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***Breeding for Collections: Horse Husbandry at the Lipica Stud Farm in 17th-Century Inner Austria***

During the late medieval and early modern periods in Europe, numerous aristocratic stud farms were established to breed horses for ceremonial use and as curiosities for court collections. The Austrian Habsburgs followed this trend, founding two prominent stud farms by the end of the 16th century: Kladrub in Bohemia and Lipica in Inner Austria. By the mid-18th century, the Lipica stud farm had developed the Lipizzaner breed, which, alongside the English Thoroughbred, is one of the most historiographically researched horse breeds. However, the history of the Lipizzaner has primarily been examined from the 18th century onward, leaving earlier periods underexplored.

This paper investigates novel sources from the 16th and 17th centuries, produced by the administration of the Lipica stud farm and preserved in the collections of the Inner Austrian Court Treasury (*Hofkammer*) in Graz and the Imperial Master of the Horse (*Oberstallmeister*) in Vienna. These sources shed light on breeding techniques, the characteristics of horses at Lipica before the 18th century, and the stud farm's connections to the broader culture of aristocratic horse breeding in Europe. Notably, Lipica's mares were bred with stallions from prominent European stud farms, including those characterised as belonging to races (*razza*) of Prince of Schwarzenberg, the Prince of D'Este, the Duke of Mirandola, the Grand Duke of Florence, the King of Denmark, and the King of Spain, among others.

By analyzing these breeding practices and breeding goals, this paper will explore the ways in which broader cultural trends of collecting horses as court curiosities has influenced breeding of horses of specific qualities at the Lipica stud farm which were used at the Imperial Court in Vienna.

Dr. Lisa Kolb (Augsburg) – Proposal for the Central European History Convention, July 17th–19th 2025, University of Vienna

## Handling Saltpeter – Habsburg's resource regimes in the Thirty Years' War

Ever since firearms became established in Europe at the end of the Middle Ages, saltpeter was a highly sought-after raw material. A key component of black powder, natural reserves of saltpeter were scarce and artificial production methods were complex and could not supply in sufficient quantity. In the Thirty Years' War, however, the ongoing and intense warfare created a significantly increased demand, while at the same time established trade routes were disrupted. Habsburg authorities and military commanders therefore made enormous efforts to collect natural saltpeter, stimulate new production processes and import the raw material from distant cultivation and mining areas.

The suggested presentation examines saltpeter as a critical raw material for imperial warfare in the first half of the 17th century. It is located at the interface of Economic History, Military History and Environmental Humanities, thus scrutinizing the specific materiality of the sensitive and dangerous raw material as well as strategies of handling the matter by different groups of actors involved – Habsburg officials, military entrepreneurs, and traders. By analyzing sources of the Austrian State Archive, I will explore the imperial party's attempts to secure the supply of saltpeter and gunpowder during the war. Imperial patents reveal the urgency of securing supplies, formulating trade restrictions and giving saltpeter workers permission to dig for the raw material in private stables. War records allow exploring resource infrastructures, i.e. trade routes, transportation conditions, and policy frameworks.

Based on the Habsburg example, I will outline Saltpeter as a raw material that particularly illustrates the dependence of human action and political events on the availability of resources, chemical processes and natural conditions. It also shows how historical actors endeavored to make uncertainties and risks manageable, to expand chemical knowledge and to ensure a constant supply of critical resources through investments, decrees and ad hoc measures.

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# **Oinking in the Mountains. Pig Husbandry in the Late Medieval and Early Modern Southern and Eastern Carpathians**

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Historical and ethnographic research on the Southern and Eastern Carpathians has largely focused on sheep husbandry, often regarded as a traditional occupation of the Romanian people. However, alongside the alpine pastures, oak and beech forests also held considerable economic significance for the surrounding regions, as they provided mast for pigs. Despite this, pig husbandry has not received the same scholarly attention as sheep. This paper examines pig husbandry in the Southern and Eastern Carpathians from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. During this period, the mountains served as a border between the Kingdom of Hungary (from 1541, Principality of Transylvania), Wallachia and Moldavia. Although these lands became Ottoman vassals by the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, no Islamisation occurred, and pork consumption persisted among the population. Late Medieval and Early Modern charters, tax registers, correspondence and land descriptions reveal that rulers, nobles and monasteries restricted access to their oak and beech forests and imposed taxes on foreign pig herders. Violations of these written and customary rules often sparked conflicts, including disputes between the principalities. The study investigates these conflicts, as well as the patterns of ownership and usage of mountain forests used for pannage. It also addresses the lesser-known phenomenon of trans-Carpathian pig transhumance, which has been overshadowed in the literature by the well-studied sheep transhumance. Furthermore, the paper explores the environmental challenges pig husbandry faced, such as the reduction of oak and beech forests due to deforestation and the erratic weather conditions of the Little Ice Age. While analyzing the Carpathians as an environmental unit, the paper also highlights the interconnectedness of the three principalities through pig husbandry and underscores its significance for the pre-modern piedmont societies.

Key words: environmental history, pig husbandry, mountain history, transhumance, Little Ice Age