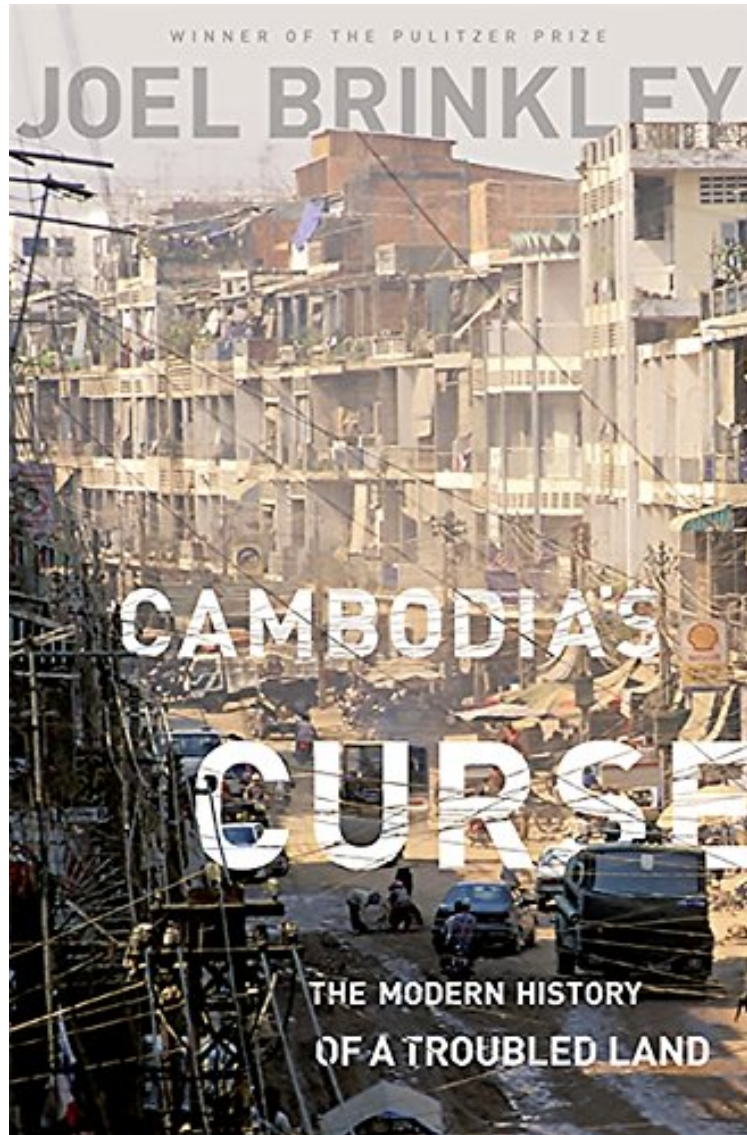


(Ebook free) Cambodia's Curse: The Modern History of a Troubled Land

Cambodia's Curse: The Modern History of a Troubled Land

Joel Brinkley

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Joel Brinkley : Cambodia's Curse: The Modern History of a Troubled Land before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Cambodia's Curse: The Modern History of a Troubled Land:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Informative, but Redundant and Skimps on Important TopicsBy MichaelBuffaloWhat this book does, it does well--but it keeps saying the same thing over and over again with different examples. Yeah, graft and corruption are rampant, and I appreciate Brinkley's detailing of this corruption, but he does go on too much. Also, the book lacks human interactions and descriptions of daily living in the post-Khmer

Rouge environment. It also does not even attempt to explain why Cambodians hate the Vietnamese, even though the Vietnamese army drove back [not out] the Khmer Rouge. By "back," I mean that in 1975 the bloodthirsty Khmer Rouge swept down National Highway 6 from northern Cambodia and conquered Phnom Penh, and four years later the Vietnamese army drove the Khmer Rouge back up National Highway 6 to northern Cambodia--where they settled back into the villages and towns from which they left. The Cambodians have a phrase for living among these returning Khmer Rouge butchers, "Living with the Tiger." Brinkley "mentions" this situation [without naming it], but does not elaborate or provide any description of how villagers reacted to these returning murderers, slave masters, and rapists. Let me try to summarize my thoughts on Brinkley's book in a phrase; Brinkley elaborates in great detail on graft and corruption at the highest levels and the lower levels of Cambodian administration and public services, but simply pays lip-service to or omits entirely other extremely important topics. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Insights into Cambodia's "curse" ... but is the curse starting to lift? By C. E. Stevens I've always been a bit fascinated by Southeast Asia, a part of the world that feels both well-known and still oddly distant in the West. I'll be traveling to Cambodia for the first time this fall, and in looking for a book to read about the country, many sources pointed me to Brinkley's work. Overall, this is an interesting and well-written book; it is a bit odd to say, but despite being a rather bleak and depressing work, it is a page-turner as well. One gets a good picture of the history of the country, the corruption and oppression that people have to deal with at all levels of society, and the hopelessness felt by many. This is not to say that this is a perfect book. In the early stages of the book, one feels like Cambodia is viewed largely through the 'elite' lens of western diplomatic community, without much thought given to the average Cambodian man, woman, or child. Brinkley eventually corrects this, and provides more balance in the second half of the book, but the first part of the book feels a bit slanted in terms of perspective. Feeding into this is the odd habit that Brinkley has to reveal his personal feelings about particular individuals (Cambodian or otherwise) through unnecessary descriptors or phrases, which can be a bit jolting and makes one worry a little about whether his perspective is a bit biased at times. Perhaps the most frustrating part about the book is the tendency to treat Cambodians as shell-shocked victims with no agency of their own ... while, without a doubt, Cambodians *have* suffered incredibly and have seen attempts to 'speak truth to power' end in jail time, slander, graft, and (disturbingly often) death, it also seems to belie the fact that Cambodia *does* seem to be changing ... measures such as HDI have been on the upswing for more than two decades now, for example. Cambodians are clearly not helpless, even if any progress is an incremental struggle. Brinkley briefly hints at positive changes toward the end of the book, but the reader feels like they might have a better grasp of 1977 Cambodia or even 1997 Cambodia than 2017 Cambodia. That said, considering that I knew very little about Cambodia in 1977, 2017, or any other year, besides general understanding of the Khmer Rouge, Pol Pot, and the connections to the Vietnam War, I was very glad I read this book. But, I am also looking forward to seeing Cambodia with my own eyes to see if the picture is as bleak and seemingly hopeless as Brinkley portrays it to be. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Should be read by all interested in Cambodia's modern history.

By Customer A detailed account that explains why Cambodia has found itself in the position it is today. Written in a way that makes it easily read, reveals facts that whilst reported have been forgotten by the modern politically involved Cambodian. Corruption in Cambodia is rife and this book details how money given by world donors without any controls has created some of the richest families in the world whilst the majority of the population struggle to live day to day.

A generation after the Khmer Rouge, Cambodia shows every sign of having overcome its history--the streets of Phnom Penh are paved; skyscrapers dot the skyline. But under this facade lies a country still haunted by its years of terror. Joel Brinkley won a Pulitzer Prize for his reporting in Cambodia on the fall of the Khmer Rouge regime that killed one quarter of the nation's population during its years in power. In 1992, the world came together to help pull the small nation out of the mire. Cambodia became a United Nations protectorate--the first and only time the UN tried something so ambitious. What did the new, democratically-elected government do with this unprecedented gift? In 2008 and 2009, Brinkley returned to Cambodia to find out. He discovered a population in the grip of a venal government. He learned that one-third to one-half of Cambodians who lived through the Khmer Rouge era have P.T.S.D.--and its afflictions are being passed to the next generation. His extensive close-up reporting in Cambodia's Curse illuminates the country, its people, and the deep historical roots of its modern-day behavior.

From Publishers Weekly Pulitzer Prizewinning journalist Brinkley takes on the pricey pitfalls of nation building and the labyrinth of centuries-old political corruption in this riveting piece of literary reportage. At once a tale of human tragedy and a primer on the future of Western engagement with developing and autocratic countries, the book offers a rare look inside a country beleaguered by poverty and imprisoned by patronage and venal leadership since the 13th century; traumatized by colonialism, Pol Pot's brutal Khmer Rouge, and the genocide he unleashed (and later by Vietnam, which overthrew the Khmer Rouge in 1979). Brinkley is merciless in his critique of both Cambodia's leadership as well as the folly of donor countries that placed faith in the U.N. to bring Cambodia into a modern, democratic era. He expresses empathy for "the most abused people in the world," many of whom are in the grip of post-traumatic stress disorders after Pol Pot's reign of terror, but he saves his mercenary eye for the corrupt leaders,

including present dictator Hun Sen, who continue to suppress and exploit the country's resources and young, vital population. (Apr.) (c) Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved. Kirkus, February 15, 2011 An excellent account of a country whose historic poverty, exacerbated by the Vietnam War, remains remarkably unchanged. Publishers Weekly A riveting piece of literary reportage.