

written account, Edington highlights the limits of the power of psychiatry and the definite but highly restricted influence mental medicine had in colonial Vietnam. Her book primarily focuses not on the asylum but rather on the individuals who came through it—many of whom were marginalized, poor, and displaced. Edington focuses less on the intricacies of asylum care or medical knowledge, instead using the asylum to analyze colonial society from the perspective of these poor and marginalized individuals. She succeeds in this aim exceptionally well.

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Engaging Asia: Essays on Laos and Beyond in Honour of Martin Stuart-Fox.
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Perhaps edited volumes have become an unfashionable form of scholarly publication, but in the case of this Festschrift for Martin Stuart-Fox, an important historian of Southeast Asia, this compendium is a worthwhile, engaging, and useful contribution. Most but not all of the eighteen chapters focus on Lao-related topics, making this volume a useful complement to other recent compendia.¹ But several chapters bleed into neighboring countries, and others spin off of Stuart-Fox's diverse interests, such as in Buddhist meditation (Roderick Bucknell) or cultural evolution theory (Juan Ramón Álvarez).

Scholars focusing on Laos are still a rare breed, but one of the delights of pursuing specialization in Laos is that scholastic investigation is still in its early stages. Thus Laos-focused scholars find themselves encountering, reading, and “falling down rabbit holes” into topics they might not have had time for or easy access to delve into if they specialized in an area with much larger, well-established bodies of specialized scholarship. The scholar focused on Laos can attain the intellectual delights that come from being a generalist.

This volume feeds the generalist inclination with chapters on topics ranging from an account by Kennon Breazeale of a French gunboat plying the middle reaches of the Mekong River from 1894 to 1910 to a treatise by the book's editor Desley Goldston on how the Lao People's Revolutionary Party creatively applied Marxist-Leninist principles to seize total power with minimal bloodshed, in sharp contrast with the Marx and Lenin-inspired revolutions in neighboring countries to the east and south as well as in other parts of Eurasia.

Several contributions shed light on Stuart-Fox's meandering trajectory in life and scholarship. In his afterword, Stuart-Fox reveals an early interest in ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern civilizations, followed by a phase of studying evolutionary biology. Jessica Harriden provides an overview of Stuart-Fox's informal and formal

¹Mayoury Ngaosrivathana and Kennon Breazeale, eds., *Breaking New Ground in Lao History: Essays on the Seventh to Twentieth Centuries* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2002); Yves Goudineau and Michel Lorrillard, eds., *New Research on Laos* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2009).

education. Travel and employment in Papua New Guinea, Hong Kong, and Japan led to an engagement with Asian cultures and philosophies. In 1963, he landed jobs in Laos first with USAID and then with United Press International. Contributions from friends and colleagues Tim Page and Steve Northrup provide first-hand details and photos from Stuart-Fox's 1960s war correspondent days. After being transferred to Vietnam, he experienced the realpolitik of the "American War," and in 1966 he moved on—traveling through many parts of Asia and then Europe, then returning to Australia where he completed a BA in Asian history and philosophy. He reengaged in Laos for both personal and journalistic reasons while pursuing graduate degrees in the evolutionary theory of history. Regardless of Stuart-Fox's postgraduate degree thesis topics, his publication of innumerable articles and several books on Laos and Southeast Asian history and politics resulted in his recognition primarily as a first-tier expert on Lao history, politics, and culture.

With an appointment at the University of Queensland in history, Stuart-Fox influenced numerous students and junior colleagues, many of whom contributed chapters to the *Festschrift* that add unusual windows and insights into the body of scholarship, particularly of mainland Southeast Asia. There are fascinating, diverse, juxtaposed subjects that would never be found together in, say, a special issue of an academic journal. Examples of these unusual topics include: the history and fates of Lao who first migrated to Cambodia in the late nineteenth century (Martin Rathie); a vignette from an early twentieth-century vaccination program in Xieng Khouang Province (Kathryn Sweet); the French impact on defining "what is Laos" (Geoffrey Gunn), including the personalities and relationships of the people behind the initiation of the study of Lao prehistory (Lia Genovese); the ill treatment of Tonkinese migrant labor in Cambodia (Margaret Slocomb); and recent efforts by the Vietnamese government to move away from centrally planned economies (Timothy McGrath). Each chapter adds new dimensions to the emerging literature concerning parts of Southeast Asia that restricted access to scholars for much of the twentieth century.

Lao nationals also contributed intriguing chapters. One concerns why and how the Lao government has in recent years astutely reached out to the Lao diaspora to entice Laos to reengage with their homeland (Soulatha Sayalath). A second is about the nonpublication of volume one of a three-volume history of Laos, covering the prehistoric period (Souneth Phothisane). Pheuiphanh and Mayoury Ngaosrivathana provide an important chapter for historians on the changing definition of the boundary between Thailand and Laos during the Lan Xang–Ayutthaya period.

The remaining two chapters relate to events outside of mainland Southeast Asia proper. Volker Grabowsky provides a fascinating history of Tai in Yunman over the last few centuries, particularly how Buddhism and Buddhist manuscripts fared during the Cultural Revolution and after. Finally, Sarah Tiffin gives an engaging account of a four-month trade mission to London from Banten on Java during the reign of Charles II, when the politics and economics of the spice trade and arms deals intersected with cultural differences and conflicting remits.

Reading all these chapters as a set leaves the reader with a sense of a deep history of entanglements emanating not so much *to* the region from outside superpowers as *from* within the region itself. Although Indianization, colonization, American intervention, and Chinese encroachments have had roles in shaping the history of Southeast Asia, including Laos, the peoples of Southeast Asia have had their own agendas and priorities (e.g., boundaries based on sacred understandings, decentralizing economies) and their own endeavors (e.g., intermarriage among different ethnolinguistic groups). The region has its own geographical challenges (e.g., the Mekong rapids) and resources (e.g., minerals

and elephants). These autochthonous conditions shaped *intraregional* developments as well as how the indigenous related to and used exogenous forces and concepts.

Stuart-Fox surely must feel satisfied to see the emanations from his life and work as they are represented in this volume. Historians of Southeast Asia, particularly scholars of Laos, will want this book in their libraries.

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Luxury and Rubble: Civility and Dispossession in the New Saigon. By ERIK HARMS. Oakland: University of California Press, 2016. x, 287 pp. ISBN: 9780520292512 (paper).
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A distinctive feature of life in contemporary Asia is the striking pace of urban development and transformation. From Seoul to Mumbai, new megaprojects are remaking the face of the Asian megacity. Asianists who travel to the region regularly are struck by the dizzying, often bewildering, changes and frequently attest to the shock at encountering spaces that were once vibrant semiformal or informal residential areas being remade into shopping malls, business districts, and new urban zones over the scant span of a few years. *Luxury and Rubble* by Erik Harms offers firsthand insight into the processes through which urban spaces in Asia are remade and, in so doing, chronicles the everyday life of the subjects who inhabit these spaces before and after they are transformed: first to rubble, then to luxury.

Luxury and Rubble chronicles the creation of new urban zones in rapidly developing Vietnam. The book takes an innovative approach to capture the everyday life of the creation of these new spaces. Harms compares two specific sites outside the immediate vicinity of Ho Chi Minh City's central core: Phù My Húng and Thủ Thiêm. The former is a massive mixed-use development on the southern periphery of Ho Chi Minh City where Harms lived during fieldwork. It consists of housing—including luxury villas, duplexes, and high-rise apartments—and commercial buildings, such as shophouses, restaurants, and Crescent Mall—“Saigon's largest and most luxurious shopping mall” (p. 9). Thủ Thiêm, in contrast, is an older, more sparsely inhabited site that, fatefully, is located directly across the Saigon River from Ho Chi Minh City's historic city core. Thủ Thiêm was for decades the focus of several ambitious development plans, yet the district had been largely left intact in spite of its advantageous location. However, during the period of Harms's fieldwork in the early 2010s, plans for a new masterplanned development have materialized, which enables Harms to document the process of eviction and (under)compensation that precedes the construction of the sparkling, new megaprojects that are so ubiquitous in Asia today.

The contrast between Phù My Húng and Thủ Thiêm yields a fascinating comparison. In the former, readers are introduced to the social forms and patterns of individual and collective life effected by such megadevelopments. Perhaps the most provocative insight of the book is that modernist megadevelopments such as Phù My Húng do not necessarily produce the anomie so often assumed by social theory. Instead, Harms documents the new configurations of sociality and collective life enabled in this new urban zone.