

**"THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE DAWEI NATIONAL"
DAWEI TOWNSHIP, TANINTHAYI DIVISION,
UNION OF MYANMAR**

SUBMITTED BY MA AYE SANDI

AN - 5

ANTHROPOLOGY

1997-1999

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Introduction

The Union of Myanmar is composed of national races. The vital requirement to exist for the Union is the unity among the national races. To this end, the national races shall abide by the cultural traditions of each nation by all. As they differ in races, localities and cultural traditions; one needs to study them from all corners in length and breadth. Only then, one shall understand the other and the relation will be smooth and the unity will be existences.

In human society, human beings live in separate communities and they undertake and conduct social, economical administration and religious affairs for their society's solidarity.

By performing such factors successfully in unity, a social society emerged firmly: this social structure means composition of collected things or composed things in a body. When one wants to study any of the society one must study the basic groups in detail so that one can know the cultural traditions of a society. I have studied the cultural traditions of Dawei nationals who live in Dawei Township in Taninthayi Division centered on their social formation. Although Daweis are in the Myanmar group, their cultural traditions, fine arts and language are peculiar in a different style. Dawei "Dance sound" which was recorded in "Maha Gita" Manual Music Book is a peculiar music in a sense. As the formation of Dawei Township entered into 200 years, their culture also has been in existence for many a year. I, being a Dawei national, exploiting a golden chance to write a thesis, for my master degree, I have decided to write on my own

locality, Dawei and its fading – away traditional customs to give an exposure to other nationals in Myanmar.

Being so, I have studied the Dawei national's social organization with undermentioned three objectives –

1. To write and submit a thesis for a Master degree ,
2. To expose and let other national understand the Dawei national traditional customs ,
3. To get closer understanding among the nationals on their respective culture and get closer unity.

Chapter 1

Geographical Location and Historical Background

(A) Geographical Location

(1) Locality

Dawei township is situated in the middle part of Taninthayi Division on the Taninthayi coastal region. It spreads over an area of 2636.142 miles (4217.83 km). The township is about 90 miles (144 km) in length, and 51.16 feet above sea level. Its borders are, the Royal Kingdom of Thailand in the east, Yebyu township in the north which separates the Taninthayi Division from the Mon State up north, Thayet-chaung township – next to which lies the Myeik township - in the south, and Long – lon township – next to which lies Andaman Sea – in the west. The exact bearings of Dawei town are between East Longitudes 98 degrees 10 minutes and 99 degrees and 12 minutes; between North Latitudes 13 degrees 17 minutes and 14 degrees 30 minutes. Dawei is 230 miles (368 km) from Yangon as the crow flies.

(2) Terrain

The type of soil in Dawei township is that of the coastal one. Reddish crust, alluvial soil, and laterite are found Commonly. The terrain rises from the coast in the west to the Thai-Myanmar border in the east. The Dawei River close by has just a little valley of flat land to the east. Hilly landscape begins from Pakari village, east of Dawei town, right to the Thai-Myanmar borders. The Myint

– mo Let – kyat summit, 6,800 ft. is the highest, and in the second place is the Nwa – la boh summit with a height of 6,000 ft. above sea level. Ten miles (16 km) to the west in offshore Andaman Sea, there are 3 archipelagos, namely, Hein-ze, Moung-ma-kan, and Long-Ion. In Dawei terminology, archipelagos are known as "boats".

Moung – ma – kan Beach

Moung – ma – kan beach is 13 miles (20.8 km) away from Dawei. It is a harbour for boats playing between Ye, Yangon, and Mawlamyine. The beach being an oval shoal on the continental shelf, the cool and pleasant turquoise – blue waters have become very popular with bathers. From every direction Moung – ma – kan looks scenic. It is a bathing sanctuary with flat plains of the shoal evenly slopping towards the sea. With the tide rising and ebbing twice daily, the natural scene of the wavy shoal with a variety of designs is really breathtaking. The shoal has a length 5 miles (8 km) and a breadth 500 yards, and the wild flora of casuarinas make the beach a sight of peculiar beauty.

In the year 517 of the Myanmar Era, (AD 1155) King Along Sithu set foot on Dawei region The Royal Barge was anchored at a particular place along the coast. During that stop – over, the courtiers of the Royal entourage went down for bathing and frolicking on the beach. Thus, the place was named after these courtiers (Moung – ma – mi – than). The original site of the Moung – ma- kan – is a little farther east of the present one.

