

## *Abstract*

### **The Cyrus cylinder: The first charter of human rights in the world?**

**KEYWORDS:** *Assyriology, Ancient Near Eastern religions, Achaemenid history, Achaemenid inscriptions, Cyrus the Great, Old Testament, Pahlavi Dynasty, Islamic Revolution*

*The purpose of the paper is twofold. Firstly, it presents the first commented translation into Estonian of a famous cuneiform text from ancient Babylon known as The Cyrus Cylinder. The document was named after Cyrus II (reigned 559–530 BCE), the founder of the Achaemenid Empire, who is positively described in the writings of several classical Greek authors and in the Old Testament. In the latter source, King Cyrus is described as an instrument, shepherd and messiah of Yahweh who is associated with Cyrus's edict which allowed the Judeans to leave their captivity in Babylon, return to Judea and restore the temple in Jerusalem.*

*Secondly, the paper deals with the reception of the cylinder in modern Iran during the reigns of the last Shah of Iran, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi (ruled 1941–1979) and the Islamic Republic (since 1979). The idea of the cylinder as the first charter of human rights was probably conceived in 1960s Iran, although it is unclear who was the first formulator. It is well known that the last Shah himself was an ardent proponent of the idea, and that he often used it in his royal ideology which presented him as the legitimate successor to Cyrus. The Shah's worship of Cyrus and his cylinder reached its peak in 1971 when he organized pompous celebrations which celebrated the 2500 years of the Iranian monarchy. The Cyrus Cylinder, which was borrowed for the event from the British Museum, became the official symbol of the celebrations and the Shah praised Cyrus as a good-willing humanist. Simultaneously with the festivities in Iran, a replica of the cylinder was given as a gift to the UN general secretary by the Shah's sister princess Ashraf Pahlavi.*

*In the early years of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Cyrus Cylinder together with other artefacts and remains of pre-Islamic Iran was out of favour among the new rulers but was later rehabilitated. The Cyrus Cylinder became especially important during the rule of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (2005–2013) under whose leadership the cylinder was once again borrowed from the British Museum to be exhibited in Tehran. In the opening event, Ahmadinejad described Cyrus as a protector of monotheism who proclaimed freedom and liberty in his cylinder.*

*Finally, it is argued that, based on the ancient document itself, there is no basis for calling it the first charter of human rights as nothing novel is said about humans and their rights in the text and, deciding by its form and content, it is a traditional Mesopotamian building text (foundation deposit). It is equally not right to say that Cyrus abolished slavery, as the existence of slaves is documented for the Achaemenid period. Lastly, it is anachronistic to call Cyrus an enlightened humanist as this kind of characterisation would only make sense a few thousand years later.*

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## **Abstract**

### **Non-Muslims in Friday sermons of Saudi Arabian imams**

**KEYWORDS:** *Friday sermon, ḥuṭba, imam, Saudi Arabia, non-Muslims, Islam and Christianity, hate sermon*

*The Friday sermons (Ar ḥuṭba) of imams, leaders of Muslim communities, on topical social themes are one of the central theological genres of Islam. The basic requirements for them were established as early as in the Middle Ages.*

*As non-Muslims have a significant place in both the foundational texts of Islam and everyday politics, already the first preserved ḥuṭbas from the 7th century deal with this theme, to say nothing of numerous present-day sermons. Until recent times, Saudi Arabian imams have particularly stood out with their spirited sermons against non-Muslims. Although Islamologists have by now acquired a general overview of Friday sermons, the ḥuṭbas against worshippers of other religions have been studied superficially.*

*Research literature has paid even less attention to the so-called hate sermons against non-Muslims.*

*Three central themes crop up in Saudi imams' sermons against non-Muslims. First, incitements to jihad, which follow the dogma of classical Islam according to which each Muslim takes efforts to fight against everything non-Islamic as much as possible, either with a weapon or money or with soul, heart or word.*

*Second, the inherent enemies of Islam — Christians and Jews — are treated like Quran suggests in its last parts which are superior compared to the earlier ones. Third, undisguised resentment is expressed in Saudi ḥuṭbas against dialogue with other religions on an equal footing, like it is spread in the West as a discipline of religious dialogue.*

*The translation presents a ḥuṭba delivered by ‘Abdalmuḥsin ibn ‘Abdarrāḥman al-Qāḍī, an imam from the Saudi Arabian town of al-‘Unayza, on 13 September 1997. It stands out with its aggressive style and colourful images which, relying on Quran and the history of Islam, warn Muslims against the substantial enemies of Islam — Christians — overthrowing their dogmas and revealing their sinfulness and hostility against Islam.*

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### ***Abstract***

## **On the reception of Japan in the Third Reich: Ideology, politics, propaganda**

**KEYWORDS:** *Third Reich, National Socialism, propaganda, cultural politics, World War II, image of Japan in Germany*

*The ally relations between Germany and Japan during World War II have remained quite enigmatic until now. On the one hand, the image of Japan was inarguably positive at all levels of the German society, from ordinary citizens to the National Socialist elite. It could be considered a service of the direct political and mediated cultural propaganda (primarily literature) subjugated to the elite that in the German mass consciousness an image of Japan began to crystallise which was concentrated on Shintoism, cult of ancestors, defiance of death, willingness to sacrifice and loyalty to the emperor. As a somewhat unexpected consequence, even some germs of an inferiority complex appeared in Germany in the shadow of the Nippon euphoria. But despite the all-embracing propagandist fireworks, real military cooperation between the two countries remained non-existent. This was primarily due to Hitler’s two-faced and possibly deter-*

*mined foreign policy directed to the destruction of Germany: from the beginning of 1939 to the disastrous end in 1945, the Führer and State Chancellor of Germany did not adopt any essential decisions that would not have been objectively harmful for Germany.*

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### **Abstract**

## **Body and mind: dualism or holism?**

**KEYWORDS:** *body, mind, strong and weak dualism, East and West*

*The idea of the body and the mind is undoubtedly part of the human worldview. However, explaining the nature of the body and the mind and their relationship has been a challenging issue throughout the ages. The body and the mind are not neutral but culturally constructed terms whose meanings have changed over time, even within a single culture. Within a single cultural space, there may not even be agreement on whether the body and the soul/mind should be considered a whole or as two separate entities. This article provides an overview of East Asia's dominant conceptions of the body and the mind, including Western concepts for comparison. Edward Slingerland's idea of a strong and a weak dualism helps to explain that even in Western conceptions of the body and the mind, speaking of a dualism of the body and the mind is nonsensical.*

*An overview reveals that although there have been thinkers in both the West and the East who are neither strictly dualistic nor strictly holistic, Westerners still tend more often to see the body and the mind as somehow qualitatively separate, hence the dualistic perspective. At the same time, man has always understood that the body and the mind/spirit interact, which inevitably leads to the desire to separate them, even though this is impossible. In the Far East, the body and the mind are accepted as a unified system, with the mind being said to be nothing that can exist apart from the body. In China, however, the rhetoric of the mind being the ruler of*

*the body is more emphasized, while in Japan, the attempt to achieve the unity of the body and the mind dominates. This kind of thinking presupposes that the body and the mind are not ontologically distinct realms. They have an overlapping part, while such a weak dualism privileges the mind over other human faculties.*

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### **Abstract**

#### **A note on unperishable force (*avipranāśa*)**

**KEYWORDS:** *Nāgārjuna*, *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, *avipranāśa*, *karma*, *anavasthā*, *Joseph Walser*, *defence mechanisms*

*The article deals with the term avipranāśa in Nāgārjunas Mūlamadhyamakakārikā (MMK XVII, 14–5; 20).*

*Avipranāśa is not an act (karma) but something that stores the effect of an act as an unperishable force that ensures the transmission of karma. Nāgārjuna demonstrates the emptiness of all phenomena and concepts but not of avipranāśa. Almost everything can be deconstructed, but not this mechanism. Therefore, avipranāśa is very clearly a tool against ethical relativism.*

*In the broader context, avipranāśa is one of such mechanisms of defence against moral irresponsibility and ethical relativism which may result from the philosophy of emptiness. Other such mechanisms in MMK are anavasthā (MMK VII, 3, 19), commonly translated as ‘infinite regress’ (regressus ad infinitum), as well as a warning against misunderstanding emptiness (MMK XIII, 8; XXIV, 11) and the fundamental principle of the distinction between conventional and ultimate truth (XXIV, 8 etc).*

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## *Abstract*

### **A cross in the sanctuary of an Inca ruler's palace: One option for interpretation of Garcilaso's chronicle message**

**KEYWORDS:** *chronicles of Peru after the conquista, Garcilaso de la Vega, conquista of Peru, religion of Incas, symbolism of the Andes, chakana*

*First, the author provides a brief overview of the life and activities of Garcilaso de la Vega (1539–1616), one of the most significant chroniclers of Peru after the conquista. This is followed by a partial translation from Spanish into Estonian of the 3rd chapter of the 2nd book of Garcilaso's main work Los comentarios line de los Incas. In this chapter, the author of the book describes a valuable cross with branches of equal length which had been kept in the sanctuary in the palace of an Inca ruler and later been placed on the altar in the cathedral of the capital city Cuzco.*

*Garcilaso was a Mestizo; his mother was a member of the ruling Inca dynasty, and, therefore, he was well versed in the pre-conquista history, heritage and lifestyle. This explains the great truth value of Garcilaso's chronicle for general and religious history and his sympathy for the local people. It is obvious that by his treatment of the Inca religion, he tried to defend the indigenous people from the violence of the conquistadores and the potential persecution by the Holy Inquisition, which followed the Spanish conquest of Peru.*

*Eventually, the author of the article proposes a possible reason why the local people who did not know Christianity before the Spanish conquest could have worshipped this cross. Even now, a special place in the symbolism of the peoples of the Andes belongs to a cross-shaped artefact called chakana which is considered an important image in Quechua mythology, cosmology and social order. In the opinion of the author of the article, the cross described by Garcilaso was just a chakana.*

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## *Abstract*

### **‘The offspring of Lady Dragon’ – an anonymous King/Queen of Kish or a child of the ruler of Kish?**

**KEYWORDS:** *Lady Dragon, offspring, king, queen, anonymous, child, Kish*

*The curious royal inscription AG 35: 777 (RIME 1: KIŠ E1.7.40) originates from the Early Dynastic Tell Agrab. This royal inscription (cuneiform text, transliteration, and translation) has been published several times and has also generated some scholarly discussion. It is notable that this inscription mentions the Lady Dragon (written as MUNUS.UŠUMGAL) and her offspring (probably son). This is an unresolved problem because it is not possible to identify who this Lady Dragon was. It is possible that the Lady Dragon was a name or epithet worn by, for example, a highly respected princess, queen, or high priestess, but it is unlikely to have been based on Mesopotamian personal names from the 3rd millennium BCE. It is also possible that this high priestess (if she was one) embodied a goddess in a sacred marriage ritual and gave birth to the future ruler of Kish (although this is purely an assumption).*

*Anyway, similar cases are known to us from the late 3rd millennium BCE from Sumer. For example, Gudea, Sumerian ruler of the Lagaš II dynasty (22nd century BCE), was born as a result of a sacred marriage rite and he called his mother a goddess. Thus, it can be assumed that a certain king of Kish (if he was king) called himself the son of the Lady Dragon. However, this mystery remains unsolved, and (based on the available evidence) we do not know for sure who the royal scribe was who composed the text, nor who the Lady Dragon was. The author of article therefore assumes that it was the unknown King of Kish who, among other things, called himself the son/offspring of the Lady Dragon.*

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