

**SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF SHAN GYI NATIONAL
OF LEINMAWGYAN VILLAGE TRACT
TAIKKYI TOWNSHIP, NORTHERN DISTRICT,
YANGON DIVISION**

Submitted by

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INTRODUCTION

The Union of Myanmar is composed of Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Myanmar, Mon, Rakkhine, Shan national races. The crucial factor for her perpetuation is unity of these national races. Only when the customs, traditions, nature and cultural features of one race are made known to others, then will they come to understand each other well and respect one another. Furthermore, they will be able to interact in kindred spirit and have peaceful, congruent relationships in doing so.

For above reasons, I have chosen to do a case study on the social organization of the Shan Gyi national of the Leinmawgyan Village Tract, Taikkyi township; a sub-race of the Shan National. The research is done from the anthropological aspect. Having villagers who speak Myanmar well and those who have sound knowledge of their ancestral traditions are great assets to the survey and make interpretations unnecessary. Moreover, from having opportunities to participate in their festivals and celebrations, I was able to collect valid and reliable data. The differences in the ancient and modern traditions are also noted.

To have data on the economy, administration and cultural traditions, seven survey trips were made to the village of study during 1997 to 1999. It is hoped that the research findings will help the different nationals of the country to have better understanding of the Shan Gyi culture and their traditions, which will strengthen the solidarity of the nationals, in turn.

The study of the social organization of the Shan Gyi national is done with the following aims and objectives.

- (1)** To submit in part fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of M.A.
- (2)** For other national races to be aware of the culture and traditions of the Shan Gyi National.
- (3)** For the nationals of the Union of Myanmar to have a better understanding of each other's culture and thus obtain national solidarity.

It is fascinating, in a way, how a group of Shan nationals came to reside among the Myanmars, in a place quite distant from the Shan State, which is their original habitat. The background history of Leinmawgyan village, starting at the point how the very first settlers came to reside in today's Leinmawgyan area, is presented in Chapter One following numerous interviews with the elderly villagers. It is also presented how the village survived the disasters, such as earthquakes and the aftermath effects. The village, being geographically connected with the Bago Yoma, was often disturbed by wild elephants from the forest of the hills.

In studying a particular society, it is important that the society in question is viewed in terms of their physical, mental and social images. Therefore, in Chapter Two, the origin of the Shan language and literature is presented. Shan language and literature can be traced back to as early as the Thayay Khitaya era (AD 73 to 80) of the Pyu kingdom. Being descendants of the Sino-Chinese, they have mongoloid features. Chapter Two deals with not only the details of the physical aspects of the Shan Gyi nationals of Leinmawgyan but also their nature and temperament.

In studying the life-style of a group of people, it is important to find out how they are related to one another, what kind of relationship they have among their family members or their kin. Kinship ties and influences of tradition on choice of partners, and relationship within family members are discussed in Chapter Three.

Chapter Four deals with social activities, including traditional festivals and dances, commemorations, betrothals, marriage ceremonies, religious ceremonies, and traditional cuisine, describing how they live, choose partners; what aspects of their traditions they conform to; and the kind of food and meals they like to have. Since the Shan Gyi nationals are an exclusive group of people, it is not extraordinary to find some outstanding features of culture which are rather unique in its own way. However, some very interesting aspects of Shan culture, such as the dances and the cuisine are studied in this chapter.

Chapter Five is a description of their economy, their livelihood, which gives a bird's eye view of their daily living and their economic status. Their major occupation is farming, but when the soil was damaged by earthquakes and farming did not yield as well as it used to, they turn to handcrafts as a supplementary occupation. The way in which the Shan Gyi nationals help and support each other not only in social matters but also in occupational activities is exemplary.

The Shan Gyi nationals are very pious and strong in their faith and beliefs. They are staunch Buddhists and hold the highest form of respect for the Five Infinite Venerables: Buddha, the Word, holy monks, parents and teachers. They also believe in spirits and have strong superstitions. Their faith and beliefs are presented in Chapter Six, together with their taboos. The chapter also includes their way of training and upbringing of children so that they will preserve and maintain their culture and beliefs which they so much treasure.

Chapter Seven is concerned with the political organization and procedures of the past and the present. It also contains information on organization of settlement and construction of houses and buildings. The chapter portrays the peace and order that prevails in the village as well as the nature of these law-abiding citizens.

The case study of the social organization of the Shan Gyi national reflects the culture and life style of a group of people who are organized, hardworking, warm and unique. It is hoped that the dissemination of the information will lead to a better understanding of each other's culture and tradition among the different national races of Myanmar.

Chapter 1

Historical Background and Topographical Features

(a) History of Leinmawgyan Village Tract: Resident of Shan Gyi Nationals

The origin of the Shan Gyi ethnic group, who migrated south from the Mongol plateau and settled in Myanmar, is the Thai-Chinese descendant Shans of southern China. The Shans who could no longer resign to passiveness under the domination of Chinese rulers started rebellions in the 1st Century A.D. However, owing to unmatched manpower, artillery and weapons, they had to retreat southwards and eventually came to the 7th century A.D, where they founded the Nancho dynasty. By the 8th Century A.D, not only had they conquered upper Myanmar but had also counter-attacked the Chinese with the aid of their Tibetan allies. From there they extended their territories to Assam. In the 13th Century when Tar-tars of the Mongoloid kin came into power, they invaded and conquered Yunan by way of China. The Shans fled southward and eastward in-groups.

During the reign of the 9th King of the Kone-boung dynasty, King Bagan, in the year 1852 A.D, the Second Anglo-Burman War broke out. Lower Myanmar including the Bago Division was added to the British colony. King Mindone, being a wise ruler and having foresight, held onto the peace-making policy and sustained congenial diplomatic relationships with the British. Since King Mindone was making great efforts towards development of the country, he began to rely much on his brother Prince Ka-naung and gave him much favour. Seeing this, the two princes, royal sons of King Mindone took for granted that their chances for becoming kings were lost. They assassinated Prince Ka-naung and provoked rebellions from then on. There was much disorder in the internal affairs of the Kingdom.

The disorder began to spread across the Shan Yoma and reached the Shan State even. A good number of Shans, to avoid conflicts migrated southwards for greener pastures and to pay homage to the Shwe Dagon Pagoda. On their pilgrimage journey, they set up settlements along the way, taking up farming as their livelihood. Small Shan settlements can still be found today along Taikkyi, Okkan, Thonze, Tharyarwaddy and Nyaung-Lay-Bin routes.

Leinmawgyan village, the subject of this paper, is in Taikkyi township, some 48 miles 3 furlongs from Yangon. As the Shans got settled in Taikkyi, Shan Sayadaw of the Bagaya Monastery from Sanchaung in Yangon came to Taikkyi and became the first presiding monk. He was ordained from novicehood to monkhood and was awarded the title, “ဂုဏလင်္ကာရ ဓဇရာဇာဓိရာဇာဂုရု” (Guna Lingara Daja Rajar Di Raja Guru)” by king Mindone himself. Hence the saying ‘(Taikkyi asa Shan bet ka) “တိုက်ကြီး အစ ရှမ်းဘက်က” meaning, “The origin of Taikkyi is from Shans”.

Shans started to settle in the surrounding areas of the monastery and eventually the area came to be known as ‘Shan Bet’. People from Shan Bet went to Leinmawgyan to do garden farming and that was how Leinmawgyan came into existence and how it came to be established only after ‘Shan Bet’.

The pioneer Shan settlers of Taikkyi were farmers whereas the later comers earned their livelihood by garden farming. Prior to garden farming, in the Myanmar year 1230, i.e. 1868 A D, there was a group of people who cleared the surrounding hills and forests of the current Leinmawgyan area and grew seasonal fruits and vegetables. Among these people were four Kayin brothers: U Nay Kyaw, U Taung Yoe, U Tha Pay and another brother whose name could not be recalled. They were not Buddhists but Kayin animists. Being diligent people they were very keen on their work. They cleared one plot of land after another and extended their farmland area for Taung-Yar. Where three brothers

of the four had moved to has not been able to trace. The remaining brother U Nay Kyaw lived alone at Kain-Sho-Gyi, a place near today's Kain Kwin Gyi, and continued to do Taung-Yar. He would go to Taikkyi often to sell the seasonal products.

When the British government came to know about U Nay Kyaw's frequent visits to Taikkyi, their officials came to U Nay Kyaw and demanded poll tax. U Nay Kyaw asked the British officials to wait awhile and went and stood at a distance of some 300 feet. Then he started reciting some charms. Soon a huge tiger appeared. He then climbed onto the tiger's back and told the British officials to follow him if they wanted the tax. Saying thus, he went into the woods, never to reappear from then onwards. Even today, when people want to do game hunting in these woods, they have to make offerings to U Nay Kyaw, 'The Tabwe Sah Nat', for safeguard measures.

A person by the name of U Chin Yauk found out about U Nay Kyaw from U Yi Puh Lwe who initiated the orange plantations. U Yi Puh Lwe and his group initially set out from the Mai Kine in the Shan State on a pilgrimage tour to Yangon in the Myanmar year 1230. On their way to the Shwe Dagon, they met up with the Shans from Taikkyi and Nyaung Lay Bin. They joined the Shan crowd and came into contact with U Nay Kyaw. He started an orange plantation between the Ale Ywa of now and Kain Kwin Gyi village. Although the plantation was yielding, business did not go well with frequent disturbances from wild beasts such as elephants, tigers, guars and bears. Their income was not sufficient for the basic needs even. So they moved back to Mai Kine of the Shan States. Leinmawgyan village is named after U Yi Puh Lwe's oranges (Leinmaw).

After that, another person by the name of U Sein Tar came to lower Myanmar on a pilgrimage tour since his trading business in the Shan States was not doing well. On his way to the Shwe Dagon Pagoda he met up with Shans

from Wanet Chaung and went to settle in a place called Kaung Hong, a neighbouring village. For his good qualities of courage, diligence and an adventurous mind, he was made Headman of the village. While carrying out his duties as Headman, he came into contact with Shans from Nyaung Lay Bin and Taikkyi. Having a keen interest in agriculture and farming, he extended the farms and yards near U Yi Puh Lwe's orange yards. These events took place around the Myanmar year 1290. Because of the dangers caused by elephants, leopards and tigers from the Bag Yoma, they could work only in the daytime but had to sleep on scaffolds built on huge trees at night.

However, these people, with a determination to succeed carried on with the work. Sometimes when food provisions ran short, they would go and ask for food in Taikkyi, then come back to proceed. They had had so much difficulties. Sometimes they had to go and exchange their farm products with foodstuff such as rice, oil and salt.

About the same time as U Sein Tar, U Hsan of Mai Ye, Shan States also came down to Yangon to pay homage to the Shwe Dagon Pagoda. They heard about U Sein Tar from Shans of Taikkyi. They came to Taikkyi and settled near U Sein Tar's plot, cleared the land and planted lime, lemon and banana. When he discovered the fertility of the soil, he went and fetched his relatives from the Shan States. It was around the Myanmar year 1268. Among the relatives were U Awe, U Chin Yaut, and U Hmone. They put heart and soul in their work and extended their business. They went to Taikkyi to trade their farm products.

Hearing about this, Shans from the Shan States came down to join others at Leinmawgyan. From mouth to mouth, words spread to Peine Goan in Shan States and on to the ears of U Hein, who led a group to Taikkyi and from there to Leinmawgyan. They built farmyards and grew oranges. U Hein and group formed a small Shan village of about five families near a Kanyin tree(a

huge oil producing tree) between Ale Ywa and Kyaing Su of now. The village was named Ywa Thit (Tin Mone in Shan). As the population gets thicker, newer and more innovative ideas came up. Grafting of lime and lemon was introduced. Rare and expensive species of fruits such as red pomelo, white pomelo, sweet and sour pomelo, Singapore pineapple, red skinned banana, butter bananas were procured and cultivated.

Families of U Chin Yaut, U Hmone and U Awe moved to the village and joined the crowd. U Sein Tar was well established with house and compound at Ale Ywa then. As the inhabitants grow in numbers, U Ein from Shan Bet, Taikkyi was made Headman. The Headman would take responsibility of village, social, and religious matters, and would allocate duties to others. The villagers willingly listened to the Headman and carry out their tasks dutifully.

For instance, when someone from another village came and asked of Leinmawgyan villagers to carry the novice at an Initiation ceremony, the Headman would decide whether or not to take charge of the task. If he did, villagers would assemble together, take an ozi and would go and join the merry-making without fail. As the garden-farms of Leinmawgyan yield more and more, so did the size of the fruit market in Taikkyi. The fruit market was big enough to become a separate market and be called 'Shan Market' by then. Seasonal fruits were picked and sent to market before dawn. They had to make torches out of bamboo and cloth to see their way. Bamboo poles were cut a few inches above the joints so as to get bowl-like oil containers. They used pieces of cloth for wicks.

On their return they would bring back foodstuff and ingredients such as rice, salt, oil, chilly, onions etc. In 1292 when the Saya San Rebellion broke out, the British Government sanctioned non-residence in woods and forests. Shans moved to Taikkyi and stayed there temporarily. When the rebellion was

put down, the Shans went back to their former dwelling, Ywa-thit village of Leinmawgyan. Some fenced up their own compounds and yards.

More and more Shans moved to Leinmawgyan as its garden farming became success. At that time U Hsu, U Thu Nanda, U Kawliya, U Hman Si, U Chin Yaut, U Hmone, U Awe, U Sein Tar and U Kun were all residing together at the Ale Ywa of now. They worshipped at the Shan Kyaung Gyi of Shan Bet, Taikkyi. Villages did not have separate names then. They were called Leinmawgyan collectively as a group. Today, there are about 8 villages in Leinmawgyan village tract.

(b) Topographical Features of Leinmawgyan

Leinmawgyan village is situated in Taikkyi Township in the northern province of Yangon Division. It borders Hlegu Township in the north, Hmawbi and Htantabin Townships in the south, Nyaung Doan in the west and Bago in the east. It is located between 17°10' and 17°48' north latitude, 95°41' and 96°08' east longitude. Leinmawgyan is directly to the east of Taikkyi and at about 2 to 3 miles distance from Yangon-Pyay motor highway and railroads. It is about 42 miles by railroad and 49 ½ miles by motor route from Yangon. The Leinmawgyan village tract consists of 8 villages : Kaing Kwin Gyi, Nyaung Lay Bin, Ale Ywa, Leinmawgyan, Payagyi Su, Kyaung Su, Pike Loan Su, and Ywa Tharyar. The Nyaung Lay Bin village is marked as the model village for its location, organization, health, commercial and educational facilities. The Gyobyu Water Reservoir that has been supplying drinking water to the entire Yangon City is at the east of Leinmawgyan. The Reservoir was built in 1937 and occupies an area of 13.10 square miles.

Leinmawgyan has a wet climate. Being at a distance of only 50 miles from the sea, it rains about 6 months in a year. June, July and August are the wettest and it rains both day and night. It rains less in other months.

July is the wettest month of the year and annual rainfall is approximately 100". Leinmawgyan never gets the intense coldness in the Cold Season for its fending walls of high mountain ranges in the north which blocks the cold north east wind. It is like a ravine among the ranges. Average temperature of the place is 100° Fahrenheit.

Land surface declines from north to south. Tributaries form in the valleys and flow into the Hline River. Natural growths of the region are evergreen growths such as Teak, Pyingadie, Htauk Nyan, and Kanyin, In, Yamanay Pyinma, Taw Thayet, Myauk Chaw, Thingan, Bine, and Didy. Nowadays, with so much timber extraction, the naturalness of the growths has changed greatly. As for bamboo, Kyet Thaung Wa, Wanet, Hmyin, Telegu, Wagauk, Wa Nwei, Wa boe, Tya khat, and Htiyo Wa are found. Herbal plants found in the area are Sandon Manwei, Kyahmanine Nwei, Nalin Kyaw, Taw Shaut, Yin Pyar, Bomayazar, and Thayingyi. The soil is of the laterite family with sandy areas along the valleys and lower parts.

Shan residents occupy an area of 1169 acres, which is 1.286 square miles out of the village tract area. There are 900 Shan families accumulating to 4552 persons.

CHAPTER 2

Shan Language, Literature, Physical Characteristics, Nature and Costumes

(a) Shan Language and Literature

Shan language (spoken as well as written) had already been in existence long before the people became Buddhists. It is believed that Buddhist Scriptures were reinscribed in the Shan language. Buddhist literature inscribed in Shan is known as "လိဝ်; ဆမ်း ", or Shan Pali, and was used by all Shan clans of olden days. Up to now, Goan Shans (Tai Khuns) have kept on using it and it is recognized today as the Goan Shan inscription. The original language was modified to the requirements of the different clans, which were spread out all over the Shan State. The Shan Gyi clan use "လိဝ်; ဝူ , ငွမ်း";, or bean sprout inscriptions; the Mao Shans use a variation with rectangular alphabets. The Khanti Shans use the Khanti variation, and the Shan-Chinese called Tainei use Tainei writings. Although the different clans are regarded as different races by their residential region and styles of living, they are all Shan descendents: "ရှမ်း, သျမ်း or သျံ ". Their language includes the same vocabulary with differences only in tone and accent.

The earliest evidence of Shan literature in Myanmar historical records was from the Tharay Khitayar Era. During the reign of King Thumoaderi, the Pyu king of Tharay Khitayar (A.D 73-80) the Oyu kingdom was underseiged by enemies, the Pyu king sent a letter by courier, a request for assistance from king Ohnbaun, ruler of the Shans, inscribed in Shan language. Records state that the arrival of Shans saved the Pyu kingdom. Whether this episode is in Pyu records is uncertain. However, the Shan records are proof that they had been using a particular form of literature at that time. It can be assumed that in

the said era, Shans who had close links with Pyus were not inferior in culture and civilization to Pyus but had similar literature standing of their own. That Shans did not have the custom of making stone inscriptions although they had close links with the Pyus may be due to their ability to make and use their own paper, a skill or art acquired from the Chinese. Evidence of their appreciation of literature may be observed even today from their practice of writing Pitakas and sermons on Shan paper to donate as a parabaik or tablet at auspicious ceremonies.

In Shan records, there are neither indications nor references as to the time when Buddhism was introduced to Shans. However, the ruler of Naung Seh, "Sao Oo Teh" sent his royal prince "Sao Hkun Hao" over to Ceylon to fetch the Tri-Pitakas and Buddhist Scriptures. The arrival of the Scriptures was regarded as the arrival of Buddha himself.

It is said that Shan literature flourished in Bagan Era during the life time of Shan Venerable Monk Dhammadina. Dhammadina, son of a Tailon (or) Shan Gyi cattle trader came down to Myanmar proper on a trading tour and arrived at Bagan where Buddhism had already flourished. He entered monkhood after meeting the disciples of Buddha and listening to their sermons in awe and adoration.

After becoming a monk, he stayed on in the Buddhist Sasana in Bagan and learned the Scriptures until he could recite the Tri-Pitakas by heart. After 35 years of monkhood, he could recite not only the Tri-Pitakas but also the Seven Doctrines, The five Vinayas or Codes of Conduct, three times repeated. He then went back to his native in Shan Hills. People welcomed him with much rejoicing. He preached the people and contributed Dhamma knowledge to them. First he was known as "Dhamma Dana", meaning contributor of Spiritual knowledge. Eventually he was called "The Venerable Dhamma

o

o

Out of the 11 consonants only the eight letters " က၊ ခ၊ စ၊ ည၊ န၊ ဖ၊ ဟ၊ ဓ " , are a little different from the Myanmar alphabet and the rest are exactly the same. The rectangular symbols that the Venerable Monk had compiled are said to have originated based on the circular letters from the time of Boedaw U Wine, who formed the Amarapura Kingdom and which are still used by Shans of the lower state. Inscriptions in Mao Shan language are also rectangular like those from the Bagan Anawrahtar Era. At a glance they look like Thai alphabets.

The letter "သ" is absent in the original Shan writing and the Myanmar "သ" is used in place of the "ဆ" sound. Therefore whenever Shans see the symbol "သ" they would pronounce it as /ဆ/. Reason for this is that Shan language being an adaptation of Pali, there is no /သ/ sound but only /hs-ဆ/ for /th-သ/, /ya - ရ/ for /ra - ရ/.

Example : *'Thar thanar'* is pronounced *'Hsar hsa na'*
'Thangar daw' is pronounced *'Hsangan daw'*
'Namawh Tatha' is pronounced *'Namawh Ta hsa'*
 and *'Thidin Sa'* is pronounced *'Hsatan Sa'*

There is not much variation in vowel representation from Myanmar. Uses of -o, -u, -e, -i, and -° are the same as in Myanmar. Inclusion of -j- and - : was done only in the middle of the colonial era. Pali and numerical

figures are the same as Myanmar Pali and Myanmar numerals with differences **in pronunciation only.**

- | | |
|----------------------|-------|
| (1) - ၁ - နိမ့် | Neim |
| (2) - ၂ - ဆောင် | Saong |
| (3) - ၃ - ဆံ | Hsan |
| (4) - ၄ - ဆီ | Hsi |
| (5) - ၅ - ဟာ | Ha |
| (6) - ၆ - ဟုပ် | Hoap |
| (7) - ၇ - စစ်(ပ်) | Sip |
| (8) - ၈ - ပျက် | Pyet |
| (9) - ၉ - ကောင် | Kao |
| (10) - ၁၀ - ဆိစ်(ပ်) | Seesp |

The revised Shan alphabets in addition to the original alphabets compiled by Shan linguists in the State Union era, are :

Shan	Myanmar	Shan	Myanmar
ၵ	က	ၵ	က
ၶ	ခ	ၶ	န
ၷ	င	ၷ	ပ
ၸ	စ	ၸ	ဖ
ၹ	ဆ	ၹ	ဗ
ၺ	ည	ၺ	မ

၈	၀	၁	၂
၃	၄	၅	၆
၇	၈	၉	၀
၁	၂	၃	၄
၅	၆	၇	၈

There is no 'hahtoe' in the original version of the language but it is included in the modified version as / / . Altogether, there are 10 letters of the Myanmar alphabets and 10 of the Shan letters in both the original and the modified version are made similar to the Myanmar letters of the alphabets. To the Shans the Myanmar alphabet is known as the Pali alphabet.

There is no grammar in Shan language. Neither can any kind of grammatical analysis be done. There are so many features amiss when thorough analysis is done although a sentence may be acceptable. It is similar to the English language in that it has the 'Subject + Verb Object' system whereas in Myanmar it is Subject + Object + Verb. Regarding pronunciation there are certain words which are written as they are pronounced and read as they are written as in the English language. In Myanmar the spoken and the written forms are distinct whereas in Shan they are not.

Example (1): For "Come and have tea " in Myanmar, the order of words would be as follows :

Tea liquid come drink (polite ex.) Sir / Madam. In Shan, the sentence would become " Mah-sut (or) Kyin-Nam-Neim-Hka".

Mah	- come
Sut/Kyin	- drink
Nam	- liquid

Neim	- tea
Hka	- polite expression (Sir / Madam)

Sut (သူတံ) = လိုမ် = တွန် (တုခင်) stands for the slow drinking of clear hot liquid, " လိုမ် " is for drinking water and " တွန် " is drinking in gulps. " ကိုဟံ " is for drinking in just one gulp.

Example (2) : For "come and eat rice" in Myanmar the order of the words would be as follows:-

Rice come eat (polite expression) Sir / Madam.

In Shan, the message is "Mah-Kyin-Khao-Ka",

where Mah	- come
Kyin	- eat
Khao	- rice
Ka	- polite expression
Kyin < kin >	= tan stands for eat.

It indicates chewing of food, and is used for ordinary people. "tan" is for monks and royalty.

A thorough study of the Shan language will show that there are special terms for God, monks, kings (saophas), ministers, the public, animals, inanimate. The status of a person can be determined from the language used.

Example (3) : Since it is a tone language the prosodic features such as stress, pitch and length of the vowels are not just allophonic variations but are separate phonetic realizations which bring out different meanings.

The word " ဝနံ " has two meanings depending on whether it is combined with the short form of the vowel / -^s / it's long form. /

A diphthong-like consonant vowel union may also be classified as closed, open, stop and wide.

The Shan language is monosyllabic. A particular combination of vowels and consonants may produce 6 to 16 different pronunciations which are different in meaning as well. Variation in the form of the word, i.e. noun, verb, adjective, or adverb form may also produce different in meaning.

Shan language is not ordinary prose but tends to be literary and poetic. Even classical plays historical events and religion Scriptures may be written as ballads and ditties. No distinction or discrimination is made on the prosody and rhetoric in the composition of poems, neither is the number limited. Sometimes a stanza may start with 4 or 5 words and 6 at times. Sometimes there are 4 words to a line but sometimes there are 3, 5 or 2 words, sometimes 4 to 11 words with rhyming and tunes inserted. Usually the poems end with a line of 4. As rhyming and tunes are included the poems are melodious and musical.

Since the introduction of the Shan alphabet by the Venerable Monk Dhamma Dinna, there had been many Shan literati who had contributed a great deal towards nationalistic literature.

Their works mainly consisted of a combination of prose and verse. Shan literature is light and expressive. Moreover as it is composed of poems with melodious features it is pleasant to listen and easy to memorize. In the Myanmar poem composition, there are two basic streams: meaning from rhyme, and rhyme from meaning. The Shan poem composition is of the former, rhyme oriented.

When translating the life stories, birth stories, historical plays and events into Shan, they are done so in the poetic style as mentioned above. The song about Buddha's Eight Victories was translated into Shan song called " Aung Pyet Saun " by a Shan sage. People of the later generations listen to the works of the literati of old and bless and praise their work. These works of literature are read or recited at auspicious events. At these recitals, the leader called Pooh-Sa-Lay (or) reader (or) preacher would place the white Scripture tablet on a stool. He then would have to take a lacquer or gilded container embedded with glass mosaic, filled with a basket of rice and some money and positioned it in front of the stool. After that he would have to light 3 or 4 candles of bee's wax or stone wax, kneel in front of the audience and recite the verses in an appropriate tone of voice and in correct rhythm and intonation to the kneeling audience.

At memorials and funerals, the rich would receive guests the whole week with food and recitals. Those who cannot afford the whole week would host a recital at least one evening in a week. Shans believe that only when recitals are given, the dead would go to heaven and the remaining family members would have accomplished their duties.

Numerous Shan translations of the Buddhist Scriptures were written on local made Shan paper called " Mine Kine ", " Kaut Parabait " in Myanmar, " Pup" in Shan. They may also be written on tablet rolls called " Parabait Leit " in Myanmar, " Kin Leit " in Shan, where " Kin " stands for roll and " Leit " stands for literature. Ink made from soot of crude oil was used with sharpened grass stems for vines as the pen. Furthermore, cotton or silk was sometimes used as a screen.

The original Shan script is inferior in quality as well as in quantity to the modern Shan Script. The old Shan Script may have different pronunciation and thus meanings to one word whereas in the new Script, there is only one

pronunciation for one word. In the reading of the old Script, a rich vocabulary is required of the reader. The meaning may be guessed from the discourse whereas in the modern Shan Script, the meaning may be interpreted as it was written since the pronunciation and spelling systems are very much precise. The new modern Shan script is the new version of the original, the flaws of which are modified and the absent features filled in. The easy teaching method of the Shan language, confirmed and acknowledged by the Shan State People's Council is commonly known as " the five /ma/ " method which represents the Reading Skill, the Writing Skill, the Mathematical Skill, the Learning Skill and the Awareness.

The Shan language " Five Ma " Course were conducted in cooperation with Shan Literature and Culture Committees of various universities and colleges to :-

- (a) To maintain and upgrade Shan literature
- (b) To support and assist in the national cause for literacy
- (c) Enable Shans to cooperate with other national ethnic groups

The courses were conducted every year since 1969 with its goal of banishing literacy.

In Each and every village of Leinmawgyan people tried to implement the project of having exclusive Shan school beginning from 1985-86. Children are taught the fundamentals, consonants and so on, according to the Primary School curriculum. However Shan youth of Leinmawgyan are much more proficient in reading than in writing.

(b) Shan Folklore

To preserve ancient Shan traditions and to expose the younger generation to Shan culture Shan adults tell children Shan folk tales. Among them " Nang Kyin Poo " is the most popular.

Nang Kyin Poo Story

Once upon a time in the ancient city of Lecha, there ruled a great and honourable Saopha. One day he ordered his royal chef to prepare him 100 crabs for his meal. Since the crabs were rather bigger than he expected he could not finish all on his own. He declared to his people that whoever that could eat all the crabs at a sitting would be made (tya-mai) his crown prince if the person is male and the Maha Deiwi, if the person is female. A very poor but beautiful girl came to eat the crabs, which she did so one after another and finished all at one sitting. The Saopha, impressed by this amazing ability made her his Maha Deiwi immediately. From this act of eating the crabs, she was called Nang Kyin Poo, Nang meaning young lady, Kyin meaning eat and Poo meaning 'crab'. This name substituted her old name eventually.

The great Saopha loved Nang Kyin Poo better than other lesser queens. Other queens became jealous. When Nang Kyin Poo gave birth to a hundred baby princes and the youngest baby princess, those lesser queens stole the babies and dropped them a hole in the floor. They replaced the babies with newborn puppies and deliberately misinformed the Saopha that the Maha Deiwi had given birth to pups. The Saopha felt such shame and disgrace that he drove Nang Kyin Poo out of his palace with a pup in her arms. Nang Kyin Poo had to go and work for a stable keeper of the Saopha and led a very poor life. In spite of the attempts of the spiteful wives of the Saopha to kill the babies' mother, cows, pigs, buffaloes and elephants fed them with their milk and helped them to survive.

When they grew past suckling age, they were charged to the care of a hermit. The hermit let the children live in a big cave and fed them on fruits and vegetables. Having noticed noble features in the children, he taught them the art of sword, and spear plays. One day, a hunter saw the children playing with their swords and spears near the cave and reported to the lesser queens. The

lesser queens sent a slave woman to that place with poisoned steamed cakes. The hermit had told the children not to talk to anyone while he was away. The slave woman tried to make the children believe that it was on his request that he had come to feed them a cake each. The children innocently believed her, ate the cakes and died. When the hermit came back and found the children dead, he dug graves around the cave and buried them. As he was burying them, he put a cast on the graves saying, " May the graves grow trees which are able to speak as human beings ".

Soon, the speaking trees started to grow from the graves. They bear yellow and sweet-smelling blossoms. Therefore he named the plants " Zagawar ", where " Zaga " means words and " war " means yellow. People believed that the yellow colour of the flowers was somehow linked to the robes of the monks. This story explains why Shans would not plant the Zagawar trees which first grew near the monastery in their home yards but only in Holy grounds such as that of pagodas and temples.

When news of preservation of these trees reached the ears of the lesser queens, they could not restrain the grudge even against the non-living trees and ordered servants to cut them down and float them away. The servants did as they were told.

At a certain place along the river, the trees were taken ashore by a clothes washer couple for making firewood. They piled the trees near the hut. At that night, they were awakened by noises of many people talking so they got up and found a hundred grown-up young men who had changed their forms from the trees. They treated the young men as their own and looked after them. The young men were in the prime of their fortune, so the lord of Nats, with an intention to help them, came down to earth from his abode in human form, bringing a fighting cock with him.

The young men welcomed the travel-worn old man, who in fact was the lord of Nats in pretense, and offered him food and drinking water. The old traveller blessed the young men and gave them the fighting cock. "The Maha Deiwi, Superior Queen of the Saopha of this region, is your mother", said the old man. He went on to explain how she had been driven out of the palace by the envious, spiteful lesser queens and how she had to struggle for her survival at the horse stable, cleaning horse dung. The young men were very much aroused with anger to hear that and started making rancorous proposals to march to the Saopha to make demands. The old man tried to pacify them by saying anger leads to errors and that it was only temporary for their mother to suffer hardships because her term of misfortune had come to an end. He also pointed out to the young men that they should not wrong their father. He proposed that they take the cock and present themselves to the Saopha and challenge him to a fighting cock match. If the Saopha's cock won they would have to become slaves but if their cock won they were to demand liberation of their mother from slavery at the stable. He guaranteed the young men of satisfaction. Then, the old man left.

The young men followed the old man's advice and had a fighting cock match. When the Saopha's cock lost, the young men demanded liberation of their mother. At first the Saopha could not accept his loss. So they repeated the match and the saopha lost again. The young men were shouting with joy for their mother's freedom. The Saopha asked the young men why they were behaving in such a fashion and what it had to do with them.

Only then, did the young men explain like the old man had suggested, that the woman at the stable was their mother and that the Saopha was their father. When the slave woman heard what they were saying, she said she had neither husband nor children, out of bitterness. The young men asked the woman to make a vow that if what the young men said was true, let milk flow

forth from her breast. No sooner had she made the vow than milk sprung forth under the eyes of the Saopha and his lesser queens.

The Soapha drove out the lesser queens from the palace after punishing them, and reinstated Nang Kyin Pooh as the Maha Deiwi. He also provided his sons with the royal insignia, status and entourage. He ruled his region until his death. When he died, his sons succeeded his title and the city bustled with prosperity.

(c) Physical Characteristics and Nature

Since Shans are descendants of Sino-Chinese ancestors, they have fair or yellowish complexion. They have straight black hair and thick eyebrows. They have puffy eyes with narrow slits, and no eye folds at all. Their eyes are black and cheeks are puffy. Women have thin lips. They have long fingers, limbs and arms. Most of them are tall. The average height for men is 5'7" and that of women is 5' 1-2". Shan maidens with natural rosy lips look so beautiful and refreshing that visitors or strangers who have come to the Shans' place would not be able to go back home as if they have been charmed. There have been many who had settled down happily in such manners.

Shans are simple and naive. In line with their tradition they are content with what can earn. They are generous and charitable people and are very keen on donating. At festivals when people sing and dance shout slogans, they would express their customary practice of donating half of they earn as, "တမူးရလို့ တပဲလှူ တိုရှမ်းတောင်သူ တူနှိုင်းရိုးလား". They are pious people showing much respect for parents and ancestors. They also have great love and respect for older members of the family.

As tradition goes, they earn their living mainly by farming. Therefore they have much appreciation of the soil. In addition they believe that people reap only what they sow. Being honest and having good characters there are

hardly any thefts or burglary. People can leave their houses open and go where they please without any anxiety over their possessions. They are very outspoken and free of wiles and cunning. They have warm sincere relationships with each other. They are very trusting but once they had had a bad experience by believing someone, they would totally end the relationship regardless of apologies.

Shans are thoughtful of obligations and gratitude, hospitable and friendly. They like to live simply and peacefully. They do not like mischief or mischief-makers, fear and despise them. If someone in the village for his own reasons has to sell his house, neighbours would buy it individually or collectively to prevent the house from falling into strangers' hands. Only when they find a suitable person, they would sell it back to him at the actual cost.

(d) Costumes

Shans of Leinmawgyan village take pride in wearing traditional Shan costumes on festive or auspicious occasions.

Shan Gents

Shan gents wear collarless long-sleeve shirts with an over jacket and baggy pants. Some over-jackets may have stand-up collars. Shan over-jackets are a bit different from Myanmar over-jackets. The differences are in the many pockets and seam lines. In early days, over-jackets are made from Pini material only. Two and a half yards of jacket material are needed to make one jacket. Besides both gents and ladies wear short-sleeve collar less over-jackets occasionally. Jacket colours are not fixed. The choice of colour may be done to taste and the same goes for materials. The headpiece is about one and a half yards by one yard. The piece may be folded and wrapped around the head with the ends sticking out for about 4 inches upward at the sides. There is no set



Shan Old Man



Dress Style: Shan Gent & Lady

colour for the headpiece either. Shan old men use towels as their headpiece even while staying at home. The same length of material, that is two and a half yards, is needed for the pants as well. Men wear sashes at the waist. The length of the sashes may be one or one and a half yards and be of different colours. Some would divide a two and a half-yard piece into two to make the headpiece match the sash. Most people choose white or pink for sashes. They would wear belts underneath the sashes because the pants often come lose with only the sash. Shans usually carry a sword to accompany the costume. The swords are decorated with tassels along the sling. Shan gents wear longyis at home.

Shan Ladies

Shan ladies wear the same button-up-front jackets and overlap-front jackets as the Myanmar ladies. There are two types of costume that vary with the designs which they could choose to wear on special occasions. The first is the Maw-Shan costume. It has a button-up-front long sleeve blouse which requires one and a half yards of jacket material. The sleeve ends, necklines and the upper part of the front pieces are embroidered with sequins. The same may be done on the stand up collars. The longyis are mostly yellow, red, green and pink with horizontal strips above the knees. Most of the items are hand woven cotton. The headpieces usually have a black background with strips of the same colour as those on the longyis. Normally only the strips are visible on the wraps and the two stick-out pieces shows the background color. Toggle buttons are used on the jackets. If the headpieces has vertical stripes, so doe the longyi. In this way the Maw Shan costume is very easily identified.

The second type is the Tai Lon ladies' costume. The jacket has a V-shape neck-line with a diagonal overlap front. It has long sleeves and 2 laces at the base of the overlap front. This type of jacket also requires about 1 ½ yard

of material. The longyi has horizontal strips only halfway and some wear plain longyis. The colour of the jacket is chosen to match the background colour of the longyi. The headpiece is of the same colour and design as the longyi. The two stick-out pieces are of the same colour as the longyi background. Wealthy ladies usually wear silk costumes with strips on longyis as well as the headpieces embroidered with gold or silver threads.

Handy Articles and Jewelry

Shans of Leinmawgyan love to carry bags; men, women, old and young alike. The bags come handy for putting personal articles in, and in trading and business. Shans in these areas also love to wear bamboo hats. Since the hats are regional products, they are easily accessible and are very convenient. They use bicycles as a major means for commuting.

Not many except for those who do exceedingly well in trade in addition to farming, can afford jewelry. There are very few rich people among the garden farmers. Only those from Shan Su village, being business-minded owing to their close association with Taikkyi, are found to wear gold chains, ear-pieces and rings.

Ready-made Shan dresses may be ordered from Taikkyi Market, Yangon and Shan State. Although older Shans take pride in wearing Shan costumes especially at ceremonies, the younger generation tend to follow modern styles in clothing and wear long dresses, skirts and casual wears, similar to that of their peers. Further more since Shans of all age and social standing are having more and more interactions in business or education with the Myanmars, sometimes it is difficult to identify them as Shans by their clothes. Shan language being the main language for daily interactions among the old as well as the young of Leinmawgyan, identifying Shans by their language can easily be done as soon as they speak.

(e) Tattoos

Marking tattoos is one of the Shan traditions. Shans of Leinmawgyan have tattoos marked on their bodies as a preventive measure. They usually have tattoos on the lower parts of the body but some have them all over. They believe that the more tattoos they have, the healthier they will be. The colour or dye of one's choice is mixed with Chinese ink. Pictures of pigs, tigers, cats, Shan alphabets or patterns are tattooed by injecting the said mixture. There is no limit in having tattoos.

The Shan Martial Arts masters most commonly administer the tattooing. People used to give them 1.25 kyats or 5.25 kyats as honorarium. The poor would offer .25 kyats. Tattoo marking is done on the 2nd day of the Thingyan (Akyat) day and the final day of Martial Arts training. However, to avoid having heavy flows of blood, people get themselves tattooed mostly in Pyarho and Tabodwe (January and February). There would be a slight swelling the next day but they would not experience unbearable pains. On the third day, the scab-like outermost layer of skin will come off and there would be no more swelling. Elderly Shans of Leinmawgyan would often say, " If I'm a Shan, I must have tattoos". In the later years, this custom of tattoos has few practitioners. Only tiny patterns may be observed on arms and forearms.

(f) Shan Traditional Cuisine

The staple food of Shan is rice, which they normally eat three times a day. They eat little meat and fish but a lot of vegetables. Chilly is not used much. They usually cook mustard, radish, beans, tomatoes, brinjals, cucumbers and taro rootstocks. They have pork, beef, mushrooms or bamboo shoots fermented. Even ridged gourds are pickled fried and eaten. They do not use much oil in their dishes. They like betel leaf, tobacco, tealeaves and strong tea. It is customary to offer tealeaf mix when visitors come.

A sour soup, most common in Shan cuisine is made from a kind of herbaceous plant called 'zayit', tamarind and salt. They are boiled together until the vegetables become soft and tender. Brown sugar slabs are then added. At times ladies' fingers and mustard leaves are also used.

Matured mustard leaves, which have turned yellow are chopped and pounded. After that, the pulp is left for three nights. Then it is boiled and heated until it is dry. This is called 'Hpet In' or 'Soom Htahn'.

A kind of bulbous root called 'Hpyan Oot' is mixed with ash and boiled. Then it is marinated in water, slaked lime and a pinch of chilly powder in to a slab. After that, the slab is cut into slices and deep-fried. If the preparation goes wrong at some stage, eaters might experience itches in the mouth or hands.

Shan Sour Rice

It is one of the favourite traditional dishes of Shans. Ingredients and preparations are as follows: -

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| Rice | - cooked and cooled |
| Fish | - seasoned with salt, boiled and deboned |
| Tomatoes | - boiled, crushed and strained to get puree |
| Soya Bean slabs | - baked and pounded to powder |
| Onions and Garlic | - fried in oil till golden brown |

A mixture of pounded onions, garlic and paprika powder is cooked in oil. Tomato puree and the deboned fish meat are added. The curry is then mixed with cooled rice and is kneaded after adding salt and seasoning powder to taste. Make balls of the rice mix into appropriate sizes. Sprinkle Soya bean powder and fried onions and garlic crisps as dressing. It is served with joo root, fried whole chilly, fresh garlic and fish soup. It is a dish frequently served at Shan meals.

Shan Noodles

Chicken or pork is slice thinly. Onions and garlic are pounded and fried until golden brown. Paprika powder is added. When the gravy is ready, put in the sliced meat. Dried noodles are boiled and strained. Shan noodle is prepared separately for each serving. The curry is put in the noodles, on the top of which are powdered groundnut and roasted sesamum. It is served with a sour dressing such as pickled mustard or radish.

Dried Soya Beans

As important the salted fish sauce is to inhabitants of the delta and coastal regions, so is dried Soya beans to Shans in their daily meals. The procedure for making dried Soya beans is as follows.

Horse gram is boiled all day long until it becomes soft and fluffy. Only wood fire is to be used. Bitter woods should be avoided. The pulp is then wrapped up in teak or fig leaves and left for three to four nights until mould is formed on it. Then it is pounded and made into thin slices. After this it is sun-dried.

Hkaw Poat (Steamed, pounded glutinous/sticky rice)

Hkaw Poat is made from glutinous rice (or) sticky rice and sesamum. It is usually eat en as a snack. This pounded sticky rice used to be a dried ration for Shan soldiers of old days. A basket of sticky rice is steamed in a steam cooker. Two milk-cans full of sesamum are needed for a basket of rice. The sesamum is roasted in a pan and then pounded. Then the sticky rice is pounded. If the rice becomes so sticky that the pestle sticks to the mortar, sesamum powder is put in to get it unstuck. When the process is prolonged, Hkaw Poat is formed.

The remaining sesamum powder is spread in a tray and Hkaw Poat is again spread evenly on it. Sesamum powder is coated on top. After that Hkaw Poat is cut into pieces as fancied and served. The Hkaw Poat never goes badly with time but it can get hardened as rocks or stones. Before it gets hard, the pieces are put on skewers, barbecued and eaten. When the Hkaw Poat gets so hard that it cannot be skewered, it is cut into thin slices and deep-fried.

Pickled Mustard

Pickled mustard is a very popular item in Shan food. Although it is called pickled mustard, it is composed of carrot mustard leaf, green chili, silk worm bean and onions. The assortments of these vegetables are mixed with paprika powder and left to soften in sun light. When it is pressed for a day or two, it becomes fermented and is ready to eat with Shan noodles or Shan sour rice or 'Touphu-Nway' (bean curd mixed). Another form of pickled mustard is made from mustard leaves. The leaves are hung in the sun for a day and then put in a pot, pressed and then hung in the sun again. When the procedure is repeated for a day or two until it gets fermented. It is used in cooking sour soup or eaten with a dip.

Shan Fermented Soya Bean

A basket of boiled Soya bean is mixed with 25 tickles of chillie, 15 tickles of ginger and salt to taste. Then the mixture is pressed into a pot to ferment.

Hkaung Myet Khine

It is a kind of traditional Shan snacks. Steamed sticky rice is made into slices and dipped in sugar solution. Then they are sun-dried. When dried, they are deep-fried with brown sugar syrup decorations on top.

Sticky Rice Tube

CHAPTER 3

FAMILY STRUCTURE AND KINSHIP

(a) Family Structure

The type of the majority of families in Leinmawgyan village are found to be of the basic family type, composed of immediate family members such as father, mother and their offspring. Some extended families are also found there where unmarried offspring with their families live together with the parents. The household duties are shared among the members.

As head of the family, the father takes the responsibility of providing for the basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter and sees to the welfare of the household members. Therefore, he becomes the dominant member of the family, well loved and respected by all members including the mother. In taking charge, he does so with support from the mother, and together they would make decisions in matters relating to the future of their children. The mother also gains respect from the children. The mother's duties are to help with the father's farm work, housekeeping, seeing to meals, education, health and social matters. The mother also has a significant role in the family.

Although Shans of Leinmawgyan practice monogamy, a widower whose wife had died in the earlier years of their marriage may marry again especially to look after the family. Relatives and family members would not have anything to object such action. Offspring also help out with household duties as much as they can, not only in farming but also in other business activities. They share work and food and lead a simple congenial life.

As family members share work and comfort equally, so do the villagers of Leinmawgyan when it comes to matters of the village. They would all work together in unison. When offspring get married they would not leave the family but stay on with parents and keep on working with and for the family.

Shans of Leinmawgyan like eating their own farm products at meals. Sometimes, there would be up to three to four families staying together in just one household. However, there is a smooth and congenial relationship among them. All members pay heed to the parents and divide work and privileges equally among them.

When the father dies, the family responsibilities fall on the mother. Having done farming or other business activities to help and support the husband previously, she has no difficulty in carrying on without him. The widowed mother would be quite capable of leading the family in economic and social matters. As for the offspring, they would be fairly experienced by that time from having helped the parents in the farm or in other business activities since they were young. They do not feel lost without the father. Even at the loss of both parents, the eldest son or daughter looks after the younger members of the family. The younger members have to listen to their elders whether they are married or single. For them, getting married and leaving the family does not effect the relationship.

In Leinmawgyan, when a member of a basic family gets married and leaves the family, there are no set practices as to staying with the wife's family or with the husband's, that is, there are no set rules for or against 'patrilocal residence' or 'matrilocal residence'. The newly-weds may stay wherever it is convenient for them. For having no such restrictions, relatives of both sides may feel free to come and go and have dealings with the family. If the couple resides with the boy's family, his parents have to take responsibility for them and if they stay with the girl's family, her parents will be responsible for them.

Only after staying with parents for a few years and have saved enough to have a house or farmland of their own will the married couple leave to set up a household by themselves. While staying with parents, the couple will have to set aside some portions of their own share of income, so that when it is time to

leave, the money for their new house will be their own and not the parent's. The parents normally give them kitchen utensils or gladiola bulbs or seeds.

(b) Kinship

There are only two types of kinship in Leinmawgyan: kinship by blood and kinship by marriage. Leinmawgyan does not have kinship by adoption. Even when a couple cannot have any children of their own, they refrain from adopting children from either their own relatives or from non-related family circles. Only cases like keeping orphaned children of relatives may be found.

Here, kinship by blood refers to genealogical ties or the consanguine relationship. Bilateral or patrilineal relatives, those from the father's side as well as matrilineal relatives, those from the mother's side, are classed as kinship by blood. A warm and congenial relationship is observed among these bilateral relatives. They would all pitch in to lend a hand not only in social activities such as weddings and funerals, but also in business activities as well. The entire group would be seen participating in religious ceremonies and festivals such as the Shan New Year, Shan National Day and Pagoda festivals. Cousins from both sides are treated as siblings. However, there are cross-cousin marriages in Leinmawgyan. Clan titles or names are not applied in Leinmawgyan.

Kinship by marriage involves relatives from both lineage of a married couple. Members of kin by marriage (or) the affinal kin also have pleasant relationships, helping each other in social and economical relationships. Parents and siblings of both parties have perfect understanding of one another.

(c) Kinship Terminology

There are two types of kinship termed in Anthropology: Classifactory and Discriptive. On classifactory terms, the relationship to Ego is emphasized.

It may be made known from the term whether the addressees are blood relatives or not and also the kind of relationship one has with Ego. For instance, one would call nieces and nephews as 'တူမ' (nieces) or 'တူ' (nephew) and never as 'သား' (son) or 'သမီး' (daughter). The same applies to siblings and cousins. The classificatory terms are found among Leinmawgyan villagers.

The descriptive terms are also used by many to address people in general. For instance, women in a mother's age group would be addressed as 'Aye, Amai, Meipa' and those in a father's age group as 'U Gyi, Ahpei' or 'Huloo'. They separate terms for patrilineal and matrilineal grandparents. The same is applied to patrilineal and matrilineal aunts and uncles. However, in general, people of the same age group as aunts and uncles would be addressed in matrilineal terms.

(d) Inheritance of Title and Fortune

(d.1) Inheritance of Title

There are Social Chairmen selected from among the villagers to carry out religious and cultural activities in addition to administrative tasks. Their descendants are not entitled to succeed to the title. Those who are familiar with the customs and are competent are chosen for the posts. The person is also required to be worthy of the respect and reliance of the villagers. Only those who meet the above requirements are entitled to succeed to the positions of Village Chairmen.

(d.2) Inheritance of Fortune

According to traditions of Leinmawgyan Shans, sons are given priority as regards entitlement to inheritance. If the son happens to be the only male

offspring, he receives a larger share of inheritance than the rest of the family. The action is justified by the fact that he will become head of the family when he marries and will have to take charge of the family responsibilities. When daughters marry, the jewelry she wears would be given to her as part of her inheritance. Shans usually leave house and land as inheritance to share among heirs. When they have money to spare, they are likely to buy land. Saving jewelry is not regular practice though. Some parents would divide the share while they are alive but some let their children have it after their death. In doing so, there are no set rules as to the volume of the shares. They may or may not be equal, but that is for the parents to decide as they seem fit. In some cases when an offspring gets married and gets into financial difficulties, parents would give him his share of the family fortune. While doing this, the rest of the family will get their shares as well. No one would complain of the differences in the volume of the shares. There are no court cases regarding inheritance. Offspring who are still residing with parents may also have their shares. The one who has gone abroad or to far away places and has settled down with his own family, may let the less well to do siblings have his share.

Villagers of Leinmawgyan are in the practice of initiation other person's offspring into novicehood if they have no children of their own. In the same way, they could give a portion of their fortune to that person who they have initiated. The rest of the fortune is usually divided among bilineal relatives. They could refrain from doing that as well and nobody would breathe a word about it. A Shan widow or widower may remarry and have the family extended by having the second spouse join the family business. Should the second spouse in question be unable to lead the family in business, only offspring from the first marriage may share the family fortune.

CHAPTER 4

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

(a) Childcare and Upbringing

Shans are in the habit of swaddling babies in longyi cut outs. White wraps and nappies are set aside for going out. They feed babies on mother's milk only. After about a month, they chew rice and feed them. When the baby is about 3 months old, the mothers would sieve softly cooked rice with a piece of thin cloth and feed it to them daily. Only when the mother is unable to breast-feed the baby, then would they use diluted condensed milk.

Different kinds of charms such as 'Kamei' string for health, 'Pareik' or 'Leippya' string for safety are made for them to wear. These strings are charmed and blessed by grandparents after keeping the five precepts, using sewing thread. These charms are tied to the right wrist and the left ankle of baby boys and the left wrist and the right ankle of baby girls. The aim of having babies wear these charms are to prevent them from seeing evil spirits and being obsessed by them and for them to be healthy. To find out if the baby needs to wear charms, a saucer filled with rice grains is placed on a piece of the baby's clothing and a handful of rice is taken from that saucer and then counted. If the number of grains is even, the charms are made.

There are prayer recitals on the Myanmar New Year Day for the village to be rid of evil, disaster or harm. Monks are invited to chant prayers for the whole village. Villagers would bring their charm pots known as pareik pots together with the reams of sewing thread. After getting them charmed and blessed, the strings can be tied onto the children when they are taken to the farms as a safety charm.

When babies start to learn to speak, adults would teach them expressions such as 'come, come,' in Shan. Adults would use both Myanmar and Shan to

Speak to them so that by the age of three, children could use both languages. In addition to that, Shan mothers being pious Buddhists, worship twice a day, once in the early morning and once in the evening, before they go to bed. They keep their children beside them when they worship and make them to repeat or recite along with them.

Women stop breast-feeding when their child has come to about three or four years. Some babies cease asking for it automatically, but some have to be made to stop. Mothers would apply bitter tealeaf to their breasts or nipples so that the child would refrain from suckling again once they have tasted the bitterness.

The ears of baby girls are pierced at birth. There are rare cases of having them pierced only when grown up. A threaded sewing needle is used to make pierces. The needle is treated with saffron, soot and oil first and have it pierced through the ears. The thread is tied into a ring afterwards and is turned and shifted now and then so that it will not set into the flesh. When the pierces are dry and healed perfectly, gold, silver or other valuable and ear pieces. Ear-piercing is mostly done by grandparents. If grandparents do not know how to go about it, in a proper manner, then those who do from the village are given charge. Only after teething, children are fed to rice and beans or peas. They would brush the teeth only after the teething is complete. They send children to local primary school at the age of five. Children eat at the table with the family. They are taught to offer the first spoonfuls to the elders in the descending order of age, and that it is sinful to fail to do so.

Mothers stop their business activities from as early as six month's pregnancy to care for their babies up to 3 or 4 years. Then they would take them to their farms when they go to work. Normally, if the grandparents are still living, the mother would give the grandparents charge over their baby and go to the farm to work with the husband. School children help out their parents

in the farm on school holidays. Few children can be seen playing and making mischief in the village. Owing to this kind of training they have, girls can keep house properly by the age of 12 or 13, and boys, at that age would know farming procedures fairly well. Boys are initiated into novice-hood only when they have reached the age of 12, when they are able to recite the scriptures.

(b) Education

Shan nationals of Leinmawgyan let their children start schooling at the age of five to have primary education. There are 5 primary schools in Leinmawgyan. After completing primary education at these schools, children join the middle schools and high schools in Taikkyi. There is only one State Middle School and one State High School in Taikkyi. Some join the high school directly instead of joining the middle school.

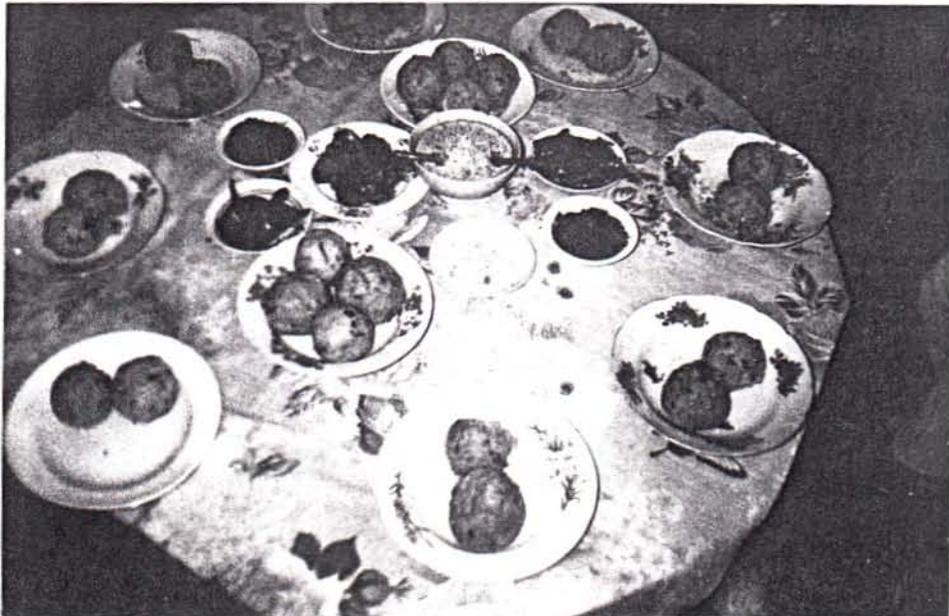
The teaching staff alone manages schools in Leinmawgyan. These teachers are mostly non-natives of Leinmawgyan. They are most likely to have come from elsewhere. Therefore, they have to rent accommodation in Leinmawgyan. Villagers look after their welfare and offer help should they need any.

Leinmawgyan is about 3 miles from Taikkyi and most of the Leinmawgyan students go to school on bicycles. Although they can commute by trishaw, it is difficult to get to Leinmawgyan in the Rainy Season. Some go to school on foot. Depending on the marks they get in the matriculation exam, students from Leinmawgyan join the university or other educational institutions in Yangon.

Children are taught Shan literature during the summer holidays. Teachers from Shan States are hired for these courses. Children are quite familiar with the Spoken language from exposure to adult conversations. Teaching of the Written language could be done beginning from 1986 only.



Primary School. Ywa Tharyar



Shan Sour-Rice Meal

Literacy campaigns are conducted, led by people from Taikkyi on the 7th of April, 1978. Altogether, 820 centers including the Leinmawgyan Center were opened as a national project.

Children of Leinmawgyan are not found to be very good at studies. They are more skillful in farming and gardening, seemingly inherited from their parents. Even if they do not complete middle-school education, they would happily settle down to do farming and other handicrafts.

(c) The Initiation

Shan nationals who believe in Buddhism are very serious about religion and take great pains in noviating their offsprings into monkhood. They are thrilled to have male offsprings for having an opportunity to be deserving of religious inheritance.

Since Shans of Leinmawgyan are used to communal activities in their everyday activities in farming and gardening, they have a tendency to have a communal initiation ceremony as well. Initiation of individuals are unlikely. Sometimes there would be up to over a hundred novices and their glittering never-ending procession is a deeply moving sight to observe. Most of the noviation ceremonies are held in Tabaung and the leading host-village would have to suspend their daily activities for a while, prior to the ceremony. Preparations may commence months before. Being an occasion where free-for-all feasts with non-stop cooking and catering are involved, careful allocation of duties and responsibilities is required, so that there would be nothing amiss. It is part of the traditional heritage handed down from ancestors, so the procedures are observed in earnest. The initiation usually lasts 2 days.

Invitations to the ceremony would be accompanied by pickled tea leaves and cheroots or cigarettes. The invitations go out to villages and include the

ozi band of that village. The catering duties are taken village-wise as well. The host-village has to see to not only the meals but also the many tasks of various other aspects of the ceremony.

In addition to the ceremonial activities at the monastery, there are other meritorious activities going on at the houses of the novices. People from neighboring villages are given the charge of attending to and looking after the novice. Therefore parents of these novices not only need to contribute cash and labor to the communal feasts at the monastery but also need to look after guests at their own houses. Shan traditional snacks such as jaggery crackers are put in baskets and tied to the poles or columns of the pandals. Pickled tealeaf mix, betel leaf dumplings, and cheroots are piled in trays to serve. Preparation of popcorn, jaggery, sweets such as 'Moh-si-gyaw' and 'MaYway' are prepared in advance to serve to the guests. Hosts have to see to bathing facilities, bedding, snacks and hot water for plain tea for the visitors as well. The main meals are served at the monastery. Although it is known as a Shan traditional religious ceremony, everybody can take part or join in. In spite of Shans having brought Shan swords of different types and lengths, and with drinking and merry making, there are neither quarrels nor fights. The novices are carried on shoulders instead of riding on horseback. They would not like to abuse animals for their merry making or have merit at the animals' expense. However, there are some that believe that having animals share the merit would deliver the animals to a higher abode of existence in the next life. In carrying novices, one would replace anyone who gets tired. This Shan custom of shouldering responsibility in a relay is believed to have originated from initiation ceremonies.

The invited ozi bands enter the village only when it gets dark. Visitors from all directions would come in without ceasing until midnight. The

elders and the aged would come earlier but the maidens and women folk would come together with the band. Youth carrying lamps on their heads usually proceed them. The hosts would send some people watch out for visitors and welcome them. Leaders of the procession would be the lamp barriers, followed by 2 water pots carried with yokes, 2 maidens carrying trays of betel and accessories, 3 young female receptionists, and the band troupe. Although it is nighttime there would be neither disturbances from creatures of the forest nor any natural disasters. However, at the monastery as well as at the novices' place, there would be offerings made to nats for safeguarding.

The invited guests and ozi bands go straight to 'Kun Zin' which is not very far from the monastery. It is a place for maidens to rest or relax while young men hang around to court. The young men may serenade to the maidens with self-composed songs or verses and feel free to court.

There is another reception group waiting for them at the monastery. Since they are representatives of the host village they perform their duties well to please their guest-villagers. These guest-villagers would have their meals in turns. After having meals they would go to the house of the novice they have to charge over. At the novice's place there would be music, dance and rejoicing. Maids of honour chosen by respective villages have to go and sit in the little hut. Meanwhile there would be listen – in sermons read out aloud. Most of the sermons are based on or related in some way to the conventional customs. Listeners have to recline on the floor and have to have their heads bowed throughout the sermons. The little nat shrine in the monastery compound where people make offerings to 'Shin Oo Pagok' for safeguard measures.

On the morning of the noviation at about 4:00 am the prelude drums sounded. These signals come, not from the bands but from the

loudspeakers at the houses of novices. The entire village comes alive with activities for alms food and other ceremonial tasks. At about 7 o'clock the noviation procession commences along the village road with the long line of ozi bands. Maidens of the village do not usually dress themselves up but would make tremendous efforts to make their novice look better than others. A novice may be seen wearing about five or six gold chains, together with a watch, rings and bracelets to match. When the novices are dressed and ready, the ozi bands would play simultaneously in a crescendo. One would feel the thrill of it all, just by sitting and watching. Youth of the bands would be wearing broad bamboo hats with funny captions written on them. Since the initiation involves participation of mostly youth, it would not be too far fetched to call it a festival for searching for life partners.

There is a custom of hiding the novices just before they reach the monastery. People would carry away the novices into the forest and hide them. The parents have to pay a ransom for their novices. When they get to the monastery they have to go round it thrice while listening to sermons. In the reception stalls or pandals, meal catering would already have started by that time. The pandal would be a very long one where males and females are to be seated separately. The meal would consist of Ngapi Leinmar, pounded dried fish, vegetable soup and pickled bean sprouts. At the back of the pandal, streams of the waste produce from rice cooking called 'Htamin juice' would be overflowing. Villagers who have taken charge of catering and ushering have to see to the provision of not only food but also other details such as napkins, water for washing hands, etc.

At the moment when hair of novices are being cast off or shaved the byaw drum is played once more. Parents of novices have to hold the ends of a piece of white cloth to receive the hair. That they are deeply moved could be observed from their facial expressions. By-standers would feel so



Shan Initiation Ceremony



much for those with one or both parents absent that many would not be able to hold back the tears. When head shaving is done, invitation for the audience to receive the sermons would come over the loudspeakers from the four directions. People who have been helping out at the meal stalls would come out, with males in their tightly wrapped girdles and covered in soot paint, and females, in longyis worn as short as possible and their faces lined with soot like war paint. Some would have their hair turbaned. They would deliberately try to look awkward and funny, carrying kitchen utensils such as pans long wooden spoons and so on. They portray people who are exhausted in doing their duty in the kitchen. Such is what may be observed in all Shan initiations. They seem to be reminding the audience not to leave them out for the sermons, since they are the ones who have done whatever they can at the ceremony. They deliver a message of old, not to pull away the scaffold when the building of a pagoda is complete. They are trying to hinder the ceremony jokingly. They would turn around and leave as soon as they get chip money from the hosts. After that the novices receive sermons on the monastery, in the hall upstairs. They would share merits with earth-bound spirits and send merits to those who have passed away. They call out the merits three times and whoever hears the calls would say 'Tha-duh' to the calls. As the calls rise to the skies, the sound of the ozi bands would suddenly be heard to add to the roar. Then the bands may leave and go back to where they come from.

(d) The Youth

Teenagers, when they reach the age of 18 are regarded as youth in Leinmawgyan. Since they have to accompany their parents and help out with gardening and farming, whether they are male or female, they can be assured to have a lot of experience regarding business. Even if they get

married, they are thought of as capable of looking after their families on their own. There are male and female youth leaders of the village to organize others in matters concerning social activities and religious tasks. These leaders may be chosen from among others for their morals and leadership ability.

As for female leaders, should the maidens be not up to mark, married women may be chosen for the role. There is no age limit. The leaders would participate in village social activities with great enthusiasm. They take responsibilities such as cooking, ushering, and catering at village ceremonies. Furthermore, the leaders would organize or supervise youth activities under the guidance of seniors at festivals such as Thingyan, Kahsoan Water Pouring Festival, Thidingyut Festival, Kahtein Festival, Sticky Rice Festival, Mahadoat, and the Continuous Chanting of Pahtaan. The youth would also help out at the Shan National Day and Shan New Year.

Shan youth would have the opportunity to meet each other in gardening and farming, at weddings and many other auspicious occasions, funerals and commemorations. In early days, Shan young men would go and court ladies at their houses at nighttime. They love to serenade the maidens with whatever musical instrument they could get hold of. Parents themselves would allow the courtship. However, premarital sexual relationships are forbidden.

The youth could search for their partners at noviation ceremonies as well. There would be a hut known as 'Kun Zin' close to the meal pandal near the monastery. Only the selected few among the village maidens are entitled to sitting there. The hut may have no flooring, but there will be benches. The façade of the hut would have a parapet of about waist-length height. The top part may be opened.

Along the parapet is an oblong stage where plain teapots and cups, betel trays filled with betel leaves, tobacco leaves, slaked lime and betel nuts; dried crisp bean salad, and tea leaf salad are placed. There will be a microphone just outside the front wall.

Entry from the front is not permitted. It is to be made only from the back wicket gate. Although chosen maidens of the host village mean this for use only, those of other villages may be found there these days. The maidens are to sit in line and watch the ozi performance of visitors, serenading in front of the hut in turns.

Apart from the light in the hut, there would be no lighting outside. The young men may freely serenade and court the maidens. When the ceremony is over, they can continue to court the maiden of their choice in their own way. Some young men would even practise the songs and slogans to be sung, prior to the visit. There would be cheers and applaus which sound like yodelling from the background to encourage them.

The maidens would be seated on a row with their heads bowed. Each young man would sing to the maiden of his own choice. Sometimes they would make fun at the clothes the maidens are wearing. Relatives especially brothers of the maidens would not come near the hut from embarrassment. They simply turn a blind eye because the activity is regarded as an innocent tradition and one, which is quite natural. On the other hand, unseemly way of dressing may be kept under control in this way and that is what makes the activity a loveable trait.

The young and old alike are gentle and polite at this time so as to honor the village. Moreover, according to a saying which means "If there must be a spill, let it spill into one's own pocket", villagers believe that their maidens can be prevented from choosing strangers about whom they know nothing at all.

(e) The Betrothal

Regarding choice of spouse, there are more marriages by choice than those by arrangement among the Shans of Leinmawgyan. When a young man and woman have made up their minds to become life partners, the young man would request his parents or elders to formally ask for the girl's hand in marriage. In this case, parents of the young man, together with village superiors would inform the maiden's parents about it. The young man is not to accompany the village superiors and his parents on this first visit. The girl's side has the right to refuse their proposal outright. On the part of the girl herself, being trained to be obedient too the smallest matters, is not likely to go against her parents' wish. It is customary for the girl's parents to say they will discuss the matter with their relatives. The young man would come along with his parents on the second visit. The girl's parents would have gathered seniors or their kin by that time. The girl's parents would say that they now have the approval of their relatives and accept the offer of hand in marriage. Bride price is not fixed. However, the boy's side is supposed to offer whatever they could afford such as goods, land or money. The volume of the Bride's price depends on the economic status of the boy's side. Shans view the Bride price as trading the girl for money or goods and they see it as an evaluation of the girl's worth by the boy's side. The wedding date would be fixed on the third visit. In doing so, experts in the worldly arts would be consulted, and they would calculate the wedding date based upon the would-be couple's dates of birth. Weddings are usually timed for 5:00 am or 6:00 am and are held only in the mornings. They do not usually get married in the months of Wahso, Wahgaung, Tawthalin, Nadaw, Pyartha or Tabaung. Some would marry as soon as after days proceeding their engagement and some would wait for two or three months. They do not have long engagements nor do they have two marriages in the same year in one family. Should a member of the household be away on a trip,

they would wait until they come back. They have to give chip money in front of village superiors. Asking for chip money is customary in Leinmawgyan. Should the couple be of the same village, the boy's family gives chip money, but should a girl marry someone from other regions, the girl's side takes charge of the chip money. If the wedding does not take place at the village, there is no need to give chip money. Guests are treated to light refreshments and cakes only at the engagement. The traditional Shan costume is not worn at engagement. They dress in the Myanmar costume. The engagement or the betrothal is called “*တနင်္ဂနွေ*” in Shan language.

(f) The Marriage Ceremony

The marriage ceremony is usually held at the bride's house in Leinmawgyan. First, the offertory bowls are prepared at the bride's house in advance. There are separate bowls for Buddha, parents, village elders and married couples. Each offertory bowl consists of one coconut, two palms of even numbered bananas, and a package composed of two smaller packets tied with a string: one of pickled tealeaves and the other of salt. The palms of even numbered bananas represent perfection throughout their lives and having packets of tealeaves and salt tied together portrays blessings from all the Shans. In the parents' offertory bowl there would also be loops of thread, wide enough for both the hands of the bride and the groom to pass through. Village elders and parents tie these loops of blessing onto the hands of the bride and groom. Contents of the bowl of the village superiors may be distributed as soon as the marriage ceremony is over, to share blessings. The bowls are prepared with an accompanying flower vase, where they may use any amount of flowers of their choice. The person who prepares the bowls for Buddha, parents and village superiors must be a single lady who has had experience in the preparation of

these bowls and is familiar with the procedures. Should she be married, hers must be a marriage between virgins, and she also must have sons as well as daughters. The offertory bowl for married couples known as Khaung-Khine is prepared at the groom's house and is brought over to the bride's, accompanying the groom as he sets out for the marriage ceremony. In delivering the bowl to the bride's house, the carrier may not rest, put it down under a tree nor stop in front of the house. He has to carry it straight into the bridal chamber without stopping. The person who prepares it must be male but the carrier can be male or female, whose parents are still alive. This bowl for married couples consists of two boiled duck eggs, a packet of pickled tea leaves, and one of salt, all carefully covered in a piece of white cloth of about one and a half feet square. Nowadays, two palms of even numbered bananas are added to the contents. There would be a cover on top of the white cloth. One corner of the white cloth is knotted. Only seven days after the ceremony can the knot be undone, washed and kept to treasure as a memoir. Having corner of the white cloth knotted implies good wishes for perpetual married life. Contents of the Khaung Khine: duck eggs, tea leaves and salt, are divided into seven portions and sent to seven houses of the bridal couple's choice. Most of the houses with which the bowl-contents are shared are those of village superiors since the bridal couple wants to show respect and to receive acknowledgement from them. On the arrival of the groom, those who are present would bar his entrance with gold or silver chains and necklaces. The groom's family will have to settle as much chip money as they can manage to clear the bar-the-way. The bride's family does not have to take responsibility for that.

Right after the activity of clearing the bar-the way, the mother of the bride takes the groom's hand and fastens it with a piece of thread to show her approval. The feeding activity commences as soon as the groom gets into the

bridal chamber. The couple who takes charge of this activity as well as the couple who prepares the bridal chamber are chosen from among any couple who had been married from young with children of their own. The feeding activity involves the leading older couple feeding seven mouthfuls of rice and seven mouthfuls of curry to the married couple. The male of the leading couple has to feed the bride and the female has to feed the groom. In doing so, they must keep their hands crossed. The seven dishes of curry consist of fish, chicken, taro rootstock, beans, duck egg and bananas. Duck eggs and bananas are to be fed last. It is done in anticipation of a pure and flawless livelihood of the couple. When the feeding activity is complete, relatives and friends of the bride would bring the bride to sit on the left side of the groom where the couple has to pay homage to the parents of both, village superiors and senior relatives. There should be an even number of guests. For example, eight, ten or twelve guests would be invited. The even number represents a perfect life together. The marriage is made auspicious by a grandparent of either side or a village superior in Shan language, praying for a long-lasting married life, health and prosperity of the couple. After that, a well-respected village elder or a senior member of either family, couples the hands of the bridal pair with the groom's on top and have the communion blessed. The loops of thread already prepared and placed in the Khaung Khine bowl are used to fasten the hands together. This activity is done to acknowledge the couple's commitment towards a long-lasting relationship.

In the earlier days, there used to be a best man and a bridesmaid at marriage ceremonies. They were also required to have both parents alive. They had to stand their own expenses for suits and dresses. However, since it involves unnecessary expenditure, people refrain from having them today. Shans do not wear black clothing at marriage ceremonies believing it to be inauspicious. Few bridal couples wear traditional Shan costumes. They are

more in the practice of wearing Myanmar costumes. Most grooms of the modern day wear an over jacket with a longyi and brides usually wear stylish blouses. This would be regarded as one of the consequences of having close and frequent relationships with the Myanmars.

Reception commences after the wedding ceremony. Guests are treated to steamed sticky rice and preserved fermented fish. The treating of sticky rice stands for good wishes for the bridal to stick together throughout their lives. In recent years, the treat would also include tea and cakes. Well-to-do people would prepare rice and curry or mohinga for the reception. Shans do not usually have ozi entertainment at weddings because they do not want loud music or noises at a solemn occasion. The ozi band is played only at Initiation ceremonies and Shan National Day celebrations. They do not kill animals for the cause either. They buy prepared meat from the market.

The newly-weds would invite monks over to the bride's house on an appropriate day for an offertory meal. As many monks as the couple could afford may be invited and offered food and alms. Shans have a unique way of inviting guests to the marriage ceremony. Instead of the usual wedding invitation, they send a plate or tray on which there would be a pile each of pickled tealeaf and salt. The tea leaves and salt signifies respect and homage that accompanies the invitation. Gifts such as handkerchiefs and face towels are given to maidens who help at the marriage ceremony by the bridal couple as a token of gratitude.

There are also elopements in Leinmawgyan. The boy's parents have to search for the couple within a week. When found, the girl will have to be returned to her parents' charge again by the boy's parents accompanied by village superiors. There would be no weddings for such couples. The boy's parents have to stand for the reception on the day they return the girl to her parent's care. Even then, there would be only tea and cakes. If the boy has lost



Marriage Ceremony

both parents, his siblings will have to take their place. Should he have no siblings, the village superiors have to perform the task on their own.

There are certain restrictions in marriages of Shans of Leinmawgyan. Stepbrothers or stepsisters are regarded as siblings and are forbidden to marry one another. However, there may be marriages among the consanguine or in-laws. Parents of a boy may give consent to their son marrying a girl, who has previously been disapproved of, on condition that she mend her ways. Should she fail to do so, parents normally disown their son. However, women with a bad reputation or morals are forbidden to reside in the village even. She would be arrested on sight.

(g) Pregnancy, Childbirth and Taboos

Shan housewives of Leinmawgyan village tract have to do gardening and farming together with their husbands. They would work in the fields and gardens even during pregnancy, up to 6 months. It is said that women would do rice planting up to 8 or 9 months of pregnancy. They are not in the practice of avoiding harmful diet. However, today's housewives would stop working when their pregnancy is over 6 months and rest at home. They would observe traditional practices and avoid forbidden behavior such as taboos.

It is believed that a woman is at a rough end when pregnant, so they would recite and observe Buddha's sermons to become as virtuous as they could. A person who is about to make a business transaction should not greet a pregnant woman, or his luck will be blocked. An expectant mother should not pick or pluck plants in case they wither and die from the heat of her fingers. She should not attend funerals nor eat funeral meal offerings. Openings or holes in pillows and bed linen are to be sewn up in case she may have a difficult delivery. She should not eat twin bananas in case she may have twins. She should not travel in carts, on bicycle, or mount or climb to high places.

She should not eat meat of monkey, salamander, squirrel and tortoise in case they may cast leprosy on her. She should put a little salt in her mild to make her chest clear. She should not drink tea because her baby may be born with flatulent ailments. She should walk a lot for a smooth and easy delivery but must take great care not to trip and fall over. If she wants to take a bath in the evening, she should put a piece of charcoal in the water to change the effects it may have on her. She should apply to the whole body, lotions of medicinal plants such as Taungtan Gyi, Karamet and tumeric after bath.

In the Leinmawgyan village tract, confinement chambers are especially prepared for child delivery of their women. Non-related males are not supposed to enter these confinement chambers. In olden days, Shan women used to have their babies delivered by their mother-in-laws or a local mid-wife. When labour pains start, the woman would squat on a chair and deliver it. When the baby is out, the mother-in-law would use a clean pair of scissors to cut the placenta. She should not call out for her mother when the pain becomes unbearable. According to Shan tradition, it is sinful to call out for the mother. If she feels like screaming out, she may do so for the father. She should not be wearing chains, necklaces or earpieces so that the delivery will be easier. Should she have fits during delivery, she is made to breathe in pinewood smoke. Local midwives usually cut the placenta with a thin sharp strip of bamboo. Today, there are two trained midwives at each village.

The baby's placenta is usually buried under the stairs. Some bury it at a distance in case the baby loses its luck. The person who buries it should not be frowning in case the baby will have an unpleasant expression. He should not stamp in the earth with force in case the baby might get chest congestions. He should not be laughing either because the baby will be smiling silly all the time. If the placenta is held in the left hand the baby will become left-handed and if it is held in the right, the baby will become right handed accordingly.

The burial site should not be too distant in case the baby will have a wayfaring habit when he grows up.

The mother should wear long sleeved jackets only up to 6 weeks after child -birth. She has to take local medicine such as Sei Pu Gyi, Thway Zei, Ngan Zei, Yin Hpya His. She is to breathe smoke from Samone Net, tumeric powder. The baby is given a bath immediately after birth. The mother has to take sweat induction treatments and medicated steam baths in the postnatal period. Medicinal herbs such as Thetyin Gyi, Sin Doan Manwei, Padegaw, Wanet, Lauthei are boiled in a huge pot until one third of the solution remains in the pot. Three or four mats may be used as partitions for the steam chamber. The chamber is covered with blankets. The mother sits in the chamber and breathes in the medicated vapour as much as she can. When she is sufficiently sweating, she has to bathe in that solution. Moreover, Shan women in post childbirth confinement need to have their hair wrapped up in turbans and get warmed up at the fireside. In doing so, only Mya Yar wood or Yay Mein wood is used. Fire- wood has to be stored for this occasion. Bathing in medicated solution and sweat induction are activities done by all Shan women regardless of age and at anytime convenient for them. That is the reason why Shan ladies have good complexion.. They are healthy and there are few cases of menstrual disorder.

Women would eat grilled non-scaled fish for over a month. They refrain from eating Hilsner and spicy flatulent food. Salt is wrapped up in leaves, baked and eaten with rice. They would not touch soap for over a month in case numbness set in. They refrain from crying for menstrual migraine can last for years. Some would have the baby's placenta preserved. They apply the ointment when their babies become ill. They believe that the baby would be free of infantile ailments.

(h) Naming

On the eighth day (or) a month after birth, the baby is christened. The lucky day is chosen and the christening is usually held in the morning. Normally, grandparents would lead the ceremony but if the grandparents are not available, village superiors would carry out the task. On that day, rice porridge with milk, sago, and acacia lotion, are offered to guests and are sent to neighboring houses. Well-wishers would pray for the baby's health and safety. The baby is then bathed in water in which gold and silver pieces are dipped. The baby's name would be a combination of three with the middle to match the day of birth. For instance, should the baby girl be given the name 'Nay Zar Kyaw' the middle name 'Zar' would indicate that she is a Tuesday born. If there are only two names, the front name would match the day of birth. If a girl's name is 'Kham Mu', 'Kham' would indicate that she is a Monday born. 'Kham' means gold and 'Mu' means lotus, therefore, the name means golden lotus. The names are mostly Myanmar names. Children are called by their Shan names only at home.

Should the first born be a Saturday baby, the father should carry a sword on his shoulder and cross over the baby while he is asleep and say, "I have won over you." Some believe that a Saturday-born come only to the deserving. Some would give away the child to a monk to farce an adoption, and the monk becomes the foster father of the baby. The monk will have to give the child a name. The baby will have two names, then: one given by the monk and the other given by the family. In giving the baby a name, most people would choose the name 'Sai Lone' to the eldest son, and 'Sai Owm' to the youngest. They usually go by their Myanmar names at school.

(i) The Divorce

There are very few divorce cases in Leinmawgyan because couples normally get married with the intention to stay married till death. So, they are

very serious with their choice of partners. They practise monogamy and have very few conflicts or differences in opinion. The husband sets out to his work in the farm early in the morning. Meanwhile the wife does housework at home. She would also help out with the husband's farm work whenever she can. Therefore there are no big problems between them. They regard divorce as a shameful matter. Only when compromise cannot be had between them even with the help of relatives and village superiors do they have a divorce. The wrongful party will have to leave the house without taking anything at all and most of the time it would be the husband who has to leave. Children if there are any, remain with the wife. The wife and children under the protection of relatives would earn their own living. There have been cases where couples part permanently and some where they reunite. If one party is reluctant to have a divorce, village seniors are asked to negotiate for them. Support for children is inconsistent. Some fathers did and some did not.

(j) Sickness and Cure

Malaria is the most frequent epidemic in Leinmawgyan. They have malaria from generation to generation, all adult and children alike. The place is full of disease carrier mosquitoes since the valley like area is almost completely covered in plants, bamboo grooves and vines. From the medical point of view it is a place where malaria is most likely occur. When the disease strikes and it is at its climax, the patient would have to be writhing in bed moaning and screaming at times even, despite the weight of the people crushing down on him to make him warm. Local traditional medicine is not used. Patients are treated with advanced medical cures. There are no doctors nor clinics at the village. They have to go to clinics in Taikkyi to get treatment. At the Gyobyu Village Health Branch Office of Leinmawgyan Health Department, there is only one nurse for child delivery and vaccination. Polio and tuberculosis

vaccines are given to children at appropriate dates and at regular intervals. The Center is more of a dispensary than a health center. The main office is in Taikkyi. Patients with emergency need for medical attention are taken to Taikkyi Hospital or the clinics there in carts or trishaws. In older days physicians of local medicine in the village took care of health matters. Now that all those physicians have passed away and with few knowledgeable persons in this field are left, the village people resort to advanced medical treatment procedures.

Shans of Leinmawgyan believe that the soul flees from the body when startled. They believe that souls can abide in the body or leave it at will. When the soul is absent, the person may not be able to sleep or eat properly and fall ill. In such cases the soul is called upon to re-enter the body. The request for re-entry may be done either inside or outside the house. The request is usually made by grandparents. First, whole rice grains are put in a saucer and a ream of thread for pareik string is placed on top of the rice. Then a set of clothes of the patient are placed in a tray and the said saucer is placed on top. Then turning to all directions, the soul-caller has to call out the request in Shan, meaning “ Soul of the patient, wherever you are, please come back. ” and then start counting the rice grains. If the number of grains is even then it may be assumed that the soul has come back. The patient is brought back into the house and the pareik strings are tied around the neck and wrists. Then the soul is requested to stay with the parents for good and is dressed in the clothes on the tray. From that time onwards the patient will be well again.

Shans love to wear charms around their neck as safeguard measures and to have a prolonged life. The pareik charms are made on the Myanmar New Year Day by monks. In emergency, grandparents of morals may bless the strings and use them after meditating on the five precepts. Should a person be suspected of being obsessed by evil spirits, persons of string religious faith and

those who are wise in the ways of the world are requested to drive the evil spirits away. There may also be rites for averting the impending misfortune. Should the patient be dying, they would recall his good deeds so that he will be able to call 'Tha-du' to these merits. Praises to Buddha are recited in Shan or Myanmar.

Moreover, Shans believe in reincarnation. When grandparents die, they would come back to be reconceived in the womb of their married daughters or the daughters-in-law. The would-be mother is usually given a dream. The child thus reincarnated will be able to relate past events or he may have scars or marks on his body exactly like the ones he or she had had in the previous life. Shans believe that such children are reincarnations.

(j.1) The Funeral

Shans of Leinmawgyan are Buddhists and are convinced that depending on the good or bad deeds that one has done in the present will have effect on where one goes to in the next life. They believe that those who have done good deeds may go to Nirvana and those who have done bad deeds may go to hell.

Shans give a corpse a bath as soon as a person has expired. When they are certain that the corpse is clean, they cover it in new clothes such as jackets and longyis. The hands are crossed on the chest and tied together. So are the toes. However, they are undone before they put the corpse in the coffin in case he may not be able to move about freely in the next life. They buy the cast-off timber and make the coffin themselves. They have to finish it within the day.

There would be a funeral pandal for a wealthy person. Those who cannot afford to put up one may invite callers into the house. The funeral is usually held on the third day. If it is required to wait for relatives from afar, they would have the funeral on the 5th day only. If the funeral is on the third day, the corpse will be put into the coffin on the 2nd day and will be placed

outside the compound on a shelf made of wood or bamboo. Some villages have carts to draw the coffin to the graveyard. If the funeral is on the 5th day, the corpse will be put into the coffin on the 3rd day. Those who cannot afford coffins would roll the corpse in a mat and bury it.

There is a pot filled with water under the bed or scaffold where the coffin is placed. The water pot is smashed at the time of the funeral, when the corpse is being carried out of the compound. Some say the smashing of the pot is an ancient custom which may be traced back to the era prior to Buddha. Before Buddha attained enlightenment, there used to be a king by the title King Andaka. Queen Upadi Devi was famous for her beauty. When she died, the king could not bear to part with her. She was encased in a glass coffin and kept in the palace. When the Nats found out about that and informed the would-be-Buddha, the hermit, who was residing in the near-by forest, the hermit spoke to the king about it. He said to the king, "Why are you still so deep in adoration to your wife?" He showed the king what had become of the queen. The queen had become a female beetle. Buddha talked to the she-beetle in the Magada language to ask her who she loved more, the king or the male beetle. The queen answered that it was true that she had loved the king dearly in her past life. Now that she had got to the new life, she preferred the male beetle to the king, so much so that she would have the king suck the blood from the male beetle's legs, she said mockingly. On hearing this, the king got furious and buried the queen's corpse to the joyful beat of the drums. He even refused to look at the place where the queen's corpse was kept. The servants were ordered to clean the floor and wash it thoroughly with water. He smashed the water pot in anger. From then on, people followed in his steps and have the water pot smashed at funerals. So say the Shans of Leinmawgyan.

If anyone dies outside the village from accidents, it is not allowed for the corpse to be brought back into the village. However, if for any reason it is

done so, two bowls of apology are offered: one at the village entrance and one at the Ywa-Daw-Shin Shrine. The offertory bowls consist of a coconut and three palms of bananas in each. There may also be another bowl at the entrance into the compound of the funeral house. Otherwise, misfortune will befall on the whole village, they say. The bowl outside the compound is discarded away on the day of the funeral. Whoever wants to eat the contents of the bowls are not forbidden to do so. Those who die at childbirth, who got crushed under falling trees, who die from snakebites, are to be buried on the same day. Those who die on the New Year's Eve are also buried before the day is over, so as to avoid having the misfortune carried over to the new year.

A twenty-five pya coin is put into the mouth of the dead to make it easier for him to travel in the next life. The bed on which the corpse is laid out must be between the two poles or columns of the living room. If the corpse start to smell and get disfigured, it is immediately put into the coffin, but the funeral will be on the target day as fixed earlier. If a mother of young children dies, Shans would set her soul free to go where she pleases since she is in a different life and has no more obligations to the children. The heights of the household members are measured with the sewing thread and put into the coffin. There would be a flower vase near the corpse. The village provident funds group would collect contribution money from houses in the village and give it to the family of the dead.

Shans of Leinmawgyan usually carry the coffin on their shoulders all the way to the cemetery. Every household would send a member to attend the funeral. Heading the funeral procession would be the brass gong. Then comes the offertory bowl followed by coffin carriers. All fires in the house of the dead have to be put out, water pots poured out and clothes, if they are hung, must be taken down.

When carrying a corpse out of the house, the feet of the dead goes first. Common people mostly have a burial, but sponsors of novice monks and mothers of monks are cremated. The gravesites are marked and cannot be moved. If there are two burials at the same time, the first one that died has to give priority to the one who died later. The family of the person who died late would have to offer those of the first who died, an offertory bowl containing three palms of bananas and a coconut. After the funeral, a twig from the cemetery is brought back. It may be taken back to the cemetery when the week-cycle is complete. The branch is not to be taken into the house but has to be a distance away from the house.

There are four kinds of offertory meals at funerals for Shans of Leinmawgyan: the expiry meal, the burial meal, the week-cycle meal and the main funeral offertory meal. The day following the expiry, a meal is offered to the invited monks early in the morning. The burial meal is to be offered to monks at the monastery during the week. On the eve of the burial, people would go about in the village, reminding others about the funeral. While doing this, they would also invite everyone to the week-cycle meal, shouting and calling at the top of their voices. Invitations as such are called 'pyo-calls'.

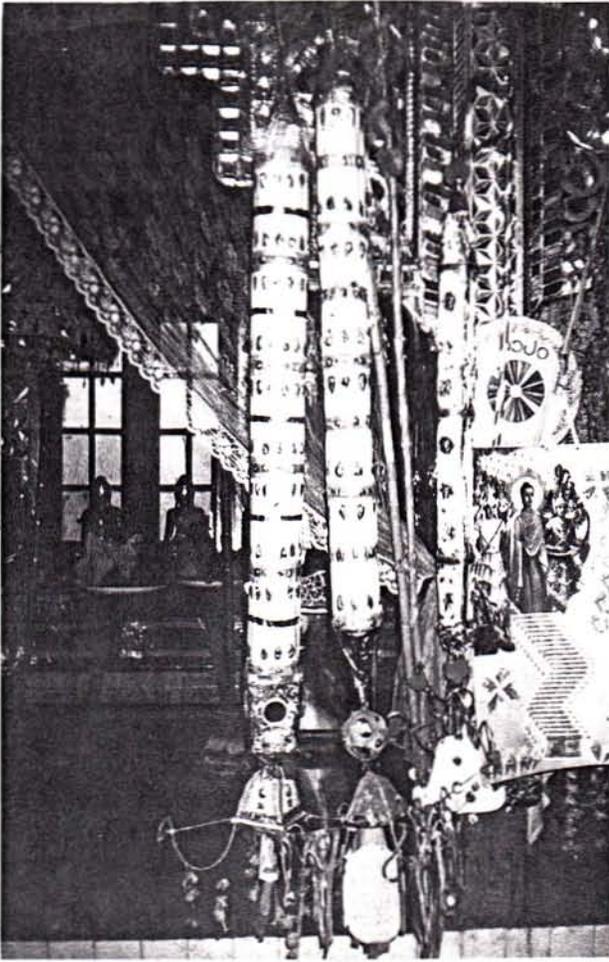
On the morning of the funeral, monks are invited over to conduct an activity where relatives and friends of the family take refuge in the Three Gems to share merit with the deceased. This activity would be repeated at the cemetery if the monks accompany the family to the burial. Monks are offered three palms of bananas and two coconuts. One the day of the funeral, people from the village are invited over to honor the funeral meal. A similar meal is offered again to the monks as well as the ordinary people on the sixth day, which is marked as the completion of the week-cycle.

In the evenings on the days of the funeral, sermons are given at the house of the funeral. At these activities, plays and parables from Shan



The Funeral Procession





The Flat and Round Pendants

Offered for the Deceased



scriptures are read. The reading is done by monks or wise and experienced Shan elders. In ancient times, the listeners of these have to sit and such great obeisance that they would be semi-reposed on the floor.

The main funeral offertory meal is known as 'Tha-beik-kyi offering'. It is usually given during the first two weeks of Thidingyut. The day may be chosen to the convenience of all concerned. As many as five monks may be invited to honor the meal. They are also offered robes, umbrellas, footwear and cash. The meal may be served either at home or at the monastery. On that day, Shan flags and pennants of cloth or paper, painted in red and white are taken to the monastery. Straight flagstuffs and round pennants are used for males and curved or bent flagstuffs are used for females. Inscriptions are written on these pennants in Myanmar. In early days, the flagstuffs used to be gilded. Shans believe that only when these pennants and banners are donated, then will the deceased go to high levels of being. If a person's mind is distracted just before death, he would go to the abode of ghouls when he dies. However, if his family and relatives make donations and share the merits with him, he would be free from that abode

LIST OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS
IN LEINMAWGYAN VILLAGE TRACT

Village Name	No. of Teachers	Std.IV	Std.III	Std II	Std I	Kintergarden	Total No. of Students
Leinmawgyan	6	12	24	23	33	28	120
Nyaung Lay Bin	4	20	13	21	23	19	96
Kyaung Su	2	6	-	5	6	3	20
Ale ywa	1	4	10	8	2	12	36

CHAPTER 5

ECONOMY

The main economic activity of Leinmawgyan village is garden farming. However, the focus has been gradually shifting towards handicrafts these days. There is hardly any person who does livestock farming for commercial purposes. In building factories for the state owned Myanma Heavy Industries, many garden farms of Shans from Leinmawgyan were nationalized. Furthermore, the topsoil was damaged by earthquakes so much so that growing lime had to be abandoned due to unsuccessful yield. However, pomelo still produces good yield. Taikkyi lime used to be very popular and widely known for their being big, juicy and thin-skinned. Now that lime farming has failed, people have to resort to the farming of other seasonal fruits as their main livelihood. On the other hand, the income from the latter activity is not as good as it was before. Therefore development is hindered. People of the village are turning to handicrafts as their main economic source. They learn the crafts from the Myanmars nearby.

(a) Agriculture

The Shans of Leinmawgyan involve themselves in two types of agriculture activities: farming and gardening.

Farming

Paddy: In farming, only paddy and sugarcane are mainly cultivated. However, there are very few people who grow paddy for commercial purposes. There are about 31 acres of paddy farms in the village, most of which are in Nyaung Lay Bin and Myanmar Su. Summer paddy is not grown due to insufficient water supply. Only Monsoon paddy is cultivated. Ploughing and tilling is done with

draught cattle and bullock. The Kauk Nge paddy of the Manawhare variety is grown. Fertilizers such as urea, phosphate and humas are proportionately used to produce good yield. Although the yield requirement as determined by the government is 36 baskets per acre, Leinmawgyan produces approximately 40 baskets to an acre. Mixed or multiple cropping with other items or varieties is not done.

Sugarcane: Sugarcane is grown only in the Nyang Lay Bin village of the Leinmawgyan village tract. Total sown acreage for sugarcane is about 200 acres. Planting of sugarcane commences usually in Pyartho and Tabodwe months. First the fields have to be tilled to loosen up the soil. Where the desired soil texture is obtained, the farmland has to be levelled again. After that, planting commences subject to weather conditions. A bag of ammonium sulphate and phosphate is needed for an acre.

An acre could accommodate 8000 to 20000 shoots of sugarcane. When the shoots get to about a foot high, which takes about a month, soil is dumped or piled at the foot of the stalks and the amount of soil to be dumped varies with the size of the stalks. The fields are ploughed again in Kason, and a bag of Pale fertilizer is added. Sugarcane matures in about a year and may be harvested for processing sugar.

Field labourers are hired for harvesting sugarcane. The top part of the stalk is cut off and set aside for replanting. Women workers skin off this top part to take out the shoot and store them in a shaded place in bundles of 50. Labour charges for delivery of the shoot bundles to their storing place is 30 kyats per 1000 shoots. If the sugarcane is well looked after, yield per acre is 10,000 to 20,000. Although there are sugar mills in the village, some send the canes to Taikkyi and some sell them by retail.

Gardening

Gladiola, Black-Eyed Susan, Rakkine banana, Betel leaf, Pineapple, Lemon grass and Pomelo are the major commercial garden products of Leinmawgyan.

Gladiola: Gladiola is one of the major sales items of Leinmawgyan. They are grown at the beginning of the Rainy Season. It is grown from bulb radicles, new bulbs coming out from old bulbs. When the flowers have been cut, the bulbs are dug out and kept in a dry place. First, the tracks are drawn in the field to stick in the bulbs. The bulbs are then covered with earth. When the sprouts come out and have two or three leaves, Pale fertilizer is added. The plants grow well in soft soil with good water supply. After about 45 days, the blossoms come out. It takes about a month to cut all the flowers. Wages for cutting, transporting them to the binding are kyat 1000/- per 5000 stems. A bunch holding 10 stems is sold for 20 kyats by wholesale. Leinmawgyan villagers take the flowers to Shan Bet flower market in Taikkyi on tri-shaws. Some flower traders come and buy them at Leinmawgyan and take them to other big cities. A basket of Gladiola bulbs may fetch kyat 1500/-.

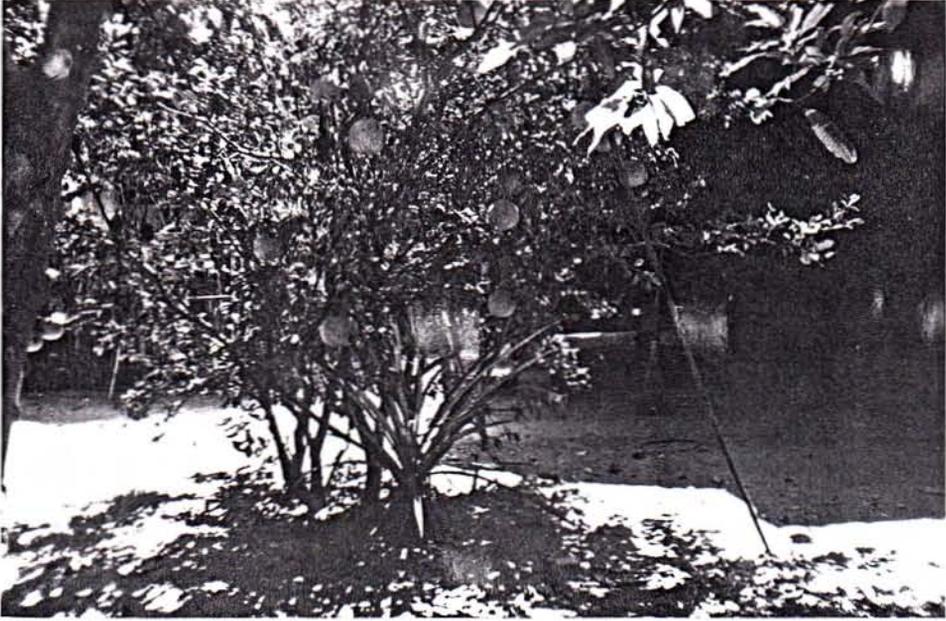
Black-Eyed Susan: Black-Eyed Susan is grown from seeds. To obtain the seeds, the flowers are left to mature and dry. Then the seeds are extracted. When planting is done and the seedlings come out, they are separated and replanted in rows. Black-Eyed Susan blooms all year-round and can be grown in any season. They take two months from the time of planting to bloom. A bunch of Black-Eyed Susan would fetch 3 kyats and a plot would fetch 5000 kyats.



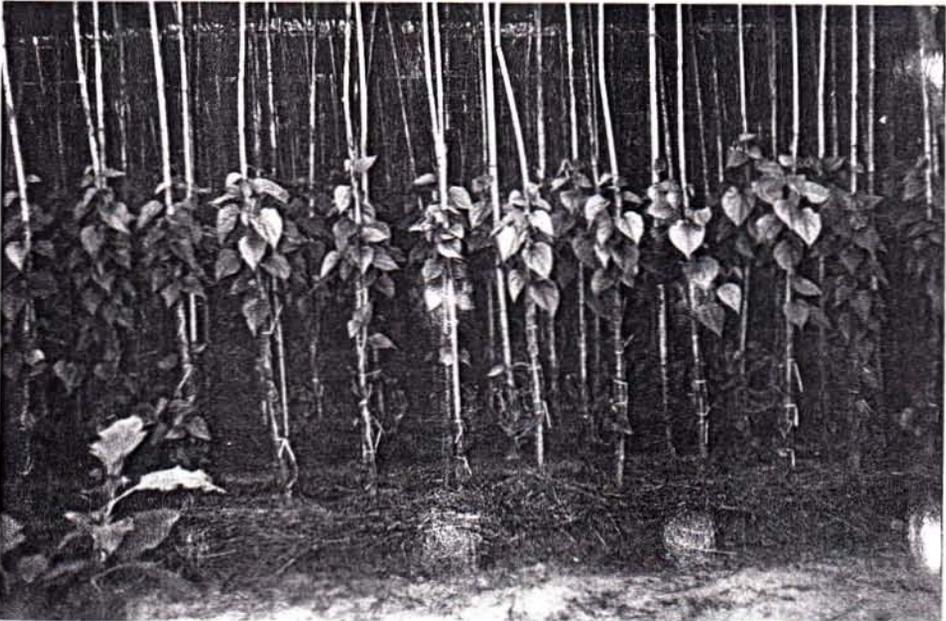
Gladiola Bulbs



Cucumber Vines



The Pomelo Tree



The Betel Vine

Rakkhine Banana: Rakkhine banana is usually planted in Kason. They like massive soil. The cutout banana trunks are bolted upright in pitches about from feet deep. The pitches are then filled with earth. The fillings should be compact so as not to damage the sprouting shoot. The plants are positioned about 12 feet apart from each in order to accommodate 300 plants in an acre wide plot. The plants yield fruit within 12 to 15 months from planting. Banana loves rich soil and yields best when treated with fertilizers. In the Cold Seasons, the surrounding area of the plant (ie, 3 feet in all directions) should be fluffed or loosened up and earth and grass are piled at the foot of the plant. An area of Rakkhine Banana earth and grass are piled at the foot of the plant. An area of Rakkhine Banana would yield 300 to 400 bunches where a bunch would have 5 to 8 palms, a bunch would fetch about 200 kyats. Therefore an acre of the Banana fetches an average net income of about 20,000 kyats.

Pineapple: The pineapple is a simple plant, but is very reproductive owing to the radicles. Replanting the crown of spikes may also do reproduction. Pineapple plants should be grown 3 feet apart and need a good flow of water. They yield fruit within 18 months from planting. The normal selling price of a pineapple is 40 kyats. The net income from a plot of pineapple is approximately 1200 kyats.

Betel Vine: Betel vine is grown for commercial purposes in Leinmawgyan. Betel vine needs good fertile soil and a lot of careful attention. Shans use betel leaf as medicine also. Moreover it is one of the delicacies served at auspicious occasions together with tealeaves. Almost every Shan house has a betel box from which betel quids are made served to guests. To cultivate betel, the earth is first loosened up and the seedlings are planted against a bamboo frame with the tendrils tied to it. The leaves are ready for picking in two month. They

are picked once every 10 days in the Rainy Season and once every 15 days during the Hot Season. A viss of betel leaves may fetch 30 kyats. A plot of betel would yield approximately 70 to 80 viss. An average income from a plot of betel is about 12,000 kyats a month.

Lemon Grass: Shans of Leinmawgyan grow lemon grass not only for trade but also for medicine. Lemon grass is believed to be good for digestion and perspiration. Lemon grass grows well in porous soil where water retention is low. The farm is tilled during summer but the planting starts only at the beginning of Monsoon. They are grown in rows of bare stalks (from which the leaves are cut off). The rows are four feet apart and the plants are 1.5 feet distant from each other. Apart from wedding, lemon grass does not need much attention. The life of lemon grass is about 3 to 4 years. A single shoot of lemon grass is sold for one or two kyats only but a plot would fetch about 20,000 kyats. Sometimes they are taken to Taikkyi in bundles on tri-shaws.

Pomelo, Lime and Lemon: The most outstanding feature of Leinmawgyan village is having pomelo, lime and lemon trees in every garden or yard or compound in the village. Taikkyi pomelo and lime are popular not only in Taikkyi but also in Yangon. The pomelo begin to bear fruit within 6 to 7 years from planting and lime starts yielding fruit in 3 to 4 years time. The pomelo blossom at the beginning of Monsoon and the fruits are picked in Pyartha. Pomeles from Taikkyi are well liked for their taste and flavour. The price of a pomelo ranges from about 50 to 100 kyats. Although lime is noted for its all year-round yield, it yields best in the Rainy season which is from June to October.

In Linmawgyan, pomelo, lime and lemon used to be the main products whereas the focus is now shifted to seasonal fruits.

(b) Livestock Breeding

Although Shans of Leinmawgyan earn their livelihood from agriculture activities and handicrafts, there is none that does so from livestock breeding. Shans strongly believe that dealing in livestock is a sin and is inauspicious. Therefore they would not trade another being's life for their gain. There is breeding of draught cattle but only to get help in farming. They even regard milking as sinful.

Draught cattle prices are as high as 40,000 kyats to 50,000 kyats. Not all households can afford one. There are also many superstitions regarding keeping draught cattle. Cattle with irregular hair twirls, with one wobbly horn, with abnormal rib cages (one side shorter or softer than the other), with two separate spines, cattles with epilepsy, pluerisy, and those that snore are not kept. However, should they keep one, they would take well care of the animals. They would call in vets from Taikkyi in case of their illness.

Although chicken is bred and kept their eggs are not eaten. They are kept as pets and are not killed for food. They do eat duck eggs, however, for duck eggs are hard to hatch. They are fed on the food remains and crushed rice of poor quality and there are proper coops for them. Breeding of goats and pigs are not done either.

(c) Handicrafts

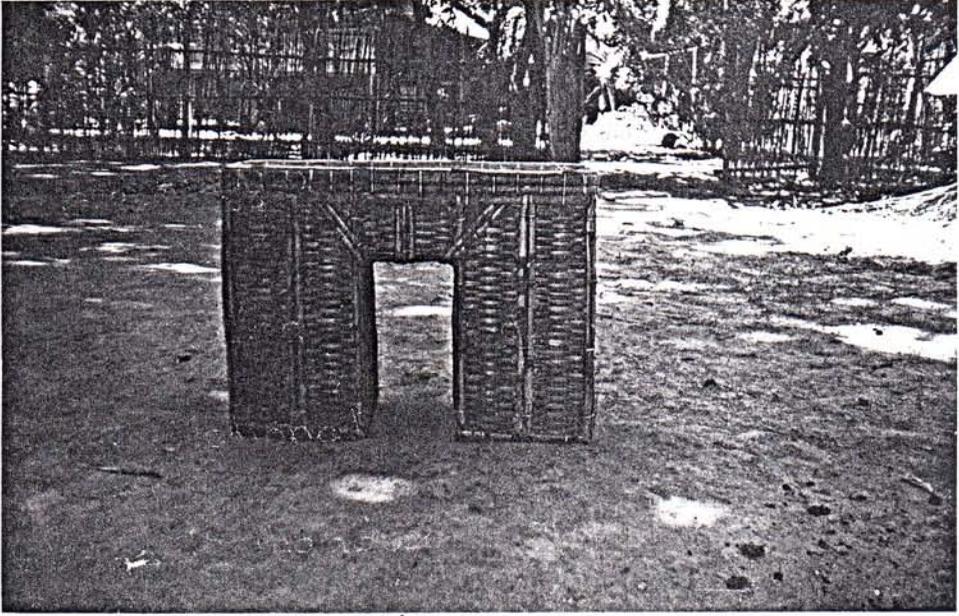
Handicrafts is as important as farming to Shans of Leinmawgyan for their livelihood. Farming is given priority in the Rainy Season, and as soon as the season is gone their priority shifts to handicrafts. This is due to access of the resource materials that are available only after the Rainy Season. The main handicraft products are carrier baskets, brooms, and bamboo hats and thatch roofing.

(c.1) Twin Carrier Basket Wearing

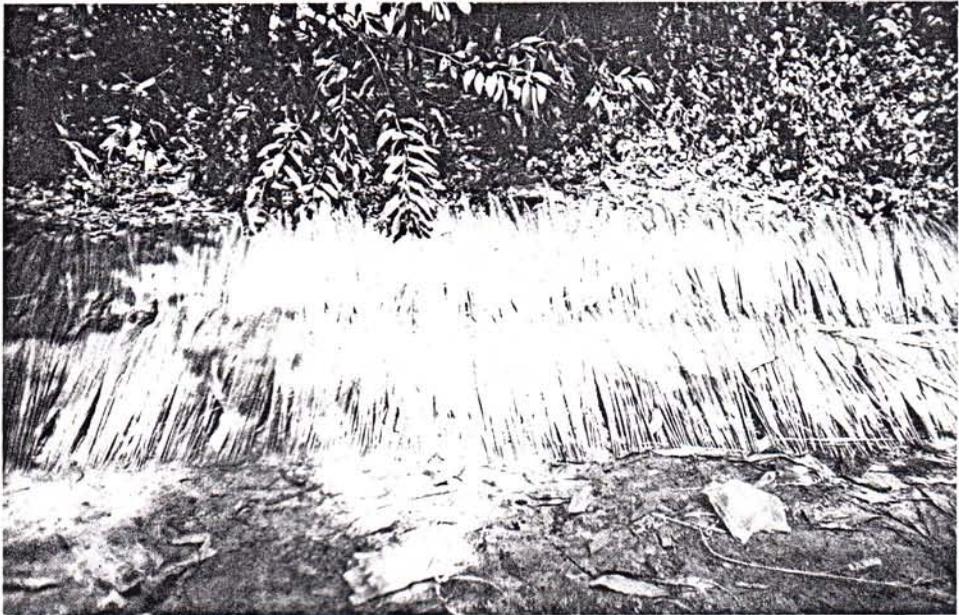
Shans of Leinmawgyan are experts in weaving twin baskets that could be placed across the bicycle carrier at the back to carry goods. They usually carry their trading goods in these carrier baskets when they go to town to trade. Most of the weaving of these baskets goes on in Kine Kwin Gyi village. Most baskets are made of Kyathaung bamboo. However, baskets for home-use are usually made from giant bamboo. Strips of the species of bamboo are pliant and strong and are suitable for weaving baskets. They may be of different sizes 8 inches square, 10 inches square and 14 inches square. The height of the basket may be about 12 inches. A pole of bamboo can be made into one basket and half of another. Much skill is needed for stripping bamboo. The amount or number of strips lessens from lack of skill. The two carrier baskets are designed to have nine or ten column strips each in between. The bridge is to be placed on the bicycle carrier. Each basket can hold up to 30 viss of goods in weight. Baskets made of good quality bamboo brushed in crude oil last 4 to 5 years. Even those that are used daily without proper handling may last the whole year. A set of small carrier baskets may cost 400 kyats to 500 kyats, and the 14 inches square basket would cost approximately 700 kyats each.

(c.2) Broom Making

Broom making is one of the major economic activities of Leinmawgyan. To get raw materials, villagers go to the Bago Yoma on foot or by carts. They pluck the shoot of Hta-Ma-Sein plants to make in to brooms. They have to set out early on the morning with their meal packs. Sometimes, the entire family would join in, since it can be done regardless of sex or age. Plucking wages are 150 kyats per 1000 shoots. Their activity would start in January and last till the end of February. After plucking the shoots, the skins are peeled off for the sprouts. Then, the sprouts are sun-dried either in the



Twin Carrier Basket Weaving



Broom Making

forest or at home. When they are dry, sprouts are gathered one-by-one and tied in to small bunches. Should these tiny bunches are kept in bundles they would last for long periods that people can live on the income for the whole year. The tiny bunches are then fastened to ratten picks, an activity known as “Zet Hto”. Hta-Ma-Sein stalks are tied to form a handle and then refined. There are roughly four stages in broom making: bunching, picking (Zet Hto), tying handles and refining. Wages for each stage are 2.50 kyats per stage, totalling to 10 kyats per broom per day. A person is able to pick 2000 to 3000 shoots. From a thousand buds, 17 brooms can be made. A person who works at it from morn till dark may finish making 10 brooms and if he does it at regular working hours, he would finish making 5 brooms. Sales price of a broom is about 40 kyats. For those who make brooms themselves would earn at an average rate of 300 kyats a day or 9000 kyats a month. Some sell their brooms to wholesale dealers at Taikkyi. Some take them to Yangon and sell them, going from one street to the next. Leinmawgyan brooms are famous for their durability.

(c.3) Bamboo Matting

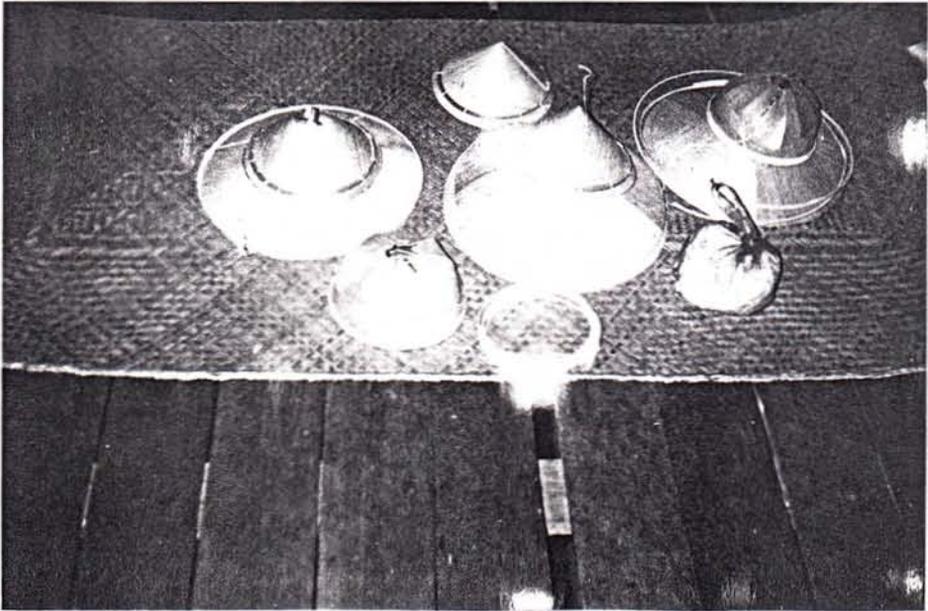
Bamboos for matting walls are obtained from the forests of Ale Yoma, within the Heavy Industries boundaries. Mostly women do bamboo matting. Kyathaung bamboo is usually used for this activity. A piece of matting is made from a pole of bamboo. Although the normal size of a piece is (2.5 feet x 5 feet), the mats of Leinmawgyan are (2 feet x 4 feet), to suit the small carriers such as bicycles or tri-shaws. Both fresh and dried bamboos are used.

(c.4) Bamboo-Hat Making

Bamboo hats are one of the products of Leinmawgyan, but not all villagers are involved in this craft. Only Ywa Thar Yar, Ale Ywar, Kyaung Su



Bamboo Hat Making



and Gyogyar Kwin are places where the production takes place. It is said that the activity originally starts from Gyogyar Kwin. There are altogether three types of raw materials needed for making bamboo hats. Wahboh bamboo, Kyathaung bamboo and thread. The awning is of Wahboh flaps and the frame is made from Kyathaung bamboo. The poles are cut, made in frames and soaked in water for about a month. Sanding of the frames is done only when dried. Then the Waboh flaps are tied onto the frame with thread, which is available at stores in Taikkyi. Thread is waxed to make smooth. Turpentine is used for the waxing. Waboh flaps are procured from Hinthada, Kyangin and Myan-Aung. Kyathaung bamboo is obtained from Ale Yoma and neighbouring areas of the village. Raw materials are stocked and store for use over the whole year. Most of the houses are two storey buildings where the ground floor is used for storing raw materials. Some do it small scale as business having their focus on making bamboo hats alone. A manufacturer would require about 10 labourers a day. Apart from Leinmawgyan there are some bamboo hat manufacturers in Shan Su of Leinmawgyan and nearby quarters. Some Leinmawgyan villagers are hired as labourers for those activities. Workers are classified according to the different stages the need to be in. Bamboo hats cannot be made at a sitting for its stages. There are two different styles: - one is the Shan flat hat and the other is a high one.

Shans wear bamboo hats in all seasons. They usually wear these hats when commuting from Leinmawgyan to Taikkyi on bicycles. That is why these bamboo hats are essential commodities of Leinmawgyan villagers.

(c.5) Thatch Roofing

Shans of Leinmawgyan do thatch roofing not only for their own houses but also an occupation. Thatch is a kind of long lasting plant found in abundance in the Ale Yoma. The stalk is about 1 – 3 feet and the leaves are 6 –

11 inches. The leaves are harvested in Tazaungmoan. First they are sun-dried, dusted and wet. Then a bamboo stick is used as a folding piece around which the leaves are fold and woven with bamboo strips. A piece of thatch roofing is about 2.1/4 yards to 2 ½ yards in breath. The price is 15 kyats a piece or 1500 kyats per hundred. Labour wages are 100 kyats per 100 pieces. Thatch roofing may not last long or as durable as other roofing materials but almost every house is roofed in thatch simply because it is a local product.

(d) Other Exclusive Occupations

Shans of the Leinmawgyan village tract occupy themselves in exclusive economic activities such as processing brown sugarcane slabs, charcoal and selling firewood. However, these activities are only at certain villages, not all.

(d.1) Processing Brown Sugarcane Slabs

Cultivation of sugarcane is done in the Nyaung Lay Bin neighbourhood in Leinmawgyan village tract. Therefore processing and production of Brown sugarcane slabs is mostly done in these areas only. The processing is done at own kilns in the village. There are about 5 kilns in the area where such activities go on from Tazaungmoan to Pyartho.

First of all, sugarcane stalks are squashed out for juice and heated in large bell-mouthed pans. About 5 to 7 wood fire stoves are needed for the heating. The dried sugarcane stalks of which the juice had been extracted are used in the stove for auxiliary heating. The froth and cream that surface would be scooped or skimmed out with a thin piece of cotton material. Then a kind of slime called Dwa-Poat is added afterwards. When the solution boils, it is transferred to another container and steamed. When it starts boiling it is stirred continuously so as not to let the pan overflow. When it thickens the contents are poured onto the mats with wooden frames and then levelled with a stick. Lines

are drawn to cut the slabs into one viss blocks before they get hard. When the slabs are hard and dry, the frames are removed and there would be one-viss blocks of brown sugarcane slabs.

The blocks are then wrapped in leaves and are transported to Taikkyi in carts. Some store them, at home in bags. 100 to 120 pans of brown sugarcane slabs may be made from an acre of sugarcane and six viss of the slabs may be made from one pan. Therefore, from an acre of sugarcane there may be as much as 600 – 700 viss of the slabs. A sales price of a viss of the slabs is approximately 120 kyats, which makes the income from an acre of sugarcane approximately over seventy thousand kyats. Most of the work is done in own factories or kilns with hired worker. The daily wages are 150 kyats. The process is carried out only to as much as kiln owners can manage.

(d.2) Processing of Charcoal

Only hard wood is used for processing charcoal. Fresh logs are used for the process. Trees felled in the Ale Yoma are placed in the pits there and then. First the logs are placed in position. Then they are covered with firewood, on top of which would be clay. There would be a funnel to let the smoke and fumes out. The colour of the smoke that comes out when the logs burn would have to be observed and water is flushed when necessary. After about 2 days when smoke turns white, the outlets have to be blocked. Some use caves in the Ale Yoma as kilns. Processing a trench of charcoal would take about 5 days and produce 70 to 80 baskets. A sales price of a basket is approximately 100 – 160 kyats, ie, 240 kyats a bag. The intense heat from the kilns may cause vomiting of blood and can be fatal. This may be the reason why not all villages take this activity up. Only a few families of Ywa-Thar-Yar, Ale-Ywa and Kyaung Su take the risk.

(d.3) Firewood Cutting

Most people in Leinmawgyan use firewood although charcoal is one of the local area products. Many woodcutters are found in the villages. Logs of hard wood are cut from the Ale Yoma, bundle up and taken back to their village in carts. Woodcutters store them in their own compounds. A bundle of firewood cost 1 or 2 kyats only. For some people, this is the only occupation.

(d.4) Trading

Shans of Leinmawgyan sell their farm and garden products in wholesale at the Shan market at Shan Su quarter, Taikkyi, everyday in the mornings. Although it is supposed to be a market, it is only a bazaar type with neither stall nor buildings. There would be 15 to 20 sellers by the roadside in front of Shan Kyaung Gyi, selling seasonal products. Most sellers are of 40 to 60 years of age since younger people are working in the farmyards or at school at this hour, which is from around 7:30 am to 9:30 am. Rectangular baskets shaped flower carts are fixed to bicycles and seasonal flowers such as gladiolas and black-eyed susan are brought to the market in them. Fruits such as Rakkhine bananas, pomelo, iced potatoes are also carried there on bicycles in twin carrier baskets. Retail dealers buy their products and sell them again at Taikkyi market. Some would not only give a portion of their goods to the wholesale dealers but also sell the rest in retail at Taikkyi market. After that they would do shopping for themselves and go back to respective places. There is no market in the afternoon or in the evenings. Shans shop at Taikkyi market for their own commodity requirements. They normally eat their garden products and very little meat or fish. None other but Shans of Shan Su quarters are found to open food stalls which sell Shan food for shoppers. Many people from far and near come to the Shan market to eat Shan food.

There are stores in villages of Leinmawgyan. The goods and commodities are produced from Taikkyi every two or three days. Most of the commodity items are available at these stores. However, there are some that would walk three miles to shop in Taikkyi. There are tri-shaws services as well. Even so, the trip from Leinmawgyan to Taikkyi costs 100 kyats on tri-shaw; it is a difficult communication in this way during the Rainy Season.

A few Shans of Leinmawgyan would make brooms and make day return sales trip to Yangon. There is a call station for buses on the Pyay-Yangon main motor way. The bus fare is 45 kyats only. Trading is also done via rail route. Trading goods are sent not only to Yangon but also to other places as well on the Yangon-Bagan, Yangon-Thar-Ra-Wawh trains.

Chapter 6

RELIGION

(a) Buddhism: Belief and Practices

The Shans of Leinmawgyan villages are Buddhists. All Shans born of Buddhist parents have worshipped the Three Venerables from the time of their conception. A Buddhist expectant mother would also pray for the baby that she is carrying every time she herself worships. Furthermore, in offering alms food, water, flowers to Buddha, or in choral chanting of prayers, or in offering alms food and doing filial duties to monks, the mother would also pray for the baby, and lets the baby share the merits. Therefore it is taken as a fact that Shans if ancestrally Buddhists have taken refuge in the Three Venerables ever since they were conceived.

Shan Buddhists are in the practice of teaching their children to pray from infancy. They would hold the baby's palms together in the praying position and teach them to say 'Oo-daw' or 'Augatha'. Although the child may not fully understand what he is doing, he gets into the good habit of performing this gesture of respect or reverence every time he sees the Statue of Buddha, a pagoda or monks, a habit which he owes to the training of parents and elders.

When a child gets to the age that he starts mouthing some words, the elders would model some lines of prayers such as, “*ဗုဒ္ဓံပူဇော်မိ၊ ဓမ္မံပူဇော်မိ၊ သံဃံပူဇော်မိ*” or “*ဗုဒ္ဓံဆရဏံ ဂစ္ဆာမိ၊ ဓမ္မံဆရဏံ ဂစ္ဆာမိ၊ သံဃံဆရဏံ ဂစ္ဆာမိ*” or “*နမောတဿ ဘ ဂဝတော*” etc. and let the child repeat after them. Some mothers would chant these prayers when putting the child to sleep and the child would often fall asleep while chanting along. Children with good memory are able to recite the prayers even without knowing the meaning. When reciting Buddhist scripture, the Shans would pronounce /hs/ for the original /th/ sound. Other

than that, the rest are the same. Only the very old can recite them in a true Shan accent.

Children are told Buddha's life stories, usually at bedtime or in early mornings so that they may become good children and also develop their character and reasoning power. "The Maha Zenekka Story" is told to develop their adventurous spirit and diligence. "Thuwanna Thamma" is told to make them appreciative of the parents and be grateful to them. "The Weithandara Story" is told to encourage them to be charitable and generous. The aims for telling these stories are for the children to be able to draw moral lessons from the stories and adopt the admirable qualities of the characters in them.

Activities such as offering alms food, flowers, water, lighting, saying of prayers in groups, keeping Sabbath during lent and on religious commemoration days, going vegetarian are modeled by parents. Thus, the Shan children have more exposure as regards Buddhist practices.

Vegetarian Diet

Shans of the Leinmawgyan village are bent on a vegetarian diet rather than on the normal. They go vegetarian during the entire 3 month lent period. Some do so on Buddhist Sabbath day, on their day of birth or from the Eve of Thingyan (Water Festival) to the Myanmar New Year Day. With the entry into Thingyan, plants are not to be harmed in anyway, i.e. picking, plucking, cutting or falling. They believe that plants have life, and bleed in the form of sap. Elders would yell at even one tiny twig at the plant. The prohibition is lifted and the activity would become normal again on New Year Day. Every year, the presiding monks of the village are requested to honor and conduct the prayer. The Chanting ceremony is held as a safeguard measure to protect the village from all evils.

The Shrine

Almost every house at Leinmawgyan has a shrine attached to the main house. Offerings of alms food, flowers, light and water are made at these shrines. Flowers at the shrines are never found to have withered but are always green and fresh. Even the poor try to keep them as fresh as possible.

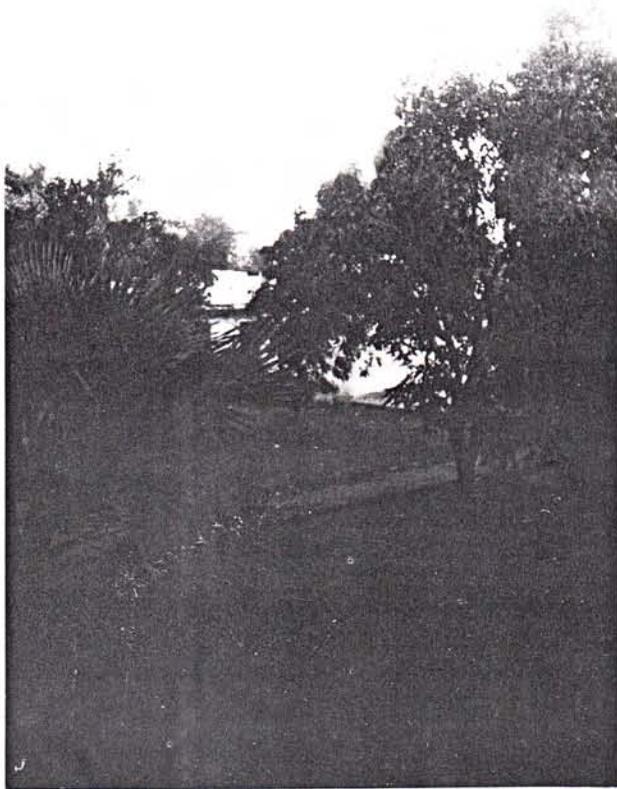
Saya San and the Nawin Pagoda

In AD 1930, peasants from Yay-tut province of Tharyarwaddy, led by Saya San marched to Yangon, driven by their involvement and enthusiasm in the Peasant's revolution. As they marched past Leinmawgyan, Saya San built a pagoda on their route between Ale-Ywa and Kine-Kwin Gyi village. The act was dedicated to the commitment and unity of all the participants in the revolution. The pagoda festival is celebrated every year on the 8th day of the waxing moon of Tabaung.

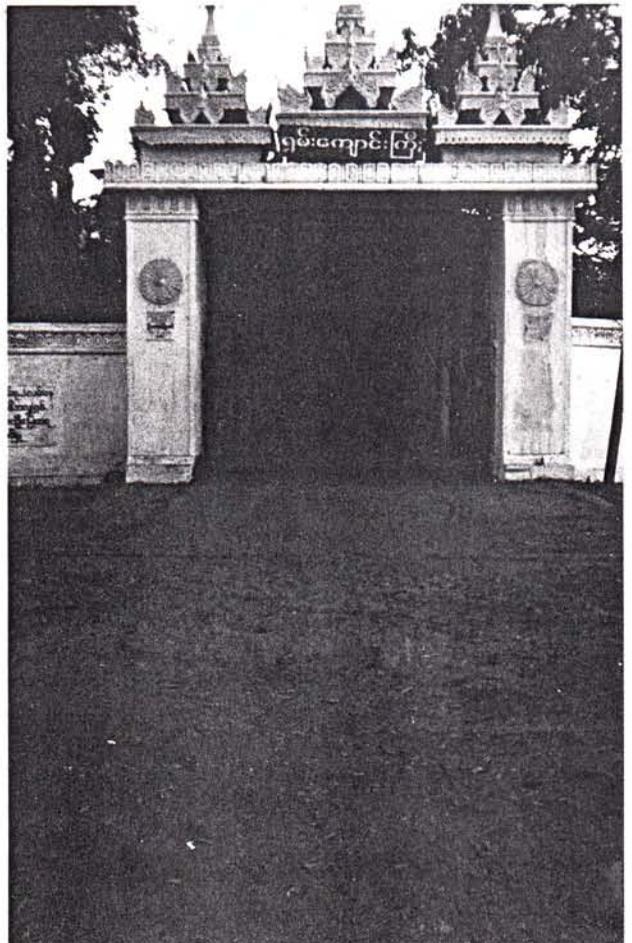
Deeds of Charity and Merit

The Shans of Leinmawgyan are extremely generous and charitable. As the saying “တစ်မူးရလို့ တစ်ပဲလှူ၊ တို့ရှမ်းတောင်သူ တူနိုင်ရိုးလား” goes (meaning Shans are unique for their charity of half their earnings), they would save their earnings from their garden farming thriftily and would donate generously.

There stands the Mya Sein Taung Pagoda on the Mya Sein Taung hill of Ale-Ywa in Leinmawgyan village tract. Village elders would go and meditate and keep Sabbath at the monastery at Mya Sein Taung Pagoda on full moon, dark-moon and Sabbath days during the Buddhist lent. In groups, they would cook alms food and do the filial duties and sundry chores at the pagoda. The presiding monk, Sayadaw U Zarnaya himself supervises the fundamental tasks and duties of Buddhist practices. Villagers offer the Wahso robes prior to the



The Pagoda in Commemoration
of the Centennial Anniversary
(Shan Kyaung Gyi)



Wahso period and during the Wahso lent as well. The entire village would also contribute cash and labour for the robe offering ceremony at Thidingyut . If there is only one funder, then the whole village would assist in other labour aspects such as cooking, feeding etc.

In addition, the Shan Kyaung Gyi Monastery at Taikkyi is also a place where many Shans of the Leinmawgyan congregate. Celebrations are held there on the Shan National Day and Shan New Year Day with pomp and ceremony. The father of the presiding Sayadaw, U Thanwara of the Shan Kyaung Gyi Monastery, Sayadaw U Seitta was the first to have settled in the Ale-Ywa of the Leinmawgyan village. Sayadaw U Thanwara has been the President of the Taikkyi Executive Sanga Board for four consecutive terms. Moreover, he has ordained 45 devotees and has been teaching Buddhist Scriptures to approximately 30 monks every year at the Shan Kyaung Gyi Monastery. In 1959 he was conferred the title of, “သာသနဓဇ သီရိပဝရအစိုးရ ဓမ္မာစရိယ” and another in 1998, “မဟာသဒ္ဓမ္မ ဇောတိကဓဇ” by the government. He is a brilliant Shan Sayadaw. In the Myanmar year 1344, he built a pagoda to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the acknowledgement of the monastery land plot as religious grounds and as tax-free land area. Separate buildings have been built for gents and ladies to meditate or keep Sabbath during lent period or on Sabbath days.

(b) Animism

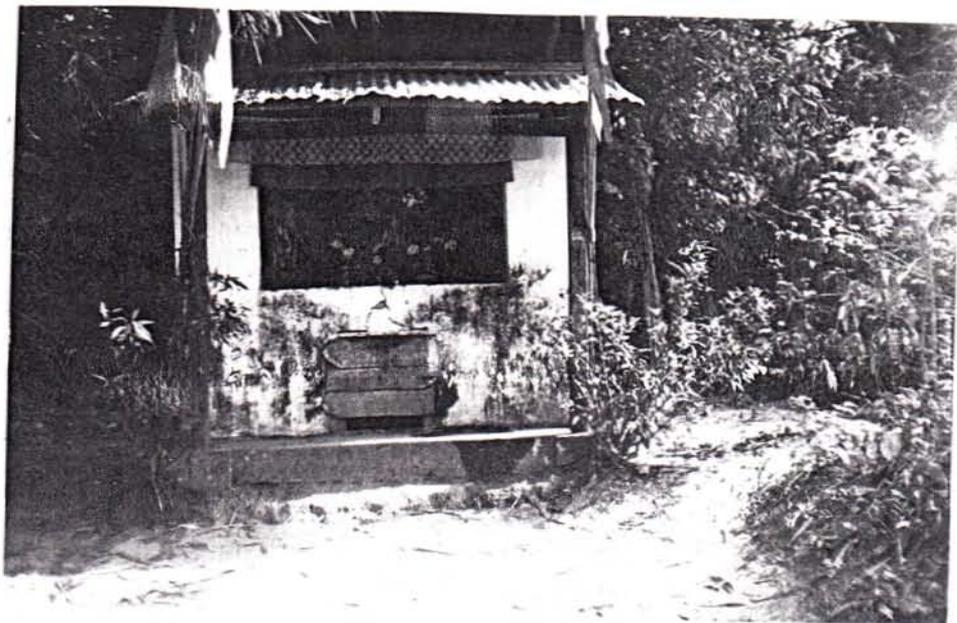
Shans of Leinmawgyan village believe in the good spirits of the earth although they do not keep images of spirits or Nats at their shrines at home. They would send good wishes to the Nats of the earth in Shan language when they pray, but this done only by the elders. They worship the Ywa-daw-shin spirit (the Village Nat), who they believe guards and supports them in their

business, social and health matters and regards it in reverence. There is only one Nat shrine in the whole village, which stands at the entrance of the Pike Lone Su village. An honourable person by the name of Saya Saw who is also very knowledgeable in local traditional medicine built the shrine after dedicating it to the Hmawbi Boe Boe. Some people call this village Nat (Ywa-daw-nat), the Nat of Nine Cities (Koe-myo-shin), referring to its guardianship of the entire nine sections of Leinmawgyan.

Today, besides the Koe-myo-shin, the sister's is also placed in the shrine. Some has added images of white horses. In fact the Ywa-daw-shin and Koe-myo-shin are not the same. The Ywa-daw-shin of Leinmawgyan is of the height of about a foot and it is accompanied by an image of about 8 inches tiger. The height of the shrine is 9' and area is 6" x 3". The shrine is built of brick and roofed in corrugated iron.

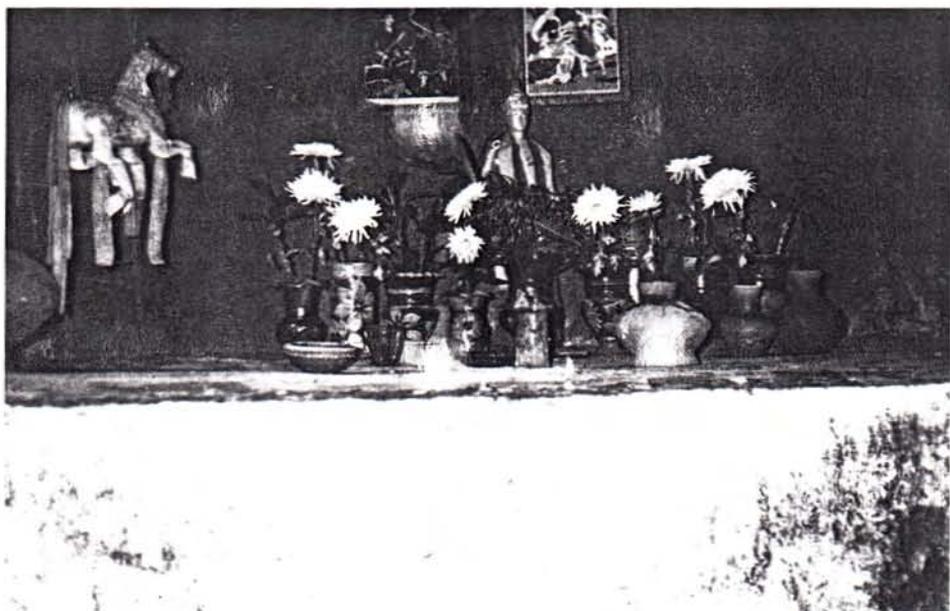
The villagers believe that they are guarded not only by the Ywa-daw-shin but also by the tiger. They would ask protection from the tiger should there be thieves or burglars disturbing the gardens or farmlands. The tiger would show that he has been keeping watch the next morning by his saucer-sized, or dinner plate-sized footprints around the yard or between houses and buildings.

The Ywa-daw-shin Nat is unfailingly offered with flowers, light and water the year round. Every year, proceeding the Buddhist lent period, on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd days of Tagoo and at the end of the lent, people would make their offerings village-wise. The offerings need to consist of 9 slices of white cake, 9 slices of red cake, one coconut cut up into small pieces, one whole bunch of peeled bananas in four plates. The four plates are for Koe-myo-shin, Sister Pale Yin, Ywa-daw-shin and the Brother-Sister Spirits of Mya Sein Taung. In addition there should be 3 bunches of bananas and a special bowl of offering consisting of candles, a packet each of perfumed joist sticks, 4 cigars. There



The Ywa-Daw-Shin Shrine

(Village Entrance)



should also be small flags made of white and red clothes fastened to bamboo sticks of equal length and have them fixed at the sides of the shrine. The flags are replaced with new ones when they wear off. The offerings are made to ask for providence in business, social and health matters.

Only the beginning of the offering period is determined as the 1st, 2nd and 3rd days of Tagoo but the ceremonies could go on at the villager's convenience and has no ending dates fixed. There should be no foul mouthing, quarrelling or rendezvous of lovers near the shrine.

Once, elephants of the Bago Yoma came into the village. That was the time when sugar cane was harvested. The villagers offered the Nats 3 bunches of bananas and prayed for protection of their sugar cane from the elephants. The elephants went away of their own accord. Non believers hit nails into the coconuts in scorn and offered it to the Nats and the village was burnt down from the candle fire from the bowl of offering. They had to apologize to the Nats. After that elders would admonish those who show disrespect to the Nats.

(c) Commemoration and Traditional Festivals

(c.1) Commemorations

(c.1.1) Shan National Day

According to history, Shan national chiefs known as Saophas had ruled their own provinces under the federal law in their own ways from one era to the next. These Saophas being blood relations in one way or another are very united and cooperative as well. Therefore, with the aim of making administration, judiciary procedures and communications smoother and more effective and efficient, they held a convention in 1928, and marked the 7th September as "The Federal of Shan State Day". From then onwards they all would meet on the 7th September each year and legislated laws and orders regarding administration and judiciary procedures. On 11th February of 1947, Shan Saophas and

national leaders met at Panglong and decided on shifting the Shan State Day from 7th September to the 7th February. Justification for the shift was that to celebrate the Shan State Day in September caused many problems since it was right in the middle of the rainy season. Therefore, to make matters more convenient, President of the Council of the Shan State Saophas, Sao Htun Pan Sing (Namsan Saopha) made declaration as follows on 7th February of 1947 in his letter dated the 11th September of the same year. The declarations regarding:

- The Shan National Day
- The Shan National Song
- The Shan National Flag is that,

Shan National Day, Shan National Song and Shan National Flag

At a meeting of all the Saophas and representatives of the people of the Shan State held at Panglong on the 11th February, 1947, it was unanimously decided that the Shan National Day be celebrated on the 7th February every year instead of as previously on the 7th September.

It was also resolved unanimously that the attached shall be the Shan National Anthem as a temporary measure and attached specimen flag shall be Shan National flag.

The flag shall be tri-coloured of yellow, green and red horizontal bars, with a white ball in the middle, nine inches in radius or one foot in diameter. The flag is to be three feet by five feet.

SD: Hkun Pang Sing

President,

Council of Shan State Saophas

Dated : Panglong the 11th Feb, 1947.

Since the annual meeting of the Council of Shan State Saophas in 1947 coincided with the national strife for independence, the Kachin, Kayin, Chin and Myanmar leaders were also invited to the meeting. Ever since the early 1960 the Shan National Day also came to be known as the Shan State Day. This day is regarded not only as the day, which represents a worldwide display of care and unity among the nationals, but also one, which commemorates the strife of the people towards freedom from slavery. It can be assumed that the National Day is born from the very core of the Shan National Day (Shan State Day), since it was on this day that the agreement was made between the different nationals such as Chins, Kachins and Myanmars to endeavour towards independence.

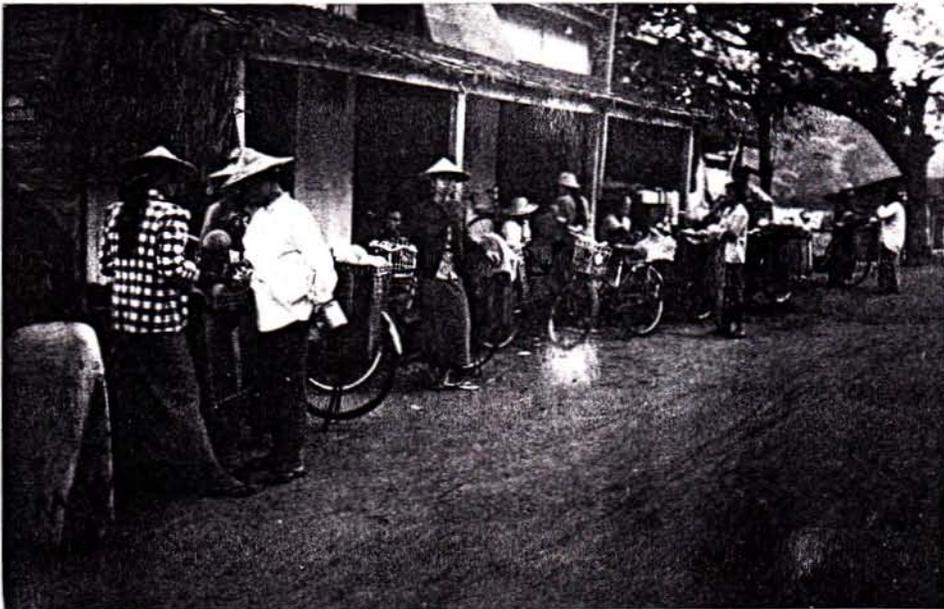
The Shan National Day is celebrated every year at the Leinmawgyan village with much fun and merry-making. At 10 o'clock in the morning of 7th February, village heads and youth leaders conduct the Opening Ceremony, where speeches are delivered on the background history of the Shan National Day. After that alms food is offered to the presiding monks and then the guests are treated to Shan Rice Mix.

In the afternoon at about 4:00 PM, groups of Shans from nearby villages and from their percussion and Ozi bands. The hosts welcome the arrivals with their non-stop Ozi performance in front of Shan Kyaung Gyi. The groups gathered and waited at the monastery until all have arrived. Then they start listening to the sermon by the Head Presiding Monk. They all share the merits after offering gifts to the venerable monks. Altogether, there are about thirty groups of 25.

As soon as the sharing of the merit is done, merry-making programs commence. The competitions of Ozi, sword playing, Toe-Naya (The Dragon Dance), Keinayi-Keinayar (Mythical Bird Dance), and fashion shows of Shan traditional costumes would go on until the next morning.



Visit from Neighbouring villages
on Shan National Day
(In front of Shan Kyaung Gyi)



Morning Market at Shan Bet

(c.1.2) The Shan New Year Day

All resident national groups of the Union of Myanmar celebrate their own New Year in their own ways. The Myanmar national signify the new year by washing away the sins of the old year with water at the Water Festival and starts a new life as a new person in the New year.

Shans do not throw water at their New Year. They pay homage to elders and request the holy monks to chant prayer and recite sacred Pali scriptures as safeguard measures for the coming year. The Shan New Year is on the 1st day of the month of Naddaw (some time in December) which is marked as the Month of the Parents.

Reasons for marking the 1st of Naddaw as the Shan New Year Day is thus. In the year AB 450 of the Buddhist Era, the 1st Century A.D, a powerful group of Shan Gyi nationals founded a kingdom on the bank of Shweli River and the great and mighty king “Sao Oo Te” became the monarch. Being very pious and religious, he sent his son “Prince Hkun Sai” to Sri Lanka (previously Ceylon) to request for and fetch the “Tri-Pitakat : The three Repositories of Buddhist Scripture”. He welcomed the arrival of the Prince and the Pitakat with celebrations for seven days and seven nights.

As a commemoration of the extension of the Buddhism, his might, propriety of the kingdom, as well as of traditional culture A.B 450 was determined as the commencement of the Shan Calendar. To find out the Shan Year, deduct four hundred and fifty (450) from he Buddhist Year or add ninety four (94) to the BC.

2543(A.B)	1999
- 450	+ 94
2093 (Shan Year)	2093 (Shan Year)

The Shan New Year month, which is Naddaw in the Myanmar Calendar, is called 'Lai Sin' in Shan language. 'Lai' means month and 'Sin' stands for the first month of the New Year of good weather and abundance of rice and foodstuff. Shans celebrate their New Year in four phases: Pint Sin, Pai Sin, Kein Sin and Lein Sin.

Pint sin

To cast away the sins of the old year and cleanse themselves, Shans would try to keep their minds and bodies as pure as they can go to the monastery collectively in families or by villages. There they would all play Shan Ozi in a heaven-bound crescendo.

Pai Sin

Worship services are conducted in togetherness where the elders are paid homage and they bless the youth in return. In addition, children would go from house to house and light perfumed joist sticks and light crackers in front to remind the household to participate in the New Year celebrations

Kein Sin

At the dawn of the New Year Day when children come to wish the household, the families would prepare sweets and snacks to treat the children. Some families would prepare traditional food or dishes and invite monks, village elders and neighbours for a treat to obtain blessing.

Lein Sin

Lein Sin is conducted as pre and post-New Year celebrations. They are displays and shows of traditional martial arts: staff playing, sword playing, lance playing and folksongs and dances.

Shans of the Leinmawgyan village celebrate the Shan New Year every year at the Shan Gyi Monastery at the Shan Su quarter in Taikkyi. Sometimes they would come to 9th mile Shan Kyaung in Yangon and jointly celebrate the

New Year. Not only Shans from Leimmawgyan but also those from Hmawbi, Thonze and Oakkan come over to the 9th mile Shan Kyaung for this occasion.

The Shan New Year is an important day in that it is a commemoration of the beginning of the Buddhist era for the Shans, and it is a remarkable activity towards the preservation of traditional culture.

(c.2) Traditional Festivals

Shan seasonal festivals are mostly a combination of meritorious and fun activities concentrated on religious procedures. Shans of the Leinmawgyan cannot afford to celebrate all seasonal festivals of the year, having to give priority to their livelihood of garden farming. However, they do celebrate the Water Festival, the Illumination Festival at Thadingyut, the 'Sticky Rice' Festival at Tabodwe. They join others in the Festival of 'Thousand Candles' at Taikkyi on the Full Moon Day of Tazaungmone.

(c.2.1) The Water Festival

At Leinmawgyan, on the eve of the Water Festival, villagers welcome Sakka, Lord of the Nats, with floral pots of coconut shoots, Eugenia leaves, plum buds and assorted flowers. On the three days of Thingyan and the New Year Day, elders would abandon their work for a while and keep Sabbath, and wash and clean the Buddha Statues. Traditional Shan dumplings are made during Thingyan by all Shan nationals far and wide. Being made from sticky rice with slab-sugar, groundnut and sesamum, the dumplings are most suitable for elders who are on a vegetarian diet during Thingyan. Offering and treating each other with these dumplings show the respect and merit shared. In paying elders homage, apologies are made for wrong doings committed against them.

In olden days the apologies were signified with packs of rice and curry. Today, however, apologies are made with snacks only. This interchange of

pardon is in much accordance with the Beatitudes and it is believed to accelerate development and success.

Children are allowed to play with water on the New Year Day. At the Shan monastery, the Buddha Statues that have been placed outside for the public to be able to wash and cleanse them are brought back into the monastery. The presiding monks are also requested to continue to honour the monastery with their presence in the coming year. Every year the Shans of Leinmawgyan celebrate the Water Festival in such noble, pleasant, delightful and courteous ways.

(c.2.2) The Thadingyut Illumination Festival

On the Full Moon Day of Thadingyut, Buddhists greet and welcome Buddha on his return from the Abode of Nats, Tawateinthar. During Thadingyut, the monks pay homage to their seniors. Ordinary people pay homage to fore parents, parents, teachers and mentors. Elders from the village are also paid homage to. They believe that obeisance to those who are dues is in accordance with the Beatitudes and that those who practice this are blessed.

The aim for paying homage is to lessen the effects of the oral, gesticulated and mental wrongs as much as possible. The presiding monks are also requested to continue to honour the monastery with their presence although the lent period is over. Although the traditional custom in paying homage to elders and mentors was done with rice and curry packs, the offerings of today have gone down to snacks with home grown vegetables and fruits.

(c.2.3) The Tabodwe Sticky Rice Festival

The Sticky Rice Festival of Tabodwe is aimed at a combination of obtaining merit, having fun and being healthy. Tabodwe is regarded as a very cold month when the body fat and marrow from the cold. Eating sticky rice

mix, made up of body heat generating ingredients, is believed to make the complexion healthier. There is a custom for the entire village to take part in the making of sticky rice mix. On the eve of the Full Moon Day every house prepares sticky rice, putting out their best efforts. On the following morning sticky rice is sent to all monasteries within reach and samples are exchanged among houses. These are the customs that are still in practice to date. In preparing the Shan Sticky Rice mix only the white glutinous is used. Brown sugar-slabs are cut to powder. Together the mix is steamed till the rice becomes soft and pulpy. A wooden spoon may be used to crush the lumps. The rest of the ingredient such as groundnut, sesamum and coconut strips are mixed in and stirred. A good sticky rice mix needs to be smooth but hard. It has to stay good and edible regardless of the length of time it has been kept. Sticky rice mixing competitions are held at the village to promote team spirit and to preserve a cultural tradition.

(d) Music and Dances

Different resident ethnic groups of the Union of Myanmar make their own modifications of the five types of musical instruments (i.e. Harp, xylophone, drums and the oboe) to suit their culture and tradition. They express their emotions such as nostalgia, melancholy, happiness, enthusiasm etc by playing these instruments and by singing and dancing to music. In doing so, the long-necked open-ended drum with a wooden frame, one end of which is covered by a tanned goatskin stretched tightly to form the surface, is the main instrument. The neck is about 7 feet to over 9 feet long and the surface end is about 12 inches to 14 inches in diameter. Steamed sticky rice is pounded into a pulp to make tuning dough. It is customary to have a series of 5 to 7 gongs, the biggest of about 18 inches in diameter and the rest in a descending order of about an inch difference in the sizes. In the early days Shan music

never used to be without the accompaniment of at least 5 gongs. However, it is played with a gong or two evens. Together with these instruments, a cymbal of about 9 inches in diameter called “Thanlwin Sibya” is used.

The drums are made with pomp and ceremony. They used to be made out of Pedan hard wood but eventually they are also made from other types of hard wood such as Bomeza, Yamanei and Peinei (Jack fruit wood). The wood pieces or logs are first dried to season and are carved out to get the desired frame. The covering surface is usually made from goatskin.

The drum or ozis as they are called are also big and heavy that only the very strong and healthy are able to carry it and play. In competitive performances between groups or villages, the group that could be heard from the farthest village is the winner. Therefore the drum players have to exert so much energy in order to be heard from as far as possible that there have been cases where a drum player would die of exhaustion or a heart attack (angina-pectoris). Today there are a very few people who play the short-necked drums but for only a few in rural regions.

Shan Ozi bands do not normally play at inauspicious ceremonies. They only play at pagoda festivals, religious ceremonies, State ceremonies and such. The Shan Ozi band is also called “Pubbei Htone” band. Some say that the band plays monotonous twangs, which go ‘Tein Nyaung’, ‘Tein Nyaung’. When a thorough study is made on Shan Ozi playing, it will be found that the sounds ‘pub’ ‘bei’ ‘htone’ ‘tein’ and ‘nyaung’ are played only in their respective places. The sounds have a varying patterns and timings. The cymbal and the gong would also come in at certain places concerning those rhythmic beats. There is a poem concerning those features.

ပတ်ဗေထုံသံစဉ်

The pubbei hton tune

မြည်ပုံမှာ-ထိန်တိန်ညောင်းရယ်နှင့်

Making Tein Nyaung sounds

ပေါင်းသဟာပျော်စေကြောင်းကို	To make friends merry
မောင်းသံနှင့်ဝှင်	The gong is struck
ရကွင်းကချမ်းချပ်ချင်	The cymbal goes 'chan-chat-chwin'
သံလွင်ကတနဲ	So does the Thanlwin
မင်္ဂလာခြိမ်းခြိမ်းသဲအောင်	To make the occasion joyous
ကိန္နရာ ကပုံနွဲ့တယ်	The Keinnra Dance is performed
ရှမ်းအိုးစည်ပွဲ	The Shan Ozi entertainment

The Shan Ozi programme would start with an introduction or a prelude with an oboe or a pipe followed by the Minister's entrance, a child's dance (Thu Nge Daw), the royal drum beat, the king's or emperor's entrance (Bayin-Htwet), the gentle breeze (Lei Byei Htoe), and the duet. All these scenes can be portrayed by the Ozi drum-play. The Ozi players are able play, “နမောတသ ဘ ဂဝတော အရဟတော” or “သမ္မာသံဗုဒ္ဓ” or “ဣတိပိတော ယံမင်္ဂလံ ဒွါဿတဟိ” without any other accompaniments.

Regarding the Shan Ozi there is a saying, which goes, “ကောင်ကွံယောင်းဟိုက် ပြင်စောင်ဖ” (kaun-kuan-yaun-heit-pyin-saun-hpaa”, a long-necked ozi drummer once became a Saopha. The saying indicates the significant role of the long-necked ozi as a traditional musical instrument in Shan culture. There is no doubt that Shans would continue to play this long neck drum to perpetuate their culture.

The Shan ozi is conjointly performed with (1) The Ozi Circle Dance: gents and ladies positioned alternately in a circle, (2) The Keinera Dance, (3) The Toe Dance and (4) The National; Procession Dance. However, in Leimmawgyan, the Shan ozi is played only for the Ozi Circle in which the Keinera and Toe dances are incorporated.

(d.1) The Keinara (Mythical Bird) Dance

People regard the Shan Keinara dance as the yearly homage dance to Setkya Waddy: Sovereign of the four islands of the universe. After Lord Buddha had given the Abidamma Sermon to his mother at the abode of nats, he returned to earth at dawn on the Full Moon Day of Thadingyut. Human beings, nats, bramahs and Keinaras joyously welcomed him with pomp and ceremonies. Shans were fascinated with the motions of the Keinari-Keinara and dance this particular portrayed at ceremonies even today. The lead drummer of the Shan Ozi is required to play pleasant melodies describing the wonders and grandeur of the forests and mountains. The Ozi band and the Keinara dance troupe are welcomed by the hosts of the ceremony with showers of floral confetti for people believe that visits from the Keinara as auspicious and they bring luck and prosperity. The Keinara dance troupe usually offers alms bowls to pay respect to the nats. Dancers have to pay respect to the costumes before they put them on. They pay respect to the drums as well. When they get the honorarium, they divide it among the group. Dancers wear masks at performances given in Thadingyut and Tazaungmone. As a prelude, the Keinara has to encircle the show-plot and do the tail-wagging act. After that in the main item he has to pay homage first and spread or gather his tails, bow or decline his head. In paying homage he also has to move his body i.e. raise, lower or crawl. After encircling the plot thrice to pay homage to holy monks and elders he dances to the Ozi rhythms and by flapping of wings and tails as if in flight, hovering about. If the drumbeats are poor the dancing is not smooth. The dancer signals to the drummer when the act is about to end. A short item lasts 5 minutes and a long item takes about 10 minutes. If the item involves a duet the dancers need to do act out a scene, when one get shoot by an arrow. While one acts out misery and anxiety, the other lies on the ground

receiving treatment from Sakka, the Lord of the Nats. The act would have a happy ending with the revival of the Keinara.

There is never a proper stage for the Keinara Dance. It is usually performed on a plot of ground with a smooth even surface. Since the dance limelight the twist, turns, flips and flexi-motions, it is at its best when danced by those with extremely supple bodies. The dance steps change from one act to the next with graceful folds of hands or legs or jerks of chin, which the drummer supports with soft drumming. Not only does the drummer coordinate with the dancer but he also needs to coordinate with his band. The percussion players i.e. the cymbals and gongs, have to watch the drum player and his movements very closely while they themselves play accordingly. The drummer watches the dancers and the dancers change their steps to the drumbeats. Perfect coordination is apparent among the band and the dancers. The faces of the dancers are hidden behind white masks in the Shan Keinara dance and not exposed as in the Unan and Myanmar Keinara dances.

Note –Keinara = An ancient Myanmar mythical bird.

Keinari = A female Keinara.

(d.2) The Toe Dance

Shans call this particular type of performance, “The Toe Dance”, whereas it is called “The Toenaya Dance” in Myanmar. Toe dance requires two dancers, one at the front and one at the back. The Shan Toe has longer body than that of the Myanmar Toenaya. It also has antlers. The horse like body can be stretched or folded in as needed. The Shan Ozi band accompanies the Toe Dance. The act begins with the beating of the gongs followed by the cymbals. Later on the ozi joins in as appropriate. The dancers would stretch out the body to signal their wish to pause or stop. Toe Dance does not involve

jumping or leaping, only the stretching and folding of the body and neck to the beating of the drum troupe. Dancers move forward and backward to and fro led by the drumbeats.

(d.3) The Shan Ozi Band (drums)

The Ozi players stand behind the dancers, in a semi-circle. The drummer stands a little forward in front others who would normally stand a step back. The open end of the drum seems to be attached to the gongs so that the drumbeats become resonant. There are over twenty styles of drumbeats. The beats vary according the variations in the tone of gongs, the timing and tempo-fast, slow, moderate and the combinations. The leading musicians may assume in general. There may also be side displays of martial arts such as bando, ban-she, sword dance, hand dance, hand and martial arts, sword and martial arts and staff martial arts.

The Keinara and Toe dances are Shan classical dances based on the Shan Ozi. At auspicious ceremonies such as weddings, noviation ceremonies, Thadingyut, Kahson Pwe, New Year celebrations and homage rites, the clanging of gongs and beating of drum echo throughout. The classical music and dances originate from the ancient homage rites of provincial Shan Saophas. A unique feature of Shan music and dances arises out of their non-involvement with inauspicious ceremonies.

(e) Superstitions and Taboos

Shans of the Leimmawgyan village have their own superstitions, interpretation of omens and casting preventive measures. Moreover, they have the 'Dos' and 'Don'ts', charms and taboos regarding religious, social and business matters.



The Shan Ozi



The Shan Ozi Dance

Shans believe that seeing a snake when one is about to set out on a trip means, the trip is going to be a long one. A snake in the house is a good omen, which brings prosperity, so the snake is not to be killed.

People do not cut fingernails or toenails while doing house-visits. The visitor is likely to trip and tumble and will be poor for life while the host will suffer poverty for seven days. Even if it is unavoidable he cutting should not be done a night. Women should not have their hair down and loose and walk about at nighttime. Evil spirits might hang onto their hair. Hair is not to be washed on Sabbath days for it means death on festive days. Moreover, hair washing is not to be done on one's birthday, Fridays, Mondays and Wednesdays. Shans avoid unlucky days.

Twilight time is called the oxen shedding time and children are not allowed to go outdoors. They believe that children can see evil spirits and might be scared if they see one. If one's hair is dry of oil at the time of an earthquake, he or she will go mad. Fluttering of the lower eyelids indicates the probability of tears.

Clothes should not be hanging on lines when the funeral proceedings are about to begin. If someone is sleeping at that time he is woken up. If someone dies during Thingyan (Water Festival) on the 1st, 2nd and 4th days, some earth is dug and put on the coffin signifying the burial with sands of the old year. However if one dies on the 3rd day of Thingyan he is not to be kept overnight and must be buried immediately for they believe the 3rd day to be unlucky. If someone dies out of the village bounds, he is not to be brought back into the village. If that is so desired the family of the deceased have to make apologies to the village nats (spirits) with appropriate offerings. Even then it brings misfortune to the family.

Shans do not ask for pets such as chicken or cats from others if they are entirely black, but if they are born or hatched at home there is no problem. A

hen that crows is a bad omen. They would kill and eat it. However, if it crows facing the house or at bedtime, it is a sign of prosperity. If it crows with its back to the house it is bad luck. Beehives in the house means if their arrival brings good things, there will be bad things when they leave and if their arrival cause bad things, there will be good things when they leave. If there are termite mounds at the side of the house towards the direction where the household lay their heads, they would light candles there and keep it auspicious. If the mounds are directly under the shrine or kitchen it means prosperity. Mushroom growing under the house is a good omen regardless of the location.

The chirrup of a house lizard coming from the front is a good omen. Having twins brings good fortune and prosperity. A screech from the bird of ill omen is a warning of the forthcoming danger for a sick person. A person with heavy footsteps is regard lazy.

Shans do not build house at the end of the road nor sit with their backs to the doors. It blocks out luck.

Number of stairs should not be even. They should be odd.

Gourd vines are not to be planted to the east or south of the house.

Gents are not to enter accouchement chamber. Ladies who have not yet had the menopause never eat food from the house where a woman had dies of childbirth.

When one approaches holy monks on the bicycle, he should get down immediately or else he goes to hell. Seeing a shooting star should not be repeated to others. One should not whistle at night.

Trips to the east should not be taken in nines, those to the south never in sixes. Trips are not to be taken on the 1st or 9th days of the waning of waxing periods of the moon (the Myanmar months).

CHAPTER 7

POLITICAL STRUCTURE

(a) Former Political Structure and Jurisdiction

(a.1) Former Political Structure

In the earlier part of the period proceeding the British confiscation of the country in 1885, the British government let the Shan nationals keep to the former traditional political structure and rule accordingly. However, in the Myanmar year 1888, the Shan nationals were compelled to abide by the Sanad Order. The implication of the Order is for Shan nationals to act according to the directives of a person appointed by the British Government. It was stated very clearly in the Order that those who disregard the contents of the order would be discharged from duties.

The different phases of the organization structure defined in the order are as follows.

- The Headman who administers 2 or 3 villages is to be called 'Sein' or 'Htamon'.
- The Headman who administers a village or a quarter is to be called 'Kan' or 'Kyawt'.
- Village criers, clerks may be appointed as well.

Ten points promulgated in the Government Order are:

1. The presentation money must be paid regularly each year. Although the amount has been determined to cover the first five years, it may vary, subject to the sanction by the Governor of Burma, regardless of the time limit.
2. Forests and mines are government properties. Persons with extraction permits must give the tax as fixed by the government. The extraction must

be done in line with the lawful procedures set by the government. Taxes for permission of grants and licenses must be paid.

3. As regards administrative matters, the directives of the Shan State Commissioner must be abided. The Commissioner must acknowledge public rights and proceed administration according to tradition. The public is not to be suppressed. Furthermore, he must protect the public from suppression as well.
4. Law and order must be preserved. Open trade is to be practised. Should traders be robbed within the region, compensation charges must be paid as the Commissioner think fit.
5. All proceedings are to be reported directly to the Commissioner. The Commissioner may appoint a representative to do the reports.
6. Should there be conflicts among the states, the details of the matter must be reported to the Governor. Should residents of a region commit crimes in another region, they should give a fine as determined by the Commissioner.
7. Should a certain portion of land in a region is required by the government for construction of railroad, the required area should be cleared and given up free of charge except for compensation for residents of the area. Assistance must be given to the construction of the railroad as well.
8. Liquor or drugs may be imported only after clearing narcotic tax.
9. Fugitives hiding within the region must be surrendered on request by government. Assistance is to be given to officials in bounty hunting.
10. Officials have no authority of jurisdiction on Europeans and British citizens. Charges involving foreigners must be handed over to the Governor of Shan State.

Apart from the rules presented above, the Shan authorities may rule the state according to the former traditional procedures. The Myanmar Government is allowed to appoint the village officials.

(a.2) Jurisdiction

Regarding jurisdiction, the attorney general is the Governor of Myanmar. The sentences involved are: (a) death sentence, (b) imprisonment, (c) flogging, (d) fine, and (e) confiscation.

1. Rebellion against the British Government of Governors will receive a death penalty and confiscation of property.
2. Willful murder may be sentenced to death, or lifetime imprisonment, or a shorter term of imprisonment of a fine in cash, as deem fit. Should the case cannot be proved as death by accident or man-slaughter, the sentence may be a death penalty (or) imprisonment (or) a fine (or) both.
3. A penalty of seven years imprisonment (or) fine (or) flogging may be passed for suicides.
4. Robbers (or) accomplices will be sentenced to imprisonment of not more than 8 years (or) a fine (or) flogging (or) both (or) a severer penalty. Should there be loss of life, all persons involved will be charged with murder.
5. If physical injury is done from anger, the person who inflicted the injury will be charged a fine of up to 200 kyats , depending on the nature of infliction. All or a portion of that fine may be given to the inflicted as compensation.
6. In rape cases, the sentence may be a 7 year imprisonment (or) a 300 kyat fine (or) flogging (or) a combination of two (or) a severer penalty.
7. Penalty for smaller cases (or) possession of stolen goods will be flogging (or) a fine of twice the value of the goods. Should the goods cannot be recovered, all or a portion of the fine is given to the owner as compensation.
8. In adultery, a fine of not less than 300 kyats is charged of the man and is given to the husband of the woman involved.

9. For contemplation of above crimes, the penalty is half of that of actual crimes.
10. All other crimes not mentioned above should be prosecuted according to the tradition and customs of Shan State. Death penalty may not be passed for cases other than those mentioned above.

To the present day, governing and administrative procedures in Leinmawgyan has always conformed to the policies laid down by the government, as it has in the pre-war and post-war days.

(b) Present-day Political Structure

According to the present-day political structure, the Leinmawgyan Village Peace and Development Committee is comprised of the following members.

- Chairman (1)
- Co-Chairman (2)
- Member (3)

The rights of authority and responsibilities assigned to the committee are as follows.

- a. Capture of criminals and their accomplices, and recovery of stolen goods.
- b. Custody of suspicious new-arrivals with unfounded excuses.
- c. Delivering criminals to the nearest police station together with the evidence.
- d. Contacting the nearest police station providing information that may prevent crimes.
- e. Aborting contemplation of murders, manslaughter, robbery, use of lethal weapons, and other crimes.
- f. Safeguarding state-owned property from invasion and destruction.
- g. Supervision in recording births and deaths according to directives.

- h. Preventing and extinguishing fires, protecting the public from disturbances, environment cleanliness, and prevention of epidemic diseases according to directives.
- i. Provision of required items for economic, social and security officers according to directives.
- j. Keeping records of overnight visitors and taking charges against those who do not report.
- k. Confiscating weapons, use of which are prohibited in public places.
- l. Implement health programmes in coordination with the Health Supervisory Committee.

The village Peace and Development Committee is given the authority to act according to the directives from the government in matters relating to educational, health, social welfare activities. The Committee is also granted the rights to take safeguard measures from natural disasters such as storms, floods or fires. It may also implement survival aid programs for victims of such disasters. The Committee may conduct village development programs. The Committee is assigned the task of settling disputes concerning rights of land, banishing invaders on uncultivated plots, virgin or fallow land, taking action against those who disregard the existing land laws, and giving support and encouragement to farm workers towards the enhancement and success of garden farming.

(c) Village Organization and Settlement

(c.1) Village Organization

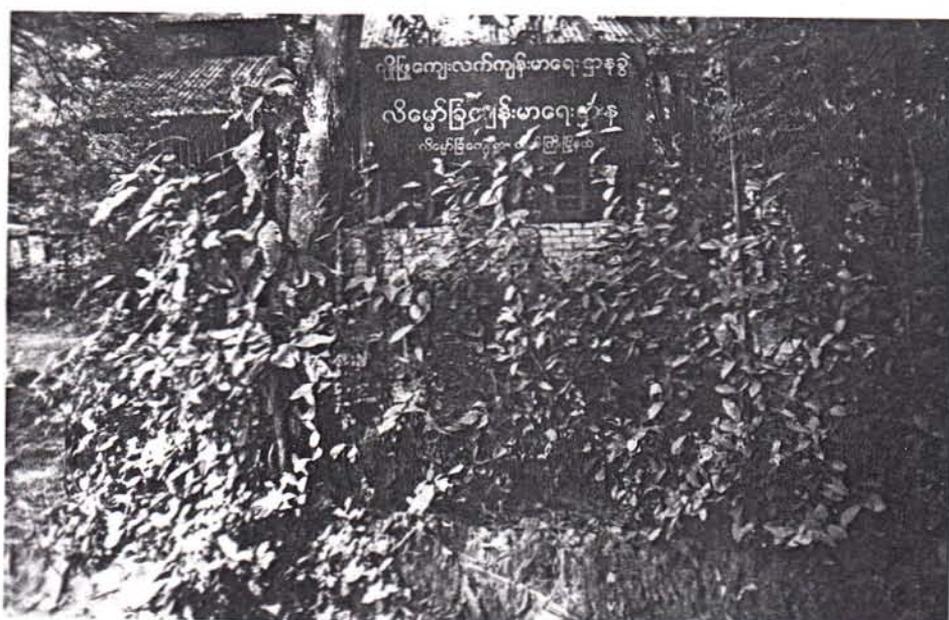
The original settlement of the Shan Nationals of Leinmawgyan is to the east of the Taikkyi railroad, at a place called Shan Su or Shan Bet. The place got its name 'Shan Bet' from being a residential area of Shan nationals from

the very early days. The Shan Su quarters accommodates 5 lanes known as Shan Su 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th Lane. Today, the main occupation of the residents of the village is bamboo hat making and farming has become a minor occupation. In earlier times, Shan nationals of Shan Su had to go to places of some distance to do farming. That was how they came to settle down in Leinmawgyan. The same applies to the establishments of Nyaung Lay Bin, Kyaung Su, and Ywa Thar Yar. According to hearsay, some ignorant people who could not discriminate between lemon (shauk) and orange (leinmaw), seeing lemon trees in the yards named it Leinmawgyan. The Leinmawgyan village tract constitutes 8 villages: Nyaung Lay Bin, Ale Ywa, Ywa Thar Yar, Kyaung Su, Pike Lone Su, Payagyi Su, Kine Kwin Gyi. The Leinmawgyan boundaries stretch from Nyaung Lay Bin to Kine Kwin Gyi. Farms in the western part of Kine Kwin Gyi extend to the foot of the Central Yoma.

Nyaung Lay Bin village, which happens to be the origin of the Leinmawgyan village tract is 1 ½ miles to the east of Taikkyi. Other villages of the tract are about another 1½ miles from Nyaung Lay Bin. The villages stand in line on each side of the main road facing one another. Along the Nyaung Lay Bin Road at the roadsides are paddy fields and sugarcane plantations. Farms and yards of gladiola, lemon grass, black-eyed Susan, pineapple, betel vines are mostly found along the footpath close to the Central Yoma. Although a motor road has been built up to Nyaung Lay Bin, the Gyobyu Waterpipe, which is 6' in diameter, lying across the road, makes it impossible to commute to Nyaung Lay Bin by car. Drinking water is supplied to Yangon by this pipeline from the Gyobyu Reservoir, which is about 4 miles from Kine Kwin Gyi village of the Leinmawgyan village tract. The Gyobyu Reservoir supplies about 16 million gallons of water per day to Yangon. Water from five large streams including the Gyobyu stream and their tributaries are



The Village Entry Way



Rural Health Center

stored in the Gyobyu Reservoir. Springs and ravines surround the Gyobyu Reservoir.

Nyaung Lay Bin is marked as the model among the villages of the tract for its rectangular format, systematic road construction, organized life style of the people, and its similarity to urban areas. All houses in the village have fences around 40' x 60' compounds. Anyone desiring to move in is required to have recommendations by at least two prominent natives of the village. He must give his word to abide by the political, social rules and regulations pertaining to the laws of the State. Formerly, residence of non-Shan nationals is not permitted.

An official is appointed for the Leinmawgyan village tract, a merger of the villages, as Chairman of the Village Peace and Development Council. Each village has a Social Committee Chairman of its own. These officials have to take charge of all social activities in the village.

(c.2) Settlement Construction

As regards construction of houses, Shan nationals of Leinmawgyan are in the practice of consulting wise and experienced adults in predictions and fortune telling, so that they would succeed in business and health. The wise would advise whether to have a 'genie based' or 'boar based' foundation and help them to pick a lucky day. They would also throw out a handful of rice grains, count them and start building a house only when the grains are even numbered. When it comes to timber they use only teak, pyin-ga-doe or hardwood to avoid having wormholes. They go to Central Yoma to buy timber from timber traders there and condition the pieces at home to suit their use. Normally, thatch is used for roofing. Thatch roofing is readily available in Leinmawgyan since it is the occupation of some of the villagers. Some stitch

the roofing at home. The well to do have corrugated iron roofing. Most of the houses are long legged two-storey wooden constructions.

There would be a bamboo model of a bow and arrow and some *Eugenia* leaves tied to the center post. Pieces of jewelry are dipped in water and then poured onto the top of the post for prosperity. While the posts are being erected, they should not touch one another. Neither should they fall, because it means bad luck. The altar or shrine is attached to the house proper, facing the road. The houses are usually 20 or 30 square feet and are painted in numerous coatings of crude oil. Friends and relatives help in building houses and the owner sees to the meals for helpers daily. Only when the building is huge then carpenters are hired. There is usually a storage compartment on the ground floor where gladiola bulbs, firewood, pomelos, twin-baskets and other household commodities are stored or kept. Members of extended families sometimes accommodate the ground floor. The upstairs hall may not be partitioned if there are no grown-up sons or daughters. The bedrooms are partitioned according to the number of offspring. Bamboo partition walls are normally used. The kitchen is upstairs and they cook and eat upstairs. Only in the Hot Season do they cook downstairs to prevent accidental fires.

In reconstruction or renovations, timber that has been used downstairs may not be used upstairs, but that used for upstairs can be used upstairs. Stairs erection is done on lucky days only. The number of stairs must be odd in count. Twenty-five pya coins are nailed down to the stairs to portray roads paved with gold and silver, or as defiance against Fate. Housewarming rites are conducted in the mornings. Monks are invited to chant prayers for prosperity and safety. The number of monks should be odd in count and vary between one to nine.

Almost all houses in Leinmawgyan have tube wells. The underground watercourse is reached at the depth of about 75'. The wells are usually dug in

the Cold Season. To find out whether there is a watercourse underneath, a piece of cotton wool is covered in an earthen container and left overnight. If the cotton wool piece is wet in the morning, they assume there is a watercourse underneath the surface and start digging. Because there is water in abundance, all houses have eggplants, beans, roselle and pineapple grown in their yard. Big trees such as mango, marion, and pomelo are also grown for shade.

CONCLUSION

This paper is a case study of the social organization of the Shan Gyi national of Leinmawgyan Village Tract of Taikkyi Township. The findings are organized into seven chapters according to the different aspects of Anthropology they are concerned with.

Chapter One deals with the background history of the village: the origin of the people and how they come to reside in Leinmawgyan. The summary of the findings show that in their search for greener pastures, the first settlers discovered an area of fertile land where they could farm and settle down on their pilgrimage journey to the Shwe Dagon Pagoda in Yangon. The pioneers found their dreamland at Taikkyi, a place about 40 miles from Yangon. The village tract is composed of 8 villages, out of which Nyaung Lay Bin, Kine Kwin Gyi, Ale Ywa, Ywa Tharyar, Pike Lone Su are the villages where most of the Shan Gyi nationals are found. Shans constitute 80% of the population where the remaining portion of the population are Myanmar and Kayin nationals. Their will and determination is reflected in how they struggled with difficult situations caused by earthquakes and destruction by elephants of the Bago Yoma. The chapter also portrays the hardships these pioneers had to face in establishing a settlement which people of the present day are now occupying with peace and comfort.

In chapter two, the role of Shan language is lime-lighted. The villagers' pride of their language and efforts to preserve the native tongue is apparent in their use of Shan language as the major language for communication, the old and the young alike. Teachers from the Shan State are hired to teach the language to the children every year during the summer holidays. Shans are honest and simple. They have no greed and are content with what they have got as long as they have a sufficient amount of income to make ends meet.

There are not many crimes or unfairness since they are god-fearing and religious. There are always people who are fasting and keeping sabbath at the monastery the whole year round. Freedom of choice may be observed in their style of clothing. There is only one style of costume for Shan gents, but they can choose the colour they fancy. Ladies can wear two different styles: Maw Shan and Shan Gyi. Like the gents, they also have the freedom of choice with colours.

Respect and priority given to elders is reflected in Chapter Three. The father, as head of the family has the authority as well as the responsibility regarding matters of the household. The mother takes over on the death of the father. In cases where both parents have passed away, the eldest son (or) daughter has to take charge. Elders have influence on the younger members of the family. Regarding kinship, there is no discrimination between patrilineal and matrilineal kin: both are treated alike. Half brothers and sisters are treated as own brothers and sisters. There is no adoption among the Shans of Leinmawgyan. Orphans are looked after by relatives but not adopted. Sons inherit a larger portion of the family fortune. Daughters inherit only the jewelry they wear.

The social activities are presented in as much detail as possible in Chapter Four. One of the unique features of the Shan Gyi tradition is that there would be an initiation of 30 to over 100 novices at their initiation ceremonies, whereas in other cultures such communal initiation practices are not as many. Initiation of a single novice is rather uncommon in the Shan Gyi tradition. Another outstanding feature among the social activities is the number of elopements that outnumbers the traditional betrothal in the present days. Today's practice is for the boy's parents to search for the couple within a week and return the girl to the parent's charge. Only after doing that the couple may be wed.

The decline in the economy of the entire village is an overview of Chapter Five. Leinmawgyan used to prosper with the growing of lime. However, after the earthquakes that resulted in the damage of the fertile soil, the villagers had to resort to growing of gladiolas and other seasonal fruits in addition to handicrafts such as basket weaving and bamboo hat making. Even then, these activities do not affect the economy as much as the growing of lime.

Facts presented in Chapter Six clearly indicate that the Shan Gyi nationals are pious and take religion seriously. This feature, in itself, portrays the Shan Gyi people as simple, honest and kind. Their traditional ways of celebration and entertainment also proves that they are truly an exclusive community, the culture of which is worthy of study and acknowledgement.

The last chapter shows that the Shan Gyi nationals are peaceful, law-abiding citizens. They had always abided by the laws of the ruling government and the jurisdiction procedures.

On the whole, the study of the social organization of the Shan Gyi nationals of Leinmawgyan in Taikkyi shows that these people have a unique way of preserving and maintaining the Shan culture. At the same time, they are capable of moving on with the modern advancements, making modifications and adaptations when and where necessary.

In the process of this case study, I have come to understand the Shan Gyi national and their culture much more than I had previously hoped for. There are many other social communities in our country of which a case study of the same nature could be done. It would be an invaluable benefit for the country as well as for the national races to have exposure to the culture of other groups or races so that the inhabitants will be able to understand each other better. Only then, our people will be able to live in peace and solidarity.

APPENDIX

List of Interviewees

No.	Name	Age	Occupation	Address
1.	Buddanta Thanwara	71	Chairman, Twonship Monk's Association	Shansu Qtrs., Taikkyi
2	U Wimala	53	Assistant Lecturer, Religious Literature	"
3	U Zar Nay Ya	48	Presiding Monk, Mya Sein Taung	Paya Gyi Su Village
4	Daw Thet	91	Dependent	Nyaung Lay Bin Sanpya Village
5	U Than Shwe	65	Gardening	"
6	Daw Nu	65	Market sales	"
7	Daw Than Yee	58	Gardening	"
8	Daw Hla Kyi	43	Gardening	"
9	U San Nyein	40	Village official	"
10	Daw Than Nu	40	Firewood seller	"
11	U Hla Kyaing	40	Gardening	"
12	Daw Than Than	35	Gardening	"
13	Ma Than Aye	35	Gardening	"
14	Ko Khin Zaw	33	Gardening	"
15	Ma Myint Than	33	Gardening	"
16	Ma Hla Hnit	31	Dependent	"
17	Ma Tin Mar Yee	30	Gardening	"
18	Ma Myint Myint Khine	21	Sales	"
19	Ma Ohnmar Myint	20	Dependent	"
20	Ma Thandar Aung	17	Dependent	"
21	U Hsu Pyinyar	80	Bamboo Hat Trader	Shansu Qtrs., Taikkyi
22	Daw Nyein Bwint	76	"	"
23	Daw Aye	70	"	"
24	Daw Nu	66	"	"
25	U Kyaw Tint	60	School teacher	"
26	Sai Kyaw Hpyoe	35	Gardening	"
27	Ko Kyaw Htoo	35	Gardening	"
28	Nan Nyunt Yee	34	Sales	"
29	Ma Aye Mu	30	School teacher	"

APPENDIX (CONTINUED)

List of Interviewees (Continued)

No.	Name	Age	Occupation	Address
30	Ma Kyu Kyu Khine	30	School teacher	Shan Su Qtrs. Taikkyi
31	U Nyo Tun	69	Gardening	Kyaung Su Village
32	Daw Khin Hla	65	Gardening	"
33	U Than Gyaung	52	Gardening	"
34	Daw Than Sein	52	Gardening	"
35	Ma Mya Than Hla	36	Gardening	"
36	Ma Nwe Nwe	34	Gardening	"
37	Ko Ye Tun	31	Bamboo Hat Making	"
38	Ma Thida Oo	25	Gardening	Ywa Tharyar
39	Daw Aye Mya	89	Dependent	"
40	U Pwar	65	Twin Basket Weaving	"
41	Daw Aye Nyunt	63	Dependent	"
42	U Aung Thein Kyi	45	Firewood Trader	"
43	Daw Tin Aye	40	Sales	"
44	Ko Aye Soe	40	Firewood Trader	"
45	Tin Tin Aye	27	Sales	"
46	U Pwa	55	Bamboo Matting	Paik Lone Su Village
47	Nyi Nyi Aung	23	Gardening	"
48	Zaw Lin Oo	18	Gardening	"

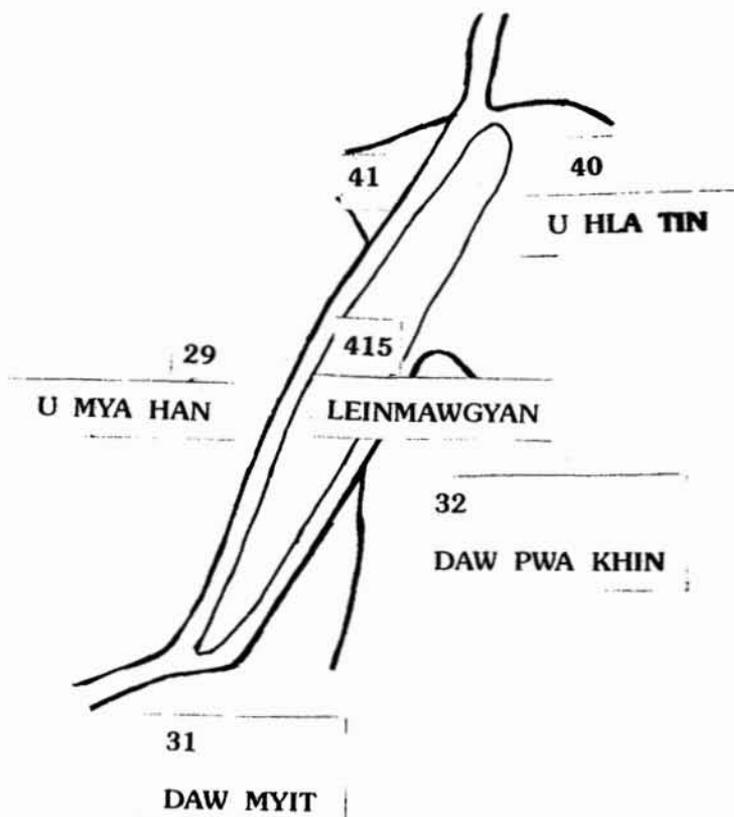
ကျမ်းကိုးစာရင်း

- ၁။ ဘ ရှင်၊ ဗိုလ်မှူး ပြည်ထောင်စု မြန်မာနိုင်ငံတော် သမိုင်း
၁၉၅၀ ခုနှစ်၊ ဒီ ဇင် ဘာ ၁၀ ရက်
- ၂။ မြန်မာ့ ဆိုရှယ်လစ် လမ်းစဉ်ပါတီ ရှမ်း ၊ ၁၉၆၈ ခုနှစ်၊ ဇန်နဝါရီလ
- ၃။ မင်းနိုင်၊ ဦး ပြည်ထောင်စု အကပဒေသာ
၁၉၅၉ ခုနှစ်၊ ဇန်နဝါရီလ
- ၄။ မြင့်၊ ဆရာ၊ ဒါရိုက်တာ မြေပြင်ဆီ မှ သွေးချင်းများ
- ၅။ မြင့်၊ ဆရာ၊ ဒါရိုက်တာ ဒို့. လူမျိုး၊ ၁၉၄၆ ခုနှစ် ဇန်နဝါရီလ
- ၆။ မြင့်လွင်၊ ကမ္ဘောဇ ရှမ်းကုန်းမြေမြင့် က ဒဏ္ဍာရီများ၊ ၁၉၆၁ ခုနှစ်
- ၇။ မြင့်လွင်၊ ကမ္ဘောဇ သိကောင်းဖွယ်ရာ ရှမ်းပြည်မှာ၊ ၁၉၆၃ ခုနှစ်
- ၈။ ပုကလေး၊ ဦး မြန်မာနိုင်ငံ တောင်တန်း ဒေသများ၊ ၁၉၆၃ ခုနှစ်
- ၉။ စံအိုက်၊ စိုင်း ဆာမ်လော၊ ၁၉၇၁ ခုနှစ်
- ၁၀။ အောင်မွန်၊ မောင် သာချင်း တို့အကြောင်း တစေတစောင်း၊ ၁၉၇၃ ခုနှစ်
- ၁၁။ နန်းဖြူဖြူထွန်း၊ တက္ကသိုလ် အဖေနှင့် အခြားဝတ္ထုတိုများ၊ ၁၉၉၂ ခုနှစ်
- ၁၂။ ဉာဏိသဘာ၊ အရှင် ရှမ်းကျောင်းကြီး ဆရာတော်ထေရူပတ္တိ၊ ၁၉၆၈ ခုနှစ်
- ၁၃။ မြို့နယ်ပါတီယူနစ် တိုက်ကြီးမြို့နယ် မှတ်တမ်း၊ ၁၉၇၉ ခုနှစ်
- ၁၄။ ဘ ဖေ၊ ဦး အလယ်တန်းမြန်မာ့သမိုင်းအကျဉ်းချုပ်၊ ၁၉၅၅ ခုနှစ်
အောက်တိုဘာ ၁
- ၁၅။ ရှမ်းစာပေ နှင့် ယဉ်ကျေးမှု ရှမ်းမဂ္ဂဇင်း၊ ၁၉၉၅-၉၆ ခုနှစ်၊ ကော်မတီ

THA MAP OF LEINMAWGYAN

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1999-2000 YEAR
VILLAGE NO. - 264
LEINMAWGYAN VILLAGE



SCALE - 16 INCHES = 1 MILE