

From People's War to People's Rule: Insurgency, Intervention, and the Lessons of Vietnam. By TIMOTHY J. LOMPERIS. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996. xvi, 440 pp. \$44.76 (cloth); \$15.96 (paper).

Going beyond his earlier work, *The War Everyone Lost—and Won* (Washington: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1993; first edition 1984), Timothy Lomperis has written a study of the Vietnam War and of insurgencies in China, Malaya, the Philippines, Greece, Cambodia, and Laos during the “Era of People’s War” (1945–75). In each of these cases, rebels employed Maoist strategies with the hope of wresting state power from incumbent governments. The guerrillas won in Vietnam, China, Cambodia, and Laos, and lost elsewhere. But, according to the author, the Vietnamese case, or cases, since the French and American wars are treated as separate struggles, are “deviant” and yield no reliable lessons (p. 313).

These conflicts prompted great power interventions on behalf of both sides, which the author analyzes and compares in detail. He places even more stress on internal factors, and especially on the battle for “political legitimacy” between rebels and the established authorities. What historical forces shaped local definitions of legitimacy, he asks, and how did the strategy of people’s war and subsequent outside interventions reinforce or undermine such conceptions? The process involves three stages, as the insurgents first appeal to the material interests of a chosen constituency, in the hope of forming a critical mass of resistance. They then strive to consolidate an organizational/military presence, leading to “crossover points” when the government can no longer maintain control by police methods alone. In the end, the success of the rebels depends on their putting forward a “belief system,” a reformed notion of legitimacy compelling enough to authorize a “breakout” toward military victory and the seizure of state power.

As an overview of the Vietnam War, this work is not as substantial as surveys by Guenter Lewy (much cited by Lomperis), George Herring, William Turley, or Marilyn Young. With respect to theoretical and comparative issues, the author’s emphasis on “legitimacy” signals a distancing from Cold War bipolarity and a move toward social and cultural history. But this program is not fully realized. What is gained when Lomperis declares that in China “the Mandate of Heaven settled easily and almost naturally on communist shoulders in October 1949” (p. 140)? I am not sure how one would prove or disprove that foreign troops in Greece “flattered the Hellenic sense of global importance embodied in their Megali Ideal” (p. 27). Perhaps political scientists will understand, but other readers may be puzzled by the suggestion that “Magsaysay, in taking out the opportunity-level sting of the insurgency, also, at least in modern terms, restored the belief-level legitimacy of the faltering Philippine political system” (p. 188).

The author’s reading is wide, and footnotes cite authorities from Plato and Aristotle to commentators on “democratization” in Central America and Eastern Europe. The reference point preferred by Lomperis is modernization theory, Walt Rostow vintage, with communist “scavengers” taking advantage of “bottlenecks” in the transition toward democracy and “the beacon of the ballot box” applauded beyond measure, even when, as in the Philippines, the CIA was instructed “to monitor the freedom of the elections” (pp. 43, 317, 190). Given this orientation, it is not surprising that Immanuel Wallerstein and Gabriel Kolko are shown the door, and that the peasant studies literature is not much in sight. Leaders shape history, while masses wait to be “mobilized” by Communists or to be offered “societal access and political participation” by incumbent regimes and their Washington allies.

A “blundering Cyclops,” the U.S. could have won in Vietnam if a “blocking force” had been employed to stop infiltration and the president had listened to Samuel Huntington, Allen Goodman, and William Colby (pp. 321, 130). Policy makers who take care to look before they leap should be able to resuscitate what Tom Engelhardt has called “victory culture” (*The End of Victory Culture: Cold War America and the Disillusioning of a Generation* [New York: Basic Books, 1995]). “The difference between a Viking’s raid for plunder and a posse’s ride for justice,” Lomperis concludes, “lies in the legitimacy with which the venture is viewed in the receiving demographic terrain” (p. 321).

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Language Use and Language Change in Brunei Darussalam. Edited by PETER W. MARTIN, CONRAD OZÓG, and GLORIA POEDJOSOEDARMO. Athens: Southeast Asia Monograph No. 100, Center for International Studies, Ohio University, 1996. xvi, 373 pp. \$26.00 (paper).

The overall intent of this edited volume is to present what is known of the languages of Brunei Darussalam and to encourage further study. This anthology is divided into three parts that focus on, respectively: the variety of Malay dialects in the country; the role and form of English used in Brunei; and the indigenous languages in Brunei. All chapters are pertinent, clear, and well-written.

The initial chapter gives solid background enabling a reader unfamiliar with Brunei to readily understand the succeeding chapters. Peter Martin and Gloria Poedjosoedarmo point out in “An Overview of the Language Situation” that the country is small in area and population, but is “linguistically complex and provides a fascinating area of study for scholars in linguistics” (p. 1). Peter W. Martin’s “Brunei Malay and Bahasa Melayu: A Sociolinguistic Perspective” analyzes the usage spheres of each language and the social consequences of their coexistence.

Gloria Poedjosoedarmo’s chapter on “Variation and Change in Sound Systems of Brunei Dialects of Malay” provides original data which show the uniqueness of the language. Soepomo Poedjosoedarmo’s paper on “An Overview of Brunei Malay Verb Morphology” points to major differences between the verb morphology of BM and of modern SM. Both topics need much fuller study with careful differentiation of local dialects.

“Some Notes on Brunei Malay Syntax,” by Gloria Poedjosoedarmo and Hj Rosnah Hj Ramly, is based on quantitative analysis of folktale texts. The authors conclude that some syntactic forms predate those of the earliest classical Malay texts that occur in colloquial Brunei Malay, and this suggests considerable antiquity for the use of Malay in north Borneo.

James T. Collins’s thought-provoking discussion of the Malay nature of the language of Bacan, southwest of Halmahera, points out the lexical and syntactical features in the Malay of Bacan similar to those of North Bornei Malay, and suggests that much remains to be learned about the historical and social interactions that relationship implies.

“The Palace Language” by Fatimah Awg Chuchu provides a unique view into a linguistic realm little known to scholars. The paper points to multiple features that characterize palace language and how palace language is being elaborated and taught