

genres, here mostly with *malhūn*, especially widespread in Maghreb. In the collected texts we find some interesting examples of this type.

The book by Veronika Ritt-Benmimoun has also interdisciplinary importance in the field of Arabic and Islamic studies. It is very carefully edited, taking into account extremely complicated system of transcription, necessary for the dialectological research. It should have big importance for almost every scholar in the field, dealing with Maghreb and Tunisia itself. Vielen dank – *šukran ǧazīlan* for such a wonderful work.

Marek M. Dziekan

Anna Krasnowolska, *Mythes, croyances populaires et symbolique animale dans la littérature persane*, „Studia Iranica” cahier 48, Association pour l’avancement des études iraniennes, Paris 2012, 244 pp.

This volume contains the text of the Ehsan and Latifeh Yarshater Distinguished Lecturer on Iranian Studies, organized by the Unité Mixte de Recherche 7528 “Mondes iranien et indien”, and delivered in 2010 at the Collège de France in Paris.

The series of lectures brings together numerous data illustrating the influence of mythological, folkloric and literary themes of Iranian culture, and their continuity from pre-Islamic till present times. This interaction between the classical and popular, oral and written traditions, still little investigated, is being examined on the examples of five motifs: Kākil, the hero of a winter festival, a spell against scorpions; the rose and the nightingale; a symbolical dream of the wise king Xosrow Anōšīrvān; and the eschatological saviour and his horse. The study is conducted in a diachronic perspective, and its sources range from the *Avesta* and Pahlavi texts through the *Šahnāme* and classical Persian literature, up to modern Persian novel and research on popular customs and beliefs.

The book consists of five texts:

I – *Kākil – Gāv-e Gil. Mysterious hero of winter festival. Festival’s mythology; The place of the festival in ritual year in Bīrūnī; Barmāye – cow and Barmāyun –the bull; Magic objects; Miraculous nouricher cow and cosmogonic bull; The name of the patron’s festival; the rite of cosmogonic sacrifice; conclusions; Resume in English.*

II – *Magical spell against scorpions. Spell against scorpions in Bīrūnī; Collateral Zoroastrian texts; Agrarian context; Astrological context; Remaining beliefs; Conclusions; Resume in English.*

III – *Nightingale and the poet. Nightingale in epic tradition; Nightingale and the court poet: a/ Samanid epoch (IX–Xc.); b/ Ghaznavid epoch (XI c.); Mystical poet Djalāloddīn Rūmī (1207–1273) and his Dīvān-e Šams; Ḥāfez-e Šīrāzī (d. 1390) (Ḥāfez identifies himself with a nightingale); conclusions, resume in English. [The poetical image of a nightingale takes different functions in different literary periods and poetical genres.]*

IV – *Tree – Animal – Water. Xosrow Nušīnraṽān's dream. The king Nušīnraṽān's dream; Gušan's song; social context the two versions; Wis-o Rāmin and the Parthe tradition; Bižan-o Maniže and Wis-o Rāmin; Mystical provenience and accommodation of the ritual of the story; Resume in English.*

V – *Saviour and his horse. In classical and modern Persian literature. Classical literature: a/ epic hero, his horse and his ascension to heaven; b/ epic hero's and his horse's funeral ceremonies; c/ sacrificial horse and the unrecognized son; d/ Muslim saints and their horses. Modern literature: a/ Simin Dānešvār [1300–1390/1921–2012] Savušun publ. 1969; b/ Hušang Golširi [1316–1379/1938–2000] Ma'sum-e pandjom (*The fifth Innocent*) publ. 1979; c/ Rezā Dānešvar [born 1327/1948] Xosrow-e xubān publ. 1994; Conclusions; English resume.*

*General conclusions; English resume.*

Within the body of the above five lectures which base on diversified Persian literary texts, a number of tightly interconnected thematic circles can be distinguished. These themes, reaching back to the Zoroastrian, and in some cases even Indo-Iranian mythology, have been adapted in transformed forms by Muslim Persian literature. The same topics are perpetuated in folklore, popular religious beliefs and rituals, which are in the present work evoked as a broader cultural background of Persian literary tradition. Ancient mythological motifs reappear in modern Persian literary works which are dealt with in the last of the five texts, being treated as a direct and legitimate continuation of the classical literary development.

The links connecting particular literary themes and epic motifs run across these five studies, thus creating a dense network of intertextual connections among them, as well as among the texts to which they refer. The most important thematic cluster approached in the work may be characterized as follows:

The myth of cosmogonic sacrifice which opens a death-and-resurrection cycle leading to the transformations of species: the Primordial Bull and his mythological counterparts Gāv-e Gil and the cow Barmāye of seven metals or seven colours, dying and resurrecting epic heroes and the beliefs in their vegetal incarnations as continuation of the myth of the first human couple originating from a plant; ritual reenactments of primordial animal sacrifice (horse, ox, camel) and their modern literary thematic interpretations.

- Contacts of the living with the other world, the souls (*fravaši*) of the dead visiting their living relatives being a mythological model of their encounters; the return of a dead hero in his new incarnation, the magical gifts of a deceased ancestor, expectation of the advent of an occulted saviour; an ecstatic flight to heaven of a mystical or shamanic character, the soul of a mystic being symbolized by a bird; a horse as the soul's bearer to the spiritual world or to its epic counterpart.
- The myth of royal charisma (*farr-e kiyāni*): belief in the magical powers of a king, his rule over natural phenomena (fire, water, vegetation), his powers of magical protection against venomous animal and evil spirits (Feridun); the charisma of an old king, symbolized by a majestic tree, questioned in *Wis-o Rāmin*; the elements of the myth of prestige ascribed to a charismatic epic hero; an awaited saviour as a depositary of sacral rule and his modern literary incarnations.

- Patriarchal domination, the fight for power and women between young and old in two versions known to Persian literature and folklore: the victory of an old (ruler, husband) or of a young (successor to the throne, lover) symbolized by a fierce animal (a bull, a boar), the former solution being much more frequent in Persian literature: the old despot dominates, the young, compared to an animal sacrifice, dies and is mourned by the whole of nature; in modern literature the conflict takes a political dimension, the despotic patriarch being replaced by foreign powers, a despotic regime, its secret services etc.
- Traces of the cult of female deities: the festival of Esfandārmaz – Mother-Earth, the patron of farmers, of women and probably of chthonic creatures (scorpions, snakes), a spring storm conceived as hierogamy of Sky and Earth; traces of the features of a goddess of Nature in epic heroines: their close relationship with water and plants the Snake-Queen and her ties with water and the underworld; the transformations of epic female types in modern prose by ascribing them new political and social roles.
- A metatextual issue that stands apart from the dominating topics of the work is the reflection on the status of a poet (symbolized by a nightingale) and of that of a “learned man” in a broader meaning, in their changing roles: an eulogist of the heroic past, a court singer, a mystic, a creative individuality in confrontation with a conformist society; a bard ridiculing the ways of his masters, a moralist – adviser of the king; in modern literature: a chronicler, whose writings arise questions about the historical truth and its versions in written sources and in human memory, about the worth of a document, and of a hagiographical legend.

The above author's enumeration in no way exhausts the list of topics that reiterate within the book, but to some extent shows their range, the degree of their mutual interconnections and their continuity through the ages to the modern day. As seen from the above short enumeration the texts are not short notes, but extensive well documented and deep considered studies of an high value. This is a very important step in the study of myth. Many texts non translated before have been excellently translated in French, maintaining the traces of their poetic versification. The author did not succeed to maintain the Persian transcription in the Persian texts. The problem of the inconveniencies have been solved by the use of foot-notes. This has not however influenced quality of the study very valuable not only for those interested in the subject.

*Zofia Józefowicz-Niedźwiecka*

Józef Pawłowski, *Przeszłość w ideologii Komunistycznej Partii Chin*, Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2013, 309 pp.

The reviewed publication on the ideological foundations of the Chinese Communist Party is both valuable and interesting. It is interesting for everyone who deals with the