

BUDDHISM IN THE LATE KONBAUNG PERIOD(1819-1885)

PhD DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

This paper is an analysis of Buddhism in the late Konbaung Period. How Buddhism was introduced into Myanmar is discussed. How the Myanmar professed a mixture of Buddhism and their traditional beliefs is explained. Among the seven kings who supported the Religion in Myanmar, two—Kings Badon and Mindon—reigned in the late Konbaung Period. King Badon's personal views and progressive ideas concerning the Religion are touched upon. How the kings purified the Religion partly to facilitate their rule is discussed. The monks formed separate sects in the late Konbaung period even though they did not differ from one another in robes, literature, doctrine or goal. However, the kings' support was important for a sect to stand on its own. In the late Konbaung Period, the Fifth Buddhist Synod, which was the first Buddhist Synod held in Myanmar, was convened. That the Buddhist synod convened by King Mindon was not necessary for the Religion and that he convened it only to defy the British who had annexed Lower Myanmar and to assume the title *Pyinsama Thangayanatin Mintaya* (the Convener of the Fifth Buddhist Synod) are discussed. It is also learnt that the *Thathanabyu Thathanazaunt* Committee which had to work together with the king had to carry out not only the tasks concerning the Religion, but also those involving politics and administration if ordered by the king. Therefore, although the Fifth Buddhist Synod was convened and the number of monks and that of religious buildings increased in the late Konbaung period, both the king and his subjects were unable to free themselves from their traditional beliefs; they still had faith in spirit worship, astrology and occult arts. Of the three *sasana*—*pariyatti*, *patipatti* and *pativedha*, they attached much importance to *pariyatti*. It can be assumed that Buddhism would not prosper satisfactorily so long as the people did not change their basic belief concerning the Religion.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- Aloka, 1926 “*Thathanawin Kyan*” (A Treatise on the History of the *Sasana*), Yangon, *Hanthawady Newspaper*, 1926
- Ameindawpyandangyi*,
1960 *Dhamma Vinaya Ameindaw Pyandan* (Edict on Dhamma and Vinaya), Mandalay, Pitakattaw Pyantpwaye Press, 1960
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GLOSSARY

<i>Abhidhamma Pitaka</i>	A collection of books on metaphysics and philosophy, one of the three divisions of the Buddhist Canon
<i>Alajji dussila</i>	A shameless and immoral monk
<i>Araññavasin</i>	A forest dweller
<i>Ari</i>	An immoral forest monk
<i>Atin faction</i>	The faction of monks who held that novices were to place their upper robes over their left shoulder when entering inhabited areas
<i>Atwinwun</i>	A privy councillor
<i>Ayon faction</i>	The faction of monks who held that novices were to cover both shoulders with their upper robes when entering inhabited areas
<i>Ayudawmingalar</i>	Court augur
<i>Catubhanavara</i>	A compilation of twenty-seven extracts from the three <i>Pitakas</i>
<i>Danda</i>	Punishments
<i>Ekacara</i>	A life of solitude
<i>Gamavasin</i>	A village dweller
<i>Hinayana</i>	“Lesser vehicle,” the name given by Mahayanists to Theravada.
<i>Hluttaw</i>	Supreme Council
<i>Hpaya kyun</i>	A slave donated to a pagoda/temple

<i>Joti View</i>	The view expounded by a monk named Varajoti that the existence of a being is completely annihilated after death
<i>Kammavaca</i>	The <i>Pali</i> formula recited at the performance of ecclesiastical acts like ordination
<i>Kanyitye</i>	A person employed to incise the scriptures on palm leaves using a stylus
<i>Khandakawat</i>	The duties as spelled out in the <i>Khandhaka</i>
<i>Khuddasikkha</i>	Name of a book
<i>Kyaung kyun</i>	A slave donated to a monastery
<i>Kyunthidaw</i>	A slave donated to a religious establishment
<i>Lajji pesala</i>	A monk who is conscientious and well-behaved
<i>Linga</i>	The characteristics of novices
<i>Mahadanwun</i>	A royal officer who had to follow out the <i>thathanabaing</i> 's orders
<i>Mahayana</i>	“Greater vehicle,” a form of Buddhism practiced chiefly in China, Tibet, and Japan
<i>Minye</i>	A person employed to write the scriptures on palm leaves in ink
<i>Myingaing</i>	A person employed to score out lines on palm leaves
<i>Myinwun</i>	Officer in charge of the cavalry
<i>Myothagyi</i>	Town headmen
<i>Neitthayi saya</i>	A monk who had to guide a monk when the latter is away from his mentor
<i>Nissayamuccaka</i>	The conditions a monk must meet to live independently of a teacher
<i>Pacchima sangha</i>	“The Latter Order”

<i>Parami</i>	Perfections a bodhisattva had to fulfill in each succeeding birth
<i>Pariyatti</i>	The studying of the scriptures
<i>Patimokkha</i>	A collection of monastic rules
<i>Patipatti</i>	The practice of meditation
<i>Pativedha</i>	The realization of the <i>Dhamma</i>
<i>Peloat</i>	A person employed to prepare palm leaves
<i>Pitakat asu</i>	Same as <i>pitakattawye asu</i>
<i>Pitakat kyun</i>	A slave donated to the Buddhist Canon
<i>Pitakat taikso</i>	Librarian
<i>Pitakattawye asu</i>	The group of service men employed to copy the scriptures
<i>Purima sangha</i>	“The Former Order”
<i>Sabhaga</i>	Monks of the <i>Ayon</i> faction
<i>Sakyi</i>	An editor
<i>Sama</i>	An editor next in rank below a <i>sama</i>
<i>Sangha</i>	The Order of Buddhist monks
<i>Sati</i>	An editor next in rank below a <i>sakyi</i>
<i>Saye</i>	Clerk
<i>Sekhiya</i>	Training rules
<i>Shwegyin Sect</i>	A Buddhist sect established in King Mindon’s reign
<i>Shweye</i>	A person employed to write the scriptures on palm leaves in gold
<i>Supaticchanna</i>	“Well wrapped around,” i.e. to wear the upper robe wrapped around one’s body covering both shoulders
<i>Sutta Pitaka</i>	A collection of the discourses delivered by the Buddha, one of the three divisions of the Buddhist Canon

<i>Tabaung</i>	A popular phrase which was interpreted as a prophecy
<i>Tantrism</i>	The doctrine of the Hindu or Buddhist religious writings known as tantras
<i>Thathanabaing</i>	Supreme Patriarch
<i>Thathanabyu sayadaw</i>	Supreme Patriarch
<i>Theravada</i>	“Doctrine of the Elders,” a form of Buddhism practiced in Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, and Cambodia.
<i>Thwethaukkyi</i>	The leader of a group of twenty six armed men, who was of the same rank as a <i>myothugyi</i> (town-headman)
<i>Ubhato Vibhanga</i>	A collective name for the <i>Bhikkhu-vibhanga</i> and the <i>Bhikkhuni-vibhanga</i> of the <i>Vinaya Pitaka</i>
<i>Upyitze saya</i>	Preceptor of a monk
<i>Vacivinnatti</i>	Giving a verbal intimation to laypersons saying how his pupils were learned, bright, etc. so that they would make donations to his pupils
<i>Vinaya Pitaka</i>	A collection of books on monastic rules, one of the three divisions of the Buddhist Canon
<i>Vinido</i>	“Bearer of the <i>Vinaya Pitaka</i> .” Arbitrators of monastic disputes are called <i>vinido</i> because they were supposed to be experts on the <i>Vinaya</i> rules
<i>Vipassana</i>	Insight meditation
<i>Visabhaga</i>	Monks of the <i>Atin</i> faction who misinterpreted the <i>supaticchanna</i> rule defiant monks
<i>Wun</i>	A minister or governor
<i>Wundauk</i>	An assistant to a minister (<i>wun</i>)
<i>Ywathagyi</i>	Village-headman

INTRODUCTION

It is generally believed that Buddhism prospered in the late Konbaung Period. This dissertation is written to determine whether this view is correct. Primary and secondary sources are used in writing this dissertation. The dissertation is arranged in four chapters.

Chapter one provides the background history. Concerning the introduction of Buddhism into Myanmar, the views of the different scholars are given. How it is impossible to accept that the earliest form of Buddhism that came to Myanmar was a pure form of Theravada Buddhism is discussed. The traditional belief that the Myanmar came into contact with Buddhism only after Aniruddha's conquest of Thaton is analyzed. Moreover, how the *aris*, who were disparaged in the Myanmar chronicles, did not appear in the early Pagan period, but appeared only in the later Pagan period and how they were powerful even in the post-Pagan periods and how no Myanmar King had ever stamped out the *aris* are discussed. How some kings were unable to carry through their reforms because they were not accepted by monks and laypersons is also explained.

Chapter two deals with the Propagation of *Sasana*. This chapter discusses how the *atin-ayon* issue, which was disputed for many years, was settled, how King Badon attempted to push through religious reforms after studying Buddhism himself and how he had to back down because his instruction to ordain monks according to the *Suttanta Pitaka* was not accepted by the citizens—monks as well as laypersons. Moreover, how the original purpose of the religious examinations, held with a view to promoting the *Pariyatti Sasana*, was lost because of the gifts presented to monks, how the *Tipitaka* texts were inscribed on stone slabs and the Fifth Buddhist Synod was convened in King Mindon's reign not because they were

necessary, but very likely because the king desired to boost the people's morale as his kingdom was unable to fight with the British forces which had annexed Lower Myanmar, how the kings' efforts to use their authority to cleanse the Religion and to make monks abide by *Vinaya* rules did not result in any noticeable improvements, and how the kings assumed the title *Sasana Dayaka* (Supporter of the Religion) and supported the Religion for political ends are analyzed.

Chapter three focuses on sectarianism. It is explained in this chapter that the Religion of the late Konbaung Period was not more orthodox than that in other periods, that the kings who were supposed to be purifying the Religion were still relying on occult practices, that the sects which enjoyed royal patronage were powerful, that the *atin-ayon* controversy resulted from the misinterpretation of the rules in the canonical texts, that the kings violently suppressed the sects like the Joti sect which held unorthodox views, and that King Mindon's edict on *Dhamma-Vinaya* brought about disputes and split the *Sangha*.

Chapter four is on the *Thathanabyu Thathanazaunt* Committee. How the *Thathanabyu Thathanazaunt* Committee was formed for forcing monks to follow the *Vinaya* rules, how the *thathanabaing* (Supreme Patriarch), who was chosen by the king, had to head this committee, how the kings usually appointed the monks who had taught them when they were young as *thathanabaings*, how the leaders of the *Sangha*, including the *thathanabaing*, had to carry out non-religious duties even though they were not permitted by *Vinaya* rules, how monks had to gather information as to the matters that could undermine the king's political prestige, as to whether crown service men were performing their duties and whether the people enjoyed peace and report to the king, and how the *Thathanabyu Thathanazaunt* Committee had to contribute to the perpetuation of feudalism are discussed in this chapter.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND HISTORY

Buddha *Sasana* means “the Buddha’s Teaching” or the period in which the Buddha's teaching or Buddhism exists. Some scholars believe that Buddhism was introduced into Myanmar in the first century AD.¹ Archaeological excavations have revealed that Buddhism flourished in Myanmar from the first to the tenth centuries AD, i.e. in the Pyu Period. Sriksetra, a city in the Pyu land, was the earliest locality in Myanmar where Buddhism flourished. Religious buildings in and around the ancient city of Sriksetra can still be seen.

The prevalence of Buddhism was the most important cultural feature of Sriksetra. Buddha images were made in gold, silver and bronze. Terracotta Buddha images were enshrined in the religious buildings. Although Sriksetra and Beikthano were contemporary, evidence suggests that Buddhist influence in Beikthano was still in its infancy.² As coins, funerary urns, bricks and beads made of baked clay or stone which had been unearthed at Beikthano were similar to those excavated in Sriksetra, it can be concluded that the two cultures were related. That a stupa-shaped lid of a pot and religious buildings excavated in Halin

¹Dr Toe Hla, *Myebaw Mye-auk Kyauksa Hmattan Mya Ka Pyawthaw Shehaung Myanmar Nainggan* (A History of Ancient Myanmar as told by the Inscriptions Above and Below Ground), Yangon, Zaw Press, 2004, p. 9 (Henceforth: Toe Hla, 2004)

²U Aung Thaw, "Beikthano Myohaung" (The Old City of Beikthano), *Tetkatho Pyinnyapadetha Sazaung*, Vol. I, part. ii, 1966, p. 298 (Henceforth: Aung Thaw, 1966)

are comparable to those found in Beikthano points to the fact that Buddhism also flourished in Halin.³

Sriksetra flourished from the third to the fifth centuries AD. Buddhism was introduced into Myanmar in the fourth century. Hinayana or Pali Buddhism from India spread to Sriksetra. It is learnt from contemporary Chinese records that there were about a hundred Buddhist monasteries in Sriksetra. Buddhist sects from northern India also spread to Sriksetra. Hinayana school took root in Sriksetra in the seventh and eighth centuries AD. After the fall of Beikthano and Halin, Sriksetra became the centre of a Sanskrit Buddhist sect of the Hinayana school and that of a Pali Buddhist school.⁴ The localities in which Buddhism flourished at about the same time as in Sriksetra were Vesali in India and the localities around Mt. Kelasa in Lower Myanmar. It is stated in the Kalyani inscriptions that Buddhism declined in the Mon land during the reign of King Manuha of Thaton. There is evidence that *Mahayana* Buddhism, which flourished in the early Sriksetra period, existed side by side with *Theravada*.⁵ *Mahayana* Buddhism with its distinctive bodhisattva ideal came into being in India in about the first century AD. The inscriptions found at Sriksetra can be divided into scriptural and Pyu inscriptions. The earliest extracts from the Buddhist canon in Myanmar are found

³U Myint Aung, "*Halin Myohaung*" (The Old City of Halin), *Tetkatho Pyinnyapadetha Sazaung*, Vol. III, part.iii, 1968, p. 193 (Henceforth: Myint Aung, 1968)

⁴U Maung Maung Gyi, "*Thayehkittaya Pyu Gita Lelagyet*," (A Study of Pyu Music in Sriksetra), *Tetkatho Pyinnyapadetha Sazaung* (Weikza), Vol.IX, part.i, 1974, p.110 (Henceforth: Maung Maung Gyi, 1974)

⁵U Sein Maung Oo, "*Thayehkittaya Myohaung*" (The Old City of Sriksetra) *Tetkatho Pyinnyapadetha Sazaung*, Vol. III, part. i, 1968, p. 199 (Henceforth: Sein Maung Oo, 1968)

in Sriksetra.⁶ It can therefore be assumed that Buddhism flourished in Sriksetra. The Pyus first professed Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism, which spread to Myanmar by an overland route through Tibet and China. Evidence indicates that these religions made their way not only to the land of the Pyus, which was the earliest locality in Myanmar in which Buddhism flourished, but also to Pagan. The Pyus were devout Theravadins; nevertheless, it seems that the Pyu court was influenced by Brahmanism.⁷ Buddhism in those days was a mixture of Theravada and Mahayana. Although the religion of the Pyus of Sriksetra was a blend of various religions, Theravada Buddhism was its mainstay. It is evident that Theravada Buddhists were tolerant of those who followed other religions and lived side by side with them. It seems that fine arts thrived in Sriksetra because image-worship played a vital role in Brahmanism. It is learnt that Pyu Buddhism spread as far as Pagan.

King Aniruddha ascended the throne of Pagan in AD 1044. Successive kings in Pagan, from King Thamudarit to King Aniruddha, following the teachings of the *aris*, held wrong views. King Aniruddha, realizing that the views of the *aris* were false, disliked them and was filled with dread.⁸ *Mahayana* Buddhism was prevalent in Pagan when King Aniruddha came to the throne. At that time, a pure form of Theravada Buddhism flourished in Thaton, which was referred to as Suvannabhumi. Religion flourished in Thaton in 1056, during the reign of King Manuha, who was a contemporary of King Aniruddha of Pagan.⁹ Religion

⁶Sein Maung Oo, 1968, 177

⁷Toe Hla, 2004, 25-30

⁸Mahadhammathingyan, *Thathanalinkara Sadan* (A Treatise on the Religion), Yangon, Hanthawady Pitakat Press, 1956, p.93 (Henceforth: Mahadhammathingyan, 1956)

⁹Ledi U Hla Paing, *Pahkan Thathanawin* (A History of Buddhism in Pahkan), Yangon, Gandawin Press, 1981, p. 12 (Henceforth: Hla Paing, 1981)

gradually declined in Thaton (Suvannabhumi). At that time, the *aris* were predominant in Pagan.

Mahayana Buddhism, which made its way to the localities around Pagan and northern Shan states in Upper Myanmar was not a form of *Mahayana* Buddhism which spread to China and Japan. It was the religion of the *aris*, which was a cross between Tantric Buddhism and Lamaism. The *aris* tried to impress their followers with occult practices and alchemy. In AD 904, King Thelekyang succeeded to the throne of Pagan. There were many *aris*, who were referred to in those days as *mahtis*,¹⁰ during his reign. Shin Mahti *Sayadaw*, a well-known occultist, was an *ari*. The practice and behaviour of the *aris* of Shinmahti *Sayadaw*'s days were not like those of the *aris* in the reigns of Kings Taungthugyi and Aniruddha.¹¹ However, the *aris* not only wielded influence in towns and villages but also had great influence in the court during the reigns of Kings Taungthugyi and Aniruddha, when kings as well as royal officials venerated them.¹²

The *aris* debased Tantric Buddhism by making alterations and additions to it. Because they became immoral in King Aniruddha's reign, the king scorned them. Aniruddha felt disdain for the *aris* and longed for a true doctrine. At that time, Shin Dhammadassi (aka Shin Araham), who had been a monk venerated by

¹⁰Ashin Muninda, *Buddhabatha Sittan* (A Survey of Buddhism), Yangon, Shwe Thein Tha Painting and Literature, 1978, pp. 182-84 (Henceforth: Muninda, 1978)

¹¹Ashin Pyinnyeindabhivamsa, *Sinkyethaw Buddhabatha* (A Pure Form of Buddhism), Yangon, Sarpelawka Press, 1965, pp.227-39 (Henceforth: Panyindabhivamsa, 1965)

¹²Muninda, 1978, 187

King Manuha of Thaton, came to Pagan.¹³ Entreated by King Anuruddha who venerated him, Shin Araham preached the Appamada-sutta to the king. The king, impressed by this sermon, constructed a monastery for Shin Araham in a locality where the latter would be able to observe *araññakanga-dhutanga* (the austere practice of dwelling in the forest). The king also made his subjects repudiate the teachings of the *aris* and follow *Theravada* Buddhism. Shin Araham ordained those who had faith in the Religion as monks and purified and propagated the Religion. Thus, *Theravada* Buddhism thrived in the royal capital of Pagan and the kingdom of Myanmar.¹⁴

The *aris*, who failed to get donations as before harboured deep resentment against Shin Araham. The king, realizing this, employed a hundred security guards to protect Shin Araham, and visited Shin Araham in his monastery daily to listen to the sermons. From then on, with the people refusing to make donations to them, the power of the *aris* shrank. The king exerted his authority and defrocked Shin Mahti and some of his followers. He made some *aris* serve as lancers and spearmen and as sweepers of elephant and horse dung. Some *aris* fled Pagan.¹⁵ The number of the *aris* dwindled; however, they did not die out.

The *aris* were powerful in Pagan until the reign of King Aniruddha, who suppressed their views after he met Shin Araham. The people also had come to

¹³Ashin Janakabhivamsa, *Tabawa Thanthaya* (One Life's Cycle), New Burma Pitakat Press, 2000, 3rd Printing, p. 19 (Henceforth: Ashin Janakabhivamsa, 2000)

¹⁴Ashin Rajinda (*Hpayahpyu Sayadaw*), *Thathana Bahuthuta Pakathani* (Knowledge about Religious Affairs), Mandalay, Shwechinthe Press, 3rd printing, 2004, p. 57 (Henceforth: Rajinda, 2004)

¹⁵Mahadhammathingyan, 1956, 85

their senses and refused to worship the *aris*, as there were no scriptural texts or the relics of the Buddha as objects of worships, Shin Arahan advised the king:

"Great king! Of the three aspects of the Buddha *Sasana*—*Pariyatti* (the studying of the scriptures), *Patipatti* (the practice of meditation) and *Pativedha* (the realization of the Dhamma), *Pariyatti* is the basis. Pagan does not have the Three *Pitakas* (Buddhist canon) which form the *Pariyatti Sasana*. Religion will endure only if the Buddhist canon and the relics exist. Therefore, you must send a delegation, with gifts, to the country which has Three *Pitakas* and Buddha's relics."¹⁶

Accordingly, King Aniruddha prepared gifts, wrote a message and sent an emissary to King Manuha of Thaton to request for the *Tipitaka* and the Buddha's relics. As he did not get the *Tipitaka* texts, King Aniruddha waged a war on Thaton. After conquering Thaton, he brought back thirty sets of the *Tipitaka*, together with the relics worshipped by the successive kings of Thaton in the palace,¹⁷ to Pagan and established *Pariyatti Sasana* in Pagan.

As King Aniruddha also brought back a thousand *ariya* monks from Thaton, Pagan became a kingdom endowed with the Three Jewels the representations of the Buddha, the *Dhamma* and the *Sangha*. Having established the Religion in Pagan, King Aniruddha sent four warriors to Ceylon to get a set of the *Tipitaka*. Then, he made Shin Arahan check the copies of the *Tipitaka* he brought back from Thaton against the copy of the *Tipitaka* from Srilanka, and it was found that they did not differ. He placed the scriptural texts in the library and

¹⁶Rajinda, 2004, 58

¹⁷U Tin, *Myanmar Min Oatchoatpon Sadan Hnint Bodawhpaya ei Yazathat Hkawthaw Ameindawtangyi* (The Administration of Myanmar Kings and Bodawhpaya's Edict Called Yazathat), Vol.III, Yangon, Baho Press, 1970, p.99 (Henceforth: Tin, 1970)

distributed copies to various localities. King Htilaing Min held on to what Pagan had achieved in King Aniruddha's reign. When some monks from India came to Myanmar, the king showed them great hospitality.

Notwithstanding the statements in Myanmar traditional accounts, some historians believe that Theravada Buddhism was accepted by the majority of the people in the Pagan period and that it was impossible that a pure form of Buddhism existed and state that it is impossible to say that Buddhism in modern Myanmar is pure as it is generally believed. Although Buddhism would have been pure when the Buddha Himself was alive, it would be adapted to fit the time and place and to suit the followers. Hence, it is impossible to say that Buddhism practiced in Myanmar is in its original form. It is believed that Buddhism in the Pagan Period would not differ much from that practiced in modern-day Myanmar.¹⁸

It is impossible to accept that Buddhism made its way to Myanmar during the lifetime of the Buddha and that Sona and Uttara came to Suvannabhumi in 235 Religious Era (309 BC) in the reign of King Asoka to propagate Buddhism as tradition asserts. There is no evidence that Buddhism spread to any locality outside Majjhimadesa (central India). Suvannabhumi was not in the list of the localities to which missionaries were dispatched in the reign of King Asoka. Therefore, it is impossible that the Myanmar received the *Tipitaka* from Thaton (Suvannabhumi). There is a scholar who argues that there is no contemporary record which mentions that King Aniruddha waged a war on Thaton to obtain the Tipitaka. Thai

¹⁸Dr Than Tun, *Hkithaung Myanmar Yazawin* (A History of Old Myanmar), Yangon, Innwa Press, 2002, December, 3rd printing, p. 211 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 2002)

scholars are of the opinion that King Aniruddha of Pagan got Buddhism from Nakhon Pathom in Thailand.¹⁹

The fact that votive tablets with Aniruddha's seal have been discovered all over Myanmar, from the confluence of the rivers Ayeyarwady and Shweli in the north to Twante in the south, indicates that Aniruddha had expanded his domain to include the territory between Shweli in the north and Twante in the south. However, it is not possible that he expanded his kingdom for religious reasons. It is also impossible to accept that a pure form of Theravada Buddhism flourished in Lower Myanmar and spread to Upper Myanmar. The statement that the Myanmars came into contact with Buddhism only after King Aniruddha's conquest of Thaton in AD 1057 is not tenable either. The Myanmars must have become Buddhists soon after they entered the central plains of Myanmar in the mid 9th century AD, when they had contacts with the Pyus and the Mons who were Buddhists. The gold leaf manuscripts and Buddha images excavated near Sriksetra also indicate that the Pyus were Buddhists who possessed scriptural texts. Similarly, it is learnt that there were a *baddha sima* and a *mahathera* near Kyaukse, a locality in which the Mons had settled. It can be conjectured that the Pyus, the Mons and the Myanmars would mix with one another. Archaeological research reveals that the two Hpetleik pagodas in Pagan belonged to a date earlier than Aniruddha's reign. It can therefore be concluded that the Myanmars had become Buddhists before Aniruddha conquered Thaton.²⁰

Concerning the *Ari* sect, when some scholars studied the history of Pagan relying on lithic inscriptions, it came to light that the *aris* were not as debased as the Myanmar chroniclers had asserted, that it was the national sect (or Myanmar

¹⁹Than Tun, 2002, 212

²⁰Than Tun, 2002, 213

sect) which was opposed by the foreign sect (or Sinhalese Sect) throughout the Pagan period and that the Myanmar kings did not disparage the Myanmar monks even though they were pleased with the Sinhalese monks who observed the Vinaya rules strictly. As the Sinhalese sect emerged victorious in AD 1480 during the reign of King Dhammazedī, aka Ramadhipati, who unwaveringly supported them, the chroniclers vilified the *aris* in the 16th century. A scholar offers a new perspective and states that although the chroniclers exaggerated the *aris*' practice of deflowering brides, there is no evidence that such a practice ever existed in Pagan.²¹

The nature of Myanmar Buddhism and Myanmar's religious toleration can be learnt from the inscriptions belonging to Htilaing Min's reign. It can be learnt from the Shwezigon inscription, which mentions Htilaing Min's regnal title, that although Buddhism was the most popular, there were other religions. The king declared himself to be an avatar of Visnu even though he was a Buddhist. Thus, Pagan was not free from Brahmanic influence. The king purified the Religion with the help of Shin Arahan. It is learnt that there were those who devoutly followed their religions and tolerated the religions professed by the others. Htilaing Min was a king who erected the Zeyabhumī pagoda, which was commonly referred to as Shwezigon, in northeast Pagan, made accurate copies of the *Tipitaka*, sent some officers with donations to Bodh Gaya to repair the temple there, donated the four requisites to monks, and converted a prince who came from abroad to Buddhism. Nevertheless, he performed brahmanical rites in the

²¹Than Tun, "History of Buddhism in Burma", Ph.D. Thesis, University of London, 1956, p. IV (Henceforth: Than Tun, 1956)

presence of Shin Arahan according to the palace inscription.²² Buddhist monks were invited to the site of the new palace to recite the *parittas* to avert evil. It is learnt that brahmins played a leading role in the construction of the palace. Making offerings to Vishnu was more important than other ceremonies. Offerings were also made to Indra. Gavampati, a Sivaite deity, was placed side by side with a Buddha image. In the Nanhpaya, the image of Brahma was the main image. A temple called Nathlaunggyaung, which stood next to Pahtohtamya, still exists. Brahmanic influence can be seen even in the inscriptions written during the reigns of the last kings of the Pagan dynasty. Gavampati is mentioned together with two disciples of the Buddha in an inscription dated AD 1179. All these indicate that Buddhism professed by the Myanmars in the 11th century was mixed with other religions and that Sivaism had at least enjoyed a position of importance in Pagan.²³

Shin Arahan, who began to spread Buddhism in Myanmar from Aniruddha's reign onwards propagated the Religion during the reigns of four kings: Aniruddha, Sawlu, Htilaing Min and Alaungsithu. He passed away at the age of 81 in AD 1093, during the reign of King Alaungsithu.²⁴ Then, King Alaungsithu, who was the donor of the Shwegu temple, entrusted the

²²Dr Than Tun, *Myanma Htimunanya* (Myanmar Court Etiquette), Yangon, Hpo Wa Press, July 2003, pp. 4-16 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 2003)

²³Than Tun, 2002, 213-14

²⁴Ashin Sirisobhana, *Mahadvara Nikaya Thathanawunthadipani* (A History of the Mahadvara Nikaya), Yangon, Ledimandaing Press, 1974, 2nd printing, p. 78 (Henceforth: Sirisobhana, 1974)

responsibility of administering religious affairs to Ven. Panthaku, and Religion continued to prosper as Panthaku wrote many books and taught his pupils.²⁵

When Alaungsithu died, his eldest son Minshinsaw strengthened his following and marched towards Pagan to seize the throne. Then, Narathu requested Panthaku, who was venerated by all the citizens, to tell Minshinsaw that he did not need to come with his followers and that he should come expeditiously to ascend the throne. Panthaku told Narathu that he would be guilty of conduct unbecoming to a monk if he called Minshinsaw and if Narathu failed to enthrone Minshinsaw. Then, Narathu pledged that he would enthrone his elder brother. Panthaku trusted his words and went and informed Minshinsaw about this. Minshinsaw, believing Panthaku's words, sailed down the river to Pagan. Narathu fulfilled his pledge and enthroned his elder brother. Then, he poisoned the king on the night of his coronation and usurped the throne. Dissatisfied with this, Panthaku went to Srilinka. King Narathu, worrying that monks might rebel against him as they lived in groups and believing that the kingdom's population would not increase if there were too many monks, forced the monks to leave the Order.²⁶

In the reign of King Narapatisithu, a royal preceptor by the name of Uttarajiva, together with his pupil Chappada who was a novice, went to Srilinka. After staying three years in Srilinka, he returned to Pagan in AD 1173. His pupil Chappada, who was ordained as a monk in Srilinka, stayed behind and studied the scriptures for ten years. After studying for ten years, Chappada returned to Srilinka with four Sinhalese monks—Sivali, Tamalinda, Ananda and Rahula, so that they would be able to perform ecclesiastical rites on their own if the monks in Pagan

²⁵Medi *Sayadaw*, *Wunthadipani* (A Work on the Lineage of Monks), Yangon, Hanthawady Press, 1966, p. 82 (Henceforth: *Medi Sayadaw*, 1966)

²⁶Sirisobhana, 1974, 81-82

refused to perform them with him. By the time they arrived in Pagan, Uttarajiva had passed away. Chappada consulted with the four monks who came to Pagan with him and performed ecclesiastical rites apart from Pagan monks. Some regard that his intention to perform ecclesiastical rites separately from other monks in Pagan stemmed from his pride.²⁷ It is believed that the year in which Chappada introduced Sinhalese *Sasana* into Pagan was AD 1181.²⁸

Thus, the Buddhist *Sangha* in Pagan split into Myanmar and Sinhalese factions in the reign of King Narapatisithu. Narapatisithu highly venerated these five monks and made them ordain novices as monks on a barge formed with boats in Ayeyarwady River. Their sect gradually grew. It is learnt that Rahula, one of the leaders of the Sinhalese sect, was smitten with love for an attractive dancer and left the Order. Of the remaining four monks who came from Srilanka, Chappada passed away, and Sivali, Tamalinda and Ananda taught the scriptural texts to their pupils and purified the religion. When King Narapatisithu donated an elephant each to those three monks, Sivali and Tamalinda set their elephants free in the forest. Ananda, however, gave it to his relatives. Then, Sivali and Tamalinda decided to perform ecclesiastical rites separately from Ananda and, thus, the Sinhalese sect split into two factions. Later, Sivali performed ecclesiastical rites separately from Tamalinda because he thought that Tamalinda was guilty of "hinting for material gain" by making suggestions to his lay devotees to make donations to his bright pupils. In this way, the Sinhalese sect splintered into three factions. Thus, the Buddhist *Sangha* in Pagan split into four factions: Arahan's, Sivali's, Tamalinda's and Ananda's factions. The sect formed by Shin Arahan, who

²⁷Sirisobhana, 1974, 86

²⁸The date given in the Glass Palace Chronicle, however, is AD 1191

came from Thaton, was called Purima Sangha (the Former Order), as it was the earliest sect; and the three factions of the Sinhalese sect were collectively referred to as *Pacchima Sangha* (the Latter Order) as they were formed later.²⁹

Thihathu, Lord of One White Elephant, founded the city of Pinya in AD 1312. Two years later, he obtained the carcass of a white elephant drifting in the Samon River, and assumed the name Tazishin (Lord of One White Elephant). There were not many monks who were virtuous, modest and well-behaved during his reign. There, however, were sham monks, who were remnants of the *aris* of Pagan. They were referred to as the monks of the *Pwegyaung* sect. They had influence over ministers and commoners. They trained their followers the skills of riding elephants and horses, swordsmanship, lancing and boxing and taught occult arts and medicine and served as soldiers. When Thahithu asked his three sons what the strengths of their armies were, the youngest son Athinhkaya Sawyun answered: "I only have eighty soldiers, including the son of the governess and excluding the *aris*, at my disposal."³⁰ This indicates that princes did favours to the *aris* and made the *aris* serve them in case of an emergency. A monk by the name of Ashin Dibbacak arrived in the royal capital of Pinya to propagate the Religion. As he behaved differently from the *aris*, King Thihathu respected him and offered food to him daily in the palace.³¹ The arrival of Ashin Dibbacak led to the increase of virtuous, modest and well-behaved monks in Pinya and to the decline of the influence of the *Pwekyauung* sect.

²⁹Mahadhammathingyan, 1956, 96, 97, 98

³⁰U Kala, *Mahayazawingyi* (Great Chronicle), Vol.I, Yarpui Book House Press, July 2006, p. 261 (Henceforth: Kala, 2006a)

³¹Mahadhammathingyan, 1956, 125

Tazishin Thihathu's eldest son Uccana succeeded to the throne of Pinya in AD 1322. He built seven monasteries with champac wood in Pinkya and donated them to seven monks who belonged to the lines of Pagan and Sinhalese monks in 1340. The monks of those seven monasteries became corrupted and turned into *Pwegyaung* monks. Therefore modest and well-behaved monks left the seven champac monasteries. The problem stemmed from the king's donation of a large amount of land to the seven monasteries, which inhibited them from studying the scriptures (*Pariyatti*) and practising meditation (*Patipatti*). In addition, disputes over the ownership of land arose. Those who left the champac monasteries and lived by themselves came to be known as *araññavasins* (forest monks), while the monks who stayed behind and resided near towns and villages were called *gamavasins* (town-dwelling monks). The monks who had to manage the revenues were referred to as *sangharajas*.³²

In 1342, King Uccana handed over the kingdom to his younger brother Kyawswa. Kyawswa became known as Ngazishin (Lord of Five White Elephants) as he got five white elephants. During his reign, there were many *Pwekyauung* monks who were village dwellers and many monks who belonged to the lines of Pagan monks and Sinhalese monks. There were both virtuous and immoral monks. Once a sham monk came and stood before the king to ask for alms while the latter was having a meal. The king gave him all the food which he was about to eat. The king thought that the monk could not be an ordinary monk but would be an *arahant* with supernormal faculties because he came for his alms just before midday. Therefore, he ordered a servant to shadow the monk. The monk was just a sham. He handed his almsbowl to his wife. The king's servant, thinking, "I will tell the king so that he will gain merit and will trust me more, and the sham monk will

³²Sirisobhana, 1974, 108

escape punishment," informed the king that the monk just vanished while he was watching.³³ It can therefore be learnt that there were many sham monks in the reign of Ngazishin Kyawswa.

His son Lezishin Kyawswa (Kyawswa, Lord of Four White Elephants) came to the throne in 1350. He was called *Lezishin* (Lord of Four White Elephants) because only four of the five elephants his father had remained in his reign. The new king constructed an imposing monastery near the seven champac monasteries, but did not donate it to any monk, thinking, "may any monk who is virtuous, well-behaved, learned, well-read, and resolute reside in this monastery." A monk known as Sudwinbyit *Sayadaw*³⁴ came and resided in this monastery. His name was Nagita. The king donated the monastery to this *Sayadaw* because the latter knew abstruse texts.³⁵

The Myanmars, who became Buddhists in the Pagan period, continued to profess Buddhism in the Innwa Period. There were no *aris* in Pagan in the early Pagan period as stated in the Myanmar chronicles; they emerged only in the late Pagan period and prospered for some time after the fall of Pagan. The *aris* flourished from circa AD 1200 to some time after 1500. The word *ari* probably derived from *Pali araññakanga*, "the austere practice of dwelling in the forest." However, the word is rarely used in contemporary inscriptions, which normally refer to those monks as *tawkyauung yahan* (forest monks).³⁶ It is evident from the

³³(a) Mahadhammathingyan, 1956, 129-138

(b) Kala, 2006a, 266-67

³⁴He acquired this name because he had been thrown into thorny shrubs by his father because he said that he did not want to go to school.

³⁵Sirisobhana, 1974, 114

³⁶Dr Than Tun, *Athitmyin Bamar Thamaing* (Myanmar History from a New Perspective), Yangon, Monywa Press, August 2007, p. 170 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 2007)

pyos (a kind of Myanmar poem) and other literary texts that the religion of the *aris* was still professed in the Innwa period.³⁷

Innwa prospered from the latter half of the 14th century onwards and, with monks and laypersons migrating to Taungoo when the political situation in Innwa became unstable, Taungoo became a populous city. It can be stated that Taungoo became strong enough to compete with Innwa in the early 16th century. It is clear that monks had helped restoring prosperity to the kingdom. The leaders of monks guided the people in maintaining order in the towns and villages, defending themselves and reclaiming land for cultivation. Such monk leaders were called *sangharajas*, meaning "kings of monks;" hence, they probably lived or had the right to live in the lap of luxury befitting a king. It is learnt that their influence declined only in the 16th century.³⁸

Thadominbya ascended the throne of Innwa in AD 1365. During his reign, the king himself interrogated a sham monk who failed to return the money a peddler had entrusted to his care. Then, saying, "How could you, as a monk, failed to return the money?," the king put the monk to death and threw the corpse into a hole in the floor. Therefore, sham and immoral monks did not dare to behave badly during King Thadominbya's reign.³⁹

³⁷U Toe Hla, "*Pyokabya mya twin Htinhatso Innwa-hkit Kogweyonkyihmu*," (Innwa Period Religion as revealed by the Pyo Poems), Vol.XIII, part.v, *Tetkatho Pinnyapadetha Sazaung*, September 1979, pp. 121-34 (Henceforth: Toe Hla, 1979)

³⁸Dr Than Tun, *Myanmar Thamaing Litkwetmya* (Missing Links in Myanmar History), Yangon, Hpowa Offset Press, November 2003, p. 87 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 2003)

³⁹Kala, 2006a, 277-78

King Swasawke ascended the throne holding a fan made of palm-leaves so that peace would prevail in the kingdom. The whole country was shaken when this king constructed the Shwezigon pagoda in Innwa in 1383. On hearing this, a monk from Rakhine came to Awa and planted a kokko tree (*Albizzia lebbek*), built a kheda, erected a commemorative pillar (bearing the name of the city of Awa) and constructed the Tharapa gate and the Ratanagu temple; then, the people became calm, it is said.⁴⁰ This shows that the royal preceptors themselves took part in occult practices. Ven. Khema from Rakhine who became the king's preceptor was a *Pwekyauung* monk and a *gamavasin*. Therefore, the *Pwekyauung* sect became powerful and prospered. The *gamavasins* in those days wore hats and carried palm-leaf fans.

In 1462 King Mohnyin Mintaya became king. He was a devout Buddhist, who venerated the monks who were learned, virtuous and dignified. As he did not respect *Pwekyauung* monks, *Pwekyauung* monasteries did not prosper during his reign. This king constructed the Ratanazedi, Yan Aung Myin and Sigon pagodas in Sagaing.⁴¹

King Mingaung II succeeded to the throne of Innwa in 1480. During his reign, a *sima* was constructed at a site to the east of the Shanze road, not very far from the Manawraman Garden. Hence, the *sima* came to be known as *Dutiya* Mingaung Thein. Tradition asserts that as some monks warned that they would not take part in the consecration of the *sima* if the lyricists were present, Shin Silavamsa and Shin Ratthasara were not allowed to take part in the ceremony.

⁴⁰Sirisobhana, 1974, 116

⁴¹See Appendix (1) for the full list

They were not allowed to take part in the ceremony because the Buddha Himself had prohibited monks from writing poems.⁴²

King Narapati, the donor of the Htupayon Pagoda, succeeded to the throne in 1482. It is learnt that "Sinhalese *Sasana* made its way to Myanmar during his reign." Thohanbwa, Mohnyin Zalon's son, became king of Innwa in 1524. He thought: "Myanmar monks had no families, but had many followers. They could rebel if they wanted to. So they must be liquidated." Hence, he invited monks from Sagaing, Pinya and Innwa and the surrounding areas to the paddy land in Taungbalu, saying he was offering food to them and, when the monks gathered there, his troops massacred them. The monks who escaped fled to Taungoo. Thohanbwa had the books in the monasteries burnt.⁴³ Thus, the Religion waned even though it was not wiped out.

Religion flourished in the Taungoo period as the kings promoted it. The construction of pagodas like the Mahazedi in Pegu shows the extent to which the kings of Taungoo period supported the Religion. Buddhism was predominant in the Taungoo period although there was slight Brahmanical influence. In a ceremony held during King Thadominsaw's reign, sugarcanes and bananas were planted and an image of *Mahapeinne* (a Hindu deity known as Ganesha), a conch shell filled with water and fourteen Brahmins were positioned around the pavilion in which the ceremony was held. The authors of the Taungoo period also wrote that there were many pagodas, temples, monasteries and virtuous monks in Taungoo in those days. The kings of Taungoo usually constructed pagodas in the territories they had conquered. They also sent religious missions to Srilanka. The

⁴²Mahadhammathingyan, 1956, 148

⁴³U Kala, *Mahayazawingyi* (Great Chronicle), Vol. II, Yangon, Yarpai Book House, August 2006, p. 118 (Henceforth: Kala, 2006b)

kings of the Taungoo Period took great care in speaking to monks. Monks could even request the kings to spare the lives of the criminals who had been sentenced to death. When a rebellion broke out in Hanthawady during the reign of King Sinbyushin of Hanthawady, the king sentenced the rebels to the stake. Then Myanmar, Shan and Mon monks requested the king to donate them the lives of the convicts (i.e. to spare the lives of the convicts); and the king assented to their request. The kings of Taungoo supported the Religion by donating the four requisites to monks. However, they prohibited monks from infringing Vinaya rules. When some monks cultivated a garden in the reign of King Sinbyushin of Hanthawady, other monks destroyed the garden, saying gardening was unbecoming to a Buddhist monk. The king ordered them to stop; but they did not stop, and the king defrocked them.⁴⁴ There were many prominent monks in the Taungoo Period. The kings made donations to those monks, and the Religion thrived.

The influence of forest monks declined in the 16th century due to the religious reforms effected by King Dhammazedi (1460-1491). King Dhammazedi was a king who made efforts to ensure that monks would observe the *Vinaya* rules strictly and that different sects would coalesce into a single Buddhist *Sangha*. The title this king assumed after he came to the throne was Ramadhipati. He believed that Religion and monkhood were interrelated, that of the five requirements to become a monk, the validity of *sima*, that of the assembly and that of the transaction statements were vital. He therefore regarded that the validity of *sima* was essential for the purity of the *Sasana*. He thought the Religion in Srilanka was

⁴⁴Dr Kyaw Win, *Hnit Layze Thamaing Shabondaw* (Forty Year Quest for History), Yangon, Ah Man Thit Sarpe, October 2006, pp. 59-60 (Henceforth: Kyaw Win, 2006)

pure because there were monks of the Mahavihara, and therefore he should send monks from Hanthawady to receive reordination in Srilinka so that the Religion in Hanthawady would be free from impurities. Hence he sent a hundred and one monks and 101 novices headed by Ven. Moggalan from Hanthawady to Srilinka to receive reordination. Myanmar monks were reordained in a *sima* in the Kalyani river in Srilinka.⁴⁵

When the monks who had been disrobed and reordained in Srilinka arrived back, King Dhammazedī had a new *sima* consecrated at a site to the west of Mawdaw pagoda. As it was consecrated by the monks who were ordained in the Kalyani River, the *sima* was known as Kalyani *Thein*. The king issued an order that monks in the country could receive reordination there. He made the *gamavasins* and *araññavasins* receive ordination together to ensure that all the monks would belong to the line of the monks of the Mahavihara in Srilinka. There were altogether 15,666 monks who received reordination and became Sinhalese monks.⁴⁶

King Dhammazedī requested the monks to ordain novices or reordain monks only after informing him or the heads of the various sects in Hanthawady. He ordered the monks who accepted the donation of gold and silver, who accumulated wealth, and who had elephants, horses or cattle or male or female slaves to surrender their possessions and to abide by the Vinaya rules. Those who refused to do so were forced to leave the Order. He defrocked the monks who obviously had committed *parajika* offences or offences entailing expulsion from the *Sangha* without making requests first. He also forced the monks who

⁴⁵Rajinda, 2004, 163-64

⁴⁶E. Michael Mendelson, *Sangha and State in Burma: A Study of Monastic Sectarianism and Leadership*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1975, p. 51 (Henceforth: Mendelson, 1975)

allegedly had broken the *parajika* rules to leave the order even though their guilt remained unclear. The monks who earned their livelihood as healers, astrologers, artists or as traders also were forced to leave the Order.⁴⁷ Dhammazedī's religious reforms made the majority of the monks become modest and supplanted Myanmar tradition with Sinhalese tradition. The rivalry between *gamavasi* and *araññavasi* continued in the reign of the next king. There is a scholar who believes that the kings could bring about unity within the *Sangha*.⁴⁸

The kings of the Nyaungyan Period (1597-1752) also supported Buddhism. Buddhism would have existed side by side with animism and other religious cults in the Nyaungyan Period. Although there was freedom of religious worship, no other religion became popular enough to eclipse Buddhism. Although Buddhism prospered because the kings supported it, the kings also accepted occult practices. Buddhism was able to contribute to the prevalence of peace and stability in the kingdom on 8 September 1647, King Thalun's son Shin Tayoke, who held Amyint in fief staged a coup. King Thalun had to leave the palace and take refuge in the *Ledatkyauung*, the abbot of which was a royal preceptor, before retaking the throne. *Ledatkyauung Sayadaw*, considering that it was improper to make arrangements to protect the king, lumbered the task of protecting the king to the *Sankyaung Sayadaw*. King Thalun, after staying in the *Ledatkyauung* for a month, was able to retake the kingdom on 8 October 1647. On 15 October, King Thalun invited the abbots of the *Ledatkyauung* and *Sankyaung* monasteries to the palace and offered food to them. He also listened to the sermons delivered by these monks. He remarked that the *Ledat Sayadaw* was a *samsara* monk (i.e. a monk who would

⁴⁷Medi *Sayadaw*, 1966, 118-121

⁴⁸Mendelson, 1975, 52-53

bring happiness in the life hereafter), whereas the *Sankyaung Sayadaw* was a *paccupan* monk (i.e. a monk who would bring happiness in the present life).⁴⁹

The kings of the Nyaungyan period supported the Religion and looked on the members of the Buddhist Order with favour. In carrying out important tasks, the kings sometimes consulted monks. They took advice from the monks as regards politics and the administration of the kingdom. In those days, the *sangharajas* who were responsible to control the monks and to protect and maintain religious buildings, were appointed in the kingdom. Those *sangharajas* were supervised by the abbot of the *Ledatkyauung* monastery in Awa. The people of the Nyaungyan Period, like those of the Pagan period, fervently supported the Religion so that it would last for five thousand years. Therefore, they made copies of the *Tipitaka*, constructed pagodas and temples and donated land and slaves to the religious buildings for their upkeep. King Anaukpetlun, after ascending the throne, continued to build the Mahamyatmuni pagoda, the construction of which was begun by his father King Nyaungyan Min. When it was completed, King Anaukpetlun donated forty servicemen to it as slaves; they were to repair the pagoda and to sweep and play drums there. He built four grand monasteries in the precincts of the Mahamyatmuni pagoda and donated them to four learned monks, who were to study the scriptures.⁵⁰ After conquering Taungoo in 1610, King Anaukpetlun brought back monks from there to Awa and propagated Buddhism. While De Brito was ruling Thanlyin, gold and silver from the temples and pagodas

⁴⁹U Kala, *Mahayazawingyi* (Great Chronicle), Vol. III, Yangon, Yarpui Book House, August 2006, pp. 207-08 (Henceforth: Kala, 2006c)

⁵⁰Rajinda, 2004, 86

were looted and sold. As many monks were afraid to stay there, the number of monks there plummeted.⁵¹

Soon after his ascension to the throne, King Thalun issued an order to prohibit the people from becoming monks or novices with a view to preventing shirkers from masquerading as monks to avoid work while he was rebuilding the kingdom. Additionally, he issued an order to ensure that those who already had become monks would be ashamed to commit sins, would respect the *Vinaya* rules and would behave well. He issued an order that the monks who sought fame and wealth or those who entered the Order to avoid repaying debts, to free themselves from slavery or to promote the welfare of their relatives were to be defrocked if found out.⁵² However, as the kings themselves believed in astrology, some of the monks in those days studied astrology, how to make cabalistic squares and how to use mantras to avert evil or to secure good results, which had nothing to do with Buddhism. Among the monks, both *araññavasins* and *gamavasins* taught scriptural texts to their pupils. The monasteries in which the *gamavasins* resided were referred to as *Pwekyaungs*. Vocational skills were taught in those monasteries.⁵³

Pintale *Min*, a younger son of King Thalun, succeeded his father on 17 August 1648. Religion did not thrive during his reign because of political instability. On 8 April 1649, he hoisted a finial on top of the Rajamanicula pagoda,

⁵¹Tin, 1970, 160-61

⁵²Than Tun, 2003, 99-100

⁵³Rajinda, 2004, 124

which was erected by his father.⁵⁴ He built a grand monastery in Sagaing and donated it to Ven. Dathanagara Rajaguru.⁵⁵

From the reign of Pyi Min onwards, the Myanmar kings donated rice to monks every month and held novitiation ceremonies every year. As his first meritorious deed, King Pyi Min donated a ruby-studded headgear and ruby-studded robes to the Shinbyu Shinhla pagoda in Sagaing on 13 February 1663.⁵⁶ It can therefore be assumed that *gamavasin pwekyauung* monks' practice of wearing hats still existed. Due to political instability, Pyi *Min* could not build pagodas and temples. However, in 1665 he constructed an imposing monastery, together with four smaller monasteries surrounding it, on the east side of the Shwezigon pagoda and a monastery with a three-tiered roof in Aungtattaw and repaired the monastery with a four-tiered roof in the precincts of the Mahamyatmuni pagoda which was destroyed during the Chinese invasion and promoted *pariyatti sasana*. He made the *Tipitaka* texts copied from 18 August 1667 onwards. He also conferred titles on monks and donated monasteries to them. The fact that he donated the *Ledatkyauung* monastery to Shin Gunarama *Sayadaw* in 1671 suggests that the latter was his preceptor.⁵⁷

Minyekyawhtin came to the throne on 16 February 1673. During his reign a strong earthquake destroyed many monasteries, pagodas and temples and killed some prominent monks. Many people were killed and many buildings—houses, monasteries, pagodas and temples—in the Golden City and its environs collapsed

⁵⁴Rajamanicula Kaunghmudaw Pagoda Inscription

⁵⁵Kala, 2006c, 218

⁵⁶Kala, 2006c, 232

⁵⁷Kala, 2006c, 234, 235, 237, 240

in the earthquake of 1697. Famous pagodas such as Anyathihadaw, Shwezayan, Shweyinmyaw and Shwezigon were destroyed.⁵⁸

King Sane, aka Mahathihathura, succeeded his father Minyekyawhtin on 19 May 1698. It is noteworthy that he undertook the task of translating a large collection of scriptural texts into Myanmar.⁵⁹ It can be assumed that the *Atin-Ayon* controversy began during his reign. On 13 April 1711, a monk who resided in a monastery to the east of the kheda, who placed his upper robe over one shoulder and who was venerated by Letwaikyawthu, knowing that a group of monks headed by the Nyaungzi *Sayadaw* were planning to expel him from Innwa, moved to Magyisinde. When they could not find this monk, the monks headed by the Nyaungzi *Sayadaw* destroyed his possessions including books. Then, they planned to go to Magyisinde to beat him up, and the king had to intervene.⁶⁰ It is stated that Letwaikyawthu's preceptor was too scared to reside in Awa that he moved to Tontaw,⁶¹ which was situated to the west of Chindwin River. This statement indicates that the *Atin-Ayon* dispute had begun by that time.

King Taininganwe, aka Mahasirisahasuradhammarajadhiraja, succeeded to the throne on 11 August 1714. He hoisted a golden finial on the pagoda his father King Sane had constructed in Paleba and named it Lawka Man Aung, made a marble image of the Buddha in Thawtapan ward in the riverside area in Sagaing

⁵⁸Kala, 2006c, 244, 278

⁵⁹Kala, 2006c, 282, 292

⁶⁰Twinthintaikwun Mahasithu U Tun Nyo, *Mahayazawinthat* (Nyaungyanzet) (A New Myanmar Chronicle (Nyaungyan Dynasty), Vol.III, Yangon, Khaing Yi Mon Offset, 1997, p. 133 (Henceforth: Tun Nyo, 1997)

⁶¹Situated in Salingyi Township, Yinmabin Sub-district, Lower Chindwin District

and named it Lekyun Man Aung, had the *Tipitaka* copied in ink, and built a library to house the copies of the *Tipitaka*.⁶²

Religion began to decline in the reign of King Mahadhamma-rajadhipati because he failed to distinguish between scrupulous and shameless monks. The king himself made the monk who resided in the Shwezedi monastery wear a golden hat and golden robes, saying that he would make the latter "monk king," got that monk drunk and had him taken back to the monastery on his palanquin if he was too drunk to go back on his own.⁶³ This account shows that the royal preceptor himself was lax in observing the *Vinaya* rules. The monks, wearing robes as they wished and neglecting the *Vinaya* rules, must have brought about the decline of the Religion.

The kings of the Konbaung Dynasty, beginning with King Alaungmintaya, promoted the Religion by building and repairing pagodas and temples and by donating monasteries to monks. There were kings who were zealous in supporting the Religion and education in the Konbaung Period. They were Kings Alaungmintaya, Badon and Mindon. The prosperity of the Religion mainly depended on the relationship between monks and their devotees, in other words—the relationship between monks and kings. The relationship between monks and kings was good during the reign of those kings and, hence, the Religion thrived.

There were three necessary conditions for the Religion to prosper: (1) that the Religion enjoyed royal patronage; (2) that the Religion maintained the ethical standards of the people, and (3) that there was an organized *Sangha*.⁶⁴ The Konbaung-period kings supported the Religion well. They appointed Thathanabyu

⁶²Kala, 2006c, 330, 331, 334

⁶³Tun Nyo, 1997, 168

⁶⁴Tin, 1970, 90

Sayadaws (or Supreme Patriarchs) to control the *Sangha*. The *Atin-Ayon* dispute, which began in the Nyaungyan Period, was not settled till the Konbaung period. During the reign of King Alaungmintaya, Ven. Atulayasa, who was a member of the *Atin* faction became the king's teacher and the *Atin* sect become stronger.

Alaungmintaya was a king who reunified the kingdom and who was able to assume the title *Sasana Dayaka* (The Supporter of the Religion). He issued an order to unify the Buddhist Sangha, which had splintered into various factions.⁶⁵ When he appointed the *thathanabyu sayadaws*, he appointed separate *gaingoks* and *gaingdauks* for the *Atin Ayon* and factions. However, the monk he venerated belonged to the *Atin* faction, and hence the influence of the *Atin* faction increased in the reign of King Alaungmintaya. King Alaungmintaya, while reunifying the kingdom, built and renovated pagodas and monasteries. On his return from Mogaung town, he built a pagoda in Tagaung where his turban became unwrapped, hoisted a golden finial on top of it and named it Zina Aungcha Shwebontha. This pagoda, now known as Baungdawkyia pagoda, is still in existence.⁶⁶ The construction of pagodas by the Myanmar kings including King Alaungmintaya might have been to promote the Religion or to mark their territories. On 21 June 1753, King Alaungmintaya appointed Ven. Atulayasa as Supreme Patriarch and made other monks obey him.⁶⁷ As he was learned in

⁶⁵U Aung Thein Han, *Myanmar Nainggan Thamaingthit* (A New History of Myanmar), Yangon, Sarpe Mwethu Press, 1968, p. 107 (Henceforth: Aung Thein Han, 1968)

⁶⁶Tin, 1970, 15-16

⁶⁷U Maung Maung Tin, *Konbaungzet Mahayazawindawgyi* (Great Chronicle of the Konbaung Dynasty), Vol.I, Yangon, Department of Historical Research, 2004, p. 83 (Henceforth: Maung Maung Tin, 2004a)

dhammasat (law texts), the Atulaya *Sayadaw* was able to give valuable advice to the king.⁶⁸ King Alaungmintaya issued an edict, ordering officials to put a stop, after investigations, to everything evil: slaughtering animals for food, butchering cattle, making offerings to spirits, drinking toddy, liquor or *hkaungye* (a kind of rice wine) or taking opium. He ordered that those who slaughtered animals or butchered cattle in the city were to be arrested and made to suffer losses. He appointed a *mahadan-wun* and *mahadan-saye* to interrogate and defrock the monks who violated *Vinaya* rules.⁶⁹ There is a scholar who assumes that King Alaungmintaya named Atulaya *Sayadaw* as his preceptor because he came to the throne with Atulaya's advice on the affairs of the kingdom rather than because he respected the *Sayadaw* for his learnedness or strict observance of *Vinaya* rules.⁷⁰

King Mindon strove for the purification of the Religion by purging the *Sangha* of *Pwekyauung gamavasin* monks, who were the dregs of the *Sangha*. He forced the sinful monks to leave the Order without apologizing. Some *gamavasins* were scared that they might be caught because they had sinned and left the Order. Some, leaving their possessions behind, defected to the sect of the *araññavasins*. Even the monks who were above suspicion were forced to receive reordination. The king ordered all the different Buddhist sects, to which the Buddhist *Sangha* had fragmented into in the reign of former kings, to merge into one, after interrogating the monks to dispel suspicions. Nevertheless, when the king

⁶⁸Daw Khin Khin Sein (ed.), *Alaungmintayagyi Ameindawmya* (Edicts of Alaungmintaya), Yangon, Burma Historical Commission, 1964, p. 99 (Henceforth: *Alaungmintayagyi Ameindawmya, 1964*)

⁶⁹Maung Maung Tin, *2004a*, 84

⁷⁰Sirisobhana, *1974*, 200

conferred the title Atulayasa Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru on Ven. Atulayasa and named him the Supreme Patriarch, the leaders of the Ayon faction⁷¹ informed the king in writing that only the *Ayon* monks were *dhammavadins* and cited many scriptural texts in support of their practice. Atula *Sayadaw* and his followers argued that the matter had been settled and the judgment had been passed. King Alaungmintaya announced that he would defer deciding the religious disputes until he had dealt with the affairs of the kingdom; thus, the dispute remained unresolved.⁷² The royal preceptor, as he himself belonged to the *Atin* faction, desired monks to follow the practice of draping their upper robes over one shoulder. However, there were hardliners in the *Ayon* faction too. For instance, Palaing *Sayadaw* Shin Sujata, refusing to pander to the Supreme Patriarch, instructed his pupils to cover both shoulders with their upper robes when entering villages in accordance with the *Vinaya* rules. On hearing this, the king exercised his power to force this monk to defect to the *Atin* faction, but in vain. Hence he banished Palaing *Sayadaw* Shin Sujata from the royal capital. Later he defrocked and imprisoned the monk. When he conquered Hanthawady, King Alaungmintaya saw many monks who covered both shoulders with their robes and came to realize that he was wrong in forcing the monks to become *Atin* monks. However, he did nothing to rectify the matter. Kings Naungdawgyi and Sinbyushin, who succeeded King Alaungmintaya, also turned a blind eye to this matter. Alaungmintaya built Shwechettho pagoda, Hpaungdaw-Oo pagodas in Myadaung, Pyay and Myan Aung towns, Zina Aungcha Shwebontha pagoda in Tagaung, Natkyun Aungmye

⁷¹See Chapter 3 for a detailed discussion.

⁷²Sirisobhana, 1974, 204

Nandaw pagoda, the covered way of the Shwedagon pagoda, a pagoda at the north-east corner of the city of Ratanasingha and a gilded open hall in Shwebawkyun, and paid the expenses for repairing dilapidated pagodas and temples in Hanthawady, Pyay, Innwa and Sagaing towns and along the river, in both Lower and Upper Myanmar.⁷³

King Naungdawgyi ascended the throne on 7 June 1760 and assumed the title Siripavara Mahadhammaraja. In the same year, he built a monastery with a three-tiered roof and a pavilion in the northeast of the royal city of Ratanasingha, named it Mahabontha and donated it to Taungdwin *Sayadaw* Ñanabhidhammalankara Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru. He also made donations, including the eight requisites, to *araññavasins* and *gamavasins*. As the Taungdwin *Sayadaw* belonged to the *Ayon* faction, the monks from the towns and villages around Badon and Kanni sent an epistle to the king, saying that monks should wear their upper robes to cover both shoulders when entering villages. Then Atula *Sayadaw* objected, saying that the case had been resolved in the reigns of the kings of Innwa. Hence, the *Ayon* monks did not get a chance to express their views.⁷⁴ The *Atin* faction was able to maintain its dominant position because King Naungdawgyi followed his father's policies. The religious buildings constructed by King Naungdawgyi were Mahabontha monastery in the northeast of the royal city of Ratanasingha, a pagoda in the Mahananda lake, the Thudhamma open-hall and a covered way in Mansettawya.⁷⁵

⁷³Hteittin Htwe, *Ratanasikha Mahayazawin* (A History of Ratanasikha City), Yangon, Shwepyinyunt, 1935, p. 212 (Henceforth: Hteittin Htwe, 1935)

⁷⁴Mahadhammathingyan, 1956, 187-88

⁷⁵Maung Maung Tin, 2004a, 263

King Sinbyushin became king on 29 November 1763 and assumed the title Siripavarasuddhamma Maharajindadhipati. He donated the Bonkyaw Tulut monastery to Ven. Nandavara, and conferred the title Jambudipa Anantadhaja Mahadhammarajaguru on him. Those who followed Joti views⁷⁶ emerged during his reign, and the king had to punish them. In 1764, he erected a pagoda in the southwest of the city of Ratanasingha, named it Neibban Seit-oo and donated land to it. On 2 May 1767, he built a forest monastery with a three-tiered roof for the Kyetthungin *Sayadaw*. On 30 May 1768, he hoisted a golden finial on top of the Shwezigon pagoda in Pagan. He also gilded the whole pagoda.⁷⁷ King Sinbyushin built the Bonsan Tulut monastery in the city of Ratanasingha and the Aungmye Sanlut monastery in the city of Innwa. In 1771, he constructed the Bonkyaw Tulut monastery, together with forty-six smaller monastery buildings surrounding it, in Innwa. He urged monks to pay meticulous attention to the *Vinaya* rules. He defrocked the monks who could not answer the questions about *Vinaya* rules and who practiced medicine and astrology, because practicing them was unbecoming to monks. Furthermore, he defrocked the monks who were suspected of having committed *parajika* offences, which were the most serious offences, without interrogating them.⁷⁸ Thus, he took tough measures to purify the Religion.

King Singu Min succeeded to the throne in 1776 and assumed the title Mahadhammarajadhiraja. He built a monastery with a five-tiered roof at the site of the Modhi monastery in the royal capital and, naming it Aungmyin Sanlut,

⁷⁶The views founded by a monk by the name of Varajoti, who resided in Wuchet, Sagaing, during the reign of King Mahadhammarajadhipati in the Innwa period. This monk held that a man was annihilated after death and would not be reborn.

⁷⁷Maung Maung Tin, *2004a*, 280, 326

⁷⁸Medi *Sayadaw*, 1966, 155-56

donated it to the Manle *Sayadaw*. He also presented the *Sayadaw* with the title Gunamunindabhisasanadhaja Mahadhammarajadhirajaguri. At that time Ven. Nandamala, who was a native of Paukmyint in Bantkyi Taik, was spending his monsoon retreat in the Myoshekyang monastery in Salin and teaching his pupils. He explained his pupils that the view of the *Atin* monks that a novice was to place his upper robe on one shoulder when entering a village was not in conformity with the *Vinaya* rules. He wrote a text to explain how to wear robes on the basis of the canonical texts, commentaries and sub-commentaries. The monks of the *Atin* faction made so that the king would know of this text. Then, the king invited Ven. Nandamala to come to Innwa and, when he came, put him up in the palace. The king was pleased with the lecture given by Ven. Nandamala's on whether novices should cover both shoulders with their upper robes or place their upper robes over one shoulder when entering villages, citing the *Vinaya* rules. Therefore, he made the *Atin* monks and *Ayon* monks debate the matter in the palace, and the *Ayon* faction emerged victorious. On 16 May 1780, the king issued an order that novices were to cover both shoulders with their upper robes when entering villages.⁷⁹

Only the practice of the *Atin* faction was approved in the reigns of Kings Alaungmintaya, Naungdawgyi and Sinbyushin. In the reign of King Singu, the king made the *Ayon* and *Atin* monks debate the matter in the Thudhamma hall from 1780 to 1781. The *Atin* monks were unable to cite canonical texts and commentaries to support their view, whereas the *Ayon* monks cited scriptural texts in substantiation of their view. Therefore, all the monks were instructed to follow

⁷⁹Mahadhammathingyan, 1956, 189-90

the practice of covering both shoulders.⁸⁰ King Singu *Min* constructed a monastery with a five-tiered roof on the south of the city of Innwa, named it Mahamingalar Shwebon monastery and donated it to the *sayadaw* who held the title Tipitakalankasami Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru. He also repaired and gilded the Mahamuni pagoda, Myodwin Sigon (i.e. the Sigon pagoda inside the city), Shwesayan, Mwe Andaw and Lawkatharahpu pagodas, which had fallen apart. He named the Manle *Sayadaw* as Supreme Patriarch and made all the monks follow the *Ayon* practice.⁸¹ The religious buildings erected by King Singu were: The Jetawun monastery in the Wutchet Village, twelve monasteries built on the site where Modi monastery formerly stood in Innwa, a library, the Mahamingala Shwebon monastery which was with a five-tiered roof and a brick wall encircling it, and the Bonkyaw Weyan monastery, with a four-tiered roof and a brick wall encircling it, on the east of Lawkatharahpu pagoda.⁸² King Singu was able to settle the *Atin-Ayon* dispute, which was not solved in the reigns of six previous kings. However, the matter resurfaced in the reign of King Badon.

⁸⁰“*Amarapuramyoti Mintayagyi Lethtet Htoatpyandawmuthi Ameindawmya*” (Royal Orders Issued During the Reign of the King who founded the City of Amarapura), *Palm-leaf MS*, no.290868, Yangon, Universities' Central Library (Henceforth: “*Mintayagyi Lethtet Htoatpyandawmuthi Ameindawmya*”)

⁸¹U Maung Maung Tin, *Konbaungzet Mahayazawindawgyi* (Great Chronicle of the Konbaung Dynasty), Vol.II, Yangon, Department of Historical Research, 2004, pp. 370-72 (Henceforth: Maung Maung Tin, 2004b)

⁸²Maung Maung Tin, 2004b, 373

King Badon was one of the seven Myanmar kings⁸³ who protected and promoted Buddhism. He succeeded to the throne on 11 February 1782. As soon as he came to the throne, he began to deal with matters concerning the Religion. When he founded Amarapura as his new royal seat in 1782, he built four monasteries in the four quarters of the city and donated them to the Min-o, Manle, Sonda and Minywa *Sayadaws* so that the Religion would prosper. He also appointed these *Sayadaws* as *Sangharaja Sasanabyu* (heads of the Order),⁸⁴ i.e. as *thathanabaings*, and promoted the Religion. King Badon paid much attention to religious matters. Concerning the Religion, first he solved the *Atin-Ayon* dispute and unified the *Sangha*. In order that Buddhism would flourish throughout Myanmar, he dispatched missionaries to different parts of the kingdom. He appointed more *thathanabyu sayadaws*. He conferred with learned monks and brahmins day and night so that he would understand the scriptural texts.⁸⁵ King Badon was the Myanmar king whose' reign was the longest in history.

Myanmar kings usually consulted with eminent monks whenever they dealt with the matters concerning the Religion. In 1786, during King Badon's reign, the king increased the number of *thanabaings* to twelve⁸⁶ On 7 March 1788, King Badon nominated Maungdaung *Sayadaw* as *thathanabyu* and made the monks meet in the Thudhamma hall.⁸⁷ At that time, there were 2,835 monks in the four quarters of the city of Amarapura and altogether 17,839 monks and novices in the

⁸³Anawrahta, King Kyaswa of Pagan, King Dhammazedī, King Sinbyushin of Hanthawady, Minyaza of Rakhine, King Badon and King Mindon.

⁸⁴Rajinda, 2004, 115

⁸⁵Tin, 1970, 36

⁸⁶Mahadhammathingyan, 1956, 198

⁸⁷Dr Than Tun, *The Royal Orders of Burma, AD 1598-1885*, Part. V (AD.1788-1806), Kyoto, The Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, 1986, p. 395 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 1986b)

kingdom. Factionalism within the *Sangha* escalated in the reign of King Badon. Of the kings of the Konbaung Period, King Badon was a king who succeeded to the throne only when he was old. Therefore he had interest in religious matters and desired to cleanse the religion. He was against factionalism in the *Sangha* and wanted the monks to unite in carrying out the tasks concerning the Religion. The first task King Badon carried out for the Religion was that of solving the *Atin-Ayon* dispute. The view of the *Atin* faction was that when entering a village, a novice was to cover his left arm with a furled-up robe, to have one end of the folded robe draped over his left shoulder and to wrap the upper part of his body with a smaller piece of robe; and this view did not agree with the *Vinaya* rules. However, the monks of this faction, like the *Ayon* monks, did not wear hats, but only carried fans.⁸⁸

The *Ayon* faction held that monks and novices, in entering a village, were to wear their upper robes wrapped around them, covering both shoulders. They were not to wear hats, but were to carry fans. Of these two factions, the *Atin* faction was headed by Ven. Gunabhilankara of Ton village, and hence it was also known as Ton faction. The *Atin* faction split off from the *Sangha* a long time ago. Of the *Arañnavasi* and *Gamavasi* sects, the *Atin* or Ton faction was a group which seceded from the *Arañnavasi* Sect.

King Badon built many religious buildings: pagodas, temples, monasteries, open-halls and libraries. He constructed the Aungmye Lawka pagoda on the site of his former residence, where he lived before he became king, in Sagaing and the Mingun pagoda on the west bank of Ayeyarwady River and cast a large bell.

⁸⁸U San Tun, *Kavilakkhanavisodhani* (Exposition to Literature Characteristics), Mandalay, Department of Buddhist Studies, Mandalay, 1961, p. 481 (Henceforth: San Tun, 1961)

Although he did not complete the construction of the Mingun pagoda, he built other religious buildings—monasteries, pagodas and temples.⁸⁹ Because the king constructed from 1790 until 1797, the people suffered. During King Badon's reign, Myanmar had contacts, especially for religious matters, with Majjhimadesa (central India) and Srilanka. The king entrusted Maungdaung *Sayadaw* with the task of translating the scriptural texts brought back from those countries into Myanmar language. After studying the translations, King Badon repudiated some of his former beliefs and formed some new ideas.⁹⁰ As he had much interest in religious matters, King Badon issued many edicts concerning the religious affairs. Thinking that the Religion was impure, he strove to cleanse it. In doing so, he had some success; however, he had to throw in the towel sometimes. According to the order proclaimed by the *mahadanwun* on 9 September 1802, the king purified the Religion in accordance with the *dhamma* after checking the views of the monks against scriptural texts to ensure that monks were practising in conformity with the Buddha's teaching. His decision as to what monks were to practise was in conformity with the Buddha's teaching. As regards whether novices were to place their upper robes over one shoulder or to cover both shoulders with their robes, it is learnt that covering both shoulders was in conformity with the *Vinaya* rules.⁹¹ King Badon punished the monks who could not translate Pali passages into

⁸⁹Aung Thein Han, 1968, 160

⁹⁰Dr Yi Yi, “Myanmar Thamaing Ahtauk-ahtarmya, 1143-1181 Panama Lelagyet” (Sources on Myanmar History, 1143-1181—A Preliminary Survey), *Researches in Burmese History, no. 1*, Yangon, Department of Historical Research, 1977, p. 92 (Henceforth: Yi Yi, 1977)

⁹¹Maungdaung *Sayadaw*, *Amedawhpye* (Answers to the King's Questions), Yangon, Department of Religious Affairs, 2007, p. 683 (Henceforth: Maungdaung, 2007)

Myanmar, probably to facilitate the emergence of learned monks. King Badon also sent missionaries to the localities in which the Religion had not taken root. He conferred titles on missionary monks. *Myoshins*, *sawbwas* and *myozas* donated the four requisites including food to those monks.⁹² He sent altogether two hundred and fifty monks—fifty learned monks and two hundred monks who were their followers—with fifty sets of the *Tipitaka* to remote areas. King Badon was the first king to dispatch missionaries with sets of the *Tipitaka* to remote areas. It is learnt from a document submitted by the *Thathanabyu Sayadaw* to the king on 27 March 1789 that there were more than three hundred *gaingoks* and *gaingdauks* who were playing a leading role in religious affairs and education in outstation towns and villages.⁹³ Titles were presented to those who deserved them. The king also had the old inscriptions in the kingdom gathered and had copies of the ruined inscriptions made. He gathered the inscriptions probably because he desired to learn literature and history⁹⁴ or because he wanted to find out which religious lands were ownerless. He had new inscriptions written in 1793.⁹⁵ A scholar regards that King Badon gathered the inscriptions to find out the extent of tax-exempt religious land by making a detailed list of religious lands.⁹⁶

⁹²Dr Than Tun, *The Royal Orders of Burma, AD 1598-1885*, Part. IV(AD.1782-1787), Kyoto, The Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, 1986, pp. 352-53 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 1986a)

⁹³Maungdaung, 2007, 342

⁹⁴Maung Thaw, *Konbaunghkit Sittan* (A Survey of the Konbaung Period), Yangon, Tauk Tauk Win Press, 1976, pp. 193-94 (Henceforth: Maung Thaw, 1976)

⁹⁵Maung Maung Tin, 2004b, 77

⁹⁶Dr Than Tun, “*Kyauksa*” (Inscriptions), *Shumawa*, September 1958, p. 12, 16 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 1958)

Each king usually made a copies of the *Tipitaka* when he ascended the throne with a view to ensuring that the Buddha's teachings would last long. King Badon began making copies of the Tipitaka on 4 July 1783.⁹⁷ He built the Yadanabon Library in the royal capital of Amarapura and a library in Ratanasingha. He promoted *pariyatti sasana*. He built a large library in Amarapura.⁹⁸ It was the most impressive library in Myanmar in those days. King Badon also built libraries in Shwebo, Pagan, Pyay, Pathein and Taungoo, and made many copies of the *Tipitaka*. Of the three aspects of the Buddhism—*pariyatti* (the study of the scriptures), *patipatti* (the practice of Dhamma) and *pativedha* (the realization of the Dhamma)—*pariyatti* is the foundation on which *patipatti* and *pativedha* rest.

Following the footsteps of his predecessors, King Badon promoted *pariyatti-sasana* and issued an order on 3 June 1783, appointing seventeen monks as *pitakattawma* and four monks to oversee their work. According to this order, monks and laypersons who copied the *Tipitaka* had to be meticulous in their work so that they would not even miss out a *thawe* (a symbol for the vowel *e*) or a *podma* (a punctuation mark comparable to a comma).⁹⁹ Although he made copies of the Tipitaka and donated them to monks, there was not a single monk who could commit the *Tipitaka* to memory. Therefore, King Badon, considering that making copies of the *Tipitaka* was a terrible waste of money and palm leaves, thought of burning those copies. He did not do so only because U Paw Oo, one of his ministers, told him to throw away the Sandamuni image he had been casting

⁹⁷U Toe Hla, “*Badonmin Lethtet Myanmar Nainggan Thamaing*” (A History of Myanmar During King Badon's Reign), M.A. Thesis, History Department, Mandalay University, 1970, p. 45 (Henceforth: Toe Hla, 1970)

⁹⁸U Toe Hla, *Konbaungkhit Pitakattaikmya* (Konbaung Period Libraries), Mandalay, Ludu Press, 1973, pp. 128-30 (Henceforth: Toe Hla, 1973)

⁹⁹Than Tun, 1986a, 257

into the river first.¹⁰⁰ Therefore, some monks probably regarded him as a king who did whatever he wanted to.¹⁰¹ King Badon sent Shwetaung Thagathu and officials to India to get more than a hundred works, including treatises on medicine, on dietetics and astrology, and made them translate those works.¹⁰² Myanmar officials travelled around India and even visited Punjab. They also brought back two Bodhi trees. Thus, King Badon sent envoys abroad to collect secular and religious works.

Pursuant to the royal order that monks were to recite the texts in the presence of the examiners in the *Thudhamma* Hall daily from 28 October 1788 onwards, the *mahadanwuns* had to send *gaingoks* and *gaingdauks* to various towns and villages to invite the monks to come and recite the scriptures. The king ordered that those who could not recite the texts were to be defrocked. In making efforts to purify and promote the Religion, King Badon attempted to replace the old calendar with a new one. When the new calendar was not used throughout the kingdom, the king bowed to public opinion and rescinded the adoption of the new calendar.

In sum, it is impossible to find out when and how Buddhism was introduced into Myanmar. Some scholars believe that Buddhism made its way to Myanmar in the 1st century AD. It is impossible to say that Buddhism which came to Myanmar first was, as Myanmar today believe, a pure form of *Theravada* Buddhism. The earliest form of Buddhism in Myanmar could be *Mahayana*

¹⁰⁰U Aung, *U Paw Oo Shaukhton Hpyitthaw Kavisettumanjusa Kyan* (Kavisettumanjusa being U Paw Oo's Words to the King), Mandalay, Pitakat Press, 1957, p. 263 (Henceforth: Aung, 1957)

¹⁰¹Sirisobhana, 1974, 273-75

¹⁰²Dr Than Tun, "Myanmar Thamaing Twin Lokipyinnya Ayepabon" (The Importance of Occultism Sciences in Myanmar History), *Myanma Htwe Htwe Ya Ya Thamaing* (A Miscellany of Myanmar History), Yangon, Hpowa Offset, March 2005, pp. 48-74 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 2005)

Buddhism. Moreover, there are scholars who disagree with the generally accepted view that the Myanmars came into contact with Buddhism only after Aniruddha's conquest of Thaton. Furthermore, it is learnt that the *aris* who were disparaged by the chroniclers did not exist in the early Pagan period, but appeared only in the later Pagan period and continued to flourish in the post-Pagan period. Some regard that the *Ari* sect was a national sect, which gained notoriety because they were denigrated in the chronicles. There is no evidence that Myanmar kings had ever persecuted the *aris*. Factionalism within the *Sangha* began when the monks who had received ordination in Srilanka came to Myanmar. Secessions resulted not from differences in the monks' behaviour, robes, practice or goals, but from the secessionists' pride in their probity. Kings Aniruddha, Dhammazedī, Sinbyumyashin of Hanthawady, Thalun and Badon were the kings who had safeguarded and promoted the Religion in the history of Myanmar. The people, monks as well as laypersons, found the reforms effected by some kings impracticable, and the kings had to back down. Some reforms were successful to some extent. However, the Myanmars—kings as well as the people—still believed in spirits and occult arts. The kings, even though they were avowed supporters of the Religion, were not able to repudiate their customs yet.

CHAPTER TWO

PROPAGATION OF THE SASANA

Myanmar Kings were involved in religious affairs. To propagate Buddhism was one of the main duties of the Myanmar Kings. Although the citizens who were ruled by an absolute monarch had to pander to the king's every whim, the king's explanation that he was waging wars, collecting taxes and issuing orders with a view to propagating Buddhism made their lives bearable. Therefore, the Myanmar Kings focused their attention on religious affairs. Additionally, each king believed that he became king because of his great merit as he was a Buddha-to-be who had fulfilled the *parami* in many previous existences. Hence, he carried out the tasks concerning the religion which the *bodhisattvas* generally fulfilled. In the Myanmar feudal system, religious affairs were directly connected with the king and it was the king's responsibility to promote the Religion. It was only in the colonial period that the government decided that religion was not directly connected with administration.

The Myanmar Kings, as was the custom of the feudal lords, concocted prophecies to say that they became kings because of those prophecies; thus, they took refuge in the *Sasana*. The people believed that the prosperity of the *Sasana* depended on the kings who promoted the *Sasana*. The kings usually assumed the title *Sasana Dayaka* (Benefactor of the Religion) when they ascended the throne. It is generally believed that the kings who promoted Buddhism in Myanmar were Anawrahta, Kyaswa of Pagan, Dhammazedi, Sinbyumyashin of Hanthawady,

Minyazagyi of Rakhine, King Badon and King Mindon.¹ Two of these kings were Konbaung Kings. Feudal lords usually put religious affairs on the front burner, regarded the duty to promote the *Sasana* as their chief duty and declared themselves as the kings who supported the Religion as prophesied by the Buddha. Their main intention was to indoctrinate the citizens that insulting a king amounted to insulting the Religion.

Before King Badon ascended the throne, the *Sangha* was disunited and split into *Atin* and *Ayon* factions. Some monks abided by the *Vinaya* rules and studied the scriptures, while others violated the *Vinaya* rules. King Badon came to the throne at a time when the Religion was on the wane. He intended to ensure that concerning the Religion, truth would prevail. When he became king, King Badon entrusted the task of promoting the *Sasana* to Sonda, Minywa, Min-o and Manle *Sayadaws*.² Worrying that disunity in the *Sangha* would be detrimental to the administration of the kingdom, he placed great emphasis on religious affairs. Therefore he checked whether monks were observing the monastic rules. He forced the monks who did not abide by the monastic rules to leave the Order and honoured the monks who observed the rules. King Badon was against schism. He desired for the unity of the *Sangha*. First, he purified the Religion. He believed that allowing the monks who were not *Samuti Sangha* to remain in the Order debased the Order. Therefore, he forced the monks who did not know the monastic rules and scriptures to leave the Order.

His first move towards purifying the Religion was solving the *Atin-Ayon* dispute.³ King Badon settled the *Atin-Ayon* issue, which began in the Nyaungyan

¹Tin, 1970, 90

²Rajinda, 2004, 115

³This will be dealt with in detail in Chapter III.

Period, for once and for all. Monks' observance of the *Vinaya* rules was vital for the purity and prosperity of the Religion. As *Vinaya* was the lifeblood of the *Sasana*, the king held examinations, in which monks and novices had to recite *Vinaya* rules.⁴ Although the king made monks study the *Vinaya Pitaka*, which was the lifeblood of the *Sasana*, most of the monks only learnt the rules by heart. There were very few who understood the rules.

The king desired monks to have compunction about doing evil deeds, to respect the monastic rules and to be pure in practice. Probity would greatly benefit the monks who had the four ideals that were hard to attain: (1) to be born as human beings, (2) to be born when Buddhism exists, (3) to have faith in Buddhism, and (4) to become monks. However, it was learnt that many monks entered the order because they wanted to become abbots, because they did not want to become service men or pay off their debts, because they wanted to be freed from slavery, because they would be able to live without working if they become monks, because they wanted to enjoy the privileges monkhood entitled them to, or because they wanted to support their relatives.⁵ Therefore, the *thathanabyu Sayadaw* (Supreme Patriarch) ordered that monks were not to ordain anybody who was a crown slave, a thief or robber, a rebel, a debtor, or a person who was not permitted by his parents to become a monk.⁶

⁴Maungdaung, 2007, 444

⁵(a) Than Tun, 1975, 495

(b)*Vinayasamuhavinicchaya Kyan*, U Nigrodha (ed.), Vol.III, Mandalay, Thathana Mandaing Press, 1940, pp. 57-60 (Henceforth: *Vinaya*, 1940)

⁶Taw Sein Ko, *Hluttaw Hmattan* (Hluttaw Proceedings), Yangon, Printing and Publication Enterprise, 1977, p. 206 (Henceforth: Taw Sein Ko, 1977)

The king wanted monks to abide by the *Vinaya* rules irrespective of their reason for entering the Order. It is believed that the Religion would prosper if monks observed the *Vinaya* rules as *Vinaya* was the lifeblood of the Religion. Some believe that a monk who does not know the *Vinaya* rules is not a son, but an enemy, of the Buddha and is like an animal.⁷ However, as there are 227 *Vinaya* rules, or more than ninety thousand million rules in detail, it is impossible for monks to follow them strictly in any period in history. In general, there were monks who were conscientious, well-behaved and desirous of training (*lajji pesala sikkhakama*) and who respected and abided by the *Vinaya* rules, and those who were shameless and immoral (*alajji dussila*)⁸ and who violated the *Vinaya* rules.

Monks' observance of the *Vinaya* rules was vital for the purity and prosperity of the Religion. King Badon put much emphasis on matters concerning the monastic rules and issued an edict to ensure that monks would follow the monastic rules and that monastic rules laid down by the Buddha would not fade into oblivion.⁹

In dealing with religious affairs, King Badon even defrocked Maungdaung *Sayadaw*, the then Supreme Patriarch, and the Bagaya *Sayadaw* for schism.¹⁰ As to practice in accordance with the Buddha's teaching was the monks' main duty, King Badon urged monks to study the scriptures and practice meditation. During King Badon's reign, the Maungdaung *Thathanabaing* selected two hundred and

⁷*Vinaya*, 1940, 155

⁸*Alajji dussila* means a monk who violated The *Vinaya* rules knowingly, who covered up their sins and who were unjust.

⁹"*Bodawhpaya Ameindaw Pyandan*" (King Bodawhpaya's Edict), *Palm-leaf MS*, No. 123292, Yangon, Universities' Central Library, cha (verso).

¹⁰Tin, 1970, 122

fifty able and courageous monks from among all the monks who were residing in the kingdom and made them commit the Ubhato Vibhanga to memory and recite it in the Thudhamma examination. Those who were unable to learn the Ubhato Vibhanga by rote had to learn the two Patimokkha texts, the Khuddasikkha and Catubhanavara and recite the texts in the examinations which were held in the Thudhamma hall. Novices had to learn how to pronounce the words correctly and memorize the ten precepts novices must observe, *linga*, *danda*, *sekhiya* and *khandhakawat* and had to recite these texts in the examinations held in the Thudhamma hall.¹¹

As the *Vinaya Pitaka* was the foundation of the *Sasana*, Maungdaung Sayadaw instructed all the monks and novices in various localities to study the Patimokkha, Aggikhandopama-sutta, ten *lingas*, ten *dandas* and the *sekhiya* rules and to recite what they had learnt in the examinations. There is evidence that some monks were involved in political matters in those days. King Badon issued an order on 10 March 1782 as follows:

Kyaik Bandaing, Thawuthti, Sipa and Htadabin, although they should have observed the *Vinaya* rules with a view to attaining the Path to *Nibbana* and the Fruition (*Nibbana*) as they were monks, and live peacefully, they failed to do so. They fraternized with laypersons, and discussed secular matters as to kingship. Defrock Kyaik Bandaing, make him wear white robes and send him to Kankaw Kalaw. Send each of the remaining three—Thawuthti, Sipa and Htandabin—to one of the four forests.¹²

¹¹Medi Sayadaw, 1966, 160

¹²Than Tun, 1986a, 233

Moreover, if a person, who was born while Buddhism existed, entered the monkhood because he desired to attain *nibbana*, he must abide by the *Vinaya* rules set down in scriptural texts. The king invited *Sayadaws* (senior monks) to the library and requested them to ask monks and novices about monastic rules; and the *Sayadaws* reported to the king that some monks and novices could answer the questions, whereas some could not. It was impossible to regard that a person who had not studied the monastic rules or did not know how many monastic rules were there was practicing according to scriptural texts, and it was impossible to venerate a person who wore robes without practicing according to scriptural texts. Therefore, the king ordered the *mahadanwun* to make a list of the monks and novices who could not answer the questions about the *Vinaya* rules together with the names of the persons who donated monasteries to them, of the teachers residing in those monasteries and of the donor of those monasteries. He also ordered to question all those who had not been questioned and to submit the statements to him. He issued an edict on 12 March 1784, ordering that the monks and novices who could not answer the questions about monastic rules were not to be allowed to live independently in their own monasteries because it would not be beneficial for both the monks and their lay devotees and that they were to be made to study the rules under the guidance of learned teachers in the monastery complexes they were residing.¹³

King Badon also studied the scriptural texts which were of vital importance for the purification, perpetuation and propagation of the *Sasana*. He believed that in the three Buddha *Sasanas*, *Patipatti Sasana* would flourish only if *Pariyatti Sasana* prospered, and *Pativedha Sasana* would thrive only if *Patipatti Sasana*

¹³Than Tun, 1986a, 316

flourished. Hence, he placed the propagation of the *Pariyatti Sasana* on the front burner. He made a list of the monks who promoted and propagated *Pariyatti Sasana* and donated the four requisites to them so that they would be able to study the scriptures and practice meditation.

King Badon also had the scriptures copied carefully like other Myanmar kings. Realizing that spelling mistakes could bring about undesirable consequences, he issued an order so that the scriptures would be copied speedily with studious attention as follows:

Of the three aspects—*Pariyatti*, *Pativedha* and *Patipatti*—of the Buddha *Sasana*, *Pariyatti Sasana* is the basis. The Buddhist Canon is to be written in gold and ink or incised on palm-leaves so that it will last long. For this matter, a hundred monks—20 *sakyi*, 40 *sati* and 40 *sama*—as editors. They are to meet four times a month in the library. The *sakyis* are to check the texts before making copies; the *satis* are to edit the texts repeatedly. The *Sayadaw* in charge of the library is to supervise the *Pitakat taikso*, *saye* and *thwethaukkyi* so that the texts would be legible. The *sakyi* and *satis* are not to leave the city. If they need to leave the city, they are to ask permission from the king in writing.¹⁴

The *Mahadanwun* had to check whether the editors attended the meetings and report to the king. Moreover, when the Maungdaung *Sayadaw* reported that the men employed to copy the scriptures were unable to work undisturbed because the leaders in various localities were exacting labour and cash contributions, the

¹⁴Than Tun, 1986a, 359

king ordered that the men were only to work for the scriptures and were not to be summoned by the heads of service groups.¹⁵

However, Maungdaung *Sayadaw* again informed the king in writing that officers, ignoring that the members of the *Pitakattawye asu* (the group of service men employed to copy the scriptures) were exempted from taxation, had enlisted them. The king issued an order to exempt them from induction into military service and to make them only copy the scriptures.¹⁶ The men employed to copy the scriptures also became dishonest. As the men in the list of the service men employed to copy the scriptures were exempted from military service, people who wanted to evade military service attempted to finagle their way into the *Pitakattawye asu*. This caused the number of service men in the *Pitakattawye asu* to fluctuate, and the *Myinwun* reported the matter to the king. The king ordered that only 100 scribes and 50 *peloats* (men to prepare palm-leaves) were to be employed.¹⁷ Knowing what the spelling mistakes in the scriptures could lead to, King Badon issued an edict on 14 December 1785:

If the spellings fixed in the reigns of my ancestors who reigned in Thayehkittaya, Pagan, Myinzaing, Sagaing, Pinya and Innwa fall into disuse, the meanings of the words will be lost. . . .

If the meanings of the words are incorrect, scriptural texts would be misinterpreted. . . . Monks and laypersons, who depended on the Religion, suffer if and when they follow wrong views. If the established spellings should be changed, editors, who are supposed to be learned, are

¹⁵Than Tun, *1986a*, 414

¹⁶Than Tun, *1986a*, 482

¹⁷Than Tun, *1986a*, 488

to explain why they should be changed and to quote authorities in the presence of the *Sayadaws* and ministers and privy councilors.¹⁸

It seems that the scribes and editors changed some spellings. It is learnt from the following edict (which was issued on 29 December 1785) that those who changed the spellings without any good reason were punished:

The *Sayadaw*, minister and privy councilor have informed me in writing that the editors who are supposed to be experts in the scriptures are unable to give any good reason for changing the spellings. The *hlut* Supreme Council is to inflict punishments commensurate with their offences on those who changed the old spellings.¹⁹

During King Badon's reign, the scribes were made to stay together in a suitable place near the library, to copy the scriptures and to leave the library together. The rules for copying the scriptures also were set down.²⁰

King Badon saw to it that no mistakes would be made in copying the scriptures. As most of the scriptural texts were in *Pali*, there were very few people who understood them. Therefore, he had the texts translated into Myanmar language. He also issued an order to the effect that if there were serious errors and omissions in the translations, the monks who were culpable would be punished. The order reads:

¹⁸Than Tun, *1986a*, 489

¹⁹Than Tun, *1986a*, 492

²⁰Yi Yi, 1977, 128

The canonical texts should be edited and copied with care so that nothing would be omitted. When the Myanmar translations of the passages from the canonical texts are made, they are to be checked against the original *Pali* texts in the presence of the *Sayadaws*, who are to inform me in writing whether the translations agree with the originals. If a *Pali* passage gives more facts than its translation, criminal charges will be brought against the monk who extracted and translated the passage.²¹

King Badon also issued an edict to order the monks to write the scriptures in *Pali* language because Magadha language did not exist, although the scriptures should be written in Magadha language according to the canonical texts. The order reads:

Although the scriptures should be written in Magadha language and script according to the canonical texts, Magadha language and script are now extinct. The canonical texts should not sink into oblivion. The scribes are to continue copying the texts under the supervision of the librarians. Appoint learned ex-monks as editors.²²

A *pitakat taikso* (librarian), who was to supervise the members of the *pitakat asu*, was also appointed. It is learnt that King Badon conferred titles on the librarian and the members of the *pitakat asu* and gave them land when Maungdaung *Sayadaw* sent an epistle to the king.²³ Building a library was an

²¹Dr Than Tun, *The Royal Orders of Burma (AD 1598-1885)*, Part.VI (AD 1867-1810), Kyoto, The Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, 1987, p. 351 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 1987)

²²Than Tun, 1987, 774

²³Maungdaung, 2007, 361

important job undertaken by King Badon. The custom of building a library as one of the seven buildings constructed at the same time when a new city was founded was not practised before. King Alaungmintaya drove in the stakes to mark off the ground plans of seven sites—the city, the palace, moat, a tank, the Shwechettho pagoda, a spirit shrine, and the watch tower—at the same time when he founded the city of Shwebo. A library was not included. The city, the palace, the moat, a pagoda, a monastery and a library became “the seven buildings” only in King Badon’s reign. Although each king made a copy of the Buddhist canon when he came to the throne, this custom was not common in the Pagan period, probably because the cost of copying the Buddhist canon was expensive and the literacy rate was low. Attempts were made to copy and donate scriptural texts in King Thalun’s reign. There is no evidence that scriptural texts were copied or donated in King Alaungmintaya’s reign. This custom revived only in King Badon’s reign.

The slaves donated to the Religion in King Badon’s reign can be divided into three categories: *hpaya kyun* (slaves donated to pagodas), *kyaung kyun* (slaves donated to monasteries) and *pitakat kyun* (slaves donated to the Buddhist canon). *Hpaya kyuns* had to deal with sundry matters concerning pagodas and temples. They became *hpaya kyuns* because they were donated by their owners or because they donated themselves to the pagodas as slaves, because they married pagoda slaves or because they were born into *hpaya kyun* families. The donors gave cultivated land to the slaves when they donated the slaves to religious establishments. The *hpaya kyuns* were allowed only to eat the food obtained from pagodas and monasteries. A *pitakat kyun* or a *kyaung kyun* who married a *hpaya kyun* would become a *hpaya kyun*. They were exempted from military service and

crown service and they enjoyed some freedom.²⁴ *Pitakat kyuns* were slaves responsible to look after the scriptures. They became *pitakat kyuns* for the same reasons the *hpaya kyuns* became slaves. *Pitakat kyuns* were of two types: those who had to look after the scriptures and those who had to make arrangements for producing new copies of the scriptures. The *pitakat kyuns* who had to look after the scriptures were higher than the *hpaya kyuns* in social status. A *kyaung kyun* or a person from another social stratum who married a *pitakat kyun* would become a *pitakat kyun*.²⁵ Just like the *hpaya kyuns* and *pitakat kyuns*, *kyaung kyuns* were donated by their owners. The living conditions were the same as those of the *hpaya kyuns*. An *alut lu* (free man) married to a *kyaung kyun* would become a *kyaung kyun*. The *kyaung kyuns* justly enjoyed some freedom. They could be freed from slavery. A service men who was donated as a monastery slave could be redeemed by paying his original price. The daughter born to a mother who was a *kyunthidaw* (slave donated to the Religion) and an outsider could not be redeemed. A son born to these parents, however, could be redeemed. Similarly, if the father was a *kyunthidaw* and mother was an outsider, the daughters could be redeemed, but the sons could not be redeemed. The sons would become *kyunthidaws*.²⁶

From 1787 onwards, King Badon scrutinized the monks residing in the monasteries in Sagaing, Tada-oo, Thinbanpinkyawwa, etc. which were in the four quarters of the Golden City, to determine who should and who should not be

²⁴U Tin, *Myanmar Min Oatchoatpon Sadan Hnint Bodawhpaya ei Yazathat Hkawthaw Ameindawtangyi* (The Administration of Myanmar Kings and Bodawhpaya's Edict Called Yazathat), Vol.II, Yangon, Government Printing, 1965, pp.49-50 (Henceforth: Tin, 1965)

²⁵Tin, 1965, 51

²⁶Tin, 1965, 52

regarded as *sabhaga*; and he presented a list of those monks to Maungdaung Thathanabaing. Arrangements were made to determine who were *sabhaga*²⁷ and who were *visabhaga*.²⁸ Maungdaung *Sayadaw* questioned the monks in forty *thathanabyu* towns, including Taungoo and Yangon, to determine whether they should be regarded as *sabhaga* or as *visabhaga*, and sent a report to King Badon. Inquiries were made to find out who were *lajji* and who were *alajji*, who were *sabhaga* or who were not *sabhaga*. The *alajji* or shameless monks and their devotees were the ones who were causing harm to the Religion. The Religion would be pure, last for ever and prosper only if the monks were checked up on with a view to finding out whether they were *lajji*, *alajji*, *sabhaga* or *visabhaga*. There were seven offences connected with following the *atin* practice and venerating the *atin* monks, offences of taking medicine in the afternoon, chewing betel, riding in carts, using umbrellas, breeding cattle and practicing medicine, five offences connected with practicing astrology, and many offences connected with accepting the donation of gold and silver, watching entertainments, etc. A monk who had committed any of those offences would become a *lajji* monk only if he realized that those acts were wrong and pledged that he would not commit those offences in the future. The *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* listed the monks who had violated those offences as *visabhaga* monks. Only the monks who had not committed those offences were true monks, who could be registered as *sabhaga* monks. *Sabhaga* and *visabhaga* monks should be segregated. The *sabhaga* monks must have firm faith in the three Refuges. The king instructed the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* to ordain only the persons who had learnt the meanings of

²⁷A *sabhaga* was a monk who had not violated the monastic rules.

²⁸A *visabhaga* was a monk who had violated the monastic rules.

paccavekkhana, *linga*, *danda*, *sekhiya* and *khandhakawat* as novices and only those who had learnt the meanings of *paccavekkhana*, *desana*, *Patimokkha* and *Khuddasikkha* as monks. He made the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* pledge in writing that they would abide by this instruction. Maungdaung *Sayadaw* informed the king in writing that of the 17,839 monks and novices residing in various localities in the kingdom except Taungoo, Yangon and more than forty *thathanabyu* towns, 7,794 monks and novices—1,754 abbots, 1,948 monks and 4,092 novices who were their pupils—were *sabhaga*, whereas 10,045 monks and novices—3266 abbots and 2030 monks and 4749 novices who were their followers—were *visabhaga* and that there were 351 leaders of different fraternities.²⁹

King Badon issued the following order to prohibit people from making donations to the Taunglelon *Sayadaw* who, despite being a *sabhaga* monk, associated with non-*sabhaga* monks:

The Taunglelon monk, after giving his word to the *Sayadaws*, is residing together with the monks who are not *sabhaga* in the monastery he has left. The monks of the Taunglelon (West) and On-in monasteries have informed the king that they desire to turn themselves into *sabhaga*. Nobody is to make donations to or visit the Taunglelon monk and the monks of the Taunglelon (West) and On-in monasteries. Sever the legs of those who make donations to or visit them.³⁰

²⁹(a) "*Bodawhpaya Ameindawpyandan*" (Bodawhpaya's Edict), *Palm-leaf MS*, No. 106273, Yangon, Universities' Central Library, ta (recto)-thi (verso)

(b) Maungdaung, 2007, 232-36

³⁰ Than Tun, 1986b, 406

However, the Thathanabyu *Sayadaws* interceded, and King Badon issued a new order on the same day on 18 March 1788 to rescind the above-mentioned order. The order runs:

I issued an order because the Taunglelon monk and the monks of Taunglelon monastery (West) and of On-in monastery failed to abide by the pledges they had made. I rescind this order because the *Sayadaws* have made a written request. The Taunglelon monk and the monks of Taunglelon monastery (West) and of On-in monastery are to be treated just like other monks who are registered as *sabhaga*.³¹

The king requested the Maungdaung *Sayadaw*, the Thathanabyu *Sayadaw*, to ask monks whether they should be exempted from *kadogun* (ferriage). The *Sayadaw* told him that they should not be exempted from *kadogun*.³² However, to do favour to *sabhaga* monks, the king issued an order on 19 October 1789 that no *kadogun* was to be collected from *sabhaga* monks.³³ He also issued an edict on 7 May 1795 that *visabhaga* monks could forsake their practices and turn themselves into *sabhaga* monks. The edict reads:

...With the agreement of the *thathanabyu Sayadaw* and other *Sayadaws*, the *visabhaga* monks who desire to turn themselves into *sabhaga* by reciting the two Patimokkha texts from memory can do so after repudiating their practice of wearing hats.³⁴

³¹Than Tun, 1986b, 408

³²Maungdaung, 2007, 663

³³Than Tun, 1986b, 444

³⁴Than Tun, 1986b, 496

This order suggests that the *visabhaga* monks were wearing hats. It can be assumed that the king did not want the *visabhaga* monks to take part in ordination ceremonies. The *mahadanwun* was ordered to question the *visabhaga* monks who had ordained someone as monks or novices and to submit their statements to the king.³⁵ It seems that the *visabhaga* monks were not expelled from the Order yet. However, the king ordered the *mahadanwun* to question the monks who spent monsoon retreat together with *visabhaga* monks.³⁶ As regards the *upyitze* and *neitthayi sayas*, who were of vital importance for monks, it was ordered in an edict dated 28 June 1795 that Kyaw Aung Sanhta *Sayadaw* and the *visabhaga* monks were to be defrocked:

Kyaw Aung Sanhta *Sayadaw* and the *visabhagas* fail to live under the guidance of a *neitthayi saya*. A person who is not an *upyitze saya* must not be allowed to behave like an *upyitze saya* and to remain in the monkhood. Defrock Kyaw Aung Sanhta and all the *visabhaga* monks.³⁷

Moreover, the number of persons who committed the *Vinaya* texts to memory increased in King Badon's reign. The king held examinations referred to as *sapyanpwe* (ceremonies of reciting the texts) for the prosperity of the *Sasana*. There were three levels of *sapyanpwes*: the *pahtamabyan* examinations for those who wanted to become novices or monks, the *sapyanpwes* in which monks and novices had to recite the monastic rules for monks and novices and the

³⁵Than Tun, *1986b*, 515

³⁶Than Tun, *1986b*, 529

³⁷Than Tun, *1986b*, 565

examinations in which the three *Pitakas* or the five *nikayas* had to be recited.³⁸

The *pahtamabyan* examinations were held from the month of *Nayon* to the fullmoon day of *Wazo* every year. The officers had to go around the monasteries to make a list of monks—with their lay names, age and educational qualifications. After completing the list, the examinations would be held. The king also issued the syllabus for the *pahtamabyan* examinations. According to the syllabus of 1785, novices had to recite the eight grammatical texts, eight parts of the *Abhidhammatthasangaha*, the *Matika*, the *Dhatukatha* and the *Yamaka*—both the *Pali* texts and their Myanmar translations. The persons who took the examinations were categorized into good, bad and mediocre candidates. Those who desired to become monks had to recite the eight grammatical texts, nine parts of the *Abhidhammatthasangaha*, the *Matika*, the *Dhatukatha*, the *Yamaka*, the *Patthana* and the *nawa* (the Buddhist scriptures taught in the daytime). The candidates who took these examinations also were categorized into good, bad and mediocre candidates.

The king also set down the rules for the examinations: a person who wanted to become a novice must not be older than 15; a novice could not take the examination after disrobing; the examiners must not give the candidates any hints, a novice-to-be must be made to recite only what he knew, if a novice-to-be refused

³⁸U Tin, *Myanmar Min Oatchoatpon Sadan Hnint Bodawhpaya ei Yazathat Hkawthaw Ameindawtangyi* (The Administration of Myanmar Kings and Bodawhpaya's Edict Called Yazathat), Vol.IV, Yangon, Department of Culture, 1976, p.215 (Henceforth: Tin, 1976)

to recite any text two or three times when asked by the examiners he was not to be allowed to continue reciting the texts.³⁹

As *Vinaya* was the lifeblood of the *Sasana*, the king held the examinations in which monastic rules for novices and monks had to be recited. This examination was held four times a month. Novices-to-be had to recite the monastic rules for novices, *linga*, *danda*, *sekhiya* and *khandhakawat* and monks-to-be had to recite the two Patimokkha texts, the *Vinaya* rules known as Kammakammavinicchaya, four *bhanavaras* (sections of the scriptures divided for purposes of recitation), the Matika, the Dhatukatha, the Yamaka, the Patthana and the Abhidhamma. The *Sayadaws* who were qualified to act as *neitthayi* or *upyitze sayas* had to recite the Ubhato Vibhangha, the Khandhakawat, the *Vinaya* rules known as Kammakammavinicchaya and the *suttas* as long as *mulapannasa*.⁴⁰ The monks in outlying areas had to recite the two Patimokkha texts, the Khuddasikkha and the Aggikhandhopama-sutta to the *gaing-oats*.⁴¹

As regards the recitation of the monastic rules for monks, the king held the examinations in which the Ubhato Vibhanga had to be recited. The monks who had spent ten or more *vassas* had to take these examinations. A monk was qualified to act as an *upyitze*⁴² or *neitthayi saya*⁴³ only if he had passed this examination. King Badon held these examinations because it is stated in the texts that a monk who lived independently of an *upyitze* or *neitthayi saya* incurred a

³⁹“*Sapyanpwe Ameindaw*” (1147) (Edict concerning the examinations), *Parabaik MS*, U Win Tin’s Collection

⁴⁰Maungdaung, 2007, 443

⁴¹Sirisobhana, 1974, 271

⁴²a monk who has to guide his pupils so that they would not commit minor offences.

⁴³a monk on whom another monk depends.

dukkata (offence of wrong-doing). Following the advice made by the Maungdaung *Sayadaw* in his epistle, King Badon instructed the *taik-oats* in the royal capital and the *gaing-oats* in the provinces to learn the texts so that they would have the qualifications to act as *upyitze* or *neitthayi sayas*. When they had learnt the texts, they had to recite them. Monks had to learn the Ubhato Vibhanga between June and August 1790 and recite the texts in the presence of other monks in the Thudhamma hall in September-October. In mid-October, they had to recite the chapter on Parajika in the Bhikkhuni Vibhanga.⁴⁴ The Bhikkhu- and Bhikkhuni-Vibhangas were collectively called Ubhato Vibhanga. By 5 July 1792, fifty-six *Sayadaws* had recited the Ubhato Vibhanga: twenty-eight from the royal capital and 28 from the outlying towns and villages. The monks who had recited the Ubhato Vibhanga had to mention the names of the works they would continue to learn in the presence of the monks in the Thudhamma hall. When they had learnt those texts, they had to recite them. Most of the monks undertook to learn the Dhammapada in this examination.⁴⁵ The monks who undertook to learn more texts were the title-holding monks from the royal capital and the *gaing-oats* from the provinces.

It is mentioned in a contemporary record that Halin *Sayadaw* U Ketu was the only monk who could recite the five texts of the *Vinaya* “like a good horse ran”. However, an author states that there were very few monks who understood the *Vinaya* rules even though it is said that the king made monks learn the *Vinaya* texts because *Vinaya* was the lifeblood of the *Sasana*.⁴⁶ The king also decided what rewards were to be given to novices- and monks-to-be who passed the

⁴⁴Maungdaung, 2007, 359-60

⁴⁵Maungdaung, 2007, 479-81

⁴⁶Vinandasabha, 1992, 87

examinations and how to exempt their relatives from crown service. Those monks and novices also had the right to get donations once a year when the ceremony of offering Kathina robes was held. Because the lay devotees of the monks and novices made lavish donations, the king had to order them to reduce the rewards. Hoping to get rewards from the king, the number of novices- and monks-to-be who took the exams increased. The number of candidates who sat the exams increased from thirty eight in 1782 to 3,249 in 1791-92. In 1806, there were only twenty-eight monks who took the exams for bad candidates.⁴⁷ As the examinations became popular because of the rewards given by the kings and the donations made by laypersons, some monks asked the examiners sarcastically: “Isn’t the boxing match over?”⁴⁸ King Badon only permitted the monks who had the requisite qualifications to act as *upyitze* or *neitthayi sayas* to act as *upyitze saya*, to ordain novices and monks or to reside in their own monasteries with their followers, and allowed laypersons to invite only the monks from the monasteries, the abbots of which had recited the Ubhato Vibhanga, to the ceremonies of making donations, offering food and of reciting the *parittas*. He denied the monks who were not qualified to act as *upyitze* or *neitthayi sayas* these rights.⁴⁹ The king held examinations in accordance with tradition for the prosperity of the *Pariyatti Sasana*. These examinations were held to test the knowledge of monks. As the king rewarded those who passed the examinations, the number of monks who took the examinations gradually increased.

For the increase of religious buildings, the kings mostly built pagodas. King Badon had five hundred and fifty Shwegu temples constructed

⁴⁷Toe Hla, 1970, 22

⁴⁸Vinandasabha, 1992, 81

⁴⁹Sirisobhana, 1974, 272

simultaneously in the towns and villages in the kingdom on 22 May 1784.⁵⁰ He realized that the kingdom would be peaceful and prosperous only if there were relations between the royal capital and the outlying towns and villages on linguistic, cultural and religious grounds. To fulfill this need, King Badon made arrangements to disseminate knowledge and spread Buddhism in remote areas. Although the documents disagree as to the number of Shwegu temples erected by King Badon, a historian seems to believe that the number was 230.⁵¹ The towns in northern Myanmar in which King Badon erected Shwegu temples were important towns. All the towns except Kaungton were the towns in which *myowuns* had their headquarters. There were altogether thirty four towns and villages with Shwegu temples in the Shan states.⁵² The fact that the Shwegu temples were built in many localities in the Shan states suggests that King Badon knew the importance of Shan states. The Shwegu temples are found as far south as Dawe and Myeit in Tanintharyi. It can be learnt from the royal orders that King Badon gave special attention to these towns as they were under the threat of Thai invasion. The north-westernmost towns in which the Shwegu temples were constructed were Kale and Thaungthut. These towns, formerly raided by the *Cassy* from Manipur and Assam, were towns of military importance. This probably was the reason why King Badon

⁵⁰The number of pagodas is 230 according to U Maung Maung Tin's *Konbaungzet Mahayazawingyi* (A Chronicle of the Konbaung Dynasty), Vol.I, Yangon, Universities' Historical Research Department, 2004, p. 398 and 200 according to *Indavajira Cetiyaakhta Myithaw Yazawingyoat* (A short chronicle named Cetiyaakatha), Yangon, Ngweyamon Sarpe, n.d., p. 50

⁵¹Dr Toe Hla, "*Badonmin Lethet Myanmar Nainggandaw*" (Myanmar During King Badon's Reign), Mandalay University, History Department, 2001, p. 40 (Henceforth: Toe Hla, 2001)

⁵²See Appendix 2

had the Shwegu temples built there. King Badon carried out the religious affairs together with political matters. The people all over the kingdom, who were living in houses made of timber or bamboo would become interested in the Religion and would be inclined to support the king when they saw gilded temples. These temples would also have civilizing effect on the people. On the other hand, the construction of these temples suggested that the king acknowledged the political importance of the localities, guaranteed peace and security of those localities and honoured the people there.

However, it is also possible that the king was trying to mark his territory by constructing Shwegu temples. He would be able to order the people in the towns and villages to construct these temples only if they pledged allegiance to him. Thus, the king's power can be gauged from the number of the Shwegu temples. It is a fact that the number of pagodas constructed varied with each king. Although 550 pagodas were erected in King Badon's reign, King Thibaw was able to build only 156 pagodas.⁵³ Therefore, it can be assumed that the king constructed Shwegu temples not only for religious purposes, but also for administrative reasons.

King Badon sent envoys to central India to collect secular and religious texts. Of the group of officers sent to India to obtain treatises, the group sent in 1813 was the biggest. Myanmar received Sanskrit works because of these journeys. When they got new secular texts, Myanmar felt inspired to study secular subjects. The collection of texts began in 1786. When the texts were

⁵³Thwe Thwe Sit, "*Badonmin Lethtet Myanmar Nainggan Oatchoatye Thamaing*" (A History of the Administration of Myanmar in King Badon's Reign), M.A Thesis, History Department, Mandalay Arts and Science University, 1968, p. 303 (Henceforth: Thwe Thwe Sit, 1968)

brought back to Myanmar, they were sent to Maungdaung *Sayadaw*, the then Supreme Patriarch, who had to transcribe and translate them. Although it is said that two hundred and fifty three texts were brought back from India between 1786 and 1818, only 236 texts have been found. It seems that the Myanmar got two copies of some texts. Maungdaung *Sayadaw* translated twenty three works.⁵⁴ Some believe that these journeys were made for political reasons. Some scholars are of the opinion that the Myanmar were exploring the possibilities of joining forces with Indian Rajis to drive out the British from Bengal.⁵⁵ As Myanmar had conquered Rakhine, Anglo-Myanmar relations had become strained because of the problems involving Rakhine rebels. That was the reason the East India Company assumed that the journeys were made for political reasons and the collection of texts was just a charade.⁵⁶

King Badon also solved the problem concerning the mix up between crown land and religious land. With the passage of time, the inscriptions recording the donations made by former kings ceased to exist and the monasteries and temples to which the lands were donated fell into ruin; and nobody knew which lands were glebe land. Therefore, King Badon sought Maungdaung *Sayadaw*'s advice. The *Sayadaw* told him that only kings owned cultivable land, that only kings should donate land to the Religion, that the land donated to the Religion should remain as glebe land, that a tithe from the persons working on the land donated to a monastery or pagoda should be paid to the monastery or pagoda, that the donation should be cancelled if the monastery or pagoda ceased to exist and if only the land tax was donated to it, that the donation should not be cancelled if the land tax as

⁵⁴Than Tun, 2005, 62-63

⁵⁵Tin, 1970, 62-63

⁵⁶Yi Yi, 1977, 75

well as land was donated to a religious establishment, and that although former kings' making donations by recording their donations on stone was not in conformity with scriptural texts, the donations were valid because there were the donors, donees and the intention to donate the land.⁵⁷

With a view to making a new register of glebe lands, King Badon had all the inscriptions in the kingdom collected. The inscriptions, from which it was impossible to find out to which monasteries or pagodas lands were donated, were collected in 1785. The king had new inscriptions written and some old inscriptions re-engraved in 1793. U Tun Nyo, the governor of Twinthin *Taik* and Thetpan *Atwinwun* Balayaza Kyawhtin had to supervise the engraving of the new inscriptions.⁵⁸ Of the over 730 inscriptions in the Mahamuni inscription shed, ninety-five per cent were inscribed in King Badon's reign. They were the inscriptions collected and re-inscribed to determine which lands were donated to the Religion by former kings; they were set out in rows according to townships.⁵⁹ King Badon's intention was to escheat the glebe lands which were ownerless, to levy taxes on those lands and to use the revenues for copying the scriptures and collecting texts.⁶⁰ It can be assumed that King Badon collected all the inscriptions within reach to make a detailed register of glebe lands with a view to finding out

⁵⁷Maungdaung, 2007, 124-30

⁵⁸U Tun Nyo, *Twinthin Yazawinthat* (New Twinthin Chronicle), Vol.I, Yangon, Mingalar Press, 1968, p. pha. (Henceforth: Tun Nyo, 1968)

⁵⁹Dr Yi Yi, "Mahamuni Kyauksazu" (Mahamuni Inscriptions), *Union of Burma Literature and Social Science Review*, Vol.I, Yangon, September 1968, pp. 555-559 (Henceforth: Yi Yi, 1968)

⁶⁰Tin, 1970, 53-54

what was the extent of glebe land and who were evading taxes by registering non-glebe land as glebe land.

It seems that King Badon tried to get the Supreme Patriarch's support for confiscating glebe land. It is not known whether he did what he wanted or what the *Sayadaw* wanted after getting the *Sayadaw's* opinion. The royal order suggests that all the lands would revert to the crown if there were no inscriptions recording their donation. What the *Sayadaw* had told the king was that a plot of land should not be escheated if the donation of it was historically valid even if there was no inscription recording its donation. When the king asked the *Sayadaw* again in 1788, the *Sayadaw* replied that the crown should regard a plot of land as glebe land if there was an inscription recording its donation or if there was any concrete proof that it was donated to the Religion, and that the crown could escheat the land if there was no irrefutable evidence that it had been donated.⁶¹

King Badon introduced many religious reforms. He strongly believed that monastic rules must be in accordance with the Buddha's teachings. He asked the *Sayadaws* whether his views on some of the Buddhist sermons were acceptable or not. He was against the disagreements over doctrinal matters and *Vinaya* rules. King Badon believed that monks could not attain Nibbana just by being virtuous. They must have firm belief in the Three Jewels. Shaving the head and wearing the robes would not lead a person to Nibbana.⁶² Before carrying out serious religious reforms, King Badon sought the Supreme Patriarch's approval. He checked whether monks were observing the *Vinaya* rules and discussed monks' behaviour. He invited the monks from the royal capital and the *neitthayi Sayadaws* from rural

⁶¹Maungdaung, 2007, 237-39

⁶²“*Badonmin Ayuwada Sadan*” (A Treatise on King Badon's Faith), *Handscript*, U Toe Hla's Collection (Henceforth: "*Badonmin Ayuwada Sadan*")

areas to the palace. The following order issued on 7 January 1811 shows that the king himself participated in the discussions about monastic rules:

We will discuss religious matters. Invite the Thathanabyu *Sayadaw*, the Sinde *Sayadaw*, the abbot of Ngazowun's monastery, the Shwegyin *Sayadaw*, the Lawkahmankin *Sayadaw*, the Kyauksauk *Sayadaw*, the Medi *Sayadaw*, Khingyi Shwetaung, Paunglaunggu *Sayadaw* and Letwe *Sayadaw* to the palace in Mingun.⁶³

It is learnt that King Badon invited monks repeatedly to the palace to discuss religious matters. The monks had to write down their discussions made in his presence and submit the records to the king. Concerning this, the king issued an edict on 30 January 1811 as follows:

Religious matters must be discussed truthfully. The *Sayadaw* and monks are to discuss the matters in the Ratanabon monastery and are to submit a report to me when the discussion is over.⁶⁴

King Badon held that a monk who wished to attain *nibbana* must reside in a secluded place and meditate on the *dhamma*. Therefore, he instructed monks to practice the *dhamma* in forests. He maintained that wearing a robe was not good enough. To attain *nibbana*, a monk must bear in mind the three Refuges (*saranagamana*), which were the essence of Buddhism. To force the monks who

⁶³Dr Than Tun, *The Royal Orders of Burma*, Part.VII (AD. 1811-1819), Kyoto, The Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, 1988, p.165 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 1988)

⁶⁴Than Tun, 1988, 184

could not practice in this way to leave the Order, he issued an order in 1812 as follows:

Merit and demerit do not hang on age. One can become a monk only if one has *saranagamana* (the three Refuges). As the three *saranagamana* are hard to attain, one must make strenuous efforts to establish the three *saranagamana* in oneself. (The Buddha) expounds in the Anagatabhaya-sutta how to practice to establish the *saranagamana* in oneself in a secluded place, where one cannot get the smell of men. If you desire to establish the *saranagamana* in yourselves, practice in a forest as instructed in the Anagatabhaya-sutta. Do not let a monk who cannot practice to establish the *saranagamana* in himself to live in the Order till he becomes old. Make him disrobe.⁶⁵

King Badon believes that dwelling in the forest would not benefit the monks who did not know scriptural texts. Therefore, he forced the monks who did not understand the monastic rules and who did not know the scriptures to leave the Order. However, he did not force the monks to leave the monkhood without giving sufficient reason. He invited senior monks to discuss *dhamma* and made the monks from all over the kingdom to recite scriptural texts from memory with a view to finding out which monks were shirking their duties and which monks were observing the *Vinaya* rules. He forced the monks who did not study the scriptures or who could not discuss the scriptures to leave the Order.

Although he tightened his grip on monks, he simplified the procedure for entering the Order. He allowed anyone to enter the Order by taking refuge in the Three Jewels after placing the Suttanta text before a Buddha image. As politeness

⁶⁵Tin, 1970, 120-21

and calmness were not enough for monks, the Buddha expounded the suttas to guide them to tame their minds. As he desired people to enter the Order according to Suttanta, the king issued an order on 12 August 1812 as follows:

Donors are to build forest monasteries, two to three hundred *tas* apart, in a suitable locality for the monks who practice in accordance with the teachings in the Suttanta.⁶⁶

An order was issued in King Badon's reign to permit some persons to enter the Order in accordance with the teachings in the Suttanta as follows:

The eight men, Nga Aw, Nga Pu, Nga Tha Ye, Nga Hkwe, Nga Tha dun Aung, Nga Sein Min, Nga Myat Tin and Nga Shwe Eit, who wanted to enter the Order according to Suttanta like the above mentioned persons, are to enter the Order by placing the Suttanta text before the Sandamuni image and taking the three refuges.⁶⁷

Nga Shwe Yi, who wished to enter the monkhood according to Suttanta may enter the monkhood before the Sandamuni Image like the above-mentioned persons.⁶⁸

Entering the Order according to Suttanta was in conformity with the way permitted by the Buddha soon after he attained Enlightenment. U Tin believes that King Badon made this mistake because *Mingyi* Minhla Mahanawrahta, also known as U Paw Oo, told him that the Buddha, after spending the first *vassa*

⁶⁶Than Tun, 1988, 297

⁶⁷Tin, 1970, 131-32

⁶⁸Than Tun, 1988, 296

(monsoon retreat) in the Deer Park, sent sixty arahants to various towns and villages to spread the Religion and permitted those who wished to become monks to enter the Order through the three Refuges without visiting the Buddha in person.⁶⁹

King Badon was against the ordinations which were not in conformity with Suttanta. When he set down strict rules, monks were disgruntled. Some disrobed, re-entered the Order according to Suttanta and became forest monks. Some returned to their native villages. Monks became disunited and some monks rebelled against the king. Nga Pu of Taungbalu Nga village and Nga Tha Myat of Kyaungbyu conspired and staged a rebellion with financial support from U Labha of Alenan monastery. The rebels were arrested and the king pardoned them. King Badon defrocked U Labha who gave financial help to the rebels and, saying that he spoke what was true, rewarded him. He conferred the title Yazathingyan on U Labha and made the latter serve him.⁷⁰ However, it seems that King Badon was not adamant about his reforms; he usually gave in when he faced vigorous opposition.

An important reform measure King Badon took was the removal of the cabalistic squares buried at the four corners of the Golden City. He ordered:

Burying cabalistic squares in the foundations of the towers at the corners of the Golden City was wrong. Those that have been placed there, together with their stone containers, must be dug out and thrown away at the confluence of the rivers . . .⁷¹

⁶⁹Tin, 1970, 121

⁷⁰Tin 1970, 129

⁷¹Tin, 1970, 129

The view that making bronze cabalistic squares was wrong was a very progressive idea in those days. The kings before and after him encouraged the burying of cabalistic squares at the corners of the royal capital. Each king made cabalistic squares as soon as he ascended the throne, before his coronation so that his reign would be long. King Badon was the only Myanmar king to reject this practice.

King Badon asked monks whether the *sima* (ordination hall), *parisa* (the assembly of monks to perform ordination rites), *ñatti* (ritual announcement made at the inauguration of a Buddhist ecclesiastical undertaking such as ordination into monkhood), *kammavaca* (sacred *Pali* texts to be recited to ordain a person into the monkhood) and monk-to-be were mentioned in canonical texts as the five conditions for a person to become a monk. Monks had to admit that they were not mentioned in canonical texts. The king asked whether it was true that the five qualities of a monk mentioned in the canonical texts were *sila* (morality), *samadhi* (concentration), *pañña* (wisdom), *vimutti* (emancipation), *vimuttiñanadassana* (vision of emancipation), and the monks told him that it was true. Believing that a person could not become a monk without having firm faith in the three Refuges, the king wanted the monks to disrobe. Some monks begged him not to defrock them when they were old because they had been living as monks since they were young. It is possible that they said so because they feared the wrath of the king. King Badon's strict orders brought about rebellions staged by monks from circa 1812 onwards, and the Religion was seemingly on the wane. A religion would last long only if its followers were united. If the followers were disunited, the king's orders would be fruitless. King Badon made some innovations concerning

Buddhism and astrology.⁷² However, he rescinded his orders when his views were not accepted by the people all over the kingdom. It can be assumed that his strict rules were in force only between 1812 and 1817. He issued an edict on 7 August 1817 as follows:

Kings of Pagan, Myin Zaing, Sagaing, Pinya and Ava followed Anawyatha and they all went wrong; all the successive religious teachers would know it and they should try somehow or other to correct it but they failed to do so; in the time of Nyaung Yan ten kings, Thalun, 1633-1648, collected all available Buddhist literature and allowed monks to be ordained as it was introduced by Anawyatha and Araham and to hold religious examinations annually, but he also allowed all other sects of Buddhism to carry on with their own ways; they would be doing one of several of the following:

<i>Atin</i>	Covering only the left shoulder with Robe
<i>Ayon</i>	Covering Both Shoulders with Robe
<i>Be Din Haw</i>	Reading Horoscopes
<i>Du Gote Tin</i>	Hanging on Dousle layer Robe from Shoulder
<i>Gamavasi</i>	Living in Village
<i>Gwin Hto</i>	Tattooing
<i>Hlay Hlaw</i>	Racing Boats
<i>Let Hpwe That</i>	Wrestling
<i>Ma Tha Laik</i>	Burying the Dead
<i>Mi Hnet</i>	Burning incense or Turning Lantern
<i>Ok Htote Hsaung</i>	Putting on Hat
<i>Pwe Gyaung</i>	Offering to Various Deities
<i>Say Yay</i>	Painting the Face

⁷²Tin, 1970, 119-20

Si Ti Beating Drum

...

Like Thalun 1633-1648 the King considered it best to allow monks and men to go back to their old ways that their teachers had taught them...⁷³

King Badon, in introducing religious reforms in line with his progressive ideas had to gauge his power. Even an able king could not stamp out the people's traditional beliefs.

Scriptures were copied also in the reign of his successor King Bagyidaw. Bagyidaw issued an order on 2 January 1820 as follows:

Copies of Pitaka (on lacquered plaques with letters) in gold, (on paper with letters) in ink and (letters incised) by stylus (on palm leaf) left by former kings in Royal Library, are in (various stages of) decay; the king wants new copies made in all three styles, i.e. written in gold, ink and by stylus; get all good scribes and all experts in preparing the material for writing; there is a register of these specialists and their descendants in all parts of the kingdom; get all of them ehre and put them under Maha Dhamma Thin Gyan, *Min Daing Bin Amat*—Minister King's Counsellor, for reorientation (in their old art).⁷⁴

He had many copies of the Suttanta, *Vinaya* and *Abhidhamma Pitakas* made so that the Religion would prosper. Mondaw *Sayadaw* and twenty one title-holding monks, who were well-versed in the canonical texts, commentaries and sub-commentaries had to supervise the copying of the scriptures. Fifty eight

⁷³Than Tun, 1988, 118-119

⁷⁴Than Tun, 1988, 370

Sayadaws had to edit the copies.⁷⁵ There is some discrepancy between the accounts of King Bagyidaw's appointment of a *thathanabaing*. Although all the documents agree that the king conferred the title Muninandabhisirisaddhammadhaja Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru on Salin *Sayadaw* Shin Paññasiha and named him as *thathanabaing*, they do not agree on the date of his appointment.⁷⁶

Three halls for copying the scriptures were constructed in the precincts of the Man Aung Yadana Pagoda and on the east side of the pagoda, which was situated to the southwest of the palace, and the copying of the three *pitakas*—Suttanta, *Vinaya* and Abhidhamma *Pitakas*—on palm leaves, supervised by the *Sayadaws* headed by the Supreme Patriarch, commenced on 8 April 1824. Robes, alms-bowls and eight requisites were donated to the title-holding *Sayadaws*.⁷⁷ By this time, the First Anglo-Myanmar war had begun. Hence, it can be assumed that some scribes were conscripted into the army. Mahadhammathingyan, a minister who had to oversee the copying of the scriptures, requested the king to cancel the conscription of the descendants of the scribes so that they would be able to continue copying the scriptures, and the king assented to his request.⁷⁸ Exemption from military service even when the war was escalating was an inducement of the job of copying the scriptures. Additionally, the king issued an order on 27 April

⁷⁵Maung Maung Tin, 2004b, 179-82

⁷⁶The date is given as 3 March 1821 in Dr Than Tun's ROB. VII (p. 374) and as 3 November 1819 in U Tikkhadhammalankara's *Myanma Yetswe Thamaing* (Konbaungkhit) (p. 142). The date is not given in U Maung Maung Tin's *Konbaungzet Mahayazawindawgyi* (Vol. II, p. 179) even though the appointment of the *thathanabaing* is mentioned.

⁷⁷Maung Maung Tin, 2004b, 261

⁷⁸Than Tun, 1988, 430

1829 that the descendants of the scribes were only to be employed in copying the scriptures and were to be exempted from other crown services.⁷⁹

King Bagyidaw made efforts to carve a marble image. A rock for carving the image was found on the Sagyin hill on 17 May 1829. It is learnt that the king asked the monks how he should name the image, and the monks chose the name Mahathakyananthi. The king himself gave the measurements to carve the image.⁸⁰ In choosing the date for building a concrete temple to house the Mahathakyananthi image, the king followed the advice given by the *thathanabaing* and a learned minister.⁸¹

It is learnt that a monk who failed to practice according to scriptural texts was defrocked in King Bagyidaw's reign. The king issued an edict as follows:

Nga Tha Noe fails to practice according to scriptural texts. He masquerades as a monk and follows wrong practices. He is a menace to the Religion and he follows a wrong view. Although Nga Tha Noe Nge should be executed, I spare his life to show mercy. As his following has grown, the Religion can become impure. Defrock Nga Tha Noe Nge and hand him over to a service group.⁸²

King Bagyidaw did not change the texts King Badon prescribed for monks- and novices-to-be to recite. Monks- and novices-to-be received robes presented by

⁷⁹Than Tun, 1988, 531

⁸⁰U Tikkhadhammalankara, *Myanma Yetswe Thamaing (Konbaungzet)* (Chronology of Myanmar History (Konbaung Period)), Yangon, Ingyin Oo Press, 2005, p.194 (Henceforth: Tikkha, 2005)

⁸¹Than Tun, 1988, 565

⁸²Than Tun, 1988, 577

the king. However, it seems that their sponsors made lavish donations to them. The king prohibited the sponsors from making lavish donations to monks and novices and even threatened them with punishment if they disobeyed. Moreover, it seems that some monks- and novices-to-be cheated in the examinations. The king ordered his servants to keep tabs on the monks- and novices-to-be and title-holding *Sayadaws* who were teaching them to find out whether they were violating rules and to submit reports to him. It can be assumed that the title-holding *Sayadaws* who were serving as examiners did not come to the Thudhamma Hall regularly. The king himself had to urge them to come.⁸³ During Bagyidaw's reign the *thathanabyu thathanazaunt Sayadaws* mediated when King Bagyidaw and Prince Tharyarwady vied for throne.⁸⁴

King Bagyidaw was succeeded by his younger brother Prince Tharyarwady on 15 April 1837.⁸⁵ As soon as he came to the throne King Tharyarwady made arrangements so that all the monks in the capital, who had to depend on the king for performing ecclesiastical rites, would go into monsoon retreat on 18 July 1837. King Tharyarwady named the *Sayadaw* who was a native of The-in village in Pahkangyi Township and whom he had been venerating as *thathanabyu* and conferred title Suriyasobhisiripavaralankaradhammasenapati Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru title on him. He also presented the Rajadhirajaguru titles to twelve monks who were the *thathanabyu Sayadaw's* pupils and who were

⁸³Than Tun, 1988, 614-15

⁸⁴This will be dealt with in detail in Chapter 4.

⁸⁵The date is given as 30 April 1837 in U Maung Maung Tin, 2004b (p. 368) and as U Tikkhadhammalankara, 2005 (p. 214) and as 15 April 1837 in Than Tun, 1988 (p.617)

endowed with *pariyatti* and *patipatti*.⁸⁶ He also issued an order to exempt the whole village of Myindin in Pahkangyi Township from crown service. As the monks who were causing the Religion to become impure by giving fruits and flowers to laypersons, by practising medicine and astrology, by accepting the donation of gold and silver, by practising alchemy, or by giving charms, etc. to laypersons could absolve themselves of sins and become *lajji* only by abandoning their possessions, they had to take a vow in the presence of monks so that other monks would have no suspicion and would be able to live in communion with them and so that laypersons would be able to make donations to them without fearing the wrath of the king. Monks had to expiate their sins before going into monsoon retreat. Monks also had to report to the king that they had expiated their sins in such and such a *sima* on such and such a date. The monks who failed to take a vow and perform ecclesiastical rites had disobeyed the orders of the Supreme Patriarch and the king. So, the persons who venerated them and the monks who associated with them would be guilty of a crime. Hence, they had to be expelled from their sects.

A list of the monks who had committed the Patimokkha to memory had to be submitted to the king. All the monks except those who had only spent a *vassa*, who were older than sixty and who were ill, must learn the Patimokkha if they did not know it by heart.⁸⁷ King Tharyarwady also instructed the librarians concerned to make copies of the scriptures in gold and ink and with a stylus for the welfare of the Religion. He issued an order to remove the scribes and preparers of the palm

⁸⁶The date given in U Maung Maung Tin, 2004b (p.372) and U Tikkhadhammalankara, 2005 (p. 216) is 31 may 1837 and that mentioned in Than Tun, 1988 (p. 635) is 29 April 1837.

⁸⁷Than Tun, 1988, 661-62

leaves from other service groups and to exempt them from crown services and from making cash contributions.⁸⁸

It is noteworthy that scriptural texts which had been donated to the Religion were traded in King Tharyarwady's reign. The king came to know of this and issued an order on 21 November 1837 to prohibit the people from buying and selling the scriptures, saying that they might make new copies if they needed.⁸⁹ It can therefore be assumed that the number of scriptural texts donated to monks increased in King Tharyarwady's reign. Some people probably bought scriptural texts rather than waiting till new copies were completed so that they would be able to donate them to their monks before others.

King Tharyarwady allowed a monk and his followers to live separately from other monks. He permitted the Kyetsugyin *Sayadaw* to admonish his pupils, study the scriptures and practice meditation and prohibited the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* from summoning him.⁹⁰ It sounds as if the king was permitting the formation of a new sect. King Mindon's permission to a monk and his followers to live apart from other monks resulted in the establishment of a new sect. However, it seems that the Kyetsugyin *Sayadaw* and his followers, who were allowed to live apart from other monks in King Tharyarwady's reign, did not mutate into a sect.

The-In *Sayadaw*, the *thathanabyu* in the reign of King Tharyarwady's reign, passed away on 4 November 1839. Then, the king appointed The-In *Sayadaw*'s pupil Ven. Ñeyyadhammalankara Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru, who had received the Rajaguru title, as *thathanabyu*.⁹¹ He had to manage the matters

⁸⁸Than Tun, 1988, 676

⁸⁹Than Tun, 1988, 688

⁹⁰Than Tun, 1988, 710

⁹¹Than Tun, 1988, 726

concerning the monks who resided in the entire kingdom. *Sayadaw U Ñeyya* served as *thathanabyu* from 1839 to 1845. On 4 December 1845, Bagaya *Sayadaw U Paññajota* replaced U Ñeyya as *thathanabyu thathanasaunt*.⁹² It is learnt that the king appointed a new *thathanabaing* not because the *thathanabaing* had passed away; he removed the *thathanabaing* because they had a disagreement and appointed a new one. The king instructed the *thathanabyu Sayadaw* to probe into the matters concerning the ordination of criminals and the monks' detention of the former fief-holder of Amyint who was facing criminal charges. The *thathanabyu Sayadaw* decided that the monks were not in the wrong. The king was dissatisfied with this and removed the *thathanabaing* from office.⁹³

King Tharyarwady was succeeded by King Pagan on 17 November 1846. On 19 June 1847, King Pagan laid the foundations for building the new Bagaya monastery for the *Sayadaw* whom he had been venerating since he was a prince. The construction of the new Bagaya monastery took about two years. As the temple housing the Mahathakyathiha image which was built by King Bagyidaw in Awa had tumbled down, King Pagan constructed a new temple with a five-tiered roof and an encircling wall close to the south of the Mahawizayaranthi pagoda, which stood to the west of Amarapura on 14 July 1847. The king renovated the Pinzeitpauk pagoda in Nga Sintkaing village which was in ruins in the same year. On 10 August 1847, the king, together with princes and ministers, went to pay

⁹²U Maung Maung Tin, *Konbaungzet Mahayazawindawgyi* (A Chronicle of the Konbaung Dynasty), Vol.III, Yangon, Universities' Historical Research Department, 2004, p. 51 (Henceforth: Maung Maung Tin, 2004c)

⁹³Ni Tut, "*Amarapurahkit Buddha Thathanawin*" (A History of Buddhism in Amarapura Period), M.A thesis, History Department, Mandalay University, 1982, p. 67 (Henceforth: Ni Tut, 1982)

homage to this pagoda. As the buildings in five monastery complexes were burnt down when a fire broke out in the western parts of the Golden City, the king built twenty monasteries: nine monastery buildings in the Northern Thayettaw monastery complex, four monastery buildings in the Southern Thayettaw monastery complex, two buildings in the Magyidaw monastery complex, five buildings in Gugyi monastery complex and two buildings in the Petpa monastery complex.⁹⁴

On 7 April 1849, King Pagan visited the Bagaya monastery which had just been completed with his four-fold army, named the monastery complex as Mahawizayarama and the monastery as Mahaweyanbontha, and conferred the title Paññajotabhisiripavaravijjayalankaradhammasenapati Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru on the Bagaya *Sayadaw*, who was the *thathanabyu* and conferred the Rajaguru titles on twenty one monks. He also donated robes, alms-bowls and *padethabins* (tree-shaped stands on which articles of offering were hung) with requisite articles hung on them to forest dwellers and village dwellers and donated the monastery to the Thathanabyu Bagaya *Sayadaw*.⁹⁵ Later, as the concrete temple housing the Mahathakyananthi image in Awa fell into ruins, the king ordered the minister who held Kyaukmaw town in fief and the Pabe *Atwinwun*, together with three hundred boatmen, to transport the image to the capital. The image arrived in the capital in three days. On 10 July 1849, the king himself went to the riverside, had the barge carrying the image pulled with a steamship, and placed the image in the recently-constructed brick temple near the Taungthaman Lake in the southern parts of the city of Amarapura.⁹⁶

⁹⁴Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 60-61

⁹⁵Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 64-65

⁹⁶Tikkha, 2005, 267

The king ordered more than eight hundred tailors to make robes in the temporary palace in the Southern Garden for 11,142 monks and novices who were residing in the four quarters of the city and in surrounding villages under the supervision of princes and ministers. After the robes had been sewn, more than four hundred bodyguards had to wash and dye them. The king, together with ministers, donated the robes with pomp and ceremony in the Athawkayama monastery, which stood near the Mahamuni temple, for eight days from 12 October 1851 onwards. Ven. Uttama and eight novices who resided in the Mahawizayayama monastery were ordained as monks.⁹⁷ On 25 June 1852, the king, together with his mother and sisters, visited the Mahamuni image and donated a gold headgear and gold *duyin* (flame-like epaulettes) to the image. He donated the Athawkayama monastery, together with four smaller monasteries and an encircling wall, the construction of which had been completed, to the *thathanabyu Sayadaw* and named the monastery *Athawkayama Taik Yadanabontha*.⁹⁸

King Mindon took over the throne from King Pagan on 17 February 1853. On 16 April 1853, he named the Maungdaung *Sayadaw*, who held the title Ñeyyadhamabhivamsasiripavaralankaradhammasenapati Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru, as *thathanabyu* to control the monks in the kingdom.⁹⁹ Tradition has it that Prince Kanaung, King Mindon's younger brother, once referred to the *thathanabaing* as *mayaba thathanabaing* (step-*thathanabaing*)

⁹⁷Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 75

⁹⁸Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 86

⁹⁹Dr Than Tun, *The Royal Orders of Burma*, Part.IX (AD 1853-1885), Kyoto, The Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, 1989, p. 337 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 1989)

because the king did not choose his own *Sayadaw* as *thathanabaing*, but appointed the monk preferred by his chief queen as *thathanabaing*.¹⁰⁰ King Mindon had the flawless copies of the three *pitakas* made in accordance with tradition. Whenever a new king came to the throne, he would take the formal possession of the palace and would have the scriptures copied by using styluses, ink and gold. The Buddhist canon was copied on palm leaves with pomp and ceremony in King Mindon's reign. On 14 April 1856,¹⁰¹ King Mindon had the scriptures copied on palm leaves under the supervision of the *thathanabyu Sayadaws*, four title-holding *pitakatma Sayadaws*, thirty *sakyi Sayadaws*, fifty *sadi Sayadaws* and fifty learned monks. Altogether 100 service men—librarian, *taikgaungs*, *thwethaukgyi*, *asuye*, *pitakatyē*, *kanyitye*, *minye* and *shweye*—had to copy the scriptures. The king conferred the titles Jagarabhivamsatipitakadhara Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru, Sumangalasamisiripavaramanidhaja Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru and Narindabhisirisaddhammajotipaladhaja Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru on the abbots of the Dethkinayama, Sidawmyinwun and Zibani monasteries, respectively. The king paid salaries and provisions to lay scholars who had to proofread the copies before the *Sayadaws*. If a proofreader found a mistake overlooked by other proofreaders, he was rewarded and the persons who overlooked the mistakes were punished. King Mindon, Prince Kanaung and the Chief Queen supervised the copying of the Suttanta, *Vinaya* and Abhidhamma Pitakas respectively. As they supervised only nominally, monks had to do the work for them. King Mindon invited the *thathanabyu Sayadaw* and title-holding *Sayadaws* to the palace and issued an order to prohibit people from venerating shameless monks who failed to

¹⁰⁰Sirisobhana, 1974, 298

¹⁰¹The date given in Tikkha, 2005 (p. 303) is 5 April 1856.

observe the *Vinaya* rules so that the Religion would be free from impurities and monks would abide by the *Vinaya* rules.¹⁰²

The persons who really had to copy the texts were the *pitakat ahmudans*. They became busy whenever a new king came to the throne. The *pitakat ahmudans* included the service men who were responsible for safekeeping scriptural texts and those who had to copy the scriptures. There were *kanyitye*, *peloke*, *myinkaing*, *minye*, and *shweye*. In the late Konbaung

period, they were appointed by the Department of Religious Education.¹⁰³ *Pitakat Taikso* and *Pitakattawoats* also were appointed. There were altogether eleven *peloke myinkaing* in the late Konbaung period and each of them received a salary of 115 *kyats*.¹⁰⁴ The salaries paid to 369 service men including the *pitakat* and *peloke myinkaing* amounted to Ks. 56,364 a year. It can therefore be regarded that the *pitakat ahmudans* were favoured by the king. On 25 February 1865, King Mindon placed more than two hundred wooden boxes with copies of the scriptures in them in the library at the foot of Mandalay Hill. Whole sets of the three *pitakas* were donated to monasteries. Monasteries usually had libraries to keep scriptural texts. A library was an essential building to be constructed whenever a new capital was founded. It was one of “the seven sites:” monastery, moat, pagoda, library, city, Thudhamma hall, and *sima*. When a king moved to a new city, the *pitakats*

¹⁰²Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 167-68

¹⁰³U Tin, *Myanmar Min Oatchoatpon Sadan Hnint Bodawhpaya ei Yazathat Hkawthaw Ameindaw Tam Gyi* (The Administration of Myanmar Kings and Bodawhpaya's Edict Called Yazathat), Vol.V, Yangon, Cultural Institute, 1983, p. 141 (Henceforth: Tin, 1983)

¹⁰⁴U Maung Maung Tin, *Shwenanthon Wohara Abhidhan* (A Dictionary of Court Language), Yangon, Yabye Publication, 2005, p. 261 (Henceforth: Maung Maung Tin, 2005)

were also carried to the new city. King Mindon brought scriptural texts from Amarapura and placed them in the library at the foot of Mandalay hill on 8 January 1864.¹⁰⁵ Laypersons donated scriptural texts to monasteries so that monks would be able to study them. Yaw *Atwinwun* donated 12,620 *ingas* of canonical texts, commentaries and sub-commentaries.¹⁰⁶ Only the king, high-ranking officials and rich persons could donate many *ingas* of scriptural texts. It seems that people donated scriptural texts for supporting the *Pariyatti Sasana* and for attaining the Path and Fruition. Although the king, ministers and rich persons could spend a lot of money to donate scriptural texts, commoners could not afford to donate them. The cost of copying the scriptures was very expensive. Although it is said that monks copied the scriptures, there were professional scribes referred to as *kyaung-sayes*. They normally charged a *kyat* per *inga*, i.e. twelve palm leaves. It took three or four days to complete an *inga*. The three *pitakas* were copied on 533 eleven-lined palm leaves in 1865.¹⁰⁷ As the cost of copying the whole set of the *pitakas* was very expensive, all the donors would not be able to donate the whole sets of the Buddhist canon. They would normally ask what texts monks needed and donate them.

King Mindon had the canonical texts inscribed on marble slabs, which no previous kings had done, so that the Buddhist Canon would last for five thousand years of the Religion. The scriptures were inscribed on stone slabs in a grand hall

¹⁰⁵Kannimyo Sitke Minhtinyaza, *Mandalay Yadanabon Mahayazawindawgyi* (Great Chronicle of Yadanabon), Mandalay, Tetnelin Press, 1969, p. 120 (Henceforth: Kannisitke, 1969)

¹⁰⁶Hmawbi Saya Thein, *Myanmar Wungyi Hmugyi Mya* (Myanmar Ministers), Yangon, Aye Aye Press, 1967, p. 98 (Henceforth: Hmawbi Saya Thein, 1967)

¹⁰⁷Win Maung, 1979, 49

built in the palace on 14 October 1860. The abbots of Dethkinayama, Sidawmyinwun and Zibani monasteries, who supervised the copying of the scriptures on palm-leaves had to proofread and correct the texts.¹⁰⁸ The laypersons who had to oversee the work were *Mingyi Mahathiriuzana*, the *atwinwun* who held Hkanbat Town in fief, *Mingyi Mahaminhlasithu*, the *atwinwun* who held Yaw town in fief and *Mahathirizeyathu*, the *Hkinmaminwun* who held Mainghkaing Town in fief.¹⁰⁹ The inscribing of the scriptures on stone completed on 4 May 1868.¹¹⁰ There were altogether 729 slabs: 111 slabs of the five *Vinaya* texts, 208 slabs of the seven *Abhidhamma* texts and 410 slabs of the five *nikayas*, three *suttas*.¹¹¹ These inscriptions, each housed in small brick pavilions, were placed in the precincts of the Mahalawkamarazein Pagodas. There were 42, a hundred and sixty eight and 519 stone slabs inside the first, second and third encircling walls of the pagoda. An author refers to these inscriptions as “the world’s largest book”.¹¹²

It seems that king Mindon inscribed the scriptures on stone as a maneuver to deflect the attention of the people who had suffered because he founded the new city of Mandalay in 1859. It is also possible that he inscribed the scriptures on stone with the hope that the Buddhist canon would last till the five thousandth years of the Religious Era. However, the *Sasana* would last forever for those who accepted the Buddha’s teachings and would be lost forever for those who did not accept them. Additionally, there is a scholar who interpreted King Mindon’s act as

¹⁰⁸The titles of these *Sayadaws* had been mentioned in page 81

¹⁰⁹Kannisitke, 1969, 149-50

¹¹⁰Shwegaingtha, *Ahmit 100 pye Mandalay* (The Centenary of the Foundation of Mandalay), Mandalay, Kyibwaye Press, 2007, p. 256 (Henceforth: Shwegaingtha, 2007)

¹¹¹Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 253

¹¹²Ludu Daw Ama, *Kaba Akyizon Sa-oatkyi* (The World’s Largest Book), Mandalay, Ludu Press, 1973 (Henceforth: Ludu Daw Ama, 1973)

a political maneuver to rally the people behind him because he could not compete with the British forces that had occupied Lower Myanmar militarily or politically.¹¹³

Although the kings were able to inscribe the three *Pitakas* on palm leaves using styluses, ink and gold and on stone slabs, they were unable to print and publish them, which would be the best way to spread the scriptures. Although there was a printing press in King Mindon's reign, the whole set of the Buddhist canon could not be printed. Even though Myanmar received a press which could print seventy two *ingas* of *Pali* texts simultaneously in 1864 with the help of Bigandat, a Christian missionary, the scriptures were not printed.¹¹⁴ As there were printing presses, some libraries of the Konbaung Period housed printed books. A Russian Orientalist by the name of Ivan Publo Maniyev recorded on 1 February 1886 in his *journey* that there were six teak boxes filled with books in King Thibaw's library when King Thibaw was dethroned.¹¹⁵ Another measure taken for the perpetuation and propagation of the scriptures was the convening of the Fifth Buddhist Synod. King Mindon made two thousand four hundred monks recite the *Tipitaka* in unison in front of the Lion Throne in the Myenan Pavilion, beginning with the *Vinaya Pitaka*, from 15 April 1871 onwards. The recital was completed on 12 September 1871. The king issued an order that the *Hluttaw* was to announce that the Synod was over in the Golden City so that the people would rejoice and to instruct the governors and officials in remote areas to announce this.¹¹⁶ Although

¹¹³Win Maung, 1979, 59

¹¹⁴Dr Than Tun, *Nehle Yazawin* (Peripatetic History), Yangon, Sarlokengan Press, 2004, p. 216 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 2004)

¹¹⁵Than Tun, 2004, 499

¹¹⁶Than Tun, 1989, 748

the Religion was used as a pretext for convening the synod, there probably were some political reasons. The first three synods were held to prevent dissension within the *Sangha*. The Fourth Synod was held by senior monks to write down the scriptures on palm leaves because the number of monks who desired to commit the scriptures to memory had dwindled due to famine and rebellions.¹¹⁷ The monks played a leading role in these Buddhist synods. The Fifth Buddhist Synod was held not because of the monks' demands, but because of the king's desire. There was no serious threat to the Religion in King Mindon's reign. It can be assumed that the recitation of the *Tipitaka* was not necessary as the scriptures had been inscribed not only on palm leaves, but also on stone slabs. The rebellions of Prince Myingun and Prince Badein, which broke out in King Mindon's reign, even threatened the king's position. They brought about political instability. Political disunity and economic downturn caused many people from Upper Myanmar to migrate to Lower Myanmar. King Mindon had to issue an order to request monks to persuade the emigrants to return to Upper Myanmar and to defer the repayment on the loans of those who returned for five years and to grant a five-year tax holiday to them.¹¹⁸ It seems that the king convened the Fifth Buddhist synod to restore public confidence. Although the Myanmar regard King Mindon's synod as the Fifth Buddhist Synod, an author argues that this synod should be called the Sixth Buddhist Synod.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷Dr Myat Myat Tun, "*Theravada Buddhabatha Mawkunwin Chatthasangayana Mahadhamma Thabin*" (The Sixth Buddhist Synod), Yangon, DPPN, 2007, pp. 34-70 (Henceforth: Myat Myat Tun, 2007)

¹¹⁸Than Tun, 1989, 656, 657, 658

¹¹⁹Tin, 1970, 130

Monks guided laypersons to ensure that they would not forget the teachings of the Buddha. The crown spent Ks. 32,780 to build thirty three Thudhamma halls where monks would be able to deliver their sermons. Twelve *tayatingoats* and eleven *dhammayons* were built near the twelve gates of the city so that people would be able to pay homage to the Buddha and keep Sabbath daily there.¹²⁰ Many people kept Sabbath. The king ordered the officers to go around the city placing the Garudhamma Edict on an elephant and reading it on every fifth day of the waxing moon so that people would not forget the *dhamma*. The king urged the people to observe the eight and five precepts four weeks a month, both during and after Lent, to pay homage to the Three Jewels day and night, to radiate loving-kindness and to be polite towards one's ancestors and teachers.¹²¹ *Dhammayons* and *Dhammatthanas* were constructed in the four quarters of the town and *uboattaw* associations, headed by *uboattawgaungs*, were formed. The number of *uboattaws* in Amarapura in June 1885 was 506, and it increased to 554 in September 1855.¹²² In Buddhism *sila* (morality) was not of vital importance. It was just used to tame one's mind so that one would see the truth. Most of the people believed that observing the precepts was for gaining happiness hereafter. This belief deflected them from the way to *Nibbana*. It seems that the *uboattaws* kept Sabbath not because they wanted to do so, but because they wanted to get the clothes and salaries given by the king. The *uboattaws* were divided into *andha* (who merely understood rules of conduct) and *kalyana* (who were able to analyse the rules of conduct). The king gave 1 *mu* and 1 *mat* per week to each *andha* and

¹²⁰Shwegaingtha, 2007, 120

¹²¹Shwegaingtha, 2007, 260

¹²²Kannisitke, 1969, 52-54

kalyana respectively.¹²³ According to a list of the donations made by King Mindon, each *kalyana* and *andha* received 5 *mu* and 2 *mu* 1 *pe* respectively and the crown spent Ks. 5,000 to 6,000 per week to pay them.¹²⁴ *Uboattaws* were also exempted from *sehnahmu mindaing* (twelve kinds of excise). Therefore, it is impossible to say that all the *uboattaws* observed the precepts because they wanted to. The *uboattawgaungs*, who enjoyed the king's favour, had to carry out the tasks of collecting taxes and gathering intelligence as ordered by the king. It can therefore be regarded that some *uboattaws* just observed the precepts perfunctorily to get emoluments from the king, not because they wanted to be moral.

The number of monks in the late Konbaung period was very high. According to a list of rice donations made in King Mindon's reign, there were altogether 15,336 monks and novices—8,718 monks and 6,648 novices—in Mandalay and Amarapura.¹²⁵ A document gives the number of monks in Mandalay and Amarapura when the king offered Kathina robes on 9 November 1881 as 2,577.¹²⁶ The number was low probably because the king only invited famous monks. The number of monks and novices combined would have been over ten thousand. The population of Myanmar in King Thibaw's reign was over a hundred thousand. Hence, ten per cent of the population were monks.¹²⁷ As regards the monasteries in Mandalay and Amarapura in which these monks resided, there were altogether 217 monastery complexes and 1,442 monasteries in King Mindon's reign and 198 monastic complexes and 1,416 monasteries in 1881,

¹²³Tin, 1976, 226

¹²⁴Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 305

¹²⁵Tin, 1970, 132

¹²⁶Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 374

¹²⁷Than Tun, 2004, 299

during King Thibaw's reign. Thus, each monastic complex had eight to twenty monasteries could accommodate 500 to 1,000 pupils.

As the people made donations to monasteries with many pupils, they became Buddhist universities. Grammar was an important subject because one would understand the *Vinaya* rules well and would be able to interpret them correctly only if one knew grammar. A person who did not know grammar could not pronounce the three Refuges correctly and could not interpret the sentences correctly. The *Sacha Sayadaws* (lecturers) taught the pupils. The *Sacha Sayadaws* were of three grades: *pahtama* (first), *dutiya* (second) and *tatiya* (third). According to a list of 1867, there were 25 *pahtama*, thirty two *dutiya* and twenty one *tatiya sachas* in Mandalay.¹²⁸ Examinations were held by the king to test the knowledge of the pupils. There were three different exams: *pahtama pyansohmu*, *wini pyansohmu* and *pitakat thonbon pyansohmu*. In the *pahtama pyansohmu*, monks and novices-to-be had to recite monastic rules. The monastic rules for novices and monks had to be recited in the *wini pyansohmu*. In the *pitakat thonbon pyansogyin*, monks had to recite the entire *Tipitaka* or one of the five *nikayas*.¹²⁹ Monks had to take these exams from the 8th day of the waxing moon of *Nayon* to the 8th day of the waxing moon of *Wazo* every year in the Thudhamma hall. A preliminary examination was held from the beginning of *Tagu* to the beginning of *Kason*. A list of monks and novices in the Golden City who would take the examinations—with the names of their monasteries and teachers, their monk and lay names, date of birth, age, parents, etc.—was made in the month of *Pyatho*. Their ability to recite the texts from memory and their understanding of the texts

¹²⁸Win Maung, 1979, 92

¹²⁹Tin, 1976, 216

were examined. A monk who could not recite the texts properly after being prompted three times would fail the exam. If they passed the examinations, they had to take an oral examination. Written examinations were held in King Thibaw's reign. Those who passed the examinations received the *Pahtamagyi*, *Pahtamalat* or *Pahtamange* certificates. The pupil who made the highest mark in the *Pahtamagyi* examination would receive the *Pahtamagyaw* title.

Rewards were given not only to princes, but also to commoners who passed the *Pahtamabyan* examinations with pomp and ceremony. Most of the persons who took the examinations were junior monks and novices. However, they usually disrobed before taking the examinations. The king allowed the examination candidates to use the trappings used by princes. The crown gave 1,000 peacock coins and clothes to a person who passed the *pahtamange* or *pahtamalat* examination, and 1,500 peacock coins and a ruby ring to a person who passed the *pahtamagyi* examination. Up to 15 of their relatives would be exempted from *sehnahmu mindaing*. A person who received the *pahtamagyaw* title would also receive a ruby ring, a jade ring, 2,500 peacock coins and fine clothes. The certificates and rewards were presented by the king himself. In this ceremony, a person who received the *pahtamagyaw* title was permitted to dress in green; if he wished to serve the king, he would be appointed as a clerk and he could rise on the rungs of the administrative hierarchy to become a minister. King Mindon placed much emphasis on the *pahtamabyan* examinations, and made Prince Thibaw, who had passed the *pahtamabyan* examinations for three times, attend him regularly. Some believe that passing the *pahtamabyan* examination was one of the reasons for King Thibaw's ascension to the throne.¹³⁰ As the rewards were enticing,

¹³⁰Shwegaingtha, 2007, 254

monks and novices vigorously competed with one another; and some monks made disparaging remarks about these examinations, saying that they had become like boxing matches.¹³¹ In reciting the texts, emphasis was placed on the pupils' ability to recite the texts from memory rather than on their understanding of the texts. Therefore the monks' ability to reason became weak. Minayev, a Russian Orientalist, remarks that committing the *Pali* stanzas to memory impairs monks' ability to reason.¹³² Learned monks were referred to as *kyandat*. They wrote books. To ensure that learners would understand the *Pali* texts, the scriptures were translated into Myanmar. The translations were *nissaya* or word-for-word translations. Monks and novices had to recite these *nissaya* translations in the examinations. There were many *nissaya* translations for teaching learners. Additionally there were grammatical texts and *vinicchayas* for learners and homilies and *dipani* (commentarial texts) in Myanmar prose written at the request of laypersons. The king conferred Rajaguru titles on learned monks. King Mindon conferred titles on forty one monks on 25 June 1854.¹³³ Before the ear-boring ceremony of his daughters in 1865, the king donated *padethabins* to a hundred and one title-holding monks.¹³⁴ This indicates that there were 101 title-holding monks at that time. In September 1884, King Thibaw divided the titles conferred to monks into five grades. The title *Malalankara Atuladhipati Siripavaradhajadhammasenapati Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru* was the highest title and was to be conferred on the *thathanabyu Sayadaws*. A second-grade title would include the words *atula*, *dhipati*, *pavara* and *dhaja*; a third-grade title

¹³¹Vinandasabha, 1992, 90

¹³²Than Tun, 2004, 484

¹³³Kannisitke, 1969, 50

¹³⁴Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 227

would be formed with *dhipati*, *pavara* and *dhaja*; a fourth-grade title would contain *pavara* and *dhaja*; and a fifth-grade would only contain the word *dhaja*. According to a list of the titles conferred on monks, there were twenty one title-holding monks.¹³⁵ Title-holding monks were favoured by the king. In July 1856, King Mindon exempted the parents and siblings of Maungdaung *Sayadaw* Ashin Paññasami and ten title-holding monks from crown service so that they would be able to look after the monks.¹³⁶ This led some monks to try to get Rajaguru titles by fair means or foul. Some received the titles by bribing the king and queens through their old acquaintances. Some title-holding monks, enjoying the favour of the king and queens, became immoral and haughty. Ashin Saddhamma, who held the title Saddhammapaladhajasiripavara Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru and who was venerated by Hteiksuhpaya, watched shows and beat up and interrogated the suspects without sending them to a court of law. Because he ill-treated his monk followers and lay devotees, the *gaingdauk* of Halin town and two hundred confederates battered him.¹³⁷ Thus, some monks became obnoxiously arrogant because of the titles conferred on them by the king for promoting *Pariyatti Sasana*. Some ill-treated their followers. Their attempts to get the titles by giving bribes made the king's original aim of promoting *Pariyatti* unrealizable. There were very few monks who refused to accept the titles presented by the king, thinking that friendliness with the king or becoming the preceptor of the king and queen would hamper their efforts to attain *Nibbana*. Scriptures were taught to pupils so that they would know how to practice. However, it seems that monks

¹³⁵(a) Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 431-35

(b) Kannisitke, 1969, 190-212

¹³⁶Kannisitke, 1969, 56

¹³⁷Win Maung, 1979, 100

were more interested in the study of the scriptures than in meditation. This probably was because they desired to promote *Pariyatti Sasana*, believing that *Pariyatti* was the basis of the three *Sasanas*, because they wanted to become royal preceptors and because they could get good jobs in the feudal period if they were good in *Pariyatti*.

Monks of the later Konbaung period put much emphasis on *Pariyatti* and were weak in *Patipatti*. The number of forest monks was low. There were more than sixty forest monasteries on the Sagaing hills and the number of forest monks residing there was over six hundred.¹³⁸ As regards *Patipatti*, some monks practiced meditation themselves, while others trained their pupils to practice meditation. As monks had to train their pupils in practicing meditation, some forest monasteries, like teaching monasteries, had many monks. It is learnt that the Htuthkaung *Sayadaw* had to move to another monastery because it was impossible to practice meditation in the Dhammika monastery on the Sagaing Hills as there were more than three hundred monks and novices there.¹³⁹ Some forest monks had to stop their meditation because the king invited them to the royal capital.¹⁴⁰ It can be assumed that donating monasteries, *simas* and open halls caused problems for the monks who were living frugal lives to reduce their responsibilities to the minimum and practicing meditation. Some forest monks, who were supposed to be practicing meditation after forsaking the titles presented by the king and monasteries donated by the king were writing homilies and verses. There even was

¹³⁸Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 304

¹³⁹Ashin Pandita, *Htuthkaung Sayadawhpayagi Akyauṅ* (Biography of Htuthkaung Sayadaw), Mandalay, Hla Khin & Son Press, no date, p. 27 (Henceforth: Pandita, *Htuthkaung Sayadawhpayagi*)

¹⁴⁰Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 126, 130

a sham monk who committed the gravest offence of having sex with a laywoman in the Padauk monastery on the Sagaing Hills, where forest monks were practicing meditation. Therefore, it was believed that the Sagaing Hills, where forest monks had been observing the precepts was becoming impure because of shameless monks.¹⁴¹ As they failed to practice meditation eagerly, the Thingaza *Sayadaw*, who held Rajaguru title, ridiculed the forest monks who were residing on the Sagaing hills.¹⁴² Minayev who visited Mandalay on 21 January 1886 remarked that Myanmar monks, leading a life of luxury with the donations made by the people, did nothing in return, that they were so haughty while the people were extremely deferential towards them and that monks had supercilious attitude toward their lay devotees even though they had to depend on laypersons for support.¹⁴³

A person who had entered the Order because he had faith in the Religion should not even greet the king first so that his livelihood would be pure. A royal preceptor had to tell lies to please the king. Maungdaung *Sayadaw*, the *thathanabaing*, had to write in a record that Me Nu, Bagyidaw's chief queen, was of royal lineage. Thus, royal preceptors had to commit sins. A monk should not speak to the king unless he was spoken to. The Buddha's instruction that monks were to pander to the king was meant only for going into monsoon retreat in King Bimbisara's reign. He instructed so because going into monsoon retreat would do

¹⁴¹Nigrodha, 1940, 19-20

¹⁴²Hmawbi Saya Thein, *Upamasamuhagirattama Myithaw Thingaza Zagabon Baunggyoke* (An Anthology of Thingaza *Sayadaw*'s Maxims Called Upamasamuhagirattama), Yangon, Ledimandaing Press, 1962, p. 85 (Henceforth: Thein, 1962)

¹⁴³Than Tun, 2004, 484-85

no harm. Some monks warned that ignoring the rules laid down by the Buddha to pander to the town- and village-headmen, saying that the Buddha had instructed monks to comply with the king's wish and go into monsoon retreat, would turn monks into shameless monks.¹⁴⁴ Some monks of the later Konbaung period committed shameless acts such as stocking up prohibited goods, buying gold and silver with the money they got from selling the eight requisites, following the orders of their lay devotees, offering rice, snacks, betel and tobacco to laypersons, practicing astrology and medicine, riding elephants, horses or carts, using umbrellas, wearing footwear, watching shows, making amulets and cabalistic squares and practicing alchemy.¹⁴⁵ The third Nanmaw *Sayadaw* remarked that the monks who practiced alchemy, as they were doing laypersons' job while being paid by the Buddha, would become members of the Preta Society on Mt. Gijjhakuta after death.¹⁴⁶ As shameless monks could multiply and the multiplication of shameless monks would harm the *Sasana*, the king had to purge shameless monks from the *Sasana*. *Pabbajaniya-kam* or excommunication was the toughest punishment inflicted by the monks themselves. In some cases, however, the guilty party was not punished and the blame was laid on an innocent monk.¹⁴⁷ The king appointed a *mahathera* as head of the Order to root out shameless monks.

The *pwegyaungs*, in which secular subjects were mainly taught, continued to exist although King Badon had suppressed them in 1802. The subjects taught in those monasteries were: treatises on astrology, medicine, massotherapy, military

¹⁴⁴Vinandasabha, 1992, 80, 86, 89

¹⁴⁵Than Tun, 1989, 433-36

¹⁴⁶Vinandasabha, 1992, 149

¹⁴⁷Nigrodha, 1940, 28, 33

tactics, elephants and on horses, martial arts and performing arts.¹⁴⁸ The subjects taught in *pwegyaung* monasteries were important for the advancement of secular arts. Secular subjects became popular in Myanmar because these *pwegyaungs* imparted both theoretical and practical knowledge. King Mindon stamped out these *pwegyaungs* in 1855. Some scholars regard that the kings who desired to promote the welfare of the kingdom patronized the *pwegyaungs* while selfish kings stamped them out.¹⁴⁹ After closing down *pwegyaungs*, King Mindon issued the DhammaVinaya Pyandan on 15 February 1856 so that monks would abide by the *Vinaya* rules. In this order, the king strictly prohibited people from venerating and making donations to shameless monks as follows:

Shameless acts are a menace to the Religion. Supporting the shameless monks, who could bring about the downfall of the Religion, by making donations to them amounts to causing harm to the Religion. All the citizens residing in the Golden City and various towns and villages in the kingdom are forbidden to venerate and make donations to shameless monks. People may venerate them and make donations to them only after making them expiate their sins. Officers are to inflict tough punishments on those who support the shameless monks by making donations to them so that other people would not dare to follow them and so that the Religion would be free from danger. Send this edict to all the *htiyan nanyan* (tributary rulers), *sawbwas* (Shan chiefs), *myozas* (fief-holders), *myowuns* (governors) and *myo-thagyis* (town-headmen).¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸Tin, 1976, 193

¹⁴⁹Tin, 1976, 211

¹⁵⁰Than Tun, 1989, 438

Some monks were dissatisfied with the king's explanation of shameless acts. They were not displeased because the king enforced them to observe the *Vinaya* rules strictly; they objected saying that the Buddha had laid down the *Vinaya* rules and the king had no right to meddle in these matters.¹⁵¹ However, the king was just stating what were mentioned in the *Vinaya* texts. This edict brought about disputes over whether making donations to an immoral person would be beneficial to the donor and whether laypersons should study the *Vinaya* rules so that they would be able to distinguish virtuous men from immoral ones. These disputes were disastrous for the unity of the *Sangha*.

King Thibaw also had the scriptures copied on 16 October 1878, even though the kingdom was declining. He issued an order to exempt the men from Mandalay, Amarapura, Alon, Tabayin, Kanni and Ngarane towns who were employed for copying the scriptures from taxation and crown service and to instruct Mahathirzeyathu, who held Maingkaing in fief, to supervise them.¹⁵² On 14 November 1878, King Thibaw, like his predecessors, issued an order that twelve title-holding *Sayadaws*—Mahawithutayama, Mandalayama and Mingalayama *Sayadaws* who had been chosen by King Mindon, Mahahkemikayama and Taungdaw *Sayadaws* (who were two of the Sangyaung *Sayadaws*) and Thetpan, Hlahtwe, Pahkan, Wiseittayama, Mahawizitayama and Mahadhammazotikayama *Sayadaws*—were to manage religious affairs in the kingdom.¹⁵³ On 23 April 1879, he erected a fifty-six-cubit-high pagoda, the diameter of the plinth of which was 55 cubits, together with an encircling wall, in

¹⁵¹Thein, 1962, 402, 417-20

¹⁵²Than Tun, 1989, 907

¹⁵³(a) Than Tun, 1989, 916

(b) Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 328

the Mahathirihemawun Garden in the southern part of the city with pomp and ceremony. He presented monks with offertories and named the pagoda Man Aung Yadana.¹⁵⁴ On 8 February 1883, King Thibaw had two pagodas named Lawka Yanhnein and Yadanadazaung, measuring 7 cubits in diameter at base and seven cubits in height, constructed in the garden to the east of Mandalay Hill, which stood to the northeast of the city, within seven days. *Thanatwun Kinwun* Legaing *Myoza Wungyi*, the *atwinwun* who held Taingda in fief, the *myedaing-wundauk*, the *atwinwuns* who held Pin and Myothit towns in fief, the *wundauks* who held Wetmasut and Kutywa towns in fief, the *wundauk-cum-thangyetwun* and the *wundauk* who was the governor of Malun had to supervise the construction of the Lawka Yanhnein pagoda. On 15 February 1883, golden finials were hoisted on top of both the Lawka Yanhnein and Lawkadazaung Pagodas with pomp and ceremony.¹⁵⁵ In February 1883, the king conferred the titles Malalankarasasanadhajadhammasenapati Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru and Jagarabhidhajasasanapaladhammasenapati Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru on Taungdaw *Sayadaw* Malankarasiridhaja Maharajaguru and Shwegyin *Sayadaw* Ashin Jagara respectively in the presence of the title-holding monks in the Thadhumma and named them as *thathanabyus*. From 15 February 1883 onwards, he gave gold bowls, silver coins and clothes to princes, ministers and other officers who could recite the Patthana and its translation, the Darana Paritta, or the Mahasatipatthana-sutta and its translation from memory. He ordered those who could recite the texts well to recite them together in the Myenandaw and gave 3 silver coins to each reciter every night.¹⁵⁶ On 18 May 1883, fifteen monks each

¹⁵⁴Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 346

¹⁵⁵Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 387-89

¹⁵⁶(a) Kannisitke, 1969, 183

from the western, northern and southern parts of the city and twenty seven monks from the eastern parts of the city were invited to the monastery which was donated by *Wunshindaw Taingda Myoza Mingyi*, which stood in the western part of the city and where the *Thathanabaing Sayadaw* resided. Then, seventy three monks—these monks and the *Thathanabaing*—deliberated to pass a law for the monks in the kingdom. The law with thirty two articles was published.¹⁵⁷ This law was issued so that monks would abide by the *Vinaya* rules and would deserve respect. It is noteworthy that this law prohibited monks from taking the carcasses of buffaloes and cows because they would be disparaged for doing so even though it was not against the *Vinaya* rules. It seems that this rule originated in King Mindon's reign, when the *thudhamma Sayadaws* instructed the *ging-oats* and *gaing-dauks* in Myedu and Hkawthanti villages to prohibit monks from taking the carcasses of buffaloes and cows in one of their orders.¹⁵⁸ It seems that the monks in Myedu and Hkawthanti villages were taking the carcasses of buffaloes and cows. It is probable that the king prohibited them from doing so even though it was not against the *Vinaya* rules because it could bring opprobrium on monks. It can be assumed that this rule, which originated in King Mindon's reign, was in force till King Thibaw's reign.

On 15 July 1883, King Thibaw redeemed the slaves and made them enter the Order. Altogether 1,394 persons manumitted from slavery entered the Order; two hundred men became monks and 1,154 boys became novices. They were

(b) Taw Sein Ko, *Hluttawhmattan Kaukhnoatchet* (Commentary of Hluttaw Records), Yangon, Hanthawady Press, 1970, p. 15 (Henceforth: Taw Sein Ko, 1970)

¹⁵⁷(a) Than Tun, 1989, 1026-29

(b) Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 397

¹⁵⁸Than Tun, 1989, 774

made to enter the Order from 16 to 18 July 1883, when *padethabins* were offered to two hundred and one *taik-oats* and *taik-kyats*.¹⁵⁹ King Thibaw, as it was the custom of the Myanmar kings, promoted the Religion and made donations to monks. However, he sentenced the monks who rebelled against him to death. On hearing that U Paññacakka, a son of Prince Kanaung who had entered the Order, was conspiring with guards to rebel against the king, the king changed the guards who were guarding the monastery to the north of the *Hluttaw* where U Paññacakka was residing on 5 March 1884. On 6 March 1884, U Paññacakka was defrocked and was detained together with his confederates. U Paññacakka, aka Hteittin Hpon and his confederates were executed in the prison on 2 April 1884.¹⁶⁰ This indicates that the kings never pardoned those who attempted to usurp the throne.

On 8 April 1884 in King Thibaw's reign, a fire broke out in the Mahamuni temple. The gold melt down by the fire was weighed by the officers who were responsible for safekeeping it; and it weighed 5,450 viss. King Thibaw asked three hundred and thirty nine monks, headed by the *thathanabyu Sayadaw*, to carry more than Ks. 300,000 worth of headgear, ear ornaments, sash and epaulettes to the Mahamuni temple. On 5 July 1884, the king himself donated these after refurbishing the face of the image. The *thathanabyu Sayadaw* also was present on the occasion.¹⁶¹ On 23 July 1884, title-holding monks headed by the *Thathanabyu Sayadaw* were invited to the *Pangon Oattaik*, which stood to the east of the *Taungsamoat Saung* (Southern Pavilion); and the king and queen had men, the number of who equalled to the queen's age, ordained as monks and made

¹⁵⁹Kannisitke, 1969, 185-86

¹⁶⁰Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 416-18

¹⁶¹Kannisitke, 1969, 186-87

donations to monks.¹⁶² On 4 September 1884, the *Thathanabaing Sayadaw* added nine articles to the 32-point law promulgated on 18 May 1883. The new articles stipulated that monks were to abstain from riding on carts unless they were ill, from pawning anything they had received in accordance with the *Vinaya* rules and from lending money by taking anything as surety, and were to have efficient lay attendants, to avoid practising usury or using weapons, to avoid the acts that would tear apart the *Sangha*, to avoid living independently of a *neitthayi saya* and to avoid turning *dhamma* into *adhamma*.¹⁶³ It seems that the law for monks had to be amended again and again because monks were not following the *Vinaya* rules strictly.

On 17 December 1884, King Thibaw issued an order that the Mahathakyathiha image, which was cast by King Bagyidaw, was to be brought to the brick temple constructed by his mother Sinbyumashin on the site of Aung Nan Yeiktha, the residence of King Mindon (Thibaw's father) before he became king in the western parts of Mandalay. Kinwun-cum-*thanatwungyi*, who held Legaing town in fief and the *Wundauk* who held Wetmasut town in fief had to supervise the people carrying the image. After making necessary arrangements, the image was transported from Amarapura on 10 April 1885 to Mandalay.¹⁶⁴ On 30 April 1885, the image arrived at the entrance to the temple. On 21 May 1885, it was placed on the altar, and the king gave rewards to the persons who conveyed the image and who supervised the transportation.¹⁶⁵ There is an order which very likely is King Thibaw's last edict concerning the Religion. Laws for monks were

¹⁶²Tikkha, 2005, 374

¹⁶³Than Tun, 1989, 1072-75

¹⁶⁴Tikkha, 2005, 376-77

¹⁶⁵Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 454

passed by the *thathanabaing* after consulting with title-holding monks. On 18 May 1883, a law with thirty two articles was passed and, on 4 September 1884, nine articles were added to it. However, as those 41 articles were not enough, six articles were added on 19 July 1885. The new articles required that monks were to teach scriptural texts thoroughly to their pupils, were not to accept monks and novices who did not want to learn the texts, were to avoid getting entangled in secular matters, were not to arm themselves, not to chew betel or take medicine in the afternoon and were not to hang around with laypersons late at night.¹⁶⁶ It seems that a new law had to be passed because monks of the later Konbaung period were behaving improperly.

In sum, the kings of the later Konbaung period did their best for the welfare of the Religion. The *Atin-Ayon* issue, which was disputed for many years, was settled in this period. King Badon attempted to carry through religious reforms after studying Buddhism himself. He was successful to some extent in purifying the Religion and had to give in sometimes because the people were against his reform measures. The people did not accept his instruction to enter the Order according to Suttanta, and King Badon had to back down. Although King Badon introduced religious reforms with his progressive ideas, monks and laypersons did not accept them. Hence, he did not have much success. He had to permit them to follow their customs. The kings of the later Konbaung period copied scriptural texts, erected pagodas and held examinations in accordance with custom. They held examinations so that *Pariyatti Sasana* would flourish. However, monks used dishonest means to enjoy the king's patronage and the kings' hope of promoting the *Sasana* was not realized. The examinations became very popular and some

¹⁶⁶Than Tun, 1989, 1085-86

ridiculed that they were like boxing matches. King Mindon had the scriptures inscribed on stone and convened the Fifth Buddhist Synod not because it was necessary. It seems that he was just trying to bolster the morale of his citizens because he did not have the ability to compete with the British who had occupied Lower Myanmar. He issued the *DhammaVinaya Ameidaw* to set down rules for monks. However, this edict brought about disputes, which undermined the unity of the *Sangha*. With the kingdom becoming unstable in King Thibaw's reign, monks probably became lax in observing the *Vinaya* rules. It can be assumed that they were lax in observing the *Vinaya* rules because the law had to be amended repeatedly. Although the kings exercised their powers to purify the Religion and to ensure that monks would abide by the *Vinaya* rules, no noticeable progress was made. It seems that the kings promoted the Religion because they desired to be renowned as *Sasana Dayaka* and because they wanted to use Religion for political ends.

CHAPTER THREE

SECTARIANISM

Myanmar is a Theravada Buddhist country. Buddhism spread to Myanmar as early as the Pyu Period. However, it is impossible to say how Buddhism came to Myanmar with any certainty. The discovery of art objects such as Buddha images, pagodas and terracotta votive tablets and inscriptions on stone and gold leaves indicates that the Pyus of Sriksetra were Buddhists. The Pyu Period pagodas which are still in existence attest to the fact that Theravada Buddhism flourished in Myanmar in the Pyu Period. However, it is difficult to conjecture whether there was a Buddhist *Sangha* (fraternity) in the Pyu Period or whether Buddhist sermons were preached to the people. A Pyu inscription found in Sriksetra records how a Buddhist monk by the name of Guhadipa, the king's preceptor, brought about a reconciliation between two rival kings.¹ Both Mahayana and Theravada Buddhism flourished in Sri Ksetra. It can therefore be assumed that there were both Mahayanist and Theravadin monks in Sriksetra. Some, however, believe that Theravada Buddhists predominated.²

Pagan was the first kingdom founded by the Myanmars. According to tradition, Mahayana Buddhism and the sect of the *aris* were well-established in Pagan before *Theravada* Buddhism was introduced into Myanmar. They argue that the Archaeology Department's assumption that the two Hpetleik pagodas in Pagan predate Aniruddha's reign suggests that the Myanmars had become

¹Than Tun, 2002, 63

²Niharranjan Ray, *Theravada Buddhism in Burma*, Calcutta, University of Calcutta, 1946, Chapters VI-IX (Henceforth: Ray, 1946)

Buddhists before King Aniruddha conquered Thaton.³ The Jataka stories in the two Hpetleik pagodas point to the existence of Theravada the scenes depicted on the terracotta plaques in the two Hpetleik pagodas are from the Theravada *Jataka* stories. The monk who introduced Theravada Buddhism to Myanmar in the Pagan period and who was popularly known as Shin Araham came from Thaton to Pagan to propagate Buddhism. It is widely accepted that Shin Araham established Theravada Buddhism in Pagan and founded the Buddhist *Sangha* there. That was why the lineage of the Theravada Buddhist monks in Myanmar was usually traced to Shin Araham.⁴ According to Myanmar chronicles, various Buddhist sects flourished in Myanmar in the Pagan period. However, there is no contemporary lithic inscription which mentions how Shin Araham came to Pagan and cleansed the Religion under the aegis of King Aniruddha or how there were different Buddhist sects in Pagan.

The first mention of a royal preceptor's visit to Srilanka in the Pagan period was made in connection with King Narathu's reign. Ven. Panthaku, who was thought to be Shin Araham's successor, believing Narathu's deceptive words, got entangled in Narathu's succession assisted Narathu for his succession to the throne. Narathu used Ven. Panthaku for liquidating his elder brother Minshinsaw so that he would become king. Therefore, Panthaku left for Srilanka. He returned to Myanmar when King Narathu passed away in AD. 1173.⁵ This was Myanmar monks' first contact with Srilanka. Uttarajiva, who belonged to the line of Panthaku, visited Srilanka in AD 1180 with a novice named Chappada. In Srilanka, they came into contact with the monks of Mahavihara which, enjoying the patronage of the king, was a strong sect. Uttarajiva made his pupil Chappada

³Than Tun, 2002, 213

⁴Bimala Churn Law, *The History of Buddha's Religion (Sasanavamsa)*, Delhi, Sri Satguru Publications, 1952, p. 68 (Henceforth: Law, 1952)

⁵Mendelson, 1975, 39

receive ordination in Sinhalese tradition. Seven years after Uttarajiva's return, Chappada traveled back to Pagan. There is a scholar who has interpreted their return from Srilinka as the first attempt of a Sinhalese *Sangha* to exert influence on the Myanmar *Sangha*.⁶

There is no evidence that Uttarajiva was reordained in Srilinka, although he made his pupil Chappada receive ordination there. This was probably because he had no doubts about the validity of his ordination. He probably believed that compared to the monks in Pagan he was virtuous as he was a Mon monk who came from Thaton. Therefore, a foreign scholar concludes that the Pagan *Sangha* was split into two factions—the Mon- Srilinka faction and the Myanmar faction (i.e. the faction of the monks who were already in Pagan when Uttarajiva arrived there).⁷

On his return from Srilinka, Chappada brought back with him four monks from Srilinka —Rahula, Ananda, Sivali and Tamalinda—so that they would be able to perform ecclesiastical rites on their own if the Pagan monks refused to perform those rites with him. The fact that Chappada returned to Pagan with enough monks to form a chapter suggests that he intended, even before his return, to perform the ecclesiastical rites separately from the Pagan monks. As he was ordained in Srilinka, he would be influenced by Sinhalese tradition. In addition, he would have doubts about Pagan monks' morality. Thus, Chappada's return from Srilinka constituted the birth of a Sinhalese *Sangha* in Myanmar. However, it is impossible to regard that the monks who accompanied Chappada to Pagan were better than the Myanmar monks because they themselves later disagreed with one another and formed their own separate sects.

King Narapatisithu held the monks who received ordination in Srilinka in high esteem and made them ordain many novices on barges in the river

⁶Ray, 1946, 112

⁷Mendelson, 1975, 40

Ayeyarwady. As it enjoyed royal patronage, the Sinhalese sect grew. King Narapatisithu invited the five monks who were ordained in Srilinka to the palace to make offerings. Then, seeing a gorgeous dancer, Rahula fell head over heels in love with her and left the Order. Of the remaining four monks who had been ordained in Srilinka, Chappada passed away first. The remaining three monks, Sivali, Tamalinda and Ananda, spread the Religion in Pagan, teaching scriptures.

When King Narapatisithu donated an elephant each to those three monks, Sivali and Tamalinda set their elephants free in a forest. Ananda, however, gave his elephant to his relatives. The other two monks (Sivali and Tamalinda) admonished him; but Ananda would not take their advice. Hence, Sivali and Tamalinda refused to perform ecclesiastical rites with him and, thus, the Sinhalese sect split into two factions.⁸

Later, Tamalinda suggested wealthy men to donate four requisites to his bright pupils by saying how intelligent they were. On hearing this, Sivali told him that "hinting for material gain" was wrong. Tamalinda refused to take his advice, and hence two monks performed ecclesiastical rites separately from one another and formed their own factions. Thus, the Sinhalese sect splintered into three factions. Therefore, there were altogether four Buddhist schools in Pagan in King Narapatisithu's reign: the school established by Shin Arahan and the three schools founded by the three monks who received ordination in Srilinka, namely, Sivali, Tamalinda and Ananda. The school formed by Shin Arahan, who came from Thaton, was referred to as *Purima Sangha* or (the Former Order), as it was the earliest school; and the Sinhalese school was called *Pacchima Sangha* (the Latter Order) as it was formed later.⁹

⁸B.C. Law, 1952, 73

⁹B.C. Law, 1952, 74

There are some scholars who, relying on inscriptions, write about the existence of different Buddhist sects in Pagan from a new perspective. A monk who is referred to often in the inscriptions is Ashin Vinido. He was the head of a teaching monastery and was venerated by ministers as well as commoners. Athinhkaya, a minister in the reign of King Nataungmya, was one of his lay devotees. In AD 1216, Athinhkaya donated 150 *pe*¹⁰ out of seven hundred *pe* of land he received from the king for his bravery to *Vinido*. In AD 1228, he donated more land to the same monk. Hpwasaw, a queen of King Narasingha Ujjana and her brother Thamantakonhtan also were *Vinido*'s devotees. In AD 1243, Hpwasaw and Thamantakonhtan donated a library and twenty lecture halls to *Vinido*. The inscriptions also record the donations of the four requisites (which were essential for the survival of a teaching monastery) to his monastery. It can be assumed that this monk became well-known from about AD 1261 onwards and had become the leader of a very strict sect, which held that the *Vinaya* rules must be obeyed to the letter, by AD 1261. As the views of this sect agreed with those of the Sinhalese monks, it received much assistance from Srilinka.¹¹

During King Narapatisithu's reign, Pagan received four relics from Srilinka, and the king enshrined them in the Dhammarajika pagoda. Relations between Pagan and Srilinka, which were good in Aniruddha's reign, deteriorated in the reign of King Narathu. Friendly relations were restored in King Narapatisithu's reign. The Kalyani inscriptions, which belonged to AD 1480, mention how Myanmar monks from Pagan visited Srilinka in the reign of King Narapatisithu. Several monks visited Srilinka in AD 1170 and their leader was a royal preceptor,

¹⁰*Pe* is a unit for measuring area, equal to 1.75 acre

¹¹Than Tun, 1956, 118. The name of the inscription belonging to AD 1243 is not given in Dr. Than Tun's work.

whose name is mentioned in the Myanmar chronicles as Uttarajiva.¹² A scholar, however, states that there is no contemporary evidence.¹³

Narapatisithu's efforts to thaw Pagan's relations with Srilanka met with success. A sect of monks who, like *Vinido*, desired to purify the Religion by adhering *Vinaya* rules strictly had become powerful in Pagan by this time. As the views of this sect were similar to those of the monks ordained in Srilanka, they must have urged the king to send Myanmar monks to Srilanka to study and to invite Sinhalese monks to Pagan for the welfare of the Religion. It is recorded in the Kalyani inscriptions that a monk named Chappada, after studying the scriptures in Srilanka for ten years, returned to Pagan in AD 1180 with four Sinhalese monks. There is a scholar who disagrees with this statement because it is mentioned in an inscription belonging to AD 1233 that a Sinhalese monk named Buddharamsi had established a monastery in Pagan, and the people donated land and slaves to that monastery. Moreover, an inscription dated AD 1248 gives the names of the two leaders of a group of monks who visited Srilanka to study as Dhammasiri and Subhucanda. The aforesaid scholar refuses to accept that the monk who had studied in Srilanka could not have been Chappada because of these two facts.¹⁴ Than Tun remarks that this is not impossible. It is mentioned in an inscription belonging to AD 1233 that a Sinhalese monk named Buddharamsi had established a monastery in Pagan, and the people donated land and slaves to that monastery. Moreover, an inscription dated AD 1248 mentions that a group of monks headed by Dhammasiri and Subhucanda visited Srilanka to study. It seems that the earlier monks who adhered strictly to the *Vinaya* rules like *Vinido* joined forces with Dhammasiri and Subhucanda who had returned from Srilanka

¹²Kala, 2006a, 214

¹³Than Tun, 1956, 119

¹⁴Than Tun, 1956, 119-20. The names of the inscriptions belonging to AD 1233 and 1248 are not given in Dr. Than Tun's work.

and initiated *Sangha* reforms in Pagan. They desired to carry through religious reforms so that only their views would remain. Dhammasiri and Subhucanda, who visited Srilanka between AD 1237 and 1248, must have brought back many Sinhalese monks with them on their return to Pagan.

However, there was a group of monks who believed that religious reforms initiated by the Sinhalese monks were unnecessary. They were the *tawkyauung* monks (or forest dwellers). They lived separately from other monks and were not enthusiastic about the reforms. In other words, they did not want to observe the *Vinaya* rules strictly. There was a forest monk who very likely had many followers. His name was Mahakassapa. Although originally a forest monk was to reside alone in a forest monastery built away from inhabited areas, the forest monks of Pagan resided in large monasteries, some of which could accommodate hundreds of monks. Land and slaves were donated to Mahakassapa between AD 1216 and 1233.¹⁵ The forest monks, like other monks, received land donated to them by laypersons. Additionally they enlarged their estates by buying more land. His influence reached as far as the royal capital. After establishing forest monasteries in Kyaukyit, Amyint, Aneit, etc, Mahakassapa built forest monasteries near Pagan. In AD 1233, he established a monastery in Minnanthu, which was situated to the east of Pagan and, in AD 1236, his lay devotees constructed forest monasteries for him in a locality to the east of Pagan. The area to the east of Pagan, where Hpwasaw and Minnanthu now lie, is referred to as Thitmati in ancient records. Myanmar chronicles refer to this area as Thamati. Thus, the forest sect was able to establish monasteries in the outskirts of the royal capital in the early thirteenth century.¹⁶

¹⁵*Essays on the History and Buddhism of Burma*, Paul Strachan (ed.), Arran Kiscadale Publications, 1988, p. 86 (Henceforth: *Essays*, 1988)

¹⁶Than Tun, 1956, 122

Mahakassapa's name is mentioned together with two eminent monks who wielded much influence in the capital, namely, Dhammasiri and Subhucanda. This suggests that the monks of the Sinhalese sect were alarmed at the growth of Mahakassapa's influence. Dhammasiri and Subhucanda led an education mission to Srilanka between 1237 and 1248 to compete with the flourishing forest sect.¹⁷

Mahakassapa continued to consolidate his position and expand his sect while his rivals were seeking help. He established forest monasteries around Kyaukse, which was the economic backbone of Pagan kingdom, circa AD 1242. It can be assumed that he was expanding his sect to Kyaukse, the most important area for Pagan's economy while his rivals were away. In the royal capital, Mahakassapa was venerated by important personages like Kingathu, the king's younger brother. The monastery Mahakassapa resided in 1244 stood near the east gate of the city of Pagan even though it was referred to as a forest monastery. From AD 1248 onwards, Mahakassapa bought many *pes* of land in Shwebo and Chindwin. After making land transactions, forest monks usually had feasts, drinking liquor and eating meat, to celebrate. Nowadays, it is unacceptable for monks to do so. The monks themselves took part in such feasts. There are scholars who courageously assert that forest monks or *aris*, apart from participating in such feasts, did not commit immoral acts.¹⁸

As a nascent sect, Mahakassapa's forest sect needed to earn income from land for survival. Therefore, Mahakassapa made efforts to acquire many *pes* of land between 1247 and 1272. It seems that he passed away between AD 1272 and 1278. Due to his efforts, the forest sect became almost as strong as the Sinhalese sect, which had to seek help from Srilanka for its survival. With the patronage of

¹⁷Mendelson, 1975, 47

¹⁸Than Tun, 1956, 124

the kings, the Sinhalese sect emerged triumphant about two hundred years later. However, the forest or *ari* sect did not disappear, but flourished till the 16th century.¹⁹

There are some noteworthy facts concerning the forest monks of the Pagan period. The religious land expanded because devotees donated land to forest monks and because forest monks themselves bought land. As religious land was exempted from taxation, the increase in religious land resulted in the decrease in crown revenues. Therefore, some kings made attempts to confiscate religious land. When the crown confiscated the land owned by forest monks soon after King Kyaswa's ascension to the throne, forest monks raised objections. Then, the king formed a six-member commission to probe into the matter. When the commission found out that the land in question was glebe land, the king returned the land to the forest monks.

There was a similar incident in AD 1255, when King Uccana confiscated the land donated to Ven. Mahamatima, who was heading a monastery on behalf of Mahakassapa. King Uccana passed away in the same year. During the reign of King Tayokepye (or the king who fled from the Chinese army), Mahamatima informed the matter to the king through the king's father-in-law, and the king donated the land to the Religion.²⁰ With nobody cultivating it when the Chinese army invaded Myanmar, this land reverted to weeds. After incorporating some localities in the north into his kingdom, King Swasawke (1367-1400) gave some of the land there to warriors as rewards. An elder named Dhammasenapati, who succeeded Mahamatima, objected to this through the chief queen, saying that religious land should not be given as rewards. Then the land reverted to the

¹⁹*Essays, 1988, 100*

²⁰*Essays, 1988, 95*

monks. Thus, the successive leaders of the forest sect strove not to lose the sect's land. A monk who, like Mahamatima of the forest sect, was versed in the Buddhist scriptures and had leadership skills, was referred to as *Sangharaja* (head of the *Sangha*) in the Innwa period.²¹ He had to control the monks and had influence over the king. He was entitled to use a white umbrella. There were many local *Sangharajas*. The *Sangharaja* referred to as a royal preceptor probably was the most powerful. There was a *Sangharaja* who was referred to as royal preceptor from AD 1370 onwards. Donations were made to him until AD 1400. Of the many *Sangharajas*, the Sanka *Sangharaja* was said to be "peerless." He very likely was the *Sangharaja* who was connected with the seven monasteries built of champac wood. An inscription in the Shwezigon pagoda in Pinya refers to the Sanka *Sangharaja* and the great elder of Veluvan monastery. Their power declined after AD 1500.

Of the *khayaings*, where the Myanmars settled first, and the *taiks* or their new settlements, cultivated lands in *taiks* reverted to jungle either because there was nobody to cultivate them or because there was no security because they were left uncultivated as there was no security. Forest monks bought both virgin land and the land that had relapsed into jungle by paying silver, food, clothes, etc and reclaimed them. A scholar has suggested that these monks deserved thanks because they contributed to the increase of food production and to political stability in the region.²²

Forest monks' owning many plots of land gave rise to a system of religious land ownership in the Pagan Period. Arable land was donated to religious establishments including monasteries. As glebe land was exempted from taxation as land and slaves were donated to religious establishments, the crown lost

²¹*Essays, 1988, 96*

²²Than Tun, 2002, 240-41

revenues and labour. Therefore, a foreign scholar concludes that the people's generous donation of cultivated land and slaves to the Religion was one of the causes of Pagan's decline in the latter half of the thirteenth century.²³

The power of the *Sangharajas*, who were the leaders of forest monks, declined from AD 1500 onwards. The forest sect shrank probably because kings and ministers could not donate land to them as people were reclaiming land and because the monks of the Sinhalese sect who held progressive views were opposing the conduct of the monks who owned land. It is also probable that the crown prevented monks from meddling in political matters by controlling land and wealth of the kingdom.

We also learn a surprising fact concerning the Pagan-period religion. Some *bhikkhunis* are mentioned just like their male counterparts. The Asawlat Inscription which was inscribed in AD 1261 mentions a *bhikkhuni* among those who recited the *parittas* at the ceremony of enshrining relics in a pagoda. Two *bhikkhunis* were present at a land transaction which was recorded in an inscription dated AD 1279.²⁴ It is learnt that they commanded respect from laypersons just like monks. Another important record was the inscription written by a daughter of King Kyaswa in AD 1267. It mentions that her father King Kyaswa permitted her to become a nun and donated land to her. Therefore, it is learnt that the Myanmar tradition that the Bhikkhuni Order died out in AD 456 was wrong and that there were *bhikkhunis* in Myanmar even in the latter half of the thirteenth century.

²³Michael Aung Thwin, "The Role of Sasana Reform in Burmese History: Economic Dimensions of a Religious Purification", *Journal of Asian Studies* 38, no. 4, pp. 641-72 (Henceforth: Aung Thwin, *Journal of Asian Studies* 38)

²⁴Than Tun, 1956, 125. The names of the inscriptions belonging to AD 1279 and AD 1267 are not given in Dr. Than Tun's work.

Compared to their forefathers of the Pagan period, modern Myanmars are not open-minded about showing respect to female ascetics.²⁵

King Uccana succeeded to the throne in AD 1322. He donated seven monasteries built of champac wood in Pinkya to monks in AD 1340. He donated the main monastery, which was named *Zaga Kyaung* (Champac Monastery), to Ven. Sudhamma Mahasami, a minister's son. This monk belonged to the line of Shin Arahan of Pagan. He donated the monastery known as Weluwun to Ven. Ñanadhaja, who was versed in the *Abhidhamma*. This monk also belonged to Arahan's line. The Jetavan monastery was offered to Ven. Gunabhira, who had committed the five texts of the Vinaya Pitaka to memory. Ven. Gunabhira was of the line of Ven. Ananda, who came to Pagan from Srilanka. The Kulavihara (Indian Monastery) was donated to Ven. Adiccaramsi, who also belonged to the line of Ananda. The king donated the *Shwekyauung* (Golden Monastery) to Ven. Thudhammalankara, who also was of the line of Ananda. The Niccageha (or Einnein *Kyaung*, ie the monastery built at the site of the house where the king resided before he came to the throne) was donated to Ven. Varapatta, a pupil of the abbot of *Kyaungmadaw* (the Main Monastery). The Dakkhinakoti (Southernmost Monastery) was given to Ven. Siripunnavasi, who also was a pupil of the abbot of *Kyaungmadaw* (Main Monastery).²⁶

It can be assumed that Sudhamma Mahasami, one of the monks who received monasteries, was the king's preceptor, because he received the main monastery and because two of his pupils also received a monastery each. The monks to whom the seven *champac* monasteries were donated later became immoral, even though they originally belonged to the line of virtuous monks.

²⁵Ashin Adiccavamsa, who asserted in 1935 that there should be *bhikkhunis* in Myanmar in his work entitled *Bhikkhuni Sasanopadesa* was excommunicated by the Buddhist *Sangha* in Myanmar.

²⁶B.C. Law, 1952, 91

King Uccana donated many plots of land to these monks for the upkeep of the seven monasteries. For managing the revenues received from these lands, Ven. Sudhamma Mahasami, who resided in the *Kyaungmadaw* employed some monks as *wuthtukanthein* (monks who were responsible to collect revenues), *thathanazo* (monks who were responsible to maintain discipline) and *wutsa thangas* (monks who had to divide the revenues among themselves/the monasteries).²⁷

The monks' possession of land brought about some problems. As the monks' involvement in such matters was detrimental to their scriptural studies (*pariyatti*) and meditation practice (*patipatti*), three monks from the seven champac monasteries—Ven. Sasanadhara and the two brothers who were referred to as Parakkama—left their monasteries. Ven. Sasanadhara went and resided at the foot of Mt. Taywin. The Parakkama brothers dwelt in a secluded monastery in Taungbalukon, Sagaing. They were called forest dwellers (*araññavasins*), while the monks who resided near towns and villages were referred to as village dwellers (*gamavasins*). Thus, the *araññavasi* and *gamavasi* sects came into existence.²⁸ The monks who collected and managed the taxes levied on religious lands were called *Sangharajas*.

Of the monks of the two sects, the *araññavasins* were more interested in the Buddhist scriptures. They studied the scriptures and practiced meditation. The *gamavasins*, however, studied both religious and secular subjects. In fact, they put greater emphasis on secular subjects. In the monasteries of the *gamavasins*, monks studied medicine, the occult sciences (for using amulets, reciting mantras, and interpreting omens) and boxing. They wore robes coloured with dyes obtained from turmeric or from the bark of jackfruit or banyan trees. They also wore hats. They occasionally drank intoxicants, arranged cockfights and rode horses. However, it would be wrong to say that all the *gamavasins* were immoral. Ven.

²⁷Mahadhammathangyan, 1956, 127

²⁸B.C. Law, 1952, 92

Saradassi, the abbot of the Pobbayon monastery wrote a work which was very valuable for the Religion although he was a *gamavasin*. It is learnt that he later defected to the *araññavasi* sect. He was supposed to be very wise and erudite.²⁹

During the reign of King Sane (1698-1714) in the Nyaungyan period, an important event happened in the *Sangha*; some monks broke away from the *araññavasi* sect, and a new faction known as the Ton sect was born. *Ton* was the name of a village on the west bank of Chindwin River. A monk named Shin Gunabhilankara from this village was the leader of this sect. He held that when entering a village, a novice was to cover his (left) arm with a furled-up robe, to have an end of the folded *dukut* (a double-layered upper robe) draped over his left shoulder and to wrap the upper part of his body with a smaller piece of robe. The faction of monks who accepted this view came to be known as Ton Forest Faction or *Atin* Faction. As the monks and novices of the forest sect, in entering a village, were required to wear their upper robes wrapped around them, covering both shoulders, their faction was referred to as *Ayon* or "Covering" Faction. There was a fight in which Gunabhilankara, the leader of the *Atin* faction, was involved. Getting wind of the fact that the abbot of Nyaungzin and monks were planning to expel him from Innwa, the monk of the *Atin* faction who was the preceptor of Letwekyawthu and who was residing in a monastery to the east of Sinkyon (kheda) moved to Magyi Sinda on 13 April 1711. When the monks of Nyaungzin, after destroying his possessions including books, were about to go to Magyi Sinda to batter him, the king stopped them.³⁰ Gunabhilankara, Letwekyawthu's teacher, did not dare to stay in Innwa. He went to Ton village, which was situated on the west side of Chindwin River. King Sane neither took sides in the *Atin-Ayon* controversy nor in the Nyaungzin monks' fight. He let the monks follow the views they preferred.

²⁹Mahadhammathingyan, 1956, 179

³⁰Tun Nyo, 1997, 133

The first attempt to settle the robe controversy was made in the reign of King Tanningwe (1714-1733). During his reign, *Twinthinmu* (commander of the interior guards) invited Ven. Ukkansamala, who resided in Shweyinhmyaw Village, to Awa and built a monastery in Shwekyetyet for him. This monk was well known because he was well-versed in the canonical texts, commentaries and sub-commentaries and also because he was skilled in secular matters and kingly concerns. As regards Myanmar language, he wrote the *Vannabodhana Thatpon Kyan* (a work on spelling rules). Together with some monks of the *Ayon* faction, he informed the king in writing that the canonical texts, commentaries and sub-commentaries only mentioned the *ayon* practice (ie the practice of wrapping the robe around the body covering both shoulders), not the *atin* practice (ie the practice of wrapping a piece of robe around one arm, arranging the *dukut* on one shoulder and binding the chest with a small piece of robe). Then the king appointed the abbots of the Modi, *Hmansikyaung*, Aungmye Sanlut and Letkaung monasteries as *Vinidos* (arbitrators) to decide the matter. However, the *Vinidos* themselves were members of the *Atin* faction, who became *Vinidos* just because they were friendly with the king. It is recorded that they were not versed in the *Vinaya*. Ven. Ukkamsamala of the *Ayon* faction and the Taungbilu *Sayadaw* of the *Atin* faction debated the matter in the presence of these *Vinidos*.³¹

Ukkamsamala of the *Ayon* faction put forward his point of view, citing many canonical texts, commentaries and sub-commentaries. The Taungbilu *Sayadaw* was unable to cite any text to substantiate his view. However, as they themselves belonged to the *Atin* faction, the *Vinidos*, with a view to preventing the *Ayon* view from being accepted as right view, decided that monks were to follow the tradition of their teachers. Thus, the *Atin-Ayon* issue remained unresolved. It seems that Ukkamsamala was able to inform the matter to the king because he was

³¹B.C. Law, 1952, 125

venerated by *Twinthinmu*, who was the king's father-in-law.³² The issue would not have been argued in the presence of the *Vinidos* if the king disagreed.

The *Atin-Ayon* issue was not solved during the reign of King Tanninganwe. The monks debated the issue for the second time in the reign of King Mahadhammarajadhipati (1733-1752), the last king of the Nyaungyan dynasty. Ven. Ñanavara, the Kyaw Aung Sanhta *Sayadaw*, and Ven. Pasamsa, the Kyetthungin *Sayadaw*, represented the *Ayon* and *Atin* factions respectively. The king appointed the Aungmye Shwebon *Sayadaw*, who was friendly with him as *Vinido*. As regards the decision concerning this issue, there are three different accounts in the *Thathanalinkara Sadan*, the *Vamsadipani* and the *Sasanavamsa*. It is stated in the *Thathanalinkara Sadan* that the issue was not solved because the Aungmye Shwebon *Sayadaw* who acted as *Vinido* was not versed in the scriptures and did not know the *Vinaya* rules, and some monks placed their robes on one shoulder, while others covered themselves with their robes.³³ The Medi *Sayadaw* mentioned in his *Vimsadipani* that although the five *Vinaya* texts were cited in the debate, the monks who preferred to follow *acariyavada* (or the tradition of their teachers) argued that although their view was not supported by the five *Vinaya* texts, it was in accordance with the *Culaganthi*, which was presented by the leader of the Ton faction as evidence. As the view of these monks and that of the Theravadins did not coincide, Ven. Saralanka who resided in the Modi monastery and who wore a hat advised the king in writing that there was no need to cite any text as they belonged to the lineage of the monks of ancient times. Then, the king,

³²Taik Soe, "*Nyaungyan Se Set Hnint Batha Ayuwada Aye*" (The Ten Kings of the Nyaungyan Dynasty and Religious Issues), *Sha Sha Hpwe Hpwe Mynmar Thamaing* (Little known Facts on Myanmar History), Vol.II, Yangon, Theintaik Yadana Press, 1999, p. 105 (Henceforth: Taik Soe, 1999)

³³Mahadhammathingyan, 1956, 184

exerting his authority, ordered that the monks of both factions were to wear hats.³⁴ The *Sasanavamsa*, however, states that the Kyaw Aung Sanhta *Sayadaw* sent an epistle to the king, informing that only the view of the *Ayon* faction was in accordance with the scriptures; but the king did not pay attention to religious affairs; he told the monks to debate the matter in the presence of the Aungmye Shwebon *Sayadaw*. The Aungmye Shwebon *Sayadaw*, who served as *vinido*, did not have enough scriptural knowledge to decide the matter. Moreover, he himself wore a hat and placed the robe on one shoulder. As he was not a competent *vinido*, Kyaw Aung Sanhta *Sayadaw* only put forward a perfunctory argument to comply with the king's order and ended the debate.³⁵ It can be concluded from these three statements that the person appointed as *vinido* was incompetent and did not command respect from monks. Moreover, King Mahadhammarajadhipati himself was busy struggling to cling on to power by using occult means. It seems that the king would not have much interest in religious affairs because of the threats posed by the Mons and the Manipuris³⁶. Many monks and laypersons in up-river towns and villages had faith in him, and his following grew. After his death, his successors continued to disseminate his views, and they were tried in court, defrocked and made to clean up elephant and horse dung.³⁷

Although tradition asserts that the *Atin-Ayon* controversy began during the reign of King Sane in the Nyaungyan period, it seems that it began in the reign of

³⁴Medi *Sayadaw*, 1967, 144-45

³⁵B.C. Law, 1952, 127

³⁶Stream-enterer, a person at the first stage of irreversible progress on the path to *Nirvana*.

³⁷Kala, 2006c, 373

King Sinbyushin of Hanthawady who issued an edict on 14 March 1574 as follows:

The dispute over *Atin* and *Ayon* is a dispute over how to wear robes; it is not a doctrinal dispute. Monks may wear the robes as they like, placing the robe on one shoulder or covering both shoulders.³⁸

Even after the end of the Nyaungyan Period or even in the Konbaung period, the *Atin-Ayon* dispute continued. The *Atin-Ayon* dispute stretched well into the Konbaung period. Ven. Atulayasa, who was a royal preceptor during the reign of King Alaungmintaya belonged to the *Atin* faction. This monk had given valuable advice to the king when the latter reunified the kingdom. The king venerated the *Atula Sayadaw* because they had worked together for the unification of the kingdom. Ven. Vinandasabha, the third *Nanmaw Sayadaw* noted that the *Atula Sayadaw* was not versed in the scriptures, but had the gift of the gab, that he was a man of moral rectitude, and that he did not understand the scriptural texts well/he spoke according to the texts sometimes and against them sometimes.³⁹ During Alaungmintaya's reign, the *Atin* faction became powerful because the king himself preferred the *Atin* view. Ven. Sujata of Palaing was a staunch defender of the *Ayon* view. When Ven. Sujata, the *Palaing Sayadaw* and the *Atula Sayadaw* debated whether a novice, in entering a village, should cover both shoulders or place his upper robe on one shoulder, King Alaungmintaya decided: "All the [monks] are to place their robes over one shoulder. I also prefer the practice of

³⁸Dr Than Tun, *The Royal Orders of Burma AD 1598-1885*, Part. II (AD 1649-1750), Kyoto, The Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, 1985, pp. 110-11 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 1985a)

³⁹Vinandasabha, 1992, 95-96

placing the robe over one shoulder." Then, the Palaing *Sayadaw* told him bluntly: "Even though [Your Majesty], the Lord of Water and Land prefer it, we cannot do it because the Buddha does not like it. [Your Majesty], the Lord of Water and Land, is not a Buddha." The king said: "I am not a Buddha. However, it is suitable to do so because there is a saying that the Buddha Himself cannot reject a unanimous decision of monks. Let the matter rest." Then, there was a buzz of excitement, the officials saying that the debate was over and that the decision was in favour of the *Atin* faction and uttering "well done." It is recorded in a document that Ven. Sarananda, a pupil of the Palaing *Sayadaw* remarked in the king's presence: "It is difficult to make oneself understood in the reign of an evil king."⁴⁰

According to another account, however, when Ven. Sujata of Palaing who belonged to the *Ayon* faction informed King Alaungmintaya, citing canonical texts and commentaries, that the Buddhist texts prescribed that novices were to cover both shoulders with their robes when going to a village, the king was willing to discuss the matter. However, the king's preceptor and his followers raised repeated objections, saying that the case had been decided in the presence of monks, that the king who was taken captive to Hanthawady had issued an edict that all the monks were to place their robes on one shoulder. Hence, the king was unable to discuss the matter even though he was willing. It is learnt that he just said: "I'll examine the facts and decide the matter in accordance with the *dhamma* (the Buddha's teachings) after I have dealt with the affairs of the State."⁴¹

King Alaungmintaya thought that monks were behaving differently in various localities; it would not be like that in the Buddha's teachings. Therefore he

⁴⁰Vinandasabha, 1992, 84-85

⁴¹(a) B.C. Law, 1952, 128

(b) Mahadhammathingyan, 1956, 187

questioned the monks. Ven. Atulayasa replied that only covering one shoulder was in accordance with the *dhamma*, and the king ordered: "Every monk must place his upper robe over one shoulder. Nobody was to act otherwise." When he heard the words of the monks of the *Ayon* faction that they desired to practice only in conformity with the *dhamma*, the king thought: "The *Atin* view also seems to be against the *Vinaya* rules laid down by the Buddha. I must decide this matter." However, he passed away before he could solve the matter.⁴² As he was busy reunifying the kingdom, King Alaungmintaya could not pay much attention to religious affairs. These three accounts suggest that the king was won over by his preceptor Ven. Atulayasa. Concerning the *Atin-Ayon* dispute, he decided in favour of the *Atin* faction. By appointing Ven. Atula as *thathanabyu* (Supreme Patriarch), the king incorporated other factions into the *Atin* faction. Some monks of the *Ayon* faction including the Palaing *Sayadaw*, refused to ordain boys into novicehood as the king did not permit them to act in accordance with the *dhamma*. They only ordained older boys and men as monks. Some members of the *Ayon* faction, however, fearing the wrath of the king, defected to the *Atin* faction.

King Naungdawgyi came to the throne in 1760. He venerated Ven. Ñanalankara, the Taungdwin *Sayadaw* who was an *Ayon* monk. The *Ayon* monks informed the king that the monks of the *Ayon* faction were *dhammavadins* (the ones who spoke according to the Dhamma). However, Atula *Sayadaw* objected, saying that the *Atin-Ayon* matter was a *res judicata*; it had been settled during the reigns of the kings of Innwa. Therefore, the *Ayon* monks were not allowed to discuss the matter. It seems that Atula *Sayadaw*'s influence had not declined yet.

⁴²Medi *Sayadaw*, 1966, 146

King Sinbyushin (also known as Myedu Min) succeeded to throne in 1763. As his teachers belonged to the *Atin* faction, the influence of the *Ayon* faction waned.⁴³

Sinbyushin was succeeded by King Singu (1776-1782). Some of the *Sayadaws* the new king venerated belonged to the *Atin* faction. King Singu built a golden monastery with a five-tiered roof, which was named Mahamingala Shwebon, together with twelve monastery buildings surrounding it, at the site of the old Modi monastery, on the south of the city of Innwa, and donated it to Tipitakalankarasami Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru, the Htandabin *Sayadaw*. This *Sayadaw*, like *Atula Sayadaw*, failed to pay attention to *Vinaya* texts and persecuted the monks of the *Ayon* faction and exerted his power.⁴⁴ During King Singu's reign, Ven. Nandamala, who was a native of Paukmyint Village in the West Taik, wrote a book to explain that the *Atin* view held by the monks of Ton faction was wrong. Ven. Nandamala, the Htandabin *Sayadaw* showed the book to the king who, after reading it, invited Ven. Nandamala (the author of the book) to the royal capital. He was asked to teach *Vinaya* rules to the king and the monks of the *Atin* faction. When the *Atin* and *Ayon* monks debated the matter during the reign of King Singu, Ven. Dhammabhinanda, the Bagaya *Sayadaw*, headed the *Ayon* monks. He was a monk venerated by Mahathirizeyathingyan, the minister who held Magwe in fief, and he resided in the Bagaya monastery, which stood close to the west of Awa. He represented the *Ayon* faction in the debates during the reigns of King Singu and Badon, and the *Ayon* faction won.⁴⁵

⁴³Mahadhammathingyan, 1956, 108

⁴⁴Sirisobhana, 1974, 219

⁴⁵Sirisobhana, 1974, 226

King Singu issued a royal order to the following effect on 24 February 1780:

The monks who desire to cover (both shoulders) and those who want to place their robes on one shoulder are to allow courageous monks to argue (on their behalf) in the Man Aung Yadana Thudhamma Hall so that the Lord of Water and Land as well as the people would know clearly what is stated in the canonical texts, commentaries, sub-commentaries and in the *Vinaya* texts which had been recited in the Buddhist Synods.⁴⁶

The Sonda, Bagaya and Kado *Sayadaws*, who represented the *Ayon* faction, and the Yadana Sanlut, Pyokan and Taungbilu *Sayadaw*, who spoke for the *Atin* faction, debated the matter in the Thudhamma Hall.⁴⁷ In the Thudhamma Hall, the *Ayon* monks and the *Atin* monks were seated on the left and right sides respectively. *Atwinwun* Nandakyawhtin, *Atwinwundauk* Nemyonawrahta, *Hluttaw-wundauk* Nemyo Mahawisa and *Hluttaw Sayagyi* Nemyoyaza had to act as moderators. Letya Yandameit Yazakyawhtin and Yazabalakyawhtin, who were versed in the canonical texts, commentaries and sub-commentaries were made to listen to their arguments and to pose questions. On 24 February 1780, the Bagaya *Sayadaw* of the *Ayon* faction, citing canonical texts and commentaries, explained in detail that novices should cover both shoulders and should not place their robes on only one shoulder or use a robe to bind the chest. The monks of the *Atin* faction argued that novices should place their robes on one shoulder and bind their chests when going to a village. On 25 February 1780, King Singu ordered: "You are not to speak loquaciously. Just give the statements in the canonical texts,

⁴⁶Dr Than Tun, *The Royal Orders of Burma AD 1598-1885*, Part. III (AD. 1751-1781), Kyoto, The Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, 1985, p. 280 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 1985b)

⁴⁷Maung Maung Tin, 2004a, 372

commentaries and sub-commentaries that novices are to place their robes on one shoulder and bind their chest.”⁴⁸ On that day the Bagaya *Sayadaw* of the Ayon faction discussed the matter first. The monks of the *Atin* faction quoted mainly from the *Culaganthi*. The *Atin-Ayon* debate lasted for over a year (from 1780-1781). As the *Culaganthi* which they cited was not an authoritative work, the *Atin* monks admitted that they were only following the tradition of their teachers. On 15 November 1780, King Singu issued an edict:

Concerning the arguments made by the *Atin* and *Ayon* monks on the basis of scriptural texts, the Buddha would not have said that (novices were) to place their robes on one shoulder and also to cover themselves with their robes. He would say only one. The *Atin* monks are to put forward their argument on the basis of canonical texts and commentaries. If they cannot, they are to practice as prescribed in the canonical texts and commentaries.⁴⁹

This order suggests that the king himself had lost faith in the monks of the *Atin* faction. The moderators had to report what transpired at the debate to the king daily. King Singu issued an order that in going to and entering a village novices were to wear their robes as prescribed in the canonical texts, commentaries and sub-commentaries.⁵⁰ Although the dates of the royal order given in different texts differ, it is clear that the Manle *Sayadaw* was appointed as *Thathanabyu* and that the decision was made in favour of the *Ayon* faction.

⁴⁸Than Tun, 1985, 281

⁴⁹Than Tun, 1985, 285

⁵⁰Mahadhammathingyan states that the order was issued on 17 May 1780 (1956, p. 190), whereas U Maung Maung Tin gives the date as 4 February 1780 in the *Konbaungzet Mahayazawindawgyi* (The Great Chronicle of the Konbaungzet Dynasty), vol. 1.

Their view was that the Buddha first allowed newly-ordained novices to cover only their left arms. Later, because the *chabbagi* (group-of-six) monks entered a village draping their robes loosely around them, the Buddha laid down the rule that in entering an inhabited area a monk must tie his waistband, fasten the fastener and wrap one end of the robe around his (left) arm, holding the furled-up part of the robe in his hand. The *Atin* monks held that this rule applied only to monks, not to novices because novices had not violated the basic rules, and because if novices covered both shoulders, it would be impossible to distinguish them from monks. The *Ayon* monks, however, held that although there was no rule that novices were to cover both shoulders the *supaticchanna* rule (or the rule that required monks to wear the [upper] robe wrapped around them), as explicitly stated in the Parivara, applied to both monks and novices. Hence, a novice should cover both his shoulders in entering a village. As the Parivara contains the rules laid down by the Buddha himself, the rules should not be disobeyed. When a rule is applicable to both monks and novices, a new rule should not be laid down for novices. If we follow the *Atin* monks' view and hold that the rules applicable to monks are not applicable to novices, we will have to accept that a novice who fondles a woman, makes dirty jokes to turn a woman on or tells a woman that having sex with him would be beneficial to her, is not guilty of an offence. These acts are unbecoming not only to monks, but also to novices. The *Ayon* monks therefore held that the *supaticchanna* rule was applicable to novices although it was laid down for monks.⁵¹

Referring to the *Atin* monks as *adhammavadis* (those who spoke what was not in conformity with the *dhamma*) or as *alajjis* (shameless monks) was not fair, because they neither did away with nor changed any *Vinaya* rule; they just misunderstood the rule. There were many *Atin* monks who were virtuous and who abided by the *Vinaya* rules. As the monks in Myanmar placed great emphasis on

⁵¹Vinandasabha, 1992, 94

the tradition of their teachers, it would have been difficult for the *Atin* monks to repudiate the tradition of their teachers. Therefore, when the king forced them to follow his decision, they would obey it only for a short while and would later revert to following *acariyavada* or the tradition of their teachers.

Although the decision was made in favour of the *Ayon* faction in the reign of King Singu, the *Atin* monks reverted to following the tradition of their teachers in King Badon's reign (1781-1819). Factionalism in the *Sangha* intensified in the reign of King Badon. Among the Konbaung kings, Badon had an interest in religious affairs as he ascended the throne only when he was old. He desired to purify the Religion and was against factionalism. He wanted the monks who were members of the *Sangha* to unite. He did not hold the coronation ceremony right away after establishing a new city and palace on 14 January 1783. Following his father's footsteps and the tradition of former kings who propagated Buddhism, he strove for the purification of the Religion for about three or four years before holding the coronation ceremony.⁵²

The first task he took upon himself for the purification of the Religion was that of solving the *Atin-Ayon* dispute. When the matter was debated during the reign of King Singu, the *Atin* faction was defeated because their view was not attested by canonical texts or commentaries; hence King Singu ordered that monks and novices were to wear their upper robes wrapped around them (covering both shoulders) in entering a village. The *Atin-Ayon* issue resurfaced in the reign of King Badon. In King Badon's reign, the monks of the *Atin*-faction reverted to wearing their robes covering only one shoulder. King Badon considered that the *Atin* monks might have admitted defeat during King Singu's reign for fear of incurring the wrath of the king. To ensure that there would not be a repeat of this in his reign, King Badon ordered U Tun Nyo, the *Twinthin Mingyi*, and the ministers who were the devotees of the *Atin* monks to ask the *Sayadaws* to express

⁵²Mahadhammathingyan, 1956, 194

their views as to the way of wearing robes in entering a village.⁵³ Accordingly, the officers visited the monks in various monasteries, including Ven. Asabha of Shwezedi, Ven. Saddharamsi of Shwemyindin, Ven. Janinda of Ledatmyauktaik and Ven. Cakkarama of Kyawhtin Thinkaya Monastery. None of them could say on the basis of canonical texts and commentaries that a novice should drape his upper robe over one shoulder and bind his chest in entering a village. In contrast, there are many statements in the canonical texts, commentaries and sub-commentaries that a novice must wear his upper robe wrapped around him in accordance with the *supaticchanna* rule. The *Atin Sayadaws* informed the officers that they were following *acariyavada* (the tradition of their teachers) in arranging their upper robes on one shoulder. When they were asked whether they wanted to act according to the canonical texts or to follow *acariyavada*, they stated with one accord that they did not want to follow *acariyavada*, but desired to act according to the canonical texts.⁵⁴ Then, King Badon issued a royal order to the following effect:

Although I intended to probe into the matter and decide in accordance with the Dhamma, the (*Atin*) monks themselves had unanimously admitted (that they were only following the tradition of their teachers). Thus, they themselves have settled the matter; I do not need to probe into the matter anymore. The matter concerning the Religion has been solved without difficulty because I am destined to promote the Religion. Novices are to abide by the unanimous decision of the *Sayadaws* and wear their robes wrapped around them in entering a village.

⁵³Sirisobhana, 1974, 249

⁵⁴Than Tun, 1986a, 236-237

All the monks in the kingdom also had to abide by this order.⁵⁵ However, the former Supreme Patriarch Atulayasa, who had been the preceptor of King Alaungmintaya, King Badon's father, submitted a letter to the king, saying that it was stated in the *Culaganthi* that novices must arrange their robes on one shoulder and bind their chests. King Badon decreed that the monks of different factions, which had split on account of [the interpretation of] the *Vinaya* rules, are to ask Atulayasa, who followed *acariyavada* and the Theravadins to explain whether (novices) should wrap their robes around them and cover both shoulders or should drape their robes over one shoulder on the basis of the five texts of the *Vinaya Pitaka*, canonical texts and commentaries.⁵⁶

He invited the former Supreme Patriarch Atulayasa and the Supreme Patriarch Manle *Sayadaw* to the golden *Hluttaw*, offered them food, and asked:

For the promotion of the *Sasana* and for the support of lay devotees, solve the ongoing disputes faultlessly and in accordance with the (statements in) scriptural texts so that the *Sangha* would not be divided by questioning the monks and by checking [their statements against] the *Vinaya* texts (both canonical texts and commentaries) and purify the Religion.⁵⁷

In answer to the question of other monks, Atula *Sayadaw* stated that the *Culaganthi* stipulated that novices must arrange their robes on one shoulder and

⁵⁵(a) Mahadhammathingyan, 1956, 192

(b) Sirisobhana, 1974, 250

⁵⁶Medi *Sayadaw*, 1966, 156

⁵⁷U Aung, *Ayudaw Mingalar Shaukhton Hpyitthaw Kawitharaminzutha Kyan* (Compilation of Learned Discourses or Memorable Sayings Presented to the King by Scholars or ministers), Yangon, Ledimandaing Press, 1956, p.564 (Henceforth: Aung, 1956)

bind their chests, and that this was not mentioned in other texts. When the other monks asked him the name of the author of the *Culaganthi*, he answered that it was written by Ven. Moggalan, an *arahat* who resided in Pokantigama Village, which lay to the south of the city of Anuradha in the island of Sihala. He went on to say that it was Thiho Pitakat Hman a genuine Sinhalese scriptural text and showed it to them. The monks examined it in the presence of the people who were present, and found out that the so-called Pitakat Hman was not *Culaganthi*, but was the *Vinayaganthi*, which was composed by Ven. Moggalana during the reign of King Parakkamabahu of Srilanka.⁵⁸ Then, the monks examined the Vinaya rules given in the *Culaganthi*. It set down the rule that monks and novices were to wear the upper robes wrapped around. It also prescribed that they were to wrap their robes around their (left) arms, to have their upper robes draped over one shoulder and to bind their chest with a robe. Therefore, the monks noticed that the Atula *Sayadaw* was contradicting himself and that the *Culaganthi* was not an authoritative work. Thus, the text contradicted itself and the monks decided that it was not fit to be used as an authoritative work.

On hearing this, King Badon remarked that Atulayasa was a shameless monk who chose to follow *acariyavada*, rejecting the five books of the *Vinaya Pitaka*. He then ordered the royal officers to ask the other monks who followed *acariyavada* why they had excommunicated Atulayasa. Those monks replied: "As he was the Supreme Patriarch who was favoured by the king during the reign of your father, he decided not only monastic disputes, but also some legal cases involving laypersons. Hence some incurred financial loss and became implicated in crimes. Therefore, we excommunicated him." And they presented Atulaya's judicial decisions to the king. The king asked the ministers to examine the documents, and the ministers told him: "If these are correct, he was unjust and immoral." Then, king Badon declared: "This man, Atulayasa, is a menace to the

⁵⁸B.C. Law, 1952, 138-139

Religion. Defrock him, publicize (his sins) by striking gongs and banish him to his own village."⁵⁹

When the *Ayon-Atin* issue was debated in the reign of King Badon, the decision was made in favour of the *Ayon* faction because Atulayasa and the members of the *Atin* faction could only cite the *Culaganthi*, which was not a text recited in the Buddhist synods and which did not agree with the *Vinaya* texts, canonical texts, commentaries and sub-commentaries. King Badon issued a royal order to punish the persons who were following wrong views. He issued an edict on 25 April 1784 as follows:

During the reigns of my father King Alaungmintaya and my elder brother, Nga Pan Htwe, who was a native of Okshit Village and who held the title Atulayasa Mahadhammarajaguru, taught the citizens, both monks and laypersons, so that they would be going in the opposite direction from the abode of deities and would suffer in the four realms of misery (*apaya*). He preached relying on the *Culaganthi*, which was against canonical texts, commentaries and sub-commentaries and which was written by *adhammavadins* who were *sasanapaccuttika* a menace to the Religion as an authoritative work. ... If those who hold the same view as Nga Pan Htwe—namely, Nga Kyawkale, Nga Toke Hpyu and Nga Peleit—and those who accompanied Nga Pan Htwe, when the latter was summoned—namely, Nga Myat Kyaw, Nga Kyaset, Nga Ya, Nga Thu and Nga Lwan—are allowed to reside in the capital, monks and laypersons would also follow wrong views and will suffer in the four realms of misery (*apaya*). Defrock them and, striking gongs, banish each of them to a forest in the north ... Nobody who is a *sasanapaccuttika*, who holds a wrong view or who is an imposter masquerading as a monk must be spared.

⁵⁹Medi Sayadaw, 1966, 158

The king also commanded that a list of those *adhammavadins* was to be asked from the *mahadanwun*⁶⁰ and that all the monks in the list were to be defrocked and, having publicised [their sins] by striking gongs, were to be handed over to the *sinza-yeit* (the service group responsible for collecting fodder for elephants).⁶¹ However, when the *samesayas* (examiners)⁶² submitted an epistle to him, requesting him to have mercy on the culprits, the king issued another order as follows:

Spare Nga Pan Htwe and his confederates. As regards the other culprits who were to be handed over to the *sinzayeit* group, exempt them from induction to the *sinzayeit*.⁶³

Thus, King Badon punished the monks who held wrong views and endeavoured to cleanse the Religion. The *Atin-Ayon* dispute, which began from King Sane's reign onwards in the Nyaungyan period, went on for almost a hundred years and was settled once and for all in the reign of King Badon in the Konbaung period. Nevertheless, some regard that both the *Ayon* and *Atin* faction, which argued bitterly with one another, were *dhammavadins*, although they disagreed with each other concerning the training of novices.⁶⁴ The matter did not resurface after 1784.

⁶⁰Officer in Charge of Religious Affairs.

⁶¹(a) Than Tun, *1986a*, 326-27

(b)“*Bodawhpaya Ameindaw Pyandan*” (Bodawhpaya’s Edicts), *Parabaik* MS, No.123292, Yangon, Universities' Central Library

(c) “*Ameindaw*”, *Parabaik* MS, No. 610, Yangon, National Library

⁶² the monks who were in charge of religious examinations.

⁶³Than Tun, *1986*, 328

⁶⁴U Thaw Zin, *Nanzin Poatsa* (Answers to the King’s Question), Yangon, Sapalwe Taik, 1970, p. 14 (Henceforth: Thaw Zin, *1970*)

King Badon strove for the purification of the Religion and put a stop to wrong views concerning the Religion in his realm by inflicting severe punishments on those who held them. The Theravadins in Myanmar had been making Buddha images and building pagodas and temple as objects of worship since the Pagan period. They venerated *samuti* monks⁶⁵ in place of *ariya* monks.⁶⁶ However, Varajoti view began to circulate in the reign of King Sinbyushin (Myedu Min) in 1763.⁶⁷ According to this view, the existence of a being is completely annihilated after death. It also exhorted that Buddha images were not to be worshipped and monks were not to be venerated. This view was an instant success in the up-river towns, especially in the towns and villages around Sinbyukyun. Although King Sinbyushin made efforts to extirpate this view, the view was alive and kicking till King Badon's reign. King Badon, who desired the Religion to be pure and the people to hold right views, issued an order with a view to preventing not only monks, but also laypersons throughout the kingdom from holding wrong views:

Considering that [the citizens] will be free from danger in this existence as well as in the future existences in the *samsara* [the endless cycle of birth and death] only if order prevails in the four quarters of the kingdom and only if Religion flourish and the people hold right views, I will maintain order.⁶⁸

⁶⁵Samuti monks are ordinary monks who are still studying the scriptures and practicing meditation with a view to attaining Nibbana.

⁶⁶*Ariya* or *paramattha* monks are the monks who have attained Nibbana in this existence and, like ordinary monks, are observing the precepts (*sila*) and studying the scriptures

⁶⁷U Maung Maung Tin (MA), *Myanmar Min Lethtettaw Sadanmya* (Treatises written during the reigns of Myanmar Kings), Yangon, Kumara Press, 1967, p. 172 (Maung Maung Tin, 1967). However, it is stated in U Kala's *Mahayazawingyi* (Vol. 1, p. 373) that the view appeared in the reign of King Mahadhammarajadhipati, who attempted to put an end to it.

⁶⁸ (a) "Ameindaw" (Edict), *Parabaik* MS, No. 616, Yangon, National Library

(b) Than Tun, 1986, 238

He also issued edicts to extirpate Varajoti view which was prevalent in the towns and villages around Sinbyukyun. A royal order promulgated on 15 July 1783 runs:

The persons who renounced the Joti view and pledged not to associate with those who held Joti view when the order was issued during my elder brother King Sinbyushin's reign to bring criminal charges against those who held Joti view, have right the wrongs they had committed as ordinary human beings. Let them off, and do not make them incur (legal) expenses.⁶⁹

Although he had declared that he forgave them for committing their first offences, when he learnt that the Joti view was still prevalent, King Badon issued another edict on 17 July 1783. It reads:

The *myowuns* (governors), *sitkes* (deputies of *myowuns*), *nagans* (liaison officer), *myothagyis* (town headmen), *ywathagyis* (village headmen), *gaungs* (heads of wards) and *akyis* (elders attached to princes) in the towns and villages in outlying areas, as they owe allegiance to the crown, are to properly interrogate those who follow Joti view and their leaders and bring them to my presence. The *wuns* are to warn [the officers] in the towns and villages throughout the kingdom that if they fail to properly investigate or to bring all the persons [who held Joti views], they will face criminal charges if I find out that there still are those who hold Joti view.⁷⁰

The king strove to extirpate the Joti view, which he regarded as a menace to the Religion. However, the followers of Joti views in various towns and villages

⁶⁹Than Tun, 1986a, 266

⁷⁰Than Tun, 1986a, 268

escaped punishment by bribing royal officers. On learning this, King Badon issued an order on 8 September 1783 to the following effect:

When the *Hluttaw* (the Supreme Council) and the *Yondaw* (the Supreme Court) dispatched *dainghmu* (commander of service units armed with shields), *thinmu* (officers responsible to supervise the servicemen in the palace), *asegan* (servants) and *hlutlulin* (peons from the hluttaw) to round up the dregs of the *Sasana* who held Varajoti view in the towns and villages around Sinbyukyun, they failed to round up the latter honestly as they owed allegiance to the crown. . . . Publicize their crimes by striking gongs both inside and outside the city so that everybody who saw would not dare to commit crimes, melt the silver they had taken as bribes, and pour molten silver into their mouths.⁷¹

Although King Badon suppressed the Joti sect, he was unable to root out the sect. There were followers of Joti views even in the closing days of the Konbaung period.

In 1839, during King Tharyarwady's reign, Nga Paw Ei, who was disseminating the Joti view, preached in Myede town that there was no point in worshipping Buddha images or relics because they were just sculpted, molded, painted or cast figures, that he made no donations to monks and did not venerate monks because monks wore red robes and preached the sermons only to earn their livelihood and were unable to lead the way to *Nibbana*, and that a man was annihilated after death and would not be reborn. The king suppressed the followers of these views. King Tharyarwady, after questioning Nga Paw Ei about Joti view, issued an order that Nga Paw Ei, who answered the questions truthfully, was to be released, that he was to submit a list of his followers, and that the persons in the

⁷¹Than Tun, 1986, 284

list were to be rounded up. There is a person who has courageously stated that the view of the Joti sect was the essence of Buddhism:

If one can practice the *dhamma* to attain *Nibbana*, one does not need to worship any thing. As the Buddha Himself practiced the *dhamma* to attain *Nibbana*, anyone who followed suit would attain *Nibbana*. The statement that there is no need to worship pagodas, Buddha images and monks means that one must practice the Buddha's *dhamma* that would lead one to *Nibbana* rather than wasting one's time by worshipping those pagodas, images, etc. and busying oneself with the rituals.⁷²

Thus in the early Konbaung period, the kings were able to solve the *Atin-Ayon* dispute and to suppress the heretical Joti view. There were some important events in the history of Buddhism in Myanmar which took place during the reign of King Mindon. Buddhist sects like the Shwegyin sect, which enjoyed the patronage of the king, came into being. After establishing the capital city of Mandalay, King Mindon invited U Jagara (1822-1894) who later would become known as the Shwegyin *Sayadaw*, to the new city. This *Sayadaw* was born in Shwegyin Village, one of the five villages of Hladawgyi which lay 14 miles to the south of Shwebo Town, on 16 July 1822.⁷³ As a novice he sat under Thalon *Sayadaw* U Candima (1786-1860). King Mindon regarded Thalon *Sayadaw* U Candima, who was Shwegyin *Sayadaw*'s teacher, as an exemplary monk who

⁷²Ba Thaug, “*Konbaung Hkit Taya Upade (1751-1885)*” (Konbaung Period laws (1751-1885)), Mandalay University, History Department, M.A Thesis, 1975, p. 124 (Henceforth: Ba Thaug, 1975)

⁷³*Chattha Shwegyin Nikaya Dhammasenapati Shwegyin Thathanabaing Hladaw Oatkyang Sayadaw Hpayagi Ei Atthuppattikatha* (The Biography of the Abbot of the Oatkyang Monastery in Hladaw, who was the Sixth Supreme Patriarch of the Shwegyin Sect), Mandalay, Ngwesanda Press, 1935, p. 35 (Henceforth: *Sayadaw Hpayagi Ei Atthuppattikatha, 1935*)

studied the scriptures (*pariyatti*) and practiced meditation (*patipatti*), and desired to invite him to the royal capital to promote the Sasana. However, as Thalon *Sayadaw* refused to move to the royal capital, King Mindon constructed a monastery named Yadanabonsan in the Thalon Village for him.⁷⁴

As the Thalon *Sayadaw* did not move to the royal capital, the king invited U Nanda, who was a pupil of Thalon *Sayadaw* and who later became known as the Shankalekyun *Sayadaw*, to come and reside in the royal capital. Accordingly, the Shankalekyun *Sayadaw* came to the royal capital on 14 June 1855, and the king built a monastery for him in Shankalekyun in the northwest of the city in the same year.⁷⁵ King Mindon issued his edict known as *Dhamma-Vinaya Ameindaw Pyandan* (Edict on Dhamma and Vinaya) on 15 February 1856. It was drafted by Shankalekyun *Sayadaw* and edited by the eight *Thathanabyu-Thathanasaunt Sayadaws* headed by U Ñeyyadhamma in the Glass Palace.⁷⁶ When it was promulgated, the *Dhamma-Vinaya Ameindaw Pyandan* met with opposition. The Shankalekyun *Sayadaw* passed away on 6 November 1858. As he came to the royal capital on 14 June 1855, he worked together with the king for a very short period, only for about three years. With a view to putting into effect the *Dhamma-Vinaya Ameindaw Pyandan* effectively, King Mindon invited U Jagara, the Shwegyin *Sayadaw*, to come and reside in the capital. The accounts differ as to how the Shwegyin *Sayadaw* arrived in the capital. However, it is undeniable that his relationship with the king was good. When the Shwegyin *Sayadaw* moved to Mandalay, King Mindon agreed tacitly that the Shwegyin *Sayadaw* and his

⁷⁴Ashin Pandita, *Shwekyin Nikaya Thathanawin* (A History of the Shwegyin Sect), Yangon, Buddha Thathana Council, 1963, p. 97 (Henceforth: Pandita, 1963)

⁷⁵Tikkha, 2005, 301-302

⁷⁶*Dhamma Vinaya Ameindaw Pyandan* (Edict on Dhamma and Vinaya), Mandalay, Pitakattaw Pyantpwaye Press, undated, p. 17 (Henceforth: *Dhamma Vinaya Ameindaw Pyandan*)

followers would live separately from the monks who were already in Mandalay.⁷⁷ Although King Mindon's *Dhamma-Vinaya Ameindaw Pyandan* was generally regarded as a royal order issued for the purification of the Religion, some scholars construed it as an order issued for political reasons. Although monks should be studying the scriptures and practicing meditation, some monks became very influential and became involved in the power struggles in the palace. That was why some scholars translated the *Dhamma-Vinaya Ameindaw Pyandan* as an order promulgated for political ends.⁷⁸ This royal order gave rise to some new problems concerning the Religion. It resulted in disputes over whether making donations to an immoral person would be beneficial to the donor and whether laypersons should study the *Vinaya* rules so that they would be able to distinguish virtuous men from immoral ones. The problems, which began in Lower Myanmar, worsened and spread to Upper Myanmar. Such intense disputes were detrimental to the unity of the *Sangha*. The *Dhamma-Vinaya Ameindaw Pyandan* which combined the power of the *Dhamma* and the regal power to purify the Religion only brought about disputes and tore apart the *Sangha*.

The *Dhamma-Vinaya Ameindaw Pyandan* played an important role in the birth of the Shwegyin Sect. As the monks of the later Konbaung period had great influence over the people and as they meddled in matters concerning the succession of kings, King Mindon had great reverence for the Shwegyin *Sayadaw* and his followers who kept aloof from politics. The Shwegyin Sect became popular because it enjoyed the king's favour. King Mindon formed the Thudhamma Thabin (Thudhamma Council) with eight Thathanabyu Thathanazaunt *Sayadaws* on 16 June 1862.⁷⁹ Of the eight *Sayadaws*, the Thingaza

⁷⁷Dr Than Tun, "*Shwekyin Nikaya Thathanawin*" (A History of Shwegyin Sect), Mandalay, *Typescript*, 1980, p. 9 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 1980)

⁷⁸Win Maung, 1979, 115-117

⁷⁹Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 211

Sayadaw and the Thetpan *Sayadaw*, like the Shwegyin *Sayadaw*, had been pupils of the Thalon *Sayadaw*.⁸⁰ It can therefore be assumed that some members of the Thudhamma Thabin would have been friendly with the Shwegyin *Sayadaw*. Nevertheless, the Shwegyin *Sayadaw* was not a member of it. As he felt great reverence for the Shwegyin *Sayadaw*, King Mindon made donations to him. In allowing the Shwegyin *Sayadaw* to keep aloof from the Thudhamma Thabin after assigning the Thudhamma *Sayadaws* the task of managing religious affairs, King Mindon probably was using his guile. It seems that the king supported the Shwegyin *Sayadaw* because there needed a group of exemplary monks.

In the reign of King Thibaw, the Shwegyin *Sayadaw*, together with U Mala, the Taungdaw *Sayadaw*, was appointed as *Thathanabyu Thathanazaunt*. Although they were responsible to manage religious affairs in the entire kingdom, the Shwegyin *Sayadaw* had to focus on nine localities. The *Sayadaw* assigned his assistants to eight centres: the royal capital, Kyaukse, Yamethin, Taungdwingyi, Minhla, Alon, Shwebo and Bamaw areas. Although the Shan states were under his jurisdiction, he was unable to work there for some unknown reasons. By the time King Thibaw appointed him as *Thathanazaunt Thathanabyu*, the British had annexed the whole of Lower Myanmar. The nine localities, which were placed under Shwegyin *Sayadaw*'s control, almost represent the entire Myanmar kingdom in Upper Myanmar. Additionally, the Taungdaw *Sayadaw*, who was appointed as *Thathanabyu Thathanazaunt* together with him, had been one of his pupils.⁸¹ Although assigning a monk and his pupil the task of managing religious affairs in almost the entire country was disapproved of by both the Thudhamma and Shwegyin leaders, it accentuated the difference between Shwegyin and

⁸⁰(a) Tikka, 2005, 318

(b) Ashin Aloka, "*Thathanawin Kyan*" (A Treatise on the History of the *Sasana*), Yangon, *Hanthawady Newspaper*, 1926, p. 84 (Henceforth: Aloka, 1926)

⁸¹Pandita, 1963, 236

Thudhamma monks. Therefore, the Shwegyin sect, which was recognized by the king himself and which enjoyed the patronage of the king, came into being in Myanmar in the later Konbaung Period.

Shwegyin *Sayadaw* studied under the Bagaya *Sayadaw* in 1842, during the reign of King Tharyarwadi. When King Pagan succeeded the throne in 1846, the Bagaya *Sayadaw* was named the Supreme Patriarch. On 7 April 1849, the Weyanbontha monastery was donated to him.⁸² It is learnt that the name of the Oakhpo *Sayadaw* was among those on whom the king would confer the Rajaguru titles at the ceremony of donating this monastery. The Oakhpo *Sayadaw*, who did not desire to become friendly with the king and who did not want to deal with sundry matters as a pupil of the Supreme Patriarch, left the monastery of the Supreme Patriarch and studied under the Myatheindan *Sayadaw*. While he was studying at the Myatheindan monastery, King Pagan requested the Supreme Patriarch to test the knowledge and ability of monks, one each representing a monastery, so that he would be able to confer titles on them in the future. When the Supreme Patriarch ordered that every monastery was to send a monk, the Myatheindan *Sayadaw* sent the Oakhpo *Sayadaw* and, it is said, the Supreme Patriarch who knew his ability did not even make him take the test.⁸³ Although the Supreme Patriarch wanted him to accept the Rajaguru title and propagate Buddhism (in the capital), he told the Supreme Patriarch that he wanted to work for the propagation of Buddhism in the towns and villages in Lower Myanmar. After studying in the capital from 1842-1850, he returned to Tharawaw Town in 1851 with twenty pupils. When Tharawaw was obliterated in the Second Anglo-Myanmar War in 1852, he went back to Oakhpo Town.

⁸²Tikkha, 2005, 266

⁸³Sirisobhana, 1974, 326

In Oakhpo, he doubted the validity of the *sima* in which the *gaing-ok* and *gaing-dauk* of Oakhpo were performing ecclesiastical rites and, accordingly, refused to perform ecclesiastical rites in it. Thus, the Buddhist fraternity in Oakhpo split into two factions: Oakhpo *Sayadaw* and his followers and the local monks headed by the *gaing-ok* and *gaing-dauk*. Other *Sayadaws* tried to reconcile them. However, the Oakhpo *Sayadaw* told them that he could not live in communion with those who had been ordained in an invalid *sima* and that he would live in communion with them if they receive reordination in a valid *sima*. The mediators advised the monks of the other side to take remedial action, but they refused. Thus, the dispute reached a deadlock. The Oakhpo *Sayadaw* broke off relations with those monks.⁸⁴ He and his pupils preached their followers that because the phrase *kayadvara*, *vacidvara*, *manodvara* was in agreement with the scriptures, they should use it in their prayers instead of *kayakan*, *vacikan*, *manokan* which the Myanmars had been customarily using. Some *Sayadaws* disagreed with the Oakhpo *Sayadaw* on this issue, and the *kan-dvara* dispute began. The Kyitheledat *Sayadaw* was a well-known *Sayadaw* who preferred to use the word *kan* (which derived from *Pali kamma*). When the disputes escalated, the people began to refer to the Oakhpo *Sayadaw* and his followers as *dvaravadins* (those who favoured the word *dvara*) and the faction came to be known as Dvara Sect.⁸⁵ The Oakhpo *Sayadaw* even locked horns with the Thudhamma *Thabin* in the royal capital of Yadanabon over some doctrinal matters. In 1862, the people put forward the matter to the Thudhamma *Sayadaws* in Mandalay, and the *Sayadaws* assigned the task of deciding it to the Maungdaung *Sayadaw*. The Maungdaung *Sayadaw* decided that both *kan* and *dvara* were acceptable. Then, the Oakhpo

⁸⁴Mamaka (Thutethi), *Buddhabatha Thanga Gaingkwemya Hnint Gainggyi Koe Gaing* (Buddhist Sects and the Nine Great Sects), Yangon, Win Myint Press, 2002, p. 139 (Henceforth: Mamaka, 2002)

⁸⁵Sirisobhana, 1974, 338

Sayadaw, through one of his pupils, informed the king in writing that only *dvara* was right, and the Maungdaung *Sayadaw* had to admit that he decided that both were right just to bring about a reconciliation between the two sides.⁸⁶ The Oakhpo *Sayadaw* consecrated a new *sima* so that he and his followers would be able to perform the formal acts of the *Vinaya*. By that time, Lower Myanmar had been annexed by the British. Most of the monks believed that a valid *sima* could not be demarcated on a plot of land granted by the British because the British government was just ruling the country after annexing it by the use of force and was not "the lord of water and land." Hence no *sima* was consecrated in Lower Myanmar for about eight or nine years after the British annexed it. Oakhpo *Sayadaw's* consecration of a *sima* in Lower Myanmar during this period sparked a new controversy. Therefore, the Oakhpo *Sayadaw* had to write a *vinicchaya* ("decision") to affirm that consecrating a *sima* on a plot of land granted by the British government was proper.⁸⁷

It seems that the Oakhpo *Sayadaw* was a reformer. The Myanmar usually ended each precept with the *Pali* word *veramani* (meaning "will abstain

from . . .") when they undertook to observe the precepts. The Oakhpo *Sayadaw*, however, made his followers recite *veramani sikkhapadam samadhiyami* (meaning, "I undertake to observe the precept to abstain from . . ."). As he was breaking with tradition by doing so, more disputes emerged. In addition, when he instructed laypersons to undertake to observe the ten precepts, some objected, saying that laypersons should not observe the ten precepts. Oakhpo *Sayadaw* also expressed that monks were mixing up the platform of a pagoda with the precincts of it, and asserted that monks were not to wear footwear on the platform of a pagoda although they could wear footwear in its precincts. Among the monks who disagreed with the Oakhpo *Sayadaw* was the Thingaza

⁸⁶Sirisobhana, 1974, 345

⁸⁷Mamaka, 2002, 140

Sayadaw, who was a monk of great renown and one of the eight Thudhamma *Sayadaws* in Mandalay. Their frequent disagreements have come down to us by popular tradition.⁸⁸ Like the Shwegyin sect, which broke with tradition, came into existence and gain strength in Upper Myanmar, the Dvara sect was founded in Lower Myanmar.

Ven. Pannava, the Hngettwin *Sayadaw*, was born in 1831 in Shwebo. At the age of six, he began to study under Ven. Kondannabhidhaja, a pupil of the Sayit *Sayadaw*, who was a monk of wide renown in the early Konbaung period. At the age of thirteen, he became a novice with Ven. Kondannabhidhaja as his *uppajjhaya* (mentor). His title was Pannava. In 1851, he was ordained as a monk in the *Khandha sima* in Sayit monastery, where Ven. Kondannabhidhaja acted as his mentor. In 1853, he went and study in the Thingaza monastery. After studying till 1858, he became a *pahtama sacha* (senior lecturer) in the Thingaza monastery.⁸⁹

It is stated in traditional accounts that the Bamaw *Sayadaw*, Shwegyin *Sayadaw*, Hpayagyi *Sayadaw*, Taungdaw *Sayadaw*, Hlahtwe *Sayadaw* and the Thingaza *Sayadaw* were unable to make King Mindon forget the Myingun-Myingondaing rebellion by delivering sermons, and that King Mindon recovered from the shock of the rebellion only when U Pannava, a pupil of the Thingaza *Sayadaw*, preached his sermons. Tradition has it that the king, holding him in high esteem, conferred the title "Paññadipakavidhaja Disapamokkha Tipitakalankara" on him. Princess Hteiksugyi, a daughter of King Mindon, undertook that she

⁸⁸*Thingaza Zagabon Baunggyoke* (An Anthology of Thingaza *Sayadaw*'s Maxims), Yangon, Hanthawady Pitakat Press, 1956 (Henceforth: *Thingaza Zagabon Baunggyoke*, 1956)

⁸⁹Ledi U Hla Paing, *Catubhummika Maggin Thathana Thamaing* (A History of the Catubhummika Maggin Sect), Yangon, Kyaw Win Shwe Press, November 1976, pp. 20, 26, 31, 34, 41 (Henceforth: Hla Paing, 1976)

would donate the four requisites to U Pannava. She constructed a forest monastery on the Minwun hills in Sagaing for the *Sayadaw* to live in. When Princess Hteiksugyi told U Pannava on her return from India in 1892 that she desired to learn how to practice meditation, she addressed him "the Prestigious *Sayadaw* Paññadipakavidhaja Disapamokkha Tipitakalankara,"⁹⁰ probably because she was present when U Pannava preached to King Mindon and knew that the king conferred this title on the *Sayadaw*.

There was a dietitian by the name of U Po, who could have been a follower of the Joti view, in the reign of King Mindon.⁹¹ U Po had extreme views concerning monks. He was a lay devotee of U Pannava, the Hngettwin *Sayadaw*.⁹² In 1867, U Pannava went and resided in the Minwun hills, observing the austere practice of dwelling in the forest. Green bee eaters in the Minwun hills dug holes on the hillsides, and U Pannava dwelt in a tunnel dug out by those birds. As he resided in a tunnel dug out by birds, he became known as the *Hngethtwin* (*hnget* "bird" + *htwin* "dig out") *Sayadaw*. Later, the word *hngethtwin* changed into *hngettwin* (bird hole). It is traditionally believed that the Satipatthana meditation method was originated by the *Hngettwin* Sect because U Pannava introduced the meditation method based on the Satipatthana-sutta. King Mindon's queen who held Kyemyin town in fief and daughter Princess Hteiksugyi were the donors of the Hngettwin monastery. U Pannava dwelt in the Hngettwin monastery on the Minwun hills from 1867 to 1882. He moved to Sagaing Hills in 1882 and established a new monastery named Abhayarama Byantgyi Gyaung.⁹³

After King Thibaw was sent into exile in 1886, U Pannava, together with his followers, went to Lower Myanmar and resided in Kungyangon Town. There

⁹⁰Hla Paing, 1976, 51

⁹¹See Appendix (3) for the biography of U Po, a dietitian.

⁹²Hla Paing, 1976, 55

⁹³Hla Paing, 1976, 61-62

is a foreign scholar who takes this year as the year in which Hngettwin sect began to strengthen its following.⁹⁴ U Ukkattha, a pupil of the Thingaza *Sayadaw* who was residing in the Lebaw monastery in Kungyaunggon, warmly welcomed U Pannava. A year after his arrival in Kungyangon, Lebaw *Sayadaw* and his followers placed about three hundred monasteries in Kungyangon and its environs under U Pannava's control as they respected him. When Lebaw *Sayadaw* U Ukkattha passed away in 1888, U Pannava and Lebaw *Sayadaw*'s followers had a disagreement over how to perform the funeral rites. Moreover, U Pannava introduced a new meditation method known as Catubhummika Satipatthan meditation method. Traditionalists opposed it, and disagreements arose. From this time onwards, U Pannava, disseminating a meditation method that differed from the methods followed by others, became the leader of a new sect. As he had resided at the *Hngettwin* monastery the people referred his sect as the *Hngettwin* Sect. As he preached the sermon named Catubhummika Maggin, the sect became known as Catubhummika Maggin Sect after his death.⁹⁵ Considering that he should leave the Lebaw monastery to mend fences with the followers of the late Lebaw *Sayadaw*, he built a new monastery in Kungyangon. In 1889, he moved to the newly-built monastery, which was named Parami Sankyaungdaw. In 1887-88, the sect came to be known as the *Hngettwin* Sect because U Pannava had resided in the *Hngettwin* monastery. The sect was better known by the name *Hngettwin* than by its original name Catubhummika. A foreign scholar believes that traditionalists vigorously opposed the view of the *Hngettwin* sect when it became popular.⁹⁶ The *Hngettwin Sayadaw* resided in the Parami Sankyaung only occasionally. He traveled around Lower Myanmar to propagate the views of his sect. He accepted the invitations of laypersons in Dedaye, Kyaiklat, Ma-oobin and

⁹⁴Mendelson, 1975, 107

⁹⁵Hla Paing, 1976, 74

⁹⁶Mendelson, 1975, 108

Hpyabon, and visited those areas to spread his views. He wrote a treatise entitled *Sasanalankara Patipatti*, which was published in 1890. When his books were published frequently, those who worried that his views would become popular refuted his views. The Hngettwin *Sayadaw* himself did not counter the refutations and prohibited his followers from doing so.⁹⁷ There already were two different phrases to begin one's prayers (one with the word *kan* and the other with *dvara*)⁹⁸ when the *Hngettwin Sayadaw* was spreading his views in Lower Myanmar. The *Hngettwin Sayadaw* concocted a new way of paying homage to the Buddha—to use the word *panama* instead of *kan* or *dvara* and to say *kayapanama*, *vacipanama*, *manopanama*—which would be acceptable to the followers of all sects. As he did not side either with the *kan* or with the *dvara* faction, his way of paying homage to the Buddha was accepted by both sides.⁹⁹ In this way, three different phrases to begin the prayer—(a) *kayakan*, *vacikan*, *manokan*, (b) *kayadvara*, *vacidvara*, *manodvara*, and (c) *kayapanama*, *vacipanama*, *manopanama*—came into being.

With the *Hngettwin Sayadaw* spreading his views in Lower Myanmar, the *Hngettwin* sect came into being and grew. The sect extended to Upper Myanmar. Shwebo town had the highest number of the members of the *Hngettwin* sect in Upper Myanmar. U So Gaung from Zidaw Village in Shwebo was the best-known preacher who expounded the views of the *Hngettwin* sect. The *Hngettwin* sect also had its own way of taking precepts. The members of the other three sects (Thudhamma, Shwegyin and Dvara) had to say that they undertook to observe the

⁹⁷Hla Paing, 1976, 78

⁹⁸The Myanmar traditionally said *kayakan*, *vacikan*, *manokan* in reciting the prayer that began with *okasa*. Saying that it was not in conformity with canonical texts, the Oakhpo *Sayadaw* and his followers began using the phrase *kayadvara*, *vacidvara*, *manodvara*. The Hpayagyi *Sayadaw* and Bamo *Sayadaw* agreed with them.

⁹⁹Mendelson, 1975, 51

five, eight or nine precepts, whereas those of the *Hngettwin* sect had to undertake that they would abstain from ten evil actions. This was the *Hngettwin* sect's distinctive feature.¹⁰⁰

Some views of the *Hngettwin* sect were extreme, and the majority of the people in Myanmar, who were traditionalists, did not find them acceptable. The *Hngettwin Sayadaw* put forward a five-point proposal to the Thudhamma *Sayadaws* appointed by King Mindon. In it, he suggested (1) that offering food to the Buddha only made the Buddha images dirty and amounted to encouraging rats (made rats multiply); (2) that laypersons should not undertake to observe the five precepts just before they received ordination as there was no way they could observe the five precepts strictly as laypersons; (3) that nobody who had not studied how to practice insight meditation (*vipassana*) should be ordained as a monk; (4) that monks should not own property, either individually or communally; and (5) that a monk should not reside in a single place for more than one or two years. This was a serious challenge to the Thudhamma *Sayadaws*. The *Hngettwin Sayadaw* was not only a monk venerated by King Mindon's chief queen, but also a prestigious leader of the forest monks of Sagaing. He moved to Lower Myanmar which was under British control because he was against the king and the Thudhamma *Sayadaws*.¹⁰¹ The *Hngettwin Sayadaw* died in Thaton in 1910. He was able to establish about twenty monasteries in both Upper and Lower Myanmar. His sect, however, was only 500 strong.

It can be assumed that the Shwegyin, Dvara and *Hngettwin Sayadaws* who formed new sects in the reign of King Mindon did not have good relations with the Thudhamma *Sayadaws*, who were appointed by the king. The Shwegyin *Sayadaw* alone was able to strengthen his sect in the royal capital with the king's support. The Dvara and *Hngettwin Sayadaws* had to increase their following in Lower Myanmar which, at that time, was under British control. It seems that this was

¹⁰⁰Hla Paing, 1976, 81-82

¹⁰¹Mendelson, 1975, 107

because the Thudhamma *Sayadaws* from Upper Myanmar were traditionalists, who prevented the monks of the Shwegyin, Dvara and Hngettwin sects who held reformist views from freely expressing their views, while the reformists were able to spread their views freely in Lower Myanmar.

To sum up, it is impossible to say that Buddhism in the later Konbaung period became purer or more orthodox than in the earlier period. The kings who supposed to have purified the Religion relied heavily on occultism. They made monks to participate in the affairs of the State including war preparations, even though monks should steer clear off them. As regards religious sects, the sect the king approved and venerated was always powerful. The split of the *Sangha* into *araññavasi* and *gamavasi* sprang from the differences of opinion on how to use the land donated to them. The Atin-Ayon controversy resulted from the differences in the interpretation of the rules laid down in canonical texts. The Atin-Ayon controversy was settled once and for all during this period. Furthermore, the kings suppressed those who held strange views like the Joti view. Nevertheless, the Joti view survived for years. Even in King Mindon's reign, the king had to punish U Po, a dietitian, who held Joti view. King Mindon's Dhamma-Vinaya *Ameindaw Pyandan*, which was issued with the avowed purpose of purifying the Religion, only led to arguments, disagreements and dissension within the *Sangha*. A new sect known as the Shwegyin Sect came into being with the support of the king. In Lower Myanmar, Dvara and *Hngettwin* Sects were established. The monks of these different sects did not differ from one another in discipline (*Vinaya*), robes or literature; they split only because they doubted each other's purity. Those who established new sects asserted that they were not founding new sects, but were living separately from other monks only because they differed from one another in practice and moral standards. Moreover, it is learnt that the kings supported some monks in the later Konbaung Period for political reasons.

CHAPTER FOUR

THATHANABYU THATHANAZAUNT COMMITTEE

It was necessary to propagate and safeguard the Religion for the prosperity of the Religion. This was the duty of Buddhist monks who were playing a leading role in dealing with religious affairs. They had to propagate the Religion so that the Religion would spread and protect the Religion from the threat of heretical views, which were the enemies without, and from that of shameless monks who, violating the *Vinaya* rules, were the enemies within. It was important that monks were to abide by the *Vinaya* rules in performing these duties. Therefore, the king formed the *Thathanabyu Thathanazaunt Ahpwe* (Committee for the Propagation and Protection of the Religion) with *Sayadaws* with a view to propagating and safeguarding the Religion and to making monks to observe the *Vinaya* rules.

King Badon, a famous king of the later Konbaung Period, unified the *Sangha* for the purity and perpetuation of the Buddha *Sasana* because he knew the essence of Buddhism. To strive for the prosperity of the Religion after unifying the *Sangha* and to control the monks in the kingdom, he appointed leaders of the *Sasana*, referred to as *Sangharaja* or heads of the *Sangha*. Later, they were called *rajaguru* (royal preceptors). The kings generally exerted influence over the citizens through *Sangha* organizations and religious leaders; and King Badon knew this. As he was an absolute monarch, King Badon attempted to reform the *Sangha* organizations.¹

When he began the construction of the golden palace and the royal city of Amarapura on 14 January 1783, King Badon marked off the ground plans of four

¹U Aung Than, "Relation Between the *Sangha* and State and Laity," *JBR*, Vol. XLVIII, part.i, 1965, p. 6 (Henceforth: Aung Than, 1965)

monasteries; these monasteries were donated to four eminent *sayadaws*, who also received the Mahadhammarajadhiraja titles. The Aungmye Bonkyaw, Bontha Weyan, Mingalar Weyan and Mingala Sanlut monasteries were donated to Min-O, Manle, Sonda and Minywa *Sayadaws*, respectively. Then, he named these four *Sayadaws* as *thathanabaing* and made them purify and promote the *Sasana*.² These *thathanabaings* seemed to have their own jurisdictions. A royal order issued on 30 May 1783 reads:

The four *thathanadein Sayadaws* (i.e. the *Sayadaws* who were charged with protecting the *Sasana*) were to decide religious disputes in their jurisdictions as demarcated above. Nobody was to infringe on another's jurisdiction. Nobody was to decide [a dispute] in another's jurisdiction. If (a *Sayadaw*) had sent a letter to someone in another's jurisdiction, he was to cancel his letter. If (a *Sayadaw*) was unable to solve a problem, (all) the *Sayadaws* were to meet in the library to decide the matter.³

Although he had appointed four *Sayadaws* as the leaders of the *Sangha*, King Badon thought that those *Sayadaws* would not be able to purify the religion, that they would not be able to avoid the mistakes that resulted from human fallibility and that they might not be able to manage the religious affairs satisfactorily as they were too old.⁴ Therefore, he appointed eight more monks as *thathanabaings*.⁵ Thus, the twelve-member committee for the propagation of the *Sasana* came into being. The twelve *Sayadaws* were: 1) Min-O *Sayadaw* Gunabhilankarasaddhamma Maharajadhirajaguru; 2) Manle *Sayadaw*

²Mahadhammathingyan, 1956, 197

³Than Tun, 1986, 252

⁴U Ba Than, *Dhammopadetha Kyan* (Treatise on Miscellaneous Dhamma), Yangon, Yan Aung Press, 1961, p. j (Henceforth: Ba Than, 1961)

⁵Mahadhammathingyan, 1956, 198-99

Gunamunindadhipati Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru; 3) Sonda *Sayadaw* Tipitakasaddhammasami Maharajadhirajaguru; 4) Minywa *Sayadaw* Ñanajambudipa Anantadhaja Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru; 5) Shwedaung *Sayadaw* Kavindabhisaddhamma; 6) Bagaya *Sayadaw* Tipatakalankara Siridhaja Mahadhammarajaguru; 7) Gado *Sayadaw* Cakkibhidhaja Mahadhammarajaguru; 8) Medi *Sayadaw* Paramasirivamsadhaja Mahadhammarajaguru; 9) Mondaw *Sayadaw* Janindabhipavara Mahadhammarajaguru; 10) Salin *Sayadaw* Mahañanabhidhaja Mahadhammarajaguru; 11) Sinda *Sayadaw* Ñanabhilankarabhisadhammarajaguru; and 12) Maungdaung *Sayadaw* Ñanabhivamsa Dhammasenapati Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru.⁶ These *sayadaws* had to recite and study the *Vinaya* texts and give guidance to their pupils. Of the twelve *Sayadaws*, the Manle *Sayadaw* probably was the oldest and most senior. Therefore, the king issued an edict on 27 June 1786 to authorize the Manle *Sayadaw* to manage the religious affairs as the head of the Committee for the Propagation of the *Sasana*:

Sayadaw Gunamunindabhisaddhammadhaja Maharajadhirajaguru is entrusted with choosing *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* from among the *taik-oks*, monks and novices who are residing in the golden city and the kingdom and managing religious affairs . . . Twelve *rajaguru sayadaws* (royal preceptors) are charged with hearing and deciding disputes in accordance with *Vinaya* rules and following correct procedure. They are to decide monastic disputes impartially and after deliberating on them in the Thudhamma Hall. They are to present the record of the trial and their decision for each dispute to the *sayadawgyi* (i.e. *Sayadaw* Gunamunindabhisaddhammadhaja Maharajadhirajaguru), whose decision is to be final. The *Sayadawgyi* is to listen to the twelve *Sayadaws* and decide whether

⁶Maungdaung, 2007, 10-11

(their decision) is acceptable or not. If there is a religious dispute they must deliberate on, they are to order the *mahadanwun* to convene a committee meeting.⁷

After the twelve *sayadaws* were entrusted with deciding religious disputes in the reign of King Badon, a *tabaung* (i.e. a popular phrase which was interpreted as a prophecy) circulated in the royal city of Amarapura. It was a *tabaung* connected with the Religion. It runs:

The shaved men or the monks, ate pickled tea, ie they tried cases which were not within their jurisdiction. This created a state of unrest in the country. If these powerful shaven heads continued to abuse their power as the thunderbolt had been misused, the Religion which was shining like the sun and moon would soon be eclipsed. The leader of this unruly shaven heads should be caged as a wild animal and sent downstream on a boat. Henceforth the Religion became bright again.⁸

It meant that the monks, being influenced by four types of prejudice (i.e. prejudice based on 1) likes and desires, 2) dislikes and anger, 3) delusion, and 4) fear), would decide legal cases involving laypersons unjustly, and this would lead to civil unrest. Then, laypersons would lose their faith in the monks and the Religion would decline. The monks who were responsible would be expelled from the royal capital, and the Religion would thrive only when impure monks were purged from it.⁹ These *tabaungs* caused chaos in the *Sasana*, and King Badon was unhappy.

⁷ Than Tun, 1986, 501-02

⁸ Than Tun, "The Influence of Occultism in Myanmar History With Special Reference to Bodawhpaya's Reign (1752-1819)", pp. 75-104, *Myanmar Htwe Htwe Ya Ya Thamaing* (A Miscellany of Myanmar History), Yangon, Moe Offset, March 2005, p. 84 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 2005)

⁹Aung, 1954, 54

However, he was able to scotch this *tabaung* and to solve a religious dispute. During King Badon's reign, monks were made to debate the *Atin-Ayon* issue, and the *Atin* faction, led by *Atula Sayadaw*, lost. King Badon, who really liked the above-mentioned *tabaung*, floated U Pan Htwe (formerly known as *Atulaya Sayadaw*), who had been stripped naked and caged, down the *Ayeyarwady* river to *Thayet Town*.¹⁰ Therefore, he needed to appoint another *thathanabyu thathanazaunt*. At that time, another *tabaung* surfaced. With regard to this *tabaung*, it is said that *Atwinwun U Paw Oo*, who held *Yaw Town* in fief, together with *Yudawmu Myinhmu U Thabin* and *Kyauksauk Myinhmu U Hpywe*, while he was on his way to the *Byedaik* to conduct a survey, passed by a jail and saw two children singing and dancing. The *tabaung* they were singing runs:

This *tabaung* means:

The *Pitaka* was not fully understood. May the king who was born on Monday be able to diffuse the required knowledge through the *Monthon Charato* who was born on Tuesday. Thus the thirst for knowledge would be quenched.¹¹

The *ayudawmingalar* (court augur) told King Badon that there appeared a *tabaung* that a hero of the Religion who would end the religious dispute and who would shine like the sun in using his intellect in various ways to safeguard the *Sasana*, had emerged. When King Badon asked him to interpret the *tabaung*, he explained: the phrase *parannawa masontheywe* meant "not know all the *Tipitaka* texts yet;" *maungdaunghkwetkale* stood for "the *Madaung Sayadaw* who was still young;" and *noyipebame mahkweye* meant that "the people were saying that they would like to suck milk from the king who was like their parent;" *zunbanko pansinyahma nowadawme* meant that "they would be satiated with the milk of

¹⁰Than Tun, 2005, 85

¹¹Aung, 1954, 68

dhamma only if the youthful Maungdaung *Sayadaw*, who was born on Tuesday, was named *thathanabaing*;" and *nochoayekode taikkywekwe nomyetngedo mazegyaung hnyuthkasutaung* meant that "the people prayed that they, who had been deprived of milk, would be able to drink the milk of knowledge from the youthful Maungdaung *Sayadaw*."

Then, King Badon invited monks and expressed his desire for the unification of the members of the Culaganthi faction and other monks, for the prosperity and purity of the *Sangha* and for the welfare of the *Sangha* and informed them that he was appointing Maungdaung *Sayadaw* as the sole *thathanabaing* to safeguard the *Sasana*.¹² Thus, thinking that disputes were not settled expeditiously as he wished when twelve *sayadaws* were charged with solving them because they had different opinions as they were ordinary human beings.¹³ In order that religious disputes would be decided in accordance with the *Vinaya* texts, he issued an order on 19 March 1787 to the following effect:

The Great King, who was the Supporter of the Religion, Lord of White Elephants and who was of great merit, ordered:

I will make *Sayadaw* Ñanabhivamsadhammasenapati Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru manage the religious affairs and, following correct procedure (lit. procedure laid down in the *Vinaya* rules), control the monks in the Golden City and the kingdom. I am appointing him as *thathanabyu*. *Sayadaw* Ñanabhivamsadhammasenapati Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru is to decide all the matters concerning the Religion. He is to order the *mahadanwun* to subpoena people, and the *mahadanwun*, in turn, is to subpoena people through the *myozas* and

¹²Ba Than, 1961, j-jh

¹³Mahadhammathingyan, 1956, 206

ywazas in the towns and villages after submitting a list to the *Hluttaw* and without causing them to incur expenses.¹⁴

This order was presented to the Maungdaung *Thathanabaing* in a formal ceremony held in the Thudhamma hall and attended by monks and *atwin* and *apyin thenapatis*. This was the custom followed in appointing *thathanabaings*.¹⁵ It seems that King Badon regarded Maungdaung *Sayadaw* as the most suitable person for the position of *thathanabaing*. He also seemed to believe that monks had to be instructed by the Buddha, people had to be ordered by the king and Religion had to be safeguarded through Maungdaung *Sayadaw*. It can be assumed that King Badon named Maungdaung *Sayadaw* as *thathanabaing* not because of the *tabaung*, but because of his respect to the latter. Maungdaung *Sayadaw* was a monk well-versed in the scriptural texts and respected by monks and was an expert on occult arts. Soon after he came to the throne, King Badon asked, "Where is the novice from Maungdaung who is supposed to be well-versed in the scriptural texts?" When the officials answered that the novice was in Maungdaung, the king ordered them to bring him to the capital right away; they told him that they would ask Minkyaw Shwetaung, the governor of Southern *Taik*, to bring the novice. The *hluttaw* had to order Minkyaw Shwetaung repeatedly because the novice did not come to the city for a long time. Later, Shin Ñana, the learned novice from Maungdaung who had put in seven *vassas* as a novice, was brought from Maungdaung Village, and the Twinthin *Taik* monastery the monastery donated by the governor of Twinthin *Taik* was donated to him. The king conferred on him the title ÑanabhiSasanadhaja Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru and made him his preceptor.¹⁶ In addition, it was believed that as King Badon who was born

¹⁴Than Tun, 1986, 521

¹⁵Tin, 1970, 253

¹⁶Mahadhammathingyan, 1956, 199-200

Monday was unable to acquire knowledge to his heart's content, Maungdaung *Sayadaw* who was born on Tuesday would help him; and this would quench King Badon's thirst for knowledge. The king therefore appointed Maungdaung *Sayadaw* as *thathanabaing*.¹⁷ Maungdaung *Sayadaw* took a vow before the Buddha image in the central monastery:

"I will act in conformity with *dhamma* in carrying out any task concerning the Religion, without being prejudiced by *chanda* (likes and desires), *dosa* (dislikes and anger), *baya* (fear), or *moha* (delusion). I would rather die than disregard the *dhamma*. Even if the king, the Supporter of the Religion, gave explicit instructions, I will do what is right. I will not disregard the *dhamma* and follow (those instructions). If I do not like (the instructions), I will keep silent.

Then he performed his duties concerning the Religion well.¹⁸ Maungdaung *Sayadaw* received four titles. Before he became *thathanabaing*, he received the title ÑānabhiSasanavaja Mahadhammarajaguru when a teaching monastery which stood to the northwest of Modi monastery in Ratanapura (Awa) was offered to him as his temporary residence. Later, when he was appointed as the sole *thathanabaing* and the Asokaramabonkyaw monastery was donated to him, he received the title Ñānabhivamsadhammasenapati Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru. He received his third title, Ñānabhivamsadhammasenapati Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru, when the Northern Queen donated a monastery to him. He earned his fourth title, Ñānabhivamsadhammasenapati Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru, when the Southern Queen donated the Aungmyebonkyaw monastery to him. Thus, he received four titles: a minor title and three major titles. After King Badon appointed him *thathanabaing*, the

¹⁷Than Tun, 2005, 85

¹⁸Maungdaung, 1941, 310-11

Maungdaung *Sayadaw* carried out the tasks concerning the religion and taught his pupils day and night. He instructed monks to study the *Ubhto Vibhanga*.¹⁹

The Myanmar kings were connected with religious affairs. To make efforts for the purification, perpetuation and propagation of the *Sasana* was an important duty of the Myanmar kings. King Badon not only promoted and safeguarded the three *Sasanas*, but also propagated the *Sasana*. Former kings usually sent missionaries to the localities in which Religion did not prosper because of the decline of *pariyatti*, *patipatti* and *pativedha*. Therefore, King Badon asked the Maungdaung *Sayadaw* whether he should sent brave monks, together with scriptural texts, as missionaries to the towns and villages in the remote areas where Religion did not flourish. The Maungdaung *Sayadaw* replied that it was in accordance with the Buddha's wish as the king would be striving for the long endurance of the *Sasana*, and pointed out that the Buddha Himself, soon after he attained Enlightenment, had sent missionaries at the end of the lent.²⁰

King Badon issued an edict to send missionaries to the localities in which the Religion had waned:

In accordance with the custom of my forefathers, the kings who supported the Religion, I, the Lord of Water and Land, myself will march to the towns and villages in the outlying areas where the Religion has not flourished yet and annex them so that the people there would profess the same Religion. On hearing this, the *sayadaw*, as he has an obligation to me who is his devotee, informed me in writing that the *Sasana* should be safeguarded and promoted. In accordance with the advice in the *Sayadaw's* homily, I will promote the *Sasana*.²¹

¹⁹Maungdaung, 2007, 10 (Introduction)

²⁰Maungdaung, 2007, 37-38

²¹Maungdaung, 2007, 115

This order indicates that to propagate the *Sasana* was not the only reason King Badon sent missionaries. It is learnt that the Myanmar Kings held that their faith was to be followed by the people in all the towns and villages in the satellite states. King Badon sent missionaries in 1785 to various localities in which Buddhism was not well-established. He sent altogether 264 missionaries and 56 sets of the Tipitaka to fifty-six towns and *hkayaings*—six missionary monks and a copy each of the Abhidhamma, Sutta and *Vinaya Pitakas* to each locality. The localities were: Kaingma, Kyaingyon, Mainglyin and Maingnyaung towns in Videha Taing, Kyaington Hkemarathta Taing, Kyaing The in Haribonza Taing, Kyaing Taung, Theindi, Legya, Mainggon, Taungpaing, Maingkaing, Naungmun, Nyaung Shwe, Yauksauk, Mainglon, Thibaw, Saga, Thikyit, Tabet, Kyaing Hkan, Helon, Mone and Maingpan towns in Kamboja Taing, Mogaung town in Zawtinagara Taing, Moemeit, Bamaw and Kaungton towns in Seint Taing, Thaungthut and Hkaungton towns in Thunaparanta Taing, Kale town in Yonaka Taing, Pathein, Mottama, Dawe and Myeit towns in Raminnya Taing, and Dinnyawadi, Rammawadi, Megawadi and Dwarawadi in Rakhine in the Mahavihika Taing.²²

It is learnt from the document recording the establishment of a town that in sending missionaries to various towns and *hkayaings*, King Badon made well-intentioned efforts for the propagation of the *Sasana*. The document runs:

For the promotion of the *Sasana* and in accordance with the custom of my forefathers, the kings who supported the Religion and sent missionaries only to the towns and villages in the outlying areas where the Religion was not well-established, I will send missionaries who are courageous and who spoke the language used in those areas with scriptural texts so that they will preach in accordance with the scriptural texts and the Religion would prospered. Manle,

²²Maung Maung Tin, 2004b, 32, 33, 34

Maungdaung and Sonda *Sayadaws* are to choose courageous and learned monks and to send them (to the outlying areas).²³

Then, monks who had been selected from among those residing in the kingdom were invited. Maungdaung *Sayadaw* selected two hundred and fifty courageous monks from among the monks who came, and said: "Of the three *pitakas*, the *Vinaya pitaka* serves as the foundation of the *Sasana*; a monk should live on his own only if he meet the required conditions to live independently of a teacher; monks must act in conformity with [the rules] laid down in the *Vinaya* texts." Thinking that he would make them memorize the Ubhato Vibhanga, Parajika-kanda and Pacittiya and, when they had memorized the last text, make them recite the texts, he made them memorize and recite the Ubhato Vibhanga in the Thudhamma hall. Those who could not commit the Ubhato Vibhanga to memory had to memorize the two Patimokkha texts (i.e. Bhikkhu- and Bhikkhuni-Patimokkha), the Khuddasikkha and the Catubhanavara, and recite them in the Thudhamma hall. Novices were first made to study how to pronounce the words correctly. Then, they had to learn the ten precepts novices must observe, *linga* (the characteristics of novices), *danda* (punishments), *sekhiya* (training rules) and *khandakawat* (the duties as spelled out in the Khandhaka), and to recite them from memory in the Thudhamma hall. Only those who had committed the Ubhato Vibhanga to memory were sent to various towns and villages to preach to the people so that the Religion would spread throughout the kingdom.²⁴

During the reign of King Badon, forty-two *sayadaws* who held titles, together with their 152 followers, were sent to forty-two towns to propagate Buddhism. They were also given forty-two sets of the three *Pitakas*: *Vinaya*, *Sutta*

²³"*Amarapura Myoti Sadan*" (A Treatise on the Foundation of the City of Amarapura), *palm-leaf MS*, no. 1790, ka-na:, Mandalay University Library, p. ko. (Henceforth: *Amarapura Myoti Sadan*)

²⁴Medi *Sayadaw*, 1967, 160

and *Abhidhamma*.²⁵ The sources do not agree as to the number of missionaries and that of the towns to which they were sent.²⁶ At that time, the Religion was on the wane in Ketumati (Taungoo) and there were the dregs of the *Sasana* who posed a threat to the *Sasana*; monks were wearing hats, binding their chests, placing their upper robes draped over their left shoulders in entering villages, engaging in trade, practicing medicine and astrology, making their living as gardeners, and whiling away their time without studying the scriptures and practicing meditation.

For choosing a monk to be sent to Taungoo as a missionary to purge the Religion of impurities in Taungoo, Maungdaung *Sayadaw* sent an epistle to King Badon:

Among the twelve *sayadaws* of the group of *vinayadharas* (i.e. the monks who had committed the *Vinaya Pitaka* to memory) . . ., Shin Paramavamsabhida—*haja*—who is residing in the same monastery with Shin Pavaramanju, a pupil of Yemein Shin Gunasiri who belongs to the line of Shin Mahakassapa—is competent, virtuous and is of unimpeachable integrity. He is also a *vinayadhara* and preaches sermons using polite words. His is the only person suitable (for the task).

Then, the king issued an Order to the following effect:

The city of Ketumati (Taungoo) was a city in which old kings had reigned. I named my son Thadodhammayaza as its governor. The *Sangha* there has fragmented into different sects, and monks there are performing ecclesiastical rites separately from one another. The Religion

²⁵Maungdaung, 2007, 473-74

²⁶ It is stated in the U Maung Maung Tin's *Konbaungzet Mahayazawindawgyi* (vol. 2) that two hundred and forty six monks were sent with fifty six sets of the *Tipitaka* to 56 towns, while the *Amedawhpye* gives the number of towns, sets of *Tipitaka* and monks as 42, 42 and 194, respectively.

does not prosper, but has become impure. Ven. Paramasirivamsa is to assume the title Paramasirivamsabhidhaja Mahadhammarajaguru and go there to promote the *Sasana*, and my son, the governor of Taungoo, is to venerate him.

Shin Indalanka, Shin Khemacara, Shin Ñanavara, Shin Jinalankaradhaja, Shin Medha, Shin Asabha, Shin Sirimanju, Shin Viharambha, and Shin Lankara, who were well versed in the five texts of the Vinaya Pitaka and canonical texts and commentaries, were chosen to accompany *Sayadaw* Paramasirivamsabhidhaja Mahadhammarajaguru. They, with thirty seven novices, went to Taungoo to propagate the Religion.²⁷ Medi *Sayadaw*, who held the title Paramasirivamsabhidhaja Mahadhammarajaguru, was well-versed in the canonical texts. He was one of the seven monks who represented the *Ayon* faction when the *Atin-Ayon* issue was debated during the reign of King Singu and one of the twelve *thathanabyu sayadaws* appointed in King Badon's reign.²⁸ At the time when the monks headed by Medi *Sayadaw* went to Taungoo to promote the *Sasana*, the *Sangha* in Taungoo was split into different factions: the faction of the *gamavasins* who wore hats, the faction of monks who did not wear hats and who placed their upper robes on their left shoulders, and the *Ayon* faction. When Medi *Sayadaw* discussed with senior monks, the learned monks requested him:

If the monks who desires to practice the *dhamma* are virtuous and are willing to voluntarily abandon their property including their monasteries, change their robes and receive reordination, expiating their expiable offences, both serious and minor, and submit themselves to your guidance, defer making a decision; reexamine them to dispel suspicions among the monks who has come (to Taungoo) with you. Then, build a

²⁷Medi *Sayadaw*, 1967, 161-62

²⁸Mahadhammathingyan, 1956, 196

hall on the island in the Paunlaung River and make them expiate their sins and re-ordain them there.

Meanwhile, more than two or three hundred monks from Taungoo and rural areas, fearing the wrath of the king, fled. Some monks left the Order because they were unable to practice the *dhamma*. The *Thathanabyu Sayadaw* (i.e. Medi *Sayadaw*) said: "Let only the monks who are willingly practicing the correct practice and who are virtuous remain. Quantity does not really count. What really matters is that the monks are virtuous." He allowed his followers to accept the monks who wanted to take their guidance only if they are virtuous. The people of the town requested (Medi *Sayadaw*): "Because the *Sangha* is split into three factions, making donations (to monks) will not benefit us. Let only those who are worthy remain in the *Sasana*, and make those who are not worthy leave the Order." Then, Ashin Nandamala and ten monks and novices from Okhpo came, saying that they wanted to surrender their property including monasteries, expiate their serious and minor offences, and take the *Sayadaw's* guidance, and that monks would study the two Patimokkha texts and the Khuddasikkha and novices would study *linga* (the characteristics of novices), *danda* (punishments), *sekhiya* (training rules) and *khandakawat* (the duties as spelled out in the Khandhaka).²⁹

The *Thathanabyu Sayadaw*, although he believed the words of Ashin Nandamala and ten monks and novices from Okhpo and believed that they were virtuous, sent them with the *mahadansaye* to Ven. Jinalankaradhaja of Lebow Zetawun monastery to submit to examination. Ven. Jinalankaradhaja asked them to which of the three factions—*Ayon*, *Atin* and *Gamavasi* factions—they belonged and to which lineage of teachers they belonged, and asked the names of the *sima* in which they were ordained, of their mentors and of the monks who recited the *kammavaca* (the *Pali* formula recited at the performance of ecclesiastical acts like

²⁹Medi *Sayadaw*, 1966, 171

ordination), their age, the number of *vassas* they had spent and their birth dates. Then, he inquired whether they were born in Tangoo, whether they engaged in trade, cultivated crops, etc. while they were residing in Taungoo. He sent his followers to monks of the three factions to inquire whether the statements made by Ashin Nandamala and his followers were true. Only when the monks of the three factions bore out on their statements, the *Thathanabyu Sayadaw* let the statements to be read out in the Thudhamma Hall. Then, he made them wear new robes and receive reordination in the Nadi Sima in the Paunglaung River, and made Ashin Nandamala, five other monks and five novices to take the guidance of a teacher. Between May and July 1783, twenty one abbots and their pupils came voluntarily to receive reordination like Ashin Nandamala.³⁰ They also were examined before they were allowed to take the guidance of a teacher. The number of monks in the monastery in which the *Thathanabyu Sayadaw* resided increased to three hundred and seventy five in 1789, six years after the *sayadaw* arrived in Taungoo.³¹ The number of monks was low presumably because the *Thathanabyu Sayadaw* reordained the monks and placed them under the guidance of a teacher only after questioning them repeatedly and only when he was satisfied with their answers.

King Badon not only strove for the propagation of the Religion in the kingdom, but also established contacts with Srilinka, a country in which Buddhism flourished, for religious purposes. In 1789, he made a valuer named Thirisandararat visit Srilinka to find out whether the Sinhalese king and his preceptor, and monks and novices in Srilinka behaved in accordance with *Vinaya* texts. The ministers of the Sinhalese king warmly welcomed Thirisandararat and sent a novice named Varakalante to Myanmar. They sent a message with him to inform the Myanmar

³⁰Medi *Sayadaw*, 1966, 174

³¹Medi *Sayadaw* 1966, 176

king that there were no scriptural texts in Srilinka, that even the Mahazedi did not have a finial and that the Religion was on the wane in Srilinka.³² Maungdaung *Sayadaw* sent an epistle to the king, advising him to teach the scriptures to the novice who came from Srilinka and to ordain him as a monk and to send the *sayadaw* himself to Srilinka with a full set of the *Tipitaka* in Sinhalese language to propagate Buddhism. At the time when King Badon became king, Buddhism was on the wane in Srilinka, over which European imperialists—the Dutch and the British—wielded power. In 1800, six novices—Ammagahatissa, Mahadampa, Kocchagodha, Brahmanavatta, Bogahavatta and Vaturagamma—brought ten genuine relics from Srilinka to Amarapura. They were made to receive ordination in the Singyoshwegu Sima with the Most Venerable Ñanabhivamsadhammasenapati, the Supreme Patriarch, as their mentor and with the abbots of the Myauknankyaung, Shweyezaung and Pyatthatkyaung taking turns to recite the *kammavaca*. A layperson named Narada also was ordained as a novice. Additionally many monks who came from Srilinka were reordained, and novices were ordained into monkhood. Laypersons were ordained as novices. King Badon sent Sinhalese monks as missionaries to Srilinka and sent a message, explaining how to promote the *Sasana*, to King Rajadhirajasiha of Srilinka with them.³³

On 29 July 1812, six monks and four novices, including Ashin Bhogtissa, Ashin Pyadassi, Ashin Candasara, and a minister by the name of Dhammadhajapandita from Srilinka came to King Badon with presents—twenty two relics, two golden images and an ivory image of the Buddha and a bo tree—and a message on the condition of the Religion in Srilinka. The message reads:

³²Maungdaung, 2007, 325

³³Mahadhammathingyan, 1956, 203-04

Buddhism flourished in Ceylon till the reign of King Sirirajadhiraja. When King Sirirajadhiraja was no more, as he did not have sons or grandsons, Sirivikkhamarajasiha, who was not of royal lineage, was enthroned. This [new] king took a Tamil lady as queen. He professed the Religion only for about two or three months after he became king. Later, he neglected his duties towards the pagodas and monks and stopped producing scriptural texts. He ignored monks' and ministers' repeated bidding and behaved like the Tamils, who were heretics. The general, ministers and monks discussed the matter, and concluded, "In Amarapura, Religion prospers and there are complete sets of the Buddhist Canon. If we present the island of Ceylon to King Badon, Religion will prosper [in Ceylon] and the people—monks as well as laypersons—will benefit." Therefore, we will serve you. Appoint someone who will be able to promote the Religion in Ceylon as *raja* (governor) to rule Ceylon.³⁴

Thus, they asked King Badon to come and annex Srilinka on the pretext of protecting the *Sasana*. Concerning this message, King Badon issued an edict:

Minister Paramarajagurudhammadvajapandita from Ceylon has entreated me to promote and safeguard the *Sasana* in the island of Ceylon where Buddhism is on the wane. Religious practices in the Golden City and the kingdom are not in conformity with the Suttanta (*Pitaka*), which was expounded by the Buddha. Ask the minister how [the monks] in Ceylon are behaving, whether their practices are wrong, whether they want me to safeguard the *Sasana* in conformity with the Suttanta, etc. and report to me.³⁵

³⁴Maung Maung Tin, *2004b*, 139-40

³⁵Than Tun, *1988*, 294

Instead, he gave priority to the propagation of the Religion. Concerning the condition of the Religion in the island of Srilanka, King Badon declared:

If I send a king designate to the island of Sri Lanka as requested in the message from the island of Sri Lanka, the Sri Lankan king and his relatives will suffer. However, one should give attention to the statement that the Religion is on the decline. Therefore, I will issue an order to the person who is reigning in Sri Lanka at present to promote and safeguard the *Sasana* as King Devanampiyatissa had done, since Sri Lanka is the locus of Buddhism. As there is no complete set of the Canon in Sri Lanka because of the disturbances caused by the heretics, I will give a complete set of the Canon—Sutta, Abhidhamma and *Vinaya Pitakas*. If, in the future, my order is neglected and the Religion is on the wane, I shall not turn a blind eye to it because it concerns the Religion. I will punish all the heretics like my ancestor King Siridhammasoka had done and safeguard and promote the Religion so that it will thrive.

Saying this, he gave a complete set of the canonical texts—Suttanta, *Vinaya* and Abhidhamma Pitakas—to Ashin Piyadassi, Ashin Candasara and the minister named Dhammadhajapandita who came from Srilanka and sent them on board a ship to Srilanka from Hanthawady port.³⁶ Thus, it seems that King Badon sent missionaries to Sri Lanka not because he desired to expand his kingdom, but just because he wanted to be renowned as a king who had supported the Religion.

The monks of the Amarapura Sect in Srilanka were descendants of the Thathanabaing from Maungdaung. King Badon not only sent missionaries to various localities for the propagation and promotion of the *Sasana* in the localities in which the *Sasana* was not well-established, but also sent envoys to Majjhima Taing (Middle Region) in India to obtain more scriptural texts, which were of vital importance for the wellbeing of the *Sasana* in Myanmar. On 12 February 1807,

³⁶Maung Maung Tin, 2004b, 140

Shwetaung Thagathu and Shwetaung Thirisithu, who were in the king's pay, were sent to the sixteen states in the Middle Region to obtain scriptural and secular texts.³⁷

They arrived back on 21 February 1808 and brought back eight medical treatises with them. Another group of officers was sent to get more treatises in 1809. Shwetaung Thagathu, Zeyakyawthu, Zeyakyawhtin and Zeyakyawswa were included in this group. They returned on 18 May 1810. They got eight treatises: treatises on oneirocriticism, medicine, works on the distinctive marks on elephants, on augury and astrology. The last recorded group of officers sent to get treatises left Amarapura on 1 May 1815 and it included Nemyo Minhlakyaw and Pyanchi Zeyanawrahta. They arrived back in Amarapura on 4 September 1819.³⁸ It seems that the Myanmars felt inspired to learn the occult arts after the arrival of Brahmins and treatises on occult arts from India.

If the monks residing in the monasteries in and around the royal capital were violating *Vinaya* rules, the *mahadanwun*, who was concerned with religious affairs, had to catch them and take them to the *adhipati sayadaws*. Moreover, the *mahadanwun* had to draft letters for the *thathanabaing* whenever necessary, relay the messages from the court and the *hluttaw* to the *thathanabyu sayadaw*, control the *athi taing* (service and dues units) of religious establishments, inform the *hluttaw* and summon people from the villages in the outlying areas if ordered by the *thathanabyu sayadaw*. Moreover, he had to appoint guardians and watchmen and ensure that there would be no disputes over the ownership of slaves and land owned by monasteries.³⁹ King Badon first appointed U Tun Nyo, Governor of Twinthin Taik, as *mahadanwun*. Later, Bayanandathu replaced U Tun Nyo as

³⁷Maung Maung Tin, 2004b, 121

³⁸Than Tun, 2005, 61-62

³⁹U Maung Maung Tin, *Shwenanthon Vohara Abhidhan* (A Dictionary of Court Language), Yangon, Yarbye Press, 2005, p. 183 (Henceforth: Maung Maung Tin, 2005)

mahadanwun. When Bayanandathu passed away, King Badon asked the *thathanabaing* to recommend someone for the post; the *thathanabaing* informed the king writing that he would recommend Nga Shanbauk, the *mahadansaye* for the post, and the king appointed Nga Shanbauk as *mahadanwun*.⁴⁰ Therefore, it seems that the *thathanabaing*'s wish was important in choosing someone as *mahadanwun*. Concerning the appointment of a *mahadanwun*, it is stated in a document as follows:

Great King, who was of great merit, who was Lord of Water and Land, of *Saddan* Elephant and White Elephants and of a Powerful Weapons, orders: "Bayanandathu is appointed as *mahadanwun*. I am appointing him as *mahadanwun* because I believe he would be grateful and loyal to me, would work hard and with honesty and would faithfully discharge whatever tasks assigned to him in the future too.

As regards the position of *mahadanwun*, kings like me and the successive kings before me have made donations of land to pagodas and monasteries, recording their boundaries in inscriptions, so that the Religion may shine out and last for five thousand years. He is responsible to ensure that the slaves and lands donated to monasteries and pagodas will not be mixed up with crown lands and the lands of the service men. The *mahadansaye* and *kyaungsaye* are to make a list of the land and slaves of the pagodas and monasteries, and of the laypersons in the monasteries. They are to strictly segregate the slaves of pagodas and monasteries from service men who lived on crown lands. Do not let anyone who had been donated to a pagoda or a monastery wangle their way into service units by asking the *acukaing* and *acuye* to enter their names in the lists (of service men) with a view to bettering their position. Every (slave) who are serving (as service men) are to be made to leave (the service units) and to be interrogated. They are to be made to serve the pagodas and monasteries they were donated to. The *mahadanwun* is

⁴⁰Maungdaung, 2007, 229-30

to keep these instructions in mind and to be impartial and honest in discharging his duties.⁴¹

The officers called *wutmyewuns* (officers of glebe land) had to take orders from the *thathanabaing* if there was one, or from the Thudhamma *Sayadaws* and officers from the Department of Religious Education if there was no *thathanabaing*. They were responsible to manage religious lands: lands donated to the pagodas and temples, to the *Tipitaka* and to monks. They had to look after the lands donated a long time ago, and manage the revenues from newly-donated lands. They also had to control the slaves donated to the Three Jewels. Concerning *peloatmyingaing* (the workers who had to prepare palm leaves for writing and score out lines on them), *parabaik ahpyu-anet* (makers of white and black *parabaiks*), pagoda slaves, *Pitaka* slaves and monastery slaves, the *wutmyewun* was responsible to keep old records, to move them to a new locality, to make new entries, and to allocate jobs among the workers.⁴² Furthermore, *wutmyewun* and *wutmyesaye* (clerk to *wutmyewun*) were responsible to collect revenues from the land donated to pagodas and monasteries and, after informing the *thathanabyu sayadaw*, were to deposit the revenues in the *Kathaungmyaung Taik* (national treasury in which revenues from glebe lands were deposited) so that the revenues would be kept separately from crown revenues.⁴³

The kings either appointed a single *thathanabyu sayadaw* or formed the *Thathanazaunt* Committee with several *thathanabyu sayadaws* to head the Buddhist *Sangha* in Myanmar. Under the *thathanabyu sayadaws* were the Thudhamma *Sayadaws* who, in turn, were assisted by *anuviccaka* (investigators) and *htanagyoat sayadaws*. *Taik-choat* (abbot of a monastery complex), *taik-oat*

⁴¹Maung Maung Tin, 2005, 184-85

⁴²Tin, 1970, 216

⁴³Maung Maung Tin, 2005, 185

(assistant to a *taik-choat*), *taik-kyat* (assistant to a *taik-oat*) and *cacha sayadaws* (lecturers) were appointed in the monasteries in the royal capital and *gaing-gyokes* (head monk of a Buddhist sect), *gaing-oats* (head monk of a local Buddhist fraternity) and *gaing-dauks* (assistants to *gaing-oats*) were appointed in other towns and villages. These leaders were answerable to the *thathanabyu Sayadaw*. The Supreme Patriarch, who was referred to as *thathanayu sayadaw* and who was the head of the *Thathanazaunt* Committee, was appointed by the king. During the reign of King Badon, a committee of *thathanabyu sayadaws* was formed.⁴⁴ A single *thathanabyu sayadaw* was appointed in the reign of King Mindon, who named Maungdaung *Sayadaw* U Ñeyya in April 1853 as *thathanabyu* with the title Ñeyyadhammabhimunivarañanakattisiridhahadhammasenapati Mahadhammarajadhiraajaguru.⁴⁵ King Thibaw, however, appointed a *thathanabaing* for every sect. The Shwegyin *Sayadaw* and his followers, enjoying royal patronage, had become like a separate sect since King Mindon's reign. When the Supreme Patriarch U Ñeyya passed away on 27 January 1866,⁴⁶ King Mindon had difficulty choosing a new supreme patriarch. He desired to name the Shwegyin *Sayadaw*, whom he highly respected, as *thathanabaing*. The Chief Queen, however, preferred to appoint a Thudhamma *Sayadaw* as *thathanabaing*. Therefore, no *thathanabaing* was appointed between 1866 and 1883. It seems that King Thibaw, however, chose a *thathanabaing* without giving much thought. In February 1883, King Thibaw appointed Taungdaw *Sayadaw* U Mala as head of the Thudhamma Sect and conferred the title Malalankara *Sasanadhammasenapatidhaja*

⁴⁴Mahadhammathingyan, 1956, 204

⁴⁵(a) “*Thathanabyu Ameindaw*” (1853) (A Royal Order Concerning the Promotion of the *Sasana* (1853)), *Parabaik* MS, no. 614, National Library, Yangon (Henceforth: *Thathanabyu Ameindaw*)

(b) Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 116

⁴⁶ Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 228

Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru on him, and named Shwegyin *Sayadaw* U Jagara as the head of the Shwegyin Sect and presented him with the title Jagarabhidhaja *Sasanapaladhammasenapati* Mahadhammarajadhirajaguru.⁴⁷ Thus, Thibaw appointed a *thathanabaing* for each of the two sects.

A *thathanabaing* must be well-versed in the three *Pitakas*, must be able to promote the *Sasana* and must be desirous of good conduct and anxious to observe religious rules. Although Taungdaw *Sayadaw* was an able monk, there were many monks who were a cut above him. Nevertheless, King Thibaw named him *thathanabaing* because the *sayadaw* formerly was his teacher.⁴⁸ A Russian Orientalist by the name of Maniyeff who had visited Mandalay noted down in his *journey* on 7 February 1886 that the Taungdaw *Sayadaw* was not known for his erudition, and that he became the head of the Order just because he had been the king's teacher.⁴⁹ Thus, although the qualifications of a *thathanabaing* had been set down, in practice, the kings generally chose the monks who had taught them when they were young.

Although we say that the king appointed the *thathanabaing* as *thathanabyu* the king appointed a monk as *thathanabyu* (Supreme Patriarch), the king did not invest the *thathanabyu* with power. Some foreign scholars regard that the power of the *thathanabaing*, as it was invested by the king, was the same as that of the patriarch of a Christian Church.⁵⁰ In fact, a Myanmar *thathanabaing* did not have the power invested by the king. He could only decide whether a person was a monk or not according to the *Vinaya* rules. Only the king could defrock and punish a sham monk, i.e. a person whom the *thathanabaing* regarded as a sham

⁴⁷Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 389

⁴⁸Kannisitke, 1969, 162

⁴⁹Than Tun, 2004, 509

⁵⁰ John F. Cady, *A History of Modern Burma*, New York, Cornell University Press, 1960, p. 53 (Henceforth: Cady, 1960)

monk.⁵¹ The *Vinaya* rules lay down how a monk who has sinned is to expiate his sin, if it is expiable. There is no need to have the head of the *Sangha* according to the *Vinaya* texts. It seems that the duty of the *thathanabaing* was invented by the king, and the *thathanabaing's* duty was to expel sham monks from the order.

The *thathanabaing* who was appointed as *thathanabyu* to head the *Sangha* had to take a vow before a stupa that he would decide legal cases and religious disputes without taking bribes and without favouritism. In actual fact, the *thathanabaing* was not the monks' representative. He was only a monk who had to take orders from the king as he became *thathanabaing* only because he was favoured by the king. Maungdaung *Sayadaw*, who became *thathanabaing* in King Badon's reign, however vowed that he would not do what was wrong even if he was ordered by the king.⁵² Whether he considered the welfare of the king or not, the *thathanabaing* had to help the king. Sometimes, he had to tell lies to help the king. The *thathanabaing*, like high-ranking royal officials, enjoyed certain privileges. He went to the Thudhamma hall, palace and to ceremonies with a large retinue and with pomp and pageantry. His main duty was to purify the Religion. Therefore, he had to issue orders that monks were to observe the *Vinaya* rules and promulgate laws so that there would not be evil monks and so that he would be able to decide religious disputes. As there were monks who observed the *Vinaya* rules, there were those who had no respect for the *Vinaya* rules. Some monks gambled, commit theft, fraternized with laywomen, etc. Therefore, the *thathanabaing* had to order the leaders concerned, *taik-oats*, *taik-kyats*, *gaing-oaks* and *gaing-dauks* to force them out of the Order. If the monks refused to obey the decision made by the leaders concerned, the *thathanabaing* himself had to

⁵¹*Dhammapada Palidaw Myanmabyan* (A Myanmar Translation of the Dhammapada), (6th Buddhist Synod), Yangon, Myanmar Buddha *Sasana* Council Press, 1962, p. 29 (Henceforth: *Dhammapada Palidaw Myanmabyan*, 1962)

⁵²Mahadhammathingyan, 1956, 206

adjudicate on the dispute. He issued an order that if there appeared immoral monks, the leaders concerned were to crush them to expel them from the Order, and if they were unable to do so, they were to report the matter to the royal capital.⁵³ The *thathanabaing* usually grilled the monk who allegedly had violated *Vinaya* rules; and if his sin was expiable, he would be admonished to expiate his sin. If the monk did not obey him, the *thathanabaing* would have to expel him from the Order.

To rid the *Sasana* of immoral monks and to ensure that monks would observe *Vinaya* rules, various laws had to be promulgated. The laws issued by the *thathanabaing* with a view to making monks behave well prescribed that monks were to study the *Patimokkha* and novices were to study *linga* (the attributes of novices), *danda* (punishments), *sekhiya* (training rules) and novices' moral code, that they were to discuss what they had studied with one another, to refuse to accept the monks and novices who, without learning or teaching others, were just wandering, to avoid getting entangled in secular matters, to avoid any act that would attract opprobrium so that they would command respect and to avoid fraternizing with laypersons.⁵⁴

Moreover, the *thathanabaing* urged the monks to unite and avoid bearing a grudge against one another, making snide remarks about one another, fighting with one another using sticks, swords, etc, making scurrilous accusations against one another. The *mahadanwun* would make inquiries and arrest any monk who had broken a law and would punish him, together with his mentor (for dereliction of duty), in the Thudhamma hall.⁵⁵ Taking action against the mentor of an offender

⁵³Than Tun, 1989, 340

⁵⁴Taw Sein Ko, 1970, 96-100

⁵⁵*Dhammaviniya Ameindawpyandangyi* (The Great Edict on the Dhamma and Vinaya), Yangon, Hanthawady Press, 1960, p. 50 (Henceforth: *Ameindawpyandangyi*, 1960)

for having been remiss in his duty presumably was to force the mentors to control their pupils firmly. Although the *thathanabaing* issued many laws and urged monks to abide by *Vinaya* rules, some monks broke *Vinaya* rules. The *thathanabaing* had to hear the legal cases involving only monks or involving both monks and laypersons: disputes over the ownership of monasteries, theft, the practising of usury, loss of property, rapes, land disputes, assault and battery, murder cases, underage youths' entering the monkhood, the practising of alchemy, etc.⁵⁶ A monk who was found guilty was punished only according to monastic rules. A monk who entered the *Hluttaw* and uttered profanities, a monk who scurrilously accused another monk of immoral behaviour, and a monk who, being accused of committing immoral acts, was excommunicated by his fellow monks, were expelled from the towns and villages they were dwelling in.⁵⁷ A monk who had raped someone could not be punished unless he himself confessed to it. If he confessed, however, he would have to leave monkhood and could continue to stay in the Order as a novice. Concerning murder cases, the *thathanabaing* decided that a monk who had killed someone unintentionally and accidentally did not need to leave the Order.⁵⁸ Thus, the *thathanabaing* decided all the cases only according to monastic rules. The decision of the *thathanabaing* was final. Thus, the *thathanabaing* had to question and punish immoral monks to purify the Religion.

When the rebellions broke out in the reigns of later Konbaung Period, the *thathanabyu sayadaws* had to negotiate between the reigning kings and the aspirants to the throne with a view to maintaining peace. In King Bagyidaw's reign, his younger brother Prince Tharyarwady rebelled against him, left the royal city on 24 February 1837 and went to Shwebo. When Prince Tharyarwady's following grew, Pin *Sayadawgyi*, Pin *Sayadawkale* and Shin Ñeyyadhamma took

⁵⁶Nigrodha, 1941, 1-122

⁵⁷Nigrodha, 1941, 32, 74, 90

⁵⁸Nigrodha, 1941, 10, 19, 97

the letter given by the The In *Sayadaw*, who was the then *thathanabyu sayadaw*, to Prince Tharyarwady. However, Prince Tharyarwady refused to negotiate with them.⁵⁹ King Bagyidaw told the *Sayadaws* to go and "negotiate to put an end to the conflict." Then the *thathanabyu sayadaw* personally went to Prince Tharyarwady on 30 March 1839. It seems that Bagyidaw meant to capitulate to all the demands made by Tharyarwady when he sent the monks to "negotiate to bring about end to the conflict." On 6 April 1837, the *thathanabyu sayadaw* and three *sayadaws* arrived back in Innwa, and the king acceded to Prince Tharyarwady's demands. A point the *sayadaws* discussed with Prince Tharyarwady was that he and Bagyidaw were to rule the kingdom as rival kings, dividing the kingdom into two countries, with the Ayeyarwady River serving as the line of demarcation between them.⁶⁰

Another coup attempt the *thathanabyu sayadaw* had to mediate was Prince Mindon's rebellion against his elder brother King Pagan. Mindon left the royal capital on 18 December 1852 to rebel against his elder brother King Pagan. His army gradually grew, and King Pagan sent the *thathanabyu sayadaw*, the Shwezedi *Sayadaw* and the Thitseint *Sayadaw* on 4 January 1852 to negotiate with Prince Mindon. However, Thalon *Wungyi* who was one of Mindon's followers, refused to negotiate with these monks. Hence, the monks had to return to the royal capital empty handed.⁶¹ It is noteworthy that this peace mission also proposed that the kingdom be split into two—with the river Ayeyarwady separating them—for the two brothers to rule. Like Tharyarwady, Prince Mindon did not accept their offer. It seems that the proposal that the two brothers were to rule the kingdom, after dividing it into two, as rival kings was the *thathanabyu sayadaw* idea. Thus,

⁵⁹Tikkha, 2005, 209

⁶⁰Maung Maung Tin, 2004b, 356

⁶¹Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 103-104

only fifteen years intervened between these two events, and the *thathanabyu Sayadaws* were involved in both. They probably made this proposal thinking that it would be acceptable to both sides. However, their advice was not accepted because each king, like all the absolute monarchs, desired to rule the kingdom as a sole and absolute ruler.

As the *thathanabaing* was not an elected representative of the *Sangha*, he did not allow any monk who had made a coup attempt to remain in the Order. The *mahadanwun* had to apprehend any monk who made a coup attempt and hand over the culprit to the king. When Princes Myingun and Myingondaing rebelled in 1866, Crown Prince Kanaung was killed.⁶² Dissatisfied with this, Prince Kanaung's son entered the Order and staged a coup. On 2 April 1884, a monk named U Pannacakka, who was Prince Kanaung's son, was arrested, defrocked and executed in the prison for treason.⁶³ An ecclesiastical law promulgated in 1883 prohibited monks from ordaining crown slaves, thieves, robbers or rebels as monks. It can be assumed that the *thathanabaing* was helping the king indirectly in administering the kingdom by instructing monks not to accept criminals. The *thathanabaing* also exhorted criminals, including thieves and robbers, to stop committing crimes. During the reign of King Mindon, the *thathanabaing*, following the king's order, instructed the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* in outlying towns and villages to report the political situation in their localities every two months. The *ahtauktaws* (agents who were responsible to obtain secret information) were divided into two groups: *awemyoywa* (those in outlying towns and villages) and *yazahtani* (those in the royal capital), each of which were again

⁶²Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 230

⁶³Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 418

divided into *ahtin asha* (those who worked openly) and *mahtin masha* (those who worked undercover).⁶⁴

In the aftermath of the Myingun-Myingondaing rebellion during King Mindon's reign, people in the towns and villages that had been occupied by the rebels suffered because they were oppressed by local authorities. Therefore, the king made the Thudhamma *Sayadaws* instruct the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* in various localities to admonish the officers to stop oppressing the people. He issued an order that if *myowuns* (governors), *sitkes* (an administrative officers below *myowuns*) or other officers accused someone as a rebel and tortured him, the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* were to stop them. If they failed to do so they would be summoned to the Thudhamma for questioning.⁶⁵ Thus, the king tried to find out about the condition of the people quickly by using the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks*. Moreover, during the Myingun-Myingondaing rebellion, many people fled to the British territory to avoid conscription. King Mindon asked the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* and their relatives to ensure that they would come back. Those who returned to the Myanmar territory because of the efforts made by the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* and their relatives, were exempted from paying taxes, making labour contributions, paying legal expenses and from repaying loans for five years. The *gaing-oats*, *gaing-dauks* and other monks had to submit a list of those who migrated back to the Myanmar kingdom to the Thudhamma *Sayadaws*.⁶⁶

The *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* also had to help the crown in collecting taxes. Levying heavy taxes could provoke public outcry and political instability. To prevent this, the king made the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* work for the crown

⁶⁴Tin, 1970, 76-77

⁶⁵Than Tun, 1989, 637-39

⁶⁶Than Tun, 1989, 655

through the Thudhamma Council. In King Mindon's reign, Thudhamma *Sayadaws* issued an instruction to the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* of Aungmye Thazi town to admonish the officers there to stop levying heavy taxes.⁶⁷ Furthermore, it is learnt that the opinions of the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* played a very important role in appointing heads of villages, which were the smallest administrative divisions in Myanmar. When the *myothagyi* (town headman) of Salin town died during his tenure, the crown appointed his son, whom the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* recommended, as the *myothagyi* of Salin. Additionally, a record mentions that at the request of the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* of Saku, Nga San was made to rule Minywa Village in Saku Town.⁶⁸

The *thathanabaing*, had to take a vow that as long as he was deciding cases he would not be partial, would not let himself influenced by bribes, would not knowingly take presents from litigants, would not knowingly let a shameless monk serve him, and would throw away anything given to him if he was suspicious about the giver's intention, etc.⁶⁹ Although no political duty was assigned to him officially, the *thathanabaing* was sometimes involved in foreign affairs. When King Mindon denied the request to sign a Myanmar-Anglo commercial treaty by a mission headed by Arthur Phayre in 1862, Arthur Phayre visited the *thathanabaing* and, donating a box of candles, asked him to help. At the request made by the *thathanabaing*, King Mindon agreed to sign the commercial treaty on 10 November 1862.⁷⁰ When carrying out momentous tasks, the kings often sought the *thathanabaing's* advice. When he intended to shift the royal capital from Amarapura to Mandalay, King Mindon sought advice from monks and laypersons. Some title-holding *sayadaws* objected, saying Amarapura was part of Mandalay,

⁶⁷Than Tun, 1989, 745

⁶⁸Than Tun, 1989, 859-60

⁶⁹*Parabaik* MS, no. 15, Pyawbwe, Zigon Monastery Collection

⁷⁰Than Tun, 2004, 325-26

so that the people would not suffer. The *thathanabaing*, however, sent an epistle to the king, saying that the new city of Mandalay should be founded and, on 14 December 1856, the king founded the city.⁷¹ Thus, the *thathanabaing* fulfilled the king's desire. King Mindon would be regarded by the people as a king who conferred with sagacious persons in ruling the kingdom. This suggests King Mindon's artfulness. Moreover, as rebellions broke out after the British annexation of Upper Myanmar, the British government sought the *thathanabaing's* help to confiscate weapons from the people. Therefore, On 3 December 1885, the *thathanabaing* issued an order, which was sent to *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks*, to strictly prohibit monks from keeping weapons, light or heavy, in the *simas*, monasteries or in the open halls because it was against *Vinaya* rules and because the British administration would not harm the Religion.⁷² The *thathanabaing* helped the government in crushing the rebels. Moreover, at the request of the king, the *thathanabaing* decided which lands were crown lands and which were religious lands after checking history texts, inscriptions and *sittans* (revenue inquests).⁷³ *Thathanabaing* carried out not only the tasks concerning the Religion, but also those concerning political and social matters as ordered by the king.

The king could appoint Thudhamma *Sayadaws* as he liked. Thudhamma *Sayadaws* were appointed from King Badon's reign onwards.⁷⁴ During King Mindon's reign, eight Thudhamma *Sayadaws* were appointed, and the number of Thudhamma *Sayadaws* increased to twelve in the reign of King Mindon. King Mindon appointed Salin, Sankyaung, Pahkan, Pyay, Madaya, Maungdaung,

⁷¹Than Tun, 2004, 244

⁷²Daw Kyan, *Myanmar Nainggain Ache-ane (1885-1886)* (Myanmar in 1885-1886), Yangon, Sarpebeikman Press, 1978, p. 46 (Henceforth, Kyan, 1978)

⁷³Maungdaung, 2007, 118

⁷⁴Tin, 1970, 118

Thetpan and Thingaza *Sayadaws* as Thudhamma *Sayadaws* in July 1862.⁷⁵ The Hlahtwe *Sayadaw* was responsible for general office work of the Thudhamma Committee. On 14 November 1878, King Thibaw named Sankyaung, Taungdaw, Pahkan, Mahakhemikarama, Mahadhammajotikarama, Mandalarama, Hlahtwe, Vicittarama and Thetpan *Sayadaws* as Thathanabyu Thudhamma.⁷⁶ He appointed many Thudhamma *Sayadaws* probably because he believed that the Religion would prosper more if the matters concerning the Religion were decided by a group of many monks rather than by a single person. However, it is impossible to regard all the Thudhamma *Sayadaws* as competent monks, because Bamaw *Sayadaw*, who was a contemporary monk, had criticized that the Thudhamma *Sayadaws* were just mediocrities even though they became the members of the Thudhamma Committee.⁷⁷ It can therefore be assumed that some *sayadaws*, even though they were unqualified, became Thudhamma *Sayadaws* because they were friendly with the king. The Thudhamma *Sayadaws* who were chosen by the king had to pledge in the presence of monks that they would sacrifice self-interest and strive for the welfare of the Religion, that they would respect the *sayadaws* and would not bully junior monks and novices, and that they would decide the disputes justly and impartially.⁷⁸ The Thudhamma *Sayadaws*, taking orders from the *thathanabaing*, had to deal with religious affairs: hearing religious disputes, appointing *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks*, relaying the laws and orders issued by the *thathanabaing* to various localities, etc. There also was a law which prescribed the

⁷⁵Kannisitke, 1969, 113

⁷⁶Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 328

⁷⁷Saya Thein, *Upamasamumhagirakkama Myithaw Thingaza Zagabon Baunggyoke* (Upamasamumhagirakkama: An Anthology of Thingaza *Sayadaw*'s Maxims), Yangon, Ledimandaing Press, 1962, p. 396 (Henceforth: Thein, 1962)

⁷⁸“*Thudhamma Sayadawmya Ei Upade*” (The Thudhamma *Sayadaws* Law), *Palm-leaf MS*, no. 45107, Yangon, Universities' Central Library, ka (verso) (Henceforth: *Sayadawmya Upade*)

penalties for the Thudhamma *Sayadaws* who violated the rules and regulations in hearing disputes or in appointing *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks*.⁷⁹

The Thudhamma *Sayadaws* had to issue instructions to the *taik-oats*, *taik-kyats*, *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* to admonish the monks and novices in the kingdom to behave well. They passed a law to prohibit monks from engaging in shameless acts such as chewing betel, smoking, wandering around towns, watching plays, puppet shows, boxing or magic shows, elbowing their way and asking for donations, fighting with other monks, holding weapons such as sticks, swords, etc., tattooing their bodies to obtain gold and silver, studying occult arts such as the art of making amulets or cabalistic squares, reciting mantras, wearing footwear and using umbrellas, practicing medicine or astrology, riding horses or riding in carts, etc.⁸⁰ They had to advise the king on matters concerning the Religion. They had to ensure that the ceremonies of enshrining relics were held in accordance with treatises, invigilate examinations and supervise the recitation of the *Patthana*, make astrological calculations to determine whether an intercalary day must be added to the month of *Nayon* whether a particular year was a leap year and to determine the date for monks to go into monsoon retreat, to make arrangements to send missionaries, etc. They also had to submit, after studying the texts, a letter to the king to advise that the king should decide whether to use the funds for repairing pagodas, revenues from religious lands, or the dues collected at pagoda festivals for repairing the inscriptions in the Mahamuni and Singyo Shwegu pagodas and to build an inscription shed.⁸¹ They had to request for land for building *simas* for the monks to perform ecclesiastical rites, and had to give permission to those who desired to build pagodas and *simas*, together with the designs and sizes of the buildings. Although it was stipulated that the Thudhamma

⁷⁹"*Sayadawmya Upade*", ki (recto)-ge (verso)

⁸⁰Than Tun, 1989, 1030, 1031, 1032

⁸¹Taw Sein Ko, 1960, 100

Sayadaws were to decide matters concerning the Religion in accordance with scriptural texts, in practice they were involved in secular matters. They even meddled in the appointment of officers and decided legal cases involving only laypersons. They had to advise the king on drafting a tax law. At the request of King Mindon made through the *thathanabaing sayadaw*, the Thudhamma *Sayadaws* issued an order on 24 April 1871 to the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* that if the officers in the towns and villages were oppressing or overtaxing the people, high-handedly turning *bobabaing* land (ancestral land) into *ayadaw* land (crown land), they were to write down the matter, stamp the letter with a seal from those who were sent to collect information, and send the letter to the royal capital.⁸² The monks of the later Konbaung period, like laypersons, were involved in various legal cases. In King Mindon's reign, the king himself, with the intention of saving lives, sometimes bought the animals which were about to be killed and set them free. It is recorded in a decision made by the Thudhamma *Sayadaws* in 1872 that three monks—Shin Sumana of Khin Mun Village in Alon Township, Shin Visuddha of Nweni Village in Pinya Township and Shin Suta of Taungdaw Village in Mingin Township—were exiled because they, conniving with laypersons, asked for a goat the king had bought to save its life, saying they wanted to look after it, and sold it.⁸³ The Thudhamma *Sayadaws* tried to keep abreast of the situation in the towns and villages in the kingdom by asking the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* to keep them posted.

When King Mindon came to the throne, Lower Myanmar was under British control. People from Upper Myanmar, which was Myanmar king's domain, often migrated into British Burma (Lower Myanmar) either to flee from justice or for economic reasons. King Mindon regarded that the emigration of people from his realm brought dishonour to him. Therefore, to put a stop to the emigration of

⁸²*Parabaik MS*, no. 28, Pyawbwe, Zigon Monastery Collection

⁸³*Parabaik MS*, no. 4, Yamethin, Thetkechan Monastery Collection

people from the kingdom, the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* had to expeditiously report to the Thudhamma *Sayadaws* if local officers were oppressing or overtaxing the people. The *gaing-oat* of Kyaukbadaung informed the Thudhamma that according to the reports of the *gaing-dauks*, the people in Kyaukbadaung were comfortably off in 1871 and 1872 as they only had to pay normal taxes; many people fled their homes in 1873 because there were more exactions of corvee labour than in the previous two years combined. This year, in 1874, they had been ordered to send cotton wool as tribute and, as cotton was not planted in this area, the people who remained in the area were distraught.⁸⁴

Although it was prescribed that the Thudhamma *Sayadaws* were to decide matters concerning the Religion in accordance with scriptural texts, in practice they had to deal with political matters to please the king whether they were allowed or not by the *Vinaya* rules. In hearing disputes, the Thudhamma *Sayadaws* were assisted by the *anuviccaka*, *htanagyoat* and *htana-oat sayadaws*. As the word *anuviccaka* means "thinking, deliberation," the *anuviccaka sayadaw* should have been a judge. However, his duty was only to record the proceedings of the court. Moreover, there were four *htanagyoat sayadaws* in the four quarters of the town. They had to prepare the cases that arose in the four quarters of the city and send them to the Thudhamma or to the *taikta nayaka* (abbots of monastery complexes), *taik-oats* (assistants to the abbots) or *taik-kyats* (assistants to *taik-oats*) concerned. Only the monks from influential monasteries were chosen as *htanagyoat sayadaws*. Four *htana-oat sayadaws*, who were to assist the *htanagyoat sayadaws*, were also appointed for the four quarters of the city. The *thathanabaing sayadaw* and the Thudhamma *Sayadaws* selected those *Sayadaws* from among the title-holding monks from the monasteries in the four quarters of the town. Those *Sayadaws* had to submit the list of monks and novices who were

⁸⁴“*Thudhamma Tho Shauksa (1874)*” (A Report to Thudhamma), *Parabaik MS*, no. 1263, Yangon, Universities' Central Library (Henceforth: *Shauksa*)

residing in the areas under their jurisdiction to the Thudhamma and had to pass on the orders and summons issued by the *thathanabaing sayadaw* and the Thudhamma *Sayadaws* to monasteries.⁸⁵

The *taik-oats* and *taik-kyats* of each monastery were chosen from among the influential monks in the monastery by the *thathanabaing* and Thudhamma *Sayadaws*. In 1881, there were 154 monastery complexes and 1,257 monasteries in Mandalay and 44 monastery complexes and 159 monasteries in Amarapura.⁸⁶ On average, there were more than seven monasteries in a monastery complex. The number of the *taik-oats* and *taik-kyats* in those monasteries was 222 on 27 June 1883.⁸⁷ The *taik-oats* and *taik-kyats* had to abide by the orders issued by the Thudhamma *Sayadaws* in managing their monasteries. They had to follow a law with forty one stipulations: to take in monks and novices who came from other localities only after entering their addresses, names, qualifications, mentors, etc in the register, to ensure that monks and novices would not fail to recite their daily prayers without sufficient reason, to perform ecclesiastical rites, not to use robes of unacceptable colour, not to engage in occult practices, not to wander around the town late at night, not to take discarded cow or buffalo carcasses, etc.⁸⁸ Although the law prescribed that if monks and novices were arrested for violating the laws *taik-oats* and *taik-kyats* concerned would face charges of negligence, they were not always punished. In King Mindon's reign, a monk stole another monk's possessions and gambled, and the *thathanabaing* expelled the monk from the royal capital, but let the *taik-oat* off as it was his first offence.⁸⁹ The *taik-oats* and *taik-*

⁸⁵Shwegaingtha, 2007, 248

⁸⁶Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 374

⁸⁷Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 399

⁸⁸“*Thathanaye Upade*” (Law on the Religion), *Parabaik* MS, No.2078, Yangon, Universities' Central Library (Henceforth: *Thathanaye Upade*)

⁸⁹Nigrodha, 1941, 35-39

kyats had to control their monasteries in accordance with the Law for the Administration of Monasteries, they also had to issue the rules of their monasteries and prescribe the penalties for violating those rules. Thus, the *taik-oats* and *taik-kyats* had to rule the monks in their monasteries strictly and had to avoid taking in immoral monks.

The *taik-oats* and *taik-kyats*, while administering their monasteries, had to promote *pariyatti* by appointing *sacha sayadaws* (lecturers) to teach monks and novices so that the number of monks and novices who took the examinations would increase. The *sacha sayadaws* were divided into different ranks: *pahtama* (first), *dutaya* (second) and *tataya* (third) *sachas*.⁹⁰ While *taik-oats* and *taik-kyats* were appointed in the monasteries in the royal capital, *gaing-gyokes*, *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* were appointed in the provinces. A *gaing-gyoke* was appointed in a town in which the *hkayaingwuns'* headquarters was established; two or three *gaing-oats* were appointed in each town administered by *myowun* and/or *sitke*; and two or three *gaing-dauks* were appointed in each town controlled by a *myothagyi* or a *thwethaukyi*. Some believe that the position of *gaing-gyoke* was created only in King Thibaw's reign because the problems concerning the Religion increased.⁹¹ There were altogether a hundred and sixty *gaing-oats* and 204 *gaing-dauks* in the reign of King Mindon.⁹² The *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* were chosen by the *thathanabaing* and *Thudhamma Sayadaws*. In appointing *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks*, orders of appointment bearing the king's seal were issued. One to four *gaing-dauk sayadaws* would be appointed under each *gaing-oat*. The monks in a locality could object if the *gaing-oat* and *gaing-dauks* for their locality were appointed without asking their opinion. The Shwegyin sect, which enjoyed King Mindon's patronage, had a different way of appointing *gaing-oats* and *gaing-*

⁹⁰Shwegaingtha, 2007, 248

⁹¹Tin, 1970, 129

⁹²Maung Maung Tin, 2004c, 304

dauks. The Shwegyin *Sayadaw*, the Thudhamma *Sayadaws* and King Mindon chose the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* in Kale, Tabayin, Taloke, Bankyi, Ratanasinkha, Yazagyo and Alon—which were placed under Shwegyin *Sayadaw*'s jurisdiction. Thus, sometimes, the king had a say in the appointment of *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* and the ways of appointing them varied.

The *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks*, as they were heads of local fraternities, were laden with many responsibilities. The *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* in various towns and villages had to pledge in the presence of the *thathanabaing* and Thudhamma *Sayadaws* that they would ensure that the monks in their fraternities would live together in harmony, that they would decide disputes that arose in their fraternities in accordance with the *Vinaya* rules and without prejudice, that they would admonish the *myowuns* and officers if they oppressed the people, that they would report to the *thathanabaing* if the officers continued to oppress the people after having been admonished three times, etc. The king relied heavily on the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* not only for the purification of the *Sasana*, but also for dealing with political matters. The king used the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* as his secret agents and made them undertake administrative tasks. In King Mindon's reign, the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* had to find out and report to the Thudhamma whether the *Sasana* was “pure” in their localities, whether peace prevailed in their localities, whether crown officers oppressed the people, whether there were thieves, robbers or rebels, whether revenues officers were fair in collecting taxes, etc.⁹³ The Myingun-Myingondaing rebellion, which broke out in King Mindon's reign, brought about loss and damage to crown property. As regards the monks and novices who returned from the royal capital to their native towns and villages, the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* had to write down the names of the monasteries they had resided in the royal capital and the names of their

⁹³“*Htaukhlansa*” (Intelligence report), *Parabaik* MS, 2, Thazi, Shwegugyi Monastery Collection (Henceforth: *Htaukhlansa*)

towns. If there were suspicious-looking monks and novices, they had to note down their names, addresses, etc. carefully and had to inform the Thudhamma about them. During the rebellion, some monks and novices disrobed and fought for the rebels, and some re-entered the Order only when the odds were stacked against them. Therefore, the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* had to note down their names, addresses, etc carefully and inform the Thudhamma. It was stipulated that the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* who failed to inform the Thudhamma that there were such monks and novices would be punished in the Thudhamma.⁹⁴

During the Myingun-Myingondaing rebellion, local administrative officials tortured some people, accusing that they were siding with the rebels; this led to instability in the towns and villages, and some fled their towns and villages. The king issued an order to grant a free pardon to those who went into hiding to avoid being tortured. It seems that the *myowuns* and *sitkes* continued torturing people. The Thudhamma ordered the *gaing-oat* and *gaing-dauks* of Shwepyi Yan Aung Ashegontaung to report the matter.⁹⁵ Poor people from Kyaukbadaung area moved to other towns and villages because of the rumour that the crown would order them to submit cotton wool as tribute, and cotton was not planted in that area. As about a thousand households had fled, the *gaing-dauks* of Kyaukbadaung Town proper sent a letter to the *thathanabyu sayadaw* to do something for the survival of those who remained in the locality would be able to cope with the situation.⁹⁶ In 1869-70, people moved from one locality to another because bad weather brought about crop failure. The people in Kyaukbadaung, who were suffering economic

⁹⁴“*Thudhamma Sayadawmyahma Ayatyat Gaing-oat Gaing-dauk Myatho Sintsa*” (Thudhamma Sayadaws’ Instructions to all the *Gaing-oats* and *Gaing-dauks*), *Parabaik* MS, no. 2, Yamethin, Thetkangyan Monastery Collection (Henceforth: *Thudhamma Sayadawmyahma Sintsa*)

⁹⁵“*Sintsa*” (Summons), *Parabaik* MS, no. 5, Pyawbwe, Zigon Monastery Collection (Henceforth: *Sintsa*)

⁹⁶“*Wagundaw Shauksa*” (A Report Concerning Cotton Wool), *Parabaik* MS, no. 1655, Yangon, Universities' Central Library (Henceforth: *Wagundaw Shauksa*)

hardship, had been ordered to found iron. While they were founding iron, people could face food shortages, which could wipe out many villages. For this reason, the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* of Kyaukbadaung who knew the situation in their area submitted a letter to the Thudhamma, advising that making the people of Kyaukbadaung pay the cost for founding fifty thousand viss of iron would be better than making them found a hundred thousand viss of iron as had been ordered.⁹⁷

The *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* also had to assist the crown in collecting taxes. During the reign of King Mindon, Nagandaw Nemyo Yazakyawthu went to Kyaukbadaung area to collect thathameda tax. Nemyo Yazakyawthu tied up more than forty poor persons and tortured them. Many people became frightened and fled their homes. As this could lead to instability and as this would be detrimental to the welfare of the kingdom, the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* of three towns tried to stop Nemyo Yazakyawthu, but to no avail. Hence they sent a report to the Thudhamma.⁹⁸ Although how the monks or novices wore their robes did not really matter in rural areas, if they wore their robes improperly when they went to the Golden City they would be picked up and taken to the Thudhamma. Although how a monk or novice wore his robes did not really matter in rural areas, a monk or novice wearing his robes improperly in the Golden City would be picked up and taken to the Thudhamma. It was prescribed that if monks and novices from rural

⁹⁷“*Gaing-oat Hma Thudhamma Tho Thwinza*” (*Gaing-oat’s* report to the Thudhamma), *Parabaik MS*, no.1579, Yangon, Universities' Central Library (Henceforth: *Gaing-oat Hma Thudhamma Tho Thwinza*)

⁹⁸“*Kyaukbadaung Gaing-oat Gaing-dauk To Hkondaw Ahkunyon Tinthi Sa*” (The Letter submitted to the Law court and Revenues Office by the *Gaing-oats* and *Gaing-dauks* of Kyaukbadaung), *Parabaik MS*, no.1433, Yangon, Universities' Central Library (Henceforth: *Kyaukbadaung Gaing-oat Tinthi Sa*)

areas who came to the royal capital were arrested for wearing robes improperly, the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* concerned would be summoned to the royal capital and punished in accordance with law.⁹⁹ This suggests that ecclesiastical officers strictly enforced the rules only in and around the royal capital.

During King Mindon's reign, the crown would use *thathameda* revenues to offer food to monks and novices in towns and villages. It seems that some officers pocketed part of the funds. When King Mindon learnt that only some monks received rice, he told the Pahkan and Parakkama *Sayadaws*, who were members of the Thudhamma, that he desired to know whether rice offerings were made honestly in the towns and villages. Therefore, the Thudhamma ordered the *gaing-oat* and *gaing-dauk* of Kondaung, in Shwepyi Yan Aung Cavalry Tract (East) to inform the Thudhamma whether the monks and novices received rice or not. It is learnt that the king would punish the officers responsible if he found out after questioning monks at random that some monks did not receive rice.¹⁰⁰

In the reign of King Mindon, the king favoured the Shwegyin *Sayadaw* and his followers. When the monks of the Shwegyin sect came and admonished them and read out the instructions and laws, some monks from Salingyi area, which was one of the localities in which the Shwegyin *Sayadaw* was to promote the *Sasana*, refused to listen; and, together with their lay devotees, they armed themselves and attacked the Shwegyin *Sayadaws*. The administrative officers tried to explain them. However, the monks led by U Lakkhana, U Sobhita, U Sundre of Kyatet village in Bankyi *Taik* would not listen. Instead, they went to the Thudhamma in the royal capital. Then, the *gaing-oat* of Tabayin town informed the Thudhamma

⁹⁹“*Thudhammasa*”, *Parabaik* MS, no. 41, Pyawbwe, Zigon Monastery Collection (Henceforth: *Thudhammasa*)

¹⁰⁰“*Sunsanwut Sintsa*” (Instruction Concerning Rice Offerings), *Parabaik* MS, no. 40, Pyawbwe, Zigon Monastery Collection (Henceforth: *Sunsanwut Sintsa*)

Sayadaws that the *gaing-oats* would not be able to control the monks and laypersons in Bankyi *Taik*, Alon and Tabayin if the monks refused to listen to the orders and laws like the above-mentioned monks.¹⁰¹ It seems that the Thudhamma monks, unwilling to take Shwegyin monks' admonitions, bypassed the Shwegyin monks and went straight to the Thudhamma.

King Thibaw also gave stamped paper to the *gaing-gyoke*, *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* and made them write *myittaza* to him. He asked them to inform him whether monks were united or whether the weather conditions were favourable in the towns and villages in their respective jurisdictions, if officers were unable to rule the localities lawfully even though they wanted to, to mention why, to mention the living conditions of the people at present and to make a speculation about their future living conditions, to advise what should be done to alleviate people's suffering, to inform him whether there was animosity between the *hkayaingwun* and the officer of the *myo yon*, to send their epistles whenever it was necessary, to submit an epistle every three months so that monks and laypersons would have no worries.¹⁰² A *gaing-oat* or *gaing-dauk*, however, was not allowed to write the report alone. Two or three senior monks had to discuss and write it. It is learnt that the *gaing-gyokes*, *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* wrote the reports meticulously on stamped paper, discussing the situation in the towns and villages. It is mentioned in a report sent by the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* of Saku town on 24 June 1885 that monks were unhappy because U Paing, who had been the *gaing-oat* of Saku during King Mindon's reign, and his followers (more than ten) were

¹⁰¹“*Tabayin Myo Ye-Oo Konbet Sayadaw Ei Thathanaye Saingya Setthwin Sa*” (A report concerning the Religion, submitted by the Ye-Oo Konbet *Sayadaw*), *Parabaik* MS, no. 26, Meiktila University Library (Henceforth: *Konbet Sayadaw Thwin Sa*)

¹⁰²“*Htaukhlansa*” (Intelligence report), *Parabaik* MS, no. 2, Thazi, Shwegugyi Monastery Collection (Henceforth: *Htaukhlansa*)

labouring resentment against the *gaing-oats*, *gaing-dauks* and other senior monks, and this had led to disunity in the *Sangha*, that crops could be cultivated because there were some rain, and that a basket of paddy cost 1 *kyat* or 1 *kyat* 1 *mu*. They also stated that the locality was safe, that there were no thieves or robbers, that corvee labour was not exacted, and that the *myowun* and other administrative officers were able to rule the town and villages lawfully. With regard to economic conditions, they discussed that in 1883 people were not able to cultivate paddy land because the dams were damaged, that they could only cultivate a few plots of land in 1884 because rainwater was scarce, that food would be in abundance in 1886 if the irrigation works were not damaged and if the rain was sufficient in 1885, that the people would be able to pay only half the *thathamedha* tax in 1885 because houses and paddy were damaged by fire on 10 May 1885, when 56 houses were burnt down, that there was no sign of dissension between the *hkayaingwuns* and the officers of the *myo-yon* or among the *myo-yon* officers. This report was written by the *gaing-gyoke*, *gaing-dauks* of Sagaing and four senior monks.¹⁰³ Thus, the *gaing-gyokes*, *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* had to gather information and send reports to the king regularly as ordered by the king.

The *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* also had to carry out some administrative duties. Concerning the collection of taxes, tax collectors had to consult the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* for collecting taxes. In Mindon's reign, the king collected taxes only after showing the tax law to the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* and getting their opinions. The *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* advised the king to exact a tithe from the people, to collect taxes only if the economic conditions were good, and to allow the people to pay taxes either in cash or kind. They also made a list of the

¹⁰³Kyaw Win, 2006, 120-125

persons who should be exempted from taxation, and the people in their list were exempted from taxation.¹⁰⁴

If the tax collectors imposed an undue burden on the people, the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* had to stop them. If they would not stop, the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* were to inform the king in writing. They had to suggest the king to reduce taxes when the people were suffering economic hardship because crop yields fell. In 1875, the *gaing-dauk* of Thayaing Village sent a letter to the king to inform that the people were unable to pay household tax and *naukhtauk-kye* (aid money to the service men who were on duty in the capital) because crop yields decreased due to drought.¹⁰⁵ When some *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* disturbed the tax collectors who were collecting taxes, the latter reported the matter to the Thudhamma, and the Thudhamma *Sayadaws* issued an order to the effect that the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* who unjustly obstructed the tax collectors in the course of their duty would be punished.¹⁰⁶ The *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* had to keep tabs on the tax collectors to ensure that they would not overtax the people. On the one hand, the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* had to ensure that the people would not be overtaxed, but on the other hand they had to make efforts to increase revenues. They had to persuade the people who migrated to British Burma to return to the Myanmar kingdom. As many people migrated to Lower Myanmar during the Myingun rebellion in 1866, King Mindon's political stature shrunk and the population and the number of households in Upper Myanmar decreased. In 1867, the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* persuaded those who had migrated to Lower Myanmar to return to Upper Myanmar. The crown exempted those who

¹⁰⁴“*Gaing-oat Gaing-dauk Hma Myothagyi Tho Pesa*” (Letter Sent to the Myothagyi by Gaing-oat and Gaing-dauk), *Parabaik* MS, no. 1536, Yangon, Universities' Central Library (Henceforth: *Gaing-oat Gaing-dauk Hma Myothagyi Tho Pesa*)

¹⁰⁵Taw Sein Ko, 1960, 140

¹⁰⁶Tin, 1976, 222

remigrated to Upper Myanmar from paying *thathameda* tax and from contributing corvee labour, wrote off their debts, pardoned their previous offences, and nullified their mortgages. To persuade them to remigrate to Upper Myanmar, the crown ordered the leaders of crown service groups not to collect dues from them, and granted them a five-year tax holiday.¹⁰⁷ However, because the *myowuns*, *myo-oats* and *myothagyis* collected dues from them, the king passed a law on 14 December 1872 to order the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* to supervise the resettlement of the persons who returned from Lower Myanmar. As many people from *Ko Hkayaing* (Nine Districts) migrated to Lower Myanmar, causing a fall in the number of households, the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* induced them to return, offering a five-year tax holiday.¹⁰⁸ If many people emigrated and villages became devoid of inhabitants because of an economic slump, the *gaing-oats* founded new villages. In this way, the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* had to use every means to increase the number of households and revenues.

The *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* played an important role not only in the collection of taxes, but also in the appointment of *myothagyis* (town headmen). The *thagyis* were appointed on the recommendation of *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks*. A record reads:

Nga San was to continue to rule Minywa in Saku Township as the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* of Saku Town had requested.

This is an edict proclaimed by Nagandaw Nemyothinhkaya on the 12th day of the waxing moon of *Pyatho*, 1235 Myanmar Era (30 December 1873).¹⁰⁹

During the reigns of the Myanmar kings, the persons who were to be appointed as *myothagyis* had to be of *myothagyi* lineage. There were many disputes over the succession to hereditary offices, and the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-*

¹⁰⁷Than Tun, 1989, 655-656

¹⁰⁸Tin, 1965, 130-31

¹⁰⁹Tin, 1965, 219

dauks had to state whether a person who was claiming the office of *myothagyis* was of *myothagyis* lineage. The crown appointed *myothagyis* only if the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* affirmed that they belonged to the lineages of *myothagyis*. The *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* also had to spy on those who rebelled against the king and send reports to the royal capital. On 4 March 1878, the *gaing-dauk* of Thaungthut town reported that the Maharaja and an English captain who were in Manipura were recruiting soldiers and hoarding weapons to attack Thaungthut Town.¹¹⁰ With a view to protecting the king from his enemies, the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* had to prohibit people from harbouring criminals, thieves, robbers and rebels. They had to gather information on the monks who assisted the rebels during the Myingun rebellion and send their reports to the Thudhamma. Additionally, they had to spread the news that the rebellion had been suppressed. Thus, the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* had to gather information for the welfare of feudal lords.

The *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* wielded influence in the towns and villages and the *myothagyis* and *ywa-thagyis* had to obey their orders. Local residents also asked the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* to solve their social problems and to arbitrate their disputes. Local residents regarded them as towers of strength and relied heavily on them. The *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* helped solve the problems of their lay devotees, although the *Vinaya* rules prohibited them from fraternizing with laypersons. Under the *taik-oats* and *taik-kyats* in the royal capital and the *gaing-gyokes*, *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* in outlying towns and villages were the *kyaungdaing sayadaws* or abbots. The qualifications a bhikkhu must

¹¹⁰*Hluttaw Parabaik Ahmat Atha Atokauk Hmatpon* (Abbreviations used in the *Parabaik Records of the Hluttaw*), Vol.II, Yangon, Government Printing, 1909, pp. 5-6 (Henceforth, *Hluttaw Atokauk Hmatpon*, 1909)

meet to act as an abbot also were set down.¹¹¹ The donors usually chose a monk as the abbot of a monastery they donated the monastery as a private (*puggala*) monastery, while the appointment of the abbot of a communal (*samghika*) monastery was by seniority. However, only a monk who had spent ten *vassas* and who was capable of laying down rules (i.e. who could act as a mentor) could be chosen as an abbot. In the provinces, monks had to choose a monk who was an expert in the *Vinaya* as a *vinidho* for arbitrating religious disputes. They had to put forward the name of the monk they had chosen, the number of *vassas* he had put in, and his address to the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks*, who would appoint him as *vinido*. It is learnt that if the monks in a locality stated that they desired to live under the leadership of a monk, the *thathanabaing* and Thudhamma *Sayadaws* usually assented to their request. On 29 August 1883, a group of monks requested that they desired to live under the leadership of Ashin Sumanacara, who had served as a *gaing-dauk* in King Mindon's reign, because Ashin Pannasiha who was their abbot had passed away; and the Thudhamma assented.¹¹²

Thus, the king not only appointed different levels of ecclesiastical officers, from the *Thathanabaing* to the abbot, and formed the Thathanazaung Committee for managing religious affairs, but also engaged a *mahadanwun*, whose duty was to coordinate religious affairs and state affairs. Underneath the *mahadanwun* were eight *mahadansayes*. The *mahadanwun* had to urge monks to abide by the *Vinaya* rules, expose the monks who were violating the *Vinaya* rules and take them to the

¹¹¹He must have been ordained as a *bhikkhu* for ten years or more, 2) he must know the two Vibhargas, 3) he must be diligent, 4) he must know the Khandhaka, 5) he must be able to expound *nama* (mentality) and *rupa* (materiality).

¹¹²“*Ameindaw*” (Edict), *Parabaik MS*, no. 0912, Yangon, Universities' Central Library (Henceforth: *Ameindaw*)

adhipati sayadaws, to ensure that the monks who had been ordered to carry water or sand as penances carried out their penances. They also had to manage the slaves and land donated to religious establishments and to ensure that there would be no disputes in the pagodas and monasteries.¹¹³ Originally, the *mahadanwun* was an officer responsible to supervise the kings' charities, later he had to expose the monks' wrongdoings and arrest immoral monks. Although the *mahadanwun* was supposed to deal with religious affairs, Nemyoyazathiha, who was the *mahadanwun* during Mindon's reign, was ordered to prospect for iron, copper and silver.¹¹⁴ Thus, the *mahadanwun* was an officer of religious affairs who had to carry out secular duties from time to time.

In short, the kings of the later Konbaung Period made efforts to ensure that the monks abide by *Vinaya* rules. For doing so, they formed the *Thathanabyu Thathanazaunt* Committee, which was charged with controlling monks. The *Thathanazaunt* Committee was headed by the *thathanabaing*. The *thathanabaing* was not chosen by monks, but was appointed by the king. The kings usually appointed the monks who had taught them when they were young as *thathanabaings*. Under the *thathanabaing* were the *Thudhamma Sayadaws* and *taik-oats* and *taik-kyats* in the royal capital and *gaing-oats*, *gaing-dauks* and *kyaundaings* in the provinces. It can be assumed that the *Thathanazaunt* Committee was formed to purge the Order of immoral monks, although the *Sangha* should not have a leader and each monk was to respect and obey any other monk who was senior to him according to *Vinaya* rules. As there were the *Vinaya* rules which monks were to observe, the *Thathanazaunt* Committee headed by the

¹¹³Maung Maung Tin, 2005, 183

¹¹⁴Win Maung, 1979, 185

thathanabaing did not need to pass more laws. They probably were laying down rules to facilitate the monks' observance of *Vinaya* rules. If the monks, both leaders and the rank and file, abided by the laws passed by the *Thathanazaunt* Committee, the *Sasana* would be free from danger and would prosper. However, the leaders, including the *thathanabaing*, had to deal with secular affair whether the *Vinaya* rules permitted them or not. They had to serve as *ahtauktaws* and gather information about matters that could cause the king to lose his political integrity, find out whether the officers obeyed the royal orders and laws or not, whether there were rebels or not, whether the social conditions were good or not, etc. and report to the king.

CONCLUSION

In discussing the Buddhism of the late Konbaung Period, how it is impossible to say with any certainty as to how and when Buddhism was introduced into Myanmar is discussed. Some scholars are of the opinion that Buddhism was introduced into Myanmar in the 1st century AD. It is impossible to accept that the earliest form of Buddhism which made its way to Myanmar was a pure form of Theravada Buddhism as modern Myanmar believe. It could be Mahayana Buddhism. Moreover, the views of some scholars who disagree that the Myanmar had their first encounter with Buddhism only after King Anuruddha of Pagan conquered Thaton. Furthermore, there were no *aris*, who are vilified in Myanmar chronicles, in the early Pagan period. They emerged only in the late Pagan period and were influential even in the post-Pagan periods. Myanmar relied considerably on Sri Lanka soon after Buddhism was introduced into Myanmar. Monks from Myanmar went to Srilanka to study scriptural texts. The monks who returned from Srilanka enjoyed the king's favour and became influential. Then, they had to compete with local monks. As only the sect supported by the king won, the national sect was vilified and the *aris* gained notoriety. There is no evidence that the Myanmar kings persecuted the *aris* as stated in the chronicles. Schism within the Myanmar *Sangha* was brought about by the monks who returned from Srilanka. Secessions resulted from the monks' pride in their purity, not from the differences in their robes, behaviour, practices or goals. In the history of Myanmar, Kings Anuruddha, Dhammazedī, Sinbyushin of Hanthawady, Thalun and Badon safeguarded and promoted the *Sasana*. The religious reforms introduced by King Dhammazedī helped the Sinhalese sect to have ascendancy over the local sect. It seems that King Dhammazedī had doubts about monks'

moral behaviour because he himself was an ex-monk. King Badon was a king who had progressive ideas concerning the Religion. However, the majority of monks and citizens refused to accept some of King Badon's views and reforms, and he had to back down.

While the Myanmars were professing Buddhism after it was introduced into Myanmar, Myanmar's relations with Srilanka brought about schisms within the *Sangha*, probably because some monks from Myanmar believed that the Religion in Srilanka was purer than that in Myanmar. On account of Chappada's study in Srilanka, a Sinhalese sect came into being. From then on, the national sect and the Sinhalese sect fought for ascendancy. There were some monks of the national sect who wielded power. Of them, Mahakassapa was the best-known. How he endeavoured to compete with the Sinhalese sect and to own land can be learnt from the inscriptions. The monks of his lineage came to be known as forest sect. After competing with the Sinhalese sect for about two hundred years, the forest sect was defeated because the kings supported the Sinhalese sect. Then, the forest monks were given a bad name and referred to as *aris*. The forest monks contributed to the economy of the kingdom which was primarily an agricultural country. These monks were able to hang on to the land they owned in the reigns of the successive kings. After the fall of Pagan, cultivated lands reverted to jungle either because there was nobody to cultivate them or because there was no security. Forest monks led the people to reclaim land—the virgin land and the cultivated land that had reverted to jungle—for cultivation. Thus, they were able to contribute to the peace and prosperity of the kingdom and to the increase of food production. Their influence declined probably because kings, ministers and laypersons could not donate land to them as people were reclaiming land, because the monks of the Sinhalese sect were opposing them and because the crown controlled land and wealth of the kingdom to prevent forest monks from

interfering in political matters. As regards the Pagan-period Buddhism, there is a fact which is against a traditional statement accepted by the Myanmars. Myanmars nowadays believe that there were no *bhikkhunis* after AD 456. However, there were *bhikkhunis* in the Pagan period or after the 1600th year of the Religious Era. There were some *bhikkhunis* who enjoyed the same status as monks. Thus, the Myanmar tradition was wrong and there was the *Bhikkhuni Sangha* (Order of Female *Sangha*) in Myanmar in the latter half of the 13th century AD.

The donation of land to monks increased the sundry matters monks had to deal with. This inhibited them from carrying out their main duties of *pariyatti* and *patipatti*. Hence some went and dwelt in the forests, leading *ekacara* (a life of solitude). This split monks into *arannavasins* or forest monks and *gamavasins* or village monks (those who resided near towns and villages). The *arannavasins* put great emphasis on *vipassana* (insight meditation), whereas the *gamavasins* were more interested in secular subjects. However, it would be wrong to regard all the *gamavasins* as immoral monks. Some monks, despite their being *gamavasins*, were able to write works that were valuable for the Religion. The controversy over whether monks and novices should place their upper robes over their left shoulder or cover both shoulders with their upper robes in entering towns and villages began in the reign of King Sane of the Nyaungyan Period. This controversy stretched into the Konbaung Period. In King Singu's reign, the king ordered the monks to debate the matter, and decided in favour of the *Ayon* faction. Myanmar monks placed great emphasis on the lineage of their teachers. Although they had to cover both shoulders with their robes because of the king's order, they eventually reverted to following the tradition of their teachers. Hence, the *Atin-Ayon* issue resurfaced in King Badon's reign. King Badon was able to settle the issue for once and for all. The *Ayon* faction emerged victorious. The *Atin-Ayon*

issue was not an important issue for the Religion. The monks did not change the *Vinaya* rules. The problem resulted from the misinterpretation of *Pali* texts. The dispute had nothing to do with monks. It was a dispute over how to train novices. There also was a view known as Joti view. The king had to issue edicts and suppressed it by inflicting stiff punishments on those who held it in King Badon's reign. However, King Badon was unable to stamp out the view. It survived till King Mindon's reign in the late Konbaung Period. During Mindon's reign, new sects like the Shwegyin sect came into being with the king's support. King Mindon issued the *Dhamma-Vinaya* Edict with the avowed purpose of purifying the Religion. This edict met with opposition when it was put into operation. It is learnt that Mindon's *Dhamma-Vinaya* Edict was issued partly for political reasons even though its avowed purpose was to cleanse the Religion. This edict brought about disputes over whether making donations to an immoral person would be beneficial to the donor and whether laypersons should study the *Vinaya* rules so that they would be able to distinguish virtuous men from immoral ones.

Oathpo *Sayadaw* Ashin Okkavamsamala, who founded the Dvara Sect in Lower Myanmar, emerged in the later Konbaung period. He came to Upper Myanmar to study in King Tharyarwady's reign. In 1851, he returned to Lower Myanmar with his followers. He refused to perform ecclesiastical rites with the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* in Oathpo area because he doubted the validity of the *sima* in which they were performing ecclesiastical rites; and this divided the fraternity in Oathpo. He instructed his followers to use the phrase *kayadvara*, *vacidvara*, *manodvara* which was in accordance with scriptural texts instead of *kayakan*, *vacikan*, *manokan*, which the Myanmar had been traditionally using. Hence his faction came to be known as the Dvara sect. Oathpo Sayadaw even wrangled with the Thudhamma Council in the royal capital of Yadanabon over some doctrinal

matters. He was a reformer. Like the Shwegyin sect which broke with tradition came into existence and gain strength in Upper Myanmar, the Dvara sect came into being in Lower Myanmar.

The Myanmar kings generally focused their attention on religious affairs. They believed that they became kings because of their great merit gained by having fulfilled the *paramitas* in many previous existences. The Myanmar kings, as was the custom of the feudal lords, concocted prophecies to say that they became kings because of those prophecies; thus, they took refuge in the *Sasana*. Of the seven kings who supported the Religion, two were kings of the late Konbaung Period. Their main intention was to make the people believe that insulting a king, who was the supporter of the Religion, amounted to insulting the *Sasana*. The king wanted monks to have shame for sin, to respect the rules of conduct and to be pure in *ale-ala* study. Probity would greatly benefit monks who had the four ideals that were hard to attain: (1) to be born as human beings, (2) to be born when Buddhism exists, (3) to have faith in Buddhism, and (4) to become monks. However, a study of monks indicates that many monks entered the order because they wanted to become abbots, because they did not want to become service men or pay debt, because they wanted to be freed from slavery, because they could live without working, because they wanted to enjoy the privileges monkhood entitled them to, or because they wanted to support their relatives. The king wanted monks to abide by *Vinaya* rules whatever was the reason they entered the Order. There were monks who observed the *Vinaya* rules and there were those who broke them. King Badon used his authority to help the monks to follow the *Vinaya* rules. Monks' main duty was to practice in accordance with the Buddha's teaching, and King Badon urged monks to study the scriptures (*pariyatti*). As the *Vinaya Pitaka* was the origin foundation of the Religion, he made monks from various places study

the *Vinaya* rules. He prohibited the monks and novices who could not answer the questions on *Vinaya* rules to live independently of a teacher; they were placed under the guidance of learned teachers in their monasteries. King Badon also had the scriptures copied with great care. The construction of libraries to house the scriptures began only in his reign. Myanmar kings began to include a library as one of “the seven sites” constructed at the same time] when they founded new capitals from King Badon’s reign onwards. King Badon held examinations referred to as *sapyanpwe* (the ceremony of reciting the scriptures) so that the number of those who committed *Vinaya* texts to memory would increase. As *Vinaya* was the lifeblood of the *Sasana*, the king made monks commit *Vinaya* texts to memory. Although they learnt the *Vinaya* texts by heart, there were very few who understood what they meant. Monks and novices aiming at the rewards given by the king and the support of laypersons took the exams, and the number of those who took the examinations increased. Therefore, some derided those examinations, calling them “boxing matches.” King Badon sent envoys to India to get secular and religious texts and good versions of what. However, some scholars regard that those journeys were made to gather intelligence to join forces with Indian feudal lords to drive out the British from Bengal, even though they were supposed to be “text collecting journeys.”

King Badon forced the monks who did not understand monastic rules and who did not know the scriptures to leave the Order with a view to purifying the *Sasana*. Although he was strict with monks, he simplified ordination procedures. He allowed anybody to enter the Order by taking refuge in the Three Jewels after placing the Suttanta text in front of a Buddha image. The monks who were ordained according to tradition did not want to associate with those who entered

the order in this way. Although King Badon had progressive ideas and introduced religious reforms, he was not as successful as he should.

There is an important point concerning the scriptures in King Tharyarwady's reign. Although laypersons donated the scriptures by pouring libation water, those scriptural texts were traded and King Tharyarwady had to issue an order to prohibit the people from buying or selling scriptural texts. It seems that laypersons, desiring to donate scriptural texts to their *Sayadaws* before others, bought them to donate, without waiting till new copies were made. In King Mindon's reign, canonical texts were inscribed on stone so that they would last long. He was probably trying to win the support of the people by doing what no other Myanmar king had done because he was unable to compete, politically or militarily, with the British who had annexed Lower Myanmar. Another effort he made for the publication and perpetuation of the Buddhist canon was the convening of the Fifth Buddhist Synod. There was no serious threat to the Religion in King Mindon's reign. It can be assumed that he convened the Fifth Buddhist Synod to restore public confidence in his rule because of the disunity and economic decline in Upper Myanmar which was under his rule. The king conferred *Rajaguru* title on learned monks and venerated them. As the king favoured title-holding monks, some monks tried to get the *Rajaguru* title by hook or by crook in the hope of enjoying royal favours. As monks used dishonest means to get titles, the king's hope of promoting *pariyatti* became unrealizable. The majority of the monks were more interested in *pariyatti* and became weak in *patipatti*. With the political stability of the kingdom weakening in King Thibaw's reign, the monks became lax in observing the *Vinaya* rules. Many new monastic rules had to be laid down. Although the kings exerted their power to ensure that the Religion would become pure and monks would abide by the *Vinaya* rules,

there was no noticeable progress. It seems that the kings themselves supported the Religion because they wanted to be known as *Sasana Dayaka* (Benefactors of the Religion) and because they wanted to exploit the Religion for their own political advantage.

The king formed the *Thathanabyu Thathanazaunt* Committee to propagate and safeguard the *Sasana* so that the *Sasana* would prosper. The kings often exerted influence over the citizens through *Sangha* organizations and religious leaders. They appointed one or more *thathanabyus* to head the *Thathanazaung* Committee. Under the *thathanabyu sayadaw* were the Thudhamma *Sayadaws*, and *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* were appointed in the outlying towns and villages. These leaders had to take orders from the *thathanabyu sayadaw*. The *thathanabaing* referred to as *thathanabyu sayadaw*, who was the chief of the *Thathanazaunt* Committee was appointed by the king. The king would appoint a committee of monks, a single monk or a monk for each sect as *thathanabyu*. In King Badon's reign, a committee of *thathanabyu* was formed; in Mindon's reign, a single *thathanabyu* was appointed; and in Thibaw's reign, a *thathanabyu* was appointed for each sect. Although the requisite qualifications of the *thathanabaing* are prescribed, in practice, the kings usually appointed the monks who had been their teachers when they were young as *thathanabaing* whether they were qualified or not. The *thathanabaing* in Myanmar was not invested with powers by the king. He only had to decide whether a person was a monk or not according to the *Vinaya* texts. Only the king could defrock and punish a person the *thathanabaing* judged as not a monk. There is no need to appoint any person to head the *Sangha* according to Buddhism. Nobody in the Buddhist *Sangha* has power over other monks. Each monk has to respect and obey any other monk who is senior to him. It seems that the duty of the *thathanabaing* was invented by the king. The *thathanabaing*, like

high-ranking royal officials, had the right to use certain trappings. The *thathanabaing* had to pass many laws to ensure that monks would abide by *Vinaya* rules. It can be assumed that the *thathanabaing* not only was responsible for the purification of the *Sasana*, but also was involved in political matters. When the rebellions broke out in the reigns of later Konbaung Period, the *thathanabyu sayadaws* had to negotiate between the reigning kings and the aspirants to the throne with a view to restore peace. During the reign of King Mindon, *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* were ordered by the king to inform him whether peace prevailed in the towns and villages. *Sayadaws* and monks were among the *ahtauktaws* who had to work undercover. The *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* also had to help the crown in tax collection. Levying heavy taxes could provoke public outcry and political instability. To prevent this, the *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* were made to supervise the tax collectors. During King Mindon's reign, people from Upper Myanmar often migrated to British Burma (Lower Myanmar) either to flee from justice or for economic reasons, and this undermined King Mindon's political integrity. The *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* had to assist the crown in making the emigrants returned to Upper Myanmar. They had to write their reports on stamped paper to report to the king. They had to state whether the *Sangha* was united or not, the weather was good or not, the conditions of the people in the towns and villages in their jurisdiction, and whether there were signs of dissension among administrative officers. They were not allowed to write their report alone. The *gaing-oats* and *gaing-dauks* had to discuss with two or three senior monks to write the reports.

As a committee for managing religious affairs was formed, the *mahadanwun* was appointed for coordinating religious affairs and state affairs. In the late Konbaung period, the kings made efforts to ensure that monks would observe the *Vinaya*

rules. To purge the *Sasana* of immoral monks, they formed the *Thathanabyu Thathanazaung* Committee. If monks abided by the laws passed by the *Thathanazaunt* Committee, the *Sasana* would be free from danger and would prosper. However, the leaders, including the *thathanabaing*, had to deal with secular affair. It is impossible to say that Buddhism prospered more in the Konbaung Period than in other periods because the number of monks and that of religious buildings increased, because scriptures were recorded on stone, and because the Fifth Buddhist Synod was convened. It is probable that the king supported the Religion because he wanted to be renowned as *Sasana Dayaka* (Benefactor of the Religion) or to use the religion for his political advantage. It can be assumed that monks focused on *pariyatti* and were less interested in *patipatti*. The people could not renounce their traditional beliefs even though they were professing Buddhism.

Appendix (1)

Religious Buildings Constructed by King Mohnyinmintaya

Ratanazedi and Shwegyaung (Golden Monastery) in Sagaing

Yan Aung Myin pagoda and Shwegyaung in Sagaing

Sigon and Shwegyaung in his native place, which lay to the east of Nyaungyan town

Sigon and Shwegyaung on the site where his army camped in Amyint

Zigon and Shwegyaung in Anyapanpyin

Sigon and Shwegyaung in Sheinmaka

Sigon and Shwegyaung in Myohla in the north

Mingaunggyi pagoda and a monastery in Yan Aung Myin

Sigon and monastery in Myene

Sigon and monastery in Yazagyo

Sigon and monastery in Pahkangyi

Sigon and monastery at Tedawya in Thitseint

Sigon and monastery in Taungkyi

Sigon and monastery in Wayindoat

Sigon and monastery in Pyay town

Nyaungnwe Sigon and monastery in Pagan

Sigon and monastery in Hkandaw

Sigon and monastery in Awamyitnge

Sigon and monastery in Myinmi

Sigon and monastery in Taungbalu

Sigon and monastery in Ngalyinkwe

Sigon and monastery in Kunwinky

Shwezigon and monastery in Pinya
the monastery to the east of Pinya
a monastery in Myingondaung
a monastery in Pyinsi town
Htandaw monastery.

Source: Kala, *2006 b*, 71

Appendix (2)

A List of the Towns in the Shan States in which King Badon Erected Temples named Shwegu

Kokyawt Village, where household tax was collected in silver

Kyaing Hkan

Kyaing Chaing

Kyaing Taung

Kyaing Ton

Kyaing Sen

Zaga

Nyaungshwe

Tabet

Taungbaing

Nonlun

Naungmun

Pinyin

the ten villages of Pwehlatame

the forty four villages of Baw

Mone

Moby

Maingkaing

Maingdon

Maingseit

Maington

Maingpan

Maingpun

Maingpyin

Mainglon

Mainglyin

Lecha

Thamainghkan

Thikyit

Thibaw

Thonze

Theinni

Helon

Inlay Village

Source: Toe Hla, *Badon Min Lethtet Myanmar Nainggandaw* (Myanmar during King Badon's Reign), p. 40

APPENDIX (3)

U Po, Dietitian

U Po was a native of Myobaw village in Budalin township. The medical works he wrote were the Sabbapakinnaka Dhatu Kyan, Dhamma Dhatu Kyan and Ayupala Dhat Kyan. The last two works were written at the request of his pupils in Mawlamyine in 1865. He moved to Amarapura. When King Mindon founded the new city of Mandalay, U Po moved to Mandalay. His home was near the Thamidaw bazaar in the western part of Mandalay.

One of his extreme views was that there remained no real paramattha ariya. He disseminated his view that as samuti *sangha* were not real *sangha*, *sangha* could not be included the three Jewels; hence, there were only two Jewels.

Additionally, there was no quantity or demarcation by space or time in *Sasana*. The phrase “5000 years of the *Sasana*” is not mentioned in the canonical texts. It was only mentioned by Buddhaghosa, a commentator, and hence it was not acceptable. U Po’s views presumably were influenced by the Joti view.

King Mindon ordered him to repudiate his assertion that there were no real monks. U Po refused to give in. The king sent U Kaung, the then kinzin *wundauk* (who later became Kinwun Mingyi) to interrogate U Po. U Po refused to repudiate his beliefs. He was battered to death by the executioners in front of the *hluttaw*. His body, facing towards the south, was impaled and fastened to a stake in the Ponnagyun Cemetery. His followers were arrested.

Source: Hlapaing, 1976, 53-56, 58

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