The Coup and Thai Democracy
Andrew Brown

Amidst the political crisis which was then developing between the Chatchai government and the Thai military, the weekly current affairs magazine Khao Phiset used its final issue for 1990 to publish the first part of a lengthy essay which dealt with the phenomenon of coups within Thai politics.1 Titled "Farewell to Coups? A Record of Revolts, Revolutions and Coup d'Etats from the Past to the Present", the anonymous author provides a lively and detailed discussion of many of the more spectacular interventions which the military have made into the flow of Thai political life over the past seven decades. The author informs us that his/her reason for engaging in this scholarly exercise was based on the hope that it would help his fellow countrymen to better understand the nature of these interventions and therefore act to oppose and prevent future coups from occurring.

There is little doubt that our anonymous author would have been disappointed by the Thai military's return to the centre of the political stage on 23 February last. Since this date there has been a great deal of speculation as to the impact which this latest military putsch is likely to have on the future development of Thailand's economy, its foreign relations, particularly with Kampuchea and Myanmar, and most importantly its emerging parliamentary system. For many the coup casts a grave shadow over Thailand's halting movement toward democracy, a view which would be supported by the author of the Khaw Phiset article. For he/she perceives coups to be characteristic
of "backward political systems" and "underdeveloped social organisations". It is claimed that they "seriously undermine the tenets of democracy". Many would agree with these opinions. However, such assessments are premised on very general and abstract definitions of democracy. This is certainly the case with our anonymous author who concerns himself/herself with the impact of coups on the formal institutions of democracy (universal suffrage, competing political parties, parliaments, constitutions etc.) and their general legal conditions of existence (freedom of speech, of association and elections). Though obviously important, this analysis fails to pay sufficient attention to the political struggle among social forces to establish, control and reorganise formal democratic institutions of the state in their overall quest for dominance. Lenin's "democracy for what class?" remains apposite.

Contents

The Coup and Thai Democracy 1
Cambodia: Nov-Dec 1990 3
Kokang 10
Charan Manophet 12
'Folk Songs' of Charan Manophet 14
Yunnan's Tea Industry 16
The Judson Jubilee, Rangoon 21

Translations
Naxi Scriptures (continued) 22

News and Correspondence 25
Karen Exonyms 25
Dehong 26

Book News 26
Announcements 27

Research has demonstrated that the most powerful, though certainly not the only, social force pushing for the establishment of parliamentary democracy has been the domestic Thai capitalist class. Indeed, Anderson argues that the political history of the entire post 1973 period can be best understood from the viewpoint of this class's effort to develop and maintain its political power through the institutionalisation of a parliamentary state form.2 However, the bourgeoisie have not been the only ones to have been making claims on the exercise of state power during this period nor have they been the only ones to have benefited from this drive to establish formal democratic institutions. One must also take into account those social forces which Turton has identified as a "secondary complex of predatory interests" who have also risen to prominence during this period.3

These secondary set of predatory interests are the local powers, the caw phors, people of influence (phu mi ittiphon ) and the dark powers (ittipon mŸt ) which have enjoyed such a high public profile in Thailand over the past decade or so. These gangster-like
politicians/capitalists who through both their nefarious business activities financed largely by the credit made available by the Thai banks and through their many interconnections with the police, the military and the civilian bureaucracies have come to occupy tremendously powerful positions within the intestines of Thailand's developing parliamentary system. As Anderson reminds us it takes more than the support of liberal intelligentsias for democracy to develop, it also requires large numbers of "ruthless, rich, energetic and competitive people from all over the country [to] be willing to invest in the system". Indeed, for Anderson the fact that these predatory interests are now prepared to kill each other for seats in parliament is indicative "that something really new is in place". Whether one can meaningfully speak of democratic development under conditions where these dark powers occupy such a crucial and strategically significant place within Thailand's democratic system remains, however, a moot point.

Upon seizing power The National Peacekeeping Council (NPC) asserted that it remained committed to the principle of the democratisation of the Thai state. In order to achieve this aim the NPC has stated that it intends to rid Thai society of the corruption which it claims had reached hitherto unprecedented levels under the Chatchai administration. We have all heard such rhetoric so many times before that we may be excused for taking such announcements with a grain of salt. It is nevertheless significant to note that this public rhetoric has been backed up not only by a special body which will investigate the assets of a number of former politicians, but also reportedly includes a plan to rid Thai society of its caw phors.

In a recent article carried in Matichon Sutsapada Supreme Commander Sunthorn Khonsomphong and Army Chief Suchinda Khraprayun are reported to be planning to launch an attack on the caw phors and local power interests who have exerted such an important influence over the results of recent Thai electoral processes. At a meeting of 50 former politicians Suchinda stated that the Ministry of the Interior would adopt an unbiased position toward future elections and that all effort would be made to ensure that vote buying be minimised. The article goes on to discuss some of the many links existing between caw phors and parliamentary candidates in areas such as Chonburi, Phetburi, Prachuapkhirikhan, Nakhonayok, Chiangrai, Nakhon Pathom, Buriram, and Prachinburi to name but a few. Clearly so extensive are these relations and so integral have they been to the process of 'democratic' elections in Thailand that the NPC will have their work cut out if they are really to assert a degree of control over these localised concentrations of power. Indeed, as the article reports if the military wishes to call a meeting of caw phors as they had done for the now unemployed politicians, their main problem would be to find a meeting place that is large enough to accommodate them all.

In the weeks and months ahead the actions taken by the NPC to reintroduce the formal institutions of democracy and its legal preconditions will be closely monitored. Equally important, we would suggest is the way in which the military leadership will deal with the caw phors. Indeed, rather than focusing on the restoration of the trappings of parliamentary forms, a better guide to the NPC's commitment to the continuation of the development of democracy in Thailand may be gleaned from the steps it takes to check or promote
the power of this secondary complex of predatory interests.

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Cambodia: November-December 1990

Michael Vickery

In September-October a group of over thirty Cambodian classical dancers spent six weeks touring the United States, much of the time living in fear from pressure by right-wing refugees, the Lawyers Committee for International Human Rights, and finally the US State Department and Immigration Service to make them defect as a massive political statement against the Phnom Penh government. In spite of threats, inducements, invasion of privacy both during their work and in their free time, and at last confinement in their hotel for interrogation during the final day and evening of their tour when they had hoped to shop and see a bit of New York night life, only five decided to remain, inflicting a political slap in the face of the US regime.

Then, on 18 November, three Khmer electricians, naturalized US citizens, were forced off a plane in Seattle by Customs officials and prevented from taking their expertise back to Cambodia where it is sorely needed. The official reasons was that they were carrying too much money, but that is little more than an excuse to prevent Khmers outside Cambodia from making sympathetic contact with and giving any kind of aid to their countrymen. White Americans making the same trip have not been questioned about the amount of money they were carrying.

These cases, in their very pettiness, epitomize the US position on Cambodia. What the US regime attempted on a small scale is its 'Nicaragua strategy', which seems to be the guiding line of US policy on Cambodia. This strategy consists first of external pressure — political and military against the nation; moral and material on the individual. When this fails to bring about collapse there is both inducement and threat to persuade the nation to relax its vigilance against the external pressure, and open up its economy to capitalist freedoms and its politics to competing factions. Then, it is implied, the external heat will be taken off, and the US will help effect a reconciliation with the external enemy which the US has organized and financed, development aid and investment will be forthcoming, and progress with freedom will be assured.

What really happens is that economic liberalism in a small, poor country, at war and facing a US economic blockade, results in disastrous inflation and further impoverishment of most of the population. When an election comes they may be so disoriented as to vote for even proven enemies because they seem to be backed by a rich uncle. If that side wins then rich uncle's promises evaporate and the country is left to rot, just as the Cambodian dancers realized, that after defection they would be on their own in a strange country, without even minimal reward for political points they had made for Uncle Sam.

There is reason to hope that Phnom Penh has learned the Nicaragua lesson and will hold out against the Nicaragua strategy on the national level just as most of the dancers did as individuals.
Soon after its own revolution Sandinista Nicaragua was one of the first governments to recognize the new Peoples Republic of Kampuchea in September 1979. Close ties were maintained thereafter through exchanges of delegations, and Phnom Penh, both directly, and via its good relations with Cuba, must certainly have kept close watch on what was happening in Central America. Equally interesting for Phnom Penh would have been the relations between China and Nicaragua, which might have been hopefully interpreted as sending out signals about China's long-term intentions on Cambodia.

As Nayan Chanda told the story in 'The Managua Connection' (Far Eastern Economic Review, 9 July 1987, p.28), China was linked with Ollie North as part of the secret network to supply the Nicaraguan Contras. China, 'like Taiwan, was a partner in the Reagan administration's anti-Nicaraguan policy ñ but unlike Taipei, Peking [sic] profited from its cooperation'. Washington wanted Chinese co-operation to continue, with increased aid to the Contras. As a 'carrot' in the negotiations between North and the Chinese, North said the Contras, once back in power, would switch recognition to Beijing from Taipei, which had been the 'China' recognized by Somoza.

All of this took place in 1984. Then, having apparently told North what to do with his carrot, by 'late summer of 1985 China suddenly stopped the sales [to the Contras] without any explanation'; and on 9 December 1985 'it was announced that China had established diplomatic relations with the Sandinista regime', and had 'even offered it US $20 million in aid'.

Nicaraguan-Chinese discussions preceding the establishment of relations could not have failed to touch on Cambodia. Presumably the Nicaraguans helped pass signals on to the latter country. Indeed, one of the Nicaraguan delegation to Beijing, Henry Ruiz, a 'member of the National Directorate of the Sandinista National Liberation Front', subsequently led the delegation to Phnom Penh at the end of July 1986.

Part of his brief would no doubt have been to inform the Cambodians about impending developments in Nicaraguan-Chinese relations connected with the visit of President Daniel Ortega to Beijing in September 1986, preceded by a stop in India. During the visit Zhao Ziyang said disputes between Nicaragua and the US should be solved through negotiations, not by force; and Ortega said Nicaragua hoped to expand its economic and diplomatic relations with China.

Equally interesting is that just before arriving in Beijing for the recognition formalities of 5-9 December 1985, the Nicaraguan delegation led by Foreign Minister Miguel D'Escoto Brockman, stopped in Australia on 26 November for meetings with his Australian counterpart, Bill Hayden, and Prime Minister Bob Hawke. No doubt there also, in one of the capitalist countries which has shown most sympathy toward the PRK, Cambodian affairs were evoked in the discussions and relevant signals communicated.

Of course Chinese policy does not change overnight, and it may be expected that even as slight changes occur, public pronouncements will for some time repeat the old lines. Whatever China may say about the Democratic Kampuchean Coalition as the legitimate government of Cambodia, China has been moving steadily away from its position of 1979 and toward accommodation with Vietnam and Phnom Penh. Noting this, and remembering Nicaragua, the US switch of last July may have
been partly motivated by the fear of another Chinese switch which would have left the US as the single great power supporter, however surreptitious, of the Khmer Rouge.

This would be particularly if Washington had gotten wind of the coming change in post-Sandinista Nicaragua's China policy. Early in November Nicaragua pulled a switch as surprising as China's in 1985 and announced diplomatic recognition of Taiwan, thereby provoking a break in relations with Beijing. For China, whose leaders no doubt feel that client states should behave as such, this must inevitably be viewed as an unfriendly American signal, on top of other perceived American insults over the past two years and where better to get even than on Cambodia?

Press reports on Cambodia during 1989-90 have given disturbing indications that the Nicaraguan strategy was succeeding, even abstracting from the individual hostility of most Western journalists to the Phnom Penh Government, which show that however nebulous the alleged gains made by the Khmer Rouge in the hearts and minds of Cambodian villagers, they have certainly made inroads into the hearts and minds of the Western press corp covering Cambodia.

The most objective signs of Nicaragua-type decay has been the explosive inflation (400% in two years), after eight years of money management which kept the riel and price level relatively stable; a far better record than in Vietnam. Another matter of concern emphasized by the press has been the increasing power of an alleged 'hardline' faction opposed to Hun Sen and intent on wiping out the gains in personal and economic freedom which has slowly accumulated since 1979. As evidence of Hun Sen's declining influence journalists have cited increasing difficulty in obtaining interviews with him.

At the end of November I was able, for the first time in two years, to visit Cambodia for a direct view of the changes which have occurred.

Pleasant surprises were in store. At the Cambodian consulate in Saigon I asked to drive to Phnom Penh rather than fly. On previous trips this had meant tedious discussion, calls to Phnom Penh for permission, requests for Vietnamese Foreign Ministry guides to the border where one was met by other guides sent from Phnom Penh to take the traveller to a designated hotel and an appointment with the Foreign Ministry Press Section. At times there was even a problem renting a car through the Vietnamese authorities.

Now it is a simple commercial operation. 'No problem', the consul said; 'just tell me when you want to go and I'll set up a car for you.' No guides either, just the driver and I. On our departure the consul remarked, 'I haven't phoned Phnom Penh about you, to save money. When you get there just check into a hotel and then go over to the Foreign Ministry to tell them you have arrived.'

Similar novelties waited in Phnom Penh. There was freedom to pick any of the several hotels newly opened since 1988, and the competition had driven the price for a basic room with toilet, shower, fridge and air conditioner down from the earlier rock bottom $17 at the Monorom to $7-8 in the now popular Asie and Santhipheap; the latter favoured by emigré Khmer flocking back on visits from the US, Canada and France.

Next morning the official at the Foreign Ministry was equally casual. 'Glad to see you again, hope you have a pleasant stay.' There
was no need for an official car or guide unless I wanted to go outside Phnom Penh, which I had not planned in the short time at my disposal. My first errand was to contact old friends from the 1960s, a project which in previous years had meant an official request, car and Foreign Ministry guide. This time I just showed up at the Municipal Education Office where one of my firends worked to invite her, her husband and another couple for dinner the following evening. No one in her office showed any surprise, as though strangers dropping in for a chat was no more controversial than in 1960. Three more lunch and dinner meetings with them and other pre-war colleagues, whether in a restaurant or in their homes, were equally uncomplicated, and they all commented on the increased personal freedom compared with earlier years. All of them, having responsible middle-level official positions and trying to make ends meet with their combined salaries and other family members in the private sector, were happy to have received legal title to the houses assigned to them after 1979. They were also cautiously optimistic about the future in spite of the universal fear that the Democratic Kampuchea Coalition, including the Khmer Rouge, could be forced on the country again through misconceived Big Power plans.

A research objective of this trip was to collect the last two years issues of the Front, Party and Army newspapers to complete my collection which started in 1979. This previously involved a formal written request, a wait for permission, a car and a guide. This time I took a cyclo to each office, made an informal verbal request, and returned the following day to collect the bundle, without any sign of suspicion or surprise that a foreigner was maintaining a collection of the local Khmer-language press. This is not only an improvement in freedom under the present government, but also in comparison with the late 1960s when a foreigner collecting Khmer press would have invited interest from the secret police; and an inopportune visit to a newspaper office would have caused near terror among the personnel.

As for the new economic freedom, its effects are visible in the improvements to housing, new shops, hotels and restaurants, consumer goods and many more vehicles. However, there are still no signs of productive investment, or at least a demonstrated increase of wealth in private hands lightly taxed, if at all; or what a poor country needs in wartime.

Where then, is the 'hardline' threat about which the Western press is so worried? Since late 1988 rights to private property have increased, as has freedom for private business. There is far more freedom of speech and contact among Khmer and foreigners, with foreign residents in Phnom Penh renting, not only entire houses, but rooms and portions of houses in which they are in constant contact, sometimes even sharing meals, with the local owners. Are hardliners perhaps endangering the peace process, something which simple inspection could not reveal, and in which concerned foreigners might have a legitimate interest? Should one take seriously the rumours of a Red Solution; a deal between the internal communists in the Phnom Penh Government and the external Khmer Rouge, which would marginalize the Sihanouk and Son Sann groups, and which would be bitterly opposed by the Cambodian people?  

Chea Sim
In recent months there has been a veritable explosion of stories in the Bangkok and Western press about the new prominence of Chea Sim, an alleged hardliner, who is portrayed as emerging as a counterweight to the 1989-90 liberalization associated with Hun Sen.\textsuperscript{10} The stories do not seem to be orchestrated, but rather the result of journalistic pack hunting. Their total effect, however, is to implicitly justify the Nicaragua strategy on the grounds that the alternative in Phnom Penh is the Red Solution. Even writers for liberal publications now treat 'Cambodian intransigence' as a particularly Phnom Penh phenomenon.\textsuperscript{11}

It is difficult to determine what the stories are based on, for they have been vague both as to sources, which may be understandable, and as to the 'hardline' measures or policies which Chea Sim is supposed to favour. One certain source is the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Phnom Penh, especially in reports by their diplomatic consultant Raoul Janner who, although sympathetic to the Phnom Penh government, seems to be unable to distinguish coffee-shop rumour from solid political analysis, and excitedly emphasizes the worst rumours about impending dangers.\textsuperscript{12} I asked one NGO Head, whose own background as a one-time Marxist-sympathizing student has immunized him against knee-jerk anti-socialism, why the NGOs were so concerned about Chea Sim. He answered that whenever there was an important public ceremony or meeting Chea Sim was there playing a prominent role; and suddenly I realized what might have happened.

In the last two years there has been a dramatic increase in the number of NGOs and foreign aid personnel in Phnom Penh, from a mere handful in 1988 to nearly forty organizations and two hundred people now. Few of the new personnel are familiar with Cambodian personalities. They, of course, knew Heng Samrin, if only because of the journalistic shibboleth 'Vietnamese-backed Heng Samrin regime', and Hun Sen would have been familiar to anyone reading news of Cambodia. But Chea Sim, until the latest anti-Phnom Penh press campaign, was hardly mentioned except in specialist studies.

On arriving in Cambodia in 1989 and 1990 our NGO innocents see another face appearing daily on Phnom Penh television and at public gatherings. They learn that he was one of the former DK officials in the present government and that he may object to the negative effects of economic liberalism and thus the 'hardline reaction' was born. Could it not, nevertheless, be true? Is Chea Sim gaining in power and influence at the expense of Heng Samrin, and more importantly Hun Sen? Are the first two ex-DK hardliners countering Hun Sen's supposed liberalism, perhaps even aiming for the Red Solution? A Kremlinological analysis of the Cambodian press does not support either hypothesis. A count of prominent front page appearances of all three in the Party newspaper Pracheachon during 1989-1990 and also in 1986 (which was Hun Sen's second year as both Prime Minister and Foreign Minister after his ranking had been consolidated), shows Hun Sen given more front page prominence than either of the others in both 1989 and 1990, whereas in 1986 both Heng Samrin and Chea Sim appeared more often. Moreover, Hun Sen's front page appearances increased from 1989 to 1990 (55 to 62) while both the others decreased; Chea Sim from 44 to 41 and Heng Samrin from 49 to 48. Neither does Kampuchea, the organ of the Front, Chea Sim's own organization, help the 'hardline'
case. Hun Sen is also less prominent, perhaps because that paper gives less attention to foreign affairs, but space devoted to him was steady in all three years and equal to Chea Sim in 1986 and 1990. Heng Samrin dominated throughout, with equivalent attention given to Chea Sim only in 1989, the year of the allegedly Hun Sen inspired liberalization and also when Kampuchea was under an editor close to Hun Sen.

The new public prominence of Chea Sim, seen by NGO workers and transient journalists, seems really to be a result of their previous lack of familiarity with the country.

As for the Red Solution, it is the least plausible of all scenarios. The Khmer Rouge consider the Phnom Penh leaders as traitors, and the latter have long rejected the Khmer Rouge as both traitors and genocidal murderers. It is unlikely that even reconciled China and Vietnam would press for such a solution, nor could they impose it. In the eyes of the Khmer Rouge the worst treason of their former colleagues in Phnom Penh is friendship with Vietnam, and Vietnam would hardly collude in restoring their most bitter enemy to any degree of control in Cambodia. The Red Solution is a canard which can only make sense to people locked in an early Cold War mindset with 'once a communist always a communist', and of only one variety.

But supposing Chea Sim, who is second ranking member of the Politburo, President of the National Assembly and President of the Front, and therefore a person of undoubted power and influence, really is showing his muscle, what precisely are the 'hardline' policies he might wish to impose on Hun Sen? Journalists love to prate about a Chea Sim inspired suppression of the new liberal economic policies with which Hun Sen has been associated—increased private ownership of housing and land, the end of attempts to collectivize agriculture, more freedom for private market activities, in particular import of foreign goods via Koh Kong. These measures have been popular, at least in Phnom Penh, and among those with extra cash or valuables to invest or spend on luxuries. Even state employees living on exiguous salaries were happy to receive title to the houses in which they had squatted with tacit government approval since 1979. The other side of the coin has been the 400% devaluation which has hit all those on salaries. It has hurt farmers who are not in a position to receive a corresponding increase in prices for their products and has created a new group of conspicuously wealthy Phnom Penhites whilst widening the gap between city and country. Those who now worry about Chea Sim had delighted in reporting all through 1989 that one effect of economic freedom was the widespread corruption and scandalous profiteering by some of those in power. It extended, so they said, right up to the country's top families.

These developments certainly trouble Chea Sim and no doubt others who are not 'hardline', in fact, everyone but the profiteers who flaunted their wealth in the new nightspots, until some recent controls were imposed on them. Chea Sim may well be saying that certain liberal developments must be reigned in; at the very least some of the new and unproductive wealth must be taxed. Before Western journalists express shock at 'hardline' economic measures they should note that so far no effective taxation has been applied to imports passing through Koh Kong from Thailand, Singapore and elsewhere. Increased taxation is on the cards for 1991.

Other 'hardline' measures were suggested by Chea Sim in a
televised conference on 4 December in which he addressed Health Ministry officials. He said that one problem which must be resolved was the vast quantities of outdated, fake and dangerous drugs which were being imported untaxed and sold without restriction in private pharmacies and street stands. Health workers had voiced their concerns about this for ten years. Chea Sim stated that new regulations must be introduced to control the import and sale of drugs, and that none should be sold unless certified by government experts. He was speaking to the right audience, for most of the private pharmacists are also Health Ministry officials.

Another problem Chea Sim emphasized was the attitude of doctors to patients. He complained that too often doctors were impolite or arrogant, particularly to poor patients (a problem not unique to Cambodia), and he said they must change their attitude. A third problem was the scarcity of doctors in distant provinces. Graduates of the medical school preferred to work in Phnom Penh but Chea Sim felt that the state should take measures to require doctors to serve some time in rural areas.

These are just some of Chea Sim's 'hardline' ideas. They contain suggestions for policies and regulations which are normal throughout the world, but which have not yet been applied to the anarchically 'liberal' situation which Cambodia could not avoid because of the penury of trained personnel and state resources after 1979.

Among his audience were several NGO foreigners whose presence illustrated the new opportunities they had for association with local colleagues and for observation of the Cambodian leadership. This could, however, lead to misunderstanding when, as in this case, they had no idea what was being said. Perhaps, bored themselves, and noting the glum expressions of the conferees who were being chided for profiteering and shirking of duties, they may have imagined they were witnessing an example of 'hardline' repression of freedom.

Interestingly, Chea Sim linked the problems he had cited and their solution to the coming free elections, which he treated implicitly as a foregone conclusion. He told his audience that if they, that is the Cambodian government and its officials, did not get the people's support, they would lose the election and would thereby lose their present positions. Doctors and pharmacists, in order not to lose potential electoral support of the government must henceforth ensure that patients were given safe medicines, were treated politely and that distant provinces received at least minimal medical care.

Chea Sim certainly knows what he is talking about. As one of the old guard he was part of the Pol Pot led revolutionary apparatus in the days when it was winning popular support among the poor and in the countryside, against Phnom Penh which appeared increasingly as the home of the wealthy, arrogant and exploitative. It was with such support that Chea Sim and his comrades withstood US bombing and conquered Phnom Penh in April 1975. He may well be more sensitive to the danger of social divisions than younger people who only joined the revolution in the 1970s and who, since 1979, have emphasized the role of foreign powers in the Pol Pot victory rather than the popular support which that group enjoyed. Chea Sim must agree with the remark of an Australian education advisor to his Khmer counterpart that 'every imported Mercedes costs the government 10,000 votes'.
On 29 November Hun Sen gave a conference for the foreign press which was broadcast to the Cambodian people that evening. He noted that the situation in Cambodia might be less serious than, for example, the situation in the Philippines where President Aquino had declared a national emergency during the rebellion of December 1989. He also said that his government had yet needed to declare a state of emergency which, he emphasized, would give them the right to enforce general mobilization and confiscation of property in order to maintain internal security and national defense. This observation may have been directed less at the foreign journalists, who probably missed its significance, than at his local audience, warning the profiteers and corrupt among them that norms of international practice, even in the capitalist and formally democratic states, permit a government to resort to dictatorial and confiscatory measures in time of national crisis.

No country can afford to indulge in political and economic liberalization in wartime, least of all the small and weak. Even in the US, far as it has been from any battlefield in the 20th century, wars have meant conscription, rationing, internment of supposed subversives, and censorship. Demands for Phnom Penh to open up multi-party politics before the war is over are misplaced and could reasonably be construed as demands for them to commit political suicide. If a few people were detained earlier this year for insisting on the formation of a new political party and pluralism, as in Warsaw or Prague, that was a normal wartime measure and not necessarily a sign of a split between Hun Sen liberals and Chea Sim hardliners.

It is not surprising that the Cambodian government had rethought the policy associated with Hun Sen, of giving generous access to all journalists, many of whom took advantage of it to fill their columns with trivial or scandalous articles with little regard for accuracy or relevance. By the end of 1988 the government appeared to believe that Cambodia had made such progress that news reaching the outside world would be good news, whatever the preconceptions of reporters, and thus journalists were given easier entrance and greater access to ranking persons than at any other time since 1980.

The first notable example was Hun Sen's two hour interview with Elizabeth Becker and Jacques Bekaert in November 1988.14 Both of these journalists had exerted their talents to undermine the PRK throughout the previous eight years. In Becker's case the new policy was very successful. Since then her writings on Cambodia have been very supportive of Phnom Penh and virtually indistinguishable in tone from the work of the Cambodia specialists she had excoriated a few years earlier.

In Bekaert's case the results have been more subtle although his columns show more positive treatment of the Phnom Penh government than before. He also seems to have been responsible for one canard which fits perfectly with the propaganda of Phnom Penh's enemies. This concerns the alleged return of Vietnamese troops to Cambodia to counter an offensive in the northwest in early 1990.

Possibly the first mention of these troops was in Bekaert's report in Le Monde of 9 February 1990, written from Battambang, with the headline, 'Des soldats vietnamiens participeraient à la protection de Battambang', and most of the contents were devoted to the Vietnamese return, which he claimed to have been informed of by PRK
soldiers, including the gem that they were to be paid 'at least 100 dollars a month'. Bekaert's report was also printed in Jane's Defence Weekly, although without clear attribution, and on the basis of these two apparently separate and mutually confirming sources, the International Herald Tribune published the story on 21 February. It is intriguing to note that in Bekaert's later articles in the Bangkok Post on 6 and 8 February 1990, which were also in part about Battambang, he was unwilling to give the same emphasis to Vietnamese troops and they were only mentioned in very low key sentences towards the end of the reports. The story was not run in Bangkok until the Nation picked it up from the International Herald Tribune on 22 February and it was not published in Bangkok until 25 February by journalists in contact with coalition troops, perhaps after the coalition had learned what their problem was from the international press. Finally a Bangkok-based journalist, Richard Ehrlich, reporting from Phnom Penh, said 'several senior Western and Eastern diplomats in Cambodia and Vietnam agreed there is 'no evidence' to support reports that Vietnamese troops have been secretly fighting against the resistance in Cambodia' (Bangkok Post 8 July 1990).

Other journalists have written endlessly, and pettily, about corruption in Phnom Penh, refusing to acknowledge that corruption inevitably accompanies the economic freedoms which the same journalists insist Phnom Penh should maintain in emulation of Eastern Europe.15

The view of Eastern Europe from Phnom Penh, moreover, is shattering. Here was a group of industrialized socialist countries, who helped revive Cambodia after 1979, where thousands of Cambodian students have been sent for advanced university and technical studies, and whose living standards seemed ultra-modern to post-revolutionary Cambodians. Suddenly, they embrace pluralism and capitalism and within a year seem to go down the drain both economically and socially. Not even the new democracy and free speech cut much ice in Phnom Penh when children write home, as did the daughter of a friend of mine, that many of the 500-odd Khmer students in former East Germany have had to interrupt their studies and flee from small towns to the slightly greater security of metropolitan Leipzig, to escape being hunted by neo-Nazi hoodlums.

If the Eastern European states, which appeared stable, prosperous and progressive, could collapse so easily, a Cambodian does not have to be a 'hardliner', or a closet Khmer Rouge, to believe that political pluralism, beyond elections among the existing factions, is premature. Even in Vietnam, where the dangers of war are past and a new prosperity is evident, the leading pro-free market economist, Nguyen Xuan Oanh, recently answered a Western journalist's question about political pluralism there with the observation that Korea had developed under Park Chung Hee, Taiwan under the Kuomintang, and Singapore under Lee Kwan Yew. So much for the attractions of political pluralism to, not just political 'hardliners', but economic hardheads.

The Cambodian hardline reaction, if that is what it is, must also be viewed against what has not happened in the West in response to the tentative steps toward perestroika and glasnost in Indochina during the past two years, and which really began there even earlier than in Eastern Europe. Since 1979 the problem had allegedly been Vietnamese troops in Cambodia, and there were implicit problems that
their withdrawal would bring relaxation of US and ASEAN pressures. They left, but except in Thailand, nothing had happened, and statements by US regime figures could be construed as meaning they want the Vietnamese to interfere in Cambodian affairs again to help secure US policy goals. In Vietnam IMF and World Bank recommendations were followed, and the Cambodian economic liberalization in 1989 was similar. But even after the IMF in 1989 wrote a glowing report, and insisted Vietnam deserved normalization of economic relations, investment and aid, the US blocked all such plans.16 What is Phnom Penh to make of this, especially when, in contrast to the Vietnamese experience, their liberalization has resulted in explosive inflation, a flood of destabilizing luxuries, and politically dangerous class disparities? The disastrous effects were to be expected, given Cambodia's wartime weaknesses. Vietnam undertook its economic rationalization during and after withdrawal from the Cambodian war when all effort could again be directed to internal development.

Even when the US finally got around to taking a minimally concrete decision against the Khmer Rouge, refusing to support further recognition in the UN, it was accompanied by a tightening of restrictions on travel and trade by Americans in Vietnam and Cambodia. Coming when it did, ten years too late, an obvious finesse of domestic criticism, and simultaneous with Big Power projects which are biased against Phnom Penh, Cambodians can easily view it with some degree of cynicism, as nothing more than an element in the Nicaraguan Strategy.

All of the so-called peace plans have been designed to effect the dissolution of the Phnom Penh government, starting with the original Australian 'Redbook' of February 1990, whose authors thanked Congressman Stephen Solarz and Prince Norodom Sihanouk, and no one else, for inspiration.17 No more ardent enemies of Phnom Penh, outside the Khmer Rouge leadership, could be imagined. Hun Sen's adamant refusal to accede to the demand for dissolution, or surrender of authority to the UN, does not need to be blamed on Chea Sim in the background. He has the support of all those Cambodians within the country who still worry about a Khmer Rouge danger, and even hostile journalists agree that they are the majority of the population.

The week after I met them, the men among my Phnom Penh friends were scheduled to 'go down to the base'. This means two weeks to a month in a distant village living with the people, in order to explain and gain support for government policies. It is a duty of all officials below Politburo level, but not the duty of the free market operators who import luxury cars and fake medicines and swill cognac with journalists in the Cambodiana hotel, perhaps regaling them with horror stories of Chea Sim-inspired taxation. The 'base' may be Siemreap or Koh Kong, regions of actual or imminent Khmer Rouge attack. This is a duty from which some do not return, but if there were times in the past when officials from Phnom Penh may have had to justify policies about which they were less than enthusiastic, there can be little doubt that this time they will spare no effort to tell their more isolated countrymen about Hun Sen's view of the peace process, Chea Sim's statements on social and economic inequalities and the dangers to Cambodia of siren calls for pluralism and lax economic organization before peace is secure.

If they had seen it, they might even cheer the observation of a 'frustrated' UN official who pretentiously 'warned that unless the
Cambodians "get their act together" and arrive at an early settlement to the conflict, "they risk being set aside" by the world. If being set aside means nobody gives any more aid, sanctuary, privileged access, or diplomatic support to any faction, in particular the Khmer Rouge, this might be the ideal solution viewed from Phnom Penh.

December 1990
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Kokang

Jackie Yang Rettie*

On the 22nd of November 1990, at the small village of Narhsaieng, near Lao Kai valley in Kokang, three events of significance took place. Firstly, when the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) secretary 1st Major General Khin Nyunt stepped down from his helicopter and shook hands with the leaders of Kokang, it symbolised the truce between SLORC and Kokang, ending a thirty year conflict. After three decades of war, the people of Kokang could hope for the prospect of peace. Secondly, Kokang, a part of the region which Western analysts claimed to produce the world's biggest volume of opium, saw the destruction of three opium refineries worth an estimated US$ 500 million. This was the first step in a six year plan to eradicate the cultivation of opium in that area. However, whether this is a genuine effort on the part of SLORC to reduce the production of opium remains to be seen. And thirdly, for centuries remote and inaccessible, foreigners were allowed into Kokang territories. These were representatives from the United Nations Programme for Drug Abuse, the United Nations Development Programme, United States Drug Enforcement Administration, and Public Security Bureau, Yunnan, of the People's Republic of China.

Since the early sixties, Kokang has been fighting the Burmese military regime for autonomy and self rule. In 1968, the Communist Party of Burma (CPB) supported by China, took Kokang under its control. However in early March 1989, Kokang leaders took the lead in staging a bloodless coup against the Burmese Communist leadership sending the latter into exile in China. The present military regime wasted no time in cultivating the goodwill of the Kokang leaders by offering US$ 10 million in rehabilitation to the war ravaged region.

As the role of Kokang in the kaleidoscope of Burmese politics has become of increased interest to both domestic and international observers, it may be time to take a closer look at the land and its people.

Location

Kokang is a small strip of land situated on the northeastern border of Burma between latitude 24.1 and 23.2 and longitude 98.2 and 98.5. It is bounded on the east by Zhenkang, China and on the south by Kunlong. Except for Chan Tsing Shan in the south and Mong Ku in the north which are part of Kokang, the Salween river demarcates its western boundary. The total area of Kokang is about 2000 sq. miles.

Topography
Kokang is made up of high mountains in the north which gradually change to lower plains in the south. The mountain ranges are an extension of the Tibetan Plateau, some of which can be very steep. The highest mountain, Da Lian Shan, soars to more than 8000 ft. The average height of the mountains ranges from 1500 ft. to 4000 ft. The largest plain is Lao Kai and its surroundings, which is also referred to as Malipa valley.

Population
Out of a population of approximately 120,000, 90% are Han Chinese and speak a Yunnan dialect quite similar to the dialect spoken in Fengyi (Shunling), south China. There are other minorities such as Shan, Palaungs, Hmong, Kachin, Wa and Lisu.

KOKANG

The Past
Wedged between southwest China and northeastern Burma, before the migration of Han and other minority groups, Kokang was an area of deep jungle inhabited by wild animals which roamed its rugged mountains. In the 16th century, the first Han migrants entered by the east and began to cultivate the land. The settlements were scattered here and there. Gradually, to overcome the harsh elements and for the sake of security, small tribes were formed. Although Kokang was part of China, its location in the far remote south made it difficult if not impossible for the central and provincial governments to exercise control. The people living on the periphery were left on their own to practise self rule. This practice, nurtured through the centuries, led to a strong sense of independence. There were also constant inter-tribal wars, however among the emerging tribes one in particular rose in influence. The settlement of this tribe, Shin Da Hu, centred around present day Ta Shwe Htang and gradually grew to encompass the whole of what is today Kokang.
The man responsible for consolidating Kokang into a single political entity was Yang Shien Tsai. He was the first of the ruling family of the House of Yang which ruled Kokang for nine generations, lasting for 300 years until 1959. In 1840, Yang Guo Hwa, a direct descendant, received the copper seal from the Governor of Yunnan giving his family and heirs the hereditary rights to rule Kokang. In 1897, under the Peking Convention, Kokang was ceded to British Burma.

Prior to the convention, Kokang's relations were mainly with China. Under British Burma, Kokang embarked on a new and different phase in its history. In 1909, the Chinese and British Governments agreed to establish working committees to resolve border issues. Under the agreement, representatives were to meet annually at Nonma east of Longchuan. The Burmese team consisted of representatives from Lashio, Kutkai, Bhamo, Namkhan and Kokang. In 1929, the British Government bestowed the title of Myosa on Yang Wen Pin, then the ruler of Kokang. Invariably, Kokang found itself veering closer to Burma.

The Present

Kokang's participation in the Second World War was well documented in British war chronicles. In 1942, when the Japanese occupied Burma, the Government of Burma retreated to Simla, India. In the same year the Japanese attempted to penetrate into Kokang, part of their plan to invade China from Yunnan, however they were repelled by Kokang forces. Being the only area free of Japanese, Kokang became a point of strategic importance to the allies. From Kokang they were able to monitor Japanese movements crucial to the Allies' plan to recapture Burma. The Myosa, Yang Wen Pin, was later decorated with an O.B.E by the British Government for his wartime efforts. However, in his acceptance speech, the Myosa said that the honour rightfully belonged to the men and women of Kokang who gallantly fought and died in defence of their homeland. Today, there still stands in Ta Shwe Htang, a column erected in memory of those who died during WW 2.

After the War, many tasks of serious and great proportion faced the people of Kokang. Of great urgency was the issue of citizenship. The Chaofa of Kokang had great difficulty persuading the newly independent Burmese Government to grant Kokang Chinese citizenship. However in 1948, Kokang Chinese were classified as an indigenous race of Burma. In practice, however, many Kokang Chinese still had difficulty in obtaining citizenship. A case in point was the harassment and arrest of Hoo Kya Chin, a Kokang national, by border officials. He was released only after 300 Kokang nationals protested.

The task of post-war reconstruction was also immense. The state coffers were almost empty and the assistance from the Shan Federation and Central Government was severely limited. Nevertheless, plans were drawn up to improve the general welfare of the people of Kokang relying on domestic resources under the leadership of the Chaofa, Yang Kyein Sai. By 1959, however, under pressure from the Central Government, the 35 Shan Chaofas relinquished their hereditary powers in exchange for compensation. Yang Kyein Sai, the Kokang Chaofa, however, refused compensation, reasoning that power cannot be exchanged with monetary compensation but should be returned to the people and not to the central government. Indeed, to this day, the compensation allocated for the Kokang Chaofa's family is still being held in abeyance by the Government of the Union of Burma. The
departure of the Chaofa left a power vacuum and a period of uncertainty and instability followed. The plans for the development of Kokang virtually stopped. In 1962, when Ne Win seized power in a bloodless coup d'état, several of Kokang's leaders including the Chaofa were detained. While still loyal to the deposed Government of U Nu, Yang Kyein Sein, the younger brother of Yang Kyein Sai, escaped to Kokang and initiated a rebellion, carried through by Pheung Kyar Shin, lasting 30 years.


Editor's Note: The author has requested that anyone wishing to reproduce this article in part or whole please first contact her c/o the Thai Yunnan Project.

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Charan Manophet

Thanet Caroenmuang

About ten years ago Charan Manophet, the Chiangmai singer, caused a considerable stir in the the artistic world of Thailand with his most appealing rendering of kam Mųang songs. Many of his songs became very widely known and gained great popularity throughout the country in the years that followed.

The reasons for this popularity, were the extensive use of the northern language in the songs and the melodiousness of the accompaniment and singing, not only in the songs of the region but also in foreign songs and those he wrote himself. The manner in which he adapted the use of the guitar in the presentation of northern regional songs was another reason for his great popularity.

Charan's songs have many other notable features, particularly the variety of subject matter, emotion and feeling; also the manner in which he has picked up well-known regional songs, and with his singing given them recognition throughout the country. An example of this is the song Noi Caiya, a moving tale of the life of a man of the country. Other such songs are Uï Kham (Grandmother Kham), Ma Mya19, Caw Duang Dork Mai (You beautiful flower), Mae Kha Pla Corm (The fish-vendor). Songs that relate the way of life of the region and countryside, are Samlor (The tricycle-[rider]), Saw Rong Bom (Tobacco Factory Girl), Mida, and Lung Ta Kham (Old Uncle Kham). Joyous, humorous songs are Saw Motasai (Motor Cycle Girl), Saw Chiangmai (Chiangmai Maid), Phakkar Dong (Pickled Chinese Cabbage) and Phisaw Khrap (Good day, Big Sister).

The deep feelings his songs express towards the old, children and the community at large, in their words, and in his conversation has brought him the reputation of an artist with sympathy and goodwill towards society as a whole.

Even more important, talking to those who have heard the entire repertoire in Kam Mųang, there is the impression of a strong sense of pride in being Khon Mųang and speaking Kam Mųang20, which gives Charan the important role of helping to foster the arts and culture of the provinces and bring them to a level of appreciation
comparable to that of the capital, give the regional populations pride in their regional origins, and increase their determination to conserve and develop their own sense of identity.

It is certain that Charan Manophet is not the only artist of Lanna. There are many other song-writers of the same period, but his reputation has made him the prototype of the regional artist fostering the sense of regional identity.

The popularity of his songs has had a beneficial effect on the popularity of other Kam MÝang song-writers such as W. Wachayan, Winai Bhanduraks and Nithasna Laorngsri whose songs have since appeared on the market.

But all that was in the past. We know that for many years now Charan has run restaurants in Chiangmai and Bangkok using his name to identify them. He has also acted in many films and plays, and won many prizes. The latest news is that he has released a new jazz tape.

Charan may now be considered a national artist and his work must be seen as international - no longer confined to regional Lanna. He is an artist with great talent who will surge forward producing endless new work for his society. But considering Thai society, there seems to be some mechanism which draws people with skills from every corner and gathers them together in the capital. There are at least two consequences. The stage of the capital city demands arts and culture much more of a national character than regional and the artists who come to live in the capital far away from the places of their birth and growing up, are constrained to produce new works which reflect their contemporary surroundings rather than the environment of their regions - now very distant from their immediate awareness.

The state should nourish those creative artists who have a reputation for representing the culture of their region in their work, by giving them ample opportunity to research their own local environments in the production of new work which ultimately is for the benefit of us all. But in truth, Thai creative artists are left to compete and struggle among themselves, for their own success, and they have little opportunity to pursue their own particular dreams.

During the early 1980s Charan was a Lanna artist who promoted and developed the arts and culture of the northern region and inspired many others to take an interest in these matters. But now, even though many groups have taken over these duties, we see a deterioration in local cultures from one region to another.

There are many monasteries and groups of individuals who teach the Lanna language to anyone interested, with no thought of any financial reward. There are many monasteries and associations who use the the Lanna script on their name boards, but it appears there are many people of Lanna, both young and old, who cannot speak Kam MÝang, because, not only the schools, but also parents and relatives, use only the language of Bangkok with young people.

Almost anywhere you go, you will see monasteries in which the bot (uposata), the viharn and the old monastery roof are being demolished, and the new bot and viharn are only skeletons, because many more millions of baht are needed to finish the building. Not only do we want to make our monasteries much grander, but we engage in intense competition to see who has the bigger buildings. But these buildings have abandoned the old styles of Lanna and are mostly built like those in the monasteries of the capital.
The Lanna country is mostly composed of mountain ranges running north-south, with small, narrow valleys between them, all highly fertile and especially suited for agriculture. The decline in agricultural prices has forced large numbers of rice and swidden farmers to sell their fields and gardens, and these are replaced by housing estates, commercial orchards, tourist resorts and golf courses. If things go on like this, in the not too distant future we shall have to buy our rice from China and Vietnam.

In the past we used to hear that young girls of the north were tricked and sold into prostitution, in circumstances of great misery, in the central and southern regions. Now, however, the large majority of prostitutes from the north are young girls who voluntarily go looking for agents to lead them to brothels in Bangkok and Haad Yai. The money they send back home allows their parents to build new houses, valued at many millions of baht, appointed with modern furniture. In addition the may buy an utility for the father and a motor cycle for the younger brother. On important festivals she may return home with bundles of money to build a new monastery for the village.

The young girls of the village gaze at her with envy, coveting her beautiful, expensive silk dresses, her perfectly made up face and her nose expertly lengthened in Bangkok.

Charan Manophet, we miss you, where are you, then? We long to hear your songs about the life of Lanna.

Khaw Phiset 28 January-3 February, 1991: 47
Translated by Gehan Wijeyewardene.

* * *

'Folk Songs' of Charan Manophet

Gehan Wijeyewardene

In 1981 Charan Manophet released what was probably his best received collection, 'The children of steamed rice' - so meaningless in English, but so evocative of Northern Thai popular culture. The staple of northern Thailand is steamed glutinous rice, a characteristic the region shares with the Shan, the Lao and the Northeastern Thai and almost nobody else. They also think nobody else can really eat and enjoy it. The song is fast, rollicking, boastful, yet self-deprecating, both Northern and Thai at the same time. As a popular figure it was perhaps Charan's greatest year yet. He opened a restaurant in the heart of the old city, in a house which uniquely blended Thai and European styles, the only accessible building of this type which does not offend, and more, is a joy to behold.

The restaurant was conceived, it seemed, as a museum of Northern Thai culture. Downstairs Charan, or other singers, sang his own songs, and sometimes Western songs, often demanded by his customers, but clearly following the host's inclination as well. On the first floor the guests sat on the floor and listened to a traditional Northern Thai orchestra. There was much more the management tried to put in, but the enterprise was not a success and by 1983 it had closed.

Unlike most other popular Chiangmai singers Charan is a
national figure, and his very success distances him from the Chiangmai
he quite clearly loves. Chiangmai, people say, is disdainful, or
envious, of its sons and daughters who have popular success in the
country at large. Others counter with accusations of arrogance. Of
course songs like 'Home on the Mountain' do not help. Does Charan
really prefer the rude life of the hills to his own people, the Khon
MÝang?

Charan has always been a balladeer with a social conscience.
The first song that brought him popular attention was Ui Kham
'Grandma Kham', which told of an old lone woman who lived by gathering
and selling Ipomea aquatica from the swamps around the city. Charan
says the song is based on a real life character he knew as a boy, who
taught him the traditional form of singing (sor) and told him stories
of her life and the past. The pathos of the song appealed to a
generation of students and other young people who had made a
revolution themselves, and had then seen it destroyed. To the outsider
the song may seem sentimental, but it is still applauded by his
original audience whenever it is performed in public. Again, the song
alludes to facts which only the insider can know. The plant the old
woman gathers is a popular, but cheap vegetable, there for the taking
by anyone who wants it. Nevertheless her neighbours allow the old
woman to gather the plant and then buy it off her; charity is bestowed
and self-respect maintained.

Old age and poverty are themes to which Charan returns,
motivated by this social conscience. One very popular song tells of a
little boy and his grandfather. The idyllic picture of old man and
grandson walking hand and hand is shattered by a motor accident that
kills the boy. Charan says the song springs from the memory of a real
accident he witnessed, and it is a protest against the abominable road
toll. The most likely ways of dying in Thailand are by murder or motor
accident.

Another theme is concern for the hill peoples. His songs have
enough of the flavour of the common people to be spiced with
stereotypes, perhaps not always welcome to the groups concerned. But
there is also a real concern, though again one may sometimes accuse
him of romanticism. Is there really more goodwill among the hill
people than there is among anyone else? The song in which the desire
to explain the hill people to the Thai is inextricably mixed with
romantic stereotype is 'Mida'. This is Charan explaining the character
of his song:

It was a true hill village, there were none of the modern
conveniences. I could observe their customs. Mida ... she was a very
beautiful widow without children. She was chosen from among that
category of women to give sex education to youths of fourteen and
fifteen. She taught them everything; how to bring up a family, and how
they should conduct themselves in social relations. Mida taught them
person to person, one at a time. Young boys were not allowed to
embrace girls on the courting grounds until they had gone through
Mida's lesson. The courting grounds were on a little rise behind the
village. A field had been cleared and round it were benches. After the
evening meal, when the moon was bright, the young men took their
musical instruments and played them there. Others danced. The young
girls sat and watched. If a girl liked a young man she would get up
and dance with him. If they reached an understanding they would
disappear together, pair by pair, into the forest. Those who had not been instructed by Mida could not enter the courting grounds under any circumstances. ... I observed that she would choose a young boy who seemed a suitable pupil and slowly instruct him in the ways of conjugal life. She would take two or three weeks - this was Mida's duty. But she herself could not love anyone. She had nothing left, it was total sacrifice. She could only escape the duties of Mida if she happened to get pregnant. I have spoken to her. She herself did not think it very strange. She said it was a task that had to be performed, and a great honour, too.

But it is not only the uncomplicated sexuality that makes the hills and hill people attractive. It is freedom, simplicity and goodwill. Sometimes we may think, and many of his fellow Khon MŸang do think, there is a certain naivetŽ in his attitude.

In the same interview just quoted, Charan talks about his early education and introduction to music, and acknowledges his debt to the American singers of the sixties and seventies. He makes the point that his music is not just a recreation of the past, not merely new words to old tunes and in old forms. It is part of his time, as well as his place. So his best songs, or some of his most popular, touch on the changing ways of Chiangmai youth, the uncertainties of young girls caught between poorly paid jobs and the temptations of bright lights and fast cars. These songs are slight, but they have humour and lightness of touch, which somehow helps make them more serious. Sometimes it is difficult to know if the English-speaker is not hearing the song rather differently from the monolingual Thai audience. In the 'Tobacco Factory Girl' the third line is thaa ruut tha thaa lip nep khan khiw khiw taa, literally 'smear rouge, put on lipstick, snap on clips, paint eyebrows, paint eyelashes'. It is difficult to know how much of the charm of this line to the English-speaker (a charm which unfortunately vanishes in translation) comes from the recognition of the words 'rouge' (ruut), 'lipstick' (lip) and 'clip' (kip) as English words. It seems so appealingly correct, the modern Chiangmai lass. But as the theme becomes more serious, the predicament of the girl plunges, with the language, into a demotic idiom which requires a native-speaker of Kham MŸang (as the language of Chiangmai is known) to elucidate, and even then the metaphor remains opaque to the outsider.

**Tobacco Factory Girl**

Little girl, little girl, pedalling a bicycle,
Going to work at the tobacco barn;
Cheeks rouged, lips red, painted lashes, painted brows,
To sort leaves at San Khong village,
In the factory of the Chinese Koh.
Oh so beautiful, like an angel from heaven,
Lovely, like a ripening pomelo.

Whose child, from where, that you so lovely
Must scrape a living sorting tobacco leaves?
Sweat flows, scurf falls,
But it hardly brings the world's goods.
I have heard your father guards you jealously.
People like us sleep early, rise late,
Eat, and sleep again.
At noon awake again, then eat.
Oh, men, they are neither one thing nor the other.

Listen, little one, beware the world of men.
They will deceive you, betray you,
Sell you, and kill you with sorrow.
You like fast cars? They will beguile you and flatter you.
Riding an ox cart you need never fear a broken heart.

Bedecked with garlands, sweet-smelling jasmines,
Eyes as bright as the mynah bird,
Beware that vile spirits do not chase
Your white legs into the buffalo wallow.

Chiangmai Maid

I am a Chiangmai lass;
Not long and I shall be a maid.
Daily the lads come courting,
With soft words, and sometimes cheeky.
Oh that Lad from Lamphun!

Which one should I choose?
Later there was Brother Kaew from Chiangrai,
Then the one with the teeth.
Brother Kong from Phrae.
Then Kham and Mun, and Som and Mee.

He said that he would come for me,
But now it's been a year.
Father and mother have prepared the bed,
But the lovely lad has vanished like the dew.

I shall no longer trust any of them,
But marry a Meo and live on the mountain tops.
Sell cloth and precious stones,
Sell rings and chains
And live on Doi Pui.

Good day, Big Sister

Good day, big sister, remember me, the one you called
Your little brother?
Tell me, do you remember ...la la!
Hey, Sis, I'm grown up now. The girls keep chasing me.
Each would like to have me for her own... la la!

We met two, three years ago. I was so little ... and so
naughty.
Can no longer love you like an elder sister - just beg to
be your lover,
Oh, you can love me like a younger brother.

Oh, Sis! I can no longer think of you as Elder Sister. Just love you without end. No longer want to be your little brother ... la la!

Home on the Mountain

My home's on the mountain;  
Clouds and mist fill the sky.  
We live among the tall grasses,  
Our lives that of the mountains.

I am neither rich nor poor  
But not one to complain;  
Born on the mountain.  
I envy no one.

Your house is in the town  
Roofed with bright tiles  
My house is in the forest  
Roofed with dried leaves.

You like Western songs,  
I like the sound of the syng.3  
There! tyng, tyng, ta, tid, tyng  
I play the forest syng

We have no bright lights,  
No TV, no piped water,  
No cinema, no massage, no bars;  
No cola, pepsi, or fanta.

No fillet fried in oyster sauce;  
On the mountain we like scorched rice.  
We have no scents, no fancy waters;  
But in our place, we have ... hmm... goodwill.

If you want rice,  
You must plough the fields.  
If you want fish,  
You must look in the stream.

If you plant cotton,  
You could have a beautiful shirt;  
But if you want to play the lottery...  
Oh, I am so sorry...

Chiangmai, 1985

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Some Observations on Yunnan's Tea Industry

Dan Etherington and Keith Forster*
Yunnan holds a special place among the eighteen tea growing provinces of mainland China as the probable home of the commercial tea plant, Camelia sinensis. Both the commercial species, the smaller leaf var. sinensis and the larger leaf var. assamica trace their origins to the Yunnan-Thai region. The oldest known and largest tea bushes in the world have been discovered in the forests of Yunnan, some growing to heights of over 10 meters.1 As recently as 1981-85 the Chinese Tea Research Institute mounted a major botanical expedition to seek out naturally-growing tea trees in the forests of Yunnan. In all, the team discovered seventeen new varieties of tea plant, classified on the basis of their seeds, flowers, and caffeine and theanine content.

The temperature and sunlight in Yunnan province are very conducive to the growth of both large and small-leaf variety tea bushes. Although rainfall is insufficient in some areas, in the mountain districts humidity is high and cloudy days plentiful, ideal conditions for tea. Moreover, there is great potential for expansion in the mountain areas. At present, 120 of the 128 counties in the province grow tea.2

The tea districts in Yunnan are divided into three geographic zones. First, south-west and south Yunnan, where the soil is thick and natural conditions are excellent for the development of the large-leaf variety and comparable to those prevailing in India and Sri Lanka. At present, tea output there makes up 83.3% of the provincial total and this is where future development will be concentrated. This region mainly produces black and Pu'er tea (a compressed tea favoured in Hong Kong and by overseas Chinese communities). In central Yunnan, where the natural conditions are not as good as in the south and south-west, 6.7% of Yunnan's output is grown, and this is mainly green tea. Because communications are relatively developed and there is a good supply of labour, the potential for future development exists, so long as fields are situated at low altitudes and in a suitable micro-climate. The third area is north-east Yunnan which suffers from cold air streams but is suited for growing the small-leaf variety. The north-east grows 4.9% of provincial output, producing mainly green and border tea. Again the supply of labour is good, but because of its marginal climate, the potential for development is limited.3

General Trends in Yunnan

Since the "Years of Natural Disaster" 1961/63, tea output in China, as recorded in official statistics, has increased at the very impressive compound growth rate of 7.2 per cent per year. Such consistent growth over 25 years is remarkable for any crop and is particularly so for a perennial requiring substantial investment in land preparation and planting. The overall performance of Yunnan has nearly matched that of the country as a whole, with an average growth rate since 1965 of 6.7 per cent. Such long-term and consistent increases in output have to be based on new plantings, and it is here that the situation in Yunnan diverges from the rest of the country.

A general pattern emerges from an examination of the fragmentary information on tea planting that is available from official statistics. These reveal that the major expansion of the tea area in many tea-producing provinces occurred during the twelve years from 1965 to 1977 (i.e. during the Cultural Revolution or so-called
"ten years of disaster") when the area nearly tripled from 377,000 to 916,000 hectares. During this period, Yunnan's increase was also impressive, rising from 42,300 to 97,400 hectares. However, in the following twelve years, while the area in the rest of the country declined marginally, the area in Yunnan continued to increase markedly. This is illustrated in Figure 1 for the period since 1970. Simultaneous with this large expansion in new tea area, in the 1980s the province has been renovating low-yielding fields at the rate of nearly 700 ha per annum.4

The effect of the rapid recent planting has been for Yunnan to have an increasing proportion of the "new" and "unharvested" areas of tea. Thus, while in 1982 Yunnan had only 9 per cent of the national new and unharvested area, in 1989 the province's share had risen to 28 per cent. In the case of Yunnan, unlike the situation in many other tea-producing provinces, the area "not-harvested" is more genuinely immature tea rather than abandoned tea lands. The implication of these trends is that whilst the strong growth in national output over the last two decades may be coming to an end, output in Yunnan is likely to continue to grow strongly well into the next century. From a level of 42,750 tons in 1989 the province's own forecast of tea production is 100,000 tons by the year 2000.5

Although Yunnan produces a wide variety of different types of tea, the major distinction is between 'black' and 'green' tea. Figure 2 gives the total State procurements of tea by these categories since 1970. The "private sales" category is the difference between total procurements and total production. It would seem very clear that Yunnan is gearing up for a vast increase in the production of black tea. County-level production bases have been established to specialise in broken black tea for the export market.6 This has many interesting implications, the first being that because black tea is not widely drunk within China the bulk of the new output will be exported. This is the clear intention of recent developments. Yunnan probably possesses the best natural environment in China for the production of broken black tea (consumed in the West) plucked from large-leaf
varieties. The implication of developments in Yunnan could be critical, both for world black tea prices and the future of tea industries in exporting countries.

In 1984 the value of tea production comprised 5.92% of the output value of the province's cash crops. By the end of the 1980s Yunnan possessed 3,000 crude processing factories with a processing capacity of 30,000 tns, and 70 refineries with a capacity of 50,000 tns. The main varieties processed were black, green, puer, scented and compressed tea.

Yunnan, like 7 of the other 14 major tea-producing provinces has established a specialised tea company (the Yunnan Tea Import and Export Company), which comes under the jurisdiction of both the provincial Bureau of Trade and and Economics and the national Native Produce and Animal By-products Import and Export Company in Beijing. The provincial agricultural, land reclamation, labour reform and overseas Chinese systems also run tea farms and processing factories, but these are normally administered without specialised business management structures. Since economic reform, the tea provincial companies have basically changed from administrative bodies to economic entities and have become business and service type companies. There are three types of business management according to the product type, and two of these are present in Yunnan.

First, export tea comes under the unified control and accounting of foreign trade departments, which in Yunnan's case is the tea company. Second, Yunnan is a major producer of border tea. This tea still comes under mandatory plan and management with an annual unified plan for production, processing and allocation issued by the Ministry of Commerce in Beijing to the principal tea companies in Yunnan and other border tea producing provinces. In 1984 the Ministry assigned Yunnan the task of producing Kang brick and other compressed teas for Tibet, and compressed tea for minority nationalities in Sichuan province.

Field Trip Discussions
In May 1990 we spent nearly a week in Yunnan province.
investigating the local tea industry and holding discussions with our hosts from the provincial tea company. The most interesting and successful part of our stay was an overnight trip to Yuxi district, south of the provincial capital Kunming. There we spent a morning with local government officials exchanging views on the successes and problems the industry is experiencing.

Tobacco is by far the most important cash crop in the district - tea is of minor but growing importance. The crops are grown on different land and there is no competition between them. The importance of tobacco is seen in the layout and facilities of Yuxi. It is the most prosperous looking district town we have seen anywhere in China with taxes raised from the cigarette factory contributing greatly to the construction of local public facilities.

Tea has been grown in the district for nearly 200 years. The area totalled about 200 hectares (3,000 mu) in 1920s but was reduced to only 20 (300 mu) by 1949. Three counties (out of 8 plus the city district) account for most of the tea. Expansion of the area is encouraged by subsidies of $120-800 per hectare (30-200 yuan/mu) depending on the quality of the land. The contract period for land ranges from 3-20 years and varies across villages and counties. It is now recognised that a 10-year period is a minimum for perennials. Fertilizer is subsidised and loans are interest free. From about 1,500 hectares in 1978 producing 250 tons, the district had 2,800 hectares producing 600 tons in 1987 and 3,500 hectares producing 750 tons in 1989. Exports started in 1986. Fifty-six tons were exported in 1988 and 93 tons in 1989.

Yields were said to vary from 450 to 3,000 kilograms per hectare (30-200 kg/mu). Poor management and short contract periods are the prime cause of the low yields. Because tea plots are so widely scattered in the district, the main extension method is through demonstration farms such as the one which we had visited the previous day (see below). There are 6 refineries and 25 crude processing plants in the district, so there is very strong competition and gross over-capacity. The decentralisation of fiscal policy in the 1980s has resulted in a proliferation of tea factories. Some have also been set up in poor areas for welfare reasons because tea is used as a development cash crop. Four factories (refineries) are integrated with leaf production but the others rely on village production and cannot guarantee either the quality or quantity of the (crude) tea they purchase.

During the briefing, the Yuxi Foreign Trade Bureau affirmed an hypothesis of ours regarding the unique structure of China's tea production/processing system compared to that in most other countries. A spokesman admitted that "The availability of transport is the critical reason that there are not more integrated factories because they are remote and scattered, the people have to process their own leaf into crude tea."

The Shanhou Tea Factory

We now move on briefly to describe one small example of a newly planted tea area which we had the opportunity to visit whilst in Yuxi district. The day of our visit to the Shanhou tea farm 160 km south of Kunming in Eshan county was dismal and rainy, giving us limited visibility for much of the journey. For 153 km the road was
excellent, wide and well maintained. This is probably because of its strategic importance as a main trunk route to the Vietnamese border and because there is no complementary railway route. There was a steady stream of traffic consisting mainly of 3-5 ton trucks. Going south, they were mainly carrying coal, reinforcing rods, thin bamboo, and fertilizer. There were some coming north carrying hardwood logs. For most of the way the highway was lined on both sides with gum trees which had often been lopped severely, presumably for making eucalyptus oil.

As soon as we got away from the flat land, the hills loomed out of the rain stark, eroded and bare. It was as though all the topsoil from the hills had been taken to the plains for the paddy fields. Nowhere on the whole trip did we see hills that might have original climax vegetation on them. The soils appeared to be red podzolic. Red was the predominant colour: of the hills, ploughed fields, rivers, bricks and houses in general. Villages were consolidated. Individual paddy fields varied in size from a quarter to one hectare. Most puddling was being done by two wheeled tractors but when we got into the hills some water buffalo were being used.

Just south-east of Lake Dian we passed by Kunyang, the home town of the famous Chinese navigator and explorer Zhenghe. We then passed through mountains before coming to the District capital of Yuxi where we were to return for the night. As the road neared Eshan county, the hills were planted with very sick looking softwoods. The tea farm is 7 kilometers off the main highway on a stony, but good dirt road cut out of the steep hillsides. It climbs a considerable height while twisting through the hills. We were in rain and cloud much of the time, on a clear day it would be a spectacular drive. The farm is isolated and lies at an elevation of between 1,900 to 2,050 meters, with the highest tea field at 2,268 meters.

This mountainous Han village (which has a history going back to 1665) now has a total population of 600, of whom 270 (77 families) are the traditional villagers and the rest outsiders. It was formerly extremely poverty-stricken, relying on trade in primitive iron foundry work (the area possesses very high grade iron ore) and handicrafts. This poverty was not only absolute but also relative to other areas in the District which had made their fortunes in growing tobacco. The villagers of Shanhou were so poor that outsiders would not marry the locals, and even today the inducement of the immediate granting of town residential status is offered to country girls marrying into the village.

As part of a district plan to assist poverty stricken areas, it was decided to expand and modernise the Shanhou foundry and investigate the possibility of growing tea. The foundry was tackled first and now produces 5,000 tons of iron billets per year and returns about 80 per cent of net income from village enterprises. With the financial backing of the district and the technical advice of the tea department of the Foreign Trade Bureau, the village started planting tea in 1981. Villagers working outside were recalled to prepare and plant the fields, and from 1981 to 1984 over 900 mu was prepared or planted. In 1989 the tea factory signed contracts with local peasants to open up a further 5,000 mu of tea fields, so as to achieve the target of exporting 500 tons of tea per annum by the year 2000. Planting density is 45,000 to 60,000 plants per hectare.
is a very high density by international standards and is due to the
practice of planting three seedlings per hole with in-row spacing at
about 30 cm between holes. Two rows are planted close (30 cm) together
on the extensive system of terraces. This is an enormous undertaking
on the steep hillsides. There was no evidence of "training" young
bushes for lateral spread but the tea bushes were in excellent
condition.

In 1989 the factory produced 37.5 tons, 85% of it First Grade,
and the factory management expect the maximum production from the
existing fields to be at least 50 tons. The best field has a yield of
about 2,250 kilograms per hectare (150 kg/mu) and from what we saw
this excellent yield (five times the provincial average) is quite
possible. Average yields of about 47 kg/mu just exceed the national
average for harvested areas of tea.

From the initial analysis of the potential of the area it was
realised that water would be a critical factor because the rains do
not come until mid to late May (ie. summer rains and they had
certainly come for us!) and yet the weather is warm enough to pluck
tea here from February to late November. For this reason, in 1987 a
supplementary irrigation system (costing about US$60,000) was
installed for use in early spring. The money came from profits
returned by the tea factory in its first two years of operation. The
first production of broken black tea was in 1986, and by 1988 output
had risen to 29 tons, all of it assigned to the export market.

At peak production 200 pluckers are employed half of whom are
regular workers from the village and the other half casual workers
from a minority group that lives in the area. Typical plucking rate is
about 20 kilograms of green leaf per worker per day (of 6 to 8 hours)
but some double this in the peak season.

Given the isolated location and the decision to produce black
tea, it was essential that the farm do its own processing. The
factory, with a capacity for about 150 tons of made tea cost about
US$100,000 to equip. Again, we were impressed: built of local
materials and (typically) devoid of paint, the plant was well laid out
and clean. Wet and bedraggled from our field visit we were invited to
sample their finished product from the current season. We were
surprised how good it was and it was undoubtedly one of the best broken
black teas we have ever tasted. This is not something that one can
achieve just by good management, it also requires the right
environment. Here, the high elevation, the clouds and the humidity are
important factors contributing to the excellent quality and flavour.

At present 150 people are employed in the foundry and tea
factory, and the total value of output is 3.6 million yuan (roughly
US$1 million) or 7,000 yuan per person, i.e. about US$2,000. Annual
profits total 550,000 yuan (2,200 per employee) 80% from iron and 20%
from tea. Average per capita income in 1987 was 1,454 yuan.

In general, tea yields in China are very low compared to
international standards. Casual observation during a number of field
visits in five provinces show that much of the tea is in a state of
neglect. The Shanhou tea farm was a very encouraging operation to
visit. If it is representative of the quality of operation on other
areas currently being planted to tea in Yunnan then, from a technical
point of view, the province in going to rapidly climb the ladder in
importance among China's tea growing provinces.
The opening of the tea factory and the development of the iron foundry has enabled the local community to benefit from the financial success of both enterprises. The employees can now afford durable consumer items such as washing machines, TV sets, radios, sewing machines and cameras. The factories have built a TV relay station and an earth satellite receiving station, new housing for their employees, a public bathroom, a primary school and a medical clinic. The village truck transports employees to the county town on their days off and on market days.

Conclusion

The impression we gathered from our short trip and from a reading of the official literature is that Yunnan is perhaps best placed and best able of all the Chinese tea-producing provinces to develop further the tea industry. Natural conditions are favourable and the tea varieties suitable both for the domestic and overseas markets. Most importantly, it is understood that the industry must take the road of regionalisation, specialisation and intensive farming to survive and thrive: that the strategy of relying on increased output through the expansion of area must be replaced by raising yields, quality and emphasising economic returns. Yunnan's greatest liability is its geographic isolation and distance from export ports. Cross-country shipments to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe are feasible, although the distances are great. To link Yunnan with the coast there has been a plan mooted to build a railway from Kunming through Guizhou province and down to the port of Beihai in Guangxi. This project would be an expensive and difficult undertaking, and would certainly require central government financial assistance.

During our stay in Yunnan we were impressed by the knowledge and enthusiasm of our guide, Mr Su Fanghua from the provincial tea import and export company. Almost alone of all the officials from the different departments we encountered in almost a month of travelling over China, he seemed to have a firm grasp of the important issues confronting the tea industry. The three-man tea research group of which he was a member and which authored a fascinating report into the future of the industry in Yunnan, made eight highly useful recommendations to lift the performance of the industry.11

These included the establishment of a tea bureau directly under the provincial government and responsible for the industry as a whole; the setting up of markets and auctions to expand exports and domestic sales; the establishment of production bases and specialist factories and workshops processing exclusively for the export market; the consolidation of scattered fields into joint operations running their own factories which combined crude and refined processing; the popularisation of hybrid bush varieties and CTC (crush, tear and curl) processed broken black tea as well as other famous and fine quality teas; the strengthening of lateral links with both interior and coastal provinces so as to expand domestic and export markets; the establishment of a tea production service and accreditation system to determine cultivation and processing regulations, fix standards for different varieties, issues licences for new tea fields and processing factories, and strengthen tea research and training of technical personnel; and determine a complete set of policies and measures to promote the development of the industry and speed up production such
as the provision of development funds, economic incentives, tax breaks and special privileges and concessions.

These proposals all make good sense. Similar suggestions have been raised, although not so systematically or comprehensively, by other Chinese observers of the industry. However, implementation of the recommendations seems unlikely in the foreseeable future in light of the siege mentality that has virtually paralysed official decision-makers in the country since the 1989 student revolt.

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At the 175th Judson Jubilee Rangoon, Burma, December, 1990

Jeff Petry

Given the current political situation in Burma, officially called Myanmar by the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Committee (SLORC), Baptist Headquarters in Rangoon (Yangon) was fortunate to be able to host an extraordinary event between December 13-16 1990: the 175th anniversary of the arrival of the first American Baptist missionary, Adoniram Judson, and his wife Ann, who had come to Burma 177 years ago. Due to the popular uprising in Burma of 8/8/88, the celebration was postponed indefinitely, until permission was finally granted by the SLORC in November 1990, one month before the event was to take place.

Being an anthropological fieldworker based in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and studying the cultural consequences of Christianity (and literacy) on "the Karen", the jubilee was indeed a cause for celebration not only to mark the arrival of Christianity in Burma (which has had both positive and negative consequences), nor only because the oppressive government appeared to be relaxing its stranglehold on the country, however slightly, but also for the exciting professional (and personal) opportunity to be (literally) surrounded by a large number of the people I had been researching for the last few years, conveniently gathered together in one place. I was not disappointed. At final count, 20,000 Baptists from fourteen minority groups were present, many having travelled great distances over a period of weeks by specially arranged ships, extra train cars, trucks, buses, bicycles, and foot. The following peoples were represented: Sgaw Karen, Pwo Karen, Karenni, Pa-O, Kachin, Chin, Shan, Naga, Wa, Mon, Arakanese, Akha, Lahu, Lisu as well as ethnic Burman.

All wore Christian pins, crosses, and emblems of their particular organizations, or conventions, often wearing their distinctive and colorful ethnic costume. Booths were set up by each group for the purposes of relating their own particular Christian history, with more detailed literature also available. Many displayed translations of the Bible into their language, along with Biblical storybooks, theological education guidebooks, and information about evangelical training. Especially prominent were large framed photographs or paintings of the missionaries who had worked with them (and were highly venerated), their own group's first convert, and large maps and graphs depicting church growth, annual number of converts, and remarkable statistical observations on a number of other aspects of the Baptist enterprise in Burma. Most groups present had as
their fin-de-sicle program the evangelization of every member of their group by the year 2000, along with the goal of converting fifty per cent of their people to Christianity within the same time frame. The Karen, for example, are approximately twenty per cent Christian in Burma, although the numbers do not reflect the actual size of the Christian community, not to mention their influence, since Baptists count only those Baptized as believers (i.e., no infant baptism), as opposed to the smaller Christian groups (in Burma and Thailand) who count all members of the family, such as Presbyterians, Lutherans, Methodists, Seventh Day Adventists, Catholics, and a large variety of other denominations.

The reasons for the enthusiastic embrace of Christianity by many minority groups in Southeast Asia (and South Asia) are complex—historical, geo-political, inter-ethnic, and mythological, the latter explanation most frequently employed in the literature. In brief, the Karen, for example, have many "myths of literacy," relating how they lost their books and their writing in the past, and were waiting for the younger, white brother to return from across the water with the gold and silver books, thus returning to them their lost literacy, and with it their lost power, their lost greatness, and their lost land. Suffice it to say that the missionaries were pleased to learn of these "myths," or this "readymade bridge."

In many ways, Christianity in the Karen context can be viewed as a revitalization movement, a vehicle for cultural maintenance and ethnic differentiation (especially from the dominant 'Burmese"Nthey object to being called "Burmese Karen," preferring "Karen from Burma"), and by far the primary carrier of Karen literacy. Conversion to literacy, however, in my opinion, has had greater cultural consequences for the Karen than conversion to Christianity (although often concomitant), given the remarkable affinity between native Karen belief systems and Christian ideology. The spirit of the word, literally, has transformed (Karen) social and political organization, and identity, to a degree and in a manner Reverend Judson and his successors had not intended, nor indeed could even imagine.

For political as well as linguistic reasons, services at the Jubilee were conducted in Burmese, alternately led by leaders from the different groups. Choirs sang, as did more Western-influenced Gospel-rock singers. Ethnic dancing and music were performed, and a play was put on (twice by popular demand) depicting events in the life of Judson, showing the trials and tribulations of the pioneering missionary and his heroic wife, including his harsh imprisonment in Ava, the smuggling of his recently completed translation of the Bible into Burmese to him in a pillow, and the untimely death of his wife. I was constantly impressed by many people's detailed knowledge of their Christian history, symbolically, graphically and dramatically represented throughout the weekend.

Their current political relationship with the Burmese government was manifest explicitly and implicitly in other ways, however. Despite the virtually exclusively religious nature of the gathering, the Tatmadaw (Army) was never far away: Burmese soldiers were strategically placed around the circumference of the grounds, just out of sight; army trucks with heavily armed soldiers behind machine guns made periodic drive-throughs of the church grounds (at which point cameras and video recorders were quickly concealed); and
just slightly less conspicuously, plainclothes Burmese MI (Military Intelligence agents) self-consciously mingled with the crowd, contributing to an undertone I felt was everpresent in Burma, whether in Rangoon, Mandalay, Pagan, or Manerplaw, of a general cautiousness, watchfulness, and, in a word, guardedness.

With painful memories of the past—both distant and recent—many present were looking towards the future with hope. The Christians, however, are not the only ones in Burma waiting for a new world order.

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Translations

SKY GOD WORSHIP
(Naxi Scriptures continued)1

Translated from the Chinese by Jiang Ren.

At the time when the old year is replaced by the new year,
we did not commit any fault or omission to the gods.
Now the new month comes to the world,
this is the month of Dong and Sai. 2
Now, when this new month comes,
we have not stained our hands with things disrespectful to the Sky God.
We have not forgotten to sprinkle the sacrificial grains with water,
nor to hold the ceremony of Luomandan, 3
We have not forgotten to collect the sacrificial rice,
nor did we forget to make the sacrificial wine.
On the third day of the New Year,
we did not forget to husk the sacrificial rice again with mortar and pestle.
On the fourth day of the New Year,
we have not forgotten to measure the sacrificial rice,
nor did we forget to come to the altar on time,
nor to erect the sacrificial board and the wonder stones.
We did not forget to burn the Big Incense and to kowtow, and to bring the baskets for the ceremony,
we did not reverse the order of the procedure required by the ceremony,
we did not quarrel with anyone,
nor did we ever gossip behind someone's back.
On the fourth day of the New Year,
we did not forget to hold the arrow-shooting ceremony,
to make bouquets of flowers used for the sacrificial rite,
to offer a live rooster to the Sky God, and to present a whole pig as sacrifice to the Sky God.
On the fifth day of the New Year, we did not forget to butcher the sacrificial pig,
to bake nine pieces of liver for the Sky God.
Before the sacrifice was cooked,
we did not forget to sprinkle the sacrificial board with fresh blood,
and to bring the baskets used for the rite.
We did not forget to free the white-footed spayed ox as the captive
animal, 
to present the live rooster, 
and to erect the Dingtian Column5 made of white poplar with an egg on top.

We, the descendants of Pudu,6 though we tried honestly to avoid faults and omissions, may still have committed errors. The faults we committed, we admit before the Sky God; for the omissions made, we apologize to the Sky God; all the misunderstandings will be straightened out; and all the tangled affairs will be solved, before the Sky God. We offer this white-footed sacrifice, this whole pig, to the Sky God, and we pray the Sky God for bestowal and protection.

At the time of creation, 
the earth, the earth of Meimeixuraodui7 first appeared below the sky. There would be no high and deep space without the existence of the earth, there would be no vast expanse of our territory without the earth. This earth is Cuihengcuizi’s earth,8 this earth feeds countless cows and sheep, this earth provides grain and rice, as good as gold and silver, this earth accommodates great forests, like having her shoulders covered by dark green jade,9 this earth is decorated with turquoise on her forehead, this earth lies on a bed made of gold, silver and jade, this earth has breasts which are big and full, this earth is fertile and adept at breast-feeding, this earth has well-built shoulders, this earth is immaculately dressed.

We, Pudu’s children, are fertile, we become rich, never exhausted, we win every battle whenever we set out on expedition, never experience frustration, we have become gifted, are quick in movement, and our people are able to prolong our lives. We know that all these are bestowed by the Earth God.

At the time when the New Year comes to man's world, in this new month of Dong and Sai, we have not done anything which is disrespectful and disloyal to the Earth God. We did not forget to sprinkle the sacrificial grain with water, we did not forget to hold the ceremony of Luomandan, and we did not forget to make the sacrificial wine.

On the New year's Day, I did not forget to hold sacrificial rites for Sanduo and Shiri.10 On the second day I did not forget to find the sacrificial wood, and to wash my head and hands and feet. On the following day, to burn the Big Incense and to kowtow with fervour,
and to husk the sacrificial rice with mortar and pestle again, on the following day.
On the fourth day I did not forget to prepare enough rice, to eat the thin gruel cooked with wild vegetables, to come to the altar for the sacrificial rite to the gods, to erect the sacrificial boards and the wonder stones, to bring the baskets for the rite, and to expel the filthy air gathered around the altar.
We did not disrupt the order which decrees who should walk in front and who behind, we did not quarrel with anyone, we never gossipped behind anyone's back, we did not forget to free the white-footed spayed ox as a captive animal for the Earth God, to present the live rooster, and to erect the Dingtian Column made of white poplar with an egg on top.

[stanza repeated]

At the same moment when the sky and the earth appeared, the God Xu appeared in between the two. The cypress tree growing on the high cliff is the Sky God's and mankind's uncle. The oak tree which grows on the ground is the Earth God's [i.e. the God of the place, Xuraodui ] grandmother. Cypress trees grow around the rim of the sky so that to enable the sky to remain stable and firm. Oak trees link the sides of the earth so that the earth becomes steady, not shaking. One white cypress tree has one thousand twigs, granting one-thousand-year's blessings to mankind. One black cypress tree has one hundred branches, guaranteeing one hundred year's propitiousness to man's world.

[repetition deleted]

Editor's Note
Due to an oversight, Jiang Ren, the translator of the above text, was not credited for her translation of Fei Xiaotong's essay titled "Ethnic Identification in China" which also appeared in the December issue of Thai-Yunnan Project Newsletter.

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News and Correspondence
Karen Exonyms and other Marginalia to Lehman's comments

Christian Bauer*

In order to avoid any confusion and possible misunderstandings I should point out that the reason for my labeling Lehman's etymological discussion "erroneous" derives from the following
paragraph of his 'Who are the Karen and if so why...' (1979, p.229):

On the one hand, if we pay attention to the Mon linguistic development that derives broken or falling-diphthongized vowels from original plain ones, we can reconstruct something like */k̂rang/ from Mon k̂reang. This looks suspiciously like the /(k̂)yang/ above, the more so if we are influenced by the Modern Burmese pronunciation in which original /t̂/ has fallen together with /y/.

Not all 'broken' diphthongs in Mon derive from monophthongs: /-oa#/ and /-ea#/ (in open syllables) correspond to earlier diphthongs. However, modern Mon /-ea»/ (in pre-velar contexts) does correspond to an earlier monophthong, which, co-incidentally, has been retained in some modern Mon dialects. But the earlier form is /-e»/, and not, as Lehman surmises, **/-a»/. Consequently, the ensuing linkage between a non-existing Mon form **/k̂ra»/ and his ethnonym */(k̂)yang/*/ is indeed erroneous. The Middle Mon form, and the form encountered in some modern varieties in Burma, is /k̂re»/.

Another point concerns his remark on page 252, footnote 14, of his 1979 essay:

Old Mon seems to have had no *ai (Shorto 1965:96) and its place was taken by e (or ä).

However, the glosses accompanying the Alop yi' frescoes of ad 1130 do have ai, transcribed by Shorto in 1971 as eai, as do two 8th century Mon votive tablets from Mahasarakham, Northeastern Thailand; this is discussed in some detail in JSS 78.3(1990) [currently in press]. I point this out just for the record.

In my Guide to Mon Studies (Melbourne: Monash University, 1984, in some ways now superseded by a number of my own publications) I briefly mentioned folk-etymologies of the word Talaing. Readers are referred to Robert Halliday's The Talaings (Rangoon: SGP, 1917), especially pp.3-4; since it is not quoted in my 'Language and ethnicity', it is worth quoting here:

Dr Stevens derives it from the Mon ita lui¤m 'Father, [we] perish', which he thinks would be often heard during the troubulous times that followed Alaungphra's conquest of Pegu. Another explanation of the term, given by the Talaings themselves, is, that in the days of the persecution, which need not be always regarded as being late as Alaungphra, mothers used to say, le¤n ra, kon ai, '[We] are undone, my child', and that the Burmese, hearing the word le¤n frequently repeated, nicknamed the people Talaing (tale¤n). Le¤n, 'to be undone', is pronounced just as Talaings pronounce the second part of the name given them by the Burmese. There seems no trace of this name in the Talaing writings. "Mon" is the term used throughout, even when others are the speakers [...].

If we find an origin for it [sc. Talaing] in a Talaing phrase, it seems most natural to connect it with the le¤n of Talaing writers, used often of the destruction of That™n. "Tanlaing" may very well represent tan le¤n, 'stands ruined'.

E.O. Stevens was Haswell's successor at the American Baptist
Mission in Amherst at the beginning of this century; his rendering 
"Father, [we] perish" may well be a euphemism for what Mons usually 
translate as 'bastard'. It has been pointed out (I do not recall 
exactly where, but seem to remember some British colonial records) 
that earlier census (or land-roll) figures must be evaluated in light 
of this popular etymology: Residents in Mon areas (which were later to 
become Amherst, Pegu, and Tavoy districts) had to identify themselves 
as either "Burman" or "Talaing", and obviously Mon did not identify 
themselves as "bastards". It remains to be seen to what extent this 
folk-legend contains some truth.

I am glad Lehman brought this issue up again; the etymology of 
ethnonyms is fraught with difficulties Ñ all the more reason to 
continue the discussion and exchange views.

Bangkok, 7 December 1990
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Dehong

Khun Khondip Na Ru'andoem writes:

I have been following the debate on the translation of the 
name "Dehong Dai", given by Acharn Thawi Sawang-panyangkun as Tai tai 
khong and by Dr Gehan Wijeyewardene as Tai khorn.

In response to the call from Acharn Thawi for the views of 
readers of the journal Silpawatthanatham on this issue, I would like 
to offer the following points:

[1] Dr Wijeyewardene is correct in opting for Tai khorn if the 
term is taken to refer to the inhabitants of Mu'ang Khorn, which is 
the main town in the Dehong Autonomous Prefecture, in the same way 
that Tai maw refers to the inhabitants of Mu'ang Maw, and Tai che fang 
to the people of Mu'ang Che Fang.

[2] Acharn Thawi's preference for Tai tai khong is correct if 
the term refers to the people of the Dehong Autonomous Region as a 
whole. The term Tai tai khong is not an expression defined by Thai 
experts, but by the Chinese Government in Yunnan Province. As 
evidence, I would like to cite the book printed by a Chinese work unit 
titled "Khe foek kham tai toe-ue khong", that is, "[Han] Chinese study 
Tai tai khong language", a photocopy of which I've included with this 
letter for publication [see insert].

INSERT CUTTING WITH TAI AND CHINESE LANGUAGE

[3] The word toe-ue is equivalent to the Thai word tai, which 
refers to the direction "south", opposite to nu'a, or "north". However 
in the Tai tai khong language toe-ue refers to the westerly direction,
and loe to the easterly direction [author's emphasis—Ed.]. Tai tai khong thus refers to the group inhabiting the west of the Khong (or Salween) River.

As for the group residing to the east of the Salween, these are referred to as Tai nu'a khong, that is the Tai Lue of Sipsongphanna.

I've obtained this evidence from many well-informed Tai tai khong and Tai yai people. Acharn Thawi and Dr Wijeyewardene may like to check whether or not it's accurate.

In the Tai tai khong language the directions "north" and "south" are referred to as horng and chan.

To sum up, both parties are correct in different ways.

1st January 2534. Translated from Thai by Scott Bamber.

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Book News

I.G. Kossikov's monograph Ethnic Processes in Cambodia (in Russian, Moscow Kauka 1988) presents a complete synthesis of the various sources relating to ethnic processes in Cambodia. The author generalizes the scientific sources and introduces, for the first time, the special ethnographic data, collected in his travels in Cambodia in 1966-68 and 1970-73.

The examination in depth of the various factors—ecological, demographic, economic and social—determining ethnic processes (chapter 1), is a particular feature of the work. For the first time, in the Soviet literature, one is given information on the complex demographic character of Cambodia in 1953-1987; the quantitative changes are established as well as the dynamics of changes in the ideology of the population from one period to another; the structural changes, such as changes in age and percentages of males and females as well as socio-economic changes. The author evaluates changes and their possible consequences for the development of the country. Changes in the density of the population, the details of its territorial distribution, the specific characteristics of urbanization in Cambodia, and the direction of both internal and external migration are examined from a dynamic point of view.

Chapter two is devoted to the study of the ethnic composition of the population of Cambodia and inter-ethnic relations; the chapter includes the most recent data on ethnicity in the country during the mid-1980s.

Chapter three draws attention to the inherent impossibility of resolving the ethnic problems of the period of constitutional monarchy, when the feudal and bourgeois elite profited from its appeals for the reinforcement of the internal unity of the state.

The nationalist policy based on the supposed exclusivity of the Khmer ethnic group and led by the military regime of Lon Nol failed completely (chapter four).

The consequences of the genocide committed by the Pol Pot clique, catastrophic for the ethnic-national development of the country, are analysed in chapter five.

An important step in the improvement of ethnic relations began...
with the proclamation of the Popular Republic of Cambodia, whose constitution guarantees equal rights to all ethnic groups in the country.

Trans. from French resumŽ by Gehan Wijeyewardene

* Other recent publications which may be of interest to readers of the Newsletter are:


"For the general reader, this book outlines the past as remembered by villagers, and explains the culture of the Lao people of the Northeast. Based on development work by NGOs, it outlines the beliefs, rituals, ceremonies, skills and knowledge of villagers. This is set against a background of rapid change".

Available from the Thai Institute of Rural Development, 230/52 Soi Mahawithayalai Ho Kan Kha Thai, Vipavadi-Rangsit Road, Bangkok, 10400. (Allow 20% postage).


"A complete translation of the Thai text on children's diseases, Khampee prathom chindaa, discussed in [the author's earlier book] Medicine, Magic and Evil Spirits. This work was compiled in 1871, from earlier texts of unknown origin, by a committee of court doctors appointed by King Chulalongkorn. It tells the story of the origin of the world, the origin of man, conception, pregnancy, birth and the diseases of children. The translation gives the scientific names of more than 800 animal, mineral and herbal substances mentioned in the hundreds of recipes for medicine included in the text."

Available from Bibliotech, The Australian National University, GPO Box 4, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia. Telephone: (06) 249 2479. FAX: (06) 257 5088.

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The Australian National University
Thai-Yunnan Project
Department of Anthropology
Research School of Pacific Studies

Bibliography and Database

The Thai-Yunnan Project has released a preliminary version of a Bibliography relating to the region of mainland Southeast Asia and
those areas of the Peoples Republic of China which have ethnic and cultural relations with the peoples of mainland Southeast Asia. Together with the Bibliography is the Richard Davis Card Index. The Index is an introduction to Thai (and Tai) ethnography prepared by the late Richard Davis for the writing of his book Muang Metaphysics (Bangkok: Pandora 1984).

The Bibliography and Index are now available as Hypercard stacks on the ANU computer network through any Macintosh computer connected to the network. We hope access will also soon be available to students through the Chifley Library.

For readers who have access to the ANU network, if you are not a 'registered Coombs user', select and open the menu item 'Chooser'. Select 'Appleshare' and the 'ANU' AppleTalk Zone. Under 'Select a fileserver' select and open 'Coombs IBM'. Connect to the Coombs fileserver as 'Guest'. The 'Allofus' disk icon should appear on your screen. On this disk open the folder named 'Public'. Inside is the 'Thai-Yunnan' folder with the Bibliography and Index. There is also an Information stack which you should open and read before proceeding. Please enter any comments, suggestions and additions in the stack named 'Comments'. This is in a separate folder so that it remains unlocked for users.

If you are a registered Coombs user, you should have direct access to these stacks on 'Allofus'.

When available, anyone wishing to access the stacks from Chifley Library, must borrow a disk from Short Loans which will connect to the network. The procedure will then be as above.

The Bibliography was prepared by Ann Buller and Gehan Wijeyewardene, and will be upgraded and extended from time to time. The Richard Davis Card Index was put on Hypercard by Ann Buller and Ian Hodges.

Enquiries from universities who may wish to place these stacks on their own networks, or other interested persons, to the Convenor, Thai-Yunnan Project, Department of Anthropology, RSPacS, ANU or phone Canberra (06) (249) 3273 or E-Mail gew400@coombs.anu.edu.au.

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Thai Studies Centre

The Australian Department of Employment, Education and Training wrote to the Vice- Chancellor of the ANU on 15 March regarding the funding of a Thai Studies Centre. The letter reports that the assessment panel of the department recommended that

... subject to certain undertakings by the ANU, a grant of $555,000 over three years from 1991 be provided to the ANU for the establishment of a national Thai Studies Centre.

In assessing the relative merits of the proposal the panel indicated that the ANU's proposal offered the best existing resource base and overall plan for developing a Thai Studies Centre.
The panel acknowledged the ANU's strength in Thai language teaching, applied linguistic research into teaching Thai and Thai research, particularly in the fields of sociological and anthropological studies. However, the panel was strongly of the view that in developing a coherent program of Thai studies to serve a range of groups an extension of the scope of Thai studies must include strong capacities in Thai politics, economics and business studies. This would enhance the Thai Studies Centre's relevance to community and business interests and enable the Centre to draw nationally on community and business resources.

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New Course in Burmese language

Latrobe University has introduced teaching of the Burmese language as a course for credit within a degree. The course will be taught by the University's Division of Asian Languages, as a full unit, Burmese I, from 1991. During the course students will be introduced to spoken and written Burmese.

Enquiries to: Dr David Bradley, Division of Asian Languages, Department of Linguistics, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Victoria 3083. Telephone (03) 479 2362.

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Conferences

Twentieth Conference of the Canadian Council for Southeast Asian Studies

"The Quality of Life in Southeast Asia: Transforming Social, Political, and Natural Environments"

October 18-20, 1991
York University
Toronto

Enquiries to: Dr Penny Van Esterik, Department of Anthropology, York University, 4700 Keele Street, North York, Ontario M3J 1P3. Telephone: (4160) 736-5261. FAX: (416) 736-5735.

*

XVII Pacific Science Congress

"Identifying Ethnic Minorities: Scientific Classification or Cultural Policy"

(session to be included in the Congress sub-theme "Contemporary Anthropological Perspectives" under the theme of "Population, Health and Social Change")
Honolulu, May 27-June 2 1991

Enquiries to: Professor David Y.H. Wu, Institute of Culture and Communication, East-West Center, 1777 East-West Road, Honolulu, Hawaii 96848. Telephone: (808) 944-7628. FAX: (808) 944-7670.

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Ethnic Groups across National Boundaries in Mainland Southeast Asia

Now Available
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Paper US$18.00; Hardback US$24.00
Add US$2.00 per copy.

1See Khao Phiset 24-30 December 1990 and 31 December-6 January 1991.
4Anderson (1990), pp.46-47.
5See Matichon Sutsapada Vol. 34, No. 11, 10 March 1991, pp.7-9.
8 The Nation, Bangkok, 8 November 1990.
9 James Pringle, 'Fears of a return to the "red way" in Cambodia', Bangkok Post 12 November 1990; there is 'little concrete to it yet although there are straws in the wind', 'neither Vietnam nor China would welcome planned United Nations-sponsored elections and a UN peace-keeping force here'; and 'why would Vietnam want its own unhappy population to see free elections next door?', said a Western diplomat; "Raoul Janner ... said, 'Cambodia is hesitating between a Western way and a red way to peace''; 'Cambodians do, after all, refer to their adversaries as "brother enemy." And 80 percent of the top leadership of the Phnom Penh regime are themselves former Khmer Rouge, including ... Hun Sen ... Chea Sim and ... Heng Samrin'; 'Chea Sim did not [flee to Vietnam]; he joined the Vietnamese only after the invasion'. The 80% figure is in fact a serious exaggeration, a propaganda element which has been orchestrated during the past two years by academics and journalists hostile to Phnom Penh.
10 'Hardliners outflank Hun Sen. In the capital, new official directives seeking to limit contacts between foreigners and Cambodians have been introduced'. Hun Sen 'has lost influence internally, according to East European and Soviet envoys' ... In the past six months, Chea Sim has filled most government and party positions with people loyal to him, diplomats here say... The hardliners are made nervous by talk of a UN presence, dismantling of their regime, free elections and a multi-party system, they say'. James Pringle, Bangkok Post 20 October 1990.
11 Nicolas Cumming-Bruce, 'Khmer Rouge ignore ceasefire to advance on Cambodia's capital', Guardian Weekly 8 July 1990.

13 This is a problem throughout the Third World. Sophie Davies 'Third World a dumping ground for unsafe drugs', Bangkok Post 9 September 1990.

14 Reported by Bekaert in 'Hun Sen: we're making progress' Bangkok Post 17 November 1988, p.7. The interview took place in France.

15 Indeed, James Pringle, "'Rampant graft' hurting image of Hun Sen regime', Bangkok Post 21 September 1989, labelled as 'leftist-leaning' a foreign relief official who remarked that 'We [the Western world] complained they were too socialist, so they liberalized the economy, and along with materialism came corruption'.


* Jackie Yang Rettie was born in Kokang and lived there until 1960.

19 See Newsletter No. 5: 26-28

20 Khon MŸang means 'people of the mŸang' and Kam MŸang 'language of the mŸang', terms the people of north Thailand use for themselves and the language. The initial consonants of the original Thai, which is not consistent, have been retained in the transliteration. In Central Thai both terms should have the initial 'kh'. In the Northern Thai language, they are both pronounced with unaspirated 'k'.

1 Lit. 'neither smooth gourd nor bitter gourd'.

2 Doi Suthep, the mountain which stands adjacent to the city of Chiangmai. One of the Hmong (Meo) communities on this mountain pioneered the sale of exotic clothes, trinkets and souvenirs to tourists.

3 A stringed instrument.

* Economics Department and Contemporary China Centre, Research School of Pacific Studies, ANU.


2 Ibid, p. 4.


8 Mu Jianwei (Department of Special Plant Management, Ministry of Commerce), "Observations on China's Tea Business Management System",
1 The first part of this translation appeared in issue No.11 (December 1990) of the Newsletter.

2 Dong and Sai are the two patron saints very sacred to the Naxi people. Dong is the saint of yang, the masculine principle in nature, and Sai is the saint of yen, the feminine principle. There is one special volume in the Naxi Scripture which is called Dong-Sai-Cou-Shou (‘Dong and Sai expel the filthy air’). Before beginning many sacrificial rites, Dong and Sai should be invited to the ceremony, and two stones should be set on the altar to indicate their presence. Usually, the Naxi people also set up two ‘wonderstones’ to indicate the two saints in front of their houses.

3 Luomandan is the Naxi term for the ceremony of burning the 'Big Incense' for the Mountain God and the Dragon King. The word originally means 'closing the back gate of the Great Valley.' It is said that when Shairelien and Cuihongbaobai came down from the sky, thick fog blurred their way. The sky and the earth cleared only after they burned incense at the end of the Great Valley. This then became a Naxi ceremony.

4 The 'Big Incense' is the incense specially made respectively for the Sky God, the Earth God and the God Xu. Usually a bamboo or pine tree, 2-3 metres high, will be used as the base of the incense. A paper bag of about one metre height will be attached on the top of this base, filled with all kinds of incense collected from the bush. Paper flowers will be used to decorate this Big Incense.

5 Literally, it means the 'column that can reach the sky'. The Column is about 0.3 metres high. It is set up behind the Sacrificial Board inidicating the God Xu. Its top is split in order to hold an egg.

6 Pudu is the name of one of the communities within the Naxi nation. The main communities are Pudu, Guxu and Guchan. Each community has its own schedule for the sacrificial rite. The Pudu people hold the rite on the fifth day of the New Year, the Guxu on the eleventh day, and the Guchan on the eighth. Within each community, some people prefer a collective ceremony, while others prefer to perform the rite in each individual household. Among the three communities, the rules and procedures applied for such ceremony are basically the same, and the scriptures used are identical.

7 Meimeixuraodui is the name of a place. According to legend, it is the place for beauties.

8 Cuihengcuizi is Zhelao'apu (the Sky God)'s wife and Cuihongbaobai's mother.

9 From here onwards, the earth is described as a woman. Some people think it is the image of Cuihengcuizi.

10 Sanduo is the patron saint of the Naxi nationalities. According to myth, he lives at the Snow Mountain of Yulong (the Jade Dragon Mountain), with his temple built at the foot of the Mountain. Shiri is the Mountain God and the Dragon King.
11 This is to show that they still remember the hard life of the Naxi ancestors.
12 The cypress tree is the symbol of the God Xu because the word is pronounced the same as that of the God Xu in the Naxi language.
13 According to Naxi myth, before Charelien (the first ancestor of the Naxi people) went to the Sky God to ask to marry his daughter, the God had planned to marry his daughter to Meirukexikele, his uncle's (i.e. the God Xu) son. After that, Meirukexikele often brought hardship and suffering on mankind. In order to relieve the suffering, the Naxi people offer sacrifices to the God Xu (the Uncle) as well as to two other Gods. The Dingtian Column is believed to mean to relieve hardship and suffering.
14 Xuraodui stands for Meimeixuraodui. (see above, footnote 7).
* Institute of Language and Culture for Rural Development, Mahidol University, Salaya Campus, Nakhorn Pathom, Thailand.
1See Thai-Yunnan Project Newsletter Number 11 Dec. 1990, pp.24-25.