

Editorial

Dear readers and fans of our journal,

welcome to the 42nd issue. One (now legendary) science-fiction text says that number 42 represents a fundamental answer to “The Ultimate Question of Life, the Universe, and Everything.” This answer is given “with infinite majesty and calm” by a fictional supercomputer called “Deep Thought.”¹ We also hope to offer you some “deep thought” through the quality of analyses and interpretations of historical issues in the four studies, one discussion text and four reviews of newly published literature that make up the contents of this issue.

This issue of DTK opens with the studies by Bohdana Divišová and Tereza Liepoldová, which build on what began last year in our thematic issue focused on the history of medicine and which form a separate “medical block”. Bohdana Divišová presents an analysis of the clash between the theoretical and empirical levels in war medicine during the paradigmatic change brought about by the rapid expansion of the use of firearms at the beginning of the 16th century. In her remarkable text, Bohdana Divišová traces the influences of the classic Galen-Hippocrates humoral theory as well as the theory of Paracelsism. The author further explores how the new practical knowledge from the field contributed to a considerable strengthening of personal experience as a defining category for the development of war medicine. Tereza Liepoldová offers a sophisticated interpretative view of the key transformations in the history of medicine in terms of an analysis of their “intellectual turning points” – in particular the cultural turn, the linguistic turn, the new materialism, the turn to emotions and the turn to neurohistory. All these transformations have greatly influenced medical theory and practice.

Josef Řičář’s study is certainly unique in the Czech and even European context. The paper deals with the still developing field of reenactment

¹ LEONIE C. MOYLE, *Forty-two, and other precise answers to difficult questions: a commentary on Westram et al., 2022*, *Journal of Evolutionary Biology* 35/2022, p. 1183.

studies, namely historical military reenactment. It examines in detail the agency of the non-human, specifically the agency of horses. Military reenactors representing cavalry units are an exclusive social group within the military reenactment and the author attributes their high status, among other, to the fact that they have to cope with and co-act with non-human actors. This is a rather demanding and complex task since these non-actors have expressively different cognitive functions and intentions.

Speaking of highly original scholarly texts, I believe that the last paper in this issue will surely not disappoint. Přemysl Vacek introduces the topic of a so far completely unexplored and scientifically unexamined subculture, the so-called “chimney climbers”. Originating in the Czech environment, the subculture has gradually transformed from a student prank to an extensive and intricately structured activity at the edge of the law. Its followers seek to preserve the value of industrial heritage and monuments, but they also try to subversively “conquer” the most inaccessible factory and other chimneys by climbing them without permission, which often means breaking the law.

As is our custom, we are pleased to offer you a critical article commenting on a topical issue in the Discussions and Disputes section of the DTK journal, this time by historian Ondřej Crhák. It deals with the difficult and conflicting renegotiation and re-evaluation of representations of indigenous peoples of North America in the context of Czech society. Ondřej wrote his analytical text following a strongly stereotyped reenactment that took place in Prague this year, the so-called General Custer Memorial. The author concludes rather sceptically that as far as the question of colonialism and imperial expansion is concerned, the Czech Republic largely resembles a “museum of the old romantic times”, but there are some attempts to reflect on the problem.

This DTK issue concludes with reviews of selected published literature: from a critical reflection on a recently published title dealing with women’s activism in the Czechoslovak exile army on the Eastern Front to an assessment of an important publication in the field of re-enactment studies by Tereza Šubrtová, to the views of Juraj Šuch and David De Pablo on new titles concerning the theory of historical sciences and the problems of alterity in history in the context of Christian-Muslim encounters and coexistence in Sicily.

Dear readers, I do believe that you will find this issue of our journal interesting, and I wish you all the best in the new year 2025.

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