

LEARNING FROM THE PAST: TRACING THE HISTORY OF MANU MANAW ETHNIC GROUPS IN MYANMAR

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Abstract

Myanmar is known as a melting pot and there are over one hundred ethnic groups. The major ethnic groups are Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Bamar, Mon, Rakhine and Shan. Manu Manaw national is included in Kayah ethnic group and they mostly reside in the Phruso township, Kayah State. The aim of this research is to find out how Manu Manaw is related to two major ethnic groups, Kayah and Kayin groups from anthropological point of view. This research was conducted in Taw Khu village, Pa Lei Le village, Hto Khwee Hso village and Khrow Kho village in Phruso township, and data were collected by using literature survey, the ethnographic methods including participant observation, individual in-depth interview and group interview. By studying from the point of physical anthropology and ethnography, it is known that Kayahs including Manu Manaw people are included in the language group of Kayin who are the southern Mongoloid, migrated from Tibet, China.

Keywords - Manu Manaw, Mongoloid Race, cultural elements, Kayah, Kayin

Introduction

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar is constituted of various nationalities, faiths and culture. There are over one hundred ethnic groups in Myanmar and the major ethnic groups are namely, Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Bamar, Mon, Rakhine and Shan. Therefore, the unity and solidarity of the nationalities play a vital role in maintaining for long the race, religion, culture and sovereignty of the country. Every year, Myanmar government celebrates the Union Day on 12th February when the *Panglong* agreement was signed and passed and Myanmar became a unified country. All of the national leaders endeavor to unify the various nationalities and they consider the national unity and solidarity is pivotal for nation building. The Chairman of the State Administration Council of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar Prime Minister sent the message, *"In reviewing the history of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, whenever the ethnic nationalities could amicably build the united strength, the country showed off strong capabilities Nonetheless, whenever the ethnic nationalities lessened unity due to various reasons, the strength of the country was weak. Finally, all ethnic nationals faced the bitter experiences that the country fell under servitude. All ethnic national brethren understand well that as the internal armed conflicts triggered by disunity for various reasons soon after regaining the independence cannot be totally solved up to now and the national unity and the Union peace cannot be firmly restored, the country sees delay of the development process. Whenever the Union peace cannot be totally restored, all Union people would have lesser opportunities to share the fruits of development with each other....."* on 75th Diamond Jubilee Union Day of our country. This message pointed out that national unity and solidarity is very important to build a modern developed nation. The unity of ethnic groups can be acquired through mutual understanding among themselves, which would lead to confidence in and reliance on one another, thence to national harmony and solidarity. The mutual understanding among them will demand the knowledge of one another's cultural traditions, nature of customs, perspectives, and traditional values. The book named "The Same Traditions in Ethnic Groups" published by Burmese Socialist Programme Party pointed out that the cultural traditions of all ethnic groups who live in Myanmar are basically same (Headquarter of Burmese Socialist Programme Party, 1975, P-9, P-357).

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The reason why the cultural traditions in various social groups are the same can be considered as a historical contact or process of diffusion. According to the influence of Boas, anthropologists considered that when cultural elements were held in common, they were interpreted as evidence of historical contact and diffusion (Moore, 2009, p-43). This research also finds out the historical contact and similarities among Manu Manaw, Kayah and Kayin nationals. The aim of this research is to illustrate how Manu Manaw is related to two major ethnic groups, Kayah and Kayin ethnic groups from anthropological point of view. The research questions are; what are the similarities among Manu Manaw, Kayah and Kayin nationals, how does Manu Manaw explain their history. In this research firstly, the aim and research questions are presented. Then the research method used in this research is explained. After that findings and discussion illustrate the similarities among Manu Manaw, Kayah and Kayin nationals and finally it will point out the relationship among them.

Research methods

This research was conducted through the ethnographic research method. In the field research, participant observation was done in the traditional festivals, funerals, donations and other auspicious ceremonies of native people. Then their economic activities like hillside plantations and traditional handicrafts and their daily lifestyles were observed. Moreover, to get the more detail information concerning the history and origin of Manu Manaw ethnic group, studying the literature and language, interviewing with the tribal chiefs of Manu Manaw and elderly people who are knowledgeable person of literary bent as key informant interview, taking photographs and then audio-recording were conducted. To know the perception and experiences of the Manu Manaw nationals concerned with their daily life, individual in-depth interviews and group interviews were done. In this research, a total of fifteen people were interviewed as the respondents. The field study was conducted within two years, 2015 and 2016. For this research, Taw Khu village, Pa Lei Le village, Hto Khwee Hso village and Khrow Kho village which are situated in Phruso township, Kayah state, were chosen as study sites (see figure 1).



Source: General Administration Office of Phruso

Figure 1: Location map of study sites

Findings and discussion

Racial view on Myanmar

By the views of Physical Anthropology and Racial Anthropology, scholars take it for granted that people can be divided into three major races; Mongoloid, Negroid and Caucasoid. The peoples of Myanmar, the ethnologists generally agree that they belong to the Mongoloid (Khin Maung Nyunt, 2017). Among them, the origin of Mongoloid is Tibet plateau and from there they spread to different parts. The ancestors of the people in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar apparently entered the country in three waves. They also linked to one another by languages (Enriquez, CM, 1933). The way they migrated is mentioned in “The Tribes of Burma” as follows;

- A. The members of Tibeto-Burman migrated from the Tibet plateau to the upper courses of Ayeyarwaddy, Than Lwin and Mae Khaung River.
- B. The members of Tai - Chinese migrated from recent Yunan province of China
- C. The members of Mon-Khmer migrated from recent Yunan province of China (Lowis, C C in Yi Sein, 2011).

Concerning with this view, by conducting research of human mitochondrial DNAs, Ballinger (1992) stated that all people in Asia are in a common genealogy and they also are the

descendants of only one common ancestral group. In addition, by using dental morphological traits, Turner (1983,1987) hypothesized that two migrations originated from central China about 20,000 - 30,000 YBP (years before present). One group, the Sinodonts, expanded northward into China, Siberia and across the Bering land bridge to the New World. The second group, the Sundadonts, moved southward into Southeast Asia and Indonesia, and later through Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia (WAKATSUKI, 1999).

Moreover, through linguistic comparisons, Bellwood (1985) proposed two major prehistoric migrations into Southeast Asia. The first was an ancient "Australoid" migration from the Indo-Malaysian Archipelago which settled Australia and New Guinea about 40,000 YBP. The second was the more recent "Southern Mongoloid" or "Austronesian" migration that originated from the Fujian or Zhejiang provinces of contemporary China and settled throughout much of island and main land Southeast Asia about 4,000-6,000 YBP (Bellwood in Ballinger, 1992). Therefore, national ethnic groups living in Myanmar are to be regarded as the descendants of southern Mongoloids.

According to philological method which is applied for identifying the races, almost all languages of South East Asia, including Myanmar, belong to either (1) Austric group or (2) Tibeto-Chinese group. The Austric group has two branches, namely the Austronesian and the Austro-Asiatic. The Tibeto-Chinese group also has two branches viz. the Tibeto-Myanmar and the Tai-Chinese. It is found that Myanmar has representatives of all these for branches of linguistic groupings. Hence the indigenous races of Myanmar conveniently classified into these three linguistic branches of the same Mongoloid stock (Khin Maung Nyunt, 2017) but they are to be categorized and needed to explore as specific individual ethnicity.

To find out the origin and the relationship of ethnicities, the contemporary documentation and the literature of neighboring ethnics become the important sources. In a situation where there is no written language, the traditions, customs, belief systems, myths and legends, oral traditions of the ancestors, clothing and accessories, poems, songs and musical instruments, the origin of a language and way of diffusion, and the physical features of humans are to be analyzed and have a guesstimate the origins and the relationship of the people. (Tai Yin Thar Yoe Yar Yin Kyaw Hmu Delei Htone San Myar, Kayin, 1967).

The ancestors of Myanmar migrated into Myanmar as Tibeto-Burman, Tai- Chinese and Mon-Khmer. Then they diverged into different sub- ethnic groups, recently there are more than 100 ethnic groups. All these ethnic groups have been living with their own languages and cultural traditions. Some of them possess own languages and literatures but some of them possess spoken languages but lack of written languages. Even language and ethnicity may not be recognized as one, if one ethnic group has a peculiarly distinct language, such language becomes a cultural element of the said ethnicity. In this case, the language may be considered as important character to identify an ethnicity. As a result, the language and ethnicity may easily be related (Yi Sein, 2011).

The languages in Myanmar can generally be characterized as Tibeto-Burman, Tai-Chinese and Mon-Khmer. The languages are categorized and grouped according to the related characteristics (Yi Sein, 2011). Besides, C C Lowis (1949) stated that all the languages in Myanmar are in the groups of main languages; Mon-Khmer and Tibeto-Chinese. Tibeto-Chinese diverged into two language groups; Tibeto-Burman and Tai-Chinese. According to Than Tun (2002), the related genealogy of people in Myanmar was described in a sample that Mon, Pa laung, Riang and La-Wa are to be categorized in Mon-Khmer descendants; Tibeto- Burman, Tai-Chinese, 'Kayin' groups and 'Man' groups are included in Tibeto-Chinese. In Kayin groups, Sgaw, Paku, Waywo, Monnepwar, Pwo, Mopwar, White Kayin, Bwe, Bre, Kayah, Padaung, Yin Baw, Ghekho, Taungthu and Zayein are included. Furthermore, U Min Naing (2000) mentioned

in his book “National Ethnic Groups of Myanmar” that the two major races that came into Myanmar territory were the Sino-Tibet and Mon-Khmers. Sino-Tibetans (Tibeto-Chinese) further separated into Tibeto-Burman and Sino-Tai (Tai-Chinese). Among them the Kayin sub-group in which comprises the Kayah group including Manu Manaw, is included in Sino-Tai (Tai-Chinese).

The name of Manu Manaw

According to the studies of oral histories and the sayings of the elders who are living in the research areas, the history of Manu Manaw ethnic group is related to the history of Kayah ethnic group. Therefore, when the history of Manu Manaw ethnic is to be described the history of Kayah may also be mentioned. People reside in Kayah state are Kayah, Parai (Bre), Padaung, Yin Baw, Zayein, Manu Manaw, Ghekho, Gheba and Yin Tale.

In the History of Kayah ethnic group (2005), it is mentioned that since the early times, the Kayah ethnic groups were variously named. Those names are (1) Kayah, (2) Kayaw, (3) Kaw Yaw, (4) Kayan, and (5) Talaing Phu. People who name themselves as Kayah are the “Kayah (previously known as Red Kayin or Karenni). People name themselves as Kayaw are Parai (or Bre) and likewise people who call themselves Kaw Yaw are Manu Manaw. People name themselves as Kayan are: i) Padaung, ii) Ghekho, iii) Yinbaw, iv) Zayein or Gaung To, and v) Gheba. Today Kayah people name their sub-ethnic groups as follows: 1) Kayah (Karenni or Red Kayin), 2) Manu Manaw (Kaw Yaw/ Monu), 3) Kayaw (Parai or Bre), 4) Yintale, 5) Kayan. which can be divided into a) Padaung (Kayan Kakhaung), b) Ghekho (Kayan Ke'dot), c) Yinbaw (Kayan Kangan), d) Zayein (Kayan La Hta/ Gaung To), e) Gheba (Kayan Ke Bar).

In the “Kayah State and Kayah Ethnic Group’s History” (an unpublished document typed in 1996, it was mentioned that although Kayah ethnic groups are originally only one group, they were named after the residential locations. By that, the Kayah people who live in the east are called Mihtay. Mihtay means the side of the Sun rise. People who live in the west are called Minu, Monu which means the side of the Sun set. People in the west are called as Minu, Monu and Kayar Monu or Manu Manaw is applied as well. Kayan people are also divided into groups depend on the places they live. People who live in the western part of Kayah state where deep forests grow well are named Kayan Kakhaung as their dialect means. The other sub groups named them as Padaung. People who live in the west of Kayah state and covered by the mountains are called Kayan Ke'dot. The other tribes called them as Ghekho. Moreover, people who live in the prairie of the Kayah state are mentioned as Kayan Kangan that means the plain or prairie. The others called them as Yinbaw.

According to the information written in Kayah history (2005), these people are named after their traditional dress styles and physical appearance by the other ethnic groups nearby. Again, Chinese, Thai and Shan know the Kayahs as Yan and also Kayin as Yan. The Shans recognize Kayah people who wear red dress as Yan Lyan. Yan means Kayah and Lyan means red. Yan Lyan means the red Kayah. As time passes by Kayah Ni became Kayin Ni. Kayan with a massy hair which has never been combed are recognized by the other Kayah as Paye' Taye'. Paye' means man and Taye' means massy hair so that Paye' Taye' means man with massy hair. As time passed by these people are called as Paye' and became Parai (or Bre) ethnic group. However, the Parai named themselves as Kayaw. People who never let their hair grow and being bald are recognized by Shan people as Yan Hohta. Yan means Kayar and Hohta means short hair and these people are known as Gaung To or Zayein. But the Gaung Tos recognize themselves as Kayan.

Kayah people who wear the brass rings around their necks, calves and arms are known by the Shan people as Yan Pattaung. Yan means Kayah and Pattaung means wear the brass ring and

Yan Pattaung means the Kayah who wear the brass rings. Padaung people name themselves as Kayan. Furthermore, the Kayahs who wear the silver and Baw (pure silver) coins as necklaces are known by the Shans as Yanbaw. Yan means Kayah, Baw means silver. Later Yanbaw transformed into Yinbaw. But Yinbaw themselves mentioned as Kayan Kangan. The Shans named the Kayah who mentioned themselves as Talaing Phu as Yan Talaing. Yan Talaing means Kayah Talaing. Later, Yan Talaing changed into Yin Tale. The Shans called the people who called themselves as Monu, Manu as Yanmanay.

Regarding the facts mentioned above, and the names of the Kayahs and their sub-ethnic groups mentioned by their neighbors the Shans, they all are descended from the common ethnic group. In the census of India, 1901, reported by C. C. Lowis, Kayah sub-groups including Manumanaw were categorized in the Northern Karen sub-group and it was mentioned that varieties of the Northern Karen sub-group are spoken in the region where Bre mostly resided, in the Padaung area and in the States of Loi-long and Mongpai. Of these varieties a number of specimens' figure in the Upper Burma Gazetteer. One of them, Mano, is a dialect of the Bres or Lakii. Sr George Scott stated in his Upper Burma Gazetteer that; "This tribe of Karens is called Brè or Manu-manaw by the Burmese, Pra-manö by the Red Karens, and Lakii by themselves. The history of the Brès is absolutely unknown. They are locally divided into the Manö, the Southern, and Northern Brè". The Manö inhabit the eastern portion of the Brè region to the south of the Tu chaung.

Concerning these kinds of naming variations of Manu Manaw, they are described not only in the historical record of their main ethnic group Kayah but also the conversation with the elderly people of the group can be added as live documents. In terms of the responses of local elders and the authorities of the Committee for the Manu Manaw Literature and Culture, they said:

We are the people from the early times that have been living in the mountains and the valleys. Manu Manaw is not the original name but it was emerged after the British people colonized Myanmar. When the Manu Manaws went to sell their paddy, people asked them "Where do you live?" "Who are you?" and the answer was "Manu" means the Kayah who live in the western part of Kayah state or 'Western Kayah'. In Kayah language, Manu means West. In Manu Manaw language Monu, and Nu means west. By mentioning Monu, Manu, it is regarded that it became Manu Manaw.

Almost all the names of the Kayah ethnic groups (Kayah, Kangan, Kayaw) mean "Human" and does the name Manu Manaw. Concerning with this name, one of the informants, who was 91-year-old man told me that due to the words of the ancestors, the Manu Manaw called themselves as Kaw Yaw or Kaw Yaw Phu. Kaw Yaw Phu means Human. Kaw means Human and Yawphu means tribe. Besides Kaw is understood as Human and Yaw means specific. Therefore, Kaw Yaw means specific people.

As the variety of the geographical features like mountains, valleys and prairie, people spread in the areas and the tone and accents of their spoken language also became a bit different. Across the research regions, names of Monu, Minu, Mano, Manuu and Manaw are pronounced slightly varied from one another. People from Tawkhu village describe themselves as Manaw but the official name is Kaw Yaw as their ancestors mentioned. Some people call them as Kaw Yaw or Kayah Monu. Ancient times they were known as Kayah Manu Manaw but on May 30, 1970, there was a meeting among Kayah Monu ethnic groups at the house of U Mie Lo in Didaku ward of Phruso township and decided to change their name from Manu Manaw called by the other people to Yan Manay or Kaw Yaw Monu Phu which is their original names since ancient time (Peterkodoyi, U, 2000).

Regarding this issue, a 78- year- old villager from Pa Lei Le village, who has experience and knowledge about their history said:

There was another meeting at Taw Khu village. Manu Manaw is not the original name so that it was needed to change to Kaw Yaw. It is said that the proposal for this new name was not yet submitted to the government.

With regard to the name of this ethnic group, during the group interview, a 72- year-old man from Khrow Kho village responded:

When we went to Phruso to sell our crops, the people who we met in the market or in the town called us ‘Monu’ or ‘Mano’ from west Kayah. And the people in the vicinity of our village called like that. This name has been accepted since the time of our progenitors.

From studying this research, it was found that in the usage of the ethnic’s name, people from Taw Khu village and Pa lei Le village prefer to use the name Kaw Yaw, but the people who live in Hto Khwee Hso village and Khrow Kho village prefer to name themselves as Monu, Mano.

The Historical Relationship of Manu Manaw and other Ethnic Groups

According to the literatures, Manu Manaw is included in the groups of Kayah and the Kayahs are also related to Kayin people. Khu Oo Rel (2004) mentioned in his book that Kayah Li or Karenni are the sub group of the Kayins and since 1128 BC they migrated to Southeast Asia together with the other Kayin ethnic groups. Eventually they settled in the upper part of Ayeyarwady river and in BC 741, they moved to the south and in BC 739, they established their mainland, Dee Maw Hso Kae or the state of Karenni. In the writing of Than Tun (2002) Kayah, Padaung, Yinbaw, Ghekho, Zayein and Bre are included in Kayin groups. There are two groups of Kayin: Taung Paw Kayin (Mountain Kayin) and Kwin Kayin. The Kayahs (formerly Karenni) are included in Taung Paw Kayin (Min Naing, 1960).

However, in *Races of Burma* (Enriquez, C.M, 1933), it is mentioned that although these people are known as Taung Paw Kayin or mountain Kayin, there are some sub-ethnic groups who are not Kayin at all. These ethnic groups such as Bre, Padaung, Zayein, Yinbaw and Kayah have been living together with mountain Kayin, they all are included in the group of Mon-Khmer. By categorizing the people with languages, they speak, the Kayins are included in the group of Tai-Chinese and also included in Tibeto-Burman. Recently these people are intended to be categorized as Mon- Khmer, and they are just regarded and mentioned as a separated or specific group before the reliable evidence is set and approved (Yi Sein, 2011).

According to the State government of Kayah, it is mentioned that in the group of Kayah, the Manu Manaws are included (Min Naing, 1960). The language of these Kayah people is included in the Kayin language group (Pe Maung Tin, 1958). The Kayin language is included in Tibetan- Chinese, one of the major languages which are spoken in Myanmar.

As the Manu Manaws are being the sub-ethnic of Kayah, it can be considered as one of the languages included in Tibetan-Chinese. The Tibetan- Chinese has been residing in Myanmar since the beginning of years of Jesus Christ. The other group of Kayins in which Kayah group are included, seemed to enter Myanmar from the east (Thailand). Moreover, these Kayin group entered the north of Laos and Thai from Kwan Shi province of China. After that they were diffused to the west and south (Yi Sein, 2011). Again, these Kayins migrated from the east round about BC 500 and as they reached at Kayah state continued to Taungoo (Than Tun, 2005). The migration history of the Kayah ethnic group which includes Manu Manaws is usually described together with the history of Kayins.

During the research period, the Manu Manaw elders who were told about their history generation by generation by their forefathers, explained that their origin is from China and spread to the mouth of the sea. It is said that before they arrived Myanmar, they used to dwell in the other interval places. After passing over those places, they finally migrated to Myanmar. According to the Manu Manaws (Kaw Yaw), their origin is the same as the origin of Human being and it is called as Paramola. Then they gradually migrated to this recent place. The places they have migrated are Paramola, Mo Go (Mongolia), Ciki/ Kokono, Jule (Yu Nan), Hohtala (Mandalay), Shi Dut Shi Dei Wei (sea), Thae Le Mo Kon (Tin), Plo Dut Lo Zin (at a hilly region, Hta Le village) and the Kayah state (Peterkodoyi, 2000). Therefore, Manu Manaw ethnic nationalities are one of the sub-groups of Kayah, and then originally of the Kayin (Karen) group.

The Relationship in Myth and Legends

There are traditional sayings that explain about the ceremonies and rituals of Manu Manaw ethnic group. The Gar Bo festival is explained in their oral history told by their ancestors as in case people suffer from serious diseases, or in any dangers and difficult situation, the offering is done under the Pho He' tree. This tree is highly valued and worshipped as it has the power to help people. Then in the belief of Kayah people on their Ku Hto Bo festival, there is also a legend of the festival. In annual Nat worship, the Kayahs also choose Pho He' tree to put the flag mast. Since not only the objectives of celebrating Gar Bo and Ku Hto Bo are the same, but also the legends of the history of both festivals are similar, the statement of "The Manu Manaws are the West Kayah" can be true. Like Kayah and Manu Manaw, some Kayin groups also still practice the tradition of flag-pole raising event.

The chicken bone reading is essential for the Manu Manaws as they usually do this whenever they are in difficulties. Together with this tradition, there is a legend concerning their literature. Once, the Manu Manaws did not happen to keep well their literature written on the leather until it was eaten by the dog as it was thought as food and finally the literature was lost. When the inquiry was carried out and the dog was asked, he answered that the leather was eaten by pig. Then the pig was asked, it said that the leather was in its manure and eaten by the chicken. Then in the turn of chicken, it turned out that it admitted that the eaten literature was now in its thigh bone. Regarding to this, the chicken said to check the truth, its bone was to be taken out and checked. This story is found in Kayah, Kayin together with the Manu Manaw and they practice the tradition of chicken bone reading. In addition, there is a tradition called Hnee Cho (Breaking Bamboo Strips) in Kayah, Bre (Parai) and Manu Manaw people. According to this closest relationship of the legends and practices, these ethnic groups are considered as related.

The Relationship in Languages

The language of a people is always related to its culture. Languages transcended from the generation to generation reflect the culture of the ancestors which includes activities of traditional belief and traditional customs. The fundamentally different principles of classification employed by different languages may be illustrated by two examples, the numerals and terms of relationship (Boas, 1938, P-130). The terms and numerals that were collected from field researches taken by researcher are as follows (see table 1):

Table 1. The Similarities in Terms and Numerals

English	Myanmar/ Bamar	Manu Manaw	Kayah	Bre (Parai)	Kayin
Mother	အမေ (Amay)	Amo	Mo	Hae Mo	Ah Mo
Father	အဖေ(Aphay)	Pha	Phe'	Hae Phar	Ah Par
Son	သား (Tharr)	Phu Ma Khut	Phu Phe' Khu	Hae Phu	Pho Khoe
Daughter	သမီး (Thamee)	Phu Ma Mu	Phu Phe' Maw	Hae Phu Mah Mu	Pho Mu
Wife	ဇနီး (Zanee)	Mah	Mein	Hae Mah	Ah Mae
Husband	ခင်ပွန်း (Khin Punn)	Wo	Vel	Hae Wun	Ah Wah
Gold	ရွှေ (Shwe)	Hta	Htel	Hta	Htoo
Water	ရေ (Yae)	Hti	Htay	Hte	Hte / Chi
Moon	လ (La)	Lar	Lel	La	Le
Sun	နေ(Nay)	Lue Mu	Ta Mow	Lu Mu	La Mu
Pig	ဝက် (Wat)	Hto	Htara	Hto	Htaw
Dog	ခွေး (hkway)	Hte	Htwei	Htu	Htwee
Fire	မီး (Mee)	Mi	Me	Min	Min Ou
Land	မြေ (Myae)	Har	Hay	Har	Haung Kho
Chili	ငြုပ်သီး(Nga Yote Thee)	Se He'	Sal He'	Ser He'	Sel He'
Paddy	စပါး (Saparr)	Bu	Boo	Bu	Bue
Knife	ခွေး (Darr)	Da Du	De Du	Dau	Dar Du
Fermented bamboo shoot	မျှစ်ချို (Myitt Chin')	Bot Shi	Bel Shi	Bot Sin	Bah Shin
Mother has meal.	အမေထမင်းစားသည်။ Amay Htamin Sar Thi	Amo Er Htwin	Mo A Dee	Mo Ei Er Dee	Amo Er Din
One	တစ် (Tit)	Ta	Tel	Tar	Tel
Two	နှစ် (Hnit)	Gi Ni	Hnel	Ki	Ki
Three	သုံး (Thone)	Sue/ Thu	Sol / Thol	Thue	Thou
Four	လေး (Lay)	Li	Lwi	Li	Lwi
Five	ငါး (Ngar)	Yel	Hnyar	Yel	Yel
Six	ခြောက် (Chauk)	Shu / Thu-thou	Hsut / Thut	Thue Thun	Thoutho
Seven	ခုန်နှစ် (Khun Hnit)	Ne / Thu-thou-ta	Noil	Hnail	Thoutho-tel
Eight	ရှစ် (Shitt)	Sho / Li- thou	Sou/ thou	Le-thu	Lwi-thou
Nine	ကိုး(Koe)	Li-thou-ta	Dar	Khinn	Lwithou- tel
Ten	တစ်ဆယ် (Tit Sel)	Shi	Shae	Hseel	Shi
One Hundred	တစ်ရာ (Tit Yar)	Tel gel	Tel Kwel	Tar yar	Tekal Yel

Source: Collected by the researcher

By comparing the terms and numerals of Manu Manaw and the other neighboring groups, it is known that the language of Manu Manaw is similar to the neighboring groups and it can be said that there may be historical connections among them. In other words, it can be assumed that their ancestors may be the same.

The Relationship in Traditional Dress

The traditional dress style of Manu Manaw is similar to the other sub-ethnic groups of Kayah. The red gown and the red headband are the same for Kayah and the Manu Manaw. Furthermore, like the Kayah or Karenni women wear the brass ring in their hands and the rattan ring in legs, the Kayan wear brass rings in their necks and legs and the Kayaw (Bre or Parai) wear the brass rings in their necks and knee, the Manu Manaws also tie the cotton rings in black resin in their wrists and wear the silver bracelets. Under the knee is for rattan ring with black resin. Concerning with the reason for wearing the brass and rattan ring, an 80-year-old woman from Hto Khwee Hso village said,

The reason for wearing the brass and rattan ring is to change our appearances to deny and hide the forceful capture as wife by the kings. The reason to wear the sacred wrist ring is not to be separated and stay united with the Kayah and Kayin because we departed with our relatives, Kayin and Kayah since time immemorial so that they can recognize us by using the symbols of these traditions.

Even though the dress style of Kayahs groups (see figure 2,3 &4) may slightly vary with another, basically it can be considered as they are from the common ancestors or the same racial group.



Figure 2. Kayah, Kayan (Padaung), and Kayaw (Bre)

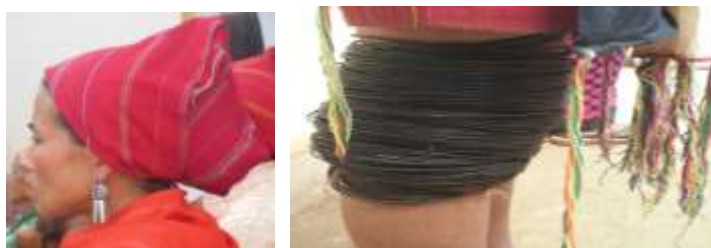


Figure 3. Manu Manaw Ornamentation



Figure 4 Manu Manaw (Old fashion Dress) (New Fashion Dress)

Source: All the photos are taken by the researcher

Similarities in Belief Systems

Some people among the Kayahs are Buddhist and the other are Christians. From the ethnographic field research, the belief system of Manu Manaws came to know that nowadays nearly all of them are Christians and some still practice in spirit worship even though they are Christians. A 72-year-old man who is one of the informants said,

We believe in spirits. When our kid seriously cried at night, and at that time we killed a chicken, and then took the minimum of pieces of chicken including meat, liver, nails and other parts of the body and put them at the junction of the village so that the kid will stop crying.

From the early times, the Manu Manaw group has the rituals and festivals based on the belief system. Some festivals which celebrated until today are, Vei' Lup or Dee Ku festival, (making the sticky rice pack), Le Gar or Gar Bo festival (the Ku Hto Bo of the Kayahs) and hunting festival.

Vei' Lup in Manu Manaw language means Ywet Khu Pwe (the festival of plucking leaves). The aim of celebrating Vei' Lup (Dee Ku) festival is to make the village away from diseases, serious disturbances and terrifying dangers and to protect the family members from kinds of evil spirits. Dee Ku is the sacred festival for the Manu Manaws so that celebrated in a high value by the whole village. A 68-year-old woman explained that:

When we were young, if we had Dee Ku festival in our village, both children and adults participated in that festival which was held by a village, and invited nearby villages. For this event, pigs were killed and distributed to the houses in our village, and the people danced from house to house and shared glutinous rice package. Formerly in that Dee Ku festival we shot illuminating rounds (*MeeKye-မီးကျည်*) but not nowadays.

The Kayahs also celebrate Dee Ku annually. The aim of the celebration, the way of celebration, and the time of celebration are the same. Besides that, the other sub-groups celebrate the glutinous rice package festival to express their happiness that they can successfully drive out the evil spirit (See- Figure 5) from their place.

The Le Gar festival of Manu Manaw is held by playing with music, dancing and praying around Gar Bo tree (Ku Hto Bo in Kayah) (See- Figure 6). Regarding the Gar Bo tree, there was a traditional belief of Manu Manaw people. At the time of their ethnic origin, the Manu Manaws suffered from severe disease and illness, and it was believed that if the offerings and worshipping under the Pho He' tree is happily made, the disease will be healed (See- Figure 7).



Figure 5. Phoe De Cree (Spirit Evictor/ Kayah) Phoe De Cree (Spirit Evictor/Manu Manaw)

Source: From Informants (Local People)



Figure 6. Ku Hto Bo in Kayah and Gar Bo tree

Source: These two photos are taken by the researcher

Therefore, the tree is regarded as Gar Bo (the headman who protects the village from any dangers) and worshipped annually. Gar Bo is the same with the Ku Hto Bo of the Kayahs. However, the Gar Bo of Manu Manaw is an alive tree and the Ku Hto Bo of the Kayahs is the cut tree which is posted for the worship. The Gar Bo is celebrated once in a year. It is celebrated by aiming for the peace of the villages, the prosperity and good health for the villagers and for the success of the crops. In other words, the Le' Gar festival means a re-cleaning ceremony of the village. In the same way the Kayahs celebrate the Ku Hto Bo festival by worshipping the mountain and forest guardians in order to have their crops succeeded, protected from dangerous disease and illness. Similarly, this kind of flag mast festival is celebrated by the other sub-groups of Kayah and sub-groups of Kayin (Bwe, Mopwar, Ta lay Pwar, Kayin Phyu).

The Kayah groups including the Manu Manaw, Kayah and Bre (Parai), before doing every activity, they interpret the omens whether the activity is good or not by doing the Chicken Bone Reading and Bamboo strips breaking. The other social economic events of the Manu Manaws such as wedding, house warming, funeral, hunting and the worship for the Taung Yar, are celebrated in the same sense with the Kayahs. Therefore, it can partially be considered as the Manu Manaws are the sub-ethnic group of Kayah people.



Figure 7. Worshiping under the Pho He' tree

Source: From Informants (Local People)

Besides, in the activation of Taboos of the ethnic groups, many similarities can be seen. For example, the taboos of Kayahs such as the visitors are not allowed to come to the house in child delivering time and the time of hunting by the whole village, the avoidance of accidental fall at one's house ladder, are considered to bring ill luck for the host.

Taboos such as prohibition for sitting of paying one's back to the door, the visit of a guest at the starting date of growing rice and corn and the harvesting must be done by the owner of the farm first are acted by the Manu Manaws. Likewise, the taboos of the Kayahs also mention that accidental fall on one's ladder is disliked by the host as it will bring ill luck for him. If the ladder of the house is broken while the guest is entering, the host will be fined and in turn, it was happened when the guest goes down the ladder in his return, the guest will be fined. The way of sitting by paying one's back to the door on a house is not allowed. Then the traditions of enquiring a case, washing face with chili liquid, putting hand into the hot liquid of lead and the cooking of rice pack can similarly be discovered in the traditions of both Kayahs and the Manu Manaws. These similar cultural elements prove that the statement of theory of cultural diffusion goes "if the cultural elements are the same, there is the closest ethnic relation".

According to anthropologist Robert Lowie, the cultural traditions are not created but inherited from the ancestors. Therefore, the same cultural elements of recent situation prove that there was a mutual relationship among the cultural elements and the people in the past (Khin Khin Su, et al., 1970). This research shows that similarities of cultural tradition between the Kayahs and the Manu Manaws are the practices of their common ancestors transmitted by generations to generations.

Radcliffe Brown said that one of the ways to maintain spirit of unity is by not failing to repeating and ritualizing this spirit of unity regularly. In this process, the repeatedly social, cultural and traditional religious celebrations are needed. Therefore, the social activities in such occasion and ceremonies are essential to maintain the existence of the society. The spirit of unity is stored by doing these kinds of social activities and this will be handed down to the next generation (Khin Khin Su, et al, 1970). The annual celebration of Dee Ku Pwe, Le' Gar Pwe or Gar Bo Pwe (Ku Hto Bo Pwe) of Kayahs including Manu Manaw people will not only upgrade the community spirit but also the transmit their traditional heritages to the next generations.

Conclusion

By using the perspective of the theory of diffusion in cultural anthropology, the degree of similarities and differences among the ethnicity can be realized by comparing the cultural elements of these people. In the study, if the cultural elements of two neighboring groups are regarded as the same, the cultures or the people must have been related. On the other hand, the cultural elements are different, it is regarded as no relationship or separated from each other for ages (Khin Khin Su, Daw, et al., 1970).

In this study, it turns out that Manu Manaw nationals are the sub-group of the Kayah nationals by the evidence such as the terminology of the Manu Manaws and the Kayaw (Bre). Besides, according to the relationship of the historical background, the Kayahs including the Manu Manaws are members of Tibeto-Chinese language group as the main language group spoken in Myanmar and again in this language group, the Kayins are also included.

By studying the relationship of the customs and traditions, in the emergence of major traditional festivals such as Gar Bo and Ku Hto Bo, the history of Chicken Bone Reading and related literature and legends, the linkages between the Manu Manaws and the Kayahs, Kayaw (Bre) etc., can be understood.

The traditional costumes, also shows that the red cloth, headband, the brass rings in the hand, neck and legs and the cotton ring in black resin and the rattan rings in the hands are the important evidence that support the Manu Manaw people are the descendants of the Kayahs. The activities based on the religion such as Chicken Bone Reading, Bamboo Strip breaking, Dee Ku Pwe, Gar Bo Pwe, are superficially different but the essence is the same so that it can be considered as they are transmitted from ancestors and this will also show the interrelationships of these ancestors. Moreover, the fact that Manu Manaws as Christians, continue to activate the traditions of animism as a traditional belief highlights the maintenance of the traditional heritage of the ancestors.

By studying from the point of physical anthropology and ethnography, it is known that Kayahs including Manu Manaw people are included in the language group of Kayin who are the southern Mongoloid, migrated from Tibet, China. In doing the future researches to find out migration, genetic and linguistic relation among ethnic groups of Myanmar, it will need interdisciplinary research methods by combing linguistics, ethnography and anthropological genetics.

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