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Abstracts

The *qāḍī*'s *dīwān* (*sijill*) before the Ottomans

WAEL B. HALLAG

The abundance of Ottoman court records and the corresponding absence of these before this period has led some to argue that the Ottomans were the first to introduce the practice of court-record keeping in a formal and systematic fashion. The implication of this argument is that prior to the Ottomans the practice was not so enshrined. Against this claim, this paper argues that the practice had become formal and systematic centuries before the Ottomans, and suggests reasons as to why these records appear so far to have failed to survive.

An introduction to the history of modern Persian Sufism, Part I: The Ni'matullāhī order: persecution, revival and schism

LEONARD LEWISOHN

This two-part essay attempts to evaluate the modern period of Sufism in Iran (roughly 1770–1998), concentrating on the historical development and socio-political context of the Iranian *ṭarīqas*, while providing an overview of the place of organized *taṣawwuf* and the major orders during the last 200 years. The first part of the essay treats the revival of the Ni'matullāhī order throughout the turbulent political upheavals of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Iran and also examines the schisms which took place in this order in the late nineteenth century. Part II will discuss the role and place of the Dhahabiyya, the second most important Sufi order in Persia, in the annals of Iranian *taṣawwuf*, analysing Dhahabī-Ni'matullāhī relations as well as the numbers and geographical distribution of Persian Sufis of both orders over the last two centuries. The conclusion outlines the key features found in the modern period of Persian Sufism.

City names of the western steppe at the time of the Mongol invasion

DONALD OSTROWSKI

In describing the conquest of the western steppe, the *Secret History of the Mongols* mentions prominently the names of five cities: Asud, Sesüd, Bolar, Mankerman-Kiwa, and Meket/d. Bolar can easily be identified with Great Bulgar on the Volga river and Mankerman-Kiwa with Kiev, Mankerman being the Turkish name for Kiev. This paper argues that Sesüd most likely refers to Saksin, and Asud is a town on a river north of the Crimean Peninsula; Meket/d is not a city name, but an attribute meaning 'capital' or 'main', and thus refers to Kiev, capital of the Rus'. It looks at John of Plano Carpini's description of Ornas as well as other contemporary references to this town (and the town named Tana), which place it approximately where the town referred to as Asud in the *Secret History* may have been, that is, on the river Don near where it flows into the Sea of Azov.

The Thangmi verbal agreement system and the Kiranti connection

MARK TURIN

The Thangmi verb sheds new light on subgroupings of Tibeto-Burman languages in the Himalayan region. Morphological analysis supports the promising, yet still controversial, *Mahākīrāntī* hypothesis. Rigorous synchronic analysis yields the precisely defined morphological units and establishes the underlying regularities which enable substantive diachronic comparison. The complete verbal paradigm of Thangmi is compared to canonical Kiranti languages and is shown to be closely genetically related to Barām and Newar.

Inventing origins: Muromachi interpretations of *okina sarugaku*

NOEL J. PINNINGTON

Within Nō performance traditions, that of the semi-ritual piece *Okina* occupies a distinct and anomalous place ('Nō which is not Nō'). Extraordinary claims are made for *Okina* as the source of Nō traditions despite their generic difference. Such claims have their roots in an exegetical tradition that evolved during the Muromachi period (1333–1573). The present essay surveys prominent readings of *Okina* in their social and ideological context and aims thereby to account for differences in exegetical stance. Explanations of the meaning of *Okina* are found in the works of both religious specialists and Nō performers such as Zeami and Zenchiku. Within Nō theoretical writings, this kind of material has been ignored; apparently chaotic popular superstition, it has not seemed amenable to scholarly study. This essay, in considering the relation between interpretations and the changing circumstances of interpreters, illustrates an approach by which such material can be understood.

R̥gvedic *satyá*

J. C. WRIGHT

Sanskrit *satyá* 'true' was traditionally derived from *sánt* ('existent, real' and, obsolescently, 'true') and hence has been deemed to be cognate with English *sooth*, Greek *ἔων*, *ἔωv*. Tradition was, however, at a loss to explain its anomalous formation, and the alleged support is illusory. A *sqt-yo 'true' is not attested in Germanic; and in Vedic it is the late hymn RV 10.117 that yields the first attestation of *satyám brū-* as mere truism, as against its apparently basic Indo-Iranian sense of action befitting one's words (*satyám kr-*, *haiθīm dā-*, *hašiyam kar-*). A relationship does in fact exist between *satyá* and the epithet *sant'ya* in the R̥gveda: this suggests that both can be derived from *sq̥r̥tyó 'concordant', which would explain why the semantic development of *satyá* is so very different from that of *sánt* and *sooth*.

On the use of the Chinese *Hsuan-ming* calendar to predict the times of eclipses in Japan

JOHN M. STEELE

From the middle of the ninth until the end of the seventeenth century the Chinese *Hsuan-ming* calendar was adopted in Japan. Analysis of over 100 eclipse predictions made with this calendar over this period reveals that the predicted times are systematically early by about one hour. This was presumably caused by the Japanese being unable to make proper allowance for the difference in location of China and Japan. By correcting for this systematic error it is found that the accuracy of the calendar in predicting the time of an eclipse is about one hour. As there are very few records of eclipse predictions made with this calendar preserved from China, the Japanese records provide a convenient source of important information about the development of the calendar at this period of Chinese history.