

contribution to debates on headhunting. His prose is balanced, even melodious, as are his artful translations of *sumengo* songs, *mamose* speeches, and other *mappurondo* genres. The book's organization is a masterly synthesis of the paradigmatic and syntagmatic, in its parallel treatment of copresent cultural codes and sequential ritual enactment. The occasional puns (e.g. "Defaced Images" and "Theory Turned on Its Head" in chapter 3) enhance the deft writing of the text, as does George's reflexive situating of himself in the text. This book is ethnography of the very highest order.

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Interpreting Development: Capitalism, Democracy, and the Middle Class in Thailand.

By JOHN GIRLING. Ithaca, N.Y.: Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1996. 98 pp. \$32.95 (cloth); \$14.00 (paper).

This is an excellent, concise rumination on Thailand's contemporary political economy. Girling draws on a wide reading of Thai and English language sources to examine the rise of capitalist development; growing tensions between state officials and members of civil society who challenge the former's perquisites; shifts in dominant values among Thais and the composition of the country's elites; and an ongoing struggle among the ideologies of capitalism, pluralism, and nationalism. He concludes that Thailand no longer is a bureaucratic polity, but has not yet become a bourgeois one.

Girling analyzes the respective roles and ideologies of the Thai military, business circles, civil society groups, and the rurally based brokers who increasingly dominate Thai political parties. He sees four autonomous forces—business, civil society, political brokers, the military—contending with four central dynamics: the rise of business influence, resistance to state (particularly military) power, the growth of civil society, and the corrosion by money politics of democratic political practice.

The last 30 years have produced three revolutions in Thailand, Girling argues. Economic nationalism ended by the early 1960s, student protests dispatched the bureaucratic polity in the early 1970s, and civil society flourished over the 1980s. The military, money politics, and civil society each reached their respective peaks in the early 1990s only to fall back exhausted: the military with the failed February 1991 coup, civil society with the May 1992 demonstrations and the September 1992 election, and money politics with the earlier March 1992 election. (In fact, subsequent elections in 1995 and 1996 make it clear that money politics has yet to peak.) The weaknesses of all alternative political and social forces leave the way open for domination by business and the middle class, who champion a pragmatic, materialistic individualism. Traditional patron-client networks, Girling suggests, have helped to imbue many Thais with fatalism, factionalism, and defeatism that leach away at efforts to promote faith in the efficacy of organized cooperation.

Girling argues that Thailand's growing civil society builds on an eclectic group of Thai intellectuals such as Pridi Panomyong, Puey Ungpakorn, Jit Phumisak, and Kukrit Pramoj. With economic development as the new hegemonic ideology, embodied in a rapidly growing middle class, Girling believes justice and order will depend on further expansion in civil society and its ability to foster the spread of political participation, as well as reforms in parliament and the political parties.

Girling's clarity, excellent organization, and insights do not seem to benefit from his review of modernization theory, corporatism, Marxism, and the thought of Vilfredo Pareto (pp. 57–61). In general, chapter 4, adapted from other work, is less illuminating than are the others. In discussing direct investment inflows, Girling neglects to note the key role of non-Japanese Asian investment (p. 34). Finally, Girling may assign overly narrow limits to the latitude open to national politics when he argues that Thailand's brand of money politics results from the structural power of capital (p. 39). Indeed, his own incisive analysis and the hopes he pins on a growing civil society suggest a different and less mechanical view.

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The Secret Vietnam War: The United States Air Force in Thailand, 1961–1975.
By JEFFREY D. GLASSER. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland and Co., 1995. xxiv,
263 pp. \$48.00 (cloth).

During the Second Indochina War, the United States used air power on an enormous scale, and in a great variety of ways. Jeffrey Glasser played a supporting role in the last stages of the air campaign, in 1972 and 1973, maintaining the electronic equipment of U.S. aircraft at a base in Thailand. Years later, he became frustrated at his inability to find a book that would give him a broader picture of the way the United States had used such bases, and he began the research that led to *The Secret Vietnam War*.

It is indeed valuable to have a history that traces year by year what the U.S. Air Force did in and from Thailand, not just the bombing missions but also search and rescue for downed pilots, aerial refueling, airborne command and control, reconnaissance, and so forth. The book will find considerable use as a reference for details on equipment, tactics, and which U.S. Air Force units were stationed at what bases in what years.

Jeffrey Glasser's interest in Thailand is primarily as a country where the United States used air bases; he says little about Thailand itself. When he ventures away from the Thai-based air campaign to provide some context, it is usually to discuss events in Vietnam, not things that occurred in Thailand other than the air campaign, or even the other ways in which Thailand was involved in the war.

For the most part Glasser approves of the air campaign he is describing, and he sometimes exaggerates its accomplishments. Some of the limitations of his book are frustrating. His research has mixed information from published sources, interviews, and a considerable variety of unpublished Air Force records and reports, but the lack of source notes leaves one unable to use his work as a guide to further research. The number of errors in the first thirty-five pages is excessive, and even after that there are occasional problems, such as a great exaggeration of the area in Laos that was off limits to U.S. airstrikes (p. 79), and erroneous figures indicating that the United States dropped more tons of bombs on North Vietnam than on the South through 1967 (p. 108). The United States actually dropped about twice as many tons on the South. The maps, borrowed from U.S. Air Force publications, have odd errors, most conspicuously the course shown for the Mekong River (p. 3) and the locations shown for Da Nang and Tchepone (p. 7).