

accomplished by the Chinese evidential scholarship, especially the study of epitaphs (Jinshixue 金石學), represented by Huang Yi 黃易 (1744–1802), Duan Songling 段松苓 (1745–1800), and Ruan Yuan 阮元 (1764–1849), who did extensive work on Shandong stone carvings. In addition, the contributors utilized and checked local gazetteers extensively. Fieldwork is also indispensable in their research and provides accurate description of the actual condition of the stone sutras.

It should be noted that the incredible Chinese scholarship accumulated in the past several decades makes this volume and the series possible. Some of these scholars are also contributors, notably Lai Fei 賴非. Not only have new large-scale surveys been conducted through decades since the mid-1980s, more and more in-depth thematic research based on these surveys has emerged as well.

In sum, the discovery and reproduction of the Buddhist stone sutras in Shandong are exciting developments and will move scholarship forward. I believe that the publication of this series in English and Chinese has without doubt brought the study of the stone sutra tradition into a new era.

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ROEL STERCKX, MARTINA SIEBERT and DAGMAR SCHÄFER (eds):

Animals through Chinese History: Earliest Times to 1911.

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“This book”, the editors write in their introduction, “aims to open the door to the rich field of animals and knowing in China” (p. 2). It does so by presenting 12 articles, ranging in time from the late second millennium BCE to (despite the title) the beginning of the twenty-first century. While a small number of articles focus on specific animals (cats, bees, and pigs), the majority are about the Chinese ways of dealing with, and knowing about, animals as illustrated by specific genres of text. In view of China’s rich textual tradition, that balance will not come as a surprise.

The textual construction of animals in the Chinese tradition is addressed most explicitly by Martina Siebert in her “Animals as text: producing and consuming ‘text-animals’” (pp. 139–59, which deals with the *pulu* (tables and lists) literature devoted to animals, which includes for instance works on crickets, horses, cats and tigers, and goldfish. Adam Schwartz opens the volume with his “Shang sacrificial animals: material documents and images”, which studies a corpus of a coherent set of oracle bones discovered in 1991 at Huazhuangyuan dongdi and published in 2003, focusing on the terminology for the sacrificed animals. Keith Knapp’s “Noble creatures: filial and righteous animals in early medieval Confucian thought” (pp. 64–83) focuses on descriptions of virtuous animal behaviour in stories of filial piety, which stress the inborn nature of filial piety by showing that even some kinds of animals display the virtue, despite the claim of some earlier philosophers that only humans are capable of doing so. Francesca Bray’s contribution is entitled “Where did the animals go? Presence and absence of livestock in Chinese agricultural treatises” (pp. 118–38) and discusses the small space devoted to farm animals in the agricultural handbooks of the late-imperial period in comparison to their more detailed treatment in similar works of the first millennium. Vincent Goossaert

contributes “Animals in nineteenth century eschatological discourse” (pp. 181–98). Focusing on texts that were revealed during the Taiping wars of the middle of the nineteenth century, he discusses the growing obsession with the preservation of life in general – and the massacres of human life that will follow if humans do not abstain from arbitrary killing. Zheng Xinxian’s “Animals as wonders: writing commentaries on the monthly ordinances in Qing China” (pp. 217–32) mostly deals with the writings of the Qianlong Emperor on the month in which certain kinds of deer shed their antlers.

Some articles analyse the writings that resulted from the government’s self-interested concern for the wellbeing of animals. Roel Sterckx, in his “Animal to edible: the ritualization of animals in early China”, deals with the prescribed preferential treatment given to the selected animals that were intended for sacrifice and consumption. In later times the government was especially concerned with the wellbeing of its horses because of the military importance of its cavalry, which is reflected in a chapter by Dagmar Schäfer and Han Yi, entitled “Great plans: Song Dynasty (960–1279) institutions for human and veterinary healthcare” (pp. 160–80), and a chapter by Sare Aricanli, entitled “Reconsidering the boundaries: multi-cultural and multilingual perspectives on the care and management of the Emperors’ horses in the Qing” (pp. 199–216).

The final article in this collection is Mindi Schneider’s “Reforming the humble pig: pigs, pork and contemporary China” (pp. 233–43), which describes the near-disappearance of native Chinese pig breeds, as China in recent decades has embraced the industrial production of pork, using the Confined Animal Feeding Operation model, for which leaner pig breeds are preferred. The article was concluded before the consequences of the current African Swine Flu epidemic in China were known. David Pattinson, who elsewhere has written on the history of bee-keeping in China, contributes “Bees in China: a brief cultural history” (pp. 99–117) to this volume, tracing the Chinese descriptions of the orderly society of the beehive. While Chinese authors occasionally praised the orderly society of bees, it might be noted that these Chinese authors tend to stress the military organization of the bees; also, the metaphor of the hive never achieved the importance in Chinese culture that it enjoyed in the Western tradition. T. H. Barrett and Mark Strange discuss the role of the cat in traditional Chinese culture up to the Song dynasty in their “Walking by itself: the singular history of the cat in China” (pp. 84–98). Drawing on Barrett’s earlier publications on the subject, they stress the link of the cat in the Chinese tradition to Buddhism. The authors of this article also mention the famous case of cat-demon magic at the court of the Sui dynasty, reported at length in the official histories of the time. But whereas the wording of the authors might suggest that this kind magic did not survive in later times (“the cat was for a while associated with a specific form of black magic” p. 87), quite recently a spate of articles has shown that this (or at least a very similar kind of) black magic is still widely practised in various places of Northwestern China – at least the fear that one’s neighbours might be increasing their wealth at the cost of their fellow villagers by venerating the ghost of a dead cat would appear to be quite common in places.

The volume under review is not a systematic survey of the animals that have been most important to the Chinese economy through history – one misses for instance an article on the silkworm. Nor is it a survey of the animals that played a major role in Chinese culture – there is no contribution on the cicada or the bat, and birds are hardly mentioned at all. A greater attention to traditional fiction would likely have resulted in more space for Monkey and Pigsy, or Pu Songling’s seductive vixens. While the book contains some fine illustrations, there is no consideration of animals in art (apart from a short discussion of *taotie* images by Schwartz), while one

might argue that pictorial representation constitutes a major way of knowing. As most of the authors who contributed to this volume have made their mark as students of Chinese thought and history it is understandable that they have looked for animals in sources best known to them. The introduction suggests that this volume “offers a selection of essays over the *longue durée*” of Chinese history, but most articles deal with a specific corpus of sources from a delimited period of time. The result is a collection of fascinating studies on the interaction of humans and animals through Chinese history and on the textual sources that shape our knowledge of that interaction.

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AO WANG:

Spatial Imaginaries in Mid-Tang China: Geography, Cartography, and Literature.

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The book under review (hereinafter: *Imaginaries*) is a study of historical geography from a peculiar angle. Interestingly, its author Wang Ao, an award-winning poet, received his PhD from Yale, one of the top universities in the United States, but one without a geography department. Here Yale is in good company – of the eight Ivy League schools, only one, Dartmouth, still has a geography department. This is probably an indication of the woeful state of geography education in the USA. Any serious academic undertaking that calls attention to the importance of geography should therefore be welcome. There is, however, more to *Imaginaries* than geography. It deals with the interaction and intersection between geography and literature during the mid-Tang period. The author is inspired by W.J.T. Mitchell’s argument that attempts to erase the barrier between graphic/pictorial images and mental (and, by inference, verbal and textual) images.

Imaginaries begins with an introduction on three crucial sources of geographical knowledge during the period in question: the “Map of Chinese and foreign lands” by Jia Dan; a genre of literary writing known as “map-guides”; and the *Maps and Treatises of the Prefect[ure]s and Counties of the Yuanhe Reign*. These three together provided the backdrop for the interplay of geography and literature during mid-Tang times.

The chapter that follows consists of a number of case studies of the map-reading experiences of four eminent men of letters, Du Fu, Li He, Liu Zongyuan, and Zhang Hu, with a focus on Jia Dan’s “grand map”.

The third chapter shifts attention to map-guides (*tujing*) and their relations with the literati. Daoist inscriptions by Yan Zhenqing, office inscriptions by Liu Zongyuan and Liu Yuxi, orisons of appeal by Yuan Zhen and Bai Juyi, and poems by Han Yu and Wang Jian are cited as examples where map-guides played a significant role in literati writing and where the literati participated in a process called “cross-field intertextualizing”.

The fourth chapter takes us further afield into the southern fringe of the empire known as Lingnan (south of the Five Mountain Ranges), encompassing present-day Guangdong, Guangxi, Hainan, and north Vietnam. In this “underdeveloped” area,