

“Man and Beast” — Zhang Dali

Confucius comes upon a crying woman and asks as to why she is crying. The woman responds that a tiger has eaten her son and husband. Confucius responds “why do you live in the wild, why don't you go live in the city?” She balks at the idea “The city, with all its tyranny is far more ferocious”

Confucius' story “Tyranny is more ferocious than a beast” underlies Zhang Dali's new series of bronze sculptures, “Man and Beast”. These new works show the artist departing from his signature, stark realist mode of working and moving towards the elusive realm of imagination, myth and fantasy. Juxtaposing life-size animals with human figures, these surrealist unions are rife with symbolic implications of a brutish violence that pervades our society and politics. In China animals traditionally symbolize power and ferocity. Some of Zhang's animals are imaginary or altered in scale, some are poised to attack, while others are plainly seated upon the human figures. The compromising arrangements allude to common man's eternal struggle with power and the hostile structures he has enwrapped himself in.

Zhang Dali is the bad-boy artist whose ubiquitous and mysterious graffiti took Beijing by force in the mid-1990's. He has since gone on to achieve international fame. Zhang Dali has recently been profiled in both ART Forum and Art in America for his participation in The Gwangju Biennial. His “Chinese Offspring” sculptures have also been recently acquired by famous British collector, Charles Saatchi.

Text: Mathieu Borysevicz

Translation: Yang Yan

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人与动物 —— 张大力

孔子过泰山侧，有妇人哭于墓者而哀。夫子式而听之，使子贡问之，曰：“子之哭也，壹似重有忧者。”而曰：“然。昔者吾舅死于虎，吾夫又死于虎焉，今吾子又死焉。”夫子曰：“何为不去也？”曰：“无苛政。”夫子曰：“小子识之，苛政猛于虎。”

孔子《苛政猛于虎》的故事，正强调了张大力新的铜像雕塑系列作品《人与动物》。这个系列显示了艺术家正在背离自己标志性的赤裸现实主义风格作品，而转向想像、神话和幻想等难以捉摸的领域。把实体大小的动物和人体并置，这种超现实主义的结合体象征地暗示了充斥在我们社会政治中的残酷暴力。“动物”在中国传统上是权力和凶猛的象征。大力的“动物”有的是想像的或进行了相应的调整，有的摆出准备攻击的姿势，有的则端坐于人体之上。这种妥协的构图影射了普通人对权力的永久的反抗，是对包围着他们的充满敌意和排斥的社会结构的反抗。

张大力，这个“坏男孩”艺术家的独一无二的神秘涂鸦，在90年代中期席卷北京，他也从此名声享誉国际。Art Forum和Art in America最近对张大力参加光洲双年展进行了报道。他的雕塑作品“种族”不久前被英国知名收藏家查尔斯·萨奇收藏，并将在今年秋季萨奇新的博物馆开幕式上展出。

文：马修

译：杨彦

二〇〇七年五月

ddmwarehouse

“Man and Beast” Zhang Dali Solo Exhibition

“人与动物”张大力个展

Curators: Mathieu Borysevicz, Yang Yan

策展人：马修、杨彦

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“Oppressive government is more cruel than a tiger” — Confucius

From about 2000 to 1500 B.C., a people known as the Xia dominated the northern regions of China. The Xia worshiped the snake, a creature that appears in some of the oldest Chinese myths. Eventually, the snake changed into the dragon, which became one of the most enduring symbols of Chinese culture and mythology. It was said that Confucius himself was born under the guard of two dragons. Like the Chinese zodiac calendar, which measures time in a cycle marked by 12 distinct animals, the dragon is an amalgamation of many entities. This mythical beast dons the head of camel, the eyes of a demon, the ears of a cow, the horns of a stag, the neck of a snake, claws of an eagle and so on. While in Christian mythology the dragon was equated with Satan or war, in China the dragon was equated with generosity, good fortune and also the supreme divinity of the emperor. The connection between the dragon and the emperor was so great that some emperors claimed to have descended from dragons and were said to possess tails. Anyone other than the emperor who used the sign of the Imperial Dragon, with its signature five claws, was immediately put to death. This fantastical national symbol, on the one hand representing benevolence, on the other hand represents the deep-rooted social/political hierarchy of Chinese civilization.

While Confucius felt that tyranny is more ferocious than a tiger he was also under the belief that the legitimacy of a ruler comes from his birth. The Emperor is the 'son of heaven' no matter what happens. It is only when the Emperor starts to act unknowingly that a new 'son of heaven' will rise and take over. Commoners are not allowed to rebel because they possess no divinity and their actions would break the Confucian Order of Rites. This is antithetical to the West's idea of a social contract, a theory formulated by Thomas Hobbes. Hobbes believed that the King and his subjects enter into a contract through which the people give the mandate of governance to the monarch. Once the King has breached the contract it is justifiable for the people to rebel. But for the common man, ignorant of alternative ideologies and subject to a strict system, the option for rebellion doesn't exist. Confucian ethics, tradition, and history have molded man into a subject that is eternally obedient to the powers above him.

Power structures have changed over the years but the hierarchy remains. Where once the emperor ruled supreme, now other ideologies are in the mix. Money, government, religion, bureaucracy, corporations and markets have spawned irreversible structures that are far more powerful than individuals. Man has inevitably become the beast of burden to the systems he has created around himself.

Text: Mathieu Borysevicz

Translation: Yang Yan

August 2007

“苛政猛于虎” —— 孔子

从公元前约2000到1500年，夏人占据着中原北方的大部分地区。他们崇拜蛇，在中国古老神话中常常可看到蛇的形象。后来蛇被龙所代替，而龙在中国文化和神话中是保留了最久的象征。相传，孔子自己就是在两条龙的保护下出生的。中国的12生肖是用12种不同的动物来计算时间的，其中龙是多种存在的结合体。这只神秘的野兽有着骆驼的头，魔鬼的眼睛，牛的耳朵，以及牧鹿的爪子。在基督教神话中，龙代表的是魔鬼撒旦及战争，而在中国象征着慷慨、好运和历代皇帝的至高神圣。龙与皇帝之间有相当的联系，皇帝自称是龙的后代，甚至有的皇上传说还长了尾巴。皇帝以外的任何人使用龙的符号，如龙的五钳爪，就会被立即处死。这个幻想的民族象征，一方面代表了仁慈，而另一面又代表了根深蒂固的中国文明的社会政治上层建筑。

孔子虽认为苛政比野兽还要凶猛，但同时也相信统治者的地位是与生俱来的。无论如何，皇帝都是“天子”。只有在皇帝开始昏庸无度时，新的“天子”就会降临并取而代之。平民不允许反抗，因为他们不具有神性，而他们的行为会破坏儒家礼教。而这与霍布斯创立的西方社会契约理论是对立的。霍布斯认为国王和他的臣民应达成契约，而统治权由人民委托给最高统治者控制。一旦国王违反了契约，人民的反抗就是合理的。但是对于一般平民，无知的非主流思想和严厉的专制系统的控制，反抗也是不可能实现的。儒家思想、传统及历史已经将人民塑造成高高在上的权利的服从者。

权利结构在历史的长河中不断变化，但上层建筑始终存在。一度的皇权统治，现在是另一种混杂的意识形态。金钱、政府、宗教、官僚、公司 and 市场形成无法推翻的结构，远远超过个人的力量。人民还是不可避免地成为在自身周围创造的系统“驮畜”。

文：马修

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