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Laos

A Personal Portrait
from the Mid-1970s

Judy A. Rantala

[256]pp. 93-38746 1993
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Photographs, maps, bibliography, index

In 1971 the author accompanied her husband, a USAID contract worker, to Laos. Befriended by two young Lao she quickly became a part of village life, joining holiday celebrations, weddings, funerals and feasts. Increasingly she realized that the American people were not being told the truth about the U.S. government's role in Laos as it related to the Vietnam conflict.

This is a unique and interesting look at the culture of Laos. It is also an insightful study of the impact of the war on the Lao people. The humor and the pathos of these chaotic and tragic years is chronicled by following one Lao family from the Rantalas' first acquaintance, through their placement in Communist controlled re-education camps, to their resettlement in the United States.

Judy A. Rantala, a retired social worker, lives in Honolulu, Hawaii.

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