11 Animals as Wonders

Writing Commentaries on Monthly Ordinances in Qing China

Zheng Xinxian

This chapter examines how the Qing Emperor and scholars aligned texts with empirical observations of animals. It focuses on the interactions between Han Chinese scholars and the Manchu emperor around animal life cycles which were recorded in classical texts. In particular, I will analyse how the Qianlong Emperor, who ruled China for most of its long eighteenth century, acted like a Han Chinese scholar and commented about animals in the classics. Living in a prosperous age with seeds of decline in sight, including the ecological crises that affected imperial hunting rituals, Qianlong interwove his frustration over hunting trophies with his wonder about animals as recorded in the classics. By examining his commentaries and the Chinese reactions towards his work, this chapter argues that knowledge of animals stayed at the front and centre of Qing political life: animals, as both objects and subjects, formed an essential part of the Qing rhetoric about imperial management.

The Reception of Monthly Ordinances in Qing China

In Qing China, almost everyone knew about Monthly Ordinances (*yueling* 月令), a body of calendrical texts that included accounts of animal activities (real and imagined) according to five-day periods (*qishier hou* 七十二候, also known as the seventy-two pentads).[1] As an essential part of ritual learning in

[1] Versions of Monthly Ordinances include the 'Yueling' in the *Liji* 禮記 (Book of Rites), the 'Xia xiaozheng' 夏小正 (Lesser Annuary of the Xia Dynasty) in the *Da Dai Liji* 大戴禮記 (The Rituals Compiled by Dai the Elder), the 'Shixun jie' 時訓解 (Interpretations of Times and Seasons) chapter in the *Yi Zhoushu* 逸周書 (Remainder of the Zhou Documents), records of the twelve months in the *Lüshi chunqiu* 呂氏春秋 (Master Lü's Springs and Autumns), the 'Shixun ze' 時訓則 (Orders of Times and Seasons) chapter in the *Huainanzi* 淮南子(The Master Huainan), the 'Youguan' 幼官 (Dark Palace) chapter in the *Guanzi* 管子 (The Master Guan), and an apocryphal text known as the *Yiwei tonggua yan* 易緯通卦驗 (Comprehensive Verification of the Hexagrams in the Weft of the Changes). Wang Mang 王莽 (45 BCE–23 CE) also used the *yueling* format to commission protocols. See *Dunhuang Xuanquan yueling zhaotiao* 敦煌懸泉

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the curriculum for the civil service examination, which was institutionalized in the Tang dynasty and abolished in 1905, Monthly Ordinances were familiar to most of the Chinese people preparing for the examination.

By the early Qing, Chinese scholars had already acknowledged the discrepancies between animal life cycles as recorded in Monthly Ordinances and their own observations. Liu Xianting 劉獻廷 (1648–95), a scholar who worked on the Qing project of compiling Ming history, argued that the Monthly Ordinances described animal life cycles as they had existed in the central plains (*zhongyuan* 中原) during the Warring States period. Not only were there discrepancies (*cha* 差) between these ancient accounts and the environmental conditions in the Qing dynasty but, he claimed, there may also have been various 'localized' editions of Monthly Ordinances that more accurately described the animal life cycles in each region.[2]

Nonetheless, for the Qing Emperor and scholars, these ancient records of animal life cycles still provided useful references to align texts with empirical observations of animals. Among scholars, extensive commentaries of Monthly Ordinances were produced to express their own opinions on the established sayings about animals in these classics.[3] At the Qing court, Qianlong's grandfather, the Kangxi Emperor, commissioned an encyclopaedia on the theme in the 1710s, which drew on almanacs, government proceedings and natural history. In 1741, Qianlong reinstitutionalized the imperial hunt, which had first been introduced by Kangxi.[4] Simultaneously, Qianlong – who had known about Monthly Ordinances since childhood[5] – listed their accounts of animal life cycles in state-commissioned agricultural texts.[6] Qianlong claimed that he expected the Monthly Ordinances to serve as standard references for seasonal planning for both hunting and farming.[7]

月令詔條 (Edict of Monthly Ordinances from Xuanquan near Dunhuang). I follow Derk Bodde's translations of the seventy-two pentads, except rendering Bodde's 'moose' as '*Mi* deer'. See Fung (Feng) and Bodde (trans.) (1983), vol. 2, 114–17. On Monthly Ordinances and the classification of animals in early China, see Sterckx (2002), 64–7, 123–204. See also Chapter 2 by Roel Sterckx in this volume.

[2] See *Guangyang zaji* 廣陽雜記, 3.22b–23a.

[3] As Henderson (1991) points out, Chinese scholars commented on classical texts rather than confronting them. For a list of monographs about Monthly Ordinances, see Zhang and Wu (2015), 115–19.

[4] Chang (2007), 91–4. [5] On Qianlong's classical education, see Kahn (1971), 120–1.

[6] See *Qinding shoushi tongkao*, 262.20–1 ('Shou shi zhi tu' 授時之圖).

[7] As he noted in a 1744 poem at the Summer Palace, he used Monthly Ordinances as the standard against which to verify the accuracy of agricultural texts in terms of seasonal planning. See *Rixia jiuwen kao*, 1341 ('Qianlong jiu nian yuzhi Xinghua chun guan shi' 乾隆九年御製杏花春館詩).

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The Wonder of the Deer Antler

Deer hunting had been a 'ritual act of great significance' for the Chinese emperors since the Yuan dynasty.[8] According to Monthly Ordinances, the *mi* 麋 'deer' (*milu* 麋鹿, *Elaphurus davidianus*, known as Père David's deer today) had horns all year, only shedding them around the winter solstice. But, as overhunting had caused a decrease in numbers, the *mi* deer recorded by Monthly Ordinances became hard to find in Qing times. In 1719, when the Kangxi Emperor was sixty-six – three years before his death – he was lucky enough to hunt down a total of fourteen *mi* deer, which was a small number compared to the 135 tigers, 96 wolves, 132 wild boars and several hundred deer in his records. An even smaller number of *mi* deer remained for Qianlong, Kangxi's grandson. The species had become endangered in China by the late nineteenth century and only avoided extinction by conservation efforts at Woburn Abbey in England after 1900.[9]

In the 1760s, Qianlong first questioned Monthly Ordinances for being at odds with his own observations on the imperial hunt and causing him bad luck in obtaining an antler, a hunter's most desired trophy. In contradiction to the ancient wisdom as recorded in the Monthly Ordinances, Qianlong found out in around 1761 that 'recently, all deer in the Mulan preserve and the *mi* deer in the Jilin preserve were shedding their horns in the summer months'. Consequently, at least that year, he had not managed to obtain a deer antler in the summer hunt. Recalling quotations from the Monthly Ordinances, which listed 'deer shedding their horns' under the fifth month and 'the *mi* deer shedding their horns' under the eleventh month, Qianlong speculated that this ancient wisdom was totally mistaken: 'How could the *mi* deer in ancient times be different from today's?'[10]

These remarks were made in an essay entitled 'A Record of My Grandfather's Deer Antler' (*Lujiao ji* 鹿角記), which Qianlong composed in 1762. That year, Qianlong ordered court artists to produce a painting of a deer antler that Kangxi had obtained in a hunt on 7 October 1709, upon which he wrote the essay in his own calligraphy (*yubi* 御筆). The essay provided a detailed account of the 'wonder' (*qi* 奇) of the antler his grandfather had obtained, an object that Qianlong 'often appreciated in leisure'. Qianlong wrote that he had always marvelled at its immense size: the antler had sixteen points and the inside span of the main beam measured a highly unusual 8 feet 7 inches. He stated that the deer antler proved his grandfather's invincible bravery (*shenwei* 神威), entreating later generations of the imperial family 'not to forget the glory of the ancestors'. 'Look at this antler', he wrote. 'Should you not be amazed (*ya* 訝) and curious (*qi* 奇) where this wonder (*qi* 奇) came

[8] Allsen (2006), 161. [9] Xia Jingshi (1989), 269–70.
[10] *Yuzhi wen chuji*, 1301.72–73 ('Lujiao ji' 鹿角記).

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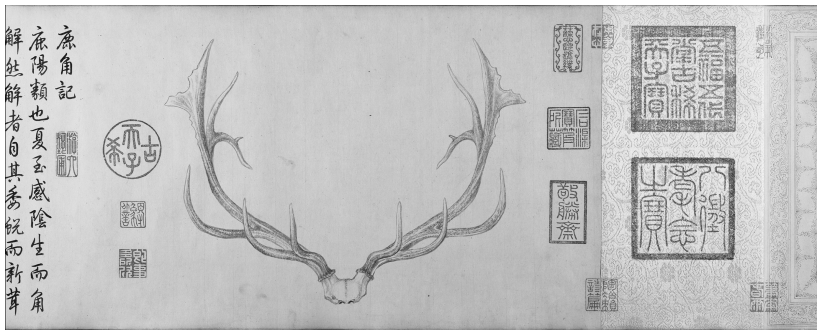

Figure 11.1 Kangxi's antler paired with Qianlong's essay. 'Two Paintings of Deer Antlers' section 2-b. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

from? How can I not record this trophy in detail so that the ancestral glories can be permanently remembered by history!'[11]

Underlying Qianlong's rhetoric about the wonder of Kangxi's antler, 'A Record of My Grandfather's Deer Antler' revealed that Qianlong had often felt troubled (*chang genggeng* 常耿耿) by the Monthly Ordinances' claim that *mi* deer shed horns around the winter solstice. In 1767, Qianlong sent an imperial guard to observe the deer in the Southern Hunting Park (*Nanyuan* 南苑). The guardsman returned with an antler in his hand, reporting that he had picked up a (broken) horn from some kind of deer-like animal domesticated in the hunting park. Qianlong allegedly 'felt lost and did not know what to do'. He lamented, 'among all things under Heaven, is there anything more than this one that shows the difficulty of exhausting principles and investigating things!'[12]

In contrast to his appeal to follow the example of Kangxi's military bravery in 1762, five years later Qianlong invoked the Han Chinese classics and announced that he had discovered the *zhu* 麅 deer (*Alces alces*, moose), a species of long-tailed deer, based on the imperial guard's report about deer in the Southern Hunting Park. On 28 December 1767, Qianlong commissioned an edict to introduce the *zhu* deer. He recalled his earlier observation that 'both deer and *mi* deer shed horns in summer', and his 'doubt that there might be a mistake in the transmission of the *Liji* 禮記 (Book of Rites)', which he referred to as *Lijing* 禮經 (Classic of Rites). Qianlong asserted that Monthly Ordinances might be correct about the timing when deer shed their

[11] *Yuzhi wen chuji*, 1301.72–3 ('Lujiao ji').
[12] *Da Qing Gaozong Chunhuangdi shilu*, 798.7a–b; *Qianlong di qiju zhu*, 32.519–20; *Yuzhi wen erji*, 1301.316 ('Mi jiao jieshuo' 麅角解說).

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horns, but still contained 'errors in erroneously naming the species of deer'. According to Qianlong, when the Monthly Ordinances' authors talked about *mi* deer, they were actually referring to *zhu* deer. Because of mistakes in the pentad, even prominent Han Chinese scholars such as Xu Shen 許慎 (c. 58–147 CE) and Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019–86 CE), who compiled the *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 (Explaining Graphs and Analysing Characters) and *Ming yuan* 名苑 (Garden of Names), respectively, could not distinguish *mi* deer from *zhu* deer. Qianlong asserted that his discovery of *zhu* deer showed that 'it is important to exhaust principles and investigate things so that we can examine antiquity'. Thus, Qianlong ordered the quotation of Monthly Ordinances in the 'Shixian shu' 時憲書 (Calendar of the Temporal Model) to be amended. The statement under the ninth month that '*mi* deer shed their horns' was revised to 'the *zhu* deer shed their horns'. While amending the 'Shixian shu', Qianlong ordered the Monthly Ordinances to be preserved as it was, that is, as a classical text (*gu shu* 古書).[13] As the next section will show, Qianlong's separation of Monthly Ordinances as a classical text from its use in the orthodox calendar allowed him to act like a Han Chinese scholar and write poems about the seventy-two pentads.

Discovering Animals in Rhetoric

Between the 1770s and 1780s, the Qing government compiled the *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 (Complete Library of the Four Branches), its largest attempt to commission orthodoxy and classify knowledge. In the project, the Qing state systematically ordered the scholarly writings about nature. For example, the compilers authorized *pulu* as an established category of treatises and listed it under the 'masters' (*zibu* 子部).[14]

In 1779, Qianlong also ordered a systematic review of all works that had been dedicated to Monthly Ordinances since the Tang. Among these works, a group of poems caught his attention, which were written by an early Qing scholar named Gu Deji 顧德基 (c. 1586–1657). Gu Deji came from Suzhou prefecture in Jiangsu province. Living through the Manchu conquest, Gu identified himself as a Ming loyalist and was active in local poetry societies.[15] In addition to the political beliefs that made him a dissident from Qianlong, Gu was also the younger cousin of Qian Qianyi 錢謙益 (1582–1664), whom Qianlong had vociferously vilified for losing his integrity

[13] *Da Qing Gaozong Chunhuangdi shilu*, 798.7a–b; *Qianlong di qiju zhu*, 32.519–20; *Yuzhi wen erji*, 1301.316 ('Mi jiao jieshuo'); He Wenlong (1997), 59.

[14] See Martina Siebert's Chapter 7 in this volume.

[15] Gu Deji was friends with Chen Hu 陳瑚 (1613–75) and Mao Jin 毛晉 (1599–1659). See *Zhongguo difang zhi jicheng*, 10.52 ('Zhixi xiao zhi' 支溪小志). For the poetic circle centred around Chen Hu and Mao Jin, see Zhu Zejie and Li Yang (2012); Miura Riichirô (2001), 150.

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by first serving the Manchus and then shifting his allegiance back to the Ming.[16]

Around 1656, Gu wrote seventy-two regulated verses on Monthly Ordinances and attached notes to each of these poems. More than one hundred years after his death, Gu's manuscript, entitled *Donghai sanren ji* 東海散人集 (Collected Works of the Man in Leisure at the East Sea), which included these poems, was presented to the Qing court by Sun Yangzeng 孫仰曾 (1751–?), a prominent book collector from Zhejiang, to be considered for inclusion in the *Siku quanshu*.[17]

In the poems, Gu, who had lived in his hometown throughout his life, revealed his knowledge about deer hunting. Under 'deer shed their horns', the fourth pentad in the fifth month, Gu also expressed doubts about the records of deer hunting in the Monthly Ordinances, commenting that seasonal changes affected deer hunters the most. Referring to Sima Xiangru's 司馬相如 (179–117 BCE) *Shanglin fu* 上林賦 (Rhapsody on the Shanglin Park), Gu mocks the grandiloquent official accounts of a dynasty's (i.e. the Qing's) imperial hunting rituals, which generally avoided mentioning the genuine challenges of hunting, such as its being contingent upon a number of deer with horns: 'If hunting were as easy as in Sima Xiangru's account of the Shanglin park, why does the emperor worry about not spotting any deer with antlers? [The emperor worries about] the seasons' change [and who wants to shoot a deer without antlers?].'[18]

In contrast to Qianlong, Gu Deji took a literary approach and treated the classical accounts of animals as a theme for poetic composition. Following the calendrical order of the seventy-two pentads, Gu Deji deployed animals and plants in his rhetoric on the vicissitudes of his life, as well as his remonstration and resistance. Gu chose not to explain most of his rhetorical use of animals, assuming that the idioms and metaphors would be well known to all educated minds at that time. Instead, the subtlety of his poems might even have added to the ways in which the audience could relate and empathize with them.

In the remaining six lines of the poem on 'deer shed their horns', Gu Deji draws on another four historical anecdotes about deer to offer a veiled criticism of the Qing dynasty. He then insinuates that those in power suppressed dissidents by citing a Western Han scholar, Wulu Chongzong 五鹿充宗 (n.d.), whose name contains the graph for 'deer' and who dominated the study of the

[16] Qian Qianyi's mother was the sister of Gu Deji's father and Qian Qianyi notes that the two families endured the Manchu conquest together. See *Qian Muzhai quanji*, 8.543–5 ('Gu Xingzhi qishi shou xu' 顧行之七十壽敘). For the reception of Qian Qianyi, see Chang (2006), 199–201, 206; Wakeman (1985).

[17] *Yuzhi shi siji*, 1308.262 ('Yueling qishi'er hou shi' 月令七十二候詩).

[18] *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu: Ji bu*, 195.351 ('Yong yueling qishi'er hou shi' 詠月令七十二候詩).

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Book of Changes until challenged by Zhu Yun 朱雲 (n.d.). Next, Gu alludes to the misuse of power by Zhao Gao 趙高 (?–208 BCE), the Qin chancellor who had called a deer a horse in order to prosecute officials who dared to disagree with him – even though he was obviously in the wrong. Zhao Gao's anecdote stands in contrast to the fourth analogy between a female deer and a man's wife, as noted in the saying 'only deer share the same wives between fathers and sons', which was perhaps an ironic reference to the Manchu practice of widow remarriage. In his concluding lines, Gu Deji uses a fifth deer analogy to portray the idea of reclusion, which can be traced back to the Tang poet Wang Wei 王維 (692–761 CE), who chose not to serve An Lushan 安祿山 (703–757 CE). Wang Wei's example reminds Gu Deji of his own milieu under Qing rulership. He concludes: 'When writing the *Deer Park Hermitage* (*Lu chai* 鹿柴) as a hermit in Lantian county in Shaanxi province, Wang Wei had just stepped down from officialdom: how could he even want to gaze at himself in the streams [near his Wangchuan mansions]!'[19]

Gu used the pentads as topics by which to group historical references according to the animals mentioned by the pentads. Animals in the pentads allowed Gu Deji to adopt an anthropomorphic voice to project moral properties onto certain animals. Under the pentad 'sparrows enter the sea and become molluscs' in the ninth month, Gu depicts his choice not to work for the Qing government as the transformation of a sparrow into a mollusc. Even if he thought the government's positions might be occupied by more unworthy people than himself, he would rather side with scholars outside the government, as suggested by the idiom 'When snipes and clams compete, it is the fishermen who benefit.'[20]

Although Qianlong considered Gu's manuscript *Donghai sanren ji*, which contained the poems, to be a piece of dissident writing 'full of ridiculous speech attacking [our] Qing rulership', he claimed that the poems 'did not include any [obviously] harmful words', and that it was necessary to 'make the work known among people'. Qianlong authorized the *Siku quanshu* compilers to preserve Gu Deji's poems independently as the *Qishi'er hou shi yi juan* 七十二候詩一卷 (Poems on the Seventy-two Pentads, in One Chapter). In contrast, Qianlong ordered them to destroy and ban the rest of the manuscript.[21]

Animals in Rhetorical Contradiction

After discovering Gu Deji's poems in the spring of 1779, Qianlong spent eighteen days completing seventy-two poems on each of the five-day periods.

[19] *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu: Ji bu*, 195.351 ('Yong yueling qishi'er hou shi').
[20] *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu: Ji bu*, 195.355 ('Yong yueling qishi'er hou shi').
[21] *Yuzhi shi siji*, 1308.262 ('Yueling qishi'er hou shi'); *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu: Ji bu*, 195.351 ('Yong yueling qishi'er hou shi').

Qianlong claimed that, by writing seventy-two poems about the seventy-two pentads, he was also able to 'universally apply' (*bian shi* 遍適) his thoughts to each of the five-day periods. In this way, he could 'correct mistaken views' item by item to transmit authentic things he had seen, experienced and learned, and relate his own emotions to things in nature.[22]

In the preface to his pentad poems, Qianlong claims that Gu Deji had produced 'a vulgar song from the countryside' and that, therefore, he 'has not repeated a single word from Gu Deji's writings'.[23] However, the two works overlap in style and content, although their rhetoric is markedly different. When writing poetic responses, Qianlong often employed contradictions (*fan* 反) to portray his innovative notions.[24] In 1779, Qianlong also shows his sense of innovation in writing poems about Monthly Ordinances by claiming a rhetoric that was opposite to the one used by Gu Deji. One telling example of this can be seen in their poems about the three pentads on falcons.[25]

In Qing China, falconry was practised among Han Chinese commoners. From a death penalty case in Jiangning 江寧 prefecture in 1753, in which a fight over a falcon between two commoners resulted in one person's death, we know that falconry was practised in the Lower Yangtze Delta region.[26] The falcon poems show that, whereas both Gu Deji and Qianlong were knowledgeable about hunting, the emperor and the scholar used their respective poetic imaginations to talk about falconry practices.

In Gu Deji's poem on the pentad 'hawks are transformed into doves' under the second month, Gu notes that the bird transformation recorded in the Monthly Ordinances is an analytical category to distinguish hunting seasons from feather-shedding times when rearing a falcon.[27] Gu Deji quotes from Lang Ying 郎瑛 (1487–1566), the author of *Qixiu leigao* 七修類稿 (A Manuscript Divided into Seven Categories), who noted that the 'doves' recorded in the Monthly Ordinances should be understood as feather-shedding falcons rather than pigeons which falcons prey upon. Gu Deji emphasizes that rabbits and doves, falcons' prey, bravely fight back against their aggressors. By describing falcons flying

[22] *Yuzhi shi siji*, 1308.262–3 ('Yueling qishi'er hou shi').
[23] *Yuzhi shi siji*, 1308.262 ('Yueling qishi'er hou shi').
[24] Rebuttal was a style technique often used in *changhe* 唱和 works (poems composed by matching another poem in rhetoric or rhyme, or both). A poet sometimes called the exchange partners his or her 'poetic adversaries', indicating that *changhe* was an intellectual arena for well-matched opponents. See Shields (2015), 140.
[25] The pentads are 'hawks transforming into doves' in the second month, 'young hawks learning to fly' in the sixth month, and 'hawks sacrificing birds' in the seventh month.
[26] A commoner named Liu Wu 劉五 caused the death of a temple gatekeeper who scared away his hawk. Liu Wu was tried by court and sentenced to hang. See Zhuang Yougong 莊有恭, 075285–001, Qing Grand Secretariat, preserved at the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica.
[27] *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu: Ji bu*, 195.347 ('Yong yueling qishi'er hou shi').

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Figure 11.2 Falconers in Republican Beijing (between 1917 and 1919). 'Men and Falconers (item ID RL_10074_LS_0157) by Sidney Gamble. (Sidney D. Gamble Photographs, David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Duke University).

as fast as the wind and capturing rabbits at lightning speed, Gu uses a metaphor that first appeared in Sima Guang's *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑 (Comprehensive Mirror in Aid of Government) about those in power prosecuting argumentative scholars.[28] Gu also refers to the poems about white doves written by Wang Shizhen 王世貞 (1526–90)[29] which were, in turn, derived from Liu Yuxi's 劉禹錫 (772–842) poem about Tan Daoji 檀道濟 (?–436 CE). Tan was a general who was killed by the ruler of the Liu Song dynasty and commemorated for generations in Moling 秣陵, ancient Nanjing.

In contrast to Gu's rhetoric of differentiating moulting falcons from doves, in Qianlong's poem on the pentad 'hawks are transformed into doves' under the second month, the Manchu emperor acts like a Han Chinese scholar, believing in an actual transformation from hawks to doves and assigning human virtues to birds as an indirect reprimand

[28] *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu: Ji bu*, 195.353 ('Yong yueling qishi'er hou shi').
[29] *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu: Ji bu*, 195.347 ('Yong yueling qishi'er hou shi').

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for overhunting and those 'human beings who still indulge themselves in killing' by flying falcons.[30] Qianlong also meticulously differentiates feather-shedding falcons from doves, and wild falcons from domesticated ones. But, instead of relying on the Han Chinese texts, he quotes a certain 'White Khoja', Qianlong's Muslim falconer, who asserted that a great amount of work was required to feed birds of prey when they shed their feathers in spring and lose the ability to hunt, thereafter having the appearance of different kinds of birds.[31]

Qianlong considered that domesticated falcons, which were likely to shed all their feathers in the spring and were incapable of catching prey when moulting, needed human beings to feed them. In contrast, wild falcons were self-reliant, as they only shed a few feathers in spring, so were still able to hunt by themselves. If they simply sat on their perch and expected people to feed them, this would be equivalent to waiting for death. Qianlong claimed that, although rearing birds of prey seemed to be a small matter, it offered potential for 'important metaphors':

> At the founding stage of our dynasty, the Eight Banners fought for the country with high morale. They never asked for many military supplies from the country. When fighting on the battlefield, every man and horse was highly motivated.
>
> Now, our dynasty has been at peace for a long time. Occasionally, we try to recruit Manchu bannermen-soldiers, but we cannot mobilize them unless we provide them with military supplies! This shows that the self-reliant ones are diligent, and those who rely on others are indolent. Subtle as birds may be, are they not also related to statecraft?[32]

Qianlong's criticism of the Manchu bannermen associated with feather-shedding falcons thus contrasts with Gu Deji's reference to remonstrative doves. Yet his use of the metaphor about moulting falcons in moral injunctions, which contrasted with Gu Deji's analogies about remonstrative rabbits, made Qianlong's writings appear to be trying to argue the opposite from Gu.

The only surviving edition of Gu Deji's pentad poems[33] includes two comments written down at the opening and concluding parts of his poems. One of these notes, reproduced below, reads: 'For these poems we do not have the original version, please do not lose this only manuscript.'[34] No one knows who wrote these notes but, considering the circulation of the text, as

[30] *Yuzhi shi siji*, 1308.264 ('Yueling qishi'er hou shi').
[31] *Yuzhi shi siji*, 1308.270 ('Yueling qishi'er hou shi').
[32] *Yuzhi shi siji*, 1308.270 ('Yueling qishi'er hou shi').
[33] This print was based upon a *chaoben* 鈔本 (handwritten copy) preserved in the National Library of China in Beijing. See *Qingren shiwen ji zongmu tiyao*, 6.
[34] *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu: Ji bu*, 195.344–5, 359 ('Yong yueling qishi'er hou shi').

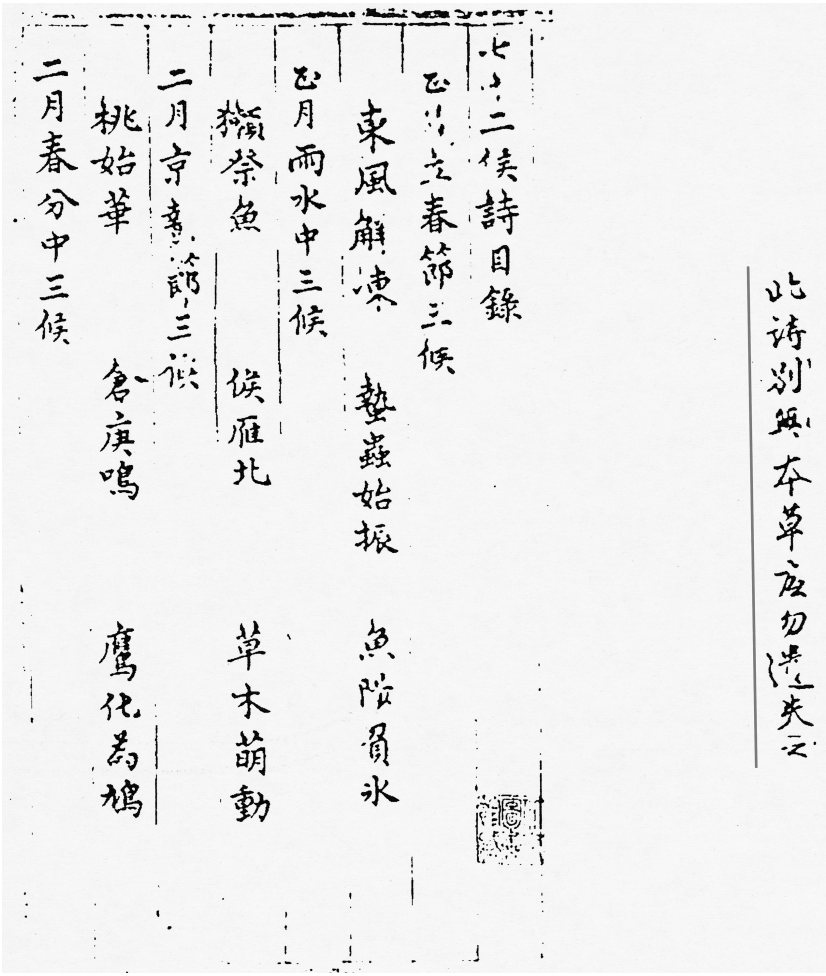

Figure 11.3 Note written on the title page of Gu Deji's poetry (*Siku quanshu cunmu congshu: Ji bu*, 195.344)

well as the reader's marks dotted throughout the manuscript, we can speculate that they may have been added during the compilation of the *Siku quanshu*, when Qianlong ordered the editors to make an exception for Gu Deji's pentad poems.

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Animals in Scholarly Responses

The animals recorded in the Monthly Ordinances, which Gu Deji and Qianlong wrote about as poems, placed both emperor and scholars in the same commentarial tradition of the classics. Some scholars who served the Qing government praised Qianlong's poems for presenting important discoveries about animal life cycles. Between 1779 and 1787, Cao Renhu 曹仁虎 (1731–87) added a special appraisal of Qianlong's imperially composed seventy-two poems on the seventy-two pentads, claiming that they reflected the emperor's 'thoughtfulness in nurturing all things in accordance with the seasons':

> The emperor condescended to prove that the *mi* deer shed antlers in summer, and corrected their name to *zhu* deer [... Because of Qianlong's seventy-two poems on the seventy-two pentads], we now know that falcons and doves are not mutually transforming, that otters and wolves do not know filial piety, that rainbows hide themselves much earlier than the Slight Snow, and that pheasants begin to crow later than the Slight Cold. As for the [two different kinds of] molluscs transformed from other animals, who had seen these? As for the green frogs, different from birds, they croak at the beginning of the summer. In each poem, the Emperor corrected a mistake about one thing, and recorded the truth.[35]

Qianlong's introduction to the pentad poems also created a new trend for writing poems about Monthly Ordinances in Qing China. In 1849, during the Daoguang reign, the governor of Guangdong, Ye Zhishen 葉志詵 (1779–1863), wrote appraisals (*zan* 贊) of pentads. Ma Guohan 馬國翰 (1794–1857), a scholar of evidential research, also composed five-word verses on the pentads, which he referred to as poems in his own notes (*zi zhu* 自注). But Qianlong's commentaries on Monthly Ordinances were not equally well received among all scholars. By citing the emperor's comments as footnotes, rather than a 'classic' or main text, remonstrative scholars safely forged their own intellectual lineages by articulating views that differed from those expressed by Qianlong.

In the *Shuowen jiezi zhu* 說文解字注 (Annotations on Explaining Graphs and Analysing Characters) published in 1815, Duan Yucai 段玉裁 (1735–1815) noted that, 'according to the knowledge of this humble servant of your majesty, the so-called *zhu* deer correspond exactly to the *mi* deer transmitted from antiquity'.[36] In the *Qishi'er hou biao*

[35] The pentad 'otters sacrifice fish' (first month); 'hawks are transformed into doves' (second month); 'green frogs croak' (fourth month); 'sparrows enter the sea and become molluscs' (ninth month); 'rainbows hide and are invisible' (tenth month); 'pheasants enter the water and become molluscs' (tenth month); 'pheasants begin to crow' (twelfth month). See *Congshu jicheng chubian*, 1339.11–12 (Cao Renhu, 'Qishi'er hou kao' 七十二候考).

[36] *Shuowen jiezi zhu*, 471 (10A.22b).

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七十二候表 (Chart of the Seventy-two Pentads), a study of the seventy-two pentads according to six classical texts which was completed around 1838,[37] Luo Yizhi 羅以智 (1788–1860), a scholar and book collector from Xindeng district in Hangzhou prefecture, lists his definition of the phrase *yun mi jiao* 隕麋角, '*mi* deer shed their horns', below the quotation from Qianlong's 1767 edict on '*mi* deer shedding their horns'. Luo Yizhi argues that Qianlong did not realize that the *mi* deer horn shedding recorded in the Monthly Ordinances referred to both the eleventh and twelfth months. Luo blamed Dai Songqing 傅崧卿 (fl. 1115) for introducing that error by only applying it to the eleventh month. Instead, Luo quotes from Kong Yingda's 孔穎達 (574–648 CE) commentary on the *Liji*: 'if the breath arrives early, the *mi* deer shed horns in the eleventh, if not, in the twelfth month'. 'Kong Yingda was right', Luo Yizhi contends.[38] In the preface to Luo Yizhi's work, a scholar named Hu Jing 胡敬 (1769–1845) praises Luo's scholarship, noting that his interest in the pentads came from his dissatisfaction with the 'substandard scholarship' of people such as Cao Renhu, the minister who had praised Qianlong's new findings about animals in the pentad poems.[39]

Conclusion

Between 1985 and 1986, the People's Republic of China launched a project to reintroduce *mi* deer and built two 'Milu' parks in Beijing and Nantong (Jiangsu) to conserve the animal that Qianlong had hoped to find. Contemporary policy-makers and researchers claimed that they were hoping to 'rebuild the beautiful sceneries of the Qianlong period' in the Milu parks by restoring the ancient deer's living environment.[40]

Before the rise of this modern view which treats animals as the object of conservation, the Qing emperor and scholars lived in their own zoological world. Ecology, which played a key role for the Qing local management of the empire,[41] was discussed in the commentaries of classical texts. As the emperor and scholars aligned those texts with empirical observations, animals such as deer and falcons were no longer prey and hunting partners: they became the 'Qing' animals which everyone could use in rhetoric. Acting like Han Chinese scholars, Qianlong interwove his

[37] The six sources included the 'Calendar of the Temporal Model', 'Xia xiaozheng', 'Yueling' and 'Shixun jie' chapters, and the record of months in the *Lüshi chunqiu*, as well as the past dynastic histories.
[38] *Siku weishou shu jikan siji*, 5.630 (Luo Yizhi, 'Qishi'er hou biao' 七十二候表).
[39] *Siku weishou shu jikan siji*, 5.611 ('Qishi'er hou biao').
[40] Jiang et al. (2000), 681.
[41] Bello (2016), 2–3.

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Table 11.1 *Fung Yu-lan and Derk Bodde's chart of the seventy-two pentads.*[a]

24 Breaths	The 72 periods of the year 七十二候		
二十四節氣	Period A	Period B	Period C
立春（正月節） Beginning of Spring	東風解凍 East winds dissipate cold.	蟄蟲始振 Hibernating creatures begin to move.	魚陟負冰 Fish rise up to the ice.
雨水（正月中） Rain Water	獺祭魚 Otters sacrifice fish.	候鴈北 Wild geese appear.	草木萌動 Plants bud and grow.
驚蟄（二月節） Waking of Insects	桃始華 Peach trees begin to blossom.	倉鶊鳴 Orioles sing.	鷹化為鳩 Hawks are transformed into doves.
春分（二月中） Spring Equinox	元鳥至 Swallows arrive.	雷乃發聲 Thunder utters its voice.	始電 Lightning begins to be seen.
清明（三月節） Pure Brightness	桐始華 Elaeococca begins to flower.	田鼠化為鴽 Moles are transformed into quails.	虹始見 Rainbows begin to appear.
穀雨（三月中） Grain Rain	萍始生 Duckweed begins to grow.	鳴鳩拂其羽 Cooing doves clap their wings.	戴勝降於桑 Crested birds light on mulberry trees.
立夏（四月節） Beginning of Summer	螻蟈鳴 Green frogs croak.	蚯蚓出 Earth-worms appear.	王瓜生 Royal melons grow.
小滿（四月中） Grain Full	苦菜秀 Sow-thistle is in seed.	靡草死 Delicate herbs die.	麥秋至 Period of slight heat arrives.
芒種（五月節） Grain in the Ear	螳螂生 Praying mantis is born.	鵙始鳴 Shrikes begin to cry.	反舌無聲 Mockingbirds cease to sing.
夏至（五月) Summer Solstice	鹿角解 Deer shed their horns.	蜩始鳴 Cicadas begin to sing.	半夏生 Midsummer herb grows.
小暑（六月節） Slight Heat	溫風至 Warm winds come.	蟋蟀居壁 Crickets live in the walls.	鷹始摯 Young hawks learn to fly.
大暑（六月中） Great Heat	腐草為螢 Decaying grass becomes fire-flies.	土潤溽暑 Ground is humid and air is hot.	大雨時行 Great rains come frequently.
立秋（七月節） Beginning of Autumn	涼風至 Cool winds arrive.	白露降 White dew descends.	寒蟬鳴 Autumn cicadas chirp.
處暑（七月中） Stopping of Heat	鷹乃祭鳥 Hawks sacrifice birds.	天地始肅 Heaven and Earth begin to be severe.	禾乃登 Grain is presented.

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Table 11.1 (*cont.*)

24 Breaths	The 72 periods of the year 七十二候		
二十四節氣	Period A	Period B	Period C
白露（八月節） White Dew	鴻鴈來 Wild geese arrive.	元鳥歸 Swallows return.	群鳥養羞 All birds store up provisions.
秋分（八月中） Autumn Equinox	雷始收聲 Thunder restrains its voice.	蟄蟲壞戶 Hibernating creatures stop up entrances to their burrows.	水始涸 Waters begin to dry up.
寒露（九月節） Cold Dew	鴻鴈來賓 Wild geese come as guests.	雀入大水為蛤 Sparrows enter the sea and become molluscs.	鞠有黃花 Chrysanthemums show yellow flowers.
霜降（九月中） Frost's Descent	豺乃祭獸 Wolves sacrifice large animals.	草木黃落 Leaves of plants become yellow and fall.	蟄蟲咸俯 Hibernating creatures all push downward.
立冬（十月節） Beginning of Winter	水始冰 Water begins to freeze.	地始凍 Ground begins to harden.	雉入大水為蜃 Pheasants enter the water and become molluscs.
小雪（十月中） Slight Snow	虹藏不見 Rainbows hide and are invisible.	天氣上升地氣下降 Heaven's ether ascends, Earth's ether descends.	閉塞而成冬 All is closed up and winter is fully formed.
大雪 (十一月節) Great Snow	鶡鳴不鳴 Yellow pheasants stop their cries.	虎始交 Tigers begin to pair.	荔挺出 Broom-sedge grows.
冬至 (十一月中) Winter Solstice	蚯蚓結 Earth-worms curl up.	麋角解 *Mi* deer shed their horns.	水泉動 Springs of water are in movement.
小寒 (十二月節) Slight Cold	鴈北鄉 Wild geese go north.	鵲始巢 Magpies begin to build nests.	雉雊 Pheasants begin to crow.
大大寒 (十二月中) Great Cold	雞乳 Hens begin to hatch.	征鳥厲疾 Birds of prey fly high and fast.	水澤腹堅 Rivers and lakes are frozen thick.

[a] Fung and Bodde trans. (1983), vol. 2, 114–17. 'Fung Yu-lan' is the Wade-Giles-style spelling of 'Feng Youlan'.

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wonder about hunting trophies with his commentaries on animal life cycles as recorded in the classics. For the Han Chinese scholars, Qianlong's participation in classical learning opened the way for more discussion: writing about animals provided them with new possibilities to challenge the established order. As such commentaries show, animals find their positions in both history and the present.

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