

chain management (Ch 27). The chapters in Part IV will especially appeal to economists and market practitioners interested in the management and technological aspects of GVCs.

In the concluding segment, Part V, policy issues are broadly discussed in eight chapters (Ch 28–35). The opening chapter (Ch 28) in this part does not focus on policies *per se* but provides policymakers with a view of the overarching canvass through sketches of the evolutionary and historical changes that have occurred during the emergence and development of GVCs. The follow-up chapters deal with broad and specific policy discussions in the areas of upgrading (Chs 29–31), trade policy (Ch 32), public-private partnerships (Ch 33), government/state (Ch 34) and international development organizations (Ch 35).

Overall, this volume is an important resource for both seasoned and new scholars researching GVCs. Many of the authors in this book have made significant contributions to the research literature on GVCs, thereby making this a comprehensive and authoritative volume. This publication also strives to be as inclusive as possible by embracing a wide range of different approaches that have been used in various fields and disciplines to study GVCs. Some of these approaches include business, economics, economic geography, political economy and sociology. The diversity and plurality of methods in this volume are not necessarily a weakness. For mainstream economists starting to research GVCs, this volume will be particularly useful in broadening their perspectives in terms of some of the key developmental, social and political issues that have been discussed in other disciplines. Although policymakers may not find the time or inclination to read the entire volume, they are encouraged to dip into this book to understand better the wide variety of issues and concerns about GVCs and development. Students engaged in the GVC literature, irrespective of their field of study, will certainly find this a valuable reference. The chapters provide readers with concise summaries of the various lines of research approaches in the study of GVCs.

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***In the Shadow of the Palms: More-Than-Human Becomings in West Papua*, by Sophie Chao.** Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2022, Pp. 336.

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*In the Shadow of the Palms* is a moving tribute to the Marind people of the Upper Bian River, West Papua. Sophie Chao pens an anthropological take on the dark side of development economics—an agribusiness narrative that wreaks destruction, death and dastardly dreaming in its expansion. Her post-humanist analysis of rural development explores the more-than-human becomings in this region, where virgin forests and mangroves fall prey to the insatiable hunger for oil palm.

Chao's book is ground-breaking in many ways. She takes an innovative approach to plant-human relations by giving the invasive species *agency*, tapping on *plant turn*, an interdisciplinary methodology that sees oil palm as “communicative, sentient and world-making actors” (p. 8).

But it is not just this interminable crop that takes on a life of its own. Sago, too, is an active organism in the Upper Bian, and in the lives of the Marind. A distant cousin of the oil palm, it is the lifeblood of the people. The author expertly weaves its stories with that of an indigenous community that faces extermination as much as the plants that symbolize their history, culture and spirituality. To the Marind, this wilderness is more than what they seem and their engagement with the vegetation is a mutual nurturing for longstanding coexistence.

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Chao insists that what she writes is co-created with the community that has become her family. She is merely their voice, and the stories she relates come from the Marind themselves—they have decided what she should tell, and how it should be written. This is the work of a true ethnographer, deftly decolonizing anthropology by ensuring that she writes the tales her people want her to share.

She was no parachute researcher in this endeavour. Chao spent more than just a few months in the field, following in the footsteps of her Marind elders, sisters and brothers. She explored what remains of their forests, listening to its more-than-human residents, and she went with them when they were summoned to the big city to listen to the spiel of the agribusinesses. She truly became one with the community when she, too, experienced the pain of oil palm consuming her in her sleep, through her dreams, as it did everyone else in the community. Sophie Chao set out “to tell the story well” (p. 24)—and this, she definitely did.

There are several themes in this book, but it is primarily a side to rural development that few ever see. Many NGOs enter communities like these with the good intention of helping them map their lands and fight for their rights. Others try to provide them with skills that might enable them to benefit from the “opportunities” that these businesses purport to bring. The Marind of the Upper Bian reject these efforts.

The arrival of oil palm heralded an era where “time has come to a stop” (p. 176), and with that, any need to contemplate the future. This is how the Marind resist the change that has been imposed on them, a “politics of refusal” (p. 178) that they use to deny a progress-driven disposition that requires them to chase an imagined future that in its expectations, condemns and trivializes everything that matters to them (Ch 7).

There is more to a forest than just trees. While the NGOs try to get a Marind to map their lands, it is a near-impossible task when a forest cannot be fully understood by mere sight. These are multidimensional spaces traversed by sound, memories and “shared wetness”. Animals and plants are kin (*amai*), and humans (*anim*) are but a small component of this ever-moving ecosystem.

Chao retells her experience audio mapping the community’s pathways (Ch 2)—a near-impossible task. She relates how, when a Marind gets hold of a development plan, they deconstruct it with disdain. There are no straight lines in a forest, and the forest is dead when seen from the top. Like the inadequacy of drone footage, there is no way that these aerial depictions of a landscape can sufficiently portray every nook, cranny and significance of a forest that can only be properly understood from below.

Individual trees are recognized in relation to spirits, shared histories, sweat and tears. Every space on the Marind’s path has meaning, memory and feelings attached to it. When there are no longer sounds of the cassowary, cicadas and pigs, the overpowering silence (or the incessant reverberation of chainsaws and bulldozers) indicates the death (or murder) of what was once a thriving, living landscape.

Top-down maps are seen as *abu-abu* (greyness or dust)—the clouding of a living space and multi-sensory maps that “do not sit still” (p. 67); purposely deceitful attempts to create confusion. It is for all these reasons that the Marind cannot map their lands as the NGOs expect them to.

It is only through Chao’s sharing that the reader begins to understand that it is not that the Marind refuses to cooperate, but that maps are just not sophisticated enough to meet their needs. They are wholly inadequate for the telling of the Marind’s stories of their forest spaces.

*Abu-abu* is a concept that Chao returns to often throughout the book. It is the murkiness of the air as dust rises along logging roads; the lack of transparency through which Indonesian soldiers morph between border guards and plantation paramilitary; and the ecology of fear that leads to the harassment of any Papuan (especially female) in their path. It is in this world of *abu-abu* that plastic dominates (p. 107). It is yet another deception in the instant noodles and other foods-with-oil-palm-in-them offered to the Papuans; glossy but dissatisfying—so unhealthy that it makes people physically weak. As forests decline and wild animals gravitate to the villages for food and shelter, non-biodegradable plastic waste accumulates and the Marind do not know what to do with both.

Oil palm is always hungry. It eats the land, it eats the sago—and when the Marind are asleep, it eats them in their dreams. It makes the rivers run backwards, red with the blood of those it has killed. Oil palm is at once a murderer, yet also a victim, a plant that has also been colonized by man and forced to live, grow and breed in unnatural ways, away from its homeland, alone (Ch 6). While the Marind see this plant as a perpetrator, they also feel sorry for it.

Chao shows us the complicated connections that the Marind have with this plant, how it engenders betrayal amongst the elite who forsake their people and land for its promises of wealth and progress, or absorbs others who end up working in the very plantations they once abhorred. These individuals tell Chao they are creating new relationships with this oil palm, which is acknowledged as distant kin, and look towards a day when there might be new stories with oil palm as a new way of knowing and being.

At times, Chao seems circuitous and repetitive in her writing, but this is only because there are so many layers to unpack, and just like the forest—there are no straight lines in the Marind's relationship with animal, plant and oil palm. Her writing is vivid and enthralling; her sharing of local songs, raw vignettes and lucid dreams brings the reader with her into the lives of the Marind. As dream sharing is a form of therapy for the community, Chao admits that this book is also written from a place of grief—and written “out of defiance and responsibility” (p. 24).

This was a story that needed to be told. A counter-narrative to the development agenda that promises a rosy future, without elaborating on the destruction and loss that it entails. The loss of sacred sago groves and forests dispossesses the Marind from themselves. Chao's deeply thought-provoking and riveting tome is both theoretical and real, development economics and the anthropology of slow violence. It is a homage to an indigenous community with their own means of resistance—until they too finally fall prey to oil palm.

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***The Economic Consequences of Globalization on Thailand*, by Juthathip Jongwanich.** Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2022. Pp. 288.

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This book examines the impact of globalization on Thailand, which began liberalizing its economy in the 1960s. During that period, tariffs were reduced while non-tariff barriers were used to protect sensitive products, especially agricultural goods. In Thailand, comprehensive tariff reduction policies were implemented stringently between 1995 and 1997, and again in 2003. As such, the decline in average tariff can be observed from 1995 onwards. Even though empirical studies from other developing countries on the impact of liberalization on raising Total Factor Productivity (TFP) and altering structural employment in favour of skilled labour are less conclusive, this book provides a clear answer to how globalization has affected TFP and employment in the Thai manufacturing sector.

The volume follows a sequential structure. Chapter 1 provides a useful liberalization timeline of the country. Thailand began with an import substitution policy in the 1960s, before switching to export promotion over the next two decades. Further liberalization measures incentivized many multinational enterprises (MNEs) to participate in the country's manufacturing sector, resulting in an increase in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflow, and improved production technology and management knowledge—

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