ELEPHANT IN MYANMAR SOCIETY (1752-1885)

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ELEPHANT IN MYANMAR SOCIETY (1752-1885)

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ABSTRACT

The Dissertation titled, Elephant in Myanmar Society (1752-1885) is presented by dividing into four chapters, in which Chapter I deals with "Elephant in Myanmar mythology", and Chapter II describes "the Elephant in Myanmar Art and Literature" and Chapter III explains “Elephant in warfare”, while the last chapter expounds about the "Elephanteers in Society". It explains the elephant cult and how elephants are related with it. As Myanmar kings accepted the white elephant as the Buddha-to-be, the cult of white elephant was related with the lives of the Buddha. By the acceptance of textual conception that the white elephant brings peace and prosperity, the dissertation goes on mention that, how kings and people of Myanmar firmly believed in the white elephant cult, how they adopted the title of the White Elephant. But Chapter I describes the irony of how the possessor Kings of white elephant faced the imperialist wars. The kings manipulated the literature by incorporating the cult of white elephant into it, in order to expand the aura and the influence of the reigning king, by which made the ruling of the country easy. As the white elephant possessing kings encouraged, art, literature and sculpture that related with the white elephant, came to emerge and piled into a heap. Most literatures, that related with the elephant, eulogized how much the king was glorified. All these are described in Chapter II. In the days of Myanmar Kings, elephants occupied a central role as war fighters. The possession of many elephants, directly related with the power and glory of a king. The dissertation also explains how much the elephant was important in the relation between the king and his vassals and in the relations of the kingdom and other countries. The believed that they could win the wars if there were white elephants in their troops. The Kaleidoscope of the change of the usefulness of the elephant, as war fighters during Bagan Period, down to early Konbaung Period, the as goods producing animal in later Konbaung Period is mentioned in Chapter III. As the elephant has played a major role in feudal Myanmar, the officials and attendants to these elephants also played a crucial role in monarchical Myanmar. Society, socially, these peoples were enjoying many privileges. But their ups and downs was dependent on the attitude of the King and his mood, and how much he valued and regarded the elephant. These are described in Chapter IV. The dissertation ends by examining how the once important and reliable elephant in wars and the elephanteers, declined in when western imperialism predominated the country.
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Baretto  Heroes of Burma, Artha Booth Gravely memorial Endowment (Blind School) fund

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<td>danakpala</td>
<td>elephant trainer</td>
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<td>htoo</td>
<td>a Burmese word for fetters or hobbles</td>
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<td>ka</td>
<td>saddle</td>
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<td>kumchee or kumkie</td>
<td>highly trained elephant used in capturing wild elephants by lasso or immobilization method</td>
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<td>kyoneyantha</td>
<td>elephant trainer</td>
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<tr>
<td>musth</td>
<td>Hindi word for secretion which usually flows from the temporal glands of male elephants</td>
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<td>oozi</td>
<td>ruler of an elephant</td>
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<td>pamaw, pamawnat, pamawu</td>
<td>elephant trainer  instructor</td>
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<td>pyandamyo</td>
<td>appointment order , junior service</td>
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<td>sinkyan</td>
<td>a treatise an elephants</td>
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<td>sinbyudaw</td>
<td>a royal white elephant</td>
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<td>sinwun</td>
<td>a designation given to an official in charge of elephants in the days of the Myanmar kings: Literality, a commissioner of elephant</td>
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<td>sugyi</td>
<td>all armed men both natives and foreigners</td>
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INTRODUCTION

Elephant, the largest land mammal on earth, is so intimately connected with man, since the ancient times. No one knows for sure, when man domesticated this beast. But one thing certain is, since its domestication, the animal proved that it is one of the most useful at the disposal of human being. Due to its strength and power, the beast is mostly used in heavy duty works, carrying, transporting and hauling heavy and bulky materials from place to place.

Like other creatures, elephants also were found varied in kinds and colors. When the man encountered and noticed the white elephant, he thought that the white elephant, being different from the mass black ones, must be distinguished with might, power and glory. And so the cult of elephant began to creep in the life of human, with much praying and worshiping, of which occupying a firm seat in the Hindu pantheon and the white elephant as bodhisattva in any sect of Buddhism. In order to be able to posses the white elephant, Southeast Asian courts were found ready to go to war. Elephant could make men both in amity and enmity each other, and so did in mutual relations of countries.

Elephants played a major role in the politics, diplomatic and socio economy of most South and Southeast Asian countries. They were deeply entrenched in the military affairs of Myanmar and neighbouring Southeast Asian countries, crowning all other military arms of these countries. But the power and glory of elephant was eclipsed by the appearance of firearms, leaving the beast to be just a productive tool in the timber extraction.


CHAPTER ONE

ELEPHANT IN MYANMAR MYTHOLOGY

Divine elephant and elephant cult, it seems that, came from India, where a range of faiths in elephant had been existed well before the coming of the Lord Buddha. At the beginning of the world, there existed the god Paramesvara and his consort Paramethurein, who did a lot for the benefit and interest of man. By their cohabitation, the consort Paramethurein once conceived, during which she dreamed of being flowered with hatthilata creeper. Then when she took birth, the sibling was named Hatthilata Mahaviralata Mahapeinnè. Mahapeinnè caused to appear a young cow and made her eaten the hatthilata creeper, to her a pair of K was born, by whom the following kinds of elephants came into existence:

- the black elephant
- \textit{Gangeya} the elephant with the odour of blue Lotus or musth
- \textit{Pandara} the white elephant
- \textit{Tampa} the reddish colored elephant
- \textit{Peingala} the variegated colored elephant
- \textit{Ganda} the elephant with the odour of sweet smell
- \textit{Mingala} the elephant with the colored of copper
- \textit{Hayma} the elephant with the color of gold
- \textit{Uposatha} the elephant resembling the conch shell, and
- \textit{Chhadan} the elephant with the color of silver.

According to the Buddhist mythology and legends, the elephant occupied a key role in some *jatakas* the history of the previous lives of the Buddha. Chief among them was the dream of the queen of the King Suddhodhana of Kapilvastu, who saw a white elephant in her dream before the conception of Gautama the Buddha. Brahmins courtiers interpreted the dream as there shall have a son, who would become, if he dwells in the house, a universal monarch, if not, a Buddha, the world renouncer and the world conqueror. By the dream, the baby in the womb was regarded as the *Bodhisattva*. The life of a white elephant could be seen in many of previous lives of the Buddha.

Besides, the elephant was the animal by which the manner and the strength of Buddha, were described in comparison. In his sermons, Buddha used to explain his points by taking the elephant as the parallel. We found the comparative description of Buddha’s intelligence and strength by the strength of ten kinds of *Kāḷāvaka* elephant bore the strength of 10 muscular men. That of *Gangeya* bore the strength of *kalāvaka*. Those of *Pandara, Tampa, Peingala, Ganda, Mingala, Hayma, Uposatha and Chaddan* bore the strength of 10 folds more power them each of their precursors, *Chaddan* elephant being the strongest.

---

1 Ashin Zanaka bhivamsa, Agga Maha Pandita, *Yokeson Buddha Sasanawam* (The illustrated Buddhavamsa), Y.M.B.A, Yangon, p.4


   *Chaddanta Jataka* (514)  
   *Dummedha Jataka* (122)  
   *Jataka* (221)  
   *Jakata* (267)  

   (357)  
   *Jataka* (455)  
   *Jataka* (72)

3 *Kāḷāvaka* elephant bore the strength of 10 muscular men. That of *Gangeya* bore the strength of *kalāvaka*. Those of *Pandara, Tampa, Peingala, Ganda, Mingala, Hayma, Uposatha* and *Chaddan* bore the strength of 10 folds more power them each of their precursors, *Chaddan* elephant being the strongest.
elephant. Of the 550 *Jatakas*, there were eighteen *Jatakas*, concerning with the elephant. Besides, among the twenty eight Buddhas, some rode the elephant in their renunciation. Elephant was found well concerned with the human in their relation, which we can understand by the Buddhist scriptures. The most famous was the attack of Maya on the Lord Buddha at the moment of enlightenment under the banyan tree. Maya riding *Girimekha* elephant with myriad followers tried to seize the *Aparazitapalanka* on which the Lord attained Buddhahood. Then Buddha had to subdue the great elephant *Nalagiri* who was being intoxicated and ordered to kill the Lord Buddha. Also in *Jataka*, the *Bodhisattva* and followers were, on account of the suspicion by the king, ordered to be killed by the tread of elephant, but the elephant did not dare to step over them, owing to the influence of affection put on the elephant by the men, whom he had to tread.

By these facts we came to know that the elephant has intelligence, enough to be able to communicate with the man and get involved in the affairs of human

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5. (a) *550 Jatakas*, 2002

6. (a) *Viccittasara*, 1982, 576

(b) *Buddha of Dipankara, Thumana*, , , *Thikhi, Konagaman*

7. *Viccittasara*, 1982, 284


beings. The intelligence of the elephant is more vividly seen in the God of Hindu mythology, the cult of which definitely arrived Myanmar in Bagan Period, Aniruddha built a pagoda under the name of a God with many elephant heads. But it is popularly known as Shwesandaw.\(^\text{10}\).

The origin of the worship of, is indistinct and obscure albeit, it is the only elephant headed god in the Hindu pantheon, symbolizing as the remover of obstacles. also represents the art of writing and understanding of literature.\(^\text{11}\) Whether Myanmar worship of carried these appellations of the god as representatives of intelligence and the remover of obstacles or not, is doubtful, but one thing sure is, the god is popular among the Hindu community in Myanmar.

In Myanmar, the elephant cult is found widely spread in the form of the white elephant as the Buddha to be. Naturally it began in India, where Buddhism first flourished. With the advent of Buddhism into Myanmar, it seems that, the white elephant cult arrived Myanmar, not much changed in the form and content. Essentially, the cult of Buddha to be or Bodhisattva is a unique contribution of the sect of Buddhism. In their faith, Bodhisattva is a symbol of friendliness, piety and help. He is the one who already has attained full perfection of wisdom. The body and the mind of Bodhisattva are suffused and penetrated with friendliness for all creatures. He aspires for the attainment of Bodhi, for the welfare and happiness of all beings including men and devas. The Buddha to be himself stays in the world of sufferings in order to do good to all creatures. This is, what the believers seem, what the Buddha to be’s great sacrifices for others. He is said to have the great vow: “I shall not enter into final unless all beings


have liberated”. Thus Bodhisattva is the embodiment of compassion and love. There are two Jataka stories, in which the Bodhisattva was born as elephant. In one, he sacrifices himself for the good of his wife (Saddanta Jataka) and in another for his mother (Chandorana Jataka).\textsuperscript{12}

The above mentioned is the cult of Bodhisattva as white elephant in Mahayana Buddhism. In Mahayana Buddhism, the cult of Bodhisattva and that of white elephant are deeply interrelated. As a country of Theravadha Buddhism, Myanmar people also worshiped the white elephant as a Buddha to be, but it seems, the form and content of white elephant worshiping is quite different from that of Mahayana Buddhist. The emphasis put in here in Theravadha is the Buddha itself, who was already enlightened, not the Bodhisattva, who in fact was still needed to do more to be perfected. With regard to white elephant worshiping, there are some dreams concerning with white elephant. It was all the famous Mayadevi’s Dream, in which, she saw a white elephant came to her from the north and smote to her right side and entered the womb.\textsuperscript{13} Likewise, the great Buddhist King Asoka had once a dream in that he saw a white elephant who touched the great king from head to toe, finally raised the right hand of the king. The dream was interpreted as an omen of the arrival of Maha Moggaliputta Tissa, under whose aegis; the great king was able to hold the Third Synod.\textsuperscript{14} We have seen that Theravadin’s worship of the white elephant did not go far beyond of that, in which they recognized him as a Buddha to be, meaning not the object of permanent veneration.

\textsuperscript{12}Gupta, 1982, 36
\textsuperscript{13}Viccittasara, 1982, 16
Historically, it can be said that, the elephant cult, was found in association with the Pyu\textsuperscript{15}, according to Dr. Than Tun, were the First Myanmar Empire builders in the land of Myanmar\textsuperscript{16}. Pyu had left many archeological sites and artifacts, of which votive tablets were one among other things. In these votaries, Pyu had moulded Buddha images seated on the throne which was propped up by a number of elephants. We may interpret these elephant based Buddha images of votive tablets as a symbol of the elephant cult.\textsuperscript{17}

The elephant cult was found unmistakingly in the old Pyu City of Sriksetra, where the king and the people had sculptured an image of a white elephant, measuring 100 feet in height. Chinese annals recorded that the king and the people usually worshiped the image of white elephant, especially in the settlement of a case, the parties concerned knelt before the image of white elephant and sweared. In times of danger, the king himself came before the great image and worshiped praying all the eminent dangers be went away.\textsuperscript{18} Pyu had these kinds of worship, which might be due to the belief in white elephant as the beholder of almighty power.

\textsuperscript{15}G.H. Luce, \textit{Manshu} (Book of the Southern Barbarians), Data paper , No.44, Southeast Asia Program, Department of Far Eastern Studies, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, December, 1961, p.90 (Henceforth: Luce , 1961)

\textsuperscript{16}Dr. Than Tun, \textit{Myanmar Thamaingnidan (Introduction to Myanmar history)}, Myanmar Heritage, Yangon, 2001, p.31(Henceforth: Than Tun, 2001)

\textsuperscript{17}Kyuyadana Maung Mya Kyaing, “Sinkhan Payamya”, (Pagodas with elephant base) \textit{Ngwetayi}, No.300, June, 1985, p.1-22 (Henceforth: Mya Kyaing, 1985)

\textsuperscript{18}(a) Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt, “Myanmar Yinkyehmu hnit Thamaing sinlar Sin Phyu taw mya” (Myanmar culture and traditional historical white elephant), \textit{The New Light of Myanmar}, November , 2001 (Henceforth: Khin Maung Nyunt, 2001)

(b) Dr. Margret Wong, “The Sino-Myanmar Relation from the Chinese Sources (AD, 1 to 13)”. Paper reading session on the 76th anniversary of Yangon University, held in Diamond Jubilee Hall, on 23, 1, 1997, p.3 (Henceforth: Margreat Wong , 1997)
After the sack of Pyu City by *Nan Chao* in 832 A.D, the first Myanmar King Aniruddha was able to build the Second Myanmar Empire, which in the eyes of conservative historians this is the First Myanmar Empire, in the middle of 11th century A.D 1044. The elephant cult went on live through the Bagan Period. The best evidence was a stone inscription, erected by the Bagan Mahathera Mahakassapa, who claimed in his record that in one of his previous lives, he had been an elephant. The inscription read thus:19

With regard to government institution, Myanmar monarchs adopted the model of Indian kingship, of which their favourite role model was that of *Cakravartin*,20 the Universal monarch, who, by legends, was supposed to own seven “ratanas”21. With the belief in being a *Cakravartin*, who allegedly commanded the respect and regard of hundred and one monarchs, prevailing over all enemies, Myanmar kings did a lot of meritorious deeds, in order to be able to come to them the seven ratanas of *Cakravartin*, such as the white elephant. According to the commentary on *Maha Sudassana Sutta*, to be able to come white elephant, a king had to make a donation, worth about one and half lakh, and then to make a bath by pouring from the head about sixteen pots of perfumed water,
after which needed to take sabbath. After taking reasonable bland diet, attaining the cloak, he had to enter the quient room, located at the upper tier of the prasada, to ponder one’s act of offerings and observance of precepts. If kept the above mentioned observances, the commentary goes on stated that a white elephant, by the line of either *Chaddan* or *Uposahta*, with characteristics of rising sun reddish legs, neck and mouth, white skin, the seven organs of all four legs, two tusks and tail being long enough to touch the ground, able to fly in the sky, like the mountain of silver with the border hued by the color of realgar (red orpiment), would arrive and occupy his place of elephant king.

The scripture clearly indicates that only the ones who was man of morality and devotion, could have a chance to own the white elephant. It also connotes that there was a belief that the owner of white elephant was powerful and glorious. Therefore, every owner of white elephant was found very powerful. In Bagan Period, King Aniruddha had, said in possession of about thirty eight white elephant\(^22\) and that of Alaungsithu about thirty two white elephants.\(^23\) The people of Indo-China believed that more white elephants mean more powerful and successful, which led many sovereigns to assume the title of the Lord of the White elephant. As far as the evidences show, the one who firstly claimed himself the possessor of white elephant was none, other than Alaungsithu (AD 1112-1167).\(^24\) Though Aniruddha had owned more number of white elephant than Alaungsithu, he never claimed such title; due might be the sovereign was caught in the busy business of building a new kingdom or simply disregarding it, as it was the outgrowth of Hinduism, in such a time where the reformation of Buddhism was being carried out.

\(^{22}(a)\) Sayadaw, “*Gaza vinicchaya*”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No.11186, kon-reverse,


\(^{23}\)“Shwezigon Kyansitha Inscription,” Mahamuni inscription shed 78, line, 1-3

\(^{24}\)Hmannan, 2003a, 307
As to the regard, special consideration was placed on the skin color of the elephant. Of the principal color of white and black, the former was more esteemed, owing to the Myanmar kings belief of the creature, as one of the seven “ratanas” of the universal monarch and as a powerful animal. Accordingly Myanmar kings preferred the white elephant in their royal occasions. Also in the occasions of religious affairs, the holy objects were being carried on the back of white elephant, rather than the black one.

King Aniruddha, the champion of Buddhism in Bagan Burma, had it carried on the back of white elephant, such holy relics of the Sacred Tooth got from China (Gandhara), the Sacred Whorl and Collar Bone acquired from Kanyan Country, and the Sacred Hair from the Town of Dala. Besides, after subduing the Thaton of Mon King Manuha, the victorious King Aniruddha placed the thirty sets of Tipitaka on the thirty two white elephants and took it away to Bagan\textsuperscript{25}. It was said that King Aniruddha welcomed the Sacred Tooth from Ceylon, by riding a white elephant called Pal pyon (the pearly smile). He sent the white elephant with the Sacred Tooth on its back and followed after it. The king contructed pagodas on every site where the white elephant crouched. Pagodas such as Shwezigon, Tankyitaung, Tuywintaung, Lokananda and Pyetkhaywetaung are the ones that the white elephant had crouched. By this fact we can understand that, for the propagation of Buddha's teachings, successive kings, since Aniruddha had used the white elephant reverently.\textsuperscript{26} These observation shows that the white elephant was more esteemed than the black one.

The cult of white elephant in Bagan Period can be seen in religious objects such as pagodas, stupa, temple and images, where elephant images are included to

\textsuperscript{25}(a) Hmanan, 2003a, 246  
(b)Baretto,10  
prop up these venerated objects. The custom of venerating the elephant based images is widely known among the populace. Veneration of pagodas with elephant propping is somewhat less known, which might come to Myanmar from Sri Lanka. There were at least three pagodas with elephant base, in Bagan Period, of which the most famous was that of Sisana, located at the south extreme of Bagan. Among the pagodas with elephant base, it was the largest, built on the square platform in which were row of elephant heads, numbering thirty nine in each side, altogether totalling 156 elephant heads. The inner sanctum of Sisana, now better known Sedanagyi, and it's ambulatories were sealed off, for unknown reason. The other stupa with the images of elephant heads was the one known as Htupagyi Pagoda. It was built on the square plinth with three terraces. Each side of the plinth carried about sixteen elephants, totalling sixty four for four cardinal directions. Another temple with elephants locates on the right side of the road, leading to Thiripyissaya Hotel. It is a temple with square plinth, surrounded by double enclosures, carrying twenty seven elephants on each side of the plinth.

It is thought that stupas with elephant might indicate the worship of Cakravartin. It is a pagoda, not only as it enshrined the relics of Lord Buddha, but also as it dedicated to the Cakravartin. Therefore, Htupagyi, with its elephant base may indicate, the dedication to the Cakravartin. The inclusion of elephant as an architectural motif of stupas and temples, might represent a custom in which Buddha and Cakravartin are worshiped altogether interchangeably. The connotation from this association of elephant with pagodas might be that, the

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28 Toe Hla, 2000, 83-89

29 Toe Hla, 2000, 83-89

30 Toe Hla, 2000, 83-89
worshiper, who himself sculptured or built pagoda or image, in fact had been trying to implant the power of Cakravartin which in reality is a mean of sorcery.

Concerning with the elephant base in pagodas and images, Myanmar belief had it that as the Uposatha and Chaddan the white elephant kinds were the mount on which should the Cakravartin be carried, by which it deems appropriate to build of sculpture the pagodas and images with the elephant in support. Therefore, one finds so many pagodas and images with elephant support throughout the country. The association of elephant with pagodas and images, can be related with the life story of the Buddha. Aside the Vessantara and Chaddan Jatakas, one among the eight victories of the Buddha was the subduing of the Nalagiri elephant. This fact might be sufficient for the rulers to build and worship the pagodas and images with elephant base, in order to ward off or repel the evil or enemies, or to be able to breakthrough the difficulties of politics, economic and military.

The belief of white elephant as one of seven “ratanas” of universal monarch, led so many monarchs to adopt the title of lord of white elephant, which can be found since Bagan Period. Aniruddha was in possession of thirty eight white elephants, while that of Alaungsithu about thirty two white elephants. Accordingly, the latters was attributed as the Lord of White Elephant by later scholars, first by Monywe Sayadaw Ashin Ardiccaransi31, whom the late historian Dr.Than Tun quoted, in the description of Sithu I in his book on the Political History of Bagan.32 Evidently, the possession of white elephant for a ruler was a

31Ashin (Monywe Sayadaw), Thamanta Setkhu Dipani, Yangon, Eiksasaya Pitaka Book House, p.216 (Henceforth: Setkhu Dipani)

32Dr. Than Tun, Bagan Khit Naingngayve (Political History of Bagan), Yangon, Yongyi chet sarpay, 2005, pp.51-59 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 2005)
source of honor, pride and glory, in many Southeast Asian countries. The white elephant had been always the symbol of Buddhism, of prestige, prosperity and political power. It also had been one of the chief causes of invasions and plunder, and drove many courts to go to war. In the court politics, white elephant possessing kings were, it seems, much feared and respected, by other kings who did not owned any of white elephants. It was the reigning King Uzana, for being owned no white elephant, who transferred the throne to his younger brother Kyawswa, who possessed five white elephants. The zeal and zest in order to be in possession of white elephant can be vividly seem in the act of King Thithathu, who in the year A.D. 1212 claimed the lord of white elephant, by riding on a dead white elephant which happened to be floating down the Samon River. In Taungngu Period, a war broke out for the ownership of the white elephants. It was that the King of Ayutia, Sakka Vattiyaza war in possession of seven white elephant, for which Hanthawaddy Sinbyushin made a war in the year 1555 and took Ayutia.


(b)Sunait Chutintaranond and Dr. Than Tun, Cakravartin: Ideology, Reason and Manifestation of Siamese and Burmese Kings in Traditional Warfare (1538-1854), on Both sides of the Tenasserim Range: History of Siamese-Burmese Relations, Asian studies Monographs No.050, Chulalong Korin University, Bangkok, 1995, p.56 (Henceforth: Cakravartin, 1995)


(d)U Toke Gale, Burmese Timber Elephant, Trade Corporation(9), Yangon,1974, p.134 (Henceforth: Toke Gale, 1974)

34Lebaw Yun Kyaung Sayadaw Zinalankaradaza; “Gazaviniccaya”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No.1186, kon-reverse

35Hmannan, 2003a, 371

36(a)“History of Siam”, Palmleaf MS, U.C.L, No.11997, khaw-observe
After the advent of Buddhism into Myanmar and Myanmar kings became devout Buddhists, they emulated the universal monarch *Cakravartin*, which was described in the Buddhist Scripture. Accordingly, Myanmar kings adopted such Titles of *Bodhisattva*, and of *Cakravartin*. The adopting of the lord of white elephant, by implication, meant the assuming of *Cakravartin*, for the white elephant was a treasure, entitled only to the *Cakravartin*. The possession of white elephant made many monarchs boasted in their royal orders and their dedication recorded in stone inscriptions, proclaiming thus, “Lord of *Chaddan*”, “Lord of White Elephant”, “Red elephant and Spotted Elephant”.37

After Bagan Period, the cult of white elephant went on live, down through the successive ages of Myanmar history. In the post Bagan Period of Sagaing, Pinya and Inwa, every monarch was found endeavored to be able to possess the white elephant, dead or alive, and if not many, but at least one. As have been mentioned above, the zeal and zest of Pinya Thihathu to possess the white elephant is extraordinary, as he took out the dead white elephant which floated down the *Samon* River, and after scaffolding the animal, he took possession of it, and claimed the lord of white elephant39. Out of six kings of Pinya, all four, except the last two, adopted the title of the lord of white elephant. Also, Kings of Sagaing and Inwa, were found adopted the title of lord of white elephant.

King Mohnyin of Inwa, in A.D. 1430 built a pagoda with a height of 120 cubits, in Sagaing. The king called it Yadana *Zedi*, which was tumbled down to


38(a) “Myanmar Mission to *Yungyî* (Father Bagan)”, *Parabaik* MS. NL, No.474

(b) Aye Kyaw ,1979, 135

39Toe Hla, 2000, 7
the platform, owing the earthquake occurred in A.D. 1485. Mingaung II (1480-
1501), in obedience to his Queen mother, repaired the pagoda and its enclosure,
adding to them with images of elephant, after which the pagoda came to be known
as Yadana Zedi Sinmyashin (pagoda of gems and possessor of many elephants). It
was said that the bodily relics and images of Buddha were enshrined on the
Aprazitapalanka which was adorned with images of elephants, made of gold,
silver, ruby and the alloy of gold and copper (mogyo). Some said that the
decoration with elephant images made the pagoda known as sinmyashin. The
enclosure walls of the pagoda also have many images of elephant. Beside, there
also are detached elephant images in front of the pagoda. It is a deviation from the
normal inclusion of elephant images at the lowest terrace. In or at every major
famous pagoda, we can find images of elephants placed reverely and much
cherishly, by the donors.

Not the religious edifices alone, images of elephant are found occupied on
various buildings, utilities and utensils. Chief among the use of human utilities is
that of Elephant Throne (Gazathanapalin), which formed one among the nine
thrones of Myanmar kings. It was made with the champak wood (michelia
champaca)41 and carved with images of elephants. The elephant throne was placed
in the chamber of Byedaik (Privy Council), where the king sat, when he made
appointments of officers or when officers were formally dismissed.42 Also the
vassals of Myanmar kings, the Shan Sawbwas had it a chair with the motifs of

40Shin , Ponpyathanga Kyehnak Abeikdan (Pictorial Medical Dictionary of
Birds and Fishes),VI&i, Yangon, Hanthawaddy Press, 1975, p.94 (Henceforth: Nagathein, 1975)
41Attha darsi became Buddha under the champac tree
42(a) Dr Yi Yi, “The Thrones of Burmese Kings”, Journal of Burma Research Society,
(b)J.G. Scott and Hardiman, J.P.C., Gazetteer of Upper Burma and The Shan States,
II&i, 1900, p.88 (Henceforth: GUBSS , 1900)
three elephants in their resident manor known, as *Haw* or *Hawnan*.\(^{43}\) Besides, decorative elephant images occupied the important places and parts on the boats and barges.

The overwhelming pervasiveness of elephant in Myanmar society, can be understood by number of villages and towns that carried the name of the elephant in their name of place, full or part. The following table shows the number of place-name with the word elephant in respective states and divisions of Myanmar.\(^{44}\)

**Table I**

**List of Villages Prefixed or Suffixed with the word *Sin***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shan</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Ayeyawaddy</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rakhine</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Bago</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mandalay</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kachin</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Magway</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chin</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sagaing</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayin</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Yangon</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayah</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Taninthayi</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Wards, Villages and Village tracts by Townships in States and Divisions.

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\(^{44}\)Wards, *Villages and Village Tracts by Townships in States and Divisions*, Yangon, Union of Burma, Buddha Sasana Press, 28 February, 1974 (Henceforth: States and Division, 1974)
By the table, we come to understand that villages and towns prefixed or suffixed with the word sin, are there more number in States and Divisions where elephants lived. They got these names owing to a number of reasons, of which some are

Having white elephants
Being a grazing ground for white elephant
Enjoyment of victory by means of elephant
Semblance to the elephant and so on. All these in fact come out of human regard and affection on the elephant.

Mon kings and Rakhine kings were also found to value and cherish the white elephant. Accordingly some of them adopted the title of lords of white elephant, who were Mon king Wareu (A.D. 1287-1306)\(^{45}\), Banya u (A.D.1353-1385)\(^{46}\), Yazadarit (A.D.1385-1423)\(^{47}\) and Rakhine King Minyazargyi (A.D.1593-1613).\(^{48}\) Kings who adopted the lord of white elephant in Myanmar history are mentioned in the following table.

### Table II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>King</th>
<th>Period reigned</th>
<th>Capital</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monarch</th>
<th>Reigns</th>
<th>Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alaungsithu</td>
<td>AD-1112-1167</td>
<td>Bagan (1044-1287)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thihathu</td>
<td>AD- 1312-1324</td>
<td>Pinya (1312-1364)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyawzwa</td>
<td>AD- 1342-1350</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nawrahta minye</td>
<td>AD- 1350</td>
<td>Sagaing (1315-1364)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taraphyange</td>
<td>AD- 1350</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taraphya</td>
<td>AD- 1401</td>
<td>Inwa (1364-1355)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thihathu</td>
<td>AD- 1422-1426</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayinnaung</td>
<td>AD- 1551-1581</td>
<td>Taungngu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1486-1752)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taninganwe</td>
<td>AD- 1714-1733</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myedu</td>
<td>AD- 1763-1776</td>
<td>Konbaung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1752-1885)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singu</td>
<td>AD- 1776-1782</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badon</td>
<td>AD- 1782-1819</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sagaing</td>
<td>AD- 1819-1837</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mindon</td>
<td>AD- 1853-1878</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thibaw</td>
<td>AD- 1878-1885</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Hmanan, 2003, a,b,c, Konbaungzet, 2004, a,b,c

By the table we come to know that throughout the successive ages of Myanmar history, from Bagan to Konbaung Periods, there were altogether fifteen monarchs who adopted the title of Lords of White Elephants. Among them, some were in possession of only one white elephant but some, many in number. But it is strange that the founder of first Myanmar Empire King Anirudha and the founder of the Third Myanmar Empire King Alaungmintaya, never claimed the title, though the latter in his royal letters described himself as the Lord of White
Elephant, Red Elephant and Spotted Elephant. The table shows that Konbaung kings assumed the title most, indicating their conservative opinion and ideological backwardness and bankruptcy.

The raison d'être of the adoption of the title of white elephant, may rest in the following reasons: with the belief in
make it long the span of the reign of a sovereign
win the respect and trust of the subject people
being the symbol of power, by implication, help in building one is power and authority, and
when the recognition of the invisible powerful being

When it had happened to take into possession of a white elephant, kings usually had done so, by conferring bombastic eulogistic titles on the animal. The following table shows the elephant titles, conferred by various Konbaung kings to their cherished white elephants.

Table III
White Elephant Titles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>King</th>
<th>Title conferred on the elephant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Myedu</td>
<td>Chadan Pyaung Kyaw (1770)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singu</td>
<td>Chaddan mingala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badon</td>
<td>U Paw Pyaungmon (8 June 1784)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yadana Pyaungmon (27 Jan 1785)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nagavara (29 April 1785)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yadana kumud (6 Nov 1788)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U baw Htutkhaung (1796)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

49 *Alaungmintaya Ameintawmaya* (The Royal Order of Alaungmintaya), Daw Khin Khin Sein, (ed), Yangon, Myanmar Historical Commission, 1964, order 25 (Henceforth: Royal Orders, 1964)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Monarch</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sagaing</td>
<td>Arunagiri</td>
<td>(1821)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mindon</td>
<td>Martinpyaungmon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lekyunyamaung</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zabudazaung</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zabudazeik</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BhaddhInwadi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zabukyetthahye</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bonyaungshunbwint</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pogaungyinma</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boyaung shun</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bontaukpa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bonyaungwin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thibaw</td>
<td>Mauriya pissara Naga yaza</td>
<td>(22 Aug 1858)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zeya Vaduna Pissaya Nagayaza</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Konbaungzet, 2004,a,b,c
Out of a total of eleven kings in Kongaung dynasty, about six kings adopted the title of Lord of White Elephant. Among them, Badon, Sagaing and Mindon possessed many white elephants and accordingly frequently adopted the title. It is noteworthy that the adoption of the title, never occurred in the beginning years of a reign, but only in the time when the kingdom enjoyed relative stability, in order to promote peace and prosperity of the domain and to boast the power of the sovereign. Of the kings who adopted the title of white elephant, King Badon can be regarded the most frenzied, concerning with the white elephant. He assumed the title of Lord and Master of Chaddan White Elephant.\textsuperscript{50}

In Konbaung Period, King Badon had owned the highest number of white elephants. The following tables shows the white elephants with their titles and where they appeared.

**Table IV**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of occupation of white elephant</th>
<th>Conferred on White Elephant</th>
<th>Habitat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 June 1784</td>
<td>Upawpyaungmon</td>
<td>appeared in Aukma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 January 1785</td>
<td>Yadanapyaungmon</td>
<td>Shwekyar Theinthaung forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 May 1785</td>
<td>Nagawara</td>
<td>Indauktha forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 December 1788</td>
<td>Yadanakumud</td>
<td>Kalay forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 February 1790</td>
<td>Upawhtukhaung</td>
<td>Presented by Kalay Sawbwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 March 1795</td>
<td>not known</td>
<td>Presented from Tagaung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 June 1796</td>
<td>Warasetagiri</td>
<td>Presented from Taunggyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 August 1797</td>
<td>Baddhawadi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 September 1804</td>
<td>Pondarika</td>
<td>Presented from Tagaung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 February 1805</td>
<td>Nirvana Pisaya</td>
<td>Minhla, Hanthawaddy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Naga Yaza</td>
<td>Nibban Village, south of Hanthawaddy Town</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{50}“The order of lord of white elephant”, No.1806, Palmleaf MS, NL, No.285, u-reverse
King Badon possessed, besides Thirimanla Maha Thubaddha and Nirvana Pissaya Naga Yaza, a total of well over 120 white and red elephants. \(^{51}\) The king also conferred the elephant the title of “Nirvana Pissaya Naga Yaza” and bestowed on the animal the royal elephant paraphernalia, \(^{52}\) which were almost the same to that of the king himself. At the ceremony, king, queens, princes and princesses, had given a range of gifts to the white elephant and lists of gifts were as follows:

### Table V

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gifts by King Badon</th>
<th>Value in Gold</th>
<th>Value in Silver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Betel cup with lion relief</td>
<td>1250</td>
<td>21950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betel cup with dragon relief</td>
<td>1300</td>
<td>22228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betel cup studded with jewels</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>1536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold banana with money figure</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>8780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold banner with elephant figure</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>8700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold banner with ogre figure</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>8780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mogyo banner with peacock figure</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>4750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banner with of garuda figure</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yadana forehead cover</td>
<td>1349</td>
<td>296283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yadana facial gear</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>122195</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^{52}\) “The royal order of Sinbyumyashin”, Palmleaf M.S, NL,No.285, reverse- ca
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair of <em>yadana</em> tusk belts</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>17735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair of <em>yadana</em> earring</td>
<td>710</td>
<td>22326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Yadana</em> necklace</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>9380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 gold cascabels</td>
<td>780</td>
<td>13560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 big gold cascabels</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>2710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair of <em>yadana</em> bracelet</td>
<td>929</td>
<td>52689</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair of <em>yadana</em> anklet with</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>133830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold cup</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold cup</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>2340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold cup with zodiac figures</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>9158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plain gold cup</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>1235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big gold bowl with jewel</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>2985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold bowl with jewel</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold bowl</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>2240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold basin</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>27750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold basin</td>
<td>575</td>
<td>31500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold basin</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver basin</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold goblet</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>8800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver goblet</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold tray</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>6359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold mash cover</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>8694</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food container with three legs</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two gold tube containers</td>
<td>835</td>
<td>14782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two gold tube containers</td>
<td>2040</td>
<td>14780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two hammer</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two <em>yadana</em> hafts with dragon coiled</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>9580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Yadana</em> good</td>
<td>Ruby hook</td>
<td>50000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts by chief queen</td>
<td>Value in Gold</td>
<td>Value in Silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair of gold bracelets</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>50000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>325 various cloth rolls</td>
<td>Equivalent to 5000 pure gold</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of gifts of crown prince</th>
<th>Value in Gold</th>
<th>Value in Silver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gold cup</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>4390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold cup</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>3512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yadana necklace</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>3775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold tray</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>10000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold bowl</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 various cloth rolls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gifts by grandson Sagaingmin</th>
<th>Value in Gold</th>
<th>Value in Silver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yadana white parasol</td>
<td>Silver money</td>
<td>4935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long stemmed fan</td>
<td>1040</td>
<td>20880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yadana yak tailed fly whisk</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yadana bw gadaw</td>
<td>5888</td>
<td>213450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yadana goad</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>44322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold cup with zodiac signs</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver cup with zodiac signs</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two gold curtain</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts by Princess Hinthada myoza</td>
<td>Value in Gold</td>
<td>Value in Silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold cup</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>2160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold cascabels</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>6110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catafalque</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold plate</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold mesh cover</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 cloth rolls</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gifts by Pyay King</th>
<th>Value in Gold</th>
<th>Value in Silver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gold cup with jewel</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>4390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold cup with jewel</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>4390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold tray</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair of earring with jewel</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>3512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 cloth rolls</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gifts by Pathein King</th>
<th>Value in Gold</th>
<th>Value in Silver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1000 pure gold</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 cloth rolls</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gifts by Taungngu King</th>
<th>Value in Gold</th>
<th>Value in Silver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gold cup with jewels</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>8780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 pure gold</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 pieces of ruby</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52 cloth rolls</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gifts by Bagan King</th>
<th>Value in Gold</th>
<th>Value in Silver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gifts by Pakhan King</td>
<td>Value in Gold</td>
<td>Value in Silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1720 pieces of ruby</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 pure gold</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 cloth rolls</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts by Momeik</td>
<td>Value in Gold</td>
<td>Value in Silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1720 pieces of ruby</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 pure gold</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 cloth rolls</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts by Prince Thibaw</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Value in Gold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold cup with jewels</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150 pure gold</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 cloth rolls</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts by Prince Syriam</td>
<td>Value in Gold</td>
<td>Value in Silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gold up</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 cloth rolls</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of gift by Prince Kanaung</td>
<td>Value in Gold</td>
<td>Value in Silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold cup</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 cloth rolls</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of gift by Mekkaya</td>
<td>Value in Gold</td>
<td>Value in Silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold cup</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>10000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 cloth rolls</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of gift by Prince Mindon</td>
<td>Value in Gold</td>
<td>Value in Silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold cup</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 cloth rolls</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of gift by Prince Hlaing</th>
<th>Value in Gold</th>
<th>Value in Silver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gold cup</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 cloth rolls</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Konbaungzet, 2004b, 117-120

Besides, princes, princesses, royal relatives, sawbwas, myozas, regimental officers, councillors richmen, all sorts of daing, cavalry, bloodbond brotherhood, headman of villages and towns, also gave gifts to the white elephant. According to the above mentioned lists, the value of gifts given by King Badon alone amounted to 936,800 kyats. Of it was exchanged into gold with the then current price of gold, it would get about 520.44 viss of gold. Evidently, the white elephant became very rich. All the gifts given to the white elephant was about 1,372,642 kyats, equivalent to 762.8 viss of gold. King, queens, princes and princesses gave away about 808050 ticals of gold (29383.6 Lb), pure silver 2080877 ticals (75668 Lb), 2245 cloth rolls and 500 cudgels lived in Pyawbwe, to the Nirvana Pissaya Naga Yaza white elephant. Besides, the king gave such Towns of Bunglin, Salin and Legaing to the white elephant as his appendages. In this way, the white elephant became very rich. With his money, monastery, rest house, bridges and tank were built. Besides, to give the indemnity, according to the terms of Yadanabo treaty, the king had to borrow much money from the white elephant.  

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held a ceremony to take into possession of the white elephant, by observing a range of rituals\textsuperscript{55} which were

- Building a pavilion for the residence of the elephant
- The bestowing of royal elephant paraphernalia
- The harness
- the attendants to the elephant
- The itinerary along which the elephant had to take in
- The consecration ceremony of the elephant
- Presenting the elephant to the king
- Conferring of the title to the elephant and
- Taking possession of the elephant by riding

Much frenzied about the white elephant notwithstanding in Badon’s reign, the status of white elephant somewhat degraded from the object of veneration from that of Bodhisattva, the treasure of a Carakravartin and the animal something powerful to, that of the cherished animal who enjoyed the likeness of royal paraphernalia.

Kings usually regarded the possession of white elephant as the manifestation of their “glory”. This belief might be connected with the Vessantara Jataka, in which the people believed that the presence of the white elephant brought good weather and good luck. People in those days had regarded the white elephant as a future godhead, a Buddha to be or as a symbol of prestige and power. In Vessanatara Jataka, in the description of the power and strength of white elephant, it was stated that the white elephant was strong enough to do things for which black elephants could not do. It went on said that the white elephant knew where the victorious ground was, and it was capable of defeating

\textsuperscript{55}Shehaung Sarpay Thutethitau, Myanmar Nanthonesin (Myanmar Court Elephant), No.3, Yangon, Seinbanmyaing Sarpay, p.46 (Henceforth: Court Elephant, No.3)
all kinds of enemies. Other qualities were making grown the power and glory of
the king, winning respect of other countries, bringing peace and prosperity and
bringing the welfare and benefit of the people.\(^\text{56}\) In *Jataka*, only such monarchs of
*Mahasudassana, Brahmadattha, Vessantara* and *Duthagaman* could possess the
white elephant, indicating the rare chance and hard possibility. By such
perception, one naturally took the appearance of the white elephant as the hard
won privilege. For these reasons, it is thought that Myanmar kings had adopted the
title of Lord of White Elephant and consecrated their animal.

Like King Badon, later Kings of Sagaing, Mindon and Thibaw held
pompous ceremonies of taking in possession of white elephants with the title of
*Arunagiri*, \(^\text{57}\) *Mauriya pissa\-ya Nagayaza*, \(^\text{58}\) and *Zeya Vaduna Pissa\-ya Naga
Yaza*, \(^\text{59}\) respectively. Due to perception and belief of being powerful, prestige and
glorious by the possession of white elephant, they bestowed the elephant
paraphernalia, similar to their imperial one.

The belief of white elephant brought good weather, peace without war,
subduing of all enemies, prosperity and glory to the king albeit, modern history of
Myanmar show that white elephant possessor Kings of Sagaing, Bagan and
Thibaw were the losers in the First, Second and Third Anglo-Myanmar wars
respectively. Contrary to the prosperity, there broke out a famine in 1805 in the
reign of white elephant possessor King Badon, lasting almost a decade (1805-
1814) causing a great damage to the country and the people. Also the white elephant possessor Siam King Maha Cakkarpat was defeated by King Bayinnaung.

These are the phenomena of by gone days. True, most of the people of Myanmar in this day and age have ceased to regard the white elephant as the symbol of prestige and power and a Buddha to be but ironically, there are still some people, particularly those in power and those living in the more remote areas of the country, who regard it as a celestial being. In précis, though Myanmar people in olden days believed that the white elephant was a Buddha to be, a celestial being and a treasure of Carakravartin, it became equal to that of the man in status, in the reign of King Badon in Konbaung Period, who bestowed the elephant paraphernalia which was same like that of the king. The people in those days also believed that the possession of many white elephant directly related with the great glory of a reigning king, and that the animal brought peace, prosperity and stability to the kingdom. The cult of white elephant was found entangled, with religion, politic, military, art and literature in Myanmar society.

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CHAPTER TWO

ELEPHANT IN MYANMAR ART AND LITERATURE

Throughout this paper, painting and sculpture would be placed under the focus of research. When a research on the art of making an effigy of elephant, not only painting and sculpture but also the craftsmanship of making an effigy of elephant of bamboo framework shall be dealt with. Painting is portraying and colouring what a person sees and feels about. So the art of making and colouring an effigy of elephant could be supposed to have developed with the progress of the civilization.

Myanmar traditional art has been classified into four kinds of portraying: *kanok, nari, kapi* and *gaza*.\(^1\) All those four kinds were drawn in one line sketch. The *pali* term “*gaza*” refers to an elephant while the art of *gaza* means drawing the figure of an elephant. This shows an evidence of emphasizing the elephant among the animals. Later, not only the elephant, but also the animal with a large body, high object and still life objects belong to kind of *gaza*. This shows the derivation of meaning from the original meaning.

**Stone age painting**

In Myanmar history, it is assumed that the elephant was found as a common sight in stone age. Thus, the elephant played a role in the art of the earliest times of history. In Myanmar painting, dated back to 20,000 to 10,000 years, was found

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\(^1\) *Sheyo Myanmar Pachi* (Myanmar Traditional Art), Yangon, Department of Culture, Branch of Archaeology, p.1 (Henceforth: *Myanmar Pachi*)
in Padalin cave.\(^2\) The stone age man painted the picture of hunting and living with animals, reflected the religious beliefs. However, when culture progressed widely, not only the art associated with the elephant but also the beliefs associated with it had spread from India. Myanmar traditional art had spread from India. That is to say, it was because the Myanmar art had been related to the ancient Indian paintings\(^3\) because the paintings on the \textit{Jataka} stories were discovered in Inzanda cave (A.D. 500-700)\(^4\). When the Myanmar people became the Buddhists, they became more familiar with the subject of the elephant.

**Mural painting**

The Myanmar paintings were based on religious subjects, or subjects on the Buddhist \textit{Sasana}. Especially, the \textit{Jataka} stories, adornments and style of dress of king, rich men, well to do people and woman people were painted in pagodas, temples and passageway since the Bagan Period. Being based on the \textit{Sasana}, the paintings of Bagan Period were mostly about the \textit{Jataka} stories. There were eighteen \textit{Jataka} stories associated with the elephants\(^5\) were only the \textit{Chaddasinmin} (noble king of the elephants) and the \textit{Vessantara} (“noble king of generosity”). In Bagan Period, the pagodas housing the mural paintings of the \textit{Jataka} stories associated with the elephant were, the Pahtothamya, the Myingapa Gupyaukgyi, the Wetgyiin Gupyaukgyi, the Lawkahteikpan and the Sein Nyet Nyima and the Upalisein. Among them, the Myingaba Gupyaukgyi was dated the earliest. In


\(^3\)Fresco History, Artemis, Production, 1990, pp.1-2 (Henceforth: Fresco History, 1990)

\(^4\)Fresco History, 1990,1-2

\(^5\)(a) 550 \textit{Jatakas}, 2002

(b)
Bagan Period, at Myingaba Gupyaukgyi Pagoda, the paintings on the story of King of the *Chaddan* elephants depict the scene of the hunter receiving exhortations from the noble elephant, the scene showing the noble elephant lying wounded with poisoned arrow all depicted with decorations of the Asoka floral design.\(^6\) Here, the figures of the elephant were found to be proportional or symmetrical.

Concerning the *Vessantara* story, at Shipin Sakyo Pagoda, Yayle Villages, Sale Township, the story was depicted in scenes the style belonging to the Bagan Period: the scene in which King *Vessantara* made donation of the royal white elephant; and the scene in which the Brahmins took away the donation, riding the royal elephant. The figure of the elephant was found to be more natural looking than those of other animals.

In the scene depicting the donation of the royal white elephant, the Brahmins held the bowl in the form of receiving the donation of the elephant while King *Vessantara* held a jar in the form of donating the royal elephant. The scene also depicts the people of the kingdom holding hands in protest.\(^7\) The donation the Brahmins begged for was that the *Pissaya* white elephant, it was believed, would bring with its miraculous power fine weather and prosperity to the kingdom. Such a donation made to another person, therefore, evoked resentment from the people. So this scene highlights the belief of the people of the Bagan Period in the miracle of the white elephant moreover this scene reflects the people's belief in the white elephant, as well as the artistic value of the painting. Moreover, it implies that the people of the kingdom had strong faith in a king who received the title of the *Shinphyushin* ("king whom the white elephant appears in obeisance"). This kind of beliefs is obvious from the study of the figure of elephant from these mural paintings. Thus, the elephant in these stories can be assumed to have closely linked with the people's faith, and religious affairs.

\(^{\text{6}}\) See photo (1)

\(^{\text{7}}\) See photo (2)
The study of the figure of the elephant shows that focus was made, not on the dark elephant, but on the white elephant. In Nyaung Yan Period, one noteworthy point about the style of painting of the figure of elephant is that the Buddha to be rode on the back of the royal elephant on his withdrawing from the mundane world, as depicted in Po Win Hill No.478 and Shwe Tha Lyaung Pagoda of Po Win Hill. Since the elephant has been regarded as the noblest creature on earth, on the recluse of Lord Dipinkaya Buddha, Sumana Buddha, Sumeda Buddha and Phussa Buddha, the royal elephant was used for the conveyance, as depicted in the Jataka stories.8

In the scene of the Shwe Tha Lyaung Pagoda, depicting the Buddha to be's retreating into the recluse, He sat on the royal elephant while an attendant was at heel; the mara (the satan) stood before the elephant and stopped the Buddha to be, raising his hand. The royal elephant, here, was depicted in all its harness.9 However, the figure was not as proportional as that of the Myingaba Gupyaungkyi Pagoda. This shows that after the conquest of King Hanthawaddy Shinphyushin of Taungoo Period (1550-1581) over the Thai King Sekkavettiraza who owned seven white elephants, the Myanmar king received the title of Shinphyushin, and from then on, 'some evidences were discovered over the custom of decorating the royal elephant with harness. Naturally, artists probably began to draw the figure of the royal elephant in its harness. The painting showing the elephant in harness was found more in Nyaungyan Period and Taungoo Period than in Bagan Period.

Moreover, in the mural painting on the Pagoda No.284 (the Shwe Tha Lyaung Pagoda) of Po Win Hill, in the story of King Vessantara, one can observe the royal white elephant in full harmers and the king in donating the elephant. Moreover, the scene also depicts the people weeping over the deed. Although there were figures of elephant in harness in Taungoo Period and Nyaungyan

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8Viccitasara, 1982,576
9See photo (3)
Period, the scene depicts the use of carrier on the back of the elephant in early Konbaung Period.\textsuperscript{10} So the custom of drawing the elephant in harness was found only in Konbaung Period, and emphasis was made on the kings of the Konbaung Period over the elephant.

In Konbaung Period, there were drawings of the \textit{Jataka} stories, as well as the scenes depicting the social customs. At the Nga Su Tan Pagodas of Ma u, Yesagyo Township, one noteworthy, scene depicts a princess on the back of the royal elephant.\textsuperscript{11} Although the elephant belonged to no one but the king as his majesty's treasure, if the king desired to show love or admiration to the valiant warrior, his majesty would give permission to the person concerned to have a ride on the back of the royal elephant. This was done with all the conferring of the harness, as well. For instance,

“On 7 December 1885, in the reign of King Mindon, the Yatsauk Sawbwa (Shan Lord) Kamawsarahta Sumaha Thiriwuntha Sudhammaraza was awarded three young elephants and one female elephant.”\textsuperscript{12}

With the conferring of the royal elephant, the carrier and harness was also included.

“On 7 December 1885, the Yatsauk Sawbwa Kamaw Sarahta Sumaha Thiriwuntha Sudhamwayaraza was awarded the royal carrier, its crest having the golden diamond banner, \textit{kataung shwe pye yay ka} (golden harness) \textit{alam kyi swut} (a roll to put the golden banner), \textit{tanet pala khatti} (harness covering) with golden sexquins and embroidery.”\textsuperscript{13}

Here, harness of different kinds were awarded according to different ranks. On the ceremony of ear boring of the royal daughters and present awarding,\textsuperscript{14} the

\textsuperscript{10}See photo (4)
\textsuperscript{11}See photo (5)
\textsuperscript{12}\textit{The Ningabyuha Kyanhtwat}, Yangon, Sarpaybeikman Press, 1973
\textsuperscript{13}See photo (15)
\textsuperscript{14}\textit{Konbaungzet}, 2004a,75
A royal elephant was presented as the royal treasure. Thus, the mural paintings show the custom of the princess riding the royal elephant.

Although the drawings of the white elephant were mostly found in religious ceremonies, only the drawings of the black elephant were found in scenes depicting warfares. The latter kind was mostly found in one of the scenes of the eight kinds of the Buddha's conquest, namely, the taming of Nagagiri elephant. Such a scene\textsuperscript{15} was found on the wall of the Yanaung Hmanaung Pagoda of Po Win Hill. Here, the scene depicts the Buddha's coming in alms round and the wild Nagagiri elephant posing threat on the Buddha. Then, another scene depicts the Buddha exhorting the wild creature which later became an arahat. This means that although the elephant is a ferocious, wild creature, the Buddha's teaching and metta (unbounded love) had transformed the wild Nagagiri into a noble creature.

Similarly, at Shwe Tha Lyaung Pagoda, Po Win Hill, Cave No.284, the scene depicts the dark elephant engaged in marching to war.\textsuperscript{16} So in the early Konbaung Period, elephants were chiefly used in warfares. The use of carriers on the back of the elephant, as well as its harness, shows the use of the animal not only in warfare, but also in carrying food and for travelling.

In Konbaung Period, the figures of elephant at Kyauk Taw Gyi Pagoda (Taungthaman Lake) were found to be very proportional, in which the elephants were depicted in motion accordingly against the background of mountains and forests a great piece of art.\textsuperscript{17}

Moreover, in 1805, at Anana Temple, the style of drawing of the elephant resembled that of the parabaik, depicting not only the jataka stories, but also the social customs. Among the subject was one depicting the use of elephants in

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\textsuperscript{15}See photo (6)
\textsuperscript{16}See photo (7)
\textsuperscript{17}See photo (8)
marching to war. Here, not the white elephant, but the dark elephant was depicted, thus implying from the point of view of the artist that the dark elephant was chiefly used for warfare.

**Parabaik paintings**

The drawings of the figure of elephant were found, not only on the walls, but also on *parabaik* and the lacquer boxes. Berney's *parabaik*, which dated round-about 1800, Konbaung Period, was discovered, so implying that there already existed the art of *parabaik* painting. Similarly, the style of *parabaik* painting depicts mostly the royal ceremonies and warfares. Here, the figure of elephant plays an essential role. The study of *parabaik* painting associated with the elephant

Scene of the king retreating into recluse
Scene throwing spear at targets before the king
Scene of showing material arts on the back of elephants before the king
Scene of elephant fight before the *sinwun* (incharge of the royal elephant”)
Training an elephant for military use
Observes the royal white elephant
The royal white elephant with a carrier
Various kinds of the royal white elephant

In the scene portraying the royal procession, the king rode the royal white elephant with a retinue of the queen and the royal daughters. Here, the drawing of the figure of elephant is very proportional, showing its might and grace very vividly and naturally.

In the *parabaik* drawing which assumably belonged to the reign of King Badon, a scene depicts the observing of the white elephant in a grand manner.

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18 See photo (9)
19 See photo (10)
Here, emphasis was made on the figure of the creature since it was assumed to belong to the king as his majesty's treasure. This drawing also shows the usefulness of the dark elephant in warfare, along with the royal ceremonies.  

Similarly, in the elephant in duel fight parabaik painting, the elephant was given a prominent role in the military parade. Then, those drawings also show the elephant not only in war but also in entertaining the king. They show the prominent role of the elephant not only in warfare, but also as the king's treasure.

In the parabaik painting of daichauk kyachauk (training an elephant for military use), concerning the military tactics, the scene depicts the training of the elephant not to be scared by the roar and welter of a war such as gun and cannon, as well as the use of tiger to scare the elephants.

So the Myanmar artists have drawn the figure of the elephant, through successive periods, from religious, political and military points of view. Based on religious beliefs, drawings were made artistically to depict social, political affairs and royal ceremonies and warfares.

In the drawings of the figure of elephant on parabaik paintings, the artists Saya Toe and Saya Yauk could be regarded as the best. These artists could portray the figure of elephant naturally and proportionally. Catching an elephant by trained elephant scene shows how the artist Saya Yauk was skilled in drawing various actions of the elephant.

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20 See photo (11)
21 See photo (12)
22 See photo (13)
23 Dr. Toe Hla, “Badonmin Lathat Panchisaya Hnink U” (Two Artists in the reign of King Badon), Myawaddy, No.9, Vol.17, July, 1967, pp.76-80 (Henceforth: Toe Hla, 1967)
24 See photo (14)
Lacquerware painting

The wooden box for preserving records, called *sardaikthitta*, of the monastery of Heya Ywama Village is an evidence showing that the figure of elephant was drawn not only on the wall and *parabaik*, but also on the palmleaf manuscript box. The drawing on that box depicting the scene of King *Vessantara* shows not only the religious beliefs, but also the people's deep respect towards the white elephant. Here, on the drawings of *parabaik*, the figure looks more neat and tidy than on that on the wall. So it has been observed from the study of the figure of elephant on mural paintings, *parabaik* painting and the lacquerware painting reveals:

The Myanmar people being familiar with the elephant from the religious point of view
The majority of the Myanmar kings receiving the title of *sinmyashin* (king of white elephants)
The elephant were used in Myanmar military tactics
The elephant can be seen as a common creature in Myanmar geographical environment
Therefore, it can be assumed that the drawing of the figure of elephant has been the best among the drawings of animals in the history of Myanmar art.

Sculptural works

The sculptural works associated with the elephant are found in the image of Lord Buddha with the base of an elephant or elephants. Even in Bagan Period, there existed pagodas and temples with the figure of elephant as the base. In that period, there are at least three pagodas with the figure of elephant as the base. Among them the most famous was the Sisana (now, the Catenagy) Pagoda, built by King Zeya Theinkha alias King Nataungmya, situated to the far south of the

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25See photo (16)
Town of Bagan, since it is the biggest temple of this kind with the largest number of elephants at its base. The sculptural works were made on the polygon platform over the four base platforms altogether the five platforms. At each side of the base platform of the pagoda were thirty nine figures of elephant altogether 156 figures around the pagoda, thus probably implying the base of 156 elephants beneath the pagoda. Another probability is that the number of the figures might have referred to the birthday of the Tuesday born Nadaungmya Min. Moreover, the number of thirty nine on each side probably shows the number of years of the king's reign, or his age at the time of construction the pagoda. Most probably, the years of King Nadaungmya were thirty seven years, and he was thirty nine years old at the time of building the pagoda. So King Nadaungmya Min might have based his age and birthday in building the pagoda with elephant figures, and assumes the title of the sovereign of the four islands of the universe as the donor of this pagoda, evoking the good omen of such a king of glory.

Another pagoda with the figures of elephants at the base is the Kassapa Htupagyi, close to the south of the Sawkyun Pagoda. The foundation based had the square shaped platform, resembling the Sirilinka temple with no cave passageway, built of three layers of platform. To the east, were sixteen figures of elephant, thus having sixty four figures in four directions. The architecture of the pagoda is that of the Htupayon Pagoda.

Another pagoda facing four directions with the base of the figures of elephant is Cave No. 1790/1091, on the right side of the road to the Sapahta Siripissaya Hotel. It had two walls surrounding the pagoda, a temple built on the square shaped brick platform. Inside was the kusahtone four corner lake shaped. The design is that of hexagonal shape, with twenty seven elephants based around the pagoda.

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26 Toe Hla, 2000, 83-84
27 Toe Hla, 2000, 83-84
Similarly, in Inwa Period, to the north west of Sagaing, lies the Yadana sinmya shin Pagoda built by King Monying Mintayagyi. Min Khaung II and his royal mother made some maintenance to the wall and the pagoda with decoration of figures of elephant. Thus, the pagoda carries the name “Yadana Zeti Sinmyashin Pagoda”. Here, the architecture of the pagoda may be noted that the figure of elephant was not included in the lowest platform, but only in front of the pagoda separately28.

The custom of having figures of elephant as the base of temples and pagodas has come into existence because the Upawthahta and Chaddan noble elephants were regarded as a treasure belonging to the sovereign of the four islands of the universe. Moreover, the stories of Lord Buddha's eight kinds of conquest, the taming of the wild elephant Nagagiri was regarded as one of the great conquests of Lord Buddha. So, the rulers built the figures of elephant so as to get out of the predicaments of political, economic and military affairs. That is why the figures of elephant in the form of sculptural works are found in the Buddhists' religious buildings. The figure of elephant is found in there buildings since it is related to the subject in the stories of Lord Buddha.

**Reliefs**

Concerning the reliefs, the figures of elephant are also found in terra cotta, glazed terra cotta and on rock surface, as well as on the surface of the daily used commodities in detailed figures29.

**Sat painting**

Not only in painting and sculpture, but also Myanmar sat artists (of decorating pavilions) made an effigy of elephant in entertainment in *Thumingala*

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28 Nagathein, 1975, 94
29 550 Jatakas, 2002
(monkey's funeral) ceremonies. So the craftsmanship of making elephant effigy also plays an important role. The earliest finding of this art is as follows:

In Bagan Period, the use of elephant in wars was a sure fact, in which one outstanding evidence was that during the Ngaramam's Rebellion, Sawlu was being decoyed to combat into the false flocks of elephants which in fact were effigies of elephants placed in the quagmire and unable to distinguish and recognize the true or false, when Sawlu charged his elephant Thanhlyinswa into the trap, the king and his elephant were caught.30

In the art of making an effigy of elephant, the more it resembles the real elephant, the better craftsmanship. So it is necessary to know the exact measurement of real elephant, and the features such as forehead, ear and limbs are made proportionally.31 Moreover, there existed the custom of worshipping the god of Utena before and after making an effigy of elephant because it was believed that the elephant belonged to the god of Utena and only this worship would facilitate the task of making the particular effigy proportionally and realistically. It is noteworthy that this art of making effigy of elephant has exited only in Kyaukse city in Mandalay Division and Paungte in Bago Division in Myanmar. Probably Kyaukse region had been in which wild elephants were caught and tamed during the reign of King Singu, as mentioned in the Shweminphone Sintaw Mawkun.

Elephant and Myanmar literature

Since the elephant has been a subject related in come way or other to the Myanmar society, writers have always found the subject of elephant to write about in the form of verse or other forms of literature. So this subject was written and composed in a grand manner in Myanmar literature and treaties. So not only artists

31Shweminphone Sintaw Mawkun, Palmleaf MS, NL, No.660
but also writers have felt at ease with this subject. In Myanmar treatises, in Magada Dictionary, the capabilities of elephant are stated in ten terms, in fifteen terms in Amarakawsa Dictionary; seventeen terms in Abidon Dika, etc. Moreover, there are ten kinds of elephant.\textsuperscript{32} According to the Gazashattara Treatise compiled by Kalidasa, there were 120 kinds of elephant.

There are texts describing the characteristics of the royal white elephant, which were written in Pali and Sanskrit in Gazashattara treatises, and were translated and interpreted by layman sages and scholarly monks. Focus was made on describing the characteristics of the royal white elephant. Those treatises were as follows:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{Gaza Veda Sinkyan}\textsuperscript{33}
  \item \textit{Gazadu Gaza Suttara Sinkyan}\textsuperscript{34}
  \item \textit{Gazavinissay Sinkyan (by Kyank Ye Sayadaw)}\textsuperscript{35}
  \item \textit{Gazavinissaya Sinkyan (by Lepawkyang Sayadaw)}\textsuperscript{36}
  \item \textit{Gazashuttara (by Kalidasa)}\textsuperscript{37}
  \item \textit{Sitawmuthi Sinkyan (by Kyauk Ye Sayadaw)}\textsuperscript{38}
  \item \textit{Sinphyuto Lekkhana Sartan (by Maung Htaung Sayadaw)}\textsuperscript{39}
  \item \textit{Nibbana Pissaya Nagaraza (by Maung Htaung Sayadaw)}\textsuperscript{40}
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{32}Monyway Zetawun Sayadaw, Uteina Pyo, XXXII, Mandalay, Hanthawaddy Piatka Press, 1927 (Henceforth: Monyway Sayadaw, 1927)

\textsuperscript{33}“Gazaveda Sinkyan”, Palmleaf MS ,NL, No.329

\textsuperscript{34}“Gazadugazasuttara”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No.367721

\textsuperscript{35}Kyaukye Sayadaw, “Gazavinissaya”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No. 1189

\textsuperscript{36}Shin Zina Linkara dhaza (Lepawyun Kyaung Sayadaw) “Gazavinissaya Treatise”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No.11186

\textsuperscript{37}“Kalidasa Gazasaratta Treatise”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No.329

\textsuperscript{38}Kyaukye Sayadaw, “Setawmuthi Sinkyan”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No.329

\textsuperscript{39}Maung Htaung Sayadaw, “Sinphyuto Letkhama Sartan”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No.10543

\textsuperscript{40}Maung-Htaung Sayadaw, “Nibbana Pissaya Nagarazakahta Nissaya”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No.11185
The features of elephant include the striking colour, physical features and miracle of the royal white elephant. In *Sinphyu Lekkana Sartan* by Maung Htaung Sayadaw Shin Nyanabiwunsa, twenty five features of the royal white elephant are stated clearly. Similarly, in *Pitaka kyanla Sinkyan Sartan* by Mingyi Thiri Maha Zeyathu, an account was given on the features of the white elephant, habitat, might, miracle, martyr like elephant's episodes, adornments on the white elephant, size and measurement, life span and characteristics.

With the development of Myanmar literature, there existed *yatus* or verses on the royal elephants:

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41 Mingyi Thiri Maha Zeyathu, “*Pitakakyanlasinkyan Sartan*”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No.291567

42 Letywaygyi Hmu, “*Mahasinkyan Linka*”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No.10541

43 Mingyi Maha Zeyathu, “*Yodaya Sinphyu Sartan*”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No.130

44 Byabon Sonaramon, “*Yodayamintha Sinkyan*”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No.298918

45 Mingyi Thiri Mahazeyathu, “*Lawa Sinkyan Sartan*”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No.11184

46 Shin Ponnyakami, “*Sanskrit Sinkyan Sartan*”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No.11188

47 Maung Htaung Sayadaw, “*Upaw Chaddan SinphyumyaTioei Lekkana*”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No.11182

48 Maung Htaung Sayadaw, “*Sinphyumya Toei Lekkana Sartan*”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No.10543

49 Mingyi Thiri Maha Zeyathu, “*Pitakata Kyanla Sinkyan Sartan*”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No.291567
Table VI
List of Yatus or Verse

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Source: Sinsu, 1960, Thuta, 1966, Sintaw ma shin ninnwe paik son yatu

In Myanmar history, the belief in the elephant is related to the Buddhism. So various forms of literature were composed on the royal white elephant and the elephants. So there are fifteen mawkuns on the royal elephant:

- *Arusa Giri Sintaw Mawkum* (Amartawye Mg Tha Aung)<sup>50</sup>
- *Chaddan Pyaung Kyaw Sintaw Mawkun* (Chaung Oo Hse Ywaswa Ramme Thiri Kyaw Htin)<sup>51</sup>
- *Sintaw Thanmyanswa Mawkun* (Hlawka Thone Htaung Hmu)<sup>52</sup>
- *Nibbanapyissaya Sintaw Mawkun* (Letwe Thondara)<sup>53</sup>
- *Kokko Chaung Sintaw Mawkun* (Kwunyataw kai Mg Ya)<sup>54</sup>
- *Phone phone Tunpa Sintaw Mawkun* (Min Zeya Randameik)<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Amartaw ye Mg Tha Aung, *Agugagirisintaw Mawkun*


<sup>52</sup> Hlawka Thone Htaung Hmu, *Sintaw Thanmyanswa Mawkun*, Thuta, 1966, 87

<sup>53</sup> Letwe Thondara, *Nibbanapyissaya Sintaw Mawkun*, Hla Tha Mein, 1961, 89


<sup>55</sup> Min Zeya Yandameik, *Phone Phone Tunpa Sintaw Mawkun*, Thuta, 1966, 107
Poppa Dhanna Sintaw Mawkun (Anonymous)

Punnarika Sintaw Mawkun (Maha Thiri Thura U Yauk)\(^{56}\)

Punnarika Sintaw Mawkun (Twinthintaik wun Maha Sithu)\(^{57}\)

Salwetaw Sintaw Mawkun (Zeya Radameik)\(^{58}\)

Shwe Minbhone Sintaw Mawkun (Atwin Wundauk U Nyo)\(^{59}\)

Shwesatai Sintaw Mawgun (by Sit Hlyin Htaung Hmu Shin Htwe Nyo)

Varaseta Giri Sintaw Mawkun (Twinthin Min U Tun Nyo)\(^{60}\)

Vilasni Mawkun (Wutmaswut Nawade)\(^{61}\)

Yadanapyangmon Sintaw Mawkun (Shin Than Kho)\(^{62}\)

Most of the Sintaw mawkuns were written in Konbaung Period. Those were composed generally on how wild elephants were captured, features of the royal elephant, fearlessness of the royal elephant, and the royal attributes of the king. Among the fifteen Sintaw mawkun, in A.D. 1510, in the reign of Shwe Nan Kyawt Shin Narapati of Inwa Period, the Shwesatai Sintaw Mawkun submitted by Shwe Htwe Nyo was the earliest one. This mawkun describes how the elephant seeks knew the characteristics of a good elephant, how they sough for one up hills and down vale, how the wild elephant was lured, how the king himself welcomes the arrival of a new elephant and how it was lured into a keddah.


\(^{57}\)Thwinthin Taik Wun Maha Sithu, *Punnarika Sintaw Mawkun*, Yan, 1959, 99


\(^{59}\)Atwin Wundauk Maung Nyo, “Shweminbhone Sintaw Mawkun”, Palmleaf MS, NL, No.660

\(^{60}\)Thwinthin Mingyi U Tun Nyo, “Varasetagiri Sintaw Mawkun”, Palmleaf MS, NL, No.660

\(^{61}\)Wutmaswut Nawade, “Vilasini Mawkun”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No.7793

\(^{62}\)Let Hsaung Yuhmusin tankho, *Yadana Pyaungmon Sintaw Mawkun*, Sinsu 1960
In composing the *Sintaw mawkun*, a record was made on the title of the royal elephant, as well as the name of the region where the royal elephant was captured. In *Varaseta Giri Sintaw Mawkun* and the *Punanarika Sintaw Mawkun*, the titles of the two royal elephants belonging to King Badon were composed. Similarly, the *Sintaw Than myan swa Mawkun* composed the attributes of the Elephant *Sintaw Than myan swa* ridden by Thado Min, younger royal brother of King Bayint Naung, in the battle of Inwa. Similarly, the *Shwe Min Phone Sintaw Mawkun* carries the title, referring to the region where the royal elephant was caught.

In *sintaw mawkuns*, there were altogether fifteen mawkuns, nine mawkuns being composed in Konbaumg Period. In the reign of Bodawpaya, the *Vilasini Mawkun*, composed by Nawade II. The first best mawkun, as recorded by scholars. The *Vilasini Mawkun* was about the Nibbana Village *Pyissayanaraza* captured at Tawkwin Thaya, of the east iron gate of south Nibban of Hanthawaddy in A.D.1806, and the *Siri Mala Maha Subbada* female royal elephant, captured at Min Hla forest, Kyehlaing Township, Hanthawaddy, A.D.1804. Here, the mawkun composed about the characteristics of the royal elephant, and the arrangements made to lure the elephant into the keddah, as well as the incident recording the capture of the elephant. Moreover, the mawkun composed the attributes of Bodawpaya who possessed the royal elephant, so it represent, the masterpiece of the writer.

Most of the *Sintaw mawkuns* were composed on the proceedings of the Myanmar kings and beliefs associated with the elephant under a positive light, but the mawkuns recorded the features of the royal elephant.

In history of Myanmar literature, there existed the *pyo*, verse or *linka*, *kyo*, *bwe*, *patpyo*, *thaphyan*, *thachin khan* and *wuttu* associated with the royal elephant.
The famous pyos were the kusa pyo,\textsuperscript{63} the Wuda Pyo,\textsuperscript{64} the Vessantara Pyo\textsuperscript{65} and the Utina Pyo\textsuperscript{66}. The Kusa Pyo written by the Monyway Sayadaw described the differences, attributes, features and behaviour of the white elephant.

Similarly, concerning the composition of verse, there were two exceptional verses written by the Inwa Hmansi kyaung Sayadaw and the Monyway Sayadaw.\textsuperscript{67}

Most of the literature associated with the royal elephant composed about the powerfulness of the kings with the title of sinphyushin, as well as the attributes of the royal elephant and this lays emphasis on the people's strong faith in the royal white elephant. Most of them may be regarded as eulogy to the particular king. However, there were also some works against the favour of the king. One was the Lepawkyauung Sayadaw Shin Zina Linkaradaza, who wrote against the king's favour.\textsuperscript{68}

The Lepawkyauung Sayadaw wrote the Gazavinnisaya Treatises, and criticized about the beliefs on the royal white elephant. It was written in A.D 1806, and his attitudes were expressed towards the royal white elephant. The Sayadaw wrote the treatise to give exhortations to King Badon, who was very much pleased, and proud of being the king of the white elephant Nibbana Pissaya

\textsuperscript{63}Shin (Mongway Sayadaw), Kusa Pyo, Yangon, Hanthawady Press, 1920 (Henceforth: Monyway Sayadaw, 1920)

\textsuperscript{64}Shin Monyway Sayadaw, Pyinsawuda Pyo, Yangon, Pitakattaw pyantpwaye Press, 1920 (Henceforth : Monyway Sayadaw, 1920)

\textsuperscript{65}U No, Vessantara Pyo, Hla Tha Mein (ed) , Yangon, The Ancient Literature and Culture, 1961 (Henceforth: U No, 1961)

\textsuperscript{66}Shin Monyway Sayadaw, Utina Pyo, Yangon, Hanthawaddy Press, 1920 (Henceforth: Monyway Sayadaw, 1920)


\textsuperscript{68}Lepawkyauung Sayadaw, “Gazavinissaya Treatise”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No.11186, kaw-back
Nagaraza as the Chaddan sinmin (king of the chaddan noble elephants), which was captured from Nibban Village.

In the sayadaw's Gazavinissaya Treatise, since the white elephants of King Badon were not the kind of Upawsahta or Chaddan, the present one shouldn't be entitled as the Chaddan sinmin, and with references to the treaties, the sayadaw argued, the white elephant did not mean the conquest of all dangers and opponents.

Moreover, the sayadaw argued, the white elephant could not make a king of the universe, nor bring about the prosperity of the kingdom, denying the important role of the white elephant in politics, and accepting the white elephant as a creature. It was through the attributes and capabilities of the king that the fame of the white elephant would spread far and wide; it was through the king who was blessed with the attribute of a good king that he would be powerful, bringing about the good weather and good harvest. The sayadaw wrote these with references to the treatises.

Then, in paukkan yazawuntha, a reference was cited: King Anawrahta, who was blessed with thirty-eight white elephants rode the white elephant named thanmyinswa, and defeated the attack of a buffalo running wild in vain, and got killed. Thus, the sayadaw exhorted King Badon, who was daydreaming over the belonging of the white elephant as the king of the universe, or King Sekkyavati.69

Nevertheless, the sayadaw cites references from various yazawun treaties associated with the royal elephant, and wrote criticisms in a new analytical light.

**Buddhist literature**

In Myanmar literature, there developed yatu, mawkun, pyo and linka in Inwa Period while the zattaw or the jataka stories developed only in Konbaung Period. There existed yatu, mawkun, pyo and linka associated with the white elephant, and when the wuttu literature came into prominence, the 550 Jatakas

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69Lepawkyaung Sayadaw, “Gazavinissaya Treatise”, pay MS, UCL, No.11186, kaw-back
stories were used as a basis for writing, and the *jataka* stories associated with the elephant were written in a grand manner. The elephant stories, or *zattaw* from the 550 Jatakas stories were as follows:

(27) The auspicious elephant and the dog

(156) The auspicious elephant and the young king

(409) The auspicious elephant and the foolish king

(105) The elephant which is always scared

(122) The auspicious elephant and the foolish king

(227) The elephant and the xxcrement

(161) The young xlephant and the hermit

(221) King of the elephant and the fake hunter

(267) The elephant and the crab

(357) The auspicious king and wren

(26) The auspicious elephant which imitates

(455) The white elephant in service of his another

(514) King of the *Chaddan* elephants

(182) The elephant and the war

(164) The auspicious ceremony of the elephant and the youth

(72) King Silawa and the hunter

(410) The foolish elephant and the

(37) The pheasant, the monkey and the elephant

In the late Konbaung Period (A.D. 1819-1885) based on the *Jataka* stories, U Pon Nya wrote the *Chaddan Sinmin* (king of the noble *Chaddan* elephants).\(^7\) In this *wuttu*, the king of the noble *Chaddan* elephants made donation of his ivory tusks with two reasons: to satisfy the rancor of Queen Subadda and to attain enlightenment. The great writer highlighted the noble wish that the king of the

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noble *Chaddan* elephants made so as to satisfy the rancor of his wife of the previous life, and not wishing for the fortunes of the mundane world, prayed for the enlightenment. This emphasizes that we should not pray for something mean, but for noble deeds. This could be assumed to include a moral lesson.

Then, in *Vessantara Zattaw* written by the Minbu Sayadaw, the description was made on the great power of the *Upawsadha* white elephant, and the prosperity of the kingdom due to the attributes of the white elephant. So the Myanmar king had strong beliefs that the rare white elephants brought about the powerfulness. This shows the relationship with the *Vessantara Zattaw* of the *Jataka* stories.

**Elephant and music**

There have existed records on music associated with elephant, as well. In the *Amyinthabin*, or higher from of entertainment in the form of marionette, there are twenty eight marionettes, and among them are included the figures of the white elephant and the dark elephant. Those *zattaw*, or stories performed at those timer were the *Vesantara Zat*, *Ohmmardhanti Zat*, *Uteinna Zat*, *Maga Lulin Zat*, *Eyar Wun*, King of the Elephant and *Chaddan Sinmin*, which all could not be performed without the use of the figure of elephant.

Similarly, in music of Myanmar, there have existed songs associated with the elephant and the white elephant: *one Sinmin Kyo* by Wungyi Padetharaza; the *Chaddan Aitha* of the *Shwetaiksaye* U Min Aung; the *Phoneetaw Bwe Patpyo* by Myawaddy *Mingyi* U Sa, Prince Pyinse and Prince Phakhan, as well as their

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71Min bu, *Vessantara Zattaw*

Thachinkham and Thaphyan, etc.\textsuperscript{73} Here, eulogies were composed in praise of the king, starting from the subject of the attributers of the king and the white elephant.

**Myanmar proverbs**

There are proverbs associated with the elephant, dealing with the social customs, exhortations and what to abstain from doing. There are sixty one kinds of proverbs and sayings of the common people of rural life, associated with the elephant.\textsuperscript{74} These tell us what is good and bad in life, and the vissitudes of life, as well as historical stories.

For instance, in the proverb, “The blind elephant runs amok through the forest,” it is implied that a person of low intelligence would go blind at things without seeing what is right or wrong. The elephant is personified as an object to take about the need of rationally in life.\textsuperscript{75}

Again, in the proverb “real task does not get muth eaten,” it is implied that real object would eternally last, and that real values was needed in life. Here, a comparison is made between the human calibre and the invaluable tusk.\textsuperscript{76}

In the proverb, “I wish you to ride on the back of the elephant, accompanied by horses,” the elephant and the horse are personified as living treasures, implying that a desire is expressed for the other person to enjoy high status of life.


\textsuperscript{74}See appendix (1)


\textsuperscript{76}Myanmar Proverbs, 1991, 68
A general survey of the proverbs exhorting about the social customs reveal that the elephant is personified as an object for comparison. Intelligence and abilities are essential to a person while the elephant is an object of value in social environ.

**Royal orders**

In Konbaung Period, since the reign of King Singu to the reign of King Thibaw, there existed 218 times issuing the royal orders associated with the elephant. There were ninety royal orders associated with the white elephant. These orders were concerned with the royal elephant and the men in service and care of the royal elephant.

Royal orders were carefully issued on the facts from capturing the elephant, the capture of the elephant to the death of the royal elephant. The orders were as follows: Royal order to capture the royal elephant, order to bring the royal elephant, to lure the royal elephant into keddah, to build the keddah and cottage for the royal elephant, to keep the royal elephant at the royal cottage, to give title to the royal elephant, and to give service and care to the royal elephant, as

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77 See appendix (2)
78 Order of lure the Minbon Tawya white elephant and to give four kinds of military training, dated 9 May 1786
79 Princess Magway's orders to bring the elephant back from the forest, dated 10 June 1801
80 Order to lure the Shwesatai elephant into keddah, dated 5 May 1783
81 (a) To repair the royal elephant cottage, dated 6 July, 1787
     (b) To drive the elephant back into keddah
82 Plans to get the white elephant back, dated 19 December 1806
83 To give title of *Nibbana Pissayanagaraza* to the white elephant, dated 3 February, 1817
84 To give harness to the white elephant *Ponnarika*, dated 7 August 1797
well as to give pasture for the royal elephant\textsuperscript{85}, and to keep the royal elephant under watch,\textsuperscript{86} and give medical treatment to the royal elephant.\textsuperscript{87}

There were also orders for men in service and care of the royal elephant: to supply pay and food,\textsuperscript{88} to provide revenue,\textsuperscript{89} to appoint the \textit{aukmarwun} under the post of the \textit{sinwun},\textsuperscript{90} to give paraphernalia to the men in care of the royal elephant\textsuperscript{91} and to care the royal elephant.\textsuperscript{92} Thus the royal orders associated with the royal elephant were issued, as well as those associated with men in care of the royal elephant. Thus, this intensified the people's belief in the royal elephant.

Moreover, there were royal orders for the working people to come and worship the white elephant\textsuperscript{93} to welcome the arrival of the white elephant\textsuperscript{94} and to compose verses on the white elephant.\textsuperscript{95}

Among the royal orders associated with the royal elephant, the royal orders were issued 157 times in the reign of King Badon. Especially in A.D. 1806 alone, there were royal orders issued thirty seven times. It was then the time that King Badon was presented with the \textit{Nibbana Pissaya Nagaraza} elephant from Nibban Village to Hanthawaddy City. Royal orders were issued so that every measure

\textsuperscript{85}To give graze ground to the elephant from Alar forest, dated 11 May 1801
\textsuperscript{86}The \textit{myowun} officer to care the white elephant at Bagan, 10 October 1806
\textsuperscript{87}Prince to receive medical treatment: 21 July 1795
\textsuperscript{88}3 December 1810, to supply pay and food to \textit{sintawsu} and \textit{sintaw oozi naukpei}
\textsuperscript{89}2 July 1787, to provide revenue to \textit{Yepadailaythinwin, asuthas}
\textsuperscript{90}(a) 26 October 1785, to give appointment to \textit{ywalatwun} Min Hla Min Kyaw
(b) 18 April 1853, to appoint Mahataraphy \textit{aukmarwun}
\textsuperscript{91}18 June 1801, to give paraphenalia to men in service and care of the elephant
\textsuperscript{92}20 December 1806, to native of Pyawbwe in service of the white elephant
\textsuperscript{93}(a) 22 December 1806, to order the headmen of far flung regions to come and worship the white elephant
(b) 6 July 1807, to order the monks from Ceylon to worship of Chaddan elephant
\textsuperscript{94}30 October 1806, to order the crown prince and the princess with all and every elephants to welcome the arrival of the white elephant in Bagan
\textsuperscript{95}(a) 15 September 1804, to order the \textit{sayadaw} to present papers on the white elephant
(b) 24 December 1806, to order to compile a treatise, or verse or \textit{yatu}, on the white elephant
would be taken to keep everything perfect. So in Konbaung Period, King Badon was the king who issued the maximum number of royal orders associated with the royal elephant. So King Badon's belief in the royal elephant was found to be very profound.

To sum up, in Bagan Period, the paintings and sculptural works show the King's possessing of the white elephant as a form of glory. In Inwa Period, *pyo*, literature and *mawkun* had developed, which emphasized the importance of the elephant in military tactics, as well as the people's faith in the royal elephant. As times progressed, paintings and sculptural works reveal the belief in the white elephant, based on religion in Bagan Period. In Inwa Period, *pyo* literature developed in associated with the subject of the elephant while in Konbaung Period, music played a role to reveal the belief in the white elephant. To take an overall view, the influences associated with the belief in the royal elephant in the fields of art, music and literature have made an impact on the Myanmar human society throughout the successive periods.
CHAPTER THREE

ELEPHANT IN WARFARE

Man has domesticated a range of animals to meet the ends of his interest, chiefly for meat of the animal and secondly to use them in various kinds of activities and purposes. Of the animals domesticated to use, the elephant is the largest and the most powerful one. Elephants and horses have been reared to use in the warfare since time immemorial. In studying the military and warfare of the world, one can find that horses have mostly been used in various campaigns all over the world. But the use of elephant in military has been found to a limited place, owing to the geographical limitations, for not every place all over the world are habitable for the elephant. Besides, number of war elephants are less than that of horse, due to the reproductive nature of the animal. When the difficulty of training is added, the number of war elephant is significantly lower than those of horse. Therefore, we can not find widespread use of elephant in the wars all over the world, but confined only to those elephant grazing grounds of Indian Sub continent and mainland Southeast Asian nations.

As a mainland country of Southeast Asia, the use of elephant in military affairs in Myanmar, has been found since Bagan Period\textsuperscript{1}. The elephant was found to occupy the prominent place in the military units as described in various \textit{jatakas} and ancient literatures. As an Indianized country of Southeast Asia, Myanmar got almost every aspect and respect of its culture from India, of which the art of war also was included. Chief among them was the \textit{Arthasastra} by Kautilia of India,

\textsuperscript{1}Tun Nyo, , \textit{1968}, 89
which described that there were four principal military organs of elephant, horse, chariot and foot soldiers. This teaching was changed in Myanmar to suit the prevailing conditions of the country and the four principal military organs became thus elephant, horse, boat and foot soldiers. Like Indian brothers, Myanmar regarded the elephant, as the most important and potent military organ, among the four.

Elephant and society

Myanmar got the concept of kingship from India where a range of elephant cult flourishes until now. As much of Southeast Asia was Indianized, the whole region generally adopted the Indian kingship, in which elephant occupied a central role. Therefore, no animal was more closely identified with kingship in Southeast Asia than the elephant. Courts found various ways to identify the ruler with the elephant as these creatures are large and powerful. In Konbaung Myanmar the elephant occupied the motif of the base of the throne. Konbaung kings were said to have rode the elephants in a saddle which was believed to replicate that which had been given to the legendary King Pyusawhti by his father solar king, which in turn was made in the likeness of Indra's saddle who rode the Erawun elephant\(^2\). In Myanmar, like the rest of Southeast Asian Nations, the elephant was closely connected with the investiture of legitimacy to rule. Myanmar kings often assumed sovereignty on the throne or over captured towns by riding an elephant in a circuit outside the walls\(^3\). The appointment or recognition of new vassals in periphery areas was often sanctified by the provision of a token supply of elephants. Royal conference of the noble status, or recognition of such, was frequently associated with the gifts of elephants, as in the case of Yatsauk Sawbwa, or elephant paraphernalia, such as the red roofed, gilded elephant howdah granted to the

\(^2\)Charney, 2004, 133
\(^3\)Charney, 2004, 133
prince to Chiengsem the “white crow”, when these people acknowledged the suzerainty of Myanmar king⁴. When Myanmar kings toured the kingdom, they usually did it by traveling on elephants⁵. The royal elephant also necessitated respect from pedestrians on its path. When ridden by the sovereign, or when taken out on official duties by a minister or official, no one was to be there in the way. If any one failed to move aside, they would be punished, for disrespect for the royal elephant was tantamount to disrespect for the ruler.

The usefulness of elephant

In monarchical Myanmar, elephants took crucial role in politic as well as in the warfares, the elephant being the big weapon, which stood strong till the arrival of firearms of hand guns and artillery, in the late 19th century.

In monarchical Myanmar, there was no regular army, of modern sense. The venerable Mounghtaung Sayadaw, in his treatise on “the Characteristics of White Elephant” described that “of the four military organs, the elephant corps formed the most noblest.”⁶ In military terms, the elephant was considered the most important part of the armed forces at the throne's disposal.⁷ Besides, the elephants were regarded as the best fighting soldiers. Of the military use of animals, horse and elephant occupied prominent role and between them, elephant was used more in the offensive warfares, than the horse. Elephants played a crucial role in the siege warfares of town and in the battle field where many mortars and cannons

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⁴Charney, 2004, 133
⁵Tun Nyo, 1968, 95
⁷Charney, 2004, 154
were deployed. It was because, the elephant was more bearable to the hardship of the battle fields than the horse.

European accounts tell us that Southeast Asians saw the elephant as more suitable for war than the horse. It was because the elephantry formed the most important military organ in the royal army. Besides, the psychological effect of the elephant, when deployed in the battle field, was paramount, which made foreign forces, unknown or unencountered them never before, scared and frightened, rendering the elephantry the leverage in the field. The trumpeting of elephant can also caused a great panic in the enemies mind. The elephant also had great tusks that were an important battle weapon.

Medieval kings of South and Southeast Asia, including Myanmar, were found relying on the elephantry most. Based on the elephantry and cavalry, kings built great empires and to achieve this end, they had built great armies, inclusive of great elephantry.

Formation of the elephantry

According to the traditional Myanmar military strategy, there were nine kinds of army, namely, Patti, Sen mukha, Rumba, Gana, Watini, Muban, Samu, Anitani and Akkhawbani, in an ascending order. The smallest Patti army in its formation had twelve men for each elephant, while the largest Akkhawba army had as much as 21670 elephants with 262440 men assigned to the elephantry.
The twelve men assigned to an elephant were three soldiers on the back of the elephant and nine soldiers accompanying the elephant on the ground on foot. Three soldiers on the back of the elephant were known as *oozi* (front rider of the elephant), *konlesi* (middle rider of the elephant) and *naukpesi* (rear rider of elephant). Nine meant that there were nine soldiers to guard two tusks, two ears, four feets and one tail, totalling nine, each man guarding to each of nine places. Though nine kinds of army were described, in practice, there never existed such armies in monarchical Myanmar. These armies could be found only in the treatises of Indian military doctrine. Myanmar had in its army, the forces of infantry, cavalry, elephantry and boat or navy.

We could not find how much number of elephant had been included in an elephant force. But according to the teaching of *Vinaya Paccit Pali* Text, we come to know that an elephant force had formed with at least three elephants.\(^{14}\) There also were elephant forces, which included elephants with denary ratio.\(^{15}\) The change of elephant numbers in the formation of elephant force, might be to suit the necessity of the battle field and in relation to the number of soldier.

According to the Siamese chronicle, Siamese elephantry had divided into elephants with shield bearers, elephant with rectangular shield (*ka*) bearers and ordinary war elephant. According to , mine forces of Siamese army had sixteen elephants each, taking position in the rear of the field\(^{16}\).

It can be acceptable that elephant was applied as a big weapon in the field, for it was not only physically suit, but also capable to move long distant journey, passing through every rough terrain. In one of the royal order, the king claimed that “To the king of kings, me, elephant is the big weapon.”\(^{17}\) Also, the record on

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\(^{14}\)Nagathein, 1975, 84  
\(^{15}\)Konbaungzet, 2004a, 325  
\(^{16}\)Loubere, Simon de la ; *The Kingdom of Siam*, Bangkok, White Lotus, 1986, p.92 (Henceforth: Loubere, 1986)  
\(^{17}\)”Wungyi Hmugyi Khant Pyantam”, *Parabaik* MS, NL, No.622
the visit of Vietnamese embassy stated that “the big weapon of elephant and horse.” The assumption of elephant as a weapon might be due to the fact that in military campaigns, elephants usually marched along with the infantry and cavalry. Both in offensive and defensive warfares, elephants were found to be used frequently. For these reasons, elephants might have been regarded as big weapon.

Field application of elephant

Myanmar kings used elephants in various campaigns throughout the ages of Myanmar history from Bagan down to Konbaung Periods. Elephants were applied in the field as an elephant combat force or as an logistic force or to use in the duel combat. Southeast Asian armies took careful organization of the elephant forces for battle. As stated above, Siamese army had divisions of their elephants into different categories for battle, including shield, hinder, and ordinary war elephants. Myanmar and Siamese armies allotted specified number of elephants to each force, in the organization of military units to be deployed in a campaign. Southeast Asian kings, in military terms, considered elephant as the most important part of the royal army at the sovereign's disposal. And they saw the elephant as more suitable for war than the horse. Therefore, prudent monarchs always tried to keep an eye on the status of the elephants in the royal precinct. It was the case in Konbaung Myanmar that the royal elephant sheds were specially built, so that, they could be seen easily by the sovereign. Among the war arms, the elephant force was that most intimately connected with elite participation in the fighting. Bayinnaung and Naresuan of Siam were known to ride a horse into battle. But both were found rode elephants more frequently. The principal usefulness of the elephant in the battle field was to carry commanders, princes, councillors and the sovereigns.

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18 "Mission to Yungyi (Further Bagan) in 1185 ME", Parabaik MS, NL, No.474
19 Charney, 2004, 154
Elephants also played a crucial role to duels between elite persons in the battlefield. One prince or noble would hunt out his counterpart on the opposing side to engage in personal combat on elephant back. Duelling on elephants, was carried out in the context of an overall battle. Royalty showed their military prowess, by driving their elephant directly towards to their equal, also an elephant. The two warriors would then fight elephant against elephant, and man against man: Myanmar rival kings sometimes determined their conflict by duel, rather than commit their armies to a bloody battle.

**Elephant in Bagan Period**

It was a well known fact that Aniruddha of Bagan took thirty three sets of Tipitaka by putting them on the back of thirty three white elephants\(^\text{20}\), from Thaton to Bagan. The carrying of Tripitaka was simply a pretext; The real politic was that Aniruddha invaded Thaton with a formidable force, in which a lot of elephant took part in the campaign, at least thirty three white elephants\(^\text{21}\). It was also said that Aniruddha usually toured the country by riding on the back of a white elephant, accompanied by 730 elephants. Surely all these elephants would be available to take part in the military campaign of any kind.

Aniruddha, in his search of Buddha's relics, had sent a white elephant to the king of Ceylon and he asked the Sacred Tooth Relic in return. Accordingly Ceylonese king presented Aniruddha what he wanted, paving the good relation between the two nations on the way.\(^\text{22}\) Aniruddha also sent through the Governor of Manchu to the Chinese emperor, vessels of gold, and later the king sent an elephant.\(^\text{23}\) These gifts were accepted and recorded by the Chinese as tribute,

\(^{20}\)Tun Nyo, *1968*, 89

\(^{21}\)Tun Nyo, *1968*, 89


\(^{23}\)Baretto, 38-39
which led to the later bitterly fought battles, on the grounds that Chinese mistakenly took Aniruddha's goodwill gifts as mere tribute. But the presents at the moment put the two countries' relations on good terms. Sometimes, there might be sour relations between the two countries, for merely to conquer the elephant. It was the war fought between Bagan of Myanmar and Ceylon in about AD 1165. Between the two countries of Lanka (Ceylon) and Ramā (Myanmar), there had never been disagreement, since both were occupied by people holding the true faith, and the kings of both were good Buddhists. All predecessor kings had felt deeply rooted trust in each other, were wont to exchange precious gifts, and thus had long lived in intercourse and amity. Even the then reigning king, like his precursors, had kept up friendly relations with King Parakramabahu. But at one time, the king of Bagan harkened to the words of slanderers, who sowed the seeds of distrust between the two kings, and the trouble set on.

Trade related charges were made against the king of Bagan, particularly Myanmar king's issuance of an order forbidding the sale of elephants to foreign countries; the great increase of the prices of elephants; and the abolition of the old custom of presenting an elephant to every vessel in which gifts were conveyed. Once Myanmar king took from the king of Lanka's envoys gifts and goods sent for the purchase of elephants, and promised them fourteen elephants and silver money; but the former told mere lies and gave them nothing. The Myanmar king also seized by force a princess sent by the king of Lanka to Kamboza.

Ceylon King Parakramabahu was infuriated and ordered his men to invade the Arimaddana. The invading army captured Paphhala, Bassein and Bagan. It was the great crisis in the history of Bagan, with the end result of Myanmar king being killed at the hands of Indians, making to that reigning King Imtawsyan to be

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24(a)Luce, 1969, 121-125  
(b)Dr. Than Tun, Bagan Khit Luhmuye (The Social of Bagan), Yangon, Phowa Press, 2005, p.55 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 2005)  
25Luce, 1969, 122
known “Kalagya” in posterity. These great events occurred on one part due to misdemeanour of Bagan King and on another for the acquisition of the elephant.

In Bagan Period, the use of elephant in wars was a sure fact, in which one outstanding evidence was that during the Ngaramam's Rebellion, Sawlu was being decoyed to combat into the false flocks of elephants which in fact were effigies of elephants placed in the quagmire and unable to distinguish and recognize the true or false, when Sawlu charged his elephant Thanhlyinswa into the trap, the king and his elephant were caught.26

A famous battle fought between the cavalry archers and the elephantry was that of Ngasaunggyan, fought between Mongol cavalry and Myanmar elephantry.27 The incident that led the two countries to war was Narathihapate's refusal of Kublai's demand for tribute. Instead of ceding the demand, Narathihapte sent a strong army over the frontier into Yunan. The Myanmar army was mustered at Bhamo, and proceeded to march seventy miles up the Taping Valley and into Yunan. The battle was fought only just inside Yunan, not near Yung chiang. Myanmar army had two thousand war elephants, which wore some kind of light armour, sufficient to protect them against spearmen and the inferior bowmen of their country.28 The actual battle ground might be the Plain of Nantin in the Taping Valley. Though the Myanmars outnumbered the Mongols five to one, the Mongols had won their first elephant battle. From that time forth, it is said, Kublai himself began to use elephants in his armies. According to the Polo's summation for the

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26Tun Nyo, 1968, 12

27U Tin, Myanmarmin Okchokpon Sardan Hnint Bodawpaya Ei Yazathat Khaw Ameindawdangyi (A Treatise on Administration under Myanmar Kings together with an edit of King Bodawpaya), Vol.II, Yangon, Department of Culture, 1965, p.233 (Henceforth: Tin, 1965)

28(a)Mauric Coillis; Marco Polo, Faber and Faber Limited, London, 1959, pp.104-105 (Henceforth: Collis, 1959)

reasons why the Myanmars were defeated, in spite of their superiority in numbers and the novel and superior form of armament. The first reason was that Myanmars were not as well armed as the Mongols, since their bows did not have a long range to go or the same power of penetration. The second was that the elephants were not sufficiently armed; that they been, they could have overrun the Chinese, whose arrows would unable to penetrate. The third reason was the Mongol General efficient deployments in the battlefield, who deployed his troops in the forests and thick woods. Polo went on to say that the Myanmar should never have attacked the Mongol in such a position. Had they forced them, to give battle in an open plain and attacked there with elephants, adequately protected against their arrows, nothing could have stopped the elephants' charge. The Mongols would have been overrun and thrown into confusion. Then, by bringing up his wings of horse and foot, the Myanmar general could have enveloped and wiped the Mongols out.\textsuperscript{29} Makopolos's account on the Battle of Ngasaunggyan was an acute piece of military reporting, and vividly showed the advantages and disadvantages of the elephants in the wars.

Likewise, in the rebellions of Mottama and Maccagiri that occurred during Narathihapates reign, elephants were also the mainstay in the suppression of the rebels. The forces, that marched to quash the rebellion, comprised with two hundred war elephants, two thousand horses and twenty thousand foot soldiers, which were commanded by Yazathingyan and Atwinthinhmu Tharepyitsatê, the former marched to Mottama and the latter to Maccagiri.\textsuperscript{30} By these accounts, we come to know that elephants were used not only in diplomatic missions, but also in military campaigns in Bagan Period. It was especially true in the reign of King Aniruddha, the founder of First Myanmar Empire.

\textsuperscript{29}Collis, 1959, 109-110

\textsuperscript{30}Hmannan, 2003a, 341
Elephants were extensively used in wars in succeeding ages of Pinya (A.D.1309-1364), Inwa (A.D.1364-1527), Taungngu (A.D.1486-1600), Nyaungyan (A.D. 1600-1752) and Konbaung (A.D.1752-1885), after Bagan.

Elephant in Taungngu Period

We have observed that every campaign in Taungngu Period had used war elephants. The degree of the use of war elephants had surpassed than that of Bagan in Taungngu Period. This fact can be seen in the following table, which shows the military campaigns waged in the reigns of Mingyinyo and Tabinshwehti.

Table VII
Elephants Used in Battles During the Reign of Mingyi Nyo (1486-1531)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Battle field</th>
<th>War Elephants Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1490</td>
<td>Pyay</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1495</td>
<td>Yamethin</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1496</td>
<td>Taungngu</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1503</td>
<td>Inwa</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1508</td>
<td>Pakhangyi</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1509</td>
<td>Magway</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1512</td>
<td>Myedu</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1514</td>
<td>Sakut</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1516</td>
<td>Myedè</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1518</td>
<td>Myedè</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1521</td>
<td>Kalay Mongyaung</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1523</td>
<td>Myedu</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1524</td>
<td>Inwa</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1527</td>
<td>Pakhangyi</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SBBR 3.2 (AUTUMN 2005): 284-395
Table VIII

Elephants Used in Battles During the Reign of Tabinshwehti (1531-1551)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Battle field</th>
<th>War Elephants Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1535</td>
<td>Bago</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1536</td>
<td>Bago</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1537</td>
<td>Bago</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No date</td>
<td>Bago</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No date</td>
<td>Pyay</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

The above tables clearly show that war elephants were extensively used almost in every campaign during the early part of Taungngu Period, in reigns of Mingyinyo and Tabinshwehti. The highest number of war elephants used in a single campaign was about 350, deployed in the campaign to Myedè, occurred in 1518. The table also shows the variation in number of war elephants used in each campaign, that suggests elephants were deployed; it seems, depending on the nature of campaign and the number of elephants available for use in each campaign. Whatever the reason may be, these tables indicate that elephants played a crucial role in each battle.

Also in the time of King Bayinnaung, the founder of the Second Myanmar Empire, elephants were found to be the major force in the unification campaigns. In examining about the wars fought during the reign of Bayinnaung, it is found that he employed elephants in every campaign, waged either in local areas or abroad. Though Bayinnaung was known to ride a horse into battle, he rode elephant more frequently. One such battle is that the king himself rode the elephant was the famous Battle of Naungyoe, into which Bayinnaung rode the
elephant, known as *Swelaman*\(^{31}\), accompanied by twenty *amats* who also rode elephants and 4000 foot soldiers\(^{32}\). The commanders of Mon army, Thushintakayupi, Byinnyadala and Minye Aungnaing, waited for Myanmar advances and were ready to go into action. Bayinnaung Kyawhtin Navyahta charged his elephant *Swelaman* to the Mon army assemblage of horses and elephants and there he attacked Byinnyadala and his elephant. Byinnyadala changed his mount from elephant to horse and went away. Like Bayinnaung, the *amats* marched along side Bayinnaung in left and right columns, also charged their elephants spontaneously to the Mon army. The Mon army was broken down into four groups and subsequently collapsed. One of their commander Minye Aungnaing was killed on his elephant. Bayinnaung had seized many horses and elephants, and captives\(^{33}\). Bayinnaung won the Naungyoe Battle, not only due to good discipline and disposition, plus good strategy, but also by the power of elephant. The prowess of hosemanship and elephantmanship was the perquisite and requisite for every kings and councillors in those days.

In medieval Myanmar, there usually was duelling on elephants, between elite men on the battle field, which was conducted in the context of an overall battle. One such duel, in which Bayinnaung himself took part was the duel with Thameinhtawyama of king. In the duel, the fight of elephant against elephant, it seems, determined the outcome, for, when Bayinnaung's elephant thrusted his tusk into the side of the elephant of Thameinhtaw, the latter in great pain, went away with his master. And the duel ended like this and Bayinnaung won\(^{34}\), in which the fight of man against man, seemed to be small. Other duels, we

thought, occurred in the campaign to the nine Shan countries in the year 1557. At a point beyond Momeit, Shans staged a formidable resistance, into which Bayinnang's commanders entered the battle by riding their elephants; Eimontaya on Nwelaman, Yazathingyan on Yadanadazaung, Nandayoda on Nagawara, Thaneinbyathanike on Zeyanubak and Thameinmawkhwin on Tayont. 

Elephants were also found useful in the siege warfare, in that the beasts were used to break down city gates and to pull down the stockades. In his campaign to Chiangmai in the year 1557, Bayinnaung sent a horde of elephants to break down the wall of Chiangmai. Also in the campaign on Sriksetra, King Mingaung and Nawrahta marched to Thandaung and then broke down the southern gate of the city by charging the elephant, known as Yodayasein. After the city gate was broken down, the troop overran the Sriksetra.

In Nandabayin's reign in the year 1599, Pyay King Thadodhammayaza staged a rebellion. The king ordered his younger brother Nyaunghyan Prince to march to Pakhan where the followers of Pyay King were amassed. Prince Nyaunghyan himself took to the elephant Zabudaseik and let his son Anaukphetlun to ride at the center on the back of the elephant and entered the battle. Nyaunghyan Prince and his son fought the battle, by riding three elephants changing them one after another. Despite of his vigor and valour, the commander of Pyay King could not resist this battle and fled away. Prince Nyaunghyan captured Pakhanmyo. The battle shows us how much elephants were useful in seizing and conquering a town.

After King Nyaunghyan had ascended to the throne, Taungngu King Minye Thihathu moved to Yamethin and made it his strong hold. King Nyaunghyan

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36 Shinbyushin Ayedawbon, 2006, 13
ordered son to march to Yamethin, who, in the year 1600, led the campaign by
riding the elephant *Thirinaga*. Nyaunyang's son captured the Yamethin City,
which in fact was a fortress town with the then seven characteristics of a town. He
won the town by riding on the back of an elephant. The capture of the town might
be in part due to the military prowess of the man, but in another owing to the
ability and capability of the elephants. For the reason, this king bestowed the
brave award upon the elephant *Thirinaga* who had a height of six cubits.
Anaukphetlun also had fought two battles into which he rode the royal elephant
*Bontaukpa*, one was the Monai Battle occurred in October 1604 and the other
Mogaung Battle fought in October 1605. He won both battles by riding the royal
elephant *Bontaukpa*.

We have seen that every battles and campaigns in Taungngu Period was
fought with elephant as its principal war arms, showing the increasing use of
elephant in wars.

**Elephant: The heroes of the war**

Throughout the history of Myanmar, elephant war heroes existed along side
with that of human war heroes. Of many heroes, three elephants stood out first,
viz, Byinwè's mount elephant of *Ngayetnw*, Yazadirit's mount elephant of
*Pakamat* and Minyè Kyawswa's mount elephant of *Nga Chit Khaing*.

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38 Twinthin Taikwun Mahasithu U Htun Nyo, *Maha Yazawinthit* (New Great Chronicle)

39 Htun Nyo, 1997, 13
40 Htun Nyo, 1997, 16
41 Tun Nyo, 1968, 284
42 Hmannan, 2003b, 2
43 Hmannan, 2003b, 5
In the forty years war of Mon Myanmar, Mingaung of Inwa and Yazadarit of Bago sometimes fought in duel. One such duel took place at Barnan, where Mingaung's mount elephant *Yėmyatswa* retreated, as it was no match to Yazadarit's mount elephant *Pakamat*. On seeing this, Ohnbaung Thokyaungbwa charged on his mount elephant *Chitmyatkè*. By observing that, fief holders of Taungdwin and Yamethin, along with well over thirty *amats*, charged on their elephants into the battle. Also *amat* Thamein Byatza rode his mount *Ngayanwè* and charged him into the battle. In this battle, Monyin Thado rode the mount elephant *Thanhlyinswa*\textsuperscript{44}. The duel and the battle proved that Yazadarit's mount elephant *Pakamat* was so clever, which was recorded in chronicle forever. Such clever and able elephant were known in elephant characteristic treatises as hero elephant (*arzarni*) and *yadayarya* elephant\textsuperscript{45}, the one that can avert impending misfortunes\textsuperscript{46}. For what reason such elephants were known as hero elephants and *yadayarya* elephants, were given by Maungthaung Sayadaw, in his *Mahazanaka Jataka*, that explained, that “the one elephant by congenital nature knew what was suitable or not, was known as the hero elephant\textsuperscript{47}(*arzarni*). The venerable *sayadaw* also explained in the *Alinacitta Jataka*, that the heroic elephants and horses never defecate and urinate in the water\textsuperscript{48}.

Concerning the characteristics of *yadayarya* elephant, the Venerable *sayadaw* went on explained that

\textsuperscript{44}Hmannan, 2002a, 3
\textsuperscript{45}“Letters on Yadayarya Elephant”, *Parabaik* MS, NL, No.146
\textsuperscript{46}Myakaytu; *Nandal Hmattan* (Record of Court Custom), Yangon, Hnalonehla Sarpay, 1971, 2\textsuperscript{nd} impression, p.112 (Henceforth: Myakaytu, 1971)
\textsuperscript{47}Maung Htaung, “The Characteristics of White Elephant”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No.10543
\textsuperscript{48}Maung Htaung, “The Characteristics of White Elephant”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No.10543
*Yadayarya* elephant is the noble one. *Yadayarya* means that such elephant are clever in movement and battle. In the battle field, *Yadayarya* elephant can endure the wound and shot of sword and spear. He can keep himself and the rider, not to harm, by clever movement49.

The characteristics of elephant were very important that there were custom to take the omen of whether the battle or the war could win or lose, by observing the characteristics of war elephants, before taking out to the field. The Letwèkyihmu wrote that

“While taking out to the battle field, if the elephant takes out the banner or the streamer or a fruit or a flower, it indicates the sign of the victory in the battle. If it takes out a piece of bamboo or potsherd, it’s a bad omen for the lose in the battle”50.

**Classification of elephants**

Elephants were very important in the royal army. We find that the names given to various elephants can explain their purpose or usefulness, and namely.

- **Aukmasin** Elephant used to catch wild elephants51.
- **Danapalasin** Elephant used for training wild elephant 52
- **Htansin** Carrier elephant 53
- **Htusin** Best young bull elephant54

49Maung Htaung, “The Characteristics of White Elephant”, Palmleaf MS,UCL, No.10543
50Letwègyihmu; “Sinkyanlinka Ahphwint Kyan” (Explantory Test on Elephant Characteristics), Palmleaf MS, U Htun Yi collection, ce-reverse
51The Royal Orders of Burma, Vol.X, (A.D.1598-1885), Dr. Than Tun, (ed), Kyoto: The Centre for Southeast Asian, Kyoto University, 1990, p.70 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 1990)
52Than Tun, 1990, 70
53Than Tun , 1990, 70
54Maung Maung Tin, 2005, 262
Htusinma  Best young cow elephant\textsuperscript{55}
Kyinsin  Elephant for funeral processions\textsuperscript{56}
Minhitsin  Poor quality elephant, due to too young or too old \textsuperscript{57}
Sidawgyi  Big and majestic bull elephant\textsuperscript{58}
Sisusinma  Cow elephant chosen for riding short trips\textsuperscript{59}
Winsin  Elephant of palace guard\textsuperscript{60}, and
Wunyansin  Elephant reserved for officers\textsuperscript{61}
Ywesin  Selected fighter elephant\textsuperscript{62}

Myanmar elephantry had their elephants categorized into, fighting elephant, helping elephant, artillery elephant and logistic elephant. But in the battle front, those of Ywesin (selected fighter elephant) and Htansin (carrier elephant) were used. In such occasions of royal procession and taking in possession of a town or a city, Htusin (best young bull elephant), Htusinma (best young bull elephant), Sisusinma (cow elephant for short trip), Sidawgyi (big majestic bull elephant) and Namantabat\textsuperscript{63} use in Yazabiseka and Muddabiseka as an complementary to the king elephant were used. Winsin (palace guard elephant), and Wunyinsin (elephant for officers) and Kyinsin (elephant for funeral procession) were used in the undertaking of royal services.

As the elephant was such a valuable animal in battles and wars, vassal states usually included elephants and horses in their tribute to the king. In 1821, a

\textsuperscript{55}Than Tun, 1990, 70
\textsuperscript{56}Maung Maung Tin, 2005, 262
\textsuperscript{57}Than Tun, 1990, 70
\textsuperscript{58}Mg Mg Tin, 2005, 260
\textsuperscript{59}Than Tun, 1990, 70
\textsuperscript{60}Maung Maung Tin, 2005, 261
\textsuperscript{61}Maung Maung Tin, 2005, 262
\textsuperscript{62}Maung Maung Tin, 2005, 261
\textsuperscript{63}“Ugamtawphwint”, Palmleaf MS, NL, No.1960, ghi-reverse
A delegation to Bangkok was sent by Sipsong Panna and Chiangtrung with four ponies and a variety of goods to trade for six male elephants, which would then be sent as tribute by these states to the king of Myanmar. As Myanmar and Siam were no longer at this time, the king of Siam approved the trade and dispatched his ministers to find out six elephants with good characteristics in the area around Nan. In the year A.D. 1554, during the reign of Bayinnaung, King of Chiangmai sent various gifts as tribute to the king, included in the tribute were a lady, nice of the Chiangmai king as gift, various royal paraphernalia, and four "hatthithara type elephants and many other elephants. The king of Siam also was required to send 100 elephants, 500 horses, gold, silver and paso as gift and tribute to the Myanmar court.

Besides, we have found, the presenting of tribute to the invading army and its king, could stop the impending danger. In the year A.D. 1565, in the reign of King Bayinnaung, the king sent his army of about ten thousand forces, comprised with fifty war elephants, commanded by Mobyè fief holder and Byannayenantabaya, 300 horses and other soldiers commanded by Letyaturu and chief of cavalry, to Chiangtrung. When the King of Chiangtrung heard about the campaign to his country, he sent various gifts of elephants and horses, gold and silver flowers, gold and silver dazaung, gold and silver pop corn, silk rolls and royal paraphernalia, plus his own daughter, to the King Bayinnaung as tribute. On receiving the tribute, Bayinnaung turned his army back.

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64 Channey, 2004, 142
65 Shinbyushin Ayedawbon, 2006, 90
66 Shinbyushin Ayedawbon, 2006, 85
67 Shinbyushin Ayedawbon, 2006, 98
**Elephant in Konbaung Period**

The elephant which had played a crucial role in politic and military since Bagan Period, went on occupied its important role till the early period of Konbaung. Konbaung kings, who used the elephant in war affairs, were Myedu (A.D. 1763-1776), Badon (A.D.1782-1819) and Bagyidaw (A.D.1819-1837). After the Anglo-Myanmar wars in later Konbaung Period, the use of elephant in warfares gradually dwindled. But the founder king of the Third Myanmar Empire, Alaungmintaya had himself ridden the royal mount elephant *Yadana Htukhaung*, into the battle.  

Elephants were important in politics as well as in military in Konbaung Period. Konbaung kings usually had presented elephants as gift to neighbouring countries in a show of amity. It was a tradition that weak kings usually presented elephants as tribute to stronger kings. Also to win the favour and trust of the reigning king, vassals, nobles and councillors presented elephants as well as their daughters to the king the practice of which became a tradition, that was much founded in Konbaung Period. A list of presents that have been found are

- In A.D. 1759, a bull elephant presented by Kalayaza, fief holder of Kala Village
- In A.D. 1764, 100 elephants by Linzin king
- In A.D. 1769, 500 elephants by Sandapuri king
- In A.D. 1772, 200 elephants by Sandapuri King Sabaithet
- In A.D. 1801, elephant by Sawbwa Maha Raja and Zuparaza of Manipur
- In A.D. 1816, cow elephant by Tolya Sawbwa of Vesali, Vazzi Division

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68 *Konbaungzet, 2004a, 229*

69 *Konbaungzet, 2004a, 230*

70 *Konbaungzet, 2004a, 376*

71 *Konbaungzet, 2004a, 328*

72 *Konbaungzet, 2004a, 353*

73 *Konbaungzet, 2004a, 230*

74“Mission to Yungyi (Further Bagan) in 1185 ME”, *Parabaik MS, NL,No.474*
In A.D. 1816, 50 fighter elephants by Sandara Gonad Singh of Vesali king\textsuperscript{75}

In A.D. 1820, one young bull elephant and two cow elephants by Zayanta king\textsuperscript{76},

In 1820 altogether 6 elephants of young bull elephants and cow elephant by Vesali king\textsuperscript{77}

In 1822, one cow elephant by Nine Sawbwas of Assam Town\textsuperscript{78}

Such winning over of regard and respect of neighbouring countries by Myanmar king, might be due to the military might of the kingdom. Like the vassals and chiefs of neighbouring countries, provincial officers and councillors also presented elephants to the king throughout Konbaung Period, they were

Atwinwun Yaw Fiet holder (A.D. 1878)\textsuperscript{79}
Bhamo Sawbwa (A.D. 1754)\textsuperscript{80}
Chief of Swords (A.D. 1858)\textsuperscript{81}
Chief Commander of Mobyè (A.D. 1863)\textsuperscript{82}
Governor of Dala (A.D. 1851)\textsuperscript{83}
Governor of Taungngu (A.D. 1853)\textsuperscript{84}
Headman of Ngabè O (A.D. 1851)\textsuperscript{85}

\textsuperscript{75} Konbaungzet, 2004\textit{b}, 148
\textsuperscript{76} Konbaungzet, 2004\textit{a}, 196
\textsuperscript{77} Konbaungzet, 2004\textit{a}, 196
\textsuperscript{78} Majjimadesa Sardan, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No. 4571
\textsuperscript{79} Konbaungzet, 2004\textit{c}, 325
\textsuperscript{80} Konbaungzet, 2004\textit{a}, 90
\textsuperscript{81} Konbaungzet, 2004\textit{c}, 118
\textsuperscript{82} Konbaungzet, 2004\textit{c}, 217
\textsuperscript{83} Konbaungzet, 2004\textit{c}, 73
\textsuperscript{84} Konbaungzet, 2004\textit{c}, 70
\textsuperscript{85} Konbaungzet, 2004\textit{c}, 73
Headman of Kyaikpi (A.D. 1851)\textsuperscript{86}
Headman of Warnwgon (A.D. 1858)\textsuperscript{87}
Hsemwi Sawbwa (A.D. 1877)\textsuperscript{88}
Kalay Sawbwa (A.D. 1861)\textsuperscript{89}
Kyebogale Amat (A.D. 1869)\textsuperscript{90}
Momeik Sawbwa, (A.D. 1754)\textsuperscript{91}
Moenai Sawbwa (A.D. 1862)\textsuperscript{92}
Myelat Wun (A.D. 1863)\textsuperscript{93}
\textit{Sawbwa} (A.D. 1869)\textsuperscript{94}
Ngwetaung Village Head (A.D. 1863)\textsuperscript{95}
Nyaungshwe Sawbwa (A.D. 1869)\textsuperscript{96}
Regimental Officer of Moenai (A.D. 1853)\textsuperscript{97}
Thaungthut Sawbwa (A.D. 1861)\textsuperscript{98}
Thaton Silver Revenue Officer (A.D. 1879)\textsuperscript{99}
Village Headman of Maisalin (A.D. 1863)\textsuperscript{100}
Waterway Minister of Hanthawaddy (A.D. 1847)\textsuperscript{101}

\textsuperscript{86} Konbaungzet, 2004c, 73
\textsuperscript{87} Konbaungzet, 2004c, 189
\textsuperscript{88} Konbaungzet, 2004c, 292
\textsuperscript{89} Konbaungzet, 2004c, 208
\textsuperscript{90} Konbaungzet, 2004c, 254
\textsuperscript{91} Konbaungzet, 2004a, 90
\textsuperscript{92} Konbaungzet, 2004c, 197
\textsuperscript{93} Konbaungzet, 2004c, 217
\textsuperscript{94} Konbaungzet, 2004c, 254
\textsuperscript{95} Konbaungzet, 2004c, 217
\textsuperscript{96} Konbaungzet, 2004c, 254
\textsuperscript{97} Konbaungzet, 2004c, 116
\textsuperscript{98} Konbaungzet, 2004c, 207
\textsuperscript{99} Konbaungzet, 2004c, 335
\textsuperscript{100} Konbaungzet, 2004c, 217
\textsuperscript{101} Konbaungzet, 2004c, 59
Therefore, we find that in building the aura and the influence of a king and his kingdom, elephant took a central role. The assemblage of elephant in high number meant that the king had a great glory, for every vassal and the loser kings in a war, had to present elephants to the king, as a token of the acceptance of the overlordship. In a war, elephant could be a peace maker or a truce bringer, because wars usually came to a stop, when the defender or a looser presented elephants as gift or tribute to the king. It was the case in 1764, in that the Kingdom of Linzin was escaped from being attacked, when its kings presented 100 elephants to the Myanmar king as tribute and accepted the suzerainty of Myanmar monarch.102

Sometimes, elephant was the raison d'etre in the break out of the wars. In the reign of King Tabinshwehti (A.D. 1530-1550), the Siamese were made obliged to present annual tribute of thirty elephants to Myanmar king. In Alaungmintaya's reign, Siamese broke this tradition, which forced the former to attack the latter. But it was only in the reign of King Myedu that this tradition of the presentation of annual tribute of thirty elephants was reestablished, the result of Myedu's onslaught of Ayutia.103

The role of war elephant in Konbaung Period.

Throughout Konbaung Period, there were so many wars waged for the consolidation of the kingdom. Konbaung kings used many war elephants in their campaigns, especially Meydu and Bagyidaw, of which King Myedu was found to use the highest number of war elephants.

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102 Konbaungzet, 2004a, 376
103 Tin, 1963, 241
Table IX
Elephants Used in Battles During the Reign of Myedu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Battle field</th>
<th>Elephants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 February 1764</td>
<td>Cheingmai</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 November</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 January</td>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 October 1765</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 August 1765</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 August 1765</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 December 1765</td>
<td>Kengtung</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 October 1766</td>
<td>Sipsongpanma</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 January 1767</td>
<td>Mogaung, Mohnyin</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 December 1767</td>
<td>Hsemwi, Thipaw</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 December 1767</td>
<td>Nyaungbingyi Bawkyo</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 December 1767</td>
<td>Mongmeit</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 December 1769</td>
<td>Mogaung</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: *Konbaungzet, 2004 a*
Table X
Elephants Used in Battles During the Reign of Bagyitaw

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Battle field</th>
<th>War Elephant Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 December 1819</td>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 December 1819</td>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 December 1819</td>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 December 1819</td>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 October 1820</td>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 February 1822</td>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 April 1824</td>
<td>Cachar</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 March 1837</td>
<td>East Column</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 March 1838</td>
<td>West Column</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Konbaungzet, 2004 b

In Myedu's reign, elephants were primarily used in various campaigns on Siam and in resistant wars against the Chinese invasions. In Sino-Myanmar Wars, Myanmar elephantry was able to defeat the Chinese cavalry. On 27 December 1765, Chinese staged siege warfare on Kengtung, surrounding it with 50000 men and 100000 horses. To repel the Chinese, Myanmar had formed two columns of right and left. The right column was formed with five forces, 100 fighter elephants, 1000 cavalry and 10000 men commanded by Left Captain of Guards. The left column was also organized with five forces, 100 fighter elephant, 1000 cavalry and 10000 men. To break the Chinese siege, Myanmar attacked the Chinese with these two columns, in that the principal force of Chinese army was the cavalry, which was destined to be crushed by Myanmar elephantry.104

104(a) Konbaungzet, 2004a, 311
(b) Ma Kyan, Konbaung Khit Myanmar Yemet Tawnya (Konbaung Myanmar Soldiers), Myanmar Yadana Sarpay, Yangon, 2006, p.13 (Henceforth: Kyan, 2006)
One of the reasons that led Myanmar victory in Sino-Myanmar wars was, it seems, the use of war elephants by Myanmar army. By nature, horses do not dare face the elephant in close range. Horses were frightened by the sight of immense beast elephant, which made them uncontrollable. Besides, Myanmar army had war elephants on their back the mortar and cannon, that fired to the enemy from the high point. How the Myanmar elephant had the cannon on their back, in what position is unknown. But Myanmar elephants carried the castles on the back and Myanmar forces had used them against the Mongols in the Battle of Ngazaunggyan in 1277. The elephant castles were made of wood and were bound to the elephants by bands tied under their bellies. The castles could be of varying size and capacity, some castles carrying four, six, eight to ten, and thirteen to fourteen men, in addition to the driver on the neck or rear. Weaponery used by the soldiers in the castles changed over the course of time. According to the records of thirteen, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, we come to know that Myanmar soldiers in the castles used spears, lances, bows and arrows, darts and cross bows to fight. From the sixteenth century, some elephant castles were armed with musketeers as well as small swivel guns. It is found that in both Tabinshwehti's and Bayinnaung's Campaigns, Myanmar soldiers fired oversized muskets, and small bronze cannon from elephant castles. These cannon from elephant castles were used effectively in Tabinshwehti's siege of Ayutia in the year 1548.\(^\text{105}\) No doubt, the use of elephant mounted cannon would increase greatly in Konbaung Period. We also find that \textit{Mingyi} Maha Bandula had used mortar mounted elephants in his campaign in Panwar.\(^\text{106}\)

Other important factor that led Myanmar victory was means of logistics and supply. While Myanmar army had used elephants for the carrying of men, weapons and supply, Chinese used horse, and mules for logistics and supply.\(^\text{107}\)

\(^{105}\text{Charney ,2004, 159}\)
\(^{106}\text{Tin, 1963, 241}\)
\(^{107}\text{Konbaungzet, 2004a,473}\)
Evidently, Myanmar elephants in this case were more useful and valuable than that of the Chinese. The other reason that caused Chinese defeat was the preemptive attack staged by the East captain of guards at Kunglung ferry, inflicting heavy loses on the part of the Chinese.

In addition to war elephants devoted to fighting, elephants in many expeditions proved their usefulness as baggage animals. The great strength of the elephant allowed it to carry heavy guns that would have been immovable otherwise, as well as smaller arms, cannon balls, and gunpowder. It was said that, in Tabinshwehti's 1546 campaign against Thandwe, sixty percent of elephant forces were devoted to carrying baggage and only the rest were for battle.

King Badon also had used hundreds of war elephants in his campaigns on Dannyawady, Rakhine and Ayutia. The Dannyawady Campaign was started on 16 October 1784 where the king used a total of 210 war elephants\textsuperscript{108}. The expedition on Ayutia began on 11 November 1785, where a total of 500 war elephants took part\textsuperscript{109}.

We find that the lose of Myanmar expedition on Ayutia in Badon's reign was due to lack of sufficient elephants to carry supply and Siamese counter attack on Myanmar elephants that carried supplies to Myanmar forces.\textsuperscript{110} This shows the degree of the importance of carrier elephants in the wars. We have seen that elephants played a major role in wars till the early Konbaung Period. The usefulness of elephants in wars were found to depend on the training. Systematic training made elephants a formidable fighting force in the battle. But poorly trained elephants could not unleashed a dire threat to the enemy. It was the case in the battle of Tarlanchaung where Siamese and Myanmar armies fought. Siamese commanders led by Aukbya Lahon went into the battle by riding their elephants of \textit{Awungyi, Pakyitkyi, Thabyethar, Yadanakwesaw} and \textit{Pavayaza}, only to be

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{108}\textit{Konbaungzet, 2004b}, 21 \\
\textsuperscript{109}\textit{Konbaungzet, 2004b}, 36 \\
\textsuperscript{110}\textit{Konbaungzet, 2004b}, 33
\end{flushright}
defeated by Myanmar forces who captured all the six Siamese forces with their horses and elephants, except the Aukbyalahon who managed to escape by riding a horse.\textsuperscript{111} With regard to mobility, although horse was more advantageous than the elephant, Konbaung military proved that elephant took the center stage in every major expeditions and wars.

Elephantry was found not in Myanmar only, but in countries of Siam, Linzin, Assam and Manipur also. In Bayinnaung's expedition on Ayutia, Siamese had used musthing elephants. Their elephants had iron spikes on the tusks and their trunks with the iron chains by which the elephant routed the enemy\textsuperscript{112}. The use of musthing elephant in the battle might be regarded as a sign of bravado or possibly a belief that the elephant would be especially damaging to the enemy\textsuperscript{113}. Alaungmintaya in one of his campaign on Ayutia, had 13000 soldiers and 130 armoured elephants\textsuperscript{114}. In the Battle of Tartanchaung, Siamese commanders had mounted elephants of Awungyi, Pakyitkyi, Thabyetha, Yadamakumsaw and Pavayaza\textsuperscript{115}. In every Battle occurred in Myedu's reign, Siamese had their elephants covered with iron sheets on musth gland, temple and chest. Siamese also had put three cannons on the left and right side of the elephant and at the rear, making it like a tank. Men at the front, middle and rear became acted like the crew of artillery.

By the above mentioned facts, we find that the elephant could fight in the battle like a good soldier, and the elephant itself was a big weapon. It could also carry heavy weapons and supplies. For these reasons, Myanmar and neighbouring countries used the elephant widely, in their building of imperial kingdoms.

\textsuperscript{111} Konbaungzet, 2004a, 238
\textsuperscript{112} “Siamese History”, Palmleaf MS, U.C.L. No.11997, khe-reverse
\textsuperscript{113} Charney, 2004, 152
\textsuperscript{114} “Siamese History”, Palmleaf MS, U.C.L. No.11997, khe-reverse
\textsuperscript{115} Konbaungzet, 2004a, 238
In précis, the elephant, very useful since Bagan Period in fighting wars and building imperial kingdoms, became obsolete in late Konbaung Period, due to advanced military technology, applied by the British in its imperialist wars against Myanmar. The explosives used by the British made the elephant frightened. Myanmar fighter elephants, even with their iron sheet cover, now become useless. In the face of advanced military technology and strategy, Myanmar elephantry was totally defunct. Therefore, beginning in Mindon's reign, war elephants were used in timber extraction. Nevertheless, elephants were still useful in one aspect of war, carrying supplies to the front line and battle fields. In all three wars of Anglo-Myanmar, both sides used elephants to carry and transport supply. In the Second Anglo-Myanmar War, one hundred elephants were gathered or purchased by the British at Taninthayi for use at Yangon, 150 were brought over from Bengal across the Rakhine Yoma, and Lord Dalhousie himself recommended that a force of three hundred elephants should be acquired for the campaign into Upper Myanmar.\footnote{Charnay, 2004, 102}

We have seen that, the elephant played a major role in every campaigns in Myanmar and in every expedition to neighbouring countries. The elephant's utility in combat, already challenged by archers at Ngasaunggyan, was quickly brought to a close, as quicker and more accurate firearms appeared. But the elephants role in carrying supply and heavy equipment, remained important into the twentieth century.
Elephants were found important for the glorification of kings, as well as in military campaigns. Therefore, Konbaung kings always kept an eye on acquisition of elephants for war elephants, royal service elephants and ceremonial elephants. To this end, each and every king issued royal orders. There were a variety of ways to get elephants, chief among them were, receiving elephants as tribute from vassal kings, getting them as capture from the loser kings in the wars and by elephant catching. As elephant was much valued as a kind of tribute, there came into existence a tradition, in which presenting elephant became a vogue in the relation of the reigning king and his vassals and officers. There were a number of cases in that elephants were presented to the king by his vassals, during Konbaung Period. The following table shows such elephant as tribute presenting cases.
### Table XI

**List of Gifts and Tributes, Presented by Vassals, Sawbwas and Officials, to the King**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Vassals and Sawbwas</th>
<th>Number of Elephant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AD. 1760</td>
<td>Linzin king</td>
<td>100 war elephants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD. 1769</td>
<td>Linzin king</td>
<td>500 war elephants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD. 1772</td>
<td>Sabaithet</td>
<td>2 elephants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD. 1813</td>
<td>Sawbwa Mahanan</td>
<td>12 elephants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD. 1816</td>
<td>Toelya Sawbwa</td>
<td>1 cow elephant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD. 1816</td>
<td>Vesali King Candra Gandha Singh</td>
<td>50 war elephants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD. 1819</td>
<td>Zayantamin</td>
<td>2 young bull elephants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 cow elephant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD. 1829</td>
<td>Candapura Linzin King</td>
<td>500 elephants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD. 1821</td>
<td>Sabaithet</td>
<td>200 elephants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** *Konbaungzet, 2004,a,b,c*

**Presenting of elephant as tribute**

Therefore, provincial officials in Konbaung Period were required not only to carry out their administrative responsibility, but also to do for the acquisition of elephants either by catching or buying. Kings usually got elephants as tribute from vassals and likewise they got it by capturing them in the battle from the loser kings. For instance, after the capture of Ayudhaya on 5 February 1764, *Sinbyushin* took away king, queens, princes, princess, artisans, royal treasures and a total of 700 elephants to Myanmar\(^{272}\). Beside such capture in the war, elephant catchers had to go to deep forests where elephants roamed freely, to catch them. Sometime kings themselves took part in elephant hunting or catching. There indeed appears to be some evidence that rulership was associated with skill in elephant hunting. As far as we know, Myanmar kings who themselves took part in elephant hunting.

\(^{272}\) *Konbaungzet, 2004a, 306*
were, Alaungsithu\textsuperscript{273} (A.D. 1088-1158) and Uzana\textsuperscript{274} (A.D. 1250-1254) in Bagan Period, Uzana\textsuperscript{275} (A.D.1324-1343) in Pinya Period, and Mingyiswa\textsuperscript{276} (A.D. 1368-1401) in Inwa Period. In such hunting, the catcher himself had sometimes died in accident. Nevertheless, kings were found to be taking part in elephant hunting, going out to the far away deep forests where elephants roamed.

**Elephant grazing ground**

Once, elephants were found roaming in the northern hemisphere and now only two of their descendants were found in the world, being Elephas Africana, the one found in Africa, and Elephas Asiatica, the one found in Asia. African elephants roam in the deep forest of Africa and the Asian elephants are known as Indian elephant, which can be found not only in India, but also in Myanmar, Srilanka, Sumatra and Malay peninsular\textsuperscript{277}.

In Myanmar, elephants are found in areas where deep forests are situated. As elephants are unbearable to the broiling heat and are water liked creatures, they live in areas of thick forest where abundant water can be found. In Konbaung Myanmar, deep forests where elephants roamed, were in Sagaing Division, Indauktha\textsuperscript{278}, Zinbin\textsuperscript{279}, Panhlaing\textsuperscript{280}, ShwelaWun\textsuperscript{281}, Hngetkyithaik\textsuperscript{282},

\textsuperscript{273}Tun Nyo, 1968, 111
\textsuperscript{274}Maung Maung Tin, 2005, 180
\textsuperscript{275}Maung Maung Tin, 2005, 180
\textsuperscript{276}(a) “The Royal Order of King Thalun, proclaimed on 6 waxing of Tabaung, 999 ME”, (7 February 1638)
(b)\textit{Royal Orders of Burma}, Vol.I, (A.D.1598-1648), Dr. Than Tun (ed), Kyoto, The Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, 1983, p.348 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 1983)
\textsuperscript{278}\textit{Konbaungzet},2004b, 51
\textsuperscript{279}\textit{Konbaungzet}, 2004b, 396
\textsuperscript{280}\textit{Konbaungzet}, 2004c, 103
\textsuperscript{281}\textit{Konbaungzet},2004c, 186
\textsuperscript{282}\textit{Konbaungzet},2004c, 342
Thityabin, Kyeainggyi, Kyamaknyo, Mahamyang, Nan Bhyan, Thebawchaung, Satthwapanmyaing, Kywesar Inn, Yemein, Panmyaing in Mandalay Division, Shwekanbyu, Nattaung, Thabyeuchaung, Kyesi, Panmyaing, Yanmyoaung, Toegyi, Yebe, Nattaung, Myasein Hill, Myaleik Hill, in Bago Division, Yegyamo, Ngwedaung, Kaung Inn, Tabaw Chaung, Kannew Chaung, Naga Chaung, Shwekhan, Myebon, Aylear, Yanaungmyin, Bago District

Royal Orders of Burma, Vol.VII, (A.D.1811-1819), Dr. Than Tun (ed), Kyoto, The Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, 1988, p.442 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 1988)

Konbaungzet, 2004c, 36
Konbaungzet, 2004b, 59
Court Elephant, No.3, 32
Court Elephant, No.3, 1
Court Elephant, No.3, 62
Konbaungzet, 2004c, 157
Konbaungzet, 2004c, 252
Konbaungzet, 2004b, 369
Konbaungzet, 2004b, 218
Konbaungzet, 2004b, 321
Konbaungzet, 2004c, 159
Konbaungzet, 2004c, 163
Konbaungzet, 2004c, 338
Konbaungzet, 2004c, 218
Konbaungzet, 2004c, 74
Konbaungzet, 2004b, 1821
Court Elephant, No.3, 68
Konbaungzet, 2004c, 159
Konbaungzet, 2004c, 193
Konbaungzet, 2004c, 193
Konbaungzet, 2004b, 309
Konbaungzet, 2004c, 67
Konbaungzet, 2004c, 36
Than Tun, 1983, 352
Than Tun, 1983, 352
Than Tun, 1983, 352
Than Tun, 1983, 555
forest, Keyni Chaung, Myanlin, Swedein, Sinphyu taung taw, Indaw, in Shan State, Maingko, Kyungyi, Pannyo, Hsinchay taing, Pannyo, in Magway Division, Kyauksayit Chaung, Yanbe Chaung, Nathadaw, Khanaye, Yeyin, Pyanchaung, Kyaukmagyi, Yinmar, Dwedagun, Aikma, Yehtoo, Kyetyokam, Kunkyin, Mingaung,

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311 Than Tun, 1983, 695
312 Court Elephant, No.3, 1
313 Konbaungzet, 2004c, 452
314 Konbaungzet, 2004c, 59
315 Konbaungzet, 2004c, 67
316 Konbaungzet, 2004c, 142
317 Konbaungzet, 2004c, 43
318 Court Elephant, No.4, 33
319 Royal Orders of Burma, Vol.IV, (A.D.1782-1787), Dr. Than Tun (ed), Kyoto, The Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, 1986, p.442 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 1986a)
320 Than Tun, 1987, 554
321 Than Tun, 1989, 592
322 Konbaungzet, 2004, 318
323 Court Elephant, No.3, 68
324 Konbaungzet, 2004b, 318
325 Konbaungzet, 2004b, 219
326 Konbaungzet, 2004b, 324
327 Konbaungzet, 2004b, 396
328 Konbaungzet, 2004c, 229
329 Konbaungzet, 2004c, 251
331 Than Tun, 1987, 691
332 Than Tun, 1987, 449
333 Than Tun, 1987, 944
334 Than Tun, 1987, 821
335 Than Tun, 1987, 318
336 Than Tun, 1987, 330
We have seen that there were many elephant roaming forests in Magway and Bago Division where elephants were frequently caught up. In King Singu’s reign, elephant catching ground and elephant roaming forests were Kanni, Kyitaung, Nyaungshwe, Taunggwin, Taungngu, Yamethin and Hlaingtet Areas. In Badon’s reign, these areas greatly expanded to Kalay and Thaungthut in Upper Country and Bago in Lower Country.

Elephant catching groups caught wild elephants from various forests. They were one of royal service groups in the Konbaung Period. The set up of elephant catching groups was as follows:

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337 Konbaungzet, 2004b, 397
338 Konbaungzet, 2004c, 117
339 Konbaungzet, 2004c, 127
340 Court Elephant, No.3, 64
341 Sinsu, 1960, 34
342 Sinsu, 1960, 48
# Officer-in-charge of Elephanteers Groups

- **Elephant Catchers**
  - Aukma ahmudan
  - Aukmawun
  - Aukmasaye
  - Sinasiyin
  - Sinyantha
  - Sinhmu
  - Sinkè
  - Sinkyatha
  - Sinsantha

- **Elephant Tender**
  - Danakpala ahmudan
  - Danakpalawun
  - Danakpalasinwun saye
  - Sinasiyin

- **Elephant Trainer**
  - Sintaing khaung
  - Sintaing ahmudan

- **Elephant Herd**
  - Sinkè
  - Lunpyit ahmudan
  - Shwelun

- **Sinhmu**
  - Oozi, Naukpè, Hlankai

- **Kyonehmu**
  - Kyoneyantha

- **Sinthwetaukgyi**
  - Sinthwetaukgyi

- **Sinmu**
  - Sinyaing ahmudan

- **Yayee**
  - Sintaing pyawbwe

- **Kyonesaunk**
  - Sinkè

- **Sinkè**
  - Oozi, Konle, Naukpè
Sinwun was the administrator of all ahmudans related with royal elephant. The responsibility of sinwun (elephant minister) was to govern the aukma ahmudans, danakpala ahmudans and elephant trainner ahmudans. He was also responsible for the training of elephants, royal going out and elephantiers. Anyone who aspired to be an elephant minister should have the following qualifications; the knowledge of how to ride and good the elephant, the knowledge on the characteristics of elephant, the knowing of traditional belief in elephant cult and omen concerning with the elephant and the ability to choose the suitable elephant ahmudans.\(^{343}\) The word, sinwun seemed to appear in Nyaungyan Period\(^{344}\) and before that sinhmu (chief of elephant), sinkè (head of elephant) or sinhtain (keeper of elephant) were used\(^{345}\). In Konbaung Period, the word minister of bull elephant (sinpauk wun) was instead used\(^{346}\). Elephant ministers found in Konbaung Period were:

\(^{343}\)Shin Pannasami, *Yazathewaka Dipani*, Yangon, Hanthawaddy Press, 1901, p.344 (Henceforth: Pannasami, 1901)


\(^{345}\)“Yazabyuha Treatise”, Palmleaf MS, UCL, No. 7457, ku-reverse

\(^{346}\)Konbaungzet, 2004b, 115
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sinwuns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1764</td>
<td>Ottama Kyawhtin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1784</td>
<td>Zeya Karmani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1785</td>
<td>Minhla Minkyaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1806</td>
<td>Naymyo Sithu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1813</td>
<td>Theinkha Zeyathu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1819</td>
<td>Udein Sithu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1823</td>
<td>Minhla Thinkhaya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1837</td>
<td>MahaMinkyaw Minhtin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1837</td>
<td>Maha Thinkhayar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1838</td>
<td>Naymyo Thiri Kyawthu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1838</td>
<td>Shwetaung Zeya Yamaung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1842</td>
<td>Maha Minkhaung Kyawhtin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1852</td>
<td>Min Zeyakyawhtin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1870</td>
<td>Maha Mingaung Thiha Thura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1879</td>
<td>Maha Minhtin Mingaung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1879</td>
<td>Maha Minhla Mingaung</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: *Konbaungzet, 2004,a,b,c*

Under the elephant minister there were elephant catching *ahmudans*, elephant training *ahmudans* and elephant herd *ahmudans*. Elephant catching *ahmudans* were sub divided into *aukmaahmudans* and *danakpala ahmudans*, *aukma ahmudans* caught the wild elephants by trained cow elephants, wooing the
wild ones into elephant enclosure\(^\text{347}\). *Danakpala ahmudans* trained and tamed the wild elephants, caught up by *aukma ahmudans*. The two elephant groups had their *wuns* each, thus, there were *aukmawun* and *danakpala wun*, which were appointed by junior service appointment order\(^\text{348}\).

**Elephant catching ahmudans**

The word “*aukma*” means that a female elephant used to woo the wild elephants into the stockade, in elephant catching\(^\text{349}\). Therefore, elephant catchers by means of elephant enclosure were called *aukma ahmudans*. The *ahmudans* were needed to apply a kind of oily wax to the *aukma* cow elephant, for which the wild elephants were found hard to abandon, the *aukma* cow elephant. Such wild elephants were then goaded into the stockade, or by making them frightened and forced then into the stockade\(^\text{350}\). With 100 *aukma* cow elephants, *aukma ahmudan* (elephant catching *ahmudan*) were formed with *aukma wun*, *aukma saye*, *aukma asiayin*, *sphinx*, *sinkè*, and *sinyan*\(^\text{351}\). The rank and status of *aukma ahmudan* in order of precedence were as follows.

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\(^{347}\)Monywe Sayadaw, *Udeinna Pyo*, Mandalay, Hanthawaddy Pitaka Press, 1927, paragraph.32 (Henceforth: Ardissaranthi, 1927)

\(^{348}\)Maung Maung Tin, 1963, 69


\(^{351}\)Maung Maung Tin, 2005, 105
Table XIII
Rank, Status and Responsibility of *Aukma ahmudan*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Aukmawun</em></td>
<td>Oversee all works of <em>aukma ahmudans</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Aukma saye</em></td>
<td>Make plans for <em>aukma ahmudans</em> to go to deep forest, and make preparatory study on wild elephants caught.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sinasiayin</em></td>
<td>Supervise the work of <em>sinhmu</em> and <em>sinke</em>, and make report on the health of elephants and extraordinary events concerning with elephants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sinyantha</em></td>
<td>Under the order of <em>aukma saye</em> and <em>sinasiayin</em>, catch wild elephants in every deep forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sinhmu</em></td>
<td>By the order of this superiors, <em>sinhmu</em> led the 220 elephant riders of front (<em>oozi</em>), middle (<em>konle</em>) and rear (<em>naukpè</em>) in elephant catching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sinke</em></td>
<td>Under <em>sinhmu</em>, <em>sinke</em> lead all <em>sinoozies</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sinkyatha and Sinsantha</em></td>
<td>Find out good quality and god characteristic elephants where elephants roamed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Maung Maung Tin, 2005, 259-264

The word *aukmawun* was found mostly used in Konbaung Period. Before that the chief of *aukma ahmudans* was called *aukmahmu*352. *Aukmawun* got 100 kyats as salary353. But it seems that there did not have the precedence to appoint the *aukmawun* from the rank of *aukma ahmudans*. Any one from other group could become *aukmawun*. For instance, according to the royal order of King

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352“List of Treasury”, Palmleaf MS, U.C.L, No.131927
353Maung Maung Tin, 2005, 177
Badon issued on 11 July 1807, we come to know that Nankamkyewun (minister of royal architect) Shwetaung Naya, took of the vacant post of aukmawun\textsuperscript{354}. Badon also appointed one of his followers, Twyin Tin hman as the aukmawun with the title of Minhla Minkyaw on 25 May 1783\textsuperscript{355}. Likewise, Tinbaw appointed his family retainer Nga Tha Aung as aukmawun\textsuperscript{356}. By these evidences, we may say that the post of Aukmawun was the one, who was a yesman. By the royal order of King Badon, issued on 9 July 1801, we also know that aukmawun took charge of the duty of sinchebon musketeers minister\textsuperscript{357}. Aukmawuns in Konbaung Period were:

Table XIV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1784</td>
<td>Zaya Shwetaung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1807</td>
<td>Shwetaung Naya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1810</td>
<td>Thihabala Kyawhtin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1824</td>
<td>Mintin Minhla Yaza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1826</td>
<td>Maha Minhla Mintin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1842</td>
<td>Maha Mingaung Kyawhtin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1845</td>
<td>Naymyo Yehla Yegaung</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Konbaungzet, 2004, a,b,c

\textsuperscript{354}Than Tun, 1987, 441

\textsuperscript{355}“The Royal Order of Bodawpaya, issued on 25 May 1783”, Parabaik M.S, U.C.L, No. 140608

\textsuperscript{356}“List of Family Retainers”, Parabaik, MS, N.L, No. 709

\textsuperscript{357}“Royal Orders of King Badon, issued on 18 August 1807”, Palmleaf MS, U.C.L, No.360136
Rules to be followed in catching elephant

_Aukma ahmudans_ had to go out elephant catching from Tazaungmon to the time before the Buddhist lent, almost a total of eight months a year. By tradition, the period of Buddhist lent was a retreating season for _aukma ahmudans_. During the lent, _aukma_ cow elephants were grazed at the grazing grounds located near or at the cultivation lands or resident lands of _aukma ahmudan_ villages. As soon as the Buddhist lent end, heads of _aukma_ cow elephants were washed and only after propitiation of thirty seven _nats_ such as _Udeinna, Mahapeinnè, Gazanahta Paramethurein_ and so on, groups of _aukma ahmudans_ were sent out for elephant catching. _Shweminbon Sindaw Mawkun_ described about the elephant catching in the reign of King Singu. Concerning with elephant catching, King Badon was found issued royal order to observe the traditional time to go to forest and other plans and arrangements. By the royal order, proclaimed on 14 November 1707, _aukma_ cow elephants were to be washed their heads before going out to the forest. When in going out on elephant catching, _aukma ahmudans_ themselves and their family members were needed to observe a set of same rules. There

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358 *Sinsu, 1960*, 34

359 *Than Tun, 1986a*, 654

360 (a) Things to be abstained by elephant catchers, _Parabaik_ MS, Historical Research Department, No.15

(b) Not to whack with an open palm over the crook of the elbow of the other arm folded across one's chest (Show of Challenge or Jubilation)

Not to eat the flesh, bitten by tiger;

Not to eat in the pot;

Not to put ladle on the pot or put in the pot,

Not to apply the oil to hair;

Not to dress shamefully

Not to urinate from the back of elephant

Not to utter abusive words

361 (a) “Things to be abstained by elephant catchers”, _Parabaik_ MS, Historical Research Department, No.15

(b) Not to wash head
also were a set of rules to be followed by the villages where *aukma ahmudans* lived\(^{362}\).

By the examination of these rules, we may deduce that these rules were set out in order to be polite in their actions and activities of *aukma ahmudans*, for the elephant was regarded as an auspicious animals. These rules represent both superstition and to make *aukma ahmudans* free of anxiety and worry. Other rules to be followed by *aukma ahmudans* were not to catch the cow elephant that brought in the *aukma* group, not to take out elephant tusks by killing wild elephants, to abstain from making rope out of elephant hide, and not to carry the flesh of the elephant on its back. The elephant enclosure should be made clean and within some distance of it, there should not be lives taking of animals. One superstition was the belief that, should there be seen the foot print of buffalo, cow, goat and hog, there the elephant could catch illness or accidentally die. These rules in fact were dos and don’ts of those days, to be followed by *aukma ahmudans* and it, should there be non observance of these, the popular belief was both *aukma ahmudans* and the elephants would perish\(^{363}\).

**Elephant catching groups**

In order that the number of elephants be increased, *aukma ahmudans* and *aukma* groups were formed since King Nyaungyan's reign. Elephant catching groups were organized based on region, dividing them into Inwa elephant catching

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\(^{362}\) The fetter was to put on the elephant fetter post since the time of going out into the forest and kept it until the *aukma* group returned. Only after that, the fetter should take down. Before the fetter was pulled down, whatever crimes should the *aukma ahmudans* commit, no one should tough and pull down the fetter and for the *ahmudan*, it should ask to his superior.

\(^{363}\) U Htun Yi, *Minhmudan Sin* (Elephant the Royal Serviceman), pp.6-7 (Henceforth: Royal Elephant)
group, Salin elephant catching group and Pyay elephant catching group. Each group had small sub divided groups, Inwa that of nine sub divided groups, Salin that of seven small sub divided groups and Pyay those of four small groups. These small groups had their own name each.\(^{364}\)

The nine small groups of Inwa were Kanbanithit, Kambanihaung, Gazathura, Zigon, Popphanaga, Yadanasaè, Longshi, Thuyehtanlatt and Thuyehtanthit. The seven small groups of Salin were Pandawya, Pyungaza, Bayathuya, Hmawat, Lettawya, Wayon Mawgyi and Wayon Mawthint. Those of the four small groups of Pyay were Maw Teza, Mohnyin, Lebwethit and Lebwehaung. Besides, there was a sinkyatha group, whose locality we did not know for sure. It was learnt that there were a total of twenty one elephant catching groups in the reigns of Nyaungyan Kings. The number of these elephant catching groups grew into twenty eight in the reign of King Sagaing in Konbaung Period. The added elephant catching groups were Saku, Zawtai, Taungngu, Letya, Theinzi, Hamti, Hamlyet and Aukpyi\(^{365}\) (Lower Country). In naming these elephant catching groups, the usual practice, we know, was calling them after their locality or after the title of the elephant.

Each aukma group had to present the king about three elephants at the end of each elephant catching season. Aukma ahmudans had to take great care in keeping aukma elephant groups. In catching elephant, each elephant catching group could go on catching trip separately at the same time, or each catching group could go on one after another. Aukma ahmudans and their head and chief, usually got reward and gift, bestowed on them by the king, if their captured elephants were of good characteristics. If it was aukmasaye (clerk), the reward

\(^{364}\)Toe Hla, “Nyaungyan Khit Sinthinmya”, (Elephant Groups in Nyaungyan Period) Ngwetayi, No.132, June, 1971, pp.48-51 (Henceforth: Toe Hla, 1971)

\(^{365}\)Than Tun, 1983, 348
usually happened to be one paso with dyed broad checkered pattern, the title and a village in fief. Sinhmu (elephant chief) would be rewarded with a silver cup of ticals and one paso with dyed broad checkered pattern, while those of elephant head (sinkè) with a cloth of ywetni each and ahmudans with indigo colored thin silk paso each.\footnote{Toe Hla, 1971, 50}

**The privileges of elephant catching ahmudans**

We find that aukma ahmudans, enjoyed special privileges than other ahmudan groups, as “they served elephant the big weapon, without regard of their lives, day and night.\footnote{(a)The creditor could not ask the debtor aukma ahmudan for his debt forcefully, on account of being indebtedness
(b)Should the aukma ahmudan be found guilty of any crime, no one shall take him in rope fastened
(c)Enjoyed exemption of tax, porter and hard labour
(d)Exemption from giving leather, cotton, quince, dammer bee product, gun powder and lead
(e)Exemption from corvee, such as digging moat, city construction and army construction
(f)Exemption from giving dues at toll gate, ferry, port, market, seasonal fair, and brokerage and so on
(g)No need to give court fee
(h) No need to take oath in any court case and
(i) Exemption to be taken as slave}"

Aukma ahmudans were also given cultivation land, resident land and land to share, these lands were known as chunmye, literally meaning “the land of goad”, and in extended meaning, it implied the land owned by master of goad, i.e, elephantmen. The granting of land to the elephant men was called “land giving by the opening of a goad” or “land giving by the opening of nine goads”. It is learnt...
that such granting of land to elephant men, began in A.D.1637. The first allotted
land was that of Yemadaing and the second was those of Nyaungpuzaw,
Pandawbyin and Ngapyawdaw, and those of the third allotted land were Yesagyo,
Thaphanbin and Paukpinsauk, and the fourth giving lands were Pakhangyi and
Nyaungbinzauk Village. Lands allotted to aukma ahmudan groups were as
follows.

### Table XV

**List of Land Granted to Aukma Ahmudans**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Aukma</th>
<th>Mother Unit</th>
<th>Residence Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wayonmawthit</td>
<td>Salin</td>
<td>Kalamémyinshit sene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinkyather asu</td>
<td>Salin</td>
<td>Kyankumyint Taik (Amyint)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gazethura, Thuyehtanthit</td>
<td>Salin</td>
<td>Chaung U</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pandaw, Mawack</td>
<td>Inwa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lettawyä</td>
<td>Salin</td>
<td>Saku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chumkozin</td>
<td>Salin</td>
<td>Sadon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebwethit, Lebewhaung</td>
<td>Pyay</td>
<td>Daze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinkyatha</td>
<td>Pyay</td>
<td>Petpandaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayathura</td>
<td>Salin</td>
<td>Pin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pyungaza, Wayonmawgyi</td>
<td>Salin</td>
<td>Phaunglin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayathura,</td>
<td>Aslin</td>
<td>Maugyi Village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayonmawthit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kambanithit</td>
<td>Inwa</td>
<td>Yemadaing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nine groups aukma member</td>
<td>Inwa</td>
<td>Lezi Village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chunkoizin</td>
<td>Inwa</td>
<td>Thetke Chaung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebwethit, Lebewhaung</td>
<td>Pyay</td>
<td>Thitseint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chunkoizin</td>
<td>Pyay</td>
<td>Halin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Toe Hla, 1971, 50-51

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368 Toe Hla, 1971, 50-51
Lands allotted to *aukma* groups and *aukma ahmudans* were found to be the ones, situated nearest to their localities. Wherever their allotted lands be located, the headquarters of *aukma* groups were those of Inwa, Salin and Pyay. Members of Inwa nine *aukma* groups had to serve at the Inwa elephant enclosure, and likewise, those of seven Salin at the Salin elephant enclosure and the four Pyay at the Pyay elephant enclosure. While in elephant catching trip, chiefs and head at the elephant catching land, had to give every assistance and help they can, to the *aukma ahmudans*. The Provincial Town Governor and Regimental Officers had to give elephant fodder and one basket of rice per mahout (*oozi*) per month. If an elephant was caught, these officers had to reward *aukma ahmudans* with chicken, hog, white coarse cloth and red coarse cloth. They were needed to place men on watch duty on the elephant caught, in order not to run away\(^{369}\).

Headman of elephant administered *aukma ahmudan* villages by hereditary right. Sometime, it was found that inefficient headman of elephant had to transfer his post to another person, on account of incompetency to his rank. According to 1145 Inquest, the post of headman of elephant, Nga Kyaw was succeeded by his son Udein Thamanta, who in old age transferred his post to sons Nga Yauk and Nga Tet by a deed of transfer. The transfer of the post was checked with the 45 (1783) Inquest, deposited in the treasury, whether these people were hereditary or not, and only after that, the transfer was approved\(^{370}\). In such appointment, Poppagaing Village, elephant headman had to take responsibility. It means that elephant headman did not like the intervention of towns and village headman, in their elephant keeping ground. Sometimes, as other towns and village headmen infringed the work of *aukmawun*, there broke out the administrative dispute.

\(^{369}\)“Shwedaik Sayin”, (List of Treasury), Palmleaf MS, U.C.L, No.131927

\(^{370}\)The Inquest of Elephant *Ahmudans* in Yaw Area”, Parabaik MS, U.C.L, No. 12677
Aukma ahmudans obeyed only to the order of aukmawun. In the case of the desertion of aukma ahmudans, there sometimes, occurred disputes over it. In A.D. 1872 aukma ahmudans of Nga Myat San, Nga Shwe Mya and their family members, totaling over twenty persons, run away from their aukma group, who were accepted by Laungshi Town Headman. Over it the dispute broke out and the case went to the ear of King Sagaing, who ordered aukma ahmudans to return to the aukmawun. In April 1824, Laungshi Town Headman demanded about 30 persons for the anti-British resistance. Aukma ahmudans did not heed the demand, as it was not the arrangement of aukmawun, and aukmasaye.

Elephant ahmudans did serve, not only to get the elephants, but also in the campaigns when the country faced the internal and external threat. When there waged Manipuri campaign, aukma ahmudans with their aukma elephants took part in the campaign. When Myingun Myinkondaing Rebellion broke out in A.D. 1866, King Mindon issued a royal order on 28 September 1873, that dictated that elephant ahmudans in Poppagaing Village shall obey the order of Wunshindaw Yenangyaung and Ahmyintwun Bohmu Mingyi. When Manipurese revolted in A.D. 1820, Myanmar King had to send an expedition to Manipur, in that aukma ahmudans had to serve in the expedition.

Though aukma ahmudans had to serve in military campaigns in emergency, as they were important in acquiring elephant the big weapon, kings usually had

373“Manipurese Affair”, Parabaik Ms, U.C.L, No.139317
374Dr. Toe Hla, Chindwin Myitha Muayar, Daw Chi, Monywa Offset, Yangon, 1995, p.149 (Henceforth: Toe Hla, 1995)
kept an eye on the *aukma* groups, and took care not to decrease the strength of *aukma* groups. Sometimes, they had filled up them. In A.D. 1533 as the *aukma* chiefs Gaza Thirikhwa and Gazathu supplicated to the king that, their nine *aukma* groups had lost the strength of manpower, King Thalun had filled about seventy persons\(^{376}\) of southern men of Sittaung to Hanthawaddy Nine *aukma* groups, by issuing a royal order on 13 October 1634\(^{377}\). Also in 1369, King Thalun filled up Cheingmains and men from Kengrum and Kengthi to *aukma ahmudan* groups, as these groups became dwindled their manpower\(^{378}\). All these shows the deep regard took on the part of kings for *aukma ahmudans*.

Dues for toll gate, ferry port, market and so on, were collected by elephant chief, elephant headman and elephant head, in their *aukma* region and the sum was halved, one of which was shared by respective *wun* and chief\(^{379}\). *Ya* cultivators had to pay two *kyats* for a plot of *ya* land, as land tax one kyat for water tax, one basket of paddy for Land Transfer Officer, and those of *le* cultivator about ten baskets of paddy for a produce of 100 paddy baskets as tax\(^{380}\).

**Danakpala ahmudans (Elephant catchers)**

Like *aukma ahmudans*, *danakpala ahmudans* were also responsible to catch elephants. Their primary duty was to catch the body elephants, born out of the union of *aukma* cow elephants and the wild elephants. When the baby elephant came of age, they were caught by lassoe method. There were about thirty

\(^{376}\)Maung Maung Hla Myint, 1990, 63

\(^{377}\)“List of Treasury”, Palmleaf MS, U.C.L, No.131927


\(^{379}\)Zabudipa Usaungkyan, J.S. Furnival and U Pe Mg Tin (ed), Yangon, Sarpay Beikman, 1960, p.61 (Henceforth: Zabudipa , 1960)

\(^{380}\)“Aukma Asupay Upade Sardan”, *Parabaiks* MS, U.C.L, 45194
Danakpala ahmudans. There were thirty strong tukers with mahouts, rear rider, lancers and lassothrowers. In these danakpala ahmudans were included the rope twisters, who used only hides obtained from seven different kinds of animals, such as, yak, black panther, gaur, sambur, bear, water buffalo and oxen. The hides properly cured, were all plaited together into strands of fine strong ropes.

In actual catching, a small howdah was put on the back of the elephant in which was placed, a coil of shaw rope with a noose. In this method, the highly trained tamed cow elephants were used, which were known kumchee or kumkie, both terms derived from Hindi. One rider sits astride her shoulders, and for balance, hold on the rope that goes under and round the animal's chest. The other sits across the base of the tail. Danakpala ahmudans went to the forest at the end monsoon. When they found out a herd of wild elephant, good characteristic elephant was to be forced out from the herd by encircling with kumchee elephants. If the wild one went away, the lasso thrower threw the rope to it, to be caught in the noose. In this way, wild elephants were caught by lassoing.

The hierarchy of danakpala ahmudans

The rank and status hierarchy of danakpala ahmudans were as follows:

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381 Court Elephant, No.4, 13

382(a) U Toke Gale, Burmese Timber Elephant, Trade Corporation 9, Yangon, 1974, p.98 (Henceforth: Toke Gale, 1974)

(b) Court Elephant, No.4,15

383(a) Court Elephant, No.4,13

(b) Toke Gale, 1974,98-103
Table XVI

Rank, Status and Responsibility of *Danakpala Ahmudan*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Damakpalawun</em></td>
<td>To govern and manage all activities of <em>danakpala ahmudans</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Danakpalasaye</em></td>
<td>Takes note down and execute the order of <em>danakpala wun</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sinhmu</em></td>
<td>Do practical elephant catching, each elephant chief had to lead a <em>danakpala</em> group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Oozi, Naukpè, Hlankai</em></td>
<td>Keeping up the tuskers, by the order of elephant chief and elephant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Lunpyit ahmudan</em></td>
<td>Catch the wild elephant by lassoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Shwelun</em></td>
<td>Make rope to use in lassoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Maung Maung Tin, 2005, 206-266

**Danakpala elephant groups**

*Danakpala* elephant groups were found being formed in 1369 A.D. But in Konbaung Period, *danakpala* groups that caught elephants by lasso method were:

- Zeyawady and Taungngu *Danakpala* Group
- Pyay and Taungngu *Danakpala* Group
- Magway and Taungngu *Danakpala* Group
- Myitche Village and Taungngu *Danakpala* Group
- Myedè and Taungngu *Danakpala* Group
- Mottama Town and Taungngu *Danakpala* Group

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384“Nyaungyan Period Royal Orders”, Palmleaf MS, U.C.L, No.366801
385Than Tun, 1986a, 544
386Than Tun, 1986b, 708
387Than Tun, 1986a, 566
388Than Tun, 1986b, 566
389Than Tun, 1988, 420
390“The 46 Inquest of Mottama”, *Parabaik* MS, NL,No.473
Yamethin and Taungngu Danakpala Group\textsuperscript{391} Shwekyin and Taungngu Danakpala Group\textsuperscript{392} and Hanthawaddy and Taungngu Danakpala Group\textsuperscript{393}.

Though the number of danakpala groups and their member were not much, like that of aukma ahmudans and groups, they were required to present the tamed elephants of more than four cubits height to the king once a year. There were about fifteen danakpala elephants in Magway Danakpala Group who were obliged to present about fifteen elephants of good characteristic.

Like aukma and danakpala ahmudans, maulawa thonze khumnakyo sinasutha (elephant ahmudans with seven ropes) had to present ten tamed elephants to the king, once three years\textsuperscript{394}. As aukma and danakpala ahmudans were the ones who had to catch the royal service elephant all the year round, they were exempted from dues and twelve kinds of excise. In formation of elephant catching groups, Myanmar were not the only race, but with other races and war captives, who were experts and skilled in the art of elephant, these elephant catching groups were formed, such as the Kayin\textsuperscript{395}, Kengyung\textsuperscript{396}, Kengthi\textsuperscript{397}, Chienmaiams\textsuperscript{398}, Mon\textsuperscript{399}, Shan and Lawa\textsuperscript{400}. Any one who were being put into the elephant catching groups, were found to be skilled in the art of elephant.

\textsuperscript{391}"The Royal Order of King Mindon, issued in May 1873"
\textsuperscript{392}Than Tun, 1986a, 544
\textsuperscript{393}"Sinbyushin Order", Palmleaf MS, NL,No.285, ka-reverse
\textsuperscript{394}"The 46 Inquest of Mottama", Parabaik MS, NL No. 743
\textsuperscript{395}Konbaungzet, 2004a, 73
\textsuperscript{396}Than Tun, 1983, 348
\textsuperscript{397}Than Tun, 1983, 348
\textsuperscript{398}Than Tun, 1983, 348
\textsuperscript{399}Than Tun, 1986a, 576
\textsuperscript{400}Than Tun, 1986b, 742
The Privileges of *danakpala ahmudans*

*Danakpala ahmudans* also were granted usual cultivation land, resident land and land to share. They also enjoyed the privileges of being given the provisions and supplies by their respective administrative areas. According to the Inquest of Pyay, it was learnt that Mindon Town had to give canes to make fetter and elephant collars. Lokewise, Pogaung boatmen of Pyay had to give *danakpala ahmudans* the canes from West Yoma to make fetters. Shwedaung Town had to give food provisions to elephant *ahmudans*\(^\text{401}\).

Also by the Inquest of Magway *Danakpala Ahmudans*, we come to know that, *danakpala ahmudans* were given cultivation land, resident land and land to share. Towns of Wetmasut, Taunggwin, Myingun and Pahtanago had to provide the shed for elephant, the ride to fasten, the plank, ripe tamarind, palm sugar and canes. Yenangyaung Town had to give a pot of each oil to each elephant, while the granary in Salin had to rig out two baskets of paddy per elephant *ahmudan*\(^\text{402}\). *Danakpala ahmudans* also were exempted from due at toll gate, ferry, port, market, brokerages and so on. It there occurred the death of a *danakpala* elephant, *ahmudans* had to present the tusks of the dead one to the officials, such as elephant minister and elephant clerk\(^\text{403}\).

**Elephant training by enclosure**

Wild elephants caught by *aukma* and *danakpala ahmudans* were tamed and trained by stockade method. The stockade was built at a place where plenty water could available all the season, or at a place which was not too far from the capital, or at a place located in a direction which was in conformity with the day and date of the king. At the head of the stockade, leafy big trees should be planted to be

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\(^{401}\)“The Pyay Sittan”, *Parabaik* MS, UHRC, No.3450

\(^{402}\)Court Elephant, No.4, 13

\(^{403}\)Court Elephant, No.4, 13
look like the deep forest\textsuperscript{404}. In Shwebo's reign as the stockade built in the north of Amarapura was not in accord with birth day of the king, new stockade was rebuilt in the south of the city according to the advice of the learned persons\textsuperscript{405}. Method of capturing elephants varied according to the limitations of the terrain. The most common method was coralling, the capture of small numbers of elephant in stockades. The corral would consist of a fenced cul-de-sac constructed from timber, firmly planted into the ground. When the elephants were close enough, the elephants, driving them into it. The elephant stockade had a door at the end of a pathway flanked by trees, tricking the elephant into thinking that it was still in the woods. After the door was shut and the females were removed, elephant trainers would use canes to prick the elephant and force him into one of several long and narrow halls connected to the stockade. The narrowness of the hall prevented the elephant from turning around. In some cases, the trainers, standing above in the loft would bind the immobilized elephant with rope, or approach it with snares and bind its feet. The elephant was them left in this state with no food or water for four or five days. At the end of this period, food and water would be supplied, a female elephant would be provided, the elephant was united, and in eight days he is became tame\textsuperscript{406}.

The training of wild elephants caught by \textit{aukma} and \textit{danakpala ahmudans}, was the responsibility of enclosure \textit{ahmudans}. Their rank and status hierarchy could be described as follow:

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{404}\textit{Court Elephant, No.4,24}
\end{flushleft}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{405}U Teikkha dhamma lankara and Dr. Than Tun, \textit{Myanma Yetswe Thamaing} (History of Myanmar Chronology Konbaung Period), Yangon, Ingyin U Press, 2005, p.223(Henceforth: Chronology, 2005)
\end{flushleft}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{406}Charney ,2004, 141-142
\end{flushleft}
Table XVII
Rank, Status and Responsibility of Elephant Trainers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Kyonehmu</em></td>
<td>Responsible to make the wild ones tamed, and governed all enclosure <em>ahmudans</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Yayee</em></td>
<td><em>Pamaw, Pamawnat, Pamaw U</em> Under the command of enclosure chief and <em>Yayee</em> head, <em>Yayee</em> had to train the elephant to do back and forth, and to lift up and down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sinpaik</em></td>
<td>Manage and administer all enclosure <em>ahmudans</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Kyoneyantha</em></td>
<td>When the elephant became jaded due to repeated play off, <em>kyoneyantha</em> drove the wild elephant into one arm of the stockade by luring it with a cow elephant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Kyonesaunk</em></td>
<td>Enclosure watchmen fastened both legs and hind legs and the animal was held up in an up right position by means of three or four strands of rope that go under and around the stomach, and the ends made fast to a stout beam above the animal. The beam was kept parallel to the spine of the elephant. Then the elephant was lift of from the ground. By doing so, the wild elephant was made tamed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Maung Maung Tin, 2005, 84,256-258
Training the elephant

Cesare Fedrici (Caesar Frederick), the Italian merchant of Venice, who arrived the court of Bago in 16th century Myanmar, had recorded the art of corralling and training what observed at Bago. There were an array of phases of selection of a war elephant in the Myanmar army. The selection of war elephant was based on the elephants manner of movement, the abeyance of instruction, the degree of cleverness, field applicability and courage. War elephants were needed to test whether they were easily frightened or not by the roaring of tiger, or by displaying the effigy of tigers, by the noise of musical instruments, war gongs, and war drums, by the shouting of soldiers, by the bang of fire crackers, and by the beat of various shields. Then, the elephant was given additional training of military advance, attack, retreat and fighting the enemies\(^{407}\).

In the month of Nadaw, the Equestrian Festival was held, from which heroes of elephant, horse, bow and shields came out. To take part in the festival, respective ahmudans had to train their horse and elephant. As to the elephanteers, they needed to train their elephants to be bearable the attack with sword and spear. Therefore, we can understand that the elephant festival was a kind of war game for the elephantry\(^{408}\).

Elephant ahmudans

To keep and manage the tamed elephants, minister of elephants and ahmudans for elephant keeping grounds were appointed. The rank and status hierarchy of minister of elephant and elephanteers were as follow:


Table XVIII

Rank, Status and Responsibility of Elephant Ahmudans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Sinwun</em></td>
<td>To govern <em>aukma ahmudans</em>, <em>danakpala ahmudans</em> and enclosure <em>ahmudans</em>; to command the elephantry; to manage elephant training and royal procession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sinwundauk</em></td>
<td>On behalf of elephant minister, govern and manage elephanteers in military and in taking possession of the city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sinlakkhanaphat</em></td>
<td>By examining the characteristics of the caught elephant, determined the kind and the usefulness of elephant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sinsachi</em></td>
<td>Execute the orders of elephant minister and assistant minister of elephant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sinasiayin</em></td>
<td>Checked the health of elephant, such as musth and report it to elephant clerk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sinsaythamar</em></td>
<td>Treat the elephant which became ill</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Maung Maung, 2005, 258-259

*Court Elephant, No.4, 51*

Fodder grass for elephant was to be given by *sintaing ahmudan* (elephant fodder grass suppliers). There were two fodder grass suppliers, the north fodder grass suppliers and the south fodder grass suppliers\(^{409}\). Under the head of fodder grass suppliers, there were fodder grass collectors, who were the lowest in status and rank in the elephantry. Here in the elephantry, we have seen the paradox of social status. To be appointed, the “master of elephants” was a high honour, but some of those under his command were not looked upon favourably. Ironically,

\(^{409}\) Maung Maung Tin, 2005, 256
given the elephant's importance to the court and army, the responsibility of feeding the royal elephants was viewed as an especially degrading task in the elephantry and in the society as a whole. Men not deemed worthy of respect were placed under the grooms in the elephant stables and one who was thus relegated to life in these stables was regarded as being of extremely low status\(^{410}\). Men mostly sent to the elephant stables for fodder and head grooms were royally punished culprits\(^{411}\), debt slaves\(^{412}\), irresponsible persons\(^{413}\), adulterers\(^{414}\) and man of abusive words\(^{415}\). Some of them had to do elephant stable groom works\(^{416}\). It is thought that when the king did not want someone to be punished with capital punishment, such peoples were sent to the elephant stables. These peoples had to carry out the cleaning works in the elephant stables on a daily basis, removing elephant excreta and food residue\(^{417}\).

**Elephant organization ground ahmudans**

There also were elephant grazing ground *ahmudans* in provincial areas. Their rank and status in hierarchical order can be described as below:

\(^{410}\)Charney, 2004, 148

\(^{411}\)Than Tun, 1986b, 635

\(^{412}\)Than Tun, 1986a, 611

\(^{413}\)“The Royal Orders in Nyaungyan Period”, Palmleaf MS, U.C.L, No.366801, kaw-reverse

\(^{414}\)“The Royal Order of King Badon, passed on 7 September 1789, The Royal Orders of Sinbyushin”, Palmleaf MS, NL.No.285, ke-reverse

\(^{415}\)“The Royal Order of King Bodawpaya, issued on 3 August 1782, The Royal Orders in the reign of Bodawpaya”, *Parabaik* M.S, U.C.L, No. 140606

\(^{416}\)“The Royal Order of King Badon, issued on 30 May 1799”, The Royal Order of King Badon, *Parabaik* M.S, U.C.L, No. 140602

\(^{417}\)Maung Maung Tin, 2005, 266
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Sinhmu</em></td>
<td>Govern and manage on elephant head, mahout, middle rider, rear rider and lancer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sinthwethaukgyi</em></td>
<td>Administer the elephant grazing ground under elephant chief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sinsaw, Sinsaye</em></td>
<td>Implement the administration and management works of elephant chief and elephant bloodbond brotherhood concerning the elephant grazing ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sinkè</em></td>
<td>Obeying the order of elephant chief, he lead all the mahouts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Oozi, Konlè, Naukpè</em></td>
<td>Under elephant clerk, do the works concerning with the elephant grazing ground</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Maung Maung Tin, 2005, 259,266

*Court Elephant, No.4,52*

**Sinmin wun and ahmudans**

In Konbaung Period, there were *sinminwun* and *ahmudans* for the white elephant. Though Myanmar kings, throughout history, adopted the title of Lord of White Elephant, they did not assign separate peoples to white elephant. This post was created only in the time of King Badon, who held a belief that, white elephant he possessed were more glorious than other white elephants possessed by other kings and what he possessed were genuine white elephant. Therefore, when, in 1805, a cow white elephant called “*Shin Hnin Nwe*” appeared, the king took possession of her by bestowing a title “*Thiri Mala Maha Subaddna*”, to whom to
attend, a *sinminwun* was appointed\textsuperscript{418}. There also appeared a bull white elephant in 1806, upon whom; the king conferred the title of “Nirvana Pissaya Naga Yaza”. As an act of award to the white elephant, the king appointed a *sinmin wun* and *ahmudans*, which later kings went on keep the tradition.

Masters elephant king, as far as we can find out in Konbaung Period, were

### Table XX

**List of Sinmin Wuns in Konbaung Period**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name of master of elephant king</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1806</td>
<td>Maha Minhla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D.1813</td>
<td>Shwetaung Shwekyaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 1818</td>
<td>Nemyo Minhla Sithu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D.1819</td>
<td>Theinkha Zeyathu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D.1819</td>
<td>Nemyo Minkyaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D.1837</td>
<td>Maha Minhla Thinkhaya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D.1837</td>
<td>Nawyhta Pyanchi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D.1842</td>
<td>Maha Minhla Minkyaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D.1850</td>
<td>Maha Kyawhtin Tarapya</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: *Konbaungzet, 2004b*

The rank and status hierarchy of master of elephant king and *ahmudans* were as follow:

\textsuperscript{418}The Funeral Record of *Shin Hnin Nwe*, Palmleaf MS, NL.,No. 2632
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sinminwun</td>
<td>Govern all <em>ahmudans</em> assigned to white elephant, manage all matters concerning with white elephant and keep up slaves, villages, paraphernalia and gold and silver materials awarded to the elephant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinminwundauk</td>
<td>Assist the master of elephant king in his work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proclaimed the orders of <em>Hluttaw</em> or Privy Council to master of elephant king and assistant master of elephant king</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinminsayegyi</td>
<td>Execute the orders of master, assistant master and liaison of elephant king</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinminnauktawhtaing</td>
<td>Expert elephant driver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supply the fresh and lush grass to the white elephants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinminpyawbwe</td>
<td>Carry out the cleaning works of elephant stables, removing all kinds of waste and refuse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Maung Maung Tin, 2005, 218,256,264-265
**Elephant grazing ground**

Elephants were important in the glorification of kings as well as in military campaigns till in the early Konbaung Period. Therefore, elephanteers had enjoyed privileges than other servicemen groups. Elephanteers were given salary, paddy or cultivation lands. Besides, separate grazing grounds were allotted to elephants. In Bodawpaya's reign, the king gave separate grazing grounds to elephant kings and court elephants by building stables in Mingun Areas.

**Table XXII**

**Elephant Keeping Grounds in Badon's Reign**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Elephant Grazing Ground</th>
<th>Area extent</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 July 1787</td>
<td>Inwa</td>
<td>Myitnge in east, Myittha in south, Myitthapauk in west, Ayeyarwady in north</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 December 1787</td>
<td>Arlaung Island</td>
<td>Arlaung</td>
<td>Yamethin and Mottama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 January 1788</td>
<td>Kyaukse, Thamantalin</td>
<td>Kyaukse</td>
<td>Chiangmai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 June 1801</td>
<td>Thabyehla Village</td>
<td>Kyawsitaik, Myenatha Town</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Maung Maung Tin, 2005, 259,266

*Court Elephant, No.4, 52*
In allotting grazing grounds, these grounds were divided into areas which were provided to each kind of elephant. In Bagyidaw's reign, the king allotted fifty pè to each of thirteen best young bull elephants, thirty pè to each of seven selected fighter elephants, and twenty nine pè to each of three royal house cow elephant and six royal cow elephants, totaling 1084 pè of grazing ground\textsuperscript{419}. In allotting grazing grounds, it was done only for the white elephant and palace elephants. No other elephants were allotted such separate grazing grounds.

**Cultivation lands for elephanteers**

Elephanteers were given titles, insignias, salaries and cultivation lands according to their rank. In elephanteers, there were armed ahmudans and memial labourers. All elephantrymen were included in armed ahmudans. In memial labourers, were included aukma ahmudans, danakpala ahmudans, elephant fodder suppliers, mahout and rear riders, fodder collectors and elephant stable grooms\textsuperscript{420}.

\textsuperscript{419}Court Elephant, No.3, 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Crop Cultivated</th>
<th>Total (in Pè)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kaukkyi</td>
<td>Mayin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1838</td>
<td>Tedaw Village</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ngapyet Village</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chanthamarnge Village</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1838</td>
<td>Chanthamargyi Village</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pyiba Village</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chin Village</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monnge Village</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mekkhaya Village</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sabatheik Village</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saingmalam Village</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Myinhti Village</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mathè Village</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Panthun Village</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yinti two Villages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theegaung Village</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Naungsaing Village</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Khanti</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Crop Cultivated</td>
<td>Total (in Pè)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kaukkyi</td>
<td>Mayin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1859</td>
<td>Kinda Weir</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nganaingthi Weir</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pyaungbya Weir</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kyinè Weir</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nadet Weir</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>Tawdwins three Villages</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tawdwins three Villages</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shindawgon North Village</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shindawgonywathit Village</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wagingon Village</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shindawgon South Village</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chaunggyiwa Village</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chaunggyiwa Village</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aungpinle Village</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The List on the Five Districts, Mya Pu Kyaung *Parabaik* MS, U

List of *Thwethauk* in the miscellaneous list of Talok Town, *Parabaik* MS, UCL, No.8993
**Table XXIV**

**List of Land Granted Land including Elephanteers (Sugyan)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Elephanteers</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Total (pè)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 February 1638</td>
<td>Menial labourers</td>
<td>Nanwingaing Village</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yekyo Village</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kantu Village</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yepadaing Village</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kangyo Village</td>
<td>513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Myin eighty Village</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Malumdin Village</td>
<td>550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kalamye Village</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kyaukyit Village</td>
<td>770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kinywa Village</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kantu Village</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thit seik Village</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ma U Sindet Village</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wanbyi Village</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chaung U Village</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lezin Village</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ngakhom Village</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Aungtha Village</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sincheya kyun Village</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sadom Village</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yawasaingkhe Village</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Poppadaing Village</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lebyu Village</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chaungku Village</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pegin Village</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sarpaw Village</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thedaw Village</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Arlaungkyun Village</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hangyiphya Village</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Singya Village</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Taw Village</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>7000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Toe Hla, *1995, 147*
In grant Arlaungkyuning cultivation lands to armed *ahmudans*, bloodbond brotherhoods were given twenty *pè* each, that of elephant rider ten *pè* each, and *ahmudans* five *pè* each\(^{421}\). In armed *ahmudans*, the highest land given was about seven *pè* and two *seit*, the middle extent of land about three *pè* and one *seit*, and those of the lowest extent of land given was one *pè* and one *seit*. By these classes of land given to elephanteers, there were a total of over 7000 *pè* of lands granted to all *ahmudans* of elephantry men\(^{422}\). Though menial labourers of elephanteers had to do hard work, lands allotted to them were not much about that of armed *ahmudans*. Besides, the class of land also was interior. Armed *ahmudans* were given mainly irrigation lands, which were mostly located near the royal capital, whereas those of elephant catchers were given lands in Sagaing and Magway Division primarily.

**Titles conferred upon elephantry men**

Not only lands to cultivate, reside and share, elephant *ahmudans* were also given titles and insignias, according to their rank and position. Titles given to elephant *ahmudans* were the title of *Nemyo* to assistant masters of elephant, the title of *Nawrahta* to elephant clerks, the title of *Gaza* to those of elephant chiefs, elephantrymen, mahouts, and rear riders, and the title of *Udein* to expert elephant riders\(^{423}\). The titles granted to elephant *ahmudans* in Konbaung Period, as far as we can find out, were described below.

---

\(^{421}\)U Tun Yi (Shehaungthutethitau), *Konbaung Khit Sayin Padethar* (Konbaung Period, Miscellaneous Data), Vol.III, Aichi University, Toyohashi, 2003, pp.112-113 (Henceforth: Tun Yi, 2003)

\(^{422}\)Toe Hla, 1995, 147

\(^{423}\)Mahazaya Thenkhayar, *Wawharalinathadipani*, Yangon, Hanthawaddy Press, p.316 (Henceforth: Thenkhayar)
Table XXV

Titles Granted to Elephant *Ahmudans* in Konbaung Period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nemyo</th>
<th>Nawrahta</th>
<th>Gaza</th>
<th>Udein</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nemyo Nandameik (1800)</td>
<td><em>Nawrahta</em> Kyawkhaung (1807)</td>
<td>Gaza Theikdra (1783)</td>
<td><em>Udein</em> Sithu (1757)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nemyo Sithu (1806)</td>
<td><em>Nawrahta</em> Pyanchi (1858)</td>
<td>Gaza Kyawthu (1807)</td>
<td><em>Udein</em> Setkathu (1817)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nemyo Minhla Sithu (1807)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gaza Kyaw (1834)</td>
<td><em>Udein</em> Nandathu (1817)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nemyo Min Kyaw (1819)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Udein</em> Thirthu (1817)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nemyo Zeya Yanaung (1824)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Udein</em> Thrikyaw (1817)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nemyo Thiri Kyawthu (1838)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Udein</em> Zeyathu (1817)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nemyo Yehla Yegaung (1845)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Udein</em> Thiri Sithu (1819)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nemyo Thari Kyawhtin (1847)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Udein</em> YeHla (1824)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nemyo Baddha Yaza (1861)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Udein</em> YeHlaKyawzwa (1824)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nemyo Minhtin Yaza (1868)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Udein</em> Thamanta (1827)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nemyo Udein Thamanta Thihakya (1868)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Udein</em> Zeya Waythaw (1829)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nemyo Yaza Kyawthu (1878)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Udein</em> Yaza Nawrahta</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: *Konbaungzet, 2004 c*
In summation, as elephants were important in royal occasions and military affairs, kings had always tried to make elephant stocks grow by every means, such as receiving elephants as tribute, capturing elephant from enemies and simply by catching the wild ones. With the increase in the number of elephants, there also grew the need for elephant catchers and elephant trainers. Therefore, Myanmar kings had formed the elephantteers systematically. Of them, the elephant minister was the highest in rank, under who were elephant catchers, elephant trainers, elephant herd ahmudans and elephant tender ahmudans. There also was an independent elephant king ahmudans.

As the possession of many elephants made crucial in the political and military relation with neighbouring countries till the early Konbaung Period, elephantteers also played a key role in the service of the king up to the early Konbaung Period. Elephantteers also enjoyed privileges, for their service was very dangerous to their lives and they catched what the kings had much treasured animal the elephant. The privileges were providing of provisions and supplies, tax exemptions and dues. Enjoying of such privileges albeit, some elephantteers deserted their groups, which caused the kings to issue a range of royal orders dictating to take care not to decrease the strength of elephant men. As these peoples enjoyed privileges and royally favoured ones, elephantteers might have enjoyed relative socio economic prosperity.

But after First and Second Anglo–Myanmar Wars, Myanmar came to realize that their once formidable elephantry were no longer useful for ever in wars. As the elephant now became a burden as it was no longer useful in both in wars and productive activities, keeping the elephantry and elephantteers costs much money and drained the royal treasury. Therefore, as a consequence to it, the number of elephantteers became decreased. For instance, the number of elephantteer in Badon's reign was about 156 persons and it decreased to sixty one persons in Thibaw's reign. The decrease might be due to the king's less emphasis and interest on elephant.
We have said that elephanteers enjoyed a range of tax exemption, in which *thathameda* or capitation tax was included. And now, in 1883, elephanteers had to pay this tax again, showing the less enjoyment of privileges and the debasing of their livelihood. The living standard of elephanteers gradually degraded, suffering economic hardship, which could be seen in many of land transaction deeds of mortgage. We have witnessed that once the spectacular and splendid lives of elephants and elephanteers who took part in the nation building tasks of First, Second and Third Myanmar Empire became obsolete and degraded, in the face of colonial imperialism.
CONCLUSION

Elephant was thoroughly related with Myanmar society, in its belief, politics and social condition. The elephant cult could be found in places where Hinduism reached or prevailed, especially in South and Southeast Asia. Though the large numbers of world’s elephant were found in Africa, there hardly existed the intimate relation of man and elephant, like those of South and Southeast Asia. As Myanmar kings believed that the white elephant was the Buddha to be, the cult had closely related with the lives of the Buddha. For, most Myanmar are devout Buddhists, we can understand the elephant cult and belief by studying the Buddhist Literature where elephant took the centre stage. The earliest sculpture of elephant could be found in the Pyu culture, which was attested by the Chinese animals. The cult of elephant found in Pyu culture might be, due not to describe the elephant found in their environment, but rather originated in the Hinduism and Buddhism, that led to the sculpturing out of elephant and worshiping of it. It is noteworthy that the belief in the elephant cult is more strong in the court circle, than the community of ordinary peoples. In emulation of Cakkravatin, Myanmar kings tried to possess the white elephant, which was one among the seven ratanas, owned by a universal monarch. Thus, it becomes a belief, that the possession of white elephant signified the power and glory of a king. In post Bagan Periods, Myanmar kings began to adopt the title of the Lords of White Elephant. In Pinya Period, we find the one Thihathu the Lord of One White Elephant, meaning he possessed a white elephant. But how much crazy and frenzy in the ownership of white elephant for a Myanmar king, could be seen here, that what Thihathu had owned was, not of a living white elephant, but a dead one. Once a dead white elephant floated down a stream and the king ordered to pick it out. For being crazy to be the Lord of White Elephant, he had made some mechanical device to make the dead elephant stand, upon which he rode. Then he conferred himself with the title the Lord of White elephant. More awkward and strange thing concerning white elephant was that, when Kyaw Swa Nge came to posses the five white elephants, his elder brother the reigning king, in fear, had transferred the throne to him. It shows how
deeply rooted the belief in white elephant and the elephant cult in Myanmar court circle, to whom the possession of white elephant means the glorification of the possessor, reigning king or not. Therefore, kings had hoped to find out white elephant, and to own white elephant became their goal. Kings also were found to manipulate the white elephant cult, in order to win the heart and soul of the people.

We can find the elephant myth in many kinds of artistic works- painting, sculpture, architecture, music and drama and also in the literature and the royal orders. Though the murals of elephant were found since Bagan Period, being an amateur in art we can not conceive this kind of art thoroughly. It is a well known fact that some sort of the painting and sculpture of elephant can be found in areas where lithic ages developed, implying that man and elephant were not of recent intimacy, but of age old friendship. In Myanmar, we can find the earliest painting of elephant on the walls of Padalin Cave, which is thought to be a Neolithic Site, from about 10000 years. By observing the Padalin painting of elephants, we have some ideas, that these early men drew it in fear of the beast, or in a way a kind of belief, but surely not of domestication of the animal. It is thought that the domestication of elephant could not be more than 1500 years ago. As the mighty kings came to possess the white elephant, their possession of the animal became the theme in art and literature. The famous ones were pagodas with elephant base, images with elephant base and elephant relief in half and round, all of which can be found in many of Bagan stupas and temples. In the field of the art of sculpture, the most distinguished and best representations of sculpture were those of elephants and horses. The people of Myanmar had a range of medium to paint, such as mural paintings, parabaik paintings and lacquerware paintings, where the theme were sometimes religious, sometimes social and sometimes military event and sometimes the nature of elephants. They drew these paintings masterly, which might be owing to the intimate relationship of man and elephant, in term of religious or personal contact. Also the most widely and exquisitely depicted animal in Myanmar literature was that of the elephant. The literature in feudal days glorified the king, by analogously mentioning the elephant in “pyo”, poem and prose. Therefore, in monarchical days, treatises on the characteristics of white elephants, “yadu”, “mawgun”, “kyo”, “bwe”, “patpyo”, “thaphyan” and “thachingan” appeared having the elephant their theme, eulogizing the animal in various ways. Texts on characteristics of elephant, it seems, made the cult of elephant more deep. Literatures about the elephant were found written to appease and please the king. But
sometimes there appeared the rationalist and the realist who did not accept the popular superstitious belief of white elephant. It was the Lebawkyang Sayadaw, who wrote the *Gaza Viniccaya* text, that criticized the white elephant cult and belief. The royal orders, concerning with the elephant, were found many in numbers in Konbaung Period, in which King Badon had issued most of them, implying his belief in the white elephant was deep and profound. The Lebaw Sayadaws *Gaza Viniccaya* text, could be seen, in part, as an attempt to show the true nature of the elephant, by eliminating the wrong view, concerning the white elephant.

When the domestication of elephant began is uncertain, but might be originated in Indian Subcontinent. The domestication of elephant in Myanmar was found to be interesting, as it was the biggest in land animal, that pose the dire threat to the lives of human. Until now, animals, being domesticated and use for the benefit of man, in fact was a little in number. Among them, scholars thought that dog was the first animal, being domesticated by man. Then came, buffalo, cow, horse, camel and elephant. Out of these animals, domestication of elephant and use of it in warfare and various means, had long been existed since Pyu Period and down to Konbaung Period. In Bagan Period, especially after 12\(^{th}\) century AD, not only the cult of elephant, but also catching, farming, training, and using of it in production and warfare, had been firmly established. The emphasis put on the value of elephant and horse than the agriculturally valuable animals of cattles, cow, buffalo and their usefulness in the politics and the wars. These animals were used as gifts or tributes in bilateral relation of two countries, or between the king and his vassals, or between the relation of the central and provincial. The possession of many elephant was taken as the manifestation of the glory of a king. Therefore, elephant played a central role in the feudal politics of Myanmar. There were wars which were fought, solely to conquer the elephant, white or black, in Myanmar history. The most famous was the one which Bayinnaung fought Ayudhaya for want of the white elephant. In feudal days, as kings regarded the elephant as a big weapon, kings only were the right to possess the elephant. Therefore, every elephant in Myanmar were owned by the king or his vassals, who enjoyed such privileges an account of the clemency and pity of the king. But the usefulness of elephant in wars had both advantages and disadvantages. In the battle, elephant was found to be a sitting duck, never missed for a good markman, also in the withdrawal, elephant could not retreat quickly like that of horse. In the famous Ngasaunggyan Battle, Myanmar elephantry was defeated under the shower of Mongol
archers, plus fire rockets. Under the volley of arrows and fire rockets, elephants were greatly frightened and turned back, treading own men and army. Nevertheless, after the wars with the imperialist capitalist countries, the role of elephants in the politics and wars gradually dwindled. Therefore, war elephant, which played a key role in every major expedition from Bagan down to Konbaung Period, has now turned themselves into productive animal in timber extraction only.

In any discussing about elephant, it would not be adequate and complete, unless we describe the elephanteers. With the formation of elephantry, elephanteers were organized according to the nature of elephantry groups. In the elephantry, there were elephant catching group, elephant training group, and elephant keeping group. These people were to live near the deep forest where elephants could roam freely. Elephanteers were not of Myanmar stock only, but comprised with of Shans, Kayins, Yuns, and Lawas, for whom the king had villages established where he granted these men land to reside, land to cultivate and land to share. Elephanteers enjoyed some privileges, and were given high post in the administrative hierarchy with relevant insignia. Kings usually tried to possess elephants as much as possible, as these beasts were to him big weapon, by sending out catching parties frequently and carrying out training always. As kings put much emphasis on elephant, as an manifestation of the power and glory of the king and the prosperity of the Sasana, members of elephantry could enjoy the special right and privileges, leading them to get the high social status. But after the wars with imperialists, the role of elephants in warfares rapidly declined and the living standard of elephanters also decreased. The lives of elephanteers went ups and downs depending on the mood swing and high or low interest of the king. Though the role of elephant gradually faded out, the cult of white elephant still persists in traces till to day.

Elephant habitants might have existed all over the world. According to ancient record, the early elephant, known as mammoth, once roamed in the northern part of the world upto Siberia. The elephant habitat has now shrieked due to the expansion of human settlements and activities. At present, elephant habitats might exist only on the border areas between Myanmar and India, it is learnt. Therefore, like the mammoth, elephants may even disappear from the world.
Photographs
Photo (1)
*Chaddanta Jataka*, Myingaba Gubyaukkyi Pagoda, Bagan

Photo (2)
*Vessantar Jataka*, the Depicting the Donation of the White elephant
Shinbinsakyo Pagoda, Yele Village, Sale Township
Photo (3)
The Great Renunciation, Shwethalyaung Pagoda, Po Win Hill
Toe Toe Win Collection

Jataka, Po Win Hill, Cave No. 284
Toe Toe Win Collection
Photo (5)
A Princess on an Elephant, Ngasudan Pagoda, Ma U, Yesagyo Township
Toe Toe Win Collection

Photo (6)
The Taming of Nalagiri, Pagoda
Toe Toe Win Collection
Photo (7)
A Scene of Military Expedition Shwethalyaung Pagoda, Po Win Hill,
Cave No.284
Toe Toe Win Collection

Photo (8)
A Herd of Elephants  Kyauktawgyi Pagoda, Amarapura
Dr. Toe Hla Collection
Photo (9)
A scene of Military Expedition Ananda Temple, Bagan
Toe Toe Win Collection

Photo (10)
A Royal Procession, Parabaik painting
U Maung Maung Thein Collection
Photo (11)
The King Observes the White Elephant, Parabaik painting
U Maung Maung Thein Collection

Photo (12)
A Duel Fight on Elephants, Parabaik painting
U Maung Maung Thein Collection
Photo (13)
Training an Elephant for Military Use, Parabaik painting
U Maung Maung Thein Collection

Photo (14)
Catching an Elephant by Trained Elephants, Parabaik painting
U Maung Maung Collection
Photo (15)
Elephant and Insignia Bestowed on Yatsauk Sawbwa, Parabaik painting
U Maung Maung Thein Collection

Photo (16)
Vessantar Jataka, Lacquerware painting
U Maung Maung Thein Collection
Maps
Map (1)

Map showing the elephant inhabited area

Source: Forest Department, Myanmar

Note: Some Unidentifiable Elephant-Inhabitants are left
Map (2)

Map showing the village where elephanteers were settled

Source: Forest Department, Myanmar
Appendix – 1

Proverbs Related with Elephants

Proverbs Related with Elephants
မေးခွန်ခေါ် မည်သူများအားလုံးနှင့် ကြည့်ခံမိသောအချက်အလက်များကို မူလများနှင့် ကြည့်ရှုနိုင်သည်။ မြန်မာစာများထဲမှ ကြည့်ရှုနိုင်သည်။

မာဝိဟောင်း မှ ပိုမိုများကို ကြည့်ရှုနိုင်သည်။

မိဘဘုရင်ဟာ ပိုမိုများကို ကြည့်ရှုနိုင်သည်။

မြန်မာစာများကို မူလများနှင့် ကြည့်ရှုနိုင်သည်။

မြောက်အိမ်ဆိုင်ရာ မြောက်အိမ်များကို ကြည့်ရှုနိုင်သည်။
Appendix – 2

Royal Orders in Relation with Elephants

[Text in Burmese]
၂၃ ဒီ အခု ဆိုးဝဲရှိသော်လည်း အောက်တွင်သော ဖျင်စဉ်များကို ဖော်ပြပါ။
၂၄ ဒီ အခု အသေးစိုက်ခြင်းများဟု မိုးမိုးဖွဲ့စည်းသော ဖျင်စဉ်များကို ဖော်ပြပါ။
၂၅ ဒီ အခု လူဝါးသော ဖျင်စဉ်များကို ဖော်ပြပါ။
၂၆ ဒီ အခု အသေးစိုက်ခြင်းများဟု မိုးမိုးဖွဲ့စည်းသော ဖျင်စဉ်များကို ဖော်ပြပါ။
၂၇ ဒီ အခု အောက်တွင်သော ဖျင်စဉ်များကို ဖော်ပြပါ။
၂၈ ဒီ အခု အသေးစိုက်ခြင်းများဟု မိုးမိုးဖွဲ့စည်းသော ဖျင်စဉ်များကို ဖော်ပြပါ။
၂၉ ဒီ အခု လူဝါးသော ဖျင်စဉ်များကို ဖော်ပြပါ။
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၃၂ ဒီ အခု လူဝါးသော ဖျင်စဉ်များကို ဖော်ပြပါ။
က အချက်များ၊ ခေါ်အမျိုးမျိုး ချစ်သောအထူးသဖြင့် အစိတ်အပိုင်းများရှိသောစာသင်္ချာများကို အခြေခံ၍

1. အပှင်သားများပြောသောစာသင်္ချာများကို အစိတ်အပိုင်းများရှိသော စာသင်္ချာများကို အခြေခံ၍

2. အပှင်သားများပြောသောစာသင်္ချာများကို အစိတ်အပိုင်းများရှိသော စာသင်္ချာများကို အခြေခံ၍

3. အပှင်သားများပြောသောစာသင်္ချာများကို အစိတ်အပိုင်းများရှိသော စာသင်္ချာများကို အခြေခံ၍

4. အပှင်သားများပြောသောစာသင်္ချာများကို အစိတ်အပိုင်းများရှိသော စာသင်္ချာများကို အခြေခံ၍

5. အပှင်သားများပြောသောစာသင်္ချာများကို အစိတ်အပိုင်းများရှိသော စာသင်္ချာများကို အခြေခံ၍

6. အပှင်သားများပြောသောစာသင်္ချာများကို အစိတ်အပိုင်းများရှိသော စာသင်္ချာများကို အခြေခံ၍

7. အပှင်သားများပြောသောစာသင်္ချာများကို အစိတ်အပိုင်းများရှိသော စာသင်္ချာများကို အခြေခံ၍

8. အပှင်သားများပြောသောစာသင်္ချာများကို အစိတ်အပိုင်းများရှိသော စာသင်္ချာများကို အခြေခံ၍
၂ မိုးတင်း နောင် အတွေ့အကြုးအရာများ ပေါ်ပြီးသောက်ရွသောအခွန်တို့ မြင်ကြည်တင်း
အတွေ့အကြုးအရာကို

၃ မိုးတင်း နောင် အတွေ့အကြုးအရာများသည် ကျွန်ုပ်တို့အား မြင်တင်း
အတွေ့အကြုးအရာကို

၄ မိုးတင်း နောင် အတွေ့အကြုးအရာများသည် ကျွန်ုပ်တို့အား မြင်တင်း
အတွေ့အကြုးအရာကို

၅ မိုးတင်း နောင် အတွေ့အကြုးအရာများသည် ကျွန်ုပ်တို့အား မြင်တင်း
အတွေ့အကြုးအရာကို

၆ မိုးတင်း နောင် အတွေ့အကြုးအရာများသည် ကျွန်ုပ်တို့အား မြင်တင်း
အတွေ့အကြုးအရာကို

၇ မိုးတင်း နောင် အတွေ့အကြုးအရာများသည် ကျွန်ုပ်တို့အား မြင်တင်း
အတွေ့အကြုးအရာကို

၈ မိုးတင်း နောင် အတွေ့အကြုးအရာများသည် ကျွန်ုပ်တို့အား မြင်တင်း
အတွေ့အကြုးအရာကို

၉ မိုးတင်း နောင် အတွေ့အကြုးအရာများသည် ကျွန်ုပ်တို့အား မြင်တင်း
အတွေ့အကြုးအရာကို

၀ မိုးတင်း နောင် အတွေ့အကြုးအရာများသည် ကျွန်ုပ်တို့အား မြင်တင်း
အတွေ့အကြုးအရာကို

၁၀ မိုးတင်း နောင် အတွေ့အကြုးအရာများသည် ကျွန်ုပ်တို့အား မြင်တင်း
အတွေ့အကြုးအရာကို
ယောက်ကြည့်ရှုသော အမှုအစိတ်ကို အနုသောအပေါ်သော အတွက်သော သောက်လေးသည် ပြောင်းလဲရာ အခြေခံတော်ပြောင်းလဲသော သောက်လေးကို မြင်ရင်သည်

ယောက်ကြည့်ရှုသော အမှုအစိတ်ကို အနုသောအပေါ်သော အတွက်သော သောက်လေးသည် ပြောင်းလဲရာ အခြေခံတော်ပြောင်းလဲသော သောက်လေးကို မြင်ရင်သည်

ယောက်ကြည့်ရှုသော အမှုအစိတ်ကို အနုသောအပေါ်သော အတွက်သော သောက်လေးသည် ပြောင်းလဲရာ အခြေခံတော်ပြောင်းလဲသော သောက်လေးကို မြင်ရင်သည်

ယောက်ကြည့်ရှုသော အမှုအစိတ်ကို အနုသောအပေါ်သော အတွက်သော သောက်လေးသည် ပြောင်းလဲရာ အခြေခံတော်ပြောင်းလဲသော သောက်လေးကို မြင်ရင်သည်
Appendix – 3

Literary Works on Elephants

550 Jatakas
Literacy Works on Elephant in Verse
လိုအပ်သော စီးပွားရေးအားလုံးအတွက် အခြေခံ၍ အကြံပြုမှုများ သိရှိရန် ဖော်ပြပါသည်။

ယခုအချိန်အတွင်း နိုင်ငံတကာ အထောက်အမှတ် စီးပွားရေး ပြုလုံးမှုများ အကြံပြု သိရှိချက်များဖြင့် လွတ်လပ်စွာ လုပ်ဆောင်နိုင်သည်။

စီးပွားရေး စီးပွားရေးပြုလုံးစဉ်အချက်အလက်များကို လိုအပ်သော စီးပွားရေးမှုများ အားလုံးမှာ ဖော်ပြပါသည်။

ပြုလုံးစဉ်အနေဖြင့် မိတ်ဆွေမှုအားလုံးပေါင်းစီးပွားရေးမှုများ အကြံပြုမှုများကို လွတ်လပ်စွာ လုပ်ဆောင်နိုင်သည်။
Treatises on Elephant
Eulogy on Royal Elephant in Yadu-Verse

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