



The River's Tale: A Year on the Mekong

Edward Gargan

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Along the Mekong, from northern Tibet to Lijiang, from Luang Prabang to Phnom Penh to Can Lo, I moved from one world to another, among cultural islands often ignorant of each other's presence. Yet each island, as if built on shifting sands and eroded and reshaped by a universal sea, was re-forming itself, or was being remolded, was expanding its horizons or sinking under the rising waters of a cultural global warming. It was a journey between worlds, worlds fragiley conjoined by a river both ominous and luminescent, muscular and bosomy, harsh and sensuous.

From windswept plateaus to the South China Sea, the Mekong flows for three thousand miles, snaking its way through Southeast Asia. Long fascinated with this part of the world, former *New York Times* correspondent Edward Gargan embarked on an ambitious exploration of the Mekong and those living within its watershed. **The River's Tale** is a rare and profound book that delivers more than a correspondent's account of a place. It is a seminal examination of the Mekong and its people, a testament to the their struggles, their defeats and their victories.

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