

ABSTRACTS

Zimbabwe: Thirty Years of Independent Life

HILDA VARELA BARRAZA
AND JORGE FERNÁNDEZ RUIZ

The aim of this paper is to provide elements in order to explain the economic and political developments —without being exhaustive— which have taken place in Zimbabwe's first thirty years of independence (1980-2010), with the purpose of contributing to the understanding of both the crisis which has unfolded and the complexity which has been exposed in the search for solutions.

As a starting point, we are faced with the fact that often Zimbabwe's history is not well known, which makes it difficult to understand the current crisis. The paper begins with an introduction that briefly presents the main features of the colonial period. The analysis of the years between 1980 and 2010 is divided in three periods and, with explanatory purposes, the economic and political developments in each of these periods are treated separately. The paper concludes with a general overview of the political arena between April 2010 and July 2012.

Re-Establishing The Cambodian Monkhood

JOHN A. MARSTON

The article describes the processes, at the grassroots and national level, whereby a Buddhist monastic lineage was re-established in Cambodia following a brief period, from 1975 to 1979, in which the monkhood was abolished. The article takes exception with the normal account of events, which commonly describes a series of irregular ordinations followed by the more regular ordination of September, 1979, which finally established a clear monastic lineage. The article argues that the early ordinations were more serious than is usually acknowledged. It also provides new information about the September ceremony.

The Making of a Transnational Public Sphere (second part)

CAMILA PASTOR DE MARIA Y CAMPOS

At the beginning of the 21st century, Lebanese migrants to Mexico City have a median income which is significantly higher than that of the Mexican population. I argue that this is the product of the history of their migration, and the institutions that they have developed during the past century; which configured a transnational field of public debates spanning the Mashreq and the American Mahjar, what we could call a “migrant public sphere”. The migration began in the late 19th century, when a diverse cross section of Lebanon’s population traveled to the Americas for a variety of reasons. Those with greater access to resources provided employment and credit for the majority of these migrants. The relationships, initially personal or based in a common village of origin, were maintained throughout the 20th century through a variety of institutions generated by the migrants themselves. The earliest of those were aid institutions organized by religious communities. These were followed many decades later by nationally defined social institutions. In the process, a social identity category was created and presented to Mexican society which has gathered together the Lebanese success stories and the middle class majority under the same national category of “Lebanese”. This combined identity allows their collective identity to be perceived as one of higher prestige by non-Lebanese Mexicans than the “Lebanese” middle class migrant and migrant descent majority would have otherwise enjoyed, and provides new avenues for social mobility.

Education in Times of War: Schools and Faculties in Civil War Beirut (1984-1988)

JUAN MARÍA RUIZ HERRERO

The 15 year long Lebanese Civil War considerably altered the educational task carried out by the schools throughout the country. Schools and colleges had to face a significant array of obstacles ranging from material to human, which often diminished its activity to a merely symbolic function. The countless destructions related to armed conflict overlapped with the economical paralysis which engulfed the State during the second half of the

eighties, imposing acute states of deprivation on educational establishments. Additionally, the penetration of armed organizations within the hierarchy of schools and colleges triggered a disciplinary subversion against the traditional authority figures of the classroom, with permanent humiliations for a teaching staff whose function was progressively emptied of any meaning. The abovementioned evolutions punished with particular severity the public sector, resulting in dramatic consequences for the capacity for meaningful social action on the part of the Lebanese State.

Text and Art in the Origins of the Enlightenment Interpretation of Confucianism

CÉSAR GUARDE PAZ

This article pursues two objectives: the first is to give a clear picture of the purpose and process of the Confucian reading developed by the Jesuits, in which Confucianism becomes part of an ancient philosophy common to all human cultures (Figurism), and to examine how the Chinese philosophical text entered 17th-18th Century Europe. The second objective is to study the assimilation of Chinese art through Dutch trade, and to establish to what extent European liberal thought was understood as “Daoist”, as stated by Christian Gerlach.