

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

After the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, rural China has been the target of dramatic change through development policies in agricultural production. The major transformation in the agricultural sector was the shift from a Maoist planned economy to Deng Xiaoping's market economy after 1979. Rural production changed from a collective system, called "Everybody Eating From the Same Public Pot" (*dagefan*), to the Household Contract Responsibility System ¹(*Jiating chengbao zerezi*). Individual households gained access rights in land-use and forest management. The individual household replaced the production team and became the basic unit of agricultural production and management in rural areas.

After 1979, household production has increasingly been encouraged. Individuals engaging in economic activity are no longer being treated as the "capitalist tail." China adopted Deng Xiaoping's "Trickle-down" rural development policy, known as the "Permit Some Peasants to Get Rich First" (*yongxu bufengre xian fuqilai*) policy. The government has encouraged farmers to pursue numerous private ways to gain prosperity. Implementation of this policy allows households which are more industrious and more innovative along with, of course, those with better personal and economic ties, to utilize their skills, personal relationships, excess labor force, and comparative advantages to accrue wealth quickly.

Moreover, the state monopoly and planned procurement system has been replaced by free market trading². The function of the state dominated grain trade was canceled while private trade was allowed. This means using market signals to adjust agricultural production.

¹ **Household Contract Responsibility System (HCRS):** In 1979, production teams distributed agricultural land among households depending on family size and/or family labor size, including outside labor sources, but ownership remained collective. Farmers have been given the right to till the contracted land for 15 years. This contract required households to pay grain or tax to the state following the contract quota every year, the size determined according to the land size. Households were free to trade their surplus output and make all decisions about production. The 1994/1995 state renewal of the land contract system, offered a 10 to 50 year term extensions from the expiration of the original contract.

² **China's Market Economy:** In the Maoist era official policy kept industrial wages and food prices artificially low by replacing free market operations with state compulsory agricultural procurement, planned production, and food rationing for urban support. After 1985, China's government began to reform the rural market to allow for private trade. In 1991, the policy to establish a socialist market economy was intended as a transitional stage to the country to becoming a real market economy.

This reform included: 1) increases in quota and above quota prices, reduction in quota levels; 2) negotiated procurement of surplus production of grains, oils, and most other commodities, and 3) flexibility in privately marketing surplus production of all categories of agricultural products (Watson, 1988). As a result, many local markets were opened in each township. Farmers could sell their products and buy daily commodities on local markets. Therefore, while farmers gave a certain amount of grains to the state as agricultural tax and a certain amount to the collective as common accumulation funds, they could have the excess products for consumption and sell in the local market as well. In this way, household production tended to vary with the level of market demand.

China's forest and land use policies have changed many times since 1979. Land and forest management became privatized. In 1980, farmland beginning to be allocated to households by contract. Based on the household contract responsibility system, usufruct rights to farmland have been re-distributed from collectives to households for 15-20 years, although ownership of land still remains with the state. But each farm household is allocated "Responsible Mountain" for forest management. Farmers manage the farmland for their own needs and benefit. As long as the grains disbursed to the state follow the contract, farmers can increase or decrease their land-use according to market demands and their own economic objectives. Hence, farmers have been given greater power to decide how to use land and what crop to grow. This reform has led to a great increase in agricultural output and rapid development in rural China. It has also led agricultural production to become more commercial, resulting in more dynamic land use.

In 1983, the "Two-mountain System" (*Liangshanshitong*) was adopted as a major policy affecting forest management. After farmland was successfully distributed to individual households, the collective forestland also began to be redistributed in two ways: 1) as Responsibility Mountain¹, under which households protect forested areas in return for a share in future timber sales, and 2) as Freehold Mountain² for a household's own subsistence use. Another major forest policy, "3D"³ (*shanding*), was adopted in 1984, allowing each household

¹ Responsibility Mountain (*Zerenshan*) is allocated for individual management with some protection responsibility required, but with no contract or time-frame of use rights. It is not inheritable.

² Freehold Mountain (*Ziliushan*) is allocated to each household for individual management according to the number of legal family members with a land-use certificate. It is inheritable.

³ 3D (*sanding*) In March 1981, the Central Committee and the State Council promulgated the Decision on several issues related to forest protection and forestry development which, in the light of the long-lasting ambiguous ownership of mountains and forests and unsecured benefits of local laborers, has determined that the prime aim of rural forestry reform was to determine the ownership of mountains and forests, designate which mountain slopes were for the use of which households, and define a forestry responsibility system (in short, the "3D"s). The main content of the forestry responsibility system is: 1) clarified boundaries between state, collective, and nature reserve forests; 2) freehold forest land allocated to farmers and held by them on a secure basis, and 3) the spelling out of responsibility, rights, and benefits of forestry for both household and villages.

to receive a certificate (entitlement) from the local government for a certain area of forestland. Farmers can now exploit the usufruct aspects of the freehold mountain for themselves or rent farmland out to other people, but it cannot be sold. Additionally, in 1985 the government declared the policy: "The tree follows the land, whoever plants them owns them and the management is also up to him" (*shuizhong shuiyu*). In this way, the tenure of forest resources was made clear, and the responsibility, rights, and benefits of the farmers for forest operation were truly integrated. In fact, forest resource being allocated to households has certainly accelerated the development of the forest economy and encouraged farmers hard cultivation on their own forestland.

Later in 1985, a primary "Socialist Market Mechanism" was established. The timber market opened gradually in rural areas. Farmers could exchange timber and other forest products freely on the local market. They could rent their forestland to outside investors or cooperate with other families. They could grow whatever crops seem to be the most profitable on their fields according to market demand. They have become peddlers of forest products in the local market (Potter, 1993). In practice, the opening of the timber market not only impelled forest production, but also improved the farmers' concept of commodity economy. In practice, many trial forest programs have been initiated in rural areas since 1989. Some private companies and specialized households (*zhuan yehu*) were encouraged to make investments in barren mountains in the early 1990s. They rented Freehold Mountain from households and planted trees by themselves or cooperated with the farming households. These policies led land-use and forest management to become more complex and increased commercial practices in rural areas. The content of forest production has also changed from simple timber production to more diverse production, responding to rural and urban consumers' demands.

After the flooding of the Yangtze River in 1998, China's forest policies changed from an exploitation-oriented to resource conservation approach. As a response to possibility of flooding, the policy of "Natural Forest Protect Program" (NFPP) was adopted. The natural forests, as well as the man-made forests near the river, have been protected. All forest policies now pay more attention to environmental and biodiversity conservation. In practice, a national reforestation campaign has been launched in China. Where farmland slopes over 25 degrees, trees were required to be planted in 2000. Farmers planting one *mu* of trees can obtain 50 yuan to cover the cost of seedlings and every year they can receive 300 *jin* in grain or corn for

8 years from the local government. Of course, many households have joined this campaign. They grow trees on their own farm, especially fruit-trees, because fruit-trees grow faster and yield economic return quickly.

The “Great West China Development”(xipu dakaifa) policy has been implemented since 2000. This strategy pays more attention to ecological conservation as its first priority. The purposes of this strategy are to achieve economic growth, unity of ethnic groups, social stability, and finally, fulfill the vision of shared prosperity and wealth between the coastal and the western areas. In the Proposal of the 10th Five-Year Plan for State Economy, the Central government declared: “we will enhance ecosystem construction and environmental protection; pull out all stops to planting trees and reduce poverty, implement the NFPP, and increase the forest cover rate”(Report of the 15th Party Committee). Thus, the government has reduced timber production and controlled the logging quotas. Many reforestation and economic development projects have been introduced to rural areas, especially in remote or ethnic areas of west China. So, the plantation has become one of the mainstream activities of rural development. However, economic structure changes have brought drastic impacts on human life. After the rural transformation to a market economy, it is interesting to observe how it has changed the livelihood of farmers in China, and how these farmers have responded to the transformation.

This study focuses on the predominant ethnic group in Guizhou, the Miao (Hmong) people who have a long tradition in forest cultivation and have adopted fruit-tree cultivation. Their responses to the state’s policies on rural development and forest management, along with the concurrent penetration of the market economy, can reveal the dynamics of rural transformation and its local meanings. These responses and transformations differently have implications for national policy.

1.2 Research Problem Justification

Guizhou is the center of the Miao population in China. According to the population survey in 1998, 2.6 million Miao live in Guizhou, accounting for 48 per cent of the total population of Miao in China, which is 5.4 million. Miao people who live in Guizhou have a long history of forest management. Based on their living environment in mountainous areas, planting and logging have been major activities and the source of livelihood for the Miao in Guizhou. They have a custom of tree cultivation, especially Chinese fir (*Cunninghamia*

Lanceolata) cultivation. Fir forestry is central to both spiritual and economic life in Miao society. They live in post-pile houses (*diaojiaolou*), use fir furniture, and use fir branches as firewood. In Miao communities, fir forestry is the symbol of economic prosperity. A nice fir house indicates the households' economic status.

In recent years, in response to market intervention and state rural development policy change, the Miao farmers rationalize their behaviors of forest management. The Miao farmers started to change from their traditional fir management to fruit-tree cultivation, because fruit-trees are fast growing and provides quick returns. Farmers have cut the less-economically valuable trees on their allotted land to grow the more profitable fruit trees. For them investing in Chinese fir is a long-term activity. They have to wait at least 18 years to enjoy the economic benefits. So farmers are happy to manage fruit-tree forests even though the overall income is lower than fir cultivation, but they can generate regular income every year. In addition, growing of fruit-trees also paint a green landscape which fits well with the government's reforestation campaign in the recent years. Growing of fruit-trees usually has been regarded as the main pillar of programs of strengthening the local economy and eliminating poverty by local government. Consequently, since the mid-1980s, and especially in the 1990s, fruit-tree based agroforestry has developed dramatically in many Miao communities in Guizhou.

However, market demand is a significant factor in agroforestry production. The uncertain price of fruit has led to both positive and negative changes in tree cultivation. In some Miao communities, overproduction of fruit has resulted in diminished market demand. Lots of fruit could not be sold or were sold at very low prices, so the Miao farmers' investment was not returned. Farmers now cut down trees with no economic value, grow other fruit trees again, change their land-use patterns, seek other earning activities, and sometimes encroach on forestland. Finally, Miao farmers gradually lose interest in forest management. In fact, a cycle has emerged in many communities of growing trees, --cutting trees down,-- growing trees again and then---cutting trees again. This practice seems to mirror the recent forest resource management transition in China after market reform. In this study, I am interested in exploring the way the Miao farmers have changed their forest use practice from timber tree planting to fruit-tree planting, and finally losing their interest in tree cultivation altogether.

There have been at least two approaches to explaining farmers' responses to an increasingly dominating market economy. A number of scholars have taken a "production approach" to explain farmers reactions and the consequences of rural development problems. This approach focuses on farm production systems. It puts an emphasis on resource use, productive relations, and labor organization change rather than local history and cultural diversity in social change. Suryanata's study (1994) on fruit-based agroforestry in Java describes market incentives which change the social relations of production, creating unexpected land-use patterns. Shifts in land-use also reflect individual responses to market opportunities. In her study of farming system changes after market reform in China, Wei Hu (1997) describes how market reform leads to land use and forest management change in local areas. The production change is a process that responds to political economic change. Farmers use land and manage their labor in accordance to their economic objectives. Production factors, i.e., land and labor, are directly determined by supply and demand. Farmer tree cultivation usually follows market demand. Zheng (1995) studies the implementation of the "Two Mountain System Policy" in a Jingpo village of Yunnan Province. He concludes that the Two Mountain System Policy has impacts on forest management. This policy has assured farmer land tenure security in forests and has also increased the productivity of forests. He also finds that with the implementation of this policy farmers change their behavior and their productive system. It has led to the degradation of the forest and a shift of forestland to plantation crops or commercial trees.

In order to understand local practices in more detail, some scholars have chosen to take an "interpretive approach" to explain farmers' responses to market economy as an action change. These scholars are interested in using the hermeneutic or meaning-centered approach to study how social life changes. They reject the positivistic approach and adopt the interpretive approach to understanding social reality. The interpretive approach emphasizes that social reality is not objectively given. It processes unfolding independently of actors' understandings of their social world. Social life is inextricably shaped by culture and meaning, since actors use their understandings to adjust to and change the world of which they are part. The interpretive approach encourages researchers to pay attention to local histories and cultures, developing models of social change from the bottom up rather than by contribution from empirical data. For example, Scott (1976) uses the concept of "moral economy" to explain the peasant perception of the world. He describes peasants as having a principle of "safety-first," and being just interested in securing their subsistence base.

Peasants have resisted the adoption of innovations or moves toward cash crops or rents which would leave them susceptible to the uncertain fluctuations of the capitalist market. Hefner (1990) has adopted this approach to understand peasant experiences of political and economic change from the pre-colonial period to today in Indonesia. He uses the interpretive approach to examine the forms and meanings of a people's way of life and the circumstances in their sustenance and change. Long (1992) adopts an action-oriented approach along similar line to explain farmer social action and agency. He argues that changes in social action is grounded in the everyday experience of the people. He utilizes the interplay between strategic action and social meaning to understand the formation and transformation of social identities. This implies addressing issues concerning the negotiation and struggle over self-image, and analyzing discursive practices. Long (1996) also points out that understanding farmer decision-making model requires an analysis of how farmers struggle over the social values of agricultural development.

The market economy and rural development policies have created great impacts on farmer tree cultivation practices, such as changing tree planting patterns, land-use, forest management, and the meanings of trees. Farmers have a "safety-first" principle and "subsistence ethic" (Scott, 1976). So while social structure changes, they will respond to it. As Anan (1989) points out, the way villagers in Northern Thailand have responded to market and state conservation policies is different according to their local systems, and that local responses are a dynamic process. Farmers respond to new policies and market demands quickly. Their responses are differentiated depending on their social situation, their access to resources, and their perceptions. So depending upon different situations, access, and perception of fruit-tree cultivation among the Miao in China, different people have different types of responses and methods of decision-making about land-use.

This study aims to investigate the change of fruit tree agroforestry practices in a Miao community of Guizhou Province. Within this framework, the study then concentrates on identifying and exploring the Miao people's differentiated responses to the market economy and rural development policies in China. To do this, this research examines Miao farmer behavior changes in tree farm management and their definition of "tree." These investigations contribute to an overall understanding of the process of Miao farmer responses to the market economy and rural development policies. In addition, the analysis tries to come to an understanding of how the Miao people interpret structural change through their actions and

meanings. A productive approach has been used to gain a detailed understanding of 'how' and 'what' practices have changed, such as, changes in land-use patterns, alterations in labor distribution and capital arrangement adjustment in the Miao community. This study not only attempts to understand what Miao people have done, but also know why they do it. Therefore, the interpretive approach is been adopted for analyzing this research. This approach supports the investigation of both productive practices and discursive practices to fully understand changes in agroforestry practices. In short, within the broader framework of the questions outlined above, this study specifically seeks to investigate the following questions: (1) How did the Miao farmers respond to the market economy and rural development policies in developing China? (2) What practices in fruit-based agroforestry management initiated by Miao farmers have changed in response to the market economy and rural development policies? And (3) how have Miao farmers made decisions about tree cultivation and how has the context of the market economy influenced their decision-making?

1.3 Research Objectives

This study has four major objectives that contribute to answering the three research questions outlined above:

- 1) To identify the socio-economic context of the Miao community in Tageba and the way in which it influence agroforestry practices.
- 2) To investigate the changes in productive practices and discursive practices in fruit-based agroforestry cultivation.
- 3) To identify the differentiated interpretations and meanings of fruit based agroforestry cultivation as Miao farmers respond to changes in market economy and rural development policies.
- 4) To analyze and identify the exogenous and endogenous factors affecting Miao farmer decision-making regarding tree cultivation and to analyze the process of Miao farmer strategies selection about the tree cultivation.

1.4 Research Methodology

As a member of Forest Department of Guizhou Province, I have always been interested in how people develop their relationship with forestry, and how farmers have managed and

thought about forests after the market reform in China. Thus, before I conducted my research, I spent some time to identify a possible research site, the one which would allow me to study the changes in farmer agroforestry practice. In September 2001, I went Guiyang and consulted with some of my colleagues at the Guizhou Province Forestry Department. I was introduced to Taijiang County in eastern Guiyang, which is one of the 69 counties in the province. Taijiang is known as the county of the Miao people. It has a long history of forest cultivation. Fir from this area is well known for its quality and was once an important item of export. Recently, farmers in Taijiang have adopted fruit tree cultivation in response to the market economy. However, poverty still remains one of the major problems in Taijiang.

In order to select a research site which was not too large for my study, I decided to choose Tageba as a community, which was the first to adopt fruit tree cultivation in Taijiang County. Around 78 per cent of the population are Miao, who have long history of fir cultivation. Like other communities in Taijiang, the farmers here have been gradually changing from traditional fir cultivation to fruit tree cultivation since the 1980s. However, the different villages in Tageba (Dade, Shangten, Xiaten, Shibanjiao, and Pingqiao) do not follow the same patterns of fruit tree cultivation. Two villages, Shangten and Xiaten still maintain traditional Chinese fir cultivation, while Dade and Shibanjiao have increasingly engaged in industrial fruit tree cultivation. Another village, Pingqiao, is not much interested in tree cultivation. Tageba exhibits the multiple conditions suitable for a comparative study of differentiated responses to the market economy.

I started to collect some general information from secondary data about Tageba and explored with the community authorities whether I could conduct my study there. After permission from the local authorities secured, I returned to Chiang Mai University and further developed my research problem and designed my plan for data collocation. I went back to collect data in Tageba in March 2002.

1.4.1 Fieldwork (*March to July, 2002*)

When I entered the field research site, I had to introduce myself to the villagers in different ways, depending on different contexts. Sometimes, I told them that I was a researcher and that I came to study village life. Most of the time, I introduced myself as a student to them. Seeing me as a student, villagers tended not to withhold information and did not expect a student to bring a project into their community. I found I am more comfortable in

this role and receive more cooperation from the villagers.

Conducting a study in a Miao community posed a problem at the beginning for I cannot speak Miao language. Despite the fact that my mother is a Miao, I was raised as a Han and learned Chinese in school since my childhood. On the other hand, only some villagers can speak Chinese well in Tageba. I had to rely on a few Miao farmers as interpreters. One of them is Mr. Ban Guijiang, who cultivated the largest pear farm in the Tageba community. He was not only my key informant, but also an excellent translator for me. Another was Mr. Lu Yihe, who also translated the Miao language for me for several days. Both helped me during my interviews in Tageba and before finishing my fieldwork I did not forget to give them some compensation for the loss of their time working for me.

I worked in the five villages of the Tageba community during the period of March to July 2002. I used the following methods to obtain different kinds of data: documentary research, household survey with interview guidelines, key informant interview, and participant observation.

(1) Secondary Data Collection

Before I started to collect my field data, I spent more than fifteen days collecting the secondary data. I collected official statistics and reviewed government historical records on agroforestry development in Tageba. I visited to several government offices in Guiyang City, Taijiang County and Taigong Township, and lastly in Tageba community. In Taijiang County, I visited the Forestry Bureau, Agricultural Bureau, Poverty Alleviation Office, and a Plantation Company. From these sources of information, I was able to write a history of agroforestry development in Tageba, as well as describe the ecological setting, demographic, socio-economic situation, and natural resources management of Tageba community.

(2) Key Informant Interview

To obtain more information on the history of Tageba, local knowledge about forest management, patterns and changes of production, I used key informant interviewing. I consulted with my two interpreters on how to identify my key informants in each village. I interviewed both official and traditional chiefs and elders in the villages. I also interviewed villagers who were knowledgeable about the history and situation of fruit-trees cultivation in Tageba. Among these key informants, Mr. Lu Shifa who was the first cultivator of fruit trees in Tageba, gave me a lot of information about agroforestry development in the area. I

developed a good relationship with him and often stayed with his family in order to learn more from him. Moreover, I also interviewed some staffs in the Taijiang County and Taigong Township government office, such as, the engineers at Forest Bureaus, the officers at County Government Offices. They are the people who have been implementing agroforestry development projects in Taijiang County and some of them are directly responsible for the pear industry project in Tageba.

(3) Household Survey

In order to obtain some quantitative data at the household level, I decided to conduct a household survey in five villages. I developed a guideline for the household survey, which aimed to illicit information on socio-economic status, family structure, household land use patterns, household tree cultivation, landholding size, livestock, subsistence pattern, on/off farm activity, and their interpretations of tree cultivation. It took one and a half months to do the household survey in Tageba.

The total number of households in Tageba is 249. I decided to choose the 35 % sample of the household. The total of 95 households were selected randomly from five natural villages. I interviewed 95 heads of household. See details in **Table 1-1**.

Table 1-1. The 95 Sample Households Selected from Five Villages in Tageba

Characteristic		Shangten village	Xiaten Village	Shibanqiao Village	Dade Village	Pingqiao Village
Households		62	43	51	93	26
Population		492	370	323	668	228
Land		645	688	821	852	639
95 Sample Households	Sample Households (95)*	21	15	17	33	9
	Population (853)	217	140	168	275	53
	Land of Households (93mu)	21	15	17	33	9
	Economics Status	Rich households (30)*	6	5	7	3
		Self-sufficient households (42)	11	6	7	4
		Poor households (23)	4	4	3	2

*The 95 sample households were selected from five villages. This number accounts for 35-40 percent of the total 429 households in Tageba. Sample households selected in each village are also in accordance with the principle of 35-40 percent. The poor households mean their income is less than average income of the total village, rich mean over average level.

(4) Focus Group Interview

The household survey renders some general data about household agroforestry practices. It also give me some information on social differentiation in the community, such as, rich and poor households, large and small landholding households, differentiation among groups in their access to recourses, and their differential practices in agroforestry cultivation. Based on

this information, I was able to identify different groups of farmers, so that I could have dialogue and discuss with them and could obtain more data on their values and perceptions and meanings about agroforestry practices.

I used focus group interviews to obtain detailed information on land use practice, tree cultivation, the way of farmers household interact with the market and their responses to development policies, as well as their experiences in participating in the market economy.

I categorized the farmers into several groups according to different factors. Then I invited them to join a small discussion group. I was the one who posed questions to them and my interpreter helped translate my questions and facilitated the discussion. I was able to make comparisons between groups of households categorized. Furthermore, I paid attention to whether women's practices were differentiated or not. I had in-depth interviews and dialogues with different groups in order to understand the different meanings of agroforestry cultivation. These interviews show that even in same practice of planting tree, different actors depend on their condition, have different productive practices and discursive practices. They interpret tree cultivation on different ways depending upon their environment and social context. In reality, during these interviews, I obtained much useful information about the differentiated practices of farmers responded to market economy. It allowed me to better understand different groups' ways of responding to the market economy and development policies.

(5) Participant Observation

During my stay in Tageba, I also used participant observation to collect data. This method allowed me to actually see how the villagers adopted fruit trees, the way they used their land, their daily activities, and the social interaction among themselves and with outsiders, as well as the role of women in agroforestry. This method allowed me to verify the data which I collected from other methods. Doing participant observation also means that I participated in several social activities in the villages whenever time permitted. However, the fact that I spent three months in this community and I had to travel from one village to another, I cannot claim that I conducted participant observation in the full sense.

1.4.2 Data Analysis (*May to August, 2002*)

The data analysis was done in the research area, Guiyang City, and Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai, Thailand. Both the data from the five villages and the sample data

from the 95 households were analyzed. Data that connect to the conceptual framework was analyzed. The work includes: 1) to fulfill the study objective number 1, differentiation of context in which tree cultivation was identified; 2) to achieve objective 2, finding and arranging land use types, process of change in planting species; 3) to realize study object 3, analysis of differentiation of farmers access to resource and markets, households labor distribution, social relation transition, and capital arrangements; and 4) to understand objective 4, the practical differentiation among the five villages and groups (large landowner, middle landowner, landless farmers) as different ways of responded to market and policies. In addition, the factors that have attracted farmers to fruit-tree planting and influenced other decision-making were analyzed; farmer decisions to change their plantation patterns and their strategies for land-use and forest management have also been analyzed. These are in-depth analyses so as to understand why and how farmers agroforestry practices have changed over time. It is a need to identify the dominant forces behind these changes through an examination of the local history of forest management.

1.5 Organization of Thesis

This thesis is organized into seven chapters. The present chapter provides a brief background and justification of the research problem, research questions and objectives, including a brief explanation of the theoretical background and the research methodology. It also presents the methodology adopted for this research, and outlines what data was obtained during the fieldwork. These include research design, methods of data collection, fieldwork, data processing and analysis.

Chapter II reviews some relevant literature and presents the conceptual framework with which this study is concerned. The various viewpoints about China's rural development and forest management are reviewed. The concepts of access, needs discourse, and decision-making also are reviewed. Then, based on the literature review, an approach for agroforestry research is developed. This approach includes an investigation access to resource, needs discourse, and decision-making in agroforestry practice. These concepts and theories are applied to understand farmers' practices change in agroforestry cultivation both in productive level and discursive level. Finally, the conceptual framework was developed for the empirical study.

Chapter III provides a description of the socio-economic context and historical

transformation in the mountain and ethnic county of Taijiang. Then, it describes the background of rural development in Taijiang County and the general historical context of transition in Miao community, especially the introduction of forest and agroforestry based development in Taijiang County. A special region of agroforestry expansion, Tageba, is then described by outlining the place of agroforestry cultivation and the Miao residential centers in Taijiang. The ecological setting, socioeconomic background, cultural perspectives of tree cultivation in the Tageba community will be expressed. Also the roles and networks of the local market will be addressed. Finally, the five villages' transition and differentiation under market conditions has been introduced in order to present farmers' differentiated responses to market opportunities.

Chapter IV surveys the change in existing land use patterns, change in labor distribution, change in social relations, and describes how the Miao farmers have responded to the market economy, how farmers have managed their land, and arranged their household labor and capital. It examines the diversification and differentiation of responses within five natural villages and different groups in Tageba community. It also presents data on current trends in agroforestry development and access differentiation. Practically, the different practices within the group of large land, small land, as well as women are reflected. It also examines how Miao farmers negotiate or cooperate with outsiders in order to gain access to garden plots or harvests as well as labor force and social capital. In fact, under this process of agroforestry development, some new forms of resources management have emerged in rural areas, such as sharecropping, land rent and tree lease. By using detailed descriptive and statistical data, this chapter presents the different performance of groups or households. It presents that different access to resources leads farmers to adopt different practices of tree cultivation while they responded to market economy.

Chapter V examines discursive practices as well as local meanings in the Tageba community. People's practices are based on their understanding and perception; different people have different interpretations of tree cultivation. They interpret subsistence needs and markets in different ways. Thus, an identification is presented of people's various interpretations to better understand how and why farmers change their tree cultivation under market condition. Following is a description of narratives of agroforestry development, both the official discourse and local discourse. Also the local meanings about market and subsistence are presented. It also examines how farmers think about the market economy and

state development policies. The conflicts of forest management are analyzed. Lastly, the differentiation of how young generations interpret the market economy and agroforestry development is described.

Chapter VI analyzes how, under market reforms, farmers choose different strategies of tree cultivation. What factors have determined the land-use, labor arrangements, and capital distributions are also identified. Both external and internal factors have been examined. Next, an analysis of factors that affect household decision-making, including access to markets, information, technology, education, kin-relations, is made. Finally, a conclusion about how the Miao people have negotiated with this social change is offered.

Chapter VII, the final chapter, summarizes the main findings and examines their wider implications. Drawing on earlier material, results and findings of the previous chapters and theoretical propositions are synthesized to make to an overall conclusion. Policy implications and some suggestions for further study are set out.

Summary

This chapter has presented how this study was designed as a bridge between the theoretical background and empirical evidence from the field. The research problem, to transfer the real life phenomena into research activities has been justified, and, research questions and objectives have been identified. The methodology employed includes: document research, key informant interviews, and informal interviews. The theoretical background of agroforestry this study will be described in the next chapter to set the political and economic context for the present study. The theoretical debates that have been introduced in this chapter are combined so they can be used to understand why certain conditions may lead to or constrain change in practice. In short, this chapter links the research questions and the theoretical background discussed earlier to the specific research methods used in this study. It describes the research methods and procedures used including research design, operational definitions, and field survey, data processing and data analysis.