

LUB NCEEGVAJ LOSTUAS

Thaum xyoo 1960, daim av uas muaj ntxhw txog vam tus thiab lub kaus dawb, uas yog lub npe Lostuas, txawm yuav nplua nuj losyog pluag, tsuas yog nyob ntawm koj saib xwb. Lub Nceegvaj muaj xyoob ntoo thiab qhov tooj hlau ntau, tabsis tsuas muaj qeetxoj kev tsheb mus txog xwb. Lub tebchaws puv npo li kab kev cai sab ntsuj plig, muaj kev cai Haujsam thiab kev cai Dabqhuas ob yam huv sis, tiam sis hais txog kev nrhiav noj nrhiav haus mas yog ib lub teb chaw uas pluag tshaj hauv qab ntuj. Qhov uas nws nplua nuj tshaj yog Lostuas teb cov tib neeg, nws kuj



muaj tshaj li tsib caug tawm haivneeg me uas nyias muaj nyias kab lig kev cai uas zoo tsis sib xws, tiamsis lawv tsis hais tib hom lus. Tej cov nyias nyob nyias tsis tau paub dua hauv paus tseem hwv, es feem ntau lawv tsuas ntseeg tau lawv tus coj ntawm zos xwb.

THE KINGDOM OF LAOS

In 1960, the Land of the Million Elephants and the White Parasol, as Laos called itself, was either rich or poor, depending how you looked at it. The kingdom had valuable forests and minerals, but few roads for reaching them. It was rich spiritually, with both Buddhism and animist religions, but in economic terms it was one of the poorest countries in the world. It was richest of all in people, with more than fifty different ethnic groups, each with their own cultures and traditions, but they lacked a common language. Some lived such isolated lives that they had never heard of their central government, and most felt loyalty only to their village or tribe.



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UN CENSEUR

Nws kuj nyuaj los qhia txog txhua haivneeg me uas nyob rau hauv Lostsuas teb, vim tias muaj ntau ntau. Cov haivneeg me no tau muab cais hu raws li thaj chaw uas lawv nyob: cov haivneeg chaw qis, cov haivneeg nyob ntav roob, thiab cov haivneeg nyob saum roob.

Cov haivneeg me coob tshaj, uas thaum chivkeeb raug hu ua Thaib, tau los pem Tuamtshoj teb los thaum kwv yees li ntawm xyoo ib txhiab ib puas. Muaj qee leej nyob rau pem roob xws li cov Thaibdas, tabsis feem coob tau los mus nyob hauv tej kwj hav losyog nyob raws ntug dej Naj-khoom, cov no tau raug hu ua neeg Lostsuas. Lub Nceeg-vaj thiaj raug lub npe tis rau cov neeg Lostsuas (Thaib teb, uas nyob sab tid tus dej Najkhoom sab qabteb, thiaj lub npe tis rau cov txheebze Thaib). Cov neeg Los-tsuas feem ntau yog neeg ua pav liaj cog nplej uas yog siv caij ntuj nag. Lawv coj kev cai Haujsam, thiab lawv txoj kab lig kev cai ua kom lawv paub kev cai heev thiab ua rau lawv tsis ua neeg nyaum. Yawg Vajntxwv Lostsuas, tsev neeg huab-tais, thiab cov nomtswv uas tau saib xyuas thiab ua kam tebchaws puav leej yog neeg Lostsuas.

It's impossible to accurately describe all of Laos' ethnic groups, because there were so many. They were usually classified according to the elevation where they lived: lowlanders, people of the mid-slopes, and people of the hills.

The largest ethnic group, originally known as the T'ai, moved south from China in about the 12th century. A few stayed in the mountains, like the T'ai Dam tribe, but most settled in valleys or in the the Mekong river lowlands, where they became known as the Lao. The kingdom was named for the Lao (and Thailand, across the Mekong river to the south, was named for their ethnic T'ai cousins). Most lowland Lao were farmers, growing rice in diked paddies that flooded with the monsoon rains. They were Buddhists, and their culture made them extraordinarily polite and hesitant to show aggression. The King of Laos, the lesser royal families, and the elites who controlled Laos politically were all ethnic Lao.







Cov haujsam Lostsuas mus sau zaub mov los ua tshais.

Ethnic Lao Buddhist monks collecting alms.

Cov Phubthawj, lossis haivneeg nyob ib nta roob, yog ib haivneeg coob nyob sab qaumteb uas muaj npe tias Qhabmub. Thaum i cov Qhabmub kuj tswj hwm lub cheebtsam, nyob raws tej ntav roob uas lawv siv lub nruas tooj los ntau ua chaw sib xa xov tias muaj xwm, tabsis tom qab no tau swb rau cov haivneeg me uas los pem Tuamtshoj qabteb los.



The Lao Theung, or Laotians of the mid-slopes, included a large northern tribe called the Khmu. The Khmu had dominated the region once, sending signals throughout the mountains with magnificent bronze drums, but lost ground to the ethnic groups that came in from southern China.



Ernest Kuhn (main photo); Galen Beery (inset)

Cov haivneeg tojsiab lossis haivneeg nyob saum roob, tau pib los pem Tuamtshoj los thaum thaj tsam li xyoo ib txhiab yim pua, uas yog xav tau kev ywjsiab thiaj kхиav tawm Tuamtshoj kev tswjhwm. Lawv cog nplej saum roob, tsis zoo li haivneeg chaw qis uas ua liaj. Xws li cov Qhabmub lawv coj kev cai dabqhuas tsis yog coj kev cai Haujsam. Yog hais tias koj xav paub meej seb ib tug neeg yug los ntawm haivneeg me twg mas qhov yoojyim tshaj yog saib seb cov pojniam hnav khaubncaws zoo li cas. Cov pojniam Co raws li pom hauv daim duab (sabxis), coj daim npua cajdab liab. Nyob rau Lostsuas, cov Co feem coob lawv nyob raws sab qaumteb thiab sab

qaumteb sab hnub-poob. Lawv txawj nyeem ntawv uas yog siv Tuamtshoj cov ntawv los sau ua lus Co.



Dr. Jack Donnan

in diked lowland paddies. Like the Lao Theung, they were animists rather than Buddhists. The tribes were most easily told apart by the clothing of their women. The Mien women, for example (right), wore red neck ruffs. The Mien lived mostly in north and northwest Laos. They were literate, using Chinese ideographs to represent the words of their own language.



Cov Hmoob, uas tau muaj kwvyees li ntawm 250,000 leej, yog haivneeg me coob tshaj hauv Lostsuas teb uas nyob pem tojsiab. Lawv muaj pee vxwm, khov khwb kho, thiab lawv nyob muaj pab ua pawg coj txawv qee yam li ntau haivneeg uas nyob nrog lawv. Hmoob yog neeg nrhiav noj ua haus, ntau yim muaj nyiaj muaj txiaj thiab paub ntau yam tiamsis kuj muaj cov pluag pluag thiab.

The Hmong, with about 250,000 people, were the largest hilltribe in Laos. Tough and independent, they were hunters and farmers, and some were wealthy and sophisticated while others were poor.





Paru archives



Paru archives



Tom Ward



Dr. Jack Donnan



Cov Hmoob nyob Lostsuas teb feem coob nyob sab
qaumteb sab hnubtuaj, uas yog zaj tom lub Tiaj Rhawvzeb.
Lub tsev neeg no nyob rau pem lub xeev Luang Prabang
(Moosloob) sab qaumteb sab hnubpoob.

*The Hmong of Laos were concentrated in the northeast, around the Plain of Jars.
This family was from Luang Prabang province in the northwest.*

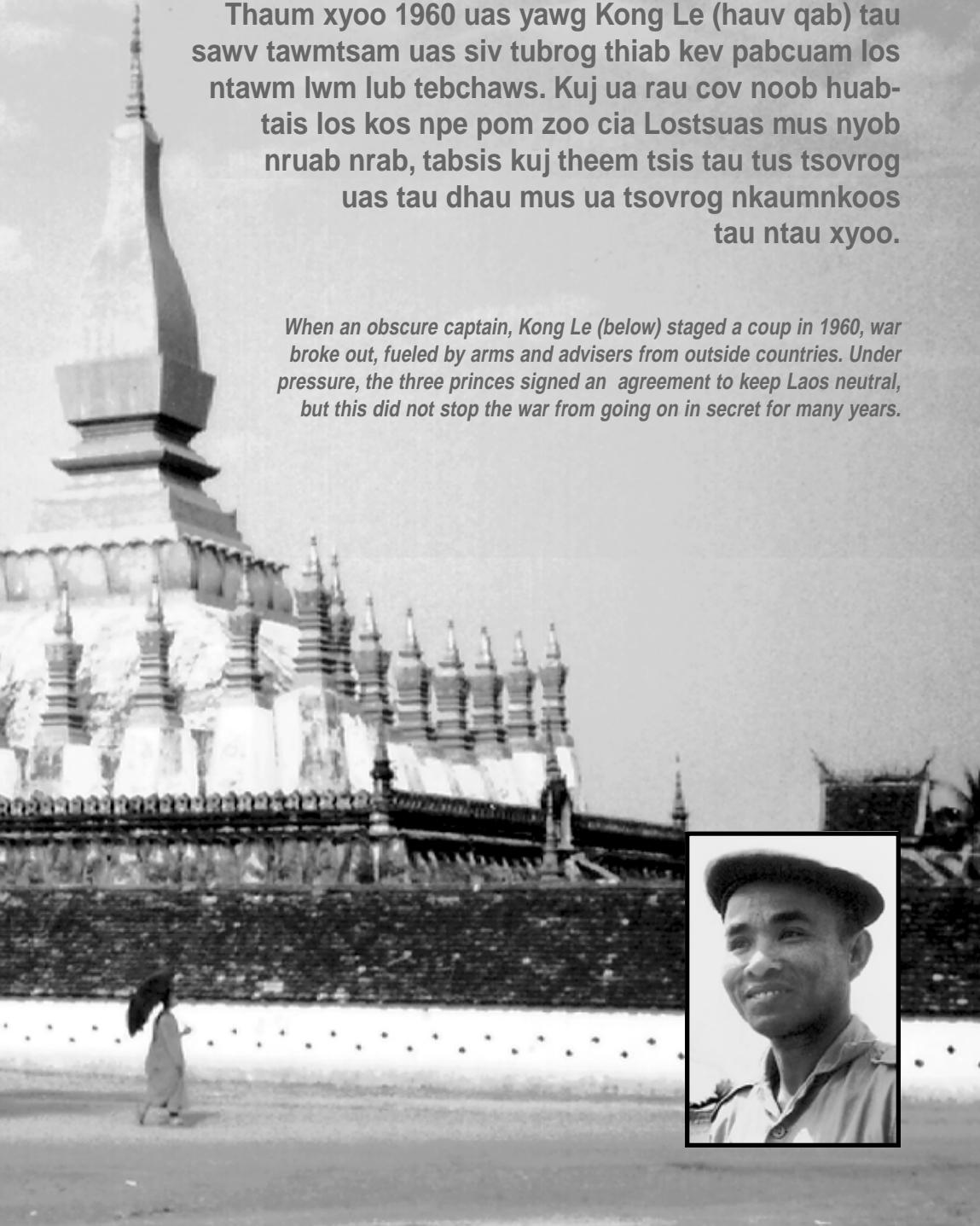
Txij li xyoo 1960, thaum zaj dabneeg no pib, mas lub tebchaws Lostsuas nyuam qhuav tau txais kev ywjsiab los ntawm Fabkis tsis muaj pestsawg xyoo xwb. Huabtais Savang Vattana yog tus mojyam saib xyuas lub tebchaws thiab tus tseem hwv kam tebchaws nyob rau Veescam tsis khiav haujlwm zoo thiab coj tsis tshuav ncaj. Yog muab ua tib zoo saib, tseemhwv Lostsuas no yeej twb faib ua peb pab ntawm cov huabtais Lostsuas.

In 1960, as this story begins, Laos had only been independent from France for a few years. King Savang Vattana was only a ceremonial figurehead, and the government in the political capital, Vientiane, was inefficient and corrupt. Politically, the government was divided between rival factions led by three lowland princes.



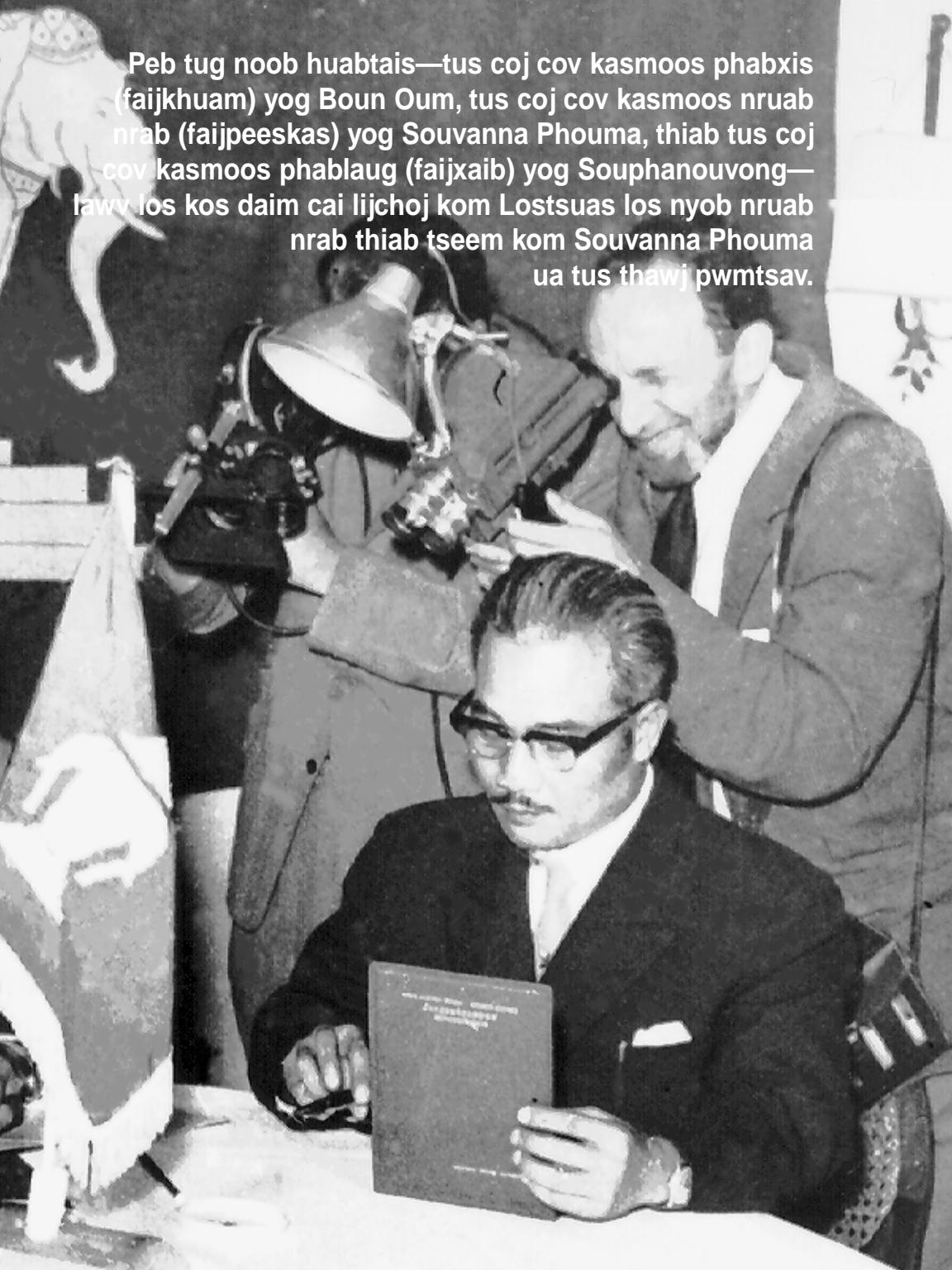
Thaum xyoo 1960 uas yawg Kong Le (hauv qab) tau sawv tawmtsam uas siv tubrog thiab kev pabcuam los ntawm lwm lub tebchaws. Kuj ua rau cov noob huab-tais los kos npe pom zoo cia Lostsuas mus nyob nruab nrab, tabsis kuj theem tsis tau tus tsovrog uas tau dhau mus ua tsovrog nkaumnkoos tau ntau xyoo.

When an obscure captain, Kong Le (below) staged a coup in 1960, war broke out, fueled by arms and advisers from outside countries. Under pressure, the three princes signed an agreement to keep Laos neutral, but this did not stop the war from going on in secret for many years.



Three princes—rightist Boun Oum, neutralist Souvanna Phouma, and leftist Souphanouvong—sign an accord to keep Laos neutral and Souvanna Phouma its prime minister.





Peb tug noob huabtais—tus coj cov kasmoos phabxis (faijkhuam) yog Boun Oum, tus coj cov kasmoos nruab nrab (faijpeeskas) yog Souvanna Phouma, thiab tus coj cov kasmoos phablaug (faijxaib) yog Souphanouvong—lawv los kos daim cai lijchoj kom Lostsuas los nyob nruab nrab thiab tseem kom Souvanna Phouma ua tus thawj pwmtsav.