

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank, first and foremost, my professor and wonderful parents. It has been an honor and a great privilege to be supervised and guided by Professor Toru Nakanishi for the past six years at the University of Tokyo. His enthusiasm, encouragement and faith in me throughout have been extremely helpful in achieving my goals. This dissertation would not have been possible if it were not for his and my parents' persistent support.

I would like to convey my profound thanks to my committee members Professor Shinji Yamashita, Professor Takumi Moriyama, Professor Yasunobu Sato and Professor Saburo Takizawa, for their valuable comments and insightful criticism. I am immensely indebted to Professor Herald Kleinschmidt of Tsukuba University, who tirelessly supervised me through each research questions and hypotheses, and enlightened me with brilliant ideas.

I owe my deepest gratitude to all the Mon families in both Thailand and Myanmar, who were brave enough to let me see their world and for making me believe that there is always a way when there is a will. Their astonishing hospitality, warmth and optimism have made this research possible. Their courage have endeavored me to see human security beyond its meanings.

I share the credit of my work with the research teams in Myanmar that helped me extensively in gathering information and data that are integral for the structure and analyses of the thesis. I am indebted to many friends who have supported me and especially my girlfriends in Tokyo who have taken care of me during the final days of my submission. I am grateful to Ms. Lana Khoury and Mrs. Suzuka Sato for checking the grammar and languages in this thesis and, Dr. Daw Thida Kyu for helping me with statistical analyses.

This thesis would have remained a dream had it not been for my Daniel.

## **DEDICATION**

This thesis would not have accomplished without the love, support and encouragement of my families in Myanmar and United States. I dedicate this thesis to my parents Dr. Kan Zaw and Daw Nanda Hmun, and my husband Dr. Daniel Alkhal, who have devoted all their lives in bringing hopes for the defenseless and unprivileged societies. Watching them sail across many challenges to create opportunities for thousands of students and refugees have inspired me to accomplish this research. Without their presence, support and understanding, I would have never been able to witness and share the journeys of Mon people in Thailand and Myanmar.