

Changing Hidden Ethnic Relationship under *Non-Timber Forest Products* Flow in Transition to Market Economy:

Case from Jinuo Community, Southern Yunnan Province, China

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Economic power is the strongest power impressing on human society and nature during social construction process (Borgmann, 2000; Kant, 1959). Non-timber forest products are a typical case, which connect human society and environment to gender and nature and expose the hidden ethnic relationship behind the Non-timber forest products' flow. A case study of Bakaxiazhai, a Jinuo community and its three brother-villages, Dai villages was carried out in order to examine this constructing process.

1. Introduction

Xishuangbanna, an autonomous prefecture of Dai nationality in the south of Yunnan Province, is located in Lancang (upper Mekong) river, and adjoins Burma, Laos and Thailand. The area of Xishuangbanna is only 0.2% of China, however, it is known as the "Royal Crown of Kingdom of Plant and Animals" for its unique 33.8% tropical forest coverage rate. It is also famous for its colorful ethnic culture and a total of 13 minority nationalities comprising nearly half the nationalities of Yunnan Province and 23% of China live there. It is an important area for biological, anthropological and research as well as a prominent tourism attraction.

Approximately, 95% of the 19,220 square kilometers land area consists of mountains and hills; flat terrain and river valleys make up the remaining 5%. Of the 614,490 population, one third is Dai; less than one third is Han, who mainly live in the valley plain at an altitude from 500m ~ 800m. The main products of the area are paddy rice and rubber. The remaining one third population, 215,071 in all are Hani, Jinuo, Lahu and Bulang etc., 11 ethnic groups who live in the upland at 800m ~ 1500m in altitude, the main crops being upland rice and other cash crops like tea and Chinese cardamom.

Jinuo nationality is the last ethnic group to be identified officially by the state in 1977. It is also one of the smallest ethnic groups out of 56 nationalities in China. They have mainly lived in Jinuo Mountain in Xishuangbanna, neighboring lowland Dai people for many centuries. Relying on rich natural resources, Jinuo people practiced shifting cultivation and non-timber forest products (NTFPs) collection for their livelihood. They have significant experience in NTFPs collection and management and have evolved their own unique indigenous knowledge system based on local natural resources and the environment. According to the primary ethno botanical research into the Jinuo community,

252 plant species of NTFPs were recorded (Wang Jieru, 1995,1998). The low yield of upland rice cultivation meant that there was an insufficient food supply, therefore a barter system was adopted, Jinuo people using NTFPs to exchange rice, salt and weaving cloth from the Dai and this barter system is still in use among the elder generation although decreasing.

Prior to 1949, the centralized state power of China Communist Party (CCP) had not been established and there being few Han Chinese the Dai nationality dominated and exercised political, economic and cultural power in the Xishuangbanna area. With the change of political structure after the liberation in 1949, Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous prefecture was established. Under the policy of attempting to eradicate conflict among minority nationalities of CCP, the governor and the other important administrative officers of the prefecture government were and are of Dai nationality or from other indigenous nationalities of Xishuangbanna. Despite this policy, the impact of the Han Chinese including political, economic and cultural aspects has gradually been felt following the immigration of Han into Xishuangbanna to create state plantations and exploit local resources. The population structure of Xishuangbanna has changed significantly three times in the last fifty years of the twentieth century. Each time, it was due to Han immigration

After Household Responsibility, an important policy of rural reform was implemented in 1983, China has changed greatly in transition from a plan-oriented economy to a market-oriented economy. Cash value now has greater significance and has had a huge social impact on the traditional bartering system and gender identity in the community. Since Xishuangbanna was promoted as a national tourist destination in 1996, market demands for NTFPs are increasing greatly driven by expanding tourism. This brings considerable cash income to Jinuo family. From data of household economy survey and analysis in Bakaxiaozhai from 1993 to 1997(Wang, 1998) and in 2001, cash income from NTFPs segment is consistently increasing. NTFPs, ranked first in 1997, increasing from 11% (ranked 5) to 28% in five years..

As a key area within the national nature reserve, Xishuangbanna prefecture government has formulated regulations under the legitimate working framework of central government and provincial government. Those regulations define the NTFPs harvest territory and harvesting methods for local people. As a result of factors such as heavy population pressure, three forestry tenures policy and the hunting ban, the traditional role of men in their traditional livelihoods has been changed, and surplus male labor has shifted from hunting to NTFPs collection.

NTFPs based bartering system between Jinuo people and Dai people only takes place within those families which have "*Laogan* " relationship traditionally. "*Laogen*" could be inherited from generation to generation if their children or children-in-law are at the same age. "*Laogan* " is a kind of social network besides its function as a necessary product flow between upland and lowland for their livelihood since it functions as friendship sharing, information exchange and economic cooperation. It is typical symbol to present the ethnic relationship between the Jinuo and the Dai.

2. Cases Sites Profile

The case study was carried out in a natural village in the Jinuo mountain, named Bakaxiaozhai which is located in a zone bordering the upland and lowland areas, neighboring Xishuangbanna Nature Reserve at an altitude of 550 meters. It is six kilometers away from the market of Menglun Township but is subordinate to Jinuo Township administratively, which is 22 kilometers away. In total, there are 500 *mu* (1 hectare = 15 *mu*) of Swidden fields, 70 *mu* of paddy fields along the Valley of Xiaola River, and 80 *mu* of permanent fields of rubber trees. In 1974, more than 1000 *mu* of Swidden fields were put into the territory of Xishuangbanna Nature Reserve by the government and villagers were compensated with 500 *mu* of dry fields which could not be cultivated due to its karst topography. This area became collective forest for fuelwood collection, hunting and NTFPs collection. On average, there are 2 *mu* Swidden fields and 0.18 *mu* paddy fields per head. Lacking of land capital, It is the most restriction to limit the economy development of Bakaxiaozhai. The main crops are dry rice, corn, peanut, taro and white gourd etc., and Chinese cardamom is cash crop traditionally.

There is a total population of 254 comprising 63 families of 131 males and 123 females mainly practicing Swidden agriculture. There are 129 laborers identified aged 16 years old to 55 years old. 63 laborers are female. Those aged below 25 years old had been educated in the official primary school. There are 6 high school graduates in the village. Women aged over 50 years old have difficulty communicating with Chinese, and men who are older than 65 cannot speak Chinese fluently. The economy of Bakaxiaozhai depends strongly on the market of Menglun Township. Each household owns a bicycle due to convenient transportation conditions. It can be observed that women sell wild edible plants and cultivated products from the dry fields such as *Callipteris esculenta*, *Musa acuminata*, *Amorphophallus yuloensis*, peanut etc. in the Menglun market every morning.

Bakaxiaozai was set up in 1975. It was separated from the Baka village, of Bakalaozai, nine kilometers away from Bakaxiaozai by the cement road, and ten kilometers by mountain paths. Since there were 50 *mu* collective paddy fields below the road and along the valley of Xiaola River, which is the boundary of Jinuo Mountain neighboring with Menglun basin. Some villagers found this place is more convenient to set up simple bamboo made sheds on the slope for watching the paddy rice during harvest season. Initially, seven households moved from upper Bakalaozai in 1972. In 1975, the households increased to twenty-four, and another seven households arrived from Kalun village, moving from the opposite mountain area, while their home land was delimited as national Nature Reserve. They settled down with those who moved from Bakalaozai. In total, thirty-eight households then established another nature village, named Bakaxiaozai, meaning of children of Bakalaozai.

The settlement of households is divided into two parts according to the natural topography, a gully lying in the middle of the village. Villagers referred to the "eastern gully" and "western gully" to indicate that those who settled in the eastern gully were the original villagers. Compared with people who live in western gully, those who live in eastern gully show more interests in new technologies and new things, and prefer to cultivate cash crop such as rubber trees, fruit trees in their Swidden fields. Most of the inhabitants from the western gully are from Kalun village, which had been located in

primitive forests. It seems they prefer to keep traditional practices such as hunting, NTFPs collecting rather than cultivating cash crops.

The principals of distinguishing the boundary line between Dai villages and Jinuo villages and other upland ethnic group in Menglun area were: *the place with water pool for feeding buffalo was Dai's territory; and the place with wild banana trees was Jinuo's territory*. The boundary of Bakaxiaozai basically follows this rule. Manlun, Man-er and Chengzi, 3 Dai villages neighboring with Bakaxiaozhai in the same small watershed of Xiaona river, which were brother-villages traditionally, will demonstrate the Laogen relationship from Dai party based on the results of a primary survey in Bakaxiaozai.

Man-lun

Man-lun is the nearest Dai village to Bakaxiaozhai with more than 300 years of history according to the stories from elders. The village has a total population of 389 with 78 families of 131 male laborers and 123 female laborers in the community. Man-lun is located at the edge of Menglun basin, 4 miles from Bakaxiaozhai and 1 mile away from Menglun market. Their paddy rice fields and rubber trees adjoin the shifting fields and rubber trees of Bakaxiaozhai. A cement road, which connect Jinuo Mountain with lowland basins passes and divides the village into two parts. Several villagers along and besides the road have set up small stores. From there, they could observe Jinuo women walk past or travel by tractor after they complete the sale of NTFPs and return home every noontime. Besides rice cultivation, they plant earlier-vegetables such as chili and eggplants to supply Kunming market. Rubber trees bring stable and sustainable income to them every year although the price varied. Due to a relatively smaller population and more fields, the village is in the shadow of the green. Almost every household owns a well-managed home garden.

Man-er

Man-er is the village besides the road from Jinghong to Menglun township, 3 kilometers from Menglun township, and 8 kilometers from Bakaxiaozai. It was in the upper valley of Xiaola River nearby Bakalaozai originally, and moved to its present location in 1959. It is a medium sized village with 97 households and a population of 432. The houses are built close together. Due to more persons but less land, they cannot plant any more cash crops. The economic development level of Man-er is the lowest among those three Dai villages. Their main cash income depends on early season vegetable plantation, for which they got support from an international program. Following the improvement of the economy, they built up village temple to revive their traditional temple culture.

Chengzhi

Chengzhi is the oldest Dai village in Menglun area. It is difficult to know when the village was built from the story telling of old men and women. It is estimated it has two thousand years of history as far as Dai historic records in Xishuangbanna are concerned. In feudal time, the highest-ranking Dai feudal-lord in Menglun area lived in Chengzi, he controlled all the land and other resources subordinate feudal-lords.

With a population of 526 people and 138 households, Chengzi is the biggest Dai village in Menglun area. There is a historic Buddhist temple behind the village, and a well-protected holy forest behind the temple (Zhu, 1995). Villagers in Chengzi have a well-managed rubber forest, and they are good at business merchants. Old women like to

stay and **sell some** vegetables in the township market. **They regard this as a pleasure** since they have more chances to meet old friends including Jinuo *Laogen* and chat **with them**.

3. Inter-/intra- village Relationship

In the past, the Dai were the dominant group in the land of Xiahungbannan. The other ethnic groups, such as Jinuo, Hani and Bulang etc. **had to** pay Dai feudal-lord land tax, cotton tax and so on, **and**, each **ethnic** group also were responsible for their **particular tasks**. For example, in the Menglun area, the Jinuo of Baka village were responsible for building up the bamboo defense **a** and flat of the Dai Lord's house located in Chengzhi village.

The official relationship between Jinuo and Dai nationality was **straightforward**. In the past, **the** feudal-lord of Dai **established an** alliance with the head of Jinuo clan through marriage with **a** Jinuo woman, who became one of his wives. Therefore, Man-er village, which is a Dai village 8 kilometers **from** Bakaxiaozai **was** called The Son-in-law of Baka. **Elders still refer to the village in this way**. At certain times Zhengzi Dai, **the** feudal-lord would hold a *Unity Meeting*, inviting the head of Baka clan to participate **in** it. The context of the meeting related mainly to **the** following:

- Boundary of Dai and Jinuo in Menglun area
- Illegal cutting **of** trees in the mountain
- Conflicts such as buffalo **destruction of** the crops

Additionally, they presented gifts to each party.

Dai lord presented:

- Two packages salt (2 kilograms app.)
- One package tobacco
- Two chickens
- Leaves of *Piper longum*

Head of Jinuo presented :

- Packages cotton (10 kilograms)
- Packages tea (5 kilograms)
- Packages Gingel (5 kilograms)

After liberation **the** feudal-lord system of Dai and **the** primitive clan system of Jinuo **were** abolished **replaced with the** commune system. Each natural village would be one unit of commune. But the tradition of **the** *Unity Meeting* was kept. According to **the** ethnic policy of CCP, each Dai and Jinuo village **were required to** build up Brother-village relationship with their neighboring villages, and the leading team of the village would have a regular meeting with their Brother-villages at a certain time every year, still called **the** *Unity Meeting*. The **meeting** involved product information exchange, **and establishment of friendships**.

Dai team presented :

☞ Two hot water pots

Jinuo team presented:

☞ A package of taro (10 kilograms)

☞ A package of magic taro (10 kilograms)

The tradition of *Unity Meeting* disappeared after the policy of Household Responsibility was implemented over all of the country in 1983, when China started its transition from a national plan-oriented economy to a market-oriented economy. The administrative system of commune collapsed, and the importance of collective unity became less important.

On the contrary, the common relationship between Jinuo people and Dai people has remained unchanged. Based on the bartering system, Dai people in lowland and Jinuo people in upland have close ties in ethnic relationships, history, culturally and economically.

There is an old Dai saying:

You should have a boat if you want to cross the river;

You should have Laogen if you want to enter the mountain.

Laogen means "same aged friends ". It is Mandarin dialect but accepted by Jinuo and Dai although both of them have their words to express meaning of friend. Its origin already cannot be trace back. *Laogen* is represents the ethnic relationship between Jinuo people and Dai people. Jinuo *Laogen* of Dai in upland villages were able to provide the following goods and services:

- Providing accommodation if required by Dai *Laogen* when they enter the mountain to look for the buffalo
- Drinking water and food
- Obtain timber for house construction
- Help to pass the information of buffalo in case buffaloes escape to upland area

The relationship of *Laogen* presents a kind of social network with the function of a bridge by which the Dai can obtain upland natural resources.

4. *Laogen* Network

4.1. Definition of *Laogen*

Due to different products in upland and lowland, Jinuo people and Dai people build up a bartering system through their *Laogen* relationship to replenish and satisfy respective subsistence needs. In Bakaxiaozhai, each adult including men and women has 3 *Laogen* minimum, and 8 maximum.

Laogen means "same aged friend ". It is mandarin dialect but accepted by Jinuo and Dai although both of them have their words to express meaning of friend. Its origin already cannot be traced. In Jinuo language and Dai language, they have their own respective words for "friend". The Jinuo call friends "*Mache*"(male friend) or "*A-mai*"(female friend). The Dai call friends using title of "*Boxiao*" (male) or

"*Maixiao*"(female). These titles are not used in any formal sense but to indicate friendship. The title of "*Laogen*" is special for the Jinuo and the Dai. The product flow of NTFPs in barter system between Jinuo people and Dai people only occurs within those families which have a "*Laogan*" relationship traditionally. "*Laogen*" network becomes a kind of social network besides its function of subsistence exchange in their livelihoods since it has an inheritance and information exchange function.

Jinuo people and Dai people have similar but different definition of "*Laogen*". The definition of "*Laogen*" for the Dai is more serious and rigid than Jinuo.

The Jinuo define their Dai "*Laogen*" as:

- Born in same year
- Kind hearted and generous
- Would like help each other
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The Dai define their Jinuo "*Laogen*" as:

- Born in same date, month and year
- Would like help each other, and cannot refuse once *Laogen* is required
- Kind and generous
- Come to celebrate when he/she build a new house
- Come to visit when he/she would die.
- Join in "*Guodan*" (Dai dialogue; a kind of ceremonious ritual once people die which should be held according to Dai custom) in the temple.

Although in both definition of the Jinuo and Dai, they put "same age" as the first condition for setting up *Laogen* relationship. It is flexible in the practical situation. In a Jinuo or a Dai family, once the husbands or wives in both family become *Laogen*, and then their wives or husbands would establish *Laogen* relation with the hostesses and the host in this family naturally though maybe their age have certain difference.

In general, there is no great different definition about "*Laogen*" between the Jinuo and the Dai, but the definition of Dai is more detailed the duty and responsibility of a *Laogen* should be done. They mentioned Three Times Visiting, which including new house building up, bidding farewell to the dead *Laogen* and *Guodan*, is the most important indicator to measure the honest of *Laogen* relation. Through observation and information reflected from interviewee, besides polite requirement, the most important subsistence reason that the Dai require their Jinuo *Laogen* should come is they need numerous wild banana leaves supply. In these three important activities of the Dai, the host family would host food for visiting friends including all villagers in the village, their Dai friends from other village and their other friends such as Jinuo *Laogen*, who go to visit them. Wild banana leaves are Dai's favored cooking using materials for loading and packaging food.

4.2 *Laogen* Network

4.2.1 Jinuo's *Laogen* Network

In Bakaxiaozhai, once a boy or a girl grows up to around ten years old even less than this age, their parents already found and make one or two appropriate aged Dai boys and girls as son's or daughter's *Laogen* from their Dai *Laogen* network. the starting

activity with Dai *Laogen* of the girls would be earlier than boys'. At ten years old, the girls would start to carry and delivery the wild banana leaves and ginger etc. NTFPs with the mother or grandmother visit their Dai *Laogen* family. the mother or the grandmother would introduce Dai *Laogen* family to her one by one. It is main approach for Jinuo girls set up their *Laogen* with Dai. After get married, young women would follow mother-in-law to recognize the *Laogen* relations of her husband's family. she would afford main assignments of maintain the subsistence delivery in her husband's family in place of her mother-in-law gradually.

The establishment of *Laogen* for boy or young men mainly is through two approaches: one is to inherit from the grandparent's generation or the parent's generation, it is normal practice. The second are to make it by themselves when they communicate with outside world, such as in the market, on the way even the trip for looking for buffalo in the mountain. After they have talked, if they are at the same age and felt could accept each other and would like to be *Laogen*, then the name of this guy would be included in his *Laogen* list.

Case1. *Zimula's* family *Laogen* relations mapping story

- **Zimula**, husband and father, 59 years old. wife's family live in Bakalaozhai. He has 4 Dai *Laogen* totally. Meanwhile, 2 are in *Man-lun*, 1 are inherited, and another one because he exchanged rice using taro and ginger from Dai thirty-five years ago. 1 is in *Man-er* due to the *Laogen* relation of wife in there. 1 is in *Chengzhi* inherited from wife's family.
- **Bulase**, wife and mother, 56 years old. she has 7 Dai *Laogen* totally. 2 are in *Man-lun* due to inherited from husband's family. 2 are in *Man-er*, which 1 was set up by herself and 1 was introduced by mother-in-law when they visit there. 3 are in *Chengzhi*, are inherited from mother once she was young girl. The most one favored is in *Chengzh* because of her kind-hearted.
- **Yufeng**, daughter, 46 years old, married with man in Bakaxiaozhai. She has 7 Dai *Laogen*. Meanwhile, 2 inherited are in *Man-lun*, only visit them in Dai Spaying water Festival; 4 in *Man-er*, and one was set up six years ago since using magic taro to exchang cotton bed cover from Dai; and 1 in *Chengzi* is followed the mother's relation with 20 years history. she often carry wild banan leaves with
- **Nalun**, sun-in-law, 43 years old. the parents live in Bakaxiaozhai also but died when he was a child. He has 8 Dai *Laogen* totally. 2 are in *Man-lun* and 2 are in *Chengzhi*, both are inherited from wife's family. 4 are in *Man-er*, which 2 was set up by himself and 1 by wife's relation and 1 by inherited.
- **Yubao**, younger son, 30 years old, married with woman in Bakaxiaozhai. He has 4 Dai *Laogen* totally. 2 are inherited from the father in *Man-lun*. 2 are in *Man-er*, meanwhile, 1 was inherited, and another one was set up by himself due to maintain tractor on the way five years ago.
- **Tongmei**, daughter-in-law, 29 years old. she has 8 Dai *Laogen* totally. 4 are in *Man-lun*, meanwhile 2 are inherited from the mother and in 2 are inherited from the hunsband's family. 2 are in *Man-er* due to hunsband's relation and ne was set up by herself in Menglun market. 2 in *Chengzhi* are introduced by mother-in-law. ocassionlly, she also visit this two Dai *Laogen* family with gift of candy and cake in Dai's Water Spaying Festival day.

In Bakaxiaozhai, 20 households including 3 old men and 5 old women; 15 women and 18 men; and 2 young girls and 3 boys aged around 15-18 years old were invited to drawing their *Laogen* social map to indicate the location of their Dai *Laogen* in *Man-lun*, *Man-er* and *Chengzi* villages. and presented how they set up the relations, and what is normal activities among them. It is founded, firstly, the general number of *Laogen* is 5-8. *Laogen's* number of old generation is greater than elder and young generation. The biggest number is a 65 years old women, named Shade, she has 15 *Laogen* in those villages. While younger has around 4-5 *Laogen*. Secondly, besides normal subsistence exchange and Three Times Visiting, the most important formal contact activity for maintaining *Laogen* relation is exchange visit in two festivals. one is the Dai's Water Spraying Festival day and Jinuo's Sun Drum Festival day. The Jinuo visit the Dai in Water Spraying Festival day is traditional regular activity. The Dai visit the Jinuo in Sun Drum Festival day has been developed in recent twenty years due to this festival was set up following the official identification of the Jinuo as a independent nationality.

The *Laogen* relation has different scenario in different wealth family in Bakaxiaozhai. In *Zimula's* family, which is a stronger kinship in the village. in Sun Drum Festival day of 2002, around 30 Dai *Laogen* visited his house. While, the poorest family, host named *Daju* only has one Dai *Laogen* visited from *Man-lun* village, which was set up due to the husband bought pineapple on the way three years ago. the interesting thing is the economic situation of *Daju's Laogen* in *Man-lun* also belongs to lower level in the village. they expressed it makes them felt more comfortable. *Daju* complained previous two Dai *Laogen* inherited from his father "*They saw I became poor since I was separated with my brother family after I got married. They felt I can not help them more, then they did not visit me no longer*". in Bakaxiaozhai, the number of *Laogen* is to be an measured indicator to evaluate one's family economic status and one's generous-heart. Since "*it will spend big money to host Dai Laogen once they visit.*" the villager said.

The feeling of the Jinuo in Bakaxiaozhai to *Laogen* network is more positive. They felt it is their tradition from generation to generation, and they can benefit from this tradition. Through communication with *Laogen*, they could know more what happen in valley area. Especially for older women group whose age are over 60 years old more depend on bartering system with Dai *Laogen* relation even if they start to accept sale NTFPs in Menglun market. Older women are used to go to visit their *Laogen* family often following this regular tradition. Once they can not sale all NTFPs in the market, they use remaining NTFPs exchange with Dai *Laogen* if they are in the market also, or go to visit *Laogen* house for. They give the remaining NTFPs to *Laogen*, present her visiting purpose, while Dai *Laogen* will host her a banana-leaves-packaged rice or stick rice, and give something old clothes and skirt, and cultivated vegetables such as **carbage** or spring onion. This behavior is laughed by younger since they though this traditional way is too shame, and is similar to beg lunch. Meanwhile, it are bushed by younger due to less value of NTFPs comparing its market price and time value two aspects consideration. The older women group argued, "*it is our tradition. We just do what our ancestor had done things.*". but young generation less than 35 years old is practicing new manners to maintain their relation with their Dai *Laogen*.

4.2.2 Dai's *Laogen* Network

The same establishment process and approaches as well as the Jinuo, but comparing with the Jinuo, the Dai are not so hurry to establish *Laogen* relation. And Dai's *Laogen* network is more simplified. In total 35 surveyed Dai families, most of them just have 1-2 *Laogen*, 2 families said they have *Laogen*, and the top number up to 4 *Laogen*, which is in *Chengzhi* and mentioned two of those *Laogen* are inherited from their parents.

The feeling of the Dai to *Laogen* network is more complex. One hand, they need subsistence provider for gaining upland resources, such as timber, wild banana leaves etc. NTFPs. on the other hands, they worry about the heavy afford of *Laogen* relation since they thought although the Dai have Three Times Visiting rule or requirements to their Jinuo *Laogen*, but it are identified. While, the visiting times of Jinuo *Laogen* are not limited. "*if they want or they need, they just come. Sometimes, twice a week*", a villager in Chengzi said, "*they would pick up what they want. We do not want more Laogen. More Laogen, more trouble and heavier afford. For maintaining the relation, I have to go the upland visit them once time annually and minimally when they invite us in their traditional festival, Sun Drum Festival.*".

4.3 Functions of *Laogen* relation

In general, based on the interviewed information from Jinuo party in Bakaxiaozhai and Dai party in *Man-lun*, *Man-er* and *Chengzhi*, the *Laogen* relation among them have following functions:

- Subsistence exchange: it is the most important and basic function. Through *Laogen* relation, the Dai could get construction timber, pig baby since they do not feed mother pig traditionally, wild banana leaves etc. NTFP s for the purpose of utensil, condiments, and upland agricultural products such as sweet potato, big cucumber(*Cucumis sativus*), taro and cotton. The Jinuo could get grains, stick rice, planted vegetables such as cabbage and spring onion, tabaco and thin skirt and bed cover made of cotton.
- Agriculture production experience exchange: what kind crop especially cash crop do you plan to plant? for verity of paddy rice, which one's yield and taste is ok besides hybrid verities? Since shifting cultivation of upland Swidden field would transfer to permenant cultivation, the Jinuo would like to learn and share more about permenat culltivation in the field from their Dai *Laogen*.
- Information exchange: such as baffullo from outside was founded nearby the village? in the village, someone suddenly increase one baffullo but it was not bought from the market, if someone in your village lose the baffullo? Since baffullo is important and great family assets and production material for the Jinuo and the Dai both. And the Jinuo and the Dai graze baffallo freely. To know the trail of baffallo always was and is an important content in information exchange.
- Labor exchange: there is a little different cultivation and harvest date between upland and lowland due to different natural conditions. So the Jinuo often exchange labour with their *Laogen* in *Man-lun* since they are closed neighbours once need more labors.
- Economic information exchange and cooperation: the Dai are more cnvinient to access market information because they live closely with the market. So the Jinuo would like to learn some market information from the Dai. Sometimes, they also

would cooperate, such as to plant water melon, the Jinuo contribute field, the Dai contribute seeds and chemical fertilizer. They contribute labor together, and share 50% profit respectively.

- Widening social network: the Jinuo and the Dai would exchange social information with *Laogen*, such as what is they family member's job, where are them? And the situation of other *Laogen* in the village. those information would be potential social capital for when they need it in one day of the future.

4.4 Changing *Laogen* Network in Transit Economy

Laogen has changed two directions: one side is people would like to set up *Laogen* relation due to its convenience attraction, the traditional definition about age has been ignored. Other side is people decrease the number of *Laogen* in his/her *Laogen* network. especially younger, both Jinuo and Dai younger prefer to *Pengyou*(*madurian*, means friend) relation than *Laogen* relation for maintaining contact. They expressed it is more free and flexible.

Before the 1990s', when the family of *Laogen* in Jinuo party as well as Dai party have some special days, such as weddings or killing of the buffalo and other important social activities, in general, it was necessary to inform *Laogen* specially, since they could know the information from others through *Laogen* network in the village. Then *Laogen* would go home to celebrate at the right time. After the 1990s', this changed in both parties. If they have not received a special invitation, they would not go to celebrate since they thought it was not required, and the host did not want to maintain the *Laogen* relationship. It is common thinking between the Dai and Jinuo when they suffer this scenario.

The Dai said: *in the past, they came to look for food. They could not produce enough rice and weave thin skirts and old women like to own skirts. So they come to exchange rice and clothes. Now, it is not necessary. Since the yield has improved, and they also cultivate paddy rice in the place where there are feasible water sources. NTFPs could be sold in market, and buy the thin skirt from Menglun market.*

The Jinuo said: *in the past, we had have to have "Laogan , then the KOULIAN could be satisfied. But now, we just trade it in local market. Everything could be bought in the local market if we suffer due to natural disasters such as flooding, sloping. Then we need not go to exchange our Dai Laogen. Also, it is un-HUANshuan if exchange it with Dai directly with measured value in the market. We can earn more if we sell on the market. And if have money, it is more flexible and easy if we need something. Such as skirt, clothing, it is now on sale in the market. Dai just gave us clothes to wear.*

Menglun market was established and opened by the township government officially in 1984 for providing opportunities for local people from more than 15 villages and resident in Menglun township to trade their agricultural and forest products as well as daily basic commodities. following market value are accepted by the Jinuo, in Bakaxiaozhai, the first person sale NTFPs in the Menglun market is a man, named *Babielie*. In 1983, he saw Dai sale soured bamboo, spring onion, magic taro noodle etc. in the space of township, so he asked his wife collected some bamboo shoots, started his first sale. The first successful experience encouraged him to continue till now. women in the village were impressed by him, few women started to sale in the beginning of 1990s'.

following they benefited from sale with visible cash income, more and more women participated in NTFPs sale besides fieldwork, NTFPs collection and housework.

Due to considerable cash income it would bring, young generation in Bakaxiaozhai has changed their recognition to *Laogen* relation and behavior in traditional *Laogen* relation with Dai. One hand, they do not hope to have 5 Dai *Laogen*, while number 5 is maximum accepted figure which it is common consciousness by younger age below 35 years old. they go to visit Dai *Laogen* family just whens are invited formally. they often bring biscuit, beer and cake as the gifts taking place of wild banana leaves, magic taro etc. NTFPs which used by elder generation as the gifts to the Dai. On the other hand, the Jinuo young generation is more interested in making friends with lowland people including Dai and Han Chinese. They said since *Pengyou* (mandarin, means "friend") is no strict responsible for duty. It does not have too many binds for limiting each other.

5. Conclusion

Both state identification of Xishuangbanna as a national tourist and holiday destination and national nature reserve have de-structured and constructed ethnic relation between the Jinuo and the Dai in Bakaxiaozhai through its social-economic impacts bringing policies by those both identification .

an hidden un-equal ethnic relationship between the Jinuo and the Dai behind the products flow of NTFPs through *Laogen* network. the domination advantage of the Dai still exists and could be perceived through their body language and altitude to their Jinuo *Laogen*, and their feeling to *Laogen* network.

Laogen relation is a kind of social network with multi-function of social, economic and subsistence exchanging. numerous family-interviewed cases showed, the Jinuo and the Dai are benefited from this traditional NTFPs-based bartering system and its networking among those villages besides its agricultural and forest products flow between upland vs. lowland.

Laogen relation and network of the Jinuo is family based or family centered. Once younger get marriage, he/she would adjust his/her *Laogen* network based on family. Especially women, they would give up some *Laogen* relation, and submit husband's family *Laogen* network if she is a mover out of Bakaxiaozai.

The function of *Laogen* network transit from signal subsistence material exchange to an available social capital helping the Jinuo and the Dai develop their livelihoods today. Both of them can benefit from information exchange and economic cooperation in this network.

Women are active and main actors in maintaining the sustainability of *Laogen* network. In gender perspective, women are raw material carriers, and men are information resources carriers.

6. Discussion

Based on case facts and studied results, the following issues are raised for discussion:

- The Market has now intervened in the traditional dependent relationship between the Jinuo and the Dai, making them less dependent on each but both parties depend on the market at present. The previous stable requirement and supply social relationship has now been de-structured taking place by unpredictable demand and supply market relationship.
- The market economy is giving an opportunity to the Jinuo to change and alter the historic un-equal relation between upland nationality and lowland nationality.
- The Market economy has resulted in a change to the definition of *Laogen* and it now has a broad context. Due to the increased Han Chinese population in Menglun area, *Laogen* network has extended to the Han Chinese group. Han Chinese is gradually becoming one party to this network.
- Women are more initiative than in improving their livelihoods since they are braver than men when both of them are facing the challenge of market economy. even if men are recognized as more brave and more courageous than women by both men and women in their vernacular identification. Facing the challenge of the market economy as against Jinuo custom, women could change their gender identity to go to the market directly to earn money to improve the life quality even though they themselves recognize that men are better at selling. Men prefer the secondary hidden role as new collectors.

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