

Clement D. *Le bestiaire innu. Les quadrupèdes. Collection "Mondes Autochtones"*. Quebec: Presse de l'Université Laval, 2012. 530 p.

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TRANSLATED BY PETER FROST FROM RUSSIAN

In Russian science, ethnozoology is broadly understood as the study of all aspects of the interaction of mankind with the world of wildlife. In Western tradition, ethnozoology is part of the branch called "ethnoscience", which studies a people's structured knowledge, be it rational or irrational, on a subject and seeks to understand and analyze from the point of view of the carriers of this knowledge. With this approach, animals are the object of ethnozoology, the subject being the notions about them that are common to a community.

This book by Canadian researcher Daniel Clément *Le bestiaire innu. Les quadrupèdes*, which the author himself calls a "textbook of zoology," more precisely "theriology" (p. 1), is about a hunting Algonquin people of the Canadian Subarctic, until recently called the Montagnais. It is the result of his almost thirty-year work on identifying and analyzing the knowledge of the Innu about animals that live with them in their surroundings. How justified is this bold statement? After all, the author himself is not an original carrier of Innu zoological knowledge, but rather a collector and interpreter, albeit from the point of view of the Innu. If we proceed from the positions of ethnoscience, such a textbook can be written only by the bearers of the knowledge. However, Clément gives a convincing explanation for this seeming contradiction. He notes that his book is of significant practical importance. Thanks to its structure, if you, the reader, wants to know what the Innu think about a particular animal, and not necessarily read the whole monograph, you need only look at the chapter you are interested in. Thus, the book performs the function of a compiled guide (p. 7).

The work is written on the basis of much fieldwork by the author with a broad review of written sources, some of which date back to the 17th century, and the works of other researchers—social anthropologists, archaeologists, and zoologists.

The book has twenty chapters, each of which is devoted to a certain kind of mammal, namely: Mouse, Squirrel, Beaver, River Otter, Muskrat, Seal, Mink, Wolf, Fox, Marten, Pekan,¹ Ermine, Lynx, Black bear, Groundhog, Hare, Porcupine,² Wolverine, Caribou. The last chapter (except for the conclusions), the twentieth, stands apart because it is about a domesticated animal: the dog. In the future, the author plans to continue working on a description of "birds, fish and inedible animals" (p.7). Not entirely understandable, the list does not seem to mention moose: an animal of interest to many Innu groups and far from last place.

Nine of these chapters are based on material from published journal articles, but in a seriously prepared form. They all have the same structure and are divided into the following five sections: Nomenclature and classification; Physical description, movement and mind / senses; Habits; The

reproductive cycle; Conclusion. Only in two chapters - "The Black Bear" and "Caribou" (especially important animals in the Innu bestiary) does the book add a sixth section: Skillful hunting and uses.

In the section "Nomenclature and Classification", Clément lists the names of each animal in the Innu language and shows profound knowledge of their terminology for the world of wildlife. These names may reflect the age, the colour of the animal, and also, from the point of view of the Innu, sub-species differences that lead directly to the classification of animals. Next comes a comparison with similar views that Euro-Canadians have about these same animals and with opinions from scientists or zoologists.

Clément also notes the presence among the Innu of another system of classification of animals, based on the hierarchy of their spirit masters who, being in the invisible world, rule the circulation of animals in the visible world. So, the master of caribou sometimes (depending on the area and historical chronology) is higher than the spiritual hosts of other land animals and is, therefore, master of animals in general. Another criterion for the classification of animals is the time of year. Animals are subdivided into winter (wolf, caribou) and summer (seal). There is also an opposition between edible and inedible animals (harmful).

Pierre Paré, reviewing the book *La zoologie des Montagnais*, the previous work by this author (Clément 1995), says that Clément considers the Montagnais approach to the animal world to be as scientific as the approach of biological science in modern times, while other authors speak of "people's knowledge" and exclude Montagnais views on the animal world from science. In this he sees the originality of Clément's work. And then he states a very interesting thought that even now, as in the time of Levi-Bruhl, people often speak of "primitive thinking" devoid of logic. Clément has proven the inconsistency of these views (Paré 1996: 228).

In the book now being reviewed, Clément holds the same beliefs. According to him, if Innu knowledge of animals is compared with the postulates of academic zoology, the latter will develop new topics and research mechanisms. Native and scientific knowledge systems have inherently more in common than do different systems (p. 9). However, scientific and native animal classifications are often based on different criteria, which can be verified by reading the chapter "Mouse". The Innu word ppukushîsh encompasses different species of forest mice and mice—voles, rats, lemmings (rodents, according to scientific classification), as well as various types of shrews and star-nosed moles, which science assigns to the category of insectivores. But the author's in-depth research reveals that the Innu have an extremely developed terminology on this topic. Here is just one of the many examples: tshînishtuî ppukushîsh (where tshîn means "sharp", "pointy") means earth-dwelling rodents in general and their varieties, and atâmpeku ppukushîsh (underwater mice) means all mice and shrews associated with the aquatic environment (p. 15).

There is in Innu zoology the term "four-legged" (aeshîshat), which appears in the title of the book. It is interesting that this defining concept is divided into two categories: "forest quadrupeds" (minâshkuât aeshîshat) and "water quadrupeds" (nipit aeshîshat).

In the sections "Description, movement, mind / feelings" (Description, modes de déplacement et sens), the physique and the physiological characteristics of the animal in particular are treated as they are seen by the Innu. This reflects observations by Indian hunters of migrations of various animals (especially with respect to caribou) and their degree of mobility, as well as the preferences of all twenty described species for living in different natural niches in accordance with the seasons of the year, but there is an impression that this aspect is given less attention. Sometimes it is a question of the features of the way of life, activities, and behavior of this or that animal. Thus, in this section Clément notes that, according to Innu, a wolf howls when there will be a change of weather, for example, in anticipation of a hurricane. Scientists-biologists, on the contrary, say that wolf howling is in no way connected with atmospheric changes (p. 134).

The separate section for "Moods" (Moeurs) in a number of cases, but not always, seems somewhat artificial, since the information contained therein may overlap with the contents of the previous section. For example, in the case of the wolf: habitats, den, and also public organization (pack, leadership, caribou hunting and its tactics, sharing and consumption of prey, hunting of other animals). These aspects could be assigned to the section on activity and instinct.

In the chapter on the wolf, Clément says that for the Innu, the wolf pack is a microcosm of their own society. He explains this by saying that the wolf is, like the Innu, a hunter. For one, as for the other, the most preferable prey is the caribou, which is hunted by both in clearly organized groups. However, these generally correct explanations, in my opinion, do not talk about an Innu's identification in his society with a pack of wolves. It is rather the author's interpretation, but this interpretation is quite convincing. From conversations with the Innu and from their myths, Clément deduces the structure of a wolf pack, where, as in a community of people, there is a leader (who can be called both a teacher and a captain), a scout, hunters, and old wolves. According to Clément, the scientific term alpha wolf is equivalent to "uchima" (leader, boss), both for wolves and for Innu (pp. 137-138).

As for the "Reproductive cycle", it is quite natural to talk about the seasons and the process of mating, the birth of offspring, the number of offspring, their feeding, and the timing of growing up in different animals. Thus, according to observations by Innu hunters, the number of young can reach five individuals, and in the initial period of their lives the male helps the female take care of them. Clément notes that, on the whole, these observations are consistent with those of Euro-Canadians. Further, which, in my opinion, is more interesting, the author organically weaves mythology and beliefs into this section. He cites a myth where Karkazhu (Wolverine as a cultural hero and trickster) based on the time and sequence of the birth of his five offspring, divides them into the progenitors of future kinds of people. According to this sequence, they became "white, Indian, Eskimo, Iroquois and black" (p. 405).

The author does not distinguish between rational and irrational, since this distinction is not made in the traditional worldview of the Innu. The mythical in the book is closely intertwined with the real. When reading Clément, one gets the impression that the Innu bestiary has no Christian strata. Although these people have kept, to some extent, their pre-Christian beliefs, they have nonetheless been Catholic for several centuries.

Very interesting is the chapter of the book about the seal. As an epigraph to it Clément took a quote from the work of Frank G. Speck, where he expresses surprise that this animal, regardless of its economic significance for the Montagnais, does not appear at all in their ritual practices. By his own admission, Speck could not find the reason for this oddity. The essential merit of the author of the book under review is, in my opinion, that he uses little-known data to answer this previously unexplored question. According to the materials of Daniel Clément, probably obtained from his Innu informants, Seal Man / sealer-master possesses the abilities of a healer (p. 100). I suppose this mention sufficiently illustrates the presence of the seal in the spiritual life of the Innu.

Speaking of caribou hunting, Clément first describes ways of looking for animals, which could be called irrational—dreams, playing on a tambourine, singing and dancing, a sweat lodge, a swaying tent—and only then passes to the rational components of animal searching: litter of animals, traces, trails, feeding places (pp. 462-464). The style of presentation creates the impression that the author himself does not doubt that the first methods are as effective as the second methods. This is probably due to his ethno-scientific approach, which reflects the view of the Innu hunters themselves.

Using the example of the Innu, Daniel Clément has convincingly shown the indissoluble inter-communication of hunters in the eastern Canadian Subarctic with the world of wildlife. Emmanuelle Devo in a review of "La Zoologie des Montagnais" noted that this book "has no equivalents in North American ethnography" (Désveaux 1996: 141). The same can be said for the peer-reviewed literature. In Russian ethnographic historiography there is a detailed book by I. Yu Vinokurova on the traditional mythological and religious ideas of the Veps about the animal world (Vinoku-2006). However, with reference to the hunting peoples of the taiga and tundra of Eurasia, as far as I know, a generalist work on such subjects has not yet been written, although it is necessary, and there is undoubtedly a need for such writing, by virtue of its particularly close connection with wildlife. In addition, both Clément's book, published in 1995, and I. Yu Vinokurova's monograph cover the entire animal world, whereas the peer-reviewed study, as already noted, more specifically considers only mammals. There are apparently no equivalents in Russian science.

Notes

1 Pekan, or fisher (*Martes pennanti*) - a large animal of the mustelid family.

2 This term is more correct than "Iglosherst" (needlewool) (*Erethison dorsatum*).

Scientific literature

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