

Foreward to the first edition in English  
 Acknowledgement  
 National Ethnic Groups of Myanmar  
 Taron  
 Rawangs  
 Hkamti Shans  
 Lisu (Northern)  
 Khatku  
 Maru  
 Lashi  
 Kholon Lishaw  
 Azi  
 Naga  
 Chin  
 Khami  
 Rakhine  
 Thet  
 Daingnet  
 Mon  
 Bamar  
 Innthars  
 Shan  
 Eng  
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The Union of Myanmar is an ethnically diverse country. With the variety of different tribal groups and the difference in locality, the dress, cultures, customs and traditions of these ethnic groups vary considerably. Therefore the ethnological study of these various tribes and clans is one of the main factors when studying the Union.

The basic aim of these ethnic studies is to help promote mutual understanding between various ethnic groups living inside the territory of the Union of Myanmar and also to present to the world the ethnically diverse and multi-cultured picture of the Union of Myanmar.

With this objective in mind we are now publishing a more detailed and expanded work on the ethnic diversity of the Union of Myanmar, "National Ethnic Groups of Myanmar" based on the author's previous book "National Races of Myanmar".

Even under the Myanmar kings we see evidence of such ethnic studies being done by the authorities. One such case cited by Mr. J.S Furnivall was a report, done by the chief of Yaw region, Maha Minhla Thurein on the Taungthar people on the command of the chief of Kawlin region. Therefore it can be surmised that there could be other ethnological studies but not recorded on official histories.

During the colonial period the Divisional Commissioners and Sub-Divisional Commissioners of the Hill Tracts concerned were mainly responsible for study of these various ethnic groups in their jurisdiction. These government officials wrote reports on not only these ethnic groups but also the socio-economic conditions of their respective jurisdictions and the government periodically published them. The publications that appeared in 1931 were the last of such reports on the ethnic diversity of the country.

Also no such studies were done in the country during the pre-war years, during the Japanese occupation and even during the early days of National Independence, except for specific reports.

The author started the study of various ethnic tribes living in the country as a hobby in 1952 and continued throughout the course of 34 years of government service at the Ministry of Culture. The culmination of these efforts was a book titled "National Races of Myanmar" published in 1960 by the Ministry of Culture, which has to this day remained as the key reference work, both domestically and internationally, on the various ethnic groups of Myanmar.

This interest has lead the author to discover new ethnic groups as well as document the disappearance of some. For example, no trace exists now of the group called "Yabein" that inhabited the Bago Yomas and was included in the 1931 census. The same is also true of the "Fon". They were last found within the Khatcho region near Myitkyina. Now only a handful is left and they have intermingled with their neighbours. The "Ahchan" which were last found in the Shan and Kachin States are now seen only in Yunnan. "Lu", "Lam" and "Yeo" had totally disappeared. "Danaw" used to live in Sammainghkam region of Southern Shan State but we cannot see them now.

But within the course of 30 years, new sub-groups of Chins, Palaungs, Lisus and Kayahs were discovered. In the Yaw region new sub-groups of Taungthars were also discovered. Photographic evidence of White Pa Os, Tarons, Zayeins, various sub-groups of the Chins in the Matupi and Kanpetlet regions and other new Shan sub-groups in the Shan State were obtained. Photographic evidence of the "Eng" was acquired only in 1998.

We are indeed proud to say that the author's book "National Races of Myanmar" not only helped the various nationalities of Myanmar understand each other but was also recognised internationally. Dr. Stenkovich, Chief of Ethnographic Section, U.S.S.R Academy of Sciences read the Russian translation of the author's work "National Races of Myanmar" at the Centenary Celebrations of Anthropology held at the Academy in 1964.

The author continued his researches with the objective of publishing a more detailed work on the ethnic diversity of the Union even after his retirement from government service in 1988, and all his new findings and results of his researches are included in this new edition.

We hope that this second and enlarged edition "National Ethnic Groups of Myanmar" would also enjoy the same popularity and significance as the first edition.