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"Violent Landscape: Global Explosions and Lao Life-Worlds"

High, Holly

High, Holly. "Violent Landscape: Global Explosions and Lao Life-Worlds." *Global Environment* 1 (2008): 56–79.

Laos, a small country tucked into the heart of Southeast Asia, seems an unlikely target for the world's most intensive bombing campaign. But from the 1950s to the 1970s, the U.S. intervened in Laos to combat the local communist forces and to attempt to stop the flow of North Vietnamese supplies through Lao territory, an intervention prompted by a particularly "global" outlook. The U.S. military intervention was characterised by tactics that pitted science and technology against the local terrain, weather, and vegetation. The Lao landscape was a violent landscape during this era, as it was entangled as both agent and object in the conflict. The U.S. war on nature in Laos remains a salient part of contemporary Laos, as the country grapples with perhaps the world's most serious unexploded ordnance problem. Thus today, the Lao landscape is violent in yet another sense: past violence is incorporated into today's land. This is reflected in local retellings of the violence and devastation of the era, stories that stress images of the loss of natural wilderness. (Author's abstract at The White Horse Press.)

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