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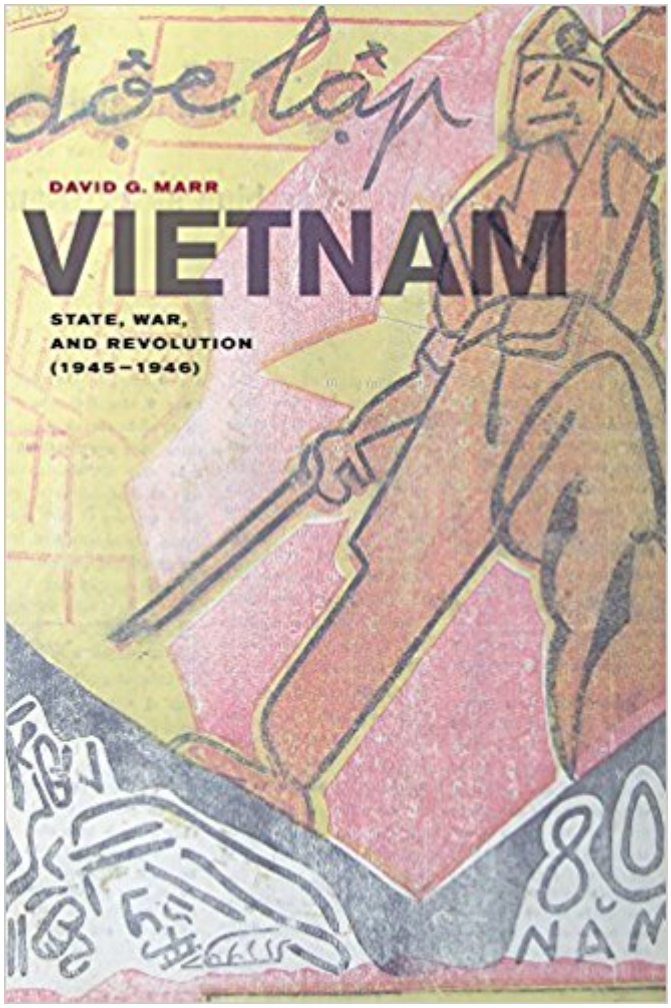

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Synopsis

Amidst the revolutionary euphoria of August 1945, most Vietnamese believed that colonialism and war were being left behind in favor of independence and modernization. The late-September British-French coup de force in Saigon cast a pall over such assumptions. Ho Chi Minh tried to negotiate a mutually advantageous relationship with France, but meanwhile told his lieutenants to plan for a war in which the nascent state might have to survive without allies. In this landmark study, David Marr evokes the uncertainty and contingency as well as coherence and momentum of fast-paced events. Mining recently accessible sources in Aix-en-Provence and Hanoi, Marr explains what became the largest, most intense mobilization of human resources ever seen in Vietnam.

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Customer Reviews

"I come away from this book with much admiration for the research that has gone into it. There clearly is no other book out there, using Vietnamese sources, that gives us a context for evaluating the war that followed." (H-Diplo Roundtable 2014-06-01)"Discerning, meticulously researched." (Nathaniel L. Moir Michigan War Studies Review 2015-04-29)

“The primary contribution of this remarkable book is that it fills in a gaping void in the historical record of the origins of the modern independent state of Vietnam and, in doing so, provides us with a far deeper understanding of the origins of the Vietnam War…an extraordinary achievement.Ã¢â ¬Â• —David Elliott, author of Changing Worlds: VietnamÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Transition From Cold War to Globalization“Like Marr's three big earlier books on Vietnam

since 1884 this pathbreaking study of how the modern nation state was born is bound to become a classic. A must for any curriculum.Ã¢â ¬Â•—Stein TÃƒÂ¸nnesson, author of Vietnam 1946: How the War Began“In this meticulous autopsy of the fifteen months following the 1945 August Revolution, David Marr shows that VietnamÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Communists did not shape, guide or control events to the extent they claimed and many others believed. Vietnam: State, War, and Revolution is a profound analysis of social mobilization and state formation in extraordinarily fluid circumstances. A monumental contribution to the history of modern Vietnam and to the study of revolutionary post-colonial states.Ã¢â ¬Â• —William S. Turley, author of The Second Indochina War: A Concise Political and Military History"This is a fascinatingly broad, detailed, and fluent account of how determined Vietnamese revolutionaries created a postcolonial state in Southeast Asia in the mid 1940s, against the extremely severe odds of food shortages, foreign invasions, little international recognition, and colonial repression. No book about Vietnam has ever succeeded so well as this one in answering Thomas Carlyle's famous question about revolutions: What was it like to be there?"—Alexander Woodside, author of Community and Revolution in Modern Vietnam“Achieving independence from France was a stupendous Vietnamese achievement about which David Marr earlier wrote the prize-winning book Vietnam 1945: The Quest for Power (1995). Vietnamese establishing a viable government for the entire country as they faced the likelihood of another French military invasion was quite another challenge. Success, Marr demonstrates in this splendidly written and detailed new study, Vietnam: State, War, and Revolution, was never a sure thing. From this meticulously researched book, historians, political scientists, and students of revolution in all disciplines, Vietnamese and non-Vietnamese alike, will learn much about state-making in times of immense adversity.Ã¢â ¬Â• —Benedict J. Tria Kerkvliet, Emeritus Professor, The Australian National University

I am just starting to read this rather amazing book. For the generation of Vietnamese that came to age during the 40s, this will surely stir up quite a few memories and may also help to shed light on a few puzzles.

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