

# THE 'ROHINGYA' - IDENTITY TRICK

## The Invention of the 'ROHINGYA' and the Manipulation of History and Facts

During the British colonial period in Burma, during the WWII Japanese occupation and devastation, during the days of the father and leader of the soon-to-be new nation - Bogyoke Aung San - and his assassination in 1947, during the time of independence (1948) from Britain, and during the time of U Nu - the leader of the troubled nation of Burma until his removal in 1958 and again in 1962 - **the term 'Rohingya' was unknown and therefore not used.** The British, who kept great records of everything never heard it, but the men from British India that were brought in to work the British agricultural projects were called **Bengali-Muslims or Chittagong-Muslims** (Chittagong being a specific area of Bengal). These were the terms that those people used themselves - **there was no objection because that was what they were.**

The Bengali Muslims formed their Mujahid Army starting in 1946, and began their armed jihad (holy war in the name of Islam) to drive out or kill the Buddhists, and to seize the land and create an Islamic State. They took over much of northern Arakan, but did not succeed in seizing the capital of Sittwe, and were pushed back into the jungles.

The Bengali Muslims started to use some other tactics. In the mid 1950s the Bengali Muslim leaders tried to have their people defined as an 'indigenous ethnic group of Burma' like Kachin, Mon, Pa-O, Chin, Palaung, etc., and therefore be eligible for citizenship. Also, instead of using the terms Bengali-Muslim or Chittagong-Muslim (**which indicate that they came from outside Burma**) they generally used the term '**Arakan Muslims**' to deceive people, and convince the world that they, also, are part of the Arakan identity. The obvious problem was that all the other ethnicities had deep roots and long history in their homelands, but the 'Arakan Muslims' did not, and were the only ones who arrived in huge waves of immigrants, fought with and took land and property from the real indigenous people, and had an agenda to have only their own fellow Muslim people in a purely Islamic State that would not be a part of the infidel (non-Muslim) union of Burma. Their demands for recognition as an 'indigenous ethnic group' was turned down, on the grounds that they were never part of the indigenous people of Arakan, and that they were quite simply - recent, or recent enough (a generation or two) immigrants settling on land they had never been part of. The term 'Arakan Muslim' failed its sly purpose, and in the 1960s the Muslim leadership realized that they needed a new story about the Muslims in Arakan - and they embraced a new identity - and they would now call themselves '**Rohingya**'.

This new word helped to make it much easier to manipulate media and opinion. The terms Bengali-Muslim and Chittagong-Muslim indicate - quite obviously - that they came from outside Burma, and that they had roots in, Bengal or specifically the Chittagong area of Bengal. The term Rohingya carries no similar meaning, making it much easier to spread the 'new history' which now says that the Rohingya actually have been inhabitants of this land for a long long time. To dominate the region, they

must become ‘indigenous residents’ of the region and they need that to be unquestionably accepted by the international community.

**Repeated lies become a false truth over time - it is happening now.**

**The Rohingya and the pro-Rohingya groups will make these claims and others:**

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**Claim 1 –The Rohingya are Actually Indigenous to Arakan.**

- **Arakan** has had a Buddhist identity (before that - Vedic/Hindu), verified by archaeology (royal capital cities, inscriptions on stone which lists kings and royal dynasties), artifacts, books and manuscripts, and many of these date back over 1000 years before Islam even existed.
- There is no archeological evidence of major Muslim cities, palaces, or large population.

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**Claim 2 – The Rohingya came from Muslim Persian, Turkish, and Bengali Traders, Shipwrecked in the 7th century, on the Shores of Arakan.**

- It was in the **13th century** that the Bengal area and the Turkish lands even started to become Muslim. Bengal was mostly Buddhist for nearly 2000 years. Its last Buddhist dynasty - starting in the 8th century and known as the Pala Empire - weakened after the destruction of the famous ancient Buddhist university of Nalanda by Muslim invaders in the late **12th century** and succumbed to the Muslim conquest in the **13th century**, with large scale conversions starting, and continuing for centuries.
- Turkey started changing to Islam in the **13th century**, and its Roman Empire capital of Constantinople (now Istanbul) fell to the Muslim armies in the **15th century**.
- Persia was defeated and occupied by the Muslim Arab armies in the **7th century**, but, only an estimated 10% of the Persian population became Muslim at that time. The conversion to Islam was very gradual in Persia, and took a couple of centuries - during in which time non-muslims were required to pay a ‘jizya’ (tax) in order to remain non-Muslim. For a couple of centuries the majority of Persians were not Muslim, though they were ruled by the Arab Muslims.
- Thus, it is abundantly clear that such statements as we have today, about Muslims arriving in Arakan in the 7th century, are undisputedly false, and impossible to be true. And, it verifies, again, the fact that the ‘Rohingya’ and supporters are putting out so much false media.

- It is in the **7th century** that Mohammed lived and Islam began - and Arakan was 5000 long miles away. The shipwreck stories are just that - stories. There is no evidence or correlating material. Around the world there are stories of shipwrecks and ship journeys - including the story of Noah's Ark.
- It can even be said that if, indeed, sailors from those areas actually landed in Arakan, then they most certainly most certainly were not Muslim!

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**Claim 3 – The language ‘Rohingya’ and the ‘Rohingya’ people originated and existed long ago, in Arakan.**

- The only old reference to ‘Rohingya’ is in a book printed in 1799 - *A Comparative Vocabulary of Some of the Languages Spoken in the Burma Empire* - by Francis Buchanan. The Rohingya mention this book and quote **one sentence**, which they think validates their claims. Much of the book deals with the four main languages of the Burma area - which include the Burmese and the Arakanese languages. Buchanan then mentions three small dialects, derived from the languages of the ‘Hindu Nation’ (India), one of which he called ‘Rooinga’ which is spoken by ‘Mohammedans’ (Muslims) who live in Arakan.

From the book:

- *The proper natives of Arakan, call themselves Yakain, which name is also commonly given to them by the Burmas.* (Yakain = Rakhine. Burmas = Burmese) The ‘*proper natives*’ is quite definitive.
- *I shall now add three dialects, spoken in the Burma empire, but evidently derived from the language of the Hindu nation.* (The Hindu nation = India, at that time British India, which included Bengal areas.)
- *The first is that spoken by the the Mohammedans, who have been long settled in Arakan, and who call themselves Rooinga, or natives of Arakan.* (This is the one sentence that the Rohingya try to use to support their claims.) ‘long settled’ is vague. How long? 50 years? 100 years? However, it is clear what ‘*long settled*’ does NOT mean - it doesn’t mean ‘native’, or ‘proper natives’, or ‘indigenous’. And ‘*settled*’ means, came from somewhere else and settled here or there, though not long enough to be considered ‘native’. Hence, the next sentence:
- *Both these tribes, by the real natives of Arakan, are called Kulaw Yakain, or stranger Arakan.* (Buchanan is referring to the ‘Mohammedans’ and the ‘Hindus’ when he writes: ‘Both these tribes’). Again, he recognizes that the Yakain (Rakhine) Buddhists are the ‘*real natives*’ which implies, ‘the mother ‘culture’, and that the Muslims and Hindus are ‘outsiders’ or ‘*strangers*’ who use languages from India.

The adaptation of the term 'Rohingya' was a clever political move - to reinvent the history and claim a solid link to the land. However, the term 'Rooinga' or 'Rohingya' was not noted at all - during the following 150 years - in any other study or reference other than Buchanan's book. This indicates that the term was so unimportant, and/or the population of Muslims at that time was so small and insignificant, that perhaps Muslims in one town, or a small area, called themselves 'Rooinga', but other small communities of Muslims didn't know that term. And, when the term was seemingly invented, or reinvented - in the 1950s, nobody knew it or recognized it, many even didn't like it.

Most people in the world do not forget what they call themselves - The French didn't forget that they were French and spoke French language, and the Chin didn't forget that they are called Chin and spoke one or more Chin languages. However, the term 'Rooinga' was entirely forgotten for 150 years, since being briefly mentioned in Buchanan's book. It was not mentioned by the Dutch, the Portuguese, the Chinese, the Indians, or the bureaucratic British.

The Muslims didn't seem to use it, which means that it obviously was not an important word for them, they forgot about it, it was not used by the Bengal Muslims, not used by the Chittagong Muslims, not used by the Bengali V-force, not used by the Mujahid Party in 1948 when they gave an ultimatum to the government, and not used by the Mujahidin Army which launched a 'jihad' (holy war in the name of Allah) on Burma. It was not used by Bogyoke Aung San, and also not used by U Nu - who had many dealings with the Muslims of Burma.

- During the British colonial period the Muslims called themselves Bengali Muslims, or often more specifically, Chittagong Muslims.
- Buchanan's book actually proves that the Bengali Muslims (Rohingya) are not indigenous to Arakan. Buchanan defined the Yukon (Rakhine) as the 'native' people of the land, and also, the 'proper' people.
- When 'Rohingya' started to be used, it was a new word for everybody - and it had a purpose - to turn attention away from the terms 'Bengali Muslims' or 'Chittagong Muslims' or 'Arakan Muslim' which clearly show the origins of the person in question.
- If the word 'Rohingya' or 'Rooinga' existed long ago to describe those people why did they never use it?

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#### Claim 4 – Many Arakan Kings Were Muslim.

- It is rather absurd to claim that some Arakan Kings were actually Muslim. Some point to coins of a certain time that had a Persian script on them. But that does not prove the Kingdoms were Muslim at all. For some time the Arakan Kingdom included parts of Bengal (including the Chittagong area)

which had become majority Muslim after a nearly 2000 year Buddhist history. Having the Persian script on the coins gave the Buddhists more legitimate rule over the Muslims.

- Also, concerning the coins - consider that U.S. one dollar bills have Latin phrases, Roman numerals, an Egyptian pyramid and the 'Eye of Horus' on them. Chinese money has five languages on them: Chinese Mandarin, Tibetan, Mongolian, Zhuang, and the Muslim minority Uighur language - and, in addition, has Western numbers - and China clearly is not beholden to any one of those cultures. Hilltribe people in many areas of Southeast Asia still have and value old British Indian Rupees. Even North Korean and Iranian money has some English and western numbers. So, the appearance of other languages on a country's currency does not necessarily show power or influence of those other entities.

**By Rick Heizman, San Francisco, Feb 2014**

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