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Articles

Arsen K. Shahinyan

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The Colonization of the Early Medieval Vilayet of Armīniya by Arab Muslims

The aim of this article is to establish the time frames and main directions of the colonization process in relation to the Greater-Armenian, Caucasian Albanian and Iberian lands captured by the Semitic-speaking Arab-Muslim tribes in the early Middle Ages. A parallel task is to identify the occupied areas in these countries of the Armenian Plateau and the Southern Caucasus and provide a list of the tribes that ruled over each of these areas. These lands were united by various tribal groups from the Arabian Peninsula, Syria and Upper Mesopotamia during the 8th and 9th centuries, and this was achieved within the framework of the Arab vilayet of Armīniya. Under the early ‘Abbasids (al-‘Abbāsīyūn, 750–1258) the colonizers gradually transformed these areas of Armīniya into their own domains, and then into their hereditary emirates. In order to fulfil the above aims, the author makes use of contemporary accounts and chronicles, as well as an examination of the coins in use in the area under scrutiny and its surroundings. At the end of the article, moreover, the author provides, in alphabetical order, a complete list of the Arab-Muslim tribes that settled in the different regions of Armīniya and, during the course of the 9th century, created their hereditary emirates. This identification is made by the author, who uses square brackets as a means of providing the reader with additions to the quoted translations emanating from the texts penned by classical authors.

KEYWORDS

Arab Caliphate | Arab vilayet of Armīniya | Arab-Muslim tribes | Arab-Muslim Emirates of Armīniya | Greater Armenia | Caucasian Iberia | Caucasian Albania | Arrān | Ğurzān

Sovan Chakraborty

19–45

The Abject Female: Exploring Contested Womanhood in Select Bengali Folk Ritual Stories and Rhymes (the *Bratas*)

Bengali *bratakathās* are folk ritual tales and rhymes that women listen to and/or narrate at the time of the accomplishment of their ritual vows known as *bratas* (Sanskrit *vratas*), made for the fulfillment of worldly wishes and wants. The *bratas* (ritual vows) and their *kathās* (tales), together with *chārās* (rhymes), create a space where women apparently dominate by becoming the performers, the narrators, the transmitters, the authorities of knowledge, the agencies of socio-familial wellbeing and the protectors of moral and ideological institutions. As these tales and rhymes portray, the “female force” crucially

plays the central role in determining and retaining the power structures of society which otherwise would not be sustained for long. While very often an alternative female presence is found in these *bratakathās*, a complex patriarchal mechanism of relentless suppression, subjugation and marginalization of the same cuts through the narrative structures. At times, it is detected and explicitly voiced against – with grief, pain, anger and bantering criticism. At other times, it is only hinted at in the spirit of pleasing submission, interpellated by the ideological (and not entirely hegemonic) structures. Very often it becomes mystically inscrutable as they appear to be honest and apparently naturalizing forces in an attempt to dilute all inner complicacies and possibilities in the con/textuality of these narratives. The femaleness in these ritual stories and rhymes continuously keeps on swinging between the subject and the object positions, blurring all such dyadic constructions (male/female, centre/margin, and so on) situating itself, as Julia Kristeva terms it, in an existentially interstitial condition/space of “abjection.”

KEYWORDS

bratakathās | ritual tales | folklore | Bengali | women | abjection | Julia Kristeva

Alessandra Consolaro 47–65

For Her Eyes Only: Embodiment in Prabhā Khetān's Autobiography

This article focuses on the way embodiment is articulated in Prabhā Khetān's autobiography *Anyā se anyā*, first published in 2007. It is introduced as an existentialist autobiography – focusing on the existential self – emphasizing the complexity of embodiment and its implications for identity and self-representation. Best known as the writer who introduced French feminist existentialism to Hindi-speaking readers through her translation of Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, Prabhā Khetān has written an autobiography that is at the same time a unique woman's intellectual and personal journey, the success story of a professional woman, as well as a profoundly moving reflection on human relationships. Prabhā Khetān never taught in the world of academia, but her influence as a poet, novelist, and feminist has been extensive. *Anyā se anyā* has been acclaimed as a piece of “extreme sincerity,” insofar as it pulls the veil off the “other woman,” a very rare voice in Hindi autobiographical literature.

KEYWORDS

Prabha Khaitan | Prabhā Khetān | autobiography | Hindi literature | Existentialism | embodiment | gender | Simone de Beauvoir

Jae-hoon Shim 67–98

The Eastward Relocation of the Zhou Royal House in the *Xinian* Manuscript: Chronological and Geographical Aspects

The *Xinian* in the second volume of the Tsinghua Bamboo Slips provides a different understanding of the so-called eastward relocation (*dongqian*) of the Zhou royal house than suggested in transmitted texts such as the *Shiji* and *Zhushu jinian*. Introducing the controversial issues concerning the relocation in the *Xinian*, this study focuses mostly on the problematic place name Shao E, where King Ping is said to have stayed for a while until Lord Wen of Jin brought him back to the capital region and enthroned him. In particular, while criticizing the later commentators' identification of E with Xiangning, Shanxi, this study argues that Shao E in the *Xinian* should be more properly located in the Nanyang region. This relocation suggests that the year 770 BCE, inscribed for so long as the turning point between the Western Zhou and the Eastern Zhou periods, is problematic. It further proposes that the narrative on the eastward relocation in the *Xinian* does not necessarily contradict the transmitted texts, but rather tends to resolve some inconsistencies inherent in those texts.

KEYWORDS

Tsinghua Bamboo Slips | *Xinian* | *Zuo zhuan* | Shao E | Zhou royal house – eastward relocation

Federico Brusadelli 99–117

Transforming Benevolence: Classicism, Buddhism and Politics in Kang Youwei's Lecture on “Ren” 講仁字

Kang Youwei 康有為 (1858–1927) is certainly not a minor figure in Chinese modern history. Best known for his unsuccessful participation in the Hundred Days Reforms of 1898, he was the last interpreter of the New Text School of Classicism – a progressive interpretation of the Confucian Canon, which praised political participation and institutional transformations. Kang's adherence to this philosophical view and his subsequent personal elaboration of Classicism, is already visible in the lectures he gave to his students in Guangdong from 1891 to 1896, published in 1897 as the *Wanmu caotang koushuo* 萬木草堂口說 (Instructions from the Hall of the Thousand Tree Cottage) and the *Nan-haishi chengji* 南海師承記 (Records of Master Nanhai's Lessons). This article sets out to analyse one of Kang's lessons from the second collection: *Lecture on “Ren”* 講仁字, in which the author provides the students with his own view of the Confucian value of “benevolence.” In his interpretation, *ren* 仁 becomes a form of universal empathy rather than the “old” value of traditional orthodoxy. This short text will be used as the departure point for a reflection on the formative process of the author's thought, following its philosophical hints in order to address two issues in particular: first, the origins of Kang's “reformism” and “progressivism” (underlying his subsequent political activism and finally flowing into the utopianism of the *Book of Great Concord*), which may appear to be more rooted in a long-standing debate among Chinese Classicists than in the abrupt

awakening caused by foreign influences; second, the presence of a pervading Buddhist undertone throughout Kang's production, and its apparent contrast with his "Confucianist" intellectual endeavour.

KEYWORDS

Kang Youwei | Confucianism | Late Imperial Buddhism | Chinese Utopianism

Hyun-ho Joo

119–134

The Translingual Practice of *Meishu* in Early Twentieth-Century China: Rethinking the *Xieyi* Tradition in Literati Painting

This paper begins by examining the discourse on the term and concept of *meishu* that emerged in early twentieth-century China and was centered on how to construct *meishu* as a form of cultural establishment and a discipline distinct from other art genres. It then considers the social and cultural contexts behind the evolution of the meaning of *meishu*, focusing on Chinese artists' and art critics' complicated attitudes toward both Chinese artistic tradition and the influence of Western art, as reflected in their varied views on literati painting and its *xieyi* tradition. This paper demonstrates that the Chinese art world's process of redefining *meishu* as fine arts was a clear indicator of the artistic endeavor to rediscover the roles of painting in Chinese society. Meanwhile, the paper also pays renewed attention to literati painting and its *xieyi* tradition by rethinking the relationship between the long-standing literati painting tradition and the increasing Western artistic trends in China. The Chinese art world of the early twentieth-century constantly attempted to encompass both Chinese and Western painting traditions, and relentlessly tried to merge the strengths of the Chinese tradition with Western influences in order to pave the way for a new Chinese painting tradition.

KEYWORDS

Chinese art | fine arts | *Meishu* | Literati painting | *Xieyi*

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