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## **The Kachin Ethno-Nationalism over Their Historical Sovereign Land Territories in Burma/Myanmar**

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### **Abstract**

Burma/Myanmar is a native home for various ethnic groups. Some of the larger ethnic groups—such as Burmese, Shan, Kachin, Karen, Mon, Rakhine, Karenni and Chin—strongly identifying with ethnic-based territories as “states”, while “regions” are typically dominated by the majority Burmese ethnic group. However, there are many other ethnic groups including minorities such as Rohingya, Palaung, Wa, Kokang, Lahu, Pa’O, Danu, Akha who have their individual territories within states and regions in Burma/Myanmar. In fact, Burmese ethno-nationalism has been deeply ingrained in the aspects of language, culture and religion since Burmese nationalists acting as national policy makers of the government have molded and continue to mold Burma/Myanmar into a Burmese nation state. Consequently, most of the larger ethnic groups have adopted similar mainstream ethno-nationalism based on their ethnicities in order to demand their political right. Accordingly, Kachin ethno-nationalism has politically engendered the Kachin self-determination struggle over their historical sovereign land territories. This study thus focuses on Kachin ethno-nationalism and their self-determination, which is in part the political imbroglio of Burma/Myanmar. In this study, grounded theory was applied as the research methodology. Grounded theory involves developing theories or concepts based on the perspectives of the research findings in terms of a bottom-up approach, rather than hypotheses. Hence, the research process was a simultaneous process of data collection and analysis, which included field informants, key informants and in-depth interviews. As a result, the research findings reveal that the Kachin ethno-nationalism has evolved from the notion of Kachin ethnicity so as to demand the right to rule themselves over their historical sovereign land territories entitled as the Kachin state and the Kachin sub-state. As a central moot point, the study argues that the Kachin ethno-nationalism and its ethnicity have been a tandem catalyst that the Kachins take up to struggle for political autonomy and ethnic equality in Burma/Myanmar.

### **Keywords**

Kachin, Ethno-nationalism, Historical Sovereign Land Territories, The Right to Rule Themselves

## **Introduction**

Burma/Myanmar, a new sovereign state only after 1948, was the product of decolonization from the British colonial rule after World War Two (WW II). Lower Burma, later known as Burma Proper included current Rakhine state and Mon state, and was officially annexed by the British in 1886 after three Anglo-Burmese Wars; the first took place from 1824 to 1826, the second in 1852, and the third in 1885 with the overthrow of king Thibaw (Tegenfeldt, 1974). In this case, it is important to understand that the regions of both Mon and Rakhine had already been conquered by the Burmese kings before the British's arrival. On the other hand, the ethnic territories that comprise the current Shan state, Kachin state, Kayah state (formerly known as independent Karenni state), Chin state and most part of the Karen state were not under the direct control of Burmese kings. As a consequence, the British had to exert arduous efforts so as to bring those territories under their control. In the case of Kachin, the British were able to fully control the whole Kachin territories including Hugawng Valley and Triangle areas only after the 1920s (Tegenfeldt, 1974). All these ethnic territories were later officially known as Frontier Areas under the Burma Frontier Service of British's administration. The Frontier Areas including the Kachin territories and Burma Proper were amalgamated, as an international territory, as a result of the Frontier Areas Committee of Enquiry in accordance with Article 8<sup>1</sup> of Aung San-Attlee Agreement in January 1947 and Panglong Agreement in February 1947. The Frontier Areas Committee of Enquiry held an event that examined the political will of frontier people's delegates in Maymyo, what is now known as Pyin Oo Lwin, from March to April, 1947; and Panglong Agreement was signed by the delegates of Burma Proper including Aung San and the delegates of the Frontier Areas, particularly the Shan, Kachin and Chin (Frontier Areas Committee of Enquiry, 1947). Throughout the independent process of Burma/Myanmar from 1946-47, the delegates of Frontier Areas asserted to form Burma/Myanmar as a federal democratic union. In contrast, the 1947 Constitution, which was drafted by the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL) under the leadership of Burmese nationalists including Aung San and legally engendered the independence of Burma/Myanmar, only accommodated a unitary form of state. As a result, the ethnic armed revolutions such as the Shan and Kachin emerged after 1958 as the last resort of political compromise within parliament from 1948-1958. However, among the Burmese nationalists, the socialists and communists had already taken arms against the central regime since 1948. The civil war in Burma/Myanmar has subsequently been unabated, instead the wars have been prolonged for more than half of a century and the recent military coup in February 2021 has exacerbated the civil war not only in most ethnic states but also in some regions. Importantly, the current military coup has adversely smashed the toddling democratic transition in Burma/Myanmar, which started in 2011 – the transition in fact was

under the minimum democratic standards based on the 2008 Constitution in favor of the Myanmar military, which was promulgated under the regime of the Myanmar military from 1990-2010. Sadly, Burma/Myanmar had undergone the dictators such as Ne Win and Than Shwe, except during inchoate democratic era from 1948-1958 after independence from the British colonial rule in 1948. Thus, it can be generally concluded that the civil war in Burma/Myanmar is the longest in the world. Burma was renamed Myanmar as an inclusive term for all ethnic groups in 1989 during the military junta led by General Than Shwe. *Myan* means fast and *mar* means hard (We Burmese Association Committee, 1976, pp. 132-133). This study uses Burma/Myanmar for both historical and official context.

This paper focuses on the mainstream arguments over the discourse of Kachin ethno-nationalism for their historical sovereign land territories. The Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and Kachin Independence Organization (KIO), hereafter KIA for the military context and KIO for the political context, have been the most recent resurrection of Kachin ethno-nationalism. The fighting between KIA and the Myanmar army, also known as Tatmadaw, has been intermittently ongoing throughout central regimes and a bilateral ceasefire agreement was culminated between the military junta and the KIO in 1994 until 2011. Nevertheless, the 17 years of ceasefire broke down and the fighting resumed more intensely after President Thein Sein-led regime took office in early 2011. In fact, it was reported that Tatmadaw pressured over the KIA to turn itself into Border Guard Force (BGF) that the KIO demurred. In the end, the fighting has continued. Consequently, more than 100,000 local ethnic people, particularly the Kachin have been internally displaced in both Kachin and northern Shan states. A bigger proportion of internally displaced persons (IDPs) sought safety in IDP camps under the government's-controlled areas, whereas some were under the KIO's-controlled areas (Lut, 2013, p. 2). This study attempts to look at the justification behind the fighting between KIA and Tatmadaw from the Kachin perspective. The Kachins have asserted that the Kachin state and the Kachin sub-state are their historical sovereign land territories, for which they have demanded for the right to rule themselves.

This study thus focuses on Kachin ethno-nationalism discourse that has galvanized the Kachins in the KIA/KIO to fight against central regimes for decades. This paper traces the ethnicization of the Kachins and their historical background including their historical land territories. The paper then examines Kachin ethno-nationalism and its justification towards the notion of the right to rule themselves. Theoretically speaking, it is significant to understand the reasons behind the Kachin self-determination struggle and the foundation of Kachin ethno-nationalism in Burma/Myanmar. Along the Kachin self-determination struggle led by KIO/KIA since 1961, the Kachin ethno-nationalism has been the discourse that inspired the Kachin public in supports of the self-determination struggle

by KIO/KIA. According to Jorgensen, Marianne and Phillips, discourse analysis has no clear consensus as to what discourses are or how to analyze them, instead different perspectives offer their own suggestions in accordance with series of interdisciplinary approaches (2002, p. 1). This research has thus been based on qualitative research, more specifically grounded theory as a research methodology. Grounded theory focuses on emphasizing a simultaneous involvement in data collection and analysis, constructing analytic codes and categories from the data, not from preconceived logically deduced hypotheses. Therefore, grounded theory does not emphasize on overriding discourses as assumptions, instead it was to investigate the understandings of people over political, social and economic issues (Khan, 2014). Distinctively, grounded theory is used to develop theories and/or concepts from the data of the research findings, rather than hypothesis that dictates the findings. Therefore, as shown in Table (1.1), in-depth interviews were conducted with field informants and key informants, in which the informants were the Kachin individuals and key stakeholders from the Kachin communities and organizations, namely KIO/KIA and KIO's Technical Assistant Team, Kachin Baptist Convention, Kachin Women's Association Thailand, Kachin National Consultative Assembly, Shalom Foundation, Kachin Political Consultative Team, Kachin Literature and Culture Committees, Kachin Peace Network, Kachin Political Consultative Team, Wunpawng Ninghtoi and the Kachin political parties. In addition, the expert interviews were carried out to reflect the perceptions of the informants. The research sites were Lashio in the northern Shan state, Mai Ja Yang, Laiza, Myitkyina, Putao in the Kachin state, Yangon in Myanmar, and Chiang Mai in Thailand. The research was conducted from 2016 and 2017.

**Table 1** The Informants of Data Collection

Sr/No.	Type of Interviews	Informants	No. of Informants
1	Field Informant Interviews	This includes Kachin IDPs, Kachin scholars, Kachin activists, NGOs staff and the general Kachin individuals across different Kachin tribes such as Jinghpaw, Lhaovo (Maru), Lachid (Lashi), Zaiwa (Atsi), Lisu (Lasaw), Rawang (Nung)	82
2	Key Informant Interviews	KBC, Youth Department (KBC), KIO and KIA, Kachin National Consultative Assembly, Kachin Culture and Literature Committee of Shan State, the Central Committee for Kachin Tribal Culture <sup>2</sup> , the Central Committee of Lisu Literature and Culture (Myanmar), Kachin Political Consultative Team, Shalom Foundation, Kachin Political Parties, and Knowledgeable Persons	25
3	Expert Interviews	International and National Analysts	2
		Total	109

### The Kachin

According to Kachin myth, the term “Jinghpaw Wunpawng” was derived from the terms ‘Pawng Yawng’ or ‘Shapawng Yawng’ after the modification of the term ‘Pawng Yaw’<sup>3</sup> generally referring to the progenitor of Kachin tribes. Kachin was derived from the term “Kahkyen or Ka-Hkyen” as an American missionary named Eugenio Kincaid misspelled the term “Ga Hkyeng”. When Kincaid reached near Mogaung in the Kachin state during his Baptist mission in 1837, he first met a man and heard the term “Ga Hkyeng” in Kachin. In fact, “Ga Hkyeng” referred to the name of land area where the man came from and it means “red soil”. It is consistent to postulate that the “definition of the collectivity by others may mark out an ethnic category, ethnic communities and nations” (Smith, 2008, p. 33). It was evident that Pastor S’Peh’s, a local Karen, used the term “Ka-Khyen” when he accompanied with Josiah N. Cushing, an American missionary to the Shan, and initiated the Kachin missionary tour in Bhamo. Pastor S’Peh’s mentioned that: “I was left alone on the mountains among the Ka-Khyens for a month and a half. Owing to fighting between the Ka-Khyens and the Burmans, I could not travel ....” (Tegenfeldt, 1974, p. 98). Officially, Lhaovo (Maru), Lachid (Lashi), Zaiwa (Atsi), Lisu (Lasaw), Rawang (Nung), and Jinghpaw are legally recognized as Kachin tribes in Burma/Myanmar. These Kachins, Jinghpaw in

particular, have been christened as Singpho in Arunachal Pradesh and Assam of India (Dennyer, 1927 & Brang Di, 2015, p. 103). Although Jinghposu is a local term, the term “Jingpo” is officially recognized in China for Jinghpaw, Zaiwa (Atsi), Lhaovo (Maru), and Lachid (Lashi) when Dehong Dai and Jingpo Autonomous Prefecture were set up in Yunnan in 1953 (Wang, 1997, p. 46). In terms of ethnicity, the Kachin tribes are native to both the Kachin state and the northern Shan state (Kachin sub-state).

According to Kachins’ oral traditions, Majoi Shingra Bum (Naturally Flat Mountain), which lies far to the north, was the origin of the Kachins. The exact location is unknown, but a number of authors suggest eastern Tibet or farther to the northeast (Tegenfeldt, 1974, p.19). Moreover, the Kachins’ oral traditions repeatedly mentioned “Hkrang Hku Majoi”, “Mali Hku Majoi” and “Chyai Hku Majoi” where the Kachins migrated with long intervals for centuries. “Hkrang Hku”, “Mali Hku” and “Chyai Hku” refer to the name of each river situated in the Kachin state and “Majoi” addresses the migration period. The migration of the Kachins into the current Kachin state began during the first century with long intervals. Their arrival pushed the earlier inhabitants (the Chins and the Palaungs) westward and southward (Henderson, et al., 1971, p. 95). Moreover, the Kachins used to have furnished levies of the great Nanchao conquered the Pyu Kingdom of lower Irrawaddy in 760 and continued his occupation on Hanoi in 863. The evidence also suggests that Tartars were among the levies of Mongols who destroyed the Pagan around 1287. In doing so, the Kachins entered into the Kachin state (Tegenfeldt, 1974, p. 58 & Dennyer, 1927, p. 62). Subsequently, the Kachins continued to migrate into upper Hsenwi in the current northern Shan state from the Bhamo and Triangle regions of the Kachin state in Burma/Myanmar during the 1350s. (Kachin Sub-State History Committee, 2014, p. 4-6). Kachins’ historical trajectories reveal that despite the fact that the term “Kachin” was recently coined, the Kachin tribes have migrated throughout the Kachin state and in the northern Shan state for centuries. Socially speaking, the Kachin tribes have a tribal-based clan system and different clans. This tribal-based clan system makes the Kachin tribes interconnected like a web. The clans set the Kachin tribes into “Triangular System”, comprising “mayu” (bride givers), “da ma” (bride takers) and “kahpu kanau” (brothers or sisters), as a tripod social structure.

## **The Historical Background of the Kachins’ Sovereign Land Territories**

### **The Traditional Self-governing Systems**

Unless the study attempts to comprehend the social and political background of the Kachin polity, it would be very hard to understand the aspirations of the Kachins in pursuit of the right to rule themselves over their historical sovereign land territories because their traditional self-governing polity intrigued them as a people who ruled themselves. The traditional self-governing systems of the Kachins can be generally categorized into two

systems, namely Gumchying Gumsa and Gumrawng Gumtsa. In these aspects, governing refers to policies, authorities and actions on the inhabitants within the domains of both Gumchying Gumsa and Gumrawng Gumtsa. When the Kachins refer to self-governance on their land territories, it was addressed as Lamu Ga instead of only Ga. Lamu Ga is addressed for both inhabitants over territories. Generally categorizing, the units of domains used to have been very similar in both systems, in which the smallest unit was of a family, and the second was a village called Kahtawng; the third was Mare (bigger village) similar to village tract and town. Ga or Mung refers to state or the biggest domain of each Duwa (chieftain) in Gumchying Gumsa and Salang (headman) in Gumrawng Gumtsa. In the Kachin Gumsa (Gumchying Gumsa) system the religious functions of the chief include the obligation to make offerings to Madai – the chief of the sky spirits. This being controls wealth and general prosperity (Leach, 1954, p. 113). In fact, the Gumchying Gumsa system was akin to the feudal system.

As Leach points out, the concept of the authority within these two traditional governing systems had two aspects, in which one was the secular aspect and the other was a religious one. In Gumchying Gumsa, the secular side included the Duwas (chieftains), Bawmung (wise men), Salangs (headmen) and Agyis (assistant headmen). They embodied the council of Salang (Salang Hpawng), or sometimes 'du salang ni myit su ni (chieftain, headman and wise men)' and this body took both judicial and executive roles. For example, Bawmungs (wise men) and Salangs (headmen) were most likely to take on judicial and administrative roles for every practical affair of the domain. However, the roles of Bawmungs and Salangs would not impinge to undermine the power of Duwa despite the fact that Duwa would be a member of the Salang Hpawng (council of Salang) while holding meetings because all members of Salang Hpawng were ritual leaders of Duwa's office. In the literature of the Kachins, it is implied that the officials in a Kachin community are always the holders of either secular or religious office (Leach, 1954). Leach continues to clarify:

*On the religious side, there were various roles for daily ritual activities of worship for Nat<sup>4</sup> like Joiwa (oral traditional narrator), Dumsa<sup>5</sup> (priest), Hkinjawng<sup>6</sup> (butcher in the sacrifices), Myithtoi<sup>7</sup> (prophet or seer), Hpunglum<sup>8</sup> (assistant of the priest), Ningwat<sup>9</sup> (sorcerer) and the like. Duwa held no priestly office; yet his power was derived from a religious role; the diviner had no formal political power, yet he was in a position of considerable political influence (1954, p. 183).*

Duwas who practiced the Gumchying Gumsa system were just like kings because they all were dynasties. Every Duwa assigned Bawmungs, Salangs, Dumsas, Joiwas, Myihtois, Ningwats, Hkingjawngs and Hpunlums, Bawmungs were similar advisors for Duwas and Salangs were those who took administrative roles. On the other hand, Dumsas, Joiwas,

Myihtoits, Ningwats, Hkingjawngs and Hpunlums took more religious and cultural roles. If there was no particular person as such, Duwa had to hire from other Duwas with remunerations (a knowledgeable Kachin, interview, Myitkyina, 8 May 2017). There were no Duwa as ruling class in these Putao regions including the territories of Nung-Rawang and Dureng, since they used to practice Gumrawng Gumtsa, and the Salangs were nominated to take a leading role. However, they were not thigh-eating persons<sup>10</sup> like Duwas and not allowed to collect taxes. Regarding with territorial possession, land territories belonged to particular tribes or clans, but nevertheless they were not rulers for such territories, instead it was recognition for land ownership. Other social and cultural activities used to be similar with that of Gumchying Gumsa system (a local Kachin, interview, Putao, 15 May 2017). In Gumrawng Gumtsa, no one was appointed to hold supreme power to rule, instead the Slangs were nominated as ceremonial positions to chair for the administrative work. Therefore, there were no Duwas for supreme power to rule in Gumrawng Gumtsa system, other titles of the persons for administrative, religious and cultural work were similar to that of Gumchying Gumsa system.

It is worth understanding the historical ideologies of Kachins such as Gumsa and Gumlau that dichotomized Gumchying Gumsa and Gumrawng Gumtsa. Gumsa itself had been the backbone of the Gumchying Gumsa system, in other words; it cannot be separate from the Gumchying Gumsa system. Gumsa ideology, very roughly, represents society as a large-scale feudal state, which implies a ranked hierarchy of the social world within a system; it also implies a large-scale political integration. Hence, every group has a fixed relation to every other in Gumchying Gumsa. In Kachin terms this would seem to mean hierarchically autocratic order. If the Gumsa political system works efficiently as it is theoretically supposed to work, we may expect to find a trend towards linguistic uniformity within the political domain of any single Gumsa chief (Leach, 1954, pp. 50-51). Gumlau, on the other hand, was not a system, instead it was Kachin revolutionary movement that the Kachin public overthrew Duwas. Gumlau Gumsa was addressed for the Kachin revolutionary movements against Duwas who practiced Gumchying Gumsa (a local Kachin, interview, Myitkyina, 8 May 2017). Sadan found out that: “the Gumlao movement clearly mapped on to a wider semantic domain of upsetting and overturning, which was widely understood within Jinghpaw nexus. Yet Gumlao was not inherently a system, it was an act” (2013, p. 106). As a consequence, the dynastic Duwas was superseded with the ones nominated by the public.

Gumchying Gumsa and Gumrawng Gumtsa systems remained as the mainstream historical self-governing systems of the Kachins. During the British colonial rule, the Kachin Hill-Tribes Regulation (Regulation No. 1 of 1895) was a legal document that recognized these traditional self-governing systems for the Kachins. The Regulation clearly expressed the clan of Kachins and powers<sup>11</sup> of Duwas as headmen and jurisdiction<sup>12</sup> of headman in

accordance with the Kachins' customs and traditions. The historical facts have signified that the Kachins used to rule themselves through their traditional self-governing systems within their historical sovereign land territories.

### **Sovereign Land Territories**

Focusing on the two traditional self-governing systems of the Kachins, namely Gumchying Gumsa and Gumrawng Gumtsa, is to reflect on their historical sovereign land territories shown in figures (1) and (2). As has been discussed, with the Gumchying Gumsa system, Duwas used to practice independent supreme power over all the inhabitants of their individual domains, perhaps as egregious as feudalism. Each Duwa had his own territories to rule within the individual domain. Duwas were powerful as the ruling class, in which each Duwa was akin to a king. All Duwas used to be legitimately inherited from their individual lineage as a clan dynasty. Therefore, the Kachins used to call the land territories with Duwas' clan lineage, namely Marip Ga, Lahtaw Ga, Lahpai Ga, Maran Ga, and the like, in which Marip, Lahtaw, Lahpai, Maran refer to clan lineage and Ga refers to as the land territories. On top of the individual land territories of each Duwa, there used to be some entitlements for geographic-based territories as a whole. In this case, the term 'Ga' was equally recognized as a state. For instance, (1) Sinpraw Ga (the eastern land), roughly the Bhamo and Sadon Districts; (2) Mungmyit Sinli Ga (north Hsenwi regions in the current northern Shan state), later officially recognized as Kachin sub-state; (3) Htingnai Ga, the region between Mogaung and Katha till Meza<sup>13</sup>; (4) Hka Hku Ga, the region to the north of the Mali-N'mai Rivers confluence.

The areas in the Putao region called Dureng Ga (Duleng Ga), meaning these land territories belonged to Kareng clans, Kareng (Duleng) is one of the Kachin clans as well as one of the Jinghpaw dialects. The land territories of Gumrawng Gumtsa were in the upper territories of Hpat stream including Putao, Machanbaw, Nogmon, Khawbode of the northern Burma/Myanmar where some the Kachin tribes like the Rawang, Lisu, and Duleng could be found (Kaw Nan, 2013). Therefore, those land territories of Gumrawng Gumtsa were much smaller compared to the land territories of Duwas who practiced the Gumchying Gumsa. All these land territories in the Gumchying Gumsa mostly covered larger parts of the Kachin state and the northern Shan state called Mungmyit Sinli Ga. Dating back to Mungmyit Sinli Ga, the Kachins continued their migration during the 14<sup>th</sup> century, after settling in the current Kachin state, the Kachin tribes led by Duwas expanded their land territories into the current Shan state by pushing La<sup>14</sup>, Shan and Palaung to the eastward and the southward (Kachin Sub-State History Committee, 2014).

Mungmyit Sinli Ga demarcated from above Lashio covering Hsenwi areas in the southern territories, the areas of Kangming and Nam Jawn close to Kokang and Wa states in the southeastern territories, the areas of Man Ton and Man Yawn in the northwestern

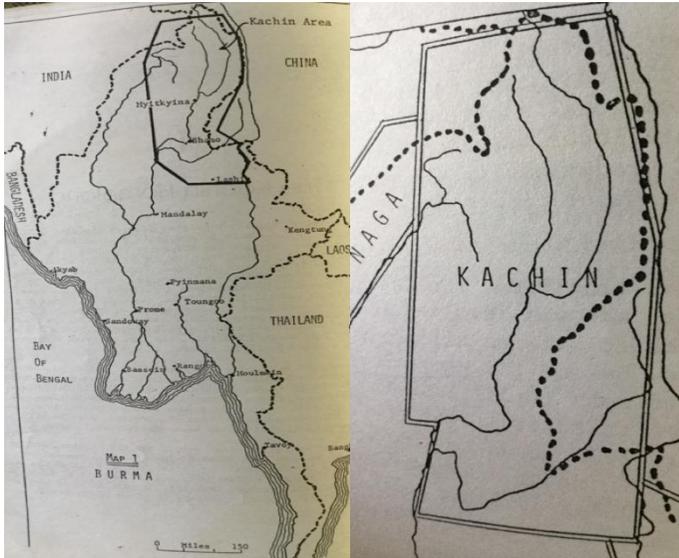
territories, and the areas of Muse and Nam Hkam in the northern territories of the northern Shan state. The Kachins were able to occupy the 'Mungmyit Sinli Ga' in the northern Shan state by sacrificing thousands of their lives in the battles of territorial expansion since centuries ago. Even now the Kachins continue to protect these land territories (a Kachin activist, interview, Lashio, 8 April 2017). In Mungmyit Sinli Ga, both the Gumchyng Gumsa and Gumrawng Gumtsa systems were practiced.

It is important to highlight the historical and political context that expounds the authentic nature of ethnic groups including the Kachins in Burma/Myanmar before 1948. This helps us to understand Burma/Myanmar's complicated politics. This article, however, does not attempt to elaborate on the detailed history of each and every ethnic group across Burma/Myanmar, instead it highlights the nature of a particular ethnic group, the Kachin, to apprehend the geopolitical background of Burma. By the time that the British started to invade lower Burma in the 1880s, the kingdoms of Mon and Rakhine were no longer extant—instead Burmese Konbaung dynasty under king Thibaw was the last of Burmese dynasties (Yi Yi, 1965, pp. 48-66 & Gin, 2004, p. 738). The British controlled lower and upper Burma after three Anglo-Burmese Wars; the first took place from 1824 to 1826, the second in 1852 and the third in 1885 with the overthrow of king Thibaw. Burma, not included most non-Burmese ethnic territories, was officially entitled Burma Proper at that time. On the other hand, the land territories of Kachins, Karen, Chin, Mon, Shan, Kayah (Karenni) and some parts of Rakhine were generally recognized as Frontier Areas (Ban, 2016). In fact, Burma/Myanmar is the native home for majority ethnic groups as well as many other minorities. The Burmese, Rakhine, and Mon were under monarchies long before the British era. The Shan used to have been under monarch-like rulers, but more analogous to feudalism. Other hilly ethnic groups such as the Kachin, Chin, Karen and Kayah (Karenni) once occupied and ruled their own land territories. In the case of the Kachin, Tegenfeldt briefly stressed that:

*The Kachins were quite pleased to see the Burmese defeated, but had no desire themselves to be included in that same conquest. Military columns were sent out to break Kachin resistance, but on numerous occasions these ran into ambushes and had to retreat. However, by 1889-1890, Bhamo District was largely under control. The areas around Mogaung to the northwest, and in the hills near Sima and Sadon next to China border, took much longer to subdue. Lieutenant Harrison was among those killed at Sadon in 1892, and Captain Morton at Sima in 1893. The Hukawng Valley was not brought under control until the late 1920s and the Triangle was not considered safe for British officers without sizable escort until the end of 1930s. The Triangle referred to*

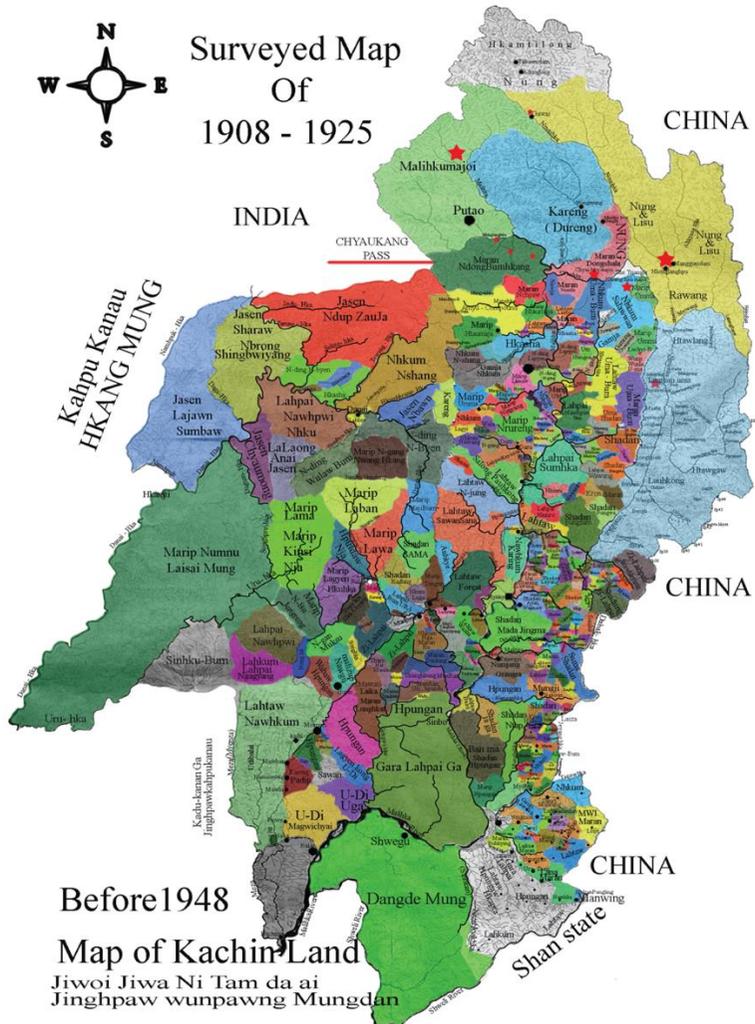
*the areas of Irrawaddy confluence of N'mai Hka (N'mai River) and Mali Hka (Irrawaddy) (1974, pp. 65-66).*

The above statement indicates that the Kachin land territories had been ceded to the British only after the late 1920s. Likewise, the Kachin sub-state, what is now part of the northern Shan state, was under the control of the British after the 1890s. This implies that the British were not able to control the Kachins' land territories even after upper Burma was formally annexed on January 1, 1886.



**Figure 1** The Kachin's Historical Sovereign Land Territories

**Source:** Tegenfeldt, 1974, 4,18



**Figure 2** The Historical Sovereign Land Territories of Current Kachin State

Source: Tu Tawng, 2014. *Kachin History Book-I*

### **Kachin Ethno-nationalism**

The discourse of Kachin ethno-nationalism has been heated after the fighting between KIA and Tatmadaw resumed in early 2011. As a consequence, the youth department of the Kachin Baptist Convention (KBC) entitled the Kachin as ‘a sovereign nation’ at a KBC youth conference held from 22-28 April 2015 in Myitkyina and it was reported that thousands of Kachin youths joined the conference (head of KBC youth department, interview, Myitkyina, 6 May, 2017). Claiming Kachins as a nation is totally dependent upon the right to freedom of expression for all Kachins. However, Burma/Myanmar is still flawed in political freedom including human rights, specifically the right to freedom of expression. Even under NLD<sup>15</sup>-led

regime between 2016-2020, freedom of expression in Burma/Myanmar did not improve much. As a historical inspiration, Dr. Ola Hanson once solemnly reminded the pioneer Kachin Baptist pastors that the Kachin land territories were huge enough and the Kachins were ubiquitously numerous in these land territories. Therefore, the Kachins should be capable of establishing a nation state (Church Leaders, Interview, Lashio and Myitkyina, 6 April and 10 May 2017). Dr. Ola Hanson was an American Baptist missionary who developed the Kachin alphabets during the 1890s and produced several literary works including the Kachin Bible.

While taking Kachin ethno-nationalism into serious consideration, nationalism and nation are the sine qua non of the discourse. In fact, nationalism and nation have been the greatest tandem of human constructions over geographical boundaries and ethnicities through the various political systems and institutions and turned into sovereign nation states in different historical, social and cultural contexts of human constructions. In essence, the term 'nation' came from the Latin term *natio* and originally described a group of college students speaking the same language. Historically speaking, the concept of nation and nationalism can be traced to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century before the French Revolution, in which a national sentiment played the central idea to pursue self-determination right of a certain group of peoples (Smith, 1991). As a consequence, the development of nationalism had been the catalyst that drove a group or groups of peoples for a nation state. Nationalism, therefore, inspires individuals from a particular nation to construct social, cultural and political entities. Nationalism as an ideology also elevates the mythologies associated with ethnicity to new levels of intensity.... The most aggressive form of nationalism, in the contemporary world, is with an explicit ethnicity: ethno-nationalism (Young, 2003, p. 10). Likewise, the Kachin ethno-nationalism has been entrenched in the Kachin ethnicity as an ideological movement to attain and maintain autonomy, unity and identity for the Kachin people since the mythologies and commonalities of the Kachin tribes have been associated with Kachin ethnicity. Ethnicity is thus an important source of self-identification, solidarity and empowerment in terms of belonging to a community and to a common culture and history – a source reinforced by migration and displacement (Gravers, 2007, p. 2).

Having considered that the Kachin ethno-nationalism was the sentiment that inspired the Kachin tribes as a distinguished people, in return the Kachin ethnicity itself had been the identity that escalated the Kachin ethno-nationalism as an effort in shaping the Kachin tribes towards a nation. In fact, ethno-nationalism by Walker Connor in the contemporary world for nationalism and ethnicity is relevant since the bottom line of political claims in nature is very crucial for the right to rule as an independent sovereign nation. However, of the thousands of various ethnic groups in the world, only some modest minorities assert a demand for the right of self-determination in terms of full sovereignty (Young, 2003, p. 10 & Morriss, 2009). Ethno-nationalism in this sense of full sovereignty

signifies that ethnic groups identify the myth of the common ancestry and culture as a commonality of the group members in terms of ethno-symbolism. The ethno-symbolism is the relationship of shared memories to collective cultural identities. Memory, almost by definition, is integral to cultural identity, and the cultivation of shared memories is essential to the survival and destiny of such collective identities (Smith, 1999, p. 10). The term "ethno-symbolism" was accidentally raised at the London School of Economics (LSE) in the late 1980s (Smith, 2009). Theoretically speaking, the ethno-symbolism has been delineated into different approaches to explain nationalism, in which Smith (*ibid*) proposes primordialism with three dimensions. The first addresses the state of nature as the ultimate source, namely power, will and law that continue to exist as the debris in history until the rebirth of such a nation. Accordingly, Kachin ethno-nationalism is a sign of struggle in pursuit of the political will, power and law for the rebirth of the Kachin nation because it has been an endeavor of political will for the independent political status and it also challenges the power and law of sovereign Burma/Myanmar. The second approach of Kachin ethno-nationalism, as Van den Berghe (1978, 1995) argues, has been primordialism, in which nations and ethnic communities are the extensions of kinship units that drive the inclusive fitness as smaller clans and families. Ethnic communities are rooted as collective extensions of individual genetic reproductions for the biological affinity. As a consequence, myths of shared descent largely correspond to real biological ancestry, because of the need for at least some generations of endogamy to forge an ethnic identity. In this primordial dimension, the Kachin tribes are adequate for the kinship system because the Kachin tribes share a common kinship system in the forms of clan and family units as briefly discussed. Last, it is based on the familiar variety of cultural primordialism associated with the overwhelming power of the primordial tie attributed to human existence, namely, congruity of blood, speech, custom, religion, and territory (Smith, 1999, pp. 4-5).

As stated, in Burma/Myanmar, the Kachin officially refer to all Kachin tribes, namely (1) Lhaovo (Maru), (2) Lachid (Lashi), (3) Zaiwa (Atsi), (4) Lisu (Lasaw), (5) Rawang (Nung), and (6) Jinghpaw. The sentiment of Kachin ethno-nationalism is not a nascence as it can be dated back to early 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1843, a battle between two Kachin chieftains, Daihpa Gam (Daffa Gaum) from the Hukawng Valley in Burma/Myanmar side and Pisa Gam (Beesa Gaum) from Assam on the India side was addressed as the Singpho-Jinghpaw revolt. In July 1835, Daffa Gaum, a Kachin chief from the Hugawng Valley on the Burma/Myanmar side of the border crossed over into Assam and destroyed the village of the Singpho chief, Beesa Gaum, killing many of the inhabitants. Consequently, this incident became an issue between the British and the King of Ava since Assam by that time had come under British rule (Tegenfeldt, 1974, p. 78). Thus, the sentiment of such revolt can be construed as an historical impulse of Kachin ethno-nationalism and such offshoot began to sprout with the

development of the Kachin scripts published in the first Kachin language newspaper called “Jinghpaw Shi Laika” in August 1914. As the aftermath of the Kachin literature, Hanson had completely translated the Holy Bible into Kachin in 1927 and this coincided with the retirement of the highest-ranking Kachin soldier, the man who first led 150 victorious Kachin soldiers during World War One (WW I) back to the hills from Mesopotamia with their pockets full of coin. Subedar Major Jinghpaw Gam established “Pawng Yawng Hpung” as a secular Kachin social development organization, which would be dedicated to the upliftment of the Kachins (Sadan, 2013, p. 232). The first formal use of this term as an ethnonymic equivalent of Kachins appeared in *Jinghpaw Shi Laika* in August 1926. This can be extrapolated that “Pawng Yawng” was the first resurrection for the Kachin ethno-national sentiment and print-languages laid the bases for national consciousness. This has been consistent as Anderson concludes: “who might find it difficult or even impossible to understand one another in conversation, became capable of comprehending one another via print and paper” (Anderson, 2006, p. 44). As a second generation of Kachin ethno-nationalism sentiment, a Kachin youth organization named “Pawng Yawng Ram Rawt Hpung” was established by Duwa Zau Zip after the independence of Burma/Myanmar, then Lahpai Naw Seng, a veteran of the Allied Forces during WW II, founded “Pawng Yawng Amyu Makawp Dap (Pawng Yawng National Defense Force)” in 1949. After his exile in China, Naw Seng later returned as a military commander of the insurgent Communist Party of Burma (CPB) in the 1960s (Smith, 2016, p. 59). In the end, “Wunpawng Mungdan Shanglawt Hpung/Wunpawng Mungdan Shanglawt Hpyen Dap” known as KIO/KIA publicly emerged in 1961 in order to mobilize current doctrine of Kachin ethno-nationalism.

### **The Kachin State and the Kachin Sub-State**

The notion of Kachin ethno-nationalism has been that the sentiment of the right to rule themselves over their historical sovereign land territories such as the Kachin state and the Kachin sub-state. As a legal aspect, the *Government of Burma Act, 1935*, which came into force in 1937, continued to recognize Kachins’ historical sovereign land territories during British administration. According to the *Government of Burma Act, 1935*, the British separated its administration into three major parts, namely Burma Proper, Part (I) and Part (II) known as Frontier Areas, as shown in figure (3). The administration areas of Part (I) and Part (II) were Federated Shan states, the Arakan Hill Tracts, the Chin Hill District, the Kachin Hill Tracts of the Myitkyina, Bhamo and Katha Districts, the Somra Tract, the Hukawng Valley lying to the north of the Upper Chindwin District, the Salween District, and all tribal territories. On the other hand, Part (II) comprised the parts of the Myitkyina and Bhamo Districts not included in Part I, Upper Chindwin District as constitute the Homalin sub-division together with the village tracts which included in the former Tamu township of the Mawlaik sub-division, and Kyain Township, the Myawaddy Circle of the Kawkareik township, the Karen Hill

tracts situated in the eastern half of the Toungoo District, and the Thaton District (Second Schedule of Government of Burma Act, 1935, p. 94). The Karenni areas were an independent Karenni state, and later turned into the Kayah state<sup>16</sup> (Ban, 2016). The Panglong Agreement was the marriage certificate for the Burma Proper and the Frontier Areas, the Article (6)<sup>17</sup> of the agreement engendered the Kachin state shown in figure (4) on 10 January 1948, six days after independence of Burma/Myanmar.

On the other hand, there was a certain extent of Kachin population across the northern Shan state particularly along Burma-China frontier areas of north Hsenwi what the Kachins call the Mungmyit Sinli as mentioned above. The Kachin leaders from Mungmyit Sinli regions in the northern Shan state formed Mungmyit Sinli Kachin Leaders Council after WW II. The council considered that the Kachins had sacrificed thousands of their lives and properties during WW II, therefore, on 3 March 1945 they proposed to the Civil Affairs Service (Burma) of the British government for their territories as a Kachin state. Consequently, five resolutions<sup>18</sup> were established at a meeting for creation of a Kachin sub-state (Mong, 2005:113). Then the council proposed an agreement with fifteen provisions<sup>19</sup> as suggested (Kachin Sub-State History Committee, 2014, p. 96 & Brang Di, 2015, p. 369). As a result, on 6 July 1948, the Shan state government<sup>20</sup> issued a notification for the Kachin sub-state<sup>21</sup>, as shown in figure (5) (Mong, 2005, p. 115). As a result, two constituents for Kachin Ministers (Amat) were officially available in the Shan state government. Such implications have revealed that some Kachin delegates who participated in the Panglong conference advocated that a Kachin state should be established. On the other hand, some Kachin groups from the northern Shan state (as part of Federated Shan States during the British administration) advocated that another Kachin state should form. Thus, it can be extrapolated that the notion of Kachin ethno-nationalism is to galvanize Kachins into the right to rule themselves over the Kachin state and the Kachin sub-state.

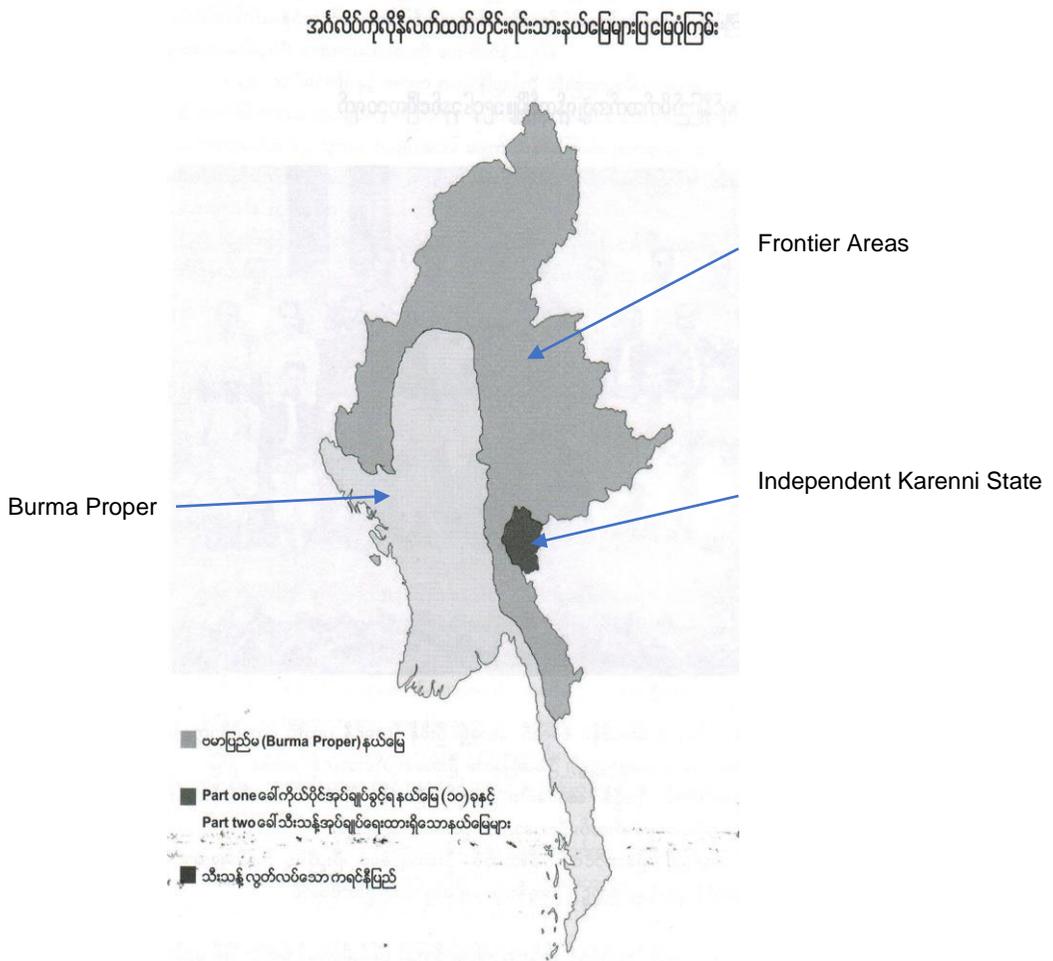
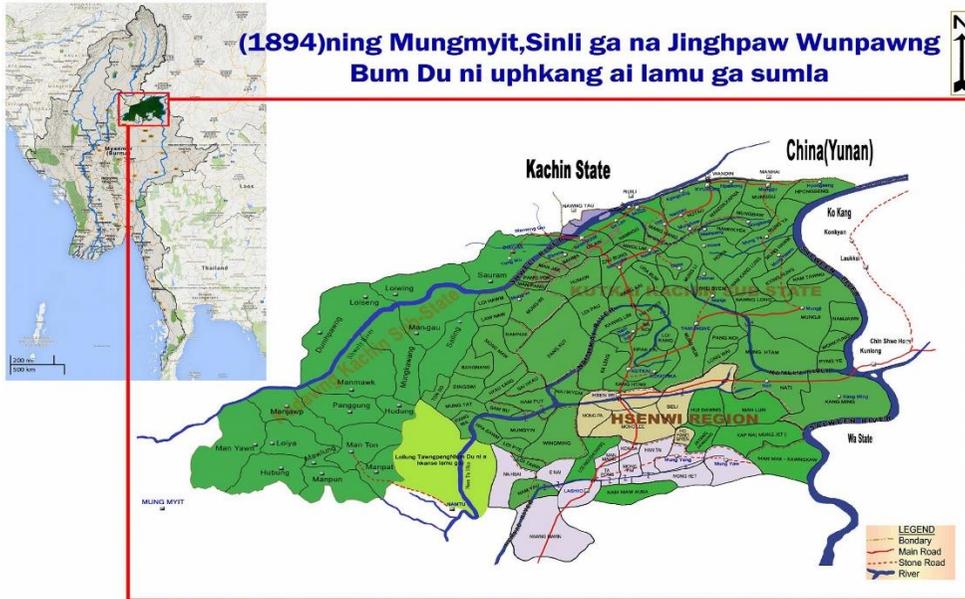


Figure 3 Burma Proper and Frontier Areas under British Rule

Source: Ban, 2016, 16





**Figure 5** The Kachin Sub-State

**Source:** Mungmyit Sinli, Kachin Sub-State History Committee, 2014, 98-99

### The Political Campaign of KIO/KIA

“Majoi Shingra,<sup>22</sup> the Origin of the Kachin;  
 The Authentic Land of the Kachin Descendants;  
 Ancestors' Legacy, Full of Valuable Wealth;  
 Our Land Our State, We Truly Like, We Truly Love;  
 Protect from Annihilation for Permanence Until the World Exists.”  
 (The Kachin National Anthem)

A campaign can be characterized by its intensity and direction as Kriesi et al. (2013). critically postulates that: “both depend on the strategic decisions by the actors involved, within the constraints imposed on them by the availability of resources, by the characteristics of the issue, and by the distribution preference between the elite and the general public”. The Kachin national anthem has been a mantra for almost all formal Kachin public events, such as meetings, conferences and gatherings. The Kachin national anthem reflects the sentiment of Kachin people that they consider themselves as the owners of their historical sovereign land territories for their identity (a Kachin youth, interview, Lashio, 18 April 2017).

It is very significant that the political campaign of KIO/KIA has mobilized the Kachin public. Throughout the political processes for both democratic and revolutionary circles, political campaigns play a crucial role whether one believes a political campaign is a

spectacle, ritual, conversation, or war, the foremost goal of candidates is to communicate information (Lipsitz, 2004, p. 170). Legitimately speaking, the KIO is the group that chose to pick up arms to demand the right to rule for all Kachins, in which it addresses for both all Kachin tribes and native non-Kachin tribes within the Kachin land territories what the KIO calls “Wunpawng Gumrawng Gumtsa Mungdan (sovereign Kachin nation state)”. As a consequence, what the KIO has proclaimed is that now they are struggling for the Kachin sovereignty on behalf of all Kachins and native non-Kachins (a KIO Central Committee Member, interview, Chiang Mai, 14 August 2016). The political campaign of the KIO/KIA seemed to have intrigued the Kachin public because the KBC youth department entitled the Kachins as a sovereign nation for the theme of the Kachin Baptist youth conference held in Myitkyina, the capital city of the Kachin state, from 21-27 April 2015. To sum up, the political campaigns of KIO/KIA galvanized the Kachin public into a sovereign nation over the Kachin state and the Kachin sub-state as their historical sovereign land territories. After the current military coup assumed in February 2021, the Kachin Political Interim Coordination Team (KPICT) was formed up so as to engage in National Unity Government (NUG) and National Unity Consultative Council (NUCC), by collaborating with Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH). The KPICT was composed of five Kachin organizations with fluid ties with the Kachin public, namely the Kachin National Consultative Assembly, the Kachin Political Consultative Team engaged by the KIO members, the Kachin Sub-State Assembly, the One Hundred Kachin Delegates Team and the World Kachin Congress (WKC).

## **Conclusion**

The sentiment of Kachin ethno-nationalism has evolved based on the ethnicity of Kachin tribes officially comprising Lachid (Lashi), Zaiwa (Atsi), Lisu (Lasaw), Rawang (Nung), and Jinghpaw. As a result, the Kachin ethno-nationalism as an ethno-national catalyst has galvanized all Kachins into collective action for the right to rule themselves over their historical sovereign land territories, namely the Kachin state and the Kachin sub-state. The discourse of Kachin ethno-nationalism has revealed that shared myth and history, a collective culture, common language and many other commonalities of all Kachin tribes have engendered ethno-symbolism. On the other hand, the Kachin ethno-nationalism can be extrapolated with the theory of primordialism that addresses political will, power, law, ethnic kinship units, congruity of blood, speech, custom, religion, and territory that could galvanize the Kachins into a nation. Importantly, modern Kachin ethno-nationalism had evolved during the 1920s after WW I when Subedar Major Jinghpaw Gam established “Pawng Yawng Hpung” as the first generation. The emergence of KIO/KIA can be considered as the last generation of the Kachin ethno-nationalism.

The Kachins consider themselves as a distinctive ethnicity occupying particular land territories with their self-governing systems since ancient times. Before the British colonial era, the Kachins practiced Gumchying Gumsa and Gumrawng Gumtsa as self-governing systems over their land territories and even the British government officially recognized these systems during its administration. In essence, such historical land territories with their self-governing systems have inspired historical sovereign land territories that the Kachins have referred to as the Kachin state and the Kachin sub-state. For these reasons, Kachin ethno-nationalism has been the catalyst that has mobilized the Kachins for the right to rule themselves over the Kachin state and the Kachin sub-state.

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- (1) It is the agreed objective of both His Majesty's Government and the Burmese Delegates to achieve the early unification of the Frontier Areas and Ministerial Burma (Burma Proper) with the free consent of the inhabitants of those areas. In the mean-time, it is agreed that the people of the frontier Areas should, in respect of subjects of common interest, be closely associated with the Government of Burma in a manner acceptable to both patties.
  - (2) It is located in Myitkyina and officially recognized by the government. There are six different committees representing each of the Kachin tribes such as Jinghpaw, Lhaovo (Maru), Lachid (Lashi), Zaiwa (Atsi), Lisu (Lasaw), Rawang (Nung).
  - (3) According to the Kachins' oral traditions, the origin of humans was from a man named *Shing Nu Nem* and a woman called *Shawa Nang*. These *Shing Nu Nem* and *Shawa Nang* were the ancestors of all human beings till the generation of a man called *Daru Chyani* and a woman named *Magam Shapyi*. During the era of *Daru Chyani* and *Magam Shapyi*, the people sinned too much; therefore, the heavenly ruler called *Mahtum Wa Mahta* was extremely angry and as a result, *Mahtum Wa Mahta* decided to wash the world with a flood so as to bring death for all. By that time, there were two simple and honest orphans, one sister and one brother named '*Ja Nyi*' and '*Ja Nga*', and these two orphans had no sin and heavenly ruler liked to spare both of them. Consequently, only these two orphans were set free from the flood. After times passed for a certain extent, the heavenly ruler *Mahtum Wa Mahta* wanted to have more humans, thus, the two orphans were persuaded to get married and nine siblings were born and all of whom were sons namely: (1) *Gam* (eldest son) had become the progenitor of Red Indian; (2) *Naw* (second eldest son) had become the progenitor of Chinese; (3) *La* (the third son) had become the progenitor of Shan; (4) *Tu* (the fourth) had become the progenitor of Kadu Kanan; (5) *Tang* (the fifth) had become the progenitor of Chin; (6) ***Yaw (the sixth)*** had become the progenitor of Kachin tribes

as **Pawng Yaw**, (7) *Hka* (the seventh) had become the progenitor of Gurkha (Nepali); (8) *Sharoi* (the eight) had become the progenitor of Tibetan. (9) *Kying* (the ninth) had become the progenitor of European (Kaze) (Naw Awn, n.d).

- (4) In the Kachin animism, it used to have believed that there were three kinds of Nats in three layers, the first one was a divine spirit called Hpanwa Ningsang Chyewa Ningchyang (omnipotent spirit) who created everything and dwelled on the highest place in heaven. The second ones were called Matsaw Ningsa Nats (heavenly spirits) including Mahtum Mahta, Lamau Madai and Ga Madai used to dwell in heaven. And the last ones were Ji Nats (spirits of dead ancestors) used to dwell in the earth (Singnan Tu Tawng, 2014).
- (5) Dumsa is a kind of priest. They have recourse to his ministry each time they have to deal with Nats. He indicates their (which he knows through one of the means), invokes them in the name of the one who employs him, asks them to accept the offerings of the sacrifices, and to grant the favors asked for. It is also the Dumsa who must send the Minlas of the deceased to the ancestors or elsewhere. As a rule, he wears no special dress for his ceremonies; yet when he addresses the great Nats (Gilhodes, 1996, p. 86).
- (6) Hkinjawng (Khinjaung) is a kind of a butcher: in the sacrifices he cuts up the victim, chooses the meat for the spirits, wraps it in special leaves and arranges it on the altar according the recognized rites. He also prepares the cups for the Nats and the different bamboo strings he needs. He too makes the shares, which belong to the family which offers the sacrifice, to the lords of the village and to the different officials on duty (Gilhodes, 1996, p. 88).
- (7) Myihtoi, from myi 'eyes' and htoi 'illuminated' could perhaps be rendered by prophet or seer. He is a medium by whom the spirits speak and make known their will or the future. He has no apprenticeship to make, nor formulas to entrust to his memory; he is not chosen by men, but by the Nats, who form him and instruct him themselves. A child, boy or girl, who is often ill and talks wildly, is supposed to receive the visit of the spirits, and, according to the Kachins, has a chance of becoming one day a myihtoi. Nowadays at least the myihtoi are not numerous; here there are only two for a group of some ten villages (Gilhodes, 1996, p. 87).
- (8) Hpunglum (Phunlum) is another assistant of the Dumsa, but a less important assistant than the Khingjaung. He works as cook or chief cook, because he generally has under him some scullion boys. In the sacrifices, the Phunlum kills the victim, washes the vessels, cooks the meat, pours out a drink for the assistants, etc. His work is not difficult and does not require much learning; that is why nearly every Kachin is capable of filling that office in the absence of an appointed Phunlum (Gilhodes, 1996, p. 89).
- (9) Ningwat is a sorcerer who uses one of the means indicated below to consult the Nats or foretell the future. There are some in each village. The Ningwawt is not a priest; he, like the Kumphan, has only a small remuneration, and is called only for small cases. Such are the principal officials of the Nats (Gilhodes, 1996, p. 89).
- (10) Whenever those who slaughtered bull, cow and the like in the domain of Duwa, they have to offer one thigh to Duwa. It is the same thing for those who got wild animals from hunting.
- (11) In this regulation – (1) hill-tract means any hill tract to which this Regulation has been extended; (2) hill-tribe means any hill-tribe to which this Regulation has been made applicable; (3) clan means any subdivision or section of a hill-tribe; (4) headman means the chief or head of any hill-

tribe, or clan or villages, or group of clans or villages, and includes a Duwa and Akyi (Article 2 of Chapter I). Regarding with headman and their power, (1) Subject to any general or special orders of the Governor, the Deputy Commissioner may appoint and remove a headman for any tribe, clan, village or group of villages, and may define the local limits of his jurisdiction and declare what tribe, clan, village, or group of villages shall be subject to him; (2) Where a headman is appointed for as group of villages, or clans, the Deputy Commissioner may declare the extent to and the manner in which the headman of the villages or clans composing such group shall be subordinate to the headman of the group; (3) In making a declaration under this section the Deputy Commissioner shall be guided as far as practicable by focal custom (Article 4 of Chapter II).

- (12) Continuously, (1) headman shall, within the local limits of his jurisdiction, have general control, according to local custom, over the tribe, clan or village made subject to him; (2) He may levy from the persons subject to him any customary dues and may impose on them such punishments as are authorized by local custom: Provided that no barbarous, excessive or unusual punishment shall be imposed by him (Article 5 of Chapter II). Article (6) of the regulation articulated the criminal jurisdiction of headmen and Article (7) addressed for civil jurisdiction of headmen.
- (13) *Meza* is believed to derive from *Myen Za* in Kachin (Jinghpaw), because it is widely known among the Kachins. *Myen* is addressed to Burmese and *Za* means elimination or eradication. While a warfare between Duwas and Burmese King broke out, the Burmese troops were cautiously defeated by the Duwas' troops in that place.
- (14) La used to be an ethnic group and used to live as a civilized people and it has now been extinct, maybe due to the assimilation and other reasons. To indicate the evidence, some of their stuffs still can be found in some places. For instance, in 1981-82 and 1986 the antique pagodas of La were excavated in an old village named *Chyamka*, which is now between *Banggai* village and *Mungyu* village, closed to *Nampaka* town along the way to *Muse* in northern Shan state of Burma (Kachin Sub-State History Committee, 2014).
- (15) National League for Democracy.
- (16) See Article (31) of the Constitution of the Union of Burma (1974).
- (17) Though the question of demarcating and establishing a separated Kachin State within Unified Burma is one, which must be relegated for decision by the Constituent Assembly, it is agreed that such a State is desirable. As a first step towards this end, the Counselor for Frontier Areas and the Deputy Counselors shall be consulted in the administration of such areas in the Myitkyina and Bhamo Districts, as are Part II Scheduled Areas under the Government of Burma Act of 1935.
- (18) The five resolutions were: (i) a Kachin minister (Amat) for the Frontier Areas Administration; (ii) Kachin language to be used as official in the area; (iii) Kachin customary law be applied in the area; (iv) right to correspond directly with the minister for Frontier Areas Administration or the Counselor; and (v) right to elect the Kachin representative in the election on population basis (Mong, 2005, pp. 113-114).
- (19) The fifteen provisions cover the territories of the Kachin sub-state, the administration authority of Sub-state Council, representativeness and power sharing including state budget, non-

- discrimination for native people, and the like (Kachin Sub-State Research Group, 2007, pp. 102-105).
- (20) The Shan state government with the provincial status was formed at Taunggyi, the administrative headquarters of the Shan state at the attainment of Burma independence in 1948 (Mong, 2005, p. 115).
- (21) The territorial limit of the Kachin sub-state reaches the North Hsenwi main state on the south, Tawngpang, Mongmit (Kodaung), Bhamo district on the west and Burma-China border on the north and northeast. Its eastern boundary is the Salween River across which are the lands of Hpawng Seng, Mong Ya, Mong Hom, Kying Hung, Nam Tawng, Mongsi, Nam Sawm, Waw Kyung, Pying Ye, Kang Mong, Mong Kyet and Manmak Kang Kaw circles. On the western side, the circles of the sub-state go right up the Shweli River are Loi Hom, Mongwi, Man Pang, Man Sak and Patma. The northern circles of the sub-state which border with Bhamo district and Burma-China boundary are, Nam Hkam, Se Lan, Muse, Kying Yang, Kapna Wanting Mongko, and Hpawng Seng (No. 142/149KC, 18 Sept 1947, Kachin Council, Kutkai, No. 172 SG (J) 48). The areas of the Kachin sub-state of North-Hsenwi state thus touches the Kokang state which is in fact a Chinese state within Shan state (Mong, 2005, p. 117).
- (22) Majoi Shingra is a historical place which the Kachins address as the origins of the Kachins in their oral traditions.

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