

A Geographical Study on the Distribution Pattern of Pottery Industry in Ywar Htaung Ward of Sagaing

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Abstract

Ywar Htaung is a ward of Sagaing which is situated on the west bank of the Ayeyarwady River, at the southeastern part of Sagaing Region. Sagaing is an important religious centre as well as a region of pottery in Myanmar. Since the previous time, Sagaing pottery is the famous traditional artisan work and it is employed mainly in Oh-Bo sub-quarter of Ywar Htaung Ward, Sagaing. The whole sub-quarter (former Oh-Bo village) participated in pot making up to 1986-1987. After 1988, the numbers of potters were gradually decreased due to lower demand in pottery market. Thus, the researcher wants to know the distribution pattern and the present situation of pottery industry in the study area. That is why, the research paper entitled "A Geographical Study on the Distribution Pattern of Pottery Industry in Ywar Htaung Ward of Sagaing" is chosen and studied. In this paper, the distribution pattern of pottery industries in Ywar Htaung Ward is analysed by using the Average Nearest Neighbour Analysis. The final result shows that the spatial distribution of pottery industries is closely concentrated as the cluster pattern in one part of the study area. At present, about 18 households are continuing their traditional pottery works as the potters. Thus, the pottery industry of Sagaing is difficult to survive in future.

Keywords: Pottery, Potters, Drinking-water Pots, Pot Shots, Spatial Distribution

Introduction

"Pottery" means a work of making the pots, vessels and other articles by fired clay. According to historical records, Myanmar' pottery has been worked since the reign of the ancient Kings and still perpetuated up to the present time. In Myanmar, potteries are employed mainly in Sagaing, Kyaukmyaung, Nwonyein and Yandapo regions. Among them, Sagaing pottery was a simple traditional handicraft since the previous time.

Although Myanmar people turn to use purified water bottles, traditional drinking-water pots are still used in almost all of the rural area and some of urban area. This is due to the water in the earthen pot is better for health than icy water in the plastic bottle. Particularly, Sagaing drinking-water pots can give a cooler taste of water than the pots from any other areas. Thus they are used by the people from various regions of the country. With the different designs, Sagaing drinking-water pots are given various popular names such as Kyauk Oh, Khin Than Nu Oh, Sagaing Narnatthi Oh, etc.

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The study area, Ywar Htaung Ward is composed of six sub-quarters, namely Oh-Bo, Ywar Htaung, Panbedan, Shwethama, Aungthaya and Nansu. There are 1,382 households, 1,293 houses and 6,313 persons in the whole Ywar Htaung Ward. Out of six sub-quarters in Ywar Htaung Ward, potteries (pot making) are employed within Oh- Bo sub-quarter only. Since the reign of the ancient Myanmar kings, Oh-Bo (former Oh-Bo village) was so named because the persons residing in this area found their ways of living by making pots. The whole Oh-Bo (over 300 households) participated in pot making up to 1986-1987. After 1988, the numbers of potters were gradually decreased. Currently, about 18 out of 370 households continue their pottery works as the potters. It represents about 4.9 percent of the total households in Oh-Bo and 1.3 percent of Ywar Htaung Ward. The remaining households are engaged in silver works, stone sculpture, weaving, cane furniture, noodle factories and other works. Some do not made any pots by self, but they sold them on their shops. Most of the pot shops are found mainly on the main roads of Oh-Bo, Shwe Tha Mar and Nan Su Sub-quarters in Ywar Htaung Ward.

Aim and Objectives

The aim of this research is to provide the information to the regional associations for development of pottery industry in future. The objectives are:

- To study the general factors related to the pottery industry,
- To analyze the spatial distribution pattern of pottery industry in the study area, and
- To assess the present situation of pottery industry in the study area.

Study Area

Ywar Htaung Ward is one of 23 wards in Sagaing. It is located between north latitudes 21° 53' 30" and 21° 54' 29" and between east longitudes 95° 57' 30" and 95° 58' 00". The total area is 0.98 square miles (627.2 acres). According to Koppen's climatic classification method, the study area enjoys the type of Tropical Steppe Climate (BSh). As Sagaing pottery is employed mainly in Oh-Bo sub-quarter which is located in Ywar Htaung Ward, it is selected as the study area. The location of Ywar Htaung Ward in Sagaing is shown in Figure 1.

Materials and Methods

Field data are primarily used for this study and secondary data are collected from governmental offices. The spatial distribution pattern of pottery industry in the study area was studied by using the Average Nearest Neighbour Analysis method. The materials used in this paper are satellite images, topographic maps, reference books, papers from libraries and the internet.

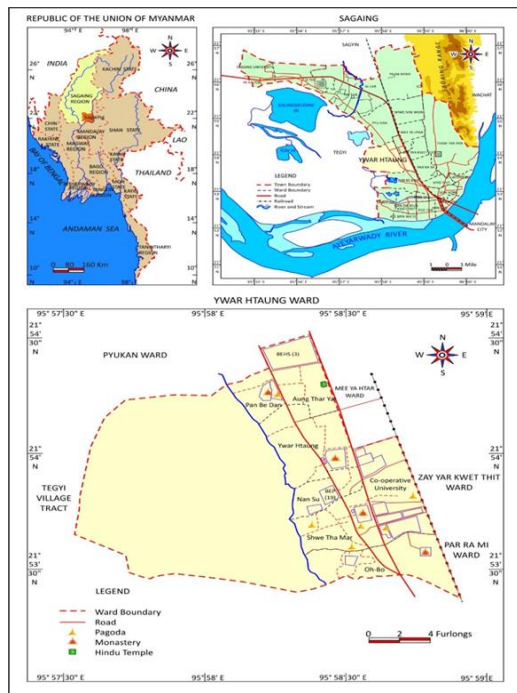


Figure 1 Location Map of Ywar Htaung Ward, Sagaing

Research Questions

There are two main research questions to be solved in this research. They are; -

- Where and how did the pottery industries distribute in the study area?
- What are the facing problems of potters in the study area?

Discussion

In the studying of the pottery industry, two categories (pottery and pot shot) are considered. According to the researcher's 2019 field observation, the total number of pottery industry in Ywar Htaung is 51 (18 potteries and 33 pot shops). All of 18 potteries are found in Oh-Bo sub- quarter only. The potters used to pay their special emphasis upon making three sizes of pots as their major economic activity. They are large and medium size for drinking-water pots and small size for Thingyan and Kasone pots. They use only local raw materials in the pot-making works such as red earth (Myayni), black earth (Myaynak) and some sand. Black earth is the best soil for pot making and it is used to mix together with red earth. Red earth is used to hard and to colour bright the pot. Sand gives the cooler taste of water. Major instruments for pot making are potter's wheel, latkhu, and panpalar. Potter's wheel is an instrument which is turned by hands to produce the desire pots. Latkhu is a small circular earthen block which is placed inside the pot when the pot is beaten for shape. Panpalar is a small hardwood which is long- triangular shape, and this is used for outer design of pot. At present, the pottery works are operated only in the dry season from the beginning of November to April though pots were made in the whole year round in the past.

In the study area, pots are mostly carried out by family members. Particularly, most of the married females are the major workers in the pot making. They made the pots at the stages of raw-pot such as treading earth, pot molding and pot designing. This is called Oh-zing making. And then, they sold their raw-pots (Oh-zing) to some brokers. Owner potters get from 100 kyats to 450 kyats for a raw-pot. For later stages of pot making, brokers have to use daily workers and give wages for their works. The wages of per head are _ 3,000 kyats per hundred pots for pot baking, 2,000 kyats per hundred pots for taking out the pot from the oven, and 6,000 kyats per day for pot taking and carrying work respectively. In the time of pot baking, the number of pots from 700 to 1,000 can be baked in the oven by using daily workers. Normally about fifteen or twenty numbers of workers are necessary during the pot baking. After the later stages of pot making, the final products are distributed to the pot sellers in various parts of the country. At present, Sagaing pots are mainly distributed to Sagaing, Mandalay, Kyaukse, Singkaing, Kumee, Naungcho, Monywa, Myinmu, Ywathitkyi, Myittha, and Myitkyina.

Out of 51 pottery industries, there are totally 33 pot shops in Ywar Htaung Ward. They are located along the main road in Ywar Htaung Ward. Most of the pot shops sold Sagaing drinking-water pots with other commodities such as glazed ware pots, seasonal fruits and others. Particularly, pot sellers also sold new-design drinking-water pots made in other regions such as Kyaukmyaung, Yandapo. The price of a new-design pot is more expensive than Sagaing traditional pot. Normally, the price of traditional drinking-water pot varies from 2,000 kyats to 5,000 kyats per pot and the new-design pot is from 8,000 kyats to 13,000 kyats depending upon their size. Annually, a pot broker distributed over 40,000-50,000 pots to pot sellers in other regions.



Plate 1 Some Processing of Pottery



Plate 2 Pot-shops in Ywar Htaung Ward

Some processing of pottery and pot shops are presented in Photo 1 and Photo 2. The distribution pattern of pottery industries in the study area is shown in Figure 2.

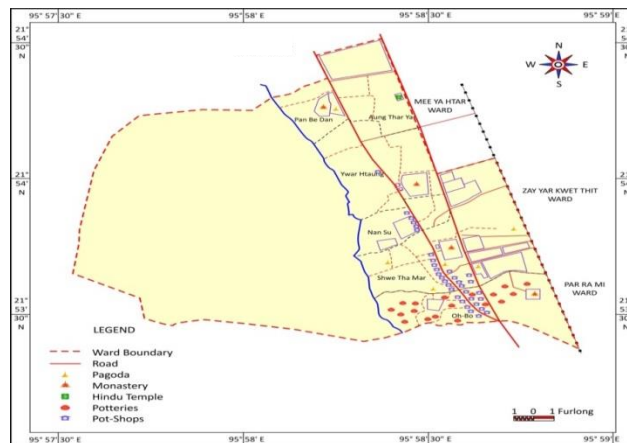


Figure 2 Distribution Pattern of Pottery Industries in Ywar Htaung Ward

In order to observe the distribution pattern of pottery industries in the study area, the method of Average Nearest Neighbour Analysis is applied. This method requires the locational values based on the latitude degree and longitude degree (Coordinates) of each point. That is why, the locational degrees of 51 pottery industries in the study area are taken by using GPS (Global Positioning System). The result can be calculated automatically by GIS software with the computer. And then, spatial distribution pattern of study area can easily be known by the result showing in Figure 3. According to the Average Nearest Neighbour Analysis, if the critical value is

less than -2.58 , the spatial distribution is considered as the cluster pattern with the significance level 0.01 . If the critical value is between -2.58 and -1.96 , it is defined as the cluster pattern with the significance level 0.05 . If the critical value is between -1.96 and -1.65 , it means the cluster pattern with the significance level 0.10 . If the critical value is between -1.65 and 1.65 , this is the random pattern, and if the critical value is between 1.65 and 1.96 , it is defined as the dispersed pattern with the significance level 0.10 . If the critical value is between 1.96 and 2.58 , it means the dispersed pattern with the significance level 0.05 . Finally, if the critical value is more than 2.58 , the spatial distribution is considered as the dispersed pattern with the significance level 0.01 .

For the study area, the analytical result is shown in Figure 3. The given result indicates that the distribution of pottery industries is in the clustered pattern with the critical value of less than -2.58 and significance level 0.01 . This means that the spatial distribution of pottery industries is closely concentrated in one part of the study area. According to the field observation, it is found that this analytical result concerning the pottery industries in the study area is very strong.

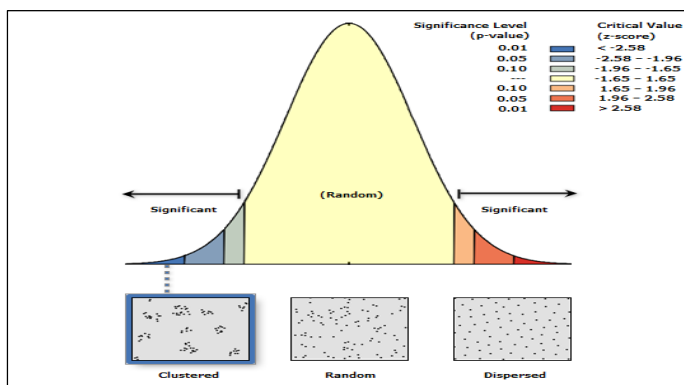


Figure 3 Result by Using the Method of Average Nearest Neighbour Analysis

Conclusion

After examining the pottery industries in the study area, it is found that Sagaing pottery was a simple traditional handicraft since the previous time. After 1988, the number of potters has gradually decreased with the lower demand of pot market. With the development of technology, the new-design drinking-water pots made in other regions are replaced in the study area. By comparing with the previous time, demand of pots has decreased by the number of over half in pot market. Thus, their income is less than before. At present, potters and pot sellers are facing many economic problems.

Thus, this study is concluded that the development of pottery industries in the study area is depending upon the pot market in the future.

Suggestion

As pots are made of clay, a weakness is that they have the nature of breakable while handling and transporting them. But, it is good point that they can give the natural cooling taste of water for users. Thus, the suggestions are presented as the following factors.

To advance the pottery industry, the potters should try to make the higher-quality pots than present, especially their durability. Pot markets should be extended not only to the new local customers in various parts of the Myanmar but also to foreign nations. Pottery associations and foundations should be organized to support their members of potters.

Then, to develop the pottery industry, the life of potters should be promoted by the regional organizations and the state government. Finally, new generations should be encouraged to be interested in the pot making works. As a result, Sagaing pottery can be maintained as the traditional handcraft in the future.

Future Prospect

At present, the pottery market of Sagaing is difficult to survive. If above suggestions can be fulfilled, Sagaing pottery industry will be a more developed traditional handicraft work in future.

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နွယ်နွယ်စိုး၊ Dr : စစ်ကိုင်းအိုးလုပ်ငန်းသုံး ဝေါဟာရလေ့လာချက်၊ စစ်ကိုင်းမြို့တည်နန်းတည်နှစ် (၇၀၀) ပြည့် အထိမ်းအမှတ်သုတေသနစာတမ်း၊ စစ်ကိုင်းတက္ကသိုလ်