

sus in Laos), the mapping of social dynamics containing historical depth, such as migration flows, can only indicate very recent changes, i.e. during the 1985–1995 period.

It would go too far to mention all the fascinating, and very often quite original, maps. The mapping of population structure and population dynamics is without doubt one of the gems of this atlas of Laos. The potentially most challenging section in the entire volume is chapter 10 as it puts modern Laos into a wider regional perspective. For example, the map showing the historical development of communication routes “from the caravan trails to the new transportation axes of the peninsula” (p. 153) is most interesting. Likewise excellent is the model of the spatial dynamics of Lao PDR (p. 157).

A few shortcomings include two historical maps (p. 151), notably the map showing the Kingdom of Lan Xang “organised into three territories and one principality, maintaining close ties with two northern confederations” (i.e. Sipsông Panna and Sipsông Chuthai). This map shows the northern Thai polity of Lan Na (present-day northern Thailand) as one single kingdom. However, by the beginning of the 18th century, i.e. at the time when Lan Xang had broken into three separate kingdoms, Lan Na was no longer a unified entity either, but had disintegrated into various smaller autonomous polities each under Burmese suzerainty.

The Atlas of Laos is a masterpiece of Lao-French scholarship, its usefulness for students of modern Laos – geographers, social scientists, development experts, and people from other disciplines – is immense.

Volker Grabowsky

MARTIN STUART-FOX, *Historical Dictionary of Laos*, 2nd edition. (Asian/Oceanian Historical Dictionaries Series, 35), Lanham/London: Scarecrow Press, 2001. LXII, 527 pages, 14 maps, \$ 75.00. ISBN 0-8108-3880-X

This is a completely revised and enlarged edition of the *Historical Dictionary of Laos* by Martin Stuart-Fox, compiled in collaboration with Mary Kooyman, published more than a decade ago. The second edition indeed marks a significant improvement as the author was able to draw on the results of his own intensive research on Lao history in recent years. The volume contains hundreds of entries reaching from “(colonial) administration” to “Zhenla” (name of an ancient Khmer kingdom whose centre was presumably in present-day southern Laos) and covering a wide range of topics. The very detailed bibliography contains a short essay on the state of the art of historical writings on Laos. Useful information on the genealogy of Lao kings, the composition of colonial and post-colonial (royal as well as revolutionary) Lao governments, and demographic data are listed in the appendices. Stuart-Fox’s *Historical Dictionary of Laos* is exceptionally meticulous and accurate for the post-1953 period on which the author’s *original* research has focussed so far.

One major improvement of the second edition is the new system of transcribing Lao names. Whereas the first edition followed the French system of Romanisation which is a bit unfamiliar to a non-French audience, the new system is closer to a phonetic transcription of Lao proper names as vowel lengths are now indicated. A list of alternative spellings (pp. XXIX-XXX) helps to locate entries in the dictionary. The current President of Laos and leader of the communist party, Khamtay Sipandone is now spelled Khamtai Sépahandôn, and the Lao capital Vientiane is now written Viang Chan. However, the present reviewer sees no reason why Stuart-Fox has not applied his transcription system to Siamese and other Tai proper names as well (for example, Täksin instead of Taksin or Ayutthayā instead of Ayutthaya). With the same logic one is tempted to ask why diacritics were also neglected for words of Sanskrit and Pali origin (like *maṇḍala*).

Fourteen maps show the political and ethno-linguistic division of contemporary Laos, while sketches of historical maps are included as well. In this context, Stuart-Fox uses the term *maṇḍala* to explain the nature of the pre-colonial polities in Laos and other parts of mainland Southeast Asia. This term is later explained as "an Indian geopolitical term referring to a variable circle of power centred on a ruler, his palace, and the religious centre from which he drew his legitimacy" (p. 198), but this certainly does not suffice to justify the use of the term *maṇḍala* simply as an equivalent to the pre-colonial polity in Southeast Asia. The Lao and the other Tai peoples prefer the term *müang* (*meuang*) which seems to be of higher explanatory value. The crucial term *müang* is explained very briefly as well, on just seven lines (sic!):

"*Meuang*. Historically a political and geographic entity of variable extent whose population owed allegiance and paid taxes to the *chao meuang* or ruling prince. Smaller *meuang* in turn paid tribute to more powerful *meuang* to form a *mandala*. Under the French the *meuang* was an administrative district, or canton, a designation that continued under both the Kingdom of Laos and the Lao People's Democratic Republic. In Laos today there are officially 112 (in fact: 132, V.G.) *meuang*."

This short paragraph does not adequately explain the flexible and complex nature of the traditional Tai-Lao polity which is characterised by a hierarchy of *müang*, which is essentially a centre-oriented political term (see subsequent entry "Meuang Lao"). The author's familiarity with Lao primary sources, notably with regard to the pre-colonial period, seems to be limited, as is demonstrated by a relatively brief and too general entry on Lao chronicles (p. 64f.). The volume also suffers from a lack of background information about the relations between Lan Xang ("[land] of a million elephants", ancient name of the Lao kingdom) and her neighbours. To mention just one example: The well-written introduction mentions that King Phothisarat (reigned 1520-1547) unified the kingdoms of Lan Xang and Lan Na "briefly" (p. 7). Why and how did the Lao king succeed in uniting two kingdoms in a personal union, and why did this

alliance hold just a few years? At this point the reader would have expected a few remarks on the close cultural relations between Lan Xang and Lan Na. The influence of Lan Na on the development of Lao Buddhism and traditional literature was significant. The entry "alphabet" (p.21) mentions the religious Lao script called Dhammā script (*tua aksòn tham*) but fails to note that this script was imported from Lan Na – unlike the secular *Lao Buhan* script (not explicitly mentioned). Completely off the mark is Stuart-Fox's characterisation of the principality of Nan as a polity which "was occasionally tributary to Lan Xang, but more often to Lan Na, and always a bone of contention between the two." In fact, Nan became an integral part of the Lan Na polity in the mid-15th century; even during the period of Burmese hegemony she never recognised the suzerainty of Luang Prabang or Vientiane.

Notwithstanding these shortcomings, the revised edition of the *Historical Dictionary of Laos* constitutes a very important contribution to our knowledge of the history of this small country which the author calls "without doubt the least known country in Southeast Asia". We hope that some of the mistakes or inaccuracies related to pre-colonial Lao history will be rectified or amended in a third edition.

Volker Grabowsky

KRISTINA CHHIM, *Die Revolutionäre Volkspartei Kampuchea 1979 bis 1989. Eine Analyse der politischen Herrschaft einer nach der vietnamesischen Intervention reorganisierten Kommunistischen Partei.* (Europäische Hochschulschriften, Reihe 3: Geschichte und ihre Hilfswissenschaften, Bd. 888). Frankfurt a.M. et al.: Peter Lang, 2000. 445 Seiten, € 75,-. ISBN 3-631-37380-5

Seit dem 7. Januar 1979 befindet sich die ‚Revolutionäre Volkspartei Kampuchea‘, heute ‚Kambodschanische Volkspartei‘ an der Macht. Kristina Chhim's historisch-politikwissenschaftliche Studie zur Entwicklung der Revolutionären Volkspartei Kampuchea zwischen 1979 und 1989 zeichnet, basierend auf einer umfangreichen Recherche in kambodschanischen Archiven und Bibliotheken, eindrucksvoll den Aufstieg, die innerparteilichen Krisen und die Machtkonsolidierung der CPP in Kambodscha nach. Die Studie stellt damit einen historisch wertvollen Beitrag zur Parteienforschung in Südostasien dar und ist gleichzeitig ein unentbehrliches Nachschlage- und Studienwerk für all jene, die die gegenwärtigen politischen, maßgeblich von der Kambodschanischen Volkspartei bestimmten Entwicklungen des Landes verfolgen.

Wie aufgezeigt wird, hat die Kambodschanische Volkspartei ihre Machtstrukturen zwischen 1979 und 1989 gefestigt und auf Grundlage dieser Strukturen ihre ökonomische und politische Macht in Kambodscha bis zum heutigen Tage halten können. Die Partei hat sich als sehr reformfähig und an neue politische Gegebenheiten anpassende Politbewegung profiliert: zunächst dem Radikal-