Editorial Letter

As many readers will note, the publication of the two parts of our third volume has been a little unusual. Part 1, as you may remember, was published far earlier than scheduled. This was due to my own absence during my sabbatical leave in Southeast Asia, including six months in the land we all love to study, Burma/Myanmar. While this has not meant a delay in the case of any of the issues, publishing part 1 early and part 2 on time has meant a gap of over a year. Hopefully, the articles and documents provided in the current issue will help make up for the long wait.

Some things have changed over the course of the past year. Two eminent Burmese historians, U Toe Hla (Director, UHRC) and U Thaw Kaung (UHRC), have joined our international advisory board and we welcome both of them on board. Dr. Kennon Breazeale, East-West Center, a SOAS alumnus, has moved from our international advisory board to the editorial board. William Womack (Now Dr. Womack), our book review editor, has completed his PhD programme and returned to the United States. We wish him the best of luck. Will will remain on the editorial board, although responsibilities for book reviews will be passed on to someone else within SOAS. During the year we also issued our first, annual bibliographic supplement. Much of the new material to be added to the bibliography will be included in a bibliographic update section at the end of each issue, although material added from older journals, such as the JBRs, will be inserted directly into the supplement. Finally, we are beginning to include among our book reviews, publications whose geographic or thematic scope goes beyond the borders of Burma. These reviews, however, will attempt to draw comparisons between scholarship on other, but related areas, and that on Burma, thus indicating possible new avenues for research.

One change to expect down the road will relate to the size of the journal. The SBBR has grown in size from roughly one hundred pages to the present 950+ pages per issue. Since we publish two regular issues per year and a bibliographic supplement, we have gone beyond the thirteen hundred page mark per volume, which is becoming a little unwieldy. Several options are available, such as increasing the number of issues per year. Another possibility is to issue large documents, such as Crawfurd’s diary of his journey to Ava in 1826-1827, included in the present issue, as separate, special publications. Any suggestions would be sincerely welcome.

We would also like to express our continued gratitude to our readers, especially those who have sent us information on their recent publications, provided advice on various issues, submitted articles, and served as referees. Without your support and cooperation, the production of the journal would not be possible.

Thank you for your support!

Mike Charney
General Editor, SBBR

September 25, 2005
The Narrative Murals of Tilokaguru Cave-Temple
A Reassessment after Jane Terry Bailey

Alexandra Green
Denison University

In 1965, Jane Terry Bailey was employed by Denison University in Granville, Ohio to teach Asian Art and to act as curator of the rapidly expanding Burmese collection. Despite the focus of the Denison collection on Buddha images, lacquer, and textiles, Bailey’s attention turned towards Burmese wall paintings. Her research on seventeenth to nineteenth century wall paintings began during an official visit to Burma in early 1973, when she spent two weeks exploring the Pagan, Mandalay, and Rangoon areas. On this expedition, she was taken to Tilokaguru cave-temple in Sagaing, several eighteenth century temples at Pagan, and the Taungthaman Kyaukdawgyi in Amarapura. The wall paintings at these sites sparked her interest.

Bailey’s study of mural paintings also stemmed from her decision to explore the painting styles of parabaik (illustrated, folded books on paper) after Denison University purchased an

1 Jane Terry Bailey was honorary curator of Asian Art at Denison University from the mid 1960s through the early 1980s.
2 See the report Jane Terry Bailey wrote upon her return. Denison University Archives, Jane Terry Bailey records, Box 1, Folder 13.
example illustrating the Muga-Pakkha Jataka (no. 538) in 1971.\(^3\) She held the theories that the painting styles of the parabaik derived from seventeenth and eighteenth century murals, and that manuscripts sometimes were used as pattern books for the murals.\(^4\) She arrived at the latter idea because the mid-nineteenth century wall paintings of the Taungthaman Kyaukdawgyi at Amarapura also exist in parabaik format. Upon receiving information that the parabaik in question was a product of the early twentieth century, however, Bailey no longer considered her theory viable.\(^5\) She also initiated explorations into the origin of the Western drawing style in Burma by enquiring about British artists and Western-trained Indian artists who worked there. Her research was hampered by the difficulties in identifying these artists, as well as by problems in dating parabaik manuscripts.\(^6\) Unable to gather sufficient dated information, Bailey did not complete her research on the impact of Western painting techniques on Burmese art, nor produced the planned article on the stylistic progression of parabaik.

Inspired by the wall paintings viewed during her visit to Burma, however, Bailey wrote three articles on seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth century wall paintings in Burma. The first article, “Some Burmese Paintings of the Seventeenth Century and Later, part 1: a Seventeenth-century Painting Style near Sagaing”, was published in Artibus Asiae in 1976, and the other two followed in 1978 and 1979. In the first piece, she acquainted readers with the painting style of the late seventeenth century through an examination of the murals of the Tilokaguru cave-temple. Initially linking the cave and its paintings to earlier productions in Burma and India, Bailey described the method of painting (not true fresco), the use of space, narrative techniques,

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3 Letter from Jane Terry Bailey to the Asia Society, New York, on 27 May 1971 (Jane Terry Bailey records, Box 2, Folder 7); letter to Anna Allott on 12 November 1973 (Box 2, Folder 4).
4 Letter from Bailey to William Sailer on 10 May 1972 (Box 1, Folder 12). Bailey initially held the theory that the painting styles of parabaik were ‘fathered’ by late seventeenth and eighteenth century murals. Letter to Frank Musgrave on 8 November 1973 (Box 4, Folder 7). Letter to Anna Allott on 12 November 1973.
5 Letter from Bailey to Frank Musgrave on 23 January 1974 (Box 4, Folder 7).
6 Letter to Mildred Archer on 27 January 1979 (Box 2, Folder 5). Letter from Mildred Archer to Jane Terry Bailey on 14 February 1979 (Box 2, Folder 5).
the clothing and general appearances of the *dramatis personae*, the
details of the settings, and the painting style itself (conceptual
realism) before stating that the murals had become fully Burmese
in nature through the incorporation of contemporary life into the
imagery. In producing this article, she made one of the first
academic attempts to define late wall paintings in Burma.

The path to this article was not entirely smooth, though, as
photographic problems dogged Bailey’s research. In her report on
her Burma trip, she wrote that in exploring the Tilokaguru cave,
they had candles, kerosene lanterns, and a flashlight, and with
these aides, they saw many Buddha figures and Jātaka tales while
looking for subjects to photograph. She spent an hour taking
pictures, as grappling with the camera, focusing and handling the
flashlight proved problematic. Her photographs did not develop
due to a faulty camera, and she had to send film to Burma for U
Aung Thaw of the Archaeology Department to re-take pictures of
several mural sites, including Tilokaguru.7 The articles on
paintings were written utilising the pictures sent by him to her in
mid 1973.8 For her study of Tilokaguru, she relied upon twenty
images that had been identified by him.9

Other practical issues also affected the topic of Bailey’s
research. The article on the Tilokaguru wall paintings was
originally intended to be a comparison between the Pagan period
murals of the Theinmazi and Wetkyi-in Kubyaukgyi and the
seventeenth century Tilokaguru ones. The basis for her study of
the early murals was to be the holdings in the Hamburg Museum,
which had been donated by Th. H. Thomann in the nineteenth
century.10 Unfortunately, the photographer at the Hamburg
museum was ill and unable to take the requisite photographs for
Bailey when she needed them. Thus, the article was refocused to
explore the Tilokaguru paintings alone.

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7 Letter to Mary Frances Cowan on 27 March 1973 (Box 3, Folder 5). Bailey
received the package of pictures in August 1973.
8 Letters to Mary Frances Cowen on 27 March 1973 and 16 August 1973 (Box 3,
Folder 5).
9 Letter to A. Griswold on 5 March 1975 (Box 3, Folder 12).
10 Although he was expelled from the country for the damage he did to the
Theinmazi and Wetkyi-in Kubyaukgyi murals at Pagan, Thomann subsequently
Buddhistischer Tempelkunst* (Stuttgart: Verlag Walter Seifert, 1923).
U Aung Thaw of the Archaeological Department in Burma has dated the Tilokaguru cave-temple to circa 1672, basing this opinion on an historical text that mentions the founding of Tilokaguru monastery on Sagaing Hill.\textsuperscript{11} The Royal Orders of Burma also mention the construction of Tilokaguru monastery, but date it to 1701.\textsuperscript{12} The dating of the murals is even more inexact, since neither work mentions their production. However, based on the rough dating of the founding of the monastery, the murals were probably painted during the last quarter of the seventeenth century or the first decade of the eighteenth. Stylistically, the Tilokaguru murals also relate to the early eighteenth century, dated paintings at the Taungbi Ok-kyuang at Pagan, further confirming the period of production.

The Tilokaguru temple is an artificially constructed cave that penetrates into the side of Sagaing Hill. Facing west, the facade of the building is constructed to look like a freestanding temple, with three arched entrances surmounted by clecs. Above the central doorway is a masonry pyatthat, a tiered roof traditionally constructed in wood demarcating sacred and royal space. Four small windows and two doors onto balconies reveal a second storey at the front of the building (the western face). The three entrances lead into a circumambulatory corridor, and the main shrine room is aligned with the central doorway. Extending off the circumambulatory corridor are six small areas, which may have been used for meditation. At each end of the western section of the circumambulatory corridor are two stairwells leading to the upper corridor, which progresses along the front of the temple (Fig. 1).

\textsuperscript{12} Than Tun (ed.), Royal Orders of Burma, AD 1598-1885 (Kyoto: Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, 1986-1990), vol. 3, 11.

\textbf{SBBR 3.2 (Autumn 2005): 246-283}
The internal areas of Tilokaguru cave-temple are painted or provide evidence of having once been painted, except for the upper storey, which has lost all of its plaster. The mural paintings, executed in reds, greens, browns, whites, greys, yellows, and possibly a very small amount of blue, depict a wide variety of scenes and motifs in the entrances, corridors, and shrines. Many sections of the murals have been badly damaged by bats, whitewashing, and loss of the plaster ground. For example, the three entrance halls into the temple may once have depicted narrative scenes, as evidenced by an image of an elephant in the northern-most entry, and a few floral and geometric motifs remain on the entrance ceilings.

On the walls of the central shrine room are floral decorative motifs and a figurative row depicting Buddhas in bhumisparsa mudra with a kneeling monk to each side. The entrance to the central shrine room has a lotus pool and a Buddha’s footprint on

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13 Most likely, it once contained murals as well.

SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005): 246-283
the ceiling. Bailey wrote that when she visited Tilokaguru on her 1973 trip there was a painted Buddha on the rear wall of the central shrine. This would connect Tilokaguru closely with the Taungbi Ok-kyuang at Pagan, which also has a painted Buddha, rather than a sculpted one, as its main image. The murals on the back wall at Tilokaguru were no longer discernible in 1998, due to the extensive use of whitewash, and a small, carved Buddha was placed on a makeshift table against the wall as a substitute for the no longer extant main image.

The circumambulatory corridor contains extensive murals. The ceilings depict floral-geometric designs with lotus pools arranged at the central and intersecting points of the corridor. Both the inner and the outer walls of the corridor present the viewer with five horizontal rows of narrative that wend their way around the temple walls, depicting a variety of topics. These include the twenty-eight previous Buddhas seated in bhumisparsa mudra underneath the tree of Enlightenment and their life events. The latter particularly emphasise their Renunciations and Enlightenments. Scenes from the life of the Buddha are additionally shown, as is the ordination of monks. Brahmas, devas, nats, and Sakka (Indra) are shown beholding the Buddha with awe and paying him homage. Jataka stories, drawn from the last fifty tales of the 547 have also been portrayed extensively. Some remnants of scenes of Hell are extant at the bottom of the wall.

The short extensions off the circumambulatory corridor do not contain narrative murals, but instead portray rows of mythical and actual animals, flowers, and birds individually placed in roundels or other geometric forms. The rooms, which are completely dark, have become dens for bats, and no murals remain in those sections.

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The Narratives

Tilokaguru cave-temple is an extensive and important site in the study of narrative wall paintings in Burma. It contains many of the elements of the narratives that developed over the course of the eighteenth century. The overall organisation of the narratives is hierarchical in nature, with the most profane imagery at the bottom of the walls and the most sacred nearest the ceiling. The layout of time and space within each tale is generally linear, moving from left to right, but occasionally, from right to left. The stories are narrated in the static monoscenic, sequential, and continuous modes, with a few examples of the in medias res mode, where temporal order is disrupted in favour of spatial considerations. Combinations of sequential and continuous modes are frequent, and wavy lines, decorated panels, architecture, and floral features variously act as scene separators. Most of the stories are demarcated by patterned dividing panels, which are also occasionally found within the tales. The narrative thread is conveyed by depicting only the most important events of a story, and thus the point of a tale is transmitted in a modicum of space. There is a preference for showing certain types of scenes, particularly palace scenes.

15 The definitions of these narrative modes are -


Sequential narration is represented by successive events or episodes in an enframed unit; the characters of the story are repeated in each scene; and spatial dividers are used. (See Dehejia, Discourse in Early Buddhist Art, ch. 1).

The continuous mode of visual narration is characterised by successive events within enframed unit and the repetition of characters. No spatial or temporal dividers are used, however. (See Dehejia, Discourse in Early Buddhist Art, ch. 1).

In medias res is an achronological mode of narration, and events are not portrayed in temporal order. (See Dehejia, Discourse in Early Buddhist Art, ch. 1). For a more extensive discussion of modes in Burmese murals, see Alexandra Green, Buddhist Narrative in Burmese Murals (Ph.D. dissertation, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 2001), ch. 5.

SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005): 246-283
The twenty-eight previous Buddhas

Representations of the twenty-eight previous Buddhas are found in the two upper rows in the circumambulatory corridor. The uppermost row contains the Buddhas seated in bhumisparsa mudra under their respective trees of Enlightenment with a devotee kneeling to each side (Fig. 2). Each Buddha and his devotees are demarcated by white umbrellas flanking the scene. The writing underneath is largely effaced, but some Buddhas and their trees are identifiable. Each caption states that the Buddha is attaining Enlightenment under a specific tree. This scene is found on both the inner and outer walls of the corridor.

Figure 2. One of the twenty-eight previous Buddhas (top row, inner east wall)

The second row portrays a variety of subjects. On the outer walls of the corridor are multiple scenes of a Buddha surrounded by retinues of monks in monastic environments. The writing underneath these scenes is illegible, making identification of the events difficult because of the standardisation of the depictions. Some scenes of a Buddha’s life are found on the outer south wall,
but these images are fragmentary. The writing mentions brahmas and Sakka, but does not provide further clues as to whose life it represents. The inner walls are in better condition. The imagery on these walls is slightly different from that on the outer walls of the circumambulatory corridor, with the Buddhas either seated alone or with a lay devotee. There are additionally scenes of a Buddha receiving offerings or homage from lay people, as well as an image of a Buddha seated under a naga with nine heads. This may be a representation of one of the Seven Stations that Gotama occupied after his Enlightenment, when he was shielded from the rain by Muchalinda Naga. Also portrayed on the west wall is a sequence of events that appears to be Dipankara Buddha’s life story. The writing has been covered by whitewash, but a depiction of a monk lying with his hair spread before a Buddha’s feet suggests that this represents Dipankara’s prophecy to Sumedha. The inner north wall has been effaced, but the east and south walls contain truncated series of the lives of the previous Buddhas. Extremely repetitive in nature, these depictions show the life of each Buddha in five scenes: living in luxury in a palace, making the renunciation, cutting his hair, seated under the tree of Enlightenment, and seated in bhumisparsa mudra in a royal or monastic building (Fig. 3). Only the dress of the princes and the method by which they make the Great Departure (on foot, horse, or elephant, or by carriage or palanquin) provide variations.

16 In Burma, there is a strong connection between the two types of wooden architecture.
Figure 3. Life scenes of one of the previous Buddhas (second row, inner east wall)
The Jataka tales

The selection of Jataka stories at Tilokaguru does not emphasize the *Mahanipata*, the last ten Jatakas, as is common at most other eighteenth century mural sites. Tilokaguru is one of two exceptions in this regard; the Ananda Ok-kyauung at Pagan is the only other building of a seventeenth or eighteenth century date with narrative murals of Jataka stories that does not depict the *Mahanipata*. The stories that are still legible at Tilokaguru appear to be drawn from the last fifty tales of the Pali recension, as translated by Cowell, et al (see Figs. 4-7).17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row 1</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Twenty-eight Previous Buddhas</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life Scenes of the Previous Buddhas</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row 3</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effaced section, Cullahamsa (533), damaged section, Mahakapi (516), Pandara (518) Jatakas</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row 4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Damaged section, Kumbha (512), Jayaddisa (513), effaced area, Somanassa (505), Campeyya (506) Jatakas</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row 5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Layer of floral and geometric designs</td>
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Figure 4: Tilokaguru Cave-Temple. Outer East Wall.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row 1</th>
<th>Twenty-eight Previous Buddhas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Row 2</td>
<td>Life Scenes of the Previous Buddhas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Row 3</td>
<td>Sambula (519), Gandatindu (520), Tesakuma (521) Jatakas, damaged section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row 4</td>
<td>Campeyya (506), Maha-Palobhana (Anitthigandhakumara) (507), Panca-Pandita (Maha-Ummaga) (508) Jatakas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row 5</td>
<td>Layer of floral and geometric designs</td>
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Figure 5. Tilokaguru Cave-Temple. Outer South Wall.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row 1</th>
<th>Twenty-eight Previous Buddhas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Row 2</td>
<td>Life Scenes of the Previous Buddhas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row 3</td>
<td>Sarabhanga (522), Alambusa (523), Samkhapala (524), Culla-Sutasoma (525) Nalinika (526) Jatakas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row 4</td>
<td>Damaged section, Bhikka-Parampara (496), Matanga (497), Citta-Sambhuta (498) Jatakas, effaced area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row 5</td>
<td>Layer of floral and geometric designs</td>
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</tbody>
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Figure 6. Tilokaguru Cave-Temple. Inner South Wall.

*SOAS BULLETIN OF BURMA RESEARCH* 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005): 246-283
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Row 1</th>
<th>Twenty-eight Previous Buddhas</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Row 2</td>
<td>Life Scenes of the Previous Buddhas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row 3</td>
<td>Nalinika (526), Ummadanti (527), Mahabodhi (528), damaged section [Sonaka (529)], Samkicca (530) Jatakas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row 4</td>
<td>Sivi (499), Sirimanda (500), Rohanta-miga (501), Hamsa (502), Sattigumba (503), Bhallatiya (504) Jatakas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row 5</td>
<td>Layer of floral and geometric designs</td>
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Figure 7. Tilokaguru Cave-Temple. Inner East Wall.

Due to extensive whitewashing and loss of plaster, the murals are not in a sufficiently complete state to discern whether all of the last fifty Jataka stories were once depicted, or whether additional narratives were also represented. Since Tilokaguru cave-temple is one of the few extant painting sites from the fourteenth to seventeenth century period, however, it may be that the use of this set of stories represents a transitional position between the representation of the 550 Jatakas of the Pagan period and the depiction of the Mahanipata of the eighteenth century. In the late seventeenth century, a specific visual canon may not have been developed, and hence a variegated use of stories occurred. This idea is corroborated by the fact that the life story of Gotama Buddha is not shown in extensive detail sandwiched between the representations of the twenty-eight previous Buddhas and the Jatakas, as is typical at later eighteenth century sites. In addition,

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18 An eclectic use of stories can also be found at the Taungbi Ok-nyaung, where the emphasis is upon the life scenes of Gotama Buddha (including ones not found in later eighteenth century paintings) and the previous Buddhas. The last ten Jatakas are also shown at the Taungbi Ok-nyaung, along with other Jataka stories.

*SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005): 246-283*
the roughly contemporaneous Taungbi Ok-kyauung at Pagan also contains non-standardised narrative wall paintings.

The murals at Tilokaguru are organised both horizontally and vertically. On the outer walls, the stories are generally organised from left to right, and largely follow a numerical order. No Jatakas remain on the outer west and north walls, and the east and south walls contain many effaced sections. Remaining on the outer east wall in the third row are the Cullahamsa Jataka (no. 533), the Mahakapi Jataka (no. 516), and the Pandara Jataka (no. 518). The third row of the south wall continues the story order with the Sambula Jataka (no. 519), the Gandatindu Jataka (no. 520), and the Tesakuna Jataka (no. 521). The remainder of this row is effaced. The fourth row of the outer east wall depicts the Kumbha Jataka (no. 512), the Jayaddisa Jataka (no. 513), the Somanassa Jataka (no. 505), and the beginning of the Campeyya Jataka (no. 506). The latter story continues onto the south wall, also in the fourth row, and the Maha-Palobhana (no. 507) and the Panca-Pandita Jatakas (no. 508) follow the end of the Campeyya narrative. As mentioned, scenes within each tale mostly utilise a left-to-right organisation, with several exceptions. The narration of events in the Cullahamsa, Mahakapi, Sambula, and Tesakuna Jatakas, four of the six tales still visible in the third row of both walls, progresses right to left. Although most of the scenes in Jataka 520 follow a left to right organisation, this story uses an in medias res mode of narration, with two scenes out of temporal order.

As with the outer walls, the inner walls of the circumambulatory corridor are considerably damaged. The third and fourth rows of the west wall have been whitewashed, as have those of the north wall. A single remnant of the paintings in these areas is found in the fourth row of the north wall, where scenes from the Kusa Jataka (no. 531) are visible. A fragment of painting in the fifth, and lowest, row shows scenes from Hell, suggesting that further portrayals of the horrors of the netherworld were once visible. The depiction of torture is graphic with people being speared by demons, eaten by animals, and wrapped in flames. A thick band of floral and geometric motifs separates the Jataka tales from the Hell scenes, creating distance between good behaviour that leads to enlightenment and punishments for sins.
The inner east and south walls are the least damaged. On the south wall in the third row are (from left to right) the Sarabhanga Jataka (no. 522), the Alambusa Jataka (no. 523), the Samkhapala Jataka (no. 524), and the Culla-Sutasoma Jataka (no. 525). These are followed in the third row of the east wall (from left to right) by the Nalinika Jataka (no. 526), the Ummadanti Jataka (no. 527), and the Mahabodhi Jataka (no. 528). An effaced section follows this last story, which probably once portrayed the Sonaka Jataka (no. 529), and the row concludes with the Samkicca Jataka (no. 530). The fourth row of the south wall portrays the Bhikkha-Parampara Jataka (no. 496), the Matanga Jataka (no. 497), and the Citta-Sambhuta Jataka (no. 498). The end of the wall is effaced. The east wall begins with the Sivi Jataka (no. 499), and also depicts the Sirimanda (no. 500), the Rohanta-Miga (no. 501), the Hamsa (no. 502), the Sattigumba (no. 503), and the Bhallatiya (no. 504) Jataka.

The order of the stories on the inner wall runs counterclockwise, from the south wall to the east wall. Of the tales shown, five of them (523, 524, 498, 500, and 501) are narrated in medias res. Five also have scenes organised from right to left, which would enable the circumambulating viewer to see the events of each story in chronological order (even if the order of the entire set of stories would be reversed). The events of the remaining seven Jatakas are depicted in a left to right order, resulting in stories that would be seen in reverse by the circumambulating viewer.

The Jataka stories are thus painted in a specific horizontal order. In terms of progression upwards, the earlier lives (i.e. lower numbers in the recension) are generally found closer to the bottom of the wall than the later ones, and the Jatakas have been placed underneath the twenty-eight previous Buddhas and their life scenes.
Narrative identification

Many of the stories at Tilokaguru cave-temple can be identified by the writing underneath the images, which gives the name of the Jataka, the previous Buddha, or the life scenes depicted. Sometimes the writing is fragmentary or effaced, and the viewer must rely upon the pictorial narratives for identification. Without the writing, however, identification is difficult. Jane Terry Bailey, due to her lack of visual material and hampered by her lack of facility in Burmese, narrated only seventeen of the (now) thirty extant tales. Of the seventeen tales that she identifies from U Aung Thaw’s information, five are incorrectly named or are misread.

Suruci Jataka/Dipankara Buddha

Bailey identified a story found in the second row of the inner west wall murals as being the Suruci Jataka (no. 489), and she described it as moving from left to right, but then suggested that the latter part of the story is portrayed from right to left and concludes in the middle with an Enlightenment scene. The writing is totally effaced, so it is not possible to be definite about re-assigning a name to the story, but the emphasis upon depictions of monks and Buddha figures does not fit the Suruci story, which tells of princes, the production of a son, and celebrations (Fig. 8). The story appears to progress from right to left beginning with an elephant (a). Next is a hair-cutting scene (b), followed by a Buddha image in bhumisparsa mudra under a tree (c). A Buddha first standing (d) and then seated under a tazaung with a retinue comprise the next two scenes (e). In the following episode, a standing Buddha with a begging bowl is followed by monks with begging bowls and is confronted by an image lying on the ground (f). Finally, the Buddha and the monks are being fed by secular figures in an architectural setting (g).

Given that Dipankara Buddha made his renunciation on elephant-back, and that a figure spreading its hair on the ground at a Buddha’s feet is generally recognised as Sumedha lying before Dipankara, it seems evident that this painting is a portrayal of Dipankara’s life.

A second reason for attributing this story to the lives of the previous Buddhas from the *Buddhavamsa*, rather than to the Jataka stories, concerns its placement with the organisational whole of the murals. It is depicted in the second row of the paintings, every other story of which portrays scenes from the lives of the twenty-eight previous Buddhas. No Jataka stories are placed this high on the walls; they are found in the third and fourth registers. Given the strict hierarchical organisation of the Tilokaguru murals, and other seventeenth and eighteenth century paintings in general, it seems unlikely that one Jataka story would be placed among scenes from the lives of the Buddhas. Thus, location of this tale in the second register supports its identification as events from Dipankara Buddha’s life.

Figure 8 (below) G-A. The life of Dipankara Buddha (second row, inner west wall)
Jataka stories 263 and 546 or Jataka stories 507 and 508?

Based on Cowell’s edition of the Jataka stories and Bailey’s article, two stories in the fourth row of the outer south wall were identified as Jataka numbers 263 and 546, the Culla-Palobhana and the Maha-Ummagga. Their presence at Tilokaguru is unusual because neither stories from the last ten Jatakas nor Jatakas numbered in the 200s by Cowell appear in the temple. The writing underneath Jataka 263, however, identifies it as the Anitthigandhakumara Jataka. In the *Dictionary of Pali Proper Names*, the
Anitthigandhakumara Jataka is listed as being narrated in both the Culla-Palobhana Jataka (no. 263) and the Maha-Palobhana Jataka (no. 507). This particular depiction is located after the Campeyya Jataka (no. 506), and thus, it is possible to assume that this version is connected with the Maha-Palobhana Jataka. The story which follows the Anitthigandakumara tale on the south wall has had its name effaced, but is identified as the Maha-Ummagga Jataka by Bailey. The fragments of writing that remain mention Videha, the king in the Maha-Ummaga Jataka, and the word *panca* is also visible. The Panca-pandita Jataka (no. 508) is the name given to a portion of the Maha-Ummagga Jataka that relates a plot to overthrow Mahosadha by the four evil ministers of King Videha. Given the fact that many of the stories are organised numerically, and this one is placed after numbers 506 and 507, it thus seems plausible to connect the scenes depicted here with the Panca-pandita Jataka.

Kapi Jataka/Mahakapi Jataka

Bailey identifies a story in the third row of the outer east wall as the Kapi Jataka (no. 404), and describes the action as moving from left to right (Fig. 9). She identifies the following scenes and, commenting on the narrative, states that,

... The King of Benares sits feasting with his Queen in a royal pavilion, surrounded by courtiers and ladies. (Gate divider.) The King drives out in his chariot, and sees his Brahmin chaplain taking a nap in the garden. ... A monkey throws down excrement on the Brahmin’s head. The Bodhisatta, who in this existence is the chief of one of the bands of monkeys living in the garden, removes his band to the forest; according to the story, he too was a monkey, but he is here shown in human form. (Tree divider.) A wounded survivor of the

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other band of monkeys (which remained in the garden against the Bodhisatta’s advice and were shot at the Brahmin’s request) lies in the arms of the Bodhisatta, who exhorts all the monkeys not to be disobedient again but to be wise and stay away from enemies. (Rock divider with trees on top.) A monkey carries the Bodhisatta.  

The visual story does not follow this version of events very well. The story is identified in the writing underneath the left side of the painting as being the Kapi Jataka, but the written narration actually begins on the right side of the painting and the events of the story have also been organised from right to left. In exploring variations of this monkey Jataka, it was determined that the literary Mahakapi Jataka (no. 516) co-ordinated with the events depicted more closely than did the Kapi Jataka (no. 404). Moving from right to left it is possible to identify the depicted narrative scenes as: (a) the Bodhisatta existing as a monkey rescues a Brahmin from a ravine; (b) the Brahmin hits the monkey; (c) the monkey escapes into a tree; (d) the monkey shows the Brahmin how to escape from the forest; (e) the Brahmin lies down in a park overwhelmed with pain because of his evil behaviour towards the Bodhisatta (the head underneath the reclining Brahmin may refer to him being swallowed by the earth and his rebirth in Hell); (f) the king of Benares in his carriage comes upon the Brahmin and asks for an explanation as to why he is lying in the park; (g) the king of Benares lives in luxury. These scenes are corroborated by the fragmentary writing underneath. The mention of a ravine and the incident where the Brahmin strikes the Bodhisatta on the head confirm this visual narrative as the Mahakapi Jataka, despite the fact that the name given in the writing is the Kapi Jataka.

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21 Bailey, “Some Burmese Paintings,” 269
Figure 9 (below) G-A. The Mahakapi Jataka (third row, outer east wall)
Alambusa Jataka / Nalinika Jataka

On the inner east wall in the third row is a tale cited in Bailey’s article as the Alambusa Jataka (no. 523), but it is actually a similar story called the Nalinika Jataka (no. 526) (Fig. 10).\(^{23}\) The actual Alambusa Jataka, portrayed in the third row of the inner south wall, is identified by the writing underneath it. The writing under the Nalinika Jataka has been effaced, but other evidence confirms the story’s identification. In this Jataka, the king’s daughter disguises herself as an ascetic in order to seduce the hermit Isisinga, whose virtue is destroying the kingdom. In this depiction of the story she is shown confronting a hermit wearing a hermit’s outfit (Fig. 10 c & d), whereas, in the Alambusa Jataka, the woman approaches the hermit Isisinga undisguised (Fig. 11 a & b).\(^{24}\)

Figure 10 (below) D-A. The Nalinika Jataka (third row, inner east wall)

\(^{24}\) Cowell, The Jataka, vol. 5, 100-106.
As mentioned, the narratives at Tilokaguru are often pictorially arrayed in numerical order, and this story, the Nalinika Jataka (no. 526), comes immediately before representation of the Ummadanta Jataka (no. 527). Thus, it seems clear that this

*SBBR 3.2 (Autumn 2005): 246-283*
depiction is of the Nalinika Jataka, rather than the Alambusa Jataka, despite the similarity of the original narratives.

Figure 11 (below) C-A. The Alambusa Jataka (third row, inner south wall).
Mahanaradakassapa Jataka/Somanassa Jataka

A fourth story which appears to have been misidentified is the Somanassa Jataka (no. 505), located in the fourth row of the outer east wall (Fig. 12). It is described by Bailey as the Mahanaradakassapa Jataka (no. 544), although this is achieved with some difficulty. She writes,

... Princess Ruja asks her father the King of Videha for money to present to mendicants; but he refuses, being unwilling to squander his wealth for good deeds which his counsellors tell him bring no reward in future lives. She says they are fools; she knows that evil deeds will sooner or later bring their retribution, and good deeds their reward, in future lives. Her father is not convinced. (Architectural divider.) The Bodhisatta, who is the great Brahma god Narada, surveys the world from heaven, and decides to help Ruja convert her father. (Tree and hill dividers.) Narada appears on earth in the guise of an ascetic, carrying an almsbowl and water pot. (Architectural divider.) ... Narada, having been invited by the King to enter the palace, converts him by describing the hells in which he will be reborn unless he mends his ways. In the picture, Narada is seen sleeping while the King and his counsellors do obeisance to him; but the story says nothing about Narada sleeping. (Hill and foliage dividers.) Narada is seen being knocked down by the counsellors, though there is nothing of this sort in the story. Is he enacting the tortures of hell? (Rock divider.) After converting the King and revealing his own identity, Narada is worshipped by the Princess and her ladies.25

Bailey’s uncertainty regarding the differing events of the Mahanaradakassapa Jataka and the depiction is palpable. The confusion over identification may have been caused by the fact

that the writing under the painting mentions the name Mahanarada, and this led to the story being attributed as it was. However, the name may refer to Maharakkhita, the ascetic who visits Renu, king of Uttarapancala in the Somanassa Jataka. In addition, the writing mentions a Prince Somanassa, a figure who does not appear in the Mahanaradakassapa Jataka, but who is unsurprisingly the main character in the Somanassa Jataka. The visible events also fit the story of the Somanassa Jataka much more easily than they do the Mahanaradakassapa Jataka. The scenes selected for depiction were: 26 (a) the king with his wife and retinue; (b) the visit of the five hundred ascetics and Maharakkhita; (c) the ‘ascetic’ is seen doing gardening work instead of behaving like an ‘ascetic’; (d) the ‘ascetic’ pretending to be insulted and lying on his bed when the king returns (here the king is shown chaffing the false ascetic’s feet); (e) the stoning of the ‘ascetic’. Beyond this is a thick patterned divider panel, which is usually used between stories, but the Somanassa Jataka, or at least the writing, appears to go on to the following section. The scene, which possibly represents Somanassa seated in the Himalayas (f), the conclusion of the tale, is in poor condition. Either the writing extends beyond the space allocated to the story and the scene of Somanassa in the Himalayas is not shown, or the divider strongly separates Somanassa as a hermit from the crowd beating the false ascetic to death. 27 This depiction is followed by the Campeyya Jataka (no. 506), suggesting that this is more likely to be a representation of Jataka number 505, the Somanassa, than number 544, the Mahanaradakassapa.

26 There is an effaced section at the beginning and at the end, so this list is not comprehensive.
27 This type of separation is also found between the Jataka stories and the Hell scenes.
Figure 12 (below) A-F. The Somanassa Jataka (fourth row, outer east wall)
Lastly, Bailey describes the action of the Sambula Jataka (no. 519), placed in the third row of the outer south wall, as moving from left to right (Fig. 13).\textsuperscript{28} Her version of events would have Prince Sotthisena portrayed as an ascetic after he begins his residency in the forest and then as a prince when he is being cured of leprosy. Clothing was often used as a method of defining a character visually and morally at Tilokaguru. Characters retain the same clothing throughout a story until a moral change occurs. Thus, for example, an individual wears attire associated with his rank (e.g. prince, hunter, etc.) until he becomes an ascetic, when he is shown in ascetic’s dress.\textsuperscript{29} In this case, when Sotthisena left the palace, he had not yet been cured of his disease, did not yet display a correct attitude towards his wife, nor did he leave the palace in order to renounce luxury but because his disease had rendered him loathsome to look at. Given these conditions, it would be unlikely that Sotthisena would be depicted as an ascetic immediately upon vacating the palace. According to the depiction and the writing, the events of the story are (from the right): (a)

\textsuperscript{28} Bailey, “Some Burmese Paintings,” 280.
\textsuperscript{29} This change of clothing with renunciation can be seen in the Somanassa, the Maha-palobhana, Rohanta-miga, Sarabhanga, and Culla-sutasoma Jatakas.

\textit{SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005): 246-283}
Sotthisena’s virtuous wife, Sambula, being attacked by the goblin and her rescue by the god Sakka; (b) Sambula curing Sotthisena with an asseveration of truth; (c) King Brahmadatta assuming residence in the palace park as an ascetic; (d) Sotthisena in a carriage returning from his exile; and finally, what appears to be Brahmadatta the ascetic with a courtly retinue preaching the law (e). The latter scene is unclear due to the damage from cementing and whitewashing, but may represent the ascetic admonishing his son, Sotthisena, who is now king, for poor behaviour towards his wife Sambula. The progression of the tale is apparently from right to left with the exception of the scene of Brahmadatta living as an ascetic. Narratively, it normally occurs after Brahmadatta has abdicated and passed the throne on to his son, but here is shown between the prince’s cure and his return. Many stories at Tilokaguru have minor variations in story order, and in this instance, it may represent the fact that King Brahmadatta abdicated upon his son’s return. The constraints in narrating simultaneous events in the murals is thus revealed.

Figure 13 (below) E-A. The Sambula Jataka (third row, outer south wall)
NARRATIVE Murals of Tilokaguru

SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005): 246-283
Summary

The difficulty of identifying the stories at Tilokaguru cave-temple, where so often the written captions below the paintings have been effaced, indicates that the writing is a crucial element of the identification process for those not thoroughly acquainted with the narratives. This is especially so where scenes and stories are not standardised for easy recognition or are so standardised as to be virtually identical. The need for captions to assist with identification was reduced at eighteenth century wall painting sites, where standardized depictions of the Mahanipata, the last ten Jatakas, became the norm. This issue raises the question of how the Tilokaguru murals were viewed and understood. The darkness of the temple and the lack of damage to the paintings from the torch-light smoke of past viewers suggests that the murals were produced to enhance the sanctity of the building, rather than as an educational tool to be studied as a whole by devotees.
The Order of Stories

Initially, the narrative wall paintings at Tilokaguru give the impression of wending their way around the temple walls in an imitation of the circumambulatory path that the worshipper follows during his or her rituals. Upon closer examination, however, it is apparent that while the narratives generally succeed each other numerically within specific rows, the story order follows a left to right organisation, disproving the idea that the stories physically reflect the circumambulatory path. In the third and fourth rows of the inner walls of the temple, the Jataka stories numerically begin at the left end of the south wall and end at the right side of the east wall. While the outer walls’ tales are less well organised according to the Jataka recension translated in Cowell’s volumes, the stories appear to progress from left to right, beginning at the left of the east wall through the right edge of the south wall (see Figs. 4-7). The lives of the previous Buddhas also seem to be presented in this fashion, though the evidence is fragmentary. On the inner south wall, three of the previous Buddhas are identifiable because the writing is legible. At the left end of the south wall is found the truncated life story of Mangala Buddha (the sixth of the twenty-eight Buddhas). The following section has been cemented over, but this is followed by life scenes of Revata Buddha and Sobhita Buddha (eighth and ninth in the order of previous Buddhas). These lives of the previous Buddhas have been painted in a left to right order. Thus, the viewer, when circumambulating, would see the stories on the inner wall in counterclockwise order, and those of the outer wall in clockwise order.

Vertically, the narratives are organised around ideas of hierarchy. The scenes of the twenty-eight previous Buddhas are found at the top of the walls, with events detailing the process by which they reached Enlightenment directly underneath in the second row. The Jatakas where the bodhisattva is closest to his Enlightenment (i.e. the higher numbers) are found in the third row and the earlier lives have been placed in the fourth row. Scenes of

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Hell are placed at the bottom of the walls, and are separated from the other narratives by a wide band of floral and geometric motifs (see Figs. 4-7). This organisation suggests the bodhisattvas' progress from sentient beings to enlightened ones, thereby providing the viewer with a blueprint of the path to follow towards nirvana.\(^{31}\) The placement of the scenes of Enlightenment and the lives of the previous Buddhas in the top two rows of narrative emphasises the escape from *samsara* as the primary goal of religious endeavour.\(^{32}\) The Jatakas underneath these images demonstrate the virtues and behaviours necessary to attain this goal, while the Hell scenes near the floor graphically warn of the results of poor karma.\(^{33}\) The strict adherence to the vertical organisation of the murals suggests that portraying a hierarchical progression from profane to sacred, and thereby delineating how to escape the samsaric cycle, was of greater concern to the donors, painters, and viewers than a rigid, clockwise, horizontal continuum of narrative stories.

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**The Murals and the Architecture**

The murals are arranged in a specific manner throughout the cave-temple, and the narratives at Tilokaguru are primarily found in the circumambulatory corridor. The walls of other areas that lead off the circumambulatory corridor are painted with images of Buddhas or floral and decorative motifs. For example, the remnants of painting in the central shrine reveal Buddhas seated in *bhumisparsa mudra* flanked by monks, as well as floral motifs.

\(^{31}\) That this route to enlightenment is virtually identical for each individual is corroborated by the repetitiveness of the lives of the previous Buddhas as depicted.

\(^{32}\) John Palmer Ferguson, *Symbolic Dimensions of the Burmese Sangha* (Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, 1975), 24. Ferguson notes that the Buddhas in *bhumisparsa mudra* are a focal point for Burmese Buddhists because it represents the Enlightenment and connects the Jàtaka stories to the defeat of Mara.

In the several cells that extend off the circumambulatory corridor, rows of animals, flowers, and birds individually placed in roundels or other geometric forms have been painted. The murals in some of these latter spaces have been completely effaced by bat excrement, and thus it is not possible to state whether they once depicted narrative material. Given the remaining evidence, however, it seems possible to state that imagery depicting a cause-and-effect theme or soteriological purpose, such as the Jataka tales and the lives of the Buddhas, is primarily found in the areas of the temple where the worshipper would be moving, in other words, the circumambulatory corridor. Areas of Tilokaguru where offerings are made to the Buddha or where motion is not possible (i.e. in the cells, which may have been spaces for meditation) contain imagery, such as painted Buddha images, devotees, or floral-geometric designs that does not depict a progression of events. Therefore, it is possible to suggest that certain types of painted imagery are located in precise areas of this religious edifice.34 In the corridor, the narrative shows progression, mirroring the movement of the worshipper. In the central shrine, the worshipper is surrounded by Buddhas in the Enlightenment posture, a reminder of the escape from samsara, the process of which is demonstrated by the Jatakas outside in the corridor.

Conclusion

In 1973, Jane Terry Bailey set out on her journey to Burma. Despite various technical problems with her camera, she managed to produce three articles, in 1976, 1978, and 1979 respectively, on Burmese wall paintings from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. While these bear evidence of some of her difficulties, they amply illustrate the variety of styles of painting found in post-Pagan Burma. In re-working and adding to some of Bailey’s story identifications, it is possible to view the murals at Tilokaguru cave-

34 For a more extensive discussion of this topic and its general application to all Burmese wall paintings, see Alexandra Green, Buddhist Narrative in Burmese Murals (Ph.D. dissertation, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 2001), ch. 4.

SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005): 246-283
temple more closely within a religious context. Religion, more than the style of the paintings, was clearly of paramount importance to the Burmese who contributed to the construction and decoration of the cave. The connection between the organisation of the murals and the architecture is evident, as is a hierarchical vertical progression from Hell near the floor of the cave to Enlightenment near the ceiling. Clearly, Jane Terry Bailey’s work just began to uncover the richness of wall paintings in Burma, and there is much yet to explore.
Min-gyi-nyo, the Shan Invasions of Ava (1524-27), and the Beginnings of Expansionary Warfare in Toungoo Burma: 1486-1539

Jon Fernquist

Min-gyi-nyo (r.1486-1531) occupies an important place in Burmese history as the first king of the First Toungoo dynasty of Burma (1486-1599). After Min-gyi-nyo’s death in 1531 mainland Southeast Asia rapidly became the stage for large-scale expansionary warfare. This warfare unified what for hundreds of years had been separate isolated zones of Burmese and Tai political control. The Toungoo Dynasty rapidly established control for a short time over such far-flung states as Ayutthya, Lan Chang (Laos), and the Chinese Shan states. As a result of these wars the Burmese state expanded to a size that it has never matched again.

Min-gyi-nyo has long been neglected by historians of Burma. The last scholarly journal article on his reign was published in 1912 (Shwe Zan Aung, May Oung, and M.K., 1912). Lieberman (2003, 142-4, 150-1) and Surakiat (2005) have recently reasserted Min-gyi-nyo’s importance for the study of state expansion and the early modern Southeast Asian polity. Despite this new-found importance, there is still no adequate narrative history of

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1 I would like to thank the anonymous referees for their extensive and helpful critiques as well as Mike Chaney, U Saw Tun, Bruce Reynolds, and Michael Aung-Thwin for their help and encouragement.
Min-gyi-nyo’s reign available in English. The Burmese chronicle, the most important source for early modern Burmese history, has yet to be translated into English and Harvey’s history of Burma provides only a very condensed history of Min-gyi-nyo’s reign based on the Burmese chronicle and neglects significant historical details. The British colonial era approach to history and historiography also limits its usefulness as a historical source (Phillips, 2005; Lieberman, 2003, 6-9). In an attempt to remedy these defects, this paper is first and foremost a narrative history (U Kala, 1961; Lieberman, 1986). Rather than pre-selecting historical detail to support a specific theory of state formation and expansion, the unity of the original Burmese chronicle narrative is maintained. At the same time, steps have been taken to make this Burmese history relevant to the wider field of world and comparative history by adding periodization, background information, and relating it to relevant theoretical models outside the discipline of history.

Min-gyi-nyo’s reign is important for understanding processes of polity expansion in early modern mainland Southeast Asia. His reign was a pivotal transition period between the political fragmentation of the Ava period (1365-c. 1555) and the consolidation and unity of the First Toungoo Dynasty. In focusing on this reign we will look for continuities and changes across the divide from the Ava period to the Toungoo period and trace the impact and influence of Min-gyi-nyo’s reign and the Shan invasions of Ava (1524-27) on the later unprecedented geopolitical expansion of his successors. Manpower accumulation driven by raids and forced migration will be seen to be the primary driving force behind this expansion (Grabowsky, 1999, 2005). During the early 1530s, in the wake of the Shan invasions, there was a transition from the informal raids of Min-gyi-nyo which targeted the human and animal populations of Upper Burma to a sustained series of four sieges against the Mon kingdom of Ramanya in the south by Min-gyi-nyo’s son and successor king Tabinshweihti (r. 1531-1550) waged over the period of four years (1535-39).

Lieberman’s (2003) geographical framework for Southeast Asia allows for a precise definition of “polity expansion” and “expansionary warfare.” Mainland Southeast Asia is broken into three autonomous sectors or regions: the western sector centered on the Irrawaddy river basin and the Burmese state that has traditionally held control over this area, the central sector centered
on the Chao Phraya river basin and the Tai kingdoms like Ayutthya and Lan Na that have held control there, and the eastern sector with Vietnamese hegemony. The western sector, which we are primarily concerned with, is further broken down into four sub-regions: Upper Burma, Lower Burma, the Shan Realm, and Arakan. To more adequately convey the geopolitical reality of the time, the more contextually correct Mon toponym “Ramanya” will be used for the geographical region and Mon kingdom of Lower Burma. There are several reasons for making this adjustment. Prior to Tabinshweihti’s conquest in 1539, “Lower Burma” was a Mon kingdom that also had a brief restoration from 1550 to 1551 after Tabinshweihti’s assassination. Tabinshweihti and Bayinnaung also made great efforts to legitimize themselves as Mon kings ruling their kingdom from Pegu, the traditional capital of the Mon kingdom. Two frontier areas, the northern Shan-Chinese frontier and southern Portuguese maritime frontier, also had an important influence on the interior. A more accurate geopolitical description of the Shan Realm breaks it into two overlapping frontier regions, a Shan-Chinese frontier region and a Shan-Burmese frontier region. In the pre-modern period frontiers were less well-defined and small states between larger neighbors were usually forced into dual allegiances and tributary relationships (Lieberman, 1984, 133; Winichakul, 1994). Historical demographers have designated warfare within one autonomous region as “internal” or intra-regional warfare and between regions “external” or inter-regional warfare (Turchin, 2003b, 2004). For our purposes, external warfare is equivalent to expansionary warfare and internal warfare is equivalent to non-expansionary warfare.

Tabinshweihti was the first Toungoo king to engage in expansionary warfare because he was the first to cross regional boundaries. In contrast, Min-gyi-nyo only went as far as making an exploratory probe or test march against settlements on Toungoo’s frontier with Ramanya. Min-kyi-nyo’s sphere of influence did, at its height, extend all the way up to the Nyaungyan-Meikhtila region near the Kyaukse irrigation district and Min-gyi-nyo did gradually extend the reach of his military expeditions all the way to Pagan on the Irrawaddy in the eastern part of Upper Burma, but all of this expansion took place within the confines of Upper Burma. Tabinshweihti, on the other hand, went on later in his reign to cross major regional barriers and attack Arakan to his east (1546-7) and Ayutthya to his west (1548). This last military expedition to Ayutthya
would set a precedent for the successor king Bayinnaung who brought Tabinshweithi’s first ventures with expansionary warfare to their culmination.

The long-term trends of consolidation and unification are clear and easy to see (table 5), but the details behind the medium term dynamics of this transition are anything but clear. How did Burma transform itself from the fragmented and chaotic political state of the late Ava period in the fifteenth century to Bayinnaung’s expansive but loosely held together confederation of states in the sixteenth century in the space of only a few decades? To what extent can this unprecedented state expansion be explained by structural and demographic factors and to what extent can it be explained by human agency or cultural factors such as superior military leadership and governance? How did Min-gyi-nyo set the stage for this later expansionary warfare? Lieberman (2003) argues that due to their greater availability European sources have been favored over indigenous sources and that this, in turn, has led to certain factors being favored over others in historical explanation:

I am convinced that the heavy emphasis on maritime influences to explain local change tends to be reductionist and exaggerated, at least for the mainland; and reflects above all the privileged position of European mercantile records, as opposed to less accessible indigenous sources more concerned with rural and court life. A variety of primarily endogenous factors—extensive and intensive agricultural growth, migrations and local demographic fluctuations, the internally-driven elaboration of religious traditions, the relentless pressures of interstate competition and resultant state interventions in economy and society --- have received little or no theoretical attention....In general, political, cultural, and domestic economic changes are too often conceived as epiphenomenal reflections of oceanic innovation (Lieberman, 1993, 478, my italics).

This paper will draw on indigenous Burmese and Chinese historical sources that focus on events in the interior of mainland Southeast Asia and read these sources in light of recent cross-cultural generalizations that have been made by scholars in the disciplines of political anthropology and historical demography (Johnson and
Warfare was a significant demographic factor during Min-gyi-nyo’s reign. From the beginning of his reign, military campaigns originated from Toungoo and only rarely was Toungoo ever attacked by other states. Min-gyi-nyo alternated between periods of offensive warfare and long periods of peace. While the negative demographic impact of warfare rarely had a chance to affect Toungoo’s population, the military activity of Toungoo, Prome, and the Mong Yang Shans had an effect on other regions of Upper Burma. So we can posit a differential warfare effect on the population of Upper Burma with some regions experiencing a population decrease, while others such as Toungoo experiencing a relative population increase. Increases in man and animal power due to the absence of warfare led to more conscriptable adult males, horses, oxen, and elephants creating a resource base for Toungoo’s sudden expansion in the 1530s.

If the influence of European maritime-based factors from Burma’s southern frontier on early modern polity expansion has traditionally been exaggerated, influences from the Shan Realm on the northern Chinese frontier have probably been under-emphasized. This may be due to the minor status accorded Burma in Ming dynastic sources. Expansions and contractions of the Burmese polity only register as significant events at the Chinese court after long intervals of time. Chinese sources do not usually distinguish between different Burmese sovereigns. During the whole course of the Ming dynasty, Burma was never recognized as a full state on par with Ayutthaya or Vietnam (Wang Gung-wu, 1998, 313-14). Burma was viewed as no larger or important than any single Shan state in the Shan realm:

Any understanding of the political role of Burma was hampered by describing it as an aboriginal office subject to the jurisdiction of the governor of Yunnan, even after its resurgence in the 1540’s. Indeed, surviving Ming records about Burma reveal this all too clearly. Apart from a few hints that it had Mon and Siamese neighbors and was in touch with the Portuguese to its south, Burma appeared to the Ming court as a recalcitrant and surprisingly rebellious powerful aboriginal power against which the rest of the aboriginal powers could form defensive alliances of various kinds and varying strengths.
It is extraordinary to see the grand unification of Burma during the sixteenth century depicted in Ming records as a number of troublesome border incidents on particular stretches of the Irrawaddy and the Salween rivers (with occasional alarms along the Mekong as well) (Wang Gung-wu, 1998, pp. 331-2).

Burma’s northern Chinese frontier and the Shan Realm were nonetheless important to Burmese political expansion during the late Ava and early Toungoo periods, and were perhaps more important than the southern maritime frontier. There was never a Portuguese invasion of any region in Burma during this period, but there were several Shan incursions into Upper Burma and in 1527 Upper Burma was wrested from ethnic Burmese control and passed to a confederation of Shan states until 1555. Although one might object that this is political contraction, not expansion, this contraction in the Burmese polity of Upper Burma all the way down to Toungoo in the far south created conditions conducive to polity expansion and a re-emergent Burmese state. With no territory to the north left to expand into, Toungoo shifted its military focus to the south, invading the Mon kingdom of Ramanya, taking first the western delta region and its ports of Dagon and Bassein (1538), and finally the capital Pegu (1539). Then, gathering manpower from the south, Toungoo swung to the north, attacking Prome (1540), then Moulmein (1541), and finally Prome again (1542-43), followed by a drive deeply into Upper Burma into territory controlled by the confederation of Shans at Ava (1544-45).

Some comments are necessary regarding the dating of events and the use of historical sources. U Kala’s Maha-yaza-win-gyi, the version of the Burmese chronicle used here, contains two parallel overlapping renditions of the events of Min-gyi-nyo’s reign written from the viewpoint of the Ava and Toungoo courts which we will call the “Toungoo” and “Avan” narrative threads, respectively. The two narrative threads complement each other, often covering the same event from different perspectives, each supplying important information not provided by the other. The two narrative threads are inter-leaved in the narrative history of Min-gyi-nyo given below. For most events the chronicle only gives the year without extra data to reconstruct a more exact date from. When only a year is given, a date can only be placed in a two year range. Wyatt provides both years (e.g. 1456/7) in his edited versions of the Chiangmai and Nan
chronicles (Wyatt, 1994; Wyatt and Wichienkeeo, 1998). When translating from Buddhist dates, the second date of the two dates (e.g. 866 + 639 = 1505), the commonly excepted date, if there already is one, and sometimes both dates are used. The original Buddhist dates are also provided since they are more precise and also serve as a ready index into the Burmese chronicle which is organized chronologically. A thorough analysis, assignment of dates, and creation of a calendar for the period using the dating techniques of Eade (1989, 1995, 1996) remains to be done. So as not to burden the reader with the extensive military statistics that slow Burmese chronicle narrative down, these statistics are given in a note similar to a bibliographical reference at the end of the sentence where they occur like this “(E:100; H:1,000; 20,000S)” meaning one hundred elephants, one thousand horses, and twenty thousand soldiers. The Ming Annals contain abundant descriptions of political events along the Shan-Chinese frontier during Min-gyi-nyo’s reign that complement the Burmese chronicle and provide a more detailed picture of the situation that the Burmese state of Ava faced on the eve of the Shan invasion of 1524 that led to its downfall. The Ming Dynasty Annals [Chinese: Ming Shi-lu] are the primary source among all Chinese primary sources for the period. As Wade (2005a, 3) observes: “It is by far the largest single historical source for the Ming Dynasty in China (1368-1644),” and consists of daily verbatim records of memorials presented to the emperor as well as the debates and policy decisions that surrounded them.2

2 All entries in the Ming Annals relevant to Southeast Asia have been translated by the Geoff Wade and are available to the general public online book at the University of Singapore (Wade, 2005b).
Upper Burma before Min-gyi-nyo (1481-86)

The events that shaped Min-gyi-nyo’s reign started before he ascended the throne in 1486. Already in the early years of Minhkaung II’s reign as king of Ava (1481-1502), Prome, Yamethin, and the Mong Yang Shans had achieved a large measure of independence. From the perspective of their overlord Ava, they were often in a state of rebellion. Shan raids from the north, that had been a problem throughout the fifteenth century, continued and grew in intensity. The Mong Yang Shans repeatedly attacked the northern garrison town of Myedu that guarded the important irrigation districts in the Mu river valley to the north of Ava thus threatening Ava’s food supply. When the king of Prome died, the ruler of Tharawaddy to the south seized the throne. This new ruler proved to be more aggressive than his predecessor, immediately sending an expedition to take Magwe on the Irrawaddy river to the north.

Yamethin posed a special type of threat. Located close to the capital and usually ruled by a member of the royal family close to the king, its physical and political proximity to the throne of Ava made Yamethin a refuge for ambitious princes. Min-gyi-swa-saw-ke had held Yamethin as an appanage before he became king of Ava in 1367 (Bennett, 1971, 21). During the 1480’s Yamethin arose as the principal threat to Ava in the eastern part of Upper Burma. The lord of Yamethin Min-ye-kyaw-swa also ruled over Ye-hlwei-nga-hkayaing [five irrigation districts] in or near Kyaukse. Although Ye-hlwai-nga-hkayaing is sometimes equated with Kyaukse, the toponyms associated with this region are located from the Meikhtila-Nyaungyan area right up to Kyaukse, so they are not entirely within Kyaukse. Whereas the Mu river valley irrigation district to the north of Ava is fairly well-defined, ending at the northern garrison town of Myedu, the target of most Shan incursions into Ava’s territory, the extent and control of southern irrigation districts from Kyaukse to Yamethin, and thus the food supply of Ava, seem to be much less well-defined. Further work on the historical geography of the region from Yamethin to Kyaukse could help clarify the extent of Ava’s control over its southern food supply.

Yamethin controlled important rice-growing regions near the capital, so this would have ranked Yamethin as an important
appanage with large food surpluses. These food surpluses led to Yamethin gaining a measure of independence in its actions, ignoring the wishes of its overlord Ava, eventually being considered rebellious by Ava, and finally being targeted in a punitive campaign. This was not the first time the lord of Yamethin had been considered rebellious. During the Chinese campaigns against Mong Mao (1436-1449) a king of Ava had even requested Chinese forces to subdue Yamethin as the price of handing over the Mong Mao [Luchuan] leader (Liew Foon Ming, 1996, 196). The lord of Yamethin’s rebellious nature seems to be fitting with his status as the younger son or brother at court. He was the youngest son of the king of Ava Mahathihathura (1469-81) (UKII:98) and the younger brother of Minhkaung II (1481-1502) (UKII:105). As we will later see on closer inspection, a large part of the chronicle narrative revolves around this figure.

Yamethin entered into rebellion in 1482 (BE 843). The Burmese chronicle usually does not describe how or why a vassal was rebellious, but it does provide hints. Not sending sufficient tribute to Ava, expanding the size of a fortified city, colluding with another vassal, attacking the settlements of another vassal, and removing population from a fief and relocating it to the vassal’s capital, were all at one time considered acts of rebellion by the king of Ava. While Yamethin revolted in the east, the two brothers who ruled Salin and Se revolted in the west, so Ava was already facing a contagion of rebellion across Upper Burma when Min-gyi-nyo became king of Toungoo. The king of Ava ordered the ruler of Toungoo Sithu-kyaw-htin to march to Yamethin to put down the rebellion. He also mustered up some reinforcements to help him. Sithu-kyaw-htin marched straight to Yamethin and without waiting for the reinforcements from Ava engaged the Yamethin troops in a pitched battle. Sithu-kyaw-htin overcame the first wave of troops sent out of the town walls to meet him, but his troops were defeated by the second wave and Sithu-kyaw-htin died in battle. When the reinforcements arrived from Ava, Min-ye-kyaw-swa, the ruler of Yamethin, strengthened the town defenses and resisted from within the town walls, because he thought the Ava troops were too great to engage in pitched battle. The walls of Yamethin were too well-defended with guns to try to scale them, so Ava had to surround the town from a distance. After two months, they were called back to Ava. After Sithu-kyaw-htin’s death at Yamethin in 1482 (BE 843),
his son Sithu-nge was appointed governor of Toungoo (UKII:105).

The king of Ava and his ministers assessed the distribution of power in Upper Burma during discussions recorded by the Burmese chronicle in 1483 (BE 844). Ava faced two threats: Prome and the Shans who continued to raid Myedu and Ngarane in the north (UKII:106). The king of Prome died in 1483 (BE 844) and his uncle Thado-min-saw the ruler of Tharrawaddy, south of Prome on the Irrawaddy near modern-day Henzada, marched to Prome and declared himself king of Prome taking his elder sister-in-law to be his queen. The same year he advanced to Magwe by land and water, an incursion into Ava’s territory. The king of Ava immediately sent forces to attack them. When the two sides arrived at Maloon, they encamped there facing each other for one month. In the end, they reached a mutual understanding without engaging in battle, exchanged gifts and returned home (UKII:106).

Yamethin attacked Nyaungyan which was defended by Ava’s troops in 1485 (BE 846). Yamethin hid in the forest near Nyaungyan until, under cover of dark after midnight, they left their hiding place and brought down the gates of the city by using an elephant as a battering ram. They took the town of Nyaungyan and after taking captives, elephants, and horses, they appointed a governor, garrisoned the town, and returned to Yamethin. A rebellious minister Sithuringatu fled the capital Ava in 1486 (BE 847) and took refuge with Min-ye-kyaw-swa at Yamethin. The king of Ava sent an expedition against Yamethin. They made assaults against the town walls several times but the walls of the town were well-defended, so when the rainy season was approaching they returned to Ava (UKII:107). To summarize, in the period leading up to Min-gyi-nyo’s reign, Ava faced both internal threats from vassal states such as Yamethin and Prome in Upper Burma and external threats from the Shan Realm, but Toungoo was not yet considered a threat.
The Shan Realm before Min-gyi-nyo (1449-1503)

Several factors conditioned the relation between the Shan Realm, China, and Burmese Ava before Min-gyi-nyo’s accession to power:

1. The Shan Realm was a perpetual threat to Ava.
2. The Shan Realm was effectively an economic frontier for Ava connecting it via trade to the vast expanding markets of Ming dynasty China (SLC 97-198; Brook, 1998).
3. The Shan Realm prospered economically from its proximity to China and trade in gems and luxury goods with which it was well-endowed (SLC 134-153).
4. Economic prosperity in the Shan Realm led to increased population and surplus wealth to finance armies and supply them with military resources such as weapons, animals, and the time of humans spent away from subsistence farming.
5. The Shan Realm had limited territory.
6. Shan expansion to the east into China was not possible.
7. Expansion to the south into Upper Burma was an easier natural alternative for territorial expansion.
8. On its frontier with the Shan Realm, the Ming Chinese state had a policy of divide and conquer and fragmenting potentially powerful frontier states (Wang Gungwu, 1998, 318-9), but this policy sometimes backfired and produced even stronger states (MSL 12 Oct 1499).
9. The Shan-Chinese frontier region was in a continual state of warfare from 1449 to at least 1503.

The most important events along the Shan-Chinese frontier during the fifteenth century were the Luchuan-Pingmian Campaigns (1436-49). Liew Foon Ming (1996) presents a detailed narrative history of these campaigns from Chinese sources. These campaigns pitted the large Shan state of Mong Mao, which the Chinese state called the “Luchuan-Pingmian Pacification Commission” after conquering it in the late fourteenth century, against the Chinese state. The core region controlled by the Mong Mao state corresponded to modern Longchuan and Ruili districts on the Yunnan-Burmese border with the modern border town and commercial center of Ruili as its administrative headquarters. The influence of Mong Mao, however, extended east of Bhamo and the
Irrawaddy river all the way to the Salween river encompassing almost all of south-western Yunnan and to the west of the Irrawaddy river its influence also spread over the Shan states of Burma (Liew Foon Ming, 164, 1996). The Luchuan-Pingmian campaigns set the stage for Shan expansionary warfare after 1449:

The first Ming emperor had tamed the most powerful Maw Shan leader in 1387 and then, after 1398, carved up the large state of Luchu’an [P’ing-mien] into eight small territories. His son, the Yung-lo emperor, fragmented the Maw Shan [Mao Shan] state further by establishing two of the territories as pacification commissions, thereby raising them to the same status as Lu-ch’uan, and openly used these two tribes to check the power of Lu-ch’uan...The re-emergence of the Maw Shan chieftains of Lu-ch’uan followed on the withdrawal of Ming armies from Vietnam in 1427. Knowing that the Ming court was in no condition to fight on the Yunnan border, the Maw Shan tribes became increasingly ambitious during the next few years. After 1436, their armies began to invade the border counties of central Yunnan, reaching as far as the Yung-ch’ang and Ching-tung [in Chinese territory] (Wang Gungwu, 1998, 325-6).

The Chinese sent a series of four military expeditions against the Maw Shans over more than a decade. As Wang Gungwu observes:

This war had disastrous consequences for the Ming state, it disrupted the economies of all the southwestern provinces involved in sending men and supplies in fighting a war of attrition against a small tribal state and it cost the Ming state the respect of its tribal allies on the border, who saw how inept and wasteful the Ming armies were. Moreover, the war drew commanders, officers, men, and other resources from the north which might have been vital to the defence of the northern borders. It is significant that the end of the Lu-ch’uan campaigns early in 1449 was followed immediately by extensive tribal uprisings and other revolts in five provinces south of the Yangtze river, and, on the northern frontiers, by the spectacular defeats later in the year which virtually destroyed the imperial armies in the north and led to the capture of the emperor himself by the Mongols. The year 1449 was a turning

In the late fifteenth century the Shan state of Mong Yang rose to prominence in the Shan Realm and by 1527 Burmese Ava had fallen to a Shan invasion led by Mong Yang. According to the understanding of Chinese officials as conveyed in their memorials to the throne in the Ming Annals, after Mong Mao’s defeat in 1449 the Chinese had eliminated the Mong Mao state by splitting it into pieces and Mong Yang was then founded by remnants of the Mong Mao royal family who were allowed to cross the Irrawaddy river [Jin-sha River, see Liew Foon Ming, 1996] and found a small state in return for a pledge not to cross the Irrawaddy river. The Mong Yang ruler Sawlon who later led the 1524-27 Shan invasions of Ava is even referred to in the Ming Annals as “the remnant spawn of the rebellious Lu-chuan [Mong Mao] bandit” (MSL 10 November 1528). The history of relations between a polity named alternatively Mohnyin (Burmese), “Meng-yang” (Chinese), or “Mong Yang” (Shan) with Burma and China goes much further back than this. The Chinese state had recognized a state called “Meng-yang” as far back as 1404 and a king of Ava during the early sixteenth century had been entitled “Mohnyin-thado” (1427-40) because of his military activities in Mong Yang (Liew Foon Ming, 2003, 153; Harvey, 96-99).

How can the Chinese claim that Mong Yang was founded after 1449 be reconciled with Burma’s and China’s record of relations long before this time? One explanation is that the remnants of Mong Mao’s ruling house may have assimilated or been assimilated by the Mong Yang Shans and assumed their identity. As Lieberman (1978) points out, boundaries between ethnic groups during the pre-modern period were often fluid. Ethnic identities did not always determine political loyalties. Personal bonds of patron-client relations were the basic social glue. These personal bonds of fealty tolerated ethnic heterogeneity and even allowed ethnicity to be redefined to some extent. If this was the case, as Lieberman argues, between ethnic groups as different as Burmese and Mons, how much more so between linguistically and culturally similar Shan groups living in close proximity to each other and often related by blood (Daniels, 2001, 53-54; Liew, 2003, 152-154). As we will see, one of the most difficult problems in writing an accurate history for the period is making sense of the chaotic and often contradictory references to Shan groups and states. In the end, instead of striving
for a false sense of accuracy, perhaps it is best to acknowledge this indeterminancy as a feature of political life during those times.

The endemic state of warfare that divided different Shan groups in the Shan Realm from 1449 to 1503 seems to dictate against any sudden ethnic union, but Shan sources during this period indicate at least temporary periods of unity (Witthayasakphan, 2001a, 85-86; Witthayasakphan, 2001b, 31-32). The conquest of the Shan-Chinese frontier by the Ming troops in the late fourteenth century had fragmented the power of Mong Mao, but there are strong indications that the conflicts between Mong Mao and the Chinese state until Mong Mao’s final defeat in 1449 hinged on the mobilization of the manpower of smaller Shan states (Liew Foon Ming, 1996). During this period Mong Mao continually tried to unify and reassert its power over the Shan domains that surrounded it that it had once controlled. The first impetus to union among Shan groups during the period we are investigating, the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, might have been the strong military leadership of Sawlon who the Burmese chronicle clearly portrays as the leader of the 1524-27 invasions. Chinese sources provide limited confirmation of this fact (MSL 10 Nov 1528). Within six years of the invasion in 1532, however, Sawlon was assassinated from within the ruling group of Shan elites. After Sawlon’s assassination, the multi-ethnic character of Shan rule at Ava starts to become more apparent. It is possible that the strong military leadership of Sawlon provided an initial impetus for ethnic union and effectively masked the multi-ethnic character of the Shan invasion of Ava through the rhetorical tendency of chronicle history to equate the state with its ruler.

During the 1480s, the power of the two Shan states Mong Yang and Mong Mit, rose in tandem, fueled by trade with the rising Ming dynasty of China. Mong Mit was most famous for rubies from the town of Mogok, sending tribute missions to the Chinese court with them as early as 1407. Mong Yang was famous for amber and jade (SLC 127, 129, 227, 241). The adjacent Shan states of Hsenwi and Hsipaw effectively defined a boundary between Chinese and Burmese spheres of influence in the Shan Realm. Hsipaw was a steadfast ally of Ava for much of the fifteenth century and appears to have had no relations with the Chinese state since it is never

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3 Here the Burmese “Sawlon” is rendered in Chinese as “Si Lun” and in Tai or Shan as “Tsa-lon” (Wade 2005c, entry “58. Lu-chuan/Ping-mian”).
mentioned in Chinese sources. Hsenwi was the largest Shan political entity recognized by the Chinese state in the Shan Realm during the early Ming dynasty (SLC 2000, 228), but in the late fifteenth century over the course of several decades Mong Mit gradually broke free from Hsenwi’s control and was finally recognized by the Chinese state as a separate political entity (SLC 230). In the mid-fifteenth century the Chinese governor of Hsenwi married his daughter Nang Hannong to the ruler of Mong Mit. She was put in charge of Mong Mit’s gem mines and eventually became ruler of Mong Mit. Starting from the 1450s, Nang Hannong, using the gem trade with China as a lever, separated Mong Mit from Hsenwi. The role of Ming dynasty court politics and the gem trade in Mong Mit’s serpentine rise to power during the later half of the fifteenth century has been documented by Sun Laichen (SLC 227-232). Other minor Shan states in the Shan Realm that are explicitly referred to in Burmese and Chinese sources include Kalei on the Upper Chindwin river as well as Mong Nai and Yawnghwe in the southern Shan states near modern-day Taung-gyi.

During the 1580s and 1590s, tribute missions were sent frequently to the Chinese court by Shan rulers. Sending a mission was usually a strategic move that often did not indicate actual submission. It was often used to delay Chinese military action, gain acquiescence to territory that had been seized, and also as a bid to get hard to obtain recognition as a state by China. Mong Yang sent regular tribute missions to the Chinese court with items such as elephants, horses, gold, and silver in 1482, 1487, and 1491. Mong Mit sent missions in 1481, 1483, and 1496. Hsenwi sent them in 1496, 1505, 1517, and 1530 (MSL: Mong Yang: 23 Apr 1482, 4 Apr 1487, 3 May 1491; Mong Mit: 19 Jun 1481, 25 Sep 1483, 4 Nov 1496; Hsenwi: 29 Apr 1496, 8 Nov 1505, 22 Mar 1517, 21 Oct 1530).

While the Mong Yang Shans were placating the Chinese to the north, they were engaging in regular raids on the Burmese frontiers to the south. In 844 (1483) the Burmese chronicle records that the Mong Yang Shans continued to attack Myedu and Ngarane in the north (UKII:106). In 1484 (BE 845) a new Burmese governor of Myedu was appointed (UKII:107). In 1484, Mong Mit was finally recognized by the Chinese state as an independent political entity (i.e. an “anfusi” or pacification office) no longer under the control of Hsenwi.

Compared with the chaotic state of continual warfare in the
Shan Realm described by Chinese sources, Burmese sources often hardly seem to describe the same region. This stems from the different approach taken by the Burmese and Chinese states in their relations with Shan states. In the face of endemic warfare in the Shan states, the Chinese state was reluctant to get militarily involved, choosing to control and monitor Shan states through continual diplomatic contact and coercion instead. The Burmese, on the other hand, were less concerned about continual monitoring and control and seem to have engaged in once-off military expeditions to extract promises of submission and token payments of tribute to the exclusion of diplomatic relations. The continual contact of Chinese officials with Shans in the Shan-Chinese frontier led to overall better descriptions of what was going on there when compared with Burmese descriptions of events in the Shan-Burmese half of the frontier.

A good example of Burma’s military approach to relations is provided by the Burmese chronicle’s description of a punitive expedition led by Ava against the two Shan states Mong Yang and Mogaung in 1477. Mong Yang and Mogaung are tightly associated with each other in the Burmese chronicle, more often than not acting as one political entity (SLC 233), but in the 1477 campaign they were treated as separate entities by Ava. The Burmese chronicle records that in 838 (1477) the king of Ava heard that the Mong Yang and Mogaung sawbwas [rulers] had entered into an alliance and were helping each other militarily, so the king of Ava ordered the crown prince to look after the capital of Ava in his absence and appointed his younger son, the lord of Yamethin Min-ye-kyaw-swa, to march by land with five armies (300E; 6,000H; 70,000S). The king of Ava himself marched with 12 armies travelling by river in his golden royal barge (70,000S). When they arrived at the port of Katha on the Irrawaddy, they disembarked and marched by land to Mong Yang. According to the chronicle, when the Mong Yang and Mogaung sawbwas learned of the king’s arrival they lost heart and were not brave enough to resist. They sent gifts and arms and entered into the Burmese king’s side. If they did in fact submit in this manner, what led them to do this? Perhaps the Shans were intimidated by the shear size of Ava’s forces. Perhaps it was common cultural knowledge that submitting in advance to Burmese forces was a cultural norm that would allow the local ruler to maintain his position of power and it was this expectation that led to an early
submission. After their submission, the Burmese chronicle records that the king of Ava took the Mong Yang sawbwa and gave him the town of Tagaung in the north on the Irrawaddy to rule over. Mong Yang was given to the younger brother of the Mogaung sawbwa to rule over. The king of Ava returned to Ava in 838 (1477) (UKII:98).

By itself, the description in the Burmese chronicle is unnoteworthy, but juxtaposed with Chinese sources it has important implications for later events. The Burmese were relocating the Mong Yang rulers with their followers to Tagaung near Hsenwi without the knowledge of the Chinese. Tagaung is on the Irrawaddy river south of Bhamo which would have given Mong Yang troops a head start in their later invasion and occupation of Bhamo around 1500. It would have put them one step closer to the Burmese heartland and given them a taste of the China trade that traveled down the Irrawaddy river from the entrepot of Bhamo. The Chinese are also likely to have misinterpreted this Burmese relocation as an independent move by the Shans (cf. MSL 12 Oct 1499).

Chinese sources also describe these events, but from a different perspective. In 1479 the Ming Annals record that Ava asked China to give it the town and territory surrounding Kaung-zin [Gong-zhang] on the Irrawaddy river near Bhamo (MSL 17 Oct 1479). There is usually a lag between events in the Shan Realm and their being recorded in Chinese sources. In this case, a two year lag in recording the event would put the Burmese military expedition against Mong Yang around the same time as the Chinese refusal to give the port of Kaung-zin to the Burmese. Kaung-zin was an important port and a stopping point for Burmese tribute missions to the Chinese capital. China had promised to give Mong Yang to Ava after Ava helped in the capture of Mong Mao’s ruler Si Ren-fa in 1449. After apparently initially intending to honor this agreement (Liew Foon Ming, 1996, footnote 116, p. 198), Chinese officials eventually decided not to honor the agreement, so Ava requested this port town instead. The request was refused by the Chinese. In the wake of this refusal, Ava may have led an expedition against Mong Yang to uphold its prior claim to Mong Yang.

To summarize, the Shan Realm in the period leading up to Min-gyi-nyo’s reign was politically fragmented and plagued with endemic warfare as well as frequently shifting loyalties and alliances. This very fragmentation and disunity, however, also gave the region a fluid and malleable quality with a future potential for
concerted action under strong leadership.

Min-gyi-nyo’s Succession (1486-1492)

Min-gyi-nyo became king of Toungoo through an act of regicide in 847 (1486) when he was twenty-six years old. Min-gyi-nyo’s uncle the king of Toungoo Si-thu-nge, refused to allow him to marry his daughter, so one night Min-gyi-nyo entered his uncle’s house and murdered him together with one hundred of his servants and retainers. After Min-gyi-nyo murdered his uncle, he married his uncle’s daughter, his cousin, and ruled over Toungoo as king (UKII:151). After seizing the throne Min-gyi-nyo sent the king of Ava two young male elephants together with arms and many gifts as tribute. The king of Ava, because he was “clever in the art of ruling” the chronicle adds, did not say anything and responded only with “I bestow Toungoo upon you” and handed Toungoo over to Min-gyi-nyo to rule (UKII:107). After he became king Min-gyi-nyo built a pagoda at the very site of his deceased uncle’s former residence near a stream called Pop-pe, about 1000 feet from the north side of Toungoo, at a place which he named Mya-wa-di. Min-gyi-nyo built a white royal house and resided there with his queen.

Regicide was not uncommon during the Ava period in Burma and there was a high percentage of regicides at Toungoo successions. As Harvey points out, for two centuries after it was founded in 1280 Toungoo was “ruled by twenty-eight chiefs, of whom fifteen perished by assassination” (Harvey, 123). Regicide does seem to mark Min-gyi-nyo from the very beginning of his reign as aggressive and ruthless, but as we will see later Min-gyi-nyo was a loyal vassal to his overlord Ava. In many pre-modern political regimes, regicide stood as an initial test of power, strength, and ability to seize the initiative. Regicide was often not only usurpation but also “a challenge brought by one group of young warriors to the established tribal elite” (Di Cosmo, 1999, 11).

Min-gyi-nyo immediately followed up his succession with tests and proofs of his military ability close to home, raiding the region around Pyinmana northeast of Toungoo (UKII:151). After word of his first successful military actions spread, the Karen tribal people living in the hills around Toungoo, referred to in the chronicle as the “people who ate chickens” are said to have submitted to Min-gyi-nyo and become his servants (UKII:151). The spelling in the Burmese
chronicle is “kyet-tha:-sa:-dou.” [chicken-meat-eat-plural] with the tone mark missing on “tha:” as it typically is in U Kala, written and copied in an era before strict spelling standards and spelling books [that-bon-kyan]. An U Kala footnote indicates that “Kyet-tha:-sa:-dou” refers specifically to Karens residing to the east of Pyinmana at “Htein-pyaung-ngwe-taung Kyauk-tag” perhaps indicating a mountain near Loi-kaw in the modern-day state of Kayah, but there is also a settlement to the west of Pyinmana named “Kyet-tha:-le-ma.” (Trager and Koenig, 1979, 175-176). As with so many other passages in the Burmese chronicle of the late Ava period, more extensive historical geographical research is needed to connect chronicle references to places on the map and give them a meaningful geographical context.

Harvey (p. 124) claims that this refers to tribute being sent from the state of Karenni, but there are no references to a state of Karenni at this early date (Mangrai, 1969, 169). Tax records (sittans) from the Toungoo Land Roll of 1784 indicate that the area surrounding Toungoo was surrounded by Karen settlements that sent tribute in kind to Toungoo. Karens are said to have supplied the court with such forest delicacies and court favorites as pickled bamboo shoots, pickled sparrows, and pickled ant eggs, together with essential weapons technologies such as tail feathers of the shrike and poisoned arrows (Trager and Koenig, 1979, 144, 147). Flowers, especially orchids, were also a popular form of tribute. Apparently, everyone wanted to claim their rightful portion of this forest beauty and, quite possibly, status symbol. The Toungoo Sit-tan (tax records) record:

There were 250 orchids in each basket, but from the reign of your father until the present reign, there have been 500 orchids in each basket and two baskets constituted a load. ...villages have to provide twelve loads of orchids for the Golden Palace, two loads for the chief queen, and four loads for the Golden Hluttaw [council of ministers]. They also have to provide one sample basket, for the foregoing as well as two loads for the Bye-daik [palace administration], four loads for the crown prince, one load for the crown princess, and one load for the wun [official] of the crown prince. Once a year in time for the Royal Horse Exhibition , the deputy chiefs of the eleven cavalry charges (of Taung-ngu) are appointed to supervise the
transport of the orchids to the Golden Hluttaw...When a princess has been allotted Me-balan as an appanage, (the flowers) are sent to the princess (Trager and Koenig, 1979, 145).

Clearly, the Karen villages near Toungoo had, at least by 1784, a well-defined function as florists and purveyor of exotic delicacies to the Burmese court. The chronicle goes on to make a more far-fetched claim that when the far-away kings of the Mons and of Chiangmai heard how Min-gyi-nyo was filled with glory and might they brought the five regalia of a king to him together with their best elephants, horses, jewels, and even their daughters and made offerings to him. There is no corroborating evidence for this claim.

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**Toungoo as a loyal vassal: Military engagements with Yamethin and Pegu (1492-1502)**

During the 1490s, Min-gyi-nyo built a new capital and proved himself both as a military commander on the battlefield as well as a loyal vassal to his overlord the king of Ava. After proving his military strength on his own at Pyinmana to the north, Min-gyi-nyo proved his strength several more times during the 1490s against forces from the Mon kingdom of Ramanya and in punitive military expeditions against Yamethin on behalf of the king of Ava. In 1493, he attacked Kyaung-pya on the Toungoo-Ramanya frontier and in 1496 repulsed a Mon expedition sent in retaliation. In the late 1490s he once again attacked Yamethin and Ramanya’s frontier, this time raiding settlements along the whole length of Ramanya’s frontier with Upper Burma from Toungoo to Prome. Min-gyi-nyo’s successes in these military engagements impressed the king of Ava who awarded him with gifts and titles despite the fact that his tribute payments to Ava were deficient.

Min-gyi-nyo strengthened Toungoo’s ties to a more universal Buddhism originating in Sri Lanka in 1492 (BE 853). A princess, the future Queen of Yindaw, was born this year and a new capital named Dwayawaddy [Dvaravati] was built. Min-gyi-nyo moved from Myawaddy near Poppe stream to the new city and resided there (UKII:151). Harvey maps this city founding to the modern-day.
settlement of “Myogyi...near the Lakoktaya pagoda outside Toungoo” (Harvey, 124). A mission of Sinhalese monks from “the lineage of the great Elder Divakara who belonged to the Mahavihara fraternity” visited Min-gyi-nyo in his new city (Pranke, 2004, 268). Min-gyi-nyo invited the great elders Suvannasobhana and Divakara who accompanied this mission “to accept a monastery built for them in the eastern quarter of Dvaravati [Dwayawaddy, Toungoo]. This residence became known as Thihoyauk monastery. Under their guidance, the king purified the Sasana [religion] in the city of Taungoo [Toungoo] so that it would be wholly in accord with the Theravada, and for this reason all monks residing there became united under the lineage of the great elders” (Pranke, 2004, 218). In the same year an umbrella was raised and fixed atop the pagoda which Min-gyi-nyo had built in the middle of the new city (UKII:151). It seems to have been the experience of becoming a new father which stimulated Min-gyi-nyo to engage in this great burst of building and religious activity.

After the Mon king Dhammaceti (r. 1453-1492) died in 1492 (BE 854), Toungoo attacked settlements on the frontier between the Mon kingdom and Toungoo. It was a common practice in early modern Burmese warfare to send a small expedition to test an opponent’s strength before sending a larger expedition against it. Although the chronicle does not explicitly label this campaign as a “test campaign” as it does other later campaigns, this is a reasonable interpretation of this small probe into Mon territory. The Burmese chronicle relates the details of the campaign. Min-gyi-nyo attacked two villages on Ramanya’s frontier with Toungoo named Ka-chi and Kyaung-pya. The ruler of Kyaung-pya was a Shan from Kyauk-nyo named Tho-taing-pwa. Min-gyi-nyo launched a surprise attack against Kyaung-pya at night. The Burmese chronicle says that Tho-taing-pwa riding his elephant Shwei-kyei engaged Min-gyi-nyo in one-to-one combat. Min-gyi-nyo seized the initiative and jumping over to Tho-taing-bwa's elephant, swung his sword at him and pierced his armor and body, splitting it in two pieces. Tho-taing-bwa’s elephant was captured and named Min-kon-daing-nya, literally “the King himself captured it” (UKII:152). When the king of Ava heard of Min-kyi-nyo’s exploits he was so pleased that he presented Min-gyi-nyo with gifts including a betel box, teapot, and water jar cover. At this time Thet-shei-kyaw-htin addressed the king and pointed out that
Min-gyi-nyo had built the new city of Dwayawaddy but had never sent any of the elephants, horses, and captives that he had captured during his military expeditions to Ava as tribute. In the future, no doubt, he would revolt. The king of Ava could not bring himself to believe that a ruler of a state as small as Toungoo would ever revolt (UKII:108).

Angered by Toungoo’s incursion into his territory in 1493, the new Mon king Ban-ya-yan sent a punitive expedition against Toungoo in 1496 (BE 857). An army led by forty ministers marched from Pegu to Dwayawadi and surrounded the town (100E; 160,000S). Min-gyi-nyo appointed his younger brother prince Min-kyi Sithu-kjaw-tin to attack from the back gate of the town (80E; 30,000S) while Min-gyi-nyo attacked from the southern gate (30E; 20,000S). All of the sixteen armies of the Mons were defeated and fled. Seventy elephants and over thirty thousand captives were taken. Many died in battle. When Min-gyi-nyo’s forces had conquered over the sixteen Mon armies, he informed the king of Ava of the victory and the elephants and captives that had been captured. The king of Ava was so pleased with Min-gyi-nyo’s military prowess that he added the prefix “Maha” meaning “Great” to his already existing title so that title he bore the title “Maha-thiri-zeya-thura”. The five regalia of a king were also bestowed upon him (UKII:108, 153).

Ava called upon Toungoo to deal with the rebellious vassal Yamethin in 1496. Min-ye-kyaw-swa of Yamethin had raided the villages of Sa-ba-taung, Ain-bu, Nga-sein-in, and Tan-ti outside of its domains and taken away human captives, buffaloes, and cows in 1492 (BE 853) (UKII:152). Ava sent Min-gyi-nyo on a punitive expedition against Yamethin four years later in 857 (1496). Although this delay of four years before retaliation might seem long, it is similar to the delay of three years between Toungoo’s attack on Ramanya’s border (1493) and Ramanya’s punitive expedition to Toungoo (1496). Min-gyi-nyo raided Sa-ba-taung and Aing-bu near Yamethin and took away buffaloes, horses, and captives (50E; 300H; 20,000S). Min-ye-kyaw-swa launched a counter-attack and Min-gyi-nyo was forced to retreat. When the king of Ava learned that Toungoo had reasserted Ava’s authority over Sa-ba-taung and Aing-put he was so pleased that he awarded Min-gyi-nyo with a bracelet and a ring from his own hands (UKII:110).

In the late 1490s, Toungoo was ordered once again to attack
the villages of Yamethin and Yei-hlwei-nga-hkayaing [five irrigation
districts]. Min-gyi-nyo also raided Kyauk-hkaye and Kyaung-pya on
the Toungoo-Ramanya frontier for elephants, horses, and captives.
After this, Min-gyi-nyo marched to the Prome-Ramanya frontier
region and led raids for captives, elephants, and horses (80E;
6,000H; 10,000S). He also captured a group of Hsin-aut-ma, a type
of female elephant of less prestige than a white elephant used as a
decoy for catching wild elephants (UK:153).

A Succession Struggle Over the Throne of Ava? (1501-02)

The five years from 1501 to 1505 were a period of tumult and change
in Ava and Toungoo. In 1501-02, the king of Ava and the lord of
Yamethin both die and there is a migration of elites from Yamethin
to Toungoo. Shortly after the accession of a new king to the throne
there is an attempt on his life, a subsequent purge at court, and the
flight to Toungoo of elite fleeing from this purge. The following year,
in 1502-03, the northernmost garrison town in the Mu river valley,
Myedu, is taken by the Mong Yang Shans providing a clear signal to
all of Ava’s vassals in Upper Burma that Ava’s power and control
over its domains was waning. The same year Ava makes an attempt
to draw Toungoo closer to itself as an ally by forming a marriage
alliance with Toungoo and providing valuable settlements near
Kyaukse as a gift and appanage. Toungoo rises in importance at the
same time as Yamethin falls in importance. In 1503-04, Toungoo
reverses its earlier behavior as an obedient vassal, depopulates the
settlements it has been given as a gift, and relocates the population
to areas near Toungoo, clearly an act of ingratitude and rebellion
against its overlord Ava. Ava sends a punitive expedition against
Toungoo that is quickly defeated by Toungoo. In the short space of
two years Toungoo changes from an obedient vassal to clearly
demonstrating that it is stronger than its overlord Ava.

In 1501-02, Ava and Yamethin were interlocked in a series of
events surrounding the succession to the throne of Ava. In about
August of 1501 [Tawthalin of 863 (1501/02)], Min-ye-kyaw-swa, the
rebellious ruler of Yamethin and the five irrigation districts, passed
away and over 1,000 of his servants and retainers migrated to
Toungoo (UKII:153). The king of Ava Minkhaung II died shortly
afterwards in about the month of April [Tagu] of 1502 just before the
Buddhist New Year in 864. A coronation was held with Minkhaung’s younger son Narapati being made king in the month of May [Kason] of 1502.

Since the new king Narapati’s uncle, the rebellious lord of Yamethin Min-ye-kyaw-swa, had passed away during the previous year, the new king Narapati marched to Yamethin in about July [Waso] of 1502 to claim his inheritance of elephants, horses, silver, and gold. He brought Min-ye-kyaw-swa’s daughter back to Ava in a palanquin. Arriving back to Ava, he raised the older sister of the former king to be his queen (UKII:112).

Shortly after the new king Narapati ascended the throne, a plot was launched against his life. In about November [Natdaw] of 1502, Nga-thauk-kya, the servant of Shwe-naw-rata, the son of the king’s elder brother, attacked Narapati with a sword. The sword hit the pole of the king’s white umbrella and the white umbrella fell over the king covering him. While this was happening the lord of Ye-nan-tha, son of a king’s attendant, ran to Nga-thauk-kya and grabbed him. While Nga-thauk-kya was struggling for the sword, they fell to the ground and Nga-tha-yauk struggled to free himself. Then the lord of Ye-nan-tha, addressing the royal ear, spoke thus “If the lord of Yenantha lets go of Nga-thauk-kya he will kill king Narapati and your reign will come to an end, so kill us both!” King Narapati took the very sword that had been used against him and slew Nga-thauk-kya, sparing the life of the lord of Ye-nan-tha (UKII:113, 153).

The king then ordered the lord of Ye-nan-tha to catch Shwe-naw-ra-ta. Shwe-naw-ra-tha was reportedly only twelve years old and obviously working for others at court. He was living in the palace with his mother who was a queen. The lord of Ye-nan-tha took the boy prisoner and handed him over to the king. The king made an investigation to find out who had enticed the young boy to act in the way he had. When the king found out who was behind the plot he had them executed. In about December [Natdaw] of 1502, the young boy Shwe-naw-ra-tha was made to “disappear in the water” meaning he was given the execution traditionally accorded royalty, placed in a bag, and put in the water to drown (UKII:153). Five members of the Avan court, the servant of King Narapati’s father Mahathihathura Shin-htwei-na-thein, the ruler (myo-sa) of Pin-ta-le, the king’s servant Thi-hmu, Le-hmu, and Ye-myat-hla, were afraid of being killed in the purge that followed the
assassination attempt, so they fled to Toungoo with their attendants, horses, and elephants, all together more than seven hundred people (UKII:113). Min-gyi-nyo gave his sister Myinmala in marriage to Shin-htwe-na-thein, his brother-in-law Min-Uzana having passed away. Min-gyi-nyo raised each of these nobles to a rank commensurate with their former rank in the Avan court (UKII:153).

Although the chronicle doesn’t explicitly record it as such, all these strange events surrounding the death of king Minhkaung II in 1501-02 seem to be linked to some crisis at the court of Ava and to provide evidence of a succession struggle. Both the king of Ava Minhkaung II and the ruler of Yamethin Min-ye-kyaw-swa die during the same year, only months apart. The cause of these deaths is not given in the chronicle and no link is drawn between the deaths, however during the same year many residents of Yamethin migrate to Toungoo and after an assassination attempt on the new king of Ava Narapati, instigated by a member of Ava’s ruling family, many members of the Avan court, most likely with strong connections to the ruler of Yamethin, fearing they might be executed in the subsequent purge, also migrate to Toungoo with their followers. These migrations together with its extensive military activity must have given Toungoo some modicum of independence and recognition as a power in its own right from the other vassals of Ava in Upper Burma. In fact, from this time forward Yamethin recedes into the background and Toungoo starts to take its place as the most powerful vassal of Ava in the eastern part of Upper Burma. Yamethin is rarely heard of again.

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**Mong Yang Controls Bhamo (1498-1503)**

Mong Yang’s occupation of Bhamo from 1494-1503 was a turning point in the history of the Shan-Chinese frontier. After withdrawing from Bhamo in 1503, Mong Yang changed the focus of its expansionary warfare from other Shan states on the frontier with China to Ava’s territory in the south. By the 1540s, Ava was ruled jointly by a confederation of Shan states. The question that primary sources do not answer directly is when this alliance or confederation of Shan states first arose, when the Shan states along the Chinese frontier stopped fighting each other and started working together.

*SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005): 284-395*
The Burmese chronicle lists five Shan states in the joint campaign against Tabinshweihti's southern forces in 1542: Mong Yang, Mong Mit, Bhamo, Hsipaw, and Ava. By 1543, Mone and Yawngwe have been added to the list.

While Toungoo's sphere of influence was expanding in Upper Burma, Mong Yang's sphere of influence in the Shan realm was also expanding. In the 1490s, Mong Yang allied itself with Mong Mit's enemy Hsenwi. In 1494, following Ming orders, Mong Yang attacked Mong Mit, and took Bhamo and Kaungzin. Up to 1499, Mong Yang had taken thirteen settlements from Mong Mit which the Ming asked Mong Yang to return to Mong Mit, but Mong Mit refused to do. By 1499, Kale was also allied with Mong Yang. During the period 1500-03, the Chinese state planned to attack Mong Yang with the help of a local alliance of states including Hsenwi, Ava, Mong Mit, and Mong Nai, but in the end chose to continue their former less ambitious strategy of long-term diplomacy (SLC 237, MSL 15 Nov 1500).

Which Shan state controlled the important trade entrepot of Bhamo on the Irrawaddy provided a good measure of relative power among the states along the Shan-Chinese frontier. Bhamo was the point where overland trade routes from China met river trade routes going into Burma (MSL 28 Sep 1499). From the mid-fifteenth century Hsenwi controlled Bhamo. During the warfare that plagued the region in the later part of the century, Bhamo passed to Mong Mit in the 1480s (SLC 128-129, footnote 553). In 1594, Mong Yang, Hsenwi, and Chinese forces made a joint attack against Bhamo in an attempt to wrest it from the hands of Mong Mit. Mong Yang succeeded in this and occupied the town. In 1503, under pressure from the Chinese, Mong Yang retreated from Bhamo, effectively handing it over to the Chinese, but this did not last for very long. By 1511, Bhamo was in the hands of Hsenwi, although Mong Yang took Bhamo back that year, indicating the continuing tension between the two relatively equally matched states (UKII:119). By the 1540s, Bhamo stood as an independent member of the Shan confederation.

The year 1503 was a turning point for warfare along the Shan-Chinese frontier. Before 1503, there was endemic warfare and after that there is hardly any. Since the primary concern of the Chinese on the Shan frontier was diplomacy to put an end to warfare, most entries in the Ming Annals deal at least indirectly with warfare. This makes the number of entries for Shan states during a
given period a rough proxy variable for the intensity of warfare on the frontier during the period. Using this data (see table 1 below) we can infer a rise in the intensity of warfare on the frontier after the Luchuan-Pingmian campaigns end in 1449 until the 1490s and a decline thereafter.

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Table 1: References in the Ming Annals to Shan States on the Frontier with China (Source: MSL Meng Yang Index)

The Chinese goal during the late fifteenth century was to maintain peace on the Shan-Chinese frontier and by maintaining peace avoid incursions into Chinese territory. This had not always been the case though. The idea of “divide and conquer” had long been used as a policy rule of thumb on the Shan-Chinese frontier to keep the states there divided and weak (Wang Gungwu, 1998, 314). Assertions such as “Why would it ever be necessary to send an expedition? ...We can use yi to attack yi [Shans to attack the Shans]” in the policy debates of this period exemplify this policy (MSL 8 Oct 1483). Some within Chinese official circles argued that this policy of divide and conquer would only lead to larger Shan states that were even more threatening to China when the manpower and resources of the defeated side had been incorporated into the victor’s side. This point is made in a policy debate at the turn of the century: “If we say that: ‘When two groups of yi [Shan] fight each other, it is to China’s advantage....if he [Sawlon] is ignored, then within several years he will gather a force and train it and then,
when the calamity occurs, even if we use millions of soldiers and expend mountains of money, it will be to no effect” (MSL 12 Oct 1499). “Calamity” being a reference to the disastrous 10-year Luchuan-Pingmian campaigns that ended in 1449. Chinese officials stationed in the Shan Realm thus felt that the conditions along the frontier were conducive to group solidarity and centralization among the Shans. At the end of the paper, we will review the literature on state formation and expansion to determine what these factors likely were.

In the last decades of the fifteenth century, the logic in the debates of Chinese officials is that if the Shan states were invading and seizing each other’s territory, then they would eventually invade and seize Chinese territory as they did in 1449, necessitating a face-saving Chinese military campaign to reclaim the territory. The events of 1449 had clearly demonstrated how difficult and risky such campaigns could be. Military campaigns were to be launched only as a last resort (MSL 18 Jul 1482). If Shan states were not invading and seizing each others’ territory on the frontier then the Chinese state was satisfied. Whether Shan states were invading and seizing the territory of other states far from the Chinese frontier was a matter of less concern to the Chinese state. After the invasion of Ava in 1527, the Chinese state instructed Shan chieftains to leave Ava alone (MSL 10 Nov 1528), but only pursued this line for a limited period of time and quickly lost interest. This turn south in Shan military activity after 1503 eventually led to an intensification of incursions and raids into Ava territory and finally in 1524 deep penetration into Ava’s territory, effectively a full-scale invasion. With their occupation of Upper Burma from 1527-1555 the Shan Realm played an important role in the transition from the Ava to First Toungoo dynasty. This occupation conditioned the restoration of Burmese rule in Upper Burma by placing constraints on Toungoo’s military activity. The north was effectively blocked to Toungoo, so Toungoo chose to target the south.

Around 1494, the Chinese enlisted the help of Mong Yang in a punitive expedition against Mong Mit to take back control of Bhamo which they had occupied. After several problems the expedition succeeded in taking control of Bhamo, but the Mong Yang Shans moved across the Irrawaddy river that had been a strictly enforced boundary since their defeat at the hands of the Chinese in 1449 and occupied Bhamo. Not until 1503, after several requests by the
Chinese, were the Mong Yang Shans finally convinced to withdraw from Bhamo. Almost immediately after their withdrawal, in the same year, the Mong Yang Shans move south, attacking and taking Ava’s northern garrison of Myedu. Although they had attacked the garrison on several other occasions, this was the first time the Mong Yang Shans actually took the garrison town. As we will see later, this had almost immediate ramifications for Ava’s internal-domestic politics.

The causal connection between warfare and population growth starts to become explicit with the short period of Mong Yang Shan control over Bhamo from 1494-1503. After the Mong Yang Shans had been barred from crossing the Irrawaddy river, their population eventually grew within the limited territory they had been allotted and when the carrying capacity of the land had been exceeded the descendants of the original settlers spread out. In 1498 they finally violated the agreement and crossed the Jin-sha [Irrawaddy] river en masse. Chinese sources describe the migration across the river: “Si Lu (sic) [must be Si Lun = Sawlon] resides at Meng-kuang which is on the other side of the river. The 5,000 or 6,000 who have crossed the river are all the yi [Shan] troops of the chieftains. They rely on their lances and crossbows and do not have the benefits of armour, helmets, or firearms” (MSL 12 Oct 1499). The numbers quoted almost amount to a resettlement of whole populations. Since Shan states occupied territory that they seized from other states along the Shan-Chinese frontier for several years one might suppose that the soldiers brought their families and engaged in farming during their occupation.

The Ming Annals provide a detailed narrative history of how Mong Yang captured and eventually abandoned Bhamo. Sometime shortly before 1494/95, Si Die, the ruler of Mong Mit, attacked and occupied Hsenwi territory when its ruler Han Wa Fa was away on a journey to Mong Nai to marry a woman there. The Chinese state made preparations for a military campaign ordering “the accumulating of grain, the opening of roads, and the casting of military weapons” (MSL, 4 May 1499). Mong Mit attacked Manzhe [?] next and the wife of the governor there traveled to Mong Yang and requested help from Sawlon. Sawlon because he was restricted to the west bank of the Irrawaddy petitioned Chinese officials to allow him “to gain military merit by killing or capturing Si Die” (MSL 4 May 1499). The request was approved by Chinese officials because other
Shan groups feared Sawlon and Mong Yang’s forces. When Si Die heard of the approach of Mong Yang forces he withdrew his troops from Manzhe and retreated to a safe position and the Mong Mit commander who Si Die had left in charge, Xin-man, was captured by Mong Yang. Han Wa Fa was invited to re-establish himself as ruler of Hsenwi. This power did not last long though, because soon after Han Wa Fa reported to Chinese officials that Si Die had returned to his territory and once again had usurped power claiming the allegiance of settlements that actually belonged to Hsenwi.

Finally, the Chinese state itself decided to involve itself militarily by sending a punitive expedition against Mong Mit. Chinese officials in Yunnan figured that Si Die had not been captured which meant that hostilities and incurions into Hsenwi’s territory would continue until he was captured. The Mong Yang troops as well as troops from other small Shan states were ordered to join a Chinese force of twelve thousand soldiers under the leadership of three commanders Jiong, Dong-shan, and Ke. The Chinese forces were to provide “defense and escort” so apparently the real fighting was to be entrusted to native troops. Mong Yang Shan forces were sent across the Irrawaddy river to attack Bhamo. Hearing of this, the Mong Mit ruler Si Die ordered his commander Si Ying to fortify and defend Bhamo. The Chinese contingent of the expedition was plagued with problems from the very beginning. The commanders could not agree where to deploy troops and although there were granaries stocked with grain:

...the troops on the expedition were not given any grain and the two armies began to grumble. Ke thus provisioned the troops using the official silver which was to be given as rewards for achievements, and from stores which he had accumulated, and reduced the monthly grain ration for each guard, so as to restore the diverted official funds. Shortly thereafter Ke went to Jiong’s camp to discuss matters. The servants of the commander Dai Ji lost control of their fire and it burnt the camp, destroying thousands of military weapons (MSL 4 May 1499).

After this catastrophe Ke joined his forces with the Mong Yang forces. While he was talking with one of the senior Mong Yang Shan leaders Lun Suo: “Lun Suo, who had already crossed the river
[before the Chinese], pointed to a hawk and said to Lin Ang [Chinese commander] ‘We are like that hawk. When we take land we control and live off it.’ Ke was sad and depressed when he heard this and could not sleep. He thus sent a person to urge Jiong to meet him at Man-mo [Bhamo]” (MSL, 4 May 1499). In other words, territorial expansion to gain cultivatable land was the motive for Mong Yang Shan warfare, perhaps implying that the ratio of population to resources was too great and that the carrying capacity of the land had been exceeded. Ke realizes that the motivations of the two sides in joining this campaign were entirely different and that difference would eventually lead to conflict. The Chinese side expected humility, submission to the Chinese emperor, and an end to aggressive warfare and the seizing of neighboring territories. Mong Yang expected to gain land that the inhabitants of their state could expand into and cultivate. This eastwards expansion towards Chinese territory would eventually be abandoned in the face of continual Chinese opposition and replaced with southward expansion into the territory of Burmese Ava.

Returning to the facts of the campaign itself, Mong Yang and Chinese troops eventually encamped in front of the Bhamo stockade. The Chinese sent representatives to request Si Ying, the Mong Mit commander in charge of the Bhamo stockade, to surrender. Si Ying refused, instead ambushing Mong Yang troops, wounding one and killing two. Si Ying hung their heads outside the stockade as a warning. Five Chinese sentries were wounded by arrows. The Chinese commander Jiong ordered Shan soldiers to move up to a point in the mountains overlooking Bhamo to better control it, but Si Ying’s troops remained in the stockade, refusing to engage in battle. A Chinese messenger was sent offering discussions for a peaceful surrender. This offer angered the Mong Yang Shans who wanted to fight, but the Chinese troops had run out of food supplies and had been reduced to eating the hearts of banana trees. The Chinese commander Ke withdrew his troops to Meng-du and Jiong to Mt. Nan-ya. The remaining commander was worried that the Mong Yang forces would block his retreat route, so he started to lead his troops back along the Gan-yai route, “the troops hungry and exhausted, moreover, heard that troops sent from Man-mo [Bhamo] were in pursuit and in the ensuing struggle to escape, an inestimable number of troops were trampled to death” (MSL 4 May 1499). Ke, reaching Meng-du, was met by the female chieftain Nang
Fang acting as an envoy for Si Die the Mong Mit ruler. Ke ordered them to return the land that had been occupied, recompense the Chinese government for grain expended during the campaign, send two elephants to the local Chinese governor as an apology, and prepare local products to be sent as tribute to the Chinese capital. When Ke was called back by the regional commander, Mong Yang was also ordered to withdraw its troops from the area, but continued to cross the river and attack Mong Mit forces. Eventually, Mong Yang succeeded in overcoming Mong Mit forces and occupied Bhamo sending troops in rotation to provide defenses. Chinese envoys made repeated requests to the Mong Yang leader Salon to withdraw to no avail (MSL 4 May 1499, 8 November 1499). The Chinese leaders of the expedition were later censored and faced disciplinary hearings investigating their actions during the campaign. They had to explain what motivated them to join ranks with the Mong Yang Shans who later seized Bhamo for themselves after it was taken.

Mong Yang’s seizure of Bhamo was a surprise for the Chinese. On the one hand, Mong Yang had helped the Chinese pacify Mong Mit and regain land. The Chinese called this an “achievement.” On the other hand, Mong Yang had taken control of this land, nullifying the achievement and any benefit the Chinese might have derived from Mong Yang’s military aid. The Chinese were confused about what to do in such a situation and were continually trying to gauge whether the Shan chieftains had taken advantage of them (8 November 1499). After Sawlon sent local products as tribute to the Chinese throne, a realistic assessment of the situation is made:

His sending of local products in tribute is aimed at delaying our sending of troops. He has other plans and is looking for opportunities to regain the former Lu-chuan territory. If we accept his tribute, he will think that we want the benefit of his tribute goods, and will thus reduce the charges against him. Then it will finally not be possible to recover the occupied areas. In such a situation when will the armed conflict be ended and when will they see peace! (8 Nov 1499)

This clearly indicates that tribute was often only a symbol of submission without any economic value, meaningless if not accompanied by actual submissive behavior. After occupying
Bhamo, Sawlon joined with Hsenwi in attacking Mong Mit “killing or carrying off 2,000 yi [native] persons and stealing elephants, horses, gold, and precious stones. He intended to annex Mong Mit so as to subsequently be able to regain his former territory.” (MSL, 29 Sep 1499)

By 1503, after repeated requests from the Chinese, Sawlon finally withdrew from Bhamo. Sawlon is said to have “obeyed the orders, returned Man-mo [Bhamo] and other territory, a total of 13 areas which he had occupied previously, and withdrew his horses, elephants, and yi [native] troops back across the Jin-sha [Irrawaddy] river.” Then he sent ..... as tribute “six elephants, 600 liang of silver as well as gold and silver wine utensils, a gold saddle, a gold hook, elephant tusks, peacock tail feathers, and other local products” to the Chinese court (MSL, 11 Feb 1503).

Mong Yang quickly marched south the same year (1503), attacking and taking Ava’s Myedu garrison protecting the Mu river valley and Ava’s food supply. This would be the first of many attacks against the Mu river valley that would culminate in a full-scale invasion in 1524. Since Mong Yang’s military activity on the Shan-Chinese frontier stops or is at least greatly reduced from 1503, Mong Yang apparently redirected its military focus to the south this year. It is also possible that in the wake of Si Die’s death [ruler of Mong Mit], the Shan states along the Shan-Chinese frontier began working together or at least reached some truce. Perhaps, the military drive to the south into Ava’s territory was accompanied by some settlement to the south. Some indications are given in the Ming Annals and the Burmese chronicle that Sawlon and Mong Yang had previously occupied territory in Ava at a place called Ting-zhan during the Cheng-hua reign (1465-87) which in Burmese is probably “Tagaung” on the Irrawaddy (MSL 28 Sep 1499; UKII:98). Unrelenting Chinese resistance over several decades to Shan expansion in the Shan-Chinese frontier region was probably the main reason why it came to an end around 1503, but economic factors that are not as well-recorded no doubt played a role also. Prohibitions against the gem and luxury good trade by the Chinese court combined with the withdrawal of the eunuchs who procured these goods from the frontier reduced trade to a low level and reduced the value to the Shans of occupying trade entrepots such as Bhamo. As Sun Laichen observes, “eunuchs were withdrawn from Jinchi-Tengchong and the capital of Yunnan in 1522 and 1530
respectively. During the early reign of Jiajing 1522-1566), in 1525 and 1531 we observe that a shortage of gems occurred in the Ming court” (SLC 143). To briefly summarize, 1503 was an important turning point for Shan states along the Shan-Chinese frontier. Warfare drops sharply from this point on and warfare to the south against Ava starts to become more important.

Ava’s Attempt and Failure to Forge an Alliance with Toungoo (1502-05)

During the period 1502-04, Ava’s waning power was clearly demonstrated in several critical events. First, Ava lost control over its northern frontier and food supply when Mong Yang invaded and occupied the northern part of the Mu river valley. Second, in the wake of this invasion, Ava made a failed attempt to forge an alliance with Toungoo. In 1502/03 (BE 864) the Burmese chronicle assesses the distribution of power in Upper Burma and lists Mong Yang, Prome, and Toungoo as threats to Ava, slightly different from the last assessment in 1483 which only lists Prome and the Shans in general as threats. Within a space of 20 years (1483-1503) Toungoo and Mong Yang have emerged as threats to Ava’s power in Upper Burma (UKII:114).

Mong Yang attacked Myedu in 1502/03 (BE 864) and Thet-daw-shei, the governor of Myedu, resisted from the town as long as he could, but due to delays in the arrival of reinforcements he abandoned the town and fled south during the night. Reaching Tabayin he joined with the ruler there and strengthened its defenses. Mong Yang took Myedu and halted its campaign there (UKII:114).

The king of Ava, following the advice of his ministers, tried to draw Toungoo into a closer relationship of cooperation in 1502/03 and to accomplish this, formed a marriage alliance accompanied with a gift of territory. The king of Ava summoned his ministers and generals and discussed affairs of state with them. The minister Thet-daw-shei addressed the king, "Now Sawlon of Mong Yang has attacked our territory Myedu and Nga-ra-ne several times. The king of Prome also cannot be trusted. Toungoo Min-gyi-nyo also has a lot of elephants, horses, and troops. If he is not faithful to the king, if he
wants to revolt, then he can revolt. To prevent him from revolting and so that he will serve the king for a long time, it is better to give him in marriage to someone closely related to the king” (UKII:114). The king of Ava thought that this advice was sound and gave Min-hla-htut, the daughter of Thadodhammayaza, the royal uncle who ruled over Salin and the “ten settlements” to Min-gyi-nyo in marriage together with new territory to rule over.

The Burmese chronicle enumerates the settlements given to Min-kyi-nyo as Yei-hlwei-nga-hkayaing [five irrigation districts] including Pya-gaung, Kin-tha, Shwe-myo, Taung-nyo, Talaing-the, Pet-paing, Sa-thon, Myo-hla, In-te, In-paut, Kyat, Than-nget, Be-gu-tha-beit, and In-chon. All these settlements were all given to Min-gyi-nyo and he was made a white umbrella bearing king (UKII:114, 153). These settlements are between Toungoo and Kyaukse to the north, some of them in the same area north of Yamethin that Min-gyi-nyo had carried on punitive raids against the ruler of Yamethin on behalf of the king of Ava. The gift of Yei-hlwei-nga-hkayaing, an appanage that Yamethin had previously held, clearly signals that Ava has replaced Yamethin with Toungoo as its most important vassal in the eastern part of Upper Burma.

After these settlements were given to him, Min-gyi-nyo ordered the inhabitants relocated to Toungoo and the settlements they had previously occupied returned to a forest state. Up to this time Min-gyi-nyo had been an obedient and loyal vassal following orders and carrying out military expeditions on behalf of his overlord the king of Ava. Breaking from his previous obedience, Min-gyi-nyo removed the entire population from the settlements he had been given as a gift to him and resettled them near Toungoo. Raiding this gift of territory for manpower was surely not what Ava had intended. A more traditional strategic relation of tribute or taxation in return for protection would have met traditional expectations, protecting the appanage from future Shan incursions and drawing Toungoo closer into the fold of Ava’s allies. As the Burmese chronicle notes, Min-gyi-nyo’s response of brute resource extraction constituted an act of revolt against Ava (UKII:153).

This rebellious act was followed by yet another rebellious act. Min-gyi-nyo gained new dependencies in the Nyaungyan-Meikhtila area just south of Kyaukse in 1503/04 (BE 865). When the ruler of Nyaungyan Min-ye-kyaw-tin died, the town of Nyaungyan and many of its dependent towns allied themselves with Toungoo.
Accumulating manpower in this fashion was a rebellious act that signaled a move to bolster military strength for future military action just as enlarging the fortified area of a town would be. Based upon the subsequent acts of support given by these lords to Toungoo this is the strongest evidence there is of a tributary relation between Toungoo and a weaker state. Nyaung-yan and five towns tributary to it, Thin-kyi, Yin-daw, Meikhtila, Myin-nyaung, and Tha-ga-ra, together with three sons of the deceased ruler, Baya-kyaw-tin, Min-don-ta and Min-pyi-ywa came over to Min-kyi-nyo’s side. This no doubt meant that they took an oath of allegiance, forged an alliance, and became in some sense tributary or subordinate to Toungoo but the three sons remained in their appanages. Min-don-ta was given in marriage to Min-gyi-nyo’s daughter who became known as the queen of Yindaw because Min-don-ta ruled over Yin-daw. Min-pyi-wa ruled over Thin-kyi (UKII:153).

In 1503/04, the king of Ava sent a punitive expedition against Toungoo to punish it for depopulating the appanage, but Toungoo intercepted it and defeated it before it arrived in Toungoo. They didn’t completely crush Ava’s forces though. Avan forces followed them and attacked them on their way back to Toungoo. The dramatic details of this incident are recorded in the Burmese chronicle. It is said that when the king of Ava heard that his people, the lords from the Nyaungyan-Meikhtila area, had become the servants of Toungoo, he appointed Yaza-thin-kyan as commander-in-chief of an expedition and together with elephants and horses he ordered them to attack Myin-nyaung and Tha-ga-ra, two of the settlements that had been given to Min-gyi-nyo and from which he had removed inhabitants. When Min-gyi-nyo heard of this, he marched on the town (120E; 6,000H; 50,000S). The forces from Ava resisted from inside the town walls. Min-gyi-nyo led the attack riding his elephant and Ava was defeated. Then Min-gyi-nyo ordered his soldiers to take Pyauk-maing. On their return march forces from Ava followed them and attacked them. In a scene from the Burmese chronicle reminiscent of a modern day action film, the commander in chief Yaza-thin-kyan in pursuit of Min-gyi-nyo’s forces rode his royal elephant Yan-kaung and attacked Min-don-ta the king of Toungoo’s son-in-law who was riding his elephant Na-ga-wa-ra. Ya-za-thin-kyan’s elephant bolted and ran away from the engagement. Min-don-ta pursued and attacked Yaza-thin-kyan, cutting off his head according to the chronicle. They took lots of
captives, buffaloes, and cows as war prizes. Then they subjugated the villages belonging to the ruler of Pyinzi which belonged to Meikhtila and took lots of elephants, horses, and captives together with cows and buffaloes (UKII:154). Min-gyi-nyo organized members of Toungoo’s ruling elite for war in 1504/05 (BE 866). The Burmese chronicle provides a list of “descendants of heroes and warriors” who were formed into cavalry groups and awarded titles. These military units would be used in Min-gyi-nyo’s last period of military activity during 1505-10 before he settled down to more peaceful pursuits and the development of his kingdom (UKII:154).

The judgment passed on Min-gyi-nyo by Harvey in his History of Burma is neither fair, nor accurate. Harvey claims that the politics of Min-gyi-nyo’s succession, the treachery and betrayal that he exhibited in regicide, followed him into the early years of his reign. Harvey claims that when the king of Ava recognized Min-gyi-nyo as the legitimate ruler of Toungoo “having thus condoned murder and put a premium on disloyalty, he refused to believe that Min-gyi-nyo was about to attack him, mumbling ‘he would never dare.’ But Min-gyi-nyo did dare: whenever he wanted slaves or cattle, he came raiding as far as Meiktila to get them, and his son conquered Ava.” Harvey concludes his assessment with a little irony: “the 1829 chroniclers cite Minhkaung’s treatment of Min-gyi-nyo as an instance of statesmanship” (Harvey, 102-3). With these sweeping statements Harvey is not giving the Hmannan chronicle of 1829 a very detailed reading. A more detailed reading shows that Min-gyi-nyo disregarded the authority of his overlord the king of Ava only in the face of his waning power and authority after the fall of the Myedu garrison to Mong Yang in 1503. Most of Min-gyi-nyo’s military campaigns were against smaller, weaker settlements dependent on stronger states like Yamethin which makes Min-gyi-nyo’s early military campaigns closer to once-off raids for resources than permanent institutions of authority. In this respect, Harvey’s characterization of Min-gyi-nyo’s warfare as raids seems correct. Furthermore, it was not the “1829 chroniclers” who described Ava’s recognition of Min-gyi-nyo as an “act of statesmanship”. The same passage can be found in U Kala’s Maha-yaza-win-gyi first published in the early eighteenth century (U Kala, 1961; Lieberman, 1986) and there’s no reason to believe that this judgement does not go back even further to the original compiler of Ava’s chronicle during the First Toungoo dynasty.
Leniency towards rebellious tributary leaders and reinstatement to their previous position after chastisement is common in the Burmese chronicle, so the king of Ava’s quick recognition of Min-gyi-nyo is not an anomalous event in Burmese history.

To briefly summarize, during this first period of his reign (1486-1504), Min-gyi-nyo seized power with an act of regicide, tested his military leadership capabilities with easy expeditions against nearby settlements, in the mid-1490s helped Ava wage punitive warfare against the powerful leader of Yamethin, and after having been awarded by Ava for his efforts, betrayed Ava’s goodwill and defeated a punitive expedition that Ava sent against him. During this whole time the threat that Mong Yang posed to Ava was looming on the horizon. When Mong Yang took the Myedu garrison in 1502/03, Ava suffered a sudden loss in prestige and standing among its tributary states which was the likely immediate cause of Toungoo’s rebellious actions in 1503-1504. The Burmese kingdom of Ava had entered into a permanent state of decline.

Toungoo Reaches Maturity: An Alliance with Prome and Expeditions to the West (1505-1510)

For the next five years of Min-gyi-nyo’s reign Toungoo and Prome waged war together attacking settlements in a very small but important region centered on Pagan, a region which roughly corresponds to “Myingyan District” of the British colonial era. This region is delimited by a triangle composed of three settlements: Pakan-gyi, Pakan-nge, and Kyaukpadaung with the Irrawaddy river serving as its western border (see map 2). Pakan-gyi (Greater Pakan) is located near the intersection of the Irrawaddy and Chindwin rivers not far from the capital Ava. Located slightly upriver and north of Pagan on the Irrawaddy, Pakan-gyi is matched down river to the south of Pagan by the Pakan-nge (Lesser Pakan). If a triangle is drawn from Pakan-gyi south to Pakan-nge along the Irrawaddy, then inland to Kyaukpadaung near Mount Popa, and finally from Kyaukpadaung to Pakan-gyi again, this triangle defines the focus for Toungoo-Prome joint military activity in the western part of Upper Burma from 1505 to 1510. This area was far to the north of either Prome or Toungoo with Magwe serving as a half-way point and staging area between Prome and this region. This region has a
border on the Irrawaddy river which probably heightened its economic and political value. The Irrawaddy was the most efficient transportation route in Upper Burma facilitating trade, the movement of troops, and the extraction of economic rents from trade in the form of tolls and duties on cargo shipped along the river. The ancient capital of Pagan must have also given this region symbolic significance to those who sought to control it militarily.

The first decade of the sixteenth century can be broken into two distinct periods. From 1502 to 1505, Min-gyi-nyo took the first steps towards independence. By 1505, although Toungoo was not a threat to Ava militarily, it certainly was not the ally Ava had planned for when it tried to forge an alliance with it in 1503. Toungoo offered no military assistance to Ava in its increasingly urgent battle against Shan encroachments on its territory. From 1505 to 1510, Min-gyi-nyo acted in an increasingly independent manner. In this middle part of his reign he moved fluidly throughout Upper Burma, setting up a sphere of influence surrounding and protecting Toungoo from raiding and predation on its human and animal populations by other states. This sphere of influence would persist through the Shan invasions of the 1520s into the reign of his son and successor Tabinshweihti. The military resources from this sphere of influence (people, horses, elephants, cattle, oxen) would provide the initial impetus when Tabinshweihti began the First Toungoo dynasty’s state expansion, an expansion that would last until the death of Bayinnaung in 1581.

**Toungoo and Prome attack the Pagan region (1505-6)**

The alliance of Toungoo and Prome originates in the Burmese chronicle as a series of stylized meetings between the rulers of Toungoo and Prome. In the Burmese chronicle these meetings signal that the political environment of Upper Burma has fundamentally changed and that a new era was beginning. Min-gyi-nyo becomes as Lieberman (2003, 150) describes it, “a master of opportunistic alliance” figuring that alliances with Prome and Taungdwingyi that together with Toungoo spanned the southern frontier of Ava were more valuable alliances than the alliance that Ava had tried to foist upon it. An alliance with Ava would have entailed the commitment and wastage of military resources (men, horses, elephants) in future...
battles against the Shans. This would also have risked creating an enmity with the Shans that might have resulted in Toungoo eventually becoming the target of Shan offensive warfare. Toungoo’s alliances with Prome and Taungdwingyi were of a fundamentally different nature. They were more of non-interference pacts than true alliances in which resources were committed to helping the other side, agreements not to interfere with each other’s raiding activities, territorial expansions, and attempts to establish a sphere of influence. Toungoo and Prome’s geographical separation to the east and west of Upper Burma’s southern marches made this arrangement feasible.

The Toungoo narrative thread of the chronicle records the Prome-Toungoo alliance as starting in 1505 (BE 866) (UKII:154). The king of Prome traveled upriver from Prome and met face to face in full war array in front of Swei-kyaw pagoda with Min-gyi-nyo’s forces after which the two kings pledged loyalty to each other. The chronicle does not reveal the reasons or events surrounding the Toungoo-Prome alliance. The two rulers simply meet, take an oath of loyalty, and march off on their joint military expedition. After their meeting was over, Min-gyi-nyo marched overland and, passing by Sale, attacked Singu. The king of Prome left his camp at Sa-kyaw, a village near Kyaukpadaung, traveled upriver to Singu, and invited his junior Min-gyi-nyo to his royal barge where they ate together on plates made of precious stones. After this they attacked Pagan, but were unable to take it. From Pagan they marched to Sale accompanied by the military contingents of the lord of Yindaw Min-ton-ta and the lord of Thin-kyi Min-pyi-wa (both towns near Nyaung-yan) who had become client states of Toungoo in 1504. When they reached Sale which must have been early in 1505 (BE 866), they surrounded the town and laid siege to it (UKII:154, 115).

The king of Ava called on Hsipaw to help him put an end to Toungoo and Prome’s military actions. The king of Ava called all his ministers and generals together and asked them for their advice. He told them that the kings of Toungoo and Prome were currently laying siege to Sale and that he had heard they had come in great force. He asked whether they thought it would be appropriate to send an expedition to quell the rebellion. The minister Nei-myo-kyaw-tin addressed the king pointing out that in the north at settlements like Si-bok-taya, Sitha, and Tabayin, when Ava was militarily present in force the Mong Yang Shans did not attack. He suggested that Ava
call upon its ally the Hsipaw sawbwa to provide reinforcements and a display of strength. The king of Ava agreed and sent gifts to the Hsipaw sawbwa requesting him to come and help. The Hsipaw sawbwa marched quickly to help his little brother the king of Ava (60E; 3,000H; 40,000S). Narapati traveled downstream, leading the Ava’s naval forces from his royal barge encrusted with gemstones. By river, three hundred small ships with sails [ka-tu], three hundred war barges with iron hull-plates and hooks propelled by oars [hlawka-than-hlei], were sent with seventy thousand ‘brave’ warriors. By land five armies were sent (300E; 6,000H; 50,000S). The king appointed the ruler of Pagan as general to lead the land forces (Charney, 1997, 19-20; Myanmar English Dictionary, 1993,19). That more troops were sent by river points to the greater efficiency of river transport. War animals were apparently only transported by land, although this was not invariably the case. When they arrived at Bon mountain near Sale, the river forces left their boats and launched an attack (UKII:155).

The combined forces of Ava and Hsipaw quickly defeated the combined forces of Toungoo and Prome. When King Narapati, riding his elephant Saw-yan, attacked, the ranks of the Toungoo and Prome kings were broken and they fled from the battlefield. The Hsipaw sawbwa pursued the troops of Min-don-ta and destroyed them. They took more than sixty elephants, ten thousand horses, and three thousand captives. They also captured Min-ton-ta and his elephant. Many died. The Avan narrative of the Burmese chronicle adds that “from that time on, the kings of Toungoo and Prome were awed by and showed respect for Narapati the king of Ava.” For the first time Min-gyi-nyo’s drive towards independence had been thwarted for the first time (UKII:115,155).

Many of Min-gyi-nyo’s ministers, generals, relatives, friends, and soldiers were taken captive by Ava’s army during the battle and were held in the town of Singu. Min-gyi-nyo led an attack against the town riding his elephant and secured the release of the captives. After freeing the captives, Min-gyi-nyo marched first to Pakan-nge (south of Sale) and then to Natmauk and nearby Pin. During their march to Nat-mauk, Min-gyi-nyo’s soldiers encountered the king of Prome’s elephant Za-ti-tu-ra which had been abandoned because it could no longer march. Min-gyi-nyo brought it back to Toungoo with them. From Natmauk Min-gyi-nyo began his march back to Toungoo raiding Kyaukpadaung and Ta-yin-taing and taking many
captives, buffaloes, and cows at these places.

What was the objective of this joint expedition by Toungoo and Prome? Since nothing came of this expedition, the question is not asked, but why did Prome and Toungoo target this region near to Ava but far away from their own states? Was their ultimate objective the conquest of Ava? The extension of long-term political and economic control (taxation, tribute) over the distant Pagan-Myingyan region, or was it merely raiding to augment their human and animal populations? Was this joint expedition by Toungoo and Ava a real threat to Ava? If the king of Ava had not acted quickly and opposed them, if Toungoo and Prome had been allowed to continue their chain of conquests unchecked, could they have accumulated enough manpower and animal resources to attack and take Ava? Would they even have considered attacking Ava? To a Burmese state such as Toungoo or Prome, Ava may have had a certain unassailable status as primus-inter-pares in the ethnic Burmese Buddhist world, that prevented its being attacked, albeit small pieces of Ava could be chipped away in a piecemeal fashion with expeditions against Ava’s tributary states.

Posing a counterfactual historical question points out the essential asymmetry of a Shan versus Burmese conquest. Instead of Prome offering an alliance to a Shan campaign making its way southwards down the Irrawaddy as it did in 1524, could the mirror image situation of Shans offering an alliance to a Toungoo and Prome making their way northwards along the Irrawaddy towards the capital at Ava have been possible? This later scenario is inconceivable. Toungoo and Prome both benefited from the order, security, and perpetuation of Burmese ethnic traditions of rule that came from the rule of their overlord Ava. Shans were outsiders with no such vested interest in the existing system. Fault lines were beginning to form in the political map of Upper Burma, fault lines that would eventually split Upper Burma between Burmese rule at Toungoo and Prome and Shan rule at Ava all the way up until the restoration of Ava to ethnic Burmese rule by Bayinnaung in 1555.

There was yet another Shan assault against the northern frontiers of Ava in 1507. As the chronicle describes it, during the same year 1507 (BE 868), Mong Yang, having taken Myedu in 1503, attacked the garrison at Tabayin and took it together with Ngarane. When Narapati heard of this, he quickly sent the ruler of Pagan with two hundred attack elephants, three thousand cavalry horses, and
sixty thousand 'brave' warriors. When this force arrived in Tabayin, before sending them into battle the king of Ava gave his generals a long inspiring speech. By the end of the battle Tabayin had been retaken (UKII:116).

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**The Rebellion of the Three Princes at Pakan-gyi (1508)**

Two years later in 1508, Toungoo and Prome had another opportunity to assert their independence. The king of Ava continued to face dissension and threats to his power within Ava's royal family in addition to the threats from Toungoo and Prome to the South and the Mong Yang Shans to the north. In 1508 (BE 869), the ruler of Pakan-gyi died and three royal princes seized Pakan-gyi. The three princes were the king of Ava's younger half-brothers, Min-gyi-thin-ka-thu, Min-gyi-lat, and Min-gyi-htwe, the sons of his step-mother. They gathered together elephants, horses, and troops and occupied Pakan-gyi. The rebels at Pakan-gyi called upon Min-gyi-nyo and the king of Prome to come and help them. Min-gyi-nyo and the king of Prome gathered forces and marched towards Pakan-gyi, but having learnt their lesson at Sale in 1506, they cautiously decided to wait before committing themselves to the princes' side. On the way to Pakan-gyi from Toungoo Min-gyi-nyo passed through several towns including Kyaukpadaung, Popa, Ngathayauk, Taywindaing, Singu, Ywa-tha, and Kya-o raiding and gathering animal and manpower resources along the way, finally halting first at Yenankyaung and then joining Prome at Magwe which the king of Prome had taken and occupied. There Min-gyi-nyo renewed his alliance with the king of Prome.

The renewal of the alliance between Toungoo and Prome is immersed in ritual. The senior, Thado-min-saw, king of Prome, sent word to the junior, Min-gyi-nyo, that he would like to meet, literally from the chronicle “the father requested to see his son.” The king of Prome sent a boat to bring Min-gyi-nyo to him. Mingyi-nyo went accompanied only by his attendants, betel box, and water holders. When Min-gyi-nyo arrived on the royal boat the two kings ate together on plates made of precious stones and swore an oath of loyalty. Then they marched together and when they arrived at a place called Kin-pein-naga they ran out of water. While the
elephants, horses, and soldiers were suffering from lack of water, they made an oath of loyalty once again. All of a sudden there appeared a stream and the horses and elephants were able to drink. While they were waiting for news there, they heard that Pakan-gyi had already been taken by the king of Ava and that the three brothers had been beheaded by their half-brother the king. After hearing this news, Min-gyi-nyo started back home in the year 1509 (BE 870). The king of Prome returned to Magwe.

Meanwhile, to put down the rebellion in Pakan-gyi, the king of Ava had appointed eight armies with two hundred fighting elephants, five thousand horses, and eighty thousand soldiers to march overland while he advanced on Pakan-gyi by river with three hundred fighting boats and thirty thousand soldiers. When the king of Ava arrived at Myaung-tu he joined with his other forces marching overland and encircled the town of Pakan-gyi. Seven days later, because there were almost no arms within the town to defend the town with, the rebels could resist no longer, and the walls of the town were mined. After Pakan was taken, Narapati summoned his three younger brothers in front of him, and spoke to them in front of ministers and generals: "When our father and elder brother passed away since there is no one worthy to rule over the golden palace, I took the golden palace and ruled from there. Recently there have been many disturbances caused by Prome, Toungoo, and Mong Yang, that when I am in trouble, instead of helping me, you turn against me and revolt. Even though I have a son, I have not given him the title of crown prince because I intend to bestow this title upon the person who most deserves it. Since you do not have any love for me, there is no way I can have pity on you." After speaking to them thus, he executed his three half-brothers. Those who had joined with the brothers in their revolt were also executed (UKII:117, 156).

Having subdued the rebel princes in Pakan-gyi the king of Ava turned his attention to Magwe to the south, still occupied by the king of Prome. He sent Thet-daw-shei and Tha-daw to Magwe by land (300E; 5,000H; 80,000). The king of Ava traveled down the Irawaddy from the capital to Magwe leading naval forces in his royal barge (three hundred Chinese boats built in the shape of Lon-kyin birds, two hundred big iron boats, and forty thousand soldiers). When they arrived at Magwe they attacked and defeated Prome’s boat armies that had been sent out in advance. Prome’s navy fled
and the Avan forces followed them to Prome where they laid siege to the town both by land and water. When Prome had finally been taken they captured thirty fighting elephants, sixty horses and over two thousand people. When the king arrived at Magwe he handed everything over to these to his commander Tuyin Banya and returned to Ava (UKII:118).

On his way back to Toungoo from western Upper Burma in 1509 Min-gyi-nyo learned that the ruler of Yindaw had joined with Prome. The ruler of Yindaw Min-pyi-wa was one of the Nyaungyan lords who came over to Toungoo’s side in 1504 and helped Min-gyi-nyo in his expedition against Sale in 1506. Apparently as a reaction to this news, Min-gyi-nyo raided settlements near Yindaw named Palein-kyei-pon, Yu-pon, Min-lan, Kon-paung, Kan-taung, and Baut-laut and then encamped to the west of Yindaw at Ma-kaing mountain. It is not clear why Yindaw’s allying itself with Prome would have caused Toungoo to raid settlements near Yindaw. Perhaps the motive was opportunistic, these settlements being left unprotected by Yindaw, perhaps the motive was punitive, even though Prome was an ally, Min-gyi-nyo felt that this shift in loyalty was betrayal, or perhaps Min-gyi-nyo was punishing these settlements of Yindaw that were acting rebellious in the Yindaw ruler’s absence. What the text does reveal is that ties of fealty were weak and realignments of loyalties common during the late Ava period, reflecting the increasing political fragmentation of the era (UKII:156).

After these raids near Yindaw, Min-gyi-nyo is said to have first made inquiries into the affairs of Taungdwingyi and then marched to Taung-dwin-gyi where he met with the ruler and discussed affairs with him. The result of these discussions was a marriage alliance, with a marriage between his son and the lord of Taung-dwin-gyi’s daughter. After arriving back in Toungoo, the people of Toungoo baked bricks to build a new city with. In 1510 (BE 871), the prince of Taungdwingyi Min-gyi-shwe-myat came to Toungoo and was married to the princess So-min, Min-gyi-nyo’s daughter (UKII:156).

What political implications did this marriage alliance have? Did it signify a difference in power? Can we infer which side initiated the alliance or which side benefited the most from the alliance? Harvey states unequivocally in his history that Min-gyi-nyo “was going to take Taungdwingyi in 1509 when its lord induced him to take a marriage between their children instead” (p. 125), but is this
inference justified? Are marriage alliances always concessions offered by the weaker side to placate the stronger side? Marriage alliances seem rather to be offered typically by the stronger side to placate a weaker but potentially rebellious side. We have already seen this logic at work in the marriage alliance that Ava offered Toungoo in 1503. It also holds for the marriage alliance Ava offered Taungdwingyi earlier in the Ava period. As Bennett observes, when the king of Ava Thihathu (r. 1312-24), “…after establishing his new capital at Pinya, set out to establish his ascendancy, he subdued the ruler of Toungoo without much trouble, but to secure Taungdwingyi he thought it wise to give its lord one of his daughters in marriage” (Bennett, 1971, 21). So we have two precedents of stronger powers offering their daughters to the rulers of weaker tributary states to form alliances, both precedents that contradict Harvey’s explanation. The Burmese chronicle does not explicitly draw any conclusions about what political implications this marriage alliance had, so any inference of motives can be at most tentative and speculative, but Taungdwingyi lied to the south of Ava between Toungoo in the east and Prome in the west. This location on the border of the Mon kingdom of Ramanya gave it an important buffer state function and put it in a powerful position and made it more an ally than a vassal to Ava.

Min-gyi-nyo built a new capital and named it Ketumadi in 1510 (BE 872). As the king of Ava built a new palace the same year and added the title “Shwe-nan-kyaw-shin” [Lord of the Golden Palace] to his name, Toungoo was likely motivated to build the new capital as a status symbol to rival its overlord or perhaps to make an outright declaration of independence. The Burmese chronicle describes the layout of the new palace and the ceremonies that took place when the city had been completed. Around a lake filled with lotuses Min-gyi-nyo planted jackfruit, mango trees, and many other edible fruit trees. He also planted flower and fruit gardens with jasmine. In the middle of the lake he built a fine residence. On the other side of the lake a rest-house was built where the king would entertain and reign from happily. Near the palace in the middle of the city a temporary platform was built and monks were invited from the area surrounding the city, both far and near, to come there. The monks were provided with the eight perquisites of monkhood and rice offerings were made without cease, to the royal father Maha-thinkaya as well. To the poor and destitute without clothing or
food, Min-gyi-nyo offered clothing and rice without cease. To the court Brahmins he offered silver basoes [male sarongs] (UKII:157).

The “Legend of the Golden Hintha Duck” tells the story of how the new city of Ketumadi was auspiciously founded:

Mingyi Nyo...reigned in Lokuttara Dwarawaddy for 19 years when he was advised by his counsellors to found a new city in order that he might live over a hundred years and become more powerful. The king himself already had a desire to remove his capital from Lokuttara Dwarawaddy which was then being eroded by the river. He was therefore very pleased with the idea. He then invited wise ponnas [Court Brahmans], ministers, and rahans over to his palace and consulted them as to the choice of site for the proposed town. And they told the king as follows...a pair of Hinthas will fly from due east. The spot on which they drop their food will be the most auspicious site for the new palace. On each of the four sides of the city wall to be built, there should be a main gate with four smaller ones, making up 20 gates in all. At the entrance of each gate, there should be erected a thein. The city should be surrounded by three moats—a water moat, a mud moat, and a dry moat. The Shwehintha Pagoda was built under the king’s personal supervision. The list of things deposited in the Pagoda is as follows: --- In the two porcelain vessels presented by the emperor of China.... (Shwe Zan Aung et al., 1912, 82, my italics)

This legend resurfaced rather strangely in 1912 when the treasure chamber of Shwe Hintha pagoda near Toungoo was opened and the objects described in the legend were found. This discovery led to an acrimonious debate between Burmese literati over Min-gyi-nyo’s regnal dates in the “Rangoon Gazette” that was later republished in the Journal of the Burma Research Society (Shwe Zan Aung et al, 1912).

There is also a legend about how Min-gyi-nyo met the mother of Tabinshewihti at this lake. The legend holds that after the new city of Ketumadi was built in 1510 “the Kya In or Lotus Lake (the present lake) was included in the city limits, and it was some time after that the King while he was out one day inspecting the overflow of water met the daughter of the Nga New Gon thugyi
[headman of Nga-nu-gon village] who became Tabin Shwehti’s mother" (Shwe Zan Aung et al., 1912, 81). The 1912 article on Min-gyi-nyo also contains a debate over the veracity of this legend and the origins of Tabinshweihti’s mother that Harvey apparently used to locate her hometown at Penwegon (Harvey, 125). As Harvey usually does not provide citations for his frequent mappings of ancient history to contemporary geography, this example clearly shows that these mappings should not be accepted on face value.

From the time he built his new capital in 1510, Min-gyi-nyo also mysteriously ceased all military activity until 1523 when he renewed his raids as Shan incursions into Avan territory intensified. During this long period of peace Min-gyi-nyo probably devoted himself to more peaceful economic pursuits such as improving Toungoo’s agricultural capabilities in the face of mounting population pressure, building “new irrigation tanks and systematically reclaiming jungle and wastes for cultivation” (Lieberman, 1993, 6).

**Shan Raids and the Fall of Ava (1510-1527)**

As the Burmese chronicle lapses into a long period of silence for Toungoo and Min-gyi-nyo, Shan raids into Burmese territory begin to intensify. Perhaps this silence signals a shift in focus to more important events that were threatening the very existence of the Avan state itself. The Burmese chronicle is after all a “Yazawin” or royal chronicle (Hla Pe, 1985, 53) recording, in a fashion, the events that occupied the attention of the king, not only the events, but also the aspect of events that the sovereign found important. To the king of Ava whatever minor assertions of its power Toungoo might have engaged in were now dwarfed by the threat on Ava’s northern border, yet the lack of historical data for this period in the Toungoo thread of chronicle narrative is curious. Even during periods of peace there are events that occupied the king’s time such as improvements to irrigation systems, hunting for elephants, religious donations, and other ceremonies. The only time the reader is given a glance into this part of Min-gyi-nyo’s life is in the short eulogy given on his death that provides some personal details surrounding his life such as his fondness for elephants, growing cotton plants, and his penchant for holding feasts (UKII:159). This long hiatus in the
Toungoo thread of the narrative does have precedents though. There are similar long pauses in other local Southeast Asian chronicles during relatively peaceful periods such as the period of Burmese control of Chiangmai in the seventeenth century in the Chiangmai Chronicle (Wyatt and Wichienkeeo, 1995, 129-132).

In the first Shan offensive of the new decade against the northern settlements of Ava, both the Shan and Burmese sides call on their respective allies for help. In 1511 (BE 873), the king of Ava and the Hsipaw Sawbwa renew their alliance. Sawlon the ruler of the Mong Yang Shans, said by the chronicle to be envious of this alliance, marched to Bhamo which then belonged to the Hsipaw sawbwa and surrounded the town. The Hsipaw sawbwa sent word to the king of Ava to march to Myedu, occupied by the Mong Yang forces, and encircle it. The king of Ava sent forces to attack Myedu (150E; 6,000H; 120,000S). When they arrived at Myedu they attacked the town, but because the forces defending the town had lots of guns, cannons, and arms they could not take the city. They retreated to a distance from the city and encircled it. While they encircled the city, vassals of Mong Yang, the rulers of Twin-tin, Mingin, and Kalei came out of the city to attack the Avan forces in the darkness at ten at night in the heavy rain (100E; 200H; 40,000S). The whole twelve armies of the king of Ava were destroyed. The king of Ava retreated to the garrison towns of Tabayin and Si-bok-taya and reinforced himself there with elephants, horses, and troops (UKII:119).

From 1513 to 1515 there were rebellions in the southwestern part of Upper Burma just north of Prome. In 1513 (BE 875), Sagu to the southwest of Ava on the Irrawaddy rebelled. The king of Ava led an expedition south and subjugated the town. In 1515 (BE 877), the king of Ava marched to Mye-hte ruled by the son of the king of Prome. The ruler of Mye-hte submitted to the Avan king before he arrived tendering, in what is almost a stock phrase of the chronicle, “gifts and weapons” signifying his submission. The king of Ava met with the family of the Mye-hte ruler. Prome had more recalcitrant satellite states with a more independent attitude towards Avan hegemony, though. After Mye-the, Narapati laid siege to the heavily fortified town of Phin-ta-sa that belonged to Prome. Failing to take the city, he finally returned to Ava when the rainy season began (UKII:120).

Tabinshweihti, Min-gyi-nyo’s son and successor, was born in
1517 (BE 878). From 1518 to 1520, Mong Yang resumed its attacks along Ava’s northern border. In 1518 (BE 879), Sawlon led attacks against villages belonging to Myedu and the king of Ava marched to Sitha, gathered reinforcements there, and marched on to Nga-ra-ne where he met Mong Yang forces and engaged them in battle. The Shans were forced to take refuge within the town of Nga-ra-ne. Finally, the Shans were defeated and fled. The king of Ava appointed rulers for Nga-ra-ne and Myedu and returned to Ava. In 1520 (BE 881), a war broke out between the Kalei Shans and the Mong Yang Shans and they fought for nine months. An expedition was sent from Ava to pacify both of the cities. Before the expedition arrived in Kalei, the Kalei sawbwa surrendered in advance. Kalei together with its nine districts and ten villages once again became a tributary state of Ava. The nearby settlements of Lan-pot, Pyaung-pya, Kani, and Kane on the Upper Chindwin river also became tributary states of Ava (UKII:120). In anticipation of future attacks by Mong Yang the town of Mingin on the Upper Chindwin river was fortified and a strong garrison placed there. Garrisons were placed at Myedu, Si-bok-taya, Tabayin, and Ngarane. Amyin on the lower Chindwin river was given to the Kalei sawbwa to rule over and protect (UKII:121). This Upper Chindwin region would become the entry point for Mong Yang’s invasion of Ava four years later in 1524.

According to the Hsenwi chronicle, when Chao Kam Saen Fa (r. 1523-1542) succeeded to the throne of Hsenwi in 1523 he requested all his vassal states to come and pay allegiance. This event of local importance is not recorded in Chinese or Burmese sources and cannot be independently verified, but it shows cooperation among Shan states during the critical period of the early 1520s just before the Shan invasion of Ava. According to the Hsenwi chronicle, the sawbwas [rulers] of Mong La, Mong Di, Mong Wan, Mong Kawn, Mong Jae Fang, Mong Mao, Mong King, Mong Ding, Mong Laem, Mong Saeng, Mong Nong Yong Huay, Satung, Mong Pai, and Hsipaw all came and paid allegiance, but the sawbwa of Mong Nai did not come. The lord of Mong Nai chose instead to take refuge with the Burmese king of Ava to the south. The king of Ava not wishing to create problems with Hsenwi, accepted the submission of the Mong Nai sawbwa, but gently sent him back to swear fealty to the Hsenwi sawbwa, his true lord. In the end, the harmony of the political system was restored (Witthayasakphan, 2001b, 31-32). There are potential inconsistencies in this text, namely Hsipaw was usually
allied with Ava, so why would it be pledging allegiance to Hsenwi? Perhaps this was actually a meeting of equals, perhaps the chronicle exaggerates the extent of those states submitting to it as vassals, or perhaps Hsipaw had dual allegiances. Hsenwi was allied with Mong Yang, so why isn’t Mong Yang present? Perhaps the presence of Mogaung [Mong Kawng] which is often considered to be one and the same as Mohnyin [Mong Yang], at least in Burmese sources, explains Mong Yang’s absence.

Min-gyi-nyo, after a long hiatus of over ten years, once again embarked on a campaign of offensive warfare and raiding in Upper Burma in 1523 (BE 884). The peace of the previous ten years would have allowed the population of Toungoo to grow, a population he could call on to provide troop levies. First, he attacked the cities of Yamethin and Tan-twin and many elephants, horses, and captives. He is said by the chronicle to have captured many Shans during this initial expedition. In 1524 (BE 885), he captured Pin and Natmauk in the west near the Irrawaddy and far from Toungoo. Perhaps Min-gyi-nyo was pulled out of his long inactivity by the increasing threats to Ava’s power by the Shan incursions from the north. Perhaps, he wanted to test his military strength in the new world that was rapidly changing much as he did when he first took power as a young man in 1486 (UKII:151).

The First Invasion of Ava (1524-1525)

In 1524 instead of their normal raids against Ava’s northern garrison towns of Myedu, Si-bok-taya, and Tabayin, Shan forces moved further to the west to the Chindwin river and made a drive deep into the Burmese heartland of Ava in what amounted to a flank attack against Ava. The Chindwin river defined the far western border of Ava’s domain and was probably not as well protected as the Mu river valley garrisons towns of Myedu, Si-bok-taya, and Ngarane. Mingin on the upper Chindwin river was attacked first. Hearing of this, the king of Ava marched to Myedu. After taking Mingin, Sawlon advanced to Myedu to attack the Burmese forces there. The cavalry of the two sides first engaged in battle. When the Shan cavalry retreated, they fought with their elephant corps. Then the Burmese cavalry was forced to retreat. The Shans overcame the Avan troops and took Myedu and then advanced on Ngarane and Si-bok-taya taking them as well. The Avan forces were forced to
retreat and the commander of the Tabayin garrison abandoned the town. Sawlon resided in Myedu for one rainy season and then advanced on the religious center of Sagaing, raiding and burning all the temples and houses there. From Sagaing, sweeping through the Chindwin river valley, he took Kani, Kane, Nat-taung, Badon, and Amyin. At the confluence of the Chindwin and Irrawaddy rivers, the Mong Yang forces crossed over to Pakan-gyi on the western side and took the town together with the villages of Lapot, Pyaung-pya, and Ban-chi. Marching to the west of Kun village all the way down the Irrawaddy river to Thayet also on the western side of the Irrawaddy, all the local rulers of the region from Sakut, Salin, Baunglin, and Leh-kaing fled the area (UKII: 122).

In the wake of Mong Yang’s invasion, Burmese Prome joined with Mong Yang as an ally and Burmese Ava called on its long-standing ally Shan Hsenwi. As the chronicle describes it, Thado-min-saw, king of Prome, sent an ambassador to Sawlon when he was in Thayet with gifts of tribute offering military aid in exchange for Ava’s throne. Sawlon agreed and Thado-min-saw went to meet with him in Mye-h te travelling by boat. Thado-min-saw built a pontoon bridge for Sawlon to cross over to the eastern side of the Irrawaddy river with his troops. They decided they would march on Ava together and that Thado-min-saw would have the throne and Sawlon would only take horses and elephants as prize. As they advanced downstream, towns either submitted to them or fled. The rulers of Taungdwingyi and Yamethin fled. When Sawlon had crossed over from Pakangyi and started taking settlements to the east of the Irrawaddy river, the king of Ava, and his ministers decided it was time to act decisively, so they called the Shan sawbwa of Hsipaw to come and help them (UKII:123). The king of Ava sent the ambassador Nanda-thin-kyan to the Hsipaw sawbwa with gifts. The Hsipaw sawbwa immediately gathered troops and headed to Ava. Arriving there they built a bridge over the Myit-nge river and encamped on the other side of the river at Taung-bilu-to-le-gyi. The king of Ava Narapati welcomed him and invited the Hsipaw sawbwa to the palace where they feasted on plates encrusted in jewels. The king expressed his gratitude to the Hsipaw sawbwa for coming and helping him. Min-u-ti, the brother-in-law of the king of Yamethin, reported to Narapati that Sawlon was now in league with Thado-min-saw king of Prome and that Sawlon was advancing on Ava on the eastern side of the Irrawaddy river attacking settlements.
along the way, while the king of Prome Thadominsaw was advancing by water and subjugating all the settlements in the western region. Both gathering together military resources such as elephants, horses, and human war captives to use in a final assault against Ava, a move that pre-figures the later manpower accumulation strategies of Tabinshweiht and Bayinnaung. Narapati discussed these developments with the Hsipaw sawbwa and they decided to strengthen the defenses of Ava in anticipation of an imminent attack (UKII:124).

After these alliances been made events progressed quickly to a final assault on the capital of Ava at the confluence of the Myit-nge and Irrawaddy rivers. As the chronicle describes events, Mong Yang forces under Sawlon marched very quickly and when they arrived they encamped near Ava starting from Ta-pe-htaut-yit, surrounding Seit-kaung-kwet. Five days later, Tho-han-bwa, son of Mong Yang Sawlon, came to attack the battalions from Taung-bilu riding on an elephant. Baya-kyaw-tu servant of the lord of the golden palace Narapati returned the attack riding on his elephant Ye-myat-hla. The elephant that Tho-han-bwa was riding ran away because it was frightened. When Baya-kyaw-tu was trying to pursue him, Sa-maw-kham, the nephew of Sawlon, joined in the attack helping Tho-han-bwa. Then Baya-kyaw-tu’s elephant took fright and Baya-kyaw-tu was shot by the bullets of the enemy and died on the back of his elephant. After Baya-kyaw-tu passed away, Nanda-kyaw-htin fought against Sa-maw-kham, Sawlon’s nephew, riding his elephant Ye-du-son. Saw-maw-kham’s elephant fell over and ran away. When Sawlon saw that Saw-maw-kham was running away, he pulled out his sword and displayed his naked sword to his generals, ministers, and the rest. When the Shan ministers saw their lord display his sword in this manner, they immediately entered the fray and fought elephant to elephant and horse to horse because none of them dared remain back with their armies. When Ava’s resisting forces had been eliminated, Shan soldiers ran right up to the base of the city walls, scaled them, and took the city. Many soldiers were injured and died in this final assault on the walls. Ava fell in early February of the year 1525.

The king of Ava and the Hsipaw ruler, since they dared not resist from the town anymore, fled during the night to the east of the Irrawaddy to a place named Sin-kaung and remained there. The chronicle records that when Thet-daw-shei-kyaw-htin and
Ne-myo-kyaw-htin heard that the king of Ava had fled from Ava, they presumed that they should not resist from Kyaut-ta-lone, so they decided to reunite with their king where he was staying. Thinking like this, they marched northwards and when they arrived at the place called Wet-kyet they crossed over the Irrawaddy to the east and reunited with their king at the place called Sin-kaung-wet-win. The king of Prome’s boat troops arrived at Kyaut-ta-lone at dawn, soon after Thet-daw-shei’s troops had left. When Thado-min-saw arrived he released all his war captives and Sawlon made him king of Ava. Three days later taking all the best elephants and horses, Sawlon went back to Mong Yang crossing the river at Sagaing. After Sawlon had returned to Mong Yang, Thado-min-saw returned to his own country of Prome with all the leaders of Ava. At that time he took away Thiri-bon-htut the daughter of king Narapati and queen Damadewi who was only eight years old. He also took away the Buddhist monk named Shin Maharattathara (1468-1529) who composed such famous Burmese classical poems as the Kogan Pyo, the Hattipala, and the Meiktila Lake Mawgun (Harvey, 104). After his victory, Sawlon of Mong Yang appointed governors over northern cities bordering on Shan domains including Myedu, Ngarane, Si-bok-ta-ya, and Tabayin garrisoning them all with strong troops (UKII:125; Harvey, 106).

When Min-gyi-nyo heard that Ava had fallen, he marched to the region south of Ava. When he was encamped at a place called Lut-lin-kom, the former vassals of Ava came to take asylum with him. They included the rulers of Amyin, Nyaungyan, Yamethin, Wa-ti, Pinle, Pinya, and Shan-pait-taung. The king met with these governors at a place called Htau-kyan-taing. Those who entered into the service of Min-gyi-nyo brought with them altogether twenty fighting elephants, six hundred horses and attendants, and over ten thousand men and women (UKII:158). This realignment of loyalties of former vassals of Ava seems to fall somewhere between forced and voluntary migration. Small settlements around Ava, having lost their overlord had also lost all protection against Shan incursions, so they realigned their loyalties and became clients of Toungoo perhaps migrating south to the safer Toungoo region also. This sort of realignment of loyalties during periods of political fragmentation and dynastic collapse were common (Lieberman, 1984, 40-43, 152-181; Fernquest, 2005). Harvey, striving for drama rather than objectivity, transforms the Burmese chronicle narrative into a clear
case of voluntary migration with a heavy dose of heroic human agency added for good measure:

The lords of Pinya in Sagaing, Myittha in Kyaukse, and Hlaingdet in Meiktila district, with many a Burmese family, noble and commoner, fled south to take refuge at his [Min-gyi-nyo’s] feet. In delight he exclaimed ‘Now I know why the bees swarmed on the gate of Toungoo. It meant my city was to be populous.’ It meant something far more than that, although he did not realise it (Harvey, 125).

A close reading of the first Shan invasion of Ava raises several questions. The Shans apparently at first had no desire to control Upper Burma. After their success they merely took animals as war prize and secured the border between Upper Burma and their territory. The actions of the king of Prome also raise questions. Why did he return to Prome? Did he feel vulnerable to an attack by remnants of the Avan court? This is the last we hear of Thado-min-saw. He does not participate in the second Shan invasion. When the Shans attack Prome in 1532, he has already been replaced by another king Bayin-htwe. The Burmese chronicle has Sawlon accuse Thado-min-saw, the 1532 king’s predecessor, of betraying his promise to “work for him.” Obviously, the Burmese chronicle is not revealing all significant details here, but a reasonable surmise would be that because the king of Ava was still alive, the Burmese kingdom of Ava still had a raison d’etre and a formidable rallying point for a restoration. The king of Prome Thado-min-saw probably returned to Prome rather than face a renewed attack by the king of Ava and the Hsipaw sawbwa.

Chinese sources provide an independent confirmation of Ava’s first fall. The first memorial to the throne indicating that Burma had been involved in warfare with the Shans is found in an entry in the Ming Annals dated 10 November 1528. Given the usual lag between events in the interior of Burma and their entry into Chinese records, the entry surely refers to the first invasion of Ava. In the Ming Annals entry no exact dates are given and there is a high degree of ambiguity in the events described, but it is clear that some momentous conflict has occurred between Shan states and Ava. The request is made that “Si Lun [Sawlon] of Meng-yang [Mong Yang] be warned against having communication with Meng-bie [Muang Pyi =
Pyi = Prome in Burma] and against invading or disturbing Ava-Burma” (MSL, 10 Nov 1528). Sun Laichen has also noted that “Chinese and Burmese sources...coincide with respect to the help Mong Yang obtained from Prome” during the first invasion (SLC footnote p. 239). Reference is made to Burmese Ava two additional times in this Ming Annals’ entry in an ominous but also very ambiguous fashion. A member of the Burmese royal family, perhaps the king of Ava, is said to have died: “...the grandfather of the Ava-Burma royal family member Mang Qi-Sui was extremely loyal, but he became involved in disputes and thereby met his death,” but later in the same Ming Annals entry the dead Mang Qi-sui is reappointed to his former position: “Mang Qi-sui is to be shown great compassion and assistance. He and Si Zhen are both permitted to inherit their respective posts.” A more detailed analysis of the original classical Chinese text of this Ming Annals entry and how it relates to other sources is necessary.

The Second Invasion of Ava (1527)

After the first fall of Ava in 1525, Toungoo did its best to pick up the pieces and obtain the loyalties of former vassal states to the south of Ava, but was quickly rebuffed when Narapati the king of Ava and the Hsipaw sawbwa [ruler] regrouped their forces and led a punitive expedition against Toungoo to punish it for its treacherous behavior. After the second and final fall of Ava in 1527, Toungoo tried to create a no-man’s land between itself and Shan territory by destroying all the irrigation dams, canals, ponds, and streams in the territory separating them. Miraculously, the new Shan rulers proved to be much less expansionist after taking Ava and chose to leave Toungoo alone, choosing instead to attack Prome, its former ally in 1532, after the death of Min-gyi-nyo.

The Burmese chronicle describes these events in detail. After abandoning Ava, the king of Ava and the Hsipaw sawbwa [ruler] encamped at a place called Sin-kaung Wet-win and counted their troops. The king of Ava had just 250 fighting elephants, four thousand horses, and eighty thousand soldiers. Since the Hsipaw forces had been destroyed, there were only eighty fighting elephants, five hundred horses, and seventy thousand soldiers. When the king of Prome left Ava and returned to Prome, the king of Ava and the
Hsipaw sawbwa marched back to Ava. The king of Ava told the Hsipaw sawbwa that their flight from Ava had saddened him deeply, they had not been lucky and had made mistakes in choosing the places to resist from. The Hsipaw sawbwa replied that every person had failures as well as victories. He assured the king that he would not abandon him and that he would travel to Mong Nai and Yawnghwe in the southern Shan states and reinforce his elephants and horses there returning within the year to help him fight the Shans when they returned (UKII:126).

When Min-gyi-nyo heard that Ava had fallen, he marched to Yamethin south of Ava, subjugated all of the villages and towns there, and took away all the elephants, horses, buffaloes, and cows (100E; 4,000H; 40,000S). When the king of Ava heard of this from his brother-in-law the ruler of Yamethin U Tii, the king of Ava Narapati and the Hsipaw sawbwa marched to Yamethin in great haste (300E; 6,000H; 120,000S). Min-gyi-nyo decided not to engage them in battle and retreated to Toungoo. King Narapati and the Hsipaw sawbwa followed in pursuit all the way to Toungoo and tried to take the city several times, but since Toungoo was well fortified with lots of guns, they could not succeed. After remaining there for one month, they went back to Ava because Ava was still in disorder (UKII:127).

When the king of Ava and the Hsipaw sawbwa arrived back in Ava, the Hsipaw sawbwa made preparations to return to Hsipaw in the Shan states because the rainy season was approaching. He asked the king to send word to him if something happened that required his help. As for the king, since he presumed that he owed the Hsipaw sawbwa for all his great deeds, he gave to him five viss of gold, thirty viss of silver, ten elephants, and many other strange clothes which were specially made for him, but the sawbwa refused to accept them and insisted that he was the one who had to give the king of Ava gifts. King Narapati then presented the sawbwa with his own horse named Bayin-ke-taung together with a precious saddle made of rubies and asked him to always ride this horse in memory of him. The sawbwa also refused to accept this gift and returned it to the king. He took with him ten good horses, two hand-held cannons (Nga-mi-paut = a gun without a trigger, handheld rocket launcher), and returned to Hsipaw. The king’s son, the crown prince, accompanied him right up to the place called Shwei-sa-yan. The lord of the golden palace Narapati, the king of Ava, summoned all the
governors of cities and villages from the whole country and ordered them to be faithful to him always and to carry out their duties by keeping in mind the two meritorious deeds of kings. The oath of allegiance was administered to them and they were all presented with many gifts (UKII:127).

During the interval between the first and second invasions of Ava in 1526 Mong Yang and Hsenwi attacked Mong Wan on the Chinese-Shan frontier according to a Shan chronicle. They first attempted to overcome the state using treachery, claiming that the younger sister of Mong Wan’s queen wished to visit her older sister. When this ruse failed they laid siege to Mong Wan. They were eventually able to cut off the walled town’s water supply which led to someone opening the gates of the town and letting the attacking forces into the town. Mong Yang and Hsenwi laid waste to Mong Wan and burned it to the ground (Witthayasakphan, 2001a, 85-86). Mong Yang’s invasions of Ava, events of much larger geopolitical significance that took place both before and after this local political event, are strangely missing from this Shan chronicle as well as other Shan chronicles.

Sawlon had entrusted the government of Ava to the king of Prome Thadominsaw. A tribute relation with Mong Yang and more efficient extraction of Ava’s wealth than that which could be obtained by raiding Ava’s heartland would have been the likely result of such an arrangement. After Thadominsaw abandoned Ava and Ava fell back into the hands of its former king Narapati, Mong Yang must have felt the need to reconquer Ava, this time taking personal responsibility for the governance of Ava and assigning this responsibility to a member of the Shan ruling elite. Sawlon, ruler of Mong Yang, sent his son Kame to attack Ava for a second time in 1527 (BE 888) with three hundred fighting elephants, ten thousand horses, and 150,000 horses. When they arrived at Han-lin-met, the king of Ava learned of their approach and called together all the governors of towns and villages. He also called the Hsipaw sawbwa to come and help. The king of Ava appointed his son the crown prince to resist them from Pakan-gyi (80E; 1,000H; 20,000S). When the crown prince arrived in Pakan-gyi, he crossed to Nawin-kaing on the other side of the river and attacked and defeated the Shans who were at Amyin on the lower Chindwin River. After staying there about two days, he marched upriver to Badon and subjugated the town. From there, he crossed over to Kani and subjugated it. When
he had taken these three towns, he captured twelve elephants, 160 horses, and over one thousand war captives. While he was staying at Kamni, one night he fell ill and passed away that very night. Without the crown prince, all the ministers and generals who had accompanied him on the campaign collected all their troops and went back to Pakan-gyi. Sawlon marched from Han-lin to Sagaing and built a pontoon bridge there, ordering his troops to cross over from Kyaut-ta-lone and encircle the capital city of Ava (UKII:128).

The lord of the golden palace king Narapati dared not leave the walls of the town to attack them because his forces were weak and the Hsipaw sawbwa had not yet arrived. To defend the city, cannons and guns were placed on the city walls. After encircling the city for eight days Sawlon informed his generals that they would attack the city the next day. Those who refused to march would be executed with his own sword. As the chronicle describes it, when Sawlon’s troops saw his sword, they did not consider themselves to be alive anymore. They did not pay any heed to the guns shooting from on top of the city walls. Some started to dig around the moat, others raised their ladders to climb over the wall. Many died when they were shot by guns on the city walls. Most of them died when they were struck by pieces of wood or thrust with spears. Even though they died in that way, they did not think they were dying, they just kept scaling the walls of the city and eventually out of sheer persistence managed to breech the defenses of the city (UKII:129).

The gates of the town were opened and the lord of the golden palace Narapati riding his elephant Shwe-sa-taik came out from the city. Moving from one side of the moat, he tried to cross over to the eastern side. Tho-han-bwa, Sawlon’s son, engaged the king in battle on his elephant. While he was fighting, the king of Ava was hit by a shot from a firearm fired by the Shans and died on the top of his elephant on the 12th waxing moon of the month of Tagu in the year 1527 (BE 888), on the last day [ata-sa] of the three festival days of Burmese New Years [thin-kyan]. Being born on this day portends misfortune, so likewise, according to traditional Burmese norms, the new Shan state of Ava had an inauspicious beginning (Myanmar Language Commission, 1993, 559). An alternative version in the Hsipaw chronicle has Narapati less heroically being taken captive and executed (Sai Aung Tun, 2001, 10). The king of Prome and the Mon king of Pegu are said by the chronicle to have died in the same year as the king of Ava.
In 1530, there is finally a belated but unambiguous confirmation in the Ming Annals that Ava had fallen to the Shans, but Mong Mit, not Mong Yang, is assigned blame: "The region of Meng-mi [Mong Mit] has precious stone mines and these are controlled by the native chieftain Si Zhen...he has forcibly occupied this territory and, relying on his wealth and might, has *swallowed up* Ava-Burma, Mu-bang and Meng-yang and moved close to Teng-chong, so as to spy on the situation within our borders" (MSL, 16 Feb 1530, my italics). Thus Ming Dynasty Chinese sources provide independent confirmation of the historical fact of Ava being invaded by Shans, a historical fact described in greater detail in the Burmese chronicle.

Here, Shan names become a problem and an obstacle to the historical interpretation of texts. Is the Chinese “Si Zhen Fa” the same as the Burmese “Tho-Han-Bwa”? “Si” [Chinese], and “Tho” [Burmese] are apparently transliterate “Chau” in Shan which means “lord”, “ruler”, or “prince” which is usually rendered “Chao-fa” or “Chao-x-fa” where x is the one-syllable personal name which distinguishes the person from other rulers. So the question can be rephrased: Are Chinese “Zhen” and Burmese “Tho” transliterating the same one-syllable Shan name? Similarly, “Sawlon” in Burmese transliterates as “Si Lun” (思倫) in Chinese sources but looks a lot like “Si Lu” (思祿) the name of Si Lun’s father (Liew Foon Ming, 1996, 197), the second syllables of which fall well within what could be taken as a normal range of transliteration error. Knowledge of the names of the Shan rulers of the period is unfortunately currently derived almost entirely from transliterations in Chinese and Burmese sources.

If Tho-han-bwa was from Mong Mit this would provide further evidence of Shan cooperation at the time of the invasion of Ava (1524-27). The argument runs as follows, if “Si-Zhen-Fa” is the same as “Tho-Han-Bwa” and the two names refer to the same person, then some important contradictions between Burmese and Chinese sources are explained. Tho-han-bwa who is active in the fighting during the first invasion is appointed ruler of Ava after the second invasion. Even though Burmese texts refer to him as the son of Sawlon this may in fact refer to him as being a junior to Sawlon. According to the Ming Annals Si-Zhen was a member of Meng-yang’s ruling family (MSL 10 November 1528) and a native “houseman” as
well as a “native chieftain” of Mong Mit (MSL 18 March 1529, 16 February 1530). Sawlon and Tho-han-bwa are intimately associated with each other in the Burmese chronicle with Sawlon taking the senior leading role and Tho-han-bwa taking the junior following role. This is certainly in keeping with a later Ming Annals entry that refers to them as the two Shans responsible for the Shan invasion and the death of the Burmese king: “the Mengmi [Mong Mit] native official Si Zhen and the Meng-yang native yi Si Lun” (23 April 1560). Although further analysis by trained linguists is necessary and the search for the actual rendering of these names in Shan should continue, for now “Si Zhen” will taken as synonymous with “Tho-han-bwa” and “Si Lun” with “Sawlon”.

The Aftermath of the Mong Yang Shan Invasion and the Death of Ming-gyi-nyo (1527-1532)

After the fall of Ava much of the royal court fled to Prome and Toungoo together with their servants and attendants. Others threw in their lot with the new Shan rulers and were given back their old positions and sources of wealth. Sawlon made his son Tho-han-bwa king of Ava and gave him two hundred fighting elephants, four thousand horses, and sixty thousand soldiers. A Burmese minister from the Ava court, Min-gyi-ya-naung, was called back from hiding in the forest to help the new king with administrative affairs and adjusting to the cultural differences between Shan and Burmese administration. He was given the town of Pyinzi as an appanage to rule over. The towns and villages of Ava were given to Burmese and Shan ministers. Tho-han-bwa gave the town of Salin to Sithu-kyaw-htin. Pagan was given back to the prince who had ruled over it before. He gave Kamni to Naw-ra-tha, Paung-ti to Pyan-chi, and Amyin to Thet-daw-shei. Soon after putting the kingdom of Ava in order Sawlon returned to Mong Yang, leaving his son to rule over Ava by himself.

Some fairly independent sources corroborate that Shans were given towns and villages. A seventeenth century Chinese geographical treatise claims that Sawlon divided up Ava’s land between Mong Yang and Hsenwi (Du shi fangyu jiyao gaoben by Guyu (sic) (1631-1692) cited in Liew, 2003, 162). Nineteenth century
tax records (sittans) indicate that the military units of some Shan states were relocated to areas near the new Shan capital in Ava. Tax records from 1802 indicate that Sawlon settled a Shan military unit at Myaung-hla in the Kyaukse irrigation district. The military unit was called “Let-ma-wun-daing” (left shield unit) with soldiers from the Kalei Shan area on the Upper Chindwin river, Tein-ngyin, Maing-ze, and Nyaung-shwei in the southern Shan states (Trager, 1979, 383-4).

The Burmese chronicle records that the question of what to do about Prome and Toungoo, two large Burmese states on the new Shan-Ava state’s southern frontier, arose in Tho-han-bwa’s discussions with his chief minister Min-gyi-yan-naung. The chronicle relates that this Burmese minister deceived the Shan king and thereby saved the tradition of Burmese kingship from extinction. When Tho-han-bwa asked him what he thought about military expeditions to Toungoo and Prome, the minister actually thought that it would be an easy Shan victory, but lied and told him that “marching to Toungoo would just mean tiring Ava troops for nothing. It was not necessary. Because of his might they would come on their own and prostrate themselves in front of him. He said that they would not dare to remain where they were without doing anything, without submitting, because they already knew that Ava had been conquered.” (UKII:130) Traditionally on a change of ruler, tributary states were obligated to come to the new ruler and renew their loyalties and swear an oath of loyalty.

After the conquest of Ava, the Shans were not quick to act against either of the two remaining Burmese strongholds to the south: Toungoo and Prome. The Burmese chronicle asserts that Tho-han-bwa presumed that if a state like Toungoo or Prome attacked him, it would be easily defeated. Thinking like this, he sent lots of gifts and ammunition to both Toungoo and Prome inviting them to come and discuss affairs with him and enter into a friendship. Then the kings of Prome and Toungoo sent a lot of gifts in return and became quite friendly with Ava. Min-gyi-nyo was afraid that the Shans would come and inhabit the land along Toungoo’s border with Ava, so he destroyed all the dams, canals, ponds, and streams and created a buffer or no-man’s land between Toungoo and Shan Ava. In the year 1531 (BE 892) when Min-gyi-nyo passed away, his son Tabin-shwei-hti became king.

In the Burmese chronicle’s eulogy for Min-gyi-nyo, the
chronicle not only praises the dead king but also reveals some personal details about his life. On the head of this king one hair had the length of a whole roll of thread. This king was an expert in the art of shooting an arrow and throwing spears. He also excelled in the preparation of food, preparing food on special occasions for Buddhist monks, ministers, his relatives, and elderly people. He appointed very smart people to cook and had two attendants serve the food to each of his guests. Min-gyi-nyo was quite talented. He knew about the future and was filled with wisdom. When he was about to pass away, he kept a taming ground for elephants inside the town. Cotton plants (let-pan-ping) grew outside the town. Instead of growing cotton plants outside the town as they normally were, he started growing them inside the town. He grew them there, even though his master, a Buddhist monk who had traveled to Sri Lanka, forbade him to grow them there because it was not an appropriate place. He did not listen to the monks advice and built a taming ground for elephants and grew cotton plants near the elephant taming ground. In that taming ground he built a house and reigned over his kingdom from there in the last years of his life (UKII:159).

The Shans decided to take Prome in 1532 (BE 894) and extend their domains to the border of the Mon kingdom of Ramanya to the south. Mong Yang Sawlon marched to Ava, called his son Tho-han-bwa to his side, and marched on to Prome with three hundred fighting elephants, eight thousand horses, and 120,000 soldiers. Bayin Htwe, the king of Prome, when he heard that Mong Yang Sawlon was marching to Prome, strengthened the fortifications of the town, the walls, moats, canals, and sent away all his queens, sons, and daughters to the western side right up to a town named Ta-le-se. The Shan forces encamped at Prome starting from Myaut-na-win stream right up to Prome’s mountain. The king of Prome, thinking of his future, took with him lots of gifts, ammunition, and provisions and sent them to the Shan ruler. Then Mong Yang Sawlon told him that in the past the father of the current king of Prome had promised him that he would help attack Ava and after that would work for him, but he failed to do that. Because of that, he asked whether he would work for him or whether he was going to attack him. The king of Prome thought that Mong Yang Sawlon and his sons were so strong that he would not be able to resist them. He felt the only alternative he had was to deal nicely.
with them and act according to their wishes. The king of Prome tendered his submission by traveling to Sawlon’s camp with one thousand of his attendants and gifts of clothing such as Basoes [male sarong]. Sawlon took the king captive with all his attendants, a clear breach of Burmese custom. In the Burmese chronicle submission by a vassal to the overlord in advance of his arrival before engaging in battle signaled a good faith effort that was rewarded by reinstating the vassal ruler, similar to a person submitting a pro-forma letter of resignation that they know their superior will refuse to accept. After taking the king of Prome captive, Sawlon started his journey back to Mong Yang passing through Ava on the way. When he reached Tabayin he set the king of Prome and his attendants free, but when he passed through Myedu there was a dispute between two factions of the Shan ruling elite and Mong Yang Sawlon was assassinated by his own ministers.

In the king of Prome’s absence, his son had assumed the throne of Prome, taking the title King Narapati. Almost five months later when his father arrived back to Prome, the son did not allow the father to enter the city and closed the gates of Prome to him. His father was forced to live outside the city, became sick, and passed away after one month living in his tent that was pitched on the other side of Na Win stream at Prome. The son gave the father a proper burial and the new king Narapati took Thiri-bon-htut, the daughter of the king of Ava Narapati who died in 1527, as his queen (UKII:131). These events during Shan ruler over Upper Burma are just a few among many which signify a breech of the moral order in Upper Burma that came with the Shan invasion, a moral order that would only be gradually reinstated after Tabinshwehti retook Prome in the 1540s and marched north towards Ava. Only his successor Bayinnaung would finally retake Ava in 1555.

A Shan Confederation rules Upper Burma? (1527-1555)

The fall of Ava in 1527 resulted in a sudden and short-lived expansion of Shan rule over Upper Burma from 1527 to 1555. This state expansion was to be over-shadowed by Bayinnaung’s even greater expansion of the Burmese state into the Tai region to the east from 1551 to 1581. The confederation of Shan states that ruled over Upper Burma after the invasion of 1527 caused a radical shift
in the regional geopolitical structure of western mainland Southeast Asia. The Shan realm suddenly extended along the Irrawaddy in the east all the way to the borders of Prome’s territory in the south. In 1532, after Prome was taken, the Shan Realm stretched all the way to the border of the Mon kingdom of Ramanya. In the eastern part of Upper Burma, Shan rule respected the rule of Min-gyi-nyo’s ruling house in Toungoo and left it intact with its own sphere of influence. Even after Min-gyi-nyo’s son Tabinshweihti embarked upon warfare against Pegu from 1535 to 1539, the new Shan state never chose to attack what must have been a weakly defended northern Toungoo frontier.

The existence of the Shan confederation is only revealed at certain critical junctures in the Burmese chronicle narrative. One critical juncture occurs when the king of Prome calls on five Shan sawbwas [rulers] to break the siege that Tabinshweihti waged against Prome in 903 (1542). The sawbwas of Ava [Tho-han-bwa], Hsipaw, and Mong Yang come to Prome’s aid and two additional sawbwas, of Bhamo and Mong Mit, arrive late after their defeat. Another critical juncture takes place in 904 (1543) after the palace coup of Burmese residing at the Avan court (UKII:136). After the Ava sawbwa (or king of Ava) Tho-han-bwa is assassinated, the sawbwa of Hsipaw, the former Shan ally of Ava at the time of its defeat in 1527 is chosen by the Burmese as his successor. Perhaps the choice of a Shan successor by a Burmese led coup was necessitated by the need to keep the confederation of Shan states that defended Ava intact. Shortly after the Hsipaw sawbwa becomes king of Ava he organizes a military expedition to retake Prome from Tabinshweihti. By this time the confederation has expanded to seven sawbwas including two new sawbwas from Yawnghwe and Mong Nai in the southern Shan states. These two new sawbwas most likely joined as long-time allies of Hsipaw, because during the Shan invasions of 1525-7 the chronicle already records the Hsipaw sawbwa as traveling to these Shan states to replenish his elephants, horses, and soldiers (UKII:126). As mentioned above Kyaukse tax records (sittans) from the nineteenth century also contain evidence of a Shan confederation during this period (Trager, 1979, 383-4).

It is not clear when this confederation began or how it evolved. Burmese sources indicate that by 1543 (BE 904) the Shan confederation included seven states: Mong Yang, Mong Mit, Bhamo, Hsipaw, Mong Nai, Yawnghwe, and Kalei. Hsenwi’s absence from

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Burmese sources is noteworthy as is Hsipaw’s absence from Chinese sources. Even though frontiers were ill-defined in the pre-modern period, states can be roughly divided as being on one or the other side of the frontier. Along an axis stretching from Ava’s capital into Yunnan, Hsipaw lied on the Burmese side and Hsenwi lied on the Chinese side. This fact seems to have conditioned the relationships that these two states developed with the larger power centers of Ming dynasty China and the Burmese state of Ava. Hsipaw was a close and reliable ally of Ava according to Burmese sources. Hsenwi was early recognized as an autonomous ethnic region [An Fusi = Pacification Office] by the Ming Dynasty in 1404 and was a frequent participant in inter-state conflicts along the Shan-Chinese frontier recorded by Chinese sources (SLC 2000, 79; Liew Foon Ming, 2003, 152). In addition to regular relations between states, military intelligence was another source of information of events on the other side of a frontier. The absence of references to Hsipaw in Chinese sources and Hsenwi references in Burmese sources seems to indicate that military intelligence was limited. The question also arises of why Mong Mit and not Hsenwi is mentioned by the Burmese chronicle as a member of the Shan coalition in the 1540s? Although Mong Mit started off as part of Hsenwi, it eventually challenged its overlord and was recognized by the Chinese as a separate autonomous ethnic region in 1584. If Tho-han-bwa who ruled Ava after 1527 was in fact from Mong Mit, Mong Mit may well have eclipsed Hsenwi in importance by then and “swallowed” it up as the chronicle usually describes it.

Local Shan chronicles help elucidate the history of smaller Shan states. The Shan Realm had two levels of interstate relations: 1. relations between large Shan states like Hsenwi, Hsipaw, Mong Mit, and Mong Yang and their larger and more powerful overlords, China and Burma, and 2. relations between these larger Shan states and smaller Shan states (and perhaps even groups of non-Tai ethnicity such as Mon-Khmer, Tibeto-Burman, and Lolo, see Daniels, 2001). Shan chronicles provide a lot of information about the later local type of relation, including marriage alliances, shifting loyalties, and endemic inter-state warfare, but this history is difficult to reconcile with and integrate into the larger-scale historical narratives of China and Burma. References to events outside the locality that might help verify local events and fit them into a larger geopolitical landscape are often missing from Shan
chronicles.

In the limited survey of Shan chronicles made for this paper there was only one reference to the 1524-27 Shan invasions of Ava, the most important event in Tai-Burmese relations of the early modern era. A version of the Hsipaw chronicle recorded by Sai Aung Tun (2001) mentions the invasion, but follows the Burmese chronicle so closely as to cast doubt on its independent origin. It is also a second-hand transcription, the original manuscript not being made available to scholars for more detailed scrutiny.

Why are the invasions of Ava included in the historical narratives of larger states like Ming dynasty China and Ava while they are missing from the narratives of the smaller Shan states subject to these states? (Hsenwi: Witthayasakphan, 2001b; Scott, 1900, 217-220; Mong Mao: Witthayasakphan et al, 2001a; Mangrai, 1969, ii-xiv; Scott, 1900, 216-217, from Elias, 1876; Mogaung: Mangrai, 1969, xviii-xxiv). Censorship or pressures on court historians to self-censor might be one explanation. A chronicle celebration of a Shan victory over the Burmese state of Ava would have been offensive to later Burmese sovereigns after the restoration of Burmese rule to Upper Burma in 1555. Of course this argument only holds if Burmese sovereigns or members of the ruling elite had access to these local texts. Lists of books held in the royal libraries at the Burmese capital might be helpful in this regard. Later Konbaung historical events described in Shan historical chronicles also might provide a better test of this hypothesis because of the abundant historical data available for the period.

Power relations between states sometimes determine the inclusion or omission of events from historical narratives. Overt censorship or pressure on historians to self-censor texts to match state policy is even a present-day phenomenon. A leading scholar of Ming dynasty relations with Tai polities claims that there is evidence that historical texts in the modern PRC have sometimes been “edited or changed” to serve the “exigencies of the modern Chinese state,” the alterations making the texts seem as though “these polities and societies had long seen themselves as part of or attached to Chinese polities” (Burmaresearch Forum, SOAS, University of London, 17 Aug 2005). The Shan chronicle of Mong Mao that has been used in this paper was, in fact, initially a translation from Shan to Chinese (Kazhangjia, 1990) and then a translation from Chinese into central Thai for a readership in Thailand (Witthayasakphan et al, 2001a),
providing one example of how, if there was a power-legitimizing change to a historical narrative, it could unwarily be disseminated to larger audiences. The point is that going back to and including original Tai manuscripts with translations as Mangrai (1981) did should be standard practice with the historical texts of smaller states because of these power relationships. Successive redactions and translations of texts run the risk of introducing cumulative errors as Pullum (1989) clearly demonstrates.

The authors of official state chronicles of small Shan states likely felt political pressures during the compilation and writing of chronicles that changed as their overlord changed. For example, truthful but negative depictions of warfare and its devastations in the Chiang Mai chronicle are much more common in the eighteenth century wars with the Burmese than they are in the sixteenth century ones (Wyatt and Wichienkeeo, 1995). Does this mean that warfare in the sixteenth century had less bloodshed? Probably not (see Charney, 2004, 17-22). Negative references to a powerful overlord like Burma which ruled Chiang Mai from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries would have risked offending the overlord and might even have been considered an act of rebellion. Versions of earlier Chiangmai chronicle narrative were actually translated into Burmese and kept at the Burmese capital as the *Zinme Yazawin* for the Burmese ruling elite to glean information from regarding court and administrative traditions in Chiangmai (Sithu Gamani Thingyan, 2003, i-ii, 53-67). They probably had access to Shan chronicles too.

Long periods of unexplained silence seem to increase as chronicles becomes more local, silence (or erasure) being a particular easy form of self-censorship to implement. Compare the continuity of the Burmese chronicle with the long hiatuses of the Chiangmai chronicle under Burmese rule after 1558. Traditions of critical textual analysis in philology (see Warring States Project, 2005) and anthropology (see Scott, 1990) provide guidance on how to deal with these textual silences and censorships when compiling composite histories from different historical traditions. In explaining the silence of the evidence Brooks (2005b) notes that “there are various reasons, other than literal nonexistence, why some item of culture is not, or seems not to be, mentioned in the texts of the time,” a “cultural taboo” being one such reason. Brooks provides an example from the Chinese Warring States period which bears some
similarity to the invasion of Ava omission:

Non-Chinese peoples are mentioned occasionally in texts of the 14th century, but after a certain point, such mentions cease. The point where such mentions stop is probably the point at which hostilities escalate between the Chinese and a new coalition of steppe peoples to the north. The existence of a society comparably organized but adversatively disposed was a fact which the Chinese worldview could not readily accommodate (Brooks, 2005b).

It is also unclear whether Mong Yang had any Shan allies when it invaded Ava from 1524 to 1527. Mong Yang worked with Hsenwi and other smaller Shan states as well as the Chinese in the 1594 offensive against Bhamo, but the state of endemic warfare in the Shan Realm meant that alliances and vassal-overlord relations could change rapidly. Mong Yang vassals are mentioned in 1511 as being Mingin and Kalei [Upper Chindwin] and Twin-tin along the invasion path used in 1524 (UKII:120), but it is unclear whether this relation still held in 1524. The Burmese chronicle only mentions Mong Yang as the invading force in 1524-7, but by 1527 “Mong Yang” had been used to refer to Shan invasions from the north for so long that it could well have frozen into a fixed chronicle cliche without much intrinsic meaning. Chinese sources are more ambiguous about who invaded Ava:

Some Chinese sources record that Mong Yang and Mong Mit...or even Mong Yang, Mong Mit, and Hsenwi altogether...sacked Ava and partitioned its territory, while Burmese chronicles show that Mong Yang almost single-handedly (except with some help from Prome) conquered Ava. The actual situation should be that Mong Yang and Hsenwi formed an alliance, but Mong Mit was not part of it, as Mong Mit was even attacked by Mong Yang after Mong Yang sacked Ava...Chinese and Burmese sources...coincide with respect to the help Mong Yang obtained from Prome (SLC 239).
The evidence in the Burmese chronicle indicates that sometime after 1527 Shan rule at Ava became a loose confederation of Shan states at least for defense and the election of a ruler. As Scott and Hardiman (1900, 200) observed, Shan states were “semi-independent States which only united for common action under a...chief of particular energy, or in cases of national emergency.” The Shan alliance included Mong Mit, the state that Mong Yang and Hsenwi had fought against at the behest of the Chinese in the late 1400s. How did this confederation of Shan states that eventually ruled Upper Burma evolve? How exactly did this confederation rule the Shan states? How did the different Shan states benefit from participating in this confederation?

Many open questions about members of the Shan confederation remain. There is the question of when Hsipaw the former ally of Ava joined the Shan confederation and whether there were any states that did not join the confederation. Answering these questions will require more detailed primary sources covering events in Upper Burma for the period 1527 to 1542. What were the Shan motives for this sudden invasion of Ava? Prior to 1524, Mong Yang’s military actions against Ava had been restricted to attacking small garrison towns in the Mu irrigation district and the Irrawaddy. In 1524, the Mong Yang Shans made a sudden entrance into the Chindwin Valley and started systematically moving down the Chindwin and then Irrawaddy river valleys right up to Thayet raiding settlements along the way. Why this sudden shift to targets deep within Upper Burma? Was it simply the pursuit of additional territory or were there additional motivating factors such as trade or Shan relations with their Chinese overlord to the north? What did the Shans stand to gain from controlling this territory? We will look at three possible explanations here: 1. Control of trade routes, 2. Resource extraction and raiding for plunder on a grand scale, and 3. Relieving population pressure on the limited territory of the Shan realm thereby reducing the endemic warfare of the region and creating a more secure border for the Chinese state.

First, control of trade would have been a logical economic motive for the Shans to invade Upper Burma. Such a motive has often been assigned to Tabinshwehti’s invasion of Ramanya to the south from 1535 to 1539. As (Bin Yang, 2004) has shown, trade along a “Southwest Silk Road” from Yunnan to South and Southeast Asia was substantial. The flow of cowries originating in the Bay of
Bengal into Yunnan and their use there as an important medium of exchange until the seventeenth century attests to the importance of this trade with China. The trade routes for this trade have been reconstructed by Deyell (1994) by “examining how bullion was shipped from Yunnan and Upper Burma into Bengal during the period 1200-1500” (Bin Yang, 2004, 289).

The first two routes were mostly overland routes. The first route passed “from Yung Chang to Momien, crossed the Irrawaddy to Mogaung, went north through the Hukawng Valley, across passes in the Patkai Range, to the Upper Brahmaputra Valley.” The second route “followed the Shweli River, crossing the Irrawaddy at Tagaung, followed the Chindwin River north, and crossed via the Imole Pass to Manipur. Overland trade routes, besides being slower than river transport, probably suffered from higher degrees of interference such as tolls, warfare, and banditry.

The third trade route passed through Upper Burma and relied mostly on more efficient river transportation. The third route “embarked on the Irrawaddy at Tagaung, Ava, or Pagan, and then passed from Prome over the Arakan Range (Arakan Yoma) to Arakan. A variation of this went directly from Pagan to Arakan via the Aeng Pass. This gave access to either a land route northward to Chatigaon, or embarkation on the coastal trading boats to Bengal” (Bin Yang, 2004, p. 289, citing Deyell, 1994, p. 128). Control over this third lowest cost trade route through the rivers of Upper Burma would be one logical motive for invasion. Controlling this important trade route would have allowed a monopoly on trade along the more efficient river route or at least the collection of tolls and duties.

Second, raiding on a much grander scale than had been attempted by the Shans before would be another logical motive for invasion. If earlier Shan military activity against the northern borders could be characterized as raiding for plunder and booty, seizing any form of transportable wealth, with little if any strategic objective of setting up some system of governance for taxation and more permanent resource extraction, the invasion of 1527 can be seen as raiding on a much larger scale with Burmese Buddhist religious institutions themselves as the target, institutions which absorbed much of Ava’s food surplus and wealth. This included large amounts of physical wealth such as silver, gold, and gemstones, building materials, and land, as well as manpower that was pledged to monasteries to support them. Whereas the

_SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005): 284-395_
traditional modes of Burmese religious reform to recapture this wealth stayed within culturally acceptable bounds, according to the chronicle the Shans used essentially military techniques to reclaim this wealth, reducing the population of monks through state-sponsored murder and raiding religious edifices such as pagodas that absorbed much surplus wealth in their underground treasure chambers and in their decoration (Aung-Thwin, 1985, 181). In the face of Shan plundering of Burmese religious wealth, religious donations virtually ceased at Ava and with it the passage of wealth into religious institutions (Aung-Thwin, 1998, 128).

Third, relieving the population pressure on the limited territory of the Shan realm would have been another logical motive. The endemic warfare in the Shan realm in the fifteenth century recorded by Chinese sources was mostly over limited territory (Liew Foon Ming, 2003, 154), the occupation of Bhamo’s territory by Mong Yang from 1494 to 1503 being one well-documented example of this. One can imagine the massive territorial expansion of the Shan Realm, and reduction in population density that Mong Yang’s invasion brought about as solving the problem of limited territory and land, eliminating the causus belli for the warfare that plagued the Shan Realm.

All told, the question of a Shan alliance during the invasion of 1524-1527 and a confederation afterwards raises more questions than it answers. The Burmese chronicle has a heavy ideological overlay during this period due to the politically-sensitive nature of Shan rule which throws suspicion over many of its interpretations. The information that Ming dynasty China had access to does not seem to penetrate very far beyond the Shan-Chinese frontier. In the absence of additional independent primary sources, only tentative speculations can be made. As Aung-Thwin (1998) has shown with the myth of the “Three Shan Brothers” there is always the danger that historical speculation based on thin evidence is mistaken for historical fact.
**Toungoo’s Southward Expansion Against Pegu (1535-1539)**

Shortly after the death of Min-gyi-nyo Toungoo began a new era of polity expansion with expeditions against the Mon kingdom of Ramanya (1535-39). The Ming Annals only completely register the significance of this expansionary warfare one century after it took place:

...in the early Jia-jing reign (1522-66), Ava-Burma was destroyed by Meng-yang [Mong Yang]. The chieftain Mang Ji-Sui [king of Ava Shwe-nan-kyaw-shin Narapati] and his entire clan were all killed. Only Mang Rui-ti [Tabinshweithi] and his brothers were able to escape and they fled to the Toungoo stockade. There they borrowed forces to exact revenge and they became daily more powerful, swallowing up territory on all sides. Gradually they became too powerful for it to control (lit: the tail became too big for the dog to wag)....How can it be expected that Ava-Burma will not expand! (MSL, 28 May 1627, my italics).

Clearly, despite missing or inaccurate detail, the significance of Burmese state expansion was eventually acknowledged by the Chinese court, albeit with a significant time lag. Chinese sources even display an understanding of the process of state expansion. The “eating food” metaphor used above to describe Burmese state expansion is found rather poetically in an even later source which likens annexing tribal lands to silk worms nibbling on mulberry leaves (Mingshigao cited in Liew, 2003, 155). As the above source makes clear, it is manpower accumulation (“they borrowed forces to exact revenge and they became daily more powerful”) that makes this territorial expansion (“swallowing up territory on all sides”) possible, town-eating [myo-sa] as the Burmese language would describe it.

There were several factors that likely influenced Toungoo’s decision to march south against Mon Ramanya in 1535. The Shan confederation had just taken Prome which demonstrated their collective strength and made Toungoo to the east an obvious next target. This placed a time constraint on Toungoo. Toungoo had to act quickly if it wished to avoid being swallowed up by the Shans. Since 1509 Toungoo had only been engaged in intermittent military
activity. Later in this paper we will argue that warfare during the First Toungoo dynasty can be characterized as a process of manpower accumulation. This process took time to get in motion. If the goal of the state was a very large important target with a lot of manpower to the north, the Shan Confederation, and the state hadn’t engaged in warfare for a long time, it would have to target smaller and weaker states to the south and build up manpower with victories there before it could hope to target the larger state in the north and be victorious there. The story of Toungoo from 1535 to 1539 is a story of manpower accumulation for warfare against the Shans, an attempt to overcome the threat that the Shans posed to Toungoo by building up a strong enough force to become a threat to the Shans.

It is worth questioning whether Tabinshweihti actually played an important role in this early period of Burmese state expansion from 1535 to 1539 or whether his role only increased in importance during the campaigns against the south as he gained military experience. Tabinshweihti would have been only ten years old when Ava fell under Shan control in 1527, hardly old enough to play any role in his father’s last military expeditions. In 1532 almost immediately after Tabinshweihti became king at age fifteen, the Mong Yang Shans attacked and took Prome in the west. In the face of this immediate Shan threat to Toungoo, the decision to start military operations against Ramanya to the south may have been a fait accompli forced upon the young king by older more experienced ministers at court. These same ministers would no doubt have played an important role during the initial stages of the campaign of 1535-39 also.

Modern Burmese histories of the early modern period often unconsciously equate the sovereign with the state just as the Burmese chronicle does, describing every action taken by the state as an intentional act of human agency by the sovereign. This is a natural result of following the narrative line of the Burmese chronicle, the most important primary source for the period. The Burmese chronicle as a “Yazawin” or royal chronicle records events relevant to the life of the king, so it is natural that chronicle narrative is written from this unquestioned perspective, but a broader historical perspective would separate rhetoric from historical fact. The practice of sovereign-centered chronicle narrative favors an interpretation of Tabinshweihti being more
actively involved in political decision-making and leadership than perhaps he actually was at his young age. Close study of other independent sources written from a Mon, European, or non-royal Burmese perspective might prove useful in determining the role played by Tabinshwehti in the Toungoo court earlier in his reign.

What enabled Toungoo to make its first drive towards state expansion? Lieberman enumerates four factors behind Toungoo’s final victory in 1539: “a more martial Toungoo tradition, larger forces, Muslim mercenaries, and splits in the enemy camp” (Lieberman, 2003, 151). The martial traditions of Toungoo had been strengthened by Min-gyi-nyo’s constant military activity earlier in his reign. Larger forces resulted from Toungoo’s high military participation rate and its being sheltered from warfare for fifty years. This freedom from warfare gave the Toungoo region a good population base for conscripting a large army to launch against Ramanya. This increase in military manpower will be shown by comparing the military statistics in the Burmese chronicle between the reigns of Min-gyi-nyo and Tabinshwehti in the next section of this paper. The wealth that maritime trade had brought to the Mon kingdom of Ramanya must also have been well known in the Toungoo court and the prospect of acquiring this wealth must have made it an attractive target. The last two factors that Lieberman enumerates, mercenaries and an enemy weakened by internal divisions, only entered the picture during the campaign itself as we will see.

Toungoo launched an attack against the south in 1535. From 1535 to 1539 Toungoo sent a total of four military expeditions against Pegu. Tabinshwehti accompanied the first expedition at the age of nineteen, a mere four years after becoming king. In 1535 (BE 896) the first expedition marched from Toungoo to Pegu (40E, 800H; 40,000S) with the future king Bayinnaung Kyaw-tin-nawrata leading the advance troops. The army encamped at Seintaung near Pegu and attacked Pegu repeatedly for only seven days. The chronicle claims that Toungoo gave up after such a short period of time because the Mon king’s ministers, Binyalaw and Achi-daw, who had looked after the Mon king in his youth were such good advisors that nothing could be achieved so the expedition returned to Toungoo (UKII:162)

It is important to keep in mind that all of Toungoo’s expeditions against Pegu were sieges and this conditioned the
nature of the warfare Toungoo waged during these years. The generalization of “flight rather than fight” that has been applied to Southeast Asian warfare certainly does not apply to this lengthy campaign or any of the campaigns that came after it (see Charney, 2004, 73-78, for a critique of this generalization). The most basic factor in successful siege warfare would have been manpower. Great numerical superiority of attacker over the defender would have resulted in the walls of the city being scaled or breached by mining operations when attackers were allowed to get close to the base of the walls. In the absence of great numerical superiority, other factors came into play. As Keegan observes of siege warfare:

All the works of siegecraft available to commanders before the invention of gunpowder were devised between 2400 and 397 B.C. None except starvation, offered a certain, or even very effective, means of bringing a fortification to surrender. A besieger’s best hope of a quick result, lay in exploiting the defender’s complacency or achieving surprise. Treachery was another device. Those methods apart, an attacker might sit for months outside the walls, unless he could find a weak spot or create one himself....In general, the advantage in siege warfare before gunpowder always lay with the defender, as long as he took the precaution of laying in supplies...the attackers might themselves run out of food, or even more probably succumb to disease in their unhealthy encampments (Keegan, 1993, 151).

Gunpowder probably played only a minor role in these campaigns. The chronicle only records the Mon defenders, not the Toungoo attackers, as using firearms. This leaves manpower accumulation, starvation, surprise, and treachery as possible strategies. The ability of Toungoo forces to wait long enough for starvation within the city walls would have been limited. During each of Toungoo’s campaigns against Pegu, the Toungoo forces returned to Toungoo at the onset of the rainy season. The great bulk of the forces would have been peasant conscripts and as Charney observes:

...unlike professional units, general peasant conscripts, were essentially farmers called away from their fields for seasonal campaigns. This could affect field campaigns, for peasant levies would simply ‘melt away’ with the outbreak of the rainy season.
in order to plant crops. Likewise, a long campaign that kept peasants far from home or left large numbers of them dead meant that there would be insufficient labour to work the fields at home. Dramatic losses of peasants in war could spell agricultural disaster in the years ahead. Moreover, it could have long-term implications for royal or elite manpower reserves in future wars (Charney, 2004, 220).

Returning to Toungoo at the onset of the rainy season was necessary to maintain the manpower base from which to conduct regular yearly sieges against Pegu. The regular pattern of Toungoo’s sieges eliminated surprise as a strategy, leaving manpower accumulation and treachery as the remaining strategies that Toungoo could and eventually did adopt.

Toungoo attacked Pegu for the second time in 1536 (BE 897). The expedition encamped at a place named Jackadaw near Pegu (60E; 800H; 60,000S). The Burmese chronicle reports that muslim mercenaries (“Kala-Panthei–dou- Sein-pyaung-Mya-ta-pu–nin Myo-Hteit-ka nei-ywei hlut-lei-thi”, UKII:163) fired down on them with guns from the top of the city walls and inflicted many casualties, making it impossible to scale the town’s walls. After staying in Pegu for three months, they returned to Toungoo as the rainy season approached.

The Burmese chronicle also reports that about this time omens started to appear that signified that the end of the current Mon dynasty at Pegu was drawing near. For seven days stars fell down like rain, but when they reached the ground they disappeared. South of Pegu in the delta area a gigantic fish came ashore. The height of its body was fifty taung (about twenty-five yards) and the length was four hundred taung (two hundred yards). A mountain named Ein-pyoun collapsed all by-itself, with many small hillocks shifting from one place to another, and the ground cracking. A crow flew onto the throne of the Mon king of Pegu, but it was encircled by many other crows. They managed to catch the crow with a snare and quickly burned it at Shwei-modo pagoda at Pegu. A stone post known as Zimalanameik fell down by-itself. The water that flowed in the river became dirty and red like blood. These were only some of the significant omens that appeared at this time (UKII:163).

Toungoo marched to Pegu for the third time in 1538 (BE 899). With a total of seven armies Bayinnaung led the advance guard and
Thado-damma-yaza the rear guard (200E; 800H; 70,000S). Min-ye-thin-ka-tu was appointed to watch over Toungoo in Tabinshwehti’s absence. Mon troops met them in advance and the cavalry of the two sides engaged in battle at Colia town near Pegu. The Toungoo cavalry gained the upper hand and pursued the Pegu forces right up to the walls of Pegu, capturing horses, elephants, captives, and the Mon minister Thamein Bru along the way. The Toungoo forces encamped at a place called Tenetkou near Pegu and laid siege to the town, but they could not scale the walls of Pegu because the walls of the town were thick and well-built with large numbers of cannon and mortars arrayed along the wall (UKII:164).

This was the third siege Toungoo had unsuccessfully launched against Pegu and by this time the walls of Pegu must have seemed almost impenetrable. Toungoo decided to change its strategy and attack the smaller and more vulnerable towns that lay to the west of Pegu first. As the Burmese chronicle describes this campaign to the western delta region of Mon Ramanya, first, Tabinshwehti marched to the west of Pegu and encamped at Thagon [Dagon]. There he divided the forces into separate divisions which were then sent off to attack the tributary towns of Pegu: Bassein, Myaungmya, Tayaintara, Kebaung, and Depadwei. The Toungoo king Tabinshweiti then marched back to Pegu and tried several more times to take Pegu. Unsuccessful, as the rainy season approached, Toungoo forces returned to Toungoo (UKII:164).

This campaign to the western delta region could have fulfilled four objectives. First, manpower could be augmented before making further siege attempts against the walls of Pegu. Second, the forces could have been augmented with either Indian Muslim or Portuguese mercenaries with firearms and technical know-how, who would have likely been residing in the seaports of Mon Ramanya. Third, the western delta region may have supplemented Toungoo’s military food supply, if the food supply in the area immediately adjacent to Pegu ran out, the Toungoo troops would have to return to Toungoo, but if alternative food supplies in the western delta region could be found, then the siege could be extended for a longer period of time. Fourth, seizing the money and transportable wealth such as silver generated by maritime trade as prize or plunder may have been an additional objective.

During the first three campaigns, Toungoo repeated the same pattern of siege warfare. Either the initial assaults against the walled
city were immediately successful or if the city walls were well-defended, the attacker was forced to retreat from the walls to distance themselves from enemy fire, perhaps making several more attempts to scale or undermine the walls, and then before the rainy season began, if they still were not successful, they returned home. This pattern is repeated so frequently in the Burmese chronicle narrative of the Ava period that it is almost reduced to a meaningless formula. The question has to be asked whether formulaic descriptions like this in the Burmese chronicle correspond to actual recorded historical facts or are rather stock historical interpretations based on generalized notions gleaned from other sources and inserted automatically by the chronicle’s author at appropriate points.

In addition to this Ava period pattern of siege warfare, a new pattern begins to emerge in the chronicle narrative during the early First Toungoo Dynasty period, manpower accumulation to augment the forces of an unsuccessful siege. This new pattern starts in much the same way as the earlier pattern with an expedition against a large settlement. Sometimes an initial assault on the larger settlement fails and sometimes there is no attack at all because the defenses are just too strong and they anticipate failure. Then the smaller tributary settlements surrounding the larger settlement are systematically raided for military resources (men, horses, elephants) which are extracted out of these settlements and finally, after the forces of the invading army have been suitably augmented, the larger settlement is attacked and taken. Oaths of loyalty are then administered and longer-term tributary relationships are set up with the larger settlement and its satellite settlements. Bayinnaung’s expeditions against Prome (1552) and Ava (1555) are later examples of this pattern of manpower accumulation from surrounding settlements before attacking a larger settlement. In short, the smaller and more vulnerable settlements surrounding the larger target settlement are subjugated first and troop levies are taken from them to attack the larger settlement with.

Toungoo must have known that the western delta region was a population rich area where troops levies, food supplies, and transportable wealth like silver and gold could be obtained. According to (Lieberman, 1984, 18) travelogues and census records from this period indicate that the western delta area was one of just four rice growing regions that would have supported a large farming
population and large armies. In Ramanya these bands of rice-growing settlements included: “the western delta around Bassein and Myaungmya, along the Martaban-Moulmein litoral, along the Irrawaddy from modern Myanaung to Danubyu, and along an arc from Dagon and Syriam to Pegu.” Toungoo forces passed through two well-known port cities, Dagon and Bassein, in their campaign through the western delta region. As Tomes Pires wrote in his *Suma Oriental* (1516) of the wealth in these port cities:

...and from this port [Dagon near Yangon] fifty leagues away is another port which is called Cosmyn (Bassein) which is the principal port of the kingdom of Pegu where there are come to trade many ships, that there come each year four or five ships from Bengalla and the goods that these ships bring are Synabafo textiles, and other sorts of cloth that are consumed in the kingdom and are taken outside through the interior. These ships arrive at this port in March and part of April, they leave from there at the end of June. They take the greater part of their employment in silver made into rings which are made in the same Kingdom...The silver mine is in the Kingdom of Pegu and a great amount is produced. The greater part goes toward Bengal and to the kingdom of the Klings and some comes to Malacca. There is a gold mine in the same kingdom of Pegu which produces a lot (Cortesao, 1944, 109, 111 quoted in SLC 178-9).

Although the chronicle does not explicitly say so, we can infer that Toungoo brought back with them to Toungoo significant increments to manpower, wealth, and weaponry after raiding these port cities on its third campaign against Pegu. Since the western delta region was probably inhabited by arms-bearing Muslim Indians and Portuguese, foreign mercenaries accompanied by their advanced weapons may have entered the Toungoo for the first time at this point (Lieberman, 1984). During Toungoo’s previous campaigns against Pegu they had encountered well-armed Portuguese and Indian Muslims in the employ of the Mon king of Pegu. This would have been their first exposure to this new military force since all their prior military activities had been in insulated Upper Burma. Lieberman describes the impact that Portuguese mercenaries and European military technology must have had:
...the principal contribution of the Portuguese to Southern ascendancy [First Toungoo Dynasty with capital in Pegu] was military. In the 1530’s, bands of Portuguese freelance soldiers started to furnish rulers along the Asian littoral with warships and more especially with arquebuses and small cannon superior to any Indian or Chinese weapons hitherto available. Portuguese cast-metal muzzle loaders were less likely to burst, their trajectories were longer and more accurate, and their shots more heavier than those of Asian cannon of equivalent weight. Although Burman and Mon kings never acquired massive siege guns such as rendered stone walls and old-style castles untenable after about 1450 in Europe, they used Portuguese cannon to good effect by mounting them on high mounds or towers and then shooting down into besieged towns. By itself, this technique was seldom decisive. But when used in conjunction with large-scale conventional assaults and mining operations, it could clear the walls of enemy soldiers, demoralize civilians, and create gaps in wood and even brick defenses. Despite their cumbersome loading procedures, handheld arquebuses or matchlocks were also valued because of their light weight, superior penetration (compared to arrows), short-range accuracy, and intimidating noise. The Burmese learned to integrate arquebuses skilfully into both infantry and elephanteer units. Portuguese weapons proved particularly effective against northern Shans, who had limited experience with firearms (Lieberman, 1984).

As Keegan observes (Keegan, 1993, 151, see quote above) treachery has always been a common means of breaking a siege. Toungoo used an act of treachery to create “splits in the enemy camp.” This act of treachery led to a political purge at the Mon court in 1538 (BE 899) and the two highest ministers next to the king, Binnyalaw and Binnyakyan, were executed (UKII: 165). Binnyalaw was one of the two ministers whose leadership the Burmese chronicle praises in resisting Toungoo’s first siege in 1535, so this purge amounted to a significant split in the enemy camp. As Harvey summarizes the rather lengthy story:
In spite of several attempts, Tabinshweiti could not take Pegu city. Therefore he had recourse to stratagem. The Pegu king’s ablest supporters were two commanders whom he sent to Tabinshweithi with a letter asking for friendly relations. Tabinshwehti pointedly avoided referring to the letter but treated the envoys themselves with unusual honor. After their return he wrote a letter to them by name ‘When the matter you arranged with me is finished, I will give one of you Pegu and the other Martaban to rule over.’ The bearers of this letter had instructions to insult the Talaing thugyis [Mon leaders] by demanding food gratuitously, and having thus provoked a quarrel, to run away leaving the letter behind. They did so, and the Talaing thugyis forwarded the letter to their king, who at once, perceiving the two commanders to be traitors, put them to death. Thus deprived of their best leaders, the Talings lost heart, many of them deserted, their king fled to Prome, and Tabinshwehti entered Prome without striking a blow in 1539 (Harvey, 153-4).

Harvey notes that this same stratagem was used by Maha Bandula during the Konbaung period in 1825 which adds to the credibility of the event.

The Burmese chronicle claims that Toungoo’s fourth campaign against Pegu encountered no resistance. The Mon king Thu-shin-tagara-rupi, anticipating problems in the defense of Hanthawaddy evacuated the city and led his forces upriver to Prome intending to unite his forces with those of his brother-in-law the king of Prome Thado-damma-yaza. Portuguese sources claim that Portuguese mercenaries aided the Mon side in this final stand. The Portuguese account of events emphasizes that Toungoo’s superior manpower was the decisive factor that allowed them to take the city:

In the year 1539 the Viceroy dispatched a trading galleon, under the command of Fernao de Moraes, to Pegu. On arrival at that port, the King with promises and favours induced him to aid him against the King of Burma, who was invading his territories with such a force that the combined armies are stated to have numbered over 2,000,000 men and 10,000 elephants. Moraes embarked in a galliot and took over command of the Pegu fleet, with which he made great havoc among the enemy’s
ships. At the same time the Burmese land troops came on like a torrent, carrying all before them, and easily gained the city and kingdom of Pegu. The rival fleets engaged in a desperate encounter, but the Pegu ships, finding themselves overpowered by the superior numbers of the Burmese fleet, deserted Moraes, who alone in his galiot performed wonders single-handed but was finally killed (Danvers, 442, my italics; also Stevens’ translation of Faria y Sousa, II.10 cited in Harvey, my italics).

Having finally taken Pegu, the capital of the Mon kingdom of Ramanya, as well as the main ports of Dagon and Bassein, Toungoo now controlled coastal access to European firearms, trade revenue, Portuguese and Muslim mercenaries, as well as the population of large stretches of the south to wage war with. This momentum would eventually propel Toungoo into a second, more vigorous phase of expansion into Prome, Arakan, and Ayutthya.

Demographic Factors Behind State Formation and Expansion

Manpower accumulation driving state expansion is a recurrent and unifying theme during the late Ava - early Toungoo period (1486-1539). Several causal relations between population and warfare with an effect on state expansion have been proposed in the literature including: 1. positive and negative causal relations between population and warfare, 2. causal relations between military manpower and military victory, and 3. causal relations between population density, social structure, and the type of warfare employed such as short-term raiding for plunder or long-term conquest for territory. Both qualitative and quantitative evidence that these relations played a role in state expansion can be found in the Burmese chronicle.

First, there are relationships between population and warfare. Warfare has a negative effect on population growth from factors such as mortality from battle, epidemic, and famine; lower birth rates; and flight-emigration from the area of hostilities (Wrigley, 1969, 64; Turchin, 2003b, 2, 6). Reid (1988) following Parker (1996) holds that bloodshed and mortality rates for Southeast Asian warfare were low because the taking of war captives to augment a state’s population was the main objective of warfare. Bloodshed
reduced the enemy’s population, the very store of wealth that warfare was being waged to obtain, so rational combatants minimized bloodshed. Charney (2004) questions the universal validity of this theory and presents several counter-examples (Reid, 1988, 124; Parker, 1996 (original 1988), 117-125; Charney, 2004, 17-22).

Using mortality to define warfare, equating bloodshed with the intensity of warfare, as Turchin (2003b, 5) does, simplifies the problem. Whether of low or high intensity, all would agree that warfare increases mortality, the question is whether warfare in early modern Southeast Asia was uniformly of low intensity or not, and if not, then what variables were responsible for variations in intensity? Were overlords waging punitive campaigns against their own vassals less likely to engage in intense, high mortality warfare? When two different cultures met in battle, like Burmese and Shans or Burmese and Mons, were mortality rates high due to the absence of any pre-existing cultural rule limiting bloodshed? Although battle casualties are not listed like troops levies are in the Burmese chronicle, the chronicle does make an explicit note when casualties were great as they were in the Mon attack on Toungoo in 1496, Ava’s attack on Toungoo and Prome occupying Sale in 1505, and the first Shan siege of Ava in 1525. As Charney argues (2004, 74), military leaders were apparently willing to risk bloodshed at least sometimes to achieve important military objectives. Along the lines of Clausewitz and Keegan (1993), it could be argued that it was the willingness of a military leader to engage in high-intensity total war and expose troops to the danger of bloodshed that enabled victory or at least avoided defeat. Examples of both high and low intensity warfare can be found during Min-gyi-nyo’s reign. As for high intensity warfare, the Burmese chronicle’s depiction of the intensity of the final Shan siege of Ava in 1527 implies that under the leadership of Sawlon Shan forces were oblivious to bloodshed and that this was an important factor in their victory (UKII:129). The frequent small-scale raids for humans and animals that Min-gyi-nyo made against the smaller satellite settlements of larger states in Upper Burma were probably an instance of low-intensity, low-bloodshed warfare. Altogether, there was likely a mix of low and high intensity warfare which forensic archaeological evidence could prove or disprove.
Population growth’s positive effect on warfare is a more controversial hypothesis. Malthus (1798) held that population pressure on limited land caused warfare as well as disease and famine. In general, population pressure on limited territory can lead to the carrying capacity of the land being exceeded and diminishing returns from agriculture. The causality between population growth and warfare has formed the basis for a “warfare theory of state formation”, but recent empirical tests have failed to establish this causal connection as a general rule (Turchin, 2003b, 1-3; Diamond, 1999, 284). The hypothesis that population pressure causes internal warfare with a time lag has been shown to be a more limited and reasonable hypothesis. The relationship holds at a lag because diminishing returns from agricultural production lead to population growth overshooting the taxes that can be generated from that population. Without taxes, the state is unable to build up the military resources necessary to suppress internal warfare (Turchin, 2003b, 7). As we’ve already seen, the history of Mong Yang’s occupation of Bhamo provides some textual evidence that the carrying capacity and “ratio of population to resources” of the Shan Realm had been exceeded and this was a motive for expansionary (external) warfare. In an opposite effect, Turchin (2003a, 52-53) argues that high population density is negatively correlated with group solidarity, a pre-condition for centralization of power and expansionary warfare. Further research on the population density of the Shan Realm during this important era is needed.

Second, the causal relationship between military manpower and military victory has always been strong. Military theorists including Napoleon have long held manpower superiority to be the most important determinant of victory in warfare (Keegan, 1993, 306). In pre-modern Southeast Asia, as Charney (2004, 219) observes, “prior to the eighteenth century, the rule of thumb was that the larger the size of the army...the greater the likelihood of a successful outcome of a military campaign” and as Lieberman observes, its larger population gave Upper Burma a military advantage over other regions:

Notwithstanding the value of firearms, in an era of limited specialization manpower was still the best single indicator of military success. Upper Burma’s demographic superiority helps to explain not only why Burmans consistently dominated
There are strong indications that Toungoo’s four campaigns against Pegu (1534-38) were backed by ever increasing man and animal resources and that the final assault succeeded largely because of great numerical superiority. Unlike other causal relations, this causal relation can actually be explored statistically (see tables 2, 3, 4). Military statistics recorded the military resources (elephants, horses, soldiers, boats) that were mobilized for a military expedition. There is a long tradition of skepticism regarding these statistics because of some obvious exaggerations particularly during Bayinnaung’s reign, but a recent exchange between Charney (2003) and Lieberman (2003) discusses the reliability of these statistics and how they sometimes act as a form of textual rhetoric.

Some patterns are immediately recognizable in the military statistics of Min-gyi-nyo and Tabinshweihti’s reigns. The overlord’s troop counts are in general quite a lot larger than that of the vassal’s. We would expect Ava’s troop counts to be several times larger than Toungoo’s and this is in fact the case. The average Ava troop count is ninety-eight thousand and the average Toungoo troop count is twenty-four thousand, so we can generalize that on average Ava was able to muster about four times as much manpower as Toungoo, a reasonable ratio between overlord and vassal. The initial success Toungoo troops had against Ava’s punitive expedition of 1503 seems to have been due to the exceptionally strong forces raised for this campaign. The troop counts are double the average and while cavalry counts are not exceptional, the elephant count is about fifty percent greater than normal (120 vs. 80). Perhaps Min-gyi-nyo was able to temporarily mobilize a large percentage of the male population and animal resources from the appanages that Ava had recently given to it. After 1503, troop counts return to normal and Toungoo together with Prome are roundly defeated by Ava in the Myingyan region in 1505-06. After this defeat Toungoo studiously avoids military encounters with Ava.

Changes in the data over time support the argument that Toungoo acquired a zone of control that was free of warfare for a long period of time and that during this period of time freedom from warfare led to increased population and a ready pool of manpower.
available for conscription and use in military campaigns. In 1524 Toungoo fielded an army of ten thousand in an expedition South of Ava. After more than a decade of peace in 1535 Toungoo fielded an army of forty thousand in its first invasion of Pegu. The army fielded by Toungoo during the course of its four campaigns to Pegu from 1535 to 1539 increases in size from forty thousand to seventy thousand, an increase that can be explained by manpower accumulation during the campaigns themselves.

Table 2: Military Expeditions (from Ava), Min-gyi-nyo’s Reign

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Chronicle</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>Elephants</th>
<th>Horses</th>
<th>Soldiers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>869 (1508)</td>
<td>UKII:117</td>
<td>Pakan-gyi</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>870 (1509)</td>
<td>UKII:118</td>
<td>Magwe</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>873 (1512)</td>
<td>UKII:119</td>
<td>Myedu</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>120,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>875 (1514)</td>
<td>UKII:120</td>
<td>Sakut</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>877 (1516)</td>
<td>UKII:120</td>
<td>Myehte</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>879 (1518)</td>
<td>UKII:120</td>
<td>Myehte</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>120,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>881 (1521)</td>
<td>UKII:120</td>
<td>Kale-Mong Yang</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>90,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>885 (1523)</td>
<td>UKII:122</td>
<td>Myedu</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>888 (1527)</td>
<td>UKII:128</td>
<td>Pakan-gyi</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3: Toungoo Military Expeditions, Min-gyi-nyo’s Reign

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Chronicle</th>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>Elephants</th>
<th>Horses</th>
<th>Soldiers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>857</td>
<td>UKII: 110</td>
<td>Toungoo</td>
<td>Yamethin</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>858</td>
<td>UKII: 108,153</td>
<td>Ramanya</td>
<td>Toungoo</td>
<td>50 + 30</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>10,000 + 20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late 1490s</td>
<td>UKII: 153</td>
<td>Toungoo</td>
<td>Prome Region</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>865</td>
<td>UKII: 154</td>
<td>Toungoo</td>
<td>Ava at Ngaraneh</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>886</td>
<td>UKII: 158</td>
<td>Toungoo</td>
<td>South of Ava</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Source of men for all entries was Toungoo.

Table 4: Toungoo Military Expeditions, Tabinshweihti’s Reign

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Chronicle</th>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>Elephants</th>
<th>Horses</th>
<th>Soldiers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>896 (1535)</td>
<td>UKII: 162</td>
<td>Toungoo</td>
<td>Pegu</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>897 (1536)</td>
<td>UKII: 163</td>
<td>Toungoo</td>
<td>Pegu</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>899 (1537)</td>
<td>UKII: 164</td>
<td>Toungoo</td>
<td>Pegu</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Date</td>
<td>UKII: 166</td>
<td>Toungoo</td>
<td>Pegu</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Date</td>
<td>UKII: 166</td>
<td>Toungoo</td>
<td>Pegu</td>
<td>200 boats</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Date</td>
<td>UKII: 166</td>
<td>Pegu</td>
<td>Prome</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Date</td>
<td>UKII: 166</td>
<td>Pegu</td>
<td>Prome</td>
<td>700 boats</td>
<td></td>
<td>40,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The source of men for all forces listed here was Toungoo.

Third, political anthropologists have long hypothesized a relationship between population density, social structure, and different types of warfare. When a social group evolves from a local chieftainship to a more regionally organized polity:

Warfare and territoriality remain central, but the goals change. The nature of warfare shifts fundamentally, from competition between local groups over land and other resources – in which enemies are killed or driven off – to conquest warfare that seeks to expand the political economy by capturing both the land and labor and bringing them into elite control (Johnson and Earle, 2000, 249).

A distinction can be made between two kinds of objectives in military campaigns: short-term raiding for plunder versus long-term conquest of territory. The objective of short-term raiding was immediately transportable wealth such as manpower (war captives),
animals, precious metals, and sometimes food (Keegan, 1993, 126). The objective of territorial conquest was a more permanent long-term extraction of wealth through tribute and taxation from the conquered territory (Jones, 2001). This second kind of military objective has been labeled “strategic” and “persisting” by military theorists, because it is forward looking and persists over a long period of time. Setting up and enforcing this long-term relationship of wealth extraction requires the creation of a threat of disciplinary action, of a punitive military campaign if tribute or taxes are not forthcoming. In return for the tribute and taxes given to the overlord, the vassal receives protection from other aggressors. One also has to ask the question whether the tribute has any immediate economic value or is rather a symbol of submission in which case it is not fulfilling a function of wealth extraction at all, but rather an ideological function. Tribute has also been used as a means of exchanging trade goods (Reid, 1993, 234).

Manpower accumulation from raiding is likely to have been more important than longer term relations of taxation and tribute during the reign of Min-gyi-nyo. This raiding interpretation is favored by the Burmese chronicle text itself. The descriptions of most military campaigns during Min-gyi-nyo’s reign in the Burmese chronicle end with the formulaic phrase “and they took many elephants, oxen, and captives” as war prize, so a large fraction of the human and animal wealth of captured settlements were likely carted back to the capital of the invading state, but since statistics are rarely ever given on war prize it is not clear to what degree the population and pool of conscriptable males was incremented by taking war captives. This war prize should have eventually resulted in increases in the detailed military resource statistics provided before each campaign. Min-gyi-nyo’s practice of attacking the smaller more vulnerable satellite settlements of larger settlements or states along an axis from Toungoo to Kyaukse and on the way to and from his campaigns in the east near Pagan from 1505 to 1509 seems most amenable to a raiding interpretation. Later on in the Burmese chronicle, during the reign of Bayinnaung, the establishment of more permanent relations of tribute and taxation are marked by formal oaths of allegiance to the new conquering ruler, but during the late Ava period these oaths of allegiance are only hinted at, for instance on the death of a ruler, the overlord-vassal relation must be re-established by traveling to the capital and taking an oath of
allegiance to the new overlord. No such trip to the capital to renew loyalties is reported for Min-gyi-nyo.

A Model of State Formation and Expansion

From relationships between demographic variables, we now turn to a model of the role that warfare played in state formation and expansion. Four stages in state formation have been proposed by Di Cosmo (1999, 26): 1. crisis, 2. militarization, 3. centralization, and 4. acquisition of external resources. In economic terms, an exogenous shock throws a state out of a stable political equilibrium and sets in motion endogenous mechanisms of adjustment (2, 3, and 4) that will eventually return it to equilibrium.

First, a crisis is the precipitating cause behind state formation. A crisis is defined as “a general, sometimes abrupt, worsening of economic, political, and social conditions, carrying with it a sense of impending change.” Bad climate, bad harvests, droughts, epidemics, overgrazing, and tensions between ethnic groups are all cited as possible precipitating causes behind a crisis that leads to war (Di Cosmo, 1999, 10). Many of these crises can be subsumed under population growth’s positive effect on warfare discussed above. Chinese sources provide ample evidence of tensions between ethnic groups along the Shan-Chinese frontier, whereas the more royal eulogizing style of the Burmese chronicle tends to leave such precipitating causes out of the narrative. One possible crisis in the Shan realm along the Shan-Chinese frontier consisted of population pressure on limited land bounded to the east by the Chinese and the south by Ava. In Toungoo, a possible crisis was the Shans taking Prome two years prior to Tabinshweihti’s first expedition against Ramanya. Toungoo would have been the next likely candidate in the Shan southern expansion. The only alternative was to attack Ramanya in the south and build up manpower from there for an assault against the north.

Second, the initial crisis leads to militarization and the mobilization of the society for war. The military participation rate of the society increases and a high percentage of the adult males are conscripted into military service. Imperial bodyguard units are also formed to strengthen the personal power of the ruler and create greater cohesion in the upper ranks of the military. The general
population that conscripts are drawn from undergoes subordination to put it on a war footing. Censuses and tattooing are instituted to stem the flow of population out of social groups that bear a greater burden during warfare such as royal servicemen into those that are exempted like religious institutions (Lieberman, 1984, 40-41, 152-181; Aung-Thwin, 1985; Charney, 214-216). In Burmese society conscripts did not draw a salary and were expected to provide many of the perquisites of war that states in other societies and times (e.g. Roman) provided soldiers with such as food supplies and personal weapons (sword, knife, lance, spear, shield, protective gear, bow and arrow, crossbow, boats, Charney, 2004, 23-41, 105). Rigid disciplinary rules that involved the families of soldiers were used to subordinate the population for war: “to ensure the loyalty of conscripts, their families were treated as hostages for their good behavior” (Charney, 219).

Third, centralization occurs next when small states begin to form alliances and work together. Di Cosmo uses the term “ideology in reserve” to “suggest the latent possibility of the state, made possible by the willing consent of tribal components to alienate part of their power for the greater good of the resolution of the crisis” (Di Cosmo, 1999, 14). Centralization occurs when:

During a crisis several leaders would emerge and strive to create a new order, thereby restoring peace; they were usually junior members of the tribal aristocracy vying for power. The competition revolved around the ability of the leader and his close military associates to defend the interests of the tribe. If successful, the leader would attract the support of several other tribes (Di Cosmo, 1999, 13).

Turchin (2003a) argues that “frontier conditions impose an intense selective pressure under which weaker groups with low asabiya [group solidarity] fragment and are incorporated into stronger groups” (Turchin, 2003a, 56). He enumerates several factors in frontier regions like the Shan-Chinese frontier that serve as catalysts for group solidarity and centralization: 1. inter-group conflict, 2. low population density, 3. small group size, 4. large neighboring state, 5. absence of mountains, 6. presence of rivers, 7. proselytizing and exclusionary religion, 8. primogeniture, 9. society-wide mechanisms of male socialization (Turchin, 2003a,
Factors 1, 3, 4, and 6 held along the Shan-Chinese frontier, but 5 and 7 did not. It is not clear whether the other factors held or not.

Fourth, the final stage is the actual acquisition of external resources to ensure the future existence of the emergent state. The focus is on more efficient resource extraction. As Di Cosmo describes it, it is “the search for more efficient and more sophisticated ways to supply the new politically dominant class with sufficient means for its continued existence” and “the gradual – but uneven – expansion of ways to achieve better control and management of revenues.” States run through an evolutionary sequence of fiscal stages in their finance that runs: raiding, tribute, taxation. As Di Cosmo describes the evolution, fiscal policies become “less rapacious and erratic.” From raiding parties “swollen to the size of fully-fledged armies” states pass to more permanent and lasting control by demanding tribute from conquered states, but tribute can be difficult to collect from remote vassals and must ultimately be backed up with the threat of punitive expeditions, so tribute can be volatile and when it disappears can provoke a crisis (Di Cosmo, 1999, 17-18, 27). To ensure fiscal revenues, governors with garrisons, not tributary lords, are appointed from the center to manage more reliable regular taxation of agriculture and trade on the periphery.

Grabowsky (1999) has argued for the “primacy of manpower” in pre-modern mainland Southeast Asian history and the importance of manpower raids and forced migration (vs. voluntary migration) in pre-modern warfare and state formation. He points out that because raiding for manpower was so effective, more efficient forms of resource extraction that required a higher degree of control such as direct taxation were not necessary:

the control of manpower, not the conquest of land, was the crucial factor for establishing, consolidating, and strengthening state power...Thai, Burmese, and Cambodian chronicles provide ample evidence of how Southeast Asian rulers launched successful attacks against weaker neighbors in order to seize large parts of the population and to resettle the war captives in their own realm. At the same time, the victorious side was very often content to establish a loose tributary relationship with the former enemy whose resources of
In pre-modern Burma military manpower resources were extracted in two different ways: 1. permanent resettlement to the overlord’s center, and 2. troop levies from the vassal periphery at the time of military campaigns to states that were even further afield that were being targeted for conquest. Whereas permanent resettlement resembled once-off raiding, troop levies resembled taxation in that they required long-term control (unless, of course, the military expedition using troop levies actually passed through the tributary state subject to troop levies). Military manpower resettled at the center, however, was more valuable because it could be mobilized quicker and controlled more reliably. The relationship between population growth and expansionary warfare was therefore strongly affected by the coercive capacity of the state to mobilize manpower for expansionary warfare. Once the military manpower and animals of a state had been augmented, they needed to be mobilized which brings us back to the second stage above.

Feedback mechanisms that describe the forces at work in pre-modern state formation have taken a prominent place in some important recent works on world history (Lieberman, 2003, 65; Diamond, 1999, 87). These feedback mechanisms provide a focal point for integrating the diverse and numerous causal factors that complicate history (cf. Wrigley, 1969, 109). A demographic feedback loop can be used to describe the relation between manpower accumulation and warfare in pre-modern Southeast Asia. After conquest on the periphery of a state’s sphere of control, military resources (human captives, animals, weapons, ammunition) were brought back to the center where they could be better organized into conscriptable units for further expansionary warfare. Warfare required strong systems of patronage, extraction, and coercion (Lieberman, 2003, 31). A starting point for such a feedback mechanism is the notion of a “manpower-warfare multiplier” to show how manpower accumulation leads to state expansion (cf. the money supply and Keynesian multipliers of economics). If territory was expanded by a certain amount, a certain fraction of the population was taken from the land of this new territory and used for further expansionary warfare. Multipliers translate into systems of first-order differential equations like those borrowed from ecology by Turchin (2003a) to describe population dynamics in pre-modern
agrarian states. The differential equation itself describes the dynamics of the system, how different factors determine rates of change in the system. Combined with a set of “initial conditions”, a starting point for a given historical situation, the differential equations determine a unique trajectory through historical space. This notion is not new and dates as far back as Carl Hempel’s description of covering laws in the philosophy of history (Dray, 1974, 67; Hempel, 1942). The main benefit is the conceptual clarity resulting from this approach, rather than any simplistic notion that events in complex evolving historical states could be entirely described by a simple differential equation. A model similar to Turchin’s (2003a) that summarizes the forces at work in sixteenth century mainland Southeast Asian state expansion will be the subject of a future paper.

Conclusion

The main purpose of this paper has been to provide a narrative history charting the forces at work behind state expansion in the early Toungoo period. Both the reign of Min-gyi-nyo and the Shan invasions of Ava played important roles in this expansion. From the very beginning of Min-gyi-nyo’s reign, after seizing the throne of Toungoo in 1486, Min-gyi-nyo built an ever widening sphere of influence in Upper Burma. After conquering the Pyinmana area near Toungoo, during the 1490s Min-gyi-nyo attacked the rebellious vassal Yamethin on behalf of his overlord the king of Ava and made exploratory military probes along the frontier of Mon Ramanya to the south. In 1501-03, there was a succession struggle at Ava as well as an invasion and occupation of the northern part of the Mu River valley, an important part of Ava’s food supply. In the wake of these events, the new king of Ava attempted to draw Min-gyi-nyo closer to him through a marriage alliance and a gift of strategically important territory near Kyaukse, another important part of Ava’s food supply. Min-gyi-nyo entered into a state of rebellion for the first time, spurned Ava’s gift and depopulated the territory. Ava sent a military expedition against Toungoo in retaliation, but Min-gyi-nyo intercepted it ahead of time and defeated it. Shortly afterwards, in 1505, Toungoo joined with Prome and attacked towns in the Myingyan area near Pagan. Toungoo was defeated and humbled by a
joint military expedition sent by Ava and Hsipaw. In 1505, three princes rebelled and seized the town of Pakan-gyi at the confluence of the Irrawaddy and Chindwin rivers. Instead of making an immediate move to help the rebels, Toungoo and Prome bided their time with expeditions against settlements like Magwe to the south. Their caution was vindicated when the princes were defeated and executed. During his trips from Toungoo to and from these campaigns, Min-gyi-nyo attacked and raided settlements along the way, in some instances establishing marriage alliances. In 1510, the king of Ava built a new capital and palace and Min-gyi-nyo followed his example. After 1510, while Ava was burdened by Shan raids of increasing intensity, Toungoo settled back to a period of peace. Only in 1523 did Min-gyi-nyo venture out of Toungoo again in a military expedition. During the Shan invasions of Ava (1524-27), he gained many loyal vassals in the area south of Ava. Min-gyi-nyo died in 1531. The new Shan state at Ava invaded Prome in 1532 and in 1535 Toungoo under a new king Tabinshweihty started a series of attacks against Pegu, the capital of Mon Ramanya, that led to Toungoo's conquest and control over the southern Ramanya region and its lucrative maritime trade.

Several demographic factors that played a role in state formation together with a model of state formation have been assessed for their relevance to early Toungoo state expansion (1486-1539). Although many might regard the lack of primary sources for the First Toungoo Dynasty as limiting research possibilities, it is hoped that shining the light of disciplines such as historical demography, political anthropology, the anthropology of war, as well as economic theory (Schmid, 2004; Van Tuyll and Brauer, 2004) on the evidence combined with a continued search for new primary sources will allow new advances to be made in this important but understudied period of Burmese history. Perhaps archaeological evidence will also one day supplement the evidence that is now almost entirely textual.
Table 5: List of Military Expeditions:

**Min-gyi-nyo's Campaigns**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pyinmana, Kyaukse</td>
<td>1487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yamethin, Kyaukse</td>
<td>1492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyaungpya on the Mon border</td>
<td>1496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyaukse, Pyinsi</td>
<td>1503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyaungyan</td>
<td>1504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salei, Bontaung</td>
<td>1506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amyin, Nyaungyan, Yamethin, Wadi, Pinle, Pinya, Shan-pait-taung</td>
<td>1525</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tabinshweiti's Campaigns**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dagon, Bassein, Western Delta Region</td>
<td>1538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pegu</td>
<td>1535-1538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prome</td>
<td>1540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mottama</td>
<td>1541-42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prome</td>
<td>1542-43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defeats Northern Shan Counterattack</td>
<td>1543-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjugates middle Burma</td>
<td>1544-1545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arakan</td>
<td>1546-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayutthya</td>
<td>1548</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bayinnaung’s Conquests (Tun Aung Chain, 2004)**

**Reconquest of the Burmese Heartland**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Toungoo</td>
<td>1551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prome</td>
<td>1551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanthawaddy</td>
<td>1552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martaban</td>
<td>1552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bassein</td>
<td>1552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ava</td>
<td>1555</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conquest of the Northern Tai Region**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mong Mit</td>
<td>1557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hsipaw</td>
<td>1557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yawnghwe</td>
<td>1557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mong Yang</td>
<td>1557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mogaung</td>
<td>1557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongnai</td>
<td>1557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chiangmai</td>
<td>1558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chiangmai</td>
<td>1559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hsenwi</td>
<td>1558</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mengmao (1563)

**Conquest of Ayutthya and Laos**

Ayutthya (1564)  
Ayutthya (1569)  
Vientiane (1574)  
Mogaung (1576)

**Table 6: Geographical Outline of Settlements in Upper Burma and the Shan States, Late Ava Period**

- **Upper Burma**
  - Northern Frontiers
    - Mu River Valley (Aung-Thwin, 1990, 72)
      - Myedu
      - Ngarane
      - Si-bok-taya
      - Tabayin [Dipeyin]
      - Sitha
    - Upper Irrawaddy River Valley
    - Upper Chindwin
      - Kalei
      - Mingin
  - Myingyan (Pagan Region)
    - Pakangyi
    - Pagan
    - Singu
    - Sale
    - Pakannge
    - Kyaukpadaung
      - Sa-kyaw
    - Mount Popa
    - Natmauk
    - Pin
    - Taywindaing
    - Ngathayauk
    - Shwe-kyaw Pagoda
  - Lower Chindwin (West)
    - Kani

*SBBR 3.2 (Autumn 2005): 284-395*
♦ Badon
♦ Amyin

▪ Kyaukse (East) (Aung-Thwin, 1990, 70)
  ♦ Myitta
  ♦ Sadon (Sa-thon)

▪ Ye-hlwe-nga-hkayaing (Footnote UK:152; Than Tun, 1983-86, v.10, p. 1)
  ♦ Pya-gaung [Kyidaungkan] (Harvey, 124)
  ♦ Kintha
  ♦ Shwe-myo (Trager and Koenig, 1979, 172-173)
  ♦ Taung-nyo (Trager and Koenig, 1979, 149-150)
  ♦ Talaing-the (Trager and Koenig, 1979, 171-172)

▪ Appanages Given to Min-gyi-nyo by Ava (1503)
  ♦ Ye-hlwe-nga-hka-yaing
  ♦ Pet-paing
  ♦ Sa-thon [Sadon in Kyaukse?]
  ♦ Myo-hla
  ♦ In-te
  ♦ In-paut
  ♦ Kyat
  ♦ Than-nget
  ♦ Begu-tha-beit
  ♦ In-chon

▪ Meiktila (East)
  ♦ Nyaungyan
  ♦ Yindaw
    ▪ Palein-kyei-pon
    ▪ Yu-pon
    ▪ Min-lan
    ▪ Kon-paung
    ▪ Kan-taung
    ▪ Baut-laut
  ♦ Thin-kyi
  ♦ Meiktila
  ♦ Tha-ga-ra (Trager and Koenig, 1979, 152)
  ♦ Myin-nyaung
  ♦ Ywatha
  ♦ Kan-daung
  ♦ Hlaingdet
- Yamethin
  - Saba-taung
  - Ain-bu
  - Nga-sein-in
  - Tan-ti
- Southern Irrawaddy River Basin
  - Salin
  - Natmauk
  - Sagu
  - Magwe
  - Malun
  - Thayet
  - Myede
  - Prome
  - Myanaung
  - Tharawaddy
- Southern Frontier
  - Prome (West)
  - Taungdwingyi (Central)
  - Toungoo (East)
- Shan Realm
  - Mong Yang (Mengyang)
  - Mogaung
  - Mong Mit (Mengmi)
  - Hsenwi (Theinni, Mu-bang)
  - Onpaung (Hsipaw, Thibaw)
  - Kalei
  - Bhamo and Kaungzin
  - Katha
  - Mong Nai (Mone)
  - Nyaungshwe (Yawngwe)
  - Mong Mao (Luchuan-Pingmian)
### Table 7: Toponym Variants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Name</th>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Chinese Name</th>
<th>Burmese Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Upper Burma</td>
<td>Mian-dian</td>
<td>Ava</td>
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<td>Shan Realm</td>
<td>Meng Yang</td>
<td>Mohnyin</td>
</tr>
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<td>Shan</td>
<td>Shan Realm</td>
<td>Mu-bang</td>
<td>Theinni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Shan</td>
<td>Shan Realm</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Thibaw, Onpaung</td>
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<td>Shan</td>
<td>Shan Realm</td>
<td>Mengmi</td>
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<td>Shan Realm</td>
<td>Meng-nai</td>
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<td>Shan</td>
<td>Shan Realm</td>
<td>Man-mo</td>
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<td>Yawnghwe</td>
<td>Shan</td>
<td>Shan Realm</td>
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</table>
APPENDIX

Map 1: Map of Burma and Siam
Map 2: Map of Upper Burma
REFERENCES


Burma Research Forum, SOAS, University of London. [Moderated forum for scholars to discuss research on Burma]


SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005): 284-395


*SOAS BULLETIN OF BURMA RESEARCH* 393

*SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005): 284-395*


Turchin, Peter (2004) "Dynamical feedbacks between population growth and sociopolitical instability in agrarian states" (Unpublished working paper from author's website. This paper was basis of a presentation at the "Santa Fe Institute working group on Analyzing Complex Macrosystems," and is to appear in the anthology "Structure and Dynamics.")


Witthayasakphan, Sompong and Zhao Hong Yun (translators and editors) (2001a) Phongsawadan Muang Tai (Khreua Muang ku muang) Chiang Mai: Silkworm. [Translation of Mong Mao chronicle]


Note:

The following addendum to Jon Fernquest, (2005) “Min-gyi-nyo, the Shan Invasions of Ava (1524-27), and the Beginnings of Expansionary Warfare in Toungoo Burma: 1486-1539,” SOAS Bulletin of Burma Research 3.2 (Autumn 2005): 35-142, was submitted after the journal was off to press (so to speak). We have added it here at the end of the volume. It is hoped that readers of Jon’s article, earlier in this journal, will also take note of this additional and revised material.

M.W.C.

Addendum: The Shan Realm in the Late Ava Period (1449-1503)

Jon Fernquist

Several factors conditioned the relation between the Shan Realm, China, and Burmese Ava before Min-gyi-nyo’s accession to power:

1. The Shan Realm had been a perpetual threat to Ava since the end of the Pagan dynasty (Than Tun, 1959, 111-12).
2. The Shan Realm was an economic frontier for Ava connecting it via trade to the expanding markets of Ming dynasty China (SLC 97-198).
3. The Shan Realm prospered economically from its proximity to China through trade in gems and luxury goods with which it was well-endowed (SLC 134-153; Brook, 1998, 75-79).

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4. Much Shan wealth was expropriated by the Chinese state through various forms of taxation (Ward, 2004, 5, 16-17, 28-29).

5. Increased wealth in the Shan Realm from farming and trade led to increased population and a surplus to finance armies and supply them with military resources such as weapons, animals, and the time of humans spent away from subsistence farming.

6. Ming China’s conquest and consolidation of power in Yunnan created more Shan states with some degree of local independence but with limited territory (Ward, 2004, 4, 5, 9, 22-25; Daniels, 2003, 3-10).

7. Shan expansion to the east into China was not possible.

8. Expansion to the south into Upper Burma was an easier natural alternative for territorial expansion.


10. The Shan-Chinese frontier region was in a continual state of warfare from 1449 to at least 1503.

The Shan state of Mong Mao arose in the power vacuum that ensued after the fall of the Dali kingdom in Yunnan to the Mongols in 1254. Through expansionary warfare the power of the Mong Mao state eventually extended over most of the Shan states of Burma and Tai ethnic states of Yunnan. This all came to an abrupt end in the 1380’s when the newly emergent Ming state invaded Yunnan and proceeded to consolidate its power there. The center of the Mong Mao state was located in the modern-day districts of Longchuan and Ruili on the Yunnan-Burmese border and had its capital at what is now the modern-day border town of Reili (Liew Foon Ming, 1996, 64; Daniels, 2003, 5-6; Wade, 2004, 31; Tapp, 2000; Reynolds, 2003).

From 1498 to 1504 the Ming replaced the tributary relations of the Tai states that surrounded Mong Mao with administrative divisions and taxation of their own making (Ward, 2004, 4-5, 9; Liew Foon Ming, 1996, 168-9). Under the pressure of increasing taxation, in 1411 Mong Mao refused to receive imperial envoys.
with proper ceremony which led to the Mong Mao leader being removed from office in 1413. During the twenty years from 1413 to 1435 the next ruler Chau-ngan-pha [Sa Ngam Pha, Thonganbwa] waged constant warfare against the former tributary states of Mong Mao. Although his initial ambition may have been to reclaim Mong Mao’s lost territory, the zone of Tai states soon fell into a state of endemic warfare much like that which would exist in the later part of the century. Such an endemic state of warfare is not uncommon among small proto-states (Ferguson and Whitehead, 1999; Turchin, 2003; Haas, no date, 11-14; Johnson and Earle, 2000, 34-45). Mong Mao was not always the aggressor. In 1436 Mong Mao received a tax exemption because of Hsenwi encroachments on its land (Liew Foon Ming, 169-170).

In the 1530s the intensity of warfare increased. As Wang Gungwu observes:

The re-emergence of the Maw Shan chieftains of Lu-ch’uan followed on the withdrawal of Ming armies from Vietnam in 1427. Knowing that the Ming court was in no condition to fight on the Yunnan border, the Maw Shan tribes became increasingly ambitious during the next few years. After 1436, their armies began to invade the border counties of central Yunnan, reaching as far as the Yung-ch’ang and Ching-tung [in Chinese territory] (Wang Gungwu, 1998, 325-6).

Eventually, one of the tit-for-tat seizures of territory in this state of endemic warfare triggered Chinese military intervention. In 1437 the ruler of the Tai state of Nandian requested Chinese assistance in returning land that had been taken from it by Mong Mao. The regional commander of Yunnan was requested to make an investigation into the matter and in 1438 he found that Mong Mao had “repeatedly invaded Nanlian, Ganyai, Tengchong,...Lujiang, and Jinch’i” and that the Mong Mao ruler had “appointed local chieftains of the neighboring regions subordinate to him without asking for the approval of the Ming court and that some of these men joined forces with him to invade Jinch’i” (Liew Foon Ming, 1996, 170). In response, the Chinese sent the first of four military expeditions against Mong Mao in a war that would last for over a decade, a war that is now known as the “Luchuan-Pingmian Campaigns” (1436-1449). As Wang Gungwu observes:
This war had disastrous consequences for the Ming state, it disrupted the economies of all the southwestern provinces involved in sending men and supplies in fighting a war of attrition against a small tribal state and it cost the Ming state the respect of its tribal allies on the border, who saw how inept and wasteful the Ming armies were. Moreover, the war drew commanders, officers, men, and other resources from the north which might have been vital to the defense of the northern borders. It is significant that the end of the Lu-ch’uan campaigns early in 1449 was followed immediately by extensive tribal uprisings and other revolts in five provinces south of the Yangtze river, and, on the northern frontiers, by the spectacular defeats later in the year which virtually destroyed the imperial armies in the north and led to the capture of the emperor himself by the Mongols. The year 1449 was a turning point in the history of the dynasty (Wang Gungwu, 1998, 326).

The rise of the Shan state of Mong Yang that would soon play such a significant role in Burmese history after 1524 occurs in the chaos that ensued at the end of the Luchuan-Pingmian Campaigns. The third campaign from 1443 to 1444 removed Chau-ngan-pha from power as the ruler of Mong Mao, but his son Chau-si-pha [Jifa] escaped capture and established a power base in Mong Yang on the west bank of the Irrawaddy river (Daniels, 2003, 8). A fourth campaign was sent in 1449 to capture him, but probably failed to achieve this main objective. The Chinese allowed remnants of the Mong Mao royal family to remain in Mong Yang if they agreed never to cross the Irrawaddy river to the east. Chinese sources disagree about how Chau-si-pha finally met his end, one Shan chronicle even claiming he reigned for another fifty years (Mangrai, 1969, xx). The version of events found in the official Chinese history includes one possible motive for Mong Yang’s eventually invasion of Ava in 1524-27, revenge:

Jifa [Chau-si-pha] escaped to Mengyang [Mong Yang] in early 1449 but was caught by the chieftain of Ava-Burma. In April 1454 the chieftain of Ava-Burma asked the Chinese to revert the land to him and the Ming ceded Yinjia...to Burma, so Si
Jifa and his family, a total of six people, were delivered to the Ming troops at a village on Upper Irrawaddy. Si Jifa [Chau-si-phə] was immediately escorted to the capital where he was executed. However, Ava-Burma let Si Bufa, the younger brother of Si Jifa, go free. He and his son, Si Hongfa (Thohanbwa) continued to rule Mengyang without the official approval of the Ming court. They sent tribute missions to China, but the court kept a close eye on the matter. Early in the Jiajing reign one of the descendants of Si Renfa [Chau-ngan-phα, Thonganbwa], then ruling Mengyang, managed to take revenge. In 1527 (Jiajing 6) he led an army that marched south to invade Ava-Burma, killing the chieftain Mang-ji-si (Shwenankyawshin) [Narapati (1502-1527)] and his wife (Liew Foon Ming, 1996, 198).

Mong Yang, to the northwest of Mong Mao, in 1449 began to emerge as the successor state to Mong Mao.

During the 1480s the power of the two Shan states Mong Yang and Mong Mit, rose in tandem, fueled by trade with the rising Ming dynasty of China. Mong Mit was most famous for rubies from the town of Mogok, sending tribute missions to the Chinese court with them as early as 1407. Mong Yang was famous for amber and jade (SLC 127, 129, 227, 241). The adjacent Shan states of Hsenwi and Hsipaw effectively defined a boundary between Chinese and Burmese spheres of influence in the Shan Realm. Hsipaw was a steadfast ally of Ava for much of the fifteenth century and appears to have had no relations with the Chinese state since it is never mentioned in Chinese sources. Hsenwi was the largest Shan political entity recognized by the Chinese state in the Shan Realm during the early Ming dynasty (SLC 2000, 228), but in the late fifteenth century over the course of several decades Mong Mit gradually broke free from Hsenwi’s control and was finally recognized by the Chinese state as a separate political entity (SLC 230). In the mid-fifteenth century the Chinese governor of Hsenwi married his daughter Nang Hannong to the ruler of Mong Mit. She was put in charge of Mong Mit’s gem mines and eventually became ruler of Mong Mit. Starting from the 1450’s Nang Hannong, using the gem trade with China as a lever, separated Mong Mit from Hsenwi. The role of Ming dynasty court politics and the gem trade in Mong Mit’s serpentine rise to power during the later half of the
fifteenth century has been documented by Sun Laichen (SLC 227-232). Other minor Shan states in the Shan Realm that are explicitly referred to in Burmese and Chinese sources include Kalei on the Upper Chindwin river as well as Mong Nai and Yawnghwe in the southern Shan states near modern-day Taung-gyi.

During the 1580s and 1590s tribute missions were sent frequently to the Chinese court by Shan rulers. Sending a mission was usually a strategic move that often did not indicate actual submission. It was often used to delay Chinese military action, gain acquiescence to territory that had been seized, and also as a bid to get hard to obtain recognition as a state by China. Mong Yang sent regular tribute missions to the Chinese court with items such as elephants, horses, gold, and silver in 1482, 1487, and 1491. Mong Mit sent missions in 1481, 1483, and 1496. Hsenwi sent them in 1496, 1505, 1517, and 1530 (MSL: Mong Yang: 23 Apr 1482, 4 Apr 1487, 3 May 1491; Mong Mit: 19 Jun 1481, 25 Sep 1483, 4 Nov 1496; Hsenwi: 29 Apr 1496, 8 Nov 1505, 22 Mar 1517, 21 Oct 1530).

While the Mong Yang Shans were placating the Chinese to the north, they were engaging in regular raids on the Burmese frontiers to the south. In 1483 (BE 844) the Burmese chronicle records that the Mong Yang Shans continued to attack Myedu and Ngarane in the north (UKII:106). In 1484 (BE 845) a new Burmese governor of Myedu was appointed (UKII:107). In 1484 Mong Mit was finally recognized by the Chinese state as an independent political entity (i.e. an “anfusi” or pacification office) no longer under the control of Hsenwi.

Compared with the chaotic state of continual warfare in the Shan Realm described by Chinese sources, Burmese sources often hardly seem to describe the same region. This probably stems from the different approach taken by the Burmese and Chinese states in their relations with Shan states in the late fifteenth century. In the face of endemic warfare in the Shan states, the Chinese state was reluctant to get militarily involved, choosing to control and monitor Shan states through continual diplomatic contact and coercion instead. The Burmese, on the other hand, were less concerned about continual monitoring and control and seem to have continued a strategy of once-off military expeditions to extract promises of submission and token payments of tribute to the exclusion of diplomatic relations. The continual contact of
Chinese officials with Shans in the Shan-Chinese frontier during this period led to overall better descriptions of what was going on there when compared with Burmese descriptions of events in the Shan-Burmese half of the frontier. Rhetorical differences between the Chinese and Burmese traditions of historical writing may also be a factor.

A good example of Burma’s military approach to relations is provided by the Burmese chronicle’s description of a punitive expedition led by Ava against the two Shan states Mong Yang and Mogaung in 1477. Mong Yang and Mogaung are tightly associated with each other in the Burmese chronicle, more often than not acting as one political entity (SLC 233), but in the 1477 campaign they were treated as separate entities by Ava. The Burmese chronicle records that in 1477 (BE 838) the king of Ava heard there was warfare in the Shan states and that the Mong Yang and Mogaung sawbwas [rulers] had entered into an alliance and were helping each other militarily, so the king of Ava ordered the crown prince to look after the capital of Ava in his absence and appointed his younger son, the lord of Yamethin Min-ye-kyaw-swa, to march by land with five armies (300E; 6,000H; 70,000S). The king of Ava himself marched with 12 armies travelling by river in his golden royal barge (70,000S). When they arrived at the port of Katha on the Irrawaddy, they disembarked and marched by land to Mong Yang. According to the chronicle, when the Mong Yang and Mogaung sawbwas learned of the king’s arrival they lost heart and were not brave enough to resist. They sent gifts and arms and entered into the Burmese king’s side. If they did in fact submit in this manner, what led them to do this? Perhaps the Shans were intimidated by the sheer size of Ava’s forces. Perhaps it was common cultural knowledge that submitting in advance to Burmese forces was a cultural norm that would allow the local ruler to maintain his position of power and it was this expectation that led to an early submission. The logic being, probably, that the quicker the submission to the Burmese, the quicker the Burmese would return to the capital and leave them to rule without interference. After their submission, the Burmese chronicle records that the king of Ava took the Mong Yang sawbwa and gave him the town of Tagaung in the north on the Irrawaddy to rule over. Mong Yang was given to the younger brother of the Mogaung sawbwa to rule over. The king of Ava returned to Ava in 1477 (BE 838)
By itself, the description in the Burmese chronicle is unnoteworthy, but juxtaposed with Chinese sources it has important implications for later events. The Burmese were relocating the Mong Yang rulers with their followers to Tagaung near Hsenwi without the knowledge of the Chinese. Tagaung is on the Irrawaddy river south of Bhamo which would have given Mong Yang troops a head start in their later invasion and occupation of Bhamo around 1500. It would have put them one step closer to the Burmese heartland and given them a taste of the China trade that traveled down the Irrawaddy river from the entrepot of Bhamo. The Chinese are also likely to have misinterpreted this Burmese relocation as an independent move by the Shans (cf. MSL 12 Oct 1499).

Chinese sources describe similar events, but from a different perspective. In 1479 the Ming Annals record that Ava asked China to give it the town and territory surrounding Kaung-zin [Gong-zhang] on the Irrawaddy river near Bhamo (MSL 17 Oct 1479). There is usually a lag between events in the Shan Realm and their being recorded in Chinese sources. The transportation delay alone for sending a message to the capital in Beijing was at least three months (Brooks, 1998, 30). In this case, a two year lag in processing the information would put the Burmese military expedition against Mong Yang around the same time as the Chinese refusal to give the port of Kaung-zin to the Burmese. Kaung-zin was an important port and a stopping point for Burmese tribute missions to the Chinese capital. China had promised to give Mong Yang to Ava after Ava helped in the capture of Mong Mao’s ruler Si Ren-fa in 1449. After apparently initially intending to honor this agreement (Liew Foon Ming, 1996, footnote 116, p. 198), Chinese officials eventually decided not to honor the agreement, so Ava requested this port town instead. The request was refused by the Chinese. In the wake of this refusal, Ava may have led an expedition against Mong Yang to uphold its prior claim to Mong Yang.

To summarize, the Shan Realm in the period leading up to Min-gyi-nyo’s reign was politically fragmented and plagued with endemic warfare as well as frequently shifting loyalties and alliances. This very fragmentation and disunity, however, also gave the region a fluid and malleable quality with a future potential for
concerted action under strong leadership.

**A Shan Confederation rules Upper Burma? (1527-1555)**

The fall of Ava in 1527 resulted in a sudden and short-lived expansion of Shan rule over Upper Burma from 1527 to 1555. This state expansion was to be over-shadowed by Bayinnaung’s even greater expansion of the Burmese state into the Tai region to the east from 1551 to 1581. Shan rule over Upper Burma after the invasion of 1527 caused a radical shift in the regional geopolitical structure of western mainland Southeast Asia. The Shan realm suddenly extended along the Irrawaddy in the east all the way to the borders of Prome’s territory in the south and in 1532, after Prome was taken, it reached the border of the Mon kingdom of Ramanya. In the eastern part of Upper Burma, Shan rule left Mingyi-nyo’s ruling house in Toungoo and intact with its own sphere of influence. Even after Mingyi-nyo’s son Tabinshweihtu embarked upon warfare against Pegu from 1535 to 1539, the new Shan state chose not to attack what must have been a weakly defended northern Toungoo frontier.

Shan rule over Upper Burma consisted of a confederation of Shan states. Although Chinese sources provide confirmation that Ava fell to a Shan invasion around 1524-1527, the evidence for Shan political control over Upper Burma from 1527 to 1555 lies entirely in Burmese sources. The existence of the confederation is only revealed at certain critical junctures in the Burmese chronicle narrative. One critical juncture occurs when the king of Prome calls on five Shan rulers to relieve the siege that Tabinshweihtu waged against Prome in 1542 (BE 903). The sawbwas of Ava (Thohan-bwa), Hsipaw, and Mong Yang come to Prome’s aid and two additional sawbwas, Bhamo and Mong Mit, arrive late after their defeat. Mustering together forces from these disparate states to the north of Ava to defend the southern borders must have presented quite a challenge. Although collectively the confederation may have been able to field a formidable army, this manpower must have been difficult to mobilize. Another critical juncture takes place in 1543 (BE 904) after the palace coup of Burmese residing at Ava’s court (UKII:136). After the Ava sawbwa Thohan-bwa was assassinated, the sawbwa of Hsipaw, the former Shan ally of Ava...
at the time of its defeat in 1527 is chosen by the Burmese as his successor. Perhaps the choice of a Shan successor by a Burmese led coup was necessitated by the need to keep the confederation of Shan states that defended Ava intact. Shortly after the Hsipaw sawbwa becomes king of Ava he organizes a military expedition to retake Prome from Tabinshweihti. By this time the confederation has expanded to seven sawbwas including two new sawbwas from Yawnghwe and Mong Nai in the southern Shan states. These two new sawbwas most likely joined as long-time allies of Hsipaw, because during the Shan invasions of 1525-7 the chronicle already records the Hsipaw sawbwa as traveling to these Shan states to replenish his elephants, horses, and soldiers (UKII:126). Later in this section we will look at the demise of the Shan confederation under Bayinnaung and the evidence that these events provide of Shan cooperation.

There is some evidence of Shan migration to and settlement in Upper Burma during the period of the Shan rule. As mentioned above, Kyaukse tax records from the nineteenth century show Shan settlement at Myaung-hla in Kyaukse (Trager, 1979, 383-4) and one of the last kings of Ava under the Shan confederation, Mobye Narapati (r. 1546-52), is said to have constructed Nga-kyi weir in Kyaukse, no doubt accompanied to some degree by Shan settlement (Harvey, p. 109). It is also worth speculating that both agricultural technology and the Buddhist religion may have started to flow into the Shan Realm with increased Shan contact with lowland Burmese practices after the Shan conquest of Upper Burma in 1527. Daniels (2003) finds significant changes in agricultural technology that likely began in the sixteenth century (Daniels, 2003, 18-21; Daniels, 2001, 77).

The origins of the Shan confederation hinge on the question of whether Mong Yang had any Shan allies when it invaded Ava from 1524 to 1527. The evidence is scattered and inconclusive. Mong Yang worked with Hsenwi and other smaller Shan states as well as the Chinese in the 1594 offensive against Bhamo, but the state of endemic warfare in the Shan Realm meant that alliances and vassal-overlord relations could change rapidly. Minkin, Kalei [Upper Chindwin] and Twin-tin along the invasion path used in 1524 are mentioned as being Mong Yang vassals in 1511 (UKII:120), but in 1520 they had once again become vassals of Ava. This is at least evidence for the possibility of quickly changing
loyalties and alliances. The Burmese chronicle only mentions Mong Yang as the invading force in 1524-7, but by 1527 “Mong Yang” had been used to refer to Shan invasions from the north for so long that it could well have frozen into a fixed chronicle cliché without much intrinsic meaning. Chinese sources are more ambiguous about who invaded Ava:

Some Chinese sources record that Mong Yang and Mong Mit...or even Mong Yang, Mong Mit, and Hsenwi altogether...sacked Ava and partitioned its territory, while Burmese chronicles show that Mong Yang almost single-handedly (except with some help from Prome) conquered Ava. The actual situation should be that Mong Yang and Hsenwi formed an alliance, but Mong Mit was not part of it, as Mong Mit was even attacked by Mong Yang after Mong Yang sacked Ava...Chinese and Burmese sources...coincide with respect to the help Mong Yang obtained from Prome (SLC 239).

The discontinuous transition from conflict and endemic warfare to an era of Shan political cooperation is rather perplexing. There is at least some precedent for this type of proto-state formation among the Mongol ethnic groups of China’s northern border. To make better sense of the scattered evidence of cooperation we will construct a model of state formation and expansion based on Di Cosmo’s model for China’s northern borders later in this paper. The evidence in the Burmese chronicle indicates that the functions of the confederation were limited to defense and the election of a ruler. As Scott and Hardiman (1900, 200) observed, Shan states were “semi-independent States which only united for common action under a...chief of particular energy, or in cases of national emergency.” How did this confederation achieve coordination among its various members? How did the different Shan states benefit from participating in this confederation?

What were the Shan motives for this sudden invasion of Ava? As we have seen the human agency motive of revenge that official Chinese historiography provides is one possibility, but were there more fundamental structural reasons based on economic or demographic factors? Prior to 1524 Mong Yang’s military actions against Ava had been restricted to attacking small garrison towns in the Mu irrigation district and the Irrawaddy. In 1524 the Mong
Yang Shans made a sudden entrance into the Chindwin Valley and started systematically moving down the Chindwin and then Irrawaddy river valleys right up to Thayet raiding settlements along the way. Why this sudden shift to targets deep within Upper Burma? Was it simply the pursuit of additional territory or were there additional motivating factors such as trade or Shan relations with their Chinese overlord to the north? What did the Shans stand to gain from controlling this territory? We will look at three possible explanations here: 1. Control of trade routes, 2. Resource extraction and raiding for plunder on a grand scale, and 3. Relieving population pressure on the limited territory of the Shan realm thereby reducing the endemic warfare of the region and creating a more secure border for the Chinese state.

First, control of trade routes would have been one logical economic motive for the Shans to invade Upper Burma. Such a motive is found in the expansionary warfare of the Mong Mao state prior to the Ming conquest. In the Baiyi Zhuan [Account of One Hundred Barbarians] Mong Mao is said to have “repeatedly invaded and disturbed the various routes. Marshal Dashibadu...went to punish him, but could not subdue him. Si Kefa annexed even more routes” (Daniels, 2003, 5, translating Jiang Yingliang, 1980, 52-55, my italics, see also Wade, 1996; Wade, forthcoming). Controlling trade routes is also a motive often assigned to Tabinshweihti’s invasion of Ramanya to the south from 1535 to 1539. As (Bin Yang, 2004) has shown, trade along a “Southwest Silk Road” from Yunnan to South and Southeast Asia was substantial. The flow of cowries originating in the Bay of Bengal into Yunnan and their use there as an important medium of exchange until the seventeenth century attests to the importance of this trade with China. The trade routes for this trade have been reconstructed by Deyell (1994) by “examining how bullion was shipped from Yunnan and Upper Burma into Bengal during the period 1200-1500” (Bin Yang, 2004, 289).

The first two routes were mostly overland routes. The first route passed “from Yung Chang to Momien, crossed the Irrawaddy to Mogaung, went north through the Hukawng Valley, across passes in the Patkai Range, to the Upper Brahmaputra Valley.” The second route “followed the Shweli River, crossing the Irrawaddy at Tagaung, followed the Chindwin River north, and crossed via the Imole Pass to Manipur. Overland trade routes, besides being
slower than river transport, probably suffered from higher degrees of interference such as tolls, warfare, and banditry.

The third trade route passed through Upper Burma and relied mostly on more efficient river transportation. The third route “embarked on the Irrawaddy at Tagaung, Ava, or Pagan, and then passed from Prome over the Arakan Range (Arakan Yoma) to Arakan. A variation of this went directly from Pagan to Arakan via the Aeng Pass. This gave access to either a land route northward to Chatigaon, or embarkation on the coastal trading boats to Bengal” (Bin Yang, 2004, p. 289, citing Deyell, 1994, p. 128). Control over this third lowest cost trade route through the rivers of Upper Burma would be one logical motive for invasion. Controlling this important trade route would have allowed a monopoly on trade along the more efficient river route or at least the collection of tolls and duties.

Second, raiding on a much grander scale than had been attempted by the Shans before would be another logical motive for invasion. If earlier Shan military activity against the northern borders could be characterized as raiding for plunder and booty, seizing any form of transportable wealth, with little if any strategic objective of setting up some system of governance for taxation and more permanent resource extraction, the invasion of 1527 can be seen as raiding on a much larger scale with Burmese Buddhist religious institutions themselves as the target, institutions which absorbed much of Ava’s food surplus and wealth. This included large amounts of physical wealth such as silver, gold, and gemstones, building materials, and land, as well as manpower that was pledged to monasteries to support them. Whereas the traditional modes of Burmese religious reform to recapture this wealth stayed within culturally acceptable bounds, according to the chronicle the Shans used essentially military techniques to reclaim this wealth, reducing the population of monks through state-sponsored murder and raiding religious edifices such as pagodas that absorbed much surplus wealth in their underground treasure chambers and in their decoration (Aung-Thwin, 1985, 181). In the face of Shan plundering of Burmese religious wealth, religious donations virtually ceased at Ava and with it the passage of wealth into religious institutions (Aung-Thwin, 1998, 128).

Third, relieving the population pressure on the limited territory of the Shan realm would have been another logical motive.
The endemic warfare in the Shan realm in the fifteenth century recorded by Chinese sources was mostly over limited territory. One can imagine the massive territorial expansion of the Shan Realm and reduction in population density that Mong Yang’s invasion brought about as solving the problem of limited territory and land, eliminating the causus belli for the warfare that plagued the Shan Realm. Migrations of Shans southwards into Lan Na around 1517 searching for new agricultural land is additional evidence that the Shan Realm was experiencing some demographic pressure that needed to be relieved around the time of the invasions of 1524-27 (Grabowsky, 2005, 42).

Local Shan chronicles could help elucidate the history of interstate competition and cooperation in the Shan Realm. The Shan Realm had two levels of interstate relations: 1. between large Shan states (e.g. Hsenwi, Hsipaw, Mong Mit, and Mong Yang) and the two much larger non-Shan states, China and Burma, and 2. between the larger Shan states and smaller Shan states (and perhaps even groups of non-Tai ethnicity such as Mon-Khmer or Tibeto-Burman-Lolo, see Daniels, 2001, 53-68). Shan chronicles provide a lot of information about the later local type of relation, including marriage alliances, shifting loyalties, and endemic interstate warfare, but this history is often difficult to integrate into the larger-scale historical narratives of China and Burma (see Daniels (2005 forthcoming) for a successful integration). References to events outside the locality that might help verify local events and fit them into a larger geopolitical landscape are often missing from Shan chronicles.

In the limited survey of Shan chronicles made for this paper there was only one reference to the 1524-27 Shan invasions of Ava, one of the most important events in Tai-Burmese relations of the pre-modern era. A version of the Hsipaw chronicle recorded by Sai Aung Tun (2001) mentions the invasion, but follows the Burmese chronicle so closely as to cast doubt on its independent origin. It is also a second-hand summary, the original manuscript not being made available to scholars for more detailed scrutiny.

Why are the invasions of Ava included in the historical narratives of larger states like Ming dynasty China and Ava while they are missing from the narratives of the smaller Shan states subject to these states? (Hsenwi: Witthayasakphan, 2001b; Scott, 1900; Mong Mao: Witthayasakphan et al, 2001a; Mangrai, 1969, ii-
Censorship or pressures on court historians to self-censor might be one explanation. A chronicle celebration of a Shan victory over the Burmese state of Ava would have been offensive to later Burmese sovereigns after the restoration of Burmese rule to Upper Burma in 1555. Of course this argument only holds if Burmese sovereigns or members of the ruling elite had access to these local texts.

Power relations between states sometimes determine the inclusion or omission of events from historical narratives. This can include overt censorship or pressure on historians to self-censor texts to match state policy. Texts are sometimes edited or changed to make them seem as if “these polities and societies had long seen themselves as part of or attached to Chinese polities” (Burma research Forum, SOAS, University of London, 17 Aug 2005). The Shan chronicle of Mong Mao that has been used in this paper was, in fact, initially a translation from Shan to Chinese (Kazhangjia, 1990) and then a translation from Chinese into central Thai for a readership in Thailand (Witthayasakphan et al, 2001a), providing one example of how, if there was a power-legitimating change to a historical narrative, it could be unwarily disseminated. The practice of including the original manuscript source of translations, as Mangrai (1981) did, would ensure that the historical narratives of smaller less powerful states do not disappear into the oblivion of larger state nationalist rhetorics. Successive redactions and translations of texts run the risk of introducing cumulative errors as Pullum (1989) clearly demonstrates.

The authors of Tai chronicles have likely always felt political pressures during the compilation and writing of their chronicles that changed when their overlord changed. For example, truthful but negative depictions of warfare and devastation under a Burmese overlord were much more common during and after the Chakri conquest of Lan Na than they were in the period immediately after the imposition of Burmese hegemony in 1558 (Wyatt and Wichienkeeo, 1995). Does this mean that warfare circa 1558 had less bloodshed? Probably not (see Charney, 2004, 17-22). Negative references to a powerful overlord would have risked offending the overlord and might even have been considered an act of rebellion. Versions of the earlier Chiangmai chronicle narrative
were actually translated into Burmese and kept at the Burmese capital as the “Zinme Yazawin” for Burmese ruling elite to glean information from regarding court and administrative traditions at Chiangmai (Sithu Gamani Thingyan, 2003, i-ii, 53-67).

Long periods of unexplained silence also seem to increase as a chronicle becomes more local, silence (or erasure) being a particular easy form of self-censorship to implement. Compare the continuity of the Burmese chronicle with the long hiatuses of the Chiangmai chronicle under Burmese rule after 1558. Traditions of critical textual analysis in philology (see Warring States Project, 2005) and anthropology (see Scott, 1990) provide new perspectives on how to deal with these textual silences and censorships. In explaining the "silence of the evidence" Brooks (2005b) notes that "there are various reasons, other than literal nonexistence, why some item of culture is not, or seems not to be, mentioned in the texts of the time," a "cultural taboo" being one such reason. Brooks provides an example from the Chinese Warring States period that bears some similarity to the invasion of Ava omission:

Non-Chinese peoples are mentioned occasionally in texts of the 14th century, but after a certain point, such mentions cease. The point where such mentions stop is probably the point at which hostilities escalate between the Chinese and a new coalition of steppe peoples to the north. The existence of a society comparably organized but adversatively disposed was a fact which the Chinese worldview could not readily accommodate (Brooks, 2005b).

Many open questions about the origin, evolution, and strength of the Shan confederation remain. It may even be the case, as it was in the case of the “Three Shan Brothers,” that the Shan coalition never actually did exist, at least as the Burmese chronicle portrays it (Aung-Thwin, 1996). There is the question of when Hsipaw the former ally of Ava joined the Shan confederation and whether there were any states that didn’t join the confederation. Hsenwi’s absence from the 1542 list of states in the Shan confederation is noteworthy. Even though frontiers were ill-defined in the pre-modern period, states can be roughly divided as being on one or both sides of the frontier. Along an axis stretching from Ava’s capital into Yunnan, Hsipaw lied on the Burmese side and Hsenwi
lied on the Chinese side. Hsipaw was a close and reliable ally of Ava according to Burmese sources. Hsenwi was early recognized as an autonomous ethnic region [An Fusi = Pacification Office] by the Ming Dynasty in 1404 and was a frequent participant in inter-state conflicts along the Shan-Chinese frontier recorded by Chinese sources (SLC 2000, 79; Liew Foon Ming, 2003, 152). After Bayinnaung’s conquest around 1557 Hsenwi would permanently move to the Burmese side of the frontier. As we’ve seen Mong Yang seems to have been poised ambiguously on both sides of the frontier alternatively entering into the Chinese and Burmese political spheres of control, but like Hsenwi permanently moving to the Burmese side after Bayinnaung’s conquest around 1557.

What exactly the systematic presence or absence of references to a state means in the historical records of a given state means is not clear. It could indicate regular relations between states or the extent of military intelligence regarding events on the other side of the frontier. The absence of references to Hsipaw in Chinese sources and Hsenwi references in Burmese sources seems to indicate that relations as well as military intelligence were limited at least after the Ming conquest. The question also arises of why Mong Mit and not Hsenwi is mentioned by the Burmese chronicle as a member of the Shan coalition in the 1540’s? Although Mong Mit started off as part of Hsenwi, it eventually challenged its overlord and was recognized by the Chinese as a separate autonomous ethnic region in 1584. If Tho-han-bwa who ruled Ava after 1527 was in fact from Mong Mit, Mong Mit may well have eclipsed Hsenwi in importance by then and “swallowed” it up as Chinese sources describe it.

All told, the question of a Shan alliance during the invasion of 1524-1527 and a confederation afterwards raises more questions than it answers. The Burmese chronicle has a heavy ideological overlay during this period due to the politically-sensitive nature of Shan rule which throws suspicion over many of its interpretations. Ming China’s knowledge of political events does not seem to have penetrated very far beyond the Shan-Chinese frontier. In the absence of additional independent primary sources, only tentative speculations can be made. As Aung-Thwin (1998) has shown with the myth of the “Three Shan Brothers” there is always the danger that historical speculation based on thin evidence is mistaken for historical fact.
The End of the Shan Confederation (1554-1557)

Perhaps the greatest amount of information about the Shan confederation comes from the events surrounding its demise. In 1555 having re-established the kingdom of his predecessor Tabinshwehti, Bayinnaung marched north to re-conquer Upper Burma. When the king of Ava learned of this, he called the Shan states of Hsipaw, Bhamo, Mogaung, and Mong Yang to come to his aid. The governors of the northern garrison towns of Myedu, Ngarane, Si-bok-taya, Sitha, Tabayin, and Kani were ordered to move south and garrison the town of Amyin near the confluence of the Irrawaddy and Chindwin rivers. On Ava’s southern approaches forces Yamethin, Wati, Yindaw, Hlaingdet, Nyaungyan, Tagara, Pindale, and Pyinsi together with Shan fighting boats were ordered to put up a defense from the port town of Tayot on the Irrawaddy, but quickly fled upon Bayinnaung’s approach (UKII: 244). Advancing on Ava, Bayinnaung repulsed a Shan cavalry attack and marched on to Sagaing near the capital of Ava. The governor of Sagaing is said to have fled to Mong Yang, perhaps indicating that the governor was of Shan ethnicity (UKII:246).

The walled capital of Ava fell quickly to Bayinnaung’s onslaught. Events in the Shan state of Hsipaw show the state of chaos following the fall of Ava and how deeply Shan rule had penetrated Upper Burma. Hsipaw was ruled by a sawbwa named Paw also known as Hkon-maing-kyi (King of Ava 1543-46). Paw’s son ruled over the town of Singu in Upper Burma on the Irrawaddy south of Pagan. When Paw’s son heard that Ava had fallen, he retreated to the walls of Singu, strengthening his defenses, but was quickly defeated by a special expedition sent by Bayinnaung (UKII:249). Paw’s son fled back to Hsipaw. Paw gave his son the Shan state of Mong Nai to the south to rule over. Paw died in 1556 (BE 918) and his younger brother Sa-hsain-loun, who was resident in Hsipaw at the time, became ruler of Hsipaw. When Paw’s son heard about this in Mong Nai, he gathered together an army, marched to Hsipaw, and attacked the city. Sa-hsain-loun sent gifts to Bayinnaung requesting his help, but sawbwa Paw’s son managed to overcome Hsipaw’s defenses. The town was taken and Sa-hsain-loun was killed (UKII:257).

Again indicating how difficult it must have been to muster
together troops from the remote north for the defense of the southern borders of Shan Ava, several of the Shan states were late in arriving to Ava’s defense as they had been at Prome (1542). The Hsipaw sawbwa is said to have arrived after the fall of Ava (UKII:248). At the time Ava fell to Bayinnaung’s forces, three of Shan states, Mogaung, Mohnyin, and Kalei, were marching towards Ava to provide aid. When they learned of the defeat at the town of Tawatein in the Shan states they halted and encamped there (UKII:250).

Bayinnaung followed up his victory at Ava with a short campaign into the southern Shan states to attack the Shans that were coming to Ava’s aid. Mogaung, Mohnyin, and Kalei fled to Myedu after a short battle, but the governors of Pakan, Si-bok-taya, and Tabayin (brother-in-law of the Mong Yang ruler) all surrendered. The governor of Wuntho (nephew of the Mong Yang sawbwa) was appointed to resist from the village Ta-se along the route to Myedu. The Burmese forces first overcame the forces at Ta-se and pursued them all the way to Myedu where they routed the combined forces of Mogaung, Mohnyin, and Kalei (UKII:251).

As the rainy season was quickly approaching which make transportation in the northern reaches of the Shan Realm extremely difficult, Bayinnaung decided against following up his recent victory with an attack on the centers of the Shan states themselves to the north. Bayinnaung appointed new Burmese governors for the important northern garrison towns of Myedu and Si-bok-taya. In acts of munificence Bayinnaung awarded the governors who had just submitted to him appanages to rule over. Pakangyi was given to the governor of Tabayin, brother in law of the Mohnyin sawbwa, and Badon was given to the governor of Si-bok-taya, nephew of Mohnyin sawbwa. The governors of Kani and Amyin were reinstated. Here the chronicle once again stresses an early submission is rewarded with reinstatement of the ruler, pointing perhaps to a didactic function of the chronicle directed at sons of tributary rulers resident at the Burmese capital and future Burmese generals on campaign. To what extent this practice was a rhetorical creation rather than historical reality can only be determined by further independent sources. Finally, on the march back to Ava several small states and towns were subjugated including San-pe-nago (Bhamo), Kyan-nyut, Tagaung, Kyun-taung, Myat-taung, and Hti-kyaiing (UKII:252).
In 1557, after having spent the rainy season in the southern capital of Pegu, Bayinnaung broached the subject of further expeditions into the Shan realm to his ministers. The minister Banyadala argued that the usurpation of the throne at Hsipaw by Paw's son was so serious and the Shan states so strong that just appointing the king's younger brother, sons, generals, and ministers to be leaders of the expedition would not be good enough, the king himself would have to lead the expedition. Only when the king accompanied the expedition would all his younger brothers, sons, generals, and ministers lay down their down lives. After conquering Hsipaw, Mong Mit, Bhamo, Mogaung, Mong Yang, and Kale would quickly follow. The lesson being conveyed here by the Burmese chronicle is that the risk of bloodshed is necessary to military success. To what extent warfare actually involved bloodshed in battles is something that only independent sources or archaeological evidence can determine.

Marching to the north, Bayinnaung passed through Pagan and when he reached the port of Tayot-myo on the Irrawaddy two local governors offered to help him catch the ruler of Mong Yang, also at that time ruling over Wun-tho. These were the two governors that Bayinnaung had appointed during his last campaign in the north, the governor of Tabayin who was the brother-in-law of the Mong Yang sawbwa and the governor of Sibok-taya and Badon. While Bayinnaung resided for a time at Ava, the Hsipaw ruler, who he had appointed on last expedition to the north, and the ruler of Thon-hse came and submitted to the king (UKII:260).

In due time a military expedition left Ava headed for Mong Mit, Hsipaw, and Mong Yang marching along three paths. One division marching along the path of Kin-taya-ngan, another from Thon-hse to Mong Mit passing besides Mong Yang, and the third, with Bayinnaung himself leading it, marched along the west bank of the Irrawaddy until it reached Bhamo. At Bhamo they built a bridge for the elephants and horses to cross over the Irrawaddy river and from Bhamo they marched on to Mong Mit. Before arriving in Mong Mit the Shans launched an attack. After an initial Shan success, the Burmese defeated the Mong Mit forces and the Mong Mit ruler fled to Hsipaw pursued by Burmese forces (UKII:261). Another Burmese column attacking Hsipaw was initially overwhelmed by the Shans, but after what by chronicle
standards was a fairly lengthy battle Hsipaw was defeated and taken. While Bayinnaung resided in Mong Mit, the so-called Mong Mit united army composed of the governors of Mo-la, Mo-wan, and Saga-taung came to submit to the Burmese with gifts and an oath of loyalty (UKII:262).

The Mong Mit sawbwa fled by elephant and horse taking with him all his sons and wives to join forces with the Hsipaw sawbwa, but when he reached a place called Pan-nya he learned of Hsipaw’s defeat and remained there. The Burmese eventually found him and, after a short resistance, the Mong Mit sawbwa surrendered. Mong Mit was given to the Hsipaw sawbwa’s grandson, the governor of Maing-lon, to govern. He was given a seal to govern Mong Mit with because he came to submit himself. He was also given back his sons, wives, father-in-law, and mother-in-law from Hanthawaddy who had all been captured when Singu, ruled by Paw’s son, was taken. They were ordered to pay tax every year in the form of rubies, gold, silver, sheep, musk deer, and horses. Hsipaw was given to the governor of Thonse to govern together with the seal of the king’s right hand and all the equipage required by a sawbwa. Bayinnaung then called all the divisions of his expeditionary forces to meet together at Mong Mit (UKII:263).

After the victories at Hsipaw and Mong Mit, Bayinnaung instituted reforms in the Shan religion to bring it into conformity with Burmese practice. The narrative of the Burmese chronicle does not state whether these Shan states were practicing Buddhism or not and this remains an open question (Daniels, 2000, 74-80). In 1555 a similar sort of religious reform or purification had even been carried out at Pagan in the Burmese heartland to rid the area of spirit worship and animal sacrifice at Mount Popa (UKII:254). In Hsipaw and Mong Mit and almost the whole Shan states there were said to have been “wrong practices” [Meik-sa-deik-ti] like killing the elephant and horse ridden by the sawbwa and the slaves loved and highly valued by him and burying them together with the dead sawbwa. When Bayinnaung learned of these practices, he had them stopped. Since there were no learning centers for Buddhism, he built one pagoda in Hsipaw and another one in Mong Mit and made offerings of land, materials, and supplies to support them. In Mong Mit he built a temple that was surrounded by ten small buildings to teach Buddhism in. Here they asked monks and virtuous persons who
were well-versed in Pali Athakata (commentary on the original Pali text composed by the Rahandas) and Nika (supplementary to the inspired commentary of the Rohandas) to stay there. Starting from the sawbwa, all of the Shan generals, ministers, and leaders had to undergo instruction in Buddhism regarding the five duties binding on all creatures, the five great commands, and the eight duties that are to be performed by all people on days of worship. They underwent three to four months of training. They kept half of the Buddhist scriptures in Hsipaw and half in Mong Mit. The leaders of the soldiers had to warn the people in both the towns and villages to undergo instruction about religion for from three to four months. As regards to the usage of measures such as one “tin” (basket), “kwe” half a basket, “hseit” quarter of a basket and measures such as “tsaroot” a measure of capacity equal to two “Pyees”, and weights such as “mu”, “pe”, “kyat”, “ta-se”, “viss”, etc. all these had to made to conform to the standards of the capital (UKII:264). Bayinnaung sent the Hsipaw and Mong Mit rulers with all their families to the capital Pegu in the south.

After putting affairs in order at Hsipaw and Mong Mit, even though the rainy season was fast approaching, Bayinnaung and his ministers decided to march north to Mong Yang and Mogaung rather than south to Mong Nai and Yawnghwe (Nyaungshwe). Mong Yang and Mogaung were chosen first for they had “caused a lot of trouble and destruction upon the whole northern part of Burma.” Mong Yang had once conquered and occupied the throne of Ava and had been engaged in warfare with the Chinese for twelve years (i.e. The Luchuan-Pingmian Campaigns, 1436-1449) (UKII:265).

Early in 1556 (BE 918) Bayinnaung marched north from Mong Mit. When they arrived to the place called Ti-kyit they built a pontoon bridge for elephants, horses, buffaloes, bulls, cows, soldiers, and their leaders to cross over the river. When they heard of the Burmese approach, the Mong Yang and Mogaung rulers gathered together their forces and hid in the forest to the north of Mong Yang building stockades there to resist the Burmese from. The Burmese quickly overcame these Mong Yang defenses and encamped near the town called Maing-naut. Shortly afterwards, the Mogaung sawbwa is said to have betrayed the Mong Yang sawbwa, handing him over to the Burmese and blaming their collective resistance on his stubbornness. Bayinnaung is said to
have forgiven both of them. The Mogaung sawbwa was given back his own town together with the right hand seal of the king. The king took away two sons, one daughter, one nephew, and one niece of the Mogaung sawbwa to be with him always. They were ordered to pay annual taxes like gold, silver, amber, sheep, musk deer, satin, Tibetan bulls, and horses. Mong Yang was given to the governor of Tabayin named Zaloun who had joined with Bayinnaung in the south and who had provided help in capturing Mong Yang and Mogaung. He was given the full regalia of a sawbwa and his son and daughter had to remain with the king. In-kind taxes consisting of gold, silver, sheep, musk deer, ducks, horses, and saddle clothes had to be given annually when magistrates sent by the king came to collect them. The sawbwa of Mong Yang, after taking an oath that he would remain faithful to the king, was given the town called Nun-sein-kan-meit to govern. By naming the son of the Mong Yang sawbwa “Mo-lon,” he was given Tabayin to govern. One of his sons and one of his daughters was to remain with the king always (UKII:266).

As he had done in Hsipaw and Mong Mit, Bayinnaung instituted religious reforms in Mong Yang and Mogaung to bring Shan religious practice into conformity with Burmese practice. They also asked monks knowledgeable in Gandadurat (Wipanadurat or Wipatana, “a kind of wisdom which enables the possessor to make extraordinary discoveries” Judson’s Dictionary) to reside there and teach Buddhism. By copying Buddhist scripts (Pali Athakata) they kept one copy in Mogaung and another in Mohnyin. As regards to measuring and weighing, they instituted the standards used in the Burmese capital. In 1557 (BE 919) Bayinnaung marched back to Ava and after staying there for seven days he marched southwards to the capital at Pegu (UKII:267).

Re: Ming Shi-lu 10 November 1528

The Ming Annals entry for November 10, 1528 is both an intriguing and confusing primary source document for the early sixteenth century that warrants further scrutiny. References to the Shan states and Ava hint at significant political developments, but a close analysis of the entry shows that the events referred to were spread over several years, sometimes decades before 1528. The
entry even begins with a statement to this effect: “the native yi…wrangled and fought feuds among themselves. This went on for years…”

References to kings of Ava show that the Chinese court was looking at Burmese history on a quite a different time-scale than that of the actual events: “…the grandfather of the Ava-Burma royal family member Mang Qi-Sui was extremely loyal, but he became involved in disputes and thereby met his death,” and later, “Mang Qi-sui is to be shown great compassion and assistance. He and Si Zhen are both permitted to inherit their respective posts” (MSL Nov 10, 1528). “Mang Qi-sui” is a transliteration into Chinese of “Min-gyi-shwe” (literally: “great-king-gold”) referring to the king of Ava Shwe-nan-kyaw-shin Narapati or Narapati II (1502-1527), taking the first syllable from his title. Although this Ming Annals entry is dated 1528 and Narapati became king of Ava in 1502 and actually died in 1527, the recognition of a ruler by Ming China did not have to be “anywhere near when he assumed the ruling post, particularly when links were so infrequent” (Wade, personal communication, 22 Sep 2005). As for the reference to Narapati II’s grandfather, “grandfather” in the original Chinese can actually refer also to great-grandfather or even great-great-grandfather (Wade, personal communication, 22 Sep 2005). Ava’s succession had since Narapati I (r. 1442-68) been lineal father to son, but Narapati I had inherited the throne from his brother (Harvey, p. 366). Tin Hla Thaw (1959, 151) reconstructs this genealogy from inscriptive evidence. Given these facts, the reference to Narapati II’s grandfather could refer to either Narapati I or Thihathura (r. 1468-82). Of these two kings Narapati was the king who had extensive relations with the Chinese during the Luchuan-Pingmian Campaigns (1436-1449). Evidence for close relations between Narapati I and Ming China 75 years before this entry in the 1440’s exists in Chinese sources (Liew Foon Ming, 1998, 198; Ward, 2004, 16), the Burmese chronicle (UKII:82), and Burmese inscriptions (Tin Hla Thaw, 1959), so Ming court references to the “grandfather” as being “extremely loyal” are probably references to Narapati I, the great-grandfather of Narapati II. The comment that “he became involved in disputes and thereby met his death” most probably refers to the circumstances surrounding his death which had nothing to do with Shan or Chinese political relations at all. Narapati died as the result of a
complicated domestic quarrel at the court of Ava which is related in great detail by the Burmese chronicle (UKII: 90-93). So to summarize, MSL Nov 10 1528 takes a different more large-scale view of Burmese history mixing recent events with events that occurred 75 years ago in a sort of timeless past.

Additional References:


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The Development of a Muslim Enclave in Arakan (Rakhine) State of Burma (Myanmar)\(^1\)

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Who are the Rohingyas? Burma gained independence from Great Britain in 1948 and this issue is a problem that Burma has had to grapple with since that time. The people who call themselves Rohingyas are the Muslims of Mayu Frontier area, present-day Buthidaung and Maungdaw Townships of Arakan (Rakhine) State, an isolated province in the western part of the country across Naaf River as boundary from Bangladesh. Arakan had been an independent kingdom before it was conquered by the Burmese in 1784. Rohingya historians have written many treatises in which they claim for themselves an indigenous status that is traceable within Arakan State for more than a thousand years. Although it is not accepted as a fact in academia, a few volumes purporting to be history but mainly composed of fictitious stories, myths and legends have been published formerly in Burma and later in the

\(^1\) The present paper was written for distribution and discussion at a seminar in Japan. During the seminar, there was a debate between the author and Professor Kei Nemoto concerning the existence of the Rohingya people in Rakhine (Arakan). Nemoto, in a paper written in Japanese, agreed with the Rohingya historians that the Rohingyas have lived in Rakhine since the eighth century A. D. The author contests the validity of these claims. The present paper was also read at the 70th Conference of Southeast Asian historians of Japan, held at the University of Kobe, on 4 to 5 February 2003.
United States, Japan and Bangladesh. These, in turn, have filtered into the international media through international organizations, including reports to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (Ba Tha 1960: 33-36; Razzaq and Haque 1995: 15).²

In light of this, it is important to reexamine the ethnicity of the ‘Rohingyas’ and to trace their history back to the earliest presence of their ancestors in Arakan. And history tells us that we do not have to go back very far. In the early 1950s that a few Bengali Muslim intellectuals of the northwestern part of Arakan began to use the term “Rohingya” to call themselves. They were indeed the direct descendants of immigrants from the Chittagong District of East Bengal (present-day Bangladesh), who had migrated into Arakan after the province was ceded to British India under the terms of the Treaty of Yandabo, an event that concluded the First Anglo-Burmese War (1824-1826). Most of these migrants settled down in the Mayu Frontier Area, near what is now Burma’s border with modern Bangladesh. Actually, they were called “Chittagonians” in the British colonial records.

The Muslims in the Arakan State can be divided into four different groups, namely the Chittagonian Bengalis in the Mayu Frontier; the descendents of the Muslim Community of Arakan in the Mrauk-U period (1430-1784), presently living in the Mrauk-U and Kyauktaw townships; the descendents of Muslim mercenaries in Ramree Island known to the Arakanese as Kaman; and the Muslims from the Myedu area of Central Burma, left behind by the Burmese invaders in Sandoway District after the conquest of Arakan in 1784.

Mass Migration in the Colonial Period (1826-1948)

As stated above, the term “Rohingya” came into use in the 1950s by the educated Bengali residents from the Mayu Frontier Area and cannot be found in any historical source in any language before then. The creators of that term might have been from the second or third generations of the Bengali immigrants from the Chittagong District in modern Bangladesh; however, this does not mean that there was no Muslim community in Arakan before the state was absorbed into British India.

When King Min Saw Mon, the founder of Mrauk-U Dynasty (1430-1784) regained the throne with the military assistance of the Sultan of Bengal, after twenty-four years of exile in Bengal, his Bengali retinues were allowed to settle down in the outskirts of Mrauk-U, where they built the well-known Santikan mosque. These were the earliest Muslim settlers and their community in Arakan did not seem to be large in number. In the middle of the seventeenth century the Muslim community grew because of the assignment of Bengali slaves in variety of the workforces in the country. The Portuguese and Arakanese raids of Bengal (Bengal) for captives and loot became a conventional practice of the kingdom since the early sixteenth century. The Moghal historian Shiahabuddin Talish noted that only the Portuguese pirates sold their captives and that the Arakanese employed all of their prisoners in agriculture and other kinds of services (Talish 1907: 422). Furthermore there seem to have been a small group of Muslim gentry at the court. Some of them might have served the king as Bengali, Persian and Arabic scribes. Because the Mrauk-U kings, though of being Buddhist, adopted some Islamic fashions such as the maintaing of silver coins that bore their Muslim titles in Persian and occasionally appearing in Muslim costumes in the style of the Sultan of Bengal. Accordingly there were Muslim servants at the court helping the king perform these Islamic conventions (Charney 1999: 146). Arthur Phayre, the first deputy commissioner of Arakan, after the British annexation, reported about the indigenous races of Akyab District and the Muslim descendents from the Arakanese days as:

The inhabitants are, In the Plains – 1. Ro-khoing-tha (Arakanese)-2. Ko-la (Indian) – 3. Dôm(Low Caste Hindu). In theHills – 1. Khyoung-tha – 2.Kumé or Kwémwé – 3. Khyang – 4. Doing-nuk, Mroong, and other tribes... While the Arakanese held these possessions in Bengal, they appear to have sent numbers of the inhabitants into Arakan as slaves, whence arose the present Ko-la population of the country (Phayre 1836: 680 – 681).

During the four decades of Burmese rule (1784-1824), because of ruthless oppression, many Arakanese fled to British Bengal. According to a record of British East India Company, there
were about thirty-five thousand Arakanese who had fled to Chittagong District in British India to seek protection in 1799 (Asiatic Annual Register 1799: 61; Charney 1999: 265). The following report by Francis Buchanan provides a vivid picture of the atrocities committed by the Burmese invaders in Arakan:

Puran says that, in one day soon after the conquest of Arakan the Burmans put 40,000 men to Death: that wherever they found a pretty Woman, they took her after killing the husband; and the young Girls they took without any consideration of their parents, and thus deprived these poor people of the property, by which in Eastern India the aged most commonly support their infirmities. Puran seems to be terribly afraid, that the Government of Bengal will be forced to give up to the Burmans all the refugees from Arakan (Buchanan 1992: 82).³

A considerable portion of Arakanese population was deported by Burmese conquerors to Central Burma. When the British occupied Arakan, the country was a scarcely populated area. Formerly high-yield paddy fields of the fertile Kaladan and Lemro River Valleys germinated nothing but wild plants for many years (Charney 1999: 279). Thus, the British policy was to encourage the Bengali inhabitants from the adjacent areas to migrate into fertile valleys in Arakan as agriculturalists. As the British East India Company extended the administration of Bengal to Arakan, there was no international boundary between the two countries and no restriction was imposed on the emigration. A superintendent, later an assistant commissioner, directly responsible to the Commissioner of Bengal, was sent in 1828 for the administration of Arakan Division, which was divided into three districts respectively: Akyab, Kyaukpyu, and Sandoway with an assistant commissioner in each district (Furnivall 1957: 29).

The migrations were mostly motivated by the search of professional opportunity. During the Burmese occupation there was a breakdown of the indigenous labor force both in size and structure. Arthur Phayre reported that in the 1830s the wages in

³ Puran Bisungri was an officer of the Police Station of Ramoo what is called Panwah by the Arakanese. He was a Hindu, born in Arakan and fled the country after Burmese invasion of 1784 (Buchanan 1992: 79).
Arakan compared with those of Bengal were very high. Therefore many hundreds, indeed thousands of coolies came from the Chittagong District by land and by sea, to seek labor and high wages (Phayre 1836:696). R.B. Smart, the deputy assistant commissioner of Akyab, wrote about the ‘flood’ of immigrants from Chittagong District as follows:

> Since 1879, immigration has taken place on a much larger scale, and the descendants of the slaves are resident for the most part in the Kyauktaw and Myohaung (Mrauk-U) townships. Maungdaw Township has been overrun by Chittagonian immigrants. Buthidaung is not far behind and new arrivals will be found in almost every part of the district (Smart 1957: 89).

At first most of them came to Arakan as seasonal agricultural laborers and went home after the harvest was done. R. B. Smart estimated the number at about twenty-five thousand during the crop-reaping season alone. He added that about the same number came to assist in plowing operations, to work at the mills and in the carrying trades. A total of fifty thousand immigrants coming annually were probably not far from the mark (Smart 1957: 99).

Moreover, hunger for land was the prime motive for the migration of most of the Chittagonians. The British judicial records tell us of an increase in the first decade of the twentieth century in lawsuits of litigation for the possession of land. The Akyab District Magistrate reported in 1913 that in Buthidaung Subdivision, the Chittagonian immigrants stand to native Arakanese in the proportion of two to one, but six sevenths of the litigation for land in the court was initiated by the Chittagonians (Smart 1957: 163). Another colonial record delivers about a striking account of the settlements of the Bengali immigrants from Chittagong District as: “Though we are in Arakan, we passed many villages occupied by Muslim settlers or descendents of the settlers, and many of them Chittagonians” (Walker 1891(I): 15).

The colonial administration of India regarded the Bengalis as amenable subjects while finding the indigenous Arakanese too defiant, rising in rebellion twice in 1830s. The British policy was also favorable for the settlement of Bengali agricultural communities in Arakan. A colonial record says:
Bengalis are a frugal race, who can pay without difficulty a tax that would press very heavily on the Arakanese....(They are) not addicted like the Arakanese to gambling, and opium smoking, and their competition is gradually ousting the Arakanese (Report of the Settlement Operation in the Akyab District 1887-1888: 21).

The flow of Chittagonian labor provided the main impetus to the economic development in Arakan within a few decades along with the opening of regular commercial shipping lines between Chittagong and Akyab. The arable land expanded to four and a half times between 1830 and 1852 and Akyab became one of the major rice exporting cities in the world.

Indeed, during a century of colonial rule, the Chittagonian immigrants became the numerically dominant ethnic group in the Mayu Frontier. The following census assessment shows the increase of population of the various ethnic/religious groups inhabiting Akyab District according to the census reports of 1871, 1901 and 1911. There was an increase of 155 percent in the population in the district. According to the reports, even in an interior township Kyauktaw, the Chittagonian population increased from 13,987 in 1891 to 19,360 in 1911, or about seventy-seven percent in twenty years. At the same time the increase of the Arakanese population including the absorption of the hill tribes and the returning refugees from Bengal was only 22.03 percent.

The Assessment of the Census Reports for 1871, 1901, and 1911

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Races</th>
<th>1871</th>
<th>1901</th>
<th>1911</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mahomedan</td>
<td>58,255</td>
<td>154,887</td>
<td>178,647</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burmese</td>
<td>4,632</td>
<td>35,751</td>
<td>92,185</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arakanese</td>
<td>171,612</td>
<td>230,649</td>
<td>209,432</td>
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<td>Shan</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hill Tribes</td>
<td>38,577</td>
<td>35,489</td>
<td>34,020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>606</td>
<td>1,355</td>
<td>1,146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>276,671</td>
<td>481,666</td>
<td>529,943</td>
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</table>
It should be noted that all the Chittagonians and all the Muslims are categorized as Mohamedan in the census reports. There was an increase of 206.67 percent in Mahomedan population in the Akyab District and it was clear that only a few numbers of the transient agricultural laborers went home after the plowing and harvesting seasons and most of them remained in Arakan, making their homes (Smart 1957:83). The heyday of the migration was in the second half of the nineteenth century after opening of the Suez Canal, for the British colonialists needed more labor to produce rice which was in growing demand in the international market. In the 1921 Census, many Muslims in Arakan were listed as Indians (Bennison 1931: 213).

Communal Violence

Moshe Yegar suggests that during the colonial period the anti-Indian riots broke out in Burma because of the resentment against unhindered Indian settlements particularly in Arakan, Tenasserim and Lower Burma (Yegar 1992:29-31). But those riots that took place in Rangoon and other major cities in 1926 and 1938 never had had any effects on the peoples of Arakan. A peaceful coexistence was possible for the two different religious/ethnic groups in the Mayu Frontier till the beginning of the World War II. At the beginning of colonial era the establishment of bureaucratic administration by the British repealed the traditional patron-client relationship in the Arakanese villages. The elected village headman had little influence on the elected village council. As John F. Cady wrote, the government policy of forbidding the village headman to take part in the activities related to the nationalist movements weakened the position of the headman as the leader of village community, and as well as his connection with the Buddhist monastery because most of the Buddhist monks were vigorously active in the movements (Cady 1958: 172-273). On the other hand British administration to a certain extent gave the Muslim village communities religious and cultural autonomy. Maung Nyo, a kyun-ok (headman of the village tract) of Maungdaw Township recorded

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4 See Appendix I. According to the 1872 Census Muslims had already formed 26.1 per cent of the population of Akyab, the capital city of Arakan Division. Also see Appendix II. According to the 1881 Census 68,809 people of the population of Arakan Division that numbered 276,877 were born in Bengal.
how the new comers from the Chittagong District set up their village communities in the frontier area. They occupied the villages deserted by the Arakanese during the Burmese rule and established purely Muslim village communities. The village committee authorized by the Village Amendment Act of 1924 paved the way for the Imam (moulovi) and the trusteeship committee members of the village mosque to be elected to the village council. They were also allowed to act as the village magistrates and shariah was somewhat in effect in the Muslim villages (Charter 1938:34-38). At least the Islamic court of village had the jurisdiction over familial problems such as marriage, inheritance and divorce. There was no internal sense of unrighteousness and presence of nonbelievers in their community, and accordingly they believe no internecine struggle was for the time being necessary.

However, the ethnic violence between Arakanese Buddhists and those Muslim Chittagonians brought a great deal of bloodshed to Arakan during the World War II and after 1948, in the opening decade of independent Burma. Some people of the Mayu Frontier in their early seventies and eighties have still not forgotten the atrocities they suffered in 1942 and 1943 during the short period of anarchy between the British evacuation and the Japanese occupation of the area. In this vacuum there was an outburst of the tension of ethnic and religious cleavage that had been simmering for a century. One of the underlying causes of the communal violence was the Zamindary System brought by the British from Bengal. By this system the British administrators granted the Bengali landowners thousands of acres of arable land on ninety-year-leases. The Arakanese peasants who fled the Burmese rule and came home after British annexation were deprived of the land that they formerly owned through inheritance. Nor did the Bengali zamindars (landowners) want the Arakanese as tenants on their land. Thousands of Bengali peasants from Chittagong District were brought to cultivate the soil (Report of the Settlement Operations in the Akyab District 1887-1888: 2, 21).

Most of the Bengali immigrants were influenced by the Fara-i-di movement in Bengal that propagated the ideology of the Wahhabis of Arabia, which advocated settling ikhwan or brethren in agricultural communities near to the places of water resources. The peasants, according to the teaching, besides cultivating the land should be ready for waging a holy war upon the call by their
lords (Rahman 1979: 200-204). In the Maungdaw Township alone, there were, in the 1910s, fifteen Bengali Zamindars who brought thousands of Chittagonian tenants and established Agricultural Muslim communities, building mosques with Islamic schools affiliated to them. However, all these villages occupied by the Bengalis continued to be called by Arakanese names in the British records (Grantham and Lat 1956: 41-43, 48-51). For the convenience of Chittagonians seasonal laborers the Arakan Flotilla Company constructed a railway between Buthidaung and Maungdaw in 1914. Their plan was to connect Chittagong by railway with Buthidaung, from where the Arakan Flotilla steamers were ferrying to Akyab and other towns in central and southern Arakan.

In the period of the independence movement in Burma in 1920s and 1930s the Muslims from the Mayu Frontier were more concerned with the progress of Muslim League in India, although some prominent Burmese Muslims such as M.A. Rashid and U Razak played an important role in the leadership of the Burmese nationalist movement. In 1931, the Simon Commission was appointed by the British Parliament to enquire the opinion of Burmese people for the constitutional reforms and on the matter of whether Burma should be separated from Indian Empire. The spokesman of the Muslim League advocated for fair share of government jobs, ten percent representation in all public bodies, and especially in Arakan the equal treatment for Muslims seeking agricultural and business loans (Cady 1958: 294).

In education, the Chittagonians were left behind the Arakanese throughout the colonial period. According to the census of 1901 only 4.5 percent of the Bengali Muslims were found to be literate while the percentage for the Arakanese was 25.5. Smart reported that it was due to the ignorance of the advantages of the education among the Chittagonian agriculturists. Especially Buthidaung and Maungdaw were reported to be most backward townships because the large Muslim population in that area mostly agriculturalists showed little interest in education. In 1894 there were nine Urdur schools with 375 students in the whole district. The British provincial administration appointed a deputy inspector for Muslim schools and in 1902 the number of schools rose to seventy-two and the students increased to 1,474 (Smart 1957: 207-209). Consequently, more Arakanese and Hindu Indians
were involved in the ancillary services of the colonial administration. Towards the middle of twentieth century a new educated and politically conscious younger generation had superseded the older, inactive ones. Before the beginning of the Second World War a political party, Jami-a-tul Ulema-e Islam was founded under the guidance of the Islamic scholars. Islam became the ideological basis of the party (Khin Gyi Pyaw 1960: 99).

Regarding the beginning of the ethnic violence in Arakan, Moshe Yegar wrote that when the British administration was withdrawn to India in 1942 the Arakanese hoodlums began to attack the Muslim villages in southern Arakan and the Muslims fled to the north where they took vengeance on the Arakanese in Buthidaung and Maungdaw townships (Yegar 1972:67). However, an Arakanese record says:

When the British administration collapsed by the Japanese occupation, the village headman of Rak-chaung village in Myebon Township and his two younger brothers were killed by the kula (Muslim) villagers. Although the headman was an Arakanese, some of the villagers were kulas. The two Arakanese young men, Thein Gyaw Aung and Kyaw Ya, organized a group and attacked the kula villages and some inhabitants were killed (Rakhine State People’s Council 1986: 36).

It is certain that hundreds of Muslim inhabitants of Southern Arakan fled northward, and that there were some cases of robbing the Indian refugees on the Padaung-Taungup pass over the Arakan Yoma mountain ranges after the retreat of the British from the Pegu Division and southern Arakan. But the news of killing, robbery and rape was exaggerated when it reached Burma India border (Ba Maw 1968: 78). The British left all these areas to the mercy of both Burmese and Arakanese dacoits. However, N.R. Chakravati, an Indian scholar, gives a brief account of the flights of Indian refugees from the war zone in the Irrawady valley across the Arakan Yoma.

Most of the estimated 900,000 Indians living in Burma attempted to walk over to India...100,000 died at the time... Practically all Indians except those who were not physically fit
or were utterly helpless, began to move from place to place in search of safety and protection until they could reach India (Chakravarti 1971: 170).

The estimated number of Chakravarti includes all the Indian refugees from the whole Burma proper excluding Arakan. The number of Chittagonian refugees put by Yegar was close to twenty-two thousand (Yegar 1972: 98). However, the leaders of ANC (Arakan National Congress), formed in 1939 and that later becoming the Arakan branch of Anti-Fascist Organization (AFO) formed a de-facto government, before the Japanese troops and Burma Independence Army (BIA) reached there. The ANC announced that anybody or any organization looting or killing the refugees would be brought before the justice and would be severely punished (New Burma Daily 1942: May 28). The Japanese air force attacked Akyab on 23 March 1942 and the British moved their administrative headquarter to India on March 30. The administration by martial law began in Akyab District on 13 April 1942 and with this racial tension burst to the surface, giving way to the public disorder (Owen 1946: 26).

For all the bloody communal violence experienced by the Arakanese Buddhists in the Western frontier, I feel strongly that it is reasonable to blame the British colonial administration for arming the Chittagonians in the Mayu Frontier as the Volunteer Force. The V Force, as it is called by the British Army, was formed in 1942 soon after the Japanese operations threatened the British position in India. Its principal role was to undertake guerrilla operations against Japanese, to collect information of the enemy’s movements and to act as interpreters. But the British Army Liaison Officer, Anthony Irwin wrote that the participation of the local V Forces in the skirmishes with the Japanese in Arakan was discredited by the British commanders (Irwin 1946: 7-8, 16).

The volunteers, instead of fighting the Japanese, destroyed Buddhist monasteries and Pagodas and burnt down the houses in the Arakanese villages. They first killed U Kyaw Khine, the deputy commissioner of Akyab District, left behind by the British government to maintain law and order in the frontier area; they then massacred thousands of Arakanese civilians in the towns and villages. A record of the Secretary of British governor of Burma in exile dated 4 February 1943 reads:

_SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005): 396-420_
I have been told harrowing tales of cruelty and suffering inflicted on the Arakanese villages in the Ratheedaung area. Most of the villages on the West bank of the Mayu River have been burnt and destroyed by the Chittagonian V forces.... The enemy never came to these villages. They had the misfortune of being in the way of our advancing patrols. Hundreds of villagers are said to be hiding in the hills... It will be the Arakanese who will be ousted from their ancestral land and if they cannot be won over in time, then there can be no hope of their salvation (British Library, London, India Office Records R/8/9GS. 4243).

After the Japanese occupation of Akyab (Sittwe), Bo Yan Aung, the member of the Thirty Comrades and commander of a BIA column, set up the administrative body in Akyab District and attempted to cease the violence in the frontier area. Bo Yan Aung discussed the matter with both Arakanese and Muslim leaders. He sent his two lieutenants, Bo Yan Naung and Bo Myo Nyunt to Maungdaw to negotiate with the radical Muslim leaders. They tried to persuade the Muslims to join in anti-imperialist and nationalist movement. But both of them were killed in Maungdaw and Bo Yan Aung was called back to Rangoon by the BIA headquarters (Rakhine State People’s Council 1986: 40-42).

For most of the Chittagonians it was a religious issue that would necessarily lead to the creation of a Dah-rul-Islam, or at least to being united with their brethren in the west. It also aimed at the extirpation of the Arakanese or being forced them to migrate to the south where there were overwhelming majority of Arakanese Buddhists. The events during the war contributed the Chittagonians’ fervent sense of alienation from the heterogeneous community of the Arakan. Anthony Irwin called the whole area a “No Man’s Land” during the three years of Japanese occupation (Irwin 1946:27). Irwin explained how the ethnic violence divided the Arakan State between Arakanese and Chittagonians:

As the area then occupied by us was almost entirely Mussulman Country ... (from) that we drew most of our “Scouts” and Agents. The Arakan before the war had been occupied over its entire length by both Mussulman and Maugh (Arakanese). Then in 1941 the two sects set to and
fought. The result of this war was roughly that the Maugh took over the southern half of the country and the Mussulman the North. Whilst it lasted it was a pretty bloody affairs...My present gun boy a Mussulman who lived near to Buthidaung, claims to have killed two hundred Maughs (Arakanese) (Irwin 1946: 21).

In the words of the historian, Clive J. Christie, the “ethnic cleansing in British controlled areas, particularly around the town of Maungdaw,” was occurring till the arrival of Japanese troops to the eastern bank of Naaf River (Christie 1996: 165). The British forces began to take offensive in the warfare against the Japanese in northern Arakan in December 1944. The Arakanese troops of AFO maintained law and order in the areas from which Japanese forces withdrew. Of course there were some prominent Arakanese guerrilla leaders who cooperated with the Japanese during the war. British Battalion 65 occupied Akyab, the capital city of Arakan on 12 December 1944. As soon as Akyab was captured the British Army began arresting the Arakanese guerrilla leaders. U Ni, a leader of AFO in Akyab was accused of one hundred and fifty-two criminal offenses and sentenced to forty-two years in prison. Another leader, U Inga was condemned to death by hanging five times, as well as forty-two-year imprisonment. Consequently many guerrilla fighters escaped into hideouts in the forests (Myanmalarin Daily 25 September 1945). On the contrary, Anthony Irwin praised the Chittagonian V Forces as follows:

It is these minorities that have most helped us in throughout the three years of constant fighting and occupation and it is these minorities who are most likely to be forgotten in the rush of Government. They must not be. It is the duty of all of us, for whom they fought, to see this (Irwin 1946: 86).

During the early post-war years both Arakanese and Bengali Muslims in the Mayu Frontier looked at each other with distrust. As the British Labor Government promised independence for Burma, some Muslims were haunted by the specter of their future living under the infidel rule in the place where the baneful Arakanese are also living. In 1946 a delegation was sent by the Jami-atul Ulema-e Islam to Karachi to discuss with the leaders of
the Muslim League the possibility of incorporation of Buthidaung, Maungdaw and Ratheedaung townships into Pakistan, but the British ignored their proposal to detach the frontier area to award it to Pakistan. The failure of their attempts ended in an armed revolt, with some Muslims, declaring a holy war on the new republic. The rebels called themselves “Mujahid.” A guerrilla army of 2700 fighters was organized (Khin Gyi Pyaw 1960: 99; The Nation Daily 1953: April 16).

In fact the Arakanese were well on their way to rebellion. Under the leadership of two prominent and politically active Buddhist monks, U Pinnyathiha and U Seinda, a guerrilla force of four hundred to five hundred men was raised and assisted the Japanese in occupying the northern Arakan. U Pinnyathiha even announced that the Japanese government had agreed to his proposal for a separate Arakanese unit of Burma Independence Army. Later his force was known as the Arakan Defense Force, under the command of Kra Hla Aung, the protégé of U Pinnyathiha. Later two monks became leaders of Arakan Branch of AFO (Anti-Fascist Organization), turning their guns on the Japanese. At the middle of 1944 they were supported by the British with certain amount of arms to fight the Japanese. Brigadier Richard Gordon Prescott, Deputy Director of Civil Affairs reported to the governor:

As result of arming certain members of AFO under the leadership of U Pinnyathiha and Kra Hla Aung, the AFO (in Arakan) are endeavoring to set up a parallel government to that of the British Administration and in fact repeating their modus operandi at the time of Japanese invasion of Arakan (British Library, London, India Office Record M/2500).

In the meantime the AFO changed its name to AFPFL (Anti-Fascist and People’s Freedom League) with U Aung San, the ultimate hero of the Burmese independence movement, as its leader. When the AFPFL accepted the proposal of the governor of Burma to join the Executive Council, U Pinnyathiha remained as the AFPFL leader in Arakan while U Seinda was actively preparing a revolt. U Sein Da’s group was acting as a local government, controlling a number of villages in the Myebon township of Kyaukpyu District and Minbya township of Akyab District. The fact of the matter was that U Seinda was persuaded by the radical communists of Thakin Soe’s
faction of the Communist Party of Burma to choose the way to independence by violence (British Library, London, India Office Records M/4/2500).

When the Aung San-Attlee Agreement was signed, U Seinda denounced it publicly. An All Arakan Conference was held in Myebo on 1 April 1947 and about ten thousand people from all parties in Arakan attended. U Aung San was openly assailed to his face as an opportunist by some people attending the conference, using rebellious slogans (British Library, London, India Office Records M/4/PRO: WO 203/5262). U Seinda with the communists behind him moved forward to the rebellion. Actually, Thakhin Soe’s Red Flag Communists took advantage of the misunderstanding between U Seinda and AFPFL. It was in fact an ideological struggle in the AFPFL, the national united front of Burma that was under the leadership of the charismatic leader U Aung San. On the other side some Arakanese intellectuals led by U Hla Tun Pru, a Barrister-at-Law, held a meeting in Rangoon and demanded the formation of “Arakanistan” for the Arakanese people (British Library, London, India Office Records, M/4/2503). All these movements of the Arakanese might have alarmed Muslims from the Mayu Frontier. In the wake of independence most of the educated Muslims felt an overwhelming sense of collective identity based on Islam as their religion and the cultural and ethnic difference of their community from the Burmese and Arakanese Buddhists. At the same time the Arakanese became more and more concerned with their racial security and ethnic survival in view of the increasingly predominant Muslim population in their frontier.

The ethnic conflict in the rural areas of the Mayu frontier revived soon after Burma celebrated independence on 4 January 1948. Rising in the guise of Jihad, many Muslim clerics (Moulovis) playing a leading role, in the countryside and remote areas gave way to banditary, arson and rapes. Moshe Yeagar wrote that one of the major reasons of Mujahid rebellion was that the Muslims who fled Japanese occupation were not allowed to resettle in their villages (Yegar 1972:98). In fact, there were more than two hundred Arakanese villages in Buthidaung and Maungdaw townships before the war began. In the post-war years only sixty villages were favorable for the Arakanese resettlement. Out of these sixty, forty-four villages were raided by the Mujahids in the first
couple of years of independence. Thousands of Arakanese villagers sought refuge in the towns and many of their villages were occupied by the Chittagonian Bengalis (Rakhine State People’s Council 1986:58-60).

The Mujahid uprising began two years before the independence was declared. In March 1946 the Muslim Liberation Organization (MLO) was formed with Zaffar Kawal, a native of Chittagong District, as the leader. A conference was held in May 1948 in Garabyin Village north to Maungdaw and the name of the organization was changed to “Mujahid Party.” Some Chittagonian Bengalis from nearby villages brought the weapons they had collected during the wartime to the mosques in Fakir Bazaar Village and Shahbi Bazaar Village (Department of Defense Service Archives, Rangoon, DR 491 (56)). Jaffar Kawal became the commander in chief and his lieutenant was Abdul Husein, formerly a corporal from the Akyab District police force (Department of Defense Service Archives, Rangoon, DR 1016). The Mujahid Party sent a letter written in Urdu and dated 9 June 1948 to the government of Union of Burma through the sub-divisional officer of Maungdaw Township. Their demands are as follows (Department of Defence Service Archives, Rangoon: CD 1016/10/11):

(1) The area between the west bank of Kaladan River and the east bank of Naaf River must be recognized as the National Home of the Muslims in Burma.
(2) The Muslims in Arakan must be accepted as the nationalities of Burma.
(3) The Mujahid Party must be granted a legal status as a political organization.
(4) The Urdu Language must be acknowledged as the national language of the Muslims in Arakan and be taught in the schools in the Muslim areas.
(5) The refugees from the Kyauktaw and Myohaung (Mrauk-U) Townships must be resettled in their villages at the expense of the state.
(6) The Muslims under detention by the Emergency Security Act must be unconditionally released.
(7) A general amnesty must be granted for the members of the Mujahid Party.
Calling themselves “the Muslims of Arakan” and “the Urdur” as their national language indicated their inclination towards the sense of collective identity that the Muslims of Indian subcontinent showed before the partition of India into two independent states. When the demands were ignored the Mujahids destroyed all the Arakanese villages in the northern part of Maungdaw Township. On 19 July 1948 they attacked Ngapru-chaung and near by Villages in Maungdaw Township and some villagers and Buddhist monks were kidnapped for ransoms (Department of Defense Service Archives, Rangoon: CD 1016/10/11). On 15 and 16 June 1951 All Arakan Muslim Conference was held in Alethangyaw Village, and “The Charter of the Constitutional Demands of the Arakani Muslims” was published. It calls for “the balance of power between the Muslims and the Maghs (Arakanese), two major races of Arakan.” The demand of the charter reads:

North Arakan should be immediately formed a free Muslim State as equal constituent Member of the Union of Burma like the Shan State, the Karenni State, the Chin Hills, and the Kachin Zone with its own Militia, Police and Security Forces under the General Command of the Union (Department of the Defense Service Archives, Rangoon: DR 1016/10/13).

Here it is again noticeable that in the charter these peoples are mentioned as the Muslims of Arakan. The word “Rohingya” was first pronounced by the Mr Abdul Gaffar, an MP from Buthidaung, in his article “The Sudeten Muslims,” published in the Guardian Daily on 20 August 1951.

However, the new democracy in the independent Burma induced some Muslim leaders to remain loyal to the state. The free and fair elections were held and four Muslims were elected to the legislature from Buthidaung and Maungdaw townships. Meanwhile the Mujahid insurgency threw the frontier area into turmoil for a decade. During his campaign for the 1960 elections, Burmese Prime Minister U Nu who succeeded U Aung San after the independence hero was assassinated, promised the statehood for Arakanese and Mon peoples. When he came to the office after a landslide victory the plans for the formation of the Arakan and Mon states were affected. Naturally the Muslim members of
parliament from Buthidaung and Maungdaw Townships denounced the plan and called for the establishment of a Rohingya State.

General Ne Win took power in a coup d'etat in 1962, and almost all the Rohingya movement went underground. The first step of Ne Win’s Burmese Way to Socialism was the nationalization of the private enterprises in 1964. The plan was clearly aimed at the transfer of private assets owned by the Indian and Chinese entrepreneurs into state ownership in the form of the public corporations. Most of the Indian and Pakistani businesspeople, living in the major cities of Burma, left Burma. In the two years following the decision to nationalize the retail trade, some 100,000 Indians and some twelve thousand Pakistanis left Burma for their homeland. The flow of Indians returning to India as a result of these policies began in 1964 (Donison 1970: 199-200). But the Muslim agriculturists from Northern Arakan, most of them, holding the national registration cards issued by the Department of National Registration in the post-war decade, were not concerned with the event and remained in the frontier areas till the Citizenship Law of 1982 was enforced in 1987.

In 1973, Ne Win’s Revolutionary Council sought public opinion for drafting anew constitution. The Muslims from the Mayu Frontier submitted a proposal to the Constitution Commission for the creation of separate Muslim state or at least a division for them (Kyaw Zan Tha 1995:6). Their proposal was again turned down. When elections were held under the 1974 Constitution the Bengali Muslims from the Mayu Frontier Area were denied the right to elect their representatives to the “Pyithu Hlut-taw” (People’s Congress). After the end of the Independence War in Bangladesh some arms and ammunitions flowed into the hands of the young Muslim leaders from Mayu Frontier. On 15 July 1972 a congress of all Rohingya parties was held at the Bangladeshi border to call for the “Rohingya National Liberation” (Mya Win 1992: 3).

Burma’s successive military regimes persisted in the same policy of denying Burmese citizenship to most Bengalis, especially in the frontier area. They stubbornly grasped the 1982 Citizenship Law that allowed only the ethnic groups who had lived in Burma before the First Anglo-Burmese War began in 1824 as the citizens of the country. By this law those Muslims had been treated as
aliens in the land they have inhabited for more than a century. According to the 1983 census report all Muslims in Arakan constituted 24.3 percent and they all were categorized as Bangladeshi, while the Arakanese Buddhists formed 67.8 percent of the population of the Arakan (Rakhine) State (Immigration and Manpower Department 1987:I-14).

In the abortive 1988 Democracy Uprising, those Muslims again became active, hoisting the Rohingya banner. Subsequently when the military junta allowed the registration of the political parties they asked for their parties to be recognized under the name “Rohingya.” Their demand was turned down and some of them changed tactics and formed a party, the National Democratic Party for Human rights (NDPHR) that won in four constituencies in 1990 elections as eleven candidates of the Arakan League for Democracy (ALD) were elected to the legislature. However, the Elections Commission abolished both the ALD and the NDPHR in 1991. Some of the party members went underground and into exile.

Recently, the main objectives of the movement of some groups have been to gain the recognition of their ethnic entity in the Union of Burma and to obtain the equal status enjoyed by other ethnic groups. But some elements have adopted the radical idea of founding a separate Muslim state. The following are the Rohingya organizations currently active on the Burma-Bangladesh border (Mya Win 1992: 3):

1. RSO (Rohingya Solidarity Organization)
2. ARIF (Arakan Rohingya Islamic Front)
3. RPF (Rohingya Patriotic Front)
4. RLO (Rohingya Liberation Organization)
5. IMA (Itihadul Mozahadin of Arakan)

**Conclusion**

After Burma gained independence, a concentration of nearly ninety percent of the area’s population, the distinguishing characteristics of their own culture and the Islamic faith formed an ethnic and religious minority group in the western fringe of the republic. For successive generations their ethnicity and Islam have been practically not distinguishable. At the beginning they adopted the
policy of irredentism in favor of joining East Pakistan with the slogan, “Pakistan Jindabad,” (Victory to Pakistan). This policy faded away when they could not gain support from the government of Pakistan. Later they began to call for the establishment of an autonomous region instead. Pakistan’s attitude toward the Muslims in Arakan was different from the Islamabad’s policy toward Kashmiris. During the Independence War in Bangladesh most of the Muslims in Arakan supported West Pakistan. After Bangladesh gained independence Dhaka followed the policy of disowning those Chittagonians. Consequently they had to insist firmly on their identity as Rohingyas. Their leaders began to complain that the term “Chittagonian Bengali” had arbitrarily been applied to them. But the majority of the ethnic group, being illiterate agriculturalists in the rural areas, still prefers their identity as Bengali Muslims.

Although they have showed the collective political interest for more than five decades since Burma gained independence, their political and cultural rights have not so far been recognized and guaranteed. On the contrary the demand for the recognition of their rights sounds a direct challenge to the right of autonomy and the myth of survival for the Arakanese majority in their homeland. A symbiotic coexistence has so far been inconceivable because of the political climate of mistrust and fear between the two races and the policy of the military junta. The Muslims from the other parts of Arakan kept themselves aloof from the Rohingya cause as well. Thus the cause of Rohingyas finds a little support outside their own community, and their claims of an earlier historical tie to Burma are insupportable.
Appendix I

*British Burma Census of 1872 (Akyab Town)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>1,884</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1,911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohomendan</td>
<td>3,516</td>
<td>1,502</td>
<td>5,018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>5,892</td>
<td>5,627</td>
<td>11,519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>11,895</td>
<td>7,335</td>
<td>19,230</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Department of Revenue, Agriculture and Commerce 1875, 42)
Appendix II

The Statement Showing the Distribution of People According to their Birth Places British Burma Census of 1881 (Arakan Division)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birth Place</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Akyab Dist.</td>
<td>144,746</td>
<td>132,131</td>
<td>276,877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bassein</td>
<td>721</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>1,239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanthawaddy</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henzada</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyauk Pyu</td>
<td>79,487</td>
<td>79,180</td>
<td>158,667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mergui</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moulmein town</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Arakan</td>
<td>7,138</td>
<td>6,853</td>
<td>13,991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prome</td>
<td>805</td>
<td>628</td>
<td>1,433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangoon Town</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandoway</td>
<td>27,410</td>
<td>27,363</td>
<td>54,773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shway Gyn</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tavoy</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tharawaddy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thayetmyo</td>
<td>704</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>1,303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thone Gwa</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toungoo</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bengal</td>
<td>49,374</td>
<td>19,435</td>
<td>68,809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bombay</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diu</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goa</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madras</td>
<td>1,823</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1,854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N-Western Provinces</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oudh</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afganistan</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabia</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Government of British Burma, British Burma Census, 1881: Appendix LXXVIII)
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----------------------Do-------------------------------------. DR 1016/10/13


**Secondary Sources**


Was “Yadza” Really Ro(d)gers?

Gerry Abbott

Under the terms of the Treaty of Yandabo, which ended the first Anglo-Burmese war of 1824-26, the Government of India sent Henry Burney to Burma as Resident Minister to the Court of Ava. Arriving at post in April 1830 he kept a journal in which, a few months later, he recorded the following:

August 12
I paid a visit this morning to an extraordinary character, an uncle of the King, named Mekkhra Mon tha or Prince of Mekkhra. He has been taught to read and understand English by the late Mr Rogers, and he evinces a very laudable desire of becoming acquainted with European science and literature.
(Tarling, ed.1995:59)

Burney goes on to say that he and his associates considered the Prince to be ‘certainly the most extraordinary man we have seen in this country’ in that he possessed an impressive English library, was already well informed in scientific matters, had translated extracts from Rees’s Cyclopaedia and – with the help of an American missionary – had well-nigh completed an English-Burmese dictionary.

According to Burney, then, the tutor credited with enabling the Prince to do all this was ‘the late Mr Rogers.’ But how did this intriguing English-born character come to be there, and who exactly was he? I raise the question because, while most of the information we have about Rogers is based on his own accounts of
his background, those accounts are not consistent. I shall therefore, working backwards from 1830, collate various pieces of information about him in an attempt to establish the truth about his past. We must first jump back four years.

In May 1826, a few months after the end of hostilities, the envoy John Crawfurd questioned a number of people who had been imprisoned by the Burmese government during the war, and obtained signed depositions from each of them (Crawfurd, 1834, vol II: 67ff). Those interviewed included a teak merchant named John Laird, a Scot; the Baptist missionary Adoniram Judson, an American; and Henry Gouger, an English merchant. On being questioned, Laird reported a discussion at the Court of Ava in 1824 between the King and Bandula, his General, about the possibility of conquering Bengal with the help of Indian and Chinese forces. He was asked at this point:

Q. Who was your interpreter on this occasion? – A. Mr. Rodgers, an Englishman, who has resided forty-one years in the country, and understands the language thoroughly.

Q. What observation did Mr. Rodgers make upon what transpired upon this occasion? – A. He said to me, "If the King takes the advice of these men, there will be a war with the English, and the country is gone." I said, "Why don't you advise his Majesty against it. He said, "If at this moment I were to speak a word on the subject, my head would be cut off." (Crawfurd II, Appendix: 73)

From this brief exchange we conclude that Rogers arrived in Burma in 1783, was fluent in Burmese and had by 1824 risen to a position which gave him access to the King's ear except on matters such as those of national military importance. We can also see the delicacy and perilousness of his position.

Laird was also questioned about a Burmese minister who had been appointed as commander of the army after the death of Bandula. This man had for a few days been incarcerated as a fellow-prisoner, said Laird, and had promised Rogers that once released he would 'do something for our comfort.' But the European prisoners had later learned that the minister intended to massacre the prisoners.
Q. Are you of opinion that he intended to destroy you? – A.
No: I never thought so, but I think it likely that he wished to
destroy two of the party, Rodgers and Lanciego; who had, as
officers of the Burman Government, thwarted him several
times. (p.85)

Once again, we see the delicacy of Rogers’ position; but we also see
the extent of his influence at Court.

Under questioning, the American missionary Judson said
nothing about Rogers but did mention the Englishman’s wife. He
said that the Queen’s brother had more than once ordered the
execution of the prisoners, but that the governor had refused to
comply without the consent of the King: “He hinted it to myself in
prison, and told Mrs. Judson and the wife of Mr. Rodgers so, more
explicitly” (p.114).

The deposition of Henry Gouger makes no mention of
Rogers, but he had started making notes from which he would
much later produce an account of his experiences. We now turn to
his version of events. Despite the fact that his book was published
so long after the events of 1826, Gouger’s brother assures us in a
Preface to the second edition (Gouger, 1862) that the book was
based upon a printed pamphlet that was in turn based on Henry’s
original notes. It is a case, then, of *sauter pour mieux reculer*, and
we can now jump back to Gouger’s account of what happened a
few months before he and Laird made their depositions.

He tells us that he and another foreigner were released from
prison on 16 February 1826, the other prisoners being left in
chains. These included Laird (who ‘was paying the penalty of
aspiring to become a titled Burmese nobleman’) and Rogers. Laird
pressed Gouger to tell the victorious General Campbell that he
preferred British nationality,

but poor old Rodgers was a difficult and deplorable case. He
remembered how often in his chequered career his life had
been in peril – how probable that it might be so again – he
had a yearning, too, after his native country – but could he
return there with safety? I saw the conflict going on within,
and ventured – *relying on all the circumstances of his story to
be correct* – to urge him to authorize me in naming his case
to the General, who would not fail to demand the surrender of his wife and family also. He hesitated some time, but to my sorrow finally declined, and ended his days in Burmah not long after.  

(p.283, my italics)

As we have seen, by 1830 he was ‘the late Mr. Rogers.’ Although old and yearning to return to England, he had not considered that it would be safe to go back. Why so? And why did Gouger pause to consider that Rogers’ story might not be correct?

Gouger tells us that when they were thrown into prison Rogers was ‘bending under sixty-five years of an anxious life, but had an iron constitution’ (p.183). He possessed ‘a sturdy frame’ (p.229) and, being ‘as much native as English in his thoughts and habits, passed most of his idle hours in chatting with the convicts’ (p.215). However, as Gouger was naturally curious about the old gentleman’s background, Rogers gave him ‘an outline of his history.’ Gouger expresses it as nearly as possible in his own words:

In the year 1782 I was the fourth officer in one of the ships belonging to the East India Company, trading to Calcutta. On the outward voyage complaints were made by the crew of the bad quality of the salt provisions served out to them, and I had the misfortune to discover, when I was sent below to get up some fresh casks, that the chief officer was dishonestly feeding them with tainted meat which belonged to himself, intending to replace it by so many casks from the ship’s stores. He was much exasperated when, on returning to the upper deck, I taxed him with the fraud. An altercation ensued, then blows. For this, being the junior officer, I was placed under arrest, from which I was not released when the ship anchored in the river Hooghly. I was allowed, however, to go on shore for exercise occasionally at Fultah, where there was a solitary tavern at which the officers used to regale themselves.

Here I hid myself until an opportunity offered of meeting my oppressor as he was walking alone in a garden behind the house. I then approached him with two of the ship’s pistols, taxed him with his ill-usage, and demanded
satisfaction, offering him his choice of the pistols. This he refused, when, urged on by the desire of revenge, I attacked him with a Penang lawyer ["A thick cane, so called"], which I had provided for the purpose, intending only to inflict a severe chastisement; but each blow seemed to increase my fury, which, as my injuries arose to my mind, became quite ungovernable. At last I left him insensible, I feared, perhaps, dead. What was to be done? Return on board my ship I dared not, so I got into a dingy, and taking the flood-tide paid the men to pull me with all speed to Barrackpore, a place some miles above Calcutta, where the cadets who came out as passengers in the ship were quartered. I cast myself on their protection, which was readily granted, as the chief officer was by no means a favourite, and they knew the provocation I had received. Here I lay hidden by them for some weeks, and then, supplying me with money, they sent me forward to Chittagong, whence I made my way across the British frontier into Arracan, and eventually to Rangoon, where, in an unknown foreign country, I found a safe asylum. From that time I have never once quitted the Burman territory, though I might have done so with safety, as I heard afterwards that the man I had so unmercifully punished happily recovered, and made subsequent voyages in the service of the East India Company. (pp.68-70)

So, as Gouger went on to say, Rogers had for more than forty years lived as a fugitive, fearing that the Indian Government would catch up with him. He had married a Portuguese-Burmese woman and had a twelve-year-old son. There had been no communication with his family, but he had somehow discovered that he had a younger brother, a teacher of music at a town in Lincolnshire whom Gouger had actually met. I shall return to his life story later, but first we should briefly note the circumstances that led to the arrest of Rogers and the other foreigners.

When on 24 May 1824 news arrived that Rangoon had fallen to the British, Gouger, Laird and Rogers feared for their safety. According to Gouger:

> With respect to Mr. Rodgers, the wily old gentleman knew his interest too well to wish to exchange a word with any of us.
He depended on his lifelong services, his complete naturalization as a Burmese subject, and hoped to save himself from shipwreck by steering with the art and skill acquired in his long experience (p.126).

As for Gouger himself, the Judsons persuaded him not to visit them any more so as to avoid any appearance of American complicity with the English. But the three British-born visitors were assumed to be spies, and it was not long before the missionaries Judson and Price joined them in confinement. In a long letter written soon after the war, Mrs. Judson explained why the Americans had also been arrested:

In examining the accounts of Mr. Gouger, it was found that Mr. Judson and Dr. Price had taken money of him to a considerable amount. Ignorant as were the Burmese of our mode of receiving money by orders on Bengal, this circumstance, to their suspicious minds, was a sufficient evidence that the missionaries were in the pay of the English, and very probably spies (Wayland, 1853: 271).

But we must return to Rogers. Apart from teaching the Mekkhara Prince to read English, how had he been occupied during his residence of forty years? Hall (1955: lxxiii) tells us that in 1802 he 'occupied an important position in the Burmese administration' and adds in a footnote that he became Shabandar (Collector) of Rangoon in 1809. In order to merit such appointments he must already have helped the Court in some way. In 1807 he had also helped Carey and Chater, two newly-arrived Baptist missionaries, to procure land for a mission-house. Hall says that the missionaries ‘had nothing but good to say of Rogers,’ who regularly attended their services, and in January 1814, when Carey sailed for Calcutta, took his family and the Judsons into his own house as guests ... (Hall: lxxiv)

Judson’s journal, however, indicates that by 1820 Rogers was out of the favour of the new emperor and had been deprived of his post:
January 26. We set out early in the morning, called on Mr. G., late collector of Rangoon, and on Mr. R., who was formerly collector, but is now out of favour (Wayland: 200).

Yet two years later, when Gouger was being introduced to King Bagyidaw in the new court at Ava, who was present?

His Majesty addressed a few words to someone in the ranks behind me, which, to my no small astonishment, elicited an address to me in clear, good English accent – “Are you, sir, an Englishman?”

Rogers was back in favour again.

He was a large, strongly-built man, slightly bent by age, attired after the fashion of the natives, already described – a long, ample silk cloth around the waist, a loose muslin jacket, tied with strings in front, covered his body, but did not conceal the white skin beneath, barelegged of course, and his long grey hair twisted into a knot at the crown, where it was confined by a strip of muslin. His long grey beard was so thinned, according to the native fashion, that that portion only which appertained to the middle part of the chin was preserved, and this being of a texture stiff as horse-hair wagged backwards and forwards in a most ludicrous manner whenever he attempted to speak. He spoke Burmese fluently, and might well have passed for a native, had not his fair complexion, his light-blue eyes, and prominent nose, of such shape and colour as I have never seen except among my own respected countrymen, unmistakably attested his origin. He was addressed as “Yadza” (the nearest approach the Burmese language admits to “Rodgers” ... (Gouger: 32-33)

Helping foreign missionaries down in Rangoon was no way to ingratiate himself with the King. So by what means might Rogers have managed to reinstate himself at Court? Of course, he was a useful interpreter; but he might have helped in a local military capacity. In his younger days, he told Gouger, he had served the
previous King by ruthlessly stamping out the piracy that was stifling trade on the Irrawaddy river.

“I picked out,” said the old gentleman, “a little army of the bravest men I could find, and let them loose upon the robbers wherever we came upon them, and, as the inhabitants were inclined to help me with information, I was pretty successful. We gave no quarter. Those who were taken alive we tied up to trees, and used to paint a bull’s-eye on their bodies for my men to fire at to improve their practice!” (p.101, Gouger’s italics).

But why should the King have turned to Rogers for such help? Possibly because Rogers took great care, as he admitted to Gouger, to build up a reputation of infallibility. He allowed it to be thought, for example, that he possessed astrological powers. As an expected eclipse of the sun approached, a fierce argument about its time of arrival sprang up in Court between the disliked Brahmins and many of the courtiers. The dispute went on until the King decreed that the wrong party should be made to stand up to their necks in a nearby horse-pond and turned to Rogers.

“What do you say, Yadza? Are the Brahmins right or wrong?” “Now,” said Mr. Rodgers, “if I had only had the wisdom to say that I was an unlearned man, and knew nothing of these matters, all would have been right; but, fired with the ambition of being thought a learned man, I replied, ‘I have not made the calculation, your Majesty.’ ‘Oh! then you can calculate eclipses?’ ‘Yes, your Majesty, after a fashion.’ ‘Then go home instantly, and let me know what you say to-morrow’ (p. 99).

Rogers went home, consulted the *Bengal Almanack*, corrected for the longitude and presented the result to the King. Many a courtier paid the price of standing up to the neck in the pond. “But I,” said Rogers, “had acquired a character that taxed all my ingenuity to support, and from that time, ... took especial care ... never to be without a copy of the *Bengal Annual Almanack*” (ibid).

The impression emerging from Rogers’ own accounts of himself to Gouger is that the renegade was shrewd, resourceful and quick-
witted but too apt to paint himself in a good light in his various anecdotes – perhaps, even, prone to embroidering over the truth. One wonders, for instance, whether he was practising a policy of being all things to all men when, back in January 1820, he told Judson a story about a Burman convert to Catholicism whose nephew reported this to the Court and who refused to obey the King’s order to recant. The nephew had his uncle imprisoned and tortured, beaten with an iron implement from the feet up to the chest. Reporting Rogers’ own account of the torture, Judson recorded in his journal that ‘Mr. R. was one of those that stood by and gave money to the executioners, to induce them to strike gently’ (Wayland: 206). It may have been so, but in recording a report of a conversation Rogers had with the King back in 1802, Symes was careful to say: “Mr. Rogers, according to his own account, not implicitly to be trusted, took much trouble to undeceive him …” (Hall: 179-180, my italics). Symes also reported that the Burmese considered Rogers an expert lawyer, and that by making himself a vassal of the Prince of Prome (the King’s second son) he was ‘exempted from arrest for debt’ (Hall, 1955: 173).

The character of Rogers, then, is difficult to assess. Although he was clearly a man of great ability, he was viewed very differently by a series of envoys. Whereas Cox (1797) championed him, Symes (1802) distrusted him and by his third mission Canning (1811) had taken a violent dislike to him and in reporting Rogers’ previous history was careful to use the phrase ‘by his own account’ (see Hall, 1955: lxxiii). By 1826, as we have seen, even the sympathetic Gouger seemed to be doubting the old man’s veracity. It is perhaps to be expected, though, that a renegade Englishman trying to make a living in a distant country ruled by a succession of dangerous tyrants should on some occasions be economical with the truth and on others overemphasise his own importance. Also, as a fugitive Rogers would have needed to cover his tracks to throw the English off the scent. To do this, he could have lied about the year of his arrival, the name of his ship, his own name and rank, and indeed the whole story of his flight. How much of this story, then, are we able to confirm today?

Let us start with the date of his desertion. Symes in 1802 says that this was ‘about 20 years ago;’ Canning in 1812 says that Rogers had been ‘resident 30 years;’ and Rogers himself gives the year 1782. Since these dates are all consistent, we turn to the ship
that Rogers said he had sailed in. Both Symes and Canning reported Rogers’ claim that this ship had been the *Worcester*, so let us assume it was so. A study of Hardy (1813) confirms that the Honourable East India Company did indeed have a ship of that name, a vessel of 723 tons, and that she sailed at least as far as the Bay of Bengal. The register shows that the HCS *Worcester* sailed from England in March 1779, but on this occasion she returned in February 1781; and besides, none of the four officers was called Rogers. It was her next sailing which fits our time-scale: she sailed on 6 February 1782 (Hardy: 94) and probably did not anchor in the Hooghly until about seven months later, arrivals normally being timed to coincide with the onset of the cool season. But again, none of the officers on this voyage bore the name Rogers, and the *Worcester* did not sail in the following season, 1783-84.

Very well, let us scan the register for the name Rogers. This looks more promising, since we find three officers of that name. But old Samuel Rogers was an experienced Captain, and was still commanding a ship, the *Osterley*, in 1786. A John Rogers is listed as number two mate aboard the *Locko*, which sailed in 1781. A John Rogers also appears as number four mate aboard the *Earl Talbot*, which sailed in 1782. As the *Locko* was still at sea when the *Earl Talbot* sailed, they cannot be the same man. But both of these men went on further voyages for years, one of them becoming a captain. The fact that neither of them was ‘our’ Rogers suggests that “Yadza” had lied about his name, perhaps even choosing to be Rogers because he knew there were at least three men of that name serving on the Company’s ships in eastern waters.

What about his rank? Under the captain – or commander, as the skipper was usually called – there were four officers known as ‘mates.’ Symes (1802:73) simply refers to Rogers as ‘a mate,’ Canning (1812) calls him ‘second mate’ and Gouger says he was ‘the fourth officer’. Once again, Rogers seems to have lied to one or other of these fellow countrymen.

Since the most consistent part of his story concerns the date 1782 and the name of the ship, let us see what officers were on board the *Worcester* at that time. The register (Hardy: 94) shows:

Capt. John Cook
1 John Hall
Could Rogers have been one of these? Certainly not the captain or the first two mates, all of whom according to the register continued to sail the high seas long after. However, it is interesting that, while many of the junior officers' names on other ships continue to appear in later sailings, often with a higher rank, those of the third and fourth mate of the Worcester disappear from the register after 1782. Rogers might have been one of these two. Robson might well have chosen the similar-sounding ‘Rogers’ as an alias; on the other hand, he is listed in Hardy’s index, while the fourth mate Wheelwright is not. Was he struck off for being a renegade?

Abandoning such conjectures, we should look again at Rogers’ dramatic tale as told to Gouger. The dishonesty of the first mate in issuing tainted meat, the bout of fisticuffs and Rogers’ consequent arrest – these incidents are credible, though we should note that he paints himself as the champion of the underdogs, the crew and the passengers. It is what follows that taxes our credulity. Allowed to go ashore for exercise, he suddenly appears in a tavern garden armed with two loaded ship’s pistols and a heavy cane. How on earth he has managed to acquire and conceal these while under arrest he does not tell us. Settling matters by means of a duel is the gentlemanly thing to do, and that is what Rogers by his own account proposes. But the first mate is ungentlemanly in showing cowardice, so Rogers beats him senseless without anyone stopping him, and makes good his escape upriver to Barrackpore, about fifteen miles upstream. [Canning (1812) has him going to Chinsurah, another fifteen miles or so inland – another inconsistency.] In Barrackpore, the cadets who have come out as passengers on the Worcester are so grateful to him that they risk punishment by hiding him for ‘some weeks.’ In all that time he is not discovered, and the grateful cadets give him enough money to get to the Burma frontier. And of course, the first mate of the Worcester recovers and sails the seas again, so everything ends happily.

How should we think of Rogers? We know that he was kind to missionaries, taught a Prince to read English, considered himself more Burmese than English and was a useful interpreter at the
Court of Ava. How much of the rest of his history to believe remains a problem because it comes almost entirely from his own mouth. Yet Gouger claimed to have met the younger brother of “Yadza” (presumably named Ro(d)gers) in Lincolnshire later on. Perhaps the old man’s name really was Rogers after all. In the absence of further evidence, it seems that “Yadza” foxed not only his contemporaries but also anyone trying to find out more about him today.

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Dissertation Abstracts

Literate Networks and the Production of Sgaw and Pwo Karen Writing in Burma, c.1830-1930

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English-language histories of Burma have cited the nineteenth-century introduction of Karen literacy by Protestant missionaries as an important precursor to the rise of pan-Karen ethnic consciousness. They have argued that Karen literacy and the literate institutions that developed in its wake gave rise to the Karen nationalist movement in Burma. Burmese ethnographic and historical works, in contrast, tend to present the missionary script as one in a range of different Karen writing systems. In fact, at least eleven different systems of writing the Pwo and Sgaw Karen languages appeared in Burma during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Some of these were tied to the great literate traditions, being the product of Christian or Theravada Buddhist missionaries or state bureaucrats. Other scripts came from syncretistic Karen religious leaders on the fringes of Buddhist and Christian literate practice. In each case, the patrons of Karen writing made use of pre-existing ideas about the function of writing in Karen communities. The proliferation of Karen scripts stands in stark contrast to the presumed integrative force of literacy on social identity invoked by many historians to explain the phenomenon of nationalism. By analysing the various cultures of writing, domains of literate practice, and networks of people,
places, and texts that gave rise to different Karen scripts, this thesis reinterprets the relationship between Karen literacy and social identity. It concludes that Karen literacies have contributed to social cohesion along the lines of specific literate networks. These networks have not always coincided with the notions of pan-Karen identity that appear in the discursive frameworks of nationalism and ethnicity. On the contrary, Karen scripts have served as markers of difference—regional, linguistic, sectarian, and political—between disparate, and sometimes antagonistic, Karen groups.

History and Ethnicity in Burma: Cultural Contexts of the Ethnic Category 'Kachin' in the Colonial and Post-Colonial State, 1824-2004

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The thesis considers the impact of the colonial and post-colonial state in Burma on the formation and transformation of notions of ethnic category, in particular the category 'Kachin' during the period 1824-2004. The first part of the thesis considers not only the emergence of meanings for the term 'Kachin' as it evolved through the colonial archive, but also the interaction of textual and oral discourses between the administration, the various Christian missions, and the colonial military establishment. The thesis also considers the local impact of the globalisation of the term 'Kachin' through the work of Edmund Leach. These various discursive developments have in turn led to attempts to repossess the term 'Kachin' locally by the construction of a parallel local ethnonym, Wunpawng, which will also be discussed. The second and third parts of the thesis address the internal problematics of the development of ethnic category at a national level, and some of the contradictions and historical tensions between the terms 'Kachin', Wunpawng, and other constructs of identity. The transformation of social memory as it relates to understandings of history and multi-group relationships will also be considered. The key issues discussed in this regard relate to the visual, oral and material
culture domains of historical photography, oral ritual language, and the transformation of ritual performance in the festival called manau and festive ‘traditional’ textiles. The fourth and final part of the thesis considers the ‘animist’ or ‘traditional’ model of multi-group identity formation that underpins Kachin nationalist claims to political autonomy within the state of Burma, and which has been reconfigured as a political discourse through the construct Wunpawng. It discusses the saliency of notions of ethnic category within this traditional model by considering how ritual practices could be formulated as an integrative model of multi-group relations, and the boundaries to that model in complex ethnographic environments and in response to the integrative inclinations of the modernising Burmese state.

The State of Vaccination: British Doctors, Indigenous Cooperation, and the Fight Against Smallpox in Colonial Burma

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While many forms of British medical knowledge were used to complement preexisting indigenous medical knowledge, throughout the colonial-era dialogue, vaccination made very little head-way. This is remarkable as the operation was portrayed by colonial medical authorities as a quintessential example of the supremacy of Western medical science. This dissertation examines British vaccination efforts in colonial Burma from the mid-nineteenth century to the 1920s, in order to explain why vaccination failed to become popular among the indigenous population of Burma. This dissertation does not view the colonial vaccination project as a medical failure, for medical technical problems were gradually resolved over time. Rather, the vaccination project failed for the same reasons that brought down the colonial state, with which its fortunes were intimately related. The major problem was that the colonial medical establishment was confused as to why the Burmese did not voluntarily submit to
their ‘superior’ medicine. Rather than regard inoculation as a competing medical system, the British chose to interpret indigenous support for inoculation as an anti-colonial political statement. Seen in this light, to question the superiority of vaccination over inoculation was to question British superiority over the Burmese, and thus the legitimacy of the entire colonial project.
Note:

John Crawfurd included in his 1827 account the notes and map made by M. Montmorency who accompanied the embassy. As Crawfurd introduced Montmorency’s account: “The following description of the fortifications and site of the town was carefully, drawn up by my friend M. Montmorency, and will be readily understood by a reference to the accompanying plan, laid down by the same gentleman.”

M.W.C.

Account of the Fortifications at Ava in 1827

M. Montmorency

The city of Ava is surrounded by a brick wall fifteen and a half feet in height, and ten feet in thickness: on the inside of which there is thrown up a bank of earth forming about an angle of forty-five degrees: on the top of this bank there is a terre pleine, in some places, of a good breadth, but in others, so narrow as scarcely to admit the recoil of a gun. The parapet of brickwork is four and a-half feet in height, and two in thickness, measured across the superior slope.

There are innumerable embrasures at about the distance of five from each other, the cheeks of which are formed in such a way as to prevent any thing but a direct fire. On the Irawadi face there is scarcely one flank defence. The wall of the outer town is miserably built, and is continually requiring repair, no doubt chiefly from the pressure of the earth thrown up inside. The ditch
round the outer wall is also inconsiderable, and during all the dry season fordable in every part.

The south and west faces of the town are defended by a deep and rapid torrent, called the Myit-tha, leading from the Myit-ngé. This is not fordable, for the banks are very steep; and even when crossed, the swamp and jungle on the west face, between it and the town, with the extensive plain of rice culture on the south, are formidable obstructions. There is a good road, however, on the banks of this brook all the way up, as well as by the banks of the Irawadi towards the north-west angle. The approach to the south-west angle is well defended, the wall there being constructed en cremalliere.

The Myit-ngé on the east face forms a considerable part of the defence on that side. This river, about one hundred and fifty yards broad, is a fine rapid stream, and the banks of it very steep and high: the river not running in such a manner as to form any part of the defence of the south-east angle of the city, a deep canal has been cut from the Myit-ngé, at the south-east angle, to about one-third the way down the east face of the city wall, where it again falls into the same river. The torrent here is very rapid,—so much so, that boats can with great difficulty stem the stream.

The lesser town, which forms the north-east angle, comprehends one-half of the north and one-third of the east faces: the wall round it is evidently better constructed than that of the large town. The ditch on the south and west faces of it is also broader and deeper, and when full in the wet season is not to be forded. There are, however, three causeways across it which it would take some time to destroy, in case of a sudden attack. The lesser town is mostly occupied by the palace; the Rung-d'hau, or hall of justice; the Lut-d'hau, or council chamber; the arsenal, and the habitations of a few courtiers of distinction. There is a strong well-built wall, about twenty feet in height, surrounding the square in which these are situated. On the outside of this wall, and at no great distance, there is a teak-wood stockade of the same height as the wall. The Irawadi opposite the Manaong gate, or that fronting the town of Sagaing, is one thousand and ninety-four yards broad.
Note:

The following extracts from the journal of Mr. Lovell Ingalls, a member of the American Baptist Mission to Burma are compiled from various entries in different numbers of the *Baptist Missionary Magazine* (earlier entitled the *American Baptist Missionary Magazine*). These numbers include issues 19.10 (October 1839), 20.1 (January 1840), and 20.4 (April 1840). The initial entry provides an introduction to Ingalls’ residence:

In the autumn of 1838, Mr. Kincaid being desirous to return to his labors at Ava at the earliest favorable period, his place at Mergui was supplied by Mr. Ingalls, who had been designated as a permanent occupant of that station. Mr. Ingalls arrived at Mergui on the 29th of October, accompanied by three assistants.

M. W. C.

__The Journal of Lovell Ingalls, 1838-1839__

Lovell Ingalls

This station embraces two departments of labor, Karen and Burman. In the Karen department a good beginning has been made. There are two Karen churches, one at Kabin, numbering fifty members, another at Thingboung, numbering between fifteen and twenty. Besides the above, there are several Christians scattered over the jungle—germs of future churches—and a number of good inquirers. This department affords every prospect of success.
The Burman department is still lying waste. Though much preaching has been performed, the people, with few exceptions, are wedded to idols. Still grace triumphs, and converts are won. We have one Burman applicant for baptism, who gives good evidence of a change of heart, and some are evidently under the influences of the Holy Spirit.

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**November 11th, 1838.**

This is the second Sabbath spent in Mergui. We have met and have had our season of worship. Our numbers were few, none of the inhabitants present. We have commenced Burman worship every evening and on the Sabbath. After evening service, the assistants give an account of the labors of the day.

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**November 15th, 1838**

Went this morning to see a lunatic (?) who had listened to the preaching of the assistants, and taken books, and who, it was stated, had expressed faith in our religion. When we entered his apartment, we found a number of our tracts nicely adjusted on a little frame work, and the man in a very serious frame of mind. He stated that he had believed our religion from the first, and had rejected the religion of his fathers. Time will show whether he is serious or not in his statements.

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**November 18th, 1839**

To-day at the zayat had a long debate with a Mussulman; his parents were from Arabia. He reasoned with candor, and seemed gratified at hearing of a religion which has a Savior in it. He took a gospel in Hindustani, and promised to read it attentively. He has charge of the Siamese who live in this province. Many Burmans who collected, had also the privilege of hearing of the only Savior from death and hell.
November 22nd, 1838

Went to the zayat as usual. Among those who called, was a man intoxicated. When told of the guilt of intemperance, he threw the blame at once upon the rulers of the land, who farm out the arrack shops. 'If the government,' said he, 'would forbid the use of arrack, no one would dare to drink.' Drunkenness is one of the principal sins of this city.

November 24th, 1838

Early this morning I started for Kabin, to see the native Christians, who had long been waiting for a visit from a teacher. About sundown, landed from our boat, and started for the village, distant about two hours' walk. I found the zayat located in the jungle, with no house in sight.

November 25th, 1838

Early this morning the Karens began to assemble, and in a short time nearly sixty had seated themselves before me, about forty of whom were Christians. To see such an assembly collecting in the forest was truly affecting. Who could refrain from weeping? At seven, before breakfast, I preached to them through an interpreter, from Eph. 1: 18—The eyes of your understanding being enlightened,’ &c. At 10, met again for the examination of candidates for baptism. Five gave good evidence of a change of heart; the church was unanimous in receiving them; they were baptized; and the 'wilderness and solitary place was made glad,' while songs of praise ascended to the Most High. In the evening the church assembled to commemorate the sufferings of the crucified Savior.
**November 26th, 1838**

Early in the morning, left for Mergui, as it was not safe to protract my stay in the Jungle at this season of the year. Reached home about eight in the evening.

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**November 30th, 1838**

To-day, at the Zayat. Many assembled and opposed with great bitterness. They charged me with coming to their country to destroy their religion. I told them not to be angry, for if their religion was true, it could not be destroyed, but if it was falser the sooner it fell the better. ‘Shew-us your God, and we will believe on him’ is a continual declaration of the Burmans, reminding me of the Psalm, ‘Wherefore should the heathen say, where is thy God.’

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**December 1st, 1838**

At the zayat to-day, our assembly consisted for some time mostly of women. One, a Mohammedan in sentiment who took the lead in debate, said, ‘that if all her ancestors had gone to hell, she could not think of going to heaven alone.’ This feeling obtains among most of the heathen. They have great veneration for their ancestors, and little regard for the undying soul.

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**December 3rd, 1838**

An unusual number at the zayats to-day, and the assistants seem much encouraged; they have been praying much for a few days past.

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**December 8th, 1838**

For a number of days past the assistants have given encouraging accounts of their labors. I am now preparing for the jungle; it cost much time to procure a boat and fit it up; also to prepare medicine. The poor natives have no physician, for soul or body.
When taken with disease, they suppose some evil spirit has entered into them, and instead of attempting to remove the disease, they make offerings to the supposed demon.

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December 9th, 1838. Sabbath.

A number of Karen Christians have come to spend the Sabbath with us; among them the Karen chief baptized by brother Kincaid.

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Tour on the Tenasserim

December 21st, 1838

Just as I had prepared my boat for the jungle, brother Mason arrived from Tavoy. He has come to show me the location of the various villages scattered over this wilderness, and introduce me to the native brethren whom he has been the means of gathering. I feel most grateful for this act of kindness, especially as it will cost him some time.

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January 4th, 1839

Have made an excursion with brother Mason up the Tenasserim; was absent ten days; visited quite a number of villages; performed considerable preaching, and found some hopeful inquirers. One Karen chief, who has about twenty houses under him, promised to serve God, and build a zayat for a school the next rains. He is a man of a good mind, and talks Burman as well as Karen.

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January 7th, 1839

To-day started with brethren Mason and Hancock to visit the Karen villages, lying between here and Tavoy, connected with this station. On the eighth reached Kabin, and spent the day with those interesting disciples.
January 9th, 1839

Started early in the morning for Thing-boung. Having three mountains to cross, made our day’s walk very wearisome. In the evening, reached the village in time to have a season of worship with the Christians.

January 10th, 1839

To-day met for the examination of candidates for baptism. Three out of five were received, and baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity.

January 11th, 1839

After a hard day’s walk through briars and jungle, reached Kata, a Christian village, about eight in the evening.

January 12th, 1839

This morning parted with brethren Mason and Hancock, who proceed to Tavoy, and commenced my return. I took a new route, to visit some Burman villages that lie near the coast. We found several small villages, to the inhabitants of which we preached the gospel. In the evening reached a village called Meing-mah-myo; here we spent the Sabbath. Many of the people listened with interest to the message of mercy. The head man publicly reviled the priesthood and religion of Gaudama. Whether it was to please me, or from a knowledge of the hypocrisy of the Burman priest, I know not. His remarks were true, and gave me a very good opportunity of preaching Christ crucified.

January 14th, 1839

Reached Mergui.
January 19th, 1839

This evening Moung Tha Zau, a Burman, of this place, asked for baptism. I found this man in Maulmain about two months before I left; his family was then here. At first he opposed stoutly the Christian religion, but day after day continued to listen and investigate. At length he professed belief in its truth. Since his coming here, he has constantly attended meeting, and gives good evidence of being a new man.

(In February Mr. Ingalls made a short excursion to several Karen villages, partly with a view to induce a fuller attendance at schools during the approaching rains)

Beginning of February

We first visited Kabin. The inhabitants (Christians), having concluded to build their village nearer town, were desirous that I should assist them in fixing upon a location. I was happy to find them feeling so much interest in the subject. The Karens have such a propensity for roving, that they cannot stay more than a year or two in a place. This presents the greatest obstacle to their improvement I have encouraged them to set out fruit trees and purchase buffaloes. Their location is only one tide from Mergui, and is most inviting. Several Christian families have moved to it within a short time, and it has every prospect of becoming a large village. They number more than a hundred, with nearly sixty members of the church. We spent the blessed Sabbath here. Three times we met for the worship of the living God, and almost forgot, amid songs and praises of these affectionate disciples, that we were in a pagan land.

February 4th, 1839

On the fourth, we reached Mek-zau. The head man is a Christian. Here we found no zayat; pitched a tent in the skirts of the jungle near the river. In the evening about twenty assembled to hear the word of God, some of whom are not far from the kingdom of Heaven, having abandoned the worship of devils—others
manifested a strong determination to continue demon worship. Preached to them from James 4: 7, from the fact that they worship demons through fear. There is a prospect of a church being raised up here: we regret that we have no assistant to station among them.

February 9th, 1839

Last night slept on a sand bank two tides above Tenasserim. This morning very early, saw a boat crossing with a Karen dressed in a fantastic manner; the identical man who brought the book to brother Boardman. He is the same man that he was then, full of pride and self-righteousness.

February 11th, 1839

Spent the Sabbath at Tomla, a village where there are two Christians. They had built us a small zayat, and a number listened with interest to the gospel.

February 13th, 1839

On the 13th, reached Mergui.

February 17th, 1839 Sabbath evening.

Mergui. At our morning service Moung-tha-zau, the Burman alluded to in my last as having asked baptism, was received as a candidate, and at 4 P. M. was baptized in presence of a large assembly. He is a native of Mergui, and his renouncement of paganism has caused much excitement. His wife has threatened to leave him, and his former friends are his enemies. May the Lord keep him! I am now building a house, to answer the two fold purpose of school-room and chapel. I have the prospect of getting a Burman day-school. I engaged a teacher this morning, the school to be opened in a week or ten days.
March 24th, 1839

Mergui. At our native service this morning, we received a man from Madras, as a candidate for baptism, and a soldier in the afternoon. This man, who has been pious for a number of years, gave an interesting account of his conversion. These individuals were baptized at 3 P. M., in the presence of a large assembly of Burmans.

April 7th, 1839

Assembled for the first time in our new chapel, where I preached to a congregation of eighteen persons, from Isa. iv. 1. We have been employed in erecting this building for a month past, and now offer praise to Almighty God, for having been permitted to establish in this idolatrous city, a place for his name. May many in this house learn of Christ, and may it soon be filled with devout worshipers.

May 6th, 1839

This evening we dispensed with our usual exercise, to unite with our fellow laborers and distant brethren in the concert of prayer. How consoling to our hearts to know that so many of the church militant are bowing around the mercy seat, offering fervent prayer for the coming of Messiah’s reign in this dark land.

May 30th, 1839

Nearly thirty Karens have entered our school, and are making good progress in their studies. Our meetings are quite interesting. About fifty attend on the Sabbath. We feel a strong desire that the glory of God may be revealed in the salvation of sinners.
June 3rd, 1839

To-day a Bunnan made application for baptism. He gave some evidence of being born again, but he was put off for a time, that we may obtain clearer proofs of his conversion.

June 16th, 1839

The man alluded to above has been received for baptism, but having been very wicked, his baptism was deferred until he has confessed his guilt before those who were his associates in sin.

June 21st, 1839

Appearances are more favorable. Two Burmans have come out in favor of the Christian religion, and testify amidst reproach and scorn, that Jesus Christ is the only Savior! They are examining the subject of baptism. Many more listen with apparent interest to the news of salvation. In addition to our Karen school, we have about ten Burman children under instruction. Brother Brayton is now here, and has charge of part of the Karens. My time is wholly occupied in the supervision of the schools, visiting the zayats with the assistants, and in preparations for public labors.

September 7th, 1839 [in a communication]

Our brightest prospects are among the Karens. The Burmans of this province glory in rejecting the gospel. Our assistants continue to preach to them, and warn them of the consequences of rejecting Christ. At times individuals have given us hopes that they were near the kingdom of heaven, but I regret to say, they have returned to their sins. The Burmans, Chinese, and Mussulmans of this place, are a most abandoned people, addicted to smoking opium, and drinking arrack, sins which blind the mind, and stupify the conscience. I have spent a part of my time in preaching to the Burmans, and part in the Karen school. The school numbers between thirty and forty pupils, principally of that tribe among

SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005):464-470
whom the gospel has triumphed so gloriously, with a few Pghos, under the instruction of brother Brayton. God is painting out the Karens, as the people whose day of salvation has come; to them the gospel is indeed good tidings, while to most of the Burmans it is foolishness. Among those now in this school, are a number of young men of good minds, and fair promise for usefulness. The Karen chief to whom I have had occasion to allude in former communications, is also studying, having determined to spend the remainder of his life in preaching the gospel. We hope from his piety, standing, and talents, that he will be the means of winning many souls to Christ. We have a Burman school consisting of fifteen pupils, mostly girls, who manifest much interest in their studies. We cannot anticipate a great increase of our present number of Burman scholars until the violent opposition to the gospel now experienced, has abated. In addition to our other labors we have a meeting for religious worship every evening, which our scholars attend. Some of them, who give evidence of piety, are desiring baptism, but as it is thought best to baptize them in their native villages, their request is deferred for the present. We have been pleased with the progress of these pupils, in reading, writing, and arithmetic. The latter study, especially, has interested them much. The Karens having no physicians, make offerings to nats for the removal of their diseases before their conversion, but afterwards, they look to their teachers for medicines, and their demands for them are not a few. I have given from my private store till nearly exhausted—and am now obliged to turn them away with the remark that my medicine is gone, but that I have written to the American teachers for a new supply, and hope ere long to receive it. It is impossible to state the amount of suffering we are permitted to relieve by the most simple prescriptions. We are frequently permitted to prescribe for the wild Karens, who, from experiencing the good effects of our medicines, give up their nat worship, and listen to the gospel.
Note:

The following account by Dr. N. Wallich, who was at that time the Superintendent of the Government Botanical Garden at Calcutta, of his excursion into rural Burma in 1826 was quoted in full in John Crawfurd’s account of his mission, of which Dr. Wallich was a part, to Ava in that year. As Crawfurd explains in his introduction to the entry: “Dr. Wallich returned to-day from a botanical excursion to the range of mountains lying east of Ava, which he performed with the sanction of the Burman Government. The following is the narrative of this short but interesting journey, which was replete with botanical discoveries.”

M.W.C.

Brief Excursion to the Hills to the East of Ava in November 1826

Dr. N. Wallich
Superintendent of the Government Botanical Garden at Calcutta(c. 1826)

I left Sagaing with Lieutenant Montmorency at half-past eleven o’clock on the forenoon of the 22d of November [1826], and crossed the Irrawadi opposite to the mouth of the Myit-ngé, or little river, which bounds the town of Ava to the east. The early part of this day’s journey was along the right bank of that stream, the course of which is remarkably tortuous,—more so, I think, than that of the river Gumtee in Hindostan, which takes its name from this circumstance. We passed two villages, and saw some fields of cotton and rice, with several gardens of betel pepper. These last
consisted of latticed enclosures, covered in with mats. There, were no trees within, but the vines were trailed on the latticed walls, which were at least double the height of any which I had ever seen before. The leaves were piquant, juicy, and high flavoured. The road was generally good, but our progress was delayed by the small number, of our carriers, and we were obliged to hire two carts. A shower of rain forced us to take shelter under a shed on the road-side. Here we saw an old lady riding on an elephant, one of the Royal Family, recognized as such by her gilded umbrella: she was followed by a numerous train of females. At half-past five in the evening we halted at the village Shwe-zi, putting up at a Zayat, or caravansera: close to this place was a large group of ancient temples, resembling in form those of Pugan. The country around was scarcely less bleak and sterile than in the neighbourhood of that place. I found here, however, the first new plant, a beautiful single lanceolate-leaved crotolaria, cultivated for hemp. Our course, in to-day’s journey, was north-east; and when we halted, the hills were not above three miles distant. These are the first of several ranges visible from Ava.

We left our ground at eight o’clock in the morning of [November] the 23d [1826]. The road soon became very indifferent, and we passed through a country much covered by the Zizyphus Jujuba, or Bher, as it is called in Hindostan. Here and there, there were a few patches of cultivated ground. The course of the Myit-ngé was at no great distance to our right. At three in the afternoon we arrived at a spacious range of Zayats, the best of which we took possession of. The Myit-ngé was still close at hand; and not far off was a group of temples, and a very splendid monastery, well filled with priests. The temples, we were told, were constructed by the present King. One of the buildings had its inner wall crowded with odd grotesque paintings, each group or figure having underneath it an inscription. Some of these paintings represented Hindoos, Mohammedans of India, Chinese, Arakanese, Shans, and Europeans, carrying offerings to a temple of Gautama. We were particularly struck with the representation of a Mohammedan horseman riding over and upsetting his followers, the horse plunging and rearing, and the rider unsaddled and clinging to his neck.

In this day’s route we met a caravan of Shans returning to their own country. The principal part of their merchandise
consisted of Ngapyi, or pickled fish. Their numerous cattle, consisting of oxen, large and in excellent condition, were grazing in an extensive plain, not far from the road-side. The path we were pursuing was the common route between the Shan country, or Lao, and Ava.

Delays and difficulties, occasioned by the laziness and apathy of our Burman attendants and guides, prevented us from pursuing our journey, on [November] the 24th [1826], until eight o’clock in the morning. The carts would not accompany us to the foot of the hills; and the porters, whom we got in lieu of them, insisted upon being relieved before they had got on two miles. This was at the village of Kwe-napa [Crawfurd’s note: The Buffalo’s Nose. This seems to be the name of the hill], close to the bank of the Myit-ngé, which at this place is very narrow, with steep banks. At a ferry, which is here, we saw ten or twelve boats, with a number of carts waiting to cross. We resumed our march at eleven o’clock, and began to pass through a forest of bamboos, some of which were in flower. Here I had the satisfaction to find the plant of *Sapindi*, on the very spot where my assistant had discovered it not many days before. It is nearly allied to *Cardiospermum*, with a heart-shaped, flat fruit, resembling an ace of spades; I called it *Cardiopteris*. Hitherto, with the exception of the caravan of Shans, we had seen few travellers; but in passing through this forest we met with several. The ground soon began to rise in a gentle acclivity, and we shortly reached the foot of the hills. In the low land, detached rocks were seen here and there, composed of compact limestone. The ascent of the mountains occupied exactly five hours. The road was winding, but far from steep or difficult; for the greater part of it I rode my pony. No section of the rock was any where to be seen; but, we frequently passed over masses of it, forming the road. About half-way up we passed the village of Ziben, near to which there was cultivated a little rice and some millet. A little beyond it I found the species of oak which my assistant had brought to me. Along with it was seen the teak, although not very frequent; so that here probably, for the first time, by an European at least, was seen growing naturally, side by side, the two greatest glories of the forests of Europe and Asia. I did not, in all, see above forty teak trees, and they were evidently not at home, for their stems were irregular, not exceeding ten feet high to the crown, nor above ten or twelve inches in diameter. The trees were in fruit; and
under the old ones were to be seen numerous seedlings. At six in the evening we reached Tong-taong, or, the Village of the Three Mountains, and found shelter for the night in a tolerably good wooden house. The evening soon became cold, and we were glad to get under our blankets at an early hour. The village we were at was but small; it is situated on a spacious table-land, considerably below the highest portion of the mountain. Our *cicerone*, rather a disagreeable person, addicted to strong potations and other irregularities, and who slept in the same apartment with us, was the lord, or, as the Burmans call it, ‘the eater’ of this village and the lands attached to it. Belonging to it are some good fields of millet, nearly ripe, with fields of sesame, tobacco, and maize. In its gardens and orchards there were, ginger, papa figs, jacks, and guavas, with some common esculent vegetables. Among the latter there was abundance of pumpkins, and a large kind of bean, pretty frequent in Hindostan (*Dolichostetra gronolobus*.) Among the trees there was one remarkable for such a situation, the common pear-tree. The greater number of these were covered with a profusion of blossoms; on some, however, there was fruit nearly ripe. This was round, a little depressed, tolerably smooth, and of a brown colour. Although neglected, and nearly in a wild state, it was not without flavour.

Part of the forenoon of [November] the 25th [1826] we spent in arranging and putting up the rich harvest of plants which I had made the day before. At noon we made an excursion into the forest, where I discovered a second species of oak, larger than the first, and a new species of raspberry.

On [November] the 26th [1826], we ascended the highest part of the mountain, which I estimate to be between three and four hundred feet above the level of the table-land on which the village stands. In this excursion, I made a fine collection of rare plants, among which were two additional oaks and a walnut-tree, with ripe fruit, smaller than the common kind; of which last, by the way, we found the nuts in the village, said to be brought from the country of the Shans, No strawberries nor firs were found in any part of the hills, and, upon the whole, but few ferns. I discovered but one *Carex* and no arjemony, though this be found on the hills of the Nepal. I did not find either the tea or *Camellea*, nor do the people seem to be aware that they exist in these hills. I found, however, one *Gordonia*, a genus nearly allied to them. Among the plants
found in this day’s excursion, were some noble gigantic *Hedycheæ*, out of flower. Of these and other *Scitamineæ* and *Orchideæ*, I took large roots.

The ascent to the top of the hill was now clearing for cultivation, and traces of that of the last season were visible. It is curious to observe that the only trees allowed to stand are oaks. These are of no great height or size, seldom exceeding two feet in diameter; they certainly do not exceed in size those found upon the lowest hills of Nepal. Two of the species were in flower.

At seven, in the morning of [November] the 27th [1826], we commenced our journey back to Ava. At nine o’clock we arrived at a village about two-thirds of the way down; and after halting there for some time, we prosecuted our journey, reaching the foot of the hills at two in the afternoon. It took us an hour more to pass through the bamboo jungle; and after a march, which we estimated at ten miles, we halted for the night at a village, putting up, as usual, at a Zayat. On our way down we met a number of loaded cattle proceeding to the country of the Shans with merchandise; and near the place where, we halted we saw a still greater number of oxen, belonging to Shan merchants, grazing in the fields.

We did not leave the village until eight o’clock in the morning, delayed, as usual, in collecting porters to carry our luggage. In the early part of our journey we passed several villages, and at twelve entered the high-road leading to Amarapura. We passed under the walls of that town, having a large lake to our left. Proceeding towards the Irawadi, we went through the extensive suburbs of Amarapura, and soon reached the river. At two o’clock our party embarked in three small boats, and in an hour, and a half reached Sagaing.

That portion of the mountain which we ascended lies due east from Sagaing, which was so distinctly visible from the top, that we found no difficulty in taking its bearings. The distance, calculated to the place where we began to ascend, we computed at about twenty miles. The general direction of the whole range is nearly north and south. The thermometer, before sunrise in the morning, stood at the lowest at 56°. At Sagaing, at the same hour, it stood at 67°. This makes a difference of eleven degrees, which, allowing three hundred feet of elevation to each degree, will make the height of the hill, above the level of Sagaing, 3300 feet. The thermometer, however, was observed at-fehe village, which I estimated to be from
three to four hundred feet below the highest portion of the hill which I ascended; so that the greatest elevation of the mountain may be estimated at about 3600 feet above the Irawadi.

We found the air bracing and elastic. At night heavy dews fell. The thermometer, in the morning at sunrise, as I have already mentioned, was at 56°, and at the highest 60°. I had it in my power to make but one observation in the afternoon, when it rose to 74°. The medium of three observations, taken in the evening at eight o’clock, gave 61°. In the dry season these mountains are probably healthy, at least to those accustomed to live on them, who had all the appearance of good health. The inhabitants of the plains, however, consider them extremely insalubrious; and it is probable, from the great quantity of forest, that they are so in the wet season, at least to those whose constitutions are unaccustomed to them.

I brought with me abundant specimens of the rock, wherever it presented itself: this proved to be every where compact limestone, either of a blue or reddish brown colour. The only mineral was calcareous spar; but the inhabitants of the village gave us a few small specimens of Iron Pyrites, which they said was procured in the neighbourhood.

The soil was of a dark reddish brown colour, tolerably deep, and not hard or stubborn; the cultivation consisting of a little rice, maize, tobacco, some pulses, but chiefly large millet, (andropogon cernuum), and sesamum. These thrrove well, especially the two last, which were very luxuriant crops. The inhabitants are supplied with water from a fine spring, about half a mile from the village. Several small brooks of limpid water were to be found amongst the hills, and here and there a few pools in the beds of torrents which had existed during the rainy season.

With respect to plants, I was particularly fortunate in my researches; having obtained, in the short space of four days, between three and four hundred new species. Respecting these it is not necessary to add more than I have already said, as an ample account of them will be given in another place.

In our visit to the hills we saw very few wild animals. Of the larger, those said to exist are a small species of cow, called by the Burmans Shat; elephants, hogs, a few deer, tigers, leopards, and monkeys. The elephants appeared to be very numerous, and troublesome to the inhabitants. On the second night of our arrival,
the village we were at was alarmed by a threatened incursion of these animals, and we were kept awake for several hours by the blowing of horns and the shouting and howling of the inhabitants, to frighten them away. The population of the hills appeared to be extremely scanty. We saw but two villages. The inhabitants spoke the Burman language, but were dressed in the costume of the Shans. There is, however, a wild race on the mountains, known to the Burmans under the name Danno, but we saw none of them.
Note:

Original editorial note: Mr. Royal B. Hancock and family left Maulmain on 27 November 1837 and arrived at Mergui December 3rd. On the 26th of December, he was joined by Eugenio Kincaid, as stated in former communications. For several months previous to his departure from Maulmain, he had been engaged partly on the printing office, and partly in evangelical labors in Maulmain and its vicinity.

Extracts from Royal B. Hancock’s Journal at Mergui

Royal B. Hancock

December 16, 1837

I have had some very interesting conversations with the natives since our arrival here. Very few set themselves in array against the truth; and all seem to be interested in what we have to communicate; but the Spirit alone can make a permanent impression on their minds, and savingly interest them in the truth. A few evenings since, two young men (Catholics) came in to converse with me on the subject of religion. They asked a great many questions, and, before they left, seemed to have made some new discoveries respecting the procuring cause of man’s salvation. They were very anxious to make out something meritorious from confessions, sacraments &c.; but the doctrine of salvation by
grace, which admits of no auxiliaries in the great work of saving
the lost, they could not thoroughly comprehend. Last night, two
young men, one of whom, I understand, the priests have
anathematized, (for what reason I know not,) came in with an
apparently sincere desire to understand the principles of the new
religion. I explained to them, to the best of my ability, the doctrines
of Christ, and they went away convinced that there is, at least, a
consistency in the various parts of the Christian system. So far as
my experience goes, the pure, unadorned doctrines of the gospel
are the only effectual weapons that can be wielded in this warfare
with the powers of darkness. To be sure, it is foolishness to some,
and a stumbling block to others; but to those who are “called,
Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”

December 19, 1837

Attended a Burman funeral. The occasion, and the circumstances
attending it, furnished matter for improvement. On their way to the
burning and burying ground, the young men bearing the corpse
seemed to be divided into two opposite parties, each striving for
preeminence I acts of disrespect towards the remains of their
departed fellow creature. At one moment, one party beears off the
body, in spite of the other, shouting victory, seemingly unwilling
that the remains should be burned; at another, the other parly
recover their lost ground, and, in their turn, overpowering the
opposition, the corpse is thrust with considerable force to the
ground. Thus the struggle is continued, until they arrive at the
spot assigned for the burning. The occasion seems to be improved
solely for the amusement of the spectators. After the tumult had
ceased, I commenced remonstrating with them on the impropriety
of their proceedings; to which they replied, it was their custom. All
seemed to be as indifferent to the fact that a soul, had passed into
eternity, as if the cause of their assembling was but the burning of
a dog. I however succeeded in securing their attention to the
document of a resurrection beyond the grave; a resurrection unto life
of all who believe in Jesus, and a resurrection unto death of all
who reject him. As is always the case, some gaped, some opposed,
and some listened with attention and asked for books. One man
rejected the whole system, he said, because I contradicted the fact
asserted in their own writings, that the world was once destroyed by fire. He, however, condescended to reconsider the subject, and requested me to give him a book to examine for himself. He was a man of some respectability.

20 December 1837

In my round, distributing tracts this morning, a young man invited me in, and wished to know something about us and our books. I therefore sat down with him, gave him an outline of the Christian religion, and exhorted him to think of the goodness of that Being who is the origin of all temporal blessings, and by whose grace alone salvation from hell iar to be obtained. He listened in silence, but with apparent interest. He is a physician, and seems to be a man of considerable intelligence. I gave him a copy of the Catechism and View, the Account of Creation, and the Life of Christ.

June 19, 1838

A few days since,¹ while conversing with an apparently respectable man, a female, who had been listening with eagerness to what had passed between us, said she wished to ask one or two questions; she wished to know whether she must trample upon idols, as a term of her admittance into this religion, and whether she must remain under water a long time on receiving baptism; for thus she had been told. Some go so far as to say, that, after the subject has been once immersed, the question, “Do you see God,” is asked, and if the answer is “No,” he is plunged into the water again and again, until he is forced to acknowledge that he sees him. Such are some of the ridiculous stories told to iver the minds of honest inquirers after truth.

¹ Clearly, this refers to an entry not included in the original extracts.
February 6, 1838

Wickedness abounds in this place. Arrack-drinking, and opium-smoking, are the crying sins. I was informed by the governor, that the revenues arising from the sale of spirits and opium is about nine hundred rupees per month.

April 9, 1838

Since my last date, I have visited Tavoy and Mata. In Tavoy city, during the dry season, there is very little missionary work done, except what is effected by one or two native assistants. In fact there is no one to do it. Brethren Mason and Wade are devoted to the Karens, and brother Bennett’s time is monopolized by the printing-office. That place needs as much the exclusive labors of a Burman missionary as Maulmain or Mergui.

My visit to Mata was an extremely interesting one, though I have since paid dearly for it. Brother Mason and myself left Tavoy on Wednesday morning, and reached the “City of Love” Thursday evening, about five o’clock. We were heartily welcomed by brother and sister Wade. In the evening, by request, I addressed an assembly of between two and three hundred Karens, from these words: “Let not your hearts be troubled,” &c. Many of them had lately lost friends by the cholera, and their hearts were still bleeding from the wounds which had been made; many, also, had contemplated a removal from the place, from fear of contagion. I directed their minds to the words above quoted, as a “balm for all their wounds, and a cordial for their fears.” It was the largest congregation of natives I had seen in the country, and a more attentive one I have never seen. When the meeting was over, all were more anxious to testify their welcome to the stranger, by a shake of the hand, and it was with much difficulty I made my way through the crowd.

The second day after my return from the tour, March seventh, I was again prostrated with “jungle fever.” It was more severe than my attack in 1836, though not so protracted. But the Lord again restored me, when all around feared the attack would be fatal; and to Him I desire to dedicate the remainder of my days.
A day or two since, I again visited one of the public zayats in town, in order to preach to any who might wish to hear; but my strength, which was but partially recruited, would not allow me to tarry long—long enough, however, to communicate saving truth to several apparently attentive listeners, “God giveth the increase.”

May 11, 1838

To-day I again went out, though the heat was extremely oppressive and debilitating, and had but just seated myself in the zayat when several old men came and entered into conversation with me. They appeared interested, and asked several pertinent questions. One of them, not quite relishing what was said, observed, with an air of triumph, “If the eternal God is what you claim for him, let him at once convince us of his ability and willingness to make his creatures happy, by making this poor man rich in our presence.” I replied that God gives like a God and that the happiness he confers is incomparable; and asked if that happiness was worth possessing, which we could not carry with us into the eternal world, since we were daily and hourly exposed to the shafts of death. They all acknowledged the force and propriety of the question, and I hope the interview was not altogether in vain.

May 12, 1838

Spent a couple of hours in conversation with the natives to-day. He arguments used in favor of the Christian system, are all acknowledged reasonable, but they do not seem to penetrate the heart: “like unto a man beholding his face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.”
May 26, 1838

I sometimes feel almost discouraged from trying to hinder these people from going to hell. In addition to their former sins, they now sneer at the name of Christ, and revile his followers. But what can we do? Must we give them up?

June 1, 1838

Perhaps there is no place in the provinces, whose religious interests are so zealously watched as here. Priests of idolatry and of the ‘mother church,’ receive abundant patronage. Day before yesterday I observed several apparently respectable men assembled in a zayat, collecting money. I enquired their object, and was informed they were about erecting a monastery. I further inquired, it all their priests could not be accommodated in the buildings already erected. They replied that some were expected from Maulmain. There are enough monasteries here to accommodate five hundred priests; but they would probably require a little repairing; and there is very little merit in repairing images, image-houses, or monasteries.2

They seemed to consider me as an intruder, and treated me with very little respect. I could not leave them, however, without bearing witness against them. I told them it was well to contribute to the support of religious teachers, if they taught the truth; and they should consider whether their priests taught them the true law. One of the number, whose soul appeared to be filled with indignation, said, “I know all about this matter, and can anticipate all you will say, and we do not wish to listen to you; you had better go somewhere else.” To persist, in such a case, would be “casting pearls before swine;” and I merely exhorted them to consider the fact that we did not ask them to support us, or to contribute in any way to our comfort; we only asked them to think for themselves, and further observed, but “All are seeking happiness; but will all obtain it, seeking, as they are, in different ways?”

2 This last sentence has been pulled up fro Hancock’s note.
July 1, 1838

A few days since, I called upon the government native school instructor. After various inquiries concerning the school, I introduced religious conversation, by asking if he had seen any of our printed books; to which he replied, he had not. I then gave him some account of their contents, which drew forth some apparently candid inquiries. Presently, two writers from the court-house joined us, and they also were very civil and inquisitive. I left them, somewhat pleased with my interview. A day or two afterwards, I sent the schoolmaster a volume of tracts, which he refused to accept; thus evincing how much interest he felt in the conversation.

In reviewing the course of the last seven months, I see much that calls for gratitude to the Great Disposer of all events. Once my life has been snatched from the jaws of the grave, and with this exception, myself and family have enjoyed a good measure of health. I see, also, much to dishearten and discourage us, as to the probability that these people will bow their stubborn wills to the authority of heaven. All the encouraging appearances mentioned above, have vanished, and all our fondly cherished hopes are dashed. It would indeed encourage our hearts, if we could see but a single individual permanently affected with divine truth. Instead of applications for books at our houses, it is difficult to give them away at any rate. Some pleasing statements might be made in reference to the Karens; but brother Kincaid’s journal will make up all deficiencies in this department.
Notes:

The following materials by John Crawfurd have been drawn and organized from his notes to his *Embassy* account.

M.W.C.

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On the Peoples and Cultures of the Kingdom of Burma

**John Crawfurd**

The extensive area of the Burman territory is inhabited by many distinct nations, or tribes, of whom I have heard not less than eighteen enumerated. The most considerable of these are the proper Burmans, the Peguans or Talains, the Shans or people of Lao, the Cassay, or more correctly Kathé, the Zabaing, the Karian, correctly called Karens, the Kyens, the Yo, and the Lawà. These are numerous and civilized, nearly in the order in which I have enumerated them. Differing as they do in language, and often in manners, customs, and religion, they have, with distinctions not always perceptible to a stranger, the same physical type. This is the common type of all the tribes which lie between Hindostan and China. In this respect they differ widely from the Chinese and Hindoos, and approach more nearly to the Malays, although from these also they differ so considerably, that even a stranger may distinguish them without difficulty. Taking the Burmans for this character, they may be described as of a short, stout, and active, but still well-proportioned form. Their complexion is never of an intense black, but commonly brown. The hair of the head, like that
of other tropical nations, is black, coarse, lank, and abundant. There is a little more beard, and generally more hair on other parts of the body, than among the tribes of the same race lying to the south of them,—such as the Siamese and people of Lao. The climate and physical aspect of the countries occupied by the different tribes constituting the subjects of the Burman empire, do not seem to produce any material difference in their physical form. One might expect to find the inhabitants of the dry and elevated country principally occupied by the true Burmans, larger and more athletic than those of the marshy champaign principally occupied by the Talains. This, however, is by no means the case; and if there be any difference, it is in favour of the latter, who are alleged to be a more robust and active race than the true Burmans.

The Burmans are greatly inferior to the Hindoos in civilization, and still more so to the Chinese. They are, as far as a stranger can judge, nearly upon an equality with the Siamese; and to compare them with a more distinct and distant people, they seem to me to approach more nearly to the condition of the inhabitants of the island of Java than to that of any other foreign people. They are, at the same time, more improved than the other civilized inhabitants of the eastern Archipelago. With respect to the whole of this last group, however, it must be remarked that the type of their civilization is of so different a kind from that of the Hindoo Chinese nations, that no fair comparison can well be instituted between them. For example, the country of the Burmans, from its fertility and continuity, is generally more favourable to social improvement than that of the Indian islanders.

The laws and political institutions of the Burmans, bad as they are, are commonly better than those of the Indian islanders; yet the Burmans are greatly inferior to the latter in enterprise, courage, personal independence, and even morality. In one respect they agree; that is, in the comparative absence of religious or political bigotry and freedom from unsocial customs. The brief delineation of their customs, arts, and institutions, contained in the following chapters, will, however, convey a more accurate notion of the actual social condition of the Burmans than any general description.

The first point which I shall advert to is that of dress. One barbarous practice, that of tattooing or staining the skin of an indelible tint, obtains amongst the Burmans and Talains: it is
confined to the men. This operation commences as early as the age of seven, eight, and nine years, and is often continued to thirty-five and forty. The principal tattooing is confined to that portion of the body from the navel to below the knee. What is on this is of a black or blue colour. The tint is given by a mixture of lamp black, procured from the soot of sessamum oil, and the gall of a fish—the mirga of India. The figures imprinted consist of animals, such as lions, tigers, monkeys, and hogs, with crows, some fabulous birds, Nats, and Balus or demons. Occasionally there are added cabalistic letters and figures intended as charms against wounds. The figure is first painted on the skin, which is afterwards punctured by needles dipped in the pigment. The arms and upper part of the body are more sparingly tattooed, and generally of a red colour, the tint being given by vermilion. The process is not only painful but expensive. The tattooing of as much surface as can be covered by “six fingers” costs a quarter of a tical, when the operation is performed by an ordinary artist; but when by one of superior qualifications, the charge is much higher. Not to be thus tattooed is considered by the Burmans as a mark of effeminacy, and there is no one who is not so more or less. Among the nations to the eastward of the Burrumpooter, the custom seems originally to have been confined to the Burmans and Talains. The nations whom they have subjugated have, more or less, followed their example,—such as the Kyens, the Aracanese, and the Shans. Neither the Siamese, the Kambojans, the people of Lao, generally, the Cassays, or the Aracanese, before their conquest, appear to have practised tattooing.

Another practice, which seems universal with both sexes, and with all the races inhabiting the Burman territories, is that of boring the lobe of the ear, so as to make a very large, and unseemly aperture, into which is stuffed a gold or silver ornament, or in lieu of them a bit of wood, or a roll of paper, gilt, or otherwise. If the aperture in question happen not to be previously occupied, a man or woman, after smoking half a segar, is often seen thrusting the remainder into the ear for future use.

The custom of blackening the teeth indelibly, appears at one time to have been general among the Burmans, but is now grown out of use. Black teeth are not at present considered becoming, but the contrary. Young men and women, before the age of marriage, keep their teeth white and clean; but after that time, it would be
considered an unbecoming affectation of youth in the one sex, and an indication of loose immodesty in the other, to be too nice upon this point. The constant use of the betel preparation, indeed, soon makes the teeth black and ugly enough, when its effects are not counteracted by care and cleanliness, and this is rarely the case.

The Burmans are great consumers of the betel mixture. The preparation, as used by them, consists of the following ingredients:—the leaf of the betel pepper, the areca nut, catechu, lime, and a little tobacco. The betel pepper is produced in great abundance throughout the Burman territory. The areca thrives well in the southern provinces, and yields a nut best suited to the Burman taste; but the produce is inadequate to the consumption, and large quantities are imported from Dacca, Chittagong, and the Straits of Malacca, the last being the lowest priced and least esteemed.

The practice of smoking tobacco obtains universally amongst the Burmans of all ranks—of both sexes—and of almost all ages; for I have seen children scarcely three years old, who seemed quite familiar with it. The mode of smoking is by segars, which are composed of shredded tobacco, rolled up in the leaf of another plant,—I believe, a species of ficus. Sometimes a little of the root of the tobacco is mixed up with the shredded leaf.

With respect to dress, the Burmese are, upon the whole, well, and not unbecomingly clad. In this last respect, however, their costume will bear no comparison with the flowing and graceful garments of the western nations of India; nor does it by any means convey the same notion of comfort and civility as the costume of the Chinese, or even of the Tonquinese and Cochin Chinese. Too, much of the body is left naked, which gives an impression of barbarism; and the texture and pattern of the fabrics worn, although substantial and durable, are comparatively coarse and homely.

The principal part of the male dress is called a Pus’ho. This covers the loins reaching half-way down the leg. It consists of a double piece of cloth composed of silk, cotton, or a mixture of both, about ten cubits long. This is loosely wrapped about the body and secured only by having one portion of it tacked under another, one extremity being allowed to hang down loosely before.

The second part of a man’s dress is called an Engi, and consists of a frock with sleeves. This comes down below the knees, and is tied with strings in front. It generally consists of white cotton
cloth; but the great, on occasions of ceremony, have it made of velvet, and occasionally of broad-cloth. In the cold weather, these jackets, when of cotton, are quilted; and a considerable number of them, always dyed black, and highly glazed, are brought to Ava, ready made, from the country of the Shans.

The head-dress is a small square handkerchief, put on in the manner of a turban, but leaving the upper part of the head bare. This is now most commonly made of English book-muslin, or English or Madras printed handkerchiefs.

The principal portion of a woman’s dress goes under the name of a Thabi, and is a petticoat, more or less open in front, according to the condition of the wearer. With the lower classes, both for economy and convenience, the breadth is so scanty, that in walking, the knee at least, and often half-way up the thigh, is exposed to view at every step. With the higher orders, this portion of the dress, because ampler, is consequently more decent, but it is also less convenient. Women use an Engi, or frock, somewhat different in form and shorter than that of the men. They generally wear no head-dress. Men and women wear the hair long; the first tying it in a knot on the crown of the head, and the last at the back. Some Burmese beaux tie the knot to a side. Sandals are frequently used by both sexes, but neither shoes, boots, or stockings, under any circumstances. Umbrellas also are in very general use among all classes. These are among the principal insignia of rank or office; and the description of them, from those of plain brown varnished paper, to red, green, gilded, and plain white, the royal colour, distinguishes the quality of the wearer.

The habit of the priesthood differs entirely from that of the laity, but has been so often described, that I need not recur to it. The head has not only no covering, but is, or ought to be, closely shaved, and the only protection to it when abroad is a small fan of palmyra-leaf. The colour appropriated for the dress of the priesthood is yellow, and it would be deemed nothing less than sacrilege in any one else to use it: so peculiarly sacred is it held, that it is not uncommon to see one of the people pay his devotions in due form to the old garment of a priest on a bush, hung out to dry, or to one after, being washed. At the conferences at Yandabo which led to peace, the Burmese negotiators made a formal complaint to the British Commissioners, that some of our camp-followers had been seen wearing yellow clothes! It may be
considered as rather a curious, coincidence, that yellow is a frequent if not favourite colour in the dress of the lowest outcasts among the Hindus.

The progress made by the Burmese in the useful arts is but very moderate. The whole process of cleaning cotton, of spinning, weaving, and generally of dying, are performed by women; the only men who are weavers being the captive Cassays. The loom is very rude, commonly resembling that used in India; but the artisans are much inferior in dexterity to those of that country, and such a thing as fine linen of native manufacture is never seen among the Burmese. Cotton cloths are manufactured for sale all the way along both sides of the Irawadi, from Ngamyagi to Shwe-daong;—where-ever, in short, the raw material is cheap and abundant. All the cottons fabrics manufactured by the Burmans are comparatively high-priced; and in general, British piece-goods can be sold cheaper, even in the interior of the country, than the domestic manufacture.

The best raw silk is brought from China, an inferior kind from Lao, and some is prepared in different parts of Pegu, especially at Lain and Shwe-gyen. The principal places for manufacturing silk cloths are Ava, Monchabo, Pakok’ho, Pugan, and Shwe-daong. The finest fabrics of silk are made at Ava, or rather Amarapura, where Chinese raw silk is the material; and the coarsest at Shwe-daong, where it is the produce of Pegu. The women are the manufacturers of silk cloths as well as of those of cotton. In general, Burman silk manufactures are coarse, high-priced, but durable. A few silks are imported into the country by the Shans and Kyens: and satins and velvets, in small quantities, by the Chinese, chiefly for the use of the Court. I may notice it as rather a remarkable fact, that such of the silk fabrics of the Kyens as we saw, were of a much finer and better texture than those of their more civilized masters the Burmans: they consisted of rich and heavy crimson scarfs, or narrow shawls, occasionally embroidered with gold, and not destitute of beauty.

The prevailing colours in silks and cottons are blue, red, yellow, green, brown, and black. Blue is invariably given by indigo; red by sasflower, partly produced in the country, but mostly imported from Bengal; yellow by turmeric, and by the wood of the jack-tree, (*Artocarpus integrifolia*). The common mordant is alum, which is imported from China. Burman colours are generally very fugitive,
especially with cottons. The patterns are all stripes and checks, a decided mark of rudeness. Printing is unknown to them.

The common coarse unglazed earthenware of the Burmans is the best of the kind which I have seen in India, and is very cheap. It is used for cooking utensils, and for keeping grain, oil, salt, pickled-fish, and similar commodities. A better description of pottery, strong and glazed, has been manufactured at Martaban, Pugan, Sengko, Senkaing, Monchabo, and Tharet. Some articles of this description, which have been long well known in other parts of India under the name of "Pegue jars," are so large as to contain two hundred viss of oil, or about one hundred and eighty-two gallons. A few of them are even of such magnitude, that it has been alleged, that the children of Europeans, born in the country, have been smuggled away in them, in former times, to elude the Burman law. The Burmans are unacquainted with the art of making any kind of porcelain, however coarse. What they use is Chinese, imported by junks into Rangoon from the European settlements in the Straits of Malacca, this being too bulky an article to be imported by land-carriage direct from China.

Iron-ore is obtained, and smelted in the vicinity of the mountain Paopa and the district of Mreduh. It costs at Ava, according to quality, which is very various, from eight ticals to fifteen per hundred viss, or three hundred and sixty-five pounds; this loses, when forged, from thirty to fifty per cent. in weight. The Burmans cannot manufacture steel, which, as well as some iron, is imported from Bengal in considerable quantity. The principal places where cutlery, always coarse and rude, is manufactured, are Ava and Pugan: here swords, spears, knives, scissors, and carpenters' tools are fabricated: muskets, or rather matchlocks, are also made at Ava. The best-tempered swords are imported from the country of the Shans. A Burman matchlock is generally sold for ten ticals of flowered silver, or about twenty-five shillings; and an old English musket at from fifteen to twenty ticals, or from thirty-seven shillings, and sixpence to fifty shillings.

Brass-ware is not very extensively used by the Burmans in their domestic economy, earthen and lackered wares being, in a good measure, substituted for it. Still, however, there is a considerable consumption of it for such articles as candlesticks, spit-pots, vessels for carrying water to the pagodas, &c. We saw a considerable manufactory of such articles a few miles from
Sagaing. The copper which is used for this purpose is brought from China, and the zinc from Lao. Bells are very frequent in the temples and monasteries. The tin made use of in the composition of these is brought from Tavoy and Lao. I may here notice, that we found in the market of Ava, without ascertaining to what purpose it was put, a considerable quantity of antimony, reduced to the metallic state, and said to be brought from Lao. As the process of preparing this article is one of considerable difficulty, the possession of it by the Shans would seem to imply a considerable share of skill in metallurgy. I remember, that when an ore of this metal was brought to Singapore, the Chinese at that place; seemed wholly unacquainted with the art of reducing it.

Gold and silver ornaments are manufactured in every considerable place in the country, but particularly at the capital. Some of the gold ornaments which we saw at the latter were massive and rather handsome, particularly the different vessels for holding the various materials of the betel preparation. In general, however, the jewellery of the Burmans is not only inferior in taste and workmanship to that of several other parts of India, but decidedly clumsy and rude.

Three descriptions of paper are used by the Burmans. The first is a domestic manufacture, made from the fibres of the young bamboo. This is a substance as thick as pasteboard, which is rubbed over with a mixture of charcoal and rice-water. Thus prepared, it is written upon with a pencil of steatite as we write on a slate. The impression may be blotted out with the moistened hand, and the paper is again fit to be written upon. This process, if the paper be good, may be often repeated. Another description of paper is imported from Mainkaing, one of the tributary states of Lao. This is a strong, white, blotting-paper, and is universally used for packages, for the decorations of coffins, and for making ornaments offered to the temples and exhibited at festivals. The Chinese import stained paper, also used for ornaments offered to the temples and for decorating coffins.

The State of Burmese Knowledge

In reference to the state of Burman knowledge, I ought not to omit an intense passion for alchemy, of which the object is to
transmute the baser into the precious metals. [The search for an elixir of immortality forms no part of Burman alchymy. This would be contrary to their religion; for, according to their system, immortality, or even longevity, would be a misfortune and not a blessing.]¹ From our earliest acquaintance with the Burmans, they seem to have been tainted with this folly; persons of all ranks, who can afford to waste their time and money, engage in it; and even his present Majesty and his predecessors have not disdained thus to occupy their leisure hours. A question frequently put to us was, whether we, the English, did not understand the art of converting iron into silver, and copper into gold. They observed our comparative wealth, and thought they could not so rationally account for it, as by. imagining that we were adepts in the art of transmuting metals. A similar question, “Can the English convert iron into silver?” was put by the Burmese courtiers to an intelligent Armenian merchant who had long resided among them; and who understood their language perfectly. His reply was, that the English understood the art perfectly, but not in the sense in which they meant it. He took an English penknife out of his pocket, and threw it down on the table before them, observing, that it was worth more than its weight in silver, and that this was an example of the skill of the English in converting the base into the precious metals. [When the Burmese perceived us collecting minerals and fossils, they pronounced at once, both chiefs and people, that our certain object was to convert them into gold and silver. That our object was nothing more than the gratification of a rational curiosity, was a notion so strange and foreign to their own habits and ideas, that no reasoning could convince them. of the sincerity of our assurances.]²

A smattering of education is very common amongst the Burmans; perhaps more so than among any people of the East. This is chiefly owing to the institution of monasteries, and it being considered a kind of religious duty in the priests to instruct youth. Boys begin to go to school from eight to ten years of age, but generally at the latter. The monasteries are the only schools, and the priests generally the only teachers. Education is entirely eleemo-synary, and the children even live at the Kyaongs, the parents only making occasional presents to the priests. In return

¹ The sentence within brackets is introduced from Crawfurd’s note at this point.
² The section within brackets is introduced from Crawfurd’s note at this point.
for education, the children serve their tutors in a menial capacity which, whatever their rank, is considered no discredit, but the contrary. They are instructed for about six hours in the day. Education consists in reading, writing, and a slight knowledge of the four common rules of arithmetic. A little reading is so frequent, that there is not one man in ten who is not possessed of it. Writing is less common, but this also is pretty general. The nuns, or female priestesses, instruct girls in reading; but few females are taught to write: even reading is not general among them. My friend Mr. Judson, after a long experience, gives the following account of the state of education amongst the Burmans:

Scholars are considered capable of reading and writing, when able to repeat and copy the Then-pong-kyi, or “spelling-book,” and the Men-ga-la-thok, or “moral lessons.” Their arithmetical knowledge is almost confined to the multiplication table. A few who aspire to the character of “learned,” advance from the elements of knowledge to the study of Baden or astrology, and that of the Pali language. This last is studied in the Thaddu-kyau, or grammar in eight divisions, and in various parts of the Buddh’hist scriptures. The ne plus ultra in Burman education is the study of the Then-gyo, or “book of metaphysics.”

Geography of the Burmans

Of navigation, or geography, the Burmese are, of course, supremely ignorant. Nearly the whole extent of their foreign adventures is bounded to the south by Prince of Wales’s Island, and to the north by the Hoogley. To these places, but especially to the latter, they make annual voyages in the fine season, creeping all the while along the coast, and in sight of it; and in their adventures to Calcutta, commonly seeking protection from the open sea in the internal navigation of the Sunderbunds.

The possession of a sea-coast, comprehending at least one-third of the Bay of Bengal, with five good harbours and several navigable rivers, it might have been expected, would have been sufficient to have converted the Burmese into a maritime and
commercial people; but the badness of their political institutions 
far more than outweigh all these natural advantages. Of their 
acquaintance with foreign countries, an anecdote related by the 
late Major Canning will show the extent. This officer was deputed 
by the Government of Bengal, in 1813, to explain to the Court of 
Ava the nature of our system of blockade. In a conference which 
ensued, one of the Burman Ministers put the following question to 
the Envoy:—

Supposing a Burman ship, in her voyage to China, should 
happen to be dismasted off the island of Mauritius, would 
she be allowed by the British blocking squadron, to enter 
that port?

I have mentioned in my journal, that they possess rude maps of 
several portions of their own country, the only favourable 
deduction to be made from which fact is that they are not 
insensible to the utility of such documents; Notwithstanding this, 
however, we found the persons who negotiated with us, and they 
were undoubtedly among the most intelligent of the Burman 
courtiers, extremely ignorant, even in regard to the topography of 
those portions of the country which became the immediate 
subjects of discussion, and concerning which it was their 
particular duty at the time to have informed themselves.

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**Astronomy, Time, and Measurements**

In the higher branches of knowledge, the attainments of the 
Burmese, as may well be expected, are extremely limited: their 
astronomy and astrology, such as they are, are, for the most part, 
borrowed from the Hindus. Indeed, from the earliest times, the 
court has always maintained a number of Bramins from Bengal, 
who have the exclusive direction of such matters. The Burmese 
kalendar [sic] is as follows: A common year consists of twelve 
months, each month being alternately of twenty-nine and thirty 
days: the year, therefore, consists of three hundred and fifty-four 
days, or is a lunar one. In order to preserve the solar time, the
fourth month of every third year is doubled, which brings the year to three hundred and sixty-four days: the additional day and hours are supplied as occasion demands by a royal edict, under the advice of the Bramins. These, by custom, are added to the third month of the year. The names of the Burmese months are as follow; viz. Ta-gu, Ka-chon, Na-yon, Wa-cho, Wa-gaong, Tau-thaleng, Tha-den-kywot, Ta-chaong-mon, Nat-dau, Pya-tho, Ta-bo-dwai, and Ta-baong. The Burmese do not, like us, and the western nations of Asia, enumerate the days of the entire month; they divide each month into two parts, an increasing and a waning moon; and it is of these subdivisions that the days are enumerated. The first day of a month, for example, will be the first of the increasing moon; and the sixteenth, the first of the waning moon. In each month there are four days of public worship, when the people repair to pay their devotions at the temples; namely, the new moon, the eighth of the increase, the Full moon, and the eighth of the wane. By far the most important of these holidays are those of the new and full moon. The Burmese have, a week of seven days; of which last, the names correspond in sense, although not in name, with those of our own and the Hindu week. The native terms are, Ta-nen-ga-nwa, Ta-neng-la, En-ga, Bud-da-hu, Kya-tha-ba-da, Thaok-kya, and Cha-na; These may be translated, the days of the Sun and Moon, and of the planets Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, and Saturn. The natural day is divided by the Burmese into sixty parts, called Nari. Thus subdivided, it commences with the dawn, and according to the season of the year, more or fewer of the divisions in question are allotted, respectively to the day or the night. The longest day or night consists of thirty-six Narís, and the shortest of twenty-four. A popular division of the day is into eight watches, of which four are allotted to the night, and as many to the day. Each watch consists of three hours; and the day, thus reckoned, commences with the dawn. The time-keeper employed by the Burmese is a copper cup, perforated at the bottom, and placed in a vase of water, which sinks to a particular mark at the close of each Nari, when a great bell, suspended from a tall belfry close to the palace, is struck. This mode of keeping time is evidently derived from the Hindus. There is a regular establishment at Ava for this particular service; in reference to which there is a curious custom observed from time immemorial among the persons employed in this service. If the
person in immediate charge of the time-keeper commit any error, his companions are at liberty to carry him off and sell him at once in the public market. The sale, however, is merely a mock one, the price being always fixed at a very trifling amount, so that the offender may easily ransom himself without much difficulty; and, in fact, he does so, by making his companions a present of some rice, fish, and other necessaries. The Burmese have, at present, no division of time into cycles, like their neighbours the Siamese, Kambojans, and others. Such however seems in remote times to have prevailed as appears by the evidence of some ancient inscriptions.

The Burmese have no less than four epochs: the first of these, called the grand epoch, corresponds with the year 691 before Christ. This is alleged to have been founded by King An-ja-na, the grandfather of Gautama. The second is the sacred epoch, which dates from the death of Gautama, and corresponds with the year before Christ 543. The alleged founder of this was a king named by the Burmese Ajatasat. The third epoch is called the era of Prome, and is said to have been established—by a king named Sumundri, (of the sea). This corresponds with the year of Christ 79; and although supposed by the Burmese to be of native origin, there is no doubt but that it is the era of Salivana, or Saka, borrowed from the Hindus of the southern peninsula of India. The fourth and last epoch, is the vulgar and Burman one—that in most frequent use. It corresponds with the year of Christ 639, and is said to have been established by a king of Pugan, named Pup-pa-chau-ra-han. In a manuscript chronological table, of which a translation will be given in the Appendix, all these four epochs are included.

The following is a sketch of the measures and weights in use amongst the Burmans. The measures of distance are these; viz.

10 Cha-k'hyis, or hair-breadths=1 N’hon (sesamum-seed)
6 N’hons=1 Mo-yau
4 Mo-yaus=1 T’hit (finger-breadth)
8 T’hits=1 Maik (hand-breadth)
1 ½ Maiks=1 T’hwa (span)
2 T’hwas=1 Taong (cubit)
4 Taongs=1 Lan (fathom)
7 Taongs=1 Ta (bamboo)
20 Tas=1 Ok-tha-pa

*SBRR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005):492-510*
20 Ok-tha-pas=1 Kosa
4 Kosas=1 Gawot
40 Gawots=1 Ujana
7000 Taongs, or cubits= 1 Taing

The finger-breadth, above alluded to, is that of the fore-finger taken at the middle point. The hand-breadth includes the extended thumb. These two, with the span, the cubit, the bamboo, and the taing, are the measures in most frequent use. The royal cubit, which is the standard, was exhibited to us at the conferences, and, upon being carefully compared, was found to measure exactly 19 1/10 English inches. According to this, the Burman finger-breadth is 99/100 of an inch; the fathom 76 4/10 inches; the bamboo 133 7/10; and the taing, 2 miles, 193 yards, 2 feet, 8 inches. The Kosa and Ujana are, in all probability, from their names, borrowed from India; they are not in use.

Burmese weights are as follow:--
2 Small Rwés=1 Large Rwé
4 Large Rwés=1 Bai
2 Bais=1 Mu
2 Mus=1 Mat’h
4 Mat’h=1 Kyat
100 Kyats=1 Paiktha

The small rwé here named is the *Arbrus precatorius*, and the larger bean that of the *Adenanthera pavonina*. The kyat is the weight which we have called the tical, and the paiktha is our vis. I believe both words are corruptions borrowed from the Mohammedan merchants of India, sojourning in the Burman country. The origin of the word tical I have not been able to ascertain. That of the other is sufficiently curious. The *p* and *v* are commutable consonants. The Mohammedan sojourners cannot pronounce the *th* of the Burmans, and always substitute an *s* for it. The *k* is mute even in the Burman pronunciation, and the final *a* is omitted by Europeans only. Thus, we have the word Paiktha commuted into Vis! This measure is equal to 3 lbs. 65/100  Avoirdupois.

The representations of the different Burmese weights are uniform and well regulated. They consist of masses of brass, of
which the handle, or apex, represents the fabulous bird which is the standard of the empire.

The measures of capacity are as follow:—

2 Lamyets = 1 Lamé.
2 Lamés = 1 Salé.
4 Salés = 1 Pyi.
2 Pyis = 1 S Sarot.
2 Sarots = 1 Sait.
4 Saits = 1 Ten.

This last measure is what is usually called by us “a basket,” and ought to weigh 16 viss of clean rice, or 58 2/5 lbs. Avoirdupois: it has commonly been reckoned at half-a-cwt. All grains, pulses, certain fruits, natron, salt, and lime, are bought and sold by measure—other commodities by weight.

Notes on the Burmese Religion

The Budd’hist religion, as it exists amongst the Burmans, does not appear, in any essential respect, to differ from the same worship as practised in Ceylon, Siam, and Kamboja. Its doctrines, the institution of the priesthood, and the external forms of devotion, appear to be the same. [quoted account of Judson published separately in the SBBR] In my account of Siam, I stated that I had not heard in that country of any heresy, or of the existence of any religious opinions above the level of the vulgar superstition. This is not the case in Ava. Of late years several individuals in this country have broached heretical doctrines,—attempted to reform the popular worship, and gained a considerable number of followers. The absolutism of the Government, however, has generally silenced these schismatics, or at least prevented any overt expression of their opinions. A few years ago, one of the leading reformers was sent for to Ava, and not being able to render a satisfactory account of his doctrines, suffered decapitation. I do not understand that the propagation of a new
religion was the object of any of these parties, but simply a reform of the old one. The reformers were generally, or I believe always, laymen. They principally decried the luxury of the priesthood, and ridiculed the idea of attaching religious merit to the building of temples, or, as they described it with some justice, “heaping together unmeaning masses of brick and mortar.” The most noted of the Burmese sectaries are known by the name of Kolans. I do not know what their particular, tenets are, but their doctrines have been repeatedly proscribed, and some of themselves put to death. The spirit of persecution in Ava, however, is rather political than religious. Innovation of any kind is considered dangerous to the State; and the “Lord of life and property” cannot endure that any subject should have the presumption to differ with him in opinion.

Among the Burmese, neither the Christian nor Mohammedan religions have made any progress. These forms of worship have the amplest toleration as far as strangers are concerned; but any attempt to convert, the natives soon creates insuperable difficulties, chiefly because it is viewed in the light of withdrawing them from their allegiance. The American missionaries, of late years, attempted the propagation of Christianity amongst the Burmans; and although they brought to their task a share of zeal, information, and sound judgment, which has rarely been equalled in such undertakings, and from which better hopes might have been entertained, their project failed of success. The result of this experiment, however, would seem satisfactorily to show, that bigotry, on the part of the lower orders, seems to afford little obstacle to their adoption of a new religion. Mr. Judson and his companions have now established themselves within the British possessions at Martaban, where a fair field is open to them for bestowing moral and religious instruction upon a people who certainly stand much in need of both, and are not without capacity to receive them.

As connected with the subject of religion, and forming indeed a material part of it, I may refer for a moment to what is peculiar in the funerals of the Burmese, as far as they have not been described in the Journal. In Siam, the practice of enbowelling the dead, and preserving the body embalmed, for an extravagantly long period before it is consumed on the funeral pile, is followed in regard to laymen of rank as well as to the priesthood. In Ava it is confined to the latter. The funeral pile in this case is a car on
wheels; and the body is blown away, from a huge wooden cannon or mortar, with the purpose, I believe, of conveying the soul more rapidly to heaven! Immense crowds are collected on occasions of these funerals, which, far from being conducted with mourning or solemnity, are occasions of rude mirth and boisterous rejoicing. Ropes are attached to each extremity of the ear, and pulled in opposite directions by adverse parties; one of these being for consuming the body, the other for opposing it. The latter are at length overcome, fire is set to the pile amidst loud acclamations, and the ceremony is consumated.

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**Burmese Sounds**

The Burman alphabet follows the arrangement of the Deva-nagari. It reckons twelve vowels and thirty-three consonant characters. The first six vowels correspond exactly with the first six of the Sanscrit alphabet, and represented in Roman letters, according to the orthography of Sir William Jones, are as follow[s]: a, á, i, í, u, ú. The seventh vowel corresponds with the eleventh Deva-negari, and is represented by e. The eighth vowel is intended to correspond with the diphthong ai of the Deva-negari alphabet, but, in truth, is a simple vowel expressing a very different sound, and which will be found in the English word *hair*. Although a simple vowel, I can find no better substitute for it than ai, and accordingly have written it so. The characters corresponding in the Burman alphabet to what are called in the Sanscrit the diphthongs o and au, are simple vowels, of which the second is but the long sound of the first. They are found respectively in the English words *paucity* and *audience*. Another vowel, not enumerated as such by the Burmans, is of not unfrequent occurrence. This corresponds with the sound of o in *note*. In writing, it is a compound character, formed from the vowels a, i, and u. A twelfth vowel sound, corresponding with the short sound of e in *pen*, is of frequent occurrence, though not written. The true diphthong sounds in the Burman language are the combination of the Roman vowels ai and au, according to Sir William Jones’s orthography.

The first, or gutteral class of consonants corresponds exactly with that of the Deva-nagari, viz. k, k’h, g, g’h, n. These would be pronounced nearly the same by a Burman and a Hindu. Most of
the letters of the second, or palatal class, however, are pronounced very differently. The ch and its aspirate have a pronunciation approaching to s. The j and its aspirate approach nearer to the sound of z. The Burmans, in pronunciation, make no distinction between the cerebral and dental classes of consonants, pronouncing them both as dentals, and writing the former, in words derived from the Sagñscrit [sic] only. The labials correspond exactly with the same series in the Sanscrit. The greatest deviation from the Hindu pronunciation exists in the liquids and sibilants. R, although frequently used in writing, is almost invariably pronounced as y. S is invariably pronounced as the common th of English orthography; thus the Sanscrit word desa is always pronounced in Burman detha. The Deva-nagari sibilant, corresponding to the English sound of sh, has no existence in the Burman alphabet. The aspirate differs in no respect from that of the Deva-nagari. The last letter of the Burman alphabet corresponds with the Welsh 1 of the Sanscrit. It is seldom written, and when it is, its pronunciation differs in no respect from that of the common liquid.

Burmese Literature

Of the character of Burman literature, I can only speak from report. The greater part of it is metrical, and consists of songs, religions romances, and chronological histories. Versions of some of the first of these were made for me; but the spirit, if there really was any, in the original, so completely evaporated in translation, as hardly to leave the germ of thought or sentiment behind it. The Wutus, or religious romances, appear to be compositions of a more respectable order; and Mr. Judson, who had read many of them, assured me that a few were works of considerable interest and merit. A native of Mon-cha-bo, or Mok-so-bo, the birthplace of Alompra, he stated to me, if I remember well, to have been the author of the best of them. This Burmese writer had not been dead above forty years—a proof that Burmese literature is at least in no worse state than in former ages. Of the historical compositions of the Burmese I shall speak in another place. Before closing this brief notice of the language and literature of the Burmese, I should add that the language may now be easily acquired by Europeans,
from our possession of a copious dictionary and valuable grammar of it, compiled by Mr. Judson, of which an edition has been printed with the native character annexed, at the missionary press at Serampore.
Geological Account of a Series of Animal and Vegetable Remains and of Rocks, collected by J. Crawfurd, Esq. on a Voyage up the Irawadi to Ava, in 1826 and 1827

Reverend William Buckland, D.D. F.G.S. F.R.S. F.L.S., Professor of Mineralogy and Geology in the University of Oxford (circa 1827)

For the specimens and notes which form the subject of the present communication, the Society is indebted to the zeal and activity of J. Crawfurd, Esq. one of its Fellows, who having occasion to traverse the Burmese Country, on an embassy to Ava, in the years 1826 and 1827, discovered an extensive deposit of organic remains in that unknown and distant region. He has brought home specimens of these remains, both animal and vegetable, as well as of the strata in which they were found, and has with much judgment and liberality presented them to the Geological Society of London, and to several other scientific Societies. It is on an examination of these specimens, and of the notes contained in Mr. Crawfurd’s daily journal, that the observations and descriptions that make up the present memoir are founded.

Before I proceed to the details of this interesting subject, it may not be amiss to refer to the state of our knowledge, or rather ignorance, of the geology of these regions, antecedently to the discoveries of Mr. Crawfurd; an ignorance which our frequent and extensive intercourse with India has but recently and in a very slight degree tended to dispel; since, with the exception of two

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1 Reprinted from John Crawfurd’s Journal of an Embassy to the Court of Ava.
Memoirs in the *Geological Transactions* (Vol. I. Part 1. New Series),—the one a paper by Mr. Colebrooke on the North-east border of Bengal, the other a description of a collection of specimens made by Mr. Fraser, on a Journey from Delhi to Bombay; and of two brief notices in the same volume,—no description of the secondary, tertiary, or diluvial formations of central and southern Asia, as compared with the similar formations of Europe, has been given to the public.

In the year 1823, in the following passage of my *Reliquiæ Diluvianæ* (p. 170), I quoted the opinion of Mr. Weaver on the importance of instituting a comparison between the organic remains which might be discovered in the diluvium of tropical countries, and the similar remains found in the diluvium of the temperate and frigid zones of the northern hemisphere:—

> Another interesting branch of enquiry is, whether any fossil remains of elephant, rhinoceros, hippopotamus and hyæna, exist in the diluvium of tropical climates; and if they do, whether they agree with the recent species of these genera, or with those extinct species whose remains are dispersed so largely over the temperate and frigid zones of the northern hemisphere.

It could scarcely have been anticipated, that within so short a period as has elapsed since the date of this publication, the zealous investigations of a single individual should have gone so far as those of Mr. Crawfurd have done, to supply an answer to the questions then proposed.

The evidence which Mr. Crawfurd has imported, is derived from no less than seven large chests full of fossil wood and fossil bones, and of specimens of the strata that are found along the course of the Irawadi, from its mouth near Rangoon up to Ava, being a distance of nearly five hundred miles.

The larger portion of the fossil wood is beautifully silicified, and displays most delicately the structure and fibres of the living plants: in other specimens of it this structure is more obscure, though sufficient to show that the trees in which it exists were dicotyledonous. This obscurity arises from the fact of most of these dicotyledonous plants being impregnated with carbonate of lime, whilst all the monocotyledonous stems are silicified, as are also a
few of the dicotyledonous: in these latter also the vegetable structure is more distinct than in the calcareous fossils, and in some of them it much resembles that of the tamarind wood. These plants were found most abundantly in the same region with the fossil bones, but occur also along nearly the whole course of the Irawadi from Ava to Prome. They were principally collected from a tract of country extending over a square of more than twenty miles on the east bank of the Irawadi, near the town of Wetmasut, about half-way between Ava and Prome, between lat. 20° and 21°. N. The occurrence of bones was most abundant in a small space near the centre of this district, occupying about one-third of the above-named area, the surface of which is composed chiefly of barren sand hills mixed with gravel; beneath these are strata containing shells and lignite, through which they sink wells about two hundred feet to collect petroleum.

In examining the bones, I have had the advantage of the co-operation of Mr. Clift, to whose anatomical description I beg to refer my readers. And though we are still without proof as to the existence of fossil elephants in Asia; there being no remains of these animals in the collection now before us; we have bones and teeth of the Pachydermata which are usually associated with them in Europe, America, and Siberia; viz. of rhinoceros, hippopotamus, mastodon, tapir, and hog; also several species of Ruminantia, resembling oxen, antelopes or deer; with the addition of the gavial and alligator, and species of the two genera of fresh-water tortoises, viz. Trionyx and Emys.

The occurrence of such reptiles in the same deposits with the Mammalia, has, I believe, not yet been noticed in the diluvium of Europe, America, or Northern Asia; and it deserves remark, that the gavial, and several of the Pachydermata found by Mr. Crawfurd, do not now inhabit the Burmese Country; for the gavial is now limited almost exclusively to the waters of the Ganges and its confluents; the hippopotamus exists no where but in the rivers and lakes of Africa; and the mastodon is utterly extinct. There is, however, no greater anomaly in supposing that all these animals inhabited the Burmese Country at the period preceding the deluge which overwhelmed it, than that at the period preceding the similar catastrophe which befel the North of Europe, the elephant, rhinoceros, hippopotamus and hyæna were co-inhabitants of England,—a point which in another work (Reliquiæ Diluvianæ) I
have endeavoured to establish from the evidence of the bones found at Kirkdale and in other caverns.

Judging from the number and proportion of bones in the collection, made by Mr. Crawfurd, the most abundant fossil animal in the valley of the Irawadi is the mastodon, then the crocodile and tortoise, and lastly the rhinoceros and deer. Of the hippopotamus, parts only of two jaws have been yet identified; and of the tapir and hog, one fragment only of a lower jaw. It is not however possible to deduce any certain conclusions as to the relative abundance of these animals, from the proportion of bones in any single collection.

The following maybe given as a rude approximation to the numerical proportion of bones and fragments of bones we have now before us.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of bones.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mastodon</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhinoceros</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hippopotamus</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tapir</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hog</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ox, Deer, and Antelope</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gavial and Alligator</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emys</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trionyx</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the head of this list stand the remains of the genus Mastodon, not only because they so much exceed in numbers the aggregate of all the rest, but because they establish the fact, that at least two species of these gigantic animals were among the antediluvian inhabitants of the southern parts of Asia, and because they add, to the six species of this extinct genus already ascertained by Cuvier, two new and strongly characterized species, one of which, from its approximation to the elephant in the structure of the teeth, Mr. Clift proposes to designate by the name of *Mastodon elephantoides*: to the other he has given the name of *Mastodon latidens*. 
In the collection before us, there must be fragments of at least a dozen skeletons of mastodons, many of them equal in size to the bones of the largest modern elephant, and some exceeding them; the fragments of femur and tibia, equal those of the largest fossil elephant, whilst in another specimen we have the milk-tooth of a sucking mastodon. In other specimens of the teeth we observe various stages of advancement from youth to extreme age.

Of the ivory tusks of this animal, there are many small but decided fragments, of one of which a section is given showing the intersecting curved lines, like the engine-turning, on a watch, by which the ivory of the elephant's tusk also is characterized.

Of Ruminantia we have evidence to establish at least three species; viz. three different sized condyles of the femur of three full-grown animals; also teeth of at least two species of ox or deer or antelope; and fragments of the solid bony base or core of three horns of antelopes; and two different tibiae, with two different scapulae of full-grown Ruminantia.

The bones of gavial in this collection afford, like the hippopotamus, another example of the occurrence of fossil animals in a different locality from their recent analogues. Mr. Clift considers this species to resemble the existing gavials of the Ganges, but the frequent discoveries of fossil gavials in tertiary strata, and even in secondary strata, down to the lias, show, that in an earlier and different state of our planet, this genus also has been dispersed abundantly and widely over its surface.

The specimens of alligators’ bones also are scarcely sufficient to allow Mr. Clift to pronounce decisively as to their identity with existing species. From the magnitude of the fragments, their size must occasionally have been very great.

The fossil emys and trionyx of Ava we can scarcely identify, from our imperfect fragments, either with species that now inhabit the rivers of that country, or with the fossil tortoises which extend through nearly all tertiary and secondary strata; occurring in the tertiary sand-rock of Brussels, and in our London and plastic clay, in our Hastings-sand and Purbeck lime-stone, as well as in the Kimmeridge clay and Stonesfield oolite, in the lias of Glostershire, and transition slate of Glarus, In the modern rivers of India, there are tortoises which attain a considerable size, and are cherished and fed by the natives.
It cannot but occur to us in this stage of our enquiry as remarkable, that not one fragment is found in all this collection, either of the elephant, tiger, or hyæna, which now abound so much in India; whilst the mastodon, whose living analogue exists not upon earth, must probably at one time have swarmed in the districts bordering on the Irawadi. The same analogy which emboldened me, in my first paper on the Cave of Kirkdale, to anticipate the discovery which was speedily made of hyaenas’ bones in the diluvium of England, arguing on the fact of their existence in the diluvium of the European continent, at the present moment encourages me also to anticipate the future discovery of the elephant, tiger, and hyæna in the diluvium of Asia. I would also argue, on the same grounds, that it is highly probable we shall hereafter find the mastodon in our own diluvium and most recent tertiary strata.

The state of preservation of all these bones from Ava is remarkably perfect, from the circumstance of their being almost entirely penetrated with hydrate of iron, to a degree that has converted many of them to a rich mass of iron ore, and has given them a hardness which caused them, at first, to be considered as silicified; and they have been erroneously so described in some printed notices on this subject in the *Calcutta Gazette*, March 21st, 1827, and in other publications. Such, however, is not the case with any specimen I have seen in the whole collection; the cancelli of the bones are filled either with hydrate of iron or carbonate of lime, and their weight and strength—thereby increased, but no other kind of change or injury to their external form has been produced.

It is, in fact, to the strength and indestructibility resulting from the mineral impregnation above-mentioned, that we owe the discovery of these remains on the shores of the Irawadi. An accident that delayed for some days the steam-boat in which Mr. Crawfurd was descending this river, allowed him to land, accompanied by Dr. Wallich, and to investigate the structure of the country for some miles on the north-east of Wetmasut. The accident arose from the shallowness of the water, when the steam-boat was descending, which, fortunately for geology, caused it to run aground near the wells of petroleum, where the left bonk of the river presents a cliff of several miles in length, generally perpendicular, and not exceeding eighty feet in height. At the
bottom of this cliff the strand was dry, and on it were found specimens of petrified wood and bones, that had probably fallen from the cliff in the course of its decay; but no bone was discovered in the cliff itself by Mr. Crawfurd and Dr. Wallich; nor were they more fortunate in several places where they dug in search of bones in the adjacent district. This district is composed of sand-hills that are very sterile, and is intersected by deep ravines: among the sand are beds of gravel, often cemented to a breccia by iron or carbonate of lime; and scattered over its surface at distant and irregular intervals, were found many fragments of bone and mineralized wood, in some instances lying entirely loose upon the sand, in other cases half buried in it, with their upper portions projecting, naked, and exposed to the air: they appeared to have been left in this condition, in consequence of the matrix of sand and gravel that once covered them undergoing daily removal by the agency of winds and rains, and they would speedily have fallen to pieces under this exposure to atmospheric action, had they not been protected by the mineralization they have undergone.

On examining many of the ravines that intersect this part of the country, and which were at this time dry, the same silicified wood was found projecting from the sand-banks, and ready to drop into the streams; from the bottoms of which the travellers took many fragments, that had so fallen during the gradual wearing of the bank, and lay rolled and exposed to friction by the passing waters. Some of these stems were from fifteen to twenty feet in length, and five feet in circumference. These circumstances show, that the ordinary effect of existing rains and torrents is not only to expose and lay bare these organic remains, but wash them out from the matrix to which some other and more powerful agency must have introduced them.

Of the total number of bones in this collection, about one-third have suffered from friction; and of the remainder, nearly all appear to have been broken, more or less, before they were lodged in the places where Mr. Crawfurd found them irregularly dispersed. Many fragments also of the ivory have been rolled considerably; but no one specimen of that substance, or indeed of any bone in this collection, has been reduced to the state of a perfect pebble: from this circumstance we may infer, that the waters which
produced the rolling they have undergone, were not in violent action during any very protracted period of time.

Many of the larger bones, and some of the small ones, have masses of stone adhering to them, which afford specimens of the matrix in which they were imbedded; these are composed of small round grains and pebbles of white quartz, and various quartzose and jasper pebbles, strongly united together by a cement of carbonate lime, and sometimes by hydrate of iron: where this iron is very abundant, it affords concentric ocherous concretions, resembling aetites, dispersed irregularly through the breccia. The masses of calcareo-silicious conglomerate that adhere thus to the bones, do not appear to have been separated by violence from any mass or stratum, of solid stone, but to be merely small local concretions attached, to these bones. There are other calcareous concretions that contain no kind of organic nucleus, but are composed of precisely the same materials as those which are formed around the bones, and present many of the irregular shapes of the tuberous roots of vegetables; some of them also have the elongated conical form of slender stalactites, or clustered icicles, a form not unfrequently produced in beds of loose calcareous sand by the constant descent of water along the same small cavity, or crevice, to which a root or worm-hole may have given the first beginning: some of these appeared in the cliffs just mentioned, near Wetmasut. I have seen similar elongated and pseudostalactitic concretions disposed at right angles to the beds of sand, and descending vertically by the side of each other, like the roots of carrots and parsnips, to a depth of nearly two feet, displayed in the section of the cliff near Finale, between Genoa and Nice; and I have also a collection of the same kind from the calcareous sand-beds of Bermuda: their form and position in the sand caused them to be sent home, under an idea that they were petrified roots.\footnote{Original footnote: Dr. Fitton, in his excellent account of some geological specimens from the coasts of Australia, (London, 1826,) describes many similar examples of stalactite-shaped and other irregular calcareous concretions, in the sandy strata that occur on many parts of those coasts. He also gives references to authors who have described similar cases in other countries; viz. to Dr. M'Culloch, who has described them as existing in Perthshire, Dr. Paris in Cornwall, Captain Lyon in Africa, and other writers.} Neither the insulated concretions from Ava, nor those adhering to the bones, contain traces of any kind of shell;
they also differ mineralogically from all the specimens of tertiary and fresh-water strata in this collection.

Among the most remarkable of these strata is a fresh-water deposit of blue and marly clay, containing abundantly shells that belong exclusively to a large and thick species of Cyrena; a dark-coloured slaty limestone, containing shells, which Mr. Sowerby has identified with some of those that occur in our London clay. There is also, from the lulls opposite Prome, granular yellow sandy limestone, containing fragments of marine shells, and much resembling the calcaire grossier of the environs of Paris; and from the same neighbourhood, and other places higher up the Irawadi, are several specimens of soft and greenish sand-stones resembling those of our plastic clay formation. From all these, it appears highly probable, that some of the most important component members of our tertiary strata occur along a great part of the course of the Irawadi, between Ava and Prome, near which latter place the alluvial delta begins, which extends from thence, by Rangoon, to the Gulf of Martaban.

Throughout this district also we seem justified, by the notes of Mr. Crawfurd, in establishing the existence of the same distinctions between diluvial and alluvial deposits that are found in the valleys of all our European rivers. To the alluvial belong not only the immense deltas just mentioned as occurring from Prome downwards to the sea, but also a number of islands, that are continually forming and shifting at various places along the whole extent of the actual bed of the Irawadi, more particularly at Rabakyoaktan, and also between the latitudes of 20° and 21° N. about half way from Prome to Ava, between the towns of Wetmasut and Salè, in the neighbourhood of the fossil bones, to the diluvial deposits we may probably refer the sand and gravel beds containing the mineralized bones, which, as Mr. Crawfurd has observed, it is impossible to attribute to the waters of the Irawadi, because they occur in a district where the stream is pent up within steep banks which it never overflows, and within which it never rises above twenty feet, while the average elevation of the ossiferous sand and gravel beds is at least sixty feet above the highest floods of this river. He further observes, that whilst the bones and wood of these comparatively elevated plains are mineralized, and converted the one to iron and the other to flint, the remains of modern trees and modern animals that are
stranded on the alluvial islands of the existing river, (particularly on an island near Rabakyoaktan,) undergo no such change, but are seen daily falling to decay and crumbling to dust: and he also mentions, for the purpose of disproving its correctness, that it is a popular notion among the natives, who have long observed the existence of this fossil wood, that it had been turned to stone by the waters of the Irawadi: such opinions are very natural on the shores of rivers and lakes where fresh pieces of fossil wood become continually exposed by the wearing away of the banks in which they were imbedded and received their mineral impregnation; the waters of Lough Neagh in the county of Antrim are in the same way believed by the Irish peasants to possess the property of converting wood to stone.3

The facts in such cases are, that a succession of fresh pieces of silicified wood is found after storms exposed along the shores, being washed out of the banks that are continually wasting by the waves. The evidence before us then is such, that I believe no practical geologist will be disposed to assign the origin either of the wood or bones under consideration, to the comparatively impotent exertions of existing causes. The question reserved for him is, whether some of these remains may not also occur in the most recent tertiary strata, as well as in the diluvium of Asia:—the analogy of Europe would lead him to expect the same Mammalia in both; we have however in the specimens before us not one shell of any kind adhering to the bonus, or in the agglutinated sand and gravel attached to them; and in Mr. Crawfurd's notes, there is no evidence to show that any bones were found, except in the deposits of sand and gravel near Wetmasut, and these differ materially from every specimen in his collection which we recognise as identical with the tertiary strata of our own country.

It is of course impossible for any person who has not been on the spot, to decide with certainty on a question which requires so much minute local investigation by a very experienced observer. I shall therefore conclude with recapitulating the only three

3 [Original footnote] The idea is probably alluded to in the cry, which is said to have been at one time common in Dublin.

“Lough Neagh! buy my hones,
Once were wood, and now
are stones.”
speculations that I conceive can be proposed, to explain with probability the date and origin of the bones before us.

I. Either they were lodged in the most recent marine sediments of the tertiary formation, like the elephant in the crag of Norfolk, the rhinoceros of Placenza, and the mastodon of Dax and Asti;

II. Or in antediluvian fresh-water deposits, analagous to those which contain the rhinoceros, elephant, hippopotamus, and mastodon in the Val’ d’Arno;

III. Or in diluvial accumulations more recent than either of these formations, and spread irregularly, like a-mantle, over them both.

Now, as we find on careful examination of the matrix adhering to these bones, that it contains neither fresh-water nor marine shells, and is wholly different in character from all the specimens which contain such shells, and which thereby enable us to refer them respectively to, fresh-water or marine origin; the most probable conclusion we can arrive at is, that the bones belong to neither of these formations, and that their matrix is of the, same diluvial character with that in which the greater part of the fossil bones of Mammalia have been discovered in Europe.

Having proceeded thus far in our consideration of the nature of the bones before us, the time when the animals lived to which they belong, and the most probable causes that brought them to their actual place and condition,—we may now consider the evidence on which it has been asserted in the preceding pages, that the strata subjacent to the Burmese diluvium, along nearly three hundred miles of the course of the Irawadi, from Prome to Ava, present a repetition of the geological structure of Europe.

From the examination of the specimens, compared with the notes in Mr. Crawfurd’s journal, the following formations may be recognised with a greater or less degree of certainty.

1. Alluvium,
2. Diluvium.
3. Fresh-water Marl.
5. Plastic Clay, with its sands and gravel.
6. Transition Limestone.
7. Grauwacke.
8. Primitive Rocks, Marble, Mica Slate.

There are also, indications (but less certain) of new red-sandstone and magnesian limestone.

The Alluvium and Diluvium (Nos. 1. and 2.) have been already spoken of.

3. The Fresh-water formation (No. 3.) occurs a little north of the Petroleum Wells, and of the district in which the bones were found near Wetmasut, and is at an elevation of 150 feet above the Irawadi. The specimens of it consist exclusively of marly blue clay, containing fresh-water shells of the genus Cyrena: the shells are very thick and heavy, nearly three inches in diameter, and judging from the great quantity imported, must be extremely abundant; and, though accompanied by no other organic remains of any kind, are sufficient to establish an analogy, in the strata containing them, to the fresh-water formations that occur associated with the tertiary strata of Europe. There is, however, no evidence to show any connexion between these fresh-water deposits and the fossil bones or wood: from the portions of iron and gravel adhering to many of the remains of tortoise, crocodile, and hippopotamus, it should seem that they had no connexion with the fresh-water deposit: still the abundance and size of such animals, show that there must have been large rivers or lakes at the time and place in which they lived; though it would not justify our assigning them, without further examination, to the period in which these fresh-water strata were formed that contain the shells of Cyrena.

4. We have from the hills near Prome a coarse-grained yellow shelly and sandy limestone, scarcely distinguishable from the calcaire grossier of Paris; and from several places higher up the Irawadi, particularly at Pugan, we have a dark bituminous slaty limestone, in which Mr. Sowerby has recognised the following fossils as identical with those of the London clay.
Ancillaria  

Lamarck, Environ de Paris. Only found in London clay and calcaire grossier.

Murex

Cerithium  

London clay

Olivia

Astarte rugata. (Min. Conch.) London clay and calcaire grossier.

Nucula rugosa. London clay and calcaire grossier.

Erycina.

Tellina. London clay:—shell figured by Brocchi.

Teredo. In blocks of calcareous wood: the same as in the London clay.

Teeth of Shark. London clay.

Scales of fishes. London clay.

Pebbles of rolled black bone.

Unknown radiating fossil, resembling coral.

This recognition of a stratum so nearly resembling the London clay in respect of its peculiar shells and other fossils, in so distant a part of Asia, receives still further Interest when viewed in conjunction with the information that has been afforded to us by Mr. Colebrooke, as to the existence of a similar formation at Cooch-Behar in the N.E. border of Bengal, where the Brahniputra emerges into the plain. Here Mr. Scott discovered strata of yellow and green sand alternating with clay, that lie horizontally at the height of about 150 feet above the level of the sea, and contain organic remains resembling those of the blue clay of the London and Hampshire basin. Mr. Scott has also discovered at Robagiri, in this same district, a stratum of white lime-stone containing nummulites and vertebrae offish, surmounted by beds of clay which contain the same nummulites, and also bones of fish, with shells of Ostrea and Pecten. Near Silhet the Laour Hills, composed of white limestone loaded with nummulites, form another example of tertiary formations in the eastern extremity of this province. And the section near Madras, given by Mr. Babington, shows the same tertiary formations to exist also on the western shores of the Bay of Bengal.

All these circumstances taken together, leave not a doubt of the important fact that the tertiary strata, which a few years since had been noticed only in the basins of Paris and London, are most
extensively distributed over the surface of the globe. Their existence is now familiar to us in almost every state in Europe, particularly in the sub-Apennine formations, where they have been so ably described by Brocchi, and are now receiving further illustration from the able hand of Professor Guidotti of Parma. Again, we trace them round the shores and in the islands of the Mediterranean, at Montpellier and Nice, at Savona, Volterra, and Rome,—in the fish-beds of Mount Lebanon,—and the nummulite limestone that forms the foundation of the Pyramids of Egypt. We recognise them also along the northern shores of Africa, and in Malta, Sicily, and Sardinia. Mr. Strangways has traced them largely in the Steppes of southern Russia, and on the shores of the Black Sea and the Caspian (see his Map of European Russia, Geol. Trans. 2nd Series, vol. i. plate II). The Russians in their expedition to Bokaria have found them on the borders of Lake Aral; and now, on the authority of Mr. Crawfurd’s discoveries, we establish them in a considerable district of the Burmese empire beyond the Ganges.

5. In many of the specimens from near Prome, we find a soft green and yellow sandstone resembling that of our plastic clay formation. Mr. Crawfurd describes these as associated with reddish clay intermixed with sand and pebbles, in words that are almost equally applicable to our English plastic clay-pits at Reading or Lewisham. He found them in many places where he landed along the shores of the Irawadi; and near Pugan (On the west shore of the Irawadi, opposite to Pugan, springs of petroleum ooze from the hills composed of immense masses of blue clay; and if wells were dug, it might be collected as at Wetmasut.--Mr. Crawfurd’s Notes.) and Wetmasut they were associated with brown coal and petroleum, precisely as we find them containing brown coal all over Europe, and connected with wells of petroleum near Parma, and also in Sicily, and near Baku on the west coast of the Caspian. Near the petroleum wells of Wetmasut, Mr. Crawfurd also found large selenites resembling those that occur at Newhaven in our plastic clay. In Ava, as in Europe, they seem to be co-extensive with the clay-beds of the tertiary formation.
6. The transition limestone appears, from the few specimens we possess, to be of the same character with that of Europe, but in these specimens there are no organic remains. At a small hill four hundred feet high, called Manlan Hill, near Wetmasut and the petroleum wells, it is associated with grauwacke. There are also specimens of grauwacke much charged with carbonate of lime from so many distant points along the Irawadi, that, in the absence of better information, we may conjecture the fundamental strata of this region to belong to the transition series, and that they are covered more or less by the tertiary strata and diluvium which we have been considering.

7. From the mountains of the Sakaing Chain, a little above Ava, we have much pure mica slate and statuary marble in its usual connexion with mica slate and hornblende rock; this marble is of the finest quality, and extensively employed by the natives in making images of Buddha.

The specimens afford no decided example of secondary rocks in this district (Near Pukangyi); but a reddish sandstone, which is used for architecture in the construction of thrones to receive the images of Buddha, and a limestone which resembles the magnesian limestone of England, may, I think, with more probability be referred to the new red sandstone than to any other formation.

The extent and relative position of all these strata it was impossible to ascertain from the few opportunities afforded to Mr. Crawfurd of landing from the steam-boat in which he made his voyage; these may become the subject of future investigations. The grand point is, however, established, of the occurrence of formations in the south-east of India, analogous to the tertiary and diluvial formations of Europe, and containing respectively the remains of animals the same which the formations of Europe contain, or very similar to them: these animals must therefore at some time or other, and most probably at the same time, have existed in regions whose climate and inhabitants now differ so widely as those of India and Europe. It must be confessed, in concluding, that the result of these discoveries, though intensely interesting, and a splendid example of what may be done by the skill and activity of one zealous individual, is rather to stimulate
than fully gratify our curiosity; and to excite our hopes for more detailed and more extensive information from the future investigations of the most intelligent among our countrymen, whose professional duties call them to the eastern world.
Note:

The following brief note has been drawn from Crawfurd’s 1826 Journal. Although brief, it offers an account of the origin of the use of ‘Baren’ that Burmese sometimes used to refer to the British.

M.W.C.

Note on the Word ‘Baren’ for the British East India Company

John Crawfurd

The Burman word “Baren,” used in this document [the 3 November 1826 Burmese Draft of the Commercial Treaty], means sovereign. The Burmese suppose the word Company to be a title of the Governor-General. It is almost unnecessary to say, that the East India Company, as such, is wholly unknown to them. During the war, a very curious illustration of this fact came under the immediate notice of the British officers in Ava. A person of some notoriety at the time, called the Raj-guru, a Brahmin, and the principal Court astrologer, had been employed by the Burmese Government as a secret emissary in Bengal. After his detection, he was employed by us as an agent, in our endeavours to bring about a peace. In this capacity he repaired, to Ava, but never returned. After the capture of Melun, his Correspondence was discovered in the stockade, and it was found that he had been intriguing in our very camp, and furnishing the enemy with intelligence. In this Correspondence, when he spoke
of the Governor-General personally, he invariably and unceremoniously gave him the name of “Company,” and no other.
Note:

The following note has been extracted from the 1829 publication, *Journal of an Embassy from the Governor-General of India to the Court of Ava in the Year 1827*, by John Crawfurd, the envoy on this mission. It was originally organized within the sixteenth chapter, but has been separated and included here under the present title as its information is self-contained within that chapter and because it has a topical interest to those currently researching the history of animals of Southeast Asia.

M.W.C.

Quadrupeds and Other Animals of Burma

John Crawfurd
Former Envoy to the Court of Ava (1827)

The useful Quadrupeds domesticated by the Burmese are, the ox, the buffalo, the horse, and the elephant. Both oxen (Nwa) and buffaloes (Kuwe) are used throughout the country; but the latter greatly prevail in the lowlands, and the former in the upper. Both are of a very good description, and commonly in high order; indeed, the rural economy of the Burmans appears nowhere to so much advantage as in their care of these animals. With respect to oxen, the males are commonly emasculated, and these, for the most part, only are used; in labour, the females being neither fed nor worked. The cost of rearing them is comparatively high; a circumstance to be accounted for, from the religious prejudice, which interdicts their use as food, and which, therefore, leaves no
profitable means of disposing of the old or imperfect cattle. The buffalo, a more docile animal than the ox, except to strangers, is not emasculated, and both males and females are used in labour. In places congenial to it, it is also more easily reared than the ox, being satisfied with coarser pasture; and it is consequently much cheaper. Notwithstanding superior strength, however, the buffalo is slow, impatient of heat and drought, and therefore incapable of long-continued exertion. Its use is therefore confined to agricultural labour; and the ox, whether for burthen or draught, is alone used in conveying goods and merchandize on long journeys.

The full-sized horse is unknown in Ava, as in every country of tropical Asia, east of Bengal. The Burman horses rarely exceed thirteen hands high. They are somewhat larger and stronger than the races of the Indian islands, but inferior to these in symmetry, spirit, and action. They are also much more costly. It is the general practice to castrate the males, which is contrary to the usage of the Indian islanders. Horses are rarely used by the Burmese as beasts of burthen, and never for draught; and their chief use is for the saddle. In the alluvial districts, where, indeed, there is seldom any footing for them, horses are rarely to be seen; but they prevail in every other part of the Country, and appear to be most numerous in the hilly country of Lao, from whence they are brought for sale to the capital. The true Burman horse, however, is preferred to that of Lao.

Respecting the elephant, I have communicated, in the Journal whatever came under my observation. In Ava, this animal is at present, a mere object of royal luxury and ostentation; for, unless probably in Lao, I do not find that it is any where used as a beast of burthen; although, as such, it might, no doubt, be very advantageously employed in many parts of the country. The hog is domesticated among the Burmese, but being used only as a scavenger, and taken no care of, its habits are offensive and disgusting to the last degree. The dog is seen, unknown and uncared for, as in other parts of the East. These animals prowl about the villages unmolested, their numbers being kept down only by disease and famine. At the capital, they are the most miserable and half-starved creatures that can be imagined. Cats are numerous, and generally of a similar breed with the Malay cat; that is, having half a tail only; they are excellent mousers. The ass

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1 Reprinted in the present issue of the SBBR [editor].
(Mré), the sheep (Tho), and the goat (S'hait), although apparently bearing native names, are little known in the domestic economy of the Burmese. About the capital there are a few goats and sheep, of a puny race, kept more for curiosity than use. I saw there also a few asses, which were ascertained to have been brought from China. The camel, although a beast of burden sufficiently well suited to the upper portion of the country, is not known to the Burmese.

Of poultry, a few common fowls and ducks. alone are reared, chiefly, I believe, for the purpose of being clandestinely sold to the Chinese, Christian, and Mohammedan residents.

In a country so abounding in deserts and forests, and so little under the dominion of man, wild animals and game are numerous. The most remarkable quadrupeds are the elephant, rhinoceros, hog, deer, oxen and buffaloes, bears, otters, the tiger, leopard, with wild and civet cats. The elephant is found in all the deep forests of the country, from one extremity to the other, and is peculiarly abundant in those of Pegu. The varieties do not differ specifically from the common Asiatic elephant of naturalists, as was proved by the comparison of some teeth, which I brought home, with those of the Bengal elephant. The rhinoceros is the common Indian one, with a single horn. This animal is sufficiently abundant in the forests of Pegu, but probably less so than the elephant. Both are hunted by the Karyens, and their flesh held not only to be esculent, but delicate. The hog, as in other parts of the East, is spread all over the wild parts of the country. Several species of deer exist, such as the Indian roe and stag. The latter is more frequent in the forests of Pegu, than I have ever heard of its being in any other part of India. Notwithstanding, their religion, these are hunted by the natives for their flesh. The common mode of doing so is as follows;—the hunters assemble in a large party in the grassy plains, which are the favourite haunt of the deer, and forming a circle, gradually contract it, until the terrified animals are reduced within a very small compass. A fence of very frail materials but quite sufficient to confine them in their terror, is then constructed; and into these the hunters enter, and cut down the game with their swords. A party of English gentlemen that had just returned from a hunting-party of this description, when I last visited Martaban, informed me that a surprisingly small number escaped over the fence, and that about thirty were killed. Another
mode of hunting them was described to me by the natives. The hunter, in this case, goes into the forest, in a dark night, with a torch in one hand, and his sword in the other. The deer, attracted by the light, are said to come up to it fearlessly, and are cut down without difficulty. No species of the antelope is found in the Burman territory, not even in the dry plains of the Upper country, where their appearance might have been looked for.

Oxen and buffaloes are both of them natives of the Burman forests. The first are known by a distinct name (Saing) from the domesticated breed, but there is no good reason to believe that they differ specifically. Of the feline tribe, the royal tiger, the spotted leopard, and several species of cats, are numerous in the forests of Ava, especially in those of the southern provinces. It is remarkable, that none of the canine family, so frequent in the neighbouring country of Hindostan, are, so far as is known, to be found within the Burman dominions. There are neither wolves, jackals, foxes, nor hyenas; and this zoological feature is said to extend to all the countries of tropical Asia lying east of Bengal.

Game is probably less abundant in the Burmese dominions than in Hindostan. The variety, however, is considerable. The hare is not known in Pegu, but makes its appearance in the high-lands before the disemboguement of the Irawadi. It is a small animal, similar, in all respects, to the Indian hare. The flesh of both, in comparison with that of the European hare, is insipid. Of gallinaceous birds, the wild cock is very generally spread over the country. It is of the same species as the wild fowl of Hindustan, and is invariably an inhabitant of the forests, where it is to be found in coveys, like our partridge and moor game. Two species of pheasants, I imagine undescribed, are sufficiently numerous in the forests of Pegu. They are both small birds, and much inferior in size and beauty of plumage to the pheasants of China and Nepal. The other birds of this family ascertained to exist are the peacock, and some partridges and quails. The snipe, a bird which seems to abound in every part of the world where there are marshes, from the arctic to the antarctic circle, is sufficiently abundant in Ava. Geese and ducks, many of them birds of passage, are numerous in the upper provinces. In the lower the goose does not appear, and ducks are not numerous.
In the last sections of his account of his mission to Ava in 1827, John Crawfurd included his journal of his visit to Martaban in the previous year, in order to fill a gap in his 1827 narrative. As he explained: “Our return to Bengal having hindered our excursion to the Saluen and Gain rivers, as well as prevented us from visiting other parts of the province, I shall endeavour in some measure to supply the deficiency, by the insertion of the journal of a voyage to Martaban, which, I performed about ten months before the time of which I am now writing. It is as follows...” We reproduce this account on its own here.

M.W.C.

An Account of Martaban in March and April 1826

John Crawfurd

My party consisted of Captain Studdert, the senior officer of his Majesty’s navy at Rangoon; Captain Hammond, of the Madras Quartermaster-general’s department; the Rev. Mr. Judson, of the American Mission in Ava, and Mr. King, R.N.

March 31, 1826

On the 31st of March, at half-past one o’clock in the afternoon, we left Rangoon in the steam-vessel Diana, and at ten in the forenoon of the following day reached the mouth of the Martaban river,
distant from that of Rangoon about seventy miles. Its entrance is not less than seven miles broad. The mouth of this river, and indeed its whole course to the town of Martaban, is a somewhat difficult, and, in some seasons, a dangerous navigation: until our visit, the existence of a tolerable harbour had not been suspected. The position of the cape of Kyaikami, the first high bold land to the south, after quitting the Delta of the Irawadi, as laid down in the chart of Mr. Abbot, led us to imagine it possible that shelter might be found behind it in the south-west monsoon; but we had proceeded in our course a considerable way up the river, and had a good view of the land behind us, before appearances rendered it probable that a harbour actually existed. We fortunately determined to return, and, making for the land, anchored in quarter-less three fathoms, within fifty yards of the shore, in a clayey bottom. It was low-water neap-tide, and the surrounding rocks and sand-banks were exposed to view; the first formed a reef of about two miles and a half in extent, running out in a north-westerly direction from the cape; and both, along with the cape itself, which sheltered us from the south-west wind, nearly land-locked us—forming, to all appearance, a good harbour. About a mile and a half to leeward of us, in reference to the south-west monsoon, was the wide mouth of a river hitherto unexplored.

After dinner our party landed, and began, with avidity, to explore the little peninsula, of which Cape Kyaikami forms the extremity. For three-quarters of a mile from the cape inland, on the north-eastern side, the land was elevated from ten to twenty feet above high-water mark spring-tides; and on the south-western side, the whole country was of similar elevation to the distance of apparently three or four miles, when there commenced a range of hills, between three and four hundred feet in height. We found the country covered everywhere with a tall forest, intermixed with so little underwood, that we walked into it without difficulty for several hundred yards. Thus far the spot promised many advantages for the site of a commercial town and military cantonment.

April 2, 1826

Early on the morning of the 2d, our party landed again, and explored the little tract of country before us more completely. It
was uninhabited, but the traces of former occupation were discernible. The ruins of four small pagodas were found close to the beach: several wells were seen not far from them; and in the same situation were the remains of a miserable breastwork, recently thrown up by way of opposing the conquest of the province by Colonel Godwin’s detachment in 1825.

At ten o’clock we proceeded to explore the river already mentioned, and the mouth of which falls into the harbour. In proceeding towards it from the place where we lay, we had all along three and a half and four fathoms water; and over the bar, which was of soft ooze, quarter-less three. After entering, we carried five and a half and five fathoms for eight miles up, ranging the river from one side to another, until the steam-vessel sometimes touched the trees. For about a mile up, this stream is everywhere from four to five hundred yards wide; and being soon landlocked, it forms a spacious and beautiful harbour, into which at low-water neap-tides most merchant-ships can enter; and at high-water, ships of any burthen. The banks of this river would have formed by far the most convenient spot for a mercantile town; but unfortunately they were, within any convenient distance of its mouth, low, and subject to inundation. We ascended the stream as far as a large branch which leads to the village of Wagru, then distant two miles. This place, once the seat of government of a dynasty of Peguan kings in the thirteenth century, was now nearly without inhabitants, having been deserted in the great emigration of Talains into the Siamese territory. The river which we had now examined is called, in the Talain language, the Kalyen, and sometimes that of Wagru. Many small but navigable streams join the main branch. We ascended one of these, on the left bank of the river near its mouth, in our boats, as it appeared to lead to the neighbourhood of our proposed settlement. It brought us to a small village, the inhabitants of which were fishermen and salt manufacturers. These poor people expressed no apprehension at our appearance, but proceeded without disturbance in their usual occupations, obligingly answering all our questions. This feeling of confidence towards us is, I believe, at present general throughout the whole Talain population, and I trust our conduct may always be such as not to forfeit it.
April 3, 1826

By dawn of day on the 3d, we landed again on the promontory, and repeated our examination. Passing to the south-west of the cape, we proceeded along a beautiful sandy beach, shaded from the morning sun by a high bank on our left, covered with overhanging trees, many of them in fruit and flower; our Indian servants feasting upon the Jamun, which was found in great abundance. After a distance of about a mile and a half, the strand now described was interrupted by a bold rocky promontory, but recommenced beyond it, and continued as far as the eye could reach. This promontory, as well as Cape Kyaikami itself, afforded us an opportunity of examining the rock formation, which is very various; consisting of granite, quartz-rock, clay-slate, mica slate, indurated clay, breccia, and clay-iron ore. The soil, apparently of good quality, and generally from two to three feet deep, as might be seen by the section of it in the wells, commonly rests on the clay-iron ore, which sometimes gives the water, in other respects pure and tasteless, a slight chalybeate flavour. The distance between the farthest rocky promontory and the river Kalyen we computed to be about two miles; the whole a table-land, nearly level, with the exception of a few hundred yards of mangrove on the immediate banks of the Kalyen. The peninsula thus formed contains about four square miles, an ample space of choice ground for a town, gardens, and military cantonments. The whole receives considerable protection from the south-west monsoon by the little woody island of Zebo, above one hundred feet high, and lying about three-quarters of a mile from the shore.

At eleven o’clock in the forenoon we ascended the Saluen river, for Martaban. During nearly our whole course up, we had the large and fertile island of Balù on our left hand. This is the most productive place in rice within the whole province, and afforded a considerable revenue to the Burmese Government. At sunset we reached Martaban, about twenty-seven miles from the mouth of the river. The prospect which opens itself upon the stranger here is probably one of the most beautiful and imposing which Oriental scenery can present. The waters of three large rivers, the Saluen, the Ataran, and the Gain, meet at this spot, and immediately proceed to the sea by two wide channels; so that, in fact, the openings of five distinct rivers are, as it were, seen at one view,
proceeding like radii from a centre. This centre itself is a wide expanse of waters interspersed with numerous wooded islands. The surrounding country consists generally of woody hills, frequently crowned with white temples. In the distance are to be seen the high mountains of Zingai, and in favourable weather the more distant and lofty ones which separate Martaban from the countries of Lao and Siam. Captain Fenwick, the Civil Superintendent of Martaban, came on board to compliment us upon our arrival. Shortly after we landed with this gentleman, and passed the evening with him at his house, where we arranged an excursion, for the following day, up the Saluen to the Caves of Kogūn.

April 4, 1826

Early on the morning of the 4th, a party visited the little picturesque island of Taongzé, opposite the town, and which is covered with white temples. From thence we passed over to Maulamyaing, on the left bank of the river; the place first contemplated for the site of a new town, and where part of the ground was already cleared of forest for this purpose. Situated twenty-five miles from the sea; by an intricate navigation, and accessible only to craft drawing ten feet water at the most, in point of convenience for a commercial establishment, it seemed to bear no comparison with the situation which we had already examined at the mouth of the river. Maulamyaing had once been the site of a town and capital under the Hindoo name of Ramapura, or the city of Rama; and the high earthen walls and ditch could still be easily traced. When the tide served at eleven o’clock, we ascended the Saluen in the steam-vessel, the first of her description that had ever entered its waters. When twelve miles above Martaban, the stream, hitherto disturbed and muddy, became as clear as crystal, and we had still three fathoms depth. About this place we passed the Kadachaong creek, which leads to Rangoon through the Setaaang and Pegu rivers, and thence again through several cross channels to Bassein, a direct distance of more than two hundred miles. The internal navigation of Pegu appears to me to possess natural facilities far beyond any other Asiatic country, of which this is a fair specimen. At half-past two o’clock, the tide aiding us all the while, we reached Kogūn, distant by computation twenty-
five miles from Martaban. The scenery in this neighbourhood was grand and beautiful, the banks of the river high, and the country to all appearance peculiarly fertile. Close to the left bank of the river was to be seen a range of mountains, steep, bare, and craggy, rising to the apparent height of fifteen hundred feet. Almost immediately on the right bank, and where the river makes an acute angle, a number of detached conical hills rose almost perpendicularly from the plain. All these last are of a grey compact limestone. We visited the largest, which contains a spacious cave, dedicated to the worship of Gautama, and which, besides having its roof rudely but curiously carved, contains several hundred images of that deity, a good number of them of pure white marble from the quarries of Ava. Around the hill is a garden belonging to a neighbouring monastery, in no very good order. The only plant in it which struck us as remarkable, was a tree about twenty feet high, abounding in long and pendulous pannicles of rich geranium-coloured blossoms, and long and elegant lance-shaped leaves; it is of the class and order *Diadelphia Decandria*, and too beautiful an object to be passed unobserved, even by the uninitiated in botany. Handfuls of the flowers were found as offerings in the cave before the images of Gautama.¹ At four o’clock, we began to descend the river, and at seven, with the assistance of the ebb-tide, the current of the river, and the full power of the steam, reached Martaban.

The cultivation of the fertile tract of country which we had passed in the course of the day is meagre, and proportionate to the oppressed and scanty population of a country, which hardly contains three inhabitants to a square mile, and these, of course, neither industrious nor intelligent. The objects of culture which we observed,—all in small patches, but growing with much luxuriance, notwithstanding the too obvious unskilfulness of the husbandry by which they were reared,—were indigo, cotton, and tobacco. Besides these, the upper part of the country, which is not subject to inundation, appears to be peculiarly fitted for the growth of the sugar-cane and coffee plant. Martaban, indeed, is a province of very various useful produce; for, besides the articles already

¹ Crawfurd’s note to the original: I showed the dry specimens of this plant to my friend Dr. Wallitch, on his arrival at Rangoon, about four months afterwards, and he soon ascertained that it constituted a new genus. He afterwards examined it in person on the spot, transferred it to the Botanical Garden at Calcutta, and described it under the name of Amherstia *nobilis*, in compliment to the Countess of Amherst.
mentioned, it yields pepper, cardamums, areca-nut, and teak wood, not to mention rice, which seldom exceeds in price twenty annas the maund. This is a list of valuable indigenous productions which can scarcely be matched in any other part of India.

April 5, 1826

On the morning of the 5th, we went through the town of Martaban, a long, straggling, and mean, place, consisting of miserable huts, according to the custom of the country. It is situated at the foot of a conical hill, and is said to have contained a population of nine thousand souls, chiefly Talains. The Chinese are very few in number, a fact which, in a country understocked with inhabitants, calculated by nature for agricultural and commercial pursuits, and removed from their own at no very inconvenient distance, must be considered the certain sign of a bad government. We found the inhabitants preparing to move across to the British side of the Saluen. Such is the poverty, and such are the unsettled habits produced by oppression, that these emigrations are no very arduous undertaking to the Peguans. Yesterday we heard that one thousand two hundred families from the district of Zingai, with three thousand head of cattle, had arrived on the banks of the Saluen, with the intention of crossing over into the British territory, there to establish themselves: But these are trifling emigrations in comparison with the great one which took place from the same quarter, in 1816, into the Siamese territory, and which, at the lowest computation, is said to have amounted to forty thousand souls. The fugitives, on this occasion, conducted the plot with so much concert and secrecy, that, from one extremity of the province to another, they put themselves in motion towards the Siamese frontier on the same day; and took such advantage of a temporary quarrel between the officers of the Burman Government among themselves, that the latter were neither in a condition to oppose their flight, nor to pursue them. By direction of the leaders of the emigration, cannon and musketry were simultaneously fired throughout the country, the concerted signal for the march. The lower orders, in their ignorance, ascribed the distant sounds which they heard to their tutelary gods.

At eleven o'clock in the forenoon, we left Martaban for Kyaikami, accompanied by Captain Fenwick. Close to
Maulamyaing, on the left bank of the river, is the termination of a range of hills of no very great height, which extends all the way to Zea, a district which commences with the right bank of the Kalyen river. In various parts of this range is found a rich and abundant ore of antimony, of which specimens were shown to us. The great range dividing Martaban from Lao and Siam, is said to afford ores of lead and copper. At five o’clock in the evening, we reached the newly discovered harbour.

**April 6, 1826**

Early on the morning of the 6th, we renewed our examination of the promontory. The day before, a party of natives had cut a path quite across the highest part of it—a labour of no great difficulty, for the ground was firm and level, and it was only necessary to clear away a little underwood. The distance measured by the perambulator was found to be only one thousand yards. After seeing and examining the banks of the Martaban river to the extent of fifty miles, we found no difficulty now in fixing upon this spot, as by far the most eligible for a commercial town. Accordingly, at twelve o’clock, the ceremony of hoisting the British flag, and fixing the site of the town, in the name of his Majesty and the East India Company, took place. Major Macqueen, of the 36th Madras regiment, and his staff, with a detachment of Sepoys, who had arrived in the Lady Blackwood transport, joined our party. The Lady Blackwood fired a royal salute, and a party of Sepoys three volleys of musketry. The Reverend Mr. Judson pronounced his benediction in a feeling prayer. The following appropriate scriptural quotations introduced by Mr. Judson, may be considered as specimens of the good taste and judgment of my amiable friend;—

The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto, thee.
For brass I will bring gold, and. for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron; I will also make thy officers peace, and thy exactors righteousness.
Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders.
The new town and harbour were called Amherst, in compliment to the Governor-General.

**April 7, 1826**

A party of workmen commenced yesterday to clear the ground for a small military cantonment, and a road having been opened all round the spot intended for it, we had an opportunity of deciding upon its eligibility. The whole country indeed up to the hills, and to within a few hundred yards of the Kalyen, was a dry, level, table-land, rising gently in the centre, than which nothing can be conceived more commodious or suitable to the purposes of an European settlement. I ought here to mention that the peninsula, from the south-west and north-east winds blowing without interruption over it, is well ventilated; that the climate, and we experienced it in one of the hottest months in the year, was consequently cool and agreeable; while the soil was so dry, that during our whole stay we did not see; or feel a single musquito, or other troublesome insect. The testimony of the natives, let it farther be added, is decided in favour of the salubrity both of this spot and of the neighbouring country, including the town of Martaban itself. In passing along the sandy beach on the western shore yesterday and to-day, we saw the fresh tracks of three leopards, many fresh tracks of wild cats, large deer, and buffaloes. The latter, we were told, were the cattle left behind by the emigrated Talains already mentioned, which they had not time to take along with them, and which therefore had taken to the forests and become wild. In the mountains close at hand, however, there exist real wild buffaloes and many elephants. In the forest, when examining the ground for cantonments, we saw one large deer and several monkeys, and the woods abound with the common wild-fowl and peacock.

In walking along the sandy beach this morning, we unexpectedly met two priests, who readily entered into conversation with us, and were very communicative. They had heard of our projected settlement, and took advantage of the circumstance to cheer us in our undertaking, by paying us a compliment, I fear, at the expense of their veracity. They said, that the place was fortunate; that the Temple of Kyaikami was dedicated to the God of Fortune, which the term imported in their
language. They added, that they had that morning perused their sacred books, and in these found it written that a colony of white men would one day settle in the neighbouring country.

Captain Hammond having measured the ground with the perambulator, a matter which was easily effected along the smooth sandy beach, drew out a plan of the whole ground, and in the course of the day we were busy in allotting the ground for the various wants and necessities of a new town. The north-western promontory was reserved for the Government, the high ground immediately fronting the harbour was set apart for the European and Chinese, or, in other words, the commercial establishment, and the lower grounds towards the Kalyen river, for the native town. A ground plan of the European town was sketched, composed of ten streets, with four hundred houses; the great front street, consisting of one row, and containing nineteen lots, each of sixty feet front, and one hundred feet deep, being especially appropriated for principal mercantile establishments. Immediately behind the town was ground for an esplanade, beyond which, arid on the western shore, were the military cantonments, and to the south-west of the whole, towards the hills, ample room remained for gardens and garden-houses, ground for a church, a botanical garden, and an European and Chinese burying-ground. Regulations for the construction of the town were adopted; and in appropriating and granting lands, the liberal and comprehensive rules laid down for the flourishing settlement of Singapore were assumed for this meditated new one.

Shortly after determining on the site of the town, a proclamation in the Burmese language was addressed to the inhabitants, of which the following is a literal translation. The object of it was to encourage the resort to, and conciliate the prejudices of the people; but at the same time to hold out no assurances which might have the effect of embarrassing our future administration of the province, or our political relations with the Burman Government:

The Commissioner of the Governor-General of British India to the Talains, Burmans, and other tribes of people. In conformity with the treaty of peace, between the Governor-General and the King of Ava, the English Government takes possession of the places beyond the
Saluen river, and at the entrance of the sea, in the district of Kyaikami, founds a new town. The inhabitants of the towns and villages who wish to come to the new place, may come and settle; those who come shall be free from molestation, extortion, and oppression. They shall be free to worship as usual temples, monasteries, priests, and holy men. There shall be no interruption of free trade, but people shall go and come, buy and sell, do and live as they please, conforming to the laws. In regard to employing the labouring people, they shall be employed on the payment of customary wages, and whoever compels their labour without reward shall be punished. In regard to slavery, since all men, whether common people or Chiefs, are by nature equal, there shall be under the English Government no slaves. Let all debts and engagements contracted under the Burmese Government previous to the war, be discharged and fulfilled according to the written documents. Touching the appointment of officers and chiefs, they are appointed to promote the prosperity of the towns and villages and the welfare of the inhabitants. If, therefore, they take property by violence, or govern unjustly, they shall be degraded and punished. In regard to government assessments, when the country is settled and prosperous, consultation will be held with the leaders of the people, and what is suitable and moderate will be taken to defray the necessary expenses of government. Whoever desires to come to the new town, or to the towns and villages beyond the Saluen river under the English Government, may come and live happily, and those who do not wish to remain may go where they please, without hinderance. Given at Martaban, the 6th April [1826], and the 14th of the wane of the moon Tagoo, 1187.

Anxious to make a farther examination of the Kalyen river, we ascended it again at eleven o’clock, and proceeded up to the distance of fourteen miles, having every where from four to five fathoms water. At the farthest point which we ascended, the river did not exceed seventy yards in breadth, and in one or two situations the hills were within a mile and a half of us. No elevated ground was, however, any where to be found on its banks. The
highest spring-tides took place this morning, and this afforded us an opportunity of determining the greatest rise and fall of the tides, and other important points connected with the navigation of the harbour and the entrance into it. The greatest rise and fall in the springs appears to be between eighteen and nineteen feet; at neaps, it is five or six feet less. On the oozy bar of the Kalyen, there were this morning, at the lowest ebb, ten feet water, and at the highest flood, quarter-less five fathoms. Every morning since our arrival, Captain Studdert was employed from three to four hours in examining and sounding the harbour and its approaches. Between the reef of rocks already mentioned, and at no great distance from the cape, there is a channel which has been long used by Chinese junks and native vessels; but for European shipping, the proper entrance into the harbour is close round the extremity of the reef, and between it and a shoal lying north of it.

[From the description now given of the harbour,—the entrance into it, and the neighbouring localities, it is obvious that the place is capable, at a very trifling expense, of being fortified in such a manner as to render it quite impregnable. A battery on the promontory completely commands the town, and protects the shipping, which may lie in good anchorage within fifty yards of the shore. An enemy entering the harbour might be sunk from a martello tower on the high rock of Kyaikami, a few hundred yards from the promontory. A battery at either side of the entrance of the Kalyen would render the harbour formed by this river equally secure.]^2

Upon the commercial advantages of the place it is scarcely necessary to insist. Ships, as already said, may lie within fifty yards of the shore, and within seventy-five of the merchants' warehouses. Sheltered by the cape, by the long reef of rocks to the north-west of the harbour, and by the innumerable sand-banks to the north of it, dry at low water, as well as by the great island of Balû, and the continent on the east bank of the Martaban river, ships will lie in smooth water, except perhaps for a moment in the westerly monsoon during high flood, and when the wind, as is not often the case, shifts to the west or north-west. In such an event, vessels with indifferent tackle, or in a disabled state, may slip with perfect facility into the Kalyen river, a short mile to the lee of the

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^2 This paragraph was apparently inserted by Crawfurd in the 1829 publication.
harbour, then accessible to merchant-vessels of the largest burthen.

**April 8, 1826**

At half-past two o'clock on the afternoon of the 8th, we quitted the new harbour on our return to Rangoon, taking, in going out, the channel commonly frequented by native vessels. It was not above fifty yards broad. We went through it with the commencement of the ebb-tide, and had a depth throughout of nothing less than five fathoms and a half.

**April 9-10, 1826**

On the evening of the 9th, we made the entrance of the Rangoon river, and early on the morning of the 10th reached the town.
Note:

In December 1832, a contingent of American Baptist missionaries, including Reverend Nathan Brown, Mrs. Brown, Mr. Webb, and Mrs. Webb, departed from Boston to join missionaries already at work in Burma. Five months later, they had only gone as far as Calcutta, from whence they would commence their final sea journey to British Tenasserim and it is from this point that correspondence from Nathan Brown begins. The following letters, sometimes in full and occasionally as extracts, were originally published in the *American Baptist Missionary Magazine* during the 1830s.

M. W. C.

**Missionary Letters from Burma, 1828-1839**

I

Extract of a Letter from Mrs. Deborah B. L. Wade to Mrs. Jones of Calcutta, forwarded by the latter, to Mrs. B. of Salem, dated 28 June 1828, ‘Maulaming’ [Maulmain]

Your last kind letter found me alone in my sleeping room, watching the corpse of one of our dear scholars, who had, after a very painful illness, just passed into her eternal state. But her placid smiling countenance, reproved my sadness and chided my tears, and I seemed to realize that angels were indeed hovering round her little bed. ‘She sleeps in Jesus and is blest. How sweet her slumbers are.’ Yes, my dear sister, we may well apply these beautiful lines to her, for she truly sleeps in Jesus. I should
exceedingly like to give you a particular account of all the kind providential care of God over her, but I have only time to say, we found her a poor little slave about seven years old, in the hands of a cruel wretch, who had by a series of cruelties. I should have said, unheard of barbarities, reduced her to the last extremity. My heart bleeds even now, to think what she suffered when we first saw her. But she recovered, and though a delicate child, enjoyed pretty good health for some months, till she was taken down with her last illness, which terminated in about six weeks. But about a month before her departure, she gave very pleasing evidence of a work of grace upon her heart, and died enjoying, in a very eminent degree, all the sweet consolations of a hope in Christ. For the last two hours of her life, she was perfectly sensible she was dying, and without expressing the least doubt or fear, would say 'I am dying, but I am not afraid to die, for Christ will call me up to heaven, He has taken away all my sins, and I wish to die now, that I may go and see him. I love Jesus Christ more than every body else.’ But it is only those who heard her from day to day lisp her little prayers and praises to God, who caught with a joy unfelt before the first dawn of light which beamed upon her dark mind; who watched with hearts raised to God its gentle progress, that can realize what a precious and heavenly scene, the death bed of little Mar-Shway-ee, presented.
II

Letter from Mrs. Deborah B. L. Wade to Mrs. B. of Salem,
Dated 22 September 1828, Maulamying [Maulmain]

Respected and very dear Mrs. B.

Your kind and very acceptable letter of January last, was received July 8th, and permit me to assure you, that its contents not only afforded “instruction,” but also gave me real pleasure. Fancy what it must be, to live here in this dark pagan land six months, without seeing the face of a single female, excepting these poor uncivilized Burmans, and you will form some idea of the joy with which again and again I perused your very welcome letter. But do not let me convey the idea that I feel discontented, for I am really happy in the station in which kind Providence has placed me, and can say with the greatest sincerity, that I was never more cheerful, and would not exchange my situation for any that my dear native country could present.

There are three women now learning to read in the girl’s school. One of the number, is Mah Lah, who was baptized some time since, and has made such proficiency in knowledge of divine things, as gives us a great deal of pleasure. The other two, are hopeful inquirers. Could you spend one day with the young converts, or even attend one of their little meetings, and hear them all pray, I am sure you would feel delighted, and more than repaid for all your benevolent exertions to support the school. You will hear from the journals, of Mat Nyo, who is upwards of eighty years old, and was baptized with Mary Hasseltine, and Me A. She walks near a mile, three or four times every week, to see us and get religious instruction. The girls who have been baptized, are very much attached to her, and she is equally fond of them, and seems to require the same kind of instruction, so that she is always counted in the class of young converts. The delightful task of leading forward these little ones in the “divine life” with the time usually devoted to the Christian women and inquirers, together with the school, must, you will readily suppose, occupy all my time, so that I find it necessary to exclude myself from all English Society. I hardly need observe, that I every day feel my need of the advice and assistance of our dear kind much lamented sister Judson. How dark the dispensation, and how mysterious the Providence which called her away at tills interesting period of the
mission! But we all desire to bow in humble and silent submission, resting assured that the salvation of souls is a cause infinitely dearer to Christ than ourselves, and though his throne is often surrounded with "clouds" and "thick darkness" yet we know it is still accessible to sinners, and that all these dark scenes will finally show forth his wisdom and glory, and enhance our eternal felicity. But we have many things here to remind us, that the days of our pilgrimage will be very few, and that it is extremely desirable that others should be ready to take our place. Are not other Missionaries already on their way to join us? May they come to us with such feelings as the great Apostle to the Gentiles expresses when he says, "And I am sure that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ." Should any Society or individual like to make up a box for the school, I would observe, that needles, thimbles, scissors, sewing cotton of all kinds, ink-powder, slates and pencils, together with work bags, all kinds of boxes, &c. &c. not forgetting emory bags which are indispensable in these hot countries, would be very valuable and acceptable. The number of scholars is now sixteen, besides the three women, and Moung Shwa-ba, their teacher, which makes the number of my Burman family twenty. I am happy, and I trust, thankful, that I can say that my health was never more perfect than at present. I think I feel some desires to give up the world, and take up my cross daily and follow after Christ. Pray much for me, my dear sister, that my feeble exertions maybe owned by Christ, and that the remainder of my life may be entirely devoted to him. That the choicest of Heaven's blessings may rest upon you and yours, until we shall meet in a happier state, is the sincere prayer of your affectionate friend.

Deborah B. L. Wade
No doubt an opportunity will soon offer for our missionary friends (Kincaid and Mason) to go to the place of their destination. A vessel sails for Rangoon tomorrow, by which, they will inform dear brother and sister Wade of their arrival here. This intelligence will, I am sure, rejoice their hearts, for many have been their prayers for spiritual minded associates in missionary labors; and that most interesting field is white to the harvest of immortal souls. The churches of Christ in America will do well to multiply largely the number of those who shall publish the glad tidings of salvation in benighted Burmah. They have done well in sending so many laborers there already—but many more are at thin moment absolutely wanted, for there is work enough for a multitude to enter upon. The Lord of the harvest is there seemingly about to thrust in his sickle, and waits for his servants whom he graciously condescends to call co-workers with himself, to obey his commands in sounding the gospel trumpet before him. His power, his willingness to save to the uttermost all who come unto him through Christ, none can doubt.—O! that Christians, who profess to have been redeemed by his most precious blood, and to feel the value of immortal souls, would supply the means, and that many more of our pious youth would willingly devote themselves body and spirit to the work of God among the heathen! Shall these perish for whom Christ died? They must perish eternally if left destitute of the knowledge of the way of life and salvation! In thinking of the solemn responsibility resting upon Christians to give light to them who sit in darkness, by sending missionaries among them, who shall give them the Bible in their own language, and break to them the bread of life, it appears to me that zeal is wanting—that a fair experiment has never yet been made; for what can a few individuals do, where a host is required in the field? And yet God has blessed the labors of the few, which should encourage those who love his cause and desire to see his kingdom established in the world, to strive to increase the number of his faithful servants to declare his truth abroad.
Yours affectionately,

E. H. Jones
IV

Letter from Mrs. Deborah B. L. Wade, to Mrs. Baldwin, of Boston,
Dated 8 January 1830, Maulmein

Dear Mrs. Baldwin,

Your kind letter of May 30, 1829, was received a few days since, and served to remind me most sensibly of those very interesting circumstances under which I was first introduced into your dear family, and those many kind offices of love which I still remember with very grateful feelings, so that I cannot willingly let this opportunity pass without dropping a few lines to you, though I feel every way indisposed for writing, on account of a slight attack of fever for the last few days. You have, no doubt, received our letters from time to time, so that, you already know that thirty natives were added to our little church here in 1828, and during the year that has just closed, notwithstanding our dear brother Judson’s time has been almost exclusively devoted to the New Testament translations, God has still been carrying on his own work, so that twenty-five natives, together with ten English soldiers, have been enabled to come out from the world and own Christ in the midst of violent opposition and reproach. You will hear all that is interesting at the Tavoy Station, from our dear brother and sister there. And O, how it delights my heart to tell you that twenty natives have been baptized at Rangoon, by our good brother Ko-thah-a. Thus you see, my dear Mrs. Baldwin, that all those prayers which have been offered up in behalf of Rangoon, have not been in vain. And O, let this encourage you to pray much for us.

With regard to schools, I am grieved to say, that I have found it my duty to devote nearly all my time to the women, the year past, so that there has been no one to look after the dear little ones. We have, however, a small number of interesting scholars still under our care, and hope with sister Bennett’s assistance, that department, may soon flourish again. And now, begging your fervent prayers that I may be kept humble, and prayer-ful, and faithful, during my short, wearisome pilgrimage in this dark land, permit me to subscribe myself, your unworthy sister,

D. B. L. Wade
Extract of a Letter from Mrs. Deborah B. L. Wade to Mrs. David, of Philadelphia,
Dated 20 February 1830, Rangoon

Before this reaches you, you will have heard that having so much to do in the way of instructing female inquirers, I have been obliged to send away several of our dear pupils, and positively refuse to take new ones, so that for some time the school has been but small. Inhere are, however eight interesting little girls still supported by the charities of our good friends in America; besides one fine little boy, who begs so hard to be permitted to stay, and weeps so bitterly if we speak of sending him home to his mother, that we cannot find it in our hearts to do so. Two of the girls above mentioned, are now with me at this place, one of them, (Me Quay, who was baptized last year,) I brought from Maulmein, and the other is a little girl who was given me when we first arrived in Rangoon, but was separated from us on account of the war. She has been quite serious, for some time, and we think begins to give evidence of true piety...

After having seen eight of our dear pupils, together with two women who were learning to read with the girls, through persecution and reproach, following the footsteps of their crucified Lord and Master, and some of them becoming bright ornaments to the little church, and striving hard for that glorious prize which our dear little suffering Me Shwayee has no doubt attained—you will not be surprised to hear me say, that I consider the education of Burman girls, and boys too, (if we can have them placed entirely under our care,) a most interesting and important department of missionary exertions. O, how I should delight to have forty or fifty such girls as I might soon collect, either here or at Maulmein, and devote all my time to their instruction. But who would then attend to these poor ignorant women, who can’t read, and who begin to be anxious about their immortal souls? And who would go about to the villages, where the poor, uncivilized women are afraid to come near a white teacher, and never once in their lives heard that there is a Saviour who died to redeem them from bell?...

We came to this place a few days ago on a visit, but find that our good brother Ko-thah-a so much needs help in instructing the little church, and inquirers, that we feel we cannot leave him at present. The female converts here beg roe to stay, and not return to Maulmein; and several fine little girls are waiting and hoping that I shall open a school. Some of the Christians here, even under
this despotic government, are bold advocates for Christ, while others are more timid, and fear persecution. There is also a very interesting number of hopeful inquirers; and we feel that the many prayers which have been offered up are now beginning to descend, and that the set time to favor Zion is fully come; and wo are looking upward to know our duty, and feel no unwillingness to leave all we love at Maulmein, to spend the rest of our pilgrimage under this despotic government, if that shall best please Him whose holy will we begin to desire to follow rather than our own.

D. B. L. Wade
VI

Extracts from Mrs. Deborah B. L. Wade’s Letter to Mrs. Wayland, of Providence, 23 February 1831, Amherst

Dear Mrs. Wayland,

Yesterday I received your kind and very acceptable letter; but this returning salutation comes from a heart oppressed with bitter grief and sorrow. And, you too will mingle your sorrows and your tears with ours, when I tell you that our beloved brother Boardman is no more! We weep not for him, for he is now free from all sin, and sweetly rests from all his toil and sufferings in the bosom of that dear Saviour whose love he so much delighted to proclaim, even until death. But we weep for his dear bereaved companion, and for the poor Burmans and Karens to whom his short life had been so rich a blessing. Alas! we poor short-sighted mortals thought he could not be spared so soon. But ‘God’s ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts.’ ‘How mysterious are his ways, and his judgments past finding out.’ Brother and sister Jones arrived at Maulmein six days since, but I have not yet seen them, as we are residing at this place a short time, for the benefit of the sea air, my health having suffered from a slow fever for the last two or three months. I am, however, quite free from fever now, and able to receive visits from our old Burman friends here, and hope my stay may not be entirely in vain.

I hear a ‘still small voice’ within, saying, Set your affections on things above—Be not conformed to this world—Lay up your treasures in heaven—Pray without ceasing—Where your treasure is, there will your hearts be also— Love thy neighbor as thyself, and the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and deny thyself, and take up thy cross daily and follow me. With regard to my usefulness, it is true that converts are multiplied, that a glorious work is begun in this dark part of the world.

I am sure you will feel compassion for me, and earnestly pray that strength may be given equal to my day, and that the grace of God may be sufficient for me.

Since writing the above, we have received a few lines from pastor Ing, our native brother at Tavoy, who says that brother and sister Boardman, together with the assistants, and brother Mason, had been on an excursion among the Karens, where the Holy Spirit seems to have been poured out in a manner unheard of before in heathen lands; that brother Mason had baptized thirty-four Karens,
when our dear departed brother became worse, and they all set out to return, but when within a day’s journey of home, his happy spirit took its upward flight. Thus you see, my dear sister, that God in judgment has remembered mercy. Sixty-nine Karens have been added to the little church at Tavoy, and almost all the number within these last two or three months. Our dear brother was indeed permitted not only to ascend the ‘mount’ and behold the ‘fair land of promise,’ but to acquire also a glorious victory ‘this side Jordan.’ Mr. Wade thinks that brother and sister Jones, together with sister Mason, will remove to Tavoy soon. But alas! they cannot speak one word to those who are inquiring what they must do to be saved. Who then shall reap that field ‘all white for harvest?’ Ko Ing and Ko Thah-bu are both goody pious, devoted brethren; but they are still, in many respects, children themselves, and need some one to lead them, and teach them ‘the way of God more perfectly.’ Mr. Kincaid now takes the pastoral charge of the little English church. The Rangoon station is becoming more and more interesting, and brother Judson is now, in every letter, begging hard to be furnished with twenty thousand tracts, &c. for the great yearly festival, just at hand, and says that he must have one thousand every succeeding month. There is also a much greater call for the scriptures and tracts here, and at Tavoy, of late, than was ever before known. Thus brother Bennett is growing pale and thin, from hard labor at the press, without being able to satisfy the demands, and Mr. Wade, besides correcting proof sheets and the care of the native church, &c., is making short excursions into the county villages. He has lately been visiting some Karen villages not far distant, where one of the assistants had been laboring, and found a very interesting spirit of inquiry had been excited; and among about a dozen, who expressed a wish to ‘come out from the world,’ four were considered worthy of the holy ordinance, and were accordingly baptized. Others, also, it is hoped, have been born again. Sister Bennett has made such proficiency in the language, that we ventured to recommence the female boarding school the first of January, and have now ten fine little girls under our care. Sister Bennett is able, with the assistance of a good native sister, to manage the school alone. Our prospect for boarding schools is extremely interesting; but we want school teachers, both male and female. How can a minister of the gospel leave off preaching to teach schools? And no one, without coming to see, can realize how much a missionary’s wife finds to do in almost every department of missionary exertions.

I should delight to devote all my time to schools, and always help what I can; but it is now a long time, that I have had more than I could do in conversing with inquirers, instructing the converts, &c.
For a long time past, I have often been obliged to receive my Burman visitors lying on my couch, and attend the native female weekly prayer meeting in the same way; but now, witty returning health, I trust I can say with more sincerity and confidence than ever before, ‘this life which thou hast made thy care, Lord, I devote to thee.’ When you shall see the letters and journals of the brethren, you will, I am sure, think I speak moderately, if I say that we need ten more missionaries here now. And why should we not have a reinforcement of twenty, as well as our dear brethren of the Sandwich Islands? Is there not one pious young man in the University over which Dr. Wayland presides, who is willing to “come over and help us?” And is there not in Providence a little band of true followers of him who, for our sakes, became so poor that he had not where to lay his head, that is willing to come forward and deny themselves so far as to support one missionary in Burmah? But I forget myself when pleading the cause of these poor pagans, and say too much, I fear, for a woman. But who, hearing what we hear, and seeing what we see, could speak coolly upon the subject? Your idea of supporting one of the native assistants has often struck me as one of the most interesting objects of Christian benevolence. There are besides the two pastors five or six others, either of whom I could most affectionately recommend as worthy of your patronage and your prayers. There is also an excellent Taling sister, who has lately, by a vote of the brethren, been added to the number of native assistants. Some account of her piety and devotedness to the cause of Him who has redeemed her from the grossest idolatry with his own blood, would, I know, be deeply interesting to you; but a pain in my side admonishes me to lay aside my pen. She can, in her present situation, live on thirty dollars a year, and she wants nothing more. Sister Bennett and myself are now trying to deny ourselves so far as to support her until some other way shall be presented, without drawing on the mission fund.

And now, my dear sister, permit me to plead my great need as my only claim and apology, for requesting that you will every day, when you go into your closet, pray that I may become truly humble before God, that my affections may be weaned from every thing

1 Original editorial note: It gives us pleasure to state that the ladies in Providence have, for some time, furnished one hundred dollars annually for the support of a native preacher in Burmah.
below him, that I may be enabled to devote all I have and am to the cause of that Saviour who I am sure I do desire to love, and taking up my cross learn to deny myself daily and follow Ills divine footsteps. With much sincere affection, I am, my dear sister, your unworthy friendy,

D. B. L. Wade
VII

Extract of a Letter from Mrs. Deborah B. L. Wade to the Corresponding Secretary,
Dated 18 April 1832, Rangoon

Dear Sir,

You are already informed that the boarding-school at Maulmein was re-established as soon as sister Bennett had gained sufficient knowledge of the language to render efficient assistance, and others were expected to strengthen our hands. Our prospects were deeply interesting, as one of our pupils soon gave pleasing evidence of piety and was baptized; while several others appeared serious, and all were daily taught the way of salvation through Christ the Saviour, and made good proficiency in their studies. We had also the prospect of as many girls as we wished to educate. But my healthy which had long suffered from a slow fever, grew worse and worse until the physician assured me that entire cessation from all labor and care, was indispensably necessary to its restoration. It was, however, a hard case; for neither sister Bennett, Kincaid nor Jones were then much better able to perform such duties than myself; and we all felt extremely anxious to continue the school. I therefore tried still to help a little, though I had a fever every day; and each of (he sisters also performed a part; so that the girls were getting on finely, until I was obliged to give up every care, and felt that I was sinking into the grave; and soon after, through the advice of the brethren, set sail for America. When we returned and went to Mergui, not expecting to remain in the place many months, it was not thought expedient to incur the expense of building a school-house; but I found twelve or fourteen girls and women, who were willing to learn to read with the assistance of a father or brother at home, and come to me for recitation and religious instruction nearly every day. Two of this number learned to read and committed the catechism and short prayers; another had just begun to read; four others, who had before learned to read, made good proficiency in committing select portions of scripture, prayers, &c., (three of this number were from sister Boardman’s school at Tavoy,) and three others had nearly finished the elementary lessons. These ten promise to continue their studies, though we are removed from them. This is the little all I was able to do in the way of schools, during our stay in Mergui. We are encouraged, however, in reflecting that the last great day may show that even this feeble effort was not entirely in vain; for the
first woman soon after beginning to learn, began to appear serious, attended family worship, and daily instructions, and was the first baptized. A young girl also, (the daughter of Ko Ing's wife,) began to appear serious, not long after she began her lessons, and asked for baptism before we left; but we all thought it proper for her to wait for a time. Another woman, from a high proud governor's family, was so vain and haughty that she would never come into our house, until she took a fancy to learn to read. She then came often to us, and learned fast; but treated the subject of religion with entire neglect, for some time. We continued, however, to instruct, admonish and pray for her, until we had the happiness of seeing her begin to relent; and not long after she came in at the time of evening worship, and, with the disciples, bowed down and worshipped Him, “who is meek and lowly.” She assured me, the next day, that she felt constrained to do this by the fullest convictions of the truth of the Christian religion and of her state, as a poor lost sinner. Some time after this, without my influence or knowledge, she took a small present and went to several of her neighbors, confessing how foolish she had been when her pride would not permit her to speak to them, and telling them that she was now resolved to be in all things a disciple, of Christ, the Saviour of sinners. She continued to give very pleasing evidence of real piety until we left Mergui; but her baptism was deferred on account of a marriage-contract, which could not then be settled according to gospel-rules; though nothing was wanting on her part, and she earnestly desired to become a member of the little church. When we arrived at this place, we found that brother Kincaid had gathered a few of sister Jones’ scholars and some Others, who were taught in the lower room of the house we occupy. The number has now increased to twenty, though four or five do not come very regularly. These are taught to read by a native Christian, and such books as we provide are daily committed to memory. Br. Kincaid superintends their writing/ and teaches them geography, &c. while I take the general superintendence of the school, and spend about an hour every morning in giving them religious instruction. They also attend family worship, which is conducted in Burman, every evening and Sunday morning, and my Sunday school, every week. I should have some hope of the conversion of these children, could they be with us entirely; but my heart sinks within me to think of the scenes of heathen superstition and wickedness into which they are daily led by their ungodly parents. We have, however, the comfort of seeing decided improvement in their morals, and knowledge of the way of salvation; and we know that with God all things are possible. We
hope to have one or two more day-schools in different parts of the town before long.

May 10. We have just now received a letter from Ko Ing, the native pastor at Mergui, who says that my scholars there continue their studies, and that they meet on Sundays at the house of Mah So, the proud woman above mentioned. The sisters at Tavoy have had about one hundred children in their schools the season past; but I am grieved to add that my last from sister Boardman states that she has been obliged to dismiss the boys on account of the illness of brother and sister Mason. I trust, however, that a later date may give you a more cheering account, as my letter was written nearly a month ago.

It makes me sad to think of the two called away last year, and the two so ill at Tavoy; but it is consoling to reflect, that though the poor “pioneers” fall here and there unaided and alone, the “soldiers of the cross” are beginning to awake, and will ere long march forward and take possession of the land.

I remain your servant for Christ’s sake.

D. B. L. Wade
VIII

Letter from Rev. Mr. Nathan Brown to the Corresponding Secretary
Dated 2 May 1833, Mouth of the Hoogly

Rev. and dear Sir:--

Through the goodness of God I am able to address you from this place, and to inform you that our voyage has been, for the most part, highly prosperous. We have had religious service on board, once every sabbath, when the sailors have usually been present. They have also attended at evening prayers. Several of them have been deeply impressed with a sense of sin, and the importance of religion; and two of them are indulging hope in the Saviour. One of them had been serious for a considerable time previous, but had never ventured to think himself a Christian. Their conduct among their ship-mates has been such as to give very good evidence of conversion.

While we rejoice over them with trembling, we cannot but hope that theirs is a religion which will stand by them in the trying hour, and that we shall hereafter see them ranged on the right hand of the Son of Man, in that day when he comes to make up his jewels. God grant that we may see them there, and that they may not be the only individuals of the Corvo’s crew, whom we shall meet in heaven.

22 April 1833

We spoke [sic] the brig Constantine, bound from Madras to Nicobar and Marclonia. On the 30th, we came in sight of Juggernaut and the Black Pagoda, and the next day we took our pilot, having been out 130 days. Since we came to anchor in the river, several boats from Kedgereee, a village just above us, have been alongside, affording us a view of the native Bengalees.

6 May 1833, Calcutta.
After being detained at the mouth of the river a day or two, we had a rapid passage up on Saturday. We got under way at half past seven, and in eight hours we had reached Calcutta—distance 130 miles. We were received most cordially by brother Pearce, at whose house we now remain, about three miles from the river. Yesterday we had the happiness to attend public worship at the English church, in the forenoon and evening, where Mr. Yates preaches. Afternoon I went to the native church, where Mr. Pearce preached in Bengalee. The prospects of the native church are encouraging. Eight were received by baptism a week ago.

There is a vessel about to sail for Maulmein, the Phenix, in which we shall probably take passage. I hasten to close my letter in order to send it by the Apthorp, which is to sail to-morrow. That the blessing of God may rest upon you and upon the cause in which you are engaged, and that you may long live to hear glorious news of the ingathering of the heathen to Christ’s kingdom, is the prayer of your unworthy brother.

Nathan Brown
IX

Letter from John Taylor Jones to Rev. L. Bolles,
Dated 30 May 1833, Bangkok

My dear Sir,

In one of my recent letters, I mentioned the variolas and vaccine diseases. When at Maulmein, and Singapore, we made various unsuccessful attempts to have our child vaccinated. On our arrival here, we found the small-pox prevailing to a lamentable extent, and that the benefits of vaccination were never experienced in this country, and the virus was not procurable. Our child was consequently inoculated, and I myself preferred inoculation from her to the danger of natural infection. I have therefore had the disease in a very serious form. For five weeks I was entirely incapacitated to do any thing: for several days partially deranged: for a month unable to wear my usual clothing; and when the power of the disease ceased, I was left extremely weak.

What greatly aggravated my sufferings was, that, soon after their commencement, Mrs. Jones was seized with a violent and dangerous fever, and for several days we were incapable of rendering any assistance to each other. Through the compassion of our heavenly Father, however, she was soon so far restored, as to be able to render me all requisite attendance, and to her judgment and care, I probably owe the continuation of my life.—We are now recovered, except that I have not yet my usual strength. From my own experience of the horrors of the small-pox, I would again say, “for no consideration, send any person here who has not been properly vaccinated. Let them not rest satisfied that the virus has been inserted, (for I have had this twice) but be sure that it has taken good effect.”

Ever since my last, even during my illness, we have been daily visited by from six to twenty patients—for whom with the aid of a boy we have with us, we have been obliged to prescribe. These have been Chinese, Siamese, Burmese, Malays, &c. I have been visited frequently by Burmese priests, of whom there are about sixty, according to their own statement, (which, I judge, is nearly correct from the number I have seen.) They live about half a mile from us. They receive tracts and portions of scripture very readily,
and are very anxious to procure copies of the Burman Maps of the World, several of which I brought from Burmah. Many of them do not hesitate to tell me that the only reason they became, and continue to be, priests, is that in that state they are unmolested, but when they leave it, they are made slaves to the King. They have consequently little attachment to Boodhism. I hope, through a divine blessing, hereafter to have more intercourse with them, and make more direct efforts for the propagation of the truth among them.

I have been visited several times by the principal Siamese priest of the Pra Klang's temple. His station is perhaps as high as that of any other in the nation: he is very intelligent, understands some English, and reads Burman very well, though he speaks it indistinctly.

His brother is my teacher, and from him he learned my acquaintance with Burmese. He made inquiries for Burman books, particularly for the gospels, with which I furnished him, as also the "View" and "Balance"—and a map of the World, &c. The next day he read the Balance, and in the evening repeated his visit, wished to see an English map—know what religions prevailed in the different countries as there delineated, and whether Boodhism was received in this and that? He showed a mind evidently not at rest, but much affected by what he had been reading. He is pleasant and manly—seems candid, and disposed to investigate truth. May the Divine Spirit lead him into it.

Very respectfully Yours,

John Taylor Jones
X

Letter from Mrs. Kincaid to Mrs. Bennet,
Dated 24 July 1833, Ava

[Original editorial note: Our readers will doubtless be pleased to see the spirit of Mrs. Kincaid, as it is developed in the following extract...]

My dear sister Bennet,

I was gratified in receiving your kind note, together with letters from our dear friends, I wrote you a small note on our arrival here, which will inform you of our reception in this city. It is our fervent prayer that the Lord of Hosts will direct and guide our steps, and that he will dispose the hearts of this despotic government to yield to the all powerful preaching of the blessed gospel. Ever since our arrival in Ava, we have had visitors daily. Some, we hope, have seen the wretchedness of idolatry, and experienced the power of the cross.

I shall mention one interesting case. An old man about sixty years of age, has visited us ever since we came here; and, after listening to the instruction of the gospel for about a month, he told Mr. Kincaid he could no more worship idols; that he put his trust in Christ, and often tried to pray to God for a new heart We hope he has experienced the sweets of religion. Of him, together with many more, we have some cheering hope. The call for books is so great, that we often fear the government. But how can we refuse to give the word of God to those who are perishing for the lack of the knowledge of a Saviour, and diffuse among these benighted heathen, the all-redeeming love of Christ. My dear sister, we feel it our duty to obey the commands of Christ, and to preach the gospel to every creature. Oh that the time of Burmah’s conversion might be at hand! May that be our daily prayer. Ko Shoon and Ko San-lone spend their time in travelling about the town, preaching in the different zayats to those who are anxious to hear. They relate many interesting cases of inquiry.

It is a long time since we heard from Maulmein, except by a small note sent by Mr. Cutter. I hope to hear from them all soon. I am glad to hear that the school is in operation at Maulmein. There
is some prospect of having one here. Many children have offered to come, and we intend erecting a zayat immediately.

I should mention that we have met with one of the oldest disciples. He lives in the jungle, about twenty miles from the city. He has visited us twice since we came here, and we had the pleasure of partaking the Lord’s Supper, with him. I must conclude, wishing you the light of God’s countenance, and much strength to labor in his vineyard.

Remember me in much love to Mr. Bennet.

Your affectionate sister in the bonds of Christ,

B. Kincaid
XI

Letter from Mr. Cutter to Bolles,
Dated 2 August 1833, Maulmain

Reverend and Dear Sir,

As an opportunity now offers for sending to Bengal, I hasten to acknowledge the reception of yours, of December 1832, by our esteemed missionary friends, Messrs. Brown and Webb, who, with Miss C. J. Harrington, (now Mrs. Simons,) arrived at their station, June sixteenth. We were rejoiced at being allowed the pleasure of welcoming these brethren to their field of missionary labor, feeling confident they were sent by the God of missions, and that He would honor them as the instruments of building up His cause in these benighted regions.

The signs of the times seem to intimate that the period is not far distant, when a rich and bountiful harvest of souls may be gathered into the garner of the Lord, from hundreds of towns and villages throughout the Burman empire. And one of the instruments which it would seem the Lord intends most effectively to use in bringing about these great and important ends, is the press. Through the medium of this machine, the gospel is sent out into all parts of the empire, and finds its way into the mansions of the governors and nobles of the land, as well as into the hands and hearts of the peasant and the slave. You will doubtless notice a paragraph in Mr. Kincaid’s journal up to Ava, in which he mentions the case of a venerable old man, who would converse freely about the Eternal God, regeneration, justification, &c., “who had no other teacher than John’s Gospel, the Catechism and View, and the Holy Spirit.” He undoubtedly was daily ripening for heaven, and perhaps “will shine as a star in the kingdom of glory.” There are also vast multitudes of Talings and Karens, who have no foreign teacher of religion to point them to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world; but, through the medium of the press, they are enabled to read in their own language, of the wonderful works of God, and the unparalleled love of a crucified Redeemer, and learn the way of salvation through the merits of his blood.
The spirit of inquiry appears to be constantly increasing throughout this whole region. The system of Boodhism begins apparently to totter to its base, and its adherents are zealously endeavoring to support the crumbling fabric: but all will be in vain. Darkness, error, and superstition will flee away before the rays of the Gospel. I presume, at no former period, have affairs in this mission worn so encouraging an aspect as at the present. The Holy Spirit is evidently operating on the hearts of many individuals here, as well as at many other stations; and we feel encouraged, and, consequently, happy in our work. Pray for us, that we may be made useful as instruments in demolishing the strong holds of the adversary, and of enlarging the kingdom of our Lord.

A grant of about twenty-four reams of paper, was received from the London Religious Tract Society, just before I arrived at this station; and a second grant of seventy-two reams, was received in January last.

Mr. Judson received a letter on, the twentieth instant, from Mr. Jones, of London, stating that this benevolent society had made another grant of seventy-two reams, which is probably now in Calcutta, waiting our order.

We endeavor to live as economical as we can, feeling that luxury and extravagance should never be known to the missionary of the cross.

Your servant in the vineyard of the Lord,

O. T. Cutter
XII

Letter from Mrs. C. J. Simons,  
Dated 10 October 1833, Maulmein

[Original editorial note: We have been favored with the following letter for publication. It gives a vivid picture of the fascinating power of Idolatry]

My dear brother,

It is with pleasure that I communicate to you, from this land of darkness, and shall be happy, if I may give you any important information respecting the heathen, and the prospect of doing good among them.

The great obstacle which prevents the rapid spread of the gospel in those places where it is taught, seems to me to be their perverse and unconquerable habits of idolatry. Paganism seems to have wound a spell about them, which it is exceedingly difficult to break. It would seem to us, that it might be very easy to persuade men to break off serving a senseless block. But, let me inform you, that the images of the Pagans are the roost dignified objects of art they have among them. Once in a month, all classes of Burmans in Maulmein, leave their low miserable huts, and go to Worship at the great pagoda. This is decorated to their tastes magnificently. Besides their first great illustrious linage of Gaudama, which is thirty or forty feet in length, they have around him forty or fifty more, some ten, some twenty feet high. These images have, to the eye of a spectator, a most imposing appearance. The first time I saw them, a strange kind of feeling came upon me, as of a trance; and, for some minutes, I could scarcely recognize my identity. I believe it to be so in a manner with them; for, as soon as they come within the pale of the temple, they seem to be in a kind of dreaming ecstasy, especially if the priest is present; and then they fall down on their knees in the profoundest self-absorption, and thus remain for some minutes. I could but imagine, that some evil genius was in their midst, casting around them the spell of insanity, so different they seemed to be from persons in their sober senses; and, especially, when we take into consideration the fact that their hopes of annihilation, which they deem the greatest
possible good, depend on their devotions to the worship of Gaudama. We may suppose that when this fatal enchantment shall come into disrepute, that the gospel will soon spread in any part of this land. But, we have still to lament that though the harvest is plenteous, yet the laborers are few. O my brother, do you ever hesitate concerning your duty to the heathen? I think, had you seen what I have, you would not allow any thing, but absolute want of a due preparation, to detain you a moment from the field. When we look upon our beloved homes, and all that binds us to them, our associates, whose kindred spirits, and affectionate kindnesses, have made them, to us, perhaps, more dear than fathers or mothers, we sigh and weep at the thought of parting. But, when we arrive at our station in a heathen country, although, when we think of home, with all its endearing associations, it may still melt the soul for a moment; yet there are considerations at hand, that will ever operate efficiently to subdue, or rather, to absorb the rising emotion, and make us feel that we would rather be here, than elsewhere, even though all our path should be strewed with thorns.

C. J. Simons
XIII

Letter from Mrs. Abigail Hancock to Dea. Farwell,
Dated 1 January 1834, Maulmein
Subject: Account of the Burman school at Maulmein

I received your truly welcome letter of June 29th, on the 26th of December. Surely it was refreshing to receive letters again from our beloved friends at home. We receive letters, and are for a short time satisfied, but soon thirst again for more.

A bundle of Testaments from you to Harriet have arrived. The Sabbath school books you mention in your letter, we can make use of, although we are not engaged in the English Sabbath school. The books are very much needed, and the European children will be very glad of them, as an addition to their library.

We have been confined entirely to the Burmans, except a short time Mr. Hancock attended to a class in the English Sabbath school. I have, in some way, been doing something with Burman children, since a fortnight after our arrival; at first by teaching them to sew, Harriet one day, and I the next, alternately, two hours a day, (making motions, for I could not speak a word;) afterwards sister Harriet and myself, authorized by the brethren, built a school-house and engaged Moung Doot as teacher; called together as many scholars as we could, and commenced a school, that they might be taught to read, if no more, knowing that if they should be able to read the Scriptures, they would be furnished with a powerful means, whereby their souls might be saved. The Lord smiled on our attempts, and we succeeded in getting a school of twenty-five scholars, [seven] women, and [seven] boys, and [eleven] girls. Though some have left for various reasons, (some women having learned to read, &c.) the number of scholars has been gradually increasing.

During the month of July, two of the larger girls, as we trust, became savingly acquainted with the truth as it is in Jesus—Me Sah, and Me Pah. The latter was baptized on the 11th of August, and Me Sah on the 8th of September. On the 1st of September, several of the Karens from Miss Cummings’ school at Chummerah, came for the purpose of learning Burman. These increased our number of scholars to upwards of fifty, when it was judged expedient to employ another teacher, and have a boy’s department...
separate from the girls; accordingly Ko Sah was employed, and commenced his labor on the 1st of October. At the time of the entering of the Karens, sister Cutter, with a view of going to Ava, gave up her part of the charge, and sister Brown entered with me and continued about a fortnight, when it was expected that brother Brown would go to Rangoon, and she gave up the school into my hands. After this, it was concluded that they would not go; but sister Brown, judging it better that she should devote her time exclusively to the study of the Burman language, did not resume her charge. Since that time, the care of the school has devolved entirely on me.

On the 24th of December, the Karens returned to Chummerah, to continue the study of the Burman, under the instruction of Miss Cummings’ Burman teacher. This left me with thirty-nine scholars, two women, twenty-two boys, and fifteen girls; seventeen of which are boarded at the expense of the Mission; the others by their parents. The Karens were boarded at the expense of the Mission. I will give you enclosed a list of their names. They are taught reading and writing principally. About eighteen can read in plain reading, though some rather slowly; five more are nearly through the spelling-book. Those who can read, commit a portion of the catechism, or, having committed that perfectly to memory, take a portion of the tract—“View of the Christian Religion,” both of which are as good, and precisely the same as the Bible, and easier for them, at present, to commit to memory. These lessons are recited on Lord’s days. Sister Brown on Lord’s days takes the girls, and I the boys, and give them what religious instruction we can in their language. We hope, ere long, to be able to do more; but we now look on what we do, as comparatively nothing, though we hope the effects may be like the fruit of “seed sown in” great “weakness,” but “raised by the power” of God, May it ever be said of us, that we “do what we can.”

In our school, a small sized globe would be very acceptable, and is very much needed. Will the Board be willing to furnish one? If so, will they send it by the first opportunity? I spend an hour of every day, in teaching the girls sewing; and examine them every Saturday in their lessons, reading and reciting, besides going in and looking at what they are about occasionally. I at all times call the school together, morning and noon. The children are all very...
dear to me, and express as much affectionate feeling as children at home.

I must close, after saying that we are in good health, and happy. I have made out a much longer letter than I expected, when I began, but thought an account of the school would be interesting to you. Much love to yourself and dear Mrs. Farwell.
XIV

Letter from Miss S. Cummings to the Reverend, Dr. L. Bolles,
Dated 1 January 1834, Chummerah

[Original editorial notes: The following letter gives a lively picture of a first year’s residence among the Karens, and of the cheerful patience inspired by Christian principles in the heart of a devoted missionary]

Reverend and dear Sir,

One year has expired since my arrival in Burmah, some account of myself is justly due to those persons, under whose patronage I have been brought hither. No regular journal has been kept of what I have done, or of what I have seen. The former may all be summed up in a single paragraph, and the latter is, for the most part, similar to that which is constantly written for your perusal, in the journals and letters of the missionaries. As to what I have heard, I am yet too great a novice in the language, to attempt recording a single debate.

Shortly after my arrival, I procured a Burman teacher, and commenced studying; and, after mature deliberation and consultation, thought it expedient to retire to this station, and here spend the dry season. The plan having met the approbation of the brethren, I left Maulmein on the 7th of February, and arrived at Chummerah the third day after June 20, was taken ill; and, on the 23d, set out for Maulmein, to which place I arrived the day following. This course had been previously enjoined upon me, in case of sickness. Found my health so well restored by the change of air and diet, that I concluded to return, and attempt spending the remainder of the rainy season in the Karen jungle. Accordingly, I again entered the boat with the natives, who, in all my travels, are my only companions; and, after having been out three stormy nights, reached my lodging place in the wilderness, July 2d. My health continued tolerably good, till September, when the rains began to abate, and the sun to shine upon the earth, now fully saturated with water. The rays of the sun, in many respects, so cheering and beneficial in their influence, bring sickness and death to many of the poor wretches inhabiting these wilds. The
exhalations they occasion from the putrefied substances which cover the whole region, are pestilential in their nature. I soon began to feel, in some decree, their effects, but was not satisfied that there was sufficient cause to justify a removal. While I was deliberating, and inquiring what I ought to do, my Burman teacher was suddenly taken with the jungle fever, which shortly increased to such a degree, as to render him unable to help himself. I now saw, that, should I be seized in like manner, we should be in an evil case, there being no one to look to us but Karens, who know as little about nursing, as they do about the fine arts of polished society. All doubt respecting the path of duty being removed, on the morning of September third, I superintended the loading of the mission-boat, the rain descending in torrents; and, assigning to the sick man the best place, started, with ten or eleven other persons on board, about eight o’clock. The current being unusually rapid, and the tide being in our favor, as we drew towards Maulmein, we arrived in that city the same day, at evening. There I remained till the 23d ultimate, when I once more ascended the Salwen, for this place, which I reached on the 27th ultimate. My time has been employed in studying the language, extending a little medical and other aid to the sick, and looking after the school, and other little concerns attending the station. These matters are trifling, as it respects the labor I have bestowed about them. But the natives do much better with one of the mission family with them, even though that one be a female and unacquainted with their language, than they do when left to themselves, which' must have been the case here, had I not resided among them.

The story of self has been short. I have encountered no great hardships, have achieved no wonders, and have been promoted to no worldly honors. Crosses, self-denials, sufferings, trials,—none have I to mention, worthy of the name. The evils I anticipated, have not yet been realized; and a year, happier than has been the past, have I never seen.

The number baptized belonging here, and many other particulars respecting this station, will probably be recorded and forwarded you by some other person. The whole number who have attended school is twenty-four, nearly all of whom have learned to read. The sum appropriated to the board of these scholars, is 180 sicca rupees, The punctuality and diligence of the children have
been such as might satisfy the most sanguine expectations of their patrons.

At the throne of grace, remember your servant, for Jesus’s sake,

S. Cummings

XV

Letter from Mr. Thomas Simons to the Reverend, Dr. L. Bolles,
Dated 18 March 1834, Maulmein

[Original editorial note: “An English school has recently been opened at this station, an account of which is given in this letter. It seems, also, that there is an opening for a Baptist church at Madras. Madras is an important city of India, on the Coromandel coast, south of Calcutta, and is the capital of the British Presidency of the same name.”]

Reverend and dear Sir,

I sit down to write by the Steamer Diana, which leaves Maulmein, to-day, for Calcutta, to inform you that the English school mentioned in the letter from the Board about a year ago, has been in operation since the 1st of February last, at my house, under the care of Mrs. Simons. The hours that the children are required to be
in school, are from 9 o'clock to 12. There have been from twenty-five to thirty regular attendants, and about one half are children of Burman mothers, and the rest are Indo-Britons, as mentioned in the reports of the Sunday school. As the parents of some are in good circumstances, we shall receive the usual charges of the place for their tuition; and, at the same time, it is known that we receive any poor children who may come, without making any charges. We have long felt the importance of such a school, and that a trial should be made by some of us. Some time in January, an Episcopal clergyman arrived at Maulmein from Calcutta, as chaplain of the army, and curate of Maulmein. He soon commenced his labors, and it was rumored that he designed to have schools established with all possible speed. Knowing the wishes of the Board, and having spoken to different persons connected with the English Baptist church and congregation, respecting their children, intimation was given that Mrs. Simons would instruct them for three hours every day. A part of the regiment left this place for Madras, a fortnight ago, when we had to part with some of the members of the church,—three men, and one woman, and one inquirer. They had a prayer meeting at the chapel, on the morning of the members leaving, and prayer was made on their behalf. Being commended to God, they parted, after singing together—“Blest be the tie that binds Our hearts in Christian love.” At Madras, there are churches of every denomination, except of the Baptist. As persons have gone from this station there, and others in time may go, there might be a church established there for our order. The particulars I will give in my next. All the members of the mission are at present in [good] health.

Yours, in the Gospel,
Thomas Simons
XVI

Letter from the Reverend Mr. Nathan Brown to the Reverend Dr. Bolles
Dated 10 April 1834, Maulmein

Rev. and dear Sir,

Although I have nothing special to communicate, yet I improve the opportunity to drop you a line, as I understand a vessel leaves today for Bengal.

You are probably aware, before this, of the arrival of brother Webb, at Rangoon, and the removal of brother Bennett to this place. Mr. Judson is now absent on a visit to Tavoy, and expects, when he returns, to go to Rangoon. He has not been in very good health lately, owing to several attacks of fever, to which he is subject. The last we heard from Ava, brother Cutter was quite ill. At this station we are all in good health.

We are going on with our studies, as usual—find ourselves able to converse a little. For several weeks I have been reading a Burman work, containing an abstract of their system of philosophy, geography, &c.

Their systems of geography and astronomy, (if it may be so called,) are very stupendous. The great central mount, and the superior celestial mansions are represented as most magnificent. Their ideas of geography and astronomy are, in nine cases out of ten, exactly the reverse of the truth. Yet their whole religious system is so based upon, and interwoven with their geography and astronomy, that they must inevitably stand or fall together.

Let a Burman only believe that there is such a country as America, at a distance, and of a size corresponding to our description of it, and his faith in Boodhism is annihilated at once, however unwilling he may be to receive the Christian religion in its stead. This makes me think that more attention ought to be paid to schools, and especially to the inculcating of correct ideas on geography, for it will be impossible for the children thus taught, ever to become conscientious believers in the religion of the country.
Your letter to brother Webb and myself, came to hand about a week ago, together with quite a quantity of newspapers, which were a rich treat to us.

With affectionate remembrances to all friends, I am as ever yours,

Nathan Brown
XVII

Letter from Reverend Nathan Brown to Messrs. Kincaid and Cutter,
Dated 9 August 1834, Maulmein
On the subject of the death of Miss Cummings

Dear Brethren,

I am very much indebted to you for your kind letters, which were received last Thursday. They found us mourning under an afflicting stroke, which will be severely felt by you all. Sister Cummings has ended her labors. She died at our house last Sabbath morning, a little before ten o’clock. She came down from Chummerah the Tuesday previous, very sick with the jungle fever. The next day she appeared to be somewhat revived, but on Thursday night, her fever returned, accompanied with violent delirium, which lasted about 24 hours. Saturday she was free from the fever, but exceedingly weak; and inclined to sleep during the whole day. Some hopes were entertained that her fever would not again return, but about day-break we were suddenly called by the watchers, when it appeared evident that the powers of nature had sunk under the disease, and that death was rapidly stealing on. She lingered till near ten o’clock, when, without a struggle, she quietly surrendered her spirit into the hands of her Maker. Her disease was so violent for the last three or four days, that we had little opportunity to learn her feelings while in the immediate prospect of death. For the last few hours she was unable to speak. But we had a surer evidence that hers was a happy death, than words, however joyous or triumphant, could have furnished,—the evidence of a godly life. She was truly a godly woman, and amid all her loneliness and trials, amid all her toils amongst the sons of the wilderness—without a friend to assist her or even a white face to look upon, we had seen her uniformly calm and patient, self-denying, and heavenly-minded; and now at the close of her sufferings, though she gave no word, or token to her earthly friends, yet we knew when we saw her lips become motionless in death, that in the regions above angels were welcoming her, as a sister spirit, to their holy company, and the Saviour himself was extending his arms to receive her as his own dear child.
She does not appear to have been in the habit of keeping a private journal. Indeed she did not leave behind her a scrap of her composition on any subject, except a few memoranda set down in a table after the manner of a counting-house almanack, which it seems she prepared and set down in her account book every year. Appended to this table for 1834, is the following striking note:

January 2. Thus have I completed an almanack for 1834, I have written it with the impression, that some of the blank lines may be filled up with the record of my own death. If any, which I cannot tell. Lord Jesus, prepare me for thy coming! A vile sinner, I cleave to thy cross, and implore pardon through the merits of thy death. That I have hitherto lived no more to thee, is my pain, my grief. Thou hast by thy good providence led me into this wilderness, and here hast thou often-times spoken comfortably to me. I bless and adore thee for thy great goodness. Who of all thy daughters is more highly favored! And now, Lord, come unto me, and make thine abode with me. Without thee, I am a lonely being indeed; but with thee, no one less so. Thou art my only hope, my only inheritance, my God, my all.

She was down at Maulmein, the latter part of April, and had considerable hesitation whether to return or remain here till after the rains, as prudence would no doubt have dictated. But the Karens were dear to her heart and she thought she might, at least, go for a few weeks, and if attacked with the fever, return soon enough to escape its violence. It appeal that from the time of leaving this place, she enjoyed unusual peace of mind. In a letter to Mrs. Brown, while on her way up, she writes, “I feel myself a pilgrim, and am happy.” She reached the scene other labors, and became so engaged in her work that when the rains came on, she felt as though she must stay as long as possible, and so lingered till she found herself attacked with the fever. She called her little flock together and gave them her farewell, expressed her willingness to live or die, just as God should appoint, and hurried away from the pestilential atmosphere. She arrived here in one day, and we had Dr. Richardson immediately called, and every means was tried to break the fever; but it was too late, and her
precious life, like a jewel dropped into the ocean, is gone! I do hope this melancholy event may be a solemn warning to us all, to do everything in our power for the preservation of our health. But she is gone, and she is happy, and we will not mourn as being comfortless; for we know that God is able to carry on all his gracious designs, and will carry them on in converting these Burmans and Karens to himself. I am glad to hear by your last letters that you are all some better than yon have been; but I fear that your health and constitutions will not be able to bear up under the hot climate of Ava. Praying that you may be directed in all your steps by Him whose wisdom is perfect, and who knows how to direct all things, I am, my dear brethren and sisters, Yours &c.

Nathan Brown
XVIII

Extract of a Letter from Mr. Comstock,
Dated 3 December 1834, Maulmein

The service which we believe our blessed Master has assigned us, has lost none of its interest in our view. We would not be back in America if we could. No, we feel thankful that we may wear ourselves out in the service of Christ, and for the good of the poor heathen. We have already been in sight of the shores of Burmah, and our language still is,

'In those deserts let us labor,
On those mountains let us tell
How he died—the blessed Saviour—
To redeem a world from hell'

Mrs. Comstock and myself are now waiting with not a little anxiety for an opportunity to take our place at Arracan. We rejoice in the providences of God in relation to us, thus far, and are willing to go forth to our work, trusting him for the future.
I left Maulmein on the twenty-second, and, after a passage of four days, arrived at Rangoon the twenty-sixth of December where we had the pleasure of meeting brother and sister Webb, whose hearts and house were open to receive us. We are now in our field of labor, and, looking back on the period that has elapsed since we left our dear friends in America, we can but exclaim, What hath God wrought for us? While travelling several hundred miles by land, and 17,600 miles by water, not a hair has fallen from our heads, nor have we suffered any loss in our temporal effects, not even so much as is often realized by the removal of a few miles in America. The climate here is now delightful, and both myself and Mrs. Howard are enjoying as good health as when we left America.

I very deeply feel that the condition of this place demands the labors of pious, persevering and experienced missionaries. But how can it be thus supplied? If it cannot be otherwise, I am willing to live and labor and die here in Burmah Proper, if the kingdom of the Redeemer may be advanced by it. I know not how a missionary, with the condition of these heathen and his Bible before him, can be discouraged in regard to his labors.
Extract of a Letter from Mr. O. T. Cutter to H. Lincoln, Esquire,  
Dated 2 February 1835, River Irrawaddy, off Yat t'haung,  
On the subject of Baptism of Moung Thun-aung

My dear Sir,

Brother Brown and myself left Rangoon for Ava on the seventeenth of November with two assistants to go the whole of the way to Ava, and one to go as far as this place. We took with us a large quantity of books and tracts, and set out with the fall intention of making a faithful distribution of them to the multitudes on this river, and which I think we have accomplished.

To-day, brother Brown had the pleasure of baptizing a young man by the name of Moung Thun-aung, a native of this place. He gave good evidence of being a Christian, when we went up, as well as his father,—and they requested we would stop when we returned, in order that they might receive baptism. The old man seems to be a real warm-hearted Christian; but, having a good deal of intercourse with Government, he is timid. He evidently wanted very much to receive the holy ordinance, but finally frankly confessed he was afraid. The young man, however, said he must be baptized; it was the command of Christ, and he must obey it. Feeling perfectly satisfied that he was a proper subject, brother Brown baptized him in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,—and having received a copy of the New Testament, he went on his way rejoicing.
Extracts of a Letter from Mr. Howard to Dr. Bolles,
Dated 21 March 1835

Since I mentioned that Ko San-lone had been imprisoned and abused for preaching the Gospel, you will doubtless wish to know how his religion supported him in the hour of trial. I can truly say that I have never seen the Christian more perfectly exhibited, than in the character and conduct of this man. He has come to see me since his release. He says that he was very happy during all his imprisonment: that though his feet and neck were hurt with irons, he did not think of his pain, nor was he afraid to be in the hands of his persecutors, since he remembered that the blessed Saviour had said to his disciples, that without the notice of their Heavenly Father not a hair should fall from their heads. The rulers, that they might terrify such as were disposed to examine the Christian religion, and obtain money for his release, had proclaimed abroad everywhere, that it was their intention to kill Ko Sanlone, so that when Moung Shwa Thah passed along the streets, the general inquiry was, “When is that Christian to be executed?” Like primitive disciples, he was condemned and imprisoned with the wicked, and like them he also prayed and sang praises to God, and the prisoners heard him. He says, when he considered what a God he had to serve, he could not fear man, and therefore he exhorted all to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. After Ko Sanlone’s imprisonment, we soon found that if I had any personal concern with the officers, in trying to effect his release, a large sum of money would be demanded, and his imprisonment would probably be much protracted. I therefore employed Mr. McCalder, who had been my interpreter, and who was, doubtless, the best person that it was possible for me to employ for that business, since he was highly esteemed by the Burmans, and also manifested a great interest in our welfare. We can have nothing to do with the officers here, without incurring expense, either in presents or otherwise. A great number of petty officers must have a small fee, and the others a few presents, so that we were obliged to give, in amount, nearly sixty rupees. This we supposed was the whole amount of expenses incurred in this affair, as we had advised his wife to do nothing, and especially to make no presents,
knowing that the rulers would keep their prisoners any length of
time, however unjustly, if thereby they could, obtain a single rupee.

When Ko Sanlone was released, I sent Moung Shwa Thah that I might ascertain all that had been expended, and to my astonishment I learned that his wife had given in presents, an amount nearly equal to two hundred rupees, in addition to the above sixty. This no doubt she did with good intentions, but under the influence of misguided feelings. When Ko Sanlone came to see me, he said he was very happy when in prison, but now he had much trouble when he thought that there was so much expense incurred on his account. He did not know that it was so till he was released. Now he had no money, and no property but his children, and he did not know but he must sell them. He was once in good circumstances as to worldly possessions, and has sacrificed all for Christ. Perhaps what I have said with regard to his wife, may not give a correct impression, as I stated that the expenses which she incurred were for presents. They may not all appear to be strictly such, as I found in the list of expenses sent me, items like the following—“paid to two secretaries, each 20 rupees.” These and other similar items, if not considered as presents were, at least to some extent, gratuitous, although she probably did not so regard them.—I believe that every professed disciple that the rulers could find in Rangoon, has been fined. Fifteen rupees is the lowest fine I have heard of. Some of the disciples ran away to the jungle, and have not since been seen. All Rangoon were afraid to come near our house. We have not yet been able to employ a teacher. We have with us three Karen lads and a Burman, who were British subjects, having come from Maulmein. These I can employ as I please, and the people dare not meddle with them. There are two Burman subjects, to whom Mrs. Howard was giving English instruction, who have not forsaken us. Eight Rangoon Karens were taken, imprisoned, fined and sent home to the jungle. They were fined from ten to one hundred rupees. Some of these came for the purpose of receiving religious instruction; others were children, and lived with us as scholars. Two of these Karen lads have remained with us, and we hope are daily receiving instruction, which will be to them a rich treasure, not to be extorted from them by their oppressive rulers.— We have just heard from the Karens in the jungle. The recent flame of persecution has extended its influence to them. A ruler of one of the Karen villages, (a Karen,)
told his Burman lords, as they were endeavoring to establish their own religion by the cruel hand of oppression, that if they wished to kill all of the Karens, they might kill them, but they were resolved that they would no longer worship Nats. We also learn, that the amount of fines paid by the Karens is about six hundred rupees. One of these had been fined sixty rupees once previously, during the present year, for worshipping the true God.

Since I commenced writing this letter, Ko Sanlone has called on me. He says that when in prison, the Seet Keh pressed him hard to renounce his religion, and worship Gaudama, telling him repeatedly that he would kill him if he would not promise to do so. When he refused compliance, the Seet Keh, with very angry tones, would repeat his threats, telling him that he was a fool for refusing to make such a promise, since that would procure his release, and then he could do as he pleased. Ko Sanlone told him, that though it were to save his life, he could not utter a falsehood; that he could not worship a being as God, which he did not believe to be such, and therefore he could not promise to do so.

Yesterday, Moung En, a Maulmein Christian who has been with brother Kincaid during the past year, arrived here from Ava. He is willing to stay with me a while, and as I need a teacher and he has been some accustomed to teaching, I have thought it best that he should tarry, at least till I could obtain the minds of the brethren on the subject. Since he is a British subject, he says he should not fear to preach and give tracts here, should I advise him to do so. The Burmans begin to call on us a little, their orders to the contrary notwithstanding.—I do not expect brother Webb’s return short of eight or ten weeks. We are making a little progress in the Karen language, and hope to be in the jungle the next dry season. We are enjoying good health, and rejoice, that through the mercy of our God we are permitted to labor in this field as your missionaries.

P. S. Ko Sanlone has informed us, that while the rulers had promised us that they would release him, they were announcing to his wife, their intentions to kill him, and that her presents would be at least the only means whereby he could be released. I mention this, so that her motives for doing as she did, may more fully appear.
XXII

Extracts of a Letter from the Reverend Mr. Nathan Brown
Dated Calcutta, October 10, 1835

Before we left Maulmein we found two Shans, one from Zenmè in Laos, the other from above Ava, with whom I studied the language for about two months previous to our leaving Maulmein, and made out a vocabulary of two or three thousand words. I find it varies little from the language of the Shans where we are going.

Application of the Roman Character to the Shan Language

Finding that the Shans have no regular alphabet, except the very imperfect one which they have borrowed from the Burmese, and that even this is written, very differently in different districts; we have concluded to introduce the Roman character, as far as practicable, among all the northeastern tribes, and especially amongst those who have no written character at all, as the Singphos, &c. The expense of books printed in the native character, considering their greater bulk, cost of type, and extra amount of labor, will be at least four times as great as that of books printed in Roman. We must not, however, dispense with the printing and circulation of tracts and scriptures in the native character where it can be read; and we expect to find a great field for tract distribution throughout the vast territory between Sadiya and Ava. As soon as we have ascertained what particular modification of the Burmese character can be read by the greatest number of Shans, we shall need to have a fount cast in that character, though that expense will probably be considerable. We shall take a small fount of Burmese with us, and a few additional Shan marks; but the forms of many; letters vary so much from the Burman, that we have some doubt whether we shall be able to print, so that our tracts can be ready without having an entirely new fount.

You will learn the method of our applying the Roman character to the Shan from the November number of the Calcutta Christian Observer, which will be forwarded to you. There appears to be nothing at present which is doing so much towards breaking
up the old heathen literature of them eastern tribes, and supplanting it by a literature truly Christian, as the recent introduction of the Roman character into India. It is the heathen literature—I am more and more convinced of it every day—it is the heathen literature of these nations that props up their religion, and in fact gives it all its charms, binding down the minds of its votaries to an ignorance and stupidity that is truly astonishing.

(In the same communication, after speaking of the kindness of Mr. Pearce, at whose house the missionaries were most hospitably entertained while at Calcutta, and alluding to the purchase of a small fount of pica, with the diacritical marks necessary for the Shan language, from the donation of Captain Jenkins before acknowledged, Mr. Brown subjoins,—)

Several other individuals have interested themselves very much in the Sadiya mission; Major White, of Assam, has subscribed two hundred rupees; Mr. Bruce and Lieutenant Charlton each one hundred; and R. M. Bird, Esquire of Allahabad, has sent brother Pearce an order for 250 rupees to be applied for the assistance of the mission. I have also to mention the donation of a large number of books, partly for the mission library at Sadiya, and partly for the use of schools, from C. E. Trevelyan, Esquire, a distinguished friend of missions and general education, who, in connexion with Capt. Jenkins, was the means of introducing Sadiya to us as a missionary field. An orrery and globe for schools, with a missionary map, have also been presented by him.

(In a subsequent letter, Mr. Brown acknowledges a donation of Chinese Scriptures from the Missionaries at Serampore, comprising one hundred copies of each of the Gospels,—one hundred copies of the Acts of the Apostles,—ten copies of the New Testament, and six copies of the Old Testament, from Genesis to Psalms. Also, a copy of Dr. Marshman’s Chinese Grammar, for the missions library.)
XXIII

Letter from the Reverend Mr. Nathan Brown to the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions
Dated 18 January 1836, Gowahati

I hasten to drop you a line from this place to inform you that we are all in the enjoyment of health, and have thus far had a comfortable journey up the river. We are now four hundred miles or more from Calcutta, and should have been up much farther, had it not been for shallow water in passing from the Hughli to the Ganges, which caused us a detention of a week or more. We have procured a Shyan teacher, and are engaged in studying the Shyan language, which we find to be entirely different from the Burman.
I still find much comfort and encouragement in trying to lead Karens in the path of knowledge and salvation. At the same time, I owe constant cause to mourn over their defects and errors, which require not a little watchfulness and anxiety; but even in this I find a pleasure, having the assurance that I am not alone.

In regard to the state of things at Dong-yahn, Ko My-at-yaw, whom I left in charge, informs me that about all remain as when I left; the three or four who were rather hopeful, still seem to be inquiring; opposition is about the same. There has been another attempt to burn the house, but unsuccessful. I have very little expectation that it will stand till my return; but this is but a secondary cause of anxiety. Their seeming determination to go down to eternal death, causes me, at times, exquisite pain. O, when will they turn and live!

The native Christians have generally, from the first, appeared remarkably firm and steadfast, and although some cases have required discipline, yet not one has had the appearance of contemplated or wilful sin. One poor old man alone, twelve or fifteen miles off, was overcome, by the long solicitation of a numerous family, and under peculiar circumstances, so as to eat in a feast made to appease evil spirits; but he immediately came down here, confessed, and appeared truly humbled; said he did not forget God any moment, or cease to love him; but to be at peace with friends, he ate. I directed him to return and prove his sincerity by a future upright walk, and when we all returned, at the close of the rains, we would consult together on his case.

There have been some other, similar cases in regard to drinking, an evil which I fear more than all others.

Agreeably to our earnest prayer, there seems to be an opening amongst the Pgwos at Bassein. I have prepared an assistant (Telaw) and family to go over to Rangoon, two or three times; but they have been providentially prevented. We now wait with anxiety to hear from that quarter in regard to political affairs.

Should Providence permit, I trust brother Brayton will be on the ground next dry season, with three or four good helps; and
may we not hope that great and glorious results will follow, so that we shall adore and rejoice as much as at the unparalleled work now going on there, amongst the other division of Karens?

I am happy that, in addition to what I was able to do last year in school, I can now add an exercise in arithmetic, and also in geography. The number of Karens now with me, is about twenty, and I am looking for a few others to-day. I employ a Burman teacher part of each day, as a number wish to learn Burmese.
Since my last letter (April 20), I have been engaged in the study of the language, and in preaching in this place. In the latter, I have been connected with brother Comstock, brother Judson having placed the assistants under our supervision. Our plan of labor has been as follows: In the morning we assemble with the assistants, now six in number, and have a season of prayer, after which we send them forth into various parts of the city, and to various zayats, to labor. In addition to the above assistants, we have located three in populous sections of the city the verandahs of whose houses are occupied as zayats, affording, also, places for evening meetings. It cost much effort to procure these houses for the assistants, as the Burmans are greatly averse to having native Christians living among them. Besides preaching in zayats, we have been preaching from house to house; and on evenings, while the weather permitted, not being able to procure such houses as we could wish, we took our stand in the street and collected large assemblies, with whom we discussed the merits and claims of our holy religion, and preached the gospel of peace. These labors have not been without effect, awaking a spirit of inquiry among the people. Many oppose, with a hardness of heart that makes our spirits mourn, while some listen to the gospel message with apparent interest. We have devoted some time to setting up day-schools, with some success. We have been prompted to this, from the fact that but few, who are from childhood educated in the belief of a false religion, give it up. Our hopes must rest upon the rising generation. If Christian teachers can but mould their youthful minds, the charm of idolatry is broken. In one school we have more than 20 children, most of whom have been delivered up to us by their parents, according to Burman custom. This school is in a section where no native Christian lives. The one to which I alluded in my last, in Tavoy-zoo, has failed, on account of the strong opposition of the people.
Extracts from a Letter of Miss Macomber
Dated 6 November 1838, Maulmain

[original editorial note: The station at Done Yahn has been temporarily in charge of Miss Macomber, aided by native assistants. In December Mr. Brayton proceeded to the station, and having built a small bamboo house, returned to Maulmain for Mrs. Brayton, whose health, for a long time impaired, had been partially restored. While at Done Yahn, Mr. Brayton administered baptism to one individual. In a previous Visit to Bootah, in company with Mr. Vinton, he had also baptized two young and one quite aged female.]

I may have mentioned that there had been attempts to burn the house and zayat at Done Yahn, when we were in it. Since the rains ceased, the attempt has been again repeated, and considerable damage done; but I understand the chief thinks he can repair it for the dry season with but little expense, and I expect to build before another season, as the house was of the kind which usually lasts but two years. I thought it probable that the first attempt was in consequence of the increase of our number—brother and sister Brayton being then there; but now believe it was owing to a settled enmity to the gospel of Christ.

Should not the power of God be displayed in changing the hearts of the perpetrators, or they be found out, I expect to be annoyed all the coming season, and have but little hope of keeping a house standing. Still the cause is God’s; the hearts of men are in his hands; he can subdue them, and I believe he will, and that the gospel will yet triumph at Done Yahn. It has already done wonders, and the time cannot be far distant when the enemy will be put to silence. Two or three of the assistants have just returned from there, and give the most cheering accounts of the attention of numbers to the word. They say that the three or four inquirers appear well, and talk of being baptized. The chief, who remains there constantly, is very much encouraged, and appears truly devoted to the cause of Christ. Ko Myatyau is also there; rather old and feeble, but a faithful laborer.

I am not a little comforted in seeing the zeal and increased efficiency with which the natives go to their work since leaving...
school (about six weeks ago.) Ko Chungpaw, Telaw, and Bah-mee, have been out in different directions, and bring pleasing accounts.

They spent three weeks in one town on a branch of the Dah Gyieng. They say they everywhere met with Karens, but they are very much scattered, and very poor, having lately emigrated from the Shyan country, three or four days over the mountains. The Karens, to an individual, listened well, though Boodhists; and many expressed a desire to receive further instruction, so as to become Christians. An aged priest, highly esteemed amongst them, and who does not conform to all the customs of the Burman priests, would not release them short of two days, so anxious was he to hear. They left the Testament and other Burman books, and Ko Chungpaw gave him his eye-glasses. The old priest sent me presents and a request to visit them. I attempted to visit that region last season, but reports of robberies on the rivers prevented. It is not more than four or five tides from here.

The assistants have just been sent to make them another visit, and to tell them that if they wish for instruction they must build a zayat.
XXVII

Extracts from a Letter of Mr. Abbot,
Dated 13 December 1838, Maulmain

[original editor’s notes: In consequence of the threatening aspect of political affairs, Mr. Abbott, accompanied by Mr. Simons, left Rangoon for Maulmain on the 24th of November].

During a few weeks after the “young chief” and his associates were released, but few Karens ventured to call on me at Rangoon, yet more than I wished. About the first of October, three men came from Bassein, to ask that question which was to me the precursor of evil—“Teacher! what shall we do?”—“for,” said they, “four of our brethren are in the stocks.” They informed me that an assistant whom I sent to that region, and three young men who joined him there, were out on a preaching excursion, and stopped at a large Karen village one evening, which was near to the village of a Burman officer, and as their custom was, Called together the people, and preached to them the kingdom of God. They were warned that their course would possibly awaken the wrath of the officers. But, as it seems, they deemed it advisable to obey God rather than man, and continued their meeting till a late hour at night. The next morning, before they had time to get away, these four young Karens were apprehended, and beaten, with several who had listened to their story the preceding evening. They were then (the four) cast into the stocks and reserved for threatened torture.

In ten days I heard again: the four had been liberated before the men who came to me reached home. But the officers had extorted a hundred and fifty rupees from the Christians, which sum had been immediately made out by voluntary contribution, some giving one anna, and some two, and some one rupee; yet not a Karen in this whole region has *been baptized, except the “young chief!”

On the 20th of November, the assistant mentioned above came to me at Rangoon, pale and emaciated from disease. I asked him how he felt while they were beating him? “Prayed for them.” But were you not a little angry? “No; I told them they might beat me to death, if they wished, but they would not make me angry,
and that I should live again at the resurrection. When they heard
this, they laughed, and after beating me a little, stopped.”

Since that time he has been preaching in villages more
remote from the Burmans, and has not been molested. The
account he brings relative to the work of the Lord in those regions,
surpasses every thing I have known in modern days among
heathen nations, and if it be of God it will stand,

“Though earth and hell oppose”

They are all expecting confidently that I will visit them this
month, especially the church at Pantanau. At Maubee and the
surrounding villages, there are very many who have learned to
read within the last year, and many who have embraced the
gospel, and are waiting for baptism. The church stands firm amid
storms and threatenings, oppressions and persecutions. Before I
left Rangoon, I saw several of the Christians, and met all the
assistants, and made arrangements for several months to come. I
parted with them, under many alarming apprehensions, and with
deep anguish of soul. If there be a war, (and there probably will,) the Karens will be great sufferers, as in the reign of anarchy the
country is thronged with banditti, and the Karens are considered
common prey.
Extracts from a Letter from Miss Macomber, [no day provided] December 1838, Maulmain
Subject: Summary View of Done Yahn Station—Native assistants and school

I shall ever rejoice in what I have witnessed of the power of divine grace amongst the heathen. A number of precious souls have been rescued from Satan’s power, and one, I trust, has gone home to heaven, though not permitted to join the church below.

The native Christians here now number twenty-three, twelve of whom have been baptized the present year. A few are still inquiring, but the multitude are going on the broad way to eternal death.

During the dry season the assistants visited, more than once, all the villages about these mountains, and I think, from what I could judge by spending most of the time with them, the truth was faithfully declared, and the way of life made plain. At Tunpuhtine and Puhaung some have been gathered in; at Tunlopun are some hopeful cases, as well as at Pahleen and Pompeah.

Evening and morning worship has been kept up all the time, and worship on the Sabbath, with Sabbath schools, &c. Bah-mee, whom I selected for the purpose from amongst the first converts, and who has thus far justified my expectations, has been my principal means of communication with the people. I have taken unwearied pains with him, giving him every means in my power for instruction, and I am daily comforted in seeing that it has not been in vain. He is much engaged about the vicinity we lately visited, on a branch of the Dah Gyieng, and I trust his labors there have been blessed. But experience has often shown that natives, however efficient with teachers, are but children if left alone.

Ko Chungpaw, two years ago, was fast going down the declivity of life, in all the darkness of heathenism; but a ray of heavenly light darted across his path, arrested, his attention, and soon kindled to a flame. Now, I may say, he is a “burning and a

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2 The original editorial comments merely mentions that “Miss Macomber, at the close of the year, gives the following.”
shining light;” one to whom we often point as a witness of the power and purity of the religion of Jesus Christ. He is wholly devoted to the work of making salvation known to others, and I think lives a life of faith and prayer.

Ko Telaw is now laboring among the Pwos scattered amongst the Sgaus in brother Vinton’s region. His son, a very promising young man, is brother Brayton’s teacher.

The little girl supported in school, and named Elizabeth Stoney, has made pleasing progress both in science and religious knowledge, possesses a very amiable disposition, and in every way promises to justify the expectations of her benefactors. The ten dollars contributed by the Sabbath school in Mt. Holly, New Jersey, I laid out in Burman tracts and books, for the use of those in my school who read Burman. I shall probably want a continued supply, as the people are much more fond of learning Burman than their own language; which, however, I do not generally encourage.
XXIX

Letter of Mr. Simons,
Dated 29 January 1839, Maulmain

Further notices of Moung Shwé Thing—Relations of Burmah and the East India Company

I cannot say that I have any evidence that the truth has reached the heart of Moung Shwé Thing, but he has always appeared very anxious to hear, and read, and understand all he can, and has said he is pleased with the Christian religion, believes it to be true, and that he will not again worship idols, He is now at Amarapura or Moksobo. Before he left Rangoon, I made him acquainted with Moung Oo Doung, and requested him to call and see the deacon and Ko Shway Nee. I also wrote a few lines to the deacon, by his son, Moung Oo Doung, concerning him, so that he might know how to instruct him, if he should call.

We have received no information from Moung Oo Doung since he left. This is probably owing to the unsettled state of things between the two governments. No Burman dares be seen near the Residency, and hence there is no safe way for him to send us letters.

My last communication apprized the Board of the arrival of Colonel Benson, the new Resident. He has been now some months at Amarapura, and up to the last communication received from him, dated on the first instant, he had had no interview with the king and it, was still somewhat doubtful how the difficulties between the two governments will terminate. The following are extracts from letters which I have received from correspondents at Amarapura and Rangoon:

“October 24, 1838 [Amarapura]. The Burmese court continues to treat the mission with studied neglect up to the present moment. All the king’s protegés (foreigners) are strictly prohibited from coming near us; even the town’s people avoid being seen talking to any of the followers attached to the Resident. Our situation at present is far from being comfortable.
November 18, 1838. Colonel Benson has not, to this day, obtained an interview with any of the ministers, as the king proposes that the Colonel should be considered (according to the treaty) merely as an officer with fifty men, and hesitated to give him the usual reception of a Resident, or even that of a common agent from the Shyán states. Our situation here, just now, is far from being comfortable; not a soul dares come near us.

November 27, 1838. The insolent and contumelious treatment of the present British mission by his majesty and his officers, has forced Colonel Benson to purchase boats and provisions, which have cost upwards of five hundred rupees, for proceeding down to Rangoon, to await the further orders of government. The ministers, perceiving that the Colonel was not an officer that would allow them to trifle with him, have begun to act with a little civility.

November 30, 1838. The Colonel has had an interview with the ministers this day, but nothing satisfactory was elicited from them as regards his representative character and manner of transacting business with them on the same footing as with Colonel Burney. I fear we shall not be able to keep on terms, long with the present king and court.

December 5, 1838. Colonel Benson was in a manner forced by the court, to apply for his departure from the capital, in consequence of their refusing to give him satisfactory replies respecting the different points in dispute between the two governments. Boats and one hundred men were supplied, in accordance with his request, and the whole of our baggage was removed into the boats; but just as we were on the point of quitting our premises, in comes a letter from the ministers, somewhat more satisfactory than those hitherto received, leaving the Colonel no other alternative, but to remain here until he receives further instructions from the government of India. His majesty has issued orders to the governors of provinces, and to the different military chiefs, to prepare for war, and the notorious Daffa Gam, the Kakhyen chief, has just arrived, no doubt to be employed against the British troops in the expected encounter.
January 1, 1839. Though preparations for war are in progress, both at the capital and in the provinces, yet the court is evidently giving in on the most material points, and it is hoped that the present differences will yet be settled without having recourse to the sword. Colonel Benson has sent in to government a statement of all that has occurred since our departure from Rangoon to the present moment, and on receipt of replies from Bengal, we shall be enabled to come to some determination as regards our future proceedings. Colonel Benson declines applying for an audience of the king, until the receipt of instructions from the governor general of India.

January 13, 1839. Rangoon. News! we have none! Boat after boat comes down, and we eagerly expect that the next, and the next, will bring something final; but no. Time is, however, getting precious, and another month, doubtless, will see ‘the deed is done.’ The Colonel and suit have suffered enough to entitle them to the glory of half a dozen martyrdoms. The fort has twenty-nine guns mounted on it Barracks are built out at the foot of the great pagoda, and a place also for his highness, the woondouk.”

Besides the above, I would also mention that her majesty’s ship of war, the Favorite, has been lying off the town of Rangoon ever since we left, and the steamer Ganges has been passing to and fro. for the last twelve months, with despatches from Rangoon, Maulmain and Calcutta.

I have been thus particular in stating these facts, because they have an important bearing on our work in Burrah Proper; for so long as the difficulty between the two governments remains unsettled, the people are kept in constant dread of a war, and there is no knowing what thoughtless, blood-thirsty officers in a moment of rage may be tempted to do.
Extracts from a Letter of Mr. Stevens,
Undated, circa early 1839, Maulmain

[Original editorial note: In a letter of previous date [to that of 31 July 1839], Mr. Stevens expresses the following views of the progress of truth in British Burmah:]

I was partly prompted to write by the sweet sound of Christian voices, from a neighboring house, which, as they warbled the notes of praise heard only in Zion, reminded me of what once was, in this land of idols, and led me to anticipate what will be. My mind was the more prepared for such anticipation from the fact, that for several days past my attention has been more than usually called to the state of religion in this city. My hopes have received new strength from the evident marks which appear of the onward progress of the gospel in this land. It is perfectly manifest, that Christianity is sapping, unobtrusively, but silently and steadily, the very foundations of the fabric of Buddhism. Light has increased, and is daily increasing, and many begin to express their fears, that this religion will ere long supplant their own. The subject is agitated among the people, and not unfrequently the assistants meet with persons who are found advocating the truths of Christianity, although they are not themselves disciples. O that more prayer might abound for the heathen! God is the hearer of prayer.
Extract of a Letter from Mr. Abbott, Dated 2 April 1839, Amherst

[Original editorial note: The last published intelligence from Mr. Abbott was extracted from a letter dated Maulmain, December 13, 1838 ... Rangoon was, for some time previous to its abandonment by Messrs. Abbott and Simons, as stated in a previous number of the [American Baptist Missionary] Magazine, the only station occupied by our missionaries in Burmah Proper, consequently all the churches which have been gathered there, with the many interesting inquirers around them, are now left emphatically as sheep without a shepherd, to be scattered and destroyed, or to be preserved by a gracious and almighty Redeemer, to witness the truth of his declarations and promises to his disciples, of his infinite power and constant presence with them to the end. Their present condition must excite the sympathy of all who love our Lord and the suffering lambs of his flock;—it calls upon them, when they pray “thy kingdom come,” to remember these destitute and afflicted disciples, and to commend them to his grace and protection with earnest importunity. We have confidence that the call will not be unheeded, that these and their oppressed countrymen will often be presented before the throne; and, that by prayer and the truth, there will yet be gathered from among the millions of Burmah, a people for the praise of the true God].

My last communication to you was from Maulmain, dated in January, soon after I had retired from Rangoon, accompanied by Mr. Simons. Subsequent events in Burmah Proper have confirmed the expediency of that measure. The officers of the Burmese government, becoming more and more jealous of foreigners, would of course look upon us with a suspicious eye, as we should unavoidably have had frequent intercourse with the Karens. The country around Rangoon has been in a dreadful state of excitement since we left, arising from a spirit of rebellion which is abroad in the land. The woundouk of Rangoon has slaughtered his fellow country men (whom he calls “rebels”) with a merciless hand; seeking the most inhuman instruments of torture and death, his
imagination could invent. O when will the reign of blood be succeeded by the mild reign of the Prince of Peace!

I received a letter a few days since from one of the Karen assistants at Maubee, saying that the Christians were suffering no more than others. Persecution for the gospel’s sake has been succeeded by oppression, and plunder, in which all the Karens suffer alike. He remarked in his letter that he had no hope the country would be quiet for a long time to come--requested roe to come and visit them, if possible, and concluded by saying, “Pray for us.” My heart bleeds at every recollection of the morrows and wrongs of that ill-fated and long oppressed people. Yet our consolation is, that Christ, the good Shepherd, knoweth his own, and will heal all their sorrows, and guide them safe home to glory.

Since my arrival in these provinces, I have been itinerating in me Karen jungles, endeavoring to do something for the salvation of souls. I spent a few weeks on Balú island, west of Maulmain, where I found a few people who listened to the gospel with attention. I have also travelled over land from Amherst to Yéh, accompanied by brother Haswell, passing through several Karen villages never visited before. We had a friendly reception from some of the villagers, who promised to learn to read if we would send them a teacher, Others scoffed, and poured contempt on the gospel, and on those who published it.
[Original editorial note: It may be recollected by some of our readers, that in 1835 Mr. Wade opened a school in Tavoy for the purpose of giving theological instruction to such converts as were expecting to engage in the work of the gospel industry. The school was continued by Mr. Wade till November 1337, and then closed, in consequence of his ill health. In March, 1839, it was re-opened by Mr. Stevens in Maulmain. In a communication of the above date, Mr. Stevens gives the following account of the institution:]

**Theological School at Maulmain—Labors and success of Native assistants—Baptisms at Maulmain and Done Yahn.**

The Seminary may now be said to be fairly resumed. On the departure of Mr. Judson for Calcutta, early in the spring, as it became necessary that some one should assume the charge of the assistants during his absence, it was agreed among the brethren that this care should devolve on me. I soon made arrangements for forming them into a bible class, which should meet twice during the week. We commenced on the afternoon of March 4th; present, seven assistants, all of whom, with one exception, were preaching assistants. On the 24th of April, the first daily student arrived from Amherst, when I began to call the assistants together three times in the week; but this will not much interfere with their daily preaching, as they do not convene till 3 1-2, P. M. They have appeared to be deeply interested in their studies, but are almost destitute of any helps, with the exception of the sacred text and their teacher. We have been through the Epistle to the Romans once, and are now going over it a second time. This beginning is small, but better than I anticipated. I love the work, and of course am happy in it.

There were present in our class today, fourteen persons. Two, who are members of the Seminary, are now absent, but are expected soon to rejoin us. Of the whole number now studying, one is from Amherst, one from Ava (now absent,) two from Tavoy, and
the remainder are connected with the Maulmain station. One is a Toungthoo, the others are Burmans and Talings.

Since assuming the charge of the assistants, I have uniformly assembled with them at 8 1/2 o'clock every morning except the Sabbath. After prayer in which generally all have united in succession, I have listened to the accounts of their labors on the preceding day, and then distributed them into different parts of the city. Three of the number are stationed at such a distance from our place of meeting, as to render it inconvenient for them to assemble daily; consequently, I have required them to meet with us only once in the week. I think I may safely say of our assistants, that, generally speaking, they have thus far been diligent and faithful in their labors. They appear to be deeply interested in their work, and the fruits of their efforts are apparent. While they have met with much violent opposition, they have also had the happiness to witness the bitter opposer become the calm and apparently sincere inquirer after the truth. Some also, who have for years been kept back by shame and fear, have come forward boldly, and have been baptized. This is especially true of the two individuals who last received the ordinance. They are both men of influence, heads of families, and known throughout the city; and their baptism has emboldened others to come forward, who will probably be baptized in the course of a few days or weeks. In view of these circumstances, the assistants are greatly encouraged, and frequently relate accounts of their preaching, with unfeigned joy. May the Lord pour out abundantly upon us the spirit of grace and supplication, and bring many to the acknowledgement of Christ!

In the English department, in which Mr. Simons has been associated with me, our congregations have increased within a few months past, so that now we have on Sabbath evenings an average attendance of fifty. I have also had the pleasure of baptizing six individuals since the beginning of the year, four soldiers and two Eurasians. My other engagements forbid my devoting more than my evenings to the interests of this church. I have uniformly met with them four evenings each week, and two evenings I conduct worship in the Burman chapel.

I have also recently become connected with the Karen department. As the church of Pgho Karens at Done Yahn had not been under the care of any one who was recognized as its pastor, I was requested by the brethren here to take the pastoral charge of it.
and the general superintendence of that station. I have consented to act in this new relation to that church and station, in hope that the cause of the Savior might be promoted by such an arrangement. On the 19th of the last month I made my first visit to that place, and found Miss Macomber in the enjoyment of her accustomed health, and the native Christians appeared to be doing well. I remained two days and a half, and had the happiness of baptizing four persons, all heads of families.

[Original editorial note: Mr. Stevens gives the following interesting Account of the candidates—Opposition of their parents, &c.]

The first person examined, was a young mother, of unusually interesting appearance. About two years before, she had seemed much interested in the subject of religion, and the hope was entertained that she would soon come forward to ask for baptism, as some of her companions did, who, together with herself, were then members of the Pgho Karen school. She, however, very unexpectedly, ceased to attend both the school and at worship, without any apparent cause, and subsequently gave no indications of special concern for her soul. Not long after leaving the school and ceasing to attend worship, she was married. Her first child God took from her by death, and when she recently expressed her determination to be baptized, her husband forsook her, and taking the child which she now has, carried it to his father's house, declaring that he would keep it. This trial was extremely severe, but she said she could not give up Christ for her child, and adhered to her determination.

Two of the applicants were husband and wife. The former had been a robber, and had suffered imprisonment for his crime two years. The parents of the latter were exceedingly opposed to her being baptized, urging that it would be the same as forsaking her parents, which would be contrary to the customs of their ancestors. The father, indeed, threatened to bring them both before the government for this crime, and came down to Maulmain for this purpose, but returned, of course, without success.

The remaining individual was also the head of a family, who had for a long time appeared to be halting between two opinions.

On the Sabbath, these four individuals were unanimously received, and accordingly, in the afternoon we assembled again in
the chapel, preparatory to our leaving for the water side. While I was conversing with the candidates in private, we were rudely interrupted by the entrance of the mother of the second woman mentioned above. She seemed very much excited, and violently seizing her daughter's arm, saying, with every breath, “living or dying, I will have my daughter,” endeavored to drag her out of the house. We immediately interfered, and prevented her from doing any injury; when she went off in a rage to call her husband. We returned to the room, and I resumed my conversation with the candidates, but soon heard it whispered, that the husband was coming. I went to the door immediately, and stood at the top of the steps. As he approached the bottom of the steps, followed by his wife, and a number of men, with whom he had been drinking, I addressed him in a calm and kind tone, and told him to pause a moment, I wished to say a few words. He ascended the steps, and sat down, trembling like an aspen. Some of us lifted our hearts in secret prayer to God. After a few words intended to lead him to think of what he was doing, he replied, that he wished to have his daughter go to his house awhile, that he might explain to her the customs of their ancestors, and that we were hindering her from so doing. With these words he descended the steps, and returned home. We felt that God had heard our prayer, and calmed the rage of the lion. We all assembled in the chapel and commended ourselves to God, giving thanks for His mercy, and praying for that deluded man. After prayer we went directly to the water side. Our path lay through the jungle. The poor woman expecting to be waylaid, kept close to us, till after a walk of half a mile we arrived at the destined spot. All around was the wildness of nature. One little spot alone was cleared, which overhung a small, but rapid brook, which was now to be consecrated by this holy ordinance. Here I had the happiness of baptizing these four individuals, without molestation, and as I turned to come up out of the water, there stood the mother of one, and the husband of the other woman, who had just arrived with the determination of taking

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3 [original note: He had sent for his daughter early in the morning for the same purpose, and she had, of her own accord, together with her husband, sent back a reply, that it was the Lord's day, and she wished to spend it in worshipping Him; therefore she could not go on that day, but would go on the day following.]
them away by force. We returned, thankful to the Hearer of prayer, who had so completely frustrated the designs of His enemies, and the wild jungle heard our song of praise.
XXXIII

Extract from a Letter of Mr. Abbott,
Dated 9 August 1839, Maulmain

[Original editorial note: At the above date Mr. Abbott was still at Maulmain. With Mr. Kincaid, he was waiting the result of the political agitations of Burmah. The question of peace or war with the British was not settled. Later advices from Calcutta state that it is determiner there will be no war this season; and the Friend of India expresses the opinion that fear of British power on one side, and hands already sufficiently occupied on the other, will effectually prevent a rupture on the questions at present in dispute. In either event, we may hope, that at no remote period our missionaries will be allowed again to return to the fields where they have formerly labored, and which they are so desirous of re-occupying. Mr. Abbott gives the following account of [the] Persecution of the Karen Christians.]

In connection with brother Kincaid I have recently been contemplating a visit to Rangoon, but the unsettled state of the country has, up to this time, rendered such a step imprudent. I have heard from the churches there several times, and have received letters from Ko Thah-a, the pastor of the Rangoon church, and Oung Bau, one of the Karen assistants. Owing to the excited state of the country arising from its disturbed political relations, the disciples of Christ have been permitted to enjoy a season of quiet, which continued till within a few weeks past, when the Burman officers found a pretext for renewing their oppression. De Poh, one of the Karen assistants, living at Karen River village, knowing from his past experience that he would be the first to suffer, in case of persecution, deemed it prudent to retire with his family farther into the interior, where he hoped to enjoy tranquillity, and be permitted to pursue his labors unmolested. But no sooner were the Burman officers aware of his absence, than they fined the Christians who remained at that village, one hundred and seventy rupees; one hundred of which they have paid, and seventy remain to be paid during the present month. But as they will make it out by voluntary contributions, it will be comparatively light, as there are about fifteen families in the village. I say comparatively light in reference to some of their former
fines. It will produce positive distress, as they are fined to the very extent of their ability to pay. Still, I hope they will be able to make out the money without selling themselves into slavery, as they have been obliged to do in former instances. Their steadfastness under these trials indicates their strong attachment to the truth, and the genuineness of their Christian character. From the letter received, I learn that though the brethren are desirous I should visit them, they are convinced that at this time such a step would be attended with positive evil to themselves, Oung Bau mentions that the people of Bassein have sent for him to come and live with them, and preach the gospel, which indicates the state of feeling in those parts.
XXXIV

Letter from Mr. Howard,
Dated 1 November 1839, Maulmain

[original editorial note: The importance of efforts for the education of the class of persons alluded to in the following; communication has long been perceived by the missionaries, and such exertions have been made on their behalf as a due attention to other duties would allow. But the circumstances of the Eurasians, mentioned below, and the frequent and urgent applications of parents for the instruction of such children, have suggested the expediency of making it an object of separate and systematic labor.]

I have been exceedingly pressed, by men in this place to take their children, with the assurance that I should have the entire control of their education, and should be paid for it any sum I would demand. When I urged as a reason for not taking them, that I had not suitable buildings for their accommodation, an offer was made to erect such buildings as I might need for them, or to make a donation of one thousand rupees to the mission, and still defray the expenses of the children, provided I would consent to educate them.

[Original editorial insert: A meeting of the missionaries, for the consideration of the subject, was accordingly held at Maulmain, in January, 1839, which resulted in the establishment of an Eurasian school, and the temporary appointment of Mr. Simons as teacher* Mr. Howard writes,—]

The term adopted to designate the class of people alluded to, indicates to some extent their condition in society. One of their parents being a European and the other an Asiatic, and many of them being entirely, and others to a great extent, abandoned by the former, to be trained up in the heathenish customs of the latter, they usually inherit from their father a disposition to despise their heathen connexions, while from their mother and the heathen among whom they live, they derive those principles of action which fit them for a pre-eminence in wickedness. Such being their character, and such their relation to the heathen, it is
unnecessary to say that their influence upon these is very great, and unless they are brought under the power of religious principle, the character of this influence will be nearly that of unmingled evil. This already numerous class of population is rapidly increasing, and, it is highly probable, will continue to increase, till in the cities and large villages it shall form a very considerable portion of their inhabitants. Convinced that they are as ready to receive religious instruction as the natives, and looking at their indissoluble connexion with them in society, as well as at their numbers and important influence, we derive from this view of the subject, arguments to satisfy our minds of the importance of directing a part of our labors to the temporal and spiritual benefit of this neglected portion of our race.

It also seems to us important that this and the native population should form two distinct departments of labor. The following are some of the considerations that lead us to this result, viz:

1st. The habits, dress, and manner of living of these two classes, are generally widely different, and as a consequence, their respective prejudices are against their being united. Indeed we think it would be impossible, at present, to unite them without detriment to both parties.

2d. Not only would there be no labor saved by uniting them, but it would tend to degrade the Eurasians, while the others would not derive the least benefit from their loss, the latter not being, at once, capable of that elevation of character of which the former are susceptible.

3d. This department, if kept separate from the native, will furnish pecuniary means for its own support, and thus we may expect, in a few years, to see this class of people taught at their own expense, and by the blessing of God, converted from their sins, so that instead of being a curse to the heathen, they will become important auxiliaries to the missionaries in spreading the gospel among them. It is well known to the Board that their missionaries at this place have not confined their labors entirely to the natives. They have, under God, raised up a church here, whose services are performed in the English language; nor are they till the present time able to escape the responsibility of sustaining its pastoral charge. This department, aside from English soldiers, is mostly composed of persons of the same rank and condition in
society with those for whose benefit we propose to establish a school, and we conceive that both the pastoral charge of this church, and the management of the school, might with propriety be assigned to one missionary. These two departments will unite with great advantage, whereas neither of them can long be sustained by a Burman missionary, without great detriment to his labors in the native department.

The providence of God which brought brother Simons to this place, we could not but regard as an indication that the time had come for us to make an effort in behalf of this people. Notwithstanding brother Simons belongs to the Ava station, yet as the state of affairs in Burmah Proper was such, and for a time was likely to continue such as to prohibit his laboring there, no serious difficulty appeared to his engaging, at least temporarily, in this department. The recent urgent applications made to some of the missionaries to receive and educate children of this class, with a promise to pay the entire expense of their education, induced us to pass the resolutions which were adopted at our meeting in January.

Though we do not expect that the entire expense of a missionary family, together with that of the school, will at once be assumed by those for whose benefit it is undertaken, yet we do think, that with a suitable person to manage this department, in the course of six or eight years the whole expense might be covered, so as to refund to the Board all that they might at first be required to pay. We regard it as quite certain that it would at least soon support itself.

Some time elapsed after passing the above mentioned resolutions before a suitable house, in an eligible part of the town, could be provided to commence our work. Owing to the unsettled state of affairs between the English and Burman governments, it was not deemed advisable at present to incur the expense of erecting buildings. A large house contiguous to the English Baptist chapel was therefore hired in April, and the school was commenced on the fifteenth of the month. With the exception of two weeks suspension, when brother Simons’s family was afflicted with sickness and bereavements, it has continued until flow, and its prospects are encouraging. The present number of scholars is thirty; males seventeen, females thirteen. Of these five are

4 This last sentence has been pulled up from Howard’s note.
boarders. Seventeen are children of Burmese mothers, of whom three are members of the church. The ages of the children are from four to twelve years. All but two are able to read intelligibly. They are taught reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, grammar, composition and singing. The fixed price for the tuition of each scholar is five rupees per month, subject to a reduction in cases where the parents or guardians cannot afford to pay this sum.

The rent paid for the house up to October 31, and other incidental expenses have amounted to 222 rupees; and the amount received for tuition during the same period is four hundred rupees.

Brother Simons preaches alternately with brother Stevens, at the English Baptist chapel; and every Lord’s day morning conducts a Sabbath school of about thirty children, at the same place; and when he has leisure, visits the Eurasian families for the purpose of giving religious instruction.
Extract from a Letter of Mr. Abbott,  
Dated 26 December 1839, Maulmain

[Original editorial notes: The visit of Mr. Abbott and Mr. Kincaid to Rangoon, as mentioned in [one of] Mr. Kincaid’s letter[s], will be recollected by our readers, and also the invitation of the viceroy for their families to come and reside in that city. In order to comply with this request, Mr. Abbott left Rangoon December 15, (Mr. Kincaid having previously left,) and returned to Maulmain, intending to go back to Rangoon with his family as soon as the proper arrangements could be made. While at Maulmain Mr. Abbott writes under the above date concerning—The state of things at Maubee—Pantanau—Bassein.]

I remained at Rangoon six weeks, where I had an opportunity of seeing all the assistants, and many of the Christians, and of learning more particularly what had passed among them during my absence.

At Maubee and in the surrounding villages, several of the assistants have spent their time in preaching from house to house, attending funerals, and conducting meetings on the Sabbath. They suffered no persecution during my absence, and were as free from oppression as any of their fellow countrymen are under the iron hand of despotism. They could not see why I should leave them; and it was with difficulty I could make them understand that it was for their sake--that they were more likely to suffer from their rulers, if it were known that they had any intercourse with foreigners. I had no idea, till my late return, what an effect it had upon them, simply to know that a missionary was in the country, although but very few of them might ever see him. They are well aware of the jealousy of the Burmese government towards foreigners just now, and that even their loyalty is suspected; still they would by all means prefer to have me remain there, and risk the consequences. Such affection and confidence towards their teachers, repay them for all their sufferings and toils, a thousand fold.

There have been a few cases of backsliding in the Maubee church, which will require discipline. One, I fear, will need to be
excluded. The others (three) appear penitent, have confessed their faults, and continue in the fellowship of the church. How many have embraced the gospel since I left, it is impossible to tell. A large number are anxious to be baptized, and are willing to suffer whatever may result if I will make them a visit.

Shortly after my arrival at Rangoon, several of the assistants came in to see me, who had just returned from Pantanau, and Bassein, where they had spent several months. The reports they brought from those places were of the most cheering character. The Pantanau church is walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost, and very many in the surrounding villages have turned unto the Lord during the year.

Success of the gospel at Bassein—Opposition of the Karens.

At Bassein, the “young chief” continues to be as actively engaged in doing good as ever. His house is a great Bethel—a temple of God, whither the people from the neighboring and distant villages resort, to learn to read, and how to worship God. He is the only baptized, individual in that region, and consequently is the only one who can be reckoned a member of the church. How many there are there who would be considered proper subjects of baptism it is impossible to say. The assistants think there are from six hundred to one thousand who are decidedly Christians. Although but one has been baptized there, still the line of demarcation between those who serve God and those who serve him not, is distinctly drawn, and generally, there exists on the part of those who reject the gospel, a most bitter hatred towards the Christians. In fact, the Karen converts fear their own countrymen, who are enemies to the gospel, more than Burman officers. Sometimes, even in families, there exists the most deadly opposition, and not only are “a man’s foes they of his own household,” but they are often his bitterest foes. Notwithstanding, I know of several villages where the people are all decidedly Christian; and although it has been denied by some that there are “whole villages who have turned to God,” yet if they will take a trip with me into the Karen jungles I will show them several such!
Mr. Kincaid and I intended to go to Rangoon immediately with our families, relying on the promises of the woondouk who was there when we arrived, who invited us to bring our families and promised us protection. But he has come up to the capital in disgrace, and his successor is another man. A few days since, I received letters from the British resident there, Captain McLeod, and from British merchants, which indicate that their stay in the country will be short. Even before I left, affairs wore a gloomy aspect, and, since then, the resident made up his mind to leave the country altogether; but was induced to remain by the woondouk, who told him he would make ample and satisfactory explanations, &c. The resident refused to remain any longer within the stockades, and has secured a more safe residence without the town, on the bank of the river, where he has gun boats, and an armed schooner near by, for his protection. All the English gentlemen there consider it would be the height of presumption in us to think of removing our families there at present. I expect letters in a few days which will determine the question. But with the permission of divine providence, I shall go, and shall hope to be allowed to see the Karens who may come into the city, to encourage and direct the assistants, and to afford to all the Karen Christians the satisfaction of knowing that their teacher has not forsaken them.

I believe nothing can be done effectually among the Burrnans under the present government. Among the Karens, I should deem it highly imprudent, to say the least, to make any efforts openly myself. Much can be accomplished among them through the assistants, as they can travel and labor quietly without being recognized as teachers of religion, by the ever watchful, jealous Burman officers. And I shall deem it my duty to stop at Rangoon and direct their efforts, if I can do it with safety to them, and with any hope of effecting more good than injury.
Note:

The following is one of many reports and accounts left by Captain Baker, some of which were published in previous issues of the SBBR.

M. W. C.

**Short Account of the Bûraghmah Country**

**Captain George Baker**

The Bûraghmah country, it is certain, has heretofore been frequented by many Europeans, particularly English, whose residence, in it, has undoubtedly afforded them much greater opportunities of giving better accounts of it, than what I can pretend to do; yet, as these gentlemen are now mostly defunct, and perhaps no account of theirs extant, I will say a few words towards it, for the satisfaction of such as have not themselves seen it.

Momchabue is the place where the present prince resides; it is a walled town, built with brick and mud, about twelve feet thick, and twenty high; and as I compute, about one thousand paces each side, being a regular square; and contains about four thousand families. It is seated in an even country, about twelve miles from the water-side, but a very sandy soil, though it abounds in many places, with a sort of black earth, which, when toiled, and otherwise prepared, produces great quantities of salt, and out of the neighbouring parts is got, with but a reasonable degree of trouble, good salt-petre; of which too, there might be great quantities had, if people were employed on it.

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Khounmewn, a place on the river’s side, about twelve miles East of Momchabue, it being the town where goods are landed for, or boated from, the capital, from this place the river running to Ava (the ancient seat of the empire) in a line nearly South about forty-five miles distant; on the West side, there runs a ridge of hills, of a moderate height, from near Khounmewn to immediately opposite of Ava, where they end; in a point, at a place, formerly well inhabited, called Chajganj. On the East side the land is marshy, at least low, in most places, for two, three, four or five miles distant from the river’s side unto the foot of a very high ridge of mountains, running nearly North and South, they extend, from considerably to the Southward of Ava, unto the North-ward of Khounmewn, even so far as can be seen, and it is said much farther, though at Khounmewn they come near the river, and part the country, which is ordinarily called the Bûraghmah dominions, from those of Siam, though these, two countries have generally been under one prince.

Ava also is a walled town, but of less extent than Momchabue, though the soil being much better for brick than that of Momchabue, it is certainly much more durable; Tis said it has been a rich and populous place. Indeed the remaining ruins afford reason to believe the latter, and common report is sufficient to confirm us, in the belief of the former; though I think (notwithstanding there are some two or three edifices admired by the country people) that there is not a single structure, or but one, that can possibly deserve the name of great, much less magnificent. It contains now about one thousand families, and is seated by the side of the river, on the point of a delightful large plain, of rich soil and delicate herbage. From hence the merchants go by land to and from Siam. At this time it is not productive of a single commodity, and though it has formerly been the mart for trade, that is at this time so dead, there is now scarce any there.

From Ava to Poganj-Youunjwe, the river is very winding and crooked. I judge the latter, in a straight line, to lie about WSW, seventy miles from the former. Between these two, the country is, for the most part, low, yet so high in the lowest places as to preserve itself from any damages from the swellings of the river, the soil is good and productive of gajary (Dalrymple’s note: q? what? In one ms it is Jagary, which is unrefined sugar) and paddy, besides the East side I am told abounds with salt-petre, and is, in
my opinion, one of the best spots in the Northern part of the kingdom. There is no remarkable town between those five places, but several small villages, both on the river’s side and farther in the country.

Pagong-Youngeoe, we are told, has formerly been a large and populous place, and indeed from the great number of pagodas, there is in, and about it, it carries with it much probability. It is situated on ground, reasonably high, perhaps ten feet above what the water ever comes to; but the soil is exceeding sandy, and remarkable for the production of nothing near it but ginjelly (Dalrymple’s note: Is a plant from whose seeds oil is expressed) and gajary, for there is neither timber nor grain grows in the neighbourhood; the country for some five miles round it, grows nothing but shrubs and tamarind trees, of which latter there are abundance. But notwithstanding the barrenness of the soil, near this place, yet at somewhat remoter distances, ‘tis very fertile; particularly on the opposite side, which is tolerably well inhabited, and from thence is brought grain and fruits, with a sort of earth good for washing.

This place is now inhabited by about six or eight hundred families, and is the mart, where goods are brought from all the neighbouring country, and consequently where others come to buy.

They have one particular pagoda, much bigger than the rest, and indeed the biggest of any between Dagon and Momchabue, ‘tis well adorned, and kept in good order, and repair; and celebrated by the people for having one of their God’s teeth and a collar-bone buried under it.

From Youngeoe to Sallee-mue I take to be about twenty-five miles, and the latter to lie about SW by South from the former; there is a ridge of ragged mountains on the Western shoar, near the river’s side (for these two places lie both on the East) that extend from opposite the one to opposite the other of these places; On the East side is another ridge of hills, but not so long, and lying farther in the country, and at the back of them again, is one remarkable Mountain, which may be seen, in clear weather, from Ava upwards, unto Mellone, or perhaps farther, downwards. The other part of the country on the East shoar is reasonably high, and perhaps a good soil; though ‘tis certain near the river’s side it has a good degree of sand mixed with it.
Raynan-Gome I take to lye 25’ South of Sallee-mue. The country between them, on the West side, is low for many miles from the river side; ‘till it ends at the feet of several mountains. The Eastern shoar is considerably higher, and, in all appearance, a fine level country, though the soil near the water side has a mixture of sand in it. At this place there are about two hundred families, who are chiefly employed in getting earth-oil, out of pitts, some five miles in the country.

Mellone, a place on the West side of the river, lyes about SSW 35’ from Raynan-Gome; there are about one hundred families inhabiting this place, who employ themselves chiefly in tillage of paddy and ginjelly; the country, on each side the river, between these two places, is something irregular; being in some places a little hilly, and in some level, reasonable heights, in others lower and plain, and in general the mould, richer and less sandy than the country above, though for want of inhabitants, and cultivation, it is mostly spread over with low thin woods.

From Mellone to Meachagang, a village containing about one hundred houses, on the West side of the river, I take to be about 35’ SSW. Between these two places there has formerly been some towns and several villages, but now utterly ruined and void of a single inhabitant; The country in most, at least many, places hilly, and some of them, on the Western side, high, though there be many intervening vallies, some lying low, and fit for paddy: others higher, and is undoubtedly fine pasture land, being rich soil, and spontaneously producing: abundant herbage, trees and other plants, as nature has possessed it of, but it is rare to see between these two places a head of any sort of cattle, or any other mark of a country inhabited or cultivated, and in general it is very Woody.

From Meachagang to Camma, the course is about South by West 20’. Between these two places, there are two or three small villages, of ten or twenty houses each. The country is much the same as that between Mellone and Meachagang, or if it differs in any thing, it is for the better, being less hilly and rather thinner of woods. Camma is remarkable for the great quantities of twelve covit teak plank it produces.

From Camma to Prone the course is about South by West 15’; the country between these two Places, is very hilly, not inhabited, and indeed unfit for Agriculture, or even Pasturage.
Prone is seated on a broad level point, jetting out into the river, which runs back into a fine Champain country, of rich soil, well inhabited, and productive of much grain; it has the ruins of an old brick wall round it, and immediately without that, another with teak timber. It contains about 2500 Families, and is the place where is the most trade for all sorts of goods, particularly the chief commodities, as iron, lead, teethe wax, timber and plank, of any between Syrian and Ava.

Saladan lies about SW 18' from Prone; the country, between these places, is level, of a rich mould, and naturally cherishes whatever is sown or planted, with care and culture; but at present abounds with no one particular thing. At the back of Saladan, which lies on the West side of the river, about a day or two's journey, in the country, grows great quantities of teak timbers, which are brought thence by two little rivers, which come out near this Place. Tis from this, and Camma, that the Syrian market always has been supplied with these commodities.

Lundsey, or Yaoungmeeoe, lies on the West side of the river about 25' SSE of Saladan. It is walled in with timber, about eight hundred Paces long, and six hundred broad; and contains (the suburbs included) about two thousand families. The country on all sides of it, is exceeding even and of an excellent rich Soil, but in general woody, being but badly cultivated; it is not remarkable for any thing in particular, but there is notwithstanding something, of whatever the country produces, to be had here, and as to trade it seconds Prone.

From Lundsey, to the mouth of that river which leads to Negrais, the course is about South, 35'. Between these two places, there are two small villages, both on the western shoar; The country is even, and lower than that above it; however it is habitable, and not so thick of woods, as some other parts. The soil is exceeding good, and productive of good paddy: and indeed the whole country between Prone and this river's mouth, is a very fertile mould; being, in my opinion, the richest soil that I have seen, for so great a space together, in the whole country. From this place, where the Negrais River receives its source from that of Ava, it being exceeding crooked, I compute to be, by way of the river, to Prygee about 110', and (according to computation one hundred) in a straight line SW 60'. The soil, between these places, is exceeding rich and productive of great quantities of grain, and
such fruits, &c. as they plant, it being in most places reasonably high; 'Tis as well inhabited, at this time, as any other part of the Country, that I have seen.

From Pryggee to Persaim, the land is much lower; yet many places habitable, though not now inhabited, and abundance of the land for paddy. I take the latter to lye from Pryggee SSW 45', direct distance.

Negrais I take to lye 45' in a line SSW from Persaim (Dalrymple note: Captain Baker having made a mistake, in casting up the Traverse of the courses and distances between Momchabue and Negrais, has obtained a false latitude of Momchabue; and has laid down his sketch of the river by this false latitude. I have thought it would be satisfactory to give Captain Baker’s Traverse, as well as the positions, from his Traverse correct). The country, between these places, is so well known, it needs no Description of mine; and therefore I shall only say, that the first 10’ below Persaim, is land exceedingly well situated for the growth of paddy, which is one commodity, if the place becomes inhabited, and the country enjoys peace, that will certainly be very cheap.
## APPENDIX

### [Captain Baker's Traverse]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Journey</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Dist.</th>
<th>Dis. S</th>
<th>Lat. E</th>
<th>Depart. W</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From Monchabue to Ava</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ava to Youngeo</td>
<td>WSW</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>26,8</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>64,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youngeo to Sallemew</td>
<td>SWbS</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20,8</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>13,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sallemew to Raynangong</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raynangong to Mellone</td>
<td>SSW</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>32,3</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>13,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mellone to Meachagang</td>
<td>SSW</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>32,3</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>13,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meachagang to Cammah</td>
<td>SbW</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18,8</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>6,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cammah to Prone</td>
<td>SbW</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14,1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>5,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prone to Saladan</td>
<td>SW</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12,7</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>12,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saladan to Lundsey</td>
<td>SSE</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>23,1</td>
<td>9,6</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lundsey to Head of Negrais River</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of Negrais River to Prygee</td>
<td>SW</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>42,4</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>42,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prygee to Persaim</td>
<td>SSW</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>41,6</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>17,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persaim to Negrais</td>
<td>SSW</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>41,6</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>17,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Total]</td>
<td></td>
<td>431,5</td>
<td>9,8</td>
<td>206,8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Difference of latitude between Negrais in 16.0N

And Momchabue 431’ or 7.11

Latitude of Monchabue 23.11N

Ava lies South of Monchabue 45

Latitude of Ava 22.26N
Note:

Dalrymple provides some information on Captain George Baker in his introduction to the *Oriental Repertory*:

Captain George Baker’s Observations at Persaim in 1755, his Journal of an Embassy, to the King of the Bûraghmahns, his Character of that King, and the Short Account of the Country are from MSS, which that valuable friend gave to me during the course of our voyage in the Cuddalore [in] 1759: His modest diffidence makes him apprehensive of appearing as an author; but, I doubt not, the publick approbation will shew his apprehensions were groundless.

All of the accounts mentioned by Dalrymple have been republished in the SBBR (see volume 3.2 and the present issue). In the collection of notes included below, “The Palace at Pegu” has been extracted from Dalrymple’s introduction. As he explains of the origin of the note, “I find amongst my memos of information, received from Captain Baker, the following account of Pegu, which could not properly be introduced in any other place, and therefore I have inserted it here.”

The sections on (1) the Burmans and Mons and (2) the Karens, below, were extracts inserted into the initial anonymous letter included in the *Oriental Repertory* collection by Dalrymple, indicating with a “B” that Baker was the source of the quotations.

Dalrymple, in his introduction to *Oriental Repertory*, also makes the following observation based on Baker’s accounts which may usefully be included here:

It has appeared, in Captain Baker’s Observations, that the Bûraghmah King had risen from his abilities; Simento, the
King of Pegu, was at first a Goldsmith; so that both competitors were self-raised.

M. W. C.

Notes on Bûragmah (c. 1755)

Captain George Baker

Bûragmahns and Peguers

(It may be here proper to observe that) This Country contains two nations, the Bûragmahns and Peguers.

The Peguers resemble the Malays, in their appearance and disposition, though more industrious; they cut their hair round before, and the back-part, from their ears to the crown of their head, is shaved in a semicircle.

Bûragmahns have more similitude to the Arabians in their features; but are darker in complexion than the Peguers. The Bûragmahns are much more numerous than the Peguers, and more addicted to commerce; Even in Pegu their numbers are 100 to 1. They punctuate themselves, and, by rubbing gunpowder [Dalrymple note: another memo says dammer, which is more probable] into the wound, give such marks as remain ever after. They are of a tawny complexion, though the women who are not much exposed, if not white, are at least fair. The common women undergo all drudgery, and are very homely.

The men are lusty, and particularly paint their thighs, as has been observed, not in figures of beasts, &c. as would seem, but like the Meangis.¹

¹ Original footnote: Dampier, in his description of the prince of Meangis, says “He was painted all down the breast, between his shoulders behind; on his thighs (mostly) before; and in the form of several broad rings, or bracelets, round his arms and legs. I cannot liken the drawings to any figure of animals or the like, but they were very curious, full of great variety of lines, flourishes, chequered work, &c. keeping a very graceful proportion, and appearing very artificial, even to wonder, especially that upon and between his shoulder blades.” Dampier, vol. I, p. 514.
Carianners [Karens]

There is another people in this country called Carianners, whiter than either, distinguished into Bûraghmah and Pegu Carianners; they live in the woods in small societies, of ten or twelve houses; are not wanting in industry, though it goes no farther than to procure them an annual subsistence.

They are remarkable for their perfect morality, but have no apparent religion. When asked if they believed the existence of any superior being, they replied, that the Bûraghmah and Pegu tallopins [monks] told them so, but that they knew nothing about it.

It is customary with them to place a duck, or fowl, with some rice, upon the grave of every deceased person; when asked on this also, they give no reply, but that it is customary. When any person dies they abandon the house, and build another.

The Palace at Pegu

The city of Pegu was a regular square, with four grand streets leading to four gates, and being built on a plain, a person, at the center, could see them all at once, although the city was above a mile each way. In the NE quarter was the palace, and the temple of Kyak Mintao, the last was gilt, and made a very splendid appearance, as do the other celebrated pagodas, in this country, being also gilt.

The palace had somewhat of grandeur, although it had no carved work, like the Bûraghmagh king’s, which was very far from being contemptibly executed. The pillars, &c. of the Pegu palace, were carried to Bengal in 1757 by Captain Bailey.

It is remarable the palace was built in one day, according to a superstitious custom these people, which enjoins their royal palaces to be raised in one day; It was built in 1753: All the materials being prepared, a certain number of people, from every district, and from every ship in the river, were summoned, with the proper implements, to be employed in this business.
The Royal Ship of Pegu

The Bûraghmah king’s boat carries three hundred persons, besides servants, 150 rowers, seventy-five men with firelocks, and seventy-five with bows and arrows, placed in three teers; the rowers on the surface of the water, and then the fire arms. The boat was about 150 feet long and forty broad, and went very swiftly, the rowers being well-trained to their oars.
Note:

We include below the complete diary portion of John Crawfurd’s account of the embassy he headed to the Burmese court in 1826 and 1827, introduced by Crawfurd’s dedication. This account was originally published (with the misleading attribution of the embassy to 1827).

Journal of an Embassy From the Governor-General of India to the Court of Ava, in the Year 1827, by John Crawfurd, Esq., FRS. FLS. FGS., &c. Late Envoy. With an Appendix, Containing a Description of Fossil Remains, by Professor Buckland and Mr. Clift (London: Henry Colburn, New Burlington Street. 1829).

M. W. C.

Journal of An Embassy From the Governor-General of India to the Court of Ava

John Crawfurd
Civil Commissioner, Rangoon
& Envoy to the Court of Ava

To His Majesty King George the Fourth,

May it Please Your Majesty; I humbly hope that a faithful account of barbarous countries suffering under slavery and superstition may be no unwelcome offering to the Sovereign

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of the greatest of free nations. In contemplating the unhappy lot of Tyrants, debased and corrupted by the absolute power which they are doomed to exercise, your Majesty may see new reason to be gratified with that constitutional exertion of authority by which you redress the grievances of your subjects, and enlarge the fabric of civil and religious liberty, for the preservation of which the illustrious House of Brunswick was called to the Throne of Great Britain.

May I presume to add that the Dedication of this Work is peculiarly due to Your Majesty, inasmuch as the materials for it were collected in the service of the British Government in India, where a comparison of the condition of the people of the British territories with that of the subjects of the surrounding States, is sufficient to show the beneficial power of the English Constitution, even in its remote and faint influence; and to awaken sanguine hopes of the blessings which await your Indian subjects, when the benefits of that Constitution shall be fully and directly imparted to them under your Majesty’s paternal administration.

I have the honour to be, Sire, Your Majesty’s faithful Subject,

John Crawfurd

September 1, 1826

I had resided at Rangoon for above six months, as Civil Commissioner on the part of the British Government, when I received instructions to proceed on an embassy to Ava. My companions were Lieutenant Chester, assistant to the Envoy; Dr. Steward, Medical Officer; Lieutenant Cox, of His Majesty’s Service, commanding the escort; Lieutenant de Montmorency, of the Quarter-Master-General’s department; and Mr. Judson, of the American Missionary Society, translator and interpreter. I had also the great advantage of the society of Dr. Wallich, Superintendent of the Government Botanical Garden at Calcutta, deputed to accompany me for the purpose of examining and reporting upon the resources of the forests of Pegu and Ava, as well as of those of our recently acquired possessions to the south of the Saluen river.
The *Diana*, of about one hundred and thirty tons burthen, the first steam-vessel which ever appeared in India, and which had proved so eminently serviceable during the Burman war, was appointed for our personal accommodation. We had besides, five Burman boats for the accommodation and conveyance of some of the writers and draftsmen, our baggage, and the presents from the Governor-General to the Burmese Court. The escort consisted of twenty-eight picked grenadiers and light infantry of His Majesty’s 87th regiment, and fifteen picked Sepoy grenadiers. The Europeans of the escort were accommodated on board the steam-vessel, and the Sepoys on board the native boats. The object of the Mission is sufficiently described in my Instructions, which will be found in the Appendix.

The heaviest baggage-boats having proceeded up the river some days, and three of what we supposed the lightest, a few hours before ourselves, we embarked on the Diana, on the afternoon of the 1st of September, and in the course of the evening weighed anchor and commenced our journey. We rested for the night, at a place called, by the English, Pagoda Point. This is a low tongue of land which separates, just at their confluence, the two branches of the Irawadi, those of Lain and Panlang, which form the Rangoon river. It is nearly visible from the town of Rangoon. As a military position, Pagoda Point is remarkably strong, and an enemy of any military skill or spirit might have fortified and defended it in such a manner, as to have rendered this route the only good one to the upper provinces and capital by water, quite impassable for an invading force. The Burmans, shortly after the arrival of our army at Rangoon, had fortified it after their fashion; erecting a stockade on the Point,—one on the right bank of the Panlang, and one on the left of the Lain river, neither of which streams are here above one hundred and fifty yards broad. Sir Arichibald Campbell attacked these stockades, on the 8th of July 1824, with the gun-boats of the expedition, carrying a detachment of European and native troops. The stockades were cannonaded for some hours. This was the practice in the commencement of the war, until it was found that the Burmese wanted courage to face the close attack of the Europeans, and that they invariably took to flight when closed with. After this discovery, the mode followed was to run up to the stockades at once, place the ladders against them, and scale. A few casualties occurred in the advance; but the seating-ladders were
scarcely placed, when the Burmans abandoned their works, and except when accident prevented their escape, an occurrence which happened on a few occasions only, they sustained little loss. From the personal intrepidity of the European troops, and their physical strength, they were peculiarly well suited for this mode of attack. Neither the moral nor physical energy of the Sepoys was found so suitable. In the attack on Pagoda Point, the European soldiers had scarcely landed, when the Burmans abandoned their stockades, and took to flight. The casualties on our side were very few, nor did the Burmese sustain any considerable loss.

On the same day with the attack on Pagoda Point, the 8th of July, took place one of the most important affairs of the Burmese war, an affair which first convinced the Burmans of their infinite inferiority to European troops. The principal Burman force was encamped at Kamarot, a place about seven miles distant from Rangoon, where they had thrown up a series of stockades. The Kyi Wungyi, the commander in chief, whose tardiness in not driving the invaders out of the country was complained of at Court, had been superseded by Thaongba Wungyi, described as a brave but rash man. He had not been above three days in command of the army, when his entrenched camp was attacked at a moment when he was preparing, according to his own belief, a formidable assault on the British lines. The escalade was so sudden, that the Burmese had no time to escape, and a great number of them perished, Thaongba Wungyi himself among the number. The report of this affair at Ava, as was afterwards well ascertained, struck the Court with consternation; and then, for the first time, it seemed to repent of its rashness in entering into the war.

**September 3, 1826**

At day-break, yesterday morning we left Pagoda Point, and in the course of the forenoon overtook the boats which had left Rangoon some hours before us, as well as a number of Burman trading-boats, that, on account of the numerous banditti which at the time infested the narrow channel of the Panlang branch of the river, were anxious to take advantage of our safe convoy. At five in the evening we reached the village of Panlang (Panleng), the place which gives name to this branch of the Irawadi. Two small branches of the river, navigable during the rains, strike off at this
point: the one running to the East communicating with the Lain branch; and that proceeding to the West, with the river of Bassien. The village of Panlang, at present perhaps not exceeding one hundred houses, is scattered over the several points of land at the bifurcation of these streams. It was the scene of one of the most decisive victories of Alompra over the Peguans, in the year 1755. In February 1825, the place had been strongly stockaded by the Burmese; but, on the approach of General Cotton’s division, was abandoned without resistance. Several boats came alongside the steam-vessel; and among our visitors were two chiefs, who had taken an active and friendly part with, us, during the war. One of them said, that it was unsafe for him to remain in the country, and that he had every thing ready to emigrate, along with the English, to our new settlements to the south of the Saluen river. We anchored for the night a few miles above the village of Panlang. This branch of the Irawadi is notorious for being infested with swarms of musquitoes: they were extremely troublesome last night; and our servants, who had no protection against them, did not get a wink of sleep. We met in the course of the day five gun-boats, and took two of them along with us as far as Henzada, having on board a detachment of an officer and twenty European soldiers.

**September 4, 1826**

We had taken in tow two of the luggage-boats; which so greatly impeded the progress of the steam-vessel, that we did not reach the Irawadi until this morning at nine o’clock. Its first appearance is not striking; and even now, in the height of the rains, it scarcely appeared a mile broad. The first village, upon its left bank, is Yangain-cham-yah (Ran-gen-san-ra), now a very trifling place, but before the war a populous village.

The Panlang river, from Pagoda Point to the Irawadi, is about sixty miles in length; has a very tortuous course, and varies in breadth from eighty to one hundred and fifty yards. For about half its course, or to the village of Panlang, the influence of the tides is felt during the freshes, but in the dry season as far as the Irawadi itself. The water, however, at all times is fresh and potable even at Panlang. The least depth which we had, in passing through, was two and a half fathoms, and this was only upon some sand-banks near the point where it issues from the Irawadi. Generally we had
from three to four fathoms. In the dry season, the least water upon
the sand-banks now mentioned is five feet. This shows that the
rise and fall of the river, in this part of its course, is ten feet. The
country from Rangoon throughout is a low champaign. As far as
the tide reaches, it is covered with a thick forest of moderate-sized
trees, among which the most frequent and remarkable are the
Sonneratia Apetala and Heritiera Fomes. Here and there, there were
a few grassy plains. As soon as the influence of the tides ceased,
the character of the vegetation altered very greatly. The country
was then generally covered with a tall, rushy grass, a species of
Saccharum, among which were scattered trees of from twenty to
sixty feet high, without any underwood. Of these trees, the most
common and striking were the Acacia elata, the Lagerstroemia
reglinæ, a species of Butea, and a species of Dillenia. This last was
the tree which our countrymen had frequently observed during the
war, and, on account of some resemblance in the size and shape of
the leaf, denominated bastard teak.

The appearance of inhabitants and cultivation was extremely
scanty. Here and there, on the immediate banks, were a few
villages of Talain fishermen. The Karian (Karen) villages, somewhat
more frequent, were to be seen now and then in the interior only,
with a few patches of rich culture about them. The only culture of
any extent was that of the banana, of which we saw extensive
groves close to the river-side. The fruit was of a very indifferent
quality, and the plant very carelessly grown—being intermixed with
the tall grass already mentioned to such a degree, that we at first
imagined that it was in a state of nature. There can be no question
but the soil is fertile and suited to the production of grain,
especially beyond the reach of the tides. The situation also
possesses great advantages for irrigation. The banks on both sides
are obviously a foot or two above the level of the surrounding
country: and thus, in the season of the rains, the circumstance
may be taken advantage of for watering the land to a great extent.
This, in fact, has been done to some degree towards the north-west
extremity of the river, where we saw a number of recently cut
canals, carrying a full stream of water to fields in the
neighbourhood.

September 5, 1826
At five in the evening we arrived at Donabew (Danubyu), twenty miles above the entrance of the Panlang river. Here we overtook such of our boats as had not already joined us. A little way below this place, we were overtaken by a dispatch-boat from Rangoon, which it had left on the 2nd. On board of her was a Burmese officer, who had brought a letter from the Wungyi, and future Governor of Rangoon, now residing at Henzada, to the British Commissioners. I had the reply with me, and, at his request, delivered it to this person, who would certainly reach before ourselves. The village of Donabew was by far the largest we had seen, and consisted of one long row of houses, extending along the very brink of the river, which here and elsewhere was full to the level of its banks; although the latter, in the dry season, are twenty feet from the water. Near Donabew was to be seen an extent of rice culture much beyond what I had observed in any other part of Pegu. Below the village, there was one field extending along the river-side for at least two miles, which was in some places a mile in depth. We observed that the practice of transplanting was followed.

At Donabew the British force received the only serious check which it met with during the war. Bandula, the Burman commander, after being repeatedly foiled or beaten before Rangoon, retired to this place in December 1824, and, in the interval between that and the beginning of March following, had erected field-works more formidable and extensive than we had at that time encountered, or indeed did encounter at any future period of the war; and in these he had collected a numerous force. We examined the remains of these works, which were already, in the short space of eighteen months, as much overgrown and obscured by rank weeds, as half a century would have made them in Europe. The principal work was a square fort of earth, supported by palisades; its river face, and that corresponding to it, being scarcely less than a mile in length. The flanks were probably not above half this extent. This fortification, with the exception of the river face, was surrounded by a ditch of tolerable depth, and about twenty feet broad. The river face was protected by a deep abattis, which constituted the strongest part of the works. Within, there were dug numerous pits, covered over with trunks of trees, to protect the besieged from the effects of our shells and rockets. A chain of redoubts, extending for half a mile below the fort, connected it with a group of seven or eight temples. The force
which defended these works was estimated at twenty thousand men. Our commanders, unacquainted at the time with the nature of the country, as well as with the movements of the enemy, considered Donabew only as a petty post. Sir Archibald Campbell had consequently passed it with the main column, and proceeded two marches beyond Sarwah, when he received news of our repulse. The capture of Donabew had been left to Brigadier-general Cotton, with the water-column of the force. On the 7th of March, he attacked the place with about seven hundred men. The group of pagodas was captured; but the European troops, who were less steady than usual, were repulsed in attempting to penetrate the abattis, and lost their two commanders, the captains of the flank companies of His Majesty’s 89th regiment, who were bravely attempting to lead the troops into the works. General Cotton, upon this repulse, retired to a large island in the Irawadi, a few miles below Donabew, and there continued until the retrograde movement of General Campbell brought him to Donabew in the end of March. The place was then regularly besieged, batteries having been erected on the island within a few hundred yards of the north-east angle of the fort. The fate of Donabew was truly characteristic of the rude warfare of the Burmans, and of the character of the government and people. An accidental shell, one of half a dozen discharged as an experiment to ascertain the range of our mortars, and before our fire had regularly opened, killed Bandula, as he lay reclining upon a couch. The Burman chiefs offered the command to his brother, who refused it; upon which the troops forthwith abandoned the place, and dispersed. Bandula’s brother fled to Ava, where he found an order ready for his execution; and was, in fact, put to death for refusing the command, as well as for his flight, within a short half hour of his arrival at his own house in Ava.

Bandula, at the time of his death, was about forty-five years of age. Mr. Judson, who had seen him, described him to me as a man of striking features and handsome person. He had a remarkable character for a Burmese courtier: he was said to be honest, and his military reputation was higher than that of any of the Burmese chiefs. He was a strict disciplinarian, and celebrated amongst the Burmans for what, among all the military virtues, they set incomparably the highest value upon,—skill in stratagem. His military fame was acquired in the conquest of Assam, and
latterly by the advantages he gained over our native troops on the Arracan frontier. Flushed with former successes, and totally miscalculating the strength and resources of the new enemy he had to deal with, he assumed the command of the Burman troops before Rangoon with great confidence; but in the sequel did nothing worthy of his former reputation, or indeed any thing to distinguish him from the crowd of ordinary commanders. Like other Burmese leaders, he no where exposed his person; and after his defeat at Rangoon, on the 9th of December, his flight was so precipitate, that he never halted, but to sleep or eat, until he reached Donabew. At this place he maintained discipline amongst his troops by those brutal and rigorous practices which are so congenial to the character of the Government. One of his principal commanders was a commandant of the palace, an officer of high rank. This person, who had been guilty of some breach of discipline, or disobedience of orders, he caused to be put to death, by sawing him asunder,—the body of the sufferer being, for this purpose, placed between two planks.

**September 6, 1826**

We stopped all day at Donabew, laying in a supply of firewood, and waiting the arrival of the two gun-boats, which had been unable to keep up with us. At day-break this morning, after writing letters and dispatches for Bengal and Rangoon, we proceeded on our journey. We found the stream rapid, running probably not less than four miles an hour, and had no wind to assist the boats. The weather was generally clear, and we had very little rain. When calm, it was sultry, and the thermometer occasionally rose to ninety degrees. More generally, however, it did not exceed eighty-three degrees, and the nights were cool and agreeable. Impeded in our progress by a heavy accommodation-boat which we had in tow, and finding it dangerous, when it became dark, to approach the shore, for the purpose of avoiding the most rapid part of the current, we were compelled to come to an anchor late in the evening, two miles below the village of Lethakong.

**September 7, 1826**
Struggling against the stream, this morning, between eight and nine o'clock, we struck upon a sand-bank in the middle of the river but got off in half an hour, without injury. Yesterday, the range of hills called in our maps Galladzet,—a name not known, however, to the Burmans,—were in sight, to the east; and to-day both these and branches of the Arracan mountains were visible, the latter lying north-west of us. The breadth of the valley of the Irawadi, even here, is therefore very inconsiderable. From the mouth of the Panlang river, up to Lethakong, both banks of the Irawadi are covered everywhere with a narrow belt of the tall reedy grass, already mentioned. Behind this belt is a thick and continuous forest of middling-sized trees, commonly from twenty to forty feet high. The most frequent of these was the Acacia elata, already mentioned. Last evening, a Myosaré, or Town-Secretary, in a four-and-twenty-oared boat, came down to us from the Wungyi, to ascertain how far we had got, and when we might be expected at Henzada. To-day another dispatch-boat came for the same purpose.

September 8, 1826

We reached Lethakong (Fine-breeze Hill) yesterday, at about twelve o'clock. This is a small village, of which the immediate neighbourhood is somewhat higher than the surrounding land; whence its name, which, at the present moment, was peculiarly inapplicable; for there was not a breath of air stirring, and the village was flooded by the rise of the river, so that the inhabitants were seen wading from one house to another. At this place we were obliged to remain all day, waiting for the gun-boats and our baggage, which had taken a short cut by a narrow branch of the river, which, commencing about five miles above Donabew, joins the Irawadi at the village of Lethakong. We took the opportunity of this delay to replenish our stock of wood. Old teak was obtained for this purpose at a cheap price; and forms so good a fuel, that our engineers gave it a preference to Indian coals. Our servants brought us from the market a supply of fresh fish, among which was the Cockup (The Coius vacti of Buchanan Hamilton), although we could not be less now than a hundred and twenty miles from the sea; and this is considered a fish of salt water only. Fish in various forms, and of every species, without exception, which the
country affords, form an essential portion of the food of all classes of the Burmans. The Irawadi and its branches afford an abundant supply, not only of ordinary kinds, but of several delicate varieties. Besides the cockup, one of the best Indian fishes, there is to be found at Rangoon abundance of mango fish (Polynemus risua of Buchanan Hamilton), from April to September, and what is called whiting (Bola Pama of Buchanan Hamilton) in Calcutta, the Rohu, and the Katla (Cyprinus Rohita and Cyprinus Catla of Buchanan Hamilton), with the mullet, and abundance of prawns, at all seasons. In some parts of the river, the sable (Clupanodon ilisha of Buchanan Hamilton), the richest fish of India, is to be found, but not in abundance; or, more probably, the art of taking it is not understood by the Burmese fishermen.

We arrived at Henzada between twelve and one o’clock. A few miles before reaching this place, we were met and escorted by a war-boat, and four accommodation-boats, carrying two chiefs, with gold umbrellas, and their retainers. One of the chiefs was an Ex-Myowun, or governor, of Bassien; and the other, the intended Akunwun, or collector of land revenue, of Henuzawadi, or Pegu. They were importunate in their endeavours to persuade us, on the part of the Wungyi, that we ought to wait at Henzada for a formal invitation from the Court; which might be expected in four or five days, as thirteen days ago intimation of the Mission had been sent to Ava. Between Donabew and Henzada we saw no marks either of commercial or agricultural industry. The villages are small, and very few in number; and some trifling patches of rice culture only were to be seen here and there. From the nature, however, of this cultivation, as well as of the country in which it is carried on, the vestiges of culture are indeed so much obliterated in a single season, by the rapid growth of the tall reedy grass already mentioned, that its amount might in reality be greater than was apparent to us. In a few spots we saw the grass recently cut down, and the ground just prepared for receiving the seed. Thirty-one years ago, Colonel Symes, and Dr. Buchanan Hamilton, whose manuscript journal was beside me, found the country in the same uncultivated state as I now describe it: so that the causes which operated to the prejudice of industry and improvement in their time, seem not to have ceased to influence it down to the present day. These causes are, without doubt, bad government in a thousand shapes; for the country seems to possess, in an eminent
degree, the advantages of a fertile soil, a favourable climate, and ready communication. On the banks of the Menam in Siam, as well as those of the river of Saigun in Kamboja, extensive cultivation commences ten miles above their embouchures. At the distance of one hundred and twenty miles from the sea, there is still no such appearance in the Irawadi. One would be tempted to believe, from this circumstance, that the Governments of Siam and Cochin China were less favourable to industry than that of Ava. But in reality, after all, I believe there is no great difference between them, the one being as bad as the other.

In the afternoon we paid a visit to the Wungyi, and were received with marked politeness and attention. A war-boat was sent to convey us. A band of music was playing as we landed, and a set of dancing-girls were exhibiting in the place where we were received. We found the great man seated under a temporary canopy erected for the occasion surrounded by five or six chiefs, the principal of whom was the intended Myowun, or Governor, of Bassien. The chief advanced to the door to meet us, and shook us cordially by the hand in the English fashion. All the Burmese chiefs, as well as the English gentlemen, were seated on chairs. The Wungyi was a man of forty-five, as he informed us himself. He was tall for a Burman; and, instead of the squat form which distinguishes the race generally, his figure was slender; his complexion, much fairer than usual; and his features, especially the nose, more distinct and better formed than common: his eyes, however, were Chinese. His manner was cheerful, unconstrained, and not undignified. He had, in short, the manners of an Asiatic gentleman. The name, or rather the title, of this personage was Maong-kaing. He had long been an Atwen-wun, or Privy-counsellor, and was raised to the rank of Wungyi towards the close of the war. In the early part of the contest he was a lieutenant under Bandula, in Arrracan; and was afterwards employed in negotiating the armistice of Nyaong-ben-saik. A curtain, behind the place where he sat, concealed the inner apartments from our view; but towards one end of it sat a handsome well-dressed young woman, full in our view, and without making any attempt to conceal her person. This was one of the junior wives of his Excellency. His principal wife had remained with his children at Ava, as a pledge; according to custom, for his loyalty. Our conversation was of a very general nature, and chiefly consisted,
on the part of the Wungyi, in attempts to persuade us to remain at Henzada, until express leave was received from the Court for our proceeding. The first question put by him, after we were seated, was an inquiry after the health of His Majesty the King of England,—no mention being then or afterwards made of the Governor-General, who had sent the Mission. This little circumstance evinced sentiments in the Burman Government, notwithstanding their defeats and humiliations, exactly corresponding with what I had experienced on the part of the Siamese and Cochin Chinese Governments. These half-civilized nations, notwithstanding their knowledge of the power of our Eastern empire, feel the utmost repugnance to placing themselves on a level with a mere viceroy. In the discussions which took place under the British cannon at Yandabo, within forty miles of the capital, and when the Government of Ava was humiliated to the last degree, the Burman Commissioners, feigning to forget that they were negotiating with the Indian Government, made difficulties about the appointment of resident ambassadors, as provided for in the treaty of peace, alleging the great distance of England from their country! It was necessary to remind them, in language not to be misunderstood, that Calcutta, and not London, was to be the place of residence of the Burman Ambassador.

In my first interview with the Siamese Minister, on my mission to that country in 1823, the servile demeanour of his officers and followers towards him, forcibly struck my companions and myself as highly offensive. In the demeanour of his officers and retainers towards the Wungyi, upon the present occasion, there was in comparison very little to offend. The former sat on chairs, and, in the discussion which ensued, offered their opinions with perfect freedom; and the latter were seated on the floor, in the usual Oriental posture, without exhibiting any constraint or embarrassment. The only exception to this was, the person charged with his Excellency’s spit-box, and who, prostrate in the Siamese fashion, held the precious utensil over his head, without venturing to look upwards.

Among the crowd of inferior officers and dependents seated on the ground, some of our party, who had known him well during the war, recognized the Myosugi, or head man of the town and district of Henzada. Of the few Burman chiefs, all of them of inferior rank, who took part with us in the late contest, this
individual was by far the most active. He hoisted a British ensign in his war-boat, put on a British uniform, and frequently attacked parties of Burmans. After the treaty of Yandabo, he repaired to Ava, and made his peace with the King. The amnesty agreed upon in the treaty had hitherto been observed in regard to him; but how long this would continue, it would be difficult to say. He recognized Mr. Montmorency, but did not address him; and I requested that no notice might be taken of him, for fear of exciting the jealousy of his superiors. The secretary of the Lutdau, however, turned round and asked Mr. Montmorency if he knew “that person,” pointing to the Myosugi. The latter said he had seen him before, and dropped the conversation (This person, and several other inferior chiefs, who had joined the English during the war, are understood to have been since, under various pretexts., put to death).

September 9, 1826

The Wungyi returned our visit to-day, between eleven and twelve o’clock. He came in great state, in a war-boat of sixty oars, accompanied by three others, and a dozen of ordinary boats. His retinue could not be less than between four and five hundred men. He was received under an awning on the poop of the steam-vessel. He had not been long seated here, when a squall and heavy rain came on. I suggested to his Excellency the convenience of going below, which he long resisted, under the apprehension of committing his dignity by placing himself in a situation where persons might tread over his head, for this singular antipathy is common to the Burmese and Siamese. The prejudice is more especially directed against the fair sex—a pretty conclusive proof of the estimation in which they are held. His Excellency seriously demanded to know whether any woman had ever trod upon the poop; and being assured in the negative, he consented at length to enter the cabin.

He was no sooner seated here, than he entered upon the discussion of public matters; and being prepared with a written memorandum of the principal objects which he desired to introduce, he placed it on the table before him. He was assisted by a secretary of the Lutdau (Literally, the Royal Hall, or Chamber; but properly, the name of the principal Council of Ministers), another secretary, and the Akunwun of Pegu; but the first of these
took the most active share in the conversation. The first matter
brought forward was the character of the Talains, or Peguans.
Many of these people, who were compromised on account of the
assistance rendered to us during the war, had emigrated, or were
preparing to emigrate, to our newly acquired provinces to the
South; and the matter, not only on account of the loss of subjects,
but probably of the opportunity of revenge or extortion, was a
subject of great uneasiness to the Burman Government. His
Excellency maligned the character of the Talains in no measured
language. He charged them with propagating false reports, tending
to interrupt the friendship existing between the English and
Burmans: and denounced them generally, as being by nature, and
from the earliest times, a disloyal, deceitful, and perfidious people.
He condescended to narrate, in illustration, two well-known
legends, which did not appear to us very apposite, or judiciously
chosen; although it was evident that the Wungyi had deliberately
selected them for his present purpose. One of these stories related,
that in ancient times a Western stranger (Kula), seven feet high,
had visited Pegu, and challenged the bravest of the kingdom to
meet him in single combat. A Talain champion presented himself.
When the parties appeared in the field, the Talain said to his
antagonist: “I fear you are going to practise some artifice. Some of
your friends are lying in ambush behind you, and I see them
there.” The giant turned round to look, and the wily Talain took
that opportunity to cut his head off. This story and the other,
which we did not so well understand, were narrated with a very
serious air. It was an object of the greatest solicitude with the
Wungyi to detain the Mission at Henzada, and prevent its
proceeding to the Court, which had from the first shown much
reluctance to admit the residence of a permanent diplomatic agent,
and especially to the military guard of fifty men, by which such
agent, in the terms of the treaty, was to be accompanied. With this
view, he expatiated upon the extent of his own authority,—telling
us that it extended from the city of Pugan to the sea; and that he
was a Wungyi, or Counsellor of State,—Myowun, or Governor, of
Pegu, a Generalissimo, and a Commissioner (Literally, bearer of the
“great burden”). He said that he was authorised to treat with us
upon any subject whatsoever, even to the conclusion of the
commercial convention, provided for in the treaty of peace, and
“what need therefore,” added he, “is there for our going to Ava?” In
reply to this, I answered, that I had no authority to treat directly with His Excellency; that I had positive orders to proceed to Ava; that I did so in accordance with an article of the treaty of peace; and that I had a letter to deliver from the Governor-General to His Majesty. The Wungyi intreated us, at all events to wait until an invitation arrived from the Court, which he expected in a few days. This was answered, by saying, that the intention of sending a Mission to Ava, was publicly made known to the Burman Deputies at Rangoon, full three months before; and that the matter was so well understood at Ava, that a house had been already prepared there for our reception.

A singular and unexpected construction was now attempted to be put upon the Seventh Article of the Treaty concluded at Yandabo, providing for the residence of accredited agents on the part of the two Governments, at their respective capitals. In the English copy of the treaty, the words used were, “at each others Durbars.” In the Burman version, the seat of Government is called, “the Burman Royal City” (Mrara Myodau), which one would have supposed sufficiently plain. The Wungyi read one of the memoranda lying before him, which purported to be an explanation of the Seventh Article of the Treaty of Yandabo, and by which it was made to appear, that Rangoon, and not Ava, was the place intended for the residence of the British Agent; or, at least, that it might be Rangoon just as well as Ava, because Rangoon was, according to Burman notions, a Myodau, or Royal city, as well as the capital itself. I explained, that the name of Rangoon had never been mentioned by either party, down to the present moment; and that at the conferences of Yandabo, Ava alone was perfectly well known to every body to be the place intended. I expressed my surprise at the perversion of the Treaty contemplated in this interpretation; and stated, that if it were urged seriously, and the Wungyi did so by authority of his Government, I should think it necessary to request that the embarkation of the British troops might be delayed until a reference were made to Calcutta and Ava. Mr. Judson, who translated the Treaty of Yandabo, and acted as interpreter to the British Commissioners, when its several articles were read over and discussed, warmly expressed his dissent from the interpretation now attempted. The proposal to detain the British force pending farther explanation, greatly alarmed the Wungyi and his friends, who employed various
subterfuges and evasions to explain away the construction attempted to be put on the Treaty, and the subject was finally dropped by mutual consent.

Various other propositions were made by the Wungyi, almost every one of them implying, in some shape or another, an infraction of the existing engagement; but from the reception given to that above mentioned, they were not very warmly insisted upon. By the supplementary Convention concluded at Yandabo, it was stipulated that no Burman force should come within forty taings, or about eighty miles, from Rangoon, until the whole British army had embarked. This stipulation, which was much approved of by the Burmese negotiators at the time, as a prudent precaution to prevent the local authorities of the two nations from clashing, became afterwards a subject of much uneasiness, in consequence of the facility which it afforded, in the meanwhile, for the emigration of the discontented, and the danger of insurrectionary movements on the part of the Talains, in the interval between the embarkation of the British troops and the occupation of Rangoon by a Burman force. Various attempts had before been made to evade it; and the Wungyi himself had, about a month previously, made a proposal to the British Commissioners, to share with them the government of the territory within the prescribed limits, and to advance to Rangoon with a force of six hundred men. The proposition was now again brought forward by him, and received the same negative as before. He was informed, however, that an arrangement had been made for putting the Burmans in tranquil possession of Rangoon and its neighbourhood, in order to obviate the dangers which he apprehended; and that for this purpose, due notice would be given of the exact period of our departure, when a Burman force would be allowed to advance, and Rangoon be put in peaceable possession of the Burman authorities on the day of our final embarkation. This explanation was very agreeable to the Wungyi, although it by no means went the length of meeting all the objects which he contemplated.

Upon this, as on other occasions of our intercourse with the Burmese, after the peace, it was found quite unsafe to permit any material deviation from the strict letter of our engagements with them. At the restoration of the Province of Bassien, a more liberal policy on our part was attended by very unpleasant consequences. By encroaching from one step to another, the Burmese had there
gradually occupied the whole province first, and finally the town, so as to leave our small detachment only the ground on which it stood. A party of Mohammedan and Chinese merchants, some of whom had settled in the place during our occupation, and who had prepared their boats to quit along with us, were arrested; and but for the prudent forbearance of Captain Alves, who was in civil charge of the province, serious consequences would have ensued. When the matter was made known to the British Commissioners, they insisted upon the release of the parties arrested, through the Wungyi at Henzada, who immediately complied with their requisition. In the mean time, a heavy contribution had been levied upon them, under various pretexts. From some, arrears of custom-house duties were demanded, during the period that Bassein was in our occupation, although all duties had been taken off. The amount of these contributions was also restored through the demand of the Commissioners. Similar encroachments were even attempted at Rangoon. The opposite town and district of Dalla were claimed for the residence of the Governor and the army which was to accompany him, and heavy contributions began to be levied there in our very sight. A bill was formally sent in, to a British merchant of Rangoon, for the rent of a house belonging to the King, for the two years that the town had been in our possession. When this matter was mentioned to me, I remonstrated with the Rewun (Literally, Water Chief; this officer is the deputy of the Myowun, or Governor)¹ and other Burman deputies then present. They treated the complaint as a fabrication. I produced the bill, bearing the Rewun’s signature. They were not at all abashed. They said they were in need of money, and thought this a laudable attempt to raise the wind!

The present conference, which lasted two hours and a half, may, I believe, be considered a fair specimen of Burman diplomacy,—importunate, oblique, but childish. The Burmese want the deep artifice and dexterity of the Hindoos and other Asiatics: but as politicians they are not less fraudulent or unprincipled. It is considered wisdom in a Burman negotiator to attempt to overreach his antagonist by every possible artifice. Difficulties are thrown in the way at every step, and in the possible hope of

¹ This is, of course, an incorrect etymology. The ‘ye’ refers to war, not water, and likely indicates that Crawfurd was making some attempt to learn Burmese, but had not yet gone beyond a limited vocabulary. M. W. C.
gaining some one point or other, and this too even in cases where it might appear to other people wise and prudent to conciliate or accommodate. Defeat by no means discomfits them, nor are they ashamed when their unreasonable demands are seen through, and their machinations baffled. The possibility of success is sufficient to encourage them to advance any proposition, however extravagant; and they seem to be incapable of taking into account the loss of character and consideration which may ensue, and the distrust and; jealousy which must necessarily be excited in their antagonists by this vicious line of conduct.

The Wungyi, throughout the conference, maintained the most tranquil and courteous demeanour; and, notwithstanding the defeat of his projects, parted with us, to all appearance, in perfect good humour. The proposals which he made to us in the conference, were, no doubt, grounded on the general views of the Burman Court. Personal vanity, however, and a desire to display the extent of his authority—which is indeed much greater than that of any previous viceroy of Pegu—before his officers and retainers, had, I think, some share in his proceeding. When I stated that I had no authority to negotiate with him personally, he looked round to his followers, and turned the matter off by saying,

He is only an Envoy (Are-dau-baing, state messenger); he is not a Commissioner (Than-ta-man, one commissioned with state business), and has no authority to treat.

September 10, 1826

Before breakfast this morning I paid another visit to the Wungyi, at his special request. We were received with the same courtesy as before, and with the same ceremonies. Two bands of music, composed of staccatos, flutes, instruments resembling a bassoon, and violins, played during our whole stay. Male and female dancers were also exhibited. Both the vocal and instrumental music of the Burmans is generally more agreeable to the European ear than that of Western India. Upon the present occasion, a young woman sung several airs in so pleasing a manner, as to gain the approbation of all our party; although the accompaniment was far too loud, and often drowned her fine voice. The dancers were all females, and their performance, to say the least of it, was not
worse than that of India. Like it, it consists more of movements of
the body and hands than of the feet; and there was little to admire
in it, for an European, beyond the display which it afforded of the
flexibility of fibre which distinguishes the natives of a tropical from
those of a temperate region, and which I have no where seen move
remarkable than among the Hindoo Chinese races. In these I have
seen the elbow joint bent back in so singular a manner, as to
appear like a partial dislocation or malconformation of the part.

No public question was discussed at this meeting, except a
few words said respecting the presents for the King, and the
number and rank of the persons composing the Mission,—points
which were adverted to by the Wungyi with a decorum and delicacy
very favourably contrasted with what I had experienced on the
same subjects in Siam. During our visit, which lasted an hour and
a half, the Wungyi conversed very familiarly on every topic which
presented itself. He spoke freely of himself and his situation, and
without any Oriental fastidiousness,—for that fastidiousness does
not belong to the character of the Burmans,—of his wife and
daughter. In speaking of the first, who is said to exercise a great
influence over him, he called her the Governess (Men-ga-ta, female
governor). His daughter, he told us, was his only child, at least by
his wife. He said she had been brought up in the palace from a
child, and was now one of the Queens,—naming the town from
which she took her title, and from which she derived her revenue.
This princess is said to be very handsome, and the father is alleged
to owe some share of his promotion to her influence with the King.
The impression left upon our minds, from our short acquaintance
with the Wungyi Maong-kain, was, that he was a man less
remarkable for strength of character or talent, than for
respectability and propriety of conduct and demeanour. Mr.
Judson, who knew him at Ava, confirmed this impression; but
added, that his mind was much beyond the ordinary level of that of
a Burman courtier. He was one out of four at the Court, who
presumed to think in any thing for themselves, or to extend their
views beyond the limits of their own manners, religion, or country.
Maong-kain is at least not a zealot in religious matters, and
observes no more of that of Gautama than is necessary to the
maintenance of his place in society. In a corner of the apartment in
which he received us, was a mimic temple of Buddha, containing a
little marble image of the deity; but this was all that was visible to
us of his religion. He inquired if we all professed the same faith; and, enumerating the different countries of Europe, showed that he had some notions on the subject of European geography. I sent the Wungyi yesterday a present to the value of about three hundred rupees, consisting of articles of British manufacture. He made a return present this morning, consisting of one piece of silk and some coarse mats, the value of which was about one-sixth of that which he had received.

**September 11, 1826**

At three o'clock yesterday we left Henzada. The name of this place is correctly written in Burman orthography Hansa-ta. It is said to be a word composed of the Sanscrit word Hansa, “the Indian goose” or “ruddy goose” of Latham; and the Burman word ta, “lamentation”—a derivation alleged to be derived from the circumstance of a prince having once accidentally shot one on a sand-bank near this place. The hansa, pronounced henza, is not held sacred by the Burmans; but it was the standard of Pegu, as the peacock is that of Ava. Henzada is the largest place we had seen since leaving Rangoon. It extends in a single row of houses for at least two miles on the right bank of the river, and the posts of most of the houses were at present washed by the inundation. From its appearance, it is probable that it does not contain less than three thousand inhabitants. There are but a few patches of rice culture near the place; and it is evident, therefore, that the inhabitants must be supplied with grain from some other quarter, most probably from the culture of the Karians, carried on in the interior, and not visible to us. It was indeed obvious, from their position and the number of small boats near them, that the inhabitants of the villages which we had hitherto seen were chiefly composed of fishermen.

Kiaungzeip, correctly written Kyaong-saik, meaning “convent, landing-place,” mentioned by Syme and Buchanan as being a large place, containing not less than two thousand inhabitants, is but a portion of Henzada. The name is now obsolete.

At five in the afternoon we passed the village of Sarwa (Tharawa), smaller but neater than Henzada. It is three miles farther, up, and on the opposite bank. There was little or no
culture near it, although the country behind was clear of large
trees to a considerable extent. From five until eight at night we
continued struggling to no purpose against the strongest current
which we had yet experienced. We then came to an anchor, but in
such deep water, and so exposed to the stream and to irregular
eddies, that the vessel tossed about violently. We weighed again
therefore at eleven, and dropped down to Sarwa, where we
continued for the night well sheltered.

**September 12, 1826**

Early yesterday morning we tried again to pass the elbow of the
river where the current was so rapid, and; after struggling against
the stream for four hours, succeeded at last, with the assistance of
a light breeze. The steam-vessel’s rate of going was six miles an
hour; so that the rapidity of the current must have been at least
equal to this. In passing the same spot in the steam-vessel last
year. Sir Archibald Campbell was detained four-mid-twenty hours,
and got through the difficulty at last only by towing the vessel.
From quitting Rangoon, until the 8th, we had clear sultry weather
and calms. On that day we had a return of the monsoon, with rain
and southerly winds, and now ascended the river with a strong
breeze in our favour. The thermometer, with this change in the
weather, fell to eighty degrees in the daytime. This forenoon we
passed two war-boats, with a number of baggage-boats. We
communicated with them, and found that they conveyed a second
Rewun, for Rangoon, with his wife and family.

In the afternoon, we stopped for a couple of hours at the
village of Shue-gain, on the right bank of the river. The name of the
place is correctly written Shue-kyen, from Shue, gold, and Kyen, to
sift; for here, and in some other places in the neighbourhood, a
little gold, is obtained by washing the sands of the river when it is
low. Two priests, the only ones in the village, paid us a visit. Very
much against the rules of their order, we found them great
beggars. They asked for razors, handkerchiefs, rice, and I know not
what all. The village, which at one time had been considerable, is
at present very paltry, not containing above twenty or thirty
houses. Our visitors informed us, that it had been in a state of
decay for many years, the inhabitants having gradually abandoned
it in consequence of the heavy contributions and exactions to
which they were subjected. This is, of course, the real cause of that absence of industry and the poverty which has been so painfully evident hitherto throughout our journey.

In the evening, we passed the villages of Nga-pi-saik, on the west bank, and Re-gyen opposite to it. The first is a petty village, and the three syllables which compose it, mean literally, “pressed fish landing-place.” Dr. Buchanan Hamilton renders it “Fish-sauce landing-place,” which appears to me to be murdering a Burman idiom, with the view of attaining an English one. This pressed fish, or Nga-pi, is a main article of the diet of the Burmans. It is of various qualities and descriptions. In some, the fish is mashed, or pounded, like the *blachang* of the Malays, and the *trasi* of the Javanese, and this description generally consists of prawns. In the coarser sorts, the pieces of fish are entire, half putrid, half pickled. They are all fetid, and offensive to Europeans. Re-gyen means “the water ceased;” in consequence, it is said, either of the tide occasionally coming up as far as this, or from a tradition that it had done so upon some remarkable occasion. This village is in the Province of Sarawadi, at the mouth of a small river navigable in the rains, and by which the teak timber is floated down from the forests of that district, the most abundant, or at least the most conveniently situated for the market, of any in the dominions of Ava. We had not yet seen a single tree of this timber, which, however, grows in abundance, at no great distance from our course, on both banks of the river, especially the eastern. The land column of our army, in its march, passed through extensive forests of it. The Irawadi is here fully more than a mile wide, without a single sand-bank above water. It presented a very different appearance when Colonel Syme and Dr. Buchanan Hamilton went up in the beginning of June 1795. The latter states, in reference to the day’s journey which brought him to, Nga-pi-saik, that the sand-banks were so numerous, that by fording a narrow channel, here and there, one might have walked upon them the whole way across. Late in the evening we came to an anchor close to the right bank of the river, and about two miles below Kanaong.

**September 13, 1826**

At half-past six in the morning we proceeded on our way, sailing within eight or ten yards of the western bank in five fathoms water.
We soon found that we were near a considerable population, from
the number of fruit-trees with which the bank of the river was
covered. About ten o’clock we readied the large village of Kanaong,
and at half-past eleven, the much larger one of Myan-aong where
we stopped for the day, laying in a supply of fuel. From at least a
mile below Kanaong to the same distance beyond Myan-aong, the
west bank of the river is one continued grove of fruit-trees,
consisting of the mango, the jack, the tamarind, the banana, the
Palmyra, and the religious fig (a tree sacred with the followers of
Buddha), with a few cocoa and areca palms. Scattered houses
connect the villages of Kanaong and Myan-aong. Through-out the
whole distance now alluded to, perhaps in all about twelve miles,
the banks of the river are higher than immediately to the north and
south of it, and in some situations were two and even three feet
above the highest inundation of the river.

Myan-aong was formerly called Loonzay (Lwan-ze), and we
found that it was still familiar to the natives under this name.
Myan-aong means “speedy victory,” and is an appellation bestowed
upon it by Alompra, who fixed here his head quarters, when, in the
year 1754, he was in the full career of his victories over the
Peguans. Myan-aong is the largest place we had seen since leaving
Rangoon. Dr. Buchanan Hamilton describes it, thirty years ago, as
extending two miles along the bank of the river. Its extent now was
scarcely less than this; but, like the other villages, it consisted of
little more than a single row of houses upon the very bank. The
same writer states, that he saw not less than two hundred trading
vessels, of not less than sixty tons burthen each, lying at the place.
We saw a good many trading boats, but nothing like this number,
nor any of the size alluded to. Both Kanaong and this town are, for
the Burman dominions, populous places. We certainly had an
opportunity of seeing the greater number of their inhabitants; for
men, women, and children, without distinction, crowded to the
bank, from curiosity to see the steam-vessel. The character of the
Burmans, in this respect, is at least less constrained than that of
the Hindoos. All are imbued with a lively curiosity, and the women
and children are neither shy nor timid. The former swam about in
the river, in the evening, near the vessel, without seeming to be in
the least abashed or constrained by the presence of strangers.
There was a greater appearance of industry about Myan-aong than
at any place we had seen. Buffaloes, oxen, and carts, were
frequent. Still, there was little cultivation observed, and no neatness, comfort, or general indication of prosperity. A few Kyaongs, or monasteries, were to be seen, and a few temples among the trees, but none of any distinction for magnitude or architecture. Two or three good wooden bridges were noticed, but invariably, as everywhere else, leading to a monastery or temple. Kanaong, with its district, is the assignment for the maintenance of his Majesty’s third queen, who takes her title of Princess of Kanaong from it; for this is the custom with all the members of the royal family. In the month of March last, and after the peace of Yandabo, both Kanaong and Myan-aong were burnt to the ground by banditti. Although in a good measure rebuilt already, we saw them therefore under disadvantage. It must however be observed, that the burning of a town constructed of such cheap and wretched materials as those of Ava, is but a trifling calamity, after all, compared with a similar one in countries where industry and property are better protected. The prosperity or decay of a Burman town is quite ephemeral. A short interval of forbearance or protection, under a moderate governor, brings on an appearance of the former; and a period of oppression still shorter, will induce the latter. The prosperity ascribed to Myan-aong by Syme and Buchanan Hamilton, in 1795, was altered for decay in 1809, as stated by Major Canning; who adds, that the town was totally destroyed by fire in the following year. Yet Mr. Judson, who saw the place in 1819, gives a still brighter picture of its prosperity than that of Syme and Hamilton. Many of the houses were constructed of plank, the acme of Burman luxury in domestic architecture; and a row of trading boats extended, with little interruption, from the extremity of Myan-aong to that of Kanaong.

At Myan-aong we obtained a supply of poultry and fish; but could not succeed in getting beef, although abundance of buffaloes and oxen was seen. By the construction which the Burmans put on the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, the lives of animals seem to be respected pretty much in proportion to their magnitude, under the belief, I imagine, that the larger the animal, the more advanced towards perfection is the soul of which it is the receptacle. Fish are universally destroyed without scruple; poultry are only occasionally spared; but buffaloes, oxen, horses, and elephants, enjoy almost an immunity, However, some calculation of profit and convenience enters into all this. The Burmans could
not live without fish; therefore, there is a general dispensation for destroying them. They cannot afford to use the flesh of the larger domestic animals as food; and in regard to them, therefore, it is made a merit to observe the law. The same principle does not extend to wild animals, which are regularly hunted for their flesh, hides, horns, or tusks. In the market of Rangoon, there is almost every day to be had abundance of venison, killed by the legitimate laws of the chase.

The officer of Government, whom we met, with his wife and family, on the river, turned out to be the Myowun of Prome, going to Henzada to have an interview with the Wungyi. He had hailed us as we passed him, and informed us that he was the Pri-wun—that is, the Wun, or Myowun, of Pri, pronounced Pyi, which is the proper name, of Prome; and this our Burman interpreters had understood "Rewun," adding Rangoon upon their own conjecture. On ascertaining who we were, he returned for the purpose of going back to Prome, there to receive the Mission. He now came on board to visit us. I had seen this chief at Rangoon, shortly after the peace, for he was one of a deputation sent down from Ava to confer with the British Commissioners. At the same time, the officer directed by the Wungyi to accompany us to Ava, overtook us and came on board. This person, a man of about sixty, I had also seen at Rangoon before. His name was Maong-Pha, and he was formerly Governor of Bassien.

September 14, 1826

The Myowun of Prome, and the old Myowun of Bassien, our conductor, had intreated us not to quit Myan-aong until the afternoon of this day, apparently with no other view than that of taking upon themselves the direction of our movements, and making a display of such authority as they believed themselves to possess. Our predecessors for severity years had been so treated. Our situation, however, was too independent for this; and, to show that it was so, we pursued our course this morning at day-break, at least half an hour earlier than usual. I reproved this morning the account given of Mr. Lester's mission to Alompra in 1757, and could not help contrasting our present situation with that of our countryman, and our Indian power now and in his time. Our numerous party was now pleasantly and independently conveyed.
on the Irawadi by steam navigation, with every convenience, and many luxuries, and having British grenadiers for our guard. Mr. Lester proceeded alone, in a miserable and sinking boat, in the worst season of the year, and subjected to all the insolence and extortion of the Burman authorities. “I meet,” says he, “with many things amongst these people, that would try the most patient man that ever existed; but, as I hope it is for the good of the gentlemen I serve, I shall put up with them and proceed.”

Upon another occasion, he observes,

This day has been attended with a hard storm of wind and rain. I have nothing to eat but salt beef, which has been on the Island Negrais four years—the Bûraghmah King has not been so good as his promise in sending the provisions.

A few miles above Myan-aong, or Loonzay, and on the same side, is a brook, or rivulet, on which is situated the village of Pashin. This rivulet forms the northern boundary of the Province of Bassien, and also of the ancient kingdom of Pegu, west of the Irawadi. The boundary of Pegu, on the eastern bank, is said to be Tarok-mau, or Chinese Point. The district and forests of Sarawadi are included in Pegu. The Peguans, or Talains, do not differ materially from the Burmans, except in dialect; and even this distinction, in a great measure, ceases as we approach the northern confines of their ancient domain; for here the Burmese language prevails, even with the Peguans.

As we advanced up the Irawadi, the number of islands in its bed increased, and it became broader and shallower. It was seldom, indeed, that we had a view of its whole breadth, on account of the numerous islands in its bed. We had one this morning, however, a little above Myan-aong, when the stream appeared to be not less than two miles in breadth. The islands are almost universally uncultivated and uncleared.

After quitting Myan-aong this morning, we had low hills, about one hundred and fifty feet in height, covered with wood, before us, with which we soon came up. The character of the scenery now became totally altered: we had high-land on both sides; and the banks of the river became bold and steep. The
character of the vegetation was also changed. The reedy grass, so often mentioned, the *saccharum spontaneum*, became less tall, rank, and frequent; and now and then there was a good deal of under-wood. The Aracan mountains were very distinct to the north-west. With the commencement of the hilly land begins that of the disemboguement of the Irawadi, which, by innumerable ramifications, is connected to the east with the Setang and Martaban rivers, and to the west with that of Bassien, and falls into the sea by a great many mouths, some of them distant from the high land, in a straight line, one hundred and fifty miles. The low and half-inundated champaign, thus abounding in streams and rivers, is the proper country of the Peguan race, as distinguished from the true Burmans.

At three in the afternoon we came to an anchor at Sen-ywa, or Elephant Village; for this was a station of the King’s elephants. Here, a good opportunity offering, we completed such a stock of wood as might last us until we should reach Prome. During our short stay. Dr. Wallich’s plant gatherers landed, and brought him some new and interesting specimens. Among these I may mention a new *Lagerstroemia*, which he has called *insignis*. The beautiful lilac corolla of this fine plant measured five inches in diameter. Opposite to Sen-ywa is a woody promontory, about one hundred feet high, composed, according to Dr. Buchanan Hamilton, of sandstone: its name in Burman is Akaok-taong, or the Hill of Customs. The channel of the river, at this place, is so narrow, as not to exceed three quarters of a mile: it is, however, deep and rapid. In the evening we came to an anchor off the upper end of the village of Nyaong-sare (religious fig scribe); before the war, a station of war-boats. Nyaong-sare is a large village. As we passed along it, very close to the shore, the whole inhabitants, young and old, seemed to be drawn to the bank, through curiosity to see the steam-vessel. They appeared to amount to several hundreds.

**September 15, 1826**

We left Nyaong-sare very early this morning, pursuing our course along the eastern bank of the river. Pebbles were now for the first time seen; and, soon after, various shelving rocks. Dr. Wallich and I landed for half an hour near the village of Kyaok-taran. The rock which we saw consisted of calcareous sandstone and breccia (The
calcareous sandstone here mentioned is ascertained to be the calcaire grossiere of the Paris basin),—the pebbles in the latter, which was of a very loose texture, were quartz. Among the fruit-trees, near the village, we found about a dozen teak trees, the first we had observed. The flowers were just disappearing, and the fruit forming. Dr. Wallich informed me, that the flowering season corresponded exactly with that of the teak of the botanical garden at Calcutta. These trees were about forty feet high. The soil appeared generally thin and sandy: but in a few spots it was of a better quality; and in the latter were cultivated, in the most slovenly manner imaginable, some indigo and sesamum; which seemed to thrive very well, considering the manner in which they were neglected. The long island, called Shwe-kywan, or Golden Isle, was now between us and the two considerable villages of Peeng-ghee (Pyin-kri, great board), and Sahlaydan (Thalé-tan, either sandy or pomegranate row). About eleven o’clock we passed the large village of Shwe-taong (golden hill), which has the rank of a Myo, or town. The bank is here, at present, from ten to fifteen feet above the level of the river; and so steep as to make it necessary to cut steps in it, in order to reach the water conveniently. Here again we saw the teak, the trees much higher than at Kyok-taran. It is probable that at both places they have been planted for shade and ornament, and are not of natural growth. Dr. Buchanan Hamilton states, that in one part of Shwe-taong he observed some young teak-trees. It is not at all improbable but that those which we now observed, and which were sixty feet high, were the identical plants noticed by him thirty-one years before. We were informed that the teak forests were here three or four miles distant from the river. Shwe-taong, and its dependencies, formed the assignment made to the present King and his father, for their maintenance, when they were heirs to the throne. It has consequently enjoyed some peculiar protection; and is, therefore, comparatively a flourishing place. We saw a good number of boats, some of them trading vessels, drawn up along the bank. We imagined, too, that the people had an air of comfort superior to those of the lower country; but this impression may have arisen from the more elevated, and therefore commodious and cleanly, situation of the dwellings. From Shwe-taong to Prome there is nearly one continuous line of villages, occupying the narrow plain, which lies between the river and a range of
undulating hills, the highest of which do not appear to exceed two hundred and fifty feet.

Opposite to Shwe-taong is Padaong (Pantaong, flower-demanding); like it, having the rank of a Myo, or town. This was a large place before the war with the British; but in November last, being in the occupation of one of our detachments, a night attack was made upon it by the Burmans, and it was nearly burnt to the ground. It now extends in a single scattered row of houses, as usual, apparently for about two miles and a half along the banks of the river. The teak forests in the neighbourhood of Padaong are more extensive and valuable than those on the eastern side of the river; but still they were not visible to us. From Padaong there is a road, or rather a bad and intricate pathway, leading to Aracan. This was the route pursued by Lieutenant Brown, in the month of March last, after the peace of Yandabo. My Burman interpreter informed me, that when he was at Padaong, about ten years ago, the Akunwan, or collector of land tax of Aracan, accompanied by the Raj Guru, or chief Court Brahmin, and astrologer of the time, arrived there, bringing with them a Hindoo girl, who was described as the daughter of a “Brahmin King.” This young woman, probably some person of very low caste, was taken into the seraglio of the late King of Ava, and is still living in the palace, the Akunwun, for this piece of good service, was raised to the rank of Rewun.

Quitting Shwe-taong we skirted along the western shore of a long island, lying nearly in the middle of the river. As soon as we had reached its northern end, a very beautiful and picturesque view presented itself, one of the finest, indeed, which I have ever seen. An amphitheatre of hills nearly surrounded us. On our left was the island of Tet-the, well wooded and raised, contrary to custom, for most of the other islands which we had seen, being subject to inundation, exclude the growth of trees, and are covered with nothing but tall grass. Before us was a distant view of the town of Prome. The river was broad, and, from the nature of the surrounding scenery, it had much the appearance of a fine lake.

We rapidly approached the town of Prome with the advantage of a fair wind, and at half-past four o'clock in the afternoon anchored before it. In sailing close to the east bank of the river, immediately before arriving at the town, we encountered a disagreeable object—the place of execution. It was situated on the brow of a hill, under a large tamarind tree. On each side of the
tree there was a wooden rail, on which were the remains of two human bodies. One of these was tolerably entire, and exhibited the malefactor in the attitude in which he had been executed. The legs and arms were stretched out against the rail to the utmost extent; the head had fallen over on the breast, and the appearance of the body showed plainly that death had been inflicted in the horrid mode of Burman execution by tearing open the abdomen. The Myowun afterwards informed us, that these two men were robbers, caught marauding in the rear of the British army when it was retiring, and that for this offence he had caused them to be executed. I am sorry, for the credit of his veracity, however, that this account was not verified on farther inquiry.

In the evening, Dr. Wallich and I landed on the western bank of the river, opposite to the town. The rock was exposed in a great many situations on the shore, and consisted, wherever we examined it, of a calcareous sandstone, of a pale red colour. The hills on both sides of the river are steep, but I think scarcely anywhere exceeding two hundred feet high. One cliff, which I attempted to ascend, consisted of red clay, in which was intermixed a large proportion of quartz pebbles. The ground was at once so loose and slippery that I could not succeed in scrambling up. These pebbles are probably the debris of a breccia, similar to what we met yesterday. I picked up on the shore the first specimen I had met with of the petrified wood, which is known to be so abundantly scattered over the face of the country between this place and Ava. In one spot on the shore I met with some blue indurated clay, and among it one piece of rolled petroleum, of the appearance and consistence of dark-coloured rosin. In many situations, mango and tamarind-trees, with the Clitoria ternatea, balsams, and other exotics, were frequent, from which appearance there is little doubt but the bank of the river opposite to Prome must have been once inhabited. At present it is one deep forest, very difficult to be penetrated on account of the prevalence of underwood, and totally destitute of habitation or culture.

While I was on this excursion, the Myowun, who had readied Prome an hour before us, came on board to pay me a visit. I regretted that I had missed this opportunity of seeing him.

September 16, 1826
A party landed this morning and visited the great Pagoda, the suburbs, and the Myo, or fort. The Pagoda, which is richly gilded all over, and is a fine object in approaching the town, is distant from the river about half a mile, and lies immediately behind the town, situated upon a hill about one hundred and thirty feet high. It is exactly of the same form and construction as the great Pagoda at Rangoon, but a good deal smaller. The body of the temple, or spire, is surrounded by a terrace, containing many small temples, with images of Buddha, and having a wooden arcade all round, the roof of which is, in some places, very curiously and elaborately carved, but both the extent and execution of this sort of work are much inferior to what I observed in the temples of Siam. There are two approaches to the temple by a flight of brick steps, which have a wooden roof over them. The name of the Prome Pagoda is Sandau, or the Temple of the “Royal Hair,” from its being presumed to contain, like the Pagoda of Rangoon, some hairs of Gautama’s head. In one of the temples on the terrace there is a K’htora, or impression of the divinity’s foot, which we visited and were permitted to examine without hindrance. It was a day of worship, being the full moon according to Burman reckoning. These are the occasions upon which the Burmans appear to the greatest advantage. The most respectable of the inhabitants, men and women, then visit the Pagodas from six to seven o’clock in the morning in their best dresses, and bearing offerings chiefly consisting of fruits and flowers. I had frequently been witness to this scene at Rangoon, and it now appeared to at least equal advantage. The two roads leading to the Pagoda were crowded with votaries, whose demeanour was extremely decorous, both here and in the performance of their devotions at the temple. The people were sufficiently cheerful, but they were not noisy, and no grotesque or ludicrous ceremonies entered into their devotions. A number of large and handsome bells were suspended between two posts round the area. Each votary, upon making his offering, or completing his devotions, struck these bells three or four times with some large deer’s antlers, which lay on the ground near them. What the object of this part of the ceremony was, I know not. The only ludicrous objects presented in the temple were the figures of menials, or servants, representing porters or slaves, receiving, upon a dish placed on the head, the offerings of the pious. These,
we observed, were often made of a red sandstone, which is said to be abundant near Prome.

The town of Prome is situated on the right bank of the Irawadi, on a narrow plain lying between the hills and the river. It is composed of the Myo, or fort, being a common square stockade, resembling that of Rangoon, but larger; and of two suburbs, the one lying east and the other west of it, along the banks of the river. As at Rangoon, the suburbs, consisting each of one long street, appear to contain the principal population. The Myo contains two streets, running parallel to each other, and to the river. In these the houses are but few and scattered, and the principal part of the area is occupied by gardens, or rather by patches of ground, occupied by fruit or ornamental trees, or coarse esculent vegetables, such as gourds, pumpkins, and cucumbers, the whole overgrown with rank weeds, and without order or neatness. Behind the town are several marshes. Over one of these is a long wooden bridge, the best I had seen in the country.

Prome is at present a thriving place, and I should suppose, from appearances, fully more populous than Rangoon. It may be estimated, without exaggeration, to contain not less than ten thousand inhabitants. We found the whole bank of the river lined with small trading vessels. The gentlemen of our party, who had seen it last year, when it was in our occupation, and when many of the inhabitants had deserted it, were forcibly struck with the improvement in its condition which they now observed. A great many new houses had been built in the interim, and the monasteries, which had been mutilated or destroyed, were now repairing or reconstructing. All this, as in other cases, depends much upon the personal character of the Myowun, who in the present instance was a respectable and moderate man. A Mohammedan merchant of Rangoon, who had been here a month, assured us, that he had paid strict attention to the amnesty stipulated in the treaty, and that no one had been oppressed or persecuted by him on account of his conduct or opinions during the recent hostilities. Whatever feeling the Burman Government may entertain to-wards us, it is certain that the people bear us no resentment. When we visited the Pagoda this morning, amidst crowds of the inhabitants of Prome, we met nothing but smiles and good humour—civility, and respectful attention. An European was no longer an object of wonder or curiosity, as during the first
mission of Colonel Syme; and many of the people whom we met seemed anxious to recognise us as old acquaintances. Our native servants were treated kindly when they landed; and the European guard even with pointed attention, especially by the Myowun himself. Mr. Judson, who had visited the place in 1819, was now much struck with the change in the demeanour of the people, which, at that time, was by no means respectful towards strangers, especially Europeans. As an example, it may be stated, that we were now encouraged to visit every part of the Pagoda unceremoniously; while towards him they expressed much dissatisfaction at his not taking off his shoes before he ascended the long flight of stairs which leads from the bottom of the hills to the terrace, evincing altogether, as he thought, a sullen and inhospitable disposition.

The name which we give to this town is evidently a corruption of that applied to it by the Mohammedan residents in the country, and which is Pron. According to Burman orthography, the correct name is Pri, always pronounced Pyi, since the Burmans, with very few exceptions, convert the consonant r into the consonant y. This place, or rather one lying about six miles to the east of it, is reported to have been the first and the most ancient seat of Burman government. According to Burmese chronology, it was founded by King Twat-ta-paung, a descendant of Gautama, in the 101st year of the sacred era—the 249th of the grand epoch, or 443 years before Christ. For seventy years the descendants of this prince reigned, sometimes at Prome, and sometimes at Maj-ji-ma, understood to be some part of India,—probably Magad'ha or Behar. At the expiration of these seventy years, the seat of government was fixed permanently at Prome, until the year 107 before Christ. Prome, according to this statement, was the seat of Burman government for 336 years. The ancient town was named Sa-re-k'het-ta-ra, which, I presume, is a Pali or Sanscrit word. According to Burman interpretation, it means a bull’s hide, and refers to a story similar to that which is related of the foundation of Carthage. Lieutenant De Montmorency had visited the ruins of Sa-re-k’het-ta-ra, now called Ra-se (a saint, or hermit), last year. All that remained of it was a broad earthen wall, of a quadrangular form, and five or six feet in height. The area contained no relics of antiquity, and was overgrown with forest.
Mr. Chester, Mr. Judson, and Dr. Stewart, returned the Myowun's visit after breakfast. In the morning, the Myowun of Shwe-taong arrived at Prome, and in the course of the forenoon came on board. This person is steward of the King's household; literally, "Lord of the Kitchen," a distinguished office. Our soldiers, however, called him "the Cook." He was a little man, and his appearance did not bespeak much talent or energy. He was one of the Kyi Wungyi's lieutenants before Rangoon, and commanded the party which repulsed Colonel Smith and a detachment of Sepoys, with considerable loss, at Kyaikalo, at an early period of the contest in 1824. He commanded also the attacks made on the post of Kemmendine (Kyi-myen-taing), near Rangoon; in the same year, the most spirited and persevering made by the Burmans during the whole course of the war. Afterwards he was beaten at Padaong, and much more severely near Prome in December last. In conversation, he gave us to understand, that his troops did not want courage; but that they had neither the arms nor discipline of ours, and on this account only were unable to contend with us.

The Myowun of Prome came on board in the afternoon, and brought, as a present, a quantity of very bad wax candles; and a large supply of custard-apples, a fruit, for the production of which the neighbourhood of Prome is celebrated. This was in return for a present of ten times the value, which I had sent him in the forenoon. He was extremely anxious that we should prolong our stay at Prome a few days, and mentioned that himself and the Myowun of Shwe-taong were each preparing two war-boats to accompany us, for the protection of our baggage, as far as Meeaday, the confines of his province, as the country to Ava was much infested by robbers. We promised to stay a day longer, and in the evening our baggage-boats came up. The Myowun of Prome, Maong-kun-thaong, we found to be a person of pleasing and unostentatious manners. At Court he was said to possess considerable influence, having a daughter one of the junior queens, and a first cousin second Queen. The latter is known by the title of Princess of Maithila, the name of a township lying north of Tongo, borrowed, it will be observed, from the ancient Sanscrit appellation of the district of Tirhoot, in Behar; the whole of which province is classic land with the followers of Gautama.

September 17, 1826
We took a walk this morning to a distance of two miles inland, from the town, and observed one good road for wheel-carriages. Carts, of a much better construction than those of India, were frequent. The cattle, all oxen, were large, and in excellent condition. They are generally of a reddish-brown colour—rarely black, and seldom or never of the white or light grey, which is so very general in Northern India. They are almost all horned, and without a hump. The Burmans treat their cattle humanely, and never over-work them. The country behind Prome is composed of a series of little hills, with occasional valleys of some extent. One of the latter was planted with rice, exhibiting the largest culture of this grain which we had yet observed. The soil of the hills is very light, being formed of the *debris* of sand, stone, and breccia, both of which we observed in an advanced state of decomposition, in sections of the hills formed in making a road last year for our artillery. A hill, on which a battery of eighteen pounders had been erected by our army, commanded an extensive prospect of the neighbouring country, which was generally uncultivated, and covered with a low forest. It was evident that the country, at no distant period, had been much better cultivated than at present; for, in the tract we passed over in our walk, we discovered several plants almost in a wild state, which are common objects of culture, such as indigo, gourds, and two or three species of millet. But the most striking proof of former industry was afforded by the remains, a short way from the town, of an embankment, to all appearance a mile in length, and which, with the neighbouring hills, formed a Tank, constructed seemingly for the purpose of irrigation. It was now out of repair, and contained no water, although it was the height of the rainy season. The people treated us in our walk today with the same kindness and civility as yesterday. Not a rude or offensive word or gesture escaped from any one. At the bottom of the range of hills, in a very pretty spot, shaded by some noble tamarind trees, which are frequent near Prome, we passed through the burying-ground, which contains the bodies of many of our countrymen who had fallen at Prome, from wounds or sickness, during our long residence there of seven months. The graves were unmolested.

*September 18, 1826*
Notwithstanding that heavy rains had fallen for some days after we quitted Henzada, and that southerly winds and occasional showers still prevailed, the river had fallen at least six feet. The commencement of this fall our Burman pilot dated from the 10th instant. It is ascertained, indeed, that the river rises and falls several times during the months of August and September. This implies heavy falls of rain in the upper country at considerable intervals, and would seem also to indicate that the source of the Irawadi is not very distant, nor the body of water, that is affected by such temporary or local causes, very great.

At half-past three yesterday afternoon we quitted Prome. Although many of the inhabitants had seen the steam-vessel during the war, a more lively curiosity was evinced now, to view her under weigh, than I had ever before observed in any eastern people upon any occasion. The banks of the river, the boats, which were moored to the shore, the verandahs of houses, their tops, and many parts of the stockade, were crowded with people, anxious to see the spectacle. We soon passed the stockade, which, besides the ordinary wooden palisades, has two brick bastions of a rude form, and in a dilapidated state. One angle of the stockade is upon a high point of land jutting a considerable way into the river. On the opposite shore, a hill projects into the river also, leaving the breadth of the stream not above eight hundred yards. This was a strong position; but the Burmans were panic-struck after the affair of Donabew, and permitted Sir Archibald Campbell to occupy Prome without opposition.

At six in the evening, we came to a narrow part of the river, not exceeding six hundred yards in breadth. On the eastern side, the hills terminate in the promontory of Napadi (Nat-padi, rosary of the Nats). There is a corresponding promontory on the west side, being the termination of a lull, called Po-u-taong, full two hundred feet high. A little farther up the river than these promontories, and in the middle of the stream, is an island. In the possession of an enemy of any military knowledge or courage, this would have proved a difficult or impregnable position. After the expiration of the armistice of Yaong-ben-saik, the Burman force, to the amount, according to the estimate of our scouts, of more than fifty thousand men, began to close in upon Prome, and the principal body occupied the narrow pass of the river which I have just
described; the Kyi Wungyi, the chief commander, being posted on
the western bank, and the Sa-dau-wun, or steward of the
household, on the eastern. The position of the Kyi Wungyi was
forced on the 2d of December last. The European troops advanced
upon this occasion with such impetuosity, and the works were so
precipitately abandoned by the Burmans, that only eleven of the
enemy lost their lives in the stockades. They fired upon the
assailants until the latter had reached the works, and then ran
away. This was their constant practice, especially in the last
campaign. The Kyi Wungyi himself, as upon former occasions, was
one of the first to quit the field. This indeed seems to be the
established practice of the Burman leaders; and even Bandula, as
already stated, was no exception. Thaongba-wungyi, who
commanded at the seven stockades on the 8th of July 1824,
behaved gallantly, and lost his life. When the King heard this, he is
said to have exclaimed, “Why did not the fool run away?” If such be
the precepts of the Monarch and the example of his generals, it is
hardly reasonable to expect that the soldiers should stand and
fight for them. On the 5th of December last, the position of the Sa-
dau-wun was forced and abandoned with equal precipitation as
the other. By an unexpected accident, a portion of the Burman
troops was on this occasion surrounded, and three hundred of
them lost their lives. The other portion of the Burman force had
been routed at Simbike, on the 1st of December, by General
Cotton. Simbike was a stockade eleven miles distant from Prome,
situated on the left bank of the Nawaine (Na-wen) river, a small
stream which falls into the Irawadi, a little above the town of
Prome, and on the same side. The place was taken by a similar
assault, and after a similar defence, with the other positions. Two
hundred of the enemy were left dead in the stockade; for here also,
by an unlooked-for accident, part of the enemy were hemmed in,
and unable to effect their escape. Among these was Maha Nemiau
(Nemyo, descendant of the Sun), the commander, a fine old man,
seventy-five years of age. The troops which defended Simbike were
of the people called by the Burmans, Shans; the same who are
called by the Siamese, and after them by Europeans, Lao, or Laos.
They composed the same force which a few weeks before had
beaten four battalions of Sepoys, at the stockade of Watigon (Wet-
ti-kan, boar’s tank). Their courage at Simbike does not appear to
have been fortified by this success.
In reference to the actions now alluded to, a singular fact has been ascertained, which affords a curious specimen of the superstition, credulity, and folly of the Burmese and their Government. Finding that all their ordinary efforts to make head against the invaders were unavailing, they had recourse to magic; and among other projects of this nature, sent down to their army before Prome, all the women at Ava who had the reputation of having a familiar spirit, in order to put a spell on the foreigners, and, as it was said, unman them. These females, who rather labour under some mental derangement than are impostors, are called by the Burmans Nat-kadau, or female nats. They profess to hold an intercourse with the demigods of that name, and to be inspired by them with supernatural powers. The presence of such persons was known to the British army; and among the wounded, after the action at Simbike, there was found a young girl of fifteen or sixteen years of age, dressed in male attire, believed to be one of them. Her sex was recognised, and attention was paid to her; but she expired in half an hour after being taken prisoner. Lieutenant Montmorency told me, that he had seen this poor creature; that she had received wounds in the neck and head, and held up both her hands, making a shiko, or Burman obeisance, to every one that from pity or curiosity came to see her.

We anchored last night ten miles above Prome. This morning, at eight o’clock, we passed the village of Kama (Pali, desire), on the western bank, which formed the line of demarcation between the English and Burmese armies during the armistice which took place at this time last year. A road, not much frequented however, leads from hence to the Aracan mountains. At ten o’clock we passed the village of Nyaong-ben-saik (holy fig-tree landing-place), the spot where the conferences were held between the British and Burman commanders, which led to the armistice just mentioned. The fig-tree which gives name to this village is conspicuous upon the extremity of a point of land, its roots being now washed by the water of the river. Behind Nyaong-ben-saik is an extensive plain,—for here the hills, which all the way from Prome approached to the very water’s edge, recede for several miles. At one o’clock we came again to a narrow part of the river, which on the right bank takes the name of Palo, and on the left that of Puto. Both were strongly fortified by the Burmans, after their manner, subsequent to the defeats sustained in the first days.
of December; but they wanted the resolution to defend them, and abandoned them without the slightest attempt at resistance. The works on the left bank were five miles in extent, and some of them were still standing. Early in the evening we came to an anchor at Tong-taong (lime-hill), a little village which may be considered as a sort of suburb to Tharet-myo. We landed at this place, and made a short excursion into the village and its neighbourhood. The banks here are high, and the place lies north of a hill about three hundred feet high. The land surrounding the village is elevated and undulating. On the river side the rock was exposed, and consisted of the same calcareous sandstone and coarse breccia, which we had observed at Prome. This was also the case at the promontory of Napadi, and in an intermediate situation, which we examined early this morning, but the name of which I did not ascertain. The high hill, however, appears to consist of primitive limestone, and gives name to the place. Heaps of this material were found near the villages, close to the kilns, where it was to be burnt. The soil of the undulating ground appeared sandy, with here and there an intermixture of gravel, and having but a very thin covering of vegetable mould. I should not have thought it fertile; but, in this matter, practice is our only guide. We found indigo, sesamum, and crotollaria juncea, or Indian hemp, growing in these situations vigorously, although much neglected. The indigo was four feet high, and the sesamum at least six. In one valley, nearly level with the river, we observed a Tank, or rather small natural lake, and close to it some good fields of rice, which it appeared to irrigate. Grazing near the village was a large herd of black cattle in high condition, indicating that the pasture was of a good quality. Leading from the village into the country were two tolerably good cart-roads. These, the inhabitants informed us, communicated with Maintom, Padain, Taing-tah, and Ngape, places which have the rank of towns, or Myos, and are all of them situated at no great distance from the foot of the Aracan mountains.

In the course of this day's journey, the hills, never at any considerable distance, often form the bank of the river: when this was the case, the stream was narrow, deep, and clear of islets. When they receded, it widened, and the bed of the river abounded in islands covered with the saccharum spontaneum. The villages were few, and far distant, and the general impression conveyed was that of a country little cultivated and thinly inhabited. The
hills are universally covered with a forest of considerable size. In this, from Prome inclusive, upwards, the teak-tree, tolerably frequent, could be recognised by its blossoms occasionally coming down almost to the water’s edge. At any other than the flowering season, we should not have been able to detect it. Accordingly it had not been noticed by the officers of the army, or other travellers who had passed, when the tree, which is deciduous, was not only out of flower but leaf. We did not expect to find the teak-tree so thinly interspersed in the common forest, until we had an opportunity of determining, by personal examination, that this was the case in the hills before Prome. In what is properly called a teak forest, the teak prevails over all other trees, sometimes nearly to their entire exclusion.

September 19, 1826

We left Tong-taong early this morning, and soon reached the village of Tharet (the Mango), which is situated on the west bank, and has the rank of a Myo. This was one of the largest places we had yet seen, and to all appearance the most thriving. A great number of boats were moored along the bank. Judging by the concourse of people who came down to gaze at the steam-vessel, it must contain several thousand inhabitants. The houses, as everywhere else, consisted of a light and frail fabric of bamboos, grass, or palm-leaves. Such a house is seldom with more than forty current ticals, or 4l., and it is a splendid mansion that costs 400 or 40l. With very few exceptions, there exists no substantial structures in the country, except those which are dedicated to religious purposes. The insecurity of property forbids that the matter should be otherwise. If a Burman becomes possessed of wealth, temple-building is the only luxury in which he can safely expend it. Hence the prosperity of a place, which is never more than temporary, is to be judged of in this country, not by the comforts or luxuries of the inhabitants, or the reputable appearance of their habitations, but by the number, magnitude, splendour, and actual condition of its temples and monasteries. On these are wasted substantial materials, labour, and even ingenuity, equal to the construction of respectable towns and villages, calculated to last for generations.—Tharet and its dependencies form, with the district of Sarawadi,
the assignment for the maintenance of the King’s only full brother, who takes his title from the last-named place.

At half-past eight o’clock we passed Meeaday (Myédé, land within), on the east bank of the river. This place is considered by Burman travellers to be half-way between Ava and Rangoon. It is but a small village in comparison with Tharet, but has also the rank of a Myo. This was the headquarters of the Burman army for six months, and the place of their eventual retreat after their defeats near Prome. Here they were attacked by fever, dysentery, and the spasmodic cholera. These and the wounds received in the late actions carried off great numbers. The ground was highly offensive when our troops passed it, and on the banks and islands were found many recent graves, for there was no time to burn the dead. This place, like the other positions of the Burman army, was strongly stockaded on both sides of the river; but the Burmans again fled at our approach, and offered no resistance. In the afternoon we had before us the wooded island of Loongee (Lwan-k’hi), and at five o’clock we anchored opposite the little village of Ang-lap (middle fish-pond). On the opposite bank of the river (the island intervening), is the village of S’han-baong-wé (elephant boat whirlpool), which is prettily situated on a projecting point of land. The scenery altogether in this situation is exceedingly romantic. Colonel Syme and his companions were particularly struck with its beauty, and longed for the pencil of Mr. Daniel to delineate it; but it did not appear to us that there were objects in it sufficiently distinct and prominent to constitute the subject of a fine landscape.

At Loongee, Dr. Wallich and I landed on a promontory where the rock was exposed. This was about fifty feet high. On the shore we found the calcareous sandstone as before. On examining the cliff farther up, I found the lowest stratum to be a slate clay much decomposed. Above it was the sand-stone, and above all a hard calcareous limestone. In the thick wood in the valleys, several of the common fowl, in a wild state, were seen, and the crowing of the cocks all round was incessant, showing that this species of game is very plentiful. A party which went to the village saw a hare, the first that had been observed, for this animal is not found in the delta of the Irawadi. The banks of the river to-day had been somewhat lower than yesterday; the hills encroaching less upon the river, the river itself being wider, and the islands more
numerous. Villages were more frequent, but still the country appeared very poorly inhabited, and the marks of culture were trifling in the extreme.

**September 20, 1826**

This morning we passed Mi-kyaong-re, a considerable village on the east bank of the river. From this place there is a road for wheel-carriage to the town of Tongo on the Setang river, and nearly in the parallel of Prome. The distance is but ten days’ travel for caravans or carts. At twelve o’clock we readied Melloon, pronounced Malun, but written Melwan. Immediately, on turning a sharp elbow of the river, which is here only six hundred yards broad, we came upon Melloon on the west, and Patanago on the east bank, fronting each other, where the stream expands to a breadth of nine hundred yards. During the negotiations which terminated in a renewal of hostilities, the British army was encamped at Patanago, and the Burman entrenched at Melloon, the river only separating the adverse parties. The Burman army, alleged to amount to twenty thousand men, was commanded by Prince Memiabo (Men-myat-pu), a half-brother of the King, and a youth without any experience. Under him was the chief Kaulen Mengyi, one of the Burman negotiators, a suspicious niggardly old man, who had never commanded an army before, or even had any knowledge of the art of war as practised by the Burmans themselves. Mr. Judson, who was taken out of irons and sent down from Ava to Melloon, to act as interpreter to the Prince, had an opportunity of observing personally the miserable manner in which things were conducted, and the dismay and consternation with which the Burmans had been seized. Old Kaulen Mengyi meted out the gunpowder to the soldiers in person, as if he had been making disbursements from the public treasury; and his parsimony was conspicuous in every department, while he neglected all the essential objects of the war. Mr. Judson had received from the Burman government, for himself and two followers, the sum of twenty ticals, which with much economy lasted for a month. Kaulen Mengyi, upon being petitioned, in official form, for another supply, told him that his habits were extravagant; and appointed a Burman officer to control his expenditure.
We landed on the spot where the Burman works had been escaladed. The greater part of these were still remaining. They had consisted of a double abattis and an earthen wall of no great height, crowned by a palisade. This surrounded a conical hill of easy ascent, and about one hundred feet high, to the extent of two thousand yards. There was no ditch. Nothing could have been more unskilfully chosen than this position, for the Burman army was exposed from head to foot to the artillery from the opposite bank, and the only protection it had against our shells and rockets, the practice of which was excellent throughout the war, consisted in pits covered by planks, in which the besieged hid themselves. Similar pits, indeed, were found in almost all the stockades which were taken, for the dread of our artillery was extreme. After a cannonade of two hours, our storming party crossed the river in boats in broad day; and as soon as it had gained the foot of the works, these were, as usual, abandoned without resistance, the Prince and his Lieutenant, being among the first to give the example of flight. The principal loss sustained by us, took place in crossing the river; but it was very trifling, for the fire of the enemy was as disorderly and ill-directed as usual. An officer who had the best means of ascertaining this last fact, informed me, that at Donabew, after their success, and when they were in high spirits, the Burman artillery-men, independent of not levelling their guns properly, or at all, did not fire any one piece oftener than once in twenty minutes. In passing over the ground within the stockade, we saw the skeletons of several of the Burmese warriors, who had been killed in the action, lying neglected among the rank weeds. The performance of funeral obsequies among the Burmans is, under all circumstances, dictated less by a regard to the memory of the dead, than the belief that it is a work of religious merit in the survivors.

Maloon is a very poor place, and is described as having been so thirty years ago, in the journal of Dr. Buchanan Hamilton, who observes, that the number of temples is out of all proportion to the population. This was still the case; and it may be safely asserted, that the temples and monasteries were more numerous than the houses. We found three new temples, two of them richly gilt. One of the latter had been built by a Myosugi, or chief of the district of Melloon, and the other by a Burman merchant; the third was built, during the war, by the Prince Memiaboo, when in command of the
army. We passed through the village, and found the inhabitants, as elsewhere, suffering from a scarcity. The price of rice was five ticals of flowered silver, or about thirteen shillings per basket, of half a hundred weight, which was from three to four hundred per cent. beyond the price of ordinary seasons. Little or none, however, was procurable at any price. The poor inhabitants, generally, had recourse to wild roots as a substitute. We saw several baskets of fresh roots of a wild arum, brought from the marshes, and some that had been prepared. In coming up the river, we observed, in several places, the same root under preparation. It is first sliced, then macerated for a couple of days, after which the women tread it in tubs with their feet, and when it is dried in the sun it is fit for use. We noticed that another root, still less palatable, was also had recourse to, but were unable to determine what it was. During the two years that the war continued, no scarcity was felt, although undoubtedly agricultural labour was greatly interrupted by the flight and dispersion of the inhabitants, the depredations of marauders, and the conscriptions which were raised. It was not until two or three months after the cessation of hostilities, that a general scarcity began to prevail throughout every part of the country, with the exception of the districts ceded to the British Government. From this it may be inferred, that there had existed in the country a stock of corn considerably beyond the average consumption of the inhabitants. Independent of this general cause of distress, the people of Melloon suffered peculiarly during the war. Mr. Judson, in his walk, met a group of the inhabitants, and had a long conversation with them, in which they informed him, that the levy raised in the district had been engaged with our troops at Donabew, on the 7th of March, and suffered severely in that affair, not one-half of those who had joined the army having ever returned.

In the evening we crossed over to Patanago, which is still smaller than Melloon. Close to it is a narrow lake, two miles in length; and we were informed that a second, of larger extent, exists at no great distance. In the cold season, these lakes had been covered with a multitude of ducks and other water-fowl; but these, which are migratory, had not yet made their appearance. A short way above Patanago is a cliff, which exposes a section of the rock and soil. The rock is calcareous sandstone in strata, nearly horizontal. The greater part of it is so decomposed, that I found it

_SBBBB_ 3.2 (Autumn 2005):636-959
difficult to get specimens sufficiently hard for preservation. Intermixed with the softer strata, and alternating with them, were thinner strata of a hard and tough rock, which I suspect to be calcareous limestone. I found none of the blue slaty clay upon this occasion which I met below the sandstone at Loongee. The soil was composed, of sand and yellow clay, intermixed with large pebbles of flint, white quartz, and common quartz. On the Meloon side I traced the sandstone to the highest hill. From Prome, up to this place. Dr. Wallich had been eminently successful in his botanical researches, having discovered several new genera, and many new species.

Meloon and its districts constitute the estate of the Prince of M'het,kha-rá (Pali?) one of the King's uncles. Here the old Myowun of Bassien overtook us.

**September 21, 1826**

We quitted Meloon by break of day this morning, and at a place called Myen-ka-taong, a few miles above it, on the same side, a little pagoda was pointed out to us upon an elevated cliff on the very verge of the bank, and threatened every season to be carried away by the river. This had in itself nothing remarkable; for it was but one out of a great many similar pagodas crowning the tops of the most conspicuous hills and eminences on both sides of the river, ever since entering the hilly country; but it was connected with an era in Burman history, and this gave it some interest. At the spot where it is erected, a Burman king of Pugan, of the name of Chau-lu, or Sau-lu, is said to have been assassinated by one of his generals. On looking into a chronological list of the Burman kings, with which I had the good fortune to be provided, this prince is stated to have ascended the throne in the year 1030 of the Christian era, and his successor in 1056, which last is probably the date of his death. Monuments to the memory of the dead are not very frequent amongst the Burmans, and those in commemoration of remarkable events still rarer. When a monument is erected over the ashes of the dead, it is in the ordinary pyramidal form, and ought not, according to the priests, to be crowned with the Ti, or iron umbrella. However, there is a difference of opinion on this point between the priesthood and the Court—the people taking part with the former. The affair is
generally compromised by making the structure at the same time a monument to the dead, and consecrating it to Gautama; so that, in fact, the priests gain their cause, as there is nothing in such a building to distinguish it from an ordinary zidi, or temple.

In the course of the day, we passed the village of Myan-kwan, a very considerable one on the east bank of the river and Ma-kwé, one of the largest and finest we had seen on the same side. A temple, on a hill near this last, has the reputation of containing the bed of Gautama: the name of it is Mya-thalon, or, “the temple of the emerald bed.” On the opposite side of the river, and farther up than Ma-kwé is another large village, called Menbu (Men-pu). The Irawadi is here at least two miles broad, and in its bed are many low islands, covered with long grass nowhere to be seen on the banks of the river, which are far too high to be ever inundated—a circumstance apparently necessary to the growth of this plant. The higher ranges of hills on both sides of the river had ceased—that on the western, at Melloon; and that on the eastern, a little sooner; but the country was still hilly in its general aspect. For the last two days, the teak had disappeared from the forest, of which the trees were now generally of a more stunted growth and less luxuriant foliage. In the evening, the range of Aracan mountains was distinctly seen running north and south. They did not appear to be above fifty miles distant, and we estimated the most elevated portions to be about six thousand feet in height. North-east of us, the high, conical, and insulated mountain of Poupa was seen for the first time.

September 22, 1826

At ten o’clock we passed the large village of Wet-ma-sut (the boar dry), which consists of three portions, and lies on the east bank of the river. A few miles below this place, the aspect of the country is remarkably altered. The banks of the river are naked, steep, and indeed generally almost perpendicular. The land consists of a succession of little hills, crowded upon each other, with frequent ravines, and no plains or valleys. The trees are of stunted growth, and thinly scattered, leaving the bare sand frequently exposed. At Wet-ma-sut we examined the rock, and found it, as before, composed of sandstone. At one o’clock, a strong current being against us, we reached the village of Re-nan-k’hyaung, usually
pronounced Ye-nan-gyaung. This compound word means literally “odorous water rivulet;” but Re-nan is the term applied to the petroleum, or earth oil, of which this village is the mart. About two miles before reaching Re-nan-k’hyaung, Dr. Wallich, Dr. Stewart, and Lieutenaut Coxe, landed, and walked along the narrow beach until close to the village, and succeeded in procuring some interesting and remarkable specimens of petrifactions. Some of these resembled stalactites, and were only incrustations of sand, of the form of the substance which composed the matrix, being of a soft and loose texture. By far the greater number consisted of masses of wood of considerable size, impregnated with chert, or horn-stone. In these, not only the external form, but the appearance of the fibre and bark, are often accurately preserved. All these specimens of petrified wood were more or less impregnated with iron. The most curious petrifaction, however, which we met, was obtained by Dr. Wallich—a fossil bone, which, from its appearance, we judged at the time to be the lower part of the femur, or thigh-bone, of an elephant. The cells of the bone, like the fibre in the wood, was accurately preserved. At three in the afternoon, our whole party proceeded to the celebrated Petroleum Wells. Those which we visited cannot be farther than three miles from the village, for we walked to them in forty minutes. The cart-road which leads to them is tolerably good, at least for a foot traveller. The wells occupy altogether a space of about sixteen square miles. The country here is a series of sand-hills and ravines,—the latter, torrents after a fall of rain, as we now experienced, and the former either covered with a very thin soil or altogether bare. The trees, which were rather more numerous than we looked for, did not rise beyond twenty feet in height. The surface gave no indication that we could detect of the existence of the petroleum. On the spot which we readied, there were eight or ten wells, and we examined one of the best. The shaft was of a square form, and its dimensions about four feet to a side. It was formed by sinking a frame of wood, composed of beams of the Mimosa catechu, which affords a durable timber. Our conductor, the son of the Myosugi of the village, informed us that the wells were commonly from one hundred and forty to one hundred and sixty cubits deep, and that their greatest depth in any case was two hundred. He informed us that the one we were examining, was the private property of his father—that it was considered very
productive, and that its exact depth was one hundred and forty cubits. We measured it with a good lead-line, and ascertained its depth to be two hundred and ten feet; thus corresponding exactly with the report of our conductor—a matter which we did not look for, considering the extraordinary carelessness of the Burmans in all matters of this description. A pot of the oil was taken up, and a good thermometer being immediately plunged into it, indicated a temperature of ninety degrees. That of the air, when we left the ship an hour before, was eighty-two degrees. To make the experiment perfectly accurate, we ought to have brought a second thermometer along with us; but this was neglected. We looked into one or two of the wells, and could discern the bottom. The liquid seemed as if boiling; but whether from the emission of gaseous fluids, or simply from the escape of the oil itself from the ground, we had no means of determining. The formation, where the wells are sunk, consisted of sand, loose sandstone, and blue clay. When a well is dug to a considerable extent, the labourers informed us that brown coal was occasionally found. Unfortunately we could obtain no specimens of this mineral on the spot, but I afterwards obtained some good ones in the village. The petroleum itself, when first taken out of the well, is of a thin watery consistence, but thickens by keeping, and in the cold weather it coagulates. Its colour, at all times, is a dirty green, not much unlike that of stagnant water. It has a pungent aromatic odour, offensive to most people. The wells are worked by the simplest contrivance imaginable. There is over each well a cross-beam, supported by two rude stanchions. At the centre of the cross-beam, and embracing it, is a hollow revolving cylinder, with a channel to receive a drag-rope, to which is appended a common earthen pot that is let down into the well, and brought up full by the assistance of two persons pulling the rope down an inclined plane by the side of the well. The contents of the pot are deposited for the time in a cistern. Two persons are employed in raising the oil, making the whole number of persons engaged on each well, only four. The oil is carried to the village or port in carts drawn by a pair of bullocks, each cart conveying from ten to fourteen pots of ten viss each, or from 265 to 371 pounds avoirdupois of the commodity. The proprietors store the oil in their houses at the village, and there vend it to the exporters. The price, according to the demand, varies from four ticals of flowered silver, to six ticals per 1000 viss;
which is from five-pence to seven-pence halfpenny per cwt. The carriage of so bulky a commodity, and the brokage to which the pots are so liable, enhance the price, in the most distant parts to which the article is transported, to fifty deals per 1000 viss. Sesamum oil will cost at the same place, not less than three hundred ticals for an equal weight; but it lasts longer, gives a better light, and is more agreeable than the petroleum, which in burning emits an immense quantity of black smoke, which soils every object near it. The cheapness, however, of this article is so great, that it must be considered as conducing much to the convenience and comfort of the Burmans. Petroleum is used by the Burmans for the purpose of burning in lamps; and smearing timber, to protect it against insects, especially the white ant, which will not approach it. It is said that about two-thirds of it is used for burning; and that its consumption is universal, until its price reach that of sesamum oil, the only one which is used in the country for burning. Its consumption, therefore, is universal wherever there is water-carriage to convey it; that is, in all the country watered by the Irawadi, its tributary streams, and its branches. It includes Bassien, but excludes Martaban, Tavoy and Mergui, Aracan, Tongo, and all the northern and southern tributary states. The quantity exported to foreign parts is a mere trifle, not worth noticing. It is considered that a consumption of thirty viss per annum for each family of five and a half persons is a moderate average. If it were practicable, therefore, to ascertain the real quantity produced at the wells, we should be possessed of the means of making a tolerable estimate of the inhabitants who make use of this commodity, constituting the larger part of the population of the kingdom.

With the view of collecting data for this estimate, I made such enquiry into the nature of the trade as my short stay would admit. The number of boats waiting for cargoes of oil was correctly taken, and found to amount to one hundred and eighty-three, of very various sizes, some carrying only one thousand viss, and others fourteen thousand. According to the Burmese, whom I consulted, the average burthen of the vessels employed in this traffic, was considered to be about four thousand viss. The number now mentioned is not considered unusual; and it has been reckoned that, one with another, they complete their cargoes in fifteen days; they are therefore renewed twenty-four times in the in
the course of the year; and the exportation of oil, according to this estimate, will be 17,568,000 viss. Deducting a third from this amount, that is, the quantity estimated to be used for other purposes than burning, and we have at the annual consumption of thirty viss, for a family of five and a half individuals, a population of 2,147,200.

Of the actual produce of the wells, we received accounts not easily reconcilable to each other. The Burmans, less perhaps from a disposition to impose than from incapacity to state any facts of this nature with precision, could not be relied upon, and we had no registers to consult. The daily produce of the wells was stated, according to goodness, to vary from—thirty to five hundred, the average giving —about two hundred and thirty-five viss; and the number of wells was sometimes given as low as fifty, and sometimes as high as four hundred. The average made about two hundred; and considering that they are spread over sixteen square miles, as well as that the oil is well known to be a very general article of consumption throughout the country, I do not think this number exaggerated. This estimate will make the consumers of petroleum for burning amount to 2,066,721.

In the narrative of one of my predecessors, Captain Cox, the number of wells is given as high as 520, and the average daily produce of each well is reckoned at 300 viss, which makes the whole annual produce 56,940,000. Calculating as before, this produce will give a population of 6,959,331. This is a much higher estimate than my rough data afford; but even this, it will be observed, gives but a very low estimate of the probable population of the empire. Calculations formed from such crude materials, and which would be justly disregarded where means of gaming more accurate information are within reach, have their value in a country in which exact details are never procurable upon any question of statistics.²

Re-nan-k'hyaung is but a petty village. It is situated in a narrow dell on the river-side, the sand-hills forming a sort of amphitheatre behind it. About a mile below it is a small village where coarse earthen pots are manufactured for the petroleum; and a short way above it a second village, which is also a port for exportation. At this last we counted twenty-three boats.

² More accurate details were afterwards obtained in Ava, and will be given in the sequel.
September 23, 1826

We left Re-nan-k'hyaung at daylight, and at the distance of about three miles above it came to the Pen river, a little stream which here falls into the Irawadi on its eastern bank. There is a village of the same name at its mouth. At two o’clock, favoured by a strong southerly breeze, we reached Pa-k’han-nge, or little Pa-k’han, a very pretty village, and of considerable size. Opposite to it, on the western bank, is a straggling village, which is four miles distant from the larger one of Sembeghewn (Sen-p’hyu-kywan, white elephant island), and has the same name. This is the best and most frequented route from the banks of the Irawadi to Aracan, and that by which Major Ross, with a battalion of Sepoys, and a large portion of the elephants and cattle of the army, proceeded in the month of March last. The route within the plains was no more than six days’ moderate march; so that the direct distance to the foot of the hills does not probably exceed forty miles. The late King constructed the excellent road which leads to the Aracan mountains. The principal town of this district, called Salen, or Chalen, is about twelve miles from the Irawadi. An interesting account of this town and its district, which constitutes at present the estate of the King’s brother-in-law and favourite, has been given by an officer of Major Ross’s detachment. Round the town are the remains of a fortification, the brick walls of which are still, in some situations, fifty feet high. This is said to have been constructed when Pugan was the capital of the empire, not less than fifteen hundred years back, which would correspond with the reign of a prince named Pok-san-lan, who ascended the throne in the year of Christ 324. The district of Salen proved to be by far the most populous and cultivated which had been seen by the English since entering the Burman dominions. Numerous villages were observed, and in some places the rice culture extended as far as the eye could see. This advantage it seems to owe to the Salen river, which is dammed by the inhabitants for the purpose of irrigation, and fertilizes the country in its whole course. It is probable, that wherever such streams exist in other parts of the country, population and agricultural industry will be found to prevail; but I do not imagine they are numerous, judging from the small number we have observed falling into the Irawadi. The banks
of this river itself, before it commences its disemboguement, are generally too steep and hilly to allow of the neighbouring country being cheaply irrigated from it; and this circumstance, independent of the insecurity of property, will go a great way towards accounting for the general absence of agricultural industry which we had hitherto observed. Even the boasted culture and population of Salen, which, not only from the statement of the English officers, but from its being the estate of the favourite, we may presume to be one of the finest in the kingdom, will bear no comparison with some of the choice districts of Bengal. In the printed account, it is stated to contain six hundred square miles, and to have a population of two hundred thousand inhabitants, which gives about three hundred and thirty-three to the square mile; whereas some of the Bengal districts have four, five, and even six hundred inhabitants.

At five in the evening we reached Sillah Mew (Sa-lé), on the east bank of the river. From Wet-ma-sut up to this place, after which it narrows, the Irawadi has a great breadth. In some situations, to all appearance, it was not less than four miles across. In this part of its course, it is full of large islands. The principal channel, all the way from Melloon, had been close to the eastern bank; and we had, therefore, little opportunity of observing the western. We landed at Salé, and inspected the village and its immediate neighbourhood. A great part of it had been destroyed during the war, and it had not yet recovered. The inhabitants, indeed, had at one time abandoned the place, and returned only three months ago. Notwithstanding this, they showed no symptoms of timidity, but came down in numbers to the bank to see the steam-vessel; and a crowd of them accompanied us in our walk, behaving in the most kind and respectful manner. Joy at the return of peace, indeed, and a deprecation of all war, seemed to be the universal feelings of the lower classes throughout the country. Salé contains 200 houses, and its population, therefore, may amount to 1000 or 1200 inhabitants. It is the principal place of a considerable district, situated on both sides of the river, the portion on the western bank being by far the most fertile—an observation which applies to all the country, from Wet-ma-sut to Salé. Salé has a neat appearance, and differs from the villages farther down, in having the houses built on the ground, instead of being raised on posts. Near the village, as usual, are several
considerable temples and monasteries. Immediately above it are the ruins of a brick fort, which, we were told, was constructed by the Burmans to resist the last invasion of the Talains; yet it has an appearance of much greater antiquity. Close to it is a stone with an inscription, standing on its end, and resembling a rude tombstone in a country churchyard in England. This is of sandstone, and the inscription not legible. There is enough, however, to show that it is not the character at present used by the Burmans. The country around is eminently sterile, consisting of little else than sand, on the surface of which are strewed large pebbles of quartz, and fragments of petrified wood. The inhabitants complained that little or no rain had fallen, and apprehended a famine.

We counted eighty trading boats at this place, some of them the largest we had seen. The trade consists in palm-sugar, terra japonica, onions, capsicum, and cotton. Salé has always been a place of considerable traffic. It was the only one in the country where the shopkeepers were in the habit of coming to passing travellers to hawk their goods. This mark of prosperity was now no longer visible.

**September 24, 1826**

At half-past three in the afternoon, we reached Pagham-mew (Pagan). In our journey we had a range of hills along the west bank of the river, from two hundred to four hundred feet high. The eastern bank was much less elevated, and here a low country, with occasional gentle swellings, extended, as far as the eye could see, to the south-east. Inland from Pugan, there is an insulated range of rugged and bleak-looking hills.

The rock formation, wherever we had an opportunity of examining it, consisted of nothing else than sandstone and breccia; the soil being composed of the debris of these materials, with little or no vegetable mould. The hills were but partly covered with trees, and these were little better than brushwood. In the narrow belt intervening between the hills and the river alone, the soil being somewhat better, trees of considerable size were to be seen, such as the sacred fig, the tamarind, palmyra, and mango.

As we approached Pugan, we had a view of the last field on which the Burmans had tried the fortune of war with our troops. A Chief of the name of Zé-ya-thuran (Jaya-sura, bold in victory, Pali),
of the rank of a Wundok, had long importuned the King of Ava to put him in command of the army. When the hard conditions, of the treaty concluded at Patanago were announced to the Court, the King, who was reluctant to comply with them, was at length brought to yield to the wishes of Zé-ya-thuran, who accordingly received the command of the army. He took with him such troops as could be collected at Ava, and with these and the fugitives from Melloon, posted himself to the south of Pugan, where the extensive Pagodas and other ruins of this ancient capital commence. Zé-ya-thuran, whose force was supposed to amount to sixteen thousand men, instead of acting on the defensive, in field-works or stockades, like his predecessors, attempted a mode of warfare apparently more judicious—that of opposing our army, step by step, by desultory attacks and bush-fighting, for which the extensive ruins of Pugan, and the low woods on the bank of the river, which characterised the scene of action, were well suited. But the Burman troops refused to fight, and took to flight on the first assault. A post on the bank of the river was entered by our troops at the charge. The Burmese, who occupied it, precipitated themselves into the river, and here three hundred of them are said to have been bayoneted or drowned. Zé-ya-thuran fled to Ava after his defeat, and had the indiscretion, on his first audience of the King, to ask for reinforcements, and to tender fresh promises of victory. The King, provoked at his assurance, and angry with himself for having broken off the negotiations, which he felt must now be renewed to a disadvantage, ordered his vanquished general for immediate execution. Zé-ya-thuran was disliked by his fellow-courtiers, and odious to the people as a notorious oppressor. In the hour of need he had therefore no one to befriend him. He was dragged from the Hall of Audience by the hair of the head and conducted to prison, where he remained only one hour, when he was led to the place of execution, and beheaded. Mr. Judson told me, that he happened by accident to be present when he was dragged to prison, and afterwards when he was taken to the place of execution. The Burmese jailers and executioners, for they are one and the same, are all pardoned criminals; and upon this occasion displayed the most savage ferocity, knowing it was safe to do so towards a man who had not only incurred the King’s displeasure, but against whom also the public hatred was particularly directed. In leading him to the prison, he was dragged.
along the ground and stripped naked, the executioners disputing with each other for the different articles of his dress. When led to execution, he was pinioned as usual, and for a distance of two miles was goaded with spears, and otherwise maltreated to such a degree, that he was nearly dead before suffering decapitation. Immediately after dinner we landed, and strolled for two or three hours among the ruins of Pugan, the most remarkable and interesting remains of antiquity in the Burman dominions, and for twelve centuries the seat of government. We ascended one of the largest temples, and from this had a commanding prospect of the surrounding country and ruins; the latter extending for at least eight miles along the bank of the river, and being in depth often three or four miles. In this space, the number of temples is quite surprising. When the Burmans themselves talk of things that are countless, it is a favourite figure to say that they are as numerous as the temples of Pugan. They are of all sizes, and in various states of preservation. Some have been restored, and are still used as places of worship; others are tolerably complete, though neglected; but many are mere ruins, and a considerable number are but heaps of mouldering brick. In the evening, when I returned to the steam-vessel, I found the old Myowun of Bassien waiting for me. He had with him the royal order for the approach of the Mission to Ava. This was, according to custom, a narrow palm leaf, about three feet long, pointed at both ends—a shape which marks a royal mandate, and the forging of which is an act of high treason. The following is a literal translation of this document.

Ne-myo-men-k'haong Kyan-the. In regard to conducting to the golden feet the English chief, he being an envoy who has come from a far country, you are to proceed along with him, sending a boat and people at the end of every two stages, saying what day you left Henzada, and at what place, and by how many stages you have arrived, and how many more stages will bring you to the presence.—The writing of the Great Wuns.

September 25, 1826

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3 The name of our conductor, the ex-Governor of Bassien.
We repeated our visit this morning to the ruins of Pu-gan. This place is stated, in Burman chronology, to have been founded by a king named Sa-mud-da-raj (This is a Pali corruption of the Sanscrit words Samudra raja, or red king,—a name which suggests the probability of a foreign lineage) in the year of the grand agra 799, of Gautama 651, of Salivana, called by the Burmans Sumundri, 29, corresponding with the year of Christ 107. It was destroyed in the year of Christ 1356, but appears to have ceased to be the seat of government in favour of Chit-kaing thirty-four years earlier. In this long interval of one thousand two hundred and fifteen years there reigned fifty-seven kings, giving an average to each reign of more than twenty-one years. These reigns, long in a barbarous state of society, would seem to imply that order and tranquillity generally prevailed while the seat of government was at Pugan; and that this was the case may perhaps appear probable, from the frequent mention made in the chronological list of sons and grandsons succeeding fathers and grandfathers, and brothers succeeding brothers, while there were but few changes of dynasty.

The oldest of the temples pointed out to us, dated in the reign of King Pyan-byá, or from 846 to 864. Nine temples are ascribed by tradition to this prince; but all of them small, in a ruinous state, and without any interesting relics. The first temple which we visited had the appellation of Thapin-nyu, or “the Omniscient,” which is an epithet of Gautama. It is one of the finest, has been restored, and is occasionally used as a place of worship. A short account of this will suffice to convey a notion of the style, character, and extent of all the large temples, for the whole of these are upon the same model. They are built of brick and lime; and the freestone, which is so abundant in the country, and apparently so easily worked, is generally to be seen only in the pavement of the ground-floor and court-yard, or in the construction of stairs. The bricks are well burnt, and commonly about fourteen or fifteen inches long, and eight broad. The form of the temple is an equilateral quadrangle, having on each side four large wings, also of a quadrangular form. In these last are the entrances, and they contain the principal images of Gautama. Each side of the temple measures about two hundred and thirty feet. The whole consists of four stages, or stories, diminishing in size as they ascend. The ground story only has wings. The centre of the building consists of
a solid mass of masonry: over this, and rising from the last story of
the building, is a steeple, in form not unlike a mitre, ending in a
thin spire, which is crowned with an iron umbrella, as in the
modern temples. Round each stage of the building is an arched
corridor, and on one side a flight of stairs leads all the way to the
last story. We ascended by this flight, and found it to consist of a
hundred and sixty steps, giving a height which may be estimated
at eighty feet. The whole height of the building, including the spire,
we were informed by our guides, was a hundred and thirty-five
cubits, or about two hundred and ten feet. Round this temple, like
all the rest, there is a court fenced by a brick wall, with gateways.
Perhaps the most remarkable feature of this temple, as well as of
almost all the other buildings of Pugan, is the prevalence of the
arch. The gateways, the doors, the galleries, and the roofs of all
smaller temples, are invariably formed by a well-turned Gothic
arch. It had been alleged, that the art of turning an arch has been
lost by the modern Burmans. There is no foundation for this
opinion; for, in the vicinity of Rangoon, I have seen several very
good arches in buildings of recent structure. The truth is, that
their modern buildings, consisting generally of masses of solid
masonry, or of wood, necessarily exclude the use of the arch. The
temple of Thappin-nyu contains some modern images of Gautama,
of an enormous size, composed of common brick and plaster, gilt
over, but very rudely and clumsily executed. Its construction is
ascribed to Alaum-chao-su, a prince of Pugan, whose reign
commenced in 1081, and ended in 1151 of Christ.

From the temple of Thapin-nyu we proceeded to another
large one, called, after Ananda, the favourite disciple of Gautama.
This is in a much more complete state of repair, and the spire has
been lately gilt over. These improvements were effected by the
father of his present Majesty, and were in progress during Colonel
Syme’s visit to the country. As a place of worship, it has the
highest reputation of any of the temples of Pagan. We found here a
number of persons at their devotions, and among them a party of
men and women of respectable appearance, who had come from
Ava for this express purpose. Each angle of this temple was found
to measure two hundred and twenty-five feet, and the spire was
reported by our guides to be one hundred and seven cubits, or one
hundred and sixty feet and a half in height. The temple contains
many huge images of Gautama, of the usual structure and form,
but no relick of antiquity. Its building is ascribed to Kyan-Thak-sa, who reigned in Pugan from 1056 of Christ, to 1081. He was the grandfather and immediate predecessor of Alann-Chau-sù, who built Thapin-nyu.

Not far from the temple of Ananda there are some good Kyaungs, or monasteries, here, as in other places, built of wood, and tiled: connected with them is a small building of masonry, the inside of the wall of which is covered with rude paintings, representing the Burman hell, called Nga-ra, probably a corruption of the Pali Naraka, and of the country or paradise of Nats. The punishments in the first are various—all of them physical; such as having the entrails torn out by vultures—decapitations—knocking the brains out with a hammer, and similar evils. Ease—idleness—high seats, and numerous attendants, are, to judge from the paintings of this place, among the principal joys of the paradise of Nats. According to the Burman creed, the Nats, like all other beings, are liable to evil and to change; the only exception is in favour of those admitted into Nibban, where there is neither joy, nor grief—pleasure or pain; a state, which if it does not amount to absolute annihilation, approaches as near to it as can well be imagined.

In passing from the temple of Ananda to the next, and close to an old and massy gateway, which belonged to the ancient fortification of Pugan, we came upon the first inscriptions which we had seen. These were on two square columns of sandstone, each about seven feet high above the ground, and much like the massy posts of a gate, although they had certainly not been used for this purpose. The four sides of these pillars were completely covered with writing, which appeared quite distinct and perfect. The character is not legible to the present race of inhabitants, or at least we could find no person at Pugan who could understand it. A person lately deceased, it was stated, made himself master of it; and his son, now at Ava, is said to have inherited his knowledge. The Pali writings of the Burman priests and laity are in the common character of the country, in which they differ from the Siamese, Kambojans, and, I believe; Cingalese, whose sacred writings are invariably in the ancient Pali character, or, as it is frequently denominated, that of Magad’ha. The only exception amongst the Burmans is one short book of a few leaves, commonly written on sheets of ivorv. called Kamawa; and the form of the
character in this instance, although essentially the same, varies a good deal from that in use among the Siamese.

The next temple which we reached has the name of Baúd’hi, a Pali name of the sacred fig. This is of the same general form as the rest, but wants the wings, and is altogether much smaller. It is in good order, and is a neat and pretty building, having at a little distance mud) the look of an English village church. On the outside of it frequent images of Budd’ha appear in niches, and the spire especially is crowded with them. We thought this the best specimen of Burman architecture we had anywhere seen. The accompanying drawing will convey a better notion of it than I can give in writing. We had been informed, that in a portico of this temple had been collected a great number of stones with inscriptions on them. These accordingly we found, and to the number of no less than fifty-three. These stones were always small slabs of sandstone, exactly resembling, as I have said of those which we saw at Sa-lé, a tombstone in an English country churchyard at the head of a grave. Some were mutilated, and in others the character was a good deal defaced or obliterated; but in general, both material and character were perfect. The writing appeared exactly the same as in the two columns already mentioned, some allowance being made for variety in handwriting. I may also add, that it appeared to me to be the same with that which is found in ancient inscriptions in Java. The character is even not so remote from the modern Javanese, but that I could make out several letters without difficulty. After the experience we have had of Indian inscriptions, it is not to be expected that much useful historical information would be obtained from those of Pugan, if they were translated. Among so many, however, we might reckon on finding a few names and dates to corroborate the accounts which the Burmans give of their own story, or even some facts to illustrate their ancient manners, religion, and institutions. The temple of Baúd’hi, according to the tradition given of it, is the most recent of the ancient structures of Pugan, having been built by Zé-ya-sinha (Jaya-sin’ha, Victorious Lion, Pali), who reigned from 1190 to 1212. This prince is surnamed Nang-tonug-mya-mang, or the King of many-ear-jewels.

We proceeded from this temple to a small one named Shwe-ku, or the golden gourd. This is distinguished from the rest, by being built upon a high terrace; and it therefore makes, though...
small, a very good appearance. It has no wings, but a porch leads to it, and it consists of a single chamber, the roof of which is a dome, having over it a spire, as in the larger temples, an ornament indeed inseparable from all these buildings. In the wall of this temple, before entering the chamber, we saw the only inscription in modern Burman which we met with. It is, as elsewhere, written on sandstone. The character differs a little from that at present in use, and the language is somewhat obsolete; but these presented no great difficulties, and Mr. Judson easily made a translation, which is as follows:

In the year Má-k'ha 913, on the 2095 year after the Omniscient God passed into Nibban, in the reign of the elder brother and monarch, Lord of the World, he emancipated the disciples—the inherited property of the monasteries throughout his dominions. He also caused that the duties should be levied at the receipts of customs, and landing-place, according to established usage. If any Kings, or Nobles, or Landlords, shall levy beyond the accustomed rate, let them be said to have destroyed Gods, religion, the priests, and the people of the land.

On referring to the chronological list, the prince referred to is ascertained to have been Na-ra-pa-ti-gan, a king who reigned at Ava from the year 1551 to 1554 of Christ. The year alluded to as the first of his reign, and the inscription was, no doubt, intended to commemorate, one of those professions of justice and liberality which Eastern monarchs are accustomed to make in the beginning of their rule. The inscription is dated one hundred and ninety-eight years after the destruction of Pugan. In this interval it may be presumed that the common Burman character, nearly in its

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4 Crawfurd’s original note: Prisoners of war and others, are frequently condemned to be hereditary slaves for the service of the temples, and this class of persons seems here to be alluded to. According to this practice, we found at Rangoon a large body of Talains under a chief of their own, who were considered slaves to the Shwe-dagong Pagoda.

5Crawfurd’s original note: Kye-sa, the term here translated landlord, for want of better, is the same at present in use, and means, literally, “eater” or “consumer” of the district, or land; by which is intended, the public officer, or favourite, for those whose maintenance the town, district, or rather allotment of land, is assigned by the Government.
present form, began to supersede the recondite character of the sacred language.

On each side of the door, and within the chamber, we found two long inscriptions on stones in the wall. These stones were covered with a black shining varnish, with the exception of the character, which was very distinct. This, like all but the last mentioned, was Pali. We had first imagined the stone to be black marble, but on examination it proved to be only sandstone shining from the recent varnish.

After quitting this temple, we came accidentally to a small ruinous one, not distinguished by any particular name. It consisted of a single arched chamber. Here alone the doorway, instead of being arched as in the rest of the temples, was formed of blocks of freestone, both lintel and posts being composed of this material. Here I was a good deal surprised to discover decided evidence of the Brahminical religion. In niches, on the outer side of the wall, were several small figures in sand-stone, which were generally too much mutilated to be easily identified. One, however, was evidently Hanuman, the monkey general of Rama. Within the chamber were two good images in sandstone, and sculptured in high relief. One of these was Vishnu, or Krishna, sitting on his garuda; and the other Siwa, the destroying powder, with his trisula, or trident, in one hand, and a mallet in the other. They were lying neglected on the floor. Our Burman guides pointing to the tallest figure, that of Siwa, said that he was a Nat, or demi-god, under an interdict for slaying cattle. The Nats, according to the Burmans, are an order of beings superior to mankind; of which some are mischievous, and others beneficent. Such of the Hindoo gods as are known to them are considered to be Nats, some good and some bad. In short, they seem to have made as free at least with Hindoo mythology, as the Mohammedans have done with that of the Jews and Christians.

This temple afforded the only evidence of Hinduism which we observed at Pugan, with the exception of a small oval tile found at a large temple, which I did not visit, caned Gau-da-palen (the throne of Gau-da, a celebrated Nat), in size and structure similar to that of Thapin-nyu. This has upon it a figure of Budd’ha, in relief, under which was an inscription of three lines, in the Deva Nagari character, which I suppose to be Sanscrit. (The inscription was afterwards examined at Calcutta by Mr. Horace Wilson, but
although the writing was good legible Nagari, the meaning could not be made out. The language therefore was certainly not Sanscrit, or even Pali, but in all likelihood some provincial dialect of India).

The temple containing the Hindoo images which I have just mentioned, is ascribed to Nau-ra-tha-chau, whose reign commenced at Pugan in the year of Christ 997, and terminated in 1030. If these images were the principal objects of worship in the temple, as is probable, and not warders, a situation in which they nowhere else appear at Pugan, it may be strongly suspected that the Budd’hism of the Burmans, eight hundred years ago, differed materially from that which is at present established; and that it was intermixed with the Brahminical worship, as is suspected to have been the case in Java. The Hindoo form of the temples at Pugan, and the existence of writings in the Ueva Nagari character, would seem, at least, to give support to such a conjecture.

The last temple which we visited is called Damma-ran-kri, the etymology of which I have not been able to ascertain. This temple is the largest which we saw, and had certainly been the finest; but it was now in a state of much dilapidation, although still frequented as a place of worship, ami having some coarse modern figures of Gautama in the wings, one of which represented the deity reclining at full length, his head resting on a pillow, an attitude which is much less frequent than the sitting posture. The form of this temple was the same with that first described, but it was much larger, each angle measuring two hundred and seventy feet. The masonry was carefully and skilfully executed; and to strengthen the corners, there were throughout, at regular intervals of about six feet, blocks of hewn freestone. A strong well-built brick wall, twelve feet high, still perfect in many places, surrounded the court-yard. In this wall, fronting the doors of the temple, there are four massy and handsome arched gateways. Every thing connected with it, in short, conveyed the impression of a superior order of building. In the gallery of the ground-floor we found two large stones, containing inscriptions in a character similar to all the others. The building of this handsome edifice is ascribed to a king who reigned in Pugan from 1151 of Christ to 1154, and who is commonly known in Burman story by the epithet of Kula-kya. Kula is a term applied by the Burmans to the inhabitants of every
country lying west of their own, whether European or Asiatic, and, in the sense in which they use it, is not very remote from the word Barbarian, as it was applied by the Greeks to strangers. Kya is, to fall, or be dethroned; and it is stated that the epithet is derived from the circumstance of this prince having lost his life and throne by the hands of a foreigner from the West, and, we may suspect, most probably by those of some Hindoo adventurer.

There are some circumstances connected with these curious remains, which require a few words of explanation. The antiquity ascribed to them may at first view be doubted, when the perishable nature of the materials of which they are composed is considered. It must be remembered, however, that those that are in the best state of preservation have been carefully attended to, and bear evidence of having been repaired or restored. The materials also are excellent of their kind; and the arch, which so frequently prevails, is well suited to give them stability. The climate also, although a tropical one, is, from the nature of the soil, well calculated to give durability to buildings. The temples may be said to stand on a rock; and such is the sterility of the soil, that the buildings have suffered little or no injury from trees or smaller vegetables insinuating their roots or branches into the walls. In tropical countries generally, the greatest destroyers of neglected buildings are the banyan, the sacred and other fig-trees; but among the ruins of Pugan we did not see a single example of these plants having insinuated themselves. From demolition by the hand of man, these temples have been sufficiently secured by the superstition of the people, who still profess the same religion with their founders.

The vast extent of the ruins of Pugan, and the extent and splendour of its religious edifices, may be considered by some as proofs of considerable civilization and wealth among the Ancient Burmans; but I am convinced there is no foundation whatever for such an inference. The building of a temple among the Burmans is not only a work of piety, but the chief species of luxury and ostentation, in which those who have become possessed of wealth either by industry or extortion, are permitted to indulge; and at Pugan we have the accumulated labour of twelve centuries so expended.

In returning home, after spending four hours among the ruins, a small temple was pointed out to us on the bank of the
river. This, to which we paid a visit, has nothing remarkable in its form, and is evidently now a modern structure in very good order. It was stated to us however by our guides, that the original temple on this spot was the first ever built at Pugan, and that it was constructed by Phru Chau-ti, the third king of Pugan, whose reign began in the year of Christ 167, and ended in 242.

We left Pugan at three o'clock, but having to make the circuit of a long sand-bank, we did not reach Nyaung-ngu (Fig-tree promontory) until sunset, although the latter place is not above three or four miles distant from the former. Nyaung-ngu is but a continuation of Pugan; occasional houses and numerous temples occurring all the way between them, and the last even for a mile farther up the river. We landed, but as the evening was fast closing, we had time only for a very short excursion. We proceeded inland to hill, on which we perceived the ruins of a temple or monastery. This eminence was about one hundred feet high, and composed of breccia. A flight of steps, consisting of blocks of sandstone of great length, led to it. The building, which had stood upon the hill, was a confused ruin, of which nothing could be made. It was said to have been a monastery. The face of the country was prettily diversified with swelling grounds, and near the town were, as usual, many fine fig-trees, tamarinds, and palmyras. There was a good deal of cultivation, divided into small fields, surrounded by a hedge, composed of the dead branches of a thorny tree, the Indian plum, or *zizyphus jujuba*. The soil, both here and at Pugan, is singularly sterile, consisting of little else than sand and gravel, with occasional fragments of petrified wood. Even at this season the surface was covered with very little vegetation, but the little grass there was seemed of a good quality. At Pugan we had seen in the morning the peasantry at work in the fields which lay among the ruins: their labour was harrowing,—the implement used consisting of a large rake, dragged, by from three to four oxen abreast, which were managed by one man sitting on a cross-beam raised on two stanchions over the rake, his weight thus giving more effect to the operation. The objects intended to be cultivated in these fields were cucumbers, pumpkins, and sesamum.

*September 26, 1826*
The country before us, and on each side, appeared now nearly an open champaign, with a few insulated hills, or short hilly ranges, scattered over it here and there, at a long interval from each other. Among these by far the most remarkable was Paopa, which, in some aspects, had much the look of a volcanic cone, but this disappeared when we came abreast of it. I should conjecture that this mountain cannot be less than five thousand feet high. The Arakan range of hills was daily in sight, and diminished greatly in height as we advanced northwards. At twelve o’clock we were abreast of Pa-k’hok-ko, on the western side of the river, a place of considerable extent and population. The inhabitants poured out to the bank to see the steam-vessel, and formed such a concourse as we had nowhere seen unless at Prome. Pa-k’hok-ko is a place of great trade, and a kind of emporium for the commerce between Ava and the lower country; many large boats, which cannot proceed to the former in the dry season, taking in their cargoes at this place. We counted one hundred and fifty trading vessels, of which twenty-one were of the largest size of Burman merchant-boats. The articles exported consist of silk and cotton cloths, but especially the latter, which is extensively manufactured in the vicinity; terrajaponica, sesamum-oil, palm-sugar, gram (cicer arietinum), and tobacco. Ten miles inland from Pa-k’hok-ko, is the town of Pugangyi (Puk’han-kri), or great Puk’han, a populous place, surrounded by a brick wall, and containing some remains of antiquity; among others, some inscriptions on stone, said to be similar to those of Pugan. Pa-k’hok-ko, and the domain annexed to it, lately constituted the estate assigned to Maung-shué-nyan, a celebrated actor. This person, a native of Rangoon, gained the present King’s favour by his professional talents, his quickness at repartee, and his accomplishments as a buffoon; and he received a title of nobility, with an estate, as marks of royal favour. During the war, he had a small command, but disgraced himself by a precipitate flight. He was in the stockade where Thongba Wungyi was killed on the 7th of July 1824. After this, he fell into disgrace, quarrelled with some of the principal courtiers, and was discovered to be an atrocious oppressor, having put several persons on his estate to death. The King discovered his mistake in promoting him, imprisoned him twice as a correctional punishment; but finding him irreclaimable, he deprived him of his estate, and confiscated his personal property.
In the evening, we came to an anchor under an island about two miles below a village on the western bank, called Nga-m’hya-nga (the little fish-hook).

**September 27, 1826**

At half-past eleven o’clock this forenoon we were abreast of Tarup-Myo, or Chinese Town, which is distant from the river, on its eastern bank, about two miles: the spires of its temples only were visible. At twelve o’clock we passed the confluence of the Irawadi (Irawati) and Kyen-dwen rivers. The prospect afforded by their junction is not, as we expected to find it, imposing. Both rivers are here confined to a comparatively narrow bed; and the tongue of land which divides them is so low and covered with reeds, that it may be easily mistaken for an island, and consequently the smaller river, the Kyen-dwen, for a branch of the larger one. The proper orthography of the Kyen-dwen is Kyang-twang, pronounced Kyen-dwen. I may take this opportunity of explaining one difficulty in rendering Burman words into Roman letters. The sound given to a final consonant is regulated by rules of euphony, which are perfectly regular, but it is necessary to know them. Colonel Wood, the officer who gave the name as it now stands in our maps, took the sounds as he heard them. *I* after *an*, or *ng*, is pronounced as *d*. After the name, the word river, or *mit*, would have been given to him by the natives. In this case the final *n*, or *ng*, of *twang*, is sounded as *m*; and hence the name, as written down, abounds in errors. Another example is afforded in the Burman word for Chinese, just mentioned, which is correctly written Tarut, but may be pronounced also Tarug, or Taruk, or Tarup, according to the consonant which follows it. In these cases consistency cannot be attained, except by adhering to the original orthography of the words as written by the Burmans themselves, as far as this is practicable, through the use of Roman letters, and an approximation to it may be made in almost every case. The words Kyang-twang-mit imply, the river that is within the country of the people called Kyang, this nation chiefly inhabiting its banks. This stream is also known by the name of the Thanlawati, or, perhaps more correctly, Sanlawati, if it be a Sanscrit name, which is likely. We were now in a flat country, the nearest ranges of hills, to the east, being at least thirty miles distant, and the Aracan mountains,
to the west, not less than fifty in the nearest part, and sixty or seventy in the most distant. The villages and cultivation were here very considerable, but still the appearance of industry was not striking, and, judging from the prospect on the banks of the river, the soil, although better, was still thin, sandy, and remote from fertile. Of the cultivation, the most remarkable feature is immense groves of palmyra-trees, grown for the manufacture of sugar, which, judging from the vast number of these palms, must be an extensive article of consumption. The price at Pa-k’hok-ko, which is the great mart for it, does not, on an average, exceed ten current ticals per hundred viss, which, in English money and weights, is less than a penny a-pound.

At two o’clock in the afternoon, we reached Yandabo (Ran-tapo), near which we stayed two hours, laying in a stock of wood, sufficient for our consumption to Ava. Here, for the first time, we met a country extensively cultivated and clear of forest, extending from the banks of the river to a low range of hills lying south-east of it. This is the place at which the conferences were held, and the treaty of peace concluded, in February last. The large tree was pointed out to us, under which was the tent of the Commander of the British army, and in which the negotiations were conducted. The place will be memorable in Burman annals. The Burmese Court changed its tone as our army advanced upon the capital. When our troops first landed at Rangoon, it spoke of the affair as a predatory excursion, and was in great haste lest the invaders might escape. Before reaching Prome, it refused to negotiate. At this place it entered into an armistice, to gain time. After its defeats in December last, it at length consented to negotiate; but the negotiators insisted that the conferences should be held in a Burman vessel lying in the river between the two armies. It was evident that they had not yet been sufficiently humiliated, and therefore fortunate, that at this period they broke the treaty. At Yandabo, Sir Archibald Campbell dictated that the conferences should be held in his tent, and every point demanded was yielded without difficulty; the customary equivocations and procrastination of the Burman statesman yielding on every occasion to a threat to advance the army. At this period the Burman Court made a faint attempt to hide its humiliation from its own subjects. The instalment of the money paid at Yandabo was first brought down clandestinely at night, and the inhabitants
directed, at the peril of their lives, to keep within doors, that they
might not witness the shame of their Government. Even this
subterfuge was at length abandoned; and before the instalment
was completed, the money was openly brought from Ava in broad
day. The Burman, peculiarly a Government of fear and violence,
seems to have little hold of the affections of its subjects, and the
support of its authority chiefly depends upon its maintaining a
character of infallibility. Much of its system of administration
consists in a juggle to impress this character upon the minds of its
subjects, and its assumed preeminence is perhaps founded as
much upon policy, as upon national vanity and miscalculation of
its own strength. Under such circumstances, it may seem
surprising that no formidable insurrection broke out during the
progress of the contest with the British. The countries actually
occupied by our army, submitted, indeed, peaceably to our rule;
and, had we determined on permanent conquest, would in all
likelihood have been easily maintained. Against the sovereign,
however, humbled as he was, there was but one plot at Court, and
the evidence even of this is doubtful. The case alluded to was as
follows: The Pakan Wun, or Governor of Pakan, had, towards the
conclusion of the war, become a favourite: he was vested with the
command of the army, and nearly with the powers of a dictator. He
was a man of bad character, and the same who contemplated the
murder of the European and American prisoners. By his insolence
in his new elevation, he incurred the enmity of several members of
the royal family, and of the officers of Government who plotted for
his destruction. It was given out that he aimed at the throne, and
that certain insignia of royalty had been discovered in his house.
In less than an hour he was deprived of his dignities, his property
was confiscated, and he was beheaded. The forbearance evinced by
the people and chiefs during the war, is, I am told, ascribed mainly
to the popular character of the King, who is universally considered
by them as a man of good dispositions, having the happiness of the
people at heart, although from weakness often misled by bad
counsel. A very moderate share of merit, indeed, seems to be
sufficient to make an Asiatic prince popular.

In the evening we anchored a short way above the village of
Samai-kom. This is a place from which cotton is exported for the
Chinese market, and here and at several other places within the
district of Tarut salt-petre is manufactured: the price on the spot is
fifteen current ticals, or about thirty rupees the hundred viss, which is greatly dearer than the same article in the market of Calcutta.

**September 28, 1826**

After passing Samai-kom, we came to the termination of the largest island which we had met in the Irawadi, and which extends all the way from the confluence of the two rivers to the place we were now at: it is called Ala-kyun, or middle island: it is high and generally cultivated. After this the Irawadi expands to a breadth which was at present not less than four miles: it is full of low islands, evidently inundated during the highest rise of the water,—therefore uncultivated, and covered with the same tall grass which we had traced, under similar circumstances, throughout our whole progress: the *saccharum spontaneum*.

At one o’clock we passed Ra-patong, a village on the east bank. This was the spot at which the Burmans contemplated making their last effort, had the British army not been arrested in its progress by the Treaty of Yandabo. Mr. Judson told me, that on his way down, he here found the Burman force encamped, under the old Chief Kaulen Mengyi, who had been defeated at Melun. The Chiefs, he said, were quite dejected and dispirited, and their troops did not exceed one thousand men, composed principally of their personal retainers—in disorder, and without equipments. Our march to Ava, had it been necessary to advance, would have been easy, and through a country much superior to any which the army had passed over.

We reached the village of Kyauk-ta-long (single rock) about four o’clock in the evening, where we stopped for the night. A few miles below Kyauk-ta-long we found a deputation sent from Ava to meet us. The chief of it was a Sare-d’haukri, commonly pronounced Saye-d’haugyi, which means a Royal Secretary of the Lutd’hau. This was a person of some rank, wearing a gold chain of nine strings, and having a title of four syllables, I mention these particulars, because such matters are of high importance with the Burmans, and chiefly determine the rank of parties. The smallest number of chains is three, and the greatest for a subject twelve, the immediate ones being six and nine. Four-and-twenty strings to the chain are worn by the royal family only. With respect to the
number of syllables in a title, although much depends upon this, still some small allowance also is made for sense; and it is especially of importance that the title should commence with the Pali word, Maha, or Great, when a subject is referred to; or Thato, of which I do not know the meaning, when the individual is a member of the royal family. The late King's title (of his own selection, of course), consisted of twenty-one syllables; and as no word in the Burman language exceeds two syllables, and the greater proportion are of one only, it may readily be imagined what an assemblage of virtues and high qualities it must have embraced. The Saye-d’haugyis was Men-ten-si-thu. He was accompanied by two other chiefs, the old Governor of the province of Myit-sin, and the “North Commandant of Horse.” They came on board, after ascertaining, by a previous message sent from the shore, that the promised Envoy was present. The conduct of Men-ten-si-thu and his associates was extremely civil and decorous: they put few questions, and no improper ones, and showed none of the importunity to which I had been too much accustomed at Siam, and even Cochin China, under similar circumstances. A writer sat behind the officers of the deputation, and the chief dictated a report to him on the spot, which, when we arrived at Kyauk-ta-long, was immediately dispatched to Ava by a horseman.

September 29, 1826

Last night and this morning we made excursions into the country about Kyauk-ta-long. Several roads for wheel-carriages lead from it,—one of them to Ava: these are of a deep sand, and so narrow that two carts cannot pass abreast. The country on both sides of the river had been far better cultivated in the course of our journey to-day, than we had yet seen it. Still, a hilly range ran not far from both banks of the river, leaving the amount of level ground for cultivation very inconsiderable. These hills at Kyauk-ta-long came almost to the river-side. We ascended them, and found them from fifty to one hundred feet high, composed of sandstone in various states of induration, with embedded breccia and indurated clay, some of the last of a slatey texture. The rock had a more distinct stratification than we had before observed, the strata from the river side appearing at an angle of about fifteen degrees. Nothing in a
tropical climate, at least, can be imagined more bleak and barren than these hills.

The bare rocks, even in this season of general verdure elsewhere, are constantly visible, and in the interstices between them the sand and gravel give birth only to patches of brushwood. The narrow valleys are however cultivated, and in these were growing rice, cotton, and sesameum, but in a very scanty soil. We met large flocks of very fine black cattle returning from pasture. The males are generally emasculated, and these alone are used for labour, the females being exclusively reserved for breeding. They are seldom milked, as the Burmans generally do not use this article for diet. This circumstance may probably account for the general superiority of the Burman cattle over those of Bengal. They are fed upon rice, chopped straw, and oil-cake; but, considering the scantiness of the vegetation, they must be poorly off in the dry season. During that time, I am told that the leaves of the fig and other trees are had recourse to for fodder. The price of a pair of bullocks at Kyauk-ta-long varies, according to quality, from thirty ticals up to one hundred, each tical of one rupee, or two shillings. A cow does not cost above eight or ten ticals, and a bull may be had at from five to nine. At Kyauk-ta-long, and a few other places close to the capital, *ghee*, or clarified butter, for the consumption of strangers residing at Ava and Rangoon, is prepared in small quantity. The principal place where this is done is the village of Ngazwan, four or five miles below Kyauk-ta-long, on the same side of the river. Many of its inhabitants are a colony of Hindoos from the Coromandel coast, dressing as Burmans, using the Burman language, but still following the religion of their own country. On the opposite side of the river to this Hindoo colony, I may notice that there are five or six villages of Catholic Christians under a pastor, who was called to us Don Joseph, and who is an European Italian. These Christians were carried off by Alompra, when he took Syrian in the year 1757. He placed them here, where they have continued ever since, dressing in the Burman costume, and chiefly occupied in Cultivating the soil. Having put the steam-vessel in such order as to make a respectable appearance on our arrival at the capital, we quitted Kyaak-ta-long at half-past ten o’clock this morning. The officers of the Burman deputation showed the utmost anxiety to detain us until an answer should be received to their dispatch, and farther instructions obtained from the Court.
wished to show them that the Mission came as a matter of right, in virtue of the treaty, and that no order could be expected but one inviting us to proceed, which we should certainly meet on our way. After we had proceeded a few miles, the expected instructions met us. The following is a translation of the written order, which shows the minute attention paid by the Burman Court to the trifles of etiquette:

Men-ten-si-thu, Royal Secretary, &c. It is necessary that the Chiefs and Officers who have arrived at Kyauk-ta-long should be received suitably. Let them wait where they may have arrived on receipt of this, and let the old Governor of Myit-sin and the North Commandant of Horse be sent up to report the day, the hour, and the place of their arrival.

Being assured that preparations were making to give us a handsome reception, and that a second deputation, consisting of officers of superior rank, was coming down to meet us, we came to an anchor, at half-past one o'clock, off the east bank of the river, at a place pointed out as a suitable one by the Burman deputies. This was at a small village named Paok-to, about six miles from Ava, and facing a stupendous temple, called Kaong-m’hu-d’hau, on the opposite bank of the river: this differed in shape from all we had seen, being something between that of a bell and a bee-hive, with a small cupola at the top. Kaong-m’hu means, in the Burman language, “good act,” or “meritorious deed,” and has become an appellative for any religious building. When, for example, inquiry is made respecting the foundation of any particular temple, it is a common phrase to say, “Whose deed of merit is this?” or words to that effect. The present temple means the royal deed of merit, so called par excellence. The scene which now presented itself was extremely picturesque and imposing: at six miles’ distance from us we had the spires and temples of Ava on the east bank of the river, and those of Sagaing on the west. To the southeast, behind Ava, we could plainly distinguish four ranges of hills, gradually rising one above another: the nearest did not appear to be above ten miles from Ava; but the most distant seemed at least fifty or sixty miles off, and these last were to all appearance higher than any portion of the Aracan range which we had seen.
September 30, 1826

We made excursions into the village yesterday afternoon and this morning. The country is here a low champaign, running from the bank of the river, for at least fifteen miles, to a low range of hills to the east. The whole of this plain was in a state of culture, with the necessary exception of some lakes; two of which, not far from the river, we visited. The soil, as before, was thin and sandy, perceptibly undulating, and of course improving in fertility on the borders of the lakes. The peasantry were engaged in their labour, and we found them extremely civile communicative, and not wanting in intelligence. I conversed with them chiefly through my interpreter, Maongno, a Burman of Rangoon, who had acquired some knowledge of English and Hindi at Madras, and who, with much intel- ligence, had a very conciliating manner. The land produces rice towards the lakes, and in the higher grounds various pulses. Three crops of rice are generally produced yearly, and always two. The best crop is obtained with the assistance of the periodical rains: this is of white rice of the finest quality. The next two crops are obtained by the assistance of irrigation from the lakes, and consist of coarse red rice, used only by the peasantry, and little esteemed. The produce of rice for the seed sown, appears at the highest to be twenty-five fold, but, on an average, does not exceed ten. This is the lowest production in this grain which I have ever heard of. In Pegu, the produce seldom falls short of fifty, and often comes up to eighty-fold. In some of the lands now alluded to, the husbandry followed is, to take a crop of rice in the wet season, and a crop of pulses in the dry. Under this management, the average produce of rice is fifteen-fold; and when the pulse sown is the Cicer arietinum, the pea given as common food to horses throughout the Bengal provinces the produce is as much as forty-fold. With pulses less productive, but more esteemed for food, several species of Phaseolus and Dolichos, it is no more than fifteen or twenty-fold. We measured one field, which was to be sown with one of the pulses most esteemed, for food in India, the Phaseolus max. The owner told us that he expected it would yield three hundred viss of grain. This would give five hundred and fifty viss, or about one thousand four hundred and fifty-seven poundes per acre. The unproductiveness of the soil is in some measurse balanced by the little labour required in tilling it, on account of its
loose and sandy texture. The implements of husbandry consist of a plough and harrow, both of them extremely rude, and, with the exception of the ploughshare, which is of iron, and commonly imported from China, all of wood. The most substantial parts of these implements are of the timber of the *Mimosa catechu*. The plough is considered worth two current ticals, or four shillings; and the harrow, a rake of from four to eight teeth, according to the nature of the soil and the grain cultivated, about half as much: these are drawn by a pair of bullocks, the most expensive part of the husbandman’s stock, and which, according to our inquiries, were worth forty ticals. The ground commonly receives a harrowing before it is ploughed, by which means the scanty vegetation on the surface of a loose soil is removed, which amounts to a good weeding. Rice is first sown in beds, and afterwards transplanted; which is contrary to the usual practice of the lower country, where it is sown broad-cast, and not afterwards removed. One of the cultivators informed us that the field he was tilling was the property of his father, and had been inherited by him from his ancestors. It was at present, he said, mortgaged along with the contiguous field, altogether estimated at one acre, for the sum of sixty ticals; the mortgagee receiving no interest, but being put in possession of the land, and deriving all profits from it from the date of the loan,—the ground to be forfeited in three years if the debt were not liquidated. He also said that no portion of the produce was paid to the King, nor to the person who held the domain as a temporary estate. In lieu of a land-tax, he added, that the latter personage assessed each family in the village at an arbitrary rate, which, for the same family, varied from fifty to one hundred ticals yearly, besides *corvées*. Another husbandman informed us that the ground he was engaged in cultivating was the property of another; that he rented it, and paid the proprietor half the produce, himself supplying seed, cattle, and implements of husbandry. When I came on board, the Sayedaugyi told me that the village of Pauk-to was one of thirty constituting the district of Tapé; that it paid its lord ten thousand ticals yearly,—five thousand of this arising from the rent of five lakes, of which we saw two, and the remainder from the tax on families. From this amount, he makes a present to the King amounting to a tenth, but sometimes to twice as much; for in this, as in every thing else, there is nothing determinate, which is one of the main evils of the Burman Government. The peasantry, on
estates given away, like the present, are sometimes called upon for extraordinary contributions to the crown, besides the revenue paid to the lord. Thus, when the King out of caprice changed the seat of government from Amarapura to Ava, each family paid one hundred and fifty ticals to assist in constructing the fortifications and palaces of the new city. By far the largest proportion of the land of the kingdom is given away in estates to the royal family, public officers, and favourites. The rest is a royal domain,—the King standing in the same relation to it that the lord does in other cases. This, I believe, may be considered as a fair statement of the condition of the tenure of cultivated land, at least in the most populous parts of the kingdom. The lord of the domain of Tapé is the Akyok-won, which, for propriety’s sake, may be rendered Keeper of the Wardrobe, or Chamberlain; but Akyok literally means a tailor,—and the joint words “Ruler of the Tailors.” This personage, however, is not only chief of all the tailors in his Majesty’s employ, but of the goldsmiths, the cutlers, &c., and he is also charged with the care of the royal wardrobe,—of scenic dresses, masks, &c.: in fact, he is a person of considerable rank and importance. The lakes, which we visited, are, as already stated, fisheries of considerable value. They abound in small shell-fish, some of which are used by the inhabitants as food: these, dead and alive, are found abundantly on the shores; and being left when the water recedes, no doubt contribute greatly to fertilize the banks. In the cold season the lakes are much frequented by water-fowl, which are generally birds of passage. We saw a few ducks and geese even at this early period of the season, besides great numbers of curlews. There is little in the botanical department which can escape the activity and skill of Dr. Wallich. He here discovered a new aquatic genus of the family of Hydrocharides, nearly allied to the European plant which has given name to the natural order. He named the genus Abildgoordia, in compliment to the memory of his friend and preceptor, Professor Abildgaard, of Copenhagen.

Last night, a Wundauk⁶ and three Sayedaugyis arrived as a deputation from Ava to receive us, and, immediately after my

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⁶ Crawfurd’s original note: From Wun, a burden, and tauk, a prop; which may be rendered, in English, assistant, or deputy; the Wun-tauk being, in fact, a deputy to the Wungyi. The letter t is here euphonically pronounced d, as in many other cases.
return from our walk, they came on board in three royal barges, covered all over, not excepting the oars, with gold, and having each forty rowers. These boats are themselves exceedingly neat and handsome, but the rowers were not uniformly dressed.; and, upon the whole, this parade made by no means so good an appearance as the royal barges in Cochin China. The Wundauk and his associates were received on the poop of the steam-vessel. They put very few questions, and their demeanour altogether was unexceptionably frank and civil. They requested us to move up to Ava as soon as we were disposed, and that they would accompany us, expressing regret that we had disappointed them of the pleasure of meeting us at Pugan, as it was the intention of the King to send them so far, had we not come up so expeditiously. The Wundauk himself was a young man, of about eight-and-twenty, one of the handsomest Burmans I ever saw. He had been promoted to this high rank, which is equal to that of an Atwen-wun, and next to that of a Wungyi, on account of his father, Maong-shwe-men, who was also a Wundauk, and killed on the 7th of July 1824, along with Thongba Wungyi, in the action of which I have already given some account.

At ten o’clock we quitted Pauk-to, and at noon arrived at Ava, anchoring opposite to the house constructed for our reception. An Atwen-wun (from *atwen*, interior, and *wun*, a burden. The word may be translated Privy Counsellor; while the term Wungyi may be rendered Secretary of State) came on board almost immediately, to compliment us, and attend us ashore to our house, where a Wungyi was ready to receive us. The Atwen-wun in question proved to be Maung-pa-rauk, the same who had signed the treaty of Yandabo, but who now discharges the office of Kyi-wun, or Lord of the Granaries. Our party landed, and entered an inclosure formed by a bamboo railing. At the front gate of this we were met by the Wungyi Maun-lá-kaing, who handed me to a large temporary house in the centre of the inclosure, where chairs were ready for us. The conversation which ensued was not of a very interesting nature; but, upon the part of the Burman chiefs, it was dictated by a spirit of conciliation and politeness. As usual, they inquired first after the health of the King of England, and of the Royal Family in general. On our side, we inquired after the health of his Burman Majesty, after that of the Queen, the young Prince, and the favourite Princess. Inquiries after the female
branches of their families, it should be observed, are considered by the Burmans as marks of civility; in which respect they differ entirely from the inhabitants of Hindostan and other countries of Western Asia, among whom such questions would be considered as betraying the utmost indelicacy. The Burman chiefs informed us, that “the glorious King,” as they repeatedly called him, had directed the house we were now in to be constructed for our accommodation; and that he desired we would be at our ease and happy, since friendship was restored between the two countries. They told us, that a guard of eighty men, twenty to each of the four gates of the inclosure, were appointed to keep the populace from intruding upon us. All this preparation was a show of keeping up the usage of the Burman Court, and indeed that of all the nations to the eastward of Hindostan,—of placing foreign ambassadors under a certain restraint, until a public presentation. This was intimated with much delicacy; and it seemed that the rule, in regard to us, was not to be much insisted upon. Maung-lá-kaing, so called from his estate, was the same Wungyi who signed the treaty of peace; and the choice of the two officers who brought this event about, seemed an indication of good feeling on the part of the Court, and was, at all events, certainly dictated by good taste. Maung-lá-kaing was a feeble-looking old man, and extremely emaciated. His manners were gentle, affable, and courteous. He told us his age, which was fifty-eight, although he seemed to us full seventy. He asked all of ours: there is no incivility in doing so among the Burmans; on the contrary, to question their new acquaintances respecting their age implies that they take some interest in their welfare. After sitting for half an hour, the Burman chiefs left us, and we inspected our new habitation: it consisted of one large house in the centre, surrounded, at the distance of the railing, by five smaller ones, with a large open shed for the accommodation of the Burman officers and attendants;—these temporary dwellings were all raised, according to the custom of the country, on posts a foot high, and had bamboo floors, walls of plaited bamboo, and roofs thatched with grass. Some of us preferred continuing on board, but the younger members of the party took possession of the house; and I sent the European guard ashore, where their comfort could be more attended to.

When we arrived, a great concourse of people, notwithstanding the attempts of the officers to keep them away,
had crowded down to the bank to see the steam-vessel and the strangers. Their behaviour, as we passed through the crowd in landing, as well as before and after this, was entirely decorous and respectful. Indeed, not a single indication had occurred of an unfriendly or hostile spirit, on the part of the people, from our quitting Rangoon until our arrival at the capital. Among the spectators were a great many priests; although the indulgence of curiosity, laudable or otherwise, is a thing expressly forbidden by the rules of their order.

We performed the journey from Rangoon to Ava in thirty days, and might have made it in about twenty, without difficulty, had we not been detained for the first few days by towing a heavy boat, and halted frequently. The distance, according to Colonel Wood’s map, is four hundred and forty-six miles. According to the vessel’s log, we ran two hundred and sixteen hours; and taking our average rate of going at five and a-half knots, with an allowance of three knots an hour for the current, the actual distance travelled will have been live hundred and forty miles. At the height of the freshes, a war-boat, proceeding day and night, has been known to go to Rangoon in four days. In the dry season, a war-boat, proceeding in the same manner, will come from Rangoon to Ava in eight days, and in the season of the rains in ten.

October 1, 1826

The Burmese chiefs yesterday informed us, that the King had issued orders for supplying the Mission with every necessary, and that he would not allow that we should be put to any expense. He had ordered, as we understand, four thousand ticals to be disbursed for our current expenses—a large sum, according to Burman notions. To carry his orders into effect on this head, a crowd of officers were in waiting, among whom were a Sarégyi, or principal Secretary; an Athong-saré, or Comptroller of expenses; an Amin-d’hau-ré, or Barrister of the Lut-d’hau; a Ta-ra-ma-thu-gyi, or Assessor of the City Court, or Rong-d’hau; and a She-ne, or Barrister of the same Court. Fruit, milk, and butter, were supplied in large quantities; and poultry, sheep, and beef, in defiance of religious prejudices.

October 2, 1826
Although our residence was watched by a Burman guard, we were not precluded from going abroad, and therefore made morning and evening excursions into the fields in our neighbourhood, where the farmers were at work preparing the land for the cold-weather crops: these crops consisted of onions, capsicums, tobacco, maize, and pulses. We found the cultivators communicative and intelligent, as I have before mentioned. The result of our inquiries was as follows:— the common land measure is denominated Pé, and is a square of twenty-five bamboos to a side, each bamboo being of seven cubits: at this rate the Pé contains seven thousand five hundred and sixty-nine yards, or three hundred and nine square yards more than an English acre and a half. One Pé of land planted with tobacco seedlings, will yield, in good soil, from four hundred to six hundred viss of tobacco leaves; but the crop is an uncertain one. This tobacco, which is of middling quality, is worth from thirty to fifty current ticals. The produce in maize is reckoned from sixty to one hundred for the seed; which is very small, this being the most productive of all the cereal grasses. The return in pulses is averaged at fifty-fold. Of rice, it was only given at twelve-fold. Some of the cultivators whom we interrogated were themselves the proprietors of the land, and others rented it. We found the yearly rent to be, according to the quality of the soil, from three to six ticals of flowered silver, each worth about 2s. 9d. sterling. When rent is paid in kind, it amounts to from one-fourth to one-half of the gross produce, according to the quality and circumstances of the soil. The land is rarely sold, but often mortgaged. The usual period is for three years; the mortgagee being put in possession of the land, and deriving all profits from it from the period of making the loan, but receiving no interest. The sum which can be raised by mortgage upon a Pé of land varies, according to its quality, from twenty to sixty ticals of flowered silver, or in sterling money from 2l. 15s. to 2l. 15s. All these lands are close upon the river-side. Notwithstanding the comparatively high prices now quoted, a considerable extent of unreclaimed land lies close at hand, and not two miles from the walls of the city. This is generally lower than the cultivated land, rather marshy, and covered with brushwood, consisting chiefly of a species of combre-tum, with narrow leaves. If too moist for cultivation, as is no doubt the case, a very trifling capital would suffice to drain it; as there is
a lake close at hand, and the river not half a mile distant. The
peasants informed us that there was enough of land without it,
and that the weeds and bushes grew up too rank and fast to allow
of its being cultivated with advantage. They stated, that any one
might clear and cultivate it, enjoying the profits; but that they were
liable to be dispossessed when the proprietors presented
themselves; from which we inferred, that all the lands in the
vicinity of the capital were appropriated. The lands which we
examined are the estate of the Sito-myan-wun, or the Master of the
King’s Stud. Five villages are appropriated to this personage,
containing between them about four hundred and fifty houses, or
families. With respect to the tax on houses or families, some are
altogether exempted from the payment of taxes to the Myo-sa, or
lord; and others pay from six to twenty ticals of flowered silver.
Upon what principle this various assessment is made we could not
learn. Most probably it is dictated chiefly by favouritism. Its
inequality is, at all events, an obvious evil. Within the estate there
is a small lake, which we understood to be the hereditary property
of one of the villagers. The fishery of it is very poor, and will not
rent for more than forty ticals of flowered silver a year. In our walk
down the banks of the Irawadi we encountered a river, about fifty
yards broad, called the Myit-tha, which runs to the south of the
city: it unites with another, called the Myit-nge, which falls into the
Irawadi, above Ava. In this manner the site of the city is an island.
The Myit-nge, literally the Little River, is in the Pali named Dutawati.
Boats going up and down the Myit-tha pay no toll; but there
is a ferry at the spot, which we visited this morning, where a small
toll is paid of, according to circumstances, one-eighth or one-
sixteenth of a tical. We saw goods, passengers, and carts
transported in considerable numbers. The toll rents for sixty ticals
a year. Half the brick, mortar, and labour in any of the
considerable Pagodas would have made an excellent bridge over
this river; but such is not the mode in which Burman capital is
expended.

In our excursions we met many persons going to the market
of the town with their goods and wares, the greater number of
whom were women carrying heavy burdens on their heads. The
principal articles, we observed, were cotton, fire-wood, and a
variety of coarse esculent greens, evidently not the result of
cultivation, but culled from the marshes or forests. Among other
articles, we noticed considerable quantities of natron, which in this country is in general use instead of soap. The price of this was given to us at half a current tical the basket, of sixteen viss, which will make about 2s. 6d. the hundred weight.

On our return from our walk, we found Dr. Price on board, who had come to pay us a visit. This gentleman is a native of America, a physician, and also a minister of the Baptist Mission. He had been near six years in the country, was married to a Burmese lady, had studied the Burman language, and spoke it with extraordinary facility. Like all other European and American residents in the country, he was imprisoned and fettered during the war; for no logic could convince the Burmans, but that all men with white skins had a common political interest. In their utmost need, however, they did not fail to apply to this gentleman and to Mr. Judson for advice and assistance; and it was in a great measure through their influence in surmounting the unspeakable distrust, jealousy, and, it may be added, incapacity of the Burman chiefs, that the peace was ultimately brought about. Dr. Price was now in favour with the King, had received a title from him, and attended the daily levees at the palace. Through him the disbursements were made on account of the Mission, as far as regarded the slaying of animals,—a task in which no Burman connected with the Government could, with any regard for his character, engage.

The first evening of our arrival, two Chinese, natives of Canton, came on board, offering their services as provisioners and brokers. These persons spoke English, and had made voyages to England, to our principal settlements in India, and to the European ports in the Malay Islands. These industrious people are to be found in every part of the East, where there is room for the exercise of their useful industry, and, wherever they are found, are always superior to the inhabitants of the countries in which they sojourn. There are a great many residing at the Burman capital, and some of them natives of parts of China, never seen in the European settlements in India. We accepted the services of our visitors; but yesterday they were told that they were infringing the laws of the country, and ordered, at their peril, to discontinue their visits until after our presentation.

October 3, 1826
The Kyi-wun, or Lord of the Granaries, paid us a visit this morning. He made some difficulty about coming on board, wishing that I should go on shore and meet him at the house constructed by order of the King for our reception. As I was not residing there, but on board, and as the place itself was meant only as a temporary residence, I declined doing so in conformity with the custom of the country. The Atwen-wun then came on board, accompanied by two Secretaries of the Palace (The name or title of these officers is Than-d’hau-sen, which means, “voice royal descend.” They are Secretaries to the Privy Council, of which the Atwen-wuns are members), and the Commandant of the Guard of Swordsmen (This officer is named Shwe-da-m’hu, which literally means, “Chief of the Golden Sword.” He commands that portion of the King’s Guard which is armed with swords), and Don Gansalez de Lanciego, a Spanish gentleman, who had resided in the Burman dominions thirty years, and who, before the war, held the situation of Akau-wun, or Collector of Customs, at Rangoon, the only appointment under the Burman Government which has been occasionally held by a foreigner.

The history of this gentleman, who was now about fifty years of age, was sufficiently varied and singular. He was by birth a Spaniard, and born of a noble family. When a boy he was sent to Paris, where he received his education, and continued to reside for many years. At the commencement of the Revolution he came out to the Isle of Bourbon, of which his maternal uncle was governor. From this place, along with a number of young men of family, he fitted out a privateer to cruise against the English trade. After leading this life of adventure, hardship, and danger for several years, the privateer was driven into the river of Bassein by stress of weather. Here Mr. Lanciego left her, and eventually found his way to Rangoon, and became a trader. He afterwards married the daughter of Mr. Jhansey, an Indian-Portuguese, who was for many years Intendant of the Port of Rangoon, and whose other daughter is his present Majesty’s fourth Queen. From Rangoon, Mr. Lanciego went to the capital, became a first-rate favourite with the present King, then heir-apparent, and through his influence was appointed Intendant or Collector of Rangoon. When the Burmans resolved upon a war with the British, which he always deprecated, he was on his annual visit at Ava with the produce of the customs.
of Rangoon, The personal attachment of the King, his known partialities to the French interest, and his family relation with the sovereign, did not exempt him from the universal suspicion which fell upon all Europeans. One or two letters from English merchants at Rangoon reached him, confined wholly to matters of business. This was enough. He was clapped into a dungeon, in letters. One or two other letters from the same quarter, and of a similar tenour, arrived. The enemies of Mr. Lanciego now framed a plot against him. He was represented as holding a correspondence with the English, and persons were found to swear that his emissaries had been seen in the enemy’s camp. The King issued the order that he should be examined “in the usual manner.” He was accordingly sent for from prison, put to the torture, and his property confiscated. At the peace of Yandabo, but not until then, he was released, but his property was not restored, and he had ever since been excluded from the palace; the only justice done to him. being the acknowledgment of his innocence, and the punishment of his false accusers. It seems that his services were now thought necessary in the ensuing negotiation: and he was to-day, for the first time, to be admitted to the palace. This accounted for his visit to us, in company with the Burman officers. I was happy to think that the presence of the British Mission should, even indirectly, hold out a prospect of improving the situation of Mr. Lanciego, a gentleman who was represented, by all who knew him, as a man of honour and probity. His situation was the more to be pitied, since he was not permitted to quit the country, either alone, or with his family. He knew, in fact, too many of the secrets of the Burman Government, and this excited their keenest jealousy and apprehension.

Our Burman visitors of rank now, and upon former occasions, were becomingly and neatly attired. The lower garment, covering the waist and loins, was a silk tartan, and this alone was Burman manufacture. The rest of the dress, consisting of a vest, a loose mantle, and a turban, or rather handkerchief binding the head, consisted of white English cotton cloth; the mantle and turban being of the description called book-muslin, a favourite, article of consumption with the Burmese. Over the left shoulder, and hanging under the right, the massy gold chains of their orders of nobility made a good appearance. The Kyi-wun was of a very dark complexion, and very far from being handsome; but his
manner was animated, he was a great speaker, and desirous to please. He aimed indeed at being an orator, and favoured us with several specimens of his skill; when he had any thing particular to say, he stood up, rested his hands upon the table, and, thus prepared, commenced his speech. The following is a specimen, as rendered to me by Dr. Price; it being premised, that the object of his address was to express a hope that the peace subsisting between the two nations might be perpetual. “The most glorious Monarch, the Lord of the Golden Palace, the Sun-rising King, holds dominion over that part of the world (The word is Jam-pu-di-pa, in Pali,--corrupted in the Burman into Zam-pu-dik) which lies towards the rising sun: the great and powerful Monarch, the King of England, rules over the whole of that portion of the world which lies towards the setting sun. The same glorious sun enlightens the one and the other. Thus may peace continue between the two countries, and for ever impart mutual blessings to both. Let no cloud intervene or mist arise to obscure its genial rays.” The Kyi-wun was by no means sparing in panegyric, and dealt it all round to our party with a liberal hand. He was equally solicitous to become the subject of our praises, and put a number of direct questions with this view; implying less tact and discretion than might have been looked for in an old courtier. The subject of business was introduced, after much preparation. The first point touched upon was that of the presents from the Governor-General to the King. This was done with delicacy and moderation, instead of the indecorum and rapacity which I had experienced on the same subject from the courtiers of Siam. It was simply hinted by the Kyi-wun, that he would like to gratify the King’s curiosity by mentioning to him the names of two or three of the most curious articles. I named two or three, and voluntarily furnished a complete list of the whole. The Kyi-wun then asked me when the British army was to quit Rangoon. I answered, that when I left that place the whole of the second instalment due by the Burmese Government had not been discharged; that the period of payment had been exceeded on the part of the Burman Government by three months; and that Sir Archibald Campbell, if he found it convenient, might delay the embarkation of the troops for three months also, without any infringement of the treaty. He said, “Among friends there is no necessity for so strict a punctuality.” In reply, I remarked that we had assumed a strict adherence to the
conditions of the treaty as the rule of our conduct, and would continue to do so. The Kyi-wun referred to the conversations which had passed on this subject between the Wungyi-Maung-kaing and myself at Henzada; asserting that, according to the report made to the Burman Government by the Wungyi, I had assured him that I had written to Sir Archibald Campbell, requesting him immediately to embark the troops. I explained that so unreasonable a request had not been made of me, and that such an assurance had never been given. He changed the conversation immediately to some other topic, and I did not insist upon continuing it.

The appearance of a British Mission at Ava, although specifically provided for by the Treaty of Peace, had excited a good deal of uneasiness on the part of the Court, and much alarm among the people. Our little party of less than thirty Europeans had been magnified by rumour into some hundreds, and from such a force the capital itself was scarcely thought to be safe—so deep an impression had the superiority of European arms produced upon the nation at large! In reference to this subject, the Kyi-wun observed with some adroitness, that it would be agreeable to his Majesty to know the particular purpose of our “friendly visit.” Aware of the alarm which existed, I had been anxious for an opportunity of explaining the objects which the Mission had in view, and said at once, that we had come for the purpose of presenting a friendly letter to the King, and of making a convention for regulating the commerce of the two countries upon terms of reciprocal advantage, as provided for in the Treaty of Yandabo; and that we had no other, object whatever. The Kyi-wun, his associates, and their followers, received this declaration with a joy which they could not conceal. An involuntary and general exclamation burst from the whole party, as if they had been relieved from some mighty load. The Kyi-wun compared the declaration now made with the official statements he had received from Rangoon and from Henzada, as well as with the rumours which had reached the Government from other quarters. Without such corroboration, our assurances would have had little weight; for Burman courtiers, eminently destitute of candour and integrity themselves, are little disposed to attribute these qualities to others.

After visiting every part of the steam-vessel, and examining the machinery, the deputation left us in very good humour, having
made a visit of at least three hours. I sent Mr. Chester and Mr. Montmorency to accompany them ashore, as a mark of attention.

**October 4, 1826**

We continued our walks morning and evening into the country, prosecuting our inquiries respecting the state of agriculture. A considerable portion of the land in the neighbourhood of the capital is the property of the King, clearly distinguished from that which is the property of individuals. We were to-day informed, that his Majesty had of late years made several purchases of lands, and some of them were pointed out. This seems to leave the existence of a private right in the soil clear and unquestionable. Land which belongs to private persons, it appears, never pays a land-tax, either directly to the Crown, or to public officers, holding it as an estate. Crown-lands, on the contrary, as far as our experience went, always pay a tax; but this seems nowhere to form a subject of direct revenue to the State, as the lands in question were, in every case in which we had observed them, held as a temporary domain by some public officer, member of the royal family, or favourite. The rents of the lands which we examined this morning, for example, were assigned for the maintenance of the young heir-apparent’s establishment of elephants. Some inferior grounds which we noticed, and which belonged to the King, produced only one crop a year, and this of pulse, at the rate of twenty-five baskets, or about three hundred viss the Pé. These were rented at two ticals and a half of what is called twenty-five per cent. silver, each of which is worth about one shilling and tenpence sterling. Better lands were rented at from three to six ticals. At present the fences. Which are only dry bushes of the prickly *ziziphus jujuba*, and meant only to protect the crops against cattle, are all removed, and heaped together for future use. The fields were all divided by low dykes of a few inches high, which served the double purpose of boundaries, and of keeping the land duly watered when necessary. In some dry lands, which we examined in the course of the morning, and which are not fit for the production of rice, although for other purposes they are reckoned good, the ground was preparing for crops of Indian corn. One of the farmers of this land stated that he expected that the produce of one Pé in Indian corn he would be able to sell for from one hundred and sixty to two
hundred ticals of coarse silver, each tical worth about one shilling and tenpence of sterling. A portion of the same land was preparing for pulse (*Cicer arietinum*). The owner stated that he expected a return of from fifty to sixty-five fold. One Pé of his land required eight viss of seed, and the produce he estimated at from twenty to twenty-five baskets, of sixteen viss each. In the vicinity of the capital, as in other parts of the upper provinces, the common palmyra, or *borassus flabelliformis*, is extensively cultivated. This tree, in good soil, comes to maturity in thirty years, but in an indifferent one it takes forty. The male and female trees are nearly in equal proportion. The first afford juice for three months in the year, and the last for eight, the daily produce being the same for both. The unproductive months are in the rainy season. During the time they are yielding, each tree gives daily at the rate of from five to six viss of juice. This is sold by the owner at the rate of one-eight of a tical of ten per cent. silver per viss, or about threepence sterling. Near the capital no sugar is manufactured, the juice being sold for consumption as it comes fresh from the tree, the most profitable means of disposing of it. We inquired into the wages of agricultural labour, and found them to be from forty to fifty ticals a-year, each tical of one shilling and tenpence sterling: with food, but no clothing. It is considered that a labourer requires twelve baskets of rice a-year, of fifty-six pounds each: the basket being worth at Ava about a rupee and a half. He gets besides, *ngapi*. vegetables, and spiceries, being always fed with his employer and family. The whole expense of his food is not reckoned less than three rupees and a half a-month, making his actual wages about seven rupees. This is more than double the wages in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, or of any native city in Hindostan or the Peninsula; a proof that the supply of labour is less in proportion to the demand in Ava than in India, and that the condition of the labourer is more comfortable, since there is no great difference in the cost of the necessaries of life.

**October 8, 1826**

We had little or now rain since our arrival. The periodical rains, indeed, generally cease at Ava in the middle of September, although they continue a month later in the lower provinces. We had the weather hot, and the sky cloudless. The nights and
mornings, however, were pleasant. At sunrise, the thermometer, for some days back, had been at 78 degrees: in the course of the day it rose to 88°, and was occasionally as high as 92°. The air at the same time was dry and pure, and favourably contrasted with the damp and sultry atmosphere of Calcutta at the same season.

The cultivators in our neighbourhood were very busy ploughing and harrowing. We counted yesterday morning twenty ploughs and harrows at work within the space of a few hundred acres. The harrow, it appears, is very much used for breaking and pulverizing the soil, as well as for removing grass and weeds. The plough, with the assistance of an iron share, the only respectable part of the implement, and which, as I have already said, is imposed from China or Lao, turns up the soil well, but does not cut deeper than four inches. In the common husbandry of the country, manure is never used, and indeed I believe in no case except occasionally with betel-wine gardens. Reaping is performed with the sickle; corn is separated from the straw by the treading of oxen; and the straw is carefully preserved for fodder. The cultivators, who are generally either the proprietors or renters of the fields they till, for hired servants are not often had recourse to, we found at their labour every morning before sunrise. Their toil is interrupted at ten o’clock, and in the heat of the day no out-door labour is performed. They are at their work again at three o’clock in the afternoon, and continue at it until sunset, so that they labour for about seven hours a day.

In our walks to-day and yesterday we found that wheat was cultivated in the vicinity of Ava in considerable quantity. The land on which it is grown appears to be the same as that in which Indian corn and pulse are produced, that is, dry lands, incapable of producing rice, because they cannot be flooded. The produce was given to us generally at such high rates as seem almost incredible. It was stated at as much as forty, fifty, and even sixty-four for the seed. The most moderate estimates made it from ten to twenty-five seeds. The lands on which wheat is grown are under water during the height of the inundation, and no other crop is taken from them in the course of the year. The grain is sown broadcast, and ripens in from three to four months. Wheat is called by the Burmans G’hyun Sampá, and Kula Sampá; words which mean wheat-rice, and Western foreigners’ rice. The word G’hyun is from the Hindi, or mixed modern dialect of Hindostan,
and not Sanscrit. It may probably be inferred from this, that wheat has been introduced among the Burmans in times comparatively modern; and it proves, at all events, that it is not an indigenous grain. The Burmans do not use it as bread, nor to any great extent in any way. The most frequent mode of using it is to boil the entire corn, and then mix it up with coarse sugar and oil, to make sweet cakes. In the market of Ava, the price is about one-third less than that of rice, or from one rupee to one rupee and a quarter for a basket, or from two shillings to two shillings and sixpence sterling per Winchester bushel. This is as low as the market-price at Patna, from which the principal supply is derived at Calcutta, both for consumption and exportation. Specimens of the grain were brought to us in the course of the morning: it is large, plump, and heavy, and the bread made from it, which we have used since our arrival, is well tasted, and remarkable for its whiteness. We compared the grain with the Patna wheat which we had along with us, and it was greatly superior both in size and colour. The only objection to it which we could observe was, that it was mixed with a few grains of barley. This last grain is not known to the natives: and when we pointed it out, they imagined it to be unripe grains of wheat. It was introduced, therefore, in all likelihood, with the first seed wheat, perhaps some centuries back, and accidentally propagated ever since through the carelessness of the natives. It is evident, from the lower price of wheat than rice, that the lands near Ava are better suited for the growth of the former than of the latter; and it seems remarkable, therefore, that it does not constitute the chief-bread corn of the inhabitants. This however, as already mentioned, is by no means the case; for all their prejudices run in favour of rice, to which they are fully as much attached as the inhabitants of the Delta, to whom wheat is unknown except as a foreign commodity. Considering the excellence of the Burman wheat, the cheapness with which it is grown, the facility of water communication to the sea, and the convenience of the port of Rangoon, it ought, under favourable circumstances, to be a material article of exportation; but it is the policy of the Burman Government to prohibit the export of every species of grain, and there is little hope of any improvement in this respect.

**October 10, 1826**
We had yesterday a visit from the Kyi-wun and his associates, the two Secretaries of the Palace, accompanied by Mr. Lanciego. This last gentleman, as we suspected, had been admitted to the palace. In discussing the terms of a commercial treaty, his assistance was indispensable, for there was not another individual at the capital who had the slightest knowledge of the external commerce of the country. One of the Wungyis as if by accident, introduced the name of Mr. Lanciego to the King, stating that he was excluded from the palace, as he had been In fetters. The King simply observed, “Who has excluded him” What prevents him from coming?” On the faith of this hint he was presented last night. It is necessary to explain, that no one who has been once in fetters can appear in the royal presence without a special sanction. He is considered as having been dishonoured by that punishment, whether guilty or innocent, and therefore an unfit object to appeal in the King’s sight. A hint of the Royal approbation is considered a sufficient purification. The present visit was ostensibly one of ceremony, but in reality of business. The following is the substance of what took place during a conversation of several hours. We desired to know when we should be presented to the King. The Kyi-wun observed, that this was a matter of much importance,” and would be discussed with all proper attention to form and ceremony, and that in the meanwhile the commercial treaty might be settled. I readily embraced the proposal of discussing the terms of the commercial treaty, without loss of time; and said that I had already prepared the draft of such a treaty, in English and Burman. The difficulties encountered on former occasions in negotiating with officers of the Burman Government not duly authorized, induced me to request that any person or persons appointed to negotiate with us now, might be vested with full authority to treat. The Burman officers replied, that the negotiators, on their side, would be vested with such powers as were given at Yandabo. He first proposed this day as the first for entering upon the negotiations, but afterwards suggested that the 11th would be more convenient. He explained, that on that day business would be transacted, and that the three following days would be devoted to the annual exhibition of boat-races, at which his Majesty and Court would all be present, and to which we were invited. The negotiation, he continued, would be renewed on the 15th and 16th, shortly after which the Mission would be
introduced to the King. In fact, it was determined that we should be presented on the first day of the new moon, which is a Burman festival, at which the public officers and tributary princes offer presents to his Majesty. I acquiesced in this arrangement, unaware, at the time, of the object which the Burman Court had in view.

The Kyi-wun and his coadjutors, not satisfied with the assurances made to them at our last meeting, that the Mission had come for no other purpose than to present a letter and presents to the King, and to conclude a commercial treaty, again begged to know whether we had any farther demands to make. I reassured them on this subject, and begged them to be satisfied with what I had already said. The Kyi-wun then entreated that I would, in confidence and “as a friend,” mention to him the principal heads of the draft of the treaty to which I alluded. I answered, that the terms were moderate, and the document very short, consisting of seven articles only. As the Burman negotiators would come better prepared to enter upon the actual negotiation, I saw some advantage in exhibiting the document, and therefore produced it. The Burman officers read it one after another in their own language, and Mr. Lanciego in English. Objections were offered to two or three of the articles; but as no doubt they would afterwards be urged in a more public manner, it is not necessary at present to enumerate them. The majority of the provisions of the treaty, but not the most essential, seemed to be approved of. The Kyi-wun begged to have a copy. This I refused. The draft was then reperused by each individual officer separately, and finally read aloud. The Kyi-wun then formally returned thanks for our being so obliging as to furnish him with the perusal of the draft. He added, that the Burman Government, on its part, had several propositions to offer, to which we might probably object; and that, under such circumstances, he hoped no offence would be taken at any objections which might be urged by the Burman negotiators against propositions brought forward by us, I answered, that I hoped every point would be freely discussed on both sides; that the Burman Government would, of course, bring forward any propositions they might think proper; and that I would enter into negotiation upon them as far as my powers extended: I added, however, that if they were not of a commercial nature, they ought not to be mixed up with this particular subject, for which a
separate and specific arrangement had been made in the Treaty of Yandabo.

The Kyi-wun, before coming on board, sent me a present of a small ruby ring, and sent another to Mr. Judson, still smaller. On coming on board, he made each of the gentlemen, seven in number, a present of a gold cup. Mine weighed eleven rupees and a half, and those of the other gentlemen nearly seven each (It is scarcely necessary for me to observe, that all presents of this description are regularly delivered over to the Government, according to an useful and necessary regulation).

**October 12, 1826**

According to the promise held out in the interview which I had with the Kyi-wun on the 9th, the Burman Commissioners came to our residence at twelve o’clock yesterday. The apartments occupied by Mr. Chester had been prepared for the conference: carpets had been spread, chairs and tables placed, and every thing was in readiness. We went ashore immediately upon their arrival, having previously ascertained, by sending Mr. Judson, that they were vested with powers to treat. We found that they had taken their places under a large open shed, commonly occupied by the Shwè-da-mhu, or, Chief of the Guard of Swordsmen, and other officers in daily attendance. The house which we had got ready for them, because the dwelling of Mr. Chester, was objected to by the Burman officers, although the very place where we had been received by the Wungyi and Atwen-wun on the first day of our arrival, and selected by themselves for that purpose. Upon this point the Burmans are punctilious to an absurd and very troublesome degree. No chief will enter the house of an inferior, or even of an equal; for to do so, either implies a derogation of dignity, or an extraordinary condescension. The King never enters the house of a subject, not even of his brothers; although with the latter he is familiar, and will often be seen walking arm-in-arm in the courts before their dwellings. A Wungyi never enters the house of an Atwen-mni or Wun-dauk, the next persons in rank to him, and so on in succession. We conformed to this prejudice, and accordingly made difficulties about meeting the Burman Commissioners under the shed where they wished to hold the conference. I insisted that they should come over to receive us,
which they readily complied with; and meeting us half-way from
the house, they conducted us to the shed, where we were all seated
upon chairs, and the conference commenced. The principal
Burman officers, seven in number, were habited in their dresses of
ceremony, and wore their chains, and other badges of nobility.
Their dress consisted of a crimson velvet cloak, with loose sleeves,
having abundance of gold lace, and of caps of the same fabric and
colour; in form not unlike those worn by the Armenians, and
covered with a profusion of gold ornaments. In front of this dress
there was a thin gold plate, on which were written, in large
characters, the titles of the individual. Mr. Lanciego appeared upon
this occasion officially, and, like the Burman officers, was habited
in a velvet cloak; but instead of the cap he wore a round hat,
ornamented after the same fashion. This was not in keeping with
the rest of the dress, and, in truth, had a very grotesque
appearance. The fact was, that Mr. Lanciego, in consideration of
his European prejudices, was allowed to wear his hat; but as to the
gold ornaments and orders, these were far too important to be
dispensed with. The Burman full dress, as now described, is
extremely cumbersome and inconvenient, especially the cap. The
negotiators, on the present occasion, groaned under the load of
their honours, and during the conference repeatedly complained of
the inconvenience.

The Burman officers were, first, two Atwen-wuns, appointed
Commissioners to negotiate the treaty: one of these was the Kyi-
wun, and another, the senior of the two, Maong-M’ha. the Wun, or
Lord, of Sau. After these came a Wundauk, who was followed by a
Than-d’hau-sen, or Secretary of the Palace; a Than-d’hau-gan (“the
Royal voice-receiver”), or reporter; a Nákan-d’hau (“the Royal
Listener”), or King’s listener; and an A-we-rauk (Literally, “from a
distance arriving.” The office of this person is to examine petitions,
and persons coming from distant parts), or examiner: writers or
secretaries sat behind the principal officers, and from the dictation
of the latter appeared to take down a minute account of every thing
that transpired. The senior Atwen-wun generally spoke for the rest,
and came prepared with a set of written questions, which he put
with great formality. The first inquiries made regarded the health of
the Governor-General, that of Lady Amherst, and of his Lordship’s
family generally. This was the first occasion on which the name of
the Governor-General was introduced. He was styled now, and

SBBR 3.2 (AUGUST 2005): 636-959
throughout the conferences, the English Chief, or Prince (for the word may mean either), who rules India (India Taing’ Ko-ok-so-thau-Englit-men). Whatever might be the real opinion of the Burman Court, the results of the late contest with the British power in India, and the necessity of treating with it upon equal terms, made it now very anxious to consider the Governor-General as exercising an independent sovereign power. Inquiries after the health of his Majesty and the Royal Family, the nobility, and officers of the Government of England, followed—the Burmans, in all this taking it for granted throughout, that matters must be exactly on the same footing with us as with themselves. The standing question respecting the age of the parties was as usual prominent; on one occasion it was omitted; but the senior Atwen-wun, afterwards recollecting himself, apologized for this unintentional want of politeness. His Majesty the King was throughout called King of Wi-lat, a slight corruption of the Arabic term for a foreign country, and commonly applied by the Asiatic nations to Europe especially. The Burmans know little of the other potentates of Europe, and have a vague notion that the King of England rules over the greater part of it.

Notwithstanding that the discussion of the Commercial Treaty was the immediate object of the meeting, it was evident that the Burman officers did not come prepared to enter upon a serious negotiation, but had distinct views, of which I had received no intimation from them. These regarded the appointment of the Mission, the letter of the Governor-General, &c. On these subjects the following conversation ensued:7

7 Crawfurd’s original note: Throughout the whole of the negotiation, notes were carefully taken down on the spot. On our parts, the questions, whenever this was practicable, were written down, and handed to the interpreters for translation; and the questions and answers of the Burmese negotiators were taken down, generally word for word as they were rendered into English. Mr. Judson, in general, interpreted, occasionally assisted by Dr. Price, and, in a few instances, by the Burmese Maong-no, whom I have before mentioned. Mr. Judson’s qualifications were of the first order; for, without reference to his unquestioned honour and integrity, he understood the Burmese language, his subject, and the character and manners of the people thoroughly; and was besides a person, in every respect, of distinguished good sense and intelligence. The letter B. in the Minutes, stands for Burmese; and E. for English. The senior Atwen-wun was generally the spokesman [in the present edition, B. has been replaced by “Burmese” and E. by “Crawfurd”].
BURMESE: When did you receive your orders to come upon the present Mission?

CRAWFURD: On the 11th of August.

BURMESE: When did you quit Rangoon?

CRAWFURD: On the 1st of September.

BURMESE: You have a letter from the Governor-General, have you not?

CRAWFURD: Yes.

BURMESE: Will you permit us to see the letter from the Governor-General to the King?

CRAWFURD: I came here to-day, by appointment, for the purpose of negotiating a commercial treaty with officers accredited by his Burman Majesty. I beg to know whether you have written authority to enter upon such a negotiation?

BURMESE: Yes, we have such an authority with us; and we take this opportunity of expressing our happiness at being deputed by his Majesty to conduct this negotiation.

Several expressions of civility or compliment here passed on both sides.

CRAWFURD: Have you authority to request a perusal of the Governor-General’s letter; for this was not the object of the meeting, nor was the matter at all intimated to me?

BURMESE: We are vested with such authority—we dare not make the request without authority. We come in our official dresses, and this is a warranty that we are vested with full authority.

CRAWFURD: I will not deliver the letter of the Governor-General, nor permit it to be opened or read; but I will exhibit it in its
envelope, and allow a Burman translation of it to be copied in my presence.

The letter of the Governor-General was, after this, brought from on board the steam-vessel by Lieutenants Cox, Montmorency, and Mr. Judson, and, preceded by orderlies and Hircanahs, introduced, the English gentlemen and Burman officers standing up to receive it. The strict punctilio of the Burmese in all such matters rendered this piece of etiquette necessary. The letter being laid upon the table, and a Burman translation exhibited, a secretary proceeded to make a copy, standing to his task, at the table; as to bring the letter down from its elevation would have been contrary to Burman etiquette—a kind of derogation, both to the dignity of the writer of the letter, and, what was of more consequence, of the party to whom it was addressed.

BURMESE: Is the Governor-General’s letter written upon paper or parchment?

CRAWFURD: It is written upon richly illuminated paper of the same quality as that made use of when the Governor-General addresses the King of Persia and other Princes, with whom he is in correspondence.

BURMESE: What is the nature of the seal affixed to the Governor-General’s letter, and in what language is the inscription upon it?

CRAWFURD: The seal affixed to the Governor-General’s letter is the principal seal of the Government, and the character is Persian, which is used by us for convenience, as being generally understood (The use of the Persian language in our correspondence with some of the Asiatic Governments is no doubt a great absurdity, and a compliance with the local usages of India wholly uncalled for; I recollect seeing, upon one occasion, a Persian letter addressed by the Governor-General of India to a native Prince, who wrote for answer that there was no one in his dominions who could translate it. Had the letter been written in English, as it ought to have been, there would have been no difficulty in getting it translated).
The letter of the Governor-General was here removed with the same forms as upon its introduction.

CRAWFURD: I now propose that we should enter upon the more immediate business of our meeting.

BURMESE: We assent.

CRAWFURD: The meeting was especially agreed upon for the purpose of negotiating a commercial arrangement, as provided for in the treaty concluded at Yandabo.

BURMESE: We have perused attentively the Burman translation of the Governor-General's letter, which is suitable and friendly. Having finished this important matter, we propose that the discussion of the Commercial Treaty should be postponed until another day.

CRAWFURD: I cannot accede to this proposal. The meeting was agreed upon only for the purpose of discussing the commercial arrangement, and it has not even been entered upon.

BURMESE: Since you are desirous of entering upon the negotiation to-day, we assent.

CRAWFURD: I have brought the written powers which I hold from the Governor-General to treat, and am ready to produce them. I wish to see your powers, and that copies should be exchanged.

The credentials of both parties were here produced, translations made, and copies exchanged. The powers of the Burman negotiators, who were the two Atwen-wuns, were from the King, in the confidential or interior department, and not from the Lut-d'hau, or public department. The following is a literal translation:

Let the Atenwon the Lord of Sau, Men-gyi-thi-ri-ma-hananda-then-kyan, and the Lord of the Revenue, the Atwen-won-mengyi-maha-men-l'ha-thi-ha-thu hold a conference in the embassy tent (than-tê) with the Ambassadors, who have
readied the Royal Presence\textsuperscript{8} with gifts\textsuperscript{9} from the King of Wilat. In the year 1188, the ninth of the increase of the moon Tha-ten-kywat (10th of October). The Na-kan-d’hau (he that listens to the King), Chief of the Pyau-kyi (great drum), Nemya-men-l’ha-kyan-ten, Interprets.

In this document, the presents are represented as coming from his Majesty the King, and not from the Governor-General; a mere subterfuge of the Court to save its pride. Viewing it in this light, and being aware that any discussion of the point would be accompanied with serious delays and difficulties, I offered no objection. The treaty, if finally concluded, must of necessity be in the name of the authorities constituted by law, and this I thought would be sufficient.

CRAWFURD: I have prepared the draft of a commercial treaty in terms of perfect reciprocity, which I imagine will be mutually beneficial. I will cause it to be read if you desire it.

BURMESE: We wish, if you please, to have a copy of this document.

CRAWFURD: I will furnish a copy. You will have the goodness, at the same time, to furnish me with a copy of such proposals as you have to offer.

BURMESE: We prefer that the articles which you propose should be discussed. If they contain any stipulations not mutually beneficial, such may be rejected. If any thing has been omitted, the want may be supplied. We are desirous that nothing should be urged on either side which is not for the common benefit.

The draft of the Commercial Treaty was perused by the Senior Atwen-wun; the Second, the Kyi-wun, had, as before observed, perused it at the interview of the 9th.

\textsuperscript{8} Crawfurd’s original note: Literally, “under the sole of the Golden foot Royal” (Shwe-bawa-d’hau-auk)
\textsuperscript{9} Crawfurd’s original note: The word here used is Let-saung, the appellative for a present or gift of any kind.
BURMESE: I have carefully read the draft over, and myself and colleague will duly consider the subject, and hereafter furnish a counter draft with such alterations and additions as we consider expedient.

CRAWFURD: My powers are chiefly directed to the conclusion of a commercial arrangement, as especially provided for by the Treaty of Yandabo. I therefore beg, if you have any propositions to make unconnected with that subject, that they may be produced in a separate and distinct form.

BURMESE: Some of the propositions made in the draft of a treaty with which you have just furnished us, go beyond what is contained in the Treaty of Yandabo. You will not, therefore, object to our tendering propositions which may infringe upon the Treaty of Yandabo.

CRAWFURD: The draft which I have submitted is in accordance with the Treaty of Yandabo, which, as I have already said, expressly provides that a commercial arrangement should hereafter be entered into. As a general principle, I have to observe that the Treaty of Yandabo cannot be altered.

BURMESE: The British commanders at Yandabo had simply authority to negotiate a peace. From the perusal of your credentials, we are led to suppose that you have authority, to modify that agreement, or to make any farther arrangements you may deem necessary for the good of the two nations.

CRAWFURD: I will say nothing farther upon the subject until I have seen your propositions: when I have, I will give a separate and distinct answer to each, according to my instructions. Having proceeded thus far in the business, I believe it was understood that we should meet again after an interval of three days.

BURMESE: Yes, three days are to be devoted to amusement, these being the annual festival of boat-racing; two days then will be devoted to business, and on the succeeding one you will be presented to his Majesty. As his Majesty desires that you should be
present at the boat-racing, suitable accommodation will be made for you for this purpose.

After this conversation, the conference, which had lasted four hours, although little real business was transacted, broke up.

October 13, 1826

When the waters of the Irawadi begin permanently to fall, a festival is held yearly for three days, the chief amusements of which consist of boat-racing: this is called in the Burman language Rethaben, or the Water Festival. According to promise, a gilt boat and six common war-boats were sent to convey us to the place where these races were exhibited, which was on the Irawadi, before the palace. We readied at eleven o'clock. The Kyi-wun, accompanied by a Palace Secretary, received us in a large and commodious covered boat, anchored, to accommodate us, in the middle of the river. The escort and our servants were very comfortably provided for in other covered boats. The King and Queen had already arrived, and were in a large barge at the east bank of the river. This vessel, the form of which represented two huge fishes, was extremely splendid: every part of it was richly gilt, and a spire of at least thirty feet high, resembling in miniature that of the palace, rose in the middle. The King and Queen sat under a green canopy at the bow of the vessel, which, according to Burman notions, is the place of honour; indeed, the only part ever occupied by persons of rank. The situation of their Majesties could be distinguished by the white umbrellas, which are the appropriate marks of royalty. The King, whose habits are volatile and restless, often walked up and down, and was easily known from the crowd of his courtiers, by his being the only person in an erect position, the multitude sitting, crouching, or crawling, all round him. Near the King’s barge were a number of gold boats, and the side of the river, in this quarter, was lined with those of the nobility, decked with gay banners, each having its little band of music, and some dancers exhibiting occasionally on their benches. Shortly after our arrival, nine gilt war-boats were ordered to manoeuvre before us. The Burmans nowhere appear to so much advantage as in their boats, the management of which is evidently a favourite occupation. The boats themselves are extremely neat, and the
rowers expert, cheerful, and animated. In rowing, they almost always sing, and their airs are not destitute of melody. The burthen of the song upon the present occasion, was literally translated for me by Dr. Price, and was as follows:

The golden glory shines forth like the round sun; the royal kingdom, the country and its affairs, are the most pleasant.

If this verse be in unison with the feelings of the people, and I have no doubt it is, they are, at least, satisfied with their own condition, whatever it may appear to others.

Some time after this exhibition, the state boats of the King and Queen were also sent to exhibit before us. These, like all others belonging to the King, are gilt all over, the very oars or paddles not excepted. In the centre of each was a throne, that of the Queen being latticed to the back and sides, so as partially to conceal her person when she occupied it. They were both very brilliant. According to the Burmans, there are thirty-seven motions of the paddle. The King and Queen’s boats went through many of them with grace and dexterity, and much to our gratification and amusement.

Towards the close of the day, the King sent us a repast of confectionary, fruits and other eatables, served with much neatness, and in vessels of gold; to indicate that the favour was bestowed personally by his Majesty. The culinary art, as practised by the Burmans and other Hindu-Chinese nations, is much more agreeable to the European palate than that of the natives of Hindostan. Upon the present occasion, there was but one article decidedly objectionable,—a dish of crickets fried in sesamum oil!

The chiefs who brought our refreshments were two persons of some note, from being much in the King’s favour. The first was an elderly person, by birth a Siamese: his offices are named Rok-the-wun and Zat-wun, which mean, Chief of the Puppet-shows, and, Manager of Theatricals, This gentleman is represented as a first-rate buffoon, and, in consideration of his drollery, the King indulges him in such freedoms as would cost the rest of the courtiers the stocks or the bamboo, if no worse. The second personage was the player whom I mentioned, in a former part of this Journal, as having been promoted for his skill as an actor, and his readiness at repartee. It seemed that he was now restored to
the King’s personal favour, but had not got back his estate. He
gained his livelihood, we were informed, by means of bribes
received for begging off criminals; for it is seldom that anyone
suffers death or other severe punishment in this country who has
funds to purchase immunity; and the favourite, therefore, has a
wide field for the exercise of his influence. He wore the highest
chain of nobility given to a subject; but his manners were flippant
and undignified, and he was described as being utterly
unprincipled. He was disliked by the courtiers, but feared by all of
them. We were not much disposed to receive such a person with
attention; and there being no spare chair, he was obliged to
continue standing. The Atwen-wun, much superior to him in rank,
observed this, and said, “Is there no chair for the King’s favourite?”
but the hint was not taken.

October 14, 1826

We appeared at the boat-races again yesterday, being conducted as
the day before. The amusements were exactly the same, and the
King and Queen were of course present; for they never land from
their water-palace, as the great vessel I have described is
sometimes called, from the commencement to the conclusion of the
festival. The boats are matched in the races two and two, no
greater number ever starting. The King’s boats are matched in
pairs against each other, and sixty pairs start during the races.
The boats of the nobility run against each other, and the chiefs
frequently sit in their own boats; but of this exhibition they are not
fond, except when confident of victory, for the loser is generally
made a butt for the merriment of his friends and companions. The
prizes consist of money, dresses, and, for the poorer classes, rice.
The boats run with the stream for the distance of a taing, or two
miles, and the goal is a vessel anchored in the river opposite to the
King’s barge. They are all pulled by paddles, each boat having
seldom less than forty. Their speed is very great, and I should
suppose they would outrun our fastest wherries. The matches
appeared to excite great emulation in the parties immediately
engaged, and much interest in the spectators, composed
principally of persons about the Court and their retainers, all of
whom were in their boats. Both on this day and yesterday there
were very few spectators on the shore. The interest of the festival,
indeed, appeared to be confined to the Court, and it seemed to excite little curiosity in the people. The King, hearing that we had been gratified at seeing the evolutions of the gilt boats, sent to-day thirteen war and three state-boats to manoeuvre in our presence. The repast was sent as before, and on this occasion, in testimony of his Majesty’s satisfaction, a double allowance; the Burmans appearing to mark their favour to their guests, like the Greeks of Homer, by the quantity of food they set before them. Besides the ordinary collation, there was also sent for each guest a separate supply of betel, fine tobacco, and lapet, or Burmatt tea. This last article is dressed with sesamum, oil, and garlic, and its taste in this state is not unlike that of olives. This is the produce of the Burman territories, growing on the hills north of Ava. It appears to be a true but coarse tea (Thea), with very large leaves. At our return home in the evening there was a heavy squall, and this morning we understood that three persons overtaken by it in the river were drowned.

October 15, 1826

In compliance with the urgent desire of our Burman friends, for our curiosity had been already sufficiently gratified, we again appeared yesterday at the boat-races: they were only distinguished from those of the two preceding days by the procession which closed them. A little before sunset, the King and Queen, with their infant daughter, and the heir-apparent, stepped into their state boats, surrounded by a number of gilt war-boats, upon the signal of three cannon being discharged: they were accompanied by between fifty and sixty boats of the principal nobility. The procession rowed up the river and back again in a circle three times, when the King and Queen returned to their barge, and three discharges of cannon proclaimed that the festival was concluded. The procession passed within one hundred yards of us, and we had a very good view of it. The Atwen-wun and other chiefs who were on hoard- with us at the time, threw themselves on their knees as the King passed, raising their joined hands, as if in the attitude of devotion. The Burmans understand the arrangement of such pageants, as that which we had now witnessed, extremely well. The moment chosen was the most favourable for effect. The setting sun shone brilliantly upon a profusion of “barbaric gold,”
and the pageant was altogether the most splendid and imposing
which I had ever seen, and not unworthy of Eastern romance.

In the course of yesterday forenoon, Dr. Price, who was with
us on the river, was sent for to the L'hut-d'hau (The word is
correctly written L'hwat, but is pronounced as I have given it in the
text), by the Wungyis, the principal of whom were, the Kyi-wungyi
and Kaulen-mengyi; the former the unsuccessful commander of
the army during the greater part of the war, and the latter the well-
known negotiator of the abortive Treaty of Patanago. He returned
in about two hours, and said that he was requested to state, that,
in consequence of his Majesty having directed an exhibition of
fireworks on Monday, for which due preparation would be
requisite, it would be necessary to postpone the appointed
meetings of the 15th and 16th, to discuss the Commercial Treaty.
It had been agreed upon at an early, period, after the Supreme
Government had resolved upon sending an embassy to Ava, that
the Mission, during its stay at the Burman capital, should occupy
the house of Dr. Price, which is on the Sagaing side of the river,
opposite to the palace; and, with the view of preparing it, this
gentleman had received from the British Commissioners at
Rangoon an advance of one thousand rupees. We had signified our
wish to take possession after our introduction, and no objections
had been offered. We were now, however, informed by Dr. Price,
that the Wungyis objected to the house at Sagaing, on the cogent
ground that it was more elevated than the King's barge, as it lay in
the river, and that such a spectacle would not become the King's
dignity. I begged Dr. Price to state to the Wungyis, that his
message upon so material a point as putting off the conferences
would not be received by me, as he was not vested, with, any
official character, and as the Burman Government had not
intimated that he was to be the channel of any communication
between us. The Kyi-wun, accompanied by a Palace Secretary, paid
us a visit in the evening, and after sitting an hour and a half, at
last entered upon the subject of postponing the conferences. This,
the known object of which was to perplex the negotiation by
procrastination, a favourite expedient with the Burmese, was the
first decidedly unfavourable example which had occurred of the
conduct of the Burman Court; and I thought it absolutely
necessary that it should not be quietly acquiesced in, hoping that
an early disapprobation might either check or prevent the
recurrence of practices which had been invariably followed by the Burman Government in former times, and proved so vexatious and embarrassing to all my predecessors. The Kyi-wun began by, asking whether we desired to be present on Monday at the exhibition of fireworks. The answer given was, that there was time enough to settle this matter at the conferences of the 15th and 16th.

After much circumlocution, he then stated, that he and I were pledged friends; that the King had conveyed to him his orders to make preparation for a display of fireworks, and that consequently, being his friend, I ought to make no objection to the arrangement. I answered, that certain days had been appointed to hold conference for the discussion of matters which related to the interest of the two countries, and I was confident the King would never give orders to postpone matters of such moment for a display of fireworks, or any such matter of mere amusement. I endeavoured to impress upon him the necessity of a strict adherence to engagements,—telling him that promises, appointments, and treaties, were held by men of honour among us and other European nations, as binding as oaths; and that those who broke them, or departed from them, on slight grounds, justly forfeited esteem and confidence. As a serious example of the evil effects of breach of engagement, I referred to the misfortunes which had followed the non-fulfilment of the Treaty of Patanago. The Kyiwun admitted “the beauty (as he called it) of strict attention to engagements, but thought that among friends some latitude ought to be allowed.”

Referring to the attack upon Melloon, which followed the breach of the treaty, he said,

Of what use was this to you, and was your conduct in this matter suitable? If you had waited a day longer, the King’s ratification would have come down.

The answer to this was,

You had due warning; a violation of engagement was committed, and through it you lost two battles, and the provinces of Mergui, Tavoy, and Yé, and part of Martaban; but I beg this subject may be dropped, as we are now
friends. I referred to it only to show what might be lost by want of punctuality to engagements.

I added, that if it were inconvenient to the Burmese chiefs to keep their appointments in any case, it was only necessary to state real grounds for doing so, which would be considered by us perfectly satisfactory; and that I was convinced the conferences would not again be postponed on slight pretexts. The Kyi-wun replied, that he was ashamed, and sorry for the part he had been obliged to take. Dr. Price acted as interpreter between us, with the occasional assistance of Mr. Judson, whose attention was principally engaged in discussing the same question with the Palace Secretary. This person had said to him,

I thought you were as one of us,—like Price. In former times, you received the King's favour. You are acquainted with our disposition and our ways, and how good a people we are.

A ray of the King's favour, in the opinion of the Burmans, binds the person upon whom it shines to everlasting gratitude, let future mal-treatment and injustice be what they may. They could scarcely have forgotten, that this very King had imprisoned Mr. Judson for eighteen months in fetters without any cause whatever, confiscating his whole property, and restoring the value of it afterwards only through compulsion.

**October 16, 1826**

Although no promise had been given of appearing at the display of fireworks, repeated messages were sent to me in the course of yesterday, to say that the King expected our presence; and that if we did not go, the Wungyis would be at a loss to know what apology to offer to his Majesty. If I did not go myself, I was requested to allow some of the gentlemen of the party to do so. It was necessary to mark our disapproval of the manner in which the conferences had been so wantonly trifled with; and I therefore refused to go myself, or to permit any of the gentlemen to attend. In the evening, word was brought to me that the Atwen-wuns requested that the conferences might take place for this day, as previously agreed upon.
Yesterday I visited the outskirts of the town, and this morning rode round it, which occupied exactly two hours, the road being all the way nearly under the ramparts. I shall take another opportunity of giving as full an account of the city of Ava as my materials will admit. In the meanwhile, I may mention that it is between five and six miles in circumference, and surrounded by a brick rampart. The north-east angle is separated from the larger part of the town by a brick wall, and constitutes a second town, which contains the palace and public offices. In the external wall we counted twenty-one gates. On a painted and gilded board, on a post fronting each gate, there is an inscription, containing the name of the gate, and the date of its construction. This is a literal translation of one of these inscriptions:—

In the year 1188 (1823), on Monday the first of the Wane of the Moon Ta-baong.—The Ta-nen-tha-ri (Tennasserim), gate of the Royal Golden City named Ra-ta-na-pu-ra.10

The gates are generally named after places,—such as the Hen-zawadi, or Pegu gate; the Yo-da-ya; or Siamese gate; the Mok-ta-ma, or Martaban gate, &c. The list contains several names little known to European geography, although apparently familiar to the Burmese. These are generally tributary states of the kingdom, chiefly of the country of Lao. The western and southern faces outside the walls are nearly destitute of population; but at the northern and eastern sides, the first bounded by the Irawadi, and the last by the “Little River,” or Myit-ngé, are well inhabited suburbs, and a large market. In our ride we met a number of the King’s elephants: several of them were large and fine animals, but generally they were ill-fed and in bad condition: they were of all ages and sizes, some not exceeding three or four months old.

October 17, 1826

The Burman negotiators, according to appointment, appeared yesterday, and the conference commenced at twelve o’clock. They were accompanied by two Palace Secretaries, but the Wun-dauk was not present. The Burman chiefs had note-books before them,

10 Crawfurd’s original note: Ratnapura, in Pali or Sanscrit, means the “city of gems.”
containing the Burman version of the draft of the treaty, which I had given in, with observations upon each article.

The senior Atwen-wun began the conference, by reading the seventh article of the Treaty of Yandabo, providing for a commercial convention.

BURMESE: Does this agree with the English copy?

CRAWFURD: It agrees in substance with a literal translation from the Burman which I hold in my hand, and this generally with the original English.

BURMESE: Besides what is stated in your credentials, we find that the letter of the Governor-General also mentions that you are the person appointed to make the arrangement consequent upon the article just read.

CRAWFURD: I am ready to enter upon the discussion with you.

The senior Atwen-wun read the first article of the draft of the treaty given in at the last meeting.

BURMESE: This article relates to two matters,—the one to ships coming and going, and the other to persons coming and going. Do the persons referred to here mean merchants, or others generally?

CRAWFURD: The persons alluded to here are merchants and traders, and no others. There is no ambiguity in the English version; should there be any in the Burman, it may be rectified.

JUNIOR ATWEN-WUN: Let the friendship between the two nations be more fast than ever. This subject occupies me so much at present that it deprives me of sleep.

The original Burman draft was here altered, so as to make it quite clear that merchants alone were meant in it. The senior Atwen-wun then read the second article.

BURMESE: I understand by this article, that every one is to be allowed to export gold and silver from this country. This is contrary
to the ancient usage of the kingdom. Gold and silver do not appear to us to be properly articles of merchandise, and therefore they ought not to be included in a treaty of commerce.

CRAWFURD: Gold and silver are considered as articles of trade by all the nations of the world. Whatever is received in commerce as an equivalent for merchandise is necessarily an article of trade, and is properly included in a commercial treaty.

BURMESE: It is not said in the second article, that the gold and silver to be exported, shall be gold and silver to be exchanged for merchandise, but any gold or silver.

CRAWFURD: What other gold or silver can be meant? What merchant can get gold and silver to take away without giving an equivalent for them, either in the shape of what is commonly called merchandise, or of some other valuable consideration?

BURMESE: If this be the case, let it be inserted in this article, that no money is to be taken away except in exchange for goods.

CRAWFURD: This will not answer, and will give rise to perplexity and difficulty. One man may import goods and dispose of the money to another, who may be inclined to send the money out of the country, although this last person did not himself import the goods for which the gold was received. One merchant may act as an agent for another and receive a commission for the goods he disposes of. He has contributed to forward the commercial interests of the two countries, and therefore ought in justice to be allowed to export the fruits of his labour. By your proposal, both these persons would be precluded from exporting gold and silver.

BURMESE: It is not our custom to let gold and silver leave the country; every thing else, such as copper, lead, yellow arsenic, &c. you may freely export.

CRAWFURD: During the explanations which took place respecting the seventh article of the Yandabo Treaty, between the British and Burman Commissioners, it was agreed that the Treaty of Commerce to be made between the two nations should be
reciprocal. We permit you to export gold and silver from all our territories; you should therefore do the same thing by us.

BURMESE: It has never been the custom to bring gold and silver into this country from yours. It has never been our custom to allow gold or silver to be exported. This is a subject of great importance. We wish therefore for more time to consider it.

CRAWFURD: I wish to take this opportunity of expressing myself more at large respecting this question. Without the free exportation of gold and silver, no considerable trade can be, or ever has been, carried on between two great countries. The nations of Europe among themselves permit the free export and import of gold and silver. The Chinese, the Siamese, the Persians, and the Arabs, permit it. Are you richer than these nations, because you prohibit it? Do you expect to lose your wealth by allowing gold and silver to be exported, when you see that other nations have not done so? If you prevent the exportation of gold and silver, their prices will be lower with you than in other countries, and you will only pay higher for all foreign commodities. You say that gold and silver has not been imported from our country. The cause of this is, that it cannot be imported to a profit, because it is lower priced in your country than in ours. Other goods that will bring a profit must therefore be imported. If you permit the free exportation of gold and silver, they will sometimes be lower and sometimes higher with you; and sometimes lower, and sometimes higher with us. Sometimes they will be exported from the one country, and sometimes from the other. Merchants will then find it easy to carry on business. The trade will greatly increase; the two nations will derive mutual advantage. You will receive our manufactures cheaper, and the King’s revenue will be vastly increased. The Americans import very little into Bengal but Spanish dollars. They have voluntarily carried on the trade for many years, and of course have derived benefit from it, or they would not have done so. There are two American gentlemen now present; you may consult them on this subject. There are some nations in the world that have little or nothing to export but gold and silver, and yet they conduct a large trade. If the nations in question, like you, were to prohibit the exportation of gold and silver, they would have no trade at all. Their gold and silver would be of little use to them, and their
nobles and people would be deprived of many of the conveniences of life, which they now get from other countries.

BURMESE: We shall take these matters into consideration, and beg you to furnish us with a copy of the remarks you have now made, in the Burman language.

A copy of the notes containing these remarks was, for the purpose of translation, handed to Dr. Price, who acted as interpreter to the Burmese negotiators.

The senior Atwen-wun read the third article of the Commercial Treaty.

BURMESE: For friendly considerations, we agree to this article; but we prefer, that instead of the length, the breadth of the vessel should be taken in estimating the measurement, and that that should be determined at eight cubits. We, agree to the exemption from pilotage, but must insist upon the vessels giving notice to a pilot.

CRAWFURD: I agree to the alterations proposed, with the exception of that regarding the measurement, which I will take into consideration, and furnish a modified article at our next meeting, in accordance with the suggestions now made by you.

The senior Atwen-wun read the fourth article.

BURMESE: This article, as it stands, is worded somewhat obscurely, according to our judgment. We agree to it according to the explanations with which you have furnished us, but we decline giving a, final answer until the next meeting.

The senior Atwen-wun read the fifth article.

BURMESE: Does this article refer to a commercial treaty, and ought it properly to be inserted in one?

CRAWFURD: It refers exclusively to merchants, and is the proper subject of a commercial arrangement. To obviate any objections on
this subject, I will insert the words “merchants” and “traders,” in lieu of “subjects.”

BURMESE: In this article it is stated that “the price of the goods and effects of merchants may be taken away.” This would imply the exportation of gold and silver, to which we have not assented.

CRAWFURD: I will modify the article thus far, until you have assented to the second article.

BURMESE: With respect to the removal of families, we wish to take farther time to consider this question.

The senior Atwen-wun read over the sixth article.

BURMESE: We do not conceive that this article comes under the head of a commercial treaty.

CRAWFURD: This is true; but still it is an article that will be beneficial to both parties.

BURMESE: You have admitted that this does not come under the head of a commercial arrangement; we think, however, that it may be necessary towards cementing the friendship between us; but, as upon this subject we have several matters to propose on our side, we wish to take time to deliberate.

The senior Atwen-wun read over the seventh article.

BURMESE: As we are great friends already, and as we wish to be greater still, we agree to this article. We now beg to say, that we have gone over the different articles of the draft you gave in, and have given our opinions upon such as our minds are made up upon. We wish you, however, to consider that nothing is as yet finally arranged or decided upon.

CRAWFURD: I consider this to be the case on both sides.

BURMESE: You are to be presented to the King to-morrow. Suitable boats will be sent down to receive you and the presents.
We will send either elephants or horses for you to the landing-place, as you wish; but we think elephants most suitable. The boats will be sent for you immediately after breakfast.

CRAWFURD: I beg you will have the goodness to state when our next meeting is to take place.

BURMESE: The festival, which commences to-morrow, will last for three days. We wish to have the fourth day for deliberation, and on the fifth we will meet you here.

The conference broke up at five o'clock, the Burman negotiators retiring apparently well satisfied with the result. A good deal of desultory conversation and explanation took place during the discussion of the different articles in the draft, which it was found impracticable to note down at the time. Every thing material, however, has been noticed.

The King had proceeded yesterday to the Temple of Kaung-m’hu-d’hau, six miles from the palace, and across the river, where the fireworks were exhibited. It rained heavily all night, and his Majesty, who did not return till three o’clock this morning, was overtaken in the storm. Word was brought us of this ill the morning, and we were informed that in consequence our audience was put off till to-morrow.

October 19, 1826

It rained all day yesterday and the night before last, and at breakfast-time we received a message from the palace, to say, that in consequence of the badness of the weather, the audience would be put off until this day. The river since our arrival had fallen about twelve feet, and for four or five days previous to the present rain it had fallen at the rate of a foot in twenty-four hours. During the rain, however, its decrease was arrested, or was nearly stationary; a fact from which it may be inferred that the source of the river is not distant, nor the body of water above Ava considerable, as otherwise the stream could hardly be affected by so partial a fall of rain.

During a moment when the weather promised to hold up. Dr. Stewart and I crossed the river, and visited the town of
Sagaing, directly opposite to Ava, and in former times, twice over, the seat of the Burman Government. We passed through the town, and went as far as the range of hills between two and three miles behind it; but as the rain recommenced almost immediately, we had little opportunity for observation. The town is a large, straggling place, where the houses are thinly scattered among groves of fruit-trees, with temples and monasteries innumerable. A considerable portion of the inhabitants are Cassay captives, or their descendants. This race is easily known from the Burmans, by their more regular and handsome features, which have a good deal of the Hindu cast. These people are not, however, genuine Hindus, but, as if it were, a mixture between these and the Burmans: their complexion is fairer than that of the inhabitants of Bengal, and a few of the young women whom we now saw were really handsome. That portion of the range of hills behind Sagaing, which lies next to the town, is composed of a coarse blue and white marble, and furnishes the material of all the lime which is used at the capital and its neighbourhood.

October 20, 1826

Yesterday, Dr. Wallich and I made a long water-excursion, which carried us round the town and its suburbs, which we thus determined to be situated on an island. We first dropped down the Irawadi for about half a mile, and entered the Myit-tha, a small stream, which carried us to the south-east angle of the town, where it joins the Myit-ngé, or “little river,” which last was now from one hundred and fifty to two hundred yards broad, and very deep. It is, in fact, according to Dr. Wallich, equal in size to the river Goomty in Hindostan. Its origin is in the hills at no great distance. As far as the Myit-ngé the current was against us; but after entering this, in our favour; so that, in reality, the two streams which I have named proved to be only two branches of the same river. The larger branch, the Myit-ngé, winds to the east, and afterwards to the north-west, until it joins the Irawadi immediately above the town. The peninsula formed by this bend has a canal across it, which commences a few hundred yards below the origin of the Myit-tha, and joins the little river about half a mile before its junction with the Irawadi. Over the Myit-tha there are two good substantial wooden-bridges, lately constructed by the Queen’s
brother. There had also been a bridge over the Myit-ngé, but it was swept away by the floods of the periodical rains some years ago. On the western face of the town there is no suburb, and on the southern there are not many houses; but on the northern and eastern side there is a very large suburb. The mouth of the Myit-ngé may be considered the proper port of Ava. Here we found many of his Majesty’s gold and war- boats, and several large trading vessels, from fifty to sixty tons burthen. The country in every direction was universally cultivated, and fine groves of fruit-trees were abundant. The impression left upon the mind of Dr. Wallich and myself, regarding the extent of industry and amount of inhabitants, was not, however, favourable. There was no bustle, no activity, but a stillness and tranquillity, without animation.

October 21, 1826

The Mission was yesterday presented to the King. After breakfast, ten or twelve boats were sent down to convey ourselves and the presents. Among these were two gold ones, as they are called. To this part of the arrangement no objection whatever could be offered. We left the steam-vessel at twelve o’clock. The Shwe-dam’hu, or Chief of the Guard of Swordsmen, and the old Governor of Bassein, in their dresses of ceremony, accompanied us. The presents went on first, conveyed in two large boats, towed by others, and having also on board the European guard. The gentlemen of the Mission and attendants followed. We reached the river-front of the Palace about one o’clock, where we were received by four Saré-d’haugyis, or Palace Secretaries. After the presents were landed and arranged, the procession moved forward, the presents going first. These, which were carried on litters by Burman porters, were followed by the Governor-General’s letter, conveyed by a native servant of the Mission, attended by two Herkaras, or Hindustani runners, on an elephant. Seven other elephants conveyed the gentlemen of the Mission. The Burmese officers who accompanied us, as well as those who received us at landing, in all six in number, were also each mounted on an elephant. The guard was drawn out upon the shore, and presented arms as we passed. After this, Lieutenant Cox took them straight back to the ship. We had been assuredly the Burmans, that it was contrary to usage to admit the armed military of any foreign power.
within the walls of the town, and I would not by any means permit them to enter unarmed. It was thought best, therefore, that they should not even go as far as the walls of the town. The following account of the etiquette of the procession, and of some of the circumstances which accompanied our introduction, will be rendered intelligible by consulting the accompanying plan of the town and palace. We entered the inner town by the Le-thá gate, one of the two commonly used by the King (One of the gates is called “the dead gate,” because funerals pass through this alone; from which circumstance, it is under a kind of stigma. Criminals, and persons under accusation, are also led through the same entrance). Passing through a short street, we came to the western side of a high wooden palisade, which, in a quadrangular form, surrounds the Palace and its different buildings. From the western side of this palisade, we passed along the southern, at the termination of which we were requested to dismount from our elephants, and complied. The Saré-d’haugyis, and other Burman officers, now preceding us, we moved on in the same order as before. We had not gone far, when these officers requested that we would take down our umbrellas, as a mark of respect to the Palace, which we were approaching. I paid no attention to what they said, but desired the gentlemen not to comply; and we moved on, until reaching the centre of the eastern face of the palisade, where there is a gate fronting the principal entrance of the Palace, opposite to the nearest side of which is the Rungd’hau, or Hall of Justice. The Saré-d’haugyis, without our being aware of their intention, led us beyond the Rungd’hau, where it was previously arranged that we should rest, to the gate of the palisade fronting the Palace, and here requested us to make a Shi-ko, or Burman homage. I had previously caused it to be intimated to the Burman officers, that in no place, or under any circumstances, should any of the gentlemen of the Mission make an obeisance, except to the King in person. As soon, therefore, as I ascertained what it was that the Saré-d’haugyis wanted, I turned round quickly, and, followed by the other gentlemen, entered the Rungd’hau, where I requested that the particular Saré-d’haugyi, who addressed us on the subject of making an obeisance to the Palace, should be reprimanded for his presumption. This was done by the other officer, who seemed to think that he had officiously exceeded his authority, as well as broken a promise made to us. We seated ourselves in the front of
the Rungd'hau. This is a lofty wooden building, supported by several rows of pillars of the same material, and without walls, like all similar public buildings among the Burmans. It is a plain structure, without carving, gilding, or any sort of decoration, and both for extent and appearance much inferior to the similar place where we had rested before being presented to the King of Siam, in the Mission to that country in 1823. We were detained at the Rungd'hau for two hours and a half, evidently for the purpose of allowing the Burman princes and officers to pass, and with the hope of dazzling us with a spectacle of which they themselves evidently entertained a very high notion. The junior courtiers passed first, according to their rank; they were followed by the seniors in the same order, and last of all came the princes, according to the rank allowed them at Court. The first of the latter who entered was the Prince of Pugan, a cousin of the King. The next was the Prince of Sadowy, better known to us by the name of Memiabo; a corruption of his name, which is correctly written Menmyat-pu. This, as I before mentioned, was the person who acted as Generalissimo of the Burman forces towards the conclusion of the late war, and after the disgrace or failure of his elder brother, the Prince of Sarawadi. He was half-brother to the King, and, from all accounts, a young man of no energy or talent. He was always accompanied by the Wungyi Kaulen Mengyi as his lieutenant; and this chief was, in reality, the effectual commander. These were followed by the Princes of Mendong and Mekkara: the first a half-brother; the second, uncle to the King. Next came Menthagyi, the Queen's brother; and the last, as the highest in rank, was the Prince of Sarawadi, the King's only full brother. The Prince of Sarawadi had ten gold umbrellas; and the Queen's brother, ranking next to him, eight. The officers and princes were each preceded by a certain number of their followers: they were seated in canopied litters open to the sides, and their elephants and led horses followed them. The Government officers used their umbrellas as far as the gate of the Palace; here they dismounted, leaving their umbrellas, litters, and retinue outside, with the exception of one or two attendants. The princes of the blood entered the Palace gate in their litters, with their umbrellas spread, but left their retinues outside, including armed followers, which they alone were permitted to have. The number of retainers which accompanied the different chiefs was in proportion to their
respective ranks and consequence. The most numerous retinue by far was that of the Queen’s brother, which amounted to at least four hundred: among them I observed twenty or thirty men carrying firelocks, and clothed in the jackets of English sepoys, which, from their appearance, I imagine to have belonged to the provincial battalion of Chittagong, of whom a number had been taken prisoners on the Aracan frontier.

Having observed that even the lowest of the chiefs in rank were permitted to use their umbrellas as far as the Palace gate, and were conveyed thither in their litters, while their elephants and horses were allowed to advance as far as the front of the Rungd’hau; and contrasting this with the treatment observed towards ourselves, I thought it my duty to expostulate, on the spot, with the chiefs who had conducted us; and through Mr. Judson and Dr. Price, gave them to understand, that the conduct they had pursued was unjustifiable, unbecoming, and contrary to the promise held out when the arrangement for our presentation was agreed upon. In the meanwhile, I was told that farther exactions and demands were contemplated; and I therefore informed the Burmese chiefs, once for all, that no obeisance whatever should be made by us except in the King’s presence, and that our shoes should not be taken off until we were upon the point of entering the Palace. They were also distinctly given to understand, that if any attempt were made to dictate to us in such matters, we should immediately return, and decline the honour of being presented altogether. Many efforts were made, notwithstanding, to induce us to make an obeisance upon the first view of the throne; and we were assured that such homage would not be paid to the mere walls of the Palace, as the King himself would unquestionably be present, and fronting us just as we should enter the gate of the enclosure. Our previous information convinced us that there was no foundation for this assertion; and being firm in our refusal, the Burmese officers at length desisted from farther attempts to over-persuade us. The procession moved on from the Rungd’hau, preceded by a Nakand’hau. I had requested a gold or silver salver to carry the letter of the Governor-General, which was refused. An old wooden one was brought, of which the gilding was defaced. This was declined, and I therefore requested Mr. Montmorency to carry the letter, and to walk by my side in the procession. The Palace, besides the palisade, is surrounded in every direction by an
inner wall of brick, which is double on the eastern or principal front; so that in this direction there are three gateways. At each of these the procession halted, and at each the Na-kand’hau prostrated himself, hoping we might be induced to follow him by making an obeisance. Nothing, however, was said to induce us to do so. My predecessor, Colonel Syme[s], had been compelled, by the same class of officers, to make repeated obeisances long before he reached the Palace. In dictating these the Burmese officers exhibited a degree of insolence which was not observed in our case. To rid himself of their importunity, he was obliged to threaten returning back, and to decline being presented altogether.

That portion of the Palace which contains the Hall of Audience, consists of a centre and two wings; the first containing the throne, and directly fronting the outer gates of the enclosure. The building is entirely of wood, with the exception of its many roofs, which are covered with plates of tin, in lieu of tiles. Over the centre is a tall and handsome spire, called by the Burmese a Pyat-thad, crowned by the ti, or iron umbrella, which is an exclusive ornament of the Temple and Palace. The Hall of Audience is without walls, and open all around, except where the throne is placed. The roof is supported by a great number of handsome pillars, and is richly and tastefully carved. The whole fabric is erected upon a terrace of solid stone and lime, ten or twelve feet high, which constitutes the floor: this is so smooth, even, and highly polished, that I mistook it at first for white marble. With the exception of about fourteen or fifteen inches at the bottom of each pillar, painted of a bright red, the whole interior of the Palace is one blaze of gilding. The throne, which is at the buck of the hall, is distinguished from the rest of the structure by its superior brilliancy and richness of decoration. The pedestal on which it stands is composed of a kind of mosaic of mirrors, coloured glass, gilding, and silver, after a style peculiar to the Burmans. Over it is a canopy richly gilt and carved, and the wall behind it is also highly embellished. The Palace is new, not having been occupied altogether above two years and a half; so that the gilding and ornaments were neither tarnished nor defaced, as we often found to be the case in other places. Although little reconcilable to our notions of good taste in architecture, the building is unquestionably most splendid and brilliant; and I doubt whether so singular and imposing a royal edifice exist in any other country.
It has the same form and proportions with that described by Colonel Symes, at Amarapura; but is larger, in the proportion of one hundred and twenty to ninety.

There are three entrances to the Hall of Audience, by a flight of a few steps,—one at each wing, and one at the centre; the last being appropriated to the King alone. We entered by the stair which is to the right, at the bottom of which we voluntarily took off our shoes, as we had from the first agreed to do. We passed through the hall, and seated ourselves where our station was pointed out, in front of the throne, a little way to the King's left hand, the presents being directly in front of the throne. The King made his appearance in about ten minutes. His approach was announced by the sound of music, shortly after which a sliding door behind the throne opened with a quick and sharp noise. He mounted a flight of steps which led to the throne from behind with apparent difficulty, and as if tottering under the load of dress and ornaments on his person. His dress consisted of a tunic of gold tissue, ornamented with jewels. The crown was a helmet with a high peak, in form not unlike the spire of a Burman Pagoda, which it was probably intended to resemble. I was told that it was of entire gold, and it had all the appearance of being studded with abundance of rubies and sapphires. In his right hand his Majesty held what is called in India a Chowrie, which, as far as we could sec, was the white tail of the Thibet cow. It is one of the five established ensigns of Burman royalty, the other four being a certain ornament for the forehead, a sword of a peculiar form, a certain description of shoes, and the white umbrella. His Majesty used his flapper with much adroitness and industry; and it occurred to us, who had never seen such an implement but in the hands of a menial, not with much dignity. Having frequently waved it to and fro, brushed himself and the throne sufficiently, and adjusted his cumbrous habiliments, he took his seat. The Burman courtiers, who were seated in the usual posture of other Eastern nations, prostrated themselves, on his Majesty's appearance, three times. This ceremony, which consists in raising the joined hands to the forehead, and bowing the head to the ground, is called, in the Burman language, Shi-ko, or the act of submission and homage. No salutation whatever was dictated to us; but as soon as his Majesty presented himself, we took off our hats, which we had
previously kept on purposely, raised our right hands to our
foreheads, and made a respectful bow.

The Queen presented herself immediately after his Majesty,
and seated herself upon the throne, at his right hand. Her dress
was of the same fabric, and equally rich with that of the King. Her
crown of gold, like his, and equally studded with gems, differed in
form, and much resembled a Roman helmet. The little Princess,
their only child, and about five years of age, followed her Majesty,
and seated herself between her parents. The Queen was received
by the courtiers with similar prostrations as his Majesty, and we
also paid her the same compliment as we had done to the King.
When their Majesties were seated, the resemblance of the scene
which presented itself to the illusion of a, well got up drama,
forcibly occurred to us; but I may safely add, that no mimic
exhibition could equal the splendour and pomp of the real scene.

As soon as his Majesty was seated, a band of Brahmins, who
are the soothsayers of the Burman Court, began to chant a hymn,
which continued for two or three minutes. In what language it was,
or on what subject, we could not ascertain. These persons stood
behind the throne, a little to his Majesty’s left; so that we had but
an imperfect view of them. They wore white dresses, with caps of
the same colour, trimmed with gold lace or tinsel. This part of the
ceremony being over, the first thing done was to read aloud a list of
offerings made by his Majesty to certain Pagodas in the city of Ava.
The names of the temples were specified, and it was staged that
the offerings were made because the temples in question were
“depositaries of relics of Gautama,—representatives of his divinity,
and therefore suitable objects of worship.” This was done by a
Than-d’hau-gan, or Reporter of the Palace. The list was read or
rather sung, from a book which he held before him.

It is necessary that I should here explain the time and
occasion taken by the Burman Court for our presentation. It was
the Burman Lent, or Fast, at the beginning and termination of
which, as well as at the new year, the tributaries and public
officers make offerings to the King, and “ask pardon” for all
offences committed in the intervening period. These festivals,
which continue for three days, are distinguished by the epithet of
Ka-dau, which word means “pardon asking.” Our presentation was
evidently put off from day to day, that we might appear among the
crowd of suppliants asking forgiveness for past offences! The
conviction of their defeat and humiliation was, I may safely say, universal amongst the Burmans of every rank; it was obvious in their demeanour and their apprehensions; yet so excessive was the vanity of the Court, that it was gratified, or at least its pride was soothed, by getting up a show, what must have appeared, even to itself, little better than a farce.

The presentation of offerings commenced with those of the Princes of the Royal Family, which was succeeded by those of the Saubwas, or tributary Princes of Lao. Then came those of the merchants, or, as they are called by the Burmans, “the rich men;” and last of all, those of the Governor-General. A list of each was drawn out on a slip of palm-leaf stained yellow. A Than-d’hau-gan, or Palace Reporter, read the lists with an audible voice, sitting in front of the throne, but at a considerable distance. The following is a translation of the address made at each presentation. I select that of the Prince of Sarawadi, to show the nature of the offerings tendered by a person of his rank. The epithets bestowed upon the King in this case are the same as in all common addresses:

Most excellent glorious Sovereign of Land and Sea, Lord of the Celestial (Saddan) Elephant, Lord of all White Elephants, Master of the Supernatural Weapon (Sakya), Sovereign Controller of the present state of existence. Great King of Righteousness, Object of Worship! On this excellent propitious occasion, when your Majesty, at the close of Lent, grants forgiveness, your Majesty’s servant, the Prince of Sarawadi, under the excellent golden foot, makes an obeisance of submission (shi-ko), and tenders offerings of expiation, viz. a golden pyramid, a silver pyramid, golden flowers, silver flowers, a golden cup, a silver cup, some fine cloths, &c. &c. &c.

When the Governor-General’s presents were presented, the address was exactly in the same language; with this exception, that for the words “Your Majesty’s servant,” were substituted “the English Ruler of India.”

When the name of each suppliant was pronounced, the party took a few grains of parched rice between the hands and made the customary prostration, being the acknowledged token of homage and submission. This ceremony, although insisted upon with
Colonel Symes and the gentlemen who accompanied him, was not proposed to us, and we made no acknowledgment whatever when the reading of the list of the Governor-General's presents was completed. We were indeed ignorant at the time of all that was said, from our want of acquaintance with the language. Dr. Price, who acted as my interpreter, did not explain to me what passed, and probably did not himself comprehend the nature of the language made use of, from the rapid manner in which the ceremony was gone through. When the list of the Governor-General’s presents to the Queen were read, all that was prefixed to it was “The presents offered to her Majesty the Sovereign Queen by the English Ruler of India.”

The arrival of the Embassy from the Government of India was then announced. His Majesty did not address us in person, but an Atwen-wun who sat before us, read from a book the following questions, as if coming from the King. Are the King and Queen of England, their sons and daughters, and all the nobility, well? Have the seasons been favourable in England? How long have you been in coming from India to this place? These scarcely required any other answer than a respectful acknowledgment. After this, betel, tobacco, a goglet of water, with a gold cup to drink from, and lapet, or Burman tea, were sent in separate vessels, to each of the English gentlemen. This mark of attention, which was not conferred upon any one else present, we were carefully informed was by the immediate order of the King. We acknowledged it by a bow, and touching the fore-head as before.

The presentation of offerings being finished, his Majesty conferred a few titles, which were loudly proclaimed by heralds through the hall. Among the persons honoured upon this occasion, was a certain native Portuguese, who was an officer of the Burman mission to Cochin China in 1823: he had been taken prisoner at Tavoy, on his return from Cochin China, and detained at Calcutta during the war. Notwithstanding the handsome and liberal treatment which he and his companions had there received, his hostility to the British was inveterate. The King, I was told, listened to him, as he is too apt to do to all flatterers of whatever rank or condition, and he had been very active in giving the most unfavourable possible picture of the British power and policy in India. Among other statements calculated to mislead, he represented the office of the Governor-General of India as being
exactly parallel to that of the Myo-wun, or Governor, of a Burman district. I had this information from such sources as left me no room to doubt its accuracy.

His Majesty, as he was about to leave the hall, directed presents to be made to the English gentlemen of the Mission. These consisted of a ruby, a piece of silk, and some lackered boxes, for each person. Those given to me might be worth about one hundred deals, the others a good deal less. Mr. Judson was altogether left out in the distribution of presents. We could understand that he was deemed a Burman subject—a person who had received favours, and therefore who was acting in his present situation contrary to his allegiance!!

The Governor-General’s letter was not exhibited, nor was even the Burman translation of it read or alluded to. Mr. Montmorency held it during the audience, and towards the conclusion delivered it into the hands of a Nakand’hau by my direction.

The King continued in the hall about three-quarters of an hour, and then retired. When he and the Queen got up, the courtiers prostrated themselves as when they entered, and the English gentlemen made a respectful bow to each; after which they put on their hats, to signify that the compliment of uncovering was intended for their Majesties alone. Their Majesties had been evidently uneasy under their cumbrous dresses, particularly their crowns, for they frequently put up their hands to adjust the latter, and relieve their heads from the load that seemed to oppress them.

The princes and public officers were all habited in their court or state dresses, which, as, I before stated, consisted of purple velvet cloaks, with highly ornamented caps of the same material: each had his chain of nobility over his shoulders, and his title blazoned on a thin plate of gold affixed to the front of the cap. The princes were distinguished by dresses of superior splendour, and especially by the form and decoration of their caps. The dress of the Prince of Sarawadi was particularly brilliant. The courtiers, according to their rank, were seated more or less near to the throne. The nearest to it was the Prince of Sarawadi; for the heir-apparent, having as yet, on account of his youth, no public station assigned to him, did not attend. The inferior courtiers were scattered over the body and wings of the hall: this might have made their number appear fewer than they really were. It struck
us, however, that the attendance was not numerous, and certainly it by no means equalled the crowd assembled at the Siamese Court. The spectacle, upon the whole, was sufficiently imposing. Yet, notwithstanding the better taste of the Palace, and the superior dresses of the Burman courtiers (for those of Siam, when I saw them, did not appear in their dresses of ceremony), the pageant was less calculated to affect the imagination than that exhibited by the Court of Siam, where the demeanour of the courtiers was more constrained, the crowd of suppliants more numerous, and the manners of the sovereign himself unquestionably more imposing—authoritative and dignified. The Siamese Court, in short, seemed more consonant to our preconceived notions of the pride, the barbaric magnificence, and wild despotism of an Eastern monarch.

His present Majesty was about forty-three years of age, of short stature, but of active form. His manners are lively and affable, but his affability often degenerates into familiarity, and this not unfrequently of a ludicrous description. A favourite courtier, for example, will sometimes have his ears pinched, or be slapped over the face. Foreigners have been still more frequently the object of such familiarities, because with them freedoms may be taken with less risk of compromising his authority. The King is partial to active sports, beyond what is usual with Asiatic sovereigns,—such as water excursions, riding on horseback and on elephants, elephant catching, &c. Among his out-door amusements there is one so boyish and so barbarous, as not easily to be believed, had it not been well authenticated:—this is the practice of riding upon a man’s shoulders. No saddle is made use of on these occasions, but for a bridle there is a strap of muslin put into the mouth of the honoured biped. Before the war, the favourite horse was a native of Sarwa—a man of great bulk and strength, with shoulders so broad and fleshy as to make his Majesty’s seat perfectly safe and comfortable. When the English arrived at Sarwa, this person had a brother there who submitted to their authority. This treasonable proceeding becoming known at Court, the favourite was degraded and put in irons, as well as deprived of a title and assignment of land which he enjoyed for his services. His Majesty has at present no human vehicle of this description. I ought to observe, that the practice of riding on a man’s shoulders
is not peculiar to his present Majesty, but has often been practised by other full-grown persons of the Royal blood.

The King's natural disposition is admitted to be kind and benevolent, and, considering the temptations by which he is surrounded, he has certainly been guilty of few excesses. In point of talents, he is greatly inferior to his immediate predecessor, and, indeed, to most or all of the princes of the house of Alompra. His perception is indeed sufficiently quick, but his curiosity, which is restless, is too easily gratified. With an easy temper, and with too little firmness or strength of mind to think or act for himself, he is readily led by the ruling favourite of the time. He is well acquainted with the popular literature of the Burmans, and reads, or rather hears a great deal read to him. He has a smattering of the Pali, has studied astrology, is a great adept in alchemy, has a turn for mechanical pursuits, and a better taste in architecture than is usual with a Burman. For theology he has no great inclination, and seems to content himself with doing what he considers absolutely necessary in religious matters, but no more.

The Queen is about two years older than his Majesty, has a good person and a dignified address, but was never handsome. She appeared to us to be the reverse; but the distance and the dazzle of gold, of ornaments, and rich dresses, prevented any distinct view of her features. She is, by birth of low origin, being the daughter of a chief gaoler,—not however one of those who are pardoned malefactors. When the present King was heir-apparent, she was taken into his seraglio as a concubine, and soon acquired a powerful influence over him, which, instead of diminishing by time, has ever since increased, and at present she and her party may be said to exercise the principal share in the government of the country. The lawful wife of the King, and the mother of the present heir-apparent, was the daughter of the King's uncle, the Prince of Prome. This lady died a few days after the birth of the heir-apparent; her death, it is alleged, having been hastened by her husband's neglect and the ascendency gained by her rival. The late King and all the royal family did every thing in their power to discourage the present connection; but the opposition which the King has experienced on this point, has only tended to confirm him in his attachment. He seldom goes abroad, or shows himself to his subjects, without being accompanied by the Queen. On the most solemn occasions, she sits with him upon the throne; and in public
processions, her vehicle is carried side by side with his. When they are spoken of, the customary form of expression is not “the King” or “the Queen” separately, but “the two Sovereign Lords.” So great is her power over him, and so unaccountable does it appear, that her enemies charge her with the practice of magic; and some of the royal family, it is said, familiarly speak of her under the name of “the sorceress.” None of his Queens ever sat with his late Majesty on the throne during his long reign, nor have I been able to ascertain that it was ever the practice of the Burman kings before his present Majesty’s accession. In an Eastern country, at all events, it is certainly a singular spectacle. When the last Chinese Embassy received an audience in the year 1823, her Majesty then appeared upon the throne,—an invasion of Oriental usage which must have been a subject of wonder to a ceremonious and punctilious nation, who themselves keep the sex in a state of entire retirement and seclusion. To the Burmans themselves, however, the matter does not seem so extraordinary; for, with them, generally speaking, women are more nearly upon an equality with the stronger sex, than among any other Eastern people of consideration; yet they have never, that I am aware of, been raised to the throne, or directly exercised any political authority. Her Majesty’s disposition is less amiable than that of the King, and her temper more austere and haughty. In pecuniary matters the King is thoughtless, or liberal; but the Queen, frugal and parsimonious. Although considerable allowances must be made for the personal character of the King, the history of her advancement plainly shows that her Majesty is a woman of superior mind. This however is not the common opinion among the Burmans, because with them she is unpopular: they consider her as a violator of national manners, and attribute, as I have already said, her whole ascendancy to the practice of supernatural and unlawful arts. There is one class however, and a very material one, with which her Majesty is popular,—the priesthood. She is devout, and, in the sense in which they are interested, charitable. She builds pagodas and monasteries, makes frequent gifts to the established temples, bestows largesses upon the priests, and is attentive to all the external forms of religion. The King has had but two children by her Majesty,—a prince who died a few months after his birth, and the young lady whom we saw upon the throne with her parents. The Queen, to strengthen and preserve her influence, proposes to

SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005): 636-959
give this princess in marriage to the heir-apparent. The marriage between half-brothers and sisters, although unknown among the people, and repugnant to their feelings, has been common, it appears, among the blood royal from time immemorial.

After sitting a few minutes we retired, putting our shoes on at the head of the stairs, where our servants were waiting for us. The same officers accompanied us as when we entered. Upon descending into the court before the palace, we had an opportunity of examining more leisurely the scene that was here presented, which consisted of an exhibition of dancing-women; buffoons and tumblers in masques and masquerade dresses; puppet-shows, state elephants, led horses, with state carriages, and palanquins. The tumblers appeared agile and expert; they were chiefly disguised as monkeys and other wild animals, and amused the company by ludicrous gestures, scrambling up poles, letting themselves fall from them, and similar feats. Some of the elephants were very noble animals; but our attention was chiefly attracted by the celebrated white elephant, which was immediately in front of the palace; it is the only one in the possession of the King of Ava, notwithstanding his titles; whereas his Majesty of Siam had six when I was in that country. The Burman white elephant was rather of a cream than a white colour, and by no means so complete an Albino as any one of those shown to us in Siam. To the best of my recollection, however, it was larger than any of the latter: it had no appearance of disease or debility, and the keepers assured us that its constitution was equally good with that of any of the common elephants. This animal was taken in the year 1806, when young, in the forests of Pegu, at a place called Nibban, which is about twelve miles distant from the old city, and was now about twenty-five years old: it is the only white elephant which has been taken in the Burman dominions for many years, with the exception of a female caught, two years before it, in the forests of Lain. Several of a light tint, but not deserving the name of white, have been taken within the last twenty years.

I had here an opportunity, as well as in Siam, of ascertaining that the veneration paid to the white elephant has been, in some respects, greatly exaggerated. The white elephant is not an object of worship, but it is considered an indispensable part of the regalia of sovereignty. Royalty is incomplete without it; and the more there are, the more perfect is the state of the kingly office considered.
Both the Court and people would consider it as peculiarly inauspicious to want a white elephant; and hence the repute in which they are held, and the anxiety to obtain them: the capture of a white elephant is consequently highly rewarded. The present one was first discovered by four common villagers, each of whom received two thousand five hundred ticals in money, and offices, titles, and estates.

While we were at Ava, a report was brought that a white elephant had been seen; but it was stated, at the same time, that its capture and transport on a sledge over the cultivated country would be accompanied by the destruction of ten thousand baskets of rice. His Majesty is said to have exclaimed more with the enthusiasm of an amateur, than the consideration of a patriot king, “What signifies the destruction of ten thousand baskets of rice, in comparison with the possession of a white elephant?” and the order was given for the hunt.

The lower orders however, it must be observed, perform the shiko, or obeisance of submission to the white elephant; but the chiefs view this as a vulgar superstition, and do not follow it. When the present elephant was taken, the event was considered a joyous one; and the late King, who was fond of money, taking advantage of the circumstance, issued an order to the tributaries and chiefs, to ask pardon of the white elephant (Ka-dau), accompanied of course by the usual presents which his Majesty deposited in his coffers.

The establishment of the white elephant is very large: he has his Wun, or Minister; his Wun-dauk, or deputy to that officer; his Saré-gyi, or Secretary, &c. with a considerable endowment of land for his maintenance. In the late reign, Sa-len, one of the finest districts in the kingdom, was the estate of the white elephant.

Having seen two Albino monkeys in Siam, we asked if his Burman Majesty was possessed of any. An ugly cream-coloured long-tailed baboon was brought out for us to inspect; but in whiteness it bore no comparison to those of Siam.

After inspecting the curiosities of the court-yard, we returned home by the same route by which we came. Our elephants had been so ill-caparisoned and uncomfortable, that we declined riding them, but caused them to accompany us to the river-side. In coming in, there was a considerable assemblage of people to view the procession; but by no means a great one—not a fifth part, I
should imagine, of that assembled on a similar occasion at Siam. They were all dressed for the occasion, and their demeanour was decorous, decent, and respectful in the highest degree. They sat down, as we passed along, in the posture deemed most respectful by the Burmans; and not a word was spoken, or a sound heard. I could not help contrasting their behaviour, in this respect, with the noisy and boisterous conduct of the Siamese populace. The difference must originate in national character, and not in the circumstances of our different political relations with the two people; for the conduct of the Burman populace towards Colonel Symes' Mission was equally respectful as towards ourselves, at a moment when the Burmans had nothing to apprehend from an opposite behaviour, and when they were as independent of us as the Siamese at the period of my visit to that country.

Constables with long rods in their hands were stationed on each side of the procession, to keep the populace in order; but there was little need for their services, and we scarcely perceived them until after our arrival at the Rung'd'hau, when they became more necessary in preserving order among the followers of the different chiefs, who were assembled in great numbers between the Rung'd'hau and the Palace gate, and disposed to be noisy but not disrespectful. The nature and history of the office of these constables form one of the ugliest and most odious features of the Burman Government. They are denominated in the language Pakwet, which means "the cheek branded with a circle." They are, in fact, most frequently atrocious malefactors, pardoned in consideration of their performing for life the duties of constables, gaolers, and executioners, for all these offices are united in one person. They receive no pay or reward for their services, and must live by their wits; that is to say, by the extortion and impositions practised upon their unfortunate prisoners. Besides the ring on each cheek, a mark which implies the commission of a capital crime, these guardians of the peace are to be seen with such epithets as the following tattooed upon their breasts, "man-killer," "robber," "thief," &c. The chief of these persons was pointed out to us, and was soon recognised by Mr. Judson as the person who had the principal charge of the European and American prisoners during the war. This was an old man of sixty, lean, and of a most villanous countenance. He was by birth of the tribe of the Kyens, had murdered his master, and had a large circle on each cheek,
with the Burman word *Lu'-that* or “man-killer,” in very large letters on his breast. The Pa-kwet are held to be infamous. Even in the execution of their office, they are not permitted to enter any house, nor in any case to come within the walls of the Palace. When they die their bodies cannot be burnt, nor the usual funeral rites performed, but they are interred like those of lepers and others held to be impure.

The military display made by the Burmans on this occasion was truly contemptible. Along the roads which we passed, files of soldiers were drawn out in single ranks, each file at the distance of ten or twelve feet. The arms consisted of alternate spears and muskets. The soldiers, who were without uniform, and indeed naked, with the exception of a scanty lower garment, and a small handkerchief round the head, sat down, having the stock of the muskets on the ground, and the muzzle a little raised from it, and supported by two cross-sticks. The appearance of the men showed that no selection had been made: they literally appeared no better than so many day-labourers, of all sizes, ages, and appearances, taken at hap-hazard from the common bazar. The Siamese soldiery, bad as they were, and grotesque as was their uniform, were better armed and accoutred, and in every respect made a better appearance. As to the troops of Cochin China, the Burman soldiery are just as far below these, as they, in their turn, are inferior to the best disciplined troops of Europe. This morning, when preparation was making for a similar festival, I counted the number of firelocks, which, widely dispersed along the two sides of the palisade which we had passed the day before, had then the appearance of being numerous: they amounted exactly to one hundred and eighty.

In passing out of the gate which we had entered, we observed a few cannon. One brass gun lying on the ground inside of the gate was of great size; but its walls were superfluously thick, and its calibre did not seem to exceed that of a twenty-four-pounder: this was a trophy brought from Siam. On the rampart on each side of the gate there was one nine-pound cannon on swivels. These two were all the guns we saw mounted. Outside the gate, and lying on the ground, there were five English ship-guns; I think, twelve-pounders.

**October 22, 1826**
The audience having been so frequently put off, I imagined that the appointed conference would have also been postponed, and I did not expect the negotiators on the day named. Yesterday morning, however, word was sent to us, that they were desirous of being punctual, and would come as agreed upon. They came accordingly at twelve o’clock. Before entering upon business, many questions were put to us respecting our reception at the Court, and the things we had seen. The Burman chiefs expressed a confident hope that we were pleased with our reception. On this point, I replied, that I would give my opinion fully, and in a public form, towards the close of the conference. They knew that I had visited the Court of Siam, and a great object with them was to obtain a favourable answer to the comparison which I should draw between that and the Burman Court. No essential point connected with the wealth or strength of the two nations was at all touched upon. The principal topics were the comparative splendour of the two Palaces, of the Court, of the courtiers, and of the King. They were especially desirous to know, whether the King of Siam had, or had not a white elephant. On the first-mentioned topics they received such replies as gratified them; but on the important subject of the white elephant, it seemed, under all circumstances, not necessary to withhold the truth from them. They were sensibly mortified when I informed them, that the King of Siam had six white elephants instead of one, and that I had actually seen four of them. They asked, whether the Siamese elephants were equally white with that which I had been yesterday. I replied, that the Siamese elephants were all whiter. They seemed to doubt the accuracy of my information, and began a sort of cross-questioning. They begged to know when I had visited Siam; who was King at the time; his age; his successor, &c. &c. I satisfied them with precise dates and circumstances. They dropped the subject, and their silence evidently implied that they were chagrined, that every circumstance of the parallel drawn between themselves and the Siamese should not have received a flattering answer.

Business commenced by the senior Atwen-wun putting the following question:

BURMESE: On the first of the moon, we discussed the different articles of the draft which you laid before us; some we agreed to,
and we rejected others. You then promised to furnish us with an amended draft, according to what had been agreed upon before the next meeting.

CRAWFURD: I certainly did not promise to furnish such a draft, or you should have had it. To the best of my recollection, the subject was not even alluded to. My notes taken on the occasion do not contain any memorandum of such a promise, nor do I think that the interpreters on either side can state that it was made.

BURMESE: We understood you so.

CRAWFURD: If you are desirous now of having a copy, it may be immediately made for you.

The writers of the Atwen-wuns began immediately to make a copy, which occupied a long time. In proceeding to copy the sixth article, the following conversation took place:

BURMESE: We did not assent to the sixth article, which is not of a commercial nature. We wish, therefore, that it should be struck out in the present draft.

CRAWFURD: I agreed with you, that this article is not strictly of a commercial nature; but as you allowed that it might be useful otherwise, it was admitted. I now assent that it should be struck out at your desire.

The amended draft was now read, article by article. In reading the title, the following observation and reply were made:

SENIOR ATWEN-WUN: We wish you to add here the name of the King of England, as well as of the Governor-General.

CRAWFURD: I will not listen to this proposal. You may make what alterations you think proper in the titles of his Burman Majesty, but I am the best judge how the Government I represent is to be designated. I beg you clearly to understand, that the Government of India exercises sovereign power, as far as you are concerned; can make peace, and can make war. You have already made one
treaty with it, and therefore there can be no difficulty on the present occasion. This is, at best, but a dispute about words.

The first and second article of the amended draft were agreed to, as well as the third article, altered as in the annexed draft. Upon the fourth article being read, the following discussion took place.

BURMESE: What river, or rivers, do you allude to in this article?

CRAWFURD: There is no particular river specified; but that which is especially in view, is the Than-luen, or Sa-luen, which, by treaty, is your eastern, and our western boundary to the south.

BURMESE: Although the Than-luen river is stated to be the boundary, yet a cession only was made by us of the provinces of Tavoy, Mergui, and Yé. Molameng, and other places to the eastward of the Sa-luen, are parts of the thirty-two districts of Martaban, and no cession is made of any portion of that province. It is also provided, that any disputes on this subject shall be hereafter settled by Commissioners, according to ancient limits. The Sa-luen river ought not therefore to be inserted here.

CRAWFURD: I beg to read to you the fourth article of the Treaty of Yandabo.

The fourth article of the Treaty of Yandabo was here read.

CRAWFURD: By this article it is expressly stated, that the Sa-luen river shall hence-forth be the boundary between the two countries; that is to say, that it is to form the line of demarcation which shall determinie the limits of the territory of each. What is on the west side belongs to you, and what is on the east side belongs to us. If there should be any dispute respecting islands in the Sa-luen, this is to be settled by Commissioners appointed for that purpose. That the river is the boundary admits of no question. This was fully explained to you at the time by the British Commissioners. In answer to some objection of yours, Sir A. Campbell pointed with his hand to the map, after informing himself previously on the subject, and said, “This is to be the boundary,” and you assented.
The record of the conversation that took place now exists, and is before me. One of the Burman Commissioners is present, and knows this very well. Mr. Judson, who acted as interpreter, is also present, and can afford you any explanation that you require. You might as well say that the ridge of the Aracan mountains is not the boundary between the two nations in another quarter, or that any part of the territory lying west of these mountains is to become a subject of dispute, to be settled by Commissioners.

BURMESE: It is evident that the persons who negotiated the treaty anticipated some dispute on this subject, by appointing Commissioners.

CRAWFURD: It is customary with all European nations, in making a treaty of this kind, to appoint Commissioners to fix the exact line of frontier. If the Sa-luen river was not to be the boundary, why should it be mentioned in the fourth article? I repeat, that this was all settled at Yandabo; and that one of you, gentlemen, was present at the conference. I decline entering farther into this discussion at present, as it is of a political, and not of a commercial nature.

BURMESE: Still it will be necessary to make some alteration in the fourth article of the treaty.

CRAWFURD: No alteration whatever is called for, as no river in particular is mentioned. If you have any thing farther to say upon this subject, let it be introduced hereafter. Have you any thing farther to state regarding the commercial treaty?

BURMESE: We particularly wish to have the river specified in the fourth article of the treaty excluded.

CRAWFURD: It is not necessary. The article, as it stands, will answer for any river or rivers, whatever they may be. Have you any thing farther to say on the subject of the commercial treaty?

BURMESE: We have something to say on the subject of Munnipore.
CRAWFURD: This is introducing a political question, which you yourselves have expressed a wish should be avoided, until the settlement of the commercial arrangement.

The circumstances which attended our introduction to his Majesty, appeared to call for a distinct remonstrance, and in conformity with what I had intimated to the Burman chiefs at the opening of the conference, I addressed them in the following terms through Mr. Judson. My notes were prepared during the intervals of the conference and handed over to the interpreter, who had time to translate and consider them before he spoke. The language as it now stands is nearly a literal translation of what he delivered in Burman.

CRAWFURD [through Judson]: The principal business of this day's conference being over, I take this opportunity of addressing you respecting some circumstances of an unpleasant nature which occurred yesterday. This embassy, you are aware, came to the Burman Court from a great Government exercising sovereign authority. The presents which we brought were offered as marks of friendship only. When you recollect the issue of the late war, was it not generous on the part of the Governor-General to send an embassy and presents in this way? Was it not conferring a favour? (Here the junior Atwen-wun very readily replied, "Yes, yes.") The Mission was conveyed to the Palace on elephants miserably equipped, compared to those on which your own officers of all ranks rode. We were made to dismount at the corner of the palisade of the Palace. Your own officers rode in their litters to the very gate. Your officers of every rank made use of their umbrellas to the very gate of the Palace. We were rudely requested to take ours down long even before reaching the Rungd’hau. A Saré-d’haugyi wanted us to make an obeisance to the Palace when we were not near it, although I had repeatedly caused it to be signified that we should make no obeisance except to the King in person, and your officers had acquiesced in this arrangement: this was an act of gratuitous rudeness. I beg that the Saré-d’haugyi may be reprimanded. The list of the Governor-General’s presents was read along with the list of presents from Saubwas and others. There was great impropriety in this, which cannot escape yourselves. I mention all these matters, that they may never happen again. I am
convinced they were unknown to his Majesty, or they would not have occurred now.

BURMESE: It is the uniform custom of the country, in the case of embassies from China, Cochin China, and Siam, that the ambassadors dismount at the corner of the palisade. All these points of etiquette are settled by the King’s order. There was no intentional disrespect in the present case. All the Government officers desired to treat the ambassadors handsomely. So far as the Saré-d’haugyi has behaved improperly and disrespectfully, it is his own affair, and we will take measures for seeing him punished.

Arrangements were after this made for visits to be paid by us to the Heir-apparent, the Prince of Sarawadi, and the Queen’s brother: the first on the twenty-third; and the other two, successively on the following days.

October 23, 1826

We were presented this forenoon to the Heir-apparent, and conveyed from the steam-vessel by the King’s boats, in the same manner as upon the occasion of our audience of his Majesty. Mr. Lanciego, who was now restored to the King’s favour, conducted us to the young Prince: this was an arrangement made to obviate the chance of our being incommoded in matters of ceremony, by the officiousness of the Than-d’hau-gans or others. The Prince’s palace, if I may use such a word for a very homely dwelling, was in the inner town, a few hundred yards from the south-west angle of the palace enclosure. We rode thither on horseback, declining the incommodious and shabby conveyance by elephants, which was again tendered to us. Besides our own horses, a number were supplied sufficient for the accommodation of our principal attendants. At the dwelling of the Heir-apparent, we were received in a Rung, or open hall, where we were not detained above twenty minutes, when we were formally summoned, by a written order, into his Highness’s presence. We ascended a short flight of wooden steps, at the bottom of which we took off our shoes, and were ushered into a hall filled with a crowd of well-dressed chiefs, wealthy natives, and some of the principal Mohammedan and Chinese merchants. The floor was spread with carpets, and we
were requested to seat ourselves immediately in front, and within a few yards of the throne prepared for his Highness. In a few minutes the folding-doors behind the throne were thrown open, and the Prince was seen in an adjoining chamber seated upon a gilt couch, cross-legged, and under a pair of mirrors. This was intended for effect, and was certainly not unsuccessful. In a few minutes he got up, with a sword in his hand, walked briskly forward, and seated himself on the throne in the front hall. He was very richly dressed in a vest of gold brocade, with a turban of gold-sprigged muslin. He wore two or three necklaces: one of these was a good string of pearls; and another a necklace of rubies, chiefly composed of small stones, but having in the centre one jewel of this class of very large size, and to all appearance, of considerable value. His fingers were covered with rings, chiefly rubies and diamonds. The sword-scabbard was also richly studded with the same gems. The throne was a couch highly ornamented, and was a handsome piece of furniture. The Prince was a fine lad of about fourteen, and had hitherto evinced a kind and mild disposition. He was much agitated, but notwithstanding acted his part with great propriety. Behind him there was a crowd of women of all ages, some of them his attendants, but the greater number the wives and daughters of chiefs who had come from curiosity. Among them was to be distinguished an elderly and venerable matron, the nurse of the Prince, whose countenance and demeanour evinced the utmost anxiety for her charge's success in this exhibition before strangers. He put the two following questions to us, for which he had evidently been prepared, in a voice which showed that the age of manhood had not yet arrived: “How long have you been on your voyage from Rangoon? Are the ambassadors all in good health?”

The list of our presents was read. The Prince accepted and ordered them to be taken away. Several other persons present also made offerings to his Highness. Betel, tobacco, and lapet, were presented early, and in due course, refreshments of fruits and sweetmeats. The Prince had his Wun, or Minister, who of course was the chief person. Through him we were told that we were at liberty to put any questions to his Highness which we might think proper. It was suggested that the Prince’s age would be a proper one, and this was asked accordingly: we took occasion to follow it up by some personal compliments to his Highness, which we were
given to understand would be expected. Before retiring, the Prince
directed presents to be made to us: these consisted of a piece of
silk and a lackered box to each of the gentlemen, an additional box
and a small ruby-ring being added to mine, to which was
afterwards joined a Burman saddle, given to the Prince at the
moment for this purpose by one of the chiefs. We retired soon after
this, and returned home. In the court, before the Prince’s house,
there was an exhibition of dancing-girls and puppets, both as we
entered and retired, and the din of Burman music was
uninterrupted from the moment of our arrival until that of our
departure. The issue of this visit was gratifying to us, and, I am
told, gave satisfaction to the Heir-apparent and his friends. In the
way of ceremonial, we complied voluntarily with every thing that
was proper or even expected of us, and the public officers found
that their officiousness was superfluous when we were left to
ourselves.

Through the influence of his step-mother, the Prince’s
establishment is at present kept upon a very humble footing.
Through the same influence, still more than on account of his
youth, he as yet occupies no ostensible place under Government,
and is only called Heir-apparent by courtesy; not having yet been
invested with the title, which is the practice of the Burman
Government. The proper title of the Heir-apparent of the Burman
Empire is Ing-she-men, which literally means “lord of the east
house,” but the origin of this title I have not been able to ascertain.
The present Prince is sometimes called Rung-ran-men, or “lord of
Rungran,” which is the name of the district assigned to him for his
support; but the most common name by which he is known is
Sakya-men (Sakya is a Burman or rather Pali corruption of the
Sanscrit word Cha-kra, a wheel or circle; and hence, according to
the Buddhists, the universe, or the system of the world), which the
Burmans translate “lord of the world.” In consequence of some
auspicious prodigies which took place at his birth, particularly an
earthquake, his great-grandfather, the late King, thought himself
justified in giving him this name. The more credulous among the
Burmans interpreted the omen and title literally, and did not
hesitate to believe that he was doomed to be the future conqueror
of Hindostan, and that it was especially his destiny to destroy the
British Empire in that country! Some of his followers spoke openly
to Mr. Judson on the subject, when the latter, not knowing his
person, one day inquired who the young Prince was that was passing. “That,” said they in reply confidently, “is the Prince who is doomed to rule over all your Kula countries,” meaning the nations of Western Asia and Europe. This was little more than one year before the commencement of the late war.

In returning home, we passed through a fashionable market in the inner town, to which the wives of the Burman grandees are accustomed occasionally to resort for their amusement. As I went along, my attention was struck with the figure of a tall and venerable-looking person, whom I took at first for an Armenian, for he was in the Oriental costume. I was soon undeceived, however, by one of my companions. The individual in question was an Englishman, a native of the town of Windsor, born a gentleman, and brought up in the naval service of the East India Company. It is alleged that, for some offence against the penal law, he fled from Calcutta about forty years ago. He had ever since resided in the Burman dominions, often in situations of public trust under the Government, but now out of employ. We afterwards found that he had been waiting for hours to see us. He was imprisoned in fetters during the war, along with the other Europeans, without any charge whatsoever being made against him. His complexion alone, as in other cases, was the principal evidence upon which he was found guilty.

October 24, 1826

Our promised visit to the Prince of Sarawadi was performed this morning. We proceeded to his house, which is in the outer town, and close to the Tennasserim gate on the river face, and arrived there at about one o’clock. The fly of a large marquee was pitched in the street, and adjoining to the front of the house: this, which was laid with Chinese carpets, and where we had the convenience of benches to sit upon, served the purpose of an ante-room. In this place we were detained nearly an hour, when we were ushered into a spacious hall, a few steps raised from the ground, and forming the front part of the Prince’s palace; a tolerably good Burman wooden house, with a tiled roof, but destitute of all that appearance of neatness and propriety, which, according to our notions, is necessary to comfort or convenience. We were seated on carpets, in front of a handsome couch, which the Prince was to
occupy. He appeared, in a few minutes, by a door leading from the inner apartments. The visit, on his side, was intended to be unceremonious and friendly. He came, therefore, without any state-sword, and in a neat undress, seating himself exactly in the position we were in. He asked after the health of his Majesty the King of England, or of the Governor-General, for the expression made use of in Burman might bear either interpretation. The words were Englit-men, which may equally mean the English Ruler, or the King of England.

He asked after the health of the gentlemen of the Mission, and, as usual, very particularly concerning our ages, telling us his own age in return. He then conversed freely and cheerfully upon a variety of indifferent topics. None of the females of the Prince’s family made their appearance, and his suite was moderate in point of number, and very orderly in behaviour. Betel, tea, and refreshments were served to us, as at the Heir-apparent’s, and presents, consisting of a ruby-ring, a Chinese straw-hat, and a lackered-ware box, were made to each of the gentlemen of the Mission.

The Prince retired, and in a few minutes afterwards we came away, much pleased with our reception, which was plain, unostentatious, but kind and civil. The Prince is a man of forty years of age. In person and features he much resembles the King, and is of a spare and light, but active form: his features are not handsome, but cheerful and pleasing. His manners are affable and unassuming, without being deficient in dignity. His character is that of a gay, thoughtless, and good-natured man; and in this also he resembles his Majesty; but his talents are of a somewhat higher order. He takes his title, Sarawati-men, Lord or Prince of Sarawadi, from the district which is so celebrated for its teak forests, and which is assigned to him for his revenue. He is much beloved by the King, and is his only full brother, as I have before mentioned. He is at the head of the party opposed to the Queen’s influence. During the greater part of the late war, he was commander-in-chief of the armies opposed to the English, but never did any thing to signalize himself, and, in fact, never saw an enemy. It seems, indeed, to be a maxim of Burman tactics, that the chiefs should keep at a respectable distance, and out of harm’s way, every one in the degree of his rank; and that the soldiery should be thrust forward to fight “the battles of their country,” at
the peril of military executions, without leaders, and without example. The founder of the family appears to have been a leader of a different class, however, and to have owed his success as much to his firmness and personal courage, as to his judgment and sagacity.

This was the day appointed for the ladies of the Burman grandees to pay their homage to the Queen; to make presents, and “ask pardon” for past transgressions, in the same way as their husbands had done before of his Majesty. We were anxious to see a part at least of the ceremonies of a Burmese drawing-room, and accordingly passed by the Palace on our return home. A great number of state equipages, that is to say of palanquins, were waiting at the gate, and with them the ladies’ female attendants, scarcely any of whom were admitted into the palace. These were all in dresses of ceremony for the occasion, and accommodated under temporary sheds thrown up for their reception. Some of the gentlemen who stayed longer than myself, saw a number of the ladies themselves coming out in their court-dresses; the most remarkable part of which is a kind of coronet of gold and black velvet. In all this, every thing was public, and open. The ladies wore no veils, and, in short, no attempt was made at concealment in anyway—a circumstance in the manners of the Burmans which distinguishes them in a remarkable manner from the nations of Western India, but in which they agree with the Siamese, and in a good measure with the Cochin Chinese also. I am not sure, after all, that the Burmese ladies gain much by this freedom, for I strongly suspect that the sex is upon the whole treated with less delicacy and consideration than in Mohammedan and Hindu countries, where the most absolute seclusion is insisted upon.

**October 25, 1826**

Our public visits were nearly completed this morning, by our introduction to the Queen’s brother. The dwelling of this personage, who in consequence is beyond all comparison the first subject of the Burman Government, is in the inner town, a short distance beyond the palace. This is a good house of brick and lime, with a spacious and convenient court in front. Our reception here was far more splendid than at the palaces of the Heir-apparent and the Prince of Sarawadi, and it was evident that the owner had the
key of the royal treasury at his command. A tent pitched in the street in front of the house served as an ante-room, but instead of benches, we had European chairs to sit upon. We were not detained here above twenty minutes, when we were ushered into the hall prepared for our accommodation: this was the front part of the house. The verandah, or front gallery, through its whole length was shaded by a canopy of scarlet broadcloth, which threw the most singular shade upon every object within, making the candles especially appear as if a phosphorescent light issued from them. At one end of the hall, the King's numerous band of dancing-women, richly and most fancifully attired, was playing; the players were all young females, and some of them very handsome. Two dancing-women, still more richly dressed than the rest, one in male and the other in female attire, were in advance, acting a kind of Burman opera. The hall was crowded with chiefs, and towards the back part of it were a number of their wives and daughters. The Queen's brother himself made his appearance almost immediately. A richly decorated couch, on which he commonly sits, was at the back of the hall; but instead of occupying it, he placed himself upon the floor, on the lowest of two cushions, and exactly upon a level with us. His attitude was the most respectful possible: he was upon his knees, resting himself upon his heels, so as effectually to keep the soles of his feet out of view—a point of indispensable etiquette towards visitors of any respectability. We were quite unprepared for so much condescension. We had reckoned at least upon a cold and haughty demeanour, and even thought it possible that the favourite might display some of the assumption of an upstart, but were agreeably disappointed. His wife and daughter followed him into the hall, and seated themselves to his right hand, but farther back. The daughter was a very handsome young woman, about seventeen or eighteen years of age, and understood to be engaged in marriage to the Prince of Mendong, a half-brother of the King. He asked the same question respecting his Majesty or the Governor-General, which had been put at the Palace, and by the Prince of Sarawadi. It appeared to me at the time, and since, that the form of expression was previously studied and concerted between the parties. He then asked if we were pleasantly situated, begged to know the ranks of the different gentlemen as connected with the Mission, and what particular appointment I held myself, before coming as Envoy to
the Court. After ordering refreshments for us, he retired for a short time, politely intimating that he wished to remove all constraint and put us at our ease while we were taking our repast, as he was aware that the position we were in was unusual and inconvenient to us. The chief returned in a short time, renewed his conversation, and then finally withdrew; informing us, that if we wished to view the spectacle exhibiting in the area, we should find chairs and refreshments ready for us under a shed. In passing through the court-yard, on our departure, we stopped for a few minutes, from motives of civility, to see an exhibition of dancing-women. Two of the King’s *corps de ballet* were performing, considered the first dancers in the kingdom. They displayed great agility in their way: sometimes they bent their body backwards in such a manner as to touch the ground with the head, and without any assistance from the hands to recover the erect position; but their movements were violent, their gestures ungraceful, and sometimes a little indecent. They sung while they danced, and in both respects seemed as if they were performing for a wager. The presents given to us upon this occasion were to each a small ruby-ring, a broad-brimmed straw hat, not unlike a lady’s Leghorn bonnet, and a handsome bamboo betel-box, of Shan or Lao manufacture.

This chief commonly goes under the name of Men-tha-gyi, which may be rendered “the great Prince.” This does not seem to be a title but an epithet bestowed upon him by common consent through fear or flattery. The rich district of Salen is assigned to him for his subsistence, and according to the common usage he is sometimes called Salen-men, or Lord of Salen. But besides the income he derives from this estate, he has many other sources of emolument, one of the most considerable of which is a duty of one per cent. upon the whole amount of the Chinese trade. While the King’s coffers are empty, he and the Queen are known to have hoarded a considerable treasure; for her Majesty has an assignment upon the whole regular revenue derived from the Chinese trade, besides many other perquisites.

Men-tha-gyi was a few years older than the Queen, and seemed to us about seven or eight and forty years of age. His talents were not of a distinguished order, but sufficiently respectable. His exterior was that of a very ordinary person; his manners were represented as reserved, haughty, and austere. The almost unlimited power he possessed, had, it is alleged, been often
exercised in deeds of oppression, injustice, and cruelty. One striking example of this came under the immediate observation of the European prisoners of war, which was frequently mentioned to me. In the family of Men-tha-gyi, but not in his seraglio, there was a handsome young woman of the Cassay nation: she and a young man of the same tribe, also in the family, had formed an attachment for each other. Men-tha-gyi, who had some pretensions to the young woman’s person himself, would not permit their union. The young people eloped, but no person dared to afford them an asylum. They were pursued, arrested, and brought back. The young man was imprisoned in five pair of shackles, put into the stocks, and finally starved to death. When he screamed from pain and suffering, he was beaten by the gaolers; and after six weeks’ endurance, his existence was terminated by a few blows of a mallet over the head and breast. Men-tha-gyi, as the gaolers stated, watched and directed his torture and punishment. The young woman disappeared, and had never since been heard of. This, according to the information of the gaolers, was the second case of the same nature which had occurred. The first took place at Amarapura, about three years before. Men-tha-gyi, before the elevation of his sister, is alleged to have exercised the very humble occupation of a fishmonger: the Queen’s mint is even said to have carried a basket of fish upon her head, in the exercise of a still humbler branch of the same calling.

On our return home, we visited the King’s pagoda and his water-palace, by special leave. The pagoda is one of the few which resemble in architecture those of Siam. The central building is of solid masonry, with pillars half European and half Hindustani. The materials are excellent, the plaster being almost as smooth, white, and shining as marble. All this excited a suspicion that the workmanship was exotic, and, on inquiry, we ascertained that the architect was a Hindoo from Madras. The same artist, we also discovered, had constructed the handsome terrace of the palace before mentioned. His Majesty is delighted with the temple, and considers it a chef-d’œuvre of art. About the central building there is a quadrangular area, surrounding which, and of the same form, there is a covered gallery opening inwards, and having the outer wall covered with drawings as rude as possible. These, which are called “Siamese paintings” by the Burmans, represent the Buddhist Hell and all its punishments; the Heaven of the Nats;
but, above all, the birth, education, adventures, and death of Gautama. Each group has one very necessary accompaniment,—a written description telling what it represents. For the satisfaction of the Oriental Mythologist, I give the following translations of some of these descriptions.

A representation of the birth of the deity, on the way to De-wa-da-ha, near the Long-pa-ni forest; his mother, the Queen Thi-ri-maha-ma-ya, wife of Thod-da-da-na, King of Kap-pi-la-wat, standing upright, and holding a branch of a tree with one hand, and her younger sister with the other; four Brahmas (superior celestial beings) receiving him in a net of gems, and four Kings of Nats (inferior celestial beings) performing the same ceremony with a black leopard’s skin, and a silk web of earthly manufacture. He instantly takes seven steps to the north, and utters three words.

A representation of the ‘divine infant’ receiving a visit from the hermit Ka-la-de-wi, when he placed his feet on the hermit’s head, and forced act of an homage from his father, the King.

A representation of his marriage with his cousin, Ya-than-da-ya, daughter of Thop-pa-bud-d’ha, King of De-wa-da-ha; the splendid reception of the bride, and the commencement of felicity, which, though human, rivalled that of the Nats.

A representation of the Prince in his royal chariot, noticing the four omens, thrown in his way by supernatural agency, viz. an old man, a sick man, a dead man, and a priest, from a view of which he first conceived an idea of the vanity of worldly enjoyment, and the necessity of providing for a future state of existence.

A representation of the Prince viewing the sprawling indelicate postures of his sleeping concubines, at which he took such disgust, that without even looking at his sleeping son, Pa-hu-la, reposing in the arms of his wife, he renounced all sensual indulgences, and all social affections, and fled into the forest.
A representation of his combat with Mar Nat, the chief evil spirit, who undertook to oppose his holy undertaking.

A representation of the homage he received from all the celestial host, in consequence of the sacrifices he made, and the victory he obtained.

A representation of his performing austerities six years in the forest of U-ru-we-la.

A representation of the throne of deification which sprung up under the sacred fig-tree.

A representation of the Prince ascending the throne, gaining a final victory over Mar Nat, the chief evil spirit, and all his legions, and obtaining the state of a deity (or becoming god, Bura-tha-ken).

A representation of the homage paid him by all the celestial powers, on his becoming a deity.

A representation of his remaining seven days on the throne of deification.

A representation of three daughters of Mar Nat tempting the deity.

A representation of the King of the Nats erecting a tank for the deity to wash his garments in, with a flat rock to dry them on.

A representation of the deity exhibiting himself in the air, half-fire and half-water, to the conviction of all rational beings.

A representation of the deity’s journey to Heaven, which he performed by setting his right foot on the summit of Mount Yu-gan-to, and his left on the summit of Mount Meru.
A representation of the deity’s descent from Heaven, accompanied by the celestial host, by a triple stair created for the occasion; the portion on the right hand being of gold, that on the left of silver, and that in the middle of ruby.

Here, as in almost all the modern Burman temples I have seen, the fanes containing the principal images of Buddha are of carved wood, gilt all over. Within the area was pointed out to us a circular fabric with a domed roof: this was the library of the temple, but the doors being shut, and none of the attendants at hand, we were unable to gain admission. Judging from this specimen of the Burman temples, and what I had before seen, I have no scruple in considering that they are generally inferior to those of Siam, both in magnitude and splendour: the images especially are much fewer and smaller. I had not yet seen a single statue in brass, nor do I believe the art of casting them in metal is known to the Burmans, although daily practised by the Siamese. This, however, is accounted for by the abundance of fine white marble of which the Burmans are possessed, and of which their best statues are formed. The richly carved wood of the doors, windows, and roofs of the Siamese temples constitutes their best ornament. In the Burman temples there is nothing comparable to it. While the Siamese are spacious buildings, open, diversified, and richly ornamented within, the majority of the modern temples of Ava are but solid masses of brick and mortar, presenting nothing but a mere exterior to gratify curiosity. I may take this opportunity of observing, that the Burman priests seem to be less numerous than those of Siam: it is not to be inferred from this, however, that the Burmans are less pious than their neighbours. This fact, and the inferiority of the temples, is to be accounted for by the religious charity of the two people being somewhat differently directed. For every temple in Siam there seemed to be twenty in Ava. None but the rich and powerful build temples in the first, and the inferior classes are satisfied with making contributions to the edifices constructed by their superiors. Here, therefore, large temples only are constructed. In Ava every petty chief builds his own temple, and deems this, and not the endowment of monasteries, the principal road to salvation. In Siam, a monastery is a necessary appendage to a temple. In Ava, the monasteries and temples are separate and distinct, and those who have power over the wealth of
the country alone can endow the former. In Siam it is the fashion for every male inhabitant to enter the priesthood once in his life, however short the period. This custom does not exist among the Burmans.

On our return home from our visit to the Queen’s brother, we inspected what is called his Burmese Majesty’s Water-palace. It is a splendid bauble, composed of two long vessels, joined together by a platform, the prow and stern of each representing a fabulous animal, richly carved and ornamented. Over the vessels there is a house of several apartments, the hall of audience containing the throne, being in front. The many-storied roof of the house is covered with plates of tin, and terminates in a spire of fifteen or sixteen feet high. The exterior of the vessels, the house and spire, are all richly gilt. The whole length of the Palace is one hundred and two feet, and its greatest breadth, including a gallery overhanging the vessels all round, forty-four feet. The Wun-dauk of his Majesty’s fleet, a person of no small consequence, accompanied us for the purpose of showing the Palace. This person is the Admiral of all his Majesty’s boats, whether of war or accommodation. He informed us that he had a population of fifty thousand persons at his disposal, by which we understood the whole number of inhabitants assigned for the maintenance of the establishment, including those appropriated for the pensions or salaries of the chiefs. The actual number of boats belonging to the King amounts, I am told, to about one thousand.

October 26, 1826

The conference, which had ben appointed for to-day was put off in consequence of the death of the first Atwen-wun’s chief wife, which took place on the night of the 24th. This was intimated to us yesterday, on our return from our visit to the Queen’s brother. We sent compliments of condolence to the Atwen-wun, and hearing that it would be well taken, proposed to appear at the funeral; which, according to custom, was to be a public one, and attended by all the principal officers of Government. The place where funeral ceremonies are performed, is to the west of the city, close to the river-side, and not above three-quarters of a mile from our dwelling. About eleven o’clock, word was sent that the procession had left the city, and we proceeded to meet it. A convenient and
comfortable open shed had been spread with carpets, and here we found chairs ready for ourselves, and some chiefs of rank, the principal of whom were the Atwen-wun Maong-za, the Kyi-wun, and the Myo-lat-wun. The procession passed close to the shed, and the Burman chiefs politely explained to us the nature of the ceremony. The following was the order in which it advanced;—The insignia of the Atwen-wun were borne in front; then came presents for the priests, and alms to be distributed amongst the beggars, consisting of sugar-cane, bananas, and other fruits, with ready-made garments. A shabby elephant, on which was mounted an ill-looking fellow dressed in red, followed these. The man in red had in his hands a box, intended to carry away the bones and ashes of the deceased. This, it seems, is an ignominious office, performed by a criminal, who is pardoned for his services. Even the elephant is thought to be contaminated by being thus employed, and for this reason an old or maimed one is selected, which is afterwards turned loose into the forest. A band of music followed the elephant; after which came a long line of priestesses, of nuns, all old and infirm; then came ten or twelve young women, attendants of the deceased, dressed in white, and carrying her insignia. The state palankeens of the deceased and her husband; the bier; the female relations of the family, carried in small litters, covered with white cloths; the husband and male relations on foot, dressed in white, followed in order. The Queen’s aunt; the wives of the Wungyis, the Atwen-wuns, and Wun-dauks, with other females of distinction, closed the procession. The body was conveyed to a broad and elevated brick terrace, where it was to be burnt. We assembled on this to see the ceremonies to be performed. The coffin, which was very splendid, was stripped of the large gold plates with which it was ornamented, and the class of persons, whose business it is to burn the bodies of the dead, were seen busy in preparing the materials of the funeral-pile. This is a class hereditarily degraded, living in villages apart from the rest of the inhabitants, and held to be so impure that the rest of the people never inter-marry with them. By the common people they are called Thuba-raja, the etymology of which is uncertain; but their proper name is Chandala, pronounced by the Burmans Sandala. This is obviously the Sanscrit name of the Hindoo outcasts. The Chandalas, united with the lepers, beggars, and coffin-makers, are under the authority of a Wun, or governor; hence called Le-so-wun, or
Governor of the Four Jurisdictions. He is also occasionally called A'-rwat-wun, which may be translated, “governor of the incurables.” This person is by no means himself one of the outcasts, but, on the contrary, a dignitary of the state. This abominable institution is rendered still more completely so by the mode in which the officer in question is rewarded for his services. Like all other public functionaries, he has no avowed salary, but draws his subsistence from the narrow resources of the degraded classes whom he rules. The villages of the lepers, beggars, and burners of the dead, are assessed by him in the usual manner; and being invested with the administration of justice over these outcasts, he draws the usual perquisites from this resource. A considerable source of profit to him also is the extortion practised upon the more respectable part of the community, under pretext of their labouring under some incurable and contagious disease. The scar of an old sore or wound will often be sufficient pretext to extort money from the individual marked with it, to enable him to escape from being driven from society. If a wealthy individual have a son or daughter suffering from leprosy, or a disease which may be mistaken for it, he will have to pay dearly to avoid being expelled, along with his whole family, from the city. The Chandalas, or burners of the dead, were represented to me as having originated in criminals condemned to death, but having their punishment commuted. They differ from the Taong-m’hu, or executioners, in this,—that the punishment of the former descends to their posterity; whereas, that of the latter is confined to the individual. In a short time the mourners, consisting of the female relations and servants of the deceased, sat down at the foot of the coffin, and began to weep and utter loud lamentations. Their grief, however, was perfectly under control; for they ceased, as if by word of command, when the religious part of the ceremony commenced. It sometimes happens, I am told, that when the families of the deceased have few servants or relations, hired mourners are employed for the occasions.

The first part of the office of the Chandalas was to open the coffin, turn the body prone,—bend back the lower limbs,—place six gilded billets of wood under its sides, and four over it. The Rahans, or priests, had hitherto neither joined the procession nor taken any share in the funeral rites, but were assembled in great numbers under a shed at no great distance. The high priest, or Sare-d’hau,
and another priest, now came forward, and along with the husband took in their hands the end of a web of white cloth, of which the other was affixed to the head of the coffin. They sat down, and the friends and principal officers of Government joined them. The priest, followed by the assembly with their hands joined, muttered the following prayer, or creed, viz.:— “We worship Buddha;” “We worship his law;” “We worship his priests;” and then repeated the five commandments—“Do not kill;” “Do not steal;” “Do not commit adultery;” “Do not drink the wine.” The husband poured water upon the cloth from a cocoa-nut shell, pronouncing, after the priest, these words: “Let the deceased, and all present, partake of the merit of the ceremonies now performing.” The assembly pronounced the words, “We partake;” or, “We accept.” The pouring of water upon the ground is considered by the Burmans the most solemn vow. It is as if it were calling the earth to witness, or rather the guardian Nat, or tutelary spirit of the place, who, is it supposed, will hold the vow in remembrance, should men forget it. Two other priests followed the first, repeating the same, or similar prayers and ceremonies. After this, the company retired to some distance, and fire was set to the funeral pile. Notwithstanding the pomp and parade of this ceremony, it was, upon the whole, not solemn, and indeed in all respects scarcely even decorous. The persons not immediately concerned in the performance of the funeral-rites, laughed and talked as at a common meeting; and the solemnity of the occasion seemed to affect no one beyond the husband, the son, and the female relations. The spectators in general seemed to view the ceremony with some vanity, as a grand national and religious display, but nothing farther. Even the husband, who shed some tears, was not altogether insensible to the pomp and circumstance of the occasion. He turned round to me, and said,

Have you examined my wife’s paraphernalia? There they are behind you; I beg you to look at them. They were all bestowed upon her by the glorious King.

The high-priest, while he was still sitting on the ground, and when he had hardly done with the prayer, turned round, upon observing us, laughed very heartily, and said unconcernedly, “Who are these strangers?” Kaulen Mengyi, the virtual first Minister, who took an
active share in the ceremony throughout, told him who we were, styling him “my Lord.” He retired without saying any thing; for to betray curiosity or interest in any temporal matter is considered beneath the rank, and contrary to the duty of the priesthood, who are to be supposed constantly engaged in religious meditation, and holding the vanities of the world in contempt.

After the pile was ignited, we retired to the shed where refreshments were provided for us, and where we were obliged to stay for an hour, until the burning of the body was completed. During the ceremony, we were introduced to the Wungyi Kaulen Mengyi, and the Atwen-wun Ma-ongza. The latter was a highly respectable and intelligent individual. He had acquired some knowledge of geography, and a considerable stock of information upon general questions, chiefly from the conversation of the American missionaries. He spoke familiarly of the Grand Lama, and the Buddhism of the nations to the north of Hindostan. Having never before heard that the followers of Gautama to the eastward were aware of the existence of a form of worship similar to their own among the Tartar nations, I inquired into the sources of his knowledge: they were entirely derived from European information; and he mentioned to me the mission of Captain Turner to Thibet, quoting the Burman year in which it had taken place. Among those who gave us their company under the shed, was an officer called Myo-lat-wun, or “governor of vacant governments;” rather a lucrative office, from the frequent removals which are made. This personage, a corpulent and good-natured-looking man, was husband to the nurse of the little Princess, the King and Queen’s only child, and hence his promotion. He had been engaged in the military operations against the English, and entered into conversation with Mr. Montmorency on the subject, who found him a great boaster. He said, for example, that he himself was a match for three Englishmen! I inquired, after coming home, into the achievements of this worthy, and found that he had made but a sorry figure in the war. In one of the engagements before Rangoon, he was among the fore-most to run away, and is said to have saved his life by hiding himself for two or three days in a dry well. He was consequently in disgrace at Court for many months, but had lately been restored to favour on account of his connexion.

October 28, 1826
From our first arrival at Ava, we were very desirous of occupying a good, comfortable stone and lime house at Sagaing, on the right bank of the river, and fronting the town and palace: this was the property of Dr. Price; and while that gentleman was at Rangoon, as already mentioned, an arrangement had been made with him for occupying it, and a formal engagement entered into, money having been advanced for its repair. Every obstacle however was thrown in our way by the Burman Government, from what motive it is difficult to say. We at length acquiesced in the objections made, and arrangements were nearly completed for extending and rendering more convenient our present habitation. Two days ago, however, the Burman Government changed Its mind, and of its own accord, proposed our immediately occupying the house at Sagaing. The King was extremely desirous of seeing the steam-vessel under weigh, and I have no doubt this was one motive for accommodating us. He was incognito in his water-palace as the vessel passed up this morning, and had a good view of her. To give her as respectable an appearance as possible, she was decked out with a variety of flags and colours, and the European guard was drawn out on the poop, with side-arms only; for a particular request had been made that they should dispense with their fire-arms; such is the effeminacy and distrust of the Court! In the course of the afternoon we took possession of our new dwelling, which we found, upon the whole, convenient and comfortable.

**October 29, 1826**

We paid a visit this morning to the widow of the King’s father, a prince who died as heir-apparent, and never came to the throne. He was the same person so frequently mentioned in the Journals of Colonel Symes and Captain Cox. He had married first the younger, and after her death the elder of two sisters, his own relations. The King was born of the first marriage. His second wife, of whom I am now speaking, was therefore at once aunt and step-mother to his Majesty. This personage was possessed of no political influence, but was treated with respect, and was wealthy; her dwelling was the best wooden-house we had seen; she was entitled to have it gilded, a royal privilege, but had not gone to this expense. We were received under, a tent pitched for the occasion;
after waiting in which for a few minutes, we were ushered into a spacious hall, supported by thirty-two wooden pillars, forming a kind of portico to the main house. At the back of this was the partition which divided the hall from her Majesty's apartments. In this, and at the elevation of six or seven feet from the floor, there was a window with gilded shutters: these were soon thrown open, and showed us the Princess sitting as if it were in a niche, a venerable and respectable-looking person, about sixty years of age. None of her relations or attendants appeared, but in the same apartment with us was her son, the Prince of Men-dong, whom I mentioned as being engaged to marry the daughter of the Queen’s brother, with three or four of her grandchildren, boys from four to six years of age. The youngest of these was son to the late Prince of Tongo, a full brother of the King, who died during the war. This child, after the Ing-she-men, or heir-apparent, was next heir to the throne. The Princess put to us the very same questions, and in the same words, as we had been asked at the heir-apparent’s, the Prince of Sarawadi’s, and the Queen’s brother’s. Betel, Burman tea, and refreshments were also brought to us in the same manner. She accepted our presents, and presented each of us in return with a ruby-ring, a lacker-ware box, and two pieces of silk. The visit was not very interesting. The attendance of persons of rank was very small, and none of the officers of Government appeared, except those expressly directed to accompany us.

Dr. Wallich and I walked this morning to the village of Kyauk-Sit (stone-cutters), situated about three miles to the north-west of Sagaing. This is the place at which the marble images of Gautama are manufactured for the whole kingdom. There are about thirty sheds, or manufactories, and at each we generally saw about ten or twelve statues either finished or in progress. The range of hills close at hand, although composed of marble, does not afford any fit for statuary, and the material is brought from a place called Sakyin, where there is an entire hill of pure white marble: this is ten miles distant from the eastern bank of the Irawadi, and forty miles, or twenty taings, above Ava. The blocks of marble, rough-hewn generally into the form necessary to make a figure of Buddha in the sitting posture, are conveyed to the Irawadi by land-carriage. From hence they are brought to Sagaing by water, and from this again by land to the place where the manufacture has been conducted,—from time immemorial:—the
only reason assigned to us for incurring so heavy and unnecessary an expense in conveyance. Our inquiries respecting the marble quarries furnish a remarkable instance of the difficulty of getting precise and accurate information among a people so incurious in such matters as the Burmans. Sometimes we were told that the quarries were fifty miles distant from Ava; but no one could tell the name of the place. At other times we were confidently informed that they were in the range of the Sagaing hills, two or three miles distant only. With this last impression, we arrived at the place of manufacture; and it was not until we had conversed with those immediately concerned in the business, that we learnt the truth.

The statuary marble used by the Burmans is a primitive limestone; it is large-grained and highly chrystalized; its colour is a snow-white, with a semi-translucency, and it is capable of receiving a high polish; it is devoid of fissures, and free from streaks and all discolouration. Some of the fragments which we examined in the shops contained a few rare particles of mica; and the manufacturers informed us, that now and then they found in it an ore, which they said was that of lead; but they could not supply us with any specimens. The means used for cutting and fashioning the marble into statues are extremely rude: they consist of an iron chisel, or rather punch, and a wooden-mallet. The prominent parts are smoothed down by the successive use of bits of sandstone, of various degrees of fineness; and the last polish is given with a soft stone, which I believe to be a clay-iron ore. This last part of the operation is very successfully performed by the Burmans. In every other respect, the statues are as rudely fashioned as possible. They are almost all in the same attitude: the form and position of the limbs are the same; the head and features are the same; and there is no room in any respect for the display of taste, fancy, or talent, the whole operation being purely mechanical, and this of the lowest order. The statues of Buddha, in the ancient temples of Java, sculptured of the inferior material of trap-rock, are Grecian forms in comparison to the Burman images. The largest block of marble which we measured was five cubits long by three broad, and its thickness about a cubit and a half. Statues are manufactured of all sizes, from this down to a few inches in length. A block of marble, two cubits long, was valued to us, at the place of manufacture, at fifteen ticals. Another rough block, measuring in
length three cubits, was valued at twenty-five ticals, and when sculptured would cost eighty.

**October 31, 1826**

I made an excursion this morning into the range of hills immediately behind our residence, accompanied by Dr. Wallich. Our walk took us three hours, in which time we ascended to the tops of some of the hills composing the range, and examined several of the quarries from which limestone is extracted for burning. As far as we could determine, every part of the range is marble. At the foot, and close to the river, the rock contains, embedded, hornblende and serpentine. This, which from its situation is most easily obtained, affords lime of inferior quality. The quarries towards the top of the ridge exhibit nothing but white marble, in a high state of crystallization, and with few extraneous ingredients. It is however in small blocks, often undergoing decomposition, and its colour is less pure than that of the statuary marble brought from a distance: it makes the best lime, which is sold on the spot unslaked, at the rate of twenty ticals of coarse silver for two thousand viss, or about eleven shillings and fourpence per ton. The quantity manufactured is very great, chiefly for the construction of temples. With these the hills are crowded to an inconceivable extent.

Two days ago, we had crossed the Irawadi to its eastern bank, where there is a rocky promontory, called Shwé-kyet-ret ("where the golden fowl scratches"), with some spacious temples built upon it. This exactly fronts the termination of the ridge of Sagaing hills, which is also a bluff promontory; the river between them being very narrow, not, I suppose, exceeding nine hundred yards in breadth. From this spot there is a fine view, at once of Ava and Amarapura; affording, with a long reach of the river and the high range of mountains to the north, a landscape which is extensive, picturesque, and beautiful. The promontory on the eastern bank, which does not appear to be connected with any range of hills on the same side of the river, is, like the Sagaing hills, composed of marble; but it differs in its composition from any limestone we observed on the western side, being tough, hard, and containing, besides hornblende and serpentine, a great deal of disseminated mica, and some embedded crystals of feldspar. We
made particular inquiry of the miners and lime-burners respecting ores and fossil remains, but could not learn that they ever met with any. The limestone rock, at no place which we had yet examined, bore any appearance of stratification. Both at the bottom and top of the range, it is generally in a state of disintegration, and on the surface under-going considerable decomposition.

The rain which fell on the 17th, 18th, and 19th, caused the river to swell greatly, and it rose between two and three feet. It did not begin to subside again till the 26th, but since that time it fell rapidly. The cold season may be calculated to have commenced on the latter day, when we had the first morning fog, and the thermometer fell to 72°. At day-break, it was now so chill, that the protection of a blanket became necessary. Through the day it was still warm, and the thermometer rose to 84 at two o’clock. The weather was calm, the sky serene and cloudless. At night heavy dews fell.

November 2, 1826

On the 30th ult. the King and Queen, with the principal part of the Court, made a visit to a celebrated Pagoda, at Amarapura, leaving, as was customary upon such occasions, her Majesty’s brother in charge of the town and palace, as being the individual most in the confidence of the King. Their Majesties returned very late at night, and the great officers who ought to have received them, were not, it would appear, sufficiently alert: they expected the royal party to return by water, and arrangements were made accordingly; but, contrary to expectation, it returned by land. For this faux pas, three Wungyis, all the Wundauks and Atwenwuns, were put into the common prison, in three pair of irons: they were liberated the following morning, at the intercession of Kaulen Mengyi, who happened not to be inculpated. The old Governor of Bassein, and the Chief of the Guard of Swordsmen, when they called upon us after this affair, spoke freely upon the subject, laughed very heartily at the mishap of the Ministers, and seemed to consider the punishment as a very proper, necessary, and suitable one.

I learnt last night, from good authority, that the Court Historiographer had recorded in the National Chronicle his account of the war with the English. It was to the following
purport;—In the years 1186 and 87, the Kula-pyu, or white strangers of the West, fastened a quarrel upon the Lord of the Golden Palace. They landed at Rangoon, took that place and Prome, and were permitted to advance as far as Yandabo; for the King, from motives of piety and regard to life, made no effort whatever to oppose them. The strangers had spent vast sums of money in their enterprise; and by the time they reached Yandabo, their resources were exhausted, and they were in great distress. They petitioned the King, who, in his clemency and generosity, sent them large sums of money to pay their expenses back, and ordered them out of the country.

**November 3, 1826**

Yesterday and the day before the Burmese officers were busy in preparing a Té, or shed, on the river-side, for the conferences: their peculiar notions would not allow them to hold them at our dwelling, where there was ample room, and where all parties might have been more conveniently accommodated. At ten o’clock to-day they made their appearance, and we met them at the Té, which was not above fifty yards from our door. The Myowun, or Governor of Sagaing, a respectable and intelligent man, sat down with the other officers, without however taking any share in the discussions. The conferences commenced by the Burmese officers producing their own draft of the Commercial Treaty, which was read and briefly explained to me by Mr. Judson. In this the subject of the fourth article of the draft, heretofore discussed, and which related to the trade on the frontier, was omitted.

CRAWFURD: It is impossible for me at present to offer any opinion regarding the document now produced until a translation of it shall have been made. I beg you to furnish me with a copy, and at our next meeting the subject of it will undergo discussion.

BURMESE: We will immediately furnish the copy you require.

A copy of the draft was made and delivered. The Burman Commissioners then produced a paper, containing certain propositions of a political nature: the substance of it was briefly translated by Mr. Judson.
CRAWFURD: I request that a copy of this paper may be furnished to me, and at our next conference I will offer my sentiments on the subject of it.

BURMESE: The copy you require will be furnished accordingly. The next meeting was appointed for the 5th.

This conference, although little was done except reading two short papers, occupied about three hours, owing to the time taken up in copying the latter; for with the Burmans, as well as most other Oriental people, writing is a tedious process, and the expedition and expertness with which European manuscripts are transcribed is a matter of wonder to them. I omitted to mention, that at all our former meetings, several spies had been present from the different parties of the Palace, not so much to watch our proceedings as the conduct of their own officers. All public matters are discussed by the Burmans with open doors; a feature of their despotic Government not very easily explained, but I imagine chiefly owing to apathy and carelessness, and certainly, at all events, not originating in any desire on the part of those in authority to allow the people a share in their own government. This custom gives easy admission to spies and informers. Among the worthies of this class, our officers, who were with the army, recognized one man who spoke English, and who had been discovered in our camp as a spy of the Burmese General, Bandula. His detection on this last occasion arose from the drollery of a sailor, who asked him if he would have “a glass of grog;” he forgot himself, made a distinct reply in English, and finally acknowledged himself to be a spy sent by Bandula, particularly to gain information respecting the steam-vessel, on board of which he was discovered. He received no punishment, for severities of any kind were repugnant to the feelings of the British Commander, and the enemy was too contemptible to render them necessary. On the contrary, the spy was taken into service as a groom, in which situation he continued until the army arrived at Melloon, when he quietly went over to his country men. At the conferences, his chief business seemed to be to watch the conduct of Mr. Lanciego, close to whom he placed himself, watching attentively every word that
passed between him and us; yet, I am convinced, understanding very little.

On returning home, Mr. Judson made literal translations of the Burman draft of a Commercial Treaty, and propositions. They were as follow:

Commercial Treaty

Article 1.—Peace being made between the great country governed by the English Ruler (Englit-men), the India Company’s Ruler (India Company Baren), and the great country of Ra-ta-na-pu-ra (City of Gems, Sanscrit), which rules over Thu-na-pa-ra, Tam-pa-di-pa, and many other great countries; when English merchants from the country of the English Ruler, and Burmese merchants from the country of the Burmese King, pass from one country to the other, selling and buying merchandise, the warders at the entrances and—outlets, the established gate-keepers of the country, shall make inquiry as usual, but without demanding any money; and all English merchants coming truly for the purpose of trade with merchandise, shall be suffered to pass without hinderance or molestation. The Governments of both countries, also, shall permit ships with cargoes to enter ports, and carry on trade, giving them the utmost protection and security.

Article 2.—The transportation of gold and silver from one country to the other shall not be prohibited, nor shall duties be taken on those articles. In regard to such exportation, when merchandise of use in one’s own country are brought from another country, things sold for gold and silver are to be sold, and things exchanged for piece-goods, and other articles in demand in one’s own country, are to be exchanged. And, notwithstanding the exportation of gold and silver has always been prohibited, since now the English and Burmese Governments have formed a grand

11 Crawfurd’s original note: These two words, the first applied to the region east of the Irawadi, and the second, to that west of it, are Pali corruptions of Sanscrit words, meaning, respectively, the country of gold, and the country of copper.
friendship, when English merchants come in boats and ships to Burmese ports for the purpose of trade, they shall, after paying the customary duties, sell the goods which remain, and the gold and silver for which the goods are sold, English merchants may take away. And if they wish to buy and take away goods, they shall be allowed to do so. And the gold and silver taken away without prohibition shall pay no duties. When Burmese merchants also come in boats and ships to English ports for the purpose of trade, they shall, after paying the customary duties, sell the goods that remain, and take away the gold and silver for which the goods are sold, if they wish to do so. But if not, they shall be allowed to buy and take away without hinderance, and without paying duties, such piece-goods, muskets, flints, powder, and other rarities and articles of use, as they may desire.

Article 3.—Ships whose breadth of beam (entrance of the hold) is eight royal cubits of twenty English inches, and all ships of smaller size, whether Burman merchants entering an English port under the Burman flag, or English merchants entering a Burmese port under the English flag, shall be subject to no other demands besides the payment of duties and the fees on the passport at quitting, not exceeding ten ticals of inferior silver. Nor shall pilotage be demanded, unless the captain voluntarily require a pilot. However, when ships arrive, information shall be given to the officer stationed at ‘the entrance of the sea.’ In regard to vessels whose breadth of beam exceeds eight cubits, it shall, with them, be according to ancient custom.

Article 4.—English and Burmese merchants passing from one country to the other, and residing, shall, on desiring to return to their own country, be allowed to do so. They shall not be hindered from going to whatever country, and by whatever vessel, they may desire. They shall also be allowed to sell their goods and property, and take away the value, together with property unsold, wife, sons, and daughters, without hinderance, or any expense incurred.
Article 5.—English and Burmese vessels meeting with contrary winds, or sustaining damage in masts, rigging, &c. or suffering shipwreck on the shore, shall, according to the laws of charity, receive all possible assistance; and whatever property may remain, in case of shipwreck, shall be restored to the rightful owner.

Burmese Propositions:

1. According to the Royal order of the English Ruler, appointing a Commissioner, Crawfurd is a wise and distinguished man. He is to proceed to the Royal country of the most excellent glorious Burman Monarch, and respectfully there make obeisance and offer presents. And he is to discuss mercantile matters, and whatever may be suitable for discussion. Thus he is commissioned. What Crawfurd says, the English Ruler says. According to the Third Article of the Treaty of Yandabo, Aracan, Ramree, Sandoway, and Cheduba, must be given up; and according to the Sixth Article, Yé, Tavoy, Mergui, and Tennasserim, with their territories. According to the Fifth Article, also one crore of rupees must be paid. Of the crore of rupees, or, according to Burman weight, seventy-five thousand, two parts have been paid, and two parts still remain. Thus, in various points, the English Government and the Burmese Government must have formed a grand friendship. The officers of Government, also, in meeting one another, have conceived mutual love. It is suitable to take into consideration the affair of refunding the expenses. Aracan, Ramree, Sandoway, Cheduba, Ye, Tavoy, Mergui, and Tennasserim, have always belonged to the royal country. In regard to the above said towns and territories, and the business of money, since peace has taken place, measures ought not to be adopted as if the countries were at war. The ambassador Crawfurd is Commissioner and Agent of the English Ruler. There is ground here for securing in perpetuity a kind feeling between the two countries. As the officers and confidential members of the two Governments are well disposed towards one another, and exhibit proofs of
mutual affection, so it is suitable that we should appropriate
and take charge, as we have uniformly appropriated and
taken charge of old.

2.--According to the Second Article of the Treaty of Yandabo,
which requires, that if Gumbheer Singh desire to return and
remain at Munnipore, he shall do so. Gumbheer Singh shall
remain quietly and happily at Munnipore. But let him not
trespass on the city of Mwe-ren, and other cities and villages
west of the Kyen-dwen river, which are Burmese territory.
Let not officers and soldiers appointed by the Burmese
Government be stationed at Munnipore, nor officers and
soldiers appointed by the English Government. Let
Gumbheer Singh remain quietly, and take care of his own
country as he will.

November 4, 1826

This morning I rode out with Mr. Chester about four miles on the
road to Monchabo and Munnipore, passing through the range of
the Sagaing hills. These run in a direction south-east and north-
west, and are composed of two distinct ranges, with a narrow
valley intervening. The northern range is much the highest, and
some of the hills here appear about four hundred feet high. The
southern range is low, and probably does not exceed a hundred or
a hundred and twenty feet. Two days ago, the fall of the river
enabled me to examine more carefully the formation of the high
range, where it terminates on the Irawadi. The lowest rock here
was found to be mica slate. Lying over it was limestone in different
states of disintegration and decomposition. Farther up was found
variegated marble, with disseminated black and green schorl. At
the top of the hills, as I have already mentioned, the rock is a white
and highly crystallized limestone. Proceeding westward, the range
becomes gradually lower, and here is found a fine grained blue
limestone. This rock, in some situations, is in a state of complete
disintegration, appearing like a mass of dry mud and day, with
fragments of the limestone disseminated through it. Of the
southern range, the higher portion is composed also of blue
limestone; but the lower, or northern portion, towards Sagaing, is
generally a mass of sand, with a large intermixture of decomposed
limestone rock. In general, this was very soft; but in a few situations it was indurated so as to compose a silicious limestone exactly resembling that which we had found at Lungyi, and other parts of the banks of the river farther down. In one place I found a detached fragment of mica slate, but could not discover the rock itself. It is probable that the sandstone and lime rest upon it.—We found the road running through the valley a very good one, and frequented by wheel-carriages: it leads to Mengwan and Mok-sobo, called by Europeans Monchabo. The first, distant six taings, or twelve miles, from Sagaing, is celebrated for a temple of immense size, built by the late King; and the last, ten taings, is well known as the birth-place and seat of Government of Alompra. We ascended a considerable way up the higher range, from which a beautiful and magnificent prospect of the lower country is presented: this consists of the towns of Ava and Sagaing, the river with its islands, the lake Remyat-gyi’ang, with the stupendous temple of Kaong-m’hu-d’hau on its banks close below. Both ranges are covered with temples innumerable. Sometimes the sides of the decomposed rocks are excavated to the distance of twenty or thirty yards, and these shafts, cased with brick and mortar, form the principal portion of the temple, the outer wall and a portion of the roof only being visible. In one low temple of this description we found a recumbent image of Gautama, occupying the whole building, and of the enormous length of very nearly seventy-five feet, each foot measuring twelve feet. The soles were sculptured in the manner in which the foot of Guatama is always represented, with a great variety of emblematic and hieroglyphic figures. The temples and statues are generally very ill constructed: of the latter, few were of marble; and the former, although at first sight making a good appearance, were built of very crude materials, and even the most recent were often found in a state of dilapidation. The “religious merit” consists in building a huge, costly, and showy edifice: there is none, apparently, in building a durable one, and very little in repairing or restoring an old one. In the vicinity of Sagaing accordingly, there are to be seen several half-finished structures of enormous magnitude, the founders having died while they were in progress, and no one afterwards thinking it worth while to complete the work. The most remarkable example of this is in the celebrated temple at Mengwan, upon which an enormous expense was lavished, which was an object of solicitude with the
late King for half his life; but which is incomplete, because he died while it was in progress. The country through which we passed is very sterile, and without any other cultivation than fruit trees, and a few patches of cotton and pulses.

Dr. Stewart and Lieutenant Montmorency walked, through the town of Ava this morning, and encountered the procession which, once a month, at the new moon, goes about the city reading a proclamation enjoining the inhabitants to observe certain moral precepts. These, besides the five principal Buddhist commandments, recommend to parents kindness to their children, and to children duty to their parents. The very aspect of the procession announced temporal punishment to such as offended. It was led by the chief Taong-m’hu, or principal hangman, the branded old malefactor whom I have already described,—a rod in one of his hands, and a cord in the other. He was followed by a numerous band of worthies of the same profession, similarly armed. After these came a drum and two gongs, a party of the King’s guards, a led horse, an elephant carrying a herald, who read the proclamation, with three heralds on horseback. A copy of the proclamation would have been a great curiosity, but I could not obtain it.

We had heard much of a person said to be covered all over with hair, and who, it was insisted upon, more resembled an ape than a human being; a description, however, which, I am glad to say, was by no means realized by his appearance. Having expressed a curiosity to see this individual, the King politely sent him over to our dwelling some days ago, and Dr. Wallich and I took down on the spot the following account of himself and his history. His name was Shwe-Maong, and he stated himself to be thirty years of age. He was a native of the district of Maiyong-gyi, a country of Lao, situated on the Saluen, or Martaban river, and three months’ journey from Ava. The Saubwa, or chief of the country, presented him to the King as a curiosity when a child of five years of age, and he had remained in Ava ever since. His height was five feet three inches and a half, which is about the ordinary stature of the Burmese. His form was slender, if compared with the usually robust make of the Hindoo-Chinese races, and his constitution was rather delicate. In his complexion there was nothing remarkable, although upon the whole he was perhaps rather fairer than the ordinary run of Burmese. The colour of his
eyes was a dark brown, not so intense as that of the ordinary Burman. The same thing may be said of the hair of the head, which was also a little finer in texture, and less copious.

The whole forehead, the cheeks, the eyelids, the nose, including a portion of the inside, the chin—in short, the whole face, with the exception of the red portion of the lips, were covered with a fine hair. On the fore-head and cheeks this was about eight inches long; and on the nose and chin, about four inches. In colour, it was of a silvery grey; its texture was silky, lank, and straight. The posterior and interior surface of the ears, with the inside of the external ear, were completely covered with hair of the same description as that on the face, and about eight inches long: it was this chiefly which contributed to give his whole appearance at first sight an unnatural and almost inhuman aspect. He may be strictly said to have had neither eyelashes, eyebrows, nor beard, or at least they were supplanted by the same silky hair which enveloped the whole face. He stated, that when a child the whole of this singular covering was much fairer than at present. The whole body, with the exception of the hands and feet, was covered with hair of the same texture and colour as that now described, but generally less abundant: it was most plentiful over the spine and shoulders, where it was five inches long: over the breast it was about four inches: it was most scanty on the fore-arms, the legs, thighs, and abdomen. We thought it not improbable that this singular integument might be periodically or occasionally shed; and inquired, but there was no ground for this surmise;—it was quite permanent.

Although but thirty years of age, Shwe-maong had, in some respects, the appearance of a man of fifty-five or sixty: this was owing to a singularity connected with the formation of the teeth, and the consequent falling in of the cheeks. On inspecting the mouth, it was discovered that he had in the lower jaw but five teeth, namely, the four incisors and the left canine; and in the upper but four, the two outer ones of which partook of the canine form. The molares, or grinders, were of course totally wanting. The gums, where they should have been, were a hard fleshy ridge, and, judging from appearances, there was no alveolar process. The few teeth he had were sound, but rather small; and he had never lost any from disease. He stated, that he did not shed his infantine teeth till he was twenty years of age, when they were succeeded in
the usual manner by the present set. He also expressly asserted, that he never had any molares; and that he experienced no inconvenience from the want of them. The features of this individual were regular and good for a Burmese. The intellectual faculties were by no means deficient; on the contrary, he was a person of very good sense, and his intelligence appeared to us to be rather above than below the ordinary Burmese standard.

He gave the following account of the manner in which the hairy covering made its appearance. At his birth his ears aloqe were covered with hair, about two inches long and of a flaxen colour. At six years of age, hair began to grow on the body generally, and first on the forehead. He distinctly stated that he did not attain the age of puberty till he was twenty years old.

Shwe-maong was married about eight years ago, or when twenty-two years of age; the King, as he stated himself, having made him a present of a wife. By this woman he has had four children, all girls; the eldest died when three years of age, and the second when eleven months old. There was nothing remarkable in their form. The mother, rather a pretty Burman woman, came to us to-day along with her third and fourth child. The eldest, about five years of age, was a striking likeness of her mother, and a pretty interesting child, without any mal-conformation whatever, or indeed any thing to distinguish her from an ordinary healthy child. She began to teeth at the usual period, and had all her infantine teeth complete at two years of age. The youngest child was about two years and a half old, a very stout fine infant: she was born with hair within the anterior portion of the ear. At six months old it began to appear all over the ears, and at one year old on different parts of the body. This hair was of a light flaxen colour, and of a fine silky texture. When two years of age, and not until then, she got a couple of incisor teeth in each jaw, but had as yet neither canine nor molares. Shwe-maong assured us, that none of his parents or relations, and, as far as he knew, none of his countrymen, were marked like himself.

Our draftsman made very faithful sketches of the father and youngest child, to which I refer. After making the party presents, they took their leave of us, extremely, grateful for our attention. Shwe-maong, we found, had been occasionally employed by the Court as a buffoon, having been taught to imitate the antics of a monkey. For these feats, however, the poor fellow does not seem to
have been very liberally rewarded; for, to subsist himself and
family, he was obliged to betake himself to the trade of a basket-
maker, in which he was now employed. He would have turned his
monstrosity to better account in London.

November 5, 1826

The negotiation was renewed yesterday. Business was entered
upon as soon as we had taken our seats.

CRAWFURD: The draft of the treaty furnished by you at our last
meeting, has been translated. I have carefully perused it, and beg
to submit to you the following remarks. The substance of the first
article is nearly the same as that in the draft heretofore discussed.
Judging from the translation, however, it is less precisely worded.
It will, however, be easy to furnish another draft, which will meet
both our views. There is another objection: instead of the words
“English and Burman merchants,” terms must be introduced
which will include all the subjects of both nations carrying on
trade. This, in our case, is indispensable, as in commercial matters
our Government deems its subjects, of whatever denomination,
equally entitled with Englishmen to any privilege or immunity.

The second article, which in the draft hitherto discussed
related solely to the free export of gold and silver, is materially
altered, and, I have no scruple in saying, is totally inadmissible in
its present form. The permission to export gold and silver, freely
and without duty, should be absolute and subject to no condition
of buying or selling. But I more particularly allude to the last
clause, which is objectionable on the following grounds.—It is not
reciprocal, being all on your side, which is contrary to the principle
on which the negotiation has hitherto been conducted—a principle
frequently urged by yourselves. It stipulates in your behalf for the
free exportation of muskets, flints, and powder. These are not
merchandise, but munitions of war. All Governments exercise the
right of permitting or prohibiting both foreigners and their own
subjects from dealing in them, as they think proper. Your
Government does so. It prohibits the manufacture and sale of
gunpowder, saltpetre, lead, and fire-arms, even to its own subjects,
not to say to strangers. How therefore can you expect that our
Government is to permit it to you? The clause I object to stipulates
that you are not only to be permitted to export the munitions of war now enumerated, and free of duty, but, also all other articles whatsoever. You make no such stipulations for British trade; nor have we required it. Already every article you export from our country pays a smaller duty than the corresponding articles exported by us from yours; and your ships pay infinitely smaller charges. This, to say the least, leaves no room for claiming a total exemption of duties on one side, without any concession whatever being yielded to the other. With respect to your granting a free exportation of gold and silver, I beg you clearly to understand that I do not ask this as a favour, but claim it as a matter of right. The engagement for the free exportation should be reciprocal, and the benefits will be mutual. At the treaty made at Yandabo, and at the conferences which led to it, it was stipulated and agreed upon, that a commercial arrangement should be made on strict principles of reciprocity; and that British vessels should be subject to no trouble or molestation at Burman ports, to which Burman vessels were not subject in British ports. The fulfilment of this condition absolutely requires that British merchants, at Burman ports, should not be molested in disposing of their lawfully acquired property, whatever it may be, in the manner they may deem most to their own advantage. What I have now stated will, I am convinced, be sufficient to convince you of the reasonableness and propriety of my requesting that you withdraw the objectionable clause, and recast the whole article. The third article, with the exception of the verbal alteration, which I have already proposed for designating the description of merchants that are to trade on both sides, and the concluding clause, is unexceptionable. In this last, it is stated, that vessels whose breadth of beam exceeds eight cubits, shall trade, according to ancient custom. In lieu of this, I propose that the article should run, that such vessels should trade conformably to the ninth article of the Treaty of Yandabo. That article confers certain privileges on British subjects and vessels, which would be in a good measure forfeited, if the trade, as proposed in the clause inserted by you, should be put upon its ancient footing. The fourth and fifth articles are unexceptionable, and I assent to them as they stand in your draft.

These observations were produced in the form of a note, but not regularly given in as such to the Burmese officers in their own
language. It had been studied by Mr. Judson, however, before the conference; and it was read and I explained by him to the chiefs, passage by passage. Dr. Price and Mr. Lanciego lending their assistance. A long and desultory conversation ensued, which from its nature it was found wholly impracticable to take notes of. It was well ascertained that the second article of the Burmese sketch of a treaty, which was the chief subject of discussion, had been framed by the ministers of the Lut-d’hau, especially by Kaulen Mengyi. The negotiators either did not understand its purport, or feigned not to do so. I believe, however, the former; for, in the course of the discussion, they evinced, as indeed they had done on every other occasion, an extraordinary want of acquaintance with all commercial matters. Upon the remonstrance made, the clauses which related to the exportation of fire-arms, and the exemption from export duties, were expunged; and the chiefs began immediately to recast the whole treaty, carefully preserving, however, their own peculiar expressions, idioms, and circumlocutions. A new draft, thus amended, was furnished to us in the course of the sitting.

The Burman propositions were then brought forward, and the following paper, which had been prepared in the same manner as the observations upon the treaty, was read by Mr. Judson, and explained by him, Dr. Price, and Mr. Lanciego.

I caused a translation to be made of the propositions which you gave in at our last meeting. I have read them carefully, and I am now prepared to offer you my sentiments on the subject. Your proposals, as I understand them, mean that we should restore to you, without equivalent, the provinces of Aracan, Ramree, Sandaway, Cheduba, Yé, Tavoy, Mergui, and Tennasserim; and further, that we should remit the one-half crore of rupees due on the fifth article of the Treaty of Peace. You may well believe that my Government did not contemplate any such proposals when I was deputed to come to Ava; and that they did not consequently vest me with powers to enter upon a negotiation, the object of which would be to cancel some of the chief stipulations of a solemn treaty, concluded not more than four months previous to the date of the orders which sent me hither. I came here by virtue of the privilege given by the treaty to both parties, to
maintain accredited agents at the seat of each other’s Government, as well as to conclude a commercial arrangement, which, as you know, is also stipulated for by treaty. It is my duty, therefore, to inform you, that I am vested with no power to remit the payment of the money due, or to restore territory solemnly ceded by treaty. Notwithstanding this, whatever the Burmese Government has to say upon these questions, I will listen to attentively, and duly report for the consideration of my Government.

With respect to the period of paying the money which is due by you, although I am by no means authorized to remit any part of it, I am willing to take upon myself the responsibility of prolonging, for a moderate time, the period of payment stipulated for in the treaty, provided you show good and sufficient grounds which shall warrant me for taking this step; and that a commercial treaty, conformable to the spirit of the stipulation to this effect, made at Yandabo, shall be conceded on your side. But I beg you to understand, that unless such ground can be shown, and such concessions made, the money payment must be punctually liquidated according to engagement. The whole of the third instalment, as you are aware, becomes due within one hundred and ten days from this date; and I will either wait here to receive it, the period not being distant, or the British Commissioners will send ships for it from Martaban to Rangoon, with a proper officer, agreeably to the additional article of the Treaty of Yandabo.

In respect to the question of Munnipoor, Gumbheer Singh is declared by treaty to be the sovereign thereof, and the King of Ava engages ‘not to molest him, but let him remain.’ Munnipoor is therefore an independent country, and will descend as such to Gumbheer Singh and his heirs, according to the laws and usages of the Cassay people. Whatever territory belonged to Cassay before it was subjugated by the Burmans, or became tributary to them, will in justice belong to it now. If the Burmans be in actual possession of any portion of such territory, they will of course relinquish it. If Gumbheer Singh shall be found to have seized any portion of the original Burman territory, or of any state tributary to the Burmans, he must make
immediate restitution. The Burman Government is bound by the treaty not to interfere with Gumbheer Singh, or his kingdom. The British Government are not so bound; but they have no desire to interfere, and will not do so; but this is a matter which rests not with you and me, but with the Governor-General. It will be expedient towards maintaining peace and harmony between the state of Munnipore and the Government of Ava, and eventually between the latter and the British Government, that a well-defined boundary should be established between the Burmese and Cassay territories. I am prepared, therefore, to discuss with you any plan you may have in view for this purpose; or to propose one myself, should you prefer it.

The Burmese Commissioners made ample notes of the substance of the paper now addressed to them, and the following conversation took place in regard to it:

BURMESE: You state in the paper which has just been read to us, that you will either stay here for the third instalment, or, returning to Martaban, send ships for it to Rangoon. Which do you intend to do?

CRAWFURD: I will be guided in this by circumstances. If a fair and equitable arrangement be concluded conformably to the Treaty of Yandabo, I am disposed to return immediately, that I may make a report to the Governor-General.

BURMESE: Should you stay here, how long are you disposed to remain?

CRAWFURD: As long as I may find convenient. The Treaty of Yandabo provides that accredited agents shall reside at the seat of each other’s Government. I will do nothing contrary to the Treaty of Yandabo.

BURMESE: In conformity with the Treaty of Yandabo, we have withdrawn from all interference with Akobat (Cachar) and We-tha-
li (Assam). We think also that you ought to withdraw your officers from Cassay.

CRAWFURD: Have you withdrawn your troops and agents from Cassay as well as from Assam and Cachar?

BURMESE: Yes.

CRAWFURD: How do you know that there are British officers in Cassay?

BURMESE: We have received information that such is the case, from our out-posts. Our letters to this effect are dated in September last.

I had ascertained, while at Rangoon, and still more precisely since coming to Ava, that a public dispatch, addressed by Captain Grant, of Gumbheer Singh’s levy, to the Quartermaster-general of the Army, for the information of Sir Archibald Campbell, had been intercepted, opened, and perused by the Ministers of the Lut-d’hau. A copy of the letter in question was one of the enclosures in my last dispatches from the Supreme Government, and this enabled me to bring the matter forward, without compromising the persons from whom I had derived my information. The following conversation ensued respecting it.

CRAWFURD: Have any letters from European officers lately arrived here? At the termination of the war, a British officer in Cassay sent a letter by two Burman officers to the address of Sir A. Campbell, or one of his principal officers; I beg to know what has become of it?

BURMESE: This may be one of the letters to which we allude.

CRAWFURD: It cannot be so. The letter to which I allude was dated the sixth of April last. Your accounts, you say, are dated in September.

BURMESE: The letter to which we allude was in English. It was open, and translated and sent down here in Burman.
CRAWFURD: Have you got the original here now?

BURMESE: No, but we will bring it to-morrow.

CRAWFURD: The letter to which I refer was delivered to two Burman officers by the writer. The officers in question were the same who were sent by the British and Burman commissioners from Yandabo, to announce the conclusion of Peace. You must, of course, know very well who they are. One of you was a Commissioner at Yandabo at the time, and therefore concerned in selecting the officers-in question. Among European and other civilized nations living in amity, the opening of public dispatches and private letters is reckoned an act at once dishonourable and criminal. The messengers who received charge of this letter and opened it deserve punishment.

BURMESE: It was not sealed.

CRAWFURD: That is of no consequence, as it ought, at any rate, to have been delivered. It was intercepted and detained.

The Burman commissioners seldom arrived before one o'clock, and much time was always lost in copying their papers. The present discussion was put an end to by its becoming dark. In the course of it, it was discovered that the letter addressed by Captain Grant to Sir Archibald Campbell was not the only one which had been opened and intercepted by the Burman Government since the Peace. Several private letters appear to have been treated in the same way. Mr. Judson heard one of the Atwen-wuns, while we were sitting down, say to an individual near him, “It was you who were ordered to open and translate such and such a letter,—you should be able to render ah account of its contents.”

The individual in question answered quickly, “I know nothing at all about it.”

I have good authority for saying, that Dr. Price, when applied to open and translate the first letter which arrived, positively
refused compliance, and represented the practice to the Burman Government as both discreditable and dangerous.

The old Myowun of Bassein, who still continued to attend us, was in the habit of coming to us generally every morning and evening, sometimes in company with the chief of the guard of swordsmen. He came this morning to Mr. Judson with a proposal of a very extraordinary nature. The Burman Government had felt the greatest anxiety concerning the result of the propositions given in by them at the last conference, and notwithstanding the pains taken to assure them to the contrary, both publicly and privately, and that such a thing is utterly repugnant to their own modes of conducting diplomatic matters, unreasonably believed, or wished to believe that the British agent possessed authority to restore the ceded provinces, and to remit the whole money payment. I was led to believe from this circumstance, and others which it is unnecessary to mention, that intriguers had impressed the Court with a belief that the British Government was desirous of restoring the provinces, and wished only for a pretext. In reference to this subject, the Myowun observed, that the agent of the British Government was hard to deal with, and asked how it would answer to begin by offering him a sum of five viss of gold, or about twelve thousand rupees as a douceur. Mr. Judson answered him, that the customs of Europeans were different from those of the Burmans; that such a proposal as that which he made would be considered an affront, and must never again be hinted at. He went away disappointed, but by no means feeling ashamed of the proposition he had made; for the practice of bribery seems to be nearly universal among all ranks of the Burman officers, and no discredit whatever is attached to it, unless when the party is silly enough, or unlucky enough, to be detected.

November 6, 1826

The sixth conference took place this morning. The amended draft of a Commercial Treaty, to all appearance agreed upon on both sides, was read. The following is a translation. Notwithstanding the prolixity and amplification with which some of its provisions are worded, I made no hesitation in assenting to it in its present form, imagining that this compliance would obviate some difficulties.
Draft of Commercial Treaty:

Article 1.—Peace being made between the great country governed by the English Ruler, the India Company Baren, and the great country of Ra-ta-na-pu-ra, which rules over Thu-na-para, Tampa-di-pa, and many other great countries; when merchants, with an English certified pass, from the country of the English Ruler, and merchants from the kingdom of Burma, pass from one country to the other, selling and buying merchandise, the sentinels at the passes and entrances, the established gate-keepers of the country, shall make inquiry as usual, but without demanding any money; and all merchants coming truly for the purpose of trade, with merchandise, shall be suffered to pass without hinderance or molestation. The Governments of both countries also shall permit ships with cargoes to enter ports, and carry on trade, giving them the utmost protection and security.

Article 2.—The transportation of gold and silver from one country to the other shall not be prohibited, nor shall duties be taken on those articles.

In regard to this subject, when goods are imported from one country to another, they are to be sold for gold and silver, or exchanged for other goods.

The exportation of gold and silver from the Burman kingdom has indeed been hitherto prohibited; but in consideration of the friendship subsisting between the English and Burman Governments, it is agreed, that when merchants, with an English certified pass, arrive at Burman ports for the purpose of trade, they shall be allowed to sell their goods, after paying the customary duties, and take away the gold and silver received in payment, as well as other gold and silver, duty free; or, if they prefer it, such merchandise as they may receive in exchange for their own goods. Burmese merchants also, arriving in English ports for the purpose of trade, shall be in like manner allowed to sell their goods after paying the customary duties, and take away the gold and silver, duty free; or, if they prefer it, such piece-goods, rarities, and articles of use as they may require.
Article 3.—Ships whose breadth of beam in the inside (opening of the hold) is eight royal Burman cubits, and all ships of smaller size, whether merchants from the Burmese country entering an English port under the Burman flag, or merchants from the English country with an English certified pass, entering a Burmese port under the English flag, shall be subject to no other demand beside the payment of duties, and ten ticals twenty-five per cent. (ten rupees) for a Police passport on leaving. Nor shall pilotage be demanded, unless the master voluntarily require a pilot. However, when ships arrive, information shall be given to the officer stationed at ‘the entrance of the sea,’ In regard to vessels whose breadth of beam exceeds eight royal cubits, they shall be treated according to the ninth article of the Treaty of Yandabo.

Article 4.—English and Burmese merchants, passing from one country to the other and residing, shall, on desiring to return to their own country, be allowed to do so. They shall not be hindered from going to whatever country, and by whatever vessel they may desire. They shall also be allowed to sell their goods and property, and take away the value, together with property unsold, wife, sons and daughters, without molestation.

Article 5.—English and Burmese vessels meeting with contrary winds, or sustaining damage in masts, rigging, &c. or suffering shipwreck on the shore, shall, according to the laws of charity, receive all possible assistance; and whatever property may remain, in case of shipwreck, shall be restored to the owner.

The whole of this treaty was agreed to, with the exception of the second article, regarding which the following conversation took place:
BURMESE: We wish again to call your attention to the necessity of our annexing to the second article the clause respecting fire-arms and ammunition.

CRAWFURD: This, as I stated: to you yesterday, is wholly inadmissible. Fire-arms, I repeat, are not an article of merchandise. You have yourselves often insisted upon striking out every thing that was not so. The condition is not mutual. You would insist upon. our selling you fire-arms and ammunition, and in your country you prohibit us and all the world from dealing in these articles.

BURMESE: As you reject our proposal on the, plea of fire-arms and ammunition not being articles of commerce, we must reject the clause respecting the free exportation of gold and silver, as this also is not of a commercial nature.

CRAWFURD: Very well. Is the treaty then, in other respects, to be considered as settled?

BURMESE: We wish to take the draft with us, and consider it further. The whole matter will be finally arranged in three days.

CRAWFURD: I assent to this.

BURMESE: You observed yesterday, that you would report “truly” to your Government what might be stated by us in regard to our request for the restoration of the ceded provinces, and said, that if we could prove our inability to pay the third instalment when it became due, you would take it upon yourself to postpone the period of payment. We have now to state, that the country has been in a state of: war for three or four years, that our treasury is exhausted, and that no revenue has been collected for a long time from the people.

CRAWFURD: In regard to the postponement of the money payment, you will recollect that my promise was made. on the condition of your executing the Commercial Treaty according to the draft, to all appearance agreed upon at the last meeting. My chief business here was the execution of a commercial treaty, and until
this be done in the manner which I have a right to expect, I must decline entering upon other matters of this description. You will not allow the free exportation of gold and silver, although you engaged by treaty at Yandabo, that our trade should suffer no “molestation or hinderance” at your ports which yours did not suffer at ours. If a British merchant receives gold and silver in your country for the goods which he imports, and you prevent him from taking them away, is not this a hinderance and molestation to free trade of the most obvious nature. It is an infringement of the treaty made at Yandabo, and might authorize me to write to Sir Archibald Campbell to detain the army, as it was there agreed that the trade should be put on the same footing on both sides, that a commercial treaty should be made, and that our troops should not be removed until all the articles of the treaty, as well as the payment of the second instalment, should be fulfilled.

BURMESE: In what have we infringed the treaty?

CRAWFURD: I have just explained that you have refused to execute such a commercial arrangement as had been promised in the Treaty of Yandabo, and the conferences which preceded it. The day before yesterday you solicited from the British Government favours of the first magnitude,—nothing less than the restoration of eight provinces, and the remission of a debt of fifty lacs of rupees. To-day you refuse us a matter of right, what had already been provided for.

BURMESE: As you refuse to proceed to other matters before the execution of the commercial treaty, and as we must refer to our superiors, we wish to understand exactly how long you will postpone the period of paying the next instalments, provided the whole commercial treaty be acceded to on our part?

CRAWFURD: For a time sufficient to enable your Ambassadors to proceed to Bengal, and make your representations, to the Governor-General. I cannot do more, and even this much I venture upon only from knowing the good disposition of the Governor-General towards you, and his unwillingness to distress you, should you be able to prove your inability to pay at the time appointed.
BURMESE: This is nothing at all. Since you say you have no powers, we will apply to the Governor-General himself. There is time enough for making application before the period of payment arrives.

CRAWFURD: The Governor-General is by this time six or seven hundred taings from Calcutta, and you will not reach where he is in one hundred and ten days. You could not also be relieved from paying at the time the money is due, merely on account of your proceeding to make an application for this favour.

BURMESE: We will of course pay as agreed upon.

CRAWFURD: The subject of Munnipore is unconnected with the matters just referred to, and I am now ready to discuss it with you.

BURMESE: We wish to postpone this subject for a day or two, as the map which we promised yesterday is not ready.

CRAWFURD: Yesterday you promised to bring the English letters, which arrived some time ago from Munnipore. Will you favour me with them now?

BURMESE: We prefer producing them at the next conference, along with the map and some other papers connected with Munnipore. It was agreed that the next meeting should take place on the 8th instant, and the conference broke up.

November 8, 1826

I visited this morning the temple, which, for distinction, is denominated Kaong-m’hu-d’hau, or “the great act of royal merit,” but more correctly Ra-ja-mani-su-la, a Pali or Sanscrit compound word. It lies south-west from Sagaing at the distance of about five miles, and about one mile beyond the manufactory of marble images. The building is a mass of solid brick and lime, and in shape resembles a dome and cupola rising from the ground. It is surrounded with a double wall and extensive area, the portion of the latter nearest to the temple being paved with large flags of sandstone. The body of the temple is immediately surrounded by a
stockade composed of round pillars of sandstone, about five feet high. The whole, as usual, is crowned by an iron ti, or umbrella, gilt. Towards the base of the building there are niches all round, occupied by sitting figures about three feet high, made of sandstone,, and generally gilt, but in a very slovenly and imperfect manner. These figures, which are one hundred and twenty in number, all represent the same personage, and this seemed to me to be the Indian divinity Vishnu. On the head there is a royal crown, in the right hand an expanded lotus flower, and in the left a triangular javelin. These images are represented by the Burmans as mere guardians of the temple. All the Hindoo deities, indeed, are represented by them, and, I believe, by other followers of Gautama, as no better than Nats, a species of beings of another but superior state of existence to ours, subject, nevertheless, to change, to calamity, and to death. Some are of a malignant, and some of a beneficent nature. It is to these that the protection of temples is entrusted. Sometimes they are represented in the form of human beings, and at others in that of beasts or birds. In a small temple on the eastern side of the great pagoda, there is a gilt statue of Gautama in sandstone, the only representation of him to be seen at the temple.

The “slaves” of the Pagoda, who were our guides, gave the following as its dimensions. It is one hundred and one royal cubits high (A royal cubit measures exactly nineteen inches and one-tenth, English), or one hundred and sixty feet nine indies; and six hundred cubits, or about three hundred and eighteen yards round at the base. The Ti, or umbrella, is fifteen cubits high, and ten in diameter at the base. The number of pillars composing the stockade is eight hundred and two. A small temple within the area was pointed out to us, which contained a fine and perfect slab of white marble, covered with Pali writing on both sides, perfectly distinct and legible. Our guides explained to us the most material part of the inscription, which they seemed to read with tolerable ease. It states that the temple was built and endowed by a king of Ava, named Tha-Iwan, or Tha-Iwan-men-dra-gyi. The date of the writing is, “Monday, the tenth day of the increase of the moon Tau-tha-len, in the year of the common era 998.” This corresponds with the year of Christ 1626; so that the temple was but a hundred and ninety years old. This fabric is altogether a heavy and inelegant building without taste or just proportions, nor is the workmanship
in any respect well executed. Indeed, the temple, it may be said, has little to recommend it to notice, but its enormous bulk. The marble slab alone is perhaps an exception: it is well polished, and, where there is no writing, richly carved: its height above the ground is eight feet five inches; its breadth, five feet seven inches and a half; and it is rather more than eleven inches in thickness. Considering the expense lavished by the Burmans on royal and religious edifices, the abundance of fine white marble which the country affords, and that white is a favourite colour, it seems extraordinary that this material should not be in more general use. No edifice, as far as I had hitherto observed, was constructed of it, either in whole or part; no floors or terraces were formed of it; and with the exception of the statues of Gautama, a few small coarse pillars, and now and then a slab with an inscription, it was nowhere to be seen in a Burman building. The temple, as I have said, is close to the banks of a small picturesque lake about two miles long, and half as broad. A little to the north-west of this, is a much more considerable sheet of water, which is reckoned to be twelve miles in length, by two in breadth. This last is called Rémyak-gyi, or the “lake abounding with grass.” Both of them afford fisheries of some value,

In going out this morning we met a number of carts, each drawn by four bullocks, and carrying a load of salt of 300 viss (1095 lbs.) each: they had come from the distance of Ti-tug, which lies about twenty miles to the north of Sagaing, and in the neighbourhood of which is produced a large quantity of the salt consumed at the capital. This is obtained by lixiviating and boiling the earth, which is strongly impregnated with salt at Ti-tug and many other situations in the neighbourhood.

The conferences were renewed at one o’clock. The Burman negotiators began by producing a Burman draft of the Commercial Treaty, with a few verbal alterations, leaving a blank for the second article, concerning the free exportation of gold and silver. In reading the article respecting shipwrecks, &c. the following conversation took place:

BURMESE: With reference to the subject of assistance being afforded in case shipwreck, we wish to know what assistance will in such case be required, and whether we incur any responsibility?
CRAWFURD: We only expect such assistance as one friend would render to another in distress. You will incur no responsibility beyond what is implied in the necessity of your rendering such assistance as it may be in your power to afford.

BURMESE: Will the expenses attending such assistance be repaid?

CRAWFURD: Those who ask for assistance, or stand in need of it, will of course pay the necessary expenses.

After the perusal of the fourth article, the following observations were made:

BURMESE: We object to your amendment, proposing to extend the privileges of this article to the “country people of India,” as well as to English merchants?

CRAWFURD: Our Indian subjects must be included. In such cases, we cannot legislate for the few, and exclude the bulk of our subjects.

BURMESE: We cannot, admit of this privilege extending to the natives of India; and the article must be struck out, if you insist upon it.

CRAWFURD: Very well. Then the negotiation of this treaty is now at an end. The treaty, as it now stands, consists of three articles of no great moment. Is this treaty such an one as you promised to make at Yandabo?

BURMESE: Yes it is. In what is it wanting?

CRAWFURD: You engaged that there should be no “molestation or hinderance,” and the trade will now be overwhelmed with all sorts of “molestations and hinderances.”

BURMESE: Do you approve of the three articles of the treaty that now remain?
CRAWFURD: Yes, I accept of them as the treaty which you are pleased to grant, but it is not such an one as is provided for in the Convention of Yandabo.

BURMESE: Are these three articles conformable to the Treaty of Yandabo?

CRAWFURD: The articles are well enough, as far as they go; but they do not fulfil the stipulations and promises made at Yandabo.

BURMESE: If this treaty be incomplete, what do you want?

CRAWFURD: I want nothing more than the insertion of the second and fourth articles, with the corrections I proposed.

BURMESE: There is little difference between us in the fourth article, and it amounts to this only,—whether it shall include a part or the whole of your subjects. With regard to permitting the families of merchants to quit the country along with them, can this be said to be of a commercial nature?

CRAWFURD: If a merchant come into the country for a temporary residence, as allowed in the first article of the treaty, and shall have a wife and children, is it not a grievous molestation and hindrance to prevent him from taking his wife and children along with him when he quits it.

BURMESE: Agreeably to the seventh article of the Yandabo Treaty, on the payment of the second instalment the troops were to evacuate Rangoon: how is it, then, that they still remain there?

CRAWFURD: You were to have completed the payment of the second instalment on the 4th of June. You infringed the treaty by delaying the period of payment for three months beyond that time. This was the case when I left Rangoon, and I do not know how much longer you may not have done so since. We have surely a good right to prolong the period of our departure an equal time. This is the right by which we now stay. We shall not stay one day longer than you have exceeded the time in which you were bound, to have made good the payment of the second instalment.
BURMESE: The Wungyi and Wundauk, the commissioners at Rangoon, have officially reported to the King that the whole money had arrived at Rangoon within the hundred days, and that much time was spent in melting, weighing, and paying it.

CRAWFURD: The treaty says, that the money is to be paid to us in one hundred days, and not that it shall arrive at Rangoon within that time. So far the treaty was infringed; but I have farther to observe, that if the Wungyi and Wundauk reported that the whole of the twenty-five lacs of rupees, or even the greater part of it, had arrived at Rangoon, within the specified time, they deceived his Majesty. I was myself at Rangoon, and saw money repeatedly arrive, which was paid over to us, and some, even as late as twenty days before my leaving that place. We were most anxious to go away, and this will appear obvious to yourselves from the following statement. We were not obliged to leave the country for a hundred days from the date of the Treaty of Yandabo, and your payment of the second instalment. Notwithstanding this, the greater portion of the troops were immediately embarked, without even landing at Rangoon. Transports had arrived at Rangoon for the whole army, long before the hundred days had expired; but seeing that there was no prospect of your paying within the time stipulated, we were compelled to send them back, and they had not all returned when I left. This has put us to an expense of several lacs of rupees, which would have been saved had you been more punctual. The Wundauk, and those who were acting with him, were repeatedly urged to complete the payment; but down to the period of my leaving Rangoon, as I have already mentioned, it had not been completed.

BURMESE: You have given no answer to what we said respecting the difficulty of paying and counting.

CRAWFURD: The paying and counting was all your affair, not ours. A hundred days were allowed to you for paying and counting. What would you say to a private individual who owed a debt payable in one hundred days and did not pay for one hundred and ninety, alleging as a pretext the difficulty of counting and weighing?
BURMESE: When will your troops quit Rangoon?

CRAWFURD: All I can say on the subject is, that if the second instalment was completed the day after I left Rangoon, which could not have been, our troops would certainly quit it in three months from that time, and probably much earlier.

BURMESE: Granting, then, that we have exceeded in the period of payment, will you not write down now to request that the troops may be removed immediately from Rangoon, provided we accede to such a treaty as you require?

CRAWFURD: As soon as the treaty corrected by me this morning, and especially the second and fourth articles are signed, ratified, and delivered to me, I will write to Sir Archibald Campbell, stating that every thing has been settled here in conformity to the Treaty of Yandabo, and in a friendly manner; that Rangoon should be delivered to the Wungyi, and the troops embarked, without any regard to the time by which the Burmese Government may have exceeded the period of liquidation of the second instalment.

BURMESE: There is good sense in this answer. We are worthy of each other, and there are now clear indications that there will be a lasting friendship between us. Will you not grant us some more favours in return for any concession we may make on our part?

CRAWFURD: What I promised at a former meeting I pledge myself to perform. I will postpone the period of the payment of the third instalment to one year, provided that the signing of the Commercial Treaty be not deferred to a later date than the 15th instant.

BURMESE: Will you not also put off the fourth instalment to a similar period?

CRAWFURD: I have already taken a heavy responsibility on myself and cannot promise any farther postponement of payment. The payment of the fourth instalment must stand as in the Treaty of Yandabo. It can serve no useful purpose to postpone it just now.
BURMESE: When the King asks us what you mean by saying you will report “well,” as your expression was translated to us, what reply shall we make?

CRAWFURD: Be so good as to say distinctly that what I have stated is, that I will report truly and faithfully what you have requested, and all that has transpired between us. To decide, rests with my superiors: I will say nothing that will embarrass them. What would you say to a Burman ambassador, sent to a foreign country, who pledged himself to “report favourably”—for this is what you mean—on proposals made by a foreign Government of which his own knew nothing?

BURMESE: We wish you to report in a friendly manner concerning our proposal.

CRAWFURD: I will lay a true report before my Government, and this is all you have a right to expect. I never make promises where I have not power to perform, and where every thing rests with higher authority.

BURMESE: We are aware that you will not say what will not be done, and this is the reason we wish for a pledge from you.

CRAWFURD: I will not pledge nor promise any thing on the subject of your proposals. The Governor-General alone will determine upon them.

The conference ended at a late hour, and the Burmese negotiators retired, to all appearance well satisfied.

November 9, 1826

I rode out this morning with Mr. Chester six miles on the Monchabo road, passing all the way between the two ranges of hills composing the Sagaing chain. The limit of our excursion was a small lake at the foot of the hills called Re-ka, pronounced Ye-ga, or the “bitter water.” In the lower range of hills, about half a mile
before coming to the lake, are several small quarries, which have afforded the sandstone that is used for flags in laying pavements, and occasionally in building, at Ava and Sagaing. The Re-ka lake appeared, and the villagers represented that the water did not fall much below its present level, about three quarters of a mile long, and half a mile broad. Cliffs of blue lime-stone formed its banks in several places. The water was a salt brine, but by no means a strong one: it contained, however, a sufficient quantity of the muriate of soda to afford common salt for culinary purposes. At each end of it there are two villages, the inhabitants of which are wholly occupied in the manufacture of this article. The following is the mode of preparing it. The soil on the borders of the lake is scraped together, and conveyed in carts to the villages: it is there placed in large square troughs raised on posts, the bottoms of which are lined with straw laid over a few cross sticks. Underneath the troughs, and attached to either side, are two frames of bamboo and straw, which meet at the bottom, acting as a kind of funnel. Over the earth, placed in the troughs, there is poured a quantity of water, obtained either from the lake or from wells close to the manufacture, but, I think, most generally from the latter. We tasted the water from the wells, which was brackish, but a still weaker brine than that of the lake. The brine falling down from the troughs is farther strained and purified by passing through the straw frames, from whence it is conveyed to pots, and boiled without undergoing any farther purification. Ten baskets of earth, or 1095 lbs. give, according to the statement of the manufacturers, from ten to fifteen viss of salt, each viss of 3.65 lbs. The salt thus obtained appears to be the worst which is brought to the market of Ava, and, it is probable, contains much sulphate of lime and other septic salts. When sea-salt, procured also by boiling, sells in the market for eighteen ticals per hundred viss, or 365 lbs. and the salt of Ti-tug for twelve, that of the Re-ka lake sells only for six. The inhabitants of the village which we visited informed us, that the rainy season was very mild, and that, with the exception of about fifteen days, they were able to carry on the manufacture throughout the year. They told us also, that this lake was the only one from which salt is procured; but that at several places in the neighbourhood it was obtained by lixiviating and boiling the earth in the same manner as at Ti-tug and its vicinity. The revenue of this village, and indeed of the whole district of Sagaing, is assigned
to the young Princess, the only child of the King and Queen. The amount paid by each family of the salt manufacturers is two ticals and a half of flowered silver, besides corvées and personal services.

The portion of the Sagaing range of hills which is composed of granular limestone, or marble, is steep, craggy, and with a very scanty vegetation. Proceeding northward, the range is lower, less steep, and the blue limestone is much decomposed. The hills are here covered with a tolerably thick brushwood, and cultivation then commences for the first time, in a narrow valley extending nearly to the salt lake: it consists of cotton and millet in the dry lands, and in the lower parts of rice: the crops appeared very thriving.

We had the pleasure to receive this evening a large packet with newspapers, public dispatches, and private letters from our friends at Rangoon, India, and England. This was the first communication that we had had from Rangoon after a stay of near six weeks. The opportunity was purely accidental; and for the security of the packet, Sir Archibald Campbell had found it necessary to send a party of Sepoys in charge of it. The bare sight of letters, especially those of strangers, excites the utmost suspicion in the minds of the officers of the Burman Government: they cannot resist the temptation of intercepting them, and they never make the least scruple of breaking open seals.

November 10, 1826

The conferences were renewed at one o’clock to-day, and began with the question of Munnipore. The Burman negotiators laid on the table a map exhibiting the frontier between Munnipore and the Burman territory according to their own views. In the course of the conference, maps of Mergui, Tavoy, Ye, and Martaban, were also produced: these were all of great size, painted on cloth, and as rude as possible. The maps of the southern provinces were all old, but that of the Munnipore frontier had every appearance of being recently prepared, and, I have little doubt, was fabricated to answer the particular object they had in view,—that of claiming a large portion of the principality of Munnipore. These documents made the Burman frontier extend nearly to the walls of the Cassay capital. The negotiators then read a statement exhibiting that Gumbheer Singh had, since the termination of the war,
appropriated certain districts belonging to the Burman Government, and that British officers were present at Munnipore countenancing his proceedings. This was followed by a very long paper giving a mythological account of the origin of the Burman Empire, and proving “by divine right” the claims of the King of Ava to certain townships on the Munnipore frontier. It was too long, and the language too obsolete to be comprehended by the interpreters without being leisurely studied.

CRAWFURD: You are aware that I possess no authority to decide upon, and that I have no means of ascertaining, the respective claims to territory of the Sovereign of Munnipore and the Burman Government. I beg you, therefore, to furnish me with a copy of the paper just read, of the map which you have produced, as well as of any other documents connected with your claims, that I may be able to lay the matter fairly before the Governor-General.

BURMESE: We will furnish you with the documents you require. It is well that the matter be discussed in Bengal; but in the meanwhile what is to be done, as the two parties are in actual collision?

CRAWFURD: Do you mean to state that actual hostilities are committing on the frontier, between yourselves and Gumbheer Singh?

BURMESE: We do not mean to say the parties are actually fighting; but our people have been so much harassed, that they have retired to prevent hostilities.

CRAWFURD: At the conclusion of the war, Gumbheer Singh was positively enjoined to forbear from all hostilities towards your Government. If any dispute respecting boundaries arise, the natural course to pursue is, that each party should maintain what it was in actual possession of at the termination of the war, until the respective limits of their territories shall be defined by an amicable arrangement. I will discuss any fair proposal which you may have to offer for adjusting the frontier between yourselves and Cassay.
BURMESE: We wish that you would give orders to Gumbheer Singh, to refrain from all, aggression upon our territory, until we have an opportunity of representing the matter by means of our Ambassadors in Bengal.

CRAWFURD: If you wish that I should direct that Gumbheer Singh be not permitted to make any aggression on your territories, and that any dispute shall be settled by the Government of India, through your Ambassadors? I will write immediately to the British Commissioner at Sylhet by way of Munnipore, and request him to give Gumbheer Singh positive orders to remain quietly within his own possessions, pending a reference to the Governor-General.

BURMESE: This is all very well, but Gumbheer Singh has made aggressions since hearing of the peace, and we wish him to fall back to the position he held when he heard of the cessation of hostilities.

CRAWFURD: If Gumbheer Singh has been advancing since the termination of the war, he will be directed to fall back to the posts which he occupied at the time the news of peace reached him.

BURMESE: It would be agreeable to us, if you would also write to Gumbheer Singh, as well as to the Commissioner.

CRAWFURD: I will write also to Gumbheer Singh.

BURMESE: As our forces are not permitted to occupy any part of the kingdom of Munnipore, we wish that your troops and officers should also be removed according to the Treaty of Yandabo.

CRAWFURD: You state that by the Treaty of Yandabo British officers and troops are not to remain at Munnipore: I ask, by what article of the treaty are they precluded from doing so?

BURMESE: Is it in the treaty that they shall stay there?

CRAWFURD: It is not in the treaty that they shall stay, neither is it in the treaty that officers and troops shall occupy Cachar and Assam, or any other country not dependent on the Burmese
Government, but still they may do so without any infringement of treaty. It is specified in the treaty, that you shall not interfere in the affairs of Munnipore; but such is not the case with us. You must therefore state your request upon some other grounds, as you have no claims by the Treaty of Yandabo.

BURMESE: If your officers are present with Gumbheer Singh, this will make him presumptuous. He will appear to be countenanced by you.

CRAWFURD: This is altogether a different ground; but you cannot say that our troops are precluded by treaty from remaining in the Cassay territory. The real state of the case is this: The troops to which you allude are not British troops, but belong to Gumbheer Singh. During the war, the British Government paid him a subsidy for maintaining the troops in question, and lent him two British officers to discipline them. Since the conclusion of peace, Gumbheer Singh has been informed, that the subsidy is discontinued, and that he must carry on the affairs of his Government at his own expense and risk.

BURMESE: That Gumbheer Singh may not presume on the support of the British Government, and conduct himself with insolence towards us, we wish that the officers in question may be recalled, lest another war should be occasioned by it. The King will endure a good deal from the English; but not from Gumbheer Singh, or any “Black Kula” (This term is most commonly applied to the Hindus).

CRAWFURD: The British Government have no intention whatever of occupying Munnipore themselves, and they will certainly not give assistance in men, money, or advice to Gumbheer Singh, to your prejudice. I cannot order the removal of the British officers from Munnipore, but will request the Governor-General to recall them, that you may have no cause of complaint.

BURMESE: When you say that you will communicate with Gumbheer Singh on these points, do you mean that you will send letters by your own people or ours?
CRAWFURD: I will send letters by an officer of our party, if you choose. After he has executed his commission, he will proceed to Bengal through Akobat and Assam. Gumbheer Singh states, that certain portions of his country are now occupied by the Burmese; and you, on the other hand, state, that large districts belonging to you are forcibly occupied by him. Do you wish that an arbitration should be made by the Governor-General, or that the matter be decided by commissioners nominated by you and us.

BURMESE: We wish to let the matter remain as you have now stated it; that is, that both parties should refrain from aggression.

CRAWFURD: As by the Treaty of Yandabo, Gumbheer Singh is admitted by you to be independent, it will be proper that some principle should be assumed for defining the boundaries of territory between you.

BURMESE: We are willing that that affair should be settled by our ambassadors at Bengal.

The Burman negotiators now read a document respecting the boundary of the Saluen River.

CRAWFURD: I have already a copy of the paper just read, which was given to me by yourselves confidentially, and will give you a deliberate written reply to it at our next conference, when the subject may undergo such farther discussion as you may be disposed to enter into.

The Burman commissioners placed on the table maps of Martaban, Yé-Tavoy, and Mergui, and were anxious to enter upon the subject of the Martaban frontier, which I declined. The subject of the Commercial Treaty was then introduced.

BURMESE: In the fourth article it was your wish, that all merchants, subjects of the British Government, as well as Englishmen, should be included. Are you satisfied to let that article refer to Englishmen only?

CRAWFURD: I wish it to include all British subjects whatever.
BURMESE: Since that is your wish, we will insert “all persons being subjects of the British Government.”

CRAWFURD. This is all I desire, and I am obliged to you for the liberal manner in which you have conceded this point.

BURMESE: According to the arrangement made at the last meeting, we have made the necessary alteration in the fourth article, and hand you a copy so corrected. As we have now granted you “whatever you wished,” we request that you will not only put off the payment of the third instalment, but of the fourth also for a similar period, as, unless this be done, the times of payment will come close upon each other.

CRAWFURD: My engagement with you was to request Sir Archibald Campbell to move the troops from Rangoon, without consideration to the time by which you may have exceeded the period of paying the second instalment, and to put off the period of paying the third instalment for one year from the date of the treaty to be concluded between us, provided you granted a treaty conformable to the stipulations made at Yandabo.

BURMESE: Do you mean that the inclusion of the second article, providing for the free exportation of gold and silver, is necessary to fulfil our agreement with you?

CRAWFURD: Certainly. I was most particular at our last conference in impressing that point upon you, and you seemed then clearly to understand it.

BURMESE: We could wish that, in presenting this treaty to the King, we might be able to say, that the difficulties with regard to the fourth instalment were also removed in a similar manner to the third.

CRAWFURD: I believe you may safely trust to the generosity of the Governor-General. I will write on the subject, and recommend it.
BURMESE: Could you not put off the third payment for one year from the period it is due?

CRAWFURD: As you are so very urgent, I will take upon myself the responsibility of meeting your wishes, by putting off the payment of the third instalment for one year, from the 15th November, 1826; and the fourth also for a year, or until the 15th November, 1828. A regular instrument must be drawn up requiring the payments within those periods.

BURMESE: We agree to this.

CRAWFURD: You, of course, understand that this is conditional upon your granting the Commercial Treaty in the shape I want it?

BURMESE: We understand this perfectly. Will you not make the time from the 24th of February, as in the Yandabo Treaty?

CRAWFURD: I will not. I cannot go a step farther than I have now done.

BURMESE: We request that the next meeting may not take place to-morrow, but the following day.

CRAWFURD: I assent to this. You promised at one of our last meetings to deliver to me certain intercepted letters from Munnipore.

A private letter was here delivered by the Burman Commissioners from Lieutenant Gordon, of Gumbheer Singh’s levy, to the address of “Lieutenant Chester, assistant to the Envoy at Ava,” dated the 7th September. The letter was stated by the writer of it to be sent open.

CRAWFURD: I request you will have the goodness to hand me also the letter from Captain Grant, delivered to your two messengers who went from Yandabo.

BURMESE: We have it not here, but we will look out for it.
The letter delivered to me upon this occasion, was a familiar epistle from one officer to another, and touched upon no public question. The writer, however, spoke in praise of the climate and country of Munnipore. This was high treason in the eyes of the Burmans, who construed his approbation of these into a desire upon the part of the English Government to stay in the country and occupy it. It appears that this letter reached Ava some days after our own arrival. Both in regard to it, and the public letter from Captain Grant, Dr. Price and Mr. Lanciego had entreated the Burman officers not to peruse or intercept them; but it was to no purpose. The temptation was irresistible; and the Wungyis thought they would not be discharging their duty if they did not make the best of them, since they were in their power.

November 12, 1826

Dr. Wallich and I ascended, this morning, one of the highest parts of the Sagaing range of mountains. The top of the hill, which we reached, contains the Temple of Paung-nya, and is certainly not less than five hundred feet above the level of the Irawadi. From this spot we had a noble prospect, embracing many reaches of the river, the towns of Amarapura, Ava, and Sagaing. On both sides of the Irawadi there are a number of lakes, which we had not observed before. The numerous temples formed a remarkable feature of the landscape. On the Sagaing side alone I counted about two hundred, without being able to enumerate those on the northern part of the range which were concealed from view. This enumeration also excludes all the monasteries and zeyats, a kind of caravanseras, which are not only used for the accommodation of travellers, but also occasionally for religious purposes, such as preaching and disputations. In the dells and ravines of the range of hills, in very romantic and pretty situations, are to be found a great many Kyaungs, or monasteries. These secluded situations are chosen by the priests as favourable to study and meditation; but we saw several extensive ones which had been abandoned, and were told that this was in consequence of the numerous gangs of robbers that haunted the place; and who, from all accounts, were not disposed to respect even the sacred character of the Rahans.

The view of the Sagaing hills themselves, as they are approached, is striking. Almost every remarkable peak is crowned
with a temple, some ancient and mouldering, but the greater number in a state of repair and whitewashed. To a good number of these, the ascent from the very bottom of the hills is by a flight of stairs of solid masonry, with a wall on each side, to serve the purpose of a balustrade. These are but clumsily constructed; but, being whitewashed, this and their immense extent give them a very remarkable appearance.

On the terrace, which contains the Temple of Paung-nya, we found an inscription on a handsome slab of sandstone, in very good order. The writing is in the ancient character; but the language is Burman, with a little intermixture of Pali. My Burman interpreter, with some assistance from a priest, who happened to be at hand, interpreted it without much difficulty. It purported, that the temple was built in the year of the Burman vulgar era 674, or five hundred and fourteen years ago, by Paung-nya, a nobleman of the Court of Si-ha-Su, King of Ava, and that he endowed it with one hundred Pés of land. No mention is made of slaves, for these could only be given by the sovereign. On the terrace there has been recently collected a large quantity of hewn sandstone, for the purpose of building a “throne,” as it is called by the Burmans, for an image of Gautama. This pious work had been undertaken by the Atwen-wun Maung-kyan-nyin-ra, one of the Ministers. This stone, and much of what is used for similar work, is brought from the neighbourhood of Pugan-gyi. It is soft and easily worked, which is probably the chief motive with the Burmans for employing it. We observed that a small temple close at hand, and containing a large image of Gautama, had been recently undermined by thieves in search of the small silver images and other relics and representations of that divinity, which are always deposited in Budd’hist temples. There is no crime more frequent amongst the Burmans, notwithstanding their piety, than sacrilege, although it is punishable with death, and generally a cruel one. Robbery, indeed, in every form, is a frequent crime in the Burman as in all other ill-governed countries. A few nights ago, the widow of an ex-governor of Sagaing had her house, within the walls of the town, broke into, and property carried off to the value of twenty thousand ticals, by a gang of fifty persons. Some of the robbers were apprehended, and the affair was in course of investigation.
The conferences were renewed about one o’clock, and began as follows:

BURMESE: We have come here to negotiate on the part of our King, and you on the part of the Governor-General. It is not the private business of either party that we are engaged in; it is proper, therefore, that nothing superfluous should be advanced. We will deliver to you a paper containing these sentiments before the close of the conference.

The paper was duly delivered as promised, and the following is a literal translation:

The Envoy Crawfurd is a distinguished, wise, and prudent man, selected by the English Ruler. He has come to the Royal country in the capacity of Ambassador. We also are persons trusted and favoured by the Rising Sun Monarch; and we are selected and appointed by his Majesty, to discuss whatever is to be discussed. The discussions relate not to the personal affairs of the Envoy Crawfurd, the affairs of his children, or of his wife. We also speak not of our personal affairs, the affairs of our children, or of our wives. It is our business to please the golden heart of, the Rising Sun Monarch, and his to please the heart of the English Ruler; and thus we are to have regard to the good of both parties. It is proper to bear in mind, that the way to preserve peace between the two great countries, is to keep in view the welfare of both countries and sovereigns, and so to manage the discussion, that there may be no excess, but straightness and right.

CRAWFURD: The sentiments you have now expressed are self-evident, and I agree with you, that they ought to be strictly conformed to. Each party is answerable to his own Government for what he says and does. Will you have the goodness to proceed to such business as you may think proper to introduce?

The Burman commissioners here produced a note, laying claim to the districts of Martaban, on the east bank of the Saluen river.
CRAWFURD: You delivered a note to me at our last meeting on the subject of boundary, to which you requested an answer. This answer is now in course of translation, and you will receive it in a few minutes. The Burman note here alluded to was as follows:

That war between the two great countries might cease, a treaty was made at Yandabo. Of the third and fourth articles of that treaty, the fourth article says, that Yé, Tavoy, Mergui, and Tenasserim, with their territories, mountains, and islands, are given up; that the Saluen river shall be the boundary; and that hereafter, if disputes shall arise concerning the boundary, they shall be settled as above-said, that is, according to the third article. It is not contained in the treaty, that any part of the territory under the jurisdiction of the city of Martaban shall be taken. We desire, therefore, to know why English officers are settled at Mau-la-myaing, one of the thirty-two townships under the jurisdiction of Martaban?

Mr. Judson arrived with the translation of my note, which, as well as the English original, was put into the hands of the Atwen-wuns, and read aloud by one of the Than-d'hau-thans. It was as follows:

I submit to you, in conformity to my promise, a reply to the note given in by you respecting the Saluen river. You desire to be informed why British troops had established themselves at Molameng, on the eastern bank of the Saluen. I answer, because Mau-la-myaing is part of the territory ceded by his Burman Majesty to the British Government, by the fourth article of the Treaty of Yandabo. In that article it is distinctly said that the Saluen shall be the boundary, or, as it is expressed in the Burman version, that it shall be 'the partition' between us. In your note to me you repeat the same words yourselves. Nothing surely can be meant by an expression so unequivocal, but that the territory which is on one side of the river in question shall belong to you, and that which is on the other shall belong to us. Had the boundary of the Saluen river been inadvertently admitted into the
treaty by the Burman commissioners, and had that
document been signed and sealed by them, ignorant of the
extent of the cession which they were making, the British
Government would not be wanting in a disposition to
reconsider the question. But no plea of this nature can be
urged on your part, as the following explanation will clearly
show. Between the provinces of Yé and Martaban there
exists no well-defined natural boundary. This appeared to
the British commissioners at Yandabo a serious objection.
They accordingly sought for the nearest good boundary to Yé
that was attainable. Natives of the country were consulted,
and they immediately pointed to the Saluen river. The
British commissioners accordingly demanded that that river
should, be the boundary. A map of the country was
produced, and explained, and the boundary of the Saluen
clearly pointed out to the Burman commissioners. These
officers, aware that the Saluen river ran through the
province of Martaban, objected that the assumption of this
line of boundary would amount to a cession of all that
portion of Martaban which lay to the east of it. Ample
explanations were given to them by the British
commissioners, and the reasons fully explained why the
Saluen was chosen to be the limit between the two countries.
After these full explanations, and after having had a day and
night to consider the subject, these commissioners
deliberately signed the treaty. The Atwen-wun Men-gyi-
maha-men-hla-thi-ha-thu was one of the commissioners
who negotiated the Treaty of Yandabo, and who signed and
sealed it. He is now also a negotiator; he is present here, and
he knows all this. The teachers (The name given by the
Burmese to the Christian missionaries, and the same which
is often applied to their own priests), Judson and Price,
acted as interpreters for the British and Burman
commissioners. They are both here before us now, and will
corroborate the statements which I make. I beg you therefore
to interrogate them.

In your note you stated that no part of the province of
Martaban is specified in the fourth article. When the treaty
was made, neither the English nor the Burmese
commissioners knew distinctly the townships of Martaban,
which are on the east of the Saluen; and therefore, in order to comprise in one word all these townships, without specifying their names, they said, “Let the Saluen river be the partition between us;” thus fixing on the best, the most obvious, and the most definite boundary for the territories of the two Governments. You farther state, that it is provided in the fourth article, that should any disputes arise concerning boundary, they are to be determined by commissioners, according to ancient limits. When a large and well-known river is expressly stated to be the boundary, what disputes can possibly arise, except such as regard islands situated in the bed of such river, or some alteration in its course, or possible change of its name in particular situations. Should disputes on those points occur, they will, of course, be settled by commissioners, according to the ancient limits of the disputed places as provided for by treaty. It is my duty to inform you, that the construction put by you on the fourth article stands a chance of being viewed by the British Government not as the natural construction which the terms made use of will admit, but as one which appears adduced to create a difficulty. Until the third conference, held with you on the 21st of October, I never heard a doubt expressed respecting the Saluen river being the true frontier between the two nations, or that what was upon one side was necessarily yours; what was on the other, ours. The officers of your Government, residing at Rangoon, who were well aware that we had formed a settlement beyond the Saluen, and who frequently discussed all other public questions with the British commissioners, never expressed a doubt upon this subject. At Henzada I had a long discussion with the Wungyi upon all the questions which concerned the immediate interests of the two countries; but neither did this officer insinuate any doubt concerning our right to the territory on the eastern bank of the Saluen river. The doubt, therefore, was never hinted at till eight months after the signing of the treaty.

In order that my sentiments on this question may not be misunderstood by the Burman Government, I deliver to you a copy of this note in the English and Burman languages, and under my hand and seal.
This note had been prepared with a view to translation into the Burman language, as may be seen from its style, and I have every reason to believe that the version of it made by Mr. Judson was able and perspicuous, for the Burman chiefs offered no objection to the language, and seemed to understand it clearly throughout.

As soon as it was read, the senior Atwen-wun said to his companion, evidently for the purpose of being repeated to me, “There is nothing in this; I will soon refute what he has said;” literally, “rub it out.”

He has given his opinion under his signature and seal, as if it were conclusive. We have also our opinion, and who is to decide between us?

The following conversation took place on the subject:

BURMESE: Do you mean to state that the ancient limits alluded to by you in this paper refer to the islands and the course of the river?

CRAWFURD: Most certainly, and to no other.

BURMESE: Do they not rather refer to the towns and places named in the treaty?

CRAWFURD: It is particularly declared in the treaty that the partition or boundary between us shall be the Saluen river.

BURMESE: It is true that the Saluen river is mentioned in the treaty, but you have not explained the point which provides that in the event of any disputes regarding boundaries, reference should be made to ancient limits as in the third article.

CRAWFURD: That is answered in the paper which I have given in.

BURMESE: The Saluen river was fixed on at Yandabo to constitute the boundary of the districts actually named in the treaty according to the information possessed by both parties at the time.
CRAWFURD: The British commissioners were quite aware that by making the Saluen river the frontier, a portion of Martaban would be ceded, and explained this fully to the Burman commissioners, exhibiting to them maps of the country, and affording them every necessary explanation. The latter, as one of the negotiators now present well knows, read the treaty repeatedly over, and signed it, after having had twenty-four hours to consider it.

BURMESE: If the Saluen be the boundary, why is it stated in the treaty that commissioners should be appointed to settle the boundary?

CRAWFURD: The reason of this provision was plain and obvious, and I have already explained it in the paper given in. It was natural that disputes might arise respecting so great a river as the Saluen flowing through a champaign country, which has more than fifty islands in its bed, which is liable to change its course, and which may possibly be found to have different names as it passes through different districts.

BURMESE: Long words will bring on long discussions, and be hurtful to friendship.

CRAWFURD: This discussion was of your own seeking. I have done nothing more than reply to a paper which you gave in to me twice over, once confidentially and once publicly, and answering such questions as you have put to me. I am ready to furnish you with such explanations as I can, but I have no power to decide, as I have often said.

BURMESE: Will you, then, consent to withdraw the paper which you have just given in?

CRAWFURD: Certainly I will not. You called for a formal explanation from me, and I have mentioned only what appeared to me to be a plain statement of facts.

BURMESE: By bringing forward this point, we hope you do not imagine that we have any intention of infringing the treaty. We do not charge you with any such intention.
CRAWFURD: I suppose, of course, you have acted in conformity to the instructions you have received. The Saluen river was declared in the treaty to be the frontier of the two nations. After a full explanation having been given, you still claimed districts on both sides of that river. I was justified, therefore, in saying, that the interpretation put by you on the fourth article, had the appearance of arising in a desire to make difficulties where none existed.

The Burmese chiefs had now entirely altered their tone, and were in the utmost perplexity, scarcely knowing what to say; they appeared very desirous of dropping the subject, Notwithstanding the invitation given to them to take the evidence of Mr. Judson and Dr. Price, no question whatever was put to these gentlemen, nor was any attempt made to deny that ample explanation had been afforded by the British commissioners at Yandabo. Dr. Price, who sat next to them, reminded the Atwen-wun Maung-ba-youk, of the explanations which had been afforded to him at Yandabo. This person feigned, however, not to understand him, and turned away to avoid the subject. After we had got up from the table, I informed him through Doctor Price, that I was sorry to be obliged to bring forward facts that might be unpleasant to him, but that I was compelled to do so by themselves. The reply was, “It is best, after all, that the whole truth should be known.” He had at all times scarcely spoken a word, when the subject of the Saluen frontier was introduced, and upon the present occasion his embarrassment and distress were such, that they appeared evident to every one present.

The paper respecting the Saluen frontier which was first tendered to me, was not again brought forward, nor was any use made of a great many maps which it was intended to produce. The Atwen-wuns delivered the following note:

In the statement which the Envoy Crawfurd has now made, it is implied that something has been said with a view to break, the Treaty of Yandabo. Since it is said in the third and fourth articles of the treaty, that the Saluen river shall be the boundary; that if hereafter disputes shall arise about the boundary, persons appointed by the English and Burmese Governments shall decide correctly, according to ancient
limits, and that the persons so appointed shall be officers of respectability and rank; it was in conformity to the treaty that we said, with a view to ancient limits, that it would be well to understand the territory of Yé, Tavoy, Mergui, and Tennasserim, because now a part of the territory of Martaban is included. We did not break the treaty in saying this. We spoke uprightly, and with a view to lasting peace.

On the 9th, I received letters from Rangoon, stating that a balance was still due on the second instalment. I thought the present a proper opportunity for bringing forward the subject, and the following conversation ensued:

CRAWFURD: I have letters from Rangoon, stating that a balance of 142,682 rupees of the second instalment is still unpaid, or in dispute, between the British and Burman authorities.

BURMESE: You have stated to us, that if the five articles of the treaty were granted, you would write a letter to the English general, requesting that the troops might be removed without regard to the delay made in paying the second instalment. Do you mean to make this an objection to keeping your engagement? Our Wungyi states that the whole money has been paid.

CRAWFURD: It is a disputed account. I will not withdraw my promise, although I might be justified in doing so, as the payment of the whole money was a matter necessarily understood.

The Commercial Treaty was here again introduced.

CRAWFURD: In the last draft of the fourth article, there is a word substituted for that which was contained in the original draft, on which my engagement with you was made. This alters the whole sense of the Article, making it of no value whatever. I presume, this was a mistake; I beg you to correct it.

The two drafts were handed to the Burman commissioners, and the alteration, or, perhaps more justly, the forgery, was pointed out to them. In the original draft it was stated, that the families of British merchants should be allowed to quit the country
along with them. In the altered draft, the words *to return*, were substituted for *to quit* the country. This would have rendered the condition perfectly nugatory, and left the Burman law practically as it stood before; for no families could leave the country except such as had come to it; and to the departure of such persons, no serious obstruction had ever been opposed. At the last meeting the senior Atwen-wun, in order that it might not appear in evidence against him, used every effort short of pulling it out of Mr. Judson’s hand, to gain possession of the original draft. Mr. Judson, from this anxiety, had a presentiment that there was something wrong, and declined giving it up. When the circumstance of the alteration was pointed out to the negotiators, they were evidently annoyed at having been detected; but pretended to consider the words as entirely synonymous. When urged, however, to make the necessary alteration, they declined it, saying it would be necessary to refer the matter to their superiors. I may, indeed, take this opportunity of mentioning, that nearly the whole negotiation had been hitherto conducted on their part under special and detailed instructions on each point from the Lut-d’hau. The Burman negotiators came daily with written instructions, and never decided upon any point, however trifling, without a reference. At the Lut-d’hau, Kaulen Mengyi seemed, from all I could understand, to have been the person who took the principal direction. He was the confidential agent of the Queen and her brother, and expressed no sentiments but what were theirs.

**November 14, 1826**

The Governor of Bassein and a Saré-d’haugyi called yesterday morning, and, in conversation with Mr. Judson, pretended to be very anxious to know when the Governor-General was likely to return from his journey to the upper provinces of Hindostan. They also said that his Majesty was desirous of sending ambassadors to the King of England, and wished to know whether the Governor-General would provide them with a free passage. I was not present when this conversation took place. Mr. Judson came to me in my room, and reported it to me; and I requested him to say, as from himself, in answer to the last subject, that his Majesty the King of England took no direct cognizance of the political affairs of India; and that if the Burman Government sent ambassadors to England,
they must do so at their own cost. About one o’clock, the usual hour for the conferences, the Burman chiefs sent me a message, to request that I would excuse them from coming, as it was a great holiday. This, however, was a mere pretext. They were aware of the holiday, and at the last conference had expressly said that they would come notwithstanding; The fact is, that the Government was perplexed and disappointed that it had gained none of the points which it had so unreasonably calculated upon, and that it was as yet quite unprepared to decide upon the propositions which had been made to it.

On the 10th instant, a circumstance took place, which in almost any other country would have been very immaterial, but which was here attended with unpleasant consequences to the Mission. His Majesty, contrary to the custom of his predecessors, is frequently in the habit of going abroad with little pomp or ceremony. On the occasion now alluded to, he was amusing himself on the river-side with an elephant fight. Four or five soldiers of the European escort happened about this time to cross the river, and passed by without noticing the King, or indeed being aware that he was present. This gave high offence. According to the Burmans, the soldiers ought to have squatted down,—thrown off their shoes, and held up their hands in an attitude of supplication. I was immediately waited upon by the chiefs to remonstrate upon the conduct of the soldiers, which was represented by them to be such as would have cost a Burman his head! I had the satisfaction to find, on inquiry, that the soldiers were not in the least to blame; and assured the chiefs, that had they been aware of his Majesty’s presence, they would have conducted themselves with every possible respect towards him, and rendered him the same compliment as to their own sovereign. This assurance, however, fell far short of their expectations. I informed them, therefore, that the soldiers should not again be allowed to enter the town, to prevent the possibility of all misunderstanding on the subject. Independent of my assurance, however, they took effectual steps to prevent their doing so, by ordering the gates of the town to be closed whenever persons belonging to the Mission presented themselves. As an apology for this ungracious proceeding, the example of the Chinese embassy was quoted, no individual belonging to which, it was stated, and I believe correctly, was ever allowed to enter the walls of Ava. The King was described to us as
being in a high state of irritation,—going about with a spear in his hand, as is his custom on such occasions, and vowing destruction to his recreant Ministers, whom he charged with all kinds of offences. If I am rightly informed, his irritation arose from a different cause. Upon our first arrival, his Ministers appear to have deceived him with false hopes and expectations, by representing “that the British Mission was sent by the Governor-General to make submissions, and to atone for what had passed, by entering into arrangements for the restoration of the ceded provinces, and the remission of the debt due.” There was a necessity for undeceiving his Majesty at last; and his coming to a knowledge of the real facts was, in all probability, the true cause of the displeasure which his Ministers feigned to attribute to the pretended disrespect of the European soldiers. I should have mentioned also, that offence was taken at the conduct of some of our native followers, and especially of the Lascars, or native seamen of the steam-vessel. The charge against them also was want of due respect when the King presented himself. It was stated that they did not throw themselves, as they should have done, into a crouching attitude; but stood on tiptoe, and stared—far too curiously!

The old Governor of Bassein called again in the evening, and was most anxious to exact from me, as he had often been before, a promise that I would speak “favourably” to the Governor-General respecting the restoration of the ceded provinces. They place implicit reliance upon assurance made to them by any European of character, and eagerly catch at the remotest hint of a promise; so that it became necessary to be extremely guarded in what was said to them. On their side, they are profuse of promises, which they unblushingly deny having ever made, when it suits their convenience. I am not quite sure that they respect us, as politicians at least, for adhering to our word, although they are loud enough in praise of our disposition to veracity. To tell the truth, is one of the five great commandments of their religion; but never was a precept more dis-regarded. They pride themselves, on the contrary, upon being cunning; and ascribe much more discredit to being overreached, than to being convicted of the most flagitious falsehoods. Mr. Judson informed me, that when he was in prison, he overheard two chiefs, who were subjected to a temporary confinement for some peccadillo, discoursing together.
on moral subjects. The elder of the two asked the other if he knew the proper definition of an “upright man.” The younger professed his ignorance; when the senior added, “Then I will tell you: an upright man is exactly the same thing as a witless man or a simpleton.” Maongrit, the senior Atwen-wun, who gave in a formal note at the last conference, recommending to all parties loyalty, disinterestedness, and truth, was detected, in the course of the day, in what was little short of a forgery; and the following anecdote will prove with how ill a grace he appeared as the advocate of loyalty and disinterestedness:—As the British troops were advancing to Prome, he was entrusted, as a Privy Counsellor of the King, with putting that important post in a state of defence. He levied heavy contributions upon the inhabitants for this purpose, appropriated them all to his own use, neglected the fortifications, and Prome consequently fell without resistance into our hands. A superior officer, I believe the Prince of Sarawadi, discovered his notorious malversation and neglect of duty, degraded him from his office, forced him to refund, and placed him in two pair of fetters. In this state he continued for many months. He was at last restored to office through the influence of Kaulen Mengyi, and was now, of course, the devoted creature of this Minister.

November 15, 1826

Close to our dwelling there was the neatest temple which I had yet seen in the country. It was quite unique, being entirely built of hewn sandstone. The workmanship was neat, but the polished stone was most absurdly disfigured by being daubed over with whitewash. The temple itself is a solid structure, at the base of a square form, each face measuring about eighty-eight feet. It is surrounded by a court paved with large sandstone flags, and enclosed by a brick wall. At each corner of the area there is a large and handsome bell with an inscription. To the eastern face of the temple there are two open wooden sheds, each supported by thirty-eight pillars. These were among the richest things of the kind that I had seen in the country. The pillars, the carved work, the ceiling, the eaves, and a great part of the outer roof, were one blaze of gilding. In one of them only there was a good marble image of Gautama, of which the annexed plate is a faithful representation.
Buildings of this description are called by the Burmans Za-yat, or, in more correct orthography, Ja-rat. Some of these are attached to temples, but others are on the public road. Their purpose is both civil and religious. They constitute a kind of caravanseras, where travellers repose themselves. Votaries who repair to the temple to perform their devotions, use them as resting-places and refectories; and it is from them that the priests deliver their orations or discourses. On the west side of the temple there is a long, rudely constructed wooden shed, where are deposited the offerings made by the King and his family to the temple. These consist of two objects only, state palanquins and figures of elephants. The palanquins are the gifts of the late King's wives and concubines, bequeathed by the will of the deceased to the temple. It is among the superstitions of the royal family, that the houses and equipages of the individuals belonging to it cannot, as things too sacred, be used by others after their death. Their costly edifices are constantly allowed to go to decay, and their equipages are presented to the temples. The palanquins now alluded to are litters of immense size and weight, with two poles, and each requiring forty men to bear them. They are all richly gilt and carved, with a high wooden canopy over them. In each of those in the temple there was placed one or more large figures of Gautama or his disciples. The figures of elephants are about a foot and a half high, standing upon wooden pedestals. The material is wood gilt over, and the figure of the animal is very well preserved; for the Burmans pride themselves upon this, as we found when we submitted our drawings of the white elephant to them. These figures, which would be considered as good children's toys amongst us, are annually presented by the King, to the number, I believe, of four, and have increased now to a hundred and eighty, the accumulated donations of five-and-forty years. Why the gifts to this temple in particular consist of elephants, I was not able to learn. In another temple of Sagaing, Which I visited a few days back, the greater number of the offerings consisted of small marble images of Buddha, not about fifteen inches high. Of these, I counted not less than between three and four hundred.

On the river-face of the temple which I have now been describing, there are two large houses of brick and mortar of one story, with flat stone roofs, called Taik by the Burmans, and purporting to be in imitation of European dwellings. These are also
considered Za-yats, or caravanseras. They are comfortless places as can be, the interior being so occupied with stone pillars that there is hardly room to move about. These two buildings were occupied by the Cochin Chinese Mission in 1821, and were proposed for our accommodation; but we declined them, chiefly on account of their dampness and want of light.

The guardian Nat of the temple now described, is Tha-kyamen, or, more correctly, Sakya Men, or the Lord Sakya. He is, according to the Burmans, the second in power of the two Kings of the Nats. Of this personage there is in a small temple a standing figure, in white marble, not however of a very good description, measuring not less than nine feet eleven inches high. The statue seems to be of one entire block.

I have been thus minute in describing the present temple, not only because it is a complete specimen of the best Burman modern architecture, but still more on account of the history of the building itself, which is extremely curious, and places the character of the Government in a very odious light. In a small vaulted building, within the area surrounding it, there is a handsome marble slab, with an inscription on both sides in the Pali character. From this it appears, that the temple is named Aong-mre-lo-ka; which, as far as I can understand, means the “ground or spot of victory;”—that it was built by the late King, in the year 1144 of Burman time, or 1782 of ours, being the second year of his reign;—that he endowed it with four hundred and thirty-seven slaves; and, that he fed and clothed five thousand priests on the occasion of its consecration. His Majesty, in the inscription, vaunts of his own wisdom and power; describes himself as master of one-fourth of the universe, meaning the whole terrestrial globe; and states that one hundred kings paid him homage. The authentic history of the foundation of the temple is less to his Majesty’s credit, and, in truth, paints him as an odious and unfeeling tyrant. He was the fourth son of Alompra, the founder of the present dynasty. His first and second brother, and his nephew, the son of the last, had respectively succeeded Alompra. Maongmaong, the son of the elder brother, had been excluded from the throne by his uncle, who first occupied it himself, and then left the succession to his own son, Senku-sa. Men-ta-ra-gyi, the founder of the temple, conspired against the son of his younger brother, raised the son of the elder brother to the throne, and in a few days
seized the throne for himself, and caused his nephew, the legitimate successor of Alompra, to be drowned in the Irawadi. It was to consecrate such deeds as these that he built the costly temple which I have just described, and upon the very spot where his own house, as a prince, had stood, and from which he had commenced his successful rebellion. The persons made slaves were the unoffending inhabitants of the district allotted for subsistence, while a prince, to the nephew whom he had murdered. To make this picture of tyranny complete, it is necessary to understand what is the lot of those condemned to be slaves to a temple. They are reduced, hereditarily and for ever, to the same degraded rank in society as the Chandalas, or burners of the dead. They cannot intermarry with the rest of the people, nor indeed in almost any manner associate with them, and few persons will even condescend to sit down and eat with them. This is a fair sample of the united effects of despotism and superstition among the Burmans.

The perpetrator of these acts was not only an eminently pious prince, but he was a learned theologian, and from a very early period of his reign aimed at the character of a religious reformer. He was in the habit of summoning the Rahans or Pun- gyis (The two names by which the Burman priests are commonly known) into his presence, and catechising and instructing them in their duties. The result of this was a declaration on his part that he found them extremely ignorant. For the last three or four years of his life, his passion for reform proceeded to very great lengths indeed, and he issued an edict, in which he professed his determination to bring the worship of Gautama back to its ancient purity and simplicity. In this he stated that the Rahans were not only ignorant of their religious duties, but that they lived luxuriously in comfortable convents, that they had fine gardens and good furniture, all which was contrary to the ancient purity of the Buddhist worship; and he blamed one of his predecessors, a prince of Pugan, for having introduced this criminal laxity of discipline. He accordingly ordered all priests, on pain of being reduced to the condition of laymen, to retire from the convents—to live in caves and forests, there to study the sacred scriptures assiduously—to content themselves with clothing sufficient to cover their nakedness, and to eat only at night, and as if by stealth! The priests were by no means prepared to conform to
such austerities, and for about three months there was scarcely one to be seen. His Majesty at this time was in his dotage, and the then Heir-apparent, the present King, took upon him to issue a secret order, permitting the priests to return to their convents, which they accordingly did; and his Majesty’s attempts at reform, which continued for nearly thirty years, proved in the sequel completely abortive. It is only surprising that, as they do not appear to have been very discreetly managed, they did not cost the reformer his life and throne. Some have been of opinion that his Majesty altogether disbelieved the popular religion, and that his pretended reforms were a mere cloak for subverting it altogether, but this does not appear probable.

The Burmese negotiators did not make their appearance today till half-past four o’clock in the evening. This was premeditated. There was but one point which they were desirous to introduce, and they knew that the late-ness of the hour would preclude the discussion of any other.

The following conversation took place:

BURMESE: At Yandabo the war was brought to a close. We ceased from till military operations, and we have completed the second instalment, when your troops ought to have withdrawn from Rangoon. You engaged with us yourself that you would write to the English general, requesting him to withdraw.

CRAWFURD: I will comply to the letter with any promise which I have made. My engagement with you was to write to Sir A. Campbell to withdraw the troops, without regard to the adjustment of the accounts of the second instalment, if you brought me the Commercial Treaty signed and sealed on the 15th instant, this day.

BURMESE: We shall not sign the treaty until your troops shall have first quitted Rangoon; We beg you, therefore, to write to the general; and as soon as authentic accounts shall have been received that your troops have retired, we will sign the treaty and deliver it to you.

CRAWFURD: I have already informed you that I have accounts from Sir Archibald Campbell, stating that the second instalment is
not completed, and requesting me to demand from your Government a balance of 142,682 rupees. This balance, as it was a disputed account, I was willing to take upon myself the responsibility of remitting, to show the favourable disposition of the British Government. Sir Archibald Campbell, I have very little doubt, will evacuate Rangoon immediately, whether the balance be paid or not; but if he does so without an adjustment of the account, you Will still be considered liable for the balance. My engagements cease with you to-day, since you have not brought the treaty. I decline complying with your request to write to Sir Archibald Campbell to withdraw the troops before the signature and delivery of the Commercial Convention, as well as accepting this document on the terms you propose. To evince the sincerity of the promise made by me, I prepared an instrument in the form of a convention, binding the British Government to consider The second instalment as completed, as well as to withdraw forthwith from Rangoon. A Burman translation of it is before me, and you are welcome to peruse it. You stipulated at Yandabo to make a Commercial treaty: I heretofore argued for such an one as I thought would be mutually beneficial. I will now take any one you may think proper to give, and I decline farther discussion on the question. Here is a note containing my final sentiments:

Since it is contained in the seventh article of the Treaty of Yandabo, that ‘in order to promote the prosperity of the two nations,’ an additional treaty shall be made, relative to opening ‘the gold and silver road’ (A figurative expression of the Burmese language for commerce), and carrying on trade: for the purpose of making such a Commercial Treaty I have come to the Royal presence. If the treaty of five articles, which I ask, be agreed to, the gold and silver road will be opened, and this will, in my opinion, promote the prosperity of both countries. If the Atwen-wuns think that it will not promote the prosperity of the Burman country, I shall not demand it. Give such a treaty as the Atwen-wuns are disposed to make. Let us use our endeavours to perpetuate friendship.

I proceeded to take steps to sign and seal this paper,—a circumstance which occasioned great alarm to the Burman chiefs,
who feared that it contained something which, like the note respecting the Martaban frontier, would have brought the discussion to a close. Putting off the perusal of it, they entreated me not to give it in; thus evincing, in a manner which they could not conceal, their great anxiety to obtain the terms which had been offered to them. The first Atwen-wun had commenced the conference in a noisy manner, almost bordering upon rudeness; but upon the production of the note, he entirely changed his tone, and solicited to be allowed to peruse the instrument which I had prepared, stipulating for the evacuation of Rangoon, and the remission of the balance claimed by the British Government.

This, which was as follows, was handed to him in the Burman language:

Article 1.—With a view to cement the bonds of friendship between the two powers, and for the accommodation of his Majesty the King of Ava, the British Government hereby consents that the payment of the third instalment of twenty-five lacs of sicca rupees, and that of the fourth instalment of a similar amount, due by the Burman to the British Government, according to the fifth and additional articles of the treaty concluded at Yandabo, and payable respectively on the 24th day of February 1826, and 24th day of February 1827, shall not be considered to become due—the first of these instalments, until on or before the 15th day of November 1827, and the last, until on or before the 15th of November 1828.

Article 2.—The British Government hereby consents to forego any claim which it may have on the Burman Government, in as far as regards the second instalment of twenty-five lacs of rupees, due on the 4th day of June last; and it is hereby agreed, that within twenty days of the receipt of this convention by the British commander of the forces at Rangoon, that town shall be delivered over to the Burman authorities, and the British army finally evacuate the Burman territory.
BURMESE: This is all very well, but we wish an article to be added, stating, that if these terms be not fulfilled, neither shall the Commercial Treaty be valid.

CRAWFURD: I agree that such a condition should be added.

BURMESE: I see that when we disagree, the interpreters only are to blame. When they interpret correctly every thing goes on right.

This charge against the interpreters had no foundation whatever. The Atwen-wun made it smiling, and intended it as an apology for any thing unpleasant which might have escaped at the commencement of the conference. The additional article was prepared on the spot, translated, and handed to the chiefs. They immediately commenced a strict analysis and examination of the whole instrument, amplifying and changing the forms of expression; but making no material alteration, except in one particular,—that of extending the period of paying the third and fourth instalments. Pretending not to understand the times specified in my draft, they inserted one year for each instalment, after the period stipulated for in the Treaty of Yandabo; which, by Burman reckoning, would have made the time of payment later by four months than that which I had engaged for. This attempt was immediately checked by Mr. Judson.

CRAWFURD: Have you made the necessary alteration in the fourth article?

BURMESE: The day after to-morrow we will take into consideration the alterations to be made in the Commercial Treaty; and two days after that again, all the papers will be ready to be sealed and signed.

The conference concluded with a speech from the junior Atwen-wun, recommending to all parties such a line of conduct as would tend, in his phrase, “to gladden the heart of the sun-rising King.” This person had not hitherto taken-any leading share in the discussions, and was evidently a man of inferior capacity to his coadjutor, as well as less in the confidence of the party in power.
November 16th, 1826

Having obtained permission some time ago, although with considerable difficulty, to send our people to the range of mountains to the north-east of Ava, Dr. Wallich’s assistant, and two of his plant-collectors, proceeded thither on the morning of the 10th, and after two days’ journey arrived at the foot of the hills, which appeared to be twenty or five-and-twenty miles distant from Sagaing. On the 12th, he ascended the hills, which it took seven hours to accomplish. Dr. Wallich’s assistant, who had been with him at Nepaul, thought the height not less than that of Siwapoor, near Katmandu, and this is known to be four or five thousand feet above the level of the valley. There are three ranges of hills, and our people went as far as the most distant. The table-land is of considerable extent, and there are several villages upon it, with a scanty cultivation of mountain-rice, some maize, ginger, and other esculent plants. The hills, however, are principally covered with forest trees, from thirty to forty feet high, with very little underwood; the cold experienced was very considerable. Specimens of the rock were collected all the way from the foot to the top of the hills, and proved to be everywhere compact limestone, white, blue, and red. The Irawadi passes close to the foot of the hills; and along its banks our travellers returned to-day. The part of the country they passed through was much infested by robbers; and yesterday they saw the spot where a man had been a few hours before murdered, on account of a load of rice which he was carrying to Ava. A little of the rice was still scattered about; and the bamboo, on which the baskets were carried, was still lying on the ground.

The Ministers last night reported to the King the progress of the negotiation. His Majesty was highly indignant, said his confidence had been abused, and that now, for the first time, he was made acquainted with the real state of affairs. He accused the Ministers of falsehoods, malversations, and all kinds of offences. His displeasure did not end in mere words; he drew his Dâ, or sword, and sallied forth in pursuit of the offending courtiers. These took to immediate flight,—some leaping over the balustrades which rail in the front of the Hall of Audience, but the greater number escaping by the stair which leads to it; and in the confusion which attended their endeavours (tumbling head over heels), one on top of another. Such royal paroxysms are pretty frequent, and, although
attended with considerable sacrifices of the kingly dignity, are always bloodless. The late King was less subject to these fits of anger than his present Majesty, but he also occasionally forgot himself. Towards the close of his reign, and when on a pilgrimage to the great temple of Mengwan, a circumstance of this description took place, which was described to me by an European gentleman, himself present, and one of the courtiers. The King had detected something flagitious, which would not have been very difficult. His anger rose; he seized his spear, and attacked the false Ministers. These, with the exception of the European, who was not a party to the offence, fled tumultuously. One hapless courtier had his heels tripped up in his flight: the King overtook him, and wounded him slightly in the calf of the leg with his spear, but took no farther vengeance.

November 17, 1826

The Burman chiefs came, as usual, at one o'clock. A Than-d’hau-than read a copy of the Commercial Treaty, as agreed upon at former conferences; and Mr. Judson held in his hand the copy given in to us in the handwriting of the same Than-d’hau-than. The first, fourth, and fifth articles agreed exactly. In the third article, the words “hinderance” and “molestation,” as applied to British ships in Burman ports, were omitted in the draft produced by the Burman negotiators, but were inserted after a short explanation. In the second article, respecting the free exportation of money, the ominous words, “according to custom,” were twice over interpolated. It became necessary to remonstrate against the unfairness of making alteration in a document which was the groundwork of the engagement which had been entered into.

CRAWFURD: You have inserted an expression in your draft which is not contained in the original, and upon which I made my engagement with you: no alteration, even verbal, ought to be made without my sanction, unless you desire the engagement should no longer be binding, and that you propose entering; upon a new arrangement.

BURMESE: The words inserted are of no consequence whatever.
CRAWFURD: As this is the case, you will have the less difficulty in striking them out.

BURMESE: We will not strike them out. It is not proper that ancient customs should be changed.

CRAWFURD: Will you be so good as to strike out the expression which you have inserted without my sanction.

BURMESE: We will not strike them out. If you think, proper, you may depart from your engagement.

CRAWFURD: The draft furnished to me is in your own handwriting, and you certainly ought to have made no alteration; but, as the change is not material, I will not object to it.

BURMESE: We made no alteration. The draft is exactly as it originally stood.

I was not prepared for so stout an assertion as this, and had no wish to contend the point any longer. The Atwen-wuns, however, continued the conversation with Mr. Judson, whom they did not hesitate to charge directly with having erased the expression in his copy. Mr. Judson warmly remonstrated, handed over the copy to the Than-d'hau-than who had written it for perusal, and made him acknowledge that the whole was in his own handwriting, and that no alteration whatever had been made. The Atwen-wuns passed the matter over with a laugh; which did not surprise me, after the repeated examples I had of their great sang-froid on such occasions.

The subject of the convention, for prolonging the period of the payment of the third and fourth instalments, and for adjusting the accounts of the second, was introduced.

CRAWFURD: The sketch of a convention which I produced at the last meeting, and which you altered and corrected according to your own views, is now before us. Let them be compared, and favour me with any observations you may wish to make on the subject.
The drafts were read, compared, and found to agree 
*verbatim*.

CRAWFURD: I propose to you to introduce a clause in the third article of this convention, providing, that in the event of the breach of any one article, none of them shall be binding on either party.

BURMESE: We object to this. The penalty should fall on you only, if your troops do not evacuate Rangoon.

CRAWFURD: You must be well aware that the conditions here are not reciprocal, but contrary to the principle upon which all negotiations ought to be conducted between friendly nations. However, to evince my disposition to oblige you, and to show that I have no inclination to create obstacles, I will assent to the article as it stands.—I wish to make a fair copy of the treaty, as it has now been agreed on; and, to prevent any future discussion or disagreement, I prefer making it from your draft.

BURMESE: We object to this. You had better make it from your own.

CRAWFURD: In your copy there are alterations which I have assented to. It will therefore be much better that the copy should be made from yours.

Here a tedious conversation followed upon this subject; and the Atwen-wuns at length were induced, although very unwillingly, to permit a copy to be taken from their draft.

BURMESE: We have some alterations to propose in this convention, which we will submit at the next conference. We beg also to state, that we wish to give farther consideration to the second article of the Commercial Treaty, respecting the exportation of gold and silver.

CRAWFURD: From what you stated to me at the last conference, and from the discussions which have just taken place, I had reason to imagine that this matter was finally decided upon.
BURMESE: We are desirous of giving the second article mature consideration before we put our final signature to the treaty. We have a farther answer to make to the paper given in by you on the subject of the Martaban frontier. We will produce it at our next meeting.

CRAWFURD: I shall be happy to receive the reply you allude to, and record it for the information of the Governor-General. If it contain any new matter, I will furnish such explanations in writing as it may be in my power to afford.

BURMESE: Let the next conference be held the day after tomorrow. We promise then to bring a definitive answer. In the event of every thing being settled to your liking, is it your intention to return immediately, without waiting upon the King; or do you wish to pay your respects to him [Crawfurd’s original note: The literal expression made use of was, “Do you wish to look with reverence at the royal golden countenance?”], and amuse yourself for a short time in the country?

CRAWFURD: Whatever may be the result of the negotiation, and whether the particular points requested by me be conceded or not, it is most certainly our wish to pay our respects to his Majesty, and to part with you on terms of friendship.

BURMESE: Shall we report to his Majesty that you desire to wait upon him?

CRAWFURD: Most certainly. I take this to be a matter of course, and intended to have made the application.

Notes upon this last subject were carefully taken down by the Atwenwuns, and read to us; the names of the two interpreters being introduced, to attest the accuracy of their report. This statement was evidently prepared in order to be exhibited to the King, who still continued to be much displeased with his courtiers, and declined giving them an audience.

The following is a translation of the Commercial Treaty and Convention, as read, and apparently agreed upon:
Commercial Treaty.--According to the Treaty of Peace between the two great nations, made at Yandabo, in order to promote the prosperity of both countries, and with a desire to assist and protect the trade of both, the Commissioner and Envoy Crawfurd, appointed by the English Ruler, the Company Buren, who rules India, and the Commissioners, the Atwen-wun Mengyi-thi-ri-maha-nanda-then-kyan, Lord of Sau, and the Atwen-wun Mengyi-maha-men-1'ha-thi-ha-thu, Lord of the Revenue, appointed by his Majesty, the Burmese Rising Sun Buren who reigns over Thu-na-pa-ra, Tam-pa-di-pa, and many other great countries, these three, on the ____ of November 1826, according to the English, and the ____ of the decrease of the moon, Tan-soung-mong, 1188, according to the Burmans, in the conference tent, at the landing-place of Sagaing, north of the Golden City of Ra-ta-na-pura, having produced and shown to each other their credentials, with mutual consent signed and sealed this engagement.

Article 1.—Peace being made between the great country governed by the English Prince, the India Company Buren, and the great country of Ra-ta-na-pura, which rules over Thu-na-para, Tam-pa-di-pa, and many other great countries, when merchants with an English certified pass from the country of the English Ruler, and merchants from the kingdom of Burma, pass from one country to the other, selling and buying merchandise, the sentinels at the passes and entrances, the established gate-keepers of the country, shall make inquiry as usual, but without demanding any money; and all merchants coming truly for the purpose of trade with merchandise, shall be suffered to pass without hinderance or molestation. The Governments of both countries also shall permit ships with cargoes to enter ports and carry on trade, giving them the utmost protection and security. And in regard to duties, there shall none be taken, beside the customary duties at the landing-places of trade.

Article 2.—The transportation of gold and silver from one country to the other shall not be prohibited, nor shall duties be taken on those articles. In regard to such exportation,
when piece-goods, and articles of use in one’s own country, are brought from another country, things sold for gold and silver are to be sold, and things exchanged for piece-goods and other articles in demand in one’s own country are to be exchanged. And notwithstanding the exportation of gold and silver from Burma has always been prohibited, since now the English and Burmese Governments have become friends, when merchants with an English certified pass come in boats and ships to Burmese ports for the purpose of trade, they shall, after paying the customary duties, sell their goods, according to custom, and take away the gold and silver for which the goods are sold, and gold and silver obtained in any other way. And if they wish to buy and take away goods, they shall be allowed to do so; and the gold and silver taken away shall pay no duties. When Burmese merchants also come in boats and ships to English ports for the purpose of trade, they shall, after paying the customary duties, sell the goods, according to custom, which remain and take away the gold and silver for which the goods are sold, and gold and silver obtained in any other way, duty free, if they wish to do so: or they shall be allowed to buy and take away without hinderance such piece-goods and other rarities and articles of use as they may desire.

Article 3.— Ships whose breadth of beam on the inside (opening of the hold) is eight royal Burman cubits, of nineteen and one-tenth English inches each, and all ships of smaller size, whether merchants from the Burmese country entering an English port under the Burmese flag, or merchants from the English country with an English stamped pass entering a Burmese port under the English flag, shall be subject to no other demands beside the payment of duties, and ten ticals, twenty-five per cent., (ten sicca rupees) for a chokey pass on leaving. Nor shall pilotage be demanded, unless the captain voluntarily require a pilot. However, when ships arrive, information shall be given to the officer stationed at the ‘entrance of the sea.’ In regard to vessels whose breadth of beam exceeds eight royal cubits, they shall remain, according to the ninth article of the Treaty of Yandabo, without unshipping their rudders or landing
their guns, and be free from trouble and molestation as Burmese vessels in British ports. Besides the royal duties, no more duties shall be given or taken than such as are customary.

Article 4.—Merchants belonging to one country, who go to the other country and remain there, shall, when they desire to return; go to whatever country and by whatever vessel they may desire, without hinderance. Property owned by merchants they shall be allowed to sell. Property not sold, and in the care of Englishmen, or Kulas, subject to the English Government, wives, sons, and daughters, they shall be allowed to take away without hinderance, or incurring any expense.

Article 5.—English and Burmese vessels meeting with contrary winds, or sustaining damage in masts, rigging, &c. or suffering shipwreck on the shore, shall, according to the laws of charity, receive assistance from the inhabitants of the towns and villages that may be near the master of the wrecked ship paying to those, that assist, suitable salvage, according to the circumstances of the case; and whatever property may remain, in case of shipwreck, shall be restored to the rightful owner.

THE CONVENTION—The Commissioner and Envoy Crawfurd, appointed by the English Ruler, the India Company Baren, and the Commissioners the Atwen-wun Mengyi-thi-ri-maha-nanda-then-kyan, Lord of Sau, and the Atwen-wun, Mengyi-maha-men-hla-thi-ha-thu, Lord of the Revenue, appointed by his Majesty the Burmese Rising-Sun Buren. These three, on the ____ day of November 1826, according to the English, and the ____of the decrease of Tan-soung-mong, 1188, according to the Burmese, in the Conference Tent, at the landing-place of Sagaing, north of the Golden City of Ra-ta-na-pu-ra, with mutual consent signed and sealed this engagement.

Article 1.—Whereas it is contained in the fifth and the additional article of the Treaty of Yandabo, that within one
year of the date of that treaty, the third instalment, and within two years the fourth instalment, shall be paid, with a view to perpetuate the friendship between the two great countries, and to please the golden heart, of the Rising-Sun Buren, the third instalment shall be paid within three hundred and sixty-five days from this day, and the fourth within three hundred and sixty-five days from the time of the payment of the third instalment.

Article 2.—Whereas the Wungyi and the Wundauk say that the Burman Government have paid in Rangoon the second instalment, according to the Treaty of Yandabo, the English Generals shall not say that the first and second instalments are not yet fully paid. Having made the engagement of five articles, this engagement that the English General shall leave Rangoon, and the engagement about putting off the third and fourth instalments, within twenty days after they come to the hand of the Commissioner, the English General,\textsuperscript{12} the Chief General now in Rangoon, shall deliver up Rangoon to the Commissioners, the Wungyi, and Wundauk, appointed by the Burman Government, and the English troops shall evacuate the kingdom of Burma.

Article 3.—If the English Governor and Generals remain, notwithstanding the treaty now made, the treaty of five articles shall not stand, but be destroyed, nor the engagement concerning the deferment of the third and fourth instalments.

\textbf{November 18, 1826}

A few days ago, passing along a road close to our dwelling, I met a native of the district of Sylhet, in Bengal, who described himself as having been, during the war, seized by the Burmans, while on business in the country of Assam, and carried off with many others as a prisoner; that is, as a slave: he was very ill for want of food,

\textsuperscript{12} Crawfurd’s original note: Literally, “the chief wearing the cock’s plume,” the name by which Sir Archibald Campbell was always known to the Burmese.
and labouring under dysentery. We had him carried to our quarters; but his disease had gone too far, and he died to-day. The conduct of the Burmans, in their predatory excursions, is cruel and ferocious to the last degree, and scarcely any people of Asia have more greatly abused the right of conquest. They are not themselves unaware of the barbarous spirit in which their wars are conducted. “You see us here,” said some of the chiefs to Mr. Judson, “a mild people, living under regular laws. Such is not the case when we invade foreign countries. We are then under no restraints—we give way to all our passions—we plunder and murder without compunction or control. Foreigners should beware how they provoke us when they know these things.” This was said at the commencement of the late war, and when the Burmese detachments were preparing to invade Cassay, Cachar, and Assam. They appear to have kept their word. Maong-kayo, a Burman chief, invaded Cachar in 1824. I took the examinations, in June 1826, of two of the prisoners who had been made in this expedition. The following, which conveys a frightful picture of the brutal ferocity of this people, is the deposition of one of them; and that of the other agreed with it in every essential point:

My name is Mahomet Ruffy. I am a native of the village of Udarbund, in the country of Cachar. I have been a prisoner of war in Ava. I was seized at my native village, about twenty months ago, by a party of Burmese, belonging to the army of the Chief Maong-kayo. About six thousand persons, including men, women, and children, were seized about the same time. We were all taken away from Cachar. —We were treated with great rigour; we were chained two and two,—got very little food,—were made to carry heavy loads on the march. Women, with infants at the breast, and who, on this account, could not carry loads, had the infants snatched from them, their heads chopped; off before them, and their bodies thrown into the rivers, I have witnessed murders of this description twelve or thirteen times myself. Old and sick persons, who could not carry burthens, were often killed by the Burman soldiers; and their loads, which consisted of plunder, were divided among the other prisoners. The reason that so many persons were seized was, that the Burmans sent numerous parties throughout the country, who
surprised and surrounded the villages, making prisoners of the inhabitants. All the prisoners were afterwards collected and marched off together. After arriving in Ava, we were dispersed all over the neighbourhood, three hundred being sent to one place, four hundred to another, and so on. Another native of Cachar, by name Tareef-gah, and myself, effected our escape from Ava, along with the Bengal Sepoy prisoners, who were lately liberated. I desire to return to my native country, provided I can effect the release of my relatives and friends, who are in captivity.

Among the Burmese, all prisoners of war, whose lives are spared, are condemned to slavery, and generally given by the King as presents to the principal officers of Government. As their fidelity cannot be relied upon,—as they frequently make attempts to escape, and as too many are generally brought at once into the market, the value set upon them is very trifling. An old Siamese woman, who was taken prisoner in her youth, in one of the incursions into Siam, and whose prime cost was a flask of spirits, was pointed out to me at Rangoon. She was sold a second time, I was told, at the enhanced price of five ticals, or 12s. 6d.!!

**November 19, 1826**

A person waited, upon me, in the course of the afternoon, in behalf of the Atwen-wuns, to say that they could not, according to their promise, give me a final answer to-day, as neither they nor any of the other public officers had been able to get a sight of the King for five days. They would come, however, they said, if I wished it, lest I might charge them with breach of engagement, or, as they styled it, Halí-kamà, which means, literally, “falsehood,” or “deceit.” I sent word, that the explanation was quite sufficient for not giving a definitive answer; but that I hoped they would come over, as I had a proposition to make, which might possibly facilitate the business in discussion between us. They came immediately upon receiving this message, and the tenth conference commenced as follows:

BURMESE: We promised at our last meeting to give you to-day a final answer on the subject of the Commercial Treaty, and the
other arrangements connected with it; but, from unavoidable causes, we are unable. We hope you will excuse us.

CRAWFURD: I understand that there are some difficulties respecting the second article, which regards the free export of gold and silver. I wish to make these difficulties as few as possible, and therefore I shall be satisfied that silver only shall be freely exported. At Yandabo you engaged that the “gold and silver” road should be opened. I shall be satisfied with the fulfilment of one-half of this promise. Let the gold, therefore, be prohibited as heretofore. You consider it peculiarly excellent, and for this reason I concede the point to you.

BURMESE: As to taking away silver from the country, it has not heretofore been the custom; nevertheless, as we are friends, we will permit the exportation of silver on the following conditions:—When English merchants come to the country, let them sell their goods, and with the proceeds purchase the produce of the country, as long as there is any produce to buy. When they cannot procure produce, they will have permission to export silver, on making application to the public authorities to the amount of the balance.

CRAWFURD: It is a maxim with us, that all interference of public officers in the concerns of merchants is hurtful. Merchants dislike it, and trade never thrives when Governments meddle. The plan you have just proposed is full of inconvenience and difficulty, and will never answer. I have already said as much upon this subject as was proper, and it is not fitting that I should insist farther upon it. Let the subject, therefore, be dropped.

BURMESE: In the first article of the treaty, it is provided that both Governments shall look after the concerns of merchants; what you now advance is inconsistent with this.

CRAWFURD: Merchants desire no protection from Government, except a fair administration of justice. The first article of the proposed treaty, to which you have alluded, provides that the two Governments shall afford protection and security to merchants. Surely this can never be construed into a permission to officers to
interfere in the private concerns of merchants—concerns of which all public officers must be totally ignorant.

BURMESE: What you desire, then, is, that English merchants should have permission to carry away gold and silver at their pleasure, received for goods imported by them. This is something new!

CRAWFURD: That is exactly what I want; but there is nothing new in it. It is exactly what is contained in the second article which you have yourselves altered and corrected, and which, in this state, has been in your possession for several days. I have demanded nothing but what is practised in all countries in which trade is understood and cherished.

BURMESE: If you consider the, interference of the officers of Government vexatious and improper, let the matter be settled by the Poe-zas, or brokers, of the merchants themselves.

CRAWFURD: The brokers to whom you allude are appointed by the Burman Government, and completely under the control of the local officers. Their acts, therefore, would be exactly the acts of the Government itself. This will never answer. The concession, in the shape in which you make it, is of no value whatever to us, and not worth any sacrifice on our part. Your Government is evidently not prepared to permit the free exportation of gold and silver. Let the subject, therefore, be henceforth dropped; and let it be considered that all my engagements with you, as connected with this matter, are cancelled from this day. You have engaged to make some commercial treaty. I proposed and heretofore argued in favour of such an one as I believed would be mutually beneficial. I will say nothing more upon the subject, but will accept any treaty you think proper to give. I hand you a statement, under my-hand-and seal, containing these sentiments.

The note proposed to be delivered in at the conference of the 17th, was here laid before the Burman negotiators.

BURMESE: We decline taking this paper with your seal to it. We prefer taking a copy only.
CRAWFURD: What objection can there be to the paper having a seal and signature to it? I prefer giving it in this authentic-shape.

BURMESE: We have not said that the free exportation of silver would not be granted. We only said that we could not grant it just now. We beg you, in the mean while, to give due consideration to the proposal which we have just made to you.

CRAWFURD: I have entirely made up my mind with regard to your proposal, and you may consider the reply which I now give as conclusive. I reject it at once, and it is not necessary for you to renew it. Had I contemplated the difficulties which have been made to the free exportation of gold and silver, I never should have proposed the subject at all.

BURMESE: We have now copied the paper given in by you, but we object to receiving the original. It is not good to receive such a document, because it looks as if there was no room for future discussion.

CRAWFURD: As you object to it upon this particular ground, and since you have an authentic copy, I will take it back. I have now been here approaching two months, and it is time that I should return to make my report of what has taken place to the Governor-General. The treaty, with the exception of the second article, is agreed upon, and may be got ready and signed in a day or two. Will you signify my wish to his Majesty, and solicit permission for us to pay our respects to him before we go away? I have ordered the steam-vessel to be got in readiness, and request your assistance in supplying such boats as may be necessary.

To his last communication the Burman officers gave a civil answer in general terms. The proposition respecting the surrender, on my part, of gold in the second article, was carefully noted down, but no answer whatever was given to it. They were in fact not prepared for the subject, and had no authority to speak. They saw, however, that there was some concession in it, and seized upon it from the first moment, as if it were a point actually stipulated for, and not contingent upon concessions to be made on their side. In accordance with this, when the subject of exporting the precious
metals was alluded to in the conversation which ensued, silver alone was mentioned, and gold carefully excluded. I was induced to make the proposition of confining the free export of money to silver, on the following grounds:—gold is in steady demand among the Burmans for gilding and plate, and, from what I can understand, is generally higher priced in the Burman dominions than in our own territories. It is also easily smuggled, and has always been so to a considerable extent by the Burman traders themselves. Under these circumstances, the prohibition to export it would be no great detriment or restraint to British commerce; while it might be a considerable inducement to the Burman Government to concede the main point, the exportation of silver.

November 21, 1826

I received information yesterday evening, from two quarters, that the Burman Government had made up their mind not to grant the free exportation of gold and silver, but that they had another project to offer, with a view of getting the period of paying the third and fourth instalments put off for a time. The proposal, as I understand, had in view the paying of interest for the debt for a limited time. The Burman Government, notwithstanding the mysteriousness of its character, certainly does not possess the art of keeping its own counsel. Every thing of consequence which transpired in the Palace was soon made known to us, and we were generally made acquainted with the different propositions to be brought forward by the Burman negotiators, always a day or two before the conferences on which they were introduced. I was this morning informed that a boat had arrived at Prome with dispatches from Sir Archibald Campbell. Our situation, I have no doubt, had excited some uneasiness among our friends at Rangoon, for the watchfulness and suspicion of the Burman Government had prevented us from writing ever since our arrival; so that no accounts of us could have been received for nearly two months and a half.

November 23, 1826

The old Governor of Bassein and the Commander of the Guard of Swordsmen called twice yesterday with confidential messages from

SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005):636-959
Kaulen Mengyi. These were of a very extraordinary character. The free export of gold and silver, these chiefs stated, could not be granted, because it was contrary to the laws of the empire. The Burman chiefs, however, took a new ground, certainly one not very easy to defend. They said that the Governor-General had sent an Envoy to cement the bonds of friendship between the two nations, and they asked by what means he, the Envoy, proposed to do this. The Burman Government, they said, were prepared, on their side, to grant four favours, meaning the four articles of the Treaty of Commerce which remained, and they wished to know what the Envoy would grant in return. They fully expected, they said, in return for the favours granted by them, without at all considering that the conditions of the treaty were strictly reciprocal, that they should receive at least a promise not only of restoring the provinces, but of remitting the debt of fifty lacs of rupees. In regard to the provinces, Kaulen Mengyi instructed them to hint that they had not been ceded to us in perpetuity. Such an argument, however, was never afterwards brought forward, nor at any time, indeed, publicly mentioned. The question of paying interest, which had been before suggested by the same officers was evaded upon this occasion. These sentiments were communicated to Mr. Judson only, and were accompanied, as usual, by many compliments to this gentleman. They did not hesitate to declare to him, to his face, that he was a person of the utmost prudence, wisdom, and discretion, and they repeatedly addressed him by the name of Pun-gyi, or “holy man,” the most usual appellation of the Burman priesthood. It was in vain to attempt any rational answer. They had been commanded to deliver a certain message, and, without any regard to its reasonableness or propriety, they thought it their duty to insist upon and enforce it.

In our ride this morning, Mr. Chester and I visited a village of lepers, consisting of about twenty houses. Many of the inhabitants were out begging at a considerable distance above Ava, where rice was said to be somewhat cheaper than in the town itself, and therefore charity more easily practised. About one-half the inhabitants of this hamlet, we were told, were affected with the malady. The disease, which the Burmans call Anú, is very frequent in the country. It is the Lepra Arabum, or Elephantiasis. We examined several persons suffering under it. The lepers described the complaint as commencing with a white spot generally on their
thighs or arms. The chief seats of the disorder are the hands and fingers, and the feet and toes; but other parts of the body are not exempt, and it occasionally attacks the bones of the nose. The parts affected have a livid look and a mottled appearance, produced by the cicatrices of old sore. When it attacks the fingers and toes, it destroys the joints and nails, and distorts them. The open sores are not numerous, are generally superficial, and, upon the whole, the appearance of the patients, in ordinary cases, is by no means so offensive as might be expected; nor was there any thing disagreeable in their residence to distinguish it from an ordinary village. The affected part, from the description of the lepers themselves, seems to be nearly dead and insensible. They stated they had no pain when not obliged to move, and that their rest was not disturbed. The disorder probably does not much contribute to shorten life, for I have often seen very old persons labouring under it. One of those whom we examined to-day was a woman, apparently seventy, a captive brought from Aracan, and she said that the disorder broke out when she was a girl of fourteen years of age, and that she had been a martyr to it ever since. Leprosy, according to the Burmans, is not contagious, but, in rare cases, may be communicated by actual contact. Even this much, however, is probably not correct; for sound children may be seen at the breast of leprous women, and we ourselves saw abundant examples of sound women married to leprous husbands, and sound children the offspring of leprous parents. We were particularly struck by seeing one little girl about three years of age, in perfect health, clinging close to her father, who was begging by the road-side, and who was a great martyr to the disorder. That the complaint, however, is frequently hereditary, and may be communicated by parents to their offspring, seems to be generally admitted. Like scrofula and gout, however, it is said to disappear for one or two generations, and to break out in the third or fourth. Like these also, it affects some members of a family, and not others. The disorder, although generally incurable, is not always so: we saw several persons in the village above-mentioned, who, by their own account, had recovered from it, and upon whose persons its scars were still visible.

It would be difficult, I imagine, to trace this disorder to any thing peculiar in the climate, the food, or the habits of the people. It occurs in the moist climate of Rangoon, and the drier climate of
Ava; and, generally speaking, the country throughout is healthy. The effectual price of labour is high, and consequently the Burman peasantry are, upon the whole, well fed, clad, and housed. For an Asiatic people, they are an active and athletic race, remarkably free from bodily infirmities; but, above all, they are free from diseases of the skin to so remarkable a degree, as to strike every stranger who has observed them. With respect to the frequency of leprosy amongst them, it ought, however, to be observed, that a stranger who has visited only the principal towns may easily be deceived, and led to consider it greater than it really is, owing to the circumstance of the lepers naturally coming to the vicinity of these for the facility of getting charity. A number of those whom we examined this morning were certainly natives of distant parts of the country.

The Burman leprosy appears to be the same with the worst form of that disease among the Jews, and also with the leprosy of the middle ages in Europe; and it is singular, how nearly alike is the treatment of the unfortunate persons labouring under it, and the prejudices which exist in regard to the subject. Among the Burmans, lepers are held to be unclean; they are expelled from society, and compelled to live in separate villages, which may be considered as so many lazarettos. The Burmans, however, go much farther than either the Jews or our European ancestors. The lepers themselves are not only expelled from society, but the interdict extends hereditarily, and for ever, to their descendants, who are considered as outcasts, ranking with the burners of the dead, or Chandalas, and other impure classes. A leper, or the child of a leper, can only marry with another leper, or the descendant of a leper. When a candidate presents himself for ordination to the priesthood, he is made to swear that he has no taint of leprosy, and even a priest who is detected with the disorder is expelled forthwith from the monastery. The bodies of all respectable Burmans are burnt and not interred. This rite is denied to the lepers, who can be buried only, or as we would express it in our own case, they are refused “Christian burial.” Leprosy also is considered a sufficient cause for the dissolution of marriages. A leprous wife would be immediately repudiated by her husband, and a wife will part without scruple from a husband who is affected with the disorder. Money however, which can effect wonders among the Burmans, will purchase an exemption for the
wealthy; and the penalties, of course, fall chiefly on the poor. This however, in persons of all ranks, becomes, like almost every other, a subject of the grossest abuse, by affording to the public officers grounds for extortion. A wealthy leper has to pay large sums to the Government and its minions for the privilege of not being expelled from society. A person without, influence, of respectable character, having the scar of a sore of any kind, is liable to be seized by the officers of the Arawun or “superintendent of outcasts,” under pretext of being affected with the leprosy. To avoid the scandal of a public examination, or the risk of being driven from society, they are obliged to pay heavy contributions. It was but two days ago, that a case of this kind occurred at Sagaing. An old woman, with the recent scar of a common boil upon her hand, was seized by one of the petty constables of the Ara-wun, and to avoid being dragged before the tribunal of that chief, a heavy fine was exacted from her. The leprosy, as well as every other physical evil, is considered by the Burmans as an infliction for some crime or transgression in some former state of existence. I believe that adultery is the particular offence for which leprosy is the supposed punishment.

This subject leads me to say a few words regarding the barbarous opinions and customs obtaining amongst the Burmans in regard to some other bodily infirmities or defects. Among the lepers, we found in the village a man afflicted with epilepsy. He told us he had been driven from his native village on account of this malady—that his friends would not own him, and that he was consequently obliged to take up his residence among the lepers. A strong prejudice appears to run not only against all natural deformities (and I imagine this is one cause why so few are to be seen amongst the Burmans), but against those labouring under incurable diseases, and even against such as have been accidentally mutilated. There is an indescribable mixture of caprice, folly, and inhumanity, in the different modes in which this is evinced. One who has lost the sight of both eyes, is forbidden to enter the Palace inclosure; but if he has lost the sight of one only, he may enter. The dumb are also interdicted from this privilege, and the loss of an ear or nose is a sufficient disqualification for the same honour. The loss of any limb, even in action, and when defending the rights of his sovereign or country, deprives a Burman of the right of entering the Palace enclosure, and is attended with the inevitable consequence of the loss of
Court favour and preferment. It would be no invidious deduction from these facts to say, that the religion and customs of the Burmese are not calculated to make heroes or patriots. This will account for the extraordinary conduct of some of the Burmese prisoners who were wounded in different actions with us, and who refused to suffer amputation; or tore off the bandages, and bled to death after it was performed. One young man who had submitted to the operation, mistook the nature of it altogether, and, conceiving that this was our peculiar mode of treating prisoners of war, with the passive courage and disregard of life so frequent with the people of the East, presented the sound leg also for amputation! These lamentable prejudices originate from their religious belief. Every physical evil, it must be repeated, is considered by the Buddhists as the punishment, not so much of offences committed in the present state of existence, as of transgressions in some previous migration. They are not considered as punishments for the benefit of the soul of the sufferer, according to the more generous and consoling view taken of such cases by our ancestors, but as inevitable inflictions merited by the individual on account of himself or ancestors, and the necessary results of the present imperfect order of the world. Those afflicted, consequently experience, generally speaking, little compassion or sympathy. There is indeed some merit in bestowing charity upon lepers and other beggars; but it is very trifling indeed, in comparison with that of giving alms to the priests, or making gifts to or endowing temples.

November 24, 1826

I received intimation yesterday, that the Burman negotiators would meet us to-day, and they accordingly came about one o’clock. A short time before their arrival, I was informed that they would come ready to sign and seal such a Commercial Treaty as they had made up their minds to give. I was a good deal surprised at this statement after the procrastination which had been practised; and would have discredited the account altogether, had I not learned to understand, by this time, that the Burman Government is capable of acting upon occasions with a caprice which baffles all calculation. The account which I had thus received proved to be strictly true. The two chiefs made their appearance with the public.
seal of the Government, and two expert writers, for the purpose of making fair copies of the proposed treaty, should I accept it. Under the belief that farther discussion would serve no useful purpose, and might even produce an unpleasant degree of irritation, I resolved to accept of the proffered document, provided it contained nothing extravagant of improper.

The conference commenced as follows:

BURMESE: At the last conference you stated, in reference to the Commercial Treaty, that you would insist upon nothing which it would be unpleasant to us to grant. We have now prepared such a treaty as we are disposed to give. If you accept of it, we will cause two copies to be made.

The paper was here given in, and proved to be the draft heretofore agreed upon; the second article, providing for the free export of gold and silver, being omitted; and that clause of the fourth article, now become the third, allowing the families of merchants to quit the country, being struck out.

CRAWFURD: I agree to the treaty as you now present it, and I am ready to sign and seal it. As there were considerable discrepancies between the Burman and English copies in the Treaty of Yandabo, and as, out of consideration to you, the Burman copy has always been acted upon, I propose now that the original treaty should be in Burman only.

BURMESE: We agree to this, but request you will furnish us, at the next conference, with an attested English translation.

CRAWFURD: I will be sure to supply you with the translation you require.

The copyists now began to make drafts of the treaty, which, from the tedious manner in which they proceeded, took up nearly three hours, during which time, little or no other business was transacted. My chief motives for proposing a Burman original copy of the treaty only, I have expressed in my observations to the Atwen-wuns. In addition to these, I may state, that so many
Burman idioms, and so much amplification had been introduced by the chiefs, from time to time, that I found it would be very difficult to make a fair translation in tolerably good English, that would correspond strictly with the Burman version.

BURMESE: The treaty is now nearly ready for seal and signature. You intimated to us at the last meeting, that, whatever might be the result of the commercial negotiation, the friendship between the two nations should not be interrupted. We beg you now to inform us, by what means you propose to cement the friendship you alluded to, and to furnish us with some proofs of it.

CRAWFURD: When the treaty is signed and sealed, I shall be glad to take into friendly consideration any proposition which you have to make. For my own part, my business is now done. I have no favours to ask.

The junior Atwenwun was here upon the point of insisting that the granting of the four articles of the Commercial Treaty were favours conceded by the Burman to the British Government, but was interrupted by his co-adjutor.

BURMESE: Although it be not a subject relating to the Commercial Arrangement, we beg to state that we desire now to renew the question of the postponement of the third and fourth instalments, on the score of friendship.

CRAWFURD: I request you will state to me distinctly what your wishes are upon this subject.

JUNIOR ATWENWUN: A Commercial Treaty has now been signed and sealed, and friendship must increase in consequence. We hope, therefore, that you will agree to put off the payment of the third and fourth instalments, as heretofore arranged.

BURMESE: If you mean to say that you expect me to defer the payment of the third and fourth instalments unconditionally, and without receiving an equivalent from you, I must plainly say, that I will not. The Atwenwuns made a reply to this, in which the
question of paying interest was introduced; but after some hesitation they requested Dr. Price not to translate it.

BURMESE: When we have made up our minds upon the subject of the proposition which we have to offer on this subject, we will solicit another conference.

CRAWFURD: This is putting the conferences off indefinitely. I beg you to fix a day for the next. My business is now concluded, and I wish to return, that I may be able to report to my Government. It is my intention to leave Ava, if possible, in about seven days.

BURMESE: You, of course, desire to see the King before your departure.

CRAWFURD: Certainly, if his Majesty expresses a wish to grant us an audience.

BURMESE: We beg you will take into your consideration the difficult circumstances of our situation in respect to this point. If you fix on too early a day for your departure, it may not suit the King’s convenience to give you an audience within that period.

CRAWFURD: Although the principal business of my mission to Ava is now settled, I beg you to understand, that I shall not, on that account, be the less disposed to give a friendly attention to any fair proposition which you may desire to make.

A civil reply, in general terms only, was given to this observation. The Burman commissioners, from the moment of my accepting the treaty, were greatly out of spirits, especially the senior, who, for the first time, allowed the junior to take a lead in the conversation. The impression which their behaviour made upon us, was, that they had proffered the treaty not in good faith, but as a mere artifice; and that they were mortified and disappointed that difficulties were not made, upon our side, especially on the subject of the fourth article, from which they might have drawn some advantage when their proposition to defer the payment of the third and fourth instalments should be brought forward.
The treaty was signed, sealed, and delivered, about six in the evening. The following is a literal translation:

A Commercial Treaty, signed and sealed at the Golden City of Ra-ta-na-pura, on the 23d of November 1826, according to the English, and the ninth of the decrease of the moon, Tansoung-mong, 1188, according to the Burmans, by the Envoy Crawfurd, appointed by the English Ruler, the Company Buren, who governs India; and the Commissioners the Atwenwun, Mengyi-thi-ri-maha-then-kyan, Lord of Sau, and the Atwenwun Men-gyi-maha-men-l'ha-thi-ha-thu. Lord of the Revenue, appointed by his Majesty, the Burmese Rising Sun Buren, who reigns over Thu-na-pa-ran-ta, Tam-pa-di-pa, and many other great countries.

According to the Treaty of Peace between the two great nations made at Yandabo in order to promote the prosperity of both countries, and with a desire to assist and protect the trade of both, the Commissioner and Envoy Crawfurd, appointed by the English Company Buren, who rules India, and the Commissioners the Atwenwun, Mengyi-thi-ri-mahananda-then-kyan, Lord of Sail, and the Atwenwun, Mengyi-maha-men-l'ha-thi-ha-thu, Lord of the Revenue, appointed by his Majesty the Burmese Sun rising Buren, who reigns over Thu-na-pa-ra, Tam-pa-di-pa, and many other great countries:—these three, in the Conference Tent at the landing-place of Ze-ya-pu-ra, north of the Golden City of Ra-ta-na-pura, with mutual consent completed this engagement.

Article 1.—Peace being made between the great country governed by the English Ruler, the Indian Company Buren, and the great, country of Ra-ta-na-pura, which rules over Thu-na-pa-ra, Tam-pa-di-pa, and many other great countries, when merchants with an English certified pass from the country of the English Ruler, and merchants from the kingdom of Burma, pass from one country to the other,

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13 Crawfurd's original note: A corruption of the Sanscrit Jaya-pura, or “city of victory”—a name for Sagaing.
selling and buying merchandise, the sentinels at the passes and entrances, the established gate-keepers of the country, shall, make inquiry as usual, but without demanding any money; and all merchants coming truly for the purpose of trade with merchandise shall be suffered to pass, without hinderance or molestation. The Governments of both countries also shall permit ships with cargoes to enter ports and carry on trade, giving them the utmost protection and security. And in regard to duties, there shall hone be taken, beside the customary duties at the landing-places of trade.

Article 2.—Ships whose breadth of beam on the inside (opening of the hold) is eight royal Burman cubits, of nineteen and one-tenth English inches each, and all ships of smaller size, whether merchants from the Burmese country entering an English port under the Burmese flag, or merchants from the English country with an English stamped pass entering a Burmese port under the English flag, shall be subject to no other demands beside the payment of duties, and ten ticals, twenty-five per cent. (ten sicca rupees) for a passport on leaving. Nor shall pilotage be demanded, unless the captain voluntarily requires a pilot. However, when ships arrive, information shall be given to the officer stationed at the entrance of the sea. In regard to vessels whose breadth of beam exceeds eight royal cubits, they shall remain according to the ninth article of the Treaty of Yandabo, without unshipping their rudders or landing their guns, and be free from trouble and molestation as Burmese vessels in British ports. Besides the royal duties, no more duties shall be given or taken than such as are customary.

Article 3.—Merchants belonging to one country, who go to the other country and remain there, shall, when they desire to return, go to whatever country and by whatever vessel they may desire, without hinderance. Property owned by merchants they shall be allowed to sell. And property not sold, and household furniture, they shall, be allowed to take away, without hinderance, or incurring any expense.
Article 4.—English and Burmese vessels meeting with contrary winds, or sustaining damage in masts, rigging, &c. or suffering shipwreck on the shore, shall, according to the laws of charity, receive assistance from the inhabitants of the towns and villages that may be near; the master of the wrecked ship paying to those that assist suitable salvage, according to the circumstances of the case; and whatever property may remain, in case of shipwreck, shall be restored to the owner.

November 25, 1826

The Armenian Sarkies Manook, who brought up our dispatch on the 9th, and whose useful services, as interpreter to Sir Archibald Campbell during the war, are well known to those acquainted with the history of the Burman war, did not think it prudent to call upon us until about four days ago, in consequence of the jealousy with which his movements were watched by the Burman Government. He called again to-day, and expressed his alarm at his situation, signifying that his personal safety required that he should return to Rangoon along with us. Spies were set round his house, and although he had brought a large investment of goods, well suited for the market, he was not able to effect sales even to the smallest extent, no Burman merchant daring to come near him. This affords a true picture of the Burman Government. Should any one in such a case, that is, when an individual is labouring under the displeasure or suspicion of Government, presume to purchase goods belonging to him, and they are afterwards discovered in the possession of the buyer, they are declared to be illegally obtained, and in due course confiscated,—the offender being farther liable to fine, imprisonment, or corporal punishment, according to circumstances. This is not a matter which happens now and then, but an established and well-known custom, of frequent occurrence. S. Manook had made to the King and his officers presents to the value of 22,000 rupees; but, notwithstanding this, he had not found it safe even to hint at his claims upon the Government, which, according to his statement, amount to above four lacs of rupees, or 40,000l. Yesterday we had again the pleasure of receiving another dispatch, from Rangoon,
which came in nineteen days, under the escort of a corporal and four Sepoys. This brought us Indian and Europe letters and public dispatches from Rangoon and Calcutta.

November 26, 1826

Yesterday forenoon the two Atwenwuns paid us a complimentary visit at our house, which they had never done before. The object of this condescension could not be mistaken: they were desirous of using every means and every persuasion to induce me to put off for a time the payment of the third and fourth instalments without the payment of interest,—a project which seems now to have been dropped, though at one time eagerly courted. The visit was long, but it was not until towards the close of it that any business was introduced.

The following notes of the conversation that took place were taken down:

CRAWFURD: I received letters yesterday from Sir Archibald Campbell. He was upon the point of quitting Rangoon, and by this time has left it, without staying out the whole time by which you had exceeded the period of paying the second instalment. Everything is amicably settled in that quarter. This has happened as I repeatedly informed you it would. There was no occasion, therefore, I must remind you, of the doubts and anxieties expressed by you upon this point. We never depart from the solemn engagements which we have made.

BURMESE: This is all right. We have information from the Wungyi at Henzada, that he has been invited to Rangoon by Sir Archibald Campbell. The time is now drawing near for the payment of the third instalment. We shall not be able to fulfil our engagement, for we have not the means. We beg to bring this circumstance under your consideration.

CRAWFURD: I communicated my sentiments to you at the last meeting. Have you any new proposal to make?

BURMESE: What we request is, that you would engage to put off the payment of the third and fourth instalments, in the same
manner you proposed doing, had we assented to the free exportation of gold and silver, as well as given permission to merchants to take away their families.

CRAWFURD: As I mentioned to you before, I have no specific authority to put off the third and fourth instalments even one day. I promised you, however, that if you could show that you had difficulty in making prompt payment, and that you executed at the same time. such a Commercial Treaty as was promised at Yandabo, I would take upon myself the responsibility of prolonging, for a moderate time, the period of paying the third and fourth instalments. You have not executed such a treaty; and I have, therefore, now no plea whatever to urge with my Government for taking so heavy a responsibility upon myself as is implied in your proposal.

BURMESE: At a conference some time ago, you held out some hopes to us that you would take it upon yourself to postpone the payment, if we could convince you that we were not able to pay at the time appointed by treaty. The known distress of the country, for a long time back, will satisfy you of our inability to pay at the period agreed upon.

CRAWFURD: I must repeat to you that my engagement was to postpone the period of payment on two sufficient grounds, viz. the execution of the treaty in the form in which I wished it, and your exhibiting evidence of your incapacity to make prompt payment.

BURMESE: Bassein, Dalla, Rangoon, and the other southern provinces, which are the most productive parts of the country, have long been out of our hands, and we have drawn no revenue from them.

CRAWFURD: There is no occasion at present to bring forward any arguments upon this subject. Some days ago you sent me confidentially the Wun of Bassein, with certain propositions respecting the deferment of the third and fourth instalments. I told him, for your information, that, as a favour to the Burman Government, I would take upon myself the risk of postponing
payment upon your conditions. You do not, however, advert to the proposition in question, although it originated with yourselves.

No reply was made to this observation. The Atwenwuns had been sitting one on each side of me. They now changed their places, and along with Dr. Price, the two Than-d’hau-thans, the Wun of Bassein, and the Commander of the Guard of Swordsmen, formed a group, and consulted together for near half an hour without being able to come to any determination. I was afterwards informed that various projects were started and discussed to induce us to prolong the period of paying the money, such as paying interest, and even conceding one or both of the articles heretofore refused; but they finally came to no determination, and concluded by saying that they would renew the discussion upon some other occasion. I renewed the subject of taking my departure, stating that my business was completed. I requested the boats which had been promised, and begged that a day might be fixed for paying our respects to the King, and taking leave. The officers of the Burman Government were aware that we could not quit without boats, and that no one dared to give them without their sanction. They were therefore anxious to throw delays in the way of our departure, hoping they might gain some advantage by having us thus in some measure in their power. They would have considered it a weakness and want of political sagacity not to have availed themselves to the fullest extent of such opportunities. A like conduct was systematically pursued during my mission to Siam; and I may safely venture to assert, that every agent of an European Government to these two States may reckon upon encountering similar difficulties. With a view to procrastination, the Atwenwuns now proposed a number of visits for our amusement, such as one to Amarapura, one to the temple containing the celebrated Aracan image, one to the great tank of Aong-ben-lâ, and one to the celebrated temple at Mengwan, which I have before mentioned. To put off time, they would have had a day allotted for each of these places, though some of them are within two or three miles of each other.

We received a visit this morning from a chief named Maong-Shwe-lû, whose office is named “North Commandant of the Palace.” This person had always shown a great partiality for Europeans, and was a staunch friend and protector of Mr. Judson during his imprisonment. When Captain Lumsden and the other
officers from the camp of Sir Archibald Campbell visited Ava, they were hospitably received and entertained in the house of Maong-shwe-lú. We received him, of course, with as much attention as was in our power. In manners he was plain and blunt, and spoke with a loud voice.

This, by the way, is a remarkable circumstance with Burmans of all ranks. Even in common conversation, they usually pitch their voice to a high key, as if they were delivering an oration. Maong-shwe-lú, as usual, told us his age: it was sixty-two, but he had not a grey hair in his head, and did not look more than forty. Indeed, from the great number of old people that are to be seen about Ava, there is ground to suppose that the climate is perfectly salubrious, and that longevity is probably as frequent as in any other part of the world.

November 28, 1826

I had another visit to-day from the Atwenwuns, accompanied, as usual, by Mr. Lanciego and the two Than-d’hau-thans. The circumstance of coming to our dwelling, instead of meeting us half-way and formally, at the shed or tent, was intended as a mark of conciliation and compliment. The following conversation took place, and the substance of it was carefully noted down by the Atwenwuns, a matter which was not done at the last meeting:

BURMESE: We are now great friends. We have granted you four articles of the Commercial Treaty; but there is one article to which we have not acceded,—that respecting the exportation of gold and silver. You came here as a commissioner (Than-ta-man, one vested with full powers), and we imagined you had authority to remit the third and fourth instalments of the money-payment due on the Treaty of Yandabo, as well as to restore the provinces which were ceded to you. You have told us that you have no such authority. We think it better, therefore, to withhold permission for the free exportation of gold and silver, until we can make final arrangements through our ambassadors in Bengal.

CRAWFURD: I am satisfied with having done my duty in arguing in favour of such a commercial arrangement as it appeared to me was provided for in the Treaty of Yandabo, and which would certainly
have been equally beneficial to both parties. I do not mean to discuss the subject again; but if you consider it for your interest to renew the topic, it can be done advantageously through your ambassadors in Bengal.

BURMESE: Do you approve of our sending an embassy to Bengal, for the purpose of farther discussing the Commercial Treaty, and for making arrangements for the remission of the money payment, and the restoration of the ceded provinces?

CRAWFURD: You can send ambassadors to Bengal at any-time, either to reside there permanently, or to return, as you may think proper. This is provided for by the second article of the Treaty of Yandabo. The same article gives us a right to send ambassadors to be resident, or otherwise, at the Court of Ava. I certainly approve of your sending ambassadors generally, because I am convinced that an interchange of missions will contribute materially to cement the bonds of friendship. With respect to the particular objects which you state you have in view by sending an embassy, this is your own affair, and I do not presume to offer any opinion upon it. I have to repeat, that I consider my principal business as settled, and I therefore wish that a day may be fixed for my departure.

BURMESE: We suppose you are desirous of seeing the King?

CRAWFURD: I have said so before. We are certainly desirous of having an audience of his Majesty, provided it be agreeable. Will you be so good as to make arrangements for determining the day.

BURMESE: This is a matter of some difficulty, but we will consult our superiors upon the subject. A lucky day must first be found, and then preparation must be made for your reception, for the King is desirous of receiving you handsomely.

CRAWFURD: I have spoken several times before to yourselves and the inferior officers respecting boats, and they are not yet furnished. It will take some time to arrange and prepare our baggage.

BURMESE: The boats will be supplied without loss of time.
The question put to me, asking my opinion respecting the propriety of sending an embassy to Bengal, and the reply given to it, excited some uneasiness in the Atwen-wuns; and after an interval of at least half an hour, they renewed the subject.

BURMESE: When we requested your opinion respecting sending a mission to Bengal, we wanted only your private sentiments upon the subject. We did not mean that we should act upon your opinion, for we have already decided that an embassy is to be sent. Much, you know, depends upon the manner in which such a question is put, and the tone in which the words are delivered.

CRAWFURD: My public and private sentiments upon such a subject must be exactly the same. The more frequently you send ambassadors to Bengal the better. Missions from you will be considered by us as marks of your friendship. What favours your ambassadors are to ask when there, and what points they are to discuss, are subjects upon which it is impossible for me to offer any opinion.

The Atwen-wuns, having made arrangements for our paying a visit to Amarapura to-morrow, took their departure. I may mention here an extraordinary example of the extravagance of Burman compliment. Turning round to me immediately before going away, the junior Atwen-wun congratulated himself upon his good fortune in having met “so valuable a friend: a true friend,” he added, “is not to be met with above once in a creation or existence!” This piece of bombast was delivered with immovable gravity. The Burmans, on such occasions, make no scruple of borrowing assistance from their theological opinions. Sir A. Campbell informed me, that at one of the negotiations, which preceded the peace, and in which the Burmans had no object but that of putting off time and deceiving us until the force was collected, which was afterwards defeated near Prome, one of the chiefs, the Governor of the province of Sarawadi, a little shrewd old man, who was always counting his beads, was loud in his praise of all peace-makers; and assured the commander of the British army, that he in particular would be quite sure of meeting his reward in some distinguished and elevated transmigration, if through his
means the British granted a favourable peace to the Burmans. I was present when Sir A. Campbell saw this person for the first time afterwards, and when he was reminded of the compliment in question: the old man was nothing abashed, but joined very heartily in the laugh which the recollection of this circumstance created.

Dr. Wallich returned to-day from a botanical excursion to the range of mountains lying east of Ava, which he performed with the sanction of the Burman Government...14

**November 30, 1826**

Yesterday we paid a visit to Amarapura, which by land is reckoned to be three taings, or six miles, above Ava; but, I think, by water not more than three and a half or four miles. It is on the same side of the river, but far less conveniently situated for a capital. Before the latter, the stream of the Irawadi is clear of islands, and, in one quarter, nearly washes its walls: all round it in other directions there are navigable rivers, which are extremely convenient. Amarapura, on the contrary, has an extensive island, fronting the town and suburbs, with but a narrow and inconvenient channel between them. There is no river but the Irawadi near it, and from this the walls of the town are now distant about three quarters of a mile, occasioned, I understand, by a change in the course; of the river. We passed through a suburb fully more extensive than any of those of Ava; and, leaving the walls of the town on our right hand, proceeded in a north-west direction towards the hills, on the road to the temple which is so celebrated for containing the image of Buddha, brought from Aracan. On this road, not far from the town, there is a temple of some repute, called Sand’haumuni, built by the late King: it contains the first bronze images which I had seen in the country. These were a figure of Gautama himself and those of four of his disciples; the latter were very well executed. Around the principal temple (an area intervening) were eighty small temples, each containing the image of a disciple of Buddha.

The Aracan temple is distant from Amarapura about two miles, and was a very costly fabric; as usual, with abundance of gilding, carving, and wooden pillars: the latter amounted to no less than two hundred and fifty-two, all massive, tall, and well gilded.

14 This account is published separately in the present issue of the SBBR.
This may convey some notion of the extent of the building. The celebrated image is a sitting statue of Gautama, in bronze, which has the reputation of having been cast in his own lifetime, and is therefore looked upon as peculiarly sacred: it measures seven and two-thirds royal cubits, or about twelve feet, in height: it is gilt all over, as usual: in features it does not much differ from the ordinary figures of Gautama, although, upon the whole, probably these are a little more animated. This image was brought from Aracan in the year 1146 of the Burman era, corresponding with the year 1784. I am told that it was transported from Aracan by the difficult route of Pa-daong, and not by that of Senbewgioun. To facilitate its carriage, it appears to have been taken to pieces,—a circumstance which does not well accord with the current tradition, that it was cast in one entire mass. It was the principal trophy of the present King’s father, as Heir-apparent, when he conquered Aracan in 1783.

A handsome marble slab, similar to others which I have already described, gives an account of the building of the temple, which was the work of the late King, who called it Maha-Myat-Muni (the word “Myat” means, in Burman, “excellent”), after the Aracan idol, which, for distinction sake, is known by the Pali title of Maha-Muni, or “the great saint.” He condemned for ever one hundred and twenty families of Aracanese, in all likelihood, the stoutest and most obstinate defenders of their country, to the degrading servitude of slaves to the Pagoda, giving each a Pé of land for subsistence. This was the endowment for the temple. This building is more frequented by votaries than any other which I have seen, owing to the sanctity attached to the image. Those whom we saw were persons of respectable appearance, and by far the larger number, aged women. The resort of votaries brought with it, of course, a proportionate number of beggars, most of whom were persons lame, blind, or very old.

Here, in a long gallery constructed for the purpose, the late King had collected an enormous number of stone inscriptions, from Sagaing, from Pugan, from San-ku, a place about three days’ journey beyond Ava, and Ang-le-ywa, in the country of the Shans—places which contain many relics of antiquity. I counted these, and found they amounted to no less than two hundred and sixty. A few of these inscriptions are on marble slabs, but the greater number on good sandstone: they are all of the form which I have already
described; the character is occasionally the old Pali, but more
frequently the common round Burman;—the writing, in both cases,
is in very good preservation. Such inscriptions as these are only
employed to commemorate the founding of temples of the first
importance; and the frequency of them, in past times, may be
estimated from the extraordinary assemblage of inscriptions here
brought together.

To satisfy the curiosity of my reader, I shall give, in the
Appendix, two of these inscriptions as they were translated for me
by my friend Mr. Judson. They are, as usual with all such
productions, mystical and puerile. The only merit which can be
said to belong to Burmese inscriptions is, that they all contain
dates, with some remote allusion to historical events, and that they
afford some slender illustrations of the religious opinions and
manners of the people.

The first inscription commemorates the building of a temple
in honour of the arrival of a saint from Ceylon, bringing with him
certain relics of Gautama. The principal date in it, or 794 of the
common Burman era, corresponds with the year of Christ 1432.
The founder was a king, whose capital was Ava, and whose reign
commenced in the Burman year 788, corresponding with the year
of Christ 1426. This circumstance is mentioned in the inscription,
and corroborated by the Burman chronological MS. which I have
already mentioned.

The second inscription seems to be a grant of land endowing
several pagodas and monasteries. The date of this corresponds
with the year of Christ 1454.

Close to the Aracan temple there is a large wooden building,
containing a single handsome image of Gautama. We were induced
to visit this place, for the purpose of seeing some images of brass
which were among the trophies brought from Aracan, along with
the celebrated idol already described. They consisted of several
gigantic statues in the human form, three griffins, and one three-
headed elephant. The human figures, all more or less mutilated,
were lying neglected on the floor: they were represented in a
standing attitude, on pedestals, had crowns on their heads, and
might measure in all about eight feet high. These, when the image
of Gautama was in Aracan, are said to have represented warders or
guardians of his temple. The Burmans call such images "Balu," a
kind of demon or malignant being. One of them had a third eye in
the forehead, and, I thought, might be intended for the Hindoo god Siwa.

Within two miles of the Aracan temple is the tank of Aong-ben-le, which we intended to have visited, but the day was too far advanced. This tank, the only one of the kind that I have heard of in the country, is about two miles long, and one broad, and irrigates an extensive tract of country in its neighbourhood. It was constructed by the late King, and, with the exception of the road from Senbewgioun to Aracan, may be said to be the only considerable work of utility in the kingdom. In returning home, we were desirous of viewing the interior of the fort of Amarapura, but unexpectedly found the gates shut against us. Whether this arose out of jealousy, or caprice, or an anxiety to conceal from us the “nakedness of the land,” we could not find out. This place comparatively so populous as late as 1819, does not now, I am informed, contain more than between two and three hundred houses; the greater number of the inhabitants who did not choose to remove to Ava, having settled in a more convenient situation, in the suburbs, on the river-side.

The fortress of Amarapura is much smaller than that of Ava, but a good deal more regular, and better constructed: it is said to be an exact square. The rampart is of brick, with many small square bastions, in which, and in the curtain, or parapet, there are innumerable small embrasures. The work is surrounded in every direction by a ditch, dry when we saw it. This appeared to us to be about fifty feet broad, and about fifteen deep. Both the scarp and counter-scarp are cased with brick. At the edge of the scarp there is a brick wall, and between this and the rampart a berme. There are in all twelve gates, three to a side, to each of which there is a causeway across the ditch. Colonel Syme reckons each side of the fort to measure two thousand four hundred yards, and states that the Burman estimation is four thousand nine hundred royal cubits, which he considers as an exaggeration: it only exceeds his own estimate, however, by two hundred yards nearly, and is probably correct.

I should have mentioned that, in passing through the suburb to the Aracan temple, we called at the house of an Armenian, to see some rubies and sapphires which he had for sale. He produced a few small ones, which we purchased; and told us in confidence, in the Hindustani language, that, for fear of the
Government, he dared not produce some large and valuable ones which he had, but which he would offer to us at Rangoon, to which place he was proceeding in a few days. Any ruby worth more than five viss of silver, or five hundred ticals, is considered the property of the King; and to be possessed of it or to expose it, is deemed a fraud punishable by fine and confiscation.

The lady of Dr. Price, who, as I observed in a former place, was a Burmese, died on the 27th, of an attack of cholera morbus, which was at present prevalent in Ava, but generally not fatal. In her case, the complaint was aggravated by her pregnancy. The disease brought on premature labour, and she sunk in a few hours. Although a convert to Christianity, the funeral ceremony was according to Burman rites, excepting that the body was interred instead of being burnt. The King, as a mark of attention to Dr. Price, whom he considered as his servant and subject, ordered that the funeral should be public, and directed some of the Atwenwuns and other principal officers to attend. The circumstances which accompanied it afforded curious illustration of Burman manners, and deserve to be mentioned. No person dying of cholera morbus, which is considered an infectious complaint, is allowed a funeral with the customary solemnities, but must be interred on the day of death. The body of a woman who dies in labour before the birth of the child, is subjected to a horrid rite. Poor Mrs. Price’s case came under both heads; and it was necessary therefore, in order to secure a respectable funeral, that the King should be deceived on both points. A public officer of high rank, a friend of Dr. Price, therefore came forward and declared that the deceased had died in child-birth, and that the infant was born before death. On these assurances, the public funeral was accorded, and took place with all proper solemnity. Funeral expenses amongst the Burmans are defrayed not by the heir or next of kin, but by voluntary contribution among the friends of the deceased. The collections for this purpose are continued for seven days after the decease of the party. This custom was followed upon the present occasion; and the public officers, according to their notions, contributed liberally,—a collection having been made, amounting to one hundred and fifty ticals.

The custom to which I have above alluded, in reference to the funerals of women dying in labour before the birth of the infant, is one of the most revolting rites of Burman superstition.
The belief is, that the souls of women dying under such circumstances would become evil spirits, haunting the towns or villages to which the deceased belonged, if a certain ceremony were not practised to exorcise them. The horrid ceremony in question is as follows:—The husband, with dishevelled hair, and bearing a Dá, or sword, in each hand, goes before the coffin, in the procession, from his house to the funeral ground, using the gestures of a maniac, and cutting the air with the weapons in every direction. When the procession has arrived at the place, the case is inquired into by the public officers, and a regular deed of divorce between the husband and the deceased is drawn up. The body is then opened by one of the burners of the dead, the foetus extracted, and held up to the spectators. The husband, after this, walks thrice round the coffin, goes home, washes his head, and returns, when the corpse is burned with the usual ceremonies. In parts of Pegu there is some refinement upon this abominable ceremony. The body is opened in effigy, by substituting for it the stem of a plantain-tree, of which the pith is extracted, to represent the infant.

This matter, in common with almost every other, is rendered a subject of extortion on the part of the Government officers. Among the public papers in the court of justice at Rangoon, I found the record of a transaction of this nature, which is worth transcribing. No funeral can take place without the sanction of Government, which, as in other cases, is applied for by petition. A person of inferior condition, a painter by profession, lost his wife in child-birth, and makes the following application:

The petition of the Painter Ngatwantha. Your petitioner’s wife having died in a state of pregnancy, he asks permission to perform the funeral writes according to the custom of the country.

Upon this the Rewun, or second governor, gives the following order:—

Order: In accordance with the petition, let the funeral take place agreeably to custom. In the year 1183, third day of the waning moon, Tobhaong, the secretary writes the Rewun’s order.
At the bottom of the petition is a list of the charges which the husband had to pay, of which the following is a literal translation;-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Ticals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For permission to open the abdomen</td>
<td>30 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine on the husband</td>
<td>30 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees of justice</td>
<td>30 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permission to burn the body</td>
<td>15 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal peace officer, for his attendance</td>
<td>15 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executioner for his services</td>
<td>17 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary for recording the transaction</td>
<td>10 0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total ticals</strong></td>
<td>147 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**December 2, 1826**

We had another conference to-day with the Atwenwuns and again, it was at our private dwelling, instead of the public shed. The Atwenwuns sat near two hours, without touching upon any public question; which led me at first to imagine that they had come upon a visit of ceremony only. To introduce business, I began with the subject of our approaching departure, when the following conversation took place:

CRAWFURD: The river is falling fast, and the steam-vessel may have difficulty in getting down to Rangoon, if her departure be much longer delayed. May I beg to know whether the boats, which were promised fourteen days ago, be ready?

BURMESE: We had secured boats, but finding them too small, we are now looking out for others.

CRAWFURD: May I beg also that you will fix a day for our taking leave of the King, provided it be agreeable to his Majesty to see us?
BURMESE: Will you fix a day for your departure from Ava; and if within that period it be convenient to the King to receive you, we will give you notice of the particular day?

CRAWFURD: I intimated my intended departure about fourteen days ago. Will seven days more be sufficient?

BURMESE: Yes: within that time we pledge ourselves to have all your boats ready.

CRAWFURD: As it will be desirable to send the steam-boat away in a day or two, to save time, I beg you will kindly furnish me with a pilot for her.

BURMESE: We wish that you would not send the steam-vessel just now, but keep her for a few days, until you go yourselves.

The real business which brought the Atwenwuns was now introduced—the case of the Burman emigrants into our territories. It was the first time that the subject had ever been hinted at, and I imagine it was now introduced in consequence of some communication from Rangoon or Henzada, for previously the matter did not seem to excite much interest here, or to be well understood. It will be seen from the conversation which follows, that the claim to the eastern bank of the Saluen seemed now to be abandoned.

BURMESE: Now that the principal business of your mission is over, we wish to say a few friendly words to you on the subject of the future intercourse between Martaban and Molamyaing. Those persons that are emigrating from our country into yours are bad men; therefore, we hope you will be on your guard against their machinations, and hinder them from doing us harm.

CRAWFURD: That is a matter of which you may rest assured. It is necessarily implied in the peace and friendship which exist between the two nations. It is the business of friends to assist each other, and not to do them harm. I wished to have inserted an article in the late treaty, expressly providing for this, but you yourselves excluded it.
BURMESE: We bring this matter to your notice, in order that, when you arrive at your new settlement, you may take counsel with Sir A. Campbell (None of our officers, during the war, were known to the Burmese by name. All the principal officers were designated Tambo, meaning “general or military chief;” to which an epithet of their own framing was attached. Major Jackson, the Quartermaster-general, for example, a very active officer, was well known under the name of “the Chief with the spectacles;” and the Commander of the Forces was known by no other name than Kyittambo, or “the chief wearing the cock’s plume”), and, as far as respects a person called Mendama and others, do as may be suitable and proper.

CRAWFURD: It is the custom among European nations to protect strangers who have sought refuge among them: we do not permit such persons to be claimed as a matter of right. But when they have committed crimes in their own country, we do not encourage them to settle in ours;—on the contrary, we shall be disposed to give them up,—reserving to ourselves, however, the right of doing so, or otherwise. Formerly you did not understand this custom. You insisted peremptorily on refugees being delivered up to you, and you even crossed our frontier in pursuit of them. This, as you know, led to troubles, and must not happen again. In our country we put no restraints upon our own subjects; they are free to go away when they please. We never think of enticing the subjects of other Governments to settle in our lands. If any Talaings or others in our territory desire to return to yours, we will never prevent them. In return, we expect that you will not forcibly detain any natives of our country who may happen to be in your territory.

BURMESE: The custom of the English and the Burmans is different in the matter to which you allude. What we said in respect to Mendama and other Talaings was said in friendship. We do not claim any one.

The present appeared a favourable opportunity for claiming the native prisoners who had been seized by the Burmans in their incursions into Cassay, Cachar, and Munnipore. The terms of the eleventh article of the Treaty of Yandabo required, even by the
Burman interpretation, that all persons coming under the name of *Kula-net*, or “black strangers,” should be delivered up. Several thousand natives of Cassay, Cachar, and Assam, I had ascertained while at Rangoon, were prisoners amongst the Burmans; and since my arrival at Ava, I found that, besides these, there were above one hundred and fifty natives of Sylhet in a state of captivity. These were removed to Amarapura upon our arrival. The day we visited that place, they were removed from thence to a distance of three hours’ journey, that they might have no opportunity of representing their case to us.

CRAWFURD: You may be assured that none of your former subjects will be retained by us contrary to their inclinations. If there be now any of our subjects here, we expect, as a matter of course, that they will either be given up, or permitted voluntarily to quit the country.

BURMESE: We have given up all you Sepoys.

CRAWFURD: Have you delivered up all persons taken prisoners during the war, who come under the name of Kula-net, whether natives of Cassay, Cachar, Assam, or Bengal? The release of all such persons is stipulated for in the eleventh article of the Treaty of Yandabo.

BURMESE: We have given up all persons for whose liberty the treaty provides

CRAWFURD: I can furnish you with a long list of natives of our provinces who were captured during the war, and who are now, I fear, in a state of bondage in this country. I am convinced that, when I make this known to you, you will voluntarily cause them to be liberated.

BURMESE: We are of opinion that we have already complied with the Treaty of Yandabo, by rendering up all who were demanded of us.

CRAWFURD: The treaty provides that all persons taken prisoners during the war should be delivered up. You cannot say that this
has been done; for there are many persons here now desirous of returning to their country, and who are prevented from doing so.

BURMESE: We know of none that are willing to go away. Do you mean to say that we are to deliver up such persons also as are willing to stay?

CRAWFURD: Certainly I do not. Those who desire to stay are very welcome to do so. It is our wish only to afford an opportunity to those who wish to return to their respective countries, to do so. I can name a number now who are very anxious to return. If you will call them before me, it is easy to ascertain those who want to stay, and those who want to go away.

BURMESE: You came here to negotiate a Commercial Treaty, and we do not think it is proper to call these people before you.

CRAWFURD: I am vested with powers to inquire into this matter. You have yourselves discussed with me various subjects, not connected with the Commercial Treaty; and hitherto you had only expressed your disappointment that my powers were not more ample.

The Burman negotiators, at this point, seemed to regret that they had introduced the question of Emigration on the Saluen frontier; imagining that it had been the cause of an unpleasant discussion, which might not otherwise have been agitated.

BURMESE: When we mentioned the subject of Martaban and Molamyaing, we did not call upon you to deliver up any one to us.

CRAWFURD: We have long ago delivered up every Burman prisoner taken during the war, in strict conformity to the eleventh article of the treaty, and no doubt you will also do the same. If you are not prepared to deliver them up to me just now, still you must expect that the British Government will ultimately claim them.

BURMESE: We understand perfectly what is in the Yandabo Treaty.
CRAWFURD: I must beg you to read it. There are many persons now here in a state of slavery, who are entitled to be released by the eleventh article of that agreement.

One of the objects of the Atwenwuns’ visit to-day was to claim the surrender of a native of Madras, who had joined our party shortly after our arrival. Of this I was informed by Mr. Lanciego, before the subject was introduced. This person had been the servant of an officer in Sir Archibald Campbell’s army, and was immediately recognized by Mr. Montmorency as such. He had been taken prisoner between Shwegyen and Setaung, and carried to Ava, where he was ordered to instruct the Burmans generally in the use of fire-arms and cannon! By his own account he had professed his ignorance of such matters; but the Burmans, deeming him contumacious, ordered him into the stocks; from which he was ultimately released, by acknowledging that he was an adept—in spite of himself.

BURMESE: There is a person now living in the Envoy’s dwelling, whom we desire to be delivered over to us.

CRAWFURD: Who is this individual? If he be a subject of his Burman Majesty, he will be immediately delivered over. If, on the contrary, he be a native of our country, I expert that you will not make any such demand.

BURMESE: The person we allude to took service with the King.

I now ascertained, for the first time, who the particular individual was that was demanded, for I was not aware that such a person was living among our followers and had never seen him.

CRAWFURD: I have ascertained who the person is that you claim. He is a native of our provinces, and was in service in the British army a few months ago. If he desires to stay here, you are very welcome to him; but if he is anxious to leave it, you will certainly not think of detaining a British subject forcibly.

I took this opportunity, which I thought a favourable one, of bringing forward the case of two deserters from his Majesty’s 89th
regiment, who were known to be at Ava. One of these, the elder, was a person of worthless character, who had seduced the other to desert. Mr. Lain, an English merchant, who had been for some months back at Ava, saw them both but three days before our arrival, but had never seen them since; so that, in all probability, they had either been secreted, or removed to a distance. Mr. Lain described them as being ill provided with food and clothes, and very anxious to deliver themselves up.

CRAWFURD: There are two European soldiers now here, deserters from the British army, who were promised to be delivered up at Yandabo. One of these I claim, in consequence; and I desire to see both, that I may ascertain what their own wishes are.

BURMESE: We do not know that there are any such persons here, but we will make the necessary inquiry and inform you. We wish to say a few words more, respecting the native of Madras to whom we have already alluded, as matters of this kind are calculated to breed dissensions.

CRAWFURD: I presume you are satisfied that he belonged to the British army; that he is a subject of the British Government, and that he desires to return to his own country.

BURMESE: This is all very right, but we think the matter ought to have been mentioned to us. The individual in question had engaged to give instructions in certain matters. Our reason for saying so much upon this subject is, that when you are gone, the King may possibly inquire for this person, and we shall be involved in trouble if we cannot render a satisfactory account of him.

CRAWFURD: All that it is necessary to say to the King is, that this individual was a prisoner of war, and intitled by treaty to his release.

On receiving this explanation, the Atwenwuns got up, charged the two interpreters with not translating properly, laughed very heartily, and said they were quite satisfied. In this humour they took leave.
December 3, 1826

Through the night of the 1st, a fire broke out in the populous suburb which lies between the walls of the town and the little river, and property to a considerable value was destroyed. The house of the widow of the Saya-wungyi, who had been the King’s tutor and favourite, was in great danger; and this old lady, who had the reputation of being very frugal, if not avaricious, irritated at her loss, repaired forthwith to the King, and made complaint that, during the conflagration, the Ministers, and especially Kaulen Mengyi, who was her husband’s successor, and of whom she was very jealous, were not at their posts; for it appears that it is their special duty to attend upon such occasions. The King, who was still very much out of humour, summoned the Ministers before him; sent for a sword, drew it, and ordered them, one by one, to come forward and swear upon it that they were present at the conflagration, and assisting in extinguishing it. Kaulen Mengyi came forward and avowed that he was not present; but that he had gone as far as the Rung-d’hau, or Town-hall, to give the necessary instructions upon the occasion. He was immediately ordered to be taken out of the Audience-hall; and, to avoid being dragged thence by the hair of the head, according to usage, voluntarily made as rapid a retreat as could be expected from a man between sixty and seventy, and of a weakly constitution. An order was given that he should be punished after a manner which I shall presently describe. The other Ministers, none of whom were present at the fire, escaped under various pretexts of business or sickness. The punishment now awarded to the first Minister is called, in the Burman language, Ne-pu m’ha l’han thé or, “spreading out in the hot sun.” The offender who undergoes it is stretched upon his back by the public executioners, and thus exposed for a given number of hours, in the hottest part of the day, with a weight on his breast, more or less heavy according to the nature of the offence, or rather according to the King’s opinion of it. It was at first thought that the sentence, on the part of the King, was a mere threat. Not so; the most faithful and zealous of his Ministers underwent the punishment this afternoon, from one to three o’clock, and not as is customary, on such occasions, with culprits Of distinction, within the Palace enclosure, but in the public road between the eastern gate of the Palace and the Town-hall, and in
the view of a multitude of spectators. The old malefactor, whom I once or twice before mentioned as being at the head of the band of executioners, superintended the infliction. This person and others of the same class are themselves not intitled to a trial; but may, by the law of the country, be put to death by any of the Ministers, at pleasure, and no questions asked. Here was the first Minister, then, delivered over into the hands of this ruffian, in whose power it was to make the punishment more or less severe. Such are the anomalies of this truly rude and barbarous Government. The stretching and sunning process, I ought to have mentioned, is the punishment of mere peccadillos, and is a very frequent infliction on persons of condition. Kaulen Mengyi had since appeared in the Lut-d'hau, and in the King's presence, and has been carrying on the business of the Government, just as usual. It cannot be supposed, however, but that the ignominy of such a punishment is felt by the person on whom it is inflicted; and consequently those who had seen the Minister since, described him as being low-spirited and downcast.

By the dispatches which I received from Government on the 24th of last month, it was intimated to me that an attempt would be made to open a communication between Calcutta and Ava, by the route of Aracan; and that duplicates of the dispatches which I received by Rangoon would be sent by this new conveyance. The Aracan dispatch had been so long in coming, that I began to give it up, and was of opinion that it had been intercepted and detained like the letters from Munnipore. This, I have not the least doubt, would have been the case but for the remonstrances made on the subject of the latter. It at length arrived this day, having taken in all two months to reach us, of which forty-five days were spent in the route from Akyab in Aracan. Our accounts from Calcutta, received by way of Rangoon on the 24th ult. came in forty-three days, or in seventeen days less than the Aracan dispatch, although they had not the advantage of being conveyed to Rangoon in the steam-vessel.

The two Atwenwuns came over with breathless haste with the dispatch, as if it had been a matter of the first moment to them. Along with it was an open passport in the Persian and Burman languages, the last of which stated; as a very proper precaution to prevent the imputation of a clandestine transaction, that it should first be brought into the King's presence. The
Atwenwuns put their own construction upon this: they said that the passport implied that there were letters for the King of Ava, and therefore that it would be suitable that they should be present when the dispatch was opened. I proceeded to inform them what the nature of the dispatch was; that it contained no secrets whatever; and I explained to them the desire of the Governor-General, to open, with the consent of the Burman Government, a communication between Calcutta and Ava, by the route of Aracan. I stated that I was already in possession of duplicates of the letters which the dispatch contained; and that it was my intention, without any requisition on their part, to have opened the packet in their presence. The Atwenwuns then, with much ceremony, handed the dispatch to me, and requested me to open it, which was done. It contained a joint letter from Mr. Hunter and Mr. Paton, the commissioners in Aracan, very cautiously worded; one from their assistant. Captain Phillips, equally so; a confidential letter from Mr. Secretary Swinton, and duplicates of the Government dispatches received from Rangoon. I handed the letters of the commissioners and their assistant, to Dr. Price, the interpreter of the Atwenwuns, and requested them to make any use they pleased of them. The duplicates, as soon as I ascertained them to be such, I tore up in their presence, to convince them that they contained nothing of importance. The Atwenwuns began, without scruple or delicacy, to take down, in Burman, the substance of the letters which were handed to them. While I was absent for a moment, bringing the Rangoon dispatches, I left Mr. Swinton’s confidential letter on the table. This the Atwenwuns would have laid hold of, had they not been prevented. They observed to Mr. Judson, “Why should not the contents of this also be made known to us, as well as the rest?” When I returned, I gave Mr. Swinton’s letter for perusal to Dr. Price, and caused to be transcribed from it the following passage for the use of the Atwenwuns:

I shall be happy to hear that the King has given you a good reception, and that he is as anxious as we are to be on good terms. The golden road must now be open for ever.

Having thus done as much as possible to satisfy them, I informed them that their desire to be informed of what passed
between a Government and its public agent was contrary to the custom of all civilized nations; but that as the Burmans were not aware of this, I had complied with their wishes in order that their Government might be assured that every thing on our part was done openly and in good faith. They pleaded the orders of the King—his belief that there were letters for himself, and the great anxiety he had expressed on the subject of this dispatch. Fortified with this authority, the first Atwenwun proceeded to demand a specification of the contents of each letter, public and private, including the duplicate dispatches. I replied that they had already been furnished with the contents of all the letters which had arrived, with the exception of those torn up in their presence, the contents of which they had nothing to do with, as I was aware of them through another channel. Five natives of Aracan were described as the messengers who had brought the dispatch. I requested they might be sent over to me, that I might reward them for their trouble, and send them back to their own country with answers to the letters I had received, of which answers the Burman Government should be made acquainted with the contents, if desired. They promised to send them in the course of the evening, or on the following morning. In the discussion which now took place, the importunity and indelicacy of the first Atwenwun were so remarkable, that even his coadjutor disapproved of his conduct, and, turning round to Dr. Price, he observed, “He does not understand good manners; I am ashamed of him.” In the course of the interview, I endeavoured again to impress upon the Atwenwuns the impropriety of breaking seals, and intercepting letters and dispatches; and once more demanded the public intercepted letter from Munnipore, already mentioned. They replied as formerly, that they were looking out for it, and would produce it; but this was a mere evasion, for it was never delivered.

December 4, 1826

The Atwenwuns, although we did not expect them, came to-day. Their object was to inform us, that all preparations had been made for our departure. The following conversation took place on the subject:
BURMESE: We have apprized his Majesty of your approaching departure. We have acquainted him that we have furnished you with boats, and we have submitted to him your anxiety to have an audience of leave. He has expressed his pleasure to receive you, tomorrow morning, at the Elephant Palace, where there is to be the exhibition of catching a wild elephant, to which you are invited. Boats will be sent for your party, when the signal of three guns announces his Majesty’s coming out.

CRAWFURD: We shall be in readiness to attend, I beg again to introduce the subject of the Bengal prisoners, discussed at our last meeting. I confine my demand at present to such persons being natives of the British provinces who were captured during the war, although, by the strict words of the eleventh article of the treaty, all prisoners whatsoever are entitled to their release. I hand you this paper containing my sentiments on the subject.

The paper alluded to was given in, in Burman, and read by Dr. Price. The following is a translation:

By the eleventh article of the Treaty of Yandabo, all English, American, and other white and black foreigners, who were prisoners at the time of making peace, were to be delivered to the English Commissioners and Envoys; and this ought to have been done, in consideration of the friendship existing between the nations. Down to the present time, however, there are many captive ‘black foreigners’ in Ava not released: some of them are in a state of slavery; such is not agreeable to the laws of right—such is not the custom of those rulers who observe those laws. It is not to be supposed that the Rising Sun Buren knows this. Release all the black foreigners that are in confinement, and allow them to return to their own countries. Inflict punishment on those officers who have prevented them from returning. I now deliver to the Atwenwuns a list of some who are detained, and will hereafter transmit a complete list from Bengal. The English Government has faithfully kept the Treaty of Yandabo; they have released all their captives; still more, no Burman is ever forcibly detained in the British dominions, but has liberty to go or stay, as he may choose.
The arrangement for your departure has been made with the King, and this being the case, we are afraid to, enter upon this discussion. We decline receiving the paper which you have given in.

CRAWFURD: It is sufficient for me that I have formally demanded the prisoners. I cannot insist upon your taking the paper, but you have publicly heard my sentiments.

BURMESE: We have listened to the contents of the paper, but we are afraid to receive it.

CRAWFURD: The paper is upon a public subject, and I think it ought not to be declined. Have you any objection that I send it to the Lut-d’hau?

BURMESE: We have no objection that you send it to the Lut-d’hau.

A Mr. Stockdale, an English merchant, who had been for some time in the Burman dominions as a trader, died at Ava in 1823. His property, said to amount to twenty thousand ticals, was seized and appropriated to her own use by her Majesty the Queen, under pretext that Mr. Stockdale had no heirs in the country. This was done contrary to the wish of the members of the Lut-d’hau; and notwithstanding the remonstrances of some European merchants, who were at the time at the capital, Mr. Stockdale’s property had been claimed at Yandabo by the British commissioners; but in consequence of the Burman deputies declaring their total ignorance on the subject, and there being no accounts ready to produce, the claim was not prosecuted. I had received, since arriving at Ava, communications from the agents of the late Mr. Stockdale, at Madras and Calcutta, and thought it my duty to bring the subject forward. The following conversation ensued in regard to it:

CRAWFURD: A Mr. Stockdale, a British subject, died at Ava, about three years ago. His property was taken charge of by the Burman Government, and is now demanded by his friends and relations. I
will either receive it here on their behalf, or, if you prefer it, you may send it to Calcutta. Here is a paper stating the case.

The paper in question, which was in the Burman language, was read. The following is a literal translation:

In the Burman year 1185, an English merchant, named Stockdale, died at Ava, and his property was taken possession of by the Burmese Government. His relations and friends have sent letters representing that the Envoy Crawfurd should claim and receive that property. It is contained in the eighth article of the Treaty of Yandabo, that the property of subjects of the English Government dying in Burma without heirs, shall, according to the custom of ‘white Kulas,’ be delivered to the English officer residing in Burma. Moreover, Stockdale was a merchant, and not concerned in war, and guilty of no offence against the Burmese Government. It is not proper to oppress such a person, or to take his property without any reason. Petition his Majesty, the Rising Sun Buren, who observes the laws of right, which Kings are to observe, that Stockdale’s property may be restored.

BURMESE: The transaction referred to in this paper took place previous to the Treaty of Yandabo, and Ought not therefore to be brought forward. We are ourselves totally ignorant of its nature.

CRAWFURD: This subject, I understand, is very well known at Ava. It is true, it took place previous to the Treaty of Yandabo; but the eighth article of that treaty, according to your own version of it, provides that all debts contracted previous to the war, by Government people or common people, shall be completely liquidated, according to good faith. The property of the late Mr. Stockdale was taken charge of by some person belonging to the Burman Government; it is therefore a debt owing to the heirs of Mr. Stockdale.

BURMESE: The property was confiscated, not taken charge of.
CRAWFURD: How could the property be confiscated? The two nations, at the time of Mr. Stockdale’s death, were at peace. It is not alleged that Mr. Stockdale had committed any offence against the Burman Government, and why should the property of a foreign merchant be confiscated? The treaty provides, that all debts should be paid, whether owed by common people, or Government people. The Burman Government is therefore bound by good faith to restore the property.

BURMESE: We will oblige all private persons who are indebted to the late Mr. Stockdale to pay their debts.

CRAWFURD: I know of no private debts owing to the estate of Mr. Stockdale: the only property to which I allude is that which was taken charge of by the Burman Government on his demise at Ava.

The Atwenwuns now recurred, of their own accord, to the subject of the prisoners of war, with the following observation:

BURMESE: The Yandabo Treaty stipulated for the liberation of prisoners. All have been delivered that ought to have been delivered up. It is not proper in you, after so long a time has elapsed, to come now and claim others.

CRAWFURD: It is surely more improper on your part to detain prisoners that ought, in good faith, to have been long ago voluntarily given up.

BURMESE: There are no prisoners here who are anxious to return. Have we prevented any from returning?

CRAWFURD: Yes, you have prevented a great number from returning. Will you promise to deliver up to me all those who express a desire to return? I want no others.

BURMESE: Are there any here now?

CRAWFURD: Yes, a great many. I have furnished you with a list of some of the principal people.

SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005):636-959
BURMESE: In what place, or in what battles were the persons you allude to captured?

CRAWFURD: It is not necessary for me to tell you in what particular situations the unoffending inhabitants of towns and villages were seized and carried off by you. It is enough that they were taken during the war—that they are subjects of our country—that they are forcibly detained by you, and made bondsmen of. I claim not only the persons named in the list I have given in, but their families, friends, and followers.

BURMESE: We settled all these matters with Sir Archibald Campbell at Yandabo, who made no mention at the time of the persons you allude to.

CRAWFURD: The Commissioners at Yandabo made a treaty with you, providing, without exception, for the release of all prisoners. The fulfilment of this was left to your good faith, according to the custom of nations. Sir Archibald Campbell did not know that the individuals I have named were prisoners, or he certainly would have claimed them. This is no ground for your evading the treaty.

BURMESE: General Campbell has been a long time at Rangoon, and has not demanded these persons.

CRAWFURD: It was but a short time before I left Rangoon, that the master became known to the British Commissioners. I come now to demand them.

BURMESE: We observe, in perusing your instructions, that you are not authorized to treat upon such points.

CRAWFURD: I have full authority to treat upon all such points, as you will see on perusing the copy of my credentials with which I furnished you.

The Burman commissioners here proceeded to read aloud a translation of the Governor-General's letter to the King, and observed, that there was not one word in it respecting prisoners of war. It became necessary to send for my credentials, and to hand
over, for perusal and explanation, the passage which vested me with powers to treat on such matters as that under discussion.

BURMESE: You were selected by the Governor-General as a prudent man, in order to promote the existing friendship. It is not proper in you to introduce subjects that are likely to give offence to the King.

CRAWFURD: In bringing forward this subject, and calling your attention to the fulfilment of the treaty, I am sure that I am taking the best means of promoting peace and friendship between us. A strict execution of the treaty on both sides will be the best means of insuring a lasting friendship. If you are indisposed to enter into the discussion at present, I will not prosecute it any farther; but you may rest quite assured that the British Government will insist upon the delivery of every one of these prisoners, according to the letter of the eleventh article of the treaty. At the last conference I claimed two European prisoners of war, soldiers of the British army, and you stated that you would make inquiries respecting them. Will you be so good now as to deliver them over to me?

The Atwenwuns, after evincing a good deal of hesitation, made the following answer:

BURMESE: We have inquired respecting the persons you allude to, and can hear nothing whatever respecting them.

CRAWFURD: There are just now with Ozana, the Governor of Martaban, several European soldiers, prisoners of war, detained by him in violation of the eleventh article of the treaty. I claim the immediate restoration of these persons, and request that orders may be issued to Ozana to that effect.

BURMESE: You can apply upon this subject to the Wungyi Maong-kaing, the Governor of Pegu.

CRAWFURD: I have no authority from the British Government to treat with Maong-kaing. My instructions direct me to discuss all such matters directly with the Government of his Majesty: will you
therefore give me an order, directed to Maong-kaing, for the delivery of the prisoners?

BURMESE: The Wungyi Maong-kaing exercises the authority of a high commissioner (Than-ta-man), and it would be improper in us to control his conduct. He will make no difficulties about delivering over the prisoners.

CRAWFURD: What difficulty can there be in giving me a letter signifying the wishes of the Government on this subject?

BURMESE: It is not necessary; the Wungyi will do every thing of his own accord.

A respectable Mohammedan merchant, of the name of Mohammed Ally, had first at Rangoon, and afterwards since he arrived at Ava, made application to me, to assist him in the recovery of property to the value of ten thousand ticals, nominally owed to him by a private merchant to whom he had sold his goods. The real facts of the case, however, were, that on the breaking out of the war, the goods of Mohammed Ally, sold to a Burman merchant, and only in part paid for, had been seized and confiscated by the Burman Government, according to custom, as the property of an enemy. Mohammed Ally was evidently entitled to relief and assistance, in accordance with the eighth article of the Treaty of Yandabo.

CRAWFURD: I bring to your notice the case of a Mohammedan merchant, named Mohammed Ally, to whom a debt is owing by one Maong-mya. Mohammed Ally is a subject of the British Government, and intitled to assistance by the eighth article of the Treaty of Yandabo. I hand you a paper upon the subject.

A Burman paper was here given in, of which the following is a literal translation:

A Mohammedan merchant, Mohammed Ally by name, a townsman of Masulipatam, and a subject of the English Government, states, that Maong-mya, a townsman of Ava, owes him ten thousand ticals of silver, and will not pay. I
request that the Burman Government, according to the
eighth article of the Treaty of Yandabo, and the first of that
Sagaing, will grant protection and assistance, in order that
Mohammed Ally may recover his property.

BURMESE: Who is this person Maong-mya? Is it the present
Rewun of Rangoon?

CRAWFURD: The person alluded to is not the Rewun of Rangoon,
but a merchant of Ava, of the same name.

BURMESE: We think we understand this case, and pledge
ourselves that justice shall be done to Mohammed Ally.

The three papers delivered, in at this meeting were left, by
the Burman commissioners, on the table. They were evidently
anxious to evade the subjects of them, or at least wished to reserve
to themselves the power of putting their own construction upon
the subject of them. I had not signed or sealed them; for these
formalities, on a former occasion, had excited so much
apprehension, that I forbore from doing so, in the hope of inducing
the Burman officers to take them in any shape. Notes were taken
by the Burmese negotiators on the subject of the claims of Mr.
Stockdale and the Mohammedan merchant, but no memoranda
whatever respecting the prisoners.

December 6, 1826

Our promised presentation to the King took place this forenoon. A
suitable number of boats were sent to receive us, and at twelve
o'clock we crossed the river, and arrived at the Elephant Palace,
which is about a mile below the town, and close to the banks of the
Irawadi. The Elephant Palace and its appurtenances is a place
appropriated for exhibiting, for the King's diversion, the taming of
the wild male elephant. This place is a square enclosure,
surrounded every where by a double palisade, composed of
immense beams of teak timber, each equal in diameter to the
mainmast of a four hundred ton ship. Between the palisades there
is a stone wall, about fourteen feet high and twenty thick. On the
top of this the spectators are seated to view the sport. The Palace is
situated on the south-west angle of the square, and is upon a level
with the highest part of the wall. The enclosure has two entrances;
the gates of which are composed of beams, which can be moved at
the bottom by means of ropes. The centre of the enclosure is a
green sward, in the middle of which there is a temple surrounded
by a palisade. This temple is dedicated to a Nat, named by the
Burmans Udin-main-so. This personage is said to have been king
of a country called Kosambi in Majima Desa, or the “middle
land;”—that is to say, Western India, or the country of the
Hindoos. He was cotemporary with Gautama; and in his
transmigration became, in consequence of his skill in taming
elephants, a King of Nats, and the guardian and protector of
elephant-hunting.

We were received under a shed winch represents the Lut-
d’hau, and which is situated on the north side of the enclosure. We
had not been here above a few minutes, when we were summoned
to the western side of the enclosure, where the gate is, at which the
elephants were about to enter. We left our shoes behind us in the
hall, and proceeded along the top of the wall, to within no great
distance of his Majesty; when we sat down, making our obeisance
by touching the forehead with the right hand. A cloud of dust
announced the approach of the elephants, about twenty in
number: these, with the exception of the captive, were all females,
several of them with their young following them. A few of the best
broken-in only were mounted. Partly by persuasion, and partly by
force, there was seen driving before them a small male elephant,
not, as we were told, above thirteen years old: it required at least
half an hour to induce him to enter the gate of the enclosure. A
very docile female elephant led the way, conducted by her keeper;
but the half-tamed females were nearly as reluctant to enter as the
wild male himself: they went five or six times half-way in, before
they were finally entrapped; and, twice over, the male had run off
to the distance of a quarter of a mile from the enclosure, but was
again brought back by the females. A message was sent to us by
the King, to say, that we were at liberty to stand up to view this
part of the sport, but unluckily we were already standing when it
reached us.

The elephants having entered, we were requested to come
into the King’s presence, in which situation we should have a
better view of the sport. We walked round accordingly by the
southern and eastern angles of the enclosure, and seats were assigned to us in the same line with, and next to the Princes; not only the most distinguished, but the most convenient situation. We made a bow, as before, and the sport went on. From the smallness of the elephant, there was neither much danger nor amusement in it. The females were withdrawn from the enclosure, one by one; and then the elephant-catchers, who are a distinct race, went into the square unarmed, and provoked the wild elephant to pursue them, which he did with great fury. The keepers took shelter from his pursuit within the palisade, through the apertures of which he lashed his trunk in vain. The elephant-keepers exhibited much boldness and agility; but, from what we saw, I should conceive that they ran very little risk. Accidents, however, sometimes occur. A few years ago, one of the hunters, when pursued by the elephant, tripped and fell: he was killed on the spot by the enraged animal. The King, who was present when this happened, immediately retired, the sight of blood not being fit for him to behold, either as a sovereign, or, a votary of Gautama.

Some goats were put into the square, and these were pursued by the elephant in the same way as the keepers, and with as little effect. These animals eluded his pursuit with the utmost ease; and were so little concerned at his presence, that they soon began to quarrel amongst themselves. When the elephant was sufficiently tired, three huge tame male elephants were brought in to secure him, each mounted by his keeper, who had in his hand a rope with a noose, which one of them, after the second or third effort, succeeded in casting round the foreleg. The animal made comparatively very little resistance, appearing to be quite subdued by the presence of his three powerful antagonists, who, after the noose was fixed, drove him by main force into a pen at the south side of the enclosure, from which he was afterwards withdrawn, and tied to a post by a comparatively slender rope put round his neck, through his mouth, and round his tusks. We saw him in this situation, under a shed, as we were returning home, very restless and sullen. He was so closely tied to the post, that he could scarcely move, and had no power to do any mischief. We were told by the keepers, that the male elephants, when thus secured, refuse food for about five days. It takes six or seven months to tame them effectually, and occasionally as much as a whole year, for their dispositions are very various.
After the elephant was secured, we had an exhibition of boxing,—not less than five-and-twenty or thirty matches. In these gymnastics, the Burmans display a good deal of strength and agility; but would make but a sorry figure, after all, even among the third or fourth class of our London prize-fighters. The boxers were stripped naked, with the exception of a piece of red cloth tied round their waist; and advanced into the ring, using provoking language and gestures. They closed almost immediately, and wrestled; using in the mean time their hands, feet, and knees with considerable adroitness. The fight consists of three rounds, unless decided earlier by some obvious advantage on one side. An umpire sits in the ring, and decides who is to be considered the victor. The loss of a single drop of blood is the loss of the battle. To determine this point, we observed some curious and minute examinations set on foot; those who had got bloody mouths endeavouring to conceal the mishap. Their detection always occasioned a loud laugh among the spectators. Both parties receive prizes from the King, consisting always of articles of dress, of which the victor of course receives the most valuable.

These were, after all, but bloodless combats, and were evidently not intended to be otherwise; for when there appeared the least risk of mischief being done from the irritation of the combatants, they were carefully parted by the umpires and their assistants. Notwithstanding the partiality of the Burmans to such exhibitions, one of our English battles would, I am convinced, shock and frighten them exceedingly. During the many battles which took place upon the present occasion, no serious accident took place; and I saw but one instance where one of the combatants was temporarily disabled: this was occasioned by a blow with the knee, given by his antagonist, in the mouth, which knocked him down; but it was inflicted with so much dexterity, that we could scarcely perceive how it was done. It excited loud applause, not only in the ring, but among the courtiers.

The behaviour of his Burman Majesty towards our party was not only condescending, but extremely affable. Refreshments, consisting of betel, pickled tea, and sweetmeats, were served to us in profusion, by his orders; and while we were eating, he came up close to us and addressed us frequently. He expressed his regret that the elephant was so small as to afford little sport, and invited us to another entertainment of a similar nature on the following
day. He asked if the art of boxing was understood in England, and was assured by Dr. Price and Mr. Lanciego that the noble science of pugilism was as much practised, and as much admired by the English as by the Burmans themselves. During several hours that we were in his presence, his Majesty never sat for ten minutes in the same place, but moved and strutted about in a very restless manner. He conversed with considerable affability, and, in short, there was no possibility of recognising in him the prince who, a few days before, had spread his prime-minister to dry in the meridian sun for a trifling faux-pas. We had, of course, a good view of his Majesty’s person: I should suppose he is not above five feet two inches high, which, after all, is not much below the middle size of Burmans; his person is slender, but active; he is what is called bandy-legged to a remarkable degree; his features are cheerful and sprightly, but not very intelligent, and not at all handsome. The most remarkable part of his countenance is his forehead, which slants back to so singular a degree, as to amount nearly to mal-conformation. This is even still more the case with the Prince of Sarawadi, his full brother; and was also the case with the late King. I am told it is a family feature in the descendants of Alompra. He was dressed in a plain white muslin, and had on a profusion of gold chains, crossing both shoulders; the buckles or clasps of these were studded with a few diamonds and emeralds, and some very large and fine un-cut rubies: there was not a sapphire about his person—this stone does not seem to be much valued by the Burmans. The Princes who were present upon this occasion, were the Heir-apparent, the Prince of Sarawadi, the Prince of Mekara, the Queen’s brother, and four young Princes, brothers to the King. The Queen did not make her appearance.

The crowd assembled upon the present occasion was by far the greatest we had seen since coming to Ava. Boxing and elephant-catching are favourite amusements with the populace; and these, rather than the presence of the King and Court, had brought them together. There must have been several thousands assembled. The top of the wall was completely crowded, and so was the space between the inner palisade and the wall, as well as that between the temple and the palisade which surrounded it. When the boxing commenced, the populace formed a ring with as much regularity as if they had been true-born Englishmen. This way preserved with much more regularity, with the assistance of
the constables, with their long rods or staves, whom I before mentioned. The King frequently said, when he saw the constables exercising their authority, “Don't hurt them,—don't prevent them from looking on.” Not a single female was to be seen among the crowd, although the curiosity of the women leads them to mix with the men upon almost every other occasion. They are not prohibited from attending; but it would be considered not feminine to do so, and contrary to custom, the amusements being considered male sports only.

In respect to the arrangement or police of such places, a whimsical and barbarous custom prevails, which ought to be noticed. If any one come with money on his person, he may be plundered of it by a public officer, or almost any one else, and can get no redress. The same practice prevails in two other places, where it is still more unpardonable, viz. at the principal gate of the Palace, and under the L'hut-d'hau, or principal council-hall, and court of justice. A few years ago, the head man of one of the King’s barges was plundered, at one of the elephant exhibitions, of some money which he had about his person. The thief was detected and apprehended on the spot, brought before the King, and ordered to have his head immediately struck off. The Myolat-wun, the foster-father of the young Princess, had the boldness to order the execution to be stayed; and to represent to his Majesty, that the culprit was justifiable by immemorial usage. The King attended to the argument, and he was pardoned.

A regular dinner, in the European fashion, was prepared for us under a shed. We did not return home until about sunset, and of course much fatigued from the disagreeable attitude in which we were obliged to sit during the greatest part of the time.

As we sat in our tent, the royal procession passed close by us, and our conductors threw up the screen to give us a full view of it. The King was mounted on his favourite elephant, on a small box or Howdah. The white elephant which he never rides, went before him. His escort consisted of several hundred musqueteers and spearmen, mixed, in the full military costume of the Burmans. This consists of a jacket, with skirts, close buttoned in front; over the shoulders, back, and breast, there is suspended a kind of ruff, or collar, of detached pieces, of the thinness and stiffness of pasteboard, covered with cloth. This is meant, I presume, for armour. On the head there is a round brass helmet ending in a
peak, and decorated with a wreath of tinsel for the soldiers, and
gold flowers for the officers. The Myolat-wun was the commandant
of this body-guard. The costume is unbecoming, grotesque,
cumbrous, and not less unsuitable to the climate than to military
habits.

December 7, 1826

The amusements of this day commenced at eleven o’clock, and
took place near the King’s water-palace, on a kind of glacis which
lies immediately between the river and the walls of the town. It
consisted of weaning a young male elephant, and of elephant-
fights. The young male elephants are weaned at three years old,—
that is to say, they are then separated from their dams and broken
in,—a process which appears to be nearly as tedious and difficult
as that of breaking in a full-grown elephant taken in the forest. The
process which we saw much resembled that of yesterday; but a
singular ceremony was performed before it commenced, which
deserves mention: it consisted of an invocation to the Nat Udin-
main-so, the genius of elephant-hunting, whom I mentioned
yesterday. Between the walls of the town and an artificial mount
planted with trees, and raised upon a ledge of rocks, jetting into
the Irawadi, there is a small elephant paddock, consisting of a
single square palisade having two gates. The King sat under a
little pavilion on the side of the mount, and directed in person the
ceremony to which I allude. A banana tree had been planted in the
middle of the paddock, which was removed with great ceremony;
and on the spot where it stood, five elderly persons came forward,
with a solemn strut and dance, holding in their hands branches of
a species of eugenia or jambu, and carrying offerings of rice and
sweetmeats to the Nat. I could not learn the exact words of the
incantation; but the substance of it was, that the demi-god was
informed that a glorious prince, the descendant of great kings,
presided at the present ceremony; that he, the demi-god, therefore,
was requested to be propitious to it, to get die elephants quickly
into the pen, and generally to lend his aid throughout the whole
ceremony. About two-and-thirty female elephants, with their young
included, were now driven into the enclosure: they were shortly
followed by four male elephants, the riders of which had long
ropes, with a noose at the end, in their hands. After many
unsuccessful efforts, they succeeded at last in entangling the young elephant that was to be weaned, by the hind leg. This was a matter of great difficulty, for he was protected by the adroitness of the herd of female elephants which crowded round him for the purpose. When taken, he was a great deal more outrageous and obstreperous than the wild elephant caught yesterday. The large mounted elephants had to beat him frequently; and I observed, once or twice, that they raised him quite off the ground with their tusks, without doing him any material injury. The cry which he emitted, on these occasions, differed in no way but in degree from the squeak of a hog that is in pain or fear. He was ultimately confined in a small pen beyond one of the doors of the paddock, where two of the male elephants continued to watch him. He was still very outrageous, and making violent efforts to extricate himself, but all to little purpose.

After some time we were summoned into the King's presence, who was now on board of a large vessel chiefly constructed of bamboo, which is occasionally used by him as a bath. We found him here seated on a common gilded chair. Our reception was not formal, but very polite. We were seated immediately in front of him, at no great distance. He asked Dr. Wallich how he liked his visit to the mountains, what new plants he had collected there, and what was the nature of his employment in Bengal. He made inquiry respecting my visit to Siam, and its object. The answer was, that I had gone there to form a commercial arrangement, as here; and to negotiate for the restoration to his country of a Malay prince, called the King of Queda. The Burman courtiers did not at first understand who this King of Queda was, but recognised him at length under the appellation of Prince of Gita. It was possible that their information respecting him was better than they pretended; for the Court of Ava, in 1823, had carried on an intrigue with this chief, with the view of supplanting the Siamese in the supremacy which the latter had long exercised over his country. The King observed, that he understood that our departure was fixed for to-morrow; and caused it to be explained to us, that it would be agreeable to him if we put it off for a day or two.

It was now signified to use that the elephant combats were about to commence, and we took leave with a respectful bow. Dr. Wallich, upon this occasion, presented the King with a large collection of seeds, and with some fine growing plants from the
Botanical Garden of Calcutta. The circumstance which attended the conveyance of the latter from the spot where we were first sitting to the King's boat, a distance not exceeding a hundred and fifty yards, afforded us a very curious and unexpected illustration of the character of the Burman Government. Four or five public officers of considerable rank were our conductors; and it might have been expected that these persons would have had influence enough to procure from the crowd of idle persons in attendance, a sufficient number, to carry a few plants intended for the King himself, and almost in his own presence. No such thing; they had not authority to command a single individual; and it was only after a considerable delay, and after much intreaty and persuasion, that a few volunteers were obtained. I suggested, as an experiment, the offer of one or two ticals, which, from my experience at Rangoon, I knew would be quite effectual; but this is the last remedy that would have been thought of by a Burman chief. The disobedience of the lower class, upon this occasion, is easily accounted for: the order did not come through their immediate chief; it was therefore not legal, and, according to universal custom, they were perfectly justified in disregarding it.

The elephant combats took place immediately on the riverside, upon a piece of level ground, in the centre of which there is a stout paling, across which it is customary to fight the animals. There were five combats, but they afforded little amusement. The elephant is not a courageous animal nor is it pugnacious: they have but one mode of fighting,—that of butting with their forehead, and endeavouring to wound each other with their tusks. After a rencontre which does not last above a few seconds, one of the parties is sure to run away. In one or two instances they refused to fight altogether over the paling, and they were therefore brought into the open plain. On one of these occasions, the vanquished elephant, after turning round in his retreat, happened to be too near a pond, and being gored in the flank by his antagonist, was thrown in: no accident happened to the riders, nor does there, I am told, upon almost any of these occasions. The guides seemed by no means wanting in intrepidity, and appeared to us to bring up the elephants to the charge with much spirit.

After the elephant combats were over, the King prepared to take his departure. His elephant, one of the noblest animals I have ever seen, having the trunk, head, and part of the neck of a white
flesh colour, and in other respects altogether perfect, was brought up close to the shed under which we were sitting, and he mounted it with great agility, placed himself upon the neck of the animal, took the hook in his hand, and seemed to be perfectly at home in this employment. We afterwards saw the Heir-apparent, a child of thirteen years of age, guiding his elephant in the same way. This practice is, I believe, peculiar to the Burmans; for, in Western India, at least, no person of condition ever condescends to guide his own elephant. There is at least some manliness in the custom; and I should not be surprised to find that the neck of the elephant would be found, on experience, the most agreeable and easy seat to the rider. After the King’s departure we repaired to a shed, where dinner was prepared for us, as yesterday. At this entertainment we had walnuts and chestnuts, just arrived from China; and some very good oranges, from Lao. This last fruit does not grow well at Ava; and among the Burmans, what is not good almost spontaneously, is not likely to become so through their care or skill. The junior Atwenwun of the two negotiators did the honours of the feast, and, with three or four other chiefs, partook heartily of our fare. As a mark of attention, when we were done, the relics of the feast were ordered to be distributed to our Indian servants; but the Burman chiefs were surprised when it was explained to them that these people would not eat what had been cooked or touched either by them or us, and, what was still worse, what had been supplied by order of “the great and glorious” King!

Having now seen so much of the royal elephants, I shall describe what has come to my knowledge respecting these annuals. All the elephants of the kingdom, tame or wild, are considered royal property: they are a royal monopoly; but the King, as a mark of special favour, gives the use of them to his wives, concubines, brothers, and sons, and occasionally, but rarely, to some of the highest dignitaries of his Government. Every one who takes an elephant must deliver it to the King; and the killing even of a wild elephant is deemed an offence punishable by a heavy fine: it is done notwithstanding, both on account of the ivory and flesh, which last is eaten by the Burmans, after being dried in the sun, when, to save the penalty, it passes under the name of buffalo beef. The King, I am told, is possessed, in all, of about one thousand elephants, divided into two classes: those which are thoroughly broken in and tamed, consisting principally of males;
and those that are employed as decoys, all females, and in a half wild state. They are under two chiefs: that of the first called the Senwun, or Elephant Governor; and that of the second, the Aokmá, or Aong-ma-wun; words which signify “governor- of female decoys.” The latter are exclusively used as decoys; and, for this purpose, generally kept in the neighbourhood of forests frequented by elephants. Here they are frequently joined by wild females, as well as by males. When the latter is the case, the particular herd that has been joined by the male, is driven into town; and the last caught, in the manner which we saw yesterday, for the King’s amusement. I believe that elephants in general are not caught in this country in the large way practised in India, Ceylon, and other countries; the mode of taking them by decoys, and breeding, being quite sufficient to keep up the stock. With respect to breeding in the domestic state, or at least in the half domestic state, in which the female elephants are generally kept, I have made frequent inquiries into it; and it is, in fact, such an every-day occurrence, that there can be no doubt respecting the truth of it. I have seen no herd of elephants without three, four, five, or six young ones,—some not more than a month, and others between three and four years old. Among these animals the intercourse of the sexes goes on exactly as among other quadrupeds. There seems to be no foundation whatever for the pretended delicacy which has been ascribed to them: it is, in reality, a romance of European origin. In addition to the testimony of many natives, I have on this subject the assurance of two Europeans, who have lived for years in Ava. I may add, that the courage and sagacity of this animal have been nearly as much exaggerated as its modesty. Its bulk, its strength, and its trunk, are its great recommendations, especially the latter. If man has been called the wisest of animals, because he possesses hands; the elephant may, with as much truth, be called the wisest of quadrupeds, because he possesses a trunk. But for this instrument, and its great strength, I think it doubtful whether it would be ranked higher in intellectual endowments than a despised animal of the same natural family, —the hog.

The best elephants belonging to his Burman Majesty are procured in the mountainous parts of the country, and those of the plains are said to be inferior in strength, symmetry, and courage. The finest are obtained in the district of Ramathen, on the Kyendwen river, and in that of Sandapuri in Lao, which is no
doubt the Chantanaburi or Lan-chang of the Siamese,—a country celebrated amongst these latter people also for, its fine elephants. The elephants of Pegu, a low country, are not esteemed, their tusks being considered small, their limbs feeble, and their carcases large. The elephant is said to be found in perfection, only within, and about the Tropics; but if the statement now made be accurate, their character also seems considerably influenced by the local and physical circumstances of the different countries of which they are natives.

Yesterday Mr. Lanciego informed me, at our audience of the King, that although the Atwenwuns had declined to submit the representation respecting the Bengal prisoners to the King, he himself had done so. His Majesty, he said, had received his statement favourably—thought the request a just and reasonable one, and demanded that their names should be given in—their native country particularized, and the time and manner of their being made prisoners stated. To-day it was hinted to me, that there was some intention of sending the captives thus claimed back to Bengal, with the Burman embassy. It seemed, however, to be the wish of the Burman Government, that every matter in discussion should be left for adjustment in Bengal; and as this was consonant to the letter of my instructions, I willingly encouraged them in it.

**December 11, 1826**

The two Atwenwuns paid us a complimentary and farewell visit this forenoon. I made them each a small present, on behalf of the Government, and made presents also to the two Than-d’hau-thens. It was intimated to me now, for the first time, that it was the intention of the King to send presents to the Governor-General, consisting of rubies, sapphires, &c. The Atwenwuns requested to know which of the gentlemen attached to the Mission had not yet received titles of honour from his Majesty. They received a list of seven, for this honour had been conferred on myself at Rangoon. The chiefs went away, after staying about half an hour.

**December 12, 1826**

In the course of yesterday and the day before, we were employed in putting our baggage on board, and last evening embarked
ourselves. After many applications, we at last succeeded in getting seven small boats from the Burman Government, and were obliged as we could to make up the number to twelve. So large a number became requisite, in consequence of the necessity of lightening the steam-vessel to six feet draft of water, on account of the great fall of the river since coming up, which had not been less at Ava than eighteen or twenty feet. I have before mentioned the difficulty of procuring boats from the Burman Government: this, it appears, did not arise altogether from a disposition to refuse prompt compliance with our wishes, or from the spirit of procrastination which reigns over all its proceedings; but from the chicanery and extortion of the public officers, which is conspicuous here, as in every thing else. Boats are to be had in Ava in abundance: the Government, however, never pays for any thing, but presses men, horses, carts, boats, or whatever else it requires at the moment. This office is intrusted to the Myosarés, or town scribes, who make such matters a capital subject of perquisite. An European informed me that he had been once employed to execute some small work for the King, in which two boats were required: he accompanied the Myosaré to point out the description required, and was personally a witness to the iniquities which he practised on the occasion; he made a visitation to almost every boat in the river, exacting fines from the owners to let them off; and it was a whole fortnight before the two boats were finally procured; the lot of course falling at length on the most miserable of the boatmen, or those who could not pay in money or influence for exemption.

As our people were embarking, the Burmese officers sent word that there were three persons among our followers who had not come up with the Mission, and who therefore ought not to go down with it. I stated, on receiving the necessary information, that the persons in question were natives of Bengal and subjects of our Government, who had been forcibly carried away, and were now unjustifiably detained. This remonstrance had no effect: one of the Atwenwuns immediately came over, and stated that it was the King’s peremptory order that no one should go back with the Mission except the persons who had actually come with it. I was compelled reluctantly to give up the point, after taking a list of the names of the individuals, and stating that they would be claimed in due course along with the other prisoners. Late last night, messengers came on board to us, with a royal order, requiring the
attendance at the Palace, on the following morning, of the gentlemen who were to be honoured with titles. They repaired thither accordingly to-day, after breakfast. There was a pretty full attendance of courtiers, and they were received respectfully; but the King did not, present himself. They received their titles in the customary way, which were read aloud, and addressed to the throne, just as if his Majesty had been present. At twelve o’clock the presents for the Governor-General were brought on board by a Than-dau-then, but there was no reply to his Lordship’s letter. The following is a translation of the list which accompanied the presents:

A list of return presents given by his Majesty to the English Ruler:

Two ruby rings; two sapphire rings; five pieces of silk cloth; two fur coats; two Chinese hats; two gilt umbrellas; two boxes, decorated with glass; two high-cover, decorated with glass; two do., gilt; two Shan boxes, large; two do., middle-sized; two do., small; two high-cover Shan boxes, two Shan cups, large; two do., middle-sized; ten do., small; one block of Sagaing white stone; one mass of rock crystal, weighing ten viss; ten elephants’ teeth, weighing five thousand one hundred and ninety viss; two horses.

Along with the presents came two boxes of Burman books, with a list of which the following, is a translation:

A list of sacred writings. Ra-ta-na-ga-ra Wuttu (Wuttu means, a religious tale or romance): Ma-ni-kong-ta-la Wuttu, 9 vols; Ma-la-ler-ka-ra Wuttu (a life of Gautama); Na-ga-thing-ma-ling, questions and answers (a metaphysical work); Sundry small works, 6 vols. (poetry chiefly); Pali Dictionary; Pali Grammar, (the original text); Pin-nya-ka-ta-ra Wuttu; Pali Grammar, (the text, accompanied with a Burman translation); Thu-ka-wa-ha Wuttu; The 550 Zat Wuttu; The adventures of Gautama in pre-existing states; Dam-na-pa-ta Wuttu.

When we first arrived at Ava, we were anxious, especially Mr. Judson, to purchase Burman books. This came to the notice of the
Government; and we were requested to give ourselves no trouble on the subject, as the King would furnish us with all we wanted, if a list were supplied. The list was accordingly given in, in which was included some historical works and treatises on law. The books now produced were those requested, with the exception of the latter description, not one of which was supplied. It was thought, it appears, that these would have afforded us some insight into the mysteries of Burman Government, and this was a sufficient ground for refusing them! I shall devote this short chapter to such a Description of the towns of Ava and Sagaing, as I was enabled to collect during my residence at the capital. The town of Ava, twice before the capital of the Burman Empire, was made so, a third time, in 1822, by his present Majesty. It lies in North latitude 21° 50’, and East longitude 96°. The native popular name of the place is Angwa, meaning a fish-pond, which the Hindus and Malays have corrupted into Awa, and the European nations, again, borrowing from them, into Ava, a word which we have extended to the whole kingdom. In all public writings, as already mentioned, the capital is denominated Ratanapura, or the City of Gems.\footnote{Quoted account of M. Montymorency has been extracted and published separately in the present issue of the SBBR.} The circumference of Ava round the walls, and excluding the suburbs, is about five and a half miles. In general, the houses are mere huts, thatched with grass. Some of the dwellings of the chiefs are constructed of planks, and tiled, and there are probably in all not half-a-dozen houses constructed of brick and mortar. Poor as the houses are, they are thinly scattered over the extensive area of the place, and some large quarters are, indeed, wholly destitute of habitations, and mere neglected commons. Including one large one in the suburb, lying between the town and the little river, there are eleven markets or bazars, composed, as usual, of thatched huts and sheds: the three largest are called Je-kyo, Sarawadi, and Shan-ze. We passed more than once through the greater number of these markets, and found them well supplied, at least, on an estimate of the wants and habits of the people. Besides native commodities, there are exposed for sale in them such of the produce of China and Lao as are used by the Burmans, with British cottons, woollens, glass, and earthenware.

In Ava, of course, there are many temples, the tall white, or gilded spires of which, give to the distant view of the place, a
splendid and imposing appearance, far from being realized on a closer examination. Some of the principal of these may be enumerated: the largest of all is called Lo-ga-thar-bu and consists of two portions, or rather of two distinct temples; one in the ancient, the other in the modern form. In the former, there is an image of Gautama in the common sitting posture, of enormous magnitude. Colonel Symes imagined this statue to be a block of marble; but this is a mistake, for it is composed of sandstone. A second very large temple is called Angwa Sé-kong; and a third, Ph'ra-l'ha, or “the beautiful.” A fourth temple of great celebrity, is named Maong-Ratna. This is the one in which the public officers of the Government take with great formality the oath of allegiance. A fifth temple is named Maha-mrat-muni. I inspected an addition which was made to this temple a short time before our arrival. It was merely a Zayat, or chapel, and chiefly constructed of wood: it however exceeded in splendour any thing we had seen without the Palace. The roof was supported by a vast number of pillars: these, as well as the ceiling, were richly gilt throughout. The person at whose expense all this was done was a Burman merchant, or rather broker, from whom we learned that the cost was forty thousand ticals, about 5,000l. sterling. When the building was completed he respectfully presented it to his Majesty, not daring to take to himself the whole merit of so pious an undertaking.

The Burman monasteries are usually built of wood only; and of those of more solid materials, a few ancient ones in ruins only are to be seen. There is however one exception in a very spacious one lately built by the Queen, close to the Palace. This is a clumsy fabric of immense size, and a very conspicuous object in approaching Ava. Of the population of Ava I shall afterwards speak.

The town of Sagaing is situated on the opposite side of the Irawadi to Ava, and directly fronting it. On the river-face it has a brick wall, which extends for about half a mile: the height of this is not above ten feet; but it has a terre pleine parapet and embrasures, like the wall of Ava. To each flank of the brick wall there is a stockade of a paltry description, erected during the late war. Inland there are no defences whatsoever. Sagaing extends along the Irawadi to the distance of better than a mile and a half, but its depth towards the hills is very inconsiderable; it consists, as elsewhere, of mean houses, thinly scattered among gardens and
orchards; the principal trees in the latter consisting of fine old tamarinds. Over the site of the town and its environs there are innumerable temples, ruinous, old, or modern, too conspicuous not to be noticed in describing the place.

The Burman capital is not confined to the town of Ava, but embraces also Sagaing and Amarapura, with the large districts attached to all three. Ava, with its district, extends along the river for six taings, or about twelve miles, and its depth inland is half this extent. Amarapura is of the same size. Sagaing, with its district, extends for six taings along the river, and is of equal depth. According to this wide acceptation, the capital embraces an area of two hundred and eighty-eight miles. The number of villages contained in this space, the subdivisions of the town being each reckoned as one, was given to me as follow:—for Ava, 320; for Amarapura, 45; and for Sagaing, 146; making in all, 511. The returns of the population, in 1835, gave 46,000 houses or families. It is usual, however, for the Wuns, or heads of districts, to give in the census at considerably less than its real amount; and this deficiency is commonly estimated at a tithe, which would raise the actual number of families to 50,600. According to the Burman estimate, each family is reckoned at seven individuals, which would give a total population of 354,200.¹⁶ This is at the rate of about 692 souls for each village or subdivision, and of 1229 to the square mile,—a very trifling population, when it is considered that three towns and the best cultivated portions of the empire are included in the enumeration. These statements respecting the extent and population of the capital, were furnished to me by a person who had actually perused the public registers, which are kept by one of the Atwenwuns, or privy counsellors, charged with this particular department; and the certain inference to be drawn from them is, that the total population of the whole kingdom must be very trifling, and its amount in all former accounts greatly exaggerated. All this will appear the more probable, when it is considered that the inhabitants of the capital enjoy, as will afterwards be explained, peculiar immunities in the way of

¹⁶ Crawfurd’s original note: The Myowun of Sagaing informed me in conversation, that the number of houses or families in the town and district constituting his jurisdiction was sixteen thousand, and the number of villages about 150,—a statement which may be considered as a corroboration of that given in the text.
taxation, which must necessarily have the effect of concentrating the population here, and withdrawing it from the provinces.

With respect to the population of the town of Ava itself, I have never heard any estimate; and probably, considering the mode in which the inhabitants of “the capital” are reckoned, the Burmese have never attempted to make any. It must however, as I conceive, be very inconsiderable. On a rough estimate, the area of the town and suburbs does not exceed two miles, and, as I have already said, a considerable part of this is occupied by the Palace and public buildings; a large portion is thinly inhabited, and much altogether unoccupied. We may compare it with other Indian towns, of which the area and population have been estimated. Calcutta is said to stand on an area of about twelve miles, and to contain 300,000. Were Ava as densely peopled, which I think very improbable, it would contain fifty thousand inhabitants. Perhaps half this number would be much nearer the truth.

December 13, 1826

Yesterday, immediately after receiving on board the presents for the Governor-General, we weighed anchor and began to drop down, taking our final leave of Ava. Owing to the intricacy of the passage, and the shallowness of the river, we did not get above six or seven miles below the town, where we anchored for the night.

December 15, 1826

On the morning of the 13th we passed Kyaok-ta-long, which is the great police station in going to and coming from Ava,—a place which, in consequence of the vexations and impositions practised by the public officers, is held in dread by merchants and travellers. Thus far we were accompanied by a Than-d’hau-gan, the same individual who had met us in going up. He was relieved by the old Governor of Bassein, who had been again appointed to conduct the Mission. In consideration of these services, he was appointed, while at Ava, one of the Rewuns of Rangoon; but declined the office, in expectation of the government of Dalla, or of some other superior appointment.

December 16, 1826
The very difficult and intricate navigation between Kyaok-ta-long and Yandabo detained us until this day, when at half-past three o’clock we passed the latter place, and at four the junction of the Kyendwen and the Irawadi: the former appeared now a petty stream not exceeding two hundred yards in breadth, and the latter had diminished, to a quarter of a mile: after their union, however, they expand to about three quarters of a mile. In the evening we anchored off Tarop Myo, or Chinese Town. A little way above Kyaok-ta-long the vessel struck against a reef of rocks, and close to the village of Ngamyagyi she took the ground on a sand-bank, where she remained for several hours.

December 21, 1826

Early on the morning of the 17th, we began to kedge down with much caution, but the vessel, notwithstanding, grounded on: a sand-bank, and was not got off until the morning of the 20th, and with great difficulty. In order to lighten her, we landed almost every thing, cut off one-third of the poop, and went ashore ourselves, with our servants, taking up our residence on a sand-bank, under temporary tents. This morning every thing was again ready, and we dropped down; the gentlemen of the Mission and servants, however, proceeding in the baggage-boats. The fall of the river since we went up in the end of September, was certainly not less than twenty feet. I landed at Ngamyagyi and Tarop Myo. The rice had just been cut, and the winter crops of various pulses were in considerable progress.

December 22, 1826

We stopped last night at Rabá-kyao-tan, which takes its name from a reef of rocks which at this place runs across the Irawadi. We pitched our temporary tents on a sand-bank in the middle of the river for the night The reef of rocks alluded to, on examination, proved to be breccia with much iron. The debris of it was scattered over the sand-bank, and consisted of quartz pebbles and clay iron ore, among which were many fragments of petrified wood with calcareous incrustations formed upon branches and roots of trees. We found one fragment, which we supposed to be fossil bone.
Scattered through these ingredients were to be seen pieces of wood, and a few bones of quadrupeds undergoing the usual process of decomposition without the slightest appearance of being turned into stone, according to the popular opinion; which shows plainly enough that the waters of the Irawadi have no power of petrifying such objects, and that the process by which petrifactions of vegetable and animal substances are formed is owing to some other agency. The steam-vessel passed the reef of rocks this morning, and we followed her about eight o’clock. At twelve we passed the flourishing village of Pakok’ho, where, in going up, we had seen so many trading vessels. There were now few, for the greater number had taken their departure for Rangoon and other parts of the lower country. We stopped for the night at Nyaong-ku, which, as before mentioned, is a suburb of Pugan, and the most noted place in the country for the manufacture of lacker-ware. Immediately above this place, and to the distance of about a mile, the banks of the river are high, often not less than sixty feet, and nearly perpendicular: they chiefly consist of indurated sand, with here and there ledges of a hard calcareous sandstone: the surface of this is every where smooth, as if water-worn; and from it projections, processes, spring out in several places, of a mammiferous form, and frequently resembling stalactites upon a gigantic scale. The wreck of these huge calcareous incrustations, and of great masses of wood-stone, are found in that part of the bed of the river which is at present dry. In many situations I observed calcareous incrustations formed round a nucleus of wood-stone. In one case the mass had the resemblance of the huge trunk of a tree, the petrified wood forming as if it were the pith.

In the steep bank there are innumerable holes of various sizes, which are the residence of swallows and wild pigeons. The last are of two descriptions, the common blue pigeon and a very handsome and large green one. In the same bank, and nearly midway up, there are several artificial excavations, once the residence of Burmese ascetics; but this race has been long extinct. In Burmese language, such pious persons are known by the name or Rathe (No doubt, a corruption of the Sanscrit word Rasi, a saint), and in Pali by that of Tâpasa and Isino.

December 23, 1826
Employed in making the necessary preparations for quitting the Burman boats and embarking in the steam-vessel, we did not quit Nyaong-ku to-day until two o’clock. This gave us an opportunity of seeing the place, and examining its temples and manufactory of lackered ware. The innumerable temples of Pugan extend to Nyaong-ku, and beyond it. The most celebrated at Nyaong-ku is that called Shwe-segum, or the Golden Temple. The original building is said to have been constructed by Naura-t’ha-sau, a king of Pugan, whose reign commenced in the year 359, and terminated in 392 of the Burman vulgar era. According to this statement, the building cannot be less than seven hundred and ninety-six years old. The temple itself is a solid mass of masonry, in the form of a pyramid, and gilt. The extensive area which surrounds it is crowded with a variety of wooden fanes, very richly gilt and carved, containing images of Gautama and his disciples, some of them of white marble; innumerable images of Nats in red sandstone; and some relics of great celebrity among the Burmans,— such as the statue of a horse in sandstone, representing the favourite steed of the founder; a fish called Nga-kren, which represents Gautama in this form, with three celebrated Nats, one of the female and two of the male gender. These relics are of the rudest description imaginable, and such of them as aim at the form of humanity, hideously ugly. Close to this, principal temple there is another in a ruinous state, of the ancient form. Here we found two inscriptions on slabs of sandstone, apparently in the modern character, but of a very rude form, and too much defaced to be read.

Nyaong-ku supplies the greater part of the kingdom with lacker-ware. The articles manufactured consist of betel boxes, cups, bowls, large boxes for keeping fine clothes, and for serving viands. The fabric is very simple. The frame consists of plaited bamboo, over which is laid a paste consisting of coarse varnish mixed up with bone-ashes. When the article thus far prepared is dry, a layer of varnish mixed up with vermilion is laid upon it; this is followed by a second, third, or even fourth layer of varnish, of a finer description, according to the quality of the article to be manufactured. The figures are drawn with a rude iron style, and yet are sometimes extremely neat and tasteful: this ware is comparatively very cheap: a hundred cups, each capable of containing a pint, may be bought at Nyaong-ku for six ticals of
flowered silver, or about fifteen shillings: these will last about six months. The finer descriptions of the manufacture, however, are much dearer. A more durable description of lacker-ware, but more costly, is imported in considerable quantity from Lao. These together serve the Burmans, in a good measure, in the place not only of cabinet-work, but of glass, fine porcelain, and the utensils of brass, pewter, and tin, which are used by other nations; and in some cases it is no bad substitute. The varnish used by the manufacturers of Nyaong-ku, is imported from the countries on the Kyen-dwen river: we purchased it here at one tical a viss. Judging by the superior brilliancy of the lacker-ware of Lao, the varnish used in the fabrication of it must be of a finer quality. The coarsest varnish of all, used by the Burmans, is procured in Lower Pegu.

**December 24, 1826**

We dropped down yesterday afternoon below Pugan, anchoring close to the opposite or western bank of the river. This morning; as some delay was occasioned by necessary repairs to the machinery of the steam-vessel, we took the opportunity of landing to explore the neighbourhood. A range of hills, not exceeding two hundred feet in height, runs parallel with the river, within a few yards of the bank. We penetrated this in two different directions, each route which we took being the dry bed of a mountain torrent. In one of these there was a soft sandy bottom, very generally covered by a saline efflorescence. On each side of it there was abundance of the tamarisk (*Tamarix Indica*), which is so familiar to those who have visited the banks of the Ganges: Dr. Wallich saw it now for the first time, in Ava; for, generally speaking, the plant is not to be found on the banks of this river. Connected with the saline formation now mentioned. Dr. Wallich found also three plants, which had not been met with by us before, viz. a new species of *Salsola*, different from the two known Indian ones; a new species of *Trichodesma*, with perfoliate leaves, and the *ammannia vesicatoria* of Roxburgh. The bed of the second torrent was composed of rocks, and rocky fragments, consisting of calcareous sandstone, and an iron-stone breccia. The latter contained an immense quantity of embedded fossil shells, as far as we could ascertain, on a superficial examination, differing from the fresh-water shells, which we had
collected in the neighbourhood of the river on our way up. The stone in which these remains are found is very abundant, and we brought away a great quantity of specimens. On our way up to Ava, a native had given us a few specimens of fossil shells, which he said were obtained not far distant from the spot where we now found similar ones: this circumstance of course had directed our inquiry. All the specimens of rocks which we found here smelt strongly of petroleum, or earth oil; and as we proceeded up, we found the substance itself oozing out from the blue clay. Were wells dug, no doubt it would be found in the same manner as at Renan-gyaong. The range of hills where we observed it is composed of immense masses of blue clay, soft sandstone, or rather aggregated sand, containing occasionally round pebbles, hard calcareous sand-stone, iron-stone breccia, in which alone the fossil remains were found, and a coarse pudding-stone; the chert, or petrified wood, and the calcareous incrustations, so abundant on the opposite side of the river, were scarcely to be found here at all.

On coming on board, the steam-vessel dropped down through a narrow passage formed between the spot which we had just examined and a broad island. The channel navigable here was scarcely thirty yards in breadth, deep, rapid, and therefore dangerous. There was certainly no part of the Irawadi which we had seen of which the passage was so precarious. Between three and four in the afternoon, we passed the town of Sale, and in the evening anchored off the western bank, about midway between that place and Sembegewn (Sen-pyu-gyun, White Elephant Island).

**December 25, 1826**

On Christmas morning, about breakfast-time, we anchored for an hour or two off Sembegewn, to give us an opportunity of sending off our letters and dispatches to Bengal by the Aracanese messengers, who had brought us letters at Ava on the 3rd of this month. We reckoned that, by this conveyance, accounts from us would be received at Calcutta in twenty-five days.

While we were at anchor off Sembegewn, the old Governor of Bassein came on board and informed us that he had that morning received accounts, that the Talains, or Peguans, under Maongzat, the chief of Syrian, had rebelled against the Burman authorities, and that a formidable insurrection had broke out immediately after
upon the departure of Sir Archibald Campbell from Rangoon, since which time several actions had been fought. In the evening we reached Renangyun, or the Petroleum brook.

**December 27, 1826**

Yesterday morning, after taking in wood, the steam-vessel dropped down, and about a mile below Renangyun took the ground. A party had landed early in the morning, and proceeded some miles down the river, in expectation of joining the vessel. We were obliged to return, and did not reach her until three in the afternoon. This excursion, and another earlier in the morning, afforded us a highly interesting view of the geology of this part of the eastern bank of the river. The country consists of a series of sand-hills, the highest of which do not exceed one hundred feet, frequently separated by narrow ravines, which, although torrents in the rainy season, were at present dry. The soil upon these lulls was scanty in the extreme, and generally covered with grass, or an under-sized forest, in which the following trees are the most frequent:—Two species of *Arborescent Accacias Celtes-Mollis*; *Rhus Paniculata*, and *Bignonia Auriculata* of Wallich; *Baringtonia Acutangula*; a few sacred fig-trees, but above all a species of *Zyzyphus*, the same which is so universal in the upper part of the Burman country.

The Irawadi had left bare a complete section of the sand-hills along its banks, where they are nearly perpendicular, and generally from seventy to eighty feet high. The whole country hereabouts is evidently of alluvial formation. The hills, at first view, appear to be sandstone, but in fact are nothing more than sand of a moderate hardness, every where more or less intermixed with gravel, sometimes very large, and at others minute. Situated generally below the sand, are beds of iron-stone breccia, and stalactitic masses of calcareous sandstone, the *debris* of which is widely scattered over the bank of the river. It is here, and in the ravines between the hills, that the petrified wood, which I have so often mentioned, is to be found in such abundance; but in the first mentioned situation we found also another object of still greater interest, a quantity of fossil bones. These appeared to be those of an animal of the size of an elephant—of one about the size of an ox, and of an alligator. We obtained in all, in our two excursions, fourteen or fifteen specimens along the bank of the river, in a
distance not exceeding in all a mile and a half, from which circumstance the abundance of such remains may be fairly inferred. The quantity of fossil wood which we met was quite extraordinary. It appears here and there on the surface of the hills—in great quantities on the bank of the river, but most abundantly in the ravines. In this latter situation it forms the beds of the torrents, and consists of very large blocks, some of them four and live feet in circumference.

December 31, 1826

The impossibility of getting the steam-vessel off the sand-bank after many attempts, had still detained us here, and enabled us to add to our Geological and Botanical collection. On the 28th, accompanied by Dr. Stewart, I took a walk of three miles on the carriage road which leads from Renangyun to the towns of Mait’hila and Ramathan, which are near each other, and distant fifty taings, or about one hundred miles. The way was over barren sand-hills intercepted by frequent ravines, and a country quite uncultivated, indeed incapable of cultivation. We proceeded as far as a hill, a little higher than the surrounding ones, called Man-lan, which was strewed with broken fragments of a stone used by the natives for making tobacco-pipes. The rock looks as if it had been cracked or broken into small fragments by a hasty drying, so that in some places the loose stones on the surface presented the appearance of a regular pavement. This, I may say, was the only place in this neighbourhood, where we had found a perfect rock; all the other stones which had any appearance of being so, having proved on examination to be nothing more than an alluvial formation or recomposed rock. The dry grass and shrubs on the hill had been just burnt, and it appeared that, from this place had been brought to us a great part of the fossil bones which I shall presently mention. The hill of Man-lan is higher than any in its vicinity, and is probably about four hundred feet above the level of the Irawadi.

We landed yesterday forenoon, in order to afford every facility for getting the steam-vessel off the bank, and pitched temporary tents on the river-side, at a little valley about a mile below Renangyun, and at a place called Nyaong-h’la, or the “handsome fig-tree,” where there is an old temple on the model of
those of Pugan. Dr. Wallich and myself this morning visited the Petroleum Wells, and examined several of them. We took the temperature of two of them carefully with a good thermometer: the thermometer being immersed in a pot of oil, just drawn from one of these, which was one hundred and thirty royal cubits, or two hundred and seven English feet in depth, rose to eighty-eight degrees. In the shade the temperature at the same time was sixty-nine degrees. In a pot of oil drawn from another well, of which the liquid was less mixed with the water, and which was one hundred and forty royal cubits, or two hundred and twenty-two feet eight inches deep, the heat indicated by the thermometer was ninety degrees.

In going over the ground, we observed several old wells altogether abandoned. The natives informed us that, in digging new ones, they came at a considerable depth to coal and fossil shells. Of the latter, we unfortunately could obtain no specimens; but, of the former, which proved to be brown coal, we obtained one or two good ones at the village of Renangyun. The oil drawers stated to us, that in clearing out old wells accidents sometimes happened from the fire-damp, and they pointed out a particular well at which two men had lost their lives from this cause.

January 3, 1827

The steam-boat was got afloat on the forenoon of the 1st, with the assistance of three hundred Burmans, who may be said to have dragged her off the sand-bank by main force, and after lightening her by cutting off the whole of her poop, discharging all the baggage, and landing some of the heaviest parts of her machinery. The detention occasioned by all this, afforded us opportunities of examining the country in the vicinity of the Petroleum Wells, of which we availed ourselves to the fullest extent. Our search after fossil bones was successful far beyond our expectation. As soon as the natives discovered our curiosity upon the subject, specimens were brought in to us every hour, so that we at last obtained a collection amounting to several large chests. Among these we could recognize those of several ruminant animals, of tortoises, and alligators. The most numerous and remarkable, however, were the bones of an animal of the size of an elephant, which, until better informed, we supposed to have belonged to the fossil elephant, or
mammoth. The natives had also brought us in a large quantity of petrified shells: these, it is singular, were all of one description,—a bivalve shell about the size of a cockle.

Anxious to see the fossil bones and shells in their situations, Dr. Wallich and I proceeded this morning in the same direction in which I had travelled on the 28th. After proceeding as far as the hill of Manlan, we took a northerly direction among the hills and ravines, until our Burman guides brought us to a hill about sixty or seventy feet above the level of the dry bed of a brook, which was immediately below it, and probably about one hundred and fifty above the level of the Irawadi. Not far from the top of this a few fossil shells were shown to us, and we proceeded to dig up the ground. After removing a very superficial soil, we came at once to a bed of blue moist clay, which contained an immense quantity of shells, some broken, but many entire. The greater number were filled with the blue clay of the bed in which they lay; but a few with calcareous matter, which last had been the case with all those brought to us by the natives at our residence, and which therefore were probably procured at some other spot. No vestige of fossil shells was to be seen any where in the immediate neighbourhood. On the opposite side of the brook, and not distant a hundred yards from the bed of shells, a section of one of the hills was laid bare, which consisted of indurated sand and calcareous sandstone breccia, which afforded a good opportunity for determining this point. The deposition of shells, therefore, was evidently very partial, or at least was broken and interrupted by other formations.

After satisfying ourselves respecting the shells, we returned to the Manlan hill, and, under the direction of our guides, took a southerly direction among the hills and ravines in this quarter, in search of fossil bones. After proceeding about a mile and a half or two miles, several specimens were shown to us; and we soon picked up ten or a dozen fragments, seemingly belonging to the same large animal which I have already mentioned. We found them between the hills, in gravelly soil, nearly on the surface, and not in the deepest ravines. We attempted to dig for others, but our search was not successful; indeed, we had neither means nor time to prosecute it with any prospect of success. The fossil wood was met with wherever we passed; but it increased in abundance as we approached the Irawadi, and was by far the most frequent in those portions of the ravines which lead immediately into it. I may here
remark, that the singular formation of barren sand-hills and ravines, which so abound with fossil wood and bones, is confined to the eastern bank of the river. The western bank, to a great extent, is a low champaign country, bearing little resemblance to the opposite one.

To elucidate the subject of the fossil bones, I shall here notice, that according to the report of the natives, or our own observations, the following are the quadrupeds at present existing in the neighbourhood; viz. a leopard, a wild cat, a species of deer the *cermis manjae*, the hare, the hog, with a mole rat. Of these, we saw ourselves the deer, hare, and rat. The elephant, the rhinoceros, the wild cow, and buffalo, with the royal tiger, which are found in different other parts of the Burman territory, exist nowhere near to the situations in which we found the fossil bones in such abundance.

January 4, 1827

We embarked last night, and began again flits morning to prosecute our voyage, after a detention of eight days. In the evening we stopped at Magwê, on the eastern bank: about a mile above it. Dr. Wallich and I landed, and walked down to the place. The bank of the river was as high and precipitate as at Re-nangyaong, and apparently consisted of the same alluvial formation. Fossil wood was in abundance along the bank; but we did not observe, nor did we hear upon inquiry of any fossil bones. At Magwê we found stationed a person of considerable consequence, called the Mret-sen-wun. This officer has charge of the river police, and is vested with the power of life and death, which was attested by a spectacle seen by two of our gentlemen on the river-side, a little below Magwê—the bodies of six persons who, fifteen days before, had been executed by him for piracy. They were already torn to pieces by the numerous birds of prey that hovered about them.

January 9, 1827

On the morning of the 5th we left Magwê, and at noon arrived at Melun and Patnago. We landed at the latter place and visited a lake not half a mile from the river-side. When we went up, this was
a considerable body of water, but now it was little better than a
marsh overgrown with aquatic plants, among which was the
*Nelumbo*, or Indian lotus, and a splendid *Nymphaea*, a new species.
We expected to find in this season numerous wildgeese and ducks;
but there were none of the former, and very few of the latter. After
taking in a supply of firewood, we prosecuted our journey, and
anchored for the night a few miles above Lungyi. On the 6th our
navigation was very intricate and difficult, and we were obliged to
take a pilot from village to village, which occasioned much
detention. Waiting for one about four or five miles below Lungyi, I
landed about noon, with Dr. Wallich, on the western bank, and
made a short excursion into the forest, which was low and scanty.
Instead of the verdant appearance which it presented in coming up
during the rains, it was now parched and withered, and had a very
dreary aspect, the trees already beginning to lose their foliage. In
March and April, the scene is still more unpromising. The soil was
poor and gravelly, and at the place where we landed there was not
the least appearance of cultivation. We observed, however, several
cart-roads intersecting the forest, and villages surrounded by
patches of culture were at no great distance. The rock presented
itself in one situation on the river-side: it was a calcareous
sandstone breccia, and in several portions of it were embedded
numerous small fossil shells.

In the forest we saw no game except wild cocks and hens,
which seemed to be very abundant, for we started one covey which
consisted of not less than fourteen or fifteen birds. In the evening
we stopped at a small village, about fifteen miles above Meaday.

On the 7th, at eleven o’clock, we passed Meaday, where
above eighty merchant-boats, in consequence of the piracies and
murders lately committed on the river, were glad to take advantage
of our safe convoy as far as Prome. Here, on both sides of the river,
we found the rock to be calcareous sandstone. At Meaday the fossil
wood was still to be seen in small quantities. We anchored for the
night at Tong-taong, or “lime-stone hill,” mentioned in our voyage
up. Yesterday the navigation of the river had greatly improved: we
consequently made a longer journey than usual, and by six in the
evening reached Prome. At this place we receiver some details of
the Talain insurrection, which appeared more formidable than we
had expected. Maong-zat, the Peguan chief, we were informed, had
attacked the Burmans twice near Rangoon, and in a good measure
blockaded that place. The people of Dalla, including the Karians of that district, had joined him, and he had established a post as far up the eastern branch of the Irawadi as Panlang, thus intercepting the communication between Rangoon and the upper provinces.

Dr. Wallich and I this morning made an excursion to the hills opposite to Prome. The great fall of the river now exposed rocks, the existence of which we did not suspect in the examination we made going up: they consisted of sandstone, pudding-stone, and slate clay; in short, this seemed a continuation of the same formation which we had traced nearly all the way from Ava. In the sandstone we found abundance of fossil shells, differing entirely, as far as we could determine, from those hitherto found, and to all appearance marine productions. Of these we made an ample collection. The soil at Prome began already to improve, and the verdure to be more luxuriant. Neither here, nor in any other part from Melun, did we observe the teak tree, which we had seen so often in going up. It sheds its leaves in every country, and being now without foliage, could not be distinguished.

While we were absent on the opposite side of the river, our friends visited the town, and found it much restored and enlarged, affording favourable testimony to the good administration of the Myowun. This person himself was absent, having proceeded about a month before to Rangoon, with four hundred men, to assist in suppressing the insurrection of the Talains. The Akunwun, or collector of taxes, who was acting for him, paid us a visit on board the steam-vessel. There is no Rewun by custom at Prome, and the person next to the Myowun in rank, and therefore his deputy, is the collector. Our visitor was a young man of some intelligence. He was desirous to see the steam-engine, and was readily gratified. The observation he made upon it was, that “it was as wonderful as the mechanism of a bee-hive.”

We left Prome between eleven and twelve o’clock. At four o’clock, after going about twenty miles, the vessel again grounded on a sand-bank, although we had a pilot on board. The navigation of the Irawadi, at this season, is precarious and uncertain to the last degree. The bed of the river every where consists of sand, and the channel seems to change every season, so that former experience and observation are of no avail. By emptying the boiler, and otherwise lightening her, the vessel was fortunately got off at seven in the evening.
January 10, 1827

We prosecuted our journey early this morning. At ten o’clock Dr. Wallich and I landed a little below the town of Pingyi, and visited the promontory called by the Burmans Kyaok-ta-ran, the last high land on the eastern bank of the river. This is a very romantic and pretty spot, and our visit to it was extremely satisfactory. The promontory is about eighty feet high, and the rocks rise perpendicularly from the river. About thirty feet up there are niches, or excavations, in each of which there is a stone figure of Gautama cut out of the rock, but plastered over every where, and in some places gilt. There cannot be less than fifty of these in all, of various sizes, and some of them very large: they are divided into two or three groups, separate and distinct from each other. The only rock we saw was a calcareous breccia, and there was neither loose sand nor clay, as in some other places. Fossil shells again occurred, and apparently of marine origin. The hills are covered with abundant verdure and considerable forests. Many of the plants were in flower and fruit, and Dr. Wallich found here a greater number of new and interesting species than in any other place, excepting the range of hills north-east of Ava. The following are some of the most remarkable; viz. a large species of *Cacalia*, with deep orange-coloured blossoms; a species of *Codonopsis*, hitherto only found in Nepal; a *Ruellia*, remarkable for having its stem and branches covered with a milkwhite down; the *Porona Paniculata*, with its profuse and highly ornamental blossoms; a new species of *Eranthemum*, first found by Dr. Wallich in the range of hills northeast of Ava; a handsome *Borderia*, a stately *Arundo*, several mosses, and *Jungermannia* in flower, and several ferns, amongst which was one elegant new species.

The ship had, dropped down slowly, and we joined her at two o’clock. We had now taken leave of the hilly country, the natural boundary of the Burman race, and entered into the Delta of the Irawadi, the native country of the Peguans. At four in the afternoon, we passed the large and populous village of Kian-k’han, on the west bank of the river, which we had not seen in going up, as we then ascended by the eastern bank. Here a very considerable number of merchant-boats were lying along the bank. This place, although governed only by a Myosugi, has the rank of a
Myo, but is without walls or stockade. The district attached to it is productive in rice; and the cattle employed in husbandry are said to amount to ten thousand buffaloes. In the evening we reached Myan-aong, or Loonzay.

**January 11, 1827**

I walked through Myan-aong this morning, which is a village of considerable extent, but without any thing remarkable to distinguish it. We found the alarm here, on account of the progress of the Talain insurrection, very considerable. The inhabitants were already collecting their grain, and preparing for flight.

**January 13, 1827**

We left Myan-aong after breakfast, on the 11th. Between Kanaong and Shwe-gain, when we had hardly gone ten miles, the difficulties of the river were found even greater than in any part of the navigation from Ava downwards. We were obliged to come-to for the day, in order to sound for a passage, which was at length discovered on the morning of the 12th, when we pursued our journey. At night we anchored off the little river, which about five miles above Sarwa goes to Bassein, being the first branch which the Irawadi sends off in its progress to the sea. A petty stream at all times, it was now choked up with sand at its mouth, and impassable for the smallest canoe. In the month of June, 1825, in the height of the rains, a fleet of gun-boats, of the smallest class, came by the route of this branch to join Sir Archibald Campbell, then at Prome; but even in that season the voyage was attended with much difficulty. At two o’clock we passed Sarwa, and in half an hour thereafter readied Henzada. The principal person now in charge here paid us a visit, and was very anxious to know what part the English would take in the present contest. The obvious reply was, that we should take no part with either, as to side with the Talains would be contrary to good faith and existing treaties. As to the Burmans, we added, that every Government was the proper asserter of its own rights; and that it did not belong to strangers to intermeddle. The old Wun of Bassein, ever since he communicated to us the insurrection of the Talains, had been most importunate in soliciting our interference. One word from us, he
said, would induce Maong-zat to give up his enterprise, and retire with his followers into our territories. I informed him that we should not interfere in any manner whatsoever.

**January 17, 1827**

On the morning of the 14th we quitted Henzada, where we laid in a stock of fuel, sufficient to last us to Rangoon. In the evening we passed Donabew, and anchored for the night within a mile of the eastern branch of the Irawadi, leading to Rangoon. Donabew we found considerably enlarged. Both this place and the village of Nyaong-gyung, about seven or eight miles below it, we found crowded with refugees, who had fled from the Talain insurrection.

We prosecuted our journey on the morning of the 15th. Before starting we met a number of boats, who had come up the main branch of the Irawadi from Pantano, a district of the province of Bassein. Among them were a considerable number of Chinese. It seemed that the people of Pantano had been ordered to attack the Talains at the post of Panlang. In the mean time Maong-pyu, the head of the Karians of Pegu, who is in alliance with Maong-zat, assaulted Pantano, and took it on his way to the attack of Bassein. He was reported to be at the head of three thousand followers. The old Wun of Bassein, like a genuine Burman Chief, not choosing to incur the personal risk of entering the districts in a state of insurrection, quitted us that morning. He was, however, sufficiently candid on the subject, and did not conceal his fears.

Just at the commencement of the Rangoon branch there was a small post of the Burmese, the only one which they held down to Rangoon. Waiting high-water to pass it, we anchored seven miles within this branch, where there was a bar; this we effected at seven in the evening, being luckily favoured by the highest spring-tides, without which we could not have got over, for even then we had barely a fathom water; and the vessel, now much lightened, drew very nearly six feet.

At seven in the morning of the 16th we proceeded, and soon passed Samalaok, where we found a breast-work newly erected, but abandoned. The village itself, and the few others upon the bank, had been also abandoned, and we saw no inhabitants except a few Karians, who came down to the river-side out of curiosity. At one o’clock we arrived at Panlang. We found the river here strongly
stockaded in three places, and in occupation of the Talains. We came to an anchor for a moment to request a safe passage for our boats, which amounted in all to two-and-twenty, twelve of which only were our own, the rest being Burman trading-vessels, belonging to European and other foreign merchants that had sought our protection. We made a signal that we wished to communicate with the garrison, and three boats pushed off without any hesitation. Our visitors were very communicative. Their manner was full of gesticulation, and their language rather boastful: they said they were afraid only of the English; and that if we would not interfere, or, as they expressed it, “if we would but stand upright, and move neither to the right hand nor to the left hand,” they would soon settle their quarrel with the Burmans, as one hundred Talains were an equal match for one thousand of the former! The chief, commanding at the post, whose name was Maong-shwe-lung, was anxious to come on board and pay us a visit of ceremony; but I evaded this proposal, which might have led to embarrassment, by becoming the subject of misrepresentation. The Talains informed us that they had been fifteen days in possession of Panlang, and in that time had fought one petty action with the Burmans, in which one or two persons were killed. They stated that Maong-zat had taken the name and tide of King,—that he had created two or three great officers, and that Maong-pyo, the chief of the Karians, who was marching upon Bassein, was to have the government of that place as the reward of his services. They readily promised a safe passage for our boats, and seemed indeed but too happy to have an opportunity of obliging us in any thing within their power. The river at Panlang is scarcely sixty yards in breadth, and this post, which commands every access to Rangoon, had been very judiciously selected. If resolutely defended, it might long have intercepted all relief from Ava to the latter place. We anchored at night at a place seven miles above Rangoon. In this day’s journey we saw alligators for the first time, and in great numbers, basking in the sun, on the muddy shores at low water: some of them were of great size, and the species seemed to us to be different from either of the two found in the Ganges.

As soon as the ebb-tide had made, and the thick fog, which now prevailed every morning, would allow us to see our way, we prosecuted our journey this morning, and at ten o’clock anchored before Rangoon. In coming down, we found the village of
Kemmendine totally destroyed. A much more extensive desolation presented itself in the vicinity of the town: the large suburb lying between the stockade and the river, and the still larger one of Tacklay, were in ruins; such of the inhabitants as had not fled to our settlements, or taken refuge in the forests, and great numbers had done so, were cooped up within the stockade. The town seemed to be completely beleaguered by the Talains, who were in full occupation of Dalla: the Pegu flag was flying on one side of the river, and the Burman on the other. The only post out of the stockade which the Burmans still retained was the Great Pagoda, where the Sad’hauwun, or master of the household, the person whom our soldiers called “the cook,” commanded.

Lieutenant Rawlinson, who was left here by Sir Archibald Campbell to await our arrival, and all the English merchants, were standing on the public wharf, looking out for us, and immediately came on board, bringing along with them our letters and packets. They informed us that this day had been decided on by the Burmans, as a fortunate one, for making a sortie; and indeed they had scarcely given us the information, when the attack actually commenced. We were eye-witnesses to a considerable part of this action, and our friends, who returned to the stockade, and mounted the tops of the houses, had a full view of the whole. The courage and conduct of both parties were upon the very lowest scale. The Burmans crept out of the stockade, and came unawares upon their enemy, on the eastern or Tacklay side of the stockade. The Talains, who were cooking or sleeping, fled precipitately, and without offering any resistance, to their boats, which were soon seen crossing the river in numbers and in great haste, although not pursued. A few Talains were killed, and a few taken prisoners. The Burman attack in the direction of the Pagoda was not so fortunate: here they were repulsed, and sustained some loss. The total killed, wounded, and prisoners, was, after all, very trifling on either side. We received various and different accounts of the casualties; but so discordant, that none could be relied on. The Burmans admitted their own loss in wounded to be fourteen. We had the misfortune to be eye-witnesses to the capture of one petty Talain chief, and an act of more savage ferocity cannot well be imagined. He had attempted to escape by swimming across the river, and was pursued by two armed Burmans in a small canoe. He attempted to avoid capture by repeated diving, but was at last
wounded by a spear and taken. He was tied to the canoe, and dragged down the river for a quarter of a mile, to the spot where we were anchored, and within five yards of us. He was landed by dragging him by the hair of the head, and one of the victors drew a sword, as if to decapitate him. We remonstrated against this act of brutality, as an insult to ourselves, and thus for the moment at least saved the life of the prisoner. Thirty ticals, it appears, are paid for every Talain’s head. The prisoners are generally taken before the Wungyi, where some are executed and others reprieved. Some of our gentlemen who entered the town after the action had ceased, saw the prisoners brought in. The men were dragged by the hair of the head, and the women and children were scarcely better treated. Among the prisoners there were some Chinese, who were sold by the captors on the spot to the highest bidder. These had not joined the Talains, nor were they taken in arms: they had not, however, quitted the suburbs, where their dwellings were, when the Burmans retired to the stockade, and this, which was considered suspicious, was an offence which merited punishment.

January 19, 1827

The day we arrived I had a message from the Wungyi, saying he would be glad to receive a visit from me; but it was delivered in such a manner, and through such a channel, that I declined paying any attention to it. Yesterday morning the Akunwun, or collector of customs, waited upon us and apologized on the part of the Wungyi for not having given us a ceremonious reception on the day of our arrival, on the plea of his being busily engaged in the arrangement of the sortie which took place. He requested that we would pay him a visit that day or the following. I answered, that I did not think a visit necessary, as I had no public business to discuss with him, being now a mere passenger, to Bengal, invested with no public authority. If the Wungyi had any public business on his side, I said, I should be glad to receive him on board the steam-vessel. The Akunwun said that this was impossible, as it was contrary to etiquette for rank to come without the walls of the fort and expose his person when the place was besieged. I replied, that I had quite made up my mind not to visit the Wungyi in his own house; but as he was anxious for an interview, I would meet him, if he desired it, at any place in the town, not being a government
building, and I proposed the house which I had myself formerly occupied when commissioner. This was agreed to, and the meeting took place to-day at eleven o’clock.

The Akunwun had intimated to us that none of the European soldiers or Sepoys of our escort should be permitted to enter the town during our stay, as it was in a state of siege. In reply to this, I answered, that this exclusion had an unfriendly appearance, and that I would not go into the town without such an escort as the Burman chiefs were accustomed to when Rangoon was occupied by us. This arrangement was assented to with some difficulty, and we entered the town, preceded by twelve men of the European escort. The ladder, which had been taken away from the wharf on the first alarm of the Talain insurrection, was replaced for our convenience; we should otherwise have had to ascend a height of five-and-twenty or thirty feet by a single rope, as other persons did, for it was low-water. The Wungyi Kept us waiting at the place appointed for half an hour, and then made his appearance in a very plain dress. The Ex-Myowun of Yé, and the Akunwun, had met us on the wharf, and sat along with us until the arrival of their superior. We had a very civil meeting with the Wungyi. Notes of the conversation which took place were taken as usual, and the following is a sketch of it:—

BURMESE: You saw the battle the day you arrived, and how matters are. I stated my apprehensions to you at Henzada, and told you how mischievous a person Maong-zat was.

CRAWFURD: I remember your warning me against the Talains generally, and denouncing them as a disloyal and treacherous people; but I have no recollection of your ever having at all introduced the name of Maong-zat.

BURMESE: Perhaps I may not have mentioned the name of Maong-zat.

CRAWFURD: I take this opportunity of mentioning, that the Wundauk and Rewun stated to me at Rangoon their apprehensions of Maong-zat, and made what I conceived at the time a very unreasonable request, viz. that the British Government should seize that person, his friends and followers, who, at the
time, had committed no offence either against the British or Burman Government, and deliver them over to the Burman authorities for punishment. A compliance with this would have been dishonourable to us, and was of course refused; but I offered, on behalf of the British Commissioners, to induce Maong-zat and his followers to retire into the British provinces, in order to remove all cause of apprehension on the part of the Burman Government. This was declined: nothing less would satisfy them than the delivering over into their hands Maong-zat and his people. The Wun of Yé, who is now before me, was present when the conversation took place, and no doubt will recollect all about it.

This officer, upon being referred to, stated that he recollected the circumstances perfectly.

CRAWFURD: Have you received a copy of the Treaty of Commerce lately concluded at Ava?

BURMESE: Yes, I have received a copy of it. How long do you propose staying here?

CRAWFURD: I hope to be able to go away in two or three days at the farthest.

The Wungyi here offered to deliver over a letter to my charge, without mentioning what it was, or offering any explanation.

CRAWFURD: Before I receive this letter, I must know from whom it comes, and to whom it is addressed; and I must be satisfied that its contents are suitable.

BURMESE: It merely contains an account of your arrival at Ava, your presentation, &c.

CRAWFURD: As soon as I am favoured with a copy, and have procured a translation, I shall be, able to say whether I can receive it, or otherwise.

BURMESE: The letter is all right, and contains nothing improper. Why will you not receive it?
CRAWFURD: I shall be able to judge of all this when I see it. Of the suitableness of what I take upon myself the responsibility of delivering to my superiors I am the proper judge, and not the officers of the Burmese Government. You state that the letter is from the Wungyis at Ava. I was not the bearer of a letter to those officers; I was the bearer of a letter to the King. If this letter be an answer to that which I took to his Majesty, I will not receive it. The Wungyis must not address the Governor-General, who is their superior, unless in the form of a petition. If the letter be in this last shape, and have no reference to the letter which I brought for the King, I will take charge of it.

BURMESE: The letter is not from the Wungyis to the Governor-General, but from the former to “the War Chiefs” in Bengal.

Copy of the letter was here made, read, and delivered.

CRAWFURD: The contents of this letter have been explained to me, and they appear to be suitable. I conceive it to be addressed from the Wungyis at Ava to officers of similar rank in Calcutta, and with this understanding I now take charge of it.

The Wungyi here produced two ruby rings, the largest of which he requested might be given to the Governor-General in his name, and of the smallest he requested my acceptance. After a good deal of conversation on indifferent topics, the English and Burman officers rose together and retired. In going through and coming from the town, we were treated with perfect civility by every one we met.

The following is a translation of the letter now alluded to:

According to the Royal order of the Most Glorious Sovereign of Land and Sea, Lord of the Celestial Elephant, Proprietor of White Elephants, Master of the Chakra Weapon, Sovereign Controller of Existence, King of Righteousness, we, the Wungyis, War Chiefs, who manage the affairs of the country, make this communication to the English War Chiefs.
Agreeably to the great friendship subsisting between the English country, and the Royal kingdom of the Burman monarch, the English Ruler sent the Envoy Crawfurd with presents to his Majesty, and he came to the Royal presence (under the Golden Foot). That his journey may be pleasant, we went out to meet and conduct him, and the presents which he brought were carried to the Golden Palace and presented to ‘the two Sovereigns.’ Houses, tents, and sheds were constructed, and appropriated for the accommodation of the Envoy Crawfurd and his suite, and a sufficient supply of provisions was furnished.

On petitioning the Throne concerning the trade of the two countries, his Majesty has given permission, calculated to promote prosperity. On petitioning the Throne concerning the Envoy’s returning, the two Sovereigns graciously granted the following presents for the English Ruler:—two ruby rings; two sapphire rings; five silk cloths of a certain description; two fur jackets; two Chinese hats; two gilt umbrellas; two round boxes, set with glass; two high cover boxes, set with glass; two ditto, gilt; two shan round boxes, large; two ditto, middle size; two ditto, small; two shan high cover boxes, large; two shan cups, large; two ditto, middle size; ten ditto, small; one block of Sagaing marble; one mass of crystal, weighing ten viss; ten elephants’ tusks, weighing fifty viss; two horses, and some sacred books. All these were safely delivered to the Envoy Crawfurd; boatmen and provisions furnished; and officers of Government were made to conduct the Envoy on his return to Han-tha-wati.

As the two great countries are now great friends, keep in mind the importance of maintaining the grand alliance.

January 23, 1827

From our arrival until to-day we were busy in making arrangements for sending the escort, our followers, and baggage to the new settlement of Amherst, on the river of Martaban. For this purpose I was obliged to take up the Bombay Merchant, an English ship of above five hundred tons burthen. We were in readiness to-day, and left Rangoon about half-past eleven o’clock.
I had recommended to Lieutenant Rawlinson to continue at his post until he heard farther from Sir Archibald Campbell; being convinced, from what I had seen and heard, that such a step was necessary for the protection of the persons of the British merchants at Rangoon, and the large property in their warehouses. I had explained this to the Wungyi in the interview which I had with him. He seemed, however, not to be satisfied with what I then stated; and just as we were weighing, a message came from him to ask what object we had in view by leaving Lieutenant Rawlinson at Rangoon. I stated shortly, that such a measure was considered necessary in the present state of the country, and that by treaty we had a right to maintain an agent in the kingdom.

From the time of our arrival to our departure, a period of six days, no action was fought between the hostile parties; and but for the occasional report of a gun or musket, and the desolate appearance of the neighbourhood of Rangoon, it might be supposed that the country was in a state of perfect peace. Last evening, however, we saw a great number of Talain boats moving up the right bank of the river, and heard that the Talain chief Maong-zat, in person, had arrived at Dalla with a considerable force, and meditated an attack upon Rangoon. The Burmans immediately began to make preparation against it, and by two o’clock the remaining houses in the suburbs were set on fire, with a view of clearing the glacis in front of the stockade. The meditated attack, however, did not take place. The Burman garrison, it appears, amounted to about 4000 men, 2500 of whom were called regular troops. The provisions in the stockade were equal only to a month’s consumption, and the garrison seemed completely cut off from farther supply, unless by sea; so that, unless the place were relieved, by a Burman army forcing the stockade at Panlang, it would be compelled to surrender.

The Wungyi Maong-kaing was reputed to be, for a Burman, a man of humanity; yet, notwithstanding, he had committed his full share of cruelty since the commencement of the insurrection. In the first action which was fought, three Talains were killed, and one prisoner made: the heads of the first were struck off, and, to make the number even, that of the prisoner also; these heads were carried in triumph through the town. The Burman warriors displayed their courage by running up to them and wounding them with their spears. This happened in the view of the English
gentlemen residing in the place, from whom I had the account. Shortly after the commencement of the insurrection, some Talains were seized in the town, under suspicion of attempting to set fire to it. They and their families, including women and children, were buried alive, by being thrown into a well and covered over with earth. The person to whom the immediate execution of this atrocity was consigned, was the Sad’hauwun, or steward of the household.

In passing down the river we met a small vessel from Chittagong, with a crew of Aracanese and a cargo of areca-nut. She had a pass in the Persian language, from the English collector of customs, which, for all the Burmans or Talains could understand of its contents, might as well have been in Hebrew. The Aracanese stated, that they had been stopped by the Talains, who endeavoured to dissuade them from proceeding to Rangoon, telling them that the Burmans would cut their heads off, and recommended to them to go to the British settlements at Martaban. We furnished them at their request with a pass in the Burman language. It was for native vessels alone that such passes were required, for British vessels of every size were permitted to pass up and down the river without the least molestation.

When we came opposite to a large creek leading to Bassein, we found a fleet of Talain boats within it. Indeed, the insurgents were in complete possession of all the river below Rangoon, on both banks. Shortly after, we met a boat full of Chinese with their families in distress, endeavouring to escape from both the belligerent parties: they begged to be taken on board and conveyed to our settlements, and their request was complied with.¹⁷

January 24, 1827

Yesterday evening we passed the mouth of the Rangoon river, and by sunset were clear of its sands and shoals. Through night, favoured by the smooth sea and calm weather which almost uniformly prevail upon this coast from November to April, we stood across for the mouth of the Martaban river. Going at a very moderate rate, we entered the new harbour of Amherst at half-past eleven o’clock this forenoon, or exactly in twenty-four hours from our quitting Rangoon: the distance is about one hundred miles.

¹⁷ Crawfurd’s separate account of Rangoon, from the previous summer, that was located here has been published separately in the SBBR
Here we found lying the Government Surveying-ship *Investigator*, with Captain Ross the Surveyor-general, and the cruizer *Ternate*. We landed in the evening, and found the place greatly altered from what it had boon when established as a British settlement in the beginning of the preceding April. There was then not a house or an inhabitant; and the houses, or rather huts, now amounted to two hundred and thirty, with a population of not less than twelve hundred inhabitants.

**January 25, 1827**

Immediately upon our reaching the place yesterday, I sent Lieutenant Montmorency up to Sir Archibald Campbell, to inform him of our arrival; giving him, in charge, for the General’s perusal, a copy of my dispatch to Government and of my Journal. We ascended ourselves, this morning, in the steam-vessel to Maulamyaing, in order that I might have an opportunity of communicating personally with Sir Archibald Campbell on the subject of the Mission. With the advantage of the flood-tide we reached it in three hours and a half, although detained nearly half an hour by getting on a sand-bank. The distance from Amherst to Maulamyaing is twenty-seven miles. We found that the new cantonment had already made great progress, and that necessaries and even some comforts were already commanded.

**January 27, 1827**

We made a long excursion yesterday into the forests, near Maulamyaing, which was rewarded by a large collection of new and magnificent plants. A range of low, hills, or rather of high land, skirts the left bank of the Saluen in this quarter, which is covered with a forest of moderate size, without much underwood. The soil is here thin and gravelly. The rock is quartz, and it is in this range that an ore of antimony is found in such vast, abundance. Behind this again are extensive and fertile grassy plains, without wood, which in better times had been cultivated with rice.

We resolved to make the best use of the time which was likely to elapse before we should find an opportunity of proceeding to Bengal, in visiting and exploring as much as was accessible to us of our new acquisitions in this quarter. Accordingly,
accompanied by Major Fenwick, Civil Superintendent of the
district, and Lieutenant Scotland, who had just returned from a
visit to the source of the Ataran, we commenced our expedition
this morning by ascending that river, one of the four fine streams
which water the province.

The Sa-luen, the Gain, and the Ataran, join at the town of
Martaban, and then proceed by two branches to the sea, these
being divided from each other by the large island of Balú. The
confluence of the rivers before this bifurcation forms a sheet of
water, interspersed with many green islets, five or six miles in
breadth, and having all the appearance of a picturesque and
beautiful lake. The view of this landscape, one of the finest pieces
of scenery in India or in any other country, is seen to most
advantage from the high hills immediately over the town of
Martaban. The Ataran is the smallest, but the deepest, of the
three principal rivers: and instead of coming from the north, like
the Saluen and Gain, its course is from south-east to north-west.
We began to ascend it at half-past two o’clock; and after running,
by estimate, about twenty-seven miles; stopped for the night at a
range of hills called Ni-daong.

January 28, 1827

The river passes through the Ni-daong hills: the principal part of
the range, which is small, being on the right bank of the river,
which, in fact, washes its base. This is one of many ranges of blue
mountain limestone, interspersed through the plains of Martaban.
The range rises to the height of not less than three hundred feet
abruptly from the plain; its sides being often quite perpendicular,
and wooded wherever there is the least hold for the soil to settle.
We landed last night, but too late for investigation. Our visit was
renewed, however, this morning; and, in a botanical point of view,
our excursion was most successful. At eight o’clock in the
morning, on coming on board, we prosecuted our journey. In the
course of the forenoon we passed another of the limestone ranges,
called Pa-baong, still more singular in appearance than the last;
but we delayed our visit to it until our return. At two o’clock we
arrived before the village of Ataran, or at least what had once been
so. This is the place which gives name to the river. Near its site,
and about a mile and a half from the right bank of the river, are
some remarkable hot springs, which we visited by passing along a path through thick and tall grass. We examined two of the springs: the largest was a pool about twenty-five yards in diameter, and covered over with a light calcareous incrustation tinged with iron: the water was perfectly limpid, and not very sensibly saline. The spring seemed to be in the middle of the pool, where the water was seen bubbling up: there was no reaching this, where no doubt the heat was greatest. A thermometer immersed at the edge of the pool stood at 133°; and in the brook which led from it, at the distance of fifteen or twenty yards, it was scarcely lower. The margin of the pool is formed of a hard calcareous incrustation,—the same substance, in an indurated state, which is seen floating on the water. One of the limestone ranges, which I have already described, is not above two miles distant from the hot springs. The neighbourhood of Ataran is praised by the Peguans for its fertility; and from appearance it may be judged that the land is well suited for the growth of rice. We observed no marks of former industry, with the exception of some groves of well-grown cocoa-nut trees, which were in fruit. In returning to the vessel, we crossed the brook which leads from the hot springs, at the distance of about a quarter of a mile from them. The water was quite clear,—nearly of the temperature of the atmosphere, and full of small fish. We stopped for the night about eight miles above Ataran.

January 29, 1827

We ascended as far as it was safe to take the vessel, being in all a distance of about sixty miles from the mouth of the river. The stream, which below was from one hundred to one hundred and fifty yards broad, with low banks, contracted above Ataran to the breadth of fifty yards, with banks fifteen and twenty feet high. In the lower part of the river, no bottom was often to be found with a line of nine fathoms, and up to Ataran there was never less than three fathoms. After this the river shoals, and at high-water spring-tides we had in some places but a fathom, or barely more than the steam-vessel's draft. The spring-tides reach apparently about seventy miles from the mouth of the river, or nearly one hundred from the sea. For fifty miles up, the navigation of the Ataran, though the river be narrow, is remarkably safe and easy. The banks are so steep that a vessel may range from side to side,
touching, as we did, the boughs of the trees alternately on both sides. There is not a single rock or danger of any kind in all this distance,

In the forenoon we ascended five or six miles in our boats, but found the river very shallow. Our chief object was to reach the teak forests; but this we found impracticable, without a detention which our time would not afford. Mr. Scotland, who had proceeded as far as the Siamese frontier at the “Three Pagodas,” described the nearest forest as being fifteen miles farther up the river than we went, and from two to threes miles distant from the banks of the river. He had passed through two of these forests. The first, and smallest, was in breadth about three miles and a half, and about one-half the trees consisted of teak. The largest forest is about five miles in breadth, and almost entirely composed of teak: this also contained the largest trees. In both, the timber very generally ran up to the height of from forty to sixty feet; and the average circumference of the trees, at the base, was from ten to fourteen feet. Some were found measuring from nineteen to twenty-three feet. The forests were on each side of the river, and the timber could be transported to it, by means of buffaloes, with comparatively very little labour.

The banks of the Ataran abound with the elephant, the rhinoceros, wild hog, and deer, but the elephant especially. We landed nowhere without finding the fresh tracks of these last, which appeared to be in vast numbers. In Mr. Scotland’s visit to the Three Pagodas, performed by land, he saw not less than a hundred. The Karians, who accompanied him, shot one elephant, a rhinoceros, and several hogs: the elephant, which was a large female, was killed with a single musket-ball, which hit her in the forehead, passing directly into the brain. The flesh of all these animals is eaten indiscriminately by all the races inhabiting this country. Two species of monkey were seen by ourselves in great numbers, especially on the limestone ranges, over the abrupt and frightful sides of which they were seen clambering with apparent ease and unconcern.

The birds which we saw were numerous pea-fowl; the common fowl in a wild state, and numerous flocks of a large green pigeon. Among the productions of this country, honey and bees’ wax are very considerable ones. By the report of the natives, there are five species of bee producing honey and wax, some of which are
without stings. Our people brought on board several honey-combs; and on splitting up the trunk of a tree for fuel, we found a fissure in the middle of it, extending nearly throughout, and containing honey and wax. The bee, in this case, was without a sting, and not one-half the size of a common fly.

**January 30, 1827**

We dropped down a short way last night, on our return to Maulamyaing, and this morning prosecuted our journey. When opposite to a place called Samí, and a little below an island in the middle of the river, we observed a few teak trees, some of which were measured, and found to be from five to seven feet in circumference. These probably form the outskirts of forests of the same timber in the interior.

**January 31, 1827**

About four o'clock yesterday afternoon we reached the rocks of Pabaong. These run parallel with the right bank of the river, and are washed by the tide. The range is a good deal higher than any of the others, and I should think in some places not less than four hundred feet high. One peak of about this elevation, separated from the general, mass, rises from the ground in the form of a sharp pyramid; on the top of it is a little pagoda, the labour, difficulty, and danger of constructing which may be easily imagined. About the centre of the range is a vaulted cavern piercing through and through the rock, which gives passage to a small branch of the river, navigable for boats for a tide, or about fifteen miles up. We went through this passage in our boats, and were much struck with the grandeur and magnificence of the prospect. The roof of the cavern was covered with stupendous stalactites.

Between two and three o'clock to-day, we returned to the military station. The following general sketch may be offered of the Ataran:—Twenty miles above its *debouchement*, its banks are low, and covered with a narrow belt of *rhizophoras*, or mangroves. In the interior, on both sides, there are extensive grassy plains, without wood, apparently well fitted for the culture of rice. Farther up the river than the distance new mentioned, the banks rise
considerably, the mangroves disappear, and the place is occupied by a narrow belt of arborescent willows: this is a new species of Salix. This tract is probably the most fertile: it abounds in plains, interrupted only here and there by the range of primitive limestone, which I have already mentioned. About fifty miles above the mouth of the river, the banks become very elevated. Another new species of willow now appears, and the teak begins to make its appearance. The soil here appeared to me to be a deep rich clay, and I should presume that it is well suited to the growth of the sugar-cane, cotton plant, indigo, and tobacco. Upon the whole, I am disposed to think that the country upon the banks of this river will be found fertile, and well suited to the growth of many articles of colonial produce. In the meanwhile, this tract, apparently so fine, is nearly destitute of inhabitants. We saw but four petty villages, all established, within the last few months by emigrants from the Burmese territory. This place, in fact, was the chief seat of the great emigration of Talains, alleged to have amounted to forty thousand people, which took place into the Siamese territory about fourteen years ago. Since that time, until the cession of the country to us, it had been a complete desert. European and Chinese settlers receiving grants, or perpetual leases of these wastes, would, with the many advantages—of timber, of a convenient navigation, and of accessible markets, soon bring them into a state of fruitful culture.

February 2, 1827

It was our intention to have gone at once up the Saluen and Gain rivers, but we found it necessary to revisit Amherst, for the purpose of making arrangements for our voyage to Bengal. We accordingly left Maulamyaing yesterday evening, anchored half-way down, close to the island of Balú, for the night, and this morning reached Amherst. While the vessel lay at anchor last evening, we visited the village of Karat-sit on Balú, proceeding, for this purpose, up a narrow creek to the distance of about three miles. The place contains about sixty houses, and had much appearance of native comfort. It is one of twelve large villages in the island, besides hamlets, Balú, which lies in the mouth of the Saluen river, dividing its embouchure into two branches, is about twenty English miles in length, and about half that extent in
average breadth. A chain of low hills runs through its length, not exceeding any where two hundred feet in height. I am told they are chiefly composed of clay-slate, but that limestone is also found. This island, among the Burmans, is celebrated for its fertility; and at present, small as its population is (about nine thousand inhabitants), it is the most populous part of Martaban. Its principal, and indeed almost only produce, is rice; which is so cheap, that it has been commonly sold at the rate of half a rupee for a basket of fifty-six pounds weight, which is about two shillings sterling. Small European vessels have taken in cargoes at this rate, and even lower. In sailing along the coast of the island, nothing is to be seen but a low mangrove jungle, and a stranger would suppose that the whole island was in fact covered with forest. This mangrove, however, is but a narrow belt; and shortly after we had entered the creek last night, extensive plains presented themselves, extending to the range of hills: these had recently been cultivated with rice. All the large villages on Balu are situated on creeks, penetrating several miles into the island. These afford a most convenient communication with the coast, and contribute materially to the cheapness with which its staple product is exported.

Our return to Bengal having hindered our excursion to the Saluen and Gain rivers, as well as prevented us from visiting other parts of the province, I shall endeavour in some measure to supply the deficiency, by the insertion of the journal of a voyage to Martaban, which, I performed about ten months before the time of which I am now writing ...18

February 9, 1827

On the 3rd, the ship Bombay Merchant, which had our baggage on board, arrived at Amherst; and on the 6th, I made an arrangement with the commander to take us to Bengal. The next morning, I proceeded up to Maulamyaing in the steam-vessel, to arrange some points of business with Sir Archibald Campbell, who returned with me on the 8th to Amherst. On the evening of that day, leaving my friend Dr. Wallich behind to prosecute his botanical researches, we embarked in the Bombay Merchant, and at nine o’clock this

18 This account has been extracted and published separately in the present issue of the SBBR.
morning, with a fair wind, sailed out of the harbour in prosecution of our voyage to Bengal. The weather in the Bay of Bengal, especially the upper part of it, although generally fine throughout the north-east monsoon, can at no time of the year be implicitly relied upon. February, however, is the most steady month, and there is hardly any example of a gale in it.

February 23, 1827

Our passage was remarkably favourable, and the weather exceedingly fine throughout. We took in a pilot at the sand-heads on the 21st, having thus, as the reckoning is usually made, effected our passage in twelve days. Here, as frequently happens in this season, we were becalmed, and it would probably have taken us eight days more to have reached Calcutta, had we proceeded all the way in the ship. On the evening of the 22nd, however, the steam-vessel Emulous, the finest and most suitable vessel of this class which has ever been seen in India, fortunately hove in sight, towing down a ship of six hundred tons, bound for England. The Emulous took our whole party on board at sunset, while we were still one hundred and forty miles from Calcutta, and not in sight of the island of Saugor, and proceeding all night, for the most part against the tide, landed us safely, at an early hour next morning. My report and dispatches being all ready, I delivered them, as well as the most valuable part of the presents, within half an hour of my landing, to the Secretary of Government.
Notes:

During his stay at Rangoon in the summer of 1826, Crawfurd drew up his account of this town, although it was not published until he included it in his account of his embassy made to the Burmese court in 1827, which was published in 1829. As Crawfurd explains: “The following account of Rangoon was collected by me while I resided there in civil, charge of Pegu, a period of more than six months.”

M.W.C.

Account of Rangoon in the Summer of 1826

John Crawfurd

This place is situated about twenty-six miles from the sea, on the eastern branch of the Irawadi, five miles below the junction of the Lain and Panlang rivers, and about two miles above the Syrian river. It lies on the left bank, and on a reach which runs nearly due east and west. The town and suburbs extend about a mile along the bank of the river, and are in depth about three-quarters of a mile; but the houses are very unequally scattered over this area. The fort, or stockade, is an irregular square; the north and south faces of which were found to measure 1145 yards; the east, 598; and the west, 197. On the north face there are two gates and a sally-port; on the south, three gates and three sally-ports; on the east, two gates; and on the west, one gate and one sally-port. The stockade is fourteen feet high, and is composed of heavy beams of teak timber. It has in some places a stage to fire musquetry from, in the parapet over which are a kind of embrasures, or loop-holes.
On the south side there is a miserable ditch, and in one situation a deep swamp, both overgrown with *Arums, Pontiderias*, the *Pitsia stratiola*, and other aquatic plants. Over the ditch there is a causeway, and over the marsh a long wooden bridge, connecting one of the gates with a large temple and monastery.

Rangoon and its suburbs are divided into eight wards, called, in the Burman language, *Yat*, superintended by an officer called the Yat-gaong, whose business it is to maintain watch and ward within his division. The palisaded fort, or stockade, which is properly what the Burmans denominate a town or myo, is composed of three wide and clean streets running east and west, and three smaller ones crossing them and fronting the gates of the south face. The most populous part of the town is the suburb called Taklay (Tatklé), immediately on the west face of the stockade.

In August 1826, I directed a census of the houses and population to be made, and found the former to amount to 1570, and the latter to 8666, excluding all strangers. This gives between five and six inhabitants to each house. During the administration of the last Burman viceroy, in a census which was made, the houses amounted to 3250, which would give a population of near eighteen thousand inhabitants. On this occasion, however, I am told, that the number of houses was swelled by including in the list all the villages and hamlets of the neighbourhood.

Almost all the houses of Rangoon are composed of the cheapest and frailest materials, and are peculiarly liable to destruction by fire. In March 1826, I saw the whole suburb of Taklay burned to the ground in a few hours, from the accident of a pot of oil boiling over. In less than a month it was not only reconstructed, but, from the circumstance of many of the inhabitants having returned after the peace, the houses were far more numerous than before the accident.

Rangoon is written, in the Burman language, Rankong, and pronounced Yangong, which is a compound epithet meaning “peace effected.” This name was given to it by Alompra, who made it the capital of Pegu and the principal sea-port of his dominions, after the destruction of Pegu and Syrian in 1755. Before that time, it was a petty village, and was called Dagon, after the great Pagoda, or Shwe Dagon (Golden Dagon). Inconsiderable as its
population is, it is at present the second city in the Burman dominions.

The environs of Rangoon are sterile, uncultivated, and not very interesting; although the situation, under institutions more favourable to industry, possesses capabilities of great improvement. The ground from the river face continues to rise gradually for two miles, until reaching the great Dagong Pagoda, where it appears to be seventy or eighty feet above the level of the Irawadi. In the vicinity of this temple, the ground is broken into ravines: amongst these are several marshes and a small lake, or rather extensive tank, formed by throwing a bank across the gorge of a wide ravine. The view from the temple is extensive and picturesque, comprehending many reaches of the river.

The elevation of site possessed by Rangoon secures itself and its environs from the inconvenience of being inundated by the periodical rains, as is the case with the low lands nearly throughout the whole Delta of the Irawadi. The climate, upon the whole, is temperate and agreeable for a tropical one, and it is certainly salubrious; for the mortality amongst our troops unquestionably arose not from climate, but want of shelter, of wholesome food, and of ordinary comforts.

In the vicinity of Rangoon there are scarcely any works of utility, and none of embellishment, save those dedicated to religion; viz. the Sidis, or monuments in honour of Buddha, and the Kyaongs, or monasteries. The only useful works are two narrow roads leading from the southern face of the stockade to the great temple: these, which are paved with brick, were constructed within the last twelve years chiefly by a Mohammedan merchant of Rangoon, who had embraced the religion of Gautama. From the town to the great Pagoda, the country is covered with innumerable monuments of various sizes,—some long in a state of dilapidation, and others entire,—before the British invasion. These are all of the same form, a form which has been aptly compared to a speaking trumpet standing on its base. The lower part of a temple, or Sidi, is commonly a polygon; and the shaft, or upper portion, is round,—the apex being ornamented with an iron net, in form of an umbrella, called, as I have more than once stated before, a “Ti.” The building is of solid brick and mortar, with the exception of the small chambers, in which are deposited the relics of Gautama,
most commonly consisting of little images of this personage, of gold or silver, deposited by the founders.

The great temple, or Shwe Dagong, is of the same structure with the rest, but richly gilt all over. The height of this, which is really a noble object, is said to be one hundred and seventy-five cubits, or about two hundred and seventy-eight feet. In the enclosure which surrounds it is an immense bell of very rude fabric: the inscription upon it imports that it was cast by the late King forty-one years before our visit.

The Shwe Dagong Pagoda has long enjoyed a higher reputation than any other religious edifice in the Burman dominions: this it owes to the legend which supposes it to contain “eight true hairs of Gautama,” brought as a trophy from Western India, many centuries ago, by two merchant brothers. The Pagoda is in fact, what is not common with religious edifices in Ava, a place of pilgrimage; and is frequented by many strangers, especially Shans, during the vernal festival in the month of March, when a great fair is held near it: it is also the only temple frequented as a common place of worship by the inhabitants of Rangoon and its vicinity; the others being resorted to only by their own founders, or their relatives and descendants.

During our occupation of Rangoon, there were two considerable markets in the place, which, after the restoration of peace, were abundantly supplied with fine fish, poultry, and very tolerable venison, besides an abundant supply of the necessaries of life, according to the Burman scale of estimating them.

Rangoon is the chief, and indeed almost the only port of foreign trade in the Burman dominions. Its situation is extremely convenient for this purpose: its distance from the sea, as already mentioned, is but twenty-six miles; and although the navigation be somewhat intricate, the difficulties are not so great as not to be readily conquered with the assistance of tolerable pilots. Of the vast number of ships which frequented it during its occupation by the British, a period of more than two years and a half, one only, I believe, suffered shipwreck. These were of every size, up to twelve hundred tons burthen. With the exception of that of Bassein, it is the only navigable branch of the Irawadi. Over this last-mentioned place, which is in other respects a more accessible, safe, and convenient port, it has the advantage of an uninterrupted communication at all seasons with the upper provinces—a
circumstance which has naturally diverted to it nearly the whole foreign trade of the kingdom.

The site of Rangoon has many advantages for ship-building. At neaps, there is a rise and fall of the tide of about eighteen feet; and at springs, of twenty-five to thirty. The distance of the principal teak forests is at the same time comparatively inconsiderable, and there is a water conveyance for the timber nearly the whole way. Ship-building has in fact been conducted at Rangoon ever since the year 1786, and in the thirty-eight years which preceded our capture of it, there had been built one hundred and eleven square-rigged vessels of European construction, the total burthens of which amounted to above thirty-five thousand tons. Several of these were of from eight hundred to one thousand tons burthen. Under the direction of European masters, the Burmese were found to make dexterous and laborious artisans; in this respect, greatly surpassing the natives of our Indian provinces. Of the commerce conducted at Rangoon, I shall take occasion to render an account in another place.
Note:

The following account is one of many of the massacre at Negrais, an island close to Bassein where the English East India Company attempted to establish a factory in the mid-eighteenth century. An introduction for the account has been provided by Dalrymple:

It will be necessary, by way of Introduction, to mention that it having been determined to withdraw the settlement at Negrais except three or four people to take care of the teak timbers that had been collected there, and to secure the right of possession, in case it might afterwards be thought proper to resettle at that place. Captain Newton proceeded accordingly to Bengal, where he arrived 14th of May 1759, with thirty-five Europeans, and seventy black people. On 30th of July 1759. The administration at Bengal, thought proper to accept of Captain William Henry Southby’s offer to go to Negrais, to take care of the teak timbers, and accordingly dispatched the Victoria Snow, Captain Walter Alves, to carry Mr. Southby to the Negrais. Captain Alves returned to Bengal in November, and gave the following account of the Settlement at Negrais, being cut off.

The papers concerning Negrais, and Captain Alve’s Embassy to Ava [previous issue of the SBBR], with the letters that passed on that occasion, were communicated by my much lamented friend, the late Lord Pigot...

Alexander Dalrymple (1791)¹

¹ This introduction is as found in Dalrymple’s Oriental Repertory, published in 1808, but originally written as a report in 1791. the second paragraph has been extracted from Dalrymple’s introduction to that volume.
Account of the Loss of Negrais

Captain Walter Alves

On our passage to Negrais, on the 22d September, in the latitude of 13°. 30'N, about thirty leagues from the Coast of Choromandal, in a violent gale of wind from the SW, we were obliged, for the preservation of our lives, and safety of the Honourable Company's vessel, to cut away our main mast, main yard, with the sail to it, the main topmast, and our lee anchor; we had got down both topsail yards, and the spritsail yard, on deck; but when the main mast fell over the side, some ropes got foul of the topsail and spritsail yards, in such a manner, that not being able to clear them, and the mast thumping along side, for fear of bilging on it, we were obliged to throw them all overboard; at that time the sea broke all over us, and, when she got before it, we were pooped by a very large sea, which drove in the dead lights in the cabin window, and shipt a great deal of water in the cabin; all which run down into the hold, and must have done a great deal of damage to the cargo there, we had several other seas that broke on us; one in particular that filled the deck, fore and aft, and unhung one of the cabin doors, which were shut, and a great quantity of water run into the cabin and so down into the hold; when we had made Cape Negrais, our fore yard, which was the only yard we had left, broke in a squall, in a place where it was bad; and the morning of the 21st of September, in the beginning of the gale of wind, our boat, which we were obliged to tow astern as we were so crank we could not hoist her in, filled with a sea, so were obliged to cut it away: On the 4th October we got into Negrais harbour where we found the Shaftsbury, Europe Ship, Captain Inglis. In the Evening Mr. Southby went ashore, and on the 5th, and on the 6th in the morning, sent for every thing belonging to him ashore, by the Shaftsbury's Long Boat; only five leaguers of Arrack.

The day of his arrival at the Negrais, there came one Antonio, the Buraghman Governor of Persaim, there also, with a letter from the Buraghmah King to the Resident, which was delivered in form the next day, and Antonio dined with Mr. Southby afterwards.

Next morning, vis. on the 6th, between 9 and 10 o’ clock, under pretence of asking for an answer to the letter he had
brought from the Buraghmah King, Antonio went again to the fort house to Mr. Southby, and was to have dined again with him; but just as the servants were bringing up the dinner, on signal given by Antonio, each of the Buraghmahns having singled out his man before, they stabbed Messrs. Southby, Robertson, Hope and Briggs, who were all above stairs; at the same time, and on the same signal, on pretence of buying something from the Europeans below, stabbed every man of them, only a midshipman that belonged to the Shaftsbury, the weapon glancing on his ribs made his escape to the water side, and hailed the Shaftsbury, telling them that the Buraghmahns had murdered all the Eurofzans in the fort. Captain Inglis immediately sent his pinnace armed, and took him on board, and as many of the black people, that belonged to the settlement, as had escaped; as we did also a country boat that we had from the shoar, for the Buraghmahns murdered man, women and child that fell into their hands; just before the midshipman came to the water side, we saw a great number of People run to the Shaftsbury's Long Boat (which had carried a loading of Mr. Southby's things ashoar from us and landed them) and she put off from the shoar, with the union of her ensign down, this was the first notice we had of what was done on shoar; there was killed of Europeans, besides those four already mentioned by name [[Dalrymple's note: Mr. Robertson was not killed], a serjeant, a corporal, a matross and three private men, which were all that belonged to the settlement: also a sick man that belonged to the Shaftsbury, who was so ill he could not rise, him they stabbed on his cott. As soon as the Buraghmahns had got quiet possession of the fort, they brought all the guns there, which were nine in number, and fired at the Shaftsbury (they fired twenty-five chests of powder of Mr. Southby's that had been landed from us in the morning among other things) they did not fire at us; but, as we lay further up the river than the Shaftsbury, for fear in the night, when the tide of flood made, of their making an attempt on us by boats, which if it happened, the Shaftsbury could be of very little service in protecting us, and as we were of no force ourselves capable of opposing a number of boats and men on such a design, we weighed and dropt without the Shaftsbury, when we anchored. Afterwards some more of the black people that belonged to the Settlement got on board us, one of them was much bruised, by blows with a stick, and another was wounded with a lance, in six
different places, they gave us an account, that though the Buraghmahns only brought about sixty men, in all the three Boats we saw, yet they had landed a great number of men, at a part of the island we could not see, and marched them through the woods; which come within half a musquet shot of the fort, in the edge of which they lay concealed, till, on the signal given, they rushed into the fort, by a gate that could not be seen by the ships, and assisted in the execution of the murdering scheme, and firing at the Shaftsbury.

In the evening I went on board Capt. Inglis, to see what he intended to do, and to ask his assistance for masts and yards, as there was little probability of getting them any where else; he told me, that as all the Europeans ashoar were killed, and nothing of The Company’s of value sufficient, that he could carry away, to excuse him if his ship should be much weakened by landing his men, especially as he knew not the numbers against them; he thought it best to leave the place, and resolved to do so as soon as possible. As to my request for masts and yards, he told me he would let me have what he could spare, and at the same time said, that as he was in want of rice, and could get none to buy, before this melancholy affair happened, so now with the additional number of people he had taken on board from Negrais, he had not sufficient for his Passage to Madrass, therefore requested, me to let him have one hundred Bags of The Honourable Company’s rice on board us, for which he would be accountable to George Picot, Esq. at Madrass; which I agreed to, on his giving me a receit, the price referred to be settled at Madrass; while I was on board the Shaftsbury, the Buraghmahns kept firing at her, and she at the fort. A shot from the fort killed Mr. Burroughs the 2d mate, another man, and wounded the gunner much in the arm, they also lodged several shot in her between wind and water, and shot away a good deal of her rigging. I saw one French man with the Buraghmahns the day before they cut off the settlement, who was an officer under the Buraghmah King, and dined with Mr. Southby once, whether or not there were any more Europeans with them I can’t tell, but think there was by their levelling and pointing their guns so well, for from first to last they lodged nine shot between wind and water, and great numbers struck her hull aloft, but luckily killed nobody, but what I mentioned before; the Buraghmahns continued to fire all night at the Shaftsbury; this
evening we saw a sail in the offing. There escaped on board the *Shaftsbury* forty-seven men and two women, and on board us thirteen men, two women and one child from the Negrais.

On the 7th the Buraghmahns continued to fire at the *Shaftsbury* all the forenoon, when she, having unmoored, weighed and dropped down the harbour with the ebb; when abreast of us Captain Inglis hailed, and told me he intended to drop out of the harbour that tide, and if we would follow him he would give us all the assistance: on which we weighed and followed him out, and anchor about six miles without the Harbour, near the *Shaftsbury*; here we got what masts, &c. he could spare us, and for them signed a receit, in which was mentioned, the prices of what I had received from him, and wrote to the Honourable George Pigot, Esq., to whom I referred him for payment, at Madrass; also there I delivered him the one hundred Bags of the Honourable Company’s rice, and took his receit for it, of which I also wrote to the Honourable George Pigot, and to settle the price, as I did not agree with him on that there. On the 10th, the *Shaftsbury* sailed, and the ship, we saw in the offing some days before, sent her boat on board; she proved to be a Moor-ship, from Madras, bound for Mergui, in great want of provisions. They had first been on board the *Shaftsbury*, and brought with them a Pass, signed by Mr. Hodges at Tellicherry; and money to pay for rice; they only wanted what would serve on their passage to Mergui, and as I shewed them our rice was damaged, they took eighteen bags of it, at three rupees per bag, and two bags of wheat at six per bag.

On the 14th, the wind coming fair, we run to Diamond Island to get water and ballast, as we were too light, and had only one cask of water left; for the time was so short that we were at Negrais before the Settlement was cut off, that we had got no supplys of any thing from thence. While we lay at Diamond Island, On the 16th, we saw a Snow under English Colours, that came from the Northward, working to get into the Negrais, we weighed and endeavoured to speak her, and made also signals for that purpose, as I imagined it might be dangerous, after what I saw, for a small vessel to go in, but they, not suspecting what had happened, ran into the harbour and anchor there: we could not get nearer, as the wind and tide was, than within three miles of Pagoda Point, however I sent in a Canoe, we had, and found her to be the *Helen Snow*, Captain Miller, from Bengal, to the Strait of
Malacca, who had run in to get his water filled; the Snow in the evening; and, in the night, and next morning, the Buraghmahns set fire to the place, it kept burning all night. In the morning they sent a small boat off to him, which would not come on board, but called to him to moor, and he should have whatever he wanted: he asked them to come along side, but they said they would go ashoar, and ask for orders to do so; soon afterwards they brought all the boats they had there, and rowed up the river, as fast as possible, a short time after that happened, I got aboard the Snow, in our canoe, for when I saw the place in flames, the night before, I imagined the Buraghmahns might be going away, therefore intended to run in with the vessel, as soon as opportunity served, in order to recover any thing of The Company’s that might have escaped the fire, if possible; but the wind continuing to the Northward, I went into the harbour in the canoe in the morning, and found Capt. Miller’s boat going ashoar to fill their empty water-casks. I also went ashoar in ours, to see if we could not make a raft of The Honourable Company’s timbers and tow down to the vessel.

On going ashoar I saw one of the most shocking sights I ever beheld, viz. the bodies of all the Europeans, and a great number of black people (by their dress I knew them, as they had not been stript, for they were all putrified) lying scattered up and down, some in a wet ditch, that was round the fort; others by the water side, and about thirteen or fourteen on a Plain, about twenty yards without the fort, to the SE, among which were the remains of Messrs. Southby’s, Hope’s and Brigg’s bodies, the others were the Europeans that belonged to the settlement, and black people; they had been all pinioned, for the ropes, that had been used for that purpose, were still visible about their arms. The Buraghmahns had set fire to every [thing] that would burn that they left behind, viz. All the houses in general were burnt down, the company’s schooner and longboat, that lay in the creek to be repaired; they had endeavoured to burn the teak timbers also, but they lying in a swampy place, would not take fire, the remains of the gun carriages (for they had burnt them for the sake of the iron) lay on the beach, the guns they carried away, they had sunk an eight oar pinnace of The Company’s, at low water mark, which, as she had lain some days, was full of sand, the weight of which had split her to pieces; I found a yard and the main boom belonging to the
schooner, that was burnt, and brought them off, and as much old iron and few coddallies which were amongst it, as there was a heap of it lay thrown together not carried away, as the canoe could carry; I tried to get some of the timbers into the water, but had not people enough to do it, as they were about fifty yards above high water mark, so I went to Captain Miller, to ask him for some people to make a raft, as our own vessel was so far off, the canoe could not have returned from her before night. Just after I had got on board there, we saw about fifteen or twenty large boats, that rowed from twenty to thirty oars each, coming down the river, towards us as fast as possible: this immediately determined Capt. Miller to weigh, and run out of the harbour; just after he had got up his anchor, they landed at the fort, I believe there might be five hundred men that we saw come out of them on the beach. I went on board our own vessel again, and as I saw no probability of getting any thing from Negrais, weighed and run to Diamond Island, to get our water filled, and our masts and yards refitted as well as possible, also ballast, we were very crank; Captain Miller went also along with us; and as he said he was in want of rice, I let him have thirty bags of The Honourable Company’s that was on board here and took a receit for it, specifying that he had received it for the use of the Helen Snow, and desiring his owners to pay for it, the price to be settled by the Gentlemen at Bengal.

We continued at Diamond Island till the 23d of October; when having filled our Water, got some ballast and fitted every thing in the best manner we could, we sailed for Bengal, and arrived in Ballasore Road the 10th November. We left Captain Miller ready to sail, from Diamond Island, the first fair wind, he had tried to get to the SE, but the wind and current being against him, he was obliged to anchor again.
Editorial Note

One goal of the SBBR is to make available the unpublished M.A. theses that abound in university libraries but rarely reach the general academic audience. One concern might be that the thesis, especially if published many years after its submission will be taken and critiqued as a representation of the latest in one’s body of research. Clearly, understandings and abilities change over time. To offset this, the original month and year of submission in theses published in the SBBR will be included in the title in parantheses. Citation of a thesis so published in the SBBR must include “(as submitted in month + year)” to be considered a fair use of the material. Of course, this also requires that the thesis printed here must be in its original, unedited form (with the exception of minor spelling or format changes). I have included my M.A. thesis as the first, in order to encourage others to follow course.

The thesis was written in 1992-1993 under the supervision of William H. Frederick and Elizabeth Collins at Ohio University and defended in June 1993. By that time, I had only studied Thai, French, and Spanish at the university level and, using Spanish, proceeded to study Portuguese on my own. Thus, while Iberian sources are used here frequently, Burmese sources were not, save for in translation (my study of Burmese would not begin until SEASSI in the summer of 1994 at Wisconsin-Madison). Another piece, an article based again on Iberian sources was written in 1993 and published in the Journal of Asian History in 1994.1 Thereafter began a long struggle with Arakanese chronicles and revised interpretations of Arakanese history. The major problem in writing the thesis, however, was that other than several useful pieces by Pamela Gutman on art history, numismatics, and an inscription, and a study of Buddhist art by U San Tha Aung,2 all focused

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on a period far earlier than the one I was examining, almost nothing had been written on Arakan, aside from Burmese-language studies unavailable to me at the time, since 1967, or about twenty-six years earlier, and, moreover, very few items had been published since the 1920s. Without a strong body of secondary work to provide theory to bounce off of or a linear narrative to provide context, much of 1992 and early 1993 was spent charting unfamiliar waters. Readers interested in the Portuguese role in Lower Burma and Arakan are also directed to the work of Maria Ana Guedes who published a study on this topic in Portuguese in 1994.

In the next few years, with Vic Lieberman's guidance, I further developed my understanding of Arakan through indigenous texts, leading to a study of river boats in Arakan and Burma in 1997 (Oriens Extremus) and two articles written in 1995 and 1997 that provided a more balanced and farther-reaching examination of the rise and fall of the Mrauk-U state (both articles were published in 1998, one in Journal of Burma Studies and the other in the Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient). These provided the rough structure for my doctoral study of Arakanese Buddhism, especially aranyavasi and gammavasi monastic rivalry, and Islam submitted to the University of Michigan in 1999 (“Where Jambudipa and Islamdom Converged: Religious Change and the Emergence of Buddhist Communalism in Early Modern Arakan (fifteenth to nineteenth centuries)").

While I work mainly on the Irrawaddy Valley today, my interest in Arakan continues. In a forthcoming issue, we will include an annotated list of Arakanese chronicles I compiled in 1995-1996 while on extension from the University of Michigan for language study at Northern Illinois University. This list tentatively identified the ‘lost’ Do We chronicle and mapped out the different chronicle traditions of Arakanese history. A fuller examination of this chronicle (‘Rakhine Min-raza-gri Arei-daw Sadan’. [Palm-leaf manuscript, number 1632] AMs, 1784 [1775], National Library, Ministry of Culture, Yangon, Union of Myanmar) was published in Michael W. Charney, “Centralizing Historical Tradition in of Ancient Arakan (An Eastern Border State Beyond India, east of Vanga and Samatata), Rangoon: Government Press: 1979.


4 I provided the major portion of the text of the ‘Do We’ chronicle and the annotated list of Arakanese chronicle traditions to Jacques P. Leider, then of Chulalongkorn University and now of the EFEO, in 1998. With the increased interest in Arakan, it would probably be useful to make both available to the general scholarly community, and thus the text of the chronicle and translation will be published in the SBBR as well as the annotated list of Arakanese chronicle traditions in the near future.

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M. W. C.

ARAKAN, MIN YAZAGYI, AND THE PORTUGUESE:  
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GROWTH OF ARAKANESE IMPERIAL POWER AND PORTUGUESE MERCENARIES ON THE FRINGE OF MAINLAND SOUTHEAST ASIA  1517-1617 (as submitted in 1993)

A thesis presented to the Faculty of The College of Arts and Sciences of Ohio University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts

Michael W. Charney

(June 1993)

Introduction

The Portuguese shipmen were a mere handful...but as they were unopposed on the sea, they found themselves in command of it...But it was not enough to be in command of the sea; some point d’appui on land for trade and refitting was essential...The Arakanese, their wits sharpened by experience, saw that here was one of those chances given to nations and individuals, which if boldly exploited yield a great profit. It seemed that a mutually agreeable understanding could be arranged. While the Portuguese were able to provide mastery of seamanship, with a modern knowledge of arms and fortification, the Arakanese could throw into the bargain territorial concessions and trade openings.

M. S. Collis and San Shwe Bu


SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005):974-1145
The History of the different Kings that reigned in Burma, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries...is a round of wars and revolts, of treacheries and murders. Its chief interest is derived from the appearance of Europeans upon the scene. Two adventurers, a Portuguese and a Spaniard, played important parts in Burma during the early years of the seventeenth century. The story of their lives is worth telling. It shows how easily lawless Europeans could establish a rule over timid Asiatics by a display of reckless audacity.

Albert Fytche

These two quotations indicate a controversy over the relationship between the rulers of the Burmese region and the Portuguese mercenaries whom they employed. In order to evaluate the situation adequately, several questions must be answered. Which of the two partners, the Arakanese (the example I have chosen) or the Portuguese mercenaries, was dominant in their relationship and why? If the Arakanese were dominant, then why were two groups of Portuguese mercenaries able to revolt against Arakanese rule during the reign of Min Yazagyi, the king of Arakan? If the Portuguese were dominant, then why were these rebellious mercenaries defeated after a decade or so of independence? There are many difficulties in finding an answer to these questions. I would now like to discuss what these difficulties are and how I propose to overcome these problems.

Historiography of Arakan

The history of Arakan has long been overlooked by scholars of Southeast Asian history. This problem exists not simply at the regional level, but


7 It should be noted that authors on Southeast Asian history largely fall into two groups. The first group are historians who have examined the role of Southeast Asians in Southeast Asian history. Perhaps it would be clearer to say that this first group of Southeast Asia historians deal with the history of Southeast Asians rather than simply being a history of events which may have taken place in Southeast Asia, but really had little to do with Southeast Asians. The second group of Southeast Asia historians are those historians who deal solely or largely with events in Southeast Asia which concerned only “outsiders,” such as the Portuguese, Dutch, or English. An example of this second group are authors such as George Winius or Donald Lach, who really deal with European activities in the Indian ocean and Southeast Asia. To be fair, George Winius does not
is present in the scholarship of those who focus on Burma as well. It is difficult to understand why Arakan has been so overlooked. Indeed, Arakan possesses a long and rich history, a unique culture, and many epigraphical and archaeological remains which would seem to make it especially appealing to Southeast Asian historians. Further, Arakan has played pivotal roles in not only Burmese history, but in Thai history, and in the history of Southeast Asian trade. Many examples can be found of Arakan’s trade connections to not only mainland Southeast Asian countries, but to archipelagic Southeast Asia as well. Arakan also presents a unique situation in which all of the major elements of the religions of Southeast Asia are represented: Buddhism, including Mahayana, Theravada, and Tantric sects, Hinduism, animism, and even Islam. Whatever the reasons for this neglect, it is a fact which the current generation of Southeast Asian historians must face, and it presents a difficulty to those historians who wish to learn more about Arakanese history.

Many of the primary sources for Arakanese history are unavailable or at the very least difficult to obtain. The old Arakanese dialect of Burmese is not taught, to my knowledge, in any universities outside of Burma, and all Arakanese chronicles remain untranslated. Even indigenous accounts have been argued to be untrustworthy for the period prior to 1400. The references to Arakan in the chronicles of Arakan’s neighbors, such as Pegu, Ayudhya, and Ava are on the whole biased or ill-informed. Likewise, early European accounts are just as biased. Although the Rev. Father Hosten, “the learned annotator of Portuguese and Spanish records,” has argued that the Portuguese have written accounts on which “many volumes might be written on Arakan and Pegu alone,” the Portuguese chroniclers which I have read, such

claim to be a historian of Southeast Asia, but rather of the Portuguese in Asia. His article, “The ‘Shadow Empire’ of Goa in the Bay of Bengal,” Itinerario 7, no. 2, (1983): 83-101, clearly deals with Arakan and Burma (as well as Bengal), while really only examining the Portuguese activities there. Donald Lach as well, in his Southeast Asia in the Eyes of Europe: the Sixteenth Century, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1968, has examined the European experience in the Southeast Asia region, while providing important insights, at least incidentally, on some aspects of Southeast Asia history, while dealing little with Southeast Asians themselves. While I have utilized the work of historians belonging to both groups, I have adopted the perspective of the first group of Southeast Asia historians.

8 Although the Arakanese have used the Burmese alphabet since the fifteenth century. See E. Forchhammer, Report on the Antiquities of Arakan, (Rangoon: 1892): 39.


10 Cited in San Shwe Bu, op. cit., 167.
as Antonio Bocarro, Manuel de Fariah y Sousa, and Manuel de Abreu Mousinho, all seem biased and simply repeat brief and superficial information about Arakan. We do, however, have the in-depth observations of Friar Manrique, but his account is of seventeenth century Arakan, when the glory of Arakan had begun to decline.

At the same time there was a seemingly brief period in Southeast Asian historiography in which important, though by no means exhaustive, work was done in putting together some of the elements of Arakanese history. This brief period was largely limited to the years between World War I and World War II, when three scholars, Maurice Collis, San Shwe Bu, and San Baw U, filled the pages of the *Journal of the Burma Research Society* with accounts of sixteenth and seventeenth century Arakanese history based on Arakanese chronicles. Their work was a substantial departure from the previous generation of Burma historians such as Arthur Phayre and D. G. E. Hall, who only dealt

12 Manuel de Fariah y Sousa, *The Portugues Asia: Or, The History of the Discovery and Conquest of India by the Portugues; Containing All their Discoveries from the Coast of Africk, to the farthest Parts of China and Japan; all their battels by Sea and Land, Sieges and other Memorable Actions; a Description of those Countries, and many Particulars of the Religion, Government and Customs of the Natives, etc.*, 3 vols., translated from the Spanish by John Stevens, London: C. Brome, 1695.
15 It should be noted that Phayre was somewhat of a pioneer in the British school of Arakanese history, publishing two important early accounts of Arakanese history, “An Account of Arakan” and “On the History of Arakan,” in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal* in the 1840s. As he shifted his interests to Burma east of the Yoma mountains, however, he seems to have abandoned research on Arakanese history to other scholars, only dealing with Arakan later in reference to historical developments in Burma proper. A good analysis of Phayre’s contributions to the study of Arakanese and Burmese history can be found in Hugh Tinker, “Arthur Phayre and Henry Yule: Two Soldier-Administrator Historians,” in D.G. E. Hall (ed.), *Historians of South East Asia*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1961): 267-278.
with the Arakanese as an interesting minority group within the boundaries of British Burma. Their accounts are superficial and are more concerned with Arakanese linguistics than with telling the history of an important people. But just as World War I had ushered in a renaissance of Arakanese studies, World War II brought it to an end. Indeed, Burma was largely ignored until the 1970s, and the current generation of Burma historians, such as Maung Htin Aung, Victor Lieberman, and Michael Aung-Thwin (who focuses on Pagan) have largely ignored Arakan.

The Issue

I became interested in Arakanese history as a result of my investigations into the strange events surrounding two Portuguese adventurers in mainland Southeast Asia in the first quarter of the seventeenth century.


SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005):974-1145
One of these “adventurers” was Philip de Brito, who carved a short-lived kingdom for himself at Syriam from 1600 until he was impaled on an iron stake by the Ava king Anaukpetlun in 1613. The other Portuguese adventurer was Sebastião Gonçalves y Tibau, who did roughly the same thing on Sundiva island in 1609. I was surprised to discover that these two events were linked: both of these men led groups of Portuguese mercenaries who had rebelled against their Arakanese employers. Further, they had rebelled against the same king, Min Yazagyi. After further examination, I found that Min Yazagyi was not seen as a weak king by the Arakanese, but considered by many to have been their greatest ruler and that his reign marked a “golden age” in Arakan. Indeed, Min Yazagyi was not weak, for he pushed the boundaries of Arakan over Lower Burma to the Isthmus of Kra in the east and further into Bengal in the west. I was thus confused: how were two Portuguese mercenary groups able to rebel against a kingdom that had shown itself to be immensely powerful? Why had the Portuguese not rebelled against the Arakanese when they were not so expansive, earlier in the sixteenth century? Further, was the cause of the Portuguese rebellions a concomitant of the process of Arakanese expansion or some fault of Min Yazagyi’s, or both?

Sources

To answer to these questions, I consulted English-language accounts of European travelers who visited Arakan in the sixteenth century and Captain Stevens’ three volume English translation of Faríah y Sousa’s great work, The Portuguese in Asia. Not satisfied, I examined the histories of Burma, Thailand, and Bengal for any secondary information that could be found regarding Arakan. Luckily, the Ohio University Southeast Asian Library possessed the Journal of the Burma Research Society on microfiche, making available to me the works of Collis, San Shwe Bu,20 and San Baw U, as well as Mon texts translated by MacGregor,21 Hall,

20 Indeed, it should be noted that Collis and San Shwe Bu seemed to have worked together on most of their articles in the Journal of the Burma Research Society. This is shown especially by their joint-authorship of several important articles such as “Arakan’s Place in the Civilization of the Bay,” (previously cited) & “Dom Martin, 1606-1643: The First Burman to Visit Europe,” Journal of the Burma Research Society 16, pt. 1 (1926): 11-23.

21 A. MacGregor’s translation of what he calls an “anonymous” book, however, seems to me to be clearly Mousinho’s work, since MacGregor’s translation seems to read the same as Almeida’s translation of Mousinho’s work. Even more indicative of the fact that these are the same works, both titles are exactly the same. For MacGregor’s translation,
and Furnivall. After collecting as many materials as I could from the Southeast Asian holdings of the major university libraries of the American mid-west, I turned my attention to Portuguese sources, studied Spanish and Portuguese, and I am only beginning to sift through important information recorded by Bocarro, Diogo do Couto, and João de Barros.22

Problems

There are several problems, however, in analyzing the sixteenth and seventeenth history of Arakan specifically and of Burma in general. One major problem is that of the numbers provided for the soldiers or ships involved in various battles. G. E. Harvey, for example, assumed that Western accounts of historical events in Burma were more accurate than the accounts of the Burmese. He has argued that the figures for the sizes of armies, casualties, massacres, etc., provided by Burmese and other chronicles must be highly exaggerated. In the few places which he was able to cross-check, he believed that the actual numbers of were exaggerated three to ten times in the chronicles.23

In many ways, his argument is convincing, but there is no reason to accept this view without considerable qualifications. From my examination of the Portuguese chroniclers, for example, I have developed a strong suspicion that Portuguese historians were just as likely to exaggerate their figures for indigenous armies, which they defeated, even more so for indigenous armies which defeated Portuguese contingents. I think that the exaggeration by Portuguese authors is probably due to the secondhand nature of their information, their sources often having themselves only heard stories which had been exaggerated by successive “storytellers.” Indeed, Ian A. MacGregor has dealt with this problem in some detail. He offers the case of Fernão Guerreiro’s Relations, based on original letters of Catholic missionaries which were largely based upon mere rumors. This problem led Guerreiro to make grave errors in his history, including “exaggerations, omissions, and undue glorification.” MacGregor also argues that the intent of the authors of reports sent back home to Lisbon played a big part in the exaggeration of their stories.

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22 The last two authors, Couto and Barros, compiled the Décadas, with Couto writing the first two volumes, and Barros subsequently completing the last two volumes. See Diogo Couto & João de Barros, Décadas, 4 vols., with preface and notes by António Baião, (Lisbon: Livraria Sa Da Costa--Editora, 1945.


SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005):974-1145
These authors were competing for a larger readership and thus more influence; a more imaginative story would probably receive the desired amount of attention. In the case of the important work of Tomé Pires, the rediscovery of which in 1933 “revolutionized” Western scholarship on the Melakan trading system, for example, “fervour outran caution” in his description of local resources. Meilink-Roelofsz has qualified this view, however, arguing that Pires’ account is an accurate depiction of the Melakan trading system. Instead, Meilink-Roelofsz believes that subsequent European observers may have left out information in their accounts which they may have felt was mundane and which they took for granted. But MacGregor touches on another important problem: many of the Portuguese accounts or “histories” were politically motivated and thus exaggeration or underestimates were made purposefully, with less than innocent intentions. As MacGregor explains, again in the case of Tomé Pires:

Readers of the *Suma* have to remember that Pires was pleading a case. He wrote the *Suma* for king Manuel, whom he wished to impress with the worth of Malacca. He wanted to persuade the monarch to cherish his distant possession, to provide it--perhaps partly in Pires himself--with ‘excellent officials, expert traders and lovers of peace’ and to see that it was ‘supplied, looked after, praised and favoured and not neglected.’...Pires’ propagandist intention probably explains at least some of his exaggerations and also the way he glossed over difficulties at Malacca...

Further, Portuguese captains who were actual participants in the historical events which Portuguese historians described, like De Brito or Gonçalves, may have purposely tried to enhance their exploits. They probably thought that local support for Portuguese rule would increase as their reputation as great conquerors became more terrible and frightening.

But the Portuguese historians are not alone in their exaggerations: the same principle may be applied to the situation of indigenous conquerors, who wanted to terrify prospective enemies or enhance the aura of their Buddhist legitimacy. I happened upon this problem during my early research on Philip de Brito’s “kingdom” at Syriam, in which I


26 Ibid., 175.
discovered that De Brito seems to have been competing for legitimacy as the leader of the local population in a way similar to indigenous Buddhist leaders.\(^{27}\) In other words, De Brito won and then lost this support, by ‘playing by the rules’ of Southeast Asians and Theravada Buddhism, until he failed in an attempt to make Southeast Asians ‘play by his rules.’ Other authors have looked more extensively at the legitimacy of Buddhist kingship and have implied similar observations in Thailand, notably S. J. Tambiah and Akin Rabibhadana.\(^{28}\) Tambiah argues convincingly that a legitimate Buddhist king is believed to be the person in the kingdom with the highest level of accumulated merit (bun). The king in a Buddhist society serves as the corrective process, by his righteousness (dharma), to the disordered world. Through his rule, he either accumulates more merit which is reflected in the well-being of his kingdom, or he accumulates demerit (bap), which is reflected in the development of chaos or destruction in his country. Further, a Buddhist king shows his Dharma by conquering non-Buddhist kings and thus spreading Buddhism in his role as a Buddhist world-conqueror, or chakravartan.\(^{29}\) Thus a powerful king, who can command the largest armies and win the most battles is seen as a legitimate Buddhist king. Obviously, Buddhist legitimacy is much more complex than I can explain here, but it should be clear that Buddhist kings had a good reason to exaggerate the size of their armies and the extent of their victories.

The problem is that we may never know what the actual figures were and it is impossible to cross-check every figure which has been

\(^{27}\) This work culminated in a paper which I presented at the Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs in 1992, entitled “Buddhist Kingship, Philip de Brito y Nicote, and Constans Phaulcon: The Causal Value of Buddhist Ideals of Kingship as the Basis for Legitimacy of the King in a Buddhist Land.” In this paper, completed under the guidance of Dr. Elizabeth Collins, I argued that beyond the theoretical constructs of Buddhist legitimacy of kingship, there were three “real” requirements, by which anyone, Buddhist or not, could win legitimacy as the king in a Buddhist country: 1. The stability of the country; 2. The protection of the country against foreign enemies; 3. The guarantee of the safe operation of the Buddhist Sangha. Nan-dá-bayin had failed in terms of all three requirements and lost Mon support for his rule. De Brito, was able to meet all three requirements for a time, and won Mon support, but sometime after 1609, De Brito suddenly became a staunch Catholic crusader and alienated the Mons, leading to his defeat by Anaukpetlun in 1613, who was able to meet these requirements.


\(^{29}\) Tambiah, *op. cit.*, passim.
provided, since sources are often few and an incident might only be related by one or two chroniclers in varying detail. When cross-checking is possible, I have done so, with explanation in the notes. In other cases, I have noted the figures which sources have provided, with comment and justification. But it is necessary to relate the figures, whether they are exaggerated or not, for several reasons. The first reason, again, is that often an exaggerated figure may be all we have to go on, and exaggerated or not a figure usually contains a good deal of value, whether absolute or relative to other figures which are provided. Second, and probably most important, a numerical figure carries a value which lies outside of the realm of telling us “how many:” a number conveys an understanding of how participants in a given battle or massacre viewed the events around them. In the Arakanese, Toungoo, or Avan sieges of De Brito’s fortress at Syriam for example, I do not think that it is probable that fifty to one hundred Portuguese successfully destroyed indigenous armies of tens of thousands. But I do think that when we are given such figures, we can better understand how the Portuguese viewed their situation; often tenacious or even hopeless or, when they won, blessed or saved by divine intervention.

Further, the figures provided tell us too little as often as they tell us too much. In the case of indigenous armies, we are rarely told how much of the army was allocated to supply or logistical units, or how many were camp-followers, religious leaders, or various personnel or slaves sent to take care of the personal needs of lords or kings. In the case of Portuguese chronicles, we rarely read of how many indigenous troops fought alongside, and often saved, their Portuguese comrades. In the case of Salvador Ribeyro and Philip de Brito, for example, it took some time before I was able to determine that while there were indeed only several hundred Portuguese in any given battle, they were usually accompanied by thousands of Mon soldiers, with the Mon captain, Ximin Barragao, as a good example. Indeed, Portuguese victories against tens of thousands seem more palpable when we consider that the Portuguese force probably numbered two or three thousand, when we include Mon auxiliaries. Again, I have tried to make these figures available when possible, and certainly the fact of indigenous participation in the Portuguese war effort, though often unspoken, always needs to be kept into account.

Another problem in examining chronicles of this period involves the use of personal or geographical names. In the case of the Arakanese kings, for example, they often had three or more names, Islamic, Buddhist, or otherwise, and Portuguese corruptions of their names makes the confusion drastically worse: the same person may be called by five or six names in any group of accounts and given a century of Arakanese history, this problem of determining who is who must be
multiplied by the hundreds. The same problem exists in indigenous chronicles, such as in the case of Philip de Brito, who is referred to as Changa, Xenga, Nga Zinga, or a variety of other names. Interestingly, European accounts have corrupted De Brito's name into various misspellings: I have counted at least ten versions. The same problem exists for geographical names and the historian has to face accounts which may use San Iago, Cirian, Siriam, etc., for Syriam, Chatigan, Chittigam, Chittigon, etc., for Chittagong, or Jungoma for Chiang Mai. Luckily, two great resources are at the historians disposal: G. E. Gerini's tremendous work of 1909, *Researches on Ptolemy's Geography of Eastern Asia*,30 and Henry Yule and Arthur Coke Burnell's similarly exhaustive work of 1886, *Hobson-Jobson*.31 I have used these works extensively as reference for place names, and special note should be given to Yule and Burnell's work, which was the most helpful in determining sixteenth century geographical references.

Related to the problem of variations in place names is the problem of contemporaneous authors who related secondhand notations of geographical locations as if they had been there, or the misunderstanding of these contemporary travelers of where they had been.32 This problem is especially evident in the location of Portuguese fortresses and trading stations, which may be said to have been located in completely different countries than where they actually were. These travelers also had no idea of which kingdoms certain sites they may have visited were in, and extended the problem by providing extensive commentary on political and economic relationships between these sites and the supposed country around them which are simply false or, at the very least, misleading. I have tried to make it easier for the reader to "navigate" through the sixteenth and seventeenth century Bay of Bengal and Burmese region, by my own investigative work and corresponding notations as well as with several maps which are provided in the text.

One last point needs to be made to allay a criticism of my work which will probably be made with some justification. Despite MacGregor's observation that Barros might be criticized by the "modern historian" for his focus on the "minutiae of small battles and sieges,"

32 In some cases, the accounts of Lisbon-based historians were more accurate than those of actual visitors to the countries they wrote about. See I. A. MacGregor, op. cit., 179.
rather than “economic and administrative matters,” examining the plethora of small battles and sieges is inescapable, in many cases, for several reasons. First, as previously explained, the Portuguese and indigenous historians, who are often our only sources, had a field-day with battles and sieges. Few historians were interested in, nor did they seem to have realized the importance of, ascertaining long-term administrative trends in any meaningful way other than ‘proving’ the legitimacy of the current ruler of their nations. Secondly, the ‘minutiae of small battles and sieges’ can offer important information to the careful observer. The complexity of small battles, for example, often offer insights into the personalities of not just the leaders, but also of the average soldier involved. These insights include loyalties, goals, beliefs, as well as how these often forgotten ‘little’ participants lived, fought, and behaved: all of these things tell us something very important in the aggregate about their societies and about how they viewed the historical events happening around them. Particularly, I have used battles and sieges to indicate the true nature of the value of Portuguese weaponry and organization relative to Arakanese weaponry and organization. But I have also used these battles and sieges to determine the leadership qualities of men like De Brito, Gonçalves, Min Yazagyi, Min Bin, and Min Khamauk. Further, these minor battles are only considered alongside general economic and administrative analysis.

Questions

Which of the two partners, the kings of the Burmese region or the Portuguese mercenaries was dominant in their relationship and why? Some scholars have argued that the mainland Southeast Asian rulers who employed Portuguese mercenaries were dominant in this partnership and that the Portuguese were merely ‘tools’ of Southeast Asian statecraft. Liberman’s important article, “Europeans, Trade, and the Unification of Burma, c. 1540-1620,” has elaborated on this point carefully, while conceding that the Portuguese eventually became independent players in the Southeast Asian political realm, but only within the parameters of established Southeast Asian political behavior. But if the Arakanese were dominant, then why were two groups of Portuguese mercenaries able to revolt against Arakanese rule during the reign of Min Yazagyi, the King of Arakan?

33 I. A. Macgregor, op. cit., 182.
On the other hand, George Winius, in his article, “The ‘Shadow Empire’ of Goa in the Bay of Bengal,”\(^\text{35}\) seems to imply that the Portuguese and not the indigenous Asians, were the true masters in their relationship. Indeed, Winius seems to feel that the Portuguese mercenaries in Pegu and Arakan fit into an ‘informal empire’ of the Portuguese. But if the Portuguese were dominant, then why were both of the rebellious mercenary groups, those of Pegu and Sundiva, defeated after a decade or so of independence?

Falling somewhere between Lieberman and Winius is the argument of G. V. Scammell. Scammell does not question European dominance in the relationship between the Portuguese and the indigenous rulers. Instead, Scammell, in his articles “Indigenous Assistance in the Establishment of Portuguese Power in Asia in the Sixteenth Century”\(^\text{36}\) and “The Pillars of Empire: Indigenous Assistance and the Survival of the ‘Estado da India’ c. 1600-1700.”\(^\text{37}\) argues that although the Europeans were dominant, this dominance could not have been achieved without indigenous support or the “adept exploitation of conflicts and divisions in indigenous societies.” Scammell’s chief concern is to attack the oft-cited claim that meat-eating Europeans (as opposed to the protein deficient diet of Asians), supposedly dominant in technology, simply entered Asia and took control without much effort. Scammell’s view thus differs from Lieberman’s since Scammell provides a scenario in which Europeans were dominant in their relationship with the indigenous rulers (Scammell only questions the means by which this was done), and Scammell differs from Winius since Scammell sees an important relationship between the indigenous population and the Portuguese. Scammell’s argument, however, leads to another question. Is it not possible, for example, that the situation was sometimes reversed and Asians took advantage of conflicts within the Estado da India to expand their own power or that Portuguese help was sometimes used by the Asians to achieve their own ends?

The answer to these questions can be found in an examination of Min Yazagyi’s reign, during which Arakan both reached its greatest territorial extent and experienced the two mercenary rebellions. Min


Yazagyi’s reign thus seems to be something of contradiction, since Arakan seems to have been at its greatest power and yet it was experiencing its greatest weakness at the same time. The major question which should be answered, then, is why this seeming contradiction developed.

In order to answer these questions, as well as those mentioned earlier, three developments will be looked at: (1) the Portuguese-Arakanese relationship in the sixteenth century; (2) the revolt of Philip de Brito; and (3) the revolt of Sebastião Gonçalves y Tibau. In examining these three stages of the Arakanese-Portuguese relationship, attention will be focused both on the Arakanese approach to dealing with the outside world, especially with the Portuguese and on the economic and administrative concerns which provoked the Arakanese desire to expand their state territorially and economically.
Chapter I
Arakanese State and Society at the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century

For many years after the retreat of Tabeng Shwéhti, Arakan was left, undisturbed. Situated between Bengal and Burma, and far inferior to either in extent and resources, the strength of Arakan lay mainly in woods and swamps, which opposed the passage of an enemy, and offered a safe refuge for the people. Trusting to these natural defences, the kings of Arakan might long have remained secure against foreign foes. But they were not content to exist in obscure independence at home, and they encroached northward and eastward as they found opportunity from the weakness of either neighbor.

Arthur P. Phayre

Mrauk-U, having turned the tables in Bengal proceeded to do the same on Burma. This was the first and only period in its history when Arakan was able not only to repulse the Burmese but even to annex part of their country. Razagri...took Pegu. This campaign was rendered possible by his excellent navy and Razagri, in appointing the Portuguese de Brito, as Governor of Syriam was repeating the policy of the north-west frontier. He depended on those mariners, in conjunction, presumably, with his own seamen, to keep his borders for him.

Maurice Collis and San Shwe Bu

These two quotations indicate that there was a great change, between the first-half of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth century, in the way in which the Arakanese kings both viewed the world around them and how they adapted themselves to the changing economic and political climate. What, for example, provoked the Arakanese kings to change from isolated monarchs to great military conquerors? Was this change due to economic developments? If so, what were these developments and how did they affect the world-view of the Arakanese kings and perhaps Arakanese society in general?

In order to answer these questions, the world-view of Arakanese society at the beginning of the sixteenth century will first be examined. Then I will examine the way in which Arakanese kings legitimized their rule: first, in terms of theoretical religious legitimation of kingship and

39 Collis and San Shwe Bu, “Arakan’s Place in the Civilization of the Bay,” 43.

SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005):974-1145
second, in terms of the economic basis of kingly legitimation. This analysis will be used as the basis for the next chapter in which the development of the relationship between the Portuguese and the Arakanese monarchy during the sixteenth century will be examined.

Arakanese Society and the Arakanese World-View

Before examining the world-view of the Arakanese kings and their means of legitimation of kingship, it would be useful to look at what Arakan society was like at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The Arakanese were similar to many peoples found throughout the world, who, finding themselves stuck between large and powerful empires, choose either to isolate themselves from the outside world or to purposefully look at other cultures for religions or tools of state-craft through which they could express their own views in a way easily recognizable to the outside world. This choice between isolation and adaptation was faced not just by Arakan, but by many other societies throughout Southeast Asia. Some Southeast Asian societies chose to adapt and opened themselves up to the outside world, as in the case of modern Thailand. Other societies in Southeast Asia chose both adaptation and isolation, in which outside models were utilized but the “doors” to their societies remained closed to the outside world, as shown by examples as varied as modern Burma and premodern Vietnam.

The Arakanese chose the second path, and their culture at the beginning of the sixteenth century reflected both their isolation and their adaptation. One way that we can see both isolation and adaptation is by looking at the temple iconography of Mrauk-U, the Arakanese capital. In the Shithaungparâ (Shithaung pagoda), built in C.E. 1535 on Pakaung-daung hill, eighty-four thousand images of the Buddha were enshrined “after the fashion of the great Asoka.”40 While King Min Bin planned on housing these Buddhist images in the Shithaungparâ from the beginning, the pagoda was stylistically Hindu, so much so that “the entire structure is alien in its main features to native architectural style.”41 In addition to the Buddhist images, the pagoda includes garudas, statues which are probably of Vishnu, and other iconography indicating the old Brahmanic social order, with the Brahmans on top, then kings, below them warriors, and, at the bottom, commoners. Further, the gateway is protected by “a six-armed figure and richly

41 Forchhammer, *op. cit.*, 20.

*SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005):974-1145*
dressed Brahmans at one side of it.” This “mixture of sculptural representations from the Buddhist cultus and Hindu pantheon” clearly indicates Arakanese religious syncretism. At the same time, another pagoda built by Min Bin, the Andaw pagoda, is completely Buddhist in its design and iconography and shows no sign of Hinduism. A little further away, however, is the Nan tha-gan, or “the tank of the palace people,” which is guarded by two sets of huge “dreadful looking bhilus in sitting posture.” Since the bhilus or bhillas, are the demons who gather human victims for Hindu gods and goddesses, we can see the adoption of further aspects of Hinduism by the Arakanese. Animism was not neglected either, with a good example being the nat-shrine built to house the female nat, Ma Pru. Interestingly, all four of these examples, the Shithaungparã, the Andaw pagoda, the Nan tha-gan, and the Ma Pru shrine were built roughly in the same thirty-year period and represent the diversity of religious models adopted by the Arakanese.

As in other Southeast Asian civilizations, this syncretic approach to religion by Arakan reflected a centuries-long process of adaptation and change. Theravada Buddhism, for example, was present from before the tenth century, yet for many centuries Arakan was more closely associated with Islamic India than with Sri Lanka. But I think that it is necessary to provide another example of how the Arakanese adopted various foreign religious models in a syncretic manner. In C.E. 1595, the poet Ugga Byan, who was the royal tutor to Prince Min Khamuang, wrote a poem, the only work of his which is extant. Ugga Byan wrote this poem in the Arakanese poetic style of Ra-tu, or seasonal, which was a style that the Arakanese had borrowed from both India and Burma. In this poem, Ugga Byan speaks through the mouth of Min Khamuang’s favorite wife, and describes her feelings, season by season, as she longs for Min

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42 Forchhammer, op. cit., 24.
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid., 24-5.
48 Hall, Burma, 57; Further, this Arakanese willingness to absorb foreign religious models into a syncretic system may account for Juan Gonzales De Mendoza’s sixteenth century observation that the Spanish knew little of the Arakanese, but they did know that the Arakanese were “very apt to receive the holie gospell.” See Juan Gonzales De Mendoza (1586), The History of the Great and Mighty Kingdom of China and the Situation Thereof, Volume II, translated by R. Parke and edited by George T. Staunton, with an introduction by R. H. Major, (New York: Burt Franklin, n.d.): 321-2.
Khamaung’s return during a journey to Pegu. To illustrate my point that Arakanese culture had adopted various foreign religious and cultural models in a syncretic manner, I will examine a few lines:

Plucking now here, now there a precious flower.  
With these I mounted the Pagoda steps  
And laid them at the knees of the Exalted.\(^{49}\)  
All these they offer to pagodas and images:  
Some observe also the Five and the Eight Precepts,  
Doing much charity as befits a Buddhist.\(^{50}\)

These two selections indicate the important role that Buddhism was playing in Arakanese society. But at the same time, the poem indicates the influence of Hinduism:

See the Rain-king marshall his thunder clouds  
And make his lightnings flicker; see the Sun-king,  
In his rich coat of a thousand scarlet flames,  
Drive out and set his horses at a gallop  
In the circuit of Mount Meru; on the summit  
The King of Heaven sits, smiling at this,  
Until, an amber rod in his left hand,  
His right upon a sword, he shouts again.  
At once the Rain-king summons back at the clouds,  
Darkens the sky, darts lightning everywhere,  
And a shower rushing down settles the dust.\(^{51}\)

These references to Indra indicate the importance that Hinduism was playing in Arakanese society as well. But I think that it is interesting that only Indra, and not other Hindu gods such as Vishnu or Çiva, is spoken of in the poem. Although Vishnu is certainly in evidence in the iconography of the royal buildings, as in Ayudhya and Angkor, I think

\(^{50}\) Seventh stanza, lines 5-7. Ibid., 226.  
\(^{51}\) Third stanza, lines 11-21. Ibid, 224-225.
that Ugga Byan’s neglect in failing to mention Vishnu or Çiva might show that Indra may have entered popular culture for his value as both the God of Rain and the symbol of kingship. This would tie together the two things which directed Arakanese society the most: kingship and water (they primarily saw themselves as a maritime people). Indeed, Indra is spoken of in this poem for his role in nature, rain, as much as he is as a king. But Ugga Byan was a royal tutor, and his environment was the royal court and not an Arakanese village: perhaps Indra played a more important role in his surroundings than he did for Arakanese as a whole.

Other sections of the poem mention aspects of Arakanese life which I think show that Ugga Byan was also in touch with Arakanese culture and society outside of the royal court; the poem also relates a strong animist tradition. As we read:

Why do the Nats who inhabit the Six Regions
Allow so cruel a cold to chill us here?
Night after night I have complained to them,
Till I am weary of complaining; they do not hear,
Wherefore I raise my hands in the form of a bud,
Wherefore appeal over the Nats to Buddha.52

This selection certainly indicates the important influence of animism in Arakanese culture and society. We also read of water festivals, and other indications of animist influence. But at the same time, we can see in this selection a clearer indication of the syncretism of the Arakanese way of looking at religion and the world: animism and Buddhism are seen together in the same context. That is, the Arakanese have adopted Buddhism, and Hinduism for that matter, and blended them with indigenous animism, creating a religious and culture syncretism which provides them with as many models as possible to express their feelings and to reassure themselves of safety in a world which threatens their survival and yet a world from which they have drawn many useful things which allow them to protect their state and society. This is not to say, however, that the Arakanese were unique in their defensive syncretism; Indeed, many Southeast Asian societies have adopted similar outlooks, but it is possible that this defensive syncretism was more strongly marked in Arakan than elsewhere. In any case, for the purposes of this case study, this general societal outlook can be kept in mind.

The most important example of how the Arakanese people used outside influences in a syncretic manner and in this way adapted and

52 Stanza 10, lines 7-12, Ibid., 227.
maintained their independence is the Mahamuni shrine. This was the national shrine of Arakanese society and it was of great symbolic importance for the chief themes of Arakanese society and national survival. The Candasara image, or Mahamuni image (the “Great Wanderer image”),\textsuperscript{53} is supposedly that of Godama Buddha: the Arakanese claim that the shrine was built in B.C.E. 545 and even Asoka is said to have visited this image twenty-three centuries ago.\textsuperscript{54} But the "throne,"\textsuperscript{55} on which the image of Godama Buddha sat inside the Mahamuni shrine, was built on top of the base which was lined with twelve thousand “magical figures” engraved on copper plates: these engravings were placed here “with a view to calling in the aid of the spirits to make [Arakan] dominant over its neighbouring states.”\textsuperscript{56} U San Tha Aung, however, argues that these spirits are engraved on the base of the pagoda to show that the Buddha was superior to all other deities and religions. His view, although much of it guess-work due to the poor condition of the images, is that the spirits represent “Devas, Yaksas, Gandharvas, Asuras, Garudas, Kinnaras, Mahoragas, and Nagas.”\textsuperscript{57}

In any case, the Candasara image, provides an important example of the multiplicity of religious models available to the Arakanese, and probably indicates a high degree of Arakanese religious syncretism. That Arakanese religious syncretism, despite San Tha Aung’s perhaps hasty argument that the shrine displays non-Buddhist religious themes to show Buddhist dominance, is more clearly in evidence when the legends of the shrine are taken into account: the Mahamuni thamein (history of the Mahamuni shrine) and the Sappadanapakarana (an ancient Arakanese manuscript), for example, give clear indications of Arakanese religious syncretism:

[I]t behoves me [Godama] that in this country, which is more excellent than the rest of the 84,000 countries, and which has been the scene of my various transmigrations, should leave my image

\textsuperscript{53} I would like to thank Dr. Collins for explaining to me the significance and meaning of “muni” which mean religious pilgrim or wanderer.


\textsuperscript{57} San Tha Aung, \textit{op. cit.}, 114-5.
and hair, which, I am fully convinced, will be held in veneration by men, nats, and Brahmins, during the 5,000 years subsequent to my Nirvana.\footnote{Translated by Forchhammer, \textit{op. cit.}, 4.}

This legendary history includes reference to nats and Hindu priests, which indicates the more widely-shared religious syncretism used for political legitimation throughout Burma: nats, Brahmins, and the Buddha were wedded together symbolically; Kyanzittha, for example, who was the Buddhist king of Pagan, installed nats in the Shwezigon, which Luce has called the “most ‘national’ of all Burma’s pagodas.”\footnote{Cited in S. J. Tambiah, \textit{op. cit.}, 110.} Similarly, the Mahamuni shrine is Arakan’s most “national” pagoda, and perhaps the combination of nats and the Buddha is indicative of a Burma-wide syncretism of religious models of political legitimation. But there is something else which indicates a more ambitious syncretic approach to religious models by the Arakanese: within the Mahamuni shrine, Arakan’s “national” symbol, there is a sacred hole which is dedicated to the worship of Vasundhara, the “Earth Goddess.”\footnote{Do We, “Maha Razawin,” \textit{Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal} (1920-21): 61-2, cited in Pamela Gutman, “The Ancient Coinage of Southeast Asia,” \textit{Journal of the Siam Society} 66, pt. 1 (January, 1978): 20f.}

The Mahamuni shrine also represented Arakan’s resilience against attempts by the outside world to dominate Arakan in a very real sense as well: almost every legendary or historical invader of Arakan tried to remove the Mahamuni shrine, and the Candasara, but either failed or was cursed as a result. In C.E. 81, the king of Tharekhettara (Prome) supposedly remained in Arakan for three years after his successful invasion, waiting for his engineers to find some way of removing the shrine; eventually it was decided to simply remove its treasure, which is said to have resulted in the fragmentation of Tharekhettara society in C.E. 94. The Shans who melted down the copper image house above the Mahamuni shrine in the late tenth century were driven out by the Arakanese and their new Shan king, brother of the invading king, who had become a “naturalized Arakanese.” Anawratha, who supposedly invaded Arakan in C.E. 1018, was unable to remove the Mahamuni shrine, and his attempts to deface it were undone by the Arakanese,\footnote{Chan Htwan Oung, “The Mahamuni Shrine in Arakan,” 263-5; Forchhammer, \textit{op. cit.}, 6.} although some accounts argue that Anawratha was
merely trying to rebuild the Mahamuni shrine.  

Kyazittda and Alaungdaw, in C.E. 1096, were able to build their own edifices at the shrine, but the Arakanese had no love for these additions to the shrine. King Min Than, “being prompted by national hatred towards the Burmans, destroyed the shrine built by them and erected a new one.” Another disaster struck the shrine in C.E. 1098, when the Pyus and Mons totally destroyed the Mahamuni shrine; it was not until C.E. 1153, when the Arakanese king, Dasaraja, had the Mahamuni shrine rebuilt. Yet again, the shrine was destroyed, by the Shans for the second time, in C.E. 1354, and rebuilt again in C.E. 1393, by the Arakanese king, Sinda.

The Arakanese thus saw the Mahamuni shrine, which combined elements of Buddhism with local animism, as symbolic of their struggle with the outside world. This importance continued even when the capital of Arakan was moved to Mrauk-U by the Min Zawmun in C.E. 1430: “he constructed a road from this city to Mahamuni; he inaugurated periodical pilgrimages to the sacred shrine, which he put in thorough repairs; the numerous tanks along the road are ascribed to him.” Further, the Mahamuni shrine continued to play a vital role in the symbolic legitimation of Arakanese kingship: As part of their “coronation ritual,” Arakanese kings deposited fifty coins commemorating their reign into a sacred hole in the Mahamuni shrine. Significantly, the first successful removal of the Candasara image by the Burmese in C.E. 1784 marked the permanent end of Arakanese independence and the destruction of Arakanese society. As Forchhammer explains:

Until the removal of the Candasara image, the Mahamuni pagoda was the most sacred shrine in Indo-China; the entire religious history of Buddhistic Arakan centres round this ‘younger brother’ of Gotama; the loss of this relic sank deeper into the hearts of the

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62 Forchhammer believes that Anawrahta even built an entrance hall to the Mahamuni shrine. See Forchhammer, op. cit., 6.
63 Chan Htwan Oung, op. cit., 263-5.
64 Forchhammer, op. cit., 6.
65 Ibid
66 Ibid
people than the loss of their liberty and the extinction of their royal house. ‘It will be brought back again’ the Arakanese fondly hope.68

The Arakanese isolated themselves inland, but, at the same time, they selected an easily defensible position for their capital, the center of their civilization, which was also on the crossroads of important overland trade routes. This allowed them to resist invasions but at the same time allowed them to select foreign models which they wanted to use to express their own views and culture. We can see this in the Arakanese use of the foreign Buddhist and Hindu models, alongside their own indigenous animism. I will now look at the importance of this syncretic approach to foreign models in the legitimation of Arakanese kingship.

Southeast Asian Legitimation of Kingship

I have already mentioned how the Arakanese used a variety of foreign religious models and blended them with their own: this syncretism was also reflected in Arakanese royal regalia and legitimation of kingship. In many Southeast Asian kingdoms, the central monarch presided over a political system in which concentric rings of decreasing royal influence extended from the political center, often referred to as a “mandala state” or a “galactic polity.”69 The Southeast Asian kingdom, for example, was a symbolic construct of five or nine points:70 there was a political center ruled by the central monarch, around which orbited a ring of smaller political centers (they were symbolically four, each with its own concentric rings of small localized political centers), ruled by subrulers under the central monarch’s direct control. Further out, often in recently captured territories, there was an outer-ring of political centers (symbolically four in number as well) left under the control of foreign vassals of hazy loyalties.71 The Southeast Asian state thus appeared like a galaxy: “we have before us a galactic picture of a central planet surrounded by differentiated satellites, which are more or less ‘autonomous’ entities held in orbit and within the sphere of influence of the center.”72 Scholars describe it as a system in which the vassal-rulers of the population centers in the outer rings often had multiple loyalties to

68 Forchhammer, op. cit., 6.
69 For a good discussion of the galactic polity, see Tambiah, op. cit., chapter 7, passim.
70 Ibid., 103-4.
71 Ibid., 112.
72 Ibid.
Other political centers which created a “patchwork of often overlapping mandalas, or ‘circles of kings’. “73 Physical, and often cultural distance of the outer population centers from the political center of the central monarch made it easy for subkings to switch allegiances quickly. Since each subcenter replicated the central royal court in its own political center, each subcenter was theoretically a potential political center in its own right, and could become the political center of a new kingdom. As Wolters explains: the “mandala perimeters continued to replicate court situations at the centre. Centres of spiritual authority and political power shifted endlessly.”74

Two things seemed to have held the mandala or galactic polity together: ideologies of royal-religious legitimation and the redistribution of wealth by the supreme king to his subrulers. That is, the subrulers were tied to the king theoretically, due to the king’s role as a dhamaraja, a chakravartan, or as maharaja, and the subrulers were tied to the king as a “father” who could provide them with wealth. One means of legitimation of kingship was not enough, and although a king may have been legitimate theoretically, if that king could not provide wealth to his subjects, they might easily transfer loyalty to others who could. Religious legitimation often accounted for this by maintaining this tie between wealth and royal legitimation on the theoretical level: a Buddhist king, for example, could only be legitimate if he maintained the economic prosperity of his kingdom, as one of the three main criteria for Buddhist royal legitimation.75 Likewise, a ruler who could provide the necessary redistribution of wealth to his subjects might find it difficult to maintain his rule in the face of stiff competition from other wealthy men in his kingdom; the king needed royal-religious legitimation to decrease the number of competitors76 and to maintain the support of the very powerful Buddhist sangha.

As Arakanese royal legitimation depended upon both religious legitimation and the redistribution of wealth throughout the kingdom as well as on the security of an isolated Arakan, Arakanese kings were continually looking for new models of religious legitimation and new opportunities for to acquire wealth for redistribution. I will look at the

74 Ibid., 17.
75 I have discussed these three criteria, the other two being the safety of the sangha and the safety of the kingdom from foreign enemies in my paper at the Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs. Charney, “Buddhist Kingship,” passim.
way in which Arakanese kings adopted foreign models of religious legitimization of kingship and then I will examine the attempt by Arakanese kings to increase their economic opportunities.

**Arakanese Kingship: Theoretical Legitimation**

Many foreign religious models of royal legitimation were adopted by Arakanese society through the centuries, as the Arakanese kings looked for the most effective means of keeping their kingdom together and many elements were combined in a syncretic fashion. The Arakanese king, for example, was identified as a Buddhist *dhamaraja*, as a Hindu *maharaja*, and as an Islamic *sultan* all at the same time. One indication of this is that the Arakanese king called himself by more than three different names, each reflecting a different religion and a different model of legitimacy of kingship. Three sixteenth century *lingas* of the Arakanese kings, each five feet high, bore the king’s different identifications. One of these, for example, bore the title “King of Persia.” In Arakanese chronicles, the Arakanese king is often called “Thura-tan,” or *sultan*.77 The Arakanese kings also claimed to be the protectors of the Buddhist *sangha* and took measures to ensure that in battle, the Buddhist monks would have a safe place to hide from invading armies. King Min Bin built Buddhist temples “after the fashion of the great Asoka,” the first great Buddhist king.78

The Arakanese kings also depended heavily upon the spiritual value of *nat*-worship. While one group of nats was important at the level of the households of the general Arakanese populace, another set of Arakanese nats were valued solely for political guidance. Before the Arakanese king would embark on any important military or governmental undertaking, for example, he had to win the support of this second set of nats. One of the most important of these nats was Wunti, from whom the Arakanese kings had sought guidance since the eleventh century. Wunti was consulted, for example, before King Pai Pyu drove out the Shans in the tenth century. Later, as I will explain, King Min Palaung consulted Wunti and the Arakanese believed that she had killed Bayinnaung when his forces had invaded Arakan.79

Arakanese kings often tried to translate their theoretical, religious powers into real powers which could be utilized against those people who threatened the king’s position on the throne. Arakanese kings, for

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example, practiced a cosmological, Brahmanic science called *Yadaya* which combined “black magic” with astrology to supposedly be invoked only as a “defensive weapon.” According to this “science” the universe was simply being a combination of mathematical equations and astrology. As Maurice Collis explains:

An invading army advancing towards...Mrauk-U would be an expression in the world of [a] form of higher mathematics. The most root way of dealing with the invasion, therefore, would be by the interposition of a neutralizing equation. If the enemy was equal to + x, the interposition of - x would cause him to disappear. Here the science of Ya-da-yá came in. It indicated what was the neutralizing equation, under what circumstances of time and orientation it could be placed in position and how it could be...let off against the advancing foe.

As Collis further explains an incident in which an upstart used *Yadaya* against an early seventeenth century Arakanese king:

He began work by making a calculation showing the astrological relationship between his horoscope and the King’s. That gave him the datum for all his future operations...The horoscopic comparison showed Kuthala in what, astrologically speaking, he fell short of the King in power. Ya-da-yá supplied the means of correcting, the adverse measurements in his favour. He accordingly inscribed on certain stone squares the calculation, which was necessary to alter his chart into one superior to the King’s, i.e., to change the measurements by which he was now controlled into other figures, which would give him mastery over the cyphers which were the astrological expression of Thiri-thudhamma. Taking the inscribed squares, he buried them at certain angles round the palace. Ya-da-yá determined the angles and the method by which the calculations on the slabs were caused to react against the King. In this way Thiri-thudhamma was invested in a mathematical net. His

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80 The science was also seen as a means of protection of the Arakanese in general. For example, at the Mahamuni shrine, the symbol of the Arakanese kingdom, there was the Yadaya bell, which, if struck “under certain circumstances of time, place, and direction,” would produce a “devastating” sound which would save the user from attackers. See Maurice Collis, “The Strange Murder of King Thirithudhamma,” *Journal of the Burma Research Society* 13, no. 3 (1923): 238-9; The Yadaya bell, however, was a later addition, as it was cast by King Naradhipati in 1734 C.E.. See Forchhammer, *op. cit.*, 7.

81 Ibid.
measurements were tampered with; the chart, which made him what he was, the King of a country, began to change, until it became possible to calculate at what point of time he would cease to exist at that place...in order to assist the operation of the squares [Kuthala] composed certain verses, written in such a rhythm and composed of such an arrangement of letters, each of which represented a number, that when uttered at a calculated time, place and angle, they set up vibrations assistant to the calculations on the squares.82 One aspect of this science, which an established king could use against foreign kings, was the construction of stone figures to contain the spirits of foreign kings to “bring them under his subjection:” one stone figure, for example, was said to have contained the spirit of the king of Pagan.83

The Yadaya bell, an eighteenth century (C.E. 1734) addition to the Mahamuni shrine, indicates the powers that Yadaya gave to the Arakanese king against foreign enemies. It was cast and placed at the shrine by King Naradhipati, with inscriptions of mantras (“sacred formulas”) in various languages (but all in Burmese script), “which, when pronounced under certain ceremonies, would effect the destruction of any enemy against whom the mantra is directed.”84 These mantras were largely designed for the destruction of foreign enemies. Forchhammer has translated the following version included in the Sarvasthanapakarana:

To prevent the inroads of enemies from foreign towns and villages, let offerings of flowers, parched corn, and lamps be made night and day at the Thitthaungnu, Mwedawngayat, and the Myotiparathit pagodas...To cause the rulers of the towns and villages in the four cardinal directions to be panic-stricken, let a pagoda, provided with four archways (facing the four cardinal points), be constructed over the Góndaw dhat...and let the Yattara bell be hung and struck at the eastern archway, and the enemies from the east will be panic-stricken and quit by flight...[and so on]...If the king desires the destruction of Maunggôt (Mogul Empire), let a pagoda be erected at... Mingauk; on its western side let a tank be dug; let the nagataing be of prano... wood placed upside down, and plant shashauk...trees at the corners of the tank. And Maunggôt will be destroyed...If the destruction of the Kulas (Western foreigners) is

82 Ibid., 239-240.
84 Forchhammer, op. cit., 7.
wished for, let a pagoda be built either at the entrance of the lesser Kulatan cave...on its western side let a tank be dug; let the nagataing be of kula (?) wood placed upside down; and at its four corners let pebabwé trees be planted. By these means all the Kulas will be destroyed...If the king desires the destruction of Thanlyin (Syriam), let a pagoda be erected on a level of 4 cubits on the top of either the Thanlwin hill or the Thanlwin taung. On its south-western side let a tank be dug; let the nagataing be of thavinthit wood (Karun oil tree) placed upside down and at its four corners plant yinhnaung trees...And Thanlyin will be destroyed...(and so on).85

Clearly, Yadaya was thought of as a powerful supernatural tool in the hands of the arakanese kings against both foreign and domestic enemies. Indeed, as Forchhammer explains, the “kings of Arakan, firmly believing in the promises of the bell, erected pagodas and dug tanks on the spots pointed out by the inscription.”86

Further, Arakanese kings believed in taran, a theory which held that tragic events were preceded by reverberations. These reverberations could only be sensed by mediums, who were unusually sensitive people such as “children, lunatics and actors.” As Maurice Collis explains:

[T]he method adopted by the King was called ‘hearing taran.’ According to the Theory of taran, if an event is on the way, its reverberation will first reach the minds of mediums. Such persons will be aware of it before its arrival into the upper consciousness and they will inadvertently say something which will indicate its existence and nature. The method of hearing taran was, therefore, to send a reliable person to stroll in the streets and listen to the casual remarks made by the kind of people who might be mediums.87

The king, as well, if his life was in danger, would see this when he looked into a mirror.88 Thus, it should be clear that a variety of spiritual tools were available for the Arakanese kings to aid them in governing their kingdom and Arakanese society.

Arakanese Kingship: Economic Legitimation & New Opportunities

85 Ibid., 10-11.
86 Ibid., 12.
87 Collis, “The Strange Murder of King Thirithudhamma,” 240.
88 Ibid
The legitimacy of Arakanese kings also depended upon the ability to increase wealth for redistribution to subrulers. But at the beginning of the sixteenth century, economic opportunities were limited. Arakan was a vassal of Bengal and, although the Arakanese were noted for their seamanship, Arakan was said to have no large ports. Indeed, the Arakanese capital, Mrauk-U, was sixty miles upriver of the Arakanese estuary, which seems to me to indicate that Arakan’s traditional seafaring orientation was being constrained by its Bengalese overlords, who maintained a virtual monopoly on the trade of this area. Arakan also had to provide the Bengalese king with whatever he wanted:

[T]he kings of Arakan...are bound to furnish him, when he goes out to war, with a certain number of men, elephants, and horses. They also pay him tribute for such harbours as they have in their territories.

Arakan had thus come to depend on land trade-routes. These land-based trade-routes had been the key to Arakan’s defensive strategy and had also served as the vehicle by which Arakan could pick and choose the foreign models which it wanted. I will try to show that the gradual collapse of the land-based markets, as well as the fall of Bengal to civil war, and thus a decrease in Bengalese control of the Bay of Bengal trade, contributed to new economic opportunities for the Arakanese kings in the maritime trade of the Bay of Bengal. The economic basis of Arakanese society will be looked at to determine what, if any, economic developments may have made it possible for Arakanese kings to change from isolated monarchs to military conquerors determined to make their presence felt beyond Arakanese shores.

Arakan was traditionally a secondary hub of trade in the Bay of Bengal. Peguan, Bengalese, and Kling traders brought their goods by sea to Mrauk-U, but this trade was relatively small. There was probably a large trade with Southern India, which is indicated by the Arakanese use of South Indian “merit-winning” dipams, or lamps. These lamps, which are shaped like human statuettes, indicate that the trade with Southern

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89 Ibid
90 François Pyrard, The Voyage of François Pyrard of Laval to the East Indies, the Maldive, the Molucca and Brazil, vol. 1, translated into English from the third French edition of 1619, and edited by Albert Gray with the assistance of H. C. P. Bell, (London: Hakluyt Society, 1887-89): 327.
91 Ibid
92 Traders from the Coromandel coast of India.
India was long-term. One of these lamps, for example, a pre-eleventh century specimen found at the site of Old Wesali, is inscribed with Arakanese script, indicating that the lamps had reached a stage at which the Arakanese had adopted them into their culture, rather than collecting them as oddities.

The export trade of Arakan must also have been under royal control, from which the Arakanese kings seem to have received some personal profit. Van Leur, for example, has cited Arakanese trade as a good example of “royal interference in trade.” Van Leur supported his claim with the orders given to a Dutch East India Company (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie, here after V.O.C.) trading mission to Arakan on 15 June 1628:

having come well in Arakan (you) shall deliver our accompanying missive and presents to the king there with the requisite compliments, and with all kinds of services and offices try to obtain His Majesty’s favour and assistance as much as possible in the collection of a good quantity of rice.

Clearly the V.O.C. leaders thought that appealing to the Arakanese king for trading privileges required compensatory payment, something that was not above V.O.C. employees, who themselves were notorious for secretly siphoning off company profits. The importance of this observation is that Arakanese trade was considered to fall under the Arakanese king’s monopoly on trade and for the Dutch, and earlier the Portuguese, to trade in Arakan, they had to “purchase” a share of the market from the royal house.

Arakanese kings not only increased their economic legitimation through trade, but aided their religious legitimation. The Arakanese kings, for example, utilized maritime trade for religious buildings which served to strengthen the religious aura, and thus theoretical legitimation, of Arakanese kingship: while the overwhelming preponderance of Arakanese housing at Mrauk-U was made of bamboo, the religious structures were made of stone from Ramree, an island some one hundred miles from Mrauk-U. To a limited extent, Arakanese

93 San Shwe Bu, “Brass Figure-Lamp Found at Old Wesali, Arakan,” Journal of the Burma Research Society 10 (1920): 64-66.
merchants and Arakanese goods were also present in the trading emporium of Malacca.96

Arakanese kings must have benefited from the Gangetic river-trade through their possession of islands in the Sunderbunds (at the Gangetic rivermouth). This can be seen by looking at Sundiva island, which, though under the control of Bengal, must have functioned in a similar manner, economically, as those islands under the Arakanese king’s control. Sundiva island possessed a diverse economy: it not only served as a refitting station for riverine traffic, but was a source of many trade goods as well. As Caesar Frederici noted in the mid-sixteenth century:

[Sundiva is] the fertilest Island in all the world...there we determined to stay 40 dayes to refresh us. And when the people of the Island saw the ship...presently they made a place of bazar or a market, with shops right over against the ship with all maner of provision of victuals to eate, which they brought downe in great abundance, and sold it so good cheape, that we were amazed at the cheapestesse thereof. I bought many salted kine there...for halfe a Larine a piece, which Larine may be 12. shillings sise pence, being very good and fat; and 4. wolde hogges ready dressed for a Larine; great fat hennes for a Bizze a piece...Also a sack of fine rice for a thing of nothing, and consequently all other things for humaine sustenance were there in such aboundance, that it is a thing incredible but to them that have seen it.97

Further, Sundiva island was the major source of salt for much of the Bay of Bengal, exporting two hundred boatloads of salt each year.98 But it is clear that trade at this level could not sustain all of Arakan and it is possible that this trade was only made possible by the mid-sixteenth century due to developments that removed Bengalese domination of Arakan’s maritime trade, which I will explain later.

Despite the low level of maritime trade during the period of Bengalese domination of the Bay of Bengal, Arakanese must have profited from a very large internal trading network, as well as large trade-

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routes overland to Burma and China. The capital of Arakan, Mrauk-U, for example, was a large metropolis, fourteen miles in circumference, with a population of 160,000, not including foreign traders.\(^{99}\) Nicolo di Conti, traveling in the Bay of Bengal in the first half of the fourteenth century, noted that Mrauk-U was a very large city that took him six days to reach by river from the coast.\(^{100}\) Within Arakan, it is probable that there was a large trade in horses, as Tomé Pires seems to imply. Further, traders came to Arakan for silver, as well as for the “three or four kinds of cotton cloth” which Arakan produced in great abundance so that there was more cloth “there than in other places.”\(^{101}\)

In the mountain ranges around Arakan, the hill peoples made musk from goats, which was then carried to Ava, and thence to Lower Burma.\(^{102}\) Indeed, Ava depended heavily upon the trade routes through Arakan to Bengal.\(^{103}\) The trade with Ava was coupled with the trade-route along the Lemro river, which connected Arakanese kings with the large Southern Chinese trading world.\(^{104}\) Barbosa, writing at the beginning of the sixteenth century, tells us that Arakan imported elephants from Pegu, and implies that the Arakanese were rich, probably from trade: the Arakanese wore silk as well as cotton garments, and they possessed many “ornaments of gold and silver.”\(^{105}\)

The Arakanese royal house probably obtained a large amount of its wealth from the exportation of finished rubies: the Arakanese imported “highly coloured rubies” from the kingdom of Capelâguã, which were then polished by skilled Arakanese craftsmen, and re-exported.\(^{106}\)

\(^{99}\) This figure comes from the estimate of Father Manrique in the first third of the seventeenth century, which is probably indicative of Mrauk-U's population in the mid-sixteenth century. See Maurice Collis, “The City of Golden Mrauk-U,” 245, for Manrique's estimate.


\(^{101}\) Pires, *op. cit.*, 95-6.

\(^{102}\) Letter from Tomé Pires to King Manuel of Portugal, From Cochin, India, 27 January 1516. In Pires, *op. cit.*, 516.


\(^{106}\) Letter from Tomé Pires to King Manuel of Portugal, From Cochin, India, 27 January 1516. In Pires, *op. cit.*, 516.
The ruby trade must have been very important to Arakan’s economy, for Tomé Pires claims that they were “the chief thing in the kingdom of Arakan.” This ruby trade may have been only a recent development, perhaps of the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century: Harvey argues that if there had been a large ruby trade, di Conti would have mentioned it, but he did not. Large-scale trade with Burma is also suggested by Arakan’s unit of currency: the câça made of different combinations of tin, copper, and lead, suggests major importation of base metals. Another unit of currency in Lower Burma, the white couries from the Maldive islands were valid in Arakan, as they were in Martaban, but not in the rest of Pegu, suggesting strong maritime trade from the rich transpeninsular trade with the portages on the isthmus of Kra.

Arakan also possessed rich, wet soil, much of it in the two great alluvial plains of the Kaladan and Lemro rivers, north of Mrauk-U, ideal for wet-rice cultivation. Not only was Arakan self-sufficient in rice, but it was capable of producing enough to make rice an important export commodity. This potential for a profitable rice export would be realized during the steady growth of a “considerable export trade in rice” throughout the seventeenth century.

The Arakanese kings thus possessed the potential for controlling great and profitable export trade, as well as a good port at Mrauk-U, and a unique position on the trade routes between India, Bengal, and Pegu. But the Arakanese kings were not able to exploit this potential, which leads to the question of what was restricting Arakanese trade growth and thus the potential for increased legitimation of Arakanese kingship. Indeed, Arakan’s great wealth in natural resources led many European visitors to question Arakan’s seeming disinterest in international trade. John Huyghen Van Linschoten, who visited Arakan in the mid-sixteenth century, commented:

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107 Pires, op. cit., 96.
110 Ibid., 100.
these kingdoms of Aracan and Pegu are very rich and fruitful of all things, besides Gold and precious stones, as Rubies, Espinels, Saffires, lacinthes, Emeraldes, Granates, and such like...Likewise they make hard ware, which is carried throughout the world: There are greater number of Elephants in these countries, than in any other place [of] the Orientall countries.113

Juan Gonzaelez De Mendoza, as well, writing of Arakan in the latter part of the sixteenth century, commented that while Arakan was “verie plentifull of prouision,” it had little prepared for export.114 I think it is probable that Bengal was either openly restricting Arakanese trade or that the Arakanese were hesitant to develop their trade potential for fear of being perceived as a threat by powerful Bengal. Arakanese kings may have seen self-imposed neglect of maritime trade as one more defense technique, by not making themselves an economic threat to their neighbors.

Royal control of Arakanese maritime trade was probably threatened or actively suppressed by the king of Bengal. But another factor emerged: the Arakanese kings may have lost their control of overland trade in the early sixteenth century. Furnivall suggests, for example, that European visitors may have observed a temporary lull in trade when they noted, as Duarte Barbossa did, that Arakan had no port and when they implied that trade was unimportant in Arakan. Furnivall further suggests that the lull in trade may have been due to the “decline of Ava,”115 which was one of Arakan’s main trading partners on its overland routes. Ava failed in the fifteenth century, to bring the ports of the western Irrawaddy basin under its control, and as it became cut off from maritime commerce by Lower Burma kingdoms, Ava’s economy was ruined by “the growth of tax-free religious lands.”116 Arakanese royal trade thus lost one of its most important land-based markets.

Bengal was divided in a civil war between the Mughal leaders Humayon and Shere Shah. For most of Min Bin’s reign (1531-1553), eastern Bengal was thus opened to attack from the Arakanese if they chose to do so, and, as I will explain later, they did.117 I think that the

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117 Collis & Sna Shwe Bu, “Arakan’s Place in the Civilization of the Bay,” 42.
significance of Bengalese division, however, was not that Bengal was open to Arakanese intervention. Rather, I think that the division of Bengalese political and military power was also felt in the Bengalese domination of the Bay of Bengal trade. The Bengalese grip on Arakanese trade probably lessened, and the decline of Bengalese markets probably increased trade at Mrauk-U, at the same time that Arakanese landbased traderoutes had collapsed.

With the removal of the Bengalese restriction on trade, new opportunities for economic legitimation gradually opened up to the Arakanese kings. The Arakanese kings, whose export trade had been dwindling for generations, gradually began to trade with the world. These kings, leaders of a society whose outlook was characterized by flexibility in adapting to new political and economic opportunities, probably moved to take advantage of the new economic opportunities offered by maritime trade in the Bay of Bengal more quickly than one might expect. By 1567, for example, “small ships” were sent annually to Cochin before the Portuguese fleet made its return trip to Lisbon. Now, moderate maritime trade also came to Arakan from Golconda. As Antony Schorer observed in the early seventeenth century:

Ships sail every year to the coast of Bengal, Arakan, Pegu, and Tenasserim, carrying a variety of cotton cloths, glass, iron, cotton yarn (red and white), tobacco, and certain shells which are used instead of coins in Bengal and Arakan; they carry also some spice and sandalwood. The return cargoes consist of rice, butter, oil, gingelly seed, sugar, a variety of woven cloths, some fine embroidered quilts, rubies, sapphires, lac, pitch, benzoin, China root, gold, tin, eagle-wood, sappan-wood, which is used for dyeing red, large jars called Martabans, and a drink called nipa. These goods are brought to the whole Coast, as far as Cochin.

William Methwold’s observation from the early seventeenth century more clearly delineates the nature of Arakan’s maritime trade with Golconda:

In September the ships for Achyne, Arrecan, Pegu, and Tannassery set all sayle; for it is to be understood that, amongst this and all other coasts of India, the windes blow constantly trade, six moneths one way and sixe moneths another...To Arrecan they send store of

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118 Frederici, op. cit., 257.
tobacco, some iron, and few sorts of painted clothes, and returne from thence some gold and gumme lacke, but most part rice, which they sell about Pallecat and that coast of Narsinga.\textsuperscript{120} Further, by the mid-sixteenth century, Arakan was already exporting rice, as part of the growing trade with the Portuguese trading stations in Asia. As Caesar Frederici observed in 1563:

From the great port of Chatigan [Chittagong] they cary for the Indies great store of rice, very great quantitie of Bombast cloth of every sort, Sugar, corne, and money, with other marchandize.\textsuperscript{121}

But the new economic opportunities of the first half of the sixteenth century should not be confused as indicating the total elimination of restrictions on trade -- it did not. Indeed, the Portuguese replaced Bengalese control of trade with the Portuguese pass system, in which any ship trading in the Bay of Bengal had to buy a Portuguese pass or face destruction at sea; by 1537, the Portuguese “commanded the whole sea-board from Orissa to Chittagong.”\textsuperscript{122} Rather, the Portuguese trading system should be seen as a new system rather than a free system. That is, the Bengalese wanted to maintain their ports as the sole sources of trade goods at the expense of Arakanese exports and thus Bengalese control of Bay of Bengal trade meant to Arakan, the suppression of indigenous commodity exports. The Portuguese, however, wanted competition of sources of trade goods, to lower the prices at which Portuguese traders bought goods, while providing Portuguese traders with increased numbers of markets at which they could sell their own trade goods (which increased both demand and profit). The Portuguese system, then, encouraged Arakanese exports as opposed to the Bengalese ‘system’ which suppressed Arakanese exports with which Bengalese exports competed. This must have revolutionized the Arakanese trading system, since the Arakanese kings were now free, despite the cost of the Portuguese passes, to trade as they wished. Further, the Portuguese system provided, as will be explained in the following chapter, another reason for Arakanese kings to seek a friendly relationship with the Portuguese.

\textsuperscript{121} Frederici, \textit{op. cit.}, 260.
\textsuperscript{122} Campos, \textit{op. cit.}, 112.\textsuperscript{123} Hall, \textit{A History of Southeast Asia}, 414.
Economic opportunities for the Arakanese monarchy changed significantly during the first-half of the sixteenth century. The civil war in Bengal removed the previous Bengalese suppression of Arakanese maritime trade, while the decreasing availability of land-based trade sources forced Arakanese kings to look elsewhere for foreign trade. Thus, economically, Arakanese kings had every reason to want to increase their influence in the outside world. With Burma and the east under inhospitable rulers and the west in decay, Arakanese kings made the natural choice of securing markets for Arakan in the west on a permanent basis.

Chapter Conclusion

The Arakanese had many reasons to be afraid of the outside world since they were pressed between the two giants of Pegu and Bengal. But the Arakanese could depend upon the safe geographical location for their society, nestled in between mountain ranges and swampland. The Arakanese kings selected and maintained an inland capital as the center of their state and they preferred relatively safe land-route trade over vulnerable maritime trade. What little maritime trade the Arakanese royal house did control, however, was constrained by the Bengalese. This was not a problem, however, so long as Arakan’s land-based trade connections remained open and profitable.

In the relative safety of this situation, the Arakanese found it advantageous to maintain their syncretic way of looking at the world. While countries like Vietnam or Thailand were open to conquest by China and Angkor, respectively, Arakan kings remained independent, with a few brief periods of foreign control. This meant that Arakan was relatively free to select foreign political and social models to reflect ideas and developments which they were experiencing, but for which they needed forms of expression. Thus, the Arakanese adopted a variety of foreign models, which were blended with indigenous systems. For this thesis, however, the significance of this observation is not what the Arakanese did in the past, but the uses to which the Arakanese kings put their syncretism in dealing with the Portuguese later in the sixteenth century, which will be the focus of the following chapters.

At this point it should be clear that Arakanese kings began to shift their policies from political isolation to one prepared to take advantage of the outside world, no longer from the safety of the mountain valleys, but on foreign ground. The decline of land-based trade routes forced Arakanese kings to look at maritime trade as their new, primary link to the outside world and new economic opportunities for kingly legitimation. The decline of Bengalese domination of the Bay of Bengal trade made this shift easier, but the Arakanese royal house probably

SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005):974-1145
would have pursued a policy of extending its influence in this trade anyway, though probably to a lesser degree. With the Bay of Bengal available to growing royal Arakanese interest in maritime trade, Arakanese kings completed the shift and changed from petty monarchs satisfied with political isolation to kings bent on empire and new economic opportunities. The Arakanese also were prepared to apply their traditional borrowing of foreign models to the new challenges, political and economic, which were ahead. And it was at this juncture that the Portuguese entered the Bay of Bengal.
Chapter II
The Portuguese and Arakanese Relationship, 1517-1600

When Minbin died in 1553...His sea-power...was the terror of the Ganges region, and his country was on the threshold of the greatest period of her history. But her somewhat spectacular rise was hardly due to the genius of her rulers. It coincides with a period of weakness in Bengal...for Minbin leased to the feringhi who took service under his flag the port of Dianga...

D.G.E. Hall123

After 1532 the coast, though poor and largely uninhabited, was liable to pillage by (Portuguese). It would have been a disastrous period for Arakan, with the aggressive Tabinshweti on the throne of Pegu, had not king Minbin...been capable. He strengthened the massive stone walls of Mrohaung and dug a deep moat for the tidal waters; and when the Burmese invaded...he opened the sluices of his great reservoirs and flooded them out. He retained Ramu and Chittagong in spite of raids there by the Tippera tribes while he was engaged with Tabinshweti...

G. E. Harvey124

These quotations present different interpretations of Arakan’s development into a major power in the sixteenth century. Hall seems to give credit to outsiders and very little credit to the Arakanese themselves. Harvey, however, seems to credit the genius of the Arakanese king, Min Bin. Thus, several important questions should be asked: was Arakan’s change from an inward-looking country to an expansive empire due to outside (Portuguese) influence, a change in the political climate of Burma and Bengal, or to a change in the world-view of the Arakanese themselves? Further, by what means did the Arakanese adapt themselves to these changes?

The Arakanese world-view at the beginning of the sixteenth century, as expressed in the first chapter, will play an important role in answering these questions: the development of the relationship between the Portuguese and the Arakanese during the sixteenth century will be looked at in the context of this Arakanese perspective. The period covered in this chapter includes the first meeting of the Portuguese and the Arakanese in 1517 until Min Yazagyi’s establishment of Arakanese power at Syriam in 1600. I will focus mostly on the real effect of Portuguese influences and how the Arakanese used, or were used by, the

124 Harvey, *History of Burma*, 140.
Portuguese. An important part of this focus will be determining who was the dominant party in the relationship.

**First Contacts With the Portuguese**

Arakan’s first official contact with the growing Portuguese presence in Southeast Asia after 1500 occurred when Don João da Silveira arrived at the Mrauk-U in 1518. D’Albuquerque’s successor, Governor Lopo Soares de Albergaria, sent Silveira to gain the concession of a port facility with which the Portuguese could conduct trading activities. The kingdom of Arakan at this time was ruled by Min Yaza (r. 1501-1523) of the Mrauk-U Dynasty. It should be stressed that Arakan’s self-imposed isolation did not mean that Arakan was small or weak: it was not. As explained earlier in this thesis, Arakan was pressed between the two empires of Bengal and Pegu, and Arakan carefully defended itself in a way that protected Arakan from attack while at the same time allowing it to sample what it chose of foreign cultures. Geography was favorable to Arakan’s defense, since the protection of the Arakan Yoma mountain range, with only two passes, the An and Taungup, often prohibited passage to large armies from the east.

Arakan was a fairly large and important state by both Southeast Asian and European standards: Arakan had twelve large cities, each ruled by a governor appointed by the king, and in each of these cities the king had a “first-rate” palace. The Arakanese king, in his main teak palace, amidst great wealth, lived in the impressive capital city of Mrauk-U: it “was an eastern Venice, like modern Bangkok, a city of

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125 Silveira was the nephew of Governor Lopo Vaz de Sampayo. See Campos, *op. cit.*, 27f.
126 It should be noted that other informal contacts had been made earlier by petty Portuguese traders who happened upon Arakan. Indeed, at Chittagong, Silveira was greeted by a fellow Portuguese, João Coelho. Coelho was sent in 1513, by the Fernão Peres d’Andrade expedition, after a fire caused by a mishandled candle gutted their largest ship and forced them to go to Melaka. See Campos, *op. cit.*, 26-7.
127 Collis & San Shwe Bu, “Arakan’s Place in the Civilization of the Bay,” 41; Campos, *op. cit.*, 27.
128 Lach, *op. cit.*, 551.
129 Indeed, this mountain range also proved to be insurmountable to British armies in 1825, which planned to invade Burma from Arakan. See D.G.E. Hall, *Burma*, 57, 104.
130 Lach, *op. cit.*, 551.
lagoons and canals.” 132 Indeed, Min Yaza must have been very impressive to the visiting Portuguese; as Duarte Barbosa observed in the early sixteenth century:

This king is very rich in money, and powerful from the number of his men at arms: he is often at war with his neighbors, and some of them obey him against their wills, and render him tribute. He lives in great luxury, and posseses very good houses in all the towns where he resides, which have got many pools of water, green and shady gardens, and good trees.133

But these Portuguese must have also been surprised by some aspects of Arakanese court life, which is indicated by another selection from Duarte Barbosa’s account:

In twelve towns of his kingdom he has twelve...palaces in which he has many women brought up; that is, in each of these cities he has a governor who each year takes twelve girls born in that year...of the highest rank and the prettiest to be found; and he has them carefully brought up...to the age of twelve years...At the end of the year the governor conducts to the king...twelve damsels of the age of twelve years. The king orders them to be well dresed and to have the name of each one written on their clothes, and...[they are] sent up to a terrace in the sun...they perspire so much...that their clothes become damp [then] the damp garments which they have thrown off are all carried to the king, who smells them, and those [girls whose clothes] do not smell bad he keeps for himself, and [the others] he makes a present of to those of his courtiers who are then present.134

Visitors to the Arakanese Court were still surprised in the seventeenth century, such as William Methwold:

The King is by religion a Gentile, but such a one as holdeth all meates and drinks indifferent; he marrieth constantly his owne sister, and giveth for reason the first mens practice in the infancy of the world, affirming that no religion can deny that Adams sons married Adams daughters.135

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133 Barbosa, *op. cit.*, 182.
134 Ibid., 182-3.
135 Methwold, *op. cit.*, 42.
Although the Arakanese king was normally tributary to Bengal, his submission to Bengalese overlordship should not be exaggerated. Indeed, the Arakanese in general were known for their rebelliousness against their Bengalese overlords. As Tomé Pires observed: the king of Arakan “is warlike and he is always at war” with Bengal.

Min Yaza treated Silveira with great interest when he sailed upriver to the Mrauk-U seeking trade concessions. Silveira came from Chittagong, where, during the winter of 1517-8, he was treated rudely by the Bengalese vizier. The Arakanese, realizing that the Portuguese might be used by the Arakanese to regain their former strength at sea in the Bay of Bengal, quickly made friendly overtures to Silveira, sending him an ambassador and a ruby ring as a gift. This first meeting, however, did not bring any new opportunities to the Arakanese; Silveira had difficulty understanding why the Arakanese were so eager to be friendly to him after the Bengalese vizier at Chittagong treated him so badly. Silveira thus suspected treachery, despite the attempts of Min Yaza’s emissary to “reassure Silveira that he would be received amicably.” Silveira related his version of these events to the Portuguese government and for the time being, the Arakanese, despite their genuine

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136 A good example of how strongly the Arakanese valued their independence, is the great rebellion against Burmese rule, which was established in 1784. Hall sums up the Arakanese struggle for independence well: “When they annexed Arakan, however, the Burmese had bitten off more than they could chew. Revolt after revolt broke out, and as their rule became more and more repressive, with the hateful practice of deportation as its chief remedy against disorder, thousands of Arakanese fled over the border into the Chittagong jungles...[They] attempt[ed] to reconquer their country from bases in the unadministered tracts behind the British frontier.” See Hall, Burma, 94.

137 Pires, op. cit., 89.

138 Silveira had tried to send a Portuguese representative to the Bengalese court to ask permission to set up a Portuguese factory. The vizier of Chittagong’s relative, Gromalle, lost several of his trade vessels in the Maldives when Silveira had decided to engage in a bit of piracy. Silveira forced a pilot of the Bengalese, and his son, into his service, but at Chittagong, the boy told the vizier what had happened, and the vizier made preparations to capture Silveira. Coelho, however, was on good relations with the Bengalese and offered to mediate between Silveira and the vizier. Silveira, however, refused. When Silveira ran out of food, he tried to seize a Bengalese ship carrying rice, and the Bengalese retaliated, routing Silveira’s fleet. Due to the monsoons, Silveira remained in the eastern part of the Bay of Bengal, attacking Bengalese shipping and forced the vizier of Chittagong to make peace with him. Although the vizier gave food to Silveira’s men, the vizier launched another attack, forcing Silveira to find another port to trade in. See Campos, op. cit., 30.
overtures to the Portuguese, were regarded as treacherous and dishonest.\textsuperscript{139}

The Portuguese misunderstanding of the Arakanese led the Portuguese to treat Arakan as an enemy rather than as a potential ally. Throughout the remainder of Min Yaza's reign, and the reigns of three of his successors, Gadzabadi (r. 1523-1525), Min Tsauo (1525), and Thatsata (r. 1525-1531), Arakan was subject to periodic attacks on its seacoast by Portuguese raiders. Goa ordered these attacks as revenge for the raids of Arakanese "pirates" on Indian shipping. These Portuguese raids targeting the Arakanese were based on misinformation, since the 'pirates' often turned out to be Afghans rather than Arakanese. Further, Portuguese "freebooters" made unofficial, piratical, attacks on the Arakanese coast in order to ransack the towns and remove anything of value which they could find.\textsuperscript{140}

Despite the Portuguese attacks, Thatsata's successor, Min Bin, or Sirisuriyacandramahadhammaraja,\textsuperscript{141} (r. 1531-1553), began to reassert Arakanese power against its traditional enemies. Min Bin's first target was Bengal, which was divided by civil war and in no position to offer any meaningful resistance. Over a century earlier, Arakan had surrendered twelve of its northern states to Bengalese control, and had submitted to Bengalese overlordship. Now, however, Min Bin was determined to end Arakanese vassalage and win back its lost provinces. In 1531, after less than a year on the Arakanese throne, Min Bin declared war on the Bengalese court at Gaur. Arakanese troops were sent by three routes to Bengal: by the Kaladin river, along the coast, and by sea.\textsuperscript{142} Min Bin's armies successfully occupied the coastal city of Ramu and then took the Bengalese port of Chittagong.\textsuperscript{143} At Kantha in Chittangaung, the Arakanese captured a Bengalese force of ten thousand under the Bengalese crown prince, Moorad Singh. The Arakanese then marched on Dacca, forcing the Bengalese to agree to negotiations. In these negotiations, Min Bin went to Gaur and, symbolic of Arakan's new importance and Min Bin's new status as a successful conqueror, Min Bin took a princess of the Bengalese royal family, Pesita, as his new queen,\textsuperscript{144} although Arakan seems to have surrendered Chittagong back to Bengalese control.

\textsuperscript{139} Lach, \textit{op. cit.}, 551.
\textsuperscript{140} Ibid., 550.
\textsuperscript{141} Forchhammer, \textit{op. cit.}, 15.
Portuguese Attack, 1534

By the new peace treaty with Bengal, Arakan’s northern borders were secure and, in the east, Burma seemed to pose no immediate threat. Chittagong, taken temporarily by Min Bin in 1531, was an extremely attractive target for Arakanese expansion, due to its increasing value as an important port in the Bay of Bengal trade system. Despite Silveira’s miserable handling of his mission to Chittagong in 1517, the Portuguese continued to send a trading ship to Chittagong each year. By 1531, Chittagong was already a major port of call for Portuguese traders. When Damião Bernaldes, the Portuguese trader turned pirate, arrived there in 1531 or 1532, there were seventeen Portuguese trade vessels in Chittagong’s harbor.145

The trade at Chittagong became so important that in 1533, the viceroy of Goa, Nunno de Cunna, sent Martim Afonso de Mello to the Bengalese court at Gaur. Martim Afonso de Mello was to present the Bengalese ruler, Mahmud Shah, with gifts and the request that Mahmud Shah give the Portuguese permission to establish a trading station at Chittagong.146 Mahmud Shah was suspicious and he had Martim Afonso de Mello and fifty-three other Portuguese thrown into prison.147 Antonio de Silva Meneses was sent from Goa in 1534, to win the release of the Portuguese. Meneses’ messenger, Jorge Alcocorado, however, took longer than Meneses thought was necessary and Meneses burned various Bengalese coastal installations, including Chittagong.148

Although Arakan was not involved in the imprisonment of the Portuguese under de Mello, Arakan was attacked as well. The Portuguese still held to Silveira’s belief that Arakan was a weak, petty state: this Portuguese misunderstanding of both Arakanese intentions and their...

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147 Affonso de Mello was captured under unusual circumstances. As Whiteway explains: “Martim Afonso and his captains [made] their presence at a banquet. They were so confident as to go with their swords only. During the banquet, which was in a courtyard surrounded by walls...The doors were closed, and the Portuguese caught like ‘fowls in a coop.’ The walls were lined with archers who fired among them and killed several... There was no other course for them to adopt [but to surrender].” See Whiteway, op. cit., 233-4.
148 Astley, op. cit., 84; Campos, op. cit., 34-5.
abilities soon led the Portuguese to make a blunder on a great scale. The Portuguese sent a fleet of warships upriver to Mrauk-U to conquer Silveira’s tiny, untrustworthy, kingdom of Arakan. In what is described as an “ingenious” defense, the Portuguese were completely defeated. Min Bin, fresh to the throne of Arakan, wisely left the direction of the Arakanese defense to his prime minister, Maha Pyinnya-gyaw, who was a “great Arakanese statesman and a naval genius.” Maha Pyinnya-gyaw realized that the Arakanese fleet, which was designed to simply support land-based defenses, was in no position to fight the Portuguese warfleet which was heavily armed with cannon. Maha Pyinnya-gyaw had informants gather intelligence on the strength of the Portuguese fleet as it sailed upriver. When he knew how strong the enemy was he had a fleet of bamboo-rafts built. Maha Pyinnya-gyaw then filled the rafts with “dummy soldiers” and explosives. As the Portuguese fleet got close to Mrauk-U, there was no sign of Arakanese opposition. But at night, and the tide had lowered the level of the river to hinder the movement of the Portuguese fleet, Maha Pyinnya-gyaw set his plans into action:

When the rafts got near the enemies’ ships, they were mistaken for reinforcements, and the enemy directed his fire on them. By a certain arrangement the fuses were set fire to, causing a thousand bonfires and at the same time millions of tiny explosions from the bamboo-rafts amidst the noise and din of battle. The whole river then became ablaze...Some of the invaders’ gunboats...were actually set on fire, and the crews of others caught among the blazing bamboo-rafts perished of heat.

The Portuguese realized that they were outwitted and quickly retreated downriver and back to India. This event was so important to the Arakanese, that a son who was born to Min Bin close to this time was named Palaung, the Arakanese name for Portuguese, “to mark the victory.” Later, when this prince became king, he was known as Min

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151 Ibid., 165.

152 The Arakanese name for the Portuguese, Palaung, is said by San Baw U, to “probably” be related to the general name by which Portuguese were known in mainland Southeast Asia, “feringhix.” See San Baw U, “My Rambles,” Journal of the Burma Research Society 11 (1921): 164-5.
Palaung.153 This victory over the Portuguese, coupled with their earlier victory in Bengal, justified a new stage in kingship for Min Bin. To reflect his new prestige as a victor on both land and sea, Min Bin had himself crowned emperor at the Shithaung pagoda.154

**Arakan Restructures Its Forces**

The Arakanese, however, continued to make overtures of friendship to the Portuguese during the reign of Min Bin and the Portuguese were increasingly hired as mercenaries. Although Min Bin was the king of Arakan when the Portuguese had attempted to conquer Arakan in 1534 he realized that the Portuguese represented a new foreign model that Arakan might find some use for. Min Bin had much experience in warfare: before becoming king, he was a military commander and crushed several rebellions of the Saks against their Arakanese overlords. Later, as the governor of Sandoway, he developed a keen understanding of the Arakanese government, seeing both its strengths and its weaknesses. Thus, when Min Bin became king, he was prepared to make both administrative changes and military reforms and was searching for new foreign models to help guide him: he saw the Portuguese as the new model he would adapt to the Arakanese model. Min Bin was also fortunate, he had many capable Arakanese leaders on whom he could depend to help him in his reforms:

> When he ascended the throne...the Arakanese nation was at the height of its power and glory. He found himself amidst wise ministers and councillors backed up by a powerful army; and above all, his prime minister...Maha-pyinnya-gyaw (Renowned Wisdom) who was at the helm of state.155

Thus, Min Bin felt that he had enough capable Arakanese support to make use of the Portuguese model without becoming dangerously dependent upon Portuguese support.

At the same time, Min Bin’s decision to hire Portuguese mercenaries may tell us two things about the character of Arakan’s developing interest in dominating the outside world. In his article, “Europeans, Trade, and the Unification of Burma, c. 1540-1620,” Victor Lieberman noted that two factors were involved in Pegu’s employment of Portuguese mercenaries in the mid-sixteenth century: (1) “Commercial

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153 Ibid.
155 Ibid., 40.
profits” from increased trade made this employment possible; and (2) Mercenaries were a stabilizing force since, although levies were raised outside of the sovereign’s center of political power were of uncertain loyalty, “mercenaries joined central forces directly loyal to the crown.”\textsuperscript{156} Lieberman’s observations about Pegu and its mercenaries may be applicable to Arakan as well. First, Min Bin’s decision to hire Portuguese mercenaries may reflect increased maritime commercial links with the Portuguese trading world (as well as increasing profits from this trade). Second, although Min Bin made sure that the Arakanese element in his armed forces was dominant, perhaps he also used Portuguese mercenaries to counterbalance regional forces and thus guarantee his personal control over his armed forces. The Portuguese mercenaries may then be seen as a tool used by the Arakanese to secure control of the outside world while at the same time serving as a tool of the royal house for the monarch’s safety against internal, regional threats.

Min Bin used Portuguese help to turn the capital of Arakan into the “strongest fortified city of the Bay:” The Portuguese laid out the walls of the city and constructed the surrounding moats.\textsuperscript{157} But it should not be thought that the Portuguese had turned an inconsequential city into a great port capable of conducting ocean-going trade: Mrauk-U already had these capabilities. All the Portuguese brought to the capital were new styles of defense, which had yet to be tested. The Arakanese had already had a secure and capable port before the Portuguese arrived:

Geographically speaking, the situation of Mrauk-U is peculiar. It lies sixty miles from the coast, but the largest ocean-going ships of that period could reach it through a network of deep creeks by which it is surrounded. This gave it the advantages of a port, without the attending risk of surprise by an enemy fleet. A large rice growing area immediately enveloped it. From behind, an old road ran over the mountains of Burma proper, while on the northwest there was easy communication with India. It was a natural focus for trade on the easterly shore of the Bay of Bengal.\textsuperscript{158}

This description of Mrauk-U indicates that the best advantages that the Arakanese capital had, both in trade and defense, already existed before the Portuguese even arrived; the strength of the capital came from Arakanese foresight rather than as the gift of the Portuguese in

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\textsuperscript{157} Collis & San Shwe Bu, “Arakan’s Place in the Civilization of the Bay,” 41.
\end{flushright}

\textit{SBBR} 3.2 (Autumn 2005):974-1145
Arakanese employ. Further, the Arakanese purposefully did not build their city in the traditional “circular” pattern usually followed by their neighbors (such as the plan of the city of Mandalay), or even the plan of Portuguese fortresses, in which a city was surrounded by rectangular walls. Instead, the Arakanese set up a virtual maze of defense-works, rivers with false outlets, and a myriad of lakes and canals, “calculated to baffle the enemy.”

Although the Portuguese constructed the moats, they were designed, and traditionally used, by the Arakanese. These moats, for example, were unique to Arakan, and were of extremely ingenious design in terms of defense-purposes. The moats were extremely deep and were designed to accommodate tidal waters. Huge reservoirs of water were connected to these moats as well, but were blocked off by sluices. The purpose of this design was to thwart besieging armies:

These were so built with dams and sluices that if an enemy had succeeded in breaking through the eastern moats and penetrating into the city, the waters would have been let loose, flooding the town and drowning the invaders. The King with his army could take refuge on the citadel safely above the flood.

Further, the Arakanese took measures to protect the Buddhist monks and other noncombatants. In the case of the Buddhist monks, four huge pagodas, the Dukkanthein, the Lemyekhna, the Andaw, and the Shittaungparâ, were built to serve as the “last retreat for the ecclesiastics:”

Into them all the monks in Mrauk-U could flee. Each stood on a mound at least forty feet above the mean level of the city and so out of danger of inundation from the reservoirs. In the first instance, therefore, these temples were the priest’s citadel. The Dukkan-thein had only one door; its walls were twelve feet thick of solid stone; once the priests were within, not even cannon could have dislodged them.

Specifically, the Shittaungparâ was designed as a redoubt for the Arakanese royal family and royal bodyguard as well. The “temple premises can hold a large garrison” and besides the walls of the pagoda

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159 Ibid.
160 Ibid., 246.
being fifteen feet thick, the roof of the pagoda was strengthened further by up to ten foot layers of brick. As Forchhammer points out, Min bin had the threat of western cannon in mind.\(^{162}\) As a whole, these defenses were designed by the Arakanese themselves to protect non-combatants; such considerations were not even followed by the Portuguese themselves in the construction of their own fortresses elsewhere. Further, Min Bin was also using traditional Arakanese religious defenses to strengthen the Shittaung-parâ, and other pagodas throughout his kingdom, when he installed in them “numerous” copies of the Candasara image in 1536.\(^{163}\)

The Portuguese forged “modern” cannon for the Arakanese army and they also mounted them on the city walls of Mrauk-U.\(^{164}\) The importance of the Portuguese influence in this case, however, should not be overrated: Portuguese guns were only marginally superior to those which the Arakanese and other mainland Southeast Asian rulers already had.\(^{165}\) There is no reason to assume, for example, that the guns which the Portuguese brought to Arakan were any better than the guns which the Portuguese brought to Ava and Pegu. In case of the guns brought to Ava and Pegu, they were not the “massive siege guns such as rendered medieval stone walls and old-style castles untenable after about 1450”\(^{166}\) elsewhere. Rather the guns brought by the Portuguese were extremely small, and their most effective use was in their placement on hills or towers and fired at the defenders inside besieged fortresses. Although the Portuguese guns were less likely to burst (and were less accurate),\(^{167}\) than the guns that the Avan, Peguan, and probably Arakanese rulers already had, this can be better attributed to the age of the guns rather than to superior Portuguese design or the skill of the gunners. Indeed, in both Burma and in Arakan, the majority of the gunners who handled the Portuguese guns were not Portuguese but Indian,\(^{168}\) or from the local populations.

Min Bin also used Portuguese help in developing a new Arakanese army. The Portuguese were used as Arakanese army officers. The Portuguese were given the duty of training Arakanese troops. Min

\(^{162}\) Forchhammer, *op. cit.*, 20.
\(^{163}\) Ibid., 7.
\(^{164}\) Collis & San Shwe Bu, “Arakan’s Place in the Civilization of the Bay,” 41.
\(^{165}\) Lieberman, “Europeans, Trade, and the Unification of Burma, c. 1540-1620,” 211.
\(^{166}\) Ibid
\(^{167}\) Ibid
\(^{168}\) Ibid
Bin also built a new mercenary army with foreign and domestic troops, including a regiment of Portuguese palace guards. But, again, this was only one unit of guards among many others. Indian mercenaries or Arakanese made up the bulk of Min Bin’s palace guard. Min Bin’s use of the Portuguese in his palace guard was probably not due to their superior military skill, but rather to the prestige which the Portuguese had won for themselves as soldiers elsewhere: they were a status symbol of sorts. Since Avan, Peguan, and other leaders had contingents of Portuguese in their armies and in their palace guards, the Arakanese kings probably felt that if they were to be considered the equals of other kings they too had to have Portuguese guard units.

Perhaps the most important use to which the Portuguese were put by Min Bin, was in the construction of a new Arakanese navy. While the crews of the Arakanese ships were mostly Arakanese, the ships were, for the most part, “guided and stiffened” by Portuguese shipmen. As Collis observes, “Min Bin in this way became master of a powerful modern weapon.” Soon, this Arakanese fleet consisted of over two hundred seagoing ships, and by the first decade of the seventeenth century, William Finch noted that the king of Arakan possessed “infinite numbers of small Barkes.” It should not be thought, however, that the Arakanese were new to naval warfare: indeed the Arakanese had been known for centuries for their sea-going abilities.

But Min Bin was not naive. The Arakanese realized that if they allowed themselves to become too dependent upon the Portuguese, they would give these foreigners an opportunity to become kingmakers in Arakan. The the Arakanese thus had good reason to make sure that, at least in the Arakanese fleet, Arakanese remained firmly in control. Also, the Portuguese presence in the Arakanese army was countered by the presence of mercenaries from other lands as well, including Japanese, Afghans, and Burmese.

Significantly, one of the most important new developments in Arakan, during this period of intensive Portuguese influence, was not in

172 Lach, op. cit., 552.
174 Harvey, History of Burma, 140.
the Arakanese armed forces, but in Arakanese jurisprudence. The great advisor to the Arakanese kings of this period was Maha Pyinnya-gyaw, who also had led the Arakanese forces against the first Portuguese invasion of Arakan. Maha Pyinnya-gyaw, who was later known as the lord of Chittagong, compiled Arakanese legal precedents into the *Maha Pyinnya-gyaw pyatton*, which “placed the interpretation of the *Manudhammathats* on a definitely Buddhist basis.” This work became of great importance, not only in Arakan, but throughout Burma. This achievement is important, because it shows us again that Arakanese were not only in command in their adaptation of cultural influences, but that they also consciously maintained and improved aspects of their traditional culture which they thought were important to keep.

**The Character of the Portuguese**

What type of people were the Portuguese who came to Arakan as traders and mercenaries? For one thing, these Portuguese can probably be best described as desperados than as adventurers, as Portuguese chroniclers are apt to describe them. These were men who were unhappy with the moralist restrictions of life in Goa, which were actually very minimal, or they were criminals escaping punishment. More than likely, these men were also members of the *soldado* class, who had either been mistreated by the government or believed they could do better in piracy than as government servants. It should be observed, however, that the Portuguese in government service engaged in piracy on a regular basis, and this was recognized by the government as a legitimate activity when the victim did not possess a Portuguese pass. Even so, the Portuguese who populated the rim of the Bay of Bengal were too independent for the government at Goa, which, from time to time, unsuccessfully tried to bring its exiles back under its control. The Portuguese who served in the Arakanese navy or who traded at Chittagong and Dianga, then, were by their nature rebellious and probably would forsake any obligation they might have to the Arakanese if an opportunity for greater profit arose.

**War With Tabinshweti**

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176 Harvey, *History of Burma*, 141.

177 In the early 1540s, for example, the viceroy of Goa, Dom Garcia de Noronha, ordered Manuel de Gama to forcibly remove the entire Portuguese population of São Tomé to the west coast of India, under closer government scrutiny. The project failed when Gama died and eventually Goa gave up its attempts to extend official control over the Bay of Bengal Portuguese. See Winius, “The ‘Shadow Empire’,” 87-8.
Min Bin’s new army and navy soon received their first test. Tabinshweti of Toungoo was at work conquering one state of Burma after another in his effort to reassemble the Burmese empire. In 1542, he turned on the still-independent Prome. A Shan force which came to relieve the beleaguered city was crushed by Tabinshweti’s son, Bayinnaung. Soon, the king of Prome turned to Arakan, since his daughter had earlier married Min Bin. Min Bin was probably eager to save Prome from Tabinshweti for two reasons: (1) If Prome fell, Arakan would most likely be Tabinshweti’s next target, and (2) This was a good opportunity for Min Bin to test his new army and navy.

Further, Min Bin was under the impression that his new forces and his new defenses were indestructible and that he had no reason to worry about opening up a new period of warfare between Arakan and Burma. As Caesar Frederici noted:

[T]he greatest enemie [the King of Arakan] hath is the King of Pegu: which king of Pegu deviseth night and day how to make this king...his subject, but by no meane he is able to doe it: because the king of Pegu hath no power nor armie by Sea. And this king...may arme two hundreth Galleyes or Fusts by Sea, and by land he hath certaine sluses with the which when the king of Pegu pretendeth any harme towards him, hee may at his pleasure drowne a great part of the Countrey. So that by this meanes hee cutteth off the way whereby the king of Pegu should come with his power to hurt him.178

Min Bin divided his forces and sent an army overland through the Padaung pass. Bayinnaung, however, forged a letter from the king of Prome to Min Bin and sent it to the approaching Arakanese army. When Min Bin’s army entered the pass, Bayinnaung ambushed it and routed the Arakanese force. Min Bin’s navy, entering the Irrawaddy river, was informed at Bassein of the defeat of the Arakanese army. The Arakanese returned home and Prome fell several months afterwards.179

Min Bin’s army and navy thus suffered a temporary setback, but Min Bin’s new defenses soon received their first test as well: in 1544, Tabinshweti began a three year assault on Arakan in revenge for their attack earlier, and to remove a threat to Toungoo’s power. The Burmese army first attacked Sandoway in the south. The governor of Sandoway, Min Bin’s cousin Aung Hla, commanded a great defense and

178 Frederici, op. cit., 260.
179 Harvey, History of Burma, 157.
Tabinshweti’s armies suffered an initial defeat.\footnote{San Baw U, “My Rambles,” \textit{Journal of the Burma Research Society} 16 (1926): 41.} The Arakanese army could not take advantage of this victory, because troops were needed elsewhere: the Tippera tribes began raiding Chittagong and Ramu.\footnote{Harvey, \textit{History of Burma}, 140.} Although the Arakanese repulsed the \textit{raja} of Tippera at Ramu and recaptured Chittagong,\footnote{Phayre, \textit{History of Burma}, 79-80.} the Burmese attempted to invade Arakan a second time, in 1545, with Tabinshweti personally leading his troops. The Arakanese defeated the Burmese at Sandoway again, and the Arakanese army counterattacked and “turned it into a rout.”\footnote{San Baw U, “My Rambles,” \textit{Journal of the Burma Research Society} 16 (1926): 41.}

In 1546, Tabinshweti attacked Arakan for a third time. Now, however, Tabinshweti attacked Arakan from two directions. His main army, under Bayinnaung, marched through the Kyangin pass “clearing a track as they went.” This force consisted of mainly Burmans from Upper Burma.\footnote{Harvey, \textit{History of Burma}, 158.} Tabinshweti personally led his secondary force, mostly of Mons, but supplemented a strong Portuguese mercenary contingent and two Portuguese ships under Diogo Soarez de Mello. Tabinshweti was able to land at Sandoway, since the governor, who was Min Bin’s uncle, agreed to support Tabinshweti if Tabinshweti would make him the new ruler of Arakan.\footnote{Ibid; Phayre, however has a different view of this incident: “His brother, discontented, had fled to Pegu, and like other royal refugees in the countries of Indochina, offered, if placed on the throne of Arakan, to hold it as a tributary.” See Phayre, \textit{History of Burma}, 100.} North of Sandoway, Tabinshweti’s forces joined Bayinnaung’s forces, and the combined army marched on Mrauk-U.\footnote{Harvey, \textit{History of Burma}, 158.} But the Arakanese cut off the Burmese food supply by burning the paddy crops behind them. The Arakanese lured sections of the Burmese army into little skirmishes, defeating the Burmese in each battle: first on the island of Pokre-gyun, then at Ranaung island, then at Daing-gyi island.\footnote{San Baw U, “My Rambles,” \textit{Journal of the Burma Research Society} 16 (1926): 41.} At Mrauk-U, Tabinshweti was in for a surprise: when the Burmese army broke through the outer perimeter of the city walls, for example, the sluices were opened and the attackers were flooded out.\footnote{Harvey, \textit{History of Burma}, 158.} At Daing-gyi island, Tabinshweti was surrounded and captured. Min Bin was now truly a king of international standing. Although Min Bin freed Tabinshweti, Tabinshweti bought his freedom with “rich presents,” as
well as a princess from Min Bin’s old ally and Tabinshweti’s new vassal, Prome.189

The Expansion of Arakanese Military Power

Min Bin had successfully integrated Portuguese influences into a mainly Arakanese style of defensive strategy, for which the Arakanese remembered him as Min Bah Gri, or “the Great.”190 The reigns of Min Bin’s two sons who succeeded him, Dikha (r. 1553-1555) and then Sawhla (r. 1555-1564), whose reign is notable only for his impressive temple-building program,191 form somewhat of a hiatus in the expansion of Arakanese military might. But the new Arakanese armed forces which Min Bin created with Portuguese help were put to even greater use by Min Bin’s grandson, Min Setya (r. 1564-1571). But first, Min Setya had other problems to contend with. While Arakan’s eastern borders were protected by the formidable Arakan Yoma mountain range, Arakan had no natural boundaries on its northwest border with Bengal to afford it similar protection. After the Bengalese empire fell, the Mughal Empire had taken over central and western Bengal. Min Setya’s territories in eastern Bengal thus continued to be threatened; Akbar, the Mughal ruler, considered all of Bengal to be within his domain. Min Setya, however, felt that the regular Arakanese army was either not big enough or strong enough to adequately defend his western frontier from the Mughal threat. Instead, Min Setya established a new policy of arranging with independent Portuguese traders to guard his border.192 This was a major departure for the Arakanese, since the Portuguese at Chittagong and on Sundiva island were often hostile to the Arakanese, once Arakan established control over Chittagong during the Bengalese collapse in the 1540s and 1550s.193

The first independent Portuguese establishment used by Min Setya, as part of his new plan to have Portuguese traders participate in the defense of Arakan’s northwestern border, was the Portuguese settlement at Dianga. To win the friendship of the Portuguese settlement

190 Ibid., 40.  
191 Sawhla (Zawhla) built the Alayceti, the Myaukseti, the Dukkankyaung, the Taungkyaung, and the Kulamyokyaung. See Forchhammer, op. cit., 15.  
192 Collis & San Shwe Bu, “Arakan’s Place in the Civilization of the Bay,” 41.  
193 S.M. Ali argues that Chittagong was under Arakanese control at least by 1542, when it was ruled by the governor, Chandilah Raja. However, he mentions that Chittagong fell under the control of various invaders periodically throughout the 1550s. See Ali, op. cit., 338.
of Dianga, near Chittagong, Min Setya sent an emissary in 1569, “proffering friendship.”

Min Setya did this at a very good time, since the governor of Chittagong, Nusrat Khan, who had been giving Min Setya trouble, was fighting the Portuguese there as well and was killed by these Portuguese. As Caesar Frederici explained:

> The people are Moores, and the king a very good man of a Moore king, for if he had bin a tyrant as others be, he might have robbed us of all, because the Portugall capitaine of Chatigan [Chittagong] was in arms against the Retor of that place, & every day there were some slaine, at which newes we rested there with no smal feare, keeping good watch and ward aboord every night...but the governour of the towne [on Sundiva Island said] we should feare nothing [since] although the Portugales of Chatigan had slaine the governour of that City...we were not culpable in that fact.

The Portuguese received Min Setya’s offer of an alliance by the time that Frederici arrived at Chittagong:

> [We] came to Chatigan the great port of Bengala, at the same time when the Portugales had made peace and taken a truce with the governours of the towne, with this condition that the chiefe Captaine of the Portugales with his ship should depart without any lading; for there were then at that time 18 ships of Portugales great and small...[He] contented to depart...rather than hee should seeke to hinder so many of his friends as were there...In this time there came a messenger from the king of Rachim [Arakan] to this Portugal Captaine, who saide in behalfe of his king, that hee had heard of the courage and valure of him, desiring him gently that he would vouchsafe to come with the ship into his port [Mrauk-U], and comming thither he should be very wel intreated. This Portugal went thither and was very well satisfied of this King.

A great crisis was thus used to great advantage by Min Setya to foster a new relationship with the Portuguese traders at Chittagong. Indeed, in this manner Arakan showed how it could deal with various Portuguese and attract them into their service. But Min Setya probably realized that

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194 Lach, op. cit., 552.
196 Frederici, op. cit., 259.
197 Ibid., 260.
these tactics would not be successful in all cases and he seemed
determined to establish a more permanent relationship.

In exchange for their help in guarding his border, Min Setya
provided these Portuguese with trade concessions. Further, the
Portuguese at Dianga were not simply traders, but raided the Bengalese
coast for slaves, which they now sold to the King of Arakan, whose
growing wealth and power demanded the control of ever-increasing
numbers of people. The Portuguese at Dianga were tied to the Arakanese
king in an arrangement surprisingly reminiscent of feudal Europe:

[T]he Magh kings...grant[ed] the best of them the rank of Captain
and conferring on them Bilatas, or revenue-producing lands, on the
understanding that they maintained a certain force of their
countrymen and also Gelias...They are usually propelled by thirty-
eight rowers who live on the Bilatas or estates of those Captains,
under the obligation of serving whenever called upon.

But Min Setya keenly observed that these Portuguese might not fulfill the
agreement or might take advantage of it to attack him. Min Setya thus
was careful to select a loyal relative as the new governor at Chittagong (to
replace the one killed by the Portuguese), in order to “watch the
Portuguese and see that they played fair.” An Arakanese contingent
of troops was always present, as well. These Arakanese troops served a
tour of duty for an entire year before they would be replaced by another
Arakanese detachment, with one hundred ships and new supplies of
gunpowder and cannon-balls. The Portuguese were also inclined to
help Arakan against the Mughals for the glory which it afforded. As
Father Manrique justified it:

198 Collis and San Shwe Bu, “Arakan’s Place in the Civilization of the Bay,” 42.
199 Hall, A History of Southeast Asia, 270.
200 Fray Sebastien Manrique, Travels of Fray Sebastien Manrique 1629-1643, 2
vols., translated from the Itinerario de las Missiones Orientales, with a introduction and
notes, by C. Eckford Luard, with assistance by Father H. Hosten, (Oxford: Hakluyt
201 The government of the twelve northern Arakanese states which Min Bin had
taken from Bengal was left to twelve local rajas who were tributary to the myoza of
Chittagong, possession of the Chittagong Myo was thus a strong and dangerously
autonomous position. Thus, the Arakanese king had to be sure of the loyalty of the
Chittagong myoza for reasons which were beyond keeping an eye on the Portuguese at
Dianga. See Collis & Bu, “Arakan’s Place in the Civilization of the Bay,” 42.
202 Harvey, History of Burma, 141.
The Portuguese in defending the frontier of Arakan against the Mughal were, in effect, continuing the age-long crusade against the Moslem infidel, which had been the glory of Portugal for so many centuries and had inspired da Gama in his voyages eastward. 203

It should also be noted that Chittagong, despite the trade privileges given to the Portuguese traders resident there, was as much an economic asset as it was a linchpin in Arakan’s northwestern defense system: the Arakanese taxed imports, exports, fishing, salt, and fruit; royal monopolies were held on teak and minerals; and numerous fees entered royal coffers for the construction of irrigation, bridges, and temples. 204

Arakan and the Expected Burmese Invasion, 1581 205

The Arakanese, however, did not see their new army or navy or the Portuguese help they received as the only way in which they could solve their problems. Again, Arakanese society was syncretic and the Arakanese maintained traditional beliefs alongside new ones. One

203 As summarized by Collis in The Land of the Great Image, 90.
204 Ali, op. cit., 341.
205 An interesting story of this attempted invasion involves Gonçalo Vaz de Camoens. Vaz had been ordered by the viceroy of Goa to take two ships at the port of Mazulapatan in 1581. The first ship, belonging to the Sultan of Aceh, had advanced warning of the impending attack and fled. The other, belonging to Bayinnuang, fled and Vaz and four ships followed it. A skirmish with Malabar pirates off the coast of Pegu, however, led to the loss of Francis Serram’s ship and Frenando de Lima’s galliot. The two remaining Portuguese ships caught Bayinnang’s ship entering the mouth of the Negrais river and in a two day battle captured her and her crew. The ship sank soon after, but not before the Portuguese had taken on much of her cargo. Interestingly however, they happened upon the Peguan invasion fleet of 1300 ships sailing for the attack on Sandoway. Nan-dá-bayin tried to capture the Portuguese ships and a naval engagement ensued. Some of the Peguan ships were rendered inoperative and others were boarded, with many prisoners and eighteen cannon taken by the Portuguese. Vaz’s force then “making all the Sail they could and plying their Oars,” fled to Mrauk-U before the Peguan force could overcome them. The Min Phalaung was extremely happy at the news of the Portuguese victory against his prospective invaders, and his pleasure was enhanced when Vaz made him a present of the Mons that the Portuguese had captured. In return, Min Phalaung released some Portuguese “he had long kept in prison.” See Fariah y Sousa, op. cit., vol. III, 269-70.
example of this is Bayinnaung's planned invasion of Arakan during the reign of King Min Palaung (r. 1571-1593). Bayinnaung saw the growing power of Arakan as a threat to his position in Burma and decided to destroy Arakan before it became too strong for him to oppose. Realizing the difficulty which had prevented the success of previous invasions of Arakan, Bayinnaung supposedly sent ambassadors to Akbar at the Mughal Court in 1579, who had conquered Bengal three years before. King Min Palaung heard of this embassy and tried to finish the fortifications begun by Min Bin. In addition, Min Palaung decided to utilize the power of the nats, “in order to make the requisite preparations to defend his country.” Min Palaung went to the Temple of Wunti and asked for her guidance. San Shwe Bu has carefully explained what Min Palaung believed was Wunti’s response:

She replied that it was unnecessary for a powerful King like himself to go to all that trouble and expense of raising an army, but that, when nations were at war, the opposing deities...first engaged themselves in conflict and decided the fate of contending armies beforehand...

With her numerous followers, she arrived at the palace of Bueng Naung at about midnight. She not only found the whole palace wrapped in slumber...she entered the Royal Chamber, and, standing at the head of the bed for a moment, she raised her five fingers above the recumbent King...

On the following morning, five large carbuncles appeared round the neck of the Burmese King, from the effects of which he subsequently died...

Shortly after Bayinnaung’s advance forces had occupied Sandoway, he died. Thus, the Arakanese believed that they were saved by Min Palaung’s timely consultation with Wunti, showing that the Arakanese

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206 Min Palaung did not engage in any large temple-building programs, although he built the Ratanapôn pagoda and “repaired” the Urittaung and Mahati pagodas. See Forchhammer, op. cit., 15-6; 26.

207 San Shwe Bu, “Wunti,” 53; Collis, “The City of Golden Mrauk-U,” 244; I have said that the mission was “supposedly” sent to Akbar’s court, because Hall has made a good argument that the mission was probably sent to the “Viceroy of Bengal.” See Hall, A History of Southeast Asia, 295.

208 Van Leur, op. cit., 171.


211 Harvey, History of Burma, 174.
merely viewed their help from the Portuguese as simply one of many recourses to solving their problems, and not as a singular deliverance from any sort of indigenous “backwardness.”

**War With Tippera, 1585**

Arakan was also gaining a very good reputation among the Portuguese in the Bay of Bengal region due to the good relations it had with its Portuguese mercenaries. This attraction of Arakan for Portuguese mercenaries was clearly evident in the invasion of Arakan by the king of Tippera, Amar Manikya in 1585. Manikya sent his son Rajdharnarayan and a large invasion force, including a contingent of Portuguese mercenaries. Taking Chittagong, the invasion force proceeded to Ramu, and took several Arakanese army camps *en route*. The Portuguese, perhaps questioning the value of working for the king of Tippera, compared to Arakanese employment, switched sides and surrendered the Tipperan camps to the Arakanese. The Arakanese then encircled the Tipperan force and although the Tipperans broke out and began a quick retreat back to Chittagong, the Arakanese followed in pursuit and “decimated them mercilessly.”

The Portuguese mercenaries then helped the Arakanese retake Chittagong.

**Sundiva**

The Arakanese succeeded in employing Portuguese mercenaries in its armies and navy, so that by 1598, there were over twenty-five hundred Portuguese in Arakan. But while the Arakanese made mutual defense pacts with the Portuguese traders at Dianga, other independent Portuguese traders often caused trouble for the Arakanese king. The case in which a Portuguese trader in Chittagong had killed the Arakanese governor has already been mentioned, but a better example can be found in the events in the last decade of the sixteenth century at Chittagong and Sundiva island. Although we are not clear on the causes, we know that in 1590, the Portuguese at Chittagong fought the Arakanese there, under their new governor, Min Nala, and captured the fortress of Chittagong. Antonio de Souza Godinho, who had led the attack, soon

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213 Ibid
214 Campos, *op. cit.*, 104.
215 Min Nala was the son of the Arakanese king, Min Palaung. See Ali, *op. cit.*, 340.
forced the island of Sundiva to be “tributary” to the Portuguese establishment at Chittagong. While the Arakanese and the Portuguese traders at Chittagong did make peace, the island of Sundiva remained in hazy submission to the Chittagong Portuguese.216

**Conclusion**

What was the true nature of the relationship between the Portuguese and the Arakanese? Further, how had the world-view of the Arakanese changed and what role did their relationship with the Portuguese play in the adaptation of the Arakanese to the changing political climate of the Bengal-Burmese region?

Some authors view the relationship between the Portuguese mercenaries and the indigenous rulers of the Burmese region as something that was determined solely by the Portuguese. The Portuguese, they argue, entered the region and through superior weaponry and skill, outfought and outwitted the local rulers. This view is held by Portuguese historians such as Bocarro, Fariah y Sousa, and Mousinho. Danvers and Harvey share this view as well. The accounts of these historians often border on the ridiculous: scores of Portuguese are said to have defeated tens of thousands of indigenous troops on land and a handful of Portuguese galleys was claimed to have defeated thousands of indigenous ships. In these accounts, no credit is given to indigenous help, although we know from both Portuguese and indigenous sources that De Brito and Gonçalves, for example, depended upon the help of thousands of indigenous troops.

Other authors have argued that the local rulers took advantage of the Portuguese and used their superior weaponry and skills for their own purposes. One example of this point of view, is Victor Lieberman’s argument in “Europeans, Trade, and the Unification of Burma, c. 1540-1620,” regarding the effect of Portuguese mercenaries in Burma in the sixteenth century. Lieberman argues that superior Portuguese military weaponry and skill was a key factor in the struggle between Ava, Pegu, and the Shan states for dominance in the Irrawaddy basin. Although Lieberman notes that Portuguese superiority should not be overestimated, Lieberman sees the ability of a ruler to make use of Portuguese weapons and mercenaries as pivotal in their ability to win wars against other rulers. This view is similar to the view that the Portuguese came into the Burmese region as superior warriors in their relationship with local rulers, but this view instead concedes that the

216 Campos, *op. cit.*, 67.
local rulers were at least equal partners in their relationship with the
Portuguese.217

My own view is that neither view is completely correct. I do not
think that in the Arakanese case that Portuguese weaponry or seafaring
skills were adopted simply for their superiority. Indeed, the Arakanese
seem to have made a point of maintaining their own techniques both at
sea and on land. Portuguese were used to train Arakanese troops and to
guide Arakanese ships, but I think that this Portuguese technology and
skills were only applied in a few minor cases. Arakanese, for example,
remained in control of their ships, both as commanders and as the
crews, and the Portuguese were only a few among many different
nationalities of mercenaries hired to supplement and not to replace
Arakanese military forces or leadership. The primary reason that the
Portuguese were used, it seems to me, is that they were the status
symbol for indigenous Southeast Asian rulers of that time. All of the
kingdoms of the Burmese region had Portuguese mercenaries, and they
seemed to have become popular due to Portuguese military exploits
elsewhere, usually at the expense of unarmed or poorly-armed Indian
ocean fleets. While Portuguese were used to drill indigenous troops and
to build walls for fortresses, the Arakanese troops continued to fight in
traditional ways and the walls of the fortresses built by the Portuguese
were no more effective than the traditional walls.

On the other hand, the Portuguese in Arakan seem to have been
outwitted by the Arakanese rather than vice-versa. In exchange for trade
concessions that were mutually beneficial to both parties, the Portuguese
at Chittagong took on the responsibility of guarding Arakan’s western
frontier against Arakan’s biggest threat, the Mughal empire. Further,
Arakan’s use of Portuguese mercenaries presented a tremendous drain
on the already low number of Portuguese troops available to the
Estado da India. This drain, which, when we consider all of the Portuguese
mercenaries in the employ of mainland Southeast Asian rulers, must
have represented well-over a thousand men, was tremendous when we
remember that at its height, the Estado da India had less than ten
thousand men at its disposal throughout Asia, from Madagascar to
Japan.218

218 Charles Ralph Boxer explains that “it is doubtful is there was ever as many as
10,000 able-bodied Europeans and Eurasians available for military and naval service
between Moçambique and Macao.” See Boxer, The Portuguese Seaborne Empire 1415-
India and of the Frontier States of Afghanistan, Nipal, and Burma, (London: MacMillan &
Co. 1880): 503.

SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005):974-1145
It is also important to note that the Arakanese were responsible for their changing view of the world around them. The threat posed by the Mughal empire and the growing Peguan empire seems to have been responsible for “shaking” the Arakanese out of their former inward-looking perspective. The Arakanese realized that they had to change or they would be conquered by one or the other of their powerful neighbors. It is also clear that the Arakanese were responsible for reaching out to the Portuguese. The Portuguese, for example, after Silveira’s misunderstanding of Arakanese intentions, might never have been seen in Arakan again if it had not been for Min Bin’s efforts and offers of friendship and employment. At least at this stage in the relationship between the Arakanese and the Portuguese, it is clear that the Arakanese were dominant in this relationship and the development of Arakanese imperial might was almost totally an Arakanese conception and creation.
Chapter III
Collapse of the Burmese World, 1590-1602

This richly favoured country [Burma] has been exposed from a remote period to cruel oppressions and bloody wars. It was anciently parcelled out, like India, amongst petty kings, who waged frequent wars on each other. There was constant rivalry between the Burmese people of Ava on the upper valley of the Irawadi and the Talains of Pegu on the lower valley. Other kings warred against each other in like manner; whilst ever and anon an invading army from China or Siam swept over the whole country, and deluged the land with blood. Sometimes there were insurrections under a rebel prince or schismatic monk, followed by sack and massacre without a parallel in recorded history. except amongst Tatar nations. To this day the whole region of Pegu and Ava bears the marks of these desolating contests; and vast tracts of culturable lands lie utterly waste from sheer want of population.

J. Talboys Wheeler219

The History of the different Kings that reigned in Burma, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries...is a round of wars and revolts, of treacheries and murders. Its chief interest is derived from the appearance of Europeans upon the scene. Two adventurers, a Portuguese and a Spaniard, played important parts in Burma during the early years of the seventeenth century. The story of their lives is worth telling. It shows how easily lawless Europeans could establish a rule over timid Asiatics by a display of reckless audacity.

Albert Fytche220

Several questions can be drawn from these quotations. Why, for example, was Pegu the target of Arakanese expansion at the end of the sixteenth century? Was Pegu suffering a short-term period of anarchy or was this its natural condition? Why were the Mons willing to accept foreigners as their kings? What was the Mon requirement for kingship and how had the former regime lost legitimacy?

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SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005):974-1145
The Great Coastal Empire: Arakanese Expansion Eastwards

Having secured their frontier in the west against the Mughal threat, the Arakanese under Min Yazagyi, or Naradhipati, [r. 1593-1612] decided to use their new military might to expand their empire eastwards at the expense of an old enemy: Pegu. This was a very opportune time for Arakan to attack Pegu, since it was now in anarchy. In an attempt to maintain the vastly overextended empire created by his father, Nan-dá-bayin (r. 1581-1599), the King of Pegu, had waged an endless series of bloody wars against rebel provinces. Since Nan-dá-bayin directly controlled only Lower Burma, Lower Burma provided the most resources for Nan-dá-bayin’s campaigns. The surrounding Mons soon raised revolts against Nan-dá-bayin, one of which in 1594 led to Ayudhya’s capture of Pegu’s possessions on the Kra isthmus. Mons also left Burma altogether and many of them fled to Arakan. Nan-dá-bayin’s other vassals throughout Burma began to break away as well, and soon the “supreme king was abandoned by all who might have supported him.” One of these rebellious vassals, the Toungoo bayin, refused to send any more agricultural produce to Pegu after 1596. Further, the Toungoo bayin took advantage of Nan-dá-bayin’s decreasing credibility as a just ruler of Lower Burma to set himself up as the legitimate ruler, “promi[sing] Life, Liberty and Estates to all that would come over to him.” This was not an entirely radical turn of events, since Mon monks had previously suggested to the Chiengmai bayin that if he overthrew Nan-dá-bayin, and set himself up as the Great King, it “would be an entirely legitimate act.”

The Toungoo bayin realized, however, that he still had to decisively crush Nan-dá-bayin, who mustered most of his remaining levies for the defense of his capital at Pegu, if he wanted to make himself the new legitimate ruler of Burma. The Toungoo bayin was not in a position to raise the strength necessary to do so and to protect his own kingdom from the other rebel provinces; he desperately needed an ally. At the same time, however, he did not want to ally himself with another

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221 Also known as Salim Shah I. See Luard’s notes in Manrique, op. cit., vol. I, xxiii.
223 Lieberman, Burmese Administrative Cycles, 43.
224 Harvey, History of Burma, 180.
225 Phayre, History of Burma, 122.
226 Lieberman, Burmese Administrative Cycles, 43.
228 Lieberman, Burmese Administrative Cycles, 42.
Burmese bayin who might turn around and crush him after they destroyed Pegu. Thus the Toungoo bayin looked abroad for help. Again, however, the foreign state likely to help Toungoo in crushing Pegu was Ayudhya, but if the growing power of Naresuan’s Ayudhya were brought into Burma, it would be very difficult to get them out after Pegu was crushed. Indeed, Naresuan had the “apparent intention of converting Nan-dá-bayin into a vassal of Ayudhya in reverse of the traditional relation.” The Toungoo bayin’s ally, then, had to be found elsewhere.

The Toungoo bayin now looked at Arakan. In the short space of two or three generations, Arakan had grown from an inward-looking, petty state on the fringe of the mainland Southeast Asian world, to a powerful state with a great navy and a large army. The Arakanese also seemed to orient her imperial designs towards Bengal, on the border of which most of Arakan’s Portuguese mercenaries and her best armies were concentrated. The Toungoo bayin believed that he found the ideal ally for his planned imperial venture: (1) Arakan had a powerful fleet which could blockade Pegu and (2) Arakan would not be likely to threaten the Toungoo bayin’s “own aspirations” of becoming to “Great King of Burma.” The Toungoo bayin thus sent emissaries to propose an alliance with Arakan with the idea of a joint attack on Pegu.

The Toungoo bayin probably did not know that Min Yazagyi had made several attempts to establish some claim to the wealth of Pegu and to involve himself in Pegu’s affairs. One attempt had even come close to success: Min Yazagyi had sent ambassadors to request the hand in marriage of Nan-dá-bayin’s daughter in the late 1590s, at a time when Nan-dá-bayin needed as many allies as possible to stave off his destruction at the hands of his rebel bayins. Nan-dá-bayin gave the Arakanese delegation an audience and the Mon advisors of Nan-dá-bayin seem to have been very impressed. After the audience, the Mon advisors in council with Nan-dá-bayin made a strong case for obtaining the help of Arakan to offset the problems of destruction and depopulation which were making Lower Burma an inadequate resource base for Nan-dá-bayin: an alliance with Arakan would bring the support of Arakan’s considerable maritime strength, which could command the riverine communication and transportation system of Lower Burma. With Min Yazagyi’s help, the Mon advisors argued, Nan-dá-bayin could slowly rebuild his empire. Nan-dá-bayin, however, was “indignant” to the thought of marrying his daughter to the ruler of the Arakanese upstarts. After responded to his advisors angrily: “I do not think that I should give

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229 Ibid., 43.
230 Ibid; Nai Thien (tr.), “Intercourse Between Burma and Siam As Recorded in Hmannan Yazawindawgyi,” *Journal of the Siam Society* 8 (1911): 54.
my daughter to a dog.” Nan-dá-bayin then ordered the Arakanese delegation to return immediately to Arakan.231

The Toungoo negotiation team arrived at a good time: Min Yazagyi had just received his delegation to Pegu and was infuriated by Nan-dá-bayin’s response. Min Yazagyi wanted revenge and realized that he had to act quickly in order to take advantage of the anarchous situation in Pegu.232 Min Yazagyi thus decided that the proposed alliance with the Toungoo bayin was a good vehicle for his revenge and or the realization of his imperial designs upon Lower Burma. In order to aid Toungoo in the capture of Nan-dá-bayin’s capital of Pegu, Min Yazagyi came with his son, Min Khamaung, and a large Arakanese fleet of six hundred jalias to invade Lower Burma.233 If we can trust the Mon history of Syriam translated by Furnivall, the Arakanese forces first attacked Nan-dá-bayin’s western-most port of Bassein. Nan-dá-bayin responded by sending six “war boats” to Bassein, as well as three “war boats” to Syriam, and ordered a royal granary to be built at Bassein, presumably in preparation for the expected siege. Other preparations were ordered for the defense of Bassein as well: the “city...had to supply cocoanuts, earth, oil, iron, timber and cord for binding...[w]hen the royal war boats became unserviceable the oarsmen and watchmen had to help one another to repair them.”234 Presumably, the Arakanese won the siege and took the port, for Min Yazagyi and his son soon went to Syriam, from which the remaining Arakanese force would proceed upriver to Pegu. The Toungoo bayin likewise sent an army by land, joined the Arakanese force at Pegu, which the two forces then besieged by the beginning of 1598.235 The siege lines were formed quickly, with the Arakanese to the

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235 Lieberman has provided a different date for the siege, 1598, for which he does not seem to be too confident. But the Hmannan Yazawindaungyig mentions Arakanese troops and Toungoo forces marching on Pegu in the spring of 1597 and indicates that Pegu was under siege by 1598. See Na Thien’s translation (54). I have chosen to accept 1597/8 as the date of the siege for a number of other reasons. First, I think that this is the most logical year for the siege by my understanding of the sequence of events before and after the siege for which we do have dates. Second, a number of sources imply dates for the siege, such as Boves letter written on 28 March, 1600, which mentions the siege of Pegu as a recent event. See Nicolas Pimenta, “Jesuit Observations of India,” in Samuel Purchas (ed.), Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes, (New York: AMS Press, 1965): 216; Phayre, History of Burma, 122-123.
south of Pegu, the king of Toungoo to the east, and Nat-Shin-Naung, the upayaza (heir-apparent) of Toungoo to the north of Pegu.236

Nan-dá-bayin attempted to organize a defense, but it was hopeless; “fifteen years of incessant military recruitment, famine, and social dislocation” drained Nan-dá-bayin’s territories of their resources.237 Further, while Nan-dá-bayin still possessed numerous European artillery, 150 pieces of which were of Portuguese origin, they were ineffective “without strong conventional support forces.”238 The Arakanese and Toungoo forces tightened their siege lines around Pegu until Nan-dá-bayin could only count on supplies of rice and other goods brought in by Portuguese ships which had been sent from Goa by the viceroy, the Conde da Vidigueira, under the command of Dom Pedro Manuel. Min Khamaung intercepted Dom Pedro Manuel’s ships on several occasions, but did not seize their supplies or punish the Portuguese captains, probably because he did not want to alienate Goa from the Arakanese cause. But after Dom Pedro Manuel’s persistence led to a skirmish between Min Khamaung’s ship and a Portuguese vessel, a battle ensued, damaging many Arakanese vessels and leaving the Portuguese bottled up in Pegu.239

The siege continued for some time and political problems back in Mrauk-U forced Min Yazagyi to quit the siege with a large part of his forces for the rest of the winter of 1598-1599, with the promise that he would return in the summer of 1599. Min Khamaung, however, was left in command of a large number of Arakanese ships to help the king of Toungoo. Before Min Yazagyi could return, however, the defense of Pegu was quickly falling apart. The upayaza of Pegu, Minyé Kyawzwa, lost ten of his popular officers to desertion to the Toungoo and Arakanese and he soon followed them in 1599.240 Hearing of his son’s desertion, Nan-dá-bayin decided to surrender as well and asked only that he be allowed to join the sangha.241 Although the human and agricultural resources of Pegu were spent, much material wealth remained for plunder. The Toungoo bayin, for example, used twelve caravans of seven hundred

236 Nai Thien, op. cit., 54-5.
238 Lieberman, Burmese Administrative Cycles, 43.
240 The Hmannan Yazawindausgyi records that Minyé-kyawzwa was murdered at Toungoo shortly after by the Toungoo upayaza, Nat-Shin-Naung, and his mother. See Nai Thien, op. cit., 55.
elephants and horses to carry the treasure,\textsuperscript{242} but he still could not remove all of the gold and the jewels. The Toungoo force left Pegu to Arakanese occupation under Min Khamauung. Min Khamauung then joined in gathering the plunder and removed “above Three Millions, and a great Train of large Cannon.”\textsuperscript{243}

**Naresuan’s Invasion**\textsuperscript{244}

Naresuan launched an attack against Pegu in order to capture Ayudhya’s great enemy, Nan-dá-bayin. The approach of the Ayudhyan army was reported to the king of Toungoo, who called a council of his ministers to decide what they should do. Some of his advisors thought that it would be better to remain at Pegu, where the Arakanese forces would be of immense value in their defense. Other advisors, however, thought that it would be better to go to Toungoo, and that the Arakanese forces should remain at Pegu and “attack the Siamese as opportunity offered.”\textsuperscript{245} The king of Toungoo decided against remaining at Pegu and his forces left for Toungoo in March 1600.\textsuperscript{246} But the Arakanese occupation force under Min Khamauung remained at the fallen capital of Nan-dá-bayin. The defenses of Pegu were now in no position to withstand another siege, and the Arakanese occupation force was not strong enough to face the massive armies under the veteran military leader and now king, Naresuan. Min Khamauung thus had his forces burn the rest of Pegu so they would leave nothing to the Ayudhyans: “they consigned to the flames all the big and splendid buildings, edifices and monasteries, starting with the golden palace itself.” The Arakanese forces then took refuge in the forests.\textsuperscript{247}

Naresuan, finding Pegu burned to the ground, then proceeded to Toungoo to take Nan-dá-bayin into his custody. The king of Toungoo had

\textsuperscript{242} Fariah y Sousa, *op. cit.*, vol. III, 121; Bocarro, however, says that moving the spoils from Pegu to Toungoo took one thousand ships and one thousand wagons five months of continuous transportation, even though Toungoo was only five days journey from Pegu. See Bocarro, *op. cit.*, vol. I, 125.

\textsuperscript{243} Fariah y Sousa, *op. cit.*, vol. III, 121.

\textsuperscript{244} At this point, I will begin to refer to the various Burmese bayins as kings, since their relationship with the ‘Great King’ at Pegu as bayins was ended when the ‘Great King,’ Nan-dá-bayin, was overthrown. Now the various Burmese bayins were independent kings.

\textsuperscript{245} Nai Thien, *op. cit.*, 57.

\textsuperscript{246} The king of Toungoo was also careful to bring the Buddha’s tooth relic and the *tripitaka* back to Toungoo. Nai Thien, *op. cit.*, 57.

\textsuperscript{247} Nai Thien, *op. cit.*, 57.
prepared for this possibility and he strengthened the defenses of Toungoo and mounted artillery on the walls. Meanwhile, the Ayudhyan army marched up along the banks of the Sittang river to Toungoo and from outside of the walls of the city, Naresuan demanded that the king of Toungoo hand Nan-dá-bayin over to him. Naresuan explained that he wanted to worship Nan-dá-bayin, since he had recently joined the Buddhist sangha. The king of Toungoo refused to surrender Nan-dá-bayin, claiming that he wanted to worship Nan-dá-bayin in the same way, forcing Naresuan to besiege Toungoo. While Naresuan made Kywé-magu-kyun-gyaung his base of operations, he ordered the Ayudhyan army besieging Toungoo to dig a channel, the Yodaya, to the Paunglaung river to drain Toungoo’s moat. Further, the Ayudhyan army “mounted guns on ramparts built by them, and shelled the city every day.” The Toungoo defenses, however, proved to be too strong to allow an Ayudhyan victory.

Min Khamaung’s forces, however, came to Toungoo’s aid. Since Naresuan supplied his forces with “[m]unitions and supplies” brought up the Sittang river on boats, Min Khamaung attacked and captured these ships. While Toungoo repulsed repeated Ayudhyan assaults on their city, the Ayudhyan officers hesitated in informing Naresuan of the supply problem and he soon found that his army was “eating all kinds of unclean meat, and had come even to the flesh of their own men.” After a month without supplies, Naresuan was forced to withdraw with extremely heavy casualties in May 1600. As the Ayudhyan army retreated back down along the banks of the Sittang River, Naresuan became the brunt of guerrilla attacks by the Arakanese, similar to those which Naresuan used to defeat three Burmese invasions of Ayudhya several years earlier. The Arakanese ambushed Ayudhyan units near Pegu, quickening the pace of Naresuan’s retreat and his losses. When Naresuan reached Martaban where the Arakanese ambushes ceased, Naresuan set up a Mon as the governor, with the title of Binnya Dala, who was tributary to Ayudhya.
Nan-dá-bayin would die not at the hands of Naresuan, but by the hands of his own sister, the queen of Toungoo. When Nan-dá-bayin was brought to Toungoo, the king of Toungoo had “presented” Nan-dá-bayin to his wife, Nan-dá-bayin’s sister, but she had him killed in November 1600:

[I]t was thought [that she] would comfort [him, but] used him Reproachfully, and afterwards seeing the King her Husband inclined to Mercy, caused him to be beaten to Death.254

The unifying king of Burma was dead and now his legacy opened up Lower Burma to whoever wished to attempt to build his own empire: lower Burma was fractured into a number of rival states in a near-anarchic political climate:

Thus the great empire of united Pegu and Burma, which a generation before had excited the wonder of European travellers. was utterly broken up’ and the wide delta of the Irawádi, with a soil fertile as Egypt, and in a geographical position commanding the outlet of a great natural highway, was abandoned by those who might claim to represent the ancient rulers, and left to be parcelled out by petty local chiefs, and European adventurers.255

**Arakanese Establishment at Syriam**

Min Yazagyi soon disagreed with the king of Toungoo because he felt that he was cheated in the division of spoils in Pegu. As Boves commented in March, 1600, it appeared that the king of Toungoo completely ignored the earlier agreement which he made with Min Yazagyi:

After [the King of Toungoo had gone] to the Tower where the Kings treasure was kept, which was so much that scarcely sixe hundred Elephants and as many Horses were sufficient to carrie away the Gold and Gemmes onely. For I say nothing of the Silver and other Metals, as things of no price. The King of Arracan then absent, hear[d] that the King of Tangu against his agreement with him had

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taken all this treasure for himselfe, and dismissed the Armie without his Knowledge.256

Min Yazagyi determined to take what he thought was rightfully his. In addition, Min Yazagyi had no intention of abandoning Syriam,257 which his forces passed during their attack against Nan-dâ-bayin a year earlier. Syriam, to Min Yazagyi, represented something which the Arakanese wanted for some time. The Arakanese capital served as an adequate and easily defensible port, but Pegu was previously the chief port-of-call for international traders. Since Syriam was located geographically in a position to dominate the trading potentials of Pegu, the good natural harbor of Syriam, provided Arakan with the ability to expand its international trade opportunities. Further, Syriam could serve as a foothold, from which Min Yazagyi could expand Arakanese power throughout the Burmese region and further down the coast towards Tavoy and Tenasserim. Since Min Yazagyi’s forces in Pegu were depleted by the recent fighting with Naresuan and were in no condition to enforce Min Yazagyi’s claims against Toungoo: Min Yazagyi gathered his army and navy and his Portuguese mercenaries under the command of Philip de Brito and sailed for the late king of Pegu’s fortress, Macao, on the Pegu river (not to be confused with Macao in China).258

De Brito is Placed in Command at Syriam

Min Yazagyi’s force stopped at Syriam before it went on to the rubble of Nan-dâ-bayin’s fortress of Macao. The condition of the the surrounding country indicated the extent of the damage that Nan-dâ-bayin’s continual wars had done to Lower Burma:

It is a lamentable spectacle to see the bankes of the Rivers set with infinite fruit-bearing trees, now overwhelmed with ruines of gilded

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256 Pimenta, op. cit., 216.

257 Fytche explains that Syriam is “a corruption of the Burmese word Than-hlyeng.” Another name for Syriam is the Pali “Khodha-dippa.” See Fytche, op. cit., 52f; Danvers refers to Syriam as Sirião. See F. C. Danvers, Report to the Secretary of State For India Council on the Portuguese Records Relating to the East Indies, Contained in the Archivo Da Torre Do Tombo, and the Public Libraries at Lisbon and Evora, (Amsterdam: N. Israel. 1892. 1966): 20.

258 In the sixteenth century, the city of Macao on the Pegu river, somewhere between Syriam and the city of Pegu, was an important trading center in Lower Burma. It was visited by most of the early Portuguese travelers in Burma, and it was also the location of Nan-dâ-bayin’s fortress and treasure house. For information on the major references to Macao, see Yule & Burnell, Hobson-Jobson, 402.
Temples, and noble edifices; the ways and fields full of skulls and bones of wretched Peguans, killed or famished and cast into the River, in such numbers that the multitude of carkasses prohibiteth the way and passage of any ship; to omit the burnings and massacres committed by this the cruellist of Tyrants that ever breathed.259

Pegu’s desolate and disunified condition allowed Min Yazagyi to “easily mak[e] himselfe Master of the Towne and Countrey.”260 Min Yazagyi then placed De Brito and his Portuguese contingent at Syriam to secure the port while the rest of the Arakanese force attacked Toungoo.261 The king of Toungoo, however, sent ambassadors offering to begin negotiations to settle the dispute between Arakan and Toungoo.262

While Min Yazagyi also allowed the Portuguese to conduct trade there, Min Yazagyi still expected a share of the profits of this venture. Min Yazagyi also feared that if he left Mons in charge of Syriam, they might easily switch loyalties to the Thai, who made overtures under Naresuan to extend Ayudhyan protection over the now anarchous Peguan region.263 Leaving Portuguese mercenaries in charge of such a strategic location was nothing new to the king of Arakan, since this was a policy which he followed to maintain his border with Bengal.264 In any case, Min Yazagyi left De Brito in charge of Syriam with three thousand Arakanese and three frigates, and one hundred smaller vessels, “thinking that the Portuguese were skillful in the use of firearms, big and small, and so the Mons would be afraid and not give any trouble.”265 De Brito convinced Min Yazagyi of the necessity of erecting a feitoria (customs house or factory) at the river-mouth to collect revenues. De Brito planned, however, to build a fort there and seize the area for the Portuguese.266

One man who was to become extremely important to De Brito’s enterprise was Salvador Ribeyro de Sousa. Ribeyro was a Portuguese and

259 Pimenta, op. cit., 216.
260 Verhoeff, op. cit., 327.
262 Verhoeff, op. cit., 327.
263 Damrong., op. cit., 205.
265 Damrong, op. cit., 205; Nai Thien, op. cit., 65.
served for some time as a captain in the Arakanese army. Ribeyro arrived at the port of Syriam due to adverse weather conditions and found Min Yazagyi in possession of the port and accompanied by De Brito’s Portuguese mercenaries. De Brito felt that he could trust Ribeyro and had Ribeyro take on the responsibility of building the fortress, while De Brito went on a mission for Min Yazagyi.

**Negotiations With Toungoo**

Min Yazagyi thus reinforced the Arakanese presence in Lower Burma. But Min Yazagyi was also not hasty and he decided that he would seek a peaceful solution to his disagreement with the king of Toungoo. Thus, Min Yazagyi ordered De Brito to go to Toungoo as his ambassador and negotiate with the king of Toungoo for the rest of his share of the booty of Pegu.

The king of Toungoo was inclined not to resist Min Yazagyi’s demands for several reasons. One reason was that Min Yazagyi’s new force was present just south of Toungoo, ready to assault Toungoo if negotiations did not go the way Min Yazagyi wanted them to. Another reason was that Naresuan was still a potential threat to Toungoo, and he had only been beaten back into Ayudhya with Arakanese help. Further, the king of Chiangmai had now begun attacking Toungoo, “to despoile him of his spoiles.” After nearly six months of negotiations, the king of Toungoo agreed to recompense Min Yazagyi and send Min Yazagyi the things that he wanted. Min Yazagyi was given the white elephant, half of the captured artillery, and any Mons that he wanted to take. The daughter of Nan-dá-bayin, who was the king of Toungoo’s niece, was also sent to Min Yazagyi for marriage.

Min Yazagyi accepted the king of Toungoo’s offer. To bring these goods back, Min Yazagyi sent a huge fleet upriver, consisting of 600 *jalias* (small ships), with biers and gilded windowpanes, under the command of Philip de Brito and the Arakanese *corangary* (admiral). Once the fleet had reached Toungoo, the king of Toungoo turned over his niece

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268 Bocarro, *op. cit.*, vol. I, 126
269 Pimenta, *op. cit.*, 217.
270 Mousinho, MacGregor trans., *op. cit.*, 114.
to De Brito, but he now expressed reluctance for her marriage to Min Yazagyi. It seems that he felt that Min Yazagyi was only a lucky man, who only obtained a large realm by chance, whereas the king of Toungoo’s niece was the widow of the great emperor of Pegu. The king of Toungoo, however, realized that the Arakanese were too strong for him to oppose at the moment and he kept his promises.\(^\text{272}\) In addition, Min Yazagyi, following the traditional practice of Southeast Asian warfare, as well as reflecting Arakan’s growing power and its concomitant need for an increased population, deported large numbers of Mons for resettlement in Arakan.\(^\text{273}\)

**Min Yazagyi Returns to Arakan**

Min Yazagyi had established a secure Arakanese position at Syriam, but he now returned to Arakan to ensure the strength of the Arakanese position on the western frontier in Bengal. Min Yazagyi decided to leave De Brito in charge of a Portuguese detachment at Syriam. But Min Yazagyi was wary of leaving the Portuguese alone at such a vital position on his new expanded eastern flank at Pegu. Min Yazagyi thus left a much larger Muslim mercenary force there as well, under the command of a local Mon lord, Binnya Dala. Interestingly, De Brito was very worried about the presence of these other mercenaries. Min Yazagyi was told by the Portuguese that “once they (the Muslims) had got a footing they were ill to throw out.” Min Yazagyi responded that these troops posed no threat to either him or to the Portuguese. To put an end to the Portuguese protests, Min Yazagyi pointed out that his local representatives were there to monitor the situation and would evict the Muslims if they showed any signs of revolt.\(^\text{274}\) The Portuguese, however, whether out of fear for their safety or as part of some plan to strengthen their own position against their Arakanese overlords, began to firmly entrench themselves by building fortifications.\(^\text{275}\)

**Events at Sundiva, 1602**

It was mentioned in the last chapter, the Portuguese trader, Antonio de Souza Godinho, forced the island of Sundiva into a tributary relationship with the Portuguese traders at Chittagong in 1590. But Sundiva remained a virtual non-man’s land, with Portuguese authority in some


\(^\text{273}\) Hall, *A History of Southeast Asia*, 300.

\(^\text{274}\) Mousinho, MacGregor *trans.*, *op. cit.*, 114-115.

\(^\text{275}\) Ibid.
places, and Mughal control, as well as a Mughal fort, elsewhere.276 Further, Kedar Rai, the Bengalese lord at Sripur who had been dispossessed of Sundiva island by the Mughals, still maintained his claim to the island’s income. Kedar Rai, a Hindu, ruled in the name of his father Chand Rai, one of the twelve Bara Bhuyas of southeastern Bengal who maintained their independence despite the Mughal conquest of the rest of the region.277 He had only taken Sundiva island recently and he must have watched events at Sundiva carefully waiting for an opportunity to reassert his control.

In 1602, the Mughals were defeated and Sundiva was brought under complete Portuguese control by Domingos Carvalho, one of Kedar Rai’s Portuguese employees. The Sundivanese, however, rebelled against the Portuguese soon after and were besieged in the former Mughal fortress. Carvalho was forced to ask the Portuguese at Chittagong and Dianga for help. Manuel de Mattos, the leader of the Portuguese at Dianga, led four hundred men in support of Carvalho, who made an assault from the shore and drove the islanders into the countryside. Since Carvalho and Mattos had together defeated the islanders, they each took half of the island to govern.278 Carvalho wrote to the Portuguese government offering Sundiva as a new Portuguese possession.279 The viceroy accepted and he had expectations that Carvalho and Mattos would attempt to bring the large number of scattered and autonomous Portuguese in Bengala back into the service of the Estado da India.280 The Portuguese king, as a reward, presented to them the Order of Christ as well as making them Fidalgos da Casa Real.281

Min Yazagyi, however, was furious that the Portuguese traders had taken Sundiva. The stated reason was that the Portuguese at Chittagong and Dianga had benefited for years, in land grants and forgiven rent worth over thirty thousand cruzados, from being in the service of the Arakanese royal house; the Portuguese, however, took Sundiva, to which Arakan seems to have also had some claim, without his knowledge or permission.  

The most important reason for Min Yazagyi's anger, however, seems to be that Min Yazagyi felt that he could leave Philip de Brito in possession of a powerful fort in the east because there was also stationed there a rival mercenary contingent; but the Portuguese who now occupied Sundiva were relatively unchallenged and had no reason to follow the orders of the king of Arakan. To have such a potential threat to the security of his northwestern border was too much for Min Yazagyi to accept. Min Yazagyi was also influenced to a large extent by his Moslem advisors in his court, “who wished nothing more than to see the Portuguese name and Christianity in all the Orient extinguished.”  

Angry at the Portuguese, and fearful of being stuck between two different Portuguese strongholds, Min Yazagyi now sent a force of 150 jalias “in which there some catures and other great ships, with many falções and cameletes.” Further, Kedar Rai made an alliance with Min Yazagyi and sent 100 cosses, (“light boats suitable for fighting on the rivers and not at sea.”) against Sundiva as well.  

The Portuguese traders throughout northern Arakan sensed that a general reprisal against the Portuguese was about to take place. The Portuguese traders at Caranja and Dianga loaded up their ships with their trade goods and fled. Although Min Yazagyi’s uncle, the governor of Chittagong, reassured the Portuguese there that they were under no danger, the Chittagong Portuguese gathered things and began to flee as well. Manuel de Mattos’ foist and several other poorly fitted out jalias were not able to escape from Dianga before the Arakanese fleet blocked them in port in November 1602. Mattos’ ship soon found itself alone in

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285 Ibid.
286 Guerreiro, translation of the author, op. cit., vol. I, 286; cameletes and falções are two different varieties of small cannon.
288 Campos, op. cit., 69.
the middle of the Arakanese fleet, but in the heavy fighting that followed Mattos’ ship inflicted a great number of Arakanese deaths. The Portuguese lost one dead and seven lightly wounded, including Mattos. The Arakanese, however, offset their losses in men by the capture of four Portuguese vessels, with all the people and goods that were in them, thus making it appear that the Arakanese won the fight.290

The Arakanese, however, forgot about the remaining Portuguese after what they felt was a great Arakanese victory. For the next two days, until November 10, the Arakanese crews spent their time “plundering the vast booty of the naus” or on shore eating and drinking well into each night. The preoccupied Arakanese did not notice the arrival of Carvalho and a relief force from Sundiva. With Mattos’ force, the combined force of the Portuguese amounted to fifty ships, including “two foists, four caturas, three batéis,” and forty-one jalias. A surprise attack at eight a.m., caught the Arakanese naval force of 149 ships off-guard. Many of the Arakanese were killed, including the governor of Chittagong, Sinabadi, who was also Min Yazagyi’s brother-in-law. Those Arakanese who were not killed jumped off their ships and swam ashore. The Portuguese also captured all the Arakanese ships as well as guns, rockets, and artillery, including twelve “peças, cameletes and falcões.”291

The Arakanese at Chittagong, now feared a Portuguese reprisal. Much of the population fled, carrying their most valuable possessions. Sinabadi’s widow fled on an elephant. But the Portuguese did not follow up their victory and missed a great opportunity to seize undefended Chittagong. Min Yazagyi, however, still furious, took revenge on those Portuguese who had not yet left Arakan. Portuguese houses in the Portuguese trading stations were sacked and all Portuguese men, women, and children were thrown into prison. Portuguese Jesuit and Dominican missionaries were also harassed. Francisco Fernandes, of the Company of Jesus, for example, was stripped, blinded, shackled, and then thrown into prison where he died on November 14.292 Min Yazagyi, however, soon must have realized that he had overreacted and that his kingdom was placed in great danger by his hasty actions. He signed a peace treaty with the Portuguese and attempted to make amends by having the church and the residence of the Dominicans, which he ordered destroyed, rebuilt with Arakanese funds. Min Yazagyi also asked the missionaries to remain in Arakan.293

290 Ibid., 287.
291 Ibid
292 Ibid., 288.
293 Campos, op. cit., 70.
But Min Yazagyi only made peace with the Portuguese in Arakan and he determined to wipe out the autonomous Portuguese on strategic Sundiva. Carvalho, with sixteen ships, soon faced a huge Arakanese naval force. Carvalho, however, was victorious, putting 130 Arakanese ships out of action. Min Yazagyi was now even more furious than he was at his first defeat at Sundiva. This time, however, Min Yazagyi took out his anger against his admirals and captains. His captains, for example, were made to wear “women’s clothes as they behaved so effeminately.” Carvalho’s fleet, however, had suffered much damage and he realized that he could not withstand any more attacks by the Arakanese. The Portuguese and Christian islanders gathered their possessions and set up trade in other Bengalese ports. Even the four fathers of the Jesuit mission on Sundiva, led by Father Blasio Nunes, abandoned their church and reestablished themselves in Bengal. Min Yazagyi, however, was soon to meet Carvalho again, since a petty king of Chandican, eager to win the support of Min Yazagyi, beheaded Carvalho and sent the head to Mrauk-U.294

Chapter Conclusion

There are many views of why Lower Burma was such an easy target for Portuguese intervention. Phayre and Harvey seem to feel that De Brito had exploited the weakness of Lower Burma to seize control against the will of the Mons. Lieberman, however, seems to argue that while De Brito had taken advantage of Lower Burma’s disorganized state, his state fit into the traditional model of a coastal polity of Burma. Both views, in other words, seem to agree that the weakness of Lower Burma was taken advantage of by De Brito, but De Brito’s role is seen differently: for Phayre and Harvey,295 De Brito is an outsider in the eyes of the Mons; but Lieberman seems to imply that De Brito could potentially become an indigenous-style coastal ruler with indigenous Mon support if he could overcome his “political isolation” and abandon “his self-conscious patronage of Christianity.”296 Lieberman is probably correct and I have adopted his perspective: I have argued that De Brito was seen by the Mons as potentially a legitimate ruler if only he could provide stability to Lower Burma and organized government conducive to both the survival

294 Ibid., 73.
295 Harvey, History of Burma, 185-189, passim; Phayre, History of Burma, 124-129, passim.
296 Lieberman, op. cit., 204, 218.
of the people as well as the continued survival of the Buddhist sangha.\textsuperscript{297}

Nan-dá-bayin was not viewed by the Mons as a Mon leader, but rather as a Buddhist king. If the Mons would accept Thai, Burman, or even Arakanese leadership, why not Portuguese leadership? In the anarchy which now enveloped Lower Burma, the Mons were willing to be satisfied if some of the requirements for leadership were met and reserved some requirements for later when stability and safety had been achieved. De Brito, for example, may not have been Buddhist, but perhaps the Mons could accept him if he was the leader who could provide organized government and provide for the safe continuance of the Buddhist religion. Indeed, De Brito at this time only held Syriam and he would still have to prove whether or not he could provide for stability throughout Lower Burma and thus achieve legitimacy. But it seems clear that De Brito was seen as a possibility by the Mons. Nan-dá-bayin, a Mon, had failed to live up to the requirements of Buddhist kingship, now the Mons were willing to give someone, anyone, a chance.

\textsuperscript{297} Charney, \textit{op. cit.}, passim.\textsuperscript{298} Fariah y Sousa, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. III, 127.
Chapter IV
The First Portuguese Revolt Against Arakan, 1603

Xilimixa King of Arracam, who had possessed himself of the Crown of Pegu, to express his Gratitude to the Portugueses that served him, gave them the Port of Siriam, at the mouth of the River of the same Name...This Grant was obtained of the King for the Portugueses by Philip de Brito & Nicote, who most ingratefully proved false to that Prince, that had raised him from a vile Collier to his Favour and Esteem.

Fariah y Sousa

De Brito had conceived the not altogether unstatesmanlike project of building up in Lower Burma a province of the Portuguese Empire. He seems to have been of the stuff of empire-builders...de Brito managed to maintain his hold upon Siriam for thirteen years from 1600 to 1613, and to confine all Burma’s sea-borne commerce to that port alone.

D.G.E. Hall

These quotations indicate a controversy regarding the activities of the Portuguese mercenaries in Arakan’s pay at Syriam. How were the Portuguese at Syriam able to rebel against their Arakanese overlords? Why, at the height of Arakanese power, did Arakan suffer it greatest setback? After the steady growth of the Arakanese empire for a half-century, how were a handful of Portuguese mercenaries able to remove Arakanese overlordship?

In order to answer these questions, the Portuguese revolt at Syriam and how Min Yazagyi reacted to it should be examined. It is important to determine whether De Brito was able to do this because of problems in Min Yazagyi’s plans for expanding the Arakanese empire or because of other factors beyond Min Yazagyi’s control.

Min Yazagyi the Conqueror

Before examining the Portuguese revolt at Syriam, however, it is necessary to first look at how Min Yazagyi was reacting to his conquests. The Arakanese had come a long way, from the isolated inland state of Min Bin to the new expansive empire of Min Yazagyi. The Arakanese successfully adapted the Portuguese model to the Arakanese style of

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298 Fariah y Sousa

warfare and military technology and now possessed large numbers of Portuguese mercenaries whom the Arakanese now used to garrison both their western and their eastern frontiers. Min Yazagyi was in no rush to pursue further conquests; he now wanted to relax and enjoy the fruits of his conquests, especially his new Mon queen.300

Shin-nhoung was more than just a woman to Min Yazagyi. She was the representative of the First Toungoo Dynasty that had threatened Arakan for almost a century and had almost succeeded in conquering Mrauk-U in the mid-sixteenth century. Min Yazagyi perhaps saw her in the same way that the Arakanese kings before him viewed the stone figures that supposedly contained the spirits of the kings of their enemies: her submission to Min Yazagyi was a submission of all First Toungoo kings to his power. At the same time, however, Shin-nhoung also represented world recognition of Min Yazagyi’s new status as a Buddhist world-conqueror, a chakravartan. That she brought Min Yazagyi new prestige among the neighboring kings was shown by the king of Toungoo’s near-refusal of her to Min Yazagyi, since Shin-nhoung, and what she represented, was too good for the lowly Arakanese king. Min Yazagyi’s success in winning her, however, thus seemed to make Min Yazagyi’s greatness clear to everyone.

Min Yazagyi thus went to great lengths to please his new royal symbol. When Shin-nhoung was about to arrive at Mrauk-U, she refused to enter the city along the same path as Arakanese “commoners” did.301 Min Yazagyi responded by having a thirty-foot deep passage dug through Sanga-doung Hill.302 He also said nothing when Shin-nhoung ordered “huge celebrations that had never been seen before in his kingdom,”303 which must have presented a great strain on the treasury of the Arakanese state, but at the same time reinforced Min Yazagyi’s belief in his new-found greatness. Later when Shin-nhoung began to miss her homeland of Pegu, Min Yazagyi had a scaled-down version of the Shwe-maw-daw Pagoda of Pegu built to allay her sadness. Shin-nhoung continued to express discontent at being in Mrauk-U, so Min Yazagyi had

300 To be fair to Min Yazagyi, he was not totally negligent of some of his traditional kingly duties: repaired some of the pagodas of his predecessors, such as the Andaw, Sandaw, and Nandaw cetis at Sandoway, and even built a new pagoda, the Parabo pagoda. See Forchhammer, op. cit., 16.
301 She also made a fuss about her treatment relative to Min Yazagyi’s chief queen, who was at his honored right hand, while Shin-nhoung was at Min Yazagyi’s left. See Guerreiro, Payne trans., op. cit., 187.
303 Bocarro, op. cit., vol I, 127.
a huge pleasure park, the Mvin-mho-daung, built. This park was enormous and probably required an enormous amount of labor to build:

Mvin-mho-daung represented Mount Meru, surrounded by four large islands, and seven circular ranges of mountains varied in heights lower and lower until the last and the lowest one reaches the edges of the five great oceans, into which the waters of the five hundred rivers flow unceasingly. To this pleasure ground the King, his queen and Royal Household often used to repair and bathed in the cool and crystal waters of its lakes.304

Min Yazagyi also indulged in other luxuries. A good example is that of Min Yazagyi’s treasured pleasure boat, which was kept on the river next to Mrauk-U. As Fariah y Sousa has described it:

[It was] a ship which he kept in that Port for to take his Pleasure. It was of a vast bigness, and wonderful Workmanship, with several Apartments like a Palace, all covered with Gold and Ivory, and yet the curiosity of the Work surpassed all the rest.305

This boat was certainly a status symbol, or a piece of royal regalia, which probably enhanced the royal aura of Min Yazagyi and thus helped the perception of his legitimacy. But this ship also represents Min Yazagyi’s overwhelming preoccupation with himself at the expense of the good governance and leadership of his kingdom.

As Min Yazagyi began to involve himself more in the glory of his own personage, he also began to let the actual governance of his kingdom slip out of his hands and into the hands of his ministers and members of the royal family. This was dangerous: the advisors who surrounded him were not the same capable ministers who guided Min Bin and his other predecessors. Indeed, after Min Yazagyi returned from his conquest of Pegu, his prime minister, Maha Pyinnya-gyaw, who had guided Min Bin and succeeding kings in their reconstruction of the Arakanese military, died.306 Maha Pyinnya-gyaw had played a large part in the quick build-up of Arakanese strength and without him a vacuum

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306 Maha Pyinnya-gyaw was buried at Cape Negrais and a pagoda was built above his grave “in proof of the high esteem and respect shewn for him, and to commemorate his successful operations in Hanthawaddy.” The exact location of this pagoda on Cape Negrais became known as Pagoda Point. See San Baw U, “My Rambles,” *Journal of the Burma Research Society* 11 (1921): 167.
of authority developed under Min Yazagyi, which could not easily be filled adequately. Since Min Yazagyi now left his state to the control of his ministers, these ministers and members of the royal family engaged in court intrigues and plots to seize power were hatched by many in the Arakanese administration.

One example of the erosion of Arakanese solidarity under the king could be found within the royal family itself. As I mentioned in the first chapter of this thesis, the poet Ugga Byan was the tutor of the royal prince Min Khamaung. These two men were not content to simply live at the palace in a relaxed state of luxury and sexual debauchery:

The prince, Min-Kamaung, was wild and he found in his tutor a boon companion. They had a band of youthful supporters, Nga Ru, Nga Piu, Nga Gru, ten of them, and they lived that life of erudition and of the imagination wedded to fighting, brawling, feats of arms and of endurance, the tradition of which is familiar to us from a study of the European Renaissance.307

A few years before Min Yazagyi invaded Pegu, Ugga Byan, Prince Min-Kamaung, and their ten supporters had tried to overthrow Min Yazagyi. The plot was discovered, however, and this band of royal rebels fled to Pegu. Ugga Byan’s poetry was popular with the people, however, and so was Min Khamaung, so Min Yazagyi forgave them and allowed them to return to Mrauk-U. During the siege of Pegu, however, these men rebelled a second time and crossed the lines to join the defense of Pegu. When it was clear that Pegu would fall, however, this band of rebels “cut their way out again.” Min Yazagyi was so impressed by this “feat” that he again pardoned them.308

Ugga Byan and Min Khamaung now saw that Min Yazagyi was losing control over his kingdom to his ministers and decided to raise a general rebellion against him. Their band went to Sandoway, Min Bin’s old myo, which was “full of Pagoda slaves, Mahomedan prisoners of war confined there to sweep out the three sacred shrines,” Andaw, Sandaw, and Nandaw.309 Other forces hostile to Min Yazagyi were present at Sandoway as well: thousands of Mons captured by Min Yazagyi during the Arakanese conquest of Lower Burma were resettled here, and one thousand of them previously escaped, but had been caught and returned.310 Freeing them, Ugga Byan and Min Khamaung led the rebel

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308 Ibid., 221-2.
309 Ibid., 222.
310 Harvey, History of Burma, 141.
army against Mrauk-U. Min Yazagyi was shaken out of his retirement from the duties of the state when he heard that his son and Ugga Byan, who he had two times before pardoned for rebellion, were ready to unseat him. Min Yazagyi gathered an army and crushed the rebel army. Min Yazagyi forgave his son, Min Khamau ng, and instead of putting Ugga Byan to death, lopped off his hands and made him a slave to the Mahamuni shrine. Maurice Collis explains, however, that Ugga Byan’s punishment was much more tragic than it would immediately appear:

> It is difficult for us to understand the full significance of that punishment. It was the most complete social downfall that could overtake a man. For one who had strutted in King’s Courts, a poet and a hero, the equal of princes, it was death, and Ugga Byan accepted it as such.

Min Yazagyi then returned his undivided attention away from his kingdom and back to his queen.

Min Yazagyi began to indulge in his “aura of greatness” and was beginning to lose touch with the kingdom that Min Bin and his other predecessors had so carefully built. Certainly Min Yazagyi was among the most powerful Arakanese kings, but he was not the most capable. Further, the kingdom of Arakan was slipping out of his hands, and without the great prime minister who held everything together from king to king for a half-century, everything was about ready to fall apart. Indeed, Min Yazagyi’s empire was now characterized by court intrigues in Mrauk-U and the defense of his eastern and western frontiers was left to autonomous groups of Portuguese mercenaries who were likely, if the opportunity arose, to overthrow Arakanese tutelage.

### Court Intrigues

Many in Arakan saw Min Yazagyi’s growing disinterest in directly managing his empire and they probably saw the unsavoriness of the Portuguese whose power and influence began to grow unchecked by

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311 It may be possible that Philip de Brito and his Portuguese, who formed part of the royal bodyguard, had played a major role in saving Min Yazagyi’s position on the throne. Guerreiro, for example, says vaguely that De Brito “twice restored him to his throne, when he had been driven from it by his rebellious subjects.” See Guerreiro, Payne trans., op. cit., 194.

312 Collis, “An Arakanese Poem of the 16th Century,” 222; See Harvey, History of Burma, 141 for the condemnation of Ugga Byan to have his hands cut off.

royal restrictions. They were worried about leaving Syriam in the hands of Portuguese mercenaries and De Brito’s increasing wealth and power may have provoked jealousy on the part of not a few Arakanese courtiers. Min Yazagyi was advised by Arakanese courtiers and others to attack the Portuguese as soon as possible, before the Portuguese position at Syriam was too strong for Min Yazagyi to maintain his control over the important port. One of those who tried to push Min Yazagyi against De Brito was a Min Yazagyi favorite, called Rume. Rume was aided in his efforts by Moslems present in the Arakanese court as well as by representatives of the king of Massulipatam (a maritime state in Eastern India). The anti-Portuguese faction at the Arakanese court grew after the king of Massulipatam’s representatives bribed important officials at the Arakanese court with “large presents.”

Min Yazagyi became interested in their advice when they told him that if the Portuguese were removed from Syriam and an Islamic community was established, a pro-Arakanese Islamic community of over twenty thousand Moslems could be established within two years. As a further enticement, it was suggested by these courtiers that this Islamic community would send an annual tribute of two “bares” to Min Yazagyi. The anti-De Brito faction at the Arakanese court also persuaded Min Yazagyi to believe that the material wealth of Pegu was too great to place into the trust of the Portuguese, who they claimed were “very difficult to dislodge from a place where they had taken root:”

The country, they said, had lost its population, but not its mines of gold and silver and precious stones, and the rivers which enriched its soil still ran to the sea. His majesty should, therefore, consider well into whose hands he delivered this port. The Moors, he knew, would always be garibos, that is very submissive, with no other desire but to live under his protection.

The anti-De Brito faction made the argument that if Arakanese forces would retake Syriam, and then place it under Islamic local government, a valuable alliance with the king of Massulipatam could be maintained “forever.”

De Brito soon came to the Arakanese court to quiet the rumors of his plans to rebel against Min Yazagyi. De Brito claimed that the

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315 Ibid
316 Ibid
Moslems at Syriam were the real threat to Min Yazagyi’s power. De Brito explained that the Islamic power of Akbar the Great was ready to seize Arakanese possessions in Bengal and the Min Yazagyi depended upon Portuguese help to secure his kingdom. One the other hand, De Brito argued, if Min Yazagyi decided to attack the Portuguese at Syriam, he could not hope to win since the Portuguese were “lords of the sea.” While Min Yazagyi might kill the fifty Portuguese at Syriam, “a thousand would come to take their place; so that there would be perpetual warfare until he was destroyed.” De Brito’s argument was supported when the viceroy of Goa’s ambassador, Gaspar da Silva, arrived at the Arakanese court during De Brito’s visit. In order to further persuade Min Yazagyi of the necessities of remaining on good terms with the Portuguese, Da Silva made an open suggestion to De Brito that he should go to Goa and obtain a Portuguese fleet to fight Akbar in Bengal on Min Yazagyi’s behalf. 317

Once De Brito and Da Silva had left, however, the anti-De Brito faction at the Arakanese court recommenced their claims that De Brito was about to rebel. This time, they pointed out that De Brito was constructing fortifications. Min Yazagyi was not entirely convinced, but to be safe, he sent messengers with a letter which ordered De Brito to “pull down all that he had built.” De Brito took advantage of the court politics in Arakan by playing the game as the king of Massulipatam was. De Brito first bribed Min Yazagyi’s messengers to tell Min Yazagyi that he could not hope to defeat the Portuguese position at Syriam. Second, De Brito bribed important members of the Arakanese government who were close to Min Yazagyi. De Brito also tried to win Min Yazagyi’s favor by sending him a present with a golden girdle, which together were worth thirty-two thousand cruzados.318

**Binnya Dala**

Min Yazagyi’s representative at Syriam, a Mon named Binnya Dala,319 was suspicious of De Brito’s actions. Binnya Dala was the lord of the local town of Dala and had his own ambitions for local power, which made him extremely cautious in his dealings with the Portuguese mercenaries.320 Binnya Dala guessed correctly that De Brito and his Portuguese mercenary contingent had their own plans independent of

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317 Ibid., 196.
318 Ibid., 196-197.
319 Binnya is the Mon title for “lord of the land.” See Guerreiro, Payne trans., op. cit., 261ff.
320 Ibid., 198.
Arakanese policy, and his fears were confirmed in his eyes by the Portuguese request that he and the Moslem mercenary contingent be removed from Syriam. He apparently felt that Min Yazagyi would not believe him, since Min Yazagyi did not seem inclined to waste his energy to investigate Binnya Dala’s warnings. Binnya Dala thus decided to secure his own position at Syriam independent of the Portuguese: he built a small fortress, with sentry-boxes, and refused to allow any Portuguese to enter it, with the sole exception of a single Dominican priest, Frei Belchior da Luz, whom Binnya Dala trusted.321

De Brito saw his plans for taking control of Syriam away from the Arakanese endangered: he decided to get rid of Binnya Dala before Binnya Dala’s defense works were completely finished. De Brito gathered fifty Portuguese mercenaries322 and with three Portuguese officers, João d’Oliva, Paulo do Rego, and Salvador Ribeyro, planned to surprise Binnya Dala and take over Binnya Dala’s fortress. Binnya Dala, however, realized what the Portuguese were up to and decided to get them first. At night, with six hundred men led by large “flaming carts,” Binnya Dala encircled and then assaulted the Portuguese fortress and the San Dominican church. Binnya Dala’s attack was successful and the Portuguese were driven out of their feitoria (factory).323 A Portuguese counterattack on 27 February 1602, however, left thirty of Binnya Dala’s men dead. The Portuguese captured ninety more Moslems as well as twelve of Binnya Dala’s ships, twenty horses, and all of Binnya Dala’s supplies.324 The Portuguese forced Binnya Dala to retreat to the small island of Delá which was not too far distant. There, Binnya Dala erected another fortress with about one thousand of his men.325

Min Yazagyi was told of what happened and belatedly decided to act: he prepared a large Arakanese fleet to relieve Binnya Dala. Further, Min Yazagyi planned to send this fleet under the leadership of Min Khamaung, who would be crowned as the new emperor of Pegu once the Portuguese had been thrown out of Syriam.326 Binnya Dala, however, had made the mistake of seizing the treasury of the Digão (Digan) Pagoda in order to buy supplies for his men. This mistake gave De Brito the evidence that he needed to convince Min Yazagyi that the skirmish was Binnya Dala’s fault. Philip de Brito went quickly to Mrauk-U with this

322 Each to be paid a quartel of one hundred pardaos. See Bocarro, op. cit., vol. I, 128.
information informed Min Yazagyi as well as repeating the earlier Portuguese demands for Binnya Dala’s removal. At the same time that De Brito was accusing Binnya Dala of being a “a robber that steals from the house of God”\footnote{“um Ladrão que roubou a casa do mesmo Deus,” See Bocarro, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. I, 130.} to Min Yazagyi, however, De Brito was preparing to send word to various Mon princes that this was the time to rebel, under Portuguese leadership, against Arakanese control.\footnote{Mousinho, MacGregor trans., \textit{op. cit.}, 115; Fariah y Sousa, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. III, 128-129; Bocarro, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. I, 130.} De Brito kept his true intentions secret, and he accepted Min Yazagyi’s suggestion that good relations between the Portuguese and Binnya Dala should be resumed. To help the two parties negotiate, Min Yazagyi sent an escort of forty jalias with De Brito as well as several Arakanese princes to serve as intermediaries. Friendly relations between Binnya Dala and the Portuguese were resumed shortly after De Brito’s arrival at Syriam, although the Portuguese seem to be clearly established as the dominant party there.\footnote{Bocarro, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. I, 130.}

For the next two years, from 1601 to 1603, the Portuguese \textit{feitoria} at Syriam collected the duties from passing ships. A large share of these duties went directly to Min Yazagyi and substantially increased the supply of wealth for redistribution by Min Yazagyi to his subjects. De Brito collected duties on trade going up and done the river and sent them to Min Yazagyi. At the same time, however, De Brito engaged in private trade, the profits of which made him very wealthy. Although De Brito only had fifty other Portuguese,\footnote{Harvey, \textit{History of Burma}, 185.} his growing wealth soon attracted other Portuguese to Syriam, warranting De Brito’s invitation for representatives of the Society of Jesus to come to service the religious needs of the growing Portuguese population.\footnote{Boves, “Indian Observations,” in Purchas, \textit{Hakluytus Posthumus}, 217.} The Arakanese military also benefited from using Syriam as a way-station, since the Portuguese \textit{feitoria} not only possessed accommodations for the Portuguese mercenaries, foreign traders, and San Dominicans, but also accommodated Arakanese naval captains.\footnote{Bocarro, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. I, 130-1.}

De Brito realized, however, that it would not be very long before Min Yazagyi’s advisers would be able to persuade him to attack Syriam directly. At the same time, De Brito felt that the Portuguese had...
succeeded in erecting great defense works, and that he was now in a position to make himself an independent lord. De Brito sent representatives to local Mon myóza asking for alliances and peace pacts, while warning them not to ally themselves to Min Yazagyi, who was “the common enemy of all.” De Brito’s representatives were successful in obtaining promises for peace and mutual defense aid from the kings of Prome, Chiengmai, and several other smaller states. The representative sent to Ayudhya, however, met with failure: a Portuguese advisor at the Siamese court, Martim de Torres, warned the king of Ayudhya “to have nothing to do with Felippe de Brito.” While the king of Ayudhya made no promises of friendship to De Brito, he tried to avoid making De Brito an enemy: the Ayudhyans sent De Brito forty Portuguese, whom they held as captives. De Brito decided to go to Goa to convince the viceroy that further Portuguese help was needed, with the argument that this was an excellent opportunity for the Portuguese to take over the whole of Bengal as well.

Ribeyro Takes Control of Syriam

Min Yazagyi, however, now knew that he had been tricked. He was informed of the Portuguese fortifications and that he had been wrong to trust the Portuguese, “as such a great fabric could no longer hide itself under the name of merchants’ warehouse.” Min Yazagyi realized that he should have listened to the protests of the Moslems and requested that the king of Prome and Binnya Dala defeat the Portuguese at Syriam. To support this effort, Min Yazagyi sent a fleet of fifty jalias “with orders to take the new fortress of Serião, and kill all the Portuguese that were in it.” Binnya Dala’s son-in-law, Binnya Lao, led a large army to crush the Portuguese and the king of Prome subsequently sent six thousand men in a fleet under the command of Binnya Dala to unseat the Portuguese. Min Yazagyi hoped that this would be done before Philip de Brito returned: he hoped that “when Philip de Brito returned from India with his new new collection of forces, they (the Arakanese) would

333 The Portuguese fortress at this time, however, was only “a stronghold of wood filled in with earth.” See Mousinho, Macgregor trans., op. cit., 114.
335 Ibid., 199.
337 “com ordem que tomassem a nova fortaleza de Serião, e matassem todos os portuguezes que n’ella estavam.” See Bocarro, op. cit., vol. I, 131.
338 Mousinho, Macgregor trans., op. cit., 115.
thus be able to capture him and all those he brought with him more easily."339

De Brito had already left for Goa, according to his plan mentioned earlier. In his place, Salvador Ribeyro now commanded the Portuguese mercenaries at Syriam. Salvador Ribeyro blocked the Arakanese fleet’s path with three trading ships that were available at Syriam. The Portuguese were armed with “firearms, jars of powder, and fire-lances, for there were no cannon.” Ribeyro was determined to make a point of the coming skirmish:

He decided that in this first encounter with the native foe it imported much to show by his valour the small account in which he held them, and that the Portuguese should attack fiercely and fight with generous mettle to maintain the reputation they held all over the East; a reputation which, acquired by astonishing exploits, had made them the terror of wide provinces and warlike peoples, Persians, Moguls, Tartars and others whose valour oft in ancient times checked the current of Roman victory, and today sufficiently embarresses the conquering Turk.340

Ribeyro placed his ships at the narrowest part of the river to concentrate his firepower on the mass of enemy ships. He took the Arakanese by surprise:

[They were] attacked with such fury and determination that defend themselves as they might, they were caught before they knew it, and under a deadly shower of bullets and powder jars obliged to take to inglorious flight. Some threw themselves into the water, others jumped ashore, while those farther off took to their oars for safety and returned the way they had come, but with very different speed.341

The Portuguese destroyed forty Arakanese ships, killing many Arakanese and routing the rest of the Arakanese fleet. The Portuguese victory soon forced some of the indigenous population to question who was really in charge at Syriam:

341 Ibid., 116.
The story soon reached the neighboring Kingdoms, and produced various effects on their Princes, every one of whom felt sick with the fear which the Portuguese arms engendered foreseeing that the little flame might end in a conflagration which would consume everything.342

Ribeyro subsequently returned to the fort to prepare the defense-works for later attacks. Twenty days later Binnya Lao attacked Syriam again with six thousand men. Since the Portuguese seemed invincible by sea, Binnya Lao determined to attack the Portuguese by land. He also convinced the king of Prome to join him in the attack on Syriam. Before they had joined forces, however, Ribeyro captured a boat, sent by the king of Prome to Binnya Lao to inform him that Prome’s army was on its way. Ribeyro sank the boat and beheaded its crew and officers. Binnya Lao was threatened by the king of Toungoo as well, since the king of Toungoo had attacked him earlier in order to subject him to Toungoo’s control. While Binnya Lao had defeated the Toungoo army, he felt that it was probable that they would attack again. Making his headquarters near a “small tidal creek” near the fort of Syriam, Binnya Lao hesitated, waiting for the king of Prome’s army in order to attack Syriam while at the same time preparing to defend himself from the king of Toungoo.343

Ribeyro decided to attack Binnya Lao since his army was obviously in disarray. He placed four wounded Portuguese near Binnya Lao’s headquarters at night and instructed them to beat drums and set off carbines when they saw rockets explode in the enemy camp. Ribeyro and his remaining men prepared to attack Binnya Lao, who expected the least trouble from the Portuguese since he knew of their small numbers: Binnya Lao had not even posted any sentries to watch for a possible Portuguese attack. The Portuguese snuck through Binnya Lao’s camp while everyone was asleep and, Ribeyro, entering Binnya Lao’s quarters, killed the Arakanese leader. The Portuguese fired a signal rocket and the four wounded Portuguese began to beat drums and fire the carbines, leading the Arakanese to believe that they were being attacked by the king of Toungoo fled in disarray. The Portuguese then burned down the enemy encampment. The king of Prome retreated from his position when heard of Binnya Lao’s death. He also recanted his alliance with Binnya Lao:

When the fame of it spread, the King of Prome sent an envoy to Captain Salvador Ribeyro to assure him that the orders of his army were not to injure him but to fight the dead Lao, for setting up,

342 Ibid
343 Ibid., 116-7
private subject as he was, to be King of Pegu; wherefore he thanked our Captain for ridding him of such an enemy, and cutting down in time the arrogance of a man hated by all for his ill-founded designs.\textsuperscript{344}

**Binnya Dala’s Siege**

Binnya Dala was furious and wanted to revenge the death of his son-in-law Binnya Lao. He gathered munitions, supplies, and over eight thousand men and surrounded Syriam. In order to prevent an easy Portuguese victory, Binnya Dala took great precautions:

To guard against the fury of the sudden attacks which he was told it was their habit to make when hard beset, he made another fort close to ours, exceeding ours greatly in size, but not less strong; for he had a great number of men, and every day more joined him, so that it might be called a veritable town rather than a fort. There were wide roads in it, and spacious squares, and public buildings for the residence both of Banha Dalá and the Ximins, or captains, and other officers of war and justice. It was enclosed by a massive palisade of wood, bound by two courses of timber and filled in with earth, and was so strong between the courses that it threw back the balls of the cannon which battered it...At its base was a hollow that ran all the way round; with raised approaches of firm earth to the gates required for the convenience of the inhabitants; these gates being watched during the day and shut at night, and always in charge of a good and trusty guard.\textsuperscript{345}

Binnya Dala’s siege continued for eight months. His attacks on the Portuguese came every night and only when it was dark, so as to minimize the effect of cannon, hand-grenades or “hand-bombs,” and musket-fire. In addition, the Portuguese were unable to concentrate their firepower since Binnya Dala’s men attacked from all sides at once. The effect of Binnya Dala’s siege was terrifying for the Portuguese:

The enemy employed every possible artifice to inflict loss on our men. Sometimes they would first of all discharge thirteen pieces of artillery which they had in their fort, and with which they overshot ours if they took elevated aim; next followed a great noise of shouting, beating of kettledrums and other instruments of war, and rattle of musketry, and presently the enemy themselves would come

\textsuperscript{344} Ibid., 117-118.
\textsuperscript{345} Ibid., 119-120.
with a rush under cover of strong mantles made of wood, and some with a kind of paveses, or broad shields, and passing the hollow not without many losses would begin to come up our walls, only with great trouble to be beaten back. At other times they crept up in silence, unperceived until they began at close quarters to strike at the little band of soldiers...346

The Portuguese defenders had become demoralized. They were afraid that since the fort at Syriam had not been built with the blessing of Goa, that no help would come. Soon, many of the Portuguese began to desert. The remaining Portuguese soldiers “took a mutinous tone” demanding that they abandon the fort since they could not defend it for very much longer. But Ribeyro encouraged his remaining followers. He argued that the viceroy would send help and if he did not, then Ribeyro would abandon the fort and they would all depart. As a guarantee against desertion en masse, Ribeyro had the ships in the port burned, blaming it on the enemy.347

After eight months of siege, however, reinforcements arrived. Although it is unclear whether these were reinforcements sent by Goa or a chance passing of Portuguese ships, the defenders at Syriam were saved.348 A Portuguese merchant ship arrived at the sandbar and a few days later, so did seven more Portuguese merchant ships as well as five Portuguese galleys. The Portuguese ships brought eight hundred Portuguese mercenaries. Help came from the Mons as well, and in one case a Mon ximin (captain), Barragao, joined the Portuguese with fifteen hundred of his men.349 With his new men and supplies, Ribeyro felt that he was strong enough to lift the siege.350

Ribeyro quickly prepared for an attack on Binnya Dala’s camp. He gathered together all the adventurers and made them pledge to follow his orders. Then Ribeyro,

got in order plenty of ladders and broad and strong planks, to afford the soldiers a way across the hollow to the enemy’s fort, and prepared a great quantity of powder-jars in cases, for the orderlies to carry among those who had to throw them. He also gave orders to

346 Ibid
347 Ibid., 122.
348 Scott argues that these Portuguese forces may have only been an “opportune passing call by some of the viceroy’s ships, for they soon left.” See J.G. Scott, Burma From the Earliest Times to the Present Day, (London: T. Fisher Unwin Ltd., 1924): 128.
rough-hew several thick logs, what the ancients called *arietes*, and with rams, to break in the gates when that time came.351

Although the preparations for the attack had been conducted in secrecy, a Moslem “of the king of Arakan’s following” told Binnya Dala of what Ribeyro was planning. Binnya Dala then evacuated all the women and non-essential personnel from his fort. Since the powder-jars would likely inflict the most damage upon his forces, Binnya Dala had huge posts set up inside his walls and strung between them huge nets which would catch the powder-jars and send them flying back at the Portuguese when they attacked.352

Ribeyro divided his forces into three sections. The first (and the main) section consisted of five hundred Portuguese and was under the command of João Pereyra, although Ribeyro would accompany this section as well. The first section also carried the equipment necessary to scale the walls. The second section consisted of one hundred and fifty Portuguese and was under the joint-command of Jorge de Barros de Azevedo and Sebastião Serrao de Anaya. This section was to occupy the ruined pagodas in front of the enemy’s main gate, in order to prevent any major counterattack against the main section. The third section also consisted of one hundred and fifty Portuguese, as well as one thousand Mons, under the command of Simão Barbosa Aranha. This section was to make a show of force from the tidal creek in a feint and thus draw off a large portion of the enemy from the main area of attack.353

The morning of the attack, just before dawn, the three sections left the fort by different gates. When the attack began, however, the Portuguese were taken by surprise by the preparations Binnya Dala made after being warned of the impending attack by the Arakanese informant. When Captain João Pereyra’s section scaled the enemy walls, the powder-jars they had thrown came flying back, killing many, including Pereyra, and causing many other Portuguese to retreat. In order to prevent a full-scale rout, Ribeyro joined the fighting, scaled the walls, and had his men cut through the netting, which allowed the powder-jars to fall in. After the powder-jars had taken their effect, Ribeyro and his men jumped into the fort. With men inside the fort, covered by musket-fire and powder-jars from their compatriots still on the enemy’s walls, the Portuguese took the main gate and opened it to the remaining Portuguese of the main section. The section under Simão Barbosa Aranha, which was posted at the tidal creek waited while

351 Mousinho, MacGregor trans., *op. cit.*, 125.
352 Ibid
353 Ibid
Ribeyro’s section attacked. Becoming impatient, however, Aranha attacked, leading the enemy to think that he was being attacked from all sides. Since Barbosa’s forces were mainly Mons, Binnya Dala’s forces felt that it would be easier to get through them than through Ribeyro’s Portuguese. Thus the enemy and Binnya Dala overran the forces at the tidal creek in order to make their escape.\(^{354}\)

**Binnya Dala’s Counterattack**

The Portuguese force, however, soon diminished in numbers. First, the barter-trade between the Portuguese, Toungoo, and Prome merchants was now finishing up for the year and these merchants soon left.\(^{355}\) Further, feeling that Portuguese might no longer be challenged in Pegu, Ribeyro released all of his men to do as they wished; only two hundred of the men which the viceroy had sent remained.\(^{356}\) In addition, Ribeyro could depend upon Ximin Barragao and his Mon contingent.\(^{357}\)

The Arakanese returned again, however, “with many moving Castles, and several forts of fireworks.”\(^{358}\) These “moving castles” must have been very frightening to the Portuguese:

> [Binnya Dala] constructed many huge cars of three and four storeys, supported on strongest axles with enormous wheels, to be pushed along, or pulled with ropes, by a great number of men protected by long thick shields to enable them to lay the machine close alongside our Fort wall in spite of carbines and burning powder-jars. These tall towers were made of very dry timber, and stuffed with pitch, tar, and powder, so to blaze freely when set on fire close to the walls of the Portuguese Fort, which likewise were of wood...Moreover the Banha provided many men with mattocks, baskets, shovels and other instruments to fill in the hollow.\(^{359}\)

Ribeyro’s men, however, were short of gun-powder and powder-jars. Despite this, Ribeyro gave inspiring speeches to his men and set about preparing any materials he could for defense. Boiling cauldrons of oil and water were begun, rocks were gathered to drop on the enemy, and missiles were prepared. In addition, Ribeyro saw to the aid of the Ximin

\(^{354}\) Ibid., 127.
\(^{355}\) Ibid., 128.
\(^{356}\) Fariah y Sousa, *op. cit.*, vol. III, 130.
\(^{357}\) Mousinho, MacGregor trans., *op. cit.*, 128.
\(^{358}\) Fariah y Sousa, *op. cit.*, vol. III, 130.
\(^{359}\) Mousinho, MacGregor trans., *op. cit.*, 128-129.
Barragao, who kept residence in defense-works which adjoined the Portuguese fortress to the south, along the river. Many Portuguese were stationed here and Ribeyro sometimes helped in person.360

Binnya Dala, however, realized that the section of the Portuguese fortress occupied by Ximin Barragao was the least fortified part of the Portuguese defense works and determined to make his main strike here. Binnya Dala began his attack after sunset. Five hundred enemy horsemen gathered on a ridge in front of the fort and then eight thousand soldiers of Binnya Dala’s army approached “with a din and hubbub of shouts, war-cries, and martial instruments of every kind.” Subsequently, Binnya Dala’s men drew up on all sides of the Portuguese fort and threw spears, fired their arquebuses and threw fire-bombs. Meanwhile, Binnya Dala had many of his men gather in small boats in order to sneak upon Barragao’s section of the fort. Although Binnya Dala’s men succeeded two times in entering Barragao’s defense-works they were repulsed both times.361

Ribeyro had fifty of his men established as a reinforcement brigade under his command. This brigade went around the fort looking for weak spots in the defense. Since he saw Barragao’s section as the most vulnerable part of the fortress, Ribeyro had several huge trenches dug to prevent the approach of Binnya Dala’s moving castles. So vital were the Mons to his defense that Ribeyro often stationed himself among them during the fighting.362

As the Portuguese position became desperate, a “fiery meteor” appeared which frightened all of the Arakanese into retreat. As one Portuguese observer interpreted the meteor:

...when the enemy’s attack was hottest and our men stood bravely to their ramparts, the Divine Majesty caused to appear above the Fort a wheel of fire equal to the circuit of the walls. Little by little it rose, growing ever larger, and then settled down with bright and burning flames upon the machines and the encampment of the enemy, to their great fear, and great comfort of our men, who seeing in the marvel the mercy of God’s pitiful hand, gave thanks and discharged their carbines and cannon with loud cries of joy and gladness. The assailants, interpreting the sign for a sure and veritable token of their own destruction, in the greatest terror abandoned their proud machines and their encampment with all their munitions, which our soldiers burned. The Banha, in despair

360 Ibid., 129-130.  
361 Ibid  
362 Ibid
of attaining to royal dignity and fear of losing his own lordship. withdrew dejected to places of safety...363

The Arakanese left behind their moving castles and fireworks, which the Portuguese destroyed.364

Binnya Dala first fled to his own territory of Dala, but local chieftains associated with Ribeyro harassed him into seeking refuge with the King of Prome. Other Arakanese and First Toungoo refugees from the Portuguese victory, fled to the ruler of Chismim (Bassein), which was a vassal of the king of Arakan. When this vassal ruler heard that the Portuguese had revolted against Arakan, he had his city and his feitoria fortified and entered into negotiations with the king of Arakan about what he should do. Min Yazagyi must have worried about losing his last foothold in Lower Burma, for he soon sent small pieces of artillery and musketeers to the Binnya of Cosmim so that the Portuguese would not be able to take over his city.365

Ribeyro, for his part, made public declarations to the effect that all who had fought against him would be forgiven if they gave him their loyalty. He also took economic measures to reestablish the prosperity of Pegu.366 As the result of Ribeyro’s victory and his subsequent reforms, the Portuguese now won the support of many of the people of Pegu. Soon, the Portuguese had the support of over two thousand Mon men, who brought their families with them to settle in Syriam.367

The Defeat of King Massinga

In May, ships from Goa arrived. They carried letters from the viceroy and the King of Portugal. In these letters, De Brito was mistakenly given credit for Ribeyro’s victories, even though De Brito was in Goa the whole time. Ribeyro, however, felt that once the truth were known, he would be credited, and he continued to maintain the Portuguese position at Syriam. Ribeyro sent his own accounts of all that had happened to the viceroy.368

At the same time, the Portuguese won a victory over King Massinga of Camelan. Binnya Lao wrote to Massinga, telling him of the poor condition of Pegu and how, if the king would come with an army, he

363 Mousinho, MacGregor trans., op. cit., 130.
366 Mousinho, MacGregor trans., op. cit., 133.
368 Ibid., vol. I, 131.
could make himself king of Pegu as well. Binnya Lao pledged his support, as well as that of the native inhabitants. Massinga saw this as a great opportunity to take the throne of Pegu, to which he seems to have had some right: he is said to have been “of the royal line of Pegu.”

He brought his “family and household,” ten thousand soldiers, as well as attendants and women, in 150 ships to Pegu. Massinga stopped, however, at an important pagoda about a league from the Portuguese fort for ceremonies to inaugurate his takeover.

Ribeyro heard of Massinga’s landing and decided that his men, Portuguese or Mon, would not be able to stand another siege. Thus, Ribeyro decided to attack Massinga before Massinga could attack him. Leaving one hundred Portuguese in the fort, Ribeyro took one hundred and fifty men armed with carbines and artillery, in fifteen small boats down-river. There they waited along the rivers-edge, unseen by Massinga’s boats. Ribeyro sneaked upon Massinga’s fleet at a time that most of Massinga’s men were at the pagoda in ceremony. Massinga, however, had finished opening the ceremony and had returned to his fleet, defended by only a fraction of his men. Ribeyro’s men easily defeated them:

Our men attacked with great noise of carbines and artillery, but hardly had need of their wonted dash on occasions of the kind, for the unexpected alarm threw the enemy in a panic and they fled after very little resistance. In the victor’s hands were left the multitude of nearly empty boats and seven pieces of artillery. Those who had landed, not feeling safe where they were, left their devotions and took to the jungle, trusting to its dense thickets to escape with their lives.

Massinga was killed and his territories were devastated so much, that no further threat was expected from this area.

As a result of this victory, Ribeyro soon accepted the support of fifteen binnyas and two hundred or so ximins, as well as that of thousands of Mon refugees who now came to Syriam for safety. By October 1613, Syriam had around fifteen thousand people engaged in agriculture. Ribeyro then received offers of friendship from the

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369 Mousinho, MacGregor trans., op. cit., 132.
370 Ibid., 132.
371 Ibid., 133.
372 Ibid., 133.
374 Mousinho, MacGregor trans., op. cit., 133; Guerreiro, Payne trans., op. cit., 195.
Burmese kingdoms as well. The king of Toungoo, for example, sent an
ambassador with five hundred horses and a gold headpiece inscribed
with “King Massinga,” as a trophy for Ribeyro. The king of Ava sent
“three pieces of orange-coloured damask.” The king of Chiengmai sent six
golden roses and the king of Prome sent a congratulatory gift as well.375
With the help of the increased population around Syriam, as well as that
of the masons and quarriers sent from Goa, Ribeyro built a new fortress
at Syriam. While Min Yazagyi was frantically trying to rebuild his military
forces, which he had allowed to be destroyed fruitlessly under poor
military commanders, five thousand Mons and Portuguese worked on
their new fortress at Syriam each day. Soon the Portuguese fortress
seemed impregnable:

[Ribeyro] marked a hillock which overlooked the wide and
spacious plain on the bank of the river, having near it a well with
a plentiful flow of good water. There he commenced the
foundations of a good Fort, which he built almost in the form of a
square, with a bastion at each corner...he made a double bastion,
which as it stands higher and is constructed bigger, appears as
the citadel of that Fort...The walls of the bastions are eleven spans
thick, filled in with earth up to the artillery platform with its
necessary portholes. The walls elsewhere are made of stone...the
waves...break against our two bastions of Santa Cruz and S.
Filippe, and between them the ship that come to that harbour can
discharge and take in cargo in perfect safety under the protection
of the artillery...the result is a Fort which, as it cannot be
commanded by hostile artillery, can with ease not only defend
itself but also take the offensive against the enemy.376

De Brito in Goa

But Ribeyro was not to rule Syriam for long; shortly after his final battle
with Binnya Dala, De Brito was preparing to return to Syriam from Goa.
Before he had left Goa, De Brito had won the favor of the viceroy. But for
some time, the viceroy’s advisors were divided about what the viceroy
should do. Some argued that the Portuguese had no right to Syriam,
while others said that obtaining Syriam for the Estado da India was too
great of an opportunity to pass up. Some even argued that the
Portuguese fortress at Syriam should be razed and control of the city
given to the king of Chiengmai who, as Nan-dá-bayin’s brother, was the
legitimate heir to the throne of Pegu. The viceroy arrived at a compromise

375 Mousinho, MacGregor trans., op. cit., 135.
376 Ibid., 136-7.
and ordered an ambassador to the court of Chiengmai, with the provision that the Portuguese would remain in control of Syriam, but that the income belonged to the king of Chiengmai (presumably with the deduction of the costs of the Portuguese occupation). The viceroy, seeing great returns from the seemingly blessed De Brito, allowed De Brito to marry his niece. These “great returns” were manifold and have been provided by Guerreiro. A closer connection between De Brito and Goa, for example, would bring thousands of Portuguese “outlaws and refugees in this area” back within the Portuguese fold. Such a connection would increase government revenues by the establishment of new factories. Pegu was also a rich timber region, providing quality shipbuilding timber at a cheap cost. Pegu and Bengala, Guerreiro continues, could also serve as a base from which arms and supplies could be sent in any season to Portuguese possessions in the archipelago. The viceroy gave De Brito the titles of General of the Conquest of Pegu as well as Commander of Syriam and much war material, soldiers, and six ships (three galeotas, one galé, and two navios) with many good captains, including Mathias de Rez, Bernardo Soares de Albergaria, João Zuzarte Tição, Antonio Zombo d’Almeida, Francisco Mendes de Crasto, and Paulo do Rego. Further, priests for the “administration of Christianity” and “instructors for casting artillery” were also provided by the viceroy. De Brito wanted the crown of Pegu for himself, although he would claim it in the name of his own king, the king of Portugal and Spain. De Brito was also

379 Guerreiro, Payne trans., op. cit., 201-3.
381 Bocarro, op. cit., vol. I, 133; Ayres de Saldhana, however, seems to have reported that the six ships given to De Brito were really five navios and one galé. One of the uses for these ships seems to have been Saldhana’s order to De Brito to subjugate the “neighboring ports.” See Documento 5, 2 March 1605, letter from the king of Portugal to the viceroy of India, Dom Martin Affonso de Castro, in Documentos Remetidos, vol. I, 23.
382 Bocarro, op. cit., vol. I, 133.
given jurisdiction over Bengala in return for his promise to bring the Portuguese renegades living there back into the service of the *Estado da India*.385

Chapter Conclusion

The Portuguese revolt at Syriam seems to indicate that there were problems in the way in which Min Yazagyi built his empire or in the way he decided to maintain it. An important problem was that Min Yazagyi became too dependent upon mercenaries to maintain his control of Arakan’s new possessions. He probably did this because the Portuguese and other mercenaries were considered to be the only forces a king had who would be directly loyal to the central court, as explained earlier. While previous Arakanese kings made effective use of mercenaries, these mercenaries never before replaced actual Arakanese garrisons. In the case of Chittagong, for example, a Portuguese settlement was already established and these Portuguese were eager to obtain the trade concessions which the Arakanese had offered. The Portuguese at Chittagong, then, had a reason to remain loyal to Arakan. The Portuguese at Syriam, however, merely handled the official trade for the Arakanese. Placing autonomous Portuguese mercenaries in a rich region, it seems to me, was a mistake on the part of Min Yazagyi, since it would only be a matter of time before greed would affect the loyalty of these Portuguese. Further, even at Chittagong, the Arakanese maintained a large Arakanese garrison. At Syriam, by contrast, the Portuguese were accompanied by other mercenaries who were often at odds with the Portuguese.

While Min Yazagyi thus had no means of guaranteeing mercenary loyalty so far from Arakan, he was also placing too much trust in the Portuguese. There had been several indications that the Portuguese intended to revolt against his authority, but Min Yazagyi chose to ignore the warning signals. He refused to take precautions when Binnya Dala warned him of what the Portuguese were planning to do. And when the Portuguese openly revolted and planned to attack the Moslem mercenaries, Min Yazagyi chose instead to believe De Brito. This overwhelming trust in Portuguese good faith was a clear departure from the traditional caution which previous Arakanese kings took in using their Portuguese mercenaries.

At the same time that Min Yazagyi was allowing his Portuguese mercenaries more autonomy, Min Yazagyi was also leaving the affairs of

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his kingdom increasingly to courtiers, while he played in a pleasure palace with his Mon queen. Min Yazagyi had no plans for expanding his empire after taking Pegu. Indeed, Min Yazagyi felt that this one victory, the sacking of his traditional enemy Pegu, had brought him both Arakanese and worldly legitimacy as a king. This is all that he wanted and he settled down to enjoy the fruits of his labors rather then assuring Arakan continued control of his expanded empire. Min Yazagyi then abandoned all of his concerns of the maintenance of the Arakanese state to his ministers. Unfortunately, he did not realize that these were not the same, capable group of men who had surrounded Min Bin. Min Yazagyi overestimated the loyalty of his Portuguese mercenaries: The Portuguese acted treacherously when they revolted against Min Yazagyi, since he had treated them well and had trusted them with holding Syriam for him. On the other hand, Min Yazagyi was negligent in giving the Portuguese the opportunity to revolt.

Arakanese attempts to retake Syriam were hampered by Min Yazagyi's lack of care in selecting capable leaders for these expeditions or even in allocating sufficient resources for such a campaign. At no time, for example, did Min Yazagyi send sufficient naval support for his troops when they attempted to retake Syriam and he left the command of the whole operation to Binnya Dala and Binnya Lao, who had already shown themselves to be incompetent as a military commanders. These two commanders wasted their best men in poorly-coordinated attacks and often simply attacked with no clear plan at all. Men and ships were rarely used in any sort of joint-assault on the Portuguese fortress and the Arakanese military leadership did not take advantage of their superior numbers in terms of either men or guns. At the same time, the Portuguese at Syriam were led by a very capable military leader who knew how to use a combination of Portuguese firepower and Mon auxiliaries effectively. Ribeyro won his victories with strategic concentrations of small numbers of troops, such as his placement of Portuguese vessels at the narrowest part of the river, or was due to the skillful use of surprise attacks. Ribeyro's victories were the result of strategic and not tactical superiority, since Ribeyro won skirmishes even when his men had no cannon or lacked sufficient firearms. Further, Ribeyro's plans were usually made possible with the help of Mon troops armed with traditional weapons, such as arrows and spears. The help of these Mon troops, for example, was essential during Binnya Dala's siege of the Portuguese fortress and Ribeyro depended upon them so much that they were placed at the weakest points of the Portuguese fortress. The Portuguese victory was thus due Ribeyro's ability to effectively coordinate the fighting skill of these Mons with Portuguese ships and firepower.
Chapter V
The Great War: De Brito’s Kingdom and the Drain on Arakanese Resources, 1603-1607

De Brito had conceived the not altogether unstatesmanlike project of building up in Lower Burma a province of the Portuguese Empire. He seems to have been of the stuff of empire-builders...de Brito managed to maintain his hold upon Syriam for thirteen years from 1600 to 1613, and to confine all Burma’s sea-borne commerce to that port alone.

D.G.E. Hall

After 1600 a change for the worse overcame the Portuguese. When their country was united with Spain and her resources were squandered on the European struggle in the Netherlands, she was unable to reinforce her eastern shipmen. The Dutch and English had arrived and threatened trade rivalry. In consequence the Portuguese were transformed from assured traders into cut-off and desperate adventurers. They realized that their empire of the sea was doomed, that being unable to look for help from Europe, they had only their own wits and swords to uphold them and that situated on the borders of great oriental states, so many thousand miles from home, the duration of their prosperity could but be short. They became pirates. The Viceroy of Goa’s control over them, always slight, now disappeared.

Maurice Collis and San Shwe Bu

These quotations indicate that De Brito was able to win some sort of legitimacy as the king of Syriam and that he was able to expand and strengthen his hold over Lower Burma. But how did De Brito expand his control of Lower Burma in the face of strong Arakanese attacks on his position over a four-year period and by what means did he ensure his political, military, and economic position at Syriam? Further, what did De Brito’s success, and Min Yazagyi’s failure, mean to Arakan?

The Return of De Brito

De Brito left Goa for Syriam in December 1603 with sixteen galleys and three hundred Portuguese soldiers. Upon his return to Syriam, De

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387 Collis & San Shwe Bu, “Arakan’s Place in the Civilization of the Bay,” 44.
388 Guerreiro, Payne’s trans., op. cit., 199-200.
Brito attempted to put things in order. He strengthened the fort, built a church and “marked out the boundaries of his capital.” Through his spies, Min Yazagyi soon learned of Philip de Brito’s return and, despite his attacks on Ribeyro, sent his greetings to De Brito as well as promises of rewards and honors. When Bartholomew Nogueira, the ambassador of the viceroy of Goa, arrived at Mrauk-U from Syriam, Min Yazagyi pretended that nothing was wrong and kept up the appearances of an undefeated conqueror. Min Yazagyi greeted Nogueira “with demonstrations of great happiness and love,” without indicating his hatred for De Brito.

De Brito arranged the feitoria’s (customhouse or factory) regulations according to instructions he carried from the viceroy and ordered that all ships attempting to trade with Pegu or to use the waters to “make their entries” at Syriam. De Brito had the orders requiring Portuguese and other maritime merchant traffic to stop at Syriam published throughout the major ports of Southeast Asia, including Martaban, Tavoy, Tenasserim, and Junkceylon island. When some trading ships from the Coromandel coast refused to comply, De Brito sent Dom Francis de Moura with six ships, which successfully captured the vessels. A similar action was taken off the Tenessarim coast against

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389 Scott, *op. cit.*, 129.
392 By these orders, De Brito was rewarded with a third of the income of the feitoria and control of the feitoria for life. In the case of his death, his wife, Dona Luiza de Saldhana would receive compensation as deemed necessary by the viceroy of India. Further, Dona Luiza would then be remarried at the “pleasure of the viceroy” to a man of “quality” who would serve as captain of the fortress. De Brito’s son, however, would be taken care of until he was an adult. Then, De Brito’s son by Dona Luiza would take over control of the feitoria. See Document 5, 2 March 1605, Letter from the king of Portugal to the viceroy of India, Dom Martin Afonso de Castro, in *Documentos Remettidos*, vol. I, 23; Document 27, 23 January 1607, letter from the king of Portugal to the viceroy of India, Dom Martin Afonso de Castro, in *Documentos Remettidos*, vol. I, 111.
393 Bocarro, *op. cit.*, 135; these orders were clarified by the king of Portugal in a provision made on 13 September 1608, in which all ships of the Estado da India, east of the Coromandel coast were required to stop at Syriam and pay taxes. See Document 352, 15 March 1613. Letter from the king of Portugal to the viceroy of India, Dom Jeronymo de Azevedo, in *Documentos Remettidos*, vol. II, 394.
two trading vessels from Aceh. De Brito’s forces took ships from other nations as well, including Cambay, Surrat, and Massulipatam:

Most of [De Brito’s] energy went in preventing smuggling; that is to say, in order to get his customs tolls, he kept ships cruising to prevent foreign craft from putting in anywhere in Burma save at Syriam. Syriam was already the chief port for the interior and now she became the only one. It made his fortune, but it disgusted the interior which had to pay increased prices on all foreign goods owing to such unprecedented customs efficiency.

Further, De Brito was ordered to prevent the Moslems, Turks, and Dutch from taking possession of the port of Syriam and presumably to prevent them from participating in the trade at Syriam as well. De Brito’s monopoly of trade of Lower Burma was so effective that:

It was not expected...that during the period of his ascendancy the [English] East India Company would entertain any serious thought of trading to Burma.

Philip de Brito’s success seems to have fostered a poor state of affairs between Goa and Chiengmai: although the Portuguese representative, frei Francisco da Annunciação, had promised the revenues of Syriam to the king of Chiengmai, De Brito had not yet provided them, and it did not appear as if De Brito ever would.

The Arakanese-Toungoo Alliance

Min Yazagyi, who lost the eastern section of his empire to the Portuguese while he was busy with his Mon queen, now decided to recapture his lost provinces in Lower Burma. At the end of 1603, the king of Toungoo complained to Min Yazagyi because he heard of De Brito’s plans to seize
some of his “outlying provinces” which were near Syriam.\footnote{Damrong, “Our Wars,” 206; It is interesting that the king of Toungoo would seek Min Yazagyi’s help at this time, because it appears that Min Yazagyi’s fighting abilities were now questioned in Lower Burma. Indeed, Philip de Brito observed that “as far as the King of Arracam is concerned, even the Pegus in our fortress go out and seize his cattle, there being none to protect them.” See Guerreiro, Payne trans., op. cit., 205.} Min Yazagyi then proposed to the king of Toungoo that they make an alliance against De Brito, since De Brito was really a threat to them both.\footnote{Nai Thien, op. cit., 65.} The proposal was carried to Toungoo by an ambassador and twenty small ships.\footnote{Fariah y Sousa, op. cit., vol. III, 132-133.} The two kings agreed to attack De Brito together: Min Yazagyi would attack Syriam by sea, while the king of Toungoo would attack Syriam by land.\footnote{Nai Thien, op. cit., 65.} The king of Toungoo then prepared an army of three hundred elephants, three thousand horses, and fifty thousand men,\footnote{I doubt the size of the Toungoo army was really as great as we are told in Hmannan Yazawindaungyi. (Nai Thien tr., 65). De Brito, for example, around this time estimated the king of Toungoo’s forces to be about three thousand Mons, fifteen thousand Burmese, and eight hundred cavalry, although no mention is made of elephants. I would guess that the actual figure for the Toungoo invasion force was probably one-fifth that given by Hmannan Yazawindaungyi. See Guerreiro, Payne trans., op. cit., 204.} who would be led by the upayaza, Nat-shin-naung.\footnote{Nai Thien, op. cit., 65.} The Toungoo force “crossed the hills” and was to march along the Irrawaddy “to insure that Prome kept faith and joined in the venture.”\footnote{Scott, op. cit., 129.} Min Yazagyi’s force consisted of one hundred warships and one hundred transport ships, under the command of Min Yazagyi’s eldest son, Min Khamaung, the Arakanese upayaza.\footnote{Nai Thien op. cit., 65; De Brito, however, in a letter sent to the king of Portugal, dated 17 October 1605, claimed that the Arakanese forces consisted of seven hundred ships and seventeen thousand men: a clear exaggeration. The king of Portugal refers to this letter in his letter to the viceroy of India, Dom Francisco d’Almeida. See Document 80, 4 January 1608, in Documentos Remettidos, vol. I, 173.}

To support Min Khamaung, Min Yazagyi took a big risk and sent the cream of the Arakanese military command, including his captain-
general and “all the chief captains of his kingdom.”

Min Khamaung was also accompanied by some people who were potential political leaders of Pegu and who were strongly pro-Arakanese, Nan-dá-bayin’s sons, Ximicolia and Marequestão (as they were known by the Portuguese). Further, over one thousand Arakanese army irregulars, mostly Mons and Burmans, and a contingent of elephants, accompanied the Arakanese force. This major Arakanese military force planned to first stop at the Arakanese vassal of Chismim and then move on to take Syriam.

At first, De Brito doubted his ability to defend himself against such a powerful host. He thus decided to escape and had his ships armed with cannon and supplied with great stores of ammunition. After some reconsideration, however, De Brito decided to stay and fight.

Min Khamaung’s Failed Invasion

To prevent the juncture of the forces of Arakan and Toungoo, De Brito sent Bartholomew Ferreyra and a naval force. The Portuguese surprised an advance squadron of ten Arakanese ships, sent ahead by Min Khamaung, off the cape of Negrais. After capturing this advance squadron, including much Arakanese artillery and munitions, the Portuguese squadron waited near the island of Caça for the remainder of Min Khamaung’s force. Min Khamaung soon learned of the Portuguese deployment and he gathered his scattered ships together and organized two tight formations. The Arakanese retreated and counterattacked three times. Since the Portuguese ships were much larger and better armed than the small Arakanese jalias, the Portuguese easily destroyed many of them from a distance. Soon, the Portuguese had killed over one thousand Arakanese and captured five hundred others. Taking advantage of the deeper draught of the Portuguese ships, Min Khamaung had his fleet pull up close to the shore and retreated beyond the reach of Portuguese guns. The Arakanese also damaged the Portuguese ships, which returned to Syriam to make repairs. The Arakanese then went to Chismim to reassemble their forces.

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408 Guerreiro, Payne trans., op. cit., 211.
410 Ibid., vol. I, 137.
411 Nai Thien, op. cit., 65.
412 Damrong, op. cit., 206.
413 Guerreiro, Payne trans., op. cit., 212.
414 This is another name for Bassein, Lower Burma’s western port.
Once Min Khamaung’s fleet entered the river, however, many of his ships became caught on sandbanks. Min Khamaung’s fleet made repairs, which gave the Portuguese four days in which to prepare for an attack upon the Arakanese fleet as it passed Syriam. The Portuguese fleet took up positions around the point of Degu, less than a mile from Syriam. On 28 January 1605, the Arakanese fleet passing Syriam was caught by a Portuguese fleet of seven ships, and many smaller boats, under Paul del Rego Pinhero. The Portuguese force was soon supplemented by the timely arrival of two ships which returned from a raiding mission near Martaban. The battle began to turn against the Arakanese and Min Khamaung, in retreat up river, accidentally took to a side-stream. Being thus cornered, the prince abandoned his fleet and over one thousand dead and fled overland. The Portuguese captured the abandoned Arakanese navy and its artillery, while the Arakanese force, which still amounted to three thousand men, including nine hundred musketeers, split up. Some of Min Khamaung’s men tried to make it back to Arakan on foot, while others fled to Prome and Toungoo. Others, “driven by hunger and the many other hardships which they had to suffer” surrendered to the Portuguese. Soon, out of Min Khamaung’s original force, only a few thousand were left.

The Portuguese Capture of Chismim and Min Khamaung

While Min Khamaung’s forces took refuge in the forests, the Portuguese determined to take the undermanned city of Chismim, a vassal of Arakan. Paulo do Rego was sent with a major Portuguese force and he soon took it, as well as many prisoners, including Binnya Dala’s wife. The city was sacked and everything which could be taken onto the Portuguese ships was taken as booty. While Paulo do Rego’s men were

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415 Estimates of the size of Min Khamaung’s force vary. Damrong has put it at 4,000 men, while it was thought to be about 17,000 men by the Portuguese government. See Damrong, op. cit., 206; Document 60, 4 January 1608, letter from the king of Portugal to the viceroy of Goa, Dom Francisco d’Almeida, in Documentos Remettidos, vol. I, 173.
416 Guerreiro, Payne trans., op. cit., 213.
419 Ibid., vol. III, 132-133.
422 Fariah y Sousa, op. cit., vol. III, 132-133; Chismim remains in the possession of the Portuguese and forms the western base for De Brito’s “kingdom.” See Nai Thein, op. cit., 67.
loading the booty, Philip de Brito’s force, including fourteen *jalías* with sixty Portuguese and two hundred Mons, arrived in pursuit of Min Khamaung’s men. There, Philip de Brito received information regarding the whereabouts of Min Khamaung and subsequently resumed his search for the Arakanese prince.  

De Brito called a council of his captains to decide what to do when they reached the vicinity of Min Khamaung’s refuge. While De Brito argued for caution, Dom Francisco de Moura, one of his captains, argued that the prince should be taken immediately. De Brito agreed and placed De Moura in charge of the assault force. De Moura was not entirely reckless and he had a Mon, called Chimitoto, and seven other Mons climb into some trees to watch for Min Khamaung, while De Moura and the rest of his force would lie in wait for the Arakanese force. The Mons captured a few of the Arakanese and from them De Moura knew the position of Min Khamaung. De Moura then attacked the Arakanese force, consisting of thirty-one hundred regular footsoldiers and nine hundred musketeers. The Mons in De Moura’s force attacked first, followed by the Portuguese; the Arakanese were taken by surprise. In the battle, Chimitoto, though wounded himself, slashed Min Khamaung in the face and captured him. Min Khamaung, wounded and defeated, was handed over to De Moura. In an attempt to rescue Min Khamaung, two thousand men of the king of Prome attacked but were repulsed. Min Khamaung realized that there was not much more he could do and offered to order an end to the fighting and his personal good behavior as a captive in exchange for the safety of his wives who had accompanied him. De Moura agreed, and the prince ordered his men to stop their attacks. De Moura and a Mon took Min Khamaung by the hand to De Brito.  

In his defeat, however, Min Khamaung showed himself to be a natural and popular leader of his men. When his men saw him captured and being taken on the Portuguese ships, they dropped their weapons and loyally surrendered as well “to follow him a prisoner, as they had followed him in liberty.” De Brito saw Min Khamaung’s natural leadership abilities and treated his prisoner with a great deal of respect.

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423 Bocarro, *op. cit.*, vol. I, 139-140; Fariah y Sousa, *op. cit.*, vol. III, 133.
425 Ibid., vol. I, 142.
and care. The Portuguese now had thousands of Arakanese prisoners, as well as the crown prince, a bastard son of the king of Prome, and the captain-general of the Arakanese army. Further, the Portuguese captured over one thousand pieces of artillery. Nat-shin-naung, the upayaza of Toungoo, had not gotten further than Macao (Nan-dá-bayin’s old fortress) when he heard of what befell the Arakanese fleet. Since there was nothing that he could do, Nat-shin-naung decided to wait at Macao for “further developments.”

De Brito’s fair treatment of Min Khamaung helped him to win further support from Mons:

Nicote may...be a President to all Men, how to use their victories; for he not forgetting he had been a slave to the Prince now his Prisoner, served him with the same respect now, as he had done then. He watched him sleeping, holding his Buskins in his Hands with Arms across, a Ceremony used by the meanest with their Kings in those Parts, and himself attended him upon all Occasions. This generosity may well equal him with great Men, and purchased him together with other the like Proceedings, the Name of Changa, which...signifies Good Man.

De Brito, however, put Min Khamaung’s presence in Syriam to its greatest use as propaganda. Finding the fortress at Syriam in the charge of Dom Martin Affonso de Castro, who had brought three more ships from Goa to help supplement De Brito’s forces, De Brito was received with “greatfestivities.” Min Khamaung, his important prisoner, was brought into the fortress in grand style by being carried on a gilded throne, with young maids who were given to him to fulfill his every pleasure. By doing this, Philip de Brito probably wanted to make his victory appear even more glorious: while previous Portuguese victories had left Arakanese seamen and possibly Arakanese captains as captives of the Portuguese, Philip de Brito’s forces were now defeating and capturing princes, admirals, generals and other major military leaders of the Arakanese kingdom.

But the continual wars with Arakan had taken their toll: De Brito informed the king of Portugal that he was unable to fulfill his promise of bringing the renegade Portuguese in Bengala back under the sway of

429 Ibid.
431 Nai Thien, op. cit., 66.
432 Fariah y Sousa, op. cit., vol III, 133-134.
Goa. Further, De Brito was forced to make excuses for the low profits earned by the feitoria at Syriam; he blamed the continual wars and the fact that the feitoria was very new and had not had sufficient time to make itself an attractive port of call. The solution which De Brito proposed was for the king of Portugal to forbid traders from going to Tenasserim, Martaban, Tavoy, and the island of Junkceylon, so that they would come to Syriam instead.434

Min Yazagyi, practically alone in Mrauk-U among much less capable Arakanese leaders, realized that he needed Min Khamaung to help him keep his kingdom together. Min Yazagyi thus decided to negotiate with De Brito, and ask for Min Khamaung’s release. Min Yazagyi, however, seems to have doubted De Brito’s generosity in future negotiations for the release of his son, and instead Min Yazagyi asked the viceroy of India, Dom Frei Aleixo de Meneses, to intercede on the behalf of Min Khamaung. When the viceroy of Goa heard that De Brito had captured Min Khamaung, he demanded that De Brito release the prince without ransom or anything else except for peace and the use of the fortress as a post for the soldiers of the king of Portugal.435 De Meneses probably wanted the conditions of the release of Min Khamaung to be as light as possible for the Arakanese since Portuguese trade with Arakan was growing despite the continual war between De Brito and Min Yazagyi in Lower Burma. As Scott explains, the viceroy took this position because “[t]here was not a little Portuguese trade with Arakan.”436 De Brito, however, was not inclined to surrender Min Khamaung to Min Yazagyi without forcing Arakan to pay a huge ransom. De Brito demanded fifty thousand cruzados despite the viceroy’s orders, “pretending that it was the Charge of the Fleet the King had obliged him to fit out.”

For over a year, the negotiation teams of Arakan and Syriam haggled over technicalities, and different offers and counteroffers were made. At first, Min Yazagyi was willing to pay a smaller ransom without taking an oath to maintain peaceful relations with De Brito. Later, Min Yazagyi offered to transfer control of the lands of Ugila, neighboring Chittagong, to De Brito as well as a small ransom.437 Soon, however, Min Yazagyi had second thoughts about paying any ransom at all and De Brito’s refusal to proceed with the release of his son as the viceroy had

436 Scott, op. cit., 129.
437 Bocarro, op. cit., vol. I, 144.
promised offended Min Yazagyi,\textsuperscript{438} who now gathered another invasion force to send against Syriam.\textsuperscript{439}

While Minyazagyi was fitting out the new expedition, a storm developed over Mrauk-U, during which lightning struck Min Yazagyi’s royal palace, the white elephant’s stall, and several important temples. Min Yazagyi’s Buddhist monks, the \textit{talapoins}, saw this as an omen and they chastised Min Yazagyi for breaking his treaty with De Brito, prophetizing Min Yazagyi’s death. Min Yazagyi responded by putting thirty of the chief \textit{talapoins} to death.\textsuperscript{440}

\textbf{The Battle of Negrais, 31 March 1607}

Min Yazagyi planned to personally lead a huge Arakanese fleet: there were eight hundred oared ships (\textit{galeotas, jalias}, etc.) and thirty-five hundred pieces of artillery. The crews of the ships reflected the diversity of Arakanese mercenaries, consisting of “Moors, Patans, Persians, and Malabars.”\textsuperscript{441} In all, Min Yazagyi gathered more than ten thousand men, many of whom were musketeers for this military expedition, and was also joined by the forces of the Arakanese dependency, Chocoria. In response to reports that Min Yazagyi had begun to amass this fleet, De Brito quickly brought together an attack fleet of eight \textit{galliots} and four \textit{sanguicels}, along with 240 Portuguese and many Mons. Paulo do Rego Pinheiro was placed in command of this force. Before the Arakanese fleet could leave Arakan, however, Do Rego raided the Arakanese coast, burning “every maritime town which he entered, and putting the inhabitants to the sword.”\textsuperscript{442} Using this as bait, Do Rego pulled his forces back to the point of Negrais and sat in waiting for the Arakanese fleet. When Min Yazagyi’s fleet arrived,\textsuperscript{443} the Arakanese saw Do Rego waiting for them and placed their ships close to shore in a easily defensible position:

\textsuperscript{438} Fariah y Sousa, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. III, 139; or as Scott explains the “king preferred to risk the killing of his son to paying the money.” see Scott, \textit{op. cit.}, 129.

\textsuperscript{439} Fariah y Sousa, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. III, 139.

\textsuperscript{440} De Brito was warned by the king of Prome of Min Yazagyi’s preparations and De Brito sent Natal Salerno to Melaka, where the viceroy of Goa had gone temporarily, to get help. The viceroy sent De Brito two \textit{gales} and six \textit{navios}. See Guerreiro, Payne trans., \textit{op. cit.}, 220-1, 224.

\textsuperscript{441} Guerreiro, Payne trans., \textit{op. cit.}, 225.

\textsuperscript{442} Ibid., 226.

\textsuperscript{443} Bocarro, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. I, 145; Guerreiro, Payne trans., \textit{op. cit.}, 225-6.
[The Arakanese] King declined the challenge, and taking shelter under the land, placed himself amongst the rocks and sandbanks, a position which gave him security whilst it was full of danger for our ships.\textsuperscript{444}

Soon, several of Min Yazagyi’s supply ships approached, not realizing that the main fleet was in hiding, and the Portuguese attacked them. A favorite of Min Yazagyi, Captain Maruja, led some \textit{jalias} out of hiding to save the supply ships, but was killed in the process.\textsuperscript{445}

On 31 March 1607, Min Yazagyi decided to begin a formal battle with the Portuguese. Although Min Yazagyi ordered his fleet to attack at 2 p.m., a terrible rainstorm delayed the attack until 4 p.m. The Portuguese, however, realized that their small numbers were no match for the Arakanese fleet in an open, traditional battle, since “the very sea seemed to be hidden by the multitude of the King’s ships.” Instead, Paulo Do Rego turned the bulky size of his otherwise fast ships to his advantage: the Portuguese drove through the Arakanese ships, firing and ramming as they went:

...they assailed the enemy with the utmost impetuosity. Flinging themselves on that forest of ships, they penetrated it from van to rear, dealing destruction as they went. There was nothing which came in their way that they did not destroy, and many of the King’s galliots were left burning, or stranded, or sinking...Finding they had reached the rear of the enemy’s fleet, our ships turned about and renewed the attack with the same vigour as before, passing through the midst of the King’s ships and destroying all that lay in their path...\textsuperscript{446}

The Portuguese ceased their attack at 10 p.m., because Paulo Do Rego thought that it was unwise to continue the battle to long after nightfall. The Battle of Negrais left the Arakanese fleet in wreckage: large numbers of \textit{jalias} and other light vessels were destroyed, and of Min Yazagyi’s larger ships, four of the large \textit{galliots} were sunk, three were on fire, and fourteen others had run aground. Min Yazagyi’s naval command was nearly wiped out, with his chief admiral, the chief commander of his Islamic mercenaries, and many of his best captains all dead. Further,

\textsuperscript{444} Guerreiro, Payne trans., \textit{op. cit.}, 225-6.
\textsuperscript{445} Guerreiro, Payne trans., \textit{op. cit.}, 226.
\textsuperscript{446} Ibid., 227.
eighteen hundred of Min Yazagyi’s naval personnel were dead and two thousand others were wounded.447

Min Yazagyi was determined, however, to wipe out the Portuguese. Within six days he reassembled much of his fleet and repaired much of the damage done in the second battle of Negrais.448 At the same time, Min Yazagyi persuaded the king of Toungoo to besiege Syriam by land and to block up the port with forces,449 under the command of the king of Toungoo’s son, Maha Upayaza Nat-shin-naung.450 Min Yazagyi’s portion of the fleet was divided into four squadrons to attack the Portuguese fleet in port.451 Paulo do Rego was sent out with eighty ships to meet the Arakanese and Toungoo force at the point of Degu.452 The Arakanese fleet, however, had already reached that point and Do Rego approached so quickly that he found himself surrounded by the Arakanese. Further, his ship lodged on some submerged piles and could not escape as the Arakanese and Toungooos “from every side bombarded [the] ship with grenades and canisters of gunpowder.” Since Do Rego’s ship was also the magazine for the Portuguese fleet, it carried a great quantity of gunpowder on board, which now caught fire. A Portuguese captain who had come to Do Rego’s aid, the Catholic priest Natal Salerno, Do Rego, Do Rego’s ship, and all of his men were all killed or destroyed by the explosion.453

The Second Siege of Syriam

The Portuguese were devastated by what happened to Do Rego, and the Portuguese fleet, without its great admiral, retreated back to Syriam to be repaired. In port, however, the Portuguese ships took on water as they were all “badly damaged by bombards,” from the Arakanese and the Toungooos. Important men fell on both sides, including Min Yazagyi’s vassal, the bayin of Chocoria. But the condition of the Portuguese defenders, with the fortress of Syriam effectively blockaded, the Portuguese fleet nearly destroyed, and the large numbers of Portuguese dead, seemed to indicate to the Arakanese and the Toungooos that the

447 Ibid., 227-8.
448 Ibid
449 Fariah y Sousa, op. cit., vol. III, 139.
450 Damrong, op. cit., 206; Nai Thien, op. cit., 66.
451 Guerreiro, Payne trans., op. cit., 228.
Portuguese were finished. Soon, Syriam was surrounded by land as well as by sea, with fewer than two hundred Portuguese and three thousand Mon defenders.

Min Yazagyi sent a representative to ask De Brito to come out of the fort and seek terms with Min Yazagyi in person. Min Yazagyi promised that De Brito would be well-treated, in consideration of the good treatment which Min Khamaung had received as a prisoner of De Brito. Min Khamaung urged De Brito to accept Min Yazagyi’s offer, since Paulo Do Rego was dead and the Portuguese situation was tenuous. Min Khamaung also promised that “he himself would intercede for him, in return for the kind treatment he had received.” In response to Min Yazagyi’s offer, De Brito insulted Min Yazagyi:

To the King he replied that his promises of peace were only made to be broken...of the coming of the Princes of Tangu he made no account, for experience had taught him that their forces, like those of the King himself, were of little worth; that he would be only too pleased if he would summon other friendly kings to his aid, so that there might be some credit in holding the fortress, within which, he said, he had every expectation of entertaining His Majesty, as on a previous occasion he had entertained his son.

Min Yazagyi was furious. He swore his generals to an oath by which they would kill De Brito or die themselves. The Arakanese now adopted a policy of continuous attacks on the Portuguese fleet and the fortress of Syriam in order to wipe out the Portuguese by attrition. After three more Portuguese ships had been destroyed, De Brito realized what was happening and had all the remaining Portuguese ships pulled up onto the shore and added the crews to his land forces, making “preparations to meet the enemy henceforward in the field.” Min Yazagyi landed many of his men on shore as well, but kept the Arakanese fleet operational. While Arakanese and Toungoo land forces made continued assaults on the fortress at Syriam, Min Yazagyi’s fleet bombarded the Portuguese positions. For a month, the fighting was back and forth.

After two months, the siege had drained Syriam of supplies and the defenders were threatened by hunger. The Mons in Syriam were losing hope of winning against the Arakanese and De Brito realized that he would have to do something before he faced a desertion en masse of

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454 Ibid
457 Ibid., 232-3.
his Mon auxiliaries. De Brito tried a new strategy and had all the remaining supplies in Syriam brought out for a great feast, which he held within the sight of several Arakanese prisoners. By doing this, De Brito made it seem as if the siege had no effect and that the Portuguese were well-prepared to hold out for several more months. And after that he sent the same Arakanese prisoners with a letter to Min Yazagyi. In the letter De Brito taunted Min Yazagyi:

Very high and powerful king of Arakan, lord of the two white elephants. Do not toil in this siege because I expect by God to have you in this fortress as I have the prince your son. Your highness says to me that many people will die purely from hunger...look here at the supply to your ladies; since they have been captured...they are very fat and beautiful. And because I hope by God that soon your highness will be as your son, I will say nothing else.458

This letter was read in front of the king and his captains and Min Yazagyi was so angered that he called De Brito a “son of a whore” and commanded his officers to “bring him to me, so that I can give him the punishment that he deserves.”459 While the officers planned the day and hour to take the fortress, Min Yazagyi personally questioned the Arakanese captives whom De Brito had dispatched with the letter. Min Yazagyi was most concerned with De Brito’s food supply and the state of the fortress. The released captives, however, informed the probably greatly disappointed Min Yazagyi that De Brito could hold out for possibly five more months, as De Brito hoped they would say. Min Yazagyi then left the siege under the command of his subordinates and left to spend the rainy season in Arakan, hoping that Syriam would fall to famine by the time he returned.460

The king of Toungoo, however, misunderstood Min Yazagyi’s plans, and believed that the Arakanese were going to leave him alone to continue the siege. Thus, after a feint attack against the Portuguese fortress on 9 May 1607, the Toungoo force raised camp and secretly returned to Toungoo. The Mon defenders of Syriam happily went out from the fortress, surveyed the abandoned Toungoo camp and defenses, and reported to De Brito that the Toungoos were gone. De Brito immediately had his men gather the abandoned food supplies and other

460 Ibid
spoils, including artillery, that the Toungoo force was not able to bring with it.\textsuperscript{461}

Further De Brito realized that this was an opportunity to surprise the remaining Arakanese forces, which had not been informed of the king of Toungoo’s retreat. A large number of Portuguese and Mons were sent out of Syriam, led by flags, fifes, and drums along the sides of the river, while other forces were deployed on the river, towards the Arakanese forces. The Arakanese were surprised by this as well as by the lack of any “trace of or signal from” the king of Toungoo.\textsuperscript{462} Min Yazagyi decided, on 10 May 1607, to lift the blockade and negotiate with De Brito. Min Yazagyi had previously made the release of Min Khamauung as the condition for the lifting of the siege. In his demands, however, Min Yazagyi referred to De Brito as his “subject” or literally as his slave. De Brito was angered by this and demanded to be addressed as an independent king as a condition for his release of Min Khamauung. Min Yazagyi and the king of Toungoo agreed to De Brito’s demand, since they feared that since De Brito’s son, Simon, was married to the daughter of Binnya Dala of Martaban, and since the king of Ayudhya was allied to Binnya Dala, that De Brito could count on the armed help of both Ayudhya and Martaban. But De Brito was also in no position to continue his defenses and agreed to surrender Min Khamauung if Min Yazagyi would withdraw and agree to no longer attack Syriam, as well as pay the indemnity which De Brito had previously demanded.\textsuperscript{463}

Once the Arakanese fleet returned home, De Brito had Min Khamauung put into a royal jalia and took him to Ranaung island, from where Min Khamauung would go to Mrauk-U unattended by Portuguese ships. De Brito’s men fired a volley salute as they left Min Khamauung’s ship. A stray pellet from the volley, however, killed Min Khamauung’s helmsman, which made Min Khamauung very suspicious of De Brito and, from then on, Min Khamauung planned De Brito’s annihilation.\textsuperscript{464} However, Min Yazagyi had agreed to consider Syriam as an independent state, which marks the end of his control over this eastern section of the Arakanese empire.

\textsuperscript{461} Ibid., vol. I, 148; The captured Toungoo artillery likely took their place alongside De Brito’s guns cast at Goa and at his own foundry. This was a common practice throughout the \textit{Estado da India}. As Boxer explains, for example, the artillery captured from an Achinese fleet in 1630 was redistributed throughout the \textit{Estado da India} to Portuguese ports to supplement their own artillery reserves. See Boxer, “Asian Potentates and European Artillery,” 165.

\textsuperscript{462} Bocarro, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. I, 147-8.

\textsuperscript{463} Nai Thien, \textit{op. cit.}, 66-7.

\textsuperscript{464} See Bocarro, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. I, 144; Payne’s notes to Guerreiro, Payne trans., \textit{op. cit.}, 267f.
The second siege of Syriam left all the major powers of Lower Burma with depleted military strength. Min Yazagyi was forced to run many of his ships aground and abandon them due to lack of men to man them. These losses meant that Min Yazagyi returned home with 262 ships out of the force of twelve hundred with which he had begun his attack. Most of the Arakanese artillery had been lost, either in battle, or in the mud of Lower Burma. Min Yazagyi had also lost many of his Moslem mercenaries, bringing the total Arakanese dead to ten thousand men. Toungoo's losses included Toungoo's best captains, fifteen hundred men, six elephants, and forty horses.465

The Portuguese were in a desperate position. Almost one hundred Portuguese were killed, including ten captains and the admiral Paulo do Rego. Large numbers of De Brito’s Mon allies were killed as well. The fortress of Syriam was in shambles, “[n]umbers of houses were destroyed, and churches, and many were wounded.” Earlier, De Brito, to strengthen himself further by alliances, had married Simon, his son by a previous wife, to a daughter of the governor of Martaban, Binnya Dala.466 Now, however, this and other alliances were in danger if De Brito could not show that he was still an important power in Lower Burma. First, De Brito built a Portuguese fortress near Pagoda point at the Cape of Negrais.467 After quick repair work to the fortress, De Brito had the remainder of his fleet put out to sea and the Portuguese combed the Bay of Bengal for ships. In one case, when an Islamic trading ship “very richly laden” refused to surrender, the Portuguese boarded it and killed all on board. After further acts of “piracy,” De Brito’s men felt that they had made their presence felt in the region again and brought back a large amount of booty to Syriam.468 On 12 January 1608, however, a fire burned the entire Portuguese fort to the ground. De Brito himself suffered major burns on one of his legs and his wife was almost killed. The fire destroyed the accumulated wealth of De Brito’s tiny kingdom:

466 Fariah y Sousa, op. cit., vol. III, 139-140; it is not clear whether Binnya Dala was Thai or Mon. See Scott, op. cit., 130. Payne has suggested that this was the same man who had fought De Brito for leadership of the customs-house at Syriam. I think that this is probably not the same Binnya Dala. Indeed, it is a title, not a personal name: binnya refers to a vassal king, and Dala can refer to the town of Dala or a number of other things. The title emerges from time to time throughout Burmese history, leading me to believe that it is quite common and that the similarity of names between the Mon leader at Syriam and the king of Martaban is simply a coincidence.
468 Guerreiro, Payne trans., op. cit., 237.
All the goods and the treasure which were in the fortress perished. Houses, churches and their ornaments, provision stores, munitions stores—all were destroyed. Apart from these losses, the seriousness of which it would be impossible to exaggerate, the fortress was now rendered completely untenable.469

Chapter Conclusion

De Brito was able to win legitimacy as the king of Syriam and was able to expand and strengthen both his economic and political hold over Lower Burma. But how did De Brito expand his control of Lower Burma in the face of strong Arakanese attacks on his position over a four-year period and what by what means did he ensure his political, military, and economic position at Syriam? Further, what did De Brito’s success, and Min Yazagyi’s failure mean to Arakan?

De Brito was able to win legitimacy just as Ribeyro had: by playing a Southeast Asian game. That is, De Brito set himself up as a local leader of the Mons and acted as other Mon, and Burmese for that matter, leaders did. De Brito did not seek territorial delineation and refused to waste men occupying useless territorial positions. Rather, like other maritime kingdoms of Lower Burma, De Brito based his strength on seapower and the ability to dominate trade and direct it to his power-base, Syriam. Indeed, De Brito could not have hoped to maintain his influence on his own, and he sought marriage alliances and mutual defense treaties with other local leaders. Through effective use of indigenous models of statecraft, De Brito was able to win the support, though not direct control over, local  myózas (local administrators). It is true, however, that sometime after 1607, De Brito changed his policies, began a strong forced Catholicization program and thus alienated his Mon subjects and allies, leading to his eventual downfall. But for the moment, De Brito truly was a local indigenous-style leader of Lower Burma and his influence spread over the eastern Irrawaddy delta.

What did this mean to Min Yazagyi? For one thing, De Brito’s ability to maintain his economic, political and military strength meant that Lower Burma was no longer an easy target for Arakanese political and economic imperialism. The political and military coalition that brought down Nan-dá-bayin and made Pegu a relatively open region for Min Yazagyi’s expansion could not be brought together again, especially as Ava’s strength began to grow in the north and this threat prevented Prome, Toungoo, or even Chiengmai from committing sufficient aid to

Arakan to crush De Brito. But more importantly, De Brito’s strength, based on a strong Portuguese mercenary fleet, supported by thousands of Mon troops, and protected by a strong, strategically located fortress, meant that Min Yazagyi was simply “throwing men away,” as well as creating a terrible drain on the economic resources of Arakan, in his repeated assaults. Min Yazagyi too easily allowed less capable men to lead his armies, especially when Min Khamaung, his son and possibly best military leader, was captured through a chance error and remained a prisoner during the two most vital years of the war. As the capable captains, crews, and soldiers on which Min Yazagyi’s earlier victories had depended were lost at sea or in useless assaults on Syriam, Min Yazagyi had to replace them quickly with less well-trained and less capable men. Indeed, by the time that Min Khamaung had been captured, it is possible that the effects of Arakanese losses under Binnya Dala, and others like him, had already taken place. When the decreasing effectiveness of the Arakanese armed forces was combined with the temporary loss of Min Khamaung, who had organized the brilliant harassment of Naresuan’s forces in 1600, the effect was devastating: Min Yazagyi was forced to abandon the Irrawaddy delta to De Brito and focus on events beginning to take place on his northwestern border. The damage which Min Yazagyi had done to his armed forces will be seen more clearly in the events taking place here after 1607, as will be shown in the following chapters.
Chapter VI
Sebastião Gonçalves y Tibao, “King” of Sundiva and the Eclipse of Arakanese power in Bengal, 1607-1612

[Gonçalves’] infamous career covered a brief period of ten years. Gonsalves had the making of a great leader, but his training and environments made of him a pirate of the lower type. For unrelieved cruelty and treachery his record had hardly any parallel, but with better education under more favourable circumstances, he might have been a Raleigh or a Drake.

Jadu-Nath Sarkar

The decline and fall of the maritime state of Arakan must have contributed powerfully to [the] liberation of Bengali commerce. Contemporary Bengali literature is strewn with echoes of the dread produced in southern Bengal by the Maghs of Arakan and their allies the Portuguese freebooters. This alliance however was far from being smooth...Razagri [Min Yazagyi] feared, with reason, that de Brito would use Dianga...to overthrow the Arakan monarchy. He therefore attacked Dianga and drove the Portuguese out of it in 1607. The Portuguese regrouped as an out and out pirate force in the island of Sundiva...under ‘king’ Sebastian Gonzales Tibao...Mughal expansion into the eastern coastal tracts of Noakhali...might have produced an alliance but Tibao preferred traitorously to capture the Arakan fleet ... The Sundiva Portuguese then raided up to the very walls of Mrohaung.

Ashin Das Gupta and M.N. Pearson

These quotations indicate a general belief that Gonçalves was both of local importance in Arakan and Bengal and was treacherous. But what does this “pirate” have to do with the collapse of Min Yazagyi’s power in the west (Bengal)?

In order to understand Gonçalves’ significance to Arakan, it should be remembered that while De Brito, by 1607, seemed to have succeeded in his venture to control Lower Burma economically, if not politically, he still faced the king of Arakan: Min Yazagyi still claimed suzerainty over Lower Burma, regardless of overt signs of friendship which he showed to De Brito. Arakan still had time to invade, defeat De Brito, and reclaim control over Syriam. But Gonçalves would prove to be

a greater threat to Min Yazagyi than De Brito was. Further, Gonçalves would render Min Yazagyi’s stratagems for gaining control of Lower Burma defunct.

Several questions can be asked regarding the rise of Gonçalves and how it affected the political climate in Lower Burma. How did Gonçalves come to power and why did he become an enemy of Min Yazagyi? Was Gonçalves following De Brito’s example, or was he forging a new style of leadership which did not follow indigenous traditions of political leaders? How did the distraction of Arakanese attention away from de Brito affect Arakan’s chances of reclaiming its recently-won eastern empire in Pegu? Was Portuguese control over Arakan’s former territories’ trade and society increased or at least consolidated?

**Arakanese Dianga**

While De Brito controlled Syriam, another important trading center, Dianga remained under Min Yazagyi’s control. Dianga, as mentioned earlier, was the port near Chittagong that Min Bin used to guard his northwestern frontier in exchange for trading concessions to the Portuguese. The Portuguese here profited from legitimate trade with Bengalese ports but often engaged in piracy as well.472 While De Brito’s example might seem likely to have influenced the Portuguese at Dianga, they made no signs of wishing to rebel against Min Yazagyi and for the moment Min Yazagyi made no sign that he feared losing Dianga to the Portuguese.

Min Yazagyi soon had reason to worry, however, and his relationship with the Portuguese traders at Dianga changed significantly. De Brito decided that in order to govern the lower Irrawaddy River basin effectively, he would have to take Dianga from Arakan. This would prevent a rival trading base so close to Syriam from preventing his absolute control of Lower Burmese trade. De Brito thus hinted to Min Yazagyi that he wanted the port, and Min Yazagyi hinted that the transfer of control would be acceptable if De Brito officially requested it.473 De Brito was then “induced to send a number of Portuguese to settle” at Dianga by Min Yazagyi. A naval force was then sent by De Brito carrying his son, Marcos de Brito, as his ambassador in order to take

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473 Guerreiro, however, seems to be under the impression that Min Yazagyi had agreed to transfer Dianga to Portuguese control under the treaty by which Min Khamaung was returned and by which Min Yazagyi agreed to recognize De Brito’s independence. I have reservations about this. I think that it is perhaps more likely that whatever promise Min Yazagyi may have made was misinterpreted by De Brito. See Guerreiro, Payne trans., *op. cit.*, 220.
possession of the port. Some of the Portuguese living at Dianga, however, persuaded Min Yazagyi that De Brito intended to steal the kingdom of Arakan from him.\footnote{Fariah y Sousa, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. III, 154; Bocarro, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. II, 431; Fytche, however, believes that the King of Arakan had planned to betray De Brito from the beginning of this episode and that this was simply “the old tale of Asiatic treachery.” See Fytche, \textit{op. cit.}, 53.}

Min Yazagyi summoned De Brito’s son and the accompanying Portuguese officers to his court and then killed them. Before this slaughter became known to the rest of the Portuguese, Min Yazagyi sent some forces to seize the Portuguese ships, which were taken and burned.\footnote{Fariah y Sousa, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. III, 154; Bocarro, \textit{op. cit.}, 432; See Document 120, 20 February 1610, letter from the king of Portugal to the viceroy of Goa, Ruy Lourenço de Tavora, reprinted in the letter of the same viceroy to the king, in \textit{Documentos Remettidos}, vol. I, 348-9.}

By now, Min Yazagyi had lost all patience with Portuguese tricks and, to further ensure that there would be no Portuguese threat to his kingdom, he attacked the Portuguese living in Dianga. The seven hundred or so Portuguese traders, as well as their wives and children and Catholic priests, were secretly surrounded by Arakanese soldiers and then put to “sword and to fire.”\footnote{Bocarro, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. II, 432; Indeed, throughout Arakan, five thousand Christians were imprisoned and supposedly treated with “barbarous cruelty.” See Guerreiro, Payne trans., \textit{op. cit.}, 220.}

Some of the Portuguese escaped into the woods, and nine or ten ships were able to make for sea. One of the Portuguese who escaped was Sebastião Gonçalves,\footnote{Fariah y Sousa, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. III, 154; Gonçalves came to Southeast Asia from Portugal in 1605, and served as a soldier in Bengal. After a year or so, he saved enough money to buy his own boat, which he used to trade along the Bengalese coast. See Phayre, \textit{History of Burma}, 174. J. Talboys Wheeler, however, argues that Gonçalves was also a deserter from the Portuguese. See Wheeler, \textit{op. cit.}, 504. I see no reason to disagree with either scholar. Indeed, it is quite probable that Gonçalves deserted from Portuguese service, considering the short tenure of his service. Bocarro adds further information, stating that Gonçalves was a “native of Santo Antonio do Tojal,” in Portugal, “of humble parents.” Gonçalves bought his ship with money he had earned as a foreman of some salt-ships. Gonçalves seems to have been expanding his trade from salt to other goods, for he was carrying cloth for sale in Dianga. See Bocarro, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. II, 431.}

who arrived at Dianga from the Megna river with salt for trade just before the Arakanese slaughter.\footnote{Phayre, \textit{History of Burma}, 174.}

Gonçalves and the rest of the survivors who had escaped in the nine ships became pirates, robbing Arakanese traders and selling
the booty in the ports of the king of Bacala, who was friendly to these Portuguese.479

**Dutch-Arakanese Alliance**

Min Yazagyi saw that he could not control or even trust the Portuguese and had now taken steps to eradicate their power. But De Brito’s earlier successes against Arakanese forces seemed to indicate that he was in no position to fight the Portuguese upstarts alone. Thus, Min Yazagyi turned to the new rising European power in Southeast Asia: the Dutch.

Min Yazagyi asked the Dutch to trade in his country, hoping to “secure their aid,” against De Brito. Min Yazagyi as early as 1607 allowed Pieter Willemszoon Verhoeff to enter Arakan with his trade items from Masulipatam.480 A further mission was sent by the Dutch under Jan Gerritsz Ruyll in the same year.481 In order to make his gestures for an alliance more appealing, however, Min Yazagyi gave the Dutch permission to trade in neighboring areas over which he claimed suzerainty, but which he did not actually control: Bengal and Pegu.482 As Verhoeff remarked:

> So would he give us to wit the aforesaid Castle in Pegu, the island of Sundiva, Chittagong, Dianga, or any other places in Bengal, as he had given the same previously to the Portuguese.483

Verhoeff, greeted these offers of economic opportunities and suggested to the V.O.C. that trade factories should be set up in Pegu.484 Min Yazagyi’s negotiations with the Dutch worried the Portuguese, especially since it was believed in Lisbon that the transfer of Chittagong and Sundiva to the Dutch had already been accomplished.485

Min Yazagyi was soon disappointed. The V.O.C. did set up a factory at Mrauk-U, but did not take advantage of the offer to trade in

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482 Davies, *op. cit.*, 86.
484 Davies, *op. cit.*, 86.
Pegu. This was not what Min Yazagyi wanted: he desperately wanted to shake De Brito’s control of Syriam and was willing to risk further European occupation of Syriam as long as it was not held by the Portuguese. Min Yazagyi intensified his offer by “present[ing]” San Iago (Syriam) to the Dutch, even though it was held by the Portuguese under Philip de Brito. Still, the Dutch made no efforts to trade in Pegu until 1635. Min Yazagyi could thus only depend upon Dutch help against the Portuguese in Arakan: his claims to hold suzerainty over Lower Burma remained simply claims.

**The Reestablishment of Arakan’s Portuguese on Sundiva**

One of those who died at Dianga was Manuel de Mattos, commander of Dianga, who was also the “Lord of Sundiva,” since the death of Domingos Carvalho. Mattos had left Sundiva, as well as his young son, under the protection of Pero Gomes. Pero Gomes seems to have been a very poor administrator, since the king of Portugal refers to him as a “vile man of less substance than that of the conquistadores.” Gomes was of such a poor reputation that the king of Portugal suggested to the viceroy of India, Dom Francisco d’Almeida, that he should consider taking over direct administration of Sundiva if Mattos continued to leave Gomes in a position of authority. When Fateh Khan, a Moslem employed by the Portuguese, heard of Mattos’ death, however, he decided to make himself the new lord of Sundiva and usurped power from the unpopular Pero Gomes. To guarantee his control, Fateh Khan had all of the thirty Portuguese traders on Sundiva, as well as their families, killed. All of the indigenous Christians and their wives and children were killed as well. Fateh Khan then gathered his “Moors” and Patanis and created his own fleet of forty ships, which he maintained with the revenue of the prosperous island.

Fateh Khan felt that he had a mission and displayed it prominently as an inscription on his flag: “Fateh Khan, by the grace of God, Lord of Sandwip, shedder of Christian blood and destroyer of the

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486 Davies, *op. cit.*, 86.
487 Campos, *op. cit.*, 82.
488 The king also suggested that Sundiva could be used as a base to bring the scattered Portuguese renegades in Bengal back under Goa’s control, presumably with the belief that De Brito in Syriam was not able to keep his promise to do the same. See Document 60, 4 January 1608, letter from the king of Portugal to the viceroy of India, Dom Francisco d’Almeida, in *Documentos Remettidos*, vol. I, 176.
Portuguese nation.” Fateh Khan determined to wipe out Gonçalves’ Portuguese as well. Fateh Khan’s fleet circled the area looking for Gonçalves and the other survivors of the Dianga massacre. Finally, Fateh Khan found the Portuguese on Dakhin Shahbazpur island (or Deccan Shabazpore), which belonged to the king of Bacala, dividing the wealth they had captured in a year or so of local piracy. The Portuguese were in the midst of a heated debate over the division of spoils, with the primary contenders being Gonçalves and one of his subordinate jalia commanders, Sebastião Pinto. Sebastião Pinto decided to break away from the rest of the Portuguese and began to leave. As Fateh Khan was about to surprise the Portuguese, then, Pinto saw Fateh Khan’s forces and fired his guns at it. This noise of this bombardment warned the rest of Gonçalves’ men. Gonçalves attacked and the two forces fought throughout the night. Gonçalves’ forces consisted of ten ships and eighty Portuguese against Fateh Khan’s forty ships and eight hundred men. The two forces fought until morning revealed that Fateh Khan was dead and his entire force either destroyed or captured. We are not told how the Portuguese managed to achieve this amazing victory, but I suspect that better arms and the fact that Fateh Khan’s men were inexperienced in battle, while Gonçalves’ men were professional ‘warriors’ may have gone a long way to ‘tip the scales’ in their favor.

The Portuguese decided to take Fateh Khan’s leaderless domain, the island of Sundiva. However, Philip de Brito, in a letter to the king of Portugal had suggested that he should seize control of the region and make a fortress at Chittagong which would allow him to bring the Portuguese desperados in Bengal back under Goa’s control, albeit indirect. Further, De Brito would set up a feitoria at Chittagong and thereby assume control over the trade of the northeastern section of the Bay of Bengal. Gonçalves, however, was moving more quickly than the correspondence between Syriam and Lisbon. To further his own plans, Gonçalves now had additional Portuguese recruits from Bengal and other ports, many of them being refugees from Min Yazagyi’s pogroms. Further, Gonçalves persuaded the king of Bacala to join in the

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490 Campos, op. cit., 82.
492 Campos, op. cit., 82.
495 Campos, op. cit., 82.
conquest, promising that “he would give him half the revenue of the island if he assisted him to conquer it.” By March 1609, Gonçalves had over forty jalias, a few oared navios, and four hundred Portuguese as well as a contingent of men and two hundred horses from the king of Bacala.497

The Moslem fortress at Sundiva was well-prepared for defense by Fateh Khan’s brother. But Sundiva was a large island and the Moslems had no way of knowing at which point Gonçalves’ men would invade. Fateh Khan’s brother thus waited with a large number of men outside of the fortress, prepared to meet the Portuguese at the beaches as soon as the Portuguese ships appeared at sea. When the Portuguese made a beachhead and disembarked the Moslems quickly attacked them.498

The Moslems fought determinedly, since they “expected no quarter,”499 but they were forced back by the Portuguese landing, and fled to their fort, three leagues further inland. The Portuguese laid siege to the fort but, after two months, they were running low on supplies and ammunition which they could not bring up from their ships. The reason for this failure to maintain a sufficient supply line from the shore to the siege lines was that while the Moslems inside of the fortress made daily sallies outside and harried the besiegers, one thousand indigenous soldiers and two hundred Patani cavalry were lying in wait in the three league-long area between Gonçalves’ men and his ships. As the besiegers became the besieged in this manner, the Portuguese were hemmed in with the few remaining supplies they had brought with them. Further, noting the desperate Portuguese situation, the Moslem forces inside and outside of the fortress became more courageous.500

The Portuguese were released from the impending danger of a final, massive counterattack against both their front and their rear, which they would probably lose, by Gaspar de Pina. Pina was a Castillian, the captain of some Portuguese mercenaries who served who served in the armies of some indigenous kings, and arrived at the port in his navio and some other ships. Pina’s forces included thirty musketeers as well as other soldiers, and was well-prepared for the skirmish with the Moslems which ensued when he and his men disembarked on shore at night. Pina and fifty of his men, including some of his mariners, marched the three leagues to Gonçalves’ siege lines, bringing the supplies to the

Portuguese. To make his forces seem more considerable, Pina had his men carry numerous banners and torches and had them play trumpets and tambourines,\textsuperscript{501} which made the “moors” believe that the Portuguese were being joined by an even greater force. Gonçalves’ and Pina’s men subsequently overran the fort and killed all of the defenders, who numbered over one thousand.\textsuperscript{502}

Before Fateh Khan’s coup, the local inhabitants of Sundiva had lived under the Portuguese and they now begrudgingly accepted Gonçalves as their new leader. Gonçalves promised that he would not hurt any of them or their property, provided that they bring all of the remaining Moslems on the island to him. When the local population returned with over one thousand captured Moslems, Gonçalves’ men beheaded them.\textsuperscript{503} Gonçalves thus became the independent lord of Sundiva, “an absolute Lord independent of any Prince, and his Orders had the force of Laws.”\textsuperscript{504} In other words, Gonçalves became the “king” of Sundiva island.\textsuperscript{505} “King” Gonçalves at first divided the land of Sundiva amongst his men as spoils, but subsequently took it back. Further, instead of giving the king of Bacala the promised half of the island’s revenues, Gonçalves attacked him and won.\textsuperscript{506} Further, Campos claims that Gonçalves also possessed “lands on the coast of Arakan.”\textsuperscript{507}

Gonçalves now commanded a sizable army and navy. His army included over one thousand Portuguese, two thousand indigenous troops, and a two-hundred-man cavalry. Gonçalves’ navy was just as considerable: it consisted of twenty oared navios, with metal-plated bows, which were armed with big falcões; seventy war jalias, not including the two hundred and fifty jalias and barges used by merchants; three big, oared galeotas, each one with two twenty-five pound guns, and each one having mounted falcões.\textsuperscript{508} Gonçalves subsequently built a feitoria which served as the official source of revenue for the island (another source was piracy). Gonçalves also seemed to be the rising power in the region and many other neighboring rulers sought alliances with him. Gonçalves expanded his control by seizing the islands of Xavapur

\textsuperscript{501} Bocarro, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. II, 436-7.
\textsuperscript{502} Fariah y Sousa, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. III, 156-157.
\textsuperscript{503} Bocarro, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. II, 437.
\textsuperscript{504} Fariah y Sousa, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. III, 156-157.
\textsuperscript{505} Hall, \textit{Europe and Burma}, 37.
\textsuperscript{506} Fariah y Sousa, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. III, 157.
\textsuperscript{507} Campos, \textit{op. cit.}, 84.
\textsuperscript{508} Bocarro, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. I, 138.
(Dakhin Shahbazpur?) and Patelbanga from the king of Bacala and lands from other rulers as well. Gonçalves and his Portuguese had thus repeated what Ribeyro and De Brito had done at Syriam: Min Yazagyi was now threatened by rebellious Portuguese in the west as well as in the east. Fortunately for Min Yazagyi, however, the Portuguese at Sundiva and at Syriam would probably make no actions in concert against Arakan, since Gonçalves refused to recognize De Brito as his overlord as ordered by Goa and this fostered a hostility between these two Portuguese that was never overcome.

Anaporam’s Revolt

Gonçalves soon became an even greater threat to Arakan than Min Yazagyi expected. Sundiva, for example, was geographically very close to Chittagong, much closer to Chittagong than Mrauk-U or even Ramu was. Given the traditional autonomy of Chittagong, and the tendency of the myoza there to be at odds with the king at Mrauk-U, Gonçalves had ample opportunity to attempt to destabilize Arakan politically. An occasion for this political intervention came in 1609, when Min Yazagyi and the governor of Chittagong, Anaporam, had a disagreement. Supposedly, Min Yazagyi demanded that Anaporam give him an elephant that Anaporam possessed, which was said to be the greatest in all of Arakan. Anaporam refused to give the elephant up and Min Yazagyi, probably having made the demand in the first place as a test of Anaporam’s loyalty, sent an army against Chittagong. Anaporam allied himself to Gonçalves, who demanded Anaporam’s sister in return as his wife. With the terms of alliance agreed upon, Gonçalves and Anaporam attacked the Arakanese army unsuccessfully. With the Arakanese quickly approaching Chittagong, Gonçalves and De Brito consulted on how to manage the situation and it was decided to bring Anaporam and

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509 Fariah y Sousa, *op. cit.*, vol. III, 158; These two islands were probably more of strategic value than anything else. As Stewart explains, “[T]heir only productions [are] rice and salt; and their climate is supposed to be unfavourable to European constitutions.” See Stewart, *op. cit.*, 27f. Perhaps Stewart was only referring to Patelbanga, for Manrique has referred to Xavapur as containing “a large number of thorny fruits, mainly limes of various species and of enormous size, which owing to the fertility of the soil are independent of the care of skilled gardeners and horticulturists.” Indeed Luard notes in 1927, that the island had 400 villages and 270,000 inhabitants. See Manrique, *op. cit.*, vol. I, 394f-395.


511 Fariah y Sousa, *op. cit.*, vol. III, 158.
his family back to Sundiva. Anaporam brought his fortune, his elephants, and his family to Sundiva, where he lived as an exile until his death, “not without suspicion of poison,” shortly afterward. This brief attempt at intervening directly in Arakan was unsuccessful, but it was of major importance. Min Yazagyi faced a new threat on his northwestern border, possibly a greater threat than De Brito posed in Pegu. Min Yazagyi could also no longer depend upon his myozas for absolute loyalty, since they could depend upon Gonçalves’ support if they chose to rebel against central Arakanese control. Further, Arakanese military resources now had to be committed increasingly to defense rather than expansion, and even if Min Yazagyi chose to conduct any military campaigns at home or abroad he had to find some way to neutralize the threat posed by Sundiva. Gonçalves also had a ‘trump card’ which he might play given the right situation: he possessed a queen of the Arakanese royal house, the widow of Anaporam, whom he was now trying to marry to his brother, Antonio Tibao. Gonçalves was soon able to play this ‘trump card,’ due to problems which Min Yazagyi was having on his border with Bengal.

The Sundiva-Arakanese Alliance

The Mughal governor of Bengal, Sheikh Islam Khan, however, was attempting to conquer the Kingdom of Balua, the territory east of the Megna river. Since this kingdom was close to Sundiva, Min Yazagyi convinced Gonçalves to join him in a military campaign against the Mughals, who were threatening them both. Min Yazagyi gathered eighty thousand men, mostly musketeers, ten thousand Mon swordsmen, and seven hundred castled elephants. In return for the return of Anaporam’s widow, Min Yazagyi also sent two hundred ships with naval personnel amounting to four thousand men to join Gonçalves’ fleet, under the supreme command of Gonçalves. The plan of action was that Gonçalves would hold off the Mughals until Min Yazagyi could get there. Gonçalves and Min Yazagyi would then divide the kingdom of Balua between them.

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513 Fariah y Sousa, op. cit., vol. III, 158-9; Bocarro seems to believe that Gonçalves may have been the culprit since he had a great motive. In the case of Anaporam’s death, for example, Gonçalves would inherit all of Anaporam’s considerable wealth. See Bocarro, op. cit., vol. II, 439.
To guarantee his promise to Min Yazagyi, Gonçalves provided his nephew and the sons of some of the Sundivanese Portuguese as hostages.515 The arrangement went well at first. The Mughals were driven out of Balua and the Arakanese captured Lakhipur, “while Gonçalves barred their advance from the sea.”516 But Gonçalves for some reason did not keep the rest of the bargain. Gonçalves left the Dangatiar rivermouth and entered a creek on Defierta island. Then Gonçalves had the captains of the Arakanese ships brought together in a great council and murdered them all. The Portuguese also slaughtered much of the Arakanese crews, making slaves of the survivors. Gonçalves then returned to Sundiva.517 Without Gonçalves’ blockade, the Mughal army was able to reach Balua by river. Min Yazagyi, who faced the Mughals alone, was severely defeated in a counterattack when the main Mughal force approached.518 Min Yazagyi and his army took refuge in the Tippera forests, but the king of Tippera saw this as a good time to rebel and the Arakanese nobles were “put to the sword.” Min Yazagyi abandoned his army, and “mounted on a swift elephant,” fled to Chittagong,519 where he left “a strong garrison” and then returned to his capital.520 This was a major defeat for the Arakanese, since the Mughals had taken Bengal up to Chittagong and even Dianga was now threatened.521

Gonçalves’ Invasion of Arakan

Gonçalves then attacked the weakened Arakanese kingdom. Since much of the kingdom’s soldiers had been lost against the Mughal armies and since most in Arakan had not heard of Gonçalves’ failure to comply with the peace agreement, the Arakanese were easily surprised, as well as “totally unprotected.”522 Gonçalves destroyed all of Arakan’s coastal forts,523 including the major Arakanese installations at Ramu,
Chittagong, and Maju. Then Gonçalves sailed up the Lemro river and destroyed merchant ships from many countries, as well as capturing European merchant ships which were “probably Dutch.” But the Arakanese repulsed Gonçalves before too much damage was done, although Min Yazagyi lost his personal pleasure-boat. In anger, Min Yazagyi had Gonçalves’ nephew impaled upon a spike and hung at a high point in Mrauk-U so that Gonçalves could see the body.

It was now clear that there was no possibility of future cooperation between Gonçalves and Min Yazagyi. Min Yazagyi now faced a strong Portuguese enemy on Sundiva island and the advanced forces of the Mughals in Bengal as a result of Gonçalves’ treachery. Further, the king of Tippera had joined the large number of enemies of Arakan. For the time being, Min Yazagyi could only gather his remaining forces, those not destroyed by Gonçalves or his enemies in Bengal, and strengthen key positions in the Arakanese defense system. Without the Portuguese at Dianga, Arakanese forces now had to be committed to the defense of Arakan’s northwest frontier in Bengala and Min Yazagyi moved a large fleet, with artillery to Chittagong and left it there while he returned to Mrauk-U to hold his court together. It is clear from the correspondence between Goa and Europe that there must have been some confusion about whom these new forces would be directed against. It was suggested that the Arakanese forces at Chittagong would be used to recapture the twelve Bengalese states, annexed by Min Bin generations before, from the Mughals, but an attack on the kingdom of Tippera seemed possible as well. Further, these forces might also have been designated for the capture of the island of Sundiva, which could then be fortified as an extension of Arakanese defenses against Mughal expansion. In any case, it is possible that Min Yazagyi did not know what to do with these forces, other than to maintain his control over Chittagong, to prevent yet another disastrous loss for Arakan.

Chapter Conclusion

Who was Gonçalves and what effect did he have upon Min Yazagyi’s empire? The general consensus seems to be that Gonçalves was simply a

524 Campos, op. cit., 87.
526 Phayre, History of Burma, 175.
527 Stewart, op. cit., 218.
pirate and that any attempt to see him as a local ruler is ill-informed. This view is supported by Das Gupta and Pearson as well as Fariah y Sousa. There is evidence, however, which was admitted by, or can be inferred from, the works of the above authors as well as the works of many others, that both Portuguese and indigenous people in Sundiva saw him as a legitimate ruler. Some called him “king,” others called him “lord,” but all who joined him or negotiated with him saw Gonçalves as a local leader of some importance. As Maurice Collis and San Shwe Bu explain:

It must be insisted that Tibau’s sovereignty was real. The Viceroy of Goa had no control nor aspired to any control over him. By 1610 he had become so prominent and important a figure in the Bay that Razagiri...invited Tibau to co-operate with him.530

How then should we view Gonçalves? My own view is that Gonçalves was less of a king than a pirate. Gonçalves came to power because he had won the support of survivors from the Dianga massacre. But it is clear that these survivors did not act out of revenge when they organized and attempted to control the Arakanese coast. Instead these Portuguese survivors were motivated by a number of other things. First, the Portuguese at Dianga were typically deserters or adventurers who found life elsewhere in the Estado da India unbearable or distasteful and had no intention of going back to Goa or Portugal. Some, who could do so, probably went to other Portuguese trading stations. But a large number did not or could not go elsewhere and thus decided to join Gonçalves who offered them a way of continuing to live as they had at Dianga. Second, the Portuguese at Dianga probably realized that the lack of direct Portuguese government influence in the Bay of Bengal, and the absence of other large-scale European operations, meant that someone like Gonçalves, given men and ships, might easily control maritime trade off the Arakanese coast. Third, since the Portuguese at Dianga had traditional lived outside of the pale of Goa’s control and were autonomous in Arakan, these men probably had little difficulty in accepting a life of piracy.

But Gonçalves was not De Brito and was not following his example. I see no evidence that Gonçalves saw any real importance in being called “king” or “lord.” Nor was Gonçalves interested in setting up feudal-like political arrangements with local potentates as De Brito was.

530 Maurice Collis and San Shwe Bu, “Dom Martin, 1606-1643,” 12.531 The authors are referring here to the period of Arakanese history between 1638 and 1785, I am using it, however, for this comparison because I think that it accurately describes Min Yazagyi’s reign. See Collis & Bu, “Arakan’s Place in the Civilization of the Bay,” 44.
Possibly this was due to the fact that Gonçalves did not rule over a substantial indigenous population on Sundiva as De Brito did at Syriam and thus needed no ideology to win local support. But neither did Gonçalves attempt to gain territory or political control elsewhere. I think this is evident by Gonçalves’ assaults on Arakan, which seemed to be directed more at reducing the Arakanese military capacity, rather than winning territorial control.

Regardless of who Gonçalves was and why he did what he did in Arakan, however, it is clear that his actions had a tremendous impact on Min Yazagyi’s dream of making Arakan the preeminent power in Bengal and Lower Burma. First, Gonçalves spread Portuguese influence further afield on mainland Southeast Asia and confirmed the growing indigenous belief that the Portuguese were invincible and that Arakan was simply just another petty kingdom. Second, Gonçalves’ rise to power had set up another, closer Portuguese center than Goa, from which De Brito, who now controlled Arakan’s eastern territories in Pegu, might receive aid and supplies. But most importantly, the physical damage incurred from Gonçalves’ attacks upon Arakan and the continued threat he posed effectively removed Arakan as an actor in the politics of Lower Burma. Gonçalves’ treacherous actions also made sure that Min Yazagyi lost his position in Bengal bringing another threatening force to bear upon Arakan: the expanding Mughal empire.

Min Yazagyi’s empire was collapsing around him, but much of this was not Min Yazagyi’s fault. He inherited a relationship between the Arakanese and their Portuguese mercenaries based on mutual trust. His predecessors depended upon Portuguese help for generations and for him to be suddenly wary of his Portuguese mercenaries is too much to expect. But something changed in their relationship and it took some time before Min Yazagyi realized it: Portuguese power in the east was declining rapidly and the Portuguese who now served the Arakanese were oriented more towards quick profit, rather than long-term planning and long-term loyalties or relationships with indigenous rulers. Min Yazagyi is at fault for attacking Dianga, when it is clear that the Portuguese at Dianga were not ready to rebel so easily as De Brito had been. Further, Min Yazagyi can be blamed for allowing a bad situation grow worse: many times he continued to trust the Portuguese after they had already proven to be untrustworthy. But then again, the changing political climate, the encroaching Mughal Empire and the anarchic situation in Pegu, often made it necessary for Min Yazagyi to seek Portuguese help even when it was not certain whether he would be tricked by them.
Chapter VII
Arakan Rises Again, 1612-1622

The causes that make men rich are often the same as ruin them. What a gambler has won he may lose by an identical throw. Mrauk-U was glorious because wise kings took advantage of a strong alliance against distracted border states. It fell into poverty and contempt because weak kings were falsely served by their allies against united border states.

Maurice Collis & San Shwe Bu

[T]he strength of Arakan lay mainly in the woods and swamps...Had the Kings of Arakan trusted to these defenses, and been content to remain in obscure independence at home, they might long have remained secure from landward foes. But, electing to become unnecessarily aggressive, their country lay at the mercy of foes on both sides.

A. Ruxton MacMahon

These two quotations accurately describe two men: the first can be applied to Min Yazagyi, while the second accurately depicts the temperament of Min Khamaung, Min Yazagyi’s son and successor. By comparing these characterizations, two very different personalities are evident. While Min Yazagyi left the maintenance of his empire to others, Min Khamaung was a fighter. If we can keep their personalities in mind, they will be useful in examining how Min Khamaung faced the problems that had developed in Min Yazagyi’s reign.

Several questions should be asked. How did the Min Khamaung overcome the problems caused by Min Yazagyi’s reign? Why did Min Khamaung’s able leadership lead to the destruction of the Portuguese? Was this a revival of Arakanese imperial might? I think that an examination of the fall of Min Yazagyi and the rise of Min Khamaung to power will help us to answer these questions.

The Eclipse of Min Yazagyi’s power

Min Yazagyi’s empire was now shaken by two Portuguese mercenary revolts. But Min Yazagyi was to face yet another revolt involving the Portuguese. With Portuguese support, Min Mangri, Min Yazagyi’s

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youngest son, revolted against his father, who he and other members of the royal family had increasingly come to see as a weak and ineffective ruler. Significantly, Min Yazagyi would again depend upon his oldest son, Min Khamaung, to lead his armies in crushing the revolt. Min Yazagyi had not resumed active participation in the activities of his army, or his state for that matter, and Arakan was now being run by courtiers and rival princes of the royal family.

One event in 1610, however, may have crystallized the Arakanese view that Min Yazagyi was bringing about the destruction of his kingdom. This was the refusal of other Burmese states to have anything to do with Arakan, indicating that Min Yazagyi’s credibility as a potential ally was low in Burma. Min Yazagyi, for example, proposed an alliance with the growing kingdom of Ava in northern Burma against Philip de Brito. But Min Yazagyi’s attempts “met with a rebuff.” Although Min Yazagyi’s attempts at an alliance with Ava met with failure, news of the “come and go of embassies” worried the Portuguese at Syriam enough so that Philip de Brito sought and gained an alliance with Nat-shin-naung of Toungoo. Since Toungoo already submitted as a vassal to Ava, this brought about a direct conflict between Ava and De Brito, a struggle which engulfed Lower Burma and precluded Arakanese intervention.

At the same time that Min Yazagyi was losing control of his government, we can see the increasing power of Min Khamaung. Min Khamaung was a fighter and a very capable military commander and political leader. Although he had led three unsuccessful attempts to overthrow Min Yazagyi in the past, Min Khamaung was now working within the Min Yazagyi administration to build up his own power-base. One of the obstacles that stood between him and the kingship, however, was his younger brother Min Mangri.

Min Mangri

Min Yazagyi slowly began to realize that he was losing his grip over his empire and that Arakan was being whittled away by its enemies, both foreign and domestic. More importantly, he probably realized that he was also losing the world recognition of his kingship that he had tried so hard to gain. To strengthen his empire, Min Yazagyi tried to find weak points in the territories which remained under his control. Min Yazagyi no longer controlled lower Burma, but he could still save Arakan from the Mughals. Anaporam’s flight left Chittagong without a governor and now to secure Arakan’s border with Bengal, Min Yazagyi appointed his

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534 Ibid.
promising younger son, Min Mangri, as the new governor of Chittagong, with the title Alamanja (or Alaman the governor). This decision was made because of Min Yazagyi’s observation of Min Mangri’s loyalty to him. The heir apparent Min Khamaung did not like Min Mangri, which was another reason that Min Yazagyi made his choice:

[H]e sent him off...in order to obviate the growing enmity which existed between the two brothers, before it led to an actual rupture. This young and sagacious Prince had no doubt that the cause of his being made to leave the Court and his home by his father was the little love his elder brother had for him. This was due to the affection and admiration which his elder brother saw that he received from his father and every one, on account of his good qualities... 536

Min Mangri believed that when Min Khamaung took the throne Min Khamaung would have him killed. Min Mangri, considering the three revolts of Min Khamaung against his father, Min Yazagyi, argued that “an individual upon whom family ties lay so lightly, would make short work of him.” Min Mangri could also see that his father’s administration was weak and that if he moved quickly, he could grab the kingship for himself. Min Mangri decided to get an ally who could support his challenge to the throne of Arakan, and turned to Sebastião Gonçalves y Tibao. He sent an embassy requesting that a pact of alliance be made, and they agreed to seal the alliance with the marriage of Mangri’s daughter to Gonçalves’ son.

**Chittagong Rebels**

In 1612, eighteen months after Min Mangri allied himself to Gonçalves, he revolted against his father. This must have presented Arakan with

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535 See Luard’s note in Manrique, *op. cit.*, vol. I, 301f.
536 Manrique, *op. cit.*, vol. I, 301.
539 Ibid., vol. I, 304.
540 This is Collis & Bu’s account of the events of the revolt of Chittagong and its governor, Min Mangri, which they say is based on Arakanese chronicles. Fariah y Sousa, working on contemporary hearsay has provided a different account of the events and a different chronology. Sousa says that “Anaporam” the brother of Min Khamaung was simply defending himself when Min Khamaung demanded Anaporam’s great elephant, “to which all other elephants of that Country were said to allow a sort of superiority.”
a crisis of disastrous proportions; not only had Arakan lost Lower Burma, the bulk of its navy, its noble class in Tippera, and the island of Sundiva, now the entire northern third of the country, as well as its most profitable port, was in revolt. Min Yazagyi lost all sympathy for his son and unleashed his eldest son, Min Khamaung, with an army to defeat Min Mangri. Min Khamaung marched along the shore of the Bay of Bengal towards Chittagong. Min Khamaung was a good military commander and took the precaution of having his fleet move slowly along the shore “in order to preserve daily communication with the army.”

Min Khamaung’s army suffered a temporary setback when it was attacked and routed by the forces of the raja of Tippera, which took positions between Chittagong and Ramu.

Min Khamaung tried again and this time succeeded in pushing his army up the coast until they soon began to lay siege to Chittagong. After four months, the people of Chittagong were starving and sent messages to Min Yazagyi that they would surrender, but Min Mangri and the Portuguese would not let them. As the defenses weakened, Min Mangri personally led the members of his court around the walls to bolster his men. While doing so, Min Mangri was mortally wounded by a bullet. Min Mangri told the Portuguese not to let the people surrender because his children would be murdered if they did so. The Portuguese, realizing that all was lost, took Min Mangri’s son and daughter to Hughli in the Mughal kingdom for protection. Min Mangri, protected by his chief eunuch, refused to be baptized before his death and remained a Buddhist.

Min Khamaung then entered Chittagong unopposed. He took time to attend the funeral of Min Mangri, but then hurried back to Mrauk-U. Gonçalves was able to remove some of Min Mangri’s wealth and elephants while Min Yazagyi, who might have continued his assaults on Gonçalves in earlier years, remained surprisingly uninterested in Gonçalves for the moment and ordered no attacks. It must have been

Anaporam supposedly then fled to Sundiva and giving Gonçalves his sister in marriage, the two leaders launched a failed invasion attempt. Sousa then says that Anaporam then died, with the suspicion of poison (Farah y Sousa, op. cit., vol. III, 157-158.). Campos, in his The Portuguese in Bengal, (84-5), supports Sousa’s claim, citing similar accounts in other Portuguese histories. I have treated these differing accounts separately, because, after reviewing the evidence, I have come to the conclusion that they were indeed separate revolts. It is probable that Min Mangri was established as the governor of Chittagong to replace Anaporam in 1609-10.

541 Phayre, History of Burma, 175.
542 Stuart, op. cit., 69.
clear to Min Yazagyi that he was in no condition, after losing his eastern empire in Pegu to De Brito, to risk losing his western empire in Bengal to yet another Portuguese upstart by futilely throwing men and resources without a good stratagem for victory. Instead, Min Yazagyi seems to have decided to postpone his revenge on Gonçalves in order to strengthen his administration and find out what he was doing wrong in the management of his kingdom and his armies. Unfortunately, Min Yazagyi no longer had time to launch any major reforms, since he died within months, leaving Min Khamaung as Arakan's new king.

Min Khamaung Rebuilds Arakanese Might

Min Khamaung had defeated Min Mangri, and his father, Min Yazagyi, was dead. As the new king of Arakan, Min Khamaung was free to make the military and administrative reforms that he felt were necessary. In order to do so, Min Khamaung realized that he needed the support of capable advisors and administrators. Thus, Min Khamaung requested that his old tutor, Ugga Byan, join him in his administration. Ugga Byan, however, refused because he was disgraced in Arakanese society and would only lessen Min Khamaung's legitimacy by serving him:

Public opinion, immemorial custom weighed on him. Once a pagoda-slave, always a pagoda-slave. It would have required a much greater King than Min-Kamaung to have overcome that conviction and to have reintroduced Ugga Byan into society. He was a disgraced man and in this utter degradation he remained for the rest of his life.546

Min Khamaung’s plans for reform thus suffered a setback, since he planned on making use of the advice of Ugga Byan, who seemed far more capable than those members of the Arakanese court would have won positions in the government through court intrigue rather than ability. Although Min Khamaung would not have the help of Ugga Byan, he immediately began to rebuild the prestige and religious aura of the Arakanese kingship, which had decreased dramatically under Min Yazagyi. Min Khamaung engaged in a large and impressive temple-building program, which included the construction of the Thuparamaceti, Shwepara, and Ngwepara pagodas.547

545 As king, Min Khamaung (r. 1612-1622) was also known as Husain Shah. See Luard’s notes in Manrique, op. cit., vol. I, xxiii.
547 Forchhammer, op. cit., 16.
Further, Min Yazagyi’s years of allowing the government and military of Arakan to slip into the hands of corrupt ministers, to say nothing of the factional infighting of the royal family, had created a situation in which Min Khamun was unable to push through reforms as quickly as his sixteenth century predecessors, such as Min Bin, had done. Min Khamun’s first administrative reform was to end Chittagong’s traditional semi-autonomy and to bring it directly under the Arakanese king’s control. This was extremely important, because Chittagong was the linchpin in Arakan’s defense strategy on the western frontier in Bengal. Chittagong’s semi-autonomy, under a governor, had allowed it to rebel under Min Mangri and it was also dangerously close to the autonomous Portuguese settlement at Dianga. After Min Mangri’s death, Min Khamun did not replace him with another governor, but instead appointed Min Soa as a viceroy “strictly under the control of the king of Arakan.”

Min Khamun could be sure of this man’s loyalty: he was a “grandee” of Arakan, and was a son of the late Nan-dá-bayin of Pegu, who had been a prisoner of De Brito, perhaps at the same time as Min Khamun. As Manrique comments, this “man had tried his utmost to obtain this governorship, simply in order to be revenged on the Portuguese, whom he hated intensely.” Further, the new viceroy of Chittagong was tied to the ruling house by his marriage to Anaporam’s widow, who had fallen back into Arakanese hands.

**Collapse of the Portuguese at Syriam**

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to provide an account of Philip de Brito’s activities at Syriam from 1608 to 1612, during which time Arakan had little to do with De Brito. But Syriam again took interest in Portuguese Syriam in 1613, when Anaukpetlun, the king of Ava, attacked Syriam with an army of 120,000 men and a navy of four hundred ships and six thousand Moslem mercenaries. De Brito’s forces consisted of about one hundred Portuguese and two thousand Mons. Further, De Brito’s forces lacked sufficient gunpowder. The siege was not lifted by any help from Goa, and during a general assault

552 No help came from Goa to De Brito despite orders from the king of Portugal to do so. See Document 397, 20 December 1613, letter from the king of Portugal to the viceroy of India, Dom Jeronymo de Azevedo, in Documentos Remetidos, vol. II, 465.
ordered by Anaukpetlun on 7 April 1612, the outer perimeter of wooden walls was lost and the Portuguese were restricted to a brick redoubt.553

Min Khamaung probably thought that this was an ideal situation in which he could reintroduce Arakanese influence into Lower Burma. De Brito, for example, had been so degraded, that he might happily submit to Arakanese control in order to save himself from Ava revenge for his sacrilege against Buddhism. Min Khamaung thus sent an Arakanese fleet of fifty ships to relieve Syriam. These ships, however, were captured by Anaukpetlun’s navy. De Brito’s forces were defeated soon after and De Brito was spitted on an iron spike, while his men were taken to the interior of Burma were they were resettled. This group of Portuguese were given local wives, producing a hereditary class of Burmese artillerymen who served the Burmese army for the next three centuries.

De Brito’s fall actually benefited Min Khamaung and Arakan in some very important ways. First, Ava’s destruction of Syriam freed up Lower Burmese trade from the Portuguese restrictions which had led to its decline for almost a generation.554 Arakan had suffered from the economic blockade by De Brito and Gonçalves and now this blockade was broken. Second, the loss of the Portuguese fortress under De Brito rendered Gonçalves’ position less intimidating, since the only rival to Arakanese naval might in the area was now that of Gonçalves rather than the huge naval forces which De Brito and Gonçalves could muster together. Third, the image of Portuguese invincibility, which had grown through many years of Arakanese defeats was now broken, and psychologically at least, an Arakanese victory could revive the declining image that the Arakanese had of their own military prowess.

Arakanese-Dutch Alliance

The Portuguese at Sundiva were an immediate threat to the Arakanese kingdom, and Min Khamaung needed an immediate solution to the decay of Arakanese imperial might. Thus Min Khamaung took advantage of Min

553 Nai Thien, op. cit., 69; Harvey, History of Burma, 188. Interestingly, orders were sent by the king of Portugal on 15 March 1613, for all Portuguese ships trading in the Bay of Bengal to stop at Syriam and pay taxes. The orders probably did not reach Goa before De Brito was killed. See Document 352, 15 March 1613, letter from the king of Portugal to the viceroy of India, Dom Jeronimo de Azevedo, in Documentos Remetidos, vol. II, 391-5.

554 Indeed, Pieter Willemszoon Verhoeff observed that as far away as Masulipatan, the “Moores...rejoice greatly at this conquest, hoping to get the trade of Pegu into their hands againe,” see Peter Floris (Pieter Willemszoon Verhoeff), Peter Floris: His Voyage to the East Indies in the Globe 1611-1615, edited and translated by W. H. Moreland. (London: Hakluyt Society. 1934): 336.
Yazagyi's earlier attempts to win Dutch help against De Brito. Min Khamaung made overtures to the Dutch to help him crush Gonçalves. The Dutch were in no position to refuse Min Khamaung's requests, because they were becoming heavily dependent on trade relations with Arakan:

As there was a constant demand for slaves in the Dutch factories in the Archipelago, Dutch merchants soon became the King's chief customers for these unhappy human beings (Bengalese prisoners of war). They also came to Arakan for rice. Their factories in the spice-growing districts were in constant need of food supplies, and their agents were constantly busy wherever rice was to be had, and especially in Siam and Arakan.555

The Dutch thus agreed to help Min Khamaung and sent a fleet and Dutch military advisors to aid the Arakanese army and navy.

I think that Min Khamaung's dependence upon Dutch help to reform Arakan indicates the depths to which Min Yazagyi's misguided reign had taken Arakan. The guiding principle of the Arakanese kings in the sixteenth century had always been to make use of foreigners and foreign models. These kings realized that they had to adapt foreign models to their culture and use them in an Arakanese way. Further, foreigners were used by the Arakanese kings in the development of the Arakanese army and fleet, but they had always made sure to keep a firm Arakanese hold over these men. Min Yazagyi failed to maintain a firm control over either his own court or his Portuguese mercenaries, and his kingdom crumbled around him. Min Khamaung inherited this poor state of affairs, and before he could adequately repair the damage done by Min Yazagyi, he had to find another foreign model and set it against the Portuguese.

**Gonçalves Invades Arakan**

Gonçalves' position was endangered by Min Khamaung's control of Chittagong. Realizing that the Arakanese would soon attack him, Gonçalves tried to hit Arakan first with some deadly blow which would forestall their plans. He decided to sack the Arakanese capital, Mrauk-U in 1615, but he needed more help and sent a representative to Dom Jeromyno de Azevedo, the viceroy of Goa.556

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Gonçalves never before recognized Goa’s sovereignty over his “kingdom,” but now he proposed to subject himself to Portugal’s control. In return for official Portuguese help, Gonçalves promised to send the viceroy one galley of rice each year as tribute. Gonçalves also excused his previous treachery against Min Yazagyi as simply revenge for the Dianga massacre. What really won the viceroy’s support, however, was Gonçalves’ hint that the viceroy would get a share of the king of Arakan’s vast treasure. The viceroy, Don Jeronymo de Azvedo, won the sanction of the Portuguese court for his support of Gonçalves, and for his recommendation of a reward for Gonçalves by the Portuguese court for his activities at Sundiva. The viceroy, however, was as dishonest as Gonçalves was. Although he prepared a fleet to invade Arakan, he ordered the commander, the former governor of Ceylon, Dom Francis de Meneses Roxo, to attack without waiting for Gonçalves, since he “did not sufficiently appreciate the value of the assistance to be expected of the pirate.” The Goan fleet of fourteen “large galliots,” one flyboat (an extremely fast, light vessel), and one ‘pink’ (a warship with a narrow stern, providing it with greater speed and maneuverability) then left in mid-September 1615 for Arakan. On 3 October 1615, the Goan fleet arrived off the coast of Arakan and the captains made a council to decide what to do next.

Min Khamaung, however, heard of the Portuguese arrival and decided to strike the Portuguese first. On 15 October 1615, the surprised Portuguese were confronted with an Arakanese fleet so large “they could not see the end of it.” The Portuguese were also surprised to see that the Arakanese had been careful to secure the aid of their new European enemy in the Indian ocean: among the Arakanese craft was a Dutch pink and several ships carrying Dutch seamen. But the Portuguese realized too late that they were no match for the the Arakanese force. The Dutch pink fired first, followed by the Arakanese. The first four Portuguese ships suffered a great deal of damage and their “Captains and many soldiers were killed.” The battle lasted a whole day, and at nightfall, the Portuguese retreated.

Due to the poor condition of his fleet, Meneses remained at bay until the middle of November, when Gonçalves arrived with fifty of his ships and furiously reprimanded Meneses for stupidly attacking without

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561 Stewart, *op. cit.*, 220.
him. Min Khamaung spent his time furiously preparing for defenses for his capital: he had massive “earthen breastworks” constructed along the shore, to prevent a Portuguese landing; he had enormous numbers of Arakanese musketeers man the walls to shoot down into the Portuguese ships; and he had his fleet wait protected in an inlet. Min Khamaung also had the Dutch ships stand between the river and his fleet, anchoring them in such a way “so as to bring their broadside guns to bear on the assailants.” On 15 November, the combined Portuguese fleets began to sail upriver to attack Mrauk-U, the Arakanese capital. The Portuguese fleet was then split into two sections, one under Gonçalves and the other under Meneses. Once the Portuguese were alongside the Arakanese capital, however, they discovered that they had walked into Min Khamaung’s trap.

At noon, three squadrons of Arakanese ships attacked the Portuguese fleet. At first, the Portuguese seemed to be winning: Gonçalves’ squadron, facing the Arakanese left, repulsed the ships sent against it and the Portuguese pink defeated the Dutch pink. But Roxo’s squadron of the Portuguese fleet, facing the Arakanese right, was not as lucky. One Portuguese ship, commanded by Gaspar de Abreu had to be abandoned with everyone on board dead, while Roxo himself was killed after taking one musket-ball in the forehead and another in his left eye. Gonçalves, now sole commander of the Portuguese fleet, realized that Min Khamaung had outwitted him and signaled the retreat. The Portuguese fleet fled down the river as fast as it could to the rivermouth. Here it paused to bury some two hundred Portuguese at sea. After electing Dom Luis de Azevedo as Roxo’s replacement, the Portuguese fled: the Goan fleet for Goa and Gonçalves for Sundiva. As a warning to the Portuguese, Min Khamaung had the Portuguese captured by the Arakanese beheaded. Their heads were then placed on spears and lined up on the shore.

Min Khamaung had saved Arakan with Dutch help and Gonçalves’ kingdom was in no position to exist for very much longer. Gonçalves had lost even more men due to desertion than he did in battle. Many of his men, for example, joined Azevedo’s fleet on its return to Goa because Gonçalves’ “tyranny and oppression had alienated most of his

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562 Fariah y Sousa, op. cit., vol. III, 227-228; Phayre, History of Burma, 176; Stewart, op. cit., 220.
563 Phayre, op. cit., 176.
564 Fariah y Sousa, op. cit., vol. III, 227-228; Phayre, History of Burma, 176; Stewart, op. cit., 220.
566 Fytche, op. cit., 58.
adherents.” The deserters “were glad to be rid of their hard-hearted master.” Gonçalves was desperate for more men to maintain his island kingdom and even begged Azevedo to leave behind his wounded. A similar occasion occurred soon after, when Dom Francisco’s fleet stayed at Sundiva during the monsoon. Min Yazagyi made various offers to the captains of this fleet to stay with him, but they refused. Gonçalves was so desperate that he even accepted an offer from the Mughal nawab (governor) of Bengal, in which Gonçalves would aid a Mughal attempt to take Chittagong, for which Gonçalves would receive two hundred thousand tangus (a local unit of currency). Some of the Portuguese captains and men mutinied against this proposal and many of them left, spreading the word of Gonçalves’ plans to help the Mughals.

The Burmese Distraction, 1615

Min Khamaung thus defeated a major Portuguese invasion, just as Min Bin did almost a century before. Min Khamaung was determined to follow up his victory by crushing Gonçalves at his base on Sundiva. Indeed, he seemed to be in a good position to do so: the Arakanese navy, which Gonçalves almost wiped out in 1612, had been largely rebuilt and now Arakan had the added support of the Dutch. But this favorable state of affairs was largely an illusion. Gonçalves had killed many of Arakan’s most experienced and capable naval commanders and these losses could not be replaced in so short a time. Further, the Dutch helped the Arakanese at Mrauk-U, because they were there trading, rather than purposely seeking a fight: the “Dutch were too busy with their own struggles with the Portuguese and with various native powers in the Archipelago to be willing to add to their commitments.” Min Khamaung thus had to depend upon his own devices in order to destroy Gonçalves’ stronghold.

Min Khamaung first looked to Burma, which had defeated its own band of Portuguese mercenaries under De Brito and was now unified under the rule of Aneukpetlun. In order to outflank Gonçalves’ extensive island empire in the Bay of Bengal, Min Khamaung requested that Aneukpetlun cede some islands on the Burmese-Arakanese border to him. Aneukpetlun was furious, and in response sent his navy to raid Sandoway. Indeed, Aneukpetlun soon appeared to be the new great threat to Arakan. While Arakan was still fighting the Portuguese in the

567 Sarkar, op. cit., 363.
570 Harvey, History of Burma, 189.
northwest, Anaukpetlun, who crushed De Brito in 1613 at Syriam, now, in 1616, sought a Portuguese-Burmese alliance. Anaukpetlun worried that the rival kingdoms of Ayudhya and Arakan might ally themselves with the Portuguese against him, and decided that he would win Portuguese support before they could. Anaukpetlun thus sent an embassy to Goa asking for peace and apologizing for the destruction of Syriam. Further, Anaukpetlun promised to return all of the Portuguese prisoners whom he had captured and resettled in the interior of Burma, presumably including the viceroy’s niece, whom Anaukpetlun made a slave. In a manner surprisingly similar to the proposals made by De Brito and Gonçalves to earlier viceroys, indicating that Anaukpetlun had probably learned something of the European ‘game’ just as De Brito had played the Burmese ‘game,’ Anaukpetlun promised that if the Portuguese joined him in an invasion of Arakan, the Portuguese could keep all of Min Khamaung’s treasure, with the exception of the white elephant.571

Min Khamaung must have heard of these events and was probably very worried, so much so that his assault on Sundiva was delayed for a year. But Min Khamaung was under no real threat from Burma, since Anaukpetlun seems to have changed his mind about an alliance with the Portuguese. The viceroy of Goa accepted Anaukpetlun’s offers and sent his ambassador, Martin de Costa Falcam, to Burma to sign an official treaty. Anaukpetlun, however, avoided meeting Falcam, and Falcam spent many wasted hours waiting for his audience with the king:

He spent many Days in solliciting an hour’s Audience, at length it was appointed at Midnight, and he was led in the dark to a Place where they ordered him to speak, for the King heared; he spoke and saw no King, nor heard no answer...He signified the desire he had of seeing the King, and was ordered to wait his going abroad. He went one Day upon an Elephant, and knowing Falcam waited in the Street to see him, never so much as turned his Eyes that way.572

Falcam thus returned to Goa. If Min Khamaung heard of these events he should have been very relieved for he was now free to wipe out his old enemy, Gonçalves.

**Threat From Bengal**

Before Min Khamaung could turn his attention against Gonçalves, however, he was temporarily distracted by events in Bengal. In 1616, the Mughals attempted to take advantage of Arakan’s problems with

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571 Fariah y Sousa, *op. cit.*, vol. III, 255.
Gonçalves and with Burma, by sending a large army of cavalry, musketeers, elephants, and one thousand ships against Chittagong. Min Khamauung responded by dividing his available forces into two sections. The first section, which he placed under the command of his chief general, consisted of 100,000 men, four hundred elephants, and one thousand ships. Min Khamauung sent this force ahead to fortify the strategic village of Kathgar, twenty miles to the northwest of Chittagong. Min Khamauung returned to Mrauk-U and gathered his second force, which consisted of 300,000 men, ten thousand cavalry, and elephants. Min Khamauung then marched up the coast to secure Chittagong.573

In May, 1616, the first Arakanese force was attacked before it completed its fortifications. At first the Arakanese were nearly defeated, but the Mughal army hesitated in delivering the final attack, giving the Arakanese time to strengthen their positions. Soon, the Arakanese forced the Mughal army into retreat and captured the Mughal heavy artillery.574 Min Khamauung now moved quickly to destroy Sundiva before any further Mughal attacks could be made.

**The Final Battle, 1617**

Finally in 1617, Min Khamauung gathered together a force of Arakanese ships and attacked Sundiva. He took the island, had most of the Portuguese inhabitants killed, and had the Portuguese defense-works torn-down. The indigenous population, which now numbered over six thousand Christians, was resettled at Dianga.575 Gonçalves escaped, but, according to a dispatch to Lisbon sent by the Count of Redondo, he died later in 1617 at Hughli in Bengala.576 After taking Sundiva, Min Khamauung went on to take other strategic islands in the western Sundurbunds.577 Min Khamauung took the few remaining Portuguese survivors and forced them into his armies.578 All of the former Portuguese strongholds in northern Arakan were now retaken by Min

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573 Sarkar, *op. cit.*, 297.
574 Ibid., 298.
575 Letter no. 51, 8 February 1618, letter from the Count of Redondo to the king of Portugal, in *Documentos Remetidos*, vol. IV, 251-2.
576 Ibid; E. Rehatsek, however, believes that Gonçalves was captured on Sundiva and was beheaded. See E. Rehatsek, “Historical Sketch of Portuguese India,” *Calcutta Review* 73 (1881): 321-362.
577 Campos, *op. cit.*, 155.
578 Stuart, *op. cit.*, 70.
Khamaung, and while Portuguese trade resumed in this area, it was from now on under strict Arakanese control.\footnote{The Portuguese, who probably resented the fact that Min Khamaung had undeniably beaten the Portuguese in northwestern Arakan and on Sundiva island, spread stories to undermine Min Khamaung’s credibility in their histories. One of these stories is found in Fariah y Sousa. It tells how when the victorious Min Khamaung returned to Chittagong, the Portuguese traders offered his white elephant a “bough thick fet with Figs.” The elephant would not eat it when it was said to bless the king of Ava, the Mughal emperor, or even for Min Khamaung. But when the bough was offered was offered for the king of Portugal, “the Elephant joyfully fnatched it in his Trunk.” Min Khamaung then punished the traitorous elephant by taken away its ornaments, its gold feed dish, and its gold chain. But the elephant would not eat without its royal trappings, and Min Khamang was forced to return the elephants’ possessions. See Fariah y Sousa, \textit{op. cit.}, vol. III, 296.}

Min Khamaung now turned all of his attention onto pushing Arakanese conquests into Bengal. He gathered a naval force of supposedly four thousand jalias, as well as seven hundred “floating batteries,” and attacked Mughal villages along the Megna river.\footnote{Sarkar, \textit{op. cit.}, 303.} Further on along the coast, Min Khamaung pushed Arakanese conquests to Dacca.\footnote{Stuart, \textit{op. cit.}, 70.} But the Bengalese soon seemed ready to counterattack, with cavalry as well as a naval force as large as that of Min Khamaung. Min Khamaung, however, seems to have had no intention of making the same mistake of over-extending his territory that Min Yazagyi had, and avoided a large battle. Instead Min Khamaung withdrew back into Arakanese territory, leaving one thousand jalias “for the protection of his border.”\footnote{Sarkar, \textit{op. cit.}, 303.}

**A New Relationship**

Min Khamaung was “keen” on improving Arakan’s exports and his efforts were successful, though not until 1623, one year after Min Khamaung’s death. The trade relationship between Arakan and the Dutch after 1623 grew significantly. While the Dutch factory at Mrauk-U which was established temporarily during the reign of King Min Yazagyi, under Jacob Dirckszoon Cortenhoof,\footnote{Gehl, \textit{Cambridge History of India}, v, 34, cited in Hall, \textit{A History of Southeast Asia}, 416.} was withdrawn in 1617, and in 1623 it was replaced by a more permanent trading station. The Dutch withdrew their factory in 1617 for several reasons:

\footnote{Sarkar, \textit{op. cit.}, 303.}
[because] of the small profits, which could be made there, and the
great expenses the Company must first be put to, in order to
establish the king again in his kingdom, which at present is much
in trouble.584

But Min Khamaung stabilized the situation later in the same year and,
by 1623, the Dutch felt safe increasing their presence in the region.
The Dutch had a pressing need to become reinvolved in Arakanese
trade: they were interested in Arakan’s new export commodity: slaves.
While the Arakanese forces began to raid Mughal territories and the
Indian coast, the “vast numbers of captives” were brought back to
Arakan. The Portuguese who were removed from Sundiva and resettled
around Chittagong played a key role in the raiding. As Manrique
observed:

[T]hey were authorized to take their vessels into the principality of
Bengala, which belonged to the Great Mogol. Here they would sack
and destroy all the villages and settlements on the banks of the
Ganges...and besides removing all the most valuable things they
found, would also take captive any people with whom they came
into contact. This raiding was pronounced by the Provincial Council
at Goa to be just, since the Mogors were not only invaders and
tyrrannical usurpers but also enemies of Christianity.585

Some of the captives were picked by the king to become Arakanese
slaves, while the remainder were sold to the Dutch who were “the chief
customers” for the slaves, since the Dutch needed them in Batavia,
which had been established in 1611.586 The growing importance of
Arakanese slaves as an export commodity was felt in other markets as
well: Arakan became a chief source of Aceh’s “servile labour.”587
Indeed, between 1621 and 1624, Portuguese slavers brought forty-two
thousand slaves for sale to Chittagong alone.588 Min Khamaung also
began to sell rice to the Dutch, who needed supplies of rice to support
the Dutch factories in the spice-growing districts.589 The Dutch

584 J.E. Heeres, Corpus Diplomaticum Neerlando-Indicum, vol. I, 412, cited in Hall, A
History of Southeast Asia, 416.
586 Furnivall, “Studies in Dutch Relations With Arakan,” 2-3, 12
587 Anthony Reid, Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450-1680, vol. I, The
588 Campos, op. cit., 105.
589 Furnivall, “Studies in Dutch Relations With Arakan,” 2-3, 12

SOAS BULLETIN OF BURMA RESEARCH 1125

SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005):974-1145
relationship with Arakan grew closer, but remained one of caution, as William Methwold observed in the early seventeenth century:

[Min Khamaung] hath also divers times invited the Dutch and English to resort unto his country, but the Dutch by good experience, having had sometimes a factory there...avoyd his importunity; yet continue good correspondence with him and his people, as knowing it a plentiful country, and not inconvenient to supply themselves with many necessaries, if difference with nations should enforce them to that extremity...I have knowne divers Hollanders, that having expired their covenanted time of service with the East India Company, and so purchased...their freedome, have gone to serve this King, and received good countenance and content in his employment of them.590

But Min Khamaung could not expect further Dutch military aid. Indeed, the Dutch “skillfully avoide d giving [Min Khamaung] any aid against the Mughal.”591 But the Arakanese were determined to commit more resources to ending the Mughal threat which plagued them for generations and Min Khamaung now arranged for a new Arakanese-Portuguese relationship. Min Khamaung looked to the captured Portuguese who had been resettled at Chittagong. Many were now used in the Arakanese navy, which was then used to spread Min Khamaung’s power over Sundiva island and the western Sunderbund delta, while Min Khamaung’s army conquered the districts of Noakhali, Backergunge, and the territory up to Murshidabad and Dacca, as well as forcing Tippera into vassalage.592 The Arakanese were now truly the masters in their relationship with the Portuguese.

Chapter Conclusion

How did the Arakanese overcome the problems caused by Min Yazagyi’s reign? How did Min Khamaung’s able leadership lead to the destruction of the Portuguese? Was this a revival of Arakanese imperial might?

Min Khamaung was a very different leader than Min Yazagyi. He was, for example, a fighter and not the “lazy,” self-important, and incapable king that Min Yazagyi seems to have been. We have seen how Min Yazagyi focused his attentions on his new queen rather than on the

590 William Methwold, op. cit., 42-3.

SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005):974-1145
safety of his kingdom in a previous chapter. But in the case of Min Khamaung, we see a king whose prime considerations were the strength and the safety of his realm. Min Khamaung, for example, did not engage in the building of useless passages through hills and the construction of huge pleasure palaces as Min Yazagyi did. Min Khamaung, both as a prince and a king, personally led his armies into battle, while Min Yazagyi conducted his wars from his throne. Further, Min Khamaung kept a watchful eye out for developments at the court regarding court intrigue and plots, which Min Yazagyi had failed to do. I think that Min Khamaung was more of a realist than Min Yazagyi, since Min Khamaung appears to have been less concerned with the superficial trappings of kingship, such as elephants and prestige, than Min Yazagyi had been. Another example of Min Yazagyi’s lack of realism is in his handling of Min Khamaung: Min Khamaung rebelled three times and was forgiven each time. I think that if the same thing had happened to Min Khamaung, Min Khamaung would not have been so lenient.

Min Khamaung, however, did not have sufficient time to reform Arakan in the way that he might have wanted to. He died in 1622, five years after he conquered Sundiva. This time was too short to repair all the damage done by Min Yazagyi. Indeed, Min Khamaung had to look for help abroad to save Arakan from a simple pirate “lord.” But Min Khamaung’s use of the Dutch was in many ways similar to Min Bin’s use of the Portuguese almost a century earlier. The Dutch were given trade opportunities and Dutch fleets were used to help bolster and reconstruct the Arakanese navy. But unlike Min Yazagyi, Min Khamaung did not allow the Dutch to build up independent power-bases within Arakanese territory and did not let them play too great a role in Arakanese affairs outside of military reform. I think that we can almost see a cycle in this comparison: Min Khamaung shared Min Bin’s world-view and had he been followed by kings as capable as those who had followed Min Bin, I think that Arakan might have adopted Dutch military influences and technologies into their own system.

Min Khamaung’s reign marked a revival in Arakanese strength. Min Khamaung had conquered Sundiva, which had never really been under Arakanese control, and he now held Dianga more firmly than the Arakanese had in their sixteenth century relationship with the Portuguese traders there. Further, in the 1620s, Min Khamaung pushed Arakanese power much deeper into Bengal than Arakan had ever done before. But Arakan was never to regain its hold over Pegu. Anaukpetlun, the Avan king had crushed De Brito in 1613 at Syriam and Pegu fell under Burmese control until the British conquest of Lower Burma in the nineteenth century. But in 1613, De Brito held Syriam with less than a hundred men and even then it took many months for the Avan king to defeat him. I think that if Syriam had remained under the control of the
Arakanese, with a well-led Arakanese garrison and an Arakanese administration, then Arakan would have been able to maintain its hold over Pegu for several centuries.

Min Khamaung had thus repaired much of the damage that Min Yazagyi had done and a brief revival of Arakanese imperial strength ensued. But this revival was cut short in the mid-seventeenth century, as the Mughal Empire displaced the Arakanese in Bengal. Arakan then fell into a steep decline, losing territories in both the east and the west. This decline continued until 1784 when Arakan was conquered by the Burmese. Min Khamaung had repaired the damage done by Min Yazagyi in the short-term, but the long-term effects of Min Yazagyi’s reign were irreparable.
Thesis Conclusion

I think it is clear that many factors were involved in Arakan’s development from an isolated state to an extensive empire. The Arakanese took advantage of the political and economic disorganization of the rival empires around them, Bengal in the mid-sixteenth century, and Pegu almost fifty years later. At the same time that the world around them was becoming more accessible, the Arakanese increasingly made their presence felt in maritime trade, especially that of the once Bengalese-controlled Bay of Bengal. The increased trade was furthered by Arakan’s growing relationship with the Portuguese trading world, just as Arakan’s military might grew with the help of Portuguese mercenaries which the increased trade revenues made possible. This scenario is strikingly similar to that posed by Victor Lieberman in regard to First Toungoo Dynasty’s short-lived, but powerful, empire of the last half of the sixteenth century. As Lieberman argues:

Lower Burma’s success in the sixteenth century derived from a unique and basically unstable combination of factors which helped to compensate for its demographic inferiority: at roughly the same time as intensive Shan raids and the unchecked growth of tax-free religious estates disorganized the northern polity, the arrival of Portuguese guns and a gradual increase in Indian Ocean commerce strengthened the military and political position of the south. Under Bayin-naung, indigenous forces from the south, augmented by Portuguese and Muslim gunners, subjugated the lowlands around Ava and a vast arc of Tai-speaking states in an unredeemedly short period.593

But an explanation such as this, which attributes an expansion of political power only after economic growth and access to Portuguese military technology, does not tell us everything. Indeed, while I have argued that the disorganization of the Bengal, and then Burma, as well as the growing access to Arakan of Bay of Bengal maritime trade was pivotal to Arakan’s growth of power, I have argued that this process of political expansion preceded the beginning of economic expansion and the arrival of the Portuguese. It is true that mercenaries played a large, if sometimes exaggerated, role in the development of Arakanese power. But if we adapt Lieberman’s argument to Arakan, we are left empty-handed when we try to account for the goals of the Arakanese in this process.

I have argued that the Arakanese played a fundamental role in determining their economic growth. That is, from the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Arakanese, cut-off from land based trade
opportunities sought new maritime opportunities. At first, Arakanese economic growth was targeted at Chittagong, which was a rich port. More importantly, Chittagong was tied into the Portuguese trading system in the Bay of Bengal and thus promised important economic opportunities. The employment of Portuguese mercenaries, and especially the defense arrangement with the Portuguese at Dianga, also brought Arakan closer to the Portuguese trading system. Thus, while Lieberman seems to indicate that indigenous rulers saw the opportunity for political and economic expansion after the employment of Portuguese mercenaries and increased trade was available, I have argued that the Arakanese sought out an economic and military relationship with the Portuguese before maritime trade and Portuguese mercenaries or arms were available: Arakanese political expansion began in order to make possible Arakanese access to maritime trade and the employment of Portuguese mercenaries and traders, and thus a trade relationship with the Portuguese. In other words, it is true that increased revenues from maritime trade made the employment of further numbers of Portuguese mercenaries possible, but the Arakanese had fostered their relationship with the Portuguese much earlier in order to increase their access to maritime trade.

Further, the question remains, how did problems in the Arakanese-Portuguese relationship bring about the temporary eclipse of Arakanese power under Min Yazagyi? I think it is clear that the economic and administrative problems in Min Yazagyi’s reign were pivotal. Arakan had grown much faster territorially than the Arakanese capacity to administer it effectively. Important political and economic centers, such as Chittagong, remained autonomous, while strategic areas such as Lower Burma depended upon the unchecked loyalty of Portuguese and Moslem mercenaries and local political leaders. Further, Lower Burma, devastated under Nan-dá-bayin, could not provide the economic resources necessary to offset the drain on Arakanese royal coffers to keep it and certainly not to recapture it when it later fell under De Brito’s control. These problems clearly led to the opportunities for the Portuguese rebellions at Syriam and later at Sundiva. But there was also a seeming contradiction in Min Yazagyi’s reign, because at the same time that these rebellions seemed to indicate Arakanese weakness, Arakan had just reached its greatest territorial growth and presumably its zenith of power. The question that needs to be answered, then, is why did this seeming contradiction develop in Min Yazagyi’s reign and how did his son and successor, Min Khamaung, deal with it?

The basis for the relationship between the Arakanese and the Portuguese mercenaries can be found in the reign of Min Bin, one half-century before Min Yazagyi’s reign. Min Bin ruled an Arakanese state and society which had developed an approach to adapting to the outside
world in which they combined isolation and, at the same time, a receptivity to foreign cultural, religious, and political models. The Arakanese effectively used the isolated nature of their society, behind mountain ranges and swamplands, to prevent gigantic neighboring empires, such as Pegu and Bengal, from conquering their civilization. The Arakanese were also receptive to foreign models with which they came into contact due to Arakan’s location on important mainland trade routes. The Arakanese, and especially the Arakanese royal house, also came into contact with, and took advantage of, foreign models through their involvement in maritime trade, which they conducted from the relative safety of their capital, Mrauk-U, which was on a river, sixty miles inland.

This Arakanese approach to the world allowed the Arakanese to import foreign models and yet keep them under firm Arakanese control. The Arakanese used foreign religions, as well as their own animism, in a syncretic fashion, in order to express thoughts and basic beliefs which they already had, but which necessitated new rules of religious or social legitimation and new vocabularies. The same approach was applied to kingship, in which the Arakanese kings used a variety of old and new ideas of kingly legitimation. The most important use of the Arakanese world-view in Min Bin’s reign, however, was their adaptation of Portuguese models of warfare and Portuguese technology: while Portuguese models, and even Portuguese mercenaries were used by the Arakanese, the Arakanese were careful never to let the Arakanese basis of their military or society disappear or fall under the control of their Portuguese employees.

While this Arakanese world-view allowed Arakan to develop from a small, isolated state to a great empire, which in 1600 stretched for one thousand miles along the mainland Southeast Asian coast at a depth of 150-200 miles inland,594 something happened during the reign of Min Yazagyi. While the Arakanese kings throughout the sixteenth century had maintained a firm grip over their government and their Portuguese mercenaries, Min Yazagyi was caught up in his new-found prestige as a chakravartan, or at the very least a ruler of great importance. He increasingly devoted his time to casual pursuits and let the governance of his kingdom fall into the hands of less capable men. At the same time that the Arakanese royal court split into rival factions, each with their own political and economic agendas, Min Yazagyi’s Portuguese mercenaries, especially at Syriam, were given autonomous control of their stations. The Portuguese decided to overthrow Arakanese tutelage while Min Yazagyi ignored the warnings of local commanders until it was too late to reverse the situation.

594 Collis & San Shwe Bu, “Arakan’s Place in the Civilization of the Bay,” 43.
Until Min Yazagyi’s reign, then, I think that the Arakanese were the dominant partner in the Arakanese-Portuguese relationship. When Min Yazagyi forgot the importance of the Arakanese king’s role in maintaining this dominance in their relationship, however, the Portuguese were given the opportunity to declare themselves independent. In response, Min Yazagyi, preoccupied with himself and his royal regalia, allowed his royal court to “fall prey” to factionalism and wasted the best of the Arakanese military forces in poorly-crafted campaigns under the command of local military leaders of doubtful abilities. This hurt Arakan’s credibility as a powerful empire and weakened the international alliance system, which had been carefully constructed by past Arakanese kings. Further, the repeated Arakanese military disasters presented a tremendous drain on Arakanese economic resources which Min Yazagyi was not able to remedy. The collapse of Arakanese dominance in the Arakanese-Portuguese relationship, however, was short-lived. Min Khamaung, Min Yazagyi’s son and successor, brought the Arakanese government back firmly under monarchical control through his careful selection of new, capable military and civilian leaders. Min Yazagyi, in the tradition of Min Bin, sought a new foreign model, the Dutch, to help him defeat the Portuguese. But Min Khamaung deserves full credit for crushing the rebellious Portuguese who served the pirate “king” Sebastião Gonsalves y Tibau and brought an end to the last of the Portuguese rebellions. In Pegu, however, Min Khamaung was too late to reassert Arakanese dominance, since the Avan king, Anaukpetlun, had already crushed De Brito at Syriam and had brought Pegu under firm Avan control. Thus, a combination of new Arakanese leaders, the selection of a new foreign model, the resurrection of the nearly-destroyed maritime-based Arakanese economy, and Min Khamaung’s military genius, saved Arakan at least partially from the damage it had suffered under Min Yazagyi and the attendant Portuguese revolts.

I think it should also be mentioned that the Portuguese mercenaries captured in both Syriam and the Sundiva campaigns, by Ava and Arakan, were forced to continue their service to both kingdoms as slaves. Anaukpetlun turned his Portuguese captives into a hereditary class of artillerymen whose descendants served in the Avan army for several centuries.595 In the case of Arakan, Min Khamaung, once himself a prisoner of the Portuguese, placed his Portuguese captives into Arakanese military units which guarded the northwestern border of Arakan in Bengal. The Arakanese-Portuguese relationship thus can be seen as a continuum of Arakanese dominance, with the exception of the hiatus of the reign of Min Yazagyi.

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Lieberman offers some interesting insights into the reliability of a Burmese chronicle and compares it to other histories such as those of Pimenta and Du Jarric.


II. Primary Sources


This is one of the few non-Portuguese first-hand accounts that we have of Lower Burma contemporaneous with De Brito’s kingdom at Syriam. Verhoeff was Dutch and never actually visited Syriam, although he did visit Arakan, but he talked to many who did and he has provided us with a written account of their information. Verhoeff used the pseudonym, Peter Floris, in following the curious practice of sixteenth century V.O.C. employees who presented themselves as being English to many Southeast Asian rulers.


This is a translation of an old Ayudhyan chronicle, which mentions, among other things, Naesuans’s siege of Toungoo in 1600.


This is a very unusual work. Furnivall has translated for us a seventeenth century “Burmese History of Portugal,” which was largely forgotten. The period from the Portuguese expulsion of the Moslems to 1641 is covered. Furnivall does not provide the whole work, however, and omits everything that does not focus on the events concerning Philipe De Brito’s kingship.


This is Furnivall’s translation of a Mon chronicle which he discovered in a monastery at Syriam. Although it is a general history of Syriam, it includes important sections on Philip De Brito’s reign.

Guerreiro, Fernão. *Relação Anual das Coisas Que Fizeram os Padres Da Companhia de Jesus Nas Suas Missões do Japão, China, Cataio, Tidore, Ternate, Ambôino, Pegu, Bengal, Bisnagá, Maduré, Costa da Pescaria, Manar, Ceilão, Travancor, Malabar*.


Payne's translation of Guerreiro's work includes, “The Mission to Pegu,” which is a rare account of Philip De Brito's reign at Syriam. While this account is valuable in itself, especially important are the extensive notes by Payne on the text which serve as a useful guide to debates in scholarship on De Brito.


This is a Mon chronicle which has been translated and used by several authors. Phayre has refered to this work as “a history of Pegu...by the Hsaya dau Athwa, a Talaing Buddhist monk.” Halliday mentions another version of this work, which he found in Thailand, which was titled “Dhatuwan.” Probably the most famous version of this work is that of P. W. Schmidt, who used the title “Slapat Rajawan Datow Smin Ron,” in his Buch des Rajawan, Der Konigsgeschichte,” which was published in Vienna in 1906.


This early seventeenth century account of De Brito, follows his activities to about 1607, recounting the process by which he and Salvador Ribeyro took Syriam and established the Portuguese kingdom there. In his introduction to his translation, MacGregor explains that it is probable that this work was actually written for Ribeyro for his case pending before the Portuguese court.
ARAKAN, MIN YAZAGYI, AND THE PORTUGUESE


MacGregor translated Mousinho’s work without realizing who the author was. MacGregor thus attributed it to an anonymous author.


This includes translations of important parts, some dealing with Philip De Brito, of the Hmannan Yazawindawgyi, an important Burmese chronicle.


Pinto, Fernão Mendes. The Voyages and Adventures of Fernand Mendez Pinto, A Portugal: During his Travels for the space of one and twenty years in The Kingdoms of Ethipia, China, Tartaria, Cauchinchina, Calaminham, Siam, Pegu, Japan, and a great part of the East-Indies. Translated into English by H. Cogan. London: F. Macock. 1653.


Pyraird, François. The Voyage of François Pyrard of Laval: To the East Indies, the Maldives, the Moluccas and Brazil. Translated into English from the third French edition of 1619, and edited, with notes, by Albert Gray. Assisted by H.C. P. Bell. 2 volumes. New York: Burt Franklin. n.d.


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III. Secondary Sources


This is a minor entry in the Journal of the Burma Research Society, in which Blagden comments on the name used in a chronicle to refer to De Brito.

This seventeenth century Portuguese history is very valuable as it is in many ways by far the most detailed history of De Brito that I have yet found. Although some incidents reported by Fariah y Sousa, in Stevens’ translation, are not to be found here, still events, feelings, and the men involved are described in great detail. Further, statistics are less inflated than I have found usually to be the case of accounts of De Brito.


Cady provides a very good explanation in one section of Portuguese activities of the Southeast Asia mainland.

This extremely valuable yet surprisingly rare analysis of Portuguese mercenary activities in the service of the Kingdom of Arakan, provides some information on De Brito, but deals in even greater depth with a similar Portuguese “king,” Tibau.


Collis examines and explains the account of Fray Sebastien Manrique. See Primary Sources in this bibliography.


Collis provides us with a more comprehensible account of the adventures of Pinto, some of which occurred in Pegu, in the mid-sixteenth century.


The development of the relationship between Arakan and Portuguese mercenaries is provided as well as a general analysis of the rise of Arakanese power in Burma and Bengal.


The life of dom Martin, an Arakanese serving in the navy of the Portuguese “king” of Sundiva, is examined, and provides us with much information on Arakanese political relationships: especially those with Sundiva.


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Danvers examines Philip De Brito briefly.


This more recent work on the history of the Portuguese in Asia is useful as reference material for events in the Estado da India. However, the actions of the Portuguese as mercenaries on Mainland Southeast Asia are ignored.


Edwards tries to fill in the spaces left by Hakluyt’s account of Ralph Fitch’s travels throughout Asia at the end of the sixteenth century, with material drawn from sources contemporaneous with Fitch.


This is probably the best-known source for the history of the Portuguese in Asia for scholars without a reading knowledge of Portuguese. A good part of it is devoted to retelling the actions and achievements of Philip De Brito, although Farialh often betrays his bias for the Portuguese adventurer. Problems in Stevens’ translation, however, require that Bocarro be read for comparison. In addition, Farialh y Sousa seems to exaggerate much more than Bocarro does. This problem has been pointed out by Campos and MacGregor argues that Farialh y Sousa himself was among the poorest of the Portuguese historians. However, his work does shed important insights into the events surrounding the Portuguese rebellions against Arakan, and, with critical use, Farialh y Sousa is still a valuable source.

Furnivall provides a periodization for Southeast Asian history. But he also provides a nice synopsis of, as well as reasons for, the shift in Portuguese colonial expansion from the Indonesian archipelago to the Southeast Asian mainland.


Fytche provides a general account of De Brito and the pirate king of Sundiva.


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Hakluyt, Richard. The Principal Navigations Voyages Traffiques & Discoveries of the English Nation Made By Sea or Overland to the Remote and Farthest Distant Quarters of the Earth at any Time Within the Compass of these 1600 Years. 8 vols. With an Introduction by John Mansfield. London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd. 1600. 1927.
Hakluyt chronicles the travels and journals of Englishmen and their discoveries. Especially important for this thesis is volume III which recounts the stories of Englishmen travelling throughout Asia, such as Ralph Fitch’s travels at the end of the sixteenth century (which included Pegu).


Hall makes brief mention of De Brito and his factory at Syriam.


This comprehensive account of the “Talaings,” or Mons, of Lower Burma is considered by many to be the standard work on Mon civilization. Now somewhat of a rarity, this work offers important information on Mon culture, history, as well as information on sources.


This reprinted history provides an account of De Brito in some detail.


Phayre has provided this standard work on Burmese history and deals with Philip De Brito in some depth.


Scammell discusses the activities largely of the Portuguese adventurers in Asia as a whole. However, slight notice is given to Portuguese activities at Syriam and in Arakan.


This is the only English-language work devoted solely to Philip De Brito. Although it glorifies De Brito too much to the point of lacking objectivity, it contains some information not found elsewhere in secondary sources.


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This work contains information on religious activities of the Portuguese in De Brito’s state.


Winius deals briefly with Portuguese activities on the Southeast Asia mainland, including the Portuguese at Dianga and at Syriam.


Forthcoming Additions to the Bibliography of Burma/Myanmar Research

In preparation for the yearly bibliographic supplement, readers are asked to submit recent publications (and old ones) that were not included in the previous year’s edition. Since there are hundreds of publications on Burma each year, producing a complete bibliography would be impossible without the help and cooperation of the Burma research community. When submitting entries, please follow the style of the bibliographic supplement.

Please also note, that we do not include encyclopedia articles in the bibliographic supplement, but we will note them here for the notice of readers. Further, while we include forthcoming publications in this list, again for the notice of readers, these entries will not be included in the supplement until they have actually been published.

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known as Nai (Mr.) Thien or Thian, and published in the *Journal of the Siam Society* (1908-11). Aung Thein made a translation in Thai, but the Thai idiom was not good, and his version was never published. A copy was sent to the Fine Arts Department, but the FAD never had anyone skilled enough in both languages to verify and polish-up the translation, so the National Library retained the manuscript unpublished. More than 70 years later, the Historical Commission of the Prime Minister’s Office considered this problem, and its solution was to have Rong Sayamanond compile these observations about the text and its contents.

National Archives Division, Department of Fine Arts. 1972. *Chotmaihet rai-nang kan sadet pai du kitchakan tang-tang...* [Records of Their Highnesses’ Reports on Their Fact-Finding Mission...]. *Sinlapakôn* 16 (4): 23-43. This is the second of a series of reports by Naris and other princes to Prince Phanurangsi (acting army commander) in 1888. In this report, Naris describes his arrival in Rangoon in November 1888 by ship (after sailing from Bangkok by way of Singapore and Pinang) and his journey by river to Mandalay.

National Archives Division, Department of Fine Arts. 1972. *Chotmaihet rai-nang kan sadet pai du kitchakan tang-tang...* [Records of Their Highnesses’ Reports on Their Fact-Finding Mission...]. *Sinlapakôn* 16 (5): 32-60. This is the third of the series of reports by Prince Naris to Prince Phanurangsi. This is the daily diary from 30 October 1888 (the departure from Bangkok) to 20 November (the arrival in Rangoon) and activities there until 22 November. National Archives Division, Department of Fine Arts. 1973. *Chotmaihet rai-ngan kan sadet pai du kitchakan tang-tang...* [Records of Their Highnesses’ Reports on Their Fact-Finding Mission...]. *Sinlapakôn* 16 (6): 22-49. This is the fourth and last of the series of reports by Naris to Prince Phanurangsi. It is the diary from 23 November 1888 (in Rangoon), the trip up the Irrawaddy, the 29 November arrival at Mandalay (with a detailed report on the city), the return down-river, the arrival at Pinang (17 December) and ending with the 20 December arrival at Singapore.

*Chotmaihet haeng mūang si ayutthaya lae mūang hongsawadi angwa* [A Record of Ayutthaya and of Pegu and Ava]. 1991. Pp. 99-101 in Phimphan Phai bunwangcharoen [Pimpun Piboonwung char worm], *Wikhrò khô mun chotmaihet haeng mūang si ayuththaya lae mūang hongsawadi angwa* [An Analysis of a Record of Ayutthaya, Pegu and Ava], *Sinlapakôn* 34 (4): 97-110. This manuscript in the Thai National Archives is untitled and undated, but was probably recorded soon after 1767. Phimphan's title is arbitrary. To reflect the content, a more accurate title would be ‘An Abbreviated Account of Ayutthaya, Pegu and Ava, 1737-67: The Final Mon Ascendancy and Subjection by the Burmese, and the Fall of Ayutthaya’.

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<td>Boundaries, Reports and Examinations, 1892-1936</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Reports on Districts and States, 1868-1936</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>18</td>
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</table>

in an alphabetical arrangement: Akyab→Yamethin

More details are to be found at [www.idc.nl/referer.php?id=461](http://www.idc.nl/referer.php?id=461).
COLONIAL RANGOON

The following map of Rangoon provides the old, colonial (and early independence) names for streets. It is intended only as a reference.
PRECOLONIAL AVA COLORIZED

Ted Turner did it for classic movies, so we have attempted it for an old map of Burma, that included in Monmorency's account, also published in the present issue of the *SBBR*. 

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