

**Ritual as a Social Institution: A Case of Zaw Ti Gone village, Hmawbi Township,
Yangon City, Myanmar**

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Abstract

The research will be discussed on villager's participation in connection with their ceremonies as their social role and also institution for new generation. They have altogether four main festivals; *Shin Pyu Pwe*¹, *Shan New Year festival*², *Thingyan*³ (water festival) and rite of passage; obligation. These are showed for their interest and familiarity among them and degree of involvement to meet his or her societal obligation in their social role. The research will be focus on connection, function and social role among their communities concerned with ritual and ceremony. In Zaw Ti Gone village, most of villagers practice ritual as Buddhist traditional way. The paper conduct participatory development, and interviewing are main research method for the research. Some semi-structure questionnaires and structure questions were prepared before doing the research. Major field work duration was January 2013 to December 2013. After the time occasionally visit for doing field work up to June 2015. It will discuss Ritual and Ceremony of Shan, value system on social organization, interaction and obligation among groups and their hidden institution. The villagers are nearly half is Shan national and others are Bamar and migrant villagers. For village ritual and social affair, most of the leading persons are Shan nationals. Main ritual and seasonal ceremonies are Shinpyu Pwe, Thingyan festival, Waso festival, Sabbath days, Thadingyut (lighting festival), Kahtain festival and New Year Festival of Shan nationals. The study also observed rite of passage among villagers such as Monk birthday ceremony, wedding and funeral. The paper would like to find out "How and Why village social organizations are well organized among themselves and help each other based on these rituals?"

Keywords: Tai Lieng(Shan-Gyi), traditions, institution, society, Buddhism, participation

Introduction

Rituals are culturally patterned, ways of expressing, some centered value or recurring concerned of collectivity (1991, Beth B. Hess, Elizabeth W. Markson, Peter J. Stein). The research will be discussed on villager's participation in connection with their ceremonies as social institution. They have altogether four main festivals; Shin Pyu Pwe, Shan New Year festival, Thingyan (water festival) and rite of passage. Most of villagers practice ritual as Buddhist traditional way. These rituals are reinforcing the unity of the community that helps individuals to learn their cultural institution. The paper conduct participatory development and interviewing are main research method for the research. Some semi-structure questionnaires and structure questions were prepared before doing the research. Accidentally, when the research collecting data, small activity has conducted and observes young generation's value, dream of the young villagers. It will discuss Ritual and Ceremony of the village, Value system on social organization, interaction among groups and their constitution. All villagers participate in the ritual and ceremonies including their social affair and responsibilities. For village ritual and social affair, most of the leading persons are Shan nationals, although Shan, Bamar, Kayin and Mon ethnic groups are live together in the village. It is because, the first migrant people are Shan national and they settled down over 150 years ago and other ethnic groups are settled down later time. Some marry villagers and then move to the village called semi –migrant.

Discussion

1. Changing practices: Shan traditions to local practice

The Shan who live in Zaw Ti Gone village are one of the immigrant members of Tai-Chinese stock and called themselves as Tai Lieng(Shan-Gyi). (Government printing and stationary, 15-17:1944). In southern Myanmar, there were several Shan settlements around Thaton, Mawlamyine, Madama (Martaban) and Bago. The most prominent and active Shan local chief named was Wareru. During the King of Wareru (1287-1539), the Shans from Chiangmai and Thailand moved to Lower Myanmar and mingled with the Mons and became good cultivators in the delta area. (Sai Aung Tun, 2007) Wareru, the Shan ruler who had established himself in Martaban in 1287, was soon converted to Buddhism. (Roger Bischoff;2007) The Shan penetrated deeply into Myanmar in the long course of their history, to occupy its plains, hills and valleys and turn wasteland to produce rice either for their own consumption or for trade. They were hardy farmers and food cultivators and adopted a feudal type of administration and a self-sufficient sustainable economy. In Myanmar, they firstly settle at Hsipaw and Hsenwi people and some group went ahead to the most part of southern Myanmar and the Shan people who live in near Yangon have settled down the village tract for 200 years ago. According to oral history, they had to migrate to avoid social crisis for the idea conflict of Shan Sawbwa at that time. But actually, the reason for their migration is to pay homage Shwe Dagon Pagoda. The name of the Zaw Ti is also Shan

national who are always belief in Buddha and the village is called Wan Zaw Ti in Shan language. (5th April, 2006 interview at Chawgone village, 22nd, April, 2013 interview at Zaw Ti Gone and 20th June, 2013 interview at 9th miles monastery called Aung Myay Bontha Shan Kyaung Gyi)

The villagers are called Zaw Ti Shan among lower Shan nationals. But they settle down with new migrant and most of the villagers live other nationals such as Bamar and Kayin. Most of their daily activities are Bamar Style and speak Myanmar language. But they have some Shan traditional practices such as food habit, traditional music and dance. Most of the music and dance are performing in their special occasions. Traditional songs may hold the power of meaning, depending on the knowledge and familiarity experience. Moreover, dramatic gestures and costumes, and rendered with the appropriate attention is to remember their main land scene or sociopolitical comment. Culture is not static but it is daily constructed in such a way that social behavior, as well as the social structures that maintain the identity of a human group, may be frequently altered. Cultural practices such as Shin Pyu Pwe, Thingyan festival, wedding ceremonies and funeral practice is used and managed, become relatively distinct cultural traits as they are passed down through generations. These types of cultural practices are the main units in which cultural change operates and ecology in anthropology was expressed as early as the 1930.(Goodenough 2003, Donald L. Hardesty, 8:1977).

The notion of cultural sustainability is concerned with direct interactions between mainland Shan culture and the environment of the Shan village and related strand applying sustainability concepts to cultural heritage. (David Throsby, 3:1997, 1999) cultural identity group is based on socio-cultural phenomena. Cultural group will also means individuals who share norms, values, and goal priority that distinguish one group from another. Differences in identities between Shan Plateau and Shan village near Yangon are generalized to other majority and minority situation. (JR. Taylor Cox, 55:1994) Adaptation is the central concept in ecological studies especially changing practice because it is the process of environment relationship and the production of individual varieties and natural selection. Cultural ecology is has traditionally been concerned with the first kind of adaptation and adaptability provides at least some flexibility to cope with unexpected environmental changes. The traditional interpretation of the Shin Pyu Pwe, funeral practice and wedding ceremonies are a mechanism of social integration, and strengthening the community ties among the villages and villagers. (Donald L. Hardesty, 24:27:1977) Many culture adapted as they are to their environment, are examples of sustainability. It is what make society unsustainable and to avoid ethnocentrism and take a broader view of cultural possibilities.



Fig. 1: Shan traditional dance



Fig.2: Shan Shin Pyu Pwe



Fig. 3: Monk funeral at Zaw Ti Gone



Fig.4: Construction for wedding reception

2. Different social groups and gathering practice: special occasion in Zaw Ti Gone

Relationship among villagers keeps relatively strong. Three strong kin groups lead in different social groups among the villagers. Most of the activities are traditional songs, playing long Drum (Oo Si) and performing art, wearing traditional dress are special occasions such as Shan ShinPyu Pwe for the villagers. Performing art such as playing Shan Oo Si is a symbolism of Zaw Ti Gone Man association. They also participate in near villager's activities. They also have two kinds of social associations in the Zaw Ti Gone village; internal social organizations and external organization. The first one also have his sub 8 associations; Shan literature and culture committee, Yetmi Yetpha A Thin (Village social leaders group), Nar Ye' Ku Nyi Hmu A Thin(funeral volunteer service association), men association, women association , Miba- Sayar A Thin (parents and teacher association), school development committee and steering committee for community knowledge center.

External organizations are 3 business groups, 1 recruit organization and one international organization. Occasionally, some NGOs are conducting their project in the village. They are 2 chicken farms, Fertilizer factory, Broom factory, Fire house group, and Red Cross association. All these

associations are supporters of any kind of village activities. As for women association, it has own institution and responsibility. They are chairmen, secretary, main organizer, finance and members. Women association is responsible for cooking in special occasion and men association is responsible for construction, carrying, heavy duty, and reciting peratta(Buddha text) in village monastery. Funeral service association has 106 members and all members have to pay 1000k to the association when the member village's funeral coming up. They have responsible to support the funeral 100,000k for funeral services and help also working together with the bereave family. Parents and teacher association will responsible for students' affair and what is needed in the school such as school building, giving prize for outstanding students and the student who is needed for their school fee. Microfinance project, Pet project and water supply projects are there in the village. That kind of projects is program of INGOs, NGOs or Buddhist association lead by a monk and individuals supporters. All these social organizations are ready to help in any social occasion and special ritual for all villagers.

Household population (2013-2015)

House No.	Name	nation	Age	Sex	Occupation	Remarks
1	U Kyi Win	shan	59	M		The head of village
	Nan Htwe Nyunt	shan	58	F	housewife	no.2 wife's sister
	Sai Han Win Aung	shan	29	M	Plantation	
	Sai Nyan Lin Aung	shan	27	M	Plantation	
	Sai Chan Myay Win	shan	24	M	Plantation	
	Nan Ei Mon Kyi	shan	20	F	officer	
	Sai Htet Naing Win	shan	14	M	student	
2	Daw Hla May	shan	68	F	housewife	no.1 wife's sister
3,4	Ko Myo Kyaw	bama	41	M	chicken farm owner	Migrate form Bake City
5	U Myint Aung	bama	64	M		
	Thin Thin San	bama	24	F	worker	hlaing thaya township
	Yu Yu Naing	bama	22	F	worker	chicken farm
	Tin Tin Ei	bama	19	F	worker	chicken farm
	Phong Myint Thewe	bama	16	M	student	
	Maung Aung	bama	12	M	student	
6	Daw Htar Htar Nwe	Shan- bama	47	F	Plantation	
	Sai Kyaw Kyaw Lin		22	F	worker	
	Nan Pan Ei Phyu		14	F	student	
House No.	Name	nation	Age	Sex	Occupation	Remarks

7	U Sein Tun	shan-bama	54	M	Plantation	
	Daw Ohnyee		?	F		
	Ngwe Lin Oo	24			Plantation	
	Moe Zar Yee	22			worker	
	Zar Zar Khine	20			worker	
	Yan Lin	18			plantation	
	Moe Moe Yee	16			worker	
	Phoe Lin Aung	14			plantation	
	Aye Mya Mon	6			student	
8	Daw Tin Aye	shan	56	F	housewife	no.55
8;1	U Aung Thura	shan	32	M	driver	no.8 wife's son
	Daw Thandar	barma	29	F	housewife,famer	
	Lu Min	shan-barma	10	M	student	
	Sa Bai	shan-barma	7	F	student	
	Lin Htet	shan-barma	3	M		
	Sai San Aung(sai lung)	shan-barma	26	F	farmer	
	Sai Chit Win Thu	shan-barma-kayin	17	M		
	Sai San Htwe	shan-barma-kayin	13	M	student	
	Ei Ei Htwe	shan-barma-kayin	9	F	student	
12	Daw Thet Thet maw	Shan	45	F	teacher	
	U Kyaw Lwin Aung		44	M	plantation	
	Daw Soe Myat Myat Maw		42	F	teacher	
	U Soe Win			M	Engineer (company staff)	
	The Thet Paing Win		15	F	student	
	Koe Koe		4	M	student	
	Daw Khin Myat Maw		40	F	teacher	
	Daw Khin Thuzar Maw		38	F	teacher	
	U Thit Aung Maw		35	M	plantation	
	Daw Kyau Key Khaing		20	F	house wife	
	?		0			
13	Ko Thet Soe Paing	barma-chinese	35	M	chicken farm owner	Migrate from Bake City

House No.	Name	nation	Age	Sex	Occupation	Remarks
14	Daw Shein Shwe	shan	67	F	plantation	
	U Mint Han	shan	30	M	Plantation	
	Nan Thidar Soe	shan	20	F	Plantation	
	Pyee Pyo Oo	shan		M	Plantation	
	U Zarin Htwe	shan	27	M	plantation	
	Daw Aye Aye Aung	barma	27	F		
16	U Thin Ko Lat	shan		M	farmer	
	Daw Nan Hla Htwe	shan		F	brooms maker	
17	Daw Hla Ngwe	shan	58	F	sewing	Women's leader
18	U Pan Nhwe	shan	48	M	glass factory's worker	
	Daw Aye Aye Myint	shan		F	house wife	
	Nan Moe Moe Nying	shan	26	F	house wife	
	U Paing Soe			M	driver	
	Khin Paing Soe Nyeing		0	F		
	Nan Pan Ei Pyu	shan		F	worker	
	Nan Zun Pen Pyu	shan		F	sudent	
19	U Zu Ei	Bamar			Plantation	
	Daw Oo	Bamar			Plantation	
20	U Aung Myint Oo	shan-barma	48	M		
	Daw Than Than Sint	barma	38	F	brooms maker	
24	U Kyaw Thein	shan	60	M	farmer	
	Daw Yin Nu	barma	4?	F		
	Lin Naing Kyaw	shan-barma	28	M	farmer	
	Ma Thandar Kyaw	shan-barma	26	F		married,wa-net-chaung
	July Lin	shan-barma	17	M	student	
	Kin Zar Tun	shan-barma	16	F	sudent	
	Nan Shan Pu	shan-barma	11	F	sudent	
25	Sai Zaw Min Than	shan	35	M	worker	cement factory
	Daw Su Moe San	barma	27	F	worker	cement factory
26	Daw Thin Sein	shan	60	F		
	Daw Lay Zin Zin	shan	34	F		
	U Thoung Ngwe Myint	shan		M	farmer	no.32's son
	Nan Mwe San Khan	shan	3	F	House wife	
27						
29	Daw Saw Tin	shan-barma		F	village shop owner	no.30's mother

30	Sai Thein Naing	shan	41	M	Worker	
	Daw Ma Law	barma-chinese	38	F	Plantation	
	Nan Honey Myo		9	F	Student	
	Sai Thura Oo Myo		16	M	plantation	
House No.	Name	nation	Age	Sex	Occupation	Remarks
	Nan Thi La Aung		32	F		Sai thet naing's sister
	CHILD			M	motorcycle shop	
	CHILD			F		
31	Daw Ohn Thin	shan-barma	55	F	village shop owner	
	Daw Aye Aye Thin		33	F	worker	
	Maung Tin Lin Lin Naing		16	M	student	
32	U Ba Tin	shan	85	M	fortune teller	
33	U san shwe		65	M	farmer	
34	Daw hla win	shan	60	F	farmer	no.35
	Nan ei phu	shan	17	F	student	
35	U theit aung	shan	38	M	lottry seller	no.34 wife's son
	Daw thidar soe		36	F	lottry seller	
	Saing mint thu		19	M	motorcycle carrier	
	Aung mint thu		12	M	student	
	Than moe zaw		8	F	student	
	Ma san thi aung		4	F		
36	U moe hein	shan	53	M	farmer ,shan drum maker	
37	Sai san tay	shan	33	M	farmer	
	Hning hnig wei	barma	32	F	brooms maker	
	Ma khine thaging oo	shan-barma	12	F	student	
	Mei myin nyin woi	shan-barma	10	M	student	
	May thu zar	shan-barma	7	F	student	
39	U chin wgwe	shan	68	M		
	Daw thein thein	barma	47	F		
41	Daw khin khin		67	F	house wife	
	Daw thet thet swe		39	F	house wife	
	Zaw thet oo		19	M	construction worker	Yangon city
	Mya swe oo		17	M	student	
	shun lei ngin		9	F	student	
43	U saw min oo	barma		M	famer	
	Nan hla they	shan		F	house wife	
	Sai mint khu	shan-barma	4	M		

45	U aung kyi	barma	56	M	driver	
	Daw than than nyein	kayin	52	F	house wife	
	Zaw thet pyo aung	barma-kayin	17	M		
	GRAND CHIDREN					
House No.	Name	nation	Age	Sex	Occupation	Remarks
46	U hla oo			M	farmer	
	Daw aye than			F	famer	
	Naing lin oo		24	M	patrol shop worker	
	Myo zaw aung			M	student	
	phu pue son			F	student	
51	U Thin soe		45	M	farmer	no.27
	Daw Ohnmar		44	F	house wife	
	Paing SoeThu		24	M		
	Pye Ei Pyu		22	F	migration worker	bankok
	Ma Win Lei		20	F	migration worker	bankok
	Nyein Gyarn		18	F	migration worker	bankok
	Tin Zar Win		12	F	student	
	Myat Muya Soe		8	F	student	
52?	UKkhin Nyo		47	M	farmer	
	Daw Hla Aye		51	F	house wife	
	Khin Thet Mar Win		22	F		
	Soe Min Hteit		19	M		
	Soe Lin Hteit		14	M	student	
	Nay lin Hteit		11	M	student	
?	Saw Al Phoe	Ka yin	44	M	daily worker	chicken farm
	Nant Kyar Htay	Ka yin	42	F	house wife	pregnant
	Saw Aung Khant Ko Khant	Ka yin	12	M	student	
	Nant thet mon khaint	Ka yin	11	F	student	
53	U soe paing		37	M	famer	
	Daw maw maw		32	F	housewife	
	Aye thandar phyo		14	F	student	
	Kaiti Phyoo		12	F	student	
	Wei Wei Phyoo		9	F	student	
	Zin Zin Phyoo		2	F		
55	U Min Oo	shan-barma		M	farm owner	

56	U Thanung Myint Oo	barma	26	M	daily worker	chicken farm
	Daw Kyi Kyi San	barma	25	F	house wife	pregnant
	Thanint Thanint Thu	barma	?	F	Daily worker	
60	U La Shen	mon	55	M	Retire	
	Daw Aye Aye	mon		F	Retire	

Source: Twe Let Myar Project (2013)

3. Buddhism and Ritual: As Social Practices

Most of the villagers are Buddhism and one house is Christian and another house is Hindu. Altogether 65 household are living together in peace. The villagers practice ritual as Buddhist traditional way. Buddhism is the common religion of the culture and central to traditional ideas. They did derive sufficient social value from traditional values to control not only the Shan, but also other villagers. Spiro (1950s) state that lay people in the villages invest their net income into merit-making in their traditional way such as Shinpyu Pwe, birthday party, wedding party, funeral, Thingyan, Kason, Waso, Thindingyut (lighting festival), Kahtain, Sabbath days, and New Year festival. These are distinguished in the village rituals. That kind of investment brings to social position. (Anthony Ware, 79:80,2012). Each has its meaning and practice.

As Shinpyu Pwe (Noviation Ceremonies), they participate in not only Shan community but also Bamar community and other nationals who live near the village. Thus, they help each other and participate in the social or religious activities. The symbolic of the participating is playing long drum and helping in cooking. When participating in Shan Shin Pyu Pwe, most of villagers even who are away from the village arrived and participate the ceremony and all participants are happy under the ethnicity view. A villager said that “this is Shan, how organized they are, how happy they are and their welcome ceremony is all night long.



Fig. 5: Processing and Long drum dancing at Shin Pyu Pwe



Fig. 6: Monk birthday ceremony

Every social practice such as birthday, wedding, and funeral activities are also religion concerned. All villagers participate in the village chief monk's birthday. They donate not only money but also helping in cooking, serving, lucky draw program and setting. Guests are not only villagers but also invited people and near villagers who connection with the village monk and village leaders. The expenditure of the ceremony is the chief monk concerned. But the people who donate for the ceremony are ok directly or through the chief monk. In the birthday party, people who live in other town such as Yangon city, Pha-an city people come and participate the party. The people are called monk's parents (main sponsor of the monk) and followers (Tapye and thar thamee). All the day donation is donate by the chief monk. For the birthday event, the members of village association prepared ceremony and food. The monk sent invitation letter to guests in advance.

Wedding Reception

In Wedding ceremony, in the Zaw Ti Gone village, there are not too different between rich person and lay men person's wedding ceremonies, Shan nationals and Bamar national in the village. But tradition is a little different among the villagers. But how they want to choose the wedding reception, what style and what place is choosing by bride and bridegroom. The village wedding ceremony is held in reception and Buddhist way. Paying homage to Buddha first and then parents is the most important one in the wedding. Mostly, the village man association sings the traditional songs for joy before the wedding reception or after reception. But a funeral ceremony occurs at the same time, they didn't sing the songs for the wedding.

Funeral Ceremonies

Henry Abramovitch said that "a functionalist perspective stressed how mortuary rites served to resolve the disruptive tendencies that operate at times of social crisis, counteract the centrifugal forces of fear, dismay, and demoralization associated with death, and provides a powerful means of reintegration of the group's shaken morale. These rituals must provide an answer to the meaning of life for the community at a time when it is most threatened. As a result, such death rituals provide a unique opportunity for studying the core values of any culture. The functionalist perspective emphasized the problem of death for society, and especially the issues of inheritance, redistribution of rights, and statuses, as well as the reintegration of mourners into day-to-day life.(Henry Abramovitch, 2010, anthropology of death)

In the village, there are a little different among monk funeral, laymen funeral, villagers who die at another place, and violet dead persons' funeral. All funeral services are connection with Buddhism's concept and traditions. Every participant donates for dead person to monk, bereave families and gathering people. Within a year, special offertories which are made by bereave family donate called Takontai for passed away person in Thindingyut festival at village monastery. All these

practice and concepts are hand over to generation to generation by participating and helping the rituals.

Thingyan Festival

In Zaw Ti Gone, there is no water throwing in the village in olden day. During these festival times, they go monastery and take Sabbath, cleaning monastery compound, watering Buddha Image and all activities are concerned with religious activities such as Shinpyu, taking Sabbath and so on. Now a day, some children are playing water throwing on out of village road. Normally, Thingyan festival held 4 days and once in three years 5 days celebration the same as others. The villagers prepared to donate and serve for the monastery and visitors. The last day of the Thingyan festival, the villagers and village monks recited Buddha's Paritta suttas to save and threat the ghost, hobgoblin, genie etc, on the road in front of No. 19 house on behalf of the whole village. New year day of Myanmar calendar which is the day after end of the Thingyan festival, villagers donate again food and things to the monastery. The day is called hnit san tayet nayt. The younger villagers served the oldest people such as washing hair, cutting nails and so on and they also making many kind of traditional snacks with rice and glutinous rice such as mho Lon Yei Paw, mho phat htoat, mhon kyar se, mhon lat kyount and so on.

Kason Festival

Although in every community of Myanmar Buddhists has water pouring on Bayan tree, the Zaw Ti Gone village has only reciting paritta at the village monastery. Before the full moon day of Kason (second month of the Myanmar calendar), the villager whoever interesting and capable to recite typically Buddha Paritta (sutta) can go village monastery and recite potion by potion. Waso festival Before and after the day of full moon of Waso(fourth month of the Myanmar calendar) to Full moon of Thadingyut(seventh month of Myanmar calendar), waso robe donation are celebrate in the village. In our research time, there are 2 houses robe donation in the village; house no. 17, and house no. 32. In the donation, robe is main donation and food and other things the donor want to donate is ok in the ceremony. Some donate not only robe but also money, food, candle and flowers. The meaning of the donation is to cover wet robe and changeable wearing robe for rainy season.

Thadingyut festival (lighting festival)

In the month of Thadingyut (7th month of Myanmar calendar), although there is lighting festival as a main activity, monks affair for end of their Buddhist lent time and pay homage to elder persons activity are held in the month for villagers by giving present as a token of respect.. Candle lighting, fire balloon to the sky, serving food for all visitors and Shan Oo Si playing and dancing are held in the annually happiest day of the lighting festival. The main area of the lighting is Sandarmuni

Pagoda platform along the way to Asitan Lapye Won monastery and villagers' houses and main road of the village.



Fire ballooning Lighting candle in village monastery Pay homage to her elder brother

All activities and performance were aimed to Buddha descending on the sky to our earth which was the back way of Buddha delivery sacred text to his mother who was in the celestial plain. Every monk goes for gathering to recite and announce end of their lent time by the Buddha's rules in the head quarter of their monasteries. If the monk not complete in a monastery up to 90 days, the monk does not allowed to announce and do not go over one day trip until the festival. During the time and after the time, most of villagers and students in the village are pay homage to elder persons and their teachers.

Shan New Year Festival

Shan New Year Festival called *Lain Sein* is concerned with Shan traditional calendar. It means the first day of the year and the first waxing day of Nataw(November/December) in Myanmar calendar. The *Zaw Ti Gone* villagers also went and held in *Thait Kyi* Township. They made *Kaunt Sone* (sour rice) and other traditional snacks occasionally and share neighbors. The village leaders collected picked up the fund for festival at every house and participate actively.

Sabbath days

From full moon day of *Waso* to full moon day of *Thadingyut* is Buddha lent time. As for Burmese Buddhists, every week of 8 waxing and 8 waning days of between the three months and full moon day and end of the months are taking Sabbath days for all villagers. During these days the people who want to take Sabbath, can go and visit the *Asitan* monastery. Although there are 5 monasteries in the *Zaw Ti Gone* village, villagers go and take their sabbath at the only village monastery. Other monasteries are invited guest when the *Asitan* monastery have special occasion. But most of the village activities are held in the monastery. In the first and last days of the Sabbath time, many village elders go and take Sabbath at the monastery.



Gathering at village monastery on Sabbath day

Kahtain Festival

One day in every first week after lighting festival of the year is *Kahtain* festival in *Zaw Ti Gone* village. The meaning of the robe donation is totally different from *Waso* robe donation. *Waso* robe donation is to change wet dress for Buddhist monk. *Kahtain* robe donation is free from some wrong doing for the monks. Therefore, ritual is a human activity in which performers and observers participate using certain habitual and recurring behaviors between or among other



Gathering at village monastery on *Kahtain* festival

routine patterns. As for this, a social gathering here the participants congregate in order to engage in a particular kind of experience. (Ludim Pedroza, 2002). According to Victor Turner, rituals also reveal group values at deepest level and the keys to an understanding of the essential constitution of human societies. The paper proves that the social institution is reveal between their societies' connections and shapes their cultural environment in changing time.

4. Social institution: ritual, enculturation and organizations

Ritual is arguably a universal feature of human social existence: just as one cannot envision a society without language or exchange, one would be equally hard-pressed to imagine a society without ritual. And while the word “ritual” commonly brings to mind extrovert images of simple society engaged in mystical activities, one can find rituals, both sacred and secular, throughout “modern” society: collective experiences such as ; rites of passage and seasonal festivals. They show the identity of a community and diffusion of the identity.

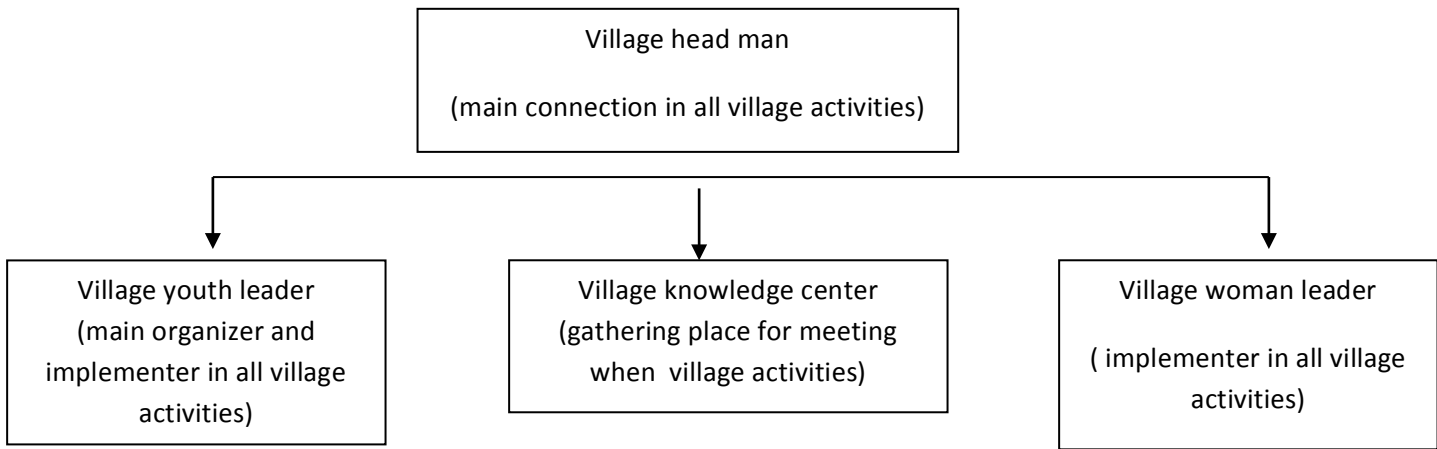
According to Catherine Bell, “ritual has been traditionally defined as an action that lacks a practical relationship between the means one chooses to achieve certain ends and it is a culturally-relative gesture or even no physical contact at all. A ritual is a clear practical relationship between the action and the desired result. (2013, *The Rites of Manhood: Man’s Need for Ritual*) For example, when constructing wedding pandal by village young men, a bond of Eugenia placed on the first pole, that’s a ritual, since the Eugenia is largely symbolic and meant to prevent any danger in the wedding time. The activity lead to organize village young men and the knowledge give the society’s young enculturation.

As for Clifford Geertz in his “Kinship in Bali” (1975), the cultural realm of symbols, patterns and ideas, despite differences in practices, or social structure, are existed in different parts of the island state that the practices are learned by ritual performance.(By Andrew L. Yarrow, 2006) Victor Turner states the symbolic behavior signifying the detachment of the individual or group either from fixed point in the social structure and a set of cultural conditions. It is because, the rituals stable state once more and it has rights and obligations with certain customary norms and ethical standards binding in social position in a system of such position in cultural space.(2008, Turner, Victor, *The ritual Process: Structure and Anti- structure*) According to Mathieu Deflem in his discussion of Turner’s Processual Symbolic Analysis, he states social mechanism and social structure by showing four forms (1) a breach of regular norm-governed social relationships between persons or groups of a social unit; (2) a crisis or extension of the breach, unless the conflict can be sealed off quickly; (3) adjustive and repressive mechanisms brought into operation by leading members of the social group; and (4) reintegration of the disturbed social group or social recognition of an irreparable breach or schism (91-94).

The basic social institution or political system is village organization. The organization are headed by chieftain usually elders and political system is largely based on respect for elders and they maintain peace and order and lead in the groups. As a village organization, the village leaders group is as a patron of the village. There are four main organizations in *Zaw Ti Gone* village. Remarkably, these groups are constituted by only villagers and not registered or supported by government that means no recognized from government and raising fund and managing is conducted by themselves. Village leaders group is top of the role. Village head man who is official recognized by government is under the village leaders group. And then, four organizations as the study discuss in heading (2) “Different social groups and gathering practice”. After Twe Let Myar Project (Joint research project between University of Yangon and Hanyan university), strong new organization was coming up called steering committee for village knowledge center called *Kyay Ywa Pyana Yeit Tha*. Their roles and responsibilities are different and some are overlap. The different social groups’ leader can be chosen based on their integrity, wisdom, mediation and participation in village affair and setting skills on conflict and dispute matter. The selections are

voting among villagers. Each group has their role and Responsibility in the village activities and performance degree is based on these activities.

Village Shan literature and cultural committee has connection with State Shan literature and cultural committee and all activities let them know. The committee activities are found in summer season and contact with all member up to State level. Village men association is main implementers of all activities and village women and village youth leaders are as supporter, helpers and participants in all village affairs such as rites of passage, seasonal activities and village knowledge center activities. All village organizations' fundraising is stand by themselves. Although the study found that a distinction between young generation and elders are socially strong and well organized by each other among native villagers, semi- native villager are active participant and migrant villagers are passive participant in the group rituals. Therefore, social institutions are more developed among native villagers and low and not interest for semi- native villagers and migrant villagers. The semi-native villagers mean the persons who marry with native villagers by the study.



The study found main connection among leaders, implementers, villagers and rituals is village head man, young leaders, and women leaders. Net work center is village knowledge center, play ground, and media used by oral communication. Although ritual has long been a cornerstone of anthropological thought, the study wants to state that rituals are as an object of socio cultural analysis and identity, and also institution for cultural value of a society. These rituals are an inevitable component of a culture, extending from largest scale of social and political processes to self-experience and reflects the full diversity of the human experience. It contributes to an understanding of contemporary experiences and the essential role of ritual in the production and reproduction of the modern identities of the society. Therefore, the discussion would like to shed light upon the phenomenon of ritual as an institution and hand over to new generation.

Acknowledgement

This paper fieldwork was supported by TveLetMyar Project sponsored by KOICA for University of Yangon, Han Yan University and RedI (Reshaping Development Initiative). I would like to thank Ministry of Education, the project team members and the villagers to get different kind of permissions whatever the research need. To present the paper at Chiang Mai University, I would also like to thank all of the responsible persons of the International Conference on Burma/ Myanmar Studies. In addition, I owe special thanks to my companionship, dedication, and unsurpassable skills greatly enriched many aspects of this fieldwork. My field assistants also deserve recognition for their valuable contributions. In particular, I owe an enormous debt of gratitude to the many patients colleagues of department of anthropology in Mandalay University and my family members. This paper is dedicated to them.

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Hnit san tayet nayt : first day of new year in Myanmar calendar

Kason Pwe: reciting Budda's paratta in 2nd month of Myanmar calendar

Kaunt Sone: snack made by sour rice

Khahtain Pwe: Robe donation for Buddhist monks by the month of 8th in Myanmar calendar.

Kyay Ywa Pyana Yeit Tha: village knowledge center established by Twe Let Myar Project sponsor by University of Yangon and Hanyan University.

Lain Sein: New Year for Shan nationals in Myanmar

Migrant villagers: the people who live in the village migrate from other city.

Mho Lon Yei Paw: traditional glutinous rice ball

Mho Phat Htoat, traditional glutinous rice packed with banana leaf.

Mhon Kyar se: traditional glutinous rice tiny ball

Nar Ye' Ku Nyi Hmu A Thin : funeral volunteer service association organized by village young leaders

Shan Oo-Si: Shan traditional Long drum playing in Special occasion

Semi –migrant villagers: the people who marry with the native villagers

Shin Pyu Pwe: Novitiation ceremony of Buddhist society

Takontai :memory of passed away person donated by bereave family in Thindingyut in village monastery

Thadingyut: Lighting festival for 7th month of Myanmar calendar concerned with Buddhists society

Thingyan Festival: Water throwing festival for New Year of Myanmar calendar

Yetmi Yetpha A Thin : old villagers who lead social affairs in the village

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