Lustig, Friedrich V. Burmese classical poems


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# BURMESE CLASSICAL POEMS 

SELECTED<br>and<br>\section*{TRANSLATED}<br>by

The Most Rev. FRIEDRICH V. LUSTIG
Buddhist Archbishop of Latvia
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## 筑URMESE CLASSICAL POEMS

SNEECHED<br>and<br>TRANSLATED

by

The Most Rev. FRIEDRICH V. LUSTIG Duilhiat trehteshop at Latpic:

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To knowidge:
".... we acquire knowlodge by giving and receiving."

Robert, King of Naples
(as quoted by Petrarch. C.E. 1304-1.374)

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A young Burmese Upazin (monk) who was one of the first pupils in my American Conversation classes later introduced my husband and me to his Guru, The Most Reverend Friedrich V. Lustig, whom we found to be a most interesting expounder on Burmese culture, the Burmese way of life and Buddhism.

Having lived midst many different cultures for long periods of time The Reverend Lustig's background is such that he brings to any cultural discussion a broad symphony of understanding. He was born in Estonia in 1912, studied Oriental Languages under Professor Sylvain Levi at the College de France in Paris, and joined the Buddhist order in Latvia at the age of eighteen. He has traveled extensively in the Far East having spent quite some time in China and Thailand. For the last seventeen years he has been living in exile in Burma, a country in which he is deeply interested. (I) In May of 1962 after the demise of his Guru, The Most Reverend Archbishop Tennisons, The Reverend Lustig was elevated as Archbishop of Latvia by His Holiness the Dalai Lama who is now living in exile in India.

In the course of our discussions with the Reverend Lustig we found that he enjoyed interpreting Burmese poetry and so we encouraged him to set down a number of his translations of Burmese classical poems. This he did in conjunction with Reverend Eindawuntha and other monks of his acquaintance.

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We shared these interpretations among Burmese and foreign friends. Much interesting discussion ensued and many people urged us to share these poems with all and this we decided to do.

We then set to work in earnest and had to decide on such issues as strict line and style translation versus interpretation of ideas and opted for this latter approach as we felt it would prove more interesting to most foreigners. To Burmese scholars and philologists we leave the more important academic tasks of analysis of style, comparison of various translations, and the presentation of a compilation of all Burmese poems that lend themselves to translation. For the "armchair" translators we have included the Burmese Text so that they might have the enjoyment of improving upon our work.

As any student of a foreign language soon learns, there are many ways of expression in his own language which do not have exact equivalents in other languages due to differences in climate, culture, philosophy, religion, and history. These differences are perhaps most difficult to overcome when moving from a philosophically oriented Buddhist script language to the theocentrically based International English language used by most world travelers today.






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We are indebted to many Burmese and foreigners who helped and who gave their time and ideas: particularly to Mrs. John W. Neave for her assistance in helping us to achieve a smoother presentation in English, to Professor U E Maung for his helpful suggestions, to U San Maung for his independent transhations which we used to check against The Reverend Lustig's, to Daw Dolly Khaing for the typing of the Burmese sections, to my Burmese gardener who disagreed with the botany books, and most of all to those who have read the manuscript and given their suggestions. Certainly our iesults are a composite effort and many points strongly argued had to be compromised and will be disputed.

We know from reading Burmese English language newspapers for the past three years that there is probably no more interesting subject in Burma than that of the proper interpretation of Pali and of poetical Burmese into modern Burmese or into International English. And quite obviously no interpretation of a poem in any other language of sounds can give the exact true flavor and meaning as in its own language of sounds but one can try. And in the trying perhaps we may encourage others to try and we shall all gain from our further mutual understanding.

Margaret M. Kardell, Advisory Editor.

October 31, 1966.

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## FOREWORD

Poetry enobles a person and elevates him above his petty environment. It can guide a wavering mind through the daily rough course of life to a safer position. And, in a way, it can make our everyday life a thing of beauty.

Only poetic, elevated emotions, stirring the imagination of all, can lay bare the meaning of a culture. For this reason I am attracted by Burmese lyrical art and find the poetry of Burma irresistible.

Apart from universal human themes, ever present in Burmese poetry is an intense expression of a spiritual way of life and the ethical experience. The profound active humanism of the common man is verbally outlined in a form which often turns their poetry into music. That is why the Burmese lyrical art with centuries-old traditions, rich and variegated, arouses a wondering and eager interest.

Burmese poetry has for me a quite special significance. A people of rich and responsive human sympathy, the Burmese are very gifted as a race. They built Pagan, a striking testimony to their spiritual insight. A nation which has such capacity possesses inexhaustible possibilities.



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In translating these Burmese poems I have tried to catch the correct meaning and to remain scrupulously faithful to the author's expressions. But to see what a poet or poetess saw passing before his or her mind's eye when the original lines were composed, is something which cannot be solved like a mathematical formula. I worked patiently and conscientiously, and am grateful to Rev. Eindawuntha, a Buddhist monk of Bawdigone Kyaung, Rangoon, who offered counsel to me in analysing the most perplex metrical lines; and to Maung Aung Khin for his practical assistance.

The Burmese patterns of intonation and well recognized melodic phrases of the times obviously governed the original compositions. Today to decipher such particular words or groups of words sometimes makes one uncomfortable, because Burmese word arrangements may often express more than one meaning. Also during the last two centuries or so the Burmese language has been greatly enriched by the accession of new words and new meanings due to scientific advancement. In the process a large number of old words and arrangements have become obsolete; and the Burmese reader often has a present understood meaning quite different from the original. Some of the difficulties encountered in translating older poems stem directly from these circumstances.






## 

I shall consider my labor amply rewarded if these translated Burmese lyrics prove interesting to today's foreigners and help them share, even in a very small degree, the innermost thoughts and feelings of the talented Burmese people.

Friedrich V. Lustig (Ashin Ananda), Buddhist Archbishop of Latvia, Sangharaja for Estonia, Latvia \& Lithuania, Great Shwedagon Pagoda, Rangoon.

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## SHORT PIPE

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A pipe...a puff...
    short as a finger...
    I give you
    for smoking.
"If I do not take it
    you will think me crude
    If I accept it
    you will think I like you.
If you want me
    to smoke it
    put it near the bed,
    my dear one."
```

Mae Khwe.

Mae Khwe was the daughter of the Mayor of Sittaung and she was married to a Maung Swe. When King Bodopaya (Bodawphaya) ascended the throne in 1782 C.E., Mae Khwe became a Court Poetess.
C.E. means Christian Era.

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## LU-GA-LAY

Oh little boy crying!<br>I would I could<br>Catch you a pigeon<br>White, blue or black<br>Oh little boy<br>How hard it is<br>To catch a pigeon<br>White, blue or black.

A lullaby.
Author unknown.

Lu-ga-lay may be translated young son or little boy as the song although originally sung by those caring for small princes is now sung in the same fashion by modern mothers and fathers.

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## MOUNTAINS AND FORESTS

Ah... beautiful...
The mountains
The forests
The quivering buds
The trees caressing one another.
The birds frolicking with joy!

Author unknown.

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## THE MONTH OF TABAUNG

On mountain tops sweet $n w e-k y o$ creepers
Bloom midst other blooms
And thabye leaves and pet-sut flowers
Are once again pure bright colors.

On the Festival of Tabaung
Tharaphi and gangaw open into flower
And fragrance pervades everywhere
On Mount Popa.

Author unknown.

For more detailed information on flowers and trees see page 38 .
The Festival of Tabaung is on the full moon day of March which is the last lunar month (February-March) in the Burmese calendar.
Mount Popa is over $4,000^{\prime}$ above sea level and lies in Central Burma near the ancient city of Pagan.

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## THE GOLDEN-YELLOW PADAUK

In the month of Tagu
From emerald green leaf-clusters Bloom forth golden-yellow flowers.

Truly what other flowers
Can compare with these in beauty
There in padauk's cool breezy shade
Where the flow of sweat ceases
At the entrance to Nanda Cave-
Retreat of the Pacceka Buddha.
During one month in a year
During one day in that month
During that Day for the Buddha
Padauk blooms forth in the forest.
Summertime!
The time of Thingyan has arrived.
And glorious is the golden pollen
Mistily blown from padauk
And spreading its fragrance
Along forest roads.
No one can describe all the marvels
Of this royal flower
Padauk!
U Kyaw.

U Kyaw flourished in the reign of King Mindon (1853-1878 C.E.)
Tagu is the first Burmese lunar month (part of April and of May).
Nanda Cave is a mythological name for a cave supposedly situated somewhere in a jungle and to which no ordinary being has access. Only super beings-Buddha, Pacceka Buddhas, and Nat Spirits or the like-may stay in this cave. Pacceka Buddha is a Buddha who has attained enlightenment but who does not preach to the world.

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## CARVED BULLOCK-CART

> In his carved bullock-cart He takes his girl to the pwe
> Many are the beautiful girls In his village district; Some are better dressed Than the girls in town And as they go to the pwe Sitting up front in the carts Attention they attract With their blue, black And violet hued kerchicfs Round their necks And small satin stoles On their shoulders.

Each young man and his girl Snugly sitting side by side.

As the cart from behind Overtakes the cart in front Bells of wood and metal ring; Young men yell across to each other Racing with their carts Moving abreast of one-another One cart on the road The other close-by.

A $p w e$ is a stage performance including music, dancing repartee, singing and folk opera. Most of the poems included in this book were first heard by the Burmese people at some pwe.


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To be first at the town's entrance
And to be first at the pwe means praise And to be first means a better place. The boy is excited - he must try hardNo longer distant is the place.

Proud is he of his bullocksPurchased for over a hundred kyats. And proud are his perfect bullocks With their white-spotted foreheads. Restrain them with reins And bullocks look skywardAnd the pace suffersSo slacken the reins.

U Ya Kyaw.

U Ya Kyaw gained celebrity in the reign of King Thibaw (1878-1885 C.E.). U Ya Kyaw was considered a master of realism.

The kyat is the Burmese monetary unit.

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## SONG OF THE FOREST

Fragrant and fresh
Are the whole branches
Brimming with new life;
Brilliant are the leaves
All golden lights.
Pleasant are the forests
At Thingyan's festival time.

One delights to see
Lingpya birds building nests;
To hear cuckoos in pairs
Making heavenly melodies; and
To see a parakeet's lovely airs
Makes a maiden long to
To feed him in a cage .
"Oh darling!
Catch him without delay
He is about to fly away."

Princess Hlaing-Teik-Khaung-Tin,

Princess Hlaing-Teik-Khaung-Tin (1833-1875 C.E.) was a gifted poetess and musician as well as one of the most beautiful women at the Mandalay Court. She married the younger brother of King Mindon and was therefore the consort of the Heir Apparent of the Court.

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## SEA SNAILS

If you meet<br>If you see<br>You believe.<br>So quaint to see<br>On curved sea shores<br>Clusters of snails<br>Whites, reds, yellows and blues<br>Moving and displaying themselves,<br>Some golden penholders<br>Others hard iron traps<br>Still others-fairies' hairpins.<br>Oh? Hermit crabs!<br>Coming here or going there And everywhere<br>Attention attracting<br>By borrowing<br>Empty sea snail shells<br>To live in them<br>And move about in them.<br>Bizarre indeed are these.

U Kyin U.

U Kyin U wrote poems and enjoyed great renown in the reigns of King Bagyidaw (1819-1837), King Tharrawaddy (1837-1846 C.E.) and King Pagan (1846-1853 C.E.).

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## THE ROYAL KASON

As the hot season Revolts against the coldIn the pattern of contrastsThe firmament becomes cloudy And winds are hot again.
It is summer.
Leaves on trees turn yellow, To fall-to show new leaves-
Stems twist or break, yet Sprouts on tama trees Are now soft greens Like parrot eggs.

While in summer trees thirst
In foothills thazin flowers
Are climbing thabye trees
Effusing fragrance
Mixing with the wafting air.
At sunset crow-pheasants are cooing, And from afar come the cuckoo's notes. Now and again thunder is beating
Through heaven's expanses
Like lambara and deindi drums.
And I... Oh, I think Of the pouring of water On the Bodhi tree And of the absent companion In the Golden Palace of Victory, And I am mournful.

U Kyaw.
Kason is the Burmese second lunar month (May) and its full-moon day is the day on which the Buddha was born, obtained enlightenment, and on which he also passed away.
Bodhi tree is the tree under which Buddha obtained enlightenment.

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## JASMINE

When jasmine
Is not in bloom
In palace gardens
Courtiers must Bedeck themselves With kan flowers.

When jasmine Is in full bloom In Mandalay's
Palace gardens Courtiers never Adorn themselves With kan flowers.

Then kan flowers
Find favor only
Among villagers.

U Ponnya.

U Ponnya was known as the best of the poets in the reign of King Mindon (1853-1878 C.E.). The King gave U Ponnya a noble title and some land as a fief.

Jasmine has a sweet odor and is beautiful whereas kan flowers although beautiful have no odor.

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Listening, thinking, questioning, answering Examining, writing, practicing, and memorizingDaily these eight disciplines need wearing As one wears flower garlands.

Constantly, with a spirit of competition and
With diligence the beginner in fundamontal lore
Must praclice recitation...and
If he tries as hard as ever he can
He will become a famous learned man.

If one does not try with the eagerness
Of a daring eagle that firmly catches a hen;
If one does not study and ponder,
Does not question and does not discuss, and
If one cannot give a discourse-
Knowing only how to read palm leaves-
How can one become a well-known man of letters?

Like a cat eating a shrimp with special enjoyment
A learner must study all texts-omitting none-
And he must learn all by heart.
He must become sharp as teeth of a saw
Penetrating deeply into all discussed matters.
Thus reaching comprehension
Indelible as a stone inscription.

Then when perfect in understanding
He will be ready to say all by heart.
Then on any matter at any public concourse
He will be ready to give a perfect discourse,
To unravel the subject from beginning to end,
Without fear-like a lion-
To stand in the midst of the crowd,
Like a pillar of stone unshaken,
Going over into every detail
And replying to all without fail.









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He must be familiar with verses in Pali, Various forms of address and old difficult words, He must know the meanings and formations
Of elements, use of metaphors and versification, Grammatical method and annotation, And how to reason forwards and backwards. Then if he knows all this he will have recognition. He will be celebrated in this life as a man of erudition.
In future rebirths in this Samsara
He will come near Buddha Arya Maitreya.
Then for him not too far distant will be Nirvana.

Shin Maharattathara.

Shin Maharattathara (1468-1529 C.E.) was a famous Buddhist monk.
Written in the sixteenth century, this poem reflects the spirit of scholasticism. However, laying stress on thoroughness as it does, it has a message for our age as well. (F.L.) Samsara is the phenomenal world, the repeating round of births and deaths.
Buddha Arya Maitreya is the expected Buddha of the future.

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## MILITARY MARCH

> We are not afraid of anything!
> We are daring and brave
> Ready to sacrifice our lives With Parpahein marching to the royal city On this day fixed as the day of victory.

At our camp in the forest Verdant are the branches Full of small flower buds; Siveet are the sounds Of the military drums and gongs In the soft evening's twilight.

Just as mists and clouds are dispersed So too must we destroy our enemy
The elder brother Zeyathein.

U Kyin U.

Zeyathein is an imaginary prince, an heir apparent, and one of the chief characters of U Kyin U's play entitled "Parpahein Pyazat". In the denouement of the drama Zeyathein is being attacked by Parpahein, Zeyathein's younger brother, and in the fighting loses his throne to his younger brother. The above excerpt is of course only a small part of the whole play. (F.L.)

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## FOREST FLOWERS

Budding branches sway daintily in the winds
Blooming forth into abundance.
Red-dappled white flowers of nan-tha
And blooms of sandalwood
Sweetly scent the foothills.
Summertime ends
But it is not yet the season of rains.

From the ground below Rises khatta's overwhelming perfume While from above Jasmine's small swinging branches Send down their fragrance.

Climbing the forest trees
Khabaung flowers sway in the wind Like rain-soaked silver strands.
Later in the rains their stems too Will be all a silver hue.

And in the valleys
Surprisingly charming too
Are the strange flowers
Called by the villagers
Crocodile flowers.

U Kyaw.

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## DEARLY LOVED SON

With the army
She has entrusted him, Her dearly beloved son, She must not pity him.

On the way to Thailand
Many are the rising rivers and streams
Violent are the rains and strong is the storm. But his own mother has agreed, "Let him die...(if need be)..."
"In my heart too, No distress lingers."

Historical song.
Author unknown,
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## RAIN

When soft breezes blow
Rate fragrance spreads
From the saga flowers
Growing on the not far-of
Mountain of the Giants Palace.
Dark becomes the horizon Enveloping us from the south in gloom. Melancholy assails my heatt.

Oh, Rain God, do not cause us sorrow! Do not cause us sorrow, Frain down and All the cight directions will look gloomy. And the rain will sadden us in many ways.

Myavati Mingyi U Sa.

Myavati Mingyi U Sa (1766-1853 C.E.) was not only a great poet but also one of the most remarkable creators and preservers of Bumese music. He is the composer of the celebrated Humachana Thachingan.

The eight directions are N., E.,S., W., and NE., NW., SE.. and SW.

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## TAKE TO HEART

## (A Father's Admonition to His Son)

With this poem
Let me give you, my son,
A parent's admonition--
A true garland of emerald flowers-
As useful to you
As your right hand.

The love in my heart
For you my son
Is like a mountain of gold.
So listen carefully
To the not to be lost heritage
Which is Good Conduct.

Traditional knowledge,
My dear son, you must master.
For if you do not acquire knowledge
You will be like spilt water-
Not a whole man-
And you will feel shame.
Repenting ten times over
You will grow pale of face
And in the world lack good place.
Like monkeys in the forest,
Who have hands and feet too,
You will be a wasted ragged fellow -
A useless purposeless man.
As a man of no solid substance-
By others held in contempt-
Ashamed you will be, dear boy.

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Therefore from childhood,
My dear son, it is necessary
To learn about all human matters:
To stay in school firmly and to study,
To read as told,
To write as told,
To ask as told,
To reply as told,
To sit as told,
To rise as told,
To stoop as told,
To use what told,
To change as told,
To partake of food and drink as told,
To address persons as told
To behave as told,
To approach persons as told,
And to honor lovingly
Your teacher as directed.

Beloved son,
Do not forget all this
Your Father's message.
Mentally note it,
Carefully heed it,
Keep it deep in your heart.

Let me say more,
So it will be indelibly
Written in your heart.
Listen gladly!

Do not make friendships with drifters, Pleasure-seeking low-thinking men,
Or vapid men seeking only evil.
When sometimes these types come near you Seeming to befriend you or in play
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Keep away from them, -
At a distance stay,
Then your welfare
Perfect will be
Dearest son!

Without fail<br>Try to do everything Just as instructed.<br>Do not push aside<br>Your Father's speech.<br>Take it gladly<br>And live by it.

This is cognizance, My son.

Sahton Sayadaw.
(Buddhist monk, probably 18th, Cent. C.E.)

## Gossons






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## MYA MAN SETKYA

The royal steamer Man Mya Setkya Now proudly flying for the King His own Golden Peacock flag Makes her way to Mandalay
Carrying durian fruits
To the King.
To accompanying echoes
Of whistles and trumpets
Steadily on steams Mya Man Setkya
Days beyond Hanthawaddy
Until finally at dusk
Samalauk village is scen.
From Samalauk village on upstream
To the mainstream-IrrawaddyShe continues making her way.
On through the night she steams
Her captain and crew, oblivious
To beautiful passing scenes,
Thinking only of reaching
Their next stop on the stream.
Even at the secret time near dawn She moves on. And from the river Rebounds to villages sounds of her Revving engines rending the skies. Just below Kanaung town at dusk
The anchor is dropped at last
And now the captain and crew
May sleep and rest.

## U Ponnya.

U Ponnya is understood to have written this poem while traveling upstream on the Mya ManSetkya-a steam vessel that had been presented to King Mindon (reign 1853-1878 C.E.) by the British then in control of Lower Burma. The Burmese historian U Tin Ohn, the author of the "Biography of Yo Atwin Wun U Po Hlaing", claims that the plan of the British was to kidnap King Mindon while the King was inspecting the imposing interior of the first-class ship given to him as a present. However, King Mindon fearing the danger (he was forewarned by Minister U Po Hlaing) refused to go on board the Mya Man Setkya. (F.L.)
Hanthawaddy is the name of the district in which Rangoon is and was located.

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## PRESENT OF A CHEROOT

The cheroot leaves
I do not buy, but pluck myself.

I do not dry them on the fire I do not spread them in the sun. But for your smokingI dry them under my bedclothing. And with my teeth I trim These aromatic leaves.

The cheroot I do not bind with silk But with common cotton thread To give it truly to you, My youthful lover in Ava.

Mae Khwe.
"Youthful lover" can also be translated sweetheart from childhood.
Ava was the capital of the Burmese Kingdom of Ava.

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## A PEASANT

Rainy season it is!
And when it rains
Happily husband and wife-
In red cotion turbans,
And tattered pasols and aingyis-
Carry along their children
Rain-wet and without clothes
Body warm in their arms.
A short pipe between his teeth-
The peasant ploughs his field;
And in his rice fields
Are water-filled holes
Homes of many small crabs.
Tossing these into his shoulder basket
Together with frogs, snails,
Su-pou plants, kazoon and kin-bon leaves,
And pilo-all for his curry-
Stoopingly he goes back home.
Sweet and juicy is the curry
Cooked on arrival and laid out quickly
With kyan-hing and kywet-na vegetables.
The rice is hot
And the curry is hot
With pungent Shan chillies
That make one suck tht, tht, tht.
Scooping sizable handfuls,
Bending he eats-
Surrounded on all sides
By robust sons and grandsons
Of these happy parents.
Wungyi Padethayaza.
Wungyi Padethayaza was born in Ava in 1672 and died in Syriam in 1752. He fiourished at the Court of Ava in the reign of King Sane (1698-1714 C.E.) during whose reign he was a Minister. He later lived in exile in Lower Burma. His tomb stands on the northern slopes of Kyaikkhauk Pagoda in Syriam.
Pasoh is another word for longyi which is the fubular skirt worn by both men and women in Burma.
Aingyis are the blouse like jackets worn by the Burmese.

19


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## PADDY PLANTING SONG

No need to pay the goldsmith! From the palm tree comes our gold! Rolled palm leaves are our earrings Chains of flowers are our necklaces.

Pleasant to look at are weThe well-mannered rural folk From the village of Aung Pin Lay Near golden Mandalay.

Rather shortish are our skirts And our cotton jackets Are dyed from bark of trees. Yet fine and tidy are our seams.

Our cheeks are smartly thanaka'd. And As we move swaying from left to right Our braids shine like buffalo-horns. Our beauty is all from nature. And Even our hair we adorn only With white mayo flowers.

Author inknown.

Thanaka is a pounded power made from thanaka tree bark and even smaller branches. This dust is then used as a powder or a paste, as a cosmetic, an astringent, a medicinal application, and/or as a decoration and sun screen for the face.

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II





## I AM LONGING

Gilt glass filtered moon rays
Light my stately diamond-studded couch Where alone I hear the drum's sweet sound Announce the third watch of the night. Dawn is no longer far-off.

On my thazin scented couch
Alone I await your coming.
Hands to my forehead
I cannot but muse
Over all that has passed
And I am filled with pensive sadness.

On oath you promised never to shun me Always to be loyal to me Solemnly you swore, "If I become King I shall make you my Queen.
Even if a Goddess tried to seduce me, Never would I surrender to her."
$j^{3}$








ญรจบำํํำ

"In coronation's splendid display I shall give to you the place of chief Queen With eight Brahmins and many pages attending you And at the time of libation's ceremonial I shall cause ail men to worship you."

I believed you and gave you my love.
Now...how different is your manner. Oh, Prince of Kanaung how stern is your face. Where is the former brightness of your face? Where are the loving caresses You so fondly showered on me? Oh, Prince of Kanaung.

Princess Hlaing-Teik-Khaung-Tin. (1833-1857 C.E.)

This is only part of a very long song sung originally by Peincess Hlaing-Teik-Khaung-Tin supposedly while waiting for her husband to return to her chamber. The sequel is that he finally hears her sweet voice, remembers her and comes back again to her from an ajoining chamber.

## 



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II


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## LOVE IN SECRET ENCOUNTERED

By chance
Secretly I fell in love
With a lovely girl,
Emerald fresh,
And of gentle birth.
As a consequence
I had to grapple with
Grief vaster than the sea.
My life is unbearable.
First pretending to love me
This maiden was like a cock
Courting round a hen;
Then suddenly she flaunted off.
In many ways she broke the trust
So naively placed in her.
How wrongly I believed in her.
It wasn't true love, just pretense.
She loves me not, all is in vain.
But for this lovely garland
Containing many sweet smelling flowers,
Not long shall I wait
To be decorated with it.
I am a man of sufficient worth.
Soon the time will come
As comes floresence of all plants
And I shall have a true love.
Ah no! My dear young lady
You are not made of jewels.
You vain and conccited girl
I have not long to wait.
Maung Thwa.
(Date unavailable, probably second Konbaung period 1818-1885).

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"२ి: $\mathfrak{n}^{\circ}$ ?"

U Kyi rose to fame at the Court of King Tharrawadd (1837-46 C.E.) who for the second time in Burmese histor moved the capital to Amarapura. U Kyi was a poe with a great command of imagery, he speaks of the thing, on which the world is forever pivoted. (F.L.)
Sit-sali are whistling teal and Mauklin are like coot.

## I WOULD SMILE

```
Round our village
How pleasing
To see
Growing in profusion
Lai-ka-nyo creepers
Living among
The paddy rows
With blue khatauk
lts fragrance
Filling the air.
Surrounded here
By such beauty
I cannot help
Missing my lover.
Oh, how lovely
The beautiful
Kazoon creepers
Rocking gently
On the water;
And in the fields
Blue water hens
Mauklin, and
Sit-sali birds
Are billing
And cooing.
Poor me!
Here alone
Midst this beauty
With my lover away
I am overcome
With sadness.
Now too,
The sky is overcast
Thunder heralds rain.
Yet if my lover
Were here
I would smile.
```


## [








 శ్విడ Mim



## NOBLE WISDOM $^{2}$

To the Three Noble Jewels! And To Mother, Father and Teacher! To these Six with pure faith Respectfully having paid homage, I shall compose into casy verses, So we may learn orally The text Lokaniti, so full of lore, Yet so difficult in Pali. From Lokaniti's maxims Much wisdom will all receive. It will be like admonition From one ripe in years, A parent, a teacher and a good friend. Then vastly learned one will become: Full of knowledge and insight Harvesting benefits untold, One's name will shine as the purest gold.
(contd.)

The Three Noble Jewels mean the Buddha (the Enlightened one), the Dhamma (the Teachings of the Buddha, Doctrine, Truth, Law, Norm), and the Sangha (the Buddhist Order, Community, Ecclesia).
Lokaniti or "The Ways of the World"-and the right conduct relating to them -is a collection of excerpts from various Pali treatises. The collection consists of seven chapters and its maxims are piercing and enthralling. "The Noble Wisdom" is only a small part of the Lokaniti. Chaturinga Bala and later Nemyo Min Tin Kyaw Khaung rendered into Burmese verse the whole text of this celebrated work.
Pali is the language used in Buddhist sacred writings.











20.



Study and acquire recorded knowledge So full of treasured benefits.
Be lazy and where will be knowledge?
Without knowledge where is wealth?
And for one without wealth
There will be no loving friends.
When there are no friends
Where is happiness?
When there is unhappiness
How will you do good deeds?
Again, when there are no good deeds,
How will you get to Nirvana?
In this world the best friend
Is knowledge firmly acquired.
That, no thief can steal away.
And in your next existence too
Knowledge will follow you
And happiness bring you.
All mankind note this way
(Follow it each day.)

> Chaturinea Bala and Nemyo Min Tin Kyaw Khaung.

Chaturinga Bala lived in the tith, century C.E. and Nemyon Min Tin Kyaw Khaung in the igin. century. The former wrote his "Lokaniti" in Pali verses and the latter later rendered it into melodious Purmese poetical language. Born in Prome district, Shaturinga Bala distinguished himself in the reign of King Ngah Sih Shin Kyawswa of Pinya (1342-1350 C.E.) and after that served as Home Minister to King Leh Sin Shin (also known as Thihathu) who reigned 1350-1359 C.E.)
Nemyo Min Tin Kyaw Khaung rose to fame in the reign of King Thibaw (1878-1885 C.E.) as a cignificant contributor to Burmese aesthetic thought.

## ิीक్षి




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## DONATIONS

## (Dana)

"Unsimilar is human destiny. At the time true religion is no more Some will still be full of faith And desirous of giving in charity;
Though they will see no worthy recipients
Yet with genuine devotion
They will give gifts
To those they do not like And the result will be poor."
Thus spoke Buddha to Angura Deva.

He who does not urge other men
To do meritorious deeds,
But practices his largess alone,
Will in future rebirths
Have many possessions
But no attendants at all.

He who gives and urges others
To give things in charity
Will be reborn rich
Surrounded by numerous attendants
And holding vast possessions.
He will be a shining moon
In the assembly of men.

He who earnestly exhorts others
To give donations freely,
While himself offering nothing, In future rebirths will be Deficient in material belongings Yet many attendants and relatives Sons and grandsons will be
In his entourage.

91





> Whosoever Neither himself is munificent Nor urges others to be Will encounter evil fate Alter his body's dissolution:

Never feeling satiated, Scarcely finding eating plants, Showing hunger day and night. He will become a hungry spiritMeeting all kinds of misery.

Shin Tezuthara<br>(Date umavalable)

The Buddhists believe that munificence (the giving of gifts) is one of the highest and most noble virtues. Charity (in Pali Dana) always leads to happy rebirths on carth or in a heaven of the Dovas (Gods). In the practice of giving the Burmese excel other nationalities. (F.L.)
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## REMORSE

To gain the prize of Illumination I have made up my mind. Then I shall have liberation From the bondage of craving (Tanha) The all consuming darkness
Of ignorance (Avijja-asava).
Seeking a womb for rebirth In other after-death conditions Many times I have experienced Different forms.
But in whatever sphere Never can it be pure.

Thus no longer do I seek a consort, Satiated with a layman's life, I renounce it all and go To muse in the Dhamma cave.

U Khaing.

The Dhamma cave is a cave for meditation.

## ¢까키








## PAINFUL AS IT IS

Painful as it is...
Let me state my trouble.
How full of anguish most dire Is one tormented by Universal Fire. As if seven suns blazed fiercely Equally burning is pain the world-round. Nowhere can a cool spot be found.
My heart's trouble seems a death agony.
But presently beautiful maidens appear. "If you want to alleviate my pain, Sprinkle me with rose scented rain."

U Kyaw Thamee.

Poetess UKyaw Thamee was a daughter of the poct U Kyaw who lived in the reign of King Mindon (1853-1878 C.E.) and who had received unanimous acclaim as a poet of extraordinary talent.

By Universal Fire is meant the catastrophic fire which will destroy and consume our universe at the end of the Kalpa according to Buddhist beliefs.
Kalpa is the "World Age" or "World Cycle" extending to millions of years.

P9

## - โిడియ




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II

## NO COOLING OF ANGUISH

In human life
We meet constant renewal.
Slowly like tree-cotton
Burning without ceasing
Day after tomorrow and the next
One day after another day
Descends upon us
But there is no cooling of anguish.
Though the sun and the moon
Will not change in the future
Always shall I seek succor
And seeking it I shall fret.
My anguish I try to forget.
But no!
Day after day anguish lingers;
My tears run in a steady flow.
"Oh, softly dry them one by one
With the best cloth of Bassein."

U Kyaw Thamee.

## 
















## THE NATURE OF THINGS

(Release from Anger)
Often a man suffers destruction In order that another man Might enjoy well-being. Such is the nature of things!

A courtier's satisfaction
In enjoying kingly confidences
In golden palaces
And a King's own good fortune Are merely bubbles
On the surface of a vast ocean
Momentary and evanescent.
If dictated by commiseration
I were to be released
And freed from execution
I would not escape Death.
Inseparable am I from Karma
All sentient beings
Being subject to dissolution.
Respectfully I salute His Majesty.
Should I again meet my Lord the King
In one of my future rebirths
In the cycle of Samsara
Begrudging him nothing
I would lovingly forgive him.
Impermanent is my body of blood.
Anantasuriya.
Anantasuriya was a chief minister in the Kingdom of Pagan under King Naratheinka (C.E. 1170-1173). When as a resulh of a palace revolution Naratheinka's brother Narapatisithu seized the throne, Anantasuriya was ordered to be executed. On the eve of his death he wrote this classical poem entitled "Dhammata" (The Nature of Things), which is one of the literary treasures of the world. (F.L.)
Karma can loosely be translated as destiny as ordained by the ethical consequences of one's acts in previous existences. Samsara is as explained before the cycle of deaths and rebirths until Nirvana is reached.

## 


J. my Juşoni: \|
















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U Wun and U Thein Han
9. Zasodaw myā atthuppatti

Bo-gyi Ba Thaung

## BOTANICAL GLOSSARY

## PAGES

Bodhi (Bawdi)<br>Nyaung Bawdi<br><br>Gangaw ต่ธmร

Kan flower วัญc

| Kazoon creepers mईీ,9ీ? | 23, 28 | Watercress Ipomea leaves |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Khabaung vine or (Kabaung) leaves วْธulદ. | 15 | Calamus longisetus |
| Khabaung tree | 15 | Strychnos nux blanda |
| Khatauk flowers (Kandauk) จ๘つวगई | 28 | Thalictrum foliolosum |

Khatta flowers 15 Eurycles amboinensis

Mansonia gagei

Acacia concinna DC. Acacia rugata-Lam

$$
\begin{aligned}
& \text { Lai-ka-nyo } \\
& \text { (Lai-ka-nyun) } \\
& \text { cownerico }
\end{aligned}
$$

| Mayo | 24 | Milk weed <br> Calotropis procera |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |


| Mayo gyi | 24 | Calotropis gigantea <br> Mi－chaung vine |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Migyaung <br> Qomjc： | 15 | Crocodile flower <br> Derris scandens |


| Nan－tha | 15 | Milletia ovalifolia |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Natha |  |  |
| \＄이 |  |  |


| $\begin{aligned} & \text { Natha-pyu } \\ & \text { soำว品 } \end{aligned}$ | 15 | Milletia piseidia |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Natha－ni | 15 | Red sanders |
|  |  | Pterocarpus santalinos |

Nwe－gyo（kyo）
4 Burma liquorice
Thurbergia laurifolia
รัพิ์
Padauk
5 Pterocarpus macrocarpus
¿ஃ๐ววศ
Pet－sut
०ֹロロロ
Pilo
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Sabe
©ous
Saga flowers 17 Michelia champaca

Su-pou
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Accacia pinnata

The Persian lilac-Pride of China, India.
Azadirachta indica-A Juss
Eugenia spp.

Laurel-Alexandrian
Callophyllum amvenum-Wall kunstlevi-King parkavi-Fischer

Orchid Bulbophyllum spp.

Burmese words for trees, shrubs, and flowers, often differ in different sections of the country. Naturally a single Burmese name will often apply to a great number of different latin botanica! names and at this late date it is a little difficult to be positive just which specific latin-named plant a poet was seeing in his mind's eye. The above list was compiled with the help of some Burmese botanists and from the following:

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IL Lustig, Friedrich V.
                                Burmese classical poems
L87
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[^0]:    (1) In 1952 the Government of the Union of Burma published a musical collection entited "Classical Burmese Music"-Prepared For Piano By the Right Rev. Friedrich W. A. Lustig. After The Piano Piesentation By Saya Myaing Under The Supervision of U Po Lat, Secretary, Ministry of Union Culture.

