Feral Empire

By tracing the dramatic spread of horses throughout the Americas, *Feral Empire* explores how horses shaped society and politics during the first century of Spanish conquest and colonization. It defines a culture of the horse in medieval and early modern Spain that, when introduced to the New World, left its imprint in colonial hierarchies and power structures. Horse populations, growing rapidly through intentional and uncontrolled breeding, served as engines of both social exclusion and mobility across the Iberian world. This growth undermined colonial ideals of domestication, purity, and breed in Spain's expanding empire. Drawing on extensive research across Latin America and Spain, Kathryn Renton offers an intimate look at animals and their role in the formation of empires. Iberian colonialism in the Americas cannot be explained without understanding human–equine relationships and the centrality of colonialism to human–equine relationships in the early modern world. This title is part of the Flip it Open Program and may also be available Open Access. Check our website Cambridge Core for details.

Kathryn Renton is a historian and a communications specialist at the Getty Research Institute. Her research is published in English and Spanish in the *Sixteenth Century Journal*, *The Court Historian*, *Bulletin Hispanique*, and several edited volumes. She is the cofounder and past president of the Equine History Collective.

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 17 Nov 2026 at 14:01:27, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009091015

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 17 Nov 2026 at 14:01:27, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009091015

Feral Empire

Horse and Human in the Early Modern Iberian World

KATHRYN RENTON
Getty Research Institute
University of California, Los Angeles

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 17 Nov 2026 at 14:01:27, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009091015



Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India

103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment, a department of the University of Cambridge.

We share the University's mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781316515075

DOI: 10.1017/9781009091015

© Kathryn Renton 2024

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press & Assessment.

First published 2024

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

A Cataloging-in-Publication data record for this book is available from the Library of Congress

ISBN 978-1-316-51507-5 Hardback

Cambridge University Press & Assessment has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 17 Nov 2026 at 14:01:27, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009091015