

Styles and Patterns of Silver Works of Ywahtaung Village in Sagaing Division, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

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Abstract: The study of styles and patterns of silver works aims to examine the history and background and the styles and patterns of silver working in Ywa Htaung Village in Sagaing Division, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. This study is a qualitative research by mainly gathering data from documents and fields studies. The data collection emphasizes on observations and in-depth interviews from two main target groups. The first group is the key informants consisted of academics, senior silversmiths and silver shop entrepreneurs. The other group is the casual informants including the silversmiths. The study results reveal that Ywa Htaung Village is known for its traditional silver making inherited from their ancestors who migrated to live in the area since the period of Pukam Kingdom. Later on, the war prisoners from various ethnicities were forced to live here. The prisoners were from Ayudhaya in Siam, Vientiane in Laos and Chiang Mai. These newcomers had lived and integrated into the culture of Burmese since then until now. The silver works produced today can be analyzed into 3 styles including the traditional style, the colonial style and the modern style. Each style of silver work differs from one another. The traditional style is duplicated from the silver wares used by the kings in the past while the colonial style is influenced by the western culture and the traditional style. Thus, the colonial style is considered the most developed style in terms of aesthetics and techniques of making. In addition, this style is the most popular style among the consumers. The third one is the modern style. This style is a universal style and influenced by the diffusion of international cultures that flooded into Burma after opening the country. The patterns of the silver works in Ywa Htaung Village can be analyzed into 2 groups including the repeat patterns and the storytelling patterns. The repeat patterns are classified into 4 types including the florals, the swords, the human forms, the create forms and the location and objects. Another group is the storytelling patterns which are the scenes based from stories. The stories commonly used are classified into 3 types including the stories related to the belief in Buddhism, the stories related to the classic literatures and the stories related to the social way of life and culture.

Key words: Silver styles, silver patterns, Ywa htaung village, analyzed, Thailand

INTRODUCTION

Sagaing District is the capital city of Sagaing Division in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. Located on the hill on the right side of the Irrawaddy River, the city was built by King Athinka Saw Yun, the founder of the kingdom in the 14th century. Sagaing once was the capital of Shan Kingdom during the period of sovereign state. In a round 1315 during a short period of time after the collapse of Pukam Kingdom, Sagaing then became the origin of Konbaung Dynasty, the last dynasty of the kingdom and the center of faith for the Myanmar people. The majority of Sagaing citizens were Buddhist, some of them were Muslim, Christian and spiritualist. Myanmar language was mainly used in the city. An important tradition of Sagaing was the rice offering at Padamya Pagoda and the important Buddhist days include

traditions of paying respect to the elders and teachers/masters. The followers would bring gifts or food to the one they respected. Every family will prepare food for giving to their neighbors or whoever passing by their houses, despite the receivers were poor or rich. The people of Sagaing are friendly and they help one another very well. There is a particular ritual that a family with a son has to perform which is the ordination of a novice monk. This is an important tradition and every male child has to ordain. The children from age of 5 until 15 have to perform the Shinbyu ritual; the ordaining person will dress in clothes like a prince or king and then they will ride on a horse and parade around the village as a way to declare the good deeds (Plynoi, 2001). The villagers of Sagaing believe that if their son is once ordained as a novice monk, the family will gain merit. Such tradition has long been practiced in the community.

Sagaing is the source of rich natural resources, both the forest and river. Thus the people in this city are able to make a living in various kinds of professions. The traditional occupations include agriculture, as a main source of income, weaving and copper distilling to smelt gold. The local handicrafts are pottery, silver work, brass ware, copper ware, iron work and lacquer ware. Furthermore, Sagaing was involved with the Siam Kingdom in the old days in which they had brought the Siamese captives to the city when the Ayutthaya Kingdom was attacked during the Siamese-Burmese war the first time. Than Tun noted about the residential allocation of the war prisoners that, "the master craftsmen, performance artists and the horse-cavalry soldiers all served under the king of Hanthawaddy. King Burengnong royally appointed the village south of Shwebo city for these soldiers from Ayutthaya and sent prisoners from Chiang Mai-Chiang Rung to live in the same areas including Karlay, Minbu, Monywa, Saigaing and Shwebo. Prince Damrong Rajanubhab recorded about the relation of the Siamese people towards Sagaing in his book about the Siamese-Burmese War that "That time Myanmar took about >30,000 captives with them. Among the royal members and government servants captivated, it appeared that King Hsinbyushin sent King Uthumphon to ordain as a monk in Sagaing city which located across from Inwa. The majority of the Siamese prisoners lived here (Prince, 2013). It can be said that Sagaing was the city of war prisoners that Myanmar allocated land for them to live in since the period of King Burengnong. The last migration of war prisoners was in the period of King Hsinbyushin. It was the second war between the Siam and Burma in 1767 and the Siam lost Ayutthaya capital. The Burmese then took a great number of war prisoners with them. They put these captives in villages along the river in Sagaing, Amarapura and Manipur (Surasawasdi Sooksawasdi, 2006). The Burmese silver work started since the 13th century. They produced bowls, dishes and vases, betel nut boxes used in the palaces, silver daggers and sheaths. Today, the quality of silver works produced in Ywa Htaung Village, located near Sagaing, are considered as similar to the silver works in the old days (Wilhelm, 1994). This village is the largest silver production community in Myanmar. Through generations the silversmiths in this village learn how to make silver from their ancestors. On the way to Shwebo, silver shops, both the large and small ones are all located on both side of the road. Some shop has a long lasting history about itself; they said they inherited the silver making skills since when there were kings ruling the country. The larger silver shops offer more various styles of silver works. Each style of the silver works comes from the acceptance

of foreign civilization into the traditional one. The styles originate from the beliefs and changes of the society, culture and foreign cultures influenced in certain period of time. However, the silver works in Ywa Htaung Village continues to reproduce the old styles that are quite in demand of the consumers and distributed to major cities in Myanmar and abroad.

Objectives:

- Study the history of silver works in Ywa Htaung Village in Sagaing city
- Study the styles and patterns of silver works in Ywa Htaung Village in Sagaing city

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study of styles and patterns of silver works in Ywa Htaung Village, Sagaing, Republic of the Union of Myanmar, aims to find the history of silver making and the styles and patterns produced in Ywa Htaung Village. This is a qualitative study with data collected from recorded documents and field study visits. The study area consists of two target groups including the key informants, such as the academics, senior silversmiths and silver shop owners and the casual informants such as experienced silversmiths of >5 years working in silver production sources. Purposive sampling was used and the target study groups are total 10 silver shops including Myanmar Silverware, Sky Silver, Tun Tun Silver Smith & Silverware, Lin Myanmar, Win Win, Tun Tip Sa, Silver Moon, S.M.T, U Kyaw Shaung and Family and Htet. The tools used in data collection are observation, survey and in-depth interviews. The results are then presented in a descriptive analysis method.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study of styles and patterns of silver works in Ywa Htaung Village in Sagaing city, Republic of the Union of Myanmar, can be analyzed following the objectives of the study as follows:

The history of silver making in Ywa Htaung Village, Saigaing: Sagaing or called by Burmese as zəgáN is the center of various kinds of handicrafts, particularly the famous silver making (ngway-hte) in Ywa Htaung Village. This village has been producing silver works for centuries. They inherited the skills from their ancestors and made ancient silver works with their hands for >800 years. The silver works produced are bowls, dishes, vases, betel nut boxes, daggers and sheaths. Ywa Htaung Village is located on both side of the road between

Mandalay to Shwebo. The geography of this village is lowland with quite many natural forests. The silver shop houses are located along the road and concretely built either one or two story levels. The villagers' houses are then located further down from the road. The streets in this community are dirt. The houses' walls are made from bamboos woven as a sheet. The floors are made from plain wooden boards and the roofs are galvanized iron. The houses are built highly lifted, so the space under the houses is used for relaxing, cooking and working. The villagers raise animals for their own consumption and they raise cows and horses for animal labor. Each house marks its boundary with woven bamboo sticks as a wall. The houses are largely built in one community area and the majority of the villagers have located here since their ancestors. According to the interview with U Win Maung, an academic of Burmese culture, he marked that Ywa Htaung means the area of gold. The meaning of the word Ywa in Burmese language is "area or village" while "Htaung" does not have any meaning in Burmese because it is a borrow word from Thai language that is "thong," or gold. However, Burmese people cannot pronounce that word, so it has been called "Htaung" instead. The word "gold" in Burmese language is called "Shwe". Therefore, the name of this village means the area that used to make gold works before they changed to make silver works due to that in this community there used to be a great number of gold mineral (Naing, 2015).

The history of this village is not recorded as evidence. However, the elders in the community have told through generations that it has been established since the Kingdom of Pukam. It is assumed that the ancestors of this village were Pyu, because they were skillful goldsmiths and silver smiths. They were also the first group of people in Southeast Asia who knew how to use silver and gold coins for exchange (Maung, 2013). Later on the Pyu migrated down from the Chinese invasion and together lived with Burmese locals in Pukam Kingdom. When Pukam was attacked, its residents then scattered away and relocated in Ywa Htaung Village in Sagaing city. Sagaing city was established since 1315 and completed 700 year anniversary in 2015 (Tun, 2015a, b). The abbot of a temple in Ywa Htaung Village who has lived in the community for a long time said that the village consists of various ethnicities including the Myanmar, mon, shan, Linzin and Yodia. These people of different ethnicities have lived in the village and all are citizens of Myanmar. In this area, it is the community of handicrafts since the old days. Ywa Htaung Temple is the center of the village members. Thida Saraya noted that besides being famous for its center of religion, the village further out the city

called "Ywa Htaung" in Sagaing was the source of skilled silver smiths. They said that these silversmiths inherited from the Yodia or the Siamese people, since they were forced to live here after losing the war to Burma. When looking at the skilled silver works, one can see the similarity of those produced by the Siamese, clearly the styles, patterns and colors of the silver (Saraya *et al.*, 1995).

According to the field study visits at Ywa Htaung Village, interesting historical information involving the Siamese war prisoners during the second war in Ayutthaya period was revealed from the owner of the Myanmar Silverware shop, namely U Myint Thar and his wife Daw Thet Thet Aye. U Myint Thar finished his bachelor's degree in geography and he told us that his grandfather said their ancestors were from Ayutthada. His ancestors produced goldsmiths for the Konbaung Dynasty before the British conquered the kingdom. After the British came in, his ancestors then produced silver works for the generals and high ranking governmental servants. His generation was the 6th generation of the family. He wanted to continue these silver skills his ancestors by planning for his oldest daughter to continue the shop and silver making. U Myint Thar did not know about the 1st and 2nd ancestor generations, but he remembered the 3rd generation which was his great grandfather named U Shan and the 4th generation named U Tun. The fifth generation was his father and his name was U Pa Thi. All of the ancestors were silversmith teachers who were very skilled and well-known, particularly his father (U Pa Thi). The story of his father was once published in the book called Silverware of South-East Asia. U Myint Thar knew about the silver making processes but he was not expertise in making the silver due to he was sent to study at the university when he was young (Myint, 2014) (Fig. 1).

Silver making in Ywa Htaung Villages is a family handcraft production. And the large silver shops normally have their own silversmiths. These silversmiths are highly skilled in different ways. They can make silvers on their own and at every process starting from melting the silver, forming up the form, drawing the patterns, making repousse, duplicating the patterns and finishing other details. The silver works produced are varied, such as waster bowls (Pha las), begging bowl (Tha-beiks), footed trays (Ka lap), trays (Lin-bas), teapot sets (Ka Yar Oh), Beakers (Yay-Khwat), Betel Box (Kon-gei), Betel Nut Box (Kon-ei-Tar), Lime Box (Ton Itt), Temple Vases (Pan-Ao), Food Containers (Hsun-Oke), Rice Bowl for Monks (Hsun), Ash Tray (Sat Late Khwat), Small Water Jar



Fig. 1: The U Myint Thar and his wife, Daw Thet Thet Aye

(Sint-Ao), Tea Box (La Phat Aok), Water Bowl for Flower (Taik pan), Rice Bowl (San pan kan), Water Pitcher (Kha Ja) and Betel Spittle (Kon Dhwei). All of such silver works are made in dedicate styles and patterns.

The styles if silver works produced in Ywa Htaung village: The silver ware production is classified into 3 styles all together including the traditional style, the colonial style and the modern style. Each of these styles is varied in forms and patterns.

The traditional styles are duplicated from the wares daily used by the kings or elites, rich and wealthy people in the old days. The kings then would use only the wares produced from gold or golden niello ware. There were some wares made from silver but covered with gold, such as the royal carrier, the throne and other wares used in the palace. When time passed and gold seemed to be hard to find and expensive, thus the wares used for the kings then were duplicated and made by silver. These silver works reflect about the wealth of the monarchy or elite groups as they were made dedicatedly. In the past the kings of Myanmar had their own royal silversmiths within the palace who produced silver wares. Thus, the styles of the silver works then are traditionally unique and inherited since the old days. Until in the period of King Mindon Min and King Thibaw Min of the Mandalay Palace, the styles of the silver works were in high shapes with support base or legs to lift up the wares above the ground. The animal forms, such as lions and nagas, were used to decorate the base or bottom parts. U Win Maung argues that it was required to have the base or bottom part for the wares used by the kings. So that these ware were higher than the ground. The bottom parts of these



Fig. 2: The silver wares of King Mindon Min, Mandalay Kingdom

wares were commonly decorated by animal figures due to the belief that animals were in the lower world than humans'. So the use of these animals to decorate on the bottom part of the wares was similar to the slaves that serve them (Myint, 2014) (Fig. 2).

The traditional silver styles have long been strictly practiced through families. Before, the silver works were dedicatedly made due to that these work were to serve the king. The king was the owner of all life. He was similar to the most powerful god and above any human. He was a deva raja. Thus, strict protocols were regulated, as well as the silver wares used by the kings. Such belief was influenced by the Indian civilization with Buddhism as the center of all spirits and way of live. Sylvia Fraser-Lu explained that the wares used by Myanmar kings were luxurious and made from good quality materials. They were dedicatedly made and the materials used were expensive. The sued of these kinds of wares by the kings came from the Brahman belief (Fraser, 1989). The belief thus reflected in the shapes and patterns of silver works symbolizing Buddhism. Those shapes and patterns were rendering about, such as the Jataka and Ramayana.

U Muang Aye, the senior silversmith at Myanmar Silverware Shop, with his experiences in silver working for 35 years and a pupil of U Pa Thi, the owner of Myanmar Silverware Shop, told that the traditional silver works were made in higher shapes and lifted up with a base. The patterns decorated were floral and the shallow base relief sculpture, on the surface. The positions of patterns were on the edges horizontally of the silver shapes. The widest patterns were made at the center of the silver which was alternated with a parallel pattern, dots and lotus petal



Fig. 3: Traditional style of silver wares taken from the Myanmar Silverware Shop

design (Myint, 2014). The silver making during the pre-colonization and the British colonization was mostly about the betel nut boxes. This type of silver making was quite popular among the wealthy group of people in the society and high ranking governmental servants. During that time, every Burmese family would have a betel nut box provided for visitors. From then until now, the Burmese is known as people who chew betel nuts in their daily life (Fig. 3).

The colonial style was influenced by Western arts and culture. In such period of time, Myanmar was colonized by the British. The country traded with many countries around the world, thus it received an increasing influences by these foreign countries. The colonial style silver works were well supported by the British elites and high ranking governmental servants who ran the country at that time. The British was yearning for finely made silver works due to that the traditional British handicrafts began to disappear from its country; Britain was just passed its revolution from agriculture to industry. It was a phenomenon that changed the production system to rely on machines rather than human beings. When Britain came in, they supported and promoted the skilled Burmese silversmiths to join international silver making competition in Calcutta, former capital of India during the colonization which currently this city is called Kolkata. Back then Myanmar was just another province of India (Fig. 4).

Besides the economic values, the Burmese silver works during the colonial period also represented comeliness and meaning. The British promoted and supported the Burmese silver works by applying the popular western patterns into the traditional ones. Before Myanmar was colonized in the Mandalay reign, however, the traders, diplomats and Christian missionaries had already came into the country. Thus, the European patterns then were introduced since then. These Western



Fig. 4: Burmese silversmiths adorn with badges they received from silver making competition (Tilly, 1904)

patterns were, such as, the grape designs or traditional curtain designs, never before they knew about these patterns (Surasawasdi and Abhakorn, 2006). The silver making in Myanmar continued to develop from traditional styles and this development was called the Victoria Style and the Rococo Style, according to the Queen Victoria reined the Britain. From 1837-1901, the outstanding style of this time was inspired by the natural forms, such as flowers, leaves and crawling plants. The patterns then were made in curving styles, tendering and swaying. The Victoria style emphasized on pretty-sweet and luxurious forms. The techniques used were 2-3 times higher carved reliefs. Usually, they used the forms of animal and women as a part of the silver patterns. The westerners favored the beauty of human figure forms, like the Greek arts which presented about the natural movements and looked realistic, thus the silver works consisted of these lively movements. The most common silver works produced then were water bowls (Palas), begging bowls (Tha-beik), betel box (Kun-it), food box (Hsun-oke) and water jars (Kha ja). The silversmiths praised these styles of silver to be the unique identity that represented the Burmese silver. This period of time was also considered to be the prosperous time for silver handicrafts (Fig. 5).

Today, the colonial style of silver works is popular among the foreign customers, particularly those Indian traders who came to buy the majority of silver produced in Ywa Htaung Village. These traders then distribute the silver works in Europe and America. U Tun Tun, the owner of Tun Tun Silver Smith and Silverwares, explained that the Indian customers liked this style of silver because it was similar to the Indian. The patterns decorated on Burmese silver were also rendering the Buddhist stories and Mahabharata. The silversmiths who produced this style must be quite skillful for at least of 8 years of experience (Tun, 2014). Such style was



Fig. 5: The colonial style silver works from Tun Tun Silver Smith and Silverwares



Fig. 6: Modern style silver works from Silver Sagaing Shop

made using the technique of repoussé and arranged by patterns and stories in order to present the main points. This style also included the skills of low relief and high relief pattern making.

The modern style originated when Myanmar already opened its country. This kind of style was introduced by the young and modern owners of silver stores who would like to change the silver production for more economic profits, reducing cost of production and have new different techniques of making. This way they believe would provide more alternative and various styles for the customers. This style is individually unique and unlike the traditional styles. The concept developed from the geometric shapes or natural forms. This style emphasized on simplicity, different patterns, surface and reliefs. The floral patterns were commonly used to emphasize the shapes made on certain spots. Some of the works were low relief; some have no patterns on, either polished or rough surface (Tun, 2015a, b). The owner of Silver Sagaing explained that “this style of silver had to be made in order to see the reaction of the buyers. Today, there are more visitors visiting the country. But when we produce this style, we cannot sell them very much. The tourists seem to like the traditional style and colonial style more. This might be because of the modern style is something they can find somewhere else” (Naing, 2015). The majority of tourists in Myanmar come from developed countries where they have advanced technology produced. So, these tourists planned to come to Myanmar to see what traditionally Burmese is. They thus, appreciate the traditional silver style and the colonial style rather than the modern. These old styles present meaningful stories and historical values (Fig. 6).

Silver patterns: The study of 3 forms of silver works can analyze the patterns decorated on the silver into 2 groups including the repeat patterns and the storytelling patterns.

The repeat patterns are divided into 5 types: flora form, monkey form, human form, create form and object form. The storytelling patterns are divided into 3 types: Buddhism, literature and way of life and culture.

The repeat patterns mean those of flowers used to decorate alone or in a repeated component uniquely. These patterns are classified as following. The floral patterns mean the patterns of flowers (pan) or leaves, along or as a bunch crawling. The flowers are placed in small rows with the stem curled in a circle (Patle pan) or in a vertical (htaungmat pan), curling flowers (gwei) or small flowers rowed in line (hmawtan) with a flower that its stem curled (chu-pan). Another pattern applied from plants in the natural forest is called Kranok pattern (Ka-nu-ta). These patterns consist of Dha-zin orchid, Klam lotus petal (kya-gyi-yut), Aster (kan-na-ma-pan), Cabbage leaf (mo-la-yunt) and Chinese cabbage (mo lar-thop-phyu). The drawing of pattern onto the silver works usually are written in the horizontal line in the form of flora scrollwork (maw-pan). The patterns in form of leaves or single flower would be drawn in order repeatedly (hsek pan) on the edge and bottom base of the silver works. The most common pattern was Kranok and Orchid in a curving form like the letter S (dha-zin gwei). U Win Maung explains that “Kranok” is a Pali-Sanskrit word meaning “Lotus” (kya). The Burmese Kranok pattern in certain period of time then varied. The one during Pukam era was the model of all others followed. The model appeared on almost every single piece of silver work (Fig. 7). Animal patterns used in the silver works are classified into 4 types:

- Monkey (Ka-ppi) is the monkey patterns from Ramayana including the demons, monkeys and apes
- Kacha (Ga-zza) are large animal and animals in general such as elephants (sain) signify as great powerful animals and horses (my inn), cows (nwar), buffaloes (kya hae), and tigers (kyarr)



Fig. 7: Orchid Dha-zin Gwei and the crawling plant patten

- Himapan forest animals and legendary animals (Zawgyi) are believed to be fort nate lives, such as lions (chin-thei), swans (hin thar), dragons (tae na ya), nagas (naga), demon (bhilu) and Kinnara (kein-na-ra), a male human bird with its bottom, but for female ones called Kinnari (kein-na-ri). Other patterns in this category are Karawek birds (karaweik), Garuda (ga-lon), spirits (nats) and Sphinx (manussiha)
- Animals of day of birth (gyo-Shit-Lon): Sunday is a garuda (ga-lon), Monday is a tiger (kyarr), Tuesday is a lion (chin-thei), Wednesday is an elephant with ivory (Shin), at night is an elephant without an ivory (hai), Thursday is a rat (kya-wati), Friday is a guinea pig (poo) and Saturaday is a naga (naga) (Fig. 8)

Human form (na-ri) are patterns of angels and princesses (main sa mee), princes (main sarr), gods (Deva), goddesses (naat sam), Indra, Brahma (Byah mar), Female Dancers (Min Tha Mee), Male Dancers (Min Thar). The position of the patterns includes a single position or a group of patterns. Some significant parts of the stories in Buddhism or Ramayana are used. The human forms show about the use of body, body part motions, postures and etc. However, the forms do not show about facial expressions which are the form of practice that has long been inherited. The silversmiths focus on the facial shape and form to look lively and surreal.

Create Form are those patterns appear on the ancient pots. The forms created by the silversmiths are to fix the empty space on the surface to complete the perfect composition or to separate the spaces between other patterns on the works. For example, between the top, central and bottom areas normally use different pattern lines based on the expertise and favor of the silversmiths. However, each pattern does not look the same, such as the twisted rope (kyaoe lain), beads (ywe-tan), Demon teeth (bilue-twe), dot (hla-au-tei-klo), waves (acheik), fish scales (nga-jin-goag), fans (yat-taw), squares (git eaing), running water (myang) and zigzag. Moreover, there are



Fig. 8: Animal patterns act as the symbol of birthdate and human patterns



Fig. 9: Create forms patterns



Fig. 10: Patterns of locations and objects used in daily life of Burmese people

other patterns that do not follow the traditional forms which are created by the silversmiths following the tools used are Klai and Sarong patterns (Fig. 9).

Locations and Tools are the patterns of archeology positioned adequately with the stories used to present on the silver works in order to complete the story and composition. These patterns are, such as, temples and stupas (phaya), large temple bells (khown Long), royal palaces (nan-dwin), people houses (aainYar) and things used in Burmese people daily life, such as carts (hleyin), curtains (kalakgar), bows (myahar), swords (dahs), thrones (tha lun) and many-tiered umbrella (htee) (Fig. 10).

Story patterns are those present about the scenes on the silver works. The silversmiths design these patterns



Fig. 11: The patterns of storytelling

based on the traditional stories passed on through generations. Examples of these patterns are as follows. The patterns related to the religious beliefs, such as the Jatakas which was the stories of the past 10 lives of the Bodhisattva before reincarnating as Lord Buddha. These stories are the most common patterns reproduced.

Patterns related to the literatures, such as the fight between the goods and bads in Ramayana. The scene of fighting used is of the Rama and the Ravana in which the former won finally. Patterns related to the social way of life and culture, such as the braveries of the Burmese kings in the old days. Others include the folktales (yo yar pong pyin) that had long been told. The folktales are stories that Burmese people believe in and are proud of their ancestors (Fig. 11).

The study of styles and patterns of silver works in Ywa Htaung Village informs about the long history of silver making. It is presumed that the ancestors of villagers in this village were Pyu who followed Theravada, a branch of Buddhism. Thus, because the silversmiths were skilled at making patterns, they then used the stories about Buddhism to make patterns on the silver works. Later, the skilled war prisoners were allocated to live in this area, they then also brought in their own traditional silver and making techniques and skills with them. The knowledge then had been transferred and created an identity of silver works from this village.

The silver works in Ywa Htaung Village consist of 3 styles. The first style is the traditional style that duplicated from the silver wares used by the kings in the old days. Influenced by the India, the kings were believed to be gods reincarnated. Thus, the wares used by the kings then were different than those of common people. The second is the colonial style which was influenced by the western civilization that came into the area during the British colonization. This style was integrated with the traditional one which made it unique silver works of Burma. This concept is consistent of what Franz Boas found that the cultural diffusion was a significant process of a culture diffused to another by adjusting to be

consistent to the new culture (Plynoi, 2001). Thirdly, the modern style is a universal style which is the one that does not in accordance to the traditional style. Then, it is not quite accepted.

The patterns of the silver works from this village are as follows. First, the flora pattern is influenced by the Indian civilization and the western colonization. However, the pattern of storytelling is influenced by the stories in Buddhism and the past lives of the Lord Buddha, as well as the Ramayana literature. The silversmiths craft these stories on the silver works in order to teach about the good deeds and morality in certain story they use.

CONCLUSION

The history and background of Ywa Htaung Village are not written as a record. However, when compare with the establishment of Sagaing city, it can be assumed that the village was set up at the same time which was about 700 years ago. Besides the traditional Burmese ethnics, there are also other ethnicities lived in the same community including the war prisoners in the old days. In the past this village used to make gold works due to its village name means the area of gold. Later, the villagers then do the silver works but still using the same traditional techniques inherited from their ancestors.

The forms of silver works today can be summarized into 3 styles. The first one is the traditional style which is duplicated from the wares used by the kings. The forms of these silver works are highly produced with a base supported or contained something to lift the wares up high. These wares are made higher than in general due to the belief that anything related to the kings should be more special or above other people, following the Brahman belief. Secondly, the colonial style is influenced by the western culture that came in during the colonization period. The colonization enhanced the shapes and methods of higher relief patterns. Thus, this causes the silver works in this period unique and identical. Thirdly, the modern style is universal style that came in the later period. This style happened due to the current economic situations and the mass production need. However, the results of this style created do not favor the consumers as it does not represent the identity of Burma. Mostly, the traditional and colonial styles are more often reproduced.

The study of patterns made on the silver works can be summarized into 2 groups. The first group is the repeat patterns which are classified into 4 types: floras, swords, human forms, create forms and locations and objects. Another group is the patterns related to various stories:

stories related to Buddhism, stories related to literatures and stories related to social way of life and culture. These two groups of patterns are made following the procedures that the silversmiths learned from their teachers.

SUGGESTIONS

General suggestion: The state should support the silver works by setting up a center of silver handicraft at the village in order to present the silver works from small individual scale/family business. The state should also promote about tourism in this village and find channels to sell these works domestically and internationally. The state could provide low interest loans to the small scale silver business and provide training on silver making. This will help improve the silver making skills as today the silversmiths are still in need.

The state can support about this by offering salary to the senior silversmiths who can teach about silver making in a way that will help preserve this type of handicraft to last long.

The silver making sources can be found in many areas in Burma. However, each area is different from another in terms of the development of styles and patterns. Thus, the comparison study of silver making in various cities, such as Rakhine, Mawlamyaing, Yangon, Pukam and Mandalay is recommended.

Silver making is a kind of arts that the silversmiths invest both their mind and body to work on the best piece of work. If one studies about the aesthetics and belief from the shapes and patterns of the Burmese silver works will be beneficial for the elaboration arts.

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