

PA-O COMMUNITY IN THE SOUTHERN SHAN STATE (1886-1962)

PhD DISSERTATION

NANG AYE AYE CHO

**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
UNIVERSITY OF MANDALAY
MYANMAR**

MAY 2014

PA-O COMMUNITY IN THE SOUTHERN SHAN STATE (1886-1962)

University of Mandalay

PA-O COMMUNITY IN THE SOUTHERN SHAN STATE (1886-1962)

A Dissertation Submitted to the University of Mandalay
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in
History

Department of History

Nang Aye Aye Cho
4 PhD-Hist- 18

Mandalay, Myanmar
May, 2014


PA-O COMMUNITY IN THE SOUTHERN SHAN STATE
(1886-1962)


NANGAYE AYE CHO

This Dissertation is submitted to the Board of Examiners in History,
University of Mandalay for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.


 APPROVED


EXTERNAL/EXAMINER
Dr Sai Nor Khay
Professor (Head of Department)(Rtd.)
Department of History
University of Mandalay


REFEREE
Dr Toe Hla
Professor (Rtd.)
Department of History
University of Mandalay


SUPERVISOR
U Sai Aung Tun
Vice Chairman (Rtd.)
Myanmar Historical Commission
Yangon


MEMBER
Dr Soe Aung
Associate Professor
Department of History
University of Mandalay


CO-SUPERVISOR
Dr Ko Ko Naing
Professor
Department of History
University of Kyaukse


CHAIRPERSON
Dr Yee Yee Win
Professor (Head of Department)
Department of History
University of Mandalay

ABSTRACT

Pa-O ethnic nationality living in the Union of Myanmar brought forth many interesting aspects of its origin, its successive migrations and settlements beginning from Mongul Hilly Regions to its present settlement in Myanmar. During their earlier migration they settled down in the Lower Regions of Myanmar and from thence they moved out to southern regions of the Shan State, the Kayin State, Kayah State and the Bago Region forming nine sub-ethnic groups. For their last migration, there was no evidence of political and economic related turmoil that they had encountered. Since 1949, the name of Pa-O came into existence by changing the old name of Taungthu. Pa-Os are now found immensely in the southern Shan State. Over one hundred years ago, in about 1901, they migrated in to southern Shan State and lived up with agriculture. The harmonic relations prevails in the Pa-O communities. In their early days, everything including housing, fencing, transplanting and so forth was done collectively. Their economy was simple, based on agriculture. It was done for self-sufficiency alone. Pa-O were very devout Buddhists. They have their own tangible and intangible cultures which are still alive in their daily life. It is an attempt to discuss the Pa-O and their traditions and cultures in historical context.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|------|
| Abstract | iv |
| List of Map | vi |
| List of Photographs | vii |
| Abbreviations | viii |
| Glossary | xiv |
| Introduction | xvi |
| Chapters | |
| 1. The Pa-O Settlement in the Southern Shan State | 1 |
| 2. Social Life | 46 |
| 3. Economic Condition | 92 |
| 4. Cultural Patterns | 139 |
| Conclusion | 187 |
| Map | 193 |
| Photographs | 194 |
| Bibliography | 199 |

List of Map

| | Page |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Map of Pa-O Township | 193 |

List of Photographs

| | Page |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Pa-O National Costume | 194 |
| 2. <i>Thanatphet Chan</i> | 195 |
| 3. Round Bamboo Basket | 196 |
| 4. Various Kinds of <i>O-zi</i> | 197 |
| 5. Pa-O Maw | 198 |

ABBREVIATIONS

- | | |
|--|--|
| <i>A-bi-dan</i> , 1978 | <i>Myanmar A-bi-dan A-kyin-choke</i> (Abridgement of Myanmar Dictionary), Yangon, Ministry of Education, 1978 |
| Ba Than, 1991 | <i>Myanmar Yar-za-win</i> (Myanmar Chronicle), Yangon, Kyae-hmon Tha-tin-sar Press, 1991 |
| Ba Yi, 1966 | “ <i>Taunggyi District, Pyidaungsu Myanmar Naing-ngan Taing-yin-tha Lu-myo-mya Le-lar-ye Sit-tan, Taungthu Lu-myo</i>), <i>Pa-O Lu-myo-mya</i> ” (Inquest on the nationalities of the Union of Myanmar), Taungthu Tribe (or) Pa-O Nationalities, 1966 |
| <i>Dalay-hton-san- mya</i> (<i>Kayin</i>), 1969 | <i>Pyidaungsu Myanmar Naing-ngan, Taing-yin-thar Yin-kyay-hmu Yoe-yar Dalay-hton-san-mya</i> (Union of Myanmar Tradition Culture and Customs), Myanmar Socialist Lanzin Party, (Kayin), Yangon, Party Head Quarters, 1969 |
| -----,(<i>Shan</i>), 1969 | <i>Pyidaungsu Myanmar Naing-ngan, Taing-yin-thar Yin-kyay-hmu Yo-yar Dalay-hton-san-mya</i> (Union of Myanmar Tradition Culture and Customs), (Shan), Myanmar Socialist Lanzin Party, Yangon, Party Head Quarters, 1969 |
| Enrjuez, 1933 | <i>Races of Burma</i> , Delhi, Manager of Publications, 1933 |
| Fycthe, 1878 | <i>Burma Past and Present</i> , Vol.I, London, C. Kegan Paul and Company, 1878 |

- Gazetteer of Thaton, 1924* *Burma Gazetteer of Thaton District, Vol.II, Including Town and village census tables and constituent village tracts of Groups and circles notified under the Burma Rural Self Government Act, 1921, Rangoon, Superintendent Government Printing Burma, 1924*
- Hla, 1977 *Pa-O Pon-pyin-mya* (Folklore of the Pa-O People), Mandalay, Gyipwaye Press, 1977
- “*Hmat-tan*”, 1962 “*Shan-pyi-ne Hmat-tan*”(The Data of Shan), Myanma Socialist Lanzin Party, Taungyi, 1962
- , 1980 “*Shan Pyi-ne Hmat-tan*”(Record of Shan State), Myanma Socialist Lan-zin Party, 1980
- “*Ho Pone Hmat-tan*”, 1969 *Ho Pone Myo-ne Hmat-tan*” (Record of Ho Pone Township), Myanmar Socialist Lanzin Party, Ho Pone, 1969
- Hpone Myint, 1975 *Buddha Ba Tha, Pwo Kayin, Paysar Tha-maing* (History of Buddhist Pwo Kayin Palmeave), Yangon, Thiha Yadanar Press, 1975
- “*Hsi-saing Hmat-tan*”, 1982 “*Hsi-saing Myo-ne Hmat-tan*” (Record of Hsi –saing Township), Myanma Socialist Lanzin Party, *Hsi-saing Myo*, 1982
- Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1908* *Imperial Gazetteer of India, The Province, Mountain, Rivers, Tribers, etc and Araken, Pegu, Irrawaddy and Tenasserin Division, Vol.XXIII, Rangoon, Superintendent of Government print Calcutta, 1908*
- Khin Khin Sein, 1986 *Bagan-khit Yin-kye-hmu, Ok-chok-ye, Ta-ya-ye and Lu-hmu-ye*(Cultural three Administration, Justice and Society of Bagan Era), Yangon, Sarpay Beikman Press, 1986

- Khun Nwe, 1976 *Sein-mya-nyo-ywet Tha-nat-phet* (Thanatphet leaves in green and brown color), Yangon, Sarpay Beikman Press, 1976
- Khun Nwe, 1978 “*Pa-O Done-Loot Da-lay*”, (Pa-O Traditional Rocket), *Ngwetaryee Magazine*, No.22, Yangon, Myawaddy Press, July 1978
- ,1992 *Pa- O*, Yangon, Center Press, 1992
- Kyan,1978 *Myanmar Naing-ngan A-che-a-ne* (Situation of Myanmar), Yangon, ZeYa Beik Hman Press, 1978
- Kyaw Sein, 1972 “*Thein Lar Chan*” (Thein Lar Plantation), *Golden Jubilee Journal*, Vol. II,1972
- Kye-let Da-lay-mya*, 1992 *Kye-let Yoe-ya Myanmar Da-lay-mya* (Rural Traditional Customs of Myanmar), Vol.I, Yangon, New Light of Myanmar and Guardian Newspaper Office,1992
- Luce, 1985 *Phases of Pre Bagan Burma Language and History*, Vol.I, London, Oxford University Press, 1985
- ,1939 Note of the People of Burma in the 12th, 13th century AD, *Journal of the Burma Research Society*, Vol.XLIII, part.i, June, 1939
- Lwin Maung,1978 *Hmat-tan Tha-maing, Dagon, Ayar, Thaninsarry* (History of Dagon, Ayar, Thaninsarry,)Yangon, Sarpay Yadanar-thike Press, 1978
- Manual*,1933 *The Shan State Manual*, Rangoon, Government Printing,1933
- Marshall,1918 *The Karen People of Burma Columbus*, Ohio State University, 1918
- Maung Maung Sai, “*Aung-myin-ne-thi Sein-lan-mye La-phet Saik-khin-mya*

- 2007 (Thriving green tea leaves plantation), Kye Mon Newspaper, 8-2-2007
- Maung Thaung, 1973 *Shan Pyi-ne Taung-Paing, Pa-O Taing -yin-thar ei Lu-hmu Pa-Hta-wi-win* (The Geography of the Pa-O National in Southern Shan State), B.A Geography, Art and Science University, Patheingyi College, 1973
- Min Naing, 1960 *Doh Taing yin Bwa, Pyidaungsu Thar* (Our bloods, Our sons, Our natives) ,Yangon, Department of Culture, 1960
- , 1967 *Doh Thwe, Doh Thar, Taing Yin Bwa* (Our Blood, Our Sons, Our Natives), Pyidaungsu Ne Taing-yin-tha Yin-kyay-hmu Lan-nyun, Yangon, Pyidaungsu Myanmar Naing-ngan, Buddha Sasana Aphwe Press, 1967
- Myat Kyaw, 1970 *Thi-hmat-Bwe-yar Kayin-yoe-yar* (The Knowledge of Kayin Custom) ,Yangon, Pyidaw Kyet thayay Press, 1970
- “Nyaung Shwe Myo-ne Sar-tan”, 1969 “Nyaung Shwe Myo-ne Sar-tan” (Record of Nyaung Shwe Township), Myanmar Party Unit, Typing Scripts, May, 1969
- Owe Ba Tha , 1975 *Thu-tay-tha-na Tha-yoke-pya Abidan* (Pictorial Research Dictionary), Yangon, Pyin Nya Handa Press, 1975
- “Pa-O A-chet-a-let-myar”, 2002 *Pa-O Saing-yar A-chet-a-let-myar* (Union of National races, the Pa-O factors), Pa O, Sarpay hnint Yin-kyay-hum a-phwe, Taunggyi, Pa-O Union Nation, 2002
- “Pa-O Yin-kyay-hmu”, 2002 “Pa-O Yin-kyay-hmu” (Culture of Pa-O), Taunggyi, Department of Culture, Typing Scripts, 12 July 2002
- Pe Maung Tin, 1958 *Bar Tha Law Ka Gyan* (The Linguistics Thesis), Yangon, Sarpay Beikman Press, 1958

- Pin Laung Hmat-tan*", 1969 "*Pin Laung Myo-ne Hmat-tan*" (Record of Pin Laung Township), Myanmar Socialist Lan- zin Party, Pin Laung, 1969
- "*Pyidaungsu Hte-ka Pa-O*", 2009 "*Set-nga-hnit Pyi Nyein Chan Yai A-htain-a-hmat, Pyidaungsu The-ka Pa-O*" (Commemoration of the 15th Anniversary of the Peace, Pa-O Union of Myanmar), Taunggyi, Pa-O A myo-tha Aphwe-chok, 2009
- "*Pyit-sin-hmat-tan*", 1969 "*Thaton Myo-ne, Pyit-sin-hmat-tan, Tha-maing, Thaton*", 1969
- Record of Hsi-saing Township, 1969 *Hsi-saing Myo-ne ei Myo-ne Phit-zin Hmat-tan* (Record of Hsi-saing Township), Myo-ne Lone-chon-ye hnint Ok-choke-hmu Committee, Taunggyi, Nyo Win Press, 1969
- "*Sarpay hnint Yin-kyay-hmu*", 1966 "*Pa-O Sarpay hnint Yin-kyay-hmu- A-phwe Baho Committee*" (Pa-O literary and Culture Committee), First Reports Taunggyi, 1966
- Scott & Hardiman, 1900a *Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States*, Vol.I, part.i, Rangoon, Superintendent, Government Printing, 1900
- Scott & Hardiman, 1900a *Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States*, Vol.II, part.i, Rangoon , Printing and Stationery, 1900
- Sin Kye, 1967 *Kayin Ba-wa Da-lay* (Kayin Life and Tradition), Yangon, Thidar Tun Press, 1967
- Stevenson, 1944 *The Hill People of Burma*, New York, The Burma Research Society, 1944
- Swe Son Gyan*, 1973 *Myanma Swe Son Gyan* (Myanmar Encyclopedia, Vol.XIII, Yangon, Sarpay Beikman Press, 1973

- Swe Son Gyan*,1992 *Myanma Swe Son Gyan* (Myanmar Encyclopedia), Vol. XII, Yangon, Sarpay Beikman Press, 1992
- Taing Ok, 1980 “*A-sar A-har-ya Theik-pan*” (Science of Diet), Vol. II, *Pyithu Letswe Sarzin*, 529, 531, Yangon, Sarpay Beikman Aphwe,1980
- Taw Sein Ko,1920 *Burmese Sketches*, Vol,II, Rangoon, British Burma Press, 1920
- Than Tun, 1969 *Khit-haung Myanmar Yarzawin* (Ancient Myanmar History),Yangon, Monywa Press, 1969
- Thein Than Tun,2001 “*Taunggyi Khayaing Se-myo-ne ei Shay-hnint-paung-ta-ya-kyaw-ka Hmat-hpwe-thu-ta-myar*” (General knowledge of 10 townships in Taunggyi District for over 100 years), *Golden Jubilee Magazine of Taunggyi Golf Club*, 2001
- “The Name of Townships and Villages”,1992 “*Shan Pyi-ne Myo-ywa Amyi-mya hnint Kyae-ywa Amyi-mya*” (The Name of Townships and Villages in Shan State),Taunggyi Degree College,1992
- Tin,1932 *Myanmar Min Oke-choke-pon Sar-tan hnit Bodaw Phayargyi ei Rajathat or Ah-meint-taw Tan-gyi* (Royal Administration of Myanmar and Royal Orders by King Bodawphaya), Vol.II, Yangon, Government Printing Press 1932
- Tin Aung,1963 *Myanmar Naing-ngan-taw-tha-maing* (History of Union of Burma),Yangon, Pyi-thu Ahlin Press, 1963
- Tin Gyi,1931 *Burma Gazetteer of Thaton District*, Vol.A, Rangoon, Superintendent Government Printing and Stationary, Burma,1931

GLOSSARY

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| <i>Gawsarum</i> | Communal Novitiate ceremony held simultaneously |
| <i>Htamone</i> | <i>Myo-thu-gyi</i> (or) Town headman |
| <i>Htan-kyaung</i> | Paying a visit to a monastery |
| <i>Htone-htain</i> | Shan long drum |
| <i>Htwet</i> | Act of monk disrobing into layman |
| <i>Katu</i> | Leader of the youth community |
| <i>Kauk Kyo</i> | Nine strand rope |
| <i>Khawcha</i> | Feeding the spirits or devils |
| <i>Khayai</i> | Fire lighting Festival |
| <i>Khayemay</i> | Lighting fire to be burned |
| <i>Khovantan</i> | Leader of village Bachelors |
| <i>Khun</i> | Manly,noble |
| <i>Kuwun</i> | Crematorium for burning corpses |
| <i>Kyai</i> | elder villager respected by the village community |
| <i>Kyawt</i> | Rank of Thugyi or equivalent |
| <i>Naung Kai</i> | Coding riddles or puzzles |
| <i>Ngaung Twai</i> | Hymns or verse |
| <i>Sao-yagu</i> | Porridge feeding ceremony |
| <i>Se-Seng</i> | Death during Pregnancy |
| <i>Sinhpar</i> | Male donor of novitiate ordinaed |
| <i>Sin-mho</i> | Lady donor of novitiate ordinaed |
| <i>Su-bya</i> | Preparing land by burning |

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| <i>Tabyo</i> | Name of the eldest son of the family |
| <i>Takho-thwun</i> | Mont-si-kyaw (Fried Shan delicacy) |
| <i>Tathi-lwun</i> | Spirit entering the human soul as medium |
| <i>Tauk-sawt-num</i> | Tauk-sawt-num |
| <i>Taung-pho</i> | Sling of scabbard |
| <i>Taung-pyar</i> | Sheath of sword |
| <i>Twe</i> | Searching |
| <i>Zwe(or)Li</i> | Pa-O weighting scale |

INTRODUCTION

It is recorded that there are 135 ethnic races settled in the geographical territory of the Union of Myanmar. Many ethnic races are familiar among one another and also to neighbouring countries, to ASEAN regions and those of the world. However it is noticed that the Pa-O ethnic race is relatively little known when compared with the other races. It is generally found that the Pa-O ethnic race had adopted Shan State as their own settlement long time ago thus assuming to be part of the Shan ethnic race at large. It is also assumed that the Pa-Os adopted the Shan language rather than having their own distinct dialect, language and literature. In the process of research and analysis leading to preparation of this Doctoral Dissertation many Shans and Myanmarers tend to pronounce “*Pa-aing*” instead of “Pa-O”, the correct pronunciation. The reason for such misnomer is due to little understanding of the Pa-O ethnic nationality, lack of basic research on its origin, migration, and settlement concerning races on Myanmar as a whole. All these factors have prompted me, a doctoral candidate belonging to the Pa-O ethnic nationality to highlight Pa-O as an integral race of longstanding stature of thousands of years, with distinct migratory route from remote Asian highland region north of ancient China into the present Shan State and parts of Myanmar region. The candidate, with profound knowledge will attempt to confirm the existence of Pa-O having their own language, literature, culture, religious faith adopting *Hteravada* Buddhism by tradition and heritage. The candidate will endeavour to substantiate the Pa-O ethnic race as a viable entity and leave this dissertation as a sustainable record in the annals of the races of the Union of Myanmar. The doctoral candidate has attempted to conduct, research and present an in-depth dissertation titled: “*The Pa-Os Community in the Southern Shan State*”

(1886-1962)” by none other than a Pa-O ethnic national herself on behalf of the entire Pa-O ethnic nationals as a whole. The thesis is presented in four chapters. Chapter (1) with the caption: Settlement of the Pa-O ethnic nationals in the Southern Shan State, traced the migration of the Pa-O ethnic nationals from the Mongul heights of the Asian Hilly regions into Myanmar from the north-east border, making earliest settlement in the Thaton Region of the Mon State in the south of Myanmar. Pa-O ethnic nationals dispersed into various regions namely: the Shan State, Mon State, Kayah State, Kayin State and the Bago Region after forming into (9) groups. Among the nine groups, the group who arrived into Southern Shan State consisted of those who migrated from the ravaged Thaton Kingdom and settled in a small region. To commemorate their old kingdom the new settlement was named as ‘Thaton Lay’ now known as His-saing. The Pa-O ethnic nationals consisted of 10 sub- groups. Although their settlements differ with the region geographically, the adoption of culture, customs, traditions, language and literature as well as dialect remained the same. The regions in the southern Shan State namely: Pinlaung, His-saing and Hopone in the Taunggyi District are now densely populated by the Pa-O ethnic nationals. Pinlaung town is situated at 4800 feet above sea level. The first settlement of the Pa-Os was in Thatonlay (His-saing). In course of time as the population of His-saing increased, they branched out to a new area and founded the new town of Pinlaung. Around 14 ethnic races lived in harmony at Pinlaung. Commercial transaction was made in the village markets which rotated around various villages on a once-in-five day regularity. The Pa-Os built villages on a circular pattern. The houses were constructed with locally produced bamboo. Village transportation connecting Aungban, Pinlaung, Loikaw were paved by the villagers on a self-help basis. Hopone was one of the towns situated in the eastern regions of the Southern Shan State 12 miles distance east of Taunggyi, capital of Southern Shan State. It was a hilly town with the elevation of 3541 feet above sea level. The name ‘Hopone’ was taken after the

locality, land and environment. The market day was the most interesting occasion where sellers from villages of the locality throng the market and brisk trade was transacted. Foot paths were connected between the villages making easy access. Thatonlay (His-saing) carries the meaning: ‘a place where thitsai trees are plentiful.’ Their main occupation is growing ‘thanatpet trees’ from which the thanatpet cheroot leaves are plucked and sold to local cheroot manufacturers as common smoking material. The weather is temperate. In general this chapter narrates Pa-O settlements dispersed and settled in Thanlwin and Sittaung River banks, Kayah Region, and Monai Region in the Southern Shan State. In Chapter (2) the social conditions of the Pa-Os are described in detail. In traditional dress the Pa-Os prefer the dark colour which is commonly worn on all occasions. The Pa-Os rely on land to grow paddy and other crops as their basic occupation. They are therefore physically fit and strong. Socially and culturally they lead a simple life. Nowadays as time change with development they still stick to black as the basic colour, but adopt shades akin to black such as blue-black and alike which both the hill people and the plainsmen wore covetously. Regarding staple food they consume mainly Shan variety of rice and *taungyar* rice with *peboke* (fermented pea) with apparent relish. As the highland fields are fertile, vegetables and crops grow plentifully. According to the dictum of the elders, there was no instance of poverty and starvation due to crop failure. When choosing a suitable site to construct a new village they tend to choose land that is fertile. After the village is settled they choose a respectable village elder to lead them as a village headman by consensus, to look after the administration and social affairs of the village on a rotation basis. All along their settlement they consistently adopt their traditional customs and hereditary practices. For example in litigation and disputes involving criminal and civil cases, inheritances, divorce cases, disputes concerning sale or mortgage of estates or property the parties to the dispute usually came to the presence of the village headman and the elders and made depositions on oath.

The Pa-Os generally put priority to their livelihood rather than over politics or social conflicts. In matters of health they rely mostly on traditional indigenous medicines and consult local practitioners to cure their ailments. In general as the Pa-Os live in clean and sanitary community, and have understanding of the knowledge of traditional medicines, there was no incidence of serious outbreaks affecting their locality. With modernization, and growing general knowledge, the Pa-Os now came to accept modern western medicines and treatment and tend to consult modern medical clinics and hospitals.

In Chapter Three: the economic conditions, trade and commerce of the Pa-Os are explained at length. The Pa-Os choose agriculture and farming as their main livelihood and occupation. As their region is covered with dense forest they worked on agriculture growing paddy and other farm crops, as well as gardening, farming and plantations. However the main crop for livelihood is agriculture growing paddy for subsistence and for sale. The main crops grown are paddy, *thanatphet* trees, potato, orange, garlic, pepoke pea, forest products and vegetables. As the Pa-O region has abundant water springs, vegetables are widely grown with clean fresh flowing water. Trash and burn methods were employed to clear the fields for plantation. Such trash and burn methods are not the most suitable means as it is dependent on location of the topography, soil and changing weather conditions of the hilly region which is not profitable as agriculture on plain fertile fields. They also undertake plantation work, growing long term and short term plants. The long term trees include *thanatphet*, damson, and peach. In the short term plantation potato, garlic, chilli, *pepoke*, and groundnut are grown. Garden farming is undertaken outside the village area, or in open space around the houses. The products were transacted in the local market held on a once-in-five-day rotation. The market day is commonly notified by tradition prevalent specifically in the Shan State. Products are sold mainly by Pa-O women. Animal husbandry and breeding was carried out for domestic use in their local occupation.

Such breeding is undertaken on local basis as systemic and scientific animal husbandry was not yet developed. In respect of transportation network the motor transport is the only available means to move around. It is widely accepted that essential means of economic development rest on efficient transportation and communication. With the development process undertaken by the Union and state governments, modern agricultural extension methods are being encouraged with increasing momentum for increased quality and yield.

In Chapter Four: social tradition, culture, and festivals are explained in convincing detail. In describing the traditional cultural patterns the Pa-Os usually hold the traditional seasonal festivals as a community or group. Festivals are held on a monthly basis and as such no month passes by without one festival or more depending on the season, natural phenomena and pagoda festivals according to the chronicles of Lord Buddha. The ongoing popular seasonal festivals are :novitiate festival, Lupyne or rocket launching festival, oil lighting festival, and ‘*saga*’ festival. Most strikingly almost all festivals are religious-oriented centred around ‘*Hteravada Buddhist faith*’. In addition to the main respect and veneration to Lord Buddha, the *Dhamma* scriptures (*Dhamma*), and Order of the Monks (*Sanghas*), there are also hereditary offering to the spirits or guardian saints. Parents, elders, lords and respectable heads of village and community who had passed away are believed to be reborn as guardian spirits of the community they had lived. The surviving community continue to pay respects by constructing shrines and offering food, water, flowers, lighting etc. All such offering were initiated by the head of the village and the elders. Such offering to the spirits have become part and parcel of the village community as a traditional hereditary pujas. Like their senior Myanmar community, the Pa-Os believe in omens, oracles, and prophecies. Such beliefs are either good or evil as the case may be. At such a time the affected villagers tend to approach the astrologer to consult the impending result and carry out corrective measures to lessen the adverse effects of the omen. Positively when

the omens are good the offerings may help promote good results. The venerable presiding *Sayadaws* and monks learned in the science of astrology also helped the villagers in giving advices, and guide them through calculations and predictions. As the number of lay astrologers are few in the villages, the monks offer valuable social service to the village community. In celebrating the seasonal festivals traditional musical instruments play essential role in adding life and joviality to the festivities. All accompanying musical instruments are the handiwork of the Pa-O nationals as they create as well as play on the instruments. Such dances, songs and music accompaniments are mainly group performances and are played on occasions such as: cheroot leaves plucking, *laphet* leaves plucking, *terererok group dancing*, dances and songs accompanying *luphye* rocket firing festivities. The Pa-O national dress is worn by all Pa-Os irrespective of class or gender such as: single or married; man, woman youth or damsel; old or young, rich and poor villagers or townsfolk. The common colour of all such communal dress is black. In ceremonial occasions verses composed by learned poets are recited. The verses are usually composed in four-word rhymed or unrhymed stanzas. The Pa-O language and literature worked hand-in-hand, and are fundamental in sustaining and promoting the progress in the years to come. In the summer months of the open season, all Pa-O villages make it compulsory to study Pa-O language. In addition to academic study, essays, riddles, maxims, proverbs, legends, fairy tales are all added to bring joy and interest to the learners both old and young. Learned monks and laymen of the community help propagate and expand the range and scope of the Pa-O language and literature. In the olden days the Pa-Os spent their daily lives in livelihood, food, shelter etc. Now with the modern trend of rapid development, new approaches towards economic, social and cultural progress were programmed for long term basis. All these processes and programmes are geared to foster confidence, and trust for solidarity of the Union at large.

The candidate had conducted extensive field work to the regions where the majority of Pa-O ethnic nationalities lived such as His-saing Township, Hopone Township, and Pinlaung Township. The candidate made research on the available literature written about Pa-Os in general, and also approached elders of the community who had accumulated knowledge of the history, geography, origin of the Pa-O race, settlement and migration to widen the scope of her dissertation. The candidate had to acknowledge a real scarcity of authentic books, maps, papers to rely on, making the dissertation more difficult. As such reference to the contemporary materials and face to face interviews had to be relied on, to make it convincing.

CHAPTER ONE

THE PA-O SETTLEMENT IN THE SOUTHERN SHAN STATE

The Shan State constitutes the largest land mass and the largest population count within the Union of Myanmar. It is located in the eastern part of the Union. Map reading shows north latitude 19' and 22' 15, and east longitude 96' 21 and 98' 49. Neighbouring countries are Peoples' Republic of China to the north-east; Laos and Thailand to the south-east; Kachin State and Sagaing Division in the north and Kayah State in the south. The total land area constitutes 60155 square miles. The State capital is Taunggyi. ¹

The British Colonial Government absorbed the Shan State into Upper Myanmar under article C of the Upper Myanmar Act on 12.3.1887. The Shan State was divided into three divisions namely: Northern Shan State, Southern Shan State, and Central Shan State.² Total land area of the Southern Shan State is 21652.96 square miles and included thirty one districts, and seven sub-townships. Population density is estimated as 88 persons per one square mile. There are around forty ethnic races in the Shan State among whom Shans, Pa-O, Bamar, Kachins, Palaung, Inn-thars, Dhanu, Kokang, Wa, Lahus, and Padaungs settle in harmony. The majority of the Pa-O ethnic races settled around Taunggyi, Loilim

¹ “*Shan-pyi-ne Hmat-tan*”(The Data of Shan), Myanmar Socialist Lanzin Party, Taunggyi, 1962, p.3 (Henceforth: “*Hmat-tan*”, 1962)

² *The Shan State Manual*, Rangoon, Government Printing, 1933, pp.2-3 (Henceforth: *Manual*, 1933)

regions in the Southern Shan State. The Pa-Os are also found in Bago, Toungoo, Hpa-An, and Kawkaik regions.

Most of the national races who settled in Myanmar more than 3000 years ago belonged to the Mongol tribes living in the northern reaches of China. These roving tribes migrated south-wards in search of new lands for agriculture and settlement, grazing grounds for their livestock and fresh water for consumption. Southward migration routes were along the Thanlwin River, Mekong River and Brahmaputra River respectively.³

According to historical records, there were three ethnic groups who entered and made settlements in Myanmar namely:

1. The Mon-Khmer Group;
2. The Tibeto-Burman Group, and
3. The Tai Chinese Group

The Tibeto-Burman group was sub-divided into three groups namely: Kachin, Bamar, and Lolo. The time of migration into Myanmar was different and phased, according to historical records. The Myanmar historians projected that around 3000 years ago the Mongol tribes migrated south to quarters India, China and Thailand into Myanmar. Some of the tribes had disappeared, and some were not consolidated into a distinct clan. Some were dispersed in two or three geographical

³ *Pyidaungsu Myanmar Naing-ngan, Taing-yin-thar Yin-kyay-hmu Yo-yar Dalay-hton-san-mya* (Union of Myanmar Tradition Culture and Customs), (Shan), Myanmar Socialist Lanzin Party, Yangon, Party Head Quarters, 1969, p.30 (Henceforth: *Dalay-hton-san-mya* (Shan), 1969)

areas.⁴

The distinctive features of the 101 ethnic national groups with similarity and differences are tabulated in the following table below:

| SN | Monwyai <i>Sayadaw</i> Records Kyawhtin | Shwedaung Mingyi Records | MahaMinhla Thinkhaya | Foreign Jabu- <i>tazeik wundaik</i> & <i>Swesone</i> |
|----|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| | Records | Records | Records | Records |
| | Kyawhtin | | | |
| | | (seven Myanmar races as itemized) | | |
| 1. | Myanmasat Myanmar | Myanma-athet | Myanmargyi | Myanmar |
| 2. | Rakhine | Rakhine | Myanma-nge | Rakhine |
| 3. | Dawei | Dawei | Dawei | Dawei |
| 4. | Pyayai | Pyaw | Pa-yai | Myo-Tarath |
| 5. | Taung-thu | Taung-thu | Taung-thu | Taung-thu |
| 6. | Myo-thet | Pyu-thet | Pyone-thet | Pyu Pyaw |
| 7. | Kayain | Kayain | Kayain | Kayain |

- Myanmar-gyi means Rakhine
- Myanmar-nge means Pyu
- Thet races split into 3 ethnic groups⁵

⁴ Bhamo Tin Aung, *Myanmar Naing-ngan-taw-tha-maing* (History of Union of Burma), Yangon, Pyi-thu Ahlin Press, 1963(2nd edition), p.47 (Henceforth: Tin Aung, 1963)

⁵ U Tin, *Myanmar Min Oke-choke-pon Sar-tan hnit Bodaw Phayargyi's ei Rajathat khaw Ah-meint-taw-tan-gyi* (Royal Administration of Myanmar and Royal Orders by King Bodawphaya), Vol.II, Yangon, Government Printing Press, 1932, p.30 (Henceforth: Tin, 1932)

The enumeration of Myanmar, Yaw(payai), Rakhine, Dawei, Pyu, Kanyan, Taung-thu among the seven Myanmar races might have indicated that the name *taung-thu*⁶ meaning the Pa-Os might have been included in the Tibetan main group. It was also construed that the Pa-O ethnic races belonged to the Tai-Chinese (Shan) group.⁷ Some historians say that the Tai-Chinese groups migrated down south into Myanmar around 9th century BC.⁸

According to the ancient lore Pa-O or Taung-thu was included in the seven major classifications of the Myanmar race. The Kayin race was also included in the seventy Shan ethnic races, and as time wore on, the Kayins might have assimilated into other ethnic races.⁹ Some believed that the ethnic name Pa-O was derived from Pa-U.¹⁰

The fact that the Pa-Os settled in the Thaton Area was not mentioned in Myanmar historical records. The reason might be that they had mingled with the native Mon ethnic races thus leading to the conclusion that the two races were the same. Therefore the history of the Pa-O send to rest on the oral history not authenticated by recorded facts in the ancient lore. The verbal lore seemed to have descended and maintained from generations to generations construed to have validity as to their origins.

⁶Taw Sein Ko, *Burmese Sketches*, Vol.II, Rangoon, British Burma Press, 1920, p.34 (Henceforth: Taw Sein Ko, 1920)

⁷ “*Nyaung Shwe Myo-ne Sar-tan*” (Record of Nyaung Shwe Township), Myanmar Party Unit, Typing Scripts, May, 1969, p.16 (Henceforth: “*Nyaungshwe Sar-tan*”, 1969)

⁸ “*Pa-O Yin-kyay-hmu*” (Culture of Pa-O), Taunggyi, Department of Culture, Typing Scripts, 12 July 2002 ,p.11(Henceforth: “*Pa-O Yin-kyay-hmu*”, 2002)

⁹ Ashin Owe Ba Tha Bi Wontha, *Thu-tay-tha-na Tha-yoke-pya A-bi-dan* (Pictorial Research Dictionary), Yangon, Pyin Nya Handa Press, 1975, p.424 (Henceforth: Owe Ba Tha, 1975)

¹⁰ U Ba Than, *Myanmar Yar-za-win* (Myanmar Chronicle), Yangon, Kyaehmon Thatin-sar Press, 1991 p.16 (Henceforth: Ba Than, 1991)

It is difficult to regard the Pa-O ethnic races as pure Myanmar or pure Kayin. Basically the Pa-Os or Taungthu might be of Kayin race, but might have mingled with the Myanmar and Shan in the bloodline.¹¹ By tradition, the Pa-O ethnic races believed that they are descents of the powerful mythical dragon breed borne out of cohabitation of female dragon and male supernatural being known as Vijja or Zawgyi. The lore of cross lineage was still kept alive to this day by the forefathers who used to narrate to their grand children like folk lore or fables. They quoted *inter alia* that the original native place was Thaton in the Southern part of Myanmar. Chronicles dated back to the years before the Enlightenment of Lord Gautama Buddha when the saintly Arahats made the Myathabeik sacred hill as their religious refuge. There was a large lake nearby where the mythical dragons (*nagas*) reveled as they were regarded as amphibious. At a certain time a beautiful dragon princess asked permission from her father king to pay respect to the saintly Arahats residing in the Myathabeik Hill in the human abode. Coincidentally a youthful handsome male *vijja* was living in a cave by the side of the lake at the foot of the hill. Eventually the *vijja* and the dragon princess fell in love and were betrothed. After some time the *vijja* found out that his princess wife was not a human being but a dragon belonging to an inferior being. Thus the *vijja* discarded the dragon princess. Belonging to the snake family the princess bore two eggs fertilized by the *vijja*. She entrusted the two eggs to the hermit residing nearby and returned to her Naga abode deep in the lake. In time a boy and a girl were hatched. When they came of age they became king of the Suvunnabhumi Kingdom of Thaton. Thereafter they became Pa-O ethnic race.

The Pa-O people believed that the name was originated since their ethnic

¹¹ Mg Khun Nwe (Inle), *Pa- O*, Yangon, Center Press, 1992, p.29 (Henceforth: Khun Nwe, 1992)

clan was formed. The Shans called them as Taungthus.¹² The Myanmar used a different interpretation regarding the genealogy of the Pa-Os. They say that the said ethnic race had settled in the southern region of Myanmar and then migrated north toward the highlands of the Shan State. Thus the name derived as Taungthu meaning the race living in the hill regions.¹³ The original English text explained by eminent English historian Professor G.H.Luce in his *Phases of Pre-Bagan in Burma*, Vol.1 was rendered as follows:

Tonsu, Taungthu, literally 'hill man, hill farmer' is a pure Myanmar name, nowadays generally confined to the Pa-O Northernmost of the Kayins, the Pa-Os speak a dialect nearest to Pwo, the Southernmost. The term Tonsu was also used in an ethnic sense in Bagan inscription though perhaps more vaguely, for dry rice cultivators on the eastern border of the plains. The term occurs frequently in slave-names, prefixed as well as suffixed. When prefixed it is almost certain ethnic. A list of slaves in one inscription dated AD 1276 contains three old ethnic terms in a row: Na Kantu: Mr Kadu, Nga cakraw Mr Sagaw?, and nga tonsu, Mr. Taungthu.¹⁴ The earliest mention of Tonsu is in one of the oldest Myanmar inscription, dated AD 1165-66.¹⁵ There is little or no evidence by which to locate the Tonsu, but judging from the fact that Taungthu is closer to Burmese than any other dialect of Kayin, I think we may

¹² Major, C.M, Enrjuez, *Races of Burma*, Delhi, Manager of Publications, 1933,p.79 (Henceforth: Enrjuez, 1933)

¹³ Khin Khin Sein, *Bagan-khit Yin-kyay-hmu, Ok-chok-ye, Tayar -ye and Lu-hmu-ye* (Cultural three Administration, Justice and Society of Bagan Era),Yangon, Sarpay Beikman Press, 1986, p.51(Henceforth: Khin Khin Sein,1986)

¹⁴ I.B.P1.III. 252, Zeyyaput Temple, Pwazaw of Pagan, 638, 1276 AD

¹⁵ I.B.P1.14.*Dhammayan-gyi Temple*, Pagan 527(AD 1165-6), for to her mention of Tonsu in slave names, see P1-I 24, 77, II 125b, 130, 156, 175, 194, IV 392, 393 etc.

assume that the Old Tonsu were northernmost of the Kayins in the Bagan period even as now.”¹⁶

The Pa-O ethnic race prefer to be called as Pa-o rather than Taungthu. Taungthu called by the Myanmar conveys the meaning of Pa-O. The word Pa-O phonetically sounds as "tonsu" in local dialect. It carries the meaning of honesty, simplicity, straightforwardness. As Myanmar phonetics sound 'sa' as 'tha', the name comes to be pronounced in Myanmar as ' *Taungthu, yar-khoke*(the farmer); *tawthar* (*rustic*) etc. The name in Pa-O dialect if split, the first word carries the meaning 'Pa' crack, fissure; and the second word 'O' peeling.¹⁷ Some scholars say "the Peo means ancient fathers".¹⁸ The reasons lie as follows;

1. They did not wish to mix the meaning of *Taungthu* as cultivator with *Taungthu* the ethnic race;
2. They wish to use the Pa-O as pronounced in their own dialect.

That may be the reason why the name *Taungthu* was changed to Pa-O. A mass demonstration sponsored by the Pa-O leaders was held in 1948 in the Yekyaw Monastery compound at Mawkyaw Ward in Thaton.¹⁹ After gaining Myanmar Independence the Pa-Os came to be better known by all nationalities living in the Union.

¹⁶G.H. Luce, *Phases of Pre Bagan Burma Language and History*, Vol.I, London, Oxford University Press, 1985, pp.25-34(Henceforth: Luce, 1985)

¹⁷ Ludu U Hla, *Pa- O Pon Pyin Mya* (Folklore of the Pa- O People), Mandalay, Kyipwaye Press, 1977,pp.13-14(Henceforth: Hla, 1977)

¹⁸ Taw Sein Ko, 1913, 5-108

¹⁹ "*Pa-O Sarpay hnint Yin-kyay-hmu- A-phwe Baho Committee*"(Pa-O Literary and Culture Committee), First Reports Taunggyi,1966,p.1(Henceforth: "*Sarpay hnint Yin-kyay-hmu*", 1966)

One research into the Bagan stone inscriptions the name *Kayin* was rarely found, but the names *Saw, Taungthu* were inscribed frequently. The present Taungthus earned their livelihood by terrace farming on the hill slopes. In the stone inscription of *Le-myet-hnar pagoda wall fencing* in Min-nan-ywa-thu village recorded in AD 585 archeologically known as *Min Nandathu Inscription*, a list of pagoda-slaves could be read. In line 43, ‘O-Ei(pa)O, O- Htein’. Thus it will be difficult to construe the Pa-Os as either pure Myanmars or pure Kayins.²⁰

The Pa-Os (taungthu) could be originally taken as Kayins, but there was cross blood of Myanmar and Shans. The English text as rendered as follows:

The Pa-O even though they are contiguous to the Kayins came nearest to the Myanmar in ethnical affinity’.²¹ Ethnically the Pa-o belongs to the Kyin tribe. The whole groups of Kayin tribes can be divided to three divisions according to their language or language difference.²² The name Kayin is an imperfect transliteration of the Myanmar word ‘Kayin’, the derivation of which puzzled the students of that language. ²³The greater part of this territory they occupy in connection with the other peoples of the country namely: the Myanmar, Shans, Myanmar and Chin”²⁴ The Po-Os also known as Taungtan Kayin (hill kayins) could presumably be

²⁰ Dr.Than Tun, *Khit-haung Myanmar Yarzawin* (Ancient Myanmar History), Yangon, Monywa Press, 1969,p.19(Henceforth: Than Tun, 1969)

²¹ Taw Sein Ko, 1913, 21

²² Rev, Marshall, Harry, *The Karen People of Burma* Columbus, Ohio State University, 1918,p.1(Henceforth: Marshall,1918)

²³ H.N.C, Stevenson, *The Hill People of Burma*, New York, The Burma Research Society, 1944(First),p.6 (Henceforth: Stevenson,1944)

²⁴ Marshall, 1918,1

included in the Kayin ethnic group.²⁵ In the 1953 Myanmar Administration Act, 11 ethnic tribes were mentioned as Kayin or Taungthu races. In the 1931 Burma Census Report, the Taungthu ethnic race was included in the 17 Kayin ethnic groupings.²⁶

Concerning the Pa-O ethnic race, some scholars in history averred that they were included in the Po racial groupings mentioning Po Kayin, and Pa-O. Also in the Kayin grouping the Pa-Os were given distinct mention.²⁷ In the 1903-1931 census the Pa-Os were noted as the third largest Kayin group. English text quoted that:

The Pa-O even though they are contiguous to the Kayins came nearest to the Myanmar in affinity.²⁸

Thus though the Pa-Os had proximity with the Kayins, regarding the clan affinity they were nearer to the Myanmar.²⁹ In the context of the dialect the Pa-Os had affinity with the Po Kayin language. Regarding the outcome of research and observations, the Scholars tend to accept the proposition that the Pa-Os were descended from the Po Kayin ethnic races. This proposition may have been based on the affinity of language between the two racial groups. Some of the similarities are described below:

²⁵ U Pe Maung Tin, *Bar-thar Law-ka-gyan* (The Linguistics Thesis), Yangon, Sarpay Beikman Press, 1958,p.13(Henceforth: Pe Maung Tin, 1958)

²⁶ Maung Sin Kye, *Kayin Ba-wa Dalay* (Kayin Life and Tradition), Yangon, Thidar Tun Press,1967(First),p.22-23(Henceforth: Sin Kye,1967)

²⁷ Marshall, 1918,1-3

²⁸ Taw Sein Ko, 1913,21

²⁹ G.H.Luce, “Note of the People of Burma in the 12th, 13th Century AD”, *Journal of the Burma Research Society*, Vol.XLIII, part.i, June, 1939(Henceforth: Luce,1939)

| | Kayin | Pa-O | Myanmar |
|-----|--------------|-------------|---|
| 3. | Pomu | Pomu | Thamee (daughter) |
| 4. | Munan | Munan | Meinmapyo |
| 5. | Nahpu | Nahpu | Thin-ei-nyi (brother) |
| 6. | Hpu | Hpu | Nyi-nge (brother) |
| 8. | Htanmawar | Mamuwarhko | Zani-maunghnan(husband/wife) |
| 11. | Li | Li | Myay(grandson) |
| 12. | Hkein | Khay | Maung, maik (dark) |
| 13. | Mar | Mar | Loke, sauk, pyu, pyusar, pyulok (do, work, spell) |
| 16. | Hwui | Hun | Kyar-thi (hear) |
| 19. | Awhti | Owahti | Ye-thauk-thi(drink) |
| | Kayin | Pa-O | Myanmar |
| 1. | Karhla | Karla | A-chain karla(time) |
| 2. | Kanyan | Kanyan | Kanyan |
| 3. | Saran | Sayin | Sayin (accounts) |
| 5. | Suya | Suyatha | Let-phawar (palm) |
| 6. | Sin-sin | Saing-saing | sinsin,kyai-kyai(clean) |
| 7. | Si | Si | Sai (salvage) |
| 9. | Hti | Hti | Yay (water) |
| 10. | Htithi | Htithi | Yaythay(still water) |
| 11. | Htaw | Htaw | Wet (pig) |
| 12. | Htaw-nyar | htaw-yar | Wet-thar (pork) |
| 13. | Ne-ing | Ni | Hnit (two) |
| 14. | Nar | Narr | Nar (ear) |
| 16. | Pipi | Paypay | Thay-nge (small) |

| | | | |
|-----|------------|------------|-------------------------------|
| 17. | Bo-naingyo | Nye-yohkar | Yakhu (now) |
| 18. | Bar | Bar | Pe,kaung,khu,hti (till) |
| 19. | Hmay | Mai | Mee (fire) |
| 20. | Theinlar | Thinlar | Thit-ywet (leaf) |
| 21. | Theehti | Thee-hti | Hsaiyai (medicine water) |
| 22. | Yo | Yo | Kyi- chin,dar,di,(look, this) |
| 23. | Laik | Laik | Sar (letter, language) |
| 24. | A-khi | A-khu | A-sai (seed) |
| 25. | A-khone | A-khone | A-kyo-kyai-zu (benefit) |
| 26. | A-di | A-di | Oo, a-san(tuber, nut) |
| 28. | Ayathar | Ayathar | Ayathar (taste) |
| 29. | Ar-ba | Lar | Aywet,athi (leaf, fruit) |
| 31. | Aye | Aye | Ar-may-taik(exclamation) |

The Kayins settled in the humid wet hilly regions in western China before entering Myanmar. Later they migrated into Myanmar around 7th and 8th century AD in Taungoo or Yamethin east regions. Some say that they infiltrated into the south-western plains from the Taungoo-Shwegyin route. They also followed along the Ayeyarwady River to the Bago Yoma Valley and deltaic regions of the main rivers.³⁰ Some migratory groups followed the Thanlwin River, crossed over the lofty Shan mountain ranges, and settled in Taungoo District and Tanintharyi coastal strip. Some Kayin migrants trudged south-quarters along Mekong deltaic valley, Shweli Valley and settled in the Shan State. Some branched out to the Kayah State. Some crossed over the Tanintharyi Mountain ranges to Thailand,

³⁰ U Hpone Myint, *Buddha Bar Thar, Pwo Kayin, Paysar Tha-maing* (History of Buddhist Pwo Kayin Palmeave), Yangon, Thiha Yadanar Press, 1975, p.266 (Henceforth: Hpone Myint, 1975)

Laos, Philippines and Borneo island groups.³¹ When they entered Myanmar the Kayins seemed to be one consolidated group. As time wore on, they dispersed into many different groups depending upon the area of their domicile.³² They tend to differ due to differences in the professed religion and worship, languages and dialects. The main Kayin groupings are as follows:

- (a) Saw Kayin,
- (b) Po Kayin,
- (c) Paku Kayin
- (d) Bwe Kayin.

Among the above group, only Po Kayin and Sgaw Kayin can be classified as the main groups.³³

In the Tai-Chinese migratory group there are

- (a) Kayin sub-group,
- (b) Shan sub-group and other minor races.

Among the Kayin sub-group there are many races such as Sgaw, Paku, Bwe, Taungthu, Kayinpyu, Po, Kayah, Padaung, Yinkaw, Zayein, Bayai, Yintalai, Kekho, Kemar etc.³⁴ The name Karen is an imperfect translation of the Burmese word 'Kayin' the derivation of which has puzzled students of the language.³⁵ In the olden times among the main Myanmar races such as Pyu, Kanyan, and Thet, some aver that the 'Kanyans' later came to be called as Kayin. The Shans called the Kayins as Yan, and the Pa-O, Taungthu called them as

³¹ Man Lin Myat Kyaw, *Thi-hmat-bwe-yar Kayin-yoe-yar* (The Knowledge of Kayin Custom), Yangon, Pyidaw Kyethayay Press, 1970, p.7 (Henceforth: Myat Kyaw, 1970)

³² Marshall, 1918, 1

³³ Myat Kyaw, 1970, 17

³⁴ U Min Naing, *Doh Taing-yin -bwa, Pyidaungsu Thar* (Our bloods, Our sons, Our natives), Yangon, Department of Culture, 1960, p.17 (Henceforth: Min Naing, 1960)

³⁵ Stevenson, 1944, 6

‘Kyauk’. Incidentally they are a group of considerable importance in the Shan State and Eastern Myanmar.³⁶

Original Kayin

| | | | | | |
|------------|---|---------|------------|---|---------|
| Taungthu | + | Pwo | Parachi | + | Sgaw |
| Taungthu | | Pwo | Parchi | | Sgaw |
| (Pa-O) | | Pwo | | | |
| Mawlamyine | | Pathein | Mawlamyine | | Pathein |

Source: *Pyidaungsu Myanmar Naing-ngan, Taing-yin-thar Yin-kyay-hmu Yoe-yar Dalay-hton-san-mya* (Union of Myanmar Tradition Culture and Customs) (Kayin), Myanmar Socialist Lanzin Party, Yangon, Party Head Quarters, 1969,p.46

There is a saying,” The origin of Pa-O is from Thaton”. Their native was said the be Suvunnabhumi or Thaton. Thaton is situated at 16’47” and 17’13” North latitude, 97’8” and 9730” east longitude. The total land area is 480 square miles. It is formed with 47 villages. The capital town is Thaton, and is renowned as the first site of the arrival of Buddhism from Lanka Dipa to Myanmar.³⁷ It was derived from the Mon historical name of “*Go-ha-zai-thason*”. The word ‘Ywai’ means ‘cave’; ‘zwai’ means ‘banyan tree’; and ‘Catu’ means ‘shade’. Thus the words mean; “worshipping the brick cave shaded by the banyan sacred tree.” As time

³⁶ Hackett, William Dunn, The Pa-O People of the Shan State Union of Burma. A sociological and Ethnographic study of the Pa-O (Taungthu)) people. A Thesis presented to the faculty of the Graduate School of Cornell University for the doctor of Philosophy, September,1953, pp.5-6(Henceforth : William Dunn,1953)

³⁷ *Burma Gazetteer of Thaton District*, Vol.2, Including Town and village census tables and constituent village tracts of Groups and circles notified under the Burma Rural Self Government Act, 1921, Rangoon, Superintendent Government Printing Burma, 1924,p.2(Henceforth: *Gazetteer of Thaton*, 1924)

wore on it came to be known as ‘Thaton’³⁸. Thaton was also interpreted in Pali (language of the Buddhist scriptures) as ‘*Sudhamma*’. Some historians also interpreted as the ‘town with a pleasing character.’ (Thudon). It also known as the golden town.³⁹

The lore by word of mouth (oral history) goes that the earlier Pa-O settlers used to sift for gold nuggets in the river flowing through the midst of the town and thereby settled along the banks of the river. In Pa-O dialect the word ‘theng’ means ‘sand’, and the word ‘toon’ means ‘search’. Thus Theng Toon was later derived into the modern word ‘Thaton’. It was assumed by eminent scholars that the Pa-O ethnic race migrated into Myanmar earlier than the Myanmar and Shans but later than the Mons. In later decades the Myanmar and Shans seemed to have pressed south-quarters, pushing the Pa-Os and Kayins further south settling in Thaton, Mon and Kayin States.⁴⁰ Around 150 kings of Pa-o Dynasty reigned in the Suvunnabhumi Thaton Kingdom. Around eighteen dynasty of kings of Mon-Pa-O mixed descents also reigned.⁴¹ Historically Thaton had become the centre of their settlements, history and culture in the ancient times of pomp and glory.⁴²

Suvannabhumi was also mentioned as ‘Zinmai Pyi Gyi (Great Chiangmai), or as Dvarawadi, Great Yodaya Nation. In the Myanmar Glass Palace Chronicle

³⁸ “*Thaton Myo-ne, Pyit-sin-hmat-tan, Tha-maing*, Thaton, 1969, p.75 (Henceforth: “*Pyit-sin-hmat-tan*”, 1969)

³⁹ *Myanmar Swe-Son Gyan 12*, Yangon, Sarpay Beikman Press, 1992, p.472 (Henceforth: *Swe-son Gyan*, 1992)

⁴⁰ Hackett, 1953, 7

⁴¹ U Kalar, *M-aha-ya-za-win-daw-gyi* (Great Chronicle), Vol.III, Yangon, Pyi-gyi-Hman-taing Pitakat Press, 1925, p.18 (Henceforth: Kalar, 1925)

⁴² *Myanmar Swe Son Gyan* (Myanmar Encyclopedia), Vol.XIII, Yangon, Sarpay Beikman Press, (First Edition) 1973, p.55 (Henceforth: *Swe Son Gyan*, 1973)

Suvannabhumi was mentioned as Thaton and not as Zinmai. Therefore it was found in history that Suvannabhumi and Thaton were interpreted in numerous ways. In Myanmar historical records Zinmai Region was also known as Suvannabhumi. The vast extent of territory stretching from the Mottama Bay along Thaton to eastern Zinmai Region could well demonstrate the vast region Suvannabhumi held sway in those days of grandeur.⁴³ Suvannabhumi was also known as Suvanna Dipa.⁴⁴ The Thaton Kingdom which King Anawratha of Bagan occupied and ransacked seemed to be a seaport.⁴⁵ After the end of the First Anglo-Myanmar War (1852-54) with victory for the British colonial powers, the British administration expanded their jurisdiction by forming new districts such as Shwegyin District, Thanlwin District and Thaton District. Thus the Tanintharyi (Tenasserim) Division included Toungoo, Thanlwin, Thaton, Kyaik-khami, Dawei and Myeik districts.⁴⁶ Thaton constituted the longest stretch of the coastal district stretching from Sittaung River along the right banks of the Thanlwin River. On the north lies Taungoo and Thanlwin districts; on the west lies the Mottama bay and Bago Division; on the south lie Kyaik-khami District and the Yodaya (Thailand) boundary, and on the east lie Thaungyin River.⁴⁷ In AD 1057 Anawratha, the Bagan King with the excuse of procuring the sacred Buddha's Tipitaka scriptures attacked and captured the entire Kingdom of Suvannabhumi (Thaton). The reigning Mon King Manuhar was seized as captive and taken back

⁴³ U Tin Gyi, *Burma Gazetteer of Thaton District*, Vol.A, Rangoon Superintendent Government Printing and Stationary, Burma, 1931, p.19 (Henceforth: Tin Gyi, 1931)

⁴⁴ *Swe Son Gyan*, 1973, 55

⁴⁵ Tin Gyi, 1931, 18

⁴⁶ U Lwin Maung, *Hmat-tan Tha-maing, Dagon, Ayar, Thaninsarry* (History of Dagon, Ayar, Thaninsarry,) Yangon, Sarpay Yadanar-thike Press, 1978, p.337 (Lwin Maung, 1978)

⁴⁷ *Gazetteer of Thaton*, 1924, 1

to Bagan. Left in disarray the Pa-Os evacuated to the northern mountain ranges and founded the new Thaton City with the sacred earth from the old town. The erstwhile Thaton (now Hsi-saing) was known as Thaton Galay (small Thaton). It was founded on the Shan plateau, known as Shan Thaton.⁴⁸ The original coastal Thaton was known as Thaton Gyi (great Thaton). The Pa-Os migrated from the plains of Myanmar to settle in the Shan State (Hsi-saing) around 1781.⁴⁹

The Thaton Region in the Shan State where the Pa-Os had made it their home has, as its boundary Maukmai, Kadugyi in the east; Kayah State, Loikaw in the south; Sakar Region in the west; and Tang-yan in the north. The total area is 471 square miles.

The Pa-O ethnic race was one of the many diverse nationalities living in the Union of Myanmar. The Myanmar generally assumed that only the Shan ethnic nationalities live in the Southern Shan State not realizing that diverse nationalities other than the Shans (Pa-Os) also made Shan State their home. The Pa-Os settled in scattered regions in the Shan State, Kayah State, Mon State, Bago Division, Mandalay Division.⁵⁰ In the Southern Shan State the Pa-O settlements made Taunggyi their centre and branched out to Pin Laung Township on the west, Mong Keng on the north, Mong Nai and Mong Pan on the east and Kayah State on the south.⁵¹ The area of Taunggyi District stands at 9225 square miles with population count of 556290 heads. To the east of Taunggyi lies Loiliem District; Kayah State

⁴⁸ Hackett, 1953,11

⁴⁹ J.G.Scott and J.P.Hardiman, *Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States*, Part.II, vol.i,1901,p.160(Henceforth: Scott & Hardiman,1901)

⁵⁰ Hackett, William, Dunn, 1950,76

⁵¹ Maung Thaung, *Shan Pyi-ne Taung-Paing, Pa-O Taing -yin-thar ei Lu-hmu Pa-Hta-wi-win* (The Geography of the Pa-O National in Southern Shan State), B.A Geography, Art and Science University, Patheingyi College, 1973,p.20(Henceforth: Maung Thaung, 1973)

to the south; Kyaukse ND Mandalay districts to the west; and Kyaukse District on the north.⁵² The Taunggyi District consists of three sub-districts and eleven townships as shown in the table below;

| Sub-districts | Townships | Sub-townships |
|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Taunggyi | Taunggyi | Shwe Nyaung |
| | Hopone | Nam Hkoke |
| | Nyaungshwe | Nam Pan |
| | Nyaungshwe | Sam kar |
| | Hsi-saing | Ban Yin |
| Kalaw | Kalaw | Aung Ban |
| | Kalaw | Heho |
| | Pindaya | Pwehla |
| | Ywa ngan | Myin Kya Doe |
| | Lawk Sawk | |
| Pin Laung | Pin Laung | - |
| | Pe Kone | - |
| Total | 10 townships | 12 sub-townships⁵³ |

Sources: *Taing-yin-thar Lu-myo-myar Sit-tan*, 1966, 12

The ethnic races living in the Taunggyi District numbered 11 as follows:

- 1.Tai or Shan
- 2.Pa-O or Taungthu
- 3.Inn Thar

⁵² U Ba Yi, “*Taunggyi District, Pyidaungsu Myanmar Naing-ngan Taing-yin-tha Lu-myo mya Le-lar-ye Sit-tan, Taungthu Lu-myo*), *Pa-O Lu-myo-mya*” (Inquest on the nationalities of the Union of Myanmar), Taungthu Tribe, (or) Pa-O nationalities, 1966, p.18 (Henceforth: Ba Yi, 1966)

⁵³ Ba Yi, 1966, 2

4. Taung Yo
5. Danu
6. Danor
7. Da Ye or Thaye
8. Palaung or Ta-Arng
9. Pa Daung
10. Rain or White Kayin
11. Li Su⁵⁴

In general the Myanmar delineated the Shan State as Northern, Southern or Eastern with Thanlwin River as the demarcation line generally defined as east of Salween (Cis Salween) and west of Salween.⁵⁵ The total land area stands at 61123 square miles. Southern Shan State area stands at 26329 square miles.⁵⁶ The townships with the largest Pa-O settlements are Taunggyi, Hsi-saing, Pin Laung, Hopone, Kalaw, Loilim, Pintaya, Namhsan, Nyaungshwe, Ywa Ngan, Lawk Sawk, Hpe Khone, Maukmai, Meng Keng, Mong Pan, Mong Nai, Lechar etc.⁵⁷ The population of Tai Shans living in the Southern Shan State is estimated at 350000 to 400000. The Pa-O ethnic nationalities settled in mountain ranges with the elevation of 3000 to 10000 above sea level. Due to the suppression of the Shan feudal chiefs in Shan mainland they refused to descend to the valleys. Only

⁵⁴ Ba Yi, 1966,1

⁵⁵ Daw Kyan, *Myanmar Naing-ngan A-che-a-ne* (Situation of Myanmar), Yangon, ZeYa Beik Hman Press, 1978, p.148 (Henceforth: Kyan, 1978)

⁵⁶ Scott & Hardiman, 1901, 531

⁵⁷ “*Set-nga-hnit Pyi Nyein Chan Yai A-htain-a-hmat, Pyidaungsu The-ka Pa-O*” (Commemoration of the 15th Anniversary of the Peace, Pa-O Union of Myanmar), Taunggyi, Pa-O A Myo-tha A Pwe-chok, 2009, p.23 (Henceforth: “*Pyidaungsu Hte-ka Pa*”-O, 2009)

after the Shan *Sawbwas* ceded feudal powers to Myanmar central government they moved to the valleys.⁵⁸

According to the census of 1948 the estimate population of the Pa-O ethnic races living in the Taunggyi area spanning out to the south stands at 223000.⁵⁹ The density of Pa-O settlements in the respective townships of Taunggyi districts are:

- | | |
|--------------|---------------------|
| 1. Pin Laung | 59226 |
| 2. Hopone | 27118 |
| 3. Hsi-saing | 20056 ⁶⁰ |

Pin Laung is also known by other names such as: 12 big mountains; Loilone, and Pin Laung. The name was derived from the Shan Language 'Pin Laung' where 'pang' means station, or open land; 'long' means great.⁶¹ Map readings are North latitude 19°40' to 20°18'; east longitude 96°25', 4800 above sea level (ASL).⁶² The area is 1293.41 square miles, east-west length 27 miles and north-south length 48 miles. Nam Khe and Aei lies on the north; Sakar, Sakwe and Nam Toke lie on the east; Moby and Pyinmana lie on the south; and Pyinmana and Yamethin lie on the west.⁶³ Pin Laung is surrounded by dense evergreen forests of timber, bamboo and fern-leaf trees (dayin gauk ywet thit pin---*filicium decipiens*). The Pa-O ethnic nationals who settled in Thaton migrated north to the mountain ranges

⁵⁸ Khun Nwe, 1990,91

⁵⁹ *Myanmar Swe Son Gyan* (Myanmar Encyclopedia), Vol.X, Yangon, Sarpay Beikman Press, 1966.p.138 (Henceforth: *Swe Son Gyan*,1966)

⁶⁰ Ba Yi, 1960,3

⁶¹ "Shan Pyi-ne Myo-ywa Amyi-mya hnint Kyae-ywa Amyi-mya" (The Name of Townships and Villages in Shan State), Taunggyi Degree College, 1992,p.8 (Henceforth: The Name of Townships and Villages, 1992)

⁶² "Pin Laung Myo-ne Hmat-tan" (Record of Pin Laung Township), Myanmar Socialist Lan- zin Party, Pin Laung, 1969,p.1 (Henceforth: "Pin Laung Hmat-tan", 1969)

⁶³ Scott & Hardiman, 1901,79

in search of new lands while bringing the earth of Thaton as auspicious in establishing a new town. They finally settled in the Hsi-saing Region christening it as Thaton lay (small Thaton).⁶⁴ The Thaton earth was scattered in the auspicious site to bring good fortune and prosperity. The water was poured into the nearby lake, pond and stream to cleanse the water of impurities borne by evil spirits. As the town flourished with growth of population the Pa-Os again shifted to greener pastures and abundant water into the Pin Laung Region. They had to clear wooded areas to expand new villages to accommodate the increasing population.⁶⁵ Pin Laung was also called as ‘*Darman-krong*’ in Pa-O and Kayin dialects. Later it became Man Rong and Ban long. The Shans came to christen the town as ‘*Pin Laung*’ meaning the auspicious town where benevolent kings reign. The Kayins called it as Pin Laung signifying dense growth of ‘*Santagu---Santalum album L.Syn*’ later becoming Pin Laung.⁶⁶

Various sub-groups of Pa-Os namely: Pa-O Kunlone, Pa-O Kayine, Pa-O Tatauk, Pa-O tayet. However the genus of Pa-Os are the same. However the manner of dress, dialect, terminology, intonation tend to differ depending on their geographical location. Major Enriguez averred that the Pa-Os settling in the Shan Thaton Region diversified into five racial groups namely: Namkhai, Tatauk, Kunlone, Kyisam, Khine etc.⁶⁷ The principal dialect spoken by all Pa-Os is called ‘*kunlone*’ .Kunlone sub-group settled in the Menai ranges in Hopone, and Kyansan range in Pin Laung Region. They were more prosperous and shrewd businessmen and merchants. The Khayaing sub-group also intermingled with the Kunlone sub-group. They settled in the south of Taunggyi in Nongpyit, Htiri, Nari,

⁶⁴ “*Pin Laung Hmat-tan*”, 1969,1

⁶⁵ “*Pin Laung Hmat-tan*”,1969,2

⁶⁶ “*Pin Laung Hmat-tan*”,1969,4

⁶⁷ *Swe Son Gyan*,1962,278

Hansu, Winya, and Pin Laung areas. Their main occupation was gardening, and farm plantation, and were reasonably prosperous.⁶⁸

The Tatauk sub-tribe intermingled with Dhanu, Taung-yoe groups and were found in Tikyit, Aungpan, Heho, and Htiyun.⁶⁹ Their main occupation was vegetable cultivation. There are ten sub-tribes.⁷⁰ There was some difference of ideas regarding the Pa-O ethnic races. It was observed that the Pa-Os were one unified group in Thaton before the invasion of Anawratha in the 11th century. After the destruction of Thaton the Pa-Os dispersed in disarray and migrated to where they were acceptable, and intermingled with the native tribes, resulting in the dispersions. Evidence indicated that among the Pa-O ethnic groups held captive and taken to Bagan with King Manuhar were called Taungthu or Pa-O and spoke the same language. Thus it can be construed that till the time of the fall of Thaton Taungthu or Pa-O seemed to be one unified race. In the Pin Laung Loilone region as at 1893 AD there were 14 racial groups as follows:

| | |
|-----------------|-------|
| 1.Pa-O | 16640 |
| 2.Shan | 3893 |
| 3.Za Yein | 3592 |
| 4.Myanmar | 2405 |
| 5.White Kayin | 1295 |
| 6.Kayah | 297 |
| 7.Innthar | 209 |
| 8.Taung-yoe | 196 |
| 9.Yinbaw(kayin) | 68 |
| 10.Lamone kayin | 65 |

⁶⁸ Khun Nwe, 1992,77-78

⁶⁹ Khun Nwe, 1992,78

⁷⁰ U Min Naing, *Doh Thwe, Doh Thar, Taing Yin Bwa* (Our Blood, Our Sons, Our Natives), Pyidaungsu Ne aing Yin The Yin Kyay-Hmu Lan Nyun, Yangon, Pyidaungsu Myanmar Naing-ngan Buddha Sasana A Pwe Press, 1967, p.55 (Henceforth: Min Naing, 1967)

| | |
|-----------------|----|
| 11.Banyaw Kayin | 60 |
| 12. Dhanu | 60 |
| 13. Dhanaw | 17 |
| 14.Padaung | 2 |

Totaling 28804⁷¹

In Pin Laung the total population is listed s 80000, and as Pa-Os constituted 60000 it was 74% of total population. The Pa-O villages were dispersed all over Pin Laung, along the mountain ranges, in the valleys and plateaus and on the top. The distance from one village to the other is about two miles. The table below illustrates the different Pa-O ethnic groups and their regional settlements:

| Ethnic grop | Regional settlement |
|--------------------|--|
| Pa-O of Kun Lon | Hopone: Me-nai Taung; Pinlone: Kyan Sin Taung |
| Pa-O District | Taunggyi: Naung Pyit, Htiri, Nare,Win Ya, Han Su,Pin Laung |
| Pa-O TaTauk | Heho township, Pin Laung township |
| Pa-O Wa Pha Re | Howan, Mong Nai |
| Pa-O Loi Ain | Hwelone, Hopone: West Kyauktan |
| Pa-O Kyan San | East of Mong Pawn Chaung; west on Pin Laung |
| Pa-O Ta Han | Loi Long , Pin Laung township |
| Pa-O Dha Nu | Ywa Ngan, Lawk Sawk township |
| Pa-O Pan Nin | Innya Ywa, Nyaung Shwe township, Nong Mon west |
| Pa-O Pa Daung | Loikaw west, Myobyai township, Hpe Khone tsp |
| Pa-O Ta Reng | Pin Laung Township |
| Pa-O Taung Yoe | Between border of Thailand and Kayin State |
| Pa-O Pa Hton | Kayah State |
| Pa-O Ta Kwa | Mong Pan township |
| Pa-O Kun Kan | Nam Phut, Nam Po Hun, Ho Pan township |

⁷¹ Scott & Hardiman, 1901,779

Almost all villages of Pin Laung Township used natural spring water flowing down the mountains to the valleys near human habitation for consumption and household use. They channeled the water with long bamboo poles split in half and propped with posts along the woods right to their villages. Vegetation is grown around both banks of the springs. The produce is taken to the once in five day market. The market day is fixed and opened in rotation to facilitate the villagers of Pin Laung Township to sell their products and other wares. Once- in- five market days are Pin Laung, Tiyun, Naung Taya, Tikyit, Lone-po, Pin Khun (Nam Har), Song Pyong, Nong Woe, etc as notified locally, and brisk buying and selling are transacted.⁷² The farmers of the region grow tea leaves, potato, cheroot leaves, garlic, fruits and *taungyar* cultivation.⁷³ In agriculture paddy was extensively cultivated.⁷⁴

The villages are built on a circular pattern, and the sites are chosen, based on the fertility of the soil for cultivation. The villages are surrounded by farmlands and gardens. The houses are also fenced and built in different sizes. The construction materials use are pine wood, cherry, *thit-yar* (*shorea obtusa*) etc. Hutments built with bamboo can be found plentifully in Tikyit area. The more developed towns and villages in Pin Laung Township are: Pin Laung, Tikyit, Taung Tayar Village and Yin Hmi Village. Business commerce and trading is brisk.⁷⁵

One significant traditional festival in Pin Laung is called firework displays,

⁷² “*Pin Laung Hmat-tan*”, 1969, 12

⁷³ Khun Nwe, 1992, 99

⁷⁴ Scott, 1901, 63

⁷⁵ Khun Nwe, 1992, 100

(Meelone or mee-kyi). In essence this festival is held as offering to Lord Buddha, and to propitiate the guardian spirits for good weather, good harvest, free from pestilence and good business prospects. This festival is held in all villages in the Pin Laung Township. The firework puja is held near the precincts of the pagoda of the villages. Venerable monks of the village monasteries were respectfully invited to grace the festival and offer prayers, invocation and blessings for the villages. After the ceremony the monks and village elders were feted with midday meals by the organizers.

Regarding the communication networks the main highway runs along the main towns of Aung Ban, Pin Laung, Loikaw motor-road. The respective villages nearby the main highway had to build linkage roads on self-help basis. They are mostly seasonal road and are road worthy only in the open season after the rains and in summer when the traffic is brisk to transport the village produce to the main warehouses and brokerage houses in major town centres. The significant village link roads are: Nyaung Tha to Phayar Phyu; Naungtayar link road; Pin Laung to Minbu Village; Yin Hmi to Tin Htet road; Saung Pyaung Village to Thone Pyin road etc. Yin Hmi /Maung Village road was built by the government. The roads are used as cart tracts to transport commodities to and fro. The ethnic people living in the villages are Pa-Os, Shans, Taung Yoes, Dhanus, Innthars, and Kayins.⁷⁶

In the Southern Shan State Ho pone was included as a township in the eastern district.⁷⁷ As map reference, Ho pone is situated in North Latitude 20' 12" to 21' 27", and east longitude 97' 10" to 97' 03". The distance is 12 miles to the east of Taunggyi, capital town the Shan State. It is a hill station, 3541 feet above

⁷⁶ Scott & Hardiman, 1901,68

⁷⁷ Scott & Hardiman, 1901,145

sea level. In the east of Ho pone lies Lechar Township, Loilim ; in the north lies. The area is 1220.50square miles. ⁷⁸ Meng Keng; in the south Hsi-saing, and to the west Lawk Sawk.

The name Ho pone is derived from location and disposition of the Land. It forms the lowest valley situated in the east bank of the Inlay, around Taungtan mountain ranges and Pun-chaung, Nam Pun, and Lwe MOUNG mountain range at the lowest point. The valley and environs are covered with green forests, and is damp and humid all year round with fertile soil and bountiful water for cultivation. This valley is called ‘*pun*’ in Shan language. The head point of the valley is lush with forests and natural springs thus earning the name of Ho pone in Shan dialect. It is taken as land lush with meadows and grassland. ⁷⁹

Ho pone Township is constituted with six town quarters and twenty two villages. The names of the six town quarters are as follows:

1. Myo Oo
2. East quarter (A-shay yat-kwet)
3. Myo Oo Kwet Thit
4. West quarter (a-nauk yat-kwet)
5. South-quarter (taung yat-kwet)
6. Tong Kham quarter

The 22 village tracts are as follows:

1. Nam Khoke
2. Lone Lar
3. Kone Kyaing
4. San Hpoo

⁷⁸ “*Ho Pone Myo-ne Hmat-tan*” (Record of Ho Pone Township), Myanmar Socialist Lanzin Party, Ho Pone,1969, p.1(Henceforth: “*Ho Pone Hmat-tan*”,1969)

⁷⁹ “The Name of Townships and Villages”,1992,19-20

5. Lwai Ont
6. Lone Khok
7. Pong Lin
8. Kyauk Tan
9. Sa-Ngaw
10. Hpet yan
11. Tee Lone
12. Lai Thet
13. Mong pyin
14. Nam Par Chi
15. Nar pone
16. Mauk Mon
17. Sa Nin (Phong Saing)
18. Nar Kit
19. Nong Dai
20. Baw Kone
21. Mong Lan and
22. Nong Lye Mu Sait⁸⁰

The people settling in the Ho pone Township are: Myanmar, Shan, Kachin, Kayin, Chinese etc. Other nationalities also live in Ho pone, but the majority are Shans and Pa-O ethnic races.⁸¹

Pa-Os ethnic races form 56% of all residents in Ho pone. Their main occupations are cheroot leave business. They have formed villages in the flat plains, plateaus between the two mountain ranges, and valleys.⁸² Ho pone have

⁸⁰ “*Ho Pone Hmat-tan*”, 1969, 6-7

⁸¹ “*Ho Pone Hmat-tan*”, 1969, 7

⁸² Scott & Hardiman, 1901, 150

contiguous boundaries with Lawk Sauk and Lechar in the south; Mong Pan in the east; Nam Khutan in the south and Nyaung Shwe in the north.⁸³ The well known Pa-O villages in Ho pone Township are: Hoke Pe, Sa-ngaw, Ban Sawk, Laila, San Hpu, Talya-noe, Sawkashar, Pin Ngo etc. The popular market places are: Ho pone, Nam Ohn, Nong Yun, San Ngaw. The market places are linked with seasonal roads, and foot tracts. The motor roads are not road-worthy in the rainy season.⁸⁴ In the Ho pone Township seven villages have once- in- five- day markets with links with other regions in the Shan State. During the market day of the respective village tract, not only the people within Ho pone Township, but also people from other regions come to buy and sell their wares.⁸⁵ The markets are notified in Ho pone, Nam ohn, Nong Yun and San Ngaw.⁸⁶ The famous pagoda festivals are held in the premises of Shwe Chan Thar Mwe Taw Yar Pagoda. The pagoda festival is held twice a year, from 4th to 8th waning day of *Tazaungmone* (November) and from 4th to 8th waning day of *Tabaung* (March).⁸⁷

The main region of Pa-O settlement in the Southern Shan State is located in the Shan Thaton Region. After the capture of Thaton King Manuhar by Bagan King Anawratha some Pa-O elders and families migrated to the new site in the Shan State in search of greener pasture, abundant water and fertile land. They chose Shan Thaton to be their habitat. During the reign of Myanmar King Bodaw Phayar the Pa-O chief formed the Lweput Village tract around AD 1782 to 1819. The reigning Myanmar King Botaw Phayar acknowledged that the name of village be notified as Thaton in memory of their earliest settlement in Mon Thaton, and

⁸³ Scott & Hardiman, 1901, 146-9

⁸⁴ Khun Nwe, 1992, 105

⁸⁵ “*Ho Pone Hmat-tan*”, 1969, 12

⁸⁶ Scott & Hardiman, 1900, 160

⁸⁷ “*Ho Pone Hmat-tan*”, 1969, 17

that the elder chief be designated as *Khun San Oo* to be equated as ruling king of the fiefdom.⁸⁸ By royal decree of King Badon (Botaw Phayay) the resident of Pa-O feudal chief was to be called as Thaton Region. During the reign of Shwebo *Min*, in AD 1837, Maung San Thar, Pa-O chief of Thaton was conferred the rank and title of the *Myosa* (lord of the town).⁸⁹ During the British Colonial rule, in the Durbar of the Governor-General of India, held on 1st February 1889, Lord Dufferin conferred *Sanad* appointments to 22 Shan *Sawbwas* to rule their designated regions in the Shan State. The Chief of Shan Thaton was included as recipient of the Governor-General's *Sanad*.⁹⁰

The famous and powerful King Alaungsithu of Bagan Dynasty, during one of his famous voyages with his mythical royal barge arrived at Naung Par Yin Village in Hsi-saing Township. It was rumoured that there was a very extraordinary Cock in that village. When the cock was killed and meat cooked to serve the king, his liver resembled a rock. The mystical liver was weighed and its color inspected by the authorities. The word 'se' in Shan meant 'colour' and 'seng' as 'rock'. Some also conjectured that in Pa-O dialect 'se' meant 'forest' and 'seng' meant dry or desiccated. Thus Hsi-saing was called in this name because there existed a desiccated Thitsi (*melanorrhoea glabra*) in that town.

The town Hsi-saing or Shan Thaton is bordered by Kayah State and Loikaw in the south; Hopone and Ban Yin in the north; Loilim in the north east; Nyaung Shwe, Sakar, Taunggyi in the west; Hpekhone in the southwest; Maukmai and Katugyi the east.⁹¹ About 50% of the Pa-Os settled in the Ho pone area. Their

⁸⁸ Scott & Hardiman, 1900, 160

⁸⁹ Scott & Hardiman, 1900, 160

⁹⁰ "Shan Pyi-ne Hmat-tan" (Record of Shan State), Myanma Socialist Lan-zin Party, 1980, p.54 (Henceforth: "Hmat-tan", 1980)

⁹¹ Hla Bu, Ahmat Chok, "Hsahtung Biography", Typing Script, n.d., p.13

occupation is cheroot leave plantation, preparation for cheroot making a popular smoking tobacco among the Shans and the Myanmar. The Pa-O villages were systematically built in the plains, on the plateaus, in the valleys and along the mountain slopes.⁹² Ho pone Region is the place where the Pa-Os migrating from Mon Thaton laid their first footsteps. The more known villages are: Hoke Pe, Sa Ngaw, Ban Sawk, Lai Pe, San Hpu, Talyanoe, Sawk-ka-shar-khan, Pin Ngo etc.⁹³ The weather in Hsi-saing is temperate, pleasant and chilly. The mountain ranges were lush with dense forests such as pine trees, *Inn(dipterocarpus tuberculatus)*, *Ingyin(shorea siamensis)*, *Thit Yar (shorea obtuse)*, *Teak(tectona grandis)*, all natural growth.⁹⁴

Shan Thaton produced precious teak for extraction, local use and export since the days of the Myanmar kings to the early years of the British colonial rule. With the paving of motor highway road from Taunggyi to Loikaw, the first Pa-O settlement Loiput faded in importance, with the focus of importance centred on to the newly emerged Hsi-saing.⁹⁵ In AD 1887 when the Southern Shan State was embroiled in conflict and destruction in the aftermath of the British Occupation of sovereign Myanmar nation, and the Shan State, Shan Thaton was one of the few regions spared by such destruction and unrest. In AD 1897 a record of Pa-O settlements was found in the Shan State Gazetteer as follows:

⁹² Scott & Hardiman, 1901, 150

⁹³ Khun Nwe, 1990, 105

⁹⁴ “*Hsi-saing Myo-ne Hmat-tan*” (Record of Hsi-saing Township), Myanma Socialist Lanzin Party, Hsi-saing Myo, 1982, p.9-11 (Henceforth: “*Hsi-saing Hmat-tan*, 1982)

⁹⁵ U Thein Than Tun, “*Taunggyi Khayaing Se-myo-ne ei Shay-hnint-ta-ya-kyaw-ka-hmat-hpwe-thu-ta-myar*” (General knowledge of 10 townships in Taunggyi District for over 100 years), *Golden Jubilee Magazine of Taunggyi Golf Club*, 2001, p.161 (Henceforth: Thein Than Tun, 2001)

| Towns | Population |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| Ho pone(Pa-O) | 2629 |
| Hsi-saing | 5541 |
| Ti Kyit | 318 |
| Lio Long(Pin Laung) | 16640 ⁹⁶ |

Series of political changes world-wide affecting Myanmar erupted with the break-out of the Second World War, retreat of the British and occupation of Burma by the Japanese from 1942 to 1945, the Allied reoccupation of Myanmar, Myanmar's mass political agitation by national leaders and entire people for independence from the British, and finally the emergence of Independent Myanmar in the family of free nations.

Shan State was also deeply involved in the mass agitation and movement for independence. Shan Chiefs rallied behind the national leaders and moved hand in hand with the Myanmar for national self identity. The solidarity movement was demonstrated by the landmark meeting among all the ethnic nationals which resulted in the crowning moment of the signing of the Pin Laung Agreement on 12th February 1947 in Pin Laung Town, just a year before total independence. Bogoyoke Aung San the Myanmar National leader, ethnic national leaders, Kachin Duwars and Shan *Sawbwas* in unison signed the historic Pin Laung Agreement. Hsi-saing Thaton *Sawbwa* Sao Hkun Kyi leader of the Pa-O nationals could not personally attend the historic meeting because of severe illness. He had delegated the administrative authority to U Phyu, who represented Thaton Hsi-saing at the Pin Laung meeting and signed the historic agreement. In 1st August 1957 Sao

⁹⁶ "Pyidaungsu Hte-ka Pa-O", 2009, 67

Aung Myint, second son of *Sawbwa* Sao Khun Kyi and Daw Aye Thant was appointed as *Sawbwa* of Thaton Hsi-saing to succeed his ailing father vide special Presidential Notification.⁹⁷ In the 1958 Caretaker Government of General Ne Win U Phyu was nominated as Minister for Education and Health in the Shan State Government Cabinet.

The Pa-O ethnic nationals had already well settled in Thaton Hsi-saing since their migration from their original home in Mon Thaton around the 12th century. They constituted 67% of the total township population. Their primary concern in establishing a village for habitation was clean and plentiful water to till their fields and grow rice on wet cultivation methods. The Pa-Os villages were built at the water head near the banks of rivers or lakes or at the foot of the mountains. In the fertile alluvial land where the two tidal waves meet the Pa-O settlements can be found. They cultivate the fertile garden land for vegetable plantation. On the hill slopes they employ *taungyar* cultivation.⁹⁸ The Pa-O huts are built mainly with bamboos, with long stilts high above the ground. The floors are made with split bamboo poles, and walls are made of woven bamboo strips. Animals are kept under the open space of their hutments. There were almost no windows. To get sunlight in the daytime sky glass were fixed on the roofing. The houses have extended roof for extra space. They also made ‘*mao long*’ or raised platforms to dry newly plucked tea leaves in the sun. There is no fencing in the

⁹⁷ *Hsi-saing Myo-ne ei Myo-ne Phit-zin Hmat-tan* (Record of Hsi-saing Township), Myo ne Lone-chon-ye hnint Ok-choke-hmu Committee, Taunggyi, Nyo Win Press, 1969, p.13 (Henceforth: *Record of Hsi-saing Township, 1969*)

⁹⁸ Mg Thaung, 1973, 30

house compound.⁹⁹ They commonly grow garlic, groundnut, potato, tomato, fermented soy beans, sugar cane, and vegetables, tobacco leaves and cotton etc. Such village products are sent directly to the central Taunggyi market.¹⁰⁰ For easier linkage with the main motor highway – Taunggyi, Hsi-saing, Loilim, village roads are paved on self help basis connecting the main highway to and from their villages.¹⁰¹

The well known Pa-O villages in the Hsi-saing Township are Lutput, Lwepu, Kawke, Pindaya, Dotan, Tikatoo, Mwetaw, Tasone, Bantkan, and Hawnan respectively. The diverse ethnic nationals living in Hsi-saing are Pa-O, Shan, Lisu, Innthar, Dhanu Kayin, and Padaung etc.¹⁰²

It was observed since the ancient times in pre-recorded history, the ethnic national groups had migratory instincts to move from one location to the other in search of green pasture, fertile fields and abundant water. Such migration may have been prompted by politics, commerce, social reasons. The Pa-Os had moved from their Mon Thaton habitat to settle along the Thanlwin and Sittaung rivers to quarters Kayah State and Mong Nai Region of the Shan State.¹⁰³ A report which recorded the Pa-O settlements in the Southern Shan State around 1901 is shown below:

⁹⁹ Khun Nwe, 1992, 100-1

¹⁰⁰ Record of Hsi-saing Township, 1969, 21-3

¹⁰¹ Record of Hsi-saing Township, 1969, 83

¹⁰² Record of Hsi-saing Township, 1969, 13-47

¹⁰³ Fychte, *Burma Past and Present*, Vol.I, London, C. Kegon Paul and Company, 1878, p.340 (Henceforth: Fychte, 1878)

Demographic Data of Southern Shan State in 1901

| SN | Ethnic race | Total populace |
|-----|--------------|----------------|
| 1. | Akhas (Kaw) | 26000 |
| 2. | Myanmar | 12100 |
| 3. | Chinese | 1000 |
| 4. | Dhanu | 50900 |
| 5. | Hkun Shan | 41500 |
| 6. | Innthars | 50500 |
| 7. | Kayins | 18700 |
| 8. | Lu Shans | 16200 |
| 9. | Padaung | 7800 |
| 10. | Taungthu | 124900 |
| 11. | Taung Yoes | 16500 |
| 12. | Wa | 23800 |
| 13. | Yin (Riang) | 3100 |
| 14. | Zayein Karen | 4140 |

Source: *Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1908*, 342-343

When the British Colonial Government annexed the Shan State after pacification of Burma proper, they demarcated the State into two divisions: the Northern and the Southern. Within the Southern Shan State it was divided into three administrative regions: the Myelat (central plains), the eastern region and the middle region. Keng Tung and Nyaung Shwe were designated as special regions.

There were 44 regions in the Shan State as follows:

1. Kyee Thi Man Sam
2. Kyauk Gu 4 villages
3. Kyaing Hkam
4. Keng Tung
5. Kyaing Lom

6. Kyone Ya
7. Sam Kar
8. Sa Koi
9. Nyaung Shwe
10. Taunggyi
11. Taung Paing
12. Naung Mom
13. Nam Kai
14. Nam Hkoke
15. Nam Toke
16. Pang Hmi
17. Pindaya
18. Pwe Hla
19. Baw
20. Baw Saing
21. Baw Nin
22. Ban Yin
23. Mong Nai
24. Mong Bye
25. Mauk Me
26. Mong keng
27. Mong Sit
28. Mong Nong
29. Mong Pan
30. Mong Pawn
31. Mong Shu (mong Kin)
32. Mong Lun
33. Lawk Sawk

34. Ywa Ngan
35. Lai Hka
36. Loi Maw
37. Loi Lone
38. Loi Ei
39. Thaton
40. Hsipaw
41. Mong Yai
42. Hsenwi (north)
43. Hsa Mong Hkam
44. Ho pone

Among the residents of respective regions in the Shan State the regions where there were no Pa-O settlers were as follows:

1. Kyee His Man Sam
2. Kyaing Hkam
3. Keng Tung
4. Kyaing Lum
5. Taung paing
6. Naung Mon
7. Nam Toke
- 8.. Pang Hmi
9. Mong Naung
10. Mong Shu
11. Mong Lun
12. Hsipaw
13. Hsenwi (north) and
14. Mory Yai

In the regions settled by the Pa-O nationals the other ethnic races living together with the Pa-Os are: Karen, Za-yein, Taw Yoe, Dhanu, Padaung, Palaung, Bamar, Yin and Shans. The Pa-O population, living in different regions in the Shan State in reverse serial order of head count are as follows:

| | Towns | Pa-Os | Remarks |
|-----|---------------------|--------------|----------------|
| 1. | Nyaung Shwe | 25810 | second largest |
| 2. | Loi Long | 17551 | largest |
| 3. | Thaton | 7616 | largest |
| 4. | Ban Yin | 7532 | largest |
| 5. | Ho pone | 7123 | largest |
| 6. | Sa Kar | 5187 | second largest |
| 7. | Mauk Mai | 5000 | second largest |
| 8. | Mong Pan | 4500 | second largest |
| 9. | Has Mong Hkam | 4500 | second largest |
| 10. | Mong Nai | 4000 | second largest |
| 11. | Loi E | 4000 | second largest |
| 12. | Loi Maw | 3660 | second largest |
| 13. | Nam Hkoke | 3343 | same number as |
| | Shan | | |
| 14. | Yawk sawk | 2056 | third largest |
| 15. | Pindaya | 2000 | second largest |
| 16. | Lai Khyar | 1877 | second largest |
| 17. | Baw Seng | 1300 | second largest |
| 18. | Ywa Ngan | 1500 | second largest |
| 19. | Myo Byai | 1416 | third largest |
| 20. | Kyauk Gu 4 villages | 1400 | second largest |
| 21. | Kyone | 1000 | second largest |
| 22. | Mong Sit | 1000 | largest |
| 23. | Nam Kai | - | largest |

Total population count 113371

Source: *Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1908, 341-342*

By reviewing the above table we could analyze that the regions densely populated by the Pa-O ethnic nationals are: Kyone, Nam Hke, Ban Yin, Loi Maw, Loi Lone, Lwe Ei, Thaton and Ho pone. The second densely populated regions are Sakar, Nyaung Shwe, Pindaya, Baw Saing, Mone Nai, Mauk Mai, Mong Pan, Ywa Ngan, Laichar, and Hsa Mong Hkam. The third densely populated regions are Moe Bye and Mong Seit. In Nam Hkoke Region, population of Pa-Os are shown to be equal to that of the Shans. In Nam Hke has so large a settlement of Pa-Os that it can even be called the stronghold of the Pa-O. Naung Shwe Region is consolidated of four in villages namely: Kyauk Htat, Nyaung Shwe, Let Thet and Tikyit having the largest number of the Pa-O nationals but by percentage proportion they are the second largest. Among the townships stated above, the most densely populated P-Os in one single region is Lwe Lone (Pin Laung). The head count is 17551. In some regions the populace of Pa-Os are so few that they are not even enumerated. In the same manner in regions such as Ta Kwe, Pwe Hla, Baw Nin, Maing Kung, Mong Pan fall in the same category as above. Nong Mong is so densely populated with Shan nationals that it can rightly be called as the Shan settlement. Thus it did not enumerate the number of Pa-Os settled in that Shan zone. In fact, Nong Mon is juxtaposed between the Pa-O regions of Ho pone, Nam Hkoke, Ban Yin, and Shan Thaton. It can be construed that there may be Pa-Os living in Nam Khoke but have missed count during the census year. In the Northern Shan State there was no record of the Pa-O settlement. It is noted that they have dense settlement in the Southern Shan State. All these records of population census were quoted from the data of 1901, nearly 100 years ago.

The Imperial Gazetteer of India, Provincial Series implied that in the Southern Shan State there were 124900 Pa-Os. In making detailed head count, the number came to 113371. The number of Innthars was not mentioned in the census of Nyaung Shwe Region, it was later mentioned as 50500. Thus it can be observed

that the Pa-O ethnic nationals had already settled in many parts of the Southern sphere.

During the British colonial rule of the Shan State, the Southern Shan region was divided into 3 divisions namely: the Central Division (Myelat), the East Division and the Middle Division.

The Myelat Division included:

- (1) Kyauk Gu,
- (2) the four villages now extinct and amalgamated with Pindaya, Lawk Sawk and Ywa Ngan. Min Ywa has now existed as Alai-chaung Village in Lawk Sawk Township. To continue the enumeration of townships within the Myelat Division there are:
- (3) Nam Hke,
- (4) Nam Toke,
- (5) Pin Hmi,
- (6) Pindaya,
- (7) Pwe Hla,
- (8) Baw,
- (9) Baw Sai,
- (10) Baw Nin,
- (11) Ywa Ngan,
- (12) Loi Maw,
- (13) Loi Lone,
- (14) Loi Ei, and
- (15) Hsa Mong Hkam etc.

In regions included in the East Division are :

- (1) Kyee Si Man San,
- (2) Kyaing Kham,

- (3) Kyaing Lun,
- (4) Mong Nai,
- (5) Mauk Mai,
- (6) Maing Kung,
- (7) Maing Seit,
- (8) Maing Naung,
- (9) Mong Pan,
- (10) Mong Pown,
- (11) Maing Ya, (Maing Sin) and
- (12) Lai Hka etc.

In the Middle Division the regions are included :

- (1) Sakar,
- (2) Sa Kwe,
- (3) Nong Mun,
- (4) Nam Hkoke,
- (5) Ban Yin,
- (6) Moe Bye,
- (7) Lawk Sauk
- (8) Thaton and
- (9) Ho pone.

The regions inhabited and settled by the Pa-O ethnic nationals are:

- 1. Kyauk Gu 4 village group,
- 2. Kyone
- 3. Sakar
- 4. Swe
- 5. Nyaung Shwe

6. Nam Hke
7. Nam Hkoke
8. Pindaya
9. Pwe Hla
10. Baw
11. Baw Saing
12. Baw Nin
13. Ban Yin
14. Mong Nai
15. Moe Bye
16. Mauk Mai
17. Maing Kung
18. Maing Seit
19. Maing Pan
20. Maing Pawn
21. Lawk Sauk
22. Ywa Ngan
23. Lai Kha
24. Loi Maw
25. Loi Lone
26. Loi Ei
27. Thaton
28. Has Mong Kham and
29. Ho pone

As Nong Mon is also inhabited by the Pa-Os it can be enumerated as region number thirty. In demarcating the respective divisions of the Southern Shan State, Keng Tung and Nyaung Shwe were not included. In fact Nyaung Shwe was included in the Kyauk Htat, Let Thet, Tikyit, and four Inn village group settled by

25810 Pa-Os. If Nyaung Shwe were to be added to the above list the count will become 31.

In the Myelat Division which include fifteen townships, fourteen are inhabited by Pa-Os accepting Nam Toke not inhabited by the majority of Pa-Os. Therefore it can be construed that the nine Myelat Division can be named as the Pa-O Region. In the same manner the nine townships in the Middle Division can be called as the Pa-O majority regions.

Statistics of Pa-O population and distribution (by percentage) in 1901

| SN | Region | Status | Population | Pa-O | Pa-O by % |
|-----|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|----------|-----------|
| 1. | Kyauk Gu(4)villages | <i>Ngwe Khun</i> <i>Hmu</i> | 4771 | 1400 | 29.344 |
| 2. | Kyone | <i>Ngwe Khun</i> <i>Hmu</i> | 2340 | 1000 | 42.735 |
| 3. | Sakar | <i>Myosa</i> | 17643 | 5178 | 29.399 |
| 4. | Sa Kwe | <i>Myosa</i> | 1387 | few | |
| 5. | Nyaung Shwe | <i>Sawbwa</i> | 95339 | 25810 | 27.072 |
| 6. | Nam Khe | <i>Ngwe Khun</i> <i>Hmu</i> | 6780 | majority | |
| 7. | Nam Khoke | <i>Myosa</i> | 6687 | 3343 | 50 |
| 8. | Pindaya | <i>Ngwe Khun</i> <i>Hmu</i> | 15014 | 2000 | 14.325 |
| 9. | Pwe Hla | <i>Myosa</i> | 7866 | few | |
| 10. | Baw | <i>Ngwe Khun</i> <i>Hmu</i> | 7743 | few | |
| 11. | Baw Seng | <i>Ngwe Khun</i> <i>Hmu</i> | 3557 | 1300 | 36.548 |

| | | | | | |
|-----|---------------|--------------------------------|-------|-------|--------|
| 12. | Baw Nin | <i>Myosa</i> | 3755 | few | |
| 13. | Ban Yin | <i>Myosa</i> | 11927 | 7532 | 66.673 |
| 14. | Mong Nai | <i>Sawbwa</i> | 44252 | 4000 | 9.039 |
| 15. | Mauk Mai | <i>Sawbwa</i> | 29454 | 5000 | 16.076 |
| 16. | Maing Kung | <i>Myosa</i> | 30482 | Few | |
| 17. | Moe Bye | <i>Sawbwa</i> | 19358 | 1416 | 7.317 |
| 18. | Mong Seik | <i>Myosa</i> | 9013 | 1000 | 11.095 |
| 19. | Mong Pan | <i>Sawbwa</i> | 16629 | Few | |
| 20. | Mong Pawn | <i>Myosa</i> | 13143 | 4500 | 34.239 |
| 21. | Lawk Sauk | <i>Sawbwa</i> | 24839 | 2056 | 8.277 |
| 22. | Ywa Ngan | <i>Ngwe Khun</i> <i>Hmu</i> | 9958 | 1500 | 15.063 |
| 23. | Lai Khar | <i>Sawbwa</i> | 25811 | 1877 | 15.063 |
| 24. | Loi Maw | <i>Ngwe Khun</i> <i>Hmu</i> | 4576 | 3660 | 79.982 |
| 25. | Loi Lone | <i>Myosa</i> | 30731 | 17551 | 57.112 |
| 26. | Loi Ei | <i>Ngwe Khun</i> <i>Hmu</i> | 442 | 4000 | 73.502 |
| 27. | Thaton | <i>Myosa</i> | 30731 | 17551 | 57.112 |
| 28. | Has muny khan | <i>Myosa</i> | 12561 | 4500 | 38.825 |
| 29. | Ho pone | <i>Myosa</i> | 11140 | 7132 | 63.44 |

Source: *Imperial Gazetteer of India, Burma*. 1908, 341-342

According to the records of the British colonial administration of the Shan State, there were two main demarcations: Southern Shan State and Northern Shan State. The above table illustrates the disposition of regions, enumerating the townships with the majority of Pa-O settlements. In the Northern Shan State there were 6 divisions namely: Thiri(north), Hsenwi (south) , Hsipaw, Taung Paing and Mong Lun. Southern Shan was delineated into thirty nine regions. I that division Nyaung

Shwe and Keng Tung were notified as special regions. In the remaining thirty seven regions, the towns inhabited by the Pa-Os numbered twenty nine. The head count was 469,689, with 24.13746% of total population. In the above table statistics have shown 113371. In some townships the number of Pa-Os could not be shown in mathematical figures due to small numbers. In Nam Khe, though overwhelmed by the majority of resident Pa-Os the actual number was not recorded. There-in lies the difference in statistical computing. However in one data, the population of Pa-Os in the twenty nine regions was shown as 124900. In a parallel reference the total population of the Northern Shan was shown as 400000 and that of Southern Shan as 770559. Thus the total population of the entire Shan State was recorded as 1170559. Therefore the population of the Pa-Os Southern Shan was 16.209% of total population, and 10.678% in the whole of Shan State.

Population of Shan State as at 1901

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Total population of Shan State | 1091649 |
| Population of Southern Shan State | 770559 |
| Population of Northern Shan State | 321090 |
| Pa-O population of Shan State | 124900 |

The distribution of Pa-O settlements –1931

| | State/District | Population |
|----|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. | Shan State | 153956 |
| 2. | Thaton | 56312 |
| 3. | Toungoo | 6208 |
| 4. | Loilim | 3736 |
| 5. | Kyeik-khami | 3698 |
| 6. | Bago | 2634 |
| 7. | Karenni(Kayah) | 2247 |
| | Total | 225822 |

Source: Wunna Taung Oo: *Pa-O Lu Myo Myar , Khit Thamaingsin*
(History Pa-O National), Yangon, La Min Press,1995
p.46(Henceforth: Taung Oo,1955)

Professor G.H.Luce recorded his research findings on Pa-O settlements the Shan State as: 154000 in Southern Shan State; 57000 in Thaton and Kyeik-Khami ; and 9000 in Toungo and Bago.

In 1901 it was found that in Thaton the Pa-O population was 37351. In 1911 it increased to 46105, and in 1921 to 52270. According to 1931 census it increased to 56213. The demographic count was calculated on a decade base. The general picture presents an increase of 8754 between 1901 and 1911; 6651 between 1912-1921; 3492 between 1922-1931. For example the mean population count in 1911 was '46105', and in 1901 was 37351. Thus we can calculate the difference in Pa-O population increase as 8754. The gradual decrease in the successive decades might have been due to pestilence and epidemic etc.¹⁰⁴

History has documented that the Pa-O ethnic race also known as Taungthu, had migrated into Myanmar and had settled in this country for many centuries up to this day. In the records of the Administration of the Myanmar Kings (*Myanmar Min Ok-choke-pone- Sartan*) enumerating the 7 Myanmar races, Taungthu was recorded as one of them. The Pa-O Taungthu ethnic race had affinity with the Kayins, and belong to the Thai-Chinese main racial group. Thus the lineage of the Taungthu ethnic race split into two different opinions. Whatever the contention may pose, it can be construed that they had belonged to the main racial groups during centuries of migration from northern reaches of the Mongolian plains southward bound, in search of green pasture, fertile agrarian fields and plentiful water for settlement and habitation. The Pa-Os have their own language and literature. They first settled in Mon Thaton. After Thaton was sacked by King Anawratha , the Pa-Os migrated to Shan State in search of new settlement. They carried water and earth of old Thaton to propitiate the new land for safety and prosperity. Eventually they found the ideal place in Shan Thaton. According to

¹⁰⁴ Taung Oo, 1955,46

age-old tradition and rites they scattered the earth brought from Thaton to purify the site and to augur auspiciousness and continuity of their settlement. They also poured Thaton water in the lakes, ponds, streams and rivers to cleanse the impurities and curses borne by evil spirits. As time wore on, their population increased and spread out quarters to the Shan State and beyond.

Although their native place originally was Suwunnabhumi or Mon Thaton, they are now settled, and prospered in many regions of Southern Shan State, mainly concentrated in Taunggyi, and Loilim townships. They have also spread out to Mon State, Bago Division, Kayin State, Kayah State and Southern Shan State. Having endured hardship as part of heritage they have migratory instincts, persistent and hardworking. Their ethnic race now constitutes the second largest population group in the Southern Shan State. Having lived together in harmony and solidarity all through centuries, the two ethnic groups, Shans and Pa-Os are now designated as one unified Shan-Pa-Os. And they will continue to live in harmony for years to come.

CHAPTER TWO

SOCIAL LIFE

History is a record of past happenings of a nation, nationality, peoples, buildings, structures, edifices, etc. It is a record of beliefs, culture, religion, language, literature, fine arts, narrated in forms of prose, verse, and songs. It is a record of politics, social, cultural administration of a nation.

The process and development of a nation and its people, its history, economy, society, culture, defence, and administration were all carefully recorded as it happened. In this manner the past history will have to be studied to keep pace with the present and determine the future. Such documentation of records needed to be true, and accurate and authentic, to give validity to the fact that it actually happened at the time it was recorded. Without proper records and documentation as such it cannot be called history. The best validations were those chiseled in marble and stone, and artifacts of that particular age.

Times change, eras and episodes of history also change. Therefore it is incumbent for the forefathers of a nation and its people as a bounden duty to keep records of the past straight, so that the present and future generation can take examples and improve upon them, as history tends to repeat itself.

The Pa-O ethnic nationalities had identical features in general. They had broad shoulders and well formed body structure. Their livelihood was in the land of their ancestry where they tilled the land to produce goods for subsistence and for barter or exchange with other commodities as existed in primitive societies of yore. Agriculture and farming took their labour from early morning to late in the evening. Their bodies grew supple and strong with hard labour, clean air and

simple organic food. They could travel far, from the mountains and hills to the plains enduring long hours of strenuous toil. Their faces are square, nose a little uplifted, eye bridge a little wide, and eyeballs comparatively small with black iris. Hair is coarse and straight. Average height is medium¹ the male around five feet six inches and the female shorter by two or three inches. The colour of skin is light or brown, not dark.² The male used to wear a thin moustache. They have thin or almost no body hair. There were birth marks on the baby's bodies, indicative of Mongoloid ancestry.

Their primary settlement after centuries of southward migration from the northern reaches of the Asian continent for fertile land, clean water and green pasture was in Thaton Suvannabhumi Region. They profess Buddhism as their enduring religion.³ After their King Manuhar was subdued and taken prisoner to Bagan, the majority of Pa-Os fled their homeland northwards to the regions known as the Southern Shan State. As the prime lands were already settled by the ethnic Shan races that were there before them, the Pa-Os had to settle in the rugged hilly regions. Due to weather and fertility of hilly land for cultivation, the Pa-Os tend to shift from place to place as they practiced shifting cultivation with thrash and burn method.⁴ After the decline of feudalism some were permanently settled in the hilly regions. Some migrated to the plains of central Myanmar and earn their livelihood in agriculture and farming. Their inherent character was honesty and simplicity. There was a proverb in Pa-O: "when the land is high, water will not stay, when a man's stature is high he will have few friends." There is equality of status and

¹ "Pyidaungsu Hte-ka Pa-O" 2009, 24

² "Pa-O A-myo-thar-doe-ei-gon-in-gar-yat-myar" (The Prestige of the Pa-O Nationals), Pa-O A-myo-thar A-phwe-chok, Taunggyi, 1992, p.32 (Henceforth: "Gon-in-gar", 1992)

³ Hackett, 1950, 27

⁴ Pyidaungsu Hte-ka Pa-O", 2009, 62

friendly relations among the Pa-Os.⁵ The Pa-Os were hardworking, diligent, have a friendly nature and are industrious. One remarkable trait of character was that the Pa-Os were high spirited. Therefore economically they were not left behind their earlier Shan settlers.⁶ They mostly communicate among themselves in their native Pa-O dialect. They were highly loyal and had a high sense of solidarity. The rogues and black sheep of the community were normally admonished by the community elders. That was the remark and assessment of a foreign researcher Mr. William Hackett. They usually talk bluntly but truthfully without any diplomacy. The guests visiting the Pa-Os were received warmly and feted generously with their ethnic delicacies.⁷ The ethnic dress was plain black but their hearts were white. Once friendship is cultivated with the Pa-Os they would not hesitate to help you by all means even at great risk.

The ethnic races living in Myanmar has distinct traits, character, tradition, culture, rites and rituals and distinct dress mode. The dress mode of the Pa-O ethnic race had certain features. There are three steps of dress mode in male and five in female. With the exception of the head turban and shirt the colour is black. The advantages of the black colour is that it absorbs the heat, can withstand the chill of the hills, and can tolerate stains and dirt.⁸ The Pa-Os wear the black colour most covetously. With the trend of the modern times they also go for blue black colour. In olden times the clothes were hand woven and dyed with barks and leaves of trees. Nowadays they procure ready-made cloths made into tailored

⁵ Ashin Thu Seitta(Hsi Seng), *Pa-O-tine-yin-thar-doh -ei-yoe-yar-dalay-htone-san-mya-ko-lay-lar-chin*(The Study of Pa-O Traditions and Customs), Sasana University, Mandalay, 2007, p ,5 (Henceforth: Ashin Thu Seitta, 2007)

⁶ U Min Naing, *Tine-yin-thar Sa-ga-pon-myar*(Native Proverbs), Yangon, Ministry of Culture, n.d.,p.18(Henceforth: Min Naing, n.d.)

⁷ Hackett,1950, 90

⁸ U Eindawantha(Pinsom), *Suwanapakarthani-kyan* (Suwanapakarthani Chronicle), Taunggyi, Taunggyi Press, 1958,p.60(Henceforth: U Eindawantha, 1958)

uniforms. The Pa-Os from the Shan hills still stick to the traditional black but the plains people adopt Myanmar fashion and dressed like them. In festive ethnic ceremonies they stick to their tradition by wearing dark dresses. The Pa-Os believe that they were descended from the cohabitation between *Vijja* supernatural man and female Naga dragon, and at times tend to dress like the *Vijja*.⁹ The traditional dress of the Pa-O male was black Shan trousers with leather belt, and black overcoat (taik-pon). They usually wore a white shirt. A Shan bag or a woven mini basket containing the betel leaves and condiments was slung across the shoulder. A ceremonial Shan silver dagger about twelve inches long was tucked in the belt. Sometimes a sword was slung around the shoulder with the sling made of pure silk yarn. A satin turban was wrapped around the head of the male.¹⁰ Nowadays they wrapped *Phusong* (large towels) around their heads with less fuss. Only elderly Pa-O gentlemen and ‘Maw’ Shamans, religious orators were seen to wear them on ceremonial occasions.

The dress code of women were designed after the legendary female dragon, from whom the Pao race was believed to have descended. There are five steps in the dress namely: *Khaung Paung*, long sleeved shirt, lower wrapper around the waist (thindaing), *longyi* and leg strap. A black cloth is wrapped around the leg from ankle upwards to the knee. It appears like wearing the trousers. A black *longyi* is worn from the waist down to the knees like maxi skirt. Over the *longyi* a black kilt like wrap (thindaing) was worn above the knee like the mini skirt. Then a short hem blouse is worn over the body. The hair was tucked like a bun on top of the head, and wrapped with a *Phusong* towel. Hair coiffeur shaped like two buns were tucked outside the ‘Kahtoosai’. One hair bun resembled a banana bud, and the other resembled a round ball a little larger than a betel nut. The shape of

⁹ Ashin Thu Seitta, 2007, 23

¹⁰ Khun Nwe, 1992, 118-119

the banana bud hair bun resembled the crest of the *naga* dragon and the ball resembled the eye. The hair was designed after the floral petals and creepers.¹¹ When a Pa-O girl came of age she used to wear gold and silver jewellery. The girls pierced their ear lobes at a young age. When they grew up they adorned the ears with rolled paper, gold and silver ear rings. The ear ring roll is called '*peilartu*' in Pa-O language. The ear roll was made of gold one inch in length, one Inch in breadth, and six ticals in weight. The ear rings made of rolled gold was so heavy that in time the ear hole began to sag widening the lobe.¹² The Pa-O girls of modern times no longer wear the traditional ear rolls but adorn themselves with light trinkets made of gold embedded with precious gems like diamond, ruby, sapphire, jade and emerald. Sometimes they used earrings studded with semi precious stones or with costume-jewelry. The rich and wealthy wore gold and silver necklaces, brooches and bracelets, especially during festivals. The girls keep long hair which they wash and shampoo with traditional herbs and rub with coconut oil to look soft and glossy. They used *thanakha* as natural cosmetic on their faces and put rouge on their cheeks. The Pa-O girls living in urban areas used the latest style *a la mode*.¹³

However it can be observed that the style and dress code of Pa-O men and women old and young, single or married were predominantly black. This colour could withstand the inclement weather of the hills, and also dirt and slime of the rugged terrain and strenuous labour. It also helped to maintain egalitarianism. The naming ceremony followed the traditional rituals. After birth the parents and relatives held a naming ceremony for the new born child. Some were content to

¹¹ Mg Thaug, 1973, 38

¹² Ashin Pyinnyarthiri, "Pa-O Nationals", Yangon, The States Pariyatti Sasana University, 2003, p.23 (Henceforth: Ashin Pyinnyarthiri, 2003)

¹³ "Pyidaungsu The-ka Pa-O", 2009, 162

hold common rites in line with ethnic customs.¹⁴ The Myanmar dictionary defines naming ceremonial rites as (1) wash the baby's head with traditional shampoo, and (2) naming the baby. Thus the practice became an established ritual among the Pa-Os.¹⁵

The naming ceremony prevailing in the Southern State is interesting. All elders became happily involved in the naming ceremony, like grand-parents, parents, astrologers of the village or presiding *Sayadaw* of the monastery. The name is determined by the day of his birth, from Sunday to Saturday calculated according to Myanmar astrological computations. In the house where the naming ceremony was to be held, certain rituals had to be observed. A silver bowl was placed on the table filled with *kinpunthee* water. The elders who preside the ceremony dipped the *Eugenia* sprigs and white plum leaves in the silver bowl and wash their faces to mark auspiciousness to the ceremony. Then the village elders sat around the baby who was placed in the centre and wound auspicious cotton threads around his wrists and muttered mantras and *suttas* to bring luck to the new born. Then the elders gave the baby presents and cash of one hundred *kyats* each. When the child reached about six or seven years the new name conforming to the day of birth was given again.

In the manner of address, when the name was not known the male can be addressed as: 'Moung' or 'Moungpei'. Moung was commonly addressed to adults. It carried the meaning of 'young adult' (maung yin) in Myanmar language. 'Moung

¹⁴ Dr. Than Tun, "*Shan-pyi-ne-taung-pine-hma Na-me-pay-pon-myar-lay-lar-chat*" (The Study of nomenclature of Southern Shan State), Taunggyi, Taunggyi University, Myanmar Department, 2-6-2010, p.1 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 2010)

¹⁵ Than Tun, 2010, 3

Pei' means young man.¹⁶ The girl was addressed as 'mu' or 'mu lay'. 'Mu' means young girl in Myanmar, and 'mu lay' means young damsel.

The Pa-Os living in the rural region prefer traditional rustic life. Even the names had a touch of rusticity. The male name is usually prefixed with 'ta', like 'talo', 'tako', 'moke', 'tamu' etc. A girl's name is prefixed with 'mie' like for example: 'mie taung', 'mie tung', 'mie mya' and so on.¹⁷

With the trend of the modern times, urban migration has become a phenomenon. Therefore the Pa-Os also moved to towns to seek new livelihood and newer ventures. Their traditional names were hard to pronounce correctly in the urban society when Myanmar was dominant and in the bigger towns like Mandalay and Yangon cosmopolitanism was a feature of the modern interrelation. Thus they usually change to Myanmar names which was comparatively easy to address. There are also some diehards who stuck to their traditional names. In that case the men prefixed their names with 'Khun', which carries the meaning of manly, auspicious, high class etc. For the ladies the prefix 'nan' is commonly used which signifies auspicious, gentle, cultured, modest etc.¹⁸ It is also a traditional practice for all males to enter into monkhood once as a boy (novitiate) and once (ordination) when he reached adulthood at eighteen (full-fledged monk). Such life as a novitiate was usually of a temporary nature of seven days to one month and then returned to the life of a layman. It is also a practice for some men to retain their monk's name such as 'Thawna', 'Nyarna', 'Neminda' etc. Another prefix was 'Htwet' meaning disrobing from monkhood. For example 'Htwet law', 'Htwet

¹⁶ Mg Khun Nwe, (Inle), "Pa-O-na-me-hmet-da-lay" (Pa-O Nomenclature Tradition), Yangon, *Myawaddy Magazine*, A twe.224, 1979, February, p.22 (Henceforth: Khun New, 1979)

¹⁷ *Dalay-hton-san-mya* (Shan), 1969, 286

¹⁸ *Dalay-hton-san-mya* (Shan), 1969, 279

Maug, *'Htwet Kham'* etc. The prefix carries the meaning: young boy.¹⁹ There are also names related to their nature of donation or charity which the Buddhists are wont to perform in their lifetime. Thus the donor of monastery carries the prefix relating to their donation such as '*Kyaung Dakar*' for those who donate the monastery. For the elder man or father who was a patron for helping a layman towards monkhood carries the name '*san hpar*'. For the ladies the name was '*mae kyaunt*', '*sang mio*, etc.'²⁰

Thus for example if the name of the eldest son is 'Ta Pyo' and the father 'Tun', he carries the name '*Pyo Hpar*' or *Pyo Hpar Tun*'. If the eldest daughter's name is 'Nan Pyo', then she is called '*Nan Pyo* or *Pyo Hpar Tun*'.²¹ However by tradition the mother's name was not designated. The village headman was called respectfully as '*Pra Doe*'. For some elders who earn more respect, trust and stature than the village headman is addressed as '*Pra Tan*'.²² Thus it can be observed that in the identity of the Pa-Os, names tend to change from a young boy to adulthood, as a novitiate, fully fledged ordained monk, and a name attached to him when he disrobed from monkhood. Special appellations are given to the eldest son or daughter or the stature of respect or social status.

In the essentials of life there are three basic requirements: food, clothes and shelter. Food requirement come the foremost. The staple food of the Pa-Os is rice especially the sticky rice or *taungyar* rice. That special strain of sticky rice is grown in the hilly slope. Rice is also grown in fields where there is abundance of water like along the streams, or irrigated water. The Pa-Os living in Lower

¹⁹ *Dalay-hton-san-mya* (Shan), 1969, 280

²⁰ Khun New, 1979, 23

²¹ *Dalay-hton-san-mya* (Shan), 1969, 289

²² Khun New, 1979, 23

Myanmar eat Myanmar-strain rice.²³ They eat rice as staple meal three times a day as they do not take after the habit of eating snacks. As they placed priority over rice their common greetings when they meet are “Have you had your rice meal?” They used to store rice for the whole year at harvest time known commonly as “*wunsar sapar* or paddy for the stomach.” When the *wunsar* stock of paddy dwindled, they substituted with vegetables.²⁴ They were not voracious meat eaters. They do not prepare nor prefer a variety of curry like the Myanmar.²⁵ They also rarely change their pattern of eating.

The Shan hilly region and the plateau were fertile and thus ideal for growing paddy and a variety of crops. In the early years of settlement population was sparse and available lands could not be fully utilized. Thus lands were developed only in areas where water was abundant. Water is available for six months a year from rainwater and water springs. Water was relatively scarce in the hot season or summer. But underground water stored in the limestone soil flowed as spring water, facilitating farming for the Pa-Os even in the hot season. As the saying goes among the elders of the old generation Pa-Os would never face starvation.²⁶ The crops the Pa-Os used to stock as reserve included paddy, rice, potato, garlic, groundnut, beans and pulses.²⁷ The main food was fermented soya

²³ Mg Khun Nwe (Inle), *Pa-O, Thway-chin-nyi-naung-yin* (Pa-O brothers of the same race), Yangon, Sarpay Beikman Press, 1984(1st edition),p.80(Henceforth: Khun Nwe, 1984)

²⁴ Hackett, 1950, 122

²⁵ Swe Swe Oo, “*Pa-O-taing-yin-thar-miba-myar-ei Thar-thamee-oke-htain-hmu-ko Lay-lar-tin-pya-chin*”(The Study of the Guardianship customs of Pa-O parents over children), A research paper of B,Ed, Yangon, University of Education, 1981,p.30(Henceforth: Swe Swe Oo,1981)

²⁶ Hackett, 1950, 118

²⁷ Hackett, 1950,120

bean (*peboke*) .It suited the chilly weather of the hills. In their cooking style they used salt instead of soy sauce, and *peboke* instead of salty fish (*ngapi*). They consume vegetables liberally, fish and meat sparingly. It may be due to abundance of fresh vegetables and scarcity of fish and meat, and also due to religious constraints.²⁸ As *ngapi* is the delicacy of the Myanmar, *Peboke* is the delicacy of the Pa-Os. There are some Pa-Os who earn a living by making *Peboke*. The *peboke* makers are located in ‘lone war’ village south of Taunggyi, Nan Maw lawn village, Nong Hkoke Village and environs located around ten mile perimeter of Hopone Town. The following is the recipe for *peboke* making:

‘First, clean the raw *peboke* seeds to weed out impurities, and wash thoroughly. Then put the *peboke* seeds into a pot, put water and place on fire to boil till soft. Then wash the insides of a bamboo basket. Wrap the inner core with green leaves called ‘*talar*’, and put the boiled *peboke* inside the basket. Then cover the basket with cloth to keep the moisture inside. To make the boiled *peboke* seed slightly fermented, the basket is kept near the open fire for about three days. Then you will smell the aroma of fermented *peboke*. It is time to drain out the fermented *peboke* from the basket ready to eat either as salad or cooked.’²⁹

To make a *peboke* slab drain out the *peboke*, put them into a pounder and crush them with the pestle. Then the meshed *peboke* is placed between two leaves known in Pao as ‘takolar’ or ‘tadwetlar’ leaf; then it is pressed between two palms into a round shape. The round *peboke*s are put on a bamboo mat and dried in the sun. When there is no sunlight it is dried with heat from fire. Then it is ready for

²⁸ Mg Thaung, 1973, 17

²⁹ “Pyidaungsu The-ka Pa-O”, 2009, 253

consumption or sale. Some sell *peboke au natural* in seed form without crushing them, measuring the contents with a measuring pot. *Pepoke* is said to contain protein and is well liked by the Pa-Os and non-Pa-Os.³⁰ The cooking is very simple indeed. They prefer boiled food, or soup like food. Sometimes they roast meat, or fish with very little oil in open wood or charcoal fire. They did not waste much time in cooking. They pluck vegetables nearby and cook it and eat while hot. For colouring, they used tumeric powder, ginger for flavor, and a liberal addition of chilli for the Pa-Os like it hot and also plenty of salt. Salt is taken by Pa-Os to neutralize the lime for eating betel leaves, and also to replace dehydration due to sweating because of hard labour.³¹

Cooking is done by the wife and grown up daughters. Being very devout Buddhists they use to offer the first plate of rice immediately it was cooked as alms to the relic of Buddha image placed for worship on the shrine. Therefore the wife and daughters wash their faces and hands first to cleanse themselves before cooking.³² The cooking utensils are simple and rudimentary. They used an iron tripod to put the pan or cooking pot and light firewood under the tripod. Some used 3 bricks or 3 even surface stones to make a tripod, copper or bronze pots for cooking rice and clay pots to prepare curry for meals.³³ Clay pots are manufactured in Mong Kung, Nyaung Shwe, and Sakar regions because of good mud. Larhke, Sakar and central plains produced abundant bronze and iron ores to

³⁰ “*Pyidaungsu The-ka Pa-O*”, 2009,254

³¹ Marshall, Rev. Harry, 1918, 138

³² *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, The Province, Mountain, Rivers, Tribes, etc and Araken, Pegu, Irrawaddy and Tenasserin Division, Vol.XXIII, Rangoon, Superintendent of Government print Calcutta,1908,p.348-9(Henceforth: *Imperial Gazetteer of India*,1908)

³³ Hackett, 1950, 118-119

make pots for cooking rice.³⁴ Bamboo is also abundantly used to make ladles and drinking cups.³⁵ The Chinese merchants who cross the border to Myanmar side of the boundary brought Chinese bronze pots for sale in Pinlone region in Southern Shan State. The copper and metal spoons made in Inle and central regions are also used as crockery.³⁶ Now-a-days in modern times aluminum pots were most commonly used as kitchen utensils. With the availability of electricity in towns and some villages, cooking is done with electric ovens and rice cookers.

For daily consumption paddy is placed in wooden mortar and pounded with long handled wooden pestles by ladies, or milled by small inverter machines or by large rice mills. Villagers use to stock the paddy rather than milled rice because it can be preserved for a long time without being spoilt by weather or weevils. There is no more need for pounding in modern times because it can be easily milled. Among the Pa-O curries, '*Hanlwan*' or *curry in leaf-pack* is a popular fare. They also relish fried pork rind fries with beef gravy.³⁷ The most popular dish of the present time is '*Den shar noot*' or mashed rice with fish or fermented rice with fish. This dish is more known as ceremonial dish and is served on festive occasions such as traditional festivals such as weddings, house warming parties, novitiate ceremonies etc. The Pa-Os have no liking for snacks. They have no time at home for making snacks too. They cut sugar canes growing wild and extract cane juice and make sugar cane slabs, for sweet-toothed children.³⁸ They also like a simple snack called '*hta-htee-lwun*' made by putting glutinous rice and *hpee-*

³⁴ J.G. Scott and J.P Hardiman, *Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States*, Rangoon Government Printing, 1900, p.560 (Henceforth: Scott & Hardiman, 1900)

³⁵ Hackett, 1950, 121

³⁶ *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, 1908, 322

³⁷ Mg Thaung, 1973, 17

³⁸ Hackett, 1950, 122

gyan banana into the hollow of a bamboo shoot and boil. The *Hta-htee-lwun* sold in Teekyit bazaar(Pinlaung Township) is well liked by the people.³⁹ The bamboo shoot glutinous rice '*Den-taung*' is similar to the Shan delicacy '*Kaw-poke*'. Other popular Pao snacks are:

- Bvwe Aie Taung , which is made by pounding the boiled glutinous rice and poured with sugar cane syrup;
- Inle cracker snack made of sessamum seeds;
- *Takopaung bwa*: relished with liberal pour of sugar cane syrup,
- Takothwoon*: fried glutinous pancake mixed with jaggery;
- Glutinous rice porridge;
- Roasted soya bean seeds;
- Pa-O beer or *Ta-thee-htee* etc.⁴⁰

The Pa-O ethnic nationals relish the mustard vegetable salad and also mustard vegetable soup. The menu is as follows:

- Firstly boil the mustard vegetables with ripe tamarind to keep from tearing apart in hot water. Then it is marinated with sugar cane syrup. Then it is enjoyed with pounded roasted sessamum seeds, or groundnut seeds, and ground chilli with oil, and spring onions.⁴¹

The Pa-Os liked to chew or just munch betel leaves mix made of betel nut, lime paste, raw tobacco leaves, and Indian condiments. They used to carry small betel box in the Shan sling bag (equivalent to modern travel bag) wherever they go. The

³⁹ Khun Nwe, 1992, 280

⁴⁰ "Pyidaungsu The-ka Pa-O",2009, 194

⁴¹ Khun Nwe,1992,280

Pa-Os young and old, also smoke locally made cheroot. After meals or in informal and casual gatherings they drink very dark and bitter first quality Shan green tea (without sugar or milk) sprinkled with salt. They also enjoy locally distilled country spirits, or fermented liquor (*khaung-ye*). But they disciplined themselves from becoming too boisterous.⁴² The traditional fermented liquor is a familiar liquor among the ethnic races of the hills like Kachins and Chins. It is made from ‘*tasihtee*’ medicinal concoction.⁴³ It is extracted from roots of Letpan, banyan, black sugar cane, pine, cloves, nutmeg, and others⁴⁴. These ingredients are collected and chopped in pieces. Then these are put in a coarse cloth and tied firmly with rope. Then it is put in a large glazed pot with a liberal amount of jiggery and water. The longer it is aged the better is the nectar. The medicinal value of *tasihtee* is that it is diuretic. Therefore it is called the Pa-O beer. Taken with salt helps one with motion, prevents constipation. The beverage is made in the Htee-thein-ywai village east of Taunggyi the State Capital city. When mild the beverage is sweet. When aged it sour like champagne and makes you dizzy and drunk when taken in large measure. Returning from hard work and totally exhausted a drink of *khaung yai* really is rejuvenating tonic. Even women also enjoyed this beverage.⁴⁵

The main occupation of the Pa-Os was agriculture, taungyar and garden

⁴² Mg Thaung, 1973, 17

⁴³ Aye Aye Aung, “*Shan-Pyi-Taung-pine Taunggyi-myo-ne-kyauk-ta-lone-shi Pao-lu-myo-myar ei Lu-hmu-yae-tee-sauk-chain*”(Pa-O Nationalities social structure in Kyauk Ta Lone, Taunggyi District, Southern Shan State), MA Research Paper, Anthropology, Yangon University, 1998, p.33 (Henceforth: Aye Aye Aung, 1998)

⁴⁴ Khun Nwe, 1992, 284

⁴⁵ Khun Nwe, 1992, 285

farming. Therefore they lay emphasis on the fertility of the soil, availability of water, good transportation and communication.⁴⁶ They made settlements on the high slopes of the Shan mountain ranges. Thus Pa-O villages cluster around the plateaus of mountains or at its peaks. Some settled in valleys and plains. Some settlements were found in valleys with the mountains surrounding them, but the lands were mostly uneven and undulating. On the slopes of ridges the Pa-Os developed taungyar cultivation, for example in Pinmun, Myaytaing, Ngohla, Ponelaung villages in Pin Laung Township.⁴⁷ Some villages could be found on the peaks where water was scarce, but compensated by clean air conducive to good health, easy availability of bamboo and timber.⁴⁸ The following conditions determine the village settlement of the Pa-Os namely:

- Soil fertility,
- Availability of water,
- Good communicative and transportation network,
- Facing the east, and
- Facility to practice ancestral traditions, rituals and rites.

Thus it could be observed that the Pa-O settlers placed priority on the fertility of soil as the first prerequisite. For example Hopone, His saing, Nam Khoke, and Ban Yin townships were located above 5000 to 6000 feet above sea level around the Menai Mountain ranges settled by the Pa-Os.⁴⁹ When land with fertile soil was discovered, they set up villages first, and later prospected for water and improved transport and communication network. Some villages had to rely on water from

⁴⁶ Min Naing, 1967,23

⁴⁷ Mg Thaung, 1973,23

⁴⁸ Hackett, 1950, 94

⁴⁹ Khun Nwe, 1992, 92

subterranean springs. They channeled water from source by joining bamboo pipes, or dig canals to reach their settlements or their lands. In some villages they built water tanks to store rain water during rainy seasons. In Kaungto and Yin Hmi villages in Pin Laung Township water was conserved from rainwater for use all year round.⁵⁰ It could be observed that village settlement and density was higher in those fertile regions. In the Southern Shan State, many villages were settled on the road side along the Kalaw-Taunggyi- Loilem highway; Aungban- Pin Laung Loilem west highway; Hopone-His saing, Loikam east highway; Aungban-Pwela-Pintaya-Yawsauk highway.⁵¹ In the Pa-O settlements a village is notified when there is a minimum of 10 houses in a community. The rural statistics showed that there were small 10 house villages as against large settlements of 50 to 70 house villages, and also 300 house villages stretching for miles along the village road. The distance from one village to the other averaged five miles. On average the village formation was generally circular as against the long formation.⁵² This type of villages was usually found in locations along the railway tracts, motor highways or river banks. Some were built along topographical grids in the valleys, plateaus, and mountain slopes.

The materials used by the Pa-Os to build their houses were those easily available around them especially bamboo, timber and hardwood.⁵³ There were two types of architectural designs namely traditional and modern. The traditional houses used bamboo or timber.⁵⁴ The houses built more than 100 years ago had a sloping roof design with no windows or a very small one. But the modern houses have five-room formation. In line with modernization, improved designs, health

⁵⁰ Mg Thaung, 1973,23-24

⁵¹ BaYi,1966,10

⁵² "*Gon-in-gar*", 1992,37

⁵³ Mg Thaung, 1973,26

⁵⁴ Min Naing,1967,56

and sanitation they now build twin houses, large and spacious windows, to let in light and conducive to air circulation.⁵⁵ Modern Pa-Os become more choosy in selecting site to build a residential home. The chosen land should be in good location and locality, with enough space for garden plantation. Astrologers were consulted for auspicious date for ground-breaking ceremony and foundation laying ceremony. The main pillar post is wrapped with red and white cloth. A large enamel bowl arranged with bananas, green coconut with stem, *Eugenia* sprigs, joss sticks, candles, lephet, tobacco leaves, beetle leaves are offered to the guardian spirits to bring luck and good fortune. Only after the guardian spirits were propitiated the building works was carried out.

The Shrine and altar is placed in the auspicious direction, i.e. east and south at head of house. Generally there are two large rooms, one for the owner and the other for the guests. In more modern houses there are three rooms. The kitchen is built separately at back of the main rooms. Under the ceiling a special shelf is made, to put green chillis, soya beans, and bitter gourd to dehydrate, preserved by heat of fire, ready for cooking.⁵⁶ Houses are built high above the ground so that the domestic draught animals can be kept underneath. In the ante room there is an open oven to roast the *thanaphet* ingredients to make local cheroot. It is the custom of the Pa-O houses to extend the floor like a shelf (*Mao-lao*) so that the raw lephet leaves can be spread to dry by sunlight. In the spacious compound of the house, the soil is well prepared to grow vegetables for home consumption. But the Pao villages are built at random without proper planning.⁵⁷ The Pa-O ethnic race was very patriotic and highly gregarious and used to build settlements in a

⁵⁵ Mg Thaung, 1973,28-29

⁵⁶ Khun Nwe,1992,97-98

⁵⁷ Mg Thaung, 1973,27-28

clan pattern. So the Pa-O villages can be easily distinguishable as against other villages. In forming a village, the village communal pattern, the elders who would be their chief were all predetermined. In effect the village is the basic political economic and social unit in Pa-O society.

There were many villages formed as a basic administrative and social unit since the earliest times of Bagan Dynasty. The individual households grouped together to form a social community. They elected a chief to rule the village, the smallest basic administrative unit. The village chief is called the headman (*thugyi*). In course of time the powerful village headman overpowered the weaker headmen to gain more authority. Thus he extended his power, and in doing so formed village circles, towns, districts, divisions and finally the apex of power that is the State or kingdom.⁵⁸ In the same manner the powerful sovereigns overwhelmed the weaker kings and in so doing extended his territory and domain till he wielded immense power and larger territories forming an empire. For example during the Bagan Period King Anawratha became absolute king of all Myanmar subjects.⁵⁹ The Pa-Os who had made Myanmar their home since their southward migration from the northern reaches of China, had consolidated his authority over his settlements and had made Myanmar a permanent home for his ethnic descendents to this day.

In the history of social relations the family is the basic social unit. The family cooperated with other families to form a social group. Then the group of families had to search for a suitable place for habitation. Their first critical requirement was to find a tract of land for homestead. Then they built a village and

⁵⁸ Dr, Toe Hla, *Konbaung-khit Kyay-let-lu-hmu Si-pwa-bawa*(Socio-economic life of Konbaung(1752-1880), Yangon, Myanmar Historical Commission Golden Jubilee, 2004, p.1(Henceforth: Toe Hla, 2004)

⁵⁹ Than Tun, 1969, 139

elect an elder to lead them. He was called the headman or chief or '*Hpyardone*.'⁶⁰ He administered the village and the families under his domain ensuring their safety, welfare and cohesion. He also needed subordinates to help him in his day to day administration. Subordinate position appeared such as Ywasaw,(organizer),youth leaders, school committees, clerk, treasurer, hundred-house charge(yar-ein-hmu), and ten-house charge (sai-ein-hmu)etc. Then there were head organizer for bachelors, and for spinsters.⁶¹ In some villages there were honorary justices of peace (councilors or juries) formed with elders of high social standing and integrity who served as patrons in turn. All villagers had to abide by the orders and directions of the *Thugyi* and patron of elders. The *Thugyi* by his own initiative could not unilaterally give commands. The agenda had to be presented and discussed in a meeting of elder villagers, held in the village monastery or the home of the headman and orders executed by common consent.⁶² When a guest or visitor comes to a village the village headman welcomes him. The villagers served him and treated him well. The entertainment cost was borne proportionately by the villagers. The headman did not enjoy any monthly salary. His services were wholly voluntary carrying status and dignity. He was not expected to exploit on the goodwill of the villagers nor would it be tolerated.⁶³ There was informal devolution of authority but had a force of law to be obeyed and applied. The village organizers, youth commanders, school committee members carried out respective duties with discipline and dedication.

The Pa-O people in general are primarily concerned with their livelihood than politics. They abided by their local ancestral customs, traditions, rites and rituals. They lived within the bounds of law in peace and harmony. The common

⁶⁰ Toe Hla, 2004,7

⁶¹ Ashi Thu Seitta, 2007, 40

⁶² Hackett, 1950, 224

⁶³ Hackett, 1950,222-223

lawsuits were adjudged by customary law. The trial over lawsuits were not judged individually but by jury system presided by more than one jurors similar to the bench of the high court. The *Phyrdone* (headman) and the village honorary jurors judged the case on the strength of its merit and demerits.⁶⁴ The common cases involved were inheritance and succession, divorce⁶⁵ and maintenance rights, loans and usury cases, cheating and misappropriation, breach of trust, land and house surety cases. Generally cases were settled by spirit of compromise. The order of procedure was for the prosecutors and the defendant to be administered on oath to make a true deposition. The penalty was judged on the cardinal principle of fairness and punishment commensurate with the offence committed. Punishments should not be served as to dehumanize him to be an outcast of society, but to enable him to amend his mentality and psychology to be accepted back into humane civil society. In general Pa-O women were free from cardinal crimes.⁶⁶

The alcoholics who disturb the peace of the village were ordinarily admonished by the headman and village elders. If the drunkard still was defiant he was chastised by the presiding *Sayadaw* of the village monastery. If he still refused to obey then he was banished from the village. If anyone commits theft he was bound to return the stolen goods or be indemnified with cash. He was also bound to perform voluntary hard labour by paving the village road with sand or gravel, mow the grass and perform other sundry work. He can also be punished by partially removing the thatched roof of his house. Such punitive action was to signify the extent of his punishment and put him to shame, to have remorse over his crime and make amends. The whole village also ostracized him by totally

⁶⁴ Hackett, 1950, 220

⁶⁵ Dr, Khin Maung Nyunt, "The Industrious Pa-Os", *The Guardian*, No 8, August 1967, p. 19 (Henceforth: Khin Maung Nyunt, 1967)

⁶⁶ Ashin Thu Seitta, 2009, 40

ignoring him, and left him uninvited to the village social ceremonies and festivities. Ultimately he had to relent. The most severe punishment was to banish him from the village. By reviewing the nature of punishment meted out to the criminal the Pa-Os are considerate by giving a chance to the accused to reform himself through compromise and conciliatory measures by the headman, presiding Sayadaw of the head village monastery and the village elders. In situations of danger crisis and conflicts, the headman and the village community assembled together to find a solution, decision or judgement, which was almost always obeyed by the villagers. Thus there was no occasion to resort to legal measures in the police stations or regular criminal court trials.⁶⁷ In cases of inheritance to the family assets and estates, the children have no right to demand a share of assets of the parents living or dead. The deceased cannot leave a will to any individual successor, but must be equally shared among the rightful beneficiaries or legatees of the deceased. In distributing land, priority must be given to the landless. When the deceased left no children those who looked after the deceased when alive shall be entitled to the share of the assets of the deceased.⁶⁸ When a divorce is contemplated, the man and woman seeking divorce shall cut a string of thread in the presence of the village elders to affect a divorce. If the divorced couple wishes to reunite again they must pay a fine to the village headman to affect reconciliation.⁶⁹ These are the essential aspects of the ancestral law practiced by the Pa-O community.

In cases of criminal nature such as land disputes, cattle theft and ordinary

⁶⁷ Khun Nwe, 1992, 297

⁶⁸ Hackett, 1950, 241

⁶⁹ Khin Maung Nyunt, 1967, 19

theft etc. the case can be compromised by returning the property to the rightful owner or pay indemnity. As the Pa-O people were Buddhists and deeply religious they rarely commit murder. If it were committed commensurate damages may be paid to compromise the case.⁷⁰ The Pa-Os were by nature simple, honest and live in peace and harmony. They were engaged in honest livelihood. By nature of such qualities they rarely commit crimes of serious or aggravating nature. Though the traditional laws and code of conduct were not documented in writing, these edicts were upheld and handed down through the successive generations by word of mouth. Such laws and moral codes are still current in spite of lapse of time.

In the governance of the Shan State the *Sawbwa* was the most integral and influential personality. The essence and quality of the feudal rule was manifested in the ruling hierarchy. At the apex was the *Sawbwa*, Shan Chief and head of the feudal entity. Serving him in subordinate positions were *Amat* (minister), *Myosars*, *Ywasars*, *Heins*, *Htamons*, *Kyauts* etc. All lands, natural resources and means of production were vested in the *Sawbwa* by feudal right, which he manipulated at will as his own. The feudal system was not elective, but descended by right of primogeniture where the eldest son succeeded to the *Sawbwaship*.⁷¹ However the administration could not be executed alone by the *Sawbwa*. Therefore trusted subordinates as mentioned above were appointed to assist him in the day to day work. The *Sawbwa*, *Kyamaing* (crown prince and heir), potential *Sawbwa* and

⁷⁰ Swe Swe Oo, 1981, 110-111

⁷¹ “*Pa-O-a-myo-thar-a-phwe-choke Pa-O-a-myo-thar-a-phwe-a-si-paung-son Pa-O-sar-pay-hson-da-pyu-pwe*” (Multi Organization of the Pao Nationals and Pa-O lecturaature), Taunggyi, Pao United Nations, Special Region(6) 18-9-2008,p.8(Henceforth: “*A-phwe-choke*”, 2008)

Myosar were appointed by the feudal king to whom the Shan *Sawbwas* affiliated with vows of allegiance. The other officials in subordinate positions were appointed by the *Sawbwa* at discretion. The minister is equivalent in rank to the *Wun, Hein* to *Sitke, Htamon* to *Myothugyi, Kyaut* to *Thugyi*.⁷² To assert the royal authority of reigning Myanmar kings over his Shan fiefdoms, high ranking officials were appointed and posted to the Shan *Sawbwa* regions as trusted representatives of the King. These officials did not involve themselves with the administration of the *Sawbwa* but were directed to assist them in security, judicature, presentation of periodic tributes.⁷³ The duty of the *Hein* was to act as liaison between *Sawbwa, Myosar, Htamon, Kyaut* and officials of the Courts of Myanmar king. *Hein* administered the village circle formed with many villages. Under *htamon, kyaut* (village headmen) and *Kyai* (honorary justices of peace) respected by villagers by virtue dignity stature and honour.⁷⁴ The *Kyais* commonly advised the village and circle headmen. The main duties of the *heins, htamons* and *kyauts* were collection of revenue, and trial of petty criminal and civil cases.⁷⁵ The *heins* and *htamons* were very crucial in the sectors of revenue collection and maintenance of law and order, peace and harmony of their respective charges. The *hein* was given the privilege of an open golden umbrella in ceremonial occasions. When the father dies the eldest son succeeded to the position of his father by virtue of hereditary right. The *Sawbwa's* officials were

⁷² U Tin, *Myanmar Min Oke-choke-pon Sar-tan hnit Bodaw Phayargyi's ei Rajathat or Ah-meint-taw-tan-gyi* (Royal Administration of Myanmar and Royal Orders by King Bodawphaya), Yangon, Central Press, 1965, p.87 (Henceforth: Tin, 1965)

⁷³ U Tin Ohn, *Shan-pyi-ne-ta-ya-si-yin-yae* (The judgment of Shan State), Yangon, *The Literature and Social Science Journal of the Union of Myanmar*, Vol.I, No.1, 1968, January, p.17 (Tin Ohn, 1968)

⁷⁴ Ba Yi, 1966, 8

⁷⁵ *Dalay-hton-san-mya* (Shan), 1969, 180

not paid a regular salary. They earn through commission over the collected revenue, cess, and fees from criminal and civil cases.⁷⁶

The Pa-O ethnic nationals were generally fit and healthy. There were no mosquitoes in the regions they lived, no clogging for breeding as the rain water flowed down the mountain slopes. The village environment is also clean and airy which prevents disease epidemic. The Pa-Os hold on to the age old maxim that as long as there is land for Pa-Os to cultivate, they will never starve. They work from early morning to late at night making them strong and swarthy. And they were not choosy in their meal intake.⁷⁷ Due to random food intake the pregnant women, the newborn child, feeding mothers face malnutrition and vitamin deficiency.⁷⁸ Therefore it is essential that the Pa-Os need to be conscious of change in life style, eating habits, habitation and recourse to modern health care and medication. The houses where they live traditionally were not conducive to health and sanitation. There are no windows or adequate air circulation and sunlight. There is only one door for entrance and exit. There was a burning fire in the centre of the living room which oozed smoke causing suffocation and breathing difficulties.⁷⁹ The houses were built on long timber or bamboo poles. The household members lived on the upper floor. The ground floor had enough space for sheltering domestic draft animals such as bullocks, buffaloes, horses on one side. A store house is walled to stock agricultural produce, which became breeding ground for rats living

⁷⁶ U Khin Maung Lone(Shan State), Curator of Cultural Museum, “*Kwin-hsin-thu- tay-tha-na-pyu-chet Sar-tan-myar*”(The field study research paper), Taunggyi, Shan State Cultural Museum, 1964,p.12(Henceforth: Khin Maung Lone, 1964)

⁷⁷ Ashin Pyinnyarthiri, 2003,68

⁷⁸ Hackett, 1950, 88

⁷⁹ Hackett, 1950, 115

on stored grains.⁸⁰ Such proliferation of rats become breeding ground for rat carrier diseases such as plague epidemic.

The location where the bulk of Pa-Os settled was around Hsi Saing Region. Seseng was ruled by long succession of *Sawbwas* since feudal times, during the colonial rule and after Myanmar's independence till 1959.

In 1959, during *Sawbwa* Sao Hkun Kyi's rule there was only one health clinic run by one compounder trained during the British rule, and one midwife.⁸¹ In 1961-62 in the whole Myanmar there were 269 hospitals accommodating 11035 in patients.⁸² In Pin Laung Township, the most incidence of outbreak of diseases were malaria, worms, malnutrition. Dysentery, diarrhe, cholera and measles, small pox follows seasonal pattern.⁸³ In population census in Myanmar about 85% constituted the peasants and the workers. Only when good working conditions could be made available to these basic work forces, there will be national economic and social growth. The government is fully accountable and committed to health of the nation for every citizen. Therefore series of plans and programmes for disease free environment were set to permeate down to the grassroots levels at the village the primary unit. The health programmes from the village levels need to focus on health knowledge and education, prevention of disease, effective curative methods.⁸⁴ Regarding the conditions of Pa-O ethnic nationals, the environment is commendable. They had some basic knowledge of traditional

⁸⁰ Ashin Pyinnyarthiri, 2003,69

⁸¹ "Record of Se-Seng", 1982,113

⁸² Maung Hla Pe, *Shan-pyi-taung-pine-pin-laung-myo-ne-ei-lu-hmu-see-pwar-phwint-pyo-hmu-go-lay-lar-hson-sit-chat* (The Study of Economic Development of Pin Laung Township), Southern Shan State, B.E.com, BA Research Paper, University of Economic, Yangon, 1978, p.29 (Henceforth: Hla Pe, 1978)

⁸³ Hla Pe, 1978,31

⁸⁴ "Pyidaungsu Hte-ka Pa-O", 2009, 205

indigenous medicine which accounted for lesser outbreak of epidemic diseases in the Pa-O community. However compared to other ethnic nationalities Pa-Os were less exposed to health education. There is need for more health educators to uplift the health of the community. The Pa-Os by nature deeply rely more on indigenous than on modern medicines. Thus with the help of government health educators and public health practitioners, health will surely improve. Thus the Pa-Os should be trained to eat nutritious food within reach of their living conditions, knowledge and know how to build houses conducive to health, and submit to modern health care and attention.

The important indicator of a country's stage of development is the average life span of the population. Nations with longer life span are regarded as well developed, and those of shorter life span as under developed. The Myanmar since ancient times of history had relied on traditional indigenous medicines.⁸⁵ The Pa-Os called their indigenous practitioners as '*Sayar Tasi*'. The medicine practitioner by virtue of his calling must be friendly with the people he treated. His premise of medicine included traditional medicines as well as psychological aspects such as witches, witch doctors, curses, sorcery and their *para*-psychological curative techniques. Pa-O believed that in the beginning of human existence and human society, there are two classes of people, those who are strong and those who are intelligent. The strong became the leader of the community. The intelligentsia became witch doctor.⁸⁶ To hypnotize people the witch doctor used multi-coloured materials in his profession. He employed drawings of figurines in different colours to cure psychic diseases or energize the psychotic patient. This witch craft has been in existence before the institution of religious faith such as Hinduism,

⁸⁵ "*Pyidaungsu Hte-ka Pa-O*", 2009, 207

⁸⁶ Dr, Toe Hla, "*Myanma Taing-yin-hsay-pyinnyar Phwint-phyo-toe-tat-hmu Tha-maing-a-sa*" (The Beginning History of the Development of the Myanmar Traditional Medicine), *Tine-yin-hsay-theit-pan Ngwe-ya-tu A-htain-a-hmat Magazine*, Yangon, Bawgawadi Press, 2001, p.153 (Henceforth: Toe Hla, "*Tine-yin-hsay*", 2001)

Buddhism, Christianity, and Islamism ⁸⁷Even after the appearance of world religions witch craft and sorcery continue to exist. There are two classes namely the upper witch craft and the nether witch craft.

Myanmar indigenous medicine and practice has its origin in the natural herbs, leaves, roots, tubers, vines, barks, fruits being nature's bounty for mankind. The animals also had their share of contributing to the indigenous medicine such as horns, bones, fat, tusks, etc. All these ingredients were prepared by indigenous pharmacopeia into medicine for cure. They are either used as ointment for rubbing, eating, preserved, or made into paste. It can rightly be called as pure indigenous medicine when the ingredients are procured from own native sources. Myanmar literature had existed since the earliest times of Myanmar history. The earliest known source was observed to be from Pyu Tharekhittara periods. After the arrival of Buddha *Sasana* patronized and propagated by King Anawratha of the Bagan Empire around the 11th century AD, the Baganites had learned and perfected the written language. Due to such literacy the indigenous medicine also made vast strides in development. The medicine men of those times called '*thamars*'.⁸⁸ The medicines used by the Pa-O practitioners were similar to that of their Myanmar counterparts, such as medicinal leaves, roots, tubers etc. These ingredients were ground into fine powder and mixed with each other to form a mixture suited for curing general or specific illness. It was believed that the Pa-O traditional indigenous medicines gradually developed due to assimilation with Shan, Mon, Myanmar races and took the cue from their well proven practices. It could not be construed with certainty that these indigenous practices were scientific (which is not), but it had at least cured some diseases to the suffering patient's advantage.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Toe Hla, 2001, 152-153

⁸⁸ Toe Hla, 2001, 154

⁸⁹ Ashin Pyinnyarthiri, 2003, 67

There are 6 departments under the Ministry of Health. The Department of Indigenous Medicine constituted one of the essential departments helping the people with alternative medicine for patients with preference for the traditional medicines. In 1996 The Indigenous Medicine Law was promulgated. In August 1997 a meeting was held in the village monastery Pharmun village in Taunggyi Township, where the Pa-O indigenous medical practitioners gathered and paper reading sessions conducted. It was preside by the Chairman of the Pa-O National Organization (Pa-O) U Aung Hkam Hti. The meeting resolved to spread the indigenous medical clinics region-wise in the Pao ethnic areas. In 30th October 1998 an Indigenous medical Committee was formed with U Maung Hein as President and U Kyaw Wan as Secretary. The Committee laid down 5 programmes of action for future implementation namely: (1) organization; (2) education; (3) health;(4) research; and (5) public relations.⁹⁰ Regarding the programme on organization, the Committee toured the Pa-O communities in villages, circles, wards and townships, giving lectures on the feasibility of such programmes. In the education sector, a one-year training course on basic indigenous medicine was opened. Youths living in Pa-O Special Region No. 6, about 46 in number attended the course. Short courses were also opened from 2000 to 2004 especially for those persons who could not attend the longer term one year courses. Members of the Pa-O Indigenous medical committee toured the Pa-O communities giving free medical treatment. Regarding the research work, 12 Pa-O indigenous practitioners participated in the Conference held at Patheingyi City

⁹⁰ “*Pyidaungsu Hte-ka Pa-O*”, 2009,208

Hall in the Ayeyarwady division on 1999. The conference heard three research papers on anti opium herb, herb to cure stomach pain and cure of HIV(B) virus.⁹¹

The definition of relative means offspring born of parents, father and mother. It also includes blood relations meaning aunts and uncles, nephews and nieces cousins etc. Some became relatives by marriage, and some are taken as relatives by living in the same village, or as neighbours with houses side by side or facing each other.⁹² In the Pa-O family tree there is no clan name. They recognized three generation upwards and three generation downward as follows:

Ascendent upwards

- | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------|-------------------|------------|
| 1. Father | (hpar), | mother ... | (Mao) |
| 2. Grandfather | (hpar pyra), | grandmother | (Maophra) |
| 3. Great grandfather | (hparpree), | great grandmother | (Maopree). |

Descent downwards

- | | | | |
|-------------------|---------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Son | (pokho) | daughter | (pomu), |
| 2. Grandson | (li) | grand-daughter | (lein), |
| 3. Great grandson | (larn) | great grand-daughter | (larne) ⁹³ . |

In a family unit the father is acknowledged head of household, but the mother wielded influence because she manages the affairs of the household. Like other ethnic races within the Union in social and economic affairs there is equality of rights between man and woman. All members of the family or extended family

⁹¹ “*Pyidaungsu Hte-ka Pa-O*”, 2009,209

⁹² Aye Aye Aung,1998,36

⁹³ Ma Aye Myint, “*Taunggyi-kha-yaing-hma Pao-a-myo-tha-me-doe-ei Bawa-a-hman sar-tan* (True life of Pa-O Women Research Paper from Taunggyi District), MA Research Paper, Yangon, Art and Science University, 1969,p.48 (Henceforth: Aye Myint, 1969)

unit respect and listen to the advice and admonitions of the elders. They commonly live together under one roof, manifestation of extended family system. Different clans within the Pa-O principal tribe live separately in villages of their own.⁹⁴

The Pa-Os do not generally draw the family tree. The majority of Pa-Os were illiterate. Thus it was not easy to maintain records. Therefore many of them could only remember three generations upwards on the ascendancy (parents, grandparents, great grandparents). They could not precisely tell how they were related. The social relations were quite similar to the Myanmar. The father was the most influential in the family unit. Family members paid respect to the elders in the family. The nature and nomenclature of family line is also similar to the Myanmar only that the difference lies in the language, Pa-O and Myanmar.

The attitude of an ordinary Pa-O with respect to the manner and nature of relatives was that whenever difficulties were faced it is believed that the relatives would help them out of trouble. Such help is also taken as reciprocal. When auspicious ceremonies such as naming (christening), novitiation, weddings, ear boring, and obituary occasions arise, all relatives both from the father's side as well as from the mother's side are expected to attend. In the obituaries when anyone of the relatives died, immediate members of both parents were expected to be present to help overcome the sad occasion.

Another interesting and striking tradition concerned the adolescent singles: bachelors and spinsters. They had to enlist themselves with the village bachelor or spinster association respectively. Such enlisting is called: *thawmu namhkoban*'. The member has to participate in all matters that arise in the village namely: social, religious, welfare, voluntary labour etc. Such occasions offer opportunities

⁹⁴ Aye Myint, 1969, 50

for the boy and girl to meet and pay courtship. It is called '*laimunam*'. The boy can then choose his life partner (vice versa), and after courtship make further steps towards engagement and finally marriage.⁹⁵ In the Pa-O society the bachelor lad had every right to pay courtship to any girl he is interested whether from own village or outside. The same right accrues to the single girl too. But they have to inform the leader of the group(*kalathar gaung*) before making such visits. Without informing thus, the bachelor was barred from entering the girl's house. He is thus welcomed by the girl with prior permission of the parents who understandably left them by themselves. Then they chat, or they talk in riddles or make puzzles to find the correct answers, and in so doing get more time for intimacy. Such interchange is called '*ngaung ke*'.⁹⁶ When there is more than one suitor visiting the girl's house, the late arrival has to wait his turn. However the girl has the option to choose the one she prefers and give priority to the late comer. The Pa-O bachelors use to visit the girl's house individually or in a group. After many meets, when the boy is sure he likes the girl and the girl accepts him the boy with his parent's consent has to give presents as preliminary proposal of intended marriage to the girl. If the girl accepts the presents, it amounts to tacit agreement to the proposal. It is also a pledge to honour and love each other. If by some misfortune the vow tends to fail then the boy can claim back the presents he had given. If the girl has defaulted she must return the presents to the boy.

In choosing a life partner for marriage, in health and in sickness, they never ordinarily decide alone, but tend to consult relatives, elders and friends and seek their agreement. The parents and relatives on their turn advise and direct the

⁹⁵ Nang Mya Me Mar, "*Pa-O-tine-yin-thar-doe-ei-lu-pyo-hle-pon*" (The courting custom of Pa-O Nationals), Yangon, *Oway Journal*, a hmat(37), Inwa Press, 15-2-1970, p.14(Henceforth: Nang Mya Mi Mar,1970)

⁹⁶ Ashin Pyinnyarthiri, 2003, 36

suitability or otherwise of the intended matrimony. There is not restriction for a Pa-O not to marry outside their ethnic clan. Even if a bride or groom were a foreigner the relatives do not ostracize them, but accepts them into the family.¹⁰⁰ In the present modern society the Pa-Os normally make their own independent choice. The only restriction for incompatibility was in respect of bad moral character, of dubious ancestry and heredity, laziness and inertia, not of sound health etc. It is also normal for both sides to the matrimony to enquire about the genealogy and of ancestry. The taboo towards marriage meant blood relatives or prohibition due hereditary incompatibility such as family feuds or curse. The Pa-Os generally choose their life partners for matrimony from among the eligible members of their village. The reason is that they had known them most intimately; the good, the bad and the ugly side of their lives as well as their families and is far safer than choosing from outside. In some cases they use to loiter to the nearby villages with closer proximity. The choice of a life partner do not ordinarily rests on personal or family wealth and status, but more on honesty, industry amiability. According to traditionally accepted matrimonial practice, when the girl accepted the courtship of the boy, he had to give pre-matrimonial gifts to the girl as dowry. According to tradition among other gifts is included a betel lime box in the shape of half-moon. However that practice is fast disappearing. It is intend to convey the message that whenever lime is put into the betel, he will be remembered. Therefore the lime box is made with gold, pure silver, silver alloy, copper or bronze. In Pin Laung region the girl is also given ornaments such as gold hairpin, gold earring, brooch etc. In Hopone Region gold was given as gift. In Taunggyi region, silver coins, silverware, gold hairpin, silver hairpin were given.⁹⁷ The pre marital gifts were not given directly by the boy. While on courtship visit the gifts

⁹⁷ Khun Nwe, 1983, 60

were discreetly left near the central fire in such manner as will be noticed by the girl. If the boy is working in the field with the girl nearby, the gift will be left in a place which can be easily noticed by the girl, ordinarily hooked on branches of trees. As time wore on, if love became estranged the boy can demand return of his gifts. In situations when the boy turned cool, the girl showed reluctance to return his gifts. When the girl intended to marry another man, the gift had to be returned.⁹⁸ On mutual consent by parents or on mutual love of intention to marry, the first requisite is to arrange an engagement. It is called ‘*Hpyaunt-tahpu*’ in Pao language. Being simple Buddhists the cases of elopement is rare. The most important members were the bride groom, the bride, parents from both sides, and ‘*khobantan*’ leader of the bachelor group.⁹⁹ The arrangements for marriage is discussed in their presence. The auspicious day for marriage was also determined by them. The principal witness was the *khobantan*. The modernized concept was to make one’s own independent choice and inform the parents. The normal time for engagement was around 7 to 8 pm, the evening. The groom and parents had to proceed to the house of the bride. It must seem to be casual in nature just like ordinary visit and then, ‘just in passing’ to broach on engagement. The night time was especially chosen to render some essence of confidentiality.¹⁰⁰

The Pa-O ethnic clans settled in the western section of the Kyansan Mountain ranges had different formalities. When engagement is about to be arranged, parents from both sides to the matrimony proceeded to the house of the

⁹⁸ Khun Nwe, 1983, 61

⁹⁹ Mg Khun Nwe, (Inle), “*Pa-O-min-ga-lar-hsaung*” (Pa-O marriage ceremony), *Myawaddy Magazine*, Yangon, , Vol. XXIV, No. 7, 1970, May, p. 144 (Henceforth: Khun Nwe, 1970)

¹⁰⁰ Khun Nwe, 1992, 329

village headman with packets of lephet, and entertained the chief. After engagement, the auspicious day for marriage had to be chosen. The days commonly avoided were full moon, dark moon, '*pyatthada*' or evil day, three months of Buddhist Vassa, Thingyan water festival days and new year day etc.¹⁰¹ In every human society marriage augurs living and working together as man and wife for good or evil, poverty and wealth, in health and in sickness, setting up a new house and household, rear children for the next generation. The Pa-Os regard the marriage as an important social and auspicious occasion. Thus not only the bride and groom but also parents, relatives and friends were all involved in this joyous celebration.

After engagement the bride and groom had to approach the bachelor leader *khobantan* to agree to the marriage. Only after his approval can the marriage ceremony proceed and members of the bachelor group will give help and participate in the ceremony. The bride-to-be accompanied by her friends went visiting houses in the village inviting people to come to her wedding ceremony, and offering local made cheroots and packet of lephet as token of invitation.¹⁰² The wedding ceremony could be held either at the groom's house or the bride's, with no discriminatory effects. If the bride would accompany the groom to live at his parent's house after marriage the ceremony is ordinarily held the groom's house. In the same way if the groom would live in the bride's house the ceremony would be held at the bride's house. The ceremony was usually celebrated in the early morning. There was no prescribed bridal dress for the occasion. The bride and groom both Pa-O nationals prepared: (1) one bowl to pay obeisance to parents from both sides; (2) one bowl for Hkobantan or leader of bachelor group; and (3) one bowl in respect for the guests attending the wedding. The bowl for the groom was placed in the house of the bride. The bowls were prepared by the eldest couple of the village with longest years of marriage. They also volunteered to set up the

¹⁰¹ Mg Thaung, 1973, 46

¹⁰² Swe Swe Oo, 1981, 66

bridal room and the silver bowl where gold and silver jewelries were placed to sprinkle on the bride and groom in the auspicious ceremony. The villagers of the host village and the neighbouring villages converged together to do the cooking for the guests and the hosts. All presents and utensils meant for the wedding ceremony should be prepared in pairs, to signify completeness and prosperity for the new couple as they embarked on a new life journey ahead. The ceremony begins only on arrival of the *Hkobantan*. The bananas in the bowl were peeled. In a prayer bowl are placed a packet of fermented fish,² banana bunches which contain even number of bananas, two packets of dried or pickled lephet, two packets of tobacco leaves, betel leaves and nuts etc.¹⁰³

In the prayer bowl for the guests in addition to the common ingredients cheroots, match boxes, sugar, sugar cane slabs, condensed milk tins, biscuits and confectionery can be added. To bless the couple with happiness and longevity, the top of the cheroot has to be cut open to let in fresh air. In the wedding of the divorced and *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, widowed fermented fish is not included. The total expenditure of the wedding has to be borne by the groom. As the ceremony began, the bride and groom sat facing each other. A silver bowl with bejeweled water and two glasses were placed in the middle. The specially invited guest couples initiated the wedding rites for the bride and groom. They were fed with boiled rice in spoon by the conductors. Then parents of both sides took the holy strands of thread from the silver water bowl and tied them on the wrists of the bride and groom, firstly on the left hand of the groom and then on both hands of the bride blessing them as the strands were tied. Such ritual is called '*loohkum*' in Pa-O language.¹⁰⁴ After the ceremonial rites were over the guests were treated to a sumptuous meal. If full feast of rice and curry was not catered, a snack of steamed glutinous rice and fritters were treated. The Pa-Os of the hills were treated to a

¹⁰³ Khun Nwe, 1970, 143

¹⁰⁴ Khun Nwe, 1970, 44

feast of rice and fermented fish and lephet. Thus the wedding derived the name of '*fermented fish treat*' or '*lephet treat*'. In the longstanding tradition of the Pa-Os, fermented fish treat is the essential theme. Some weddings feted the guest with full meal of rice and curry. If meal was not entertained, the guests were given gifts of snacks, cakes, oranges, bananas, fermented fish packets.¹⁰⁵ In some villages the services of a Shaman or *Maw* teacher was arranged to deliver auspicious sermons for the bride and groom. On return of the newly married couple from the reception halls to the house where the bridal was prepared, the young revelers barred the way with ropes, or sticks or with chain of clasped hand to demand '*stone money*' meaning money for feasting. If the couple bypass such barriers without honouring them it is believed ill luck or difficulties on first pregnancy would befall them. On the first two or three days of wedding the newly married couple spent their time visiting the houses of parents and elder relatives with prayer bowls. The parents and relatives generally returned the treat to the couple. When some relatives took away the bowls, then a new prayer bowl is prepared for the remaining relatives. The newlyweds in their first months of marriage usually stayed either in the husband's parents' house or the wife's parents' house or some elder relatives' houses. When they have accumulated enough money to buy plots of land to build their own house, agricultural or farm lands, chattel, and paddy seeds they stayed independently to seek their own fortune¹⁰⁶ and most importantly to perpetuate future generation of children. Such preservation of the purity of clan might be construed as a good sign for perpetuation of Pa-O social custom and traditions. The girl who came of age and contemplate marriage will find it necessary to choose the most propitious month and day for the occasion. It heralds good fortune, longevity and prosperity of the family. In such matters the parents of both sides used to consult reputable astrologers and also venerable presiding *Sayadaws*

¹⁰⁵ Mg Thaung, 1973, 47

¹⁰⁶ Swe Swe Oo, 1981, 70

of the village monastery who were learned in the mundane science of prediction. These scholars will match the horoscope of the man and woman for compatibility as to the days of the month and the corresponding months of the year. In performing the wedding ceremony the elder couples with good record of marriage are chosen to bring auspicious to the occasion. In the Pa-O tradition there is a ceremony dedicated to the leader of the bachelor team called '*kantaw hkobantan*' or paying respects to the leader. The meaning conveys the leader to be unmarried. He wielded informal authority over the youths and the village community, performed voluntary work for the benefit of the village social life.

The ceremony was held regularly twice a year, once in the end of Myanmar vassa months (lent) in *Thadingyut* (October) and in the Myanmar New Year day at the end of the *Thingyan* water festival (April). The objective of the ceremony was to pay respects to his virtue and consideration in contributing to the welfare of the village community. The youths went round the village to collect voluntary donations for celebration. There was no compulsion in such occasion. Then purchase for gifts were made from the proceeds of the collection. Then prayer bowls had to be made, one for the Presiding *Sayadaw* of the village monastery, one for the village elders and one for the leader '*hkobantan*'.¹⁰⁷ At dusk the beat of the gong signaled assembly for the girls. For the men the *byaw* drum was struck. After three beats all bachelors and spinsters were already assembled in the rendezvous point. Then they marched in procession to the village monastery. The *hkobantan* stayed behind by custom. After obeisance to the *Sayadaw*, the procession went to the village headman's house for *puja*. Then they proceeded to the leader's house amidst joy and hilarity dancing and singing as they went. The leader *hkobantan* gave words of advice to the youths. After the ceremony was

¹⁰⁷ Mg Khun Nwe,(Inle), "*P a-O-doe-ei-kan-taw-kho-han-tan-da-lay*"(Pa-O's khohantan respect paying(custom), Yangon, *Myawaddy Magazine*, Vol.XXVII,No.4, 1979,February, p.59 (Henceforth: Khun Nwe, 1979)

over, the youths set the house in order. The jovial occasion extended late into the night. The youths chaperoned the girls back to their respective houses to allay the fear and anxiety of the waiting parents.¹⁰⁸

The '*kataw hkobantan*' was regularly held twice a year.¹⁰⁹ This custom demonstrated the unity among the village community, observance of the age old customs, traditions rites and rituals, respect for the elders, obeying the advice of the elders, devotion towards Buddhist teachings, adherence to moral code of conduct and behavior, etc.

There is also another collective community function called '*marpadaw*'. This group organized for contributing voluntary labour was implemented for charitable deeds such as religious festivals and ceremonies, social work etc. Social functions of individuals, families were collectively helped with community spirit and goodwill.¹¹⁰ They also carried out community work with voluntary labour by cleaning and refurbishing pagodas, monasteries, communal ponds, waterways, cutting and pruning overgrowth and garbage. The one significant Pa-O religious festivity is called '*communal novitiate ceremony*' where the young lads of the village wore the saffron robes of the Sanghas, renouncing lay life for some duration. The number of lay boys entering the order of the Sangha to become a novice amounted from 50 to 300. This communal ceremony clearly demonstrated the solidarity of the Pa-O ethnic nationals. It had also highlighted the strength of such community endeavours. In cases of an agriculturist unable to finish his work in time, the strong and able bodied men turned out voluntarily, in full force to help him and his family finish his field work. They helped him in transplanting, harvesting, winnowing and other related field works. The field owner as a reciprocal favour fed the voluntary workers with rice meals, ceremonial *khaung yay* ceremonial *drink*, amid joy and hilarity.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ Khun Nwe, 1979,60

¹⁰⁹ Khun Nwe, 1979,68

¹¹⁰ Ashin Pyinnyarthiri, 2003,33

¹¹¹ Khun Nwe, 1984,129

When a new house is built in the village the communal group help the owner who was of limited means, with free timber and bamboo, all carried to site of construction.

There were many social functions in the village all year round such as name giving, novitiate ceremonies, weddings, house warming etc where the entire village. Being well fed due to fertility of land and congenial weather of the hills it is no wonder that fertility of married women and healthy children was a gratuitous symptom of the Pa-Os.

The Pa-O family preferred boys to girls, because they could send the boy into a novice and ordained into a full-fledged monk and less responsibility compared with daughters. Rearing of children would also help harmony in family life.. Sometimes the relatives adopted some of the children to ease their difficulties.¹¹² As the extended family system was still a feature of Myanmar society more prevalent in the rural community, parents, grand- parents, uncles, aunts and grandchildren lived together in harmony.

The Pa-Os adopted the monogamous family system (one husband one wife for life). Divorce cases were rare in the Pa-O community. Even if it arose occasionally the village elders were reluctant to consummate the proceedings. They tried by all means to compromise and conciliate. Only as a last resort when all options were exhausted they would decide on final divorce. The reasons for seeking divorce on the part of the wife were failing to support the wife, seeking a mistress, and ill-treatment. Although both husband and wife could plea for rights to keep children and partition of assets the decision of the elders would always prevail. If the husband is at fault the upkeep of children and assets devolved on the wife. In addition the husband had to give indemnity and compensation to the wife for misdemeanor. If the wife is at fault, she had to surrender her conjugal properties to the husband. In some cases the children were also split up for

¹¹² Hackett, 1950,194-195

maintenance.¹¹³ There were instances where all the off springs were taken care of either by the husband or the wife. If the husband had to pay for maintenance fees for the care of children he would be responsible up to time when the children reached 15 years of age after which he would no longer be liable. The divorce case had to be affected in the presence of the village headman. In token of the divorce case the headman tore a betel leaf into two parts and gave one part each to the husband and wife who were by now declared as divorced. In some regions the intended divorcees had to hold a string from both ends and the headman had to cut the string into two¹¹⁴ to signify that relations were now over. Generally the married Pa-O couples lived happily ever afterwards. Only when one of them passed away, the other can marry again. The Pa-O community despised those who kept lesser wives or husbands. The divorced women were also were not looked down upon, but kept their status in society. When the woman divorcees maintained themselves well to look presentable, they were eligible in society by having a few suitors courting them to the bargain.

The Pa-Os toiled day in, day out, year by year till old age in a spirit of self-reliance. There is the system of succession and inheritance rights in every family.¹¹⁵ Such rights accrued to the children when either or both parents died or still alive. However there was no occasion for the children to claim inheritance from the parents before they die. When the son or daughter married and left the parent's house to set up a separate family household then the parents usually gave the departing couple land, jewelry or cash. When one of the parents died and the widower or widow remarried, family life went on as usual, the children accepting either the step father or step mother as head of the household. When both parents died, the eldest son or daughter assumed charge of the family. In the division of inheritance there was a difference between the children who had maintained a

¹¹³ Hackett, 1950,187

¹¹⁴ Khin Maung Nyunt,1967, 19

¹¹⁵ *"Pyidaungsu Hte-ka Pa-O"*,2009,162,166

separate household and those who lived together with the parents before they passed away. It was commonly accepted that the children living together were entitled to receive a larger share. In general, priority was given to the youngest son or daughter. Priority was also offered to the son or daughter who had no possession of land or farm than to those who already had land. When the deceased parents left no children, the nearest relatives or those who cared for them before they passed away, were entitled to the inheritance.¹¹⁶

The belief and attitude of the Pa-Os on life and death were similar to the Myanmars because both Myanmar and Pa-Os professed Buddhism as their main faith. When someone died in the village all villagers converged to help in the funeral rites. They even stopped their work or occupation to attend to the funeral also donating rice, cooking oil, salt to feed the volunteers and guests from near and afar who came to offer their condolence to the bereaved family.¹¹⁷ If the deceased was of scarce means the village took full responsibility to bury the dead. The Pa-Os normally bury the dead rather than cremation. Once a person dies the corpse was immediately washed and put on new clothing. A twenty-five coins was put into the mouth as a standing ritual, to serve as ferry toll in his journey to the otherworld. Alms food was donated to the village monastery for full seven days from the day of demise. Meals, snacks and water were placed on a table beside the deceased according to custom. A candle was lit continually.¹¹⁸ The corpse could be kept in the house from 3 to 7 days before burial. The guests who came to offer their condolences were treated to lephet, betel, tobacco, Shan green tea etc. The guests also donated cash towards meeting funeral expenses. When a monk of the village monastery passed away the corpse was kept in an elaborately constructed hearse and funeral pyre, outside the monastery compound and kept for three

¹¹⁶ Aye Myint, 1969, 175

¹¹⁷ Khun Nwe, 1992, 346

¹¹⁸ *Dalay-hton-san-mya* (Shan), 1969, 226

months. Huge festivals were celebrated in the monastery compound and then cremated with bonfire. When a child died the corpse was simply wrapped in a bamboo mat and buried.¹¹⁹

The village cemetery was located in the west or south of the village. The ethnic Pa-Os living in the Shan State on burial placed the head in the northern direction and feet in the southern direction.¹²⁰ The reason behind such arrangement was to remind them of their original domicile in Thaton where they were first settled. After burial nine sliced bamboo strips and 9 earth lumps were placed above the funeral pit. The reason behind this ritual was that the original Pa-O migrants came to the Shan States in 9 groups. On the day of the dark moon, or during the 2nd day of *Thingyan*(Ah-kyat) the corpse was immediately taken out of the house to the cemetery for instant burial.¹²¹ It was believed that any delay would bring disaster to the village.

Generally the corpse was kept in the house for 3 days. Funeral prayers were delivered by the venerable monks for the deceased. If the day of the burial was on Sunday, though it was daylight they lit torches to effect the burial. To signify peace all lights in the house had to be extinguished. At the time of taking out the hearse from the house, water had to be poured right down the stairs to the ground. Along the road from the house to the cemetery, leftover rice was put in the basket with a gaping hole, strewing all along the way.¹²² Some old folks make advance preparation for impending death by making coffins beforehand. The pregnant woman who died because they could not give birth was called '*seseng*'¹²³ and these corpses had to be buried instantly. Another extraordinary incident concerned with

¹¹⁹ Swe Swe Oo, 1981, 75

¹²⁰ "*Ho-Poe Hmat-tan*", 1966, 3

¹²¹ Ashin Thu Seitta, 2007, 42-43

¹²² Aye Myint, 1969, 146

¹²³ Mg Thaung, 1973, 61-62

the separation of the souls of the husband and wife. When the wife died and was buried, the surviving husband had to run at breakneck speed facing his home without turning back. As soon as he ran an accomplice had to fire 3 or 4 shots with a gun to scare away the wife's soul from following the husband. This is the eerie way of separating the souls of the dead and the living. For those with accidental death donations of banners and streamers were to the relic Buddha images and pray for deliverance from evil reactions. On burial, at the foot of the pit a bamboo stranded rope needed to be buried at the foot direction with one piece jutting out to the surface. After the burial was over a man with back to the burial site should pull the rope backward and throw it away.¹²⁴ Returning from the cemetery, thron branches should be placed across the road in three barricade positions so that the soul of the dead can never return. If the dead person was heavily in debt, he will find the pit can never be filled with earth however much he tried. When seven days passed, donations were made and contacts between the living and the dead were totally severed. For some wealthier family the ceremony was postponed to later feasible time.¹²⁵

If the deceased was a bachelor or a spinster all things used during his lifetime such as sword, hand organ or looking glass etc were taken along with the hearse to the cemetery burial site. If the deceased did not have any possession these materials were loaned to complete the ritual. The alms offering on the seventh day is called '*pwepanswun*'. Such seventh donation of alms offering is done individually or in some cases collectively among two or three obituaries.¹²⁶ For some extreme persons amounting to perversion, the seventh day offering was performed even before death. A streamer was hung on the pole of a pandal . When such ceremony was collective, the number of streamers corresponding to the

¹²⁴ Aye Myint, 1973, 147

¹²⁵ Khun Nwe, 1992, 349

¹²⁶ Maung Thaung, 1979, 62

number of persons involved, were hung.¹²⁷ For those who met sudden or unnatural deaths like car accidents such streamers were donated for a better life in the next existence. For the wealthy family such streamers were built on the pagoda premises with durable materials such as timber or concrete. Such construction had to be done before the alms giving ceremony.¹²⁸ Before the alms donation was to be performed one member of the family had to go to the cemetery to the burial site with an Eugenia sprig or white plum branch and tapping the ground invite his spirit to the place where the donation was to be made, to enable him to share the merits to transport him a better afterlife. The branch had to be tied to one of the posts of the temporary pandal. After the donation ceremony and the libation rites were over the branch was thrown away.¹²⁹ The invitation of the spirit of the dead was performed by the male members. The ladies took the responsibility of cooking food for donation for the members of the family, guests and volunteer workers. In such Pa-O ceremony it was customary to procure the professional services of a Maw religious lecturer because he could recite and lecture on the sermons in Pa-O language to captivate the audience. Especially during 7 pm to 12 midnight the Chronicles (jatakas) of Bodhisattava were lectured. Sometimes this session lasted till the wee hours of dawn of the next day. Sometimes the *Mae Aye lecture session* was held in the afternoon. In morning time the venerable monks were invited to the house, where alms food was donated to the monks and prayers were delivered. After the sermons of the monks, the *Maw Aye* continued with his sermons on Bodhisattava. After the ceremonies were over, the seventh day donation was presumed to be completed.

In summation we observed that there are 135 ethnic races and Pa-Os constitutes one of them. There are large ethnic clans as well as small clans and tribes. The nature and characteristics of the Pa-Os are simple and peace loving. Their clan colour of dress is black but their heart is white. They make it a point to

¹²⁷ Khun Nwe, 1992, 348

¹²⁸ Khun Nwe, 1992, 350

¹²⁹ Aye Myint, 1969, 147

wear their traditional black dress on ceremonial occasions, and festivals to demonstrate their ethnic loyalty and preservation of their tradition and ancestry. Their state of health is good and robust because they earn their livelihood outdoors in the fields and open space, on the hills and in the plains mainly on agriculture, taungyar farming and vegetable growing. In sickness they rely more on traditional indigenous medicine and practitioners, who are more on close touch in their village and vicinity. These traditional practitioners had a long generation of practice as it was handed down from generation to generation. Modern medicine made from experimented pharmacopoeia was rather out of reach for these hill tribes. Only very recently starting from the British occupation period through the wars to independence eras, students were given the opportunity to attend the medical schools in Myanmar proper in Yangon. It was amazing that some of the indigenous practitioners use para-psychological methods veering towards occultism and spiritualism by incantation of mantras, and hanging of amulets on their necks to drive away the spirits, cursed by evil spells, witchcraft and sorcery. However these occult practices were on the wane because of lack of sustaining them, and peoples' attitude of not believing their necromancy. But generally due to ignorance, and distance to travel from their villages and high costs to take modern treatment in towns, the sick prefer to take treatment from the local practitioners. Only when the disease may need surgery or specialized treatment they take modern treatment in the government hospitals.

There are voluntary societies formed by consent of the community in every village. One of the popular associations is called 'the Bachelor's group'. They organize and carry out social work, auspicious ceremonies such as wedding, novitiate ceremonies, pagoda festivals, and *puja* ceremonies to the village *Sayadaws*. It was an endearing tradition. When any villager committed any crime or social wrong the presiding *Sayadaw* of the village monastery, village headman (*pradone*), or leader of bachelor's group (*hkobantan*) called the culprit to admonish him against continuing his anti social behavior. If he refused to obey, he was held incommunicado. If he persisted then he was banished from the village.

The codes of conduct, regulations, disciplinary actions were borne out of rulings by the elders handed down to generations, or code of conduct and morality practiced by precedence or proven experience. Loyalty and camaraderie were the priority values in this social interchange. They gave precedence to the aging elders of the community as respectable, experienced and well learned in the affairs of the world and were given leading roles for the welfare of the community with no element of social segregation, treating all as equal.

The courtship ritual, endearing tradition of the Pa-Os is now fast disappearing. Among many things it can be due to the march of modernization which has swept the world beyond boundaries like globalization. Urban migration of the Pa-Os is now a reality, draining youths from their villages in search of a better future in towns and even to foreign lands. The marriage ceremonies were similar to the Myanmar customs and traditions.

In performing the funeral rites to the dead the Pa-Os did not perform the burial or cremation in a short time of three days and mourning of seven days as practised in Myanmar society. They tend to extend the ceremony from six months to one year or even two years after demise. The bereaved families used to offer alms and charity to all deceased as a group offering for a better life in the next existences. Such alms donation is called ' *pwe pan thwum* ' and was commonly held in winter months. The ceremony lasted for one day and one night. Group offerings were celebrated with religious lectures and jataka narratives (*maw aye chins*) by the professional orators. This tradition still exists in the Pa-O communities to this day.

In the social inter relations the Pa-Os are reserved and reticent and deal with suspicion. This situation might have borne out by bitter experience of the ancient times due to clan feuds and spirit of vendetta. But once their confidence is gained the Pa-Os will go to great lengths to help even in great sacrifice. The propensity of the Pa-Os to live in the own homestead of their domicile, sustain their traditions of their ancestors, close knit solidarity, honesty and simplicity are positive preconditions towards future development and well being.

CHAPTER THREE

ECONOMIC CONDITION

The people all over the world are working a variety of occupations for their livelihood. People had to eat foods daily for their survival and the foods they eat are derived mostly from vegetables. As there are a lot of mountain ranges and deep forests in the Shan states, the people work cultivation as their main profession. In the southern regions of the Shan states where the Pa-O nationals were mostly living, the people made three kinds of cultivation. These were as follows:

1. *Le-ya* (Paddy land cultivation)
2. *Taung-ya* (Hill-side cultivation)
3. *Uyin Chan* (Garden cultivation).

There were few Pa-O nationals who are engaged in animal husbandry and handicrafts. Most of the Pa-O nationals did not engage in only one occupation. They engaged in various occupations in conformity with the season. *Taung-ya* (Hill side cultivation) was made in association with terrace cultivation as well as farmland was made in association with plantation. The main items produced by the Pa-O nationals are paddy, *Tha-nat-phet* (*Cordia myxa*), pickled tea leaf, potato, orange, garlic, coffee, mango, damson, pear, soya-bean, groundnut, corn, sugarcane, ginger, chili, turmeric, and all sorts of vegetables.¹

The Pa-O nationals in the Shan state, depending on water from the springs, cultivated various kinds of crops in all the plots of land available. The springs

¹ J. G. Scott and J. P. Hardiman, *Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States*, Vol.I, part.i, Rangoon, Superintendent, Government Printing, 1900, p. 8 (Henceforth: Scott & Hardiman, 1900a)

greatly contributed to the economy of the Pa-O Nationals. They worked paddy cultivation for their own consumption. The Pa-O nationals in the southern Shan state cultivated paddy for their own consumption by farming, irrigation, or hill-side cultivation, or dry cultivation.² The farm lands were situated in the low-lying areas at the interval of wavy plains or water-logged valleys. At the sloping areas, steps were made to cultivate crops.³ The reason of making steps at the hill-sides was to be water-logged when rain falls. In some areas, dams were built at the upper level of terraced farmlands and water was diverted step by step down to the bottom step. The dams were not large, but were able to distribute enough water necessary for the farmlands. The dams situated in Pin Laung Township were as follows:

1. Ho Pin (for paddy land reclamation)
2. Ti Kyit (for paddy land reclamation)
3. Myin Htwin (for paddy land reclamation)
4. Ye Oo Hti Yun (water for use)
5. Thi Kyit Pyin Tha (for reclaiming stepped land)
6. Ban Mauk (for reclaiming stepped land)
7. Bor Lan (for land reclamation or opium substitute)
8. Lin Khan (for land reclamation or opium substitute)
9. Hti Yun (for land reclamation or opium substitute)
10. Eik Kye (for land reclamation or opium substitute)
11. Min Bu (for land reclamation or opium substitute)
12. Saung Tun (for land reclamation or opium substitute)⁴

²J.G. Scott and J.P.Hardiman, *Gazetter of Upper Burma and the Shan States*, Vol.II, part.i, Rangoon , Printing and Stationery,1900,pp.353-354 (Henceforth: Scott & Hardiman, 1900b)

³ *Pyidaungsu Hte-ka Pa-O*”,2009, 254

⁴ Hla Pe, 1978, 51-52

The terrace cultivation not only prevented the soil erosion but it also contributes to the maintenance of water for cultivation. Paddy cultivation started in *Kason* (May) when the rain began to fall, and lands were ploughed with buffalo. The ground was broken up by harrow with a metal tooth drawn by single buffalo.⁵ As the plot of land was small and as it was situated at the hill-side, and so the land could not be ploughed by two buffaloes. The land was harvested in the month of *Thidingyut* (October) and *Tazaungmon* (November) and it yielded 30 to 40 baskets of paddy per acre. A farming household received an average of 80 baskets of paddy per year. The genus of paddy mostly grown were Shan rice, *Shwe Yin Aye*, *Yar Kyaw*, and *Kauk-nyin* (Glutinous rice) etc. As the Pa-O nationals used traditional cultivation method, the yield of paddy per acre was small.⁶ In order to maintain the soil, it is necessary to grow the crops in rotation. The Pa-O nationals used suitable amount of fertilizer in the farmlands, or they practiced the method of growing the lands *two pyo* years, leaving one year uncultivated.⁷ The Pa-O nationals living in the southern Shan states are also engaged in hill-side cultivation. The transplanted method was used every three years in the hill-side cultivation or dry cultivation. In the hill-side cultivation, it does not need to bring water into the land as it can be grown in rather humid lands.

Regarding the hill-side cultivation, cultivable land was chosen in the hill-side, at the side of the mountain, or in the highlands, and trees were cut down. Such works are done in the month of *Nataw* and *Pyatho* (December, January), rubbish are set fire in *Tabaung* (March), Lands are cultivated by dibbling in *Tagu* (April) or are ploughed with buffalo or with hoe.⁸ If it was not the land dense with

⁵ Scott & Hardiman, 1900,353

⁶ Mg Thaung, 1973, 66-67

⁷ Hackett, 1950, 147

⁸ Scott & Hardiman, 1900b, 8

forest, the waste land was cleared and harrowed with buffalo and cow. Then the cleared land was set to fire or the harrowed land was set for fire. It is called “*Pa-yit-phote*” (Baking the ground).⁹ The soil was to be broken up by digging about with mattock and hoe. After digging about the land, heads with same distance, were made on the land, pot-holds were made at the top. Then they had to put rubbish, fodder, dried cow dung in these pot-holds and set fire it. While burning, it was covered with earth. The heads burned gradually up the land. It was a kind of preparing the land to grow few weeds and to make good soil.¹⁰ *Pa-yit-phote* was the traditional practice of farmers living in the hilly region. The Pa-O nationals called it “*Soo Phya*”. After heating the land, it was to be leveled and had to sow seeds. At the interval of paddy stalks, vegetables, gourd, cucumber, flower plants were grown. It was the multiple crop method used by the Pa-O nationals. If the land was densed with forest and the earth was burnt, paddy was grown with pointed instrument. The yield by average was about twenty baskets of paddy per acre.¹¹ The method of baking the earth made the weeds fewer and it could save the human energy. But as the soil became lesser in the land which was baked, no plants was able to grow and there appeared bare mountains. Therefore, it could not be said that baking the land was a modern agricultural technique.¹² The hill-side cultivation was advantageous in ancient time, although it was a tiresome work, when there was good soil and weather. But with the increase of population, the cultivated lands became scare and the people had to plant only on one plot of land for several times. The result was that the soil became used up and the cultivator could not enjoy full advantage.

⁹“*Pyidaungsu Het-ka Pa-O*”, 2009, 254

¹⁰ “*Dalay-hton-san-myan (Shan)*”, 1969, 106-107

¹¹ Mg Thaung, 1973, 70

¹² Hla Pe, 1978, 53

The Departmental personals and heads of villages educated the cultivators about the advantage and disadvantage of setting fire to the hill-side cultivated lands, and of baking the ground. Although there were still those who cultivated the crops with conservative agricultural method, some people used scientific agricultural methods such as modernized machines, fertilizer and pesticides, and therefore, the obsession will disappear in one day.

Hill-side cultivation is more difficult and less advantageous than the paddy growing. After growing at one place for a couple of times, it became less soil, and therefore, had to move another place, and made jungle clearing, and set fire to the cultivated land. In the hill-side rice cultivation, growing to harvest time, as weeds were cleared away for two or three times, it was tiresome and the yield was also lower.

As the people had to make land clearing, hill-side cultivation led to deforestation. Being lack of forest, there broke out soil erosion, and there was no water in the streams. There was also scarcity of food for the cattle. In some areas of Shan states, such as Loin Lin, Aung Ban, Kalaw, Heho, etc. due to deforestation, there appeared bare mountains everywhere.¹³ Therefore, land clearing and hill-side cultivation could change the weather and geographical condition of the areas, and it was not an advantageous agricultural technique.

The Pa-O nationals also made garden plantation as a main occupation as it could lead to thriving economy. There were two kinds of Garden plantation; short term and long term garden cultivation. In the long term cultivation, *Thanatphet* (*Cordia myxa*), and such edible plants as pickled tea leaf, pear, damson, peach etc, were grown. The plants are mostly grown as perennial crops. The cultivators have to make investment of capital beginning from the time of growing up to the time

¹³ “*Dalay-hton-san-myan (Shan)*”, 1969, 111

of reaping. After eight years of life span, these plants can be reaped. So the plant is grown only by those who can make investment.¹⁴

In the short term cultivation, such crops as potato, garlic, chili, soybean, groundnuts are grown. Both long term and short term cultivation are practiced in the township. The Pa-O nationals living in the Shan states are now growing many kinds of flowers, and various kinds of vegetables, such as *Gurkha* (Fruit bear from a kind of creeper), beans of all kinds as the short term crops, mustard, radish, cabbage, bitter gourd, cucumber, tomato, chili, etc. Garden plantations are set up outside the village or at the adjacent areas of the house. The crops, flowers and vegetables yielded from one's own land are sold at the market or exported to other plain regions.¹⁵ Plantation workers do not take labor charge, but they took the products by ratio depending on their performance. It is the traditional system of cooperative work. If they pluck the pickled tea leaves, they take pickled tea leaves, or if they pluck *Thanatphet*, they take *Thanatphet*, and if they pluck fruits, they take fruits as labor charge. Nowadays, labor charge is given with money. There is the custom of helping together the work of other who fails to perform his quota for ill-health or other social affair.¹⁶ Labor problem, depending on the time and place, is solved when necessary to finish the work in time. The custom of working collectively, as it does not need impetus and it has the mind of taking responsibility by each one, is used in preparing the bridges and roads.

The Pa-O nationals whose main occupation was agriculture, before making plough the land, had to strike the earth with hoe for three times. Then, cooked rice, roasted fish-paste, onion, and chili are packed together and put the packet in the earthen pit. It is called "*Le Nat Kyway Gyin*" (Propitiation to the Spirit of

¹⁴ Khun Nwe, 1992, 237-238

¹⁵ "*Dalay-hton-san-mya (Shan)*", 1969, 112

¹⁶ Hackett, 1950, 143-144

cultivated land).¹⁷ Moreover, the ceremony propitiating to the Guardian spirit of village is annually held in May and June. But at the time the work of cultivation coming near, the people go to the village monastery and asked the Abbot to choose the auspicious day to start the cultivation. As the villagers have to rely on the advice of the village monks, the monks became important not only in religious affairs but also in the economy of the village. In agriculture, due to the out-of-date agricultural technique, as well as drought by natural disasters, and infestation with insects, the people do not think of the reduction in the crop yield. When they are advised to change new modern technique, they simply argue that “ It is not our tradition”.¹⁸ At the present time, some ancient traditions suitable must be maintained and some unsuitable must be rejected. It is necessary to consider the difficulties in a practical way.¹⁹

The plant mainly cultivated and produced by the Pa-O nationals living in the southern Shan state is *Thanatphet*. There are two kinds, *Thanatkyi* which is brought from the Shan states, known as Shan *Phet* and *Thanatnge*. *Thanatphet* is grown more than other crops. Therefore, *Thanatphet* could be said as the life-blood of the Pa-O nationals. They make *Thanatphet* cultivation as business of getting good income.²⁰ However, due to the exploitation of traders and brokers who have large capital, they do not enjoy as much profit as they deserve. Cigars are smoking all over the world, and not only cigars but cheroots are now smoking in Myanmar. In Lower Myanmar, “*Thanatphet*” is simply called “*Shan Phet*” as it

¹⁷ Swe Swe Oo, 1981,83

¹⁸ Hackett, 1950, 144

¹⁹ Hackett, 1950, 146-147

²⁰ Scott & Hardiman, 1900b, 621

is the products of Shan states. Some people think that it is only the Shan nationals who cultivated and produced *Shan Phet*. In reality, the leaves used in rolling the cheroots is called *Thanatphet*, and those who cultivated and produced *Thanatphet* are “the Pa-O nationals”. In some rural areas, people are smoking cheroots made by rolling corn leaf or *Bantbwe* leaf or *palmyra* leaf, wrapping by cotton thread.²¹

Thanatphet is called by the Pa-O language “*Thein La*”. “*Tha*” in Myanmar alphabet is pronounced as “*Sa*” in Pa-O alphabet, and “*Thein La Chan*” (*Sein La Chan*) means “*Thanatphet Chan* (Plantation of *Thanatphet* (*Cordia myxa*)”. “*Chan*” is pronounced in Arakan tone. In the Pa-O language, “*Ya Kok*” must be pronounced in the palatal sound.²² The areas where *Thanatphet* mostly grown are villages in *Kyauk-tan* of *Ho Pone* Township, hilly villages of Me-ne hill. The villages situated in *Kyauk-tan* are *Naung-de*, *Hti-pu*. The villages located in the *Mong-taung* (Me-ne Hill) are San-gong, Lai Pe, Don-li-kong, Ban-sauk, Pin-ta-khwa, San-phoo, Kyauk-ta-char, Pin-son, Nan-hok, Ta-sho-saung-yan, Wun-yan. The villages of Pang Long area are Ta-si-hmu, Kon-ki, Swa-mya²³, Kong-mong, Tin-htet, Hti-ri, Htimi, Nongpi, Lang-na, Saung-pyaung, Kong-hto, Hti-bwa. Many *Thanatphet* plants are grown in large quantity in Loi Lin District and neighboring areas of Ping Laung, as well as at Sin San Hill in the west of Pin Lun. In the villages around this hill, such as Hwe-hon, Pin-lyin, Don-mauk-khan, Lwe-tat, Lwe-loi, Yi-wan, Hwe-hin, Kum-kyao, kyu-phu-mi, Kyauk-su, Kyauk-daing, Hnya-van, Lwe-khwin, Khauk-nwe, Hwe-tauk, etc., *Thanatphet* is grown abundantly. *Thanatphet* is also grown in such Pa-O villages as Lwewolan in

²¹ Khun Nwe (Inle), *Sein-mya-nyo-ywet Tha-nat-phet* (Thanatphet leaves in green and brown color), Yangon, Sarpay Beikman Press, 1976, p. 1-3 (Henceforth: Khun Nwe, 1976)

²² Pao Kyaw Sein, “*Thein Lar Chan*” (Thein Lar Plantation), *Golden Jubilee Journal*, Vol. II, No. 6, 1-5-1972, p. 18 (Henceforth: Kyaw Sein, 1972)

²³ Scott & Hardiman, 1900b, 146

Mong-kai Township, villages in Yak Sauk Township, such as Pu Ye, Ta Tar Kan, Ye-kyu, The-phyu-kone, Kyauk-ni, Tha-yet-pin-hla, such villages in Taunggyi Township as Sa-le, Kone-thar, Kaung-kha, Ta-naing-hto, Nar-kan, Phet-kon, On-ar, Pin-mon, Kyauk-ta-lone, Inn-ni, Lwe-khao, Naung-khe, Ta-naing-pe, Ta-kho-mu, Naung-tit, Naung-kar, Hti-yee etc.²⁴ From these regions, the best kind of *Thanatphet* are produced. According to the estimation of agriculture department (1973), there were 15000 acres of *Thanatphet* tree grown area in Taunggyi District. Nowadays, more *Thanatphet* trees came to be grown. There is no Pa-O villages which do not engage in *Thanatphet* cultivation.²⁵ It is know that 1528 plants had been grown in Thibaw Township of northern Shan state in 1892.²⁶

In comparison with other crops, *Thanatphet* cultivation is more difficult, tiresome and an elaborate work. It is to be done all the year round with great capital, labor, and equipments. Moreover, both young and adults took part in the cultivation from their respective works. Although the work is tiresome, it makes extra money and job to the Pa-Os nationalities, contributing to the reduction of unemployment.²⁷

Thanatphet is naturally the deciduous tree, and its leaves are used for cheroot making. The best kind of *Thanatphet* could be produced from the trees grown in the sloping shadowed valley.²⁸ The life span of *Thanatphet* is from 80 to 100 years. So it is the kind of perennial tree. Although being produced from the only area of Shan states, due to the difference of weather, physical features and soil, *Thanatphet* (*Cordia myxa*) can be varied in kinds. They are

1. *Taung Chaw* (Pang Long, Loilim)

²⁴ Hla Pe, 1978, 54

²⁵ Mg Thaung, 1973, 74

²⁶ Scott & Hardiman, 1900c, 263

²⁷ Aye Myint, 1969, 86-87

²⁸ Scott & Hardiman, 1900b, 621

2. *Taung Lat* (Me Ne Hill)
3. *Taung Kyan* (Nam Khote and south of Taunggyi)
4. Pang Long
5. Myay Latt
6. Mong Kai.²⁹

The most suitable time to cultivate *Thanatphet* is *Wa-so* (July) and *Wa-gaung* (August). Before the trees are planted, the plantation is prepared in stages. Firstly, the virgin land is cleared away in *Nataw* (November) and then they are set fire in *Dabaung* (March). In the cultivation of *Thanatphet* trees, three methods are used.

1. Transplantation after sowing seeds
2. Cultivation with branch
3. Cultivation with seeds

In the cultivation after sowing seeds, it can generally be classified into two: water seedling and land seedling. In humid plains where seeds are broadcasted and the seedlings grown are called “Water *Thanatphet* seedlings”.³⁰ After fifteen to thirty days, the seedlings gradually grown into plants. When the plants reached two to three feet in height, they can be transplanted. Planting with branch is more sure to grow than planting with seeds. Moreover, the leaves can be picked earlier.³¹ Generally, a cultivator can grow 1000 to 1200 *Thanatphet* trees per day. Dibbling is used in planting, but hoe is mostly used. In January and February, strong branch can be cut down and grown. These branches are put in the hole two feet in dept of humid places or they can be immersed in the flowing creek. In July and August, they began to put out the roots. Then the holes 4 feet in depth are dug

²⁹ *Swe Son Gyan, 1992, 483*

³⁰ *Khun Nwe, 1992, 240*

³¹ *Khun Nwe, 1976, 7-8*

and the branches are to be put in these holes in lay-down position. In planting the seeds, dibbling is made in July and August.³² *Thanatphet* tree liked natural dried soil of upper layer which is in color and soil of lower layer in red color. In the planting with the seeds, seeds are put about half an inch in the ditch of fourteen *taung* (7 yards) in length and four *taung* (2 yards) in width, keeping apart a couple of fingers. After 8 months, it can be transplanted to other places. When the plant is three years old, the upper portion must be cut down, leaving one *htwa* (one-eight yard) from the bottom. It must not hurt the roots.³³ Every year, the branches are to be cut down so that it does not grow very high.³⁴

Thanatphet trees are grown on the hill and slope of over 4000 feet in height or in ravines and plain of about 4000 feet in height. The leaves of *Thanatphet* trees grown in the plain regions are thick and the fringes of the leaves are torn because of air blowing.³⁵ *Thanatphet* trees are most thriving in the valley where soil is very fertile.³⁶ The weeds are to be cleaned away frequently which contributed to fertilizer and make easy for plucking the leaves.³⁷ The Pa-Os women took part in the work of digging, cleaning the weeds and grass.³⁸ In cutting the branches, if the work cannot be finished with the family members, some villages are asked for help. They had to give assistance by turn. After cutting the branches, fertilizer or dried cow dung are to be put for the thriving of the trees.³⁹ *Thanatphet* plants

³² Khun Nwe, 1976, 12-3

³³ *Swe Son Gyan*, 1992, 481

³⁴ *Swe Son Gyan*, 1992, 483

³⁵ *Swe Son Gyan*, 1992, 483

³⁶ Scott & Hardiman, 1900b, 621

³⁷ Khun Nwe, 1992, 241

³⁸ *Swe Son Gyan*, 1992, 481

³⁹ “*Dalay-hton-san-myan (Shan)*”, 1969, 114

grow very fast when the rain falls. Therefore, leaves of *Thanatphet* began to pick up in a couple of weeks after the rain began to fall in late April and early May. It is necessary to pay great attention to pluck the leaves of *Thanatphet* before the color changed from green to yellow.⁴⁰ It is because leaves of *Thanatphet* which turned yellow in color, when fried, became rough and its color is also not bright. Picking up *Thanatphet* and baking them are called “*Yar Thi Phet Khu*” (Seasonally plucking). It is known that leaves of *Thanatphet* can be plucked twice a year.⁴¹ The leaves of *Thanatphet* are to be put in *Pa laing* (Cane or bamboo basket with sling or tumpline) and brought home by putting Pa Laing on the back. At home, before the leaves are fried in the pan, grains of leaves are removed to make them more smooth.⁴² In removing the grains of leaves, sharp knife is to be used. The large size *Thanatphet* can be sold more quickly than the small size.⁴³

In frying *Thanatphet*, a lot of fire wood is needed. The Pa-O nationality put *Thanatphet* in the flat pan and fried it with fire which is called “*Thanatphet Hlaw Thi*”, (Making *Thanatphet* dried with fire). It is the time when the cultivators are very busy. After being picked up from the plantations, streaks of *Thanatphet* are to be peeled off immediately and fried the leaves with fire. Leafs are put in order on the flat pan in each of the oven and bags of paddy husks are put on it. In some places, 16 flat pans at most are put on the oven in length and leafs are put on each of the flat pan. Above the leaves is pressed by layer of clothes full of sand and layer of clothes full of tiny stones respectively.⁴⁴ This method of steaming can make the leaves dried. The cultivators used to pick up the amount of leafs as much

⁴⁰ “*Dalay-hton-san-myan(Shan)*”, 1969, 113-114

⁴¹ Khun Nwe, 1976, 24-26

⁴² Khun Nwe, 1976, 26-27

⁴³ Khun Nwe, 1976, 242-243

⁴⁴ Kyaw Sein, 1972, 18

as they can fry. In frying the leaves, temperature of fire should be temperate and it must not be turned up and down.⁴⁵ To produce *Thanatphet* once, it takes fifteen to twenty minutes. About two to three viss of leafs can be fried at one time. In the flat pan, leafs are to be placed in spiral position and they are put not in thick or thin volume. Up to twenty five leafs are put in one flat pan. This way of frying with fire is called “*Mya Sein Phet*”. The work of frying *Thanatphet* is too elaborate that it is to be done continuously at day and at night. The fried leafs are too brittle that the leaves are to be put in the basket gently. Then, the leaves are pressed with the weight. About eight to fifteen viss of *Thanatphet* can be put in a basket and the baskets are put inside the air tight home or hut. If they are placed in the air, the color of *Thanatphet* is less bright and turned to dark and it becomes less demand and cannot get good price.⁴⁶ The kiln can be made of mud or stucco.⁴⁷ In some of the big houses, kiln is placed in the lower storey of the house. Some people put kiln in the separate hut which is built beside the house.⁴⁸ The Pa-O nationals set up their village in the region where their *Thanatphet* plantation is situated. Therefore, the Pa-O villages are found in the hilly regions. *Thanatphet* plants are grown within the compound of the house or plantation. The *Thanatphet* plantations of a Pa-O national are far away from one another that it is difficult to go from one plantation to another. However, there is an opportunity as the plantations are far away from one another, when the hailstone falls in the rainy season, all the plantations cannot be destroyed. Moreover, the yield of *Thanatphet* depends on such factors as weather, physical features, kind of soil, cultivated

⁴⁵ Aye Myint, 1969, 91

⁴⁶ *Myanma Swe Son Gyan* (Encyclopedia), Vol.14, Yangon, Sarpay Beikman Press, 1975, p. 483 (Henceforth: *Swe Son Gyan*, 1975)

⁴⁷ *Dalay-hton-san-myan(Shan)*, 1969, 113

⁴⁸ Mg Thaung, 1973, 72

technique, duration of the span of the plant, use of fertilizer and pesticide etc.⁴⁹ In *Thanatphet* industry, classification of feed leaves is also an important part. Therefore, *Thanatphet* brokers have to classify the size and kind of *Thanatphet* so that it made convenient for the cheroot rolling.

A person who began to learn the classification of *Thanatphet* leaves has to make specimen of *Thanatphet* with paper or iron sheet and he came to know it after two months.⁵⁰ It is known that a skillful laborer can classify 10 to 20 viss of leaves per day. Generally, the women make classification. The classified leafs are put in spiral position in the circular basket which has two openings. The basket has 19 inches in diameter and it is made of bamboo. It is called “*Kha Yaung Pan*” in Pa-O language. After the leaves being put in order in the basket, the basket is stretched into upper part. Then these baskets are put in the shelves in classification. After *Thanatphet* leaves are classified, they are to be put in the “*Po*” which means “Basket” or “*Pote*” (Round bamboo basket).⁵¹ In putting *Thanatphet* leafs in the “*Po*”, bamboo matting are put in order around inside the “*Po*” so that it could not destroy the leaves and water cannot enter in it. To be easy and not to break up as well as not to pierce by its strings, it was put in water in a few moments. A basket with *Thanatphet* in it is from twenty three to twenty four viss in weight. *Wa Boe* bamboo (Huge and hard bamboo) is mostly used in weaving “*Po*”(Round Basket)⁵². Generally, the baskets are woven in the rainy season. The tools necessary for weaving the basket are a saw of seventeen inches or twenty inches in length, a sword, a stool to be used for making the bamboo smooth. After

⁴⁹ Khun Nwe, 1976, 36-39

⁵⁰ Khun Nwe, 1976, 42-43

⁵¹ *Swe Son Gyan*, 1992, 482

⁵² *Dalay-hton-san-myan(Shan)*, 1969, 114

putting *Thanatphet* into the basket by force, mat is woven to cover the basket. Only the men made the work of weaving basket and mat.⁵³ In *Thanatphet* industry, about a million of *Thanatphet Po* can be produced. *Thanatphet* is mostly used in rolling the cheroots because it has good quality favorable for many people. *Thanatphet Po* are marked and sent to the selling place by bullock cart drawn by cow or mule. There is no plantation owner and laborers in *Thanatphet* industry. It is the business of family. It is the cooperative work among the plantations or among the villages.⁵⁴ Selling and buying of *Thanatphet* is done throughout the year. The Pa-O family get enough money from the *Thanatphet* business. But there is exploitation in the transaction of *Thanatphet* that the cultivators cannot enjoy the fruit of their labor. Some plantation owners have to take money in advance from the brokers, to make the kilm prepared and for other expenditures, before the time of plucking *Thanatphet* leaves. When *Thanatphet* leaves are plucked, the plantation owner has to give back the leaves at the current price. Generally, the *Thanatphet* cultivators used to sell all the *Thanatphet* leaves at the current price only after the leaves are fried. There is good weather and soil in the regions where *Thanatphet* plants are grown. But the cultivators cannot use modern technique and agricultural utensils. Moreover, the plantation is far away from the house of the owner made the owner tired and it caused more expense. The owner has to invest large capital, a great deal of time and labor in the plantation. Moreover, within the first three or four years after cultivating *Thanatphet* plants, they have no income. These are the problems the cultivators of *Thanatphet* plants mostly have to encounter. The cultivators not only have to pay interest on the money they took in

⁵³ Khun Nwe, 1976, 46-51

⁵⁴ Kyaw Sein, 1972, 18

advance from the broker but also they are underpaid than the current price.⁵⁵ Another problem is that as the cultivators has to spend all of their time in the *Thanatphet* plantation, they cannot grow other crops. Moreover, when the hail-stone falls in the rainy season, the whole plantation is likely to be destroyed. There is the destruction of insects and pests. The cost of their living has to depend mainly on the good yield of *Thanatphet* leaves. There is also the scarcity of fire wood as the fire wood is used in frying the *Thanatphet* leaves.⁵⁶

Collection of tax on *Thanatphet* enterprise

The collection of taxes on *Thanatphet* enterprise has been prevailed since the feudal age. The main purpose of feudal administration is to maintain stability and to collect tax. Therefore, the feudal lords emphasized the collection of tax. Under feudal administration, the provincial areas were put under the rule of provincial administrative officers such as *Sawbwa* (Shan Chiefs), *Myosar* (Official holding the town as fief) and *Ywasar* (Official holding the village as fief), *Ywathugyi* (Village Headmen) and their posts were hereditary.⁵⁷ The cultivators had to pay one-tenth of their farm products. The Pa-O nationals were mostly engaged in crop cultivation, especially mainly they cultivated *Thanatphet* plants. During the colonial period, the feudal rulers (*Sawbwa* and local hereditary chiefs) collected heavy taxes on *Thanatphet* works and so the Pa-O nationals were making attempts to evade the tax. In 1929, the feudal nobility increased the tax from one *pya* (1/100 kyat) on *Thanatphet* per plant to three *pyas* on two or three plants. The Pa-O nationals under the leadership of *Phya Tan Kon Khe*, with available arms, fought

⁵⁵ Khun Nwe, 1976, 54-60

⁵⁶ Khun Nwe, 1976, 54-60

⁵⁷“All Pa-O National Associations”, Expression of opinion on Pa-O Literature, Taunggyi, 18-9-2008 (Henceforth: “Pa-O National Associations”, 2008)

against the feudal rulers. In 1946, the Pa-O Unity Association was formed with U Phoe Khin (Chairman), U Khan Khaing (Secretary), and Executive members. On 11 December 1949, the Feudal resistance movement was started from *Hti Ta Kong* of *Lwe Put* Region in His-saing Township. By the General Amnesty Order of *Tatmadaw* (Armed Force) and Shan State government, Chan Zon and Hein Mg who led the Organization for the liberation from Feudal Administration (OLFA) returned to the legal fold in 1950. On 5 May 1959, under the efforts of the Caretaker Government, all *Sawbwas* (Feudal Shan Chiefs) of the Shan States renounced their power and feudalism terminated in Shan States.⁵⁸ Until 1959, there was no systematic collection of tax on *Thanatphet* enterprise. Tax was increased on such crops as potato, onion, orange, and coffee.⁵⁹ After assuming the administrative responsibility from the *Sawbwas* (Shan Chiefs), the government made a systematic tax collection on *Thanatphet*. It is known that one *kyat* was taxed on every “*Thanatphet Po*” (Round bamboo basket).⁶⁰ Therefore, the advantages of the Feudal Revolution were as follows:

1. Termination of feudalism
2. Abolishment of gambling
3. Prevention of opium cultivation
4. Reduction of various taxation
5. Establishment of provincial administration.

The third General Assembly of all Pa-O Nationals could be held on 12 March 1959.⁶¹ The immediate cause for holding the Assembly was the increase of tax on *Thanatphet* enterprise. *Taunggyi* and *Loilim* districts of the southern Shan states are the most-productive areas of *Thanatphet*. The persons mostly engaged in

⁵⁸ Pa-O National Associations, 2008, 9-10

⁵⁹ Hackett, 1950, 36

⁶⁰ Khun Nwe, 1976, 64-65

⁶¹ Hackett, 1950, 33-34

Thanatphet enterprise were the Pa-O nationals. But nowadays, the *Shan* and *Danu* nationals are also cultivating *Thanatphet* due to good income. *Thanatphet* is now cultivated in Ywangan and Yat Sauk etc of Kalaw Township. Being the good income enterprise, efforts should be made to use modern technique of cultivation of *Thanatphet*. On the other hand, there is a danger of deforestation as many trees were cut down for firewood to fry *Thanatphet*. So, other means should be considered to prevent deforestation. If the yielding became high, more *Thanatphet* can be produced not only for internal use but also for export and it will be advantageous to the cultivators. After the task of frying, the Pa-O cultivators have to make cutting yearly at the place above which it sprouts so that it can grow new branch in the next year. *Thanatphet* plants are cut down in the month of *Tabodwe* (February) and *Tabaung* (March). *Thanatphet* is the kind of jute fiber from which fiber could be produced. The cultivators can get extra money not only by selling *Thanatphet* leafs, but also they can get fiber by barking off *Thanatphet* tree. Because of its durability, withstand against the adverse effect of rain and sun, and its ability of maintaining the smell and taste of cheroot, its lack of sparks, *Thanatphet* produced from the Shan states are very popular.⁶² At the present time, Pa-O students compose the songs and proudly dance in the style of picking up *Thanatphet*.

In Myanmar, people consume *La Phet* (Pickled Tea) as *La Phet Yi* (Tea), *La Phet Yi Gyan* (Green Tea) and *La Phet Thote* (Mixed salad of pickled tea leaves with dried beans and sesamum). Nowadays, being taken care of their health, people abstained from eating the crops which are grown by using chemicals and fertilizer. They also feared the negative side-effects of crops which used extreme pesticides. So they preferred to eat more safe Myanmar pickled tea. As the substitute crop for opium, they now came to grow pickled tea in the frontier

⁶² Khun Nwe, 1992, 247-248

areas. The northern and southern Shan States are the areas where good quality of pickled tea is producing. Attempts are also being made to transform the *Chin State* into the pickled tea growing area. There are pickled tea plantations in Mong Kung, Mong Shu, and Mong Naung of Southern Shan States. But these plantations were neglected because of the gems industry of Mong Shu. It is necessary to resume the plantations. Every people eat pickled tea. Therefore, the pickled tea became one of the main crops cultivated by the Pa-O nationals living in the southern Shan states.⁶³

In ancient times, like the letters written in *Pe* (Black folded book), Myanmar people wrote the letter of “*La Phet*” in short form. Although the term “*La Phet*” (Pickled tea) was not found in the inscriptions of Bagan period, it has been mentioned in the treatises that the person who first presented pickled tea to *Taungthu* or Pa-O nationals for cultivation was King Alaungsithu (Narapatisithu) of Bagan.⁶⁴ There is another saying that King Alaungsithu held the seeds of pickled tea in one of his hands and gave it to those who would make cultivation in the Shan States. The term “*Let Ta Phet Pin*” (Plant holding in one hand) was later transformed into “*Let Phet Pin*”.⁶⁵ The terms of *La Phet* defined in the book entitled “Abridgement of Myanmar Dictionary” are -

1. Pickled tea is a kind of shrub grown at water-logged slope of mountains which has good rain, leaves of that tree
2. Tea leaves, tea leaves (Wet) and green tea leaves which are steamed and prepared.

⁶³ Scott & Hardiman, 1900a, 356

⁶⁴ “*Kye-let Yoe-ya Myanmar Dalay-mya*” (Rural traditional customs of Myanmar), Ministry of Information, Vol. I, Yangon, *New Light of Myanmar and Guardian Newspaper Office*, p. 29 (Henceforth: *Kye-let Yoe-ya*, 1992)

⁶⁵ Dr. Than Tun, *Myauk-phet Mon* (Annam) (Mon- Annam from Northern Region), *Kalya Magazine*, 1994, No. 111, May, p. 23 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 1994)

3. *La Phet Thote* means mixed salad of pickled tea with sesame, fried garlic, edible oil and salt etc.⁶⁶

The pickled tea leaf is one of the foodstuffs of the Pa-O nationals. The Pa-O nationals are engaged in plantations. When they have leisure time, they gathered around the bonfire and they used to eat pickled tea leaf. *The Shans*, Pa-Os, Taung Yoe and Danu nationals invited one another by giving pickled tea which was packed with banana leaf. Some people invited one another with the dried pickled tea leaf. When invitation cards appear, the custom of inviting with the package of pickled tea disappears.

The pickled tea cultivation is the second most important enterprise of the Pa-O nationals. It is also the traditional enterprise of the Pa-O families who earned good income from the pickled tea cultivation. The pickled tea can grow well in the cold weather. The pickled tea can be grown in the slope and side of mountain ranges where there is well ventilation and thin fog. Being unable to bear the adverse effect of fog, the small plants are to be protected with some covers.⁶⁷ Weeds and grass around the bottom of the plants are cleared away. The pickled tea can be well grown in the slope and side of mountains adjacent to Pin Laung which has red soil.⁶⁸ But the color, smell and taste of the plant grown in red soil are not as good as those grown in white soil. As white soil can mostly be found in *Saung Si* village and its neighborhoods of Pin Laung Township, the dried pickled tea produced from these regions is very well-known.⁶⁹ The pickled tea cultivation method used in Southern Shan States is that seeds are spread first. When plants

⁶⁶ *Myanmar Ahbidan A-kyin-choke* (Abridgement of Myanmar Dictionary), Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma, Yangon, Ministry of Education, 1978, pp. 98-99 (Henceforth: *Ahbidan*, 1978)

⁶⁷ "Pyidaungsu Hte-ka Pa-O," 2009, 357

⁶⁸ Scott & Hardiman, 1900b, 356

⁶⁹ Mg Thaung, 1973, 75

grow, they are to be covered to protect from sun, rain and frost. When plants became three years old, they are transplanted. Two or three years after transplantation, the leaves can be plucked. Plucking the tender leaves can produce more new leaves.⁷⁰ But it can get the best leaves only when the plants are ten or fifteen years old. These plants are to be cut from time to time so that they grow not too height. Besides the locality and weather, leaves can be plucked for several times depending on the growth of the plants. But it must be very careful not to injure the plant in plucking the leaves. The women and children have to pluck the pickled tea leaves in the sun and put them in *Pa Laing* (Cane or bamboo basket) which is slung on their back. Mostly, buds and tender leaves are plucked. Depending on the tenderness or maturity of tea leaves, dry tea leaves are called by various names.⁷¹ The modern method of cultivation of pickled tea is to transplant the seedlings when it is one year old or when it grows ten leaves. It can be prepared by cutting the top bud. Cutting the top bud can make the buds between the branches at the stem strengthened and new branches come out. Then, the *la phet* plant was getting short and round which made plucking more easy and high yield.⁷² The dried pickled tea leaves produced from Pin Laung and Pin Laung region are very popular. Organizing the people to produce *La Phet* as the substitute crop for opium can contribute to the rise of living standard of the indigenous people. Cultivation of good gene, plant preparation and packaging by modern technique will contribute to the rise of income. The pickled tea leaf plucked in *Kason* and *Nayon* (May and June) is the best and it is called “*Shwe Phi Moe Lut*”. After the rain falls, tender leaves became mature. The dried pickled tea

⁷⁰ Swe Son Gyan, 1975, 150

⁷¹ Swe Son Gyan, 1992, 156

⁷² Maung Maung Sai, “Aung-myin-ne-thi Sein-lan-mye Laphet Seik-khin-mya” (Thriving green tea leaves plantation), *Kye Mon Newspaper*, 8-2-2007, p. 10 (Henceforth: Maung Maung Sai, 2007)

leaves plucked at this time is more rush and pale in color, less taste and smell. Only the women made the work of plucking the pickled tea.⁷³ To make dried picked tea leaves, tender leaders are plucked three times a year in all three seasons. The tender leaves plucked in Summer is called “*Nway Ywet*”, the tender leaves plucked in rainy season is called “*Moe Ywet*”, and the tender leaves plucked in the cold season is called “*Saung Ywet*”. The tender leaves plucked in Summer season of *Kason* and *Nayon* is called e “*Shw Phe Moe Lut*”. The pickled tea leaf plucked after *Tagu* is called “*Shwe Phi Lar*” which is the second best pickled tea leaf. The third best pickled tea leaf is called “*Khaung Naing*” which is plucked in winter.⁷⁴

The dried pickled tea leaf is the traditional enterprise of the Pa-O nationals. In making dried tea leaves, puckers played a vital role. There are two kinds of plucking: plucking the tender leaves with care and plucking together with the branches which has two more leaves. The leaves are dried either by steaming or frying. To make the pickled tea leaf dried, the Pa-Os from Pin Laung Township steamed the tender leaves whereas the people in Pin Laung Township fried the leaves.⁷⁵ The tea leaves (wet) are put in the pan and it is placed on oven to be fried. It is called “*Hlaw Thi*”. There is a separate pan for frying the tea leaves and it is by average 18 inches in diameter. When the leaves turned into wither and juicy and withered, the leaves are to be removed from the oven and they must be spread over the mat. To make the boiled or fried leaves soft, they are to be pressed by hand on the mat. And then they are placed in the sun. When the leaves became half dried, a few water is sprayed over the mat so that the leaves became dense. It is the best way to press the leaves by this procedure. The leaves can be made fried in winter. But as the fried tea leaves can smell smoke, its price is not as high as the sun-dried tea leaves. If such sun-dried tea leaves are tiny, compact and curl, they

⁷³Scott & Hardiman, 1900b, 250

⁷⁴ Scott & Hardiman, 1900b, 357

⁷⁵ Scott & Hardiman, 1900b, 358

are the best kind of tea leaves. The dried pickled tea leaf resembles the moustache of the *Sawbwa* (Shan Chief) and so it is also called “*Sawbwa Hnote Khan Hmway*” in ancient time. Among the dried tea leaves, the white leaves are the best as these are the tender leaves. The procedures for making dried leaves are the same whether the leaves are steamed or fried or roasted. But the dried steamed leaves are the best kind.⁷⁶ It is known that the steamed pickled tea leaf is better than the fried one. When the dried tea leaves are put in the kettle, although mixed with boiled water for three or four times, its color does not change. When the tea leaves steamed are mixed with water for two times, the color change. It is known that the fried pickled tea leaf is better than the steamed one. But it cannot compete with the steamed tea leaves. Five viss of Green tea leaves can produce one viss of dried tea leaves in summer, but seven viss of green tea leaves can produce one viss of dried tea leaves in winter. It is known that about ten viss of tea leaves can be plucked at one time.

Among the dried tea leaves produced by the Pa-O nationals in the Southern Shan States, those produced from Saung Si Village in Pin Laung Township and from Naung Taung, west of Pin Lon are the best ones and they are very popular. The dried pickled tea leaf produced by the Pa-O nationals in Southern Shan States have been transacted at Myo Ma market in Taunggyi up to the present time.

The process of making the pickled tea leaf (wet) is that the tender leaves are first boiled and then they are to be put in the large round bamboo basket or glazed jar and stored for six months. It can be assumed that Myanmar is the only country where people eat the salad of pickled tea leaves (wet).⁷⁷ The way of making green tea leaves in Pin Laung Township of Southern Shan States is that the tender leaves

⁷⁶ “*Pyidaungsu Hte-ka Pa-O*”2009, 251

⁷⁷ U Taing Ok, “*A-sar A-har-ya Theik-pan*” (Science of Diet), Vol. II, Yangon, Sarpay Beikman, *Pyithu Letswe Sarzin*, No.529, 531,1980, p. 154 (Henceforth: Taing Ok, 1980)

are a little boiled and then made them cool and the leaves are squeezed to get the liquid. Then, the leaves are pressed into the basket and made the basket airtight. Water is sprayed over the basket. Some people packed the leaves tightly and put them in water. Some of the people put the steamed pickled tea leaves in *Wa Kyi Htauk* (Short length of bamboo closed at one end) which is called “*Let Phet Wa Bu*” which is made airtight. *Let Phet Wa Bu* are made in Pin Laung Township of Southern Shan States.⁷⁸

It is important in steaming tea leaves. If tea leaves are half-boiled, it can be rotten. Steaming for long hours can make tea leaves soft. Therefore, it should take 10 to 15 minutes to steam the tea leaves. The steamed tender leaves are ready for making dried tea leaves and green tea leaves.

The tender tea leaves are steamed enough only to be softened. The steamed leaves are spread over the mat woven with the outer rind of bamboo. Then it is to be grinded in roll. But it is necessary to be careful not to break the tender leaves. The juice is to be squeezed by hand. It can reduce bitter and sour taste.⁷⁹

After pressing the steamed tea leaves, they are pressed into *Yai Pat* (bamboo matting used for storing grain) and weight it down by big stone. If they are not pressed by stone, it can be rotten. After pressing in *Yai Pat* for one to two months, it is to be placed in the hole of 6 feet in diameter and 9 to 12 feet in depth. The longer it is placed in the hole the better the tea leaves. Formerly, tender leaves are used for making green tea leaves, but nowadays, both tender and mature leaves are used and removal of matured leaves is very few. There are those who made tea leaves only with tender leaves.⁸⁰ There are mixtures in green tea leaves like dried

⁷⁸ Scott & Hardiman, 1900b, 357

⁷⁹ *Dalay-hton-san-myan(Shan)*, 1969, 115

⁸⁰ Scott & Hardiman, 1900a, 250-257

tea leaves. The leaves mixed with *Latphet Yoe* is *Dauk Yat Ywet*. It is difficult to classify the mixture. It can only be known through smelting. Only the experts can know it. There is the mixture of green tea leaves.⁸¹ If *Laphet* is placed in the hole longer, it can reduce the weight. But the longer it is placed in the hole, the better its taste will be.⁸² When the green tea leaves are stored, grease oozes from the green tea leaves. The grease stitches the pot. The grease of tea leaves, after making seeds of *La phet*, grease of *La phet* seeds can be taken out and *Kyeit Phat* (Grinded substances) can be used as pesticide. In Myanmar society, there are many proverbs and sayings concerning with the pickled tea. For example, “*Laphet Kaung Sar Chin, Palaung Taung Tet Hnay*” which means that he has to climb the Pin Laung hill.⁸³ There is also another proverb, “*Laphet Ta Yoe, Kwan Yoe Ta Hnya*” meaning “The pickled tea leave must be eaten slowly by enjoying its taste as chewing a quid of betel.” The Pa-O nationals used to say the proverbs. For example, if a pot of green tea is served at the gathering, they are regarded as “Talkative persons”. “The person who hold the hoe and strike the earth is not the talkative one”. There can still be proverbs concerning with other national races.⁸⁴ In the tea cup with boiled water, the stalk of pickled tea leaf is found in upright

⁸¹ Lu Du Daw Ah Mar, “*La Phet Chauk Lok Ngan*” (Green Tea leaves Enterprise), *Da Na Sibwayay Magazine*, Vol. II, No. 7, 1991, p. 103 (Henceforth: Ah Mar, 1991)

⁸² Scott & Hardiman, 1900b, 358

⁸³ *Myanmar Za-ga-pon* (Myanmar Proverbs), The Government of the Union of Burma, Ministry of Education, Yangon, Universities’ Press, 1996, p.219 (Henceforth: Myanmar Proverbs, 1996)

⁸⁴ *Myanmar So-yo-za-ga* (Myanmar Sayings), The Government of the Union of Burma, Ministry of Education, Yangon, Yangon Universities’ Library, 1966, p. 129 (Henceforth: Myanmar Sayings, 1966)

position, they predict that the guest is likely to pay a visit soon. The people in the Shan States are in the habit of putting a little salt in their green tea.⁸⁵

The Pa-O nationals do not engage in only one enterprise. They also grow pickled tea, potato and *Thanatphet*. The work of plucking tea leaves is done more in *Tabaung* and *Tagu* (March and April). As it is necessary to pluck tea leaves the same time in a short period, men and women together work the plucking. Tea leaves that plucked are sold as wet and dried.⁸⁶

But the problem concerning with the Pa-O nationals over *Laphet* enterprise is “algae”, which is destructive to the plant. When this kind of algae attached the plant cannot bear tender leaves and gradually wither to death. The average life span of *Laphet* plant is 30 years. Being plucked frequently the tender leaves deterred the growth of plant. By average, the plant is 5 feet in height. The plants are grown four feet apart, 2700 plants can be grown at per acre. As the Pa-O nationals engage various occupations, they do not work *Laphet* enterprise for lucrative purpose. *La Phet* enterprise is mostly worked in Pin Laung Township of southern Shan states. It is known that 95 % of pickled tea are produced from Pin Laung and the Pa-O nationals living in such townships as Naung Htaung, Kyanzantaung, Yaksauk, Kalaw, Loi len, Lechar, Mong Lei Hka, Kyethimanzan, Mong Shu, etc. also grow a little.⁸⁷

Potato is one of the important kitchen crops grown in the southern Shan States not only for the own consumption, but also as the crop for sale. Potato is the most suitable diet for human kind. According to the estimation of World Food Organization (F.A.O.), a person needs three to four viss of potato for the diet. The

⁸⁵ Mg Zin Yaw, “*Nway-yar-thi hnit Yay-nway-gyan*” (Summer and Green Tea), *Sanda Yoteson Magazine*, No. 217, 1987 April issue, pp. 166-167 (Henceforth: Zin Yaw, 1987)

⁸⁶ *Dalay-hton-san-myan(Shan)*, 1969, 116-7

⁸⁷ Hla Pe, 1978, 154

normal potato is six to eight ounces in weight and it contains over 100 calories.⁸⁸ The weather and soil in the southern Shan States are the most suitable for the cultivation of potato.⁸⁹ Nowadays, potato produced from the southern Shan States are exported to different parts of Myanmar through Bayinnaung wholesale center. Potato is an annual plant. Potato is not a fruit but a tuber. Its botanical name is “*Solanum tuberosum*”. Potato can be traced its origin at *Ardes*, a town of South America from 8000 years ago. In some countries of South America, potato is the staple food.⁹⁰ At the early period, the Indians ate potato as the suitable crop. Potato is called “*Pa Pas*”.⁹¹ In the 19th century, potato is used not only as food for cattle, but also it came to be used in distillery.⁹² Nowadays, potato becomes favorite food for all people without age, sex, race and poor or rich. The cultivation of potato in *Myanmar* had been introduced before the British occupation of the Shan States. At that time, Chinese potato were grown. As the potato can be thrive in the high land areas, it was grown in the Shan States which is 3000 to 5000 feet in height. Between the years from 1885 to 1900, alien species of potato were brought and grown in Myanmar.⁹³ *Colonel Rippen* brought *Ar Lu Phyu* (Puritan or white

⁸⁸ Win Lè Yi Win, “*Ar-lu Phu-lun-yay hnit An-da-ye Kin-sin-yay*” (Sufficiency of Potato and Free from danger), *Le-ya Si-bwa Tha-din* (News Bulletin of Farming Economy), No. 414, 13-8-2008 issue, p. 8 (Henceforth: Win Lè Yi Wint, , 2008)

⁸⁹ *Swe Son Gyan* , 1995, 399

⁹⁰ Yun Le Yi Wint, “*Ar Lu hnit hma Ar lu Ah kyaung Thi kaung sa ya*” (Knowledge about potato in the potato year), *Le Yar Sibwa Thadin*, No. 395, 19-3-2008, p. 1 (Henceforth: Yun Le Yi Wint, , 2008)

⁹¹ “*Ar-lu Toe-tet Pyaung-le-la-hmu Ah-sint-sint*” (Stages of evolution of potato), *Le-ya Si-bwa Tha-din* ,No. 407, 2-7-2008, p. 1 (Henceforth: Yun Le Yi Win, , 2008)

⁹² Yun Le Yi Wint, 2008 , 7

⁹³ Yun Le Yi Wint, ,2008, (N0.395), 7

beauty of hebron) into *Myanmar* and grew it in the *Loi An* plantation center near *Kalaw* and a new gene of potato (*Sit Bo* gene) appeared.⁹⁴ Customers like the new gene. Potato is the plant covered with leaves. But the tuber is thick, swollen in the earth and it is not the same size. The shape of the tuber of potato which grown in the earth resembles a little big duck egg, and has different colors as red, yellow and brown. But the inner part is pale in color and is pulpy.⁹⁵ In 1915, a plantation was established in Nyaung Shwe area by Agriculture Department. The new species of potato were grown as the test. These were as follows:

1. King of Potato
2. Wonderful
3. Sharp Express
4. Great Scot
5. Aron Chief
6. British Queen
7. King George
8. Up to Date
9. Ally
10. Arren Comrade
11. Rhoderick Dhu
12. In Comer
13. Response
14. Kerre Pink

⁹⁴ Dr Tun Sai, “*Myanmar Ar-lu A-sa Shan Pyi-ka*” (Myanmar Potato begins at Shan States), *Le-ya Si-bwa Thadin*, No. 420, 1-10-2008 issue, p. 10 (Henceforth: Tun Sai, 2008)

⁹⁵ Win Lè Yi Wint, , 2008, 8

15. Renow

16. Magnum Bonum.⁹⁶

Among these new species, Great Scot, Ally and Up to Date were widely grown. In the years from 1890 to 1900, foreign species came to be grown.⁹⁷ These species are in conformity with Myanmar weather and they have resistance against the insects and high yielding and therefore, these species are still grown up to the present time. Potato can be thrived in the regions where the weather is cold and moderate rain and enough moisture. In the tropical region, potato can be grown in winter. In the region where the weather is humid and has the rainfall of 40 to 80 inches, potato can be grown by irrigation. Potato is grown either by tumbler or half-cutting or cutting into pieces. When good species is wanted, seed is grown.⁹⁸ Potato is grown from Eye Bud that set on the surface of it. Potato with one or two eye buds is cut and grown. When plant grows, roots came out and crawled into the earth, and sucked the nourish from the earth. From eye buds on the potato, underground stem emerged and gradually grow into potato type. There are three growing seasons and the duration of growth is five months.⁹⁹ Summer potato is grown in January and February by irrigation, and dug up in April and May. Rainy season potato is grown in April and May and dug up in August and September. Late rainy season potato is grown in August and September and are dug up in December and January. Winter potato is grown from second week of October to

⁹⁶ U Myint Than, *Aung Ban Tho-ma-hote Myo ta Myo Mway-phwa-gyin* (Aung Ban or Birth of a town), Yangon, Seik Ku Cho Cho Sarpay, 2008, p. 203 (Henceforth: Myint Than, 2008)

⁹⁷ Tun Sai, , 2008, 10

⁹⁸ *Swe Son Gyan* , 1975, 399

⁹⁹ Tun Sai, 2008, 1

the end of November and dug up in January and February.¹⁰⁰ Potato plant can grow from one feet to three feet and flowers of white or purple in color are bloomed. When the fringe of potato plant is matured, potato should be dug up.¹⁰¹ Smallest potato is used for potato seed. There are three to four eye buds in one potato. The potato seed of about 250 to 300 viss are grown for one acres. It is grown from the second week of October to the end of November.¹⁰² The potato gene imported since 1915 is to be sprinkled with pesticide. The principal pests mainly destroyed potato plants are “Tutrer moth”, “Xut worm”, “28 spotted bettle”, “Wither Bacteria” etc.¹⁰³ The “late Blight” which greatly affected the cultivation of potato is caused by “fungus”. The infection is very quick and potato plants became withered and rotten to death. That kind of fungus broke out in Ireland in 1840. It was known in the world as “The Irish Potato Famine”.¹⁰⁴ Potatoes are stored in the dry and cool place with no direct light. The potato seeds are to be stored in the well-ventilated places with enough sunbeams. Otherwise, potato changed its color into green and it is not suitable for consumption. The green peel made the taste bitter and it disturbs digestion.¹⁰⁵ Potato is the suitable crop for human kind.

Potatoes are widely grown in the Pa-O regions of the southern Shan states. Other national races such as Danu and Shan also grow potato in the areas of

¹⁰⁰ Yun Le Yi Wint, *Myanmar Nain-gan Ar-lu Htoke-loke-hmu A- che-a-nay hnit A-lar a-lar-mya* (Conditions and Potentials to produce potato in Myanmar), 10-9-2008, p.10 (Henceforth: Yun Le Yi Wint, 2008)

¹⁰¹ *Swe Son Gyan* , 1975, 399

¹⁰² Tun Sai, , 2008, 11

¹⁰³ Yun Le Yi Wint, 2008, 10

¹⁰⁴ Myint Than, 2008, 223

¹⁰⁵ Win Le Yi Wint, , 2008, 9

Taungyi District, such as Has-mong Kham, Pan-tara, Pwe-hla, Loi-long, Baw, Kyon, Ywa-ngan, Pang-mi, Ho pone, Nyaung Shwe, Pin Laung, Heho etc. In 1910, the railways was extended to southern Shan States. In 1915 Aung Ban became the railway intersection and potato trading developed quickly. In transportation, the railway took the place of bullock carts. The brokers emerged abundantly. The Indian merchants from Yangon set up brokers' sale center and tried to buy potato of Shan States through the medium men. In 1921, the yielding of potato was getting high in Heho and neighboring areas.¹⁰⁶ The potato trading needed a large capital it had to depend on the brokers. The cultivators did not get the modern agricultural technique. Between the years from 1914 to 1915, the total export of from the Shan States amounted to 8800 tons. In 1936-37, it increased to over 50000 tons.¹⁰⁷ New species of potato were imported to get good quality. But the agricultural technique, soil preservation and prevention of insects were weak. The cultivators used the conservative agricultural method and produced the crops. As the population is little and there were abundant virgin lands, cow dung and humus could be used as fertilizer.¹⁰⁸

Potato is used in the traditional foods and it is thriving as household business, such as fried potato and rice mixing with potato etc. Potato is sold not only in the Shan states but also in the other regions which contributed to the socio-economic development. The weather and soil of southern Shan states is suitable for the cultivation of potato. Nowadays, five genes of potato are now growing in favor with the weather. These five genes are (1) Water Potato (Summer) is grown in January and February at Heho valley, Seyethauk, Inn Lay: (2) Land potato is grown from the month of March to April at Kalaw, Pan tara, Pin Laung and Ywa

¹⁰⁶ Myint Than, 2008, 206-207

¹⁰⁷ Myint Than, 2008, 218-219

¹⁰⁸ Myint Than, 2008, 221-222

Ngan: (3) Pre-rainy season potato is grown from the month of May to June at Kalaw, Heho, Aung Ban, Pin Laung; (4) Saka potato is grown in August at Heho, Aung Ban, and Pin Laung; (5) Winter potato is grown in the month of November to December at plain and bank of river and creeks. It must have the suitable weather and soil for the cultivation of potato and it must be the good gene. Potato farmers must accept modern techniques and they should make practical cultivation. The government encouraged the potato farmers technically and financially which will surely contribute to the rise of income of the potato farmers.

Thittaw (Pear- *Pyrus Communis*) is one of the perennial crops cultivated by the Pa-O nationals.¹⁰⁹ *Thittaw* are grown at the places where *Thanatphet* cannot be grown. *Thittaw* is the kind of plant which is in conformity with the locality, weather and soil of Pin Laung Township in Taunggyi District where the Pa-O nationals are living. The fruits can be plucked after the life span of 8 years. *Thittaw* can be thrived in the hilly regions. There are two kinds: *Thittaw* fruit (Wild) and *Thittaw* fruit (Plant) and both kinds can be grown by grafting method.¹¹⁰ U Ba Han who first invented the grafting. Since his school boyhood in 1890, U Ba Han grew fruits and flower plants as his hobby. In cooperation with his uncle U Hla Aung who studied in India, he made contact with different foreign countries, and he became successful in the business of selling flower bulbs. Then, he bought plantations, and grew *Thittaw* (wild) plants systematically at equal distance. By grafting method derived from India and rope-tied method, he grew *Thittaw* plants.¹¹¹ In order to prevent the graft from dry up due to sun heat and air, it is covered with mud. With inquisitive mind, the Pa-Os stripped off the mud or

¹⁰⁹ *Dalay-hton-san-myan(Shan)*, 1969, 113

¹¹⁰ Mg Thaung, 1973, 78

¹¹¹ U Tin Mg Thein, “*Thitthaw Mu-la-a-sa U Ba Han Ka*” (U Ba Han who originates Thitthaw”, *Magazine issued on the commemoration of 100th anniversary of establishment of Taungyi*, Taungyi, Myint Theingi Press, 1996, p. 65 (Henceforth: Tin Mg Thein, 1996)

untie the rope, destroying the plants. Then, villagers were organized and grafting was taught to them. From that time onwards, it spread across the adjacent areas of *Taungyi*.¹¹² In grafting, the plant with a thumb in girth is cut at the length of *Ta Maik* (breadth of the fist with the thumb erected). Then, top is divided and tied with the branch of plant. One year after grafting, the plant can be transplanted. It is necessary to water continuously till the tender leaves came out.

When the plant is six years old, it began to bear fruits. *Thittaw* began flowering in *Tabodwe* (February) and bear fruits in *Nayon* (June). There are three kinds of *Thittaw*: *Thittaw* with cover in red, cover in green and with soft cover.¹¹³ *Thittaw* with cover in green has the best taste and get good price. The regions where *Thittaw* fruits mostly grown are the surrounding areas of Taungyi, Kalaw, Pang Long, and Aung Ban township. In Taunggyi District, the Pa-O villages where *Thittaw* fruits mostly grown are Myay-phyu, Hti-thein-ywe, Loi-kaung, Pha-mon, Hti-thein, Phat-kon and Kyauk-dan. In Pin Laung Township, *Thittaw* fruits are grown in the areas around Pin-mon village tract and Baung Ywa. Many *Thittaw* plantations of the Pa-O nationals can be found in the adjacent areas of Kalaw and Aung Ban.¹¹⁴ But it cannot be grown with scientific method. It is better to educate the cultivators to use scientific method, fertilizer and pesticide.

Orange is one of the principal crops grown by the Pa-O nationals in the southern Shan States. Orange is one of the perennial crops.¹¹⁵ With the different locality, its name can be varied. Orange eaten throughout the country is called in foreign countries by such names as “Trengerince”, “Mandrin”, “Orange”, “Sunkiss”. The botanical names are “orange, lime, lemon, and all these include in

¹¹² Tin Mg Thein, 1996, 96

¹¹³ Khun Nwe, 1992, 256-257

¹¹⁴ Mg Thaung, 1973, 78-79

¹¹⁵ Scott & Hardiman, 1900a, 357

the kind of Citrus. Orange species are generally productive.¹¹⁶ Orange can be grown in muddy lands and drainage areas. But enough sun shine is important for the growth of the plant. It is important to get water from river. Natural and chemical fertilizers are necessary to nourish the plant. In Myanmar, Chin, Kachin and Shan states are the areas where orange is widely grown. Especially in the southern Shan States, such as Aung Ban, Si Saing, Ho pone, Taunggyi, Mong Kungs, Nyaung Shwe, Yak Sauk, Kye Thee, Mann San Township where orange is grown. Mostly are grown plants, the fruit is small and slim cover, but it has sweet taste.¹¹⁷ Seeds are planted in the dug grounds at the initial fall of rains in *Nayon* and *Waso*. When the plants are over one year old, they are transplanted. They are planted in row, 15 feet distance between the plants. All the year round, grass is cleared away and removal of weed and digging are done. When the plant is three years old, fruits can be plucked. It is matured and ripe in *Tazaungmon* (November) and *Nadaw* (December) when the fruits can be plucked. At least 10 viss can be yielded per plant. Some productive plants can yield up to 80 viss.¹¹⁸ The fruits are distributed and sold through *Yangon and Mandalay* to other cities. When the plant is young, enough water, regular fertilizer, and protection can contribute to the high yield.¹¹⁹ Nowadays, orange can be produced all around 12 months. Testing and interbreeding are doing. For example, there appeared new species such as *Pya Lain Maw* (Bee Orange), natural fruit, small and big fruits. Orange is favorite fruit that everyone likes. Planting orange is a thriving business and orange is suitable for health.

¹¹⁶ Aung Myin (Shan Pyi), *Lein-maw A-kyauing Thi-kaung-sa-ya-mya* (Knowledge about orange), Yangon, Sar Pay Beik Man Press, 1986, pp. 6-7 (Henceforth: Aung Myin, 1986)

¹¹⁷ Khun Nwe, 1992, 260

¹¹⁸ Aye Myint, 1969, 96-97

¹¹⁹ Aung Myint, 1986, 85-86

The Pa-O nationals of the Southern Shan states grow garlic in the plot of lands by irrigation. The garlic can be classified into two: garlic (clove) and garlic (bulb). *Kyet Thoon Phyu* (Garlic) is known by botanical term “*Allium Sativum*” The origin of garlic is southern France and Northern sea Sicily Island.¹²⁰ Garlic began to grow at the areas to the west of Himalayan range of central Asia. Later, it spread to different parts. Garlic resembles onion and its leaves resemble grass. It has a very strong smell and hot taste and it is used to preserve food. Garlic is put in every curry of the Spanish of Northern Europe and Italians. Garlic is used in cooking as a spice, especially to give flavor to foods. It is also used as indigenous medicine. In Myanmar encyclopedia, it is mentioned that garlic looks like onion, as its leaves being not round, but flat, it resembles the grass. It is 2 feet in height.¹²¹ Garlic can be grown in temperate weather with hot water and air and in *Ya* (Plantation) and *Kung* (island where culinary plants are growing), and *Uyin* (Garden). The garlic is grown in plot of farmland or silted lands. The garlic can be grown in puffy soil and it needs little water.¹²² Black earth mingled with mud is most suitable for cultivation of garlic. In September, three or six times of harrowing is made and cow dung, Amonian Sulphate are to be put in and mixed thoroughly. Little trenches are made, and then about 250 to 300 cloves of garlic are necessary for the cultivated plot per acre.¹²³ It is grown in hole of three inches dept and 7 inches in distance between the plants. It can be grown in October and November and the seedlings are to be covered with hay stacks thinly. When

¹²⁰ Shan Yekyaw Than Maung, *U-yin Chan Thee-hnan Saik-pyo-ye* (Gardening), Yangon, Aung Chan Tha Press, 1971, Vol. I, p 98 (Henceforth: Than Maung & Win Kyi, 1971)

¹²¹ U Hla Din, *Sar-pin Thone-pin Say-bet-win Kyet-thon-phyu-site-pyo-ni* (The way of growing garlic), Yangon, Amyotha Book Stall, pp. 6- 8 (Henceforth: Hla Din, 1966)

¹²² Hla Din, 1966, 25

¹²³ Than Kyaw & Win Kyi, 1971, 100

sprouts came out, it is watered on every seven or ten day. One acre of land can produce 1200 to 1600 viss of garlic. To make garlic matured, leaves are tied together with rope. It must be careful not to break the leaves. Weeds are also to be cleared away. Pests such as minute, flea etc., can destroy the plants. To protect disease and pests, dead plants are pulled out and to be set fire. Other crops are grown as alternatives. Smoke of sulphur are blown to the plants. The plucked garlic are put in the sun to be dried. Then they are stored in the dried and ventilated places. They are frequently checked and rotten garlic is to cast off and turned up and down. The best method to store is to place them on the shelves.¹²⁴

The Pa-O villages where the garlic is mostly grown are Naung-pit, Naungkar, Ti-ri, Nar-yi, Han-tho, in Taunggyi Township, Sike-khaung, Ban-kan, Pinsohn, Nan-bye, Twe-phu in Hsi-saing Township, Pot-mu, Pan-htwe, Selai, Set-khe in Nyaungshwe Township, Naung-taung, Wakhaya in Loi Len Township, Me-nai hill in Ho Pone Township.¹²⁵ Nowadays, the garlic produced from the southern Shan States are exported to different parts of the country and the garlic became the principal crop of the Shan States.

Generally, wheat is grown in regions where onion is grown. The plot where wheat is intended to grow are first cleared, digging, mixing with cow dung. Not to enter the animals, the plot is fenced in advance. Seeds are grown on waning days of *Tawthalin*. Three to four days later, the seeds grow plants, weeds are cleared away. It does not need to water or irrigate. In *Tabodwe* and *Tabaung*, it can be harvested. Pile of wheat is to be beaten or winnowed by natural air and it is blown with with large round fan. The Pa-O villages where wheat is mostly grown are Naungkar, Naung-pit, Don-mauk Talaing, Saung-ngon, Pha-mon, Loi-kaung,

¹²⁴ Hla Din, 1966, 26-27

¹²⁵ Mg Thaung, 1973, 80

Kha-yone-Kung.¹²⁶ Mr. Hill De Brandy, the first Secretary of Shan State, made instigation to grow wheat in the years (1890-1900) so that the Pa-O nationals get extra income. Moreover, the weather of Shan States is suitable for the cultivation of garlic. The Pa-O nationals do not eat foods made of wheat. The wheat produced in the Shan States has high quality.¹²⁷

Pepote (Soy Bean or Manchurian bean) is the principal food daily eaten by the Pa-O nationals. It can be grown in every soil. It can bear a moderate drought, but it cannot withstand inundation, It is the crop that can mostly grown in the highland areas. About 6 *pyi* (one-sixteen part of a basket) of seed is necessary for per acre.¹²⁸ The Soybean is grown in Lone-wa region to the south of Taunggyi, Ho Pone Township, Nam-bo-hum, Naung-wote etc.¹²⁹ Nowadays, various beans such as *Pe-pote* (soy-bean), *Pe-yin* (rice bean), *Za-daw-pe* (green peas), *Pe-lwan* (cow pea) and other peas are grown in the southern Shan States. Moreover, signboards reading “One village must produce one crop” are put up at the entrance of every village in Pin Laung Township.

As the Pa-O nationals transferred their houses from one place to another place, they also moved their farmland from one place to another. There is no registration on land ownership or land cultivation. Exchange of land or selling and buying of land are made in front of the village headman. If the plot of land is left 3 years vacant, other person has the right to work the land in the fourth year. The lands can be inherited from parents to children.¹³⁰ When the Pa-O nationals

¹²⁶ Aye Myint, 1969, 93-94

¹²⁷ Hackette, 1957, 138

¹²⁸ “*Pyidaungsu Hte-ka Pa-O*”, 2009, 247-8

¹²⁹ Aye Myint, 1969, 94-95

¹³⁰ Hackette, 1957, 239-231

borrowed the crops for their consumption, they had to give back it with the same amount when they borrowed.¹³¹ Either written contract or oral agreement had been made up to the present time.

When social problems broke out in the village community, it is settled by arbitration method among one's relatives or family. At sometimes, when there are bad weather or outbreak of fire, they put blame on their destiny. When there broke out fire, the fellow villagers helped one another and supported the fire victims as much as they can. For example, the villagers in cooperation built the house for the fire victims.¹³² It cannot be denied that this custom is loveable.

Market Day

In the Pa-O region, five day market is designated as *Myo Zay* or *Zay Nay* (Market Day). There is the market daily opened but five day market is more alive with the sellers and buyers. For example, 24 August 2012 is the market day of Taunggyi. After five days later, there is the market day. By calculating such way, it can be known all the market day of the year. If the market day is coincided with the full moon day or the last of the waning day, the day before is designated as the market day.¹³³ It is called "*A-phate Zay*". 14 Waxing Day is used as "*Shan Pyi-ne A-phate Nay*". There is a day called "*Zay Pyat*". For example, if auspicious days as the full moon day of *Thidinggyut*, *Tazaungmon*, on the eve of water festival, full moon day of *Tabaung*, *Wazo* etc. are coincided with the forth day prior to the market

¹³¹ Hackette, 1957, 243

¹³² Hackette, 1950, 250-251

¹³³ *Dalay-hton-san-myan(Shan)*, 1969, 117

day, the third day prior to the market day is called “*Taw Phate Zay*” or “*Zay Pyat*”. Knowing well this calculating method, the Pa-O nationals never miscalculate the market day. If they miscalculate, they will miss the market day.¹³⁴ In ancient times, it was not easy to go from one place to another. There was little population and it did not need to sell daily. The crops were not grown in large scale for trading and the daily trading had little demand. Because of all these factors, the market day is designated on every five day. Previously, the area where *Sawbwa* established his office was called “*Myo*” (Town). In the town, market opened on every five day is called “*Myo Zay*” (Town Market Day). In 1891, there were nine markets in *Lin Khay* district and later it increased to 21. The market days of the towns are similar. Other markets are opened on the next day of *Myo Zay*. For example, markets of Le-char, Mong Kai, Mauk-u, Mong Nai, Mong Pan, Mong Pon, Ho-pone, Hsi Saing, Yat-sauk, Nyaung-shwe, Pin tara, and Pin Laung are opened on the day after town market day.¹³⁵

In the markets of towns and villages in the southern Shan States, those who by wearing uniform black in color with cane or bamboo basket on their back, made business transactions are the Pa-O nationals.¹³⁶ They laid out the flooring at a place and spread out the items for sale. In the market, those who made selling are Pa-O women. They engaged in trading the products of their farmland, household

¹³⁴ Dr. Aung Kyaw, “*Nge Nge Tone Ka Taungyi Zay Nay*” (Taunggyi Market day at childhood), *Magazine issued on the commemoration of 100th anniversary of establishment of Taungyi*, Taungyi, Myint Theingi Press, 1996, p. 65 (Henceforth: Aung Kyaw, 1996)

¹³⁵ “*Shan Pyi-ne Hmat-tan*” (Record of Shan States), Burma Socialist Program Party, Si Saing Town, 1985, 420 (Henceforth: “*Shan Pyi Hmat-tan*”, 1985)

¹³⁶ *Swe Son Gyan*, , 1992, 156

utensils, clothes, and commodities on the market day. Consumer goods such as fish-paste, betel nut, wool, clothes are bought for duration of a week.¹³⁷ In the Shan State, the market day is important because bazaar sellers and traders from different parts of the neighboring areas gather together in the market, where friends can be met and can inform one another about the personal matters. Therefore, the market day is very active like the festival. The market day is especially active during three months of the Lent.¹³⁸ It is extraordinary that on the market day of Ho pone where the Pa-O nationals mostly lived, there is the cattle market called “*Sa Nay Daing*”. If the people from neighboring villages want to sell or buy or exchange their buffalo, cow, horse, or mule, they gather at *Sa Nay Daing* and made their business.¹³⁹

The Pa-O nationals in the southern Shan States raised cattle, horse, chicken, pig etc with the intention of utilization in their work.¹⁴⁰ They raised cattle and horse mainly for plough, transportation, and for fertilizer. There are very few persons who made scientific animal husbandry and mostly are the traditional breeders.¹⁴¹

In the Shan States, buffalo is used for ploughing in the farmland and so every household has at least one buffalo. Some households have a couple of buffaloes depending on their business. Both male and female buffalo are used in agriculture, but male buffalo is more employed.¹⁴² Buffaloes are called “*Kala*

¹³⁷ Scott & Hardiman, 1900b, 8

¹³⁸ Aung Kyaw, , 1996, 65

¹³⁹ “*Ho-pone Myo-ne Hmat-tan*”, 1996, 12

¹⁴⁰ Aye Myint, 1969, 100

¹⁴¹ “*Shan Pyi Hmat-tan*”, 1969, 136

¹⁴² Hackett, 1950, 150

Kywe” (Alien Buffalo), “*Taing Yin Kywe*” (Indigenous Buffalo). *Taing Yin Kywe* means “Draught cattle”. The buffalos are heavy in body and slow in movement, but they have the strong energy to pull things and are used in inundated farm lands.¹⁴³ The buffalos cannot bear the heat and so it is necessary to steep them in buffalo pool at least once a day, or otherwise they are very difficult to herd. Sometimes, the farmers, by riding on the back of the buffalos, sprinkled water on them. This is the lovely scene accustomed to be seen in the southern Shan states. The buffalos work for six months in a year and they are set free at the pasture in the remaining six months. The child in the family always herds the buffaloes daily. The buffalos are in the habit of destroying the fences with their horns. As the working time of the buffalos is short, they are fat and stout. The buffalo can be employed well for five to six years.¹⁴⁴ As the buffalos are useful in the farm lands, the government forbids the slaughter and trading of buffalo. The Pa-O nationals raised the cows not for meat in Hsi Saing Township. But when the buffaloes are getting old, they are sent to the slaughter-house for meat. The indigenous cows from these regions are very good for labor. The ox is used for drawing bullock cart. Not only straws, but sesame and *Pè Phut* (bean expeller cake) are fed to them. Grass is also cut to feed them. Horses are mainly raised for transportation. Indigenous horses are mostly raised. As there are very few people who own horse in the village, there is the case of stealing horse. Young horses are not systematically trained, but they are carefully raised. As the foods for them, broken rice and groundnut expeller cake and straws are used. The Pa-O nationals regard the breeding of pig as demerit.¹⁴⁵ Concerning with the animal husbandry, mixing female gene with good male gene can produce good gene, but they make no elaborate effort for it. They do not regard the poultry farming as the business. As

¹⁴³ “*Shan Pyi Hmat-tan*”, 1969, 137

¹⁴⁴ Hackett, 1950, 150

¹⁴⁵ “*Shan Pyi Hmat-tan*”, 1969, 137-138

there is no systematic breeding, the egg yielding is low. Egg and meat contributes a little to their food and there is little egg and meat which are sold in market.¹⁴⁶ Although there are good weather suitable for animal husbandry and good pasture in the southern Shan states, animal husbandry do not prevail. It is due to three factors: (1) their religious belief, (2) refusal of society and (3) their preference to cultivation than animal husbandry. The Pa-O nationals are the Buddhists and they regard the slaughter of animals as sins. However, buffalo, cow and horse are raised for travelling to distant place. Chicken are breed at monasteries to know the time. In some Pa-O villages, chickens are sold as consuming good on the market day.¹⁴⁷ Therefore, animal husbandry is regarded as undesirable business for them.

Hunting

In the southern Shan States, hunting is mostly made by the Pa-O youths and middle men. They use musket, cross-bow and catapult in hunting the animals. The meat are shared among themselves. There are very few people who made hunting.¹⁴⁸ Other enterprises are domestic industries such as weaving of bamboo baskets and hand weaving. The Pa-O nationals are very skillful in the art of bamboo. They also made knife, hoe, grubbing hoe, harrow. They also made the living as carpenters and goldsmith.¹⁴⁹ There are such Cottage industries as weaving, tanned leather¹⁵⁰, snacks. But these are done as little household works. In the later period, when there are some changes and developments, they came to use ready-made goods which can be available at the market and the result is the gradual disappearance of their traditional handicrafts.

¹⁴⁶ Hackett, 1950, 152-153

¹⁴⁷ Scott & Hardiman, 1900, 8

¹⁴⁸ *Dalay-hton-san-myan(Shan)*, 1969, 125

¹⁴⁹ Mg Thaung, 1973, 82

¹⁵⁰ Hackett, 1950, 152

In the southern Shan States, the regions the Pa-O nationals mostly living are Taunggyi Township, Ho Pone Township, Hsi-saing Township, and Pin Laung township. The products of these regions are transported mainly by motor routes. For example, *Si-saing* Township is situated on the high way connecting between Taungoo, Loikaw and Ho Pone and so it has good transportation.¹⁵¹ Si-saing also had water route to Pone Inn Taik villages in Naungmon Township. There are three motor roads, namely

1. Hsi-saing -Sagar road
2. Hsi-saing -Maukme road (Up to Ponchaung)
3. Ho Pone-Loikaw road (Upto Htisakha).¹⁵²

Hsi-seng Sagar road is 30.5 mile in length and it passes through Lwe Ton Hill situated to the west of *Si Saing* and two streams situated near Sagar Town. Si-saing-Mauk-me road (Up to Pon-chaung) is 18.5 miles in length and it communicates not only with Lwe Lin District, but also it makes close to Kayah state. Ho Pone-Loikaw road (Up to Htisakha) is the road built to communicate between Shan states and Kayah state. Its total length is 68.5 miles.¹⁵³

In Hsi-saing Township, the people mostly living are the Pa-O nationals who made the living by hill-side cultivation and garden. Although there are co-operations in cultivation, reaping, building the houses, and making meritorious deeds, there is no transaction of goods and barter system. Crops are produced for self-sufficiency and there is no production for lucrative purpose. The second town where the Pa-O nationals mostly live is Pin Laung which is situated on the hilly

¹⁵¹ “*Se-Seng Myo-ne Hmat-tan*” (Record of Township), Burma Socialist Programme Party, Hsi-saingTown, 1982, September 10, p. 74 (Henceforth: “*Hsi-saingHmat-tan*”, 1982)

¹⁵² “*Se-Seng Myo-ne Hmat-tan*” (Record of Township), Burma Socialist Programme Party, Si Saing Town, 1969, June 26, pp. 81-83 (Henceforth: “*Hsi-saingHmat-tan*”, 1969)

¹⁵³ *Se-Seng Hmat-tan*, 1969, 84-5

region and it is mainly dependent on the motor road. In the township, there are three main roads conned with Aung Ban, Pin Laung, and Loikaw. In the rural areas, there are self-made roads which can be used only in summer. These roads are-

1. Road from Nyanbin to Phaya Phyu
2. Road from Naungtaya to Baung
3. Road from Htiyun to Pinmon
4. Road from Pin Laung to Minbu
5. Road from Wali to Kintetthar
6. Road from Baungpyaung to Lonepyin
7. Road from Lainli to Thabyegon
8. Road from Loibya to Htapotho¹⁵⁴
9. Road from Tikyit to Lonewoetho
10. Road from Mithwechaung to Moeneparsaw.

Pin Laung has only motor road for transportation. Such farm products as potato, garlic, *thittaw* fruit, dried pickled tea leaf, and orange are exported a little to other towns.¹⁵⁵ The economic development of a country depends proportionately to the development of its political and social stability. To develop a country, progress must be made on villages, townships, divisions step by step. Sending, transaction, and distribution in time of the local products greatly depend on the good transportation. Nowadays, the government builds roads connecting between urban and rural areas as well as between the districts with the intention of smooth transaction of goods. The government built roads joining villages and village with town for the development of Pa-O region. These undertakings will surely advantageous to future development.

¹⁵⁴ Hla Pe, 1987, 49

¹⁵⁵ Hla Pe, 1987, 47

The Pa-O nationals are mainly engaged in agriculture. They made their own utensils by themselves. These utensils are *Taung-pya* (Scabbard), *Fop* (Cane or bamboo basket with sling), *Yone* (Large bamboo basket covered with stucco), *Taungpo* (Pao Bag), *Phoi-han* (pottery) and *Pa* (Tower).¹⁵⁶

Taung-pya (Scabbard) is the traditional utensil of Pa-O nationals. It is the scabbard in which knife is put and it is carried along at the waist. It is made of outer rind of bamboo. *Fop* is a kind of cane or bamboo basket with sling which is used by Pa-O women. It is woven neatly with the outer rind of bamboo and produced mostly from Pin Laung and Naungtaya Township. *Yone* is the large bamboo basket covered with stucco to store rice. It is also known as “*May Naw*” (Basket to store vegetables). It is mostly used when the rural farmers go to the farms. *Phoi-han* is the earthen pots which are still used by the Pa-Os in rural areas. It is said that if something is cooked in earthen pot, its taste gets better. Nowadays, earthen pots are made and sold at the neighborhood of Thayetpu village in Aung Ban, Heho. *Taungpo* (Pa-O bag) is the traditional utensil. Bag used in travelling is called “*Taungpolar*”. It is made of cotton of local product and it is woven mostly in red or blue in color. It is the hand-woven cloth. The bags produced from Minthaung of Naungtaya sub-township and Pin Mon Village are well-known. The symbol of all Pa-O nationals is the bag. Nowadays, *Katupauk* (Pa) which is equivalent to *Phet phoo saung* (blanket or tower) is still used by the Pa-O nationals. It is still produced, by using the cotton of local product, at *Htiyun* Village in Pang Long Township. Nowadays, it is woven in Loikaw.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶“*Pyidaungsu Hte-ka Pa-O*,”2009, 183-5

¹⁵⁷ “*Pyidaungsu Hte-ka Pa-O*,”2009, 183-185

The Pa-O nationals used their traditional weights and measures in association with the *Myanmar* system. But there are weights and measures which are exclusively used only in the Pa-O region. For example, in the dealing of vegetables and groceries, they use the scale which has only one pan. It is called in Pa-O language “*Swè*” or “*Li*”.¹⁵⁸ This scale is especially used in weighing such items as garlic, potato, *Thanatphet*, *Thittaw* fruit, orange etc. But this type of scale, for being not exact in weight, is no longer used at the present time. One side of that scale is hung by fixed weight. The side with tongue is a fixed frame and the side with weight is longer and there are numbers for weight. The frame and tongue is made of wood and the cup is made of mat woven with the outer rind of bamboo. These are tied with rope and hung down on the hook as necessary. Weight can be divided into four kinds: one viss, fifty ticals (one of hundreds of a viss), twenty five ticals, and 12.5 ticals. Especially, “*Li*” is equivalent with the Chinese scale in nature. Although the economy of the Pa-O nationals lies in their own hands, they are subject to the price depreciation of the brokers living in the city, they are not as much developed as they must be.

Taking as a whole, the Pa-O nationals who are living in the southern Shan States are mainly engaged in agriculture. They can enjoy free economic undertakings. The principal products of the Pa-O nationals are *Thanatphet*, orange, potato, *Thittaw* fruit, Soybean, tomato, Ginger which gets higher income. These crops should be promoted in quality as well as in quantity so that the social standard of the Pa-O nationals would be higher. The characteristics of the Pa-O nationals are their faithfulness, honesty, and diligence, etc. Other economic enterprises of the Pa-O nationals are gold and silver smith, blacksmith, pottery, bamboo basket weaving, snacks, weaving of cloth, tower and blankets. But these works are meant only for the use of family. There is no production and selling in

¹⁵⁸ “*Se- Seng Hmat-tan*”, 1969, 40

large scale. The local products which are sold at the five day market are cheap and can easily be obtained. Regarding the animal husbandry, only very few Pa-O nationals are engaged in animal breeding. It is because of their emphasis on the religion. On the other hand, the region has favorable weather and soil which greatly attributed to their reliance on agricultural works. Buddhism has a profound influence upon the mind of the Pa-O nationals. They are going on pilgrimage, making donations, dedication and meritorious deeds. They knew very well that the development of the Pa-O region greatly depends on their own efforts. With this intention in mind, the Pa-O nationals are making strenuous attempts to achieve development in economic, social, education, health sector.

CHAPTER FOUR

CULTURAL PATTERNS

There are twelve monthly festivals among the Pa-O ethnic nationals all year round, almost one festival a month. The majority of festivals are religious festivals. There are similarities in the nature, customs, tradition, culture of such festivals among all ethnic groups. For example *Thingyan* festival is held in the twelfth month of the Myanmar lunar calendar (*Tagu*), which falls in April by the Christian calendar. The *Thingyan* revelry lasts for three days of water throwing, after which the New Year ushers in with charity, prayers and blessings. The Pa-O ethnic nationals celebrate the *Thingyan* festival and the New Year in same manner like the Myanmar. The meaning of Thingyan is defined in Myanmar language as “transfer, moving”.¹ The Thingyan festival and the New Year are usually held in the Myanmar month of *Tagu*. Pa-Os also visited the homes of the elderly people to offer them with ‘Katawpwe’, which include 3 bunches of bananas, one green coconut, candles, and other sundry food and eatables. Such *puja* ceremonies lasted for three days of the *Thingyan* period.

The *Thingyan* period is held in veneration especially in the villages of the Pa-O ethnic nationalities. The villagers use to visit the pagodas, monasteries and venerable places of worship. All villagers do not work for the entire three days of *Thingyan* and New Year, which is treated as holiday. It is customary for them to

¹ U Aye Naing, *Ta-se-na-la-yar-thi Mayanmar Pwe-taw-myar* (The twelve monthly season of Myanmar traditional festivals), Yangon, Sasana Department, 1980, p.13 (Henceforth : Aye Naing, 1980)

stock food and water for the three days of rest and leisure.² It is also customary for the villagers to visit the monasteries within ten mile perimeter and make donation accompanied by joyous hilarity, music, songs and dances. Such festivities are called '*htant kyaung*' in Pa-O dialect.³ On the third or last day (in some years extending to the fourth day) of the *Thingyan* festival, known in Myanmar as '*Ahtar-tet-pwe*' the villagers visit the village pagodas, temples and monasteries to conduct a special celebration. They offered communal alms donation to the monks who congregate at the monasteries to celebrate end of the old year. After the New Year, the Pa-O traditional '*Lu-hpye*' ceremony is also held. Originally *Lu-hpye* festival signifies the pre-rainfall festival.⁴ This *Lu-hpye* festival is celebrated together with the religious festival of *Kason* and *Nayone* (April and May), alms donation, etc. It was not known when this rocket competition was first held. The name *Luh-hpye* is the name of rocket (Done) commonly used by the Pa-Os and Shans. Other nationalities called it as the rocket firing ceremony (Mee-shu Pwe, Done Hlut Pwe).⁵

This rocket firing ceremony was originally celebrated in Maing Kaing Town and thence spread to Pin Laung Township and Inle Region. In Inle the people make small rockets. Taunggyi makes medium sized rockets. Large rockets are made in Pin Laung only. The Pin Laung residents started making large rockets

²Pyidaungsu-taing-yin-thar-lu-myo-myar, *Pa-O saing-yar A-chet-a-lat-myar* (Union of National races, the Pa-O factors), Pa-O, Sarpay hnint Yin-kyay-hum A-phwe, Taunggyi, Pa-O Union Nation, 2002,p.22 (Henceforth: *Pa-O A-chet-a-lat-myar*, 2002)

³ Aye Myint, 1969

⁴ *Se-seng-myo-phit-zin-hmat-tan*, 1969,13-14

⁵ Mg Khun Nwe (Inle) "*Pa-O Done-Lookh Da-lay*" (Pa-O Traditional rocket), *Ngwetaryee Magazine*, No. 22, Yangon, Myawady Press, July 1978, p. 23 (Henceforth : Khun Nwe, 1978)

since the last fifty years. They called the rocket as 'Bantone'. There was no guiding system in the first series of rockets. They were fired on raised platforms so they used to land at will erratically involving much risk. This type of rocket is called '*Mai Pan Tone*'.⁶ Any kind of gunpowder is used in such kind of rocket. Such gunpowder for the Shan rocket was manufactured in Hpa Saung (Loikaw), and Ywa-ngan Area. Raw gunpowder is mixed with charcoal and pounded. Charcoal made only with wood from mango tree, plum tree, Ye-mai tree and *thit-ni* are to be used for making gun powder. Gunpowder mixed with mango charcoal produces black smoke. When two volumes of gunpowder is mixed with 1 volume of charcoal powder it is called 'two- volume-gunpowder (yan hnitlay); when 4 volumes of gunpowder is mixed the ratio is called' four-volume-gunpowder (yan lay-lay). The rocket makers can mix up to nine volumes of gunpowder to one volume of charcoal powder depending upon the strength of the rocket to be fired. Such mixture is called in vernacular language as 'Yan-hpyat chin.' Such mixture of gunpowder needs exceptional skill and experience. The gunpowder mixture made by unskilled technician, greatly restrict the range, speed, sound and safety of the rocket. In olden days bamboo poles are used as outer shells where gunpowder is filled to fire the rocket. In later years casing made with aluminium sheets are used, and in the present times iron casing is extensively used, because iron casing have added advantage of being reusable again.

The making and mixture of gunpowder to be filled into the firing casing is also very interesting.⁷ The mixture is pounded into the iron shell or casing. There are a series of steps in making a Pa-O rocket. Firstly the top end of the iron casing chosen to make a rocket must be firmly capped. The capped top is called in Pa-O dialect as '*katu*'. Sticky earth is usually employed to make the capping material. When the gunpowder mix is put into the casing, a little water is added, because the

⁶ Khun Nwe, 1978, 22

⁷ : *Dalay-hton-san-mya* (Shan), 1969, 256

gunpowder is highly combustible without water. After the required amount of gunpowder mix is completely filled, the bottom portion is again closed with sticky earth mix called 'yan-bok'. A thin iron sheet is fixed on top of the bottom material especially for big rockets. Smaller rockets however do not need iron sheet reinforcement. The length of the Pa-O rockets range from three feet to eight feet. After the preliminary arrangements are over, a hole is bored from the bottom to the top with an iron rod. It is called as ' *khaye may*' in Pa-O dialect. The hole is wide at the bottom and tapers narrowly as it reaches the top. The purpose of the hole is to put ' *meeser*' or firing wick to ignite the rocket. The rocket's range goes further when the opening is narrow at the top, but if it is too narrow the rocket may explode causing unforeseen results. To make a wick, gunpowder is put into the locally made Shan paper and is rolled to resemble a rope or hollow bamboo. The firing wick is inserted only when the rocket is ready to be launched.⁸ The length of the wick is from two feet to five feet. The tail of the rocket is made of bamboo and is precisely calibrated and firmly bound to the rocket. The most important element is the proper mixture of the gunpowder. The technique is a family guarded secret and is maintained and handed down from generation to generation. Every Po-O Village would procure the services of a master rocket professional to build a village rocket. The completed rocket is carried on the shoulders of the village youth and brought to the presence of the presiding *Sayadaw* of the village monastery. After prayers the *Sayadaw* and monks give blessings for successful launching. Then led by the village elders, the village youths carried the competing rocket on their shoulders and made three rounds circling the monastery. Then the tail or guiding rudder is fixed to the tail. Due care and caution is necessary and thus it is firmly fixed by winding around the rocket with strong aluminium wire and the final round is completed. Among the many sporting festivals held in Pa-O

⁸ Khun Nwe 1992, 405-407

Region this rocket launching festival is the most popular amongst all other festivals. After arrangements are completed the rocket is placed on the rocket-launcher amidst music and hilarious dances by competing teams as they await their turn. Then the wick is fired as they watched with gleeful expectation for the results. Here again care and precaution must be observed so that enough time remains for the igniter to light the firing wick and descend to safety. It is really a risky affair because due to the force of the gunpowder the rocket can travel up to three miles shaking the launcher with huge vibration. Therefore the launching ground needs to be at a safe distance from human habitation. The winner of the rocket competition is judged on the range the rocket can travel. The rocket that travels farthest wins the competition.⁹

In the previous occasions competition is also made as to which rocket sounded the loudest. In the Taunggyi Township competition, when the range of two rockets are even, the one nearest to the centre is adjudged the winner. In Panglong Township when the distance is equal the prize is shared between the two. The winner of the competition is determined by panel of judges who watch the results from a safe distance to avert from danger. When the winner is adjudged by demarcating the parameter, rockets which fell outside the demarcation line is judged as the loser. In a number of launches, the location of the fall of rocket is dug out from the ground, and the range measured before determining the winner. Nowadays in launching the big rockets the destination mark is fixed.

In essence the objective of holding the rocket launching ceremony is to propitiate Lord Buddha and the guardian spirits of the region to bless the people to bring about good harvest, ideal weather, free from destruction by pestilence, and overall economic prosperity. Thus it is a *puja* ceremony held on auspicious days of the New Year. It is also an occasion for relatives and friends who live afar to meet and enjoy while participating in the rocket competition ceremony. The remarkable

⁹ : *Dalay-hton-san-mya* (Shan), 1969, 257

thing is that everyone old and young without distinction as to race and nationality can enjoy at random with boisterous hilarity. There are also a variety of rockets launched by the Pa-Os in general such as '*Maesai (Mee-ngai)*' or small rockets with just 4 feet long. It is manufactured in Kyauktan region of Panlong Township. It is sold for *Kyats* 80 to 100 a piece and is launched for fun by old and young alike.

The next popular religious festival of the Pa-O ethnic national is known as '*Thom Sarga*' or *alms offerings at Sabbath days*. In some regions it is known as, '*Thom Sarga alms offering ceremony*'. It is commonly held during the three months of Buddhist lent which begins from 1st waning day of *Waso* (July) and ending on the full moon day of *Thadingyut* (October). Specifically the ceremony is held every 1st waxing and waning day of Myanmar lunar month and is fed to the grandpas, grandmas and respectable elderly of the village who observe Sabbath of higher disciplined precepts by taking refuge in the monasteries.¹⁰ It is during the three-month of Buddhist Lent that special lecturer of Buddhist teachings known as '*Maw*' are invited to talk on the stories of Lord Buddha, the practice maintained up to this day.

The Sabbath day alms donation was organized by the '*village bachelor-spinster informal association*' on village or ward community basis. On the evening of the Sabbath-day, two youth leaders of the bachelor group invited the old Sabbath precept observers to attend the ceremony and offering alms on Sabbath day. This charity is called in Pa-O language as: '*Hpit pan*'.¹¹ It is customary for the old persons to accept the invitation. On the next morning after Sabbath Day the members of the Bachelor-Spinster group offered cooked rice and curry to every Sabbath-observing old and young at their homes. They gave blessings for such special alms donation and enjoyed this special meal. Only after enjoying this

¹⁰ Khun, Nwe, 1992, 411

¹¹ Khun Nwe , 1984, 78

Sabbath meal they ended their Sabbath observance. In this manner the Pa-O ethnic nationals regularly offer such meals twice a month during the three months of Buddhist Lent. Other ceremonies and festivals connected with the social activities of the Pa-O community are also celebrated.

After the end of Buddhist Lent on the full moon day of *Thatingyut* (October), the *Thatingyut* festival is held regularly on the 14th waxing day and the full moon day of the auspicious month. It was believed by the Buddhists that on the full moon night of *Thatinkyut*, Lord Gautama Buddha the Supreme Self-Enlightened One descended from the second Abode of the *Tavatimsa Devas* to the Earth Abode of the human beings after spending three months at the Tusita Abode, delivering *Abhiddhamma* sermons to *Mai-taw-mi deva*, who was his mother in the previous life. She died within seven days of giving birth to Prince Siddhattha, and reborn as *Deva* Sentient being in Tusita the 4th Abode of the *Devas*. The Prince later became enlightened as Lord Buddha in his last existence before achieving *Nibbana*, cessation of total suffering in the endless rounds of births and deaths. All kinds of lights are illuminated to welcome Lord Buddha's return to Earth Abode. This lighting festival is called in: Pa-O dialect as '*Pwe Maibo*'.¹² The celebration of the lighting festival is interesting to observe. The lantern illuminated with candle light or oil is hung on a bamboo pole. This lantern pole is carried by the belle of the village, who walked in procession towards the village pagoda, temple or monastery in the evening of the full moon day of *Thadingyut*. On arrival they circle the pagoda or monastery and posted the bamboo pole on the ground circling the pagoda or monastery as act of prayer or offering to the auspicious occasion. The lighting ceremony began around 6 pm. All other kinds of offerings such as candles, flowers, locally produced fruits, joss sticks were dangled on the ropes as *puja* to Lord Buddha. Some village youths and elders built temporary stalls with decorations to place the offerings.

¹² Swe Swe Oo, 1981, 109

On the 14th waxing day , the Full moon day and the 1st waning day of *Thadingyut* the Pa-O Buddhist devotees use to light candles and oil lamps on the offering stands posted in front of their houses called ‘ Mok-laung’ every festival night for three days continuously. For some families who can afford to be lavish these offering stands are built solidly with timber. Thus when the *puja* ceremony is over they dismantle the offering stands and store them for the next year. For the common villagers they usually buy the ready- made offering stand made of bamboo from the market to be used for one season only. When the offering ceremony is ended they burned them.¹³ On the night of the 1st waning day of *Thadingyut* the Pa-O womenfolk go on pilgrimage to the pagodas and offer candle lights to gain merit. In addition they lit candles on the entrance of their houses, on the stairs, on four corners of the house compound, on the rim of the water tank, ponds and lakes, on the kitchen, on the rice pots, curry pots and frying pans and sundry cooking utensils. They also pay respects to the four powerful guardian deities and *devas* who protect the human universe. Thus by observing the rites and rituals followed by life-long tradition we can understand and appreciate the belief, devotion and veneration of the simple Pa-Os over Buddhism the abiding faith of the ethnic people.

On the lunar month of *Tasaungmone* (November) the Pa-O ethnic nationals celebrate ‘*Pwekathin*’ or ‘*Kathein*’ robe offering ceremony. Generally the Pa-O nationals living in the Southern Shan State do not celebrate the *Tazaungtine* and *Kathein* festival with pomp and grandeur. However the Pa-O nationals living in the Zayatkyi Village, Toungoo District of Lower Myanmar use to celebrate this religious festival in grand manner. However the Pa-Os of the Southern Shan State herald the *Tazaungtine* festival by garlanding materials and utensils in triangular wooden frame shaped in the form of a tree on the 14th waxing day of *Tazaungmone*. The charity materials consist of robes for monks, umbrellas,

¹³ *Pa-O A-chet-a-let-myar*, 2002, 15

slippers, and utensils for use in the monasteries. Each ward of town or village competes with each other in competitive mood. It is also an endearing custom for townsfolk to scout the monastery which do not have the benefit of receiving the Kathein donation. The Pa-Os also contribute to the Taunggyi communal *Kathein* charity.

The Myanmar lunar month of *Nattaw* (December) heralds the new harvest season. A special festival called new crop eating festival is celebrated by the Pa-O nationals by long standing tradition. They also celebrate the ‘*Hkawpoke* pounding ceremony’,¹⁴ where new crop of glutinous rice is steamed and pounded to make sticky food delicacy. It is in this auspicious month of *Nattaw* that new crop donation is offered to the venerable monks of the Buddhist Order of the *Sanghas*. They also celebrate the *Sangha Pariwut* discipline, a special ceremony unique to the Pa-O nationals. They build temporary monastery for the *Sanghas* to observe this *Sangha* discipline.

The full moon night of the lunar month of *Tabotwe* (February) is the coldest month in the entire Shan State. The Pa-Os celebrated this night by lighting a huge lamp post called *Khayai* (Chone)’and pay respect to Lord Buddha and disciples. They also search and cut trees from the forests to make fuel wood and donate them *en masse* to the respective village and ward monasteries. This endearing ceremony is also called ‘Bonfire ceremony ‘mainly intended to give warmth to Lord Buddha when alive and now to the relics of Lord Buddha in commemoration of the traditional rites. Nowadays bonfire donation is offered to the venerable monks of the monasteries and old age grandpas and grandmas.¹⁵ In Pa-O ethnic dialect the word *Phayai* is interpreted as a huge lamp post to light fire to donate to the pagoda or monastery. To make such a lamp post a special weed called ‘*kalaw*’ is tied together to *Wanet* bamboo to form a tapered stake called *htu-*

¹⁴ Aye Myint, 1969, 124-126

¹⁵ *Pa-O A-chet-a-let-myar*, 2002, 18

chun. Then this stake is fixed on the outer four sides with green bamboos. This *Khayai* lamp post is from 5 to 10 feet long and the base measures from 1 foot to 1 foot six inches in diameter. The volunteers have to put the post in two rope loops at two ends and lifted from bow to stern to the destined place. The male volunteers carry the *Khayai* posts in their own communal groups. When they arrived at the Pagoda precinct the groups charged with the *Khayai* against each other while the attending observers cheered both contenders.¹⁶ Although this is a duel the elders and observers took great care to assure that no one is hurt. In effect it is a test of strength and dexterity carried out in fun and hilarity. The duel ended around 4 pm in the evening. Then the lamp poles are carried around the pagoda precinct to designated places where the earth is dug to fix the posts. Then with ceremony the poles are lighted. As the poles were made of reeds it burns very easily, excited to watch.

The cremation of venerable monks of the monasteries also occurs both in the towns and villages. The Shans also call it: '*Pwelaw*' in Pa-O dialect. In Myanmar language it is interpreted as: 'cart caravan festival'. The dead body of the expired monk is placed on a decorated cart and taken with utmost respect and ceremony to the place of cremation usually outside the village on open ground. The cremation site is prepared with paper decoration of banners, streamers. Firewood and in some deceased senior monks of the *Sangha* Order sandalwood is added to heighten the veneration in grand manner. Such cremation ceremony is usually held in the months of harvest in the open winter season extending from November to March of the New Year. The body is carefully preserved till the day of cremation when the villagers had reaped the harvest. The cremation celebration is then celebrated with tradition, pomp and ceremony in the months of *Pyatho* and *Tapodwe* (January and February) and lasts from ten to fifteen days.

¹⁶ Aye Naing, 1980, 412

As soon as a monk of the village monastery expires, a temporary decorated pandal is constructed in front of the entrance of the village monastery. It is called: '*Yaung Neikban*' where the body of the expired monk will rest temporarily till the cremation ceremony takes place. The corpse is moved into an inflammable receptacle designated as: '*Kwan*' in Pa-O dialect and guarded by village security day and night till the time when the holy corpse is either entombed or cremated. In the highly venerated religious ceremony sermons were delivered by '*Maws*' or Pa-O preachers. On the last night of the ceremony, the venerable hearse placed on '*Lu-law or cart of the deva or flying cart*'. A special nine-stranded bamboo rope (*kauk-kyo*) is woven to pull the flying cart aloft. Then the flying cart is placed on the flammable pier and burned. All temporarily constructed pandals are also burned. The pier is lighted with a rocket called '*May-shew*'. The burnt ashes were placed into an earthen burial urn and entombed into a pagoda or stupa where previous urns were buried years ago. The *Pwe-law* is one among the many popular festivities much enjoyed by the Pa-O nationals through their settlements in the country.¹⁷

Among the twelve traditional seasonal festivals of the Pa-O ethnic nationals, the novitiate ceremony is one of the most popular festivals enjoyed by the community at large with pomp and pageantry in their traditional ways. When the son is born to the Pa-O family, attention is focused to make him a novice when he arrives around the age of 10 till 18 years. At eighteen when he becomes an adult he reached the stage to become a full-fledged ordained monk. When a wife becomes sterile without an offspring of a boy the family adopts the son of a relative and celebrate a novitiate ceremony to gain merit.¹⁸ The novitiate ceremony is called '*Pwe-pan*'. However generally, the Pa-Os do not celebrate the

¹⁷ Mg Thaung, 1973, 14

¹⁸ Hla Pe, 1978, 43

novitiate ceremony alone single-handedly. It is usually celebrated communally. It is celebrated in the following manner. The village elders and the *thugyi* started grouping grown-up Pa-O youths from around the neighbouring villages well in advance, intending to celebrate group-novitiate ceremony around the fair weather open season of *Tabaung* and *Tagu* (March and April). Agreements and consensus have been negotiated with the parents and relatives well beforehand. The inter-village novitiate ceremony lasts for seven days.¹⁹ The donors of each novice usually entertain the relatives and guests of the individual at their homes as others entertain in similar ways. A temporary pandal is also built in front of the individual donor's home. When the procession of novices is to be arranged it is held in a group rather than individually because it adds a measure of grace, glamour and pleasantry to the occasion. A special monastery is designated to supervise the group charity called as: '*Godharagam*' combining three or four villages. Novitiate ceremony has to be held at the same time. If the novitiate ceremony is held within the same village it has to include seven households simultaneously as previously arranged well beforehand. Such group ceremony really entails much hard work as it involves quite a large number of persons to make it successful. Therefore invitations have to be made to the bachelor groups of neighbouring villages involved in the mass donation efforts. Generally around 50 to 300 novices participate in the novice-hood effort and take preparation of more than one year in advance. Preparations of food-staff also had to be made well in advance such as buying and stocking to cater to the guests who would be attending the solemn ceremony.

Imposing temporary open sheds (pandals) also had to be built in advance near the main monastery where the ceremony is to be celebrated. There is the central shed to celebrate the ceremony. Then follows at least one or two sheds to cater to the attending monks and guests from the surrounding villages and towns.

¹⁹ Aye Myint, 1969, 127

Then small sheds to cater Shan plain tea and desserts such as pickled tea, roasted ground nuts and local snacks and delicacies after meals are over. The Central Pandal is the special venue to perform the main novitiate ceremony such as converting the lay novice by donning the saffron robe to become a *koyin* monk. It is also a venue to seat the invited guests, parents and relatives of novices. Guests of relatives are entertained in specially allotted small pandals. Young volunteers comprising of village youths and damsels offer their voluntary services to cater to the teeming guests. In the evenings, lectures and religious sermons were delivered by learned Pa-O lecturers well versed in Buddhist scriptures known in ethnic dialect as '*Maw Aye*'. The sermons are pleasing in content and rhythmic renditions. The Pa-O damsels attended the ever continuing stream of guests in allotted turn of duty around twenty four hour rotation. Each of the temporary pandals was allocated to three or four donors of the villages. Sometimes a well affordable and rich donor took charge of a single pandal individually to entertain the guests. Thus in general on occasions where there were group novitiate ceremony involving 150 novices as many as twenty five small pandals had to be constructed. Around 500 volunteer youths and damsels had to be invited from surrounding villages for catering and entertainment. Special invitations to volunteers are also extended to entertain the VIP guests to the main Central Mandat pandal, to take part in the procession of novices, to hold saffron robes decorative platters and to sprinkle confetti of rice popcorn. On such elaborate ceremony, even manner of invitation tend to be different depending upon the status of the guests. The invitation is composed in verse form and read aloud in musical pitch and intonation. In olden days such ceremonial invitation cards are accompanied with pickled tea wrapped in tender green banana leaves. Date, time and venue are also mentioned on the invitation card. The celebration also provided

opportunity for youths to pay court to the eligible damsels to get engaged for betrothal.²⁰

The novitiate procession usually starts around one to 2 p.m. in the afternoon. Before such procession, the laymen who were to become novice monks were elaborately dressed and seated in the main room of the central pandal. In the meantime, the volunteer youths entertain the invited guests who came from near and far. Then parents and relatives of the lay novices tied the ceremonial cotton thread around the wrists of the lay novices. Religious verses and poems were recited by learned Pa-o Buddhist scholars.

After the ceremonies were over, the fully dressed lay novices were seated on the decorated horses and towed along in procession together with the offertories along with Pa-O musical troupes and headed towards the monastery where the novitiate ceremony were to be supervised by the presiding *Sayadaw* and attending junior monks. On arrival, the procession encircled the monastery for three rounds in a prescribed agenda. The gong troupe was the first to lead the procession, followed by the damsels carrying charity materials, damsels holding bowls of saffron robes, damsels carrying a tree decorated with donation materials, then followed by Shan drum musical troupe. Last to follow was the procession of decorative horses with novices astride their backs.²¹

In the order of procession, the fully decorated and saddled horse was placed at the head of the procession. In the forehead of the horse a small mirror was harnessed, a small packet of popcorn was tied with the small stick together with a small mirror. Two youths were given the responsibility of holding the saddle of the decorated horse. Two youths held along handled golden umbrella over a novice and two young damsels were given the task of scattering the popcorn in front of the walking horse, thus altogether six youths accompanied the leading

²⁰ *Dalay-hton-san-mya (Shan)*, 1969, 149

²¹ *Dalay-hton-san-mya (Shan)*, 1969, 254

horse where the novice was seated. As the first horse was regarded as the most auspicious and valuable in the entire procession care was taken to carefully select the horse to be well trained to withstand the din and bustle of various sounds and noises such as human noises, noises of drums and traditional musical instruments. In the same manner, other horses who can equally withstand the noises and strains and also carefully selected. The parents of novices, relatives, guests of the region fully believed that the novice ceremony is being blessed by the guardian spirits to see that no untoward incident can befall the ceremony.²²

The procession moved at a slow leisurely pace. There was some jokes and hilarity as it moved along. Some mischievous lads carried small glass mirrors and reflected the lights at the working young damsels. The drums troupe also played boisterously as the dancers romp with vigour and vitality. They also send small verses in honour of the donors, novices, attending guests and the volunteers. At the end of every verse, the musicians shouted “hway...hway...hway” to acknowledge the momentum of the music and dances.²³

In some novitiate ceremonies, there was a traditional prank made by some people in jest. The novice was fully dressed and decorated like a prince mounted on a similarly decorated horse and was drawn away at midnight. This traditional prank was also carried out in the novitiate ceremony where the novice was about to enter into full-fledged monk. Such celebration by the Pa-O community is called “thi-htet-taw-hwet-khan” in their ethnic dialect. In Myanmar language, it is called “renunciation by Prince *Siddhattha*.”. This responsibility of the novice procession undertaken by the youth community entailed much work. Therefore only youth volunteers were capable of performing the ceremony from start to finish. This Prince Siddhattha renunciation ceremony was also closely observed with interest

²² AshinThu Seitta , 2007, 50

²³ Aye Myint, 1969, 129

by the Pa-O community of the village.²⁴ By tradition and precedence the Pa-O community were overly generous in such charitable work. Such charitable tradition can be witnessed in such religious ceremony which can be seen in the Pa-O region especially in Panglong Township, Hopone Township and Hsee-hsaing Township.²⁵

At the end of such elaborate ceremonies, the laymen were dressed with the saffron robe of a monk of the Buddhist Order of the *Sangha* by the preceptor monks of the monastery. The newly ordained monks were tutored to recite the ten precepts of code of a monk after such *Sangha* formalities. All attending disciples were given the *Dhamma* sermons by the presiding learned monk of the ceremony. A libation or water pouring ceremony followed whereby all donation and charity work offered by parents, relatives of the novices and guests were acknowledged and after such ceremonies the solemn ceremony came to an auspicious end.²⁶

At the end of the novitiate ceremony of the Pa-O Village, the volunteers old and young celebrated “mee-su-khan” treat. The Pa-O community also called such treat as “taung”. Such ceremony was celebrated when the lay novices became the monk of the order of the *Sangha* and also at the night of the conclusion of the Buddhist sermons. The meaning of “mee-su-khan” conveyed the successful conclusion of the Novitiate ceremony which signified the joyous hilarity and merry making dances and songs of the participating volunteers. It is also customary for the donors of the group novitiate celebration to offer reward and prizes in form of cash to the volunteers. Such funds was saved by the youth association for future use when the occasion arises.²⁷ By observing the novitiate ceremonies of the Pa-O ethnic nationalities, we can assess the generosity in

²⁴ Ashin Thu Seitta, 2007, 51

²⁵ Khun Nwe, 1992, 389

²⁶ Ashin Thu Seitta, 2007, 51

²⁷ Khun Nwe, 1992, 394-396

charity, wealth and prosperity, and devout dedication in the Buddhist religion which truly reflected their personalities and culture.²⁸ Among the various ethnic nationalities in the Union of Myanmar there were special auspicious days reflected in the culture and society of their own ethnic races. The full moon day of *Tabaung* (March) is a day of special religious significance among the Pa-O nationalities. It can also be called as the Pa-O national day. The Pa-Os usually celebrated their national day on the full moon day of *Tabaung* of every year. It is believed that King Thuriya Sandar was born on the full moon day of *Tabaung* heralding auspicious ceremonies for Pa-O nationals. It was on that auspicious day that the Pa-Os cooked the rice harvested from their fields and donated them to the relic pagodas, venerable monks of the Pa-O monasteries, the relatives and elders of the Pa-O community in the towns and villages. It was in this national day that discussions, seminars and presentation of experiences were spontaneously held, and from such community discussions that the national day was designated in consensus by the entire Pa-O community.²⁹ In the present contemporary period, the Pa-O national day was celebrated on a broader basis reflecting significance in character and perspective at large. Generally the Pa-Os were not believers in the Nat spirits. However they offer due respects to the guardian spirits such as powerful devas guarding the Buddhist religion, guardians of the house, guardian of the villages, noble spirits, etc. with flowers, candles, and joss sticks. A special celebration for the guardian spirits of the house was celebrated on the *Kason* lunar calendar (April and May) in the Pa-O community as a whole. Special offertories such as local brew made with fish paste and rice were presented to them to bring health, happiness and wealth for such donation.³⁰ The Pa-Os also paid respect to the guardian spirits of the village in the same manner as the guardian spirits of the

²⁸ Mg Thaug, 1973, 52

²⁹ Khun Nwe, 1992, 398

³⁰ "Pyidaungsu Hte-ka Pa-O", 2009, 49-50

houses in the Myanmar month of *Nayone* (May-June). It was the tradition of the Pa-O Village community to build a large shrine under a large tree outside the respected villages to give respect to the guardian spirits of Buddhism and guardian spirits of the villages around their vicinity. The cost of such shrine was borne by the respected villages concern. Offertories such as fish paste, rice, salt, ginger and chilli were offered to the guardian spirits of the village by every family of the house of the villages to protect them from danger and evil. Special offerings were also given to the guardian spirits of Buddhist religion with cooked rice and meals on every full moon day and moonless day of the Myanmar lunar calendar. The afore-mentioned guardian spirits were involved with the entire Pa-O community as a whole.³¹ The Pa-Os also do not believe in underworld spirits such as witches, ghosts and devils. They also made due protection against the evil influence especially over the children by preparing amulets, runes, specially blessed cotton thread strands and tied them around their necks and on their wrists. Even some adults used to hang such protective devices on their necks and round their wrists to protect them from such evil influences and also act as love charms and love potions.³²

The Pa-Os also have the habit of consulting the astrologers, palmists and occultists to predict their future. Such consultations are also made when properties, materials, live animals such as cows, oxen, etc. were lost. Astrologers' consultation also extended to disputes and conflicts arising out of land and property, on weather condition, on the nature of harvest regarding agriculture such as paddy, potato, tomato, garlic and etc. Sometimes weird form of consultation such as calculating with chicken bone (htwarban), or calculating by scratching

³¹ J.G.Scott and J.P Herdimrn, *Gazatteer of Upper Burma on the Shan States*, Yangon, Vol.I, part.i, Government, Printing, 1900, p. 559 (Henceforth: Scott and Hardiman, 1900a)

³² Scott and Hardiman, 1900, 560

with stick, or calculating with the living frog and etc but such practices are disappearing in the society.

When the Pa-O children become sick, they perform a special ritual called “khaw-cha”. Such kind of practices was also adopted by Myanmar in a similar way such as feeding the ghosts “khaw-sar-kway”. If the young children become sick, the nature of which is regarded as suspicious beyond normal situation, they believe it to be cursed by the underworld spirits. The Pa-O called such supernatural situation as “tart-mu”. To bring about speedy recovery from such curse by the underworld spirit, food were given to please such ghosts and witches. Such kind of offering is called “khaw-cha”. The receptacle to place such food is called “khaw-sar-kwet”. This receptacle is woven with split bamboo strips. A strip of banana leaf was placed on the receptacle and cooked rice, special red and white rice cakes were placed in it. Candles, joss sticks also had to be lighted and placed in the receptacles. The nature of the offering have to be matched with the day, date and month of the affected children. As time goes on such old tradition and custom have almost disappeared in their community. For those sick people who lay invalid for a long time, the patient’s family regarded the sick as afflicted by bad luck and thus they invited the elders of the villages and treated them with meals to bring the sick back to health. In return the elders prayed for recovery and good luck, because they believe that such donations will certainly bring back health and happiness to the patient. Such offer of charity on behalf of the sick people is called “htauk-hsaw-nan” which bears the meaning of recovery and health to the sick persons.³³

The Pa-O nationals believe in their own traditional astrology which is distinct from the general astrology of the Myanmars. Such traditional astrology is calculated not by the mathematical computations but by observing the tips of the stick used by the traditional Pa-O astrologers. Such ethnic traditional astrology is

³³ *Dalay-hton-san-mya (Shan)*, 1969, 297-298

called “bam” in local dialect. There are bam astrologers in almost every Pa-O village predicting bam astrology, and they are known as: “htwar bam”. It is a common belief that for those who consulted bam and proved to be true did not prosper in business. The elders believe that the bam astrological calculations were derived from the lions and the tigers. The tigers and lions being kings of the jungle were very careful in their forays of hunting for their prey. Therefore it is said that they consulted the bam astrology before they hunt to assure safety and success. Such bam astrology may have descended from the kings of the wild long long ago, and thus the Pa-Os consulted the predictions of “hwar bam” in every Pa-O up to this day. The Pa-Os also believed in the Myanmar astrology in the same manner as traditional bam astrology. They called the Myanmar astrology as “pay tan”. After having consulted the Myanmar astrology it is customary for them to shift residence called *yaryi*. If the predictions foresee bad luck they engage in corrective devices such as lighting candles, propping the branches of the Bo tree with strong sticks, spanning bridges, offering candles, flowers and water glasses, their numbers calculated on the number of years of the affected person. In other similar propitious occasions such as building new houses, selecting auspicious grounds for building houses, engage in travels, carried out donations and offer their sons and daughters in marriage, etc, such practices are also performed.

There is also another kind of consultation called “frog astrology”. In that special case, the frog astrologer used a bamboo strip 3 feet (1 yard long), he then measured the fingers of the consultant. Then he measured from the middle finger to the tip of the elbow. Then, depending upon the length of the bamboo strip the astrologer made relevant predictions and corrective arrangements to bring luck and prosperity and to prevent impending misfortune to the consultant.³⁴

There is also another kind of astrological predictions called “chicken astrology”. That kind of astrology is generally consulted when certain properties

³⁴ *Pynnyar thiri*, 2003, 100-101

are lost to the persons concerned. The astrologer generally checked the exact location of the loss and stuck the chicken bone on the exact location. Then the astrologer carefully observed the nature of the chicken bone and gave relevant predications. Such nature of traditional astrology has been descended from the ancestry of forefathers down to the present generation. But the frog astrology and chicken astrology has almost disappeared. It is advisable that such traditional astrology should be maintained to preserve such practices from being lost forever.

The Pa-O ethnic nationalities carefully accept and practice as traditional customs and social mores from experiences drawn from environment, occurrences, prophecies and predictions. However when a wild buck enters a village, the villagers deemed it as bad luck and therefore offered alms, meals to the monks of the village monasteries for corrective action. In cases when a roving buck crosses the street of the travelling villager or when a tree falls across the street, it is regarded as hindrance or obstruction. Again when traveller finds a snake or a pregnant woman at birth, it is regarded as good luck for the traveller. If a mushroom curry is inadvertently or purposely fed to a guest, it is believed that he will not come back again. If the host really wants to feed such curry, he should ask token money from the guests to cook thus convey to the guest that he has bought the curry out of its own. In the course of eating or during rest if a person accidentally bites his tongue, it is believed that someone may be gossiping about him in his absence. When a person trips a rock while travelling, it is a warning of danger for him. When his right eye brow shakes, it is regarded a good luck. When the right lower eye lid shakes, it bores bad luck. If the upper eye lid shakes, it brings good luck.³⁵

All these customs and traditions mentioned above cannot be taken as correct *in toto*. However these practices have been in use from ancestry up to this day. It is a generally known fact that each ethnic nationality possesses its own

³⁵ Pynnyarthiri, 2003, 102-3

literature, language, customs, culture, civilization, moral and social values, etc. As society progresses, social and cultural values develop correspondingly in their relations. In such a situation spoken language was no longer sufficient, forcing them to resort to written language. Therefore the Pa-O nationals have developed their own written language and literature.³⁶ In general Pa-O literature is similar with the ancient Myanmar in basic alphabet and script. However the script is different in two ways, namely: main Pa-O, Shan(Taunggyi), and *Alantayar* (*Thatongyi*) respectively. In fact there are no striking differences in their basic scripts and alphabets. The Myanmar alphabets (vowels and consonants) were commonly used with minor alterations for many years up to this day.³⁷ Thus it can be construed that the Pa-O alphabet is an offshoot of the main Myanmar alphabet. But the pronunciation of the Pa-O vowels is not the same with the Myanmar pronunciation. For example the Myanmar alphabet '*tha*' is pronounced as 'sa'; 'sa' as 'kya'; and 'ya' pronounced as 'RA' respectively. The Pa-Os generally prefer to write letters in form of rhyming verses rather than in plain prose.³⁸

In Pa-O language they prefer religious literature rather than worldly literary writings. Such worldly writings tend to include those referring to astrology, astronomy, economy, trade and commerce, education, social affairs.³⁹ They were written by learned monks and lay scholars, learners, writers and scholars. Nowadays in the Southern Shan State the Buddhist *Tipitakat* scriptures documented in Myanmar language are being translated into Pa-O Shan language supervised by the learned Venerable Scholar *Sayadaws*. It is also customary that

³⁶ Khun Nwe, 1992, 377-381

³⁷ *Dalay-hton-san-mya (Shan)*, 1969, 336

³⁸ Pynnyarthiri, 2003, 4

³⁹ Khun Yrma, "*Pa-O Ahmyo-thar Sarpay Tha-maing*" (History of Pa-O Literature), Part.i, Type Script, Pa-O United Nations, September 1992, p. 129 (Henceforth: Khun Yama, 1992)

every Pa-O youths who come of age is obligated to enter into monkhood under the guardianship and direction of the *Sayadaw* and scholar monks of the village monastery. Therefore it is an endearing qualification for every male youth to be proficient in Pa-O language and literature as well as in Myanmar. It is also customary for every male adult youth who comes of age to be sent to the monastery to learn the Pa-O language and literature.

In the olden days, the Pa-O literature was written on the dried palm leaves with iron stylus. In later years, it was written on traditional Shan paper which was folded and written on both sides. In modern times, the Pa-O literature in Shan State (Taunggyi version) was printed by specially manufactured printing machine in first Taunggyi monastery in Shan State capital city. The Pa-O literature can be classified into three eras. The first era is generally called “Suvanabhummi Thaton Kingdom era”, in the heyday of Thaton Dynasty of Kings. The second era flourished in the Hsi-saing Region of the Shan State commonly known as “Thaton-Galay” also called as “Maingpyo Sayadaw Bhaddanta Withara era”. The third era is the present era also known as “Htihein Kyaing Sayadaw Bhaddanta Thunanda era” respectively.⁴⁰

It was observed that the Pa-O literature flourished in the same contemporary period of King Anawratha of the Bagan Kingdom and that of King Manuhar of the Thaton Kingdom around 10th Century AD. According to the version of elder Pa-O scholars and intellectuals, the era of Pa-O literature declined at the end of the era of King Manuhar when the king was held captive by King Anawratha after Thaton Kingdom was destroyed.

In 419 AD, the Thaton Kingdom was ransacked and destroyed by King Anawratha of Bagan Kingdom. After the destruction of Thaton Kingdom, the Pa-O ethnic nationals fled their original kingdom and migrated northwards to the

⁴⁰ *Dalay-hton-san-mya (Shan)*, 1969, 336

Upper Myanmar regions. The majority settled in the Southern Shan State⁴¹. The Pa-O nationals who settled in the Southern Shan State established the second era of Pa-O literature. They were the original founders of Hsi-saing previously known as Thatonkalay Region. The original founder of the second era of Pa-O literature was venerable Maing Pyo *Sayadaw* Ashin Kawithara, resident of South Nan Pan Village. “Maing” bears the meaning of Shan language and also can be interpreted as “Thai Kingdom”. The word “Pyo” bears the meaning of “Pa-O”.⁴² Therefore the word “Maing Pyo” came to be designated as the Pa-O Kingdom. The venerable Maing Pyo *Sayadaw* was fully dedicated to propagate Buddha *Sasana* in the Pa-O Region. In the auspicious religious days commemorating Hteravada Buddhism, the disciples and guests pay homage to the pagodas and also visited the village monastery to pay obeisance to the relics of Lord Buddha reposed on the shrines and donated offertories and sundry items to the venerable presiding *Sayadaw*. Then the *Sayadaw* delivered Buddhist sermons and advice in Pa-O language to the attending disciples.⁴³

The Venerable *Sayadaw* mentioned that the Pa-O ethnic language has its own distinct literary style and character. A literature is integral to the identity of a national race. Therefore it is extremely necessary to revive the teaching and learning of Pa-O language in the Pa-O community. In the history of Pa-O literature there are many famous illustrious scholars. They are:

1. Venerable Ming Pyo *Sayadaw* Baddanta Kawithara from Nyaung Shwe Township
2. Venerable Naung Heng *Sayadaw* from Hsi-saing Township

⁴¹ “*Zathokedha A-kyein A-see-yin-khan-sar*” (Forth Reports), Pa-O-a-myo-thar-a-phwe-choke, Taunggyi, October, 1989, p. 104 (Henceforth: Forth Reports, 1989)

⁴² Scott and Hardiman, 1900a, 555

⁴³ “*Wai-than-da-yar Zat-daw-gyi*”, *Parabaik* Manuscript, No.3, Phar Moon Monastery, Taunggyi Township (Henceforth: *Parabaik* Manuscript, No.3, Phar Moon Monastery)

3. Venerable Sanchwee *Sayadaw* Baddanta Nyarneindabidhaza from Taunggyi Township
4. Venerable Pinpwan *Sayadaw* U Thila from Pin Laung Township.⁴⁴

From among the learned scholar *Sayadaws*, Ming Pyo *Sayadaw* was famous for inventing the Pa-O literature and took over the noble task of translating *Tipitaka* Buddhist literature from original *Pali* to Pa-O language. The Venerable Pinpwan *Sayadaw* and Baung Pyaung *Sayadaw* also undertook to translate *Tipitaka* literature into Pa-O ethnic language. Venerable Sanchwee *Sayadaw* undertook to recompose the Buddhist literature from prose to verse to add style and rhythm for recitation. The Pa-O poets and lecturers recited the verse and prose sermons during the novitiate ceremonies and alms donation ceremonies.⁴⁵

In this manner, the Pa-O ethnic language and literature gradually progressed in time and spread over from the south of Taunggyi District to the west into Aung Ban and Heho regions. From that time onwards, the Pa-O ethnic nationals unanimously accepted the Pa-O language as the main literature and means of communication. However it can be observed that due to recent invention, orientation and usage there were unavoidable mistakes and weaknesses in vocabulary and pronunciation causing difficulties to the users.⁴⁶ Therefore Pa-O scholars tried assiduously to overcome those difficulties and eventually the history of Pa-O literature entered into the third era of its application and usage. Essentially the Pa-O literary books and papers printed from the Pa-O printing press located in the “Pahtamataung Kyaunggyi Monastery” in Taunggyi can be called as the third era of Pa-O literature. The present Taunggyi style has its foundation in the original Ming Pyo style. That Taunggyi style was originally used by Htithsein *Sayadaw* U Thunanda from Taunggyi Township in 1928. In his original version, a Pa-O word was pronounced in one intonation thus

⁴⁴ Pynnyarthiri, 2003, 43

⁴⁵ Khun Yama, 1991, 103

⁴⁶ Thuseitta, 2007, 58-9

synchronising the sound of the Pa-O script. The *Sayadaw* has envisioned that a Pa-O national who had learnt the Pa-O language will be able to read the Myanmar language too and tried to implement its effort. In 1933 at the invitation of the Nyaung Shwe *Sawbwa* Sao Shwe Thike to conduct the translation and recitation of *Tipitaka* Buddhist literature in Pa-O language, all venerable *Sayadaws* residing in Shan State numbering 100 accepted the *Sawbwa*'s invitation and participated in the Samkayana recitation of *Vinaya* five scriptures.⁴⁷ After recitation the scriptures were put into print and the completed corrected version of Pa-O *Tipitaka* literature was presented to *Sawbwa* Sao Shwe Thike by Venerable U Nanda, one of the participating Sanghas of the Pa-O Sangha Council.

In fact, Venerable U Thunanda of Tithein monastery had attempted to standardise Pa-O language and literature in a unified standard version to be used at the same level with Myanmar literature in the shortest possible moment since 1928.⁴⁸ In 1937, many Pa-O literature scripts were submitted to the patron of a Committee for prescribing new Pa-O language and literature. The new proposed scripts included not only Tithein scripts but also “Donelikaung script, Pin Sone scripts, Sakar scripts, Pintaya script, Lweput script, Baung script, etc.” Among the patrons were also included Mon Cheng *Sayadaw* U Nayreinda, Kan Oo *Sayadaw* U Maydiya, Inn-paw-khone *Sayadaw* U Thuriya, Naungka *Sayadaw* U Pandita respectively. After carefully scrutinising the submitted scripts, the script researched by Tithein *Sayadaw* was recommended and approved as the new alphabetical primer of the new Pa-O Buddhist literature.⁴⁹ The new Tithein script was reconfirmed by the Pa-O Supreme Council of Sangha scholars. Thereafter the

⁴⁷ Pynnyarthiri, 2003, 45

⁴⁸ Fourth Report, 1989, 106

⁴⁹ Bandenda Lakhantarmi, *Taunggyi Myone, Naung Kar-taung Kyaung Sayadaw Phayagyi Bandanda Panthitha Mahahtay ei Htay-rote-patti* (Taunggyi Township Naung Kar Sayadaw Phayagyi Bandanda Panthitha Mahahtay's Biography), Taunggyi, Ayezedi Monastery, pp. 159-60 (Henceforth : Lakhatarmi, 1990)

new course on Buddhist literature was inaugurated at “Htanphara Monastery” in Taunggyi Township. In that first course the Venerable Titheinka *Sayadaw* personally instructed the new Buddhist *Tipitaka* primer to the attending student monks.⁵⁰ In 1941 on 10th Waning day of *Wakhaung* (August), Venerable *Sayadaw* U Thunanda passed away at the age of 47, *Vara* (war, or years of monkhood) 23. After his demise the monks from the “Sasana-rakkhita Pa-O Sangha Association congregated with the objective of educating all Pa-O ethnic nationalities to become learned and well versed in their own language and literature. Thus new Pa-O schools were opened in Hsi-saing Region, Taunggyi Region, Mai-ne-taung region, Naungka Region, Kayuk-talone Region, which were densely populated by the Pa-O nationals to spread the learning of Pa-O language and literature. However due to difficulties in communication and backwardness of these Pa-O regions, such pursuit of Pa-O language could not be effectively implemented.⁵¹ In 1942, Pa-O schools were extended in Pintaan Monastery up to Taunggyi northern area. In 1944, Venerable Htanyar *Sayadaw* and Naungka *Sayadaw* continued their efforts to print *Tipitaka* literature in Pa-O language. In 1945, the Pa-O alphabets were moulded in lead from Yangon to be used in the Pa-O printing press at Taunggyi. In 1947, the Pa-O primer textbook was distributed in Pa-O schools free of charge. With such concerted efforts by the Pa-O *Sayadaws* and scholars, the Pa-O primer was studied with interest by the Pa-O community at large. From 1951 July onwards, a new Pa-O primer was upgraded with sketches and published with wider circulation.⁵² The Pa-O alphabetical order is arranged in such a way that it can easily be put into the printing press without changing original meaning and thus facilitate the manuscript and printing systems. All these upgrading are in conformity with the agreement of the Pa-O monks. In 1955, the second edition of the Pa-O alphabet text was published. In 1957, the Alphabetical Text Committee

⁵⁰ Latkhanartharmi, 1990, 162

⁵¹ Latkhanartharmi, 1990, 164

⁵² Forth Report, 2002, 106-7

has been reorganised with the help of the learned scholar monks of the 'Pahtama Kyaung Taik Monastery *Pariyatti* teaching institute located in Taunggyi, the capital city of the Shan State. The newly constituted Scholar Monk Committee thereafter lay down programmes and teaching methodology to facilitate progress of the Pa-O traditions and customs, to lay the foundations of the Pa-O education and basic systems of Buddhist culture and learning, and also to propagate and perpetuate Buddha *Sasana*.⁵³ In the years from 1956 to 1960, Buddhist fundamental training courses were instituted. From 1956 to 1960, training courses were conducted in Pin-moon, Naung-pyit, Kyauk-talone, Hsi-saing, Kyaunglwe-Karong respectively.⁵⁴ In Taunggyi, Pa-O language and literature training courses were conducted and necessary amendments and upgrading works carried out in Pahtamataung Kyaungtaik Monastery, the pioneer of the Pa-O language and literature.

Essentially customs, traditions, culture and social mores of the Pa-O ethnic nationalities were based on the teachings of Hteravada Buddhism, the principal religion of the people. The social and cultural beliefs and practices were inseparable from the Buddhist religion. In the Pa-O society there exist a class of Buddhist lecturer called 'Maw'. These orators deliver lectures and sermons on *jakatas*, *vinayas* and *nipata* stories on the anthology of Lord Buddha during many existences of Boddhisatta, with proper intonations and musical pitch to interest the audiences⁵⁵ similar to their Myanmar counterparts. There are two classes of 'Maws'. The one class of Maws are specially engaged in curing those patients afflicted with sorcery, witchcraft. Or being haunted by ghosts and evil spirits. The other class of Maws known as '*Maw-Ayes*' or orators who are engaged in teaching and lecturing on Buddhism. By definition the word, '*Maw*' is a Shan language which carries the meaning of being learned and proficient. Therefore the Maw

⁵³ Latkhanartharmi, 1990, 166

⁵⁴ Forth Report, 2002, 107

⁵⁵ Forth Report, 2002, 1

Aye scholar is deemed to be most learned in Buddhist scriptures, Pa-O language and literature as well as Myanmar language and literature.

The Pa-O nationals commonly name the lecture or oration delivered by the Maw Aye scholar as 'Hoe-maw'. The literal meaning of 'Hoe' conveys the musical pitch, rhyme and rhythm delivered by the orator to add interest for the audience. On Pa-O festive occasions such as: pagoda festivals, donation ceremonies, house-warming parties, condolence ceremonies these Maw-Aye lecturers were specially invited or hired to deliver lectures befitting the occasion.⁵⁶ For such special services the Maw Ayes charge from *Kyats* 20000/- to *Kyats* 100000/- depending on the nature and status of the ceremony or festival. These Maw Aye scholars are imbued with magnetic persuasive qualities to captivate the audience. Strategies were employed to sustain the continued interest for the entire duration of the lecture such as: quipping jokes, humour, and incidents of sadness and melancholy accompanied by body movements to fit the mood of the lecture.⁵⁷ Some Maw Ayes even recite poems, verses, ballads extemporaneously to gain praise and appreciation. In essence this Maw Aye scholastic learning has to be carefully studied under expert tutorship to become qualified for professional business in the Pa-O community.

In essence it is not at all easy to become a Pa-O Maw speaker. There are conditions needed to be such a qualified personality. They have to have wide general knowledge, have moral courage and valour, be possessed with clear persuasive voice and musical pitch and rhythm, must have sharp wit and humour, and the ability to draw the interest of the audience in the course and duration of the lecture. Basically the Maw speaker must be well versed in his understanding of the Buddhist canonical scriptures and teachings. Therefore he has to study in the

⁵⁶ Mg Khun Nwe (Inle), "Sar-haw Sayar" (The Lecture of Buddhist teacher), *Pa-O Tasaung Magazine*, Laikaw, Ngan Jay Press, October, 1995, p.76 (Henceforth : Khun Nwe, 1957)

⁵⁷ *Dalay-hton-san-mya (Shan)*, 1969, 255

monastic education schools opened in the monasteries supervised by the learned presiding *Sayadaws* and scholar monks of the teaching monasteries of Pa-O region. In addition, he has to be administered with magical potion tattooed into his skin to boost his energy to undergo the strain of the lecture.

The apprentice Maw speaker has to approach the learned Maw scholar as understudy to learn the art and skill of becoming a Maw. He has to be a humble disciple carrying out all duties not only of the trade, but also personal requirements and missions as the case may be. He has to follow the master on his lecture tours to attend to his personal needs, and carry out necessary preparations relevant to the lectures in collaboration with the host community.

In return the Maw master has to perform reciprocal duties towards his disciple. As an induction measure he has to teach his apprentice certain verses and poems such as praising the quality and virtue of the Maw master. Then he is taught the invocation to the Surassati Devi in form of verse, because the Devi princess is much loved by the womenfolk of Myanmar and the Shan State though she is originated from Indian Hindi Goddess. Then he is taught the rhyme, rhythm, intonation and musical pitch of the Pa-O words and sentences. Then as he progresses his training he is taught to lecture on simple Buddhist tales, *jatakas* of the lives of the Boddhissata during His many existences. Then to strengthen his basic knowledge of Buddhism he is taught to lecture on the principles of the three jewels namely: Lord Buddha, the Supreme Self-Enlightened One; *Dhamma*, the Buddhist Canonical Teachings; and Order of the *Sanghas*, the Monks who are the Disciples of Lord Buddha.⁵⁸ This young apprentice speaker is called ‘*Maw Wai*’ *young Maw speaker*’ in Pa-O language. These Maw Wais have to observe strict

⁵⁸ Khun Yama, “*Pa-O Ahmyo-thar Sarpay Tha-maing*”(History of Pa-O Literature), Part. II, Type Script, Pa-O United Nations, 1st Edition, September, 1999,p.67 (Henceforth: Khun Yama, 1999)

discipline, character, good morality and conduct conducive to the noble profession.

In the olden days the Maw speakers keep long hair tied in knot, a common hairdo of respectable elders of the community. Now-a-days this fashion has been discarded. Following the trend of the times he needs one bright coloured Pa-O suit, one traditional Yaw headwear, one bathing towel, one *gaung-baung* (head turban), and one pair of socks etc.⁵⁹ At the end of the lecture he was honoured with a fee or honorarium by the organizer or patron. When the lecture is related to the Myanmar *Anyeint* Show or short play, the audience give additional bonus to the speaker on some excerpts which strike their fancy. At the interval of the show certain persons from among the audience went around the audience to collect donations with a bowl of the betel box and the proceeds distributed to the dance troupe or the Maw speakers. As for the Maw lecturers, the leader gets the lion's share of the collection. At the end of the Maw lecture, some enterprising youths approached the speaker for more intimate discussion or with requests for repeat of certain verses from his main lecture which the speaker willingly obliged to the satisfaction of both parties.

In essence, it will not be wrong to say that the Maw lecturers were missionaries to propagate Buddhism in all regions of the Pa-O community but there are some women who tend to speak ill of the Maw lecturers more or less jokingly: “if you marry a teacher, you will have to sleep apart. If you marry a Maw lecturer, you will sleep peacefully. If you marry a lazy man, you will sleep warmly.” Some understandable women however say that “if you see a fresh tender *Eugenia* leafs, you will remember your teacher husband”. “If you see tender grass, you will remember your Maw husband. If you see a rusted iron, you will remember your blacksmith husband.” Such words of praise rendered by some

⁵⁹ Khun Yama, 1999, 26-30

women can also be found among the women society. However as much emphasis is now given to the teaching of modern literature by voluntary societies, the teaching of religious literature has been on the decline. It can also be said that literature, culture and language of the Pa-O ethnic nationalities are principally dependent on the Maw teachers. The Maw lecturers have to be fluent and versatile in delivering the lectures to suit the occasion. If the ceremony is related to the novitiation celebration he has to deliver lectures concerned with novitiation ceremony. If it concerns with the offer of alms for sabbatical occasions, the lectures shall have to deal with the virtues that will benefit the donor and his relatives. The Maw lecturer needs to make preparations in accordance with the time, the place and the subject matter at hand. The donor also has certain preconditions to fulfil such as preparing a puja bowl with Eugenia leaves, grass, and the amount of money to be donated to the Maw speaker. The Pa-O Maw speakers need to be very careful of the behaviour, character, dress and courtesy so as to please the audience in the delivery. In the beginning of the Buddhist sermons, obeisance will have to be paid to the three jewels, namely Lord Buddha, Dhamma and the Order of Monks. Then respect need to be rendered to the nine principal virtues of Lord Buddha. Afterwards invocation also need to be given to the Surasatti Guardian Devi to bring about blessings, virtue and good luck to the audience as well as to the Maw speaker.

The Maw *Saya* on every occasion has to respond to the likes and dislikes of the audience he is lecturing, whether intellectual or unruly audience. His voice and tone of delivery must also fit trend of the lecture. His voice must be clear and loud. His facial expression must also be lively.⁶⁰ When the subject matter deals with the virtue of donation, the good and the evil, he must deliver the sermons in such a way that he can persuade the mood of the audience to be mindful of doing the virtual deeds and abstain from committing evil. He must also speak to increase the

⁶⁰ Khun Yama, 1999, 31

general knowledge of religion and benefits of charity. He must persuade the donor in such a way that he will help increase his generosity in his mission. The Maw speaker also must have the ability to reform the bad people to become polite and cultured. In a fact, the Maw lecturers were the intellectuals who can help promote education and general knowledge, and also propagate the religious aspects of the Pa-O ethnic nationalities.⁶¹ As the Maw lectures delivered by the Maw *Saya* are mostly in the Pa-O language, it can be easily understood by the Pa-O audience. However the Maw lecturers carry on their professional trade more or less on individual basis. It will be more beneficial to the Pa-O Maws to be systematically organised as an association so that they can move in harmony and also develop their association and trade and maintain its continuity for future generations.

It is heartening to note that the Pa-O ethnic nationalities have developed their own intrinsic language and literature. They also prefer composing themes more in verse, ballad and poetry than in plain prose. They also like to speak and deliver lectures in verse mixed with simple prose. It is most striking that the Pa-O verse and poetry are very musical and pleasant to listen. When a person studies the handwritten *parabaik* written by a Pa-O national, it is similar in many ways like the Myanmar manuscript because they tend to give respect to the three jewels like their Myanmar counterpart. The body of the literature is composed in rhymes. At the end of the manuscript the Pa-O scholars blessed the buyers with good wishes for health and prosperity, and their future wellbeing as a result of their donation of the *parabaik*.⁶² Thus the Pa-O *parabaiks* truly reflect the devotion and dedication towards Buddhism. Therefore the modern Pa-O educators, scholars and youths need to give in-depth study and research on what has been written in *parabaik* and also to transform them into books for growth and development of Pa-O literature through successive generations.

⁶¹ Khun Nwe, 1992, 191

⁶² Khun Nwe, 1992, 192-193

Retracing the chronology of Pa-O literature written by scholars since ancient times, the early literary works were observed to be composed in verse poetry and ballad forms. Such literary compositions were known in Pa-O dialect as “ngaung-tet or wai-tet”. They generally mean comparison, description of the idea, location and thematic approach etc. Such early versification were meant more to be read aloud, enabling the audience to enjoy their musical pitch, intonation and meaning, generally touching on local ceremonies and celebrations concerning Pagoda festivals, ceremonies held in the monasteries, house warming parties etc. Formation and descriptions of villages and regions were also interestingly composed in ngaung-tet verses.⁶³

The Maw lecturer can always be versatile in his delivery. Sometimes he alternates his lecture with proverbs, riddles and legends, making the family audience absorbed with interest in resolving the riddles. Sometimes in that family gathering, the Maw lecturer who has earned the respect of the community talked on the intimate matters of the family and children and also indebtedness in their business transactions. Sometimes the Maw speaker goes out of his way to compose verses and poems extemporaneously.

In those hilly regions of the Shan State due to severely cold weather, such community talks were delivered around the central open fire like the common bonfire assembly where old and young gathered around the fire to get the warmth as well as to listen to those invaluable experiences handed down from the old to the younger generations. All interesting episodes, anecdotes, and maxims were generally handed down by learned elders to the younger generations, thus forming oral history spreading along the entire region. In this manner, the residents of the hilly region gather extensive knowledge and experience concerning their special ethnic environment and habitation. Many of such oral anecdotes were lost in the

⁶³ Khun Nwe, 1992, 150-152

passage of time but nevertheless many remain as precious heritage of literature, culture and morality.⁶⁴

Like other ethnic nationalities the Pa-Os have their own collection of proverbs, maxims and anecdotes. Such proverbs are called “ngong toi” in Pa-O language, carrying the meaning of allegory. The Pa-O proverbs were derived from their way of living, their eating habits, way of reasoning and philosophy. Some of the proverbs were adopted from their traditional legends, jatakas and chronology of Bothissatta, admonitions and verses. Studies into the many varying episodes of Pa-O literature bring forth diverse styles of the literary expositions. Samples of the following maxims will describe such flowery feelings as mentioned below:

- (1) An egg will break when it falls on a rock;
the egg will also break when a rock falls on it.
- (2) If you intend to buy land, buy it immediately;
if you intend to marry a girl, think slowly and carefully.
- (3) You aim to hit a rat, but you hit a bird;
what you want is a buffalo, what you get is a cow.
- (4) Before you enter the water, try to measure the depth with a stick

The cow can endure heat; the buffalo can endure the cold; a lazy man can endure rebuke.⁶⁵

Such variety of proverbs can certainly direct and advise people towards reason and righteousness in reading, writing and speaking. The type of riddles serves in creating and questioning the audience with animate and inanimate objects which exist around him. The Pa-O nationals use to compose riddles among one another. The riddles are more commonly used by the children. The Pa-

⁶⁴ Khun Nwe, 1992, 7-8

⁶⁵ Aung Thein and Min Naing, *Taing-yin-thar-yoe-yar-pon-pyin* (The Ethnic Legend), Yangon, Ministry of Culture, 1989, p. 142 (Henceforth: Aung Thein and Min Naing, 1989)

Os use to define such riddle making as “ngaung-tut-loh-wan”. The riddle is called “naung tut”. The riddle making is composed by youth girls, children and adults without discrimination. The elders used such riddles to test the intelligence of the young children. Such riddle making is usually employed to sharpen the intellectual and reasoning capacity of the community as a whole. Some riddles are described below to portray the variety and nature as follows:

- (1) Take the tree as wood, the bulk as fish scales and the leaf as needle. What is it? (Pine tree)
- (2) Two children in a running competition in a race to win. What is it? (a pair of legs)
- (3) With upturned lips storing bushes. What is it? (flower vase)
- (4) Let it be correct. If not it pokes out its tongue. What is it? (a traditional scale)
- (5) A dead man carrying a live man. What is it? (a square bamboo prop holding pea vines)

Such kinds of riddles amuse the children in their search for answers and also develop community harmony. In some villages, the bachelors used to make riddles during their courtship rounds to eligible girls in the villages.⁶⁶

In the Union of Myanmar, the legends, proverbs and tales which existed among the various ethnic nationalities living in different parts of the Union in the hills and the plains have descended from their forefathers who had made their settlements in their respective regions. Such legends had their origins long time ago as ethnic heritage to be treasured and preserved by a long line of succeeding generations. It can be assumed that the elder forefathers gathered around the open fire as their young children huddled around listening to the fascinating tales and automatically memorizing them. Many of these legends were long lost but what remains were treasured and put into print for perpetual use to this day. Such

⁶⁶ Pynnyarthiri, 2003, 57-58

ethnic legends clearly portray their traditional culture, customs, rites and rituals, and were handed down through many successive generations by word of mouth. Such oral documentation also has persisted through years of their settlement. Eventually in the process of time and development, such oral documentation were put into print and published for record and studied.⁶⁷

In this context and interesting legend of the Pa-O ethnic national called “in true justice (*tayar thabaw*)” written by author Ludu U Hla will be briefly described below:

“Once upon a time, a princess was born to the reigning king. However the princess was very beautiful and proud regarding herself as too unworthy of the suitor princes of other countries who came to ask for her hand in marriage. One intelligent prince from among the suitors has the wit to teach the proud princess a lesson. On the first day of his approach to the princess, he brought gold nuggets on a gold platter. On the second day, he brought silver nuggets on a silver platter. On the third day, he brought copper nuggets on a copper platter. The proud princess was furious and asked the prince the meaning of his gift. The clever prince wittily replied that it is human nature for her to grow old and lose beauty as the day passes. Therefore to remind her of the growing age and withering beauty, the witty prince had pointed out to her that, like the value of the precious metals her pride and value will also be correspondingly diminished. The proud princess who was no less learned, immediately understood the message of the prince and sought refuge in religion, and eventually became a nun “*bikkhunima*” for life after renouncing the life of luxury. That legend by Ludu U Hla had directly portrayed the message of Buddha’s teaching in a short and direct manner. This message also touched on impermanence, eventual aging and uncontrollable nature of human existence.”

⁶⁷ Khun Nwe, 1984, 57-61

In the same manner as other ethnic nationalities, the Pa-O children naturally composed and recite while in play among their own playmates. Such proverbs have clearly portrayed their region, environment, customs, habits, rites and rituals. For example, observed the following poems:

- (1) Pa-O – Lamar Labway, Lophyar, Beinkyaung
- (2) Lwaylong Sai-ti, Lway aun tahtee

Myanmar translation – on full moon and dark moon days, the old people visit the monasteries to observe the holy precepts of discipline. They also offer alms to the village pagoda in such holy days, let us enjoy eating bananas.⁶⁸

The Pa-O ethnic nationalities profess Buddhism as their religion and strictly observed its sermons, teaching and discipline. On Buddhist Sabbath days they take complete rest from work. They staunchly believe that working on Sabbath days will not give them prosperity and wealth. On every full moon and dark moon day the elders consistently keep Sabbath observing the higher precepts of disciplines. The young children however, true to nature think only of enjoyment and fun. On such holy days, they made a point to visit monasteries to enjoy lots of bananas given to them by the presiding monks and the elders. Therefore it is natural that these young children look forward to those days with high expectations. While in play, they naturally manage to compose poems describing the true nature of the elders and their joy of partaking the charity of the monks and elders. It was not known how, when and who composed such interesting poems, but it can however be assumed that it might have been composed at random while in play. It is highly commendable that such interesting custom need to be strictly maintained.

There are also many traditional songs and musical instruments among the Pa-O ethnic nationals. Although traditional culture, customs, rites and rituals may tend to be similar the manner of singing, dancing, playing the musical instruments and their themes are slightly different according to their locality and tribes. The

⁶⁸ Aung Thein and Min Naing, 1989, 140

Pa-O culture, tradition and social trends had their basic foundation in Buddhism. As such in the course of religious festivals, the theme of their songs and dances are mostly centred in their religious teachings, stories and admonitions. Among the traditional Pa-O musical instruments played by the Pa-O nationals, there are four kinds of gong instruments. They are:

- (1) Maung myu or the large gong
- (2) Maung laung or gong string instrumentation
- (3) Htone-may-swar or long drum and gong instrumentation
- (4) Htone htoing or short drum and gong string instrumentation

In the mong myu or the large gong instrument, the largest gong measures 2' 2" in diameter and 7'2" in length and the smallest one measures 6" in diameter. The large gong instrumentation consists of 7 gongs from the largest to the smallest in their serial order. When the gong instrumentation is played in musical harmony, it brings forth a very pleasing melody.

In this large gong string orchestra, the Pa-O named "maung myu" was designated due to the largest gong included in this instrument. In Myanmar terminology it is known as large gong.⁶⁹ To play this gong it had to be strung on the shoulders of two strong men and be struck in accordance with the musical tune. The smaller gongs and the cymbals are played individually by members of the team. The double based drum is played by a single man only. The musical instruments included in the maung myu orchestra are as follows:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|----------|
| (1) Gongs | - | 7 number |
| (2) Large cymbals | - | 1 pair |
| (3) Double ended drum | - | 1 number |
| (4) Timing instrument (Sie) | - | 1 pair |

⁶⁹ Khun Nwe, 1984, 54

In that maung myu gong orchestra, ten persons are needed to strike the large gong orchestra. In that orchestration, the cymbal player is the lead instrumentalist and other players follow the mood and tempo of the lead cymbal player. The maung myu gong player usually takes time to strike the gong string in modulated tempo. Therefore the gong string instrument was usually played by elder and more experienced players. The dancers accompanying the gong instrumentation need no special training but follow the musical lead of the gong assembly by moving their head, hands and feet in musical beat and rhythm. Whenever a song and the accompanying dance ended, the singers and the players use to shout “hwa-hwa-hu” in chorus to end that song and dance beat. In this manner, maung myu musical instrumentation and dance ensemble provided the means to foster harmony and friendship among the Pa-O nationals.⁷⁰

Among the music and dance orchestration of traditional Pa-O drama, this maung myu orchestra is one of the most popular dramas played by the nationals in common. This maung myu orchestration are always played in popular ceremonies and festivals such as *Thingyan* and new year festival, *Thidinkyut* lighting festival, *Tazaung-mone* pagoda festival, group *Kathein* and group novitiate festival, sacred hti hoisting festival, monastery donation festival, and celebration of Pa-O ethnic national day, etc.

In the traditional “htone-may-bwar” (long drum and gong instrumentation), the musical instrument included:

- 1) Long drum – 1 number
- 2) 2 gong – 5 or 7 numbers
- 3) Cymbals – 1 pair
- 4) Timing instrument – 1 pair

⁷⁰ “*Pyidaungsu Hte –ka Pa-O*”, 2009, 196-197

To play on this *htone-may-bwar* long drum and gong assembly, eight people are needed, if the drum is rather large and long two players are needed to shoulder the top portion of the drum and one at the tail end to lift it aloft from the ground.⁷¹

In addition, five or seven gong pieces form an essential accompaniment to the *htone-may-bwa* musical troupe. The size of gong varied in series from large to small forming seven pieces in number and need to be played in harmony. This *htone-may-bwa* drum-gong-troupe is normally played in religious and social festivities and celebrations. As it produced live activity and boisterous merry making, this *htone-may-bwa* drum-gong-troupe goes very well with traditional verse recitation “ngaung-ke”. However the style of musical melody and instrumentation differs with the region and ethnicity of the Pa-O nationals. The common dance accompaniment to this instrumentation is easily performed by men and women, youth and elders either individually or in a group, making it a perfect and interesting match, and the most popular among the musical instrumentation and dance ensemble.⁷²

Among the Pa-O traditional musical instruments “htone htoine” or short drum and gong orchestration also is very popular. It includes the following:

- 1) Short drum - 1 number
- 2) Cymbal - 1 pair
- 3) Gong - 3 numbers
- 4) Bamboo clapper - 1 number respectively.

This *htone htoine* short drum and gong instrument seems to be comparatively lighter to handle and easier to play. Only six players are needed to play this *htone htoine* instrumentation and can be played both on slow as well as fast music beat and rhythm. The elder audience prefer slow beat and rhythm,

⁷¹ *Pa-O Sapay hnint Yin Kyay hmu*, 2002, 24

⁷² *Pa-O Sapay hnint Yin Kyay hmu*, 2002, 25

which is usually played by older and more experienced players. The young audience however prefer the fast beat and tempo. The melody, harmony, and tempo of the music depends on the skill and dexterity of the drummer. It is observed that the Pa-O traditional instrumentation and melody differs from other ethnic nationalities as they adopt the music and song of their traditional forefathers. In the choreography of the Pa-O dancers, they adopt “hway-nai-hway” chorus, musical pitch and tunes in the traditional festivities and celebrations.⁷³

The traditional dances still danced and enjoyed by the Pa-O nationals since the olden times to the present days consist of six in number. They are:

- 1) Maung moo or large gong dance
- 2) Htone-mai-swar or long drum and gong dance
- 3) Htone-htoine or short drum and gong dance
- 4) Tiririrok dance
- 5) Thein-lar-khan-bi dance (cheroot leaf plucking dance), and
- 6) Tea leaf plucking dance respectively.⁷⁴

The Pa-O dances demonstrate their national identity, intimacy and harmony. The maung moo or large gong orchestration is danced in form of Shan martial art steps. It was generally danced by the elder dancers. The mong htaung or maung string music dance was preferred by the youth dancers. Htone htoine or short drum gong dance was enjoyed by the young and the old in form of martial art steps and also by sword display with beautiful and supple body movements. The maung moo and htone-mai-swar dances are generally displayed in traditional festivals and *Thindinkyut* festival. The htone htoine orchestration is one of the most ancient Pa-O traditional dances. It was generally included in the rocket firing festivals and alms offering at the end of the three-month lent ceremony. The

⁷³ Aye Myint, 1969, 75

⁷⁴ “Pyidaungsu Hte-ka Pa-O”, 2009, 196-197

tirirrok dance also forms one of the most popular Pa-O dances and is included in the popular Buddhist festival such as novitiation ceremonies for young novices and full-fledged monks. The tirirrok song was originally pioneered by Khun Thar Dun (Animal Husbandry) who originally organised the modern musical troupe and was composed and sung personally by himself.⁷⁵ As the song and dance ensemble portrays group demonstration of their scenes and sentiments of their ethnic society, it was displayed at harvest time and time of sowing paddy seeds at the start of the plantation season. The dances are active, lively and distinctly portray the actual scenes as it actually happens in their environment. The htone htoine dances usually accompanied rocket firing festive season and meal offerings donated by the villagers at the end of Buddhist lent season.⁷⁶

In the pursuit of their economy, trade and commerce, the cheroot leaf business forms one of the essential enterprises of the Pa-O nationals. It was so popular that cheroot leaf plucking group dance or “*thein-lar-khe-vee*” meaning the golden cheroot leaf was always included in the Pa-O festivities such as Buddhist ceremonies, charity offerings and traditional ceremonies. The male members use to sing the songs and the women performers dance according to the tunes and rhythms of the male singers.

Among the more popular traditional dances of Pa-O nationals tea leaf plucking dance also forms a no less popular item in their song and dance symphony. The musical and dance troupe use to portray the various stages of tea-leaf processing in form of dances such as plucking leaves, drying the green leaves in the sun, preparing the dry leaves into edible items such as making plain tea for drinking. This tea-leaf planting and preparing process is also entertained in the popular religious and social festivities.

⁷⁵ *Pa-O Sapay hnint Yin Kyay hmu*, 2002, 25

⁷⁶ *Pa-O Sapay hnint Yin Kyay hmu*, 2002, 23

Among the many traditional dances of the Pa-O ethnic nationals, emphasis is centred more on group dances than on individual performances. One striking aspect is that the Pa-O dancers both male and female use to wear dark colour dresses in all the performances.

The musical instruments of the Pa-O nationals also include wind instruments in addition to the percussion but they were infrequently used. The wind instruments include “ta-kwar-war” or wind instrument made of bamboo and “ta-kwar-pasi” or wind instrument made of iron and brass. The wind instruments are played most commonly by the male youths at the time of harvest and by women workers at the time of plantation. Another kind of instrument called “taung-lit” is made from long bamboo, fixed with dried gourd at the top. This wind instrument is played during herding cows, attending the garden, at leisure time, and on enduring courtship. There are also string instruments called *tayaw* (violin) and banjo which are slightly similar to the Myanmar instrument but different in the form of play. There are also “tin” or mandolin and hand accordion. However Pa-O musical composition played by wind instruments and string instruments are comparatively fewer than other percussion instruments like cymbals, bamboo clappers, gongs and drums.

The Shan long drum is very popularly played among the various ethnic nationalities living in the hilly regions such as Shans, Pa-Os, Palaungs, Dhanus and Innthars commonly in the Southern Shan State. When the sound of Shan *Ohsi* long drum was heard, it can be instantly recognised that the somewhere in the region nearby, donation ceremony or ethnic funfair is being organised with pomp and pageantry, fun and hilarity. The Pa-O Shan *Ohsi* players play their best with power, vigour and vitality. In the making of the Shan long drum the main surface measures one foot in diameter and the length is five to six feet that of a normal adult. The Shan long drum orchestra consists of one large drum, a pair of cymbals, and gong instrument of seven to nine gongs fastened in serial order with

a string attached to a square wooden frame. The musical instrumentation is regarded as complete only when these instruments are included and produce high melody pleasing to the ears of the audience. There is no difference between the Shan drum orchestra and the Pa-O drum orchestra. There are also many varieties of drums in the Shan State. The drums played by various ethnic nationalities are: Shan drum, Dhanu drum, Htone-Htein drum and large drum, etc. The Shan drums can be played by all ethnic nationalities living in the Shan State.⁷⁷ The Shan *Ozi* is made with a special type of timber called “*Yamanay*” because that kind of wood has a soft texture and easy to make.

The Shan *Ozi* is called in Pa-O dialect as “*htone-kun-yong*”. The definition *htone-kun-yong* comes from the Shan language meaning the drum with a long body. It is usually played in all seasonal festivals held in the Shan State such as novitiate ceremony, rocket firing ceremony, Buddhist recitation ceremony (sar-yai-tan-pwe), *Thidingyut* festival, *Kahtein* robe offering festival, fire balloon hoisting festival, and *Tazaungtaing* festival. The Shan *Ozi* orchestration is played accompanied by song and verse recitation, as well as traditional dances.⁷⁸ By watching and enjoying the Pa-O traditional dances and songs, an observer can distinctly notice their national identity, friendliness, intimacy, ethnic harmony and cooperation.

To summarise on the essential qualities of the Pa-O culture, customs, behaviour, rites and rituals, it can be said that the Pa-O nationals in general are on an equal level if not superior to other ethnic nationalities living in the Union of Myanmar in areas of devotion and respect to the Buddhist religious faith, belief and dedication. They believe that the Buddhist sermons, admonitions, moral disciplines and code of conduct are essential guidelines meant to be maintained and followed by the entire Pa-O community as a whole. They also celebrate the

⁷⁷ Hla Pe, 1973, 39

⁷⁸ Khun Nwe, 1980, 42

Buddhist seasonal festivals all year round the twelve lunar months. In ‘*Tagu*’, the first month of the Myanmar lunar calendar (April), the *Thingyan* water festival and the New Year festival is celebrated. In the month of *Kasone* and *Nayone* (May and June) the sacred festival of pouring water to the sacred Bodhi Tree, and the “luphy or rocket festival” are celebrated. In the months of *Wazo* and *Wakhaung* (July and August) and *Tawthalin* (September), alms donation festivals are held on Sabbath days either at the monasteries or in the homes of Buddhist elders and families. In the month of *Thadingyut*, end of Buddhist Lent (October), a special festival called *Maybo* or *Mawlaung* festival is held. In the month of *Tazaungmone* (November), *Kathein* robe offering festival is held. In the month of *Nattaw* (December), the sticky rice pounding festival is held. In the month of *Pyatho* (January), rice porridge offering ceremony is held. In the month of *Tabotwe* (February) “*Khaye* or *Chone*” festival is held, and in the final lunar month of *Tabaung* (March), novitiate ceremony and the Pa-O national day ceremony are held in pomp and pageantry, fun and hilarity.

In the course of development through the passage of time the Pa-Os have developed materially towards growth and modernisation. However they have consistently maintained the belief and dedication towards Buddhism with unflinching consistency. They even coined a saying: “earning five *pyas* (cents) and donating ten *pyas* is the unrivalled dictum of us Shan, Pa-Os”. The Pa-O nationals are very generous in the act of charity so much so that they keep no reserve in donating what they have earned. They give voluntary service in any way possible wholeheartedly in all sectors of charity as well as in social and voluntary affairs which they maintain even to this day.

Although the Pa-O nationals are traditionally adherents of Buddhist religion, some still continue to profess worship of ancestral spirits and divine beings which they had adopted before the advent of Hteravada Buddhism from Myanmar into the Shan State at large. In most of the villages there are found

shrines being built for the guardian spirits at convenient locations such as spirits of the house, village, and fields etc. Offerings are given to invoke their power in times of crop failure, natural calamity, and sickness of members of the family, when a new village is to be established, offerings are made to the guardian spirits by building a new shrine, and invoking their power to bring luck and prosperity to the villagers. On the month of *Nayon* the month of worship of the *nat* spirits, flowers, incense such as joss sticks, candles, fruits, pickled *laphet*, betel quid are offered on a regular basis. A grand *nat* festival “*Nat Kannar*” is celebrated to propitiate these guardian spirits. At certain villages, animal sacrifices are made as offering in extreme circumstances practiced long before they were converted to Buddhism and such brutal sacrifices are now totally abandoned. It is believed that propitiating the guardian spirits and invoking their spiritual power may help prevent danger, epidemics and natural calamity from affecting the villages protected by them. However in the present day of modernization and development, such *nat* worship is progressively declining as devotion and worship of Buddhism has increased.

In the present contemporary era, the Pa-O literary activities are being pursued in form of various publications with emphasis on prose, poetry, verse, ballads, novels, short and long fiction, and article presentations. The Pa-O learned monks in the Order of the Buddhist *Sanghas* have also helped momentarily to disseminate the growth and spread of the Pa-O literature among the community at large. To enable every Pa-O youth to be literate in the Pa-O language and literature, courses are being opened to conduct literacy training courses and teachers’ training courses every year in the village tracts in rotation. It is an essential fact that the perpetuation of national identity depends upon the progress and development of literature. Therefore the Pa-O language and literature is the basic factor for the development of both the material and psychological aspect of the Pa-O ethnic nationals. Thus every Pa-O national will need to develop the will

to understand and the will to know about language, literature and general knowledge of the world and environment. Only then their community will experience sustain growth and progress.

Whenever a charity celebration is held in the Pa-O community, it is always accompanied by singing, dancing, and musical accompaniment. The basic musical instrument in the Pa-O musical orchestration is the Shan *Ozi* or Shan drum. The liveliness of the musical play depends on the player of the Shan drum. Only the drummer with his consummate skills, dexterity and experience can excite and interest the players, the dancers, the singers and the general spectators. The Pa-O nationals have an identity and style quite different from other ethnic national communities. The celebration of seasonal festivals is based on religious ceremonies which eventually lead to maintenance and development of traditional culture, customs, rites and rituals. The maintenance and development of traditional culture, language and literature are vital for the maintenance and perpetuation of one's own community among various ethnic nationalities making the Shan State their permanent settlement and habitation from time immemorial to this day.

CONCLUSION

This doctoral thesis has attempted to make a research study on the history of Pa-O ethnic nationality of the Southern Shan State. From time immemorial these Pa-O nationalities have made Southern Shan State their permanent settlement. In time they have developed their economic foundation, social conditions, civilization, culture, tradition, habits and customs which the candidate has elaborated in the body of this thesis. Many of the ethnic nationalities who have migrated into Myanmar had their origins in the Mongolian highlands west of the China proper. In the process of migration, they branched out into three main nationalities as they enter into Myanmar. En route some of the lesser tribes among the major ethnic groups have disappeared, and some tribes had not yet merged into one strong ethnic group as they dispersed themselves into two or three convenient geographical regions. It has been observed that the Pa-O (Taung thu) nationalities settled among the Karen and Shan tribes and became mingled among them which evidently numbered around 70 sub-tribes. It can also be presumed that in that process the Myanmar, Shan and Karen blood line can be conveniently merged. It can also be surmised that in the formation of the ethnic languages there are similarities between the Pa-O and Poe Karen dialects. It has been accepted that Pa-O ethnic nationalities were descended from the Poe Karen ethnic groups. The first settlement of the Pa-O nationalities was centred in *Thuwunna Bhummi* or Thaton Kingdom city where 150 dynasties of Pa-O Kings reigned continuously. It was followed by Mon-Pa-O Kings which numbered 18 dynasties. Tracing the ancient history of Thaton Mon Kings, it was found that the Pa-O Mon nationals had made Thaton area their centre of settlement. However in the Myanmar history there was no mention of Pa-Os settling in Thaton area. The reason may

have been accounted as such because it was observed that as the Pa-O and Mons were living together as one ethnic nationality, the Myanmar historians may have identified them as one ethnic nationality grouping. Moreover there were very few records of history about early traces of Pa-O nationals which might have made early Myanmar historian conclude that same identity between the Pa-O and the Mons in the Thaton area.

In AD 1057, Emperor Anawratha, King of Bagan Kingdom invaded the Thaton kingdom on the excuse of bringing Lord Buddha's Tipitaka Canonical Scriptures, which had arrived earlier from India due to the missionary efforts of King Asoka. Thaton was devastated and reigning King Manuhar was captured and brought to Bagan as captive. The Pa-O nationals fled their homeland, and migrated northwards towards the Shan hilly regions, taking with them the sacred earth of Thaton. They settled in the Thatonlay Town, now known as His-saing and made it their new capital city. Some of the historians who were not familiar with the Pa-O history of migration, was led to believe that the entire region of the South Shan State was settled by the ethnic Shan nationalities only. However evidence and record of history of the Southern Shan State pointed out to the fact that after the destruction of the Pa-O kingdom of Thaton the Pa-O nationals dispersed and settled in several regions such as the Shan State, Mon State, Bago Division, and Mandalay Division etc. It was a fact that since ancient times of history prompted by political situation, economics, trade, commerce, and social conditions many ethnic nationalities had migrated to regions where grass is greener and habitable to migrating families, with large expanse of pasture land and water to grow paddy and feed their cattle. There were around 10 sub-tribes of Pa-O ethnic nationalities. However tracing the evidence of past history, the Pa-Os were of one homogenous race living harmoniously in the Mon Kingdom of Thaton before the invasion of Thaton by King Anawratha of Bagan Dynasty. In later years after Thaton was invaded and devastated, the Pa-Os dispersed and fled

in disarray to many regions. In the process they merged with the native ethnic nationals already settled there and adopted the new racial identity. Whatever the case maybe, it can be presumed that the Pa-Os still constitute the dominant group in the regions they made them their permanent homes.

Among the many respective ethnic nationalities living in the Union of Myanmar, it can be observed that culture, tradition and customs, social mores, rites and rituals are quite different from one another. The Pa-O ethnic nationals are found to preserve their traditional customs and culture. One striking aspect of their traits and character which stands out above all else, is their strong national spirit which pervades their ethnic society and helps forge their ethnic harmony, loyalty and cohesiveness. They adopt the black colour as their national costume because of its resistance to cold as well as wear and tear. It is the custom of the Pa-Os to christen the name of their new-born child immediately at birth. Their daily staple food consists of cooked rice as the main meal. They prefer the home-grown variety of rice known as the sticky Shan rice, and also another variety known as “taung-yar red coarse rice”. It is customary to eat rice with fresh vegetables grown locally according to season. They also like fermented pea called ‘*pe-boke*.’ They tend to set up village as a group, and thus it is easy to identify a Pa-O village community by its distinctive shape and identity. It is also observed that justice is administered according to tradition adopted through heredity, customs and precedence. In the realm of health the Pa-Os are generally fit and healthy because they tend to work outdoors in the open fields. However compared with other ethnic nationalities they seem to be weak in health knowledge and education. Regarding medicine, they tend to rely more on indigenous herbal medicines. There are also certain psychological means of cure such as creating runes and reciting mantras and charms to ward off evil spirits. It is amazing to note that these cures are effective indeed. In social relations and environment the Pa-Os form a close-knit society relying more on relatives within the community

than total strangers. They firmly believe that in times of distress only the relatives can come to their rescue for all out help. On occasions of welfare and bereavement the entire village community join hands to help. When a villager commits wrongful deeds or social misbehaviour, the village elders take the onus to censure the guilty person, or punish him or drive him out of the village to atone for his guilt.

The Pa-O ethnic nationals pursue agriculture as their main occupation and livelihood. However animal breeding and cottage industry work take the minor role. The relative abundance of clean water gushing out from the springs of mountains greatly aided the agricultural pursuits. Before the beginning of cultivation offerings are made to the guardian spirits of the paddy lands they are about to plough. The agricultural extension methods must not be too ancient or outmoded, nor it need to be too ultra-modern, but must be a happy mix to make it practical and applicable and in line with the trend of the times. The Pa-Os pursue cheroot leaf business as a commercially thriving employment. In the lower Myanmar region the cheroot leaf is known as “the Shan leaf” and produced by the Shan nationals. In fact the cheroot industry was the sole occupation of the Pa-O nationals, and not of the Shan nationals. There is a unique method of curing the cheroot leaf to make it into the outer cover to roll the local tobacco for smoking. Firstly the green leaf has to be dried and roasted by the heat generated by firewood. But caution need to be exercised, to guard against speedy forest depletion due to rash over-use.

The other equally important cultivation pursued by the Pa-O nationals is the *La-phet* cultivation and production enterprise. It is a traditional occupation of the Pa-Os and is a highly profitable one indeed. As the *La-phet* foodstuff industry is a growing enterprise, new methods of cultivation and production need to be researched and improved.

The other important winter crop of the Southern Shan State is the potato.

Potato is well liked by people of all ages and nationalities both in Myanmar and abroad. Potatoes are taken as a traditional staple food as well as the most favoured snack. It is also grown as back yard garden plantation on a self- sufficiency basis. It will be highly desirable if the government authorities will help procure new and improved seeds for improved strains, and also improved extension methods and procedures to bring about better income generation, and raise the social standard of living. In addition other no less important crops are grown in the Southern Shan States by the Pa-O cultivators such as oranges, garlic, Shan *Pepoke*, and forest plantation. Previously in line with the agricultural programme and planning, one village is allowed to develop one type of crop only for the agricultural plantation season. But at the present contemporary period they are allowed to grow commercially profitable crops at their own free will dictated by the market forces. The Pa-Os are allowed to pursue other commercially viable cottage industrial enterprises such as goldsmith, silversmith, basket weaving, pottery works and sell their products at the local markets rotating once-in-five- days frequency. However there is little incentive for animal breeding due to religious beliefs. In overall perspective the criteria for development of Pa-O nationals as a whole will depend on the will and dynamism of the entire people over and above the prevailing weather and temperament towards attitude on work.

In the field of culture there are two aspects: physical and mental. In the physical and material aspects of culture, all commodities, implements, works of art, instruments, artifacts' used by the people come under its purview. In the mental, spiritual or psychological aspects of culture, social relations systems, language, literature and communication, traditional customs rites and rituals, religion, and faith, and philosophy are all involved as a whole. The Pa-Os were early converts of Buddhism as Buddhist Missionary monks came to Thaton from India to spread Buddhist faith into the Myanmar kingdoms. When Thaton was occupied by King Anawratha of Bagan, the Pa-o residents fled northwards to the

Southern Shan State and beyond, taking along their Buddhist faith. They conduct their style of living according to Buddhist teachings as guided by the learned Buddhist monks of the Order of the Sangha. On Sabbath days which fall on the 8th waxing day, full moon day, 8th waning day and dark moon day they observe the eight precepts of higher discipline and take leave from work. Families take this opportunity to visit the monasteries where they listen to the sermons on Jatakas, Chronicles of Lord Buddhas delivered by the presiding *Sayadaws* and also observe the precepts of higher discipline. The *Sayadaws*, by virtue of their learning contemplation are well respected by the entire Pa-O community. They are also generous in making donation (dana) for propagation of Buddhism, by building pagodas, monasteries, and rest houses. The *Sayadaws* and learned monks take this auspicious occasion to advise and extol the virtues of such meritorious deeds.

Although the Pa-O nationals are true believers of Hteravada Buddhism, they also continue to profess traditional worship of deities and spirits of ancient times before the advent of Buddhism. They are guardian spirits of the house, the village, and *Sasana* to whom the Pa-Os give offerings regularly on designated days. However animal sacrifices and offerings of liquor were banned. Much progress was witnessed in the field of consistently promoting Pa-O language and literature. Training classes on Pa-O language are regularly opened as summer courses in the Pa-O community. The mission and overall objective is to promote all out literacy of the Pa-O nationalities because the decline and disappearance of the culture, customs, and literature will result in the entire disappearance of the Pa-O as a whole with direconsequence on the nation and its people. Therefore it is incumbent on the nation and its people to maintain, propagate and perpetuate one's own identity, culture, tradition, religion, language, literature, customs, rites and rituals to last for centuries through successive generations.

Map

Index

- Division Boundary
- - - Township Boundary
- Road
- Strem / river
- Town

Source: Planning Office in Taunggyi

Photographs

Photo(1)
Pa-o National Costume



Photo by the Researcher (23-7-2012)

Photo (2)

Thanatphet Orchard from Pinlaung



Photo by the Researcher (23-7-2012)

Photo(3)

Round Bamboo Basket from Taunggyi



Photo by the Researcher (2-9-2012)

Photo(4)

Various Kinds of Drum



Photo by the Researcher (2-9-2012)

Photo(5)
Pa-O Maw



Photo by the Researcher (23-7-2013)

Photographs

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Inscriptions

I.B.P1.III. 252, Zeyyaput Temple, Pwazaw of Pagan, 638, 1276 AD

I.B.P1.14.*Dhammayan-gyi Temple*, Pagan 527(AD 1165-6)

Secondary Sources

Unpublished Books

Aye Aye Aung, *Shan-Pyi-Taung-pine Taunggyi-myo-ne-kyauk-ta-lone-shi Pao-lu-myo-myar ei Lu-hmu-yae-tee-sauk-chain* (Pa-O Nationalities social structure in Kyauk Ta Lone, Taunggyi District, Southern Shan State), MA Research Paper, Anthropology, Yangon University, 1998

Aye Myint, “*Taunggyi-kha-yaing-hma Pao-a-myo-tha-me-doe-ei Bawa-a-hman sar-tan*” (True life of Pa-O Women Research Paper from Taunggyi District), MA Research Paper, Yangon, Art and Science University, 1969

Ba Yi, “*Taunggyi District, Pyidaungsu Myanmar Naing-ngan Taing-yin-tha Lu-myomya Le-lar-ye Sit-tan, Taungthu Lu-myo), Pa-O Lu-myo-mya*” (Inquest on the nationalities of the Union of Myanmar), Taungthu Tribe, (or) Pa-O nationalities, 1966

Hla Bu, Ahmat Chok, “Hsahtung Biography”, Typing Script

“*Ho Pone Myo-ne Hmat-tan*” (Record of Ho Pone Township), Myanmar Socialist Lanzin Party, Ho Pone, 1969

“*Hsi-saing Myo-ne Hmat-tan*” (Record of Hsi-saing Township), Myanma Socialist Lanzin Party, Hsi-saing Myo, 1982

- Khin Maung Lone,U,(Shan State), Curator of Cultural Museum, “*Kwin-hsin-thu-tay-tha-na-pyu-chet Sar-tan-myar*”(The field study research paper), Taunggyi, Shan State Cultural Museum, 1964
- “*Nyaung Shwe Myo-ne Sar-tan*” (Record of Nyaung Shwe Township), Myanmar Party Unit, Typing Scripts, May,1969
- “*Pa-O A-myo-thar-doe-ei-gon-in-gar-yat-myar*” (The Prestige of the Pa-O Nationals), Pa-O A-myo-thar A-phwe-chok, Taunggyi,1992
- “*Pa-O A-myo-thar-a-phwe-choke Pa-O-a-myo-thar-a-phwe-a-si-paung-son Pa-O-sar-pay-hson-da-pyu-pwe*” (Multi Organization of the Pao Nationals and Pa-O literature), Taunggyi, Pao United Nations, Special Region(6) 18-9-2008
- “*Pa-O Sarpay hnint Yin-kyay-hmu- A-phwe Baho Committee*”(Pa-O Literary and Culture Committee), First Reports, Taunggyi, 1966
- “*Pa-O Yin-kyay-hmu*” (Culture of Pa-O), Taunggyi, Department of Culture, Typing Scripts, 12 July 2002
- “*Pin Laung Myo-ne Hmat-tan*”(Record of Pin Laung Township), Myanmar Socialistnanzin Party, Pin Laung, 1969
- Pyinnyarthiri, “Pa-O Nationals”, Yangon, The States Pariyatti Sasana University,2003
- “*Shan Pyi-ne Myo-ywa Amyi-mya hnint Kyae-ywa Amyi-mya*” (The Name of Townships and Villages in Shan State),Taunggyi Degree College,1992 “*Pin Shan Pyi-ne Hmat-tan*”(Record of Shan State), Myanma Socialist Lanzin Party, 1980
- Swe Swe Oo, “*Pa-O-taing-yin-thar-miba-myar-ei Thar-thamee-oke-htain-hmu-ko Lay-lar-tin-pya-chin*”(The Study of the Guardianship customs of Pa-O parents over children), A research paper of B,Ed, Yangon, University of Education, 1981

- “*Set-nga-hnit Pyi Nyein Chan Yai A-htain-a-hmat, Pyidaungsu The-ka Pa-O*”
(Commemoration of the 15th Anniversary of the Peace, Pa-O Union of Myanmar), Taunggyi, Pa-O A Myo-tha A Pwe-chok, 2009
- “*Shan-pyi-ne Hmat-tan*”(The Data of Shan), Myanmar Socialist Lanzin Party, Taunggyi, 1962
- Than Tun, Dr, “*Shan-pyi-ne-taung-pine-hma Na-me-pay-pon-myar-lay-lar-chat*”
(The Study of nomenclature of Southern Shan State), Taunggyi, Taunggyi University, Myanmar Department, 2-6-2010
- Thaung, Maung, *Shan Pyi-ne Taung-Paing, Pa-O Taing -yin-thar ei Lu-hmu Pa-Hta-wi-win* (The Geography of the Pa-O National in Southern Shan State), B.A Geography, Art and Science University, Patheingyi College, 1973
- “*Thaton Myo-ne, Pyit-sin-hmat-tan, Tha-maing*, Thaton, 1969
- Thu Seitta(Hsi Seng), Ahin, *Pa-O-tine-yin-thar-doh -ei-yoe-yar-dalay-htone-san-mya-ko-lay-lar-chin* (The Study of Pa-O Traditions and Customs), Sasana University, Mandalay, 2007

Published Books in Myanmar

- Aye Naing, *Ta-sae-na-la Ya-thi Myanmar Yo-ya-ya-thi-pwe-taw -mya* (The twelve Monthly season of Myanmar Traditional Festival), Yangon Sasana Department, 1980
- Bhamo Tin Aung, *Myanmar Naing-ngan-taw-tha-maing* (History of Union of Burma), Yangon, Pyi-thu Ahlin Press, 1963
- Ba Than, U, *Myanmar Ya-za-win* (Myanmar Chronicle), Yangon Kye-mon Thatin-sar Press, 1991
- Burma Gazetteer of Thaton District*, Vol.II, Including Town and village census tables and constituent village tracts of Groups and circles notified under the Burma Rural Self Government Act, 1921, Rangoon, Superintendent Government Printing Burma, 1924

- Eindawantha(Pinsom), *Suwanapakarthani-kyan* (Suwanapakarthani Chronicle), Taunggyi, Taunggyi Press, 1958
- Hpone Myint, U, *Buddha Bar Thar, Pwo Kayin, Paysar Tha-maing* (History of Buddhist Pwo Kayin Palmeave), Yangon, Thiha Yadanar Press, 1975
- Kalar, U, *Maha-ya-za-win-daw-gyi* (Great Chronicle), Vol.III, Yangon, Pyi-gyi-Hman-taing Pitakat Press, 1925
- Khin Khin Sein, *Bagan-khit Yin-kyay-hmu, Ok-chok-ye, Tayar -ye and Lu-hmu-ye* (Cultural three Administration, Justice and Society of Bagan Era), Yangon, Sarpay Beikman Press, 1986
- Khun Nwe (Inle), Maung, *Pa- O*, Yangon, Center Press, 1992
- , *Pa-O, Thway-chin-nyi-naung-yin* (Pa-O brothers of the same race), Yangon, Sarpay Beikman Press, 1984
- Ludu U Hla, *Pa- O Pon Pyin Mya* (Folklore of the Pa- O People), Mandalay, Kyipwaye Press, 1977
- Lwin Maung, *Hmat-tan Tha-maing, Dagon, Ayar, Thaninsarry* (History of Dagon, Ayar, Thaninsarry,) Yangon, Sarpay Yadanar-thike Press, 1978
- Man Lin Myat Kyaw, *Thi-hmat-bwe-yar Kayin-yoe-yar* (The Knowledge of Kayin Custom), Yangon, Pyidaw Kyetthayay Press, 1970
- Min Naing,U, *Doh Taing-yin -bwa, Pyidaungsu Thar* (Our bloods, Our sons, Our natives), Yangon, Department of Culture, 1960
- , *Doh Thwe, Doh Thar, Taing Yin Bwa* (Our Blood, Our Sons, Our Natives), Pyidaungsu Ne aing Yin The Yin Kyay-Hmu Lan Nyun, Yangon, Pyidaungsu Myanmar Naing-ngan Buddha Sasana A Pwe Press, 1967
- , *Taing-yin-thar Sa-ga-pon-myar* (Native Proverbs), Yangon, Ministry of Culture, n.d
- Myanmar A-bi-dan A-kyin-choke* (Abridgement of Myanmar Dictionary), Yangon Ministry of Education, 1978
- Myanma Swe Son Gyan* (Myanmar Encyclopedia) ,Vol.X, Yangon, Sarpay

- Beikman Press, 1966
- Myanmar Swe-Son Gyan* , Vol.XII, Yangon, Sarpay Beikman Press, 1992
- Myanma Swe Son Gyan* (Myanmar Encyclopedia), Vol.XIII, Yangon, Sarpay Beikman Press, (First Edition) 1973
- Myanma Swe Son Gyan* (Myanmar Encyclopedia), Vol.X, Yangon, Sarpay Beikman Press, 1966
- Owe Ba Tha Bi Wontha, Ashin, *Thu-tay-tha-na Tha-yoke-pya A-bi-dan* (Pictorial Research Dictionary), Yangon, Pyin Nya Handa Press, 1975
- Pyidaungsu Myanmar Naing-ngan, Taing-yin-thar Yin-kyay-hmu Yo-yar Dalay-hton-san-mya* (Union of Myanmar Tradition Culture and Customs), (Kayin), Myanmar Socialist Lanzin Party, Yangon, Party Head Quarters, 1969
- Pyidaungsu Myanmar Naing-ngan, Taing-yin-thar Yin-kyay-hmu Yo-yar Dalay-hton-san-mya* (Union of Myanmar Tradition Culture and Customs), (Shan), Myanmar Socialist Lanzin Party, Yangon, Party Head Quarters, 1969
- Sin Kye, Maung, *Kayin Ba-wa Dalay* (Kayin Life and Tradition), Yangon, Thidar Tun Press, 1967
- Taw Sein Ko, *Burmese Sketches*, Vol.II, Rangoon, British Burma Press, 1920
- Than Tun, Dr, *Khit-haung Myanmar Yar-za-win* (Ancient Myanmar History), Yangon, Monywa Press, 1969
- The Shan State Manual*, Rangoon, Government Printing, 1933
- Tin, U, *Myanmar Min Oke-choke-pon Sar-tan hnit Bodaw Phayargyi's ei Rajathat khaw Ah- meint-taw-tan-gyi* (Royal Administration of Myanmar and Royal Orders by King Bodawphaya), Vol. II, Yangon, Government Printing Press, 1932
- Toe Hla, *Konbaung-khit Kyay-let-lu-hmu Si-pwa-bawa* (Socio-economic life of Konbaung(1752-1880), Yangon, Myanmar Historical Commission Golden Jubilee, 2004

Wunna Taung Oo, Pa-O Lu Myo Myar , Khit Thamaingsin (History of Pa-O National), Yangon, La Min Press,1995

Published Books in English

Enrjuez, Major, C.M, *Races of Burma*, Delhi, Manager of Publications, 1933

Fychte, *Burma Past and Present*, Vol.I, London, C. Kegan Paul and Company,1878

Imperial Gazetteer of India, Provincial Service, Burma, Vol.XXIII, The Province, Mountains, Rivers, Tribes, etc. and the Arakan, Pegu, Irawaddy and Tanasserin Division, Rangoon, Superintendent of Government Printing, Calcutta, 1908

Luce, G.H. *Phases of Pre Bagan Burma Language and History*, Vol.I, London, Oxford University Press, 1985

Marshall, Harry, Rev, *The Karen People of Burma* Columbus, Ohio State University ,1918

Scott,J.G ,and Hardiman,J.P, *Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States*, Part.II,vol.i,1901

Stevenson, H.N.C., *The Hill People of Burma*, New York, The Burma Research Society, 1944

Tin Gyi, *Burma Gazetteer of Thaton District*, Vol.A, Rangoon Superintendent Government Printing and Stationary, Burma,1931

Journals and Magazines

Khin Maung Nyunt, Dr.“The Industrious Pa-Os”, *The Guardian*, No 8, August 1967

Khun Nwe,(Inle), “*P a-O Doe-ei-kan-taw-kho-han-tan-da-lay*”(Pa-O’s Khohantan respect paying(custom), Yangon, *Myawaddy Magazine*, Vol.XXVII, No.4, 1979,February

- Khun Nwe,(Inle),, “*Pa-O-min-ga-lar-hsaung*” (Pa-O Marriage Ceremony),
Myawaddy Magazine ,Yangon, , Vol.XXIV, No.7,1970,May
- , *Sein-mya-nyo-ywet Tha-nat-phet* (Thanatphet leaves in green
 and brown color), Yangon, Sarpay Beikman Press, 1976
- , Maung, “*Pa-O-na-me-hmet-da-lay*” (Pa-O Nomenclature
 Tradition), Yangon, *Myawaddy Magazine*, A twe.224 , 1979, February
- Luce, G.H.“Note of the People of Burma in the 12th, 13th Century AD”, *Journal of
 the Burma Research Society*, Vol.XLIII, part.i, June, 1939
- Pao Kyaw Sein, “*Thein Lar Chan*” (Thein Lar Plantation), *Golden Jubilee
 Journal*, Vol. II, No. 6, 1-5-1972
- Thein Than Tun, “*Taunggyi Khayaing Se-myo-ne ei Shay-hnint-ta-ya-kyaw-ka-
 hmat-hpwe-thu-ta-myar*” (General knowledge of 10 townships in Taunggyi
 District for over 100 years), *Golden Jubilee Magazine of Taunggyi Golf
 Club*, 2001
- Tin Ohn, *Shan-pyi-ne-ta-ya-si-yin-yae* (The judgment of Shan State), Yangon, *The
 Literature and Social Science Journal of the Union of Myanmar*, Vol.I,
 No.1, 1968, January