

meant to point to certain characteristics of such experiences because I believe they are quite representative for many who live in a foreign culture and who make an effort to establish good contact, but are prevented from really succeeding by the limited environment they have created for themselves in the foreign country. One would not go to this book for a historical account about a time of significant changes in China, but for a personal document about a foreigner's "island life" within the sea of an unfamiliar society. That the society in question is that of China in this book may, from that point of view, be only incidental.

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STERCKX, ROEL. *The Animal and the Daemon in Early China*. SUNY Series in Chinese Philosophy and Culture. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002. ix + 375 pages. Bibliography, index. Cloth US\$92.50; ISBN 0-7914-5269-7. Paper US\$34.95; ISBN 0-7914-5270-0.

Roel Sterckx's *The Animal and the Daemon in Early China* explores the perception of animals in Warring States (475–222 BCE) and Han (202 BCE–220 CE) dynasty thought. Sterckx examines how cultural perceptions of the animal world influenced the way Chinese viewed their place among the living species and within the world itself. Rather than offering a natural history of animals in China, this book instead describes how the Chinese view of animals shaped *and* was shaped by intellectual, political, and religious thought and notions of sagehood and rulership.

Chapter 1 opens with a systematic introduction to animal theory in surviving Warring States and Han dynasty texts. In addition to discussing philosophical, calendrical, and legal texts, Sterckx also analyzes title references in the Han bibliographic catalog. The surviving literature, however, is not zoological in nature. The Chinese did not define animals in terms of an "ology"—anthropology, biology, zoology—but, instead, emphasized the naming and classification of animals based on lexicography. This naming and ordering of names, Sterckx argues, enabled Chinese rulers and scholars to maintain symbolic and intellectual control over animal species.

Chapter 2 examines the classification of animals based on their ritual and social uses. Using evidence from the *Zhouli*, Sterckx provides numerous examples of human bureaucratic positions responsible for animals. These officials were responsible for raising and breeding animals, the sacrificial preparation of animals, the management of animal tributes and parks, hunting, fishing, and expelling venomous or prodigious animals. For example, the commander of the stables classified royal horses into six categories—horses suited for breeding, warfare, ceremonial display, travel, the hunt, and labor. They were not classified by their biological characteristics, but rather by their use within human society. Sterckx argues that "the author(s) of the *Zhouli* integrate the animal world into a social zoography in which every single aspect of an animal's behavior was classified within the province of human office" (49).

Chinese classified animals based on their role in social and religious ritual. Animals were ordered based on the system of gift exchange. Specific animals were appropriate as a gift to superiors and friends. Animal species were also ordered in a sacrificial hierarchy based on their use in ancestral sacrifices and state sacrifices. For example, while rulers and nobility sacrificed oxen, commoners sacrificed fish. Calendrical texts provide another source of information regarding animal taxonomy by linking animal behavior to the cycle of human activity, particularly the agricultural cycle.

Sterckx next discusses three models of classification in Chapter 3: a physical model based on the concept of blood, "blood and *qi*," a functional model based on *yin* and *yang* and

the five phases theory, and a moral model based on human nature and morality. Sterckx concludes that these models did not emphasize the differences between the species, but emphasized the differences as a difference of degree. Both humans and animals were composed of “blood and *qi*”; both were separate categories within the same five phases model; and both species were analyzed according to the same moral standards and principles.

The link between animals and geographic territory is examined in Chapter 4. Animal symbols on tallies, seals, and military banners were determined, in part, based on terrain. The *Zhouli* notes that states in mountainous regions used tallies inscribed with the image of a tiger, states of the plains, a human image, and states near water, a dragon image. Linking animals with the local soil, climate, and natural characteristics served as a form of geographic zoology. Animal sacrifices were often dictated by the location of the sacrificial altar. One would never sacrifice fish or a turtle at an altar located in the mountains. Therefore, both a physical and spiritual link existed between the territory and its animal inhabitants. Sterckx argues that the construction of animal parks and the giving of exotic animals as tribute suggested that the ruler, by collecting these animals, symbolically demonstrated power and control over the territories represented by the animals.

The role of the sage in the moral transformation of animals through music and virtue is thoroughly discussed in Chapter 5. According to Sterckx, the differences between human and animals were based on moral factors and not biological factors. Music and dance, originating from the sounds and movement of animals, could only be transformed into music and dance by the sage. Through music, the sage could “soothe the savage beast” transforming wild beasts into moral animals. In parallel, virtuous conduct and exemplary rulership by the sage-ruler could also transform the predatory instincts of beasts. By extension, since barbarians were considered the next of kin to animals, these theories of transformation were also used as an analogy in Han control over the peripheral barbarian tribes.

In contrast to the previous chapter, Chapter 6 explores several theories of physical change and animal metamorphosis within the animal species itself. Some theories purport that human and animal transformations were a result of moral retribution. Calendrical texts argued that species transformation followed the change of seasons. Some animals, like the snake, were more likely to be associated with transformations because of their natural ability to shed their skin. Certain mythological creatures incorporated body parts from different species. Humans identified themselves with animals by wearing animal skins and animal masks. Finally, some animal transformations were interpreted as portents. Sterckx convincingly provides examples and explanations for each theory.

Chapter 7 examines strange animals. Although change within the animal world was accepted, certain creatures were singled out as being “strange.” The classification of these creatures was not based on zoology as much as it was based on omenology. The appearance of these strange creatures or abnormal behavior among animals was often attributed to negative changes in the human order. The sage, by identifying, naming, and classifying the anomalous creatures, became a master of the strange. The *gracko*, the dog, and the unicorn are all examples that Sterckx examines in this chapter.

The Animal and the Daemon in Early China is intended as a textual study of Warring States and Han texts. This book does not provide a systematic study of the archaeological or artistic evidence, and the author never intended it to, leaving that to “the professional care of scholars of archaeology and art history” (12). This book does provide an important and solid foundation for future studies in those fields in addition to becoming a major reference work for the study of the intellectual and religious thought of early China. Sterckx provides an insightful analysis of animal theory in Warring States and Han dynasty China. He presents us with a Chinese portrait of the animal world as seen through the eyes of the lexicographer,

ritualist, cosmologist, geographer, philosopher, sage, and ruler, who each tried to formulate a model of the animal world. Sterckx provides such a wealth of information that a second, or even third, reading of the book is necessary in order to digest all it has to offer!

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SOUTHEAST ASIA

KERSHAW, EVA MARIA. *A Study of Brunei Dusun Religion: Ethnic Priesthood on a Frontier of Islam*. Borneo Research Council Monograph Series No. 4. Phillips, ME 04966: Borneo Research Council, Inc., 2000. x + 287 pages. Photographs, map, glossary, bibliography. Cloth US\$38.50; ISBN 1-929900-01-5.

Despite its oil wealth and trappings of modernity, Brunei Darussalam is one of the most self-encapsulated nations in Southeast Asia. With even its national budget a state secret, it is not surprising that little long-term social science research has been done in the kingdom, particularly on ethnic minorities such as the Dusun. For this reason, Eva Kershaw's book is especially welcome. In addition to providing a detailed account of traditional Dusun religion and worldview, this book also offers an insightful analysis of the precarious status of a minority ethnic religion in an increasingly Islamic Malay state.

A Study of Brunei Dusun Religion is based on material collected from 1985 to 1993. Because of the secrecy that surrounds the calling of the priestesses, or *belian*, much of the information contained in this book comes not from the *belian* themselves, but from Narak Buntak, whom Kershaw describes as an octogenarian male authority on Dusun custom and religion. When she started her work, Narak's son simultaneously began to tape-record his father; hence their sessions together gave Narak a chance to pass on what he knew, not only to the author, but also to his favorite son. This, Kershaw tells us, is unusual, as most Dusun elders have long resigned themselves to the incompatibility of the old religion with "modern times."

The primary purpose of this book, Kershaw tells us, is "to establish a precise record of a dying religion of Borneo" (5). More specifically, it attempts "to describe the traditional Dusun view...of the universe and the world around them; of self; of man's life-force (*nyawa*) and soul (*lingu*); of divine and malign spirits (*derato* and *isi*) and the spirits of the dead (*lamatai*)" (4). The final sections of the book deal with the ritual role of the Dusun *belian* and contain a series of brief descriptions of the principal rituals they perform, including healing and exorcist séances.

Since 1961, the Dusun have been classified as one of seven "original indigenous" groups in Brunei. Three of these are Muslim, including the dominant Brunei Malay. Since 1971, the practice has been to classify all "original indigenous" groups, whether Muslim or not, as "Malay." This practice is consistent, the author argues, with the nation-building project of the modern Brunei sultanate, which is, essentially, to promote the general assimilation of non-Muslim communities to Malay culture and Islam under Brunei Malay political leadership. Hence, today, the Dusun are officially merged with other "Malays" and are classified under "Religion" as "freethinkers." The central rituals of the *belian*, called *temarok*, are described by Brunei Malay Islamic religious officials as *berhantu* ("playing ghosts") and so are equated with the possession séances that persist among Malays, which the modernist Islamic revival aims to stamp out.

In the absence of writing, the repositories of Dusun religious knowledge, and the agents