

Indochina Wars: Impact On The Way Of Life Of The Lao People's Democratic Republic From 1954 To The Present

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Abstract

The study entitled Indochina War: Impacts on the Way of Life of the People of Lao PDR from the Indochina War Between 1954 to the Present was aimed at studying the history of the Indochina war in Lao PDR, the impacts on the way of life of the people of Lao PDR from the Indochina War between 1954 to the present. This qualitative research was conducted with groups of key informants, casual informants, general informants, people affected by the war, and vulnerable subjects. The research tools consist of surveys and semi-structured interviews. The data was analyzed using conflict theory and structural-functional theory. The result was presented through descriptive analysis, aligning with the objectives. The result showed that the history of the Indochina war in Lao PDR is divided into two periods. The first period was during the French occupation of Indochina from 1893-1954 and during the US occupation of Indochina from 1954-1975. The impacts on the people's way of life of Lao PDR from the Indochina War between 1954 to the present can be divided into six aspects: mental aspects, social aspects, environmental aspects, economic aspects, cultural aspects, and educational aspects and are most noticeable in Xiangkhouang and Savannakhet.

Keywords: Indochina War, impacts, way of life, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Republic.

Introduction

This research is crucial in learning about the past, starting from the beginning, the events and different stories from the Indochina war, which has been affecting the way of life of the Lao people, filling it with pain and suffering. The findings can be used to amend, examine, find answers, and encourage academics and other interested parties in future developments. The Indochina war started in Vietnam and was one of the many wars in Southeast Asia from 1946 – 1989 between the patriotic Vietnamese and the French, United States, and China. The original meaning of “Indochina” was the French’s Indochina, consisting of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. The Indochina war can be divided into four periods. The first Indochina war between North Vietnam and France from 1946 – 1954 (Theerasawat, 2000) due to the demand for independence by the patriotic movement led by Ho Chi Minh. France lost at the Battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954. After the negotiation by both sides in Geneva, the countries in Indochina were liberated and separated into four countries: Laos, Cambodia, North Vietnam, and South Vietnam (Siwalai, n.d.). The second Indochina war was from 1954 – 1975, starting from the conflict between the South Vietnam government supported by the United States and the North Vietnam army and the Vietcong. The conflict later spread into Laos. There were clashes between the United States-supported government and the Pathet Lao Movement, who were communists, and was known as the “Lao Civil War.” The third Indochina war was between Cambodia and Vietnam from mid-May 1975 to December 1989. The war occurred after the second Indochina war when Vietnam invaded Cambodia and drove the Khmer Rouge out of Cambodia. The fourth Indochina war was the war between Vietnam and China. It was a brief war between February and March of 1979 as a “punishment” to Vietnam for invading Cambodia. Vietnam withdrew its troops from Cambodia one month after due to heavy losses (Theerasawat, 2000). The Indochina war in Laos occurred between 1893 – 1975. Laos borders five countries; China in the north, Thailand in the west and the south, Cambodia in the south, Vietnam in the east, Burma in the north and the west. Geographically, the country is situated in the middle of the Southeast Asia continent and landlocked (Mungthaisong, 1996).

From 1946 -1989, there was a conflict between the capitalists and socialists in Laos. Laos was occupied by western colonizers and in the middle of the Indochina war between France and the United States. The Indochina war in Laos is divided into two periods. The first period was when France

occupied Indochina from 1893 – 1954. After France was able to occupy the whole country of Vietnam, it expanded its territory towards the Mekong river and claimed occupation over the Kingdom of Laos, stating that Laos was part of Vietnam. A treaty was signed for Laos to be liberated, declared the first constitution in 1947, and combined all the regions under King Sisavang Vong's rule. The Kingdom of Laos is independent but is in the French Commonwealth (Mitsuriya, 2014). The opposition against France started in 1900 until the country gained independence in 1954. The wars can be divided into three periods. The first period was before the second world war (1900 – 1938), the second period was during the second world war (1939 – 1945), and the third period was after the second world war, which Laos gained its independence (1946 - 1954) (Theerasawat, 2000).

From 1954 – 1975, The United States infiltrated and took over the Kingdom of Laos's politics, governing, economy, society, and culture by changing the standards of daily livelihood, religion, beliefs, and most importantly, destroying the languages. During the civil war in the Kingdom of Laos, the United States' infiltration replaced the French's and can be divided into four periods. The first infiltration was between 1954 – 1962, the second infiltration was the special Johnson's warfare from 1962 – 1969, the third period was the special warfare according to the Nixon Doctrine from 1969 – 1973, and the fourth period was the third coalition government from 1973 – 1975 (Pothisane, 2015). The United States' occupation of Laos period was when Laos became the most bombed country in Indochina. The bombing affected the way of life of Lao people across the country, caused people to become homeless, and many migrated to the neighboring countries and other third countries.

The impacts of the Indochina war in Lao PDR were most severe for the people in northern Laos. Most people in the east were hill tribes or ethnic minorities, consisting of Lao Thoeng, especially Lao Soong, (Mian and Hmong). There are also people of Tai Phu, the Lao Puan people of Xieng Khouang, and the Phu Tai people, who were in the central-east of the country. The Hmong social patterns started to collapse; villagers migrated down from the mountain. Many fourteen years old Hmong boys were drafted for the war, leaving only women behind to take care of the children and working in the fields only during the night due to constant fears. Thousands of people escaped from the war, causing an increased amount of war refugees. In southern Laos, the Bolaven Plateau remains under Laos. The

cease-fire declaration was declared in 1973. The Laos-Vietnamese border and Laos-Cambodian border were used to transport weapons and food supplies and were called the “Ho Chi Min Trail” (Stuart-Fox & Martin, 1997). After the Indochina war in Laos ended in 1975, Theerasasawat (2000) studied and categorized the impacts of the Indochina war in Laos into five points: **The first point** was a decrease in production labor since many young men were drafted into the military, which many died or became invalids. **The second point** was the inconvenience in agriculture. **The third point** was property damages, where many villagers became deserted due to the bombings from bomber planes and canons, such as Muang Ngeun. **The fourth point** was social degradation. In the area with the Vientiane army bases, there were many mercenaries from different countries under the United States and French military, which led to the establishment of bars, gambling houses, and brothels. The increased amount of brothels led to the spread of sexual transmission diseases. **The fifth point** was post-war purges. After the war ended, Vientiane’s police and soldiers were also wiped out, being separated and sent to “seminars.”

From the literature reviews and relevant research on the Indochina war in Lao PDR from 1893 – 1954, the war can be divided into two periods; the French occupation of Indochina from 1893 – 1975 and the occupation by the United States of Indochina from 1954 - 1975. The impacts of the war can be divided into six aspects: social aspect, cultural aspect, economic aspect, environmental aspect, educational aspect, and mental aspect. The areas with the most impact were Xiangkhouang and Savannakhet. This research consists of two objectives: 1. to study the history of the Indochina war in Lao PDR and 2. to study the impacts on the way of life of the people of Lao PDR from the Indochina war from 1954 to the present. The researcher determined the conceptual research framework according to the objectives of this qualitative research. For the research methodology, five target groups were determined, consisting of 90 people from 1. key informants, 2. casual informants, 3. general informants, 4. people affected by the war, and 5. vulnerable subjects. The timeframe for the research was from May 2021 to May 2022, a period of three months. The data collection steps consist of two tools: 1. survey and 2. In-depth interviews using semi-structured interview questions. The data from the field visits were analyzed using the Conflict Theory (Marx, 1848) and the structural-functional theory

(Parson, 1979). The study result was presented using descriptive analysis following the objectives.

Research Objectives

1. to study the history of the Indochina war in Lao PDR
2. to study the impacts on the way of life of the people of Lao PDR from the Indochina war from 1954 to the present

Research Methodology

Target Group

The target groups in this research were selected with the purposive sampling method, consisting of **key informants**, organizations that find and destroy the unexploded ordinances (UXO) of Xiangkhouang, private organizations such as MAG in Xiangkhouang, Lao PDR, academics, war experts both within Lao PDR and from other countries; **casual informants**, veterans from the Indochina war from 1954 to the present in Lao PDR; **general informants**, villagers in Lao PDR and officers from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare; **war-affected people**, dismembered Lao Lum people, dismembered Lao Theung people, and dismembered veterans from the Indochina war from 1954 to the present; **vulnerable group** elders and invalids from the Indochina war from 1954 to the present.

Research Scope

Content scope covers the Indochina war with an emphasis on the history of the Indochina war in Lao PDR from 1954 to the present and the impacts of war on the way of life of the people in Lao PDR.

Area scope covers the most affected areas by the Indochina war from 1954 – 1975 in Lao PDR, which were Xiangkhouang and Savannakhet. These two areas are the most heavily bombed in Lao PDR.

Research timeframe. February 2021 to June 2022. Duration months

Research tools

In the research entitled Indochina Wars: Impact on the Way of Life of the Lao People's Democratic Republic from 1954 to the Present, the researcher used the following tools for collecting data.

Surveys. The surveys were used in collecting data in the research area by individually interviewing the specified target

groups in Xiangkhouang and Savannakhet, along with photographs.

In-depth Interviews. The semi-structured interview was used to interview individuals in the specified target groups in Xiangkhouang and Savannakhet, along with photographs.

Data Collection

The researcher collected the data according to the two objectives for data collection.

Data collection from documents is the study of documents of relevant content, such as research documents, books, thesis, internet, official documents, academic documents, and personal documents from the National Library of Laos, Lao National Institute of Fine Arts, National Museum of Laos, the Kaysone Phomvihane Museum, UXO Retrieval Center in Xiangkhouang, MAG Xiangkhouang, Khon Kaen University, Maharakham University, Silpakorn University, and Srinakharinwirot University.

Data collection from the research areas, consisting of Xiangkhouang and Savannakhet, using surveys and semi-structured in-depth interviews to get the most comprehensive and complete factual information through a qualitative research approach.

Data Analysis

For the data analysis, the researcher used two types of analysis: document and field data analysis, with the following detail.

The analysis of document data used the Method of Agreement, consisting of verification using concepts and theories in documents from various sources.

The analysis of field data from all types of data collection tools to create a conclusion from the analysis by categorizing the data using different concepts, comparison of data according to the events or phenomenon, and concluding.

Data Presentation

This research was qualitative research focused on the study of the impacts on the way of life of the people of Lao PDR by the Indochina Wars between 1954 to the present. The result from the analysis was presented using descriptive analysis that was in line with the objectives.

Result

The historical study found that the Indochina wars in Laos were between 1893 – 1975. Laos was under occupation and infiltration by western powers, France and the United States. According to the framework by Pothisane (2015), the war can be divided into two periods: Laos under France's occupation from 1893 – 1954 and Laos under the United States' occupation from 1954 – 1975. Both periods of war created the most impact in Xiangkhouang and Savannakhet.

During France's occupation from 1893 – 1954, it was found that the cause of the war was the transition of France from the old system to the monopoly system. The spreading of Roman Catholicism and language teaching created social and cultural conflicts that affected Laos's traditional way of life, norms, and tradition. The conflict led to the formation of an anti-French group called the "Holy Man Rebellion." The rebellion was first formed in Savannakhet. The Holy Man Rebellion was wiped out in 1945, and a new opposing group, Lao Issara, who were also suppressed by the French and had to flee to Thailand. In 1950, a new group called the "Prathet Lao" movement was formed along the Lao and Vietnamese border in northern Lao. Later on, the Prathet Lao movement received support and joined North Vietnam. From 1939 – 1945, the French military killed many people. The most severe case was in Khammouane and Savannakhet province. At the time, the Prathet Lao movement joined forces with North Vietnam and attacked the Lao and North Vietnam areas. On May 8, 1954, France surrendered when the Dien Bien Phu base was taken over, which led to the liberation of North Vietnam, Lao, and Cambodia, and the Geneva Agreement was signed on July 21, 1954.

During the occupation and infiltration of the United States in Laos from 1954 – 1975, it was found that the cause was the spreading of the communist-socialist into Indochina and the victory of the revolution in China and the Soviet Union. The event led to the spread of communism in Vietnam, Lao, and Cambodia. Later on, the United States refused to sign the Geneva Agreement on July 21, 1954, declaring that they were not part of the agreement, and formed SEATO to counter the spreading of communism in the Indochina Peninsular. From 1954 – 1973, the United States' infiltrated Laos by sending their advisory and military personnel, disguised as civilian staff, in to send secrets back to the CIA. This was called the "Secret War." The strategies for the special war were carried out by providing economic, monetary, military, and arms support. Socio-culturally, western socio-culture was brought to infiltrate Lao

and create a dominant power and new values in Laos. From 1962 – 1973, the United States and Lao Right-Wing violated the Geneva Agreement on July 21, 1954, by using fighter jets and bombers to drop over 3 million tons of bombs in Laos every 8 minutes. The operation was carried out daily and ended up killing over 20,000 people. Today, over 80 million cluster munitions are buried underground in Laos, affecting people being killed and injured. From 1960 – 1971, Savannakhet was one province with the Ho Chi Min trail passing through Nong, Sepone, and Phine. Since 1960, Nong had been the target of the bombing for nine years during the war. In 1972, the Lao Liberation Army invaded the Thong Hai Hin area in Xiangkhouang and other strategic areas, leading to the United States pulling all their troops from Laos. Later in 1973, All three sides of Laos negotiated a cease-fire and proposed a third coalition government. At the time, the United States still had a role and influence on the Lao Right-Wing and tried to push for another conflict. Lao Left-Wing started a revolution, forced the Right-Wing to surrender, and established “Lao People’s Democratic Republic” on December 2, 1975.

For the history of the Indochina war in Xiangkhouang during the French occupation from 1950 – 1954, Xiangkhouang is one crucial strategic point in Laos, situated in the northeast of the country. In 1950, the anti-French group formed the “Prathet Lao” movement to establish their command and army base and liberate Houaphanh and Xiangkhouang provinces. In 1953, the Viet Minh invaded Laos, backed by the Prather Lao movement. In 1954, The Viet Minh and Lao Liberation army simultaneously attacked the French from three sides in the Thong Hai Hin and Sepone area in Savannakhet. The Vietnamese coalition army took over Captured Xieng Khouang, Luang Prabang, Vientiane, Savannakhet, Thakhek, Salavan, and Pakse. At the same time, another Vietnamese coalition army attacked and took over the Dien Bien Phu base on May 8, 1954, followed by the signing of the Geneva Agreement on July 21, 1954. During the United States occupation and infiltration of Laos from 1960 – 1970, the United States and the Lao Right-Wing sent in planes to bomb the Thung Hai Hin area. Later, the Lao Liberation Army marched in and liberated Thung Hai Hin back to Xiangkhouang. From 1962 – 1963, the United States and Lao Right-Wing violated the Geneva Agreement by attacking the liberated area and causing many people to die. On April 17 and 18, 1964, the Prathet Lao movement opened a negotiation at Khang Khay, Xiangkhouang, but was refused by the opposing group. On May 17, 1964, the United States started to send in

their T28 fighters and B52 bombers to drop bombs in the liberated area, resulting in the injury and death of people and monks, as well as the destruction of buildings, homes, antiques, and religious buildings. Later on November 24, 1968, the Tham Piew massacre, the most severe case of massacre, occurred, causing 374 people hiding in a cave to die. The cave is situated in Luam Long village, Kham district, Xiangkhouang province. In 1969, the United States used around 400 places to drop bombs in the liberated area throughout the year, with a total of around 1 million tons. Also, in 1969, the people within the liberation area were oppressed and moved to a concentration camp called “Refugee Camps, Development Zones, And Unity Villages” and then to Vientiane. The United States experimented with the Nixon Doctrine by using Asians to kill Asians. The army started to move into Thung Hai Hin, Xiangkhouang. On February 10, 1970, the Lao Left-Wing opened the attack in Thung Hai Hin until February 22, 1970, when they ultimately won over the enemies.

For the history of the Indochina Wars during the French occupation from 1893 – 1954, Savannakhet province has highway number 9 that goes all the way to the Lao and Vietnamese border in Lao Bao. Kaysone Phomvihane city was the major city during the Indochina war. France divided Laos into two parts. The northern part started from Phongsaly to Khammuan province, while the southern part started from Savannakhet to Attapeu province. France moved from Vientiane to Savannakhet for easier control and administration. The traditional administration system was changed to the monopoly system. French Roman Catholicism was being preached, and the French language was also being taught, affecting the Lao people, the way of life, the economy, and Lao traditional culture and traditions. The changes also led to the anti-French group, the Holy Man Rebellion, first formed in Savannakhet but was eventually wiped out by the French. In 1950, a new movement was formed called the “Lao Issara” movement, which the French also wiped out, and many people fled to Thailand. In 1950, one of the members formed another group of Lao army called the “Prathet Lao” movement to fight back against the French. This group received support and joined North Vietnam. From 1939 to 1945, the French military killed many people in Khammuan and Savannakhet province, one of the most severe incidents in central Lao. During the United States occupation and infiltration of Laos from 1960 – 1971, Savannakhet was one of the provinces that the Ho Chi Min trail passed through, on the Lao and Vietnamese border around

Nong, Sepone, and Phine city. Since 1960, Sepone was the target of bombing for nine years during the war. Many people, livestock, and cattle in Sepone died from the bombing. The buildings along the Ho Chi Minh trail were left in ruins. People fled into the forest and transitioned to farming during the nighttime. During the dry season in 1970, the Lao Liberation Army, the North Vietnam army, and the Viet Cong moved their troops down to liberate Southern Vietnam. In 1971, at the Lam Son 719, the United States and South Vietnam Army moved their largest troops along highway 9 and opened the battlefield according to the Nixon Doctrine in Xeno, Savannakhet. After 43 days of intense fighting, the Lao Liberation Army, The Viet Minh, and the Viet Cong won. After the Indochina war ended, the war left behind problems, the unexploded ordinances in Savannakhet province, with the largest amount in Sepone, Nong, and Phone districts. These unexploded ordinances had been affecting the economy and society in these areas. From the chart above, it was found that largest impact was in Xiang Khouang, Lao PDR, which was during the occupation and infiltration of the United States in Laos from 1954 – 1975.

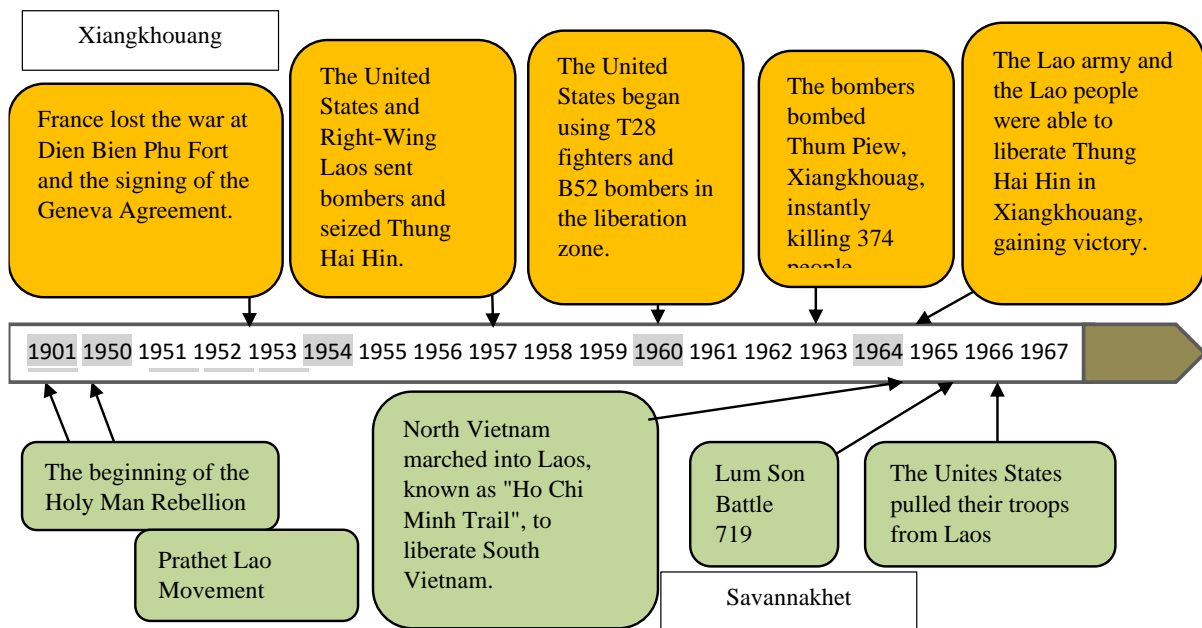


Figure1 : Xiangkhouang

The study of the impacts on the way of life of the people of Lao PDR in Xiang Khouang and Savannakhet provinces from the Indochina war from 1954 to the present can be divided into six aspects of impacts: the social, cultural, economic, educational, environmental, and mental impacts, based on the concepts by Theerasasawat (2002) and Dye (1982) as follows:

Social Impacts During the French occupation, the society in Savannakhet was destroyed, changing the way of life to exploitation, oppression, and tax extortions, and ended with the suppression of the Holy Man Rebellion. The impacts were caused by the transition from the traditional system to the monopolized system. Xiang Khouang society was destroyed, and the French wiped out the liberated area controlled by the Prathet Lao movement. During the United States occupation, there were bombings and the use of toxic chemicals. The societies in the two provinces were destroyed, the way of life was changed, people lost their lives, bodies, and minds, families were split apart, and some became prisoners while some became refugees. Many fled into the forest and lived in caves and bunkers. Their livelihood changed from working during the day to working at night. The unexploded bombs and chemicals still have an impact today, causing more people with disabilities, human resources to lack quality, and children being born with disfigurements and disabilities. For the social impacts during the French occupation, almost all areas of Xiang Khouang were affected, while in Savannakhet, only the Lao and Vietnamese borders were affected.

Cultural impacts. During the French occupation, the spreading of Roman Catholicism and the teaching of the French language affected the traditional culture of Lao society, and this impact led to cultural conflicts. Later, during the United States occupation, western-style society was brought in to infiltrate Laos and overtake the traditional religion. At the same time, all types of harmful behaviors were introduced to teenagers to take control of the pro-United States group. The infiltration of western society can be found the most in Savannakhet. In Xiang Khouang, the bombings caused many religious buildings, such as Sri Phrom temple, That Phon temple, Phia temple, and Muang Khun temple, which helped hold the hearts of the people, places to hold religious ceremonies, and places of education, along with any antiquities, such as Thung Hai Hin, to be damaged. Culturally, it was found that there was more damage to the culture in Xiang Khouang than in Savannakhet.

Economical impacts. During the French occupation of the two provinces, taxes were replaced by labor. Most Lao people had no knowledge of trading and were taken advantage of by French investors due to the higher tax. During the United States occupation, US products replaced Lao products, and the United States monopolized the right of control over Lao economic

areas, affecting the people's livelihood. Most of the economic impacts happened in Savannakhet. The areas of Xiang Khouang were mostly battlefields, preventing people from trading. After the Indochina wars, villagers picked up scraps from the bombs and turned them into products in order to maintain their lives. For the economic impacts, people in Xiang Khouang had fewer opportunities to generate income and trade since most areas were battlefields.

Environmental impacts. During the French occupation of Savannakhet, temples, buildings, and houses were burned from the suppression of the Holy Man Rebellion. In Xiang Khouang, bombs were dropped on the communities, agricultural fields, livestock raising areas, and forests during the fight with the Prathet Lao movement. During the United States occupation, bombs were dropped on communities, temples, hospitals, schools, agricultural fields, livestock raising areas, forests, and transportation routes. Chemicals were released from planes into water sources, vegetations, and soil, causing plants to wither and die. These attacks impacted the Lao people in both provinces, who relied on the water, vegetation, and livestock, as well as their physical beings and their children that would be born in the future. The unexploded bombs affected agricultural areas, transportation, and economic areas. Environmentally, Xiang Khouang had more impacts than Savannakhet since almost all areas were battlefields, while only the Lao and Vietnamese border in Savannakhet was affected, especially in Sepon city, where the Ho Chi Min trail passes.

Educational impacts. The French built schools in Savannakhet. However, Lao people along the border rarely had opportunities to learn. During the United States occupation, Lao people needed to escape the war, causing their children not to receive any education. Educationally, it was found that Xiang Khouang province was more affected than Savannakhet since most of the areas in Xiang Khouang were battlefields, causing many people to be uneducated.

Mental impacts. During the French occupation, the Holy Man Rebellion, oppressed villagers had hatred and anger toward the French. During the United States occupation, people were panicking, living in fear, depressed, sad, and worried. The Indochina war affected the mental state of the people. Lao people were devastated by the loss of everything they had, leading to stress, paranoia, anger, and hate for the war. Today,

people still live in fear due to unexploded bombs and chemical residue. Lao people are afraid of working in the fields, and their children become sick. Mentally, it was found that people suffered mentally under the United States occupation than the French due to the use of more destructive weapons and the war that lasted longer.

Conclusion

The history of the Indochina wars in Lao PDR can be divided into two periods: the French occupation from 1893 – 1954, where the cause of the war was the transition from the traditional system to the monopolized system, the spreading of Roman Catholicism, and the teaching of the French language. Three anti-French rebellions were formed. The first group started in Savannakhet in 1901, called the “Holy Man Rebellion,” the second group in 1945 called “Lao Issara,” and the third group in 1950, with their bases in the liberation area in northern Laos, including Xiang Khouang, Sum Nuea, and Phongsaly provinces. This third group was called the “Prathet Lao” movement. This latter group was supported by North Vietnam. In 1954, France lost the war in Dien Bien Phu, and North Vietnam took back Vientiane and several other provinces, leading to the independence of North Vietnam and Cambodia. The Geneva Agreement was signed on July 21, 1954. The second period was the occupation and infiltration of the United States from 1954 – 1975. The cause of the war was the spreading of communism into Vietnam, Lao, and Cambodia from 1954 – 1975. The United States sent their advisors and military disguised as flight and ground officers to send secrets back to the CIA. The war during this period was called the “Secret War,” with the strategies of providing financial, military, and weapon aids to create the controlling power. Socio-culturally, western socio-culture was used to create new values in Laos. From 1960 – 1973, the United States and the Right-Wing Lao violated the Geneva Agreement by using fighter jets and bombers to drop more than three million tons of bombs every eight minutes, 24 hours per day. The bombing caused the lives of more than 20,000 people and the destruction of religious sites, such as Sri Phrom temple, That Phun temple, and Phia temple. Historical sites, such as Thung Hai Hin were also damaged. In Xiang Khouang, around 80 million unexploded bombs are still buried underneath the ground. In 1969, people in the liberation area were transferred to Vientiane. In 1971, The North Vietnam army marched into Laos along the Ho Chi Min trail to liberate South Vietnam. The most intense battle was along the Lao and Vietnam border at

Nong, Sepone, and Phine cities; the area was called the “Lum Son battlefield.” Later in 1972, the Lao liberation army invaded and liberated Thung Hai Hin in Xiang Khouang and other areas, which led to the United States pulling back their troops from Laos. In 1973, the Left-Wing Lao revolutionized the government and established the Lao People’s Democratic Republic on December 2, 1975.

The impacts on the people’s way of life of Lao People’s Democratic Republic in Xiang Khouang and Savannakhet province during the Indochina war can be divided into six aspects: mental impact, social impact, environmental impact, economic impact, cultural impact, and educational impact. These six impacts are connected. For instance, the bombing of the communities affects the social structure and environment, affecting the culture, economy, education, and mental aspects. The destruction of the social and environmental structure leads to the destruction of other aspects related to the lives during the war and the changes in the way of life. For people to survive, they need to struggle and suffer, and activities conducted during the day must be conducted at night. After the war, villagers tried to solve their household financial issues by finding the scraps from the bombs and turning them into souvenirs or household utensils, such as spoons, forks, or chopsticks.

Discussion and Conclusion

The study revealed that the history of Indochina as Lao People’s Democratic Republic could be divided into two periods. The first period was the occupation of Indochina by France from 1893 – 1954. The cause of the Indochina war in Lao in 1893 was the transition from the traditional to the monopolized system, the spreading of Roman Catholicism, and the teaching of the French language. These changes led to cultural conflicts and affected the traditional traditions of Lao society. The Holy Man Rebellion was first formed in Savannakhet against the French and later spread to the left side of the Mekong river, followed by the rebellion group in northern Lao. France suppressed almost all the rebellions between 1939 – 1945. Another anti-France group called “Lao Issara,” followed by the “Prathet Lao” movement. The latter group gained support from the Communist Party in Indochina, North Vietnam. They fought together and succeeded in the revolution in Laos and the Dien Bien Phu base attack in 1954, leading to France losing the war. The Geneva Agreement was signed on July 21, 1954. The second period was the occupation of the United States from

1954 – 1975, replacing France through control and infiltration. The cause of the Indochina war in Laos in 1954 was the spread of communism to Vietnam, Lao, and Cambodia. This phenomenon prompted the United States to lay out strategies in Indochina, especially in Laos. The United States supported the Right-Wing Lao in Vientiane through US advisors and military personnel as direct commanders while using the local people, mercenaries, and weapons. The first target was taking control of Xiang Khouang and Sum Nuea. In 1970, the most intense fight happened in Savannakhet at Lum Son battlefield 719 at the Lao and Vietnamese border, along the Ho Chi Min trail, between the Lao Liberation Army, North Vietnamese Army, and Viet Cong, against the United States army, Vientiane military, mercenaries, and South Vietnam. The socialist communists ended up winning. Between 1972 – 1973, the Lao liberation army took control of Thung Hai Hin and all crucial strategic points, ending the Indochina war and the United States' control of Laos. In 1975, the Lao Liberation army took power and led Laos into peace, independence, and unification. The monarchy system was replaced with the Lao People's Democratic Republic on December 2, 1975. The finding is in line with Pothisane (2015), who divided modern Lao history into two periods: the French occupation (1893 – 1954) and the infiltration of the United States (1954 – 1975). The finding also aligns with the conflict theory by Karl Marx (1848), which explained that the Dialectical Thesis rejected the Anti-thesis and rejected the Synthesis. This process involves the production need → separation of labor → accumulation and development of personal properties → increased social gaps → conflict between social classes → political representatives to maintain the benefit for each class → social classes, → revolution.

The Impacts on the Way of Life of the People of Lao People's Democratic Republic During the Indochina Wars From 1954 to the Present

The impacts on the people's way of life of Lao People's Democratic Republic during the Indochina wars from 1954 to the present in the research areas of Xiang Khouang and Savannakhet provinces in Lao PDR revealed six aspects of impacts that are interconnected. Since the internal conflict between the ruling class and the intervention of the United States and the cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union, Laos became a battleground. These causes affected the way of life of the Lao people, including the society,

culture, economy, education, and mental aspects. The impacts are in line with the Structural-Functional Theory of Parson (1979), which stated that the social functions consist of the following parts: the internal relationship and support, the constant relationship of each part is the factor that stabilizes the social system, and social changes occurred from the destroyed balance since the social structure consists of personality, organic, and culture. The balance was destroyed since internal and external causes shattered the social elements. The stress and the unrest within the society are other reasons for the social change. The findings also align with the knowledge related to the impacts of the way of life proposed by Theerasawat (2003), who stated that the impacts led to five changes: 1) decreased production labor 2) inconvenience in agriculture for villagers 3) property damages 4) social degradation and 5) the cleaning up after the war. These findings also align with Dye (1982), who stated that impacts mean categorizing social issues and investigating the source of the issues while proposing solutions. Impacts can be categorized into different aspects of the content, including economic and social, political, administration, environmental, physical, and others. The impacts according to the aspects of reality can be divided into two big categories: objective impacts, which are the direct impacts that are not related to people's consciousness, and subjective impacts, which affect people's consciousness.

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