

Factors Affecting Construction of Identity in Designing Lao Banknote

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Abstract: The research on the factors affecting the construction of identity in designing Lao banknote. The aim of this research is to study the history and the factors contributing to the construction of identity in designing Lao banknote. The researcher had chosen the city of Vientiane as the research area. The criteria for choosing the area are as follows: the location where the bank of Lao PDR is situated; the area where there are academics who are experts, practitioners and personnel related to the Lao banknote. The data is collected from the documents and from field data collection. The following tools were used for data collection: surveys, participatory and non-participatory observation, structured and non-structured interviews and group discussions. The data were then analyzed using descriptive analysis basing on the objectives of the research. The results from the analysis were reported using the statistics from the data collection. From the study, it was found that the history of the Lao banknote can be categorized into the three different forms of governance over the country in three major periods. Lao banknote during the period of French-Indochina (1893-1945). Lao started using banknotes for the first time after falling into a colony of France. The currency at that time was piastre which started being used in the year 1939. Lao banknote during the period of the Kingdom of Lao (1957-1974). The currency “Katay Kip” was used starting in the year 1946 and Royal kip in the year 1952. These two currencies were being used alongside the piastre currency. In 1955, Bank of Lao PDR officially announced the discontinue of piastre currency and called the kip currency, Vientiane kip. The Vientiane kip started being used in the year 1957 alongside the Khang Khai kip which was used during 1962-1963 and Liberation kip in 1968. Lao banknote under Lao PDR (1979-2016). Bank of Lao PDR announced the use of kip currency in the year 1979 and is being used up until the current time. As for the factors contributing to the construction of the identity for the Lao banknote, it was found that for the following were the external factors. The factors from Foreign influence contribute to the construction of the Lao banknote in terms of the design style, the identity of the main image, the identity of the numbers and the fonts and the identity of the Lao emblem in the Lao banknotes. The factors influenced by technology contribute to the design style, the identity of the main image, the identity of the illustrators, the identity of the numbers and fonts and the identity of the blank spaces and watermarks in the Lao banknote. The followings were the internal actors. The factors from the political and governance influenced the construction of identity in the design of Lao banknote on the design style, the main image, the numbers and fonts and the country’s emblem of the Lao banknote. The factors from the influence of religion, tradition and culture contribute to the construction of the design of Lao banknote on the design style, the main image and the illustrators in the Lao banknote. The factors from the influence of the artist’s creativity contributed to the construction of the identity in Lao banknote on the blank spaces and the watermarks on the Lao banknote.

Key words: Banknote, Lao, kip, history, factor, identity, design

INTRODUCTION

Banknotes are small sheets made from paper or other material with currency values printed on them. These notes are able to be used for legal purchases. Therefore, banknotes are a kind of trusted currency within the

control, printing and implementation system supported by the law. While gold, silver and copper coins, along with coins made from other materials whose values are dependent on the types of materials they were made from (Lekhukul, 2014). The evolution of the use of banknotes as a medium of purchasing started, since, the pre-historic

time. Starting from the system where one item was used to exchange with another item for instance, exchanging roots with a stone axe, arrowheads and small animals or clay pots and rice (Pinyarat, 2012). Once, the communities evolved and developed into cities, men started to use valuable materials that were more needed in the place of currency; such as domestic animals, weapons and pieces of jewelry. That was when the system of trading through certain types, of mediums was started (Department of Treasury, 2002). Due to the fact that many times, the needs from both sides were different, the exchange couldn't always happen. In order both the exchange to be satisfactory for both sides of the party, men started to find valuable things during their period of time to use them as the mediums for the exchanges; such as domestic animals, beads, salt, shells, feathers, stone axes, arrowheads, animal skin, whale's teeth, jewelries and certain kind of metals (Naksakul, 1983). The civilization that discovered copper and started to widely use copper as weapons or tools was the Mesopotamia civilization in 5,000 BC. Their discovery started the bronze age by using copper as one of the mediums for the exchanges and trades (Lekhukul, 2014). Around 2,700 years ago, Lydian people, currently Turkey, took the natural bronze and cut them in small different piece, according to, the official weights and impressed the seal of the Lydian king on each piece. The bronze pieces with different sizes were used for purchases things with different "prices". The bronze, impressed with the seal of the king in, different specific sizes and weights were called "money" and "coins" (Pinyarat, 2012).

The use of silver and gold coins to pay for different items with other countries became more convenient and helped increase trade in a wide area. And on the opposite side, the more expanded trade became, the less convenient the use of coins became (Department of Treasury, 2002). At the end of the 10th century, the Chinese officials started using deposit papers instead of the "money" which will be given to each other afterwards. This had made purchases became more convenient, faster and safer. Deposit papers became very popular. The Chinese government, therefore, decided to print put deposit money and called them "Banknotes". In Europe, the transferring and sending of money into accounts became more popular from the 4-17th century which had created loan documents, tickets that can be exchanged for money, receipts and deposit documents, especially, amongst the people in the gold business which later on became commercial banks and deposit documents became banknotes.

After there was a clear standard medium for exchanging of items, trade increased and expanded to a further distance. Europe reached its peak in civilization,

since, the 15th century. There were in need of raw materials and products from other countries. Powerful countries at that time which includes Portugal, Holland and British, sent out fleets of ships to a survey of all their trade routes for possible raw materials that they needed. After the European came into South East Asia and colonized a lot of the area, they started to start their operation in seeking out raw materials to ship back to their countries and turned some of their colonies into a market for distributing goods. One important change that they implement was to make all currencies for all the colonies fall under one standard (Pinyarat, 2012). Lao PDR was one of the countries that suffered from the influence of the West. Lao was the last country to be colonized by the French. Lao broke off into three kingdoms; Lan Xang Luang Prabang, Lan Xang Vientiane and Lan Xang Champasak. All three kingdoms and Isaan, eventually, fell under Siam in 1779 as Siamese suzerainty for the first time. Siam ruled over Laos for 114 years until 1893, when Lao on the right side of the river became French protectorate (Thirasasawat, 2000).

From the above reasons and importance, the researcher found that Lao PDR was an interesting case for the study of the factors that contribute to the construction of identity in the design of Lao banknotes. Lao PDR had gone through many historical events over the years as well as many changes in politics and economy which contributed to the changes in the medium being used for trades, the currency and the design of the banknotes through symbols that represents somehistorical events. The research looked at the meaning and the factors that reflect the identity and the aesthetic beauty through both sides of the banknote which can lead to new knowledge on arts and history of Lao banknotes.

Objectives of the study: The objectives of this study are to learn about the history and the factors that will affect the construction of identity and the design the banknotes.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

For this study on the history and the factors that contribute to the construction of identity in the design of Lao banknotes, the researchers used the following methodology.

Population and sample groups: For the population of this study, the researchers focused on the population that relate to the Lao banknotes. the objects which includes all the different designs of Lao banknote from 1945-2016, people which includes experts, practitioners and people related to the Lao banknotes.

Research tools: The research tools used in the data collection in this research consist of survey; used for collecting primary data with the research scope on the social, cultural, livelihood and the access to information dimensions; observations which is categorized into two following types: participatory observation which was used as a direction through the results gathered from observing the population's activity related to the Lao banknotes. The researchers also, participated in two activities: non-participatory observation, used for observing the environment, the society, the culture, the implementation process of the practitioners through video recordings, sound recordings and note takings interviews which is categorized into two following types: structured interview, consists of general information of the interviewees, general context of the area, the environment, the society, the culture, the history, the role and importance of Lao banknotes, the current situation and the problems concerning Lao banknotes. This tool was used on the practitioners and the people related to the banknotes unstructured interview, used for interviews which required in-depth information with no limitation to the answers. This kind of interviews covers different topics ranges from history, the role, the importance of the Lao banknotes, the current situations and problems. This kind of interview was used on the experts.

Data collection: The data was collected from the documents from government agencies, educational institutions, thesis, the internet, general population and the data from the field research through surveys, observations, interviews and group discussions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The summary of the history and the factors contributed to the construction of identity in designing Lao banknotes. The researchers presented the research results in three parts, each part is categorized by the following time periods.

Lao banknote during the French-Indochina period: From the 15th century, Europe became a civilized nation. They had expanded their trade routes and the needs for raw materials and merchandises from other countries was increasing. Powerful countries during that time had sent out their fleets of ships to do surveys for new trade routes and finding new sources for the needed raw materials. The mediums for exchanges of goods were all in the same standard and well-accepted in wider areas. Since, the 16th century, the colonization from the West reached the far East, mainly by Portugal and the Espagnol who

traveled the world finding new countries. In the 17th century, Holland and the French started their colonization. From Van Wushhoff's journal, a Hollander, Lao was praised as a powerful and rich country due to the fact that the Lan Xang kingdom was full of expensive natural resources which were in high demand in the Western market; such as wax, incense, herbs and spices which led to more people from the West coming in to trade and preach the Gospel. Pornkaew stated that in the 19th century, the British and the French set sail in search of resources as well as trading with the countries in the far East. In was then that they discovered the countries that were close to China. The British and the French fought over the colonization of these countries; the British took over Pakistan and India while the French took over the cities along the coast to establish their trade companies and expand their influence. The British had also, expanded their influence to the East and took over Burma while the French took over Vietnam and Cambodia. In 1860's, after learning that the British were planning to expand their territory from Burma to Thailand, the French decided to expand their territory from the coast to prevent the British from getting too close to the coastal cities that they had taken over earlier. Because of this reason, the French made the decision to take over part of the land that was called "Lan Xang". It was a good opportunity for the French to take over the Lao little by little since there was no bloodshed in comparison to when they were trying to take over Vietnam. Lao was in its weak state at the time and the people were all discouraged due to the fact that they had been under the control of Thailand. During (1827-1828), after King Anuvong lost Vientiane to Thailand, the city was savagely burned down by the army led by Phaya Bodin a Thai general. Lao had nothing left to fight the Western country, especially, the French which led the French to easily take over Laos. Laos became part of the French Protectorates after their expansion of influence from Vietnam and Cambodia because the French wanted to gain access to the Mekong river as one of their trade routes to China and also because Laos was abundant with natural resources such as; rice, maize and forest.

From (1939-1945), the French had already colonized some countries in the Indochina which were Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. They had begun the process to help facilitate the transportation of goods back to their countries while using the colonies as the market for distributing goods. One of the changes they implemented was to standardize the currencies amongst all the colonies. Under the French influence a currency under the name "piastre" was created to make it easier to control the army and the administration of the three colonized

countries. The French had established the center for the governing of Indochina in Vietnam but still sending their officials to govern over Laos in order to gather the resources, labor and tax back to the French. During the French colonization period, the French had laid out the city planning for Vientiane to make the city more modern; constructing beautiful buildings and improving the education. However, Laos people at the time still understood that the French had come in and destroyed their culture; for instance, enforcing the use of Roman characters instead of the Lao characters. Because of this reason, a group of Lao people got together to go against the French. Amongst the well-educated in Laos, one of their important leaders was Prince Petxarat. The Lao leaders such as; Prince Suphanouvong and Kraison Pomvihhan had also, joined the Vietnamese communist movement to fight for their freedom until the French lost in the battle of Dien Bien Phu. That year, the French returned the freedom to all of Indochina including Laos.

The factors affecting the construction of identity in the design of Lao banknotes during the French-Indochina period. The banknotes in the French-Indochina period used the same currency that was being used three countries which were Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Each note contains different designs in terms of the composition, color tones and outlines. The varieties of designs could be derived from the fact that the notes were printed from different printshops. The characteristics of the banknotes during this period was creatively incorporating the specific identity of the three countries in the design of the main images and the illustrators on the banknote that represents the French colonies. To create the unification, all the notes were printed using Roman characters and Arabic numerals to signify the internationality while also, showing the control over the colonies on the front of the banknotes. The back side of the banknotes shows outstanding letters specifying the different values of the notes in three different languages to reflect that the banknotes can be used in the three countries. The values of the banknotes were printed with big fonts both the front and in the back to put more emphasis on the values, since, they were the most important part in differentiating the different values of the note. The fonts that were the second biggest was the name of the bank that was responsible for issuing the banknotes and that the notes were controlled under the law. The smallest fonts were the laws and the legal punishment for counterfeiting the banknotes which were printed at the bottom of the note which was the area with the least importance in the design. In differentiating the values of the banknotes, apart from using the characters

and numbers signifying the values, the designer also used different colors to sizes for the banknotes of different values. The least valuable banknotes at the time were the 1 piastre banknotes. The banknote was the smallest in size. The banknotes with the most value were the 100 piastre banknote which was also the biggest in size. The colors that were used at the time was mostly monotone color using only one color but different in terms of the color shades to signify the unity amongst the banknotes and showed simplicity but elegant. Apart from the notes that were designed with monotone colors, there were also banknotes that were designed with contrast colors. The design using contrast colors was to help people to memorize each of the note by using orange for the main images while using dark blue for other components on the back of the 1 piastre or 1 kip notes printed by Thomas De La Rue Ltd., London, England (1953). The banknotes that were colorful and could be compared to a piece of art were 100 piastres or 100 kips banknotes printed (1954) using harmony colors, controlled by warm colors. The composition of the main images and the illustrators blended harmoniously through the detail of the content, creating a high sense of unity to the banknotes.

Banknotes during the Kingdom of Laos (1957-1974):

The history of the Lao banknote during the Kingdom of Lao period (1957-1974). The French had included Laos as part of their colonies in 1898. In 1944, during the Second World War, Japan had taken over Laos and support Laos in becoming independent. The end of Japanese control in Laos happened in 1945 after they began losing the war to the Allies. Japan pressured the king of Laos of Luang Phra Bang to declare independence on April 8th, 1945. After Japan lost the war on August 15th, Prince Petxarat tried to propose to King Savang Vatthana to unify the country and stop being under the French protection, since, the French weren't able to protect Laos from Japan. But King Savang Vatthana believed that Laos should continue being part of the French colony. In October 1945, the support of Laos independent announce the deposing of the king and set up a Lao government called Lao Issara to fill in the political vacuum. Lao Issara was formed in September 1945. It was a movement against the French, focusing on nationalism and didn't favor communism. The movement was formed by Petxarat and Suphanouvong right after Japan lost the war. They became the Lao government before falling back under the French government. The goal of the movement was to prevent the French from taking over Laos again. Lao Issara government spent 6 months trying to set up the rights to govern by setting up the arm forces led by Prince

Suphanouvong and receiving help from Vietnam and the Chinese government. However, there was another important event that happened and allowed the French to take over Laos, once again that was the agreement between Ho Chi Min and the French government on March 6th, 1946 and the agreement for the Chinese troops to be pulled out which had left the Laos army on its own. The Lao army itself was too weak to go against the French.

Apart from not receiving help from other countries, Laos Issara also had its own internal conflict. They don't have much support in the urban area and at the same time, not receiving support from the ethnic minority groups. This had led to the failure of the Lao Issara ideology of independent. Additionally, Laos wasn't able to manage their finance appropriately. The army wanted a lot of budgets but King Suphanouvong refused to reveal the countries expenditure. For a short period of time, the Lao Issara had no administrative budget. The minister of the Ministry of Finance, Katay Don Sasorith had approved of the new budget at the beginning of the year 1946 and announce the Katay kip currency which will be used alongside the existing piastre currency. Katay kip was printed on a lower quality paper to the point where they were unusable. The currency was later named "Katay Dried Leaves" until the end of April 1946 when the French took over Vientiane and eventually, Luang Phra Bang. All the Lao leaders came to find asylum in Thailand.

Lao Issara was officially dissolved due to the conflict within the organization on October 24th, 1949. After France regain their control over Laos, they set up a new governing unit on August 27, 1949. France declared that they will be reuniting Laos as part of the French Union. King Suphanouvong clearly announced his stance against the decision. In addition, there was also, a conflict between him and Katay. After the French regain their influence in Laos, they declared that Laos was a free country under the French Associate State and thus, became the Kingdom of Laos. Royal kip was declared as the main currency in 1952 while piastre currency was also being used. In October 22nd, 1953, Laos and France signed a treaty to transfer all powers to Laos government, except the military. Laos became fully independent in 1954 following the Geneva convention.

However, although, France gave Laos their independent, they still control over some important policies such as; military, economy and Foreign affairs. Due to this incomplete independent, Lao Issara was broken into two sides; Prince Boum Oumna Champasak and Prince Souvanna Phouma who agreed to all of France's proposal as a compromise. On the other hand, King Suphanouvong want a full dependent for Laos. He

asked for help from the Vietminh movement formed by Ho Chi Minh and formed a liberation movement called "Prated Lao Rebels" and set up their own government at Xam Neua area. After the French lost the war at Fine Bien Phu, Lao got liberated and received full independent, according to, the Geneva Convention in 1954. It wasn't until 1955 that the Banque Nationale du Laos officially discontinued the use of piastre currency called Vientiane kip which went into use in 1957. However, although, Vientiane kip was being circulated within the market, Khang Khai kip was also being used at the same time under the control of Prince Souvanna Phouma who established a government at Khang Khai village in Xiang Khouang Province to resist the communist ideology of the Prated Lao government of Prince Souphanouvong. Khang Khai kip was used alongside Vientiane kip from 1962-1963.

After the liberation, Laos was split into two sides, the Northern side which consists of Phongsali and Xam Neua Province under Prince Suphanouvong and the Southern part control by Prince Suvanna Phouma. Later in November 1957, both sides of Laos set up a coalition government with Prince Suvanna Phouma as the Prime Minister but wasn't able to carry out the policies together. In August 1960, Captain Kong Lae staged a coup and set up the government and placed Prince Suvanna Phouma as the Prime Minister. After running the country for just a little while General Nosavan who was supported by the US staged another coup and established a new government and placed Prince Boum Oum Na Champasak as the Prime Minister. After that Laos was split into three sides:

- Left-Wing Laos-led by Prince Suphanouvong
- Rightist-Laos-led by General Nosavan
- Neutral Laos-led by Prince Suvanna Phouma

In June 1962, all three sides of Laos set up a coalition government with Prince Suvanna Phouma as the Prime Minister. However, the coalition government wasn't able to solve the existing problems. The Foreign military which includes the Soviet, Chinese, Vietnamese and the US all stationed in Laos to help the side that they were supporting. The US support General Vang Pao to set up the Hmong army with the headquarter in Long Tieng and their training center in Udon Thani province which started the war in Laos. The government under Prince Suvanna Phouma wasn't able to stop the war. After the US retrieved their troops from Indochina under Nixon, the Prated Lao rebels proposed to the government to set up another coalition government with Prince Suvanna Phouma as the Prime Minister. It was in 1975 that the Prated Lao Rebel or left-wing Laos was able to take over

Laos and shifted the governing system to socialist system with Prince Suphanouvong as the President and Mr. Kraison Pomvihan as the Prime Minister.

Prated Lao Rebel took control over every part of Laos as well as Vientiane and established Lao People's Democratic Republic in December 2nd, 1975 with Prince Suphanouvong as the first President and Mr. Kraison Pomvihan as the Prime Minister. Prated Lao Rebels was changed to Lao people's revolutionary party. In addition, in 1968, Prated Lao Rebels announced a new currency called "Liberation Kip" in order to take control of the economic system before successfully took over the Kingdom of Laos in the year 1975. This currency was produced in China.

The factors contributing to the construction of identity in the design of Lao banknote during the Kingdom of Lao period. The identity in the design of Lao banknote during the Kingdom of Laos period could be seen from the format of a rectangular shape with frame outlines on all the notes. There were two different formats. Outlines with patterns on all four sides: thicker lines, focusing on Lao patterns in mixture with more international patterns, providing clear boundaries for main image outlines with patterns only on three sides: the patterns on one side was taken out, either on the left or right side to create more room and more ease to the eyes. The outline frame was still in rectangular shape and run all the way to the edge of the note. The colors used for the banknotes help differentiate the different values. The main colors used on the Lao banknotes can be categorized into two forms:

Monotone color: The notes were all created using only one color but using different tones. The main image, the frame and the symbol were designed to have a darker color than the rest of the components but still going in the same direction. The different shades or tones that were used was to highlight the components that were aimed to be presented.

Harmony colors: The banknotes were designed to use different colors and aimed at realistic looks. The shades were used to create continuity look of the illustrators similar to those in paintings. The banknotes that use harmony colors were 100 kip notes from 1957 with the image of King Sisavangvong and contrast colors. It was found that the use of colors from opposite temperatures, warm colors and cool colors, helps create intensive feelings while being memorable and eye-catching. An example of banknotes using contrast colors were the 500 kip notes from 1957. Monotone colors in red were used in the design of the frame and the front image but

other illustrators used cool harmony colors. The identity in creating the uniqueness of the main images can be categorized into the following categories.

Portrait: Portraits were used in the design of the following important people of the countries; such as King Sisavangvong and Sisavang Vatthana.

Laos Arts: Laos arts were also used on the main image to reflect the identity of Laos such as the chakram or pediment patterns.

Buildings: Images of important buildings in the country such as temples, stupas, government buildings or Lao style houses. Some examples of these buildings are that Ing Hang in Savannakhet city that Makmo temple, Visoun temple and a Ham temple in Luang Phra Bang.

People: The livelihood of the people was also, included in the notes such as the musical plays or rice planting which can be found on the back side of the 5000 kip from 1975 and 50 kip from 1957.

Animals as the main images: Animals that represents the country such as elephants and animals that are related to people's livelihood such as cows were also used.

Landscape as main images: Important landscapes such as the waterfall in Bolaven. These images could be found on the 200 kip note from 1963. The identity of the emblem of the country. The emblem from the Kingdom of Laos period was an oval shaped frame with a three-headed elephant under a royal umbrella and was also used to identify the time period of the Lao banknotes.

Lao banknote during the period of Lao PDR (1979-2016): The most current kip currency can be broken down to 100 att which equals to 1 kip. It was first used in 1979 and came along with the change in the governing system of the country. Even though, the name of the country was changed to Lao people's democratic Republic, the country itself is still under the communist system. When the most current kip currency started being used, there were 1, 5, 10, 20, 50 and 100 kip notes. Up until, the present time, the notes under 500 kip was already discontinued. At the moment, Lao people prefer to use Thai baht and US dollar due to the fact that they are more valuable than Lao kip. The Bank of Lao PDR decided to release notes with more values to encourage the Lao people to start using kip more. The current kip banknote that are being used now are 1,000, 2,000, 5,000, 10,000, 20,000, 50,000 and 100,000 kip. The new banknotes

were released in 2003. From the observation within Vientiane city, the capital of Laos, people normally carry around lots of kip when they have to pay for goods and services due to the fact that their values are very low. However, the Lao people are really familiar with the different value on each of the notes. They are also, very familiar with converting between kip and baht and between kip and US dollar, especially, those who are in business or service sector. As for the satisfaction on the use of Lao banknotes, from interviewing the vendors along the Mekong River, Thai tourist prefers to use Thai baht when purchasing things compared to Lao kip because they are worried about the different values of the currencies (G, Luang Kaew Koomphon, Personal Communication, November 25, 2016). From the interview with booksellers, it was found that foreigners are using Lao kip more. However, this also depends on the exchange rate. If the kip is weak and the foreigners can get more kip, they will use kip. After the campaign to get people to start using more kip, people normally will carry around 50,000 and 100,000 kip, since, it is more convenient (N. Kaewprasert, Personal Communication, November 26, 2016). While the notes with the values of 500, 1000 and 2000 kip were mostly used by Lao people in religious ceremonies (Jirathiko Personal Communication, november 26, 2016). The bank will limit the amount of 500, 1000 and 2000 kip notes when people go in and exchange smaller notes with the banks in order to prevent the selling of smaller notes in temple festivals where they will be able to sell the smaller notes and make around 3,000 kip per 100,000 kip (Toosuan, Personal Communication, November 6, 2014). Before the campaign on the use of Lao kip, both tourists and Lao people in Vientiane preferred to use Thai baht because kip has too many values and the tourists needed to really look at the numbers before using as opposed to Lao people who were already familiar with the size and color of the Lao banknotes (A. Khumla, Personal Communication, November 26, 2016). Apart from being used as a medium for purchasing goods, tourists also like to buy old Lao banknotes for collection or framing the notes for decoration. But finding the notes is being more difficult, since, more and more villagers are also collecting the notes themselves (T. Phudthavangsay, Personal Communication, November 26, 2016).

The factors contributing to the construction of identity in the design of Lao banknotes under Lao PDR (1979-2016). The identity in the design of Lao banknotes under the Lao PDR (1979-2016) consists of the horizontal rectangular shape with four different formats.

Outlines with patterns on all 4 sides: Thicker lines using various line to construct the patterns. The patterns for

this first format wasn't necessarily Lao pattern but the patterns that could be found in general places. This first format was found in the banknotes used from 1979-1988, printed by Shanghai banknote Printing Factory, Shanghai, people's Republic of China.

Outlines with patterns only on 3 sides: The patterns on one side was taken out, either on the left or right side to create more room and more ease to the eyes. The main image and other illustrators within the frame was constructed from different lines similar to those of paintings but contain stories. This format could be found on the banknotes in 1992, printed by Shanghai banknote Printing Factory, Shanghai, people's Republic of China and was reprinted in 1998 by the Bank of Lao PDR Currency Printing House, Vientiane.

Outlines with patterns only on 2 sides: These notes were designed with only the top and bottom outline frame. The drawing of the outline was more drawn with more freedom than the other two formats. Some of the lines were drawn into the area within the frame. The patterns were more international patterns. More techniques were used to protect against counterfeiting. This format was found in the notes from 1997, 2002 and 2008, printed by Bank of Lao PDR Currency Printing House, Vientiane.

No outline frame: This kind of design used the lines in the background of the banknote in softer colors comparing to the main image. The lines were drawn through the empty space forming more free style patterns comparing to the format with outline framing. The shading of the colors depended on the importance of the images that were to be communicated out. The main image was really clear due to the use of more intense shading. This format was found on the banknote from 2004, printed by the Bank of Lao PDR Currency Printing House, Vientiane. The colors of the note help to differentiate the different values. The colors used on Lao banknotes can be categorized into 2 forms.

Monotone colors: The banknote with monotone colors was designed using only one color with different shades of intensities. The colors were less intense colors. The patterns were simple but create dynamics. The main image, the frame and the emblem of the country were designed with more intense colors than the rest of the note to highlight the important parts but still in the same color tone.

Contrast colors: The idea of the design was to use contrasting colors and could be found on the notes

during the French-Indochina period. It was found that there was only one note that this technique was used and only on the backside of the note; the 1 piastre note from 1953. The color blue was used on a white background to increase the intensity but also to be more memorable. The white background help ease the eyes. Creating uniqueness with the main image was used in the design during the French-Indochina period and can be categorized into four types.

Portrait: Portraits were found to be used in the design of the banknote during the Lao PDR period and were portraits of important figures in the country. The notes were printed and used from 1997-2011. It was found that out of the 10 banknotes, the drawing of Kaysone Phomvihane was used on 7 notes. Mr. Kaysorn was wearing a suit showing his higher status as leaders that helped fight for the freedom of Laos. The portrait was a half-body image facing 45°. The lightning helped create more dynamics to the image and make the image more realistic. The shadow was also very detailed.

Buildings: Important buildings were also used as main images on the notes. House of Parliament, bridges, roads and dams. The buildings signify the development and some reflect the faith and the unity of the people through beliefs such as religious buildings, temples and stupas.

People: Images of people in their traditional costumes doing daily activities. The image can be of an individual or a group of people on different banknotes; for instance, the image of a group of people holding up a Lao flag, farmers planting rice, people in the shopping malls or students in a classroom.

Animal: Animals were also used as main images in the design of Lao banknotes. The animals used in the banknotes were normally local animals and are related to the livelihood of the people; for instance, domestic animals use for agriculture such as buffalos or animals that are the symbols of the country or serve as transportation such as elephants or cows.

Objects: Man-made objects were also used on the notes to show their benefits and were mostly highlighted more than other images on the notes; such as machines or innovations. The identity of the emblem of the country during the Lao PDR period had been used, since, 1991. The emblem is a circle. The lower half is an image of a chakram, also, acting as a cog and the ribbon with the word "Lao People's Democratic Republic". The images surrounded with ripe rice plants like the curve of the moon

and another ribbon in red with the words "Peace, Freedom, Democracy, Unity and Prosperity". The center of the emblem is an image of That Luang a road a rice paddy field, forest and a hydropower dam. It was found that the emblem was put onto the front of all Lao banknotes to clearly state the country's political system. The uniqueness of the banknote in this period was putting the national emblem on all the banknotes which is an important identity of the design.

In this discussion part about the factors that contribute to the construction of identity in the design of Lao banknote, the researchers had studied the different ideologies and theories, according to the following research objectives to study the history and the development of the Lao banknotes using the structural-functional theory as the main theory and the cultural diffusion theory as the supporting theory to study the factors contributing to the construction of the identity in the design of Lao banknote. The main theory is the deconstruction theory, the ideology on identity, the ideology on the represented image, the ideology on the artistic composition and the aesthetics. The supporting theory the theory on the theory on mythologies. The discussions are as follows.

The history and the development of the banknote: The phenomenon can be explained through the Theory of Cultural Diffusion by Roger. Laos is one of the countries that received the diffusion of culture, ideology and behaviors. The values and the social and cultural changes were caused by the diffusion of new things from France to Laos and other colonized countries. One of the new things that Lao took in was the use of paper money or what is called banknotes. The piastre currency was accepted by people in the society at the time and was used as a medium in the communication by the French to the Vietnamese, Cambodian and Laos to help boost the economy and facilitating the control over the colonies. This goes along with the structural-functional theory that provides the explanation for the different social phenomenon, the relationship between people through the different way of life, the use of social mechanism through the beliefs and the values to gain control over people's behaviors. Implementing the use of one currency amongst the three countries create the equilibrium within the society and prevents the anomie. This is one of the processes that was used to unify society. As for the social change that happened after Laos declared its independence from the French empire in 1945 and the establishment of the Lao People's Democratic Republic on December 2nd, 1975, Parson suggested that the changes were caused by the fact that the balance was destroyed

from both the external factors and internal factors. The external factors were for instance, the second world, the French losing to the Vietminh and Laos in the battle of Dien Bien Phu or the retrieval of the US from Indochina. The internal factors were for instance, the internal system that created strain due to the relationship of some units which failed to work collaboratively such as the fact that there were many political groups that wanted to gain control of the country. One phenomenon that shows that Laos had gained full independence was the discontinuation of piastre currency in 1955 by the Banque Nationale du Laos and coming up with its own currency.

The factors contributing to the construction of identity in the design of Laos banknote: The factors contributing to the construction of identity in the design of Laos banknote is the study on the structure of the banknote design to analyze the identity within the design through the deconstruction of the existing structure to separate all the components and recategorized them; similar to decoding. The complication on the source of the problems or the source of the idea for the design was analyzed to find the factor that affects the structure through the deconstruction theory by Jacques Derrida. The research had separated the detail and regroup them according to their uniqueness or their differences from other components (Collins Dictionary). This shows that the design of the Lao banknotes has a different identity from other kinds of designs. Little, John and Foss had explained that when the question “Who am I?” is posed, we are trying to find the small images that make us who we are or what we call a “personal identity”. The theory that looks at identity also covers cultural aspects. Communication is a tool that helps construct the identity and is also a mechanism that changes the identity or the feelings towards the identities and consists of two components:

- Subjective dimension
- Ascribed dimension

How do other people see you or your own perspectives that you learned from others. Identity is a kind of code that explains how you are a member of the community. These codes consist of symbols. Lao banknotes consist of many symbols and the design of the notes are filled with hidden meanings which go in line with the ideology, if representation; the re-presentation. Representation isn't the presentation of the things that exist in reality, since, not everyone has direct experience with all things. Therefore, many of the knowledge that we have are the knowledge that we received through some media as well as through certain individuals who were

trying to present to us the things that are not in front of us. There is no way for us to know whether our perception of the things that are being present to us is the same as the perception of the presenter. Especially, the identity of the main images and other illustrators on the banknotes during the French-Indochina period. For example, the national costumes were also used as symbols of the three countries colonized by the French. The goal was to communicate that the three countries were under the control of the colonizer. Religions were also used to represent the faith of the people and to draw people's hearts and mind together. When the French decided to use the image of that Luang which is considered a religious symbol and one of the things that hold all Lao people together, the banknotes were well-accepted by the people because people saw the things that represent themselves or the things that they feel they could depend upon, Hall (1997) explained that “representation” are images that are embedded with different meanings for things that exist in reality whether they were concrete objects or abstract ideas through languages. The language and the images used are the agreement amongst the member of the society and the culture. Within the same society and culture, there is normally the pre-existing image of the combination of the two. Creating representatives created by human is like creating a new world. For example, when there is a change in the political system for instance, gaining the dependency, new banknotes were created right away using representation through the images and illustrations to fully present Lao identity with hidden myth. Roland Barthes suggested that each communication unit doesn't exist individually but rather relying on the connectedness and form an overall structure where each unit has its own meaning. The shapes, configurations, weights or density affect the senses and consciousness of the people. Myths were used as a process to communicate appropriation such as the image of King Sisavangvong and King Sisavangvatthana on the banknote during the Kingdom of Lao period which shows that most people from the Lao Issara group were still demanding that their leaders return through the hidden meaning behind the images. Or during the Lao PDR period when most of the images were about religious buildings to help communicate the importance of Buddhism. This goes along with the research by Boonplook Suanphong “Ways to Lose Freedom, Life Under Communism”. It was found that the governing status, the Lao revolution movement and the economy, politics, and society were affected by socialism. Buddhism was affected both directly and indirectly. The government had stopped any education on Buddhism and replaced it with socialism. Monks received the status of layperson having to work to make a living. It was an effort to stop

people from having faith in Buddhism and to making Buddhism seem a thing for the ignorant people and Karma doesn't exist. At the same time, monks were also used as a way to spread communism. It wasn't until the country entered into the new thinking policy where there was less effort in trying to gain control over Buddhism. Buddhism was once again made important. There was also no banknote that used Roman characters or Arabic numerals on the front of the note which is different from the banknote from the French-Indochina period where all those characters and numerals were put in front. The front of the banknotes is the part that is really powerful in terms of communicating and affecting people's perception in comparison with the back of the notes. The hidden myth was that the Lao nation has a very important role which shows the coming back of Lao as a country. Therefore, the way myths work was through the overtaking of the initial meaning of all things. This could be the meanings through senses or the usefulness that were communicated out as a principle. Theory of mythology is an analysis of the meaning that has to do with power from each institution within the society. Institutions were viewed as possessing the power to create meanings and principles and change denotations to connotations or vice versa through words. More meanings will be increased through different levels of institutions, unnoticeable. Therefore, the design of Lao banknotes was not just to communicate the meaning but also, explaining the aesthetic beauty and the design. Each banknote has its own value even though it doesn't have any benefit in terms of usage. This value was crafted carefully, so, the banknote itself can be considered a kind of arts. "Works of art are the only media of complete and unhindered communication between man and man that can occur in a world full of gulfs and walls that limit community of experience". Arts can easily gain access to people, banknotes are therefore, another political tool that was used to infiltrate the feeling of the people. There were examples of banknotes that used the actual photo of people but weren't being accepted such as the 1,000 kip banknote from 2008. Lao people call this note "Kip Sam Nang" (Three Women kip) due to the fact that the photo of three women wearing three costumes, each from different ethnic minority groups. Although, the real photograph was used the note wasn't really being accepted within the society due to the fact that according to the Lao people, the three women were not important people without any enough good and admirable deeds to be printed onto the country banknotes. If those three women did something bad, it might also affect the image of the country. The notes were only used for one month and were collected back compared to the old banknotes that were more accepted. This goes in line with the research by Wongwareethip (2007) celebratory coins were more accepted than normal coins in Laos. This reflects the close relationship between the coins and the Lao

governing system. Coins part of politics. They are the production of the politics and serve political purposes, depending on what ideology or belief the leaders at the time want to communicate to the people under their control. The identity of Lao banknotes also goes in line with the research by Pudla (2008). The cultural identity in Lao textbooks which found that the cultural identity in traditional Lao textbooks received influence from Buddhism under the ideology of customary social state. This had an impact on the way Lao people thought and lived their lives. After the change in the government system to socialism in 1975, the cultural aspects within the textbooks changed following the social dynamics at the time. The textbooks were filled with the neo-socialist ideology. The cultural identity was reformed by the new principle to serve socialism. The research by Kongsirirat (2005) on "The Identity and the Construction of Lao Identity through Textbooks" shows that the unique identity that exists in the primary level textbooks talked about unity, nationalism and good health. Especially, the focus on unity which is the identity that was trying to be communicated through the Lao banknotes for instance, the image of the people as the representation of different aspects in development of the country. The images also, consist of a classroom with students and a teacher, the advance of medical aspect through the representation of doctors and nurses treating patients and the national security through the representation of soldiers.

CONCLUSION

The history of the Lao banknote can be categorized into three main periods; The banknote during the French-Indochina (1893-1945): From the above information, starting from 1839-1945 when France took over parts of the Indochina. Lao came under the French colonization after the French expanded their influence from Vietnam and Cambodia into Laos. The reason was that the French wanted to use the Mekong river as their trade route to China. In addition, Lao also had an abundance of natural resources. After the French took control, they started finding ways to facilitate the transferring of the goods back to their country while designating their colony as the markets for distributing the goods. One of the things that they implemented at the time was standardizing the currencies. The French have printed out the banknotes to be used within the three countries and calling the currency "piastre". The reason for standardizing the currency was to increase the control over the army and the administration of the three countries. France set up its headquarter of the Indochina in Hue, Vietnam while sending their officials to rule over Laos for the purpose of gathering the resources, labors and collecting tax for France.

Lao banknote during the Kingdom of La period (1957-1974): Laos became independent from the French in 1945. However, they were not able to unify the country due to the fact that there were many political groups that still want to power to rule the country. The first group that was able to set up an interim government at the time was the Lao Issara movement after the Japanese lost in the Second World War and stayed in power until the French retook over Laos. The objective of the movement was to prevent the French from coming back and take over Laos. The movement was dissolved in 1949 by Prince Petxarat and Prince Suphanouvong. Katay kip was then introduced as a new currency alongside the existing piastre currency. When the French regained their influence in Laos and declared Laos as one as part of their Associate State, the Kingdom of Laos was formed and Royal kip was introduced in 1952 while piastre was still being used. In 1954, after the French lost the war to the Vietminh group and to Laos in the ware of Dien Bien Phu, Laos became fully independent. It was in 1955 when the Banque Nationale du Laos announced the discontinuation of piastre currency and renamed the kip as Vientiane kip in 1957. However, while the Vientiane kip was being circulated in the market, Khang Khai kip was also, being used under a government led by Prince Suvanna Phouma established in Khang Khai village in Xiang Khouang as a form to resist the communist ideology of the Prated Lao government under Prince Suphanouvong. That was the reason why Prince Suvanna Phouma ordered the printing of Khang Khai to be used from 1962-1963.

Lao banknote during the Pao PDR period (1979-2016): After the US retrieved from Indochina according to Nixon's order, Prated Lao movement proposed that the government set up another coalition government and put Prince Suvanna Phouma as the Prime Minister. However, it wasn't until 1975 when the Prated Lao movement of the left-wing Lao took over the country and rule the country under a socialist system with Prince Suphanouvong as the president and Mr. Kaysone Phomvahane as the Prime Minister. The Prated Lao movement took over all of Laos and established the Lao People's Democratic Republic in December 2nd, 1975 with Prince Suphanouvong as the first president and Mr. Kaysone Phomvihane as the Prime Minister. Prated Lao movement was renamed as the "Lao People's Revolutionary Party". In addition, Prated Lao movement launched the Liberation kip in order to expand the control over the economy of the country before taking over the power from the government under the Kingdom of Laos in 1975. This kip currency was printed in China.

The current kip currency was broken down to 1 kip being equal to 100 att. IT was first used in 1979, the same time that the country political system changed and the country was renamed the Lao People's Democratic Republic. In reality, the country has been running under the communist system. The first set of kip that was used consist of 1, 5, 10, 20, 50 and 100 kip notes. The value of the notes increased over the years. Currently, notes that are under 500 kip are no longer being used. Lao people prefer to use Thai baht and US dollar due to the fact that they have a higher value in comparison to kip currency. Therefore, Lao PDR decided to increase the value of the kip to encourage the people to start using kip currency more. At the present time, Lao banknotes also contain the value of 1000, 2000, 5000, 10000, 20000, 50000 and 100000 kip. These banknotes were produced, since, 2003. The Lao coins that were produced, since 1980 which consist of 10, 20 and 50 att with the national emblem on one side and the image of agriculture on one side, including the special set which consist of 1, 5, 10, 20 and 50 att to celebrate their 10 years anniversary under the communist system were all discontinued to be used, since, 1991 after the fall of the Soviet Union.

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