

The Four Necessities of Buddhist Monks: Patterns, Faiths, and Signs Changes in Luang Prabang, Laos

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Abstracts: Luang Prabang was the early capital of the Laos PDR with national unification where the head of the state at that time was the monarchy, based on the Buddhist concept of centralization, and with the constitution based on Buddhist principles which originated from the belief that if the Lao leaders of any era were Buddhists, then there would be support for Buddhism and would bring prosperity and stability to Buddhism. Therefore, this research article aims to study the current condition of the *Four Necessities* of Buddhist Monks in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR. After being registered as a World Heritage City. This was a qualitative study by studying both documented data and fieldwork interviews with knowledgeable groups, practitioners, and relevant groups, and then analyzing the data descriptively using relevant theoretical framework analysis. The study found that when Luang Prabang was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage City in 1995, Luang Prabang became a world-class cultural tourism industry city, and its Buddhist roots remained. There was a preservation of patterns of life, culture, traditions, and unique traditional beliefs that had been handed down since the ancestors of the locals. After being registered as a World Heritage City, under the change of cultural traditions in Buddhism through merit-making by offering the *Four Necessities* of a Buddhist Monk, there is a practice that is currently focused on convenience and speed. Most of them are offered by you or purchased from stores available in Luang Prabang, with the main objective still continuing to offer *Four Necessities* to escape misfortune and create merit both for yourself in the present and in the next life.

Keywords: Changes, Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk, Luang Prabang.

1. INTRODUCTION

Luang Prabang was the first capital of the unified Laos PDR where the head of the state at that time, the monarchy, adopted the Buddhist tradition as a center of thought based on Buddhist principles. This is based on the belief that if any Lao leader is a Buddhist, then there will be support for Buddhism, and it will bring prosperity and stability to Buddhism through the four things that support the monks called the *Four Necessities* of a Buddhist Monks: food (*Bīṅṭhāṭ*), clothing (*Cī wa rā*), place of residence (*Śenāśna*), and medicine (*Khilānpheṣāch cha*). This teaches Buddhists to be kind to their fellow world, reduce egoism or selfishness or greed, create prosperity for themselves and their families. Including dedicating merit and charity for those who have passed away, like giving alms according to religious principles (Bhikkhu, 1991; PhraMaha Dao Siam Wachirapanyo, 2013; Pongsiri & Yenphech, 2022; Wachirakij, 2017). The practice is carried out according to the rules of ceremonies known as ordinances under the strict control of the monastic discipline. By the virtue of the belief of offering it according to the prayers in this life and in the next life, so that the mind is full of happiness and joy. Consumption of these *Four Necessaries* by *Theravada* monks symbolizes consumption according to the actual needs. Such as consuming clothing to cover the body, consuming food to sustain the body, having a dwelling to cure the cold and danger, and medicine to cure the symptoms of the monks alone. Later, Luang Prabang was registered as a cultural world heritage city in 1995 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (Evans, 2003) which sees the importance of Luang Prabang as an ancient capital rich in long history stories that penetrate into every nook and cranny of the city with houses, temples, palaces, and architecture as well as preserving traditions, rituals, beliefs that have been transmitted from generation to generation (Phra Sombat Buttasit, 2017; Phra Sophonphatthanabandit & Worametheesrisakul; Sinsiri, 2016). After the changes that took place, the economic, social, and cultural conditions in Luang Prabang improved for the better, making people in the city more comfortable to shop, there was an expansion in all sectors of society, including various areas of life to support Buddhist organizations at all levels and dimensions. However, the procurement of offerings for merit is still strictly in

accordance with the discipline of the monks, as well as human behavior that chooses to adhere to good values and is what the majority of people want by inheriting them from generation to generation until they become beliefs. It is believed that it is important to follow traditions because they come together to make merit according to tradition flow together. The traditions of society are also the source of culture as well (Charoensitthichai, 2011; Koses, 2003; Phothisarn et al, 2000). This is a study of the current state of the *Four Necessities* of a Buddhist Monks in Luang Prabang Lao PDR after being registered as a World Heritage City, It is an overview analysis of research studies that come from documents, textbooks, publications, and related research, as well as interviews from residents of Luang Prabang.

1.1. Objective

To analyze the current state of the *Four Necessities* of Buddhist Monks in Luang Prabang Lao PDR (post world heritage registration period).

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Target Population

The research was conducted, using a specific method, on a target population of 25 people who were knowledgeable about the Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monks model as follows: 1) Five key informants who were knowledgeable in socio-cultural and religious history, consisting of senior monks, scholars, 2) Fifteen casual informants who were monks, novices, laymen (*Father Khao*), laymen (*Mother Khao*), entrepreneurs who produce consecrated goods or business owners, and people related to Buddhism, and 3) Five general informants of local people or tourists in Luang Prabang Lao PDR.

2.2. Research Tools

Using observation, non-participant observation, and interview forms consisting of 1) structured interviews were used for key informants, casual informants, and general informants, and 2) unstructured interviews without limiting answers to a variety of issues. This tool was used for knowledgeable groups (key informants) and relevant people (general informants). This was an interview by the researcher as the interviewer himself, and 3) focus group discussions to verify the analyzed data for the relevant groups.

2.3. Data Collection

Consists of 1) Document data collection was a documented study of the relevant subject matter, and 2) Fieldwork collected data using research tools.

2.4. Data Analysis

Surveys and interviews were used to analyze data and were considered in conjunction with cultural diffusion theory, belief concept, popular functional structure theory, and semiotic theory.

3. RESULTS

The fact that Luang Prabang was designated as a UNESCO World Heritage City in 1995 makes Luang Prabang a world-class cultural tourism industry city that has contributed to the Buddhism-based economy of the Lao PDR, with the preservation of patterns of living, culture, traditions, traditional beliefs, unique settlement styles, architectural styles, landscape architecture, and *Het Kong* traditions standing out in a very tangible way (Bounpany & Dankittikul, 2018; Singyabut, 2009; Suraphee & Pimonsompong, 2017). Political changes, as well as technological changes, bring the Lao PDR into a more diverse culture, which occurred after becoming a world heritage city, affecting the maintenance of the Buddhist religion of Buddhists in various aspects.

Lao PDR and Luang Prabang have Buddhism as their main way of life and govern the country alongside the current regime. People, including leaders of various levels, also demonstrated and supported the Buddhist faith in Luang Prabang. Buddhists from all over the world visit, live, and settle in this city, performing merit making in various forms, especially merit making in the daily routine. People who want to make merit in different ways from local Buddhists from other countries, through traditional beliefs, merge rituals with Buddhist traditions and culture. Moreover, making merit of the Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk also supports the monks' survival and sustenance of Buddhism. The type form of the Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk at present still strictly follows the *Vinaya* guidelines from the *Vinaya Pitaka* scriptures as follows: From the belief in the tradition of making merit that still exists today in Luang Prabang. The following changes have been made to the offering of the *Four Necessities* of Buddhist Monks, which are a means of promoting Buddhism through monks (Buarapha, 2012; Siphachai, 2018).

3.1. Current state of the Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk/Monk offering in the capital Luang Prabang

3.1.1. Giving Meaning to the Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk

The offering of the Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk still means things for alms or offerings for monks, as is the nature of the offering.

For example, *Kherùxng thiythān* refers to things generally used to offer to monks during sermons (sermons). By being something that supports the existence of people's lives in general, including the lives of monks, it encourages the monks to perform their duties in Dharma practice and propagation.

3.1.2. The importance of offering the Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk

The offering of the *Four Necessities* of a Buddhist Monk remains the main merit-making tool of devotees, enabling the people to go to temples, make merit, and listen to sermons, which is a religious practice in daily life that is established in the culture that Buddhists practice and inherit from a long time ago. In the old days, Buddhists paid great attention to the quality of alms because monks would eat the food they received from the alms given by those who came to offer without selecting and sticking to the taste of the food, resulting in the body having the energy to sustain life and perform religious activities daily. The category of the *Four Necessities* of a Buddhist Monk always has the function of monastic utilization. The difference is that this offering creates respect in society: the more you merit you perform, the more blessing you will receive. Moreover, Buddhists help each other to take care of the good health of the monks, whether offering alms or other things- something that Buddhists turn to pay attention to choosing good things that are useful for all five groups.

1.3. Types of Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk

The Four Requisite Necessities in Buddhism, there are certain rules in the Disciplinary Rules, which are measures for practice with many aspects of resource consumption. In the life of monks in Buddhism regarding discipline, monks are forbidden from using more than three pieces of clothing, namely, *Chiwara Cloth* (Yellow robe), *Sanghati Cloth*, and *Sabong cloth*, and personal belongings are permitted only necessary for the life of peace, abstinence from all objects of restraint, and for the highest quality consumption of resources. Over time, society has changed due to various causes and factors. The monks used more than eight items. This raises the question of whether the consumption of monks in excess of the limit is a perversion of the original principles of the Buddha, and how appropriate it is. One has to first go back and consider Buddha's principle of consumption, that the consumption of various monks' factors is to be a device or tool that leads to *Nirvana*. Therefore, the Lord Buddha always warned that, before consuming the *Four Necessaries*, we must first consider what we are consuming. Therefore, when a monk is consumed as a means of extinguishing defilement, he is not a pervert of the Buddha's principles. However, he consumes for other purposes, which is undoubtedly a perversion of the original principles (PhraKruvoraditthammaporn, Saññato, & Saengsai, 2020). A form of the *Four Necessities* of a Buddhist Monk was developed, in which the materials used to prepare the *Four Necessities* were of sufficient quality and suitable for the utilization of the *Sangha* and the Monastery. It allows living to study *Dhamma Vinaya*, such as the *Four Necessities*. At present, it is considered good, for example, Tri-*Chiwara cloth* is easy to find as a finished product and is of good

quality. However, if a temple receives more than enough offerings, it can still be used to help those in need. The money collected from the villagers is used to restore and repair the temple and use it as is. At the same time, if a temple has not had enough famous monks, there will also be a shortage of offerings.

3.1.4. Opportunities used in various traditions

The use of offerings in customs and traditions related to Buddhism has continued to the present day by focusing on offerings in important religious days. What is different is that one does not need to make merit every day, emphasizing the opportunity to do anywhere quickly in various places that are easily accessible.

3.1.5. Procedure for offering

There are still preparations and procedures that are not different from the original, from preparing the venue, preparing the equipment for the ceremony, preparing the personnel for the ceremony, preparing the schedule, inviting a believer to offer the monks, praying for the precepts and dharma, preparing food, and the Four Necessities of a Buddhist monk, making the offerings, pouring water, blessing the Buddha, and ending the ceremony. What needs to be adjusted is to shorten the offering process, focusing on the important steps that the monks have to adjust by reducing the ritual process to shorten the time.

3.1.6. Source of supply

Preparation of the *Four Necessities* of a Buddhist Monk from Interviews: Most of the interviewees saw that they were procured, made by themselves, or imported from abroad. Nowadays, there are still villagers' shops that prepare ready-made goods for purchase to create the *Four Necessities*. This is a product imported from Thailand and China, using their own money to buy and the authority to tell the public to procure, prepare, and assemble for the monks, emphasizing convenience because people are selling. The overall preparation of the *Four Necessities* of a Buddhist Monk was in line with the rigorous stipulations of the Buddhist discipline. Those who prepare offerings, whether villagers, Buddhists, or shops, also know the rules of monks. Moreover, if the recipient or any monk practices, acts well, and acts accordingly, there will be people who believe in it. However, if monks do not follow those disciplines, they will be warned and eventually have to leave the monkhood. In addition, interviewees noted that there are some differences with the *Vinaya* as there are times when there is no adherence to the form of offerings such as the offerings of money, which the *Vinaya* did not allow the *Sangha* to accept silver and gold.

3.1.7. The Virtue Of Merit

The virtue of making merit, including the Four Necessaries, giving alms, and offering food, is no different from the past, depending on the status and belief of the individual. Because the Lord Buddha once said that the result of offerings will come upon the person who gives it when he is born in any life, there will be no poverty, and when he goes to any land, there will be no misery, hardship, or poverty. More people make merit to benefit themselves, such as making themselves more comfortable, winning more lotteries, or becoming richer.

3.1.8. Benefits

It is used in the livelihood of the monks as in the past, but the difference is that the agency where the monks are maintained or have money to develop the temple, including the money received, let us pay more utility bills, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Differences in types of offerings, offering process, offering occasions, and people in the ceremony.

Item	Past	Present	Differences
(1) Type of Offering (1.1) Apparel (Yellow robe, Sarongs, Sangha's cloth, Waist strap, Satchel bag) (1.2) Food (<i>Bir̥ṭh̥bāt</i>) savory food, sweet food, beverage (1.3) Housing Accessories	(1) Offering alms to make merit takes time to procure alms and preparing for the ceremony may take a long time. (2) What is required are the	(1) Money and objects are offered. (2) Consecration depends on the status and beliefs of the individual. (3) There are more deposits	(1) Offerings are more diverse from incoming foreign goods. (2) The procurement of ready-made items that meet the <i>Vinaya</i> is more ready-to-

<p>(<i>Senāsna</i>) (Cubicle, Chapel, Pavilion, Mattress, Chair, Table, Pillow, Mats) (1.4) Medicines (<i>Khilānpheṣāch</i>) Medicines for all kinds of diseases.</p>	<p>Four Necessaries. Apparel (Yellow robe, Sarongs, Sangha's cloth, Waist strap, Satchel bag) Savory food, sweet food, beverages, housing accessories, pillows, mats, medicines of all kinds, etc.</p>	<p>to offer. (4) Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk nowadays are not difficult to find and can be bought in shops, and markets. (5) Own sourcing and import from abroad. (6) Product quality is high quality and diverse.</p>	<p>use without having to wait for the season. (3) There are more sustenance offerings that the monks spend on themselves and the temple.</p>
<p>(2) Offering steps; (2.1) Apparel (Yellow robe, Sarongs, Sangha's cloth, Waist strap, Satchel bag). (2.2) Food (<i>Binṭhbāt</i>), savory food, sweet food, beverages. (2.3) Housing Accessories (<i>Senāsna</i>) (Cubicle, Chapel, Pavilion, Mattress, Chair, Table, Pillow, Mats). (2.4) Medicines (<i>Khilānpheṣāch</i>), medicines for all kinds of diseases.</p>	<p>(1) Venue preparation (2) Preparing equipment for the ceremony (3) Personnel preparation: monks, ceremony presidents, religious ceremonies, and participants (4) Schedule preparation (5) Inviting a fan to offer to the monks (6) Consecration request for praying and civilization (7) Food Preparation and the Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk (8) Appreciation (9) An Invitation to the Gravel (10) Sprinkle water on the Buddha image (11) End Ceremony</p>	<p>(1) Venue preparation (2) Preparing equipment for the ceremony (3) Personnel preparation: monks, ceremony presidents, religious ceremonies, and participants (4) Schedule preparation (5) Inviting a fan to offer to the monks (6) Consecration request for praying and civilization (7) Food Preparation and the Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk (8) Appreciation (9) An Invitation to the Gravel (10) Sprinkle water on the Buddha image (11) End Ceremony What's more. 1. After completing the offering, one can go home without having to wait for blessings from the monks and pour water at home instead.</p>	<p>(1) Shorten the process of offering (2) The monks slowed down the ritual process to shorten the time. (3) The main process strictly maintains the original.</p>
<p>3. Opportunity of offering (3.1) Apparel (Yellow robe, Sarongs, Sangha's cloth, Waist strap, Satchel bag) (3.2) Food (<i>Binṭhbāt</i>), savory food, sweet food, drink (3.3) Dwelling Accessories (<i>Senāsna</i>) (Cubicle, Chapel, Pavilion, Mattress, Chair, Table, Pillow, Mats) (3.4) Medicines (<i>Khilānpheṣāch</i>) Medicines for all kinds of diseases.</p>	<p>(1) More Activities (2) Tradition Activities (3) Convention Activities</p>	<p>(1) Emphasize offerings on important religious days (2) Changes in the globalization situation where young people are so impatient that making merit doesn't have to go every day.</p>	<p>(1) for quickness (2) Places to organize traditions that are easy to make merit in various forms such as department stores, and shops, including popular places to meet in the area. (3) Only important religious traditions such as Makha Bucha, Visakha Bucha, Atthami Bucha, Asalha Bucha, Buddhist Lent, Devo offerings, Kathin offerings, Robe offerings, marriages, Naga ordination, Songkran, and funerals.</p>
<p>ritual person</p>	<p>Monks and Deacons</p>	<p>Monks, deacons, or organizers of religious activities</p>	<p>Hosting events will play a role in the ritual.</p>

Note: Based on the target group of 26 persons

The offering of the *Four Necessities* of a Buddhist Monk that is traditional or ceremonial still follows ancient beliefs as a whole, still adhering to the stipulations in the Buddhist discipline that have been strictly practiced. Those who prepare the offerings, whether villagers, Buddhists, or shops, also know the rules of the monks as well, The *Four Necessities* of a Buddhist Monk model was developed in which the materials used to prepare the *Four Necessities* were of good quality and suitable for the utilization of the *Sangha* and the Temple. The money received from the villagers to collect, restore at the temple, and use it as it really is. The monks themselves also use the rituals from various teachings to have the same procedures to be following the era to emphasize quickly, with the duration of

the rituals being adapted to a shorter time. However, after the monks have finished offering food, they return home, so they do not have to wait for the monks to pour water at their homes instead.

Table 2: Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monks in terms of clothing that influenced rituals, beliefs, and symbols after World Heritage Registration

Type	Ritual	Belief	Symbol
Yellow robe (clothing)	(1) The ceremony of consecrating the Four Necessities of Buddhist Monks at present follows the trend of globalization. (2) Robes are offered in rituals such as offerings to monks, including in Buddhist traditions. (3) Ready-made robes are offered from purchases from the consecration shop in the area and outside the area. (4) The use of robes in Buddhist rituals is the same as before being registered as a World Heritage Site. (5) Reduce the ceremony process to be more concise.	The beliefs are not different from before the World Heritage registration. (1) A son who is ordained can help his parents attain to the heavens. (2) Can cut sin out of the mind. (3) Get rid of passion or greed, and stinginess. (4) Full of merit, free from poverty, and deprivation in every life. (5) Born in any life will have a beautiful appearance, and skin.	(1) As a symbol of social status (2) Represents the division of duties between men and women.

Note: Based on the target group of 26 persons

From Table 2, the offering of the *Four Necessities* in the form of robes or three robes after the World Heritage Registration has the same rituals, but the ceremony has been reduced to become more concise, focusing only on necessary and meaningful offerings. Since people in the area had to work outside, there was less time to prepare for bringing the *Four Necessities* to offer. Using money to buy robes from the Monk Shop was the best solution. Most importantly, the three robes purchased were still in line with the discipline of the *Sangha* of belief and adhered to the past style. The offering of the robes in this era in terms of social status expression and consumerism plays a huge role in this era, resulting in many monks having more than one set of robes, thus decreasing modesty.

Table 3: Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk: Diet that affects rituals, beliefs, and Symbols after World Heritage Registration

Type	Ritual	Belief	Symbol
<i>Binjbat</i> (food)	(1) The alms round has become a popular ritual for religious preservation and is one of the main purposes of tourists to offer rice to monks in Luang Prabang. (2) There is an invitation from the people to make merit at home, birthday parties, wedding celebrations, the opening of new businesses, and funeral prayers. Therefore, there is more eating out of the temple area as well.	(1) Giving alms every day is loved by all people, being a good person with wisdom would like to associate with others, having a good reputation, being not far from the Dhamma, and dying in a peaceful world. (2) Some people see that paying to order good food is expensive, making them and their families wealthier in the future.	(1) to reduce stinginess alleviate selfishness, create a happy mind, and create a peaceful society. (2) Enhance prestige and fortune and create wealth and agility in the world. (3) It is the preservation of traditions, creating harmony for the Buddhists.

Note: Based on the target group of 26 persons

From Table 3, food consumption in the post-world heritage registration period of Luang Prabang has made the alms-giving ritual popular, especially for foreigners visiting the area who were always interested in offering sticky rice to the monks in the alms round. With the arrival of civilization, more jobs were created, more companies were built, and more houses were built as people earned more money. Inviting monks to attend both auspicious and unlucky events in various places for prosperity therefore increased. Many places have a feast for monks, who are always invited to go. Belief in offering food or daily alms to monks was loved by all people, a good person with wisdom who likes to associate with others, has a good reputation, is not far from dharma, and pays money to order good food is expensive, resulting in self and family wealth in the future.

Table 4: Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk in Terms of Habitation Affecting Rituals, beliefs, and Symbols after World Heritage Registration.

Type	Ritual	Belief	Symbol
<i>Senāśna</i> (Residence)	(1) The construction and management of the forest sanctuary have important stakeholders, namely, the abbot monk, the monk who builds it, the abbot of the sanctuary, and the monk who uses the sanctuary. (2) Ceremonies create more agencies and Buddhists.	(1) Building a temple for monks is an emphasis on joint funding to make merit from the donations of all Buddhists, great merit as before, with the addition that the more temples there are, the more merit.	(1) The basic functions remain the same as before. Protect your body from wind, rain, or dangerous creatures. (2) The construction of temples was built in a traditional style to create the identity of the area. (3) The fact that temples are often built in various forms or are constantly being renovated indicates that the temple has more support from the Buddhists than lesser-improved temples.

Note: Based on the target group of 26 persons

Table 4 showed the construction of important temples within a temple after World Heritage registration, most of which focus on how the identity of that temple or temple-building era was most closely preserved. There was a ritual to obtain money, which was another indispensable factor in this era to support the maintenance of temples and to repair more temples. The ceremonial monarchs, who were mainly monarchs or monastics, became increasingly supported by the government and private organizations. The advent of some liberal systems has led people to believe that the more temples there are, the more merit the area and co-creators have. The construction of temples like this caused the value that caused disparity, that this temple was rich, that temple had fewer people, etc.

Table 5: Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monks Medicines affecting rituals, beliefs, and symbols after World Heritage Registration

Type	Ritual	Belief	Symbol
<i>Khilānpheṣāch</i> (Medicine)	(1) There is a joint offering of medicines from external agencies. (2) The monks themselves received more financial support for treatment at hospitals and pharmacies.	The offerings of medicines in this era emphasized the offerings of medicines that were more scientifically developed. The treatment is therefore easier to access, with the belief that the virtue remains the same as before.	(1) Consumption of medicine focuses on improving the quality of life and sustaining life by consuming modern medicines. (2) If a large number of high-quality and effective Western medicines are obtained, it can be said that this place is very prosperous and has good state welfare.

Note: Based on the target group of 26 persons

From Table 5, the consumption of medicines or Kirana pharmaceuticals has been supported by the World Health Organization and government agencies with the construction of more hospitals and salaries, allowing monks to receive medicines that treat the disease more. Therefore, recovery from the disease is more frequent. However, the belief in offering medicine was still not different from that in the past. Although monks' access to medicines has increased, the cost of going to the doctor and obtaining medicines has also increased. Earning monetary sustenance also plays an important role in facilitating the healing of monks. The availability of good and quality medicine results in the understanding that this place has prosperity and good state welfare.

Table 6: Comparative table of the Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk in terms of rituals, beliefs, and symbols in Luang Prabang Lao PDR before World Heritage and after World Heritage registration.

Items	Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk (Four Necessities)	Before being a world heritage	After being a world heritage
Ritual	Food	For monks to see the true value of food consumption, to enable them to	The alms round has become a popular ritual for religious

		live according to their abilities according to the Heet Khong tradition such as the ordination ceremony, the Buddhist Lent ceremony, the pavilion ceremony, the Kathina Ceremony, and the monks' morning alms round	maintenance. And most importantly, it is one of the main attractions for tourists to offer rice to monks in Luang Prabang. In addition, it also accepts activities from religious people to make merit at home, birthday parties, wedding celebrations, the opening of new businesses, and funeral prayers.
	Clothing	It is one of the ways of life according to the Heet Khong tradition, from the birth ceremony to the young men entering the ordination ceremony, from the cloth used to dress the Naga, including the cloth in the ceremony. such as Sobong cloth, Angsa cloth, and robe cloth according to Buddhist society, after becoming ordained, they enter a wedding ceremony and finally a funeral ceremony.	The present offering of the Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk is in line with the trend of globalization. The robes are offered in rituals such as offerings to monks, including in Buddhist traditions.
	Residence	Most of the houses were built near the village or not too far from the community, so that the monks can walk in and receive food for alms. There are 5 types of Sanaa: Vihara (a house with a roof), Atthayok (single thatched house), castle (storied house), Hammiya (cut-roofed house), and Kooha (cave).	The construction and management of the Sena Forest have the following key stakeholders: the abbot monk, the construction monk, the abbot monk of the seat, and the monk who uses the seat. The ceremonial master of creation is more agency and Buddhist.
	Medicine	Medicines were offered to monks on herbs that could be found in nature, including monks who were able to produce medicines for their own use.	There were joint offerings of medicines from outside organizations as well as the monks themselves received more financial support for treatment at hospitals and pharmacies.
Belief	Food	It is to add luck and prestige in the future, such as longevity and strength. It is also to attain a beautiful caste, rank, and happiness. Be brave and wise. It is a merit increase, nourishing life to be more prosperous, and as a whole, helping and fostering Buddhism To continue to prosper.	Giving alms every day would be loved by all people. He was a good, wise man who liked to associate with him, had a good reputation, was not far from the Dharma, and died in the world of peace. Some people see the expensive cost of paying to order good food as a means of making themselves and their families wealthier in the future.
	Clothing	Being ordained brings great merit as the son repays his parents' gratitude by believing that Ordained sons can help their parents to cling to heaven, can cut off sins from their minds, get rid of defilement or greed, stinginess, the fullness of merit, free from poverty, poverty in all lives, in any birth will have a beautiful appearance and complexion	The ordination for the family to cling to the yellow-clothed man is also a belief that has been passed on to take the family to heaven. Can cut off sin from the mind, get rid of defilements or greed, and stinginess, be full of merit, and be free from poverty, and poverty in every life, in any life there will be a beautiful appearance and skin.
	Residence	Providing residences for monks to make them believe that they will never be homeless is another high merit in making merit.	Building a seat for monks is an emphasis on joint funding of merit from the donations of all Buddhists, great merit as before, with the addition that the more temples there are, the more merit.
	Medicine	The offering of medicines made Buddhists believe that Every human being has birth, old age, sickness, and death. If there is an offering, it will result in less sickness for yourself and your family or alleviation.	The offerings of medicines in this era emphasized the offerings of medicines that were more scientifically developed. The treatment is therefore easier to access, with the belief that the

			virtue remains the same as before.
Symbol	Food	It is consumed to sustain the body's existence in order to alleviate old hunger, prevent new hunger, and give strength to the creation of good deeds. It also reduces stinginess, alleviates selfishness, creates a happy mind, and creates a peaceful society.	to reduce stinginess, Alleviate selfishness, create a happy mind, and create a peaceful society. Enhance prestige and fortune, create wealth and agility in the world. It is a preservation of traditions. Creating harmony for the Buddhists.
	Clothing	To meet the basic necessities of human daily life. As a symbol of social status. To represent the division of duties between men and women.	To prevent cold or sunlight, prevent impact with other objects. In order to indicate the culture, tradition, and progress of the producers, the social rank of the monks can also be shown.
	Residence	To treat cold, and heat, and prevent danger from animals and seasons.	It protects the body from rain, wind, or dangerous creatures. The built temples can use the original style in all respects to create the identity of the area.
	Medicine	for use in the treatment of various ailments	Drug consumption focused on improving the quality of life and sustaining life, is consumed by endless modern trends.

Note: Based on the target group of 26 persons

From the summary in Table 6, it can be seen that the consumption of Four Necessaries tends to be adapted by Theravada Buddhist monks to achieve consumption according to real goals or symbols, for example: 1) Consumption of functional clothing to cover the body and not adornment, 2) Food consumption: One must wake up and realize that it was consumed to maintain the existence of different bodies - to alleviate old hunger, prevent new hunger, and energize goodness, 3) Habitat consumption to protect against cold and hot environments, animals, and changing seasons, and 4) consumption of medicines for the treatment of various ailments.

Therefore, monks must consider the objective of receiving real benefits. The problem with the consumption of the *Four Necessaries* nowadays is that it emphasizes consumption according to popular trends resulting from the excessive needs of monks. Novices are lost along this trend, causing imitative behavior with delusions, resulting in health problems, excessive use, and addiction. This entails the loss of property, including health and wisdom for monks, novices, and others involved, in which the guidelines were for adapting consumption of four necessities to different situations. The implications of these the *Four Necessities* are as follows: Robe >>> Cloth, alms round >>> Food, *Sanaasana* >>> House (accommodation), Pharmacy >>> Medicine. According to the practices of the way of life, it should not be consumed as a social sign. It is an advertising model of consumerism with the main goals of Buddhist consumption being knowing the cause, knowing the effect, knowing oneself, knowing the moderation, and knowing the time. It is a change in behavior, adaptation, and consumption of the Four Necessaries, etc.

3.2. Rituals and Types of Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk with Changes in Belief and Symbolism in Luang Prabang Lao PDR

3.2.1. Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk According to Ritual Changes

The transformation of Buddhist rituals also exists to support Buddhist activities in important Buddhist events and in local traditions where the process of consecration and ceremonies is maintained. Traditional operating procedures have been reduced to make them more concise and flexible. The category of the Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk resulted in the diffusion of foreign cultures through the opening of the country to foreigners for tourism and various investments, causing people in the area to have more jobs, coupled with the fact that people in the area have more work outside the home or outside the area, they can go to work in companies or agencies, both in the public and private sectors. The time available for the preparation of the Four Necessaries is reduced, so one must buy things to make merit from the market, from the shops that prepare items for making merit, especially in terms of the Four Necessaries.

Traditions and rituals nowadays focus on speed to shorten the time of performing various rituals. At the same time, there are views that the rituals have changed because of the impact of COVID-19, when the country has been closed and no tourists could enter the country, with no religious people able to make offerings to monks or temples as before COVID. The types of Four Necessities of Buddhist Monks, which the Buddha established as a discipline based on survival in the Four Necessaries, are food, clothing, housing, and medicine. Currently, Buddhists in Luang Prabang also saw the need for speed in making merit and providing offerings in order to have more time for more work. One of the changes that has been added is the use of money to offer money to the monks to replace buying ready-made items.

3.2.2 Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk with Changes in Belief

Due to the variety of rituals, the study of the meanings of various rituals allows villagers to study along with the actual practice, resulting in more diverse rituals. In addition, the elders gained knowledge and bonded with the temple group with expressions of confidence, more mutual assistance, and the economic aspect, resulting in the meaning of the rituals and beliefs that are consistent with Buddhism. Therefore, changing attitudes toward cooking is necessary to avoid the following traditions. The form of the Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk was seen by most interviewees as having little effect on the change in their beliefs, and their faith in their ancestors remained strong on merit-making and merits of making merit. Because the monks have a ritual to build their faith after receiving the Four Necessities, they may differ slightly. For example, in the past, before finishing the almsgiving, the monks gave blessings and waited for the water to be poured before returning home. However, after the monks have been offering food, they return home so that people do not have to wait for the precepts from the monks to pour water at their homes instead. According to popular concepts, beliefs, and structure since Buddhism was introduced into the area of Lao PDR, the Lao PDR opened the country after Luang Prabang, the former capital, was designated as a World Heritage City, bringing more and more people to the area every year. The Lao PDR itself has accepted science and technology to further develop the country. One thing that Luang Prabang and the Lao PDR still emphasize and will always emphasize strictly adhering to Buddhist teachings and disciplines through the journey of social and political change in the country for many generations.

3.2.3. Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk with Significant Changes

Created to serve as a symbol of worship and to support the lives of the monks responsible for spreading Buddhism in many countries, including Luang Prabang, which corresponds to the three aspects of the signal, namely physical characteristics that can be touched, separated by the five human senses, which must arise from the intention of the sender to convey some meaning that is greater than itself. Here is the influence of the sign that human beings can consume endlessly with present goods, a form of the Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monks. Most of the interviewees agreed that the Four Necessities of a Buddhist monk model reflected a semantic shift due to the growing population of consecrated citizens for better life, prosperity, and well-being, part of which is the current globalization trend that emphasizes being a good person by creating merit, as well as making offerings in order to attain fame for oneself by offering the Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monks. Nowadays, dharma is transmitted through the online world for people to have faith and understand, while practicing themselves to access Buddhism more easily, affecting the connotation and modernity resulting in food, snacks, and utensils. Only with more money can make merit in many temples and places, travel more comfortably, and from the changes in the global situation of globalization. Young people are impatient and do not go to make merit every day. Most people play instead of going to the temple to make merit. These things also affect understanding the symbols of the practice of offering the Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk. The theory of semiotics can change according to conditions and time, with changes and improvements made by human beings to create prosperity in people's way of life. As a result, good things are individually transmitted to Luang Prabang and Lao PDR according to the principles of Buddhism in which the existing Buddhist culture is based on the system of Buddhist symbols in society that Lao Buddhists have created by offering the Four Necessities of Buddhist Monks. The donor, if he wishes for something, will focus on making related offerings to make life better, such as offering light bulbs to brighten their lives and careers and to clear their minds, medicine for good health, and the three robes that are sewn with good quality to make yourself and your family have a good life. However, in the matter of offering money, people today regard it as one of the offerings that Buddhists can accept as making merit.

4. DISCUSSION

Buddhists living in Luang Prabang now increasingly offer the Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk in the form of money and objects, believing that this kind of offering will create merit for themselves: the more you give, the more you receive with faith. In the past, people focused more on food offerings and the process of preparing food from natural ingredients, which require more elaborate work and time to prepare. For the younger generation, with the influence and cultural impact from the West that has spread into Laos PDR, it is more convenient to buy quality finished goods from stores, making it faster to offer the Four Necessities. In the current capital and spread to Luang Prabang, the acceptance of foreign cultures and trade liberalization has resulted in a great change in Lao society, whether through media such as television, radio, books, online media, and various social media that today's Lao people can easily access modern innovation technology. However, the Lao people can still maintain their own culture and traditions in parallel with the foreign cultures that have come in. This is related to the cultural diffusion theory. In summary, it has been reported that most social changes are caused by the diffusion of external culture rather than by inventions within that society, which is caused by the integration of new things from the outside mixed with the society inside, resulting in a new society and culture that has never been seen before in society (Sanyawiwat, 1983).

The rituals and types of the Four Necessities of Buddhist Monks have changed the beliefs and symbols in Luang Prabang. The form of the Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk has little effect on religious conversion because the faith of Buddhists is still strong in the matter of sin, merit, merit making, and punishment, which is a factor that affects the existence of the identity (Toopario, 2009). All of them have a bearing on the beliefs, rituals, and symbols of the offerings of the Four Necessities, as well as those that are consistent with the beliefs of cultural origins. Beliefs are the guidelines for determining the way of life, setting practices about customs, traditions, rules, systems of conduct, and establishing guidelines for various social activities in society. Those who perform the ritual feel fulfilled and have received merit from following the doctrine according to the popular functional structure theory of August Comte and Herbert Spencer (Sangkaphanthanon, 2016).

As a result, societies, as territorial systems, are self-regulating, with a tendency to interdependent and maintain equilibrium. The people of society follow norms and values, and social control is therefore a good mechanism to bring the social system into equilibrium. This demonstrates that the structure and function of the Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk are perceived by experience as well as by how other people's experiences are actually learned from those who play a role in modern society through participatory observation and social networking technology. As a result, seminal perception is unstable and not unique. However, people in society accept or understand each other's things, although their interpretations may differ according to the context of their own perceptions based on semiotic theory (Purnngam et al., 2012). This result is consistent with that of PhraSophonphatthanabandit and Woramtheesrisakul (2017). Buddhism came to Laos and influenced the foundation of the culture, tradition, thought, and beliefs of the Lao people. Buddhism has a strong influence on the people of Laos in their way of life throughout the year, as well as the people of Isaan in the Northeast of Thailand, called the *Heet 12* and *Klong 14* traditions. Buddhism is a constitution of life that strengthens the cultural relations of the people and supports the Lao people in maintaining stability in their lives. After the change in government, the Lao monks modified the way of administration to adapt to the modern era, resulting in the tendency of Buddhism in Lao PDR to be more prosperous.

From the *Sangha Act*, the policy of the Ministry of Information and Culture, and the World Heritage City Strategy of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to bring it to study and analyze, it can be said that monks continue to play the primary role of guiding Buddhist rituals in offering and receiving the Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monks under the transformation of ceremonies, beliefs, and symbols in Luang Prabang. However, it is necessary to create an understanding and make changes for the new generation to focus on providing necessary and accurate information through the public channel media, whether it is social media on all platforms, in order to create group behavior according to Lao PDR, and to ascribe importance to Buddhism that Buddhism cannot be cut off from the nation, and monks and novices cannot be cut off from their relatives. The government of Laos also determined that monks played an important role in the nation and the people throughout the history of Laos. Everything about Buddhism is life. These studies and interviews indicate that there are changes in the ritual process of offering the Four

Necessities of a Buddhist Monk through the modernization of society, and these changes affect thought processes and beliefs, both ritually. Beliefs as well as symbols are unable to make people in Lao PDR, especially in Luang Prabang, use the form of offering the Four Necessities that are different from the provisions of the monastic discipline, making it possible to see that the use of the current development plan is still effective for people in society.

CONCLUSIONS

Even with all the changes brought about by being recognized and registered as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, specifically in terms of ancient sites and nature, the people of Luang Prabang still adhere to the traditional customs of their daily lives. Despite the influx of technology, media, and investment in the area since 1995, the Lao authorities are still strictly adhering to the Buddhist statutes that govern the clergy, with the government together with participation in the development and management of the Luang Prabang area to maintain the origin of beliefs, traditions, and non-material cultures. In keeping with this tradition, Buddhists living in Luang Prabang still prefer to offer the Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk in the form of physical offerings, but an increasing number of people now make offerings of money and other objects that are believed to also create merit. For oneself, the more one does, the more one returns with faith. However, the occasion of offering these Four Necessaries also corresponds to the customs of the Lao tradition, in which traditional merit-making can be divided into three categories: 1) traditional merit-making, 2) traditional merit-making process, and 3) traditional merit-making that is similar to traditional Buddhist principles, which provide Four Necessaries that can be purchased from local shops. Currently, most people focus on expediency in preparing offerings because people's work schedules are still respectful of the discipline of Buddhism in their preparation of offerings. This has resulted in a change in symbolism due to the expansion of citizens who focus on making offerings to create good things for life and to create prosperity and well-being according to the belief that good people can be good. Owing to the creation of merit, the more you do, the more merit you have. With the gradual acceptance of money in offering, just having money can make merit in many temples and allow one to travel conveniently to many places, affecting understanding and access to the symbols of the *Four Necessities* offering the form of Buddhist Monks. It may be that nowadays, the number of villagers comes to make merit each year because most of the villagers who come are old people. As for young people, children, and youth, in addition to less participation in Buddhist rituals, they also know the background history of the ceremony, the materials of the sacrifice, the ritual process, the details of the performers, and the time and place necessary to offer the Four Necessities of a Buddhist Monk.

RECOMMENDATION

General Recommendation

(1) Based on this research data, further research on Thai *Dharma* Factors on the Changes in Rituals, Beliefs, and Symbols in Luang Prabang, Lao PDR is required.

(2) From this research, study data can be used as basic data and further developed according to plans and policies of the public and private sectors in the Lao People's Democratic State to formulate a plan for the development of cultural works in the public and private sectors.

(3) From this study and research data, the public and private sectors can use research data that appear in various dimensions to create cultural works to create new innovations in conservation in the future.

Further Research Recommendation

(1) Data from this research can be used as basic data for research on Thai *Dharma* Factors in other dimensions in Lao PDR and other countries where Buddhism is practiced in various sectors.

(2) Data from this research can be used as basic information to study the development of the Thai *Dharma* Quadrant from the past to the present in Lao PDR and other countries.

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