

example, Teh's treatment of neotraditionalism as a "mute product of Thailand's cultural globalization" (p. 186) occludes practices that might complicate such framing, such as the work of mural painter Paiboon Suwannakudt. Similarly, his positioning of premodern Southeast Asia as a model for radical autonomy does not take into account forms of cultural power that, as Thompson posits, may reconfigure the implications of "free will" (Thompson 2016, p. 179) in this context. However, these should be taken as minor criticisms that do not detract from Teh's nuanced and theoretically sharp scholarship, which will be of immense value to a wide readership interested in contemporary art.

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Imperial Intoxication: Alcohol and the Making of Colonial Indochina. By Gerard Sasges. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2017. viii+280 pp.

This study stands out, first and foremost, for its meticulous and original research: the author has made fine use of previously unutilized library collections in Dijon, France, of archives in several locales in Vietnam, Cambodia, Paris, Aix-en-Provence and beyond. In addition, *Imperial Intoxication* makes original contributions to multiple fields: political economy, the history of science and technology, the study of environment and space, the history of the colonial state, the study

of development, and the impact of French colonialism and its limits, to name only a few.

Sasges shows the staggering size of the *douanes et régies* administration (customs and monopolies), pointing out that it stood at more than twice that of the colony's next largest department, and more than five times the size of Indochina's fledgling education system. He follows different alcohol regimes and uses multiple analytical tools to reveal major differences between the north and the south, and between the lands that now comprise Vietnam and Cambodia. Sasges' nuanced and sophisticated study challenges the often arbitrary and overly simplistic conceptions of colonial modernity or colonial hegemony, and demonstrates how oppressive and exploitative this pillar of the French colonial economy proved to be. The study also reveals the entanglements of medicine with alcohol production. Sasges contends that the "conceptual distance" (p. 31) between the science of vaccines as practised by the Pasteur Institute's Albert Calmette and his implication in the lucrative distilling business "was not as great as it might first appear" (p. 31).

Some of the micro-biographies that emerge from the book are truly fascinating. Calmette, the enterprising scientist just mentioned who was famous for his tuberculosis vaccine, left a mark on industrial alcohol production during his brief three years in Indochina. By studying the fermentation of Chinese and Japanese rice liquor, Calmette was able to more than double the yields of traditional methods — although this did not guarantee that his product would be considered tasty; quite the contrary. Similarly, A.R. Fontaine's remarkable rags to riches — and back to rags — saga as the monopoly's distillery magnate strikes me as emblematic of French Indochina's own boom and bust cycles. So too, incidentally, was Fontaine's shrewd but ruthless and corrupt business model. Sasges makes wonderful use of previously neglected sources from Fontaine's personal library to formulate conclusions on his political and social iconoclasm. Fontaine is depicted with considerable nuance. His later involvement in the new student quarter in Paris (Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris) highlights the ways in which colonial magnates

attempted to manage and navigate the dusk of empire back home in the metropole.

In the realm of the history of science, Sasges rightly highlights the impact of Jean Effront on Albert Calmette. Effront's invention of a terrifying product known as *viandine*, a meat substitute derived from waste, manifestly influenced Calmette in his cooperation with Fontaine. The two devised a scheme whereby byproducts of the rice transformation process could be channelled into a product known as amylosine, which in turn was introduced into a supposedly improved version of the ubiquitous Vietnamese fish sauce. Rice, fish sauce and rice wine became major capitalist stakes, linked as they were to the French colonial state monopoly of alcohol that was enacted in the late-nineteenth century, and to the staples of Vietnamese cuisine.

Taxation, extraction and coercion also represent important leitmotifs in this study. Sasges rightly underscores how the alcohol monopoly's influence "waned as distance increased from the centre" (p. 81), rendering it essentially non-existent in Cambodia, where a market of rival distillers kept costs low and unreliable communications curtailed French fiscal efforts to extend it westward. Sasges charts forms of opposition and resistance, from individuals turning a blind eye to cheating, to villagers refusing tax officials entry past their gates, to armed revolt in the face of either appalling colonial violence or blatant cultural or religious insensitivity. The trappings of colonial justice surface throughout the text, as do indications of its everyday practices. The mere presence of a pot in a kitchen could pass for evidence of illegal alcohol. Officials were frustrated by their lack of mastery of local languages. The glass ceiling encountered by Vietnamese functionaries is also made manifest, as in an instance where a Vietnamese man cheating on an administrative exam was disqualified, while his French competitors were not.

It is likewise fascinating to note that some of the most exploitative voices in this study were also deeply concerned about the transformation and uprooting of so-called "traditional Indochina" to which they themselves had so potently contributed. The same impulse that drove Henry Ford to build a replica of a bygone America he had refashioned no doubt impelled these colonials to advocate a

return to tradition, royalism and Confucianism — all the while guzzling “hygienic” new rice wine and standardized fish sauce from industrial byproducts.

I have only a handful of minor critiques to make. The archives of the Institut Pasteur in Paris — in particular, the Fonds Calmette — might have been consulted by the author. Furthermore, it would have been good to see some engagement with the work of Erica Peters (2010), whose doctoral dissertation dealt in part with rice wine in nineteenth-century Vietnam. Finally, although Fontaine had been deceased for a decade by then, the virtual autarky in which Indochina found itself in 1941, and its sudden swing into the orbit of Japan a year prior, might have provided an interesting postscript for this study which essentially ends in the 1930s.

In the final analysis, this is a fascinating book. Its many ramifications will make it of interest to scholars in several disciplines. Sasges depicts a colonial state as addicted to alcohol revenue as it is torn by the challenges involved in collecting the revenue in question.

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Violent Neoliberalism: Development, Discourse, and Dispossession in Cambodia. By Simon Springer. New York: Routledge. 2015. xi+219 pp.

Violent Neoliberalism explores the implications and, more specifically, the negative externalities of global capitalism, drawing on Cambodia’s experience with dispossession and turbo-capitalist development as a