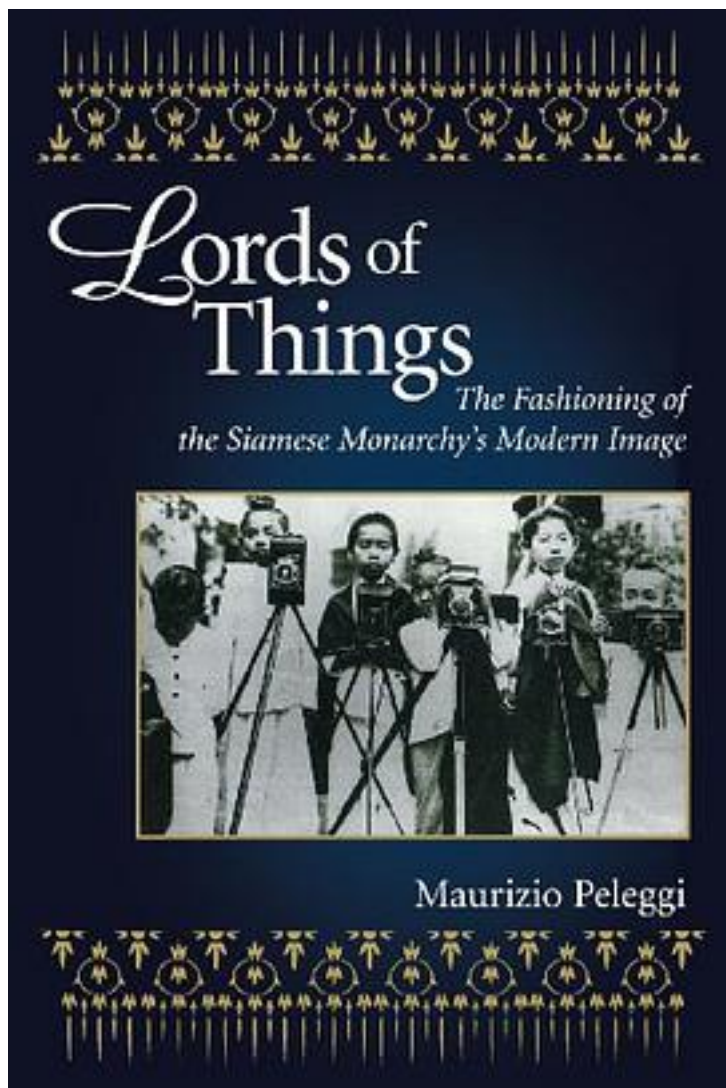


Lords of Things



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Lords of Things offers a fascinating interpretation of modernity in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Siam by focusing on the novel material possessions and social practices adopted by the royal elite to refashion its self and public image in the early stages of globalization. It examines the westernized modes of consumption and self-presentation, the residential and representational architecture, and the public spectacles appropriated by the Bangkok court not as byproducts of institutional reformation initiated by modernizing sovereigns, but as practices and objects constitutive of the very identity of the royalty as a civilized and civilizing class. Bringing a wealth of new source material into a theoretically informed discussion, Lords of Things will be required reading for historians of Thailand and Southeast Asia scholars generally. It represents a welcome change from previous studies of Siamese modernization that are almost exclusively concerned with the institutional and economic dimensions of the process or with foreign relations, and will appeal greatly to those interested in transnational cultural flows, the culture of colonialism, the invention of tradition, and the relationship between consumption and identity formation in the modern era.

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