



Japan-Myanmar Collaboration on Conservation and Preservation of Cultural Heritages in Myanmar



Proceeding Paper of Joint Symposium of Digitization and Conservation of Myanmar Old Manuscripts

Organized By

**Ide Laboratory, Kyoto University, Japan
University of Yangon**



***13th – 14th December 2016
Science Hall,
University of Yangon***

96th. Anniversary of University of Yangon

**Japan-Myanmar Collaboration on Conservation and
Preservation of Cultural Heritages in Myanmar**

**Proceedings of Joint Symposium on Digitization and
Conservation of Myanmar Old Manuscripts**

December 2016

University of Yangon

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Ide Laboratory, Advanced Imaging Technology

Graduate School of Engineering, Kyoto University, Japan

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Table of Contents



	Page
Foreword	ii
Welcome Address by Rector Dr. Pho Kaung	v
Welcome Address by Sithu Dr. Thaw Kaung	vii
Proceedings	
Proceedings of Joint Symposium on Digitization and Conservation of Myanmar Old Manuscripts	1

Foreword

By Sithu Dr. Thaw Kaung



It is a pleasure and an honour for me to be able to write this "Foreword" to the *Proceedings of the Symposium Program for Digitization and Conservation of Myanmar Old Manuscripts*, held at the University of Yangon under the Japan-Myanmar Collaboration Conservation and Preservation of Cultural Heritage in Myanmar. The Symposium was held at the Science Hall of the University of Yangon on 13th and 14th December 2016.

In this *Proceedings* there are (19) valuable papers on Conservation and Digitization of Myanmar Old Manuscripts, (3) by Japanese scholars and (16) by Myanmar scholars. The three papers by Japanese scholars include two by eminent Professors of Kyoto University on control of the library indoor hygro-thermal environment for long-term preservation of rare manuscript and other library materials. There is also an informative and useful paper on high quality digitization of important documents in the library. Both these papers are invaluable to Myanmar librarians and archivists for the preservation of old traditional manuscripts, and for making the texts from these manuscripts available to scholars through digitization.

The third paper is on present-day Japanese public libraries, providing useful information to Myanmar readers and librarians.

Of the (16) papers by Myanmar librarians and scholars, many are valuable records of special collections in university libraries, national libraries and archives which are still not much known even to local scholars. They provide data on what Myanmar librarians and scholars are doing to conserve and digitize old manuscripts. The paper on digitizing traditional medical texts from palm-leaf manuscripts by Dr. Hlaing Hlaing Gyi, Librarian and Head of the University of Yangon Library is valuable as a model for digitizing programmes in our country. To supplement this paper is another one on traditional medical texts on palm-leaf manuscripts in the Universities' Central Library by

Daw Yu Yu Tin, the Chief Librarian of UCL. During my tenure as Chief Librarian of UCL from 1969 to 1997, I collected many priceless old manuscripts on traditional Myanmar medicine. Many were microfilmed around 1988 to 1996 under a collaborative programme between Cornell University Library and UCL. These old texts should now be transferred from microfilm to digital format to make them readily accessible to all scholars.

The study on the palm-leaf manuscripts collection in Thar-lay (South) monastery in Inlay Lake, Shan State, by Daw Zin Mar Oo, Librarian of Taunggyi University, is mainly based on a catalogue of this collection compiled by me and U Nyunt Maung, retired Head of the UCL Manuscripts Section, with the help of (7) librarians and archivists chiefly from the Historical Research Department under the Myanmar Historical Commission. The project was funded by Toyota Foundation.

After my retirement from the Universities' Central Library, I became a Member of the Myanmar Historical Commission (MHC) in 1998. We were able to form under MHC the National Commission for the Preservation of Traditional Manuscripts, from 1994 to about 2005. Our main support was from the Japan and Toyota Foundations. We were able to compile inventories of still existing monastic library collections, take microfilms of rare manuscripts and compile some catalogues. From 2006 to 2016 this National Commission collapsed. Only now in early 2017 this commission is being re-established as a main committee under the Myanmar Historical Commission, now led by the Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture. I have been asked to head this committee under MHC.

From 1980 with the completion of the Universities' Central Library new building to about 2006 we have received strong support from the Japanese Government and Foundations for preservation of old manuscripts.

I hope that the new joint programmes between the University of Yangon and Kyoto University for the Japan-Myanmar Collaboration on Conservation and Preservation of Cultural Heritage in Myanmar will give new impetus to protect, conserve and preserve the rich cultural heritage of Myanmar that is embedded on our old palm-leaf and *parabike* paper manuscripts.

In 2005 when I was awarded the Fukuoka Asian Cultural Prize as an Academic Laureate, mainly for my work in collecting and preserving old manuscripts, the selection committee cited the importance of the old Myanmar manuscripts as a valuable part of the rich Asian Cultural heritage which we should all do our utmost to preserve not only for the present but for future generations as part of the Memory of the World and Mankind. I hope this book will form a valuable contribution towards the goal of preserving Myanmar Cultural Heritage as part of the centuries old Asian Culture to which both Japan and Myanmar are making worthy contributions.

12.2.2017

Thaw Kaung



Welcome address given by Rector Dr Pho Kaung at the Symposium for Digitization and Conservation of Myanmar Old Manuscript under the auspices of Japan Myanmar Collaboration on Conservation and Preservation of Cultural Heritage in Myanmar 15 August 2016 Dear Honorable Sayargyi Dr Thaw Kaung, Professors from Japan, Pro-rectors, Professors, Chief Librarians, Librarians and Faculty Members of Universities in Myanmar, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen and all those present at this occasion, May I wish you a very Good Morning!

I would like to extend a warm welcome to you on behalf of University of Yangon. It is our pleasure to host the Symposium for Digitization and Conservation of Myanmar Old Manuscript under the auspices of Japan-Myanmar or Kyoto University-Yangon University Collaboration on Conservation and Preservation of Cultural Heritage in Myanmar.

Actually, Kyoto University and University of Yangon had built up some collaborative record for some time. Let me point out some activities of collaboration carried out in various disciplines. They are Conservation and preservation of Cultural Heritages in Myanmar, Geological Science, Energy Science, Bio-resources Management and study on International Relations. Even I myself have worked together with Professors of Kyoto University for the program called Promotion of Energy Science Education for Sustainable Development in Myanmar. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) for academic cooperation and exchange was concluded between Kyoto University and the University of Yangon in 2015. Through the concluded MOU, the two universities aim to further develop their existing collaboration. We have already installed solar cells powered system on the roof of new Research Center with technical assistance by Kyoto University, Japan. As a continued effort of both universities, here comes the Symposium for Digitization and Conservation of Myanmar Old Manuscript. I firmly believed that this symposium would enhance the technical capacity for conserving and managing valuable Myanmar Cultural Heritage.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before concluding my opening remark, I would like to express my sincere thanks to Prof Ari Ide-Ektessabi and members of his lab, KU and invited Speakers for sharing their specialist knowledge and extensive experiences, Librarian Dr Hlaing Hlaing Gyi and members of University of Yangon Library and Faculty Members of UY for their special efforts that they have made to hold this symposium possible. Finally, I wish you all every success in this symposium. Thank you once again and have a nice day.

Rector of Yangon University
Honorable Japanese Scholars
Distinguished Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen



Greetings and a Warm Welcome to participants of the Japan-Myanmar Symposium on the Digitization and Conservation of Myanmar Old Manuscripts.

As we all know it is of the utmost importance for each country in the world to preserve its cultural heritage. Of the many kinds of cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, for academic scholars, the preservation of the written word from old traditional manuscripts is one of the most important tasks that we have to undertake.

Myanmar like many other countries, including Japan, has a rich heritage of writings on stone, palm-leaf, paper **parabike** and other mediums. The material on which words are written has to be preserved mainly by using chemicals. So we need expert chemists to help the librarians.

For University Librarians we have the important task of preserving not only the written words of the past but also the medium on which they were written.

Archaeologists preserve stone inscriptions and writings on ancient artifacts like pagoda bells, wall paintings and other mediums.

Librarians have to preserve the writings on palm-leaf and paper manuscripts not only in our own collections but from other collections both within our country, especially in old monastic libraries, and also from priceless collections in other countries for example at the British Library in London.

We preserve the writing with microfilming and digitizing. For the University Library our 1st microfilm cameras (mostly from canon) and photocopiers were all provided by the Japanese govt. during my tenure Chief Librarian. We received a grant of 40m. yen from Japan and bought preservation equipment and our 1st air-conditioners. But that was over 35 years ago later university library had collaborative programmes with Tokyo University of Foreign studies. We did joint-seminars in Yangon and Tokyo (Fuchu), up to about 2006.

The foundation that my son, Dr. Thant Thaw Kaung, and I established called Myanmar Book Aid and Preservation Foundation have received funding from Toyota Foundation to prepare mss. and microfilm catalogues like the one we compiled for Thalay South. Monastery in the Inle lake, on an island next to the famous Phaung daw Oo Pagoda.

When we digitize we should make the old texts available to all scholars through our websites. These old texts are our Memory of the Past, as well as Repositories of our Traditional Knowledge.

But at the same time we have to carry out PAC work (PAC-Preservation and Conservation) for the medium also. For Myanmar libraries, our old manuscripts. are mainly palm-leaf and *parabike* hand-made paper. The National Diet Library, both in Tokyo and Nara_ (the Kansai Branch) have helped us with PAC training. Also training for microfilming, digitizing technicians. But there has been a long gap of over (15) years. All the Japan trained staff have retired.

I hope that this Symposium with our Japanese colleagues from Kyoto University will be the start of further collaboration between our two universities for Preservation and Conservation of mss. both the text and the medium.

In conclusion:

I wish you all a successful (2) days of paper presentations and discussions.

And for our Japanese scholars a pleasant stay in Myanmar.

Thank you.

Symposium Program for Digitization and Conservation of
Myanmar Old Manuscripts
13rd – 14th December 2016
University of Yangon

DAY 1 December 13 (Tuesday)	
Venue : Science Hall, University of Yangon	
Time	Agenda
9:00-9:10	Welcome Address Dr. Pho Kaung , Rector, University of Yangon
9:15-9:30	Welcome Address, Introduction to the Collaboration Project, 2015 and 2016 Ari Ide-Ektessabi, Professor, Graduate School of Engineering, Kyoto University
9:30-9:50	Welcome Address, Sithu Dr. U Thaw Kaung
Session 1	Digitization and Conservation of Myanmar Old Manuscripts
10:30-11:00	Paper Presentation: Unearthed Story of Myanmar History: Preserving Myanmar Manuscripts by Dr. Thaw Kaung, Chief Librarian (Redt.), Universities' Central Library
11:00-11:30	Paper Presentation : “ Necessity of Preserving our Tangible Heritage Manuscripts ”, Daw Khin Lay Soe, Deputy Director, SEAMEO-CHAT
11:30-12:00	Japanese Public Libraries of Today by Yoshie Kato, TRC Library Service Inc.
13:30-14:30	Demonstration Using High Resolution Display by Professor Ide and Hoko
14:30-15:00	Paper Presentation: Treasures of the National Library of Myanmar By Daw Mya O, Director, National Library, Myanmar.
15:15-15:45	Paper Presentation “ Digitization Project of the National Archives Department of Myanmar ”, Dr. Ni Win Zaw, Professor (Head), Dept. of Library and Information Studies, University of Yangon
15:45-16:15	Paper Presentation : Admitted letters of Konbaung period from Parabaik Manuscripts by Daw Ni Ni Naing, Librarian, Universities' Central Library
16:15-16:45	Paper Presentation : “ The Causes of deterioration of Traditional Manuscript ”, Daw Myo, Librarian, Culture University, Yangon
16:45-17:15	Panel Discussion : Discussion on participants : Japan, Libraries and Chemistry Department

DAY 2 December 14 (Wednesday)

Venue : Science Hall, University of Yangon

Time	Agenda
Session 2 Digitization and Conservation of Myanmar Old Palm-leaf Manuscripts	
9:00-9:15	Introduction to today's program, Professor Ari ide-Ektessabi
9:15-9:45	Paper Presentation: Preservation and Conservation of Ancient Myanmar Manuscripts by Daw Tin Phone Nwe, Chief Librarian (Redt.) and Part-time Professor, Universities' Central Library and Department of Library and Information Studies.
9:45-10:15	Paper Presentation: "Palm-leaf : the ancient writing medium of Myanmar" by U Maung Maung Thein and U Thein Lwin, Professor (Redt.) Department of Library and Information Studies, University of Yangon.
10:30-11:00	Paper Presentation: "Detection of Fungus from Old Palm-leaf Manuscripts Stored in the University of Yangon Library and Biochemical Properties of Citronella Grass" by Dr. San San Aye, Associated Professor, Chemistry Department, Myin Chan Degree College, Mandalay Division.
11:00-11:30	Paper Presentation : "Cataloguing of Parabaiks In the Universities' Central Library" by Daw Tin Win Yee, Chief Librarian (Retired), Universities' Central Library
11:30-12:00	Paper Presentation : "Preservation and Conservation of Palm Leaf Manuscripts Collected from Mingin District, Sagaing Region" Dr. Kaythi Htwe, Director, National Library, Myanmar.
13:30-14:00	Paper Presentation : "Myanmar Traditional Medicine on Palm-leaf Manuscripts Collected in Universities' Central Library" Daw Yu Yu Tin, Chief Librarian, Universities' Central Library
14:00-14:30	Paper Presentation : Ancient Myanmar Manuscript Collection in Yadanabon University by Dr. Sandar Oo, Professor (Head), Library and Information Studies, University of Yantanabon
14:30-15:00	Paper Presentation : A Study on the selected Tipitaka catalogue formats of old manuscripts (palm-leaf) by Dr. Saw Mya Kyi Thar, Professor (Head), Library and Information Studies, East Yangon University
15:00-15:30	Paper Presentation : " Digitization Process and study on selective traditional Medicine Palm-leaf Manuscripts" Dr. Hlaing Hlaing Gyi, Librarian, University of Yangon.
15:30-16:00	Paper Presentation : A study on the Palm leaf Manuscripts in Thar -Lay (South) Monastery, Thar-Lay Village, Innle Lake, Shan State by Daw Zin Mar Oo, Librarian, Taunggyi University, Shan State
16:00-17:00	Panel Discussion and Closing Program Discussion participants : Japan, Academic Libraries and National Libraries

