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THE ECONOMIES OF LAO AND SERB PEASANTS: A CONTRAST IN CULTURAL VALUES

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DRAWING inspiration from world-wide programs of economic development, anthropologists have recently become increasingly interested in the relationship between peasant economies and the policies of national states. To a certain extent universal, parallel cultural evolution, irrespective of competing political systems, appears to be now in process. This is not to minimize the crucial differences in style with regard to planning and implementation, but certainly the shared emphasis on broad economic development as a positive goal provides an important illustration. Economic development in the modern industrial sense is obviously approached from many different economic bases, or systems. It is the intention in this paper to examine two such systems descriptively and indicate at least in these two cultures, areas of stability and possible parallel cultural evolution.

The Lao belong to the Thai peoples widely distributed through southeast Asia, the Kingdom of Laos including only a minority of Lao both in the relative and absolute sense. It appears that somewhat less than half of the population of the kingdom (currently estimated at approximately 2,000,000) are ethnic Lao, the remainder being various tribal peoples.

The Lao of Laos may be briefly characterized as rice cultivators who live in valleys. Their kinship system is bilateral and "loosely-structured." There is some tendency toward matrilocality although the nuclear family is the most common residential unit. The Buddhist pagoda is the main focus of community activity. Lao villages vary in size but average about two hundred in population. They are usually located near streams or rivers. This discussion draws on information concerning villages in the area of Luang Prabang in north central Laos, although many of the statements have broader applicability. Most of the Lao in this area dwell along the Mekong River or its tributaries. Glutinous rice is the main crop. In addition to its key economic importance, dependence on this food is a strongly-felt national cultural characteristic, differentiating the Lao from the neighboring peoples. The most important means of transportation and communication are the rivers navigated in poled dugouts. Trails and a few jeepable roads exist, but in many if not most cases they are impassable during the rainy season.

Prior to the coming of the French, local administrators lived on the sums they were able to extract from the population. The French set up a system of head taxes and utilized the traditional *corvée* as well. After independence the head-tax was abolished, and at present the peasants are taxed only to a minor extent on market transactions.

The Serbs constitute the largest ethnic group in Yugoslavia (approximately 7,000,000 out of a total population of 17,000,000). Their main crops are wheat and corn. The data in this paper have particular reference to the region of Šumadija, the geographical and emotional heart of Serbia.

Just as the pagoda lends characteristic form to the traditional structure of the Lao village, so the *zadruga* has been the key institution in Serb villages. Basically a patriarchal, extended family, the *zadruga* and its associated lineage constituted the essence of village organization. Today these units have largely disappeared in the formal sense, but the lineages remain important. Households today average between four and six members in both Serbia and Laos.

Serb villages approximate about 2,000 in population and thus are much larger than those in Laos. In many cases the homes are scattered over the countryside, and village boundaries appear indefinite to the outsider. Lao villages, although concentrated in a physical way, have certainly no more and probably less cohesion in terms of kinship structure.

Oxcarts on dirt roads and village paths are the traditional means of transportation in Serbia although buses and trucks on paved roads are becoming increasingly common. The tax systems have varied through the years from an original head-tax to the present more diversified tax base of land, estimated productive capacity of each household, wine and plum brandy produced, and market transactions such as the sale of produce and livestock.

Basic capital, in terms of productive resources, of both Lao and Serb societies consists primarily of land and secondarily of livestock. In each case the land is divided into several categories. For the Lao farmer it consists of gardens around the household compound, irrigated rice fields, and often some *hai* areas, plots cleared by slash-and-burn cultivation, in which are grown corn, vegetables, and occasionally rice. Some land may also be devoted to orchards.

In addition to his household gardens, the Serb peasant possesses some pasture land for his livestock and some forest, but economically the most important are the plots in vineyards and the land devoted to wheat and corn. Both Lao and Serb farms are highly fragmented and a land-use map of either area resembles a fantastic jigsaw puzzle. In both cases the fragmentation of land through inheritance makes it difficult for either group to attain maximum productivity even within existing technologies.

Yet strangely enough, both Laos and Serbia have been, and to some extent still are, pioneer areas. This implies something of a paradox, for how is it possible in a pioneer area to have fragmentation of the land? This seeming contradiction is resolved if we examine the historical and ecological relationships in each case. A century and a half ago much of central Serbia was in oak forests and the princi-

pal economy was based on herding pigs and feeding them on acorns. Plow agriculture was secondary. Progressive colonization from the mountainous areas of Bosnia and Montenegro plus population growth has resulted in extensive deforestation and a great increase in the amount of arable land. The greatest fragmentation of land has occurred during the last hundred years.

In Laos the situation is quite different. Most villagers are only semi-permanent, and forest land is still available. The irrigated rice fields (*na*) have become fragmented because their yields are more reliable than those of the *hai*. The creation of new *na* is not easily done, for it involves the extension of irrigation ditches and a major investment of labor. This labor must be hired or supplied by the family itself, and implies existing fluid capital or a large extended family containing a number of able-bodied workers. Neither of these situations commonly occurs among Lao peasants, and therefore the progressive division of existing land and cultivation of *hai*, which requires less initial labor. It should be added, however, that given an adequate amount of capital or labor, an irrigated rice field is a much better investment: its yields are continuous and require much less weeding and maintenance than the *hai*. This is, of course, from the point of view of rice cultivation.

In terms of income, the most important item is wheat in Serbia and rice in Laos. The ways in which these crops are disposed of provides significant insights into the meaning of capital and the importance of investment in each society. In both cultures production for home consumption is the primary factor; although this is true, barter and sales for cash are also practiced. There are certain types of purchases that can be defined as essential in both cultures. Metal farm implements, cooking utensils, some items of clothing, salt, some sugar, supplementary purchases of vegetables, fruit, meat, and sometimes even grain are all felt to be required, but neither Serbia nor Laos is consumer-oriented. Even today they produce most of their own needs themselves. It should be stressed that this is becoming progressively less true, however. Once immediate personal needs have been satisfied, investment decisions are necessary. Prior to the Second World War, in Serbia much surplus income was invested. That is, a maximum amount of the wheat crop was marketed, and the family contented itself with corn bread. Wheat was used only on holidays or other special occasions. One of the major motivations for this practice was to amass enough capital to expand the household's land holdings. This was the first priority. Next, some capital might be put into livestock and relatively little would be invested in the house or its furnishings. Reflections of this pattern remain in Serbia today. One can enter a home with a single room, dirt floor, and only rough hewn furniture, and be impressed by the family's seeming poverty. Yet in consulting village records one finds that such a household might have been among the largest landholders in the village, adversely affected by the Yugoslav government's

land reform program. In recalling the past, adult villagers remember how their patriarchal *zadruga* forced them to work hard so that they could produce more wheat and other crops in order to earn money to buy land. The ownership of property as such was not the primary motivation. These hard-driving elders were not solely interested in amassing property for its own sake; rather, in Serb peasant culture land represented the basis for future security of the kin unit. Possession of an adequate amount of land enabled the family to stay together. It also represented prestige in the eyes of one's fellow villagers.

Linked to this system of land acquisition was a coexisting pattern of rural indebtedness. In fact, rural indebtedness was a major political problem of pre-war governments. Capital obtained by the sale of agricultural commodities was not always invested directly in land. Sometimes it was used to lend to other villagers at high rates or was invested in small businesses established by a relative in a nearby town. These activities increased an individual's status within the community, but a rich peasant was also supposed to treat his poorer fellow villagers with generosity and a sense of humanity, assisting them in a paternalistic way in various crises. Not only were the fruits of one's labor highly valued, but labor itself, work for its own sake, was and is very much prized. Even young boys going to work in the fields after school will proudly declare, "*Čovek mora da radi*" (A man must work). A lazy man has low status. A prospective wife is selected with an eye to her potential abilities as a fellow worker in the fields, and the most complimentary remark one can make is "*Ona je vredna*" (She is capable).

It is easy to draw an idyllic picture of the Lao peasant as a charming loafer in the midst of tropical plenty. This is definitely not true. If the rains do not come soon enough or in sufficient quantity, the Lao farmer may know real privation although seldom, if ever, actual starvation. Also, farming in a semi-tropical climate, the productivity of which is more mythical than real, can be very hard work. Plowing a paddy field under a hot sun, spending hours stooped over transplanting rice seedlings, hacking a clearing from the jungle, are all tasks that require hard labor. Work for its own sake is not valued in Lao society, nor is an extremely high value placed on the acquisition of land or capital. In fact, an individual who is overly aggressive in the pursuit of these things is looked upon with disfavor, if not open hostility, by his fellow villagers. This is not to say that the Lao are not interested in material goods or their accumulation, for they can see the advantages in possessing more land, livestock, tools, better house, personal clothing, and ornaments. Yet a stronger attitude in Laos is the credo "*Bo peng yang*" (It doesn't matter; it can't be helped).

It is possible to discuss the economy of a Serb village without reference to the local church or priest, although the peasants do contribute to their upkeep. Most

village churches are fairly modest and their maintenance is a minor expenditure. Under the present government the parish priest receives a small salary and sometimes also helps support his family with a household garden. Major religious ceremonies center on the home, not the church, and this marked de-emphasis on public observances appears to be a relic of the Turkish conquest.

Special feasts are also held several times a year at the village graveyard, perhaps the major communal ceremonial center. There is a decided element of competition, and often elaborate dishes are prepared. The peasants are very conscious of these graveyard feasts as an economic drain, but feel compelled to maintain them to preserve social status.

One cannot discuss rural Lao economy without detailed reference to the local pagoda. We have seen that in both societies the primary objective of the villagers is to produce enough from their land and animals to feed themselves and reinvest enough in the form of seed and livestock feed to continue production at the same level. Once this has been accomplished, it must be decided whether to work harder to increase production and how to dispose of any surplus above and beyond the family's immediate consumption needs. We have indicated that forced savings to buy land was given higher priority than purchase of consumer goods in traditional Serb culture. In Lao culture too, the purchase of consumer goods has secondary priority, but not to investment in land. Rather first priority is for investment or expenditure on religious matters. (The use of one of these terms over the other would seem to reflect differing value systems.)

Every morning the Lao villager makes a religious contribution, when the Buddhist monks make their rounds with begging bowls for their daily ration of rice. Unlike in Serbia, where one priest can minister to the religious needs of thousands of villagers, every Lao village, even if it has only a few hundred people, possesses at least one pagoda with several monks and/or novices. They are completely supported by the local population, not only in terms of food but also with clothing and many miscellaneous gifts. A contemporary Buddhist monk requires more than a yellow robe and a begging bowl. He uses cigarettes, betel-chewing equipment, writing materials, cooking utensils, mosquito net, vacuum flask, parasol, all small items in themselves but important in their total value since they represent cash purchases made by the villagers. Unlike Christian monks in some countries, Buddhist monks do not raise any of their food themselves, although they do engage in physical labor necessary for the upkeep of the pagoda compound. However, the purchase of cement and other materials is the responsibility of the villagers. Almost universally the local pagoda is by far the most substantial structure in the Lao village and expenses to maintain it are not resented by the population in the same way that the graveyard feasts are regarded as an onerous burden

by the Serb peasantry. When the Lao government recently began to undertake a program of rural development and villagers were asked to indicate what they felt to be their most important needs, they replied, "Metal roofing for the pagoda, cement for the pagoda, lumber for the pagoda." Schools, roads, or health facilities ran a poor second. Funds for a pagoda as opposed to a school do not appear hard to raise.

These attitudes are, of course, closely connected to the Lao system of religious beliefs, where it is a privilege to be able to contribute to the support of the pagoda and the monks. In this way an individual acquires merit and consequently assures himself a better rebirth. It should be stressed that there are also auxiliary expenditures such as seasonal religious festivals, ordination ceremonies sponsored by individual families, and elaborate funeral rites. Associated with Buddhism, but far antedating it, is the system of animistic beliefs in the *phi*, or nature spirits. To appease these resident spirits of the mountains, fields, villages and homes, animal sacrifices are often necessary. These may range from chickens to water buffalo, and their frequency is highly variable although their occurrence is widespread. It would be incorrect to state that the majority of the poultry, pigs, cows, and buffalo of the Lao serve only sacrificial purposes, since buffalo are important as draft animals, and the animals slaughtered for ritual purposes are eaten after the spirit "has had his fill." In some of the more prosperous lowland areas of Laos, cattle are important as a symbolic prestige item. No use is made of the milk, nor are they raised primarily for food.

Since much of the framework of our economic reasoning is derived from the culture patterns and experiences of Western cultivation, it does not seem objectively analytical to apply concepts such as non-economic or non-functional to the above activities in an obviously false attempt to segregate material and non-material aspects of culture. Instead it seems that we have here an allocation of resources based on deeply felt cultural values. Both Serb and Lao peasants have been increasingly affected by contact with urban centers, resulting in some interesting shifts in expenditure and investment patterns. When, for example, Yugoslavia became a People's Republic after World War II, a law was passed limiting peasant holdings to ten hectares. This appears to have greatly affected earlier values with regard to the accumulation of capital for investment in land. At least one effect of the law was an alteration of market patterns, and at least for a time after the war proportionately less wheat was marketed. A big factor here was that formerly the larger land holders had sold a relatively greater amount of their wheat crop than had the smaller farmers. Now it is obviously no longer considered desirable to purchase land in large amounts even if a peasant owns less than the maximum allowed by law. More wheat is consumed at home, and wheat

bread is no longer a rarity. There is also greater emphasis placed on items of personal consumption. Better houses are being built and more attention is paid to investment in livestock, representing an easily liquidated capital investment, which in many cases produces quicker returns than did land. All of these factors contribute to a rise in living standards.

Among the Lao, savings were traditionally represented in the form of gold and silver jewelry worn by the women and children—necklaces, anklets, bracelets, and chignon pins. Silver was felt to have a beneficial effect in that it tended to contain the *quan* or soul substance within the human body. In the last fifteen years, and particularly within the last five years, a whole range of consumer items has become more easily available to the Lao villager. Bicycles, manufactured cloth, kerosene lamps, flashlights, vacuum flasks, canned condensed milk, and suitcases for storing clothes, are only a few of the items that have begun to attract the rural Lao consumer.

Thus far in this discussion we have treated both the Serb and Lao peasants as if their incomes were derived exclusively from agriculture. This is not the case, there being important exceptions in even the most isolated villages. In dealing with both societies it is possible to define two categories of peasants: those engaged in agriculture and livestock raising exclusively, and those who are part-time agriculturists, the latter having other sources of income.

In rural Serbia non-agricultural sources of income are available inside the villages as well as outside. Within the village there is a need for many part-time specialists including, for example, masons, tailors, carpenters, well-diggers, blacksmiths, cartwrights, storekeepers, and petty officials. In central Serbia miners would also be included, since there exist a number of village lignite mines which have been operating for the past fifty years or so. It is possible for men to engage in these occupations and still participate in the running of their family farms. Usually, however, it is the peasants with smaller plots or large families with several able-bodied males who engage in such occupations.

The career of the peasant is sometimes viewed as a long unbroken stretch of time spent continuously tilling a plot of land. Serb peasants often work for various periods of time outside their villages. This may be forced, as in the case of military service, a very frequent occurrence in Serbia during the past half century. Significant numbers of peasants have also migrated to towns where they have worked as long as two or three decades before returning to their villages. Others work seasonally in distant foreign cities. Considerable savings may be accumulated in this way and were previously invested in land. Today they are used for purchase of livestock, farm and home improvement, as well as personal consumption. More recently, industry has begun to develop in the provincial

market towns and to attract peasant laborers from the surrounding countryside who commute to their jobs on foot or by cart or bus. As in the case of part-time village specialists, they too spend considerable time working their land. As a consequence of these activities it is not possible to judge the wealth of a peasant household by its land holdings alone. This has been particularly true since 1945.

In Laos some villagers go to work as coolies in the towns, usually for only brief periods of time. Of much greater significance as a part-time occupation is trade with the mountain people. Formerly contact between the Lao and the other ethnic groups of Laos was more difficult than it is today, due in part to language and transportation problems. This gave rise in northern Laos to *lam*, still in use to some extent today. The *lam* (usually translated as interpreter) is a person who acts as an intermediary between traders, and occasionally the government on one hand and the tribal peoples, the Khmu (indigenous tribal group) on the other. The *lam* himself is a Lao, usually inhabiting a village that has relatively easy access to the market town. According to some scholars the institution of the *lam* is closely correlated with the system of government and is viewed as a convenient way to establish control over semi-nomadic tribal groups.

Traditionally the Khmu came to him whenever they had some forest products to sell or wanted to buy salt or clothing. Then the *lam* would arrange the trade with a merchant, or sometimes the *lam* himself engaged in commerce directly with the tribal people. *Lam* is distinctly a reciprocal relationship. Head-taxes levied by the French were often paid by the *lam*, and in return the Khmu worked in the fields of their *lam* when necessary, supplying him with game and forest products. In those cases where the *lam* was also a merchant he enjoyed complete monopoly, with all the tribal trade funneled through his hands. The relationship between a *lam* and his clients was not formalized and depended largely on individual personalities. A man might act as the *lam* for a few tribal families or for an entire tribal village. He might be the *lam* to these people by virtue of inheriting the position, or, if the Khmu found him to be dishonest in his dealings, the latter could seek another. Today this institution is beginning to break down for a number of reasons, one of the chief factors being that the Khmu are beginning to market their own products directly.

It might seem from this description of the *lam* and the fact that it has started to disintegrate that trade with the tribal peoples involves only a small number of the Lao valley farmers. This is not so. Almost every Lao village of any size, located along the Mekong or one of its major tributaries, is a center of trade with tribal peoples. Most households participate in this trade, even if they do not act as *lam*. Barter trade is very important, the Lao supplying such goods as cotton or woven cloth produced in their own fields or homes, fish or fish products, pot-

sources and availability of credit and accumulation of indebtedness. These are not of great importance either for the Lao or Serb peasant today, but for quite different reasons. In the towns of Laos the elite and the Chinese and Vietnamese merchants definitely do engage in a considerable amount of lending and borrowing, usually at very high interest rates. Houses or other personal property are given as security, with the interest rate running as high as ten percent a month. The rate decreases as the sum involved increases. Borrowing may be for business ventures, the purchase of an automobile, or for the payment of gambling debts. There is a tendency to to confine borrowing within one's ethnic group and if possible to one's extended family unit. However, it not infrequently happens that the urban Lao extend credit to Chinese merchants.

In rural areas among non-Lao groups such as the Khmu debt slavery is still reported to exist. One of the important reasons for this is the strongly felt necessity to obtain animals, especially buffalo, for sacrifice. Illness, failure of crops, demands of social status may all force a family to go deeply into debt. Since cash or material goods to secure a loan are lacking, a child is sometimes given to the creditor. This in effect often amounts to bonded servitude. Such practices are outlawed by the Lao government, but they have by no means been eliminated.

By contrast, the rural Lao are largely free of such constraints. They do not possess the standard of living of their urban compatriots nor the Khmu's cultural imperative for providing sacrificial animals. There is, of course, economic differentiation within a village, and some absentee land ownership exists. It should be emphasized that holdings are limited, for even the various members of the royal family own no more than a few hundred hectares of irrigated rice land. In the area of the administrative capital of Vientiane there are very few holdings that even approach one hundred hectares. In the immediate area of the royal capital of Luang Prabang where this pattern is most accentuated, perhaps fifty percent of the villagers may rent part of the rice lands they cultivate. Often a villager may own one piece of land and rent another. A big advantage in renting is that the land is probably well irrigated, a prosperous owner being able to afford maintenance of the irrigation system. Rental for land use alone amounts to twenty to thirty-five percent of the crop. If the landlord supplies the buffalo for the plowing, provides the seed, and maintains the irrigation system, the tenant must turn over fifty percent of the crop as rent.

We have seen that Laos is underpopulated. Even in the river valleys and particularly in northern Laos, extra rice land is usually available to those who will take the trouble to clear the land. Of course, this is not always an easy task and takes considerable time and labor. A poorer Lao farmer with a small family cannot clear land by himself, and to invite others to help necessitates incurring the expense of a

feast. Thus even in areas where absentee landlords do not exist some Lao will hire themselves out to work as agricultural laborers for others. These are exceptions, however, the general pattern being for the Lao to work primarily on their own land.

As was mentioned, central Serbia was until comparatively recently a pioneer area. For most of the nineteenth century new land was available for the clearing. This relatively favorable relationship between the population and the available resources in Šumadija is reflected in the fact that comparatively few peasants emigrated abroad from this area in contrast to emigrants from other regions of Yugoslavia. But as the land began to fill up, particularly in the last half century, there has arisen a significant disparity in land holdings and a fragmentation of the arable land. The number of landless peasants, however, is very small. Share-cropping on arable land also exists, and as in Laos about fifty percent of the crop is turned over to the owner who provides the seed and often the implements as well. In Serbia this is rather limited in significance today because of government restriction on the amount of private land holdings. The extension of credit by the more prosperous peasants is also less prevalent today, since heavy taxation has tended to minimize class distinction in rural areas (yet even before the Second World War there were no clearly marked hereditary class differences in Serbia although status distinctions did exist). In any case there are fewer reasons for the Serb peasant to go into debt today. There is much less private accumulation of capital, and as we have seen, when money is saved it is more likely to be used for consumer goods rather than long term investment.

Private lending, on any scale, is likely to violate the law. Many needs of the peasants are now provided by the state: free medical care, education, subsidized housing. (Even individual market patterns are diminishing in favor of the state-run coöperatives.) The Yugoslav government's eventual aim, of course, is to eliminate individual farm ownership entirely. State farms have made their appearance in many villages in Serbia, and they are being generously subsidized and presented to the peasants as the system for the future.

Nor would it seem probable that economic patterns will continue unaltered in Laos. Across the borders in China and North Vietnam communes have been organized among Thai peoples ethnically similar to those in Laos. Within Laos itself the government is making efforts to build roads and modernize Lao agriculture as well as to expand educational and health facilities in rural development programs. All these activities are bound to bring about an increasing involvement in cash economy and government control. There are also some indications that the economic role of the pagoda may be declining. This is already evident in the towns where the status of the monk has lessened. Urban expenditures on religion appear to be significantly lower than in rural areas.

Possibly the most significant economic change in both Laos and Serbia is the decline in the status of farming as an occupation. No longer is the peasant "the salt of the earth"; many of the religious festivals sanctifying farming as a way of life are either no longer performed or fast disappearing in both cultures. At one time the King of Laos plowed the first furrow in a symbolic start of rice planting, while in Serbia the parish priest led a procession around the fields and the crops were blessed. Today both of these customs belong in the realm of culture history. Few village children who attend school want to follow the occupations of their parents. Lao and Serbian school children writing essays on their future universally agree on one point—they don't want to become farmers or the wives of farmers. Rural development programs in both countries implicitly and sometimes explicitly define the peasant farmer and village life in general as backward and hence less desirable. Rural economies are always considered underdeveloped and often the peasants agree with some if not all of these evaluations. These attitudes are often consciously developed by officials working in rural areas.

This decline in the prestige of farming as a way of life and increase in migration to towns, evident not only in Serbia but also in Laos, indicates that the degree of autonomy of peasant subcultures may be lessening. Does this mean that the peasant has less flexibility in the allocation of his economic resources? Are the crucial variables in the economic value system now progressively becoming controlled by forces outside the village? Do affirmative answers indicate that centralized planning systems follow as an inevitable consequence of economic change in predominantly peasant societies? Recent Yugoslav efforts at economic decentralization are very interesting in this regard. The present politico-military struggle in Laos clearly shows the attempts of both sides to involve the peasant in extra-village activities and consequently lessen his self-sufficiency. Regardless of the outcome the greater participation of the Lao peasant in a cash economy (however managed) seems assured. The more limited the peasant's economic contacts the greater his "backwardness" in government terms.

It is, of course, easy to get caught up in a vision of world-wide change and parallel cultural evolution by minimizing the sources of stability in peasant economies. Basic patterns of land ownership remain unchanged although they have been considerably modified in Serbia. Production for household consumption remains primary; although Lao villagers raise less cotton for weaving, many still keep silkworms. While manufactured clothing is presently more plentiful in Serbia, sheep continue to be raised by individual households for their wool. The hand poled pirogue and oxcart remain primary forms of transportation despite outboard motors, trucks, and buses. In government services and effective administration the Yugoslav government has established a pattern that Laos has already

begun by embarking on village development programs. But these changes have not led to the elimination of traditional curing or agricultural practices although the latter, since they tend to be negatively correlated with economic development, are less important in Serbia. Traditional handicrafts survive to a much greater extent in Serbia than in Laos although this is a function of the greater availability of consumer goods in Laos (among the valley Lao in those areas not too distant from the towns). But this is an artificial development due to foreign economic aid. Rural and urban differences in standard and style of living remain although, of course, more pronounced in Laos. Yet these sources of stability do not lessen our need to understand and hopefully predict events of parallel culture change. Political scientists and economists have suggested a series of developmental models for national states and economies on a world-wide basis. Can this similarly be done with peasant economies?

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