

Europeans, Trade, and the Unification of Burma, c. 1540–1620

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The sixteenth century saw a singular transformation in the political structure of the Irrawaddy valley. This region, the core of modern Burma, had originally known a limited degree of political unity under the empire of Pagan, whose Buddhist florescence represented an embryonic synthesis between Burmese and Mon cultural traditions. In the aftermath of the Mongol invasions of the late thirteenth century, however, the Pagan empire fragmented into a number of independent principalities. The two chief kingdoms, the northern state of Ava and the southern state of Pegu, engaged in a protracted, but indecisive struggle for hegemony. Then rather suddenly in the mid-sixteenth century, after over 250 years of polycentrism, Pegu conquered the north and again joined the lowlands under one sovereignty. Furthermore, after uniting the lowlands, the kings of Pegu proceeded to subdue a vast region of Tai-speaking kingdoms extending to modern Laos and Thailand, over most of which Pagan had never claimed even nominal authority. By 1569, only thirty years after their first major conquests in the Irrawaddy basin, the kings of southern Burma had built the largest empire in Southeast Asia, and indeed in the estimate of well-informed European travellers, one of the most impressive polities in all of Asia. How can we explain this unprecedented, extraordinarily rapid military expansion?

Moreover, why in the sixteenth century for the first and only time in Burmese history, did the coast rather than the north suddenly become the dominant region? The south was traditionally the less productive agricultural district, and thus suffered from a natural demographic inferiority. It is true that the south receives far heavier monsoon rains than the interior of Burma, but until the colonial period this was a disadvantage. Removing the dense tropical vegetation of the south, turning its heavy alluvial soils, and combating endemic malaria, particularly in newly-cleared areas, were more formidable tasks than clearing the light vegetation of the north and erecting relatively small-scale irrigation works. Census records from 1581 and 1783 suggest that the population of the dry interior was normally much larger, perhaps by a factor of three, than that of the Lower Irrawaddy valley and the Delta¹. In an age of limited military specialization, when the number of men a king could put into the field was the best single indication of his military prospects, this meant that Lower Burma was in a decidedly weak position. The empire of Pagan was based in the north, as were the pre-colonial empires of the Restored Taung-ngu Dynasty (1597–1752) and the Kôn-baung Dynasty (1752–1885). Even after Pagan's fall, the northern state of Ava usually took the offensive against the south. Why then should the normal pattern have been reversed in the sixteenth century? And why was the south unable to maintain its new-found superiority for more than two generations?

Despite their importance to the history not only of Burma, but of mainland Southeast Asia as a whole in the sixteenth century, these questions have never received detailed examination. The two most careful and reliable histories of pre-colonial Burma, by Sir Arthur Phayre² and G. E. Harvey³, draw attention to the appearance of Portuguese adventurers, but do not relate their activities in systematic fashion to the shifting regional balance, or to more general changes in trade and military patterns. Published in 1883

and 1925 respectively, these excellent pioneering surveys were chiefly concerned to establish a detailed political chronology through the study of indigenous chronicles, supplemented by European travelogues. In so far as they analyzed the south's sixteenth-century success, they, like the chronicles, tended to emphasize the importance of royal personality.

This approach seems suspect on theoretical grounds, and one's doubts are strengthened by more recent studies which show that not only in the Irrawaddy valley, but also in Arakan⁴, Java⁵, Bengal⁶, and possible Siam and Cambodia⁷, the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries saw an increase in the influence of the coastal and commercial sector. In Arakan, in particular, the rise of the maritime empire of Mrauk-u after 1530 coincided almost exactly with the heyday of Pegu. This paper therefore attempts to interpret political developments in Lower Burma against the background of economic and technological change embracing a wider region. Basically I shall argue that the growth of Indian Ocean commerce provided the south with unique advantages which allowed it to exploit with increasing effectiveness administrative disorders in the north. Expanding international trade tended to integrate the regional economies of the interior under coastal auspices. At the same time it enhanced the ability of southern rulers to control political patronage; and it permitted them to hire large numbers of foreign mercenaries, among whom the Portuguese were most valuable because of their advanced ships and firearms. Eventually Portuguese adventurers attempted to exploit their technical superiority to establish an independent enclave at Syriam on the coast; but their political isolation combined with changes in demographic and landholding patterns to facilitate the return of political authority to Upper Burma. Thereafter Ava retained effective control over the coastal ports, and the dual bases of southern power – commercial wealth and firearms – were used to buttress the northern state.

Sources used in this paper fall into three categories. Firstly, along with Phayre and Harvey, I have relied heavily on Ū Kalā's *Maha-ya-zawin-gyi* chronicle⁸ (completed in the second quarter of the eighteenth century and taken over almost verbatim a century later in the *Hman-nān-maha-ya-zawin-daw-gyi*); but I have sought to extract from it fresh information on commercial and military matters. Similarly, I have consulted a variety of contemporary European accounts, most of them known to Phayre and Harvey, with a view to obtaining new data on trade and mercenary finances. Because most European visitors were knowledgeable only about matters affecting the foreign community, it is always necessary to weigh their comments on political and social developments against Burmese histories. Thirdly, I have consulted several hitherto-ignored indigenous sources of a specialist nature, including the *Mok-tamá-ya-zawin-baung-gyok*⁹, the *Mon-ya-zawin*¹⁰, the "Han-tha-wadi hsin-byu-shin ayei-daw-bon"¹¹, edicts from the reign of King Tha-lun (r. 1629–1648)¹², and the Mon-language *Nidāna Rāmādhīpaī-kathā*. This last-named history, a translation of which was kindly made available by Professor H. L. Shorto, antedates Ū Kalā's history by at least 130 years¹³. It is not only the earliest, but also the most graphic and detailed source on the unification campaigns of the 1550s.

Economic and Political Trends Before the Arrival of the Portuguese

Portuguese involvement in Burma, which became militarily significant only after 1539, accelerated certain economic and political tendencies which were apparent well before that date.

Two noted scholars of pre-modern Southeast Asian trade, B. Schrieke¹⁴ and M. A. P. Meilink-Roelofs¹⁵ have called attention to the increase in Muslim shipping eastwards across the Indian Ocean in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Growing demand for spices in Europe combined with the effects of the Crusades and of Mongol incursions to send an increasing volume of trade over the route which ran from Europe to Egypt to Aden to Gujarat to East Asia. Starting in the twelfth century, demographic and economic changes in China, at the far eastern end of the inter-Asian trading network, also encouraged Chinese participation in the commerce of the southern seas. Despite the cessation of official support for Chinese maritime activities after the early Ming, private junks continued to ply the sea routes to Sumatra, Malaya, Java, Siam, and the Philippines¹⁶. Thus as a result of stimuli from both the western and eastern termini of the Asian system, Southeast Asian ports expanded their functions as transshipment and exchange centers. The most dramatic growth, particularly after the mid-1430s, occurred at the celebrated emporium of Malacca, where Indian textiles, Indonesian spices, and Chinese wares found a natural rendezvous; but Javanese ports like Japara and Grise, which were commercially allied to Malacca, also grew swiftly in population and wealth during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries¹⁷.

Although never in the same class as these famous Muslim harbors, maritime centers in Lower Burma like Bassein, Pegu, Martaban, and Yei also benefitted from the expansion of Indian Ocean and Indonesian commerce. The coastal zone at this time was inhabited chiefly by Mon-speakers and – in contrast to the Burmese-speaking states of the interior – these coastal principalities embodied Mon cultural and political traditions. Some evidence suggests that in the mid-fifteenth century not only did the volume of trade passing through the Mon ports expand in absolute terms, but the relative importance of the Mon area as a link in the Asian trade network increased. Commercial itineraries of Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean compiled by Chinese authors between 1349 and 1436 failed to list any ports in Lower Burma among over a hundred harbors and noteworthy localities. The famed Chinese eunuch Cheng Ho had no contact with Burma¹⁸. Similarly, Nicolò Conti, a Venetian merchant who journeyed across the Arakan Yoma mountains about 1430, had much to recall about Upper Burma, but virtually nothing to say about commerce at the Mon ports¹⁹. This is not to imply that Lower Burma had no significant foreign trade – seaborne intercourse clearly influenced the strategic thinking of Pagan's rulers, while one of Ava's chief goals in its wars with Pegu after 1385 was to obtain access to the customs revenue of the western Delta²⁰. Yet, judged by later standards, Lower Burma's international trade before the mid-fifteenth century may have been limited. The *Mok-tamá ya-zawin baung-gyok* claims that the old port city of Yei, south of Martaban, was reclaimed from jungle and opened to foreign trade in 1438²¹. According to the *Mon ya-zawin*, starting with the accession at Pegu of Shin Sāw-bu (r. 1453–1472), merchants "from distant towns and cities arrived in great numbers, (hitherto) unusual wearing apparel became abundant, and the people had fine clothes and prospered exceedingly."²² Most of the merchants in question were probably Indians, for Mon chronicles identify this group as Lower Burma's chief foreign community; and along with the Kalyāni Inscriptions of 1476, describe how Indian merchant vessels frequented the Mon ports of Dagon and Kusimanagara (Bassein?)²³. Furthermore the history of Pegu by the monk of Athwā and the *Nidāna Rāmādhipati-kathā* both dwell at length on expanding diplomatic contacts under Shin Sāw-bu and more particularly under her famed successor Damā-zēi-di (r. 1472–1492). The principal em-

bassies, most of which had commercial overtones, came from Ceylon, Ayudhya, China, and various states in north and south India²⁴.

European accounts after 1470 reinforce this impression of heightened commercial activity. A Russian merchant described Pegu c. 1470 as "no inconsiderable port, principally inhabited by Indian dervishes"²⁵. In 1495 or 1496 a Genoese trader, Hieronimo di Santo Stefano, sailed from the Coromandel Coast to Pegu where he apparently bought rubies before continuing on towards Malacca²⁶. As J. S. Furnivall has suggested from an examination of this account and of Momeik history, the export of rubies may have started in the late fifteenth century²⁷. Some eight years after Santo Stefano, another Italian merchant Ludovico di Varthema claimed that the king of Pegu enjoyed an enormous income (implausibly stated at a million gold ducats a years) through the sale of local luxury products²⁸. In 1517-1518, Duarte Barbosa described Pegu as a "Realm of great fertility and with much trade by sea in many kinds of goods... it possesses three or four havens where there are rich merchants and great towns inhabited as well by Moors as by the Heathen who possess it"²⁹. His fellow Portuguese Tomé Pires wrote in comparable terms c. 1512-1515³⁰.

According to these and other reports, Lower Burma's commerce had three principal components. First was the trade with the rising center of Malacca and with north Sumatra. Lower Burma supplied these areas with large numbers of ocean-going vessels; with rice and other local foodstuffs; and with low-bulk, high-value goods (lac, benzoin, precious stones, silver, musk) funneled to the Peguan coast via a network of interior markets embracing regions as distant as Chiengmai and Yunnan³¹. Lower Burma's principal imports from Malacca and north Sumatra were Chinese porcelains and textiles, and Indonesian spices, especially pepper. The second line of commerce was with West Asia and India, particularly Gujarat, the Coromandel Coast, and Bengal. Merchants from these areas brought to Bassein, Pegu, and Martaban large quantities of printed cloths, both cotton and silk; copper, quick-silver, Cambayan drugs, etc. They returned with those local products for which Burma was noted, plus Chinese goods and Indonesian spices which had originally been imported from Malacca and north Sumatra. Thus the direct trade between India and Pegu bypassed Malacca entirely. The third segment of Lower Burma's commerce affected chiefly the eastern port of Martaban, which was in land communication with Siam. If monsoon winds were contrary or political conditions in the Straits were unsettled, Chinese and other low-bulk goods destined for the Indian Ocean (particularly Bengal) could be taken to Martaban more quickly and conveniently than they could be transported around the Malay peninsula; so the land route to Martaban was to some extent an alternative to the sea route focusing on Malacca. (This was yet more true of the shorter overland route between the Gulf of Siam and Mergui, to which we shall return shortly.)

Trade provided a welcome increment to the revenue of coastal rulers. As noted, Lower Burma's agricultural base was modest, and to judge by *Kön-baung* patterns, it was also rather static. Moreover, as was characteristic of rice-plains economies generally, only a fraction of the original tax collections entered the royal treasury because a chain of autonomous provincial and township officials sliced off a portion of the revenue at successive levels³². By exploiting various aspects of Indian Ocean commerce at directly-ruled ports, however, Mon rulers could tap a large and expanding source of income, much of it in cash³³, without such heavy reliance on territorial intermediaries. According to early sixteenth-century Portuguese sources, Peguan ports charged twelve

per cent on incoming goods, and six per cent (at Martaban) on rice purchased for export³⁴. If later Taung-ngu practice be accepted as a guide, the crown itself owned or purchased shares in merchant vessels trading around the Bay of Bengal³⁵. Furthermore in the sixteenth century royal brokers or officials at Pegu controlled the distribution of imports, and may have furnished foreign merchants with lac, rare woods, and other reserved commodities from royal godowns³⁶.

The lords of Mon principalities like Pegu – known to southerners as the “treasure-house of kings”³⁷ – used commercial revenues to strengthen their authority. Political loyalty revolved around the concept of reciprocal obligation: rulers were obliged to reward their followers with land or movable goods, but in return for this patronage, courtiers incurred a life-long debt of gratitude which they had to discharge through faithful service. Increased revenues obviously enhanced the sovereign’s ability to attract and manipulate supporters, and it is recorded that southern rulers frequently rewarded servants with imported (?) textiles as well as with gold and silver. In addition, commercial profits could be used to hire foreign mercenaries who could compensate for the Mon region’s demographic inferiority. Di Varthema, who claimed that the king of Pegu gained a “million” gold ducats a year, added at once: “and he gives all his income to his soldiers.” At the time of di Varthema’s visit, the king Banyà-ran had been waging a generally successful war against Ava for two years, and for that purpose reportedly had engaged a thousand mercenaries, each of whom received a fixed monthly salary payable in gold, plus expenses³⁸. Burmese accounts show that the most popular mercenaries before the arrival of the Portuguese were Indian Muslims who often came equipped with handguns and small cannon such as were popular on the subcontinent³⁹. Unlike regional levies whose control was not always certain, in the mid-sixteenth century mercenaries joined central forces directly loyal to the crown.

The rulers of Upper Burma lacked comparable access to customs revenues and foreign military assistance. To be sure, they commanded larger agricultural resources; but as noted, more intermediaries were involved in the collection of agricultural taxes than port revenues. Upper Burma did not export rice to the south and internal monetization seems to have been exceptionally primitive. Thus it is unlikely that in-kind taxes could readily be converted into the cash which was necessary to centralize patronage, to hire mercenaries, or to purchase firearms. According to Duarte Barbosa, “Moorish, Heathen, and Chati (sic) merchants” visited Ava to purchase precious stones and musk, sold through a royal monopoly⁴⁰. Yet these same merchants also had to pay duties in Lower Burma, and in general the scale of foreign mercantile involvement in the north seems to have been considerably less than in Middle or Lower Burma. Nor is there any record of Indian mercenaries supporting northern principalities. Following Ava’s failure in the early fifteenth century to gain control over ports in the western Delta, the northern sector of the Irrawaddy basin entered an era of political and military decline as first Pegu, and then Ava’s southern vassals like Taung-ngu and Prome, defied Ava’s armies with impunity.

It would appear that Ava’s difficulties in these years were compounded by a second phenomenon of quite independent origin, the growth of tax-free religious lands. In the late Pagan era (i.e. thirteenth century) a heterodox monastic sect known as the Forest Dwellers began to accumulate landed estates in the north through a combination of donations, purchases, and reclamation projects. Like all *sangha* property, these lands were exempt from taxation, and the religious slaves who cultivated them were exempt from

the poll tax and from government service. Despite the obvious implications for the kingdom's military potential, the rulers of Upper Burma found it exceedingly difficult to arrest the growth of religious lands because of their ideological obligation to protect the Faith, and to accumulate merit for themselves and their subjects through continued gifts to the Religion. (Indeed the royal family were normally the principal donors.) By the close of the Pagan period, Than Tun has estimated that perhaps a third of Upper Burma's cultivated land had been alienated to Forest Dwellers and other monastic communities⁴¹. We lack acreage studies for later periods. But Charles Duroiselle's list of dedicatory inscriptions⁴² shows that religious donations continued during the fourteenth through early sixteenth centuries at approximately the same rate as during the late Pagan period, so the cumulative impact (even assuming a substantial loss of earlier grants) must have been very great indeed. During the latter centuries, unlike the Pagan era, the Forest Dwellers were virtually unchallenged at the northern court by more orthodox, Sinhalese-oriented sects⁴³.

A detailed discussion of religious lands is beyond the scope of this paper, but I would suggest three possible reasons why the problem of monastic estates was less severe in Middle and Lower Burma than in the north at this time: a) For centuries royal and aristocratic donations had been concentrated in Upper Burma, the seat of the first unified empire. The new kingdoms of Taung-ngu, Prome, Martaban, and Pegu all arose in the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries in areas where there had been no independent royal court since at least the eleventh century. b) Because commerce was more important to the southern economy, the tradition of donating money and commercial goods, rather than land, to the *sangha* may have been more developed in the south than in the north. This would have allowed kings and other lay patrons to accumulate merit, while retaining control over the sources of renewable wealth. c) Southern kings, most notably Dama-zei-di, were more successful than their northern counterparts in purging the *sangha* and in thus preventing the rise of acquisitive, heterodox sects. Conceivably his purification efforts were accompanied by the development of certain institutional controls over the *sangha* which were unknown in the north until a later date⁴⁴.

Early Portuguese Involvement in Burma : Tabin-shwei-hti

When Portuguese mercenaries first intervened in Burma in force, that is to say about 1540, the Irrawaddy valley was still fragmented into several more or less independent states (Ava, Pegu, Martaban, Prome, etc.), but the decline of the northern sector and the rise of southern power were already well advanced. Ava, the chief northern kingdom, was in a chaotic state. Since at least the fourteenth century, the predominantly Burmese population of the dry zone had been subject to raids and full-scale settlements by Tai-speaking highlanders known as Shans. The kings of Ava themselves had Shan as well as Burmese blood, but they proved unable to assert even a nominal authority over the major Shan kingdoms, or to stop the constant encroachments on their frontier. Originally symptomatic of Upper Burma's decline, Shan invasions themselves became a major cause of instability and administrative disorder. In 1527 the Shans of Mohnyin finally killed the king of Ava and set their own prince on the throne. Described in the chronicles as a man "without respect for the Triple Gems", the new ruler sought to regain control over religious wealth by launching a severe persecution of the monkhood. But this merely forced large numbers of Burmese monks and lay followers to flee south

to Middle and Lower Burma, and further weakened the foundations of the state. The far north thus came to rely for its defense on a politically unstable and geographically diverse coalition of Shan principalities.

By contrast the south in 1540 had entered a period of centralization under a Burmese ruler of extraordinary vigor, Tabin-shwei-hti. Originally from Taung-ngu, a predominantly Burmese principality on the southeast perimeter of the dry zone, Tabin-shwei-hti conquered the Mon city of Pegu in 1537-38 and joined it with his native principality to form the nucleus of the future unified kingdom of Burma. Lest we exaggerate the political significance of maritime commerce, we should note that Taung-ngu, lacking direct access to the sea, depended on coastal centers for salt and textiles⁴⁵. Taung-ngu's geographic position, however, conferred an important advantage: the southeast corridor offered a natural escape route for Burmese fleeing Shan incursions in the north, and by the start of the sixteenth century Taung-ngu had become the principal stronghold of those who identified themselves as Burmese. Tabin-shwei-hti's father Mingyi-nyo (r. 1486-1531) undertook a systematic program of colonization and resettlement in the southern dry zone. In this early period, the strength of the Taung-ngu state therefore derived from its location as a refugee center, from the ambition of its rulers, and from the excellence and plenitude of its Burmese soldiers, rather than from its access to foreign trade.

At the same time, because Taung-ngu relied on the coast for Indian Ocean goods and was involved in the network of regional markets which supplied the ports with an apparently growing volume of local products, its political interests may have gravitated towards the south rather than the interior. Certainly Tabin-shwei-hti from the start of his career showed a keen appreciation of maritime contacts. After taking the throne of Taung-ngu in 1531, he chose to attack Pegu rather than Ava because its wealth made it a more inviting target. When he found Pegu defended by gun-wielding Indian Muslims in 1535, he broke off the attack until he had acquired his own firearms, probably from the western Delta⁴⁶. After his victory of 1537-1538, he abandoned the interior capital of his father in order to dwell at Pegu, the ancient center of the Mon country. There he (and his successors) patronized Mon culture with great assiduity, and created a genuinely poly-ethnic court in which Mons held positions of honor alongside southern Burmese and Shans. The scope and success of this synthesis were largely unprecedented⁴⁷. Furthermore, having consolidated his hold on the Delta, he determined to enforce Pegu's traditional hegemony over the rival Mon port of Martaban, and for that purpose used commercial wealth to engage yet larger numbers of foreign mercenaries. A contemporary Portuguese source claims, with some exaggeration perhaps, that within two or three years of his conquest of Pegu, Tabin-shwei-hti had hired soldiers from 42 nationalities, including Greeks, Turks, Abyssinians, Mughals, and Malabaris⁴⁸. Yet the foreign nationality which was to make the most important contribution to Tabin-shwei-hti's campaigns, and the one in which he placed the greatest confidence, were the Portuguese.

By 1540 the Portuguese intrusion into Southeast Asia had already had an impact on Burma, although this was of a primarily commercial rather than military nature. The anti-Muslim policy favored by Portuguese authorities following their capture of Malacca in 1511; their early determination to deny Asians access to spices at Malacca, hitherto the chief intermediary center for acquiring such cargoes; and their policy (to 1544) of raising customs rates at Malacca combined to discourage Indian and West A-

sian Muslims from visiting that port. These people therefore resorted with increased frequency to Achin, Bantam, and Mergui (Tenasserim); but Pegu and Martaban may also have benefitted. As noted, even before 1511 the routes leading from Mergui and Martaban to the Gulf of Siam had functioned as alternative passages to that around the peninsula. Since Martaban was at the height of its prosperity in the mid-sixteenth century, and since Portuguese policies enhanced Muslim interest in Mergui and the peninsular ports⁴⁹, one may speculate that Martaban also owed some of its legendary wealth to increased trade with Siam. Tabin-shwei-hü and Bayin-naung both found it practicable to send supplies to Ayudhya via Martaban⁵⁰, while Samuel Purchas, writing of the late sixteenth century, listed Martaban along with Mergui, Yei, Junkceylon, and Kedah as places where "Ship(s) of Moores... lade Pepper, Cinamon, or other commodities... for Surat or Mecca"⁵¹. However, some of these goods at Martaban may also have come from the newly-emergent, anti-Portuguese centers of Achin and Bantam. Like Malacca before them, these ports supplied Lower Burma with spices and Chinese wares, which were then sold to Indian and West Asian merchants reluctant to undertake the journey to Indonesia⁵². Although we have no way to quantify the level of Muslim trade with Burma, the fact that the Muslim community of Pegu saw fit to erect a mosque, apparently for the first time, in the 1550s, is consistent with the image of increasing Indian and West Asian contacts⁵³.

Lower Burma's popularity with Muslim merchants did nothing to impair its traditionally profitable relations with Malacca after that city became a Portuguese base. On the contrary, the periodic success of the Portuguese' foes in interrupting the supply of food-stuffs from Java and Siam rendered Malacca (as well as Portuguese outposts in the Moluccas and Amboina) yet more dependent on Lower Burma's rice. The Portuguese therefore sent at least three diplomatic missions to Lower Burma (c. 1512, 1519 and c. 1540) to encourage food ships to call at Malacca; while from time to time factors for the King of Portugal went to Martaban to purchase rice directly⁵⁴. Independently of the trade between Lower Burma and Malacca, Portuguese from Goa, the Coromandel Coast, and Bengal also visited Pegu in order to exchange Indian textiles and salt for local products⁵⁵. About 1551 in the Portuguese quarter of Pegu alone, there were said to be 140 Portuguese, both private traders and factors for the King of Portugal⁵⁶. Clearly they were a major element in the mercantile community, and a welcome source of royal customs. Thus, directly and indirectly, the Portuguese intrusion allowed Lower Burma to attract a not insignificant share of the Southeast Asian country trade, whose total volume in the mid- and late-sixteenth century was expanding⁵⁷. More importantly, Portuguese commercial contacts allowed the rulers of Lower Burma to observe European military techniques at first hand, and to recruit Portuguese merchants and adventurers to their armies. Indeed the first documented case of Portuguese military involvement in Burma occurred about 1538, when the ruler of Pegu persuaded a Portuguese merchant just arrived in port to direct the naval defense against Tabin-shwei-hü⁵⁸.

The military reputation of the Portuguese rested on the superiority of both their ships and firearms. Lower Burma was itself an important shipbuilding center, but it served the Muslim trading community, and the design of Peguan ocean-going vessels in the early sixteenth century almost certainly followed that of Muslim mercantile craft in other Indian Ocean ports. These were lightly built ships whose planks were lashed together and which were incapable of supporting heavy armament. By comparison, Portuguese galleons, caravels, and even foists were solid structures, whose planks were nailed together

and which normally carried cannon⁵⁹. The only way the Burmese could deal with Portuguese ships was to overwhelm them in harbor with innumerable war canoes and light sailing craft, usually at frightful cost to the attackers, or else to launch firerafts against them from upstream.

Portuguese superiority was only slightly less marked in land ballistics, which was of greater potential importance than naval design because most of Tabin-shwei-hti's campaigns were fought on land. By the first decade of the sixteenth century, if not earlier, Meilink-Roelofs claims that iron foundries at Pegu were producing small, rather primitive firearms⁶⁰; while the *Maha-ya-zawin-gyi* refers to smallarms (*thei-nat*), swivel guns (*sein-byuing*), and cannon (*amyauk* or *myá-tabu*) used by Indian (*kalá*) or Indian Muslim (*kalá-bathe*) soldiers in Burma from the late fourteenth century on⁶¹. Muslim mercenaries outnumbered Portuguese troops during both Tabin-shwei-hti and Bayín-naung's reigns. Their continued popularity proves that the weapons these soldiers brought with them were by no means ineffective. Yet on the whole they were inferior to Portuguese firearms. William Irvine has observed that in Mughal India, matchlocks "of European make were much prized, but were only found in the possession of the greatest nobles"⁶². The barrels and firing mechanisms of Indian matchlocks were less adroitly made; moreover, the Portuguese in 1536 introduced cartridges containing the correct measure of powder and the ball, which decreased appreciably the time needed to reload⁶³. As for non-European artillery pieces, their muzzles were more likely to burst, their trajectories were shorter and less accurate, and their shots were lighter than those of Portuguese cast-metal muzzle-loaders of equivalent weight. No doubt Asian gunners on average were also less well trained than their Portuguese counterparts⁶⁴.

Now we must not exaggerate the utility of Portuguese firearms. The sixteenth-century matchlock, or arquebus, was still a relatively crude instrument, not incomparably more powerful than the bow-and-arrow⁶⁵. As for artillery, there is no evidence that Tabin-shwei-hti or Bayín-naung acquired massive siege guns such as rendered medieval stone walls and old-style castles untenable after about 1450 in both Christian and Ottoman Europe⁶⁶. The largest cannon used in the Burmese wars to which I have found specific reference fired a ball of only one *viss*, i.e. 3.65 pounds⁶⁷. Rather than direct them against stone or brick fortifications, the Burmese usually brought their cannon into play by mounting them on high mounds or towers and then shooting down into the besieged towns. Nonetheless, if used in conjunction with mining operations and large-scale conventional assaults, this technique could be quite effective. Coordinated bombardments cleared enemy soldiers from battlements, set towers alight, and thoroughly demoralized the civilian populations. At some of the weaker towns, particularly those whose walls lacked brick facades, concentrated fire at close range actually seems to have breached the defenses. Artillery and arquebuses also proved their worth in certain field encounters: to cite a famous example, in 1550 a Portuguese arquebusier shot one of the chief contenders for the throne of Pegu atop his elephant, and thus determined the course of the succession struggle⁶⁸.

As one would expect, firearms took the heaviest toll against interior Burmese principalities and Shan kingdoms, which were least familiar with the new weapons. They were generally less effective against rival coastal states like Martaban, Arakan, and Ayudhya, for these polities obtained their own Portuguese contingents and their own cannon which tended to offset those of Pegu. In the case of Arakan, Portuguese experts also organized the fleet, trained a heterogeneous mercenary army, and helped to lay out

the capital's elaborate defenses⁶⁹. The relatively high cost of guns, mercenaries, and new-type fortifications, and the problem of differential access, may have contributed to a shift in military power away from the interior towards the coast throughout mainland Southeast Asia⁷⁰. Pegu, however, surpassed all other states in this period because she became the first to use the new technology for systematic conquest of the interior. Pegu was uniquely favored by the size and vulnerability of her hinterland: neither Martaban nor the Arakanese capital had riverine access to the interior comparable to that which Pegu enjoyed along the Irrawaddy. Ayudhya, on the other hand, had reasonably good access, but in the mid-sixteenth century local strategic and administrative factors apparently helped Chiengmai to resist Ayudhya more effectively than Ava and the Shans opposed Pegu⁷¹. It is also possible that the Burmese recognized the offensive capability of Western guns somewhat earlier than the Siamese⁷². Pegu alone therefore achieved a string of interior victories which provided vast numbers of war elephants and feudal levies to complement her Indian Ocean firearms. It was this combination, rather than foreign guns alone, which destroyed two of the other chief maritime centers and forced a third onto the defensive.

These patterns will become apparent if we survey Pegu's principal campaigns. In 1540, we have seen, Tabin-shwei-hti, having made himself master of the Delta, determined to conquer the eastern port-city of Martaban, and for that purpose engaged the services of large groups of foreign soldiers including a confederation of Portuguese mercenaries nominally led by João Caeiro. Mendez Pinto places the number of Portuguese fighting for Tabin-shwei-hti at seven hundred, though this figure may well be exaggerated⁷³. Like other Portuguese bands which served in Siam, Bengal, and Arakan in these same years, Tabin-shwei-hti's men were freelance adventurers who had originally come out to Asia in the service of the King of Portugal but who, because of irregular and meagre wages, had since turned themselves into traders-cum-pirates-cum-mercenaries under private captains. In return for pay and the right to plunder, they agreed to serve Asian rulers for varying periods. Ian A. Macgregor has noted that Portuguese mercenaries in Burma and adjacent countries came into prominence in official documents only in the 1530s and 1540s, and this may be related to the fact that by 1527 the Portuguese government had fallen into arrears in Malacca in its wages and rations accounts⁷⁴. These adventurers retained a generalized loyalty to the Portuguese crown in that they could sometimes be expected to aid Goa or Malacca in an emergency. But they were often classified as deserters from royal service and were by no means under effective control of Portuguese officials.

Not to be caught unawares by Tabin-shwei-hti, the Mon lord of Martaban imported large quantities of firearms, and also began to recruit Portuguese mercenaries, to whom he had easy access because of Martaban's traditionally close commercial ties to Malacca. At first the battle went in favor of Martaban, whose Portuguese ships inflicted frightful casualties on Peguan craft which tried to attack at the city's most vulnerable point⁷⁵. Tabin-shwei-hti therefore resorted to an old Mon stratagem: he built firerafts which, floating on the tide, burned the defending vessels or forced them to flee to the open sea. The attackers then maneuvered into position a high fortress raft from which gunners and cannoners, including no doubt many of Caeiro's men, were able to clear the ramparts in preparation for a successful breaching operation. Thus while firearms alone could not subdue Martaban, they facilitated the final assault.

Firearms proved more effective during the campaign against Prome, a predominantly Burmese principality on the southern fringes of the dry zone, which Tabin-shwei-hti attacked the year after Martaban fell. On this occasion his opponents had no Portuguese assistance. Tabin-shwei-hti used traditional siege techniques, requiring enormous levies of infantry, to starve Prome into submission. Yet he also employed Portuguese and Muslim guns to cannonade the town, and to help defeat two Shan invasions which sought to challenge his control of Prome. During the second Shan invasion of 1543–1544, Tabin-shwei-hti brought up from the coast four large warboats loaded with artillery. Here is a précis of the ensuing battle from the *Maha-ya-zawin-gyi*:

Tabin-shwei-hti had great war boats [*taik-hlei-gyi*], whereas the [Shan] *saw-bwás* had only small craft. Furthermore the *saw-bwás* had no cannon or large mortars [*amyauk myá-tabu-gyi*]. When he fired these great guns, he smashed the *saw-bwás*' warboats to splinters, and the fleet was entirely destroyed . . .⁷⁶

The phrase *taik-hlei-gyi* suggests traditional oar-propelled warboats rather than Portuguese ships, but it is quite likely that Portuguese helped work the cannon. Mendez Pinto, whose account of the Prome campaign agrees reasonably well with the Burmese chronicles, refers to heavy casualties among Tabin-shwei-hti's Portuguese and "Turkish" auxiliaries, and claims that shortly after the Prome campaign ended, Tabin-shwei-hti maintained a large body of Portuguese troops at Pegu under one Antonio Ferreira⁷⁷.

If at this point, Tabin-shwei-hti had been willing to organize a major attack on Upper Burma, he probably could have pushed all the way to Ava and reunited the Irrawaddy valley in the mid-1540s. Clearly the Shans (and those northern Burmese who still supported them) were particularly vulnerable. But Tabin-shwei-hti chose to direct his armies against Arakan and Ayudhya, and it was not for another decade that his successor Bayín-naung (r. 1551–1581) took up the conquest of the Shans. When Bayín-naung did so, it was partly to obtain manpower and strategic positions with which to pursue more effectively Tabin-shwei-hti's original goal of subduing Ayudhya. As noted, Portuguese interference with Muslim trade at Malacca enhanced the value of land routes connecting the Bay of Bengal with the Gulf of Siam; and evidence from the chronicles suggests that one of Tabin-shwei-hti's objectives in attacking Ayudhya in 1547–1548 was to win control of the trans-peninsular traffic, to which he had hitherto had only indirect access via Martaban. Thus the king of Ayudhya sought to win the release of high-ranking prisoners by conceding to Tabin-shwei-hti the harbor tolls of Mergui, plus an annual indemnity⁷⁸. Arakan, on the Bay of Bengal, was also a maritime state of growing importance whose conquest attracted Tabin-shwei-hti more than that of the north.

Tabin-shwei-hti engaged fresh bodies of Portuguese mercenaries for his campaigns against the Arakanese capital of Mrauk-u⁷⁹ and Ayudhya⁸⁰. Yet these cities were more formidable than any he had yet encountered. Both had their own Portuguese units and Indian Ocean firearms, while Mrauk-u's moats and walls had also been laid out with Portuguese assistance. Burmese and Mon forces were inadequate to surround these cities or to sustain effective sieges. Frontal assaults proved useless, and in the end Tabin-shwei-hti gained no permanent advantage from either campaign. Nonetheless, according to Prince Damrong, Tabin-shwei-hti's unprecedented use of large attack cannon revealed the awesome potential of these instruments and forced the Siamese to overhaul Ayudhya's defenses. Hitherto the walls of Ayudhya had consisted of earthenwork with wooden posts planted upon it. After Tabin-shwei-hti withdrew, they were

rebuilt with more solid materials, most likely brick plastered over with quick lime, expressly designed to withstand guns of Western type⁸¹.

Tabin-shwei-hti's failures in no way diminished his confidence in the Portuguese. Portuguese soldiers, together with Indian Muslims, probably constituted his inner guard on the retreat from Ayudhya⁸². According to Iberian sources, his commander on that campaign was Diego Suarez d'Albergaria, who also served as governor of Pegu with the title of "The King's Brother" and a large annual salary⁸³. Burmese sources provide no confirmation on d'Albergaria's role. But they relate how Tabin-shwei-hti, after returning from Ayudhya, consorted with a young Portuguese soldier who taught him to drink wine sweetened with honey. Indeed, to the scandal of his own and subsequent generations, the Buddhist sovereign became an alcoholic through his association with this "unseemly heretic"⁸⁴. He lost control over the court, and was finally assassinated by a Mon official in 1550.

The Portuguese Under Bayin-naung

Tabin-shwei-hti was succeeded by his brother-in-law and fellow Burman Bayin-naung after a confused three-cornered struggle in which Portuguese mercenaries played a prominent role in each of the contending camps⁸⁵.

After reconquering Middle and Lower Burma and consolidating his hold on the throne, the new king launched an ambitious series of campaigns against Ava and the surrounding Shan kingdoms. Bayin-naung had learned from his predecessor's experience that larger reserves of manpower and war animals were needed to subjugate Ayudhya, and – as Ū Kalā, a generally reliable source, indicates – he invaded the north with this ultimate goal in mind⁸⁶. At the same time, control of the highlands promised to enhance the crown's commercial position. Rubies and other precious stones from the Shan state of Momeik; benjamin from the Yun country; musk from Momeik, Mohnyin, and Chiengmai; benzoin and tin from the peninsula and Upper Burma; Chinese goods available in Chiengmai and Momeik; and gold, silver, and lac from a variety of northern locales – since at least the fifteenth century such export items had been supplied to the coast by peddlars and small traders through the network of interior markets⁸⁷. Now Bayin-naung sought to obtain more regular supplies, and to eliminate interior tolls and middlemen, by imposing on conquered Tai principalities annual tribute quotas in these and other goods to be delivered to the royal godowns⁸⁸. Although the mechanisms by which the throne then marketed its goods to Indian Ocean merchants are not well understood, the throne seems to have maintained a degree of monopolistic control through a system of licensed brokers. Caesar Frederike c. 1569 reported that all rubies were disposed in this manner⁸⁹, while the Dutch later confirmed that Indian Ocean traders had to conduct both purchases and sales through official brokers⁹⁰.

Between 1554 and 1558, Bayin-naung succeeded in reuniting Upper Burma with the coast, and in subduing a great arc of Tai-speaking states ranging from Kalei in the extreme northwest to Chiengmai in the southeast. His success confirmed Tabin-shwei-hti's discovery at Prome about the value of firearms against northern opponents. While firearms were by no means unknown before Tabin-shwei-hti and Bayin-naung arrived, the Shans, isolated in their upland valleys, had no experience with culverins of such large calibre and arquebuses in such number, which terrified them by their awesome din as much as by their shot. The following descriptions from the *Nidāna Rāmādhīpātī-kathā*, whose author(s) may have witnessed the events in question, convey something of

the terror which Bayin-naung's arms inspired. As in Tabin-shwei-hti's day, arquebuses were wielded by large numbers of Muslim mercenaries and indigenous levies. Yet the "four hundred" armored arquebusiers who guarded Bayin-naung atop his elephant were Portuguese⁹¹, and it is likely that Portuguese also supplied and operated most of the big cannon. Indeed, if we may generalize from the situation at Pegu in the 1590s, many of Bayin-naung's best guns still bore the arms of the King of Portugal⁹². Here is the *Nidāna Rāmādhipatī-kathā* account of the battle of Ava in early 1555:

[The attackers built siege works all around the city, and] the officers carried up the weapons and artillery and installed them on the rampart... The bombardment was now unleashed, ringing the town with fire. The reports of the cannon and muskets reverberated like Indra's thunderbolts. Those within the town had to take refuge in holes, for... there was no other refuge above ground. Night and day succeeded each other unheeded as detonation followed detonation till it seemed a man's ears would burst; no defender dared expose so much as a finger above the battlements... After five days of siege the town could resist no longer, and [an] assault finished it. As the walls subsided in rubble, elephants, horses, men poured in⁹³.

Thus Ava fell in five days whereas the more southerly cities of Martaban, Mrauk-u, and Ayudhya defied Pegu for months. Pokkhan, west (?) of Ava, also submitted within a matter of days after Bayin-naung "commenced a bombardment intended to awe the defenders"⁹⁴.

Having consolidated control over the northern lowlands, Bayin-naung marched against the Shan kingdoms of Mohnyin, Mogaung, Hsipaw, Mong Mit, Mongmai, and so on. As they approached Mohnyin,

each division marched to the ceaseless accompaniment of gunfire and musket shots, the sound echoing through the forest as if the earth were splitting in two... The [ruler] of Mohnyin, Cau Lum, said, "When our soldiers... join battle, they are usually victorious. But after hearing the guns of the King's men, and the rumour of their march, for three days... I wonder whether our elephants and cavalry will stand up to them"⁹⁵.

In fact Mohnyin collapsed precipitously. Cannon had a comparable effect on Mogaung: "We reckoned we would have to deal with the kings of Prome and Ava maybe, and the Shans of Mong Mit and Hsipaw", the ruler of Mogaung is represented as saying after a later rebellion, "[but] not with [Bayin-naung's] cannon, which are powerful enough to pierce the earth"⁹⁶. In other passages intimidated Shans likened the sound of the southern artillery to thunder or the roaring of the ocean⁹⁷. Even at Chiangmai, an important town in the north of modern Thailand where some sort of firearms had been known apparently since the fifteenth century⁹⁸, Bayin-naung's siege guns helped breach the walls. Possibly these walls were of the earthwork-and-post arrangement which Ayudhya had begun to replace only about eight years earlier.

As the sound of artillery and musket fire re-echoed like thunder, breaches appeared in the walls wherever a shot struck home. The upper works were set on fire with pyrotechnic devices; and then the officers, under cover of a breastwork of planks, mined under the wall, causing subsidence and further breaches... [Finally] the main body with elephants and cavalry entered the town at all the mined places⁹⁹.

None of this is to deny that factors other than firearms were extremely important on the northern campaigns. Bayin-naung benefitted from the death of an important Shan ruler in 1556, which sparked a succession struggle between rival Shan houses. I have emphasized that the area around Ava had already been disorganized by Shan incursions, and was thus particularly vulnerable when Bayin-naung arrived. Furthermore until Tabin-shwei-hti and Bayin-naung, no southern leader had joined Taung-ngu, Mar-

taban, Pegu, and Prome under one sovereignty, so the north never faced such a formidable concentration of conventional forces. Enormous numbers of war elephants, cavalry, and above all, common infantry were needed to protect artillery on siege stockades and to follow up the cannonades with effective mining and ground assaults. In field encounters, as opposed to siege operations, elephantry and cavalry were almost always more effective than the relatively immobile artillery (note, however, that arquebusiers were often placed in elephants' howdahs). Field engagements rather than sieges determined the fate of several major Shan states, including Hsipaw, Mohnyin, and Mong Mit. Nonetheless, having made these allowances, one still finds it difficult to accept that Bayin-naung could have reduced Ava, Chiengmai, and the entire Shan world in the amazing period of three and a half years without the assistance of European, and to a lesser extent, Indian gunners. The north had known earlier periods of acute disorder (e.g. 1359–1368, 1427, 1524–1527), and southern principalities, even including Taung-ngu, had sometimes been able to coordinate their strategy. But until 1541, the first year Portuguese firearms were employed in Middle Burma, the south had maintained a generally defensive posture, and – apart from an expedition in 1404–1406 by the Peguan king Ya-za-dí-ya-zá – had failed to penetrate beyond the Chin-dwin junction. As the campaigns of 1404–1406 showed, Ya-za-dí-ya-zá was weak where Bayin-naung's strength was perhaps most pronounced: lacking cannon, Ya-za-dí-ya-zá had no rapid or reliable method to reduce walled towns in the north¹⁰⁰.

Once he had pacified the Shan uplands and Chiengmai, Bayin-naung turned his attention to the long-deferred conquest of Ayudhya, which was to be his crowning achievement. In the same way as he used nearer Shan kingdoms to help subjugate more distant ones, he now marshalled all those Tai-speaking states which owed him fealty to join his main army in attacking Ayudhya. Assured of regular supplies from Chiengmai, Bayin-naung followed a more northerly invasion route than Tabin-shwei-hti and thereby deprived Ayudhya of auxiliaries from its northern provinces. Bayin-naung also took the precaution of obtaining more powerful foreign guns than had been used in 1548, along with Portuguese to operate them¹⁰¹. During his first invasion, after masses of conventional infantry and elephantry had overcome Ayudhya's outer defenses, Bayin-naung turned to artillery to reduce the town. In the somewhat stylized words of the *Maha-ya-zawin-gyi*, Bayin-naung "ordered his great cannon and other firearms to rain down on the city [by shooting over the walls from atop stockades]. All the people of Ayudhya became as scared as if the Burmese were about to eat their flesh, and begged the Siamese king to surrender"¹⁰². During Bayin-naung's second invasion of 1568–1569, however, although the attacking force was larger than in 1563¹⁰³, Bayin-naung's Portuguese and Muslim gunners gained no advantage over Ayudhya's defenders. It is unclear whether this was due primarily to some deficiency in the Burmese strategy, or to further improvements in Siamese ordnance and fortifications¹⁰⁴. In any case, Ayudhya's guns parried repeated Burmese assaults much as the defenders of Mrauk-u and Ayudhya had thwarted Tabin-shwei-hti. Bayin-naung was forced to institute a nine-month siege whose credibility required the continuous sacrifice of enormous reserves. The city finally fell only through treachery¹⁰⁵.

After this conquest, Bayin-naung dominated the maritime trade of mainland Southeast Asia. Stimulated by increased European demand, the prices of Asian spices increased two- or three-fold during the second half of the sixteenth century, while Muslim as well as Portuguese exports from Asia rose sharply¹⁰⁶. Wherever this trade and its al-

ried branches touched the coasts of Burma or Siam, Bayin-naung now drew a profit. According to W. H. Moreland, over eighteen per cent of India's eastern trade at the close of the sixteenth century went to the ports of Lower Burma and to Ayudhya's erstwhile dependency of Mergui¹⁰⁷. The importance Bayin-naung attached to the trans-peninsular traffic, in particular, is suggested by his unusually detailed administrative arrangements at Tavoy and Mergui, where he standardized weights and measures, appointed special officials to supervise shipping, and erected accommodations for envoys arriving from India¹⁰⁸. The crown continued to draw from interior and peninsular principalities heavy annual tribute of musk, rubies, benzoin, lac, etc. valued by Indian Ocean traders. At the same time, of course, Pegu retained the right to exact military levies from all her vassals. The experienced traveller Caesar Frederike of Venice, who visited Pegu during the second Ayudhya campaign, penned this memorable description:

To conclude, there is not a King on the Earth that hath more power or strength then this King of Pegu, because hee hath twenty and sixe crowned Kings at his command.... This King of Pegu hath not any Armie or power by Sea, but in the Land, for People, Dominions, Gold and Silver, he farre exceeds the power of the great Turke in treasure and strength. This King hath divers Magasons full of treasure, as Gold, and Silver, and every day he increaseth it more and more, and it is never diminished¹⁰⁹.

These resources helped maintain a military establishment which reportedly included 80,000 "most excellent" arquebuses, 3000 "cannon" (in the 1590s), and an indeterminate number of mercenaries on regular pay¹¹⁰.

The Attempt To Create a Portuguese Enclave on the Coast and Its Denouement

Despite, or perhaps because of, Pegu's strength and the breathtaking rapidity of Bayin-naung's conquests, his empire remained exceptionally fragile, and it collapsed within a generation. Bayin-naung's domain was a sprawling incongruous entity, embracing half of mainland Southeast Asia, without common cultural traditions, a natural geographic unity, or even the most rudimentary administrative institutions such as were to be observed at a later stage in the evolution of Burmese royal government. The only means to ensure the loyalty of distant regions, if it were not forthcoming voluntarily, was to mount punitive expeditions — indeed Bayin-naung spent the latter part of his reign dispatching forces against Mogaung and Vientiane. These were increasingly expensive commitments. Three years after Bayin-naung's death, Ayudhya again revolted. This time the rebellion succeeded because the Siamese had better leadership and Pegu's resources were much diminished since Bayin-naung's original conquests. His son and successor Nan-dá-bayin (r. 1581–1599) devoted his entire reign to a vain attempt to restore order within the empire as one principality after another followed Ayudhya's example. Nan-dá-bayin was forced to rely more heavily on the only area he controlled directly, Lower Burma. It has been emphasized that the population of the Mon Delta was relatively small, and that foreign firearms were ineffective for land operations, particularly field encounters, without large support forces. By 1599, after fifteen years of incessant military recruitment, famine, and social dislocation, Lower Burma was exhausted. The capital fell to a combined invasion from Arakan and Taung-ngu; Nan-dá-bayin himself was eventually assassinated; and much of the Mon south reverted to a highly localized anarchic condition¹¹¹.

Into this political vacuum entered a band of Portuguese adventurers who sought to create a coastal enclave loosely affiliated with the Portuguese empire of the Indies.

Filippe de Brito e Nicote, who had taken service some years earlier with the king of Arakan, was the architect of this design¹¹². After Arakanese forces seized Pegu, de Brito persuaded the king to allow him and some fellow Portuguese to establish a customhouse at Syriam, which was the main port for Pegu and a place of great strategic and commercial value. The king of Arakan assumed that he would use them to guard Syriam in much the same way as he used other groups of Portuguese to protect his northwest frontier with central Bengal. But de Brito decided he could strike a better bargain with the Portuguese viceroy at Goa. He ceased sending tribute to Arakan; and in return for extravagant promises about the wealth and benefit that would accrue to Portugal from his enterprise, convinced the viceroy to send modest Portuguese reinforcements. "Commander of Syriam and General of the Conquests of Pegu" – such was the grandiloquent title which the viceroy conferred on de Brito when he visited Goa. Through the excellence of his munitions and naval tactics, de Brito defeated a series of Arakanese punitive expeditions and by 1604, had won grudging recognition of his independence from Arakan and all the rulers of Middle and Lower Burma. His patrols forced merchant vessels off the Burmese coast to enter Syriam to the exclusion of other ports. Thus he denied all the rulers of the interior access to customs revenue, and exercised a stranglehold on the importation of textiles, salt, and (one must assume) firearms from the coast.

Unwittingly de Brito's success helped the northern dry zone to resume its historic dominance within the Irrawaddy valley. De Brito represented a type of Portuguese adventurer by no means uncommon in this period – Gonsalves Tibão, self-styled "king" of Sandwip Island below the Ganges Delta, and the less well-known leaders of Dianga near Chittagong were other examples¹¹³. These men organized autonomous maritime principalities with the aid of Portuguese and Eurasian followers, but were incapable of gaining authority over substantial sections of the interior. It is true that de Brito enjoyed some indigenous support: his forces included Burmese and Mon auxiliaries, while Mon monks allegedly claimed that the ascendancy of "strangers with white faces and teeth and cropped hair" had been foretold in religious texts¹¹⁴. Nonetheless de Brito could never succeed to the imperial dignity of Pegu, for his self-conscious patronage of Christianity precluded his acceptance as an authentic representative of local traditions. Even if we discount charges in the *Maha-ya-zawin-gyi* and the "History of Syriam" that he pillaged Buddhist shrines¹¹⁵, Burmese and European sources sympathetic to de Brito indicate that baptism became a sign of political support at Syriam, and that de Brito himself was more interested in gaining influence among his fellow Portuguese at Dianga and elsewhere in Arakan than among the people of Pegu¹¹⁶. In any case it is essential to remember that the Mon population of the devastated Delta was no longer sufficient to support a state with ambitions in the interior, however legitimate the credentials of its ruler. The Syriam – Pegu area, formerly the center of the entire valley, was thus reduced to an alien enclave whose power derived from the sea and whose policies were oriented towards Goa.

On the other hand, the dry zone of Upper Burma, particularly the valuable irrigated districts around the ancient capital of Ava, was now in a relatively strong position. The invasions, wars, and disorganization which had plagued the south and parts of Middle Burma for the past two decades not only affected the north less directly but in the 1590s assisted that area by forcing a limited number of refugees up the Irrawaddy valley. The problem of religious estates which impaired royal authority in Upper Burma during the

Ava period appears to have eased in the early sixteenth century, because Shan raids and unsettled conditions led to the abandonment of certain monastic lands subsequently occupied by cultivators owing taxes and service to the crown. Certainly the influence of the Forest Dweller sect declined after the early sixteenth century¹¹⁷. Ironically, however, the Shans themselves were no longer a threat to Upper Burma because of Bayin-naung's campaigns and more recent military pressures from China¹¹⁸. Ava still lacked access to customs revenues and firearms from coastal ports; yet de Brito's monopoly meant that Ava was no longer uniquely disadvantaged in this respect as she had been throughout the sixteenth century. Ava's principal competitors in Middle Burma, Taung-ngu and Prome, suffered from the same disability. The ruler of Taung-ngu, for example, joined Arakan in the unsuccessful campaign against Syriam because de Brito had deprived him of imports and customs from the ports of Dalá and Bassein¹¹⁹. In other words, to summarize a complex situation, most of those factors which had harmed Ava in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries and had favored more southerly principalities at her expense, no longer obtained. The way was clear for Ava to reestablish within the Irrawaddy basin her traditional hegemony, based on abundant rice and manpower. This eventually reintroduced a pronounced Burmese orientation at court which contrasted with the relatively successful Burmese-Mon synthesis of the sixteenth century.

The three leaders who revived Upper Burma's fortunes were a minor son of Bayin-naung known as Nyaung-yàn Min and his famous sons Anauk-hpet-lun (r. 1606–1628) and Tha-lun (r. 1629–1648). In a series of campaigns between 1596 and 1610, they subdued the more accessible Shan states as well as Prome and Taung-ngu. Thus they reintegrated the domain Ava had controlled in the early fifteenth century. Not surprisingly, Indian Ocean mercenaries do not appear to have participated in these wars between interior principalities. Once he had conquered the dry zone, in 1612 Anauk-hpet-lun organized a special levy throughout the kingdom to attack de Brito, the last obstacle to the reunification of the entire valley under northern auspices. Although de Brito had better ships and cannon, he ran short of gunpowder and thus had no antidote to Ava's overwhelming manpower advantage. Faria y Sousa claims that a naval force of "cap-wearing" Moors, whom Anauk-hpet-lun may have recruited through the western Delta, assisted the Burmese army¹²⁰. By using his water-borne troops to seal off the southern approaches to Syriam, and by exploiting traditional siege techniques – night attacks, tunneling, and mining operations – Anauk-hpet-lun gradually wore down Syriam's resistance and prepared the way for a successful final assault.

Anauk-hpet-lun impaled de Brito on an iron stake, where he suffered in agony for two days. He justified this rigorous punishment by charging that de Brito, a "heretic", had committed sacrileges against Buddhist shrines. Other sources also suggest that Anauk-hpet-lun regarded the Portuguese as an alien and dangerous element¹²¹. Possibly these attitudes reflected a more general northern hostility towards the coast, for the same years which saw the return of the capital to the Burmese heartland also saw an express royal preference for Burmese as opposed to Mon culture¹²². In any case, for almost half a century after the capture of Syriam, we find no further reference to mercenary employment. The Portuguese had proven themselves militarily useful, to be sure, but they were politically unreliable: the fickleness of Lusitanian and Muslim mercenaries is a recurrent theme in contemporary sources¹²³. Furthermore, from a

practical standpoint, Portuguese mercenaries were very expensive, and they served only for limited periods.

The solution to the problem of foreign expertise which Anauk-hpet-lun favored was to tie to the crown on an hereditary basis those Portuguese soldiers whom he captured at Syriam. He deported all of de Brito's men, together with their families, their Catholic priests, and their equipment, to the river valleys surrounding Ava, where they were allotted village lands and organized into hereditary platoons of artillerymen and musketeers. (This system of hereditary service had long been the basis of royal control over the indigenous population). The original prisoners, perhaps four or five hundred in all, were later joined by a much larger number of sailors, mostly Indian Muslims, from ships affiliated with de Brito which had wandered into the harbor after Syriam fell and had been captured. These Portuguese and Indian families remained the backbone of the artillery, and to a lesser extent the musketeer, section of the imperial guard for almost 150 years, when they were reinforced by fresh batches of French and Indian prisoners¹²⁴. They apparently helped to defeat a Chinese attack on Ava in 1659, and afforded Ava a continuous advantage over provincial and tributary rebels who lacked comparable access to firearms. They, or allied groups of specialists, manufactured their own gunpowder and may have cast their own cannon in Upper Burma¹²⁵. Their equipment was supplemented periodically by European firearms purchased at the coastal ports¹²⁶, over which the restored dynasty now maintained a most careful and guarded control.

After taking Syriam, Anauk-hpet-lun went on to subdue Martaban, Yei, and Tavoy in the southeastern littoral. He also planned to reconquer Ayudhya; but an early defeat at Mergui combined with memories of Nan-dá-bayin's experiences to dissuade him from launching a sustained invasion of Siam¹²⁷. Until the mid-eighteenth century his successors also contented themselves with a reduced territorial role. Nonetheless the stretch of coast between Bassein and Tavoy which they retained afforded them direct access to Indian Ocean commerce. The interior origins of the restored dynasty did not blind its rulers to the practical value of such trade. Anauk-hpet-lun and Tha-lun evolved intricate and largely successful administrative procedures which allowed them to dominate the coast and to monopolize its trade, while maintaining Burma's official capital in the dry zone at Ava. The governors of the port cities became relatively humble administrators known as *myó-wuns*. Along with a battery of centrally-appointed deputies, they were responsible to the royal Council of Ministers for such matters as customs collections, export controls, foreign gratuities, and trade in reserved commodities¹²⁸. Within a few years of Syriam's fall, the ports of Lower Burma had resumed regular commerce, and the court was receiving diplomatic-cum-commercial embassies from such maritime centers as Achin, Bengal, Masulipatam, and – all sins forgiven – Portuguese Goa¹²⁹.

Conclusion

John K. Whitmore, in a perceptive essay¹³⁰, has suggested that maritime influences helped to determine the rhythm of political development in mainland Southeast Asia during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This essay has tended to confirm the validity of that approach. In the sixteenth century the growth of Indian Ocean trade and the appearance of Portuguese military technology reinforced a trend towards southern dominance. Thereby these developments assisted Pegu, the leading coastal principality, in unifying the lowlands and a vast Tai-speaking area which contributed products *inter*

alia for the Indian Ocean trade. Although, paradoxically, Pegu's success fostered excessive ambition which led to premature imperial disintegration, the memory of Bayinnaung's achievement inspired the early seventeenth century kings to resurrect his creation on a more modest scale. The Portuguese, quite unintentionally and indirectly of course, also aided this second unification, by helping to neutralize the coast at a critical time, and by providing the new dynasty with hereditary military specialists. Upper Burma thus incorporated the two principal sources of coastal strength – firearms and maritime wealth – into its own system, and the state was materially strengthened as a result of European contacts. At the same time, the Portuguese themselves were denied an autonomous role. The lineaments of this response to European penetration persisted into the nineteenth century, when the continuous and by now irresistible pressures of international commerce and European military technology finally dismantled the traditional Burmese state and undid, albeit temporarily, the sixteenth century work of unification.

Notes

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¹ See census figures, William J. Koenig, "The Early Kôn-baung Polity, 1752-1819", unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (Univ. of London, 1978), App. II; and *Zam-bù-di-pà ok-hsaiung kyàn* [Garland of the Crown of Zam-bù-di-pà], eds. J. S. Furnivall and Pe Maung Tin (Rangoon, 1960), p. 41.

² *History of Burma* (1883; repr., New York, 1969).

³ *History of Burma from the Earliest Times to 10 March 1824...* (1925; repr., 1967).

⁴ See M. S. Collis, "The City of Golden Mrauk-u", *Journal of the Burma Research Society* (hereafter *J.B.R.S.*), XIII, 3 (1923), 244-56; *idem* and San Shwe Bu, "Arakan's place in the civilization of the Bay", *J.B.R.S.*, XV, 1 (1925), 34-52.

⁵ See B. Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies*, I (The Hague, 1955), 7-48, 80-82; M. C. Ricklefs, *Modern Javanese Historical Tradition* (London, 1978), pp. 2, 156-63; Bernard H. M. Vlekke, *Nusantara: A History of Indonesia* (The Hague, 4th impr., 1959), Ch. IV.

⁶ Arun Das Gupta, "Aspects of Bengal's Sea-Borne Commerce in the Pre-European Period" (Paper Presented at the History Congress, Dacca, May, 1973). On the impact of firearms and new commercial patterns on Muslim India generally, see M. Athar Ali, "Towards an Interpretation of the Mughal Empire", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1978, No. 1, 38-49; Marshall G. S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam, III: The Gunpowder Empires and Modern Times* (Chicago, 1974), Ch. 1.

⁷ See Charnvit Kasetsiri, *The Rise of Ayudhya* (Kuala Lumpur, 1976), pp. 79-86, 111-113 (discussing commercial influences on Ayudhya's 14th century development), 131-42; Donald F. Lach, *Southeast Asia in the Eyes of Europe* (Chicago, 1968), pp. 519-38, 560-71; John K. Whitmore, "The Opening of Southeast Asia, Trading Patterns Through the Centuries", *Economic Exchange and Social Interaction in Southeast Asia*, ed. Karl L. Hutterer (Ann Arbor, 1977), pp. 146-47, 152-53.

⁸ *Ū Kalā, Maha-ya-zawin-gyi* [The Great Chronicle], I and II, ed. Saya Pwa (Rangoon, 1926, 1932); III, ed. Saya U Hkin Soe (Rangoon, 1961).

⁹ *Mok-tamā ya-zawin baung-gyok-hnin mok-tamā sit-tān sa-hsiung kyàn* [Compilation of Martaban History together with Administrative Records], ed. U Pyin-nya (Thahton, 1927). Histories and documents chiefly of early Kôn-baung vintage.

¹⁰ *Mon ya-zawin* [History of the Mons] (Rangoon, 1922). Composed in the eighteenth century, this derives from much older materials.

¹¹ "Han-tha-wadi hsin-byu-shin ayei-daw-bon" [Biography of the Lord of the White Elephants of Han-tha-wadi], eds. Hsaya-gyi U Bi et. al., *Ayei-daw-bon nga-zaung-dwé* [Five Royal Biographies], (Rangoon, 1923), pp. 383-481.

- ¹² Rangoon University Library MS. 45235, "Tahse-chauk tahse-hkanit ya-zú myan-ma min a-mein-daw-mya" [Burmese Royal Edicts of the 16th and 17th Centuries], typescript provided by Prof. Than Tun.
- ¹³ Prof. H. L. Shorto has suggested that part of *Nidāna Rāmādhīpati-kathā*, ed. Phra Candakanto (Pak Lat, Siam, 1912) was written by Bayin-naung's general Banyā-dalā (c. 1518–1572). In this case the last nine years of the history, to 1581, would be an addendum. Page references are to Prof. Shorto's typescript.
- ¹⁴ Schrieke, *op. cit.*, pp. 7–15.
- ¹⁵ *Asian Trade and European Influence in the Indonesian Archipelago between 1500 and about 1630* (The Hague, 1962), pp. 20–21.
- ¹⁶ See Jung-pang Lo, "The Emergence of China as a Sea Power During the Late Sung and Early Yuan Periods", *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, XIV, 4 (1955), 489–503; *idem*, "The Decline of the Early Ming Navy", *Oriens Extremus*, V (1958), 149–68; John K. Fairbank, *Trade and Diplomacy on the China Coast*, I (Cambridge, Mass., 1953), 34–38.
- ¹⁷ According to Schrieke, *op. cit.*, 25–26, whereas three of Java's chief ports had a combined population c. 1430 of "over a thousand families", by the beginning of the seventeenth century Japara alone had up to 100 000 people. On Malacca's rise, see O. W. Wolters, *The fall of Srivijaya in Malay history* (London, 1970).
- ¹⁸ On Chinese trade, see W. W. Rockhill, "Notes on the relations and trade of China with the Eastern Archipelago and the coasts of the Indian Ocean during the fourteenth century", *T'oung Pao*, ser. II, XV (1914), 419–47; XVI (1915), 61–159, 236–71, 374–92, 435–67, 604–26; and J. J. L. Duyvendak, "The true Dates of the Chinese Maritime Expeditions in the early fifteenth Century", *T'oung Pao*, XXXIV (1939), 341–412. Chou Ch'u-fei and Chao Ju-kua, writing in 1178 and c. 1250 respectively, referred to Burma, but it is unclear whether this knowledge derived chiefly from land or seaborne contact. See *Chou Ju-kua*, tr. Friedrich Hirth and W. W. Rockhill (1911; repr., Taipei, 1970), Intro., and pp. 58–59, 94.
- ¹⁹ "The Travels of Nicolò Conti, in the East...", *India in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. R. H. Major (London, 1857), pp. 10–15.
- ²⁰ See G. H. Luce, "The Career of Htilaing Min (Kyanzitha)", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1966, Pts. 1–2, 58–60; *idem*, *Old Burma—Early Pagan*, I (Locust Valley, N. Y., 1969), 27, 121–25; *Zam-bū-di-pā*, p. 60; Ü Kalā, *op. cit.*, I, 435; Harvey, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
- ²¹ *Mok-tamā ya-zawin*, pp. 11–13.
- ²² *Mon ya-zawin*, p. 66. Cf. the Burmese text of the Mon history of Pegu by the monk of Athwā, British Library, London, MS. OR 3463, pp. 129–30; in her reign "merchants, travelling the gold and silver routes of trade, came to buy and sell...", and *Achei-pyā myan-mā naing-ngan yei-thamaing* [Basic Burmese History], I (Rangoon, 1970), 336.
- ²³ British Library MS. OR 3463, p. 129; *Mon ya-zawin*, pp. 67–68; *The Kalyāni Inscriptions Erected by King Dhammaceti at Pegu in 1476 A. D.: Text and Translation* (Rangoon, 1892), pp. 83–84.
- ²⁴ British Library MS. OR 3463, pp. 129–30, 136–58, 186–92; *Nidāna*, pp. 11–20. An overland embassy also arrived from an unidentified Haw king, whose state along with China probably supplied Pegu with interior goods for export. See below, n. 31.
- ²⁵ "The Travels of Athanasius Nikitin of Twer", *India in the Fifteenth Century*, pp. 20–21.
- ²⁶ "Account of the Journey of Hieronimo di Santo Stefano...", *ibid.*, pp. 5–7.
- ²⁷ J. S. Furnivall, "Europeans in Burma of the Fifteenth Century", *J.B.R.S.*, XXIX, 3 (1939), 239. Cf. Harvey, *op. cit.*, p. 101.
- ²⁸ *The Travels of Ludovico di Varthema*, ed. George P. Badger (London, 1863), p. 222. For critical comments on this author (who, despite obvious exaggerations, agrees reasonably well with Burmese sources), see Furnivall, "Europeans in Burma", *loc. cit.*, pp. 241–49.
- ²⁹ *The Book of Duarte Barbosa*, ed. and tr. Mansel L. Dames, II (London, 1921), 152–53.
- ³⁰ *The Suma Oriental of Tomé Pires...*, ed. and tr. Armando Cortesão, I (London, 1944), 97–103, 110–111.
- ³¹ Interior trade was conducted both by Indian Ocean traders and by local merchants and peddlers. See *Kalyāni Inscriptions*, pp. 73–75, itemizing interior products being sent to Ceylon; *Tomé Pires*, I, 111; *Duarte Barbosa*, II, 159; "The Voyage of Master Ralph Fitch...", *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes*, ed. Samuel Purchas (repr., Glasgow, 1905), X, 194–95; Ü Kalā, *op. cit.*, III, 111; *The Voyages and Adventures of Fernand Mendez Pinto*, tr. H. Cogan (1653; repr., London, 1969), p. 215.
- ³² Cf. S. J. Tambiah, *World Conqueror and World Renouncer* (Cambridge, 1976), pp. 128–29.
- ³³ On local coinage, see *Tomé Pires*, I, 99–100.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 99; Ian A. Macgregor, "Notes on the Portuguese in Malaya", *Journal Malayan Branch Royal Asiatic Society*, XXVIII, 2 (1955), 7, n. 18.

- ³³ India Office, London, *Records of Fort St. George. Diary and Consulation Books of 1711-1733* (Madras, 1929-30), *passim*.
- ³⁴ See "Extracts of Master Caesar Frederike...", *Hakluytus Posthumus*, X, 131-35; *di Varthema*, pp. 220-222; "Santo Stefano", *loc. cit.*, p. 6. Cf. D. G. E. Hall, "The Dagregister of Batavia and Dutch Trade with Burma in the Seventeenth Century", *J. B. R. S.* XXIX, 2 (1939), 142-47.
- ³⁵ *Nidāna*, p. 87.
- ³⁶ *di Varthema*, pp. 217-22. Cf. references to Peguan campaigns, *Mon ya-zawin*, pp. 100-04; *Nidāna*, pp. 30-34. I am unable to expand on Badger's analysis of *di Varthema's* claim that the mercenaries were Christians.
- ³⁷ See Ū Kalā, *op. cit.*, I, 381, 410; II, 44, 47, 107, 171-73; M. Siddiq Khan, "Muslim Intercourse with Burma", *Islamic Culture*, X (1936), 426-27; Phayre, *op. cit.*, p. 67-70.
- ³⁸ *Duarte Barbosa*, II, 159.
- ³⁹ Than Tun, *Hkit-haing myan-ma ya-zawin* [Ancient Burmese History], (Rangoon, 1964), pp. 181, 183.
- ⁴⁰ *A List of Inscriptions Found in Burma*, comp. Charles Duroiselle, I (Rangoon, 1921).
- ⁴¹ See Than Tun, "Religion in Burma, A. D. 1000-1300", *J. B. R. S.* XLII, 2 (1959), 47-69; *idem*, "Mahākassapa and His Tradition", *J. B. R. S.*, XLII, 2 (1959), 99-118; Tin Hla Thaw, "History of Burma: A. D. 1400-1500", *J. B. R. S.*, XLII, 2 (1959), 135-51.
- ⁴² See above, n. 43; *Kalyāni Inscriptions*, esp. pp. 99-102; and Victor B. Lieberman, "The Political Significance of Religious Wealth in Burmese History: Some Further Thoughts", *Journal of Asian Studies*, XXXIX, 4 (Aug., 1980).
- ⁴³ See Ū Kalā, *op. cit.*, III, 111, referring to opening years of 17th century.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, II, 171-77; *Nidāna*, p. 45. Unless otherwise noted, the chronology of this paper derives from *Nidāna*, the earliest credible source, although it apparently dates Tabin-shwei-hfi's final conquest of Pegu at least a year earlier than Manuel de Faria y Sousa, *The Portuguese Asia*, tr. John Stevens (1695; repr., Westmead, England, 1971), II, 10.
- ⁴⁵ See H. L. Shorto, "A Mon Genealogy of Kings...", *Historians of South-East Asia*, ed. D. G. E. Hall (London, 1962), p. 68; Victor B. Lieberman, "Ethnic Politics in Eighteenth-Century Burma", *Modern Asian Studies*, XII, 3 (1978), 455-82.
- ⁴⁶ *Mendez Pinto*, p. 200.
- ⁴⁷ See *Mendez Pinto*, pp. 192-93; "Han-tha-wadi hsin-byu-shin", *loc. cit.*, p. 436; Meilink-Roelofs, *op. cit.*, pp. 72, 127-28, 133-34, 165-66, 371 n. 261. On Portuguese policies and the diversion of trade, see too Schrieke, *op. cit.*, I, 42-48; C. R. Boxer, *The Portuguese Seaborne Empire, 1415-1825* (London, 1977), pp. 48-49, 61-64; M. N. Pearson, *Merchants and Rulers in Gujarat* (Berkeley, 1976), pp. 101-02.
- ⁴⁸ Ū Kalā, *op. cit.*, II, 232; Harvey, *op. cit.*, p. 159; "Caesar Frederike", *loc. cit.*, p. 118.
- ⁴⁹ Samuel Purchas, *Purchas His Pilgrimage or Relations of the World* (London, 1626), p. 513. *The Voyage of John Huyghen van Linschoten to the East Indies*, I, ed. A. C. Burnell (London, 1885), 101; Maurice Collis, *The Grand Peregrination* (London, 1949), pp. 166-67; "Our Wars with the Burmese", tr. U Aung Thein, *J. B. R. S.*, XXXVIII, 2 (1955), 133; and R. Halliday, "Immigration of the Mons into Siam", *Journal of the Siam Society*, X, 3 (1913), 7-9 all refer to regular intercourse between Martaban and Siamese towns like Kanburi and Ayudhya.
- ⁵⁰ On Peguan trade with Bantam and Achin, see Schrieke, *op. cit.*, I, 43; "Caesar Frederike", *loc. cit.*, p. 128; Ū Kalā, *op. cit.*, II, 387 and III, 182-83; D. G. E. Hall, *A History of South-East Asia* (2nd ed., New York, 1966), p. 357.
- ⁵¹ *Nidāna*, p. 98. It may also be significant that whereas *Mendez Pinto*, p. 215 and "Caesar Frederike", *loc. cit.*, p. 128 spoke of direct trade with Mecca, Tomé Pires, writing c. 1515, made no such reference.
- ⁵² y Sousa, *op. cit.*, I, 181-82, 226-28; Meilink-Roelofs, *op. cit.*, pp. 138, 145; Frederick C. Danvers, *The Portuguese in India*, I (London, 1894), 228, 291, 344-45; R. S. Whiteway, *The Rise of Portuguese Power in India, 1497-1550* (Westminster, 1899), p. 328; Macgregor, *op. cit.*, p. 7-8, n. 18; *Mendez Pinto*, p. 189.
- ⁵³ "Caesar Frederike", *loc. cit.*, pp. 127-28; y Sousa, *op. cit.*, II, 10; *Mendez Pinto*, pp. 215, 287; *Linschoten*, I, 98, 100-01; "A Brief Account of the Kingdom of Pegu", tr. A. Macgregor, *J. B. R. S.* XVI, 2 (1926), 108, 123-24.
- ⁵⁴ *Mendez Pinto*, p. 290. Comparably, "Caesar Frederike", *loc. cit.*, p. 118 said that Martaban had 90 Portuguese c. 1568.
- ⁵⁵ See below, n. 106.
- ⁵⁶ y Sousa, *op. cit.*, II, 10. This date, however, follows *Nidāna*.
- ⁵⁷ See J. H. Parry, *The Age of Reconnaissance* (New York, 1963), p. 138; Meilink-Roelofs, *op. cit.*, pp. 61, 122-24; Carlo M. Cipolla, *Guns and Sails in the Early Phase of European Expansion 1400-1700* (London, 1965), pp. 100-03; von Bernard Rathgen, "Die Pulverwaffe in Indien", *Ostasiatische Zeitschrift*, n. s. II (1925), 16-19, 24.

- ⁶⁰ *op. cit.*, p. 123.
- ⁶¹ See above, n. 39. Harvey, *op. cit.*, p. 340 correctly points out that the Burmese chronicles contain numerous anachronisms, but Harvey underestimated the antiquity of Indian firearms. See above, n. 6 and S. A. Z. Nadvi, "The Use of Cannon in Muslim India", *Islamic Culture*, XII (1938), 405-18.
- ⁶² William Irvine, *The Army of the Indian Moghuls* (London, 1903), p. 104.
- ⁶³ Whiteway, *op. cit.*, p. 39.
- ⁶⁴ The following authorities emphasize the superiority of Portuguese or European firearms and gunners: Rathgen, "Pulverwaffe", *loc. cit.*, pp. 11-30, 196-217; Cipolla, *op. cit.*, Pt. II; C. R. Boxer, "Asian Potentates and European Artillery in the 16th-18th Centuries...", *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, XXXVIII, 2 (1966), 156-72; Meilink-Roelofs, *op. cit.*, pp. 122-23; Irvine, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-18; Whiteway, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-41. Whiteway also calls attention to the advantages of Portuguese armor.
- ⁶⁵ W. Y. Carman, *A History of Firearms* (London, 1955), pp. 95, 100.
- ⁶⁶ See Hodgson, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18; Charles Oman, *A History of the Art of War in the Middle Ages*, II (New York, 1924), 225-27.
- ⁶⁷ *Nidāna*, p. 129. This was actually fired by the defenders of Ayudhya against the Burmese in 1568-69.
- ⁶⁸ *Mendez Pinto*, p. 287. Similarly the Burmese attack on Ayudhya in 1593 collapsed when the Burmese Heir-Apparent was killed in a field encounter by an arquebus or swivel-gun. See Ü Kalā, *op. cit.*, III, 91 and "The Jesuits on Pegu at the end of the XVIIth Century", tr. Rev. A. Saulière, *Bengal Past and Present*, XIX, Series Nos. 37-38 (1919), 73. *Nidāna*, p. 110 suggests that arquebus range determined the spot where Burmese and Siamese troops formed their battle lines.
- ⁶⁹ Collis and San Shwe Bu, "Arakan's place", *loc. cit.*, p. 41.
- ⁷⁰ Cf. Charnvit Kasetsiri, *op. cit.*, p. 86, referring apparently to the 14th century.
- ⁷¹ Unlike Ava, Chiengmai does not appear to have suffered from the unchecked growth of religious lands or from "barbarian" incursions. Moreover, Nan and Luang Prabang bolstered Chiengmai's defenses. On the struggle with Ayudhya, see W. A. R. Wood, *History of Siam* (repr., Bangkok, 1959), pp. 99-106; *Annales du Siam, III: Chronique de Xieng Mai*, ed. and tr. Camille Notton (Paris, 1932), 153-57.
- ⁷² Prince Damrong said that when Pegu attacked Ayudhya in 1547-48, i.e. some two years after the disastrous Ayudhyan campaign against Chiengmai referred to in n. 71 above, "it was the first time that big guns came to be used as the chief weapon in (Siamese) wars of the time." "Our Wars with the Burmese", *loc. cit.*, p. 138. This was despite the fact that Portuguese advisers were attached to the Ayudhyan army shortly after 1518.
- ⁷³ The Portuguese population at Malacca itself rarely exceeded 600.
- ⁷⁴ Macgregor, "Portuguese in Malaya", *loc. cit.*, pp. 7-11 and p. 11, n. 28. Cf. Meilink-Roelofs, *op. cit.*, p. 128. Although we write of "Portuguese", many of Portugal's gunners in Asia were in fact Italians, Flemings, and Germans.
- ⁷⁵ This account derives from Ü Kalā, II, 183-89. Cf. *Mendez Pinto*, Chs. 50-52. Although Pinto is unreliable for numbers and dates and his speeches are pure fiction, his political information is usually reliable. See Collis, *Peregrination*; I. A. Macgregor, "Some Aspects of Portuguese Historical Writing of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries on South East Asia", *Historians of South-East Asia*, pp. 179, 194-96.
- ⁷⁶ Ü Kalā, *op. cit.*, II, 145. Cf. *ibid.*, II, 181-2, 191-211; *Nidāna*, p. 46.
- ⁷⁷ *Mendez Pinto*, pp. 211, 214, 237-38.
- ⁷⁸ Ü Kalā, *op. cit.*, II, 243. Cf. below, n. 108. On Ayudhya's peninsular possessions, see too Lach, *op. cit.*, pp. 524-26.
- ⁷⁹ See Harvey, *op. cit.*, p. 158 relying on Diogo de Couto, *Da Asia*, III (Lisbon, 1778-88), Pt. 1, 17-20.
- ⁸⁰ Ü Kalā, *op. cit.*, II, 234-35; y Sousa, *op. cit.*, II, 134-36; *Mendez Pinto*, pp. 270-75.
- ⁸¹ "Our Wars with the Burmese", *loc. cit.*, pp. 138-39. See too Wood, *op. cit.*, p. 114 (referring to the "old mud wall"); A. B. Griswold and Prasert Na Nagara, "A Fifteenth-Century Historical Poem", *Southeast Asian History and Historiography: Essays Presented to D. G. E. Hall*, eds. C. D. Cowan and O. W. Wolters (Ithaca, 1976), p. 128, n. 1.
- ⁸² Ü Kalā, *op. cit.*, II, 234-35. Cf. below, n. 91. *Kalā*, *kalā-batheī*, and *kalā-bayin-gyi* seem to have been used imprecisely.
- ⁸³ For different spellings and identifications, see *Mendez Pinto*, pp. 271 ff.; y Sousa, *op. cit.*, III, 357-58; Harvey, *op. cit.*, pp. 162-63.
- ⁸⁴ Ü Kalā, *op. cit.*, II, 245-47.
- ⁸⁵ For example, Diego Suarez and his men fought in turn for Tabin-shwei-hñi and Tabin-shwei-hñi's assassin, until the latter was killed by a Portuguese loyal to a claimant named Smin Dhaw.

- ⁴⁶ Ū Kalā, *op. cit.*, II, 274–75. Prince Damrong, "Our Wars with the Burmese", *loc. cit.*, pp. 143–44 accepts this interpretation.
- ⁴⁷ See above, n. 31 and the inventory of interior products made available through Bayin-naung's conquests in "Jesuits on Pegu", *loc. cit.*, pp. 69–70.
- ⁴⁸ See detailed tribute lists at Ū Kalā, *op. cit.*, II, 306, 312, 323. Note the similarity of items with n. 87 above.
- ⁴⁹ "Caesar Frederike", *loc. cit.*, pp. 134. *Ibid.*, p. 131 refers to "eight brokers of the Kings'... bound to sell all the merchandise which come to Pegu". Cf. n. 36 above; and David Joel Steinberg et. al., *In Search of Southeast Asia: A Modern History* (New York, 1971), p. 52.
- ⁵⁰ Hall, "Dagregister of Batavia", *loc. cit.*, pp. 142–47. These brokers were known in Burmese as *pwè-zās*. See *Zam-bù-di-pá*, p. 51. A desire to secure access to north Tai and Chinese export products also may have prompted Damá-zei-di to send an otherwise bizarre expedition to the Tai area near Yunnan in the late 15th century. See *Mon ya-zawin*, pp. 70 ff.
- ⁵¹ Cf. Ū Kalā, *op. cit.*, II, 279 and 365, 412; Phayre, *op. cit.*, p. 107.
- ⁵² "Jesuits on Pegu", *loc. cit.*, p. 76.
- ⁵³ *Nidāna*, pp. 85–86.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 84.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 91–92.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 151.
- ⁵⁷ See *ibid.*, pp. 86, 90. Such speeches are not put into the mouths of Ayudhya's defenders.
- ⁵⁸ *Chronique de Xieng Mai*, pp. 93, 135.
- ⁵⁹ *Nidāna*, pp. 94–95.
- ⁶⁰ See Ū Kalā, *op. cit.*, I, 409–35.
- ⁶¹ "Our Wars with the Burmese", *loc. cit.*, pp. 147–48.
- ⁶² Ū Kalā, *op. cit.*, II, 357. Cf. *ibid.*, II, 352–53, 415–16; *Nidāna*, p. 107; "Han-tha-wadi hsin-byu-shin", *loc. cit.*, p. 457. See too Alexander Hamilton's history, reportedly derived from knowledgeable Peguan informants c. 1709: "Neither the Siamers nor the Peguers at that Time [c. 1563] understood the Use of Fire Arms, and their Noise and Execution at so great a Distance terrified them. With the Portuguese Assistance, the Peguer went... to find out the Siamer... and where ever the Portuguese Arms went, they had Victory..." Alexander Hamilton, *A New Account of the East Indies...*, II (Edinburgh, 1727), 36–37, 40. Ayudhya's partial submission at this time was also heavily influenced by dissensions within the court. See Wood, *op. cit.*, pp. 117–23; "Our Wars with the Burmese", *loc. cit.*, pp. 145–46, 152–61, for the political background to this settlement and the subsequent revolt which prompted the second invasion.
- ⁶³ For various estimates, see *Nidāna*, pp. 105, 128; "Jesuits on Pegu", *loc. cit.*, p. 70; Ū Kalā, *op. cit.*, II, 408–13.
- ⁶⁴ "Our Wars with the Burmese", *loc. cit.*, pp. 161–64 emphasizes the latter element.
- ⁶⁵ *Nidāna*, pp. 128–35; "Caesar Frederike", *loc. cit.*, p. 111 (who claimed the siege lasted 21 months); Ū Kalā, *op. cit.*, II, 407–32.
- ⁶⁶ Boxer, *Seaborne Empire*, p. 59; Meilink-Roelofs, *op. cit.*, pp. 133–35.
- ⁶⁷ W. H. Moreland, *India at the Death of Akbar: An Economic Study* (London, 1920), pp. 235–37.
- ⁶⁸ "Han-tha-wadi hsin-byu-shin", *loc. cit.*, pp. 436–37, 459.
- ⁶⁹ "Caesar Frederike", *loc. cit.*, p. 125. Cf. y Sousa, *op. cit.*, III, 117–18.
- ⁷⁰ "Caesar Frederike", *loc. cit.*, p. 124; "Jesuits on Pegu", *loc. cit.*, p. 76; *Mendez Pinto*, p. 288. Note, though, that in the 1580s "The Voyage of Master Ralph Fitch...", *Hakluytus Posthumus*, X, 189 rated Pegu's ordnance much less highly than did Frederike.
- ⁷¹ See Ū Kalā, *op. cit.*, III, 69–100; "Jesuits on Pegu", *loc. cit.*, pp. 79–80; "Indian Observations gathered out of the Letters of Nicolas Pimenta...", *Hakluytus Posthumus*, X, 210–17.
- ⁷² On de Brito, see Ū Kalā, *op. cit.*, III, 106–11, 159–66; *Pāw-tú-gi ya-zawin* [History of the Portuguese], eds. Thi-ri-zei-dá-yat-kyaw and Dom Ignacio (?) (Rangoon, 1918), pp. 198 ff. (this is an anonymous 17th century history); "Brief Account of Pegu", *loc. cit.*, pp. 99–138 (another early 17th century source); y Sousa, *op. cit.*, III, 127–40, 154, 191–94.
- ⁷³ See J. J. A. Campos, *History of the Portuguese in Bengal* (Calcutta, 1919), Chs. 6, 7, 14; y Sousa, *op. cit.*, III, 153–62, 224–28.
- ⁷⁴ Ū Kalā, *op. cit.*, III, 106, 159–60, 164–65; *Pāw-tú-gi*, pp. 203–16; "Brief Account of Pegu", *loc. cit.*, p. 134.
- ⁷⁵ Ū Kalā, *op. cit.*, III, 111, 165; "The History of Syriam", ed. and tr. J. S. Furnivall, *J. B. R. S.*, V, 2 (1915), 49 (Burmese text).
- ⁷⁶ *Pāw-tú-gi*, pp. 201, 213; y Sousa, *op. cit.*, III, 154; Purchas, *op. cit.*, pp. 513–14.

- ¹¹⁷ See Than Tun, "Mahākassapa", *loc. cit.*, pp. 99, 107, 116; Tin Hla Thaw, "History 1400–1500", *loc. cit.*, p. 147; Rangoon University Library MS. 45235, Edict 10 (992 nadaw 10 wan.), pp. 9–10; Edict 44 (999 nadaw 2 wax.), pp. 38–39; Edict 89 (1000 tabó-dwè 5 wan.), p. 79.
- ¹¹⁸ Sao Saimong Mangrai, *The Shan States and the British Annexation* (Ithaca, 1965), App. II, p. XIV.
- ¹¹⁹ Ú Kalà, *op. cit.*, III, 111.
- ¹²⁰ y Sousa, *op. cit.*, III, 191.
- ¹²¹ See above, n. 115, and y Sousa, *op. cit.*, III, 192–93.
- ¹²² See Victor B. Lieberman, "The Transfer of the Burmese Capital from Pegu to Ava", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1980, No. 1, 64–83.
- ¹²³ As de Brito betrayed the king of Arakan, so expediency led other Portuguese to desert Tabinshwei-hti (see above, n. 85), Bayin-naung (*Mendez Pinto*, Ch. 73); and Nan-dá-bayin (y Sousa, *op. cit.*, III, 120–21). Nor were Muslim mercenaries more reliable, as y Sousa, *op. cit.*, III, 120–21, and "Gasparo Balbi his Voyage to Pegu...", *Hakluytus Posthumus*, X, 159 attest.
- ¹²⁴ See "History of Syriam", *loc. cit.*, pp. 49–50, 133; Ú Kalà, *op. cit.*, III, 166; *Report on the Settlement Operations in the Sagaing District, Season 1893–1900* (Rangoon, 1903), pp. 3–4; *Report on the Settlement Operations in the Shwebo District, Season 1900–1906* (Rangoon, 1907), pp. 13–18.
- ¹²⁵ National Library, Rangoon, MS. 1950, Edict of 1041 kahson 12 wax., leaf *gi*; Hall, "Dagh-register of Batavia", *loc. cit.*, p. 144. Cf. *Nidāna*, p. 137.
- ¹²⁶ Hall, "Daghregister of Batavia", *loc. cit.*, p. 154; *idem*, *Early English Intercourse with Burma, 1587–1743* (1928; repr., London, 1968), pp. 208–09; Rangoon University Library, MS. 45235, Edict 69 (1000 wa-gaung 10 wan.), p. 63; *Kòn-baung-zet maha-ya-zawin-daw-gyi* [Chronicle of the Kòn-baung Dynasty], ed. Ú Tin, I (Rangoon, 1967), 111.
- ¹²⁷ See Ú Kalà, *op. cit.*, III, 167–72; y Sousa, *op. cit.*, III, 197.
- ¹²⁸ Victor B. Lieberman, "Provincial Reforms in Taung-ngu Burma", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, XLIII, 3 (1980).
- ¹²⁹ Ú Kalà, *op. cit.*, III, 180–83; Hall, *English Intercourse*, ch. 2; y Sousa, *op. cit.*, III, 255–56.
- ¹³⁰ Whitmore, "Opening of Southeast Asia", *loc. cit.*, pp. 146–47, 152–53.