

The Uneasy Subordinate Alliance: The Relations between Myanmar and the Shan States in Late Nineteenth Century

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Historical Setting

The Shan who belong to the Tai ethnic group of Mongoloid family migrated from China into Myanmar before the Christian Era (Scott and Hardiman, 1901a). Although the date of their migration was still controversial, they had already present in Myanmar before the rise of Bagan in central Ayeyarwaddy Basin. In comparison, the area of settlements of Shans was larger than that of Bamar who entered in the Ayeyarwaddy Basin after the collapse of Pyu city-states (Than Tun, 2002). Since they lived in Yunnan Province, Shans established clusters of communities known as *Mong*, *Muang*, *Keng*-state or town which was ruled by a hereditary chief known as *Saopha*-lord of the sky. The Myanmar word *saw-bwa* derived from *sao-pha* (Zeng Peng: 1990). The first kingdom of Shans might be the Mao which located in a strategic place on the Yunnan border, from thence they entered Myanmar by crossing Chindwin and Ayeyarwaddy River. The Shans from Mong Mao area also moved south along the Ayeyarwaddy River. With the help of other groups from Shan States they later founded kingdoms and dynasties in central Myanmar, Upper Sagaing District, Mohnyin, Mong Kwang, Mong Mit and Bhamo. Tai immigrants on the other hand, established petty states in Hsenwi, Hsipaw, Mong Nai, Mong Pai, Yawng Hwe (Nyaung Shwe), and Kyaing Tong. When Bagan was founded by Aniruddha (1044-77) in the first half of eleventh century A.D, the Shan principalities had already existed in Myanmar. It is attributed that the hegemony of the kings of Bagan could not be extended to the principalities of Shan States, particularly the trans- Than Lwin area (Than Tun, 2004).

Rise of Shan Hagemony in Myanmar

The diplomatic problem with Mongol led to the collapse of Bagan. In September 1283, Mongol armies launched an offensive against Ngasaungchan, near Bhamo. This battle signaled King Narathihapate to flee from Bagan. The Mongol established a new province in northern Myanmar and it was named Kien Mien (Than Tun, 2002). In this situation, three sons of a Shan Chief who served under King Narathihapate of Bagan, became the real ruler of Myanmar. Three Shan Brothers, after receiving homage of Hsenwi, Mohnyin and other Shan principalities, were able to reoccupy Singu and Ma-le from Mongol invaders (Harvey and Temple, 2010). Although Mongol invaded into Myinzaing in 1300, Three Shan Brothers had to defend themselves and finally submitted gold to make peace. The withdrawal of Mongol forces and the lack of Myanmar strong ruler to fill the power vacuum led to the emergence of Shan dynasties in Central Myanmar. The first dynasty of Shan was Pinya which was founded by Thihathu who was

an ambitious monarch. The descendants of Three Shan Brothers enabled to establish successive new dynasties of Sagaing and Inwa (U Kala, 2006a).

The decline of Bagan led to the existence of power vacuum in Lower Myanmar. Accordingly in 1287 Chiang Mai Shan migrated into Lower Myanmar. They settled in Thaton, Mattaban and Bago as cultivators. They were led by a leader named Magadu who was a native of Thaton. He went to Sukhotai and served as an elephant serviceman at the Royal Court. For his good services, Magadu was favoured by the king and later he acquainted with king's daughter. In 1281, he went back to Myanmar and revolted against the Viceroy of Mataban. Magadu declared himself the king of Mataban and took a new title "Wareru". He then collaborated with Mon chief Taraphya and attacked Bago. By 1287 they occupied all territories south of Pyay and Taungoo. However their alliance was short-lived and a quarrel broke out over the division of the conquered lands. After the killing of Taraphya, Wareru became a founder of new dynasty which lasted to 1526. He was also famous for his compilation of traditional laws known as "Wareru Dhammathat" (Harvey and Temple, 2010).

Revival of Myanmar Power and the Establishment of the Second Myanmar Empire

The rivalries and power struggles among Shan Sawbwas in Inwa led to the decline of Shan power in the mid-fifteenth century. Meanwhile, Tabinshwehti (1531-50), rising champion from Hanthawaddy, enabled to exploit the disunity of Sawbwas and extended his power to Inwa, some regions of upper Myanmar and Shan States. His successor King Bayinnaung was able to wipe out the Shan hegemony from central Myanmar and Ayeyarwaddy Valley.

King Bayinnaung's reign (1551-1581) saw the extension of Myanmar power and establishment of the one of the largest empires in Asia. He became the first emperor who won all of the Shan principalities between 1557 and till his death in 1581 (U-Thayaw, 2006). The conquest of trans-Tham Lwin regions enabled King Bayinnaung to subdue Kyaing Tong and Chiang Mai. He appointed his son Nawrahta Min Saw the viceroy of Chiang Mai. It is interesting to note that King Bayinnaung used not only military strength but also friendship ties in the establishment of hegemony in the Shan States. Some *saw-bwas* voluntarily owed their allegiance to the king. For instance, Kyaing Tong Sawbwa Kyauk Yut Phareinda (1524-60) owed his allegiance to the king by sending elephants, horses and men to the king in his Chiang Mai expedition in 1546 (Than Tun, 2004).

Anyway, King Bayinnaung was the first king who established the systematic and firm relations between the centre and peripherals. The chiefs, *sawbwas* and *myozas* of subordinate states had to come to the royal capital to pay homage to the king on the new-year day and at the beginning and end of the Buddhist Lent. At the ceremony, the subordinate chiefs submitted gold, silver, horses, elephants, etc. They also had to pay annual taxes to the king. In some cases, Shan *sawbwas* showed their loyalty by submitting voluntary services and supplying contingents in times of war and rebellion. In return, they got *sanad*, or letter of appointment from the king along with regalia, titles. They were also allowed to manage judicial and revenue administration without interference from the central government. The outstanding attitude of King Bayinnaung was his policy of non-interference in the rules and privileges of *sawbwa*.

During Konbaung dynasty (1752-1885), Myanmar Kings made attempts to win the allegiance of Shan chiefs by various ways. Shan *sawbwas* participated not only in Myanmar Kings' internal warfare but also in the wars against the neighbouring countries. When King Myeidu (1763-76) attacked Chiang Mai in 1766, Shan chiefs of *Myei-Lat*-the lands located between Shan States and Myanmar proper, dispatched 3000 men to the king (Maung Maung Tin, 2004a). In addition to the military service, some Shan Sawbwas from frontier areas participated in the diplomatic relations with the neighbouring countries. For instance, Hsenwi (Theinni) Sawbwas and Bhamo Sawbwa played an active role in the relations of the Kingdom of Myanmar with China (Than Tun, 1987f). As the Shan *Sawbwas* assisted the Myanmar Kings in warfare and diplomacies, the kings in turn gave protection to the Shan *Sawbwas* in case of threats by the outside power (Maung Maung Tin, 2004a).

Myanmar King's Attitude on Sawbwas

Myanmar Kings recognized the *sawbwas* as the autonomous rulers or even as the subordinate kings. However his orders and policies for Shan States were implemented by the *wungyis*, *bohmu-mintha*-princes who had to serve as the commandant, or *sitkè*-regimental officer. They were assisted by *na-gan*-liaison officer *sa-yei* - clerk or secretary. They were sent either to the royal capitals of *sawbwas* or military head quarters which were opened at Mong Nai, Hsenwi, Mo-byè, Kyaing Tong and *Bhamo*.

The King instructed to commandants of the garrisons to submit certain portions of tax, to ensure loyalty and to demand levies from *sawbwas* in time of war. In some cases, the king involved in the territorial disputes of *sawbwas* and made territorial division (Scott and Hardiman, 1901a). By this way, former larger states of *sawbwas* were divided into new territories.

Marital Alliance

As have mentioned earlier, the Kings of Konbaung dynasty followed suit of their predecessors of Taungoo and Nyaung-yan dynasties and married Shan princesses. In addition to the practice of marital alliance, sons of *sawbwas* were summoned to the royal court to learn literature and court etiquettes (Tin, 1965c). As a result the tradition and practices of Shan *Haw* or palace were similar to those of Myanmar palace. Although *sawbwas* were allowed by the king to rule their regions as the autonomous rulers, the succession or any form of alienation of *sawbwas* without the knowledge of the king could not be done. When a *sawbwa* was to be appointed, he was summoned to the royal court to take the oath of allegiance (Sawbwa, 0065).

Disintegration of Loyalty of Shan Sawbwas

In the late Konbaung period King Mindon (1853-1878) undertook a series of reforms and sustainability of alliance with Shan *Sawbwas*. However, the loss of Lower Myanmar after the War exposed the weakness of the central power for the subordinate *sawbwas* who would like to throw off Myanmar yoke. As a result a series of rebellions of *sawbwas* broke out in King Mindon's reign. Since before the reign of King Mindon, Karennis

began to persecute the stability of southern Shan States primarily in Pong Mu, Sa-kwe, Mo-byè, Pa-leik, Tabet, Let-maing, Thi-kyit, Sa-ga, Thaton, Nong Mon, Kyei-lya Gyi, Maukme and territories comprised in the silver revenue tract such as Loi Long, Ngwe Taung, Naung Pa-lè, Yamethin (East) and Taungoo (East) (Kayin, 1054). After the annexation of Lower Myanmar, the relations between Karenni and Myanmar began to deteriorate. The invasion of Karennis sometimes spread to the Shan-Karenni frontier areas and Myeilat region. Since 1852, the commandants of Mong Nai and Mo-Byè Garrisons were busy with the subduing Karenni rebels (Shan Pyi, 1851). These situations favoured *sawbwas* who would like to break away from their allegiance to Myanmar kings.

During King Mindon's reign in 1861, Tong Peng Sawbwa Sao Khun Tha revolted against the King. He was caught in death by the troops of royal capital, Hsipaw, Mong Long, and Thonze (Maung Maung Tin, 2004c). Meanwhile ex-Sawbwa of Nyaung Shwe Sao Naw Pha attacked Nyaung Shwe. The king sent troops from Mong Nai and Mong Shu. Heng San Heik, chief of Hsenwi (north) revolted against the king in 1864 (Maung Maung Tin, 2004c). Indeed, Hsenwi was divided into five territories in Konbaung period. When Thais invaded Kyaing Tong in 1852, King Mindon summoned the troops of Cis-Than Lwin regions including that of Hsenwi. Naw Pha, Swabwa of Hsenwi, assigned San Heik to lead the troop to drive out Thais from Kyaing Tong. Owing to his diligent efforts in the battle field against Thais, San Heik was popular among his followers. He was also so proud of his achievement that he attempted to depose his master Naw Pha. As he met with failure against San Heik, Naw Pha was summoned to the royal capital and imprisoned there. New *Sawbwa* U Pho followed Naw Pha for his failure to wipe out San Heik (Crosthwaite, 1912). While Hsenwi facing with the chaotic situations, Maukme *Sawbwa* attacked Mong Nai, a major stronghold of Myanmar King (Maung Maung Tin, 2004c). Since 1802, Maukme, Mong Pon and Kyaing Kham was separated from Mong Nai's jurisdiction and the latter was merged with Kyaing Tong. After the separation from Mong Nai, Maukme Sawbwa escaped to his state established an intimate relation with Chiang Mai. Therefore King Mindon summoned and imprisoned Maukme *Sawbwa* at the royal capital. After seven years of imprisonment, Maukme *Sawbwa* attacked Mong Nai. However he met with failure due to the successful defence of Mong Nai *Sitke* and *Sawbwa*. He later took refuge into trans-Than Lwin region. King Mindon installed Khun Lon as *Sawbwa* of Maukme (Scott and Hardiman, 1901).

During king Thabaw's reign (1878-1885) Mong Nai, the former strong hold of Myanmar kings and major Shan Principalities, revolted against Mandalay in 1882. Indeed Mong Nai Sawbwa Sao Khun Kyi had a personal grudge against Myanmar King on the appointment of Kyaing Tong Myoza. The step-father of the newly appointed Kyaing Tong Myoza was Twet Nga Lu, ex-monk and sworn opponent of Sao Khun Kyi (Hendershot, 1952). Meanwhile, of the execution of Queen Mong Wai, elder sister of Khun Kyi, by King Thibaw spread in Mong Nai and it escalated the anger of Khun Kyi. During the midst of chaotic situations, King Thibaw made attempt to impose heavy tax from Mong Nai hatched a plot to arrest Khun Kyi. Before the implementation of their plan, Myanmar officers and followers were slew by Khun Kyi. King Thibaw responded this outrage with a punitive expedition. Khun Kyi fled to Kyaing Tong Sao Waing, Sawbwa of Kawk Sawk, Mong Nong Myoza and some lesser chiefs joined Khun Kyi. They planned to drive Myanmar garrisons out of Shan States and looked for an appropriate Myanmar prince

to replace King Thibaw (Handershot, 1952). At this juncture they found their candidate. He was Prince Limbin who was a son of late crown Prince Kanaung.

After the abortive rebellion of Prince Myingun and Myinkhondaing in 1866, Prince Limbin was looked after by royal uncle King Mindon. However the massacre of royal siblings in early King Thibaw's reign in 1878 forced Prince Limbin to flee to Lower Myanmar. In 1897 the British managed him to study at St. John College in Yangon. After the completion of his learning, Prince Limbin was appointed as the town officer. When the British annexed Upper Myanmar, the Prince was viewed by the British as a potential leader of armed-struggle of the people of Upper Myanmar. Therefore he was dismissed from his office and deported to Mawlamyine even though a pension was granted. At this juncture, Mong Nai Sawbwa, Lawk Sauk (Yawk Sawk) Sawbwa and Kyaing Tong Sawbwa decided to make contact with the Prince to throw off King Thibaw's yoke (Ma Kyan, 1968).

The case of Kyaing Tong was different from that of Taung Baing, Hsenwi and Maukme. *Sawbwas* of Kyaing Tong customarily owed their allegiance to the kings. The kings also gave special treatment to the successive *sawbwas* who were exempted from paying taxes. They were liable to pay annual tributes. *Sawbwas* and their kinsmen were used to visit the royal capital occasionally. A subordinate official of Mong Nai Sitkè was appointed as commandant of Kyaing Tong. He was assisted by two *na-gans*, clerks and fifty armed men. Although Myanmar commandant had the privilege to attend the meetings of Kyaing Tong *Sawbwa*, he did not interfere in the decision of *sawbwa*. The subordinate towns of Kyaing Tong such as Mong Yin, Mong Yaung, Mong Lin, Mong Pyin, etc. were administered by *myo-wun-town* officer. The main responsibility of Myanmar officers in Trans-Than Lwin regions was to investigate the local situations and to report back to the capital through Mong Nai Sitkè. They were also responsible to collect bazaar taxes to support their officers. Commandant and followers of Kyaing Tong garrison were allotted lands for their subsistence. In addition, the gambling booths were imposed taxes to support commandant of Kyaing Tong. Whenever a new commandant was appointed by the royal capital, *sawbwa* and his subordinate headmen along with local music band had to welcome him from a place three miles away from the town (Scott and Hardiman, 1901). During the last year of King Mindon's reign Khemarahta Maha Thiha, Kyaing Tong *Sawbwa*, and his minister arrived at the royal capital to submit annual tributes (Hluttaw, 1901). The king reciprocally allotted gifts to *sawbwa*, Maha Devi and four ministers (Than Tun, 2004). The visit of Kyaing Tong *Sawbwa* revealed the last amicable relations with Myanmar. When new *sawbwa* Sao Kon Tai (1881-86) ruled Kyaing Tong in 1881, Mong Nai *Sawbwa*, Yawk Sawk *Sawbwa* and Mong Nong *Sawbwa* revolted against King Thibaw and took refuge in Kyaing Tong. Sao Kon Tai collaborated with fugitive *sawbwas* to throw off Myanmar yoke due to his personal grudge against King Mindon on the appointment of Kyaing Yong *Sawbwa*. He slew Myanmar Commandant and thirty followers (Than Tun, 2004). Meanwhile, the attempts of Kyaing Tong *Sawbwa* and his allies to depose King Thibaw was strengthened by the arrival of Lin Bin Prince to Kyaing Tong in 1885.

Actually Mong Nai and Kyaing Tong *Sawbwas* wished only to depose King Thibaw. They also wished to regain their lost territories and to ease taxation from the Myanmar government. Their objectives can be seen thus;

- (a) So long as a sovereign was absent Shan Sawbwas would fight each other.
- (b) Only with the rise of a just monarch the welfare of the country, the race and Buddhist religion would be safe guarded and promoted.
- (c) If Prince Limbin succeed the throne, *thathameda* (income tax) would be revoked and annual tribute to the king would be paid once in three year.
- (d) All people would be freed from the devastation of strifes
- (e) If a just monarch emerged, sawbwas would colloborate with the monarch for the benefit of religion, kingdom and people (Tin Ohn, 1968).

In early 1886, Limbin confederacy organized Keng Yong, Kyaing Tong, Keng Chieng, Monpyin, Yawk Sawk, Mong Nai, Monglin, Mong-Yan and Mongsak. At the beginning it had only four thousand troops (Thibaw Sawbwa, 1886). Later, they were joined by Mongshu, Mongsi, Kyeeshi Mansam and Mongtong and thus main force increased up to 13,000 troops (Thibaw Sawbwa, 1886). Although Prince Limbin openly admitted that he did not have any intention to fight against the British (Limbin, 1886), the strength of his followers and the wide area under his control threatened the British government and decided to take action on the movement of Limbin and followers.

Another Shan State under chaotic situations was Mong Meik. Customarily, it was ruled by *sawbwas* under recognition of Myanmar kings. However, since 1837, the political instability broke out due to the deposition of *sawbwa* by his commandant. Between 1837 and 1840, Myanmar king appointed nine town officers to rule the region. During Bagan Min's reign, four ministers were appointed by the king to Mong Meik. They were attacked by U Aye Pu, ex-*Sawbwa* of Mong Meik in 1850. This political problems still lingered in the region up to the reign of King Mindon who finally appointed Khon Tè, a descendant of *sawbwa*, as *sawbwa* of Mong Meik. He ruled Mong Meik till his assassination in 1858 by Bo Hlaing and Haw Kyin. In 1861, Haw Kyin was appointed as *Sawbwa* by King Mindon. In 1867 Myadaung Myowun occupied Mong Meik. Royal capital sent a couple of *myo-wuns* to rule Mong Meik. In 1874 King Mindon installed Kan Ho the *sawbwa* of Mong Meik who ruled up to 1883 (Scott and Hardiman, 1901).

Although Taung Peng, Maukme, Hsenwi (north), and Kyaing Tong, etc, broke away their allegiance to Myanmar King, many *sawbwa* principalities stayed away from the rebellions against Myanmar king. They watched the problems of King Thibaw and some states kept their relations with Mandalay the status quo. For instance, Nyaung Shwe Sawbwa Sao Mong who was raised by King Mindon at Mandalay kept his loyalty and continued to pay homage to king Thibaw (Maung Maung Tin, 2004c).

Soon after the occupation of Upper Myanmar, the British gave priority to the pacification and the restoration of law and order in Upper Myanmar and the Shan States. Meanwhile the chaotic situations and upsets prevailed in the Shan State through the rivalries among the Shan Chiefs, Limbin confederacy, the rebellion of Twet Nga Lu who was an antagonistic to the Mong Nai Chief (Sai Aung Tun, 2009) the rebellion of Karenni chief against the British, the anti-British rebellion of Prince Saw Yan Naing, political instability in Hsipaw and North Hsenwi and activities of Prince Myingun (Scott, 1908). Accordingly Colonel Sladen, political officer of British expeditionary forces establish an interim government with ex-officials of King Thibaws headed by Kinwun Mingyi, chief minister of King Thibaw (Thant Myint-U, 2001).

The chief obligation of interim government was to facilitate the process of pacification. As regard to the unrest of Shan States-Magwe Myoza Mingyi Minhla Mingaung, one of the members of interim government and also being an ex-assistant minister of King Thibaw, suggested the British government to station the permanent garrisons in the turbulent areas of Shan State and to distribute order of amnesty among the native people because young princes like Limbin still carrying out the anti-British resistances (Magwe Wundauk, 1886). However the British government was reluctant and India did not have actual plan to bring the Shan States under British hegemony. However he put forward the idea to cultivate goodwill with the Shan Sawbwas and to respect their independence (Sao Khin Maung and Sao Shwe Thaike, 1930). When he visited Mandalay, in February 1886, Viceroy Lord Dufferin abolished the interim government and placed the entire country except for the Shan States under British rule as part of British India (Than Myint-U, 2001). The Viceroy approved the British policy of the allowance of autonomous rule in Shan States. Why the British authorities appreciated this policy so much was because it would save the exchequer of the Government.

Before they setting up the policy of the administration of Shan States the British thoroughly studied old Myanmar records of Hluttaw. Then the Shan States were divided into main administrative and political sectors (White, 1886) as follows:

The first sector was comprised of some regions of present day Kachin state and Chindwin riverine regions such as Khamtilong, Hsinkalaing Khamti, Kale, Wuntho and Hsaung Hsop. The second sector comprised of twenty-nine states of Myelat- the land existing between Shan principalities and Myanmar proper. They are Ywangan, Kyaukkulewa, Pwe-hla, Pindayaya, Mongpyein, Namkon, Naungmon, Mongseik, Keng Hkan, Baw-saing, Kyauktat, Kyon, Thamakhan, Namke, Bayin, Kyaingtaung and Mong Nai. The trans Thanlwin states comprised in the third sector. They are Mong lun, Mawpwa, Mainglingyi, Kyaingyongyi, Kyaing Tong, Kyaing Chieng, Kyaing thingyi, Mong Sak (Maingthat), Mongpu, Mongham, Maingthat and Maingta (Taw Sein Ko, 1887).

When traced, the British interest in the Shan states primarily depended on its economic potentialities. They even did not make the division of administrative units and let the Shans to govern their land in their own way. In order to materialize the system of subordinate alliance with Sawbwas, the British chose R.H Pilcher, an able administrator who well-versed in Shan Language, as the political officer (Ma Kyan, 1973). Sir Charles Bernard, Chief Commissioner, instructed Pilcher to explain the policy of the non-interference of the government in the administration of Shan Sawbwas (Symes, 1885). They were made to understand that the intention of British government was to preserve law and order and to encourage trade and regional economy. Pilcher made careful enquiries about the relationship between China and the Shan states situated in the frontier areas. He also dispatched the letters of friendship to the Sawbwas of Mongpan, Mongsit, Mongnai, Maukme, Hopong, Namkok, Nongmon, Wanyin, Thaton, Nyaungshwe, Samka, Mongton, Mobyè, Loilon and Inlewa (Symes, 1885).

While Pilcher was busy with the dealing with Sawbwas, Lord Dufferin, Viceroy of India seeking the ways to win the allegiance of Sawbwas. He knew that there was a constant struggle among themselves. He therefore convinced that the British did not need to exert much pressure to win the allegiance of Shan Chiefs. His policy towards the Shan States could be classified as;

- (a) to keep the Shan states under the respective Sawbwas and to refrain them from terrorizing British administered territories,
- (b) to prevent internecine strife in the Shan States and
- (c) to prevent Sawbwas from contacting any foreign nation.

Even after a lapse of one year after annexation of Upper Myanmar, however, the British authorities had not yet definite policy on the administration of Shan States. Meanwhile some Sawbwas did not accept the rule of British while other Sawbwas such as Khun Sai of Thibaw stood as the pro-British elements (White, 1886). Yawngwe (Nyaung Shwe) Sawbwa Sao Ohn also refused to join anti-British Shans because he realized the British power. Sawbwas of Hsipaw, Mongpaw, Laikha, Mong Nai, Keshi, Sikip, Mong Kung, and Samka also accepted British overlordship.

Military Expedition to the Southern Shan States

Although many of Shan Sawbwas voluntarily submitted themselves to the British suzerainty, chief commissioner and British authorities decide to dispatch military expedition to show their strength so that Shan public to be acknowledge British power and supremacy (The Secretary, 1887). On 3 January 1887, a military expedition comprising 3rd Gurkha Regiment, 50th Bombay Sappers and Miners and 40th Mounted Infantry, was dispatched to southern Shan States (Superintendent, 1887). The expedition was led by political officer A.H. Hildebrand and Commander Colonel Stedman. They were told by authorities that the prime task of the expedition was to befriend with local people rather than to subdue them through hostile actions. They were told to inform Shan *Sawbwas* that trade impediments between Shan States and Myanmar proper had been abolished (Bernard, 1886). Till now the British had no intention of subjugating Shan States by force.

When the British expedition arrived Kyatsakan, a place located between Thazi and Singu, they faced with the resistance of Limbin's followers comprising *ngwe-khun-hmus* (officers in charge of silver tracts) of Pwehla, Pindaya, and Kyaukguleywa. After the engagement all of them surrendered to the British force (Scott and Hardiman, 1901b). The Hildebrand received information from them that Limbin's strong outpost was located in Yawksauk area and it was put under the command of Kun Bek, father of Yawksauk Sawbwa. There were also other outposts in the vicinity of Mongnai, Mongpaw, Mongpyin, Hopong, Namkok, Nongmon, Thaton and Ban-yin (Hildebrand, 1887a). However, it is suggested that subordinate chiefs of Limbin carried out their own plans without the knowledge of the Prince himself because the latter openly admitted that he had no intention to revolt against the British.

On 30 January 1887 Hildebrand received the submission of the *ngwe-gun-hmus* at Pwe-hla. From there Hildebrand sent a letter to the Lawksawk Sawbwa requesting an explanation for his resistance. He also informed the Sawbwa of the British intention to arbitrate and settle the confusion which arose between him and Saw On, the *de facto* ruler of Yawngwe (Hildebrand, 1887a).

In replying to Hildebrand the Sawbwa of Lawksawk stated that there was chaos in the Shan States and that the trade routes were taken care of. He described Sao On to be a dacoit and that Yawngwe was without a Sawbwa. The Sawbwa inform Hildebrand that his men had

accidentally resisted the British columns as they have no information about it. As Hildebrand had intention to proceed to Lawsauk, its Sawbwa was ordered to disband his forces at Kugyo and thereabouts and to try and meet him at Kugyo (Hildebrand, 1887b).

No reply came from Lawksawk Sawbwa and the column of Colonel Stedman proceeded. They reached Bawyethat pagoda, near Kugyo on 7 February 1887. Another strong letter was dispatched which stated that resistance to the British column meant resisting the Chief Commissioner and the British Queen. He was warned of the dire consequences which would follow from it (Hildebrand, 1887b).

Having defeated the Limbin Confederacy the British quickened their work on the pacification of the Shan States. J.G. Scott preceded to Mobyè on 27 February 1887 and accepted the unconditional surrender of the *Sawbwa*. Before returning to Fort Stedman, near Nyaung Shwe, Scott established a post at Pekon. The British column reached Mongpaw on 23 April and soon accepted the submission of the *Sawbwa* (Superintendent, 1887).

Meanwhile, the British distributed letters contained information stating that the British would not interfere in their internal affairs and that they expected the *Sawbwas* to maintain law and order in their respective territories in eastern States. One particular *Sawbwa* proved to be rather stubborn. He was Sao Weng, the *Sawbwa* of Lawksawk. He declined to submit in spite of repeated British invitation. He continued to terrorize the Chiefs of Myelat area, and wrought havoc on communication lines between Hlaingdet and Fort Stedman.

The British were thus forced to take drastic action on Sao Weng. The British column headed by Hildebrand and Scott was attacked by Sao Weng's men. When this was subdued they found the *Sawbwa* no more in his region. He had fled to Kyaing Tong and later moved to Kenghung which was situated in Yunnan. The British then appointed Bo Saing, an old Myanmar *Sitke* to take temporary charge of the area (Superintendent, 1887).

Other areas of the Shan States were also in a turbulent position. With the help of Sawlapaw the *Sawbwa* of Mong Nai had his hands full driving out Twet Nga Lu from Kyaing Tong. At the same time the Maukme *Sawbwa* attacked Mongpan. It only came to an end with his death. His forces then returned to their own destination. J.G. Scott viewed the whole situation as being critical (Hildebrand, 1887a). Nevertheless with the submission of Mongpaw *Sawbwa* the tension ceased. Ultimately other *Sawbwas* from Southern Shan State submitted. Hildebrand was thus able to return to Fort Stedman.

On 5 May 1887 Prince Limbin surrendered to J.G. Scott. Limbin was then moved to Yangon. With the approval of Mong Nai *Sawbwa* the British flag was unfurled at Mong Nai. It was a joyous occasion for Hildebrand and his colleagues in the Shan States. Hildebrand and his staff subjugated the Southern States in less than five months. What was more they did it without the loss of one single Tommy on their side. But this did not mean that British dominion in the area was totally solved. Unforeseen problems still awaited them and more campaigning need to be done (Hendershot, 1952). Many other states followed suit after the surrender of Prince Limbin and the *Sawbwa* of Mong Nai. The states in the Myelet that submitted were Ywangan, Kyaukkuleyma, Pwehla, Pindaya, Bawsaing, Kyauktat, Kyon, Nankon, Thamakan, Pihhmi, Lwe E, Lwemaw, Nanke, Bawnin, Inle, Lwelon, Nantok, Sagwe, Ponmu, Thaton, Banyin, Naungmun, Hopon and Nankok.

Non Myelat states that accepted British rule were Moby, Saga, Nyaungwe, Thigyit, Yatsauk, Maingpyin, Letthet, Maingpun, Maingseik, Mongnai, Mukme, Maingpan, Kyaingtaung, Kyaingkhan, Kyethi-Bansam, Maonkaing and Legya (Hildebrand, 1887b).

The energies of the British, by force of circumstances soon moved north from their southern positions. Here there was not only pro and anti British elements but saw the presence of two Myanmar Princes in their midst. Prince Saw Yan Naing and his younger brother Saw Yan Paing, grandsons of King Mindon had raised followers in Hsenwi and Manse. Hsipaw and Hsenwi, two northern states engaged the British attention. The *Sawbwa* of Hsipaw was Hkun Saing but the man who was influential in Hsenwi was Hkun Sang Tong Hong. To cause confusion to the British the Chaungwa Prince, a royal descendent had established himself in Manse region. He had some few supporters in the persons of Naw Hpa, *ex-Sawbwa* of Hsenwi, Naw Mong, his son, etc. The forces of Chaungwa Prince were opposed by Hkun Sang Tong Hong and his supporters (Daly, 133). To set the matters right J.E. Bridges, Mandalay Deputy Commissioner and Hkun Saing were sent to Hsipaw by the British authorities.

In one of his reports the Superintendent of Northern Shan States stated that the presence of the Chaungwa Princes in Taungpaing had created much confusion in the northern States. The two brothers Saw Yan Naing and Saw Yan Paing had raised followers in Inwa district and resisted the British forces. When it was crushed in July 1886 the elder Prince Saw Yan Naing headed for Kalagwe, a township in Hsumsai, Northern Shan States. There he tried to gain the support of Hein Nga Maung, the *ex-Myook* of Mainglon. When the latter refused him help the Prince left for Taungpaing. Like Hein Nga Maung the *Sawbwa* also refused to help him. He therefore made his way to Naungmun and later to Manse. It was believed that a civil war erupted in those areas because of his presence.

In order to regain his status Saing Naw Hpa, the *de jure* ruler of Hsenwi tried to attach himself and his son Naw Mong to Prince Saw Yan Naing. They offered the Prince to the Northern Shan State as being an aspirant to the Myanmar kingship. He utilised the royal status to further his own aims. At this time Hsenwi and its environs were under the control of Hkun Sang Tong Hong. This made it more imperative for Naw Hpa and Naw Mong fled away with Hkun Sang Tong Hong. To materialise it Naw Hpa sought the help of Kachins while his sons gathered some followers in Hsenwi. Khun Saing, the *Sawbwa* of Thibaw who was pro-British now joined hands with Hkun Sang Tong Hong and at once despatched a force 500 men to him. Prince Saw Yan Naing and Naw Mong marched to Lashio and declared their intention of seizing Hsenwi for Nawpha. A fierce battle raged at Lashio resulting in the loss of Naw Mong and men from the camp of the Chaungwa Prince. After some bitter fighting, Nawpha was driven to Mangsi in the Kachin Hills whereas Prince Saw Yan Naing together with Nga Se, the Heng of Hsum Hsai fled to Taungpeng (Smeaton, 1887).

After some time Hkun Sang Tong Hong continued with his attack. Men from Somu and Manglun fought from his side. Very soon he won over the forces of Naw Mong who informed the British that he would have to surrender to Hkun Sang Tong Hong. Meanwhile Hkun Saing had ordered the *Sawbwas* of Kehsi Mansam and Mongnaung to send what forces they could to Alelet. Superintendent Hildebrand stepped in at this juncture. He commanded all *Sawbwas* to cease fighting and only to resort to defensive action. At the same time he ordered Hkun Saing to

withdraw his forces to *Alelet* (middle tract). Naw Mong and Hkun Sang Tong Hong were also made submit and disband their men. The order was disregarded (Handershot, 1952). Hkun Saing and Hkun Sang Tong Hong were then given stern warning from the authorities. At the same time Charles Bernard called for the withdrawal of Hkun Saing's men from *Alelet*.

Meanwhile, *Sawbwas* from Yawnghwe and Mongnai were watching the situations Hkun Saing obeyed the orders of the authorities but not so with Hkun Sang Tong Hong. The latter ignored the order and extended his campaigns to Mongnawng, Monshu and Keshi Mansam. This time the British warned Hkun Sang Tong Hong in no uncertain terms. He was told that he will be treated as an outlaw if he occupied Mongnawng or any other southern state. He accepted the British warning and retired to his former headquarters. His acceptance ushered in peace and tranquility in the Northern Shan States by August 1887 (Crosthwaite, 1912).

Another case centered around Saw Weng, the *Sawbwa* of Lawsawk who refused to acknowledge British supremacy. Later he became emboldened and disallowed the entry of British representative to his territory. Meanwhile the British temporarily appointed Bo Saing, ex-Myanmar *Sitke* as Myook of Lawsawk and its dependency Maingpyin. For the vacant *Sawbwas* Hildebrand favoured Saw Maung. But he declined the offer because he had his eyes on Yawnghwe more than Lawsawk. Hildebrand then recommended Kun Nu, ex-*Myosa* of Tabet to be the next *Sawbwa* of Lawsawk, and Maingpyin. This arrangement pleased all the people of Lawsawk, Mongnai and Mongpaw. It contributed much towards the fulfillment of peace and stability in the districts of Meiktila and Kyaukse.

As regard to the eastern Shan States, British authorities therefore believed that contact should be made with Kengtung, Kenghung and Monglem. It worried the British to know that the small trans-Thanlwin states of Mongton, Monghang, Mongkyawt, Monghta and Monghsat had sought allegiance to Siam. There was also disorder in Myelat. For these reasons two columns- Northern and Southern planned to tour the Shan States. One column would leave from Maymyo and the other from Fort Stedman (Crosthwaite, 1912).

In order to restore Law and order the government appointed Major Swetenham to command the Southern Column. Superintendent Hildebrand and Political Officer Scott were attached to the column. The column set out on 15 November 1887. It was to arrive at Mong Nai about 7 February 1888. It took the route covering Mobyè, Maukme, Kengtaung, Mongpan, Mong Nai, Laikha, Mongkung, Kehsi Mansam, Taungpaing and Hsipaw. Superintendent Hildebrand proposed Mongpan as the place to meet the Chieng Mai representatives and the British Council. Before the two columns started their tour of the Shan States the Chiefs of Myelat and nearby areas were summoned to Fort Stedman in May 1887. Their sanads were presented and the tribute money to be paid fixed.

When he arrived Kengtung, Hildebrand had discovered that Twet Nga Lu had wrought havoc to Kengtaung. The prence of the column however led Twet Nga Lu flee to Maington. He had done much plunders in Mogpaw. The *Sawbwa* of Mogpaw Hkun aing had fled from his state three times because of Twet Nga Lu. The latter had burnt the whole place down (Scott, 1889).

After the restoration of law and order in Eastern Shan States, Hildebrand was able to hold a durbar at Mongnai. The possession of Mongpu was given to Mongnai Sawbwa. The following Chiefs were granted provisional sanads.

Khun Sa, ex-Myosa of Maington
 Naw Mong of Hsenwi
 Paockchok of Mongyai
 Sawbwa of Mongnai
 Sawbwa of Mongpaw
 Sawbwa of Maukmai
 Myosa of Wanyin
 Myosa of Nawng Wawn
 Myosa of Hsataung
 Myosa of Mongsit
 Myosa of Mongnawng
 Myosa of Hopong
 Myosa of Kenghkam
 Myosa of Namhkok (Crosthwaite, 1912).

Pockets of resistance seemed to brew when British forces marched to the north. The other reason for resistance was the absence of British personnel at Fort Stedman. Rumour has it that the British had withdrawn their forces from the Shan States. Disputes arose in Myelat, Maukmai and Mongnai. Yaunghwe *Sawbwa* had laid waste to Loilem. Sawlapaw appointed his own man as Maukmai *Sawbwa*. Meanwhile, Twet Nga Lu threatened Mong Nai.

Hildebrand took up the disturbed state of affairs. He made a full enquiry of it and Yawnghwe *Sawbwa* was fined Rs 10,000 and warned that the British would strip him of his *Sawbwaship* if he involved in anti-British activities. J.G. Scott decided that the time has arrived for Twet Nga Lu to be dealt severely. Scott himself marched to Mong Nai and Twet Nga Lu and other rebels were recaptured on 10 May 1888. The ringleaders were handed over to the Mongnai *Sawbwa* who sentenced them to death by a firing squad. Twet Nga Lu was singled out and taken to Fort Stedman under heavy guard. On the way, he tried to escape and one of the Beluchi guards shot him dead (Woodman, 1962). J.G. Scott left for Maukmai on 14 May 1888 after leaving a outpost of 25 men from the Beluchi battalion of Maukmai. The surrender of Prince Limbin-coupled with the death of Twet Nga Lu had helped much in laying some foundation for the administration of the Shan States. Nevertheless there were still trouble in Hsenwi and Hsipaw states.

Meanwhile disturbances arose in south Hsenwi. Sir Charles Crosthwaite, Chief Commissioner visited the Shan States for the first time and held a durbar at Fort Stedman on 19 March 1890. All Shan Chiefs west of the Thanlwin river attended. The *Sawbwas* of Mongnai and Yawnghwe were awarded the titles and honours by Crosthwaite, on behalf of the Viceroy and Governor-General. Crosthwaite addressed the gathering stating the advantages of accepting British rule. He also laid down the rules and responsibilities of the *Sawbwas*. He explained that customary law of the Shan States to be modified into modern version (Scott and Hardiman, 1901b).

Annexation of Trans-Thamlwin States

The British knew that annexation of the Shan States would not be complete without the inclusion of the trans-Thamlwin states. They also understood that Kyaing Tong, Kengcheng, Kenghung, and Manglun owed dual allegiance—one to China and another to the Myanmar king. The Mongnai *Sawbwa* reminded this fact to J.G. Scott at the Mongnai durbar in 1887 (Scott, 1889).

To scare away their fears and to enable the Shan Chiefs appreciate British friendship, Scott wrote a long letter to the Kengtung *Sawbwa*. The letter included some heart warming thoughts for the *Sawbwa*. It stated that the British were on good terms with the Chinese Emperor. It also assured the *Sawbwa* that by accepting British friendship they would be able to free themselves from interference of China (Scott, 1889).

Having made such a preliminary arrangement Scott set out to annex the state of Kengtung. He led a small column from Mong Nai in February 1889. It reached Kengtung on 14 March 1890. Shan senior officials met Scott a few miles outside Kengtung. Later Scott stationed a camp at the previous Myanmar military post. The Kengtung *Sawbwa* Sao Hkun Hpu paid Scott a visit. A reception was later accorded to Scott and his entourage. On 29 March 1890 Scott conducted the durbar and the *Sawbwa* received the sanad. (Handershot, 1952). The largest Shan State had now submitted (Mangrai, 1965).

Kyaing Tong was treated as a 'subordinate alliance' and not taken under the British crown. The sanad granted to the *Sawbwa* did not mention that he was to give his rights of ownership of forests and minerals to the British. Nevertheless, one clause specifically stated that the *Sawbwa* was not to have any contact with foreign rulers. This was done as Kyaing Tong lay between the Thanlwin and the Mekong. Besides her frontiers ran adjacent to those of China and Siam (Woodman, 1962).

The British introduced certain-administrative measures with regard to the state of Kyaing Tong. They insisted on keeping a representative of the *Sawbwa* of Kyaing Tong at the headquarters of the British Superintendent. Again, as a protection and help to the *Sawbwa* and his ministers the British stipulated to the stationing of a strong escort and a Political Officer at Kyaing Tong.

Regarding the trans-Thamlwin Wa states the British focused their attention only on the Manglun states. Superintendent Hildebrand sent invitation letters to Mawpha and Manglun requesting them to attend the Mongnai durbar. The *Sawbwa* of Mawpha upon receipt of the letter redirected it to the Chief of Manglun with a note stating that he would follow the conduct of the Manglun *Sawbwa*. At that time Manglun was divided into two parts—the east and west. The two states were administered by two brothers. It was learnt that Manglun had been an independent state. It had not been under the control of Myanmar or Chinese authority. Therefore the chief of Manglun declined to attend the Mong Nai durbar. Nevertheless, the British hoped that ultimately he would accept a British protectorate or make itself a tributary state (Scott, 1889). After securing law and order in Trans-Thamlwin States and acceptance of *sanad* by Kyaing Tong *Sawbwa* in March 1890, the British government enabled to organize all *Sawbwas* in Trans-Thamlwin area (Mangrai, 1965). Under the Shan States Act of 1888, the indirect control of the British superintendent was regularized (Burma Gazettee, 1888). In 1889

the British government enabled to make agreements which limited the authority of *Sawbwas* and asserting the British rights to mineral resources and forests (Scott and Hardiman, 1900b). Anyway as the British had already put northern and southern Shan States under their suzerainty, all of the Shan States and autonomous *Sawbwas* accepted the British colonial administration in 1890.

To sum up, the Shans who established dynasties in the heartland of Myanmar at Pinya, Sagaing and Inwa played a crucial role in the politics of Myanmar during monarchical period. The collapse of Bagan polity gave rise to power vacuum in central Myanmar and it was filled by the Shan dynasties. However the constant fighting among the important Shan chiefs and the revival of Myanmar power in the mid-sixteenth century led to the downfall of Shan hegemony and Shan chiefs became the subordinate allies of Myanmar kings since Bayinnaung's reign. They had to pay tributes and taxes to the Myanmar kings up to the second half of Konbaung dynasty in mid-nineteenth century. However the defeat of Myanmar in the Second Anglo-Myanmar War signaled the Shan *Sawbwas* who wished to throw off Myanmar yoke. From that time onwards, a series of rebellions against King Mindon and his successor Thibaw as well as the power struggles among *Sawbwas* themselves broke out. Of these rebellions, the rebellion of Tong Peng, Yawnghwe, Hsenwi, Maukme, Mong Nai and Limbin confederacy shattered the long tradition of subordinate alliance between Shan Chiefs and Myanmar kings. Some of these rebellion lasted during the first decade of colonial period. As the Myanmar fugitive princes and some Shan *Sawbwas* collaborated for the anti-British resistance, the British took some years to quell the rebellion. However as the power struggle took place in the armed-resistance of Shan *Sawbwas*, the British enabled to exploit the disunity of *Sawbwas* and to establish colonial rule. In addition the stance of some pro-British *Sawbwas* such as those of Hsipaw and Yawnghwe as well as Prince Limbin himself weakened the armed-struggle of the Shan States against British imperialism. Although they could not set up definite policy on the Shan States in the couple of years after the annexation of Upper Myanmar, the British were able to organize the Shan States by means of granting *sanads* and recognition of the autonomous rule of *Sawbwas*. However the enactment of the Shan States Act of 1888 and subsequent agreements limited the authority of the *Sawbwas*.

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