

## RESETTLEMENT AND ADAPTABILITY OF TAI-PHUAN ETHNIC: FROM XIENG KHOUANG, THE LAO PDR TO THE CENTRAL REGION OF THAILAND

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This research focuses on the living adaptability of Tai-Phuan Ethnic whose original settlement was in Xieng Khouang, The Lao PDR. Two hundred years ago, a large number of Tai-Phuan Ethnic had migrated to the Central Thailand. Both the Tai-Phuan populations in the Lao PDR and in Thailand had faced with diverse changes in their living conditions and have adapted to the changing environment while maintaining parts of their architectural culture. By using field survey method in combination with in-depth interview, the research focuses on the villages of Muang Pak and Muang Khoun in Xieng Khouang, the Lao PDR as well as the villages of Ban Makam-Lom and Ban Rang-Bua in Supanburi province of Thailand. Concentrating on their living adaptability, the research framework of Cultural Ecology as well as Sustainable Vernacular Architecture and Environment are to be used. The research deals with issues of adaptability in natural environment, ways of living, physical conditions of village planning and vernacular architecture. It is a comparison between Tai-Phuan in the Lao PDR and in Thailand.

Faced with war, Tai-Phuan villagers at Muang Pak and Muang Khoun in Xieng Khouang, the Lao PDR had to leave their homeland for three decades. In 1975, after the war, they re-settled in their original land, and have been

able to maintain much of their environmental, ecological, architectural as well as domestic culture. On the other hand, Tai-Phuans who had migrated and settled in Thailand two centuries ago could maintain only parts of their domestic culture and particular ways of living, while their architectural culture had totally been transformed. The influence of traditional Thai house had overshadowed and replaced their vernacular architecture, while their village environment has gradually been transformed by the agricultural policy of Thai Development Plan. While their rituals and beliefs remain, many of their architectural and environmental heritages have gradually faded away.

The research thus focuses on the changes of living conditions for the Tai-Phuan Ethnic both in the Lao PDR and in Thailand. It addresses the influences that the new multi-cultural and multi-ethnic communities have on Tai-Phuan ethnic group. It attempts to answer the questions: with resettlement, why and how traditions are still possible?

From the comparative study of living adaptability of those two areas, it was found that for Tai-Phuan Ethnic group only the age of the settlement cannot truly reflect the traditional value of living. Holistic study and various degrees of influences of the new culture should be concerned when evaluating

the remains of traditional value as well as living adaptability.

*Keywords:*

*Resettlement, Tai-Phuan, adaptability, Traditional value holistic study*