

# Individual Mobility and Political Activism

## The case of Chin activists from Hakha and Thantlang townships Chin State, Burma

Chin is an ethnic identity to which people speaking various related languages in the Kuki-Chin language family and living primarily in western Burma self-ascribe. The shaded area shows the distribution of this language family. Source: Grierson, G. A. (1903) Linguistic Survey of India. Delhi: Motilal Banarsi das.

Studying political activism while paying attention to individual subjects reveals the profound effects that individuals' very specific, often highly contingent mobilities have on their political participation. The movements of two Chin activists, one from a village in Thantlang township and the other from Hakha, the capital of Chin State, illustrate this. Their movements influenced their participation in key historical events, including the 1988 nation-wide uprising, the formation of the Chin National Front (armed resistance group), and the 1990 elections. University students played a central role in both of these events, and for both activists leaving Chin State to go to university was a critical event in their activist careers – putting them in contact with radical Chin nationalists.

