

In This Issue

WENDY DONIGER's presidential address unpacks an apocryphal historical anecdote involving Sir Charles James Fox Napier to draw attention to the complexities of myth and language as well as to complicate the Orientalism of orientalists, specifically that of Indologists. Although she recognizes the value of anti-orientalist and postcolonial theories and criticism, she ultimately calls for a more balanced appreciation and assessment of Orientalist scholarship.

JIAN XU reads the contemporary discourse relating to the practice of *qigong*, a form of bodily cultivation, as a battle over ideological control of the Chinese 'body.' The connections between this discourse and the politicized body are underscored by the author's exploration of the sociocultural representations of *qigong* and the embodiment of its discourse and by a consideration of the different discourses relating to *qigong*.

LILLIAN M. LI and ALISON DRAY-NOVEY examine the different strategies the Qing state employed to ensure the food supply of Beijing in order to preserve the security of the capital. The authors show that the state relied on a variety of institutional mechanisms to supply the different groups comprising the capital's population and that it was particularly successful during the eighteenth century. They also draw instructive comparisons between Qing efforts to provision Beijing and the policies and methods used in Paris and Edo.

JAMES S. OCKEY examines the phenomenon of "godmothers" in Thailand by exploring their links to Thai politics and by scrutinizing their representations in the media. He shows how the increasing visibility of "godmothers" in Thai society and their characterization in terms of both male and female traits may reflect changing gender stereotypes in contemporary Thailand.

MARGARET H. CHILDS analyzes the attributes of "love" in the world of premodern Japanese literature. She concentrates on the emotional dynamics of love affairs in *The Tale of Genji* and other Heian tales in order to highlight the high value that both men and women placed on vulnerability. By linking love to pity or compassion, the author makes a case for what she terms "the erotic potential of powerlessness."