

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON ETHNIC CHANGES IN KAYINIC CLUSTER IN MYANMAR (1860-1950)¹

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Abstract

Discussion is made to take part of eleven categories: Kinnic clusters in Myanmar, the Kayin in 101 Ethnic Peoples of Traditional Myanmar, the Kayinnic clusters described in Historical Documents, F. Mason-discovered Kayinnic Clusters, 1901 Census-revealed Kayinnic Clusters, 1921Census-revealed Kayinnic Cluster, 1931 Census-revealed the Kayinnic Cluster, Report of Inquiry Commission for the Kayins in 1950, the Kayin Clusters in 135 Ethnic Peoples of Myanmar. Fundamental courses of different clusters involve geographical, social environment, cultural intercourses with mutual-coexisted indigenous ethnics and political condition. Eventually, particular existence is demanded. Ethnic changes in Kayinnic cluster is an important phenomenon when reconsideration on political unanimity for the union-based country.

Keywords: the Sgaw, the Pwo, upland Kayin, Lowland Kayin, the Monepwa, the Pa-O, the Padaung (Kayan), census, F. Mason

Research Methodology: Survey method, Descriptive method, Historical Research Method.

Introduction

This paper is composed of five parts: Myanmar-known Kayinnic clusters, Rev. F Mason-discovered Kayinnic clusters, census-revealed Kayinnic clusters, the Report of Special Commission for the Kayins in 1950, and Report of the Revealed-Collected Ethnonyms of 2017. The final one consists of conclusion and acknowledgements. In rationale for this study, armed-conflict with the Kayins (1949-2009) brought about in Myanmar and peace-building process is being made with Kayin armed-groups. Periodically, it changes due to the political, religious and other causes. Therefore, Kayin Studies is an important phenomenon of Myanmar and is need to do specializing subject. The correct numbers of the Kayinnic cluster has not been reaching goal.

Study sites include seven areas: Mottimyaung village, where is the settlements of Monepwa Kayins, in south of Htantapin, Bago Region, Paku Kayins in Bawkali township, Kayin State, Mepauk village, settlement of the Kayinbyus, Pyinmana township, Nay Pyi Daw Region, Leik Tho township, settlement of the Geba Kayins, in the northernmost of Kayin State, Thirteen Mile at the foot of Mt. Thandaunggyi, Bago Region; Palechi village, Thandaunggyi township, Kayin State, Myanmar, and Loikaw, Dimawso and Phruso townships in Kayah State, Myanmar.

Literature Review

The term 'ethnic' refers to a group of people having common racial, national, religious or cultural origins. Now, academicians accepted as the most reliable term. It also differs from the terms *race*, and *tribe* referring to colonial subordination in the 1950s.³ The concept of race refers to such a negative sense that it is possibly created by racists. Geneticists viewed that all are the man who descended from a 'mitochondrial Eve', who lived in Africa some 200, 000 years ago.⁴

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³ Ted C. Lewellen (2003), *Political Anthropology: An Introduction*, London: Praeger Publisher, p. 166. Hereafter cited as Lewellen: 2003.

⁴ Iain McLean, (1996) *Oxford Dictionary of Politics*, Oxford University Press, pp. 418ff.

Therefore, biology refers to polymorphism (different peoples in different areas).¹ Accordingly, there are different complexioned-peoples: white, black, brown and yellow peoples over the world. It is based on the two aspects—monogenesis and polygenesis.

Nevertheless, physical and cultural characteristics of men made a large number of different ethnicity in the world. Regarding with different ethnic groups, the four fundamental causes—geographical, cultural, religious and political phenomena—discriminate among the peoples. Geographical barriers—seas, mountainous ranges, and different weather conditions—make differences among the peoples. However, technology overcomes the differences between one and another.

Basing on the concept, no country which is lived by only one ethnic people is in the world. Likewise, Myanmar is a home of over a hundred ethnic clusters. However, the different ethnic clusters belong to mongoloid peoples: Mon-Khmer, Tibeto-Burman, and Tai-Chinese. All the peoples migrated from the Yunnan province, China. Historical sources of Myanmar show diversity of ethnic peoples in Myanmar.

Political and cultural phenomena make vital causes of particularism in peoples. These are possible to make the ethnic discrimination, xenophobia (like Anglophobia), ethnic conflicts, and outbreak of wars and rise of castes: slaves, middle class and elite. Similarly, political impact on ethnic differences brought about since feudal, and colonial in Myanmar. History reflected on present day of Myanmar.

At present, Myanmar is being made attempt to obtain the pace making with ethnic armed groups so that understanding on the ethnic peoples is an important study in fundamental needs of Myanmar. In this peace-making process, the Kayin armed groups also participate as a leadership role. Basing on the rise of Myanmar politics at present, retrospection on the ethnic peoples including the Kayins should be needed for Myanmar. An attempt is, therefore, made to reconsider about the rise of different clusters among the Kayin ethnic peoples in Myanmar and study how the clusters bifurcated into further small minorities. This paper contributes review on the Kayins basing on political-based changes of Kayin clusters. The complicated complexion of Kayin clusters motivates to do this work.

The works in English written about the Kayins previously appeared. Mostly these belong to ethnographical and political accounts in English which had been done by ABM missionaries, British officers and an intellect among the Kayins. In 1876, Lt. Col. A.R. McMahon produced *The Karens of the Golden Chersonese* which discussed about the Kayins in Taunggu. In 1887, Donald Mackenzie Smeaton wrote the *Loyal Karens of Burma* being aware of the Kayins, the bravest defenders of British rule.² In 1922, Harry I. Marshall in the *Karen People of Burma* is an anthropological work. Dr. San C. Po wrote a work *Burma and the Karens* in 1928 intending to know about the condition of the Kayins, and their aspiration as a nation.³ In this paper, study is made on ethnic changes among the Kayin clusters.

¹ Professor M. Nesturkh (1963), *The Races of Mankind*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, p. 11.

² Donald Mackenzie Smeaton (1887) *the Loyal Karens of Burma*, London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., p.1.

³ San C. Po (1928), "Preface", *Burma and the Karens*, Bangkok: White Lotus Press, 2001 Reprinted, p. XIV.

The Kayinnic Clusters in Myanmar

Myanmar is a country which is a home of major eight stocks of peoples including over a hundred ethnic groups. Among the peoples, the Bamar is the largest population of Myanmar and the Kayins is also a second largest population who live in Lower Myanmar¹ and western hill tract region of Thailand. Linguistically, all her indigenous peoples belong to the Mongoloid (Yellow Peoples) embracing its three races: the Mon-Khmer, the Tibeto-Burman and Tai-Kadaing. Geographically, the peoples are categorized, i.e. lowland ethnics and upland ethnics.² For example, scholars categorize Mon-Khmer: Lowland Mon-Khmer and Upland Mon-Khmer. The Palaung (now Ta-ang) and the Wa are included in the Upland Mon-Khmer and the Mons who live in the Gulf of Mottama are known as Lowland Mon-Khmer. Also, the Kayins, one of the Tibeto-Burman clusters, have two parts: the Lowland Kayins and the Upland Kayins.³

The Kayin in 101 Ethnic Peoples of Traditional Myanmar

101 races, an idea of Buddhist Indian model, were adopted by Myanmar in the literature of Konbaung period. It provided ethnic classification among the people of Myanmar. The *Zatardawbon Yazawun* and U Tin in his *Myanmar Min Oke Choke PonSardan* mentions that the Kayin consists of four clusters of the Mons; it gives ethnonym Mon-Kayin and thirty clusters of the Shans.⁴ The traditional classification of Myanmar ethnic groups was not depended upon linguistics so that it is also not reliable.

The Kayinnic Clusters described in Historical Documents

The absolute monarchy system of old Myanmar viewed the peoples as merely two branches: the rulers (*arhañ*) and the ruled or slaves (*kwyān*). However, traces of the source of ethnic peoples are investigated in the list of slaves who were offered to the *Sāsana* (Buddhist Order) bearing on the text of stone inscriptions. The three ethnonyms of Kayinnic clusters—the *Cakro* (Sgaw), the *Plaw* (Pwo) and the *Toisū* (Taungthu /Pa-O)—are described in the stone inscriptions of Bagan period which belong to the earliest description for primary source dealing with the Kayinnic clusters in Myanmar.⁵ Also, the word *Kayañ* is mentioned in the Shwekuncharpayar stone inscription of 1238. The ethnonyms of Kayin continued in the succeeding periods of Bagan: the Inwa, Taunggu, and Nyaungyan (AD 14th-17th centuries). In 1802, the *Hanthawaddy Sittan* (Inquest of Bago and 32 satellites) mentions that population of Zayein Kayin and Kayinsin 32 satellites.⁶ According to the sources, pre-colonial Myanmar knew Kiyinnic clusters: the Sgaw, the Pwo, the Zayein and the Kayinni. Since the old monarchic Myanmar, it shows that Myanmar was a union state and *not* unitary, a coexistence of different indigenous people. Therefore, J. S. Furnivall indicates that Myanmar is a plural society.

¹ G.H. Luce (1950) "Introduction to the Comparative Study of Karen Languages", *Journal of the Burma Research Society*, Vol. XLII, Part I, Yangon: Burma Research Society, (1-19), p. 9.

² Frank M. Lebar and *et. al* (1964), *Ethnic Groups of Mainland Southeast Asia*, New Haven: Human Relations Area Files Press, pp. 58-62.

³ Volker Grabowsky, (1996), "the Thai Census of 1904: Translation and Analysis", *Journal of The Siam Society*, Vol. 84, Part I, (49-85), p. 63.

⁴ *စာတာတော်ပုံရာဇဝင်* (the Horoscopic Chronicle), (in Myanmar), Yangon: Archaeological Department, p. 100.

(b) U Tin, (1924) *မြန်မာမင်းအုပ်ချုပ်ပုံစာတမ်းနှင့်ဘိုးတော်ဘုရားကြီး၏ရာဇသတ်ခေါ်သော အမိန့်တော်တမ်းကြီး*, (Traditional Administration of Myanmar and Royal Orders of King Bodawpaya), (in Myanmar), Yangon: Seikkoo Cho Cho Books, 2012 reprinted, pp. 158-160.

⁵ G.H. Luce and U PeMaung Tin, *Inscriptions of Burma*, Vol. III, London: Oxford University Press, plate no. 309.

(b) Gordon H. Luce (1985) *Pre-Phases of Bagán: Burma*, Vol. I, Oxford University Press, p. 25.

(c) Ancient Myanmar Inscriptions, Five Volumes, Vol. I, U NyeinMaung (ed.), Yangon: Archaeological Department, 1972, p. 138.

⁶ *Hanthawaddy and its 32 satellites*, (in Myanmar), *Parabaik* manuscript no. 740, Yangon: National Library.

Rev. F. Mason-discovered Kayinnic Clusters

American Baptist Missionaries reached Myanmar in 1813 and established their mission in Yangon in 1819. At the end of First Anglo-Myanmar War (1824-26), ABM missionary developed among the Kayin clusters rather than the Myanmar.¹ Among the revered pastors of ABM pioneers in Myanmar, Dr. Francis Mason was a famous pastor because of his invention of Sgaw Kayin writing, and his work *Burmah, its People and Natural Productions* in 1860. In chapter 4 of his work, he wrote ethnology including the four great families: the Talaing (Mon), the Burman, the Kayin, and the Shan. His work in English pioneered not only ethnology of Myanmar but also ethnology of the Kayins. Mason classified the Kayinnic clusters basing on the two clusters: the Sgaw and the Pwo. Accordingly, in his work he mentions thirty five Kayinnic clusters with special explanations as follows:

(1) **Sgau (Sgaw Clusters),**

- (2) Muane-Pgha (Monepwa),
- (3) Paku (a Sgaw cluster),
- (4) Wewa (a Sgaw clan, put the people into unspecific Kayins),
- (5) Bghai (Bwe, a Sgaw clan),
- (6) Tunic Bghai (a Bwe clan also called BweKahtaw),
- (7) Pant Bghai (a Bwe clan also called BweMuthai and Kayah or Kayinni),
- (8) Lay May (Bre Kayin, a Bwe clan renamed themselves now Kayaw in Kayah State),
- (9) Manu-Manau (a Bwe clan),
- (10) Red-Kayins (now Kayah),

(11) **Pwo Clusters**

- (12) Shoung (the name of tributary of Sittaung),
- (13) Kay or Ka (a Bwe clan in the east and northeast of Sittaung),
- (14) Taru (a Kayah clan),
- (15) Mopgha (a Bwe-Pwo Kayin/ /Tawbyagyi in Myanmar),
- (16) Hashu or Hshwie (who settled between the Thauk Ye Khat creek and the Paunglaung),
- (17) Toung-thus,(Pa-O),
- (18) Khyen (Chins on the Yoma that stretches up from Rakhine to Naga hills),
- (19) Shan-Kayins (Black Kayin in Moebye, Shan State),
- (20) Yen of Yein (east of Inwa),
- (21) Yen-Siek (The Kayins who live in the east of Inwa),
- (22) Ying-Bau (Yinbaw),
- (23) Black Kayin (Kayins in the north of Moebye),
- (24) Padaung (Shan Padaung) and
- (25) Toung-Yo (east of Inwa).²

Mason classified ten clans of the Sgaw clusters and twenty five clans of the Pwo clusters. His attempt was a pioneer among westerners but threw his confusion into the Kayinswiththe

¹ Francis Wayland (1854), *A Memoir of the Life and Labors of the Rev. Adoniram Judson, D.D.*, Vol. II, Boston: Phillips, Sampson, and company, pp.16ff.

² Rev. F. Mason (1860), *Burmah: its People and Natural Productions*, London: Trubner& Co., pp. 77-96.

Chins, and the Taung Yo. In 1880, Col. Horace Spearman also divided into three Kayinnic clusters, i.e. the Sgaw with three clans, the Pwo with five clans and the Bwe with six clans.¹ Therefore, Kayinnic clusters specified from two clusters done by F. Mason in 1860 to three clusters done by Spearman in 1880. Some clans of the Kayins—the Khyen, the Toung-Yo, the Black Kayin, Shan Kayin, the Kay or Ka, the Padaung— were omitted. Therefore, it shows us differences between the Mason and Spearman, the two compilers. He made attempt to be more specific than the work done by Mason.

1901 Census-revealed Kayinnic Clusters

Although British Burma carried out census in 1872, the census of the whole country of the general census of British Burma was taken on 17 February 1881. In its census, languages of the people are included. The Kayins were also confined in the hill tribes in the southeast of Myanmar. British Burma census, 1881 mentions that there was over half-a-million of them in British Burma. They are aboriginal people who settled in the Ayeyarwaddy delta and Tanintharyi including the districts: Taunggu, Shwegyin, and Than Lwin. There are 518294 in 1881. However, the census does not mention ethnic clusters and it shows the only total population of the Kayins. Census of 1891 also includes total population of the Kayins involving the Sgaw, the Pwo and the Taungthu.² However, Kayinnic clusters—the Sgaw, the Pwo and the Bwe—is a description which is referred by Dr. Mason. In this census, the Shangkipho, a Pwo clan, is hard to know about their ethnography.

In 1901, C.C. Lewis, superintendent, census operations, took census of Myanmar. The census mentions village-level populations of ethnic clusters of Myanmar including the Kayins. It was more specific than the 1881 and 1891 censuses. It mentions general category of the Kayins—the Sgaw, the Pwo, the Red Kayins and unspecified clusters including fifteen clusters. Also, the Kayins are divided into two parts—northern Kayins and southern Kayins.

Northern Kayin clusters:

- (1) The Kayinni (now Kayah, red Kyin),
- (2) The Bré (now Kayaw in Kayah State),
- (3) The Manō (5000 Manu Manos in Kayah State, Kaw Yaw Mono phu called by themselves),
- (4) The Sawngtaung (Gaungto-cum-Zayien-cum-KayanLahtaa),
- (5) The PadaungZayein (KayanKaKhaung),
- (6) The Bang Yaung (KayanLahtar or ZeyeinKayin),
- (7) The KawnSawng (KayanLahtar of ZeyeinKayin),
- (8) The Yintale (Yantalaing in Shan who is the smallest minority in Kayah State),
- (9) The SinmawMepauk (the Kayinbyu in Pyinmana and Yamethin),
- (10) The Yinbaw (Yanbaw in Shan or KayanKaNgan in now),
- (11) The White Kayin(KatyanbuorKayinbyu, who settled in Pyinmana and Yemethin).

Southern Kayin clusters:

- (1) The Sgaw,

¹ Colonel Horace Spearman (1880), *British Burma Gazetteer*, Vol. II, Yangon: Govt. Press, pp. 226, 227, 553.

² H.L. Eales (1892), *Census of 1891*, Vol. IX, *Burma Report*, Vol. I, Yangon: Govt. Printing, p.165.

- (2) The Pwo,
- (3) The Mopgha,
- (4) The Taungthu (Pa-O).¹

Also, the two clusters are known as Plain-settled Kayins embracing the Sgaw and the Pwo and Hill-settled Kayin living in the northernmost part of Kayin State, southernmost part of Shan State and Kayah State.²

1921 Census-revealed Kayinnic Cluster

Indigenous Languages and Races is an appendix of the census of 1921 which is done by L.F. Taylor. Taylor argued that the Kayin language consists of a branch of Tai-Chinese, sub-family of Tibeto-Chinese. He reconstituted the Kayinnic clusters linguistically categorized into eight groups as follows:

- (1) The Sgaw and Pwo group,
- (2) The Sgaw and Kayinbyu group,
- (3) The Kayinbyu and Padaung group,
- (4) The Sgaw and Padaung group,
- (5) The Pwo and Mopwa group,
- (6) The Kayinni and Sgaw, Pwo, Kayinbyu, and Padaung group,
- (7) The Taungthu (an independent group), and
- (8) The Zayein group.³

The census of 1921 presents the Kayinnic clusters as follows:

- (1) Kayin (Unspecified),
- (2) The Sgaw,
- (3) The Paku,
- (4) The Wewaw,
- (5) The Monepwa,
- (6) The Bwe,
- (7) The Brek,
- (8) The Kayinbyu,
- (9) The Pwo,
- (10) The Mopwa,
- (11) The Taungthu,
- (12) The Padaung,
- (13) The Yinbaw,
- (14) The Gheko,
- (15) The Karenni,
- (16) The Zayein,
- (17) The Talaing-kalasi¹

¹ C.C. Lowis (1902), *Census of India, 1901*, Vol. XII, *Burma*, Part I, Yangon: Govt. Printing, p. 94.

² P. MaungSoe (2018) *History of the Kayan People*, (in Myanmar), Yangon: YwekSein Publishing, p. 36.

³ S.G. Grantham (1923), *Census of India, 1921*, Vol. X, *Burma*, Part I, Yangon: Govt. Printing, p. 288.

When the two censuses is compared, the census of 1921 mentions that there were the seventeen clusters of Kayins which two Kayinnic clusters—the Gekho and the Talaing-kalasi— is added. Among the seventeen clusters of the Kayins, the Talaing-kalasi is a new cluster which cannot be mentioned their population. R. S. Wilkie in his *Burma Gazetteer: the Yaméthin District* mentions that the Talaings who speak in Kayin probably settled in the area between Yezin and Shwemyo, Yamethin. Probably, the people may be the Talaing-kalasi. In the 1931 Census of India, there are 73 Talaing-kalasi peoples in Yamethin. They are also known as Htalaing.² However, no one who lives in Pyinmanar area can know about them.³

1931 Census-revealed The Kayinnic Clusters

The census done by J.J. Bennison in 1931 is not only the most reliable census of British Burma period but also its advantages rather than the former censuses under the British Burma. In this census the demographic Kayins—total population, distribution of races by districts, provisional tables of Kayinnic clusters—are mentioned. Also, the Kayinnic clusters are more specific than the former censuses.

- (1) Kayin (unspecified)
- (2) The Sgaw,
- (3) The Paku,
- (4) The Wewaw,
- (5) The Monepwa,
- (6) The Bwé,
- (7) The Brek,
- (8) The Kayinbyu,
- (9) The Pwo,
- (10) The Mopwa,
- (11) The Taungthu,
- (12) The Padaung,
- (13) The Yinbaw,
- (14) The Gheko,
- (15) The Kayinni,
- (16) The Zayein,
- (17) The Taliang-kalasi⁴

Most of the British Burma censuses peculiarly mention that unspecified Kayins are always mentioned as an exception. At present, the ethnonyms which are described in the British Burma censuses are now renamed. Regarding with the Wewa, 1931 census clarifies a brief remark that the Wewa probably returns as Kayin (unspecified). Also, it shows the clusters of Kayinbyu including the Geba, the Kani, the Konni, the Tabara, the Tayaung, the Thilpya, the Bennunge, the Bennugyi which are called Benlonnge and Benlongyee, the Koedit.

¹ Grantham, *Census of 1921*, I, pp. 290, 293.

² J.J. Bennison (1933) *Census of India, 1931*, Vol. XI, *Burma*, Part II, p. 224.

³ Interview with Saw SoeNaing, Chairman, Kayinbyu Affairs Committee, Pyinmana (Nay PyiDaw), on 16 April 2019.

⁴ J.J. Bennison (1933) *Census of India, 1931*, Vol. XI, *Burma*, Part II, p. 224.

Report of Inquiry Commission for the Kayins in 1950

Anti-Fascist People Freedom League (AFPFL) won the victory in election of 1947 and formed cabinet in 1948. Since the pre-independence days, left-wings of Myanmar rebelled against AFPFL. Soon after the rise of leftists' armed insurgency, Karen National Union (KNU) demanded to attain an independent state for the Kayins. During the time of solution for the establishment of Kayin State, armed conflict between the AFPFL and KNU and its KNDO armed group broke out at the end of January 1949. Coincidentally, Karenni protested against the Kayinni pertaining in the Kayin State. To prepare the establishment of Kayin State and Kayah State, AFPFL government formed a special inquiry commission for the Kayins which ethnic groups wanted to stand among the Kayinnic clusters. Also, a special commission for the Kayinni State was formed. Members of the Commission sent out and made survey. This commission for the Kayins gave a result that the following ethnic groups included in the Kayinnic clusters:

- (1) The Kayin (unspecified),
- (2) The Sgaw,
- (3) The Pwo,
- (4) The Bwe,
- (5) The Monepwa,
- (6) The Kayinbyu (white Kayin), and
- (7) The Paku¹

In contrast, the following ethnic groups explicitly excluded, i.e.

- (1) The BrekKayin (now Kayaw),
- (2) Kayinni (now Kayah),
- (3) The Taungthu (now Pa-O),
- (4) The Padaung (now KayanKakhaung),
- (5) The Yinbaw (now KayanKaNgan),
- (6) The Zayein (now Kayan),²

The commission easily made decision to deal with the three ethnic groups: the Zeyein, the Yinbaw, the Brek whose ancestors were the same with Kayin but culturally different from them.³ However, the commission was hard to make decision regarding with the Gekho because they took part in the constituency of Kayin in 1947 and the Gekho people disclosed not to involve in the Kayin. Therefore, the commission excluded them from the Kayin in line with their willingness and recognized them a particular ethnic.⁴ Also, the Taungthu (Pa-O) had willing to separate from the Kayin because they accepted that their language and cultural identity are individualistic and different from the Kayin, especially in religion.⁵ In regarding with the Pa-O, since 1891, British demographers accepted that the Pa-O language was very closely connected

¹ ပြည်ထောင်စုမြန်မာနိုင်ငံတော်အစိုးရကရင်လူမျိုးအထူးစုံစမ်းစစ်ဆေးရေးကော်မရှင်အဖွဲ့၏အစီရင်ခံစာ၊ ၁၉၅၀ ခုနှစ် (the Report of Special Inquiry Commission for the Karens, 1950), (in Myanmar). Govt. Printing, 1951, p.33. Hereafter cited as *RSICK 1950*.

² *RSICK 1950*, p. 22.

³ *RSICK 1950*, p. 21.

⁴ *RSICK 1950*, p. 22.

⁵ *RSICK 1950*, p. 14.

with Pwo Kyin but ethnological characteristics classed separately.¹ Ethnic separation of the Pa-O from the Pwo Kayin clusters resulted in a drastic decrease of Kayin population because the Pa-O took the third largest population of the Kayins.²

The Commission did not need to consider about the Kayah because they reviled not to be joint with the Kayins since the time of drawing state constitution in 1947.³ The leaders of Kayinni bitterly refused not to be the same with the Kayins so that their ethnonym was renamed and called them the Kayah.⁴ Actually, the Kayinni is a member of Kayinnic clusters. The ethnic people were also known as the Kayin or Kayinnic called by Myanmar royal records in 1870.⁵

In regarding with the Pa-O and Padaung, complaints arose from a commission member Revd. Thra J. Hla Kyaw, and a parliament senator Saw Johnson Di Po Min. They gave reasons for ethnic resembling between the Kayin and the Padaung as well as the Pwo and the Pa-O. In that time, U Ba Gyan, a minister of AFPFL government answered that the Padaung is the Padaung when Johnson Di Po Min asked the question that what nationality of the Padaung is. Col. Ba Shin, a member of consulting sub-committee of the commission and a Myanmar historian, answered that there are incomprehensive languages between the two ethnics. He suggested that the two ethnic peoples can be separated from the Kayin because of the different culture of the two clusters and the Kayin. In this question, the two-ethnic willingness are the most important theme to make decision. CSO of the Pa-O in South Shan, TaungGyi also had willing to separate from the Kayin.⁶ Also, the Pa-O (225,822) is the third largest population of the Kayinnic clusters in 1931. With the exception of 320 Pa-O peoples who converted to Christianity, all the Pa-O are Buddhists. Nowadays, the Pa-O leaders demand an autonomous state for the Pa-O in the 21st Century Panlang Conference in 2016 held in Nay Pyi Daw.⁷

Similarly, the Kayinni (now Kayah) included in the six clans of Bwe which are also called BweMuhtaw (East Bwe) in BweKayin. British researchers believed that the Kayinni was the origin of the Kayinnic clusters and the highest civilized people among the Kayinnic clusters. Later, the people bifurcated the two branches: the Sgaw and the Pwo.⁸ They were disturbed by the Karen National Defense Organization (KNDO) in 1948. Therefore, Karenni Council Conference held on 10 August 1949 made decision to change their ethnonym “Kayah” which was made

¹ H. L. Eales (1892), *Census of 1891*, Vol. IX, *Burma Report*, Vol. I, Yangon: Govt. Printing, p.165.
² 47298 Sgaw, 418,112 Pwo and 218,137 Taungthu in 1921 (Grantham, *Census of India, 1921*, Vol.I, p.290.)
³ *RSICK 1950*, p. 11.
 (b)ကရင်နီပြည်နယ်အထူးစုံစမ်းစစ်ဆေးရေးကော်မရှင်၏အစီရင်ခံစာ(Report of Special Inquiry Commission for the Kayinni State), (in Myanmar), Yangon: Govt. Printing, 1955, pp. 1-2. Hereafter cited as *RSICKS, 1955*.
⁴ *RSICKS, 1955*, p. 23.
⁵ Taw SeinKo (1889), *လွတ်တော်မှတ်တမ်း*/(Records of the Hluttaw), (in Myanmar), Nan NyuntSwe (ed.), Yangon: 1977 Reprinted, pp.167ff.
 (b)လွတ်တော်ပုံရိပ်ကတ်အမှတ်အသား အတိုကောက်မှတ်ပုံ/(Catalogues of the Hluttaw Records), (in Myanmar), Yangon: Govt. Printing, 1901, 2011 Reprinted, pp. 144ff.
⁶ ကရင်နီပြည်နယ်သစ်(the New Kayinni State), Vol. I, Yangon: Kayinni State Government, 1949, p. 21.
 (b) ကရင်လူမျိုးအထူးစုံစမ်းစစ်ဆေးရေးကော်မရှင်အဖွဲ့၏အစီရင်ခံစာ(Report of Special Inquiry Commission for the Karen), (in Myanmar), Yangon: Govt. Printing, pp. 14, 17f.
⁷ Kun TunShwe, Secretary 2, (2016), “ပအိုဝ်းအမျိုးသားအဖွဲ့ချုပ်မှ တင်သွင်းသောစာတမ်း (the Paper submitted by Pa-O National Organization (PNO)”, *ပြည်ထောင်စုငြိမ်းချမ်းရေးညီလာခံ ၂၁၇၁၈ ပင်လုံ(ပထမအစည်းအဝေး)မှတ်တမ်း* (Record of the Union Peace Conference: the 21st Century Pan Lang , held on the First Day, (in Myanmar), Yangon: Ministry of Information, 2017, pp.156-158.
⁸ Spearman (1880) *British Burma Gazetteer*, Vol. II, Yangon: Govt. Press, pp. 242f.
 (b) C. C. Lowis (1902) *Census of India, 1901*, Vol. XII, *Burma*, Part I, *Report*, Yangon: Govt. Printing, p. 86.

difference from the Kayin. U Sein, Kayinni Affairs Minister, put his proposal for their ethnic rename to Kayah and ratified their ethnonym in line with no. 10 amendment of 1947 Constitution.¹ Under the Kayah clusters, the seven clans—the Gekho, the Geba, the Kayan, the Prek, the Manumanaw, the Yinbaw, and the Yintalai—had been unanimous.² Recently, the ethnic peoples of Kayah State held Kayinni State Conference on 19 December 2015. They complained that the name of Kayah State represents the only Kayah people and all the ethnic peoples are not inclusive. Therefore, they make attempt to rename the former name Kayinni which is inclusive for the ethnic peoples in Kayah. Like the Kayah, the Manumanaw (now the Kawyaw) belongs to the Bwe (northern Kayins). The ethnic peoples is also known as the Mu Hti (western Bwe) in the Bwe Kayins. Also, they believe that their cluster was the same with the Kayin.³

The Kayinnic Clusters described in 135 Ethnic Peoples of Myanmar

Myanmar is a land of diverse ethnic peoples. Regarding with the ethnic diversities of Myanmar, State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC military regime 1988-1997), the 135 ethnic groups are recognized and are entitled as the indigenous peoples of Myanmar which compose of the following peoples:

1. 12 ethnic groups in the Kachin,
2. 9 ethnic groups in the Kayah,
3. 11 ethnic groups in the Kayins,
4. 53 ethnic groups in the Chins,
5. 9 ethnic groups in the Bamar,
6. 1 ethnic group in the Mon,
7. 7 ethnic groups in the Rakhine, and
8. 33 ethnic groups in the Shan.⁴

Among the 135 ethnic peoples, the Kayins belong to the following ethnonyms:

1. The Kayin,
2. The Kayinbyu (white Kayin),
3. The Palekhi,
4. The Mon-Kayin,
5. The SgawKayin,
6. The Talepwa,
7. The Paku,
8. The Bwe,
9. The Monepwa,

¹ ပြည်ထောင်စုမြန်မာနိုင်ငံတော်တိုင်းပြည်ပြုလွှတ်တော် (ပါလီမန်) မှတ်တမ်း/(Records of House of Parliament Representatives), (in Myanmar), Vol. X, Pt. VI, Yangon: Govt. Printing, 1950, pp. 167ff. Hereafter cited as *RHPR*.
(b) Union of Burma Constitution, 1947, Yangon: Govt. Printing, p. 115.

² ကယားတိုင်းရင်းသားယဉ်ကျေးမှုရိုးရာဓလေ့ထုံးတမ်းများ(the Kayah: their traditions and Culture), (in Myanmar), Yangon: BSPP Headquarter, 1976, pp. 19-23.

³ Saw Thar Doo, B. A (Myanmar), Secretary General, All Ethnic Cooperative Committee for Literature and Culture in Kayah State on 14 April 2019.

⁴ *Record of the Fifth Meeting of First Conference held at the House of Nationalities (AmyothaHluttaw) on 18 October 2012*, (in Myanmar), Nay PyiDaw: Govt. Printing, p. 472. Hereafter cited as *RFFCHN*, 2012.

10. The Mopwa, and

11. The PwoKayin.¹

However, the 135 ethnic peoples of Myanmar are incorrect clusters because some indigenous ethnic peoples complained against the 135 numbers. In 2012, Sai Thant Zin, a parliament representative of no. 4 constituent of Shan State, presented that the 33 ethnic peoples of the Shan consist of non-Shan peoples. Similarly, the Palekhi or the Palechi does not belong to the ethnonym of Kayinnic clusters. It belongs to the name of the creek, the Palekhi, which flows in Thandaungtownship, northern Kayin State and the name of village which is a native of the Mopwa clusters, who are also Baptists. Palekhi literally means starting point of the Pale creek in Kayin. The Pale is also known as Pathi in Myanmar. In 1964, Naw Rosy, an old Kayin woman who cannot speak well in Myanmar and is a Palekhi native, visited Yangon and attend the honorable dinner on the Union Day (12 February). Some researchers asked her nationality. She answered their question “what her nationality is” that she was a Palekhi.² From that time, Palekhi or Palechi became a pseudo-ethnonym of Kayinnic clusters. The name Palekhi is now renamed Tawpygyi. Next, the Mon-Kayin is unspecific ethnonym. It is possible to confuse with the PwoKayin who are also known as the Talaing-Kayin which is called by the Bamar. Therefore, the Mon-Kayin does not belong to a certain ethnonym, but it belongs to another name of Pwo. Therefore, ethnonyms of Myanmar are pseudonym. A need is to do research for correct ethnonym.

Report for the Revealed-corrected-Ethnonyms of the Kayinnic Clusters

In sponsors of USAID and Karen Affairs Committee (KAC) Saw KyawZwa, a project director who is the youngest son of Saw Tamalabaw, Commander-in-Chief of KNLA, and his colleagues carried out to implement the corrective ethnonyms of the Kayinnic clusters during 2015-2017. They made attempt to legitimize the Kayin which is composed of seven clusters: the Sgaw, the Pwo, the Bwe, the Paku, the Mopwa, and the Kayinbyu. A peculiar phenomenon is the omission the Monepwa, a Pwo cluster in Southeast Taunggu District. An attempt is also made to integrate into the Pwo, a unanimous ethnicity, between the East PwoKayins in Kayin State and West PwoKayin in the Ayeyarwaddy delta.³ It is a certain hardness because of incomprehensible language between them although they are the Pwo-spoken ethnics.⁴

The Monepwa individualizes with their ethnographic characteristics: only animism, individual attires and language. Their settlement can be divided into two parts: northern Monepwa settling between the Youk Twar creek and the MyitNgan creek and southern Monepwa living between the Lower Yauk Twar creek and the Mon creek. The Monepwa is mentioned in the British Burma census of 1931, and in the *Report of Special Inquiry Commission for the Karens, 1950*. Saw Htoo Blood and Revd. Naw Sweedy gave utterly refuse.⁵

¹ Maung Pa SoeGyann (2007), *A Dictionary of Ethnic People of Myanmar*, (in Myanmar), Yangon: Alinthit Books, pp.63-76. Hereafter cited as Pa SoeGyann: 2007.

² Interview with Saw Christopher, former State Minister of Kayin State Government whose native is Palekhi village, Thandaung on 5 January 2019.

³ ကရင်မျိုးနွယ်စုအမည်မှန်ဖော်ထုတ်အတည်ပြုရေးစီမံကိန်းအစီရင်ခံစာ (Report of Reviling the Corrective Ethnonyms of Kayinnic Cluster), (in Myanmar), n.p., Kayin Affairs Committee, 2017, (unpublished), pp. 1,18.

⁴ Saw Oun Thaw, Ethnic Representatives House of North Hlaing Bwe, asked to broadcast in Sgaw and Pwo to understand the Kayins in Kayin State. (24 March 1955) *the New Light of Burma Newspaper*, p. 18.

⁵ Interview with Saw Htoo Blood, a member of JMC, Taunggu District, Bago Region and Saw Present, a PakuKayin, ThabyayGon village, Bawkali Township, Kayin State on 13 November 2018.

Conclusion

Unlike the Kachin and the Chin in Myanmar, the Kayin, the Tibeto-Burman peoples and scattered in Lower Myanmar, live in Lowland settled together with the Bamar, the majority of population. They are syncretism with the Bamars. Most of the Kayins are Buddhists who are closed to the Bamars. Unlike the Kayins in Lowland, the Kayins who live on the Upland in southeastern Myanmar obviously differ. Most of them were animists. After arriving Christian missionaries, most of them had converted to Christianity. They live closely with the Shans in eastern highland. It obviously makes cultural syncretism between the Kayin and the Bamar in lowland areas, as well as the Kayins and the Shans in highland areas. Loanwords are also infiltrated into the mother-tongue of the Kayins. In music, the Kayins used musical instruments: a long drum (*oezi*) and sword dance closely with the same with the Shans. The Pa-O, the third majority of the Kayins, widely differs from the Kayins. Accordingly, there are some different characteristics between the lowland Kayins and the upland Kayins. Many years later, cultural differences between lowland and upland Kayins became gap. After the independence period, cultural gaps between the Kayah, the Pa-O, the Kayans in upland and the Kayins in lowland made ethnic particularism.

Religious gaps between the Buddhists, Baptists and Roman Catholic Christians also made particularism. Most of the Buddhist Kayins in delta are close to the Buddhist Bamars. The two ethnic groups live together with in the same areas so that the Kayins were culturally bland with Bamars. However, the Kayins lost their mother-tongue in the delta because the Kayin Buddhist literature depends upon Myanmar and Pali. Buddhism allowed them to continue their animism. Therefore, most of Buddhist Kayins survived their culture but helped to lose their mother-tongue. The *Census of India, 1931* mentions that numbers of Kayins in delta lost their mother-tongue. In contrast, American Baptist Missionaries learned Kayin language and preached them in Kayin. As the Kayins had no writing, they invented scripts and writing and translated the bibles into Kayin. Therefore, Christian Kayins in delta survive their mother tongue, i.e. Sgaw and Pwo.

As missionaries took care on socio-economic life of the Kayins, they promoted their lives. Rev. F. Mason made attempt to reveal the Kayinnic clusters for the first time. After him, some English officers—J George Scott, J.J. Bannison and C.C. Luwis—also made attempt on the Kayin studies. Basing on the Kayin languages, ethnic categorization had been made. The *Census of India, 1931, Burma*, is the most reliable work. In the censuses of British Burma, the many Kayinnic clusters—the Kayinni (now Kayah), the Taungthu (now Pa-O), the Zayein (now the Kayan), the Manumanaw (now Kayaomono), the Brek Kayin (now the Kayaw)—were under the list of Kayinnic clusters in 1950. Also, the Pa-O, the third largest population of the Kayins, separated from the Kayins. In 1947-48, the Kayinni (Kayah) separated from the Kayins as the conflict between KNDO and Sawphya (feudal lords) of Kayah State. At the beginning of the post-independent Myanmar, some of the Kayinnic clusters had separated from the Kayins. According to it, the Kayins decreased to the third largest population of Myanmar. It made a side-effect on the population strength of Kayins. The four clans of Kayan are been making attempt to separate from the Kayah. Recently, the Pa-O asked to establish the Pa-O State in Myanmar. Some Kayins—the Palechi and the Talebwa—occurred in the Burma Socialist People Party (BSPP) period. The two ethnic groups belong to pseudonym. In 2016, the *Report for Correction to the Kayinnic Ethnonyms* omitted the Monepwa and enlisted the ethnics in the Paku Kayins. It was not reliable because there are forty villages of the Monepwa in the Monn mountainous area.

Until to the present time, they believe animism. Their mother-tongue is different from the other Kayinnic cluster. At Mottimyaung village, the villagers owned over 70 bronze drums. The Report which was done by Kayin Affairs Committee led by Saw KyawZwa omitted the Monepwa in the Kayinnic cluster. In sum, Kayinnic cluster fragmented in 1950 and ethnic particularism between the Kayah, the Pa-O, the Padaung and the Kayins brought about due to the emergence of separated Kayin State.

Ethnonyms of the Kayinnic clusters were named in Myanmar and Shan who are neighbours of them. For instance, the name Padaung is called by the Shans. The word refers to the people who wear bronze rings at the neck. The ethnonym in Shan is not accepted by the people so that they renamed the Kayan Kakhaung meaning the Kayans who live on hill. (Paw Lu Chan:14 April 2019.) Similarly, the Brekis not called by mother tongue of them. Now, the ethnic group is renamed the Kayaw. In mountainous land, geographical barriers make clusters differences which can be incomprehensible mutually. Therefore, Kayinnic clusters are obvious among the upland Kayins rather than the lowland Kayins. Further, courses of different clusters involve scattered and broad range of Kayin settlements, linguistic syncretism with their neighbours, i.e. Myanmar, Shan, Dawainese which is resulted in incomprehensible spoken languages, their favorite settlement in tranquil and separate rural areas. The four Kayinnic clusters—the Padaung, the Yinbaw, the Gekho, and the Zayein—are made unanimous ethnicity in Kayah State. Kayan Literature and Culture Committee led by U Paw Lu Chan in chair have been established in Loikaw. The Committee produced the *Kayan-English-Katan Dictionary* (Edward Nan and Tan Min: 2018), the *History of the Kayanin Myanmar*, and ethnographic view on the Kayans in Myanmar. Nevertheless, they accept that they were the same root of Kayinnic cluster at present. Different religions—Buddhists, Baptists, Anglican, and Catholics— among them also led to different opinion. These courses make disadvantages of unanimous Kayins. In regarding with the particularism of Kayins, some intellects gave his comment in 1950 that the Kayins has more willing to separation than the unanimity (RSICK: 1950:15). It must be a challenge to overcome disintegration among them till to the present time.

The Kayinnic cluster fragmented due to geographical, cultural, and political causes is viewed as validity and invalidity. Some view that it makes strength of population of Kayins decrease and political weakness for the Kayins. In regarding this particularism among the Kayinnic clusters, it is a valid right for indigenous people according to the United Nation Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)¹ which recognized the right for self-determination and nationality. According to UNDRIP, ethnic particularism is valid for ethnic peoples.

In the Kayin elder's point of view, particularism among the Kayinnic clusters was displeasure as a symptom of disunity in the past. However, they have restrained the Kayinnic particularism because numbers of different identities in Kayinnic clusters came to bear respectively. At present time, Kayin elders accept reciprocity with the Myanmar, majority of population but they have social apprehension not to lose Kayin national identity.

¹ *United Nations Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples*, New York: UNICEF, p.12.

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- NawLedar, retired headmistress of high school, 13 miles point village, east of Taunggu township, Thandaungtownship, Kayin State on 19 March 2018 and 5 January 2019.
- Saw Htoo Blood, a member of JMC, Taunggu District, Bago Region on 13 November 2018.
- Saw Present, a PakuKayin, ThabyayGon village, Bawkali Township, Kayin State on 13 November 2018.
- Saw SoeNaing, Chairman, Kayinbyu Affairs Committee, Pyinmana (Nay PyiDaw), on 16 April 2019.
- Saw Christopher, retired minister of Kayin State, who is a Tawpyyagi village native, Thandaunggyi township, Kayin State, on 5 January 2019.
- Saw MaungHsaing, chairman of KNU, Muttimyaung village, Htantapintownship, Bago Region on 14 November 2018.
- Saw Bhu Taw, head of village, Muttimyaung village, Htantapintownship, Bago Region on 14 November 2018.
- Saw Do Soe, chairman, Baptist Society, Taw PyaGyi village (Palekhi), Thandaunggyitownship, Kayin State on 5 January 2019.
- Saw George HlaMaung, chairman, Geba Literature and Culture Committee, Leiktho township, Kayin State on 20 April 2018.

Illustrations



Figure 1 President Mahn Win Maung, a PwoKayin, Ayeyarwaddy Delta

From Universities Central Library, University of Yangon



Figure 2 The Ruler of the Kayin, a wall-painting, Shin Pin PwintLan Pagoda, HsinKyau village, Yezakyo

From Ko Khin Lay Maung, M.A (Archaeology) student.



Figure 3 Thramoo Naw Lédar, a Bwe Kayin, Thandaunggyi, Taunggu, Bago Region

Photographed by Nan Hlaing



Figure 4 A KaynaKakhaung (former Padaung), Loikaw, Kayah State

Photographed by Nan Hlaing



Figure 5 The KayanKaNgan, former YinbawKayin,,Kayah State

From U Paw Lu Chan, Chairman, Kayan Literature and Culture Committee, Loikaw

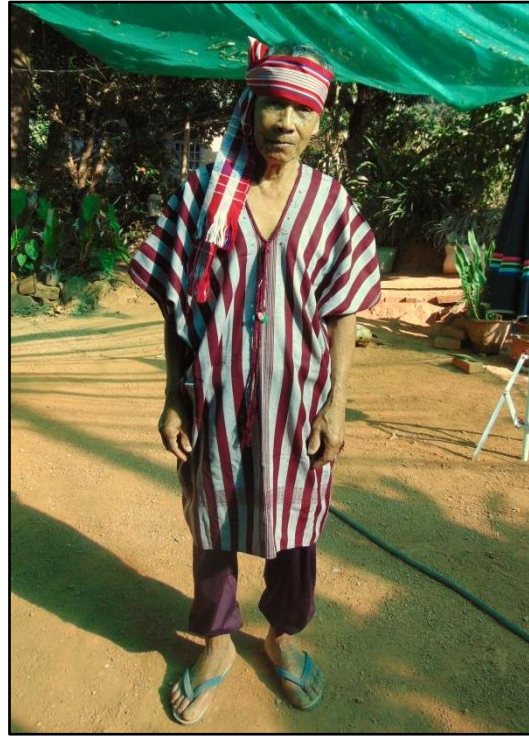


Figure 6 the MopwaKayin, Palechi village, ThanduanggyiTownship, Kayin State

Photographed by Nan Hlaing



Figure 7 The Pa-O girl who live in Htantabin, Taunggu District, Bago Region (From Khun Myint Naing)



Figure 8 Sword Dancing of the PakuKayins in the Kayin New Year Festival, Taunggu, Baog Region, 2018

Photographed by Nan Hlaing



Figure 9 The Monepwa Couple, Mottimyaung village, Htantapin, Taunggu District, Bago

(Photographed by Nan Hlaing)



Figure 10 The KayanLahtar (former Zayein Kayin) in the Kayah State

(from U Paw Lu Chan, Chairman, Kayan Literature and Culture Committee, Loikaw)



Figure 11 The Gebha Couple

(photographed by Gorge Hla Din, Chairperson, Geba Literature and Art Committee, Leiktho, Kayin State)



Figure 12 the Brek Couple

(now Kayaw in Kayah State)
Photographed by Nan Hlaing