise and Its Antecedents -- Hunting Parks at the Core and on the Periphery -- Hunting Parks in East Asia -- The Purposes of Paradise -- 4. Partners -- Animal Assistants -- Dogs -- Birds -- Elephants -- Cats -- 5. Administration -- Hunting Establishments -- Success and Safety -- Careers -- Costs -- 6. Conservation -- Killing and Sparing -- Game Management -- Cultural Constraints -- Species Endangered -- Natural Attitudes -- 7. A Measure of Men -- Hunting and Hierarchy -- Princely Virtues -- Courting Danger -- Publicizing Prowess -- 8. Political Animals -- Power of Animals -- Power over Animals -- 9. Legitimation -- Animals and Ideology -- Threat -- Animal Control Officer -- State and Nature -- 10. Circulation -- On the Road -- Pursuing Pleasures -- Favors -- The Court Out-of-Doors -- 11. Intimidation -- Initiating Warriors -- Imitating War -- Intimating War -- Initiating War -- 12. Internationalization -- Traffic in Animals -- Dogs -- Birds -- Elephants -- Cats -- Traffic in Trainers -- 13. Conclusions -- History Wide --

Sommario/riassunto

From antiquity to the nineteenth century, the royal hunt was a vital component of the political cultures of the Middle East, India, Central Asia, and China. Besides marking elite status, royal hunts functioned as inspection tours and imperial progresses, a means of asserting kingly authority over the countryside. The hunt was, in fact, the "court out-of-doors," an open-air theater for displays of majesty, the entertainment of guests, and the bestowal of favor on subjects. In the conduct of interstate relations, great hunts were used to train armies, show the flag, and send diplomatic signals. Wars sometimes began as hunts and ended as celebratory chases. Often understood as a kind of covert military training, the royal hunt was subject to the same strict discipline as that applied in war and was also a source of innovation in military organization and tactics. Just as human subjects were to recognize royal power, so was the natural kingdom brought within the power structure by means of the royal hunt. Hunting parks were centers of botanical exchange, military depots, early conservation reserves, and important links in local ecologies. The mastery of the king over nature served an important purpose in official renderings: as a manifestation of his possession of heavenly good fortune he could tame the natural world and keep his kingdom safe from marauding threats, human or animal. The exchanges of hunting partners—cheetahs, elephants, and even birds—became diplomatic tools as well as serving to create an elite hunting culture that transcended political allegiances and ecological frontiers. This sweeping comparative work ranges from ancient Egypt to India under the Raj. With a magisterial command of contemporary sources, literature, material culture, and archaeology, Thomas T. Allsen chronicles the vast range of traditions surrounding this fabled royal occupation.
