

cultural capital that single working women can accrue. These women negotiate a charged landscape of ideas about women's roles, Vietnamese tradition, "Western" individuality and romantic love.

Earl's richly detailed study of the lives of migrant women in Ho Chi Minh City contributes important insights to a growing literature on new Asian middle classes that has moved beyond bewilderment at spectacular consumption to focus on their members' anxieties, pleasures and heterogeneity. In persuasively highlighting the need to attend to connections between gender and class, Earl may overstate the "gender blindness" (p. 240) of prior class analysis, particularly given decades of scholarship emphasizing intersectionality. That such intersectionality is vividly apparent throughout the ethnography suggests a missed opportunity to theorize the ways in which gender and class are co-constructed through individual agency and experience.

Vietnam's New Middle Classes effectively illuminates the everyday realities and diversity of middle-class women's experiences. It will become required reading for scholars and students of contemporary Vietnam and offers instructive comparison for readers interested in gender, urban culture and class in Asia and beyond.

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Women on the Move: Hanoi's Migrant Roving Street Vendors. By Rolf Jensen, Donald M. Peppard, Jr. and Vũ Thị Minh Thắng. Hanoi: Women's Publishing House, 2013. 164 pp.

Based on over a decade of research, *Women on the Move* provides a comprehensive examination of the lives of female migrant street vendors in Hanoi. The book is divided into three main sections: "Village Life", "The Decision to Migrate" and "Life in Hanoi". Taken together, these sections provide a detailed description of the sociocultural and economic contexts of these migrants' lives, their

motivations and aspirations, and their experiences as roving vendors in Hanoi.

The authors relied on over 2,000 quantitative surveys and on in-depth interviews with thirty migrant vendors to illuminate many aspects of the women's lives. Included throughout the book are in-text boxes on the personal experiences of specific women; these are helpful to illustrate the authors' points and provide a human face to the data presented.

The book also offers meticulous accounts not only of the economic but also of the cultural and social pressures that compelled the women to become "basket ladies", a term that, according to the authors, is commonly used to refer to roving street vendors. In rural areas the complex system of social reciprocity and religious rituals have intensified in the *Đổi Mới* period and have placed significant demands on household budgets. Coupled with inadequate land, this situation makes it challenging for many families to survive on farming income alone.

Another important topic explored in the book is the dynamics of female-dominated migration and its effects on gender relations. According to the authors' findings, the female-dominated migration pattern does not in itself deviate significantly from prevailing gender practices or change the conventional roles or expectations of women — for example, when migrants are away, their husbands perform some of the housework that the women typically do, but the majority of the husbands surveyed relied on their children and/or relatives to help. More tellingly, when the women return — either temporarily or permanently — much of the housework once again becomes their responsibility.

The most compelling section of the book is the one describing the women's lives in Hanoi. Not only is the work of roving vendors exhausting, requiring them to shoulder heavy baskets all day, but these women are also vulnerable to robbery, bullying and cheating by customers and wholesalers. As expected, many of these women also suffer significant stress and emotional turmoil as a result of being away from their families. Moreover, recent government attempts to

improve Hanoi's modern image by restricting the activities of roving vendors has created more anxiety and challenges for these migrants. As a result, the vendors work in constant fear of being caught and fined by the police.

The onerous impact of this new law on roving vendors is a concern of the authors, and they conclude the book with a plea to the authorities to ease the restrictions. While doing away with these restrictions would be helpful in the short term, it is regretful that the authors did not emphasize the need for longer-term and more thoroughgoing improvements to the plight of these vendors. As the work of roving vendors is extraordinarily burdensome, a call for employment alternatives in the locales from which these women migrate appears to me the logical conclusion to this study. But, rather than depicting the phenomenon of circular migration as problematic, the authors state in the introduction "the women in this book also represent an example of the success of Vietnam's reforms.... They have taken advantage of the ability of families to control their economic lives and reap the benefits that private sales can confer" (p. 7). While it is true that the women and their families have taken advantage of the freedom afforded to them by *Đổi Mới*, the fact remains that they have been compelled to migrate for work because of poverty and a lack of local opportunities. As the authors themselves contend, the rural families pursue this line of work out of economic necessity, because "a large number of rural families simply cannot survive on agriculture alone" (p. 2).

On a lesser point, I would have liked to see the literature review incorporated into the text rather than relegated to the appendix. A direct engagement with the existing scholarship would have provided more context for an appreciation of the empirical contribution of the research and allowed in turn for engagement with theoretical concerns.

This book has a great deal to offer. It is an accessible work that may attract general readers as well as specialists. One comes away from it with a better understanding of some of the changes that have gripped rural Vietnam in the last decade. Readers will certainly gain

more appreciation and admiration for the women who undertake the sort of work described in order to improve the living conditions of their families.

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Land for the People: The State and Agrarian Conflict in Indonesia. Edited by Anton Lucas and Carol Warren. Ohio University Research in International Studies: Southeast Asia series No 126. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2013. 405 pp.

While this book began with an Australian Research Council grant to Anton Lucas and Carol Warren in 1998, its focus has been widened and its time frame expanded to include several general descriptions of land-related laws and struggles in Indonesia, and six case studies from across the country. The time frame now encompasses the final decade of Soeharto's New Order regime between 1988 and 1998, with a backward glance at Sukarno's "Old Order"; the heady years of Reformasi, decentralization, popular protest and land occupation from 1998 to the winding back of some reforms in 2004; and the government of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono up to 2012.

Lucas and Warren set the scene in Chapter One, beginning with an analysis of the 1960 Basic Agrarian Law (BAL/UUPA 5/60) and its treatment under both the Old and New Orders, especially its famous qualification that acknowledgment of the territorial rights of *adat* communities must accord with the national interest. They point out that "the most acute conflicts" during the Soeharto period were caused by this application of "national interest" to the disposition of "state lands", both those classified as forests and those previously occupied by colonial-era plantations on Java and Sumatra (p. 9). In addition, urban and industrial areas were cleared of "squatters"