

「生不可得見」的「有形之物」—— 中藥材龍骨的認知變遷與使用歷史

陳元朋*

「龍骨」是傳統中國醫學裡的常用藥物。從文獻上看來，「龍骨」見載於傳統中國醫療文本的時間，至遲不晚於公元一至三世紀間，而傳統醫家對於這味藥物的使用，基本也是長期而持續的。

本文從「醫療」與「物質文化」的角度，對「龍骨」這味藥物進行跨領域的研討。本文以為，古代中國先民所抱持的「龍／龍骨」關聯認知，正適足導引出一個潛藏於「醫療」與「物質文化」兩範疇裡的研究議題：此即，一種長時間被運用於醫療目的的素材，人們竟然很可能完全錯識其物質屬性。而要加以說明的是，本文並不認為認知上的謬誤，就必然會導致相關知識，乃至於價值體系的全面崩解。以「龍骨」這個個案而言，物性的錯解，不僅沒有影響其醫療功能的建構，甚且還形塑出一種獨特的物之價值文化。

就性質上來說，對於以「龍骨」之「本質」、「運用」、「產銷」、「交換」，乃至於相關贖品所體現的「價值意涵」而進行探索的本文來說，最終所要達成的目標，乃是重構一個具有貫時屬性、質屬醫療層面的物質文化史。

關鍵詞：龍骨 醫療 物質文化 社會生命史

* 國立東華大學歷史學系暨研究所

本文為中央研究院歷史語言研究所主題計畫「醫學的物質文化——歷史的考察」所轄子計畫「龍骨的社會生命史」之研究論文。

Changes in the Perception and Usage of “Os Draconis”

Yuan-peng Chen

Department and Institute of History, National Dong Hwa University

“Os Draconis” has been frequently applied in traditional Chinese medication, and such application, according to traditional Chinese medical texts, began to be used in practice no later than the 1st to the 3rd century AD. Traditionally, Chinese doctors have long and consistently prescribed this medicine to their patients.

This essay is an interdisciplinary study on Os Draconis from the aspects of “medication” and “material culture.” The concept of the inter-relationship between dragons and Os Draconis held by ancient Chinese may actually inspire us to look into a topic that involves both medication and material culture: people might have completely misunderstood the nature of ingredients which had been used for medical purposes for a long time. Nevertheless, such misunderstanding did not lead to a full collapse of related knowledge or the entire value system. In the case of “Os Draconis,” misunderstanding of its nature did not affect its medical function. To the contrary, it formed a unique culture of value.

The purpose of this essay is to conduct a detailed research regarding the “nature,” “application,” “production/marketing” and “trade” of Os Draconis, as well as the values underlying related counterfeit products. The final goal is to reconstruct a history of the material culture of medication beyond temporal boundaries.

Keywords: Os Draconis, medication, material culture, social life history