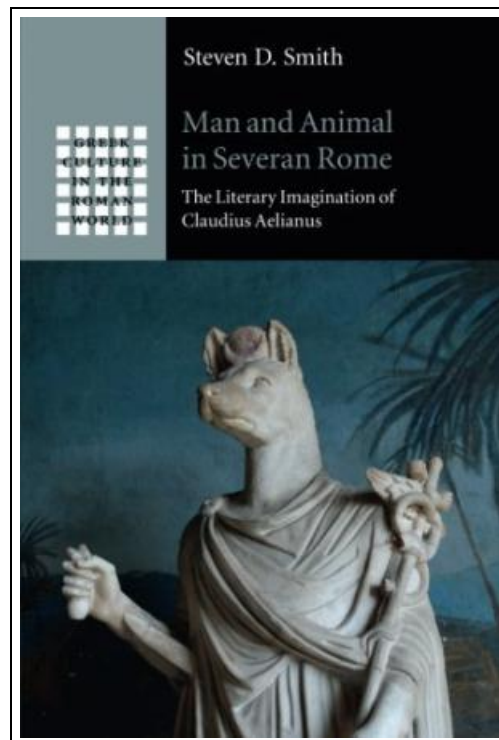


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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, United Kingdom, 2017. Paperback. Condition: New. Reprint. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.The Roman sophist Claudius Aelianus, born in Praeneste in the late second century CE, spent his career cultivating a Greek literary persona. Aelian was a highly regarded writer during his own lifetime, and his literary compilations would be influential for a thousand years and more in the Roman world. This book argues that the *De natura animalium*, a miscellaneous treasury of animal lore and Aelian's greatest work, is a sophisticated literary critique of Severan Rome. Aelian's fascination with animals reflects the cultural issues of his day: philosophy, religion, the exoticism of Egypt and India, sex, gender, and imperial politics. This study also considers how Aelian's interests in the *De natura animalium* are echoed in his other works, the *Rustic Letters* and the *Varia Historia*. Himself a prominent figure of mainstream Roman Hellenism, Aelian refined his literary aesthetic to produce a reading of nature that is both moral and provocative.



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