The 5th International Thai Studies Conference

The 5th International Thai Studies Conference was hosted successfully by SOAS in London from 5-10 July. While the Conference maintained its reputation for spirited debate, the London Conference was thankfully free of the political controversy which accompanied the 4th Conference in Kunming, and there was strong representation from Asia, Europe and America. The choice of SOAS was a very popular one with participants, located in an interesting and scenic part of London well supplied with a number of the amenities conducive for stimulating academic discourse: bookshops, museums, restaurants and pubs.

Conference papers were presented in panels organised under a wide variety of themes, ranging from 'traditional' topics such as minority groups, literature, law, the arts and linguistics, to more recent topics such as the environment, development issues and HIV/AIDS. While this situation is indicative of the richness and health of Thai studies at present, the diversity of papers also presented problems for participants in their choice of which panels to attend. This was exacerbated in some cases by the fact that a number of panels were organised with a view to the publication of papers, which meant that presenters were obliged to attend all sessions in order to contribute to final discussions. In the case of the HIV/AIDS panel, its popularity necessitated a move to another building, several hundred metres away from SOAS, which created considerable difficulties for those wanting to move between panels.

For the reasons outlined above, it is difficult to make any comment on the academic content of the conference as a whole. Nevertheless there are a number of issues which appear to have attracted considerable attention from participants in discussion across a number of panels at the conference. One such key area to emerge was the issue of the concept of 'community', particularly in the context where macro issues such as the environment, development and HIV/AIDS can foster a situation which pits the state against local interests or traditions. This is especially relevant in regard to the subject of HIV/AIDS where interventions necessarily cut across traditions and social structures, as revealed in efforts to control prostitution and to give women more control over their lives; as one Thai speaker at the conference put it 'all the things which we regarded as beautifulÐcaring for parents, looking after brothers and sistersÐare now hurting us'. For reasons such as these, speakers in a number of panels argued strongly for a critical reassessment of the concept of community in Thailand and among peoples in other countries of the region. In a slightly different guise, this issue also surfaced in the context of the discussion of 'ethnicity', 'borders', 'maps', and national symbols in the minorities panels.

Similarly, the topic of gender, though it received considerable attention in various panels at the Conference, did not
The prominence of HIV/AIDS at the conference also touches on a matter of some importance related to research funding which bears comment. It has been evident for some time that HIV/AIDS has been attracting considerable amounts of research money, in a general context where research budgets have been shrinking. In Thai Studies the effect seems to have been to reduce research in other areas, and this was reflected in the HIV/AIDS panel at the conference where a number of contributors appear to have switched their focus to HIV/AIDS from other areas of study. While this has been important in addressing the problem of AIDS, it will be a matter of some concern if the situation continues; it is becoming clear that in addition to research which directly relates to HIV transmission and the care of sufferers, it is essential that basic research be continued on the social forces which serve to place people at risk. In other words, studies such as those related to subjects such as poverty, social injustice, gender relations and family structures, in both the present and past, should be supported. Even though the link between factors such as rural poverty and politics and the problem of HIV/AIDS in Thailand may seem to be less immediate, ultimately they determine the extent to which an individual is exposed to risk of infection, his or her ability to cope, and the overall impact of the disease. It is important that basic research on these areas continues.

It was decided that the next International Thai Studies Conference should be in Thailand. However, at the time of writing, the exact venue has yet to be finalised. The selection of Thailand conforms to the 'home and away' pattern which has become established in selection of the site for the Conference, reflecting the Thai-centric focus implied in the name 'Thai Studies'. However, once again (see TYPN 9 1990), the diverse range of papers presented at the London Conference gave more than ample evidence that the interests of participants extend far beyond the borders of Thailand. Perhaps it is time that earnest consideration was given to changes in the name and the choice of venues for the conference which would more accurately reflect this situation.

Congratulations to the organisers of the Conference for their excellent efforts, and for the warm hospitality which was extended to all participants.

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Apology Owing to an editorial oversight no acknowledgement was made in the June issue of the generosity of the National Thai Studies Centre in providing a grant to assist in the publication of Number 21 of the Newsletter.

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TRAFFIC, TEAK AND TRAFFICKING: OBSERVATIONS FROM THE BURMA ROAD

John McKinnon

Between 1-28 May 1993 I toured Yunnan with colleagues attached to institutions related in various ways to the Yunnan Academy of Social Sciences. My principal task was to carry out a reconnaissance of rural areas and to discuss with Chinese academics the possibility of setting up research on highland land use and resource management and how this has changed in response to liberalisation.

Because of widespread interest in the nature of Burma-Chinese trade, especially logging and military equipment, every
time I travelled on the Burma Road I periodically recorded details of on-coming vehicles and where possible identified the load carried. This proved to be difficult. Of the more than 2,500 vehicles sighted over six days between 12-22 May some 50 percent were government five tonne trucks that conscientiously covered their load with a uniformly dark brown canvas tarpaulin. Where they hauled a trailer behind them the same care was taken. It was only possible to see what a few covered trucks were carrying when the tarpaulins were badly secured and/or trucks were overtaken from behind.

Despite this difficulty readers of the Newsletter may be interested in the preliminary results I was able to put together. Given the scarcity of reports, the information and figures provided here give some indication of what is going on.

Trade

Over the past few years since trade between China and Burma picked up momentum, Highway 320 D the old Burma Road D which links Kunming to Wanding and Burma has become increasingly busy. The route is by far the most important transport link between the two countries and it is down this road that all heavy freight is moved. Discounting local vehicles such as the iron buffalo, bicycles and tractors, every minute of every day, excluding Sunday, between 8am and 8pm an average of eight to ten vehicles pass any given point along the section of the road between Dali and Kunming carrying people and agricultural produce, logs and timber to Kunming, and industrial supplies away from the city. On the Dali-Baoshan section the number of vehicles drops to a third of this density but from Baoshan on through Mengshi to Wanding and Ruili the traffic density remains consistent, two-way traffic accounts for three to four vehicles every minute over the twelve-hour daylight period.

Construction Work

The route is considered to be important enough for the government to assign permanent road maintenance teams and to undertake reconstruction work. A new bridge spans the border at Wanding, and China has extended their investment into upgrading connecting roads in Burma. Officials who attended the opening of the Bhamon-Myitkying (Manching) highway on 15 May were still in Tengchong (well off the Burma Road) when I made an overnight stop a few days later. New freight routes are likely to be opened up, but the Bhamon-Myitkying sector seems to be specifically designed to ease the extraction of teak.

Tourism

Traffic is not restricted to freight. Between five and eight percent of vehicles are buses, many carrying tourists. Domestic tourism extended from China to Burma is relatively easy. I was told that Chinese citizens with proper documentation can take vehicles across the border and travel as far as they have a mind. Westerners who have the same inclination need to obtain permission from the Burmese authorities in Kunming, but it was not clear whether applications would be dealt with as liberally as Westerners wishing to cross into Burma from Thailand at Mae Sai, Chiang Rai.

At Wanding immigration officials refused me permission to leave China and a few days later in the middle of the Laying market Burmese soldiers posted in the middle of a line of stalls informed me that I could not go any closer to the all but invisible border that I was told lay ten metres ahead of me. A few well-placed RMB may have taken me the distance but I did not try.

Dai Shwi further back along the border and people in Ruili had warned against crossing in isolated sectors for fear of armed robbery by Burmese government soldiers. Dai villagers whose communities straddle the border were prepared to purchase guns for self protection.

Kunming-Dali

Between Kunming and Dali the two-lane highway that forms the Burma Road carries very heavy traffic. Hold-ups caused by reconstruction work rapidly lead to long queues of impatient truck drivers and vehicles of every kind. Between 10.30 and 11.00am 22 May, one hold- up caused by road works resulted in the backup of 247 vehicles travelling in the direction of Dali. Half an hour later a stop for a head on collision held up a similar number of
I expected to see more evidence of accidents. Well out of sight of Kunming, the surface gets rough, the road twists and turns and vehicles backup into convoys. When these pass they can be counted, but recording individual characteristics is not so easy. Broken rocks put under the wheels of trucks forced to stop for repairs or laid along the road to indicate a hazard ahead are invariably left where they were placed. Evidence of how 40 years of socialism created a driving fraternity with a deep concern for the safety of other road users? On a calm day the air is heavy with exhaust fumes and heavily laden trucks keep traffic speeds down. When one driver of a faster vehicle pulls out to overtake he is followed by a convoy of the crazed that snakes a lazy tail of passing vehicles which survives for as long as it takes the leaders to meet trucks travelling in the opposite direction. PLA training which encourages drivers to save petrol by freewheeling five tonne-trucks, even bigger buses and cars downhill, adds another element of chance to survival.

On more challenging sections of the road it is extremely difficult to keep a reliable record. Vehicles pass quickly in considerable numbers from around blind bends. The surface is rough and evasive action must be taken with alarming frequency. Often just getting pencil to paper can be difficult.

As with all long distance traffic on the Burma Road Chinese government trucks make up by far the largest proportion of the total number of vehicles. Between Kunming and Dali over 70 percent of all vehicles are government trucks of which in turn 70 percent are covered and 30 percent uncovered. A large proportion of the uncovered trucks travelling from Kunming carry reinforcing steel, cement mixers, transformers, cement products, and road building equipment all of which indicate a building boom. Fuel trucks which usually haul trailers make up a large proportion of the uncovered trucks. Under flapping canvas covered trucks reveal stacks of cardboard packages of various sizes, and industrial goods ranging from nails, nuts and bolts, and toys, to household utensils and white ware.

Industrial Products Out: Raw Materials In?

The expected pattern stated in the question does not always hold. Dali provides a home to several industrial enterprises. There is a paper mill in the Dali area and scrappy wood is carried in that direction most probably for fibre. On parts of the road closer to Burma sugar cane is hauled to local mills rather than brought into bigger urban areas for processing. Overall though the expected configuration holds. The countryside supplies raw materials and agricultural produce and the urban areas industrial goods. Heavily laden fuel trucks were always heading out of Kunming while logs, cut timber and coal were coming in.

If a relatively conservative estimate is made on the basis of a detailed 2-hour 40-minute reliable sample period extended to a 12-hour day, about 6,300 vehicles use this section of the road every working day (Monday to Saturday). Trucks continue to move along the road after dark and many of the restaurants stay open into the late evening. Some drivers use the many motels scattered along the way, or may park and sleep in their trucks or find small hotels in the towns which lie along their route. The 12-hour day makes a generous allowance for rest and eating stops.

At least half of the trucks travelling into Kunming are loaded with logs or cut timber but it would be a mistake to assume that all this comes from Burma. Some 26 percent of Yunnan is under forest cover. Although most of this is in the south of the province a considerable amount lies along the border region in close proximity to the upper reaches of the Lancang Jiang (Mekong). Frequent sightings of both pine logs and barked logs being floated down rivers left me with the impression that a good proportion of the timber was of local origin.

Dali-BaoshanÐMangshi (Luxi)ÐWanding

Along these sections of the Burma Road traffic dropped to about one third the volume of the KunmingÐDali stretch. The recorded average was three vehicles per minute. This density remained pretty much the same right up to the border at Wanding. Each day approximately 2,159 long-distance vehicles pass along one or other section of the road. On an average more than 70 percent were government trucks and at least 70 percent of these were covered.

Teak Estimates: Less than Certain

Sad to relate to those interested in the volume of timber coming across the border from Burma I arrived at Wanding on
a Sunday. Although the number of vehicles remained at the same level the proportion of trucks dropped off sharply to 20 percent of the total. The total number of vehicles was maintained by the number of passenger carrying vehicles apparently out for Sunday afternoon rides.

Despite this serious but unavoidable shortcoming in the information I believe it is possible to make a conservative estimate that at least 300 five-tonne trucks and as many as 750 return across the border from Burma and back into China every working day and at least half of these, including covered trucks, carry mostly short cut logs, some milled timber and even parquet flooring.

Although timber is usually measured in volume rather than weight, I can only say that between 1,500 and 3,750 tonnes of wood, mostly teak, leaves Burma via Wanding each day but hardly ever on Sunday.

Borderline Activities

The cross border traffic appears to be generating a host of other activities in the Dehong Dai–Jingpo Autonomous Prefecture. Southwest of Wanding it is possible to informally cross the river border into Burma to gamble in a fair ground, camp town of temporary enterprises. Southwest of Ruili an expensive bridge has been built across the Shweli River to a relatively small pocket of land which formerly provided a home for Dai farmers. The farmers are gone, the paddy fields are buried under a metre of laterite fill and a grid pattern of roads and a few buildings indicate that this is a small Special Economic Zone waiting for investors. Burmese registered pickups equipped for carrying passengers were waiting for clients. Given its isolation it seems likely that the Zone will use Burmese rather than Chinese labour.

On selected corners on the periphery of the Ruili market money changers with piles of Kip are selling Yuan RMB. Here the RMB is king and nobody is interested in FEC.

In the market are a lot of Rohingya gem sellers. From the collective memory of the colonial past, unlike any other Burmese they greet farang like brothers. Was it not East India Company business that enabled many more Muslims to settle in Arakan? All of those to whom I spoke called themselves Pakistani which left the impression that they had entered Burma before the formation of Bangladesh.

Nightlife has undergone a revival. Bars are liberally sprinkled throughout the Ruili market and bar girls seated in doorways do their modest best to attract clients. ‘Come with me! Sit with me! Talk with me!’ Even in a town like Mengshi well away from the border there are said to be some 30 bars and a few discos. Still the early closing hour of most establishments keeps nightlife quiet. Dances included a dignified waltz, fast and slow foxtrots. When the band temporarily retired in favour of a disco tape few dancers attempted anything more than a mechanical wriggle. Nothing wild.

Heroin

Prostitution may be a problem, but there is definitely a growing drug problem. A party held in a restaurant attracted several spaced out young women who were described as ‘opium addicts’; the mature night floor-attendant who opened the door to my room in the miserably waterless Ruili Hotel showed all the symptoms of being high on heroin. UNPDAC with the help of ESCAP maintains an open clinic in Ruili for the treatment of addicts. Wider servicing may be required. At one small roadside restaurant north of Baoshan the young woman proprietor complained of aching joints, headaches and erratic temperature fluctuations. On a return visit, emboldened by a tenuous familiarity she told the story of a long affair with a truck driver who encouraged her to smoke heroin and the subsequent difficulty she experienced in trying to free herself from the habit. Post modern soap? A common enough story in the West, but somehow unexpected in socialist China.

With so many trucks travelling across the border from Burma and the centre of the world's biggest opium fields, even where there is a will, it must be extremely difficult to make a thorough search of all vehicles. Cut logs form a heavy load, and full inspection would require a hoist, slow traffic and result in hold-ups. I saw no dogs, but then heroin is virtually odourless. Unless trucks and drivers are methodically and meticulously checked the chances of interdiction are extremely low.
The number of recent Mercedes Benz and expensive saloon cars provides an index of new wealth. Government officials on relatively low fixed salaries (US$35Ð$80 per month) must be sorely tempted to participate in the boom by cooperating with those engaged in both legitimate and illegitimate trade. The ethics of civil service, military and paramilitary professionalism would have to be remarkably resilient to survive the temptation, especially in China where the message 'To be rich is glorious' appears to be lodged in a billion hearts beating as one.

Tribal Research Institute
Chiangmai
9 June 1993

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RECENT DAM CONSTRUCTION ON THE MEKONG IN YUNNAN AND LAOS AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

E. C. Chapman1 and Peter Hinton2

The first dam to be built across the mainstream of the Mekong River is now nearing completion. Manwan Dam is located in Yun Xian County of Lincang Prefecture in Yunnan. It will have an installed capacity of 1,000 megawatts (by way of comparison, the entire Snowy Mountains scheme has an installed capacity of 3,700 megawatts [Pigram, 1986:149]), its annual output of 5.48 TWh will be the fifth highest for any dam in China (where there are 42 hydropower stations of 250 megawatts and over) and it stands 128 metres high (Shi Dazhen, 1991). This is a dam of major significance which will be connected to the grid serving the growing power demands of Kunming and the booming industries in the region.

Last year we were among the few outsiders allowed to see Manwan. (See Chapman, Hinton and Tan 1992, and Chapman and Hinton 1993 for observations on other recent developments in this region. See also Walker 1993 for a plan of an associated project.) Photographs were strictly prohibited. This was to be expected: perhaps the Chinese authorities were particularly cautious as they were aware of the controversy that continues to plague the use of the river by the nations to the south.

If so, their caution is well advised, as they have ambitious plans for the Mekong. Although Manwan is the only dam under construction, plans to build others are advanced. The next one scheduled for construction is Xiaowan Dam, for which Beijing gave approval in April this year. Xiaowan, which will be located about 50 kilometres upstream of Manwan, will have a considerably larger capacity. Another dam is to be built not far north of Jinghong, the capital of Xishuangbanna Prefecture, and there are plans for a 'cascade' of up to 14 dams for the Mekong in Yunnan.

The Chinese developments will pose new tensions in the management of the Mekong's waters which, south of the Yunnan border, flow through Laos, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam and are vital to the fortunes of millions of people. Although this specific problem will be new, its parameters are as old as the efforts of human beings to manage the waters of streams. These can be summed up as follows: while all members of the society need access to water to live, some, by virtue of their location on the river system are in a position to control the flow and thus get a disproportionate amount of water at the expense of others. In small-scale, homogeneous societies, rules are worked out to secure a more or less equitable distribution. Equitable management becomes increasingly difficult as the number and heterogeneity of water uses become greater. The Mekong Basin is an enormous area, in which many millions of people of diverse cultures and economic interests live. When the element of rapid socio-economic change, engendered by the remarkable pace of development, is added, the problems of securing equitable access to the Mekong's waters appear formidable.

The Work of the Mekong Secretariat

Although this issue will be given immediacy by developments in China, it is not the first time that problems of water management have arisen, nor is it the first time that attempts have been made to solve them. Central to these efforts has been the Mekong Secretariat whose achievements and travaills highlight the difficulties of managing the Mekong.
The Mekong Secretariat, or to give it its full name, the Secretariat of the Interim Committee for Coordination of Investigations of the Lower Mekong Basin, was established in 1957 under the auspices of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE), an agency of the United Nations. It was established as an autonomous organization of sovereign states to achieve a common purpose, namely the promotion and coordination of integrated basin development through regional cooperation (Mekong Secretariat, 1989:13). Foundation members were Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam. It fostered research by hydrologists, engineers, meteorologists and other specialists. A great deal of data was collected and feasibility studies were carried out. An ambitious plan for a cascade of dams along the river was drawn up: furthest upstream was a major dam at Luang Prabang; towards the downstream extremity there were projects for Tonle Sap in Cambodia, and the delta in Vietnam.

The centre-piece was to be Pa Mong Dam, a few kilometres upstream from Vientiane. This was to be a huge structure, of 4,800 megawatts installed capacity, which would flood a very large area of country as it filled. It was the latter issue which led to the plan being abandoned in a Revised Indicative Plan drawn up in 1987: the inundation of the countryside would have forced the resettlement of some 480,000 people (no doubt this figure would have been even bigger by the time the dam was completed). The magnitude of this statistic becomes clearer when it is considered that one of the world's largest dams, Aswan Dam in Egypt, displaced 'only' 70,000 people. The Secretariat, in its 1987 Revised Plan, acknowledged that this would be socially and politically unacceptable. It is, however, a reflection of the extent to which planning was dominated by technocrats, particularly engineers, that non-technological issues were given such little attention for so long.

In the Revised Indicative Plan of 1987 which took greater note of constraints of cost as well as social factors than its predecessor Pa Mong Dam was to be replaced with Low Pa Mong Dam with an installed capacity of 2,250 megawatts. It would displace 'only' 43,000 people.

Despite all the talk, all the research and all the planning, none of the mainstream dams proposed by the Mekong Secretariat seems likely be built. For years, major political upheavals prevented any dam building. The Vietnam War put paid to any construction along the river from about 1963 to 1975. Then the rise of the Khmer Rouge led to the withdrawal of Cambodia from the Secretariat. Pol Pot wanted no part of any regional cooperation, and had his own hydraulic schemes. These entailed the use of forced labour to build elaborate irrigation canals on strictly geometric grid formations. Hydraulic engineers who have worked in this region since the eclipse of the Khmer Rouge have told us that this has caused widespread desiccation of formerly fertile land.

In 1992 a bitter debate erupted between Secretariat members about the terms under which Cambodia might be readmitted to the organisation. The dispute was a classic illustration of the sort of conflict that can so easily arise between water users in any hydraulic society. The Thai saw these deliberations concerning Cambodia's readmission as an opportunity to recast the basic objectives of the Mekong Secretariat (which had been laid down when the agency was founded in 1957) in such a way as to serve one of their major desires to divert a significant proportion of the stream's water to Thailand's water-starved north-eastern provinces. The Vietnamese reacted sharply to this suggestion, as they feared that the diversion of water upstream would cause further salt water intrusion in the delta, which would ruin highly productive rice lands. The Thai responded by forcing the resignation of the high profile Canadian Executive Agent of the Secretariat, Chuck Lankester and threatening to withdraw from the Secretariat. As Thailand is the richest and most powerful Secretariat member, with the greatest length of the river flowing along its border, and as the Secretariat was headquartered in Bangkok, this would have effectively killed the organisation. In a rescue operation, held on neutral ground at Kuala Lumpur in December 1992, United Nations mediators brought the disputants together, established a formula by which Cambodia might be readmitted and saved the Secretariat. The organisation, however, appears much reduced in stature.

Dams in Laos

The major hydro-electric dam in Laos, Nam Ngum which is indeed the only hydro-electric development of international significance in the entire Mekong Basin so far was inaugurated in 1971. It was financed with assistance from a number of Western nations and has an installed capacity of about 150 megawatts, although it is said to be operating below capacity owing to problems with siltation. It is located on the Nam Ngum River, not far to the north-west of Vientiane. Nam Ngum and several lesser dams are of considerable importance to Laos as most of the power
they generate is exported to Thailand. The payments by the Thai Government for this electricity comprise no less than about 60 percent of the foreign exchange the country earns. In 1991, 662 million kilowatt-hours of electricity were exported (State Statistical Centre, 1991:75).

With little prospect for other major export industries, the possibilities of building other dams on other tributaries of the Mekong has proved attractive to the Lao Government. In April 1993 a major step to further develop the hydro-electric potential of the country was taken when the Lao Government gave a 'Sole Mandate' to the Australian construction company, Transfield, to raise finance and to secure market contracts to enable construction of a major dam, designated by the Mekong Secretariat as 'Nam Theun 2'. The Nam Theun River, a tributary of the Mekong, flows through Bolikhamsay Province, immediately to the south of Vientiane. This dam will be considerably larger than Nam Ngum, having an installed capacity of 600 megawatts. The Australian Embassy in Vientiane has expressed strong optimism to us that Transfield will be successful in raising the A$700Ð$800 million required to build the dam, and states that construction will start 'very soon'. The dam will be complete in six years. It is being proposed on a 'build, own and transfer' (BOT) basis, which means that after the dam is completed, the company will operate it for a period until a stipulated profit has accrued, after which the Lao will take control of the dam.

There are rumours in Vientiane that the government may approve the dam designated by the Mekong Secretariat as 'Nam Ngum 2'. This is located upstream from the existing Nam Ngum Dam. It appears a much less attractive proposition than Nam Theun 2. A publication of the Mekong Secretariat, assessing the two projects, determined that on all significant criteria Nam Theun 2 was 'far superior' to Nam Ngum 2 (Mekong Secretariat, 1988a:61). The rumours we refer to suggest that a Vientiane- based international financier has been trying to cobble together a package to fund a Nam Ngum 2 Dam, and that the government is interested. Whether the rumours are true or not, the fact that Nam Ngum 2, despite its shortcomings, is now being considered is an indication of the current enthusiasm for dam building in Laos.

As is the case with the Chinese authorities and Manwan, the Lao Government and the commercial interests concerned with Lao dams have been cautious about publicising their intentions. It is, on the face of it, surprising that the only announcement of Transfield's Sole Mandate, which amounted to a considerable commercial coup, should, so far as we know, have received only two brief mentions in the press Ð one on an ABC newscast, another in the Australian Financial Review. The reasons are doubtless partly commercial, but there is another consideration, to which we will now turn.

Greens and Dams

There is increasing concern on the part of authorities planning dams about the reaction of the environmental movement. Worldwide, the Greens are now a powerful lobby which has a following not only amongst Western liberals, but amongst the large populations which are often adversely affected by dam plans. Those who gain from hydro-electric developments are always urban dwellers and the commercial sector. The losers are the masses of small farmers, fishers and traders who live near the dam.

The politics of environmentalism have already had an impact on dam projects in Southeast Asia. In Thailand, where breakneck economic development has had such a negative effect on rivers like the Chao Phya and Ping that it is evident to all, mass demonstrations have given pause even to the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT), which in the past had achieved a reputation for being high- handed in dealing with people whose livelihood was affected by dams. As an example, mass demonstrations and publicity about adverse environmental impacts have delayed the completion of the Pak Moon Dam, in north-east Thailand.

At a different level, environmentalists' lobbying has forced the World Bank to attach conditions to its loans for dams which are designed to lessen negative environmental effects and to take into account the interests of those who are affected by dam construction and subsequent inundation of farm land. This is one factor which has led many would-be borrower nations to think twice before accepting World Bank loans. It was without doubt a consideration in the Lao Government's decision to build the Nam Theun 2 Dam under a BOT arrangement, rather than by a loan.

Laos has, indeed, received a good deal of publicity concerning its projected dams and their likely environmental impact (e.g. Lohmann, 1991). Critics point out that while Laos is sparsely populated and thus displacement of
population will be relatively small, it contains large areas of forest which would be destroyed by developments. Moreover, it is said that the dams will affect the ecosystems upon which millions of people depend downstream.

While some Lao authorities are strongly pro-development, and are guarded when schemes are criticised by environmentalists, others have more complex positions. These are often associated with the strong feelings many Lao have about being engulfed culturally and politically as well as economically in any big regional development push. Not all Lao authorities are in the thrall of what Grant Evans in the last Newsletter described as 'the toolakit (business) craze' which has gripped many of their countrymen (Evans, 1993). These more reflective people try to balance the material gains to be made from selling electricity to Thailand against the environmental, social and political costs of untrammelled development. It is arguable that such people may well see the environmentalists as allies, rather than the enemies of Lao.

Conclusion

The Chinese plans are likely to cause increasing disquiet in the other riparian states. The effects of Manwan on the volume and seasonal distribution of flow downstream is difficult to predict, but will probably not be great. But even if only a few of the 14 dams planned for the Mekong cascade in Yunnan were built, the consequences for the downstream nations would be considerable. (The watershed of the Mekong within China contributes about 20 percent of the river's volume [Mekong Secretariat 1988b:8]).

So far the Mekong Secretariat has mainly been concerned with the middle and lower basin, that is, the region south of Luang Prabang, and has taken virtually no account of Chinese intentions. It has invited a few Chinese delegations to visit Bangkok, but these seem to have been mainly concerned with the potential of the Mekong as a navigable waterway rather than with dams. China has never been a member of the Secretariat, and although the Thai have made desultory suggestions that they should be included, there has never been a concerted push for Chinese admission. The Chinese, for their part, perhaps remembering that they control the head-waters, have shown little interest in joining.

An indication that the Secretariat may be revising its position appears in a footnote in a recent publication which states 'developments in China should be carefully monitored since they will significantly increase upstream/mainstream developments in the lower Mekong basin' (Mekong Committee, 1990). It is ironic that China, which increasingly shares a capitalist orientation with its Southeast Asian neighbours, may, through its dam-building program, become more of a threat to the interests of the downstream riparian nations than it ever was during the Cold War.

But here again, qualifications are necessary. No one knows what China's political future will be, and accounts of recent peasant discontent (e.g. Goldstein and Kaye, 1993) suggest that it may be necessary to revise the bullish scenarios for China which have become a commonplace in the financial press. Whatever the case, it seems that the Chinese people will become more vocal about the developments being foisted upon them. Some authorities in the counties which would be affected by the Xiaowan Dam expressed considerable concern when we visited the area last year. One factor that distinguishes Xiaowan from Manwan is that it will displace a far greater number of people than the latter. It may be that the 14-dam plan will recede into the realm of technocratic pipe dreams as surely as the schemes proposed by the Mekong Secretariat for the lower basin in the 1960s and 70s. Further weight for this prediction is given by the likelihood that the Chinese authorities will be increasingly accountable to world opinion and this will include consideration of environmental matters. The environmentalists have already given notice that they will oppose the massive Three Gorges Project, approved by the government for the Yangtze in 1992. As has happened elsewhere, they are likely to be successful in making multilateral loans conditional on provisions which would threaten the feasibility of the project. Plans for the Mekong could attract similar attention. If so, relief will be felt not only by environmentalists but by the millions in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam whose prospects would be threatened by the proposed massive developments in Yunnan.

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RAINWATER AS A SOURCE OF DRINKING WATER IN RURAL VILLAGES OF THE LAO PDR

Nongluk Tunyavanich2

Background

While there have been a number of successful initiatives and innovations in rural water supply in the Lao PDR, it must be admitted that government programmes in this sector have reached only a small percentage of the rural population. Indeed, recent surveys have indicated that coverage rates for improved, government or other agency-supported, water supplies is just 10-15 percent, the efforts of officials, dedicated non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and local people not withstanding (UNICEF, 1991).

The reasons for the limited success are manifold: poor transportation, limited assistance to the Lao government, a lack of skilled personnel, and a range of other pressing demands for limited government budget. One major constraint on rural water supply in Laos has been the expense of providing improved supplies and then in maintaining them.

By and large, the rural population continues to draw its drinking and domestic use water from sources technicians refer to as 'traditional'. These include dug wells3 and streams, rivers and springs (UNICEF, 1991; Tunyavanich, 1991; Dennis, 1989; Breakey and Voulgaropoulos, 1976). None of these supplies are likely to be bacteriologically sanitary (Dennis, 1989).

The problem of bacteriological quality and improved health is one likely to be recognised by officials and given high priority. However, villagers are less likely to acknowledge this, and are often more concerned about having a convenient and reliable water supply. These different perspectives have often been the crux of many problems within rural water supply programmes and projects, with outsiders emphasising health benefits from improved supplies, while
villagers are looking for quite different outcomes. The most successful water supply improvements are those which have attended to both sets of aspirations, often unintentionally.

An example of this coincidence of interests has been seen in the collection of rainwater for drinking in Thailand, and especially in the Northeastern region. The idea of storing rainwater in privately-owned, 2,000-litre reinforced cement jars pleased health and water supply officials because it was thought bacteriologically 'safe'. Villagers took up the idea because the jars were relatively cheap and provided a convenient source of water at the household. Within a few years of their introduction, literally millions of cement rainwater jars were in use throughout the Northeast (Hewison & Tunyavanich, 1990).

A number of people and agencies, including NGOs, multilaterals and the government had noted the success of rainwater jars in Thailand, and attempted to introduce the technology to some of the lowland areas of Laos. There were early problems—cement was expensive, often in short supply, and sometimes of poor quality; construction techniques were experimental; and metal roofing was not common in most villages. Nevertheless, the benefits of collecting rainwater appeared to warrant further efforts.

Rainwater is plentiful in the country, especially during the wet season. The national average is 1,800 mm of precipitation a year, with no area experiencing less than 1,000 mm per year (Mekong Committee, 1988). Theoretically, then, it was seen that rainwater could be captured and used for drinking in rural areas. The problem remained that rainwater collection via cement jars was a new idea for Laos and for villagers. Indeed, there was little information available concerning the use of rainwater in rural villages. Indeed, Brekey and Voulgaropoulos (1976) did not mention these facilities in their survey between 1968-1969, and said little about the use of rainwater.

It was not until 1991 that attention was given to questions of the acceptability of rainwater, for consumption by villagers, were raised. As part of a nationwide survey of 505 villages in 16 provinces indicated that rainwater collection was more common than previously thought. For example, it was found that 40.7 percent of respondents claimed to collect rainwater for domestic consumption. This collection was mainly in 200-litre drums previously storing fuel (UNICEF, 1991). This suggested that rainwater might be an acceptable drinking water. To follow this, a more extensive survey was conducted to assess some of the social, cultural and technical problems associated with the collection of rainwater. The results of this study are presented here.

Rainwater in Laos

The two studies which form the basis of this article were completed for UNICEF-Vientiane. The first study was conducted in March and April 1991 in nine rural villages in the provinces of Khammouan, Luang Prabang and Xieng Khouang. This collected data on the social and cultural aspects of the water supply and environmental sanitation. The second study was conducted in 16 villages in the provinces of Champasak, Houaphan, Khammouan, Savannakhet and Xieng Khouang. This study was a part of a training exercise for the basic village research techniques during April and June, 1991. A total of 40 households were formally interviewed in the first study and 457 households in the second.

a. Social and Economic Characteristics

A wide range of ethnic groups was involved in the survey. The Lao government's standard ethnic classification system is hardly sufficient to cover this diversity, but there were 16 villages which could be classified as Lao Loum (including people who were Lao, Phuan, Phutai, Taisum and Yuan), six Lao Theung villages (including Khmu, Makong, and So), and four Lao Soung villages (all of which were Hmong).

The general social and economic picture to be drawn from the surveys is familiar for rural Laos, although the aggregation of 25 villages, comprising so many ethnic variations, tends to homogenise rather than demonstrate their heterogeneity. The size of the villages studied ranged from as small as 25 households to as many as 234, with an average of 82 households, with each household usually having between five and eight members.

All the households involved themselves in rice farming, with many also raising livestock. A small number also had household members engaged in other economic activities. About two-thirds of households claimed to have adequate means to meet their needs, although cash income was irregular for some. For these people, if the need for cash arose,
they would attempt to sell produce or animals.

The majority of the homes were constructed of hardwood, although there were a number which combined hardwood and other materials, and a few were made of grasses and bamboo. The roofing materials used included grass thatch, galvanised metal, and wood shingles. The majority of households kept cattle or buffalo or both. Almost half of the households had bicycles and one-third of the households had radios. Sewing machines, television sets and motorcycles were noted in isolated instances, but were not common.

Only one of the 25 villages had access to electricity. Officially at least, with the exception of one Hmong village, all villages had a primary school, although it was clear that not all were fully operational. Four of the villages had health centres, but these operated under great difficulty and with few materials. Finally, it was noted that just three of the surveyed villages had had any development activities initiated or conducted by outside agencies.

b. The Use of Rainwater As Drinking Water Availability

Laos generally experiences a tropical climate, although this tropical pattern varies according to elevation. Precipitation is generally high, with a national average of 1,800 mm a year. There is considerable variation, with the Bolovens Plateau receiving over 3,500 mm a year, while no area experiences less than 1,000 mm in a year. Most of this rain is concentrated in one season, coming in heavy downpours, so there are long periods where there is little or no rainfall (see Table 1), which indicates the total falls at recording centres, and the percentage of that total falling between May and October.

Table 1: Precipitation in the Lao PDR, 1988

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Station</th>
<th>Total Yearly Rainfall (mm)</th>
<th>% of Total (May-October)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sayabouri</td>
<td>1174.2</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luang Prabang</td>
<td>1156.3</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paksane</td>
<td>2638.0</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paklay</td>
<td>1568.3</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vientiane</td>
<td>1608.4</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thakhek</td>
<td>1889.1</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seno</td>
<td>1483.8</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savannakhet</td>
<td>1133.8</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakse</td>
<td>1676.2</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saravane</td>
<td>1655.4</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paksong</td>
<td>3025.5</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Certainly the amount of rainfall suggests that the storage of rainwater is possible, and that the dry-season storage capacity would need to be between 2,100 and 5,400 litres, to service a six person household.4 These figures are roughly comparable to Northeastern Thailand, where total rainfall is less, but also concentrated in a few months.

Preferred Water Sources

Not surprisingly, when asked to identify their preferred water source, villagers selected the sources they knew best and had regularly used. However, when asked to specify the characteristics they valued in a water supply, interviewees identified sources which produced water that was clear, did not have an unpleasant odour, had a good 'taste', provided easier and more convenient access, and was a reliable supply. Improving a supply meant that these characteristics should be addressed and enhanced, if possible.

The nominated, 'best' sources for both drinking and domestic water were gravity-fed systems (GFS) and dug wells and shallow wells, as indicated in Table 2. It is noteworthy that almost 10 percent of villagers named a combination of rainwater and handpumped tubewells as their preferred drinking water.

Table 2: Preferred Water Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Water sources</th>
<th>Drinking Water</th>
<th>Domestic Water</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dug &amp; Shallow wells</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rivers, streams  0  0.0  20  4.4
Ponds, lakes  0  0.0  45  9.8
Rainwater & hand-
pumped tubewell  45  9.8  0  0.0
Handpumped
  tubewell  63  13.8  64  14.0
GFS & piped
  water system  161  35.2  158  34.6
No preferred
  source nominated  67  14.7  67  14.7
Total  457  100.0  457  100.0

Actual Sources of Water

Both surveys showed that the most common sources of water available and used by villagers were dug wells, shallow wells, rivers, streams and springs. There were exceptions to this in just two villages. The first was in a village where a GFS was available and widely used, and in a second village where large-capacity cement jars were available to all the households on a sharing basis. However, in this latter village, rainwater was not widely used for drinking because the roofing materials used tended to discolor the water and give the water an odour. Just eight households reported the use of rainwater for drinking, mainly during the rainy season (see Table 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Water sources</th>
<th>Drinking Water</th>
<th>Domestic Water</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dry Season</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dug &amp; shallow wells</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>69.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rivers &amp; streams</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainwater</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Springs</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>457</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wet Season</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dug &amp; shallow wells</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>65.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rivers &amp; streams</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>28.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainwater</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Springs</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>457</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is worth noting that the numbers reporting the use of rainwater in these specialised surveys were considerably less than in the large-scale UNICEF-sponsored survey.

Household Water Storage and Quantities Used Within the Household These studies indicated that the existing household water storage capacity was limited in all villages, and certainly far less than that required for drinking and domestic purposes for household members in any one day. This suggests that villagers are currently prepared to expend time collecting water.

The amount of water used at home for drinking and domestic purposes ranged from 9 to 45 litres per capita per day, while household storage capacities ranged from 10 to 40 litres for drinking water and 20 to 75 litres for domestic water. It would be expected that an 'average' household might need a drinking water storage of 12 to 30 litres per day, suggesting that storage in this area is sufficient. However, the same household could need 180 to 300 litres of domestic use water per day. This means that villagers will often need to fetch domestic water more than once a day.

Women and children tend to be the main water collectors, carrying water on their shoulders using buckets and bamboo stick or on their backs, using bamboo tubes or wooden containers. Among the households surveyed in the first study it was reported that 3-5 water collection trips were made each day, with each trip taking up to 40 minutes, but as little as five minutes, depending on season and ease of access. In the villages of the second study, an average of three trips per day was reported, with each trip taking about 30 minutes.
One village stored water in large-capacity cement jars, but as noted above, storage was limited. While small clay jars were most common, there were exceptions. In one village, bamboo tubes were used to both fetch and store water. In all, about 20 percent of households in the second study group reported a storage capacity which was only the containers they used to fetch water (buckets, wooden containers (pae), bamboo tubes, and the like), as indicated in Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Drinking Water</th>
<th>Domestic Water</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pot</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drum</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small clay jar</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucket and basin</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wooden container (pae)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bamboo tube and bucket</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination of above</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>457</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Current Use of Rainwater for Drinking

In the first-study villages, only a few households had metal roofing (preferable for the collection of rainwater), and very few villagers reported the use of rainwater as drinking water. The most common reasons given for not consuming rainwater were that the traditional roofing materials tended to discolour the water and imparted an odour to the water (see Table 5). Thus, the consumption of rainwater was not a traditional practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials Used</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metal or fibro-cement sheeting</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grass</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>55.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wooden shingles</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination of above</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the second-study areas, there were a few households reporting the regular use of rainwater as drinking water. However, when asked 'Do you drink rainwater' almost 21 percent gave a positive answer. Those who did not drink rainwater gave three major explanations, as indicated in Table 6. It is notable that almost half of the respondents indicated that they did not appreciate the taste of rainwater.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question: Do you drink rainwater?</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>79.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for not drinking:</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No storage container</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not 'tasty', never drink</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>47.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grass roofing (i.e. water is dirty &amp; has an odour)</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusions
This article has summarised some of the findings concerning the use of rainwater for drinking and related factors in the rural villages in the Lao PDR. Rainfall patterns suggest that, during the wet season, there is sufficient water to be harvested and stored for drinking for much of the rest of the year. However, there are a number of factors that appear likely to prevent or discourage villagers from doing so. The main factors are set out below:

The perceived quality of rainwater

The majority of the rural Lao houses utilise grass thatch or wooden shingles as their roofing material. These materials impart a colour (usually reddish-brown) and an unpleasant odour to the rainwater, which makes it unacceptable for drinking. In villages where large-capacity rainwater jars had been introduced, this factor prevented a wide use of the water collected. In these villages, those who did drink rainwater caught the rain from houses with a galvanised roof or positioned their jars away from the house in order to catch the rainwater directly, without contact with the roof (UNICEF, 1991: C-6).

In another study (Tunyavanich, 1991), over half of the Hmong households said they would use rainwater for drinking, but noted that the roof made the water dirty. Some villagers identified rainwater as a potential source, with a number of Lao Theung villagers attempting to catch it through plastic sheets with a hole in the middle, again to avoid contact with the roof (Tunyavanich, 1991: 20).

Proper technical assistance and advice is required, involving the replacement of a portion of roofing with acceptable materials for rainwater catchment. Alternatively, rainwater collection may be limited to wealthier households with metal roofing.

Storage capacity

Most rural households do not have sufficient water storage capacity, even for daily use. A number do not have water storage containers at all, using those receptacles also used to fetch water. In order to promote rainwater for drinking, large storage containers will need to be fostered. It has been shown that large-capacity rainwater jars can be very effective in providing a drinking water supply in Northeastern Thailand. A sharing arrangement of cement jars such as that promoted in a village in Khammouane province will not provide sufficient storage to make the jar a reliable facility during the whole dry season (UNICEF, 1991: D-24). In addition, it must be emphasised that jars are private facilities.

Villagers have expressed a need for large storage containers for rainwater (Tunyavanich, 1991: 20). Villagers in a Savannakhet village expressed a willingness to sell buffaloes to cover the cost of constructing large cement jars (Tunyavanich, 1991:12).

Taste

At this point, there seems to be little expressed objection to the taste of rainwater stored in cement jars. However, this was a major issue at the beginning of Thailand's jar promotion programme. Perhaps this has not yet emerged in Laos since other problems, such as smell and colour from wooden roofing, have drawn attention away from the cement taste. Proper and adequate community preparation will be required to address this problem, if it emerges.

Community education

Considerable community education is needed in order to promote rainwater as drinking water in the rural areas of the Lao PDR, to extend throughout any programme established. Rainwater is not a preferred source of drinking water among villagers, but the main objections to drinking rainwater seem to be to aspects of collection which may be corrected—lack of containers, unacceptable quality of water due to roofing materials, rainwater is not a traditional source. To motivate villagers to use rainwater for drinking, knowledge on the advantages of using the rainwater for drinking from both the technical and villagers' perspectives need to be communicated. Villagers need to understand all the issues (the good points of using rainwater for drinking, roofing materials, storage containers, cost involved, proper use and care of facilities) involved in the collection and use of rainwater for drinking. Positive aspects of using
rainwater for drinking such as convenience, the quality of rainwater, the advantage of a private and reliable water supply, all of which villagers can understand, should be stressed. Along with this education, technical assistance will be required (e.g. for the replacement of a portion of roofing).

In the end, these studies suggest that there are significant problems to be overcome if the use of rainwater is to be promoted. However, it is also clear that rainwater has considerable potential for providing convenient drinking water supplies.

Endnotes

1. The author wishes to express her gratitude to UNICEF-Vientiane for their support and the opportunity to work in the Lao PDR. However, it must be understood that nothing in this paper represents the policies, conclusions or views of UNICEF; all conclusions and interpretations are solely those of the author. She also thanks all the individuals who assisted in the collection of data, and especially the Lao Women's Union and the villagers who participated. The author is especially grateful to Kevin Hewison of Murdoch University, who assisted her in beginning these studies and who edited this paper.

2. Nongluk Tunyavanich is an Associate Professor, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mahidol University, Salaya, Nakornpathom, Thailand. The author served as a consultant to UNICEF-Vientiane in 1991, and the results of her work are presented in UNICEF (1991).

3. A dug well is a hole, usually hand-constructed, dug down into the ground, with a diameter of about 1-1.5 metres. Water is abstracted via buckets and ropes.

4. If daily consumption was 2 litres per capita per day (lpcpd), approximately 2,100 litres would be required for a family of six persons; 2 lpcpd is considered minimal. In Thailand, this figure is 5 lpcpd, meaning a storage capacity of 5,400 litres.

5. A GFS is a piped water supply which usually brings water from a high-level source, using gravity to distribute water to a distribution system. Such systems are usually small, village-level supplies, but may be quite extensive. For example, Luang Prabang town has a remarkable GFS, bringing water from high in the mountains to the city.

6. Basically, a dug well, but improved through the addition of cement rings and a cement apron.

References


Participation in a Village Based Water and Sanitation Project, Bangkok, Mahidol University.


***

BURMAH REPORTS 1: EVENTS LEADING TO THE CAPTURE OF Ava1

No. 70

'Mr. Godley to Sir J. Pauncefote. Ñ (Received November 19)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Lord Randolph Churchill, forwards herewith copy of a note prepared in this Office on the subject of the relations between the Governments of India and Upper Burmah during the reign of the present King.

India Office, November 19, 1885.

______________________________

Inclosure in No. 70

Note on the Relations between the Government of India and Upper Burmah during the present King's Reign.

[NOTE.ÑThis Paper is only intended to be an abstract of a course of correspondence which will be recorded in detail in a Separate Departmental Note on Burmah now in preparation.]

THE relations between the Government of Upper Burmah and that of India have, since the accession to power in October 1878 of King Theebaw, been of an extremely unsatisfactory, and, at times, hostile character. This is due (1) partly to the personal disposition of the King and his dislike of the British alliance; and (2) partly to the almost undue forebearance exhibited towards him by Her Majesty's Government, under much provocation. The King signalized the commencement of his reign by an unprovoked massacre of all his nearest relations, with their wives and children, some eighty in number, besides other victims of lesser note, the executions being effected under his orders by ruffians, specially released for that purpose from gaol, who carried out their task in the most revolting manner. For this and other reasons, Lord Lytton's Government, in the spring of 1879,* considered that the time had arrived for reshaping their relations with Mandalay, inasmuch as those relations were "incomplete, unsatisfactory, and ill assured," and the King had shown himself capable of acting with "unscrupulous disregard" of international obligations. "Up to the present time," said the Government of India, "no request of the least importance, no representation, however earnest and reasonable, no complaint, however well founded, has been entertained or satisfied without such pressure as to convince the Government of Upper Burmah that further resistance would be unsafe in itself."

Although, however, Her Majesty's Government agreed with that of India that our relations# with Burmah were in "a very precarious position," they preferred a policy of reserve and precaution to anything savouring of an ultimatum, in the absence of plain evidence of aggressive designs on the part of the King of Ava. In the meantime, affairs at Mandalay went from bad to worse; the King continued his relentless executions, notwithstanding the strong protests of the Government of India, and the position of the British Resident became an anxious one. He was harassed by almost
daily reports of hostile intentions against himself, and of aggressive designs on British territory; whilst all this time the temper of the people towards him became insolent and hostile; trade, moreover, showed a serious and steady decline, and all business came to a standstill. At this period the Resident, Mr. Shaw, died (13th June, 1879), and was replaced temporarily by Colonel Browne, Commissioner of Pegu. The officer on reaching Mandalay found his position untenable. He had to submit to absolute isolation and almost daily insults from the Burmese Government, so much so, that it was deemed inexpedient to allow an officer of his rank to remain in such circumstances at the capital, and he was eventually withdrawn. The hostility of the Court and people to the British Mission was evidenced at this time by (1) an excited mob following Mr. St. Barbe, who has assumed temporary charge of the Mission on Colonel Browne’s departure, to the gates of the Residency; (2) the ill-treatment of a clerk of the Bhamo Agency; (3) the cruel and wanton murder of a British subject; and (4) a gross and unprovoked assault on the Residency Surgeon. In these circumstances, it became a question with the Government of India whether it would not be prudent to withdraw the Mission altogether, and the step was eventually carried out on the 6th October, 1879, it being considered by Lord Lytton's Government that the news of the destruction of the British Mission at Cabul on the 3rd September would render the position of our officer at Mandalay still more insecure.

The attitude of the Burmese Court became after this event more and more estranged and inimical. In November 1879 a serious attack was made by some Burmese coolies at Mingyan, in Upper Burmah, on the captain and crew of the India flotilla steamer "Shwemyo," whilst it was lying at anchor at Mingyan, on the Irrawaddy, in Upper Burmah. This attack was, according to reliable evidence, instigated by the local Burmese authorities, acting under undoubted orders from headquarters, and was entirely unprovoked. The occurrence was viewed seriously by Lord Lytton's Government, to whom the Chief Commissioner wrote that it would be "impossible long to maintain peace if occurrences like this are overlooked." Redress was demanded from the Burmese Government, and a recommendation was made to the Home authorities that we should withdraw from all Treaty engagements with the King in the event of this demand being refused or evaded. No notice was taken by the King of the demand for three months, when it was merely intimated to the Chief Commissioner of British Burmah that the case had been "decided by the local authorities," an answer which was deemed by the Government of India to be sufficiently "unsatisfactory in tone and substance" as to justify the withdrawal recommended. This opinion was not shared, however, by Her Majesty's Government, who questioned the expediency of denouncing the Treaties as proposed.

The King now apparently became alarmed at the condition of things, and sent an Envoy into British Burmah with the object of proposing a new Treaty. Its Articles were found on examination to be so inadmissible, and the King's overtures deemed, after careful inquiry, to be "so insincere and illusory," that theEnvoy was not allowed by the British local authorities to proceed to Rangoon, and he eventually (June 1880) returned to Mandalay.

In the spring of 1880 another outrage occurred in the Burmese waters of the Irrawaddy. The British mail-steamer "Yunan" was, on the pretext that a rebellion had broken out in Upper Burmah, which the King attributed to our instigation, seized and detained for a day by the Burmese authorities at Sillehmyo, in Upper Burmah. The demands made by the Government of India|| for an explanation of this seizure, although preferred in the least exacting manner possible, were, as before, wholly unsuccessful.

More than a year now passed without any special occurrence to mark or alter our relations with Upper Burmah, which still remained at a deadlock. Early in 1882, however, hopes were awakened of the re-establishment of more amicable relations with the Court of Ava. In April of that year an Envoy was sent from Mandalay to propose a fresh Treaty with the Government of India. He reached Simla on the 30th April.*

Negotiations were carried on for some months. At the outset the Envoy sought very wide commercial and other concessions, and claimed to treat directly with the Queen. The Government of India were prepared on their part to deal liberally with the Burmese Government; but when matters were being brought, after much trouble, to a conclusion, the King, without assigning any reason, withdrew his Envoy, and the negotiations collapsed. He shortly afterwards sent another Envoy into British Burmah with two new draft Treaties, which were so unsatisfactory in their terms as to be rejected at once by Lord Ripon's Government. They said, "We fear that improving our Treaty relations with them, and for the present our efforts must, in all probability, be limited to securing observance of existing Treaties and to the protection of British subjects visiting Upper Burmah."
Shortly after this information reached the Government of India that a Burmese Mission had left Mandalay for Paris. Ostensibly their Mission had no political significance, but, as is now known, the real object of the Embassy was to enter into direct relations with France; and it resulted in the conclusion at Paris, on the 15th January, 1885, of the Franco-Burmese Treaty, giving effect to the establishment of a French Consulate at Mandalay. King Theebaw was now anxious, according to reliable report, to throw himself into the arms of France in order to escape from English control.

In the meantime, affairs at Mandalay during 1883-84 were in a very disorganized state. In September of the latter year fresh atrocities were committed at the capital, which brought out once more in strong colours the character of King Theebaw's Administration. Briefly, about 300 persons were, for no reason whatever, massacred in the gaol. The King's Ministers, with the Palace guard, surrounded the gaol, in which there were at the time none but peaceable and unarmed persons, and an indiscriminate slaughter commenced. The gaol was set on fire, and the flames drove the prisoners to the gate, where they were hacked to pieces one after the other by hired executioners. No mercy was shown to age or sex. The King during this time "gave orders that the dead were not to be buried for some days," and it is reported that he held high revel at his Court over the event.

About this time (1884) he gave further evidence of unfriendly feeling towards the British Government. In 1881, in consequence of certain raids from Burmah into Manipur, a State under British protection, it was deemed right to mark clearly its boundaries, about which some doubts existed on the part of both the Government of India and that of Burmah. The co-operation of Burmah in this demarcation was asked in vain, and the work had consequently to be done by British officers alone. The Burmese Government declined to abide by what was done, and on the 8th May, 1884, addressed the Chief Commissioner on the subject in insolent terms. "If," wrote the Burmese Minister, "in spite of the request precisely, distinctly, or definitely preferred by the Burmese Government, the British Government omit or delay to have these withdrawals (of the boundary pillars) effected, the Burmese Government will issue instruction to the Sumjok Sawbwa, and have the stockades, sheds and stone heaps all and every one, without exception, removed and destroyed." The Government of India met these threats by an intimation of its firm determination to uphold the demarcation of the boundary by force if necessary.

 Shortly after this proceeding the Earl of Dufferin assumed office (13th December, 1884) as Viceroy of India and gave early attention to Burmah affairs. In March 1885 the Governor-General of India in Council addressed the Home Government on the state of affairs generally in Burmah, with special reference to the Franco-Burmese Treaty, without making any specific recommendation as to ulterior measures. They said, "By the conclusion of the recent Treaty between France and Burmah the situation may be seriously altered. Considering the object which the parties to the Treaty are believed to have in view, we cannot but look forward with some concern to its possible consequences. The presence of a French Consular Agent at Mandalay is likely to increase our difficulties in dealing with the Court of Ava, and to prove antagonistic to British interests. In these circumstances we are of the opinion that something, if possible, should be done to restore our influence at Mandalay." What that something should be Lord Dufferin's Government were not prepared to say, but they promised to keep a careful watch over the progress of events. This was approved by Her Majesty's Government, who suggested, however, that something might be done to lead to the renewal of the abortive Simla negotiations of 1882, in view to the restoration, under proper conditions, of the British Residency at Mandalay.

The situation at this time was as follows. The character of King Theebaw's Administration, of which the Mandalay massacres of 1879-84 were flagrant instances, had grown more and more weak and depraved. Nearly half of his kingdom (i.e. the greater part of the Shan States) was in open rebellion; anarchy and misgovernment prevailed, bands of armed dacoits roamed about unchecked, and the whole country was in a state of serious disorganization. Our relations with the King were also at a deadlock. King Theebaw, although our ally by Treaty, had, in short, shown no friendship for the British Government from the commencement of his reign; his seven years' rule had been sullied by horrible cruelties and disgraceful misgovernment, whilst trade, although in some respects revived, had passed from British firms to other hands, and our mercantile interests at Rangoon were proportionately depressed. This state of affairs was fast becoming intolerable, more especially as it was recognized by all competent authorities that the prosperity and tranquillity of Upper and Lower Burmah are bound up indissolubly together, that Ava depends for the greater part of its external trade on, and is nourished from, British Burmah, which again depends on Ava for about one-eighth of its external trade, and that anarchy and disturbance on one side of the border makes itself felt on the other, and paralyses every effort in the direction of friendship, civilization, or trade.
Whilst our own position in Upper Burmah was thus ill-assured, that of France was assuming an increasing influence there, which was both disquieting and dangerous, and the question of French intervention at Mandalay became a serious one, considered in the light of our knowledge of French designs in the Indo-Chinese Peninsula. The Tien-tsin Treaty and French progress in Tonquin and Annam were now matters of history. The administration of Cambodia had been completely transferred to France, whilst Reports showed that her Agents were straining every nerve to obtain a footing in Siam. In short, with the French pushing along the valley of the Mekong River from the south, and seeking, not unsuccessfully, to extend their influence westwards from Tonquin and Annam, they now occupied by a Consular Agency firmly established at Mandalay another central point for intrigue and extension of influence, rendering, at the same time, the restoration of our legitimate position in Upper Burmah, in concert with King Theebaw, vastly more difficult, if not altogether impossible.

In this condition of affairs, matters in Upper Burmah soon came to a crisis. Reliable information was received in July 1885, that, when the Burmese Envoy was passing through Rome from Paris en route to Mandalay, an arrangement was made which had for its object the establishment of a Franco-Burmese bank at Mandalay, with a capital of 25,000,000 rupees, at the cost to Upper Burmah of 121₂⁄₄ per cent. interest, and the apportionment of the Ruby mines and the Letput revenues for security; earth, oil, share of profits, and Irrawaddy duties, jointly collected, were pledged as guarantees for interest.

It was rumoured also that a scheme had been started under French auspices for the construction of a Franco-Burmese railway from Mandalay to the British frontier, France providing 2,000,000l., and completing the line in seven years, at 71₂⁄₄ per cent. interest. Soon after this information was received a Burmese Envoy reached Rangoon, en route to Paris (where he arrived in September last), and admittedà to the Chief Commissioner that the railway question had been discussed, but that the proposal had not actually emanated from the French Government, but from a M. Trevelar, at Mandalay, in connection with a Mr. Farman, at Paris. This information turned out to be correct. It was avowed, however, that the object of the Burmese Envoy's mission to Paris was to negotiate the project.

It became evident that if such arrangements were concluded, French Agents would dominate all trade and chief sources of revenue in Ava, and that the consequences of British interests and trade would be fatal. The Governor-General of India in Council,* considered that the establishment by France of exclusive or dominant influence in Upper Burmah would be sufficiently disastrous to justify prevention, even at the risk of hostilities with Mandalay.

So serious, likewise, did Her Majesty's Government consider the position of affairs, that it was at once intimated to the French Government that if such undertakings were carried to a practical issue the necessary consequence would be that the liberty and power of the King of Burmah would have to be materially restricted. The French Government, on their side, denied that any agreement on the subject had been entered into between them and the King of Burmah.

In the meantime, further information was received from Rangoonà that, on an allegation of fraudulent removal of timber, a fine of upwards of 20 lacs of rupees had been imposed on the Bombay-Burmah Trading Corporation by King Theebaw's Ministers, and that in all probability the leases under which they had worked the forests in about one-half of Upper Burmah for twenty years would be cancelled. This action was, it appears, brought about at the instigation of the French Consul at Mandalay.

The position of affairs in connection with this communication is best described in the following brief note, drawn up, on this date, for the information of the Foreign Office:Ñ

"The attitude of King Theebaw towards the British Government has been consistently unfriendly since his accession in
1878. It has now culminated in intrigues with French subjects inimical to British interests, whilst his kingdom has, from misgovernment, become a source of danger to the adjacent districts of British Burmah.

"Three months ago, on an allegation, believed to be wholly unfounded, of fraudulent removal of timber from the Ningyan forests, the King's Ministers issued a Decree imposing a fine of upwards of 23 lacs of rupees on the Bombay-Burmah Trading Corporation, threatening at the same time to cancel the forest leases held by them without molestation for twenty years. This action is said to have been instigated by the French Consul at Mandalay in order to get the forests into French hands. The Government of India could not allow this gross act of extortion on British subjects to be carried out without proper inquiry.

"With the approval, therefore, of Her Majesty's Government, the Viceroy of India caused a letter to be addressed on the 29th August to the Burmese Government, (1) expressing a hope that the King would suspend the realization of this Decree, as well as the order for the cancelment of the leases, until the whole matter had been properly investigated; and (2) asking for the King's consent to the appointment of an Arbitrator by the Viceroy. Replying on the 10th October, the King's Government summarily rejected this proposal, declining at the same time to suspend action against the Corporation. The Government of India, therefore, unanimously decided, with the approval of Her Majesty's Government, to inform the Burmese Government:Ñ

"1. That with a view of settling the present dispute they must insist upon an Envoy from the Government of India being received at Mandalay, with free access to the King upon the same terms as are usual at other Courts, and without submitting to any humiliating ceremony; and

"2. That if, in the meantime, any proceedings have been or shall be taken against the Company, the Government of India will take the matter into their own hands without making any further communication to the Burmese Government; and

"3. That the present and recent incidents show the necessity for an English Agent being permanently stationed at the Burmese capital, with a proper guard and steamer for his personal protection.

"4. That the Burmese Government will be expected to regulate its external relations in accordance with their advice, as is now done by the Ameer of Afghanistan.

"5. That proper facilities shall be granted for the opening up of British trade with China vi‰ Bhamo.

"(These two last items of the arrangement are to be insisted upon after the arrival of the British Agent at Mandalay.)

"To this ultimatum no reply has yet been received, although it is immediately expected." O.T.B.

India Office, November 10, 1885'.

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REPORT OF THE PRELIMINARY JOINT SURVEY TEAM ON OPIUM PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION IN THE UNION OF BURMA

[continued1 ]

C. Miscellaneous

69. The Team thought it appropriate to include in a separate section some miscellaneous suggestions that were brought to its attention and discussed by it.

(i) Disposal of seized opium
70. It was brought to the Team's attention that the Government was in the possession of about 40 tons of seized opium. Much of this opium was of very inferior quality and adulterated, and it was difficult to find any commercial use for it. On the other hand, the Government had made considerable efforts in seizing this quantity over a period of years and would not wish to see it destroyed. The Government was aware, as pointed out by the Team, that the spirit and intention of the existing international treaties (the 1953 Opium Protocol included a provision for destruction of seized opium) was that seized narcotics should be destroyed, but in view of budgetary stringencies; would like to see their way to using this quantity of opium within the framework of international obligations.

71. The Team thought that export would need a homogeneous opium mass or extractum (pharmacopoeia type) with higher degree of morphine content. There were, of course, other questions of quality and price involved, and the Team considered that the Government should look further into the matter. It hoped that international co-operation would be more easily forthcoming if there was some assurance that returned from such use would be utilised in fighting the illicit drug traffic and improving the general condition of opium growing areas. In any case, the Government must consult the PCOB on the question of exports so as to remain within the framework of international obligations.

(ii) Research concerning medicinal plants

72. In connection with the Government's anti-opium programme, the Team thought that long-term research should be undertaken on the therapeutic properties of indigenous plants.

73. It is well known that all ancient civilisations had their own therapies which in many cases continue to be practised in the present time by some part of the population. The discovery of chemo-therapeutic drugs has often eclipsed the use of medicinal plants. Many [member states] of the WHO consider that it would be useful to undertake, following modern analytical and biological methods, a planned and systematic study on the rich and diverse 'materia medica' of certain therapies consecrated by old tradition.

74. The relatively recent discovery of ephedrin from a Chinese medicinal plant, of reserpin from an Indian Rauwolfia, of tubo-curarin from a South American plant and of psilocybin extracted from a mushroom of the same continent, shows that such studies could be profitable if pursued with patience and discernment.

75. Several WHO experts have already studied the planning of such research and examined the stages to be covered: (i) botanical and pharmacognostic identification; (ii) chemical analysis; (iii) pharmocological and toxicological tests and finally (iv) clinical trials.

The Team considers that Burma could play a useful role for itself and the world in such planned research and that the Government might wish to consider available assistance from UNESCO and especially WHO.

(iii) Samples of authenticated opium for the UN Laboratory

76. The Team would draw the attention of the Government to the need for submitting more authenticated samples of opium to the UN Laboratory to enable comprehensive and effective work to be carried out under the international programme of opium research. This is in accordance with the wishes of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the United Nations.

D. List of Recommendations

Opium cultivation and production

77. The Team recommended:

(a) The policy of the Government, as established in the terms of reference of its Opium Enquiry Committee, to abolish the large base of opium cultivation in the country, should be given full support. However, in view of the magnitude of the problem, the Team recommended caution in the early stages of experimentation. A sure beginning on a small scale is a prime requirement before a broad policy of opium substitution is undertaken. The improvement of all means of communication and transport was of particular importance. (Paragraphs 34, 40).
(b) That any long-term solution of opium cultivation involves the co-operation of the local people in an atmosphere of stability and security. It also needs co-operation from neighbouring countries in tackling the regional opium production which is somewhat similar to that in the Burmese frontier areas. (Paragraph 35).

c) That the work commenced by the Frontier Areas Administration in the frontier areas it visited be broadened and speeded up if progress is to be achieved in the foreseeable future. (Paragraph 37).

d) Prime attention needs to be given to settling hill peoples and in attracting them into close contact with a different and more advanced civilisation without damaging their lives. The Government would call upon the advice of sociologists and anthropologists, in co-operation with the UN Bureau of Social Affairs, to enable it to achieve this relationship. (Paragraph 38).

e) In broadening and speeding up the work commenced by FAA in the frontier areas, the Government should discuss with the UNTAB Resident Representative, in the first instance, possibilities of international assistance to supplement the national effort. Furthermore, the Government should explore any avenues of bilateral assistance that may be possible. (Paragraph 38).

(f) The Hukawng Valley offers sufficient economic prospects for the introduction of alternative income-producing activities to replace poppy cultivation and the Government should seriously consider its development. As a first step, the Government should consider the opening of experimental centres for viable crops; such centres could also be the focus of general welfare and income-producing activities. The Government should discuss with the UNTAB Resident Representative the possibilities of international assistance in setting up such centres. (Paragraph 39).

Opium consumption and addiction

78. The Team recommended:

(g) Registration of addicts should be undertaken by the Government as early as possible, in accordance with the wishes of international bodies and so as to enable control, inter alia, of the consumption of opium. (Paragraphs 46, 48).

(h) Eradication of the opium habit, particularly among the people that grow opium, should be undertaken gradually, along with other measures directed to improving living conditions, particularly as regards food and work, provision of adequate health and welfare services and propaganda against social acceptance of the opium habit. (Paragraph 47).

(i) The advances in health services in the frontier districts it visited should be extended as soon as possible. In this connection the Government should explore all avenues of international assistance to supplement the national effort, particularly from the WHO and UNICEF, in campaigns against endemic diseases, malnutrition and protection and education of children. (Paragraph 47).

(j) Tighter control should be exercised on the operation of licensed opium shops, especially with respect to the transport permits for purchase of opium, the entries of smokers in the shop registers and the use of opium by smokers outside the shops. Juveniles and children should not be permitted entry into opium shops. (Paragraph 48).

(k) The Government should refuse employment to addicts as part of its anti-opium policy. (Paragraph 48).

(l) The Government should give greater attention to building up the services that are responsible for treatment of addicts in both phases of withdrawal treatment and rehabilitation. All persons who wished to be cured of the opium habit should have the possibility to do so and efforts should be made to encourage them to come forward. (Paragraph 49).

(m) In respect of after-care and rehabilitation of cured addicts, greater use be made of official and voluntary social and religious organisations and that special efforts be made for employment and housing of such cured patients. (Para. 49).

(n) Better organised propaganda against the opium habit needs to be established, with adequate training and
preparation in a continuous programme over a number of years and full utilisation of all means of communication such as press, radio, pamphlets, posters, etc. Such education and propaganda should, in the first instance, be directed at teachers, Government officials, social workers, voluntary social and religious organisations. To supplement the national effort in education and propaganda against the opium habit, the Government should utilise any assistance that could be given by UNESCO, UNICEF and WHO. (Paragraph 49).

Illicit traffic

79. The Team recommended:

(o) That the Government should introduce, as soon as feasible, the narcotic legislation and administration that exists in Burma proper into all parts of the Union, in particular, the Kachin Hill Tracts and the Shan State west and east of the Salween River. (Paragraph 51).

(p) With respect to the training of enforcement staff and insufficiency of equipment in combating the smuggling of narcotics, the Government should utilise all available facilities of international (e.g. the forthcoming ICPO seminar in November, 1964) and bilateral assistance to supplement the national effort. (Paragraph 54).

Legislation and Administration

80. The Team recommended:

(q) The Government should consider ratifying or adhering to the 1936 Convention and the 1953 Opium Protocol. (Paragraph 56).

(r) If need be, the Government should consult the UN Division of Narcotic Drugs and the PCOB/DSB in co-ordinating and streamlining the different pieces of narcotic legislation in force in Burma. (Paragraph 58).

(s) A permanent administrative or small co-ordinating body should be established to supervise the anti-narcotic activities in the various fields. (Paragraph 60).

Substitution of Opium by Other Useful Crops

81. The Team recommended:

(t) That a long-term research programme should be undertaken by the Government with a view to discovery of crops which are suitable substitutes for opium, both economically and agronomically, along the general lines indicated in its report. Such experimentation should be carried out at different altitudes for tropical and sub-tropical crops and plants. (Paragraphs 63, 64, 67).

(u) In the stage of experimentation, the Government should consider several possibilities of marketable food (e.g. poppy oil) and medicinal crops and fruits, and diversity should be aimed at. Consideration should also be given to increasing the paddy yield per acre particularly in the Kunlong area. (Paras 65, 66).

(v) In communicating the knowledge of better techniques and different crops that might be acquired, demonstration farms would play an important role. Also, the utilisation of rural development agents would speed up the process. (Paragraph 67).

(w) In the interim period of adjustment, the Government should avail itself of the resources of the World Food Programme, FAO, to supplement the national effort. (Paragraph 68).

Miscellaneous

82. The Team recommended:

(x) With respect to the disposal of seized opium, the Government should examine possibilities of export within the
framework of international obligations and must consult the PCOB on this question. (Paragraph 71).

(y) Burma should undertake a survey of indigenous plants with therapeutic properties and participate in planned international research in this field, if need be, with the assistance of UNESCO and especially WHO. (Para. 75).

(z) More samples of authenticated opium should be sent to the UN Laboratory to enable comprehensive and effective research work to be carried out there. (Paragraph 76).

CORRECTIONS

The following corrections should be made to the paper by Vladimir Lisc‡k published in the March issue of the Newsletter (TYPN 20):

¥The name on page 12, footnotes 23, 24, 25, and page 15, footnote 37, should read Chien Chiao not Chien Chaio.

¥In addition, the text of the bottom half of Table II should appear as follows:

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News and Correspondence

Gehan Wijeyewardene writes:

I hope to submit a longer comment on the Southeast Asian situation for the December issue.

This brief note makes available some information on the recent KIO-SLORC talks. These were of concern at the August DAB Executive Committee meeting in Manerplaw. The outcome seemed to be that the DAB would trust the KIO to proceed with the talks on conditions agreed by all DAB members.

The point of major interest is that the Chinese are putting pressure on all concerned, especially the KIO, to reach agreement. One of the main Chinese concerns is to open the Kachin frontier. The present trade route into Burma is the old Burma road, through Ruili and then through Wa territory. The Chinese want to stop the Wa trade in narcotics. If they can re-route the 'legitimate' trade through Kachin territory, they can close the old route and, they believe, stop the narcotics trade. The Kachin claim their territory is free of opium cultivation, refining and trade.

Dr Tuja Manam has been transferred to Kachin headquarters near the Chinese border and will, therefore, unfortunately be unable to attend our seminar on Southeast Asian Borders.

Ho Chi Minh City
16 September 1993.

Chao-Tzang Yawngewe on Constructive Engagement

Chao-Tzang Yawngewe's article in June issue of Thai-Yunnan Newsletter on proper identity for Burma was very interesting. He has put it as 'viability of a nation-state' that carries a notion of economic value-judgement.

When the border areas of Burma are reflected upon, one cannot think about them without observing the fact of narcotics trade, especially on the direction of the Golden Triangle region and this region's connection to any economic/political power.
C-TY has elaborated on other speculative forms of economic resources only. There may be lot of speculation concerning the power of narcotics trade, true power, but the value of this trade cannot be underestimated.

The idea of Burma Proper as an emerging NIC could be developed a bit further. C-TY’s interesting analysis falls short here.

Moreover, his view of ‘economic-oriented political alignment which the world is now undergoing’ should be checked as I certainly perceive, as do many other researchers and analysts, that this worldly process of regions and economies is not so much a matter of politics but abandoning political values because of short-term economic interest and private orientation. In this new system of orientation, nation-state as a concept will gradually become weaker if not obsolete altogether. To my understanding, market and private interests undermine values and political orientation: politics will be replaced by legal action. VERY ROUGHLY speaking, it could be said that deregulation of market is about (individual) rights and the political orientation is about duties (towards society).

C-TY correctly writes that 'the field of policy alternatives becomes wider'. Here he is correct, but it is no more a matter of politics, policies only.

Finally, the term of Balkanization is a useful term when we observe that there are cultural differences explaining the behaviour of conflicting tribal/ethnic identities, a matter of much deeper psychology. From the fact of cultural identity as a project to legitimize different use of resources we can take the examples of, say, Jews, overseas Chinese and Japanese. In terms of politics, justice may be hampered by this kind of psychology as we have clearly seen.

C-TY’s work serves as a reorientation for the mythical expression of Constructive Engagement, but it could be further elaborated, couldn't it?

Matti Ojanpera General Secretary of Finland-Burma Society

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SYMPOSIUM ON SOUTHEAST ASIAN BORDERS

A symposium on Southeast Asian Borders, as part of the Thai-Yunnan Project, will be hosted by the Department of Anthropology, Research School of Pacific Studies, at The Australian National University.

HC Coombs Building, ANU
28-30 October 1993

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2 Department of Anthropology, University of Sydney.

1 From the British Public Records Office.


# Lord Cranbrook, No. 11, Secret, April 3, 1879.


à Government of India, No. 6, Secret, January 14; and No. 59, June 1, 1880.

□ Lord Cranbrook's telegram of March 1, 1880, &c.

|| Government of India, No. 231, Secret, November 9, 1880.


Government of India, No. 26, Secret, February 13, 1883.

à Government of India, No. 78, Political, June 20, 1884.

□ Government of India, No. 56, Secret, March 24, 1885.

* Earl of Kimberley, No. 13, Secret, May 1, 1885.

Government of India, July 25, 1885, and subsequent telegrams.

à Lord Dufferin's telegram, August 14, 1885.

* Lord Dufferin's telegram, August 2, 1885.

See Correspondence Foreign Office to India Office, August 14 and September 14, 23 and 26; India Office to Foreign Office, August 18 and October 5, 1885, &c.

à Secretary of State's telegram of August 20, and Viceroy's reply, August 24, 1885.

□ Lord Dufferin's telegram, August 24, 1885.

|| Secretary of State's telegram, August 25, 1885.

1 Earlier sections of this report appeared in issues 18 and 20 of the Newsletter.