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Tragic Mountains

By Jane Hamilton-Merritt

BLOOMINGTON, Ind. —In celebration of the 15th anniversary of its publication, a revisit to *Tragic Mountains* is a must. Jane Hamilton-Merritt recounts the story of the Hmong's struggle for freedom and survival in Laos from 1942 through 1992. During those years, most Hmong sided with the French against the Japanese and Ho Chi Minh's Viet Minh, and then with the Americans against the North Vietnamese.

The staunchest of allies, the Hmong were America's foot soldiers in the brutal secret Lao theater of the Vietnam War, risking all to defend their homelands and to rescue downed American air crews. Abandoned by the United States when it withdrew in 1975, the Hmong have been subjected to a campaign of genocide by communist Laos and Vietnam. *Tragic Mountains* is a story of courage, tenacity, brutality, secrecy, incredible heroism—by Hmong and Americans alike—international cynicism, betrayal, genocide, resilience, and still, hope.

Jane Hamilton-Merritt was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in 1969 for her coverage of the Vietnam War, and in 1998 for the Nobel Peace Prize, in recognition of her long-standing efforts on behalf of the Hmong. *Tragic Mountains* is her account of the historic struggle of the Hmong and of their betrayal by the United States.

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Tragic Mountains: The Hmong, the Americans, and the Secret Wars for Laos, 1942-1992

By Jane Hamilton-Merritt

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