The Construction of Race and Space in Thomas Dooley's Writings: "What kind of place was Laos?"

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Introduction

"What kind of place was Laos," pondered Thomas Dooley's team members as they awaited their onward journey from a layover in Vietnam to Laos in September 1956 to begin Operation Laos.[1] Dooley and his team knew very little about Laos, only that Oden Meeker, a former chief of Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE) had informed them that the village Nam Tha in northern Laos where they would set up a hospital was "the most isolated part of Laos, and politically the most vulnerable."[2] According to Dooley's memoir *The Edge of Tomorrow* (1958), Meeker expressed that "[t]hose mountain people have rarely seen a white man. They have no allegiance to the central government. They're just ripe for the Commie treatment."[3] A few years prior to Dooley and his team's arrival, the *New York Times*'s chief correspondent in Southeast Asia, Tillman Durdin, had provided a glimpse of Laos's past, present, and future, writing "Laos was a great kingdom, [but now] remains a buffer state with unnatural boundaries, undeveloped territory, and scattered, largely [with an] illiterate population."[4] In 1959, Meeker's personal travelogue, *The Little World of Laos*, detailed his role as chief of CARE (1954–1955) and his observations of the country from his post in Vientiane to trips up to the countryside. Though Meeker provided a positive account of Laos, his views ran parallel to those who noted that Laotians were "slow," "passive," and "clumsy" and that Laos was a primitive place. These Orientalist tropes were common during US empire in Cold War Southeast Asia, and Laos was not immune to such knowledge of racial and spatial difference.

How did Laos emerge in the American imagination and become a site of US intervention? Dooley's widely circulated memoirs, *The Edge of Tomorrow* (1958) and *The Night They Burned the Mountain* (1960), I suggest, function as a form of racial knowledge that intersected with US foreign policy-making and empire during the early

years of the Cold War in Laos. *The Edge of Tomorrow* sold more copies than Dooley's best-selling *Deliver Us From Evil* (1956) and *The Night They Burned the Mountain* spent twenty-one weeks on the *New York Times* bestseller list. "The most famous American in Indochina" and selected as one of the "Ten Outstanding Men of 1956" by the Junior Chamber of Commerce, Dooley concretized his presence and authority with Americans through his humanitarian work of forging relationships with Laotians; a significant and effective activity during this period of economic and cultural expansion across international boundaries, and ongoing military occupation.[5] Through his memoirs, Dooley offered a "people-to-people" narrative that brought average Americans into contact with Laotians, and contributed to the former's understanding of themselves in relation to the rest of the world. After Dooley's death in 1961, his celebrity status faded, with scant mention of him in any of the "major histories of the Vietnam War published from the late 1970s through the 1990s," according to historian Seth Jacobs.[6] The revival of Dooley's memoirs as more than humanitarian, and in fact staging the production of US involvement in Southeast Asia, impel a new interest in his writings. Situating my work in transnational American studies, ethnic studies, and cultural studies, I argue Dooley's representations of Laos reveal another form of America's racial knowledge about Asia(ns) that reinforced US intervention in the region and the "cold war plan" for Laos.[7] My aim here is to illustrate how Dooley's cultural mapping and civilizing mission provided the ideological work that made US imperialism imaginable in Laos for ordinary Americans and bolstered US anticommunist containment policy. Such languages and Orientalist tropes enabled Dooley to conceive of Laos and its people as backward and without progress, characteristics that allegedly would make them more susceptible to communism, thus necessitating US intervention.

As part of US Cold War policies of containment and integration, the US sought nonaggressive strategies for winning the "hearts and minds" of Asians from the threat of communist insurgencies by expanding overseas cultural activities and propaganda. Circumventing the terms of the 1954 Geneva Accords that ended French colonialism in Indochina and banned US military intervention in Laos, the US endorsed independent and secular humanitarian programs. President Dwight D. Eisenhower's people-to-people initiative, formulated by the United States Information Agency (USIA), was one US program intended to gather information while promoting world peace and cultivating public support for political ends through culture.[8] In Southeast Asia, the Eisenhower administration turned its attention towards Laos, fearing the country might fall to communism. Southeast Asia scholar Bernard Fall described in March 1957 a "growing fear both in the American press and in government circles that Laos grossly underestimate[d] the danger of Communist subversion."[9] In September 1957, Ambassador J. Graham Parsons shared similar sentiments and believed Laos was "obviously too weak politically, economically, and otherwise to maintain its own independence or to implement the policy of neutrality which it professed."[10] The

administration escalated commitment in monetary aid, military supply, and growth in US personnel presence to thwart communism and prop up a pro-Western government.[11] It proved this commitment in numbers: In 1953, two American officials were permanently stationed in Laos; by 1959, the number of US personnel rose to eight hundred and thirty-one.[12] At its height in 1961, the number was as great as eight hundred and fifty and eventually declined to two hundred and fifty.[13] Taking this into consideration, I examine literary representation of Laos in the form of travel writings published between the Geneva Accords of 1954 and 1962 because this period saw the most Americans in Laos.

The genre of travel writing was instrumental during the colonial era, and its popularity generated curiosity and expectations of adventure, particularly writing about "foreign" and "exotic" places. Underscoring the significance of travel narratives and its "othering" practices, I show that Dooley's accounts of Laos and its people circulated to an audience back home are tied to US foreign policy-making and expansion in Southeast Asia. Edward Said's *Orientalism* illustrates the centrality of travel narratives to the Orientalist enterprise that served to shore up European identity and culture as superior, at the expense of the East: "Europe is powerful and articulate; Asia is defeated and distant."[14] This unequal process articulates Asia as unfamiliar and Other; vocabulary employed to define Asia as empty and inferior, tropes which remain essential to Western imagination and enterprises of civilization. Advancing Said's imagined geographies, Derek Gregory illustrates that representations are "not only accumulations of time, sedimentations of successive histories; they are also *performances of space*."[15] Specifically, representation of space is implicated in power relations by shaping how we conceive connections and separations, and gives meaning to distinctions between the familiar and unfamiliar. In the context of the literary and cultural production of US imperialism, the race–space connection reveals the cultural and material relations that made the East matter to the West, and by which its existence has remained fixed in time and place. Christina Klein and Melanie McAlister demonstrate the role of cultural productions in "forg[ing] a web of meanings" that made the Middle East and Asia matter to the US in terms of setting the stage for the production of American identities and expansion of power since 1945.[16] McAlister suggests that "through the intersecting deployment of cultural interests and political investments," distant regions and geographical spaces can be mapped for Americans.[17] Considering how US foreign policy is developed in a cultural context, Walter L. Hixson extends our understanding of foreign policy by examining the nation's identity since the expansion of modernity.[18] Hixson points out that the cultural understanding of empty land which frames narratives of discovery and settlement—settler colonialism, slavery, and imperial expansion—cannot be separated from the traditions undergirding the "[m]yth of America identity." Such an identity is built on a series of encounters and violence that produced "a white, modernist, and manly nation, under God," a national narrative that supported the ways in which "the United

States inscribed the non-Western world as an arena of 'backward' and 'developing' peoples and lands."[19] Foregrounding various dimensions of colonial encounters and expansions, travel writing provided the imperial center knowledge of itself in relation to the rest of the world. [20]

Thomas Dooley and the Start of Operation Laos

By the time *The Edge of Tomorrow* was made available in 1958, American presence in Laos had expanded. A young physician from St. Louis, Missouri, Thomas Dooley captured Americans' imaginations with his charm and humanitarian engagement in Southeast Asia. The success and appeal of *The Edge of Tomorrow* was a result in part of efforts by his publisher, Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, and his editors at the *Reader's Digest*, who urged Dooley to reframe his experience from a conflict with US foreign aid programs to a "conflict with a savage jungle, a distant kingdom, loneliness, and the monotony of misery."[21] Despite his publisher's push, Dooley insists his writings exemplified the presence of Americans in Laos as innocent and sentimental. He writes, "I wanted to show that we Americans possess an instrument not too well developed, more powerful than any bomb yet devised. It is the force that can relieve ugliness and tragedy. It is the force of gentleness."[22]

At the same time, narrating his journey as a "conflict with the savage jungle" in the most remote villages made sense, particularly if Dooley's writings aimed to exemplify the "growing fear" of communism in Laos and the justification of US presence. Moreover, interpreting his accounts of the jungle as a natural backdrop to save Laotians from communism legitimated for American readerships US expansion in Southeast Asia. Rather than read Dooley's memoirs as sentimental narratives, I analyze Dooley's writings to reveal that the simultaneity of his writings and US foreign policies made Laos important to the US between the Geneva Accords of 1954 and 1962.

Scholarship on Dooley's private and public lives, as well as books recounting his medical and humanitarian activities is limited. James T. Fisher's comprehensive biography of Dooley centers on his life as a Catholic and gay man, his relationship with his mother, his place in cultural politics, and his role in reshaping public discourse about US military and political interventions in Southeast Asia.[23] Seth Jacobs illustrates that Dooley's egotism and relentless self-promotion in Laos differed from Edgar Monroe Buell's reserved demeanor to save Laos from communism.[24] In her critical analyses of *Reader's Digest* and the *Saturday Review*, Christina Klein reveals how middlebrow cultural institutions helped shape popular representations of Asia in US expansion during the Cold War, particularly sentimental narratives that permitted Americans to achieve "some of the ends of imperialism through non-imperial means."[25] Exploring America's interest in and fascination with Asia, Klein argues Dooley's sentimental narratives were central to the self-definition of a national American identity. Building upon Klein's articulation of Cold War orientalism, Danielle Glassmeyer contends that a particular notion of intervention emerged during the 1950s that instantiated America's

presence in Asia. "Sentimental orientalism" captured how popular films and novels produced between 1955 and 1962 cast American intervention as "maternal, pedagogical benevolence," while constructing Asians as "children struggling toward democracy."[26] Instead of pursuing overtly interventionist foreign policy, maternal benevolence fueled by affective influence could support US interests as benevolent, yet also undergird US expansion. Glassmeyer argues Dooley's practice of love, kindness, and gentleness towards Asian children materialized through his representations of the region as devoid of maternal benevolence, which offered what native barbarism, colonialism, and communism had been unable to supply: love and education for Asians. [27] Klein and Glassmeyer provide insightful and compelling arguments about the pervasive nature of sentimental narratives during the early Cold War period and the materialization of these benevolent ideologies alongside America's military and political policies in Asia. This affective turn in literary and cultural studies foregrounds feminist readings of racialized benevolence and sentimentality as the "soft side" of colonization and racial uplift.

The US interest in Laos must be situated within the context of the Geneva Accords signed on July 21, 1954 that ended French rule, partitioned Vietnam along the seventeenth parallel, and stipulated neutrality for Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam.[28] Specifically, the Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities prohibited the introduction of new troops, military personnel, armaments, and munitions in Laos. President Eisenhower believed "if Laos were lost, the rest of Southeast Asia would follow and the gateway to India would be opened."[29] This domino theory bolstered US security and containment strategy and deepened its affairs in Laos from 1955 onwards. Avoiding overt violations of the accord, the US structured programs and foreign aid to counter communist expansion and gain greater influence in the region. The first US ambassador to Laos, Charles W. Yost (1955–1956), established several agencies in the country to focus on defense-related assistance such as the United States Operations Mission (USOM), and "a thinly disguised, but politically defensible, military aid organization called the Programs Evaluations Office (PEO)," explains Timothy Castle.[30] American officials understood Laos "to be part of a broader effort by international communist forces to dominate Asia – and the world," as Joshua Kurlantzick points out, and it did not matter Laos was small and landlocked.[31] Determined to stop the spread of communism and to support the Royal Lao government, the US believed their presence in Laos was necessary. According to Seth Jacobs, "the United States paid 100 percent of the military budget [and] Eisenhower approved the most audacious enterprise in CIA history when he permitted that agency to equip an army of Lao tribespeople to fight against communist guerillas."[32] A year before Dooley's arrival, International Voluntary Services (IVS)—a form of people-to-people program—entered Laos under contract with the USAID in 1956.[33] At a time when many Americans living overseas demonstrated little interest in the customs and cultures of the host countries, Dooley's humanitarian work exemplified President Eisenhower's people-to-people

program—a critical goal during the Cold War years—that aimed to boast American exceptionalism on the premise of spreading democracy and freedom while accelerating US militarization globally.[34] As far as Dooley was concerned, he was "an invited guest in this foreign land" and sought not to make the same mistake of criticizing, complaining, and demanding "that too often is the white man's error in Asia." [35] Instead, Dooley distinguished himself from Americans living in compounds with Western amenities, and offered a narrative that brought Americans into contact with Laos and its people, as demonstrated in the vivid portraits of *The Edge of Tomorrow* and *The Night They Burned the Mountain*.[36]

After the publication of *Deliver Us From Evil* (1956), and despite the US Navy forcing Dooley to resign on March 28, 1956 because of his homosexual "tendencies and activities," Dooley's celebrity status continued to rise.[37] *The Washington Post* praised Dooley's mission of vanquishing communism and providing medical care in Southeast Asia as a project that "demonstrate[d] American goodwill in a practical manner."[38] *The New York Times* lauded Dooley's act of healing the sick in Laos as selfless, commenting that "comfortable Americans owe gratitude to those who have the courage to work in it and the energy and ability to describe it."[39] Capitalizing on this spectacularity and US interventionist policy in the region, Dooley's practice of humanitarianism soon gained a reputation beyond religious circles. Leo Cherne, chairman of the International Rescue Committee, approached Dooley to set up Operation Laos, a version of Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) agent Edward G. Lansdale's Operation Brotherhood, or his "eye of God" technique, a form of covert psychological warfare.[40] Andrew Smith notes that Cherne believed the US could infiltrate communism in Southeast Asia and knew that the future "depends on organizing all resources to resettle refugees, sustain near bankrupt government, give people something to fight for and unite them to resist communism."[41] Through Operation Brotherhood, Cherne met Dooley and considered him an ideal person for the task of unifying people to reject communism in Laos and to represent American exceptionalism abroad.

Operation Brotherhood commenced on October 14, 1954 with the first medical team of Filipino physicians and nurses sent to Saigon to assist with refugee influx and political support to the Ngo Dinh Diem regime.[42] Lansdale conceived of this covert strategy in the Philippines with the successful presidential election of Ramón Magsaysay, and later brought Operation Brotherhood to Vietnam and Laos to supplant US power.[43] The presence of Filipinos in both countries worked to shield CIA operatives, and Lansdale knew a critical element of winning over the population required having Asians helping Asians.[44] Historian Simeon Man critically illustrates the "deployment of care" of Filipino workers to Vietnam as part of a "longstanding colonial diaspora" and a racial project of war-making. Although Operation Brotherhood emerged with the Philippine Jaycees' desire to support their neighbors in Asia by "launch[ing] a program – not of Asia for the Asians, but of Asians helping

Asians," it was Lansdale who "was responsible for bringing Filipinos to South Vietnam."[45] According to Man, "Lansdale shunned conventional military tactics and opted to become close to the people and earn their trust."[46] This idea circulated amongst state and military officials who believed "[US] aid is essential to the support of the security forces charged with suppression of Pathet Lao subversion and for such projects as civic action and Operation Brotherhood which gain popular loyalty."[47] After completion of its mission in Vietnam, Operation Brotherhood relocated forty-four Filipino volunteers to Laos in January 1957 under contract with USAID, which also marked Dooley's arrival in Laos.[48] The establishment of mobile clinics and Filipino presence shielded American presence, especially by 1961 when the number of Filipino residents was estimated to reach five hundred.[49] While Operation Brotherhood "decided to utilize the best among [their] personnel" for the Laos mission to expand socioeconomic and medical operations, writer Diana Shaw suggests Lansdale made Operation Laos possible because "it was he who passed this on to the rescue committee, which, in turn, brought in the Laotian health minister to make his appeal."[50] Lansdale aimed to focus on one American doctor and his medical mission to infiltrate Laos under the façade of Eisenhower's people-to-people mission.[51] Lansdale knew Dooley would be a plausible cover as a private, independent American providing humanitarian aid to Laotians, especially with Operation Brotherhood establishing provincial medical clinics throughout Laos.[52] Historian Daniel Immerwahr points out, "[Dooley's] powerful protectors hushed [his homosexual conduct] up, got him discharged honorably from the US Navy, and established him in Laos, where, as a private doctor receiving funding from the International Rescue Committee (IRC), he continued his work. The CIA secretly financed the IRC, and Dooley briefed the agency about what he saw there."[53] Dooley's purpose in Laos was twofold: to act as an "agent of influence" to demonstrate US goodwill in the fight against communism, and as a courier for the CIA, giving US access to Southeast Asia's social, economic, and political life in order to preserve military presence in the region. Dooley's presence presented a win-win situation that both served the CIA's operation and provided him an opportunity to recoup his reputation through self-promotion and reinvention.[54] Nevertheless, Dooley's writing established racial and spatial positioning, and his preoccupation with demonstrating goodwill as anti-conquest was a product of political forces and activities.

"What kind of place was Laos?": An Unruly Place of Danger in Need of Saving

Laos is a landlocked country neighboring China, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, and Cambodia. Its mountain chains and evergreen forests extend down from the border with North and Central Vietnam. At its peak in the early eighteenth century, the Lao kingdom (then called Lan-Xang) included "sections of Yunnan, of the Southern Shan States, of the Vietnamese and Cambodian mountain plateaus, and large stretches of present-day northeastern Thailand."[55] But feudal rivalries left Laos in a state of

disintegration, which prompted the French to proclaim Laos a protectorate in 1893. The French maintained a dual relationship: The Kingdom of Luang Prabang remained a proctectorate and the rest of Laos was ruled as a French colony. Despite claims of civilizing Laos, France made very little effort to build roads and schools, encourage a sense of a Laotian national identity, or create a modern political system as it had in Vietnam. Laos scholar Martin Stuart-Fox notes that during French rule of Laos (1893–1945), the country "remained the least developed and least important of France's possession in Indochina" and French interest was conceived "as a means for ends that led elsewhere" – as an extension of Vietnam and access to southern China.[56] After Japan's brief occupation of Laos and withdrawal in 1945, the French government continued to establish Laos as an autonomous "associated state," with the support of economic and military aid from the US until Laos's status as an independent state in 1954.[57] Following the Geneva Conference, the Eisenhower administration saw the importance of Laos's geographical position. "[T]he US had an important stake in Laos," Fall explained, as the latter is surrounded by powerful countries, and any failed policies there "could have severe repercussions in other small countries living in the shadow of the Communist Bloc."[58] Both French and American interventions in Laos viewed the country as a hinterland.

Very few Americans have heard about Laos or know the location of this country, but by 1958, Laos grew prominent in the American press, and its future and freedom became a concern for Americans. In *The New York Times,* more than one hundred thirty articles either mentioned or dedicated a piece on Laos. *The Los Angeles Times* published more than one hundred fifty articles mentioning the country.[59] Charles Poore of the *New York Times* lauded *The Edge of Tomorrow* as "a breezy and remarkably compelling narrative of [Dooley's] adventures in the Kingdom of Laos."[60] Situating Dooley's adventure "to save lives in shadowy corners of the world," Poore rhetorically asked "Where is Laos?" before informing readers that Laos is a "pestilential jungle country near the border of Red China." In essence, Poore answered the question posed by Dooley's team as they commenced Operation Laos, "[w]hat kind of place was Laos?" [61] According to William Prochnau, "[t]he Westerners drawn [to Laos] gave it still other names, invariably taken from the fairylands of their youth. Never-Never Land, they called it, and The Land of Oz."[62] Kurlantzick writes that "the few foreigners who did come to Laos – whether diplomats or backpackers – tended to fall into the trap of viewing [Laos] romantically as a land that time forgot."[63] Despite Meeker's timely personal travelogue in 1959 introducing Laos as a country populated with "dreamy, gentle, bucolic, nonaggressive people who live in bamboo-and-thatch houses on stilts," it was Dooley's memoirs that piqued ordinary American readership's interest in Laos as a "place in an exotic land of tinkling wind bells and clashing cymbals, half a world away," teeming with darkness, misery, and the dangers of communism.[64] Dooley's memoirs of "other" places and people boasted an unchanging American attitude of westward expansion where American values could flourish and liberate

those subjugated by communism. This ideological structure has dominated westward expansion of replacing darkness with light and savagery with civilization since the colonial period when Puritans first encountered Indians.[65]

Dooley's presence aimed to show American influence could save Laos and bring it out of the dangers of communism. A mostly mountainous country, Laos's terrain was viewed by the US as a critical factor, since it was "ideally suited to guerilla warfare."[66] Reiterating this position, Dooley draws a correlation of the rainforest trees "devoured by clinging, tenacious tendrils and trailers, saprophytes, clawing into the fleshy bark trying to consume the very core of the tree" to the "techniques of Communist conquest in Asia."[67] In order to racialize Laos as an unruly place of danger and misery, Dooley narrates an imaginative understanding of the jungle as a gateway to a hidden communist threat lurking in Laotian villages. His civilizing mission familiarized Americans with a way the wretchedness of Asia could be saved.

The jungle image draws on a long history of colonial discourse in travel writings. In George Orwell's *Burmese Days*, Myanmar's unruly and sluggish landscape—its forest and jungle—can only be tamed and cleared with British colonial presence.[68] Richard Drinnon notes the forest in the Philippines for William Pomeroy "was not a sacred grove, not an embracing shelter, nor even an indifferent refuge," but as Pomeroy explained in *The Forest*: "The forest is all the evil forces that have held back the advance of civilization, and I am man, fighting his way through the dark underbrush of ignorance, intolerance, and misunderstanding, toward an open world of enlightenment, of freedom, and of brotherhood."[69] Similarly, Laos's jungle and dangerous mountain slopes played a strategic part in acquainting readers with the "wild and wonderful" place overflowing with diseases and red forces yet tamable by Dooley's presence.[70]

In *The Edge of Tomorrow*, Dooley maps Laos for ordinary Americans during his first Operation Laos task in Vang Vieng, a village located halfway between the capital Vientiene and the royal capital Luang Prabang. Under the guidance of a Lao man called Chai, Dooley and his team members emerged from Vang Vieng's "primitive" conditions, where they "crept and crawled through dense jungle, plowed through monsoon mud, and hit long stretches of suffocating dust."[71] In one long passage, Dooley evokes a familiar colonial discourse of having traveled halfway around the world to an unexplored territory in which he descends onto Vang Vieng:

> The setting for Vang Vieng must have been selected by a master artist. It is spectacular. The village rests at the foot of stupendous walls of rock, rising two thousand and three thousand feet into the sky. These mountains have no foothills. There's no gradual rise or slope. Just an absolutely flat plain; then suddenly, abruptly, a staggering wall of rock. The tops of these mountains are covered with pine and on the side walls stubby tree grows out of the rock at painful

> angles and reach upwards for light.… There are many stories of [Mekong River's] perils, stories of deadly leeches, parasites, huge fish, rays and snakes, as well as Chai's stories of spirits and dragons."[72]

Dooley's mastery over the nature of Laos's landscape provided a valuable knowledge of Laos as a peripheral, uncivilized country that can be tamed. His representation of Laos functions as a logic of conquest and civilization as readers learned the country is *his* valley, land, and village. Literary scholar David Spurr suggests this writing convention is an important feature in the narratives of explorers of the nineteenth century. These tropes of colonial writing constitute the "conceptual categories and logical operations available for purposes of representation" of the Other, and give Western writers a privileged point of view over knowledge gathered, surveyed, and produced.[73] In Dooley's case, the surveillance trope offers an aesthetic pleasure in, knowledge of, and authority over the Other: "[I]t conveys a sense of mastery over the unknown and over what is often perceived by the Western writer as strange and bizarre."[74] Similarly, comparative literature scholar Mary Louise Pratt demonstrates travel narratives surveil distant land, and nature stands in for the tropes of contact, possession, and control that form European subjectivities.[75] These narratives and strategies of "anti-conquest" read as innocent knowledge production yet in fact work to legitimate imperial expansion and knowledge about the Other. In Laos, Dooley's representation of the country as backward and uncivilized echoed an emblematic trope of colonized landscape void of social life but "rich with potential for future progress," specifically where he ultimately stakes a claim over the land.[76]

This possession also alludes to Dooley proclaiming to his readers "we 'belonged'" in Laos.[77] As his men hacked and cleared the jungle through the northernmost part of Laos, where "freedom [is] jammed into the underbelly of Communist China," they dreamed of introducing democracy and bringing peace in the process.[78] Dooley's descriptive and dramatic writing provides readers with an understanding of the difference between good and evil as communist soldiers "swooped down on the [Iu Mien] tribesman's hut in a little village near the border. They had hacked at the occupants with long swords, literally quartering the grandmother and a small child."[79] Employing elders and children as innocent victims of communist soldiers' barbaric violence, Dooley names the enemy other for the audience back home. This strategy of representation provided Americans with a rationale that communism in Laos, and by extension underdeveloped Asia, must be contained in the name of democracy and freedom. Perhaps the most descriptive account of his journey to a village bordering China appeared in *The Night They Burned the Mountain.* In the mode of a geographer studying the land, features, and inhabitants, Dooley describes his last operation in Muong Sing as "another unsanitary, underdeveloped Asian village" located in the northwest corner of northern Laos, surrounded by jagged mountains where "down deep in the foliage of those mountains

is wild and wonderful jungle."[80] In 1959, readers learned that "Red troops" were infiltrating two provinces in northern Laos: Sam Neua and Phong Saly, which remained "assembly areas" for Lao communists and eventually target areas of US vigorous aerial bombing campaign from 1964 to 1973.[81] Considering Dooley's role in Operation Laos, his expedition may have provided the CIA information about villagers' sentiments in communist-controlled areas. According to Eric Chester, CIA operatives debriefed Dooley before each of his trips into Laos's isolated villages to learn about troop movements and villagers' opinions.[82] Few would have suspected Dooley to have any part in a CIA campaign, particularly with Dooley touting the importance of a "person-to-person" program that could accomplish more than the "dollars-to-person" program. Dooley's publicity campaign for Operation Laos "provided an excellent opportunity to persuade the American people of the necessity of aiding Laotians" and he at the same time, "kept the agency posted on troop movements and villager sentiments around his Laos hospitals."[83] Ultimately, Dooley's writings on Laos as an unruly place reflected US anxiety over communism in the 1950s and justified US intervention in Laos.

In the next section, I extend US racial knowledge about Laos as an unruly place to highlight how Dooley's colonial cleansing project provided justification for a US humanitarian presence to remove "filth" and, by extension, communism. This colonial cleansing project offered what communism was unable to do: help Laotians toward progress and civilization. The logic of progress and civilization in Laos functions similarly to other Third World countries: though spatially and temporally different from the West, both owe their progress to colonialism. In *Facing West*, Richard Drinnon shows US Army general Richard G. Stilwell's attitude towards the Philippines, Vietnam, and Laos paralleled Alden Vaughan's belief in the Puritans' justification for exterminating Indians—namely that in "backward territories lived backward races or peoples, dark-skinned natives."[84] Drinnon contends about Stilwell and Vaughn that "both regarded the native as a child or a 'savage,' while eschewing the word, an empty vessel into which the advanced white Westerner could dump inputs, 'our widely heralded social traits."[85]

"The Place Was Filthy": The Project of Colonial Cleansing

During his visit to Ban Phu Van, Dooley reflects on the village being a "bit dirtier […] it gave us an eerie feeling, as though we were not in this century but in a time-machine which had taken us back to Biblical days."[86] Dooley writes, "I did practice 19th-century medicine, and this was just fine. Upon my departure our indigenous personnel would practice 18th-century medicine. Good, this is progress, since most of the villagers live in the 15th century."[87] Though readers are informed of stories of perils, spirits, and dragons, Dooley's descriptions of the region rendered Laos as an indeterminate space and a fantasy, one that beseeches "the new ways of the white medicine-men [distanced] from the magic of the traditional sorcerers."[88] Feminist scholar Anne

McClintock points to the trope of "anachronistic space" in colonial discourse as "prehistoric, atavistic and irrational, inherently out of place in the historical time of modernity."[89] This trope marked backward territories as places "out of time in modernity, marooned and historically abandoned."[90] Dooley extends this trope of imperial progress across space as simultaneously a journey backward in time by which he details Laos as a "never-never land where witch-doctors put a 'hex' on their hospitals."[91]

The designation of Laos as an "anachronistic space" also involves the designation of the people as "primitive." For example, Dooley's dramatization of his missionary work included healing a Tibetan pony attacked by a tiger, encountering a sorcerer playing the drums while a Lao woman gives birth squatting on a small stool, and a witch doctor who put a hex on his team. Showing his sympathy for the people of Laos, Dooley subtly articulates the distinction between his humanitarian mission from other Americans in Laos. He notes Lao Ambassador Souvannavong's praise for his work: "Many times before, white men have come to help us. But always they had other motives—colonization, trade, even our religious conversion. I really believe your motive is purely humanitarian. That will make your mission unique in my country."[92] Despite such distinction, Dooley makes Laos intelligible for Americans through his accounts of exotic adventures as *Thanh Mo America*. He illustrates in the passage below the importance of his presence in Laos.

> "We knew the importance of going into the huts of these people. Never had they seen an American.... I would estimate that we have been in over three thousand Asian homes. Often the insides of these huts were oppressively sultry and humid. Most of them by our standards were filthy, and they were plagued with lice, fleas, gnats and insects.[93]

Dooley and his team revealed to readers the daunting task of visiting over "three thousand Asian homes" consisting of "oppressively sultry and humid" huts.[94] By American standards, the huts were filthy and teeming with animalian life: lice, fleas, gnats, and insects. Dooley's assistant Pete Kessey insisted "even the poorest white trash back in Texas wouldn't live in such a place."[95] Writing off Kessey's statement as reflective of racial and spatial hierarchy, Dooley declared that despite the filth "[n]o one could ever say that the men of Operation Laos lived apart from the natives in an air-conditioned 'American compound.'"[96] Moreover, Dooley took pride in extolling cultural tolerance, claiming that unlike the racial and social hierarchy practiced in the US, Laotians were an integral part of his team: "They dined with us, bathed with us, swam with us, worked with us, and came out on nightcalls with us." He harped insistently that the terms "coolie," "houseboy," and "servant" took on different meanings in Laos. [97] Unlike the French, who were obligated to maintain rank, Dooley rejected social difference between Americans and Laotians as a form of domination

and framed Laos as a place that could be tamed with the guiding principles of American values.[98] Christina Klein suggests celebrating cultural difference was a way of "Dooley distinguish[ing] himself, and by extension America from the former colonial rulers of Laos, the French."[99] In doing so, Dooley provided what Eisenhower's administration aimed to accomplish, that the US could bring forth democracy and freedom in the decolonizing world as partners and protectors rather than conquerors, and bridge connections between the US to Laos, and by extension Asia.

In Dooley's desire to alleviate the suffering of Laotians, he bridged this connection and brought Americans closer to Laos by encouraging the latter to donate soap in a place where "the pot-bellied children, the under-nourished, the malnourished, and the miserable" lived in "the darkest corner."[100] Referencing Laos as "the darkest corner" was an important part of Dooley's training about Kwashiorakor—a malnutrition disease produced by inadequate amounts of protein—first found in a tribe called the Akra in Africa and now found in Laos. The association of Africa with darkness has been part of a colonial discourse promulgated by Rudyard Kipling's *In Darkest Africa* and Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. Moreover, David Sibley demonstrates that the use of white and black represented a set of social characteristics and power relations—"the association between black and dirt, between dirt and disease, emphasizes the threatening quality of blackness" and "whiteness with order, rationality, rigidity, qualities brought out by contrast with black disorder."[101] These accounts interpreted a specific kind of knowledge about the country and its people. David Spurr suggests Western writings on Indigenous peoples relating them to disease, witchcraft, and barbarism were knowledge-building projects, and served to justify imperial intervention through "demonstrations of moral superiority."[102] Moreover, Drinnon explains that the racial and racist language about "the natives" is deeply embedded in a Western psyche that dominated rationales of westward expansion from the colonial period to the Vietnam War and is intertwined with "repressive attitudes towards nature and the body, and with concomitant associations of dark skin *color* with filth, death, and radical evil generally."[103] As an example, Dooley's hospital at Muong Sing illustrated what communism was not able to provide the villagers:

> The villagers all their lives had thought it was impossible to be rid of malaria, goiter, rickets, dysentery and boils. When we demonstrated to them that they need not have these things, it was an amazing and wonderful thing. The scarlet and black wounds that burst in their superb olive flesh were closed up with simple cleanliness. The dirty stumps of teeth were extracted with ease; no longer did they have a fetid or foul mouth. Soon the wretched patients with green-black sores, or inflamed bellies, would quietly become cured. *They were the better for our having been there*.[104]

Pointing out the distinction between "civilized" and "savage," only Dooley's Western medicine could miraculously cure Laos's misery and wretchedness and cleanse Laotians from dirt and filth. Against his claim of cultural tolerance, Dooley's articulation of racial meanings required difference, despite proclaiming "differences of race and cultural are not accurate measurements of superiority or inferiority."[105]

In both of his memoirs, Dooley narrates his journey through Laos as an effort to bring civilization to Laos's "darkest corner." Soap, the commodity that would putatively clean and save Laotians from disease, performed the civilizing work of providing Laos and its people access to universal inclusion and progress, and by extension freedom and peace. Anne McClintock argues soap in the eighteenth century was solely a mundane household object; by late nineteenth century, soap as a commodity became "the fundamental form of a new industrial economy and cultural system for representing social value."[106] As a "cheap and portable domestic commodity," soap filled a gap in the domestic market and was influential in mediating the "Victorian poetics of racial hygiene and imperial progress."[107] Tracing soap advertising in the realm of empire, McClintock illustrates a "new imperialism was found in soap," where the imperial civilizing mission of washing and clothing the savage or native became an effective tool of European expansionism. Similarly, Dooley's gesture of "saving" Laotians and Laos from filth, and by extension communism, was rooted in imperial racism through suggesting the superiority of soap (the new ways of the white medicine-men) over traditional medicine and superstitions practiced by Laotian witch doctors. For Dooley, soap cured yaws, a skin disease through the "1-2-3 treatment—one shot of penicillin, two bars of soap, and three days!"[108] The introduction of soap inaugurated villagers into history proper as they learned to "scrub away the filth" off their bodies. A symbol of progress, soap exemplified the civilizing work of US imperial power in decolonizing Laos and introducing the presence of American culture and way of life. Diana Shaw points out the establishment of Dooley's presence in Laos was more than the representation of a humanitarian enterprise and was also essential to the production of US involvement in Southeast Asia for the CIA. Shaw writes that "[t]he agency wanted him to take weapons, along with his pharmaceutical supplies and surgical gear, so he could bury caches of arms that agents could use to mobilize local militia. His task would be to promote his clinics as outposts of peace, all the while covertly preparing for battle and giving induction exams to Laotian boys to clear them for service in the militia. Dooley's clinics were early mobilization efforts—in a part of Indochina that was meant to be neutral."[109]

Seeking to dignify his mission, Dooley acted out his desires in myriad forms to vigilantly maintain racial and spatial separation in the domestic sphere. Even in "backward" Laos, Dooley's attention to detail included the respectable arrangements of his homes and hospitals: rooms for different purposes, here and there a bright desk

lamp, movie projector, beds of teak wood, pictures from old magazines on the walls, and a piano. His first home in Vang Vieng typified a Lao hut "perched six feet above the ground on stout poles surrounded by a 'porch' and reached by a steep ladder."[110] Dooley shuddered that "the place was filthy" and quickly tore the home apart, breaking out "boxes of soap-power and bleach, and swab[bing] the deck Navy-style."[111] Distinguishing between purity and contamination, Dooley expresses that "[n]o matter how many times we scrubbed up during the day, washing our hands in alcohol until the skin became dry and brittle, we felt a mad desire toward evening to burn our clothes and literally bathe in alcohol."[112] In Nam Tha and Muong Sing, Dooley's homes and hospitals were sophisticated and modern. They broke from the tradition of the typical Lao home constructed with bamboo walls, thatched roof and on stilts. Both homes were built on the ground, with rooms for different purposes—sleeping, dining, cooking and entertaining—and were superior to the typical Lao home with one room. Despite championing cultural blending, the spatial configuration of Dooley's home functioned differently for Laotians and himself; distinguishing who occupied what space reinforced difference. "The wretched sick came from huts where they lived on miserable straw pallets in dark rooms. They came to our bright clinic with colourful pictures on the walls and put themselves in the tender hands of my crew. And they were better even before they received their antibiotics."[113]

David Sibley demonstrates the maintenance of racial and spatial boundaries, specifically in the systems of values and the symbolic quality of whiteness: [W]hiteness is a symbol of purity, virtue and goodness and a colour which is easily polluted. … Thus, white may be connected with a heightened consciousness of the boundaries between white and not-white, with an urge to clean, to expel dirt and resist pollution, whether whiteness is attributed to people or to material objects."[114] In Klein's analysis, she suggests Dooley's home in Vang Vieng must be read in a national and international context. His home is described as a hybrid space of East meets West: "The house resonates with two national landscapes and cultures: made out of bamboo and standing on stilts, the house proclaims its location in a Laotian village; at the same time, its wide front porch and flying American flag suggests a small-town American bungalow."[115] Yet in crucial respects, Dooley's staking a claim in Laos and the transformation of his home must also be read as one of spatial and racial superiority underscoring his presence in Laos. In *The Night They Burned the Mountain*, Dooley proclaims his life's work as not simply treating the sick but bearing witness, as "I must tell other Americans of these Asians. I think all men should reaffirm what they know, what they believe. I want to speak of the spirit of Asia."[116]

Dooley's narratives placed Laos on the ideological map for Americans and showed that democracy may be achieved, even in seemingly small ways such as the introduction of soap. Edward Said discusses this form of style in Rudyard Kipling's poem "The White Man's Burden" (1898) as "a very concrete manner of being-in-the-world, a way of taking hold of reality, language, and thought."[117] Accordingly, Dooley's

expeditions to provide the "white man's miraculous medicines" in far-flung villages employed Kipling's White Man style, and his evaluations differentiating traditional and Western medicine served as a form of authority that required Western attention.[118] Dooley explains: "Before we came to Nam Tha, and perhaps from time immemorial, the witch doctors had ruled supreme. No one ever questioned their wisdom or the power of their nostrums or incantations. But now the wretched people were torn between the magic of the traditional sorcerers and the new ways of the white medicine-men."[119] This representation of "the white man's burden" is rooted in an understanding of exploration.

Kipling's "The White Man's Burden" encouraged American aggressive expansion across the Pacific to take over the Philippines after the Spanish-American War and ultimately produced violence in Southeast Asia in the struggle against communism. For Dooley, the claim of curing disease and removing darkness in Laos was possible because of his presence, and by extension the US presence. In 1961, a *New York Times* editorial memorialized Dooley's "work and his spirit [that] was like a flame in the dark jungle" that gave existence to Laos.[120] Such statements suggest Laos was never a country in its own right but owed her existence to Western encounters—first by French annexation, then US intervention, and finally Dooley's presence.

Conclusion

In 1959, *Washington Post* reporter John G. Norris questioned whether the US with its military power could do much in Laos, a "land-locked, mountain kingdom of a few freedom-loving intellectuals and largely unconcerned farmers, fishermen and opium-growing mountaineers."[121] In his examination of the many US civilians and military officials who helped formulate and execute the Eisenhower administration's policy in Laos from 1954 to 1961, William J. Rust argued the policy would be a "key initial misstep on the road to war in Southeast Asia."[122] These sentiments paralleled US official's sentiment distributed in top secret correspondences dated March 1958. The US foreign policy toward Laos was one of expendability.

> There are those who consider Laos expendable, or at least the most expendable of our Asian allies. And it is true that Laos does appear more a liability than an asset to the Free World. It is the weakest and least stable of all the states in Southeast Asia, it labors under the greatest economic handicaps, its miniscule elite has thus far not proven equal to the task of satisfying the economic and social requirements of the Lao people or of assuming the international responsibilities of a newly independent state. In its resistance to Communist pressure, Laos has resembled nothing so much as a bowl of Jell-O.[123]

By 1959, questions were raised regarding the inefficiency of carrying out hundreds of millions of dollars in aid to Laos and concerning the nation's ability to keep out communism. With the balance of the Cold War remaining on the US side and despite their sentiments about the Lao people, state officials believed the US had to stay in Laos to keep the country free.

Two days before President John F. Kennedy's presidential inauguration on January 20, 1961, Dooley passed away from cancer. In less than a year after his death, Dooley's empire evaporated after his clinics came under the control of the Pathet Lao. On June 7, 1962, Kennedy awarded Agnes Dooley with the Medal of Freedom to commemorate her son for providing Americans a model of compassion as the tool to combat disease and communism. The interest in and revitalization of Dooley's publications resurfaced in 1991 with Diana Shaw's *The Los Angeles Times* article "The Temptation of Tom Dooley," and more recently with James T. Fisher's *Dr. America*, Christina Klein's *Cold War Orientalism*, and Seth Jacobs's *America's Miracle Man in Vietnam* and *The Universe Unraveling*. Why was there such an interest in Dooley? Diana Shaw claimed Dooley's crusade in Southeast Asia was "integral to a covert CIA disinformation campaign. And the result of his propaganda, taken to its extreme interpretation, was no less than US involvement in the Vietnam War."[124] Fisher declared that *Deliver Us From Evil* put Vietnam on the map for Americans, with Dooley playing an important role "in announcing the arrival of South Vietnam as a new ally whose fate was decisively bound to that of the United States."[125] Building on Fisher's comprehensive scholarship on Dooley and Jacobs's fascinating work on the cultural understanding of American policy in Laos, I also contend that *The Edge of Tomorrow* and *The Night They Burned the Mountain* put Laos on the map for Americans. The language and sentiments employed by Dooley, the American press, and US officials during the late 1950s represented US anxiety over communism, and produced knowledge about the racial and cultural Other in distant lands.

This article illustrates the top-down racialization of Laos and its people through Thomas Dooley's memoirs that influenced how Americans came to know Laos as a place frozen in time, with "backward" and "filthy" inhabitants who would never grow up, fostering a national identity of saving places such as Laos from communism. Dooley's representation of Laos reflected a Cold War narrative discourse marked by the campaign against communism, the struggle between good and evil, and the expansion of US power in Southeast Asia. Jacobs explains that Dooley gave Americans "the chance to play nursemaid to eternal children, to experience, vicariously, the gratitude of innocents cured of medieval diseases."[126] After Dooley's death, the US continued its covert presence in Laos even as they prepared to withdraw American personnel in accordance with the Geneva Accords of 1962. From 1964 to 1973, the US engaged in a violent and decisive aerial war—dropping over two million tons of bombs and more than two hundred seventy million cluster bombs—that enabled and fostered its own moral superiority and legitimacy, requiring Laos's space to be null and void of

social relations where neither compassion nor gentleness existed. Today, Laos continues to deal with the aftermath of US foreign policy that claimed its presence in the country could prevent the spread of communism in Southeast Asia.

Notes

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[1] Thomas Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow* (New York: Signet Publisher, 1961), 24.

[2] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 24.

[3] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 24.

[4] Tillman Durdin, "Kingdom of Laos Having Hard Time: Little Indo-China Country has Bright Past, Good Future, Poor Present," *New York Times,* February 20, 1952, page 3, https://ww.nytimes.com/1952/02/20/archives/kingdom-of-laos-having-hard-time-little-indochina-country-has.html, accessed April 12, 2014.

[5] On Dooley being the most famous American in Indochina, see Andrew F. Smith, *Rescuing the World: The Life and Times of Leo Cherne*, (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2005), 100.

[6] Seth Jacobs, *America's Miracle Man in Vietnam: Ngo Dinh Diem, Religion, Race, and US Intervention in Southeast Asia, 1950–1957* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 139–40. Jacobs writes that there may be several reasons for his plunge from celebrity status to obscurity. "First of all, he left no lasting monument to his life's work. Then there was Dooley's homosexuality, never completely hidden but a matter of public record only after his death. But probably the most significant reason for Americans' amnesia with regard to Dooley was the Vietnam War."

[7] Laos Files; 1954-1961, Entry # A1-3121, Folder 300 Gen US Govt Attitudes and Actions, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs/Office of Southeast Asian Affairs, NND 959311, Box 1, RG 59, NACP. See Memo from SEA Alfred le S. Jenkins to FE Graham Parsons dated September 17, 1958 on the US cold war plan. Commander in Chief Pacific Fleet Headquarters (CINCPAC) believed a cold war plan for Laos was needed.

[8] See President Dwight D. Eisenhower, Presidential Library, Museum and Boyhood Home Online Archive. Documents on People-to-People Program at https://www.eisenhowerlibrary.gov/research/online-documents/people-people-program. The basic mission of the agency was carried out under the United States Information

Agency. DDE's Records as President, Official File, Box 748, OF 247 United States Information Agency 1954 (2); NAID #12648972 (accessed June 2, 2019). *See also* Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia In the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945–1961* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

[9] Bernard Fall, "The International Relations of Laos," *Pacific Affairs* 30, no. 1 (1957): 32.

[10] Laos Files; 1954-1961, Entry #A1 3121, Folder 320.1 SEATO (Manila Pact) – Nov THRU 323.1 International Control Commission, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs/Office of Southeast Asian Affairs, NND 959311, Box 2, Record Group 59 (RG), General Records of the Department of State, National Archives, College Park (NACP).

[11] Defense Programs and Operations, Folder MAP – Misc. Top Secret, Records of Robert S. McNamara, NND 932009, Box 29 NN3-200-092-001 HM 92-93, RG 200 National Archives Gift Collection, NACP. The Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate states: "Through the years 1955–62, the United States provided over $450 million in aid of all kinds to Laos" (9). See Seth Jacobs, *The Universe Unraveling: American Foreign Policy in Cold War Laos* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012). Jacobs details how government officials viewed Laos as a place of no value to the US (4). For more information on US secret military programs in Laos, see also Timothy N. Castle, *At War in the Shadow of Vietnam: US Military Aid to the Royal Lao Government 1955–1975* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993). Castle points out that the US decision to avoid overt violations of the Geneva Accords of 1954 and 1962 resulted in a "complex military logistic networks, a civilian operated airborne resupply and troop movement system, a multinational ground air force, and the introduction into Laos of a limited number of US military personnel" (1–2).

[12] Laos Files; 1954–1961, Entry # A1-3121, Folder 001 Briefing Papers THRU Viet-Nam/Laos. Folder – US Government Attitudes and Action, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs/Office of Southeast Asian Affairs, NND 959311, Box 1, RG 59, NACP. See James T. Fisher, *Dr. America: The Lives of Thomas Dooley, 1927–1961* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1997), 191. Fisher remarked that by 1958 Southeast Asia became a dumping ground for USOM, who placed individuals brought to Laos, including those with "previous convictions for forgery, confinements in mental institutions, and episodes of alcoholic psychosis, confirming the judgment of Lederer and Burdick that Southeast Asia had indeed become a dumping ground for troubled employees of the foreign service." See also Yale Richmond's experience in Laos as an American diplomat. He arrived in Laos in June 1954, one month after the fall of Dien Bien Phu and left Vientiane in June 1956. During his time in Laos, Richmond narrates his public diplomacy effort in Laos's nation-building, observing that "no one in Washington cared much about Laos or the American staff there." Yale Richmond, "Nation Building in Laos," *American Diplomacy: Insight and Analysis from Foreign Affairs Practitioners and Scholars*, December 2011,

http://americandiplomacy.web.unc.edu/2011/12/nation-building-in-laos/, accessed June 30, 2019.

[13] Defense Programs and Operations, Folder MAP – Misc. Top Secret, Records of Robert S. McNamara, NND 932009, Box 29 NN3-200-092-001 HM 92-93, RG 200, NACP. See report of Viet Nam and Southeast Asia of the Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate.

[14] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 57

[15] Derek Gregory, *The Colonial Present: Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 18–19.

[16] Melanie McAlister, *Epic Encounters: Culture, Media, and US Interests in the Middle East since 1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), xi. Klein, *Cold War Orientalism.*

[17] McAlister, *Epic Encounters*, 303.

[18] Walter Hixson, *The Myth of American Diplomacy: National Identity and US Foreign Policy* (Yale University Press, 2008).

[19] Hixson, *The Myth of American Diplomacy*, 214.

[20] For a short yet insightful understanding of the race-space connection representing and articulating difference and distance, see Brooke Neely and Michelle Samura, "Social Geographies of Race: Connecting Race and Space," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 34, no. 11 (2011): 1933–1952.

[21] Fisher, *Dr. America: The Lives of Thomas A. Dooley,* 153.

[22] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 137.

[23] See Fisher, *Dr. America.*

[24] Jacobs, *The Universe Unraveling.*

[25] Klein, *Cold War Orientalism*, 84.

[26] Danielle Glassmeyer, "'A Beautiful Idea': *The King and I* and the Maternal Promise of Sentimental Orientalism," *The Journal of American Culture* 35, no. 2 (2012): 106.

[27] Danielle Glassmeyer, "Tom Dooley and the Cold War Revision of 'Indochina,'" in *Sinographies: Writing China*, ed. Eric Hayot, Haun Saussy, and Steven G. Yao, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

[28] The agreement stipulated all foreign powers except France were prohibited from establishing or maintaining bases in Laos. "Indochina—Agreement on the Cessation of

Hostilities in Laos, July 20, 1954," Avalon Project, Lillian Goldman Law Library, Yale Law School, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20thcentury/inch004.asp.

[29] Castle, *At War in the Shadow of Vietnam*, 10. See also Joshau Kurlantzick, *A Great Place to Have a War: America in Laos and the Birth of a Military CIA* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2016), 10.

[30] Castle, *At War in the Shadow of Vietnam*, 15–16.

[31] Kurlantzick, *A Great Place to Have a War,* 3.

[32] Jacobs, *The Universe Unraveling,* 4.

[33] Frederic C. Benson, "Indochina War Refugee Movements in Laos, 1954-1975: A Chronological Overview Citing New Primary Sources." *The Journal of Lao Studies*, Special Issue 2015: 24-63, 29.

[34] President Dwight D. Eisenhower, Presidential Library, Museum & Boyhood Home Online Archive. Documents on People-to-People Program at https://www.eisenhowerlibrary.gov/research/online-documents/people-people-program. "A critical goal during the Cold War years, the program became a part of a new agency created, the United States Information Agency (USIA), and its basic mission aimed "to submit evidence to peoples of other nations by means of communication techniques that the objectives and policies of the US are in harmony with and will advance their legitimate aspirations for freedom, progress, and peace." Moreover, the Eisenhower administration's attention to the decolonizing world aimed to have Americans see their connections with the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America. (accessed June 4, 2019).

[35] Thomas Dooley, *The Night They Burned the Mountain* (Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, 1960): 109. See also Smith, *Rescuing the World*, 100. Smith states while Dooley assisted the evacuation of refugees from North to South Vietnam, but under the suggestion of William Lederer who authored *The Ugly American*, Dooley's work "reported atrocities committed by the Viet Minh, particularly against Catholics" to appeal to American readers.

[36] See Jacobs, *The Universe Unraveling*. Jacobs discussed the compounds in Vientiane where military officials and their families lived. These compounds were wall-offed from Laotians, which provided Dooley's understanding of two kinds of Americans in Laos. See also Richmond, "Nation Building in Laos." Richmond observes, "[t]here are only two kinds of Americans in Laos—those who have amoebic dysentery, and those who don't know it."

[37] James T. Fisher, *Dr. America and The Catholic Counterculture in America, 1933–1962* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 82.

[38] "Diplomacy of the Heart," *The Washington Post*, July 16, 1956, accessed April 12, 2014.

[39] Peggy Durdin, "Mission to Laos," *The New York Times*, September 7, 1958, accessed April 8, 2014.

[40] Fisher, *Dr. America: The Lives of Thomas A. Dooley,* 93-115. See Drinnon, *Facing West* on Lansdale and his work in the Philippines, 393.

[41] Fisher, *Dr. America*, 393. See also Smith, *Rescuing the World*, 94.

[42] Oscar J. Arellano, "How Operation Brotherhood got to Viet Nam." Philippine Studies. 14, no. 3 (1966): 396-409, 404. Simeon Man, *Soldiering Through Empire: Race and the Making of the Decolonizing Pacific* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2018), 57. See Robert Gilkey, "Laos: Politics, Elections and Foreign Aid," *Far Eastern Survey* 27, no. 6 (1958): 89–94. Gilkey notes Operation Brotherhood was one of many projects in Laos, and in footnote 3, he writes: "For a recent account of a US medical team's work in a village of northern Laos, see Thomas A. Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Cudahy, 1958) – *Editor.*"

[43] Richard Drinnon, *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian-Hating and Empire Building* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1980), 391. Drinnon stated the CIA and Lansdale's covert operation in the Philippines "had a bottomless budget of untallied COIN dollars that supplemented the $67 million the US Congress appropriated between 1951 and 1954 for military assistance to the Philippines."

[44] Drinnon, *Facing West,* 412; Man, *Soldiering Through Empire.*

[45] Arelleno, "How Operation Brother got to Viet Nam," 400. Man, *Soldiering Through Empire*, 58. See also Jonathan Nashel, *Edward Lansdale's Cold War: A Cultural Biography of a Legendary Cold War Figure* (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005), 61. According to Nashel, Operation Brotherhood's goal was simple: "having Asians from different countries working together (though under the covert auspices of the United States) would lend the new government of South Vietnam an air of legitimacy in the eyes of other governments in Asia."

[46] Man, *Soldiering Through Empire,* 58.

[47] Laos Files; 1954-1961, Entry # A1-3121, Folder 300 Gen US Govt Attitudes and Actions, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs/Office of Southeast Asian Affairs, NND 959311, Box 1, RG 59, NACP. Secret Draft "US Policy Toward Laos."

[48] Miguel A. Bernard, S.J. *Filipinos in Laos: The True Story of a Remarkable Asian People Partnership* (San Bernardino, CA: CreateSpace Independent Publishing, 2015), 5.

[49] Bernard, S.J., *Filipinos in Laos*, section titled "The Filipino Pioneers: A Timeline."

[50] Diana Shaw, "The Temptation of Tom Dooley: He was the Heroic Jungle Doctor of Indochina in the 1950s," *Los Angeles Times*, December 15, 1991, accessed May 28, 2019. Bernard, S.J., *Filipinos in Laos*, 42.

[51] Laos Files; 1954–1961, Entry # A1-3121, Folder 001 Briefing Papers THRU Viet-Nam/Laos. Folder – US Government Attitudes and Action, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs/Office of Southeast Asian Affairs, NND 959311, Box 1, RG 59, NACP. As mentioned, a total of eight hundred and thirty-one US officials were present in Laos.

[52] See Bernard, S.J., *Filipinos in Laos.*

[53] Daniel Immerwahr, "*The Ugly American*: Peeling the Onion of an Iconic Cold War Text," *Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 26, no. 1 (2019): 7–20, 15.

[54] See Klein's *Cold War Orientalism* and Fisher's *Dr. America: The Lives of Thomas A. Dooley,* both authors suggest Dooley went to Laos in quest of redemption from professional disgrace and of freedom from the constraints of heterosexual and normative family formations of the 1950s.

[55] Fall, "The International Relations of Laos," 22.

[56] Martin Stuart-Fox, "The French in Laos, 1887–1945," *Modern Asia Studies* 29, no. 1 (1995): 111–39, 111.

[57] For more information on Laos's international relations, see Castle, *At War in the Shadow of Vietnam*, 9–12; Fall, "The International Relations of Laos"; Kurlantzick, *A Great Place to Have A War*; and Jacobs, *The Universe Unraveling.*

[58] Fall, "The International Relations of Laos," 32.

[59] Using ProQuest Historical Newspapers for *The New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times*, I filtered the date range from January 1, 1956 to December 31, 1958 to include subjects such as international relations, foreign aid, Far East and Pacific areas, big powers, mutual relations and cold war, military action, moves for new negotiations in cold war, etc. I conducted the first search on August 8, 2017 and most recently on June 17, 2019. See also Kurlantzick, *A Great Place to Have a War*, 10. He explains, "Laos did not enter American public's consciousness until 1960." Regarding Americans' interest in Laos, the "*New York Times* devoted more than three times the newspaper space, in column inches, to Laos in 1960, the year Kennedy was elected, than it did to Vietnam."

[60] Charles Poore, "Books of the Times," *New York Times*, May 27, 1958, accessed April 12, 2014.

[61] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 24.

[62] William Prochnau, *Once Upon a Distant War* (New York: Crown Publishing Group, 1995), 103. Fisher, *Dr. America: The Lives of Thomas A. Dooley,* 122. Though Never Never is a

geographical location encompassing a large remote area of the Australian Outback, the origin of the term is associated with J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* and defined as "an imaginary utopian place."

[63] Kurlantzick, *A Great Place to Have a War*, 57.

[64] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, ix; Oden Meeker, *The Little World of Laos* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959), 14.

[65] Drinnon, *Facing West*.

[66] Laos Files; 1954-1961, Entry # A1-3121, Folder 300 Gen US Govt Attitudes and Actions, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs/Office of Southeast Asian Affairs, NND 959311, Box 1, RG 59, NACP. See Office Memorandum to Graham Parsons from SEA Daniel V. Anderson dated September 8, 1959 on answers to Senator Mansfield's questions.

[67] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 58.

[68] See also Douglas Kerr, "Colonial habitats: Orwell and Woolf in the Jungle," *English Studies* 78, no. 2 (1997): 149. In his reading of Orwell's novel, Kerr argues the jungle both symbolically and materially represented "the most foreign about the foreign parts which the European empires had penetrated," and played an important part in Orwell's "eastern novels because much of the action is set in the environment."

[69] Drinnon, *Facing West*, 398. The quotation from Pomeroy is in William J. Pomeroy, *The Forest: A Personal Record of the Huk Guerilla Struggle in the Philippines* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1963; digitized by RevSocialist for SocialistStories), 203. http://www.socialiststories.com/liberate/The%20Forest%20-%20William%20J%20Pomeroy.pdf, accessed May 23, 2019.

[70] Dooley, *The Night They Burned the Mountain*, 145.

[71] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow,* 31.

[72] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 33.

[73] David Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing, and Imperial Administration* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 3.

[74] Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire*, 15.

[75] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (rev. with a new preface, New York: Routledge, 2007), 7.

[76] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes,* 7; Dooley, *The Night They Burned the Mountain*, 44.

[77] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 58.

[78] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 58

[79] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 120.

[80] Dooley, *The Night They Burned the Mountain,* 145.

[81] Castle, *At War in the Shadow of Vietnam,* 15.

[82] Eric T. Chester, *Covert Network: Progressives, the International Rescue Committee, and the CIA* (New York: Routledge, 2015).

[83] Chester, *Covert Network.*

[84] Drinnon, *Facing West*, 367.

[85] Drinnon, *Facing West*, 367.

[86] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 117.

[87] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 50, and *The Night*, 111.

[88] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 64.

[89] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 40.

[90] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 47.

[91] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 64.

[92] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 20–21.

[93] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 43.

[94] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 43.

[95] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 35.

[96] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 35.

[97] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 41.

[98] Emmanuelle Saada, *Empire's Children: Race, Filiation, and Citizenship in the French Colonies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 63. On the risk of "Decivilization," segregation was essential to maintain rank.

[99] Klein, *Cold War Orientalism*.

[100] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 43.

[101] David Sibley, *Geographies of Exclusion: Society and Difference in the West* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 23.

[102] Spurr, *The Rhetoric,* 78.

[103] Richard Drinnon, *Facing West*, xvii.

[104] Emphasis added, Dooley, *The Night They Burned the Mountain*, 69.

[105] Dooley, *The Night They Burned the Mountain*, 59.

[106] Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 208.

[107] McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, 209.

[108] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 35.

[109] Shaw, "The Temptation of Tom Dooley."

[110] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 34.

[111] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 35

[112] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 46.

[113] Dooley, *The Night They Burned the Mountain*, 68.

[114] Sibley, *Geographies of Exclusion,* 24.

[115] Klein, *Cold War Orientalism*, 94.

[116] Dooley, *The Night They Burned the Mountain*, 61.

[117] Said, *Orientalism*, 227.

[118] Said, *Orientalism*, 53.

[119] Dooley, *The Edge of Tomorrow*, 64.

[120] "Thomas Dooley, M.D," *New York Times,* January 20, 1961, accessed April 14, 2014.

[121] John G. Norris, "If U.N. Fails, What Then? Laos Poses Military Problem for West," *The Washington Post,* September 13, 1959, accessed April 14, 2014.

[122] William J. Rust, *Before the Quagmire: American Intervention in Laos,* 1954–1961 (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 2012), 3.

[123] Laos Files; 1954-1961, Entry # A1-3121, Folder – 300 US Government Attitudes and Action, File "Secret US Policy Toward Laos," Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs/Office of Southeast Asian Affairs, NND 959311, Box 1, RG 59, NACP. See "Secret US Policy Toward Laos," draft dated March 7, 1958.

[124] Shaw, "The Temptation of Tom Dooley."

[125] Fisher, *Dr. America*, 34.

[126] Jacobs, *Universe Unraveling*, 193.

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