

## U Kyaw Yin, Enthusiast of Myanmar Literature

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### Abstract

All librarians need to familiarize with the genre of books and writing style of a particular proficient writer. Due to their personal qualities, they can support the readers' requirements. This research work tries to reveal the personal profile of U Kyaw Yin (Retired Rector of Mandalay Arts and Science University) and his creative literary work. As he takes great interest in Myanmar literature, he enjoys writing creatively. He is not only a skillful teacher but also a talented writer. Saya Gyi can be regarded as a shining star that glows brilliantly both in his work place and in the field of literature. The main purpose of this research work is conducted by using interview method and literature search method. In order to serve as a remarkable spot light for the future generation, this research work is done.

**Key words** \_ Literature, Biography

### 1. Introduction

Myanmar literature has been flourished and marked tremendous changes throughout the continuous periods. Myanmar citizens can protect their literary and cultural heritage. A major landmark in Myanmar literature can be traced in Rajakumara (ရဇာကုမာရ) Stone Inscription.

Myanmar literature developed further through three pathways. The first path based on Buddhism and Buddhist literature. Novels, dramas and poems are inclusive in this genre. The second path focused on the royal environment. The record of significant events Maw Kun (မာဝကုန်), Aye Chin (အိချိန်), history, Lyoke Hton (လှိုကျော်စွယ်စုံ), and Phyat Hton (ဖျာတ်စွယ်စုံ), are the genres that involved in the second path. The last path includes Tra Chin (တရချိန်), Eain Chin (အိချိန်), Myatta Sar (မိတ္တရာ), Lwan Chin (လှော်ချိန်), and Kouk Saik Thachin (ကွေ့ဆိန်စာချိန်). Thus, Myanmar has become prominent both in poetic genre and prose genre.

Concerning with the historical background of Myanmar Literature, there are many notable facts. In the decades, before and after the Second World War, the movement for independence continued to fuel Myanmar Literature. New style of writing with shorter and clear sentences and unadorned poem were published in popular periodicals. Some notable poetries were Thakhin Ko Taw Hmaine, Zaw Gyi and Min Thu Won.

Short stories and novels and proses form came into vogue. They focus on the individual experiences and place that character at the centre of the plot. Theik Pan Mg Wa, Thein Pe Myint and Tet Toe were some significant authors.

After attaining independence, the role of drama expanded to masses. Promotion of Socialism, Colony Opposition, Fascism Opposition and National aims were expressed in their creativity. Some well-known dramatists were U Nu, Thakhin Ba Thaug and Aung Ba La. One of the prolific male writers of the Colonial and Independent periods was U Kyaw Yin. He was a man with rare abilities. The evidences of his actions and words will be revealed in this research paper. The activities that mentioned in this research attract a lot of interest to the readers. Thus, the librarians, the teachers and the researchers should make themselves known to U Kyaw Yin and his personal experiences.

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### Scope of the Study

U Kyaw Yin was renowned as a man of honour due to his variety of experiences and abilities. This research provides a detailed profile of U Kyaw Yin and his literary achievements. Three of his literary works in article, play and poem are sorted out for review.

### Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this research paper are to make known the amazing life and work of Rakhine writers that seem to fade away and disappear. The secondary aim is to uplift the feeling of respect and value the high standard of literature. Hopefully, it can be regarded as a reliable reference for future use. Moreover the facts and information from this dissertation are intended to support all the researchers. And finally, the collected data is clearly targeted on the future generation to imitate patriotic spirit of the internationally well-known writer.

### Method of the Study

By using the vital literature search method and interview method, the personal data of U Kyaw Yin are collected. The required reference books are provided by Universities' Central Library University of Yangon Library and Yadanabon University Library.

### Organization of Research Paper

The contents of this research paper comprise various forms of Myanmar words. For having the correct spelling system, *Myanmar (Burmese) Romanization* published by Library of Congress is being used.<sup>1</sup>

In contributing transliteration, the titles of books and the publishing houses are significantly recorded according to the system. However, the titles of some well-known magazines and publishing houses are exposed in their original spelling.

eg. Sarpay Beikman (p̄mayĀr̄mē)

All personal names and the names of towns are not included in this procedure.

eg. U Kyaw Yin (ŌbāŪsm̄&ī)

Sittwe (pp̄áw̄)

### Outcome of the Study

Different types of literature are value for form and style. Being a prolific writer, U Kyaw Yin created significant literary works. As a matter of facts, it is necessary to highlight his capabilities.

## 2. Literature Review

A literature review is an evaluative report of information found in the literature related to the selected area of study. The review surveys scholarly articles, books and other sources relevant to particular issue, area of research, or theory, providing a description, summary and critical evaluation of each work. The purpose is to offer an overview of significant literature published on a topic. A long number of studies have been undertaken on many aspect related to live and work of prominent writer. The literature analyzed and reviewed has been appended below in a classified manner as supportive materials for further references.

Wai Wai Hlaing examined the selected study of writings of some prominent writers as information sources. After the Myanmar Historical Commission has established in 1955, invaluable historical records were published as the anniversary of the Golden Jubilee of

<sup>1</sup> *Myanmar (Burmese) Romanization*. Washington DC: Library of Congress, 1981.

Myanmar Historical Commission in 2004. It covers five selected writing by prominent writers such as Daw Khin Khin Ma, Dr. Khin Maung Nyunt, Daw Ni Ni Myit, Sao Htun Hmat Win and U Tun Aung Chain, who are members of the Myanmar Historical Commission. Each book is evaluated for the better use for who are interested in the writing of prominent authors so, the result for this paper will help to scholars and researchers who are in the field of history and its related subjects.<sup>2</sup>

Phyo Su Thet mentioned biographies of Myanmar librarians-cum-writers and to five great honour to them. It analyses their work, experiences achievement, their attitudes as a librarian and a writer. It also explores their writings. This paper is based on certain criteria such age, position and contribution as a writer. It consists of 18 librarians who are still alive and those who have passed away; they all are librarians as well as writers as their profession. It also included the biographical data for each individual are arranged chronologically. Throughout that thesis, biographical data is collected from a variety of sources, interview and questionnaire. It will be useful for the next generations who are interested in the biographies of librarians also known as writers.<sup>3</sup>

Yin Mon Thant investigated the life and work of a well-known Myanmar writer Htin Lin, pen-name of U thein Maung (1919-1996). He wrote poems, articles, short stories, composition, usage and novel for forty-nine years from 1947-1996. Explicit annotation and review of selected novel, poetry, articles and short story are included in this paper. Through his works Myanmar standard of literature can be known. This paper is certainly great help to readers and researchers in their studies of Htin Lin life and his literary works.<sup>4</sup>

Demo Khin focuses on the bibliographies of author compiled at the Department of Library and Information Studies, University of Yangon for the post graduate diploma theses between 1975- 2009. It includes bibliographies of 7 authors such as Maha Swe, Mawpi Saya Thein, P Moe Ninn, Shwe U Daung, Theippan Maung Wa, Thein Pe Myint and Zaw Gyi. And then tis paper includes the author's brief biographies data, special feature of author's bibliography, and comments. The compilation of this paper is intended for the students, scholars and researchers to search easily for their needed information.<sup>5</sup>

Mi Han Thar Yar Marn discussed lives and works of three selected Myanmar writer-cum-lawyers who the National Literary Awards within the year 1948-1970. Two of the writer had passed away. The biographies of three prominent writers and their four prize-winning books are exposed. As a mark of honour to their concerted effort and their remarkable achievements, this research paper tries to compile their literary contributions. In collecting data of the award winning writers, two methods are used. The literature search method and personal interview method are used for compiling the required data of each writer. it is also beneficial to those who wish to do further research on Myanmar National Literary Awards and Lawyers.<sup>6</sup>

### **3. U Kyaw Yin (Rector of Mandalay University) (1916-1966)**

<sup>2</sup> Wai Wai Hlaing, "An Analytical Study on the Selected Writing of Members of Myanmar Historical Commission." (Master's thesis: Yadanabon University, 2005), viii.

<sup>3</sup> Phyo Su Thet, "An Analytical Study on the Writers-Cum Librarians of Myanmar". ( Master's thesis: Yadanabon University, 2005), viii.

<sup>4</sup> Yin Mon Thant, "Analytical Study on Life and Works of Htin Lin", (Master of Research's thesis: University of East Yangon, 2008), viii.

<sup>5</sup> Demo Khin. "An Analytical Study on Selected Author Bibliographies Compiled at the Department of Library and Information Studies, University of Yangon. (Master's thesis: Yadanabon University, 2016), viii.

<sup>6</sup> Han Thar Yar Marn, "Lives and Works of Myanmar Writers-Cum-Lawyers Who Won the National Literary Awards (1948-1979), (Master of Research's thesis: University of East Yangon, 2017), viii.



Figure 1 Photos of U Kyaw Yin (1916-1966)

### Childhood life

U Kyaw Yin was born at 4 am on December 7, 1916 at Thandwe (ဝံး) Township in Rakhine State. He was the only son of U Pho Oo, a district superintendent clerk and Daw Mya Yin. When he was five years old, his father passed away. He grew up under the care and guidance of his grandfather U Pho, and his grandmother, Daw Shwe Ei. As he was well-bred and nicely shaped by his grandfather, he became good-natured, and well behaved. He also had a happy childhood as he got on well with his peer-group.<sup>7</sup>

### Student life

He attended the A.B.M. (American Baptist Mission) school in Thandwe. He had his primary and middle schooling from that school. After passing the seventh standard examination, he transferred to Thandwe Government High School from where he passed the Matriculation Exam in 1934. However, his application for attending Rangoon University was rejected, due to his mistaken choice of subject combination. In 1935, he continued his education at Rangoon T.T.C. While studying there he was awarded the first prize in the nation-wide essay contest.<sup>8</sup>

In 1936, he was admitted to attend Rangoon University. As a University student, he took an active part in national movement in 1936. He earned B.A in 1941. As he had good leadership qualities, he was offered the leading role by the students. Moreover, he was one of the members of Dui' Bamā 'acaññ 'arum' ( 'Armtprnt 1/2H). He returned to Thandwe and formed opposing forces of Colonization. In 1942, when British Army was retreating from Burma, he took part in the underground resistance movement of Thandwe District. In September 1943, he tried in vain to go to China with his comrade, Thakhin Tin for the purpose of disapproving Fascism. Then, he attended the political training course that was secretly run

<sup>7</sup> Mg Zayar, *Mran 'mā lūkyo' 100* (Pathama 'aup') (jreimvbaumi100 (yxrty)) (Yangon: Unity Press, 2010), 190-193. ( Hereafter cited as Mg Zayar, 2010)

<sup>8</sup> Mg Zayar, 2010, 12-15.

in Delta region with the aim of resisting fascists. Instead of his real name, he took the course under the name of Ko Ba Kunn (ကုဝေ့).<sup>9</sup>

In 1944, he was one of the first batch members who were sent secretly to India by AFPFL. Being a patriotic person, he became a prominent national leader in the movement of fascists' revolution. Moreover, he was a renowned parachutist. When he became an officer in charge of political training course, he delivered lectures to the trainees about the way of changing Colonial War to Public War.<sup>10</sup>

In the post-war year, he wrote a book entitled *Nay' khyai' cac' mha lū thu cac' sui'* (နေ့စဉ်အတွက်ပုဂ္ဂိုလ်). It was based on his previous lectures. The *Lūthu* publishing House printed and made it available to the public. In 1945, he was voted in as a member of Burma Communist Party Central Committee of Shanchaung Township. In 1945, due to the divisiveness of Communist Party, he became a committee member of communist party (Leftist) under the leadership of Thakin Than Tun and Thakin Thein Pe Myint.<sup>11</sup>

### Professional Life

Due to the unstable political situation, Bogyoke Aung San assigned U Kyaw Yin to take up a post of Union Minister for Thandwe Township in Rakhine State. However, he offered an apology for refusing the job. Then, he served as a tutor of Department of Burmese in Rangoon University. He earned M.A (Burmese) in 1950. For having a master degree, he had submitted a thesis entitled "History of Burmese Proverbs" (*Mran'mā cakā* "ပုံစံပုဒ်များ") (ကျောက်တုံးစာပေ). In the same University, he served as an Assistant Lecturer and then, he was promoted to the position of Lecturer. In 1962, he went to Soviet Russia and performed duties of visiting professor in Burmese Department of International Communication University, Moscow, up till 1964. From 1964 to 1965 he took on new responsibilities as Vice- Director in University Board of Administration. From 1965 to 1966, he served as a Rector of Mandalay Arts and Science University.<sup>12</sup>

### Academic Activities

While he was in service at Department of Burmese Language in Rangoon University, he acted as one of the members of Sarpay Beikman (ပုထိုးပုထိုး) Association, *The Rangoon University Annual Magazine* and *The Rakhine Tan-zaung* (ရခိုင်တောင်ငူ) Magazine. In 1950-1952, he carried out a task of supervisor in Burmese section for Burma Writers Association.

### Family Life

In 1945, he got married to Daw Phyu Phyu. Their marriage took place at Sinaung (ခင်းတိုင်) village in Thandwe Township. They had their quiet wedding ceremony in order to avoid causing detriment of Japanese resistance movements. They have two children. The elder son is U Nyan Htun Aung and the younger daughter is Daw Thandar Phyu.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> *Nhac'chay' Rācu Mran'mā cāre'' charā 100 (Athuppatti 'ākyñ')* (20 &mpkjrefrmpma&q&m 100 (tw-KyŪwādtusOf)? (Yangon: Yarpayae cāpe, 2010). 162-164. (Hereafter cited as *Nhac'chay' Rācu Mran'mā cāre'' charā 100(Athuppatti 'ākyñ')*, 2010)

<sup>11</sup> Mg Zayar, 2010, 12-15.

<sup>12</sup> *'Apoñ'' 'asañ''yoñ''rañ''tui' \*e Kyaw Yin (taygif;toif;a&mif;&if;wdkY\ausmf&if)* (Rangoon: Praññ' to' sac' cāpe, 1967), 232-264. (Here after cited as *'Apoñ'' 'asañ''yoñ''rañ''tui' \*e Kyaw Yin, 1967)*



4. Mg Ba Kunn
5. Mg Kyaw Yin
6. Oke Hla
7. Shwe Twe` Kyaw
8. Theikpan Myo Tint

### Review on the author's literary works

U Kyaw Yin had great talent for creative writing. His literary creativity had exploited literature (poems, dramas, novels), politics, biographies, education, science, historiography, language, technology, translation, religion and industrialism. Among the preferable genres of U Kyaw Yin, three of his literary works are sorted out for review.

Three of his literary works are sorted out for review.

(i) Kyaw Yin. "Mibha guṇo 'anantā (၎်ဝဲ\*၎်ပ၎်တေ့၎်)." *The Tārā Maggajaṇ* " October 1947, 60-71.

(ii) Kyaw Yin, U. "Khet' nhat' nārī kabyā cī (၁၁၁၁၁၁၁၁၁၁)." *The Pephū* " *lvhā Maggajaṇ* " , December 1957, 182-187.

(iii) Kyaw Yin. "Pathama kalon' (၂၃၄၅၆၇၈၉၀)." *The Mravatī Maggajaṇ* " , May 1959, 16, 22.

(i) Kyaw Yin. "Mibha guṇo 'anantā (၎်ဝဲ\*၎်ပ၎်တေ့၎်)," *The Tārā Maggajaṇ* " October 1947, 60-71

This amusing play was chosen for review as the writer highlighted the importance of family harmony. A decline immoral standard of the children was indicated satirically.

U Kyaw Yin was genius at creating a wide variety of literature. Among his literary works, a play entitled "Mibha guṇo' 'anantā" (၎်ဝဲ\*၎်ပ၎်တေ့၎်), appeared in *The Tārā Magazine*, October issue in 1947.

It was a translated play. Its theme was similar to that of the short story, "Hhuik' sū sam" (၂၃၄၅၆၇၈၉၀), written by Thakhin Ko Taw Hmainn which appeared in Myawaddy magazine volume 9, number 6 in 1961. <sup>18</sup>

It was an amusing play based on the family affairs. The main character was an old widower who had a life-insurance for his own safety. He had two daughters who were married. The elder daughter had one female kid. The daughters neither loved nor respected their father as they were lack of responsible attitude towards him. In the hope of receiving all his inheritance, they let him stay in their houses alternately and took care of him. Not long after writing his last will and testament of his money and property, he suffered from a sudden illness. He became bed-ridden and gradually he had lapsed into unconsciousness.

"Those who have a passion for money are frequently prepared to do everything for money"- is a saying that coincides with the following plot. Thinking that he was near to death, the elder daughter pilfered some precious jewels. Then, her sister and her brother-in-law were called to see her. While they were discussing to divide their father's inheritance, the granddaughter came running towards them and broke the news of his grandpa's condition.

To everyone's surprise, the old man walked into the room. When he realized his daughters' secret plan and pilferage of his property, he felt bitter. Then, he controlled his emotions and announced that he had intended to remarry soon and he would make the renewal of his deed of agreement. He also invited them to come to his wedding ceremony without fail. "The thirst for money brings all the sins into the world" is a supporting expression for this play.

<sup>18</sup> 'Apon' " 'asan' " yon' " ran' " tui' \*e Kyaw Yin, 1967, 338-340.

As the writer has a good sense of humour, he can create an amusing play with full of interest. His play vividly portrays life of the family members who are not unanimous. The words used in the dialogues are stylish, lively and full of fun. Moreover, he has used satire to highlight the faults and weaknesses of the family members.

It is a pleasure to enjoy reading the funny side of the play. However, his didactic art can be sought on the other side of the play. It depicts that some family ties have been shaken and human actions are motivated by greed and anger. It also reminds the importance of family harmony and the development of highly moral sense. From a practical view-point, the playwright urges the readers to practise good deeds and good manners.

(ii) Kyaw Yin, U. "Khet' nahan' nārī kabyā cī (အချိန်တော်နှင့်အညီ)," *The Pephū' lvhā Maggajan' "*, December 1957, 182-187.

This article is under review as it reveals the advancement of modern technology through time. The writer's sense of humour can also be traced in describing the different use of time by people from all walks of life.

With his full knowledge, he wrote an interesting article which depicted the development of clocks and watches through time. In successive periods, people across the world tried to know the passage of time with the help of the sun and the moon. In addition, they also estimated time, based on natural sources like the blooming of flowers varying with the season and the behaviours of animals.

To keep track of time, people started using sundials or sun clocks. During the reigns of kings, drums and gongs were available for knowing the time of their purposeful work. The writer also shared his knowledge by exposing the systematic approach on how to use the royal drum and gongs.

With the advancement of high technology, clocks and watches were invented. They are reliable machines that can tell the exact time. The writer also gave his frank opinion. Every tick of the clock serves as a reminder for urbanized society but most of the country folks still do not know how to make good use of time.

Technicians of today try to create more and more modernized clocks and watches. However, they will become outdated in near future. He also pointed out that nothing can ensure the permanent consistency in this ever changing world. Obviously, his conclusive remark was full of remorse.

(iii) Kyaw Yin. "Pathama kalon' (ပထမဆုံးကလောင်)," *The Mravatī Maggajan' "*, May 1959, 16, 22.

This article is review as it exposed the first-hand experience of the writer and his poetic talent. The overwhelming feeling of the young writer was also appreciative.

Since young, U Kyaw Yin had an enthusiastic interest in reading all sorts of books and he was also a genius at writing poems. His love of reading poems, gave him a chance to choose the ideal poets, who provided models for him to imitate. He tried to study the poets' use of rhymes. After that, he had a natural sense of rhythm and started creating poems with graceful quality.

He was also crazy about printing his poems in magazines and making them available to the public. His manuscripts were rejected by *The Dagan' Maggajan' "* (ဒဂုန်မဂ္ဂဇာနည်) and *The Sak'con' Maggajan' "* (စာပေမဂ္ဂဇာနည်). He felt hurt and depressed but three months later, his first-ever poem was appeared in *The Sak'con' Maggajan' "*. He used the pen-name Shwe Twe` Kyaw (ရွှေဘွဲ့ကျော်). On seeing his printed poem, on a page of the magazine, he was overwhelmed by feelings of joy and satisfaction.

**In Myanmar version**

yiM, h0;vixif  
 at;vlyfgwll aqmif&mod  
 wllrxmeV  
 llkUwV  
 vlyMf&bl?  
 uAsmaemf  
 q&maumpf&w, ?  
 awlvbwl:/

**In English version**

Located far from sea

Winter is intensely cold  
 In my native town "Thandwe"

Woolen coat and outer-wear

Can't make me warm

Poetic language, in reality

Created by Sayar Kyaw

It's just expressing my idea.

This poem indicates his childhood experience in his native town. It was also a report of what the weather condition was like in Thandwe in the cold season. Being affected by bad weather, he felt bitterly cold. To protect him from the intense cold, he longed for wearing weather-proofed suit. Moreover, he gave a general description of the locality of Thandwe. His proud boast can be seen in the last verse of the poem.

As a whole, his first-hand experience of literary work expressed how much he valued and cherished his birth place. On the evidence of his poem, it was obvious that Thandwe was a place of his great pride and attachment.

**4. Conclusion**

U Kyaw Yin was a remarkable person. It was his team spirit that helped him to develop his social skills. He enjoyed socializing with other people. Regardless of race, and status, he treated them with equality of opportunity. His positive attitude, simple mind, openly speech and dignified features made him noticeable in the public eye.<sup>19</sup> After observing his biography, it was obvious that he had led an action-packed life. His adoring fields of interest were education, literature and politics.

As a government staff, he had stepped-up gradually from the post of Tutor to the rank of Rector of Mandalay University. In every workplace, he was warmly welcomed by all the staff, due to his qualification and working experience. With the aim of providing social services of students, he gave them, permission to form Subject-wise Associations of students, Literature and Arts Association and Health and Fitness Association. As he deserved credit for his outstanding services, he was regarded as a worth- praising person.

Being an avid reader, his secondary interest was writing various forms of literature. Moreover, he was a skilled translator. His great literary works appeared in journals and

<sup>19</sup> 'Apon "' asan "' yon "' ran "' tui' \*e Kyaw Yin, 1967, 156-169.

magazines and he became prominent play-wright. He could create many amusing plays as he had a good sense of humour.<sup>20</sup>

Due to his patriotic spirit, he got involved in political movements. However, he never thought of going into politics. He merely believed that a politics of the future had to engage with new ideas of younger generation.<sup>21</sup>

On the evidences of his actions and words, U Kyaw Yin was a man with rare abilities. A speech delivered at Mandalay Arts and Sciences University was remarkable. A flow of his words and the striking use of metaphor were the proof of his talent. From his point of view, he exposed that a track was made by the action of an elephant. By following the route through the deep forest, the path-finder could reach his destination. Likewise, the first step of upgrading methods of creating Myanmar literature might be difficult. Nevertheless, he urged the audience to pave the effective way for better changes.

The environmental influences on him, the incidents he had experienced and his thirst for knowledge were the raw materials that helped him to get to the position of a well-known writer. Evidently, achievements of his literary works provided partial contribution to the study of Myanmar Literature.

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<sup>20</sup> 'Apoñ' " 'asan' " yoñ' " raiñ' " tui' \*e Kyaw Yin, 1967, 156-169.

<sup>21</sup> 'Ibid.

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