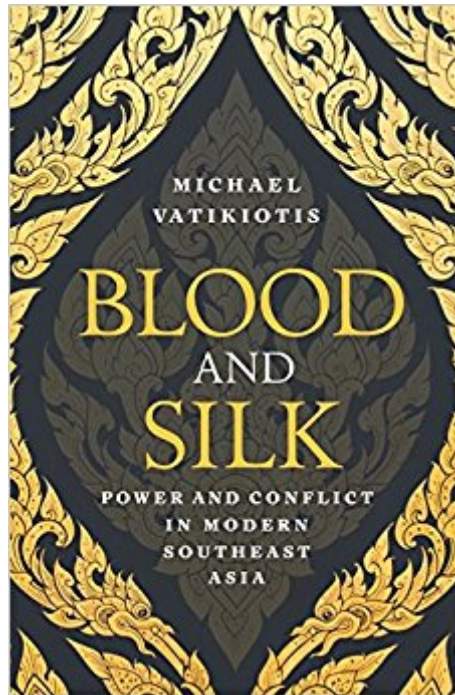




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Blood And Silk: Power And Conflict In Modern Southeast Asia



Synopsis

Thought-provoking and eye-opening, *BLOOD AND SILK* is an accessible, personal look at modern Southeast Asia, written by one of the region's most experienced outside observers. This is a first-hand account of what it's like to sit at the table with deadly Thai Muslim insurgents, mediate between warring clans in the Southern Philippines and console the victims of political violence in Indonesia - all in an effort to negotiate peace, and understand the reasons behind endemic violence. Peering beyond brand new shopping malls and shiny glass towers in Bangkok and Jakarta, Michael Vatikiotis probes the heart of modern Southeast Asia. Why are the region's richest countries such as Malaysia riddled with corruption? Why do Myanmar, Thailand and the Philippines harbour unresolved violent insurgencies? How do deepening religious divisions in Indonesia and Malaysia and China's growing influence affect the region and the rest of the world? Vatikiotis tells the story of modern Southeast Asia using vivid portraits of the personalities who pull the strings, mixed with revealing analysis that is underpinned by decades of experience in the countries involved, from their silk-sheathed salons to blood-spattered streets. The result is a fascinating study of the dynamics of power and conflict in one of the world's fastest growing regions.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A fascinating and many-layered portrait of Southeast Asia, brimming with colourful characters, insights and anecdotes, *Blood and Silk* is a rich palimpsest as can only be written by a longstanding student and scholar of the region like Michael Vatikiotis -- Thant Myint-U, author of *THE RIVER OF*

LOST FOOTSTEPS Vatikiotis's arguments are fluent and convincing, and his writing is suffused with a deep knowledge of and affection for Southeast Asia and its peoples. -- Richard Cockett * LITERARY REVIEW * Blood and Silk is not a dry socio-political analysis. Vatikiotis has an eye for quirky detail, whether it be the Thai crown prince's pet poodle commissioned as an air force officer and dressed in uniform, or the self-important Muslim separatist from southern Thailand who prayed with Osama bin Laden in Khartoum but found the terrorist mastermind uninspiring and unimpressive. In the end, though, the outlook is menacing. Indonesia risks "the kind of ethnic and religious sectarian strife we see in the Middle East today". Malaysians are dismayed by "the slow disintegration of the multiracial compact". In Thailand, there is "little prospect of the military willingly giving up power". The Philippines remains "a prisoner of oligarchy". Even Aung San Suu Kyi in Myanmar has disappointed her liberal supporters. We can hope that Vatikiotis is wrong, but I fear he is not. -- VICTOR MALLET * FINANCIAL TIMES * Books on the rise of Asia tend to concentrate on China and India. Vatikiotis fills a gap by providing a lively and learned guide to the politics, personalities and conflicts that are shaping a dynamic group of countries, including Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Burma -- Gideon Rachman * FINANCIAL TIMES Summer Reads *

Michael Vatikiotis is a graduate of the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and gained his doctorate from the University of Oxford. He is a member of the Asia Society's International Council and has a decade of experience working as a private diplomat and conflict mediator for the Geneva-based Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue. Prior to that he worked as a journalist in Asia for thirty years, living in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Hong Kong. He is the author of two previous books on the politics of Southeast Asia and is based in Singapore. @jagowriter

Frank and insightful account drawn from deep pool of personal experience that pulls no punches. Structured along the lines of an enjoyable conversation and easy to dip into as time allows.

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