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Nota di contenuto	Preliminary material / F. Robinne and M. Sadan -- The biographical origins of political systems of Highland Burma / Robert Anderson -- On the continuing relevance of E. R. Leach's political systems of Highland Burma to Kachin studies / Maran La Raw -- Translating Gumlau: History, the 'Kachin' and Edmund Leach / Mandy Sadan -- Politico-ritual variations on the Assamese Fringes: Do social systems exist? / Philippe Ramirez -- Naga ethnography and Leach's oscillatory model of Gumsa and Gumlao / Pascal Bouchery -- Interethnic systems and localized identities: The Khmu subgroups (Tmoy)in north-west Laos / Olivier Evrard -- From Kettledrums to coins: Social transformation and the flow of valuables in northern Laos / Guido Sprenger -- Political hierarchical processes among some highlanders of Laos / Vanina Bouté

-- Rethinking Kachin wealth ownership / Ho Ts'Ui-P'Ing -- The missing share: The ritual language of sharing as a 'total social fact' in the eastern Himalayas (Northwest Yunnan, China) / Stéphane Gros -- Transethnic social space of clans and lineages: A discussion of Leach's concept of common ritual language / François Robinne -- Postscript: Reconsidering the dynamics of ethnicity through Foucault's concept of 'spaces of dispersion' / François Robinne and Mandy Sadan -- Bibliography / F. Robinne and M. Sadan -- Index / F. Robinne and M. Sadan.

Sommario/riassunto

This reappraisal of Political Systems of Highland Burma, the seminal work by E.R. Leach, presents much new material on the highlands of Southeast Asia and its borders from writers with long-term research experience in these areas. The Introduction establishes in detail both the theoretical and regional ethnographic significance of Leach's work and the chapters to follow. Part One discusses issues relating to Leach's fieldwork, including the background to his research and issues arising from his fieldwork practice. Part Two presents a variety of engagements with Leach's theoretical approach, particularly his ideas of socio-political oscillation. This theory is considered in relation to the historical experience of culture contact in Assam and Laos, particularly between Tai and non-Tai groups. Part Three considers once more Leach's ideas with respect to communities that are, or could be considered, Kachin sub-groups in Burma, Tibet and Yunnan, this time focusing on interpretations of exchange and the notion of ritual language. A discussion of approaches towards the study of transethnicity concludes the work. The book is a significant contribution to the development of a new regional anthropology of Southeast Asia, incorporating material from areas that were, until recently, closed to researchers.
