

Recent Books from Thailand – April 2023

Mary Martin Booksellers Pte Ltd
Blk 231, Bain Street
#03-05, Bras Basah Complex
Singapore 180231
Tel : +65-6883-2284/6883-2204
info@marymartin.com
www.marymartin.com

Biography/Memoirs

Monarchy, Revolution and Refugees: Laos - Thailand - Argentina - Kampuchea: A Personal View / Walter Irvine (Ed) Narisa Chakrabongse
Bangkok: River Books Co., Ltd., 2022
332p.
Includes Index; Bibliography
9786164510654
\$ 39.95 / PB
722gm.

Walter Irvine's account places his personal experiences against the political and cultural changes that surrounded the Lao and Cambodian revolutions of the 1970s and 80s, giving particular attention to refugee movements and their impact. Irvine's professional involvement as teacher in Laos, Social Anthropologist in Thailand and UNHCR official in Argentina gives him an insider's understanding of the specificity of culture, the dynamics of political change, the realities of forced exile, and the challenges of refugee work. His description of revisiting Indochina in 2016 puts the account of the earlier period into perspective. The text is illustrated with the author's photographs. "A fascinating, detailed and richly illustrated account of personal experiences in Laos, Thailand, Argentina and Cambodia in the 1970s and 80s. Based on copious contemporary diary entries, and enriched by sharp political and sociological analysis, the book will enhance the reader's understanding of the history and cultures of South-East Asia, and of the work of UNHCR. Martin Barber Associate Fellow, Chatham House; retired UN official, with extensive experience in Laos and Thailand; author of 'Blinded by Humanity'.

- first-hand account of the fall of the Lao monarchy.
- fascinating account of Thai spirit mediums
- astute political and sociological analysis

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=835619>

History

Enchanted Land: Foreign Writings about Chiang Mai in the Early 20th Century / (Ed)
Graham Jefcoate
Bangkok: River Books Press Co. Ltd., 2023
288p.
Includes Index
9786164510647
\$ 39.95 / HB
452gm.

A century ago, northern Thailand (or Siam, as it was then known) was home to small communities of westerners, many of them British diplomats and foresters (like Reginald Le May and Reginald Campbell) or American missionaries (like Lucy Starling and Mary Lou O'Brien). Though few in number, they left behind a considerable written legacy. Their writing is invariably personal and often vivid, describing their hopes and aspirations, the challenges they faced in their work and daily lives, and their attachment to this "enchanted land". This book makes a selection of that writing accessible to a wide readership, much of it for the first time. The texts are illustrated by 65 evocative photographs, many of them contemporary. Graham Jefcoate was born in England and studied English and Library Science in Cambridge and London. He has spent much of his adult life abroad, now a retired librarian living in Chiang Mai. He took an increasing interest in Thailand when he became Head of Early Printed Collections at the British Library in London in 1997, even became a member of the committee of the AngloThai Society. In recent years, he has become interested in the life of the Anglo-American community in Chiang Mai and the north of Thailand before the Pacific War and gave lectures and workshops from his research for Payap University.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=847309>

Literature

Slow Steps to Love: A Novel / Tew Bunnag
Bangkok: River Books Press Co. Ltd., 2023
336p.
9786164510753
\$ 32.95 / PB
402gm.

Living in Baan Suan, a family mansion, Chai is a disillusioned writer, blocked physically and spiritually. Like the house, he has been both a witness and participant in the events that shaped modern Bangkok. A child of privilege, Chai has lived comfortably but without the passion and the depth of experience he had once craved. When he meets Yai Li – a healer from the slums who is grappling with her own past trauma – his inertia begins to shift. Set in pre-pandemic Bangkok, *Slow Steps to Love* traces a gradual process of discovering love and healing that allows reconciliation with the past and acceptance of the present.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=847310>

Politics/Current Affairs

Regional Identities in Southeast Asia: Contemporary Challenges, Historical Fractures / (Eds)
Jayeel Cornelio & Volker Grabowsky
Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2023
xii, 472,
Includes Index
9786162151903
SEATIDE-CRISEA-Silkworm Books Series
\$ 49.95 / PB
666gm.

Southeast Asia, as a regional configuration of nation-states called ASEAN, is a community of multiple identities. Over time, its citizens' loyalties were formed around national and transnational frameworks involving ethnic, religious, and ideological affinities. In the post-

independence period, they were impacted by the processes of decolonization, nation-building, the Cold War, globalization, and the rise of China. As a result, Southeast Asia is emerging as a confluence of competing and overlapping identities.

Thus, in recent years, ASEAN has noticed the appearance of new collective imaginations about the region's future, committing its member states to directions beyond the politico-economic realm. Yet there is a risk that more exclusive visions among its people, whether national, religious, ethnic, or other allegiances, will hold sway.

This book unpacks these competing identities. Rich in ethnographic and historical material, its chapters examine identities shaped by generational markers, transnational linkages, and shared experiences of violence. Collectively, they point to the region's historical fractures and contemporary challenges.

<http://www.marymartin.com/web?pid=847311>
