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Abstract	This paper “Conditions of Myanmar in Nyaungyan Period (1599-1752)” is an attempt to examine the socio-economic conditions of the country under the successive kings who undertook the peace and stability of the country with good administrative system .At that time, the country had often faced with many internal disasters as well as external dangers. Thus, how the efficient kings tried to carry out the peace and stability of the country and under inefficient kings the country underwent into difficulties were discussed in this paper.
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# Conditions of Myanmar in Nyaungyan Period

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## Abstract

This paper “Conditions of Myanmar in Nyaungyan Period (1599-1752)” is an attempt to examine the socio-economic conditions of the country under the successive kings who undertook the peace and stability of the country with good administrative system. At that time, the country had often faced with many internal disasters as well as external dangers. Thus, how the efficient kings tried to carry out the peace and stability of the country and under inefficient kings the country underwent into difficulties were discussed in this paper.

## Introduction

There were ten dynasties in Nyaungyan Period, and the names of kings and their years of reign were indicated. Although King Nyaungyan tried to reform Myanmar, his reign year was only six years long and so it was described that his son, King Anaukphetlun, continued to do so. Because of King Anaukphetlun’s hard work, a lot of success had been received and it was also indicated that Pegu became the capital, and after King Anaukphetlun passed away, his younger brother King Thalwin ascended the throne. It is also presented that in the reign of King Thalwin, the Capital was moved to Inwa, being at war became less because of having good relationship with the neighbouring countries, collecting surveys to develop the country, and practicing many techniques to widen the administrative power. It was also in this paper that in the reign of King Pintale after King Thalun, Myanmar people had been in trouble because of the disturbance of Chinese, who ran away as they had been beaten by Manchu, and King Pintale could not solve about that problem and so his younger brother King Pyay captured the throne. In the present paper, it is also shown that Nyaungyan Dynasty had disappeared, destroying the social and economic conditions of Myanmar people because of the new kings’ not having the ability of governing the country, the natural disaster and invading into Myanmar by the outside countries.

## Materials

This research paper was prepared with reference to the primary sources like the Chronicles and secondary sources like published Myanmar books and English books from Mandalay University

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Library and History Department Library, Mandalay University. Some are from the author's collections.

### Discussion

The King who founded to Inwa for second time was Nyaungyan *Min* (1600-1606), so it was called the second Inwa Period as well as Nyaungyan Period and ruled by ten Myanmar Kings. They were Nyaungyan *Min* (AD 1599-1605), Anaukphetlun *Min* (AD 1605-1628), Thalun *Min* (AD 1629-1648), Pintale *Min* (AD 1648-1661) Pyay *Min* (AD 1661-1672) Narawara *Min* (AD 1672-1673) Minye Kyaw Htin (AD 1673-1698) Sanay *Min* (AD 1698-1714) Tanninganway *Min* (AD 1714-1733) and Hanthawaddyauk *Min* (AD 1733-1752)<sup>2</sup>

During the reign of his father, Bayinnaung, he was conferred Nyaungyan as a nappanage and was conferred again during the time of his elder brother King Nanda. During the reign of King Nanda, Kingdom of Hanthawaddy founded by Bayinnaung began to disintegrate. Nyaungyan *Min* made every endeavour for the unification of the disintegrated country. However, he passed away in 1606 and he reigned for six years only.<sup>3</sup> During his short-reign Nyaungyan *Min* reunified the country centered on Ava through the Northern Parts of Myanmar and Shan regions. Nyaungyan *Min* was full of wisdom and martial prowess. It was said that King Bayintnaung said, "My son will become the Lord of the kings as mine".<sup>4</sup>

Anaukphetlun *Min* succeeded to his father's throne. Why he is called Anaukphetlun *Min* is that he was assassinated by his son Min Ye Deibba when he stayed in the temporary place built on the western bank of Bago new creek. The word in Burmese is *Anaukphet* and *Lun* means death. Therefore he was called Anaukphetlun *Min* in history and he adopted the title of Maha Dhamma Raja which means the Righteous King. As there faced with the collapse of economy and killing due to the full of warfare people were in state of panic by hearing of news about the change of royal authority from another to one or outbreak of civil war. In order to control that situation, Anaukphetlun *Min* issued a royal order that there was no point getting into a panic about the transfer of royal authority as for this time. This order was proclaimed from on an elephant to hear all people on 28 October 1605 as follows: I, the Lord of life of people ordered that I succeeded the throne and ruled the whole country. There should be no panic and business should be carried on as usual at Shwe Wa.<sup>5</sup> It can be assumed that the king noticed not to be afraid of fear to the people.

<sup>2</sup> Twinthin Taik Wun Maha Sithu U Tun Nyo, *Maha Yazawinthat* (Nyaungyanzet), Vol.III, Yangon, Khaing Yi Mon Offset, 1997, p.gaw (Henceforth: Tun Nyo, 1997)

<sup>3</sup> Dr Than Tun, *Athitmyin Thamaing* (New Outlook on Myanmar History), 1975, p.462 (Henceforth: Than Tun, 1975)

<sup>4</sup> *Thuthawdhita Yazawintawgyi* (Chronicle of Thuthawdhita), Vol.III & IV, Yangon, Yarpayae Book House, 2015, p.67 (Henceforth: *Thuthawdhita*, 2015)

<sup>5</sup> Than Tun, 1975, 469

He continued to make the reunification of country remained since the time of his father.<sup>6</sup> During his reign, he could unite the disintegrated Myanmar. Besides, he defeated Zimme and it came under the suzerainty of Myanmar. As Anaukphetlun *Min* continued his father's unfinished task of unification he attained so many achievements.

Anaukphetlun *Min* founded as a wide country from Davoy (Dawei) in the south to Bhamaw in the north and from Kyaingyonegyi and Zimme in the east to Rakhine Mountain Ranges in the West. At the beginning of his reign, though Awa was placed as royal capital, later in AD 1613 Bago was placed as royal capital.<sup>7</sup>

After during Anaukphetlun *Min*, usurpation of throne was broke out with royal palace for succession, it was lasted for one year. Monks and people watched the Prince who succeeded the throne due to the winning for usurpation of throne that he could serve for prosperity of country or not. Thalun *Min*, son of Nyaungyan *Min* and younger brother of Anaukphetlun *Min*, ascended the throne in Bago (Hanthawaddy) in AD 1629. After ascending the throne for four years later, he was consecrated the coronation with the title of Thiri Thudhammaraja Mahadhipati. During his reign, as the country came to be peaceful he came to be known as Thalun *Min*.<sup>8</sup>

At the beginning of his reign, he advanced and attacked to Zimme where revolted against his power and then Thalun *Min* defeated and gained Zimme. A royal order issued on 27 April 1637 concerning with a large demarcation of Myanmar's area in the time of Thalun *Min* was also found. There were Kyaingyonegyi, Zimme, Linzin, in the east up to shore line of sea in the west, up to Yodaya frontier in the south and Manipuri Kathe where it was suzerainty under Akkabar, Mughul King in the north.<sup>9</sup>

After Thalun *Min* had reigned in Hanthawaddy for five years central administrative centre was moved to Ava. It was assumed for these reasons that there were rivalries of royal families on each other, uselessness of Bago River enough to arrive the ships from oversea as Bago River was formed sand-back since AD 1600 and appearance of Thanlyin as an important port.

Thalun *Min* wanted to be peaceful for country and attempted to be strengthened and integrated for his country. Therefore, during his reign, as he made the relation with neighbouring

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countries smoothly war-fares came to be less than as before. Thalun *Min* sent a diplomatic mission to Yodaya in AD 1629 and during the reign of Thiri Thudhamma Raja, Rakhine King sent the diplomats to Thalun *Min* in AD 1630 and Thalun *Min* also accepted to these diplomats warmly.

Thalun *Min* collected variety of *sittans* or inquests concerning with economics, agricultural land, towns and villages for the development of country. These *sittans* collected by Thalun *Min* are valuable to the researchers who study on the study of economy, social, politics and administration of Nyaungyan Period.

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<sup>6</sup>Thuthawdhita,2015,81-82

<sup>7</sup> Tun Nyo, 1997, Gan

<sup>8</sup> *Hman-nan Yazawintawgyi* (The Glass Palace Chronicles), Three Volumes, Yangon, Monywa Press, 2008, p.708 (Henceforth: *Hman-nan*, 2008)

<sup>9</sup> *Zabudipa U-saung-kyan* (Jabudipa in a Nutshell : An account of the Geopolitics of Myanmar), edited by Than Tun, Yangon, The Universities Press, 2005, p.63 (Henceforth: *Zabudipa*, 2005)

As mentioned above, no sooner had Thalun Min ascended the throne, royal capital was moved from Hanthawaddy to Awa.<sup>10</sup> As his predecessors, King Thalun depended on Kyaukse area (or) Ledwin Kokhayaing which was called granary of Myanmar for agriculture.

Before Thalun *Min*'s reign, as there were many war-fares population decreased. To reinforce for the decreasing of population, national races from frontier areas and hill regions were placed into these areas.

Thalun *Min* attempted to administer systematically and to be integrated for country. Since royal capital had been moved to Ava, Thalun *Min* adopted the various ways for widespread of his royal authority. In AD 1637 Thalun *Min* issued some royal orders concerning with administrative affairs and authorities in accordance with posts. At that time, records of revenue inquest were collected by royal order from various regions.

Thalun *Min* ordered to recruit 10,000 gunners, 10,000 artillery-men, 50,000 archers, 10,000 war-boats, 50,000 guard sailing boats to defend and for warfare of the country. Therefore, it can be estimated that there were many soldiers at that time.<sup>11</sup>

Principles to be followed to soldiers in the time of advance were issued, it was found in royal order proclaimed by Thalun *Min*. There were stated in these order, to avoid the killing to animals along the marching routes, not to rob the materials without knowing or giving by someone, not to quarrel and fight between each other, must be controlled their anger, proud and ignorance, not to ill-treat upon people by using their authority, not to go away from camp-site, must be placed horses and elephants near camp-site and not to waste the war expenditure.<sup>12</sup> Observing this royal order, it is obvious the attitude of Thalun *Min* upon common people and it can also be seen to the traditional rules related to the relation between armed force and common people.

In royal orders proclaimed by Thalun *Min*, it can be found that not only duties to serve and rights to enjoy for royal servicemen, officers, and chiefs of town and village were included but also the fundamental rules regarding to the common people were stated.

During the reign of Thalun *Min*, there were also designations concerning with *Asu-ahmutan* for the strengthening of administrative system. These designations were consisted of the placing of *Nay Myay*, and *Sar Myay* (Men in the king's service were given land to live and cultivate) for *Asu-ahmutan*, not to transform from one group to another, not to transform from positive group to superlative group, not to move from one village to another, working of paddy land, working of paddy land, not to serve nothing, trading, training enough to skill, not still going skillful for their services, making a list related to birth and death of male or female, person ordinate as a monk and old and disable person.

Instructions for prevention of fire hazard were also found in royal order proclaimed by Thalun *Min*. As people were careless it was faced with fire hazard from ancient time to up to now. Even though the administrative officers promulgated the instructions for the prevention of fire hazard people did not follow for it. So it was faced with the fire hazard. A royal order issued on 9 December 1639 was stated for the prevention of fire hazard that cook food only in a pit three *taung*(1,3716 metres) deep, must be cooked food only in fixed time, not to be cooked food according to willingness. After the cooking time is over, fire warders shall check

a cooking place by putting a feather in the ash and if it signs the people of that house where the feather signs, shall be sent to the court of the east to be tried and punished. Again men should not

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<sup>10</sup> Sir Arthur P. Phayre, History of Burma, Thailand, Orchid Press, 1998, p.135 (Henceforth: Phayre, 1998)

<sup>11</sup> Than Tun, 2007, 311

<sup>12</sup> Than Tun, 2007, 313

go about in the streets smoking tobacco pipes and anyone found smoking a pipe in the street shall be given 100 lashes of the whip. In order to check the instruction which the people followed or not, fire wardens shall go the round of checking five times in a day.<sup>13</sup> Thus it can be assumed that strict disciplines were adopted for the prevention of fire hazard in the time of Thalun *Min*.

During the reign of Thalun *Min*, there were three types of administrative royal servicemen, provincial administrative servicemen and military servicemen. Among them, though senior officers were appointed in accordance with their qualification, as far junior officers and chiefs of village administration were selected in accordance with the traditional rules with right hereditary, satisfaction of followers and pleasure of king.

During the reign of Thalun *Min*, Dutch established the factory at Thanlyin in AD 1635, it was the first time in Myanmar. It was aimed to wipe out the merchants from India and Portugal who monopolized the Myanmar's foreign commerce at the time. On September 1635, Thalun *Min* met with Dutch merchants at Ava royal palace. Thalun *Min* allowed trading the commodities such as ruby, zinc, lac, wax and buffalo horn for Dutch. Thalun *Min*'s foreign trade policy was that equal rights were given to alien from away country. Under administration of Thalun *Min*, Dutch competed to trade with merchants from India and Portugal in Myanmar. But Dutch wanted to monopolize upon merchants from India and Portugal. As for Myanmar Government, it was disliked. Dutch merchants did not get the chance for their will. Besides commerce were also declined without development as a various causes lastly Dutch factory was closed.

After occupying Thanlyin in the time of Anaukphetlun *Min*, Myanmar made to contact with merchants from Portugal and Malacca for commerce at Myanmar's ports and then English merchants and Dutch merchants also reached to Myanmar's port for commerce. Firstly English merchants were not interested in opening the factory in Myanmar. After closing their factories from Patani, Parlikirt, Yodaya and Herado Port in Japan in 1623, they were probably interested to open the factory at Thanlyin.

Dutch East Indian Company and English East India Company began to establish the factories in Myanmar since the time of Thalun *Min*. Dutch purchased the commodities such as gold, tin, lac, ivory, pepper and Chinese copper coins from Myanmar. Although the Dutch wanted to get "Ginzer" called by foreigner, as Myanmar's currency, Myanmar King did not allow for it. The Dutch was allowed to purchase for Myanmar's ruby, but it was a few only purchased as a disagreement of price. Goods imported by Dutch into Myanmar were clothes with pink and dark, red color made in India, red coloured cotton fibre, silk produced in Madaras and clothes produced in Bengal. Commodities such as *karamat* (bastard sandalwood), perfume and mercury were also imported to Myanmar. English established the factory in Myanmar in 1647 officially after the Dutch for 12 years.

During the reign of Pindale *Min* in 1653, Yonli, the last Emperor of Chinese Ming Dynasty, who fled due to the failure of war to Manchu, together with his soldiers, came to enter to northeastern regions of Myanmar. Although Myanmar soldiers sent by Pindale *Min*, advanced and attacked to there, the Chinese army entered and attacked seriously to the villages where situated in frontier areas of Myanmar. The Chinese army reached till to the surrounding area of Inwa and destroyed and fired to the pagodas and monasteries near Inwa and also killed the people who lived in those villages. Therefore the people fell into trouble. Pindale *Min* did not be able to control these various problems.

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<sup>13</sup> (a) Than Tun, 2007, 315-316

(b) *Achay-pya Myanma Naing-ngan-yay Thamaing* (Basic Political History of Myanmar), Yangon, Sarpay Beikman Press, 1970, p.474 (Henceforth: *Achay-pya*, 1970)



The worst problem is that Pintale *Min* allowed *Kohloketaws* (lesser wife of king below the status of a queen) to sell the rice as a business at the western gate of royal palace taking the advantage of scarce rice. Therefore, Pyay *Min* usurped the throne with the help of soldiers and people who dissatisfied with King Pintale.

Pyay *Min* solved the complicated problems occurred in the time of Pintale. It was time that rebellion of Chinese war refugees was solved to be peaceful, on the other hand invasion of Yodaya in Lower Myanmar was also pushed down. Under the administration of Pyay *Min*, there were no distinctive performances. It can be said that political situation of Myanmar was halted the development from the time of Pyay *Min* till to the rebellion of Hanthawaddy in 1740. Anyhow, it can be assumed that Pyay *Min* could afford to reach the peacefulness of country better than Pintale *Min*. While Pyay *Min* was carrying out the peacefulness of country and affairs of law and order he died in AD 1672. Thus Narawara *Min* succeeded the throne to his successor. But Narawara *Min* reigned nearly one year only and then he passed away. No records have not found about King Narawara yet so that we do not know about the condition of the country under him.

Minye Kyaw Htin ascended the throne after Narawara *Min*. Minye Kyaw Htin was selected by wise ministers as a king.<sup>14</sup> He inaugurated the *Ukin* again and again and he also accepted the changes with various titles. It was characterized by the following of an astrologer's advice with changes of his title for the failure of his any performance. His name was also recorded as Yamethin *Mingyi* and Wunbèsan *Mingyi* in history. Even Kathè under the influence of Myanmar previously, invaded to Thaungthut as there was weakness of administrative qualities.

Oversea trade developed during the reign of Sanay *Min*. Besides, there was also mutual diplomatic relations with Mughul King. It could be carried out just only for peaceful situation of country. Thus, it can be assumed that the condition of country under King Sanay was better than from those of King Pyay and king Pintale.

Portend of doom for Nyaungyan Dynasty began to occur since the time of Taininganway *Min*. Natural disasters such as flooding and earthquake were also occurred one after another. There was outbreak of fire case on 20 April 1730. Consequently, royal palace was totally burned. Again Kathè entered to attack by taking the advantage of opportunity. Even though the efficient King could control these events successfully, for an inefficient king, it could be faced difficulties.

Mahadhammarajadipati succeeded the throne after Taininganway *Min*, was not a harsh king, he was full of knowledge related to literature and practiced to favour to his royal servicemen. Although there were unrest of robbers and thieves, the king did not take the action to them and ignored for it. Therefore there were occurrences of unrest all over the country. As the king ignored the tasks of administration situation of country came to worsen and the works of paddy land were deteriorated year by year. Thus paddy for supplied food was scarce and many people went into trouble. When the Kyaukse area was fallen the hand of Banyadala in 1751 it was faced with the difficulties to get the paddy for Inwa people. The situation of the kingdom had become so critical and the last king Mahadhammaraza Dipati was captured by the King of Bago and Nyaungyan Dynasty was ended.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Phayre, 1988,140

<sup>15</sup> *Achay-pya*, 1970,430

### **Conclusion**

During the reign of Nyaunyan *Min* and Anaukphetlun *Min* they attempted to reunite for disintegrated country. King Thalun made endeavours within country being stability and prosperity. In the time of successors after Thalun *Min* could not maintain law and order of country. It was exposed the lack of qualification for rulers, as a result, internal and external dangers were appeared again and again.

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