

History

The impetus for founding the Archive came from within a Southeast Asian American community. Dr. Phạm Cao Dương, a member of the Orange County Vietnamese American community, first proposed the idea to UCI officials in the mid-1980s.

In response, the UC Irvine Libraries established the Archive in 1987 with the primary purpose of documenting the new Southeast Asian population in Orange County. The initial materials came from donors throughout California, other parts of the United States, and abroad. Many early items documented the donors' personal experiences as refugees and provided background information on the culture and history of their homelands. Other contributions came from refugee workers and from American veterans.

As the Archive grew, it expanded to include Americans of Southeast Asian origin in the United States as a whole, including smaller ethnic groups such as the Cham, Tai Dam, Kmhmu, Iu Mien, and Lahu. The special focus on Orange County and California continues. It became the mission of the Archive to preserve and document the social, cultural, religious, political, and economic life of Americans of Southeast Asian origin, beginning with the exodus from Southeast Asia in 1975 and continuing on into the future as their new communities develop.

The Archive's significance has been recognized by the receipt of prestigious grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the California State Library.

How You Can Assist the Archive

The Archive actively solicits donations of materials and financial support for our activities. We are especially interested in materials concerning the activities of organizations, businesses, individuals, and events in Southeast Asian American communities. Please contact us if you have materials that you would like to donate or if you would like to make a financial donation.

For more information please contact:

Orange County & Southeast Asian Archive Center
(OC & SEAA)

Visit: Libraries Gateway Study Center, Room 104

Mail: UC Irvine Libraries

P.O. Box 19557

Irvine, CA 92623-9557

Email: spcoll@uci.edu

Phone: (949) 824-3947

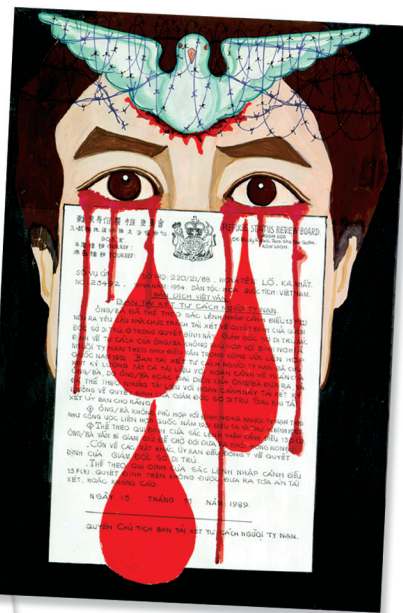
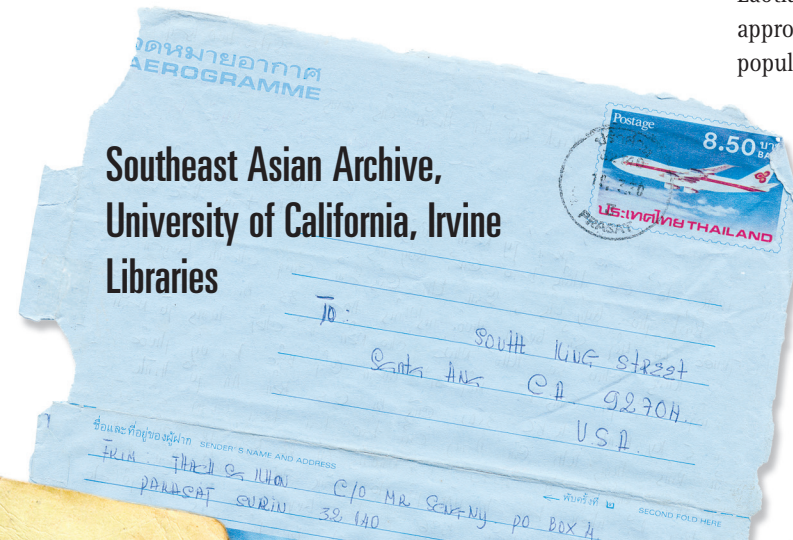
Web: ocseaa.lib.uci.edu

This brochure is also available in Cambodian, Hmong, Lao, and Vietnamese at ocseaa.lib.uci.edu

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Documenting The Southeast Asian American Experience

Southeast Asian Archive,
University of California, Irvine
Libraries



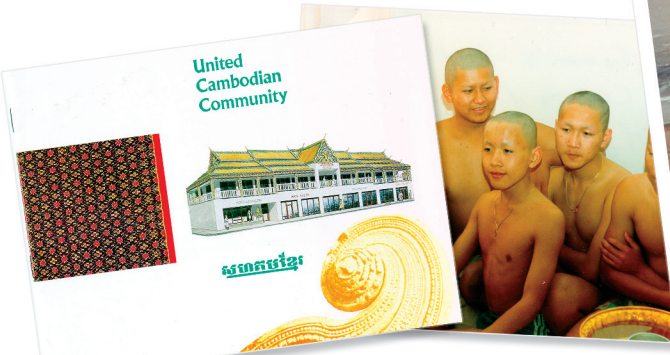
Our Mission

The Southeast Asian Archive of the University of California, Irvine Libraries has as its sole focus the documentation of the refugees and immigrants from the former Indochina – Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam – who have resettled in the United States since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975.

According to the 2000 U.S. census 638,000 Cambodians, Laotians, and Vietnamese now live in California, approximately 40% of the Southeast Asian American population in the United States. Orange County has

the largest population of Vietnamese outside of Vietnam. There are substantial Laotian settlements in San Diego and the Central Valley in addition to the large San Francisco Bay Area community. The largest population of overseas Cambodians is in nearby Long Beach.

Given this demographic profile, UCI is the logical location to document and preserve the experiences of this new American population group.



Collections

The Southeast Asian Archive contains a wide variety of materials in English and Southeast Asian languages. Collecting has focused on the refugee camp experiences of boat people and land refugees, resettlement efforts in the United States and beyond, the development and progress of new ethnic communities, and – to a lesser extent – the culture and history of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam as they reflect the cultural origins of the refugees.

Types of materials found in the Archive include:

- art (paintings, drawings)
- artifacts
- articles from magazines & journals
- books
- business directories
- correspondence
- dissertations & theses
- ephemeral materials (fliers, brochures, programs, etc.)
- films/videos/audiotapes
- government documents
- magazines & journals
- newsletters
- newspaper clippings
- organizational records
- pamphlets
- personal narratives & papers
- photographs
- posters
- refugee orientation materials
- reports
- surveys

Archival collections contain unique materials for researchers. A few examples:

Mitchell I. Bonner Papers, 1975-1990s. Textual materials and photographs primarily documenting the San Francisco Bay Area's Southeast Asian American communities, focusing on Laotian Americans.

Kim Hà Papers, 1983-1997. Manuscript of Kim Hà's published account of her family's escape from Vietnam by land to refugee camps in Thailand.

Brigitte Marshall Papers, 1980s-1990s. Printed and audiovisual materials documenting refugees (primarily Hmong) in camps in Thailand and their resettlement in California, mainly in the Central Valley.

Southeast Asian Resource Action Center (SEARAC) Records, 1975-1996. Files of this major center located in Washington, D.C. which was established to assist resettlement of refugees nationwide.

We Welcome All Visitors

Users of the Southeast Asian Archive include college and university students and faculty, K-12 teachers and students, social service agencies, community activists, the media, and law firms. No credentials or approvals are necessary for access to the Archive, but a UC library card is required to check out circulating materials. Circulating materials also may be requested through Interlibrary Loan. Most materials can be photocopied or scanned.

Community Outreach

Southeast Asian communities have given much to the Archive in terms of knowledge, contacts, expertise, and collection donations. In return, the Archive gives back as actively as possible.

An Advisory Board composed of community members and academics was formed in 1993 to enhance the Archive's outreach efforts, maintain an active contact between the community and the university, and assist in obtaining materials.

Tours of the Archive are frequently given to classes, community members, campus visitors, and others.

The Archive's website (seaa.lib.uci.edu) describes the collections in detail, including extensive guides to the archival materials, thesaurus for the Vertical File materials, and a link to SEAADoc, a free educational resource of 1,500 visual images and 4,000 pages of searchable text selected from the Archive.

The Southeast Asian Archive in Print

Archibold, Randal C. (1997, January 26). Preserving pieces of refugee experience. *Los Angeles Times*, pp. A1, A20.

Bà Anne Frank - Đại Học UCI giới thiệu thư viện - Văn Khố Đông Nam Á. (1999, April-May). *Văn Hóa* 44, A47-48.

Fujita-Rony, Dorothy, & Frank, Anne. (2003). Archiving histories: The Southeast Asian Archive at University of California, Irvine. *Amerasia Journal* 29(1): 153-164.

