

ABSTRACT

The judgment issued by The Mae-Ai district office on February 5, 2002 to withdraw the Thai citizenship of 1,243 villagers living along side the Thailand-Burma border has pushed them to the nationality status of displaced Burmese. This phenomenon has raised various issues concerning the violation of human rights by the Thai State, and triggered the learning process among cooperative working agencies to solve this problem both at the philosophical and technical levels; this thesis, based on a 3 years fieldwork, attempted to be a part of this constructive process.

Local residents in the geographic area of interest, which is a part of Upper-Kok River Valley, comprises multi-ethnic groups, i.e. Shan, Yuan(Northern Thai), Yunnan Chinese, Lue ,Laos and Lahu. Although, each group has its own history of settlement in the area, some may dated back far beyond the emergence of the present Thai State, these groups have formed a complex social network among themselves with their cultures interwoven. They have also possessed the consciousness of "being Thai" in the political domain of Thai citizenship.

The research proposed that various attempts, especially from the government part, to manage this problem since it was triggered have been trapped by the philosophical inadequacy of the Thai civil law and the inappropriateness of applying the law at a practical level, both leading to the consequence of obvious violation of human rights.

To solve the problem at a technical level, the research suggested the reissuing of the Thai citizenship to all accused subjects as the first step of official actions, and the second step by forming a fair committee comprising representatives of various relevant agencies to appropriately resolve the nationality of subjects within the frame of Thai law. At a philosophical level, the research suggested the reconsideration by various components of the Thai society, both governmental and non-governmental, concerning the complex cultural dimensions of "being Thai" aside from the strict political sense, especially within the moral and human rights frames.