

Round table – Rats and Mice

Today, mice and particularly rats have a bad reputation as disease vectors and as competitors for human food. Was their reputation equally bad or merely different in times before the notion of germs causing sickness was accepted or were they thought of as part of daily life – a nuisance to be dealt with or even as markers of place – of what ‘made a place’.

Some questions that might be addressed in this round table discussion although, as usual, any ideas are welcomed:

- ❖ Was there a difference in the way mice and rats were treated in texts and images in medieval times and does this change in later historic times compared to later times?
- ❖ Were mice and rats really differentiated in medieval times?
- ❖ What is known archaeologically about medieval mice and rats across Europe given different kinds of archaeological sampling?
- ❖ Was there a difference in the way rats were generally described in texts or shown in images after the appearance of the brown (aka Norway) rats (*Rattus norvegicus*) compared to the black rat, (*Rattus rattus*) is described in texts or shown in images?
- ❖ What are the most recent ideas about the connection of rats to the bubonic plague of the fourteenth century as well as later plague outbursts in Europe?

SUBMIT TITLES for 5-6 slide short presentations (in person preferred)

Please send the title of your paper and a short biography along with your precise name, affiliation, address, and email to Alice Choyke (choyke@ceu.edu) by Wednesday, September 10th, 2025, at the latest.

Names for round table – moderator Gerhard Jaritz

Dr. Philip Line – (philip.line@gmail.com) protecting animals, round table?

Prof. Jacqueline Leclercq-Marx (mice) (jacqueline.leclercq@ulb.be or jalecler@ulb.ac.be)

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