EDMUND RUSSELL. *Greyhound Nation: A Coevolutionary History of England, 1200–1900*. Studies in Environmental History. Cambridge: Cambridge University Pres, 2018. Pp. 214. $94.99 (cloth).
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Edmund Russell has joint appointments in the University of Virginia's departments of Science, Technology and Society, and History. His scholarship in environmental history and the history of technology often includes evolutionary biological studies. In this new book he carefully explains the coadaptation of humans and greyhounds in Britain from the Middle Ages through the first part of the twentieth century. Russell writes that he did not expect to write this book, first intending a book on working-class dogs in England. Such surprise is a good sign of the evidence guiding his thinking and writing. Russell's arguments surprised me, too, in a really pleasant way.

Evolution and coevolution of humans and greyhounds reveals how the traits of both changed over time. Russell's distinctive argument explains the "historical forces that led people to value different traits at different times in non-human populations" (2). As the human and environmental circumstances of work and habitat, or *niches*, changed, the variation among greyhounds narrowed. The adaptation of human and greyhound populations to such niches gave shape to their mutual evolution. Place and jobs work together, and the former's narrowing meant the narrowing of the latter. No force worked to narrow that more powerfully, and rapidly, than modernization, remarkably not only in human society, but for evolution itself.

Russell's book also contributes to the history of sport, as he explains the *meme*, or instruction for dog behavior, of their particular jobs. He narrates the transformation of rural hunting with greyhounds into modern coursing trials, and finally, the creation of greyhound shows. Closing breeding pools among show and coursing greyhounds effectively made descent from two registered greyhounds *the* major job description for both kinds of dogs, ending five hundred years of cross breeding.

Some of these forces were at work earlier, but the key period, Russell argues, was the 1880s. Rejecting the romantic or essentialist typology of animal breeds, variations and malleability were beneficial characteristics of people and dogs. The modern forces of democracy and capitalist opportunity invited nonaristocrats into the greyhound breeding culture. In response, Britain's nobility began to adjust their definitions of greyhound appearance, habitat, and jobs in order to retain a hold on the status distinctions they associated with their dogs. This action paralleled similar cultural convictions about the romanticization of savagery and Britain's Gaelic "fringe," imperial rule in the colonies, and even racial notions of breeding and purity of blood. In his famous essay on Balinese cockfighting culture, Clifford Geertz argued that convictions about masculinity and class were woven deeply into the contests, where owners identified with their animals. Similarly, Russell implies that the savage/civil distinction, so critical to the Enlightenment social sciences, also encouraged increased distinctions between "smooth" and "rough" greyhounds, located in habitat distinctions between civilized England and the tougher climes of Ireland and Scotland.

Russell's sources are remarkably varied, which is not surprising considering his distinctive questions about coevolution. Documents on hunting, on rural sports, and the culture of the British nobility serve him for the medieval and early modern period. Memoirs, biographies and manuals on domesticated animals guide him in the transitional era of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. For the modern period, Russell turned to dog club publications, local newspapers, and published breeding guides.

The book is rich in detail, especially from printed sources, and the occasional appropriate period illustration. Once the reader has the nomenclature in hand (*coevolution*, *niche*, *meme*, *job*, and *habitation*, for example) Russell is a sure-footed guide through the argument. At times the book is redundant, in the sense that Russell regularly recalls earlier claims and

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repeatedly offers summaries. Perhaps this comes from a self-consciousness of the book's distinctive, even groundbreaking, argument to historians unfamiliar with evolutionary biology. He surely hopes biologists and evolutionary scientists as well will read this, and their lack of familiarity with British history might also require repetition. At times his discussion of the dogs is far more interesting, to this reader, than that of the people (with a few notable exceptions, such as George Walpole, Lord Orford). It does seem, on occasion, that Russell depends on quite mature narrative histories of modern Britain, making me wonder if recent work would be even more suggestive. The role that Christianity, or religion generally, played in defining the ideologies surrounding memes and niches is minimal for Russell.

Historical change is evolution, Russell argues, and greyhounds, like other domesticated animals, are a kind of biotechnology. Biologists should therefore build historical social forces into their models. Modern humans have accelerated evolution in a manner far greater than any previous age. Russell successfully brings evolution down to a human/dog scale, tracing in a kind of microhistorical manner a single thread across a long era. Russell's concentration on the greyhound helps the reader recognize that breed uniformity, due to human intervention, is only recently the case. Modern evolution and history are therefore "two facets of the same coin" (ix). "The frequency of ideas (culture, memes) and behaviors (traits) changed in the population of greyhound owners. The populations evolved. These kinds of changes are familiar to historians. We call them history" (31).

Popular culture continues to borrow from the Frankenstein model to narrate human intercession in evolutionary change. But Russell's account suggests how that intervention has been going on, methodically and mutually, without grand scientific technique. As a scientifically ill-informed historian, I was really pleased with the book, and I hope the historically challenged scientist finds it just as enlightening.

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Keith J. Stringer and Angus J. L. Winchester, eds. *Northern England and Southern Scotland in the Central Middle Ages*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2017. Pp. 369. $99.00 (cloth).
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This collection of essays brings into print several papers presented at a 2012 conference in Durham, the purpose of which was a reassessment in light of recent research of the history of "middle Britain" in the high medieval period. A common theme of the work is that throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (oddly—and inexplicably—labeled here the "central" Middle Ages) southern Scotland and northern England shared features of a single British identity.

In addition to a lucid introduction by co-editor Keith Stringer, the book consists of ten essays. The first five ask fundamental questions about national identity in the context of high medieval secular and ecclesiastical politics. The remaining contributions explore rural and urban medieval settlement patterns and secular and religious landownership. Many of the essays apply to the region of middle Britain methodologies that have informed the recent historiography of English medieval peasant and landscape studies. Each contribution also addresses the challenges of applying the modernist construct of the "transnational" to the medieval period.

Not surprisingly, evidence of closely shared experiences that transcended the political line which marked the boundary between two realms is most compelling in the essays that

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