

Chinese assistance to the Viet Minh. Only recently have archival materials emerged to give substance to this particular French miscalculation.

Except for the American reports from French briefings, this book offers readers nothing that has not already been said by a long list of French participants in the Dien Bien Phu fiasco or examined by subsequent historians of the event. The best account is still Bernard Fall, *Hell in a Very Small Place: The Siege of Dien Bien Phu* (New York: J. B. Lippincott, 1967).

DAVID G. MARR

Australian National University

Mad Dogs, Englishmen, and the Errant Anthropologist: Fieldwork in Malaysia. By DOUGLAS RAYBECK. Prospect Heights, Il.: Waveland Press, 1996. xi, 248 pp. \$10.95 (paper).

An account of field research in the first person, this book is both a reflexive ethnography of Kelantanese Malay society and a text on ethnographic field research methods. On balance, Douglas Raybeck is much more concerned with describing practical field research methods than producing a thorough ethnography or testing particular ethnological propositions. The reflexive aspect of the ethnography and the concentration on ethnographic methodology are obvious in the first two chapters, where the author discusses the holistic virtues of anthropology, describes his own recruitment into the field of cultural anthropology, and details the circumstances that led him to choose Kelantan, Malaysia as the site for his doctoral dissertation research.

In the next five chapters, he describes and discusses particular culture-based problems he and his wife experienced while locating and gaining entrance into an appropriate Kelantanese community, settling into the community, developing practical methods for collecting appropriate and accurate data, and sorting out ethical issues related to ethnographic field research. The eighth chapter discusses the importance of extended periods of ethnographic research, and illustrates this point with a crisp description of work and social activities in his Kelantanese community through the course of an entire year. The ninth chapter deals with the concept of gendered roles in Kelantan Malay culture and its impact on how productive ethnographic research must be conducted. And the next to last chapter illustrates the importance of relating village ethnographies to the wider nation-state with a discussion of how Kelantanese villagers conceptualized and reacted to the national election campaigns, elections, and the subsequent ethnic riots in 1969. Of course, the final chapter deals with the problems of culture shock experienced on returning to one's native society and culture.

There is a good but too brief ethnographic description of Kelantan Malay culture embedded in this work on ethnographic methodology. It includes description and discussion of village factions, privacy, house architecture, clothing, entrepreneurship, the pace of life, conversation, chess, kinship, entrepreneurs, hard and soft deviance, cock fights, bull fights, shadow plays, house moving, gender roles, and relations with the Chinese of Kelantan. The interesting ways in which the distinctive Kelantanese dialect varies from standard Malay are not even briefly described. And there are a few inevitable flaws of fact and spelling, including the statement that Brunei is "just across the Malacca Strait" from Kelantan (p. 173), and the misspelling of Heather Strange's last name (p. 181). But these small flaws are hardly noticeable because of

the superb storytelling skills of the author. Students will love the book, and professors will find it a useful addition to texts for courses on peoples and cultures of Southeast Asia or ethnographic field research.

RONALD PROVENCHER
Northern Illinois University

Counting the Costs: Economic Growth and Environmental Change in Thailand.
Edited by JONATHAN RIGG. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1995. xxi, 267 pp. \$36.50 (paper).

Thailand has enjoyed record economic growth over the past two decades. It has been dubbed one of Asia's economic "tigers." Yet such growth has not been without cost. A growing income disparity between rich and poor shows that the fruits of "development" are distributed highly unequally. As environmental degradation has become ubiquitous in the country, questions have also been raised as to the ecological merits of this process. There is growing doubt today as to the social and environmental viability of Thailand's "growth-first" development model.

Counting the Costs explores this darker side of the Thai economic "miracle." A product of the Fifth International Thai Studies Conference held in London in 1993, the volume reflects a common recognition by the contributors that human-environment interaction in Thailand has recently undergone a "fundamental shift" (p. 19). Befitting the complex issues involved, the contributors hold different views about the nature of Thailand's environmental crisis. Hence, those looking for a list of policy recommendations as to the resolution of this crisis will be disappointed. Yet, this would be to mistake the intent and utility of this collection, for, as the editor points out, "the value of the papers lies in their very disagreements" (p. 4). The messiness of Thailand's political ecology is in a way reflected in this book in the discordant views of contributors of different backgrounds and ideological persuasions.

A thought-provoking essay by Jonathan Rigg highlights some of the areas of disagreement. The effect is a refreshing one. Rather than the unity of views that editors often impose on collections of this kind, debate over Thailand's environmental crisis is allowed to flourish, thereby providing insights into broader arguments presently animating the Thai polity. This introduction also relates the book's Thai material to broader conceptual concerns, albeit not always as fully as one might have wished. Overall, the author ably sets the scene for the detailed empirical analyses that follow.

The theme of "learning from tradition" is first considered in two contrasting essays. Leslie Sponsel and Poranee Natadecha-Sponsel focus on Buddhism as the basis for an ecologically sustainable approach in Thailand. Blaming Western modernization for current ecological ills, they argue that Buddhism is a suitable source for an indigenous environmental ethics, as well as an actual mechanism for social change as illustrated by, say, monks' enactments of tree ordination ceremonies designed to save the forests. A useful essay, it would nonetheless have been stronger if it had taken a more critical stance on the politicized nature of Buddhism in Thai society, and how this situation may weaken the ability of Buddhism to serve as an alternative approach to environmental issues. If Buddhism is often portrayed as a 'sustainable' cultural tradition, shifting cultivation, as Dietrich Schmidt-Vogt makes plain in a study of northern Thai swiddeners, is usually condemned as an ecologically destructive tradition. Using case studies of the Lawa and Akha peoples, he shows the need for a