

A close-up photograph of a pair of hands, likely belonging to a farmer, holding a large quantity of golden-brown rice grains. The grains are piled high in the palms and are the central focus of the image. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a wooden surface or a field.

Rotational Farming

Rice Diversity: Center of
Indigenous Life and Culture

A photo documentary about the way of life of upland rice farmers in the indigenous Pga K'nyau communities of Mae Lid Pa Kae and Mae Salee, and the indigenous Lua community of La-Oob, Mae Hong Son Province, Northern Thailand.

Title of the book: Rotational Farming, Rice Diversity: Center of Indigenous Life and Culture

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Rotational Farming

Rice Diversity: Center of
Indigenous Life and Culture



Rotational farming is a source of food, the center of life...



and evidence of the intimate relationship between
“humans” and “nature”



Introduction

This photo book of highland rice diversity presents worldviews, perspectives, principles, key ideas, and philosophies of the Pga K'nyau and Lua people, in particular related to the importance of rice for nourishing both people's lives and spirituality.

Bu pax cax nai (magic rice) feeds people, and particularly the poor, e.g. widows and orphans, as stated in the introduction of the traditional "Hta" poem "Nauj wai meij bu pax cax nai Kwaj Kai muf mai dauv hpof qai", which can be translated as "you are like magic rice that feeds widows and orphans" (In Pga K'nyau culture, widows and orphans are symbols of vulnerable people) In the understanding of the Pga K'nyau, rice is nurturing people at all levels, especially the poor, powerless and most vulnerable in society.

Also, the Lua people have many ideas, philosophies, and teachings in the form of proverbs and aphorisms about rice, for example, "having rice is like having God with us. Rice is great; rice is like a mother who raises and nurses us so that we can survive. Rice is the medicine of life." Moreover, the Lua also believe that "having rice means we can survive and eat whenever we want. The Lua's key principles, philosophy and, worldviews related to rice reflect the high value given to rice; rice is compared to a mother raising her children, a protective guardian, as well as a curing medicine. Moreover, also benefits of rice for people are mentioned; for the individual, the family, and the community, to the city and even the whole world, rice is of great value; so rice has made great contributions to the people and the planet. At the end, the proverb emphasizes that people who are eating rice from the same rice plant are not different from each other, implying that they should be united in mind and spirit.

Rice is the most common crop consumed by the world's population, and in particular in Asia, as a staple food that provides nutrients and energy. According to data from the Rice Science Center, Kasetsart University (2010) after corn, rice is the second most cultivated cereal worldwide. Thailand has large varieties of rice. Overall, there are five types of rice, according to the ecosystem in which they are grown: rainfed rice, irrigated rice (wet rice), deep water rice, floating rice and land rice. However, indigenous rice varieties are disappearing and have partly been lost and due to commercial businesses. During the Green Revolution, for example, the introduction of new rice varieties gave entry to

high-yielding rice crops, replacing indigenous rice seeds and leading to their elimination.

In addition, climate change and land insecurity due to laws and policies within and outside the country have further accelerated the extinction of indigenous seeds. It is estimated that only twenty percent of the traditional species remain for Indigenous Peoples. Rice is not only a source of food, but also forms an important part of culture and beliefs. Therefore, it is of vital importance that traditional indigenous seeds are recorded, preserved and revived. As native seeds are adaptable to climate and able to survive, they play a crucial role for present and future food security and for the identity of Indigenous Peoples.

Research findings show a large variety and number of different plants in the rotational (Rai Mun Wian) field. In 2003, Prof. Dr. Anan Ganjanapan and his team discovered that there are 207 plant species in the rotational farm (Ganjanapan, 2013). However, this indigenous food production system is steadily diminishing, contributing to the loss of traditional upland rice varieties.

This book is based on a collaborative study of the Pga K'nyau Association for Sustainable Development (PASD) and the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP). It examines specific rice varieties that still prevail in the rotational fields today, and establishes links between the culture, value of rice and the Indigenous Peoples in the Pga K'nyau communities Mae Lid Pa Kae and Mae Salee village, Mae Ho Subdistrict, Mae Sariang District, Mae Hong Son Province, and a Lua community in La-Oob Village, Huay Hom Subdistrict, Mae La Noi District, Mae Hong Son Province. The study compares rice varieties existing in two indigenous groups which are still practicing rotational farming, with the aim of creating awareness, highlighting the economic, social and cultural value of rice, and of contributing to the future preservation of local rice varieties.

The Pga K'nyau Association for Sustainable Development (PASD) and the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) would like to thank the knowledgeable people and villagers in these communities for sacrificing their time and for passing on their knowledge of rice varieties on to our study team, even during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, we would like to thank them from our hearts.

Organizing Team of PASD and AIPP

Message from the photographer

Each year during the rice planting season, men and women, the youth, elderly people or even monks - no matter who, and from where - everyone heads back to their village and jointly works together to produce upland rice through rotational farming (in Thai: Rai Mun Wian).

For the Lua and Pga K'nyau people, rice is the core and essence of life, and the rotational field is the center of the universe. As participatory observers in the community, we have witnessed, understood, and gained knowledge on their ideas and methods, and we have built trusted relationships with these people, who live in harmony with Nature.

What we have seen and experienced makes us believe that one day, the wisdom that has been passed on for generations, will save this world in times of crises... this is what we believe.

Rotational farming (Rai Mun Wian)...is not swidden pioneering (Rai Luean Loi), This is a sentence that we need to bring up in conversation whenever someone is talking about environmental issues, such as deforestation, forest degradation, forest fires, and is making false accusations that Indigenous Peoples are the drivers of the forests destruction and deforestation in Thailand. Communicating to create a deeper understanding is better than any other strategy...

For us visual storytellers, our photographs are eyewitnesses, and they are part of our hope.

...It is the images through which we want to communicate ...it is the images that we want people to see ...the images that invite people to listen ... and the images that we want people to understand.

These images, starting from the small seeds of upland rice, tell the story of the guardians of the environment and their deep spiritual and cultural connection to Nature.

Pariwat Wichianchot

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Rice and rotational farming

Rice grown in rotational farms forms the basis of life for both the Pga K'nyau and Lua people. As long as the villagers continue to cultivate highland rice, they are able to ensure community food security based on natural resources. In addition, the continuing practice of rotational farming indicates that the foundation of life, culture, traditions, and wisdom which has been handed down from generation to generation is not lost, but continues to exist.



*"Sey Jae A Kee Ler Hor Kho Pga K'Nyau
Jae A Kee Ler May"*

"Trees take root in the soil, people take root in the rice."

This Pga K'nyau saying depicts the relationship between humans and rice,
and a lifestyle in harmony with nature.

The relationship between humans and rice



Family gathering of the Pga K'nyau,

Mae Salee Village, Mae Sariang District, Mae Hong Son Province.



Family gathering of the Lua,

La-Oob Village, Huay Hom Subdistrict, Mae La Noi District, Mae Hong Son Province.

Upland rice... is used in almost every ritual,
showing the importance
of rice for the Pga K'nyau and Lua peoples.





The process of upland rice farming mirrors the close relationship between the people in the village.

One rice plant can feed a person. One rice plant can feed a family. And one rice plant can feed the whole world.

A Lua proverb that discloses the relationship between humans and rice, and a life in harmony with Nature.

Lua

The Lua people, also known as Lawa, are indigenous to Northern Thailand.

The history of the Lua community

Ban La Oob, Huay Hom Subdistrict, Mae La Noi District,
Mae Hong Son Province.

The Lua had settled in northern Thailand for more than 900 years. Traces have been found of abandoned communities of Lua people along the Thai-Burma border, stretching from the north to the west of the country.

The original Lua community lived in Chiang Mai which was a prosperous city. The city area was fenced with a moat and surrounded by thorny bamboo, so that outsiders could not get in easily. Later, people from other places, led by “Grandfather Jade”, wanted to invade the city. Since they could not enter, they came up with a plan, they scattered money around the bamboo clumps. Some of the Lua people wanted to collect the money so they decided to cut down the thorny bamboo. In this way, Grandfather Jade was able to gain access and to successfully seize the city of the Lua people.

Defeated and persecuted, the Lua could no longer stay in the city. They had to flee and migrate further. Khun Luang Wilangka¹ commanded the Lua people to move up to a higher place, making it easy to spot enemies. The Lua people migrated to what is today Mae Chaem and Hod District in Chiang Mai Province. From there, they divided into different villages, e.g., Bo Salee, Kong Loi village, which is today’s Mae Hong Son Province. From Kong Loi, one branch of the Lua people migrated to the left bank of the Yuam River, and then, from the left bank of the Yuam River, split up to stay at Pa Pae; then they moved further to different places in Huay Hom Subdistrict, Mae La Noi District “Motu Yuang”, from there to “Tukolachak”, and later to “Tugolongsa”, and including “Mozambieng” or today, La-Oob village.

¹The 13th King of the Lua of Raming Nakhon (Currently Chiang Mai). The last Lua Kingdom lasted until 657 AD; source <https://www.chiangmainews.co.th/page/archives/742425>





The history of the Lua community

La-Oob village, Huay Hom Sub-District,
Mae La Noi District, Mae Hong Son Province

La-Oob village, an indigenous Lua community, is called “Yong Rua Oak” in the local language. Both terms, Yong Rua Oak and La-Oob, refer to an important community utensil of the Lua, used by each household to store valuable items.

The Indigenous Peoples’ livelihoods in the community depends on natural capital and resources, and are based on principles of self-sufficiency. Traditional beliefs, the language, and customary governance have been preserved through a succession of natural chiefs, called Chao Ngo.

La-Oob village is located around **1,100** meters above sea level. The area is steep and surrounded by hill evergreen forests, located in Pa Mae Yuam Fang Sai (left bank of the Mae Yuam) National Forest Reserve, around **25** kilometers far from Mae La Noi District. A paved road makes the village accessible in every season.

The village population is comprised of **205** households, or a population of **1,093** people, **557** males and **536** females (data from the Huay Hom Sub-district Health Promoting Hospital, **2015**).







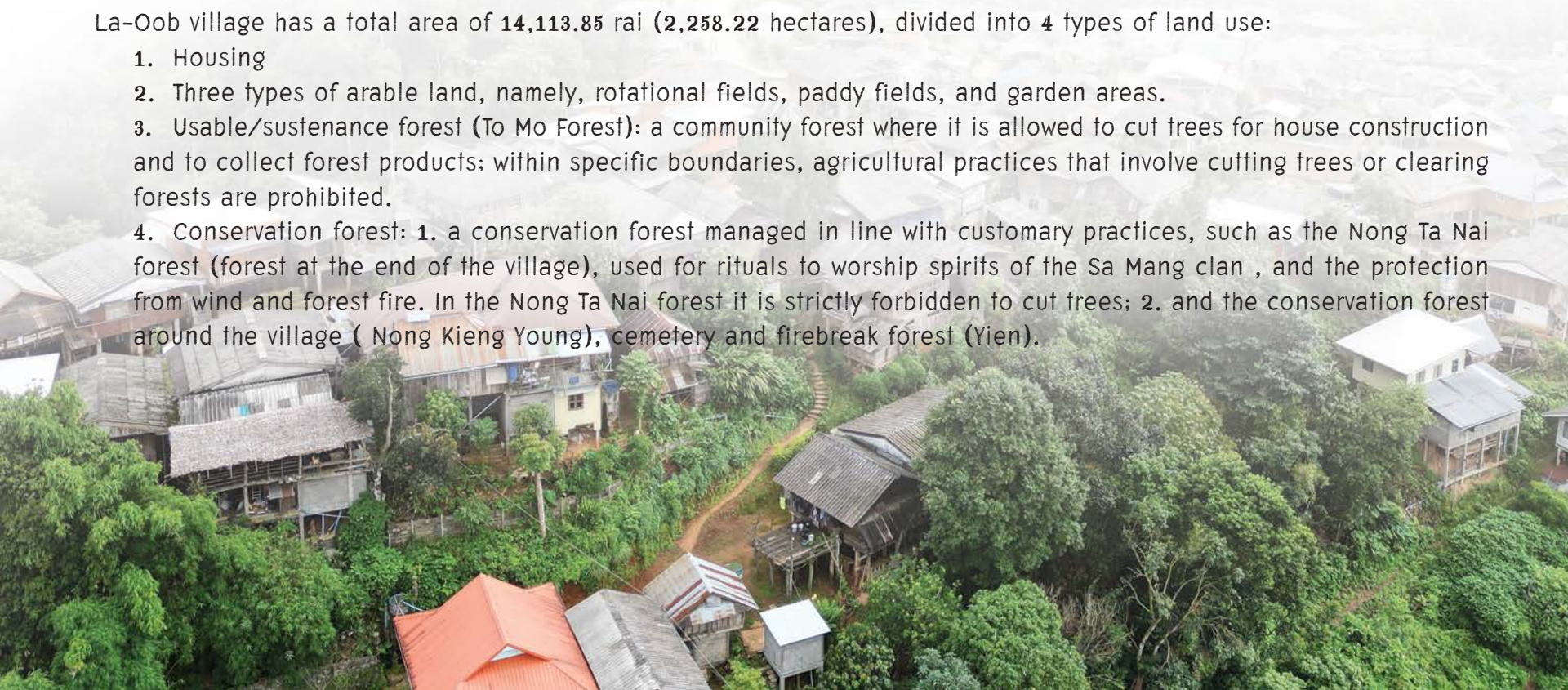
Natural Resources Management

In the past, resources were managed in line with customary traditions based on local wisdom, passed on and practiced by generations. At the same time, the community governance was led by different lineages, respected by the community members. In this way, the community has been able to exist until today and to uphold their management of soil, water, and forest resources based on customary practices and beliefs, which is important for the sustainable use of resources.

Nowadays, the management of the rotational field in line with customary traditions and culture requires more than just the community or ethnic group. Therefore, more network-oriented mechanisms and rules are now in place, with community forest committees and community leaders deciding and determining possession, utilization, conservation and creation of forests, and income generation for the community. In line with traditional beliefs and customary traditions, forest is categorized, for example, into a sacred area, firebreaks, sustenance forest, and community forest. Fines for damages are specified in the community rules and regulations.

La-Oob village has a total area of **14,113.85 rai (2,258.22 hectares)**, divided into **4** types of land use:

1. Housing
2. Three types of arable land, namely, rotational fields, paddy fields, and garden areas.
3. Usable/sustenance forest (To Mo Forest): a community forest where it is allowed to cut trees for house construction and to collect forest products; within specific boundaries, agricultural practices that involve cutting trees or clearing forests are prohibited.
4. Conservation forest: **1.** a conservation forest managed in line with customary practices, such as the Nong Ta Nai forest (forest at the end of the village), used for rituals to worship spirits of the Sa Mang clan , and the protection from wind and forest fire. In the Nong Ta Nai forest it is strictly forbidden to cut trees; **2.** and the conservation forest around the village (Nong Kieng Young), cemetery and firebreak forest (Yien).



An aerial photograph of a mountainous region. The foreground is dominated by a dense, lush green forest. In the middle ground, a hillside is divided into several distinct sections: a large area of vibrant green grass, a section of dark brown, tilled soil, and a section of lighter brown soil. A dirt road or path runs across these sections. In the background, more rolling hills are visible, some with patches of brown soil and others covered in green vegetation. Mist or low clouds are scattered throughout the landscape, particularly in the valleys and around the peaks of the hills. The overall scene depicts a rural, agricultural landscape with a mix of natural forest and cultivated land.

Rotational farming

An aerial photograph of a lush, green valley. The foreground shows terraced rice fields with distinct rows. A dense forest of green trees covers the middle ground. In the background, rolling hills and mountains are visible, some with mist or clouds. The text "of the Lua" is overlaid in the center in a white, hand-drawn font.

of the Lua



Rotational
farming area

Large trees
for birds to rest

The Yien
(firebreak)
forest

Conservation
forest

Rice production system of the Lua people

Like other indigenous groups, such as the Karen, the Htin or the Khmu, the indigenous Lua people grow upland rice in a rotational farming system. At La-Oob village, the rotational farming system has been passed down from the ancestors to the present; and it is closely related to beliefs and rituals. In particular farmers who maintain traditional beliefs are still strictly practicing customary traditions, as they believe in the close relationship between humans, humans and Nature, and the universe. The rotational farming process comprises the following steps: a community meeting (Poak Ko Yoang), clearing the fields (Kan Mok Ma), drying scraps of wood (Dong Rua Doom), making a fire break (Pai), burning the field (Tok), removal of wood scraps (Bram), building a fence, building a hut in the rotational field, planting upland rice (Moh), checking the germination of grain, cutting grass in the field (Ram), harvesting (Mug), threshing (Poo Ngor).





The Lua Rotational Farming. In 2022, this Lua family of La-Oob village resumed practicing rotational farming for the first time in decades in order to revive this traditional practice in the community because of the declining number of households practicing rotational farming.



For the first time in many years, this family of Lua knowledge holders gathered to share their knowledge and to help each other manage the rotational field.



Lua housewife is cutting grass (Ram) in the rotational field.



While cutting grass, a variety of vegetables can be found in the rotational field that are ready to harvest.



A small Ta-Leaw made of wood to receive good things, the large part woven in another pattern is preventing bad things from entering the rotational field. In the Northern Thai language, Ta-Leaw means “eagle’s eyes”. Similar to an amulet, it is a symbol of protection that marks the boundaries of an area that is guarded from evil forces.



Knowledge holders in the village attach the Bamboo (Ta Leaw), a symbol of God Indra's blessings for prosperity in the field.

According to Hindu mythology, Indra is the god of thunder, lightning and rain.



The condition of the area after burning (Tok): the rai (field) is ready for planting.

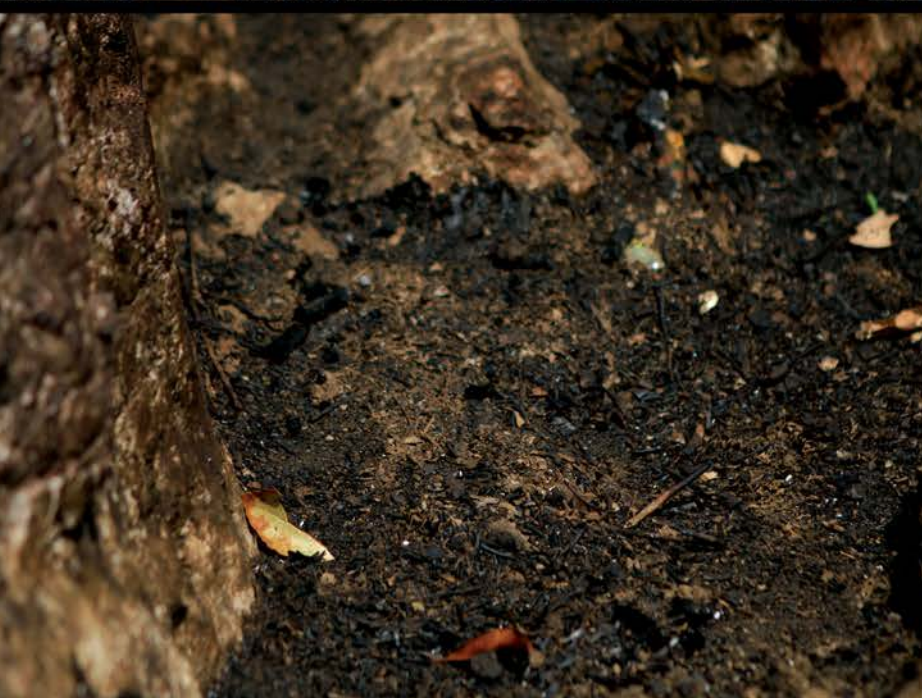


The Lua people use trees as a bridge from the rotational field to the fire break forest (Yien) for small animals to escape during the burning of the field.

Natural indicators in the Lua's rotational field



The soil quality in the rotational field of the Lua is characterized by an abundance of minerals and organic matter.



The condition of the ground after burning/trees starting to sprout, indicating the readiness of the soil.



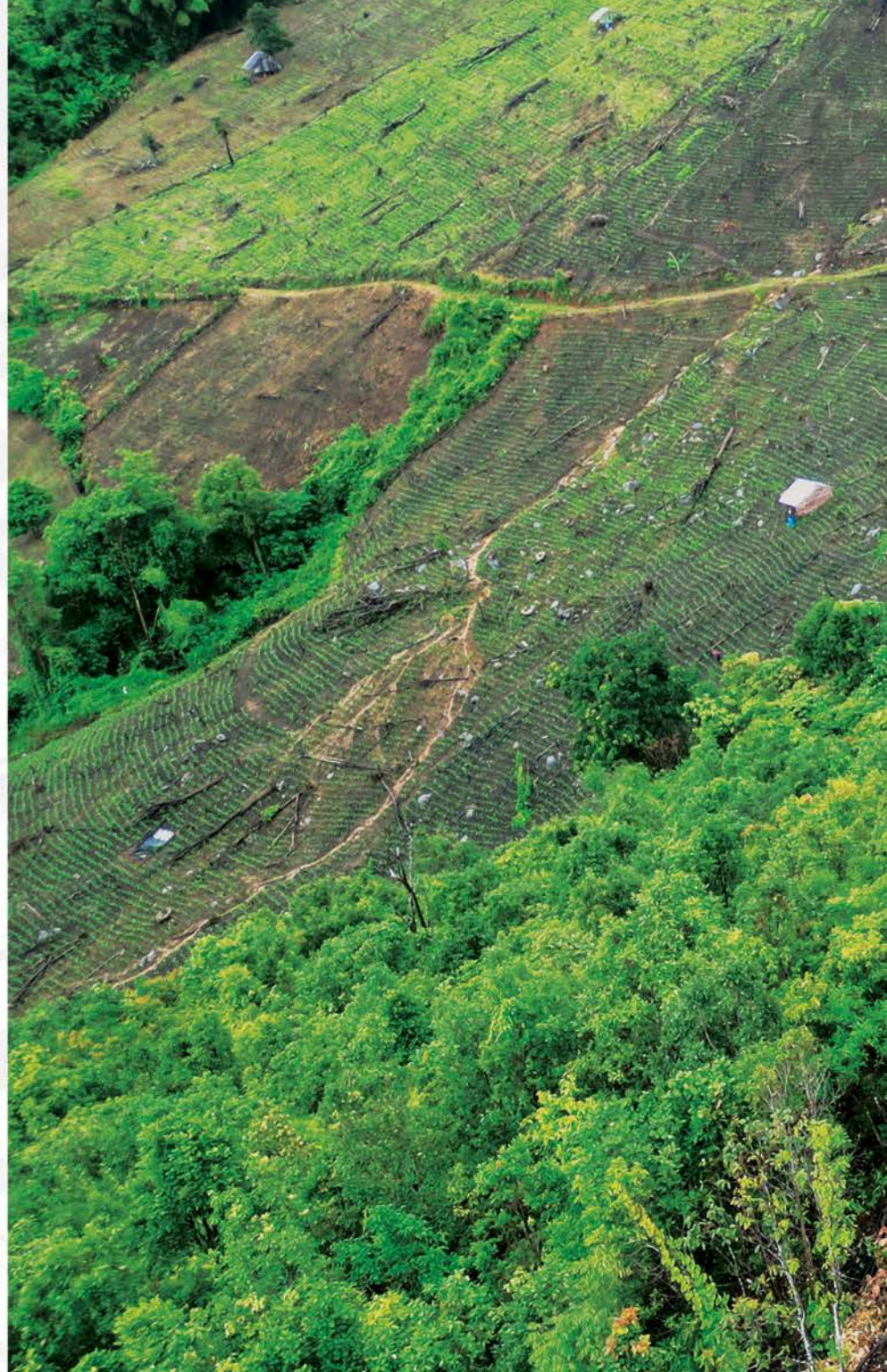
La-Oob village is located in a mountainous area. Knowledge holders in the community pass on their knowledge on the use of minerals after burning the rotational farming from one generation to the next.

Yien

The Yien can be compared to the umbilical cord to life: it is a firebreak forest that connects the rotational farming field to other areas. At the same time, it is a refuge and migratory area for small and large animals during the burning of the fields.

The Lua people teach and pass on to their descendants that the Yien is like a rope that cannot be cut off. If there is no Yien in a rotational farm, the plot owner is guilty,

...similar to killing someone. The Yien is an important area that demonstrates the Lua's connection to and respect for Nature.







The Yien, a firebreak forest that serves as a migratory and refuge area for animals of all sizes.



The Ta Leaw, attached in front of the Yien area, prevents bad things from entering the rotational field.

Concepts of rice and teachings from the ancestors



People with money, we do not call rich.
Having rice and cotton to make clothes
...this is considered being rich.

Teachings of the Lua

“Ngor Term Long Choung Dok Ler Dok Ngor
Mhog Mai Plau Mhug Kuey Kor”

“Rice (Dtay-eum variety) with black stalks,
beautiful rice grains (Mok variety) in December”.

“Kom Kua Fud Fad Kai Rur Mae Kom Kua
Moo Mae Kai Aor Ho Roung”

“If the wind blows through, if there is a
whirlwind or a cold wind, then the rice will
produce grains.”

“Ngor Pid Rue Yoom Chum Hoy La Ngor Pid
Ang Wa Mai La Rong”

“Sticky rice at Mae Sariang is soft to the leaves.
Sticky rice from Inwa is soft and beautiful”.

“Kom Kua Yoong Long Nong Lang Ko”

“Rice planted under a big tree does not produce yield”.

“Kom Kua Hun Kook Ka Wook Nerm Kom
Kua Kook Lai Kai Pri Kee”

“There are weeds that cause the rice crops to
fail. An area with good soil is a good location”.

Examples of rice-related stories in Lua poems



“A stalk of rice can feed a person and a house.
A stalk of rice can feed a house and a city.
A stalk of rice can feed a city or the whole world, and
in the same rice plant, the rice is not different”.

Teachings of the Lua



Rice in the Lua's rotational field



Ngor Rua Sey (rice with small seeds), soft texture, delicious taste, nowadays rarely cultivated.



Ngor Pid Kuam (productive sticky rice), hard grains, delicious taste, popularly planted.



Ngor Pid Long Nong (sticky rice with black seeds), rather hard and less popular.



Ngor Pid Long Lor (sticky side with black husk), hard texture, delicious taste, less popular.

Pga K'nyau

(The indigenous Karen live on both sides of the Thailand-Burma border.
In Thailand, they can be divided into two major subgroups, the Karen Sgaw and the Karen Pwo.
The Karen Sgaw refer to themselves as Pga K'nau, meaning 'human being')



Rotational farming and fallow areas



Pga K'nyau people and rotational farming

The history of the Pga K'nyau Community

Mae Ho Subdistrict, Mae Sariang District,
Mae Hong Son Province

Study Area: Upland rice from rotational farming, located at Moo 1, Mae Ho Subdistrict, Mae Sariang District, Mae Hong Son Province, consisting of the following 5 villages:

1. Seif Htof Hkluj Dei village (Mae Salee)
2. Bauv Der village (Mae Lid Pa Kae)
3. Maif Liv Hpo Hki village (Mae Lid Noi)
4. Hsaut'Kux Klo village (Bpa Chaang)
5. P'nwaij Klo village (Kha-nun)

Due to wide coverage of the area, research was undertaken in two main communities:

1. Mae Lid Pa Kae Village, located in the rain forest (Ger-Ner-Meu), comprises 68 households, with a total population of 288 people, 163 men and 125 women.
2. Mae Salee Village, located in the mixed forest (Gor Bay), has 46 households, with a total population of 238 people, 120 men and 118 women.

It can be concluded that the highland rice varieties which people plant both in rainforest and mixed forest, and which are grown in different rotational fields, vary from each other, i.e., germinate differently and produce distinct yields.









The history of the Pga K'nyau Community

Mae Ho Subdistrict, Mae Sariang District,
Mae Hong Son Province

The Pga K'nyau community has settled in the area for more than **200** years. This community was once called Dai Lau Hpav Dof, referring to a large community with hundreds of houses (narrated by the elders of the Sey Tho Klue Day/Mae Salee village).

Later, due to an epidemic “dtaa chaa do” (smallpox) many people died; the remaining escaped to survive. The community dispersed, people moved away and set up new communities in the Mae Lid River Basin, such as Sey Tho Klue Day Village (Mae Salee) and Bo De Village (Mae Lid Pa Kae), which were officially established as a village, i.e. as Moo 1, Mae Ho Subdistrict, Mae Sariang District, Mae Hong Son Province.

Other groups of people established a new community in distant areas, such as Mueang Ngam Village and Huay Bong Village, in Fang District, Chiang Mai Province. Again another part set up a community at Wawee village, Mae Suai District, Chiang Rai Province.





Rotational farming of the Pga K'nyau



Rotational farming in Mae Salee Village, Mae Sariang District, Mae Hong Son Province



Knowledge holders from Mae Salee and Mae Lid Pa Kae communities shared information on the background and history of rotational farming in the Mae Lid River Basin. In the past, the villagers in the basin only practiced rotational farming. This livelihood system is intimately connected to the Pga K'nyau people, and exists in harmony with humankind since time immemorial. About 100 years later, adults learned to develop paddy rice fields, but were not yet skilled at it, and only cultivated small areas. Also, new pioneering areas, including wet rice farming, required animal labor, i.e. buffaloes to plow the field, so the rice yield was small.

After about 50 years, the wet rice fields were expanded. At present, plowing machines and tractors are used, as well as excavators to adjust the area for irrigation. The wet rice fields have grown exponentially, until the villagers were able to produce more rice and other impressive natural resources. Since the arable land produced enough to eat – even as much as before dividing the area, and enough to share with children, brothers and sisters –, some people began to reduce their rotational farming area, and unfortunately, some gave up the practice entirely.



Rice seeds that are sown in the Pga K'nyau rotational field.



The villagers bring seeds from each house to the owner of the rotational farming field, to mix them with paddy, beans, seeds of sesame, lettuce, eggplant and other crops.



Collaboration and mutual support in the Pga K'nyau village: people bring food and help each other planting rice in plots of friends and neighbors.



Rice that is sown/dropped in holes in the rotational field.



Pga K'nyau woman are cutting grass, using a small hoe (Kla) to take care of the rice in the field.



The "Wee Bue" (blowing the rice) after threshing; "Ka Ra Ba" (blow) blows off the rice leaves.

Seeds and women



Women are responsible for sorting and collecting seeds in the rotational fields.



Women jointly plant rice in the rotational field, using Kue (baskets) to keep the rice seeds.

Natural indicators in the Pga K'nyau field



A tree stump will not die but produce new leaves, and eventually grow into a big tree.



Soil fertility in the rotational farming plot.

Beliefs, rituals, and rice in the rotational field



“Taji’Mauv” is a ceremony to worship, ask for blessings and to thank the mother of rice for letting the rice in the rotational field and other produce grow well, feeding the Pga K’nyau people.

TAJT'MAUV

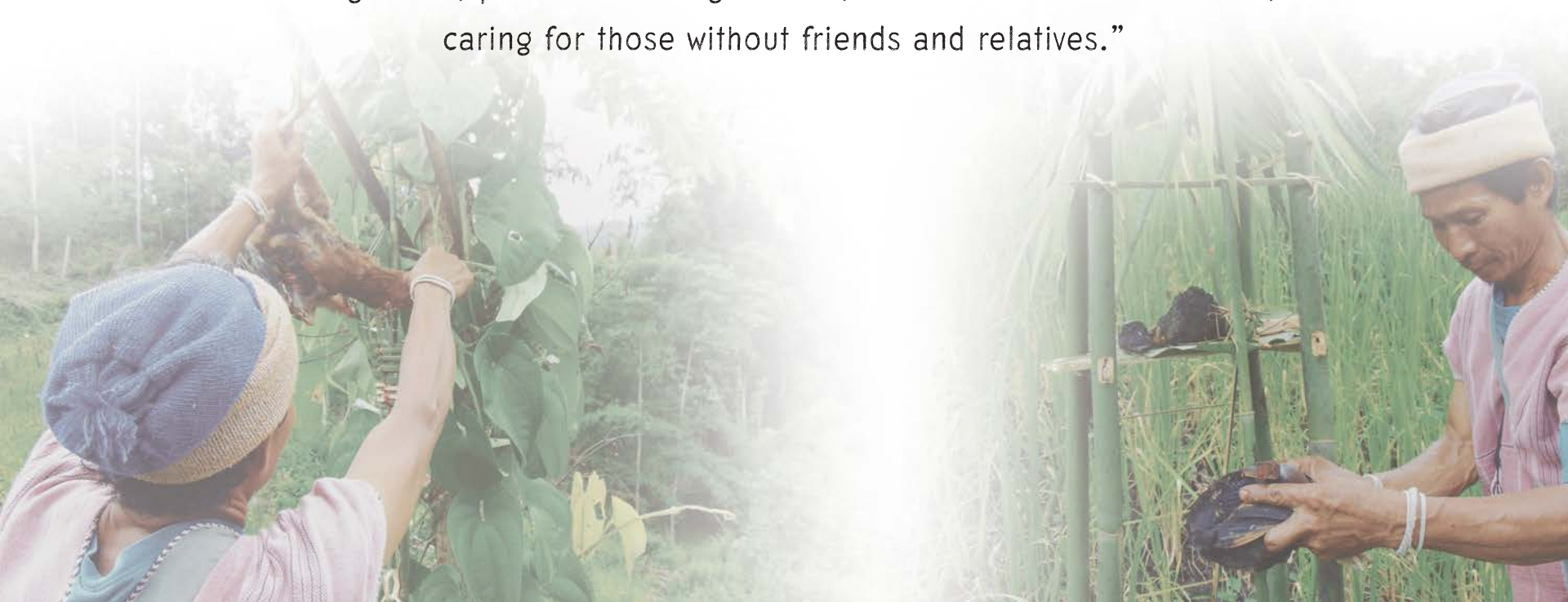
This is an important ritual in the rotational rice farming. Taj T' Mauv is a ceremony to worship, ask for blessings and thank Mae Khao (Goddess of rice) in the ritual. A female chicken will be used, symbolizing a woman/the mother of rice (Bu moj pgaj—the Goddess of Rice, or Goddess of Grain), which yields plentiful rice, enough for the owner's consumption, for visiting guests, and to share with widows, orphans, and people who have been abandoned, as mentioned in the Tha (poem):

“Nauj wai meij bu pax cax nai, Kwaj kai muf mai dauv hpof qai”

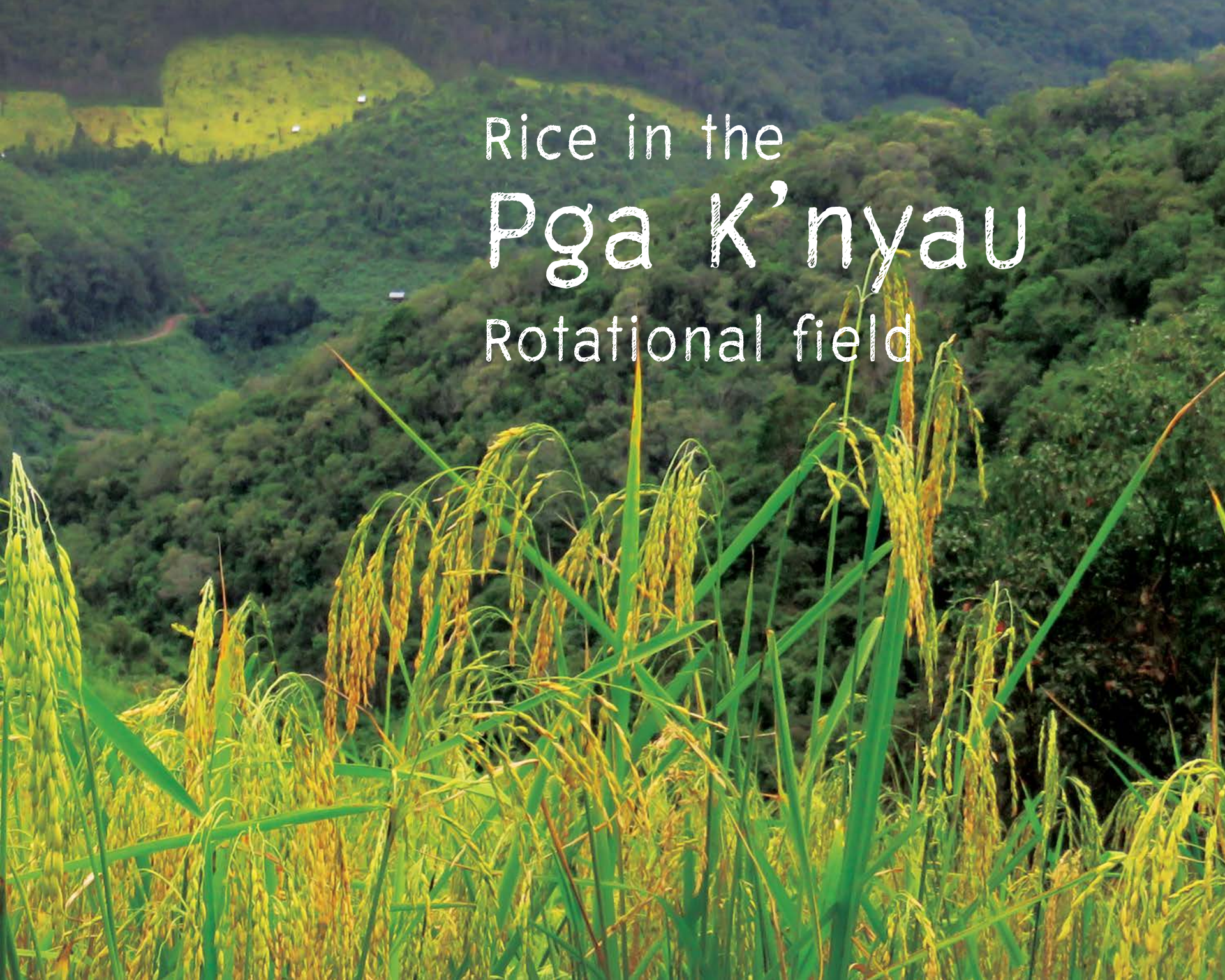
”Magic rice, meaning she (Mae Khao, the Goddess of the rice) has taken care of and fed both widows and orphans.”

“Bu pax cax nai av sav sei, kwaj keiz Pga lauz hsgeif lauz dei”

“Magic rice, plentiful with a generous, tolerant and unselfish heart, caring for those without friends and relatives.”





A photograph of a rice field in a valley. The foreground is filled with tall, green rice stalks with yellowish panicles. The background shows a lush green valley with a winding road and forested hills under a bright sky.

Rice in the
Pga K'nyau
Rotational field



Rice in the Pga K'nyau rotational field "Bue Ki Soo" (black striped rice)



Rice in Pga K'nyau rotational field "Bue Ki Wa" (white striped rice)



Rice in Pga K'nyau rotational field "Bue Kha" (traditional rice variety; characteristics: large long grains)



Rice in Pga K'nyau rotational field "Bue Kha Kaw" (large long-grain; the shell is red but the rice is white)



Rice in Pga K'nyau rotational field " Bue Jaw Pa" ("king rice" rarely yields, but tastes great)



Rice in Pga K'nyau rotational field "Bue Sor Kee" (rice that produces many grains)



Rice in the rotational field of the Pga K'nyau "Bue Choe" (harvest within 3 months).



Rice in the rotational field of the Pga K'nyau "Bue Soo" (black rice shell, red milled rice red)



Rice in the rotational field of the Pga K'nyau "Bue Mue Soo Kee" (rice grains: black, very hard rice, bland taste, does not stick to the tray)



Rice in the rotational field of the Pga K'nyau "Bue Soo Bo" (black rice stem)



Rice in the rotational field of the Pga K'nyau "Bue Ner Moo" (fragrant Rice)



Rice in the rotational field of the Pga K'nyau "Bue Po Lo" (round grains, can be grown both in rainforest and mixed forest)



Rice in the rotational field of the Pga K'nyau "Bue Mue Lor Pay" (rice that bends down in the wind)



Rice in the rotational field of Pga K'nyau "Bue Lam Pang"



Rice in the rotational field of the Pga K'nyau "Pi Ei Ki Wa" (white striped glutinous rice)



Rice in the rotational field of the Pga K'nyau "Pi Ei Klo Klaw"



Rice in the rotational field of the Pga K'nyau "Pi Ei Soo" (black sticky rice)



Rice in the rotational field of the Pga K'nyau "Pi Ei Baw" (yellow sticky rice)

Elderly people sing a “Hta” poem and pray

to ask blessings from the holiest things to get enough rice.

“Siv k’caj siv muj siv bauv, meiz k’caj meiz muj meiz
bauv, P’mei au siv p’deif lauz, p’mei auf meiz p’raif
lauz, Raif lauz baf le av hkof dau, bauv htauf buhpau av
plaj htau”.

“Goddess of Liquor , the greatest supreme; Goddess of Rice,
the greatest supreme,
When we drink wine, we pour it for you first. When we are going
to eat rice, we will give it to you first.
We serve you rice and rice whisky; please help us fill a lot of
rice in our barn”.

“Hti k’caj av cumeif cei, kauj k’caj av cumeif cei,
P’mei au siv p’raif keiz, p’mei auf meiz p’raif keiz,
Raif lauz baf av pluz naz ceiz, soonya p’maz seif
auf sei”.

”God of Water, God of Earth, silver finger nails,
God of Water, God of Earth, silver finger nails,
Before we drink liquor, we pour it for you. Before we eat, we
will scoop rice for you.
We serve rice and rice whisky to you (we pour, we scoop on
your lips). Please let us make a sufficient living”.

³Goddess of alcohol; whisky, made from rice,
is considered as holy.



Elderly people sing a “Hta” poem and pray

to ask blessings from the holiest things to get enough rice.

“Hti k’caj hai lauz hai lauz, kauj k’caj hai lauz hai lauz, Hai lauz le bumuj hkof dau, hai lauz le buhpau hkof dau, Muj mei baf bu mei saf gauz, bu t’hpau pi-i t’hpau”.

“God of Water, God of Earth, please come, God of Water, God of Earth, please come. Please come down to stay above the rice; please come down to stay over the granary. When it comes to the harvest season, the rice is golden ...

...please give us a barn full of paddy rice...and a barn full of sticky rice, please”.



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