

Chapter II Ethnic Policy towards Various “Peoples” in the Early Konbaung Dynasty: Ethnic Awareness in Eighteenth to Nineteenth Century Burma

WATANABE Yoshinari

Introduction

Nineteenth century Burma is considered to be in a transitional phase from pre-modern to modern times. After being defeated three times in wars with the British in the nineteenth century, the country became colonized by Britain. As a result, Burmese society was compelled to go through fundamental transformations; a colonial system that was alien to the “traditional” system was imposed. What is commonly believed to have happened is that the state’s administrative system was replaced by the modern system based on bureaucracy, the economic system was changed into a market economy directly connected with and governed by the international market, and principles of modern law and justice that support the system were implemented: that which was pre-modern was swept away and a completely new era came into being [Cady 1958; Furnivall 1956; Adas 1974; Ogiwara et al. 1983].

What had struck the modern historians as discontinuity between the dynasty era and colonial period was viewed somewhat differently and in a thought-provoking way by Taylor [1987] and Thant Myint-U [2001]. Taylor began with the question of what a state or the government means for the people or society, and analyzed the development of the state and its relationships with the society from the Nyaungyan dynasty to the present time. The conventional framework of a time line from the dynasty era through the colonial period and finally to independence was replaced by an analysis of the development in the political system that affected the functionality of the state for the people. Through this, he stressed that even though there was change during the colonial occupation, there still existed continuity between the system of dynasty and that of the colonial period. He emphasized the functionality of the state that was founded during the dynasty era and further refined and developed during the colonial period. This functionality was in danger of collapsing during the Japanese occupation and ensuing U Nu period. The Ne Win regime came about to make efforts to reconstruct the government. Thant Myint-U maintained that it was in the nineteenth century that many aspects of contemporary Burma were developed such as the boundary line to define the county’s outer frame,

the social structure of rural communities, and a national identity as “Burma.” He pointed out that the precedent for such transformations had been set in the late nineteenth century following King Mindon even though the major change took place during the time of the colonial occupation.

Seeking continuity in the modern to premodern periods would not only lead to a better understanding of the history of Burma as a whole, but would also help in the reexamination of the modern Asian era in the broader context. Hamashita [1999] criticized the traditional historical perspective on Asia being affected by the “Western Impact”; he pointed out the significance of reviewing the continuity between the modern and premodern eras, as well as examining the modern Asian era “in the structural outline of taking Asia as an active entity, and Europe playing a part in it.” In other words, as the world became rapidly integrated since the nineteenth century, it is of most importance that each of the Asian countries should be assessed specifically as to how the “modern era” was established and how the country had transformed its “past.”

From this point of view, the author assessed whether or not British colonial rule had brought about the three requirements of modern states: singular sovereignty, territory and nation by examining the territorial views of the rulers of the Konbaung dynasty from the late eighteenth century to the early nineteenth century [Watanabe 1996, 2001].

The ruler’s territorial perception showed, on one hand, the premodern characteristic of the dominated region not being clear-cut with an ambiguous boundary. On the other hand, there appeared to have been fledgling consciousness of borderlines. The author pointed out that this new awareness did not take place through the encounter with the “modern times,” the British Empire, but rather the definition of dominion was generated from the perception of territory for the ruler to impose tax or *corvée* labor, which eventually gave rise to a conscious idea of a national borderline that would differentiate this country from the other.

From the above perspective, even though there was the pre-modern characteristic of continuously expanding and contracting territory, the “state” of the Konbaung dynasty did have one of the components of the modern state on the ruler’s mind: having a definitive exterior border and the integration of the territory that was within that border. If this was the case, then the conventional interpretation of discontinuity from premodern to modern times needs to be reviewed from the perspective of continuity in the two eras. As well, no doubt there is the need to reconsider the traditional argument of “the modern state” being pushed by the colonial rule.

Taking the above discussion into consideration, in this chapter, I will review “nation,” the other attribute of the modern state, by studying whether or not it came into being as the colonial rule developed. As the basis for the review, I will seek to determine how much the rulers were aware of “ethnicity” in the nineteenth centu-

ry Konbaung dynasty.

It is often said that the premodern states of Mainland Southeast Asia is not based on the land but rather on “the people.”¹ In actuality, in Burma under the Konbaung dynasty regime, it is known that subjects were divided into two categories: *ahmudan* (crown servicemen) and *athi* (free nonservicemen), and the ruler took control of the state’s human resources through the head of each of the groups [Lieberman 1984; Koenig 1990; Saitō 1991].

The *ahmudan*, said to have consisted of nearly 40 percent of the social hierarchy, were constantly required to do royal duties including military service, in return, being granted a number of privileges, such as pieces of land. They were distributed around the capital area, Upper Burma, but were not controlled by the local administration but had direct ties with the central government through the *hmu* or *thugyi*, the chief of each *asuangan* (regiment, unit, or group) formed by each of their duties. The *athi*, on the other hand, who were farmers that paid taxes and occasionally had corvée labor or military service imposed upon them, were controlled by the regime through the *thugyi* (chief) of each of the *myo* (district or town) or *ywa* (village) in the local administration’s framework.

These people’s actual living space, however, was not strictly divided by social strata. In the same village or town, *ahmudan* and *athi* lived mixed, or sometimes *ahmudan* that belonged to different duty groups lived close to each other. What should have been controlled separately based on the different administrative systems theoretically may have been treated ambiguously in the actual application. In fact, *ahmudan* and *athi* were sometimes treated without distinction, or in some cases, it was not uncommon for *ahmudans* to switch the groups to which they belonged without permission.

There was a danger that such ambiguity could result in one person being controlled and exploited doubly or not controlled by either of the groups at times. On the other hand, as Tambiah suggested based on the example of the Ayutthaya Kingdom, the duality in the ruler’s system had prevented corruption or injustice by bureaucrats and may have had the aspect of contributing to more effective control [Tambiah 1976, (1977) 1985].

In reality, there were many people who belonged neither to the hierarchy of *ahmudan* nor *athi*. They were, from the viewpoint of the state’s finances and human resources, the people who were marginalized: those who were exempted from tax and corvée labor, including clergy, slaves and the dependents of influential people. It was an enormous problem to have *ahmudan* and *athi* escape into the private sector, which caused the destabilization of the state [Lieberman 1984].

Those switching their social strata or escaping from the societal framework could affect the foundations of the rulers’ regime; needless to say, the line of kings

¹ As is stated in Steinberg [1985:30–33], Vietnam seems to be an exception.

made efforts to prevent this from happening in order to maintain the system of *ahmudan* and *athi* in the society. As an example, some of the policies that King Bodawpaya (1782–1819) initiated are particularly worthy of note. After taking the throne in 1783, he ordered the heads of *asuangan* and *myothugyis* to submit *sayin* (list) of the people under his administration and, at the same time, ordered to have *sittan* (a record of inquiry) be submitted to the regime so any information on the area be reported to him [BS:5–7, 32–60; Watanabe 1987; Iwaki 1995; Itō 1995].² With *sayin* and *sittan*, King Bodawpaya's central government could ascertain with certainty the limited number of human resources collected to secure the necessary resources in order to put in numerous projects³ which would allow him to claim the legitimacy of his royal throne, and establish the financial bedrock of the state.

However, from the fact that royal orders had been issued to order the amendment and the drawing up of *sayin* and *sittan* several times,⁴ it was not necessarily effective in controlling the human resources; rather it was only possible through mutual compromise with the heads of the *asuangan* and *myothugyis*.

This power struggle and compromise on the limited human resources between the royal throne and the power elites had been the key factor in explaining the change in dynasty in Burmese history, as Lieberman [1984] et al. have made clear. However, there has been no explicit discussion on how other ethnic groups, that comprise present day multiethnic Burma, had been treated.

In this paper, I will examine *ameindaw* (royal orders) written by kings to find out how various ethnic groups were positioned in the framework of state administration. To clarify the language used in the royal order, I will list the terms used for each of the ethnic groups.

Ethnic groups by themselves have been formed historically. A certain name used to indicate an ethnic group does not necessarily represent the same ethnic group in the eighteenth to nineteenth century [Ikeda 2000, 2005; Itō 2006; Gravers 2007; Takatani 2008]. Myanmar, Shan, and Kayin (Karen) are some of the examples of the same name used now and then. The issue is what terms and phrases were used to designate ethnicity for Shan and Kayin. At present, it is not easy to determine whether or not each example has a specific meaning to it or if it is rhetorical, as I have not gone through examples of the royal order thoroughly nor have I examined other contemporary source materials. In the meantime, the following are some of the examples in the royal orders.

² Itō [1995], in particular, analyzed the circumstances and revealed that *sittan* was the means for *myothugyis* to assure their own positions and protect their interest rather than for governance of the state.

³ Refer to Watanabe [1987] on these projects.

⁴ For examples, refer to ROB 4:443 (19 Apr. 1785), 6:651 (8 Feb. 1810), 676 (2 Mar. 1810), 688 (14 Mar. 1810).

One frequently used style is the name of the ethnic group that is generally used today, together with the suffix “to,” which signifies a plural form. In this case I would interpret it as “the people of —.” Similarly, terms with an ethnic name and the attached noun that means occupation or social stratum such as “monk” or “merchant” are often used. Those two styles were the most common ways of expression. Another not so often used expression is *lumyo* (*lu* means person or people + *myo* means kind). A variation to *lumyo* is *myo* (kind) attached to *kywandaw* (subjects). I will elaborate on this last one later.

1. People outside the *Naingngandaw*

The author once reviewed how the rulers perceived their territory in the Konbaung dynasty. It was found that the kings professed themselves to be the ruler of the whole world, whereas in actuality, realizing their limitation, claimed that they were “the king of the kings” in one of the small “worlds” for which they asserted the legitimacy of their reign. Back then, the small “world” was termed in the royal order as “*naingngandaw*” (the original meaning was king’s country), being differentiated from other small “worlds,” a sign of the forming of the modern concept of territory [Watanabe 1996].

From here, to make clear how ethnic groups were positioned in the framework of the hierarchy, I will first examine how the people that were considered outside of the Konbaung dynasty were treated.

1.1. Chinese

When the ex-king Singu was rumored to have fled to China, Chinese were perceived as those who belonged to another *naingngan* (state) in Bodawpaya’s mind, since they were referred to as “Chinese and Mongolians of the *naingngan* on one (another) island” [ROB 4:214 (12 Feb. 1782)]. In other words, they were the people who were under the control of another country’s rule. As Bodawpaya put it regarding a contentious case in which Chinese were involved, “a case related to the Chinese merchant that came from one (another) *taing* (state) *pyi* (state),” and ordered that the case should be investigated as promptly as possible [ROB 6:473 (4 Sept. 1807)], indicating special treatment of some sort.

It is pointed out by the researchers that in eighteenth to nineteenth century Burma, Chinese were actively involved in such areas as a trader or miner [Ogiwara 1956; Chen 1961; Watanabe 2006]. There were some royal orders from which one could infer the way the government had dealt with Chinese at that time. In the documents, Chinese people were mostly referred to in regard to collecting tax. The

basic attitude the government had taken towards the Chinese was to draw a line between their subjects and the Chinese; which can be seen from the ban on opium eating and related transactions [ROB 4:220 (20 Feb. 1782)].⁵

There has been no such custom as eating or smoking opium in the Myanmar *taingpyi* (state). As for capturing [the opium eaters], only Kala (Indian; will be discussed later) and the Chinese, whose *lumyo* is different, should be excluded [as targets]. Myanmar's opium eaters should be captured and jailed strictly by *myowun* (governor) as soon as they are found. Eradicate all the opium sellers. Confiscate all the opium and put it away in *taikdaw* (royal treasury). All the opium that the Chinese own should be seized by the *shwedaikwun* (minister of the treasury) and be put away in *shwedaik* (royal treasury). [ROB 7:485 (16 Dec. 1817)] (cf. ROB 7:486 [17 Dec. 1817])

Likewise, with regard to the ban on liquor [ROB 4:220 (20 Feb. 1782)], when the liquor that was brought by the Chinese merchants was confiscated, it was ordered that they should be exempted from monetary impoundment as “the Chinese *lumyo* that came from one (another) *taingpyi* are different” [ROB 6:808 (27 Nov. 1810)]. It was also ordered that their horses should be returned to them [ROB 7:184 (30 Jan. 1811)].

A similar attitude of “treating as foreigners” can be seen in the practice of tax collection. In the royal order to reduce and exempt a traveling tax at the checking station on the river (*kin*, watch post and custom house), other than those “merchants of Myanmar, Shan, Talaing (Mon),” perquisite should not be collected from “the Chinese merchants”; also *kinwun* (minister of *kin*) would be in charge of collecting tax and a handling charge from them [AAM:275 (4 Jan. 1758)] on arrival to the capital; as well, custom duties on raw cotton shipping and trading that had been imposed only on “the Chinese merchants” and became to be also applied to “Myanmar's merchants” was banned [ROB 5:738 (18 Feb. 1788)]. In dealing with Chinese, he ordered as follows:

In the *myos* and *ywas* of Shan *pyi*'s Myelat [district] there are the Chinese residing scattered all over...*Tayok-wun* (minister for Chinese affairs) should collect them and have them reside there to contribute to work for the tin colliery. [ROB 5:711 (15 June 1801)] (cf. ROB 8:355 [15 Sept. 1819])

Tayok-wun was appointed to specifically deal with the affairs for the Chinese, as

⁵ The banned area ranged from “the capital and various *myos* and *ywas* of Shan *pyi*, Yun *pyi* (Chiang Mai region), *Akye-Anye* (downstream, upstream) of *Naingngandaw*...,” which covered not only the nuclear zone but also *Sawbwa* ruled regions, as described later.

the following examples show. The *Tayok-wun* was instructed to be in charge of collecting a mining tax, which formerly was the *Sawbwa*'s (described later) work. In the latter half of the above order, *Tayok-wun* was also ordered to act as a trade commissioner and to take charge of collecting a commercial tax from the merchants (ethnicity not specified) in the capital that work together with the Chinese merchants [ibid.].

As the above historical data gathered from the royal order on tax and prohibitions shows, Chinese had been receiving at least a form of special treatment apart from the framework of the general governing system, not so much as extra territorial rights of the modern time's. Were the Indians, that were also recognized as people outside of *Naingngandaw*, treated the same way as Chinese?

1.2. *Kala*

Before further discussing the subject here, a little note on the term used to indicate “Indian” should be included. Indian people are referred to as “Kala” in the materials including the royal order. However, the term covers those who were in India at that time, including European such as British. In some cases, it is clearly stated whether or not it meant Indian people or British people, but other cases include those that are difficult to differentiate. It was pointed out that the English and French people are perceived as those outside of the framework of *naingngandaw* [Watanabe 1996]. In the following, I will review the people called “Kala” including both of these cases.

The document that would help us infer how the Kala were perceived at that time would be the royal order to appoint *Kala-wun* (minister for Indian affairs). In it, as a matter of duty, the following is stated:

Various *lummyos* are relying on the king's majesty, residing here, and these are large in number. These are being divided into groups to reside in communities in an appropriate manner. The Kala people also inhabit the brick houses, many of them having engaged in trading and residing. Thanlyin *myo* (Syriam), in *naingngandaw*, is a port where ships come to anchor. Kala are from one island and one *naingngan*, many of who come to our majesty's golden hand. Those who come here are all mixed; some are new and some have been here for a long time, it is hard to tell who are who. Among the Kala under the golden hand, some have been given duties related to *asuangan*. [ROB 7:359 (17 Nov. 1816)]

It is clear from this royal order, similar measures as those for the Chinese miners were taken for the Kala, who were put together in one location as a group, rather

than mingling with all the other ethnic groups. Also apparent is the acknowledgement that there were old and new Kala⁶ who were engaged in trading. As well, there were some Kala who served as *ahmudan*.

Similar to the previously quoted royal order in which Chinese were exempted from the opium ban, it is obvious that some kind of special treatment was given to those Kala. There has not been any clear description in the royal order regarding the special measures for the tax imposed on the Indian merchants. It is unclear about the special treatment for the Indian merchants, but there must have been the reverse “special treatment” towards the British merchants, for one of the purposes The (English) East India Company sent missions from the late eighteenth century to the early nineteenth century was that they wanted the abolishment of discriminatory policies against the British traders [Khan 1957; Symes 1969; Hall 1955; Cox 1821; Ramachandra 1979; Woodman 1962; Htin Aung 1965].

According to the *sittan* of Ranmawadi *myo* (Ramree in Arakan) in 1802, although the amount differs between the time of the Kingdom of Arakan and the postannexation period, the Indian merchants paid 749 kyat in silver as a whole, Indian fishermen paid 1 kyat per fish net for the poll tax to the *myowun* who exercised jurisdiction over the *myo* [BS:91–92]. If you compare this with the above mentioned Chinese merchants and miners, you will notice the agency that collects the tax are different. In the case of Chinese, *Tayok-wun* of the central government has the jurisdiction over collecting tax, whereas Indian’s tax is collected by *myowun*, the provincial governor. How do we interpret this distinction? Would it be just a flaw or confusion in the governing system? Or would there be a certain kind of principles that caused the different treatment?

It seems that there is a hint to help answer the question in the formerly mentioned royal order. The descriptions are “some (Kala) are new and some have been here for a long time, it is hard to tell who are who” and another description regarding some of the Kala serving for *ahmudan*. Already it has become known that the Indians were serving for the kingdom as *ahmudan*. Were they treated special in some way as Indian? There was a description in the royal order as shown below regarding *ahmudan* in Sagaing, Inwa (Ava or Awa), and the areas around the capital:

(Because the population has grown) what used to be five households for a group will now become seven households for a group. On theatre, music and dance [*ahmudan*], whichever *asuangan* or *ahmudan* they might be, and regard-

⁶ The expression of old and new foreign trader may have referred to the Indians who had long been trading and the British who newly made an advance into trading. However, since there have not been other historical materials that would prove this theory, whether or not this interpretation is appropriate needs to be withheld.

less of the title, or whether or not one is Kathay (Manipuri), Kala, or Yodaya (Siamese), let every single one of them carry stones from the quarry. [ROB 6:808 (27 Nov. 1810)]

Here, there is no particular consideration for Kala, not to mention Manipuri and Siamese. Rather, it is found that they are treated the same way as other *ahmudan* in general. The absence of ethnic consideration in treating an ethnic group can be seen not only on *ahmudan* but also on slaves (*kywan*) who are considered to be human resources outside the framework of a state control.

Do not enlist the people whom the high-ranking officials were given as a royal gift, such as Kathay, Kala, Shan, Yodaya, Chin, Kadu, and the captive slaves or trafficked slaves such as Kathay and Kala. They should be recruited separately. Also, submit the *sayin* (list). [ROB 6:609 (21 Oct. 1808)] (list making ROB 6:619 [30 Oct. 1808]) (similar example of gift given from the king; ROB 6:613 [24 Oct. 1807], 7:406 [19 Aug. 1817])

It is interesting to note that in this royal order the king was also trying to control even those servants who were owned privately and entirely independent from the state. Apart from that, difference in ethnicity is not the deciding factor. Also I would like to point out that there is a description of those who would be classified as dependents, and there seems to be no differentiation based on the ethnic groups.

Of captured [Kathay], those who do not have the tattoo⁷ of either peacock, argyle or *hingtha* (Brahminy duck), tattoo the word “fugitive” on the back of their hands. Prince Mekkahaya has been said to use following peoples after paying tithes; 79 Shan Ingyay and Kathay who escaped to Kathay *pyi*, were caught, unfettered and granted; 19 Chin and Kathay; 139 Kathay who are thatchers, salt farmers, and bell ringers that were granted later; 22 muslim Kala tailors who are used without paying silver. As we have examined the *sayin* of those people... [ROB 6:688 (14 Mar. 1810)]

There seems not to have been any particular meaning to be Kala, be they *ahmudan*, slaves, or servants. On the other hand, when it comes to merchants, Kala as an ethnic group does seem to have meaning. Would the distinction come from the “old and new” that has been mentioned above? As in the royal order, the mixing of “old and new” was certainly regarded as a problem, and there seems to be a special meaning to it. However, from the way Indian merchants were dealt with in the conventional framework of provincial administration in Arakan, what seems to be more

⁷ A tattoo of this kind denoted a member of *ahmudan*.

important is that the difference between the people within the state framework of Konbaung dynasty and those who are out of it seems to be the deciding factor. In the next chapter, I will examine how the ethnic groups are dealt with in the *Naingngandaw*.

2. People within the *Naingngandaw*

It is unnecessary to say that the structure for governing the state of the Konbaung dynasty, is not uniform within the *Naingngandaw*. Many researchers have commented that *Naingngandaw* consisted of concentric circles of nuclear and provincial zones, principalities of various ethnic groups, and tributary kingdoms. *Naingngandaw* consisted of the following three components: nuclear and provincial zones where the residents were divided into two strata of *ahmudan* and *athi* and were ruled directly; principalities, where essentially the hereditary ruler, *Sawbwa*, was acknowledged and thus was indirectly ruled; and independent states of *Min* (king) who recognized the king of Burma as “the king of kings” by presenting tribute or other forms of acknowledgement but where there is virtually no dominance relationship between them [Lieberman 1984; Koenig 1990; Watanabe 1987].

On the governance mechanism, researchers, including myself, have conventionally discussed the power relations between the Burmese king and *Sawbwa* and *Min* of principality and tributary states. Most of the findings have done nothing more than mention indirect rule, as there are not enough historical materials to describe the nature of the actual relations between the Burmese king and the subjects under the rulers of *Sawbwa* or *Min*. Also, as was mentioned above, many studies focus on the governance in the nuclear zone, but not on other ethnic groups.

In this chapter, using royal orders as historical data, I will examine how other ethnic groups were ruled in each of the components of the government structure. Note however, not all the royal orders were preserved, and there are many materials that only show fragmentary data. My ultimate goal is to show concrete image of governance, but for now, I will shed light on the ruler’s intention of how to govern the “people,” to help cast light on the issues discussed in Chapter 1.

2.1. “People in the Nuclear and Provincial Zones”

From the royal order quoted in Chapter 1 on Kala, it is clear that the ethnic *ahmudans*, regardless of ethnic group, be it Kala outside of *Naingngandaw*, Siamese under the *Min*, or Manipuri under the *Sawbwa*, were essentially treated the same way as the Burmese *ahmudan*. From the following,

Those who are not included in the list of *ahmudan* by the title of Kathay Akkapat, assign them by giving the title of *myin-tasu* (troop of horsemen) or *le-tasu* (troop of bowmen). For the horsemen, give them the sign of *hingtha* in ink (tattoo), for bowmen, argyle... [ROB 6:598 (10 Oct. 1808)]

it is clear that the king applied the same measures to make clear which *ahmudan* the person belongs to for the Manipuri as well. Also,

Do not requisition the cultivators of *Lamaing-asu* of Kathay or Myanmar as soldiers. [ROB 4:562 (8 Aug. 1787)]

there is no distinction set by the ethnic group for the royal order forbidding giving other duty to the *ahmudan* of *Lamaing-asu* who have the duty to cultivate the royal lands, which is deviating from their original capacity.

Thus, for the control of *ahmudan* population, it seems that ethnicity does not make a difference. However there are some cases in the royal order where it deviates from this general principle. In the royal order to requisition soldiers in the Arakan region in order for preparing to attack Siam whose ruler would not acknowledge that the Burmese king is “the king of kings,” there is a line as follows:

Anyone, regardless of *asuangan* or *ahmudan*, who is related to Myanmar, one person per family should be enlisted..., it does not apply to anyone who is related to Rakhine (Arakan). [ROB 6:437 (7 July 1807)] (Requisition from 4 *myos* in Rakhine)

In this royal order, only the Burmese are to be enlisted and the Arakanese are excluded. It is hard to interpret if this is just an exceptional case, or if there is no such general rule as mentioned above to begin with and rather it was handled differently each time, case by case. However, according to the British record of the time, there was increasing frustration with repeated conscription into the army in the whole of Lower Burma. Also, since the annexation by King Bodawpaya in 1785, Arakan had been quite unstable because of those who escaped to British territory and kept looting areas in Arakan. Later in 1811, a great uprising, most commonly called Chin Pyan Rebellion,⁸ broke out. These destabilizing elements might have been the contributing background factor for the exclusion of the Arakanese. Therefore, this case should be regarded as an exception.

Thus, there are exceptions, but in the framework of control of *ahmudan* population, essentially there is no distinction in the treatment of numerous ethnic

⁸ Political situation regarding Arakan at that time, refer to Pearn [1933]; Woodman [1962]; Watanabe [1987].

groups, the rule of which also applies to the private sector, namely slaves. As it was mentioned in the previous chapter about Kala, there was no distinction in treating other ethnic groups⁹ in captive slaves and trafficked slaves as well.

Ethnic groups placed within the control framework of *ahmudan* and slaves, were treated with no distinction. In the domain of provincial administration, would this same lack of distinction be applied to the subordinate ethnic groups controlled by *myowun* and *myothugyi*?

The king had ordered them to make lists of people under their jurisdiction and had them report on *sittan*, as was mentioned above. In such a royal order, the following is being described:

On having various *myothugyis* and *ywathugyi* present with *sayin* (list) in the format, ...other than Yodaya that is included in *asuangan* with given titles, Yodaya in various *myos* and *ywas* should also be listed without fail. [ROB 6:651 (8 Feb. 1810)].

Also, as was mentioned above, in Ramree in Arakan, Indian merchants and fishermen were treated equally under the control of *myowun* as ordinary *athi*, although the tax collection criterion may have been different. When the extant *sittans* is examined, one will notice that similar practices are found in different parts of *myos* in Lower Burma. These are mostly not Indian but Kayin people. For example, the *sittan* of 1784 Taungoo *myo* describes in the report that various villages of Kayin are under control, and according to their business, they paid tax or tribute as follows: salted pork, salted fish, 12 horseback full of orchids (about 1,000), shrike feathers, and poisoned arrows; betel nut tax (1 kyat flowered silver per household), swidden cultivation tax (5 baskets of rice or 1 kyat flowered silver per household) [BS:144–47]. Also, in the *sittan* of 1784 Bassein (Pathein) *myo*, there is a description in which they are collecting as *khun-ma* (main tax), 1 kyat flowered silver and 1 viss beeswax for commission charges for the *myothugyi* from Kayin and Chin swidden cultivators [BS:133].¹⁰

On the other hand, for ordinary *athi*, what kind of tax was imposed? We cannot review the whole taxation system here, but if we focus on the main tax [BS:36–50; Saitō 1991], there were two taxation methods, taxing a tenth part of production, and a certain amount of rice baskets per pair of water buffalos or per unit

⁹ To give more examples on bestowal of slaves, there exists a royal order as follows:

On distributing Kathay to princes, princesses and descendants of the king, share them following the rule of silver inheritance. [ROB 6:644 (3 Feb. 1810)] (Granting Kathays; ROB 6:664 [21 Feb. 1810])
Divide and grant Myanmar in the same way as the Kathays were divided and granted. [ROB: 647 (6 Feb. 1810)]

area of the field. That is to say, two rules existed and were mixed in application: a tax imposed according to the amount of the annual crop yield, and a fixed amount of tax regardless of annual crop. This kind of discrepancy did not happen only in taxation rules, but also procedures for determining the amount of tax varied depending on the region. Some *athi* were imposed a poll tax.¹¹

However, without seeing the examples mentioned above, it is clear that there were differences in taxation method; *athi*, in general, were taxed for the land, and ethnic minority groups were taxed either per head, by household, or by a tribute system. The question is whether or not it derives from ethnicity. On the surface, there seems to be separate taxation standards, but the differences also appear to be in response to different types of business. This can be confirmed from the tax imposed on fishing that *athi* also did. For example, according to the *sittan* of Kyaukmaw *myo*, the main tax rate is two kyat flowered silver per fisherman, and if a fishing net is used, five kyat per net [BS:67].¹² In this example, it is in part a poll tax and also there is the taxation per fishing net similar to the tax paid by the Indian fishermen in Ramree, Arakan.

In order to prove that the taxation methods differ by the types of business, not by ethnicity, the above example is inadequate; one has to examine taxation on all types of business to show the validity of the above hypothesis. However, there is no room to demonstrate it in this paper. I shall leave it for another paper. If the above hypothesis is wrong, the taxation methods differ according to ethnicity. Still, I would like to stress that both of taxations is imposed by the *myothugyi* and

¹⁰ I will briefly list similar examples.

Sittan of Hpaunglin *myo* (1802); Kayin, Zabeins (a subgroup of Kayins): 9 kyat 2 mat per each household (*Athi* 93 households, Yun *ahmudan* 24 households, Zabeins 102 households that pay silver tax) [BS:80]

Sittan of Sittan *myo* (1783); Kayin in Mobaw growing betel palm or piper betel: per each year each household 5 viss beeswax (Ivory 250 kyat, flowered silver 6kyat 1mat) [BS:64]

Sittan of Kyaukmaw *myo* (1784); Kayin engaged in swidden agriculture: 5 baskets of rice per household (1 kyat flowered silver), Kayin growing betel palm: 370 viss betel palm [BS:67, 181] (cf. *Sittan* of Kyaungbya Yawmindat *myo*; 200 viss betel palm [BS:70])

Sittan of Hanthawaddy *Myoma* (1802) *Sittan* of Tidut *myo* (1803); Kayin: 9 kyat per person, Zabeins: 10 kyat silver per person [BS:75, 82] (cf. *Sittan* of Kawliya *myo*; *Athi* 40 households, Zabeins 40 households, Kayin 62 households, 187 adult males, 181 adult females, 101 boys, 55 girls [BS:77]) (cf. *Sittan* of Htandawagyi *myo*; *Athi* 215 households, Zabeins 56 households, Kayin 122 households, others 693 households, 621 adult males, 549 adult females, 194 boys, 152 girls [BS:79])

¹¹ *Sittan* of Tongan Village [BS:168]

¹² Other similar examples are occasionally found in other *sittans* [refer to BS:65, 68, 69, 71].

myowun.

Should the taxation method or the taxation standard be different, when it comes to the tax collecting agent, there was no discrimination be it *athi* or any ethnic groups. Therefore, it is safe to say that on the very basis of the control, there was no distinction by ethnic group.

It was found that in dealing with the ethnic groups in the nuclear and provincial zones, there has not been any particular discrimination that derives from ethnicity, although there are differences that derives from the agency through which they are controlled. In the next section, I will examine subjects of *Sawbwa*, who were regarded as indirectly controlled. How did the king of the Konbaung dynasty view their position?

2.2. Subjects of “*Sawbwa*”

Let us first make clear the nature of the relationship between the Burmese king and *Sawbwa*, which assumes the premise of indirect control [Watanabe 1987]. What kind of right and duty did the *Sawbwa* have, who were under the authority of the Burmese king? As was written in King Alaungpaya’s (1752–60) personal letter to the British, “All of the heads, Shan 9 *Sawbwas*, *Sawbwas* of Houn, Kachin, Kayin (Karen), and Danu, who put up their own umbrella, made a respectful bow to become *kywandaw* (subjects)...” [AAM:3 (4 Mar. 1755)].

They are recognized essentially as an independent ruler on their own, whose police and judicial power were entirely left up to them, as is seen in the following: “Any *Sawbwas* within the *Naingngandaw* were a part of the league of rulers under an umbrella. They are the ones that study and fully understand the 10 laws that the kings should follow...” [MMOS 5:256 (28 Jan. 1795)]. Also, command positions of chieftainship such as *myoza*¹³ and *tatpaungza* was accredited to *Sawbwa*, and it was strictly forbidden for any outpost agency of the central or local government to directly contact them [ibid.].¹⁴ Thus, *Sawbwa* were permitted to have nearly full power, but it was an autonomy permitted under the premises that they would prosecute following duties.

After occupying the Manipur, as Alaungpaya stated, offering children (especially daughter for king’s harem), annual tribute and military services during war time were required.¹⁵

¹³ A small lord under the *Sawbwa*’s rule. Although pronounced the same as *Myoza* (appanage grantee), who were given the authority from the king of Burma over a part or all of a *myo*’s tax, *Myoza* is different.

¹⁴ There is a royal order that specifies that only *Sawbwas* can appoint *myoza* (Order to adopt a measure to settle a dispute over right to appoint Maingkhine’s *myoza* under the Nyaungshwe *Sawbwa*; ROB 7:481–82 [17 Nov.1817]).

Whoever wishes to reign for generations, make me presents of your child once in every three years; and 10 gold, 100 horses, 500 bows, 5,000 poison arrows, 1,000 lacquers every year. On occasion of state affairs, the *Sawbwa* himself should follow the golden feet with his subjects and 2 troops of 1,000 horse-men and 1,000 bowmen each. [AAM: 106 (19 Jan. 1759)]

Also, it is written as follows:

On the *gado* (paying homage) ritual after the Buddhist Lent in 1157 (1795), *myos* and *ywas* such as Mottama (Martaban), Ye, Dawei (Tavoy), Beik (Mergui), Rakhine, Thandwe (Sandway), Yanbyay (Ramree), Manaung (Cheduba), Kyaingthi (Keng Hsi), Mogaung are the ones that are on the edge of the *taingpyi*, defending and carrying out their duty with arms and military provisions. Let the *myowun* be on guard, and only have the tribute be carried by *sitke* (deputy) and *nagan* (reporter) to present to the king. Let other *Sawbwa*, *myowun*, *myoza*, and *sitke* come to the golden hands. [ROB 5:564 (27 June 1795)] (cf. ROB 5:978 [16 Sept. 1806]) (Present with horses on the ritual of *gado*; ROB 7:260 [24 Dec. 1811])

The tribute can only be done by paying a visit to the Burmese king in person and declare one's loyalty, rather than sending a subordinate.

That was the summary of indirect rule. In the next royal order, one can see that the *Sawbwa's* territory is recognized the same way as the areas ruled by the *myowun* and *myothugyi*. Bodawpaya said in the royal order to notify of his coronation as follows:

Within the *Naingngandaw*, *Sawbwa*, *myoza*, *myowun*, *sitke*, and *myothugyi* of the far away *myo* and *ywa* with the flags might have not heard about it. [ROB 4:213 (12 Feb. 1782)] (Notification of Bagyidaw's enthronement; ROB 8:313 [8 June 1819])

Also in the royal order that tolerates all kinds of Buddhist sects, he stated,

Let the proclamation of this royal order be made throughout the *myoza*, *Sawbwa*, *myowun*, *sitke*, *myedaing* (local headman), and *thugyi* in *Taing-naing-gandaw*. [ROB 7:390–91 (7 Aug. 1817)]

¹⁵ Refer to the following royal order of military service for *Sawbwa*. Yaw *Sawbwa* [AAM:146 (4 Jan. 1760)], *Sawbwa* in Myelat [ROB 5:410 (21 Mar. 1788), 6:619 (30 Oct. 1808)], Kaingma, Maingkhine, Maingwun *Sawbwa* [ROB 6:587 (30 Sept. 1808)], *Sawbwas* [ROB 6:589 (2 Oct. 1808)]. Also, there is a case in which restoration of the walled and gated castle in the capital was ordered [ROB 7:267 (31 Dec. 1811)].

It becomes clear from the above orders that important policy was conveyed to the *Sawbwa* using the same system as to local administrative organizations such as *myowun* and *myothugyi*.¹⁶ That is, it seems that regarding the communication system, people under the *myowun* and *myothugyi* and the people under *Sawbwa* were recognized as similar.

What is interesting related to this are some incidents over the appointment and dismissal of *Sawbwa*. *Sawbwa* was hereditary, but the actual succession had to wait for the Burmese king's permission,¹⁷ and the king would settle any conflicts.¹⁸ This hereditary position and permission of succession by king is different from *myowun* who were appointed and dispatched by the central government, in that it appears to have the characteristic of a tributary state. However, according to the royal order to dismiss a *Sawbwa*, the king stated that the member of the proper family should be appointed as *myowun*.

In Bhamo *myo*, he who pretend to be *Sawbwa* is not a descendent of the line of chiefs. Abolish the *Sawbwa*. [ROB 4:588 (2 Sept. 1787)]

In this dismissal, we have no historical material available, so there is no way to know the details. However, there is a section in the royal order that mentioned the reason why the *Sawbwa* of Mohnyin was dismissed.

Even though he is a *Sawbwa*, Mohnyin *Sawbwa* devastated the surrounding villages...the tax that used to be paid is not paid anymore, ...dismiss him from the *Sawbwa*. Appoint an appropriate person as *myowun* and deal with it. [ROB 6:426 (23 April 1807)]

It is interesting to note that the word tribute is not used in this case. It is mentioned as tax instead. One of the reasons given for dismissal was the *Sawbwa* not fulfilling his obligations. More importantly, failure to rule the residents is the other reason, and *myowun* is to be the replacement. This means that both *Sawbwa* and

¹⁶ Other than that, the bans on narcotics, liquor, and gambling have already been mentioned. Also, similar measures were taken for designating *dhammathat*, the compilation of customary law [ROB 7:371 (31 May 1817)], and distribution of calendars [ROB 5:397 (8 Mar. 1788)]. On the other hand, as for promotion of agriculture and cultivation, *Sawbwas* were excluded. [ROB 5:656 (16 May 1801)]

¹⁷ For succession and appointment of *Sawbwa* refer to ROB 4:628 (20 Oct. 1787) (Mohnyin *Sawbwa*), ROB 5:647 (10 May 1801) (Kyaingyong *Sawbwa*), ROB 5:712 (15 June 1801) (Theinni *Sawbwa*), ROB 5:824 (10 Mar. 1806) (Letmaing *Sawbwa*), ROB 6:401 (31 Mar. 1807) (Thaungthut *Sawbwa*), ROB 6:583 (27 Sept. 1808) (Bhamo *Sawbwa*), ROB 7:199 (19 Feb. 1811) (Mainghligyi *Sawbwa*).

¹⁸ Refer to ROB 5:787 (6 Feb. 1806) (Letmaing *Sawbwa*), ROB 6:334 (15 Jan. 1807) (12 toung-Kayin [Karen] *Sawbwa*), ROB 6:338 (19 Jan. 1807) (*idem quod*).

myowun were considered to be equal in the capacity of governing the subjects. At this moment, I found only two examples of dismissal and replacement with *myowun*.¹⁹ In both examples, the regions are special in that they are strategically important points in the trade routes to China and Assam. It is better to not reach a definite conclusion too soon, but as far as these regions are concerned, the Burmese king did not recognize any innate difference between the *myowun* and *Sawbwa* as administrative systems. Also, when *myothugyi* and *Sawbwa* are compared, their approved power and the duty are drastically different, but they are the same in that both of them are hereditary rulers. *Myothugyi* also had to have the king’s approval for succession and whenever there was a conflict in the succession, the central government would often intervene and make rulings.²⁰

Thus, I have shown above the picture that might be slightly different from that of indirect rule as is widely alleged. How were the subjects under such a ruler seen from the central government? From the viewpoint of autonomy, have they been cut off from the central control as they have little relevance? On important political measures, as was seen above, subjects under *Sawbwa* were included as targets to keep informed and disseminated. The following is a royal order that gives us important insights on this:

In Nyaungshwe *myonay* (district), *tatpaungza* and *myoza* cannot give title and town appanage like *Sawbwa*. ...Nyaungshwe *myonay* is adjacent to...in the east, ...in the south, ...in the west, ...in the north. Make the land for Nyaungshwe (extent of the territory) in the way that is shown in the map that the Nyaungshwe *Sawbwa* has copied. ...all the *athi*, *ala* (those who were born between *athi* and *katpa*), and *katpa* (immigrants from elsewhere) other than those who have the sign of black bees (one troop of *ahmudan*) should be dealt with by Nyaungshwe *Sawbwa*. [ROB 6:596 (10 Oct. 1808)]

In this royal order regulating the power and jurisdiction of Nyaungshwe *Sawbwa*, an impression is given that *Sawbwa* is just the same as *myothugyi* who is ruling over all the residents within his territory except for *ahmudan*, contrary to the image of the *Sawbwa* as the traditional chief ruling over various ethnic groups and forming a small kingdom. I cannot reach a definite conclusion, as there is no mention of how the tax is collected from *athi*, but at least from this example, subjects under *Sawbwa* are recognized to be of equal rank as the subjects under *myothugyi*. Also in the royal order, similar to the cases of the *myothugyi*, there are many records of

¹⁹ As an example of transfer of jurisdiction from *Sawbwa* to *myothugyi*, Wuntho is well known. The transfer is confirmed from the record that in 1764, the *sittan* was submitted by *Sawbwa*, but in 1802 it was by *myothugyi*. What had happened between these years is not known [BS:363–70, 381]. What should be noted here is that it was *Sawbwa* that submitted *sittan*.

arbitration regarding conflict over the jurisdictional right over the residents, conflicts not only between *Sawbwas*, but conflicts as well with the special tax collection administrator or the commander of the garrison troops that is directly connected with the central government.²¹

From the limited examples that we have, it is clear that people under *Sawbwa* control were not outside of the Burmese king's concern. From the king's point of view, it can be said that people under the *Sawbwa* are the same as those under *myothugyi* in that they both are the king's subjects under the jurisdiction of provincial administration. Of course, there was undoubtedly a distinct difference between them in the load of tax and labor, which did not originate in the difference in ethnicity but rather the difference from whom the people were receiving the rule of the Burmese king.

Thus from the inference made from fragments of historical sources, I have shown that under the *Sawbwa*'s rule, ethnicity did not have an influence in the way that people were being dealt with. In the next section, I would like to examine how the people under the *Min*'s rule were dealt with within the structure of the state of *Naingngandaw*.

2.3. Subjects of *Min* and “*Ayaing*”

Whether or not the subjects of *Sawbwa* were ruled by the Burmese king directly or indirectly, at least in the mind of the Burmese king, they were essentially recognized as his subjects. On the other hand, people under the control of *Min* had only a theoretical subordinate relation with the king of Burma, and there was no substantial dominance relationship at all. If anything, in the example seen with the Siamese *ahmudan* and slaves, Siamese residing in the nuclear and provincial zones were treated the same as the subjects of the Burmese king's, not under the rule of *Min* of Siam.

I will review how the Burmese king recognized and treated the people who were under the rule of *Min*. Note, however, there were very few royal orders of Burmese kings that referred to those who have very little to do with his rule. I will look at the royal orders related to the people in the former kingdom of Arakan that used to be part of *Min* but later became the nuclear and provincial zones of Burma,

²⁰ Refer to Saitō [1991] and Itō [1995] for a detailed discussion of the power and position of *myothugyi*.

²¹ Refer to the following royal orders for examples: *Yauksauk Sa vs. Mongnai Sawbwa* [ROB 3:275 (4 Sept. 1773)], *Kale Sawbwa vs. Anaukpet-taik-wun* [ROB 8:359 (16 Sept. 1819)], *Hlaing myoza vs. silver tax collection agent: dispute over Kayin's jurisdiction* [ROB 4:601 (17 Sept. 1787)], *Karenni Latmaing Sawbwa vs. Mobyay garrison force* [ROB 6:494 (2 Oct. 1807)], *Taungthut Sawbwa vs. kin-tathmu* [ROB 6:835 (16 Dec. 1810)].

and the people in the Kingdom of Assam²² that was under an independent *Min* but became subject to Burma.

As the relationship with Great Britain became worse, King Bodawpaya stated in the royal order to get ready for marching into Bengal,

The only land that the British *lumyo* possesses is Wilat Islands (British Isles). The *myos* and *ywas* in the western region are not of British *naingngan*'s possession. Such *myos* as Sittakaung (Chittagong), Panwa, Daka (Dacca), and Mokthuza (Murshidabad) in which Rakhine *kywandawmyos* reside are the *myos* and *ywas* that the kings of Rakhine used to possess and now they are those of *naingngandaw*. The Brits should not demand [tax] for Rakhine *kywandawmyos* that reside in *myos* and *ywas* within *naingngandaw*. ...western *myos* are *myos* and *ywas* that the kings of Bayanathi (Benares), Lekkhaung (Lucknow), and Dili (Delhi) possess and the Dili king's banners are so clear. It is not an accepted practice that the British unduly occupy those *myos* as *naingngan*'s villages. [ROB 7:487 (22 Dec. 1817): not done]²³

Note a special term “*kywandawmyo*” is used in referring to Arakanese. In making a protest against the British government in India, by using the expression “subject” and “kind,” it clearly showed the attribution and stressed that Arakanese is under the rule of the Burmese king. Similar attribution made about “people” is seen in the royal order that regards Indians as new subjects as follows:

Those *taingthu* (people or man) or *pyitha* (people or man) in Bayanathi (Benares) in Majjhima Desa (India) have clearly had the feeling that they want to become *kywandawmyo* since the Burmese king received the statue of Kappila the Risi... [ROB 7:306 (11 Apr. 1813)] (In preparing for welcoming the statue of Kappila the Risi and Maha Bodhi tree)

Also in the royal order associated with attacking Ayutthaya Kingdom and in another order demanding insurgents to be extradited by the king of Ayutthaya respectively:

(Do not steal the rice that has been accumulated at Phetchaburi) it is there to be distributed and shared with the *kywandawmyos* of Shan, Talaing (Mon),

²² Refer to Watanabe [1987] for detailed background.

²³ Almost the same description is found in a royal order to get ready for marching into Bengal [ROB 7:435 (16 Sept. 1817)], as well in a royal order [ROB 7:365 (18 Feb. 1817)] demanding surrender of the Arakanese referring to phrases similar to that. Also, there is a royal order on Manipur with similar contents [ROB 7:489 (8 Mar. 1818)].

Gwe,²⁴ Yodaya (after occupying Ayutthaya). [AAM:215 (25 Mar. 1760)]

(King Yodaya is the kind of ruler who) is accurately recording all Dawei *kywandawmyo*, Myanmar *kywandawmyo*, and Talaing *kywandawmyo* in *sayin* who came in the villages and the khayaings of Dawei *myo* and is holding his umbrella and building a palace at other *pyi tain*. [AAM:149–50 (15 Jan. 1760)]

The king used the expression “*kywandawmyo*” being very conscious of King Ayutthaya who is *Min*, and also to make it clear that they are subjects of the king of Burma. As well, in the nuclear and provincial zones, in relation to setting jurisdiction, the expression “*kywandawmyo*” is used as follows:

Villages in Mindon *myo* are close to the places of Chin-*ayaing*...Thandwe *wun* and *sitke* are invading our jurisdiction and claiming the right over the Chin *kywandawmyos* and Myanmar *kywandawmyos* in the villages in Mindon *myo*... [ROB 5:596 (24 July 1795)]

to clearly differentiate those “*ayaing*” who are outside of the rule, and those who are under the king’s power.

In the protest against Britain as mentioned above, it is certain that the king appears to have the understanding that the Arakanese are people who are under the rule of the Burmese king. Also, there is clearly the recognition that they are the ones that should be taxed. To put it the other way around, those who are recognized as being outside of the king’s authority are excluded from taxation. I would like to avoid making a strong assertion as I could not find any further historical materials to support my position, but people under the *Min* may have been recognized as such.

Is it safe to say that people under the *Min*’s rule were regarded as non-taxable and therefore were of little or no concern to the Burmese king? There is an interesting royal order in regard to this question. King Bodawpaya ordered the following to the occupation forces that he dispatched in order for the once retired king of Assam to be enthroned again,

Mohnyin *myowun* and Mogaung *myowun* have attacked *myos* and *ywas* of Eastern Wethali-*pyi* (Assam) and captured and took over 1,000 people away...if that is true, put those who were captured to the last man into Wethali-*pyi* high official’s hands. [ROB 7:426 (7 Sept. 1817)] (Order issued again; ROB 7:471 [6 Nov. 1817])

²⁴ A widely accepted theory states that they were of Chinese descent, but another theory asserts that they were Kayin. Refer to Suzuki and Ogiwara [1977].

Athann-*taing* (Assam) have become the same as *taingnaingandaw*, as I have put the umbrella on the palace (had him enthroned). Stop the soldiers of Bhamo, Mogaung, Mohnyin that have captured [people of Assam] as prisoner, for they are not an enemy *myo* and *ywa* that needs to be attacked and suppressed. Bring every single one of the prisoners from the soldiers of Bhamo, Mogaung, Mohnyin as well as troops of *ahmudan* and *ayadan*. [ROB 7:446 (2 Oct. 1817)]

From these royal orders, it is evident that Bodawpaya was trying to stop *myowuns* of north Burma from capturing and owning *Min* people of Assam just because Assam had came under his control. However, the other meaning of this episode is that this kind of practice was prevalent when the people were regarded not under the king's control. That is, people who were regarded as not being under the rule of the Burmese king were treated as a new target for acquiring manpower. If there was a chance, they could be regarded as someone to be captured for use as slaves or *ahmudan*. This did not only apply to people under *Min* rule.

In the nuclear zone and peripheral tributary zones of *Sawbwa*, there were people called Kachin, Chin, or Kayin, who were described with the word “*ayaing*” (savages) or “*ayaingasaing*” (savages) attached. In royal orders, it is often seen that those people newly came under the *Sawbwa*'s rule.²⁵ And those who would not submit were considered to be sources of social unrest or treated as sources of manpower as follows:

Let Mogaung *Sawbwa* attack Chins and Kachins and have them captured. Attack Chins and Kachins along the road between the amber mine and Mainglon *myo*, capture them and gain security in the traffic on the road. [ROB 5:347 (21 Jan. 1788)]

In the above, I have shown how people that came under the rule of the Burmese king were regarded, and reasoned by this analogy how people might have been dealt with before coming under the king's rule. Although I was unable to show historical material that directly depicted how people under *Min* rule were regarded, I concluded that, including those considered to be “savages,” they were not thought of as coming under the authority of the Burmese king and also were regarded as a potential source of manpower.

²⁵ Refer to ROB 6:400 (30 Mar. 1807) (“Kachin Theinpaw *Ayaingasaing*”; those who yield allegiance should be rewarded), ROB 6:334 (15 Jan. 1807) (“Kayin *Ayaing Sandomyo*” have come under the rule; have them serve for the queen as *Sawbwas*; cf. ROB 6:338 [19 Jan. 1807], ROB 6:480 [10 Sept. 1807]), ROB 6:558 (11 Dec. 1807) (“Kayins became *kywandaw*, and tranquility was restored”), ROB 6:395 (25 Mar. 1807) (Kachin 96 Taung *Sawbwa* came under the rule).

Conclusion

Thus far, I have provided an overview of how various ethnic groups were regarded and dealt with in each level of concentric circle under the rule of the Konbaung dynasty. It became clear that from the ruler's point of view, ethnicity was not the decisive factor, rather what mattered most were the differences of "peoples" in the governing institution through which they were ruled. It was, in a sense, a proof that as a state, Konbaung dynasty has had the basis of its governing structure on the "people," not on the "land."

People of China and India who were considered to be from the world other than *Naingngandaw* were treated as a special being exempted from the governing rule of the Konbaung dynasty such as the taxation system. Sometimes it meant preferential treatment for them, or sometimes unfavorable. However, not everyone was treated special. For example, even though Indians were born in the other world, once they were regarded to be under the rule of the Burmese king, their treatment was changed accordingly.

As for the peoples within the *Naingngandaw*, when it comes to those under the rule of *Min* or the "Savages" who were not under anyone else, it was more complicated. They were the same as those who were in the other world in that they were virtually not under the Burmese king's rule, therefore were treated the same way as Chinese people. However, because they were residing within the *Naingngandaw*, at the same time, they were considered to be a source of manpower in many aspects.

On the other hand, people under the rule of *Sawbwa*, contrary to the conventional view that each of the ethnic groups such as Shan had its own chieftain and had autonomous control in political integration, were regarded in a similar manner to those in nuclear zones, and were treated as those in the provincial administration. Rather than forming a group by ethnicity and indirectly governed by the Burmese king, they formed a "group" under the rule of *Sawbwa*, the local hereditary chief, through which they experienced the rule of Burmese king.

Regardless of their ethnicities, places of origin or situations of dependency, all those who lived in the nuclear and provincial zones were put under the system of either *athi* or *ahmudan* and were governed according to their various social strata and jobs.

In eighteenth to nineteenth century Burma, whether or not it was the same as today, it is certain that there were a number of ethnic groups that were regarded differently²⁶ from the Burmese. However from the ruler's point of view, the ethnic dif-

²⁶ As mentioned above, the phrase "*lummyo* is different" [ROB 7:485] plainly shows this recognition. As well, it is evident from the royal order of King Bodawpaya issued after the annexation of Arakan;

Rakhine (Arakan) *Myo* is the *myo* and *ywa* of the *Naingngandaw*. ...Do not use the former seals written in Arakanese language. [ROB 4:621 (14 Oct. 1787)]

ferences were not of importance, the issue was rather how they were governed as a group.

This sums up how the rulers of Konbaung dynasty had recognized numerous ethnic groups as subjects of domination. There, however, is much to be done in this field of study. Although I have mainly used royal orders to examine the fact, there is much room for further research utilizing other Burmese historical materials as well as European records from the same time period. The conclusions to which I have come, therefore, could be improved further.

Also of importance is the examination of the concrete image of the mechanism of governing. If the Konbaung dynasty functioned as a state by ruling people divided by social strata regardless of the differences in ethnicity not only in the nuclear zone but in *Sawbwa* or *Min* ruled areas and further to the people in the other world, it is necessary to show aspects of a concrete system of rule in the nuclear zone as a whole. There have been numerous studies on the government system of the Konbaung dynasty with tangible achievements, however, it needs to be reexamined further as mentioned in the above discussion.

What needs to be done in particular is to re-examine the system of taxation and labor conscription, the bedrock of ruling “people.” As I have mentioned above, in the royal orders, in the practice of tax collection and imposing labor or military service, there were exceptional cases which deviated from the conventional opinion. Those exceptional cases may have been just exceptions, but as I have pointed out in this paper, there could be other ruling systems that could not have been found from the traditional methods of discussion. This area should be further examined.

I cannot say that I was able to offer enough material to judge how the ruler’s perception of “ethnicity” affected creating “nation” of the state, or was it the British colonial rule completely apart from the ruler’s ethnic view that had generated “nation.” For that, it is necessary to reexamine ethnic groups in the colonial period, which most likely might have aimed at uniform ruling, in such a way that it is possible to compare it with the dynasty era, showing how ethnic groups were perceived and actually positioned in the system under the colonial rule. Also, with the conclusion of this paper in mind, it is necessary to study the growing nationalism; how the various “ethnic” perceptions and identity of “nation” were related, and if it had anything to do with the “past,” namely dynasty era in people’s minds. There seems to be much to be investigated.

Reference

Primary Sources

AAM: Khin Khin Sein. 1964. *Alaungmintaya Ameidawmya*. Yangon: Pyedaunzu

- Yinkyehmu thana Myanma Nainngan Thamaing Commission.
- Cox, H. 1821. *Journal of a residence in the Burmhan empire*. London: John Warren / G. and W. B. Whittaker.
- Hall, D. G. E., ed. 1955. *Michael Symes: Journal of his second embassy to the court of Ava in 1802*. London: Allen & Urwin.
- KBZ: Maung Maung Tin, U. 1967–68. *Konbaungzet Mahayazawindawgyi* (The great royal chronicle of the Konbaung dynasty). 3 vols. 3rd ed. Yangon: Leti Mandain Pounhneip daik.
- Sangermano, F. (1893) 1984. *The Burmese empire: A hundred years ago*. Westminster: Archibald Constable and Co. Repr. Delhi: B. R. Pub. Corp.
- Symes, M. (1800) 1969. *An account of an embassy to the kingdom of Ava*. London: Printed by W. Bulmer and Co., and sold by G. and W. Nicol and by J. Wright. Repr. Farnborough: Gregg International.
- MMOS: Tin. 1963–83. *Myanma Min Okchokpon Sadan* (Documents relating to the administration of the Burmese kings). 5 vols. Yangon: Ministry of Culture.
- ROB: Than Tun, ed. 1983–90. *The royal orders of Burma, A.D. 1598–1885*. 10 vols. Kyoto: Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University.
- Than Tun, 1983. The royal order (Wednesday 28 January 1795) of King Badon. *Ajia Afurika gengo bunka kenkyū* アジア・アフリカ言語文化研究 (Journal of Asian and African studies) 26: 153–201.
- BS: Trager, F. N., and W. J. Koenig. 1979. *Burmese Sittans: 1764–1826*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

Books and Articles

- Adas, Michael. 1974. *The Burma delta: Economic development and social change on an Asian rice frontier, 1852–1941*. [Madison]: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Anderson, Benedict. 1983. *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origins and spread of nationalism*. London: Verso. Trans. Shiraishi Takashi 白石隆 and Shiraishi Saya 白石さや, as *Sōzō no kyōdōtai: Nashonarizumu no kigen to ryūkō* 想像の共同体：ナショナリズムの起源と流行. Tokyo: Riburopōto リプロポート, 1987.
- Cady, John F. 1958. *A history of modern Burma*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
- Chen Ruxing 陳孺性. 1961. Miandian huaqiao shi gangyao 緬甸華僑史綱要 (A brief history of Chinese in Burma). In *Lumian Chaozhou huiguan qingzhu xinsha loucheng jinian tekan* 旅緬潮州會館慶祝新厦落成紀念特刊 (Commemoration volume for the construction of new building of Burma Chao Chow Society), 8–22. Yangon: Burma Chao Chow Society.
- Furnivall, J. S. (1948) 1956. *Colonial policy and practice: A comparative study of Burma and Netherlands India*. New York: New York University Press (Orig. pub. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Gravers, Mikael, ed. 2007. *Exploring Ethnic Diversity in Burma*. Copenhagen: NIAS (Nordic Institute of Asian Studies) Press.
- Hamashita Takeshi 浜下武志. 1999. Ajia no “kindai” アジアの〈近代〉 (“Modern” for Asia). In *Iwanami kōza sekai rekishi* 岩波講座世界歴史 (Iwanami lecture series: World his-

- tory), vol. 20, *Ajia no “kindai”: 19 seiki アジアの<近代>: 19世紀 (“Modern” for Asia: 19th century)*, 3–65. Tokyo: Iwanami shoten 岩波書店.
- Htin Aung. 1965. *The stricken peacock: Anglo-Burmese relations 1752–1948*. The Hague: Nijhoff.
- Ikeda Kazuto 池田一人. 2000. Biruma dokuritsuki ni okeru Karen minzoku undō: “A separate state” o meguru seiji ビルマ独立期におけるカレン民族運動: “a separate state” をめぐる政治 (The Karen nationalist movement in the independence period of Burma: The politics of “a separate state”). *Ajia Afurika gengo bunka kenkyū* 60:37–111.
- . 2005. Nihon senryōki Biruma ni okeru Myaunmya jiken to Karen: Shuwetuncha o meguru minzokuteki keiken ni tsuite 日本占領期ビルマにおけるミャウンミャ事件とカレン: シュウエトウンチャをめぐり民族的经验について (The Myaungmya incident and Karens under the Japanese occupation in Burma: The Karen’s experience through Shwe Tun Kya). *Tōnan Ajia: Rekishi to bunka* 東南アジア: 歴史と文化 (Southeast Asia: History and culture) 34:40–79.
- Itō Toshikatsu 伊東利勝. 1995. Thu-gyi and Sit-tan: Rural administration in late 18th and early 19th century Myanmar. *Aidai shigaku* 愛大史学 (Aichi University historical journal) 4:149–67.
- . 2006. “Karen” no hakken: Seiyōjin ni yoru Konbaun chō Myammā no Karen zō 「カレン」の発見: 西洋人によるコンバウン朝ミャンマーのカレン像 (Discovering the Karen: European views of the Karen in Myanmar under the Konbaung dynasty). Pts. 1 and 2. *Aichi daigaku bungaku ronsō* 愛知大学文学論叢 (Literary symposium) 133: 17–37; 134: 23–48.
- Iwaki Takahiro 岩城高広. 1995. Konbaun chōki no Shittān ni tsuite コンバウン朝期のシッターンについて (A note on the *Sittans* of Hanthawadi province). *Tōnan Ajia: Rekishi to bunka* 24:100–25.
- Khan, M. Siddiq. 1957. Captain George Sorrel’s mission to the court of Amarapura 1793–4: An episode in Anglo-Burmese relations. *Journal of Asiatic Society of Pakistan* 2:131–53.
- Koenig, W. J. 1990. *The Burmese polity, 1752–1819: Politics, administration, and social organization in the early Kon-baung period*. Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan.
- Lehman, F. K. 1991. Empiricist method and intentional analysis in Burmese historiography: William Koenig’s *The Burmese polity, 1752–1819*: A review article. *Crossroads* 6 (2): 77–120
- Lieberman, Victor B. 1984. *Burmese administrative cycles: Anarchy and conquest, c. 1580–1760*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Ogiwara Hiroaki 荻原弘明. 1956. Biruma san menka no Chūgoku yushutsu o chūshin to sita kinsei (18c.–19c. zenhan) ni okeru Biruma rūto bōeki ni tsuite ビルマ産綿花の中国輸出を中心とした近世 (18c.～19c. 前半) におけるビルマルート貿易について (Trade through the Burmese route in modern times [the 18th and the first half of the 19th century], with the export trade to China of the Burmese raw cotton as a central theme). *Kagoshima daigaku bunri gakubu bunka hōkoku* 鹿児島大学文学部文科報告 (Cultural science reports of Kagoshima University) 5:1–22.
- Ogiwara Hiroaki, et al. 1983. *Tōnan Ajia gendaishi* 東南アジア現代史 (Modern Southeast Asian history). Vol. 4, *Biruma, Tai* ビルマ・タイ (Burma and Thailand). Tokyo: Yamakawa shuppansha 山川出版社.

- Ōno Tōru 大野徹. 1980. Konbaun chōka no shimo Biruma コンバウン朝下の下ビルマ (Lower Burma under the Konbaung dynasty). In *Tōnan Ajia, Indo no shakai to bunka* 東南アジア・インドの社会と文化 (Society and culture of Southeast Asia and India), vol. 1:291–321. Tokyo: Yamakawa shuppansha.
- Pearn, B. R. 1933. King Bering. *Journal of the Burma Research Society (JBR)* 23 (2): 55–85.
- Ramachandra, G. P. 1979. The Canning mission to Burma of 1809/10. *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 10 (1): 119–38.
- Saitō Teruko 斎藤照子. 1991. Konbaun chō Biruma no tochi hoyū seido to shakai kōsei: Zaigen chōsho (Shittān) no bunseki o chūshin ni コンバウン朝ビルマの土地保有制度と社会構成：財源調書（シッターン）の分析を中心に (Land tenure and local administration in Konbaung Burma). In *Tōnan Ajia no tochi seido to nōgyō henka* 東南アジアの土地制度と農業変化 (Land tenure and agricultural change in Southeast Asia), ed. Umehara Hiromitsu 梅原弘光, 107–48. Tokyo: Ajia keizai kenkyūjo アジア経済研究所.
- Sekimoto Teruo 関本照夫. 1987. Tōnan Ajia teki ōken no kōzō 東南アジア的王権の構造 (The structure of the kingship in Southeast Asia). In *Gendai no shakai jinruigaku* 現代の社会人類学 (Social anthropology today), vol. 3, *Kokka to bunmei e no katei* 国家と文明への過程 (A road to the state and the civilization), ed. Itō Abito 伊藤亜人, Sekimoto Teruo, and Funabiki Takeo 船曳建夫, 3–34. Tokyo: Tōkyō daigaku shuppankai 東京大学出版会.
- Steinberg, D. J., ed. 1985. *In search of Southeast Asia: A modern history*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Sunait Chutinataranond. 1990. Cakravartin: The ideology of traditional warfare in Siam and Burma, 1548–1605. PhD diss., Cornell University.
- Suzuki Chūsei 鈴木中正, and Ogiwara Hiroaki. 1977. Kika Kyu-Rigan to Shin-Men sensō 貴家宮裡雁と清緬戦争 (Gong Liyan and the Sino-Burmese War of 1766–69). *Shiroku* 史録 (Shiroku Kagoshima University) 10: 1–40.
- Takatani Michio 高谷紀夫. 2008. *Biruma no minzoku hyoshō: Bunka jinruigaku no shiza kara* ビルマの民族表象：文化人類学の視座から (Ethnicity in Burma from anthropological viewpoint). Kyoto: Hōzōkan 法蔵館.
- Tambiah, S. J. 1976. *World conqueror and world renouncer: A study of Buddhism and polity in Thailand against a historical background*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- . (1977) 1985. The galactic polity in Southeast Asia. In *Culture, thought and social action: An anthropological perspective*, 252–86. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Taylor, Robert H. 1987. *The state in Burma*. London: C. Hurst & Company.
- Thant Myint-U. 2001. *The making of modern Burma*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Watanabe Yoshinari 渡辺佳成. 1987. Bōdōpayā ō no taigai seisaku ni tsuite: Biruma, Konbaun chō no ōken o meguru ichi kōsatsu ボードパヤー王の対外政策について：ビルマ・コンバウン朝の王権をめぐる一考察 (Concerning the foreign policy of King Bodawpaya: A study of kingship in Burma's Konbaung dynasty). *Tōyōshi kenkyū* 東洋史研究 (The journal of Oriental researches) 46 (3): 129–63.
- . 1996. Konbaun chō zenki ni okeru shihai ryōiki no ninshiki: kokka ishiki no tankyū

- コンバウン朝前期における支配領域の認識：国家意識の探求 (Perception of the state territory in the early Konbaung dynasty). In *Tōnan Ajia shi ni miru kokka ishiki* 東南アジア史に見る国家意識 (Perceptions of the state in the Southeast Asian history), ed. Yoshikawa Toshiharu 吉川利治 *Sōgōteki chiiki kenkyū seika hōkokusho shirīzu* 総合的地域研究成果報告書シリーズ 12, 40–66. Kyoto: Jūten ryōiki kenkyū “Sōgōteki chiiki kenkyū” sōkatsuhan 重点領域研究「総合的地域研究」総括班.
- . 2001. Konbaun chō Biruma to “kindai” sekai コンバウン朝ビルマと「近代」世界 (Konbaung Burma and “Modern” world). In *Iwanami kōza Tōnan Ajia shi* 岩波講座東南アジア史 (Iwanami lecture series: Southeast Asian history), vol. 5, *Tōnan Ajia sekai no saihen* 東南アジア世界の再編 (Reconstruction of Southeast Asian world), ed. Saitō Teruko, 129–60. Tokyo: Iwanami shoten.
- . 2006. Mandarē shūhen no Chūgoku jūin ni tsuite: 18–19 seiki Biruma ni okeru Kakyō shakai no seiritsu ni kansuru yobiteki kōsatsu マンダレー周辺の中国寺院について：18–19世紀ビルマにおける華僑社会の成立に関する予備的考察 (The Chinese temples in and around Mandalay area: A preliminary study on the formation of Chinese community in the 18th and 19th century Burma). In *Biruma chishi fōramu: Kikaku, chōsa, shikenteki kōkai* ビルマ地誌フォーラム：企画・調査・試験的公開 (The forum for the gazetteer of Burma), ed. Sawada Hideo 澤田英夫, 81–102. Tokyo: Tōkyō gaikokugo daigaku 東京外国語大学.
- Wolters, O. W. 1982. *History, culture, and region in Southeast Asian perspectives*. Singapore: ISEAS (Institute of Southeast Asian Studies). Rev. ed. Ithaca, N.Y.: SEAP (Southeast Asia Program), Cornell University, 1999.
- Woodman, Dorothy. 1962. *The making of Burma*. London: Cresset Press.