# CHAPTER II

LAHU RESETTLEMENT IN NORTHERN THAILAND

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter,the history of Lahu migration movements before the twentieth century will be explored. The aim will be to see how the relationship between the highland and lowland people in this area, in terms of power relations, hasdeveloped, what elements have influenced this relationship, and how therelationship process has actually affected the Lahu. Within the continuum of power relations and migratory movementsacross more than three centuries, the Lahu have used different tactics to survive.The development of a political organization and the diversification of the cultural identity of the Lahu, such as sub-group divisions and religious practices, can be seen by tracing the history of their migration patterns.

Another history that will be explored in this chapter is the history of 'highland development' in Thailand. The aim here is to understand how people in the northernThai highlands have been recognized by the State and what kind of technologies of power has been used over them. In the Golden Quadrangle Area, the power relationship between highland and lowland people has largely been implemented since just before the formation of the ThaiState. After the emergence of the nation state, with bordersmarked out in the area, the highlands and

lowlandsbegan to developa closer relationship and, especially in the case of Thailand, the
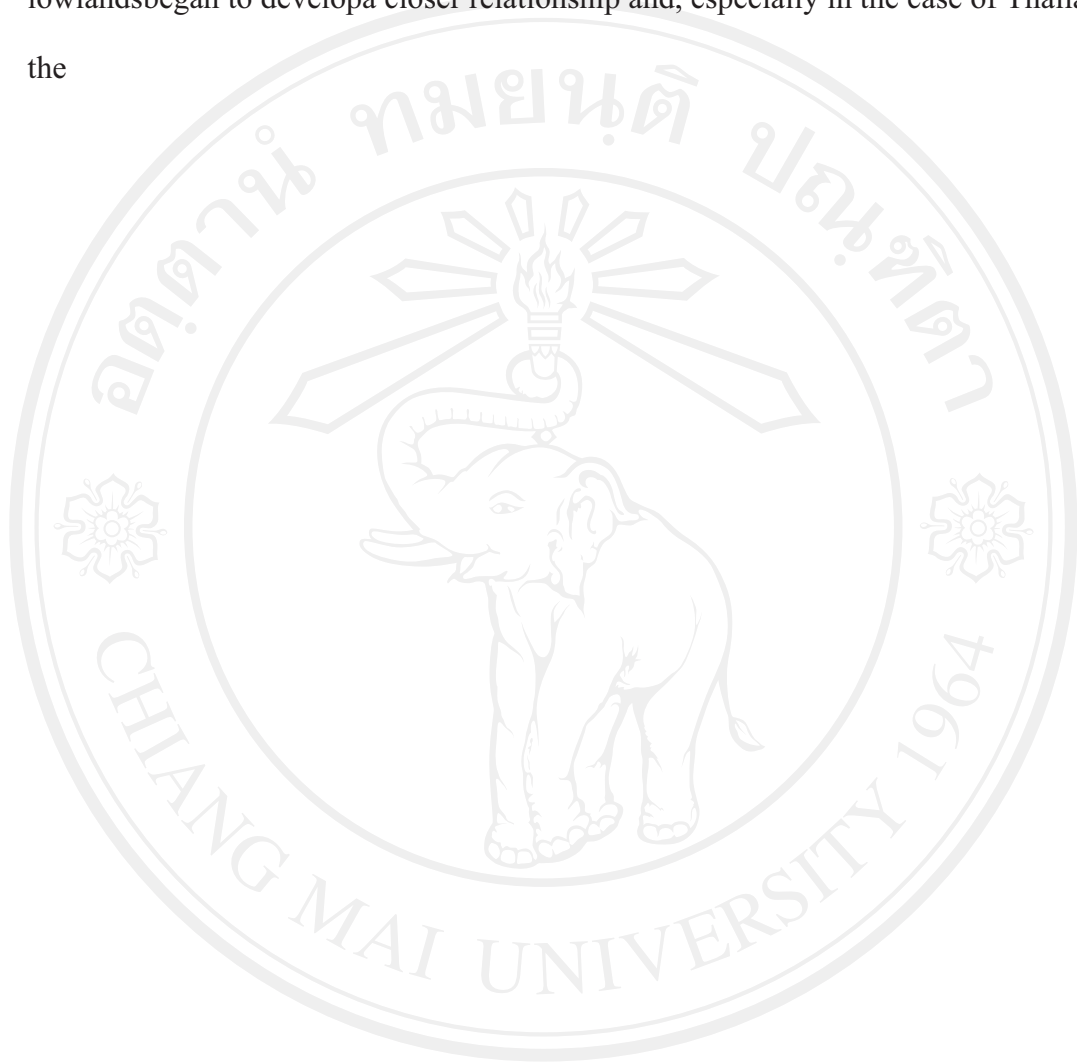
Thai Government and international organizations, as well as globalization forces, began to affect the lives of those living in the highlands, in quite a serious way.

The chapter is divided into two parts. In the first part, after the introduction of the Lahu, the history of Lahu migration movements will be traced back, and as part of this, political incidents and religious transformationsamong the Lahu will be highlighted, in terms of the relationships amongst themselves, their relationships with the authorities, as well as with the forces of globalization.In the second part, the inter-ethnic relationship between those living in the highlands and those in the lowlands will be examined, by focusing on the case ofThailand. In the name of 'development', many projects of 'inclusion' or 'exclusion'with regard to the highland people have been implemented, and these have influenced the highland-lowland relationship, leading to it becoming more intense. The chapter aims to understand the background toa phenomenon in which Lahu women have developed the space to engage in small-scale commercial activity in the Chiang Mai urban area.

2.2 Who are the Lahu?

The origins and migration movements of the Lahu have been explored by many scholars. In particular, Walker (2003), Kataoka (2006) and Nishimoto (2009) have summarized the secondary data obtained by Chinese scholars and Christian missionaries, plus their research data, in some detail. The migration of the Lahu within Thailand has been reported upon by Sanit (1984), Hoare (1985) andthe Tribal Research Institute (1991). Tracing the history of Lahu migration movements is important, not only to see how the relationshipsbetween people with different levels of power have developed, but also to reveal the level of dynamism regarding Lahu

identity through their migration.

The 'Lahu';the group of people who are the focus of this study, are one of the groups of hill-dwelling people in southwest China, as well as upper-northern mainlandSoutheast Asia. In Thailand, the Lahu are often called *Mussur* by thenorthern Thais and sometimes by themselves, as well as other highland ethnic groups. Linguistically the Lahu language belongs to a branch of the Tibeto-Burman family. This, like the Karen language, is part of a 'supergroup' which can be divided into many different sub-groups[15](Bradley 1983:49). A division of the Lahu group occurred during the process of migrating southwards over long distances from China. Throughout this migration,afterthe eighteenth century, the Lahu always interacted with, not only other hill dwelling peoples, but also valley dwelling peoples such as the Han Chinese and Tai, who were usually been dominant over the Lahu and the other highland ethnic groups. The Lahu have been influenced by these groups of people culturally, and have absorbed many elements into their own lifestyles (Walker 1992). Such cultural integration by the Lahu has produced diversity among the Lahu sub-groups and shaped their ethnic identity (Walker 2003,Nishimoto 1998).

The Lahu are now dispersed within China and neighboring countries such as Burma, Thailand, Laos and Vietnam (Table 2.1). Some Lahu have also resettledin Europe as well as the United States (personal communication 2008,Pathiphat 1991:4

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[15]According to some scholars, the number of sub-groups is not stable; Walker(2003:99) has mentioned of 23 while Bradley(1979 in Walker 2003:99) has listed 27 groups. These sub-groups belong to either the Lahu Na (Black Lahu) or Lahu Shi (Yellow Lahu) (Walker 2003:94). The division of these two mainstreams is categorized by linguistic data. However, such a division does not correspond with the sociological point of view. For example, Walker (2003) has indicated several socio-cultural differences between the Lahu Nyi (Red Lahu) and Lahu Sheleh, who linguistically belong to the same group of Lahu Na, such as their dress patterns, housing structures, patrifocality, and origins.

in Nishimoto 2009:43). The total number given for the Lahu population is somewhere between 700,000 to 800,000 andaround 12.5%of themlive in Thailand (Thai Government 2002, in Nishimoto 2009:26). In terms of a beliefs system, the Lahu believe in *G'uisha*, the high God, and various spirits. Many Lahu Nyi and Lahu Sheleh follow the traditional methods of worship and rituals, using beeswax candles and joss sticks. Meanwhile many Lahu Na and Lahu Shi have converted to Christianity, interpreting *G'uisha* as the Christian God. Most of them converted when they were in Burma - influenced by Western missionaries.

Country	Population	Source
China	453,705	(Chinese Government 2000)
Burma	170,000-250,000	(Smith 1997 [1994]:47-48)
Thailand	102,876	(Thai Government 2002)
Laos	16,000	(Chazee 1999:133-134)
Vietnam	5,400	(Dang et al. 2000:248)
USA	more than 1,500	(Cooper and Cooper 1996:19)
Taiwan	300	(McCoy 1972:133)
Total	**749,781-829,781**	

Table2.1:The Lahu Populationacross Seven Countries

(Source: Nishimoto 2009:27)

Over time, the Lahu have practiced hunting and gathering in forests, as well as swidden agriculture, planting several kinds of cropsin the same field such as rice and vegetables, as well as opium[16]. After the Thai Government launched its highland

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[16]The Lahu used to be one group who grew opium in northern Thailand.

development policies, many opium growers were encouraged to cultivate new fields, opening up the forest and cultivating substitute cash crops. As a result of engaging in the market economy, and with population growth, it has become difficult for the Lahu to follow their traditional way of life in the highlands. As a result, nowadays there are an increasing number of Lahu in Thailand who rely on wage labor in the cities and on wet-rice cultivation, rather than their traditional way of life (Nishimoto 2009:27). At the same time, the stereotypes created and sustained bythe Thai Government have penetrated the Lahu consciousness, developing into afeeling of inferiority which is shared among the Chrisitian Lahu in Thailand (Nishimoto 1998).

Thai nationality is important for the Lahu people in Thailand.Those who have citizenship have full rights, and can gain access to various services, such as healthcare and education, plus to economic activities. However, there are still many people within the highland ethnic groups, including the Lahu, who have not been granted Thai nationality[17]. Among the six highland ethnic groups who are categorized as 'hill tribe' in Thailand, one-third of the total populations have not been granted Thai nationality[18].

Throughout their transnational migration movements, not only political but

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[17] Highland ethnic groups are classified through their Identification cards: a 'white card' indicates Thai nationality, a 'sky blue card' is the highlanders' identification card, a 'red-framed-green card' is the highland communities' identification card, and there is even an 'alien' card which allows the holder to work in Thailand without an ID card. (This information was obtained from an NGO with whom I studied regarding the problems of obtaining Thai nationality for highland ethnic groups, in 2003.) Nowadays, according to the Regulation of Central Registrations Office(Thai Government 2005), all cards for non-Thai citizen (sky blue card, red-framed-green card, alien card and another fourteen different kinds of ID card) can be classified together into a 'pink card', which indicates the unidentified status of the holder in the registry.

[18] According to the Department of Provincial Administration (Thai Government 2003:9), the number of highland ethnic groups who had not been granted Thai citizenship by 2003 was 377,677, which constituted 36.5% of the total population of highland ethnic groups.

also religiouselements have influenced the Lahu, and both elements are intertwined. Based on their own belief in *Guisha* and in*ne* (spirits), the Lahu were originally strongly influenced by Mahayana Buddhism, and Christianity and millenarianism have occurred through the political and religious movements.

Sometime during the second half of seventeenth century to early eighteenth century,Mahayana Buddhism was introduced to the Lahu in the westernregion of the LancangRiver, by Monk Yang Deyuan. He built a mother temple in Nanzha which was "the centre for [the] dissemination of Buddhist ideas among the mountain peoples of the Lancang area, principally the Lahu but also the Wa" (Walker 2003:324). Among the Lahu, Monk Yang Deyuanwas regarded as the embodiment of *Guisha* and took this role in order to appoint the head of the village[19], leading to the development of the Lahu political system[20] into a politico-religious organization. The recognition of a Buddhist monk as the embodiment of Buddha, as well as the recognition of Buddha as *Guisha* among the Lahu, was another development in this organization's formation (Kataoka 2006:47). Centered around the Nanzha temple, another four temples were built and formed the hub for an organization called the *wufo* (five temples) (Kataoka 2006:47, Walker 2003:328), and these temples became the centers for a revolt by the Lahu (Nishimoto 2009:36-37). Led by the monk leaders of the organizations, the Lahu organized revolts against the local Shan rulers, as well as the central authorities of the Qing dynasty, until its end in the nineteenth century. Each time a revolt occurred, it was suppressed by the central authorities and a temple was demolished and in response, another temple became the mother temple, with a new

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[19]It was not only monk Yang Deyuan, but also other monks who established the politico-religious organizations were also regarded as the embodiment of *Guisha*.

[20] Before being influencedby Mahayana Buddhism, the Lahu used to operate a political system in which the head of the village also held the post of religious leader (Kataoka 2006:47).

leader appointed; however, the more revolts that were organized by the Lahu and then suppressed, the more control as well as oppression was exercised by the central authoritiesover the Lahu. In the end, the Lahu politico-religious organizations were all destroyed, and fell under the direct control of the central authoritiesin the area.

Many monk leaders who led the organizations were believed to have magical powers,a fact which attracted many Lahu people to follow them. Villagers believed that there was the shadow of *G'uisha*in their magical powers (Walker 2003:313-314). Such recognition was commonly placed on the religious leaders, who were not only Buddhist monks for the organizations, but also religious leaders among the traditional Lahu in the twentieth century (Ibid:507-538). Charismatic religious leaders with supernatural powers have been influential in terms ofdevelopment of millenarianismamong the Lahu. Among the key monks who led the Lahu during the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, Asha Fu cu is creditedwith the emergence of millenarianism among the Lahu. He was trained in the Buddhist doctrines in Nanzha and established a politico-religious organization in Ximeng after fleeing from the oppression of the central authorities in 1875 (Walker 2003:333, Kataoka 2006:49, Nishimoto 2009:38). Before he died in 1888, he predicted the coming of enlightenment by *Guisha*[21]. Among the Lahu, who had experienced the failure of many revolts and suffered continuous oppression at the hands of the imperial Qing, this was interpreted as hope for salvation from *Guisha*, and he became the founder of the millenarianism movement among the Lahu (Lewis 1970:88 in Kataoka 2006:51). Kataoka (2006:52-53) explores how this prediction became the motivation for the

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[21]Kataoka (2006:51) cites the words of A sha Fu cu from Yohan (1976:5) that,"whenthe time comes a true *Guisha* will visit us by himself. A white man comes to our houses riding a white horse and holding a white book. On that time we will get the teaching of *Guisha*…' . The color white is a metaphor for the sacredness for the Lahu.

transformation to millenarianism, by looking at the international relations between Yunnan and western countries. During the late 1880s to early 1890s, control over the Menglian and Ximeng areas was contested between the Imperial Qing and the British. Many westerners thus entered this area during the process of contestation, and this made A sha Fu cu'sprediction seem credible among the Lahu, as they interpreted the westerners as the "white men" referred to in the prediction. This was one of the factors which led to the rise of millenarianismamong the Lahu, and several leaders with supernatural power emerged, as Walker (2003:505-547) and Nishimoto (2009:233-234) explore. Some of them, as "warrior messiahs" (Walker 2003:514), led their followers and revolted against lowland authorities, as mentioned in last section.

The prediction of Asha Fu cu was also interpreted as the coming of Christianity. After 1904, there wasa mass-conversion to Christianity among the Lahu in Kengtung, Burma:"It occurred in the extension of a cult movement which was descended from Buddhism from that time on A sha Fu cu"[22] (Kataoka 2006:58). At this time, William Young, an American Baptist Missionary, who had been sent to preach in Kengtungafter 1901, was regarded as the "white man", at the same time the Bible was also interpreted as the "white book". Many conversionsalso occurred in Yunnanafter 1920, when Young started to preach in Menglian (Ibid:58-59).

2.3 The History of Lahu Migration to Mainland Southeast Asia

The migration of the Lahu has been recorded in Chinese references since the eighteenth century. Although their history before the eighteenth century is regarded as pseudo-history (Walker 2003:54, Nishimoto 2009:35-36), Walker (2003:57),

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[22]Kataoka (2006:58) proved it through hearsay that "baptism will bring us ever-lasting food, ever-lasting soul and life" (Lewisesn.d.)", which is the slogan of the ideal order in millenarianism.

Nishimoto (2009:35-36) describes the origins and migration practices of the Lahu. It is assumed that the ancestors of the Lahu used to belong to the Qiang, an ethnic group who settled in the southeastern area of Qinghai Lake (Walker 2003:59, Nishimoto 2009:35). The Qiangundertook a southward migration due to the expansion of their authority and due to wars with other ethnic groups, settling in the area around present day Dali. Their migration continued from the third to fifth centuries until about the tenth century [23]. The area of Dali between the YalongRiverto the east and JinshaRiverto the south is where the Lahu gained independence from the Qiang. After this, the Lahu started their southward migration again, and this time, the Lahu people separated into two groups, who went different ways. It is said that this separation occurred after the emergence of two large sub-groups, the Lahu Na and Lahu Shi. Both Lahu groups then began to interact with the Tai[24] during the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries.

In the middle period of the Qing dynasty, many Lahu settled to the east and west of the LancangRiver, near the current Burmese border. In the eastern area,which includedJinggu, Zhenyuan and Jindong, a system of direct control by the central authorities called *GaituGuiliu* was implemented, and officials of the central authority were appointed to rule the area, instead of the*tusi*, the local ruler. Meanwhile in the west, which includedShuangjiang, Lancang and Menglian, the*tusi* system continued, as Shan *tusi* were appointed. While under the control of the Shan *tusi*, the Lahu developed their political autonomy through the influence of Mahayana Buddhism,

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[23]In Lahu legend, this area is called *SuhHk'awSuh Law* (seven mountains and seven rivers), in which the number seven is a metaphor for "multitudes" (Zhang 1994:46 in Walker 2003:61).
[24]Several Tai states emerged in the lowlands of Yunnan and the northern parts of mainland Southeast Asia after the thirteenth century (Daniels 1998:152). Among them, there were Shan autonomous principalities within Lahu settlement area, such asWeiyuan, Zhenyuan, CheLi, Gengma and Mengmeng (Kataoka 2006:47).

which was introduced into the area in the eighteenth century[25]. Most revolts were triggered as a result of oppressive control by the *tusi*. From the eighteenth to the twentieth century, over twentyLahu revolts were recorded (Wang 1983:243 in Nishimoto 2009:37). Revolts between 1725 and 1732 were triggered not just by the Lahu, but also the Tai and other ethnic groups. Revolts also occurred to the west of the Lancang River, and these seemed to include the participation of the Lahu Shi, but not the Lahu Na. Between 1796 and 1812, the Lahu Shi revolted, with the participation of some Lahu Na as well (Walker 2003:79). They tended to have leaders who were also Buddhist monks, as will be explained further in the next section. Other national concerns also influenced the emergence of Lahu independent political organizations, which led to the occurrence of some of the revolts. Between 1855 and 1873, the Panthay Rebellion occurred in Yunnan, and this weakened the Shan states and paralyzed the administration of the central authorities in Yunnan. The Lahu in the highlands took this as an opportunity to build independent political organizations, and among them, the leader of the organization in the Mengmeng highlands was recognized as the most influential, where there were also several Lahu political organizations (Kataoka 2006:48). A concern over border demarcations between the Qing dynastic area and colonial British Empire in Burmaemerged in the 1880s[26], andthe leaders of the Lahu political organizations in Mengmeng and the Menglian highlands were targeted to be under the control of the Qing dynasty, in order to prevent them from opposingit and takingthe side of the British. The leader of the

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[25] Mahayana Buddhism was introduced from the south and moved north, starting inSri Lankathen moving to the Mon states in lower Burma in the eleventh century. It was introduced to the Tai in the Tai Cultural Area during the fourteenth to fifteenth centuries (Daniels 1998:164-165).
[26] As a result of the Third Anglo-Burmese War (1885-1890), upper Burma was colonized by British in 1886. Because of the weakness of the *tusi* and the power of the independent political organizations in eastern part of Yunnan, the central authorities in Qing dynasty worried that the Yunnan area may be taken by the British during the process of border demarcation (Kataoka 2006:48, 50-51).

organization in the Mengmeng highlands resisted the control of the central authorities of the Qing Dynasty, but, in contrast,the leaders of the organizations in the Menglian highlands cooperated with the central Qing authorities[27], having been conciliated by the authorities in order to defeat the leader of the organization in the Mengmeng highlands (Ibid:49-50). As a result of the suppression of the revolts, many Lahu were killed, some decided to stay under control of the authorities and some fled southward in order to be free from control and oppression. The organizations' autonomy was gradually lost through such political incidents (Nishimoto 2009:39).

The new settlement zone for the Lahu who migrated from Yunnan to Burma was an area east of the SalweenRiver (Nishimoto 2009:41). In this areathey encountered Christian missionaries and many converted to Christianity as a result. During World War II, the Christian Lahu fought against Japanese and the Communists, under the command of US Christian missionaries who supported the Allied Forces and the Kuomintang (KMT). Meanwhile, and according to research by Nishimoto (Ibid:42), the non-Christian Lahu were taken to work for the Japanese army. Even after World War II, because they had settled in the Shan states, they experienced instability caused by internal wars, such as those between the Burmese and Shan, as well asbetween the Burmese and the Communist Party of Burma (CPB). Attacksbythe CPB after 1968, as well as its occupation of the border area between Burma and China up to 1973, motivated many Lahu to migrate to Thailand, a movement which was called *aw molon*[28] (Kataoka 2006:67). To search of new land for their swidden agriculture was another reason why the Lahu migrated towards Burma as well as Laos

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[27] Leaders of the Lahu political organizations in Menglian highlands helped the central authorities in the suppression of the Panthay Rebellion during 1855-1873.

[28] It means 'mass-migration' although it literally means 'mass-group' (Kataoka 2006:80).

(Nishimoto 2009:41); however, political tensions continuedto influence the lives of the Lahu and this became the main reason for their migration over this period, as it had been before.

2.4Resettlement in Northern Thailand

Themigration of the Lahu from Burma into Thailand has occurred since the end of the nineteenth century (Nishimoto 2009:44-45). The Lahu Nyi and Lahu Sheleh migrated in advance of the Lahu Na and Lahu Shi, most of whom were Christian. It was rare to see revolts against the central authorities by the Lahu in Thailand, although their life was influenced by national politics. However, some of the Christian Lahu wereincorporated into the military KMT hierarchy[29] in the 1960s, and the descendants of William Young had a strong influence on them.Some worked as spies for the Central Intelligence Agency(CIA) through the son and grandson of William Young[30], and this was related to the Christian Lahu migrating towards Thailand on a continuous basis, in order to work for the son of William Young after 1953 (Adul 1995:1 in Kataoka 2006:73-74). This finally led to the mass-migration of the Christian Lahu in 1973, as mentioned before. The Thai Government tacitly allowed the KMT to stay in Thailand, although it occupied the production and distribution of opium in order to help the CIA arm itself[31] (Ibid:69). The presence of the KMT was profitable for the Thai Government, since at the time it was struggling

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[29] After theremoval of the KMT by the Burmese Government, with the cooperation of the Communist Party of China in 1960, most KMT members were sent to Taiwan, but two troopsrefused to do this and instead moved in Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai (Taylor 1973:5962 and Kanchana 1990:30-33, in Kataoka 2006:70).

[30] Information from Yunnan collected by the Lahu was taken to Gordon Young, the grandson of William Young, translated for him and submitted to the CIA (Kataoka 2006:73).

[31] The tacit permission given by the Government for the activities related to opium production was kept secret, since it contradicted the Government's formal policy of opium prohibition (Kataoka 2006:71).

to prevent the Communist influence spreading into the country. Afterthe late 1960s, terrorism activities carried out by the Thai Communist Party intensified, and the KMT was informally used by the Thai Government to help remove the Communists (Ibid:70-73). Such informal Government actions towards the KMT might have been seen as "using barbarians to rule barbarians[32]" (Ibid:76). After the national security situation calmed down in the early 1980s, the border areas occupied by the KMT were gradually disarmed and came under Government control. By this time, the Lahu,who contributed much to the KMT cause, had become "out of use" and were discredited as a "troublesome existence"and given a negative image, categorized as*chaokhao*(Ibid:77-78).

By 1969, the Lahu in Thailand mainly lived in the highlands; located higher than 1,200meters above sea level (Sanit 1980:1). Some villages were chosen as model villagesin order to support the Government's highland development projects[33],but some Lahu decided to move to the lowlandsin order to gainthe benefits and convenience of a lowland life. Some migration from the highlands to the lowlandswas recorded (Sanit 1980, Hoare 1985) and Sanit (1980:2-4) analyzed the reasonsfor these migrations, finding that the movements occurred in order to gain political security and to come within reach of Government development support and more productive land and advanced agricultural techniques. Such migrations resulted a transformation of the agricultural production system, leading to economic improvements and the opportunity to send children for formal education (Ibid:5). He also found that the

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[32] This was a policy used to control non-Han ethnic groups in ancient China.

[33]Pahlo village, which is located in the highland of Chiang Dao District, Chiang Mai, was chosen to be the key village center for the Department of Public Welfare at the Ministry of Interior in the 1980s. As part of the developments implemented in the village, all villagers over the age of fifteenwere granted Thai nationality, and coffee was introduced as a cash crop (Hoare 1985:83-86,94).

Lahu had more opportunity to gain Thai nationality by migrating in from border areas (Ibid:12, Hoare 1985:95). A limitation on the amount of cultivatable land, a decrease of in levels of agricultural production and an increase in costs, plus several pull factors in the urban areas including the growth of the service sector, made many of the Lahu in northern Thailand target the lowlands, especially urban Chiang Mai, as a place to work and earn cash income.

2.5 Highlanders and the Mainland Development Projects: Political Relationships between the Highlanders and Lowlanders

Political relationships between the highlanders and lowlanders existed before the nation state was formed. After that, whilethe political authority tended to exist among the polities inthe lowlands, those in the highlands interacted with the lowland polities through the use of tributes.For instance, the Lua and Karen in the uplandsused to take tributes to the Lan NaPrince on a regular basis, and in return, they received official title to their land (Walker 1981). Later, the hill and valley relationship intensified further, particularly after the Kingdom of Lan Na became a tributary state of the SiameseKingdom in 1774, after which government officials from Bangkok were sent to Lan Na in order to rule over 'northern Thailand'. The building of a nation state through the demarcating of national boundaries created tensionsamong selected highland ethnic groups within the new Thai State. The State's actionstowards the highlanders was motivated bythe presence of powerful Western countries; the British had colonized Burma and France had colonized Laos, plus the Government believed there was a threat from Chinese Communist troops,those who had occupied some of the highland areas of Thailand.

2.5.1 State Development Policies towards the Highlands

Since the 1950s, the highland-lowland relationship has been strongly influenced by the actions of the Thai Government towards the highlands, and in Thailand since that timethe highland ethnic groups have been regarded as a problem, in addition to the Chinese, and the Thai-Muslims(Khachatphai1983:1).The inclusion and categorization of selected highland ethnic groupsby the Government does not always mean they are recognized as Thai citizens, since the Thai State has been constructed based on the idea of 'Thainess'. This has meant that the highland ethnic groups,those who are ethnically non-Thai,have been automatically recognized as "others" (Thongchai 1999), based on the idea of a differentiation between 'us' and 'others'. Based on the pre-existing hierarchical society, Siamoriginally differentiated the people outside the city from urban residents in spatial and temporal terms. Within this,Bangkokwas situated as'civilization', rural areaswere less civilized, and the forestswere 'wild' or far from civilized. Not only the space, but also the people in each area were categorized as either civilized, less civilized rural peasants (*khonbannok* - literally 'people in the countryside') or primitive hilltribes (*chao pa* - literally 'forest people') (Turton 2000). Indeed, *chao pa* was intentionally placed asmeaning the opposite of civilization (Thongchai 2000).The inferiority of the forest as well as the 'hilltribes' was continuously linked by the Thai Government with the notion of 'disobedience', which was derived from the disorder and actions of the Thai communist movement and the anti-communist armed forces (Kataoka 2006:298-299).

The recognition and categorization of highland ethnic groups as "others within" (Thongchai 2000) began under the influence of the cold war. Since, in the 1950s, therewas a concern that Communist movementsin neighboring countries might

move into Thailand, the Government began a policy of controlover the highland

ethnic groups.The stereotype of "hill tribes equal opium growers equal communists

equal enemies of the people" was developed from a discrimination towards the

Hmong, who were recognized as working alongside the communists (Kataoka

2004:198). Based on such stereotypes, a process of interference in the affairs of the

highland ethnic groups, in the name of highland development projects,was

implemented, and at the beginning of these highland development projects, in 1959,

the consumption of and trade in opium was prohibited (Kataoka 2004:191). Thai

Government also set up the Central Hill Tribe Committee in 1959 and the

categorization *chaokhao*was enforced across the nine selected highland ethnic

groupsby the Ministry of Public Welfare. Among them, six groups were the particular

focus of attention for the implementation of development policies. The Thai

Government then helped to label these *chaokhao* as primitive, backward, or less

civilized people, as those who must be developed by the civilized lowland Thais.

Therefore, most of the development policies regarding the highland ethnic groups

since that time have been implemented with little participation from the highlanders

themselves (Kampe 1997). These policies havebeen amended several times, and three

main strands, namely occupation, education and health, have been the main focus of

concernfor implementation of the policies (Khachatphai 1983).

As a result of the perceived Communist threat, which became worse in the

Thai highland areas in 1967, the Committee for Hill Tribes[34]was set up to focus more

on national security. The relocation of highland ethnic groups to the lowland areas has

been enforced,and some other programs have been introduced by the police and army

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[34] It was renamed from the Central Hill Tribe Committee.

in the highland village, in orderto "create a greater sense of Thai-ness" (Tawin 1997:98). As one of the methods used, the Government hascarried out four censuses since 1969,which have been focused on the highland ethnic groups and the concept of Thai nationality. Through these censuses, the highland people have been classified into either Thai (worthy of Thai citizenship), 'hill tribes' (their existence in Thailandis recognized but they are not regarded as being eligible for Thai citizenship), or even strangers (those whose existence in Thailandhas not been recognized). Thesepeople have differentiated ID cards[35];people who are recognized as 'hill tribes' have their mobility legally restricted to only within the sub-district where they live[36], and as a result, theiropportunity to gain an education as well as an occupation is also restricted (Thai Government 2000). The process of applying for Thai citizenship, even among those who have the right documentation and the evidence to support their claim, is very complicated and slow. This ensures that many members of the highland ethnic groups remain unable to claim their rights as Thai citizens.

Since 1969, with the policy amended in 1982, the Government has encouraged the eradication of opium produced by highland ethnic groups,due to pressure brought to bear by the international community concerning the opium problem. When a project to reduce poppy cultivation and opium addiction was enforced by the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse (UNFDAC), eleven government ministries were also involved in the project, and since that time substitute cash crops

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[35] In Thailand, every citizen who reaches 15 years old has to hold his or her identification card (of which there are thirteen)in order to identify his or her status as a person who has been granted Thai citizenship. Seventeen different identification cards were originally introduced to identify the status of minority group members, but since 2004 these have been integrated into one card (Thai Government 2000, 2005).

[36] If he or she applies to the Governor for permission to leave the sub-district, he or she can do so for ten days (Thai Government 2000).

and administrative integration processes have been introduced.

In line with the environmental movement which has developed across the globe, in 1989 the Thai Government revised its policies towards the highlands and placed more emphasis on environmental issues. The permanent settlement of highland ethnic groups wasintroduced, with one of the objectives being natural resource conservation, the others being to control highland ethnic groups within a legally-based local administrative system (under Thai law) and resolving the opium problem (Elawat 1997,Tawin 1997).

Reflecting on these highland development policies, Elawat (1997:90) states that "the quality of life of the hilltribes has improved"to some extent. For instance, an increasing number of highland people have received Thai nationality, the utilization of formal education and health services has expanded, and people have become less dependent upon opium in pure economic terms. However, other problems have emerged at the same time, for as part of setting up national parks and different levels of reserved forests, those highland ethnic groups with no documented land rights have been excluded from this land and have been unable to cultivate or even reside within the areas. Although substitute cash crops have been introduced and permanent settlements encouraged, people in the highlandshave faced difficulties in economic as well as social terms. The introduction of cash crop cultivation has meant that the groups have had to rely on market forces in terms of the demand for and price of the crops they produce,which are often unstable.Cash crop cultivation also means relying on the outside world in terms of seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and other chemicals, plus uses farming techniques which do not utilize villagers' local knowledge. Indeed, a

reduction in soil fertility has occurred as a result of the constant use of concentrated chemicals on the fields. As a result, these people find themselves in a vicious circle in terms of their agricultural lives.

Other than the agricultural problemsoutlined above, the central Thai education system and the flow of people and goods, as well as the new valuesadopted under the name of globalization, have become elements that not only have developed their lives, but have also destroyed the social structure of communities in the highlands; young people disobeying the elderly and being ashamed of their ethnicity, plus the problems of drugs, prostitution and HIVinfection; all these developments have occurred (Tawin 1997,Cholada2001).

2.5.2The Influences of Tourism and ReligiononHighland Ethnic Groups

Tourism has also encouraged an interaction between highlanders and lowlanders, as well as with foreigners. The Thai Government began to develop tourism inorder to generate foreign currency in 1976, and chose Chiang Mai as a tourism hub for the upper north of Thailandas part of thesixth National Economic and Social Development Plan (1987-1991). As a result, the number of tourists visiting Chiang Mai doubled, as did the income from tourism over the five years of the plan (Prasit 1997:271). Tour operators organize tours to the villages inhabited by the highland ethnic groups; they target tourists who want a 'cultural experience', different from their Western, often urbanway of life – to experience the'authentic' life of the highland villagers which is "untouched by civilization" and "remote and unspoilt" (Cohen 1983:308).

Cohen (1983:318) highlights some of the effects and problems experienced by the villagers in the highlands in the early stages of tourism, since the "hill tribe tours" started in Thailand. "A quick and relatively painless source of cash for less-developed communities" has changed the values of the villagers. Though tourism sometimes provides an opportunity to preserve or revive old technologies, begging in the village as well as the commercialization of cultural knowledge through handicrafts have also occurred. When tourists show an interest in using opium, it encourages the villagers to continue to cultivate and produce the drug and causes an increase in the number of opium addicts. Also, since tourists also introduce modern items and commodities, the villagers enter further into the market economy in order to acquire such commodities for themselves. In addition, becoming the object of photographs and sightseeing tours causes the villagers to lose their dignity. Prasit (1997) highlights some other problems that have occurredamong the highland ethnic groups. The villagers who receive tourists have begun to rely on the tourist industry as their major source of income,though it was only their secondary source in the 1980s. Therefore,a declinein the level of traditional knowledge, mainly to do with agriculture, has occurred among the younger generation. Moreover, conflicts between the villagers who provide the services and those who do not occur, as do prostitution and crime.

Religion is another element which has been introduced and caused highland communities to connect more closely with those in the lowlands. Between 1964 and 1965, Thammacharik Buddhist Missionary Program was implemented in the highland ethnic communities by the Thai Government and Buddhist organizations, in order to integrate the populations into Buddhist Thai society (Hayami 1994). Meanwhile,

many of the Karen, the Lahu, the Akha and the Lisu have converted to Christianity since they were in Burma before the 1950s, and have established a Christian association for each ethnic group in Thailand (Nishimoto 2005).

Adopting both Buddhism and Christianity hasled to many villagers choosing to abandon their traditional rituals,rituals that are often costly and inappropriate under current conditions. Education has also been encouraged by religious organizations. For example, as part of the Buddhist missionary project, an educational training center was established at Srisoda temple in Chiang Mai in 1972, and many boys with a highland ethnic background have since been sent there to be a novice or priest, plushave receiveda free education(Hayami 1994:232). Given the Western requirement for literacy, Christian missionaries have created written languages for many of the highland ethnic groups, using the English alphabet, but often with symbols of tones. In order to support Christian students from the highlands, scholarships and student dormitories in the lowlands have been provided, and some elites who have received a high standard of education in the lowlands have created highland development organizations and called for the maintenance or reconstruction of their own ethnic identity (Kwanchewan and Pannada 2008).
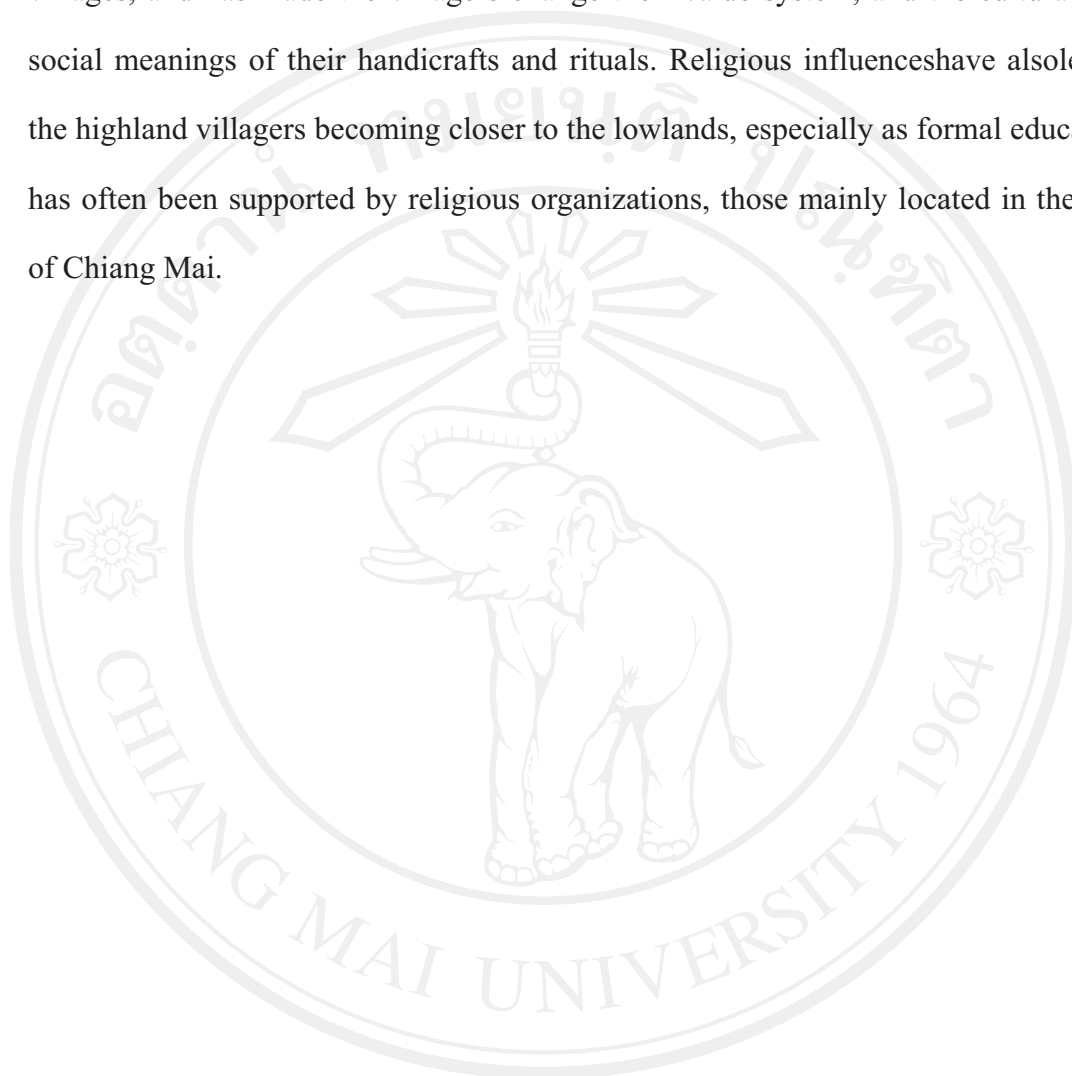
Implementation of state projects, as well as the global influences brought about by tourism and religion, has ledthe highland ethnic groups to see themselves as the target of development and, as a result, to increase their dependency on the lowlands.

2.6 Conclusion

The history of Lahu migration provides an indication of the interrelationship between the highlands and lowlands in northern Thailand. In the case of the Lahu, political and religious elements have been a strong influence over their decision making over recent decades. The continuum of the formation of Lahu independent organizations and the suppression of lowland authoritiesrevealsa flux in term of the power relations between the highland and lowlands.Such relations and migration practices have affected the identity construction of the Lahu. Since they moved into Thailand, the pattern of Lahu migration within Thailand has changed. Before, political action against the lowland authorities was more prominent, but now, the practice of migrating for economic reasons; moving to the lowlands in order to secure greater comforts and benefits, as well as cash income, has become a popular practice implemented by the Lahu.

The highland-lowland relationship, which was traditionally practiced in the areas of southeast China and northern inland Southeast Asia, has intensified since the nation states were formed, plus the forces of globalization have begun to engage with such relations. Such outside influences have had an impact on the lives of people in the highland. After the demarcation of national borders, highland ethnic groups were selected as"hill tribes",and given a negative image in Thailand. In order to 'develop' the 'troublesome' hill tribes, Government development policies were introduced in the 1960s. Some aspects of their lives have been improved, because,having received Thai nationality, some have been able to gain a formal education and utilize health services; however, others have ended up worseoff as a result of land use laws and a changing agricultural system, one which relies on the availability of cash and the

forces of the market economy. Tourism has brought many tourists into the highland villages, and has made the villagers change their value system, and the cultural and social meanings of their handicrafts and rituals. Religious influenceshave alsoled to the highland villagers becoming closer to the lowlands, especially as formal education has often been supported by religious organizations, those mainly located in the city of Chiang Mai.