

JOHN HARTMANN, PH.D.

Sabaidee!

Welcome to the First International Conference on Lao Studies. The goal of this conference is to promote and develop Lao studies by providing an international forum for scholars to present and discuss their research.

The Lao PDR today has a population of more than five million people, comprised of an amazing complex of ethnolinguistic groups. Moreover, the number of people in the Lao “diaspora” maybe as great as twenty-five million. In recent years there has been an increased interest in Laos and its peoples as subjects of serious discussion by scholars and the interested public alike. Indeed, there has been a flowering of scholarly publications on topics pertaining to Laos in the last several decades and a growing interest cultivated by the international media with its global reach. The First Lao History Symposium, held in the Spring of 2003 at the University of California-Berkeley, heralded the burgeoning of a growing interest in Lao studies among a new generation of scholars. This conference will build on that momentum. The 2005 conference features papers on many topics concerning Lao Studies. Topics include all ethnolinguistic groups of Laos, the Isan Lao and other ethnic Lao groups in Thailand, cross-border ethnic groups in Thailand, Vietnam, China, Burma, and Cambodia (e.g., Akha, Hmong, Khmu, Mien, Lao Phuan, Tai Lue, Tai Dam), and overseas Laotians.



VINYA SYSAMOUTH

There are very few universities in the United States with Lao specialists, and this conference is a way for those specialists to establish stronger international connections, as well as to discover topics of interest among the Lao American community in the U.S. This inaugural event also represents the first attempt to bring a group of scholars from Laos, in particular, and Lao specialists from neighboring countries in Asia who have close research contacts with Laos to exchange ideas with American scholars and scholars from the West.

One of the permanent outcomes of this 2005 First International Conference on Lao Studies at Northern Illinois University will be the publication of vetted papers as part of a new series as the conference moves to new sites on the campus of universities in the West and in Asia, Laos, in particular.

In addition to the academic portion of the assembly, the Lao-American community of Elgin, Illinois also warmly welcomes everyone, the public included, to an evening of Lao culture and cuisine. In this way, “town and gown” join together to bring together the Lao family from all over the world in a truly historic event.

Hak Phaeng,
The Organizing Committee
First International Conference on Lao Studies

Lao Studies ຄື “ລາວສຶກສາ”

ໂດຍ Vinya Sysamouth

ຄະນະກຳມະການ ການປະຊຸມນາໆຊາດ ເຮືອງ ລາວສຶກສາ ຄັ້ງທີ ໑

ມີບາງທ່ານໄດ້ບອກຂ້າພະເຈົ້າວ່າ ຊື່ຂອງການປະຊຸມ The First International Conference on Lao Studies ຊຶ່ງໄດ້ແປເປັນພາສາລາວວ່າ “ການປະຊຸມນາໆຊາດ ເຮືອງ ລາວສຶກສາ ຄັ້ງທີ ໑” ທີ່ເອີ້ນກັນສັ້ນໆ “ລາວສຶກສາ” ນັ້ນບໍ່ຖືກຕ້ອງ. ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າຂໍຂອບໃຈທຸກໆທ່ານທີ່ໄດ້ຄຳແນະນຳ ແລະ ມີຄວາມປາຖນາດີ ຢາກໃຫ້ກອງປະຊຸມສຳຄັນຄັ້ງນີ້ແປຖືກຕາມຫຼັກໄວຍາກອນພາສາທີ່ຕົນເອງຄຸ້ນເຄີຍແຕ່ວ່າ ຂ້າພະເຈົ້າຍັງຢືນວ່າທີ່ແປມານີ້ ຖືກຕ້ອງ ແລະ ເໝາະສົມທີ່ສຸດແລ້ວ.

ຄຳວ່າ “ສຶກສາ” ກໍມີຄວາມໝາຍຄ້າຍຄຽງກັນກັບຄຳວ່າ “ສາດ” ຊຶ່ງໃນພາສາປາລີ ສັນສະກຣິດ = शास्त्र (shastra, ສາສຕຣ໌) ໝາຍຄວາມວ່າ “ວິທະຍາສາດ” ຫຼື “ການສຶກສາເຮືອງ...” ພາສາອັງກລິດກໍມີຄຳນີ້ເຊັ່ນກັນ ຄືຄຳຕໍ່ຫ້າຍ (suffix) -ology ຊຶ່ງໄດ້ຢືນຈາກພາສາກຣີກ Greek=λογία (-logia) ແລະ ມີຄວາມໝາຍ science ຫຼື the study of... (ການສຶກສາເຮືອງ...) ເໝືອນກັນກັບພາສາລາວ. ຍົກຕົວຢ່າງໃນພາສາລາວມີ ຣັຖສາດ ປະວັດສາດ ສັງຄົມສາດ ພາສາສາດ ແລະ ຄະນິດສາດ ເປັນຕົ້ນທີ່ໃຊ້ຄຳວ່າ “ສາດ” ຕໍ່ຫ້າຍ ແລະ ພາສາອັງກລິດກໍມີຄຳວ່າ sociology, biology, paleontology, archaeology, etymology ແລະ ອື່ນໆ ທີ່ໃຊ້ຄຳ -ology ຕໍ່ຫ້າຍອີກດ້ວຍ. ຄຳສັບໃນທັງພາສາລາວ ແລະ ອັງກລິດທີ່ລົງຫ້າຍດ້ວຍ “ສາດ” ຫຼື -ology ນີ້ສ່ວນຫຼາຍຈະຕົກໃຊ້ກັບວິຊາສຶກສາທີ່ເກົ່າແກ່ ແລະ ມີບົດບາດສຳຄັນຕໍ່ການສຶກສາຄົ້ນຄວ້າມາດົນນານແລ້ວ ສະນັ້ນເວລາເກີດມີຂແນວວິຊາສາດ ທີ່ບໍ່ໄດ້ຈັດຢູ່ພາຍໃຕ້ພາກວິຊາ ວິທະຍາສາດ (non-scientific field) ຫຼືມີວິຊາສາດໃໝ່ໆ (new field of studies) ທີ່ໄດ້ຕັ້ງຂຶ້ນມາ ທັງພາສາລາວ ແລະ ອັງກລິດກໍຈະໃຊ້ຄຳ “ສຶກສາ” ແທນ “ສາດ” ຫຼື studies ແທນ -ology ເຊັ່ນ Asian Studies (ເອເຊັຽສຶກສາ), Women Studies (ສຕຣີສຶກສາ), Southeast Asian Studies (ເອເຊັຽອາຄະເນສຶກສາ) ແລະ Lao Studies (ລາວສຶກສາ). ຄັນເຮົາຈະເອີ້ນ Lao Studies “ລາວສາດ” ຫຼື Laology ກໍຈະບໍ່ຖືກຕ້ອງ. ດັ່ງນັ້ນ Lao Studies ເໝາະສົມທີ່ສຸດແລ້ວທີ່ແປເປັນ “ລາວສຶກສາ.”

ທຸກໆພາສາໃນໂລກນີ້ ມີຊີວິດ ມີການພັດທະນາປ່ຽນແປງໄປເລື້ອຍໆ ເຊັ່ນ ການຍືນພາສາຊາຕອື່ນມາໃຊ້ ແລະ ການສ້າງຄຳສັບໃໝ່ໆຂຶ້ນ. ຍົກຕົວຢ່າງ “ເອເຊັຽອາຄະເນສຶກສາ” ກໍໄດ້ແປຈາກ Southeast Asian Studies ຊຶ່ງສັງຄົມລາວເຮົາກໍຮັບຮູ້ດ້ວຍດີ. “ລາວສຶກສາ” ກໍໄດ້ໃຊ້ຫຼັກໃນການແປແບບດຽວກັນ. ອີກຢ່າງໜຶ່ງ ວິຊາການສຶກສາທາງດ້ານ “ກຸ່ມຊາຕິພັນສຶກສາ” ຊຶ່ງປະເທດເພື່ອນບ້ານ ຈີນ ໄທ ຂເມຣ ແລະ ວຽດນາມ ແປເປັນພາສາຂອງຕົນຍັງໄດ້ໃຊ້ຫຼັກວິທີແປຕາມພາສາອັງກລິດ ໂດຍໃຊ້ຄຳ “ຊື່ຂອງຊາຕ” ຕາມດ້ວຍ “ສຶກສາ” (Ethnic Group + Studies) ອີກ. ສ່ວນລາວເຮົາເອງ ກໍຄວນຫາວິທີສ້າງຄຳສັບໃໝ່ໄປນຳ ເພື່ອໃຫ້ທຽບທັນກັບຍຸກສະໄໝ ພ້ອມທັງສ້າງຄວາມກ້າວໜ້າໃຫ້ພາສາລາວດ້ວຍ.

ການແປຈາກພາສາອັງກລິດຂອງພາສາເພື່ອນບ້ານ ໂດຍໃຊ້ “ຊື່ຂອງຊາຕ” ຕາມດ້ວຍ “ສຶກສາ”*

ພາສາລາວ	ວຽດນາມສຶກສາ	ຂເມຣສຶກສາ	ຈີນສຶກສາ	ໄທສຶກສາ	ລາວສຶກສາ
ວິທີຂຽນ ແລະ ອອກສຽງຂອງພາສາເພື່ອນບ້ານ	Việt-Học <small>ວຽດ ຫໍກ</small>	ខេមរសិក្សា <small>ເຂມຣສຶກສາ</small>	中國研究 <small>ຈິ່ງ ໂກ່ ຫຍຽນ ຈິ່ວ</small>	ไทยศึกษา <small>ໄທສຶກສາ</small>	ລາວສຶກສາ
ພາສາອັງກລິດ	Vietnamese Studies	Khmer Studies	Chinese Studies	Thai Studies	Lao Studies

ຄຳວ່າ “ລາວສຶກສາ” ນີ້ອາດຈະບໍ່ນວມໃນຫຸສະເພາະບາງທ່ານປານໃດເພາະເຫັນວ່າເປັນຄຳສັບໃໝ່. ເຖິງຢ່າງໃດກໍດີ ການປະຊຸມ “ລາວສຶກສາ” ຄັ້ງນີ້ໄດ້ຈັດຂຶ້ນໃຫ້ພວກເຮົາທັງຫຼາຍມີໂອກາດເຕົ້າໂຮມກັນ ເພື່ອ ສເມີ ປຶກສາ ສົນທະນາ ແລະ ແລກປ່ຽນ ປະເດີນຕ່າງໆກ່ຽວກັບ ລາວ. ຖ້າພວກເຮົາພະຍາຍາມໃຊ້ຄຳສັບນີ້ເລື້ອຍໆ ກໍຈະເກີດມີຄວາມໝາຍຕາຍໂຕ ແລະ ສ້າງພາບບັນທຶກໄວ້ໃນຈິດສຳນຶກວ່າ “ລາວສຶກສາ” ນີ້ເປັນການສຶກສາຄົ້ນຄວ້າກ່ຽວກັບ ພາສາ ສິລປະວັທນະທັມ ປະວັດສາດ ການເມືອງ ເສດຖະກິດ ສິ່ງແວດລ້ອມ ສຖາປັດຍະກັມ ບູຮານຄະດີ ວິທະຍາສາດ ເຕັກໂນໂລຢີ ສື່ສານມວນຊົນ ແລະ ຫົວຂໍ້ອື່ນໆຂອງເຊື້ອຊາຕລາວ ແລະ ຊົນຊາຕຊົນເຜົ່າລາວທັງຫຼາຍ ຊຶ່ງພວກເຮົາຄວນເປັນນ້ຳນຶ່ງໃຈດຽວ ໂຮມແຮງອຸກຍູ້ໃຫ້ສະຖາບັນສຶກສາ ແລະ ອົງການຈັດຕັ້ງຕ່າງໆຮັບຮູ້ວ່າ ລາວສຶກສານີ້ ເປັນຂແນວວິຊາສຶກສາ ຫຼື ວິຊາສາດທີ່ມີຄວາມສຳຄັນ ເທົ່າທຽມກັບວິຊາຣັຖສາດ ປະວັດສາດ ສັງຄົມສາດ ພາສາສາດ ແລະ ຄະນິດສາດ ເປັນຕົ້ນ.

*Reference/ອ້າງອີງຈາກ | Khmer Studies: www.khmerstudies.org/index.htm; Thai Studies: <http://depts.washington.edu/seac/newsletter2/thaistudies.htm>; Chinese Studies: www.international.ucla.edu/ccs/; Vietnamese Studies: www.viethoc.org/

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Professor Charles (Tim)
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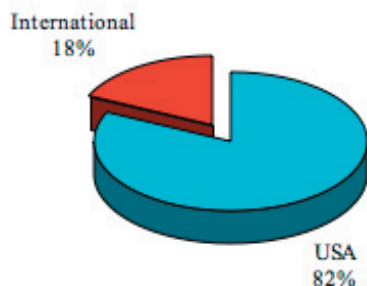
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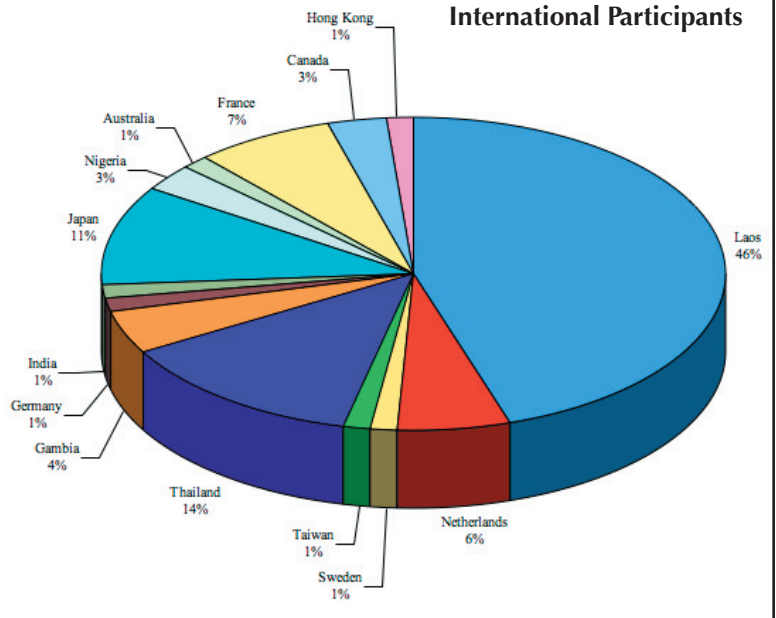
First Lao Studies Conference Participants

As of May 16, 2005 there are a total of 351 people from five continents and 15 countries who have registered for the conference. The numbers are broken as follows: United States, 288 (from all regions, including Alaska and Hawaii), and International Participants, 63. There are also a total of 36 sessions with 110 presenters.

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NIU School of Art

In Memorium



MAHA SILA VIRAVONG "Father of Lao Studies"

Maha Sila Viravong was born exactly 100 years ago in the Isan province of Roi-Et, but he lived out his life in Laos. Among his great works are *Thao Hung Thao Cheuang*, *Thao Sieo Savat*, *Tamnan Khun Bulom*, *Vetsantra Sado*, *Pavatsat Lao*, *A Grammar*

of the Pali Language, *Dictionary of the Lao Language in Four Volumes*, *History of the Lao Flag*, *That Luang Chronicle*, *The Twelve Customs*, *The Epic Poem of Sinxay*, and the *Biography of Viceroy Phetsarat*. He was involved in editing numerous works on Lao history, literature and culture. We choose to honor his memory as "Father of Lao Studies" on this auspicious occasion of the First International Conference on Lao Studies.



KRISTINA LINDELL

Kristina Lindell, renowned scholar of Asian folklore, linguistics and culture, internationally known for her long-term research on the culture of the Kammu (Khmu) people of northern Southeast Asia - Laos in particular - passed away on February 8, 2005, in

Lund Sweden. In 1984, she and a number of specialists at Lund University established the Programme for East and Southeast Asian Studies, with Kristina Lindell as founding chair of its board. She and her Kammu collaborator, Damrong Tayanin (Kam Raw) wrote and published a series of works that appeared as *Folk Tales from Kammu* and the *Kammu-Lao Dictionary* using a Lao-based Kammu font developed by Professor Lindell and her colleagues. The world of Lao and Asian scholarship is deeply indebted to Kristina Lindell for her contribution to our knowledge about the Kammu. It is with this in mind that we pause to remember her at the First International Conference on Lao Studies in 2005.

Explore Northern Illinois University



NIU Art Gallery Altgeld Hall

Reception on Friday evening
5:00 pm to 6:45 pm

Current Exhibit: "World of
Burmese Buddhism"



Anthropology Museum Stevens Building

Hours:
Thur. - Sat. 8 am to 6 pm

Current Exhibit:
"Masks of Southeast Asia"



Founders Memorial Library

Hours:
M-F 8 am to 5 pm
Sat-Sun 1-5 pm

Time: 12:00-1:00 pm **REGISTRATION**

Time: 1:00-1:30 pm

OPENING & WELCOME Concert Hall, Music Building. Open to the Public.

Announcer and Introductions by Carol Compton, Conference Committee

- ✱ John G. Peters, President of NIU
- ✱ Rathindra Bose, Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School, NIU
- ✱ Harold A. Kafer, Dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts, NIU
- ✱ Catherine Raymond, Center for Burma Studies & Associate Professor of Southeast Asian Art, NIU
- ✱ Susan Russell, Director of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, NIU
- ✱ John Hartmann, Conference Co-coordinator, Professor of Foreign Languages and Literatures, NIU
- ✱ Vinya Sysamouth, Conference Co-coordinator

STRAND A

Time: 1:30 – 2:30pm

Moderator: Greg Green, Illinois, USA

History I

Looking From the Past into the Future of Lan Xang
Chao Anouvong Sethathirath IV, North Carolina, USA
(In Lao & English, ພາສາລາວ)

Indo-Lao Cultural Rapprochement in Ancient and
Medieval Times
Patit Paban Mishra, India

History of Wapikhamthong Province, Kingdom of Laos
Bouaphet Sygnavong, California, USA
(In Lao & English, ພາສາລາວ)

15 Minutes Break

Time: 2:45 – 3:45pm

Moderator: Greg Green, Illinois, USA

History II

Tiao Phetsarath and the Lao Issara
Grant Evans, Hong Kong

Touby Lyfoung and the Emergence of Youthful
Leadership among the Lao Hmong
Mai Na M. Lee, Wisconsin, USA

Historical Presentations in the Lao Texts:
From the Independent to the Socialism Era
Yaowalak Apichatvullop, Thailand

15 Minutes Break

Time: 4:00 – 5:00 pm

Moderator: Hongvilay Thongsamouth, California, USA

Economics I

The Road to Serfdom and Back: the Process of Mar-
ketization in Laos
James Soukam, New York, USA

Governance, Barriers, and the Socioeconomic Pros-
pect in Laos
Mana K. Southichack, Hawaii, USA

Lao Social Structure
Boike Rehbein, Germany

STRAND B

Time: 1:30 – 2:30pm

Moderator: Somsong Burusphat, Thailand

Gender & Development Economics

Gender, Land Rights and Culture in Laos: A Study in
Vientiane, Districts, Villages and Households
Loes Schenk-Sandbergen, The Netherlands

Development Opportunities for Women in Rural Laos
Kathryn Sweet, Lao PDR

The Image of Women in the Sex Trade
Susada Viravong, Washington DC, USA

Time: 2:45 – 3:45pm

Moderator: J. Lin Compton, Wisconsin, USA

Land Use & Livelihood Field Studies I

Dynamics of Fallow Vegetation in Shifting Cultivation
in Northern Laos: A Case Study in Houay Phee Vil-
lage, La District, Udomxay Province
Isao Hirota, Japan

The "Slippage" Implementation of Forest Policy by
Local Officials: A Case Study of the
Protected Areas of Savannakhet Province, Laos
Kimihiro Hyakumura, Japan

Plant Uses in Minor Subsistence of Hill Peoples: From
an Ethnobotanical Aspect
Yukino Ochiai, Japan

Time: 4:00 – 5:00 pm

Moderator: Vinya Sysamouth, California, USA

Land Use & Livelihood Field Studies II

The Trade Flow of Agro-forestry Products and Com-
modities in Northern Mountainous Regions of Laos
Satoshi Yokoyama, Japan

Lao Wisdom on Land and Forest Use: Rethinking
Principles of Environmental Governance
Yasuyuki Kono, Japan

Testing Assumptions: The Recent History of Forest
Cover in Nakai-Nam Theun National Protected Area,
Khammouan and Bolikhamxay Provinces
William G. Robichaud, Canada

STRAND C

Time: 1:30 – 2:30pm

Moderator: Khammany Mathavongsy, California, USA

Buddhism & Culture

How Does Buddhism Help the Community?
Ven. Phramaha Bounkon Singsouvanh, Hawaii, USA
(In Lao & English, ພາສາລາວ)

The Lao Language and Lao People
Khampha Sidavong, Connecticut, USA
(In Lao & English, ພາສາລາວ)

Viewing Laos through Buddhism: Yesterday, Today and
Tomorrow
Phra Dussdi Dhammacitto Manisaeng, Kansas, USA
(In Lao & English, ພາສາລາວ)

Time: 2:45 – 3:45pm

Moderator: Buasawan Simmala, Wisconsin, USA

Buddhist Manuscripts & Teaching

The Preservation of Palm Leaf Manuscripts in Lao PDR
Dara Kanlaya, Lao PDR
(In Lao & English, ພາສາລາວ)

Towards a Computerization of the Lao Tham System
of Writing
Gregory Kourilsky & Vincent Berment, France

Buddhist Pedagogy in Laos: Past and Present
Justin McDaniel, California, USA

Time: 4:00 – 5:00 pm

Moderator: Kingsavanh Pathammavong, Washington
DC, USA

Architecture and Art

The Social and Symbolic Situation of the Artist in Lao
Tradition and Diaspora
Tiao Nithakhong Somsanith, France
(In Lao & English, ພາສາລາວ)

Burmese Influence in Lao Architecture: Late Eigh-
teenth to Early Nineteenth Century
Catherine Raymond, Illinois, USA

Transformation of the Buddhist Language in Lao
Modern Architecture: What is Laotian Modern
Architecture?
Thongkhoun T. Pathana, Rhode Island, USA

Time: 5:00 - 6:45 PM

RECEPTION AT NIU ART MUSEUM in Altgeld Hall, including rice buffet (free of charge for conference registrants).

Location: Burma Gallery in Altgeld Hall.

Current Exhibit: "The World of Burmese Buddhism" (Center for Burma Studies)

STRAND A

Continental Breakfast (included with registration)

Time: 8:30 – 9:30 AM

Moderator: Mana K. Southichack, Hawaii, USA

Economics II

U.S. –Laos Trade and Investment “Opportunities and Challenges”
Buasawan Simmala, Lao PDR & Wisconsin, USA

Foreign Direct Investment in Lao PDR: Promotion Strategies
Sianong Phomkong, Lao PDR

Sustainable Tourism Paradigm in Lao PDR (1986-2004)
Boonyasari Aneksuk, Thailand
(In Lao & English, ພາສາລາວ)

Time: 9:30 – 10:30 AM

Moderator: Frank Osanka, Wisconsin, USA

War in History I

The Contributions of the Laotian Ethnic Minorities in the Building of Laos
Yang Dao, Minnesota, USA

Laos in the Vietnam War: The Politics of Escalation, 1962-1973
Patit Paban Mishra, India

The Formation and Maintenance of the Anti-Lao Government Forces
Shoua Yang, Illinois, USA

15 Minutes Break

Time: 10:30 AM POSTER PRESENTATION, Music Building Gallery

Predicting Primary Forest Recovery in a Fragmented Landscape: a Restoration Roadmap

Time: 10:45 – 11:45 AM

Moderator: Frank Osanka, Wisconsin, USA

War in History II

Legacies of War: A Project on the Secret U.S. Bombings in Laos, A Panel
Channapha Khamvongsa, New York, USA
Bounthanh Phommasathit, Ohio, USA
Lee Thorn, California, USA

STRAND B

Continental Breakfast (included with registration)

Time: 8:30 – 9:30 AM

Moderator: Laly Keoudouangsy, Wisconsin, USA

Women & Culture

Lao Women: Transmitters of Tradition and Culture
Bounheng Inversin, Washington DC, USA

Rice, Women and Rituals
Elisabeth Preisig, Lao PDR

Laos 1965: Feminist Consciousness and Social Critique
Maria Carmen Domingo-Kirk, California, USA

Time: 9:30 – 10:30 AM

Moderator: Carol J. Compton, Wisconsin, USA

Lao Literature

Research Work on the Thao Hung Epic by Maha Sila Viravongs: A Comparative Study of the Political Ideology Expressed in the Thao Hung Epic
Douangdeuane Bounyavong, Lao PDR
(In Lao & English, ພາສາລາວ)

Women's Identities in Contemporary Lao Literature after National and Democratic Revolution in 1975
Umarin Tularak, Thailand
(In Lao & English, ພາສາລາວ)

Xung Xin Xai: The Local Traditions of Laos
Niphasone Souphom, Washington DC, USA

Time: 10:45 – 11:45 AM

Moderator: Vinya Sysamouth, California, USA

Media, Performance & Literature

Media in the Lao PDR: Post Chintanakan Mai Challenges
Viengsay S. Luangkhot, Washington DC, USA

“Public” and “Private”: Notes on Media, Performance, and the Public Sphere in the Lao PDR
Bret Johnson, Wisconsin, USA

Awakening Ancient Voices of Sang Sin Xai through Radio
Tutu Phimviengkham, Washington DC, USA

STRAND C

Continental Breakfast (included with registration)

Time: 8:30 – 9:30 AM

Moderator: Tassany Prasoeuthsy, Wisconsin, USA

Lao Traditional Medicine I

Traditional Medicine Stations: A Plan to Study and Popularize Lao Traditional Medicines
Charlotte Gyllenhaal, Illinois, USA

Lao Traditional Medicine Mapping Project
Mary Riley, Illinois, USA

The Influence of Cultural Tradition and Geographic Location on the Level of Medicinal Plant Knowledge Held by Various Cultural Groups in Laos
Ameiy Libman, Illinois, USA

Time: 9:30 – 10:30 AM

Moderator: Tina Arounsack, Fremont, USA

Lao Traditional Medicine II

Collaborative Studies on Lao Medicinal Plants under the International Cooperative Biodiversity Groups Program
Djaja D. Soejarto, Illinois, USA

Plant Use in Laos as Viewed through the Eyes of European Explorers
Kristine L. Callis, North Carolina, USA

Aloha Medical Mission to Lao PDR
Sakuna Thongchan, Washington, USA

Time: 10:45 – 11:45 AM

Moderator: Catherine Raymond, Illinois, USA

Archaeology

Recent Archaeological Research in the Lao PDR
Thongsa Sayavongkhamdy, Lao PDR

Middle Mekong Archaeological Project Phase I: The Luang Prabang Survey
Joyce C. White, Pennsylvania, USA

New Discovery of Buddha Collection at Tam Nong Papha, Thakhek District, Khammouan Province, Central Laos
Viengkeo Souksavatdy, Lao PDR
(In Lao & English, ພາສາລາວ)

Time: 11:45 – 1:00 PM LUNCH (included with registration)

Time: 12:00 Noon

BUSINESS MEETING: Music Building Room 173. The meeting is open to those who are interested in hosting the Second International Conference on Lao Studies to be held in 2007. A new host will be selected at this time.

Time: 12:00 Noon

VIDEO SHOWING: Vientiane in the Flow of History

Produced by Gregory Green, NIU

Art Building, Room 100

STRAND A

Time: 1:00 – 2:00 PM

Moderator: Grant Evans, Hong Kong

History III

Cultural Heritage of the Lost Kingdom in the United States: The History of Laotian People in America
Kingsavanh Pathammavong, Washington DC, USA

Lao History Stories: Towards Multivocality in History Writing
Anna Karlstrom, Sweden

Hmong Americans: 30 Years in Review
Kou Yang, California, USA

15 Minutes Break

Time: 2:15 – 3:15 PM

Moderator: Phoumy Sayavong, California, USA

Education I

K-16 Lao Language Curriculum for Wisconsin
Seree Weroha, Wisconsin, USA

Project Voices, Individuals, & Pictures: Engaging Hmong Parents, Schools, & CBOs to Support Student Learning & Academic Achievement
Laly Keoudouangsy, Wisconsin, USA

State-Mandated Selective Testing, Classification, and Tracking of English Learners in California Public Schools
Yang Sao Xiong, California, USA

15 Minutes Break

Time: 3:30 – 4:30 PM

Moderator: Bounheng Inversin, Washington DC, USA

Education II

The Power of Narrative: Students Daring to Dream in Lao PDR
Kara Burnett, California, USA

Social and Cultural Perspectives of Lao Developing Voices through Writing
Rassami Souryasack, California, USA

Lao Primary Schools Teachers' Perceptions of the Developmental Stages of Youth in UXO-Impacted Communities
Christy Hicks, Michigan, USA

STRAND B

Time: 1:00 – 2:00 PM

Moderator: Carol J. Compton, Wisconsin, USA

Lao Music I

Performing Isan-Style Lam in Laos: An Expression of Pan-Laoism or Thai Hegemony
Terry E. Miller, Ohio, USA

Going 'Glocal': Lao Music in Transnational Spaces
Adam Chapman, Australia

The Cultural Collision between Folk Performing Arts, Molam and the Culture Industry
Prayut Wannaudom, Thailand
(In Lao & English, ພາສາລາວ)

Time: 2:15 – 3:15 PM

Moderator: Terry Miller, Ohio, USA

Lao Music II

The Mouth Organ of Laos: An Instrumental Constant at the Heart of Complex Ethnic and Cultural Diversity
Veronique de Lavenere, France

Khaen Repertoires: The Development of Lao Traditional Music in Northeast Thailand
Priwan Nanongkham, Ohio, USA

Time: 3:30 - 4:30 PM

Moderator: Sangkhom Ratsavong, Wisconsin, USA

Resources on Laos

A Digital View of Laos: The Joel M. Halpern Laotian Slide Collection, SEAIT, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Joel M. Halpern, Massachusetts, USA &
Larry Ashmun, Wisconsin, USA

SEASITE Lao: Web Resources for Lao Studies
John Hartmann, Illinois, USA &
Kip Thammavongsa, Illinois, USA

SEAdoc: Documenting the Southeast Asian American Experience
Anne Frank, California, USA

STRAND C

Time: 1:00 – 2:00 PM

Moderator: Tina Arounsack, California, USA

Law & Culture

How to Get Rid of an Unwanted Suitor: Advice from Hmong Elders
Susan Meredith Burt, Illinois, USA

Hmong in Wisconsin: Attitudes toward Minnesota's Hmong Marriage Bill
Shoua Thao, Wisconsin, USA

Lao-America and the Laws that Shape It
Hongvilay Thongsamouth, California, USA

Time: 2:15 – 3:15 PM

Moderator: Pom Outama Khampradith, Washington, USA

Health & Culture

The Place of Story, Silk and Song: Collaborative Development Practice in Laos
Ellen A. Herda, California, USA

Development Practice in Primary Health Care: A Participatory Service and Education Model in Lao
Valerie Dzubar, California, USA

Women, Weaving, and Well-Being: The Social Reproduction of Health in Laos
Kristin V. Lundberg, Kansas, USA

Time: 3:30 - 4:30 PM

Moderator: Jacqueline Butler-Diaz, Arizona, USA

Textiles and Culture

Tai Banners: Buddhist Import or Adaptation
Rebecca Hall, California, USA

The Process of Assimilation: Interview Narratives of Six Lao-American Women Refugees
Vinthany Souvannarath, Wisconsin, USA

Time: 5:00 PM

Buses leave for Elgin for LAO CULTURAL NIGHT, Elgin High School
1200 Maroon Drive; Elgin, IL 60120

Time: 9:30 PM

Buses leave for NIU (Buses will pick-up and drop-off at the Holmes Student Center, NIU campus.)

SUNDAY, MAY 22, 2005

Conference Schedule

STRAND A

Continental Breakfast (included with registration)

Time: 9:00 – 10:00 AM

Moderator: Viengsay Luangkhot, Washington DC, USA

Culture and History I

The Chao Ai-Chao Nong Legend and Tradition
Suksavang Simana, Lao PDR
(In Lao & English, ພາສາລາວ)

Gerrit Wuijsthoof's Journey to the Lao Court at Vientiane, 1641-1642
Wouter Feldberg, The Netherlands

The Laos Historiography in the Socialist State Period of the Lao People's Democratic Republic
Kitirat Skhabun, Thailand
(In Lao & English, ພາສາລາວ)

15 Minutes Break

Time: 10:15 – 11:15 AM

Moderator: Khammany Mathavongsy, California, USA

Culture and History II

Naming Process of the Tai-m`en: Influences of Culture on Language
Rattana Chanthao, Thailand
(In Lao & English, ພາສາລາວ)

Lao Nationalism as Reflected in Primary and Secondary School Texts
Jaruvan Thammawat, Thailand
(In Lao & English, ພາສາລາວ)

The Relationship between Differential Acculturation Levels and Perception of Intergenerational Conflict and Depression in Lao-American Adolescents
Phoukham Kelly Bounkeua, Washington, USA

15 Minutes Break

Time: 11:30 – 12:30 PM

Moderator: Toni Philadeng, California, USA

Intercultural Contact & Survival

Intercultural Contact and Exchange: The Philippine-Lao Nexus
Penelope V. Flores, California, USA

The People Within and Without: Constructing a Pan-Lue World on the Northwest Coast of North America
Shih-chung Hsieh, Taiwan

Lessons of Refugee Survival
J. Pete Fuentecilla, New York, USA

Time: 12:30 PM CLOSING SESSION

Concert Hall, Music Building. Open to the Public.

Grant Evans, Professor, University of Hong Kong, Summary of the First International Conference on Lao Studies
Julia S. Lamb, Conference Committee and NIU, Southeast Asian Outreach Coordinator, Comments of Appreciation
Vinya Sysamouth, Co-coordinator, Comments of Appreciation
John Hartmann & Vinya Sysamouth, ICLS co-coordinators: Present Lao Studies banner to the Second International Conference on Lao Studies host (to be held in 2007)
Second ICLS Host: TBA

Greg Green, Conference Committee and NIU Southeast Asian Librarian, Announcer

STRAND B

Continental Breakfast (included with registration)

Time: 9:00 – 10:00 AM

Moderator: Karen Adams, Arizona, USA

Lao Language & Research

Language in Laos: An Agenda for Research
Nick Enfield, The Netherlands

Contemporary Lao Writing
Souksomboun Sayasithsena, Washington DC, USA
(In Lao & English, ພາສາລາວ)

On-Line Translation Services for the Lao Language
Vincent Berment, France

Time: 10:15 – 11:15 AM

Moderator: Nick Enfield, The Netherlands

Historical Linguistics & Lao Tones

Linguistic and Historical Continuities of the Tai Dam and Lao Phuan: Case Studies in Boundary Crossings
John Hartmann, Illinois, USA

Tones in Proto-Lao, Modern Lao, and Future Lao
Phinnarat Akharawatthanakun, Thailand

Acoustic Phonetics of Lao Tones
Marlys A. Macken, Wisconsin, USA

Time: 11:30– 12:30 AM

Moderator: John Hartmann, Illinois, USA

Linguistics: Lao Syntax

Lao Numeral Classifiers in Comparison to Central Thai
Somsong Burusphat, Thailand

Interpreting Four-Word Phrases and Related Patterns in Lao Discourse
Carol J. Compton, Wisconsin, USA

The Lao Copula /men/ as a Focus Marker
Karen Barto, Arizona, USA

STRAND C

Continental Breakfast (included with registration)

Time: 9:00 – 10:00 AM

Moderator: J. Lin Compton, Wisconsin, USA

Development & Irrigation

A Sustainable Irrigation Project in Lao PDR: Effective Management of Pump Irrigation Projects in the Mekong River and Its Tributaries
Fongsamuth Phengphaengsy, Japan

Kaan Baan: Sipsongpanna Lue's Communal Village Activities in Irrigation
Vinya Sysamouth, California, USA

Is Hydropower the Best Option for Laos' Development?
Aviva Imhof, California, USA

Time: 10:15 – 11:15 AM

Moderator: William Sage, Arizona, USA

Rural Development

Reaching the Poorest in the Lao PDR Requires Cutting Edge Approaches
Jacquelyn Chagnon, Lao PDR

Rural Financial Development: Credit Access and Credit Constraints of Rural Farm Households in Naxaithong and Phonghon Districts in Lao PDR
Phinseng Channgakham, Japan

Aiding or Abetting? Village Relocation and International Donors in the Lao PDR
Bruce P. Shoemaker, Minnesota, USA

Time: 11:30 – 12:30 PM

Moderator: Alan Potkin, Illinois, USA

Cultural Conservation

This session is open to the public

Linking the Lao Loum Diaspora in Northern Illinois with Cultural Conservation Practice in Vientiane, A Panel
Alan Potkin, Illinois, USA
Chaleunxay Phommavongsa, Lao PDR
Catherine Raymond, Illinois, USA
Souneth Photisane, Lao PDR
Vanpheng Keophannh, Lao PDR
(In Lao & English, ພາສາລາວ)

FRIDAY, MAY 20, 2005

Film Festival

Northern Illinois University
Visual Arts Building
DeKalb, IL USA
6:45 – 10:00 pm

Hosted By: S. Steve Arounsack
President, Pacific ARC Media LLC
(www.pacificarc.com)

Welcome to the film festival portion of the First International Conference on Lao Studies. Films will be shown concurrently in three rooms. Below is the schedule of films and their show times. Please meet at the Visual Arts Building room 100 first for a brief introduction.

Note: The First International Conference on Lao Studies committee and Pacific ARC Media LLC does not necessarily endorse or promote the views expressed by these films. We have made every attempt to provide a canvas for a broad range of perspectives, ranging from independent filmmakers to larger production groups. The audience is invited to form their own opinion. The film festival portion of the conference is organized by the Lao Studies committee members.

PROGRAM A

Visual Arts Building, Room 100

Feature Presentations. Two classic films that depict life in the homeland.

6:45 pm Introduction by Steve Arounsack and Dara Viravong Kanlaya (script writer of Bua Daeng)

7:00 pm

Bua Daeng (Red Lotus)

Run time: 85 min.

Language: Lao with English subtitles
Producer: Somouk Suthiphon
Lao PDR, 1988



Based on scripts written by Dara Kalaya, the story follows a young woman, Bua Daeng, who lives in rural Laos before and during the communist uprising. The story is set in the 1960s and follows important events in her life: finding a husband, surviving the chaos of warfare, and enduring everyday life. Throughout it all, Bua Daeng is portrayed as having all the characteristics of an ideal Lao woman: smart, beautiful, virtuous, skillful in handicrafts, and above all the love of Communist ideologies, thus the name Bua Daeng or Red Lotus—the color of communism.



PROGRAM B

Visual Arts Building, Room 102

The Journey. These films focus on the circumstances of the exodus from the motherland. References are made to the war and its aftermath.

7:00 pm

Bombies

Run time: 57 min. Language: English

Director: Jack Silberman

Producer: Lumiere Productions, USA, 2000

Between 1964 and 1973 the United States conducted a secret air war, dropping over 2 million tons of bombs and making tiny Laos the most heavily bombed country in history. Millions of these 'cluster bombs' did not explode when dropped, leaving the country massively contaminated with 'bombies' as dangerous now as when they fell a quarter century ago. Bombies examines the problem of unexploded cluster bombs through the personal experiences of a group of Laotians and foreigners and argues for their elimination as a weapon of war.

8:05 pm

The Leaf, Not Yet Falling

Run time: 13 min.

Language: Lao with English subtitles

Producer: Vannasone Keodara, USA, 2002

Memories are very precarious: good memories can fade with time, while haunted ones remain. The Leaf, Not Yet Falling is a documentary film of a little girl's sweet childhood memories of her homeland, Laos, her bitter experiences during the Communist Regime and the involvement of the American CIA during the secret air war era. It recaptures over two decades of experiences living in exile.

PROGRAM C

Visual Arts Building Room, 103

Modern identity. Acculturation and finding one's identity are explored. Relationships and the struggles of "fitting in" are central themes.

7:00 pm

Kelly Loves Tony

Run time: 57 min.

Language: English/Mien

Producer: Spencer Nakasako, USA, 1998

Seventeen year-old Kelly Saeteurn has a dream—she calls it her "American dream." As a fresh high school graduate on her way to college, she envisions a rosy future for herself. Kelly is the first in her family of Lu-Mien refugees from Laos to have accomplished as much as she already has, but her dreams exist in sharp contrast to her reality. She is also pregnant. Her boyfriend Tony is a junior high drop out and ex-con. The brutal honesty of this film's footage and dialogue offers viewers a rare glimpse into the lives of two young people struggling to make their relationship work in the face of overwhelming obstacles like parenthood, gender issues and cultural and educational differences.

8:00 pm

Blue Collar and Buddha

Run time: 57 min.

Language: English/Lao, USA, 1987

This is a dramatic documentary depicting the plight of America's most recent refugees, who must struggle against the hostility developed in the post-Vietnam era. Their attempts to preserve their culture and religious heritage are met with several terrorist attacks against their Buddhist temple. By documenting the opinions of townspeople and American officials, the film depicts America's attitudes towards refugees and immigrants.

PROGRAM A

Visual Arts Building, Room 100 8:25 pm

Luk Isan (A Child of the Northeast)

Run time: 115 min. Language: Lao Isan with English subtitles
Director: Choroen Lampungporn
Producer: Kunawut
Thailand, 1991



Luk Isan or A Child of the Northeast is about a year in the life of a village in Northeast Thailand during the 1930's. It is also about a world scarcely known in the West: the world of "Isan," which is what the natives call their corner of Thailand. This movie is based on Khampoun Bountavee award-winning novel which the author based on the memories of his own childhood in Isan during the depths of the Depression. The loving, courageous family at the center of novel include a boy named Koun, who is about eight years old; his sisters Yeesoun, and Bounlai, two; and their parents, whose names we never learn. They are called simply "Koun's mother" and "Koun's father," even by their friends and family. Khampoun also introduces a wider, equally unforgettable family: the relatives and neighbors who live in Koun's village. It is their bravery, their goodness of heart, and above all, their indestructible, earthy sense of humor, that shape the boy Koun's perception of the world, and of his purpose in it. (A Child of the Northeast, translated by Susan F. Kepner).

PROGRAM B

Visual Arts Building, Room 102 8:25 pm

Becoming American

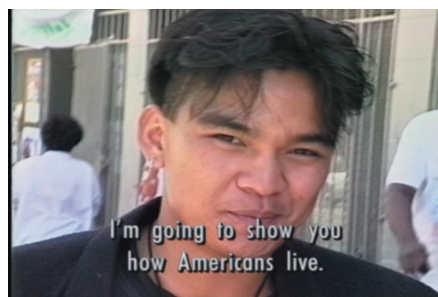
Run time: 60 min. Language: English/Hmong, USA, 1982

Hang Sou, his wife and child, sister-in-law, and her five children—a strongly united Hmong tribal family—await resettlement in a refugee camp in northern Thailand. As victims of the secret war in Laos and its political aftermath, they have lived for six years in this rural, impoverished camp. When the Hangs are informed that they will be allowed to immigrate to the United States, a twelve-thousand-mile odyssey begins. Becoming American provides a rare insight into the lives of these brave refugees and celebrates their spirit of survival.

9:30 pm

Letter Back Home

Run time: 15 min.
Language: Lao with English subtitles
Directors: Nith Lacroix & Sang Thepkaysone
Producer: Nith Lacroix, USA, 1994



An honest and compelling look at life in San Francisco's Tenderloin district for Lao and Cambodian youth. Tough and with attitude, they long for home while also carving out a life in their neighborhood. Through this bittersweet Letter Back Home, you can feel the history, resilience and strength in these youth. This video was brought back to Laos to show the Lao youth at various temples and villages of one aspect of refugee teens living in the United States.

Second Prize, Chicago Asian American Film & Video Contest
Best New Vision Documentary Award, Berkeley Video Festival
National PBS broadcast

PROGRAM C

Visual Arts Building, Room 103 9:00 pm

Death of a Shaman

Run time: 57 min. Language: English
Director: Richard Hall Producer: Fahm Fong Saeyang
USA, 2002

In Death of a Shaman, Fahm Saeyang responds to her father's unsettled life and death by taking a reverse journey to examine the heartbreaking path he took from respectability to hopelessness-and from Southeast Asia to America-in a heartfelt personal mission to understand his tragic story. This dual journey helps Death of a Shaman examine with painful honesty how Fahm's Mien immigrant family suffered through a 20 year ordeal of poverty, racism, religions, drugs, jail, and the murder of a family member. It is a chronicle of a darker side of the pursuit of the American dream that affected many of the 40,000 Mien who came from a primitive life in the mountains of Southeast Asia to America. Death of a Shaman is also a moving account of Fahm's need to understand her father's pain, and a desire to figure out what will placate his troubled spirit and her own.

Phinnarat Akharawatthanakun, Ph.D.
Tone Change: A Case Study of the Lao Language*
 Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

This research studies the tones of several varieties of Lao with the idea of proposing three Lao subgroups: Pure Lao, Deviant Lao, and Adopted Lao. The difference in tones between Pure Lao and Deviant Lao is investigated in order to reconstruct the Lao proto-tonal system. Hypotheses on tone change as well as the factors motivating such changes will then be set forth. Tone data for Lao dialects spoken as majority and minority dialects around Thailand and the Thailand-Lao PDR border have been collected. Other sources of possible interference are sought in the tones of the other languages spoken in the same areas. Twenty-seven villages around Thailand were selected as study locations. The data were collected from 239 informants: 162 Lao native speakers and 77 speakers of other languages, including Kaloeng, Yooy, Suai/Suai Lao/Suai Isan, Phuan, Muang/Kham Muang/Yuan/Tai Yuan, Lue/Tai Lue, and Central Thai.

Two word lists were used to study the tones of the Lao dialects. The first word list consists of 80 test words from a modification of Gedney's word list. The second word list consists of 20 monosyllabic words from the analogous set; /khaa24/, /paa33/, /baan33/, /khaa33/, /khaa21/, /paa21/, /baa21/, /khaa42/, /khaaw42/, /paa42/, /baa42/, /khaa453/, /khaat21/, /paat21/, /baat21/, /khaat42/, /khat21/, /pat21/, /bat21/, /khat453/. The words from the analogous set include five tokens of each test word arranged in random order so that there are 100 test words altogether (20 words X 5 repetitions = 100 test words). Thus, the tone data in this study are 180 test words from each informant. The words were elicited from the informants and recorded onto tape. The tone data in this study were analyzed in two ways: The tonal mergers and splits were determined by ear, and the tonal characteristics were analyzed with the SIL CECIL program.

The findings here reveal that the ethnic names or language names as well as the history of migration and the development of tones can be used as the criteria to subgroup the Lao language into four subgroups; Pure Lao 1, Pure Lao 2, Deviant Lao, and Adopted Lao. The distinctive patterns of tonal mergers and splits of Pure Lao 1 are B1234, C1=DL123/C234=DL4 ("Lao ladder"), and B≠DL. The tones in Pure Lao 2 are found to be similar to the ones in Pure Lao 1 but there are variations. In Deviant Lao there are many tone variations and changes, and some tonal patterns are similar to the ones in the surrounding languages. Pure Lao 1, Pure Lao 2, and Deviant Lao are considered to be in the Lao group, while Adopted Lao is not. Confusion between ethnic names and tonal systems is found in Adopted Lao.

The patterns of tonal mergers and splits in Proto-Lao are *A1-23-4, *B1234, *C1-234, and *D123-4. There are no mergers between tone C and D in Proto-Lao (C1≠D123/C234≠D4). Eight tones are hypothesized to be in the Proto-Lao tonal system, i.e., T.1 (*A1) rising 1 [R1], T.2 (*A23) rising 2 [R2], T.3 (*A4) rising 3 [R3], T.4 (*B1234) level [L ̥], T.5 (*C1) falling with laryngealization 1 [F1?], T.6 (*C234) falling with laryngealization 2 [F2?], T.7 (*D123) falling 3 [F3], and T.8 (*D4) falling 4 [F4]. Tonal variations and changes in both majority and minority Lao induced by both internal and external factors. Tonal interference, pronunciation borrowing or accentual borrowing is found as the important factors leading to variation and change. The variations and changes induced by an internal factor are suspected to have been caused by simplification from more marked tones to less marked tones. It can be concluded that variation and change can occur not only in dialects of the minority, but also of the majority. It is not necessarily so that in dialects in contact situations, the dialects of the minority are influenced to a higher degree than the dialects of the majority. In addition, it is hypothesized that various patterns of tonal mergers and splits may be found in Lao dialects in the future, especially C1≠DL123, C234≠DL4, or B=DL. Thus, the mergers and splits, B1234, C1=DL123/C234=DL4, and B≠DL may not be the distinctive patterns of the Lao language any more.

Boonyasari Aneksuk
Sustainable Tourism Paradigm in Lao PDR (1986-2004 A.D.)*
 Ph.D. Candidate, Tai Studies Program, Mahasarakham University and lecturer in Tourism Program
 Ubon Rajathane University, Thailand

In 1986 Social and Economic Reform in Lao PDR has created a great change in various aspects. Tourism, which has been accepted recently in Lao PDR, also plays an important role in economic development of Lao PDR. As a result, Tourism is considered as a change of Lao PDR's development paradigm.

The article aims to present sustainable tourism paradigm, which is an aspect of development paradigm of Lao PDR since the development of tourism man-

agement from 1986 to present. In addition, the sustainable tourism paradigm is influenced by different levels tourism concepts; for example, Theory and Universal and Regional levels. UNESCO Nam Ha Ecotourism Project, Luang Nam Tha Province, a United Nations development project, is employed as a case study of the sustainable tourism paradigm.

The results of the study indicated firstly, the sustainable tourism paradigm in Lao PRD occurring in 1980s has emphasized high value of Tourism which consists of culture and tradition protected value; biodiversity value for providing accommodations for the minority of Lao PDR; ecotourism network among stakeholders such as government, entrepreneurs and local communities in participation of activity development; and management Tourism as a tool of rural development integration for ecotourism practitioners. Secondly, the tourism management is supported by international private development organization such as World Conservation Union (IUCN) as well as United Nations, for instance, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), thus affecting the compatibility of sustainable tourism paradigm in Lao PDR with tourism concept at Theory level. The results reflected the development paradigm as ideology, which needs to be followed up.

•This article is an extract of Boonyasari Aneksuk Ph.D. dissertation, topic Sustainable Tourism Paradigm in Thailand, Lao PDR and Vietnam. Thank you for suggestion from my major advisor, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Seri Pongpit.

Vincent Berment
On-Line Translation Services for the Lao Language
GETA-CLIPS (IMAG) INALCO
 France

Thanks to a continuous effort made over the last 30 years, the Lao system of writing has now achieved a satisfactory level of computerization: mature fonts, input tools and word processors are now available and the Lao Unicode is used on the Internet. So a lot of people is now waiting for what may be looked as a natural suite of this computerization effort: a high quality machine translation service that would allow the Lao people to read English, Chinese, Japanese, French or whatever language, translated in their own one.

In contrast with the pioneering age where isolated individuals could offer complete solutions, the much more complex machine translation step must rely on groups of linguists and computer scientists to get through. For example, the order of magnitude for producing a good quality Lao-English / English-Lao machine translation system is estimated to 50 men-years (Lafourcade, 1994), only for the lingware, when an add-in such as LaoWord which provides a full set of word processing functions only requires about 5 men-years. So even if the methods used are adapted to the computerization of minority languages (Berment, 2004), it may take time before good translation software is available for the Lao language.

On the way of this highly desirable future, an interesting translation support can be brought to professional and occasional translators by simpler tools mostly based on the technology developed for word processors. In this paper, we present LaoTrans, a set of on-line translation services that offers, for the first time, a translation support on the Web (dictionary, word for word translation of texts). Doing so, we will see how the reuse of a technology previously developed dramatically eased the realization of this new software. Then, looking towards the future, we will also show how the LaoTrans experience can contribute to the design of a full machine translation service.

Phoukham Kelly Bounkeua, M.A., LMHC
The Relationship between Differential Acculturation Levels and Perception of Intergenerational Conflict and Depression in Lao-American* Adolescents
 Ph.D. Candidate, Seattle Pacific University, Washington

This study will examine the relationship between differential acculturation levels and perception of parent-child conflict on depression for Lao-American adolescents. A total sample of 111 Lao adolescents, 13-18 years of age, and their parents will be recruited from youth service agencies and the Lao community from the western portion of Washington State. Adolescents will be administered a total of four scales: the Asian American Multidimensional Acculturation Scale (AAMAS) for self-evaluation, and additional copy of the AAMAS for the ado-

lescents to rate their parents, Intergenerational Conflict Inventory: Adolescent's version (ICI-A), and the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale for Children (CES-DC). Due to the language barriers, the Laotian parents were orally administered two scales the AAMAS, and Intergenerational Conflict Inventory: Adolescent's Parent Version (ICI-P).

The following hypotheses are based on the scales listed herein that will be administered in the study: 1) There will be significant differences between the adolescent's self-reported acculturation and their parent's self-reported acculturation levels. 2) There will be no significant difference between the adolescents' perceptions of the parents' acculturation level vs. the parents self-reported acculturation level. 3) The greater the difference in the self-reported acculturation levels between the adolescents and their parents, the higher the likelihood of the intergenerational conflicts rated by both of them... 4) The greater the difference in the self-reported acculturation levels between the adolescents and the parents, the higher the likelihood that the adolescents would report symptoms of depression. 5) The higher the likelihood of the intergenerational conflicts rated by adolescents and the parents, the higher the likelihood that adolescents would report symptoms of depression.

*Lao in this paper refers to all ethnic groups from Laos (e.g. Hmong, Mien, Khamu, Tai Lue, Tai Dam, etc.)

Douang Deuane Bounyavong

Research work on Thao Hung Epic by Maha Sila Viravongs: Comparative Study of the Political Ideology Expressed in Thao Hung Epic

Researcher on Lao Literature and Textiles, Maha Sila Viravongs Library, Lao PDR

This paper has two parts. The first focused on the research work done by Maha Sila Viravongs during the 1940's. How he came to discover the palm leave document of this great historical Epic of Thao Hung at the Thai National Library in Bangkok where he lived in exile. The original manuscript comprised of more than 300 leaves tied together into bundles. When Maha Sila found the bundles of palm leaves, they were not in good condition enough to be readable. Maha Sila spent almost a year to read the work and transliterated into Thai script. He has tried to arrange line by line of the story in poem pattern and found out that the poems were composed of many kinds of verses. As many pages were missed, the story was not completed, so it could be not comprehensible by readers. When he returned to Laos later on, Maha Sila went toward his work and discovered others versions of Thao Hung story. Once he understood the complete story, he was trying to fill up the missing part by adding his own poem. This very missing part is about the birth of Thao Hung and his brother. Therefore Maha Sila made up the story about the birth of the twin brothers: Thao Hung and his elder brother Thao Huong.

The second part is a comparative study of the political ideology expressed in the epic. It focused on the interaction between the neighbor kingdoms, the customs and believes of people, the ideal quality of the political leaders and the factors involved in the legitimacy process of the kingship and role and duty of political leader. The study referred to: the Atom -Buranji. "From the earliest time to the end of Ahom rule," the Xieng Tung (Chiangtung) chronicle of Tai'Kheun in the Shan state of Myanmar, the Yonok or Xieng Sene (Chiangsene); chronicles of Lanna and the Khun Borom of Lanxang.

This approach to anthropological and historical study referred to local documents of different sources enables us to understand better some aspects of the history such as the very close relationship between the indigenous and Lao-Tai' ethnic who is newcomer, the intercultural exchange among them in the period prior Indian influence etc. The Ahom Buranji composed in local language told us that the God or Lord of Thunder has sent his two nephews to rule the earth and govern T'ai people. This legendary ancestor's story is similar to that of Lao-Tai ethnic in Lanna and Lanxang kingdom. The comparative study found that the T'ai in Ahom or Asam state of India, the T'ai Kheun in Shan state of Myanmar, the T'ai Lao in Laos and Thailand worshiped the same God or Lord of Thunder by scarifying elephant, cow and water buffalo. There are also other common deities and local spirits.

The interaction among neighboring kingdoms based on the marriage between the crown prince and princess of other state. It was also found that the intermarriage between a brother and half sister or a relative's member (second cousin) among royal families is widely practiced. It is clear that this intermarriage is a very important factor involved in the extending policy of conquest, territory annexation. A person of ordinary rank who became a son in law of a powerful king

could make himself a legitimate heir or seized directly or indirectly the throne. The daughter of a political leader or princess enjoyed her role of peacemaker as well as conflict and war cause. This social value role of ruling class women reflected in other daily life such as the followings: the equal right of inheritance for both male and female descendants, the female medium spirit for workshop ceremony and protected spirits. Our local chronicles and legends portrayed this women's role in accordance with historical documents.

For the cultural characteristics of South East Asian people, it is interesting to include the knowledge in horoscopy. Indigenous and Lao-T'ai people believed in the prediction of future by an examination of the chicken leg bone. In a ceremony called Riak-Khuane in Asam a Su-Khuane in Laos, one can note that the boiled chicken is placed among others foods and offering items. When the shaman or the elder folk who presided the ceremony ended his prayers, the bone of the chicken leg and mouth would be carefully examined and the specialist (shaman) will predict the future of the Sukhuane's owner. The Ahom Buranji and Thao Hung epic, both semi local chronicle semi legendary documents, elaborated this custom if they were composed by the same hand. The interpretation of dreams and omens seemed to be one of the powerful means to legitimate the kinship. Its influence among Lao-T'ai people still continued to persist up to present time.

Yes, there is any doubt about Lao-T'ai believes. The God named Lord of Thunder who reigned in his realm came into communication with people through the medium spirit. The ruler or political; evader was considered as a descendent of this God or Thaen. In the early period of state formation, the rulers of brother kingdoms originated from the same family. They were brothers and cousins. Being descendent of Thaen means to be invincible. In this early period of political centralization, the local ruler had to lead by himself any kinds of construction works such as irrigation canals, bridges, city wall, and palaces. The greatness and authority of the king necessitated in a number of labor force and population who will contribute by paying taxes for the wealth of the kingdom. The content of teachings and advices given by Lord of Thunder or by the king to their subjects, showed that the rulers had to apply a policy which much satisfy his population. This is quite interesting to note that the capital punishment did exist in that time. It was prescribed against male culprit who raped or robbed or usurped women's properties. Punishment of culprit women is remarkably less severe than the male case. Comparing with the contents of the Thai Thammasat (14-18 century) and the royal Orders of Burma (from 13th century) it was found that the tuning point in this matter is very concerned with political and social role of women.

Kara Burnett, Ed.D.

The Power of Narrative: Students Daring to Dream in Lao PDR University of San Francisco, California

Research Issue:

Young adults in Laos, as they complete school and attempt to enter the workforce, experience the traditional challenges of this transition accompanied by challenges by living in an economically developing nation. This research identifies the places selected Lao students inhabit as they explore who they are, and who they may be becoming, i.e. their identity. Identity development (Ricoeur 1992) is formed through narrative. Telling one's story bridges life's stages, whether they refer to age, or cultural and economic changes. This research seeks to interpret selected Lao students' stories of their past, their present, and how they envision and plan their future. The purpose of this research is to ferret out policy recommendations that may serve to strengthen and broaden the Lao education system.

Research Process:

This research is grounded in critical hermeneutic participatory theory (Herda 1999) supported by concepts of understanding and narrative identity (Ricoeur 1992). Three categories used for data collection and analysis are Mimesis1, figuration: reflection and remembering the past, Mimesis2, configuration: narrative employment, and Mimesis3, refiguration: imagining the future. Data were collected through both formal and informal conversations with selected participants at Lao American College in Vientiane, Laos. Transcriptions of the conversations provided the text for analysis. This process offered the researcher opportunities to work collaboratively with Lao students to explore the present and reflect on the past and future.

Research Implications:

Lao students are aware that the Lao way of life is slow to change in light of the development process. They know their country compares unfavorably, in terms of socioeconomic development, to some of their neighbors. They see an education

system in need of change. Students can and should be given the opportunity to explore education development in conversations with others who shape policy. If education in Laos would become a primary priority, socioeconomic development would greatly benefit and, moreover, would be strengthened by the possibility that the dreams of students could become a reality.

Susan Meredith Burt

How to Get Rid of an Unwanted Suitor: Advice from Hmong Elders

Department of English, Illinois State University, Normal, Illinois

In an interview designed to assess changes in the pragmatics of the Hmong spoken by the immigrant generation and college-age young adults in a Hmong immigrant community in Wisconsin, interviewees were presented with the following prompt:

"A young woman is at the Hmong New Year Festival. A young man wants to play the ball toss game [a traditional courting game] with her, but she does not want to. What are some ways she can ask him to leave her alone? Which way seems best to you? Do young women today know how to say this?"

When we analyze immigrant women's responses to this face-threatening scenario by generation, striking differences emerge: the elders recommend using bald-on-record statements and blunt, unmitigated directives; the one exception to this is the youngest elder, who uses an excuse and a postponement. Younger women, who have grown up in the U.S., overwhelmingly recommend using excuses and postponements, the occasional apology, and no directives. The younger speakers, to western ears, sound far less direct and more polite than the female elders recommend—a pattern that seems puzzling.

The explanation lies in the different cultural conditions under which the speakers imagine the interaction taking place, as these were immensely different for women who grew up in Laos than for those who grew up in the U.S. In Laos, a suitor posed a real threat to a woman's autonomy; Hmong marriage customs included possible marriage by capture, bride-price negotiations, and marriage possibly resulting in lower status as a second wife in a polygamous household. Thus, the interaction involved higher stakes for the older women, when they were young, than it does today for young women growing up in the US.

One cultural discontinuity that marks the Hmong refugee immigration from Laos to the United States is a change in the relative status of women within Hmong society (Donnelly 1994, Meredith and Rowe 1986). What the data on this speech act type show is that that change in status affects the politeness strategies speakers bring to interaction, although not, perhaps, in quite the way that Brown and Levinson (1987) would predict. Here, the increased power that a relatively higher status brings to women in the US allows them to prioritize goals of self-presentation over goals of self-preservation, in that a suitor in the US does not usually constitute the dire threat to the woman's autonomy that he could in Laos; from her relatively safe position, then the woman can afford to be less direct, more polite in her attempt to discourage an unwanted suitor.

Somsong Burusphat, Ph.D.

Lao numeral classifiers in comparison to Central Thai

Institute of Language and Culture for Rural Development, Mahidol University, Salaya, Nakhonpathom, Thailand

This paper presents a semantic analysis of numeral classifier system in the Lao language. The hierarchically structured set of parameters underlying categorizations of nouns presented in a tree diagram has been applied to this study.

Shape/form component has the largest number of classes. The classes that have a lot of members are *duāaN*, *nuŭay*, *saāay*, *seŷn*, *baāy*, *phuāun*, *phQŭn*, *huāa*, and *meŷt*. Most of these classes involve metaphorical extension into another semantic field. Repeaters are mostly used with entities possessing the nature/function component. The general classifier */an* can be used with entities of any size and can replace some inanimate classifiers. The arrangement component mostly consists of classifiers which are derived verbs. The human classifier *khōan* is widely used whereas *phuŷu* is restricted to the indefinite construction: noun-*phuŷu*-numeral one. The use of non-human classifier *toāo* has been extended from its original realm to class bad humans and inanimate objects. The animate collection component distinguishes between human and non-human. Thus a group of people belongs to one class and a group of animal belongs to another. The inanimate

collection component overlaps with the arrangement component. A collection of inanimate objects are classified according to how they are arranged, e.g., a pile, a bundle, and a bunch. Partitive component partially relates to arrangement, e.g., a lump of object is in *tŭŭn* class and a slice of object is in *piŭaŋ* class. This component also distinguishes between 'one of a pair' of body parts and inanimate objects. That is one hand is in the *bŭbaŋ* or *khaŷaŋ* class and one shoe or sock is in the *kiŭn* class which is the same class as 'twig'.

The comparative study of Lao and Thai numeral systems reveals that there is a great similarity of traditional use of numeral classifiers in both languages. The difference lies on the innovative classification of entities.

Kristine Callis

Historical Plant Use in Laos from Accounts of European Exploration

Department of Botany, North Carolina State University, North Carolina

The study of European texts on Laos, from the 16th-19th centuries, offers an examination of the evolution of both Lao and European culture. Investigating the plant use described by Europeans reveals a possible shift in traditional environmental knowledge (TEK) by the native Lao. Many of the plants described in the texts were used medicinally and some have been examined for modern pharmaceutical use. These pharmaceutical studies have substantiated the effectiveness of historical medicinal plant use. The texts also describe plants that were used in religious ceremonies and continue to play an important role in Lao culture. Understanding the plants that are important to the native Lao in the past can lead to better methods of conservation in the future.

Jacquelyn Chagnon

Reaching the Poorest in the Lao DPR Requires Cutting Edge Approaches

Rural Development Consultant, Participatory Development Associates, Lao PDR

In the mid-1990's, the Lao government consciously began to shift its rural development focus towards the least advantaged, least accessible, and most war-traumatized districts of the country. In 2003 the Lao PDR's Report on the National Poverty Eradication Program identified through quantitative and qualitative measures 72 poor districts out of 142. Top priority was given to 40 districts. Almost all were in remote upland areas characterized by high ethnic diversity, low education rates, and inadequate outreach of government services. Decidedly, these districts presented the zenith of development challenges.

Drawing from her decades of professional development experience, the writer raises three critical challenges for reaching remote poor districts. First, how can the critical core of indigenous development professionals emerge in these districts, where education levels average 2-3 grades? Second, as many of the poorest districts are plagued by high levels of unexploded ordnance (UXO), can clearing methods be improved to meet popular demands? Third, with an underpaid, understaffed civil service core, what alternatives are there for providing basic health and education services in these remote, low population areas? For each challenge, the writer highlights some cutting edge approaches being tested in the Lao PDR.

Phinseng Channgakham*

Rural Financial Development: Farm Credit Access and Credit Constraints of Rural Farm Households in Naxaithong and Phonghon Districts in Lao PDR

* Ph.D. Student (Lao)

International Graduate School of Social and Sciences, Yokohama National University, Japan

Access to rural financial services has a crucial role to play on poverty reduction in rural areas. Farm credit is needed for short-term investment as well as medium- and long-term investment, especially credit for purchasing inputs and investing in livestock and tree crops. This study attempts to search on main determinants which influence on farm household borrowing behavior and their credit constrain. The survey was conducted in Phonghon district of Vientiane Province and Naxaithong district of Vientiane Municipality where villages are classified as rural zones with the road access. Both loan borrowing and non-borrowing farm

households were interviewed with totally 450 farm households in 10 villages of these districts. The detail of questionnaires was to obtain the cross-sectional data on socio-economic characteristics, intermediate inputs, amount of loan, capital, cultivated areas, family labor stock and other related information during 2003 - 2004. Probit model was applied to estimate and analyze the determinants of borrowing possibility and credit constrain. In the case of borrowing possibility by farm households, the analyses found that age of family's head had significantly negative correlation. Family labor stock had significant positive correlation which means bigger farm household tend to apply loan into their farm investment. However, the effect of education of family's head and cultivated area showed insignificant correlation. Numbers of dependent, hired labors and frequency of cultivated time per year had significant positive correlation. Farm households, who have more number of dependents and hire more labor for their cultivation as well as produce more than one time a year, have higher possibility to make a loan. Regarding credit constrain by farm households, the study found that farm households which family's head has high education level face low possibility to become credit constrain. In contrast, numbers of livestock, cultivated areas and family labor stock had significant positive correlation. This mean that farm households who raise more livestock, cultivate in larger farm areas and have more family labor stock, have higher level in credit constrain. This study concludes that rural financial services provides more advantage to large or rich farm households, while small and poor farm households remain leaving behind as well as weakly utilize the farm credit services.

Rattana Chanthao* and Sarisa Unthanon**

Naming Process of the Tai-mène: Influences of Culture on Language

*CERP (Khon Kaen University) Thailand

**Khon Kaen University Thailand

The Tai-mène is an ethnic group residing in villages in Bolikhamsai province in the Lao PDR. In the past, they lived in Chiang-men village of Nghe-An province in the Vietnam. The Tai-mène people emigrated to and settled in Laos slightly less than 80 years ago, but the up-to-date information on the exact number of them is not available. Linguistically, the language of the Tai-mène people belongs to the Tai Language Family. The Tai-mène language does not use tones that significantly affect the meaning of words. However, the influence of Lao, the national language, has brought about the development of tones in the present Tai-mène language. The Tai-mène are well-known for their individual names and the process of naming people. Not only does the name show the unique characteristics of the Tai-mène culture, but it also play an important role as a device for strengthening relationships and creating harmony between people in the community.

In the naming process, parents first give a name to their child by consulting with a more-mon, or a spiritual specialist in the village so they can have a name that is spiritually suitable to the date of birth of their child. They believe that auspicious names benefit the child. If the date of birth does not go together with the gender of the child, the name must be changed to make the connection between the both factors. For example, if a female child was born on a male day, the name must indicate the female sex of the child. Similarly, if the male child was born on a female day, the name should specify the male sex of the child.

Later, during the first one to three years, if the child has a chronic illness, the Tai-mène believe that it is caused by an unfit and inauspicious name. Consequently, they change the name of the child. Nowadays, 80 percent of Tai-mène people have a second name, which has become their permanent name. The second name generally begins with the word mai, meaning "new," followed by the same old name or the new given name such as mai nang, the previous name being nang.

Apart from the child's family members, the more mon and elderly people in the village play a vital role in giving the second name to the child. In doing so, they hold a ceremony or cast lots to find the right person to name the child. After receiving the second name, the child and his or her family generally have a relative-like kinship with the family of the person who gave him or her the second name.

As a result, the naming process is not simply giving a name to a person, but it is a kind of wisdom of the Tai-mène to stimulate social interaction in the community. Moreover, it also reflects the idea of living in harmony in a community linked through this naming process. However, the culture of naming people in the Tai-mène ethnic group would disappear if the government applied the more conventional record system because the certificate of birth and house registration would identify only the first name, and the traditional naming process would finally fade away.

Adam Chapman, Ph.D.

Going 'Glocal': Lao Music in Transnational Spaces

Australian National University, Australia

Over the past five years a transnational music industry has emerged across the communities of the Lao diaspora. Still in its infancy, this industry encapsulates the changing nature of transnational exchanges between Lao communities across the globe through its utilization of the Internet, digital technologies and frequent overseas travel. The drive for much of the activity in this fledgling industry comes from a local level with individual musicians and small recording/distribution companies working to develop their niche market: "Lao music". This local activity draws from, and feeds back into, a global Lao community extending through North America, Europe, Australasia and Southeast Asia. Through these reciprocal communicative processes music becomes a focal point for contesting, reconfiguring and reconstructing Lao identity and establishing a home away from home.

This presentation is part paper and part virtual tour through Lao digital places and spaces filled with sounds, images and words. Traveling through these transnational 'spaces' opens up insights into the ways that concepts of 'the local' and 'the global' are collapsing inwards as the communities of the Lao diaspora redefine Lao-ness, khuam pên laaw. The term "glocalization" (Robertson 1994) has been used to describe such processes of conflation, however, they may also be described as the dynamic fluctuations between fixity and fluidity in the material and discursive processes involving Lao communities (Connell and Gibson 2003:9-10).

Carol J. Compton, Ph.D.

Interpreting Four-Word Phrases and Related Patterns in Lao Discourse

Independent Scholar, Madison, Wisconsin

In earlier work on four-word phrases in Lao (such as yuu4 dui2 mii3 hEEN333 'be well' or khii5 long1 khii5 lyym3 'absent-minded'), I looked at internal rhyme, repetition and semantic similarities within a four-word phrase itself. In this paper I focus on the use of four-word phrases in larger context, that is in written discourse. I compare the types, frequency, distribution and use of the four-word phrases found in short stories, poetry and textbooks. Comparisons from this corpus of data are made as to the frequency and variety in types of four-word phrases and related patterns in written Lao and their uses in the discourse structure. This research suggests the need to investigate the role of four-word phrases and related patterns as an integral part of Lao syntax. Analysis of the role of four-word phrases and related patterns by linguists, language teachers and translators of literature could be productive in expanding our knowledge of aspects of Lao discourse and poetics and would have value for exploring discourse structures and poetics in other Tai languages as well.

Yang Dao, Ph.D.

The Contribution of the Laotian Ethnic Minorities in the Building of Laos

Faculty member, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN

Laos is a small country, located in the heart of Southeast Asia. Due to its geographic situation, this small land has from time immemorial been a crossroad of migrations and trades from the Polynesian islands and from South China as well as from Thailand and Vietnam. These movements of races and cultures, civilizations and ideologies have, over centuries, shaped the present-day countenance of ancient "Lan Xang".

However, the building of the nation of Laos has never been easy, due to its cultural mosaic and its absence of national conscience, complicated by the influence of foreign ideologies. The feudalist system in Laos had never recognized the rights of the ethnic minorities to become an integral part of the Lao society while Western colonialism tried to divide the poly-ethnic population of the country in order to dominate. Laos was just a state with an administration, but not a nation with ethnic representations.

When World War II ended in 1945, the emerging Lao elite was torn into two political factions: pro-Western status quo and nationalist movement. Then, in their struggle for leadership, the Lao antagonist leaders, supported by foreign powers, recognized the importance of the ethnic minorities which composed half of the

total population of the country, and sought their political support. Therefore, the Khmu, the Hmong, the Mien and other ethnic groups who for centuries had been considered as "pariah" or foreigners by the dominant society in Laos, actively participated on both sides, that of the Royal Lao Government and that of the Neo Lao Hak Xat (Pathet Lao), in the long and devastating civil war of Laos (1946-1975).

The Hmong involvement in the first and second wars of Indochina would constitute an example. To show their loyalty to the King of Laos, Touby Lyfoung led a faction of the Hmong to support the Royal Lao Government while his maternal uncle Faydang Lobliayao led another faction to join the Lao Issara Movement or Pathet Lao under the leadership of Prince Souphanouvong. The Hmong distinguished themselves in the defense of the "national cause" with General Vang Pao from the Royal Lao Army's side and with Colonel Ya Thao Tou on the side of the Army of National Liberation.

Today, thirty years after the Vietnam War ended in 1975, the geopolitical world has been profoundly changed. The great powers, such as the U.S.A., the USSR and China, who only yesterday were enemies, have become friends today under a new era of cooperation and partnership. The Laotian leaders who were belligerents during the civil war should take their example into consideration to promote peace and national reconciliation which constitute the essential foundation for social and economic progress in Laos.

Maria Carmen Domingo-Kirk, Ed.D.

Laos 1965 - Feminist Consciousness and Social Critique

Anthropology Instructor, Department of Philippine Studies,
City College of San Francisco, California

This paper focuses on the experience of an educator and medical records librarian who joined a Filipino medical organization, Operation Brotherhood International (OBI) a humanitarian organization based in Manila, Philippines. Volunteers of this organization sign up for a two year contract which can be renewed more than once for service in Laos.

Forty years beyond the Indochinese War, the author reflects on her one year work in Laos. First, as an educator who had the task of supervising kindergarten classes in Vientiane at the refugee center within the That Luang complex and at the clinics operated by the OBI in Vang Vieng, Sayaboury, Paksong and Attapeu. Second, as a medical records librarian who kept track of the diseases reported at the OBI hospital in Vientiane and in the clinics in the countryside.

After eleven months of service, the author became conscious of the reality of the war going on in Laos. After much reflection, she questioned many things that were going on. The deaths of a Filipina nurse, a Canadian with the International Control Commission, a young Australian diplomat, three American pilots, all these deaths affected the author deeply. Then there is the quiet resignation of young Lao soldiers who were brought to the hospital in Vientiane as their arms and legs were amputated.

The author left Laos after a year with bitter memories of what a war can do. The last forty years has made her a critic of armed conflict. War has happened before, continues to happen now and most likely will happen in the future. As a woman and a social scientist the author critiques those who start wars and those who aid those engaged in this inhuman, human activity.

Valerie Dzibur, RN MSN FNP-C

Development Practice in Primary Health Care: A Participatory Service and Education Model in Lao

Samuel Merritt College, Oakland, California

The provision of primary health care is basic to all societies. Although taken for granted in industrial and post-industrial nations, it is not uncommon to visit many localities where people with health needs remain un-served. There is increasing recognition among Lao people that good health is critical to appropriate development. Furthermore, where resources are scarce, service teams can work with local people to meet needs in creative ways. The main point of this paper is to demonstrate that health care needs can be taught and administered without prolonged development implementation and/or extensive funding. Moreover, in this case, international health care providers collaborate with local practitioners to create conditions that can meet health needs in both an educative and applied manner. In this participatory service model, a minimal infrastructure was identified and used with partners to create the requisite conditions for education and service. Examples are drawn from work with a local free Sunday clinic in Vientiane and an orphanage in Luang Phrabang.

N. J. Enfield, Ph.D.

Language in Laos: an Agenda for Research

Language and Cognition Group, Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics,
The Netherlands

There is at present a vigorous public debate in Laos on the issue of language, with the participation of scholars, researchers, educators, and politicians. This debate goes to the highest level, and has been on the agenda for decades. The issue? Whether the letter 'r' should or should not be included in the Lao alphabet. Meanwhile, there are nearly one hundred distinct human languages spoken in Laos which are in danger of extinction in the immediate or near future. We know little or nothing about the structure, history, or social setting of these languages or the people who speak them. There is no public debate about this issue in Laos, and next to no research activity to document the country's dozens of minority languages, whether for scientific, practical, or social purposes. This paper offers a number of reasons why this must change.

Grant Evans, Ph.D.

Tiao Phetsarath and the Lao Issara

Reader in Anthropology, Centre for Anthropological Research,
Department of Sociology, University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, PRC

Tiao Phetsarath was one of the most important figures in 20th century Lao nationalism. His leadership of the small Lao independence movement, the Lao Issara, from 1945-1949 brought him both notoriety and political prominence, but it also brought him into conflict with the Luang Phrabang monarchy which he had long supported. His motives for some were suspect. The disagreement between Phetsarath and the King would deprive Laos of one of its most important figures as it made the transition to independence and fell into the cauldron of the Cold War. The confusing events around the Issara movement also fragmented the country's political memory, and continues to do so today.

Wouter Feldberg, MA

Gerrit Wuijsthoof's Journey to the Lao Court at Vientiane, 1641-1642

International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), Leiden and Amsterdam,
the Netherlands

In July 1641 the Dutch United East India Company (VOC) merchant Gerrit Wuijsthoof set out from Loveck, the capital of Cambodia, for a journey up the Mekong River. His destiny was the Lao court at Vientiane. Wuijsthoof was sent to the Lao King Souigna Vongsa by VOC Governor General Antonio van Diemen of Batavia, who was in search of new trading opportunities. While making his way up and down the Mekong River Wuijsthoof made valuable notes of his experiences with the Lao, their country, and king. In doing so he was the first European to write an elaborate report on Laos and this river route. Wuijsthoof and the Portuguese Jesuit missionary Giovanni-Maria Leria authored the only extensive European accounts of Laos until the French appeared in the region two centuries later.

The journal of Gerrit Wuijsthoof can still be read in the VOC section of the National Archives in The Hague, the Netherlands. It is a unique European source of information on seventeenth century Laos. By describing a number of Wuijsthoof's experiences, this paper will address seventeenth century Lao customs, trade, the monarchy, politics, and attitude towards European traders.

Penélope V. Flores

Inter-country Cultural Contact and Exchange: The Philippine-Lao Nexus

San Francisco State University, California

In 2004, The Mekong Circle International initiated a book project where Filipinos who served in Laos told their stories for publication. There was a huge response for the call for personal stories. The first work of Filipinos in Laos existed in the field of humanitarian and socioeconomic fields represented by Operation Brotherhood, a private Jaycee (Junior Chamber of Commerce) organization. By the 1960s the population of the Filipino community in Laos increased and many Filipinos served under USAID and many affiliated corporations.

This paper is a content analysis of the personal stories told by Filipinos who served in Laos from 1956 to 1973. Using the ethnographic strategies of Emic

and Etic strategies the analysis of this paper derives the contextual and negotiated meanings and interpretations among the Filipinos' work experience in Laos. This conceptualization brings out the interconnections of cultural experiences between separate, discrete, yet similar groups of people.

The analysis of fifty narratives told by personnel from Operation Brotherhood (OB), Eastern Construction Company Operations in Laos (ECCOIL), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and Air Continental reveal regional differences among Filipinos and cultural differences between Filipinos and Laotians, yet an underlying richness of common life experience strengthened the complicated nexus.

Very few people realize that the Filipinos' intercultural contact and exchange with the Laotian people brought about a particularity among the Lao villagers who they served. The Laotians defined the Filipinos as "thanmos" or doctors who treated patients on their Mobile Clinic boat that plied the Mekong River. In other words, all Filipinos were seen as medical doctors. Storytellers indicated how the Lao experience changed them.

This transformative power of the Philippine-Lao nexus is fully developed in this paper using the personal untold stories. The stories are anthologized under the title *Goodbye Vientiane: The Untold Stories of Filipinos in Laos*, published by the Philippine American Writers and Artists and will be available at the conference.

Anne Frank

SEAAdoc: Documenting the Southeast Asian American Experience

Irvine Libraries Southeast Asian Archive, University of California, California

This presentation will introduce the web portal on Southeast Asian Americans created by the University of California, Irvine Libraries Southeast Asian Archive. This digitalization project was funded by a generous grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (2003-2005).

SEAAdoc: Documenting the Southeast Asian American Experience web portal is an educational web site that focuses on the cultural, economic, educational, political, and social experiences of refugees and immigrants from Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. Its objective is to present a sampling of historical and contemporary primary and secondary materials about the diverse Southeast Asian populations in the United States, which can be used by students, educators, researchers, and the general public for research and teaching purposes. The documents in this project are from the collections housed in the Southeast Asian Archive, unit of the Department of Special Collections and Archives at Langson Library located at the University of California, Irvine.

This presentation will focus on SEAAdoc's resources on Laotian Americans, including ethnic Lao, Hmong, Lu Mien, Khmu, and Lahu.

J. Pete Fuentesella

Lessons of Refugee Survival

Mekong Circle International, New York, NY

When the Pathet Lao won control of Laos in 1975, waves of lowland Lao and Hmong, uncertain and fearful of their future under the new rulers, fled the country. It is estimated that 10 percent of the inhabitants, or some 350,000, settled in Thailand, the USA, Canada, Australia, France, and other countries. The migration lasted over 10 years.

The first wave was composed of the elite -- former government and military personnel and merchants. Among the first wave were Lao lowland nurses, the products of the first private school of nursing operated by a non-governmental organization managing a health care program in the country. The author was an instructor in that school. These nurses represented a sector of a small population of Lao possessing skills of value and middle-level education. As such they composed a distinct segment of the refugees, a majority of whom were uneducated Lao farmers and Hmong tribes people.

This paper will describe the circumstance of their migration to and settlement in the USA. Their experience will be compared with demographically similar and dissimilar refugees in the USA, not only from Laos but also from Vietnam and Cambodia. (All three countries saw the forced migration of large numbers of their inhabitants during the same period).

Charlotte Gyllenhaal*, Boun Hoong Southavong, Mary Riley*, Kongmany Sydara**, Somsanith Bouamanivong**, Amey Libman*, Djaja Djendoel Soejarto* listed but Riley only Traditional Medicine Stations: A Design to Study and Popularize Lao Traditional Medicines, Illinois**

*Program for Collaborative Research in the Pharmaceutical Sciences (PCRPS), College of Pharmacy, University of Illinois at Chicago, 833 S. Wood St., Chicago, IL 60612

**Traditional Medicine Research Center, Ministry of Health, Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic

Recognizing the important role of traditional medicine in Laos, the Ministry of Health established the Traditional Medicine Research Center (TMRC), the only institute of its kind in Laos. TMRC is charged with the responsibility of conducting adaptive research on medicinal plants and Traditional Lao Medicine. The Ministry of Health through TMRC established a network of 10 provincial Traditional Medicine Stations (TMSs) across Laos. TMSs consist of one or more buildings with a staff of three to five, whose Heads include university graduates, a Faculty of Pharmacy graduate, or graduate of secondary medical technical schools. Other staff members include senior traditional healers and Buddhist monks at some stations. TMRC staff together with TMS personnel carry out research to inventory and document traditional medicinal uses of plants, review potential toxic effects of plants used in traditional medicinal preparations, formulate herbal medicinal preparations, and educate healers and local communities on sustainable uses of medicinal plants. Details of research by TMRC and TMSs will be presented. This project was funded by NIH Grant 1-U01-TW010-50, with support from NIH, NSF, and USDA FAS.

Rebecca Hall

Tai Banners: Buddhist Import or Adaptation?

Ph.D. candidate, University of California, Los Angeles, California

My presentation is a preliminary examination of Tai banners in an attempt to understand their relationship to the larger world of banners in Asia, with specific attention paid to banners associated with the practice of Buddhism. The high value of cloth in pre-modern times likely played an important role in the function of banners as religious objects; as a result different forms of banners have been documented throughout Buddhist Asia, from the Indian subcontinent to Japan. However, Tai banners are markedly different from other Buddhist banners, in construction, appearance, and function. The motifs on banners make reference to both Buddhist and Tai cultural motifs present on other textile forms. Thus, a central concern in this study is whether an existing textile was adapted for use within the Tai Buddhist temple, or if a new textile form may have been introduced and adapted for local purposes. In part, then, my presentation on banners is an iconographical study that will examine physical characteristics and attempt to place these banners into their historical and cultural contexts. I ask what evidence can be deduced from the banners and their use to understand their incorporation into local Tai ceremonies. Banners are an essential visual element of Tai Buddhism whose iconography, production, and use reveal the delicate balance of external and local ideologies that exists in these cultures.

Joel M. Halpern* and Larry Ashmun**

A Digital View of Laos: The Joel M. Halpern Laotian Slide Collection, SEAIT, University of Wisconsin-Madison

*Professor Emeritus, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Massachusetts

**University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison

Consisting of slightly over 3000 images, the Joel M. Halpern Laotian Slide Collection is a unique portrait of life in Laos. Nearly all of the images were personally taken by Professor Halpern, an anthropologist, in Laos in 1957, 1959, and 1969. He initially went to Laos as a Junior Foreign Service Officer attached to USOM, the U.S. Operations Mission, in January 1957 and stayed until the end of the year. Subsequently supported by the Rand Corporation and a University of California Junior Faculty Fellowship, Prof. Halpern returned to Laos in 1959 to conduct a study of, in particular, the Lao elite. His stays and research resulted in some of the first American academic work on Laos, a French colony from 1893 to 1953, most notably the 22-volume Laos Project Paper series while at UCLA in 1961-2. In 1969, Prof. Halpern was back in Laos as a member of the Mekong

Group of the Southeast Asia Development Advisory Group (SEADAG). Following stints at UCLA, Brandeis University, and Harvard University, Prof. Emeritus Halpern retired in 1992 after teaching 25 years at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Digitalization of his extensive, nearly all, slide collection commenced at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in late 2003, with the metadata phase being completed in early 2005. As a part of SEAIT, the Halpern Collection very nicely constitutes the project's initial component for Laos.

The Halpern Collection provides a very interesting picture of activities and life in Laos, from royal ceremonies to rural scenes, from American aid to "hilltribe" communities. Its most distinctive feature is its extensive focus on Luang Prabang, the (then) royal capital, where Prof. Halpern and his wife, Barbara Kerewsky-Halpern, resided during their 1957 stay, as well as neighboring parts of northern Laos from that year and 1959, as well as Vientiane and vicinity. Among the Luang Prabang and northern Laos highlights are:

- (1) Coverage of several royal ceremonies, including the wedding of (then) King Sisavang Vong's youngest son, Prince Manivong, in 1957;
- (2) A rural trip with Prince Phetsarath, the "Uparat", or Viceroy, in 1957, shortly after he had returned from political exile; and
- (3) Numerous images of the region's various ethnic minority "hilltribe" groups, in particular the Akha, Hmong, Khmu', Lanten, Lu, Tai Dam, and Yao.

Among the latter grouping, the Collection includes an especially rare set of images from the White Hmong village of Kiu Katiam in Luang Prabang province. The village, about 50 miles south of the city, was home to Father Yves Bertrais, a Frenchman of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, from April 1950 until the end of 1959. In 1952, Father Bertrais was one of three missionary co-founders of the Hmong Romanized.

Popular Alphabet (RPA), the script now most used by the Hmong around the world. Prof. Halpern's Kiu Katiam images have been most significantly enhanced by the addition of personal information about individuals as well as the village through direct contact with Father Bertrais (working in Thailand at the time, December 2004) and several White Hmong born in Laos who now live in the U.S. (at the same time).

John Hartmann, Ph.D.

Linguistic and Historical Continuities of the Tai Dam and Lao Phuan: Case Studies in Boundary Crossings
Northern Illinois University, Illinois

One of the most salient and enduring features of ethno-cultural identity is language. The Tai Dam and Lao Phuan, just two examples of Tai ethnic minorities who migrated or were moved across the borders of Vietnam and Laos and resettled in Thailand as early as two centuries ago, are remarkable for having preserved their sense of ethnic uniqueness. Other Tai groups have similar histories and exhibit parallel cultural and linguistic continuities and processes of change: the Lue and Phu Tai, are two other examples that come readily to mind. Using the analytical tools of comparative-historical linguistics, we will examine one significant set of underlying language patterns that have persisted in the Tai Dam and Lao Phuan communities over time, namely tones. This paper presents a new description determined by Hartmann, Wayland, Thammavongsa in 2003 of the tonal array of Lao Phuan from Xiang Khuang, Laos to complement the analysis of Lao Lao Phuan tones recorded by Tanprasert (2003) in thirty-three villages of nineteen provinces in Thailand. The earlier work on Lao Phuan by Chamberlain (1971, 1975) is examined in light of these new findings. Tai Dam and Lao Song have identical tonal arrays that can be traced back to origins in northwestern Vietnam. Lao Phuan is, in terms of tonal patterns, a copy of Lao of Luang Prabang, except for its tell-tale split of the proto-Tai *B tone, which also provides the clearest marker of enduring continuity between Lao Phuan of Laos with all of the Lao Phuan dialects in Thailand. Prior classification of Lao speech domains by Hartmann (1980) into three regional dialects – Northern (Luang Prabang), Central (Vientiane), and Southern (Pakse) – is affirmed but refined by now calling them "Mekong Lao," a notion borrowed from Crisfield (p.c.) as my means of drawing attention to the uniqueness of "non-Mekong" Lao Phuan. A cursory summary of some of the historical events and sociological factors that lend to the persistence of the language and culture of these two ethnic Tai groups will be presented. Their "tribal labels" are political constructs that refer back to historical states that no longer exist. Still, the preservation of underlying tonal patterns unique to both groups provides an interesting "linguistic DNA sample," showing the continuity of language and culture across national boundaries and two centuries of Thai, Tai Dam, and Phuan history.

Ellen A. Herda, Ph.D.

The Place of Story, Silk and Song: Collaborative Development Practice in Lao
University of San Francisco, California

Drawing upon local story and talent, development practices have emerged in a variety of ways that bring people from the West who are not full-time professional developers to work with people in Lao on specific projects. Narrative analysis sets the foundation and direction for collaborative development practices carried out by Lao and American educators, musicians, social scientists and artisans. Establishing a relationship between an American school and a school in the remote province of Phongsali, hearing the stories of a small people group in Sayabury talk about the future, promoting the appreciation of Lao silk among urban and suburban Americans, and collaborating with a music demonstration theater in Vientiane are examples of development work that take on meaning through commitment and friendship. Assumptions about development are discussed and questions of sustainability and policy are considered from a critical hermeneutic orientation.

Ellen A. Herda and Valerie Dzibur

Interpreting Lao Development Through Story, Fabric, Education, and Music
California, USA

Based on travels and service work in Lao over the past four years, we have seen socioeconomic development take on various meanings and avenues. These two presentations provide insight into the changing nature of development from instrumental and technical service to a hands-on and collaborative mode. Examples are drawn from Luang Pra Bang, Sayabury, Vientiane, Phongsali. Implications for development policies are drawn from our work and are based in a critical hermeneutic orientation.

Christy Hicks

Lao Primary School Teachers' Perceptions of the Developmental Stages of Youth in UXO-Impacted Communities
Department of Family & Child Ecology, Youth Development Program, Michigan State University, Michigan

Since 1999, volunteers from Thailand and the United States have worked in partnership with the Lao Ministry of Education and Consortium Lao to facilitate workshops in child-centered, multi-sensory learning. The volunteers believed that teachers attempt to meet the developmental needs of their students based upon their assumptions about youth development stages. These are the common physical, cognitive, social, and emotional characteristics of each age group with whom an educator works. The challenge for the facilitators was to determine whether perceptions about these developmental stages of youth are consistent across cultures (U.S., Thai and Lao), or influenced by environmental factors (i.e. the presence of unexploded ordnance in the community). This paper explores the similarities and differences in these perceptions, revealed through small-group discussions among Lao participants in the workshops.

Shih-chung Hsieh, Ph.D.

Constructing a Pan-Lue World—Community and Ethnicity among Lao Immigrants in Seattle
Department of Anthropology, National Taiwan University, Taiwan

The main Tai-speaking peoples distributed in Luang Namtha Province, Laos are Tai-Lue, Tai-Nuea, Tai-Dam, Tai-Daeng, Kalom and so on. Most of refugees escaped from northern Laos to Thailand, then moved to western countries such as US and France are members of those non-Lao Tai-speaking Laotians. At present there are around 100 Lue families in Seattle area of Washington State in US. They founded a Lao-Lue Association in 1979, four years after the first Lue had settled down there. In 1997, the Lue immigrants in Seattle bought a suburban land, and established a Buddhist temple named Wat Buddharam. They went to Lao temple usually before the Lue temple had been built up. The appearance of Lue temple symbolizes the success of practice of ethnicity. This particular group of people have re-planted "traditional" life out of homeland. One may feel a cultural atmo-

sphere of northern Laos in the sphere of Lue temple and activities initiated by the Association. However the Lue organization and people's grouping are definitely beyond "pure" ethnic identity, i.e., almost all non-Lao Laotians originated from northern muangs join the Association entitled by ethnonym Lue. In this paper I am going to argue that Lue as a symbol of integrating northerners has become one of the major identities deposited in individual's inventory of ethnicities among most of Luang Lamthalites in Seattle. There is a pan-Lue world in northwest coast of North America that evidently distinguished from the majority Lao in most arena of daily lives.

Aviva Imhof

Is Hydropower the Best Option for Laos' Development?

Campaigns Director, International Rivers Network, California

The Mekong River forms the heart and soul of mainland Southeast Asia, providing sustenance, drinking water and transport for more than 65 million people living along its banks. Known as the "Mother of Waters," the Mekong River supports one of the world's most diverse fisheries, second only to the Amazon. The Mekong's annual flood-drought cycles are essential for the sustainable production of food crops on the floodplains and along the banks of the rivers during the dry season.

Laotians depend on the Mekong River and its many tributaries for all aspects of their lives – wild-caught fisheries make up 80% of the dietary protein of people in the country. People depend on rivers to irrigate and fertilize their rice fields, to grow vegetables along riverbanks during the dry season and for transportation, drinking water and many other uses. River development projects threaten not only the integrity of the river ecosystem but the livelihoods of communities who depend on the river for their survival.

Hydropower projects have been promoted in Laos for national development and poverty alleviation. Since the late 1980s, the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and other international donors have advised the Lao government that the best option for development is to build hydropower dams and export the power to neighboring Thailand. This would provide the Lao government with foreign exchange that can be used to fund development activities in the country. However, the track record of building and implementing dam projects in the country has been poor, depriving communities of access to natural resources essential for their survival.

Five hydropower projects developed over the past decade have damaged fisheries and river ecosystems that people depend on for their food security and well-being. Tens of thousands of Laotians now lack sufficient food to eat, clean water to drink and income to meet basic needs because of dam projects. As there are no independent agencies within Laos to monitor the government's commitments, affected communities remain isolated, marginalized and intimidated from voicing concerns.

At the end of March, 2005, the World Bank and Asian Development Bank approved the controversial Nam Theun 2 hydropower project in Laos, arguing that the project will generate much-needed foreign exchange to alleviate poverty in Laos. However, Nam Theun 2 will displace 6,200 indigenous people living on the Nakai Plateau and will affect another 100,000 people living downstream of the project along the Xe Bang Fai and Nam Theun who rely on these rivers for fish, drinking water and agriculture. Most of these people are subsistence farmers dependent upon natural resources for their livelihoods. Experience from other hydropower projects in Laos shows that replacing subsistence livelihoods is extremely difficult. Independent reviews of the mitigation and compensation plans reveal that these plans are overly ambitious and have a high likelihood of failure.

This paper will discuss the experience with hydropower development in Laos and explore whether hydropower is indeed the best option for Laos' development.

Faith Inman, poster presentation

Predicting Primary Forest Recovery in a Fragmented Landscape: a Restoration Roadmap

Botany Department, North Carolina State University, North Carolina

To develop a predictive model for primary forest species establishment following disturbance, I propose to conduct experiments to measure dispersal and recruitment of primary forest species in three different habitats: primary forest,

secondary forest, and pasture, and determine the relationship between these variables and seed characters along the environmental gradients found in the three habitat types. This information will be used to construct a model that will generate establishment probabilities for species under specified environmental conditions. This model will be used to determine which primary forest species will require intensive management (seeding, planting, etc) under a variety of environmental conditions. An interesting study site I have identified is the Nam Ha National Preserve Area in northwestern Laos. According to satellite imagery, this 222,000 hectare preserve is a mosaic of primary forest, secondary forest, and recently abandoned pasture. Furthermore, the dominant primary forest trees in the lowland moist forest in Laos are wind-dispersed Dipterocarps, which may present the opportunity to study a novel relationship between dispersal traits and environmental conditions.

Bounheng Inversin, MSW

Lao Women: Transmitters of Tradition and Culture

Lao American Women Association (LAWA), Washington, D.C.

There is an old saying among the Lao Lum people that a family is like an elephant. The man is compared to the front legs initiating the 'first' steps. The ability to move or advance depends greatly on the cooperation of the hind legs. The woman being compared to "the hind legs of an elephant" makes her the major contributor in all things possible for a family. Like a family, Lao society relies on its womenfolk for the teaching, preserving, and transmitting of tradition and culture to younger generations. Sayings such as "When choosing a wife, make sure to check out her mother first" or "Language tells where a person is from, his manners reveal his family background" may no longer be as fully applicable or valid today, but they highlight the important teaching role that women have assumed to ensure that their children are important assets and not a nuisance to the family and a shame to the society.

Although there are advantages to be globally in tune, there is, at the same time, an outcry to remain individual. According to Patricia Schultz, one of the "1,000 Places To See Before You Die" is Laos. What makes Laos attractive? Among her natural beauty are her people, culture, food, and textiles to name a few. A people's behavior, language, cuisine, and textiles motifs certainly are a heritage that was passed down from generation to generation. And throughout the millennia, women have been playing major roles in such generational connection.

This paper will present the contribution of women as transmitters of tradition and culture in the Lao Lum people of Laos rather than the general Laotian women. It will touch on the contribution of Lao American women as preservers of Lao heritage for the next generation growing up far from Laos. The chapter "Beyond Pabieang" will present the challenges that these women face in re-creating a traditional culture in their new environment.

Hirota Isao, Hyakumura Kimihiko, Ochiai Yukino, Yokoyama Satoshi and Kono Yasuyuki

Land Use and Livelihood in Laos: From Field Studies on Forestry, Agriculture and Plant Resource Management Japan

Concerning the rural life in Laos, many ethnic groups currently adopt their own land use system and practice various subsistence activities depending upon the natural environmental conditions of each place. This is a notable feature of rural Laos. In particular, farmers in Laos are commonly engaged in swidden agriculture for food production and hunting animals and gathering plants for domestic use, while in other areas in mainland Southeast Asia, such as northern Vietnam and Yunnan Province of China, these traditional activities are rarely found, even though the same ethnic groups inhabit in both areas. Moreover, many farmers in Laos are still occupied in self-sufficient agriculture by using indigenous practices, in spite the commercial and modern agriculture have been developing in the surrounded areas.

The geographical features of mountains and low population pressure can account for the maintenance of traditional agriculture in Laos. Probably, insufficient infrastructure development and low influence of government leading for modernization could be considerable obstacle for Laotian farmers to engage marketable and intensive agriculture. These may be also the reasons why wide ranged land use system and subsistence activities are preserved in the current rural Laos.

However, one can hardly imagine that this situation should continue in the

future. Actually, after Chintanakan-mai, the new way of thinking policy, has been adopted in 1986, rural life in Laos has highly changed: for example, land-forest allocation program has carried out and commercial farming of new cash crops has introduced. Also, another question to consider is addressed: who is the real actor of these changes? It is estimated that many of the changes had risen not by domestic people's own initiatives but by outsider's guidance and suggestions. Thus, actions of foreign governmental and nongovernmental organizations and private companies have made a huge impact on many aspects of political and economical issues of all over the regions in Laos.

How we should expect the future of rural Laos? Is it going to move to the direction of centralized and standardized situation of northern Vietnam and Yunnan Province, or create a unique style to maintain its diversity and own characteristics? However, unfortunately, few reports on Laotian rural life are available. Therefore, based on the field surveys in the forest and farmland, this panel provides three topics, 1) plant uses for minor subsistence, 2) changes in land-forest use and 3) relationships between ethnic groups and occupation structure, to discuss about the close interaction between land, biological resources and people in Laos. We aim to argue the past, present and future of rural life in Laos from the comparative views with surrounding areas of the mainland Southeast Asia.

Hirota Isao*, Nakanishi Asami, Vilaysak Vanhna*** and Eiji Nawata***

Dynamics of Fallow Vegetation in Shifting Cultivation in Northern Laos: A Case Study in Houay Phee Village, La District, Udomxay Province

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Dynamics of fallow vegetation in shifting cultivation was studied in Houay Phee Village, La District, Udomxay Province, Lao P. D. R. by comparing various characteristics of fallow and conservation forests, which were able to be regarded as long fallow forest. DBH (diameter at breast height) and height of all woody plants in 20x20 m quadrats were investigated in a conservation forest, a secondary forest after the fallow period of more than 20 years and fallow forests with various fallow periods from 1 to 8 years. In each quadrat, 5 species were ranked according to the abundance and Shannon-Weaver index was calculated. Canopy openness was measured by photographs of the canopy. The biomass of woody plants increased gradually in the first 2 years, and rapidly in the 3rd year, and the increase of the biomass continued up to 8th year. The increase of biomass at early stages of the fallow period was mainly accounted for that of bamboo. The biomass of the other woody species increased as fallow periods prolonged. The biomass of bamboo was less than 5% of the whole biomass in the conservation forest. Among tree species, Euphorbiaceous plants were dominant in all quadrats except the conservation forest. Fagaceous and Juglandaceous plants, known as climax species in this area, appeared in later stages of fallow period. These species were especially abundant in the conservation forest. Bamboo was dominant species in all quadrats except the conservation forest. As it is unnatural that the biomass of bamboo have been decreased sharply in the fallow forests in about ten years and bamboo grows much faster than the other woody species at early growth stages, bamboo may have flourished more remarkably in recent years.

Meanwhile, according to the interviews with the villagers, the main non-timber forest products (NTFPs), like cardamom, paper mulberry, peuk meuk (Boehmeria malabarica), or tiger grass, were begun gathering about from 5 to 10 years ago. At this time, forest utilization of the villagers abruptly changed, while NTFPs is mainly gathered in the fallow forests. As a result, there have been two impacts, which are the shortening of fallow periods and the gathering of NTFPs, on the fallow forests in these about ten years, and that causes recent vegetation change in this area.

Bret Johnston

"Public" and "Private": Notes on Media, Performance, and the Public Sphere in the Lao PDR

Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Anthropology, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Wisconsin

In light of the Lao government's recent ban on the showing of Thai media in public places, my paper considers what may be an emerging distinction between ideas of "public" and "private" in contemporary Laos. In particular, such policies point to what may be a de facto recognition of the limits of state power on the part of the LPRP. I consider these issues by way of a comparison between two musical performances I observed in Laos in 2003, each of which is implicated with emerging media privatization in different ways.

Dara Kanlaya, MS

The Preservation of Palm leaf Manuscripts in Lao PDR

Manager and Chief Editor of DOKKED Publisher.

Permanent Advisor, Preservation of Lao Palm Leaf Manuscript Program

National Library, Ministry of Information and Culture

Lao PDR

This paper deals with the palm leaf manuscripts' preservation and transmission, as it was performed in the traditional way in the Lane Xang Kingdom in the past 600–700 years. When Laos lost its independence, the leading role of manuscripts in the education were also degrading due to ongoing wars. In the past, there were two periods of great loss. There had been attempts to safeguard the manuscripts. During the cultural renaissance period between 1928–1941 and thereafter, the attempts of intellectuals and leading administration (cooperating with concerned foreign researchers), the renovation of monasteries and the copying of palm-leaf manuscripts were registered. Transliteration into Lao language and publication for school purpose by Chanthaboury Buddhist Council provided a broader dissemination to all Buddhist schools throughout the country.

However, when the modern educational system developed with an emphasis on general education, the curriculum related to Buddhism was reduced and Lao manuscripts were no more in appropriate care.

In 1988, the Ministry of Information and Culture (MIC) carried out a national seminar on manuscripts preservation with financial support from The Toyota Foundation. Monks from 17 provinces have participated. They were invited to present their reports concerning the condition and number of palm leaf manuscripts in their respective provinces. Thereafter, the project staff members were nominated by the MIC in order to carry out inventory work in 6 provinces, namely: Vientiane Capital, Vientiane province, Luang Prabang, Khammouane, Savannakhet and Champassak. With the financial support of The Toyota Foundation, the project-team was able to work for 6 years, on an inventory in the selected monasteries.

Although the survey work in 6 provinces was completed, only the manuscripts of 252 Buddhist monasteries could be registered, while Laos has more than 2,800 monasteries in the whole country. In response to this need, the MIC applied for financial assistance from the Federal Republic of Germany. As a result, the following 10 years of "Lao-German Cooperation" (1992–2002) can be considered as an historical event in the protection of Lao manuscripts: All 17 provinces were covered and many important and ancient manuscripts were registered and microfilmed. The project activities emphasized on the participation of the public and the mobilization of concerned villagers and monks in that way ensuring the involvement of people from all social strata. Regarding the study of these documents, the project has encouraged and supported Buddhist monks and National University in studying the traditional tam script, Pali language and ancient literature. The project came to an end in 2002, however 2 years of follow up work has been carried out. The final work was to establish four Preservation centers: (Luang Prabang, Vientiane Capital, Savannakhet and Champassak) where the Lao Buddhist Fellowship will continue the preservation and dissemination work on their own, but with close follow-up and technical assistance of the National Library.

The paper includes a lively series of photos showing the activities of field-work throughout the country.

Anna Karlström

Lao History Stories—Towards Multivocality in History Writing

Department of Archaeology and Ancient History, Uppsala University, Sweden

The history of a country sometimes has a tendency to start with the establishment of a state or states in that particular area. The idea of a unified nation, where nation borders were much the same as those today, and the idea of a people, unified by and homogenous within that nation are essential in the conceptualization of a country's history. The formation of Lane Xang kingdom in the mid 14th century is often set as the starting point for the history of Laos.

In this paper I will use the results from last years' archaeological fieldwork in Vientiane Province to discuss what happens when myths and legends concerning origin and history of Laos, and archaeological research including survey and excavation meet. In this case they meet in Viengkham, a site which to some extent were significant in the formation of Lane Xang kingdom, but also indicates a continuity of human activity and early state formation from the 7th to 8th century.

Laty Keodouangsy and Kalyani Rai***

Project Voices, Individuals, and Pictures: Engaging Hmong Parents, Schools, and CBOs to Support Student Learning and Academic Achievement

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Prevailing attempts to address the lack of parental involvement in children's schools are based on "middle class Anglo-American value systems" on traditional parental roles in the schools. This approach to address the lack of parental involvement in children's schools is essential but not adequate for many Southeast Asian parents who are considered limited English proficient and particularly, Hmong refugee parents. It fails to recognize culturally specific parental involvement strategies in the SEA community and therefore presents a challenge for educators and schools alike to understand and communicate meaningfully with these parents concerning their children's education.

This paper documents Participatory Action Research with a group of Hmong refugee parents, community-based organizations, teachers, and School administrators who share concerns about their children's education with a focus on the strategies these parents use to guide and help their children despite linguistic and cultural barriers.

The presentation is divided into five sections: Introduction, PAR methodology, Findings, Implications, and Conclusions. The introduction section gives an outline of the most prevailing approaches to address parental involvement in schools. The second section provides an overview of a participatory action research strategy. The findings section explains the major themes that have emerged from the discussion and concludes with a set of implications for educators concerned about involving SEA parents in their children's education.

The conclusion examines how the recent No Child Left Behind act and the issues concerning student academic achievement and increased parental involvement in schools are critical issues that are being addressed in mainstream and culturally-appropriate ways. Through dialogue, action, and reflection employed through the duration of the project, we gather information about how Hmong parents and students navigate the American school system and practice naturally occurring strategies to help students learn in schools.

Vanpheng Keophannha

From Dusty Cobwebbed Piles to Golden Jewel: 8 Years of Transformation of the Luang Prabang Palace Museum

Deputy Director Royal Palace National Museum, Luang Prabang, Lao PDR

This is a first person story. I was hired by the Luang Prabang Department of Information and Culture in 1997 as an assistant collections manager of the Luang Prabang National Museum. In the late 1980s the Lao government decided to develop its tourism sector, but when I walked into the Museum for the first time in 1997, little had been done to develop the building as a Museum since 1976. The total professional staff at that time was 3, a Director, a Deputy Director, and me. As the first person with a background in museology to work in the Museum, I experienced a range of initial overwhelming impressions-- from the complexity of the job from registration to preservation; to the dust that needed to be cleaned off every surface from glassware to thrones; to the exhibitry the needed to be

developed to explain the time and meaning of this building and its contents to the modern world. Over the past 8 years I have encountered problems ranging from how to develop a modern registration system without computers; to preservation of delicate materials such as royal silk clothing or old photographs and negatives without a conservation department. Fortunately, I have had several opportunities for additional training in collections management and textile conservation. My paper will detail the steps and challenges I have encountered in bringing the Palace from abandoned residence to a National Museum in a World Heritage Town.

Channapha Khamvongsa*, Sary Tatpaporn, Bounthanh Phommasathit***, Lee Thorn******

Legacies of War: A Project on the Secret U.S. Bombings in Laos

*New York, NY, Presentation Chair

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The secret U.S. bombings of Laos during the Vietnam War era branded it the most bombed country in all of warfare history. Yet, the bombings and the legacy of Laos, being heavily littered by deadly unexploded ordnances, remain unknown to most of the world today. Unauthorized by Congress, the U.S. bombings killed and injured tens of thousands, and displaced countless Lao from their homes. The illegality of the bombings has led to suggestions that the U.S. military aggression is a crime of war and a violation of human rights.

Thirty-years after the last bombs were dropped, a group of Lao-Americans and supporters are organizing to unearth this obscure chapter in U.S. history. Legacies of War is an education and advocacy project which seeks to raise awareness about the fatal American bombings and to develop strategies for increasing the role of the U.S. in the removal of unexploded ordnances and in the assistance to survivors. Legacies of War will also draw attention to the victims and survivors of the bombings, whose faces, voices and humanity are often forgotten in the discourse of warfare.

The panel will include presentations from the above authors, along with display of historic illustrations drawn 30-years ago in Laos by survivors of the secret American bombings. The panelist will include Lee Thorn, formerly with the U.S. Navy, who loaded cluster bombs on U.S. planes destined for Laos. Mr. Thorn is featured in the film "Bombies," which is scheduled to be screened at the conference. Ms. Bounthan Phommasathit is a survivor of the bombings in Xieng Khoang.

Hyakumura Kimihiko

The "Slippage" Implementation of the Forest Policy by Local Officials: A Case Study of the Protected Areas of Savannakhet Province, Laos

Forest Management, Research Associate, Forest Conservation Project, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, Japan

Recently, the concept of decentralization has been introduced lots of South-east Asian Countries. In the forestry section of Laos, it has been also shown not only the re-organization of the administration system such as power transfer of lower authority, but also policy re-forming such as land and forest allocation program.

An important and progressive part of the forest policy regime in Laos is its land and forest allocation program started in 1996, which contains critical elements that delegate the rights of land and forest use to local people. This study aims to analyze the gap between the initial concept of the program and its actual implementation by local forestry officials and discuss several issues with the program that need addressing in order for it to function more effectively.

A case study was done by conducting interviews, gathering data, and doing field observation in the protected areas of Savannakhet Province, which is in the southern part of the country.

After introduction of the land and forest allocation program in the study village, it appears that several non-fulfillments by local people, i.e. land-use management designations, recognition of boundaries between villages and the conversion of land use from swidden fields to paddy fields can be seen. Local officials have not control these affirmatively. It was shown that the lack of man-power,

insufficient budget for implementation and lack of capacity building by local officials may lead to them. By changing the viewpoint, however, it appears that local forestry officials carry out the “slippage” way for keeping the livelihood of local people. Although local people do not follow the regulation, land-use pressures on the land and forests in the study area are still relatively small because of the local people’s sustainable land- and forest-use practices as well as enough land for cultivation. Therefore, local officials do not need to control them all.

National policies such as land and forest allocation program should be fixed strictly. However, the real land and forest use in village have various ways. Therefore, implementation of the policy by local officials should need the flexibility, which includes “slippage” way.

Grégory Kourilsky* and Vincent Berment**

Towards a Computerization of the Lao Tham System of Writing

* INALCO

** INALCO and GETA-CLIPS (IMAG)

France

Although the subject of under-resourced languages is a problem often taken into consideration, one omits to make the distinction with under-resourced scripts. The Tham script of Laos, used to write Buddhist Texts, is one of the two official writing systems used in Lao P.D.R. (Laos). But if the other one — the so-called “laic” Lao script — is now quite well computerized (numerous fonts, input software, word processors, Unicode area), the Tham script seems to have always been forsaken by modern technologies (typewriters and computers). And this phenomenon does not seem to be being reversed soon since the Unicode Standard does not integrate it in any zone. Understanding the sociological and technical reasons of this neglect, we present an approach to mend it:

- Distinction between two “sub-writing” systems, each working in its own manner:
 - P-Tham (Tham transcribing the Pali language),
 - L-Tham (Tham transcribing the Lao language),
- Comparison between two families of input methods and selection of one of them:
 - Indic,
 - Thai-Lao,
- Proposal of a Unicode chart for the Tham script (presented in the Private Area Zone”).

Then we describe the tools we developed for entering Tham text in a word processor:

- A “Unicode” font called Tham Unicode,
- A Microsoft Word add-in called ThamWord that allows typing “Unicode” Tham.

We finally present another tool that could be developed in the future, that is a collaborative web site aimed at building L-Tham and P-Tham dictionaries online.

Véronique de Lavenere

The mouth organs of Laos : an instrumental constant at the heart of this complex ethnic and cultural diversity

Ethnomusicologue, Docteur en Musique et musicologie de Paris IV Sorbonne, CRLM (Centre de Recherche sur les Langages Musicaux- Paris Sorbonne), France

The khène, Lao mouth organ, is most widely spread instrument and the most representative of Lao culture. The Lao people themselves consider it as their genuine musical heritage although it is found in different forms among various populations stemming from the four major ethnolinguistic families present in Laos. It appears thus as « an instrumental constant at the heart of this complex ethnic and cultural diversity ».

A comparative study of the mouth organ music in one or two populations belonging to each of these four major ethnolinguistic families allows to approach this notion of « constant » from many different angles (musicological, organological and ethnological). Thus one can address questions of the similarity and specificity, of the common musical language, as well as the problems of the evolution of

music and the eventual relations between the specific musical traits and the notion of « historic layer ».

Les orgues à bouche du Laos : une constante instrumentale au cœur d’une multi-ethnicité et d’une diversité culturelle

Résumé:

Le khène, orgue à bouche Lao, est l’instrument le plus populaire et le plus représentatif de cette population. Considéré par les Laos eux-mêmes comme leur véritable patrimoine, il se retrouve cependant sous différentes formes dans plusieurs populations issues des quatre grandes familles ethnolinguistiques présentes au Laos. Il apparaît alors comme « une constante instrumentale au cœur d’une multi-ethnicité et d’une diversité culturelle ».

Une étude comparative de la musique d’orgue à bouche d’une ou deux populations appartenant à chacune de ces quatre grandes familles ethnolinguistiques présentes au Laos, permet d’aborder cette notion de « constante » sous de multiples angles (musicologique, organologique et ethnologique). Se posent alors les questions de similitude et spécificité, de langage musical commun (un système musical de l’orgue à bouche ?) mais aussi le problème de l’évolution des musiques et des rapports éventuels entre les traits musicaux spécifiques et la notion de « couche historique ».

Mai Na M. Lee

Touby Lyfoung and the Emergence of Youthful Leadership Among the Lao Hmong

PhD Candidate, University of Wisconsin—Madison, Wisconsin

In 1939, with the consent of the Hmong clan leaders in the region of Nong Het, the French and Lao authorities in Xieng Khouang named Touby Lyfoung the tasseng of Keng Khoai, presiding over the prestigious position once held by the legendary Kaitong Lo Bliia Yao. Touby was just twenty-one years old. In a society that honored age and experience, Touby’s nomination was unprecedented. His appointment marked the appearance of youthful leaders among the Lao Hmong. This paper examines the elements that made the Hmong accept Touby Lyfoung as a leader despite his tender age. It is argued that literacy and knowledge of multiple languages, both of which made Touby the ideal political broker for the Hmong, opened the door for him to become a paramount Hmong leader. Touby’s rise, albeit seemingly unprecedented, also has roots in Hmong history and society. Touby’s charisma and literate power tied him to prophetic Hmong leaders in the past, making him appealing to the Hmong.

Amey Libman, Bounhong Southavong, Kongmany Sydara**, Somsanith Bouamanivong**, Charlotte Gyllenhaal*, Mary Riley*, Doel Soejarto*.**

The Influence of Cultural Tradition and Geographic Location on the Level of Medicinal Plant Knowledge Held by Various Cultural Groups in Laos

Illinois

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The tradition of using plants as medicine is something that is passed down from generation to generation within a culture. The country of Laos is inhabited by approximately 5 million people who are defined by an extremely varied cultural makeup. The government classifies its citizens into three major cultural groups based mainly on geographic location; the Lao Loum, the Lao Theung, and the Lao Sung, which are then broken down further into 47 ethnic subgroups. From an ethnolinguistic point of view, however, the people of Laos can be categorized into anywhere from 120 to 200 different ethnic subgroups. The tradition of using plants to treat common diseases continues to be widely practiced in Laos due to the fact that many communities have little or no access to the most contemporary and technologically advanced forms of medicine. Different cultural groups may possess different traditions for the usage of plants as medicine. Since 1998, an International Collaborative Biodiversity Group (ICBG) Project, with consortium members in Vietnam and Laos, has been working in collaboration with the Lao

Ministry of Health through its Traditional Medicine Research Center. One question this project is currently investigating is whether geographic location or cultural heritage has the greatest influence on levels of medicinal plant knowledge. Results from this study are expected to demonstrate whether cultures living in similar regions of the country possess similar levels of medicinal plant knowledge or if cultural traditions, rather than geographic location, determine how much medicinal plant knowledge a culture possesses.

Viengsay S. Luangkhot

Media in the Lao PDR: Post Chintanakane Mai Challenges

Director, Lao Service, Radio Free Asia, Washington, D.C.

A communist one-party state since 1975, the Lao PDR does not tolerate any dissension. It views the media as a tool for the Lao communist party, with four main objectives:

1. Disseminate the policies of the party/state
2. Reform people's minds, and old policies
3. Fight the enemies' "propaganda"
4. Attack the opposition.

In 1986, when then president Kaysone Phomvihane adopted the "Chintanakane Mai" or the theory of economic liberalization, the Lao PDR faced new challenges: How to open the country to market economy, while maintaining the lid on the socio-political aspects.

The challenge has increased in intensity during recent years, as the Lao PDR plays a more active role in the regional scene, and depends heavily on international assistance for its development.

Kristin V. Lundberg

Women, Weaving, and Well-Being: The Social Reproduction of Health in Laos

University of Kansas, Kansas

Health is more than a biological phenomenon and demographic indicators. It exists in synergistic processes between biological actions and social constructs. To a large degree, health occurs because of the interactions of people and their commitment to relationships, institutions, and productive means, resources affected by historical, ideological, political, social, and economic forces. The interconnectedness of social determinants and biology coalesce in the concept of a social reproduction of health where the focus is on how health is created, maintained, and reproduced. Women weavers and their families in Laos provided a microcosm by which to study the social reproduction of health because of particular conventional cultural practices connected to the making of textiles within a country striving to prosper and overcome least-developed status.

Marlys A. Macken, Ph.D.

Acoustic Phonetics of Lao Tones

Professor – Department of Linguistics, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Wisconsin

The tones of Tai languages are typically studied within the historical model and method of Gedney (1964), using a basic twenty word word-list for twenty categories that vary by initial consonant, and Proto-Tai tones (*A,*B, and *C) and syllable type (smooth versus checked syllable). Synchronic descriptions of Lao tones posit five or six main tones (in smooth syllables) with considerable differences by dialect and in the nature of each tonal phoneme (e.g. rising, falling, low, high, etc.). This paper presents acoustic phonetic data for the Lao tones in two Lao dialects, the Central Vientiane dialect and the Southern dialect as spoken in Savannakhet. Data include multiple tokens of at least five words per Gedney category, words spoken in both isolation and in sentence frame, and native speaker judgments about phonemic contrast and where tones in particular words are the same or different. Results include (i) cross-dialect similarities in the phonological factoring of the Gedney 20 category proto system; (ii) differences between dialect in number of the tone phonemes (five tone phonemes in the Central dialect (as per Crisfield and Hartmann 2002, Enfield 2000, and Brown 1965, among others), five tone phonemes in the Savannakhet Southern dialect that are different from the five tone phonemes in Vientiane and different from the six tone phonemes for the Southern dialect as spoken further south of Savannakhet in Pakse (a not sur-

prising variation given other reports); (iii) differences in the phonological shape of the tone phonemes; and (iv) within category acoustic differences that provide dramatic evidence of the underlying historical development and the synchronic dialect system from Northern to Southern Laos.

Ven. Dussdi Manisaeng listed name shortened here

Viewing Laos through Buddhism: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

Wat Lao Wichita Monastery, Lao Buddhist Association of Kansas, Kansas

- The meaning and main ideas of Buddhism, and the influences and an important of Buddhism for the people of Laos.
- Buddhism earlier came to the Lane Xang Kingdom. The King Fa Ngum brought over the Politics of period and political authority along with Buddhist moral rule.
- To inform you about Buddhism in primary age, middle and final ages of the Lane Xang Kingdom.
- Buddhism during the Lao Royal Kingdom under the rule of other colonies. Buddhism, Influence, Function and Important to the society of Lao today.
- How is going on in the future about Buddhism in Laos.
- In conclusion: would like to inform you about Lao Sangha ruler law 1998I and the former leaders of the Lao Sangha.

Justin McDaniel, Ph.D.

Buddhist Pedagogy in Laos: Past and Present

Dept. of Religious Studies, University of California, Riverside, California

Laos has been generally seen as a place of little innovation and development in terms of Buddhist texts and textuality. However, many have overlooked the contribution Lao Buddhist intellectuals have made to the development of new genres of Buddhist literature especially in regards to pedagogical texts. This paper will examine some examples of palm-leaf manuscripts used for sermons and monastic instruction and then compare their pedagogical techniques and rhetorical style to modern Lao sermons (both oral and printed) and student guidebooks. The paper claims that there has been great continuity in Lao pedagogy from the sixteenth century to the present despite political, institutional, and economic shifts and disruptions.

Dararat Matarikanon* and Yaowalak Apichatvullop**

Historical Presentations in the Lao Texts: From the Independent to the Socialism Era

*Associate Professor in History, Center for Research on Plurality in the Mekong Region, Khon Kaen University, Thailand

**Assistant Professor in Sociology, Center for Research on Plurality in the Mekong Region, Khon Kaen University, Thailand

This paper presents some preliminary findings from a research on Representations of Lao History in the Lao Texts: From the Period of Independent Era to the Establishment of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (1954 – 1986). The study has confirmed the historical significance of the mentioned period, as it was shown that this was the time for national building after acquiring independence from France. The history of this period was constructed, and presented in chronological style, as influenced by chronological writings of the past. The content of the history mainly focused on the core institutions, namely the state, religion, and kingdom. At the same time, the presentations of history in the period after the political revolution in 1975 was very much influenced by Marxism. During this period, Laos was transformed into a socialist state with the country's name changed from "the Kingdom of Laos" to "the Lao People's Democratic Republic". The study found there had been efforts to build up nationalism through local texts. In other words, the historical reality as presented in the texts were reproduced by the nation – state, and was used as means to socialize the younger generations. Such history was the history of struggles, competition between the dominating powerful foreign countries and the Lao people, and the final liberation of the country. In these presentations of the struggles, the Lao history has provided space to describe the kings in the royal period, common peoples movements, and ethnic group relations. It also made reference to the countries that were involved in the internal struggles after the second World War. For example, many texts allow

some space for the description of Vietnam. Finally, the division of “we” and “they” or “the Nation’s enemies” can be clearly seen in Laotian texts. Thus, the younger Laotians will perceive this distinction of “we” and “they” from their elementary education.

Mr. Khamsith Mekavong,* Miss. Sakuna Thongchanh,
Mr. Paul Vonsouthep,*** Ms. Rathida Phimviengkham******
Aloha Medical Mission to Lao PDR

*President Lao American Organization

**LMT, Positive Touch Healthcare

***Costco Warehouse, Facility Manager

****Accountant, University of Bookstore, Executive Director, Founder and Past President, LAO

This will be a slide presentation telling the story of the Aloha Medical Mission. The members of this panel participated as volunteers in the remote villages of Luang Prabang Province, under the auspices of the Aloha Medical Mission, under the leadership of Dr. Phoumy Bounkeua. Medical volunteers provided medical and surgical care to the underserved people of the Luang Prabang. The group hopes to stimulate interests in recruiting volunteers or donations to the mission, especially from the Lao American community. This is another golden opportunity to share participation in building a philanthropic project that benefits the underserved people of Lao PDR.

Background of Aloha Medical Mission (AMM)

Members of the Philippine Medical Association of Hawaii, wishing to share their success with their home country through volunteer medical missions there, founded the Aloha Medical Mission in 1983. Going well beyond its original focus, AMM has since sent 64 medical missions to underserved communities in Mainland China, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Nepal, Vanuatu, Laos, Cambodia and the Big Island of Hawaii as well as to the Philippines. Some 3,000 volunteer professionals, paying all their own travel and lodging expenses while taking along their own equipment and medical supplies, have treated nearly 200,000 persons to date (June 2004). In addition, they have performed some 8,000 surgical operations without charge. Finally, AMM operates three free clinics—one in Honolulu and two in Bangladesh, which ranks among the poorest countries on earth. AMM assists a third clinic in Bangladesh and supports a free clinic in the Philippines. The economic value of professional services rendered thus far runs into the tens of millions of dollars. At the same time, mission members have spread a sense of aloha (good will) and hope among populations with real cause for despair. More details can be found at www.alohamm.org.

Terry E. Miller

**Performing Isan-Style Lam in Laos: an Expression of
Pan-Laoism or Thai Hegemony**
Kent State University, Ohio

The most typical and traditional form of Lao musical expression is embodied in the term lam, which denotes the singing of poetry, most commonly accompanied by the khaen/khene free-reed mouth organ. Lam is generated from a coordination of lexical tones and typical melodic phrases and is quite unlike the singing of a composed melody, that called hawng. Although Laos and Thailand’s northeastern region (Isan) share a common musical culture, there is great variety in the styles.

In Laos there are at least twelve regional styles, mostly named after specific geographical locations (e.g., lam saravane) while in Isan the classifications are based on genre (e.g., lam klawn or lam ploen). Most forms of lam are in repartee form, that is, the alternation of male and female singers. Typically, Isan singers specialize in one genre, but some are eclectic to the point of being able to sing one or more genres as well. Lao singers in the north tend to sing one regional form alone, but those in the south can normally sing several regional styles. While Isan singers rarely sing any of the Lao styles, most southern Lao singers are adept at performing one or more of the Isan genres.

This situation raises several questions. Why do Lao singers perform Isan styles and Isan singers do not perform Lao styles? When representing Lao music in concert or on recordings, why do Lao singers usually include Isan styles? Do Lao singers fairly represent themselves and their country when they sing Isan styles in such situations? Does the inclusion of Isan styles by Lao singers indicate

a power relationship between Laos and Isan (or Thailand) or is it an expression of pan-Laoism?

Patit Paban Mishra, Ph.D.

Laos in the Vietnam War: The Politics of Escalation, 1962-1973
Professor, Department of History, Sambalpur University, Orissa, India

The landlocked country of Lao People’s Democratic Republic has passed through vicissitudes of history facing problems like foreign invasion, external interference, and ideological conflict. Beginning from First Indochina War (1946-1954), fate of Laos was linked very closely with that of Vietnam. With the escalation of conflict, a solution to problem of Laos was nowhere in sight. The present article makes an endeavour to analyze the events of 1960s and shows how the fate of Laos was subordinated to that of Vietnam.

The Japanese interlude in the Second World War opened new avenues for the Lao elite to chart out a course of independence. The proclamation of Lao Issara (Free Laos) was short-lived and the French began to reconquer its colonial Empire of Indochina. The conciliatory measures of the colonial government were opposed by many. By the Franco-Laotian Convention of July 1949, Laos received internal autonomy only. The Pathet Lao under Souphanouvong, the Communist faction with pro-Vietnamese leanings vociferously opposed the French move. Laos was soon engulfed in the First Indochina War. The three communist factions formed the Viet-Khmer-Lao alliance on 11 March 1951 and fought the First Indochina War. The United States with its containment strategy in cold war period was viewing with concern the threat from a monolithic communist world. The collapse of Dien Bien Phu on 7 May 1954 ended the French colonial rule. The Geneva Conference of 1954 did not solve the problem. The three major strands in Laos; Pathet Lao, neutralists and the rightists became a constant feature of Lao politics. Neither 1957 Vientiane Agreements nor 1962 Geneva Accords give the country any respite from civil war. Laos was going to be embroiled in the Vietnam War and there was no peace in sight unless a solution was there in Vietnam. Laos became a sideshow in Vietnam War.

Both the United States and North Vietnam came into conflict, as they were committed to help their respective allies in Laos, and regarded the other’s action in Laos as harmful to their interest in South Vietnam. An agreement on Laos became contingent upon ending the war in Vietnam. The net result of outside intervention was prolongation of conflict in Laos. The gulf between the internal factions in Laos widened, and the freedom of choice was restricted for the belligerents in Laos. The problem of Laos remained unsolved and there was de facto balkanization of the country. A solution to Lao conflict was in sight after the Geneva accords of 1962. However, the gradual linkage of the country with the Vietnam War made the solution of dependent upon the outcome of conflict in Vietnam. By that time, whole of Indochina became red.

Patit Paban Mishra, Ph.D.

**Indo-Lao Cultural Rapprochement in Ancient and
Medieval Times**

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Beginning from prehistoric times, Indian culture flowed to Southeast Asia in gush and sometimes in tickles until the western hegemony was established in both the regions. India’s relations with Southeast Asia passed through many vicissitudes. In the new millennium, India is trying its best to be a major power in the region with its ‘look east’ policy. A region of ethnic, cultural, linguistic, historical and physical mosaic; external influences like Indian, Chinese, Islamic and European civilizations have left deep imprints on the indigenous culture of Southeast Asian countries. Although it has received transfusion of these cultures adding nuances and shades of meaning through centuries, the region has not lost its idiom. The data from India and Southeast Asia is inseparably linked and a comprehensive study of one is meaningless without a thorough knowledge of the other.

The material and cultural base of autochthonous societies of Southeast Asia was already developed at the time of contact with external forces. On this base was raised a superstructure, the materials of which was largely contributed by the Indians. An interaction between local and external cultures went on. A rapport was established and as acculturation proceeded, elements of Indian culture were absorbed. In course of time, its origin was forgotten. Some of the indigenous beliefs were in harmony with Indian traditions like worship of mountains, rivers

and serpents. In fact, the pre-Aryan India and Southeast Asia shared many cultural traits that were similar. Many facets of life in India and Southeast Asia looked alike. They are intertwined to such a degree that sometimes it becomes difficult to differentiate between them.

The present article would focus on India's cultural contact with Laos in ancient and medieval times with special reference to literature. As far as Indian influence was concerned, Hindu and Buddhist practices came to Laos in the early centuries of present era through Chinese, Khmers and Thais. It is difficult to have an exact idea of the period of beginning of cultural contact between India and Laos due to absence of historical records. According to local tradition, a Buddhist shrine (That) was built in Laos during Asoka's time in about middle of third century before Common Era. The Ourangkharrattan chronicle mentions that That Luang of Vientiane was earlier built by a Buddhist monk Phra Chao Chanthaburi Pasithisak to keep Buddhist relic brought from Rajgir in India.

The prevalence of Hinduism also could be known from the numerous inscriptions found in Laos. On the top of Phou Lokan hill, a Sanskrit inscription mentions the erection of Siva linga by king Mahendravarman. Another inscription of second half of fifth century compares the King Sri-Devanika with Yudhisthira, Indra, and Dhananjay and with Indradymna. In art and architecture, the impact of various Indian styles is clearly marked. The concept is Indian, but in the choice of pattern and other details, indigenous touch is given. The different types of Buddhist icons found in Laos were in conformity with Indian canons.

Sanskrit and Pali made deep inroads into the script, language and literature of Laos. Majority of the Lao inscriptions had been in Sanskrit. The wide prevalence of Sanskrit influenced immensely the classical Lao script, language and literature. Lao script was introduced by King Rama Kampheng of Sukhodaya in 1283 C.E., which marked the common origin of Thai and Lao alphabets. In the same year, Pali scriptures from Sri Lanka were introduced resulting in greater influence of Pali. One type of Lao script known as Toua-Lam is considered sacred and it is used for transcribing Pali. In Lao language, there are about sixty percent of words having Sanskrit and Pali origin. There are many Lao words having Indian origin like: Kumara (Kumara), Pativat (Prativada), Pathet (Pradesh), Prom (Brahma), Pranam (Pranam), Rusi (Rsi), Shanti (Santi), Sri (Sri), Sut (Sutra), Setthi (Sresthi), Youvatnari (Yuvanari), Sabha (Sabha), Champa (Campa), Nang Mekhala (Mani Mekhala), Nang Thorani (Devi Dharani), Praya Nak (Nagaraja) etc. The true classical Lao poetry is formed by translation of Indian poems, and Lao verses follow the metrics of Indian prosody. In folk songs, dramas and theatres, themes from Indian literature are in abundance. The Lao folklore had been influenced by Indian themes. Development of religious song of Buddhist monks encouraged many stories becoming popular in both prose and poetry. In the classical Lao dance, one can find gestures and movements showing strong influence of various Indian dance forms.

The Ramayana is very popular in Laos. The country was earlier known as Lava, the son of Rama. The stories of Rama or Phra Lak Phra Lam with its fundamental human value and social idea has contributed to the cultural life of people. The Lao have adopted the stories of Ramayana as if it had happened in Laos. Names, titles and geographical settings were given local colour. The majority of Lao stories were derived from the Pancatantra. It was translated into Lao language by Phra Samgharaja Vixula Mahaviharathipati in 1507 C.E. of Wat Vixula Mahavihan. The Pancatantra stories written by Visnu Sarma of Orissa became very popular in Laos. The Lao version consisted of five Pakon (Prakarana); Nanda, Manduka, Pisaca, Sakuna and Samgha.

Indian culture was diffused through the autochthonous societies of Laos and other areas of Southeast Asia, whose material base was of such a standard that it could assimilate elements of that culture. The people of the region had knowledge of metal industry, long-established contact with outside world, acquaintance with marine technology and a developed agriculture. An attempt to assign greater role either to India or to Southeast Asia would be futile. Moreover, giving importance to terminologies like Indic, Indianization, Classical or Indigenization would result into semantic controversy. The whole process of Indian cultural influence was interaction between culture of India and Southeast Asia.

Priwan Nanongkham

Khaen Repertoires: The Developments of Lao Traditional Music in Northeast Thailand

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The khaen, a bamboo free-reed mouth organ is the predominant musical instru-

ment among Lao people in mainland Southeast Asia. There is limited evidence of its origin but it appears to have been invented and developed over thousands of years in Lao culture. Due perhaps to its long history, the khaen is considered, among the other Lao instruments to have the richest musical literature. In terms of instrumental music, the music of the khaen is considered the "mother" of the Lao music. Its repertoires are the basis of the other Lao musical instruments. Most of all, the khaen is a musical symbol of both Lao people in the Isan region (Northeast Thailand) and modern-day Laos.

Khaen music is based on aural tradition. The repertoire is called lai, meaning pieces of music, modes, and keys, which can be classified into several categories. However, the highest art of the khaen repertoire is improvisation based on a certain scale and modes. Khaen music is based on a five-tone collection (pentatonic scale) which can be divided into two kinds of modes: thang sun and thang yao according to its diatonic tuning system. Each mode can be played in three different keys. As a result, there are six sets of five-tone paths that can be played on the khaen. The improvisation on these six paths comprises the primary repertoires of khaen music. The last developmental stage of indigenous khaen music is considered to have occurred during the second and third quarters of the twentieth century. The six primary repertoires reached the pinnacle of high technique and virtuosity as well as improvisation. They became the most serious listening pieces before the decline of Lao traditional music due to the impact of westernization and mass media during the last quarter of the twentieth century.

Lao people sing lam or khup-lam (vocal musics) and play the khaen in keeping with the roots of their musical heritage. Besides functioning as informal individual instrument, the play khaen also accompanies the more formal vocal musics. The development of khaen music is based on these two functions. As in most cultures in the world, vocal musics played a more significant role prior to the rise of instrumental music. In Lao culture the khup-lam accompaniment is the most influential music in the development of the khaen repertoires.

In northeast Thailand after World War II, a developing vocal genre began to reach its popularity. Influenced by a new-found capitalism, the lam klawn and other Isan traditional genres became "professions." Khaen music, as an accompaniment of the lam klawn also reached the peak of its indigenous development as well before westernization impacted these traditional musics in the late twentieth century.

This paper will discuss the structure of khaen music and its indigenous development of both instrumental and vocal repertoires from the early to the final stages of its development. The correlation between the roles, status and repertoires of the instrument and changing social conditions across time will be examined as well.

Kingsavanh Pathammavong

Cultural Heritage of the Lost Kingdom in the United States:

The History of Laotian People in America

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People from Asia and the Pacific region came to the United States at different times, by different routes, and for different reasons. But beyond these differences, immigrants and refugees alike share the same experiences of hardship and find great reward in their move to a new land. This is certainly true of the Laotian people who have relocated to America for the past 30 years.

"Cultural Heritage of the Lost Kingdom and the United States," is an overview of the Lao-American history. To better understand whom the Lao people are we need to explore from where their ancestors came? What happened to their society before they reached the shores of the United States of America? And how the Lao people assimilated into the American society today. To comprehend the answers to these questions, it is very crucial that their social, cultural and political history be broken down into seven periods.

1. The migration from southern China
2. The establishment of Lan Xang Kingdom
3. The Siam annexation (1778-1893)
4. The French colonization (1893-1954)
5. The Last Kingdom of the Lao People (1954-1975)
6. The Darkest Page in Lao History, 1975
7. The establishment of the Lao-American community in the U.S. (1953 to present)

Until the twenty-first century, Laos had been numbered among the undeveloped countries of the world. Democracy and sovereignty have remained in

their infancy. In schools and society as a whole, the arts, music, literature and humanities curricula had not been well developed. Even today, the Lao people at home and abroad continue to emphasize their history in ceremonies, rituals, music, dance, cuisine and the other forms of culture rather than researching and documenting these aspects of the Laotian cultural heritage. This practice has created frustration in the new generations of Laotians who want to understand the history of their ancestors.

Beyond the references, parts of the information contained in this paper have been selected from my previous research projects. Over one hundred Lao-American community members across the country were interviewed. Since then, many of them are now deceased and only their voices and photographs are left behind. The memories of my childhood experiences in the Kingdom of Laos, as a foreign student in the United States who witnessed the anti-Indochina War efforts, as a refugee resettlement officer, as a Lao cultural presenter, as an artist and a Lao Cultural Consultant to the Smithsonian Institution, and other academic institutions also provide substantial information.

Thongkhoun T. Pathana

Transformation of the Buddhist language into Lao-Modern architecture. What is Laotian Modern Architecture?

President, Laotian Community Center of RI, Inc., Rhode Island

I salute every Chetiya (shrine) that may stand in any place the bodily relics, the Great Bodhi and all images of the Buddha." (Ven. Dhammananda 67)

The focus of this research and studies is to investigate, "Laotian Buddhist practice in terms of the Buddhist religious iconography and architectural form". The iconographic expression is represented in its themes, languages, metaphors, and spiritual forms as seen through speculation and interpretation.

Although the language of Buddhist's Buddhology does not change, the collaboration of its society and cultures are always impermanent in both time and place. Symbols and themes, in terms of architecture, are not redefined but interpreted and adapted within the Buddhist religious expression. Its re-representation and reinterpretation is expected to be found in the contemporary Buddhist temple.

The selection of site must reflect some specific elements of the Buddhist religion in terms of culture, ritual, ceremony, festival, tradition, physical orientation, and the sacred building where the faith is practiced. The Buddhist cosmology of the site and the Buddhist monasteries are designed to face a body of water towards the east (a representation of awakening). The integration of water themes play a major role in cosmological imagery.* These elements form their own language through iconographic representation of imagery in Buddhist religious monastery and through its function within the ritual activities in the temple. The issue of the site selection is unlike the traditional or Laotian's mythology. The Buddhist Temple in American cities has been formed upon its own culture and history, removed from Laotian Buddhist religion. The so-called "congregation and contemplation" is related to both the American city and its' way of life. These investigations will allow me to determine the most suitable site for the focal point of the Laotian Buddhist Temple Center.

The program has been divided into three categories, reflecting three realms or aspects of Buddhist religious iconography and the Ultimate Goal of Buddha Dharma (the three worlds). The three primary Buddhist structures are: first, the various facilities needed to sustain the life of the monastery (Kuti or viharas); second, the stupa or pagoda (the Great Bodhi Tree); third, the imagery of Buddha, known as the lotus. These elements concerned with the contemporary issues can be explored through the public, private, suburban, ritualistic levels of the sanctuary and shrine. Whatever the form of the structure, the Buddhist worship involves circumambulation, a custom easily followed in the context of a freestanding stupa.

The vehicle of the Lao architecture studies is to search for the meanings in one's culture and in particular, one's religious needs and the historic background in terms of the symbols, images and metaphors that it represents. In regards to the cave, sculptures, arts and other Laotian Buddhist elements, they begin to generate the formal strategy in the practice. This allows the architectural interpretation to integrate both organization and programmatic elements within the condition of the city and becoming an ideal within a contemporary society. Can a speculation of 'shrine or chatiya' be used theoretically? It represents both icon of the temple and the image of Buddha, what defines the complex relationship between icon and building? This leads to the investigation of the city's history, demographic and culture identity.

Fongsamuth Phengphaengsy*

Sustainable Irrigation Project in Lao PDR: Effective Management of Pump Irrigation Projects in Mekong River and its Tributaries

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Irrigation is the major agricultural technique applied for paddy cultivation due to there is no rainfall in dry season. Therefore, government invested a lot of money in developing the irrigation sector in order to increase rice production and stable self-sufficiency. In particular, expanding the dry-season irrigated agriculture areas have been heavily promoted during 1996-2000. Government initiated a radical measure to increase rice production by distributing more than 8,000 pump units along Mekong River and its tributaries in 3 main plains of Vientiane, Savannakhet and Khammuan Provinces. This project boosted the paddy production remarkably from 1.4 million tones in 1996 to 2.2 million tones in 2000, and then government declared rice self-sufficiency in this year.

Despite their apparent attractiveness in terms of potential productivity, pumping irrigation schemes become to have several problems. Most schemes have poor performance and operate below capacity due to the lack of lesson on proper management. After 2000, farmers in pump scheme have refused growing rice in dry season. As a result, dry-season planted area has been gradually decreasing from 102,000 ha in 2001 to 84,000 ha in 2002 and 81,000 ha in 2003. This left from target of 120,000 ha in 2003. Finally, many schemes had largely become totally disillusioned and abandon. Therefore, pumping project assessment will be needed to identify the problems and trial for solution in order to improve and sustain the projects. The study was conducted in 3 pump projects: Kao Leo 2 pumping irrigation project located at Mekong River in Vientiane Municipality, Pak Khagnoung pump project at Num Ngum River in Vientiane province and Ton Hen pump project at Se-Bangfai River in Savannakhet province. Farm households of 40% in each scheme were interviewed concerning their dissatisfaction of using pump irrigation scheme for dry season cultivation. The study classifies project problems and particularly evaluates irrigation facilities, water distribution issue, actual planted areas, water fee collection and Water User Group.

The result showed that decreasing percentage of water fee collection, increasing electricity charge, weakness of Water User Group and poor condition of irrigation facilities - canals, pumps and water gates - are the main factors, resulting to projects become problems. Kao Leo 2 project has serious performance. Only 25% of total project areas were cultivated. Water irrigation fee could be collected only 25% of total number of farmers. This was due to farmers misunderstanding of their responsibility to the irrigation system and also irrigation system itself was incomplete in function properly with poor water distribution. More than 80% of interview farmers complained water was not enough for their cultivation. The study concludes that Irrigation water fee is the key component in order to maintain scheme operating well. Without this fee, irrigation facilities are unable to maintain and then water supply is poorly distributed. Water User Group also plays an important key as they suppose to be responsible for water distribution and encourage member to become understand of their responsibilities for irrigation system.

Tutu Phimviengkham

Awakening Ancient Voices of Sang Sin Xai through Radio

Gokhokho Publishing, Inc., Washington, DC

The people of Laos have a strong oral tradition that is quickly disappearing in the modern era, taking with it the oral rendition of such epic poems like Sang Sin Xai, Vetsantrasadok (Phravetsandon), Xiang Mieng and others. Ironically, the explosion of modern media may be attributed to the extinction of oral transmission of knowledge and stories; however, such media also has the power to recreate, reinvent and preserve the art of storytelling. This paper will demonstrate how an ancient epic poem like Sang Sin Xai can be recreated with media production for the young and old to enjoy.

Sianong Phomkong

Foreign direct investment in Lao PDR: Promotion Strategies

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Historical Context

Since the Lao People's Democratic Republic was established on December 2, 1975, the Lao government has been taking various actions aiming to develop the country. These actions culminated when the government launched the New Economic Mechanism (NEM) in 1986, moving from a centrally planned economy to a market-oriented economy. A large number of state-owned enterprises became privatized.

Implementing the NEM, the Lao government recognizes that foreign direct investment (FDI) - with its capital, technology, and expertise - can play a crucial role in the country's economic development. To attract more FDI, however, the government tends to emphasize only the liberalization of laws and regulations.

Current Problems

The government decided to open the country for FDI in 1988. It enacted numerous laws and decrees directly and indirectly governing FDI, yet it has not been able to ensure the effectiveness of these instruments. Furthermore, the Lao Government has not marketed the country as a desirable investment destination to potential foreign investors.

Competition among host countries is severe. Laos's neighboring countries, namely Vietnam, Myanmar and China, are also emerging countries. These countries have advantages over Laos in terms of labor forces, domestic markets, sea ports, and infrastructure for promoted investments. These countries are campaigning hard for FDI. Furthermore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, and other developing countries in Southeast Asia are also doing their best to keep the investments they have. Other countries worldwide are also encouraging FDI.

Recommendations

- In order to attract good quality FDI, that will bring the greatest benefit to the country, the Lao Government must change its promotion strategies. The government needs to have a clear understanding of
 - what FDI is needed
 - why the country needs FDI
 - profitable sectors
 - target investors
- Furthermore, the country should be ready for the investments it aims to attract. An image should be created for the country to inspire Laotians and foreign investors.
- Lastly, the Government should launch aggressive FDI promotion campaigns inside the country and abroad.

Only by following these strategies will Laos succeed in attracting FDI and gain more benefits from those investments.

Alan Potkin*, Mr. Chaleunxay Phommavongsa,** and Catherine Raymond**

Linking the Lao Loum Diaspora in Northern Illinois with Cultural Conservation Practice in Vientiane

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As increasing wealth is generated within the Lao PDR, and also flows there from outside, the traditional meritorious reconstruction of Buddhist Vats and sacred sites has been accelerating everywhere around Vientiane. The aggrandizement of so many temples, to the delight so many people in the bans, has clearly sometimes come at a cost of disposing of undervalued assets —not all of them material. The uniquely Lao “cultural capital” recently lost ranges from the superb Phralak Phralam frescoes demolished with the old Vat Oup Mong vihaan, to an obscure religious cult necessarily weakened by the proud refurbishing of Vat Chan on the Old City waterfront: formerly the stark and austere royal seat for propitiating Lord Sikhottabang's well-deserved curse.

The conservation of Vat Sisaket —Vientiane's sole religious monument in more-or-less its original condition— is a special case in that the local abbot and the ban cannot rehabilitate the cloistered museum complex on their own initiative: a mixed blessing, as the surrounding improvements are plentiful. But the will and the resources to reverse officially Sisaket's appallingly rapid deterioration are barely mobilized.

Existing Lao PDR legislation and decrees on archaeological and historical preservation require formal authorization by the Ministry of Information and Culture prior to the demolition or the rebuilding of major structures older than fifty years. In principle, the decisions on what to protect and why, draw upon specialized knowledge —inside and outside the government— of art and aesthetics; of history and religion; and of touristic development and practical conservatorship. How effective are these laws in actuality, how well-used is the available expertise, and how can the constituencies for cultural preservation be mobilized and strengthened?

We could now only guess the significance of remittances from overseas Lao in the redevelopment of temple compounds in the mother country, especially when new vats are springing up across the Lao loum diaspora. As Lao immigrants in North America both resist and embrace assimilation****, what are their views on the transformation of the Buddhist cultural landscape back in Vientiane? Are some Lao becoming more sentimental, more preservationist towards previously-devaluated relics of “underdevelopment”?

During the weeks before the FICLS, in cooperation with the Lao loum communities of Burlington, Elgin, and Rockford IL USA we will have installed interpretive materials and conducted workshops in one or more nearby vats, and will present our methodology and findings to this Conference.

**** “The process in which one group takes on the cultural and other traits of a larger group”, (Microsoft Word dictionary).

Elisabeth Preisig

Rice, Women and Rituals

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The paper explores the role of Kmhmu' women in livelihood, more precisely, the role in their rice culture. The careful study of the rice culture of the Kmhmu' reveals an intimate relationship between rice and women. The ritual role of women in Kmhmu' rice culture demonstrates the independence and interdependence of both sexes in the Kmhmu' family and society, in the face of natural, and supernatural powers.

Planning and development, or change, without the careful weighing of the impact on this equilibrium could have a destabilizing effect on their society and break down patterns of responsibility and authority, thus eroding social structure and order.

Mountain rice fields cannot be done without reinforcement and help from others, so people working together well form field clusters and do their fields in close cooperation, helping each other out throughout the planting cycle. Apart from physical strength rice as well as rice growers need some supernatural protection and blessing.

While it is the men who perform most rituals and prayers in the life cycle of people, and in connection with the ancestors, women share responsibility in field rituals. In fact, some rituals in the fields even must be performed by a woman. Following this lead conducts to most interesting results for the understanding of Kmhmu' social life and culture.

Boike Rehbein, Ph.D.

Lao Social Structure

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The tendencies of globalization start to reach the hinterland of the global periphery, to which the small country of Laos certainly belongs. What do the concomitant changes mean for the country's social structure? To answer this question, the paper draws on the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu. Social structure is conceived of as a hierarchy of “fields”, the structure of which is determined by the social agents' resources or “capital”. Globalization can be understood as a global dif-

ferentiation of fields leading to integration as well as diversification. From this perspective, Lao social structure forms a system in itself and part of regional and global structures. To analyze current changes in Lao social structure, the evolution of social fields has to be understood in global and local terms. The agents' position within the structure depends on the value of their social capital on the emerging fields in Lao society. Two dimensions have to be added to Bourdieu's concept. First, social structure cannot be reduced to differences in capital alone but is shaped by cultural patterns of action as well. Second, historical differences and patterns still persist (somewhat covertly). The elements of these dimensions form a specific configuration, which might be called a socio-cultural structure. In Laos, we can determine the emergence of two main fields (economic and political) – as in Western countries. On these fields, agents adhere to cultures of patrimonialism (Ernst Boesch), subsistence ethics (James Scott), occasionalism and rationalism (Max Weber), while differing in their possibilities of action. These are changing due to global, regional, and local tendencies. The paper is to present the most important aspects of the relation between resources, current tendencies and cultures on the economic and political fields.

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The Lao Traditional Medicine Mapping Project (Lao TMMP) Illinois

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Because research involving the use of traditional knowledge and access to genetic resources triggers intellectual property concerns, the UIC ICBG has established the Lao Traditional Medicine Mapping Project (Lao TMMP) in order to organize, catalogue, and ultimately recognize and protect the intellectual property embedded in the knowledge and practices used by traditional healers in Lao traditional medicine. This paper will: (1) outline the objectives the Lao TMMP serves to meet; (2) briefly discuss the issues involved in the intellectual property protection of traditional knowledge; (3) discuss the formal and informal means to be used to protect Lao traditional medicinal knowledge. The overall goal of the Lao TMMP is to recognize the value of, protect, and promote traditional medicine in Laos, and to assist the TMRC its mission to encourage traditional medicine use among the Lao population, especially in rural areas.

William G. Robichaud

Testing assumptions: the recent history of forest cover in Nakai-Nam Theun National Protected Area, Khammouan and Bolikhamxay Provinces

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Nakai-Nam Theun National Protected Area (NNT NPA), in the Annamite Mountains of central Laos, is the largest nature reserve in Laos or Vietnam. It has witnessed a flurry of management planning in recent years, largely as precondition for the World Bank's consideration of support for the nearby Nam Theun 2 dam. A pillar of NNT's management planning - and which permeates most protected area planning in Laos - has been that swidden agriculture is the principal threat to the area's forest cover, and thus interventions in indigenous agricultural systems the first priority of management. However, in NNT the magnitude of the swidden 'problem' is an untested assumption, since there has never been an analysis of trends in forest cover in the reserve. This study attempted to fill that gap using, as a first step, analyses of decades-long series of topographic maps and Landsat satellite imagery.

Results show that there was probably a significant decline in forest cover in NNT from the mid-1960s to the early 1980s, but that in the last two decades forest cover has been stable, and perhaps increased slightly. But even in the earlier pe-

riod of loss, the broad area over which local residents cleared fields has not grown - what loss occurred was largely a process of infilling and intensification within the boundaries of a forest/swidden mosaic, rather than expansion outward into untrammelled areas of the reserve. Reasons for this probably include cultural stability and conservatism, and argue for a more conservative management approach.

Yokoyama Satoshi, Ph.D.

The Trade Flow of Agro-forest Products and Commodities in Northern Mountainous Region of Laos

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This study focuses on the mountainous region of Ngoi district in Luang Phabang province, where three ethnic groups, the Lao, the Khmu and the Hmong, reside in the same area. In this area, people have gathered forest products for export since the 1990s. There is a long history of forest product gathering in northern Laos. The indigenous peoples, especially Khmu people, have actively gathered benzoin and cardamom for centuries. In the past, governmental peddlers had sold merchandise and purchased agro-forest products from mountain people. After the Lao version of Perestroika or "Chintanakan Mai" in 1986, privately managed general stores and periodic markets appeared on the Ou riverside.

In an ethnic Lao village along the Ou river, seven households have opened general stores since 1985, and by 2003 a total of 15 households were running general stores. These merchants engage in both commodity sales and agro-forest products trading. After the middle 1990s, agro-forest traders appeared in Khmu and Hmong settlements in this mountainous region in addition to the Lao village. The periodic markets are held once every 10 days. Many market stalls and traders come from outside the study area, and mountain people also walk down to the market place from the mountainous area carrying forest products over their shoulders.

Forest products, except for benzoin and cardamom that are traded in this region are not traditional species as food or medicine but new species exported to China after the 1990s. What amazes us is that gatherers and traders do not know the intended use of new forest products in China, that is, local people have little interest in these species.

The Thailand border at Houay Xai and the Chinese border at Boten in northern Laos, which were closed to ordinary people due to governmental policy, were re-opened in the early of 1990s. Afterwards, some Chinese traders directly came to northern Laos by truck to purchase these forest products. Additionally, a number of Chinese merchants opened stalls dealing in electrical products and tools at these periodic markets. The flow of people, goods and information seen after "Chintanakan Mai" have strongly influenced the occupational structure of these mountain peoples.

Souksomboun Sayasithsena

Contemporary Lao Writing

Foreign Service Institute, US Department of State, Washington, D.C.

Lao writing evolved through times, from pure Pali to modified Pali-Lao. This occurred in the Wat or temple schools. In this presentation I will focus on the period of from late 1950's until present. Discussion will cover variety of ways of how people conceptualize the Lao writing system. These three major writings: from the sound of words; the Royal Decree No. 10, in late 1950's which included a set of rules; and a textbook by Mr. Phoumi Vongvichit, after 1975 which simplified each syllable spelling to a vowel and initial consonant with or without final. Some points on Lao alphabet charts will be mentioned: the new "sara la" and the omission of "Ror". And what happened since.

I will also discuss the extend to which the spelling of Lao words varies? This includes Lao-Nork vs. Lao-Nai spellings. Is it possible for the readers to instantly distinguish between the two? What is the reaction of readers to the two systems?

State-of-the art texts – the use of variety of Lao fonts in computers has made a big difference. Some examples will be presented to illustrate how typists tried to cope with columns and justified texts. I will also talk about some difficulties my Lao students have encountered when they use Lao-English dictionaries?

Punctuation is another issue that I will discuss. Some samples will accompany points of discussion.

Some grammar points will be discussed along with some features of Lao-way of speaking, such as stressing, repeating of words, and some Tong Toi.

Thongsa Sayavongkhamdy

Recent Archaeological Research in Lao PDR

Ph.D.Candidate, Archaeology and Anthropology, Australian National University, Australia

My presentation will try to bring information to these three questions:

1. How the archaeological research is organised in Lao PDR?
2. What is the recent archaeological research?
3. What are the perspectives of archaeological research in Lao PDR?

1. For the first question, the mandate of the Department of Museums and Archaeology (DMA), Ministry of Information and Culture (MIC) will be briefly presented. The DMA is the leading governmental organization that deals with four inter-related issues: 1. Creation and development of museums; 2. Protection of national antiquities; 3. Conservation of national cultural heritage and 4. the archaeological research. Policy, legislation, organization and programmes will be briefed.

2. The recent archaeological research will briefly present the results from survey and excavation that have been conducted at these sites: 1. Tam Hua Pu (LPB Province), Tam Nang An (LPB Prov), Plain of Jars (Xieng Khuang Prov), Lao Pako (Vientiane Prov), Megalithic stones of Muong Hua Muong (Hua Pan Prov), Tam Hang (Hua Pan Prov), Pu Bia (Saysomboun Special Zone), Xepon (Savannakhet Prov) and Phe Phen of Nam Theun 2 Hydroelectric Project (Khammuane and Bolikhamsay Prov).

3. The concerns for the future are of double fold: firstly the national capacity building and lastly the current trends of thematic research, in particular the matters that would bring light to the birth of an agriculturalist society in Southeast Asia. This theme is related to the peopling of the region and more specifically the migrational movements of the human expansion within the Asian continent.

Loes Schenk-Sandbergen Ph.D

Gender, Land Rights and Culture in Laos: A Study in Vientiane, Districts, Villages and Households

Department Sociology/Anthropology, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Laos is going through a rural transition phase of transforming co-operative, communal and traditional land tenure ship to individual land 'ownership' and use. In provinces and districts large-scale land surveys were carried out in 1994 and 1995 in order to issue Land Certificates and Land Tax Bills.

The data we (my counterparts and I) collected in 1994 on these operation, in particular in the rice-growing villages along the Mekong, raised our profound concern as we found that the whole approach and practice was very male-dominant. As a result of a combination of gender aspects, it was found that although land is inherited by women, the name put in land documents was mostly in the name of 'the head of the household': for the majority the men. We warned that the largest threat for the undermining of the relatively high status of the majority of Lao women might be located in the sphere of 'land legislation'. We insisted that awareness raising and action should be taken immediately to safeguard the land rights of women in Laos and to prevent drastic negative effects at all levels of the society. We envisaged that with the male-dominated land registration women may lose, as experience in other Third World countries shows, one of the most basic and vital power resources: the land they have inherited from their parents. This in view of the fact that Laos is one of the very few countries left in the world in which bi-lineal descent and kinship, matrilineal post marriage residence-, and matrilineal inheritance patterns still exist for a large group of women.

As a preparation on the adjudication of land 'ownership' and land use in four provinces, a small Pilot Land Title Project was launched in 1996-1997 in two districts in Vientiane Municipality and in districts of the capitals of four provinces: Vientiane, Luang Prabang, Savannakhet, and Champasak, and in Vientiane Prefecture. With the above considerations in mind, and within the context of the pilot phase, the Australian Agency for International Development and the World Bank agreed that a study on 'Land, Gender and Social Issues' would be useful to examine multi ethnic, and socio cultural aspects related to land titling. We conducted the study in 1997 in a participatory way to involve the implementing responsible staff of the Ministry of Land and Housing, the Lao Women's Union and NGO members. In total 10 districts were selected in Vientiane Municipality and in the four provinces of the pilot land titling and in each district two villages. In each village women from eight households were interviewed. Interviews were conducted with district- and village heads and authorities, with women's focus groups at the village level (total 221 respondents) and women at the household level (160). My

paper will show the participatory methodology, theoretical concepts and findings of the study. Moreover, we searched for evidence to explore if the world-wide 'defeat' of women-friendly societies is also happening in Laos, or, if there are indications for a mild process of Lao Lumisation.

Anouvong Sethathirath IV

Looking From the Past into the Future of Lan Xang

Independent Researcher, North Carolina

During the war with Rama III of Siam, King Sethathirath III instructed his surviving son, Prince Rajsavong, to carry on the Sethathirath line and to guard the royal treasures. As his father's command, Prince Ratsavong married his cousin, begot a son whom he name "Syharath" and continued the struggle for the autonomy of Laos. One hundred seventy six years after the war of 1827-1829, his descendents are still working to help Laotians come to term with their history and to work with neighboring countries for the greater good of the nation of Laos.

The presentation will touch on four main areas: (1) the Buddhist White Robed Monks and the Sethathirath, (2) The Sethathirath Royal Treasures, (3) Lao-Issara and my Grandfather, and (4) the Future of Laos.

Bruce P. Shoemaker and Ian G. Baird*

Aiding or Abetting? Village Relocation and International Donors in the Lao PDR

A number of programs and policies currently in place in the Lao PDR are promoting the internal resettlement of mostly indigenous ethnic communities from the more remote highlands to lowland areas and along roads. These ongoing initiatives—including village consolidation and relocation, and the establishment of "focal zones"—are often linked to policies calling for the rapid elimination of swidden agriculture and opium cultivation, and the concentration of rural populations. International donors—bilateral and multilateral agencies as well as NGOs—have played a key role in facilitating these initiatives—sometimes intentionally and other times with little understanding of the issues or the implications of their support.

There is increasing evidence —throughout the Lao PDR—that internal resettlement is having devastating impacts on the livelihoods and well-being of upland people and communities. While usually undertaken in the name of "poverty alleviation", these initiatives often, in fact, contribute to long-term poverty, environmental degradation, cultural alienation, and increasing social conflicts. The serious impacts of internal resettlement in Laos were first reported in a 1997 UNESCO/OSTROM study which detailed mortality rates of up to 30% in upland communities following poorly implemented relocations. Since then, evidence has continued to mount of the negative consequences of internal resettlement. Both official Lao government documents and a series of more recent studies in many parts of the country have confirmed many of these same severe impacts.

These studies and reports have affected a number of international donors—some now say they will not knowingly support internal relocation and will encourage local government agencies to support more appropriate development in existing upland communities. This in turn has had some impact on government agencies. However, other donors claim to distinguish between "voluntary" resettlement (which they will support) and "involuntary" resettlement (which they claim not to support).

Recent research calls into question this whole framework. Much of what is classified as voluntary resettlement is, in reality, not villager-initiated. Most donors lack the capacity to adequately assess what is voluntary and what is not. Others remain oblivious or uninterested in the issue. Even when it is brought to their attention, some agencies appear more concerned about program continuation and supporting other objectives sought by some western countries—such as an end to opium cultivation. Are these agencies in reality facilitating violations of the basic rights of impacted communities through their support for internal resettlement?

In order to avoid this possibility, aid groups need to take a much more analytical, pro-active and "preventive" approach to their rural development work in Laos. Some recommendations for doing this are provided, while acknowledging that local circumstances are likely to dictate somewhat varying approaches in different areas.

* Bruce Shoemaker is an independent researcher based in Minneapolis who previously worked in Laos for almost eight years. Ian Baird is a graduate student at the University of British Columbia and has worked in Laos for many years. Both speak Lao, Baird also speaks Brao, an important ethnic language of southern Laos.

Khampha Sidavong*, Ph.D.
The Lao Language and Lao People
Manchester, Connecticut

According to the <http://countrystudies.us/laos> and Maha Sila Viravong's documentation on the early history of Laos: In the seventh century, a northwesterly migration of Tais from their region of origin in northwestern Tonkin brought to the Ta-li region in what is present-day Yunnan, China, a successor state to the Ai Lao kingdom. This new kingdom, Nan-Chao, expanded its power by controlling major trading routes. Culturally, this polytechnic, hierarchical, and militarized state was to have a great influence on later societies in Indochina, transmitting the Tantric (Hindu Sanskrit, Pali) Buddhism of Bengal to Laos, Thailand, the Shan state, and possible Cambodia, the political ideology of the maharaja (protector of Buddhism). Both findings are similar to each other but no one yet can determine how our ancestors acquired the ability to speak.

The linguistic origin of the Lao language is divided into two periods.

1. The first Linguistic period have its roots in the Buddhism script which used the Pali and Sanskrit languages and originated in India about two thousand five hundred forty eight years and seven months ago (2,549 years since Buddha's passing), during the reign of King Asoka Maharaza. The King reformed the Buddhism official doctrine and language. After the reform, the King appointed two monks: Phra Sona and Phra Outhara their task was to spread the Buddhism Doctrine throughout central and South East Asia which makes up the Laos territory in Nongsae and current Laos or Souvannaphom pateth.

2. The second Lao Linguistic period have its origins in the Cambodian Buddhism which also used Pali and Sanskrit languages, during the reign of King Fagnum Maharaz who returned to Laos establishing the Lanexang kingdom in 1349.

The Laotian Language Elite Committee of the Royal Lao Government from 1953-1975 passed solution order # 10 to change the original 41 characters to 27 and created new 6 compound characters.

The current Lao PDR government reduced the original Lao alphabet from 27 characters to 26 characters. The full report is included on the hand out.

The first Lao Lanexang Kingdom Dictionary was written in June 7, 2004 and completed on December 31, 2004. This Dictionary will contain the meaning and root.

President: New England Arch, Inc. and Sidavong and Associates

Founder: "The Free International Economic Trade Zone" between border of Laos, Thailand and Cambodia namely "The Emerald Triangle Project"

Kitirat Sihabun

The Laos historiography in the Socialist State Period of the Lao People's Democratic Republic

Ph.D. Candidate, Mahasarakham University, Mahasarakham, Thailand

The Lao People's Revolutionary Party under Kaysone Pomvihan, the great leader of Laos, pursued the power struggle with the government in Vientiane, successfully ousting the government and establishing the new regime under the Lao People's Revolutionary Party on 23, August, 1975.

On the first of December, 1975, representatives of Lao people opened the grand meeting in Vientiane in which the throne abdication by the monarch, Sri Sawangwatana, was officially approved.

Dissolution of the national ad hoc coalition government, official acceptance of the national flag, the national anthem and the formation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic were formally declared and recognised. Chao Supanuvong was installed as the nation's chair man. Kaysone Pomvihan was the prime minister of the new government. The incident above mentioned was the critical turning point in the Lao history. The administrative system under the monarchy which had been held for thousands of years came to an end.

Laos after the 1975 Revolution with the Lao People's Revolutionary Party as the supreme body saw many changes in politics, economy, society and culture. It also witnessed its history being rewritten.

The present work deals with what content and concept the new Lao history wants to present. It also explores in what context the said history was written and for what purpose the history was made.

Suksavang Simana
The Chao Ai- Chao Noong Legend and Tradition

Director and Co-Founder, "Association for Research Development", Lao PDR

This paper focuses on the tradition of 'Chao Ai, - Chao Noong' as it existed between the Phia Kasak as 'Chao Ai' (older Prince), and the King of Luang Prabang as the 'Chao Noong' (younger Prince), and sheds light on the ritual relationship that existed between them.

The tradition of the two unequal Prince-brothers, based on a legend about two brothers, reflects the real life and social reality of the Kmhmu' Kasak people as the older ones and the Lao as the younger ones.

The Phia Kasak and the King both lived together in Luang Prabang in an unequal status relationship. The elder of the two princes was the slave and servant of the younger. Many people today are not familiar with the legend, the ritual, or its social background.

The older of the two Prince-brothers, the Phia Kasak, had two ritual functions: 1. to feed the spirits of the Meuang, (area) and 2. to send the fruit of longevity to the King as a blessing.

As reward he earned just scoldings of the younger brother (the King) and would be chased away with a curse.

The topic of Chao Ai, Chao Noong also touches on the unequal status of the indigenous Kmhmu' in comparison with the Lao, which has existed in Laos in times past, with the Lao holding the power, and exploiting the Kmhmu' population that was lacking rights and had no power.

Ven. Phramaha Bounkong Singsouvanh

How does Buddhism help the Community?

President, Laotian-American Buddhist Monks Organization in America, Inc., Hawaii

The background of how Buddhism spread throughout South East Asia and North America Continent.

What are the strategic areas to act in the process of making Buddhism widely known to the younger Lao-American generation?

Religious movements aimed at the revitalization of society have helped people adapt to changing conditions. Religion establishes and maintains family and social control. It does this through a series of moral and ethical beliefs, along with real and imagined rewards and punishments, internalized in individuals.

Djaja D. Soejarto*, **, Bounhong Southavong*, Kongmany Sydara***, Somsanith Bouamanivong***, Mary C. Riley*, Amey Libman*, Marian R. Kadushin**, Charlotte Gyllenhaal***

A Collaborative Program Between the University of Illinois at Chicago and the Traditional Medicine Research Center of Laos in the Study of Lao Medical Plants

Illinois

*Program for Collaborative Research in the Pharmaceutical Sciences (PCRPS), College of Pharmacy, University of Illinois at Chicago, 833 S. Wood St., Chicago, IL 60612 and **Department of Botany, Field Museum, 1400 S. Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60605, USA

***Traditional Medicine Research Center, Ministry of Health, Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic

In 1996, the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) initiated an informal scientific cooperation in the study of medicinal plants of Laos with the Traditional Medicine Research Center (TMRC), Vientiane. This cooperation was strengthened in 1998, when TMRC joined the UIC-based International Cooperative Biodiversity Group (ICBG) consortium to undertake "Studies on Biodiversity of Vietnam and Laos". The ICBG is a program administered by the Fogarty International Center, through funds from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the Foreign Agricultural Service of the United States Department of Agriculture (FAS USDA). The ICBG Program is an experiment by the US government in the implementation of the terms of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), whereby researchers in developed countries collaborate in the studies of the biological diversity of biodiversity-rich countries, sharing the benefits in the process and, in the event of

the commercialization of a product(s), in an equitable manner. As a member of the UIC-based ICBG consortium, TMRC has been able to strengthen its human and institutional resources, to allow this institution to (1) establish the Lao Biodiversity Fund (LBF), (2) continue to provide infrastructure support to communities throughout Laos, (3) continue country-wide survey to inventory Lao medicinal plants through interviews with village healers and members of the communities at large, (4) establish a Lao Medicinal Plant Database in conjunction with the strengthening of its herbarium collection holding as a material documentation, (5) develop education outreach programs at the village level, (6) inventory and protect Lao traditional medicinal knowledge, (7) establish a Medicinal Plant Preserve (in situ medicinal plant conservation site), and (8) continue collaboration in the laboratory analysis and bioassay of medicinal plants collected in Laos. Support of NIH Grant 1 UO1 TW01015 01, 1998-2003, is gratefully acknowledged.

B. James Soukam

The Road to Serfdom and Back: the Process of Marketization in Laos

Ph.D. Candidate, Dept. of City and Regional Planning, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y.

In the process of reforming its economy, in response to globalization and economic change, the Lao government has recently integrated into the regional grouping, ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations). As the country opens up to the world, its membership in ASEAN and incorporation into the world market present as many opportunities and possibilities as challenges and threats. Rich in land and natural resources, but lacking in technical skills and finance capital, Laos could conceivably become a key node in the development of mainland Southeast Asia. Nonetheless, the country remains at a cross-road. Surrounded by powerful neighbors in a dynamic and fast growing region, it is either well-positioned to benefit from economic integration, or regrettably isolated and potentially overwhelmed by more powerful economic actors. The economic necessity of trade, the small size of its economy, the dependence on limited markets, and vulnerability to natural disasters will invariably condition the country's degree of openness. How has this government managed the socialist transition and capitalist incorporation, while maintaining some semblance of external sovereignty and internal legitimacy?

Relying on observations during my time on research assignment in Laos (May 2004-March 2005); interviews with government officials, members of the development and diplomatic communities; and a literature review of on the political economy of transition, this paper examines the process of marketization in Laos that began in earnest in the early 1990s. By and large, the socialist transition everywhere has involved the retreat of the state from direct management of the economy. Yet, marketization in Laos had entailed building a national economy, where fragmented and regional economies once dominated. In the transition process, a strong central government capable of regulating and enforcing economic governance has gradually eroded traditional autonomy of Lao provincial authority. Taking a Polanyian perspective on markets, I conclude that the contrast between markets and states tends to obscure the ways in which governments need to structure market relations. In Laos, consolidation of state power has gone hand in hand with the creation of a national economic space.

Viengkeo Souksavatty

New Discovery of Buddha Collection at Tam Nong Papha, Thakhek District, Khammuan Province, Central Laos

Director, Division of Archaeological Research, Lao PDR

Tam Nongpapha was discovered in mid May 2004 by villagers of Ban Tha Khae and Ban Na Khangsang while rowing a canoe in a underground pond and searching for various forest products. The mysterious cave's entrance was hidden behind a vegetation about 12 metre above this pond and opens on a steep cliff wall of a limestone massive. During the last hundreds of years, inside of this cave was preserved not only the beauty of geological formations, but also a very precious cultural value of Lao art. It is a most significant Collection of Buddha Statues ever discovered in Laos. This Treasure Collection has survived intact and in good condition, it consists of 229 Buddha statues, made of bronze, lead, wood, terra cotta and pollen covered with gold and silver plated. Apart of the iconographic items, some of religious movables were also preserved. About 8 dates were identified in the palm leave manuscript and on the throne of statues. According to this written source, the manuscripts are belonging to the earlier date which between 1568 and

1627, whilst the pollen statues are between 1738-1754. Among the bronze statues, many of them represent a stylistic design that can be found a lot of similarity with those bronze statues displayed in Sisaket and Ho Phrakeo Museums in Vientiane. The small Bouddha made of pollen covered by gold and silver plated that known by traditional appellation as "Phra Keson Dokmai" are identical to those found in Luang Phrabang, Vientiane, Champassack and many places throughout the country.

Who takes the objects to this cave? When it was happened, when it was abandoned, what is the reason? Why to keep in such mysterious place? Why nobody remember about what was happened here? Where is the custodian gone? A lot of questions are still to be answered in the further research activity.

Niphasone Souphom

Xung Xin Xai: The Local Traditions of Laos

Lao Heritage Foundation, USA

Generally, traditional Southeast Asian literatures are heavily influenced by Indian culture and ideas. Southeast Asian literatures share similar structure, plot, and core religious values with the Indian epic of Mahabharata and Ramayana. Though Lao traditional literature may share these elements, it also weaves in many traditional and cultural components which distinguish the literature as Lao.

This paper will use Xung Xin Xai as a way to analyze how Lao traditional literature reflects the culture and tradition of Laos. The paper will examine Lao traditional culture in the areas of etiquette, religion, marriage rites, ceremonies, celebrations, and personal relations within the family. Upon close inspection, one will find that these traditional customs continue to be very prominent in the lives of the Lao people today.

Rassamichanh Souryasack

Cultural and Social Perspectives of Lao Adolescents: Developing Voices Through Writing

Ph.D. Candidate, Dept. of Cultural Perspectives and Comparative Education, University of California, Santa Barbara

The purpose of this study was to investigate how Lao-American adolescents become skilled readers and writers while developing their sense of ethnic identity and personal voice. This study examines the issues of empowerment, family, race, poverty, inequities, and voices through dialogue, guided questions, and the process of writing.

Out of the ten students who initially participated in the study, there were only three girls who completed the study. Through the dialogue and writings of these three girls and the researcher's field notes, the researcher collected data to demonstrate how the issues of empowerment, family, race, poverty, inequities and voices make it difficult for them to be part of the mainstream academic community.

During the nine weeks of writing sessions, the three Lao-American adolescents shared their perspectives on the academic, social, and cultural life. By sharing their perspectives with one another, the students were able to develop their sense of ethnic identity and personal voice. Even though the writing process was a major obstacle for the students, their writings revealed common themes related to family, community, isolation, loneliness, race, and poverty.

Mana K. Southichack, Ph.D.

Governance, Barriers, and the Socioeconomic Prospect in Laos Development and Agricultural Economist, Interim Executive Director, LaoEcon Organization, USA

Government can either serve as a barrier or facilitator for socioeconomic progress. While some socioeconomic progress has been made since the 1990s, due largely to foreign aid, the existing governance emphasizing societal control does not only restrain economic growth, it exacerbates income inequality at the expense of the poor and disadvantaged. As an example, government suppression of the free flow of information and the private sector's participation in the publication and media businesses does not only depress employment and professional development in the industry, the development of national intellectual capital stock and the market at large, it discriminates against the poor and disadvantaged. The existing judicial system, which is un-immune from the interference of high-ranking individual party members and government officials, can neither guarantee a level playing field to investors nor justice to the average citizen, an advantage for

the rich and/or politically well-connected. Barriers to socioeconomic progress that exist in Laos are numerous. Certain barriers are purely natural phenomena while others are manmade and event-driven. Lowering these barriers would stimulate economic growth and social changes, but to whose advantage, the elites or the mass, it depends on how broadly and far reaching these barriers can be lowered. However, thus far, the efforts to reduce economic barriers by the Lao government have focused on natural variables while evidences indicate that governance is the main impediment to economic and social progress. The absence of fundamental reforms in governance has caused the fruit of foreign aid and economic growth to be skewed towards the few urban elites at the expense of the poor. To move towards sustainability and broad-based economic growth with social advancement necessary for poverty eradication and beyond, broad-based fundamental changes are necessary. In this light, this paper examines how and in what key areas has governance obstructed and promoted socioeconomic progress in Laos.

Vinthany Souvannarath* and Pamela Schaefer listed but only Souvannarath**

The process of Assimilation: Interview Narratives of six Lao American Women Refugees

Department of Psychology, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Wisconsin

*McNair Scholar

**Professor

After the communist takeover in Laos in 1975, about 16,000 Laotians fled to the U.S. The Lao currently constitutes less than one percent of the total U.S. population (Reeves & Bennet, 2003) and have been the least noticed of the groups who fled from Southeast Asia (Silberman et al., 2001; Cerquone, 1986). In this study I gathered narrative analyses from six Lao women refugees aged 18-45 from who have lived in the U.S. for an average of 19 years in a Midwestern state. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore 1) the challenges and adjustments they had in adapting to the U.S., 2) the extent to which they feel they have integrated in the U.S. society, and 3) the importance of preserving their cultural identity.

The findings reveal the women's cultural and linguistic isolation as newcomers and a range of challenges the women experienced. Challenges of overcoming traditional behavioral expectations of women, adapting to more individualistic attitudes, climate and weather change, distaste of American foods, transportation, and homesickness were reported. The biggest cultural adjustments however, were acquiring the English language and pursuing education in the U.S. school system. As hypothesized, the women have not fully integrated in the society and are still learning to adapt while continuing to maintain their cultural identity.

Kathryn Sweet

Development Opportunities in Rural Laos Project Advisor

Rural Women's Project, Family Planning Australia, Vientiane, Lao PDR

The paper explores the development landscape in Lao PDR and the effect of its urban bias on rural communities. It examines the experiences of rural women in particular, and practical strategies to engage with rural women and improve their ability to access more development opportunities. Strategies must address geographical isolation, poor communications links, low levels of formal education and resulting low fluency in Lao language, poor health, high birth and maternal mortality rates, and the daily grind of agricultural subsistence. Examples are taken from the Rural Women's Project, jointly implemented by Family Planning Australia and the Lao Women's Union, in Vientiane province and Xaysomboun Special Zone.

Bouaphet Sygnavong

The Lost Province of Wapikhamthong (1962-75)

Independent Scholar, California

As a native of Wapikhamthong, I would like to tell the story of my lost home province which was created in 1962 by a constitutional amendment of the Kingdom of Laos, but was erased from the map of the world with the advent of the People's Democratic Republic at the end of 1975.

The province took its name from two ancient villages established along the Sedone River in Southern Laos: Wapi, meaning "source," and Khamtong "gold." This golden district was first elevated to the rank of Muong (mandala) in 1713

by King Chao Soi-Sisamouth of Champassack. It kept the same status under the Siamese occupation, from 1779 to 1893. In the meantime, around 1830-40, Chao Menh, a son of King Anou, found refuge in Khamtong and married a daughter of the local ChaoMuong (Governor).

In 1893, when the French took over the left bank of the Mekong River from Siam, they confirmed Chao Anou's descendants as administrators of Wapi and Khamtong districts but incorporated them as part of Saravane Province.

In 1945, when Prince Phetsarath, then Vice-Roy and Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Luang-Prabang, proclaimed the unification of Northern and Southern Laos as a sole and undivided Lao Kingdom. He chose Phagna Bouakham Maokhamphiou, one of Chao Anou's great grandsons, as the first Chaokhoueng (Governor) of Saravane.

In 1962, the new province of Wapikhamtong was carved out of the boundaries of its former motherland, Sravane. For a full decade, Wapikhamtong, and in particular, Khongsedone, the provincial capital, witnessed a fast paced development with communications improvements, administrative buildings, housings and new businesses. Unfortunately, this boom was suddenly stopped in 1971 by the expanding civil war, in the aftermath of Operation Lamson 719. The fate of Wapikhamthong was finally sealed at the end of 1975 when the new communist Republic decided to re-incorporate it once more as part of Saravane Province.

Nowadays, Wapikhamtong as a separate provincial entity is gone. There only remains a few sons and daughters of Wapikhamtong who still stick together for the worse and the better, in spite of all kinds of adversity. Their former province may be lost forever, yet, they do not want to forget their special biological or friendship ties that united them in the past. They try to revive their memory and their common heritage by organizing family reunions in France and America so that the younger generations of Wapikhamtong's children in exile may learn about their distant Lao roots.

Vinya Sysamouth

Kaan Baan: Sipsongpanna Lue's Communal Village Activities in Irrigation

Ph.D. Candidate, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin

The administrative and political system of Sipsongpanna could be described as proto Tai feudalism since it is believed to have evolved from the lowest political system, the baan or village.* The baan serves as a unit of production with certain autonomy and rights in managing its own affairs. In a Tai Lue village setting, the division of land, labor, resources, and the burden of responsibilities are based on egalitarian system (a type of equal field system). In the past men and women between the ages of 18 and 50 were granted full member status of their respective baan which entitled them to land allotment and subjected to kaan baan. The Tai Lue word /kaan 1/ means "work" or "activity" and /baan 1/ means "village." Together the words kaan baan mean "village work" or "communal village activities." The kaan baan system is used for many activities that deemed beneficial to the entire community. These activities include road buildings, temple repairs, weir constructions, and numerous other tasks that are carried out annually or as needed. The main focus of this presentation will be on how kaan baan is practiced in the communal irrigation system called nam meuang fai within Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture's current political environment. What are the structural and operational systems of kaan baan? How is kaan baan incorporated into the regional irrigation management? And what roles and functions will kaan baan play in the Tai Lue's lives as a minority group in China?

*Yanyong Chiranakorn and Ratanaporn Sethakul. 2001. Pravatisat Sipsongpanna (Sipsongpanna History). Sathabun Vithi Dham, Bangkok. (In Thai)

Sary Tatpaporn*, Buasawan Simmala**

US-Laos Trade and Investment: Opportunities and Challenges

*California, USA

**Lao PDR; Wisconsin, USA

Background:

The US and Lao PDR signed the Bilateral Trade Agreement in September 2003. The US Congress passed the NTR legislation to ratify the agreement in November and the President Bush signed it into law in December 2004.

This historical trade agreement paves the way for both American and Lao businesses the opportunities to trade and investment between the two countries. However, the US-Laos trade and investment are very new emerging opportunities

with no existing resources and infrastructure. The following are major points for both the opportunities and challenges for the business people to consider.

Opportunities:

- US is biggest world economy
- 500,000 strong Laotian-Americans
- US serves as a sources for funding, professional skills and technologies to Laos
- Existing and emerging Lao-American entrepreneurship
- Lao-American investments in Laos
- Young Laotian-American professionals and entrepreneurs

Challenges:

- New comer and has to compete with the existing network of other Asian businesses
- Political factionalism of Laotian-Americans in the United States
- Quality of goods and products from Laos and the price
- Business ethic and professionalism of Lao business people in Laos
- Transportation
- Banking
- Insurance
- Distribution channel of goods through out the US

Recommendations:

- Creation of national network of Laotian-American businesses who are interested to engage in US-Laos trade and investment opportunities. (US-Laos Trade and Investment Group) to promote the trading and investment opportunities and address the emerging issues.
- Organize the conference and seminars to attract the mainstream American corporations and businesses to invest and trade with Laos.

Shoua Thao* and Kristin Espinosa listed but only Thao Hmong in Wisconsin: Attitudes toward Minnesota's Hmong Marriage Bill**

*McNair Scholar, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

**Professor Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Wisconsin, USA

"Mai Xiong died while riding as a passenger in a car driven by her husband, Nhia Xiong. Mai's and Nhia's minor children...filed a variety of claims against Nhia, including a wrongful death claim. The trial court, however, determined that the wrongful death claim belonged to Nhia, not his children, and therefore dismissed it. As the "surviving spouse," Nhia was first in the line of priorities as provided by [Wisconsin statute]. The minor children contended that their parents' marriage was invalid and thus their wrongful death claim should be reinstated." (Blinka and Hammer, 2002)

A young pregnant Hmong woman married her boyfriend, the father of her child, in a traditional Hmong marriage. They later divorced, and now with two children, she cannot claim child support or any marital benefits in the U.S. court, because there is no legal documentation of the marriage (Heng, 2004).

These are two examples of the consequences of marriage in the Hmong tradition, which is not legally recognized by U.S. law, whether the marriage took place before or after arrival in the United States. To prevent such complications, Minnesota State Representative Andy Dawkins proposed a bill in 1991 in the Minnesota state legislature that would legalize the status of marriages conducted in the Hmong tradition. This bill, the Hmong Marriage Bill (HMB), was intended to help legalize, prevent, and clarify Hmong marriages in order to prevent further legal problems such as child support, insurance, and specifically taxes. It would alleviate certain legal disadvantages, but it would also significantly alter crucial aspects of the Hmong marriage tradition.

In this study, I surveyed individuals in the Hmong community in Wisconsin (Milwaukee and Green Bay) to analyze their perspectives on Hmong traditional marriage and, more specifically, the HMB. I evaluated the attitudes of people in the Hmong community, focusing on whether and how demographic factors, such as education, gender, and age, influence those attitudes toward the HMB. In addition, I conducted unstructured interviews with Hmong community leaders and elders. The purpose of this research is to explore how Hmong's perception on traditional marriage and practices might have potential affects on attitudes toward the HMB.

Hongvilay Thongsamouth

Lao-America and the Laws That Shape It

Gokhokho Publishing, Inc., California

Before 1975, only about 500 Lao* had been admitted into the United States. Today, almost 400,000 individuals from Laos reside in the United States as lawful permanent residents and citizens.

The mass exodus following the American withdrawal from the Vietnam conflict forced the United States to develop extensive refugee resettlement laws and policies. These policies, in turn, have largely shaped the formation and character of the Lao-American community as it exists today.

From early resettlement policies to current laws affecting detention and the threat of possible deportation, this presentation seeks to explore the history of Lao-American immigration and the specific laws that have shaped and that continue to shape the community.

*Lao in this paper refers to all ethnic groups from Laos (e.g. Hmong, Mien, Khamu, Tai Lue, Tai Dam, etc.)

Susada Viravong

The Image of Women in the Sex Trade

Washington

An old profession, a modern problem in today's society is prostitution. Women in the sex industry are on the rise no matter how much effort we try to control the problem. This is the result of modernization where people's desire (tanha) for money and material things are on the rise.

Whether that these women are willing or not, society's view of them and their profession is still seen as negative. These women cannot face people in society because even money can buy their body and their integrity, reducing their worth. Now, these women's old profession is no longer taboo, instead, their profession is more visible and out in the open for society to see and buy their service.

The above concept influences the painter's creativity studies and researches on prostitution. From painting and researching the theme of Women in the Sex Industry, which the paintings capture real life problem, the painter would like her work to act as a social criticism towards our apathetic society. The painter also wishes that her work will educate society about the problem of prostitution and hope that her work will motivate other potential artists and researchers to use her work to further their studies about prostitution as a theme for their artwork.

Prayut Wannaudom

The Cultural Collision between folk Performing Arts "Molam" and Culture Industry

Ph.D candidate of Faculty of Communication Arts, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

In the past, Molam is a form of folk performance of the north-eastern region of Thailand. It was performed in special occasions such as in a traditional ritual or ceremony. At present, due to the more advance technology in mass communication, Molam is more popular. This is because mass communication, which is the Culture Industry acts as media through which Molam can reach various audiences. Mass communications play significant roles in producing more Molam and transforming Molam into a modern performance.

Finally, Molam is promoted to be global performance because it is managed to be cultural commodity by mass communication. Many entertainment enterprises and industries bring efficient management system to serve every process of the production of Molam, for example, Molam becomes live show recorded in to the VCD format, tape cassette, audio CD, VCD karaoke for mass distribution into the market.

Nowadays, we can witness the cultural effects of the phenomenon of Molam as Global performance as follows:

1. The more Culture Industry exercise its roles in society, the more Molam displays its unique identity because Culture Industry contributes in distinguishing the differences between global performance and local performance. As a result, we can better perceive the differences of these two forms of performance.

2. When the rise of Culture Industry brings the Western performance to Thailand, there is the resistance from conservative Molam artists. Especially the traditional Molam artists try to maintain their identity by negotiating with the

Western culture in order to keep their traditional performance and Molam's spirit, for example play the local musical instrument "Kaen" and "Pin" along with their show.

3. The trend of Culture Industry allows Molam more spaces to show more of its identities. The spaces are largely in mass communication media such as press, magazine, TV, Radio, tape cassette, VCD, even cyber space where there are websites setup by fans of famous Molam artists.

4. However, The Culture Industry also affects local performing arts to be distorted from its original style due to the enterprises' urgent need to produce plenty of Molam for their market. This makes the young generation of Molam artists ignore the roots and spirit of the performance.

5. When Molam becomes cultural commodities due to mass production, its values and its duration as a classic art form seem to be reduced continually. The tasks of the artists are to produce the performing art for the sake of business transaction instead of for the aesthetic values of the art as the Molam artist in the past do.

As mentioned above, we witness the phenomenon of cultural collision between local performing arts and Culture Industry which brings both advantages and disadvantages to the performance art of Molam.

Remark: Molam's meanings are:

1. The performer mastering in dancing and singing in a type of northeastern or Isan Lao folk performance.
2. The form of one of the most popular local performing arts in the Northeast of Thailand which carries the unique characteristics of singing and dancing in the style of Northeastern folk performance.

Seree Weroha, Ph.D.

K-16 Lao Language Curriculum for Wisconsin

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Wisconsin

Since 2001, the DPI has provided financial support to groups and individuals to work on Lao curriculum based on ACTFL standards and DPI guidelines on world languages. Lao language standards, curriculum, and assessment are needed for K-16 Lao language teaching and learning in Wisconsin. The goal is to design the Lao heritage/world language curriculum and instruction that meet the requirements of foreign/world language in K-12 setting and allow students to pursue higher levels of Lao language proficiency and literacy skills in postsecondary institutions.

Joyce C. White

Middle Mekong Archaeological Project Phase I: The Luang Prabang Survey

University of Pennsylvania Museum, Pennsylvania

The paper will report on the first phase of the Middle Mekong Archaeological Project (MMAP), a reconnaissance survey of three left bank tributaries of the Mekong River in Luang Prabang province, Laos scheduled to occur in March and April 2005. The main objective of this initial survey is to find sites likely dating to the middle Holocene, roughly 6000-2000 BC calibrated, in order to begin acquiring data to test alternative models for the appearance of agriculture in mainland Southeast Asia. Models postulating migration mechanisms for the appearance of agriculture in this region suggest the Mekong as one highway for southward-migrating rice cultivators originating in southern China. One migration model favors the late 3rd millennium BC for this expansion based primarily on dates associated with a widespread ceramic decorative syntax (Higham 2001:8, 2002:110). Another model based on linguistics favors the 6th millennium BC for expansion of rice cultivators down the Mekong from Yunnan (Blust 1996:132). However, northern Vietnamese data show that an autochthonous transition from hunting and gathering to use of domesticated foodstuffs during the middle Holocene cannot be ruled out (Bui Vinh 1997). Existing data from the middle Holocene in mainland Southeast Asia are currently too poor in quantity and quality to scientifically evaluate these alternative scenarios.

Determination of the timing and nature of the development of early agriculture in Southeast Asia has implications not only for the culture history of one region, but also for the validity of the proposal that modern day global distributions of languages and populations represent expansions from a few well-defined regions where agriculture is proposed to have originated (Diamond and Bellwood

2003). In this view, Southeast Asian languages, populations, and agriculture derived from the Yangtze basin where the earliest domesticated rice has been found. However, assumptions of this model for demography, plant genetics, and human biology may not hold for mainland Southeast Asia. Knowing if the subsistence regime underlying Southeast Asia's long-term socioeconomic development emerged from an extraregional expansion driven by the development of rice cultivation, an autochthonous development of plant cultivation perhaps of multiple crops, or some combination of processes is important not just for evaluation of the universality of the Diamond/Bellwood proposal. Knowing if a rice-focused cropping system as opposed to a multi-species horticultural cropping system characterized Southeast Asia's original agricultural regime is fundamental to understanding the region's distinctive social, economic, political, and environmental trajectories (White 1988, 1995a, 1995b; White and Pigott 1996; White et al. 2003).

The survey along three left bank tributaries to the Mekong in Luang Prabang province should identify sites that will allow evaluation of these alternative models for the emergence of plant cultivation in this core region. Luang Prabang is upstream from Ban Chiang cultural tradition sites in northern northeast Thailand where the earliest agricultural societies so far identified in the middle Mekong basin lie. Luang Prabang province is also on the western side of a divide whose eastern side witnessed subsistence changes during the middle Holocene that the Vietnamese claim involved exploitation of domesticated livestock. These two geographic factors indicate that there is no better location in all of Southeast Asia to seek evidence for changes in middle Holocene subsistence regimes than Luang Prabang province.

Yang Sao Xiong

State-Mandated Selective Testing, Classification, and Tracking of English Learners in California Public Schools

Ph.D. Student, Department of Sociology, University of California, Los Angeles

Southeast Asian refugees, especially their U.S.-born children, confront a multitude of socio-political obstacles to educational advancement and economic survival. Made invisible by policies which neglect the tremendous diversity of histories and experiences in contemporary American communities, Southeast Asian American children remain socially marginalized as the state erect multiple barriers to deny them equal access to quality education—their most important hope for prosperity in the United States. Through a critical examination of federal, state, and school district education policies and practices, this research identifies and explains how the processes of state-mandated selective testing, classification, and tracking of English Learners, including Southeast Asians, operate to systematically deprive these students of equal access to quality education in California's public schools. Educational and social implications for Hmong-American students are also examined.

Kou Yang, Ed.D.

Hmong Americans: 30 Years In-Review

Chair, Ethnic and Gender Studies Department, Associate Professor of Asian American Studies

California State University, Stanislaus CA

The experience of Hmong Americans during the last 30 years is very unique and fascinating. They came from very disadvantage background and must adapt to America, the most developed country in the world, from the very bottom up. The gap between the two cultures is very large, making it more difficulty for them to overcome their acculturation needs in a short period of time. Because of their unprepared background, their first 15 years in the United States are preoccupied with many difficulties, including cultural shock, unemployment, welfare reliance, poverty and other acculturation problems. The decade of 1992 to 1999 marks the second phase of their adaptation to life in the United States. This decade is the turning point for Hmong Americans as they began to run for office, develop business enterprises, and most importantly reduce the rate of welfare participation. Beginning from 2000, Hmong Americans have entered a new phase of adaptation to life in the United States. As they entered the 21st century, their population became more diverse, youthful, educated and assertive. Further, Hmong Americans have become more politically active, educationally competitive, and high-tech oriented. Furthermore, they have also entered many professions, including Art, Anthropology, Computer, Education, Engineering, Journalism, Law, Medicine, Military, Psychology, Science, Social Work, and Teaching. On the other extreme

of the spectrum, Hmong Americans face with many pressing needs and issues. Some of the pressing needs and issues are family conflict, generation gap, health and mental health, poverty, and the lack of the know-how and accessibility to resources and information.

This paper reviews the experience of Hmong Americans during the last 30 years and list issues and problems that face Hmong Americans in 2005 and beyond. Its main emphasis is on Hmong Americans' acculturation, education, economic and business development, political participation, and contributions.

Shoua Yang

The Formation and Maintenance of the Anti-Lao Government Forces

Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Political Science, Northern Illinois University, Illinois

Although the government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (LPDR) claims that there is no internal conflict between the government and the resistance forces, I learned from my field research in Fresno, California, and in the Twin Cities, Minnesota, from June 2003 to December 2004 that there has been an ongoing war between the government and the resistance forces since 1975, and that the fighting still continues. Utilizing a set of open-ended questions, I interviewed 23 exiled officials of the Royal Lao Government (RLG) who are cofounders, leaders, and members of the Democratic Chao Fa Party of Laos (Chao Fa) and the United Lao National Liberation Front (Neo Hom), the two affiliated homeland political organizations in America. With the help of these homeland political organizations, their affiliated resistance forces inside Laos are still actively resisting the government in the jungles of northern Laos. In April 2004, BBC journalists Ruhi Hamid and Misha Maltsev, guided by resistance secret agents, sneaked into the jungles to interview the resistance leaders. They reported to the Hmong-American, the Lao-American, and the international communities that, in fact, there is still a war between the government and the resistance forces. Thus, in contrast to the government claim, this evidence shows that there is an internal conflict in Laos.

In this presentation, I will discuss the factors that led to the formation and maintenance of these two resistance forces. In 1975, the Pathet Lao seized power and adopted a persecution policy to wipe out former civilian officials and soldiers of the RLG. In counteraction, a group of former Hmong civilian officials and soldiers of the RLG reorganized themselves as Chao Fa to resist this policy. In 1978, Chao Fa was supported by Thailand; in 1979, by China; in the 1980s, by the United States. Fearful that Chao Fa, with the help of this international support, might succeed in overthrowing the Communist government of the LPDR, exiled Lao leaders and Hmong General Vang Pao formed the ULNLF/Neo Hom in 1981 to counteract Chao Fa and then the LPDR, for Vientiane, Neo Hom argues, has been dominated by Hanoi. Organizational goals, intraorganizational interaction, inter-organizational networks, and honorific leadership positions essentially explain the survival of these two homeland political organizations. Having explained the leading variables in the formation and maintenance of these two homeland political organizations, I propose a conference of five members, one each from the LPDR, Chao Fa, Neo Hom, the USA, and the UN to address this Lao internal conflict.

Kono Yasuyuki

Lao Wisdom on Land and Forest Use: Rethinking Principles of Environmental Governance

Land and water resources management, Associate Professor, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, Japan

Contemporary environmental policies and regulations are threatening people's livelihood in Northern Laos, particularly of shifting cultivators. It is not solely because shifting cultivation is going to be banned. There seems to be a big gap in fundamental understanding on the concept of property right of land access to ecological resources such as land and forest. The outsiders including the government introduce simplified, mapped and fixed property right and access regulations, while people's livelihood has been based on overlaid, temporal and spatially-buffered land and forest use. Although changes in environmental governance from an ad hoc basis to transparent ones may be a process of modernization, our experiences in the contemporary world told us that it was not always successful. Lao way of land and forest use may give us a clue to new solutions of harmonizing our life with nature.

Ochiai Yukino, Ph.D.

Plant Uses in Minor Subsistence of Hill Peoples: From an Ethnobotanical Aspect

Ethnobotany, Associate Professor, Kagoshima University Museum, Japan

In this paper, I focus on various plants used for minor subsistence of local people and suggest the role of them in people-plant relationships in mainland Southeast Asia. The various plants includes both cultivated plants like minor crops grown in home gardens and swidden fields, and wild plants like trees, grasses, herbs, climbing plants, water plants and weeds collected from different habitats like fallow lands, secondary forests, watershed, roadside and settlements. They are used for many purposes, such as for food, medicine, housing, materials, textiles, fuels, religions and rituals. Thus, people in this region still use a great diversity of plants for everyday domestic life mainly for self sufficiency, in addition to the useful plants for major subsistence, such as rice for main staple and crops and plants for cash income. Apparently, they do not have importance as the main staple and market value as the cash crops. However, even though they are not indispensable, they are still used based on personal concern and preference of local people and are kept with associated cultural practices and knowledge that evolved around it. Therefore, it can be pointed out that the various useful plants can be treated as a key factor for designing well-balanced landscape and biodiversity conservation in rural villages and also maintenance of quality of life of local people.

To the memories of my late father Thao Bo (Phya Chamnongphanij)
who loved Laos so much,

—and—

To the future of my daughter Alina Champon who I hope,
will always be proud that her father is a refugee from Laos.



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*Alina Champon
February 8, 2005
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- Advocate for bilingual and multicultural programs and policies needed by SEA peoples.

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AFFILIATE GROUPS

Southeast Asian Leaders (SEAL) seeks to develop, recognize, and promote Asian leaders, while increasing a sense of unity and serving as positive role models in our community.

FOR MORE INFO, CONTACT THE CO-COORDINATORS Tassany Prasoeuthsy and Lang Chaysinh at:
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Center for Southeast Asian Parents (CSEAP) helps address the educational needs of Hmong, Laotian, Vietnamese, and other Southeast Asian parents. Your input as a parent or liaison to parents, especially refugee parents, will help ensure that their voices are heard.

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