



A GUIDE TO THE LOWLAND LAO PEOPLE

For centuries, the Lowland Lao have generally had more political, cultural and economic control over the country than other ethnic groups. This has remained the case since the country became a communist state in 1975. Lao Buddhism is actively being used by the government to unify a very ethnically diverse country.

The Lao are located throughout Lao P.D.R. but primarily in the lowland areas along the Mekong river and its tributaries bordering Thailand and Cambodia. The Lao tend to live in larger villages than many of the minority groups.



Primarily in the lowland areas of Lao P.D.R.
Population - 3,648,300.



Village life centres around the temple but much of the religious activity is done in the home.



Many Lao are now moving to urban areas in search of work or education.



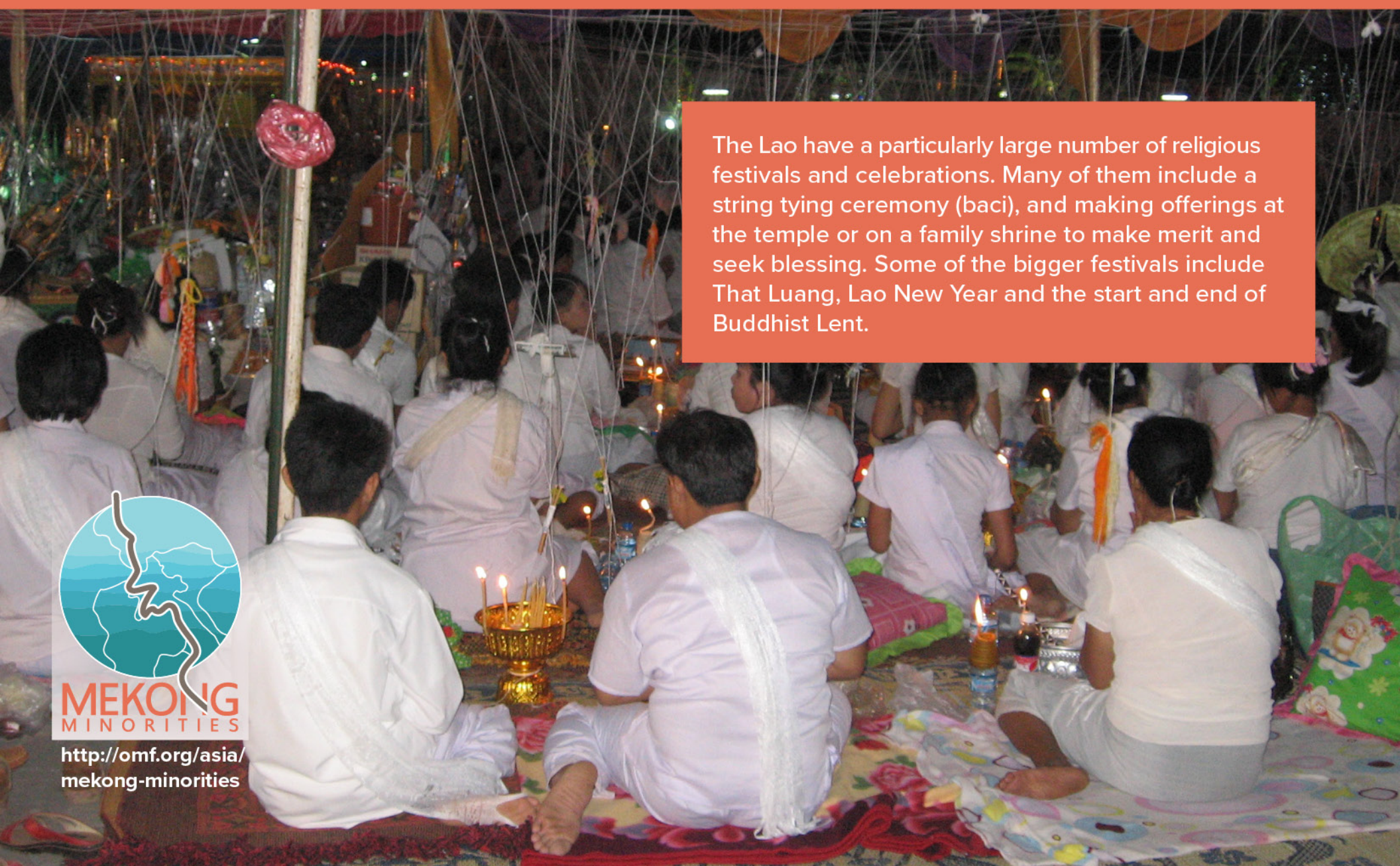
Monks are still highly revered. Women kneel outside their house to make offerings to the monks.



The Lao believe that to be Lao is to be Buddhist. Animistic worldview.



Approx. 1% of the Lowland Lao are evangelical Christians. Numerous Christian resources available.



The Lao have a particularly large number of religious festivals and celebrations. Many of them include a string tying ceremony (baci), and making offerings at the temple or on a family shrine to make merit and seek blessing. Some of the bigger festivals include That Luang, Lao New Year and the start and end of Buddhist Lent.