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## Princess Palatine, Protectress of Animals

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Of all the trades on display at Versailles, "defender of animals" was iconoclastic, to say the least, yet this avantgarde stance went down in history.

Pets were plentiful at the court of the French kings. They livened up the royal apartments, never hesitating to catch a nap on a lady's coat or Louis XVI's commode. They were entitled to regal treatment. This aspect of life in Versailles is revisted through the eyes of Louis XIV's sister-in-law, Princess Palatine. In her letters, she describes the court with witty affection. Her attitude gives evidence of a sensibility opposed to Descartes' animal-machine theory, which the Princess mischievously dismantles: "When you are jealous, are you machine or man? For save you, I know of no one more jealous than my dogs?"