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Source: All photographs were taken by the author between October 2003 and May 2004.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AITPT	Assembly for Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of Thailand
CBNRM	Community Based Natural Resource Management
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
IAITPTF	International Alliance of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests
IMPECT	Inter Mountain Peoples Education and Culture Association of Thailand
INGO	International Non-Government Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
RFD	Royal Forest Department
SAO	Sub-district Administrative Organization

UNITS OF MEASUREMENT

Throughout this thesis the metric system has been used where applicable, with the exception of some measurements of area (*rai*) and yield (*tang*).

Area (*rai*)

1 *rai* = 1,600 m² = 0.16 ha = 0.395 acre

Yield (*tang*)

1 *tang* = 20 litres

Currency (*baht*)

From March 2003 until September 2004 the Thai baht fluctuated between 40 and 41 baht to US\$1.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Thai Language

<i>buat pa</i>	forest ordination
<i>chao khao</i>	hill tribe
<i>chat</i>	nation
<i>chao müang</i>	chief or lord of city, township or principality
<i>chumchon</i>	community
<i>ekalak</i>	identity
<i>kanjatkan pa</i>	forest management
<i>kanpathana</i>	development
<i>kasat</i>	King
<i>kham müang</i>	Northern Thai language
<i>khet raksa phan sat pa</i>	wildlife sanctuary
<i>khon müang</i>	lowland Tai in northern Thailand
<i>khwampenkhonthai</i>	Thainess
<i>khwamruammue</i>	cooperation
<i>liso</i>	refers to the Lisu ethnic group (Thailand)
<i>muang</i>	city, township, principality
<i>mu ban</i>	community administrative unit
<i>nai amphur</i>	district governor
<i>pa</i>	forest; wild, non-city area
<i>pai thiao</i>	to travel
<i>pho luang</i>	village headman
<i>rai</i>	a unit of area measurement equal to 1,600 m ² or 0.16 hectare or 0.395 acre
<i>talat</i>	market
<i>ta laeo</i>	hawk's eye star shaped bamboo woven symbols, commonly covered in chicken's blood and indicate areas where entry is forbidden (the same word is used in Lisu)
<i>tambon</i>	administrative sub-district
<i>thahan</i>	soldier
<i>thanon</i>	road
<i>thai yai</i>	Shan ethnic group
<i>watanatham</i>	culture
<i>uthayan haeng chat</i>	national park

Lisu Language¹

<i>a ja muew</i>	Lisu land classification, 'cold' land where opium can be grown
<i>apa mo</i>	Grandfather Spirit (village guardian spirit)
<i>apa mo hee</i>	Grandfather Spirit shrine
<i>bya su nei</i>	Tai spirit incorporated into Lisu cosmology
<i>chae loseu pha</i>	Lisu territorial spirit from northern Thailand's Doi Luang Mountain in Chiang Dao province
<i>cho mo cho ti</i>	village elders
<i>e da ma</i>	Forest Guardian Spirit
<i>e da ma ja zu</i>	ceremonial forest
<i>e ju</i>	clan
<i>e müe lua</i>	Lisu naming ceremony
<i>gapumüsu</i>	Lisu classification of Lisu from northern provinces in Thailand
<i>hee</i>	house
<i>i khu nei</i>	Inside spirits, tame or domesticated
<i>ja ku</i>	living area (place)
<i>ja zu</i>	community, village
<i>kaw nei</i>	Outside spirits, wild or non-Lisu origins
<i>ko pur</i>	Bamboo mat used in cleansing ceremonies placed on the road of the village
<i>leki mi</i>	forest
<i>lua</i>	ceremony
<i>lu muew</i>	Lisu land classification, 'hot' land where rice and corn can be grown
<i>meua</i>	Similar to the work müang in Thai, makes reference to a country, land or village
<i>moh mue</i>	Village priest
<i>nee kur</i>	property of the spirits
<i>nee pha</i>	Village spirit medium, 'nee' meaning spirits, 'pha' a male classifier
<i>nguaw kur</i>	personal property
<i>thai la chu</i>	Thailand (country)
<i>upumüsu</i>	Lisu classification of Lisu from southern provinces in Thailand
<i>wa</i>	place, or stay place
<i>wu sa pha</i>	God
<i>yaw kur</i>	property of other people or clans
<i>za me</i>	rice fields

¹ The words presented here are the author's own interpretation of the phonetic sounds of the Lisu language. For reference the author used several sources, the most beneficial of such were; Otome Klein Hutheesing (1990), and David Bradley et al. (1999).

Can one be simultaneously inside and outside the state? This is the dilemma of marginality ... Marginals stand outside the state by tying themselves to it; they constitute the state locally by fleeing from it. As culturally “different” subjects they can never be citizens; as culturally different “subjects,” they can never escape citizenship.
(Tsing 1993:26)

How are understandings of locality, community, and region formed and lived? To answer this question, we must turn away from the commonsense idea that such things as locality and community are simply given or natural and turn toward a focus on social and political processes of place making, conceived less as a matter of ‘ideas’ than of embodied practices that shape identities and enable resistance.
(Gupta and Ferguson 1997: 6, cited in Lowe 2003:109)

When you ride a tiger you have to hold on with all your strength, because if fall off you will be in even greater trouble.
(Village leader, Ban Sai Ngam, January 2004)

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OVERVIEW

When I arrived in Thailand in 1999 to complete my final year of undergraduate studies at Chiang Mai University, I was unaware of the political and social magnitude of the times for highland people and lowland farmers in northern Thailand: the struggles, anger, frustration, desperation, determination and strength of will, the building of alliances and networks locally, nationally and internationally with people sharing similar problems and obstacles, the desire for change, but also the assertion of identity. It was a pivotal time for highland people in Thailand, and these issues were to guide my personal life, as well as work and academic direction over the next six years.

It was the start of winter 2001 when I was first began visiting Lisu communities in Mae Hong Son province, northern Thailand. I was intrigued by the level interaction between state authorities and local people as I witnessed first-hand the construction of a “developed” community. Village members had gathered early that evening at the school to listen to an army officer from the Community Development Unit outline the planned development strategy for the community. In the background stood a heavily armed company from the Special Forces Unit sent to the village to eradicate opium fields. These two separate units were both stationed at the village school and operating under different mandates. Villagers sat quietly as the Community Development Unit leader spoke, his official mission was not political in nature, as he explained, “...we have come to develop the village (*phattanaa muu ban*), promote cooperation (*sang khwam ruam muer*) and community safety (*chum chon phlot phai*).”

The first step for development focused primarily on the physical appearance of the village, to make the surrounding area free of rubbish, for in a developed village the roads are clean. Roads and pathways were to be swept, and rubbish was collected and burnt by a representative from each household. The second step was to build

fences around each house to ensure that pigs and chickens could not roam freely throughout the village. The third step in the strategy was to paint green wooden signboards for each house indicating the name of the head of the household, the household number and the number of inhabitants. The fourth was for village members to start the construction of huts for the Community Development Unit to live in, since there was insufficient room at the school. The final step included holding workshops with village youth on the dangers and penalties of narcotic use, and related government policy. Participation in this development process was ensured, if not enforced.²

I remember my puzzlement with the implementation of state development models in this community, and at how the Lisu responded, following directions and undertaking what was required. At night, in hushed voices around the fire, villagers spoke of their fear of the army, their confusion and frustration, and they spoke of possible alternatives. “We will wait, they will leave soon,” a Lisu elder told me. From this one instance, the uncertainties that influence the lives and livelihoods of highland villagers in the forests of northern Thailand became clear. Although the political agenda of the development activities remained concealed, the linkage between development and national security prevalent in Thai politics was unmistakable. After a month the army left, their mission completed, satisfied with their accomplishment of community development in a remote Lisu village, for after

² When preparing my research proposal I was given a copy of Komatra Chuengsatiansup's PhD dissertation titled “Living on the Edge: Marginality and Contestation in the Kui Communities of Northern Thailand,” Harvard University 1998. This work assisted me greatly in my conceptualization and understanding of marginalization and ethnic minorities vis-à-vis the state in Thailand. It was however, his chapter on Development, Hermeneutics, and the Interpretive Construction of Citizenship (Chapter 6 pp. 322-380) where he outlines an experience, almost identical to my own involving state-led community development almost 10 years earlier and on the other side of the country (pp. 322-326) that I found most affecting. The significance of this similarity solidified my understanding of state-led community development models in rural areas, political ideology and underlying policies and approaches to ethnic minorities in Thailand.

all “Liso [Lisu] are the most difficult ethnic group to develop” (Army officer, Community Development Unit, Ban Doi Phii Luu, 1-2 December 2001).³

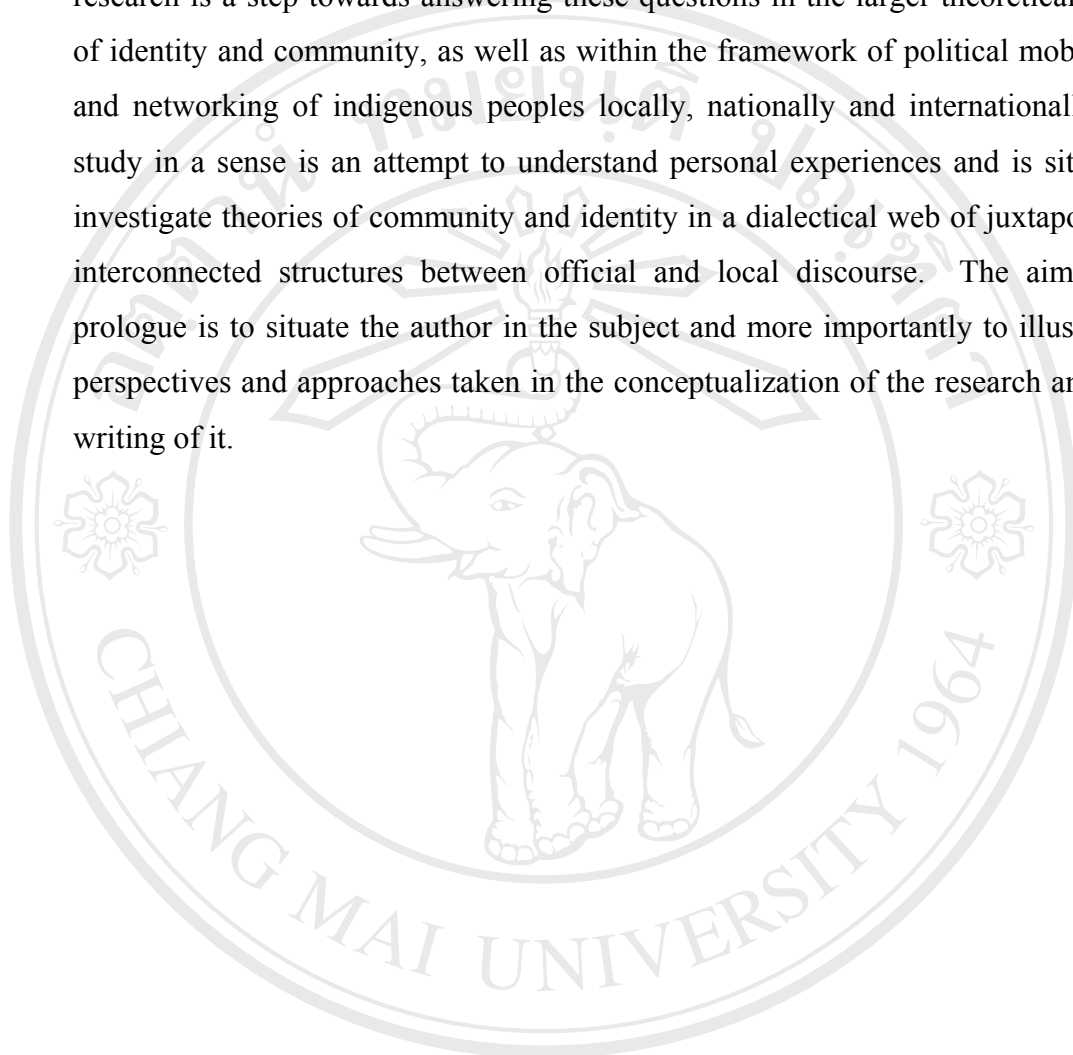
Preliminary research for this study was conducted over three months from March 2003 in several Lisu villages located in Mae Na Terng sub-district, Pai district, Mae Hong Son province, northern Thailand. During this time, roads to the village were blocked, cars entering and leaving the area were searched, personal details were taken and recorded (in “secret places” in “secret files”), entry fees for foreigners were boldly collected, the rains started and rice was planted. It was the final phase of the Thaksin Shinawatra (Thai Rak Thai) Government’s “War on Drugs: To be Number One” policy; this war was being waged in all of the Lisu villages I was visiting. During this time, two army battalions, the Special Forces Unit 514, and the Community Development Unit, had moved into the area and established permanent camps in two of the three nearby Lisu villages. Relocation and resettlement of highland communities was no longer discussed in hushed voices but declared on loud speakers at community meetings by army and forestry officials.

Highland communities, and those people who have found themselves placed or pushed to the edge of society have responded in diverse, creative and multiple ways: protests, marches, rallies, civil actions, and the forming of alliances and networks active at varying levels and degrees of participation. This has produced a dimension of place consciousness to multiple sites, or multi-consciousness, in an increasingly integrated society expanding the levels of contract, this is shown by minority peoples relationships to locality, and the interconnection between identity, community, migration, clan and kinship networks, along with membership in alliances and organizations local, national and international in scope and direction.

It is from this beginning that the following research grew. How boundaries and place are articulated, and are there different interpretation and conceptualizations of boundaries? What is the significance of fixing people to place, and in turn how

³ Extract from an interview with a member of the Community Development Unit, December 2001, Ban Doi Phii Luu, Mae Na Terng Sub-district, Pai District, Mae Hong Son Province.

does this contribute to multiple interpretations of community and shifting representations of identity within the geo-political boundaries of the state? This research is a step towards answering these questions in the larger theoretical context of identity and community, as well as within the framework of political mobilization and networking of indigenous peoples locally, nationally and internationally. The study in a sense is an attempt to understand personal experiences and is situated to investigate theories of community and identity in a dialectical web of juxtaposed and interconnected structures between official and local discourse. The aim of this prologue is to situate the author in the subject and more importantly to illustrate the perspectives and approaches taken in the conceptualization of the research and in the writing of it.



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