The sixth and final chapter is devoted to the memory and representation of American POWs. Close the past to face the future, was the Vietnamese gesture to the Americans. But, the author argues, the reverse occurred in US policy towards the Vietnamese. The past was recalled, ‘perhaps not uncoincidentally as the US strengthened its efforts toward dismantling “market socialism” and expanding economic liberalization’ [p. 177].

What the Vietnamese have done in the field this book covers is, the author concludes, not unlike “market socialism”. ‘The merging of capitalist and noncapitalist economic logics and knowledge practices demonstrate[s] not a definitive “defeat” of socialism – a claim denied by many in Vietnam – but its reconfiguration as a strategy to delimit and control the reach and penetration of U.S. capitalism and its empire of memory into Vietnam’s growing economy and its still-scarred landscape of history’ [p. 206].

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