

**“THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF RAKKHINE NATIONAL”**  
**KIN MAW VILLAGE, THANDWE TOWNSHIP, RAKKHINE STATE**  
**UNION OF MYANMAR**

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**AN - 10**

**ANTHROPOLOGY**

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## INTRODUCTION

The national races of the Union of Myanmar reside in our country as Myanmar nationals. Our national leader General Aung San pointed out in his speeches that these national races are inter-dependent on each other. Although this may be the case, the life style, customs and traditions, ideologies and attitudes, depending on their habitat and environment, differ in many ways. The union solidarity is the key factor for prosperity and perpetuation of the nation.

It is the duty of Anthropologists to reveal the traditions and customs of the national races in order to help the different races to understand each other's cultural practices in spite of the geographical disparities and differences in cultural traditions. Therefore the aim of this paper is to:-

- (1) record survey data on the cultural practices of the national races and thus realize the objectives of Anthropology.
- (2) provide information for the future generations and interested parties to exploit the customs and traditions of national races.
- (3) to pave the way to a better understanding and smooth relationships among the races from the study of their traditions, taboos etc. It is also aimed at passing on the information to authorities concerned of the needs of the races so that these needs may be fulfilled.

Rakkhine natives of Kin Maw village hold their heredity in such high esteem that they would give their lives for the cause. They are especially appreciative of a sound heritage and do not think much of half casts or the mixing of blood. They believe in their tradition. They are pious and

acquire enjoyment in religious teachings. Therefore there are no aliens of a different faith or heritage in Kin Maw village. All villagers are **Buddhists**.

Although there have been instances of such mixing of the blood in neighboring villages such as U yin Byin, Kyaung Daik, Taun Nyo, Let pan Su, Kyaing Kaseit and Thayet Maw, natives of Kin Maw take great pains to avoid marriages with foreigners or aliens.

Furthermore, help and guidance from village elders are assets. Some could experience the folk festivals and ceremonies themselves. Those who do not, could learn about it from village elders. It is remarkable of the natives of Kin Maw to have preserved their culture to the present day.

The facts above have been of great assistance in this study on, 'The Social Community of the Rakkhine Natives of Kin Maw Village'.

## CHAPTER 1

### LOCATION AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

#### (A) Topographical Features

Kin Maw village is situated at 6 miles north of Thandwe in Thandwe Province, Rakkhine State. The village lies between  $18^{\circ}32'$  –  $18^{\circ}35'$  of north latitude and  $94^{\circ}21'$  -  $94^{\circ}25'$  of east longitude. To the east lies Kayan Maw village, to the west lies Oo Yinbyin village, to the south lies Kyaung Dike village and to the north lies Taung Nyo village. It lies alongside Thandwe Creek (Illustration 1) and is two furlongs in breadth and a mile in length. There are altogether 500 families constituting a population of 3287 persons.

(See Illustration 1)

Although the land surface is plain flat and even, there is Wunti Mountain in the north, Minpone Mountain in the south and Myo Taung in the west. The Thandwe creek that lies along the east gets tides in the Rainy Season.

Although it lies in the tropical zone, it receives the southwest and the northeast winds. The Hot Season begins in March and lasts until May. June, July, and August are the wettest months but the rain decreases in August when the season ends. Annual rainfall is approximately 200 inches. The Cold Season is from November to February but it has a temperate weather even in the Cold Season owing to its location near the sea. Since the Rakkhine Yoma barricades the southwest winds that blow through the Bay of Bengal, it gets a lot of rain.

## **(B) Historical Background**

According to the Rakkhine folktales, the nats or guardian spirits founded the Iszura City millions of years ago for Prince Thamuti Deva who was a descendant from the 1<sup>st</sup> Buddha of the Four.

Rakkhine comes originally from Pali, meaning guardianship. Since they are pious Buddhists, they prefer the name '**Rekkine**' from the Buddhist literature rather than '**Rakkhine**'. Rakkhine is called '**Rakka Pura**' in Pali. The stone inscriptions at the Shitthaun Pagoda denote that Rakkhine was known as '**Arekkha Deisa**' in Sanskrit literature. Indians refer to it as '**Arakan**' and so did westerners.

Rakkhines cherish their habitant and adoringly refer to it as '**Barekkhine (or) Barakkhine Nation**'. They refer to it as their fatherland rather than the motherland. Upon studying the physical characteristics of the races of Myanmar, it becomes apparent that Myanmars descend from the Mongoloids. Natives of Kin Maw are therefore descendants of the Mongoloids as well.

According to classification of races by geographical distinction, there are four sub categories of the Mongoloid kin. They are: -

- (1) Habitants of the north
- (2) Habitants of the south
- (3) Habitants of the oceans
- (4) Habitants of America

The Mongoloid descendants of Myanmar are of the southerners.

The southerners may be classified again into three categories:

- (1) Mon Khmers
- (2) Tibeto Burmese

### (3) Sino-Chinese

How Rakkhines came into Myanmar may be referred to old folklore. According to these tales, the Tibeto Burmese entered Myanmar only after the 9<sup>th</sup> century. From among the group of settlers Rakkhines chose to settle in the west. Some researchers say the migration into India could be traced back to BC 2000. They say the Tibeto-Burmese settlers had migrated into the country much earlier than the Aryans and other Mongoloids that came in around BC 100. Evidence may be found that there have been earlier settlements.

- (1) Entry of King Thamu Deva and his retinue into Yamawaddy prior to BC 6000.
- (2) Entry of a group of ten, headed by the brothers, Wathu Deva, Bala Deva into Dwarawaddy prior to BC 6000.
- (3) Entry of Kinsena Devi, Bhrama Sondra and followers into ancient Weitharli Kingdom prior to BC 5000.

In the colonial days, the British took advantage of slight differences in the accent due to geographical variations and emphasized it to cause discrimination among the people by classifying them as separate groups such as Sittway Rakkhine, Rambrei Rakkhine, Mahn Aung Rakkhine, Chaung Thah Rakkhine and Thandwe Rakkhine.

Kin Maw village has been a perpetual ambush patrol camp even since the reign of ancient Rakkhine kings. The village got its name from patrol 'Kin' and the cape on which the patrol camps are stationed, 'Maw'. The cape in question is where the Kin pagoda now stands.

(See Illustration 2.a-b)

In earlier days there were only about forty houses, comprising of a certain group of kin. Later on, the Rambrei Rakkhines joined them and introduced pottery to the place. Their customs and traditions were also those of the ancient Rakkhines. In view of Anthropology, the merging of cultures may be caused by interactions with groups of a different geographical environment as such. In this case the customs and traditions of the people of Kin Maw are merged with those of Rambrei.

### **(C) Physical Characteristics and Costumes**

As mentioned above, natives of the Myanmar Naing Ngan are descendants of the southern Mongoloids of the four Mongoloid categories. Gretz Taylor assumed that the Mongoloids are descendants of the Aryans. Some people suspect that the Rakkhines are a mixture of Aryans and Mongoloids. They have broad heads and yellowish brown complexion, prominent eye folds and nose. They have brown eyes, thick coarse hair, and thick eyebrows. Their jaw- bones are normal. The average stature of a Rakkhine male is 5'6" to 5' 9" or 5'10". They have stout torsos.

Rakkhines used to wear traditional costumes but in the present day, they wear them on special occasions only. The males need to have their headdress flap hanging to the left. There are no pockets on the upper part of the over jacket, only in the lower part. There are slits of about 1.5" at the sides of the jacket at the hemline called 'Hpa Kwei'. There should be embroidered Thazin floral designs on the front piece of the ladies' costume. A shawl with embroidered linings is usually cascaded over the

shoulders on top of the jacket. Ladies' longyis are worn with the floral lining (Paun San) on the left.

(See Illustration 3)

#### **(D)Language and Literature**

The language that Kin Maw villagers use is, in fact, a regional dialect of the Myanmar language. The Rakkhine language makes use of guttural sounds and rolls, which make the utterances, sound harsh and abrupt. However harsh their language may sound, the Rakkhines are good and sincere people. Their language, being a dialect of the Myanmar language, has variations from the Myanmar language in vocabulary and pronunciation.

<u>Myanmar expression</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Rakkhine expression</u>
Narnat Thee	Pineapple	Nataya Thee
Paloh penan u	Tapioca root	Kappali u
Malacca thee	Guava	Gohran Thee
Thokkalau	Lock	Kalau Thee
Suppya	Soap	Thabon
Thinbaw Thee	Papaya	Padaka Thee
Pasoe	Male sarong	Khadaung
Meebone	Lantern	Mee Einbyan

There is a saying in Myanmar meaning "Each monastery has its own prayers, varying from village to village". Likewise, many

expressions vary in pronunciation and vocabulary. Some examples follow.

<u>Numerals</u>	<u>Myanmar</u>	<u>Rakkhine</u>
1.	ti	tai
2.	hnit	hnai
3.	thone	thai
4.	lay	lay
5.	nga	nga
6.	chau	karau
7.	khuni	khunai
8.	shi	Shai
9.	koe	koe
10.	tasei	tasei
11	setti	Settai
12	sennhi	Sennhai

#### Days of the week

<u>Day</u>	<u>Myanmar</u>	<u>Rakkhine</u>
<b>Sunday</b>	Tanin ganwei	Tanin gani
<b>Monday</b>	Tanin lah	Tanin lah
<b>Tuesday</b>	Inga	Inga
<b>Wednesday</b>	Boaddahu	Boaddahu
<b>Thursday</b>	Kyarthar-padei	Karathar-padei
<b>Friday</b>	Thaukkya	Thaukara
<b>Saturday</b>	Sanei	Sani

In Rakkhine, if a vowel ends with ‘ေ’ in the written language, the pronunciation is ‘ေ့’.

Rakkhine written form      Rakkhine pronunciation

စစ်တွေ	စိုက်တွေ
/sitwei/	/saitwei/

‘ေ့’ is pronounced as ‘ေ့’

‘wear’ is pronounced as ‘way’

‘swear’ is pronounced as ‘sway’

The three tones of Myanmar / ei / are pronounced as the three tones of / i /.

e.g.	<u>Myanmar</u>	<u>Rakkhine</u>
	yei	yi
	cheidan	chidan
	chei	chi

There are many others that are similar in meaning but different in pronunciation. Below are a few examples.

<u>Myanmar</u>	<u>Rakkhine</u>
ဘ ဘဲ	ဘဲ
ရပ်ပါ	တန်ပါ

လျော့သွားပြီလား	လတ်သွားပြီလား
နဲနဲလေးပေးပါ	နဲနဲသူငယ်ပေးပါ
မရှိ	မဟိ
စားပြီးပြီလား	စားပြီးရာ
စွန် :	စွမ်း
မဖြစ်	မမြိုက်

Rakhines use the 33 letters of the Myanmar alphabet for both general and religious literature. However, the style of expression is different.

The Rakhines are simple and sincere. They would not bully others nor let themselves be bullied by others. Many Rakhine proverbs and sayings arise out of their traditional ideologies, their daily struggle for survival, and social interactions with others.

### Some Rakhine Proverbs and Sayings

ကိုး စိပ် ကိုး လန် ကိုး ပင် ကန်၊ ကျင် သန် တက်ပြီးစည် ကို တီး။

Koe seik koe lan koe pin kan kyin than tet pi si goh tea

The saying is a kind of applaud or cheer for the ancient Rakhine warriors on the war vessels urging them to fight with the sense of unity.

ကုက္ကို သာ: ခွီး စား ပြီး

Kokko tha kwei sah pea

On days when hunting is successful, dogs are fed until they could eat no more. These dogs are not fed again until the next successful hunt. This proverb is used for people who do not work at a regular pace but when they do work, they do so without sleeping or eating.

ကျား ကိုက် လိုက် စွာ ထက် ငင် စွာ ရိရေ

Kyar kait lite swar htet ngin swar yiyei

The moaning and groaning is greater than the tiger bite. This is used when there is too much exaggeration and complaining over a loss which is comparatively minor.

ခရမ်း သီး ပိန် ခါး တုံး၊ လူပိန် ဉာဏ် တုံး။

Kayan thee pein dah tone, lu pein nyan tone

A blunt knife would not cut a shriveled aubergine easily. Likewise, a lazy good-for-nothing person with no integrity nor drive would not be able to achieve anything at all.

ချီး စိုက် မိုး ခါ မှ ချီး ကိုင်း တံ ရှာ နေ။

Chee saippoh gamma, chee kindan shar nay

This is used for a person who looks for things in frenzy just before he goes out when he should have made preparations in advance.

မ စား ရ ဘဲ အညှော် ခံ၊ အောင်ဗလ မိ ကံ။

Masah ya bei anyaw kan, Aun Bala mi kan

Having to bear the nasty smell of frying fish or mosigyaw (a Myanmar sweet made from sticky rice and jaggery) without having a chance to eat them. In the same way, this expression is used when one has to bear the brunt in anticipation of an opportunity that would never come his way.

There are many Rakkhine proverbs similar to those of Myanmar. A few are given below.

- (1) ဂဏန်းလှေဆုံး၊ ခြွန်းလှေဆုံး။ ( The crab is lost, so is the hook. )
- (2) ကုလားအို၊ နွားကျောင်းကျ။ ( Old Indian gets cattle watching duty)
- (3) ကုလားမနိုင်၊ ရခိုင်ကိုမိန်း (မေး)။ ( If you can't beat an Indian, ask a Rakkhine)
- (4) ကောင်းစီလိုလိုတရားနာ၊ ဒူးနာနာနန်ငြား။ ( Listen to a sermon to get merit, you get your knees hurt)

- (5) ကျွန်မှာကုလား၊ မယားတောသူ။ ( Take an Indian as slave, a village maiden as wife.)
- (6) ချောင်းရိုးတိမ်လို့၊ မျိုးရိုးမတိမ်။ ( Streams may die, genes will not )
- (6) ခွီးမှာနရောင်၊ လူမှာဒူး၊ ကြောင်မှာနဖူး။ ( Hit dogs in the nose, people in the knees, cats in the forehead.)
- (8) ဆူးမှာဖက်ကျ ဖက်ဒုက္ခ၊ ဖက်မှာဆူးကျ ဖက်ဒုက္ခ။ ( Whether a thorn hits a leaf or the reverse, it is the leaf that suffers.)
- (9) ဆလိပ်မှာအတို၊ မယားမှာအပျို။ ( A cheroot should be short, a wife - a virgin)
- (10) ဆင်းရဲကာ အမျိုးမတော်ချင်။ ( People do not want poor relatives.)
- (10) ဇရပ်နန်မီးသွီး၊ တံတားနန်ချိုး ( As unsuitable as the temple is to coal, so is a bridge to bowels.)
- (11) ဈေးရိပ်ကြည့်လို့ ငါးဖဲ့ပါးပါးသင်။ ( Slice the fish into thin pieces if the price is high.)

- (12) ညဉ့်နက်သန်းခေါင်၊ တစ္ဆိမြောင်။ ( Spirits and ghosts are likely to haunt at night.)
- (13) တစ်ရွာသားတစ်မျိုးစီ၊ မက္ကလာဆောင်းတစောင်းစီ။ ( Each village has its own people and its unique music.)
- (14) ထွက်တေဆင်စွယ်၊ ဝင်ရေမဟိန်။ ( Once an elephant's tusks have started to grow, there's no turning back.)
- (15) ဒါဒေါင်စပါးယူလိုစား၊ အတိုးဒါဂျီဆပ်မကျီ။ ( Once you've taken a loan, there's no end to the interest)
- (16) ဖားကိုတုလို့ခရုခုန်၊ ခုန်ရေခရုတူနိုင်းရိုးလား။ ( A snail is imitating a frog with no avail.)
- (17) ဘုန်းကြီးမှာသုံးကျောင်း၊ မိမ္မမှာသုံးလင်။ (As a monk who has been transferred from three monasteries, so is a woman three times married)

- (18) မိဘ စကားနားမထောင်၊ သားတစ်ကောင်နဲ့တွဲလွဲလွဲ။ ( The result of disobeying parents is having problems with a baby hanging onto you.)
- (19) မြို့ဝန်မင်းစောင်မ၊ ထောင်သုံးလကျ။ (Only when the Mayor helps, will things get worse and you will one get a 3 month's prison sentence.)

Elders and seniors of Kin Maw village use the above proverbs to admonish the children, youth, and subordinates. Most people believe that proverbs and sayings are effective measures for developing morals of the members of a social community. Therefore, the proverbs are practiced and relayed to the younger generations. That is the main reason why Rakkshine proverbs are still much appreciated today.



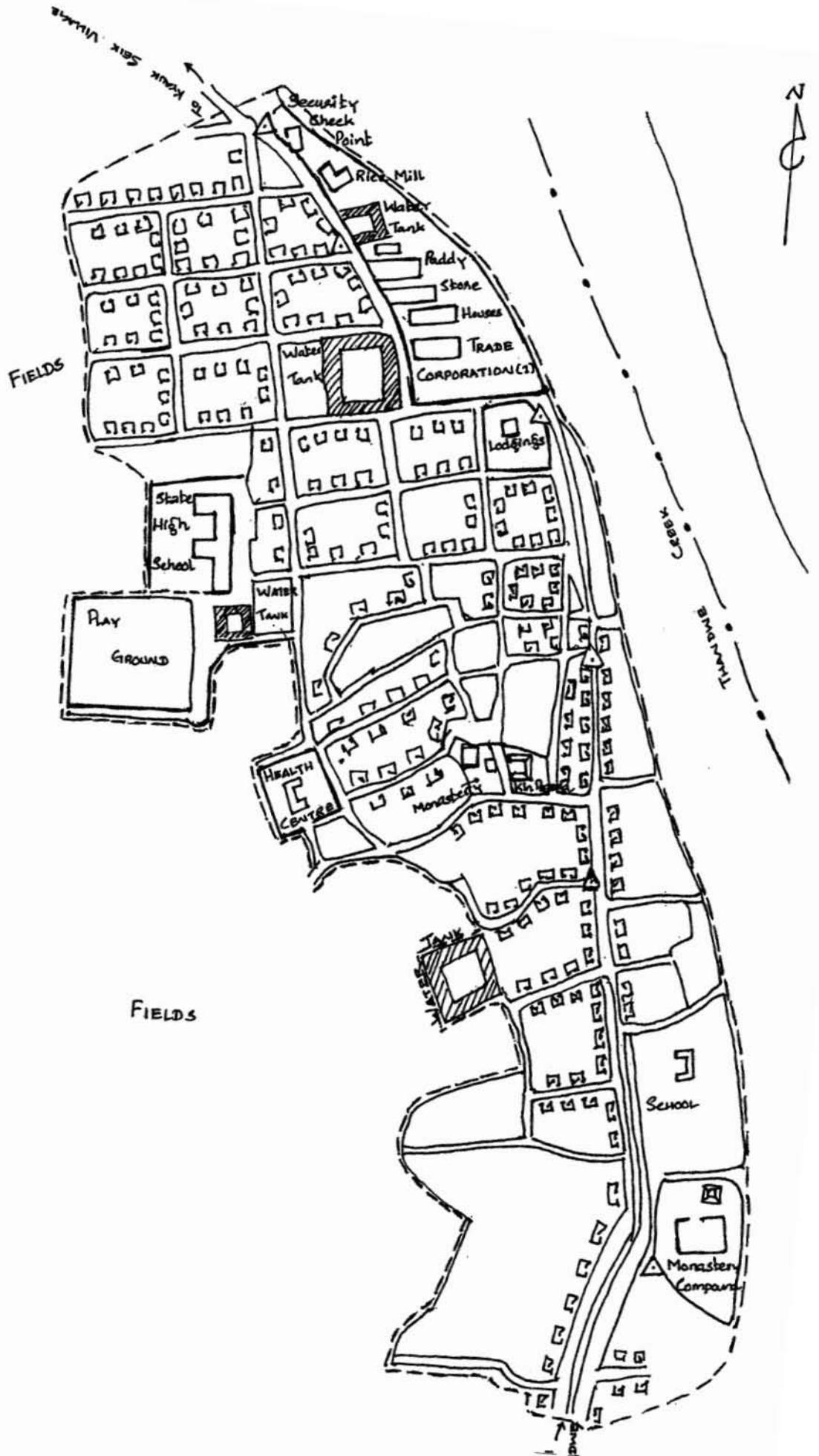




Illustration (1)

Thandwe Creek



Illustration (2.a)

The Kin Pagoda



Illustration (2.b)

Statue of Buddha found during restoration  
of the pagoda



Illustration (3)

Rakkhine Gent and Lady

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **FAMILY ORGANIZATION AND SOCIAL INTERACTIONS**

#### **(A) Infancy and Childhood**

From infancy, the Rakkhine children of the Kin Maw village inherit mechanism of social behavior under influence of the community. They are nurtured to abide by customs and traditions, to develop intellectually to be able to keep up with modern advancement; to love and be proud of their origin, race and religion; all of which would develop their personality. The Rakkhine nationals are not only industrious but are also caring parents. As the saying “Parents are worthy of being called the initial teachers” goes parents are the ones who first teach their children to be adaptable to the social environment since birth.

Parents send their children to school from the age of four or five. Children learn to adjust with or adapt to the social environment and develop their personality from the teachings at home by their parents, at school, and from playing with their seniors. There are few child adoptions. Biological children and adopted children have equal rights.

#### **(1) The Naming Ceremony**

According to the Rakkhine tradition, the Naming Ceremony is held at the end of the mother’s child-birth confinement which is about 5 to 7 days after child birth, that is 7 days for the first born and 5 days for the rest. Friends and relatives were invited over and given food and

refreshments and the naming begins. A small patch in the child's head is shaved as a ritual where relatives and friends touched it with a kind of local shampoo made from the bark of Tayaw plant and the Kin-pun beans. Rakkhines call this activity 'Kin-pun-kine'. At this ceremony boiled Kin-pun - beans, oil and tumeric powder, a fist full of rice, a stone and a nail are all put together in a tray. Prayers are said for the child's health and prosperity.

Visitors, while touching the child's head with shampoo say prayers for the child to have health, to be as hard as a nail, and to have plentiful food. A lady patron then carries the baby and powders the paws of its feet with earth and takes it back to the house. This activity is called 'Nay-lapya' meaning 'exposing to the sun and moon', and implying a march on the victorious ground. While showing a mirror and a headdress to a male child or a comb to a female baby, their ears are pierced. After that, visitors are treated to sticky rice or Rakkhine rice vermicelli. In earlier days presents were not accepted but there are some that do nowadays.

## **(2) Initiation**

The natives of Kin Maw village observe the precepts and give charity. Since they are pious followers of Buddha's teachings, they need to ordain their sons into novice hood when they come of age.

In preparation for the ceremony, the hosts are required to build pandals and buy or hire necessary furnishings and decorations. They also need to buy and preserve foodstuff such as dried fish, rice, oil etc. in advance since it is not customary to offer fresh meat or fish to guests. They send the novices to the monastery to learn how to count beads and

to familiarize them with the rules and regulations that novices have to abide by. The would-be novices need to be very careful so as not to be endangered or fall ill. They are not to take risks such as climbing trees, swimming in lakes or taking trips over night. They are not to play hide and seek either for people believe that spirits might hide them. Two days before the ceremony parents send the requisites consisting of robes, alms bowls, two upper garments and one under garment piece of robe, one girdle and a razor knife to the monastery. They also take coconuts and branches of banana as gift offerings. On the day before the noviation, village elders, parents and village damsels, together with the would-be novices go to the monastery to ask for the robes from the venerable monks. The novice, in his grand costume and head dress is accompanied by water pot carriers, chosen for this special activity by their names which correspond to the novice's day of birth. They play music and dance merrily all the way to the monastery.

On their return trip from the monastery the mother of the novice has to carry the robes on her head and the father carry the requisites to the decorated pandal. When they reach the pandal, the village youths and maidens hide the novice and ask for ransom money from the parents. This traditional play is called 'Novice Hiding'.

The noviation pandal must have among the setting, the eight requisites : the alms bowls, the lower robes, the akasie and dukut ( the double lined robes), needle and thread, the razor knife, and a water streamer. There should be a coconut, three palms of bananas and earthen or bronze flower vase of eugenia leaves as well . The ceremony is usually held very early in the morning.

(See Illustration 4)

(See Illustration 5)

On the morning of the ceremony, novices are made annointed with sprinkles of scented water from eugenia leaves on the head. After that, the hosts throw confetti of coloured rice (red and yellow) and money in the crowd.

(See Illustration 6)

A significant feature of the initiation procession is for the novice, who is on horseback, to be accompanied by maidens (whose names correspond to the novices day of birth) carrying holy water pots at the front. After the maidens comes the mother holding bedrolls, blankets and pillows. The father (Shipha) carries the on his shoulder. The novice proceeds on horseback shaded by golden umbrellas normally carried by young men with favorable birthdays.

In the head-shaving ceremony, a monk with a favorable birthday has to initiate the shaving. The shaving is then carried on by experienced senior monks. Parents of the novice receive the cast-off hair with a white piece of cloth. When shaving is thoroughly done, the novices have to cleanse themselves. Senior monks need to request for the robes from the Presiding Monk have them blessed after which they robe the novices themselves.

(See Illustration 7)

At initiation ceremonies, gents and ladies, youth and maidens of the village, lend a helping hand with joy and enthusiasm. Guests are

treated to Rakkhine vermicelli, rice and curry consisting of dried, pounded fish, assorted salad and soup etc.

There is no limitation for the number of novices and age at the initiation ceremonies. However, most of the novices are from seven years to the teens. Parents of the novices and the patrons of the ceremony have to send meals to the monastery for the novices until they cast off their robes.

Monkhood is permitted only when a person is the age of twenty or more. Furthermore completion of novicehood is a requirement for entering into monkhood. The ordination of the monks is lead by the Presiding Monk accompanied by at least five senior monks. The Sacred Pali Texts are read at the ordination ceremony. A person becomes a monk as he departs from the ordination hall. Parents, relatives and friends have to wait for the monk to emerge from the hall at the entrance, ready with offertory gifts.

(See Illustration 8)

Offertory gifts presented at the emergence from the ordination hall are regarded as the noblest deeds. The term of either the novicehood or monkhood (seven days, nine days, a month, three months of the Buddhist Lent – a full term), is to be determined by the novices or monks themselves depending on the length of time they think they could keep their vows. As junior monks, they have to keep the two hundred and twenty seven commandments by Lord Buddha including the ten precepts.

### (3) Traditional Games

Man cannot live alone. He must have friends and be part of a social community to survive. Native of Kin Maw have a particular trait of developing the children's personality by letting them play with other children so that they will be able to interact well with in the community. Children need to have ideas and concepts that would promote the human society. To obtain appropriate ideology and do things accordingly, they sing folk songs and have a variety of fun activities.

One of the games that the majority of the children of Kin Maw play is 'Shwe-Soon-Nyo' (*The Brown Kite*). This game is usually played in shady places in the daytime and moonlit night with much enjoyment. Many could participate in the game. One plays the brown kite and the rest stand in queue in the order of size holding onto the front person's hips. The smallest and the last become Ma Htway. The first person stretches out his arms sideways. Chanting of the following verse is done in turns between the brown kite and Ma Htway's group.

- Group** - **Brown kite, for what are you hovering about?**  
**Brown kite** - *For Ma Htway, I'm hovering.*  
**Group** - **Ma Htway's flesh is very bitter.**  
**Brown kite** - *I'll wash it in creek water.*  
**Group** - **Creek water has dried up in summer.**  
**Brown kite** - *I'll wash it in river water.*  
**Group** - **River water has dried up in summer.**  
**Brown kite** - *I'll wash it in the sea-water.*  
**Group** - **Sea-water has dried up in summer.**

**Brown kite -      *Sea-water never dries up, so I'll catch Ma Htway,  
thus.***

And so saying the Brown kite chases Ma Htway running from left to right while the group tries to protect her children play joyfully with team spirit.

Another folk game is the '*Cock Fight*' game. Participants squat on the ground and chant the verse below in unison.

*“The Tainyin cock goes into the woods  
Maung Yin will shoot at it with a bow  
Don't shoot Maung Yin  
You'll die of a prick from the cock's spur  
Whether it pricks from the left  
Whether it pricks from the right  
Let's just fight my friends  
COCK - A - DOODLE - DOO”*

Then participants swing their arms and legs sideways and back and front. The one who can do it for the longest time wins.

Their games empower concentration and confidence as well as will power from not wanting to lose.

### **(B) The Youth**

In all societies, social activities are cared out age-wise. According to this grouping in terms of age children who are still dependent upon parents are not given any social tasks or responsibilities. Only the youth

are able to take part in community matters and can have the privileges and rights that are due to them.

Rakkhine young men usually go and visit young women to court at evenings. The approach differs from one region to the next in the Rakkhine State. In earlier times, there used to be an approach to courting where the house of young single women have holes in the walls or the floor for the young men to probe around which is called 'The Hand Probing' approach. However this approach is now obsolete.

A young man ear-mark the young woman of his choice when he meets her at festivals such as the Water Festival, the Lighting Festival, etc. or at ceremonial occasions such as the monk initiation ceremony, weddings or a regatta. When an opportunity arises, he goes and proposes to her and court. Sometimes courting is done across different places.

### **(B.1) Male and female youth leaders**

Leaders are chosen for male youth and female youth in Kin Maw village. These leaders are the most powerful and influential among the youth and have a substantial amount of importance in the relationships of these young people. The leaders are responsible for any matter that arises. A young man has to get approval from the male leader and request for his assistance in proposing her. The male leader then informs the girl through the female leader. Only after that the courtship may begin.

According to the tradition, there are two types of register to use when courting a Rakkhine lady. One is the ordinary everyday language and the other is called the 'Zan' language. Native of Kin Maw, having

descended from the Rumbeyi Islands would not use the everyday language in courting. They normally use the 'Zan' language.

The word 'Zan' comes from 'Sun' and has changed in pronunciation to 'Zan'. 'Zan' means testing. The young man his lady would test each other's wits to fall in love. Ladies of the village have concern only for men who can speak 'Zan'. The youth use the witty, mysterious, poetic 'Zan'.

Young men go serenading when the elders have gone to bed. They would approach the young women, then and make their proposals. The young man would stand somewhere on the ground and try to catch her attention by waving swords, threshers and handkerchiefs. The young woman would accept a proposal that comes only from the one she likes. An example of 'Zan' is provided underneath. For instance the dialogue in 'Zan' is as follows:-

*Young man*  
*Young woman*


*In Myanmar*

The Zan verse means - a young man asks the sleeping lady whether she doesn't hear his call or if she is pretending to be asleep because she is angry. The young woman replies that the tamarind-tree has blossomed thrice over and so has the Kyee tree (a medium sized timber tree). You never even made an appearance for once. Is that because you **have** been visiting other ladies and having an affair?

All young men have to approach his seniors and the young women have to do the same to learn Zan when they come of age. From this come they say “ Young men need to know Zan when they come of age ”.

### **(C) The Betrothal and Marriage Ceremony**

In view of the Rakkhine tradition, marriage is a social function where the bridegroom has to go over to the bride's to marry her. This has been in practice since the very early days. Therefore, the wedding ceremony is called the 'Marein Tet Pwe' which originates from 'Maya Ein Tet Pwe', meaning 'getting into the bride's house'.

#### **(C.1) Choosing the Partner**

Parents of both parties usually arrange marriages of Kin Maw dwellers. However, there are some couples who have made the choice by themselves. Parents give priority to those of the same kin and only when for one reason or another, it is not feasible, then they would look from among other kin. Children are very obedient to their parents and they normally accept these arrangements made for them. There are also matchmakers or go-betweens who help to make the would-be couple get to know each other better. In the regional dialect it is called having 'Aun'. Sometimes, the would-be groom has to go to the girl's place for her people to view him. This activity is called 'Lu Lone Pya'. It is quite different from courting.

## **(C.2) Betrothal**

### Acknowledgements

The betrothal is done in many stages according to tradition. The first is 'Acknowledgement' where the would-be groom send word to the bride's family that he would like to call on the bride and hers, accompanied and supported by elders, seniors and those involved to formally ask for her hand in marriage.

## **(C.3) Presentation of Gifts**

In the second stage, the groom's family honors the bride's by sending presents in order to know each other better. The present packages consist of foodstuff only. It is decorated with floral buds and blossoms, all of which are placed in a container. It is sent in anticipation of smooth relationship. And to indicate their status, and to imply the future privileges. The girl's family would boast on the number of packages they get. There is no limit as to the number of the packages. However, the more the packages, the more reliable the betrothal becomes. This practice has almost diminished nowadays.

## **(C.4) Forecast by Birth-dates**

The third stage is the forecasting of the couple's fortune by their date of birth. A comparative study of the couple's dates of birth is done. The two detailed documents regarding their birth is written and scrutiny is done to find out whether the days of birth are matched and whether they would suit each other. This activity, 'Yet choke', is led by guests, village

seniors, parents and senior family members. If the dates of births do not match, wise seniors would arrange aversion of impending misfortunes.

### **(C.5) Bride Price Offering**

Bride price, in the forms of gold, silver, farms, land and draught cattle are given over to the bride's family by the groom's. It is called 'Athwin Pay'. It is not to be regarded as the girl's family asking for a price nor as the boy's parents buying her off. It is done to honor the bride by showing appreciation of her social status, beauty and refined behavior, by the groom's parents. It has nothing to do with asking fees for services but a lot to do with support, praise and appreciation.

### **(C.6) Fixing the Date**

Wedding dates are not usually fixed on Pyathada days, which are days of misfortune calculated according to the Myanmar calendar. They are neither set for any day during the months of the Buddhist lent (Wasoh, Wagaung, Tawthalin), Pyatho and Tabodwe. Furthermore, the 1<sup>st</sup> days of the Waxing and Waning Moons are avoided as well. “အောင်ပကုလား၊ဆွေသားတော်ရင်း” or “ဓမ္မာသောကအင်းဝရာဇာ”, formulas may also be used to choose a suitable wedding date. Since Rakkhines are pious and serious in matters concerning religion, they do not like to get themselves involved in worldly activities (weddings being linked to sexual activities), however auspicious.

Tradition goes that should the engagement or a wedding be annulled, the Bride Price has to be forfeited when the annulment comes

Tradition goes that should the engagement or a wedding be annulled, the Bride Price has to be forfeited when the annulment comes from the groom's side or if it is from the bride's side, the Bride Price has to be refunded.

#### **(C.7) Expenses on the Ceremony, Entry into Village and Entry into the Bridal Chamber**

Expenses for the marriage ceremony has to be paid to the bride's family in advance by the groom's family. There is no limit to the amount; only as much as one could afford, just for the sake of tradition.

Should the bride and groom be from different villages, a sum of chip money is put in charge of the male youth leader of the bride's village on the very day of the betrothal. The amount is not fixed. It is known as village entry fees of village christening fees.

#### **(C.8) The Blessing Ceremony**

On the day of the marriage ceremony at some time in the morning, village elders and patrons are invited to be paid homage. The elders, in turn, bless the couple. The ceremony is made auspicious by the Master of the Ceremony who would sprinkle perfumed water with Eugenia leaves on the groom and his two best men, while chanting blessings. The groom needs to avoid wearing dark colours for the ceremony.

In the same way, the bride also is made auspicious at her own place.

### **(C.9) The Reception**

Receptions commence on the eve of the marriage ceremony at the houses of both the bride and the groom. Servants take charge of the preparation and cooking of the meals while the youth of the village see to the catering.

There would be unusual activities at the bride's that evening. The leading maiden and company would go from house to house to collect maids for the bride. This activity is known as 'gathering of the bridesmaids'. When they go scanning the village for maidens, they would offer tea leaves in cones made of banana leaf. In the later years sugar is used instead of tea leaves. These damsels would dress themselves up in fine clothes and have to try to make the occasion active and merry. They are not supposed to see to cooking or catering. When the maids have been gathered, they all would go to the bride's house and compose slogans to attack the groom's young men and put them in their place. They would try to dig up facts about the groom and his relatives.

The singing of these slogans represents cooperation and strength among the peers and encourages people to be merry and enthusiastic. The sound of clapping and cheering rises in a crescendo. The activity, although done mainly to sneer or snub one another, reflects the features and characteristics of the social community and the culture of the era.

### **(C.10) The Marriage Ceremony**

Preparations start in the evening. There is a procession led by prominent ladies of the village carrying a pot of blessed water, new furniture and paraphernalia for the bridal chamber such as blankets, mat,

pillows, mosquito net, suitcases; all wrapped up in velvet shawls. Some weddings or Marein Tet ceremonies are grand affairs whereas some are not, according to the social status of the persons concerned. In any case, the youth of the village are the ones who enjoy the weddings most, grand or otherwise.

At marriages of the elite members, the youth would fence the path with gold or silver chains and necklaces. Some would use any kind of neck chains at marriages of a less wealthy community. The bridal couple or hosts have to comply with the demands of the youth. It is believed that in refusing, the couple would face many obstacles throughout their married life.

#### **(C.11) The Communion of Hands**

The groom enters the chamber accompanied by his best men. They take their place at the left and the bride and her maids on the right. A brand new empty pot as well as a rice pot is placed at the center. There is also a plate of fried fish, seven in number, together with the rice. An honorable and well-respected senior would give a wedding address before he marries the couple with the sounding of conch shells and annoints the coupled hands in holy water. Then, the bride and groom have to make seven rice balls each as fast as they can and put them in the new pot. Such activity is known as 'The Communion Meal' and the pot of rice balls is called '*The Communion Pot*'. After the communion, parents of both parties present the gift money.

Natives of Kin Maw practice monogamy. Taking a lesser wife is ostracized. Parents would admonish their daughters to refrain from getting into that status.

#### **(D) Pregnancy and Child-birth**

Natives of Kin Maw village are found to appreciate having children. Husbands delight in finding out about their wife being with child. A woman with child has to keep to medicinal as well as Rakkhine traditional procedures.

According to the Rakkhine tradition, an expecting mother is not to attend weddings, nor give wedding presents. It would bring bad luck to the bridal couple. When making bed linen, flaps or openings are not to be sewn up in case there should be difficulties in child delivery. She should not go out when dark, nor is she supposed to take trips across streams or rivers. She is not to go to funerals nor give donations for that cause. She should not plant trees, sit at the doorway nor at the foot of the stairs. A woman with child does not take baths at nighttime. If she dies, there is a risk of evil possessing her. Eating twin bananas or fork tipped betel leaves would end up in having twins. During pregnancy, they usually avoid eating green, fresh vegetables, mushroom, bamboo shoot and any foodstuff that is hot, bitter and hyper-tensive.

The husband, while his wife is with child, should avoid carrying coffins, buying weapons. Local midwives are called in for child delivery as they could perform the task very well from experience. Should there be difficulties, the child bearer needs to drink holy water. A piece of the

Danu leaf from the roof is plucked and stuck into her hair knot upside down. The woman's suitcase, doors and windows, and water pot lids are all to be opened. The parents enjoy approbation in the birth of a son. As soon as the baby is born, plum branches would be hung at the four corners of the house and custard-apple leaves are stuck in the walls so as to fence off evil spirits.

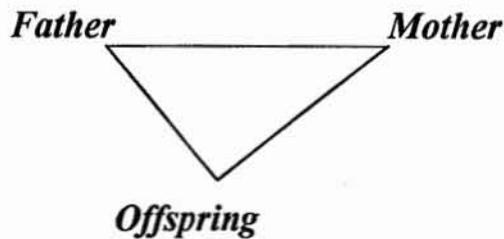
Rakkhines also believe in obsession by the Mensu Zombie and take great pains to keep the fires burning in the confinement chamber. Relatives, neighbors and friends would have to come and keep company to give moral support and to prevent cases of trauma. No male should enter the confinement chamber in case they lose their dominance. On the third day of confinement, old ashes are cleared away and new fires are kindled with new firewood. Fire from the confinement chamber is not to be used for other activities. Wood used for making fire in the chamber should not crack and spark. The baby's mother needs to drink saffron tonic and oil from a medicinal plant known as 'Yin Bya'. She has to eat lemon grass as well. Dishes made from fresh fish are to be avoided but grilled fish, dried tassel fish may be made into soup and drunk. In olden days, mothers in confinement had to eat only rice and baked salt up to one or two days after delivery. Even today, she should avoid eating potatoes, mushroom, bamboo shoot, green chilli, beans and peas, and for, for about a month. She should take care not to touch honey for about six months. Otherwise, she'd be stricken with leprosy. The baby is given honey by persons, other than the mother.

Women in confinement should bathe in hot water. After bath a lotion made from saffron and a king of fragrant wood called 'Taun-tan-gyi' is

applied to the whole body. Sometimes they have to take a steam treatment to get the sweat out. She may wash her hair after about a month.

### **(E) Family Structure and Kinship**

Under the family relationship structure of the Rakkhine natives of Kin Maw village, the father is the head of the family. Most of the families are of the elementary or primary type. However, some offspring, after getting married join the parents' family and some stay on their own as an extended family.



Natives of Kin Maw village practice monogamy. Their offspring as well as adopted children would all stay together as a primary or elementary family. The father is the head of the family and takes charge of the social, economic, education and health matters of the children. Therefore, the children as well as their mother have to respect the dominating father. The mother takes the responsibility of household matters and sees to the basic needs of the family.

Parents also make the decisions for marriage of their children. Even when children live on their own with their families, they respect their parents as they have done as ever. Only those who cannot afford to

live on their own stay with the parents. Sons or daughters-in-law treat the parents-in-law as their own. The head of the extended family is the father. All family members work for the family under the supervision of the father. In cases where the father dies, the mother becomes the head of the family. Everyone has to pitch in their best efforts and share the food as well as the bad in household matters. Should the family within the extended family requires a separate business, they may do so, but they may or may not share the meals.

When the parents pass away, the eldest son or daughter will become head of the family. He or she may have to take charge of the brothers and sisters until they come of age. In some extended families, the brother or the sister of the deceased parents takes over charge of the family.

Kinship is a significant factor in the Rakkhine community. There are three types of relationships:

1. Kinship by blood
2. Kinship by marriage
3. Kinship by adoption.

Rakkhines, in order to preserve their clan, rarely marry people other than their own. According to the Rakkhine tradition, cross-cousin marriages are permitted. First cousins born of brother and sister may marry whereas first cousins born of brothers or sisters may not.

All types of kinship are found among the Rakkhine natives of Kin Maw. Those included in the blood relations are parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, brothers, sisters, and cousins.

Those included in affinal relations are parents-in-law, sons or daughters -in-law, brothers or sisters-in-law.

Rakkhines, in order to preserve their kinship, rarely marry people outside their own clan. According to the Rakkhine tradition, first cousins born of brother and sister, known as 'Thamee Myauk Tha' may marry whereas first cousins born of brothers or sisters may not. The son or the daughter of a brother and the son or the daughter of a sister have the so-called 'Thamee Myauk Tha' relation.

Although they are first cousins, their Thamee Myauk Tha relationship allows them to marry according to the Rakkhine relationship system. It falls into the by-marriage relationship.

However, children born of brothers or sisters cannot marry because their blood-tie is so much closer to the other, and they are regarded as blood-relatives.

If a man marries into the family the sisters if the mother-in-law will automatically becomes his mother-in-law as well, and the brothers of the mother-in-law will become his fathers-in-law. Their sons will become his brothers-in-law.

Among kinship by adoption, there may be adoption at birth as well as adoptions on the death of parents. Children may be adopted as nieces, nephews or as own children. Sometimes adoptions may be done through legal procedures and sometimes through local procedures such as acknowledgement by village authorities. No matter which procedure the adoption may be done by, the relationship between the adopted and the foster parents are warm and loving. Most adoptions are made within

distant relatives. However, there are few cases of adoptions in Kin Maw village.

In general, there are three types of relationships in Kin Maw village. Regardless of the type of relationship, members of the clan would be loving and supportive of one another, giving guidance and cooperative with one another. Should there be quarrels, arguments and conflicts within the clan, seniors would help to pacify and reunite its members. Conflicts, if there are any would not perpetuate since it is customary of the younger members to listen to elders.

### **(E.1) The Kinship Terminology**

Address of one another corresponds to the relationship they have. Children call their parents 'A-hpa, A-hpe, A-Mi, A-may'; grandchildren call their parents and aunts or uncles 'A-Hpo Gyi, Hpo-Hpo Latt, Hpo-Hpo, Doe-Doe, Doe-Doe-Gyi, Doe-Chei, Doe-Lat, Doe-Doe-Tha-Nge.' Among the siblings, the eldest would call his/her brothers and sisters by their names or one-part of the name that is prominent. The eldest would be called 'Ako Gyi, Ma Ma Gyi, Maunn Maunggyi, Meii May Gyi and so on.

Moreover, the father's elder sister is called 'Aree', the father's younger brother is 'Ba Htwe', and the father's older brother 'Ba Gyi or U Gyi'. The mother's younger sister is Mi Htwe, the mother's elder sister is Gyidaw.

## **(F) Inheritance**

Rakkhines usually share the inheritance equally. The eldest has to divide the shares and let the youngest have his choice of the shares first and go up on the ascending order. The eldest has the obligation to look after the younger members and manage the family matters. Whoever takes on the responsibility of the family usually has a share covering half the inheritance and has special privileges.

There used to be a custom in ancient days of the eldest prince succeeding to the throne. In the same way, the eldest son of a village headman would take the father's place when the headman died. These practices are still in practice. The eldest son has to take over the responsibilities of the father and see to the basic needs of the family. The same goes for the eldest daughter when the mother dies. Should widows and widowers remarry, children from the first marriage are entitled to their share of inheritance. Whoever is not happy or satisfied with the distribution of the inheritance may put up their complaints to the village authorities and abide by their decisions.

## **(G) Housing and Settlement**

In preparing living quarters Rakkhines abide by their traditional procedures. They avoid using hollow poles or those that are worm-holed for they believe them to be inauspicious. When a new house is to be built, the land plot would be ploughed, levelled and sprayed with scented water or perfume. Those who can afford even cast confetti of tiny gold or silver pieces.

The very first post or column erected is called “Uru Tine” or “Mingalar Tine”. Bananas, coconut branches, coconuts, plum branches would be hung at the top. There would be a strip of red cloth called ‘Shan-Pan-Hte’ wrapped around the post. Some people keep offertory bowls of coconuts or bananas at the foot of the post. Planks, battens and partitions are first constructed. While the partitions are being put up, some *Eugenia* leaves and an oar is stuck into a water pot and kept nearby. Later, only the leaves and the water are kept on. The walls are sprinkled with perfumed water. This practice is done not only in Kin Maw village but in all Rakkhine villages as well. If the house is to have three rooms, the construction starts with the middle room. The owner of the house gives meals to all those who help out with the construction.

Three types of houses are usually found in Kin Maw: ordinary house, those with tri-hipped or tetra-hipped roofs. (See illustration 9a, 9b). In building a house without a ridge, the first post, the Uru Tine, is erected first. Then the other five posts, Kya Ngan, Nyaung Yan, Thabyay, Tawei and Kombi are put up. The left and right Kya Ngan posts are erected simultaneously with the Uru post. However, there are very few who build such houses in this way nowadays.

(See Illustration 9.a-9.b)

Only when the entire house is done, then are the stairs attached. The housewarming and the pareik sermons are given.

The house normally is facing east or west. The Rakkhine architecture procedures are observed when building houses.

### **(H) The Divorce**

The Rakkhines of Kin Maw village practice monogamy after settling down. Although there are divorces, there are no many because marriages are bound by Rakkhine traditions. Only after the conflict being looked into by village authorities is a divorce granted. The wrongful party is not entitled to the wedding gifts nor the family possessions.

Single unmarried persons or happily married couples are regarded as the blessed and welcomed at all auspicious occasions. Divorcees, widows and widowers are forbidden to participate in these auspicious activities. That is why divorces are not encouraged.

### **(I) The Funerals**

Kin Maw villagers are the practice of announcing funerals to inform others near and far. Deaths from old age, various kinds of diseases, deaths of children, deaths from epidemic, disasters and accidents usually have burials. Mothers of monks or the monks themselves are cremated at death.

The eyes and the mouth of a person are to be closed the moment he expires. The corpse is bathed and the water pot used in the bathing has to be crashed. The corpse is dressed in fine clothes and is made to smell nice with scents. If it is a female that dies, she needs to be applied thanaka and to have flowers in her hair. The two big toes are tied together with a string. A twenty five pya coin or very small pieces of gold or silver are to be put in it is mouth. It used to be a 25 pya coin but today they put a kyat note or a five kyat note. The corpse is kept for about a night or two, to suit the convenience of the family. Should

relatives are travelling, the funeral would be held off until they return. A scaffold is built with four bamboo poles and a bamboo mesh. Rice, betel, tobacco is placed beside the corpse in a make-believe that the corpse is fed. A flower vase is also placed beside it.

On the day of the funeral, Kabaza rice is cooked especially for the expired family member. The remaining spouse or nearest relative has to carry the rice to the cemetery. The person who dies this is not to visit or go to the other people's household for one month. Therefore, today carriers of Kabaza are hired.

A small bamboo ladder is placed in the path where the corpse is taken out of the house. A new pot filled with water has to be crashed broken, meaning, 'There will be no more deaths in the house. So there is no need for the water pot that bathes the dead.'

The corpse or the coffin should not be carried sideways. When sending it to the cemetery, the legs should be directed towards it. The coffin is carried on the shoulders. The coffin lid is not nailed down. The clothes items spread over the corpse is not put into the coffin. There would be a packet of rice at the foot of the corpse. Stretchers for the coffin is made of five bamboo posts; two of about three feet across, and another three of about two and a half yards alongside are tied and made into a stretcher frame. The coffin is then placed on it and they are fastened together with a piece of string. The procession would include seniors and elders carrying a pot of rice and offertory bowls.

In olden days, when young people died, the coffin carriers would play with the coffin as soon as they reach the outskirts of the village, lifting it high up and let it drop with a jerk onto the shoulders, running

and jumping about to make the dead happy. When old people die, they would only shove the coffin about. When a maiden died, a long piece of the banana trunk will be placed in the coffin whereas if it was a young man, a doll made of dough will be used. This used to be done so that they would not be lonely in the next life.

When they reach the cemetery the strings binding the toes are undone and people would take refuge in the three Gems to share merit with the deceased.

A grave is dug only on the morning of the burial. The gravesite when once dug may not be shifted to another place. Some would start digging only at the actual funeral time with a knife from the house of the deceased. Then the corpse is cut in five places with the knife. That is to prevent the corpse from going back home. The rice packet is unpacked before the coffin is lowered into the grave. Three pieces of ropes are used for lowering the coffin. Some people have the coffin lid closed and some have it opened. Most bury the coffin with the lids closed. In burying a corpse the head must be laid towards the east, the feet towards the west and the face turning a little towards the north. However, there are some who bury corpse heading towards the north. People would turn their backs to the pit and throw the earth into it over their shoulders. Coffins are made for those over ten years of age. Those who can afford may have it entombed.

Guests at the funeral come back to the house of the deceased and eat betel and tobacco from there. They crush the betel leaves and smell them and then throw them away over their shoulders. Those who remain at the house must take a handful of ash and a scoop of water and throw

them over the shoulders as soon as they see people returning from the funeral. If a maiden dies, the brothers need to leap over a fire placed in front of the house. Only after this, they are allowed to get back into the house. This activity is called 'Mee Kyaw'.

On the seventh day of the week-cycle, monks are invited to the house and offered a meal. According to the tradition, the funeral meals are offered thrice: the expiry meal, the seventh day meal, and the annual meal. On the day of the seventh day meal, someone has to go to the cemetery and bring back a twig from there. He should not turn around to look. (It is believed that the dead person's soul is still in the cemetery).

If a parent dies, pieces of strings matched with the height of the children are put into the coffin. It portrays the separation of the souls. The activity is meant to prevent the deceased from taking away the souls of the children.

Those who had violent deaths such as by drowning, gun shots, falling from trees, stab wounds are buried without delay, before the day is over. Death of an expecting mother is not classed as above. The stomach of the woman is cut open and the child and mother are buried separately.

### **(I.1) Ritual Cremation of Monks**

When a monk from a village expires, the cremation is conducted by a communal contribution of all neighbouring villages. Even then, if there is not enough funds, the cremation ceremony would be postponed to a later time. However, if a monk passed away during the Water festival, the cremation may not be extended because once it gets into the next

year, it will be cancelled. The cremation ceremonies are held in Pyarho, Tabohdwe and Tabaung.

The body is first cleaned in a sitting posture. The robes are then wrapped tightly around the body. The body is then placed on a bed for a while. Two or three bottles of oil or honey are poured down the throat as part of the preservation. Then it is laid in the coffin in the afternoon. The coffin is usually carved out from large mango or jack-fruit trees. Ash and tobacco leaves are spread in the coffin and the body is laid on top. It is covered again in tobacco leaves. Some would have chaff and slaked lime under the relic. The coffin is kept in an exclusive chamber in the monastery. A month later, the relics are put in a glass or silver coffin, which is placed on a pedestal. It is taken down only at the time of cremation.

A week before the cremation, a pandal would be built and the rites are carried out over the week. Young men and maidens would sing or chant elegies. There would be ritual funeral dances. After that, the pyre is ignited with fire rockets. Iron and copper chains used for the ignition would be about 200 yards long. If other kinds of chains or ropes are to be used, the distance from the ignition site and the pyre would be set at 120 yard's distance. The first rocket that is sent is known as the 'Mingalar rocket'.

The pyre is ignited at twilight. The ash from the relic is entombed. The cremation ceremony is also made festive with plays, kyin-pwe, pwes, martial arts demonstrations and dances.



Illustration (4)

Setting for the Marriage Ceremony



Illustration (5)

The Marriage Ceremony



Illustration (6)

Showering confetti



Illustration (7)

Requesting robes for the novices



Illustration (8)

Offertory presentations on emergence

From the ordination hall



Illustration (9.a)

Rakhiine traditional residence

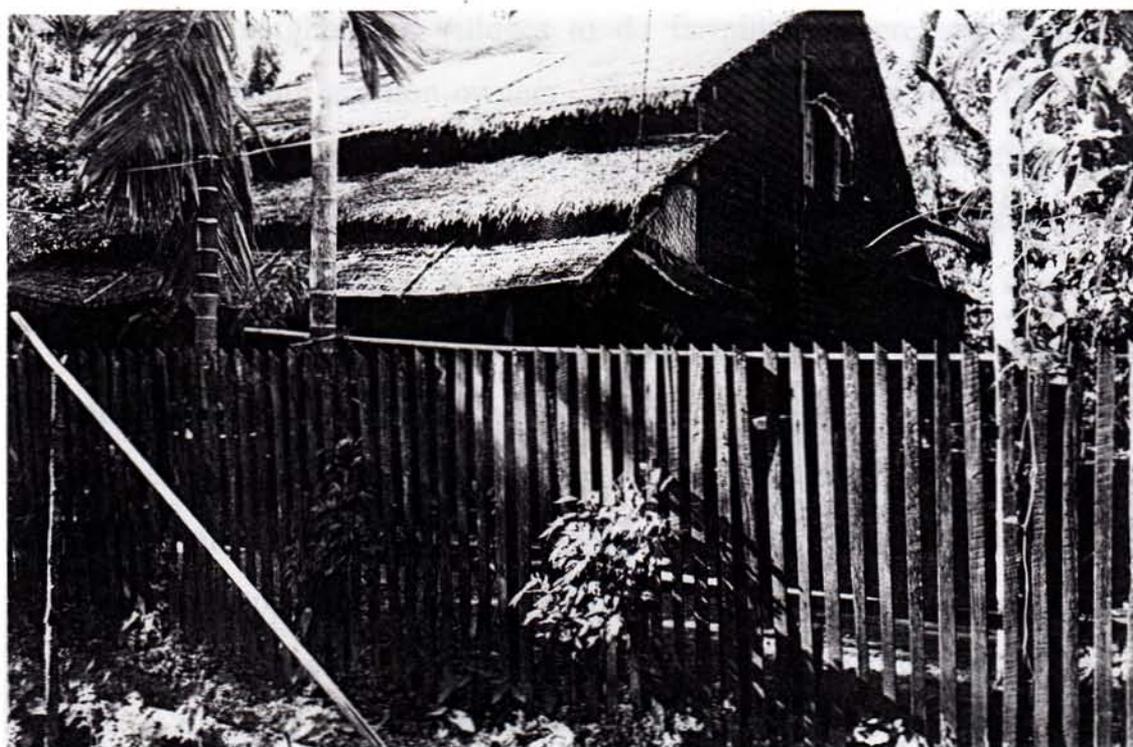


Illustration (9.b)

Rakhiine traditional residence

## CHAPTER 3

### ECONOMY

Economy is a crucial factor in all relationships such as in social, business and political bodies; within families, relatives, villages, towns or nations. Economic activities are determining factors for variations in the social behavior of the people of different regions. In addition to farming, other activities with which most Rakkhine natives are involved are livestock breeding, trading, Water Palm or Nipa roof industry, pottery, and transport services.

#### **(A) Farming**

Kin Maw villagers do farming in the Rainy Season. Some villagers even go to neighboring villages to do farming. There are farmland owners but many are non-owners. Farmland owners let their farms on contract basis. Non-owners work for them for wages. There are two ways of letting farms. One is hiring laborers by daily wages for 120 kyats per day. The other is to give contract to a contractor for a portion of the yield. If the yield is good, the contractor gets a sizeable amount of profit.

There used to be discrimination of sex regarding farming duties. Weeding and winnowing used to be done by men. Broadcasting, pulling out and transplanting, by women in the past. In the present day, this discrimination has been annulled and men do the tasks of women as well.

The types of paddy cultivated are Patin Thu Ma, Nga Hpyu Chei, Byaat Wah, Por San Hmwei, Nga Kywe Ma, Yeibaw Sein, Rakkhine Thu

Ma, and Byat Manain. Farming starts with nurseries in Nayone. Normally, seedlings are nurtured on the nurseries first and then shifted or transplanted in to fields. However, some people skip the nurseries and plant rice straightaway. Farming begins in Wahso and goes on till the end of Wagaung. Harvesting id from Tazaungmone to Pyartho and Tabodwe.

Manure and fertilizers are used to make the farms fertile. Harvested crops are threshed with draught cattle in the threshing ground. Winnowing is done next where the threshed paddy is collected in baskets and poured out from the heights to get rid of dust and chaff.

On the first day of farming, sweets and food offering are sent to the village monastery. The Lamine Spirit (or) Nat has to be paid homage before farming starts. The ground has to be stamped seven times after which sweets and fruits are offered to the Lamine Nat. Offerings of food and sweets are sent to the monastery and to other villagers on the first day of planting as well. Planting commences only on Sundays. First, the Thanshin Rice, mother of all paddy varieties, is planted as a token of the commencement.

In Kin Maw village, preparations for farming begin from as early as Kahson and Nayon. Then the villagers wait for the rain. When it is time for farming to start, offerings to the Maung Shin Gyi Nat are made but never on Sabbath days, days of misfortune, and the first days of the waning or the waxing moon. They pray for abundance of yield and deliverance from wastage and loss. The Maung Shin Gyi Nat has to be offered sticky rice, coconut, jaggery, pickled tealeaves, bananas, clean drinking water, flowers, candles and perfume.

The Maung Shin Gyi Shrine, made of bamboo, is built in front of houses. Two plates of sticky rice, coconut, jaggery, brown sugar slabs, pickled tealeaves, bananas; two cups of drinking water; perfume and candles are arranged on a tray. Maung Shin Gyi is then asked to honor the invitation and bless them. All these are done in stages according to customary rites.

Only after completing the task of Maung Shin Gyi offering would they be able to work in peace and confidence. Maung Shin Gyi is again made offerings at the time of harvest. Lucky days are chosen for storing grains in barns. Farming is done only in the Rainy Season in Kin Maw village.

### **(B) The Nipa Industry (Water Palm)**

Natives of Kin Maw occupy themselves in Nipa roofing in the Hot Season. Nipa plants usually grow in tufts. They are grown along the banks of tidal creeks.

(See Illustration 10)

The seeds have to be planted a few feet apart from each other in the marsh. They grow well just by regular weeding of grass and prickly poppy. There are also natural growths along the banks of briny waters.

It is most suitable to chop sown the branches when the plant is about three to four years old. The cutting (or) chopping activity begins some time in November and December. The activity is usually begun on the 8<sup>th</sup> or the 12<sup>th</sup> day of the waning moon but never on a full moon. It is not done when it is raining either. In cutting a six-month old plant, a bud and a branch is to be left for the plant to revive. The leaves from the chopped

branches are cut and made into bunches. The midrib of the branch is stripped finely and used for fastening bunches. The leaves are carefully aligned when arranging them in bunches which are known as 'Ohn Baw'. These ohn baws are soaked in brine water creeks for about a month to one and a half months. If the leaves are not sufficiently soaked, they turn yellow and brittle. The longer they are made to soak, the better it is.

Bamboo for skewers must be Khayin bamboo. Since Khayin bamboo is fairly expensive, those who cannot afford it would fetch Kyun Taung bamboo from the forests nearby. The bamboo is cut into suitable sizes of 5 ¼ or 6 feet. The bamboo pieces are then cut lengthwise into smaller pieces of appropriate size. The inner part of the strips is used as skewers. The palm skewers are sun dried for 3 or 4 days to avoid having wormholes. The ohn baws are taken out from the marshes, washed and made into flaps. The nipa leaves are folded from the back; skewed and pinned with nipa picks in a slant. The activity is called stitching.

(See Illustration 11)

Some would deliberately have the flaps folded unevenly. The ones folded evenly are of the best quality.

The stitched nipa flaps are arranged in layers to have the skewers about 4 inches apart. Then they are sun-dried. The activity is known as 'Ohn Hlan'. It takes at least 3 days too have them dry. Nipa flaps that have not been sun dried are not durable and are likely to have wormholes. After that, the flaps are arranged in layers again about 4 inches apart. Then they are pressed to have them matted. The activity is nipa matting, 'Ohn Thut' It takes about a week or eight days to have the nipa flaps flattened.

Only when the flaps are flat, then would the roof be rainproof. A thousand flaps would fetch 3,500 kyats to 4500 kyats.

At intervals between farming activities, the entire family, husband, wife and children; would pitch in their labour in this nipa palm stitching. A yard of nipa palm yields 5,00 to 50,000 flaps depending on the size of the yard. A plant of three years produces nipa juice. Nipa yields maximum amount of juice in September and October. Nipa juice is drunk as is toddy juice of Upper Myanmar.

### **(C) Pottery**

Some Kin Maw villagers earn their living by making pots for daily use such as rice pots, curry pots, and water pots. Pottery was introduced to Kin Maw dwellers over a hundred years ago by settlers who had moved to Kin Maw from Thandaung, a region along the borders of Kyaukpyu and Rambrei townships.

Potter's clay is procured in the month of Natdaw from the 'Sei mountain where it gets maximum sunlight due to the falling of leaves. The topsoil of the potter's clay area is likely to be dry and cracked, revealing rock dust and clay chips. The topsoil is removed to the depth of 3 or 4 feet until the yellow soil (or) green soil (or) blue soil is reached.

Requisites for pottery are clay, firewood, hay, sand dust and the potters wheel or turntable which is about 3' x 6'. About 3 women laborers and a master potter who supervises the laborers are needed. The master potter has to take charge of procuring clay, kneading, mixing the clay, coloring and baking while the women laborers sees to moulding, grinding and designing.

(See Illustration 12)

In making pots, women laborers need a mat of about 54" x 22", a grinding stand for pots or various sizes, stones of different sizes that would serve as a moulding tool, padded trowels for shaping, two or three profiling pallets with different designs embossed on them, a spatula for smoothing edges, a round rod for enlarging the mouth, a piece of cloth for scrubbing the rim, and a water container for wetting hands.

The first step is to dry the clay. The master potter has to place the clay block on the potter's wheel and beat it to powder. The activity is called 'Tamun thutt'.

The clay powder is then sifted with a sieve or filter to remove unwanted waste or particles. Then it is soaked in water. The activity is known as 'Tamanh Sein'.

(See Illustration 13)

After about an hour, white sand powder is mixed in to the clay and kneaded. This is called 'Tamanh Neh'. (See Illustration 14)

When kneading is done, the clay slab is formed into blocks. This activity is called blocking and is known to the locals as 'O Laung'. (See Illustration 15)

Then the clay blocks are moulded. (O Laung Htwin) The potter would put the slab onto the turned-table or the potter's wheel, which is placed, between the legs and start moulding. The rice is shaped by hand.

The mouth of the pot is made smooth with the round rod.. (See Illustratin 16.a-b)

A wet piece of cloth is used to smooth out the rim. This is called (O Nah Htoke). (See Illustration 17)

The pots are then sun dried. When the rim is dry, it is beaten to make it bigger and rounder. It is done by holding a rock-slab inside the pot with one hand and beating with the padded trowel

(See Illustration 18)

Then designing is done by beating with the profiling pallets The pot will then have an wide-open mouth. This is called 'O Hpwin't'.

By now the pot needs to be made smooth at the bottom (See Illustration 19). The pot is taken down from the turned-table. The mouth of the pot is turned to face the potter. A hand is placed inside the pot to hold a stone piece and the pot is beaten from outside with padded trowels (Illustration 20). The surface is made smooth with a wet piece of cloth or sponge. The refining of the bottom called 'O Sin Kauk'.

To have a pot made from clay, the different stages are –

- |                            |                     |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| (1) O Laung activity       | (blocking)          |
| (2) O Laung Htwin activity | (moulding)          |
| (3) O Nah Htoke activity   | (setting the mouth) |
| (4) O Hpwin't activity     | (enlarging)         |
| (5) O Sin Kauk activity    | (refining bottom)   |

The pots are then placed facedown on hay flooring and sun dried to set. When the bottom part is dry they are turned upwards again. When the pots are wholly dried they are coated in a mixture of red clay solution

for colouring. The red coating must be done in the afternoon at a time when the day temperature is intense.

Firewood is laid in two layers. Hard wood is placed at the bottom with soft fluffy wood called 'Kyee Kan Thah' on top. Eight layers of wood are required with hard and softwood placed alternately. More wood is stacked outwards than in the middle. In positioning the firewood, the flame path (Mee Lan) is marked at the four corners and also with two bamboo poles intersecting diagonally, no firewood is placed on the markings, only bits and pieces of saw dust is spread on them. Hay is spread thickly on the firewood stacked in places other than the markings for the fire path. The sundries pots are positioned on the hay. The placing of the pots starts at sunset. The pots are stacked with the big ones at the bottom and smaller ones in the top part. Pots with wide mouths are placed in the middle. They are cornered again with hays leaving nothing uncovered.

Mg Shin Gyi is paid homage again that evening for the baking to go well and to be free of disturbances. Mg Shin Gyi is to be offered two plates of rice, two pieces of sugar jaggery, two pieces of coconut flesh and a two-peeled bananas. Accompany the food offered at the bamboo shrine with bamboo flooring are four vases of offertory flowers fastened to the four posts at the corners. There should be a white screen around the shrine. The height of the shrine needs to have a bamboo stick to represent a ladder.

At the sides of the entrance aperture there are two lighted torches with wicks made from cloth soaked in Kerosene. The food offerings are placed inside the shrine. The food offered may be shared and eaten by

menfolk when the torchlights go off. The women are not allowed to eat the food that has been offered but they may have whatever remains in the pots in which they prepare the food.

The fireplace is set on fire at 6 o'clock in the evening. The flames must be evenly spread. When these flames move along the path and meet the center, the pots are believed to be baked. The baking takes about half the night starting from early evening and is complete at about midnight. (See Illustration 21)

The pots are left to cool and set for one more day. After that they may be taken down and sold.

If there are about 4,000 pots at a baking, only about 3,500 would be well baked. A baking of pots may fetch up to 75,000 kyats approximately.

Pottery is a domestic industry where all family members are involved. There are altogether five pottery kilns in Kin Maw. Normally pot making is done from January to April.

#### **(D)Other Occupations**

Kin Maw villagers have side-occupations that they employ at intervals from farming, while farming and on holidays. Some have it for business purposes and some as a social activity. Those that are employed for business purposes are trading, transport services, bamboo stripping and weaving. Building constructions, renovations and house moving are activities done with business as well as social motives. When they are done socially through combined efforts of friends, the hosts have to offer them meals.

Livestock breeding is not done as a business activity in Kin Maw village. Breeding of draught cattle is done for using them in farms. Chicken, duck and pig are also bred small-scale. Even then, not all houses breed them. Some fish for meals in creeks and ponds and sell them if there is enough to share. Baskets, bamboo hats and Mekkala (Pale Maut) are hand-made (See Illustration 22-a, b, c).

This activity is most commonly done by old people to have pocket money to buy betel quids or tobacco (See Illustration 23).

Some housewives have their own weaving looms and facilities. They used to weave Rakkhie longyis before but now they make only robes for the monks. This is their way of earning money without leaving home (See Illustration 24). Many are in government service. Some are retired. Many are employees of the Education Ministry and some are from other departments. They do business on holidays. Some sell seasonal fruits. There are four big stores, three shops for selling commodities and eight small family income shops. Big stores fetch an income of 25,00/- to 35,00/- kyats in average. Commodity and clothing materials shop sells up to 2000/- approximately. Small family shops get about 400/- kyats a day. As for travel services, passengers are transported from Kin Maw village to Thandwe for 25/- kyats each way. Since Kayan Maw, a village to the east is divided from Kin Maw by a creek, motor boats are run at a price of 10/- kyats per person. School children pay 250/- kyats a month for ferry services.

However different the villagers may be regarding their occupations, there is a supportive feeling shared among them, helping each other in need. For this and for their love of their race and kin, the

Rakkhines of Kin Maw village are happy and content in living and interacting with each other in the most peaceful way of life.

### **(E) Organization of Labour Forces**

Rakkhines make combined efforts in social, commercial and religious activities. They usually help one another in activities such as cleaning growths and trees, planting and harvesting paddy, and cutting wood, bamboo or dani.

The whole village would help out at social activities such as noviations, weddings, ceremonies and funerals. Villagers make it their concern in when someone builds a new house, taking down the old one or having renovations. The host would offer meals to those that came and help. Sometimes, there would be friends from other villages even. They would go and help their friends when their turn comes.

Regarding careers and jobs, men-folk would lead and women-folk help their husbands. Children also help their parents in thatch roof making and basket-weaving. The old and the aged are kept at home and looked after with love and respect.

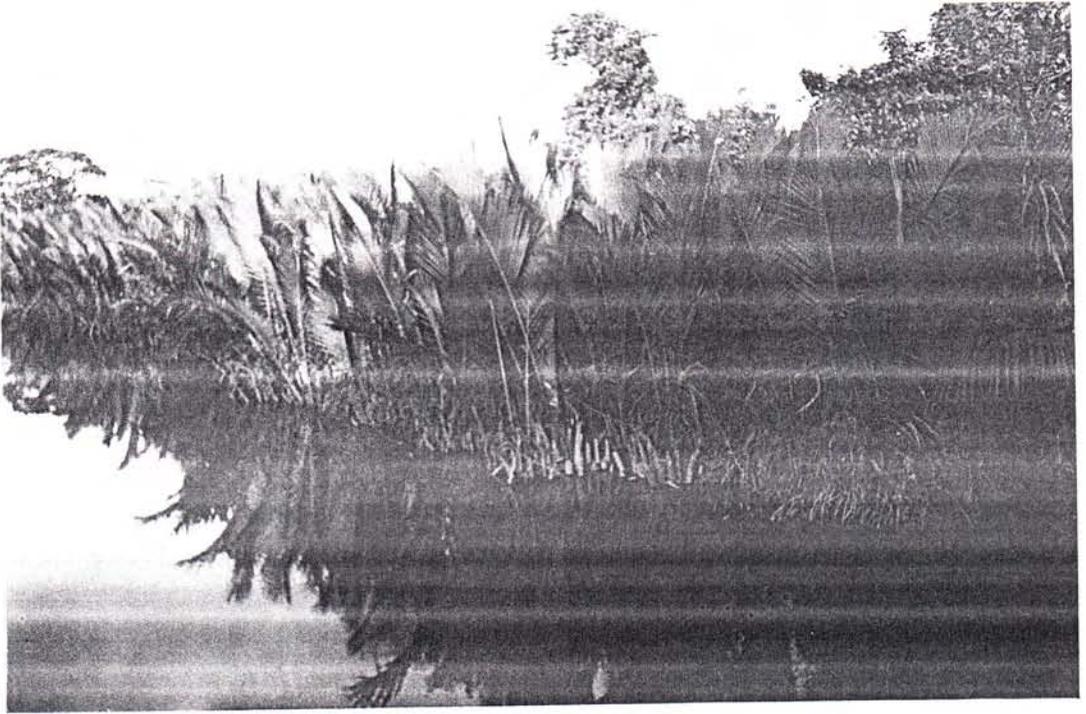


Illustration (10)

Nippa plantations



Illustration (11)

Stitching Nippa Flaps

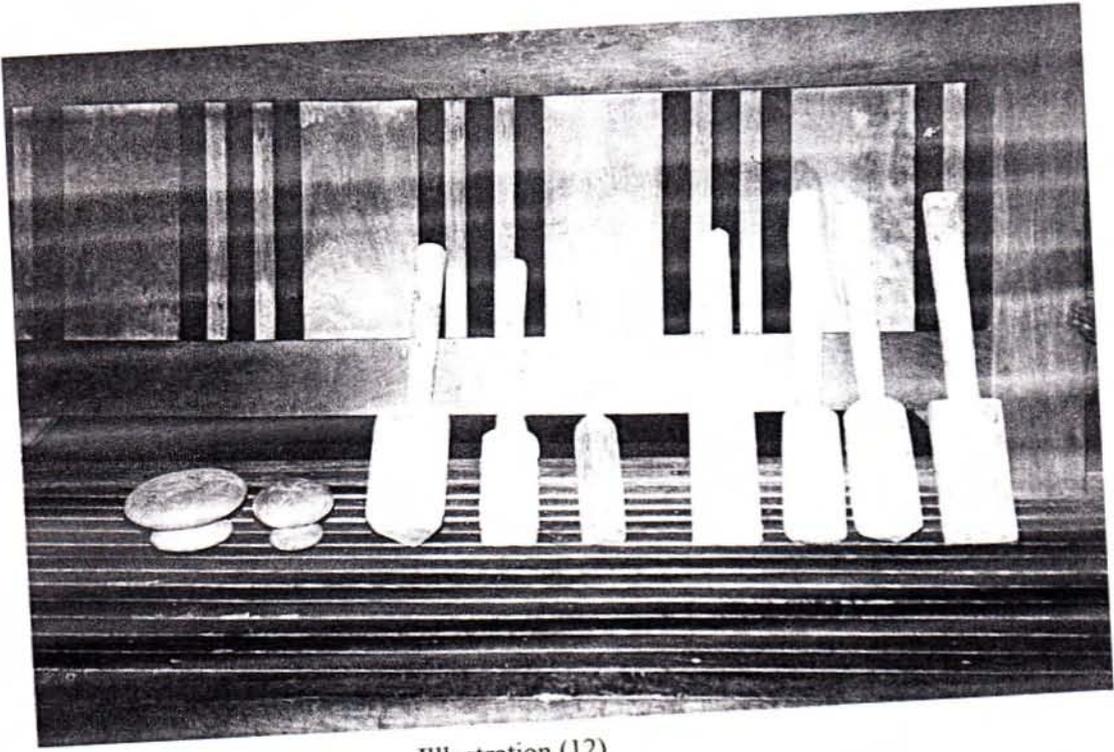


Illustration (12)

Pottery tools and appliances



Illustration (13)

Soaking clay in water



Illustration (14)

Kneading clay



Illustration (15)

Blocking



Illustration (16.a)

Moulding



Illustration (16.b)

Moulding



Illustration (17)

Smoothing out the rim



Illustration (18)

Beating to engargen size



Illustration (19)

Designing



Illustration (20)

Smoothing the bottom

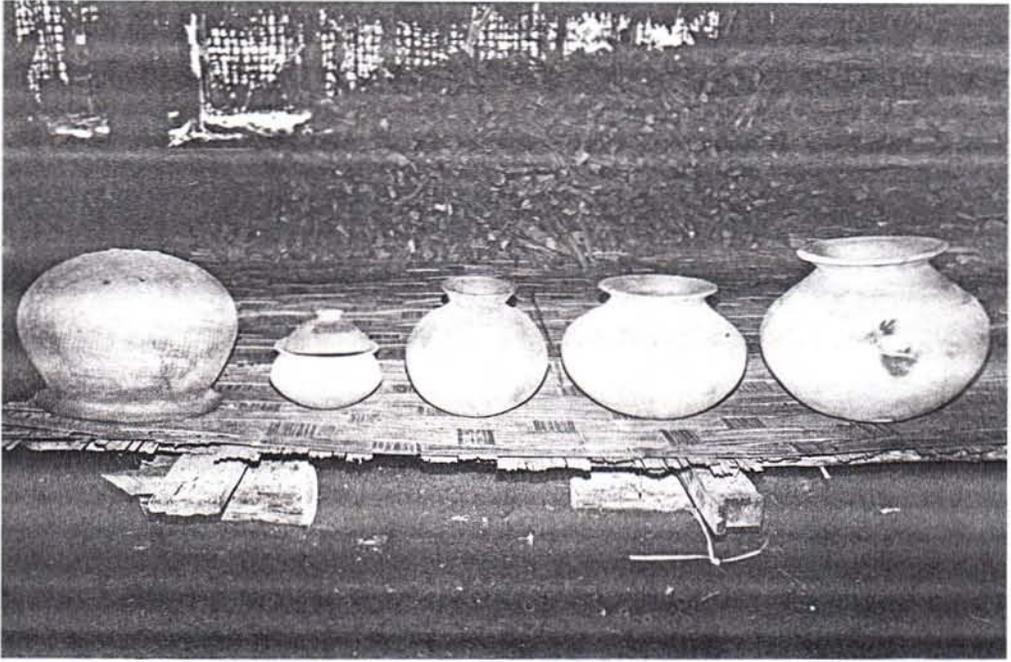


Illustration (21)

Display of pottery products

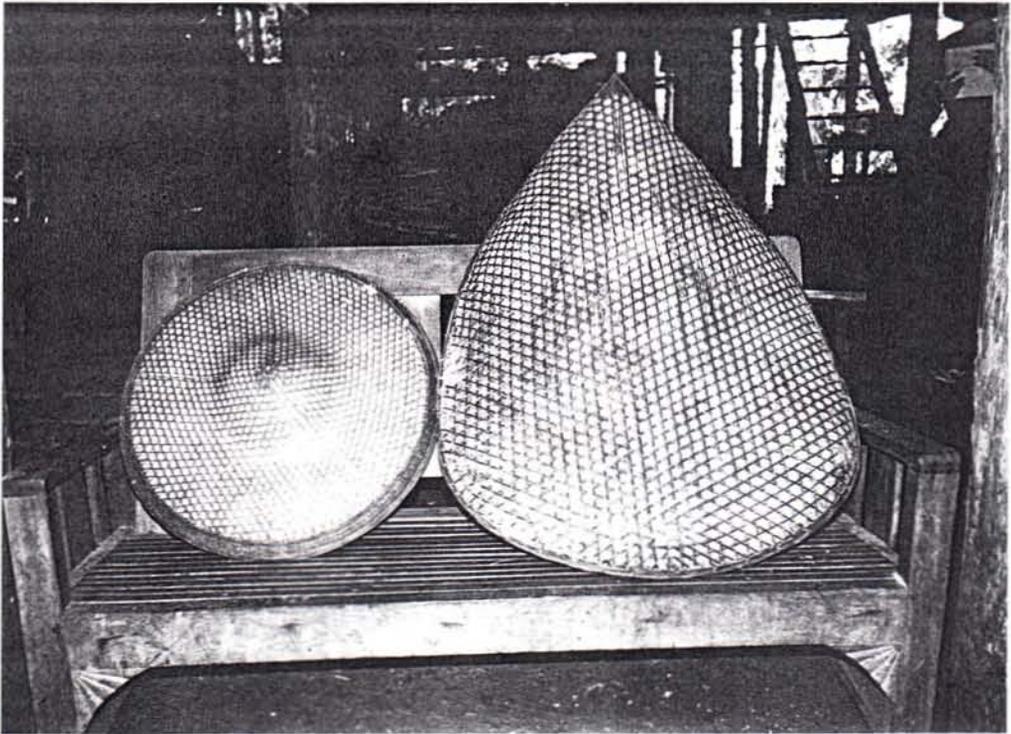


Illustration (22)

Mekkala (or) Pale Maut



Illustration (22.b)

Bamboo hat weaving



Illustration (22.c)

Fishery equipments



Illustration (23)

Basket weaving

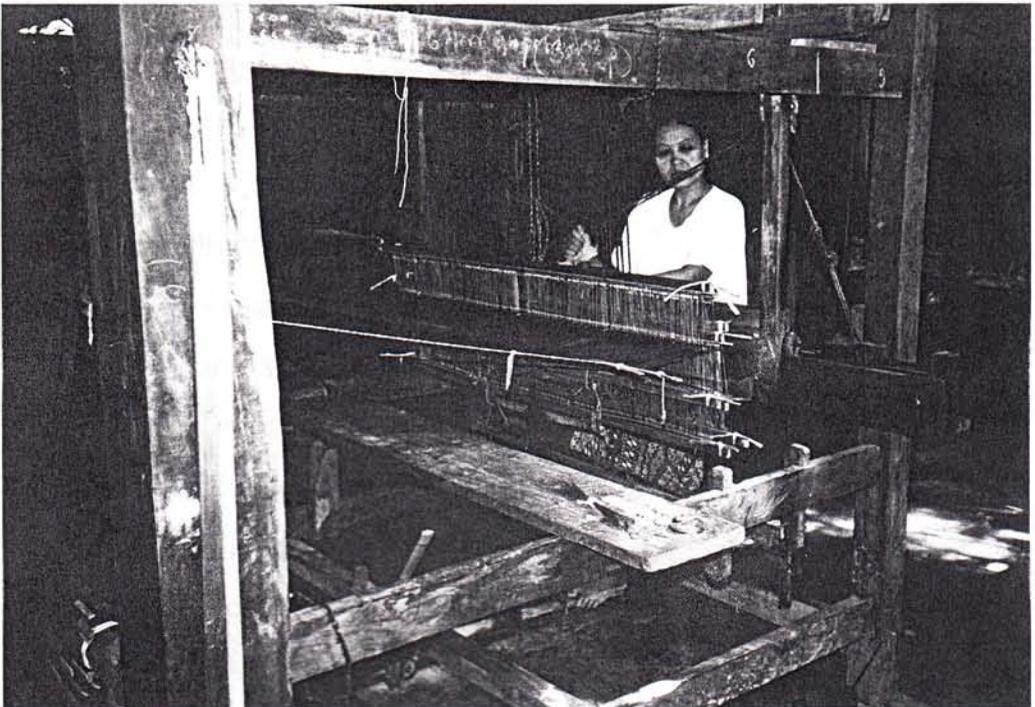


Illustration (24)

Weaving looms

## CHAPTER 4

### RELIGION AND FOLK CULTURE

#### (A) Faith and Beliefs

The Rakkhine natives of Kin Maw village are Buddhists. A stone inscription written in Birhi alphabets (Pali language) has been found in Danyawaddy, an ancient city in 'Taun-Pauk-Kyi' province. It is stated in the inscription that Buddha visited Danyawaddy during the reign of King Chandrasuriya (BC 500 – 510). It indicates that Buddhism had flourished in Rakkhine for many years throughout the reigns of many ancient kings.

Since the Rakkhines live under Buddha's teachings, they have great faith and belief in 'Four Noble Truths'. The first Noble truth is the existence of suffering. The second Noble truth is the course of suffering which means craving, known as Samudra Sacca. The suffering and Samudra Sacca may be made to cease by Nirodha Sacca, the third Noble truth. The last Noble truth is the Magga Sacca, which is the way to ultimate extinction.

They believe that before they can attain Nivana, they have to be reborn over and over again within the thirty-one abodes. The thirty-one abodes are comprised of the human abodes, the four nether worlds (hell, the world of animals, inauspicious beings), the six celestial abodes, the first three Jhana abodes, the second three Jhana abodes, the third three Jhana abodes, the Vehaboh abode, the Athanyat abode, the five Nuthuda Bramha abodes and the four Nathanya Arupa Brahma abodes. They not only pay great respect to the Triple Gems: Buddha, Dharma and Sangha; but also pay homage to the Sanghas of the highest order and abide by

their preaching. The venerable monks from the village monastery have great influence on the village people.

They usually observe the Five Precepts and observe Eight or Nine Precepts on Sabbath days. They obtain merit through charitable deeds. They hold reverence for Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, parents and teachers. Villagers do various chores for the venerable monks at the monastery. In this way they try to promulgate and propagate the longevity of the Buddha Sasana.

### **(B) The Rakkhine Conventional Nats**

The natives of Kin Maw village have always believed in the conventional nats(spirits) ever since the days of their ancestors.

At the beginning of the rainy season the ritual worship of “U Shin Kyi” is held at every house. Offerings such as coconut, banana, sugar cane, jaggery (palm sugar), sticky rice, joist sticks, candles and flowers are made. People pray for protection from danger, good health and good business.

A while after the offerings have been made, the food may be eaten by family members, guests and neighbours. Invitations are unnecessary. Any passer-by may have a share at own accord.

Another nat, the so called ‘Rakkhine “House-hold Nat” is worshiped by ladies only. The ceremonial rites are held either before or after the Buddhist lent in the month of Wa-hso.

The ritual procedure of ancient days is as follows. Having people stamp on them kills two chickens, a male and a female. The chickens are then cleaned and boiled. The chicken meat is offered to the Nat, together with

nine flower buds. Today, due to the reluctance to kill living beings, they ask for forgiveness and offer sweets instead. White cakes and red cakes made of sticky rice are put into two bamboo pitchers. Next, these pitchers are tied to the inner walls of the house. After sticking flowers on top of them, they are offered to the Nat. This tradition is handed down from mother to daughter through the years. If the daughter wants to cease the practice she may put it in the coffin of the mother and bury it. Few people practice this tradition these days.

If a person goes into the woods and comes back ill, a food offering is made to the spirits of the woods. A pair of chicken, male and female is killed. Care is taken not to have any visible wounds on them. The feathers need to be plucked without any damage to the form or skin. Then the chickens are boiled or roasted. The intestines must be taken out, leaving the entrails intact.

The food is then taken to the place where the sick person became disoriented. There, they would recite, “ This offering is made by a(...) day born, by the name of ..... . Please forgive this person and do not condemn him”. After a while when they could assume that the spirit has finished eating, the chicken meat may be shared among the participants of the rite. Any passer-by may join in without being invited.

### **(C) Superstitions**

The natives of Kin Maw village have strong superstitions regarding witchery, sorcery and black magic. They believe that ghosts and spirits, in addition to the above, can scare the soul out of people. However this belief is almost extinct today.

Anyhow, if anyone gets a fright, it is customary to call back the soul by saying “patkayu patkayu”. In the same way, if a person comes home at late hours he would stamp his foot three times saying “patkayu” before he enters the house. This is done to drive out the ghosts, demons and evil spirits, which might have come along with him. Although they do not worship the Mountain Nat, Creek Nat or Land Nat they believe in their existence and abide by the conventional customs in their travels.

### **(D) Interpretations of Omens**

The people living in Kin Maw believe in omens and have their own ways of interpreting them. Even to this day it is still in practice.

A water-lizard in the house, beehives in front of or at the back of the house is taken as a bad omen. Shooting stars, loud booming, rumbling sounds and earthquakes are signs of bad omens.

Dreaming of a smoky place or the tumbling of pagodas, and epidemic in the village are bad omens which predicts suffering from various diseases. To remove the misfortune, flowers which corresponds to the day of birth must be offered at the pagoda. And offering water at the pagoda also may be done.

Dream of one's clothes catching a fire predicts illness. To be in good health and to eradicate bad omens they offer gold leaves, water, alms food and flowers at the pagoda.

The screeching and attacks of a barn owl, finding beehives, snakes or a termites mound inside the house are signs of bad omen.

If one sees a snake it is a bad omen meaning the trip will take longer than it should. If an axe or a saw, which used for cutting trees are found misplaced it is a bad omen.

If the drinking water pot is empty when a person is about to make a trip, it is regarded as a bad omen. People usually invite the monks and recite to get rid of the evil and move them all to other place.

### **(E) Belief in Fortune Telling**

The native Rakkhines of the Kin Maw village believe in Astrology. On occasions when they are confronted with danger, starting a business, one of the relatives are ill, something is lost or when laying a foundation for a house they ask the fortune teller what they should do. In the same way, to celebrate a wedding ceremony, first the bride and the bride groom must go to the astrologer to have their horoscopes studied and have the wedding date chosen.

Kin Maw villagers know the different methods of fortune telling from ancient days. The different methods are:-

Shell fish Method

Bamboo Stick Method

The Tripling Method,  
 Reading Facial Features,  
 Predictions through Meditation,  
 Mahabou Method,  
 Pointing Fingers Method,  
 Four Trees Method,  
 Leaf Method,

In recent times the mahabou method is most commonly used.

In Mahabou Method there are two variations : The original Mahabou and Kawza Mahabou. The Original Mahabou casts the horoscope as follows :-

It is based on the sentence, which in fact is a number series :  
 “*Aung-Lan-Htu-Sit-Thu-Gyee-Pwe*”, Where :-

<i>‘Aung’</i> stands for	1	<i>Sunday</i>
<i>‘Lan’</i>	4	<i>Wednesday</i>
<i>‘Htu’</i>	7	<i>Saturday</i>
<i>‘Sit’</i>	3	<i>Tuesday</i>
<i>‘Thu’</i>	6	<i>Friday</i>
<i>‘Gyee’</i>	2	<i>Monday</i>
<i>‘Pwe’</i>	5	<i>Thursday</i>

	<i>Adipati</i>	
<i>Ahtun</i>	<i>Thaik</i>	<i>Raza</i>
<i>Marana</i>	<i>Binga</i>	<i>Puti</i>

The Myanmar year of a person's birth is divided by seven. Start the number series with the remainder. E.g. If the remainder is 2, the number series would be '2-5-1-4-7-3-6'. Start the series from Binga house and go from Binga to Marana, Ahtun, Thaik, Raza, Puti and Adipati. If that person is a Wednesday born, his number is 4. His birth number '4' falls in the Thaik house. So he is said to be a 'Thaik born'.

	6	
1	4	7
5	2	3

- A Puti Born - Selfish, mean and jealous. A born traveller; will marry someone from afar. Will be famous for either in good or bad reputation.
- A Binga Born - Sickly, emotionally insecure; no permanent job; little influence; few friends.
- A Marana Born - Sickly in childhood. Sicknesses may be fatal. If survived death in childhood, will be rich and become great and famous.
- An Ahtun Born - Well loved but proud and conceited. Will be rich and famous. Incomparably well versed and just.
- A Thaik Born - Pure at heart. Have many friends. Charitable and

generous. Makes easy money. May live luxuriously.

Raza Born - Well-respected, well known, well sieved. Have power or influence. May be vane in pompous.

An Adipati born - Will obtain great wealth. Will have power and might. Will be at the top in any field. Well-loved and admired by many.

Besides this kind of horoscopic calculation there is another procedure used in the village. One's present age is divided by eight and the remainder is counted clockwise starting from his day of birth.

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>
<i>Friday</i>		<i>Wednesday</i>
<i>Rahu</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>

If the counting stops on Sunday, Tuesday, Rahu and Saturday it is not good. If it stops on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, it is good.

### **The Leaf Method**

Many people believe in this method as well. The method is used for tracing lost materials, predicting health conditions, safety in travelling and success of plans. The person is asked to pluck a leaf in haste. If two leaves are plucked he is to repeat. It is not a good sign to have plucked

only the top part. Difficulties may be encountered if there are holes. All will go well if the leaf is flawless.

### **(F) Folk Festivals and Dances**

The natives of Kin Maw celebrate festivals according to the seasons of the year. These festivals reflect their way of life, solidarity, social community, and their nature, their rites and rituals.

In April they celebrate the Water Festival where sweets and desserts are offered free to all. The watering of the Bo tree is celebrated in the month of Ka-hson(usually in May). The Lighting Festival is in October. The Kahtein Festival is celebrated in Tazaungmone (around November).

#### **(F.1) The Water Festival**

It is held in the month of Tagoo (April) with much fun and festivities. The Rakkhine Water Festival is unique. Three or four days ahead, the Headman together with responsible elders and youths hold a meeting and they start fund raising activities. With the donation money they give free food such as coconut juice-mix, sticky-rice balls with jaggery and various kinds refreshments snacks to the whole village. First of all, before giving free food to the people, they offer all the eatables to monks at the village monastery. They also offered alms food to the monks.

During the water festival, ladies do not go around the village as in other regions to play with water but they stay in the pandals and play. At

the pandals they keep a very long racing boat filled with water. Gents and ladies stand on each side of the boat. A line is drawn at arms length from where the ladies so that gents cannot mix with the ladies. There must be no quarrelling or fighting at the pandals and elders keep watch all the time.

If a group arrive at the pandals while one group is playing water with the ladies, the late arrivals wait for their turn with singing and dancing until the first troupe has finished water playing. They have a very strict discipline. They play with water only afternoon up till the evenings. The children play in the morning, however, throwing water at passers by.

The gentlemen and ladies throw water at one another from each side of the long boat (See illustration 25). They throw water each other till there no water left in the long boat. They must throw water briskly and only at the person in front of him/her. If a person touches his face to remove the water the group with that person loses. The result of the game is determined by the judges.

On the New Year day of the Myanmar Calendar, men, women and youths go to the village monastery. They construct a tree with bamboo frames and offertories on them. Youths play drums and symbols all along the way as they take it to the monastery in a long procession. (See illustration 26). Similar activities are carried out at the Lighting Festivals in October and November.

## **(F.2) Regatta Festivals**

Rakkhine nationals, according to their village tradition hold the Regatta Festivals in March or April. Rakkhines call the long boat 'laung' or 'hle'. Nowadays, after the Water Festival, before the Bo tree Watering Festival, the Regatta Festival usually takes place. The Regatta Festival occupies both sides of the stream where they built pandals. The audience cheer and give moral support to participants with music and songs.

As a stern post there are sculpted figureheads of a dragon and a keinari (The mythical bird with a human face) painted in multi-colours. On the stem of the boat, there are figureheads of tigers, birds and lotus flowers sculpted on the stem post. Inside the boat there are thwarts with oarlocks fixed at an arms length. In race, all rowers wear, colourful uniforms with sashes.

The length of the boat is six yards and accommodates fifteen strong oarsmen ; one Cox, two steering leaders and 12 oarsmen. For a sixteen yards boat there must be 40 rowers whereas only 17 to 19 rowers are required for small boats. If the number of rowers do not match the required number it is disqualified even if it comes first. The Cox can sit anywhere but if he helps in the rowing the boat is disqualified. The Regatta Festival takes place in the Thandwe stream at the beginning of the waning or waxing of the Moon. The finishing line is 200 yards from the starting line. The stream is divided into tracks by poles with floral decorations. The race lasts three days altogether. The Regatta starts at 10:00 am in the morning and goes on till 3:00 Pm in the evening. The winners are awarded prizes on the third day. The method for determining

the winner is known as 'Set-pyat-swei' method meaning cutting and pulling the flower.

A sword is tied to the stern of the boat. As the boat cross the finishing line to which a flower bud is tied, it automatically cuts the rope and the flower bud drops. A bamboo pole is pierced right through and a rattan wire is inserted at one end. The rowers need to pull the flower. The winner is determined thus.

The winning team flies banners and row along the stream, singing and dancing to music and greeting the audience.

From this Regatta many may learn the navigation rules and techniques. They may also learn how to unite. It breeds love and understanding among the team members.

Furthermore, since it needs much strength and will power, it is regarded as a healthy and merry sport.

### **(F.3) Watering of Bo Tree**

As the natives of Kin Maw are Buddhist, they usually celebrate the Water Pouring Festival at the Bo tree. There is a Bo Tree at the Kin pagoda. On the full moon of Ka-hson, they usually go to that tree and pour water on it.

### **(F.4) The Wa-hso Festival**

In the month of Wa-hso, the Robe Offering Festival and the Wa-hso Flower collecting is celebrated. Village maidens usually go to the forest and collect wild flowers,. Which they offer at the monastery and Kin Pagoda.

### **(F.5) The Lighting Festival**

The Lighting Festival is celebrated in October. In earlier times, people use earthen bowls lighted by oil soaked wicks.

Today, bamboo poles of about 4 feet in length are used as candle stands. The poles are stripped into quarters down to about 9 inches at the top. By placing pieces of sticks or bamboo strips between the cuts, a bowl-shaped holder is formed. People light candles on these holders or on plates, which they fasten to the top of the pole.

Moreover, they also float tiny illuminated bamboo rafts. The little rafts are lighted with a small piece of banana stalk around which they wrap a strip of cloth soaked in kerosene. On the full moon day, The Thandwe Stream glows from illumination of thousands of these little rafts. This activity is also done on the full moon of Tazaung Moan.

In Tazaung Moan, which is some time in November, monks are offered robes. This ceremony is called 'The Kahtein Ceremony'. The Kahtein may be hosted individually or collectively. Offertories of various kinds are hung on trees made of bamboo frames, known as 'Padethapin'. On the day of the Kahtein the Padethapins decorated with gift offerings are carried to the monasteries. Musicians play music all the way long. At the monastery, participants circle the tree clockwise, blessing the good deeds. To be fair in presenting gifts among the guest monks lucky draws are made. However larger numbers of trees are usually sent to the host monastery. Then the robes are offered and people listen to the preaching by the presiding monk. The ceremony ends with the sharing of merits.

In addition, on the full moon day of the same month, Tazaung Moan, the ceremony for offering alms food and fruit at the pagoda is held at about 5:00am. People play music all the way to the pagoda. This is a customary ritual practised every year.

At night-time, there are illuminations of electric lights, candles or lanterns. On this very night youths of the village pinch food, delicacies and fruits from houses. They do this for fun and not for gain no harm to others. Some believe that the buds of the Mezali plant give out its strongest medicinal effects on the full moon of Tazaung Moan. They eat buds, either cooked or mixed on this night.

#### **(F.6) Kyin Pwe: The Rakkhine Traditional Wrestling**

On special occasions such as funerals of monks, the Independence Day Celebrations or other festive commemorations, Kyin Pwes are conducted. In addition to strength, which is the major requirement in these matches, a competitor also needs to be light, swift, alert and skilful. In Rakkhine wrestling one competitor is marked the catcher or attacker and the other plays defence. The opponents are required to make the other fall to the ground or floor. It is allowed of a competitor to lie on the ground in order throw his opponent over. While hanging or hooking onto the opponent with his feet a competitor may rest on his hand as a support. However, this activity should not be prolonged, or else he would be considered to have fallen and thus lose the match. The judges are selected from among Rakkhine ex-wrestlers or experienced persons from the audience.

Entries by class as first or second divisions are recorded by the in pairs priors to the matches. Pairing of opponents is determined by drawing lots. Then, headed by the team leaders. The team goes into the ring or field for a display of prowess. The strategies usually performed in the display are: -

- (a.a) Bear skipping
- (b.b) Jumping
- (c.c) Crow Plunging, and
- (d.d) Hovering (Over head/ Peacock)

The competition opens with a fly-start match of the auspicious pair of non-entrees. The auspicious pair usually gets more prize money than the competitors. Competitors may be harmed or get hurt should there be evil disturbances within the competition grounds. The matches are a set of 2 rounds where competitor takes on the role of attack or defence in turns. The attacker may lock, punch or wrestle his opponent. If the pair falls to the ground the one on top wins. If the set ends in a draw it is repeated. The competition normally starts at mid-day and goes on until about 5:00 PM.

There are many rules set for the competitors in Rakkhine Wrestling.

- (a.a) Competitors may dust their palms with sand but they are not to use sand in wrestling i.e. throw sand at opponent or rub him with sand.
- (b.b) Whether in attack or defence, competitors are not to pull at the opponent's ears, eyes, nose, hair or lips. They must not throttle or choke the other.
- (c.c) Competitors may push back the chin, forehead or neck of the other.

(d.d) Competitors are not to pull or hold on to the opponent from waist down to items such as the longyi, pants. They are not to jab into the groin.

(e.e) Fingernails are to be cut so as not to harm another when grasping.

There are over 20 strategies in wrestling such as somersault, scratching, spiral twist, left leave, right leave, leg break, thy hoop, lizard back, stamping, up turned heels, over throw, out swinger etc. The winner circles the ring to display prowess and the audience would give reward money to cheer him.

These competitors are conducted in the afternoons, even at pagoda festivals.

### **(F.7) Han Dance**

In early times the 'Han Dance' used to be called 'The Yein Dance' which means a group dance. A song composed to suit the story or play is sung in chorus while the dancers dance accordingly. For a scene involving birds dancers would portray the flapping of wings whereas for a village scene their movements would indicate rice planting or that of village damsels fetching water. The Yein dance may consist of 8 to 20 dancers.

### **(F.8) Ma-Rein-Tet Dance (or) The Nuptials Dance**

Traditional Rakkhine marriage ceremonies are known as the Ma-Yein-Tet ceremonies.

The Ma-Yein-Tet dance portrays nuptial activities such as match-making, engagement, paying off mischief makers for entry in to the bridal

chamber, blessing of elders, receptions, the wedding ceremony, clearing gold and silver barricades, food partaking etc., and lady dancers dance in unison to the song. Moreover the Doan Dance, The Martial Arts Dance are also performed at the Ma-Yein-Tet ceremonies.

### **(F.9) Nga-si Dance**

The Nga-si Dance which motions involve footsteps and finger snapping is one of the many Rakkhine traditional dances. It is a solo performance, unaccompanied even by music. The dancer takes on various roles in various voices.

As a prelude, the dancer would sing and act out about the founding of a Kingdom. In the second part he would relate the plot with humour and predictions. In the third or conclusion part the dancer sets out in a boat to look for fish (meaning greener pastures). The audience enjoys the dance very much. In ancient time it used to be a royal court performance but with the diminishing of royalty it spread to other regions as a folk dance or entertainment programme. The dance involves both historical facts and moral lessons. It hints at 'The biter getting bitter' or 'Misfortune falls on evil doers'.

The dance is rarely performed under man-made lighting. It is commonly danced by moon light at a clearing on the ground. Since it is a solo performance, the story teller has to sit on the throne while being a king and get down and speak humbly when he becomes a squire. Not many accessories are needed for this dance. All that is required would be a set to serve as a throne, a fishing sieve, a bamboo container, a paddle, a basket, a cupful of rice, an offering of fruits commonly used for asking

the nats (spirits) for guardianship, and a shawl. The shawl is to be used when acting as a woman. The dancer needs to wear a head-dress with a protrusion of about 9 inches at the front to represent the snout of a fish. Otherwise he dresses like a commoner and sings a poem-like song known as 'Tha Chin'. Archaic Rakkhine language is used. To preserve and maintain this traditional act, old people who have the know-how are requested to teach school children to perform it at school concerts.

### **(G) Traditional Dishes**

The Rakkhines of Kin Maw village mostly eat seafood and vegetables, which can be obtained, in the local region.

'Magut Sie' or coral snail shells are cut at the tip and boiled and are suckled through the broken tip. Some cook and eat the meat. Another kind of mussels called jates is boiled and flesh is picked with a safety pin for eating. Mussel flesh is cooked with plenty of onions.

'Thin-Paung-Htoh' which are air sacks of golden hue pike congers and sun dried and soaked in oil until puffed up. Then it is prepared with vegetable mix to serve. Some boil them and slices of it are mixed with chilly sauce and oil. Dried fish, especially thread fins and bummalo is dishes that people do not do only on important or festive occasions. Small dried bummalos are fried and mixed with hot chillies and lime. Dried threadfins are pounded and fried.

Moreover green chillies and fish paste are baked and mixed with salt, onion and tomato to form a paste. There is no meal that does not have this chilly paste. Fish or prawn also be added to the chilly paste and cooked. It is a famous appetiser.

The Rakkhine vermicelli is also a famous dish among Rakkhine nationals. Furthermore sticky rice stalks, sticky rice dumplings, jaggery pan cake, pop corn, sticky rice in oil, sticky rice in jaggery and rice cakes are traditional snacks.

### **(H) Folk Tales**

The Rakkhine tales are handed down from ancestors to children of today. They still tell them to children. According to tradition, the story telling begins with “ayin go hka yei lat” meaning ‘once upon a time’. When the story finishes they would conclude with ‘a kyun wuhtu hsone ba be’ meaning ‘my story has ended’. If this isn’t so, spirits and fairies, please continue.

Folktales of the little frog, the indigenous medicine for fever, the buffalo prince are told to children to support the saying ‘The do-gooders succeed in life.’ Lessons such as a person getting into trouble from listening to rumours a thoughtless liar who gets into difficulties, serving or helping others may bring personal benefit and not to be selfish but respect elders are told to make children want to do meritable deeds.

### **( I ) Taboos**

Rakkhine nationals of Kin Maw village observe quite a number of taboos in social, religious and other personal tasks. This has been so since the time of their ancestors.

- In farming, the sowing of the first seed are done on Sundays only.
- Early fruits are not to be pointed at for they would become bad or stunted.

- The 'Bo' tree, 'Gangaw, an evergreen hard wood tree', Red Silk Cotton tree', are not supposed to be planted at home. Even if they are naturally grown, they shouldn't be kept till they have grown bigger. The owner will become poor for life.
- Banana plants are to be planted only to the north and west of the house.
- They should not be planted in the east or south directions. If it is desirable the person who plants it should step over it and chant, 'You are gayin, I am bayin (king)' to delete the bad luck.
- The banana bunch pointing towards the house is unlucky.
- Narcotic plants are not to be planted in the front yard. It brings unpleasant and causes the family fortunes to deteriorate.
- Whistling, cursing and foul language should be avoided on sea voyages.
- When someone has caught a fish, others should not show surprise or say the fish is big.
- Fisherman should not go and assist at childbirth. If so desired he should do it only after christening.
- Offerings should be made to U Shin Gyi before fishing trips.
- Housewives should not wash their hair until the husband has come back from sea and the net is put in place.
- Knives or swords are not to ever touch the walls of the sitting room. Sitting with toes pointing to the house front is not good either.
- Streams and creeks are to be crossed with a turmeric piece in hand.
- Crocodiles are believed to be afraid of turmeric and the turmeric piece

is carried for safety.

- Visiting sailboats must not come in to the shore with their sail unflured. Once they have come in with their sails up, they cannot take them down. They must go back with their sails up.
- Sailboats that come in with their masts up should not bring it down. They must go back with the masts standing.
- If someone has been saving wood for building a house and dies before he can start building, the wood he had saved should not be used. It should be donated to use for religious buildings
- A house should not face south or north. It should either face the sun or turn its back to it.
- It is unlucky to have empty water containers in front of the house.
- One should not visit other people's houses if the water pot in your house is empty.
- If a person comes home late at night he should stamp his heels thrice after saying 'pat-ka yu'. That is to drive away the demons following him.
- There should not be two auspicious ceremonies such as noviation or weddings in the same year. If so desired one should be conducted before the Water Festival and the other after it. Having three causes no problems.
- Weddings do not take place before the Water Festival and not during the Buddhist lent.
- Weddings do not take place in the month of Nattaw either.
- In the month of Pyartho, weddings take place during the waxing period of the moon. The waxing period is avoided.

- In the month of Tabodwe, weddings take place within the waxing period of the moon.
- Face washing and gurgling should not be done with water from drinking water tanks. Feet are not to be washed at any water tank.
- White cows, white buffaloes or white chickens, if not homebred should not be bought or raised. It blocks prosperity.
- There should be sufficient supplies during the 3 days of Thingyan (Water Festival).
- Clothes, house, bedding should be cleaned and washed prior to the Water Festival. Sins of the old year are not to be carried over to the new.
- On the New Year day there should be only the incoming money but no loans of any kind.
- A pregnant woman should not go out after dark. If it is necessary or important she should stick a pin in her hair and do so. She should not cross any streams or rivers. She should not go to funerals, should not step on cemetery grounds.
- No monetary contributions are to be made at the death of either relatives or strangers.
- The expectant father should not carry coffins, nor should he go under clothesline.
- Expectant mothers should not eat fresh vegetables, sticky rice, mushroom, bamboo shoot, and twin bananas nor should she sit at the foot of the stairs nor at the door. She should not make pillows, mattresses or clothes for the child in advance.
- Had a woman had a miscarriage, she should not go into other people's

houses for one month.

- Even an uncle buffalo or oxen is not supposed to draw a cart under the same yoke as his nephew. People take more pains. Since they are related as in-laws, the Rakkhine nephews show respect for uncles, stay away from them out of humility, and fear.
- When keeping a cat at home, one may say, "I will keep you but not your waste". Only then they will keep the house clean.
- One should not whistle at night or he'll be possessed by demons.
- One should not cut fingernails at night. It brings misfortune
- Children should not play hid and seek at night. Spirits might hide them.
- Beetles at night are believed as a bad omen.
- Resting an elbow on a table to support the head is to be avoided.
- One should not eat from the pot or he'll be accused.
- One should not pound an empty chilly pounder.
- No two persons of the same household are to go on different trips on the same day. It brings misfortune.
- Women are not to cross over cow strings.
- Women should not kick a male dog.

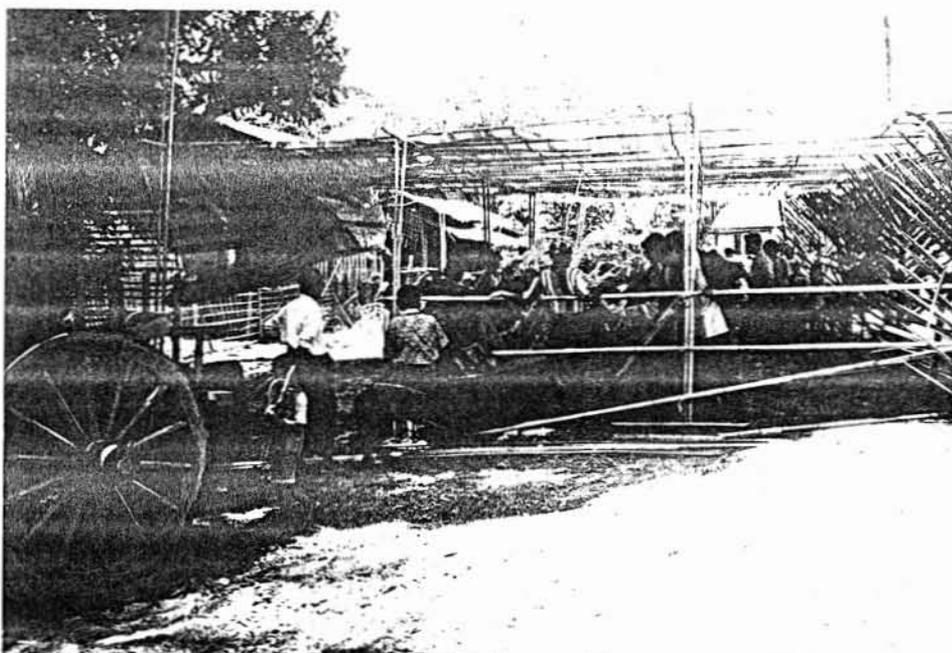


Illustration (25)

Water play at Thingyan Festival



Illustration (26)

Offertory procession on New Year Day.

## CHAPTER 5

### EDUCATION AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE

#### **(A) Education**

Natives of the Kin Maw village teach their children the mechanisms of social behavior are adaptable to the community requirements even before they reach schooling age.

When parents are at work, grand parents, aunts, brothers, sisters or whoever is free do the teaching. All parents encourage schooling. Girls are trained to do house work and womanly tasks in their free time. As a mother she has a duty to train a daughter who has come of age in social behavior and housekeeping.

Although there are no fixed places or rendezvous for the male youth they get together with older men at village celebrations, traditional ceremonies and festivals and chatted or discussed with them, the skills and knowledge required of the man folk.

In addition to that all the tradition and customs are explained and relayed to the younger generation to understand and bear in mind. Boys are taught how to plough thresh paddy and to herd cattle and girls are taught how to pull out seedlings and transport them, reap and winnow paddy. Furthermore, boys are taught how to strip bamboo, weaving baskets and thatch-work.

Kin Maw accommodates a State Primary school and a State High school. In 1914, under the sponsorship of the governor of Thandwe, a

primary school was founded. Which programmed on to become a State Middle school. Then, in 1936, it became “ The Government Subsidiary Myanmar National high school”, and remained so until it was destroyed by the World War. It recommenced in 1948 as a State Primary school after the independence. It was upgraded to a middle school in 1952 and upgraded even further to a high school in 1954.

### **State High School, Kin Maw**

#### **Student Enrollment by Year (1995-1998)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>
<b>Kindergarten</b>	13	25	12	20
<b>First Standard</b>	23	12	20	18
<b>Second Standard</b>	12	20	20	21
<b>Third Standard</b>	16	17	18	31
<b>Fourth Standard</b>	17	13	27	39
<b>Fifth Standard</b>	119	141	152	170
<b>Sixth Standard</b>	102	118	131	127
<b>Seventh Standard</b>	85	121	111	90
<b>Eighth Standard</b>	121	96	84	93
<b>Ninth Standard</b>	63	71	98	94
<b>Tenth Standard</b>	98	106	129	171
<b>Total</b>	<b>669</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>802</b>	<b>874</b>

In 1986 a State Primary School was established approximate a furlong to the east of the state High School.

**State Primary School, Kin Maw village**

**Students Enrollment by Year (1995-1998)**

Year	Kintergarten	First Std	Second Std	Third Std	Fourth Std	Total
1995	22	13	13	15	89	89
1996	12	13	10	22	30	87
1997	15	7	17	25	17	81
1998	6	12	25	12	16	71

All parents encourage schooling. Being enthusiastic to learn, students go to school and work on school holidays.

**(B) Former Political Structure**

Since early days in the Rakkhine tradition, the father was head of the family where he dominated. Where people of different families gather, the oldest in years was chosen to be the leader and the rest of the group was required to abide by his decisions. In the same way, a wise and honest person was chosen to be the Headman of village to keep the villagers happy and at peace. When the headman had been chosen, the boundaries of the village were marked and the fencing was put up with the help of the villagers. The villagers took the security measures in turns. They cooperated with each other so that there would be no quarrels. They work hard together for economic growth of the village.

During the reign of ancient Rakkhine kings, the titles such as Duke or Count may be allowed to pass on to the son. When the father died, the decision as to whether the title should be passed to the son or not was

made by the king after discussing the issue with his ministers. Should he approve, he would send credentials to the son.

Under the British regime, the Headman's descendants were entitled to succeed to the position when the Headman in question died. The Headman's duties involved collecting tax from the villagers and transferring it to the government. A clerk was appointed under the Headman. 2% of the revenue was given to the clerk.

In the days of Anti Fascist's Freedom League, the village Headman was elected by votes.

### **(C) Present-day Political Structure**

The governmental system of the Union of Myanmar is determined at various levels: State and Division, Regional, township, town, quarter and village tract. The most fundamental are the quarter and the village tract levels. Only when political, economic and social objectives are fully implemented in these levels will the establishment of a peaceful and developed nation be materialized.

The Peace and Development council of Kin Maw village constitutes the following members.

1. U Sein Tin (Chairman)
2. U Myint Than (Secretary)
3. U Win Maung (member)
4. U Shwe Maung (member)
5. U Myint Kyaing (member)

6. U Tin Win (member)

7. U Tun Lu (member)

Manuals with orientations on rights and implementation procedures for village officials have been published in order to help maintain law and order, peace and tranquility and enhance regional development.

In keeping law and order in the village, officials must report illegal issues such as thefts, trading stolen goods, murders, robbery, escaped convicts fugitives, etc. to the township Peace and Development Council and the police department promptly.

The Headman must assist in official inquiries for criminal charges within his domain. Should it be impossible to inform the authorities, he has the right to arrest the criminal.

Regarding regional development activities, the Headman must assist in maintaining reservoirs, embankments, pastures for draught cattle, preserving forests, and in estate management and collection of tax and revenue.

As social duties, the Headman must administer activities for health and sports, educational development, systematic planting of trees for shade and gardens, establishment of the reserve fire brigade and carry out other social duties as well. Villagers have the obligation to follow the leadership of the Headman.

In this way, the policies, aims and objective of the State must be realized through preservation of law and order, peace and development under the directives of the State Peace and Development Council.

## CONCLUSION

Kin Maw village is in Thandwe Township in which people of different races and cultures other than the native Rakkhines may be found. Kin Maw villagers are found to have inextricable links with people of Thandwe due to their having fairly well established transport and communication facilities with the place in question.

From the Anthropological point of view, such cases may have developments of new cultures of modifications or variations from the old. However, in this case, natives of Kin Maw have hung on to their own culture, still speak their own tongue, and are found to have managed to maintain their culture and traditions well.

From childhood, training is given to children to behave according to own culture. Children are made to play with the aims of developing team spirit, coordination, confidence and will power. Even at the age of schooling, children are trained to help their parents: sons helping with the fathers' work and daughters with their mothers'. Children are taught all aspects of the Rakkhine culture to ensure that nothing will be left out. Rakkhine is a name derived from the Pali expression 'Rekkha' which means 'guardianship'. In the words of Ashin Nargainda as recorded in the archives, the following has been quoted.

“အမျိုးသီလ။ နှစ်ဌာနကို။ ပြည်ဝဇ္ဇာတိုင်။ ဓောဝိဒ္ဓါနိဝိသညံ။ ရက္ခိုင်နာမ။ ဘွဲ့ ဝဇ္ဇာလှမြင့်၊  
အနန္တဗ္ဗသညာ။ ခေါ်အပ်ရာတည်း”

meaning “Having managed to preserve both race and religion, this place should be given a beautiful name of Rakkhine”

Religion and culture are the major features for development of a perpetual nation. Having the proverbs and folktales made known to the public reveals the prestigious status of the Rakkhine culture and helps in preserving own culture a great deal.

In earlier days, the youth are given a chance to meet at festivals such as Thdingyut, Thingyan, Tazaungdaing, Kahtein, and ceremonies such as initiations, weddings and regattas. In current practices in addition to all these activities, the Rakkhine youth are given chances to meet and find out about each other while participating in social activities. However, whether by mutual liking or by parents' arrangement a couple is betrothed, premarital sex is forbidden.

In choosing life partners, priority is given to honest, hardworking and helpful persons. The betrothals, the weddings and receptions are conducted according to tradition. The ceremony is called the 'Marein Tet Pwe'. Meals and refreshments vary according to current practices.

Most families of Rakkhine natives of Kin maw are basic families. Parents are highly respected and children learn to adapt themselves to the environment under the training and guidance of parents. Although the father is the head in a basic family, relatives may be from both sides. In extended families, the grand parents or aunts and uncles are regarded with as much obeisance as they have for parents. Problems or difficulties of a family member are settled or solved as much as they can by other members. There is a close knitted relationship among all members.

Burials are conducted for those who died from old age, diseases, epidemic and accidents. Cremation is for monks and parents of monks.

Rakkhines show off their cooperation in seasonal festivals such as Tazaundain, Kahtein, Thidingyut, Thingyan and at initiation ceremonies.

Prior to the Thingyan Festival, there would be discussions and meetings of adult and youth for food offers, fund raising for the free-for-all (Satuditha) , communal donations and contributions and merry making. Unity among the villagers is reinforced by combined efforts of the villagers in Tazaundain, Kahtein, Thidingyut and initiation ceremonies.

The well-to-do families would contribute a major portion of the funds and encourage the inferior to participate and share the merits.

There are no systematic associations nor establishments formed regarding economic activities but assistance is given to one another when and where necessary. Small scale breeding of draught cattle and buffaloes is done but not for commercial purposes. Pottery, introduced by the Rambrei Rakkhines is a domestic industry in Kin Maw. Government servants earn extra income from these domestic industries outside office hours. Villagers of Kin Maw also help each other as needed in the building and renovation of schools, residential buildings, and monasteries. They do not mind offering a helping hand to fellow villagers especially in social and religious matters and the person who is the most active in such activities becomes the most respected and admired by all. Kin Maw villagers believe in fortune telling. They are superstitious and eccentric in many ways.

An overview of the study of Kin Maw village would show that the unique way of Rakkhine natives in preserving their culture, training of the young for the relaying of tradition and culture, cooperating with peers in

social and religious activities are exemplary. Distribution of responsibilities and duties regarding economic activities also helps to achieve more efficient approaches towards economic growth.

Other native residents of the Union of Myanmar should be aware of the attitudes and practices of the Rakhine Kin Maw villagers in terms of their love of own culture, safeguard measures for preserving race and religion, cooperation and coordination. Only then will they be able to promote solidarity and unity among the national races of the Union of Myanmar. When we understand and are aware of the practices, taboos and traditions of another we will be able to avoid unnecessary harmful behavior. This understanding will in turn promote goodwill and solidarity to advance towards perpetual solidarity of the nation.

**APPENDIX****List of Interviewees**

<b>No</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Address</b>
1.	U Tun Pe Aung	67	Kin Maw Village
2.	U Sein Shwe	76	Kin Maw Village
3.	U Kyan Yae	72	Kin Maw Village
4.	U Sein Doe	75	Kin Maw Village
5.	U San Lin	65	Kin Maw Village
6.	U Thein Tin	70	Kin Maw Village
7.	U Sein Tin	52	Kin Maw Village
8.	U Maung Tha Doe	55	Kin Maw Village
9.	U Tin Aung	45	Kin Maw Village
10.	U Tin Shwe	42	Kin Maw Village
11.	U Myint Maung	48	Kin Maw Village
12.	U Win Maung	34	Kin Maw Village
13.	Daw Thein Khin	78	Kin Maw Village
14.	Daw Bo Ma	70	Kin Maw Village
15.	Daw Than Yee	55	Kin Maw Village
16.	Daw Tin Tin Lay	53	Kin Maw Village
17.	Daw Thein Tin	55	Kin Maw Village
18.	Daw Khin Myint	42	Kin Maw Village
19.	Daw Than Yin/ Daw Pu Lay	45	Kin Maw Village
20.	Daw Than Mya	45	Kin Maw Village
21.	U Tin Win	30	Kin Maw Village
22.	Ma Win Win Myint	30	Kin Maw Village
23.	Ma Hpyu Hpyu Htun	32	Kin Maw Village
24.	Daw Tin May	45	Kin Maw Village
25.	Daw Tin Yee	43	Kin Maw Village
26.	Daw Khin Thein	43	Kin Maw Village
27.	Daw Khin Kyi	53	Kin Maw Village
28.	Maung Tun Tint Swe	25	Kin Maw Village
29.	Dr. Moe Kyaw Tun	28	Kin Maw Village

တွေ့ဆုံမေးမြန်းသူများ

၁။ ဦးထွန်းဖေအောင်	၆၇ နှစ်	ကင်းမော်ကျေးရွာ
၂။ ဦးစိန်ရွှေ	၇၆ နှစ်	။
၃။ ဦးကျန်ရေ	၇၂ နှစ်	။
၄။ ဦးစိန်ခိုး	၇၅ နှစ်	။
၅။ ဦးစံလင်း	၆၅ နှစ်	။
၆။ ဦးသိန်းတင်	၇၀ နှစ်	။
၇။ ဦးစိန်တင်	၅၂ နှစ်	။
၈။ ဦးမောင်သာခိုး	၅၅ နှစ်	။
၉။ ဦးတင်အောင်	၄၅ နှစ်	။
၁၀။ ဦးတင်ရွှေ	၄၂ နှစ်	။
၁၁။ ဦးမြင့်အောင်	၄၀ နှစ်	။
၁၂။ ဦးဝင်းမောင်	၃၄ နှစ်	။
၁၃။ ဒေါ်သိန်းခင်	၇၈ နှစ်	။
၁၄။ ဒေါ်ဘိုမ	၇၀ နှစ်	။

၁၅။ ဒေါသန်းရီ	၅၅ နှစ်	။
၁၆။ ဒေါတင်တင်လေး	၅၃ နှစ်	။
၁၇။ ဒေါသိန်းတင်	၅၅ နှစ်	။
၁၈။ ဒေါခင်မြင့်	၄၂ နှစ်	။
၁၉။ ဒေါသန်းရင်(ခ) ဒေါပုလေး	၄၅ နှစ်	။
၂၀။ ဒေါသန်းမြ	၄၅ နှစ်	။
၂၁။ ဦးတင်ဝင်း	၃၀ နှစ်	။
၂၂။ မဝင်းဝင်းမြင့်	၃၀ နှစ်	ကင်းမော် / ရုံးခရစ်
၂၃။ မဖြူဖြူထွန်း	၃၂ နှစ်	သံတွဲ
၂၄။ ဒေါတင်မေ	၄၅ နှစ်	။
၂၅။ ဒေါတင်ရီ	၄၃ နှစ်	။
၂၆။ ဒေါခင်သိန်း	၄၃ နှစ်	ရန်ကုန်
၂၇။ ဒေါခင်ကြည်	၅၃ နှစ်	ကင်းမော် / ခရမ်းမော်
၂၈။ မောင်ထွန်းတင့်ဆွေ	၂၅ နှစ်	ရန်ကုန်
၂၉။ ဒေါက်တာမိုးကျော်ထွန်း	၂၈ နှစ်	။

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- ၂။ ဒေဝ၊ မောင် (မြောက်ဦး) .. .. ရခိုင်အကြောင်း သိအပ်ဖွယ် အဖြာဖြာ
- ၃။ မင်းခိုင်၊ ဦး .. .. တိုတိုင်းရင်းဘဝား ပြည်ထောင်စုသား
- ၄။ မင်းခိုင်၊ ဦး .. .. ဒိုသွေး ဒိုသား တိုင်းရင်းဘဝား
- ၅။ မင်းခိုင်၊ ဦး .. .. ရခိုင်ဝတ္ထုပုံပြင်
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- ၇။ စန္ဒမာ လင်္ကာရ .. .. ရခိုင်ရာဇဝင်ကျမ်း (ပ)
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၁၄။ ပါတီထုတ် စာတမ်း	..	ပြည်ထောင်စု မြန်မာနိုင်ငံ တိုင်းရင်းသား
		ယဉ်ကျေးမှုရိုးရာ ဓလေ့ထုံးစံများ (ရခိုင်)
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		(ငွေတာရီမဂ္ဂဇင်း၊ ၁၉၆၉ ခုနှစ်၊ ဇွန်လ)
၁၈။ ကောက်ခံ၊ မောင်	.. ..	ရခိုင်သားတို့၏ကျင်အတတ်(ငွေတာရီမဂ္ဂဇင်း၊
		၁၉၇၁ ခုနှစ်၊ ဖေဖော်ဝါရီလ)
၁၉။ ကျော်၊ လေးမြို့	.. ..	ရခိုင်သားတို့၏ကျင်အတတ်(ငွေတာရီမဂ္ဂဇင်း၊
		၁၉၈၁ ခုနှစ်၊ ဖေဖော်ဝါရီလ)
၂၀။ ဖေလေးပွင့်	.. ..	သွေးချင်းရခိုင်တို့၏ ဓနိလုပ်ငန်း
		(ငွေတာရီမဂ္ဂဇင်း၊ ၁၉၇၂ ခုနှစ်၊ ဇွန်လ)
၂၁။ ကြီးစိန်၊ မောင်	.. ..	ရခိုင်လူမျိုး တို့၏လှေပြိုင်ပွဲ
		(ငွေတာရီ မဂ္ဂဇင်း)
၂၂။ ခင်နုနု၊ ဒေါ်	.. ..	မနုဿဗေဒနိဒါန်း
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၂၅။ ကြင်ကြင်၊ ဒေါ်	.. ..	မနုဿဗေဒနိဒါန်း