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Jana Mynářová

- A Comment on the Opening Passages of the Amarna Letters –
Its Structure and Its Address 396–405

The present article concentrates on an analysis of the structure of the opening passages and means of address in the Amarna Letters, one of the largest sources of epistolary documents, written during the 2nd half of the 2nd millennium B.C. From the first look at the Amarna corpus, those familiar with the topic will notice a formal structure very similar to the one found in other letters written in Peripheral Akkadian. However, the discussion on the formal structure usually limits itself to several short statements and general descriptive comments.

Bronislav Ostránský

- The Art of Medieval Arab Oneirology 406–427

This essay deals with fundamental features of Arab oneirology that formed medieval Muslim attitudes towards dreams and their interpretation. Since the rise of Islam, Muslims kept voluminous records of the famous dreams of important historical figures, the dreams' hidden meanings, and methods of explanation. Medieval Islamic thought considered oneirology an important part of human knowledge and education. Oneirological literature received widespread attention among Muslim scholars. This essay focuses on the basic characterization of the medieval perception of dreams and aims to put forth the fundamental principles of dream interpretation essential for the correct understanding of this part of spiritual Muslim heritage.

Ludmila Volná

- Indian Writing in English: Its Identity, Character,
and Development 428–448

Ludmila Volná attempts to explain the problems associated with identifying the literature written by Indian authors in the English language. Indian writing in English is most often classified as belonging to “postcolonial literature,” a term generally used for a field of study that examines how literature deals with the departure of a society from its colonial past and the exploration of the common features of postcolonial societies, or to “new literature in English,” a term that allows the possibility of concentrating on the significant features of a singular culture. In the second part of her paper, Volná characterizes Indian anglophone writing, which includes drama, poetry, and fiction. Volná discusses fiction themes and style, and analyzes new narrative techniques and styles in the context of traditional, “realistic” writing.

Dušan Andrš

On the Brink of Demise: Anti-idyllic Facets of Two
Short Stories by Shen Congwen 450–462

The article presents an analysis of two short stories by Shen Congwen (1902-1988), the foremost Chinese writer of the Republican period (1912-1949). The peculiar anti-idyllic quality of “Aboard and on Shore,” a local-mood prose piece with marked autobiographical coloring, and “Sansan,” an early example of the writer’s famous pastoral stories, is scrutinized using M. Bakhtin’s concept of “chronotop.” Examination of the stories’ spatio-temporal layout reveals the presence of a shared semantic structure: the rise and subsequent demise of an idyllic space. The unstable chronotop, a quality inherent not only to the two pieces under scrutiny but also to a series of Shen Congwen’s work from the late 1920s and early 1930s, is discussed as being possibly a product of the writer’s effort to express nostalgia.

Zornica Kirkova

Landscapes of Paradise – the Otherworldly Current
of the Six Dynasties Landscape Poetry 464–494

In this discussion of the otherworldly current of landscape vision in Six Dynasties Chinese poetry, I have attempted to outline the features and order of the world beyond and at the same time to demonstrate how it has enriched the early medieval perception of earthly nature. The merging of the otherworldly realms of the immortals, the mountain worlds of hermits, and the temporal landscapes of nature poetry make one question the legitimacy of the established generic categorizations: should paradise descriptions be regarded as aspects of the youxian subgenre or as a variety of landscape poetry? Apparently they are both, and the worlds of immortals and of the mountains and rivers are much closer than the accepted classification would suggest. The interplay between real and transcendental landscape poses the question of whether many aspects of the poetry on mountains and rivers are more than poetic embellishments, or whether they are in fact features of the inverted world of paradise.

Obituary

Jaroslav Oliverius, Petr Zemánek

In memoriam Stanislav Segert 496–499

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