

“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

Chapter 1 LOCATION AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

(A) Topographical Features	1
(B) Historical Background	2
(C) Physical Characteristic and Costumes	4
(D) Language and Literature	5

**Chapter 2 FAMILY ORGANIZATION AND
SOCIAL INTERACTIONS**

(A) Infancy and Childhood	16
(B) The Youth	22
(C) The Betrothal and The Marriage Ceremony	25
(D) Pregnancy and Child - birth	31
(E) Family Organization and Kinship	33
(F) Inheritance	37
(G) Housing and Settlement	37
(H) The Divorce	39
(I) The Funerals	39

Chapter 3 ECONOMY

(A) Farming	47
(B) The Nipa Industry	49
(C) Pottery	51
(D) Other Occupations	53
(E) Organization of Labour Forces	57

Chapter 4 RELIGION AND FOLK CULTURE

(A) Faith and Beliefs	67
(B) The Rakkhine Traditional Nats	68
(C) Superstitions	70
(D) Interpretation of Omens	70
(E) Belief in Fortune Telling	71
(F) Folk Festivals and Dances	75
(G) Traditional Cuisine	84
(H) Folktales	85
(I) Taboo	85

Chapter 5 EDUCATION AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE

(A) Education	91
(B) Former Political Structure	93
(C) Present-day Political Structure	94

CONCLUSION

BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIX : List of Interviewees

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 1st 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

