

## Laos Cinema: Development and Assimilation in New Economic Mechanism Context

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**Abstract:** In this study on Laos Cinema: Development and Assimilation in New Economic Mechanism Context, the researcher had design the research by using qualitative research. The data were collected from the document from the government organization and both the governmental and private educational institution, textbooks, researches, movies, videos and mainly from the field study. The objectives of this research are as follows: to study the development of Laos cinema. To study the assimilation of Laos cinema in the context under the new economic mechanism context. The sample group were chosen by using the purposive sampling method. The sample group was chosen by the Laos fiction films which was produced from the year 1945-2015. The key informants of this research are Laos history experts, Laos cinema experts, the head of the department of cinema, the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism. The casual informants of this research are the producers of Laos cinema, the manager and organizer of the Laos cinema, the distributors and the public relations of Laos cinema through main stream media within Vientiane province as the main area since most of the informants resides within the province. The research tools consist of interview forms, observation forms and group discussion. It was found from the study that the development and the history of Laos cinema can be distinguished into 6 eras: Laos cinema during the colonization period which consist of the French colonization 1945-1954 the United States of America colonization 1955-1974. Laos cinema the in the liberation period 1975-1985 Laos cinema under the New Economic Mechanism Context 1986-1990 Laos cinema during the restoration period 1991-2007 Laos cinema during the assimilation period and Laos cinema during the new wave period 2014-2015. The assimilation of the Laos cinema in the new economic mechanism context consist of 4 assimilating aspects: the assimilation of Laos cinema in technology and the production technics the assimilation of Laos cinema in of the ideas and the structure of story-telling the assimilation of Laos cinema in the objectives of the production and the assimilation Laos cinema in the producers and the distributors. This study is part of the dissertation for the Art and Culture Research program at KhonKaen University with the title “Laos Cinema: Development and Assimilation. In New Economic Mechanism Context” with Assoc. Prof. Dr. Niyom Wongpongkham as the main advisor and Assistant Professor. Dr. SastraLaoakka as co-advisor.

**Key words:** Text books, cinema, stream, colonization, technology

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### INTRODUCTION

**Rational and the significant o the study:** After Thomas Alva Edison invented the kinetoscope, the first movie projector in the world and Louise and Auguste Lumiere from France built a cinematograph which act as both the camera and the projector, the era of movie business got started. The first selling movie was shown in Paris. In 1902, Georges Melies produced the first science fiction movie called a trip to the Moon. The movie created a huge inspiration to the human kind which led to the actual trip to the moon was accomplished 67 years later ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A\\_Trip\\_to\\_the\\_Moon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Trip_to_the_Moon)). Ever since then, movies have been an important aspect to human beings.

Chetharat (1993) had defined movies as a major role in presenting the content, knowledge and entertainment to the audiences. Even though there are limitations and

imbalances amongst the audiences in terms of communication, everyone can still come to the same understanding in the content of a given movie. Viwatsinudom talked about the 3 important components of a movie: movies are science, art and mass communication. Movie is considered as science because it is a scientific invention. It derived from the development of advance technology. As for the saying that movies are art, Boonyaketmala (2009) stated that “movies” are the seventh branch of art that accumulate all the other six branches which consist of literature, painting, sculpture, architecture, music and plays in order to communicate the story from the history, society, politics and culture from each of the eras. As for the idea that movies are mass communication, Thanawangnoi (2001) stated that of all the medias that play a role in providing the news, knowledge and entertainment, none of the other medias is as efficient in accessing the feelings, consciousness and

as influential as movies. Moreover, movies are able to create mass culture which became the product of the creative economy. Movies are able to respond to the market mechanism by being a movie industry and create huge amount of income many movie producers. Krainara (2009) had also mentioned that the developed country such as South Korea had tried to create stability and wealth from cultural capital which goes in line with what Viwatsinudom had mentioned that movie industry is still an important industry of several countries from the fact that many countries still allocate their budget to support the movie industry to become a qualify export product.

In the aspect of anthropology and sociology, movie also play a role in efficiently reflecting the reality in society in each of the era. This goes along with what Turner stated that movies are a kind of media that is a system of creating a meaning through pictures. It became even more apparent that movies are a good tool in reflecting the pictures of society, politics and culture. Boonyaketmala (2009) said that movies are also a social document which has the power to move the society forward starting from the relations between the state and the people in different classes to the consciousness of individuals.

It can be said that movies are perfect cultural media that everyone can easily access since movies are considered a universal language. They have the power to control the mind and the emotion of people. It is also a mix between aestheticism and economy and political activities. Movies therefore became a main force in the twentieth century. Since movies are considered as science, art and mass communication as well as playing a role as a product from the creative economy in creating a reality, reflecting the reality within society, a reliable and powerful social document, these reasons make it important to study the movies in order to understand that certain society.

The information from the Neighboring Countries Economic Development Cooperation Agency stated that the area of Laos PDR is 70% mountain and 30% plain. There are many varieties of ethnic minority groups or what we call indigenous people. The habitat of Lao people can be categorized into 3 main groups: Lao Loom refers to the Laos people who are living in the lowland which composed of 68% of the whole population. Most of the lowland Lao people are Buddhist, use the Tai-Laos language and practice agriculture. Lao Teung refers to the Lao people living on the upland which composed of 22% of the whole population, use the Mon-Khmer language, mostly practice agriculture and animal raising and Lao Phu-Khao refers to the Lao people who are living in the

highland which composed of 9% of the whole population, use that Shino-Tibetan language, practice agriculture and animal raising.

Theerasasawat distinguished the periods that Laos had gone through the changes in the society and culture into 3 different periods. The first period is when Laos was under the control of Thailand, 1779-1893. During this period, Laos was ruled under the system called "Aya See" which means the administering officers were all Lao people but the Thai state still had the power to appoint or remove those officers. The second period is during the control by the French, 1893-1954. France had removed previous administering system. The highest ranking officer were all French. Lower ranking officer would be Lao people. The French had oppressed and extorted both the tax money and the labor. At the end of World War II, Japan came and took over Laos until the end of the war and the France resumed its power over Laos. This time, there were conflicts over political ideas that Laos split into two groups: the right group who supported the French and the left group who of Laos people forming up against colonization. Eventually, France lost the war at DienBienPhuin the year 1954 which ended the French power over Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia. The third period is when Laos was liberated, 1954-1975. The development in terms of the economy, society and politic was very slow due to the conflict between the three groups: the government or the rightist, the neutral party and the Laos people movement or the leftist who got support from the northern Vietnam. However, eventually, the leftist won their victory in the year 1975 and the political regime changed. Sihabun (2006) stated that the changes in the political regime in Laos in 1975 had a huge impact on the monarchy institution that has been in power in Laos for many centuries.

Chinmasang agrees that the changes in of the political regime had led to the abolish of the Laos monarchy after 600 years. Phomvihane, one of the leader in the Laos people movement became the first prime minister in Laos who played a major role in leading Laos in a new direction under the communist system. Tularak (2005) refers to the report called "The New Range, New Direction, New Role and Some Basic Problems in Guaranteeing the Victory of Socialism" which mentioned that the revolution on the ideas and culture needs to eradicate the old culture that doesn't fit with the new system by using the mass communication in presenting the policies and discourses, every news press, newspaper, radio broadcasting, publishing, cinema and literature will all need to reflect this new culture. This research had identified the importance of the cinema in the social and cultural dimension.

Somphavong (1999) had talked about the role of cinema during the year 1950-1985 in that cinema is a tool in communication between the government and the people in presenting the policies, vision, the practice and in improving the society and culture; all through the use of cinema as a propaganda. This goes along with Yamcharoen (2013) who had studied the history of cinema and distinguished them into 6 different periods: cinema for political ideology the liberation the new economic mechanism the era of new and freelance creator of cinema the resurrection of cinema the educated in Laos cinema and the complete system of entertainment. The major role of Laos cinema has been the communication tool between the government and the people to create a good understanding in terms of the governing of the country and to create a product to respond to the movie industry. In the fourth big assembly meeting Lao's People Revolutionary Party, Puttichot (2004) had mentioned that the chairperson, Phomvihane had changed the policies in the economic development from socialist system to the market mechanism system, or what is called the New Economic Mechanism. This new policy had created an impact on the cinema industry in Laos where the industry itself clearly relies on the market mechanism and thus making it more difficult to move the policies forward due to the fact that the production of the cinema will need a huge amount of budget and neither the government and the private sector can provide the budget that is needed which caused the growth of cinema to stop. It can be observed that the development of the cinema changed accordingly to the social, economic and political context in each era; in addition to the technology the idea and narrative structure, the objectives of the production, as well as the producers and the distributors of the cinema. These issues clearly reflect the Laos society.

From the 2 dimensions that were mentioned above, the role of cinema as a policy, or propaganda, also reflects the social and cultural aspect, the role of the cinema as mass communication and the valuable social document which is very reliable in the history of Laos as well as its role in creating entertainment and built itself up to be a type of industry that generate a huge amount of income to the producers. The research is curious to know more about the development of the cinema and its entering into the new economic mechanism economy.

How NEM or New Economic Mechanism that aims at the market mechanism will affect the assimilation of the cinema and its role in building the good understanding in the history, economy, politics and culture in Laos while entering into the ASEAN community and being under the constant change of the global society.

#### **The objectives of the research:**

- To study the development of the Laos cinema
- To study the assimilation of the cinema within the context of the new economic mechanism

#### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

In the research on Laos cinema: Development and Assimilation In New Economic Mechanism Context, the researcher has designed the research process using the qualitative research method by collecting the information from the documents of the government and both the governmental and provide educational institution, textbooks, researches, movies and videos and the data collected from the field study in order to study the knowledge on Laos cinema with the objectives of studying the development and the assimilation of Laos cinema in within the context of New Economic Mechanism.

This research study 26 samples from the sampling group, the key informant, casual informants and related parties who have the knowledge in Laos cinema: the 5 key informants: these group of people are experts in Laos history, history of Laos cinema and the people with the power to approve in collecting the information from both the government and the private sector's database which consist of academics related to Laos cinema, academics in Laos history, the head of the Department of Cinema, the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism.

The 21 casual informants: these casual informants are people who possess the knowledge in the history of Laos cinema, the showing and organizers of the Laos cinema which consist of 5 producers of the Laos cinemas, 8 directors, 2 organizers of the Laos cinema, projecting staff of the Laos cinema, 2 narrators of Laos cinema, a manager of the Laos cinema theater, 1 actor, 1 entrepreneur of Laos cinema and a group of people who are not in the Laos cinema business such as the audience of the Laos cinema.

The tools used in collecting the data consist of field study notes and group discussions, participatory observation, structured interview and non-structured interviews in order to study the development and the assimilation of Laos cinema within the new economic mechanism context.

#### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**The development of Laos cinema:** From the study the development of Laos cinema from the historical evidences, it was found that the development of Laos cinema slowly follows the social and political status which can be further distinguished into 6 periods:

**First period; Laos cinema during the colony period from 1945-1974:**

This period can be further distinguished into 2 smaller periods: the French colony from 1945-1954 and the US colony from 1954-1974. The role of Laos cinema can be put under 2 statuses: the role in providing entertainment. From the historical evidences, Laos cinema during this period was the only entertainment provided to the people of Vientiane. It was very popular identify from some major indicators such as the fact that there >10 cinema theatre that was opened for business during that time. The movie being played in the theatre during that period were movies from Thailand, the Soviet Union, Korea, China, Japan and Vietnam. The producers and the production year of the movies produced by Lao directors cannot identified since they were lost during the World War II. The role in the propaganda to serve the political ideology by being used as a media in combination with the cultural media to draw the people to side with them. The role of Laos cinema slowly changed according to the people in power within the country. There was also the receiving of the technology, the idea and narrative structure from the country controlling Laos at the time. The technology used in the production process of the Laos cinema consist of 8, 16 and 35 mm films. There were mainly 3 genres: drama, action and documentary film, the later were mostly used to serve the political ideology.

The producers of the Laos cinema can be categorized into 3 groups: the patriot group (Lao People's Movement) responsible by the Lao Patriotic Front's Film Production Unit. The government's producers responsible by the United State Information Service or the USIS and the psychological military unit. The last group was the group of producers that focus on the entertainment who possess some knowledge in the production of cinema mostly from the show business and mass communication work.

**Second period; the government control period from 1975-1985:**

After the changes in the political regime in 1975, the government setup a unit to work directly on cinema starting from the production, distribution and the showing of the cinema throughout the country. Every kind of media was under the control of the government. This period is the gap period between the highest and the lowest period. The movies being brought in during this period will only be brought in from the other communist countries and not from the free world. The development of cinema during this period was stalled. The technology used for the production of the movies can be categorized according to the changes in the society, culture and politics; the technology from the countries that used to rule over Laos such as Japan, French and the US and the technology from other communist countries such as

China, Vietnam and the Soviet Union. The genre of cinema during this period were documentary. There was only one fiction movie called "Gunshot from Plain of Jars" (1983) which is the combination of a documentary, drama, action and ideology. The narrative structure during this period were based on conflicts. The external conflicts were on the political conflicts. The theme of the movie is the effort in trying to justify the Lao People's Movement, who later on won and become the present government. The characters are clearly defined as protagonist and villains. The backdrop was normally in nature settings to present the reality of the location. The movie was told in the third person point of view in order to present the story from all angles. The content of the film needs to serve the political ideology by presenting the policy and the work of the government to the people. While the government control the media, the protagonists were mostly a model of a citizen that the government was aiming for in that transition period. The government had monopoly over all the production.

**Third period; economic mechanism of Lao cinema:**

After the downfall of the economy in Laos, the government needs to adjust the economic structure by relying on the capitalist system from other free countries. The country itself is approaching the 10 year-period after the changing of the political regime. The country wasn't as stable as it should be. The government came up with the idea to produce a movie called BuaDaeng with the objective of getting people to forget the hardship that they were facing from the economy downfall. It was a trick to divert people's attention by presenting the cruelty of the Royal Lao Government and the Imperialism to drive people to be aware and to build strength and the loyalty to the party and the government. The movie was shown and entrance fee were collected. The cinema during this period was aim at motivating the development of the economy and society to be at the same level as other countries. The government therefore tried to respond to the economy needs. The cinema during this period was therefore in the "balance" level with a better direction in building up the capacity of the personal by the government such as sending those people to study about film making in other countries, especially in other communist countries such as Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, Bulgaria as well as the two countries that used to rule over Laos which is French and the US. Laos also took in the production technology from 4 groups of countries; communist countries such as the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Russia and Bulgaria; the country that used to rule Laos which are France and the US; the countries that share their border with Laos which are Thailand and Vietnam; and other free countries which are Germany, Switzerland

and India. The genre of cinema during this period was a combination between drama and action. The ideology and the narrative structure of the cinema during this period were fiction and conflicts. The external conflicts between the two sides of the military due to the differences on the political ideology. The theme of the movies was an effort in trying to communicate the ideology of the Lao People's Movement. The characters were clearly defined between the protagonists and the villains. The settings are mostly natural settings to present the reality of the location. The point of view of the movies are presented with the effort in trying to get the audience to be able to follow and see every aspect of the story. The objective of the movie was to respond to the need of the government in justifying the rules and regulations, their regime, all the way to the maintaining off the tradition, art and culture of the people in the country. The government still holds the monopoly in the production.

**Fourth period; recovery age of Lao Cinema (1991-2006):**

After the "balance" situation or an effort to sustain itself during 1986-1990, more fiction films were being produced. This period was the gap between the film and television era. VHS and DV camera were being used in the filming process. Computers were used in the editing process under the Non-linear system. Most film were either drama or fiction films. The narrative structure focused on the conflict between the main character and the location of the film; countries trying to develop in the economy, social and cultural aspect and the effort in trying to fight with their own desires. The theme of the film was trying to communicate that the people should act as the kind of citizen that the government wanted as part of developing countries. The characters of the movies mainly had good looks and were from middle to upper class families. The true nature of the characters was not clearly shown. The settings of the film were mostly natural setting to present the reality of the real location. The point of view was from a third person point of view to help the audience to be able to observe everything that see every aspect of the film. The objective of the film during this period was to respond to the market mechanism. However, this kind of ideology were not support by the current economy and political system. The main objective of the government was to use to film to present the negative impact that could potentially happen to the country from not being a good member of the family and society. The government still held the monopoly in the production of the film. The policy of the government at that time was for the people to be unified.

**Fifth period; assimilation age of Lao Film (2007-2011):**

Lao cinema started to have a better direction in terms of the production, the content and the income from the showing of the film especially through the co-production for the purpose of market gain. The collaboration between Thailand and Laos had, once again, gain an interest for Lao cinema, through a film called "Sabai-dee Luang Prabang" in 2008 which was shown at the Vientiane International Films Festival and the Luang Prabang Film Festival. These events were another trend that contribute to the development of Laos cinema. These also help led to the exchange of knowledge between the international directors and the Lao new generation directors through the support of the Lao Department of Cinema. There were, however, some issues that the government wouldn't allow to be shown on film such as the social conflict and some exposure to the culture. As for the technology in the production, many technologies were put to use in the so-call digital cinema. Computers were used for the editing process in as non-linear system and computer graphic. The main genre of the film during this period were drama film depicting the way of life and the tradition and norms. The idea and the narrative structure of the film was fiction and conflict. The conflicts were mostly internal rather than the external conflict. The theme varied according to the social context such as love, tourism and the development of their own habitat. The characters were more complex. The background of each of characters were explained to the audience until they understand the reason why each of the characters made each of the decisions. The characters during this period were therefore gray rather than being either black or white. The settings were mostly natural setting to present the reality of the locations. The point of view in the movie was a third person point of view in order for the audience to be able to see the movie from every point of view. The objective in the production of the Lao cinema was to reflect the image of the society and encourage people to love their country and to be unified; also to produce the film for monetary gain in the film business which was a co-investment internationally. The producers and the distributors consist of the films produced by the non-profit organization, the government and the private sector; the films produced by the government, films produced by the private sector in Thailand and expect the benefit from the industry and films produced together between the private sector within the country and outside of the country.

**Sixth period; new wave age of Lao cinema:** This is the period for the new wave to continuously produce the films to feed the market. The new young age directors

consist of Keoheang Production and TK. As for Lao Art Media Production, they still continuously producing films with Anousorn Sirisackda who became a producer and focus most of his work in working together with Thailand, France and Estonia. The Vientiane International Film Festival and the Luang Prabang Film Festival prompt these directors to participate in the development of their work in terms of the content, the technology in the production and the idea and narrative structure which had contributed a lot to the development. The digital technology helped provide a more convenient production system. The genre of the film was mostly drama and horror, thriller, especially comedy which had become a huge trend. The idea and the narrative structure were fiction and conflict. The conflicts were mostly internal as oppose to external conflict. The theme of the film varied according to the social context such as love, livelihood, the reflection and the direct criticism of the culture. The characters were more complex. The settings were mostly set in nature to present the reality in the location. As for the point of view, the film used the third person point of view to allow the audience to be able to follow and see all the aspect of the story. The objective in producing the film was the market benefit and the reflection of the Lao society and culture. The objectives can be further categorized into smaller objectives such as the reflection on the social classes, the education and the gender issue in Lao society. The producers of the film consist of the private sector, the collaboration between the private sector and the government and the international collaboration.

**The assimilation of Lao cinema under the new economic mechanism context:** The result of the study on the assimilation of Lao cinema under the New Economy of Lao cinema from 1986-2015 (current time of this research) from looking at the problems and obstacles which consist of the technology and technological production, the idea and the narrative structure, the objectives of the production and the distribution, can be analyzed as follows:

**The assimilation of Lao cinema in the technology and production technics:** The Economic and Mechanism age of Lao cinema (1986-1990) was influenced from 4 groups of countries which were the communist countries such as the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Russia and Bulgaria; the countries that used to rule over Laos such as France and the US; the free countries such as Germany and Switzerland; and the countries that share the border with Laos such as Thailand and Vietnam. The Recovery Age of Lao cinema (1991-2006) which transitioned away from

the use of films in the production starting from the pre-production, the production, the post-production and the distribution process to cassette videos, CD, DVD and hard-drive.

The assimilation age of Lao cinema where the information technology, the 1st Vientiane International Films Festival in 2009, the 2nd Vientiane International Films Festival in 2011 and the 1st Luang Prabang Film Festival played a role in developing the technology in the production system which had an leaping impact on both the production process and the audiences of the cinema, as well as the legalize aspect that the producers of the films needed to adjust to by setting up their own firms to prepare for the developments.

The New Wave Age of Lao Cinema (2012-2015) where many new technologies were brought in and use for a more convenient work. A new film studio was built to meet the international standard while the films were being shown using the Digital Cinema Package or DCP to which the Lao cinema producers still lack the readiness for that kind of technology. The film called *Above It All* in 2015 was the first Lao movie that was shown in a theatre that meets the international standard.

**The assimilation of Lao cinema in the idea and narrative structure:** The Economic Mechanism Age of Lao Cinema (1986-1990) needs to contain some of the inappropriate content in order to respond to the need of the government; there needs to be patriotism, the unity of the people in the country, the overthrowing of the imperialism, the resistant against foreign culture, cultural monitoring and creating a norm of how to be a good citizen of the state.

The Recovery Age of Lao Cinema (1991-2006) was the time when the country is developing in its economy, social and cultural aspects. The content of the film focused on how to behave as the good citizen of the country.

The Assimilation Age of Lao Cinema (2007-2011) was the time of patriotism. After the movie *Sabai-Dee Luan Prabang* was made in 2008, then trend of movies shifted to tourism and the support of culture. In addition, there was also an exchange of idea and knowledge with the directors from other countries at the Vientiane International Film Festival and the Luang Prabang Film Festival or LPPF.

The New Age of Lao Cinema (2012-2015) focuses in the support of eco-Tourism and the tradition and culture of the country. There was also a film that was prohibited from being shown called *Above It All* (2015) which aimed to talk about the transsexuality. However, eventually, the Department of Cinema still allows the movie to be shown which was a huge step for Lao cinema for communicating

such a cultural risk and sensitive issue which was an example of the assimilation in terms of the content and the narrative structure. The film "My Teacher" (2015) was the collaboration between the Thailand and Laos government but still needed to adjust the content of the film and was strictly under the monitoring of the Department of Cinema. The theme of film that was the most popular was comedy.

**The assimilation of lao cinema in the objective of the production:** The Economic Mechanism Age of Lao Cinema (1986-1990) was the production to respond to the policy of the government in patriotism, the resistant to the imperialism the monitoring of the culture and creating the norm in being a good citizen for the state. The film during this period wasn't expecting any benefit from the market.

The Recovery Age of Lao Cinema (1991-2006) focuses on the fact that the people should be a kind of citizen that the government wanted as the country move forwards to becoming a developing country; presenting what a good and bad citizen are like and how to be a good citizen that the government wanted.

The Assimilation Age of Lao Cinema (2007-2011) was the time when films began to play a role as being more industrialized. There was an effort in trying to reflect the problem and social monitoring, the support of the arts and culture, the tradition, while integrating all these aspects to the benefit from the industry under the control of the government.

The New Age of Lao Cinema (2012-2015) was the age where monetary benefit was expected from the mechanism of the market. Films were being push into the industry through the public relation and information technology.

**The assimilation of lao cinema for the producers and the distributors:** The Economic Mechanism Age of Lao Cinema (1986-1990) and The Recovery Age of Lao Cinema (1991-2006) were the two periods where the government still have the power to pass down the order through the Department of Cinema in producing and distributing the films through the theatre and mobile units. The content of the film must be according to the government's policies.

The Assimilation Age of Lao Cinema (2007-2011) was the time when more film companies were setup from having just one film company called Lao Art Company to having Lao New Cinema Production, Hopin, Doklao and TK Production.

The New Age of Lao Cinema (2012-2015) was still the time when the producers and the distributors of the films still need partners to help provide the support such as the technology, production process, the distribution and the organizing the of events. Therefore, many co-productions were initiate in different forms such as the co-production

between the government and the private sector, the co-production with the non-profit organizations and the international co-production between the government of each country. These are all a progress to the Lao cinema especially in terms of the content, the idea and the narrative structure to truly respond to the market mechanism.

## CONCLUSION

The development and the history of Lao cinema can be distinguished into 6 periods: colony period of Lao Cinema (1945-1974) which consist of French Colony (1945-1954), US Colony (1955-1974). Films during this period were aimed at entertaining the people especially the films imported from different groups of countries; countries that used to rule Laos, communist countries, free countries and neighboring countries. Apart from that, films were also used as a tool to serve the political ideology from the conflict between the Royal Laos Government and the Lao People's Movement. The Government Control Period of Lao Cinema was the time when the films were under a total control by the government. Foreign cultures were not welcome due to the fact that the government wanted the build a nation and bring back the local culture as fast as possible. Only the technology, knowledge and films from other communist countries are allowed within the country. The government was the only party that can produce movies with the content that encourage people to feel more patriotic. The Economic Mechanism Age of Lao (1986-1990) was the time when the economic was at a low point due to the collapse of the Soviet Union, the leader of the communist countries. However, the technology and the production of the films were still the communist countries, the countries that used to rule over Laos, the free countries and the neighboring countries. The government still had the monopoly in the content of the films and still focuses a lot in creating patriotism within the country. The Assimilation Age of Lao Cinema (2008-2013) was the height of Lao Cinema due to the co-production film called Sabai-Dee LuangPrabang which gained a lot of interest along with the organization of the Vientiane International Film Festival and the LuangPrabang Film Festival or LPFF. The two events had caused the development for both the producers and the audiences in Laos along with the producers from other countries. The government played a role in helping support the collaboration between the government and the private sector both within the country and outside of the country. The government was still trying to monitor the content that was considered a risk to national

security. And The New Wave Age of Lao Cinema (2014-2015) is an era for the new generation that have easier access to the knowledge from the fact technology in communication, the production tools that can easily be found with lower price. The films were produced to respond to the mechanism of the market with the support from the government under strict regulations in monitoring the content that poses risks to the culture and national security.

The result from the development in cinema shows the direction in the development of cinema with the factors that can further the knowledge. In other words, the development went along the trend of modern technology through the information technology system and a more convenient and faster mean of communication. The production tools are also easier to find at a cheaper price. In addition, there was also a factor of support from the government and the private organization who sincerely work together in setting up the Lao Cinema Director Association under the responsibility of the Department of Cinema, the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism. The association will act as a strong network to help negotiate with the distributors of the films, the support from other countries, especially the countries that used to rule over Laos, the communist countries, the free countries and neighboring countries who still help provide the support on the knowledge, the tools and film events and moreover, the budget in film production. These aids will come in a form of co-production such as Sabai-Dee LuangPrabang (2008), Sabai-dee 2: From Pakse with Love (2010) and Lao Wedding (2011), Jantalee (2013) and My Teacher (2015). These factors help Lao cinema to develop in the idea, narrative structure in parallel with the modern technology with new producers who will help develop the film in the future.

The assimilation of Lao Cinema in the New Economy Mechanism consist of 4 different aspect of assimilation: the assimilation in technology and production technics. The knowledge was brought in from 4 groups of countries: the communist countries, the countries that used to rule over Laos, the free countries and the neighboring countries. Starting from the use of films to the transition to digital file following the technological development in the production process the assimilation in the idea and the narrative structure to support the patriotism and how to behave like a good citizen to the government, support the country's art and culture and emphasize the in the natural and historical tourist site the assimilation of Lao cinema in the objectives in the production starting from the film production to respond the need of the political ideology, presenting the work of the government, monitoring the culture while responding to the market mechanism at the same time. The assimilation in the production and the distribution starting

from the monopolization of the government until the starting of the co-production between the government and the private sector both domestically and internationally which greatly impact the development of Lao cinema.

After the changes in the political regime in the year 1976, the government had setup a unit to oversee the production, protecting and the distribution of cinema. The focus was on telling a story basing on the political ideology and presenting the work of the government although films such as those could not respond to the mechanism of the market such as the film called "Gun shot from Plain of Jars" (1983), BuaDaeng (1988) and I want to be a soldier (2008), until the department of cinema had come up with the policy in the year 2014 which oversee the policy of the Department of Cinema, the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism which had changed the objectives of the films from encouraging patriotism to presenting the issue on the beauty of arts and culture and the beautiful landscape. The type of film changed from drama and action to love and comedy such as HukAumLum (2012) HukEy Ly 1 (2014), HukEy Ly 2 (2015), Kau Piang Huk (2010) and Huk Ni Ti Vienjan (2014). The objective of the production changed to responding the mechanism of the market. From the monopoly of the Lao government to the new wave producers. The co-production of the film between the private sector both domestically and internationally such as Sabai-Dee LuangPrabang (2008), Sabai-dee 2: From Pakse with Love (2010) and Lao Wedding (2011), Jantalee (2013) and My Teacher (2015).

## **SUGGESTIONS**

The research on Laos Cinema: Development and Assimilation In New Economic Mechanism Context is the study on the development and transition, the assimilation in the production of cinema. The scope of this study is between 1945-2015. The research suggest that further study should look into other issues apart from the development and the assimilation in each of the transitioning phrase; such as studying the on the reflection of cinema on politic, society and culture.

Due to the fact that cinema is a very efficient tool, director is an important person in the production process who had gone through different experience. Therefore, the way of thinking, the idea, the narrative structure, taste of movie, perspective on the arts and the process in directing a movie. Therefore, the method of each of the director for Lao cinema should be studied. Cinema is a product of the applied thought on creative economy which can respond to the mechanism of the market. A study should be done on the idea, the use of arts and cultural knowledge in applying to the mechanism of the market as a creative economy product.



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