The Victims of Frontiers

The Newsletter has perhaps struck some readers as paying an inordinate amount of attention to borders and frontiers. Some justification may be claimed on the grounds that the region covered by the project is characterized by many important frontiers. The editor, however, must also admit to a certain current preoccupation with the subject.

The two photographs, on this page and the next, represent some of the glitter of the Thai frontier post at Mae Sai. The first is reproduced (by permission) from Time Australia (11 September 1989) and accompanied an article on the world-wide video revolution. The second was taken by the editor in a most pleasant restaurant on the

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11 September 1989

Contents
river looking across to Myanmar. To legally cross that river at this frontier post one must be of either Burmese or Thai citizenship. Gone are the days when Tha Kilek on the Myanmar side was a major centre for the distribution of heroin and it is eight years since Khun Sa burned down the police station in Mae Sai. Today it is an interesting and prosperous town, the terminus of Highway 1 (the Paholyothin Road) from Bangkok and the northernmost point of Thailand. No one who has been there will forget the brightly-clad children, all girls, who pester visitors to have their photographs taken at five baht a time. The caption to the Time photograph, however, is inaccurate. They are most unlikely to be 'hilltribe' girls and their dress is not 'ceremonial costume' as the magazine suggests. The girls are mostly Tai without Thai citizenship – that is, from across the border. But, it is now said that some Akha girls from across the border have joined them. Of the girls in the photographs two sisters were born in Thailand – in Ban Hin Taek, in the days when it was Khun Sa's headquarters. After the 1982 attack they fled to Burma and moved by stages to Tha Kilek. They are now resident in the no man's land which is home to many issued with 'pink cards' by the Thai government. The card states that the holder is a refugee of Burmese nationality. Many who hold such cards are in fact citizens of the Peoples Republic of China. The only girl known to be a Thai citizen is also the only one known to have recent hill-tribe ancestry. Her father is from Malaysia working for the Thai government and her mother Akha. Many of these girls are the major earners of income for their families. The enterprise probably began with a Chinese general store which hired the costumes out to the girls. In 1989 the store sold off the costumes and left the business. The girls now seem to operate independently.

Behind the glitter of the brightly-coloured clothes and the pretty faces is a hard economic reality and often a determination to improve the family's status. But perhaps these girls are the lucky ones. It is now known that cross-border traffic is supplying an increasingly significant part of Thailand's trade in prostitutes and Mae Sai itself
has developed a reputation for its brothels.

As victims go in the modern world the 'refugees' of Mae Sai are among the more fortunate. Parents may find it difficult to educate their children and some miss out altogether. But work is available even within the restricted zone. At a price work may be available elsewhere and even permanent residence may be bought.

There are others in Southeast Asia, however, who are not as fortunate. We know that among the occupants of many refugee camps are those classified as unaccompanied minors. These are children who have been consigned by their Vietnamese parents to little boats in the hope that they will ultimately find acceptance and domicile in some other country. Are those who reach the camps, having escaped pirates and the other horrors of the journey the lucky ones? It is now unlikely that children in the camps will not get permanent residence status in Thailand (where many of them are) or some other country. Yet, we are told, that the parents refuse to take the children back when international agencies offer to facilitate their return, because of the parents absolute conviction that their children are the means to a passage to some promised land – perhaps, 'California'.

It is naive to suggest that it is only now and here that parents behave so brutally to their own children. But we can argue that many of the post-Vietnam war horrors in Cambodia and Vietnam are a consequence of international support for the Khmer Rouge which has isolated Vietnam from the community of nations and the world economy. The impetus for this has come from China, sections of ASEAN and sections of the United States of America. The justification has been noble support for the principle of respect for international boundaries. There have been suggestions that the American position is dictated by desire for retribution for the defeat in Vietnam. A much more rational explanation is that it was a considered strategy to stop the advance of communism in Asia. This has been pre-eminently successful. This, of course, was an aim supported by ASEAN, but these latter nations also used the defence of the Khmer Rouge as the adhesive of their own unity. However praiseworthy these national aims might be, some, particularly in ASEAN, have been most cynical in the pursuit of these policies. They must take responsibility for the creation of conditions which have resulted in the public breakdown of the basis of human social systems.

* * *

Sir James George Scott and the Political Institutions of the Wa
Cholthira Satyawadhna

In 1893, a British party, including James Scott as Political Officer, first crossed the centre of the Wa territory. At 'Ms'ng Hka' the Wa were declared by the Shan head–man to be stupid creatures who
did no harm if you did not bother them. Anyway, when the party marched between the villages of 'Hsan Tung' and 'Sung Ramang', a headless body was found lying, apparently killed where it was, for the body lay askew across the track. It was explained by the local Shan guide that the head-hunting season had begun. Just before coming across this proof, the party passed a skull avenue, the longest by far of any that they saw, though at intervals here and there they found others.

Scott's data on the head-hunting Wa is interesting, particularly as it is now almost impossible to do field research in Wa territory within Burma because it has been a liberated zone of the Wa in rebellion against Burmese authority; this insurgency also implies a resistance which began with the imposition of British hegemony. My own fieldwork in Yunnan lends support to my argument on Wa state-formation, the reconstruction of Lawa States in terms of an Asiatic mode of confederation in pre-modern Southeast Asia.

Head-hunting and human-head sacrifice are the pinnacle of the spirit cults within the Wa belief system commonly practised even in the early twentieth century when Scott took part in the British mapping mission. Scott diligently kept notes on his mission and submitted a report, but it was considered to be unfit for publication, for it never appeared. It has to be admitted that there are things about the Wa that do not permit of frank description (Scott 1932: 294).

What should be read between the lines of Scott's version of Wa ethnography? Similar to Lua/Lawa ethnography in Thai perception, there has been again some mystery about Wa history, a political mystery. Fortunately, in his official ethnography of the Wa, Scott gave us some clues, at least two major points should be raised:

a) Scott suggests that the Wa, despite their 'wild tribal instinct' for head-hunting, also had a certain kind of 'federation': The Wa, as has been explained, really form a series of village communities, but the most powerful chieftains, like Sung Ramang in the north and Ho Kha in the south, are said to rule over a number of villages and look upon the connection as a federation rather than a government (Scott 1932: 209).

b) Also, Scott was inclined to believe that once in the past, his so-called Wa 'federation' occupied a larger area, covered the whole state of Kengtung and the area he called 'Siamese Shan states', including Chiang Mai: It is certain that at one time they occupied the whole state of Kengtung, and held what are now the Siamese Shan states as far south as Chiangmai, and even farther. Their skull avenues, no less than their outrageous hill-ranges, are a warning to land-snatchers that they are not going to stand it any longer (Scott 1932: 299-300).

It was on his first journey to Kengtung in December 1890 for frontier work that Scott began to collect material about the Wa. His mission at Kengtung was successful, the submission of the Kengtung Sawbwa has
added from 15,000 to 20,000 square miles and 'many exceedingly wild subjects to the charge' (Mitton 1936: 159). But it was not until December 1892 that Scott had received orders to go to East Manglun to get the formal submission of the great Ton Sang, a chief who was himself a Wa but ruled over Shans (Mitton 1936: 179). According to Scott's report, Ton Sang was supposed to be chief of both West and East Manglun territories on each side of the Salween, who had been formally placed in charge of this state. But later, Sau Maha, the sub-chief of the Western division had rebelled against him, and Ton Sang had asked the British for help. The insurrectionist Sau Maha 'had bribed Wa chiefs to aid and abet him; moreover, he was supposed to be getting secret backing from the Chinese' (Mitton 1936: 179–180). When called on to submit to the British, he disappeared and 'showed no sign of obeying'. Also along Scott's journey from south to north, some of the rebel forces fired volleys from long distances. In one settlement the sub-chief had joined the rebels and Scott appointed the only possible person, a little boy of six, 'of the ruling family,' in his place and left him in charge of a regency of thirteen men: headmen and neighbouring chiefs. Ton Sang was their overlord. The reason was, explained Scott, 'it was the only thing to do, the wild men of this region would submit to none but one of their ruling house, and this boy was the only member of it available' (Mitton 1936: 180–181).

Lady Scott who compiled Scott's notes and reports, writes, They do not group themselves, as the Shans do, into states, but each chief has his own fortress on the top of a steep hill. It is barricaded by a huge earthwork, ages old, grown over with prickly plants and shrubs, through which is driven a tunnel, made to turn at an angle, so that there can be no straight shooting down it (Mitton 1936: 181).

Lady Scott also writes that Sung Ramang, the name of the greatest chief was 'the leader of the innermost circle of the Wild Wa' (Mitton 1936: 181). And when Scott arranged a meeting, it was described: All the headmen of the state excepting the Shans of Na Fan came in to the meeting and the whole hillside swarmed with armed men. The discussion was very long and noisy, and was conducted almost entirely in Wa...There was at the end a great chanting of ritual by the elders, a passing backwards and forwards of fowls' legs and pigs' hams, and finally the slaughtering of a gigantic buffalo which the meeting ate (Mitton 1936: 185).

After the meeting of over 1,000 Wa, Scott continued on his trip in order to meet the 'celebrated' Sung Ramang, the highest Wa chief. Along the way, he came across a Lahu community which was nominally a tributary of Sung Ramang, this Buddhist community sent the powerful Wa chief annual offerings of bullocks, pigs, opium and liquor (Mitton 1936: 188). Ta fu ye, the religious Lahu chief told Scott that the Chinese also made him pay tribute by force majeure.1
Scott and the British party marched further and for five days passed through the country of the Wild Wa until they arrived a huge big place which was believed to be the great Sung Ramang's village. They were asked not to enter the village, but they did. Five persons were successively presented to him as Chief, but all in turn, when pressed, admitted it was not so (Mitton 1936: 190). The party marched through several Wa villages in the innermost parts of the Wa country, where all night long the people shouted and beat their drums. Scott's first encounter with the Wa was a failure. No submission was made, except two puppets appointed by the British, i.e., the senior defector, Ton Sang, and the six-year-old Wa boy of the ruling house. The highest Wa authority, Sung Ramang, never presented himself to British authority.

These incidents give us at least a rough picture of Wa societies and the hierarchy within them. A prominent feature was the hereditary authority above the village level. Confederacy, what Scott called 'federation', seemed to be the most prominent feature of Wa social formation, in which many Wa villages were combined. Manglun seemed to be an example of a dependent 'state' with a subordinate township. In this region, the Wa were not always the ones subjugated by Shans or Burmese. In fact, in Manglun, Wa authority ruled over the Shan population. There is also the evidence just mentioned that a Lahu Buddhist community was a tributary of the Central Wa. Again, while the more advanced state-formations, the Burmese and Shan states, submitted to the British, the Wa ignored and rebelled against British authority.

On his second trip to the Wa country, Scott frequently met, in his words, massing and arming of Wa chiefs, the swearing of blood-brotherhood, and the intention to resist any British force which might enter the country" (Mitton 1936: 226). The Wa country was then between the paws of both China and Britain. When Ton Sang, the British puppet of Wa origin, met the British Commissioner, Scott writes, He was afraid to receive Chinese letters, he was afraid to answer them, and he was mortally afraid of not answering them - he was almost tearful in his entreaties that I protect him from China (Mitton 1936: 226).

Again, when Scott reached Loi Nung, the Sawbwa, Naw Kham U, had simply run away and refused to come and see Scott. Scott, this time, had to appoint his uncle to administer the state in his place. The uncle told Scott that the Chinese had actually made arrangements with the (ex-) Sawbwa for coercing the Wild Wa of the Gold Tracts (Mitton 1936: 228).

The status of the Sawbwa of Loi Nung was apparently significant and probably very close to Sung Ramang who was supposed to be the highest authority of the Wa of the Gold Tracts. Scott tried his best to arrange the meeting with the Gold Tract Wa Chiefs. The local people themselves classified this tract as the 'Wa Pet Ken' or the Eight
Petty Chiefdoms (Mitton 1936: 235). At Loi Lon, the British came across men armed with spears and guns, the Sawbwa of Loi Lon was not there; instead his father-in-law, fighting men, and some headmen confronted the British party. Admittance to the village was refused and the meeting was rejected. Scott tried to force them to make the Sawbwa appear by threatening huge fines if he did not.

The next day armed men poured into the citadel from all directions. The headman said they had come 'to guard the village.' The Loi Nung road was blocked and no one could go either way. Confronting such difficult situation, Scott wrote,

I said the village would be fined thirty rifles if our road were interrupted. Without a word in reply he (the headman) handed me a letter in Chinese and a flat thin silver plaque about the size of a cheese-plate stamped with Chinese characters. I saw no more of him. The characters merely said, 'The Puerh Taotai, Southern Taotai of Yunnan, presents this.' (Mitton 1936: 237) Scott's interpretation was the Wa people of Loi Lon looked on it as a sort of letter patent, in appearance it suggested the badge of the "Free Foresters," i.e., the rights given by the Southern "Cao Tai" of Yunnan to the Wa in occupying the areas.

In Northern Thailand, there have been reports of at least two such silver plates found in Lua/Lawa communities; Kraisri reports on the Laap Ngeun (silver plate) inscribed by Queen Rajasudhidevi (Kraisri), a research team from Phayap College found another one. This was unearthed for them for research purposes. These plates, which have high ritual value, are usually carefully hidden and only brought out on special occasions once every several years (Krisana). The plates are interpreted as giving land rights to the Lua'Lawa and exempting them from corvZˇe on the grounds that their ancestors were the original inhabitants of the land.

The Wa had never met such demands as that made by the British and were probably attempting to make their traditional rights manifest and affirm their rights and dignity.

The next day, the British party marched into the village where they believed the Pet Ken Chiefs were assembled to meet them. With 70 men, Scott went forward, pulled down a hastily constructed stockade, and went through the tunnel.2

In that large village of 200 houses, Scott searched for the house of the Sawbwa but could not find him. A mass of letters were found, showing they never had any intention of meeting Scott, even worse, the Wa coalition against British authority had a real existence. His note went on, 'I therefore decided to burn the place. It was too formidable a position to risk having to take a second time' (Mitton 1936: 239). The citadel full of rice and pigs and fowls was plundered for three
hours and then burnt. Scott wrote,

Up to this moment we had done nothing that could be called an act of war...I cannot see that under the circumstances any other course was open to me... (Mitton 1936: 239)

Scott had not given up his intention to meet the Wa Chiefs of Pet Ken; he marched on and finally achieved a formal meeting. There were fifteen chiefs and eleven of them presented tribute. The British were asked by the Wa chiefs to attack and burn Lem villages; they claimed that Monglem had steadily taken territory from them for the last ten or twelve years, that there was still a stone in Monglem bazaar which marked their boundary (Mitton 1936: 246).

In his Official Report, Scott said it was difficult to estimate the value of this Pet Ken trip. It was reported that of 33 'circles' in the Wa 'state', only 17 had made submission to Naw Hseng (British appointed Chief). On his way back to Loi Lon (the starting point), four miles on, two shots were fired from an ambush, two guards in the party were killed. At night, shots were fired into the British camp. The next day, another two guards were shot, one died, and another was seriously wounded. So in turn, all the villages in the Ngek Te were burnt. Scott explained, it was necessary to give our men something to do to steady their nerves and the Wa deserved punishment. Burning villages is contemptible, but it is better than sitting quiet to be shot at (Mitton 1936: 251).

The frontier work during the year 1896–1897 through the Wa country was perhaps the most terrible, in Scott's words, 'the fighting was the most difficult kind of jungle warfare' (Mitton 1936: 253). It might perhaps mark the beginning of the long-term people's war in this region, an uprising against foreign domination. This Wa insurgency which first started from a real 'jungle warfare' against British colonization has become the longest resistance against an established government that has ever occurred in Southeast Asia.

In 1900, Scott went up on the frontier again to meet the Chinese Commissioner in order to finish his mission of frontier-making. This time, the task had to be done by cutting through the Wild Wa country. According to Scott's official report, there were three Wa states of which one was adjudged to be on the China side of line, and the other two on the British; in doing such work there were no maps on both sides (Mitton 1936: 273). They proceeded along the track with difficulty because 'it was blocked by felled trees and panjis (bamboo spikes), and the Wa rolled large pieces of rock down the steep hillsides as they passed' (Mitton 1936: 274). The instructions being very positive to avoid fighting if possible, but it occurred. It was reported in the Rangoon Times:

We regret to report that a very serious outrage was perpetrated on the 9th Feb., Major Kiddle, R.A.M.C., in medical charge of the British party of the Burma–Chinese Boundary Commission, and Mr. A.B.
Sutherland, Extra Assistant Commissioner on special duty, being killed, while Mr. G.J.L. Litton, H.M.'s Consul at Ssumao, was wounded. No details yet received beyond the fact that it happened at Mong-hem, which is not marked on any map. (Mitton 1936: 275).

In his report, Scott stated that these two British officers were killed by the Wild Wa at Mong Hka on their way back to the British camp. Their heads were hacked off half a mile or so from the gate where their headless bodies were found. It was hopeless to search for the heads of the two officers, in Scott's words: 'The Wa were punished in a way they are never likely to forget...' (Scott 1932: 312-313).

On the 27th, an operation was made against a group of villages situated on the water-shed while the Chinese would work in other directions. British forces composed of 40 Durhams and 150 military police had smashed the Wa villages which probably numbered two or three hundred houses. Every house, war-drum, spirit-house, including livestocks, liquor stores and granaries were summarily burnt; probably the heads of the two officers were also burnt in the fire.

The demarcation of the frontier succeeded. It should be noted that at the beginning while Scott suggested the desirability of demarcating a frontier which would imply going into the Wild Wa country, a Chinese General, Liu, of the Chinese Boundary Commission suggested it was unwise to do so and requested not to stir the Wa if possible (Mitton 1936: 271). Also, Scott insisted that Chinese posts in the Pet Ken were distinctly 'unfriendly' and contrary to the Agreement of 1897 at Peking. When the task was fulfilled, Scott wrote:

We had been humble and accommodating everywhere to the east and south-east, but we were firm as adamant about conical peaks and precipitous ranges where there were no inhabitants but independent and semi-barbarous hillmen....However, a passable frontier line was agreed from the neighbourhood of the selected peak down to the Mekhong. The frontier exists on maps and was formally intimated to the Chinese Government, but it is absolutely ignored on the ground...If we had had a little common sense of enterprise like the French, the Wa country might have been an enclave, and we could have taken up the management and control of it when we chose. As it is we have not even got the whole of the Wa country but we have the whole responsibility for its behaviour--sooner or later we shall be called upon to keep our Wild Wa in order, it may be at a time that is not convenient for us (Mitton 1936: 281-2).

Lady Scott ended her compilation of Scott's ethnography of the Wa with a dramatic expression: 'We are, as a nation, terribly afraid of being accused of "earth-hunger"!' (Mitton 1936: 282).

Scott was truly a typical man of mission. He faced the real situation and uncovered the reality with an innocent eagerness to achieve his major goal -- the mapping of the frontier for Britain's ultimate benefit. That is why and how the truth crept in -- the existence and disappearance of Wa States.
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The Mon and the ethnonyms of their neighbours

Christian Bauer

[The short account below was (but is not now) part of a paper entitled 'Language and Ethnicity: the Mon in Burma and Thailand' which is to appear in the Project publication Ethnic Groups across national boundaries in mainland Southeast Asia (see Number Seven p. 28). Bauer's argument is that ethnonyms used for their neighbours, sometimes even of themselves, are to a greater or lesser extent influenced by Mon. The claims deserve to be brought to the attention of other linguists for comment. Ed.]

a) Karen
Mon distinguish between two Karen groups, karen man /kʰ^rea» màon/ and karen bam%a /kʰ^rea» hʰmàäa/, Pwo Karen(Phlow or Phlong their endonym) and Sgaw Karen respectively. The same distinction is made by Burmans but it is likely that this distinction was adopted from Mon given the longstanding and extensive contacts between Karen and Mon. The Thai term /kʰaOr!ia»/ is also borrowed from Mon as is the English term
Karen.5
The modern Thai form is problematic insofar as its diphthong corresponds to the Old Burmese from karya?n; the low tone in the major syllable also warrants some explanation.

b) Burman
The OM word for Burman is attested since 1102 as mirm°a /m¨rma/, OBurm. mrann°a. The modern Burmese form may be a re-borrowing from the MM form bam%a; the modern Mon form is /h¨màäa/. The English term is, again, likely to have been borrowed from Mon.

c) Khmer
The OM word for Khmer is OM krom attested since the 11th Century, OBurm. krwam &c., which Shorto connects with *kprum (whence Sre /prum/ meaning 'Cham'). Another etymology would interpret OM krom as a Khmer loan, meaning 'below, south', hence modern Thai /kh<1:m/ for 'Khmer', again borrowed via Mon, as supported by the relative chronology of Thai-Mon and Thai-Khmer contacts as shown in Bauer 1990.

d) Tai
Referring to various Tai groups Mon, today, use the ethnonym /sem/.6 Mon in Burma use this name to designate Shan, Mon in Thailand to refer to Thais. Lao are referred to, in both countries, as /làäa/. In Burma, the term /càocàäa/ denotes Thailand; it is derived from the name Ayuthya, LM dyody%a.

e) Pyu
The Old mon name for Pyu is tircul which has been accepted by Luce to be their endonym. For discussion the reader is referred to Luce's Phases ..., op. cit., pp. 47, 56 n. 5.

f) Lawa
The Mon-Khmer-speaking Lawa living north and northeast of the Mon are attested in an Old Mon inscription as lwa', hence the term /lœaÖ/. Following regular sound changes its modern Mon reflex is wa /wàäÖ/ which, however, is identified today with the Wa living in northeastern Burma. Although obviously related, Wa and Lawa are linguistically distinct today.

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The Historical Context of
William Clifton Dodd's The Tai Race

by
Herbert R. Swanson*
The Tai Race by William Clifton Dodd (1857-1919), Presbyterian missionary in northern Siam, symbolizes the problems scholars face in interpreting the missionary role in Asia. The book itself represents an artifact of a long American Presbyterian heritage that grew out of both the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation and the eighteenth-century Scottish Enlightenment. Scholars, thus, cannot properly evaluate the data Dodd presents in The Tai Race without an appreciation of how its American social and religious context influenced its content.

Dodd's book further inhibits cogent appraisal by masking its immediate historical context, which context directly relates to its larger intellectual environment. Stated briefly, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the American Presbyterian in northern Siam (called the 'Laos Mission') fell into a territorial dispute with the American Baptists in Burma concerning who would work in Kengtung. Each side claimed that they could better 'evangelize' Kengtung State. The Baptists claimed Kengtung because it fell within British Burma. The Presbyterian claimed it because they believed that the Shans of Kengtung were ethnic Tai, closely related racially and linguistically to the 'Laos' of northern Siam. The Baptists, on the other hand, argued that the Shans were not so closely related to the Laos as the Presbyterians claimed. The Baptists set up a mission station in Kengtung in 1901, and the Presbyterians followed suit in 1904.

This territorial dispute generated a large body of correspondence, memoranda, articles, and studies all aimed at proving the better claim of the one side or the other. Dodd played a leading role in preparing the Presbyterian arguments, which he aimed primarily at the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions in New York because 'the Board' was inclined to let the Baptists have Kengtung. Dodd and his colleagues lobbyed the Board with two purposes in mind: first of all, to prove that the Laos Mission could better spread Protestant Christianity in Kengtung State and, therefore, the Board had a moral and religious duty to support Presbyterian work there; and, secondly, to enthuse the Board with the idea that Kengtung stood as a 'gateway' to a much larger Tai-speaking inland population which only the Presbyterians could Christianize.

The Board of Foreign Missions ended the dispute in 1907 by ordering the closure of Presbyterian work in Kengtung, but that order only led Dodd and others to intensify their campaign for Presbyterian work among the Tai peoples. Presbyterian missionaries from northern Siam took a number of extensive survey tours to collect ethnographic and linguistic data on the Tai in southern China, Burma, and French Indochina, all in hopes of persuading the Board to open work in those regions. The Board finally did approve a station in Chiengrung, Yunnan, which was opened in 1916 and where Dodd died in 1919.

The Tai Race contains a compilation of Dodd's writings during the period he lobbyed the Board of Foreign Missions for work beyond Siam. Hence the book itself combines the sometimes confusing characteristics of a travalogue, of missionary propaganda, of a social
science-like monograph, and of history. What does come through clearly is Dodd's intense commitment to spreading the Christian religion. He undertook both his many trips of exploration and the compilation of the book for the purposes of communicating the needs of the Tai peoples for the Christian religions and of alerting the Presbyterian Church of the extent of its responsibility to the Tai race in that regard.8

On his tours beyond Siam, Dodd collected various kinds of evidence to substantiate his argument that the Tai race extended over a large territory and encompassed millions of people. That evidence included personal interviews, vocabulary lists, observations on customs and language, and research into published French, British, and missionary sources. Dodd kept carefully exact notes concerning the 'facts and impressions' he gathered. He constantly jotted down not only facts concerning the racial composition and customs of the peoples he met but also paid particular attention to the similarities and differences of each Tai dialect compared to northern Thai.9 Dodd strongly emphasized linguistic considerations because he sought to prove that the Presbyterian Laos Mission could, and therefore should, communicate its religious convictions to the great Tai population outside Siam. He emphasized how his missionary tours, the basis for much of The Tai Race, involved close, painstaking investigations into the ethnic background, customs, history and language of the peoples he met. He noted how vast was the secondary literature he used and how he tried to use the latest printed sources.10

Dodd, thus, stressed the collection of impressive amounts of carefully collected and collated data as the means by which he sought to convince the Presbyterian Church it should undertake a great Tai mission. He displayed a deep concern to gather 'the facts' and then arrange those facts into an ordered body of knowledge. In doing so he drew upon the intellectual roots of his conservative Presbyterian heritage. That heritage viewed 'truth' as a stable, universal entity that could be stated in precise propositions. It expressed itself, furthermore, through Scottish common sense philosophy's (CSP) inductive method of research and reasoning.11

CSP, an eighteenth-century product of the Enlightenment, sought to protect the Christian religion from attacks on it by showing that Christianity was reasonable and that science and the Bible complimented rather than contradicted each other.12 It emphasized 'inductive reasoning' which meant the careful collection of data, the ordering of that data, and the drawing of careful, precise conclusions from this factual base. Conservative American Presbyterians, such as Dodd, cherished the inductive method as the epitome of scientific thinking. They demanded that scientific generalizations be built upon as complete a set of facts as possible. Such generalizations must be arrived at carefully and take into account all of the facts gathered.13 Thus, for example, they attacked the theory of evolution as a mere speculative hypothesis that failed to take into account all of the known facts. CSP gave conservative Presbyterians a
philosophical tool for the defense of orthodox Protestant Christian beliefs.14

While the late twentieth-century reader may find in Dodd a confusing conglomerate of facts and religion, The Tai Race represented to Dodd himself the results of long years of the careful application of the inductive method. He 'knew' that his God called him to work among the Tai beyond Siam. Dodd, therefore, used the inductive method to provide him with incontrovertible data to prove that the various Tai ethnic groups he studied all spoke dialects intelligible to his Laos Mission. He felt that such evidence proved that the Laos Mission had a God-given moral responsibility to spread Christianity to all those groups because it could communicate with them. His carefully conducted research represented for him the proper use of the inductive scientific method for religious ends. the Tai Race, in sum, embodied a dual commitment. It expressed Dodd's commitment to establishing the 'truth' about the Tai race. It also embodied his commitment to the spread of Protestant Christianity. In this way, the Tai Race symbolizes the American Presbyterian belief that faith and facts went hand-in-hand and cannot be understood apart from the dual commitment to religious beliefs and the inductive method.

Bibliography


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the debate continues

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One respects John McKinnon's sympathy for the highlanders of Thailand and his humanitarian concern over their harsh vicissitudes, as also his intent to register that they have too often been cast in the role of scapegoats as the prime culprits in the deforestation of the nation, and thus in consequence that their sufferings have been compounded in the past and might all too easily be so again in the future.

Nevertheless, his persistent sniping at environmental and conservationist considerations remains puzzling. How has he come to believe that fudging this issue can in any way help the hill-tribes? The sombre reality of environmental ravages are starkly apparent throughout Thailand, not least in the north, and the ethnic minorities are neither immune from their consequences nor totally uninvolved in their perpetration.

Some anthropologists and other seasoned observers of the north-western provinces are reporting a widespread awareness among both highland and lowland villagers that due to the ever-increasing population pressures on the fixed resource base, the old traditions of agriculture, which all depended on yet more forest to expand into at need, are no longer viable since further unclaimed terrain no longer exists. These erstwhile farmers' dilemma is that all too often they lack both the capital and the technical knowhow to adapt successfully to the maelstrom of change by evolving new survival strategies.

Against this, it is also noted that in both highland and lowland settlements a minority is achieving a transition which offers both increased security and status. The majority, though, is descending willy-nilly into an existence as a class of underpaid day-labourers scraping by in deepening proverty.

In analysing the plight of the ethnic minorities, it might thus be worthwhile to widen the focus by recognising the large evident overlap existing between their problems – constituting 1% of the total population – and those of the rural populace at large, who still make up 70% of the kingdom's citizens. Lack of space precludes a full rehearsal of such complexities here, but certain salient features ban be briefly mentioned.

For one, there is Thailand's political scenario – a fitfully evolving nascent democracy in which overcentralization and the continued dominance of the alliance between the military, the bureaucracy and the Sino-Thai nouveaux riche business clans still as yet inhibit any substantial participation in the political process by the rural and urban labouring and the emergent middle and professional classes – though such an engagement is beginning to gain ground.

For another, Thailand continues to bear the brunt of certain repercussions of the fifty years' imbroglio of the great powers' geo-political confrontations enacted through [often proxy] wars in Indochina. The refugees keep coming – from the four decades long civil strife in Burma also – and intermittent battles just beyond and across the nation's frontiers still persist. Military spokesmen thus
have little difficulty in rationalising the army's continuing political involvement at centre stage. Nor, under these circumstances, can the military's lion's share of the national budget be effectively questioned, let alone challenged in parliament.

A third element is that in the industrialised nations the green lobby is having a sufficiently strong impact to result in the enactment and efficient implementation of environmental protection legislation, though unethical entrepreneurs have subsequently exported these problems of pollution and environmental degradation to Third World countries, where local elites have frequently proved only too eager to take the money and damn the consequences.

The 'domino theory' can take on a new lease of life in these changed conditions. After the despoilation and the squandering of Thailand's natural resources, which neighbour will be the next in this sequence to topple.

The foregoing gives but glimpses of the ongoing interactions between Thailand and other weightier global economies. Much of the kingdom's modern history is inextricably blended with the Thai response to such external stimuli.

In light of this, it might be well for expatriates concerned to aid minority refugees and other far longer established highland communities here to beware of interpreting the truly tangled reality in terms of a Mediaeval morality play. In doing so, they risk provoking a backlash among Thai officials and impoverished lowlanders alike, which has already happened more than once.

It should also be borne in mind that an action inspired by compassion but lacking in wisdom is potentially harmful on two counts, since just as ignorance is no defence in law, so well-meaning acts that contribute to calamities are morally culpable. This may seem a harsh observation but it is the recognised metaphysical reality.

As for environmentalists 'reading events myopically', perhaps it is time you took a look in the mirror, John.

*

LOGGING

2

Hans BSˇnziger16

While I appreciate Dr. J. McKinnon's concern about the plight of the minorities, his comments on the floods and the landslide disaster in Phipun in southern Thailand, November '88, are somewhat simplistic in squarely blaming the unusually heavy rainfall for the tragedy.

It is of course correct that such prolonged downpours are likely to cause landslides, but these will occur prevalently where the original forest cover has been destroyed or strongly disturbed on steep slopes. The areas where most slides, in fact, happened had been logged and "reforested" with rubber plantations. Rubber trees have
shallow root systems; moreover, there was no undergrowth beneath and between the tree rows.

A mature evergreen rain forest, such as is typical of that area, is a highly diverse community of tall emergents, closed canopy, lianas and epiphytes, undergrowth bushes and herbs occupying every niche. This forest cover absorbs much of the rain's impact while the heterogeneous root system anchors the soil. Most importantly, the thick layer of litter and humus soaks in and retains a large amount of the rainfall. On exposed compacted soil, rainwater simply runs down the steep slopes thus causing rapid erosion which leads to landslides and floods.

Furthermore, what caused the public outcry was that the destruction of Phipun village and most of the deaths were caused by the cataract of logs – interspersed with trees swept along in their descent – which was definitely a legacy of recent logging, whether 'legal' or illegal.

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3

Rejoinder

John McKinnon

Thanks for the opportunity to provide a rejoinder to my two learned colleagues. Conservationists like Geoffrey Walton and Hans BSˇnziger deserve our support. I have no argument with their general concern. Any development activity in the highlands must, as they observe, be ecologically sound. As I no longer have any formal contacts with any institute or project in the North I rely on such comments to keep me in touch with local feelings. Please thank them for taking the trouble of expressing their opinions. Please assure them that far from wishing to fudge, snipe and confuse the issue, my original and limited concern was to caution against a politically naive response to the ban on logging which followed the Phipun tragedy. For the sake of brevity my statement simplified the facts. Their frustrated comments indicate that more information is required. To date the only published results I have seen of an investigation into the causes of the Phipun disaster are those of Mr Suvit Vibulsresth, Director, Remote Sensing Division of The Thailand National Research Council. In the areas of the Khlong Din Daeng (Red Earth River) catchment studied, those in which the vegetation had been significantly altered showed that in contrast to areas in which the vegetation was relatively unaltered, 3.5% more slips occurred. This marginal difference tends to support Dr Hans BSˇnziger's observations.
CANBERRA ANTHROPOLOGY invites readers of the Thai-Yunnan Project Newsletter to submit papers for publication.

CANBERRA ANTHROPOLOGY provides a forum for the publication of research in all branches of anthropology, focusing on Australasia, the Pacific and Southeast Asia. It is published twice a year and has an international readership.

The Editors would like to increase the journal's coverage of Southeast Asian anthropology.

Papers should not exceed 8000 words, but longer submissions of outstanding quality will be considered. Manuscripts should be typed double-spaced on one side only of A4 paper, with ample margins, accompanied where possible by computer disk using only Word (version 3.02, 4 or 5) for IBM (MS-DOS) or Macintosh computer. Citations should be in short (Harvard) form; references should include all (but only) works cited in the paper; endnotes should be typed on a separate sheet and numbered consecutively throughout the text.

The Editors
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Cartoon by Nop from the Bangkok Post, Monday, 20 November, 1989; reproduced with permission.

The Suvit sample study areas appear to be limited to this granitic landscape. When aerial photographs of more resilient metamorphic formations in the same catchment are examined the difference between the incidence of slips on altered and unaltered
vegetation is negligible. As Dr Hans Bșnziger notes, a 'simplisitic (explanation) ... squarely blaming the unusually heavy rainfall' is unacceptable but neither does it appear to have much to do with the 'shallow root systems' of rubber trees nor 'the original forest cover'.

Then what happened and why?

The most promising hypothesis is currently under examination at Chiang Mai University. Researchers in the Department of Geography have evidence which indicates that the cyclone which dumped 600mm of water on the catchment over three days at the end of the rainy season on ground already saturated, triggered an endemic environmental hazard. Fissures in the granite already charged with water, subject to increasingly high rates of percolation which contributed both weight and lubrication split, and sent massive slumps of extremely heavy material downhill. The result can be compared with the collapse of a multiplicity of dams. The rush of rock and water carried all before it. Huge trees were torn up root and all, soil was washed away as mud along with any loose material such as logs which lay in the path of the flow.

The arechaeological evidence is too strong to ignore. Cross-sections taken through the sedimentary material which makes up the valley floor indicates a recurring sequence of similar events of the same, or greater, magnitude, every 100 years or so. Periodic infill of the valley floor with large boulders and other coarse sedimentary material interspersed with narrow bedding layers of fine silt establishes the fact that serious flooding predates the era in which either farmers or loggers are likely to have significantly altered the vegetation of the upper catchment.

I hope these additional details are of interest. I look forward to reading the published results of the Chiang Mai study.

Department of Geography
Victoria University of Wellington

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The Shan Leadership Unites on the Road to Independence

When the situation in the lands of our western neighbour should be progressing, the border regions behind the mountain ranges to the west only continue to show the results of old divisions. The twists and turns in the movement of power tighten at all times, particularly in the last three weeks of the old year and the beginning of the new. The latest news reports that on 1 January the leaders of Shan State held an important meeting to seal an agreement with the long-term aim of declaring the independence of the eight million Thai Jai.

In the biting cold, with the temperature falling near zero Celsius, in an area of over-lapping mountain ranges, five important
members of the Shan State Progressive Party, under the leadership of Chai Lek, journeyed secretly and appeared at the meeting place of the Tai Revolutionary Council; with much heated argument they dealt with the problem of agreeing on basic principles for unity on a political and economic program and on the unity of the three Tai armies which had been divided since early days. In fact the Shan Revolutionary Army of Mo Heng and the Shan State Army of the group under the leadership of Khun Sa had united politically and militarily under the banner of the Tai Revolutionary Army. But both parties agreed that until the Shan State Progressive Party joined them, independence would not be possible. This was the reason that this new meeting was taking place. Two of the five SSPP representatives were Caw Noh MŸang and Khun Cai. The TRC representatives, besides Khun Sa and representatives of other Tai Jai revolutionary councils, included Caw Khun Saeng, the President of the TRC and Cang Su Chian alias Fa Lan, the commander of the military camp of Doi Lan had travelled to join the meeting, a source close to the leaders of Shan State informed Khaw Phiset in an interview last week.

Cang Su Chian is Chinese, a member of the Kuo Min Tang who broke with Lao Li and joined Khun Sa. He was the one who devised the plan to abduct the two Russian doctors who were part of a Soviet aid team in Burma so that they could be exchanged for Khun Sa who had been captured by the Rangoon government and was held in Mandalay gaol for five years. He was still on very close terms [with Khun Sa] and had been appointed a military commander.

The news source reported that after many hours of negotiation the representatives of the TRC and SSPP agreed on a number of basic principles and points of view on politics, economics and military affairs.

- the two parties would unite in one Tai Jai state, with the forces of the SSPP under the command of Cai Lek would become a unit in the MŸang Tai Army, the military force of the TRC.
- they would strongly follow an independent economic policy based on revenues raised from taxes, with no attempt to benefit from the trade in opium and heroin.
- in politics, the SSPP would send representatives to join the Thai Jai Revolutionary Council, the supreme body in the state.
- the SSPP would withdraw from the National Democratic Front, the organization of minorities established to fight the military government of Rangoon.

However there are many details that need to be agreed on at a future date. The news source, who attended as an observer, specifically said that though the two parties were able to agree on many principles, there were other points, such as the conditions for the withdrawal of the SSPP from the NDF; the TRC looks to a future in which the Shan State will secede and become independent of the Union of Burma. Remaining in the Union of Burma is something quite unacceptable to the TRC.

In addition the representatives of the two sides had wide-ranging discussions about the future, for instance, after the two
parties are united, what system of government should be followed and what would be suitable for the present situation in the territory of this minority. Besides this the representatives of the SSPP expressed fears that they would lose leadership of their group if it was merges with the TRC. But they were assured by Khun Sa that their position would not be affected in any way.

'After thirty years on the road of revolution, this meeting has come near to achieving a major aim - that we should all join together as brothers', the news source drew attention to this section of the address of Caw Noh M Yi, the head of the SSPP representatives, at the end of the meeting.

This was the third attempt to arrive at unity among the Thai Jai people. The other two attempts were in 1988 and 1989. Though it has been a confused and difficult matter to overcome the divisions between the three parties in the past, the aim has been clear for a long time - that is to lead the eight million people down the long, hard road of independence.

The Thai Jai or Shan State is the largest of the minorities within the Union of Burma. After the Second World War, in 1967, the breaking of the Treaty of Pang Luang [Panglong] which had guaranteed the rights of Shan State and other minorities on entering the Union, Ne Win forced this territory to declare itself the enemy of the central government and this has continued to the present. The Government in Rangoon has regularly used force every dry season in its attempts to suppress the minorities.

At some periods the Thai Government has given aid to the minorities of Burma, or at least tried to make things more convenient for them; but in recent times the policy has changed somewhat, with the view being taken that these were the internal affairs of a neighbouring country, even though some of these groups, particularly the Thai Jai, were of the same race as the Thai of the Chao Phraya valley.

The isolation of this minority, created the condition that they had no choice but to depend on the production of narcotics, even to the supply of heroin, in order to feed its own population and to supply arms to its forces. This has created the massive problem for the Thai Jai, particularly for Khun Sa who is known as an international 'heroin king', and who is even branded a 'criminal' wanted for punishment by the United States.

Trans. Gehan Wijeyewardene

Editor's note: A number of articles in recent issues of Khaw Phiset concern the insurrections on the Burmese side of the border. Some of these are listed below.

22–29 January Aphichart Suthiwong ""War"" for whose benefit?' on the Mon.
26 Feb.–4 March Chacharin Chaiwat 'Before it is too late' on Karen reactions to Burmese offensive and Thai acceptance of Burmese incursions.
Zhuang frog worship

Yu Shi-jie

Zhuang frog worship is most evident in the 'Frog Festival' which is still held in Nan-dan, Dong-lan, Tian-er, Ba-ma, Feng-shan and He-chi of the Red River [Hong-shui] catchment in Guangxi Autonomous Region. This celebration is also known as the 'Frog-woman festival' or Mai-ma-guai, Mai-guai meaning frog in the Guangxi dialect. The festival is an annual event held in the first lunar month and lasts between three to five days and one month. On the first day of the new lunar year the villagers gather and walk to the fields, beating drums and gongs as they go. The first person to find a frog calls out and is immediately surrounded by an excited throng. Three or seven bangs from locally-made firecrackers notify the spirits that a frog has been captured. The finder of the first frog is considered to have good luck for the rest of the year and receives congratulations from the other villagers. This individual then encloses the frog in an intricately carved coffin and places it in a palanquin made of wood and coloured paper. Two young men, surrounded by villagers beating gongs, then carry the chair to the She Huang temple or pavilion outside the village where the coffin is placed. In the evening the villagers reassemble here to keep vigil beside the coffin. They are in a joyous mood, the elderly beating gongs and bronze drums and the young people performing the frog and bronze drum dances in time with the music. This group of young men and women sing folk-songs throughout the night. The festivities continue until the day for burying the frog-coffin.

During the period of the coffin vigil, the village children continue to catch frogs and to parade through the village singing and dancing to the accompaniment of drums and gongs. At each door they pause to sing the "Frog Song" and offer good wishes to the household head. The household head responds with gifts of rice, zong-zi [ glutinous rice dumplings which have been wrapped in bamboo leaves and boiled], glutinous rice cakes, meat, coloured eggs and so forth which
are offerings to the frog. In fact, only a small portion of these gifts are placed with the frog, the remainder are divided up and taken home since it is considered that children who consume these offerings will be strong and clever, young people healthy and the elderly blessed with long-life.

A suitable day for burying the frog is selected. That morning the villagers erect bamboo poles at the pavilion where the frog rests and top these with different coloured flags. At the appointed lucky time, gongs and drums are beaten and firecrackers lit as sacrifices to the frog. Youths wearing all sorts of crudely-made masks dance in clever imitation of the frog to the sounds of bronze drums, skin drums and suo-na horns. Each villager carries a triangular flag of coloured paper and an elder leads them in carrying the frog-coffin around a field outside the village. The villagers sing the "Frog Song" as they carry the frog to a specified site where the coffin will be buried and soil heaped on top to form a mound. The villagers first disinter the frog buried the previous year and examine the colour of the corpse to determine prospects for the coming harvest. Blackened frog-bones indicate an unlucky year of natural disasters, bleached bones portend a bumper cotton crop and yellow bones presage favourable growing conditions and abundant grain.18 This custom has a long history: in discussing the customs of Nan-dan-tu Prefecture, the Gazetteer of He-chi County records that "during the first lunar month villagers in each settlement bury frogs to the accompaniment of gongs and drums and will stick coloured flags in the grave mound. On the eve of the new lunar year they divine their fortunes from frog bones".19

Zhuang frog worship is also depicted on bronze drums. Guangxi possesses the largest collection of bronze drums in China and most have been excavated or obtained from areas of Zhuang settlement. Since 1949, a number of drums from the Warring States [475-221 BC] and Western Han [206 BC-8 AD] periods have been excavated in Gui-xian, Tian-lin and Tian-dong Counties.20 These bronze drums can be divided into four different shapes. Four or six cast frogs can be found on the edges of most types of drum. Those from Long-zhou and Qing-xi have a large cast frog bearing a smaller one on its back. It is evident from historical records and from drum excavation sites that the Leng-shui-chong, Bei-liu and Ling-shan shaped drums were distributed in the region of present-day Yu-lin, Qian-zhou and Nan-ning.21

Zhuang frog worship is also depicted on cliff murals. The cliff mural made by the first Zhuang on Hua Shan [Mt. Hua] at Ning-ming is the largest yet found in China. The mural comprises over 1,000 figures of humans and animals. Only the Hua-shan Mural contains such a large number of figures. The figures are all drawn in the same stance; with both arms raised but bent at the elbows and the knees bent in a corresponding manner. Some scholars in China consider that this posture resembles that of a frog preparing to leap and represents the first Zhuang imitating frogs during the dance for the frog sacrifice.22 Indeed, contemporary Zhuang frog dancers at the Frog Festival bear a close resemblance to the figures in the cliff murals.
The origin of frog worship:

Religion only emerges after societies have reached a certain stage of development. During the earliest stages of human history it is common for natural phenomena which are closely associated with everyday life to become the objects of worship. The Zhuang are agriculturalists and archaeological material provides evidence that agricultural production was developing in Guangxi during the earliest stage of the Neolithic Period and by the late Neolithic this primitive agriculture had recognisably improved. By the end of the Warring States period, agriculture occupied a significant place in the economic life of the Luo-Yue. The Records of Wu Ti in the Han History note that "South of the Yangtze River [they use] slash and burn techniques before growing paddy". The section describing the Jiao-zhou hinterland in the "Commentary on the Water Classic" [Shui-jing Zhu] states that "During the time when the area was divided into Counties, there were Luo fields in the Chao River valley. The farmers who cultivated the land were known as Luo-min; people of Luo. From these accounts it is evident that the history of Zhuang agriculture is comparatively long. According to the Yi-wu Zhi [Chronicle of Oddities] the people of Luo-Yue cultivated two rice-crops per year during the Chin and Han dynasties.

Knowledge of nature and the capacity to alter natural conditions were extremely limited, particularly among those who were heavily dependent on the impact made by the natural world on agricultural production. In terms of rice cultivation the role of water was crucial to ploughing, harrowing, planting and seedling growth. In the period before irrigation developed, rice production was reliant on rainfall. Although Guangxi has a subtropical climate and abundant rainfall, the monsoon and the mountainous topography make drought, waterlogging and low temperatures common occurrences. Of these natural disasters, drought is the most common, particularly in springtime. The likelihood of spring drought is 70-90 per cent in the west, 30-50 per cent in central Guangxi and 3-10 per cent in the east.23 These drought conditions frequently precede spring ploughing and adversely affect prospects for harvest. The myriad changes in the weather were beyond the comprehension of the first Zhuang and they devised explanations for processes, conditions and causes which they could neither explain nor control. After a long period of observation they discovered that frogs had a close association with the thunder spirit since shortly after the frogs chorused, thunder would roll. The Zhuang personified and socialised this relationship to produce the tale of the frog spirit and the thunder spirit as retold in the "Frog Song" and similar myths. According to an account from Dong-tan County, the frogs are the children of the thunder spirit and the humans who slaughtered the frogs incurred the thunder spirits' wrath - a great drought in which "birds built nests in the river-beds, mice lived on the lake-bottom and the Dragon King became a pauper begging everywhere for drinking water." Only after the people undertook a solemn funeral ceremony for the frogs under the direction of the
ancestors Bu-luo-tuo and Mu-liu-jia did the thunder spirit allow rain to fall. After this event, the people made annual offerings to the frogs. A traditional account from Feng-shan County relates that the frogs were sons of the thunder spirit who interceded on behalf of humanity and were cast to earth by their father to act as messengers from humans requesting rain. The humans appreciated the honest words of the frogs [presumably those which caused their downfall] and presented offerings, withholding nothing. When the frogs died, the people held funeral rites to send their spirits to heaven, thereby hoping to obtain assurance of bountiful harvests.

A story from Tian-er County tells of a drought in ancient times. The Zhuang sacrificed pigs and sheep under the direction of Bu-luo-tuo and placed frogs on top of the bronze drums as offerings. The frogs were touched by the sincerity and suffering of the people and called for their father to let rain fall. After this, the people worshipped the frogs every year. 24 Although these stories differ in detail, the common core is that the thunder spirit controls rainfall, the frogs are his children and they have been sent to earth as messengers. Humans who want bountiful harvests should worship the frogs or risk devastation by drought. This worship evolved into a request for rain, but also a joyous celebration.

The nature of frog worship:

Zhuang frog worship is a form of primitive religion, but whether it can be termed totemism is a question requiring further research. Totem is a term taken from the language of the Ojibwa American Indians, meaning 'his relatives'. Totem worshippers consider that their clan has blood-links with a certain plant, animal or natural phenomena and name themselves after it. The Pan-hu worship of the Yao is a clear example of this. Yet when Zhuang in most districts are asked to explain why the first Zhuang worshipped frogs they make no mention of a blood-relationship or of totemic function. As discussed above, the Zhuang worship the frogs to obtain rain and this constitutes an agricultural sacrifice as part of nature worship. By contrast, the Yao worship of their ancestor Pan-hu who married a daughter of the Gao-xin clan and begat six sons and daughters who intermarried to produce the 12 Yao family names, is totemism.


* Editor's note: The Project and the Department of Anthropology, together with the ANU Library, sponsored an exhibition of Ms Hu Zejia's collection of Hmong textiles from Guizhou. There was considerable concern about the insistence of Ms Hu that the exhibition be billed as 'Miao', which appears not to be the name by which most groups of Hmong refer to themselves. It is now well-known, that 'Miao' is thought to be an unacceptable term, particularly in Thailand. In
the Peoples Republic of China, however, it is still the official term. There are many names in this region which are of uncertain status, and the Newsletter welcomes comment by readers on this topic.

INTRODUCING THE MOU OF GUIZHOU

Miao is the name generally used by outsiders for these people in the Peoples' Republic of China and elsewhere. The name they commonly call themselves is represented in English as 'Hmong'. Different dialect groups may refer to themselves differently however, and those in southeastern Guizhou term themselves 'Mou'.

In February this year, the Thai-Yunnan Project jointly sponsored a display of Hmong embroideries at the Australian National University. This display represented a portion of the private collection of Ms Hu Zejia. Ms Hu graduated from the Sichuan Academy of Art in 1982, where she specialised in oil-painting. She has been employed as a factory-worker and a teacher and is now artistic director for a news agency. She is extremely interested in Mou culture and travels to their settlements several times each year to research and collect items of embroidery. What follows are excerpts from the translation of Ms Hu's commentary made by the Thai-Yunnan Project.

It is said that in ancient times a fierce tribal war took place on the central plain of China in the valley of the Yellow River. The troops of the Yellow Emperor defeated the tribe led by Chi You and drove its members southward. Centuries later, some descendants of these wanderers settled in the mountains of south-west China. The absence of detailed historical records makes it near impossible to reconstruct the history of Hmong migration or the experience of these early settlers, but the Hmong of Guizhou are convinced that Chi You is their ancestor. In their mountain strongholds these Hmong established and maintained an insular agricultural society and struggled to eke out a living. They also created a unique and beautiful culture which is expressed and has been transmitted through the embroidery-work of Hmong women. These embroideries are of special significance since the Hmong lacked a writing system for much of their history (records were kept by tying knots) and had no tradition of painting.

At present, approximately 4.34 million Hmong live scattered throughout Guizhou, but most are concentrated in the Miao-ling Mountains and the Qing-shui River region. The Hmong live mainly in inhospitable, cold and rugged high-country to which their methods of production are adapted. Their staple crops are glutinous rice, potatoes and corn. They enjoy sour and hot foods. The Hmong generally live in single-storey wooden stilt-houses. Due to difficulties in transportation, most Hmong have not journeyed beyond their own County. The Hmong hold many festivals, of which weddings and funerals are the most spectacular.

Differences in dialect, totemic symbols and customs among the Hmong are reflected in the variety of embroidery styles in the region and even Hmong from the same village but who speak different dialects
preserve distinctive embroidery styles. However, most Hmong embroidery employs a common characteristic of abstract, geometric designs. Only in the area stretching for around 50 kms along the Qingshui River and centred on Tai Jiang and Shi-dong Townships do the Hmong, known as "Riverside Miao", stitch stories from history and make use of religious and animal imagery to create a unique style of embroidery.

There were three main types of Shi-dong embroidery. The panel style may be constructed as follows: the upper portion was embroidered with elephants and lions to represent loyalty and prosperity. The middle panel depicts the sun and moon and the lower part shows a nest of grass containing the newly-born Jiang Ying and his brothers. Unmarried girls made this style of red clothing to wear on festive occasions and to display their intelligence and skill. Such items formed an important basis for marital selection.

Geometric designs are employed in Shi-dong embroidery to symbolise various features: For instance, a triangle decorated with fruits and plants stands for a house and coloured stripes are used to indicate the rivers and mountains which their ancestors once crossed. In other areas, squares are used to symbolise farm fields and crosses, forests.

The Pai-yang sub-group of the Hmong prepared clothes in a totally different manner to that of the Shi-dong Hmong. Most Pai-yang clothing was patterned with 'dragon lines' which were embroidered using skeins made by braiding eight threads. A skein was then ruched and stitched onto the fabric to produce a three-dimensional, relief effect.

The preparation of a Hmong costume usually involved spinning, weaving, dyeing, tailoring and finally, embroidery and was traditionally undertaken totally by hand. Patterns were usually embroidered using a tiny needle and a single strand of silk thread. Red and blue comprised the basic colours of silk thread, but green, pink, purple, white, yellow and other shades were used to enliven the pattern.

As women worked alongside men in the fields, they could use only brief periods of leisure after finishing housework to undertake the slow task of making festive clothing. Completion of a good quality piece of work required between six months and several years. The clothing of women comprised long skirts and loose wrap-around jackets with broad sleeves and resembled that worn by Han women during the Tang Dynasty [618-907 AD]. Women's clothing was characterised by ornate embroidery but that of Hmong men was generally unadorned and exhibited little change in design over the years.

The lives of Hmong women are particularly hard after marriage. The blue embroidered clothes worn by married women are usually roughly-made. Economic capacity determined whether a Hmong woman owned more than one formal costume. Wealthier women displayed their largesse by attaching exquisite strips of embroidery to the back hems of their garments. Dragon, flower and bird designs were all embroidered using the braided thread technique.

After marriage these women will again prepare an intricately
stitched jacket of blue cloth which will eventually serve as the woman's funeral attire and be buried with her. Some embroidered pieces are passed down to daughters, but this practice rarely lasts more than several generations. Hmong women are usually so attached to their embroidered pieces that they will part with them only in times of dire economic necessity.

Images of animals are a common embroidery motif among the Hmong. Before the Han Dynasty (206 BC–220 AD) the dragon of the Han Chinese took many forms, such as a reptile or a winged beast. After the Han however, the dragon evolved as the symbol of Imperial power and its use as a decoration by the common people declined. The Han Chinese dragon consequently exhibits a majestic and frightening mien. The Hmong continued to depict the huge winged dragon, the snake dragon, the ox-headed dragon and the silkworm dragon, but, by comparison with the fearsome Han beasts, the Hmong dragons are simple, unsophisticated and indeed, quite congenial. Some dragons have the horns of oxen and are called "Ox dragons", others are plump and have scales like fish, hence the name "Fish dragons". There are even "silkworm dragons", 'centipede dragons' and 'water dragons'. These are the protective spirits for Hmong production activities. For example, centipede dragons represent favourable crop conditions and an abundant harvest. Dragons are also credited with having helped humans by levelling the mountains to produce more farmland and are believed to beckon the winds and rain. A dragon is also believed to have flown between heaven and earth to separate them.

Among Hmong dragons, the ox-headed is the most popular. Oxen are offered as sacrifices in ceremonies worshipping the ancestors and ox horns symbolise virility. The ox is also the main source of animal labour for cultivating the fields. For these reasons the ox-headed dragon appears frequently in Hmong embroidery in the company of a wizard seated on a sacred chair and holding a sacred umbrella. It is interesting that in Hmong embroidery the relationship between dragons and humans is one of equal standing. This is also addressed in ancient Hmong songs which relate that both humans and dragons are brothers who share the same mother. Many animals are considered brothers or friends of humans and are depicted as such in Hmong embroidery. For instance, Han Chinese embroidery makes frequent use of the motif of "two dragons playing with a pearl" but the Hmong give a totally different interpretation to the image. The butterfly mother gave birth to 12 sons, among which were Jiang Yang, the ancestor of humans, the Thunder God, the dragon, ox and tiger which were the children of nature. These siblings are worshipping the female ancestor, a butterfly. This female butterfly was born from the heart of a maple tree and fell in love with the river froth. She later laid twelve eggs. Her younger sister, the ji-yo (a phoenix-like bird) helped brood on the eggs. After three periods of 49 days she was exhausted to the point where her feathers fell away and she became mere skin and bone. Only then did the Thunder God, the dragon and tiger, the ghosts and the male ancestor of humans, Jiang Yang, hatch from the eggs.
For this reason, the mother butterfly and the ji-yu are the most popular symbols in Hmong embroidery. The butterfly mother is frequently depicted in Shi-dong embroidery as the female ancestor receiving obeisance from dragons, birds and humans.

In addition to dragons, the Hmong admire the qualities of many other animals; the ox for its strength and stoicism, the lion for its bravery and power, the cat and the mouse for their sensitivity and intelligence and the butterfly for its lithe grace. A mouse was traditionally believed to help people find gold and silver and in embroidery a small mouse seated on a chair was considered to be a symbol of good geomancy. The Hmong phoenix is considered to bring good luck.

The animals and plants depicted in Hmong embroideries often bear close resemblance to each other; plants having eyes and animals ears turned into leaves. The sun is comprised of two flying birds. A huge frog has grown hair and carries its son, which resembles a fishbone, on its back.

The Hmong believe in mutual transformation between humans, plants and animals. An ancestor who changes into a dragon after death will bring good fortune to descendants for many generations. Tales of transformation are recorded in Hmong folk-stories. For example, 'There was a youth who climbed high into the mountains each day gathering firewood for sale to support his aged mother. One day he met a woman on the banks of the Qing-shui River who purchased his whole load of wood. When he returned home he discovered that his payment had turned to gold. He decided to return the money, but was unable to find the woman and finally lost his way. His old mother came down to the river bank, sobbing and calling out for her son. A rock rose from the river and changed into a huge fish. On its back rode her lost son and he called out 'I have become a dragon and will not return home. If you wish to see me, then come again to this site and call out. I will come to you'. Similarly, A flying bird dropped a seed from its mouth to an elderly farmer tilling his fields below. The old man planted the seed and told his sons 'I will die soon, so bury me for 49 days then come back to my grave'. The sons buried him but became impatient and hastened to disenter the corpse. They found that his body had changed into a flower and only his head remained human.

In Hmong embroideries the ears of sacred animals frequently have a broken line extending from head to tail. The Hmong explain that this 'is the intestine of the soul'. This line is apparent along the back of this large dragon which has the body of a fish and the head of an ox. Similar lines are found linking points on a yin-yang symbol and some people associate these with old star constellations.

In some Hmong embroideries the stamens of flowers are left unfinished because the embroiderer believed that a completed pattern indicated an expended life. The Hmong believe that after a person dies one spirit returns to the old home in the east, another travels to a distant place for reincarnation and a third remains at home to protect the children. The Hmong worship their dead ancestors and the original ancestor of humans, the butterfly mother. Some old pieces of blue
embroidery show the butterfly mother and the ancestors but in authentic Hmong temples there are no such religious figures. Perhaps the ancestors of the embroidery are the spirits which have remained in the home?

A large proportion of the Shi-dong embroideries concern the worship of ancestors, spirits and ghosts and relate to the techniques used by Hmong wizards. Female wizards are sometimes depicted in Hmong embroidery and may be depicted wearing a flowered crown and summoning forth the animal dragon and the fish dragon to help her dispell ghosts. The peculiar characteristic of the female wizard is that her arms are long wings and she has a purple goatsbeard. The belief that all things contain spirits is still a prevalent belief in Hmong settlements. Individuals can escape from disaster with the help of the wizard and so clothing embroidered with wizards can also grant protection.

The Hmong of the Lei Shan region frequently depict temples surrounded by all manner of plants, flowers and grasses, the sacred beast xiu-niu bearing a temple on its back which dragons and birds are worshipping. Such embroideries may also depict the Goddess of Progeny who responsible for child-birth. The desire for descendants often finds expression in Hmong ancestor worship, in temple ceremonies and also in embroidery. Hmong women call this design of a temple surrounded by dragons, flowers and butterflies the 'pattern for seeking children'.

The Hmong hold many festivals and in southeastern Guizhou the 'Dragon-boat Festival', the 'Reed Flute Festival' and the 'Sisters' Festival' are the most famous. These ceremonies provide occasions for exhibiting fine embroidery. For example, Mr Li Zhi-qi is Master of the Gu-zhang Ceremony in Ji-hua village of Rong-jiang County. His 'myriad bird' costume has been passed down through four generations of his family and is over 200 years old. The material has been embroidered with all manner of bird designs. The costume is only worn at the feast for the Gu-zhang Ceremony which is held once every thirteen years to worship the ancestors. At other times the clothing is hidden away and nobody is permitted to see it.

Autumn is the traditional time for Hmong marriage ceremonies and much fine embroidery is displayed on such occasions. Following the ceremony, the bride is escorted back to her natal home by an unmarried female relative. The time which the bride spends at her parents' home varies from one year to as long as seven or eight years. The bridegroom frequently comes to request her return and finally, she agrees.

The Hmong have fought many battles throughout history and these have been mythologised in embroidery. Heroes wielding swords or daggers are commonly mounted on fish-dragons or on the backs of strange animals. Their faces are embroidered with complicated linear patterns. Is it possible that these are an ancient type of tattoo? From 1866 until 1874 a peasant rebellion against the Qing Government raged across south-eastern Guizhou and the stories of its leader, Zhang Xiumei, and the heroine Wu Maxi are common knowledge among the
Hmong. Zhang Xiumei is sometimes depicted in embroidery astride a sacred ox and carrying the banner of command. Wu Maxi is shown in a number of poses; mounted on a sacred dragon and holding a revolver, holding an opened umbrella which enables her to fly from her enemies or setting forth to battle with a baby in her arms. It is notable that female figures feature more often in embroidery than those of men and that the original progenitor of the Hmong people was a female butterfly. Some embroidered images also hint at the possibility that early Hmong society was matriarchal in structure.

Some embroideries from Shi-dong contain designs which have been passed down from ancient times. These are predominantly patterns of animals and plants with a row of small clouds which form an elegant ensemble. They also bear a close resemblance to the patterns found on bronze-ware from the Yin-Shang Period (16th–11th century BC).

Red Clothing from Bala He displays designs which may be quite old and have patterns such as a beautifully executed dragon and lion above a line of mystical, eddying clouds. The style is reminiscent of the tao-te or water-cloud patterns found on bronze ware from the Yin-Shang period [1766–1122 BC] and Zhou [1122–771 BC] in Han Chinese culture. The dragon with clouds has traditionally been a popular embroidery theme among Hmong women, but has fallen from favour in the last forty years.

Elderly villagers are unable to explain the origin of the purple-coloured clothing which can be found in some southeastern Guizhou settlements. The pattern consists of many Chinese characters and all manner of frogs, small insects and plants. The sun is represented by an ancient coin. The cassia tree in the moon is accompanied by the male ancestor of the Hmong, Jiang Ying. From the felicitous imagery of the embroidered symbols and the presence of certain wrongly written or strange Chinese characters it is likely that the embroiderers were kinsfolk of a local Hmong official during the early years of direct contact with Han Chinese. Some of these early embroideries show figures wearing cues; a custom which had been prevalent in the Qing Dynasty [1644–1911].

In older embroideries animals, plants and people always appear together and their are suggestions of a lifestyle which incorporated hunting and fishing. These earlier embroideries are characterised by a meticulous hem-stitch finish, usually in white or other light colours.

By comparison with these early embroideries, works which are between 30 and 50 years old show strong influences from Han Chinese culture. Images are less abstract and less likely to represent religious or mythological themes. The patterns are also smoother and more delicate. On clothing less than 30 years old embroidered figures are almost totally displaced by the popularity of animal figures. Blanket stitch is no longer used along borders and the silk thread has declined in quality. Traditionally, silk was supplied by home-bred silkworms and then hand-spun.

Other embroidered items include beishan, or back-slings made for carrying babies. They are embroidered by the prospective mother and form part of her dowry. Embroidered bibs are given to babies one
month after birth. Aprons are woven on wooden looms and often form part of a full costume. The Hmong women who make these articles are deemed most intelligent since the design relies totally on individual creativity. Hmong embroidered slippers or 'flower shoes' are made in a large range of styles and are usually only worn on festive occasions.

Hmong society changed rapidly under the impact of induced modernisation. In some settlements it is difficult to differentiate Hmong women from Han, other than by their characteristic conical hair-style and comb. The exquisite embroideries manufactured over a hundred years ago have vanished and it is difficult to find works over forty years old. Young Hmong women have lost the embroidery skills of their forebears and, instead, make crude imitations for sale. Designs are often taken from patterns printed on the packaging of purchased household goods or from children's school-books. Cloth is no longer hand waxed and dyed, but comes via the weaving mill and dye-factory. Perhaps these changes are inevitable, but one cannot but be saddened at the demise of such an art.

The situation regarding silver ornaments is similar to that of embroidery. Hmong women are accustomed to wearing silver jewellery and attaching pieces of silver to their clothing. In the case of unmarried women, this is particularly important as an indication to prospective marriage partners of the financial status of her family. But in truth, few village families have the capacity to produce silver jewellery for their daughters and so there is much evidence of patently fake silver pieces created by embroidery. Many Hmong women lack silver ornaments and substitute fake silver pieces made from a copper-nickel alloy.

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A FURTHER DISCUSSION OF MIAO25 MEDICINE

[Part 1]

Yang Chang-wen

The origin of Miao medicine is ascribed to a mythical time. Accounts in the Shuo-wan Bian-wu by Liu Xiang and the Shan-hai Jing [Classic of the Mountains and Seas] of the Western Han period [206 BC–8 AD] support the belief that Miao medicine is of ancient origin. An initial discussion of Miao medicine (published in Guangxi Min-zu Yan-jiu no. 3, 1988) by the author detailed this early development of Miao medicine and so this article will take up other matters.

Miao medicine has an earlier recorded history than that of Han [Chinese] medicine. The Miao medicines Da-ze [a rhyzome of the oriental water plantain, Alisma plantago – aquatica] and Chang-pu are mentioned frequently in literature from the Spring and Autumn and Warring States Period [475-221 BC], such as the "Songs of Chu". The famous historian, Professor Fan Wen-lan, records in Zhong-guo Tong-shi
Jian-bian [Concise Version of the Comprehensive History] that "The State of Chu was Miao', 'The Miao wizards of Chu often used Miao medicine in their ceremonies'. The famous Miao poem "Li-sao" by Qu Yuan "used Miao language to refer to Bai Zhi [Dahurian angelica] and Chuan-xiong [a rhyzome]". The Number 1 and 2 Han tombs at Ma-wang-dui in Chang-sha contained Ze-lan [Da-ze] among the funerary objects which indicated the popularity of Miao medicine at that time. Tang Mang, who lived under the Emperor Han Wu-ti, travelled to Nan-yue [southern Yue State] and ate gou-jiang. He inquired of its origin and was told it came from the Qiang-ke river to the north-west [in present-day Guizhou Province]. The Xing-REN Xian-zhi [Gazetteer of Xing-ren County] records that the "mountainous areas produce a plant with a flower resembling a liana, leaves like bi-bo and seeds like mulberries. The Miao extract the oil of this plant and make it into a paste which has a fragrant aroma. They also collect leaves to wrap betel nuts for eating as prevention against the ill-effects of miasmas. Miao girls make tokens of these betel nuts to their boyfriends". This is historical evidence of the Miao capacity to utilise plant resources for food and medicine.

The renowned Tang Dynasty herbalist Sun Shi-mao recorded the medicinal knowledge of several minorities, such as the Xi-zhou, Xiong-nu and Man-yi (which included the Miao), in his book Bei-ji Qian-jin Fang [A Thousand Important Prescriptions for Emergencies]. The famous Ming herbalist Li Shi-zhen described many Miao medicines in his book Ben-cao Gang-mu [Compendium of Materia Medica]. In the Qing Dynasty Wu Qi-jun recorded in his Zhi-wu Ming-shi Tu-kao [An Illustrated Herbal] that "the Miao in Guizhou Province burn a plant to make indigo and sell it as far north as the Yangtze and Han Rivers". 'The medicines commonly used in Yunnan and Guizhou are from the Miao'. The Qian Shu [The Guizhou Annals] written in the Qing Dynasty by Qian Wen-xiu describes 'a prickly pear, with a sweet, cool taste which is used as a digestive aid'. It was known as wild pear or ga-gong-jiang-bo-to in the Miao dialect of south-eastern Guizhou. In Miao medicine it was identified as having a 'cold' property, a sour taste and being classified as belonging to the 'heat channel'. It could reduce internal heat and stop coughing and diarrhoea. Miao used it with another medicine to cure pulmonary disease in the aged, coughing, vomiting and diarrhoea.

All the accounts mentioned above accord with present practice in Miao areas of Guizhou. Only after Qing was Miao medicine considered to be a branch of traditional medicine in China. Before the Qian-long Era [1736-96], western Hunan and the Lei-gong Mountains of southeastern Guizhou were considered to be wild, Miao areas beyond Chinese administration or control. Instead, they operated under the hereditary headman [tu-si ] system. Miao were prohibited from entering areas of Han settlement and Han were banned from entering Miao territory. Miao and Chinese medicine retained separate traditions and Miao medicine enjoyed great popularity. "The Miao possess many medicines ... which are either taken internally or used externally with rapid results" (Feng-huang Ting Zhi: Sang-zang Pian)
Military and civil officials of the Qing and later periods paid greater heed to Miao medicine. The rebel army led by Zhang Xiu-mei in the Xian-tong period [1851–1875] had a Miao doctor called Pan-gao-nai-li-jiang to care for the troops. In the Tong-zhi Era [1862–75] Yong-sui Prefecture in Hunan Province had a Miao doctor called Shi Guang-quan who was skilled in treating bone-diseases and listed among famous Miao by the famous Miao singer Shi Ban-tang in his book Miao-zu Ming-ren [Famous Miao]. Xiong Xi-ling, Prime Minister during the Northern Expedition, dispatched several delegations to western Hunan to invite Miao doctors to Beijing [Beiping]. During the campaign against Yuan Shi-kai in 1916, many Miao doctors actively entered the Western Hunan Army of Salvation. In 1928 Chen Qu-zhen, from western Hunan, fought the Guizhou warlord Wang Jia-chie. Chen asked Miao doctor Long Chang-qing to train a Miao medical corps in martial arts and Miao medicine. During the Long March Marshal He Long also attached great importance to Miao medicine and emphasised that 'we should not only choose good Miao guides, but also encourage Miao doctors to travel with us'. This period produced many famous Miao doctors.

According to historical documents, Chinese medicine was introduced to Miao areas only after these settlements became Han administrative territory. Western medicine was first introduced during the Republican period [1911–1949]. The first western-style hospital in Guizhou was established in 1919 by the Provincial government. This hospital had a 141 staff and 19 beds. The earliest County-level clinics were located at Zhen-yuan and Huang-ping which were established in 1938 and 1941 respectively. The Counties of Tai-jiang, Jian-he, Dan-zhai, Lu-shan (present-day Kai-li City), Shi-bing, Song-tao, Zhi-yun and Guan-ling only established hospitals in 1942. In the late 1940's the Autonomous Prefectures of northeast Guizhou possessed only 12 clinics with 46 staff and four simple beds. The Jian-he Xian-zhi [Jian-he County Gazetteer] written before Liberation recorded that 'our County is a Miao area and we only had one Chinese medicine shop, which had only a small range of medicines, before the clinic was established. The local people were totally reliant on Miao medicine'. Other areas were in a similar situation to that of Jian-he, so it can be concluded that the Miao medicine was the sole form of medication in these areas before the arrival of Chinese and western medicine.

Miao medicine has its own theories of disease, diagnosis and treatment. The author discussed these in his "Preliminary Discussion of Miao Medicine". What follows is a further discussion of these matters.

Lu Ke-min from the Minorities Medical Research Institute in Southeast Prefecture, Guizhou summarised his findings from a long-term study of Miao medicine: Miao medicine is divided into two gang [classes], cold and hot; five jing [channels], cold, hot, side of the body, slow and fast. The slow and fast include mute. There are 36 zheng [symptoms] and 62 ji [diseases]. Almost simultaneously, Tang
Yong-jiang, a Miao from the Song-tao Miao Autonomous County Bureau of Hygiene, confirmed the findings of Lu but referred to the five jing as bing. It is apparent that the eastern and central Miao dialect areas of Guizhou recognise 36 symptoms and 62 diseases. One untitled medical text was found in Song-tao which is probably Bai-ling-ba Jiu-shi Qi-zheng Xian -fang [108 Important Presecriptions]. This book lists 108 symptoms and diseases which were referred to as 49 fan, 49 ji and 10 dan-du [erysipelas]. It is very interesting that fan was used to describe the diseases, since this word is very rare and translates as sa in Chinese, which means disease; for example crow fan, dog fan, elephant fan, snake fan and bear fan. They are all used as analogies for certain diseases. The "Initial Search for the Miao medicine of western Hunan" ("Xiang-xi Miao-yi Chu-kao") by Ou Zhi-an from Feng-huang County supports these findings on the basis theory and structure of Miao medicine.

How does Miao medicine diagnose and treat disease in clinical practice? The following description is based on the situation in southeast Guizhou.

As described above, the two main classes of disease in Miao medicine are hot and cold. This resembles the classification of yin and yang in Han Chinese medicine. A doctor undertaking diagnosis first identifies the illness as hot or cold then attempts to ascertain which channels, symptoms and disease(s) are concerned.

The clinical manifestation of the five channels is obvious to Miao doctors. The cold channels are apparent as shivering and pallor. Hot channels are evident in overheating, sweating, thirst and high colour. The 'side of the body' channel is shown by numbness of the head, tongue, leg and arm on a particular side. The fast channels are apparent from unconsciousness, sweating, cramps in the limbs and crazed eyes. A person with such symptoms will die one or two days after losing consciousness. The mute channel which is a sub-category of the fast channel usually results in sequelae. The slow channel is evident from the slow manifestation and cure of the disease, in weight-loss, pallor, weakness, insomnia and night-sweating. Once the doctor has identified the channel concerned, an appropriate treatment will be prescribed. For example, diarrhoea can be identified as the cold or hot channel. A patient with cold channel diarrhoea will feel chilled and bloated and stool will increase and become looser. Heat channel diarrhoea is apparent in a flushed and sweating patient who complains of overheating and constipation. Similarly, a cough can be classified as hot or cold. A patient who coughs during the day-time and has high internal heat has a hot cough, but a patient who coughs at night and spits phlegm has a cold cough. An unconscious patient, a dumb patient and a partially paralysed patient should be classified as either affected in the 'part of body' channel or the fast channel.

In practice, Miao medicine shares some common characteristics with Han Chinese medicine but differs from the medicine of the Tong minority. Miao medicine in southwestern Guizhou is based on consultation, observation, taking the pulse and examination of the body by touch.
1) Consultation: Is based on a description of symptoms by the patient. The doctor will inquire about the patient's history of health, history of the particular affliction and medicine already taken. The doctor forms a preliminary assessment.

2) Observation: In this important stage of diagnosis the doctor will observe the patient's gait to determine the severity of the illness, the complexion (a dark grey complexion indicates a disease which is rapidly increasing in severity, pinkness indicates a 'hot' disease, sallowness indicates either a 'yellow-skin disease' if the illness appeared rapidly and caused the skin to yellow or an internal ailment if the patient's temperature is normal but the skin has yellowed; a purple coloured face indicates a dangerous disease, whether the patient feels cold or hot) and the mouth and tongue (inflation indicates a hot disease, pale or pink skin shows a cold disease).

3) Taking the pulse: In combination with consultation and observation, this method can identify the type of illness.

4) Examination by touch: Miao medicine does not recognise internal organs. The forehead, chest and abdomen are touched to determine whether the patient is sweating and whether the disease is hot or cold.

Miao diagnosis stresses the health status of the patient's close kin and this factor will receive careful consideration during arrangements for betrothal. Arrangements for marriage will terminate if it becomes apparent that the family of one party has a history of leprosy. Few people visit an individual afflicted with an infectious disease, such as tuberculosis.

Characteristics:

1) Martial arts and medicine are closely linked. Miao doctors skilled in treating injury are generally also masters of martial arts. Some villages of Ma-jiang County, Song-tao County, Kai-li City, Da-fang County and An-shun County contain Miao doctors also skilled in martial arts. When Chen Qu-zhen from western Hunan fought Wang Jia-lie in 1928, he organised a Miao medical corps which was also trained in martial arts. Members could box, fight with knives and sticks, and practised qi-gong. Some Miao fighting positions resemble those illustrated on a diagram unearthed in a Ma-wang-dui Han tomb.

The Miao of western Hunan possess several types of martial arts combined with medical skills which are known as 'iron-ox', 'blood-stopping' and 'Hua-tuo' (a historical person highly skilled at treating disease). For example, 'iron-ox' qi-gong was frequently used to treat fractures and dislocations. 'Blood-stopping' concentrates qi-gong on a particular part of the body to staunch bleeding or cure pain. 'Hua-tuo' qi-gong was used to lessen pain during surgery. These three types of qi-gong were renowned for their rapid efficacy. When Miao doctors prescribed treatment they usually encouraged the patient to undertake some martial exercises to speed recovery.

2) Links between medicine and scorcery: Some Miao wizards also offered treatment for disease. They helped the patient to plea for
help from the spirits in exorcising the devil. Undoubtedly, such treatment owed much to superstition but also had some value for psychosomatic ailments. If the illness was not cured by such treatment, the wizard would administer medicine. The Gazetteer of Feng-huang Prefecture Vol.12 records that, in addition to seeking medical treatment, the patient should also appeal to the spirits.

3) The relationship between doctor and medicine: Miao doctors have a profound knowledge of diagnosis and pharmacology. Doctors collect and process materials for their own prescriptions and may cultivate a private herbal garden. They make use of local herbs when treating diseases in different localities.

4) The relationship between diagnosis and nursing: Miao doctors nurse their own patients and mix their own medicines. They do not seek assistance for fear that their knowledge will be stolen. In cases of mild illness the family of the patient will undertake nursing and the doctor will make house-calls only.

5) The relationship between medicine and commerce: In many places, Miao doctors take their medical paraphernalia to market where they operate small stalls to treat customers and dispense medicine. Of these local markets, Gang-wu, Hua-jiang, Yong-ning, Bao-bao and Bei-kou are the most widely renowned as sources of medicine. For instance, over one thousand people attend each Hua-jiang market-day and medicine stalls line the roadway for over eight hundred metres. Medicinal stalls comprise over half of all stalls at the Gang-wu market. Over one thousand Miao doctors from Guan-ling Autonomous County pedal Miao medicine in other areas of China each year. They encounter many strange diseases and have earned a good reputation and are paid well. A Miao woman, Li Yun-fen, from Hua-shi-ban village in Pan-xian Special District is one of 120 households which have benefitted from selling medicine since economic reforms were first implemented in 1978. These households have achieved food self-sufficiency and built new housing. Li Yun-fen earns 10,000 yuan each year from her enterprise.

6) Relationship between disease prevention and cure: Miao medicine is concerned with prevention of disease as well as its cure. Miao people consume Miao medicines on a daily basis and also carry medicines on their person. For example, they use mugwort to repel snakes and evil; anise and a variety of vine to prevent skin disease and realgar with mashed garlic and wine to prevent a range of infections. The Miao carry garlic, mu-jiang-zi and ku-suan-guo with them when travelling and chew some before drinking water from unfamiliar areas. They also carry Chinese lobelia and wormwood to treat snake-bite and injury and plant zhi-jia [finger-nail] flower and mo-yu around their houses to repel snakes. They carry a back bamboo stick to prevent attack by a rabid dog (it is said that a rabid dog will flee when it sees such a stick). They put hot knotweed, quan grass and leaves from the Chinese scholar tree and the willow in their toilets to discourage maggots. Individuals infected with diseases such as leprosy are moved to isolated quarters outside the village. After the person has died, all their possessions are burnt.
In southeastern Guizhou the Miao build raised-houses with wooden floors and sometimes erect projecting balconies to avoid diseases caused by cold and damp, such as rheumatism. They dig wells as the base of the mountains to ensure a supply of fresh water and sometimes use a system of interlinked basins; the first for drinking water, the second for washing vegetables and the third for washing clothes. The Miao enjoy eating sour fish soup and chicken congee as these encourage production of saliva and aid digestion. Sour soup is consumed throughout the year because its 'cold' property can quench thirst, prevent hot weather diseases, stimulate appetite and nourish the spleen. There is a Miao saying that "A person who has not taken sour soup for three days will be unable to walk".

The Miao are skilled in preventing illness, but poverty forced many into unhealthy eating habits and starvation.

Miao doctors are experienced in utilising medicinal materials and have a compendium of over 1,000 medicines. There are common sayings that "Every plant is a medicine for those who know how to use it" and "There are 3,000 Miao medicines and 80,000 prescriptions". Miao prescriptions usually prescribe one to five ingredients; only a few require more. Generally there is a single medicine per prescription and one prescription per illness. Ingredients are usually used fresh, without processing, unless the ingredient is poisonous in its original form. Miao medicine has a seasonal character which has a basis in plant physiology; flowers and leaves of medicines are used in spring and summer since they constitute the most important part of the plant and stalks and roots are used in autumn and winter.

The Miao consider that each plant has its most efficacious part: for example, "The arbor tree is mainly used for its leaves, bark and fruit. Bushes, herbs and vines are used in their entirety, flowering plants are nipped for their buds, plants with fibrous roots are used for their above-ground parts only and tuberous plants are used for their roots". The properties of these parts are that "Vines can cure colds, plants with paired leaves and stems can staunch bleeding, furry or spikey plants can reduce swelling, glossy and sappy foliage can act as an antidote for poison". "Tonics are usually sweet, haemstatic medicines are tart, aromatic medicines can whet the appetite and anti-phlogistic medicines taste bitter."

By comparison with Han Chinese medicine, Miao medicines are named according to the part of the plant, its function, its taste and its colour. The property of the medicine can be identified from its name; for example, the Miao in southeastern Guizhou call yin-xing cao "jia-jia-ga-shou" which means the medicine for treating diarrhoea and call ma-bian cao [Verbena officinalis L.] jia-lao-gei which means the medicine for broken bones.

Research by Lu Ke-min indicates that the Miao use 'cold' medicine to treat 'hot' diseases and vice versa. Sweet, peppery, aromatic and hot tasting medicines have 'hot' properties and sour, bitter and tart tasting medicines have 'cold' properties. Cold medicines act on the hot channels and, likewise, hot medicines act on
cold channels. Aromatic and hot tasting medicines act on the fast and 'body-part' channels. For example, a day-time cough indicates pulmonary internal heat which results from a 'hot' illness. According to the principles mentioned above, a sour, bitter or tart tasting medicine should be prescribed as a cure. This principle resembles a Chinese medicine saying that "Hot, sweet medicines are the yang principle and sour and bitter medicines are the yin principle".

[To be continued]

NEW BOOKS:

Kang Jian et. al. (eds.) Wang Zi-yao (trans.) 1988, Hong Shui Ji (The Epic of the Flood) Guizhou Min-zu Chu-ban-she (Guizhou Minorities Publishing House).

The 'Story of the Flood' is a universal myth. The people of the central plain of China tell of the Lady Nu-wo who 'Collected reed-ash to stop the flood-waters of Yao', the story of Gun who "Stole soil to block the flood-waters" and the story of Yu who "Diverted the flood through a great ditch" all contain descriptions of a great flood. Almost all the minorities of southern China possess similar accounts of a flood, such as 'The Floods Surge Heavenward' and the 'Marriage of the elder brother and younger sister' told by the Miao, "Catching the God of Thunder" of the Bu-yi, "The Origin of the Ancestors" of the Tong, "Long, Long Ago" told by the Yao, "The Growth of the Human Race" of the Tu-jia and "The Floods which Overwhelmed Heaven" told by the Na-xi. Little was known of these ethnic accounts before 1949. There are similar stories of floods found in overseas literature, such as that of Noah's Ark and Babylon recorded in the Bible. These stories have spread with the transmission of religious doctrine.

The Yi minority "Chronicle of the Flood" translated in this book is the most complete account in the old Yi language and is known throughout western Guizhou. It was little known to people beyond this region until the late 1950's when the Yi translation group based in Bi-jie translated and edited a mimeographed version titled "A History of the Flood", published in both Yi script and Chinese romanisation. In the early 1960's the ethnic literature section of the Guizhou Literary Group rewrote this version and deleted the old Yi and international phonetics which had proved difficult to print. Only the textual commentaries were retained. In 1984, the Bi-jie Yi translation group prepared another story called "Du-mi and the Flood". These two stories are generally similar, with only slight differences in plot, and it seems that they originated from the same source. However, they are markedly different from stories of the flood currently circulating in the Yi areas. Only the basic story line, that humans who were nearly anihilated by the flood were eventually saved, is common to both groups.

The present version is by far the most complete translation
available to date. It contains 19 chapters in two main parts: The
first describes the formation of heaven and earth and the creation of
nature and the first human beings... the second, major part, of the
book relates the birth of Du-mu-er to Wu-luo-zuo and his partner, the
relationship between Du-mu and his two brothers and the origin of
conflict between these three tribes. Heaven called on the brothers to
stop fighting but the conflict escalated. Heaven finally took revenge
by loosing a terrible flood which wiped out two of the tribes. The
youngest brother, Du-mu-er, was spared, but could not produce
prodgeny. The senior spirit took pity on the plight of humanity and
gave Du-mu-er three beautiful wives to ensure the perpetuation of the
human race. These three women were the fiancees of the Er, Mo and Wu
families in Heaven and the families sent troops to recover them.
Du-mu-er received assistance from the senior spirit and was able to
overcome the heavenly forces and retain his wives. Each wife
subsequently bore two sons which became the ancestors of the Six Yi
sub-groups.

The Han Shi [History of the Han Dynasty] supports this account
and records the existence of a person called Du-mu. Some Yi experts
estimate that Du-mu lived from the late Chou Dynasty until the early
Warring States Period (about 300 B.C.). This hypothesis is supported
by evidence that the Zhu-ming or Zhong-mu-you who appears in Han
historical documents and was famous during the Warring States Period
is actually Du-mu or Du-mi. There were two great floods in ancient
China, that in Shu and another in Yao. The former flood occured
during the Warring States period and is probably the same as that
mentioned in the Du-mu story. In this case, the records of the Yi and
Han corroborate.

News and Correspondence

Donn Bayard (University of Otago) writes

I have just completed analysis of an interesting attitudinal
evaluation of Standard Thai accents, using the variables of gender
(two each female and male speakers), /l/-/r/ merger and
hypercorrection of /l/ to [r], and initial consonant cluster
reduction. Thanks to the generous help of Dr. Somsuda Rutnin I was
able get 62 questionnaires completed in Bangkok and Chiang Mai. These
give some interesting insights into different views of what I am
calling 'colloquial', 'standard', and 'hyperstandard' Tha, as well as
the apparent inability of listeners to detect what appear to me to be
obvious Phasa Isan features in one speaker's accent (i.e., /ia/-/ya/
merger and hypercorrection). Perhaps more importantly, it gives some
insight into different evaluation by Thai and Farang of power,
solidarity, and what I call 'charisma' variables vis-a-vis speaker
gender. The use of terms like 'hyperstandard' and 'charisma' are very
tentative.

Donn Bayard would like to make contact with Dr. Deeyo Palikupt who
completed a thesis on this subject in 1983, and with others with similar interests.

Louisa Schein is completing a PhD in anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley on the Hmong of China, Thailand and the United States.

Jim Placzek of the Institute of Asian Research, University of British Columbia has sent us a copy of the newsletter Friends of Thailand News which is published by Friends of Thailand Educational and Cultural Society which is 'a non-profit group dedicated to sensitizing Canadians to Thai language and culture, and to helping Thais understand Canadian life and culture'. The newsletter is local and social in content, but does give coverage to academic and business issues. It has useful information on the spoken language. The January 1990 issue leads with a story [by Placzek] on the Thai Investment Promotion Mission to Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver. The reports cites the Thai Minister Korn Dabbarangsi as saying that over the last thirty years foreign investment in Thailand has been dominated by Japan - some 50%. The report goes on,

'Other nations who have recently opted to invest in Thailand are the Swedes (production of Volvos, telephones and telephone exchanges, trucks and major appliances), the Belgians (largest PCB production unit in Asia, petroleum-related industries), the French (many sectors, especially the hotel industry ...), and the Australians who submitted only 14 projects in the last 30 years, but 34 new projects last year, including a proposal to build the great new bridge over the Mekhong river to Laos.'

The Northwest Regional Consortium for Southeast Asian Studies calls for papers for their Third Annual Conference on Change, Identity and Justice
to be held at the University of Washington, Seattle, October 19-21, 1990. The conference welcomes papers on any subject in historical and contemporary Southeast Asia
Paper title, brief abstract and CV by 15 May to Daniel S. Lev
Southeast Asian Studies, DR-05
229 Thomson Hall
University of Washington
Seattle, Washington 98195, USA

The Program for Southeast Asian Studies at Arizona State University issued its first Newsletter (Suva$n$nabh*umi Southeast Asia - Land of Gold) in February.
The Program received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities for a two-year project on humanist approaches in
Southeast Asian studies. The first of a series of faculty workshops sponsored by the Endowment was on 'Buddhist jataka tales and their interpretation in Southeast Asia'.

The address of the Program is Krause Hall 102, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ 85287-3101.

* We are most pleased to record the completion of PhDs by the following associated either with the Dept. of Anthropology or the Project

Nerida Cook (now with the Department of Anthropology, Monash University) on 'Astrology in Thailand: the future and the recollection of the past' (Department of Anthropology).

Scott Bamber (Post-Doctoral Fellow with the Project) on 'Trope and Taxonomy: an examination of the classification and treatment of illness in traditional Thai medicine' (Southeast Asia Centre).

Irene Bain (Translator with the Project to March. Project Officer Du An Yao Poverty Alleviation Project from April 1990) 'From here to modernity: agricultural reform in Taiwan' (Department of Geography).

Terry Narramore (former translator with the Project. Currently holder of Japanese Department of Education Scholarship) 'Making the news in Shanghai 1912-1937'. (Department of Far Eastern History).

1This may be identified as muang suay song fai fa, a tributary state under two 'skies' (authorities) in Thai. For this Lahu community, the two authorities were the local Chinese and the highest Wa authority.

2In the past, the Wa villages were very formidable places and quite impregnable against any force that the neighbouring groups could bring against them. Scott has detailed descriptions (Scott 1932: 303-305).

3Lady Scott wrote: 'It must be remembered that firing these villages, with their grass and mat houses, is not the same thing as burning an English village. Furniture there is none, and a few days suffice to rebuild. The Wa always carried off their dead if there were any and their losses could not be estimated but were probably small. 'We never saw a dead Wa' (Mitton 1936: 241).

But elsewhere Scott describes the ingenuity, skill and effort that goes in the building of the Wa house (Scott 1932: 305-6).

4While the book on the Wa was in press in 1936, it was reported that there had been some jungle warfare which was sharp engagements between the Wild Wa, 'co-operating with Chinese bandits'; the Wa later submitted under the forces of the Burma Military Police, Buffs (R.East Kent), and the Burma Rifles. Villages were burnt.

5The MM form is /kʰ'ɾe»/; Anglo-Karen contacts date from the annexation of Tenasserim and must hence postdate Anglo-Mon contacts. This two-fold division of the Karen exonym as well as a Mon origin of the Thai word for Karen has been known for some time; see C.F. Keyes, ed. Ethnic adaptation and identity: The Karens of the Thai frontier, Philadelphia, PA, ISHI, 1979, 25-61, here pp. 45, 60 n. 68; T. Stern 'A people between' ibid., 63-80, here p. 64. The etymologies provided
by F.K. Lehman in his 'Who are the Karen and if so why? ibid., 215-63, here pp. 229, 251-2 n. 14, are erroneous. See also G.H. Luce Phases of Pre-Pag†n Burma, Oxford University Press, 1985, Vol. 1, pp. 24-35.

6This is problematic insofar as Shorto interprets OMja'$ba as an ethnonym for 'native(s) of the region of northern Laos', connecting it with Lao sw%a (*jv%a).

* The author is Head of the office of History of the Church of Christ in Thailand.
7From Swanson, 'The Kengtung Question', 59-68.
8See Dodd, The Tai Race, 50, 161.
9Vincent, 'Missionary Statesman', 476-479.
10Dodd, 'The Explorations of a Decade', 27, 29.
11Marsden, Fundamentalism and American Culture, 109-110.
12Hovenkamp, Science and Religion, 5-10.
13Bozeman, Protestants in an Age of Science, 60-62, 101ff.
15Geoffrey Walton is a free-lance ESL teacher and writer/editor who has lived in Thailand since 1967, for the past four years in Chiangmai.
16 Dr. Hans BS`nziger is an entomologist and naturalist who has been conducting research in the forests and mountains of northwest Thailand for over eighteen years.
17According to Guang–xi Feng–wu Zhi [Gazeteer of Guangxi Scenery] edited by Mo Jie (1984 Guangxi Minorities Publishing House), the scope of the ceremony encompasses several villages and between 10 and 20 youths are involved in searching for the frog. This account suggests that the frog is considered to be auspicious because it eats harmful insects and so protects crops – trans.

25Please see editor's note above. As this translation is from a published Chinese paper the name 'Miao' has been retained.
1 The 'Lan Ming Xun' section of the Huai Nan-zi.
2 See the section on the interior, Hai-nei Jing in the Shan-hai Jing [Classic of the Mountains and Seas].
3 Shi-yi Ji Vol. 1.
4 Tian Bing (ed.) Miao-zu Gu-ge (Ancient Songs of the Miao).
26The Reverend Samuel Clarke lived among the Miao in Guizhou for over 20 years around the turn of the century and recorded several Miao stories of the Flood, see Samuel R. Clarke, 1911 Among the Tribes of South-west China London: China Inland Mission pp. 43-60 -trans.

5 Institute of Literary Research, Guizhou Academy of Social Science (ed.) Bu-yi Zu Gu-ge Xu-shi-ge Xu-an (Selected Ancient Songs of the Bu-yi).
6 Yang Guo-ren and Wu Sheng-xian (eds.) Tong-zu Zu-xian Na-li Lai (The Origin of the Ancestors).
8 Peng Bo and Peng Yan-jiao (eds.) Chu Feng no. 1, 2, 1981.
9 See Chuang-shi Ji (The Chronicle of Creation), Yunnan Peoples' Publishing House.

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