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Articles

Lucie Jirásková

- Stone Offering Tables of the Early Dynasty Period
and the Old Kingdom Reconsidered 125–148

The article presents a particular group of objects – stone offering tables – uncovered in the mastaba AS 54 at Abusir South (Egypt) during the excavations of the Czech Institute of Egyptology, and on the basis of their classification reconsiders the so far published material of the same kind. Among the group of stone tables which represent common types that are to be found in publications of previous excavations, a peculiar piece was reconstructed from the fragments that were brought to light in the Spring season, 2010. The unusual features clearly visible on the lower part can be regarded as a kind of support for a stand that has not been considered for stone tables so far. Such a hypothesis was supported by another piece of a stone table that was documented a year later and bore the same feature. Moreover, another piece of an offering table found at the royal necropolis of Abusir seems to bear traces of a similar depression. Based on the new material, the author presents the available types of stone offering tables, interprets their construction possibilities and further historical development implications. The results of the analysis point to a well organised system of stone table production and general knowledge of the craftsmen who created them.

Keywords: Abusir – mastaba AS 54 – Early Dynastic Period – Old Kingdom
– stone tables – typology

Aldo D'Agostini

- De l'usage diplomatique du discours sur le panislamisme :
La correspondance de l'ambassadeur français à Istanbul
Charles-Joseph Tissot, lors de la crise tunisienne de 1881 149–172

The idea of the existence of an Islamic danger has been used occasionally as an instrument of pressure and dissuasion against some governments of countries of the Islamic world. In 1881, French government developed this kind of strategy during a diplomatic conflict with the Ottoman government caused by French invasion of Tunisia. In this circumstance, the idea of the Islamic danger developed into a discourse on Pan-Islamism: the French ambassador, Charles-Joseph Tissot, accused the Ottoman government of exerting a secret Pan-Islamic policy which consisted in fomenting a general uprising of Islamic peoples in North Africa. This indeed was a tactic to elude the Ottoman protestations about French occupation of Tunis. In this article, we analyse this diplomatic strategy throughout the political correspondence between Paris and Istanbul in 1880–81.

Keywords: France – Nineteenth Century – Colonial Politics – Diplomacy
– Pan-Islamism – Campaign of Tunisia (1881)

Orçun Ünal

The Needle Case of Jánoshida Revisited 173–182

The needle case of Jánoshida is a significant artefact of the Late Avar period. It is inscribed with the Old Turkic runiform script on three sides. The present paper offers new readings for the three inscriptions on the needle case, explores its origin, and defines the traits of the underlying language based on these readings.

Keywords: needle case – Jánoshida – Old Turkic runiform script – Avar language

Harun Yeni

The Utilization of Mobile Groups in the Ottoman Balkans:
A Revision of General Perception 183–205

This article deals with the utilization of mobile groups called ‘*yörüks*’ as an auxiliary force in 16th century Ottoman Balkans. Their organization and structure together with the changes in time are analysed through the regulations specifically issued for them. Following it, the perception that all of these groups in the Ottoman Balkans were of military nature is assessed. The validity of it is checked by means of registers for militarily associated *yörüks* and cadastral surveys of the regions where a significant number of them resided. Besides, the reliability of the data in *yörüük* registers is questioned. Through the examination of regulations on *yörüks*, their registers together with cadastral surveys, it is exhibited that these groups were not all of military nature; on the contrary, the rates of militarily associated groups were at a low level.

Keywords: *yörüks* – Ottoman Empire – the Balkans – Western Thrace – 16th century

Arnaud Fournet

About the Vocalic System of Armenian Words
of Substratic Origin 207–222

The paper provides an up-to-date list and discussion of Armenian words with probable substratic or ancient adstratic origin. It is shown that at least three words can be suspected of being of Hurrian origin because of their prosodic features, instead of the more usual Urartian origin. Short and long *a* and *i* are normally reflected in Armenian by *a* and *i*. But it can be observed that the Armenian *u* normally reflects short *ũ* while Armenian *o* normally reflects long *ū*, thus pointing at some kind of allophonic variants in Hurro-Urartian phonology between short and long *u*.

Keywords: Armenian – Hurrian – Urartean – Substrate – Phonology

Strahil V. Panayotov – Jaume Llop-Raduà

A Middle Assyrian Juridical Text on a Tablet with Handle 223–233

The present article offers an edition of the cuneiform tablet BM 103395 from the British Museum in London, which has been published only in a copy so far. This document is a so called amulet shaped or formed tablet, which contains a Middle Assyrian administrative text. In this article, it is sustained that the very damaged record is probably an inheritance division. The physical features of the artefact allow that it was hung, therefore displayed and made visible. The format and function of the tablet are also discussed and another designation, concerning such artefact, “tablet with handle” is proposed. Furthermore, evidence from the *Vorderasiatisches Museum* in Berlin, for this kind of tablets, will be discussed.

Keywords: Middle Assyrian – tablets with handle – amulet shaped or formed tablets
– division of inheritance – Aššur-uballit I

Bronislav Ostránský

The Lesser Signs of the Hour. A Reconstruction
of the Islamic Apocalyptic Overture 235–284

The article examines traditional medieval Islamic visions of the End and their modern interpretations. The focus, however, is an analysis of the contemporary Islamic eschatological imagination, as was impressively depicted in the reconstruction of the Lesser Signs of the Hour. In Arabic, the apocalyptic phenomena are generally known as *‘alāmāt al-sā‘a*, which means the Signs of the Hour (i.e., the end of the world) and Muslim theologians have divided these apocalyptic portents into two groups: the Lesser (*sughrā*) and the Greater (*kubrā*). The Lesser Signs of the Hour could be considered as “an apocalyptic overture,” since these moral, religious, social, cultural, political, and even natural, events are designed to warn humanity that the End is near and to bring people into state of repentance. Modern Muslim apocalyptic emerged from blending of classical medieval heritage, embodied by the work of Nu‘aym ibn Hammād al-Marwazī, a prolific master of this branch of literature, and an extensive set of “western borrowings.” If we might resort to this shortcut, the medieval Islamic sources provided a series of predictions meanwhile the modern times brought the way of presentation which could make that medieval material more comprehensible. To make this theme attractive, the modern Muslim apocalyptists strenuously tried to identify particular Signs, described by the Tradition (*Sunna*), with specific historical events. Attention has been paid especially to this way of “the reconstruction of the apocalyptic overture.” Its analysis reliably enables us to better understand an important example of how Islam currently can face challenges of modern times.

Keywords: millennialism – apocalypse – apocalyptic exegesis – the portents of the End
– Islamic Doomsday – Muslim eschatology

Esther Peskes

Geiseln in der jemenitischen Geschichte 285–306

More than any other country in the Near and Middle East, Yemen has become known for the taking of foreigners – tourists or others – as hostages during the last two decades. While such incidents evoke much international sensation, the fact that hostages were taken in Yemeni society itself for centuries has been generally ignored by the public, except for some experts on Yemen and the Yemenis themselves.

The article explores the practice of local hostage taking, starting from the twentieth century, then going back to the historical dimension. Yemeni historiography from the Middle Ages and later as well as modern ethnographical and historical studies testify to the existence of a many-layered phenomenon rooted deeply in the political strategies of dynasties or powers aiming at central rule and in the tribal society. The article collects situations of hostage-taking documented in the sources and examines them as to the parties engaged, the policies pursued and the fate of the individuals taken as hostages. Finally the article proposes an answer to the question why Yemen stands so unique amongst other regions in the Middle East in a political practice which is testified for from pre-Islamic times until the twentieth century.

Keywords: Yemen – hostage taking – tribal society

Giles Andrienne

Tendre l'arc – Comparaisons entre le *Rāmāyaṇa* et l'*Odyssée* .. 307–319

Research in comparatism between Greek and Indian archaic texts revealed major connections between Mahābhārata 1, 175–181 and Odyssey 21, and specifically structural similarities between Odysseus' return and Arjuna's marriage to Draupadī. Moreover, Rāmāyaṇa 1, 66 also shows resemblance with the Greek text: the bending of the bow accomplished by Odysseus and Rāma revealed striking structural, textual and phraseologic parallels, which comforts the idea of common episodes and patterns in the Indo-Greek area.

Keywords: comparatism – structuralism – Rāmāyaṇa – Odyssey – Homer – bow
– archery – Rāma – Ulysses – Heracles – kingship – *svayaṃvara*

Udo Moenig

The Influence of Korean Nationalism on the Formational
Process of *T'aekwōndo* in South Korea 321–344

T'aekwōndo is presented in popular historical descriptions as the offspring of ancient Korean indigenous martial arts. However, this article focuses less on the connection or lack thereof between ancient Korean martial arts and *t'aekwōndo*, but instead on the well-documented relationship between the founders of *t'aekwōndo* and Japanese *karate*.

During the formation process of the different schools under the name ‘*t’aekwōndo*,’ instructors of that time and following generations may have misrepresented *t’aekwōndo*’s historical origins, with Korean nationalism as the driving, motivational force. The creation of *t’aekwōndo*’s historical narrative as rooted in ancient Korea was a gradual process that was influenced and inspired by the realities and necessities of the South Korean nation at that time. The development has to be seen in the light of South Korea’s quest for survival after liberation from Japanese colonial rule and the destruction occasioned by the Korean War. This tendency to invent the past in a more favourable light is by no means peculiar to the *t’aekwōndo* environment. However, in line with Korea’s economic and political development as an advanced nation, the time has come for a more balanced and accurate portrayal of *t’aekwōndo*’s historical roots and modern development. Moreover, in a broader context, *t’aekwōndo*’s historical ‘resume’ may also be seen as a reflection of the wide-ranging tendencies and political disputes currently taking place in East Asia.

Keywords: *t’aekwōndo* – karate – nationalism – martial arts

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