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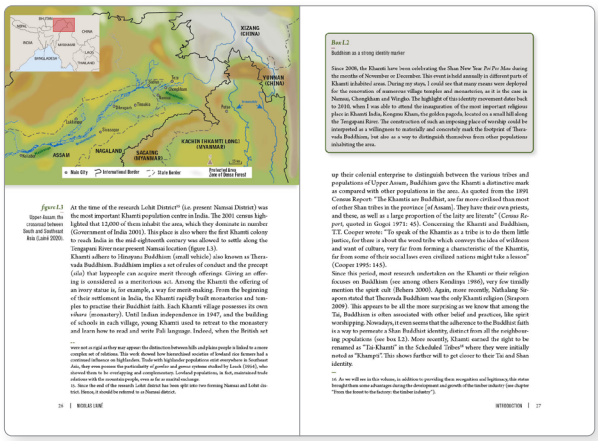

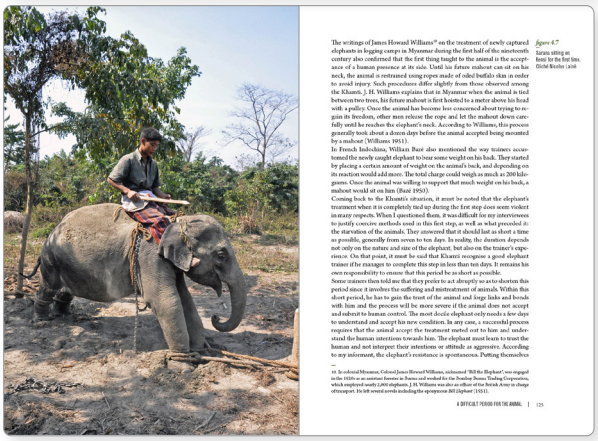

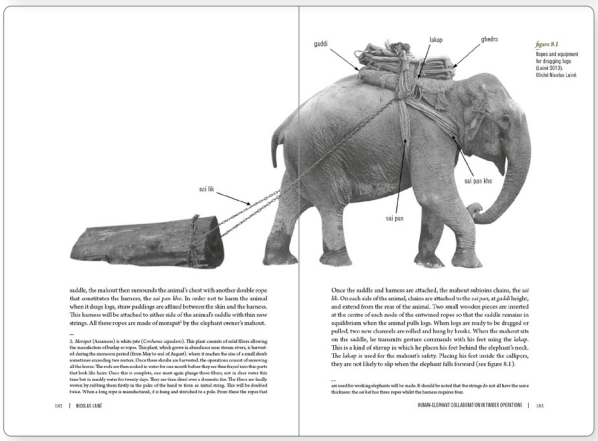

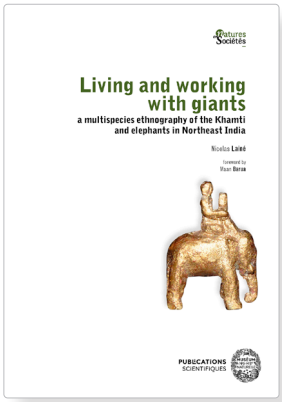

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Living and working with giants

a multispecies ethnography of the Khamti and elephants in Northeast india

Nicolas Lainé

THE BOOK

This book proposes a multispecies ethnography of human-elephant working relationships in Northeast india, in the local context of the Khamti population. Based on an extended research fieldwork, it analyses not only people's action but also animal involvement in establishing and maintaining trusting relationships at the workplace. Thanks to Nicolas Lainé rich descriptions, the reader can follow the capture of a juvenile forest elephant, and understand its transformation into a village elephant as a reciprocal process. Both cognitive capacities and corporeal capabilities of humans and elephants are taken into consideration, as well as their mutual influences and the representations that arise from the specific contexts of interspecies communication and collaboration. The adopted multidisciplinary approach allows thinking the human-animal working unit in terms of cooperative interaction, and even intersubjective engagement —opening to reflexions on the mutually beneficial modalities of existence of humans and animals in a shared environment.

THE AUTHOR

Nicolas Lainé holds a PhD in Ethnology from Paris West University (2014). He is currently a postdoctoral research fellow at the institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD/UMR Paloc) and a postdoctoral research associate at the Research institute of Contemporary Southeast Asia (IRASEC) in Bangkok. He is also a member of the International Multidisciplinary Thematic Network "Biodiversity, Health, and Societies in Southeast Asia", supported by CNRS-InEE (National Institute of Ecology and Environment, France), and serves as an expert member of the IUCN SSC Asian Elephant Specialist Group. His research focuses on human-animal relations in Asia, the links between health and biocultural diversity, and the decolonization of science.

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