

University of Yangon

A Thesis of Master of Research

(Anthropology)

**Social Organization of the AZI (Zaiwa) National of
Warshaung Village, Waingmaw Township,
in Kachin State.**

Submitted by Thet Mar Aye

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Introduction

Myanmar got its independence at 4:20 Am, on 4th January, 1948; and since that moment it has become the Union of Myanmar with sovereign power, comprising the four states of the Kachins, Kayins, Kayahs, Shans and Chin Hills Division, and the Myanmars who mostly live in the Central Belt and the Lower Myanmar Delta, the term Myanmar embracing all of them.

Once it became the Union of Myanmar, the leaders at that time endeavoured to get all-round development for the country, including the aim to study and promote the culture of all the nationalities. The Culture Ministry was formed in 1952, and its branch of Culture Department of National Peoples was open in 1954.

As preservation and promotion of ethnic culture of all the nationalities in the country is the key step for national consolidation it was an appropriate action to open this department. There can be no doubt that understanding towards one another was founded to a certain extent through the activities of this office. In accordance with the motto "from the understanding between two persons to the understanding between two groups; from the understanding between two groups to the understanding between two states", to have the understanding between the two states it must be started from two persons or two groups. So, for all the national peoples to understand the Myanmars, and for the Myanmars to understand all the ethnic peoples, we must open the channels and encourage all to study the traditions and customs of all in the country.

But, in undertaking the cultural affairs of the ethnic peoples, it should be divided into two forms of task: one for studying and preservation and another for making modifications in these culture for the benefit of these peoples. It means, after studying and preserving the culture that are not inconsistent with modern time, some of them should be modified without totally discarding them. It is quite natural that this duty can be well performed by anthropologists who can make systematic research on traditions and customs of a nationality and analyses each of them whether it should be preserved or modified or discarded for the benefit of that community. In studying the traditions and customs of an ethnic group, the background history of that group must be studied thoroughly with all possible interrelations that might have been made in the past and cultural assimilations that might have taken place and also the history of the culture of neighbouring countries and territories.

Besides, we must also study how neighbouring countries are striving to get national consolidation in their own ways among the ethnic groups of their states, including their projects towards that aim so far mace. So, only an anthropologist can make such a comprehensive study in a scholarly way.

During the colonial times, the colonists applied this anthropology subject in finding the ways and means of smoothly governing their colonies, like the missionary groups of those days. Other social organizations too applied this for good, noble aims. There were many instances during the Second World war where the belligerent nations had applied this subject for their own profit. In the same way,

the officials responsible for the administration of the border areas and the new settlers in strange lands also applied this subject in founding in good, friendly relation with old native people. A new branch of anthropology appeared in 1920 by the name of 'applied anthropology' and this new study field has helped many to solve social as well as political problems in many areas of the world.

With this view in mind, as an anthropology student, I have tried my best to make my research as much scientifically as possible to depict the true picture of Azi (zaiwa national of the Kachin State with all their customary beliefs and background history, for the present as well as the coming generations, to enable the reader to have a glimpse of their social organization within a short time.

Anthropologists say each system of custom should be studied in its own terms; and they also point out that the difference in culture of the two ethnic groups is not because of the difference in their intelligent levels but it is due to different religious belief and different regions of their settlements. I hope my this paper will serve as an evidence for that concept.