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Abstract	<p>Sagaing Division was inhabited by Stone Age people. Sagaing town was a place where the successive kings of Pagan, Innwa and Kon-baungs period constructed religious buildings. Hence it can be regarded as an important place not only for military matters, but also for the administration of the kingdom. Moreover, a considerable number of foreigners were Siamese, Yuns and Manipuris also settled in Sagaing township. Its population was higher than that of Innwa and lower than that of Amarapura. Therefore, it can be regarded as a medium size town. Agriculture has been the backbone of Sagaing township's economy since the Pagan period. The Sagaing must have been prosperous but the deeds of land and other mortgages highlight the economic difficulties of the area. It is learnt from the documents concerning legal cases that arose in this area. As Sagaing was famous for its silverware industry, silk-weaving and pottery, it can be concluded that the cultural status was high.</p>
Keywords	Historical site, military forces, economic aspect, cultural heigh
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## Around the Sagaing Township in Kon-baung Period

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### Background History

Sagaing Division comprises the tracts between Ayeyarwady and Chindwin rivers, and the earliest fossil remains and remains of Myanmar's prehistoric culture have been discovered there. A fossilized mandible of a primate was discovered in April 1978 from the Pondaung Formation, a mile to the northwest of Mogaung village, Pale township, Sagaing township. Geologists and foreign scholars have confirmed that it was about the Pondaung Formation was forty million years old. This proves that the area around Mogaung village, Pale township, Sagaing Division, was inhabited by the world's earliest anthropoid primates.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, the Shwemyintin range in Monywa and Chaung Oo townships, Sagaing Division, has yielded fossil remains which were about a million years old were also discovered in Kywebagon village near Dingagon, roughly a mile to the northwest of Nwegwe village, Chaung Oo township. Hence, it is clear that these areas were inhabited by Palaeolithic human beings.<sup>3</sup>

Additionally, Neolithic stone implements were discovered in Sahton on the western bank of Chindwin river, Htaukmagon in Salingyi, Twindaung in Budalin township, Kyaukkar village, and in the precincts of the Suhpyubin monastery, Gwegyivillage in Myonywa township. Therefore, Myanmar's earliest prehistoric humans and inhabited the Sagaing Division.<sup>4</sup>

The name Sagaing first occurs in the Hledaung Pagoda inscription belonging to AD 1111.<sup>5</sup> The boundaries of the tract of Sagaing are given in Zambudipa Usaung Kyan as follows:

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<sup>2</sup> *Sagaing Myone Hmattan* (Sagaing Record), Sagaing, Pyinnya Alin Library, p.65, 1985 (Henceforth: *Sagaing Hmattan*, 1985)

<sup>3</sup> *Sagaing Hmattan*, 1985, 66-67

<sup>4</sup> *Sagaing Hmattan*, 1985, 68-69

<sup>5</sup> U Nyein Maung, *Shehaung Myanmar Kyauksamyā* (Old Myanmar Inscriptions), Vol.I, Yangon, Archaeological Survey Department, 1972, 46 (Henceforth Nyein Maung, 1971, I)

...The tract of Sagaing was to the east Saukte lake, to the south Ayeyarwady, to the west Taw-inhtwet stream, and to the north Mangyisi.<sup>6</sup>

The extent of Sagaing tract is given in the *Sittan* of 999 Myanmar Era (ME) AD 1637 as follows:

The tract of Sagaing is to the east as far as the ride in the desolate tract, to the southeast bordering the land of Paung Malahka, to the South Kywet Chaung, Peitkyi Chaung, Tatsaye Chaung and bordering the land of Mawti, to the west boudering the land of Paungtatthit, Htandabin, Maingsama, to the west, Kyeintali Chaung, Legyun Chaung and bodering the land of Inpaliyun and the land of Kyunbinhla, Ngayanaing, Lahatapaukpinthasa, to the north east Tayoutbe Mawtawtet Alasoat Chaung, Kyeni Chaung, as far as the desolate land and boudering the land of Thayarwady. Winthin this tract are Tanga Village (north), Tawle village, The Aing Akaw in village, 30 Taungtet village, Loatkan village, Kabye village, a large village of Hpayagon, Wekyan village, Aingminkyaw village, Kinde village and Kon village altogether 20 villages.<sup>7</sup>

Sunaparanta and Tampadipa, which were located around the place where the Chindwin River flows into the river Ayeyarwady, constituted the political center of ancient Myanmar. Sunaparanta comprised the tracts to the west of the river Ayeyarwady. Geographically, the area was bounded on the east by Ayeyarwady River and on the west by western Yoma (Chin Hills) referred to as Mitsagiri. Therefore, Sagaing, which was situated on the west bank of the Ayeyarwady River was included in the Sunaparanta.<sup>8</sup> This area, which was the political center of Myanmar was also the socio-economic center and the center of art and culture and of Buddhism.<sup>9</sup>

During the reign of King Thalun (AD 1629-1640), who ruled the kingdom of Yadanapura (Awa), Myanmar was divided into ten administrative units, and the boundaries of the eighth division are recorded as follows:

...to the west Chindwin, to the North Myedu, to the east Ayeyarwady, and to the South Sagaing. This was the Sunaparanta Division.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> J.S. Furnivall and Pe Maung Tin, *Zambudia Usaung Kyan* ( A Collection of Royal Order and Sit-tans), Yangon, Burma Research Society, 1960, p.16

<sup>7</sup> Shehaung Sarpe Thutethi Ta Oo, *Shehkit Myanmar Nainggan Myo Ywa Nepe Thamaing* (A history of the Towns, villages and districts in old Myanmar), Sittans of 999 ME, Yangon, einbanmying Press, p.25

<sup>8</sup> Dr. Toe Hla, *Chindwin Myittha Mu Ayeyar* (Chindwin, Myittha, Mu and Ayeyarwady Rivers), Magwe, Monywa Offest, 1995, p.1 (Henceforth: Toe Hla, 1995)

<sup>9</sup> Toe Hla, 1995, 2

<sup>10</sup> Shehaung Sarpe Thutethi Ta Oo, *Myanmar Shehkit Oatchoatpon Sanit* (Ancient Administrative System of Myanmar), Vol.II, Myanmar Beikmn Sarpebank, p. 33

All the boundaries of Sagaing except the one on the north were rivers. Ayeyarwady River served as the east and south boundaries, while the western boundary was delineated by the Mu River. The Sagaing township adjoins Wetlet Township on the north, Mandalay Division on the east and southeast, and Myinmu and Ayadaw townships<sup>11</sup> on the west.<sup>12</sup> There are nine lakes<sup>13</sup>, nine hmaws<sup>14</sup> (Place were jade in mined), nine hills<sup>15</sup> and nine streams<sup>16</sup> and fourteen wards<sup>17</sup> in Sagaing Township. It comprises an area of 485.16 square miles, and there are fourteen wards and 225 villages in it.

### Security Force

Although Sagaing was not a royal seat in the Pagan period, it was a place easily accessible of the kings when they toured around the kingdom.<sup>18</sup> In addition, the Bangyi Taik and Dipeyin, Myedu, Mawton, Mawke, Kani and Sagaing towns were among the localities the kings granted to the members of the royal household in fief. Forts were constructed in the Pagan period, and the remains of these forts can still be seen along the Mu valley in the townships in Sagaing Division: Budalin, Ye Oo and Dabayin, Khin Oo and Kanbalu. These forts are:

Dabayin Fort  
 Hkawthani Fort  
 Khin Oo Fort  
 Khintha Fort  
 Myogyi Fort  
 Myohla Fort  
 Myedu Forth  
 Namya City walls  
 Ngayazu Fort  
 Pyinsala including Yatha Fort  
 Sipottara Fort  
 Taungdan City walls

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<sup>11</sup> Maung Thein Kyaw, *Sagaing Dethantara Pahtawiwun* ( Regional Geography of Sagaing), M.A Thesis, Mandalay University, 1988, p.45 (Henceforth Thein Kyaw, 1988)

<sup>12</sup> See Appendix I

<sup>13</sup> Kone Inn, Tant ti Inn, Daung ma Inn, Pyu kan yan Inn, Punna Inn, Ye khar Inn, Shwe Myet Inn, Shwe kyar inn and Tha-nwin-o inn

<sup>14</sup> Kyet yet hmaw, Saku hmaw, Pwe tet hmaw, mi kyaung hmaw, Yin yan hmaw, Shin hla hmaw, Shwe taung oo hmaw, Nat ye hmaw and Aye kyun hmaw

<sup>15</sup> Kyauk ye kone, khan tat kone, Te pin kone, Bo tet kone, Moat htaw kone, Min nyun kone, Thittsa kone, Tha man kone and The thaung kone

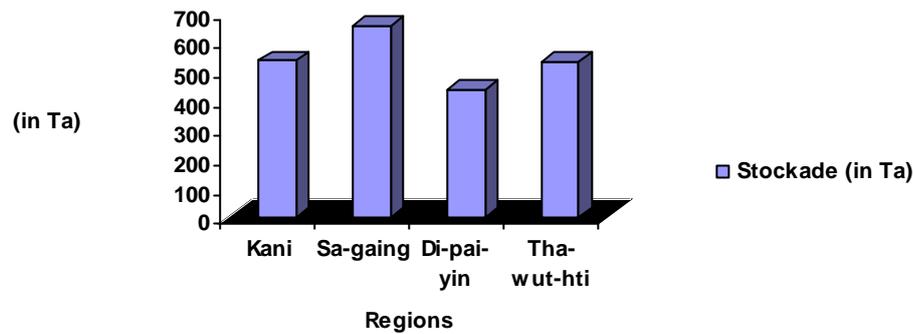
<sup>16</sup> Zin gyan Chaung, Sithu Chaung, Sein Pyu Chaung, Pegu Chaung, Phi la Chaung, Mantaing Chaung, Myit wa Chaung, Shwe tone Chaung and Utta ma Chaung

<sup>17</sup> Sein kone, Zeya, Tagaung, Htone bo, Htewa, Nandawun, Poe tan, Babe tan, Moeza, Mee yahta, Min lan, Myo thit, Ywa htaung and Aye Mya waddy

<sup>18</sup> Maung Thein Kyaw, *Sagaing Dethantara Pahtawiwun* (Regional Geography of Sagaing), M.A thesis, Mandalay University, 1988, p.45 (Henceforth Thein Kyaw, 1988)

The remains of these forts and city walls can still be seen in these towns in which the *myozas* (town holders) had settled. Therefore, it is clear that Sagaing was within the realms of the Pagan period. Some towns and villages located at the strategic points had stockades built for defense. These towns and villages are shown in the table 2.

Table. 1 Stockade towns/villages



Source: Toe Hla, 1995, 37-38

These were just security built for the royal capital city. They might have existed since the Bagan period. But some had appeared during the Nyaung-yan period. They could least keep peace and security.

### Monarchical Day

In AD 1322, King Athinkhaya Sawyun (AD 1322-1330), a son of King Thihathu, constructed a teak stockade around Sagaing. Later, in AD 1323, he founded the city of Sagaing as his royal seat. The royal capital of Sagaing was situated around the northern portion of modern Sagaing. Its name was Zeyapura according to some scholars and Atulawadi according to others. The kings who had Sagaing as their royal seat were:

1. Athinkhaya Sawyun (AD 1322-1330)
2. Tarahpyagyi(AD 1330-1336)
3. Shwetaungtet (AD 1336-1339)
4. Kyaswa (AD 1339-1344)
5. Minyegyi(AD 1344-1352)
6. Tarahpayange, also know as Sinbyushin (AD 1352-1354)
7. Minbyaukgyi(AD 1354-1364)<sup>19</sup>

Thus, Sagaing was the royal capital of seven kings for forty nine years. Sagaing fell when Thochibwa, a Shan ruler, came and attacked it in AD 1364. After

<sup>19</sup> Monywa Maha Zatawin Sayataw, *Zetiya Kahta Myithaw Yazawinchoat* (A brief history called Zetiya Kahta), edit by Dr. Toe Hla, p.27 (Henceforth: Monywa Maha Zatawin Sayataw n.d)

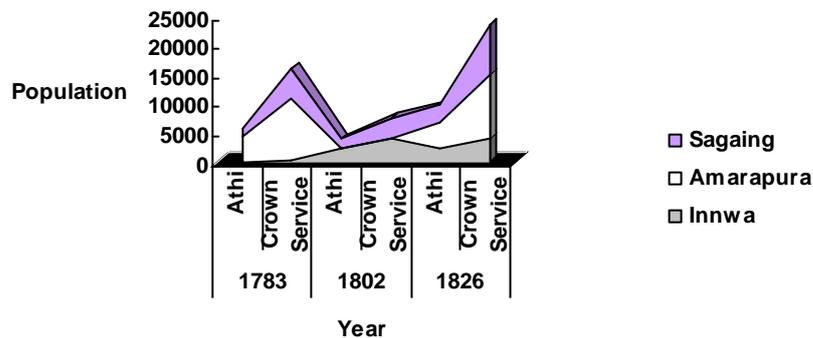
the fall of Sagaing. Thadominbya (AD 1364-1367) established the city of Yadanapura (Innwa). The kings of Innwa visited Sagaing often and constructed stupas and temples there. The city was named Anandapura, Sagaing, which had been the royal seat of early Myanmar Kings, is now the capital of Sagaing Division.<sup>20</sup>

In the reign of King Thibaw (AD 1678-1885), Myanmar was divided into ten administrative units. The Eighth division or the Sagaing Division comprised Sagaing, Amyint, Alon and Dabayin and their environs.<sup>21</sup> Therefore Sagaing enjoyed the status of a town in the Konbaung period, and it can be assumed that the living conditions in Sagaing would not have differed much from those in Amarapura and Innwa in those days.

**Population**

The population of Konbaung period villages ranged between two to three digits. There were very few villages with populations of more than a thousand.<sup>22</sup> The populations are as follows:

**Table.2 Populations of Innwa, Amarapura and Sagaing Townships**



Source: Tranger, Frank N., Koenig, William J., *Burmese Sittans 1764-1826*, Tukson University of Arizona Press, p.408

Population of Konbaung period is compared with that the nearby towns of Innwa and Amarapura in the dirgram: This table indicates that the population of Sagaing town was higher than that of Innwa and lower than that of Amarapura. Therefore, Sagaing can be regarded as the second largest town.

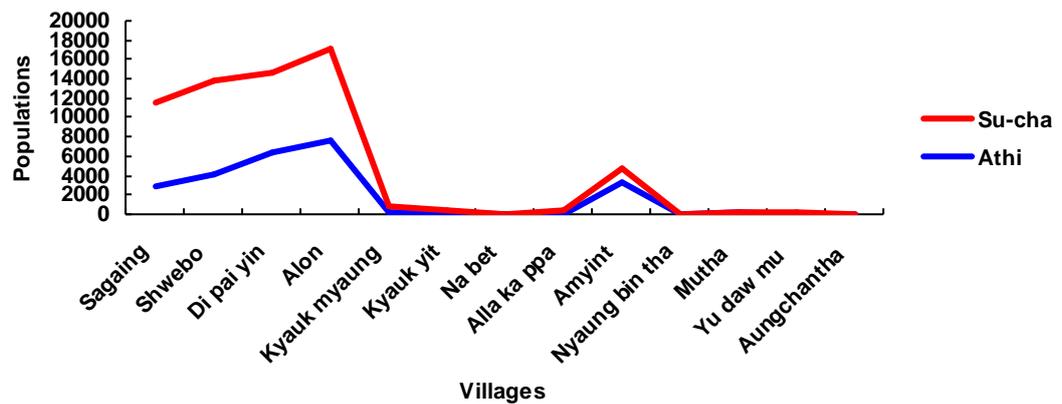
<sup>20</sup> *Sagaing Hmattan*, 1985, 71

<sup>21</sup> U Tin, *Myanmar Min Oatchoatpon Sadan Hnit Bodawhpaya I Yazathat Hkawthaw Ameindaw Tam Gyi* (Treatise on Myanmar Traditional Administration System), Vol: II, Yangon, Cultural Department 1965, pp.110-111

<sup>22</sup> Toe Hla, n.d.4

In order to know more about the population of the region, let me mention some lists of the servicemen of certain towns and villages of the Sagaing region. In many a case the member of *athi* was less than that of the *su-cha* (foreigner servicemen groups). It simply means that the *athi* and *su-cha* dominated the region.

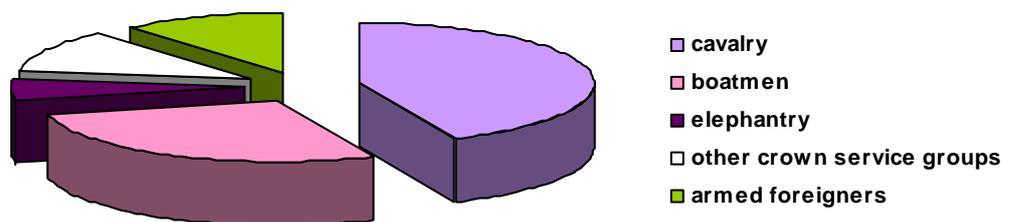
**Table. 3 Populations of the villages in Sagaing Townships (1782-83)**



Source: List of Military Groups Organized, *Parabaik MS*, no. 732, National Library, Yangon; Dr. Toe Hla, *Konbaung Khit lu-hmu si pwa yaei (1752-1885)*, (Rural Socio-economic life in konbaung period), Yangon, The University Historical Research Center, 2002 (Henceforth Toe Hla, 2002)

As described above that the entries are made only for two social classes in Sagaing regions in 1782. The population of the villages in Sagaing township in 1783 are given for comparisons. Some villages were settled by crown service group. They are as follows:

**Table.4 Villages Settled by Crown Servicemen**



Source: Yebet Myinbwe Sayinchoat, *Parabaik MS*, no. 1029, Yangon, National Library; List of Tegyi Hintha Boat Squadorn, *Parabaik MS*, no. 280, Kabar Aye Buddhist University Library, Yangon; Toe Hla, 1995, 148; U Maung Maung Tin, *Shwenanthon Wohara Abhidan* (A dictionary of palace usages), Yangon, Buddha Sasana Council Press, 1975, pp.179,180,181; Dr. Toe Hla, *Konebaung Hkit Kyelet Luhmu Sibwa Bawa (1752-1885)*, (Rural Socio economic life in the konbaung period (1752-1885)), Yangon, Myanmar Historical Commission, 2004, p.34

Other villages were settled by *athi* (tax-paying people). The cavalry villages were ruled by cavalry officers and the villages in which other service men settled were administered by the officers of the service groups concerned. *Athi* villages, according to the *sittans* of 1784 and 1802, were ruled by hereditary officers *se-eingaungs* (heads of ten households), *Ywagaungs*, *Ywa-oats* (rural guardians) and *ywa-thugyis* (village headmen).<sup>23</sup>

### Variety of Crown Service men

Many variety of crown service men or regiment like groups are found in this township. The crown service groups settled in this township consisted of the *Amyauksu* (Gunnery group); *Da-we-su* (men from Dawe); *Myin-zu gyi* (horsemen of Big Group); the *Nga-ze-daw* (the Royal fifty); *North Marabin* (Royal security group); *Shwe-pyi Hmankin* (Royal security group); and the *The-nat-zu* (Musketeers) status groups are found settled in villages.<sup>24</sup>

Sagaing was the palace where the *Myin Ko Thin* (Nine Cavalry Units)<sup>25</sup> were first formed in A.D 1518, during the reign of King Athinkaya Sawyun; and hence the area ruled by *myinzis* (a leader of ten horsemen), *myingaungs* (Chief of a cavalry village of the same ranks as *ywathugyi*) and *myintatbos* (commander of a cavalry regiment) was the most extensive.<sup>26</sup> Some cavalry corps had special names indicating that they were the selected special corps. Among them were the *Ye-bet myin-su* (the cavalry corps organized with some most trust-worthy comrades and *Shwe-pyi-ta-gun-myin su* (the cavalry corps marked with the *Shwe-pyi Ta-gun* Banner). As mentioned in the census roll of the *Ye-bet myin-su* and *Shwe-pyi-ta-gun-myin su* the strength numbered as the following table shows.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Shehaung Sarpe Thutethi Ta Oo, *Myanmar Shehkit Oatchoatpon Sanit* (Ancient Administrative System of Myanmar), Vol.I, Myanmar Beikmn Sarpebank, p. 18

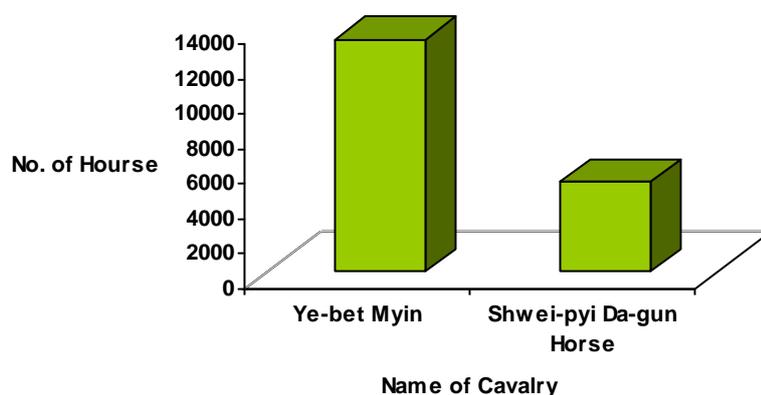
<sup>24</sup> Maung Maung Tin, *Shwenanthon Wahara Abhidan* (A dictionary of Palace usages), Yangon, Buddha Sasana Council Press, 1975, pp. 179, 180, 181 (Henceforth Maung Maung Tin, 1975)

<sup>25</sup> The nine cavalry regiments were Htein-kyaing, Let-ywe-nyi, Min-sei-nat, Nyaung-wun, Okshit, Pan-nauk, Saw-but-o, Yai-chin and Za-yat.

<sup>26</sup> Shehaung Sarpe Thutethi Ta Oo, *Myanmar Shehkit Oatchoatpon Sanit* (Administrative system of early Myanmar, n.d.), Vol.I, Myanmar Beikman Sarpeban, p.18 (Henceforth Shehaung Sarpe Thutethi Ta Oo, a)

<sup>27</sup> The formation list of Ye-bet cavalry corps, *Parabaik M.S*, no.1029, YNLC

Table-5 Population of the Ye-bet Myin and Shwei Pyi ta gon Myin



Source: The Formation List of Ye-bet Cavalry Corps, *Parabaik MS*, no. 1029, National Library Collection, Yangon; Dr. Toe Hla, *Chindwin Myittha Mu Ayeyar* (Chindwin, Myittha, Mu and Ayeyarwady Rivers), Magwe, Monywa Offest, 1995

All the population of the royal cavalry in the two main cavalry groups, i.e. the Ye-bet Myin Group and Shwe-pyi Da-gun Group in the present day Sagaing regions might number many thousands. The cavalry then served as mainstay or backbone of the Myanmar armed forces in the Kon-baung period.

When they went on military expeditions, ancient Myanmar kings used waterways when there were no land routes.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, the Myanmar kings formed boat squadrons, and the following squadrons were formed with the boatmen from Sagaing in the reign of King Bagyidaw (A.D 1829).

Hkodaung Shwege  
 Linzin  
 Moza  
 Myetayaw Myapan  
 Pylon An  
 Tabayingwe Manuthiha  
 Tegyi Hintha, and  
 Ywathitkyi Shwelaung<sup>29</sup>

Moreover, King Mindon recognized some squadrons in King Bagyidaws reign Shwege, Tegyi Hintha, Pylon an, Moza, Linzin and also formed news squadrons: Seigon, Natpan, Mingalar Minsan, Shwedeinnyin, Shwemantan and Thaugtin.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup> U Tin, Myanmar Min Oatchoapon Sadan Hnit Bodawhpaya I Yazathat Hkawthaw Ameidaw Tam Gyi ( Administration under the Myanmar kings and king Bodawhpaya's royal order called yazathat), IV, 1976, p.265 (Henceforth Tin, 1976)

<sup>29</sup> Shehaung Spare Thutethi Ta Oo, Nanthon Yin, Paribawga Hnit Wutsasinyinhmu (Palace vehicles, furniture and consumes), portfolio I, Part III, Yangon, Seinbannyaing Press, pp.51-51

As the boat men were serving for the defense of the country, the crown provided them with impress funds Badon the royal order in his edict issued. In 11847, during King Mindon's reign, the crown provided the boatmen of the Tegyi Hinthta boat squadron with impress funds. Additionally, it can be learnt that the boatmen of Natpan and Yannaing Boat Squadrons were exempted from taxation in 1879.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, royal orders were issued to ensure that the land allotted to boatmen would not be confiscated. According to the royal orders issued an edict to the following effect. Thus the king attached much important to the land granted to boatmen.

When the king allowed the taxation for construction of the residential quarters to let the recruits dwell in, *thugyi* (village headmen) made entries of the taxed money to the officials. The following are the entries of the village heads of the Wetlet, Shwebo and Sagaing regions to the officials concerned. It is also found that some village heads paid their taxed money to the officials in several installments in these regions are as follows:

**Table. 6 Tax Entries Made by villages Concerned**



Source: *Parabaik MS*, UCL, no.15040

Here, only the villages that fall in the region under study are mentioned and other villages and towns are left out, as they are out of my study area.

In addition to the servicemen of *Sugyi* (Service units comprising of Elephant, cavalry and boatmen) there were servicemen of the security forces. The six "inner"

<sup>30</sup> Reports of the servicemen of the boat squadrons, *Parabaik MS*, no. 52, Yangon, Kabar Aye Buddhist University Library

<sup>31</sup> Record of the collection of Thathameda tax from Tegyi Hinthta Boat Squadron, *Parabaik MS*, no. 152, Yangon, Kabar Aye Buddhist Library.

guards<sup>32</sup> were formed in Sagaing Township in the reign of King Badon A.D 1782-1819.

### **Servicemen of the “Inner” Guards in Sagaing**

#### **Six “Inner” Guards**

North Dawe  
North 150  
South 150  
North Marabin  
Shwepyi Hmankin

#### **Ahmudan Villages**

Thazi<sup>33</sup>  
Aung Chan Tha, Ywathit<sup>34</sup>  
Aungtha, Aung Chan Tha, Ywathit<sup>35</sup>  
Aungtha, Maungdaung<sup>36</sup>  
Minywa<sup>37</sup>

Able bodied young men from these villages were enlisted as soldiers of the Six “Inner” Guards. They had to go to the capital city and take night duty in the palace. When the salary system was introduced in the reigns of King Mindon (A.D 1853-1878) and King Thibaw (AD 1878-1885), the servicemen of these guard units received salaries.<sup>38</sup>

Moreover, lands in Yannaing village in Sagaing were granted to the service men of Wawgyi (royal boat) as *ne-mye* (Land for residence), *sa-mye* (Land for subsistence) and *loke-mye* (land for work). Thus, Sagaing was a locality in which many crown service men settled.

In addition to the crown service men, war captives also were resettled in Sagaing Township. The localities in which war captives were resettled included Chang Oo, Alon and Shwebo township in Sagaing Division. During the reign of King Nyaungyan (A.D 1597-1605), the Shwepanpan groups, formed with Mon King’s descendants, were resettled in Sagaing town.<sup>39</sup>

According to the suttans of King Thalun’s reign (A.D 1628-1648), the soldiers of Tat Kaunghan and Yunzu Kaunghan which were formed with Yun was captive from Chiangmai area were settled in Yudawmu (Sagaing) and Mutha and Ngatayaw villages. Fifty men of Siamese descent from these villages enlisted in the cavalry in King Myedu reign. Similarly, a hundred and twenty men of Siamese descent joined

<sup>32</sup> North Dawe, South Dawe, North 150, South 150, North Marabin and Shwepyi Hmankin

<sup>33</sup> Maung Maung Tin, U, *Shwenanthon Wohara Abhidan* (A dictionary of palace usages), Yangon, Buddha Sasana Council Press, 1975 (henceforth Maung Maung Tin, 1975)

<sup>34</sup> Maung Maung Tin, 1975, 180-181

<sup>35</sup> Maung Maung Tin, 1975, 181

<sup>36</sup> Maung Maung Tin, 1975, 157

<sup>37</sup> Shehaung Sarpe Thutethi Ta Oo (b), 18

<sup>38</sup> Maung Maung Tin, 1975, 157

<sup>39</sup> Dr. Toe Hla, 2002, 33

the cavalry and were led by Rai Nanda; they were granted in Myedu. Documents concerning Siamese war captives have been discovered. The goldsmiths and silversmiths from Ywahtaung and Linzin villages were descendants of Siamese war captives.<sup>40</sup>

Moreover, King Thalun formed the Yunzu Gard with ten heads and 100 followers with men from Cheingmai, and granted them *Loke-mye* and *ne-mye* in Magyi yone and Minywa villages.<sup>41</sup> In the reign of King Myedu (1763-1776), 10,600 Siamese were captured and the King settled them in and around Mandalay, Sagaing, Shwebo and Thayet. The Siamese were absorbed by the Myanmar through mixed marriages.

In King Alaungmintaya reign (A.D 1752-1765) Myanmar defeated Thanlyin and resettled all the Portugues and more than 400 women and children of mixed ancestry in Nabet, Chaung Oo, Ye-U and Chantha villages which were made to service in the artillery. The Bayingyi population in A.D 1800 was about 2,000.<sup>42</sup>

King Alaungmintaya invaded Manipur either to restore the dethrone king of Manipur in 12 November 1857 who came and sought Myanmar's help to his throne or to help solve the internal problems of Manipur. It is possible that the Myanmar King wished to lead a punitive campaign against Manipur because the Kathes of Manipur had been harrying the Myanmar villages near the border.<sup>43</sup>

Therefore, Alaungmintaya invaded Manipur and brought back Manipuris to Myanmar. The Kathes included cavalrymen<sup>44</sup> and famous artisans. They were resettled in the villages along the Ayeyarwady River in the Sagaing district. Some of them enlisted in the naval forces, while others earned their livelihoods as silversmiths, goldsmiths or silk-weavers. They were the ones who invented the *acheit* (curlicue) pattern. It is believed that the Myanmar learnt the art of silk weaving from the Kathes of Manipur.<sup>45</sup>

Some of the Kathe were Hindus, and their descendents are still living in Sagaing, Amarapura and Mandalay. As they had to perform religious rites and as they

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<sup>40</sup> Kywe Kywe Sein, Thai Descendants in Myanmar, M.A. Thesis, Mandalay University, 1998, pp.23,27

<sup>41</sup> Tin, 1976, 50

<sup>42</sup> Tin, 1976, 50

<sup>43</sup> *Shwebo Nidan* (Shwebo an introduction), Yangon, Loketha Press, October 1983, p.85 (Henceforth *Shwebo Nidan*, 1983)

<sup>44</sup> *Shwebo Nidan*, 1983, 86

<sup>45</sup> *Shwebo Nidan*, 1983, 85, 208

were responsible for matters connected with astrology and the royalty,<sup>46</sup> the King issued an edict on 15 July 1801 grant them the right to work in Moza Ward in Sagaing<sup>47</sup> and in Pegwe, Ngatayaw and Myinmwe villages.<sup>48</sup> Thus, Sagaing was a locality in which a considerable number of Siamese, Yuns, Shans from Kenghan and Kathes from Manipur resided.

Apart from the crown servicemen and *sugyas*, there were *kyun* (pagoda slaves) in Sagaing township. How the slaves were donated to the Yazamanisula Kaunghmudaw Pagoda may be explained here<sup>49</sup>.

Acreage of <i>Sa-mye</i>	- 2138.92
Chief	- 160
Followers	- 890

Although the Yazamanisula inscription gives the number of slaves as 842 the total numbers of the slaves given different duties were 890 followers. Land was not shared equally by the slaves: it seems that the extent of land, twenty monastery slaves only got 35 acres.<sup>50</sup> As the slaves included ministers and artisans, it seemed that the status of the slaves was not now.

### Law Suits and Cases

Lawsuits and cases heard and tried or rather arbitrated often found in records. They were related with robbery, theft, assault, territorial dispute, steal, toddy palm dispute, divorce, rape, inheritance, land dispute and slaughtering cow. For maintaining peace and security, some criminals in Sagaing township faced hardship penalties. The legal cases that arose in Sagaing township from available evidence were as follows:

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<sup>46</sup> Min Swe (Theikpan Thinch), *Ponna Thamaing Hnit Yinkyehmu* (History and culture and Ponnas), Yangon, Aung Chan Tha Press, December 2000, p.15 (Henceforth Min Swe, 2000)

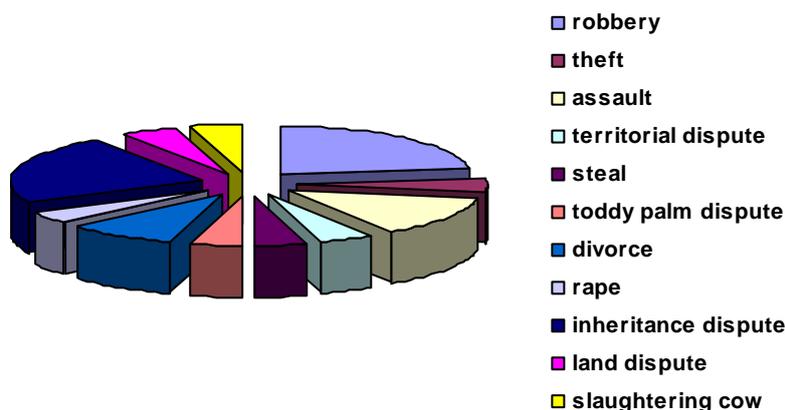
<sup>47</sup> Min Swe, 2000, 30

<sup>48</sup> Than Tun, 1986 (a), 754

<sup>49</sup> Daw Ohn Kyi, "Yazamanisula Kyauksa" (Yazamanisula iInscription), Researches in Myanmar History, Yangon, Universities Historical Research Department, 2002, pp.145-147

<sup>50</sup> Daw Ohn Kyi, *Letywez in Sadan Mya* (Selected papers), Yangon, Myanmar Historical Commision, 2004, p.41

**Table.7 Distribution of Thet-kayit (Crimes in Sagaing Regions)**



Source: Division of inheritance, *Parabaik MS*, no.1, Ywathit village, Daw San san win Collection (Henceforth: SSWC); Money Loans, *Parabaik MS*, no. 7 and 46, SBMC; Report on the Legal case in Sagaing Township, *Parabaik MS*, no.50, SBMC; Inheritance Suit, *Parabaik MS*, UTC (Henceforth UTC); Mr.Taw Sein Hko, Hluttaw Hmattan, Yangon Union of Burma Government Printing and Stationery; 1960, p.161; Division of inheritance, *Parabaik MS*, no.1, Ywathit village, SSWC; Shehaung Sarpe Thutethi Ta Oo, 1, 4, 9, 21, 27; Than Tun, 1986 (a), 659; Than Tun, 1989, 534

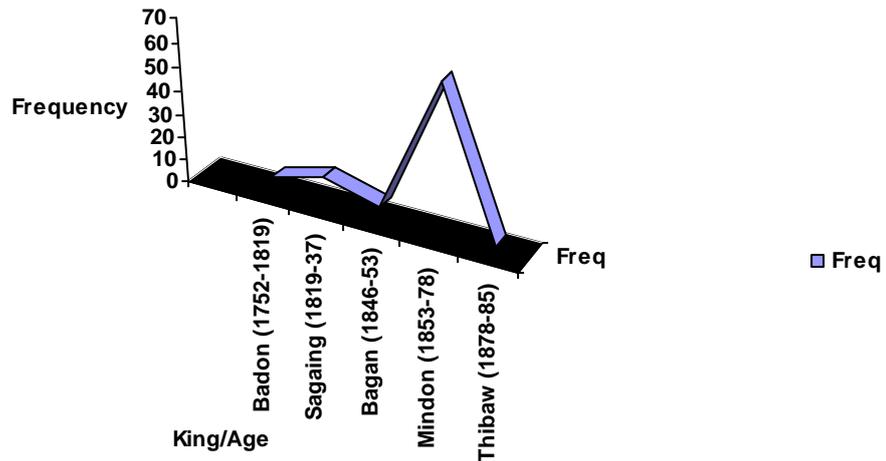
Robbery was rampant during the later part of King Badon's reign. Most notorious bandits who reigned over the Sagaing township in Konbaung period. In Myanmar history such highway banditry took place only when great economic hardship and famine broke out. Such an epidemic naturally devastated many villages. So it can be said that Sagaiings was facing great economic hardship that bred social unrest in the region. Another banditry broke out during the reign of King Thara wadi in the year 1824 all the lawsuits and trials were suspended during the growing seasons. The two Anglo-Myanmar wars also caused the people a great economic hardship. Owing to this causes, it effects of crimes and sin. Criminal cases were also Sagaing regions.

### **Distribution of *Thetkayit***

Most of the *athi* were poor and they hardly kept money with them for daily use. Through out their life they had to resort to barter system and they had to exchange commodities with other people. Sometimes when they were in need of money they had to borrow with interest. But they were unable to give back the money and they had to reply their money by doing odd jobs which they could master. During the feudal period there were the exploitation of men by men especially well-to-do and powerful individuals usually exploited the poor. Thus, they had but to mortgage or sell their properties including land, animals, siblings and household utensil. Money

loans with was also common place in Sagaing regions. All in all, I would like to present the distribution of *thetkayit* collected from the villages. One hundred and nine *thet-kayits* were collected from the Sagaing regions. Of them *le paung* (land mortgages), *newei-chei* (money loans) and *ko-nei* (bondage loans) were most common. They are tabulated.

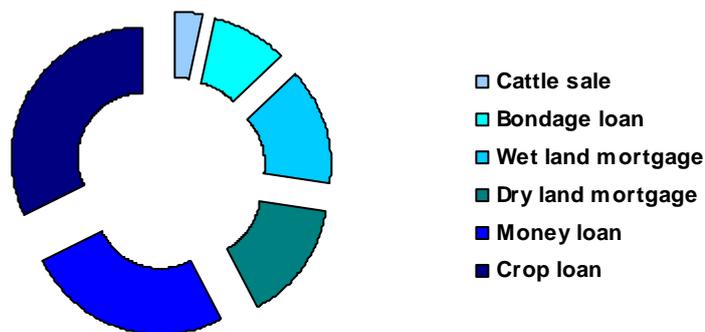
Table.8 Distribution of Thetkayits (1820-1943)



Source: Bondage Loan, *Parabaik MS*, no. 1268, DCC; Cattle Loan, *Parabaik MS*, nos.139 and 251, SBMC; Money Loan, *Parabaik MS*, nos. 46, 138, 140 and 225, SBMC; Paddy Loan, *Parabaik MS*, nos, 2,4 and 211, SBMC; Money Loan, *Parabaik MS*, nos. 2, 5, 6, 7 and 18, SSWC; Cattle Loan, *Parabaik MS*, no.3, UTC.

Based on the available data, it can be surmised that the king Mindon saw more people entangled in the web of indebted. What type of *Thakayits* were arose distributed are as follows:

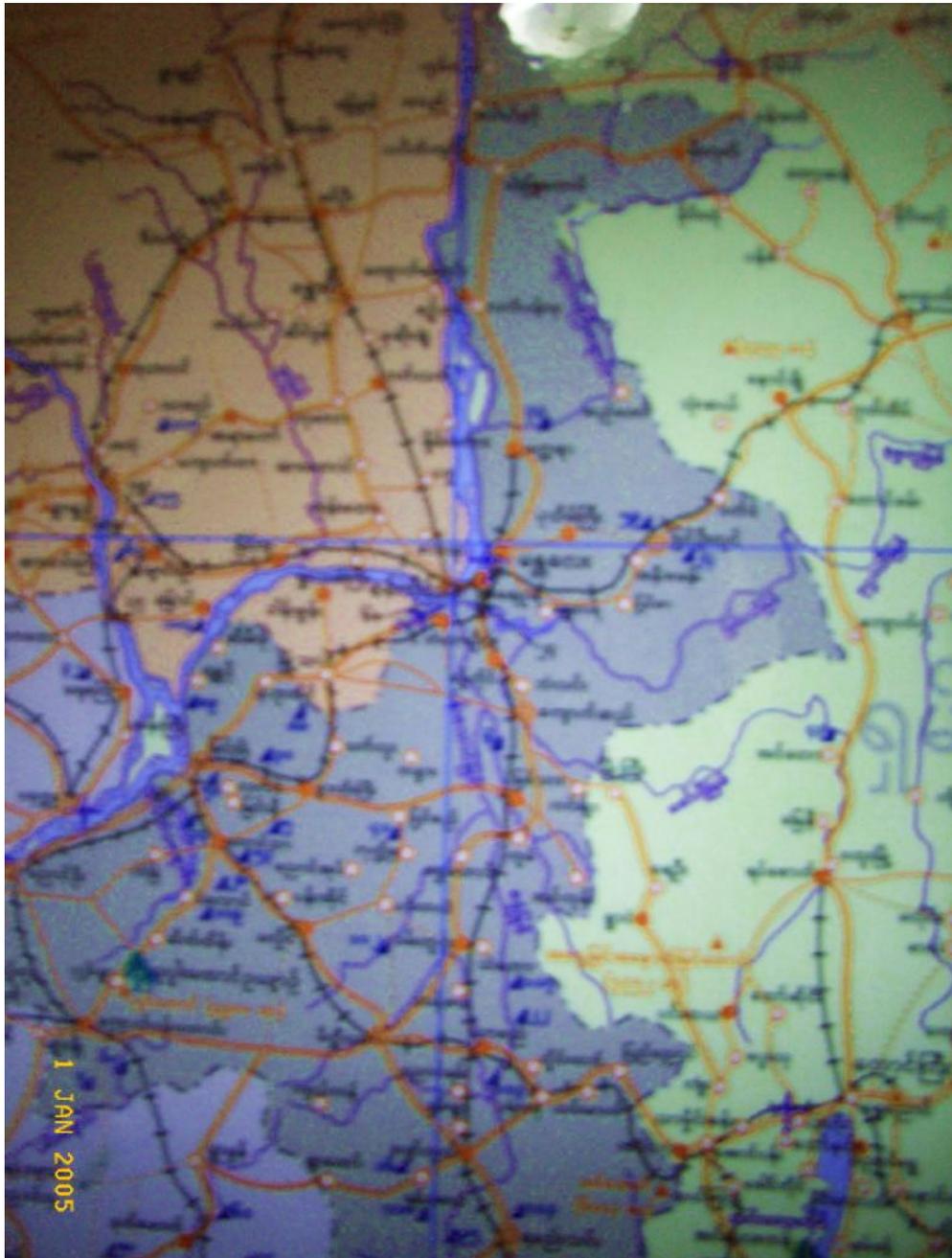
Table-6 Distribution of Thetkayits



There are (109) *thetkayits* collected from various parts of the township to study the socio-economic life of the people who dwelt in the Sagaing region. Majority of the money lenders were from this region. Among them were money men like donors of pagoda, monastery and box.

In short, the areas in Sagaing Division were inhabited by Stone Age people. The earliest inscription in which the name Sagaing is mentioned in the Hledaung pagoda inscription which belongs to A.D 1111, Sagaing town was a place where the successive kings of Pagan, Innwa and Kon-baungs period constructed religious buildings. Hence it can be regarded as an important place not only for military matters, but also for the administration of the kingdom. Moreover, a considerable number of foreigners were Siamese, Yuns and Manipuris also settled in Sagaing township. Its population was higher than that of Innwa and lower than that of Amarapura. Therefore, it can be regarded as a medium size town. Agriculture has been the backbone of Sagaing township's economy since the Pagan period. The Sagaing must have been prosperous but the deeds of land and other mortgages highlight the economic difficulties of the area. It is learnt from the documents concerning legal cases that arose in this area. As Sagaing was famous for its silverware industry, silk-weaving and pottery, it can be concluded that the cultural status was high.

**Around the Sagaing Region**



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