Rohingya History
Myths and Reality

By Zul Nurain

An Ovi Project Books Publication

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Introduction

During the last few years, I came across some historical works on the Rohingya history by some native Rohingyas and some illustrious history scholars such as Martin Smith and Professor Dr. than Tun. The works of native writers include: an attempt to solve the differences of opinions on Rohingya history, the hidden chapters of Arakan history, Wesali and its people, Rationale to be considered by Rohingya critics - all in Burmese and Towards understanding Arakan history, Rudiments of Arakan history – in English. Some of these works are already on a website, based in Japan. One of the above treatises: The Hidden Chapters of Arakan History was found to be pirated by one pseudo historian, Zaw Min Htut in Japan who produced and distributed it widely with his own name as the writer: An insult to the original author. But the problem is some readers and viewers of above works came on heel to criticize and condemn those works as baseless, false and fabricated. This censorious group collected a lot of critical articles and published it in Japan in 2003. The name of their critique is Criticism on Rohingya's false history. As far as my historical knowledge concerned my study of those works informs me that those are not Esoof Fables and make believe. They are well

referenced, better documented with reliable source materials. The critics are not confined to criticizing natives, they boldly refute what Dr. Than Tun and Martin Smith write: These two are not alley writers but highly respected history scholars. Dr. Than Tun's comment on Rohingya's historicity is a bold, brave as well as a benevolent deed. Everyone should note the tight and risky atmosphere in which he shed light on Rohingya history. His remark on Muslim rulers in north Arakan and the relativity of present day Rohingya with them is not an imagination. He documented his remarks with "Ava" age inscription with their registration numbers. So we must say all above works had already given a vindication for Rohingya and their history.

Constructive comments and criticism always help a writer to review and improve his works. Actually history is always an endless blending of facts and imagination. But I find those treatises above contain less imagination compared the facts there in which are drawn from the works of authentic writers whose works based principally on primary source materials. The writer's comments and opinion makings were seen minimized. Perhaps it is just to avoid refutation and criticism from Rohingya's opponents. Thus the native's works highlight on the facts of history; judgment on those is left for the readers and viewers to make for themselves.

Experiences have shown it is traditional and habitual to this censorious group to come on heel to decry any historical documents that shed light on Rohingya's historical background. The fact is they have an inculcated mindset and are overwhelmed by traditional chauvinism. If actually won't be an exaggeration if I say they are suffering from Rohingya Phobia. There is no therapy for it unless they change their outworn ideas. The point not to forget is, on our side there are a lot of issues in Rakhine version of Arakan history that we can disprove with facts and figures. So the censorious readers and viewers of Rohingya historical works should think over if you point out one finger to others, another four will stand against you. One living in glass house should not throw stones on others. Rakhine version of Arakan history is embellished with legends, lutes and makes believe. But we are not going to turn over all those in the interest of maintaining unity among coursing. We cautiously avoid to comment on the misinterpretation of Arakan history by some native historians and some amateur writers just to refrain from rift and friction among us. But now due to their (the critics) ridiculous and irrational criticism of above works I have to take this steps. The critics' maybe

historians, professional or amateur. But they are biased and blindfolded by ultra-nationalistic tendency. Their decry is not based on reality and historical facts but on their chaurinism and malevolence against Rohingya. Hence my task now is to give a precise and comprehensive explanation of above censorious critique.

The author of ‘’ Towards Understanding Arakan’s History: Rudiments of Arakan history said his book was overseen thoroughly by many senior Burmese historians who include one of the most respected history Professor Dr. Than Tun, he said Dr. Than Tun had edited his treatise and had given an invaluable forwarding too. Here the complementation of Dr. Than Tun alone is sufficient, I think, for the critics to change their mind and accept reality of Arakan history.

Refutation and decry on Rohingya history of momentum when foreign historians and international media began to shed light on the historicity of Rohingya, especially immediately after the Rihingya refugee crisis in 1991. Remarkable critics in this context are U Khin Maung Win of New York whose articles appeared in “Far Eastern Economics Review” July issue 1991 and U Khin Maung Saw of Hamburg University who read a paper on this subject.(Rohingya History) in a conference on Myanmar affairs in 1993. Their works were full of illusions not based on real facts and authentic references. What they write are based on hear and say and traditional Rakhine Legends, tales and delusions. U Khin Maung Saw’s writing is of very much bigotry. He ignored the works of illustrious scholars. He ridiculously criticized Martin Smith, a Myanmar specialist, who wrote same articles shedding light on Rohingya’s historical background. Again when Professor Dr. Than Tun referring to Myanmar stone inscriptions writes. “There were Muslim rulers in north Arakan, who were very friendly with “Avak”, are (Myanmar King). Perhaps, it was Bengal turned Islam (12th century A.D). The present day Rohingya of Mayyu may be descendents of those early Muslims, criticism of his articles began to grow louder. (Dr. Than Tun’s remark see “Kliya magazine, August, 1994”, “North Arakan”. The final word of his critics is what Dr. Than Tun writes in against traditional Rakhine historical conception (see. Criticism of Rohingya’s false history, Japan,2003). The so called traditional concept cannot enclose the discovery of history. History is a subject, the more we study, the more we discover. There are a lot of many things that are not yet discovered by historians. Denying latest finding in the

name of traditional concept is neither logical nor scientific. What we must accept is the latest discovery of Arakan history by prominent, illustrious historians such as Dr. Than Tun, Martin Smith, Dr. Pamela Gutman, Dr. J.L.Lieder of France and Dr. S.B Kunango of Bangladesh is the only thing that can solve the lifelong imbroglio of Arakan history. We can see a sea of difference between traditional version of history and what the above scholars bring into light virulence against a race should not blind us. We must reconcile to logic and reasons.

To accept the true non-historical work is free of or void of criticism. These may be various dimension of a subject in question. But decry and criticism on the above works of Rohingya are virtually ridiculous and aggressive just only because this works above unveil longtime deliberately hidden chapters of Arakan history. These critics are not courageous enough to accept the reality of history. They are misted by writers of older generations who knowingly adulterated and misinterpreted Arakan history. Facts were mixed with legends and delusion, some facts were prevaricated just to suit Rakhine taste and obliterate Rohingya from historical landscape of Arakan. This inculcated mind set of theirs is difficult to fade away.

Motives behind the Criticism

Depriving Rohingya of its history and portraying them as aliens, as if they entered Arakan during British rule and there after, have been the cardinal motives of Rakhine historians and politicians. Most of their history books have been written after British occupation of Arakan. A dichotomy between Rakhine and Rohingya took root at least a century ago then. Rakhine do not want to share the history with Rohingya who have never been alien to the land. So Rakhine have manual to obliterate the part of Muslim role as far as possible. A lot of this role Muslims or Rohingya had played in Arakan's socio-political life was deliberately hidden. The above works of Rohingya dedicated to unearth those hidden chapters. This attempt just hits the nail right on the top .This effort of unrevealing initiated the bigots and jealous. Here in the words of Professor Robert. J. Samuelson," the discovery of history is always and exhausting project, part adventure, and part ordered because the past is surrounded in its own secret of time, place, belief, motivation and personality." It is quite true in the case of Arakan history.

The Rakhine had had a free hand to write Arakan history in the way they like or wish it to be. Most of their works are devoid of any source materials. Imaginary works overwhelmed their narrations. In the early time, there were very few historians who dived deep into the study of Arakan history. There were rarely any native writers either. (see: Pamela Gutman; preface, "Ancient Arakan". Most writers did their works during British period. "Maurice Collis", a British Commission and historian whom many Burmers regard as the fairest minded western historian remarks," the work of Rakhine chronicles are mixed up with legends and exaggeration in praise of their King and Religion. They are unreliable, void of historian reality.(see: M. Collis, Into hidden Burma Chapter, Arakan). Yet British time historians had to collaborate with those native writers. M. Collis himself did his history research in collaboration with U San Shwe Bu. Rakhine were the most favored, privileged people in British-Burma because they were the ones who invited British and along with them against the Burma. (Before Burmese occupation in 1775, Arakan was independent).

In colonial administration most of the senior officials other than the British were Rakhine. For example; pre-independence British governor council secretary was U Moe Aung (who lately became interior minister also) and chief of police force was U Tun Hla Aung. Thus, Rakhine were in a good position to persuade British historians to portray Arakan history in the liking of them. Again after independence, having racial affinity with the mainstream Burma, they enjoyed much favor from the central government and got free hand to write Arakan history as they want it to be: which unquestionably is to obliterate all parts of Muslim (Rohingya) played in Arakan history. Senior Burmese historians say they avoid interfering in this free writing in the name of national unity. But their version of Arakan history is obviously in disagreement with that of Rakhine's.(see: Dr. Than Tun 80th birthday Bulletin, open letter to Than Tun, Rakhine Thahaya magazine, Yangon, 2004).

Disregard of Academic Ethnic: Omission, Misinterpretation and Misquotation

There are a lot of issues in Rakhine version of Arakan history deserved to be disproved. But I am not going to argue all in squarely. I will just select a few pivotal points which only concern Rohingya. Mrauk-U dynasty was founded by King Narameik Hla in 1430 AD with the benevolent military help of Bengal Muslim King. The Hey day of Arakan history began from then. But most Rakhine historians are reluctant to discuss this Muslim involvement openly and precisely. They prefer to mention the help of "Mon" who were opponent of Myanmar then. The fact is "Mon" struggle for about 20 years to get control of Arakan against "Ava" (Myanmar King) was a failure. Exiled Arakan King Narameik Hla got the help of Bengal King. The King's first retinue headed by General Walikhan consisting of ten thousand force (see: J. Lieder, Ascendance of Mrauk-U dynasty, 2004) expelled the occupying Burmese army and got control of Arakan, but betrayed his trust.

Instead of enthroning Narameik Hla, Walikhan made himself King of Arakan. Narameik Hla was imprisoned at Babutaung (Babuhi). He ruled there for some years. He introduced there Muslim Sharia Law. He enjoyed the support and collaboration of some princes and grandees who originally opposed Narameik Hla and invited Ava Min Khaung to take over Arakan. No Rakhine chronicles clearly explained about the period of Walikhan rule. Narameik Hla escaped from imprisonment, reached again to Bengal and obtained a larger army than the first one. This army was headed by Sandi Khan who was ordered to take a fitting action against Walikhan for his perfidy. When Sandi Khan's army arrived at Arakan (then the capital was Laung Kyet) Walikhan showed little resistance and surrendered to Sandi Khan. He was sent to the Bengal King to face a fitted punishment deserved for his perfidy.

Narameik Hla was put on his right full throne. He kept all the Muslim forces to protect him. There still was potential danger of attack from both Myanmar and Mon. (see: U Hla Tun Pru, a senior politician; Mrauk-U King Narameik Hla; Rakhine Tasaung magazine, 1998). Here Narameik Hla escaped from imprisonment, went again to Bengal attained a second retinue to help him and came back to Arakan, took the control of the land from Walikhan. These all processes were not done over night. It took a long period, perhaps, some years. This was the stint of Walikhan's Rule over Arakan which Rakhine chronicles virtually ommitted.

Here though some chronicles writes very faintly about the retinues of Bengal King, they never mention the number of them. They never narrate the permanent settlement of the retinues and the period of Walikhan's Rule. I came across only one historian who writes the retinues were settled in Arakan permanently was Dr. Aye Chan, presently in Japan, in his open letter to one, Zaw Min Htut, a pseudo historian.

Another historic event in the part Gazi Abdul Karim of Minbya town, took in first Anglo Burma War. He fought along with the Burmese Army with his Muslim Recruits. He was captured a line and put in Calcutta Military Jail. He was later highly appreciated by British Officers for the advice they got from him and which later were proved to be very useful during the military operation of the war.(see: Anglo-Burma first war record, by Captain Robertson). No Rakhine political and historical work ever mentioned it.

There are Rakhine Mosques in Yangon and Mawlamyaing which were built by Arakanese Muslim Combatant, of early Rakhine and Myanmar Kings (see: encyclopedia Britannia, 2003). Rakhine chronicles never discuss about this they don't regard Muslim as a part of them. Thus Muslims religious edifices have no place in Rakhine history.

Again National School Education was an important factor in anti-colonial struggle. Mr.Zainuddin of KyaukTaw town was once the principal of Akyab National High School. The chronicle compiled by Arakan State Council in 1984 demeaned him describing as assistant principal.

A lot of Rohingya elders jointly acted along with their Rakhine compatriots against colonial force. But none of their role was ever mentioned any post independence political and historical literature. Muslim in north Arakan played a nevoid role during anti-fascist resistance. They helped the British a lot. There British recruited a Rohingya army in the name of "victory force" British Military Officers had praised the part this force had played British utilized Rohingya's full energy for British war effort, despite lucratim and lofty promises concerning Rohingya's future, post war British Government did nothing for Rohingya.

Eventually Rohingya's life today become as was predicted by them British Commander Major Anthony Irwin.(see: A Irwin, Burmese outpost and F.M William Slim; Defeat into victory). This post of Muslim role was almost obscured in Rakhine chronicles. This part of Muslims or Rohingyas in the struggle of independence was almost obscured in Rakhine historical and political literature. To suppress the Rohingyas, to demean the Rohingyas politically, Rakhine historians' literates amply misinterpret and misquote illustrious historians. To mention a few, one critic of Dr. Than Tun's article which shed light on Rohingya's presence in Arakan in early medieval period, pointed out that Muslims were never a free people in Arakan. In Rakhine period too, they required travel permit. He quoted fairer for his assertion. But in Maurique's works, there were none like this. Only the Portuguese who attempted to seize the throne of Arakan twice in first decade of 17th century were ordered to take travel permit in case, they went to go further West of Chittagong. It was just to restrict them from making contact with Moghul in the West. The issuant of the permit was the Arakan Governor of Chittagong.(see: detail below)

Another history scholar (whose name I don't mention here to save his dignity) misquoted Dr. Pamela Guttmann as to have said that Arakan population of early history was Tibeto-Burman (Mongoloid). In the book and on the page he referred; Pamela says (" we are not sure of early population of Arakan. Perhaps present hilly people who live in remote areas such as Mro, Khami, and Sak were among them. The presently dominant Rakhine are a Tibeto-Burman race, the last group of people to enter Arakan during 10th century and on.") (Pamela; The Lost Kingdom, Bangkok, 2002, P-5). Here it is clear that there were no Rakhine in Arakan before 10th century. These early people were Indo-Aryan, plus some hilly peoples mentioned above. Rohingya came out from those Indo-Aryans.

This very history scholar again misinterpreted E. Forechamar, British time archeological director. He said "Rohingyas are British time immigrants in Arakan. Seeing the massive yearly influx of immigrants E. Forechamaer predicted "Arakan to become Palestine of the east." (E. Forechamer, Arakan, 1981, P-5). Actually it was on page-2 of that book. Here the point to consider is, there were no immigrant problem in 1891 in Palestine. There was not Arab-Israel problem. What Forechamer said was not of politics but matter of religion. He compares Judaism in Palestine and Buddhism in Arakan. He said Rakhine myth that Buddhism in Arakan will flourish in Arakan for five thousand years as was prophesied by Lord Buddha himself may be true. As Judaism endured in Palestine for many thousands of years so will Buddhism in Arakan. And Arakan may become the Palestine of the east. Here it is obvious on Rakhine scholar deliberately misuse a respected history scholar, for his non political purpose. Here the question arises - Why are all these misconducts? Because Arakan society envolved on dichotomy since many centuries ago. Abhorrence and virulence against Rohingya has a historical root. Even today we can observe it in Arakan society in various forms. There was a mass massacre of Muslims in 1660-63 AD during the crisis of Arakan King Sanda Thudamma versus exiled Moguul Prince Shah Shujah. Again the gruesome massacre of Muslim in 1942 is another landmark of Arakan politics. Pointing out of the killing spree of Muslims in Rakhine contemporary leaders then. (see: detail below p: 24). To sum up all above misconducts are only due to Rakhine people's tendency of exclusionism. They don't want to share Arakan with Rohingya. Thus respect of academic ethnic is not important for them, their desire and political objective is paramount to them.

Historians are influenced

Detailed and scientific study of Arakan history began only in the last few decades. Early historical literatures were mostly imaginary. Sometimes ethnic history is mixed up with that of religion. Anyway, western writers had to rely on those native writers for source materials. Thus westerner's works are sometime over Rakhinized. Rakhinization virtually means demeaning Rohingya. Col. A. Phayre writes with the help of U Nga Mai. M. Collis' works on Arakan history was carried out in collaboration with U San Shwe Bu. R. B. Smart wrote his Burma gazetteer, Akyab distinct with the heap and motivation of his Rakhine staffers. Even the latest writers Pamela Guttmann and J. Lieder had a tensile co-operation with Rakhine intellectuals in their writing of their respective Ph.D Thesis on Arakan history. It may partly be because that they needed the native people's helps for some source materials.

On the other hand the implication of this closeness indeed has a ruinous impact on the role of Rohingya in Arakan. When Pamela Guttmann was writing her thesis (in 1975 – 76) U San Tha Aung was director general of higher education department. He too was an Arakan history researcher. In one way or another Pamela had to seek the help of U San Tha Aung. I am of the opinion that U San Tha Aung was a factor that Pamela didn't discuss elaborately about Rohingya although Rohingya consist of half the population of Arakan. She didn't attempt to illuminate the connection between the present day demography and early settlers of Arakan. This connection is a very important issue in Arakan history. But thanks to her, she on various chapters of her thesis distinguished presently dominant Rakhine not to be the early settlers but the latest comers. In an indirect reference she says "local people in Dudan near Saing Daing (a village in Buthidaung Township) still speak the language of early inscriptions such as Khali for stream. Dudan is a Rohingya village.

Thus Rohingya language has similarity with that of early inscriptions. Again her transliteration of Ananda Saudra stone monument shows a huge nearness to the Rohingya language. Here we can track the root of Rohingya in those early people who inscribed those inscriptions. From the description of Pamela we can say for sure that inscribing of those archeological remains were not the work of present Rakhine a nation U San Tha Aung inserted in his "Ananda Sandra stone monument". It is not Rakhine as U San Tha Aung says, used Indian Language, but the inscribers themselves were Indians. Here the only people in Arakan with Indian complexion, tradition and language in the Rohingya. To the Irony of our fate, historians don't openly discuss that point just not to annoy the Rakhine. Dr. Than Tun once told me when he wrote that early Rakhine literature such as Rakhine "Minthamie Exechin" was like Burmese and he didn't find separate literature, he received a lot of criticism from Rakhines. So he said he avoided commenting on Rakhine version of history just not to be in clash with them. That is why we say historians in the need by Rakhines.

Who are the early settlers of Arakan

We already have got a rough idea about the early population of Arakan. An objective study of early demography can clear the imbroglio of Arakan history. Rakhine chronicles vaguely connected its present with the past. In fact there is a missing link between the past and present, especially in the context of demography. Latest scientific researchers Dr. Pamela Guttmann says the present day dominant Rakhine are of Tibeto-Burman origin and their entry into Aran began since 10th century. After long resistance from the Sak tribe they got the control of Arakan plain in 10th century. Their first capital was Sambewak and their First King was Kethathein. Sambewak was founded in 1018 A.D.

Here arises the question - the rich culture, literature, archeological remains and religions that flourished there since before Christian era' belong to whom? Does this civilization belong to Mro, Sak, Khami and Chin whose arrival according to inscriptions there preceded the Rakhine's ?. That is not possible as these peoples are still tribal, untutored and mostly are until recently animist. Their languages are different vastly from the inscription. Here is the missing link. Once the Rakhine and the hilly peoples are excluded, the rightful inheritants of those early civilizations should be the Rohingya.

The most complex points here is Rohingyas are today Muslims but not Muslims from Arab, Iran or India. They are native converts. From the time they turned Muslim, they discarded Buddhistic civilization. This Buddhistic civilization goes into the hands of Buddhist Burman since 10th century, who also has been the ruling people of the land ever since then. It is a historical and logical point. When present day Rohingya are trying to unearth this hidden point, it indeed falls against interest of some rested interest group. This group wants to neglect the ethnic root of Rohingya and try to portray them simply as Muslim. Muslims from India and Bengal who immigrated into the land of Rakhine people. This is the root of the problem. This is the point Rakhine people hold tight to degrade Muslims (or) Rohingya. This is the point they until today use to deprive Rohingya of all rights in Myanmar.

So I humbly implore foreign history scholars, especially those from India and Bangladesh in whose hands there are ample historical materials, to give a benevolent concentration on this missing link of Arakan history so as the historical imbroglio is cleared up and Rohingyas are rescued as well. In Arakan, Rohingya alone has an ethnic co-relation and connection with early Indo-Aryan people of Arakan. On the other hand if you take them as Muslim, the whole Mrauk-U period was unquestionably of Muslim dominance in all sphere of Arakanese life. Some western historians even designated Arakan then as a Muslim Country. (see: below P: 10).

Evolution of Arakan History

When and how the history of Arakan began? How did it evolve up to now? To cover this subject in detail is a big task. The objectives of this treatise is not to go that detail just intend to clear up the ambiguous impression on Rohingya created by some black propaganda of vested interest. Maintaining Rohingya's true historical image is my objective. I just want to explore how the argumentation against and objection of Rohingya history are illogical and groundless. We will bring here a skeleton of chronological abridgement of the past history.

Arakan is a coastal plain separated from Burma proper by a natural barrier; "The Arakan Yoma Ranges". Dr. S. B. Qunango says; "Arakan is the continuation of Chittagong plain. It is link with Chittagong region has been very close since time immemorial. Century after century both regions have been under the same rule". He further compared "Arakan relation to Chittagong with of Norway to Sweden". People and civilization infiltrated into Arakan through Chittagong area since many centuries before Christian era. Sudan people and Indian civilization spread into the Arakan and Indian ruled there century after century. Name of places, mountains and rivers were given by those Indians. For example; "Gesappa Nadi" (Kaladan River), "Malayu Nadi" (Mayu River), "Ingsana Nadi" (Leymyo River), "Srimabu Nadi" (Kheri Chaung) and so called "Dannya Vadi" (Dannya Wadi), "Vesali" (Wethali) were names given by Indian people then. (see: E. Forechamer, Arakan, 1891, 1)

To authenticate above version of foreign scholar, here, I would like to add the assessment of a Rakhine scholar U Aye Chan (now Dr. Aye Chan) from Yangon University History Department. He wrote in an article, "All inscriptions before 10th century were Indian literature. Not only the ruling class but their subjects also used that literature. Burmese inscriptions were found only after 10th century. For example, Dasaraza Stone inscription. That was a swift change. There might have been a rapid and momentous political and cultural revolution in Arakan during (early) 10th century A.D. So it is difficult for us to say the present Rakhine are the same as those settlers before 10th century. It is an important issue remains to clear up for coming generation researchers. (U Aye Chan; Assessment of Rakhine history, Rakhine Tasaung magazine 1975-76 in Burmese.

Rakhine chronicles say these early people ruled from the capitals, Thabaiktaung, Dannya Waddy, Wethali successively. Dr. Pamela referring to early day inscriptions confirmed Dannya Wadi lasted until 6th century AD when the capital was shifted to Wathali (Vesali) by Sandra dynasty rulers then. Wethali (Vesali) lasted until the over run of Burma. (who later called Rakhine) in early 11th century. The Burma shifted their capital to "Sambawak" and their first king was Kethathein (see; Pamela; Ancient Arakan, 1976: her Ph.D Thesis). Here through the infiltration and military excursion of Burma took place from 10th century, the land came into their control only in 11th

century.

Before the successful reading of the early inscriptions in late British period, Arakan past history was in the mist. Writers have vague and different opinions. Some had tried to extend Wethali period to early Christian era. The successful reading of ancient inscriptions had cleared the contentious opinions of different writers. The last ruler of Dannya Wadi was the group of the people whose surname was Sandra (Chandra). This Sandra family had valued over Arakan until 11th century. The successive records of their rules were preserved on a stone monument erected by one of their 8th century King, Ananda Sandra. That was why that monument until today has been called Ananda Sandra stone monument. It was brought from Wethali to Mrauk-U, the last capital of Rakhine Kingdom, by one of their 16th century King: Min Ba Gyi (a) Zabauk Shah. During the Sandra rule, there of course were ups and downs. There were times of instability, chaos and absence of central government. Sometimes local chiefs and warlords ruled locally. Here Pamela says a prince from other side of Naf River had to stabilize the disintegrated kingdom in the last decade of 6th century. Mahavira (from Chittagong area) established his capital at "Parapura" which according to Ptolomey's record is to be localized as Pruma village of Maung Daw North. His control was strengthened from there. He won over the locally standing chiefs and later the capital was shifted into inner Arakan. Perhaps to Wethali. (Pamela; Ancient Arakan: 1976).

Dr. Kunango opens an especial chapter in his "History of Chittgong volume-1; 1978" about this Sandra family who also ruled over Chittagong until 10th century when Cada from South India and Pala from North-east India alternately occupied Chittagong. Sandra lost their sovereignty there. But Arakanese Chandra were still in power, Dr. Kunango says compared their inscriptions coins, there was a huge similarity between the Sandra's of Arakan and Chittagong. Perhaps the same family members ruled over the two regions with different capitals.(see; Dr. Kunango, History of Chittagong volume-1; 1978).

Rakhine chronicles say one Wethali King Sulataing Sandra in AD-957, tried to occupy Chittagong but he returned back without making war. His mission might have intended to restore Sandra rule there by driving out the "Coda".

His not making war has some reasons. What so ever the fate of Sandra in Arakan turned feeble too. On his return from Chittagong Sulataing Sandra got a migraine like severe headache and at the advice of his astrologers, he made a journey to "Tagoung", Upper Burma. He lived there three years. On his return journey near "Maw Tin", south coast of Arakan his fleet's way caught by a terrible storm and he perished there. Instability, strife and chaos broke out in "Wethali". Rakhine chronicles say two, "Myo" father and son, some say uncle and nephew: "Amrathu and Paipru" declared themselves as King and make "KethriTaung", their capital. (Here in "Wethali", there might be someone from Sandra's Family). The "Myo" ruled nearly twenty years. The "Pyu" and "Shan" from the east frequently invaded and attacked them. Arakan was desperately instable. At least a "Sak"(Thek) Ngamin Nasadon became a King and he made his capital "Pynsa". He became subject of repeated invasion by the Burman from the east. Burman was trying to take advantage from the instability of Arakan. Despite long resistance for years by the "Sak", finally the Burman got the control of Arakan plain. (Pamela; "Ancient Arakan")

Here Pamela Guttmann points out "Ananda Sandra's inscription north side indicates there still was a King of Sandra's Family line that resisted all these tribal disobedience and insurrections. He was crying for help from "Wethali". It was the last gasp of Last Sandra King". What so ever in early 11th century, the Burman became the dominant race. They ruled Arakan ever since and later known as Rakhine. The name Rakhine was first found in 12th century, Ava inscription (Pamela; "Ancient Arakan"). Dr. Kunango also says the name Rakhine was given by the Burman. In modern usage, the Land is Rakhine and the people there are "Rakhine Thaa".

The first King of invading Burman was "Kethathein". All succeeding Kings up to the Last Mrauk-U King bear Burmese names. These Arakan Kings from "Kethathein" had no longer the Sandra littles. Hence, all inscriptions and literature in Arakan were in Burmese. Thus these Burmese Kings are difficult to say to have blood tank with early Sandras. Two distinct things; Sandras and Indians where as the Kings from 11th century and over were all Burman.

In "Wethali" there were various seats of Buddhism and Hinduism. But from

the time of Burman control Hinayana (or) Teraveda Buddhism began to grow stronger. (see. Dr. Than Tun; 8th Birthday Bulletin"). Islam got root there only from 8th century. A.D Islam was introduced in Arakan through the cyclone stricken ship wrecked Arabs (see. U Nga Mac, Rakhine Razwin).

Rakhine chronicles try to relate first Burmese King "Kethathein" as the first cousins with the defected "Sak"(Thek) King Ngamin Mgadon who intern was forcibly connected with late Sandra King "Sulataing Sandra". It is said that after "Sulataing Sandra" perished, his Queen "Sada Devi" had handed over her infant son to a "Sak" tribe of Saing Daing Hill for adoption. How can it be possible? An Aryan child cannot easily be handed over to tribal untutored "Sak" Family. The King died but the Queen and their relatives were still alive. What forced them to hand over a child to the "Sak" tribe? It is a twist of Rakhine chronicles, perhaps to link late Kingship with early "Sandras" who ruled over Arakan for many centuries continuously. Another point, it is illogical the invading Burman would choose a cousin of defeated "Sak" King as their rules. Ngamin Ngadon himself cannot be an Indian Sandra. If "Sak" King "Ngamin Ngadon" and his victor "Kethathein" both are from "Sandra" Family as Rakhine chronicles claim, why the Last "Sandra" King in Wethali is said to have fought against them. (Pamela; Ancient Arakan). Neither "Ngamin Ngadon" nor his victor "Kethathien" were from "Sandra" Family. If they were so, "Sandra" dynasty would have continued in Arakan. But "Sandras" were finished. Name, Language and literature all became Burman.

A substantial proof of "Sandra age finished, a new Burman era began" is successive Pagan rulers, "Anaw Rahta", "Kyan Sitha", "Aloung Sesu", despite their military excusion into Arakan they nwver extended their full sovereignty over there. But kept Arakan as vassalage. Burmese Kings in their retreat used to take along only Indians as war captives. King "Kyan Sit Tha, in late 11th century, captured 3000 Indians from Rambree and settled them in Myin Kyan and Miktilla townships. (see; G. E. Harvey; "Out time of Burmese History". Of Rambree and offshore island had that many Indians, their population in main land Arakan would had been in zillion.

Relation between the main stream population, Indian and ruling Burma turned disarm one of us ever since then. On the other hand, there was

Muslim religions penetration into Arakan. Rakhine Historian "U Nga Mae's" Rakhine Razawin and other works of western historians high light the point that Muslim Arabs got settlement in Arakan since the time of Wethali King "Mahataing Sandra AD 788". Cyclone stricken shipwrecked Arabs who were settled in Arakan proper by the Kings then propagated their religion and the natives mostly the Indians had converted to Islam. Most of the converts were found during the early rule of Burman (Rakhine). Muslim population gradually increased by 12th and 13th century principally due to the missionary works of Muslim saint like "Badr Walia" who abodes are still to lay found along the coast of Arakan. He was known as the Saint of Sea, and seafaring people were his devotees.

There were Muslim infiltrations on the north too. Bengal then turned Muslim by 12th century. Some Chieftains or Warlord from other side of "Naf River" established their rules over Arakan. Muslim Legends say One "Amir Hamza" at Gaulauggie (Upper Mayu and Pruma valley) ruled for longtime and he fought a series of war with some rulers in inner Arakan. Another case of Muslim rule was the rule of "Hanifa" and "Keyapuree", a married couple making their seats of rule at Mingalar Gyi range. Two peaks on Mingalar Gyi range still are totally called "Hanifa Tanki and Keyapuree Tanki". The records of these episodes in book form have been recited group by Muslim until recently in Arakan. These may be instances of Muslim King in north Arakan which Dr. Than Tun described in his article ("Keliya magazine, August, 1994). Thus in Arakan Muslim became a big majority which is why Rakhine chronicles say in the time of "Anu Lun Min", the King employed fourty-two thousand Muslims, in various hard works. (see; "Dannya Waddy Arey Daw Pon" by Rambree Saradaw.) If you say this is an exaggeration of the chronicler, then how can we rely on other content; fit and rest of other chronicles of native writers? (See; also below P: 11).

"Dannya Wady Areydaw Pon" mentions another instance, that a war Captive "Kalaa" (Muslim) was given treatment. When cured, he was treated "Myocaa" Governor of Akyab. As said above Rakhine Burma have enthrall and ethnic affinity. Sometimes, they are two body one soul. Thus Rakhine used to rely on Burma in case of political despondency. One there was political instability, rivalry and chaos; they used to seek help from Burman. Burmese King occasionally used their army to restore a King of their choice

in Arakan. "Bodan Phya" of Ava's occupation of Arakan in 1785 AD was an instance in this context. An early instance was when 15th century King, "Narameik Hla" began to rule very cruelly and in uncivil way some princes and grandees sought the help of Ava (Myanmar) King "Min Khaung" in AD 1404. "Min Khaung" invaded Arakan, "Narameik Hla" fled to Gaur the Capital of Bengal Muslim King. His supporters had invited "Mou" King "Razadirit" to take over Arakan. Mon in Hanthawaddy (Lower Burma), Burman in Ava (Upper Burma) was rivals at that time. Hence "Mon Razadirit" and "Ava Min Khaung" fought a series of battles for about a dozen of years to get control of Arakan. But "Laung Kyet", Capital of Arakan then remained in the hands of "Min Kaung". War torn Arakan was devastated. People suffered untold miseries. The Exile King "Narameik Hla" served with Bengal King in his army about 20 years; most probably was about twelve years. (see; U Nyo Mya, Kung Baung Shapondaw, 2003, pg.129). He got the favor and trust Bengal Patten King. The King helped to regain his throne. Perhaps, he procured the help of Bengal King with some submission provisions. After two episodes of armed struggle "Narameik Hla" finally got his throne in "Laug Kyet".

Since then, the political, economic, social and cultural structure of Arakan had changed at all. Etiquette of Muslim court system was introduced. Both groups of Bengal retinues were kept permanently for his protection. Muslim became a privileged class in Arakan. Muslim culture flourished. Persian, the official language of Bengal was also became the official language of Arakan. Persian skilled officers, ministers were appointed coins were minted in Persian script. Some coins bore Arakan King's Muslim name on outside and the Muslim "Kalima" (verse of confession of faith) on another side. Local Muslims whose language was not Persian began to write their language in Persian script. Calligraphy in Persian developed Muslim art. Muslim poetry and literature were encouraged. Arakan Kings kept the Muslim names. Some western writers remarked Arakan as a Muslim State.

In the world political atlas of 15th century Arakan was shown in the category of Muslim States. (see; Abu Aaneen, Arakan History, 2003). Arakan's foreign correspondence until 18th century was found in Persian. Some copy of those correspondence were discovered by "J. Lieder", (see; J. Lieder, "The Ascendance of Mrauk-U dynasty, 2003). After all, it is a consensus

of the historians that Arakan became vassalage of Muslim Bengal at least for a hundred years. Here some Rakhine writers try to deny that fact, by highlighting the points "Narameik Hla's" successor "Min Khari (a) Ali Khan" captured "Ramu" and his successor "Ba Saw Pru (a) Kalima Shah" was able to occupy Chittagaung, because they were not under any political influence of Bengal. The fact is that, Chittagaung ever before "Narameik Hla" was under Arakan rule. Bengal without Chittagaung in fact is a wide region. During Arakan's internal war above Arakan lost its control over Chittagaung due to lack of proper central Government. Perhaps, Chittagaung fell under the control of Local Chief or "Tripura King" in the north-east. That was why "Narameik Hla's successors' "recapturing of Chittagaung did not have any affect on its relation with Bengal King who helped "Narameik Hla" to get back his throne.

During the reign of Mrauk-U dynasty King "Min Saw Hla" in early 16th century Muslim missionary from India headed by "U Kadir" and "Hanu Meah" were allowed to preach Muslim religion. They built many mosques in various places and recruited new preachers from India. It had a miraculous like effect. People village by village converted to Islam. The momentum of conversion was so great that some Buddhist elders had raised alarm and lodged a complaint during the time of third King, "Min Bagyi (a) Zabauk Shah (A 1538-52) who after discussing the case in his "Luttaw (Parliament)" stopped the missionary works. (see; Pundit U Tha Tun, Rakhine Maha Razawin BE 1282). Consequently Arakan had already produced hundreds and thousands of Muslims in this period. This converts consist of both local Indians and Tibeto Burmans. Due to stronger influence of Rohingya Culture, all assimilated and accumulated as Rohingya. (See; below p: 21)

There still were other categories of Muslim. When Bengal was occupied by "Devi" Emperor "Akbar in 1572 from the hand of "Pattan" King, thousands of "Pattan" ran into Arakan. Arakan King protected them and employed them in ranks and files of the King. They were shown great favor by Arakan Kings. (see; Dr. Kunango, History of Chittagong vol. I, 1975). Again early 17th century King, "Narapadi", brought thirty thousand dyers and weavers from Chittagong and settled them in Arakan valleys, to enhance his fertile industry foreign export. The King did it besides the objections of his ministers. (see; J. Leader, "The Ascendance of Mrauk-U Dynasty", 2003).

The irony today is that some including a few highly educated Rakhine try to say that, there were no Muslim Population in Arakan. Before British time except a tiny community of slave descendents and "Narameik Hla's" Bengal retinues. The fact majority population in Arakan even before British occupations was Muslims and all were natives who converted to Islam and other who facilitated by Rakhine Kings to settle in their country. It was because Arakan Kings then needed their services. Muslim influence was not only on political, military and economic field but also on religious culture. British time Archeological director "E. Forccharmer" writes; The Badr Mokan Mosque in Akyab was a prototype for many Buddhist temples. (see; E. Forcchamer, Arakan, 1891). Again Dr. Pamela writes; "The Pra Hla Zedi (temple) of Sandoway, and the famous Shit Thaung Phaya temple of Mrauk-U were built on the model of "Barasuna" and "Chutasuna" Mosques of Bengal". (see; Pamela, "The Lost Kingdom", Bangkok, 2002).

There are all authentic records. No one can fool us on this. Muslims in Mrauk-U was a well rooted community. Their influences there were indeed very great. In early 18th century, the politics of Arakan was wholly and solely in their hands. They made their own King and Kings of their own choice. (see; below P: 19). Yet some of our compatriots have been beating dead horse enhancing anti Rohingya, anti Muslim propaganda denying the existence of Muslims in Arakan before British time. Even some are going to say for that this Muslims in Arakan entered into Arakan only recently Bangladesh. Here to notice one thing is Muslim and Rohingya in synonymous. (see; below P: 19).

Many assert that Rohingya are Bangladeshi. Actually it is Bangladesh who should raise complaint for being forced to shelter millions of Rohingya amidst their originally dense population. Rohingya in Arakan from A.D 1662, occasionally subjected to mass massacre had to flee for safe haven into Bengal in thousands in each time. These expatriates made a community in Chittagong region; In British time census they were categorized in the name of "Rowaing" People from Rowang: Arakan.

Finally I would like to furnish my above narration with the words of an illustrious scholar. Professor G.E Harvey writes though Arakan was

predominantly Buddhist, it could not resist the spread of Islam both through the sea and Land. By 13th century Islam spread all over Arakan; Badr Mokan Shrine (abode of Saint Badr Walia) dotted through out the coast. (Harvey; Outline Burmese history, 1944, Pg 92).

Whatsoever Muslim-Rakhine racial harmony tested until the second phase of Mrauk-U dynasty. The harmony turned sour due to a historic event: The crisis of Moghul Prince Shah Shujah versus Rakhine King "Sanda Thudamma". Shah Shujah viceroy of Bengal (excluded Chittagong which was under Rakhine King) defeated at the hand of his brother "Aureng Zeb" in their struggle to gain the "Dehli" empirical throne was warmly given asylum by Arakan King "Sandra Thudamma" in A.D 1660. Rakhine Armada escorted him from "Dacca" to Chittagong. From Chittagong, he proceeded to Mrauk-U through the Land. The route he crossed through was still called "Shujah Road" in Bangladesh. He subjoined for some days in Maung Daw. This place is called "Shugah Village" in Maung Daw. Then he proceeded to Mrauk-U where he was warmly welcomed along with his hundreds of body guards. They were provided all necessary facilities to stay peacefully and comfortably. He was promised to provide a vessel for his final Journey to "Meckah" where he intended to retire for life. But lately problem arose between the exiled Prince and Arakan King.

Rakhine version of the crisis is Shujah was killed in a battle of a coup coup d'etat he staged to seize the throne of Arakan. There are a lot of premises to factor who initiated the crisis. Since there are no interest servers of Shujah, Rakhine literature on this topic seemed always to be one sided. The factors related to this crisis to take into account are many. Why Shujah was not supplied with a ship for his trip to "Meckah" as was promised by Arakan King through more than a year passed then? Where is his six camels loaded jewelleries gone? Why Arakan King forcibly took into marriage one of Shujah's daughter? Were not there lyrics of poems glorifying the beauty of Shujah's daughters sung by children from the street to appease their King whose crazy love for those young women was in every one's mouth in the Kingdom? (see; U Hla Tun Pru, Arakan).

Suppose! Shujah tried to seize Arakan throne. Then he should have initially staged the coup with the help of his body guards he brought with him from

Bengal. Then the body guards were rebel or criminals. Why were those rebels recruited by the same King as his royal body guards? Besides this recruited body guards hundreds of other body guards of Sha Shujah were resettled in remote villages, provided them with land and tools for husbandry. They were arranged to get married with local women. (see; J. Lieder; "The Ascendances of Mrauk-U dynasty, 2003). Is it logical that criminals would be treated in such a Philan therapy? Again if Arakan King had not an ulterior motive he would not had ordered the "Dutch factors" in Mrauk-U to leave the town overnight before the on slaughter on Sujah's family was began. (Moshe Yegar, "The Muslims of Burma", 1972).

All these factors lead us to the conclusion that the above Rakhine version of the crisis is not true. This in fact is a biased notion to cover up their King's ugly character. The fact was Arakan King was crazy to marry one of Shujah's daughters. He was also too greedy to seize the jewelleries of Shujah which was never seen in Arakan court. To fulfill his lust, he spread false rumors of an unfounded rebellion and consequently by a brutal attack on the Prince family, he killed the exiled Prince and his wife. Then one of his daughters was forcibly married the rest of the exiled Prince family was put in prison. Shujah's jewelleries were seized. Some people said the imprisoned family members of Shujah were released by the intercession of queen mother. (Sandra Thudamma's mother) who argued that it was not proper to kill royal asylum seekers. One year later in 1662, Shujah's followers who remained in north Arakan tried to rescue rest of Shujah family with unarmed attack. But this episode was crushed by the King's Army. In this rebellion, all members of Shujah and thousands of local Muslims were killed in cold blood. Dutch Dak register recorded everyone seen with beard was killed by Rakhine King's Army. One of the King's Muslim Ministers "Shah Al-Awal" was imprisoned on the charge of accomplice with the rebellion. "Al-Awal" remained in prison for seven years. (see; Moshe Yegar; Muslim of Burma).

The Murder of Shah Shujah and Its Impact

The murder of Shujah was a disregard of diplomatic norms. It had had a very ruinous effect on Arakan History. The grandeur of Mrauk-U Kingdom began gradually to fade away. The Empire like Kingdom no longer could maintain its stability. Rivalries, insurrection, civil disorder and chaos prevailed over the whole country. The Kings loyal ally the Portuguese were no longer faithful to him. Relation between the King and the Portuguese spoiled. The Portuguese at the Bay and Chittagong began to take the side of Moghul. Finally the King was murdered in his own Palace.

One remarkable lesson here is, once when an Arakan Prince took asylum in Muslim Bengal, he was treated well and provided with all necessary help to regain his throne. The Prince established Mrauk-U dynasty and grew up as a strong and splendid Empire. But one of the Kings of this Empire mistreated the exiled Muslim Prince, broke diplomatic principles and finally murdered the whole family of the exile. From there no Arakan gradually lost its past grandeur and finally its sovereignty. It is a lesson for all Arakanese. In another word when Muslim-Rakhine relationships were harmonious, Arakan prospered; when it turned sour Arakan lost everything including its precious sovereignty.

Of course, it might be true "Devi Emperor Aureng Zeb" was ready to take off his brother, Shujah's head due to their royal feud. The murder of Royal Moghul family by others was utterly unbearable for him. It seemed as a great insult to him and to his empire. Thus he ordered his Army general to make war on Arakan and seize it as soon as possible. General Mir Jumla launched both naval and land attack on Arakan. The Portuguese in Chittagong and at Bay of Bengal who had been loyal ally to Arakan for centuries abandoned Arakan King and sided with the Moghul. Mir Jumla's army occupied Chittagong and Ramu in 1665 A.D. Historian say the sudden death of Mir Jumla and the weather condition there obstructed Moghul army to march further on. Thousands of Rakhines were killed and thousands along with their weaponry and warships were captured. Local Bengalis once captured and enslaved by Rakhine rose against them. They began to attack Rakhine civilians there. As a result, Rakhine there began to flee the land of further south leaving behind their legacies. (see; Dr. Kunango, History of Chittagong, vol-I, 1978).

A few years ago, during the Shujah crisis Muslim from Arakan flocked in thousands into Chittagong area to escape the indiscriminate massacre of Arakan King. Now the Rakhine in Chittagong had to runaway into Arakan. Thus the structure of Demography in Arakan looks a different shape. North Arakan became Muslim predominant where as south Arakan became Rakhine Heart Land. The Lost Chittagong was a great blow to Arakan Kingdom, which ruled over there for centuries. Arakan never regain its power over there.

Situation in domestic front changed too. Political rivalry grew up. Insurrection

arose. “Sanda Thudamma” himself was murdered in his Palace. Anarchy and Chaos prevailed over the whole country. The King indiscriminate massacre of Muslims earlier had created a fearful communal atmosphere. Mrauk-U began to run down the road from its zenith.

Royal guards recruited from among the Shujah’s followers took the law in their own hands. They roamed across the country with swords and fire at their hands. People used to tremble before them. They made and unmade Kings at their will. Some are for days and some are for months. Arakan in fact was in a quagmire. Yangon University Professor W.S. Desai named the royal body guards (followers of Shujah) Kings makers of Arakan. (see; W.S. Desai ; “The Pageant of Burmese History). Here noticeable point is Rakhine chronicles say these royal guards who were skilled archery and also called “Kamanthei” denoting their weapons: the bows and arrow, numbered a few hundred. A few hundred could not the power of the country in their own hands. Perhaps their numbers were greater than what the chronicles say. These “Kaman” forces had exploited the politics of Arakan for forty years. When “Sanda Wizaya” came on power (A.D 1710-1720) he maintained sort of stability for some years but he too was murdered later. He got control over the “Kaman” force and deported them to Akyab and Rambree islands where they are still found as a community with distinct character having Muslim faith and Rakhine culture. A point of father research in here. Rakhine historian used to say Buddhist Rakhine also consisted in the “Kaman” force. But we find the deportees all in Akyab and Rambrae were Muslims. The King suppressed Muslims a lot. Thus, 3700 Muslims had to flee to Burma proper. (see below P: 22).

After “Sanda Wizeya’s” murder situation became worse. Looting, killing, robbery and arsons became routines of the day. Power rivalry among Rakhine ran deep. Some had sided with Muslims. In 1737, one Muslim “Sultan Raza Katera” was made King. (Rakhine State Chronicles, 1984).He too did not last long. He was dethroned. Then Muslims insurrection broke out in the country. (Rakhine State Council Chronicle, 1984). Muslims sent off their families up to “Panwa” (Ramu) as to haven, and they took active part in the politics (King making) of Arakan. (Net Myit San Aung; the sak tribes and Rakhine King; Rakhine Thahaya magazine, 2002). No rule of law in country. Law of jungle ruled there. Kings came and Kings want; no one

could rule for long. Famine and a pandemic frequently visited the Land. People fell in nightmare.

One Dahbaing Gyi Thauk Tire (an Influential Lord) organized the Muslims honored them by various means. With collaboration of Muslim, he was facilitated to become King in 1772 AD. He too was opposed by others, rivalry did not cease and he finally was overthroned in 1772 AD. Main Leaders despised him. As a result and according to Rakhine, tradition some so called princes had invited "Bodaw Phya" of Ara to interfere in Arakan. "Bodaw Phya" responded and invaded Arakan and occupied it in 1775. The famous "Mahamuni" image erected some 2000 years ago was carried away to Mandalay.

"Bodaw Phya" introduced his rule appointing four "Myowan" (Governor) for four divisions of Arakan. One special Muslim "Myowan" was appointed to handle Muslims affairs them and there. A special royal decree was issued for Muslims allowing them to their social disputes according to their religious verdict. (J. Lieder – Muslims names of Arakanese Kings, Rakhine research Journal II, 2003). Muslims judges (Razi) were appointed. There are still many families of those "Razi", British for maintained that "Razi" system.

Soon after "Badaw Phya's" occupation Rakhine began to dictate Burmese rule. Burmese rule was said to be cruel and disgustful. The very princes who invited Myanmar King began to oppose his rule. Insurrection broke out led by "Nga San Dai" one of the inviters of Myanmar King. The greater the momentum of the insurgency, the harsher the cruelty of the King. Historians say the "Myowans" took stiff and brutal measures to punish the insurgents that the people had to desert the Land. More than half the population: according to some estimate two and half lakh people fled the Land into Bengal. This exodus of refugees and insurgents brought Burmese King into direct confrontation with the British Government there. This confrontation finally led to the first Anglo – Burma war in 1842. This exodus of refugees of refugees comprises both Muslim and Buddhist (Rakhine). (See; Bonpauk Tha Kyaw, The danger of Rohingya in the Union; 1990; a memorandum put up to the SLORC Government). These refugees returned to Arakan when British occupied it in 1826. Salient point here is R.B Smart in his Burma gazetteer, Akyab district denoted Muslim returnees as Chittagonians and this

remark still today remains a reason to accuse Rohingya (or) Muslims as Chittagonians.

British Period

As we have seen Muslim-Rakhine relationships deteriorated since late Mrauk-U period. It did not improve much during Burmese rule, though there were no remarkable problems. The Rakhine had invited British and fought the war along with them. Most Rohingya were neutral, passive in the time of first Anglo-Burma war. But some actively took part in the Burmese Army. "Thado Mingyi Maha Bandoola" marched from "Sein Pyu Kyun", slim to Arakan with five battalions each comprising 2000 fighters war horses and elephants. In Arakan, he recruited fresh members of Army. (see U Lay Maung, Myanmar political history I, 1973, pg:20). Bandoola found the Muslims in Arakan more co-operative and supportive. He got a Muslim army led by "Qazi Abdul Karim " of Minbya. Abdul Karim got captured alive in the war and was put in "Calcutta Military Jail". Bandoola later shifted his head quarter to "Lakwaidek". Buthidaung from where he recruited new fighters. (Captain Robertson; first Anglo-Burma War record).

The great grand father of this writer's grand father was one of the recruits. British won the war. Arakan fell under British rule. During British rule, Rakhine enjoyed special favor of British. Yet there were not any noticeable problem for the Muslims either. Muslim judicial system (Qazi system) was maintained by the British Official Qazis (Judges) was appointed. There are several Qazi families in Arakan to day. In late British Period independent movement revived. Rakhine compared to Rahingya were mostly educated and they have ethnic affinity with the Burman. So they closely collaborated with mainstream Burmese movement. Rakhine Mrauk-U Othamma was a lead activist of independence movement. Muslim elders, leaders, students just co-acted or participated in Rakhine led movements. Muslims did not try to have separate movements. Muslim then thought, they were part and parcel of Rakhine. They even called themselves as Rakhine or Arakanese Muslims. Advocate "Sultan Mahmood" (later Health Minister of U Nu's last cabinet) U Pho Khaing, U Yasin were members of "All Arakan Nationals Solidarity Organization". Mr. Zainuddin of Kyauk Taw actively advocated the cause of national school education and later became the principal of Akyab National High School. U Ba Sein of Sandaway, U Thein Maung of Kyauk Phyu, and another U Thein Maung of Myebon, U Pho Khing and Daw Aye Nyunt (a) zurak were some of the well known leaders of independence movement. U Thein Maung, Kuauk Phyu was chairman of district AFPFL (Pasapala).

In normal politics "Goni Marakan" of Akyab was a native M.L.e in British time assembly of 1935.U Pho Khaing from Akyab, U Abdul Gaffar from Buthidaung and U Sultan Ahmed from Maung Daw were 1947 constitutional assembly members. U Sultan Ahmed and U Abdul Gaffar were constitution drafting committee members. (U Kyaw Win +3, Myan History, 1955-1962). All these were possible only because this Muslims whom we called Rohingya are Burmese national. More important point is the nationality question Muslims in Arakan was settled by Boghoke Aung San and Mr. A. Jinna of Pakistan during their meeting in Karachi on 7th, January, 1947. Then there was a hot political issue about leaders were demanding north Arakan to be included in coming state of Pakistan. Due to this hot issue, Boghoke Aung San his close aide Mr. Rashid to Jinna some months ago as a emissary to sound out Mr. Jinna's stand on this issue. (Moshe Yegar Muslims of Burma, 1972). In their negotiation on 7th, January, 1947, Mr. Jinna withdraws the claim of east Bengal Leaders and conceded that the religion in question will

be within Burma and the Muslims there on will be Burmese citizen. (see. U PoGaLae; Boghoke; 1967; 244). Consequently post independence Burmese Government gave full constitutional guarantee to this people. They enjoyed full citizenship rights. They had parliament arias, Parliament secretaries and with last cabinet of U Nu, Sultan Mahmood M.P from Buthidaung health minister. Enjoying the night of Franchise and having the right of having can fleeted in the Parliament indicate, they have and having the right of having era elected in genuine Burmeser's.

Changes of Attitude

Despite all these harmonious virtues, lately we encountered changes of heart and attitude. What we thought in 1920s and 1930s were proved wrong. Our belief that we are also Rakhine and we will not be discriminated came to be questioned. In late 1930s and early 40s some Rakhine began to spread anti-Muslims tendencies. They were unwilling to share the future with Muslims. Exclusive, divisive political agendas were being fostered. Consequently there came 1942 killing spree of Muslims. Muslims did not find Rakhine as partners. Muslims were not welcomed in their social and political outfit. Outcry against Muslim interest grew louder. This exclusionism, in my belief, is ruinous to Arakan future. Yet Muslims (or) Rohingyas enjoyed full citizenship rights.

This anti-Muslim and anti-Rohingya element in Arakan still has been decrying and refuting everything of the Rohingyas. Here Rohingya means people of Rohang (i.e Arakan since other races in Arakan either take or given their own ethnic names respectively, Rohingya virtually became synonymous with Muslim. (see: detail on P 18 below). The ultra-motive of above Rohingyas opponents into make Arakan exclusively a Buddhist state. They want to get rid of Rohingya. Thus black propaganda and discriminatory administrative mechanism have been in full steam for a long stint. They are successful up to some extent because Rohingya happened to be a degraded and vulnerable community in Arakan. They raised a lot of questions against Rohingya. Some repudiation and objections of theirs have been explained in previous chapters. Yet there are a lot more. These are: Rohingyas are refugees; there were not Muslims before Mrauk-U Dynasty; Mrauk-U Dynasty had only a small Muslim community; Muslims are not native but aliens; Muslims never have been a political fixture in Arakan history; some who were in Mrauk-U period were only slave descendants.

However, the reader of this short treatise, especially through what I have narrated in previous chapters can make an independent judgment on how far above repudiation is true and what Rohingya really is – Still I believe it will be more helpful to give detailed explanation concerning major accusations against Rohingya. It may lessen the confusion created by the censure. I would try to do it here on. Their main accusations are

(1) – Rohingyas are aliens: British time immigrants which a British record show.

(2) – The term Rohingya is a lately creation, not historical.

(3) – Muslims in Rakhine period was just a small community of slave descendents and Narameik Hla's Bengal retinues.

(4) – Slave community was not allowed to have married life.

(5) – Muslims in Rakhine period required travel permits.

(6) – 1942 communal not was initiated by Muslims.

(7) – Mujahid had persecuted Rakhine to consider being Rakhine or Burmese.

(8) – Rohingya literature & culture all are different from Rakhine.

(9) – Rohingyas are now but massive infiltrators from Bangladesh recently.

Appalling point here is these all are just to disseminate a false image of Rohingya. These have vestige of truth. Let us see below.

Before embarking on answering or explaining above censorious repudiation I have to say. I already have the conviction that the readers of this treatise will have a picture in mind Rohingya's history and identify just from previous chapters. The picture you got from there on of course will convey a message who these questioners are and what their motive of denial really mean. The illusion that so called Rohingyas are British time immigrants in wrong. Geo-Historical context of the Land where Rohingya live and their historical landmarks are different from other India related peoples in Myanmar. Rohingya have been natives there since ancient time. Going through the explanation below my readers can realize it and make an independent and unbiased judgment on it.

The Repudiation of Rohingya's Opponents

(1) Rohingyas are not the original settlers of Arakan

Who are the original settlers of Arakan? Rohingya or Rakhine? Of course Rakhines are bonfire nationals of Arakan. They have a proud history of their own. They have inherited and cherished Buddhist civilization of Ancient Arakan, because they already were Buddhist before they entered Arakan. They have been a dominant race there for the Last millioneum. But the preceding millioneum concerned to Rohingya alone. Through out the Rakhine period there were co-existence and contribution of Muslims, who are today known as Rohingya. The grandeler and splendor of Rakhine dynasties, especially of Mrauk-U Dynasty were the contribution of Muslims there. Indo-Aryan people ruled over Arakan dynasty after dynasty, century after century before the arrival of Burmans who today are called Rakhine. (M.collis + U San Shwe Bu; Into hidden Burma; chapt: Arakan). Yangon University Professor G.H.Luce explored it in detailed. He wrote before to the century in Arakan, the people and civilization all were Indian. (see; G.H.Luce; Early Burma Pre-Bagan).

Again British time archeological department director Emile Forcchammer through his study of ancient inscriptions and archeological remains said "Arakan was an Indian Land before 10th century. Name of places, rivers, mountains will all kept by Indians in their Indian Language. Their rule lasted for many centuries. Three names of the country were "Dannia Vady" (Dannya Waddy), and "Vesali"(Wethali). Present day "Kaladan" river was "Gessapa Nedi". "Leymyo" river was "Insna Nadi", "Mayu" river was "Malayu Nadi", "Kere Chaung" was "Sirimabu Nadi".(see; E. Forcchammer; Arakan; 1891, 1). Here Rakhine historian U San Shwe Bu recognized this undeniable fact. He said the language of early people turned into present Rakhinel language due to massive and continued infiltration of Burmese people from the east. (see; M. Collis; Into Hidden Burma; Chapt: Arakan). Here the notion of U San Tha Aung that Rakhine people in early period seemed to write Indian language is found to be wrong. (see; Wethali Age Ananda Sandra Stone Monument, by U San Tha Aung, pg:12).

The fact in ground was the people themselves were Indians not present day Rakhine. Former Yangon University History Professor Dr. Kyaw Thek says "Rakhine crossing the mountain passes conquered Arakan from the hands of Indians and then ceforth they were able to control their sovereignty, because they were brave and brilliant Burmese descendents. They speak an early form of Burmese. (see; Dr.Kyaw Thek; Pyi Taungsu Myanmar Naingan Thamaing, Kaith Myanmar Press, Yangon). The most illustrious scholar Dr. Htin Aung, once chancellor of Yangon University wirtes; Rakhine and Burman are the same race. Rakhine speak in a accent of early Burman. More important, their religion is the same too. (see; Dr. Htin Aung, Burma before AD 1280; trans: U Aung Than, 2003, pg.40). Professor Dr. Than Tun says, Rakhine is a branch of Burman. Their early literatures were found in Burmese. (see; Than Tun 80th Birthday Bulletin). In contract to some present day writer's claim that Rakhine is an Indo-Aryan race. Senior Rakhine Politic and Historian U Hla Tun Pyu say, Rakhine and Burman have affinity in blood and religion. He quoted a Burmese adage to substantiate his remise that Burman, Bran, Rakhine, Yaw, and Tavoy . . . . . all together seven groups none but Burman races. (see; History of Arakan; combination of his articles; published by U Min Lwin).

The lasted research of Dr. Pamela Guttmann, Australia, points out on many

chapters of her PhD Thesis that "presently dominant Rakhine are the Last group of people to enter Arakan in 10th century and there after. The form Rakhine was first found in 12th and 13th century Bagan and Ava inscriptions. (see. Pamela; Ancient Arakan, 1976 and the Lost Kingdom, 2002, Bangkok, Pg-5). Dr. Kunango quoting Myanmar inscriptions says the name Rakhine was given to their by Burman. Finally the consensus of almost all historians is that the early inhabitants of Arakan were Indians and Rakhine are a Tibeto-Burman race by all measure of ethnicity. They entered Arakan from 10th century and on group after group. On the other hand here we can find traces of Indians and Rohingya of Arakan only Rohingya language alone has a close affinity with that of ancient inscriptions of Arakan. Hence Rohingya, are surely the progeny of early Indo-Aryan who brought civilization to this land. So the early civilization: architecture, literature, religious, all were the products of Rohingya's which went into the hands of Buddhist-Rakhine since their arrival. Again in Rakhine period, specially Mrauk-U period, Muslim contribution was of a distinct dimension. The founding and endurance of Mrauk-U dynasty was principally connected with Muslim contribution. (see: below P: 19).

(2) Rohingya is not a historical term but created in portends pandered period

Tracing the historicity of names of place, people and so is a difficult task. Etymology of racial name has mostly controversial versions. Yet the term Rohingya and its etymology are very precise and clear. It is directly connected with the term of their native land: "Arakan". Illustrious scholars such as Dr. S.B. Kunango, Dr.Pamela Guttmann and even some Rakhine writers say the term Arakan derived from the words Rakhasa, Rakhasha, Rakapuru. In course of centuries various people in contact with Arakan called in various terms which were slightly different in pronunciations. Those terms were Arhkoung, Rakham, Rakchan, and Rohang and British named it "Arakan" which still is in used. In traditional Bengali literature, Arakan amply and wider has been described as "Rohang". (see. Dr. Kunango, History Chittagong, vol: 1, 1978 and Etymology of Arakan by one researcher in Rakhine, "Thahara" magazine, 2002.). Thus from Rohang its people is Rohingya.

In Bengali linguistic style, people from Rambree are Rambiezzya; people from Chattagham are Chattaghanyia. Thus people from Rohang(Arakan) are Rohingya. Both Dr. Kunango and Dr.Pamela Guttmann write Burman call Arakan as Rakhine or sometimes Rakhine Pyi. So Rakhine is the appellation of the Land not of the people there in. Its people are called Rakhine Thaa and sometimes Rakhine too. Burman's appellations of their own clans are on that pattern; for example: Lower Burmans are "Aukthaa", upper Burman are "Anyatha", those in Einlay lake are "Engthaa" and in this order those who line in Rakhine are "Rakhinethaa". Rakhinethaa is a common and daily visage of Arakanese today in referring to them. Thus sometimes a Rakhine proudly used to say, you know I am a "Rakhinethaa".

Hence our perception that Rakhine and Burman are of this same ethnic root not far away from truth. On the other hand, Arakan is called Rohang and its people are Rohingya is not a matter of denial and contention either. It is due to difference of language, the essence and meaning are the same. Arkanese, Rakhinethaa, Rohingya all represent the same meaning. Even respected historian such as Sir Aurthur Phayre described the King of Arakan; as the King of "Roum" (Rohang). (see: A.Phayre; Burma, Pg: 170). So here saying the term Rohingya is not of a historical one but created in post independence period is a sheer refutation of truth, intended to described it Rohingya and make a false image of them. As seen above records say the term Rohingya is as old as the history of Arakan itself. Other people in Arakan either take or given their respective ethnic names. So the term Rohingya remains for Muslims. Westerners also commonly use people of Islamic faith as Muslims rather than by their ethnic names. So here Muslims and Rohingya are synonymous denoting the same entity. Consequently I have to use Muslim and Rohingya alternately through out this treatise.

(3) There was no Muslims or Rohingya population before Mrauk-U Period

Clearing up the early history of a people is a difficult taste. It is a wide subject. The purpose of this treatise is just to introduce Rohingya and to clear up those baseless refutations concerning their history. I already here maneuvered to bridge Rohingya history from ancient to modern time in previous chapters. To avoid repetitions and boredom of reading I would like to be concise but

precise here. To disprove the false notions and blind accusation, we must go to the earliest period of history. Arakan is a cyclone prone region. Cyclone used to hit frequently this coastal region which was open to the traders of the west. Maritime transportation was the only means of trade in those early times. According to Dr. Kunango, Arab traders were master of the sea trade in the east until westerners came in 15th and 16th century. Westerners found the way to the east mostly with the help of Arab navigators. Still today many visages in the navigation are of Arab origin. (see. Dr. Kunango, History of Chittagong, vol: 1, Introduction). Arabs along with their trade activities preached their religion. Rakhine chronicles recognized Islam reached Arakan coast 8th century truth storm stricken shipwrecked Arab merchants. It said cyclone hit shipwrecked crew were washed ashore who were settled and remained in Arakan preaching Islam and Muslim community got root them. (U Nga Mae; "Rakhine Razwin").

It is not only Arakan, other coastal area of Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean experienced the same phenomenon. (Dr. Kunango, History of Chittagong, vol: 1, Chapter: Introduction). Nobel prized winner "Dr. Amartya Sen" says Islam spread in India through Arab traders from the sea since 8th century, many centuries before the military rulers came from the land. (See. Amartya Sen, Argumentative Indians). If we accept the notion that Arab traders preached Islam in India, it is also logical that they preached Islam in Arakan. Rakhine as well as Burmese historians recognized Arakan's foreign trade until 16th century old was in the hands of Arabs. In the works of Sir Arthur Phayre, G.E.Harvey, R.B.Smart, we find clear hints of shipwrecked Arabs getting shelter in Arakan (then Wethali) during the reign of "Mahataing Sandra" in A.D 788. These crews were said to be Arabs and to have been settled in Arakan proper. Senior Rakhine Politician and historian -"U Hla Tun Pru" despite his reluctance to accept Muslim antiquity in Arakan, admitted foreign trade of Arakan from early time to 16th century was solely in the hands of Arabs, Iranians and Indians most of whom were Muslims. (see. U Hla Tun Pru; Treasure Trove of Arakan, 1982, Pg: 320-325). Unlike today traders in those days used to stay for a long time in a place. Collecting their merchandises, obtaining clearances from the King and waiting for a fair weather condition took them a long period. There were foreigner's settlements in Mrauk-U. They built "Pueca Mosques". A stone plate of alter (Pulpit) of such a Mosque is still in the archives of Akyab. (See. Pamela

Guttmann, the Lost Kingdom, Bangkok, 2002). There are other stone plates and epigraphics of early Muslim heritage too. (See: Details; Abu Aaneen, Rudiments of Arakanese History). Those stone plates, inscriptions and other religious antiquities and edifices give us the information that there were wide presences of Muslims from early to Mrauk-U Period.

Islam in Bengal, Malaysia, Indonesia too got root from this sort of Muslim merchants or sea farers. Bandar Aeey, the city of Aeey province of Indonesia was once a seaport and the name itself is an Arabic word. Today those who are questioning the historicity and antiquity of Rohingya, even did not get access to this land in those early period.

Another concrete proof of Muslim presence in early middle-ages is in Rakhine chronicle itself. It is said there were forty-two thousand of Muslims work for as on various field of hard work in the time of "Anyute Lun Min", a 13th century Arakan King. (See: Rambree Sayadaw, Dannyawaddy Arey Daw Pon). Foreign historians are also of the same opinion. G.E. Harvey writes "Although Arakan is predominantly Buddhist it could not resist the penetration of Islam both from the sea and land. By 13th century Islam spread through out Arakan. The Bodar Mokan the abode of saint badar dotted the coast of Arakan. (G.E. Harvey, "Outline of Burmese History"). There still is a Badar Mokan in Akyab, and such are also found in many other coastal areas of the Bay of Bengal. Emile Forcchamer described the Badar Mokan of Akyab as a prototype for many Buddhist temples later in Arakan. (See. E. Forcchamer; Arakan). Today people from all denominations go to the shrine to give their homage. Presently the precincts of the shrine fall inside Arakan Naval Base Command.

After all the most authentic proof of Muslim presence before Mrauk-U Period is highlighted by two eminent Burmese history professors: G.H. Luce and Dr. Than Tun. Dr. Than Tun quoting an Ava age inscription with its registration number writes. The inscription indicates there were Muslim Kings and rulers over north Arakan. These Kings were very friendly with Ava Kings. It might be when east-Bengal turned Muslim (in 12th century A.D). Perhaps some Muslim chiefs or warlords had shifted into this part of the country and established their rule. (See: G.H. Luce, Barly Burma-pre Pagan, and Pg-75). It may be the Rohingya of "Mayu" region today are the

descendents of those early Muslims, because they (the Rohingya) too claim to be there for more than a thousand years. If not a thousand years, it might be eight-hundred years at least. (See: Dr. Than Tun, North Arakan, Rohingya magazine, August, 1994).

In fact in those early days there was no proper boundary line of sovereignty on that part of the region. Chittagong was a bone of contention among many peoples. Fluctuation of sovereignty there was a sort of routine phenomenon. The political situation of that century and around was supportive of this assertion of Dr. Than Tun. G.E. Harvey says in mid 12th century the famous "Mahamuni" shrine was overgrown. Rakhine state sponsored chronicle 1984 say Arakan King Dazaraza in 12th century had to seek the help of Mro tribe (a hilly people) to find out the Mahamuni shrine in the midst of dense jungle. J. Lieder say "Arakan became very instable and its Kings were very weak before the reign of King Htee. Their control of the land was constricted up to their capital south Arakan was under Mon rule".

Again so said more than one hundred years long tenure (A.D. . . . . .) of Min Htee's rule in Rakhine chronicles is a subject of question for historians. Historians say "It is assumed that Rakhine chronicles just expanded the tenure to cover the loss of their Kingship during this period.

Around 460 B.E Pyu and Mon had overrun Arakan, ruled for some years, destroyed the Mahamuni shrine, looted its jewelries. For 50 years, there were no maintainers of the shrine. It was covered with wild jungle. In only B.E 516, "Dafaraza Min" clearing the jungle found out the shrine and repaired it. B.E 516 corresponds to A.D 1150. This indicates during this early 12th century the control of Arakan Kings on the Land lapsed away. (see: U Nyo Mya, Kung Baung Shapondaw, 2003, Pg-139).

Taking into consideration all these ground facts we can say for sure that there were Muslims over north Arakan during this period. Muslims have their own records of this period and its Kings. Their records are in book form called "Puthee" which they used to recite gathering during their leisure time. These books are "Hanifa and Keyapuree", and "Dasine Amir Hamza". These are in Bengali script but in Rohingya dialect.

These records narrated one Hanifa and his queen Kayapuree ruled over North Arakan. They make the seats of their rules on two peaks of "Mingalar Gyi" Mountain range. These two peaks are still locally known as Hanifa Tonki and Kayapuree Tonki (Hanifa peak and Kayapuree peak). King Amir Hamza is said to be the King of "Gaulangyi" (upper pruma; Mayu valley). He is said to be in war with Kings in inner Arakan for long period. Though it is not very authentic; it still gives us some strands of historical information.

Another point of Muslim existence before Mrauk-U period is the introduction of Muslim "Sharia Law" in Arakan by "Wali Khan" the head of first military retinue of deposed King Narameik Hla. Genaral Wali Khan, head of Bengal retinue, sent to help Narameik Hla, by Bengal King betrayed the deposed Arakan King and made himself King of Arakan and ruled it until he was deposed by another retinue of Bengal King. (See: Bengal Gazetteer, Chittagong District). Here if there were no Muslim population, Wali Khan did not have introduced "Sharia law" because "Sharia Law" is specially meant for Muslims. Until then Mrauk-U dynasty was not founded. So denial of Muslim presence or accusation that there were no Muslims before Mrauk-U period is purely due to ignorance of history or due to their ultra motives. It might be partly due to the weakness of Muslims in discovering and recording their own history. This Muslims of Arakan fall outside the main streams and this historian, neglected them. Delicate points of their history mostly have been over looked.

(4) In Mrauk-U period there was only a small community of Muslims comprising some slave descendant and King Narameik Hla's Bengal retinue:

Of course there were thousands of war captives brought from east Bengal by Rakhine Kings during their military excursion there. (Rambree Saya Daw, Dannya Waddy Arey Dawpon, and Sayadaw U Nya Na, Dannya Waddy Maha Razwin). Again there had been slave hunting business in Arakan for centuries. Rakhine in collaboration with Portuguese pirates perpetuated slave hunting through out and the yearly captives in the 17th century was in thousands. Most of them were employed in Arakan (see: Travelogue of Friar Manrique and History of Chittagong, vol: 1, by Dr. Kunango). U Hla Tun Pru figured out some instances of them episode by episode mentioning

the names of the vessels carrying them. His sum total figure is several dozen thousands. (See: U Hla Tun Pru; Arakan Treasure Trove, Pg: 320-330). But Muslims doubt U Hla Tun Pru's figure. He might have reduced the figure of slave population just with the intention of unlegitimizing present day Muslim population of Arakan. Here U Hla Tun Pru too is anti-Rohingya, a fact we must realize.

Latest research of Dr. J Lieder says Narameik Hla's retinue comprised ten thousand combatants. He did not clearly say whether this figure is of one retinue or of both (see: J. Lieder, Ascendance of Mrauk-U Dynasty, 2003). Two Bengal armies came twice to help Narameik Hla (see: above P: 4). Then the figure of the armed forces would be twenty thousand.

In retrospect, there had been early Muslim converts (see: above P: 7 & 10). The Muslim rulers and their followers in the north are the product of Muslim missionaries from India in early 16th century. Muslims missionaries U Kadir, U Hana Meya and their associates were allowed by early 16th century Arakan King (perhaps Min Saw Hla) to preach Islam in Arakan. (See: J. Lieder, A critical shady of Manrique's works on Arakan and The Ascendance of Mrauk-U Dynasty, 2003). They built mosques in various places and preached their religion. People began to convert en masse, village by village. The momentum was so impressive and extensive that some conscious Rakhine elders had raised alarm and complained with King Min Bagyica (Zabauk Shah) (A.D 1532 – 52). The King after consulting his Luttaw (parliament) restricted the works of missionaries. But by and then there were hundreds of thousands of Muslim converts in the country. (See: Pandit U Tha Tun; Rakhine Maha Razwin B.E -1280, pg – 75).

Again there were a lot of Patton exiles when Bengal was captured from the Patton, by Emperor Akbar of Delhi in 1573 A.D. The Pattons were well received most of them were employed on prestigious official posts (see: Dr. Kunango). Portuguese priest Friar Manrique attended the coronation ceremony of King Thiri Thudamma (a) Salim Shah (A.D 1622-38). Manrique described the ceremony where almost all military units at the parade were Muslims. (See: M. Collis, "The Land of Great Image"). J. Lieder points out again Narapadi Min (1638-1645) to uplift his textile industry and to enhance foreign trade brought thirty thousand dyers and weavers from Chittagong and

settled them in Arakan valleys despite some objections from his ministers.

Another considerable fact: A glimpse on old Rakhine Chronicles shows us that the Rakhine Kings in their war against Moghul, Tripura, Burman, and Mon used "Kalaas" (Rakhine term for Muslims) in thousands. For example Min Razagyi (a) Salim Shah in the last decade of 16th century A.D, on his invasion of "Bagu" and "Mawlamyaine" employed ninety thousands "Kalaa" Muslim fighters. Say the chronicles exaggerated the figure. Then we take half of its fifty thousand. This fifty thousand in 16th century undoubtedly have multiplied to fifty lakh to day by its natural growth rate. Nonetheless there were Moghul Prince Shah Shujah's followers (see: above page: 13). Adding together all these historical categories of Muslims, we can imagine the population figure of Mrauk-U period. How can it be a small community? That notion is just nonsense and rubbish. Muslims have never been a minority in Arakan though they are today just like a non fixture and a non-entity. In Mrauk-U, they could make their own King and choose King of their liking. Compared to Mrauk-U age Muslim Population today is thinner and heavier because half of the Muslim Population left the country due to persecution, suppression and massacre. (See: P: 24). This point we can find in the "Sasana Raung WaTunzephu", a SPDC publication in 1997 that Islam spread into Myanmar proper through Arakan. And 3700 Muslim in 1710 during the region of Sane Min fled to Myanmar. They were settled in 12 different places. This exodus was due to Rakhine King Sanda Wizaya's suppression of Muslims, he was also the King who deposited the Kamans into Rambree and Akyab islands. (See: above P: 31).

(5) Slave community was not allowed to have marriage life

So-called slave community! An important phenomenon in Arakan history. This people were not slaves by birth. Many men and women of noble birth were too forced to undergo this bondage. Primary source materials say this slave population contains both male and female. (See: Harvey; Outlines of Burmese History, Dr. Kunango, and Chittagong History). They were not slaves in the very sense of the word. Their lives were much freer. But they were employed for all hard and rough work in the country, especially in Agricultural field. There were some artisans and technocrats too, who were chosen by the Kings themselves. For example: Shah Alawal served with

two or three Kings continuously. He was also a captured slave. He was a writer, a poet and later became Rakhine King Sanda Thudamma's minister. He wrote many books. He was a literary genius. He had admirable skill and ability of Arabic, Persian, and Bengali. His work in Bengali such as "Parda Puthee", Sikandarnama, and Roshan Panchali was of excellent merit in Bengali Literature.

In Roshan Panchali, he had narrated the tragedy of his suffering at the hand of the King on the unfounded accusation of accomplice with exiled Moghul Prince Shah Shuja. He served seven years prison term where his life was saved by the intercession of another minister Daulat Gazi (see: Kunango, History of Chittagong, vol: 1). These slaves in Arakan were either war prisoners or victims of piracy by Portuguese-Rakhine on a raiders. Whatsoever, these all were prior to 17th century. Given their notion is correct, there were no marriage life and no reproduction; no pregnancy of the slaves remained. Again another notion of the critics, there were no other categories of Muslims either. Then the question is where the Muslims in mid and late 18th century came from to make their own king to make insurrection in whole over the country. (See: Rakhine Stali Chronicle). Where the Muslims came from with that some Rakhine had collaborated to make King of their own choice during the chaotic period of 18th century. (Netmgit San Hung, Rakhine Thahaya magazine 2002, Rakhine Kings and the Sak (Thek) tribes). Where those Muslims expatiate and war prisoners came from in Bodaw Phya's time? (See: Bonpauk Thakyaw, The danger of Rohingya).

If there were no Muslims as the critics are highlighting why did Bodaw Phya appointed a special Muslim Mayor Myowan to handle Muslim affairs (see: J. Lieder, Muslim names of Arakan Kings). Here my reader can make a correct judgment on the illusionary version of so called Rohingya history critics.

(6) Muslims in Rakhine period required to take travel permit

This is just intended in demeaning the political image of Rohingya. Their criticism or argumentations were not relevant and lack of sequence. They say there were no Muslims, then for whom this permit is needed. This is a very unruly argument. To bring value to their notion, this quoted Friar

Manrique. There is none this sort of remark in Manrique's works. Referring to Marique, Dr. Kunango writes: Muslims in Mrauk-U then was a privileged class. For various reasons, Arakan Kings had to rely on Muslims. Counselors of Arakan Kings were Muslims. Units of armed forces were composed of Muslims. Senior Ministers such as Sulaiman, Majlis, Naverez, Syid Musa, Daulat Razi, Ashrof, Shah Alawal and many others were Muslims. Even Arakan foreign correspondence was found in Persian, the writing language of Muslims in Arakan. J. Lieder had discovered some instances of correspondence in Persia with Dutch at Batavia in 18th century. (See: J. Lieder, The Ascendance of Mrauk-U Dynasty).

Muslim armed forces were the main strength of Kings Min Khamaung (a) Hussein Shah and Min Razagyi (a) Salim Shah in their wars against the Portuguese in early 17th century. So, how can it be logical to imagine Muslims required travel permit. Dr. Kunango narrated Portuguese attempted two times in early 17th century to seize the throne of Arakan. Each time it was suppressed ruthlessly. Hundreds were killed. Their stronghold at Sandwip Island was captured. Other hundreds were kept in confinement. This confined Portuguese required taking travel permit. Issuant of this permit was Arakan Governor of Chittagong. It was just to prevent the Portuguese from getting with the Moghul in the west, the rival of Rakhine. Marique's trip to Arakan itself was to rescue the confined Portuguese. (See: Dr. Kunango, History of Chittagong). If in Marique's record there were something like foreigners required travel permit, it was not for Muslims but for Portuguese alone. Muslims were not foreigners. They were natives. Noticeable point here is this permit was issued by Chittagong Governor. How could Muslims in Mrauk-U obtain this permit without traveling across the country up to Chittagong? When they can travel to Chittagong without permit, there were no Rakhine territories to go further with so said permit. This background confutes the notion that Muslims in Mrauk-U period required travel permit.

(7) R.B Smart's Burma gazetteer, Akyab district as a document to prove Rohingya's being aliens:

It is the biggest weapon of Rohingya's critics. Almost all opponents used to refer this book to disgrace Rohingya politically. Critics say R.B Smart had described this Muslims of Arakan as Chittagonians. May I ask has a

writer or an officer the right or power to define or appellate a peoples' ethnic name. What shall you say? In the same gazetteer, he called Rakhine "Magh". Can Rakhine be "Magh" because R.B Smart said so -What is your response to this? Further major Anthony Irwin and Field Marshal William Slim too described Rakhine as "Magh" where as Muslims are called Arakanese. (See: A. Irwin, Burmese Outpost and W. Slim; "Defeat into Victory"). Do you accept "Magh" as your racial name because these entire British officials write so. These are the military officers with whom you fully co-operated in antifascist war ? So they cannot be said biased. In fact R.B Smart was only biased officer. He was motivated or influenced by his Rakhine staffers.

Another point the critics selected to highlight is British time immigrants and the increase Muslim population in the census returns. R.B Smart himself explained the causes of increase in the census returns. He said it was firstly due to returning of Burmese time expatriates. Secondly there were seasonal laborers who used to come into Arakan for seasonal work. The laborers from Chittagong used to come during open season when the census taking process was ongoing. These laborers were also included in the census. But once the season was over, the laborers returned to their home. They never remained for permanent settlement except a few. Some who remained in Arakan for permanent residency took F.R.Cs. Dr. Than Tun remarks these seasonal laborers as floating population. (See: Than Tun, Trade Development in Arakan, Myanmar Danna magazine 1999, August Issues). R. Adlof and Virginia Thomson explained the case of Indian immigrants more precisely. They say Indian immigrants into Burma proper were different from those into Arakan. Immigrants into Burma comprise traders, office staffers, and general workers. More or less most of them settled for long time in Burma. But immigrants into Arakan were mostly seasonal laborers. This group used to return to their homeland Chittagong after working season was over. (See: R. Adlof and Virginia Thomson; minority problem in south East Asia). These laborers included in the census under the headline of Muslims which included native Muslims too. There were not separate column for foreigners. Sometimes natives and immigrant laborers were jointly recorded as Chittagonians. Thus increase population of Muslims or Chittagonians was due to the system of British census taking.

They deliberately or unknowingly mixed the natives with foreigners. Thus

this increase of census returns cannot be an excuse to charge natives to be Chittagonians or aliens. The price of British census incongruity should not be given by the Rohingyas. The most odious point is - Smart mentions the returning Rakhine as expatriates. Through expatriates consist of Muslims their case was omitted. Muslims were referred as Chittagonians. Is it fair? Is it right? Not at all. He was motivated expatriates originally from Rambree island chose Rathedaung area for their new settlement. That is why most Rakhine in Rathedaung area speak Rambree dialect. (See: R. B Smart; Burma gazetteer, Akyab district). Muslim expatriates who returned from Chittagong chose their new settlement in mostly northern townships. This was partly because of social disharmony between Rakhines and Muslims. Consequently Arakan north became Muslim majority area. Density of Muslims in the north further increased on the aftermath of 1942 pogrom.

(8) 1942 Pogrom: Who suffered the worst ?

This charge is totally groundless. This so called riot is a historic landmark. In Rohingya villages, calendar years are calculated from that landmark year. Neither post war British Government nor post independence Myanmar Government made any effort to keep correct records of these events. Individual records may be unfair, unbalanced and sometimes difficult to publicize. Muslims records go against the interest of Rakhine whereas Rakhine records against the Muslim vice versa. After all to reduce the arguments of Rohingya's opponents, I chose the works of two active Rakhine leaders. In these records, we can find the hints who were the aggressors and who were the victims and who suffered the greatest loss.

These two leaders I choose to refer are also "Nainshan Gouri Prize" awardees. I hope their works will give some satisfactory answers to accusations raised by Rohingya's opponents. They unveiled some secrets of the riots although they too are very cautious and restraint to discuss the casualties and losses of Muslims. Yet seeing their works those who put the blame on Rohingya can adjust their views and accept what the truth in the field really was.

Critics say Muslims got arms from retreating British "Rajput" force and initiated the riot. Both Bonpauk Tha Kyaw and U Ba San say the remnants of last British forces were found in Akyab and Maung Daw in the early

1942. Muslims enjoyed the support of "Rajput" British force the riot should have started from towns where still were their presence. But both Bonpauk and U Ba San say the riot started from Myebou town in the south which is Rakhine majority area and British had completely withdrawn from there. Bonpauk say in the absence of proper Government in early 1942, militants units were formed in all townships of Akyab district. Akyab then had nine townships. He did not narrate who organized these militant units what he says is he was unable to control the militant gangs who were freely looting, rampaging and killing Muslim population there. Mimbya town became the headquarter of militants. Bonpauk says gang leaders take pride and boast to have killed hundreds of Muslims daily by their own hands. (see: Bonpauk Tha Kyaw; "Tawlenrey Khriway", 1973). Here is the analysis: if one leader can kill hundreds, dozens of leaders across the region then could have killed thousands a day. What about the acts of their followers? This anarchy lasted from mid-March to May. In this long period, we can imagine what the figure of the casualties. Most of the Muslim villages from Myebon to Kyauk Taw were burned down. Properties were looted.

When British withdrew, they handed over Arakan civil administration to commissioner U Kyaw Khaing. His police forces in the town were unable to enforce law and order. Actual power was in the hands of militant gang. Bonpauk says U Kyaw Khaing had been inflecting around the towns with his streamer. But he was 24 hours drunk. He was a terrible man. He could do little to improve law and order situation. Bonpauk says he asked the militants not to fight communal war but to prepare to fight the common enemy (British). He said after long effort and continuous persuasion some gang leaders along with their followers accepted finally to undergo a short term military training course sponsored by him. (See: Bonpauk, Tawlenray Khriway). This all happened in central and south Arakan save Kyaukpyu town and Sandoway district. These riot stricken towns were Muslim minority area. Both Bonpauk and U Ba San did not mention any aggressive acts from the side of Muslims there. They did not discuss any act of resistance. It might be Muslims there were armless, unprepared and unexpectedly the victims of killing spree. Being subjected to grusome massacres, Muslims began to flee into the north of the country where Muslims are majority. But the route to that haven is not smooth one. There were not proper roads or paths. It was an area of wild jungle from Kyauk Taw to Buthidaung in the north-west.

The jungle covered an area of about 40 miles width. This jungle area was blocked by parallel mountain ranges and rivers. The worst thing was this fleeing caravans were not allowed to run away freely. They were blocked on the way by the militants. In some cases, all found on the way were murdered. This notion was substantiated by the remark of Field Marshal William Slim. Marshal Slim described in his book, he faced a great difficulty to cross Apauk-Wa pass from Rathedaung-Buthidaung side to Kyauk Taw in 1944, i.e. two years after the riot, because the pathway along the pass was blocked by human skeletons. (See: F. W Slim; "Defeat into victory").

Muslim version remark on commissioner U Kyaw Khaing was different. Muslims said he supplied arms and ammunitions to the militants from police stations which were under his control. So Muslims saw him as the most responsible person for their losses of men and materials. So when Muslims saw him returning from his inspection journey (a journey Muslims take to be encouraging to the Rakhine community in Buthidaung) from Buthidaung he was ambushed by Muslims and died on board his launch.

Both Bonpauk and U Ba San did not mention any casualties of Rakhine in inner Arakan. Both say Muslims in Akyab alone with the help of "Rajput" forces did some excessive deeds on Rakhine in the earliest days of the year.

Muslims who could escape the onslaught in inner Arakan rashly fled into the north. Despite risk of life thousands could cross the jungle way and reached the Mayu region. Some stationed them and some had crossed the border to reach India, where British Government had sheltered them in "Raungpur" refugee camps. Mosheyegar described the number to be sixty thousand. Muslim version of the refugee figure is more than that. After the war until post independence Government the refugees were repatriated with co-ordination of official, of both Governments. Mosheyegar says still some thirteen thousand refugees were not allowed to come back. The Muslim returnees were not able to settle down in their original places in central and south Arakan. They had to settle down in Akyab, Buthidaung and Maung Daw townships. Thus hundreds of villages along with their land properties deserted by the Muslims were occupied by Rakhine community in Myebon, Minbya, Pauk-Taw, Punnakyunn, Kyauk Taw, Mrauk-U and Rathedaung townships. Some refugees could not return. Those returnees were unable

to access their original villages and properties. According to Mosheyegar, these two are among the causes of rising Mujahid movement later. (See: M. yagar; "Muslims of Burma", 1972).

BIA army led by Bo Yan Aung reached Arakan a few weeks ahead of Japanese Army. U Thein Pe Myint writes BIA maneuvered hard to reach Arakan ahead of Japanese Army. (See: Thein Pe Myint; Tawlenrey Khrithee). Bo Yan Aung made his headquarter at Minbya. Bonpauk says he became very friendly with Bo Yan Aung. He saves some lives of the militant leaders by interceding with Bo Yan Aung. This means Bo Yan Aung realized the excesses done by the militants in the vacuum of proper Government. Law of the land then was in their hands. They were free to act on their will. Later when Japanese reached that area, Japanese commander had arrested one Buddhist clergy Sayadaw U Sein Dah of Myebon on charges of patronizing the massacre of Muslims and burning down of their villages. But Bo Yan Aung interceded to save the life of the clergy. (See: Bonpauk; 1973). Sayadaw U Sein Dah was a very influential figure. He ever led an insurgent movement along with Bonpauk from pre-independence period. (See: Tetmadaw Thamaing, vol: 4, Pg-190).

Muslims in Arakan there were very thankful to Japanese for their timely arrival which protected their plight from turning to the worst. Some Muslims, in some case village wide got safely and security in the hands of Japanese army that they did not had to flee.

Bonpauk narrated having got information of the situation in Buthidaung (north Arakan where Rakhine were at the threat of Muslim revenge, all elders in Akyab gathered at "Rupa" village primary school where it was decided to send arms and ammunition) to Buthidaung to rescue the Rakhine there. But perhaps a few days later the launch loaded with arms and ammunitions was captured by Japanese early in the mooring before it could depart for it destination. Those in charge of the launch were saved from punishment by the intercession of Bo Yan Aung. This narration of Bonpauk indicates the fact the arson, looting and acts of massacre were not accidental but well organized and enjoyed the patronization of some influential elderly people.

Bonpauk writes when British withdrew from Akyab in early 1942, he made friendship with Karen soldiers' in charge of arsenals in Akyab. He said he

looted the arsenal of Plauk Taung (Akyab) and sent four raw boats loaded arms and ammunitions to Laung Che Chang, Minbya. Minbya was the headquarter of militant gangs. God knows for who intended this military equipments and where these reached.

Both Bonpauk and U Ba San write Rakhine in Maung Daw, Buthidaung suffered up to some extend especially due to retaliatory acts of refugees from south and central Arakan. Maung Daw was safer, because there still was British rule. Rakhine in Maung Daw able to cross to the other side of the border where they were sheltered in "Dainuspur refugee camp". Mosheyegar said their number was about twenty thousand.

The main fatality of Rakhine occurred in Buthidaung when a motor Launch overloaded with fleeing refugees sank. It was in May, Bo Yan Aung was returning from his peace making trip to Maung Daw. Rakhine in Buthidaung highly frightened by pending assault of Muslim retaliation rashly jumped into a motor launch so as they can accompany Bo Yan Aung on his way back to Akyab. This overloaded launch capsized and sank. Both Bonpauk and U Ba San narrated the death toll of the accident about three hundred. Some Rakhine in Buthitaung also ran away through the jungle route in the east to central Arakan. Thus due to this riot of 1942 demographic structure of Arakan changed. North Arakan became Muslim area where as central and south Arakan became Rakhine dominant area. (See: Anthorny Irwin; Burmese Outpost).

To finalize the footage of this crisis is that Muslims were contained and restraint. Retaliation in Maung Daw, Buthidaung were not as wild as expected. Muslim losses were hundred times larger than the Rakhines. In the absence of official record one can express his imagination freely. Fact is the victors are blaming the victims. If there were international criminal court of just like today many gentleman some of whom later enjoyed high ranking Government position would had gone to the tribunal.

In the riot stricken townships from Myebon to Rathedaung approximate total Muslim population would had been then about four or five lakh roughly half of the total population of Akyab district. One fourth of them were assumed to have been killed. Half of them were uprooted. Only one fourth was

able to remain in their original places mainly due to the help provided by Japanese.

In fact this crisis was not a riot in full meaning. It was one sided massacre. It was in the series of many agendas well planned by exchisionist in Arakan. It was nothing but ethnic cleansing in its full meaning during the darkness of Second World War.

(9) Mujahids (Muslim insurgents) in the north Arakan persecuted the Rakhines or not ?

It was one of the interesting issues. Israeli historian Mosheyegar listed the causes of Mujahid uprising. He points out –

(1) Thousands of refugees in India camp were not allowed to return.
(2) Those allowed to return were not given the right to return to their original places.
(3) Muslim Government staffs were discharged from jobs.
(4) Land properties were seized to distribute among Rakhine population.

These and many other discriminatory acts led the Muslims to take arms. (M.yegar; Muslims of Burma, 1972). These who do not know the grass-roots facts and situation will be apt to believe that Mujahid indeed exercised some gruel deeds over the Rakhine minority there. Biased and bigotry literature and black propagandas of almost half a century indeed had some effects in the mind of people today. Many got a wrong image of Mujahids as well as Rohingya. Many think Mujahids and Rahingyas are the same. The main course of Mujahid uprising, besides those mentioned above was the existence of Rakhine armed insurgent groups. The bitter experience of 1942 riot compelled them to feel insecure without armed group to protect them. There were a lot of logic and rationale that kept the insurgent groups in Arakan at a status quo-position especially in the context of inter-group relations. North Arakan was the stronghold of Mujahids, whose movement started in 1948. Their main stream group surrendered in 1961 having an understanding with the Government. Some even think Mujahids are then

Pakistani. Government has no reason to facilitate foreign insurgents. Mujahids got firm promises from the Government to get genuine indigenous race status in Burma. (See: Brig: Aung Gyi's speech at Mujahid surrendering ceremony, "The future of Mayu").In facts Mujahid sometimes were very uncivil; sometimes they have had rough edges. They sometimes killed persons and burnt down villages if they found them non cooperative and non supportive. But these all were exercised on Muslims not on Rakhine. They might be elite about Mujahid's cruelty on Rakhine, in practice there is no record of Rakhine being killed and Rakhine villages having been burnt down. Instead according to former Mujahid elderly men Rakhine enjoyed a special status in their domain. Mujahids were restraint and contained in dealing with Rakhine. They were said to be very cautious not to flare up any racial problem. There were unwritten understanding among the insurgent groups not to exercise their power excessively towards opposite race. If Mujahids persecuted the Rakhine as it is accused today. Rakhine insurgents in the south would not have stood still with their arms folded. They would naturally retaliate on Muslims ad midst them. But that sort of thing actually did not take place anywhere. Even sometimes insurgent groups of various colors and races were in alliance. If there were any excess on the part of Mujahids as some elements today are trying to highlight. (See: Critique of Rahingya's false History, Japan, 2003), it was unnoticeable compare to the cruelties exercised on Rohingya by BTF paramilitary force exclusively composed of Rakhine personal. In response to complaint raised by Rohingya parliamentarians Government had to take action against those culprits and finally BTF was replaced by Chin Special Rifles headed by captain Khin Za Mon. (see: Some hints in Tetmadaw Thamaing, vol: 4, Pg-40). Some Rakhine had shifted from the north to the south in the late 1940s, not because they were oppressed or persecuted by Mujahids but just to obtain the share of free land abandoned by Muslims there. Perhaps there might be some who felt guilty conscious and over feared. They would have their own reasons.

(10) Bangladeshi entered into Arakan en masse or not ?

It is one of the latest accusations against the Rohingyas. They say it because they are free to say so. Seasons favor them. They think they can delude the world. It is part of the strategy to strip Rohingya of all their rights, to discolor their image, to perpetrate discriminatory grasp forever. Their version in this

connection is, Bangladesh is poor with an overcrowded population of 150 million. It has not alternative other than sending its people into neighboring countries. So India had to erect barrier across the border. So indeed there might be infiltration into Myanmar too which needed preventive actions. Facts in grassroots are not as we imagined. Bangladesh is fully aware of the political, social, economic situation of Arakan. It is neither industrialized nor socially harmonious region. There is refugee problem too. Native Muslims are almost a starving. These natives have no right to go beyond their own townships. They are toiling hard to meet both ends. They are just eking out for a living. Do they share their fortune with foreigners? I think not. Due to economic scarcity they have a lot of family disputes for fair division of family property. Above all there is a furcating Government mechanism. There is full enforcement of law. How can a foreigner enter to this place? Further a Bangladeshi is very distinctive in the midst of Rohingya. Accent of dialect is different. Anyone can easily single out him or her and trips will very promptly go to the Government agent or department concerned which is why it is about 15 years, now there have been a Na Sa Ka Force (Border Immigration Control Forces) stationed along the border on several places, but no news of illegal entrants ever head. I think this fact alone is more than to modify the above accusation.

(11) Rohingya different culturally from Rakhine to consider them to be Rakhine or Myanmar national:

Name, Language different, even different from general Burmese Muslims. Important point is being different from Rakhine is not a crime. Thinking it as a crime and fostering that notion to strip Rohingya of their right is only racism. Every people have its own right to preserve their culture and language. Of course there is some rationale that over sea immigrants should have to discard their old being and adopt the culture of their new choice of land. But Rohingyas are not over sea immigrants. As seen above they are there from the start of the history. From legal point of existing Myanmar Law Rohingyas are not bound to be alike to Rakhine. Myanmar Laws don't force anyone to adopt other's culture. The region Rohingyas line has been culturally independent for many many centuries. It is not like the environment of Myanmar Muslims, who live in this midst of Burman. Burmese automatically became their first Language. Most of them are

Burmese mix-blood. When we study the Etymology of Arakan it has never been a Rakhine Pyi. Rakhine Pyi became only from 1974. There was an "Arakanistan" movement led by U Hla Tun Pru, for many Myanmar State Council Member, during pre independence period. (See: U Kyaw Wints; "History of Myanmar", 1958, Pg-62). So Arakan is for all Arakanese. If it was the property of only Rakhine, we could have abandoned it from the very beginning. Making cultural affinity a criteria of enjoying nationality is hegemonic tendency, and racial chauvinism.

Of course there are some Muslims who speak Rakhine Language, due to mix marriage or proximity of settlement. They are very tiny percentage of Muslims in Arakan. Sometimes we find the offsprings of foreigners speak Rakhine Language; can he or she is Arakanese benefice? We must note until independence, almost all Rakhine, especially in the north were bilingual. Rohingya Language was so dominant through out Arakan History that it has been means of communication in Arakan. It was the common language of Arakanese. Rohingya, Hindus, Daing Net, Bruwa and some hilly peoples commonly use this Rohingya Language as their first language with a slight difference of accent. Thus Rakhine had no option other than to learn that Rohang Language. (See: Francois Buchanin, "A study on the Languages of Burma Empire, 1798). Buchanin had analyzed in detail about the dominance of Rohingya Language then.

As we have seen above Rohingya was a privileged community in Maruk-U period. They were never compelled to speak Rakhine Language. In contrast, Rakhine speak Rohingya Language. Not the common people, the ruling class too used to speak in Rohingya. King Thiri Thudamma conversed with Friar Manrique in Indian Language. (See: M. Collis; "The Land of Great Image". Rakhine not only preferred the language but used to keep Muslim names. Nearly twenty Rakhine Kings were found with Muslim names. In this backdrop history, how can we expect Rohingya to speak Rakhine and to keep Rakhine names?

If Rohingya were aliens, immigrated into Arakan in search of greener pastures they would have adopted Rakhine Language and culture. They would have picked up the settled native people's language. Adoptability enhances social and economic comfort. But the case in Arakan was adverse of it. Rohingya

were the settled native population, where Rakhine lately entered and got political supremacy. The late entrants had no option other than learning and adopting the language of the natives for their routine communication. So Rohingya's not speaking Rakhine and not keeping Rakhine names have had a strong historical background. This deeply rooted culture cannot be faded away over night despite the demand of present day political and social atmosphere there. Rohingya's sticking to their own culture should not be a factor to measure them as not being benefice natives but aliens. We can see similar distinctive ethnic and cultural phenomena in all the borders of Myanmar.

The cultural influence of this Muslims in Arakan was very deep. Rakhine Kings have Muslim names. Rakhine poet name was Abdu Min Nyo. Rakhine treasury officers were called Dabaing (Dewan).Rakhine post officers were called Shah Bandar. Terms of official rank and file were in Persian. Arakan Naval Fleet was with Muslim names such as Ghurab, Pangyi, and Zalbah etc. (see: Kunango). Weaponry of Rakhine artillery seized by Bodaw Phya bear Muslim names inscribed on them in Persian. (See: Pamela; "The Lost Kingdom).

So in this case of this Arakan Muslims or Rahingya, cultural affinity with the dominant Rakhine should not be stiff criteria. Assessing the above background, we should consider this issue with some discount.

The Paradox of Rakhine History Version

The version of Rakhine on their ethnic root is paradoxical. Sometimes they say, they are Tibeto-Burman and akin to Burman proper. Sometime they say they are not from the Tibeto-Burman stock, but Indo-Aryan. Two opposite promises, perhaps for linkage of history, civilization, and grandeur of the past they styled as Indo-Aryans whose rule prevailed in Arakan for more than a millennium until the over run of Burmans. On the other hand not to alienate from their original stock they say they are Burman. Actually the second version seemed correct. In earlier Rakhine chronicles and literature we see Rakhine claimed them as Myanmar. (See: Dannya Waddy Areydaw Pon).

Rakhine in Bangladesh still take Myanmar as their official appellation. Thus the claim to be Indo-Aryan is a plot twist and turn of Rakhine chroniclers to grab away the past history from Rohingya. Rakhine called Indian "Kalaah" as the Burman do. If they themselves are Indian, is it logical to call others as "Kalaah" (see: also above P: 22).

The double paradox is they sometimes claim to be "Maghadi" people from central India where Lord Buddha was born. One of the reasons of calling the Rakhines as "Magh" is because they were from Maghada. But in Muslim sense "Magh" means pirate. Historians say Maghadi people migrated into Chittagong-Arakan region due to religious persecution and these migrants mixed up with natives. Thus Chittagong dialect was Maghadi influence. It has been so extensive that Chittagong dialect is divorced from Bengali proper. Chittagong dialect's being different from Bengali must naturally due to the influence of language of neighboring Burman. But there is no Burmese or Rakhine penetration because those people in early Arakan were Maghadi (north India). Only the influence of Maghadi parakrit is found in Rohingya. Maghadi influence in Rohingya is stronger because Rohang is further away from Bengal than Chittagong. So Bangali impact on Rohingya language is linear. In another way we can say Chittagong Language was highly influenced by the Language of early Arakan. That is it is not Rohingya who speak Chittagonian dialect but it is Chittagonian who speak Rohingya Language. Arakan's early inscriptions bear greater similarity with Rohingya Language despite some changes in Rohingya language in the course of centuries. Rakhine language has no trace of Maghadi or early inscriptions of Arakan. It is just an early form of Burmese. Thus there are adages in Burma. "Pein Reit mamaing Rakhine Mae and Rakhine Ohhara, Myanmar Pohhrana" meaning "ask Rakhine for correct spelling and Rakhine daily usages are Myanmar's glossaries". In ethnic aspect the feature, the complexion of Rakhine has no affinity with ethnic Maghadi or Indian. By all measure of ethnicity Rakhine is a Burman race. They are in all aspect; especially the southerners are entirely similar to Burman. No Burmese historian says that Myanmar (Burmans) is Maghadis. So there is no a single strand of reason to assume Rakhine to be Maghadi. If there were Maghadi migrants into Arakan they would be the Rohingya of today. Linguistic and ethnic affinities with those central Indian are only found in Rohingya.

Nationality

Rohingyas were genuine nationality of Myanmar. How? The question of citizenship was no serious issue in Myanmar and Rakhine period. It became a political issue only during British time because of massive immigrants' stiffen. When Burma was politically separated from in Indian in 1937 natives remained citizen where as foreigners had got to register as foreigners under 1940 foreigner registration act. Rohingya still were calm as Burmese citizen in 1935, under Governor's council; there was a legislative council too. Rhingya got representation there as natives not as Indian. Their MLC was "Goni Maracan" of Akyab. Those who contested with Goni Maracan were advocate U Aung Tun Khaing and U Shwe Tha. That was the proof of they were natives' runners.

Thus Goni Maracan was too a native representative. Boghoke Aung San gave them full citizenship rights. Rohingya were allowed to represent in his time in the constitutional assembly. After independence the question of citizenship became more serious and important. Then 1948 citizenship act was enacted. Under 1947 constitution and 1948 Burma citizenship act, Rohingya still enjoyed full citizenship rights. Mr. Sultan Ahmed and Mr. Abdul Gaffer were members, 1947 constitution drafting committee (see: U Kyaw Win + 3; "History of Myanmar", 1958-62). That was the proof of Bogoke's recognition of Rohingya as Myanmar citizen 1947. Rohingya got the right to elect and to be elected in all elections of state organs, specially the parliament. They have M.Ps, parliament secretaries and even one minister once. Sultan Mahmood M.P from Buthidaung was health minister in U Nu's Last Patasa Government. These all passed smoothly because every one then knew that Rohingyas were indigenous people of Myanmar not Indians. Rohingya region was provided with school, hospital, post office. Rohingya have been regular tax payers until today. They obtained Burmese passport in case of foreign travel. They got employment in all Government departments including armed forces and police forces.

Another legal and historical point is Bogyoke Aung San himself had settled Rohingya's citizenship question with Pakistani leader Mr. M. Ali Jinna at his Krachi meeting on 7th, January, 1947.. But the situation turned different recently. Rohingya cannot get nationality scrutiny cards. They have been treated as foreigners or stateless. Their life in every sphere is constricted. To be frank, 1982 citizenship new law is so discriminatory that Rohingya virtually became stateless and unwelcome community in Myanmar.

The Situation

No one can deny the shining dynasty of Mrauk-U, Arakan was founded by the help of Muslims (see: above P: 21). The grandeur and splendor we relished there were the fruits of Muslim contribution. We were a political fixture in Mrauk-U age. Bodaw Phaya appointed an especial Muslims Myowan for Muslim affairs (see: J. Lieder; Muslim name of Arakan Kings). The critics of Rohingya say, "We agree with you". We accept those early Muslims. They are today very much alike to us. They speak Rakhine Language. They adopted Rakhine culture. So they are among so called 135 indigenous Myanmar nationals. Of course they are none but the Kamans. You see Kaman is so called because they were archers. It is a Persian term. Persian on those days was Arakan's official language. Name of places, peoples, official destination etc. were mostly in Persian. The term Magh (Rakhine) is also a Persian word depicting pirate. Rakhine were famous for their piracy along with Portuguese. From among the followers of Shah Shujah, the archers were recruited as the King bodyguards (see: above P: 13). By singling out these archers (Kaman) you cannot distract the attention from mainstream Muslims who are Rohingya. There are dozen of categories of Muslims in Arakan besides the Kamans. Kaman is not the whole but a part of the whole. Kamans claim to be ethnically Rakhine. U Hla Tun Pru complemented that notion (see: U Hla Tun Pru; "History of Rakhine Nationalities, 1982). Here the question is not of Rakhine with Muslim faith. Question here is of those whom you called "Kalaa".

Singling out the Kamans as the symbol of early Muslims described above is nothing but a ploy to suppress the rest of the Muslims. Kamans were deported by Sanda Wizeya (1710-19) in early 18th century to Akyab and Rambree islands. In 1737, about 2 decades after the Kaman deportation Sultan Razi Ketra ascended to the throne of Arakan. The question is "early Muslims" means the followers, supporters of Sultan Raza Ketra.

Kaman population is in thousands today. They cannot represent the whole Muslim community. Rakhine chronicles say when Muslim King Sultan Razi Ketra was dethroned there was a countrywide insurrection of Muslims. (See: Rakhine State Chronicle, 1984). At that time, Kamans were exiled in Rambree and Akyab islands. Countrywide means Muslims from all towns involved. So how can exiled Kaman alone can be singled out to be the early Muslim of Arakan. Twist and turn is not always useful in politics. It is the age of knowledge and awareness. We cannot befool the people all the time. So be fair and sincere to us. Age of ignorance is gone. Everyone wants to preserve his own identity. You must reel on with Rohingya. They have been a filature in Arakan's politics and demography. Rohingya naturally have their dreams and visions. Let us respect the feeling and freedom of others. The solution lies only there.

The Last Word

Judging from all these historical and legal background we can say Rohingya is a rightful fixture in Arakan political landscape. We cannot reverse by gone history. We can give trouble, we can impoverish a people, we can degenerate by force a people for sometime, but not forever. We cannot annihilate a race as a whole on our own will. It might be possible to change political maps of the world. But it is almost difficult to extinguish a people. Despite Hitler Holocaust there still are Jews. In Rowanda and Bosinia there still are those peoples who were subjected to genocide. My advice to all of us is let us wash out our rusty out-worn mentality and racialistic ideas. Century long chauvinism does not bring any good fruits. Hatred on us breeds hatred. Amity and friendship will bring prosperity. It is time for us to come into sense and reasons. We must stop bickering. Unless we are courageous enough to accept the reality of history we will be in fiasco.

Whatever is the contention we are Arakanese intrinsically. Our food, our clothes, our language, our behavior, our mentality, all bear a lot of identical phenomena despite our differences on culture and belief. We have lived in Arakan for centuries and have grown to love it. Outsiders know us as Rakhine. We feel enraged when one is insulted in the name of Rakhine.

By mispropaganda or false presentation of Rohingya's identity perhaps we can fool some people for sometime not all forever. The world is very waking today. Many voluntary historians are unearthing the history of minorities. Many outfits, organizations are working for the salvation of oppressed minorities. Today one third of Rohingyas are in overseas countries living as expatriates. Yet today half of about 35 lakh Arakan population is Rohingya. Arakan means not only Rakhine. It is a multiracial state. Our attachment is too exclusively "Rakhineness" of Arakan is a delusion. Ultra nationalistic rhetoric and adulterated historical literature (just like the critique, published in Japan in 2003) to please the ignorant will lead us into a ruinous future. Let us search for a common platform as it was in the past to share and enjoy the future. (Zul Nurain)

"The Author's Note"

This treatise is controversial and contentious in nature because it explores the hidden truth of Arakan history which in fact goes against the vested interest of some people. The explanation on repudiation and blames just hit the nail right on the head. So there will be some elements who will try to give trouble to the writer. But on the whole, my desire is to go through diversity to unity and to sort out our future on historical realities. My wish is the betterment of Arakan. Yet, I am cautious to introduce myself. In a good atmosphere, I will write a more complete preface for this treatise. I will work to gain the symphony and philanthropy of admirers of Rohingya in this period of their dire plight. I wish good luck and prosperity for all my readers.
Long live Rakhine-Rohingya friendship.

Yours,

Zul Nurain
Aung San (Bogyoke)
(Father of Nobel Peace Laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi)
(a city in Indonesia, indices)
Abdul Gaffer (M.L.C -1947)
Amarathu Badr Makan (a Mro ruler of traditional period of 10th century)
Bodaw Phya (Myanmar King)
Dannya Waddy
Emile Forcchammer
Gesapa Nadi (Kaladan River)
Harvey G.E

Insana Nadi (J. Lieder, Jinna, M.A)
Kaman
Kalapanzan Kethathein (1st King of preset Rakhine)
Magh
Mosheyegar
Maghada
Manrique (a Portuguese Priest lived in Arakan about 10 years)
Malayu Nadi
Mahamuni (the holiest Buddhist Shrine of Ancient Arakan)
Makha
Mahavira (an early Wethali King who intergraded a Kingdom)
Narameik Hla
Narapaddi Min
Ngamin Ngadon (the Sak (Thek) King who lost Arakan to Burman)
Plauktaung (Arsenal)
Pamela Guttmann (a prominent scholar on Arakan History)
Paipru
Rajput (British Army Personnel)
Sirimabu Nadi
Sindhi Khan
Slim Shah II (Min Raza Gyi)
Sultan Mahmood (Minister in U Nu cabinet), Ramu (in Burmese PannWa)
Sultan Ahamed (Parliament Secretary), Dr. Than Tun
Sanda Thudamma
San Shwe Bu
Sultan Raza Karera
Sulatain Sandra (Wethali King)
Sanda Dewi (Queen of Sulatain Sandra)
Smart R.B
Shah Shujah (a Maghul Prince exiled in Arakan in 1660 A.D)
Sambawek (First City of Rakhine Dynasty)
Sein Dah Pu (aelergy)
U Nu
U Kyaw Kahine (Commissioner)
Wethali (Verseli)

Wali Khan (Retinue)
W.S Desai (Sraff Ayagon University)
Zabouk Shah (Min Ba Gyi)
Zainaddin (Principal of national high school)
Amir Hamza (legendary Muslim King of north Arakan)
AtuAwal (a minister of King Sandra Thu)
Ali Khan (2nd Mrauk-U King dominate)
Bo Yan Aung
Bon Pauk Thar Kyaw (wartime Rakhine Leader)
Htin Aung, Dr.
Hanumeah (a missionary)
Hanifa
Kalima Shah (Ba Saw Pru, 3rd Mrauk-U King)
Keyapuri, Kyaw Thek, Dr.
Letwaidak
Kethreetaung (the capital of Mro period)
Kadir (Indian missionary)
Mon Min Khoung (Ava King)
Razadirit (Mon King)
Robertson (Captain-
Laung Kyet (Arakan capital before Mrauk-U)
Mir Jumla (Chief of staff or Dahli King)
Kalapanzan (valley, river)
Mujahids (Muslim insurgent group in Arakan)
Parapura (the capital King Mahavira first founded)
Ptolemy (Synonymous to Pruma, north Maung Daw)
Pruma
Pyinsa

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