

A person wearing a dark jacket and a cap is riding a dark horse through a vast, open landscape. The terrain is a mix of green and brown grass with scattered rocks. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a sky filled with white and grey clouds. The overall scene is one of a wide, open natural environment.

MULTISPECIES HOUSEHOLDS IN THE SAIAN MOUNTAINS

Ecology at the Russia–Mongolia Border

EDITED BY ALEX OEHLER AND
ANNA VARFOLOMEEVA

Multispecies Households in the Saian Mountains Ecology at the Russia-Mongolia Border

EDITED BY ALEX OEHLER AND ANNA VARFOLOMEEVA - CONTRIBUTIONS BY AIVARAS JEFANOVAS; ALEX OEHLER; ANNA VARFOLOMEEVA; BENEDIKTE MØLLER KRISTENSEN; IGOR RASSADIN; KONSTANTIN KLOKOV; NICOLAS RASIULIS; SELCEN KÜÇÜKÜSTEL; TAYANA MONGUSH-ARAKCHAA AND VICTORIA PEEMOT

Multispecies Households in the Saian Mountains brings together new ethnographic insights from the mountains of Southern Siberia and Mongolia. It examines Indigenous ideas of what it means to make a home alongside animals and spirits in changing alpine and subalpine environments. Set in the Eastern Saian Mountain Region of South Central Siberia and northern Mongolia, the book covers an area famous for its claim as the birthplace of Eurasian reindeer domestication. Going beyond reindeer, the authors explore the less known role of yak, horses, wolves, spirits, fish, and many other sentient beings, all of which co-constitute local notions of 'home places.' In their contributions, the authors reach beyond conventional categories of wild and tame in a region that is increasingly hostile toward its own inhabitants as the result of global efforts to create protected nature reserves. Through its ethnographic nuance, the reader comes to appreciate many connections existing between human and other households — networks of relationships that transcends idioms of dominance or mutualism.

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Reviews

Multispecies Households in the Saian Mountains highlights the complex attunements between humans, animals, and invisible entities in the taiga, from a historical and anthropological perspective. Through rich and original ethnographical vignettes, this volume offers subtle insight into the taiga landscape, perceived as a home shared by human and non-human sentient beings, and adds to our understanding of the shaping of multispecies coexistence in a time of change and uncertainty in Inner Asia.

Charlotte Marchina, Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales

With true-to-life detail, the contributors to this volume describe the big and small techniques and procedures that herders and hunters of southern Siberia use to make a good home for themselves and their animals. This collection features important and timely ethnographies that show how humans, reindeer, horses, dogs, wolves, and a whole range of spiritual beings cooperate and compete—coexist, really—in the sentient ecology of the Siberian forests.

Gregory Delaplace, Paris Nanterre University

Acknowledgments

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