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.

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 หรือ "ลาโวอาวะ"

.by Vinya Sysmouht

จะมาแทนที่ Nam Khamyen และ Lao Studies หรือ "ลาโวอาวะ" ใน future.

ในที่สุด "ลาววิทยา" หรือ "ลาวศึกษา" จะเป็นรูปแบบที่ใช้ในการรับรู้ "ลาววิทยา" หรือ "ลาวศึกษา" ใน future.

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<tr>
<th>ภาษา</th>
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<th>ภาษาอังกฤษ</th>
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<tr>
<td>เวียดนาม</td>
<td>Vietnamese Studies</td>
<td>Khmer Studies</td>
<td>Chinese Studies</td>
<td>Thai Studies</td>
<td>Lao Studies</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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.
MAJOR SPONSORS

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The Asia Foundation: Lao PDR

UNITES STATES EMBASSY, Lao PDR
US Department of State

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Buasawan Simmala, Wisconsin
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Sinouk Coffee Company

CONFERENCE FACILITIES PROVIDED BY:
School of Music, NIU
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 Sadok, 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.

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**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
FRIDAY, MAY 20, 2005

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 Sebhathirath IV, North Carolina, USA
(In Lao & English, ວຽງຈັນ)
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, ວຽງຈັນ)

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
Toudhy Lysouang 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
Yaovalak 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 Marketization in Laos
James Soukam, New York, USA
Governance, Barriers, and the Socioeconomic Prospect in Laos
Mana K. Southichack, Hawaii, USA
Lao Social Structure
Boike Rehbein, Germany

Time: 4:00 – 5:00 pm
Moderator: Vinya Sysamouth, California, USA

Land Use & Livelihood Field Studies I
Dynamics of Fallow Vegetation in Shifting Cultivation in Northern Laos: A Case Study in Houay Phee Village, La District, Udomxay Province
Kao Hirota, Japan
The “Slippage” Implementation of Forest Policy by Local Officials: A Case Study of the Protected Areas of Savannakhet Province, Laos
Kimihiko Hyakumura, Japan
Plant Uses in Minor Subsistence of Hill Peoples: From an Ethnobotanical Aspect
Yukino Ochiai, Japan

15 Minutes Break

Time: 4:00 – 5:00 pm
Moderator: Kingsavan Pathammavong, Washington DC, USA

Land Use & Livelihood Field Studies II
The Trade Flow of Agro-forestry Products and Commodities 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 Bolikhamsai Provinces
William G. Robichaud, Canada

Time: 4:00 – 5:00 pm
Moderator: Buasawan Simmala, Wisconsin, USA

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

REGISTRATION 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)
### Conference Schedule: Saturday, May 21, 2005

#### STRAND A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time: 8:30 – 9:30 AM</th>
<th>Moderator: Mana K. Southichack, Hawaii, USA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Continental Breakfast</strong> (included with registration)</td>
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#### STRAND B

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time: 8:30 – 9:30 AM</th>
<th>Moderator: Laty Keodouangsy, Wisconsin, USA</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Continental Breakfast</strong> (included with registration)</td>
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#### STRAND C

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<tr>
<th>Time: 8:30 – 9:30 AM</th>
<th>Moderator: Tassany Prasoeuthsy, Wisconsin, USA</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Continental Breakfast</strong> (included with registration)</td>
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#### Economics II

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<tr>
<th>Time: 9:30 – 10:30 AM</th>
<th>Moderator: Frank Osanka, Wisconsin, USA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>War in History I</strong></td>
<td>The Contributions of the Laotian Ethnic Minorities in the Building of Laos</td>
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<td>Yang Dao, Minnesota, USA</td>
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<td>Patit Pabn Mishra, India</td>
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<td>The Formation and Maintenance of the Anti-Lao Government Forces</td>
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<td>Shoua Yang, Illinois, USA</td>
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#### Women & Culture

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<tr>
<th>Time: 9:30 – 10:30 AM</th>
<th>Moderator: Carol J. Compton, Wisconsin, USA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lao Literature</strong></td>
<td>Research Work on the Thao Hung Epic by Maha Sila Viravongs: A Comparative Study of the Political Ideology Expressed in the Thao Hung Epic Dowangduane Bounyavong, Lao PDR</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(In Lao &amp; English, հայերեն)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Women’s Identities in Contemporary Lao Literature after National and Democratic Revolution in 1975 Umarrin Tulakun, Thailand</td>
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<td>(In Lao &amp; English, հայերեն)</td>
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<td>Xung Xin Xai: The Local Traditions of Laos</td>
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#### War in History II

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<tr>
<th>Time: 10:45 – 11:45 AM</th>
<th>Moderator: Vinya Sysamouth, California, USA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Media, Performance &amp; Literature</strong></td>
<td>Media in the Lao PDR: Post Chintanakan Mai Challenges Viengsay S. Luangkhot, Washington DC, USA</td>
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<td>“Public” and “Private”: Notes on Media, Performance, and the Public Sphere in the Lao PDR Bret Johnson, Wisconsin, USA</td>
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<td>Awakening Ancient Voices of Sang Sin Xai through Radio Tutu Phimviengkham, Washington DC, USA</td>
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#### Lao Traditional Medicine I

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<tr>
<th>Time: 9:30 – 10:30 AM</th>
<th>Moderator: Tina Arounsack, Fremont, USA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lao Traditional Medicine II</strong></td>
<td>Collaborative Studies on Lao Medicinal Plants under the International Cooperative Biodiversity Groups Program Djaja D. Soejarto, Illinois, USA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Plant Use in Laos as Viewed through the Eyes of European Explorers Kristine L. Callis, North Carolina, USA</td>
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<td>Aloha Medical Mission to Lao PDR Sakuna Thongchan, Washington, USA</td>
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</tbody>
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#### Lao Traditional Medicine III

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<tr>
<th>Time: 10:45 – 11:45 AM</th>
<th>Moderator: Catherine Raymond, Illinois, USA</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Archaeology</strong></td>
<td>Recent Archaeological Research in the Lao PDR Thongsavongkhamdy, Lao PDR</td>
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<td>Middle Mekong Archaeological Project Phase I: The Luang Prabang Survey Joyce C. White, Pennsylvania, USA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>New Discovery of Buddha Collection at Tam Nong Paphra, Thakhek District, Khammouan Province, Central Laos Viengkho Souksavadt, Lao PDR</td>
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<td>(In Lao &amp; English, հայերեն)</td>
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#### 15 Minutes Break

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<tr>
<th>Time: 10:30 AM</th>
<th>POSTER PRESENTATION, Music Building Gallery</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Predicting Primary Forest Recovery in a Fragmented Landscape: a Restoration Roadmap</strong></td>
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#### 10:45 – 11:45 AM

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<tr>
<th>Time: 11:45 AM – 1:00 PM</th>
<th>LUNCH (included with registration)</th>
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#### BUSINESS MEETING

Time: 12:00 Noon

**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.

#### VIDEO SHOWING

Time: 12:00 Noon

**Vientiane in the Flow of History**
Produced by Gregory Green, NIU
Art Building, Room 100
Conference Schedule

**Saturday, May 21, 2005**

**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  
  Laty Keodouangsy, 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, 邯Ł﹩"

15 Minutes Break

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  
  Veronica de Lavenere, France
- Khaen Repertoires: The Development of Lao Traditional Music in Northeast Thailand  
  Phisaw Nanongkham, Ohio, USA

15 Minutes Break

Time: 3:30 - 4:30 PM  
Moderator: Sangkhom Ratsavong, Wisconsin, USA

**Resources on Laos**
- A Digital View of Laos: The Joel M. Halpern Laothian Slide Collection, SEAIT, University of Wisconsin-Madison  
  Joel M. Halpern, Massachusetts, USA & Larry Ashman, Wisconsin, USA
- SEASITE Lao: Web Resources for Lao Studies  
  John Hartmann, Illinois, USA & Kip Thammavongsa, Illinois, USA
- SEAAdoc: 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

15 Minutes Break

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

15 Minutes Break

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  
  Vinhanya Sovannarath, 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
Sukasang Simana, Lao PDR
(In Lao & English, ภาษาลาว)

Gerrit Wuijsthoff'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, ภาษาลาว)

**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, ภาษาลาว)

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

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: J. Lin Compton, Wisconsin, 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

Linguistics: Lao Syntax
Luo Numeral Classifiers in Comparison to Central Thai
Somsonge 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

**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, ภาษาลาว)

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 Phinarat Akharawatthanakun, Thailand

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

**15 Minutes Break**

Time: 11:30 – 12:30 PM
Moderator: Alan Potkin, Illinois, USA

Linguistics: Lao Syntax
Luo Numerical Classifiers in Comparison to Central Thai
Somsonge 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 Credit Access and Credit Constraints of Rural Farm Households in Naxathong and Phonghon Districts in Lao PDR
Phinseng Channakhom, Japan

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

**15 Minutes Break**

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 Phommaxongva, Lao PDR
Catherine Raymond, Illinois, USA
Souath Photisane, Lao PDR
Vanhpheng Keophannh, Lao PDR
(In Lao & English, ภาษาลาว)
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

Bombsies
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 ‘bombsies’ 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.
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).

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
Presentation Abstracts

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-tonsal 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 180 informants: 162 Lao native speakers and 77 speakers of other languages, including Kaloeng, Yoo, Suai/Suai Lao/Suai Isan, Phuan, Muang/Kham Muang/Yuan/Tai Yuan, Lu/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/, /khaa42/, /baa42/, /khaa45/, /khaa2i/, /paa2i/, /baa2i/, /khaa42/, /khaat21/, /paa2l/, /baa2l/, /khaat453/. 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, *C1-23-4, 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., T1 (*A1) rising [1], T2 (*A2) rising [2] [R2], T3 (*A4) rising 3 [R3], T4 (*B1234) level [L Û], T5 (*C1) falling with laryngealization 1 [F1?] T6 (*C234) falling with laryngealization 2 [F2?], T7 (*D123) falling 3 [F3], and T8 (*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 of 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.

Boonyasarit Aneksuk
Sustainable Tourism Paradigm in Lao PDR (1986-2004 A.D.)*
Ph.D. Candidate, Tai Studies Program, Maharakaram University and lecturer in Tourism Program
Ubon Ratchane 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 management 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 PDR 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 Boonyasarit 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
GTA-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 whatsoever 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 (Laforecude, 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 drastically 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 Boukeua, 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 also 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 levels. 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 leaf 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 not be 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 Huing.

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 –Burani. “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-T’ai ethnic who is newcomer, the intercultural exchange among them in the period prior Indian influence etc. The Ahom Burani composed in local language told us that the God or Lord of Thunder has sent his two nephews to rule the earth and the God or 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 descendant 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 descendant 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 would 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, refugration: 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 bold-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.

Somsonge Burusphat, Ph.D.
Lao numeral classifiers in comparison to Central Thai
Institute of Language and Culture for Rural Development, Mahidol University, Salaya, Nakonpathom, Thailand

This paper presents a semantic analysis of numeral classifier system in the Lao language. The hierarchically structured set of parameters underlying categorization 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 duàaN, nuüay, saàay, seÝn, baày, phµàµn, phQÜn, huàa, and meÝt. 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 khoân is widely used whereas phuÝu is restricted to the indefinite construction: noun- phuÝu- numeral one. The use of non-human classifier toào 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 tοÜn class and a slice of object is in pùañ class. This component also distinguishes between ‘one of a pair’ of body parts and inanimate objects. That is one hand is in the phµaN or khaÝaN class and one shoe or sock is in the kìUN 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, under-staffed 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.
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 unfruit 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.
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 Hmongs to support the Royal Lao Government while his maternal uncle Faydang Lobiamiyo led another faction to join the Lao Issara Movement or Pathet Lao under the leadership of Prince Souphanouvong. The Hmongs 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 1963 - Feminist Consciousness and Social Critique
Anthropology Instructor, Department of Philipino 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, Pakson 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 Dzubur, 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 the clinics operated by the OBI in Vang Vieng, Sayaboury, Pakson 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.

The journal of Gerrit Wuijsthoff 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 Wuijsthoff’s experiences, this paper will address seventeenth century Lao customs, trade, the monarchy, politics, and attitude towards European traders.

Penelope V. Flores
Intercountry 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 Ethnic 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 “thamos” 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 Vietsiane: The Untold Stories of Filipinos in Laos, published by the Philippine American Writers and Artists and will be available at the conference.

Anne Frank
SEAdoc: 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).

SEAdoc: 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 SEAdoc’s resources on Laotian Americans, including ethnic Lao, Hmong, Ju Mien, Khmu, and Lahu.

J. Pete Fuentecilla
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, Vietsiane, 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 banner 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 Laoonian Slide Collection, SEAIIT, 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 Laoonian 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 Yong’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, Khu’m, 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 Kiatam 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 Kiatam 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 Tampraset (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 lead 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, 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 Dzubur
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 Prabang, 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 ordinance 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-Nu, Tai-Dam, Tai-Daeng, Kalam 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-Tai Lao Tai-speaking Laoatians. 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 Loe 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-
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.
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 Champassack. 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 as an historical event in the protection of Lao manuscripts: All 17 provinces could be registered, while Laos has more than 2,800 monasteries in the whole country. In response to this need, the MIC applied a special project for the preservation work. The project team was able to work for 6 years, on an inventory in the selected monasteries.

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 homogeneous 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
*Assistant Professor, UW—Milwaukee School of Continuing Education **Advisor, Dept. of Curriculum & Instruction, UW—Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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 Keophannah
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 exhibit 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 Phommmasahith***, Lee Thorn****
Legacies of War: A Project on the Secret U.S. Bombings in Laos
*New York, NY, Presentation Chair **Richmond, CA ***Cleveland, OH ****San Francisco, CA

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 “Bomby,” which is scheduled to be screened at the conference. Ms. Bounthanh Phommasahit 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 sector 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-fulfilments 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,
Une étude comparative de la musique d’orgue à bouche d’une ou deux populations issues des quatre grandes familles ethnolinguistiques présentes au Laos. Il apparaît alors comme « une constante instrumentale au cœur d’une multi-ethnicté et d’une diversité culturelle ».

Éthnomusicologue, Docteur en Musique et musicologie de Paris IV Sorbonne, France

** Résumé :**
Le khène, orgue à bouche Lao, est l’instrument le plus populaire et le plus représentatif de cette population. Considéré par les Lao 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-ethnicté et d’une diversité culturelle ».

** 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 Khoui, presiding over the prestigious position once held by the legendary Kaitong Lo Blia 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, Bouhong Southavong**, **Kongmany Sydara**, **Somsanith Bouamanivong**, **Charlotte Gylenhaal**, **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
PhD Candidate, University of Wisconsin—Madison, Wisconsin

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 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 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
**Presentation Abstracts**

**Lao tones posit five or six main tones (in smooth syllables) with considerable differences in syllable type (smooth versus checked syllable). Synchronic descriptions of the tones of Tai languages are typically studied within the historical model of Prospects and overcomes least-developed status.**

**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) 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 Vientianne and different from the six tone phonemes for the Southern dialect as spoken further south of Savannakhet in Pakse (a not surprising 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. Dusdsi Manisaen** (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 19981 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 Yuowalak 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 a 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 in concert or on recordings, why do Lao singers usually include Isan styles? 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 analyse 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-Khmier-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 Vietniente 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
Professor, Department of History, Sambalpur University, Orissa, India

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 identity. 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
Khaen Repertories: The Developments of Lao Traditional Music in Northeast Thailand
Kent State University, Ohio

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

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 interwined 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 Ourangkharitran chronicle mentions that That Luang of Vientiane was earlier built by a Buddhist monk Phra Chao Chanhaburi Pasitithsak to keep Buddhist reliqu 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 Dhanaanjan and with Indradyumna. In art and architecture, the impact of several 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 (Risi), Shanti (Santi), Sri (Sri), Sut (Sutra), Sethi (Sreshti), Youvatturi (Yuvanari), Sabha (Sahba), Champa (Campa), Nang Mekhala (Mani Mekhala), Nang Thorani (Devi Dhariani), 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 Pancantra. It was translated into Lao language by Phra Samgharaja Vixula Mahaviharatthapi in 1507 C.E. of Wat Vixula Mahavihvan. The Pancantra stories written by Visnu Sarma of Orissa became very popular in Laos. The Lao version consisted of five Pakon (Prakaranan); Nanda, Manduka, Piscia, 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 Repertories: The Developments of Lao Traditional Music in Northeast Thailand
Kent State University, Ohio

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

Kingsavanh Pathammavong
Cultural Heritage of the Lost Kingdom in the United States: The History of Laotian People in America
Independent Researcher, Washington D.C.

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

Presentation Abstracts
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 Chethya (shrine) that may stand in any place the bodily relics, the Great Bodhi and all images of the Buddha.” (Ven. Dharmmananda 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 Buddhism does not change, the collaboration of its society and cultures are always unimportant 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 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 Chutiy’ 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
Department of International Environmental Agriculture and Science, Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology, Japan
Lecturer of irrigation, Department of Water Resource Engineering National University of Laos PDR

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 abandoned. 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 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), Xieng 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.
Foreign direct investment in Lao PDR: Promotion Strategies

Sianong Phomkong
Former Deputy Director of Investment Promotion Division, Department for Promotion and Management of Domestic and Foreign Investment, State Planning Committee, Lao PDR

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
*Team Leader, Digital Conservation Facility, Laos
**Founder, Black and White Studio, Vientiane; Principal consultant, Digital Conservation Facility Laos
***Associate Professor of Southeast Asian Art History, Northern Illinois University

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 ban, 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 Sikkottabang’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 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 loun 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 loun 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

Association for Research and Development, Vientiane, Lao P.D.R.

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

Acting Chair of Sociology, University of Freiburg, Germany

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-
Results show that there was probably a significant decline in forest cover in Laos as a first step, analyses of decades-long series of topographic maps and Landsat trends in forest cover in the reserve. This study attempted to fill that gap using, the area's forest cover, and thus interventions in indigenous agricultural systems. A pillar of NNT's management planning - and which permeates most protected areas - is the protection of traditional knowledge; (3) discuss the formal and informal means to organize, catalogue, and ultimately recognize and protect the intellectual property embedded in the knowledge and practices used by traditional healers in Laos. 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 in organizing, cataloguing, and ultimately recognizing and protecting the intellectual property embedded in the LNMP. The broader 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 un-tramedled areas of the reserve. Reasons for this probably include cultural stability and conservatism, and argue for a more conservative management approach.


The Lao Traditional Medicine Mapping Project (Lao TMMP) 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
****White Point Systems, Inc., 120 Nichols St., Friday Harbor, WA 98250

Because research involving the use of traditional knowledge and access to genetic resources triggers intellectual property concerns, the IUCN 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 in organizing, cataloguing, and ultimately recognizing and protecting the intellectual property embedded in the knowledge and practices used by traditional healers in Lao traditional medicine. 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 in organizing, cataloguing, and ultimately recognizing and protecting the intellectual property embedded in the knowledge and practices used by traditional healers in Lao traditional medicine.

William G. Robichaud
Testing assumptions: the recent history of forest cover in Nakai-Nam Theun National Protected Area, Khammouan and Bolikhamsay Provinces Centre for Biodiversity Research, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, CANADA

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 is 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-
Thougsa 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 is the archaeological research 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. archaeological research. Policy, legislation, organization and programmes will be briefly presented.

2. The recent archaeological research will briefly present the results from survey and excavation that has been conducted at these sites: 1. Tam Hua Pu (LPB Province), Tam Nang An (LPB Prov), Plain of Jars (Xiang Khuang Prov), Lao Pako (Vientiane Prov), Malagotic stones of Muong Hua Muong (Hua Pan Prov), Tam Hang (Hua Pan Prov), Pu Bia (Sayomboun Special Zone), Xepon (Savannakhet Prov) and Ph Quef of Nan Theun 2 Hydroelectric Project (Khammuan 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 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 loss of women’s knowledge of their 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-linear descent and kinship, matrilocial 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 Luminisation.

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 Rajasvong, to carry on the Sethathirath line and to guard the royal treasures. As his father’s command, Prince Ratsavong married his cousin, aged a boy 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) Laos-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 villagers-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 Taes 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 Sovannaphom pateh.

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 Laoitian 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.

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The first Lao Lanexang Kingdom Dictionary was written in June 7, 2004 and is currently only available as 26 characters. The full report is included on the hand out.

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 Khmu’ 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 Khmu’ in comparison with the Lao, which has existed in Laos in times past, with the Lao holding the power, and exploiting the Khmu’ 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.

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.

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 U01 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 group, 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 Souksavatdy
New Discovery of Buddha Collection at Tam Nong Papha, Thakhek District, Khammuan Province, Central Laos
Director, Division of Archaeological Research, Lao PDR

Tam Nongpafa 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. Khae and Ban Na Khangsang while rowing a canoe in a underground pond and

Niphason 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.

Manu K. Southichack, Ph.D.
Governance, Barriers, and the Socioeconomic Prospect of 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 & Benett, 2003) and have been the least noticed of the groups who fled from Southeast Asia (Silverman et al., 2001; Cerquone, 1986). In this study I gathered narrative analyses from six Lao women refugees aged 14-45 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 he 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 Chao Muong (Governor).

In 1893, when the French took over the left bank of the Mekong River from Siam, they confirmed Chao Anou’s descendents 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 Maokhamphious, one of Chao Anou’s great grandsons, as the first Chao Khhoueng (Governor) of Saravane.

In 1962, the new province of Wapikhamthong was carved out of the boundaries of its former motherland, Sravane. For a full decade, Wapikhamthong, 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, Wapikhamthong as a separate provincial entity is gone. There only remains a few sons and daughters of Wapikhamthong 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 Wapikhamthong’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 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?


Sary Tattporn*, Buasawan Simma**
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 Lao-Lao-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 Lao-Lao-American professionals and entrepreneurs

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

Recommendations:
• Creation of national network of Lao-Lao-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
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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 Luc, 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 services.

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 communications, 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 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 “Kaeun” and “Pin” along with their show.

3. The trend of Culture Industry allows Molammore 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 style 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 eastward-presssed subsistence changes during the late Holocene indicate 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 difficult 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. To utilize 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 Maltev, 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, interorganizational 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 include 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.
Our mission is to preserve and promote Lao culture and heritage through the arts. The Lao Heritage Foundation supports groups and individuals such as Tiao Somsanith Nithakhong.

Find out more about Tiao Nithakong’s work at www.princesomsanith.com.

Trees cannot grow without roots, learn more about yours!

Lao-American Organization of Elgin purposes are as follows:

1. To preserve and enhance Lao culture, customs, language, religion, arts and literature, and develop cultural understanding among persons of Lao origin in the Elgin area.

2. To provide support to Lao-American youth in the areas of education and sports, to the Lao-American elderly in all areas of need; and to facilitate Lao youth in receiving higher education.

3. To develop cultural exchanges and understanding with persons of other national origins who stand for justice, peace and democracy.

4. To co-operate with other civic, cultural, and educational organizations.

5. The Corporation is organized exclusively for charitable, educational, religious, or scientific purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
The Lao American Women Association (LAWA) of Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area was incorporated in the State of Virginia as a non-profit organization in early 1995.

http://www.lawadc.org/  email: info@lawadc.org
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MISSION
Through a collaborative network of students, parents, teachers, and community members, SEA Network strives to:
- Increase the research on SEA educational, social, and economic issues; and
- 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: asian_leaders@hotmail.com

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.
For more info, contact the director, Soumaly Bounket at: soumalyz@yahoo.com
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