

# Context:

## Southeast Asians in California

Volume 9, Number 70 January, 1989

(formerly "Refugee Update")

Folsom Cordova Unified School District  
2460 Cordova Lane,  
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Judy Lewis, Editor

February 6, 1989  
Chinese, Vietnamese, & Mien New Year

# Year of the Snake

During the Spring and Autumn period (722-476 B.C.), in the city of Ying, in the State of Ch'u there lived three very lazy and idle men. They would often sit in a tavern, playing games and drinking.

One day the three men were chatting again in a tavern. One of the men said, "It is boring to always play drinking games. Today let's play a new game!"

"O.K.!" said another. "So what should we play?"

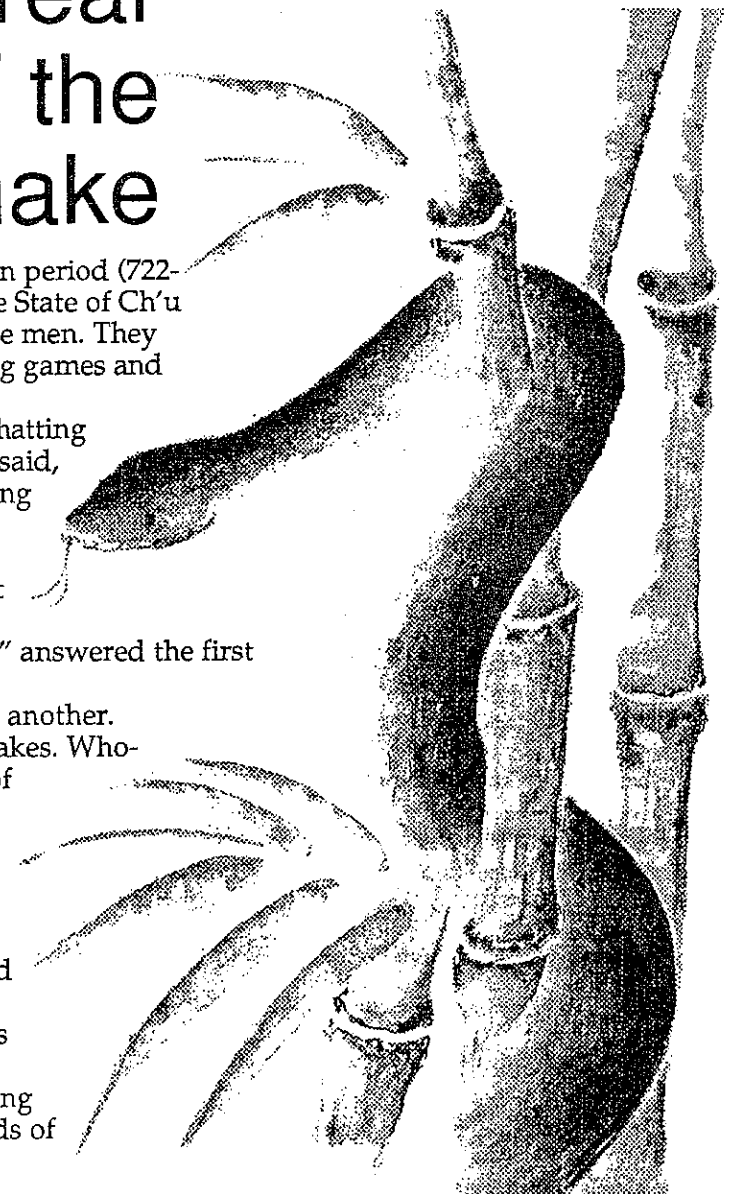
"Let's have a drawing contest," answered the first man.

"How do we compete?" asked another.

"Let's compete by drawing snakes. Whoever finishes first, gets the bottle of wine," replied the first man.

After discussing it, the three men asked the tavern owner for a few willow branches that had been burnt into charcoal. They then squatted down on the ground to draw. Not long after, Chang finished drawing. He stretched his hand out to take the wine but noticed that beside him, Lee and Wang were still slowly drawing the heads of their snakes. They had not even

A snake  
story.



started on the bodies!

Chang thought to himself, "It will probably be dark by the time they finish drawing. There is no harm in just adding a few legs to the snake. Then they will really be convinced of defeat." So he picked up his charcoal again and began to draw the snake's legs.

Shortly after, Wang finished drawing. He picked up the wine and poured it into this mouth. Chang put out his hand to stop him and said, "I finished first, how can you steal my wine?"

Wang made a face at him, then grinning happily said, "Who told you to draw legs? When have you seen a snake with legs!"

*"to add legs to a snake"—literally, to make undesirable additions; superfluous.*

From Peng Minh-hui, *Stories from Classical Allusions, The Overseas Chinese Library, No. 3001*. Taipei: The Overseas Chinese Affairs Commission, 1985.



## Reflections of an American Woman on Tết

Helen Coutant

(from *The Vietnam Forum* #3, Winter-Spring 1984. New Haven, CT: Yale Southeast Studies Program)

Winter has come to Stonevale. The woodshed is piled high with firewood; the garden is battened down against a bitter wind that sweeps up the valley, bringing ice and snow. The fields seem to stretch farther than they do in summer, now that they are a uniform gray. The corn stubble crunches underfoot, and the earth is hard enough to wound my hand. In this unlikely spot, and at this, the coldest time of the year, my Vietnamese husband, our children, and I, an American woman, will celebrate Tết.

Tết is the most important event of the year in Vietnam. It corresponds with our New Year's, and yet is more like Christmas, Easter, and the

Fourth of July rolled into one... For Vietnamese, it means both the beginning of a lunar year and of spring. Most of all, it is a time to be home with one's family, whatever the cost, and a time to pay one's respects to the ancestors. To be away from one's parents, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles at Tết—what desolation!

You will be right in wondering what Tết can mean to an American who has never been to Vietnam. And you will be amused to know that I associate it with snow and ice, with bleak skies and sunlight of the most forlorn yellow, instead of tropical warmth, flowering plums and green, branches. And yet, since Tết entered my life, I have never celebrated an American New Year, except in the most perfunctory way. Tết has become my "New Year's".

Tết begins for me some morning in mid-January when my husband rushes in the door, his face and hands red from the cold, carrying three or four cherry branches he has cut in a neighboring orchard. The branches are placed in a bucket in a sunny room. We watch them lovingly, nurturing the cautious unfolding of buds. Our patience is rewarded at last, when, among the green buds, there are one or two pink ones. These will be the flowers. Even one blossom will be enough for us, a treasure, a feast for the eyes. These branches, ripened and expressing our longing for spring, will be placed on the altar of the

ancestors.

In a Vietnamese home, the altar occupies the most prominent spot. It is the focus of all activities at Tết. Here the family welcomes the ancestors and pays homage to them. If one is from Huế, as my husband is, there will be a vase of yellow plum blossoms on the altar. But these are impossible to obtain in North America, so we substitute cherry.

Usually a week before Tết, on a Saturday morning, I'll find that my husband has taken everything off our altar. The large brass candlesticks, the crooked brass incense burner, left on the streets of Huế during the 1968 Tết offensive and given to my husband by his parents when he returned briefly in 1974, the copper bowl holding the amber prayer beads—all these must be polished until they gleam. Then two new red candles are placed in the holders. The blue Chinese bowl which contains the burnt incense sticks stuck in grains of rice must be emptied and new rice put in. And last year's cherry branch which has been on the altar all year, decorated with small paper blossoms and leaves to replace the withered ones, is removed, and our new branch is put into its place.

Next my husband brings two red paper banners down from his studio. On these are written, in his calligraphy, matching verses by a Vietnamese Zen master who is also one of his dearest friends. Each year I learn the words again:

Spring comes again, in a foreign land—  
still unable to see the yellow plum blossoms, the Vietnamese bird is sorrowful.

As my heart goes back to my old village,  
all I can watch is the falling snow,  
and I dream of the Southern branches.

Xuân đáo tha hương,  
bất kiến hoàng mai  
sâu Việt điệu.  
Tâm hoài cố quốc,  
thường chiêm bích  
tuyết mộng Nam chi.

Finally, the day before Tết, or Tết's Eve, arrives. We congregate in the kitchen where a duck is thawing on the counter; behind it are several jars of *dưa món*, a special kind of pickle which we have labored to make. In the refrigerator is the *thịt đông*, a kind of Vietnamese head cheese. All night, pots of sweet rice and mung beans without their skins have been soaking. Great slabs of pork are marinating in *nước mắm* (or fish sauce) and crushed onions and black pepper. I pull the two wooden *bánh chưng* frames my husband made from a drawer, and my daughters and I set to work. We will make twenty to twenty-five *bánh chưng*; these are like square cakes made of sweet rice, yellow beans and pork. Each cake is wrapped in bamboo leaves, tin foil and Saran wrap, for it must stay dry during the twelve hours of boiling. As we work together, filling, wrapping, tying these small square cakes, I think of the Vietnamese women who patiently, and with great good humor, taught me how to make these special Tết dishes. To them I owe much of my love for Tết; for it is they, as well as my husband, who made me a participant.

We count the finished *bánh chưng* before we drop them into a huge pot to boil. There are plenty to share with friends, plenty so that we can enjoy them daily during the first week of Tết. I will even hide a few in the freezer to be opened and appreciated in March or April.

Darkness falls early, for after all, it is mid-winter. Now, this evening before Tết, a serious and somber mood pervades the house. The brass

candlesticks, the incense burner, the shine on the altar. Our few cherry blossoms gleam like tiny fallen stars. The duck, roasted and cooling on a rack, has been cut. One *bánh chưng* is opened. Two pairs of red chopsticks and two red bowls are placed on two trays. Next we fill the trays with our offerings of Tết dishes for the ancestors: *thịt đông*, roast duck, *dưa món*, *bánh chưng*. The trays are set before the altar, and my husband lights the candles. At last it is time for the *cúng*. For Vietnamese, this is a time to pray to the ancestors. For me, it is a time for prayer also, and of lovely silence. Our small room is soon filled with the fragrance of incense. I imagine the fragrant smoke wandering outside through a crack in the door; I imagine it filling our garden so that our Vietnamese ancestors will know that this is the place where they are to come, to this bare mountainside in northern Maryland. The bell which hangs from a mimosa tree in our front yard rings once, twice. It could be a benediction, a greeting. We stand, heads bowed, each waiting to light a stick of incense and pray. For a few minutes we exist outside the boundaries of time and space. We know we are a link in a long chain stretching behind and ahead of us. Eternity exists here and now. I watch my youngest daughter pray. She holds the incense stick tightly between her two hands. Her prayer lasts a long time. After this, we sit quietly until the very last stick of incense has burned down.

On the morning of Tết, my husband puts on his coat and goes outside before breakfast. He knocks on our door so that he can be our first "visitor". For Vietnamese, it is important that the first visitor during Tết be an esteemed friend. Out

(continued on page 12)

## Rice Cakes, Square and Round

retold by Trương Chính  
drawings by Nguyễn Thi Hợp  
(reprinted from *The Vietnam Forum*  
#3, Winter-Spring 1984.)

King Hung the Sixth, growing old, wanted to turn the throne over to one of his sons. But he had twenty of them—how should he go about choosing a worthy successor? Bandits from across the border had been driven out, but bandits inside the border still needed watching. If the throne was to stand firm, the people must be kept well fed and warmly clothed.

So the king gathered all his children and told them: "Our forefathers founded this realm which has lasted for six generations. The An bandits have breached our border time and time again, but thanks to the succor of the Former Kings we have driven the enemy back, and the people are enjoying peace. But I am getting on in years—I am not going to live forever. The heir to my throne must carry on my will and purpose, and he need not be my eldest son.



This year, we will offer sacrifices to the Founding Kings. That son of mine who does something that pleases my heart on this occasion shall succeed me on the throne."

Each of the princes (*lang*) wanted the throne for himself, so they all tried their best to please their father. But what he had in mind nobody could guess. They strove to outvie one another in preparing lavish and delicious feasts for offering to the spirits of the Founding Kings.

The unhappiest of them all was Prince Liêu, the eighteenth son. His mother had been neglected and spurned by the king, and she had wasted away and died. As compared with his brothers, he was the least favored. They had many servants and could send them here and there to collect fancy products from the mountains or from the sea. But he had to fend for himself. What could he offer to the ancestors' spirits that would meet with his father's approval? Since childhood, he had lived apart, tilling the fields and growing rice and yams. Now he looked around his house and saw nothing but yams and rice. And they were such plain, common staples!

One night, Prince Liêu dreamed and saw a goddess who told him: "Between heaven and earth, there is nothing as precious as a grain of rice. Only rice can keep man alive and be eaten without ever cloying the palate. The other things, though delicious to the taste, are rare and cannot be produced by men themselves. But men can grow rice through their own efforts: the more they sow, the more they reap. Take rice and make cakes for offering to the manes of your Founding Kings!"

As he woke up, Prince Liêu felt joy in his heart. The more he thought about the goddess' words, the more

sense they made to him. So he picked a variety of fragrant, sweet rice with white, round and fat grains, and he washed them clean; then he prepared a filling of pork and mung beans, used *dong* leaves from his garden to wrap the cakes in square shapes, and simmered them for one day and one night. For a change of taste and form, he ground sweet rice fine and fashioned it into round cakes, which he steamed.

On the day of sacrifices to the Founding Kings' manes, all the other princes turned up with delicacies galore from the sea and mountains. The king looked them over, then he stopped by the heap of Prince Liêu's cakes: he seemed intrigued at what he saw. He summoned the prince and asked him about the cakes. The prince retold the dream in which he had met the goddess. After pondering the matter for quite a while, the king chose the two kinds of rice cakes, round and square, as sacrificial presents to the Founding Kings' spirits.

When the ceremony was over, the king handed out the cakes to his ministers. They ate the cakes and found them quite tasty. The king convened one and all and said: "The round cake stands for Heaven—I shall name it *bánh dầy*. The square cake stands for the Earth: pork, beans and *dong* leaves represent the beasts and plants and all creatures—I shall name it *bánh chưng*. The leaves, wrapping up something good inside, symbolize mutual help and care. Prince Liêu has offered gifts that answer my heart's desire. He shall succeed me on the throne—may the Founding Kings' spirits bear witness!"

Ever since, the Vietnamese people have engaged with diligence in growing rice and other crops, in raising domestic beasts, and thus has come about the custom of making square cakes and round cakes for *Tết* or the New Year's festival. Without those rice cakes, *Tết* would lose much of its special flavor.

## Month 1 Day 1 of the Lunar Calendar— New Year (Spring Festival)

The preparations for the New Year begin two weeks before the end of the lunar year when the Kitchen God and the God of Wealth are sent up to Heaven to report on the family. On New Year's Eve the family gathers together to eat and paste up the new good-luck charms and Door Gods ready for the New Year. The children of the family are given small red packets with money inside. This "lucky money" is also given to children of friends over the fifteen days of the New Year celebration.

New Year's Day is a day for eating special food and not doing certain things. For instance, no one sweeps the house in case they sweep out the good fortune. Nor are knives, scissors, or other sharp implements used in case the good luck is cut. In many families the food is vegetarian out of respect for the animal world, from which the name of the year comes. The food is carefully chosen using Chinese puns in order to have names which mean good luck, fortune, plenty of money, etc. An example of this is the sticky rice ball with sesame seeds, the name of which in Cantonese is a pun for "gold".

At the turn of the year, the Gods are reinstated in their shrines and incense is offered to Heaven, Earth, and the ancestors. Firecrackers are exploded to scare away the old spirits and the demons, and the doors are thrown open. There will be Lion, Unicorn, and Dragon dances through the streets. The Lion is teased through the streets by a figure supposed to be Mi Lo Fo, the Future Buddha. When he comes

to reign, all will be well and life will be extended. If a family's potted bush blooms on New Year's Day, especially good fortune will come to the family.

Traditionally, the celebration went on for fifteen days until the Feast of the Night of the First Full Moon (or Lantern Festival). The 7th day is Yan Yat—Everyone's Birthday. On this day everyone becomes a year older.

Other major Chinese festivals are

Month 1 Day 15—

Lantern Festival, End of New Year's.

Month 2 Day 16—

Ch'ing Ming (Clear and Bright). Honoring the dead.

Month 5 Day 5—Dragon Boat Festival.

Dispel evil on the most dangerous day.

Month 7 Day 7—Mid-Autumn Festival.

Offerings to the Moon Goddess.

Month 9 Day 9—Chung Yang (Climbing the Heights). Visiting the graves of ancestors.

Month 11 Day 11—Winter Festival. Winter solstice (solar calendar).]

Month 12 Day 26—Li Ch'un

## Mien New Year

The Iu-Mien people, who came first from Laos, then to Seattle, Portland, Oakland, and other areas before moving to Sacramento, also celebrate the coming of their New Year according to the Chinese lunar calendar. Below is a picture of four beautifully dressed Mien girls at a Sacramento fundraiser for the Vietnam Memorial. We have searched through the few resources we have, but can find very little about particular Iu-Mien New Year customs and beliefs. The video called "A New Year for the Mien" refers more figuratively to a new life, a new beginning. If anyone can provide information for next year's *Context*, please send it to the editor.



	Mandarin	Cantonese
恭 禧 發 財	kung	gung
	hsi	hay
	fah	fat
	ts'ai	choy

## Resources

*New Americans: An Oral History, Immigrants & Refugees in the U.S. Today.*

Al Santoli. New York: Viking Penguin, Inc., 1988.

*Vietnam Opening Doors to the World*

Rick Graetz, assisted by Fred Rohrbach. Helena, MT: American Geographic Publishing, 1988. \$17.95.

A beautiful book of photos of Vietnam taken before the fall and after. Graetz states his purpose: "to show the beauty of Vietnam, describe a unique journey and give my impressions of the country." Chapters include Physical Description, Description of a Journey, The North in Photos, Central Highlands in Photos, Central Vietnam in Photos, The South in Photos, Visiting Vietnam.

*New Oxford Picture Dictionary*

Oxford University Press, 1856 Cherry Ave Suite 634, Long Beach, CA 90806. (213) 433-1488.

2400 words in picture context; volumes for English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, Cambodian, Korean, and Navajo: \$5.95 each. Teacher's guide: \$4.95. Beginning workbook: \$4.50. Intermediate workbook: \$4.50. Wall

charts (100): \$150. Vocabulary playing cards: \$4.95. Cassettes: \$24.95.

*Handbook for Teaching Khmer Speaking Students*

Developed by Mory Ouk, Franklin E. Huffman, and Judy Lewis, and others. Rancho Cordova, CA: Southeast Asia Community Resource Center, 1988. \$5.50 (plus \$1.25 s/h, and 33¢ CA tax for CA residents).

This handbook is similar to the *Handbook for Teaching Hmong Speaking Students* (Bliatout, Downing, Lewis, Yang). The original work was done in 1981, but was never completed. Mory Ouk (Long Beach USD) and Judy Lewis (Folsom Cordova USD) revised the original material, added new information, and prepared it for printing. The book includes a section on the historical background of the Khmer students, the education available in Cambodia and Thailand, characteristics of the Khmer language, suggestions for programs, appendices, and implications for educators.

*Hmong Bilingual Glossary of School Terminology*

by Huynh Dinh Te, translated by Lue Vang. \$2.00 from the SEACRC.

## The Dictionary of Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know

E.D. Hirsch, Jr., Joseph F. Kett, and James Trefil. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1988. \$19.95 (\$12 at Price Club).

Earlier this year, we summarized Hirsch's main ideas as presented in the 1987 book called "Cultural Literacy", in which he suggests that to be literate a person needs to know the important antecedents and references so common in everyday text. In that book, Hirsch and his associates listed 5,000 key words. This new book contains that list, along with short concrete explanations. The chapters include: The Bible; Mythology and Folklore; Proverbs; Idioms; World Literature, Philosophy, and Religion; Literature in English; Conventions in Written English; Fine Arts; World History to 1550; World History Since 1550; American History to 1865; American History Since 1865; World Politics; American Politics; World Geography; American Geography; Anthropology, Psychology, and Sociology; Business and Economics; Physical Sciences and Mathematics; Earth Sciences; Life Sciences; Medicine and Health; Technology.

[Editor's note: this could be developed into a basic program for bilingual aides, and then into their special contribution to the

success of students new to America. It also has implications for native-born students whose parents are under-educated or members of minority groups outside the mainstream.

If anyone else is at work on using this resource in the schools, please let us know...no need to duplicate effort!]

What follows is the third excerpt from Hirsch's list, from "g" to "k".

Galahad, Sir  
galaxy  
Galileo  
galvanize  
gamma rays  
gamut, running the  
Gandhi, Mohandas (Mahatma)  
Ganges River  
Gang of Four  
gangrene  
gas (physics)  
gasohol  
Gauguin, Paul  
Geiger counter  
geisha  
gene  
gene pool  
general anesthetic  
generating plant  
generation gap  
generator  
Genesis, The Book of  
genetic engineering  
genetics  
Geneva Convention  
Genghis Khan  
Genius is one percent inspiration and ninety-nine percent perspiration.  
genocide  
genre  
Gentile  
genus  
geology  
geometric progression  
geothermal energy  
Geronimo  
gerrymander  
gerund  
gestalt psychology  
Gestapo

gesundheit  
get down to brass tacks  
get out of bed on the wrong side, to  
getting a dose of one's own medicine  
Gettysburg Address  
GI Bill  
GI Joe  
Gilbert and Sullivan  
gilded cage, a  
Girl Scouts of America  
Give him enough rope and he'll hang himself.  
Give me liberty or give me death.  
Give me your tire, your poor...  
give than to receive, It is better to  
glacier  
glad hand  
global village  
glossary  
glucose  
glut  
God Bless America (song)  
God helps those who help themselves.  
Golan Heights  
Goldberg, Rube  
golden calf  
Golden Gate Bridge  
Golden Rule  
Goldilocks and the Three Bears  
gold rush, the  
gold standard  
Gone With the Wind (title)  
Good fences make good neighbors.  
Good Friday  
good man is hard to find., A  
Good Neighbor Policy  
good Samaritan  
goosestep  
goose who laid the golden eggs  
GOP  
Gospel  
gothic  
go to pot  
Go west, young man.  
graças  
graft (politics)  
grain of salt, with a  
grand jury  
Grandma Moses  
grass is always greener on the other side., The  
gravity  
greatest good for the greatest number  
Great Depression  
Great Lakes

Great oaks from little acorns grow.  
Great Salt Lake  
Great Wall of China  
greenbacks  
green-eyed monster  
greenhouse effect  
Greenwich mean time  
grim reaper  
gringo  
Gross National Product (GNP)  
guerrilla war  
guilt by association  
Gulliver's Travels (title)  
gung-ho  
guru  
  
H<sub>2</sub>O  
habeas corpus  
habitat  
H-bomb  
Hades  
hairsplitting  
Half a loaf is better than none.  
half-life  
hallucination  
Hamlet (title)  
hammer and sickle  
handwriting on the wall, the  
Hanoi  
Hansel and Gretel (title)  
Hanukkah  
hara-kiri  
hard water  
harpsichord  
harpy  
Haste makes waste.  
Havana  
hawks and doves  
hearsay  
heat capacity  
heat of fusion  
heat of vaporization  
heavy water  
hedonism  
helium  
Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned.  
Hemingway, Ernest  
hemisphere  
hemoglobin  
hemophilia  
Henry, Patrick  
Henry VIII  
herbivore  
Hercules  
heredity  
heretic  
Here today, gone tomorrow.  
herpes  
hertz (Hz)  
heterogeneity  
heterosexuality  
He that is not with me is

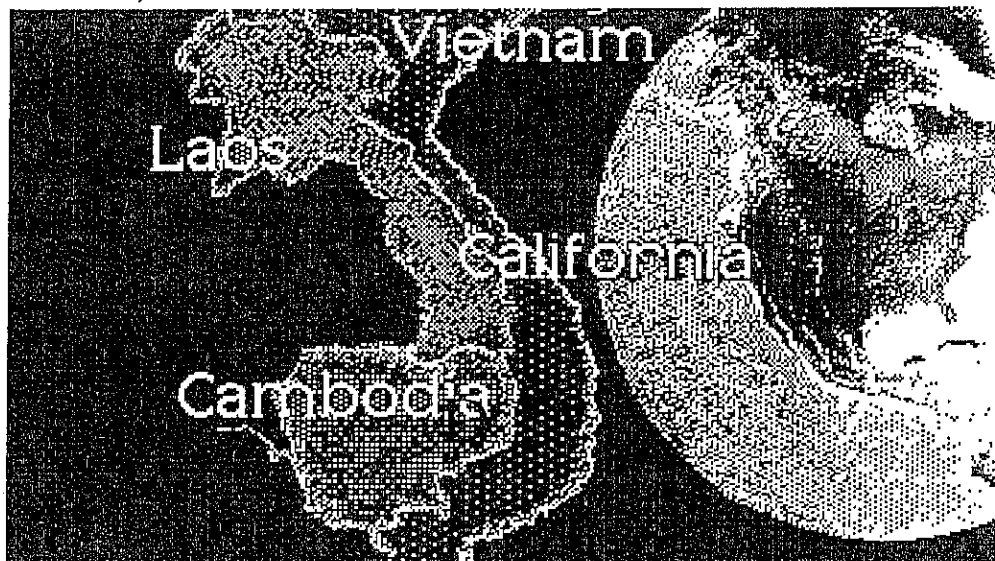
against me.  
He who hesitates is lost.  
He who laughs last laughs best.  
hibernation  
highbrow/lowbrow  
high tech  
Hinduism  
hippies  
Hippocratic Oath  
Hiroshima  
hit below the belt  
Hitler, Adolf  
hitting the nail on the head  
hoi polloi  
holding company  
holistic  
Holocaust, the  
holy writ  
homage  
homeostasis  
homicide  
homogeneity  
homonym  
homophone  
Homo sapiens  
homosexuality  
Honesty is the best policy.  
Hong Kong  
hormones  
hornet's nest, stir up a  
horns of a dilemma, on the  
horticulture  
house arrest  
House of Representatives, the U.S.  
How you gonna keep 'em down on the farm, after they've seen Patee?  
hubris  
Huckleberry Finn (title)  
hue and cry  
humanist  
humanitarianism  
humanities, the  
humidity (relative and absolute)  
hung jury  
hurricane  
hybridization  
hydraulic  
hydrocarbon  
hydroelectric  
hydrogen  
hydroponics  
hyperbola  
hyperbole  
hypertension  
hyphen  
hypnosis  
hypochondriac  
hypotenuse

(continued on p. 9)



February 25,  
1989  
8:00-4:30  
Delta College  
Stockton  
\$30.00

(includes lunch,  
handouts,  
copy of *Handbook for  
Teaching Hmong  
Speaking Students*)



5th annual

# South east Asia

Sponsors:  
Refugee Educators' Network  
SDE, Bilingual Educator Office  
San Joaquin Delta College

Local organization: Stockton USD  
Program & tickets: Folsom Cordova USD

Check/PO to *Refugee Educators' Network*  
2460 Cordova Lane, Rancho Cordova CA 95670.  
(916) 635-6815.

**Ordering deadline  
February 15**

# Education Faire '89

Susan Arriaga, Sacramento City USD  
Integrating Cooperative Learning into the Language Arts Curriculum

Eric Crystal, Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, UC  
Berkeley  
1—Mien Refugees  
2—California's Khmer: Culture in Crisis?

James Fletcher, Modesto USD  
The 1988 History-Social Science Framework for California Public  
Schools

James Freeman, Dept of Anthropology, San Jose State University  
Hearts of Sorrow: Vietnamese American Lives

Ruth Hammond, Southeast Asia Refugee Studies Program, Univ of MN  
Hmong Youth: Overcoming Obstacles to Success.

Kenji Ima, San Diego State University, Dept of Sociology  
Assessment of Southeast Asian Youth School Adjustment

Van Le & Hector Burke, State Dept of Education, Bilingual Ed Office  
EIEA and TPRC Programs: Identification of Refugee-Immigrant  
Students

Xuyen Le, Sacramento City USD & Chuong Chung, San Francisco  
State Univ.  
How have Vietnamese women coped with role conflicts?

Dorcas Lopez & Harry Maxey, Stockton USD  
Primary language classes in summer school.

Khamchong Luangpraseut, Santa Ana USD  
1—How did Lao & Khmer villagers "parent" their children?  
2—What kinds of parenting skills are important in the U.S.? (in Lao)

Kim Lan Nguyen, Franklin McKinley SD & Van Le, State Dept of Ed,  
Bilingual Ed Office  
Amerasians in California (book in preparation)

Jeanne Nidorf, UC San Diego Medical Center, School of Medicine  
1—Chinese & Vietnamese Youth "at risk": Patterns & Strategies  
2—Lao & Khmer Youth "at risk": Patterns & Strategies

Mory Ouk, Long Beach USD  
1—"Handbook for Teaching Khmer-Speaking Students" (just pub-  
lished).  
2—Helping Khmer students to be more successful in school? (in  
Khmer)

Kao Ta Saepharn, student at UC Berkeley  
Tribal Village to UC Campus: A Personal Reflection

Huynh Dinh Te, Southwestern Center for  
Educational Equity, Oakland  
Teaching Content Areas to SEAsian LEP Stds

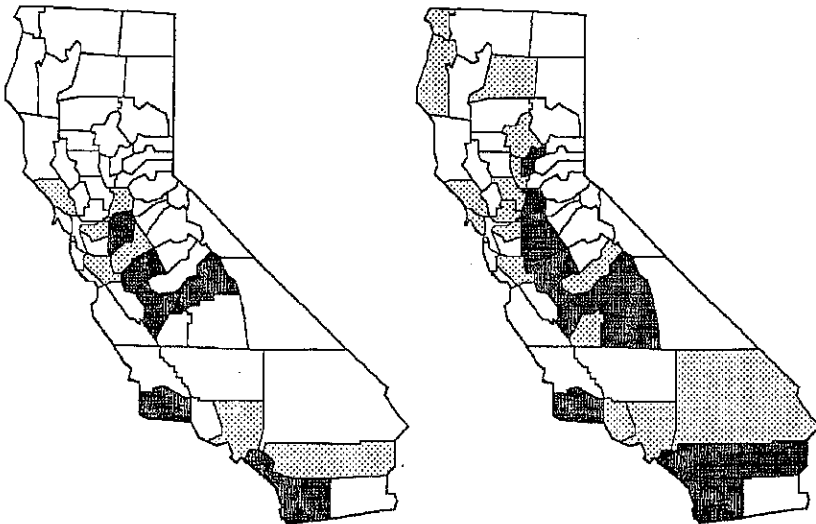


(continued from p. 7)

igneous rock	injunction	in vitro	joie de vivre
Ignorance is bliss.	in loco parentis	in vivo	Joint Chiefs of Staff
illegitimacy	in medias res	ionic bond	joint resolution
Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.	in memoriam	ionization	journeyman
immigration	inoculation/vaccination	ionosphere	Judaism
immune system	Inquisition, the	IOU	Judgment Day
immunity (law)	in situ	Iron Age	judicial branch
impeachment	insomnia	Iron Curtain	judicial review
impedance	installment buying	irony	junta
imperative (grammar)	instinct	irrational number	juvenile
imperialism	insulator	irregular verb	
import quota	insurance	I shall return.	kangaroo court
impressionism	integrated circuit	Islam	keeping up with the Joneses
Incas	integration	isolationism	keep the wolf from your door
incumbent	intelligence quotient (IQ)	isotope	Keller, Helen
indefinite article	intelligentsia	isthmus	KGB
indentured servant	intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM)	italics	kibbutz
Independence Day	interest rate	I think, therefore I am.	kill two birds with one stone
independent clause	interference	It was the best of time, it was the worst of times.	kill with kindness
Indian file	interjection	ivory tower	kilogram
Indian summer	intermediate range ballistic missile (IRBM)	Ivy League	kilometer
indirect object	internal combustion machine	Jack and Jill	kilowatt hour (kwh)
individualism	Internal Revenue Service (IRS)	Jack Frost	kingdom come
Indochina	interrogative sentence	jack-of-all-trades, master of none	King Kong
induction (philosophy)	Interstate Commerce Commission	jargon	king's English, the
industrial relations	in toto	jazz	kleptomania
Industrial Revolution	intransitive verb	Jekyll and Hyde	knee-jerk reflex
inference	intrauterine device (IUD)	Jesus Christ	Knock on wood.
infinitive	introspection	jet stream	Knowledge is power.
inflammation	introvert/extrovert	Jew	Koran
inflation	invertibrate	Jihad	kosher
influenza		Joan of Arc	
infrared		John Doe	
inhibition			

## Hmong population in California

The two California maps below show graphically the changes in where the majority of the Hmong live. The map on the left is a record of 1982, and the one on the right 1987. These were taken from graphs developed from State Department of Education statistics collected during the annual Language Census. The darker shading represents more people.



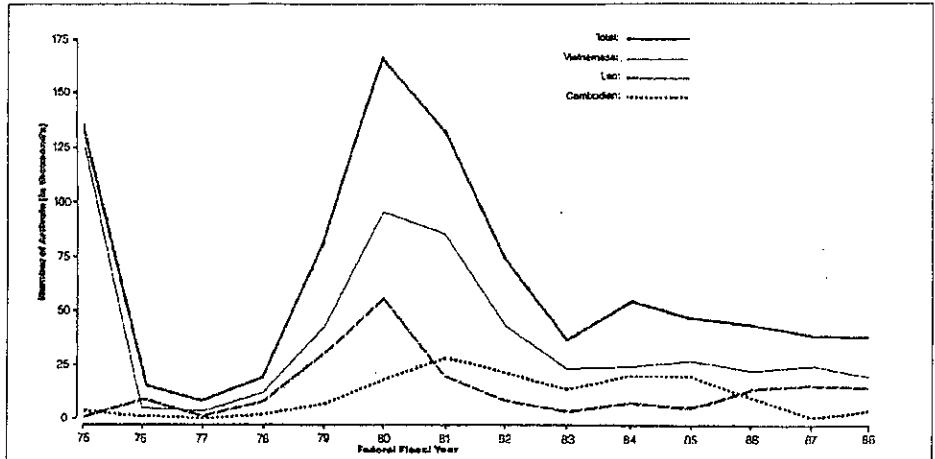
*Ceilings & Actual Admissions  
FY 75-89  
Refugees from Asia*

FFY	Ceiling	Actual
75		135,000
76		15,000
77		7,000
78		20,574
79		76,521
80	169,200	163,799
81	168,000	131,139
82	96,000	73,522
83	64,000	39,408
84	52,000	51,960
85	50,000	49,970
86	45,500	45,454
87	40,500	40,115
88	38,000	35,015
89	53,000	

The Refugee Act was passed in 1980, establishing annual ceilings set by Congress. Reagan took office in 1983, vowing to reduce refugee flows from SE Asia to about 15,000 annually. The higher ceiling for 1989 includes 25,000 for Orderly Departure Program slots, Amerasians and political prisoners. The Amerasian Homecoming Act calls for all the Amerasians to be brought in to the US between 1988 and 1990.

Ceilings are also established for other refugee-producing regions of the world, including Africa, Eastern Europe, Soviet Union, Latin America, and Near East & South Asia. Latin America, for example, has a FY89 ceiling of 3,500; Africa 2,000; E. Europe none (although there are admissions); Soviet Union 24,500; Near East & S. Asia 7,000.

Refugee admissions are only part of the overall allocation for yearly legal immigration. The major difference, of course, is that refugees *flee*, and immigrants *plan*. Refugees receive financial assistance for a few months, but immigrants do not.



Southeast Asian Refugee Arrivals in the United States by Nationality, FY 75-88

Fiscal Yr	Cambodia	Laos	Vietnam	Total <sup>a</sup>
1988	3,276	14,563	17,499	35,338
1987	1,539	15,564	23,012	40,115
1986	10,054	12,894	22,443	45,391
1985	19,131	5,181	25,209	49,521
1984	19,849	7,224	24,927	52,000
1983	13,114	2,835	23,459	39,408
1982	20,234	9,437	43,656	73,327
1981	27,100	19,300	86,100	132,500
1980	16,000	55,500	95,200	166,700
1979	6,000	30,200	44,500	80,700
1978	1,300	8,000	11,100	20,400
1977	300	400	1,900	2,600
1976	1,100	10,200	3,200	14,500
1975	4,600	800	125,000	130,400
Total	143,597	192,098	547,205	882,900

a/ Total may not agree with U.S. State Dept annual arrival data because they are based on different data files.

Source: Linda W. Gordon, Chief Statistician, ORR, "Southeast Asian Refugee Migration to the United States," September 1984, and Office of Refugee Resettlement, U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services. *Refugee Reports*, vol IX, No 12, December 16, 1988.

*Refugees still waiting in SE Asia (September 1988)*

Country	Lao	Highlanders	Khmer	Vietnamese
HongKong				25,010
Indonesia				2,118
Japan				496
Korea				123
Macau				465
Malaysia				12,467
Philippines	1,851		798	15,848
Singapore				345
Thailand	19,004	58,314	17,940	12,925
Taiwan				188
Totals	20,855	58,314	18,744	69,979

*Handbook for Teaching Hmong-Speaking Students*  
 \$4.50 (\$1.00 s/h, .27 CA tax)  
 Make check payable to Folsom Cordova USD/SEACRC

*New location:*  
 2460 Cordova Lane,  
 Rancho Cordova, CA  
 95670  
 916-635-6815

*Handbook for Teaching Khmer-Speaking Students*  
 \$5.50 (\$1.25 s/h, .33 CA tax)  
 Make check payable to Folsom Cordova USD/SEACRC

*New hours:*  
 1:15 to 6:00 pm  
 daily

*Grandmother's Path, Grandfather's Way*  
 \$12.95 (\$1.25 s/h, .78 CA tax).  
 Make check payable to Lue Vang

Also, open most  
 mornings  
 (call first).

*Traditions of the New Year*  
 \$3.00 (.50 s/h, no tax).  
 Make check payable to Lue Vang.

*Refugee Educators'*  
*Network meetings:*

*Hmong New Year* (video, 1985)  
 \$50.00 (\$3.00 s/h, no tax).  
*Traditions of the New Year* (color pamphlet), 1985  
 \$3.00 (no s/h, tax included)  
 Make check payable to Lue Vang

January 19  
 March 16 March 9  
 May 18  
 9:00-11:00 a.m.

*Hmong Bilingual Glossary of School Terminology*  
 Huynh Dinh Te, translated by Lue Vang  
 \$2.00 (\$.75s/h)  
 Make check payable to Folsom Cordova USD/SEACRC

# South east Asia Community Resource Center

- Hmong Primer \$3.00
- Lao Primer \$3.00
- Lao 1st grade reader \$3.00
- Lao 2nd grade reader \$4.00
- Lao 3rd grade reader \$4.00
- Lao alphabet poster \$2.00

Make check payable to Refugee Educators' Network (75¢ per item s/h, or figure '4th class special' for bulk book rate).

Subscription to *Context: Southeast Asians in California* — send 20 stamps per year to 2460 Cordova Lane, Rancho Cordova CA 95670.

**New at the Center:**

- ESL video lessons (prepared by San JuanUSD for the local Cable network). *Passport to English...*
- ...Renting an Apartment (#1587)
- ...Going to the Doctor (#1588)
- ...Intro to Driving Rules (#1589)
- ...Finding a Job (#1590)
- ...Letter writing (job application) (#1591)
- ...Writing a letter and job interview (#1592)
- ...How to write a check; banking (#1593)
- ...Eating out (#1594)
- ...Grocery shopping (#1595)
- ...Renting an apartment, pt 2 (#1596)
- ...Reading job ads, calling for info (#1597)
- ...Obtaining a driver's license (#1598)

- ...At the restaurant (#1599)
- ...Some American social customs (#1600)
- ...Job interviews (#1601)
- ...Going to the dentist (#1602)
- ...Shopping for a birthday gift (#1603)
- ...Reporting maintenance problems (#1604)

- #1605 Chinese history (poor reproduction video, in Cantonese, with Chinese and English subtitles)
- #1645 SEAsian Refugee Youth: Annotated Biblio... Hammond, Hendricks, 1988.
- #1654-55 Apsara: The Female in Cambodian Art
- #1663 Essential Idioms (Dixon)-Cambodian transltn
- #1690 History of the VN War (Kemps)
- #1692 New Americans: An Oral History (Santoli, 1988)
- #1691 Dictionary of Cultural Literacy (Hirsch..., 1988)
- #1693 Sun Tzu: The Art of War (Clavell)



Lue Vang with villagers in Bua Chan, Thailand (northeast of Chiang Mai), November, 1986. Most of the men were away finishing the rice harvest in time for the New Year. Notice the boy on the left who is fascinated with how a Polaroid picture works.

(continued from page 3)

here, in the middle of the country, it's hard to tell who might come knocking at our door, and my husband doesn't want to trust to luck. Once our "visitor" has entered, we light incense again and pray. Then, at last, we taste our first *bánh chưng*. Some time before noon, our children line up for their red envelopes. It is a Vietnamese custom to give children envelopes with a small amount of money on the first day of the new year. After the excitement, I

join my husband where he has gone to stand by the window. I know that he is thinking of his family in Vietnam, of his old parents, his brothers and sisters, his childhood home. Looking out at our garden, does he see another world of ancient customs, gentility, devotion and prayer? In that world, is a light rain falling on trees which are already green; does the smell of incense rise in thick clouds and pass from house to house like a silent invocation; does he hear his mother chanting

the sutras (*tụng kinh*), and his father's deep voice calling him? I put my hand on his arm, and he looks down at me,

Every year Tết comes and goes, in the manner of all holidays. And yet it is with us far beyond its designated week in mid-winter. In spring, in summer, in fall, when a very light drizzle is falling and it is about fifty degrees, my husband will stand by a window, lost in thought. I know what he is thinking—

## Context:

Folsom CordovaUSD  
Transitional English Programs Office  
2460 Cordova Lane  
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670  
(916) 635-6815