CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RELATED STUDIES
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This chapter deals with the following three major headings:

2.1 The Tai Races
2.2 Review of the Related Studies
2.3 Theoretical Framework

2.1 The Tai Races

Thai people are found not only in Thailand but also in Laos, Burma, India, both in the north and south of Vietnam, and in southern China. These Thais speak the Thai language, but with different accents and a few different words. Little difference exists between the Thai in Laos, Burma, and even in China and those of northern Thailand, but there is a noticeable difference between them and the Thai living in the central plain and close to Cambodia. The peninsular Thai also are much influenced by the Malay (The New Encyclopaedia, 1943-1973).

The Thai race has been great since ancient times. It appears that the Thai people migrated from the north more than five thousand years ago. The Chao Phraya
River basin became the home of the Siamese people, while other Thai groups remained to the north and east of the Mekhong River, which is the present northeast border of Thailand. Modern political events have divided the Thai into two Thai nations. The Thai of Thailand and the Thai outside Thailand or the Free Thai state (Arumanrajadhon, 1968).

The Thais are believed to be one of the world's ancient races. But due to complex history of this origin, various groups of scholars including historians, ethnologists, archaeologists, linguists and anthropologists express different ideas about the origin. However, regarding this point of view, they can be classified into five major groups: (i) This group believe that the Thai people have originated in Sze-Chuan Region in the middle part of China in the Yangtze valley, and then moved southward to present Indo-Chinese Peninsula. (Couperié, 1933, 1970; Sayamanonda, 1971); (ii) The second group believe that the Thais have originated in AL-Tai valley in the northwest of China near Russia and then moved southward to Sze-Chuan Region, Yunan and Sukhothai gradually. (Dodd, 1909; Wood, 1959; Wijitmattra, 1967; Julajakkrapong, 1962); (iii) The third group believe that the Thais originally have spread over the large areas of the South of China, in Yunan,
Kwangsi, Kwangtung and the northern part of the South-East Asia including Assam of India (Hallet, 1970; Parker, 1894; Pelliot, 1904; Davies, 1909; Aymonier, 1900; Cochrane, 1959; Finot, 1921; Credner, 1935; Seidenfaden, 1967; Eberhard, 1977; Sukphanich, 1978; Phumisak, 1976; Mote, 1964); (iv) This group believe that the Thais have originated right where they are now; they have never migrated from anywhere else; and (v) This group believe that they have originated from the Malayan Peninsula and the surrounded islands and they then migrated northward to the Indo-Chinese Peninsula (La-Ongsri, 1981).

It should be noted that according to the opinions of the groups of scholars mentioned above, the ideas of the first two groups are said to have been accepted widely till the reign of King Rama V, 1957, when a group of scholars including anthropologists made attempts to argue against the beliefs of the former groups. The third group tried to search and refer to literature, linguistics, ethymological, historical, sociological, and anthropological evidence for the origin of the Tai race and finally this group concluded that the Tai people were located and spread over the South of China in Yunan, Kwangsi, Kwangtung, and the northern part of Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Burma, and Assam in India (La-Ongsri, 1981).
It is believed that the pioneer of the mentioned group is Arcnibal R. Colguhour, an English explorer who had made a journey and surveyed throughout the southern part of China, from Kwangtung till Mandaley of Burma and wrote a well-known "Chryse" in 1885 to describe the Tai races he found and experienced with during his journey (Hallet, 1970). Besides, there is a Chinese interpretation work by Yang Shen which was written in 1550. The interpretator was an English consule at Hailam. He wrote an article named, "Nan-Chao" describing that Nan-Chao kingdom was a well-known independent kingdom of the Tai people. Specifically during the reign of Simulo Dynasty, the kingdom was considered the real home of the Tai races. According to such writing, it is believed that the Tai people founded the Kingdom of Nan-Chao in Yunan Region in about the middle of the 13th century (Parker, 1894).

However, Polliot (1904) claims against this point of view in his writing describing two of his journeys from China to India, entitled, "Deux Itineraires de chine en Inde a la fin du VIII Siecle" by viewing that the first king of Nan-Chao was Peeloko who had a son named Kilofong and Kilofong's son was named after him as Fong-Ie. "Such pattern of naming the son's after the father's name was not the Tai's tradition, it was
rather the Tibetian's and some races of Burmese's" (Pelliot, 1904). This point of view is similar to the view of Davies (1909) who had surveyed various races in Yunan Region.

It is noted that Aymonier (1900), who studied the history of Cambodian and Tai races, subsequently wrote a book entitled, "Le Cambodge". He points out that the Tai race include various groups which closely related especially in languages and culture. The major groups of the Tai races include Shan, Lao, Siamese who are believed to have originated in the high plateau of Yunan.

Furthermore, Cochrane (1915) published "The Shan" and explains that though the Tai people are called in different nicknames, they all are in the same race and they occupied a larger amount of areas than the other races in the Indo-Chinese Peninsula, i.e., from Assam along the border lines of Burma and China. Echoing this view, Pinot (1921) concludes that the Tai races are scattered like a large piece of cloth over the southern part of China, Tung-Kia, Laos, Siam, including Burma and Assam.

In addition, according to the study of Credner (1935) regarding the analysis of geographical areas and
races in Yunan, it can be concluded that around the Ta-li lake in Yunan, there lives the Lo-Lo, and the Tais live in the south of the lake. When put a close consideration into the geographical characteristics of Yunnan, it is observed that due to the mountaneous and high plateau areas of Yunnan and since these people rather prefer to live in plain and warm areas based on the purpose of growing rice for their living, the Tais would have not possibly migrated to Yunnan, but originated there itself.

It, therefore, can be said that the Tai should have been originated in the southern part near the sea like Kwangtung Regions (Credner, 1935). This idea, as a result, has given essential light to the study about the history of the Tai races in "The Thai Peoples" by Seidenfaden (1967).

Eberhard (1977) as a German sociologist, an anthropologist, and an archaeologist who has involved a great deal in studying Chinese and the people in this area, purposes the idea about the origin of the Tais that these people are believed to settle down in Kwangtung Region before the period of Tsu. When there was a great fight between the Hun and the enemy from the North, Eberhard adds, the Tai people migrated southward to Yunnan and
the areas around Tangkia Bay. This "march to the south" in which the Tai founded the Kingdom of Tien in Yunnan, is believed to have occurred at the period of the Chinese Hun Dynasty. Until the period of Tang Dynasty, the Tai races founded the Nan-Chao Kingdom in Yunnan and abolished Ta-Ho as its capital city.

Sukphanich (1978), a Thai historian who conducted a study about the history of the Tai races, summarizes that the Thai people have been originated in the southern part of China in Kwangtung, Kwangsi Regions and subsequently migrated westward to Sze-Chuan Region, Chieng-Tu, Yunnan, Ta-Ho and then moved southward through Sip-Song-Chu-Thai, to Laos where they founded a kingdom called Tulan which was changed by the Chinese Hun Dynasty as Chang-Ko. "Such-Kingdom is believed to be the Lan-Chang Kingdom."

Phumisak (1976), another Thai scholar who studied the origin of the Tai people with the help of the analyses of etymology and local folklores, and presented his work in "The Origin of Siamese, Lao and Khmer Language and the Social Characteristics of the Tai Races", and stated that the Tai people lived in different areas of the southern part of China and the northern part of Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Burma and Assam of India. In
addition, Phumisak observes that Nan-Chao Kingdom which was formerly called by the Chinese as Kingdom of Tai-Lo-Lo Nakha and as Nan-Chao in Yunnan, had centered in the extremely southern part. Therefore, "the word 'Nan-Chao' was so named as it was the kingdom of the south".

From the evidence of the studies, analyses, hypotheses and views of these anthropologists and historians of these five groups mentioned above, it is evident that the third group, which claim that the Tai races are scattered all over the large areas of the southern part of China in Yunnan, Kwangtung, Kwangsi, including the northern part of the South-East Asia in Assam of the North-East Region of India, is more acceptable as the views of this group are based on the more authentic findings of the similarity of language and culture of these people.

Karathip Praphanpong (1913): refers to the history of the Tai race, in the episode of "Chaat Thai" (Thailand) in his historical writing about the Tai Yai that "the Thais have originated in Ka-Sae (Manipur) at the border line of India of Madhya Pradesh and scattered over to Kwangsi of China, present Bangkok of Thailand, and Yunnan ...". Besides, this there are four major Thai
groups: (i) Thai Phayap (Northern Thais); (ii) Thai I-san (Northeastern Thais); (iii) Thai-Tawan-Ok (Eastern Thais); and, (iv) Thai-Tai (Southern Thais). Thai-Phayap includes Tai-Yai and Tai Phama (Burmese Tai) which is located in the Ka Sa, Assam, Pha-Mo, Kong (Mo-Kong or Muang Kung), and Yang (Mon-Yin). Kong is the kingdom of the Mao which used to be civilised and ruled by ninety-nine kings, the first of which was Chao-Sam-Luang-Fa. The kingdom was scattered over to other kingdom of Khamti (Khamti-Luang) and Sing Ka Ling Khamti living along the Chindwin River.

Furthermore, Narathip Praphanpong (1913) also describes that there are eight different languages in the use of these Tai people: (i) the Tai Siam (Shan or Siam, as the European and Burmese call the Thais, the 'Shan'); (ii) Tai Lao (iii) Tai Su (of the Tais located in the east side of the Salwin River); (iv) Salwin Shan (of the Tais at the west side of the Salwin); (v) Tai Mao or Tai Luang (or Tai Yai which are called 'Check' by the British and Nguac' by the Thais); (vi) Shan Khamti (of the Tais at the west side of the Irawadee River which are sometimes called Tai Yai or Tai Nguac; (vii) Tai Khae or Chin (of the Tais at the southern part of China); and, (viii) Tai-Moi or Tai Muang (of the Tais at Tong-Kia in Vietnam).
Chotsukarat (1969), who studied the Tai races and wrote a book entitled, "Tai Yuan Khon Muang", describes in summary, that the Thais or Tais were the Mongols, one race of which were the Tai-Chinese who lived spreading over the large areas along the Po River and in the Indo-Chinese Peninsula. These groups include Tai Lao, Tai Lu, Tai Daeng, Tai Dan, Tai Khao (Phu Tai), Tai To, Tai Nung, and the group living in Burma at the present time such as Tai Yai (Nguao or Shan), Tai Khurn (the Tai from Chieng Tung), Tai Lu, and Koren. Besides there are the Tais who have migrated into the northeastern part of India in Assam State. These groups are Tai Khamti, Tai Pha Kae, and Tai Luang.

It is noted that the various Thai groups have spread about everywhere and founded separate kingdoms. It is evident that communal politics, lack of communications, lack of literacy have separated the Thai people from each other. As a result they forgot each other and even went so far as to fight among themselves as enemies for the aggrandisement of power by the various overlords. Different kingdoms, therefore, arose out of the Thai race. Even the Shans in Upper Burma during the British occupation were divided into forty-nine states, each with a ruler, called Sawbwas (Chaofah in the Thai language), or princes,
Even in Laos, three or four states arose among them: the Kingdom of Luang Prabang, the principality of Vientiane, the Principality of Chiengkwang and the Kingdom of Champasak (Bassac), and at times also another principality of Kammuan at Thankhek. Sibsong Panna in the North had their princes at Chiengrung, and Sibsong Chutai at Muang Lai (Laichao) (Jumsai, 1983). This is how the single Thai race had split up into various groups and sub-group to such an extent to lose their identity being in the midst of diversity.

It is believed that the Thai people from South-West China in Nan-Chao were gradually migrated southward along the Mekhong, the Salwin, the Irrawadee, the Tongking Delta, and finally down the Chao Phraya River towards the sea, and as early as 1229 the Thai who came to the North of Burma split themselves up, and one part led by Sukapha crossed the Patkoi Mountain and founded the Ahom Kingdom in Assam, which was later in 1826 annexed by the British into the Indian Empire. The Ahoms are to be found from Srinagar and Sadiya in South-West China down to Gauhati in Assam (Jumsai, 1983).

In the valley of the Chao Phraya River, the Khmers were believed to have predominated before the arrival of the Thais. The Thai emigrated southwards from
China and came under Khmer rule. In 1239 the leader of the Thai people in Sukhothai rose against their Khmer ruler and set up a Thai Kingdom. This became the first Thai kingdom in Indo-China, and she then extended her sway gradually over the whole of the Malay Penninsular. At the same time, two Thai chiefs also set up their kingdoms side by side: the Kingdom of Lannathai under King Mengrai with the capital first at Chiengrai, then at Chiengmai, and the Principality of Payao under Ngam Muang. The heads of these three countries became close friends and allied with each other.

The Kingdom of Sukhothai became prosperous, especially under King Rama Kamhaeng, who ruled the country from 1275-1317.

However, another kingdom started in the South at Ayudhya in 1350. This kingdom became more and more powerful and finally in 1438 Sukhothai was incorporated into the Thai Kingdom of Ayudhya. Ayudhya lasted until 1767 when it fell to the Burmese, but King Taksin liberated the country and moved his capital to Dhonburi. Chao Phraya Chakri, thereafter, took over and set up the present dynasty when he moved the capital city to Bangkok in 1782 (Jumsai, 1979).
2.2 REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES:

The origin of Tai race or Tai-family-speaking race has been told differently in many countries, such as Thailand, China, Burma, India, Vietnam, Kampuchea, Laos, Malasia, etc.

Anthropologists, archaeologists, linguistic, sociologists and historians have different views about the origin of Tai race. Some agree and some argue. It is, therefore, a question to be solved.

The researcher would like to pick up some studies, opinions, and theories in relation to the origin of Tai race for consideration. Here are some of them.

Grierson (1904) divides the origin of Tai people into four regions: the southeastern region group living in the east of the Salawin River, consisting of Tai-Siam, Tai Lao, Tai Lu, Tai Khen; the southwestern region group living in Shan State in the north of Burma; the northeastern region group living in Yunan and westward to the Irawaddi River consisting of Tai Mao (Tai-Chinese); and the northwestern and northeastern region group consisting of Northern Shan (Northern Tai). In addition, opined another view about the Thai language is that the Thai or Shan language belongs to the Siamese-Chinese family of the Indo-Chinese form of speech. The Thai language can be
classified into two groups: (i) the Southern group; and (ii) the Northern group. The first includes Siamese, Lao, Lu and Khun spoken by those who settled in the east of the Salwin; and the latter includes Ahom, Khamti, and the Shan proper, i.e., Northern Shan, Southern Shan and the Chinese Shan. In spite of the controversy regarding the place of the Tai Ahom in the Tai language, Grierson was able to find out the connection between Tai Ahom and those of Khamtis and Shans of Burma. In support of this, he points out that Tai Ahom has an alphabet of its own, which is an archaic form of the one used at present by the Khamtis and the Shans. Of course, it can not be said that Khamti and Shan actually descended from the Ahom, but it can be said that the Ahom has a close relationship with them.

Scott (1906) mentions about the history of the "Tai" that "The Tai have no traditions of their prehistoric wanderings. They were certainly in the South-Western provinces of China when the Burmans migrated to south. Early swarms seem to have entered Northern Burma 2000 years ago, but they were small in number, and there was more movement south and east ... The various Tai principalities in Salween and Mekhong Valleys took place between the third century of our era and the fall of the 'Tang'
Dodd (1923) who claims that the Tai Race have been divided into three great modern divisions; the Tai of the extreme South known as the Siamese; the Tai or Burma and Assam known as the Shans, the Khamtis, and the Ahoms; and the rest of the Tai race at the north of the Siamese and the east of the Shans. In the old state of Mogaung and along the Chindwin the Shans have by no means disappeared. And the same is true of Khamti. The Ahoms of Shans of Assam are now largely returned in census reports as Hindus. But the real number is a matter of conjecture.

Gait (1926) further writes that the Ahoms have abandoned their tribal dialect in favour of Assamese. The earlier philological changes were accompanied by racial fusion and this occurred after the Ahom invasion of Assam when many Chutiya, Moran and Borahi families were incorporated in the Ahom tribal system and by lapse of time and inter-marriage, gradually came to be recognised as genuine Ahoms. The Ahoms themselves are Shans, who are an outcome of an intermingling of Mons, Negretos and Chinese. The Ahoms were, of course, few in number, but these were too dominant a race. The Ahoms ruled in Assam for 700 years. But they left very few marks on the toponomy of the country. In any case there can be no doubt that the original home of
the Ahoms was somewhere in the ancient kingdom of Pong. They are genuine Shans both in their physical type as well as their tribal language and written character. They call themselves Tai and maintained a continuous intercourse with the inhabitants of their original home until very recent times. The Khantis, Phakials, Aitonias, Turungs and Khamjangs are all Shan tribes who have at different times moved along the same route from the original cradle, but the Ahoms are the only race who came before the conversion of its inhabitants to Buddhism. The other Shan tribes of Assam are all Buddhists, which shows that they migrated at the late date. The Turungs, in fact, did not reach the plains of Assam until the beginning of the 19th century.

Kidniya (1935) mentions that, "there was a branch of Thai race in Assam called the Khantis. They are a Buddhist tribe, living mainly in the Lohit District of Arunachal Pradesh. They are also to be found in the Tirap District of Arunachal Pradesh as well as in the districts of Dibrugarh and Lakhimpur of Assam". Needham (1864) adds that, "Sadiya is up in the North. The Khantis who are descendants of the great Shan race, have migrated to Arunachal Pradesh from Burma in the second half of the 18th century. The Khantis are the only tribe of Arunachal Pradesh having a script of their own, called 'Lik' or 'Lik-Tai'."
Gohain (1950) mentions about the Tai Buddhist tribes that are:

i. **Tai Khamtis** like the Ahoms, belong to Mau branch of the Tai or Shan race. Their original home was Khamti-Lung or Khamti-Mung or Bor Khamti country the word Khamti (Kham, - gold, ti, - place) means 'country full of gold'; and from this the people themselves come to be known as Khamti. The origin is said to be full of gold; and gold is still washed from the rivers there.

ii. **Tai Noras** - Noras is the name by which the Mungkong Shans were generally known to the Ahoms, and frequent references in Ahoms chronicles are made to them under the name, either as friend or foe. The boundary of the Ahom Kingdom and the Nora territory was the patkoi or patkai Hill which was previously known as Doi-Kao-Rong. It came to be known as Pat-kai-Seng-Kan (pat, -cut, kai,-fowl, seng, -oath, kan, -sworn), for it on this hill where the Ahoms and the Noras took a solemn oath, by sacrificing a fowl not to tresspass into each others territory. The Ahoms Noras, particularly those of the
Sibsagar district, have mixed with the Assamese people adopting their dress, language, manners and customs, like the Ahoms.

iii. Tai Phakials or Tai Phake. The Phake or Phakials called themselves Tai Phake the origin of the word Phake is not definitely known. The Phakials say that they are the descendants of Tai royal officials. This seems to be correct, for Pha means king or chief and Ke means official. The people belong to the Mau branch of the Tai race. Prior to their immigration into this province, they were residents on the banks of the Nam Turung or Turungpani, and were thus apparently near neighbours of the Turungs or Tairongs.

iv. Tai Turungs - They are also called Tairongs or Tairungs as they originally came from Tairung i.e., the Tai country, for, rung or rong or lung or mung means country or province. Their own tradition is that they originally came from Mung mang Khosang on the Northeast of Upper Burma, and settled on the Turungpani.
v. Tai Aitons - The Aitons or Aitongs or Aitoneelas are said to have been the section of the Shan of Monkong which supplied eunuchs to the royal seraglio, and to have emigrated to Assam to avoid the punishment to which, for some reason, they had been condemned.

Dalton (1960), while writing on the Khamtis, says that the Phakis or Phakials on the Dihing River, the Khamjangs of Sadiya, and the numerous settlements of Khamtis are all colonies of the Shan or the Tai race and they retain the customs, costume, and religion that they brought with them into a valley. The Khamtis are Buddhists too. They are more advanced than all other North-Eastern Frontier Tribes in knowledge, arts and civilization. The style of wearing the principal garment of women (Phanung or Phanek, the lower garment is fold over the breasts under the arms, and reaches to the feet), common to the Shans and the Manipuries, appears to have been introduced into Assam by the former, as the Assamese women of the lower classes have all adopted it, but the Khamti women wear in addition a coloured silk scarf round the waist and a long-sleeved jacket. Refering back to Dalton (1960), work "Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal", in order to trace the similar use of terms, words, and meaning for the following linguistic groups of the Thai language family:
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Tuning (1961) mentions some of the Tai groups in Assam such as Ahoms: who are at present Hindus. They ruled Assam for about six hundred years. They do not recognise their kiths and kins.

Khamti: Khamtis had kingdom of their own. Now they have lost their ruling power. Their condition was a
a bit better in the time of British. Under the Congress Government they have lost everything. Their number is about thirty thousand. **Khamjangs:** the number of Tai Khamjangs who recognise themselves as Shyams is about one thousand. They had also kingdom at the foot hill of the Patkai mountain. They are Buddhists. But they have forgotten the Tai language. **Phake:** Tai Phake were from Shan state of Burma. Now they live on the bank of the river Buridihing of Upper Assam. Their language is Tai. Religion is Buddhism. **Aitons:** Tai Aitons live at Barpathar of the Golaghat subdivision and at Balipathar of Mikir hills district of Assam. They speak Tai and their religion is Buddhism.

**Leach** (1964) writes that Khamti appears to have been originally a title associated with the royal family of Mogaung. As these Khamti states have played an important role in Kachin affairs they are worth enumerating in detail.

1. **Khamti Long** (Great Khamti), now a confederation of 7 small Shan principalities situated near the head waters of the Irrawaddy.
2. **Singkaling Khamti.** A small Shan state on the upper Chindwin. The bulk of the local population are Kachins and Nagas. The Shan element, including the ruling family, seem to have come from Ningbyen in the Hukawng Valley.

3. **The Khamti of Assam** Located at the east of Sadiya and also on the Dihing near Ledo. The former derive from colonist from Khamti Long who entered Assam about 1795. The latter from various groups of Shan colonists who entered Assam from the Hukawng valley during the 18th and 19th centuries through the past 120 years the Khamti of Assam have always been much mixed up with Assamese, Mishmis, Nagas and Kachins (Singpho).

*Mangrai* (1965), while talking on 'some earlier shans' explains that the shans from only one section of the Tai race which at present is divided over an area stretching from Assam in India through northern and eastern Burma to China of the Chinese Shan States then southwards into Laos till the Kingdom of Siam. Altogether the number of these people is about 27 - 30 million. *Mangrai* disagrees with the theory that the Mon-Khmer peoples immigrated into
South-East Asia from India. He presumes that when the 13th century opened the Tai "beach-heads" had already been firmly established among the Burmese and Mon-Khmer peoples, and it was from these "beach heads", that the Tai tribes began to assert themselves over their neighbours resulting in "a large effervescence" from the direction of the Southern frontier of Yunan and it is during this period that the Ahoms reached Assam.

Seidenfaden (1967) agrees with Grierson about the classification of Tai groups according to their settlement regions. He mentions the Tai-family-speaking race and divides Tai people into four groups according to the directions of their migrations. The General and North group consists of the Yang Tzi Kiang Basin Tai: Tai Lu of Sip-Song Panna, Tai Nam, and Tai Lai. The West Group Tai lives in the upper past the valley, the Irrawady Basin and the upper part and the lower part of the Salween Basin: these are Tai Ahom, Tai Moi (Kassey in Manipur), Tai Khanti, Burmo-Thai and Tai Yai (in Shan State). The East group Tai lives in the southern part of Kwai Chao, Kwangsi: these are Tai Tho, Tai Nung, and Tai Khac. The South Group Tai live in the Chao Phraya and the Mekhong Basins and in the upper part of Malay Peninsula: these are Tai Phuan, Tai Lanna, Tai Lao and Tai Siam (Thai in Thailand).
Anumanrajadhon (1968) writes about the people of these two regions. The Thai belongs to the same ethnic group as the Shans of Upper Burma, and certain Thai minor tribes also scattered in North-Eastern region of Assam. There is a primitive belief which has survived among the people of these regions. The Khawn, as vaguely understood in a confused way, is a unsubstantial thing supposed to reside in the physical body of a person due to the presence of which the person enjoys good health and happiness. This belief is rather strong in North-Eastern Thailand. Ming like the Khawn is also an immaterial thing residing in a person. The various Thai tribes outside Thailand i.e. the Ahoms in North-Eastern India, the Dioi and the Nung in Southern China, still retain the 'Ming' meaning life in Thai language. In the North and North-East of Thailand there is a Tham Khawn ceremony for distinguished visitors which custom still exists in Arunachal Pradesh and in the hill areas of North-East India.

The Thai marriage custom in earlier days was the young men to leave his parents' house and live in the wife's home. Such system still exists in the Khasi matriarchal society.

Anumanrajadhon later divided the Tai-family-speaking people living outside Thailand into three groups. The first is the Sino-Tai consisting of the Tai in China
such as Yunan, Kwangsi, Tang-Kia, and Hainum Island:
these are Tai Nam, Tai Lai, Tai Lung, Tai Long, Tai Li,
Tai Juang. The second is the West Tai consisting of the
Tai in Burma and India: these are Tai Yai, Tai Lu, Tai
Khen, Tai Ahom, Tai Nora, Tai Ronç, Tai Aiton, Tai
Khamti and Tai Phakhe. And the last group is the East Tai
consisting of the Tai in Vietnam and Lao: these are Tai
Tho, Tai Nung, Tai-Lao, Phu Tai, Black Tai, and White
Tai.

Gogoi (1971) describes that the 'Tai' is a
generic name denoting a great branch of the Mongoloid
population of Asia. The Tai are now mainly concentrated
in the Indo-Chinese peninsula. The present habitat of the
Tai people extends from Assam in the west to Kwangsi and
Hainan in the east and from the interior of Yunan in the
north to the southernmost extremity of Thailand (Siam) in
the south. Wherever they have spreaded, the Tai have
acquired local appellations. In the four major areas
of East Asia, namely, Burma, Thailand (Siam), French
Indo-China and Yunan they are known respectively as the
Shan, Siamese, Lao and Tai.

While writing on the Khamti, says that the
Khamti, migrated to Assam only in the second half of the
18th century. This happened when Alomphra, king of Burma,
causd the final dismemberment of the Shan Empire of Pong,
which once touched in its extent Tipperah, Yunan and Siam, and had the city called 'Mogang' by the Burmese and Mongmarong by the Shans themselves, as its capital. The Shans (Tai) are believed to have originally their home to the west of China.

**Michell (1973),** while giving the topographical, political and military report, talks about the Singphos and Khamtis. The Singphos are divided into two great tribes: the Mocrocs, Yohyen and Lashe tribes while the other tribes are the Lapai and Oom Koom Shung tribes. The former are characterised as naked savages while the latter are Chinese in manners and appearance. The Singphos have no settled form of religion or worship but believe in the efficacy of the sacrifice of animals to certain spirits, good and bad. Polygamy is allowed. The law of inheritance is for the property of the father to be divided between the eldest and youngest sons, the eldest taking the title and estate, and the youngest the personal and moveable property, the other sons have to provide for themselves. The Khamtis are far advanced in civilisation having a written language and literature of their own. They can hold their own against Mishmis and Singphos. The trade relationship between the Khamtis and the Burmese is also mentioned.
Harris (1976) states, in his "Notes on Khamti Shan" that the Khamti people call themselves "Tay Khamti" and their language "Khaam Tay Khamti". Therefore, the most likely meaning of the word Khamti is "Khamti the place (where) gold (is)" which, in regular tone, corresponds with Tai Mao Khamti, which has the same meaning. The Tai Khamti is spoken in the North-East Frontier Agency in Assam and in the adjacent areas of North-West Burma. Apart from this, Harris, after his studies of Tones of Tai Khamti in Lohit District, Arunachal Pradesh, found that "The Maan Chong Kham dialect has five tones on live syllables (those not ending in a stop". This finding is in contrast to the report of Needham (1894) which claims that the Tai Khamti dialect of Sadiya has six tones.

The variation from one dialect to another between five and six tones is very common among Shan and Chinese Shan dialects, thus it is not surprising to find closely related Khamti Shan dialects doing the same thing.

Weidert (1977) writes that the vocalic sound pattern of a Tai language is taken to exemplify the use of a diacritic component Regularization (a) applying to the morphonological level within a 3-level phonological hierarchy for the determination of this Regularization component, the concept of 'Phoneme' has to be applied in a manner which deviates both from the established classical and generative usage.
Choudhury (1978) writes that "The Khamtis call themselves Tai or Tai Khamtis denoting that they belong to the Tai race. The name of the people has been derived from the place inhabited by them. The Khamtis have attained to a high degree of civilisation and culture with remarkable achievement in the fields of art and literature."

He writes about Thai or Tai that the name "Assam" is of recent origin. There are different interpretations of this. One interpretation is that it is an off shoot of a Sanskrit word "Assam" which means "unparalleled" or "peerless". It is said that this word was used to describe the invincible might of the Ahoms who invaded this country in the first part of thirteenth century (1228 A.D.), from across the Patkai ranges. But the scientific and generally accepted interpretation is as follows: the word "Assam" is a transformation of the word "Sam" (or Ham-Ahom) a species or a group of people originating from the "Shan" or the "Siamese" who called themselves "Thai" or "Tai".

Barua (1978) describes that the Ahoms entered Assam in the early part of the thirteenth century. They became Hinduised and adopted the local Assamese language by the seventeenth century. At present their main concentration is seen in the districts of Dibrugarh, Lakhimpur and Sibsagar of upper Assam. The hereditary aristocracy, coupled
with functional occupation, helped in the growth of different Phaids (clans) in Ahom society. In case of using surname also, there is no uniformity or standard practice. The Ahoms followed certain rules very rigidly in establishing marriage relations. The marriage between Buragohain and Deodhai, and Mohan and Borogohain (these are various clans) are not strictly allowed. The marriage restrictions within the group are strictly followed. Each village is self-sufficient and the manual labour is highly encouraged. The land and the subjects are equally the property of the state and, therefore, not only the houses and the lands, but the cultivators are also assessed. This is the Paik system.

Pemberton (1978) writes that the Khamtis, Ahoms Singphos, Burmas and Shans, had trade relationships among them carried out through land and sea-routes, sometimes crossing through Tanousi mountain into the North and North-East of Thailand, thereby developing the social and cultural relationship.

Pankhuenkat (1979) views that, the Thai races in Shan State include Tai Lu, Tai Yai, Tai Kun, and Tai Yong. The ones in India are Tai Khanti, Tai Rong, Tai Nora, Tai Ahom and Tai Ayton; in Vietnam are Tai Dam, Tai Kao, Tai Tho and Tai Nung; in Laos are Tai Lac, Tai Phuan,
Phu Tai, Tai Yo and Tai Dam; and, in Kampuchea is Tai Lao. Pankhuenkat quoted that "... The Thai language family (Kham Thai) or Tai Language family is one of the major language families in Asia. It can be said that there are Tai speaking people in eight countries including China, Burma, India, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Malaysia".

Fang Kuei Li (1980) studied and analysed the Tai family languages. He divides them into three groups. The Southwest Tai group consists of the Tai in Thailand, Lao, Shan, Ahom, Black Tai, White Tai including Tai race in India, Burma and Vietnam. The Central Tai group consists of the Tai-groups living in North Vietnam around the frontier between North Vietnam and China: these are Tai Tho, Tai Nung, Lung Chow, Tien Pao, and Yung Chun. The North Tai group consists of the southern part of China: these are Tai Yoi, Wu-Ming, Po-Ay, Saek.

Jumsai (1983) states that there are various Thai tribes under different names. For instance, the Thai living in upper Burma are known as the Shans, Khoens, and Khanti; in Assam as Ahoms; in South China (with the capital at Shweli or Chiengrung) as the Lus; in Laos as Lao; and, in Thailand as Siamese or Thai. He hypothesizes that it might be because the Tai or Thai people in different regions
have originated from the same race, but as they are separated and living spreadily, they have adopted the customs of the people nearer to them. Those near the Chinese took the Chinese, while those near the Burmese took the Burmese customs. For instance, the Thai Tho of Cao Bang have assimilated a number of their neighbours' words - the Vietnamese - into their language, whereas the Thai Nung have absorbed many Chinese words into theirs simply because they have close contact with the Chinese. In addition, it is also noted that the Thais in Yunnan were known to use Chinese script apart from the southern group using a Mon-Burman script in an adapted form. The inscription stone of Kolofong (a king of the Nanchao Kingdom) was found, in 766 A.D. in Chinese Characters.

Warangrat (1984) writes that trade used to be one of the important occupations of the North-Eastern Thai people, only second to agriculture sometimes penetrating to Cambodia, Lower Burma, etc. Thai shows that they had trade relationship directly or indirectly with North-Eastern Indian people.

In the light of the aforesaid sameness of origin of people in the North-Eastern of Thailand and India and the differences which cropped up in the two societies with
the passage of time, it will be an interesting study
to compare and contrast the socio-cultural and educational
conditions historically to have a glimpse of the similarities
and difference in the two countries on the main variables
of study.

2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Since the present study is geared toward the
comparison of the two groups of people, the Tai races in
Lohit District, Arunachal Pradesh, India (Tai Khamti)
and the Thai I-San people in Kantharawichai District of
Mahasarakham Province in Thailand, the following topics
are discussed as they are considered the theoretical frame­
work of the study:

2.3.1 Cultural Anthropology : Basic Concept
2.3.2 Anthropological Research

2.3.1 CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY : BASIC CONCEPT

It is evident that the primary concept employed
by anthropologists is culture which is mostly used in the
sense:

i. Culture refers to the way of life of a
particular group of people. It is everything
that a group of people thinks, and says and
does, and makes. Culture is learned: it is transmitted from generation to
generation. When anthropologists refer
to the culture of a people, they are
referring to a large and diverse member
of topics which include technological
pursuits, marriage customs, military
practices, and religious beliefs.

ii. If the article 'a' precedes the term culture,
it refers to the particular group of people
themselves. If the term culture is used in
the plural, it refers to different groups
of people (Otterbein, 1977).

Although there is not complete agreement among
anthropologists, it is said that the most satisfactory
way of distinguishing one group of people - one culture -
from another is to use two criteria: language distinctness
and geographic separation (Ember, 1963).

Language distinctness is an appropriate criterion
because not only is it an important aspect of culture, but
it is also the major means by which culture is transmitted
or taught to the young. If two groups of people speak
different languages, they are different cultures. Languages
are different if the speaker of one language cannot understand the speaker of the other language.

Geographic separation, the second criterion, permits the delineation into separate culture those people who, though not living contiguously, speak the same language. For example, the various English-speaking peoples throughout the world who are geographically separate from each other constitute different cultures. On the other hand, English-speaking North Americans whether they live in Canada or the United States are one culture since they speak one language, and are geographically contiguous.

It is noted, according to Ember (1963), that using these two criteria, a culture can be defined as "a continuously disturbed population whose members speak a common language .... ".

Furthermore, culture can be viewed as systems composed of overlapping subsystems. Four subsystems are usually distinguished (Beals, 1967): economic, social, political, and belief systems. An economic system consists of the means by which the physical environment is exploited technologically and the means by which the products of this endeavour are differentially allocated to the members of a culture. A social system is composed of the relationships between kinsmen and the groups formed by kinsmen as well as
voluntary groups formed from kinsmen and/or nonkinsmen. A political system consists of power-oriented organizational units, their leaders, the relationships which leaders have with members of their units, and relationships between units. And finally, a belief system is composed of the knowledge which people have of the world around them and the practices and customs by which people utilize that knowledge.

Moreover, it can be said that the culture of a people is composed of innumerable culture traits. Although the culture trait has been defined as the "smallest identifiable unit in a given culture" (Herskovits, 1948), the term in actual practice is applied to any aspect of a people's way of life.

Some culture traits are considered to be more important than others. The more cultural traits a particular culture influences or is influenced by, the more important it is deemed to be. Since important culture traits are interrelated, in the sense of having mutual influence upon each other, it can be said in conclusion that they form networks or systems. Four such systems described above, are the economic, social, political, and belief systems. They can be thought of as subsystems since they overlap some important culture traits are
members of two or more subsystems - and form a single cultural system.

2.3.2 Anthropological Research

In order to learn about the way of life or a particular group of people, an anthropologist undertakes field research in that culture. Ideally this involves living with the members of the culture for a year or more and learning their language. A year of "fieldwork" is desirable in order that events which occurs only once annually cannot be observed. A minimal facility in the language is necessary of course in order to talk with people. The time-honoured method of conducting fieldwork is the take-up residence with a local group. This may consist of living with a family, building a house, or pitching a tent. The location should be as advantageous as possible for watching daily activities. From this vantage point the anthropologist observes as much information as he can about the way the members of the local group live. He keeps a diary which describes both daily activities and special events. One of his first tasks is to map the location of structures and important landmarks. A census is also taken. The individuals from whom an anthropologist obtains his information are known as informants (Otterbein, 1977).
The two major techniques of gathering information about a people's culture are observation and interviewing. These methods go hand in hand: the anthropologist asks his informants questions about a forthcoming event, he observes the event, and then he asks further questions concerning what he has observed. What he both sees and hears he records. Sometimes he is assisted by a camera and a tape recorder. Other more specialized techniques of data gathering may also be used (Edgerton and Langness, 1974). After gaining familiarity with the culture through his residence in one local group, the anthropologist may visit or change his residence to other local groups. However, an anthropologist usually spends most of his time studying the culture of a single local group.

Upon returning from 'the field', the anthropologist begins the task of analyzing the massive amount of information which he has collected. This information is contained in his diary, in his maps, in his census reports, in his notes, in his photographs, and in his tape recordings. The first step in analysis is to index the diary and to tabulate the census data. The index, the census table and the other information collected are organized by topic. The topics may be ones developed for that particular culture, or they may be taken from a standard list. The list commonly used by American anthropologists is titled outline of Culture Materia (Murdock et al. 1961).
Consequently, the next step consists of reading and rereading the information by topic. At this point the anthropologist begins to "see" the outline for his report coming into focus. The order of the topics may be changed. Eventually, the list of topics becomes the outline for his report.

The third step is to write the report, utilizing the information which has been organized by topic.

The final product is a book which describes the culture of a particular group of people.

Since the anthropologist is likely to have spent most of his time living with a single local group, the book is a description not of the lives of all members of the culture, but of the culture of a particular local group. Such a descriptive account is an ethnography (Otterbein, 1977).

It is noted that the content of ethnographies varies. Some provide information on every conceivable subject while others emphasize one or several related topics, giving little or no attending to many subjects. The former is called general ethnographies, and the latter is focussed ethnographies:
i. General Ethnography:

An ethnographer wishing to produce a general ethnography will probably consult a standard list to determine if he has given adequate coverage to most topics deemed important to anthropologists; that is, he will include in his report information on topics which other anthropologists have included in their ethnographies. In addition, he will probably include information on topics which are intrinsically interesting to him. The general ethnography has been said to use the "standard style" by Edgerton and Langness (1974).

ii. Focused Ethnography:

A focused ethnography is usually said to be "problem-oriented" in the sense that the ethnographer desires to explain the culture traits which he has focussed upon. He solves his problem, so to speak, by including in his report topics which he believes, or other anthropologists believe, are casual factors. He also will usually include a description of the subsystem (economic, social, political or belief system) in which the focused topic is embedded. Most ethnographies written today are focused, but much contextual information is also provided.

It is important to note that in the writing of an ethnography, the anthropologist frequently employs
concepts that represent the reality which he observed or had been described to him by an informant. For example, anthropologist observes that the members of the local groups in which he is residing live in separate houses, each dwelling containing a married man and woman and their children. His census reports confirm this observation. Moreover, he learns that each adult has only one marriage partner and that newly-wed couples establish themselves in a dwelling separate from that of their parents. Because anthropologists refer to such family groups as "Independent nuclear family households", this term is used in the ethnography. Each concept is a useful way of designating, in one to several words, a complex phenomenon - a culture trait - which might take several pages to describe (Otterbein, 1977).

For further discussion, it is crucial to note that once he has completed the ethnography, the anthropologist may choose to undertake comparative research rather than to initiate another ethnographic study. Comparative research may be undertaken for any one of several purpose. First, the anthropologist may compare his description of the culture he studied with descriptions of other cultures in order to derive new problems for research. For example, if a culture with a nomadic settlement pattern is contrasted
with a culture which has year-round settlement, and it is noted that the former is a hunting and gathering people while the latter is an agricultural people, it can be inferred that the mode of subsistence is responsible for the type of settlement pattern. Moreover, the anthropologist may speculate that it is the sufficiency of food obtained or grown which is producing the greater permanence of settlements, since the local groups of the agricultural people do not have to move frequently to obtain enough to eat. Although there are no rules or special techniques for conducting comparative research of this type, usually the anthropologist compares cultures which are dissimilar and attempts to arrive at explanations for the cultural differences. Sometimes it is helpful for two anthropologists to work together in conducting the research. They may thus compare the cultures which each has studied.

Anthropologists may compare two or more cultures to simply discover similarities and differences; they may compare the same culture at two points in time in order to ascertain the amount of culture change which has occurred; they may compare a large number of cultures in order to determine the frequency with which different culture traits occur, either on a worldwide or regional basis; they may
compare culture traits themselves in order to establish whether the traits cluster geographically. Underlying each of these endeavours, however, is usually the desire to explain cultural phenomenon: why the similarities and differences between cultures; Why does a culture change every time? Why are some culture traits common and others rare? Why are some culture traits found only in specific geographic region? The tentative answers to these questions propose a relationship between two phenomena - either two culture traits or a culture trait and some other phenomenon, such as a geographic factor.

The most basic purpose, though, for undertaking comparative research is to test proposed relationships between two phenomena - relationships proposed either from data in ethnographies or from comparative research. Different techniques have been devised for testing these proposed relationships, or hypotheses. One technique, known as the method of controlled comparison, consists of comparing two highly similar cultures. Another technique, which requires a knowledge of research methodology and statistics, is known as the cross-cultural survey method. Usually as many as thirty different cultures, often more, are compared simultaneously.
Research reports emanating from this method are known as cross-cultural studies.

It can be concluded that comparative research, whether it involves the use of the controlled comparative, the cross-cultural survey, or some other technique, is referred to as ethnology. Ethnology is the comparative study of cultures. The term is often used to contrast comparative research with ethnographic research.