

ABSTRACTS

Post-Pol Pot Cambodia and the Building of a New *Stupa*

JOHN A. MARSTON

On the occasion of the 1957 Buddha-Jayanti, relics were brought from Sri Lanka and installed in a *stupa* in front of the railway station in Phnom Penh, an event of great symbolic importance for the newly independent country. When, after a period of profound political disruption, the former king, Sihanouk, returned to Cambodia in the early 1990s, these relics once again became a focus of attention. A medium from the royal family suggested to the king that the country's misfortunes were due to the relics being in an inauspicious place, and that they should be moved. After other locations proved unfeasible, it was decided to build a mammoth *stupa* on Oudong mountain, the location of pre-colonial burial *stupas* for the royal family. The relics were moved to the new *stupa* with great ceremony in 2002. This paper describes the building of the *stupa* and the ceremonies surrounding the transfer of the relics and discusses the emerging symbolic importance of the *stupa*.

Historical Buddha and Legendary Buddha. Hagiographical Traditions of Siddhārtha Gautama

JUAN ARNAU

The article analyzes the various sources that have contributed to the legend of Siddhārtha Gautama: independent hagiographies such as the *Lalitavistara* or the *Mahāvastu*, the *Buddhacarita* of Aśvaghōṣa, *Udāna*, which constitutes the third section of the *Khuddakanikāya* and other fragments of the collections of the nikaya like the *Nidānakathā*, the hagiographies in monastic codes, collections of legends, tales and Indian tales collected in the genre of the *jātaka*-Canon. Finally some of the recent research around the dates of the historical Buddha's life are synthesized.

The Women of Hamas: Subaltern Silence or Participative Voice?

ÉRIKA SUSANA AGUILAR SILVA

This article aims to investigate and evaluate, using the approach of Subaltern Studies and the proposal of the cultural anthropologist Saba Mahmood (related to the *agency* or the *capacity for action* of women involved in religious movements), the role of female members of the Palestinian Islamic Resistance Movement “Hamas” from its emergence in 1987 until 2006, when the Movement’s political wing won the elections of the Legislative Council.

We are going to talk about “women” as a minority or subaltern group with the capability to challenge the specific context in which they spend their lives. The following are questions which guide our study: Do the media images of Muslim women (especially those produced by the press and the cinema—in which persist the definition of the East in opposition to the West—) constitute an authentic portrait of the Palestinian reality? Can we talk about female empowerment within Hamas?

The Shepherd’s Attributes in the Image of Egyptian Royalty. Some Notes for its Comprehension during the Early Period

PABLO MARTÍN ROSELL

The ancient societies from the Near East and Egypt used to associate their leaderships positions with the figure of a shepherd. Thus the rulers of these societies used to act as shepherds whose main activities were to lead their people on the right path, as a herd follows its shepherd.

In Egypt, the development of leadership and kingship during the Predynastic period was linked to some features which clearly belong to a pastoral world. Therefore, it is possible to observe the close relationship between the origins of the pharaonic monarchy and all the elements relating to pastoral activities from the study of iconography and the archaeological records. In fact, one of the sacred objects of Egyptian kingship was the so-called heqasceptre, which derived from a shepherd’s crook.

Thus, this paper aims to study the pastoral backgrounds which inspired the imagery of the rising Egyptian kingship during the Early Period, stating

the hypothesis that in Predynastic Egypt, some of the aspects of the imagery of the pharaonic monarchy were taken from the figure of the shepherd.

The Republic of Mauritius and the Overcoming of the Hurdles to Economic Development

JORGE FERNÁNDEZ RUIZ

The Republic of Mauritius enjoys welfare levels much higher than the average Subsaharan African country in spite of the fact that, when it became an independent country, it exhibited some of the features that have inhibited economic growth and poverty alleviation in other African countries. In this paper we focus on the way that Mauritius overcame three of these hurdles: *i*) a very heterogeneous population in ethnic and religious terms, that in other African countries has caused divisions and clashes and retarded economic development, *ii*) an economy extremely dependent on sugar and its by-products, and *iii*) the existence of propitious conditions for the spread of several diseases, in particular malaria.