

of heroic patriots versus stories of hardship and suffering, and a total silence regarding the violent death of the last king of Laos in a re-education camp. Tappe's attention to the historicity, diversity, complexity and contradictions of everyday social life and livelihood stands out in the collection.

If the book inspires a follow-up volume, I hope for a focus on cities and towns and on the contemporary diversity of the Lao people that questions the easy binary of lowland Lao and highland ethnic others. One analytical angle that the collection does not bring up is the areal and comparative (Southeast Asian) dimension.

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Consumption and Vietnam's New Middle Classes: Societal Transformations and Everyday Life. By Arve Hansen. London: Palgrave Macmillan Cham, 2022. xv+203 pp.

Ethnographies of economic transition and accompanying social transformations can have short shelf lives for contemporary societal analysis in a country like Vietnam, where GDP growth has been one of the highest in Asia for over a generation. Situated field research is essential to document the rapid developments that have long been under way in the country and region. Nonetheless, given the inevitable temporal lag of long-term fieldwork and subsequent academic publishing, book-length studies of economic transitions

often make their strongest contributions as archives of the everyday anticipations and apprehensions that accompanied accumulated structural changes. Such in situ reflections are often forgotten as the navigational vicissitudes of those social histories become retrospectively generalized, reified and mapped onto analytical apexes such as Đổi Mới.

Arve Hansen's book is an ambitious study that endeavours to analyse a broad swath of socio-economic developments that have been radically reorganizing Vietnamese society in recent years. The book is based on multiple fieldwork trips to Hanoi between 2010 and 2019 and is largely focused on urban transitions and consumer patterns that the author observed in that particular city rather than Vietnam as a whole. There, the author examines a number of at first seemingly disparate developments related to consumption trends among middle class Hanoians. These include the emergence of a particular kind of post-command economy Asian socialist consumer, the analysis of which partially parallels analytical frameworks employed in China. The author puts these analyses in conversation with broader literatures about agency, provision systems and practice to then ground his descriptions of "everyday geographies of consumption" (p. 44) in Vietnam. These geographies proceed through a chapter about shifting practices and attitudes towards automobiles, motorcycles and bikes; another on transitions in caloric intakes, eating out and fast food cultures driven by changing household structures, work cycles and spending capacities; a third about the growth in Vietnamese meat provision and consumption; and finally one about electricity usage and accompanying bodily relations to and attitudes towards the environment. Hansen concludes by reflecting on what this all means for Vietnamese and global sustainability, critical discourses that are also urgently growing and circulating among middle class Vietnamese.

The book provides useful secondary data related to all of these issues, painting a compelling and oftentimes alarming consequential macro portrait of the rapid consumption uptake that is under way in Vietnam. Interspersed throughout the presentations of quantitative data are valuable qualitative insights into Vietnamese reflections

on the developmental road they are travelling. One informant, for example, reflects on how Vietnamese have gone from having too little meat to too much, observing that the basic portions of meat content in a simple bowl of *phở* have been growing noticeably in recent years. This phenomenon, Hansen argues, is perhaps more reflective of the growth of the meat industry and concomitant supply chains as part and parcel of Vietnamese development policy support for agricultural and livestock production. In other words, the growth of meat consumption is not necessarily indicative of an inherent or inevitable appetite for meat-sourced protein that accompanies income growth.

In relating a variety of broader global consumption trends that can be tracked across many developing economies, the author carefully attends to their accommodations and at times resistances in the particular context of Vietnam. Another example of these developmental trends, moto-mobilities, or relations to motorcycles as they have historically developed, are connected to particular forms of mobile consumption and social practices in Vietnam. These practices are not so easily replaced by the automobile without radically transforming the everyday neighbourhood infrastructures that many Hanoians remain attached to. It may be then that electro moto-mobility, rather than auto-mobility, will be an alternative way forward for urban mobility in Vietnam. By the same token, many Vietnamese feel strongly about the particularities of their local food and the inherent properties they entail. “Fast food” may certainly involve transformations in how food is consumed, including their rapid delivery by a moto-mobile system of Grab and other service providers, but may not ultimately entail a “Westernization” of food brands and cuisines.

Overall, the seemingly disparate consumption sectors presented in each of the book’s chapters, from cars to meat and electricity, are convincingly brought together to paint a dynamic picture of a society undergoing rapid transformation, yet not un-reflexive of the transitions under way or without ideal visions of the horizons it is navigating towards. The book could sometimes benefit from deeper

ethnographic engagements with how Vietnamese see themselves caught within these shifting systems of provision and the competing navigational capacities they may apprehend as state citizens and market consumers, including their reflections on the social inequalities entailed by the staggered distribution of political and economic affordances. Interview responses related in the text do not extensively elaborate on the characters of the author's interlocutors or detail the contexts of the neighbourhoods in which they reside, for example. The straightforward details that are conveyed primarily relate to profession, gender and age, generally reflecting ethnographic engagements with a young professional middle-class set of informants who share a similar urban habitus.

Hansen offers students and scholars of emerging economies, and of Vietnam, an important social science intervention that links to broader analyses of consumption and sustainability. The book provides a critical overview of the economic transitions that a younger generation of Vietnamese has experienced in the twenty-first century, offering insight into how Hanoians in particular have perceived and grappled with them. It paves the way for more ethnographic studies to further examine how many of the specificities of the issues described continue to evolve, and how they might be tracked or compared with other urban, sub-urban or rural landscapes in different parts of the country. As an example, the recent growth of high-end vegetarian and vegan restaurants in cities like Saigon, many attached more to discourses about bodily health and organic food sourcing than traditional religious or spiritual practices and diets, is already perhaps a particular localized consumer reaction to the "meatification" trend described in the book. Such developments and responses, which will continue to evolve in new and unanticipated ways, ultimately demonstrate Hansen's point that economic growth and consumption preferences rarely follow inevitable or singular trajectories.

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