The History of Plant Use in Laos: Analysis of European Accounts of Plant Use for Primarily Religious and Medicinal Purposes

Title: The History of Plant Use in Laos: Analysis of European Accounts of Plant Use for Primarily Religious and Medicinal Purposes

Author: Callis, Kristine Lee

Advisors: Robert Beckmann, Committee Chair
Anne Schiller, Committee Member
John Riddle, Committee Member

Abstract: A Review of manuscripts written by European explorers and colonists affords the opportunity to develop a clearer understanding both of types of plants employed and their significance in religion and medicine during the 16th to 19th centuries. This paper is a distillation of accounts by thirteen European explorers, written between 1545 until 1861, about Laos and the Lao people in Siam. All of the references to plants and plant use have been extracted for an analysis of which plants European explorers viewed being used traditionally in Laos during this time period and information on how these plants were used and collected. Many of the plants described in the texts were medicinal in nature and some have been examined for modern pharmaceutical use. These pharmaceutical studies have substantiated the effectiveness of historical medicinal plant use. The texts also describe plants that were used in religious ceremonies and that continue to play an important role in Lao culture. Future comparative analysis of these early records with modern day observations of plant use should prove productive in formulating assessments of Traditional Environmental Knowledge loss and the impact of this loss on daily life. Understanding the plants that are important to native Lao in the past can lead to better methods of conservation in the future.

Date: 2005-07-05

Degree: MS

Discipline: Botany

URI: http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/resolver/1840.16/1755

Files in this item

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Files</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>View</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>etd.pdf</td>
<td>435.9Kb</td>
<td>PDF</td>
<td>View/Open</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THIS ITEM APPEARS IN THE FOLLOWING COLLECTION(S)

Theses
CONTACT

D. H. HILL JR. LIBRARY
2 Broughton Drive
Campus Box 7111
Raleigh, NC 27695-7111
(919) 515-3364

JAMES B. HUNT JR. LIBRARY
1070 Partners Way
Campus Box 7132
Raleigh, NC 27606-7132
(919) 515-7110

LIBRARIES
D. H. Hill Jr. Library
James B. Hunt Jr. Library
Design Library
Natural Resources Library
Veterinary Medicine Library

Copyright
All of the references to plants and plant use have been extracted for an analysis of which plants European explorers viewed being used traditionally in Laos during this time period and information on how these plants were used and collected. Many of the plants described in the texts were medicinal in nature and some have been examined for modern pharmaceutical use. These pharmaceutical studies have substantiated the effectiveness of historical medicinal plant use. The texts also describe plants that were used in religious ceremonies.
and that continue to play an important role in Lao culture.