

Research Publications of Dr. Lwin Lwin Mon

Professor, Department of Anthropology, Yadanabon University

1. The Traditional Marriage Custom of Kayan(Padaung) People

(MAAS, Research Journal,2008, Vol.VI)

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to make other ethnic peoples understand the culture and customs of Kayan (Padaung) people and to promote our national unity and solidarity. During the year 2000, from February 15 to March 1, the researcher had done this field research about "**The Traditional Marriage Customs of Kayan (Padaung) People**" with the team led by Retired Professor Daw Tin Yee, Anthropology Department, Yangon University as a departmental research project. This field research was done by using available information, observation, interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussion (FGD) methods. In this research paper, the researcher has presented about the bachelors and maidens' life, the custom of engagement, the enumerations in holding marriage ceremonies, prohibitions of marriage, bride-prices and the wedding ceremony and the divorce in Padaung marriage. Padaung races is one of our outstanding Myanmar ethnic groups because a Padaung woman wears bronze-rings weighing about 8 viss around her neck, arms and legs. The Padaung bachelors and maidens choose their partners with their parents' consent in olden days and even nowadays. A **go-between** performs the Bethothal and Wedding Ceremony. They marry within **consanguineal relatives**. The groom pays some silver coins as a **bride-price** and all the wedding expenses. The Padaung people practise **Monogamy system** and their divorce rate is only about 10%.

Key Words: A go-between, consanguineal relatives, bride-price, Monogamy system

Introduction

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This field research was done by using available information, observation, interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussion (FGD) methods. In this research paper, the researcher has presented about the bachelors and maidens' life, the custom of engagement, the enumerations in holding marriage ceremonies, prohibitions of marriage, bride-prices and the wedding ceremony, the procedure of worshipping the spirit and the divorce in Padaung marriage.

Findings and Discussions

Most of Padaung distributed in Shan and Kayah States, Union of Myanmar.

The Padaung bachelors and maidens choose their partners with their parents' consent in olden days and even nowadays. They are very innocent and they follow their parents and elders' disciplines and rules. Moreover, they live in unity and solidarity especially when they celebrate their traditional festivals and social affairs.

The custom of engagement belongs to the tribe Kayan (Padaung) can be observed that they generally use the match-maker from both sides (Paranapaung in vernacular term). After engagement has finished, the future bride groom has a chance to visit her home. But sexual relationships of premarital stage, is restrictly prohibited among those people. If he commits that action, he must beg their pardons and apologies not only from the bride's parents but also from the whole villagers especially from village elders. Moreover he must be punished by a fine, defined by village elders. After they accept his apologies, he can continue his future marriage ceremony. During wedding ceremony, the duty of laying foods to audience with fermented liquor, cooked rice and curry, etc, is on the bride's side and the bride-groom's side. But the total expenses of feeding on both sides and bride-price (Dowry) must be paid by the bride groom's side.

The enumerations in holding marriage ceremonies among various religious groups and various regions of those people are slightly different from one another. But the fundamental concept is comparatively the same. Marriage by free consent, by parents' consent and by elopement can be observed among those. Majority of the people like to marry within the same clan. They have rights to match between parallel relatives like, cousins from the same siblings and cousins from cousins. But the marriage between cross- relations such as aunts and nephews, uncles and nieces, grandmothers and grandsons are strongly prohibited. With one exceptional case, it is that the marriage between the grandfather and granddaughter, can be missable. These marital rights and prohibitions derives from their legends and all are valid among in-laws, even those of primarily, secondary and tertiary in-laws.

The future groom pays 20 to 30 silver coins, gold brace let, gold ear-ring, gold ring and sometimes 3 or 4 cows as bride-price (dowry), to the girl's parents and all wedding expenses. They celebrate wedding ceremony at the bride's house one day per ahead, then they do at the groom's house and invite the whole village and feed and serve some refreshments such as 20 bottles of Khaung-Ye , 20 viss of pork, 30 viss of beef, 48 baskets of rice etc. After serving at the bride's house, the relatives of the groom and female parties pick up the bride to the groom's house and play wooden or bamboo bells, flutes, etc. And they believe that by doing so the future baby get better hearing power and easy to obey and follow the elder's advice. During the wedding ceremony, the elder person of relatives wind the left wrist of the bride and groom about 7 times or 5 times or 3 times with their hand-made cotton thread and bless them for their long-life of marriage. One of the most significant custom is that the Padaung bride and groom cannot live together or cohabit as husband and wife right after the wedding because of their shyness and this will last for about a fortnight or a month or even 7 years in the olden time. After wedding, the girl used to live with her parents at first. Mostly, the girl becomes 18 years old, they will start to live together as husband and wife. At that time, the groom and his friends pick up the girl from her parents' house and on the way of carrying her to the groom's house, they play cow's bell made of wood, bamboo, bronze and iron. The reason is that the voice can be heard from the groom's side only. There was no more celebration and invitation. Some Kayan (Padaung) Nationals follow this custom to this every day.

. The Padaung people practise Monogamy system and their divorce rate is only about 1%.

Conclusion

By studying these interesting traditional marriage customs of Kayan (Padaung) Nationals, one can get many knowledge about their rare and ancient customs. Moreover, the mutual understanding between Padaung and other ethnic peoples of Myanmar would be enhanced and can promote our national unity and solidarity.

2. Myanmar Cultural Value Systems on Theravada Buddhism (Universities Research Journal, 2008, Vol.1. No.1)

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to find out **the cultural value systems** on Theravada Buddhism and provide **guiding principles** to a good life for the Myanmar people. The data will be collected by library research. In this paper, the brief history of Bagan Period, the arrival of Theravada Buddhism in Myanmar, the origin of Myanmar cultural value systems, the connection of Myanmar cultural value systems and Theravada Buddhism are presented. These evidences make to understand that Myanmar people will manage to preserve their **national identity**. According to the evidences, Theravada Buddhism flourished in the Bagan period during the King Anawrahta's reign. It was regarded that Shin Arahant from Thaton arrived and guided the debased Buddhists and the three Pitakas of Buddhist Canon to be enshrined all over the land. It was in the early eleventh century and from that time onwards, the people of Bagan and royal families were engaged in building so many pagodas with benevolence and **generosity**. Myanmar cultural value systems originated during the Bagan Era when Buddhist culture began to flourish and permeate all levels of society. **The principal values** that form the underpinnings for the moral codes are: generosity, compassion, forgiveness, propriety and decency, knowledge and wisdom and peace and tranquility.

Key words: the cultural value systems, guiding principles, the principle values, national identity, generosity

Myanmar Cultural Value Systems on Theravada Buddhism

Lwin Lwin Mon

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Introduction

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The brief history of Bagan Period

Bagan has many cultural monuments and cultural heritage and properties. Some of these cultural monuments can still exist and can be studied even nowadays. The name of Bagan was derived from Pyu gama. From Pyu gama, it was changed to Pyugam and then to Pugam. Later, it has been pronounced Bagan. According to the inscriptions from Bagan Period, the literary name of Bagan was Arimaddana-pura which means "crushing of enemies". At that time, it was also called Pukkan. Bagan actually was a Pyu place, where Myanmar chose to have their capital. The age of Bagan is 1262 years from A.D 107 to A.D 1369. The Bagan Dynasty was started with King Thamudarit by organizing the nineteen Pyu villages located around "Yon-hlut-kyun", an island surrounded by a creek flowing from Mt. Poppa into the Ayeyarwaddy River. The first Bagan Palace was built in "Yon-hlut-kyun". According to the Glass Palace Chronicle, the land of Bagan can be defined as "land of victory". During the reign of King Thamudarit, the great

four enemies of the kingdom; the great bird, the great boar, the great tiger and the flying squirrel were defeated by the hero Pyusawhti who became the heir to the throne.

There were altogether 55 kings who ruled Bagan and it was in the reign of King Anawrahta, the 42nd king of Bagan dynasty, known as the founder of the First Myanmar Nation. During his reign, he had the great heroes who were recognized for their bravery and strength; Kyansitha: heroic Lancer, Nga Htwe Yuu: heroic Climber, Nga Lon Letpe: heroic Harrower and Nyaung U Phi: heroic Swimmer. Among the kings in Bagan Dynasty, the successors of King Anawrahta, kings like Kyansitha, Alaungsithu, Narapatisithu, Htilo Minlo and Kya Swa were well known for their devotedness to the Theravada Buddhism and the supremacy of power. The Audience Hall for the administration of state affairs was inaugurated in A.D 1211-1234 during the reign of King Htilo Minlo, the 49th king of Bagan Dynasty.

The arrival of Theravada Buddhism in Myanmar

The development of Buddhism undergoes the following stages of change. The first appearance of Buddhism in Majjhimadesa was in the fifth century BC. Successful attempts by Asoka, a Mauryan king of Magadha to propagate Buddhism outside Central India was in the third century BC. The schism in Buddhism appeared towards the beginning of the Christian era. There were Mahayanists in the North and Hinayanists or Theravadins in the south of India. Kaniska helped the further expansion of Mahayanism in the second century AD. The Gupta Kings supported Brahmanism in the third to sixth

scenuries AD. They, however, tolerated Buddhism of both forms. King Harsa supported Mahayanism. Nalanda in the North-east of India became a famous Buddhist university. The south east coast of India still retained Hinayanism. The north part of this east coast had the Pala Kingdom and south part had the Pallava Kingdom. Both were Hinayana centers. Mahayana gradually becomes a counterpart of Tantricism of Hindu. According to the Dipawontha and Mahawontha evidences, Shin Thaw-na and U-tha-ra of the mission of Asoka arrived at Thu-wa-na-bu-mi, lower Myanmar from about fourth to fifth century AD. And then Theravada Buddhism flourished in the Bagan period during King Anawrahta's reign. It was regarded that Shin Arahan from Thaton arrived and guided the debased Buddhists and the three Pitakas of Buddhist Canon to be enshrined all over the land. It was in the early eleventh century and from that time onwards, the people of Bagan and royal families were engaged in building many pagodas with benevolence and generosity.

That is why everybody knows the total number of Bagan pagodas in accord with the old rhyme "Hle-win-yo-than, tanyannyan bagan phayabaung" (the sound of the wheels of bullock-cart's axel) by the numerals, they represented that the total number is 4446. The severe earthquake in 1975 caused a lot of damages all around Bagan and turned most of its numerous temples and pagodas to become mounds and scattered bricks.

The sacred scriptures which were taken from Thaton enlightened the Theravada Buddhism and they were kept at a special library building (the Pitakataik) as advised by Shin Arahan. With the support of Mon monks the doctrines and the literature of Buddhism were spread far and wide. Pali, the sacred language of pitakas became the sacred language for Myanmar and Mon alphabets were also adopted. The conquest of Thaton was a decisive event of Myanmar's history and the firm foundation of literature. The most famous inscriptions left as silent witnesses of their devotedness to the Lord Buddha and Buddhism Record of their generous donation and protection not to be destroyed became the milestones of historical evidences.

Among them, the Rajakumar Inscription (AD-1113) was expressive of reverence and grandeur and contributed a lot by providing Mon, Myanmar, Pali and Pyu languages. Such monastic complexes as Shin Arahan, Sinphyu shin, Shwenanyindaw, Htae Gyi (Phwasaw) and Lay Myetttha show the introduction of monastic education in Bagan. These monastic complexes became higher learning centers for Buddhist Studies and also centers of basic education.

The origin of Myanmar cultural value systems

Myanmar cultural value systems originated during the Bagan Era when Buddhist culture began to flourish and permeate all levels of society. Codes of conduct were clearly laid down for parent and offspring, teacher and student, ruler and ruled, elder and youth, monk and laymen, between friends as well as towards one's impoverished relatives. The principal values that form the underpinnings for these moral codes are: (a) generosity (b) compassion (c) forgiveness (d) propriety and decency (e) knowledge and wisdom and (f) peace and tranquility.

A good man was one who tried to develop such attitudes and lived in accordance with these values. So goodness was measured according to these norms. These characteristics were considered to be more valuable than wealth, power and glory, which are impermanent. These were the values instilled in Myanmar people since the advent of Theravada Buddhism in Bagan Era and which hold true today as in ancient times. These are the values of our cultural heritage and although, man being human, may fail to live up to these standards, nevertheless, they are there to guide us to a good life.

The connection of Myanmar cultural value systems and Theravada Buddhism

All Buddhists, whether Mahayana, Hinayana or Theravada subscribe the Five Precepts, would be an essential part of the value system of the Myanmar people. The Five Precepts are:

To refrain from killing (respect for life); to refrain from stealing (respect for another's possession); to refrain from sexual misconduct (respect for another's dignity); to refrain from falsehood (avoid verbal misconduct) and to refrain from intoxicants (respect for oneself, mind as well as body). They are such as integral part of Buddhism and these values must have prevailed from the Pyu society and culture to even nowadays.

Based on these precepts, one of the Myanmar cultural value systems, generosity has characterized the Myanmar personality since the Bagan Era of 11th century AD. There are many stone inscriptions that record the religious donations as well as the religious monuments large and small, which testify the spirit of generosity. But Myanmar people did not confine themselves to religious donations only, although it is considered the highest kind of merit for it contributes to the propagation of Buddhism and finally to liberation from the suffering of the endless cycle of birth and rebirths. Generosity

and hospitality is a fact of daily life. To this day Myanmar people in groups, as a family or individually is ever ready to give donations for religions as well as social purposes.

They will donate towards pagoda funds and offer food for monks on a large scale at monasteries inviting many relatives and friends to partake of their hospitality. The Myanmar people seem to be the happiest when they are able to treat others to feasts. They make donations for the aged and needy, for the building of schools and hospitals. Digging wells and ponds to provide water to people and building rest houses for the weary traveller and building roads and bridges are part of cultural tradition. Those with limited means will donate their services. In any Myanmar neighbourhood almost everyone will help a family in need in both cash and kind or services. A large number of Myanmar people will come to the aid of a stranger especially a foreigner who has lost his bearings in a large city or who is in need of some form of help. Even when friends eat together at a restaurant or drink tea in a shop, each one will insist on paying for the food and drink. This tradition of "Dana" as we call it, which literally means "giving" began in the Bagan Period and thrives till today. There are many stone inscriptions, which record the good deeds and donations by king and commoner alike. The Myanmar people thus are noted for their generosity and hospitality.

One of the tenets preached by Lord Buddha is compassion towards all living beings and this spirit of compassion has been instilled in the Myanmar character. For example, in a small temple in Minanthu village of Bagan there exists a stone inscription that shows that one Asawlat, wife of a minister at the royal court donated this temple. In ancient days, when pagodas or temples were donated, it was the custom to assign certain people to work in the fields in the vicinity for the upkeep of the monument and tend to the daily rituals of the offering of alms food, flowers and candles at the temple. And these people became hereditary pagoda slaves. But Madame Asawlat, taking the Buddha's teachings to heart freed all her slaves when the temple was built and gave them land to earn their livelihood. This is all inscribed on stone, a more or less permanent record of the value placed on "giving" as well as "compassion".

Compassion is shown especially to those who are weak and dependent on others, both human and animal. Hence the reason why Myanmar children are cared for so lovingly and the old and infirm are treated with great respect. Myanmar people are taught from young to respect their elders and pay proper homage. This compassion is extended to all living beings.

Myanmar is an agricultural country so in olden days, the cultivator together with his pair of oxen had to plough the field with great labour. This forged a bond between beast and man and also a sense of gratitude towards the faithful oxen. So, farmers regard their oxen as their benefactor and out of gratitude and compassion will not eat its meat. This is true of most Myanmar Buddhists who will not eat beef. In addition it is considered to be a good deed to buy animals about to be slaughtered to set them free. This is a ritual one can see every year on the day of the Myanmar New Year. You will see earthenware pots proceeding to lakes and ponds to release fish that had been caught for the market. Birds in captivity are freed and cattle for slaughter are given sanctuary. In fact, most monasteries are sanctuaries for animals and birds and there are many in the country to this day. Compassion is an important part of the Myanmar value system for it is based on respect for all forms of life.

Forgiveness is also considered as a moral virtue. The moral value placed on forgiveness is a legacy bestowed on us by our forebears of the Bagan Era. Ananda Thuriya, a minister of the court of King Narapatisithu, by his example and the thoughts he expressed on life and death and glory and power in the poem. He gives the quintessence of all the values that the Myanmar people hold most dear. Minister Ananda Thuriya through a gross misunderstanding had incurred the king's wrath and had been condemned to death. As the executioners came to carry out their orders, he asked them to provide him with writing materials as the last wish and composed the poem "To Dispel Anger" which is he beseeched his captors to submit to the king after his death. This poem is a classic lesson in human dignity, for in it he did not plead for his life. In fact, he wrote in a beautiful verse his views on life, on power and glory, his loyalty to his master and his acceptance of the law of Kamma, as taught by the Buddha; the law of Kamma which maintains that the deeds, words and thoughts of each man's past determine his present, as his present actions in deeds, words and thoughts would determine his future. And in the closing stanzas he expresses his steadfast loyalty to the king and forgives him. The king on reading this poem was so filled with remorse that he ordered a reprieve for the minister, but by then it was too late. Ananda Thuriya had already been executed. This poem is now over a thousand years old but it still manages to stir the emotions of modern readers and every well-read person can quote it verbatim. His generosity of spirit, great forbearance and his view of the reality of life, that is but momentary, is distilled in this short poem with a few well chosen words that goes directly to the heart.

These are still the guiding principles for Myanmar Buddhists.

The Myanmar people have a fierce national pride and may be quick to anger when their dignity and sensibilities are hurt, but they do not harbour resentment nor do they seek revenge. To cite some examples, the Myanmar people were under colonial rule for over a hundred years and also suffered greatly during World War II under the oppressive Fascist Japanese regime. Loss of life and wealth was enormous. But the Myanmar people bear no grudge against either the British or the Japanese. They oppose only the Imperialist and Fascist systems. This is because of the values and virtues of forbearance and forgiveness that have been instilled in us since the ancient Era of Bagan. In a way, it can be said that we have learned well the lessons taught to us by a great man like Ananda Thuriya whose attitudes reflect the essence of Myanmar culture.

The Myanmar people also place great value on propriety. It is called the principle of "Hiri Ottappa" in Myanmar; it means "Shame of misconduct and fear of losing one's dignity". In other words, the Myanmar people shun impropriety in speech, dress and manner and disapprove of any behaviour that hurt human dignity. We are very much aware that as intelligent human beings, we cannot and should not surrender to our animal instincts. Even in the matter of dress, we need to be modest. Revealing clothes are contrary to Myanmar customs. If one makes a study of the small figurines of musicians and dancers of the Pyu Period, it will be noticed that even in those days they were modestly clad. This fact can again be seen on the wall paintings of the cave temples of Bagan.

Modern day dancers and singers in dramas, plays and dance performances are all acquired to be fully and decently dressed. Hence modesty and propriety were and still are considered moral virtues. It was this modesty and sense of propriety which led to the emergence and development of marionette shows, for few parents would allow their daughters to dance or act for a living. Men played the female parts in dramas live shows and there were no female dancer in a duet and only males in female dress. This rigid attitude changed over the years, but it is only about 100 to 150 years that professional female dancers and actresses emerged. However, even today the dress code for all performers, dancers, actors and actresses, is still strict. It should be noted that this is in accordance with norms set by the public itself. There are Myanmar proverbs that advocate the need for propriety. For example, "As the rim makes a basket, clothes make a man". Myanmar society today still values propriety. There are unwritten rules of behaviour

between father and daughter, mother and son, brother and sister, elders and young people even today and they are obeyed without questioning.

In Myanmar Culture wisdom and knowledge are valued above wealth and power and down through the ages there has been a considerably high literacy rate among the people, both men and women. According to Buddhist teachings it is ignorance that prompts men to do evil. So each individual must try to acquire knowledge and understanding in order to lead a good life. Here, we should note the role of Buddhist monasteries and Buddhist monks who took sole responsibility for the education of the young, in both the moral and secular spheres. Attendance at a monastery for education of boys was more or less obligatory, for a male child has to enter the religious order as a novice as soon as he reaches puberty or even earlier. But to do so, he has to be able to read and understand the Buddhist scriptures. So most boys were sent to the monastery at about 6 or 8 years old to learn to read and write and recite the scriptures. Such monastic education flourished through the ages and even today there are monastic schools at the primary level. The pupils are also given moral instruction, it is a very wholesome system. Education for girls was not forbidden but it was not compulsory. There have been outstanding women of letters throughout Myanmar history since the Bagan Era. One princess Thanbyin of the Bagan Era was so well-versed in the scriptures that she became a teacher to Buddhist monks. So according to Myanmar culture only knowledge and wisdom can help a person to lead a life of virtue. There are many Myanmar proverbs extolling the benefits of knowledge. One says that, "Knowledge is a golden jar which thieves cannot steal".

Sympathy is another virtue that is high on the list of the Myanmar system of values. It is a complementary to compassion. Myanmar society and culture disapproves of selfish and self-centered people. Such people are considered anti-social and aggressive. The tradition of helping the aged and the needy arises out of this attitude of sympathy. One will frequently hear statements such as "Think of them as your children, parents, sisters, etc" as the case maybe. In other words, it exhorts one to treat others as your own. This value has also been ingrained in Myanmar society since ancient times as shown in the Shwezigon Stone Inscription of King Kyansitha.

Conclusion

By studying the Myanmar cultural value systems on Theravada Buddhism provide guiding principles to a good life for the Myanmar people. As mentioned earlier in the paper, Theravada

Buddhism arrived and flourished in Myanmar from the time of King Anawrahta and since then, has been a great influence in all aspects of Myanmar life.

However, Theravada Buddhism flourishes not only in Myanmar but also in Sri Lanka in South Asia and Thailand, Cambodia and Laos in Southeast Asia. These countries thus share many common features. We find similarities in physical appearance as well as in personality among our brethren of the Southeast Asian region.

The researcher has mainly focused on the Bagan Era, for that period is the well-spring of our culture, traditions and customs. There naturally have been some changes, modifications and revisions through the ages, especially with the impact of colonial rule and western influence. But the teaching of the Buddha has greatly infused our culture, our social norms and world outlook. We may have borrowed liberally from the cultural traditions and values of our neighbouring countries and even from the west. There is no denying that. But we have not borrowed *in toto* new ideas, thoughts, fashions and even style of living. What we have borrowed has always been adapted to suit Myanmar society and Myanmar people. The modern trends have not shaken or destroyed the cultural foundations of Myanmar society and we have managed to preserve our national identity while striving at the same time to build a modern and developed nation.

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3. Harvesting Festival and New Year Festival of Lisu National (Universities Research Journal , 2009, Vol.2. No.2)

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to record and conduct the social life and custom of modern Lisu National by using Applied Anthropology's methods. Moreover, the other ethnic groups in Union of Myanmar can get the knowledge of one's culture from another and promote the mutual understanding and unity between each other. The data were collected by using available information, library research, field research, and interview and interpret the data from an ethnological point of view. In this research, their interesting harvesting festival based on economy and how to celebrate their New Year festival were studied.

Harvesting Festival

In October and November, the paddy begins to get ripe and it is harvested in November and early December. In harvesting paddy, the Duwa or headman's plot is first harvested. They use the sickle to harvest the paddy. They are tied in bundles. To remove the paddy seeds from the straw, they first clear a piece of land and place rough bamboo mats on it. Then they put two low forked posts twelve feet apart on that ground. They put a pole on the two forked posts. The paddy bundles are beaten swung by hand on the pole and seeds fall on the mat. While one person is beating the paddy bundles another stand at the edge of the mat, fanning with a big bamboo tray to separate the chaff from the seeds. They are packed in gunny sacks and tied with a loop of rope. The women carry this sack of paddy by putting the rope loop across their forehead like how they carry a bamboo basket. The men carry it on their shoulders. The paddy is stored in big bamboo baskets, woven by them, to last the whole year.

The Lisu nationals do not grow paddy on a commercial scale. They can only grow to get enough for the family for one year. Sometimes a family may have to borrow some paddy from another family to be repaid in the next harvest time. He needs to repay only the amount he borrowed and no need to pay any interest. It shows that they help each other and they live in unity.

Some Lisu nationals who believe in traditional ancestor worship, they offer a plate of rice and bowl of curry to the guardian spirit of the barn ; praying for a good harvest next year and to be able to store a lot of paddy. Sometimes, all the men and women of the whole village paddy to the mandat and pray the god for a good harvest next year. This ceremony celebrates at the Church nowadays.

The harvesting ceremony is mostly led by the men and women co-operate together .When they celebrate this ceremony, the leader should mostly be the elder person and make the plan for the whole ceremony. The women are responsible for the cooking. Their younger generations serve the guests with rice, curry and some drinks. Therefore, we can say that the Lisu nationals do not differ between male and female's role for doing the harvesting ceremony in the olden days to even nowadays.

New Year Festival

The New Year Festival is the most important festival to the Lisu nationals. It is celebrated by the whole village altogether. In the ancient time, before they use the calendar, they observe their environment of forests and mountains, the waters and the land and their natural surroundings to celebrate their festivals. They celebrate the New Year Festival after 15th January. When the time draws for this festival, Lisu nationals; relatives and family member living far and near, those who have gone hunting, all come back to their native village to join the festival.

The food to be offered to the nats has to be new. The rice must be from newly harvested paddy. The sticky rice for khawpoat (preparation of steamed and pounded glutinous rice) also must be new. It must be pounded just before the festival. New alcohol also must be brewed with new sticky rice.

When alcohol, khaungye and khawpoat are ready, they can celebrate the New Year Festival. They begin on the first day after the full moon day of Pyatho and lasts seven to nine days .The whole village participates in the celebration. Nobody does any other work. Some meat is put in between a slab of khawpoats. It is then placed on a ten feet post erected at the entrance of the village. Then they shoot at it with a cross bow from a distance of thirty to forty feet. If it hits the meat, it is a sign that they will get a lot of prey in hunting and if it hits the khawpoat, it means abundant harvests of grains. If the cross bow string broke while shooting, it means that the shooter's life will be short and if the bow-string didn't break, it means long life for the shooter or bow-man. Next the shaman goes into the village and turn down all grain mills and mortars as a sign of complete rest from all labor. They pour down a little alcohol on the grain mill and mortar as an offering to their guardian nats. Then worship for the souls of their ancestors they have to offer two cups of alcohol, two plates of rice, two bowls of pork curry and two packets of khawpoat, each packet containing ten sheets of khawpoat. Each thing has to be two because one is for the souls of their ancestors and the other is for the shaman. They have to say, "We are celebrating the New Year Festival and we are inviting our shaman and souls of our ancestors to come and honor the occasion. May everything be new in the New Year? We offer new alcohol, new khawpoat and new rice. Please also give us new children. We promise to invite you the next year also, please visit us". After the worship and offering the whole village enjoys the alcohol, khawpoat and rice. Then they play their traditional musical

instruments, sing and dance traditional dances and songs in groups. This goes on for three days, but for the remaining days they do not dance and sing and play the music and they do not also do any labor at all. Only after seven or nine days the shaman declares the feast over and people go back to their jobs.

Nowadays, the Christian Lisu people celebrate the New Year Festival at the end of January. They pray to the god that the New Year may be as happy and healthy as the past year. Some Christian lisus celebrate the New Year Festival in a different way. They wait for the New Year the whole of 31st December night. They welcome the New Year on 1st January morning and celebrate the festival the whole day by praying to God. Then they entertain the guests with food and drinks.

After seventh day of the New Year festival, the Lisu women stay at home and they do not do anything. As the same, at the ninth day after the New Year Festival, the Lisu men do not do anything. The reason they believe is that if they do anything on that day, they will be unlucky for the next whole year.

Conclusion

By studying the Harvesting Festival and New Year Festival of Lisu Nationals, we can get many knowledge about their interesting harvesting ceremony based on economy and how to celebrate their New Year Festival. In addition, we were learnt the facts that even they practice Patrilineal System, the gender's value upon man and woman do not differ one-sided and most of their gender role is nearly fair and square. Therefore, the research groups hope that their customs and beliefs will be understood by other ethnic groups and this research hopes to fill the gap of the real understanding between the Lisu nationals and other nationals groups and to promote our national unity.

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4. The Social Value and Function of Myanmar Lacquer Ware in Bagan

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Abstract

The objective of this research is to maintain the Myanmar Traditional Lacquer ware Art in Bagan and reveal their social life and to get international interest for the **distinct tradition and custom** of Myanmar Lacquer ware Art. In this research, desk review, library survey, field research, Key Informant Interview, Participant observation, taking photographs recording with video were performed for special activities associated with the Lacquer ware Art. Moreover, these data will be studied by Economic Anthropology and Cultural Anthropology point of view. In this research presentation, nine themes were described. These were: Introduction, Methodology, Historical background of the Myanmar Lacquer ware Art, Production, Distribution, Consumption, Division of labour and their daily income, Social value and function related to Myanmar lacquer ware and Conclusion. Expected impact of the research is to maintain the Myanmar tradition and culture based on Lacquer ware and how to ensure **the continuity of their art**. And then, expected outcome is to prolong and become famous for Myanmar Traditional Lacquer ware Art and Technology among the world and to do advanced studies with international research institutes. Moreover, this research will need to learn in details and cooperate with the other interesting scholars.

Key words: distinct tradition and custom, the continuity of their art

Introduction

According to the program of Asia Research Centre, the research team of Anthropology Department, University of Yangon did this research. The objective of the research is to maintain the Myanmar Traditional Lacquer ware Art in Bagan and reveal their social life and to get international interest for the distinct tradition and custom of Myanmar Lacquer ware Art.

In this research presentation, nine themes were described. These were: Introduction, Methodology, Historical background of the Myanmar Lacquer ware Art, Production,

Distribution, Consumption, Division of labour and their daily income, Social value and function related to Myanmar lacquer ware and Conclusion.

Expected impact of the research is to maintain the Myanmar tradition and culture based on Lacquer ware and how to ensure the continuity of their art. And then, expected outcome is to prolong and become famous for Myanmar Traditional Lacquer ware Art and Technology among the world and to do advanced studies with international research institutes.

Methodology

In this research, desk review, library survey, field research, Key Informant Interview, Participant observation, taking photographs recording with video were performed for special activities associated with the Lacquer ware Art. Moreover, these data were studied by Economic Anthropology and Cultural Anthropology point of view. Therefore, the research team did the library survey and field research on Bagan Nyaung -Oo area during September-October, 2010.

Findings & Discussions

Historical background of the Myanmar Lacquer ware Art

Each country of the world has its own culture, art, traditional custom and beliefs. These cultures do by the generation after generation and stand as their cultural heritage function. Therefore, each country love and value upon their own cultural heritage and maintain to prolong.

Union of Myanmar is famous for its various cultural heritage and cultural arts among the world. Most of the Myanmar people maintain their own cultural heritage. There are two ways to maintain their culture and these are: maintain the remains of cultural heritage things era after era not to be damaged and maintain their traditional technology and continuity of their art and technology for generation after generation. Among these technologies, Myanmar Lacquer ware art is one of them. Lacquer ware making is one of the Ten Myanmar Traditional Arts which have long been existed in the country. It is called in Myanmar “Pan Yun”. The names of other nine arts also have the prefix “Pan” which is the same word for flower. The art or craft that creates aesthetic beauty is prefixed with the word “Pan” which is an ornamental

word. It is also a name with a loose meaning. Any article or object covered with a hard bright and smooth varnish called lacquer which is a vegetable product is called lacquer ware, because this varnish can be applied to plain or carved surface of paper, bamboo, wood, brick, terra cotta, stone fabric even metal. Recently glazed objects covered have been produced.

The historical background of the Myanmar Lacquer ware art was studied by various aspects and expressed. Some of the researchers said that the lacquer takes its origin in China for a few three thousand years, and then developed in all the Southeast Asia. In Myanmar the tree which one takes the resin is called “thit-si”. These trees push naturally in whole forests almost in all Myanmar in light altitudes. One takes the resin, a little like one does it with latex, by notches at the base of the trunk on which one fixes small bowls in bamboo. The sap of the lacquer tree has a very strong adhesive quality and splendid brilliance. It has many qualities as to make impermeable the objects which it covers. It adheres on many surfaces, bamboo, woods, sheets of palm tree, metal and leather. It resists the insects and guards on all occasions its flexibility.

Some researchers believed that the lacquer’s origin may come from Bagan about 12th - 13th century in Myanmar. One of the oldest lacquers was discovered in Mingalazedi pagoda, one of the last built with Bagan (at the 13th century). The manufacture of the lacquers acquired its letters of nobility in Bagan. Moreover, there are isolated references to the lacquer ware in ancient epigraphs. In the lithic inscription of Pawdawmu Pagoda and also that of Shinpin Bodhi Pagoda at Bagan, there are mentioned of alms bowls dedicated to monks and these are mostly made of lacquer, bamboo and wood. These references suggested that the lacquer ware art and technology were made in the Bagan era about A.D 1044-1287 (King Anawratha’s reign). According to the chronicle, when the King Anawratha conquered Thaton in A.D. 1058, he took with him not only Buddhist relics, scriptures and learned monks but also many artists and craftsmen including lacquer ware makers whom he settled at his Capital.

Some researchers believed the theory that since the Mon kingdom neighboured with Chiangmai with which there was an island trade route, the Mons must have acquired the lacquer art from Chiangmai. The exponents of this theory were Taw Sein Ko and U Lu Pe Win. The former was the Superintendent of the Epigraphic Office of British Burma and latter

the Director of Archaeology Department of Myanmar., U Tin, the Sub-divisional Offices of Bagan in the British Colonial Period supported this theory.

According to U Lu Pe Win, the lacquer ware technology was derived from the northern Thailand to Myanmar at 14th Century A.D. and at that time Bagan was the main area of the lacquer ware industry. Therefore, Myanmar lacquer ware art arrived from Thailand to Myanmar before 16th Century A.D. King Bayintnaung (A.D.1551-1581) conquered Chaingmai at 1557 and took about 40000 home artists and artisans including lacquer artists to Bago. This assumption was supported by Mr. H.P Morris.

These assumptions were analyzed by Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt and his conclusion is that the technology of lacquer ware existed in Myanmar very ancient time and the lacquer ware art was put into Myanmar social role and used as domestic utensils. In Myanmar Era 532 Year, the chief monk of King Narapatisithu, Sayadaw Utaraziwa paid homage to the Thein-ko (Thi-ho) island across the Pa thein with ship and carried with religious objects of lacquer ware for the people of Thein-ko (Thi-ho) island. Therefore, the technology of lacquer ware was flourished since Bagan era.

Ancient Myanmar was high-standard culture people and their technology of the lacquer ware was also developed gradually. Most of the domestic objects, royal objects and religious objects were varnished with thitsi and vermilion for long endure, wonder and beauty. These lacquer ware objects 'use were traced in stone inscriptions in Bagan Era.

When studied to the Bagan Archaeology Museum, one of the wooden Buddha image dated to 13th Century A.D., Inn-wa Era was found and inside the image, there was an evidence of varnished thitsi and gilded gold.

In the Second Inn-wa Era, also called Nyaung-yang Era, Hni Daunglan was used as ordinary family lunch table, a circular tray which was putting on rice and curry. Therefore, one can learn the fact that Hni Daunglan was continued to use from 13th Century A.D., Bagan Era to 17th Century A.D., Nyaung-yang Era. In addition, in Nyaung-yang Era, the lacquer ware utensils were made not only varnished thitsi (called plain lacquer ware) but also incised lacquer ware stage. That can be found at the poet of Sein-ta-kyaw-thu U Aw (pdeÅausmfolOD;jo),stanzas no.752 at Myanmar Era.1113.

In the Kone-baung Era, the technology of the lacquer ware was more advanced. There could find incised lacquer ware (Yun ware), gilt lacquer ware (Shwezawa ware), relief moulded lacquer ware (Tha-yo), glass mosaic and gilt lacquer ware(Hman-si Shwe-Cha Yun) etc and produced with numerous designs. These designs and decorations were sophisticated and exquisite. Moreover, most of the Buddhists people of Kone-baung Era, donated the big lacquer ware mail boxes to the monasteries for putting some palm scripts. These big lacquer ware mail boxes were made strongly and decorated with incised lacquer ware, gilt lacquer ware, relief moulded lacquer ware, glass mosaic and gilt lacquer ware depicting the Buddha past life. These big lacquer ware mail boxes could be found every ancient monastery in Myanmar. One of the most significant lacquer mail box was made and decorated by incised lacquer ware depicting the life history of Buddha from birth to death on five upper faces and it was possessed by Min -lat-wa-gyi (ရှိလတ်ဘဲကျိ)in the reigns of King Min-done and King Thi-baw. Now, this lacquer ware mail box exists in the Myanmar Lacquer Museum, Bagan and exhibits for the interesting local and foreign guests. Moreover, the lacquer mail box about six feet high was made by relief moulded lacquer ware which was used by Queen Su Paya Latt, wife of the King Thi-baw was also exhibited in the National Museum of Yangon. The ancient lacquer ware objects could be found in every Museum of Myanmar country.

Artistic ancient lacquer wares were displayed among the famous Museum of other countries. In Pitt Rivers Museum Oxford, London, the lacquer container about 12” high called “Kyup” which was put the distinctive fillet worn by royalty of King Thi-baw and decorated with glass mosaic and gilt lacquer ware. Moreover, the lacquer kyup which was used as fragrance container of King Thi-baw decorated with relief moulded shwesawa yun with geometrical shapes, motif design can be found at Victoria and Albert Museum, London and they took it when the British conquered Myanmar in 1885. In England, Myanmar royal lacquer wares, human utensils made by lacquer wares and Manpayas were arrived. This was recorded in “Burmese Lacquer ware” by Frazer Luce.

Myanmar lacquer ware art was flourished from Kone-baung period to Earlier Age of British Colony period. Not only plain lacquer wares (using only thitsi and vermilion) but also incised lacquer ware, shwesaza lacquer ware, gilt lacquer ware, relief moulded lacquer ware

and glass mosaic and gilt lacquer ware of high quality were produced according to their regions. Incised lacquer ware, gilt lacquer ware, relief moulded lacquer ware were mostly made in the Bagan area. In Kyaing-ton and Myauk-Oo area, the relief moulded lacquer ware was made. In Kyaukka, Maung taung, Inn-wa area, plain lacquer ware was mostly made. Among them, the design made by Bagan area was the most famous for the earlier times to nowadays. They get the tourist attraction. These designs were sold to Myin-chan, Mandalay, Pyin-mana, Pyay, Patheingyi and Yangon and even to the Vietnam and Singapore as export objects.

After 1923, the competition and exhibition of Myanmar traditional art for maintenance and long life celebrate every year at Jubli Hall, Yangon. Most of the artists who considered themselves that some of them were their ideal objects of lacquer ware included in the competition and got the prizes and certifications of honour. These data could be learnt in “Myanmar Pan Yun” by U Khin Maung Gyi. In 1924 and 1925, Provincial Arts and Crafts Exhibition, 1923) celebrate and Maung Phoe Sai from Maung Htung village got the prize of 15 dollars for his black plain lacquer ware. Moreover, the lacquer ware objects were competed with local earthen ware, wooden ware and copper ware. In addition, the porcelain objects called “Kywe hte”, earthen ware and glaze ware from China were also competed.

Myanmar lacquer ware has been studied both by native and foreign scholars from artistic and historical points of view. Bagan lacquer is thriving as a result of increase in tourism and demands from abroad.

Bagan Minister U Tin and the lacquer artists opened the school of the lacquer ware for the intention of the maintenance and long lasting of the lacquer ware art in the main area of the lacquer ware’s function, Bagan at the time of the British control and the first school head master is U Sein. The main teaching lacquer ware art subjects were: plain bamboo ware, plain wooden ware, the black ware, incised lacquer ware, gilt lacquer ware (Shwezawa ware) and relief moulded lacquer ware (Tha-yo). Now, this school is famous and called as the Technology School of Myanmar Lacquer ware and gives the degree for the students.

By studying these data, Myanmar lacquer ware art and technology stands its own style and own culture since the ancient time to modern time and spread to the other countries of the

world. In spite of their long lasting, usefulness, high quality and artistic of the lacquer ware objects, they stand gracefully as one of the famous art and craft in the world and record as “the origin of the Myanmar lacquer ware comes from only Myanmar”.

Production

The production of Myanmar lacquer ware art varies according to the raw materials it used. Most of the types of the Myanmar lacquer ware are: bamboo lacquer ware, wooden lacquer ware, horse hair lacquer ware and Japan lacquer ware.

There are altogether seven processes for production of the lacquer ware. These are: making the inner parts, lacquering, drying, washing, polishing, 7 layers of lacquering and decoration. Four main basic styles of Myanmar traditional drawing are applied in lacquer ware decoration .They are: Kanou’, Kapi, Gaza and Na-ri. All are Pali words.

Distribution

For the distribution of the lacquer ware, some lacquer ware are sold in the compound of famous pagodas as lacquer ware shops; some are sold in the industry of the owners as lacquer ware show rooms and some are only distributed and exported throughout the country and overseas. Moreover, lacquer wares are sold at the pagoda fairs in Upper Myanmar. The pagoda fairs are held regularly throughout the year. During the festival, the villagers from the surrounding villages come to the fair to buy different products from all over the country including the lacquer wares. The pagoda fairs regularly held in Upper Myanmar are Shweguni Pagoda Festival at Kyaukka, Pakkoku Yezagyo Festival, Ma-oo Pagoda Festival, Ayardaw Pagoda Festival, Paungwa Pagoda Festival at Myinmu, Myotaung Pagoda Festival at Shwebo, Sutaungpye Pagoda Festival at monywa, Monyin Pagoda Festival at Monywa, Ananda Pagoda Festival at Bagan and Alone pagoda Festival at Alone. And then, lacquer wares are sent to shops in Yangon, the wholesale dealers from Mandalay and Bagan .

Most of the craftsmen did their best and sold their excellent lacquer ware to the various markets. Moreover, the lacquer ware which is made from good quality of every process could get high price and the lacquer ware which is made from a few processes could get low price. But these low price lacquer ware could be bought by the pilgrims of Bagan as remembrance.

Most of the rich owners of the lacquer ware open their show rooms with their industries. In these show rooms, they arrange to learn the process of the lacquer ware making methods for the attraction of the visitors. So they can get more attention to buy the lacquer ware and attain better income.

By this way, Myanmar lacquer ware is popular and gets the high standard of the lacquer ware art and technology not only in the country but also among the Southeast Asian countries and other European countries.

Consumption

By doing the lacquer wares, the native people of Bagan can get the jobs. Most of the people and families in Bagan skilled in the lacquer ware technology since the ancient time and they can depend on their daily income from this function. Moreover, they can send their children to school and universities and can get their household expenses from these incomes.

Division of labour and their daily income

For the sex division of labour, the splitting of bamboo into thin strips, coiling the strips into containers, gilding and decorating, making of wooden lacquer ware raw materials and other difficult raw materials are mostly done by men. Applying the mixture of wood oil and sawdust on the plain bamboo ware, polishing the surface of the lacquer and applying the wood oil are done by the women. And then, for the making of basic raw materials like bamboo cup and horse hair cup are made by men or women. For these workers, their daily income is about 1500 kyats and they can go home to take their lunch or they can take their lunch with lunch box. For the making of wooden lacquer ware, the basic step for coating thitsi, smoothing and washing were done by men. Their daily income is about 2000 kyats.

Actually, the main attraction for Bagan lacquer ware is its artistic decoration. Therefore, for the drawing of lacquer painting is difficult and one has to study this technology for at least three years. Some attend the Technological School of Lacquer ware in Bagan and some study according to their appropriate teachers. For this reason, the one who can draw the lacquer painting can get the highest income. They can get their income daily or once 5 days or once 10days or once 15 days. Their maximum income is about 4000 kyats to 5000 kyats. Most of

the outline drawing of lacquer ware painting is made by men and colouring of the painting is made by women. For this function, the daily income of women is about 1000 kyats to 1500 kyats. For the making of gilt lacquer ware and relief moulded lacquer ware, putting gold foils and the first lacquering the interior covered with “thayo” are done by men and get 2500 kyats for a day.

Finally, one can learn the fact that most men have to do more difficult and hard work and get more income and most women have to do the detail works such as decoration, colouring, painting, etc and get less income.

Most of the lacquer ware shops open daily. The best time of selling the lacquer ware is between the months of November to March. During the summer and rainy season, there is less income. In one of the lacquer show room, their daily income of selling is about 500,000 kyats to 1000,000 kyats per day. They make the lacquer ware functions the whole year and only close their industries only the time of pagoda festivals and days of significance. The social dealing between the owner and the workers is good and the owner helps their workers’ social affairs. Sometimes they send their workers for vocations’ trip to other cities such as visiting to the Yangon, Mandalay, Kyik-hti-yo pagoda, etc annually.

Social value and function related to Myanmar lacquer ware

There are various social value and function related to Myanmar lacquer ware. Every Myanmar household has at least one piece of Myanmar lacquer ware object since the ancient time to even nowadays. For this reason, one can learn the fact that every Myanmar value upon the traditional Myanmar lacquer ware and believes as it shows the social dignity of Myanmar. Most of the objects of lacquer ware that can be seen in Myanmar household are: the lacquer ok which is used to put the pickle tea leaves, the lacquer betel box, the lacquer tray, the lacquer cup, etc.

The lacquer ok (tkyf) of the pickle tea leave is important and useful item for the Myanmar family. They use it as their daily affair and entertaining their guests. Most of Myanmar likes to eat the pickle tea leave since the ancient time to modern time. They want to eat the pickle tea leaves after the lunch and even when they go to abroad, they take it with them. Therefore, when the visitors came to their house they put the pickle tea leave within the

lacquer ok and eat it with pleasure. Moreover, we can see the very big lacquer ok in front of the Parliament Hall in Nay Pyi Taw using the glass mosaic and gilt lacquer ware (Hmansi Shwecha) (၀၀၀၀၀၀၀၀) technique. This big lacquer ok is made by one of our research project key informants who live in New Bagan area. Sometimes, near the traffic jam in Yangon City, we can also see the very big lacquer ware ok figure decorated with flowers. This custom stands as the social dignity of Myanmar and the eating habit of the pickle tea leave maintains as the cultural heritage of Myanmar since the Bagan period to nowadays.

The lacquer betel box is also important item of Myanmar family. In the ancient time, most of the Myanmar men and women like to chew the betel every day and use the lacquer betel box. Now, this custom can be seen in the some areas of the country and the lacquer betel box is existed as the ornament of Myanmar traditional custom in the household. In some lacquer ware shops in Bagan, the lacquer betel box is decorated with the letter of the stone inscription because they want to get the tourist attraction and show the tradition of Myanmar culture. Therefore, the function of the lacquer betel box shows the hospitality, friendship, generosity and social dignity of Myanmar culture. The chewing habit also stands as the cultural heritage of Myanmar.

The lacquer tray is also useful for Myanmar family. It is used as the entertaining for the guests with putting cold drinks or water. Moreover, when they celebrate the ceremonies, they use the lacquer tray putting with some prizes. Therefore, the lacquer tray is also the ideal item for the traditional Myanmar art and craft.

The lacquer cup is also important object for the Myanmar family. It is used as the daily utensil and religious affair. When the Myanmar Buddhist people worship to the Buddha, they use the lacquer cup. Moreover, in the upper area of Myanmar country, the smell of thitsi (၀၀၀၀) from the lacquer cup changes the flavour of water.

Moreover, in the Bagan area, various kinds of lacquer ware objects could be found. Among them, Daunglan(၀၀၀၀) is the important trade mark of the social value of Myanmar family and it shows the unity, love, sharing and caring for one family member to another. Because it is the circular tray and when the Myanmar family takes the breakfast or lunch or dinner, they put rice and curry on the Daunglan and eat together with their hands. By

that time, they share their rice and curry equally and care each other and love each other. They drink the soup together and their hands are stained with soup and curry but they don't loathe each other. In Myanmar proverb, it is called as "Le' jei dabjin zi:" (လှေ့ၤ ဝုၤ ဝုၤ ဝုၤ ဝုၤ). Therefore, among the Myanmar lacquer ware objects, "Daunglan" was more important and useful for social and religious affairs. It is the shallow stand on which the dishes are arranged at meal time. Moreover, when ancient Myanmar worshipped to the Buddha daily, they used Daunglan by putting rice, water, candle lamp and fruits, etc.

Other lacquer items have their own social values and functions. **The lacquer mail box** is also the significant object for the Myanmar religious affair. As mentioned above, the big lacquer ware mail box could be found every ancient monastery in Myanmar. The lacquer mail box is useful for the monks by putting their ancient palm-leaf inscriptions and bundle of palm-leaf writings and keep for the long time. Moreover, it can be used as the royal affair in the ancient time.

The lacquer kyup (လှေ့ၤ) is the specific item for the Myanmar traditional culture. It is used as fragrance container or container for other materials like the traditional medicine, pickle tea leave, palm sugar, precious stones, the royal orders of appointment etc. Sometimes, it is decorated with the scenes of traditional belief and legend of the spirit (Nat) such as Shwe-oo-kya-chi (လှေ့ၤ ဝုၤ ဝုၤ ဝုၤ) and used by the traditional medical practitioners. They believed that the medicine they use will be good if the kyup is decorated like this. Moreover, the medical practitioner can get the prestige and impression by using this kind of lacquer kyup.

Another item is **the lacquer basket**. It is also the common item for Myanmar family's daily affair and religious affair. It is used as the container for buying things. And then, when the monks going around the village for daily food, the lay attendants of the monks carries the food with the lacquer basket. Like the lacquer basket, **the lacquer bowl** is used for offering the food to monks since the ancient time. Nowadays, it is used by the village beautiful girls called Kon-taung-gaing (လှေ့ၤ ဝုၤ ဝုၤ ဝုၤ) while they carrying the lacquer bowl in a novitiation procession.

The interesting item of Myanmar lacquer ware is **the lacquer clap**. It is the small circular tray with a stem and use for religious affair and social affair. Most of the Myanmar Buddhists

use the lacquer clap by putting a small Buddha image and pray to the Buddha daily. Sometimes, it is used for keeping the precious stone or other valuable items. Moreover, the lacquer clap is used by putting food, water and candle for praying to the Buddha daily. Even in the junctions of the main road in Yangon city, the symbol of lacquer clap putting the ruby stone can be seen for tourist attraction. It shows that the lacquer clap has the prestige and social status of the ideal of Myanmar traditional culture.

The other traditional items of lacquer ware are **the lacquer goblet** and **the lacquer water pot**. They are used and maintained for Myanmar traditional custom. Moreover, **the lacquer partition** is the useful item for the traditional lacquer ware. It is used for decoration at home and sometimes it is decorated at the hotels because it is the favourite item of the foreigners. Therefore it stands as the symbols of Myanmar culture.

Nowadays, some of the lacquer ware shops export their objects to the overseas and make the various items of modern lacquer utensils. These are: the lacquer guitar (use the technique of the wooden lacquer), the lacquer violin (use the technique of the wooden lacquer), the lacquer helmet (only decorated with the lacquer), the lacquer key-chain, the lacquer hand-phone cover, the lacquer tissue-box, the lacquer painting, etc. These items stand as the modernization and global correlation of Myanmar and other countries. It also shows the demand-driven activities for the lacquer ware industry. By exporting overseas market, their income becomes high and their living standard and their social status also gradually high.

By studying most of the workshops of lacquer ware owners, they try to maintain their traditional lacquer ware art and technology and their basic methods are nearly the same. There are various processes to produce the lacquer ware and these processes are carried out by the traditional style and prolong the objects for a longer period. Moreover, they aspect their traditional lacquer ware art to become the international level and export to the world's market.

Conclusion

By studying the Myanmar traditional lacquer ware art in Bagan, one can get the knowledge about the traditional custom of Myanmar culture, how to maintain and ensure their art from generation to generation, how to prolong and become famous for Myanmar

traditional lacquer ware art and technology among the world and to do advanced studies with international institutes, how to distribute and transmit the traditional art and craft from fathers to sons. Moreover, the younger generations who have to pay attention to the Myanmar lacquer ware art can get not only their daily income but also can reduce to arrive the wrong roads and promote their creating powers.

To sum up, the functions of lacquer ware correlate with their social values and social life. Moreover, most of the workers and owners of the traditional Myanmar lacquer ware art could get their daily income by producing the lacquer ware as well as promoting their life and maintaining the traditional craft of Myanmar culture not only in the country but also in the world. Moreover, the researcher would like to recommend that this research will need to learn in details and cooperate with the other interesting scholars.

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Fig.1. The lacquer oks



Fig.2. The lacquer oks



Fig.3. The lacquer trays



Fig.4. The lacquer daunglan, trays and pots



Fig.5. The lacquer keychains



Fig.6. The lacquer workers making their materials



Fig.7. The processure of the lacquer ware making



Fig.8. The lacquer shop