

# The landowners of Ayeyarwaddy Delta in British Colonial Period:

a case study of one village in Maubin district

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The aim of this paper is to examine land ownership, land alienation and a condition of the tenant in a newly risen village, where rice production was stable, in Maubin district, Ayeyarwaddy delta, from 1892 in which reclamation of land was just started, to 1947 of independence. The existent studies say that non-agriculturalists became to own about 50% of land in Ayeyarwaddy delta in 1930s. However, when, how extent and why this phenomenon proceeded are not clear. This paper tries to throw some light on these problems from one case study.

The following resulted from this study: The trend of enlargement of land ownership and un-equalization had begun just after reclamation of the delta. About 30% of landowner was non-agriculturist and 80% of land was rented out to tenants in early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The landowners who could sustain their land were people with the rich fund. The “farmer” in rural area was a tenant under this situation. Tenants were supposed to be not so poor as to say by the existent studies and they also enlarged borrowing area. After the world depression, the trend of enlargement of land ownership and un-equalization was stopped.