

## THE SACK OF AYUTTHAYA: A CHRONICLE REDISCOVERED

### *Yodayar Naing Mawgun* by Letwe Nawrahta: A Contemporary Myanmar Record, Long Lost, of How Ayutthaya Was Conquered

Translated by Soe Thuzar Myint

A contemporary record of the Myanmar siege and destruction of Ayutthaya in 1767 has been rediscovered and translated into English.\* It was composed as a *mawgun*, a classical poetic form, by Letwe Nawrahta (1723–1792), a prolific author and senior noble at the Konboun court at Innwa (Ava). While it may read like an eyewitness account, more likely Letwe Nawrahta was at the side of King Hsinbyushin in Ava at the time and compiled his narrative from dispatches and debriefings.

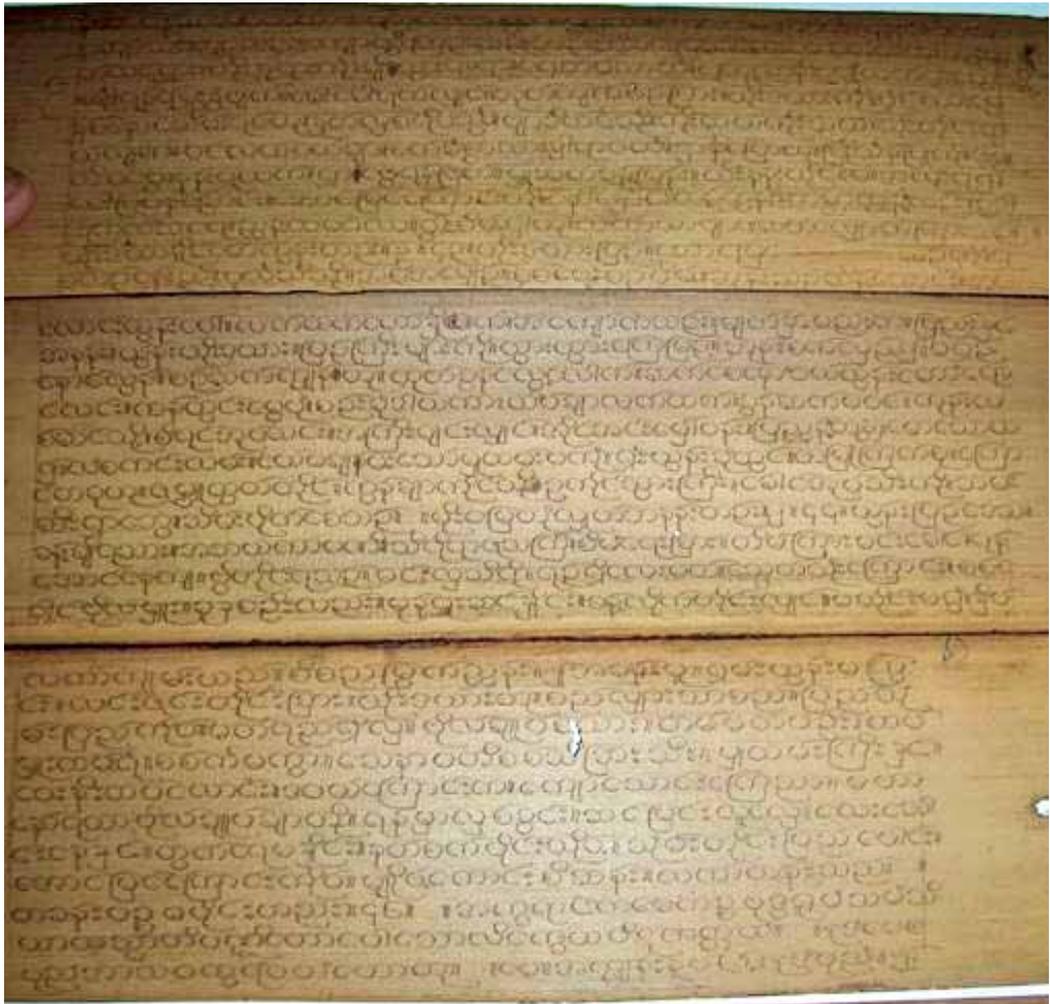
The original text was lost for many decades, through misattribution of authorship among other causes. The poem became confused with another work of the same name by a different author, about the Siamese attack on Kengtung in 1853. On top of that, the manuscript was wrongly catalogued under another author's name. Notwithstanding, extracts were copied into the later Burmese chronicles. An excerpt of four stanzas appeared in an anthology of Myanmar literature published during the colonial period.

It was written as a *mawgun*, a poem that records a memorable event as a panegyric to the monarch. Its title *Yodayar Naing Mawgun* means “record of victory over Ayutthaya”. The earliest copy we have is a palm-leaf manuscript of twelve leaves, with eleven lines on each leaf, that was dated 8 July 1889, about 120 years after the historic event. The poem has 46 stanzas, divided into five parts: the first four have eight stanzas followed by a summary stanza, while the last has nine stanzas plus a summary stanza. While my translation is not word-for-word and not in verse like the original, I have tried to convey the full contents of the original.

The account of the fall of Ayutthaya in *Yodayar Naing Mawgun* differs from other Myanmar and Thai accounts in many ways. Since it is the only one known to have been written immediately after the event, it is vital for our understanding of those epochal events.

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\* ED. NOTE— See Soe Thuzar Myint, *The Portrayal of the Battle of Ayutthaya in Myanmar Literature* (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 2011). See also the Note that follows this Article: “The Myanmar poetic account of Ayutthaya vanquished: Notes on its rediscovery and significance” by Thaw Kaung with the assistance of Yee Yee Khin; pp. 25–37.



The palm-leaf manuscript of *Yodayar Naing Mawgun* by Letwe Nawrahta

## *Yodayar Naing Mawgun* by Letwe Nawrahta

### ❧ FIRST PART ❧

#### STANZA 1

Praising in the correct way, I will open the ears of the people. In every military campaign at many different times, the most renowned and illustrious Alaungpaya<sup>1</sup> placed our lord Hsinphyushin,<sup>2</sup> second son of Alaungpaya, at the head of the army or vanguard. It seems he was honing Hsinphyushin's prowess in battle and heralding his feats in arms to people far and near. The turmoil in the fifty-seven districts of Chiang Mai seemed to be prompting the sons of King Alaungpaya to reclaim the legacy bestowed upon them by their late father, King Alaungpaya. Therefore, Hsinphyushin appointed nobles to march to Dwarawati [Siam] that lay adjacent to the ninety-nine Shan states including Khemavara [Keng Tung], Mahanagra [Keng Yone], and Haribunja [Chiang Mai], and to invest and occupy the city though it was difficult to subdue being surrounded by the sea, rivers, and streams.

So that the events of overcoming the country and palace of the king of Siam may endure without interruption until the extinction of the world, and so that the auspiciousness may increase, this *Yodayar Naing Mawgun*, utmost of all poems, is offered.

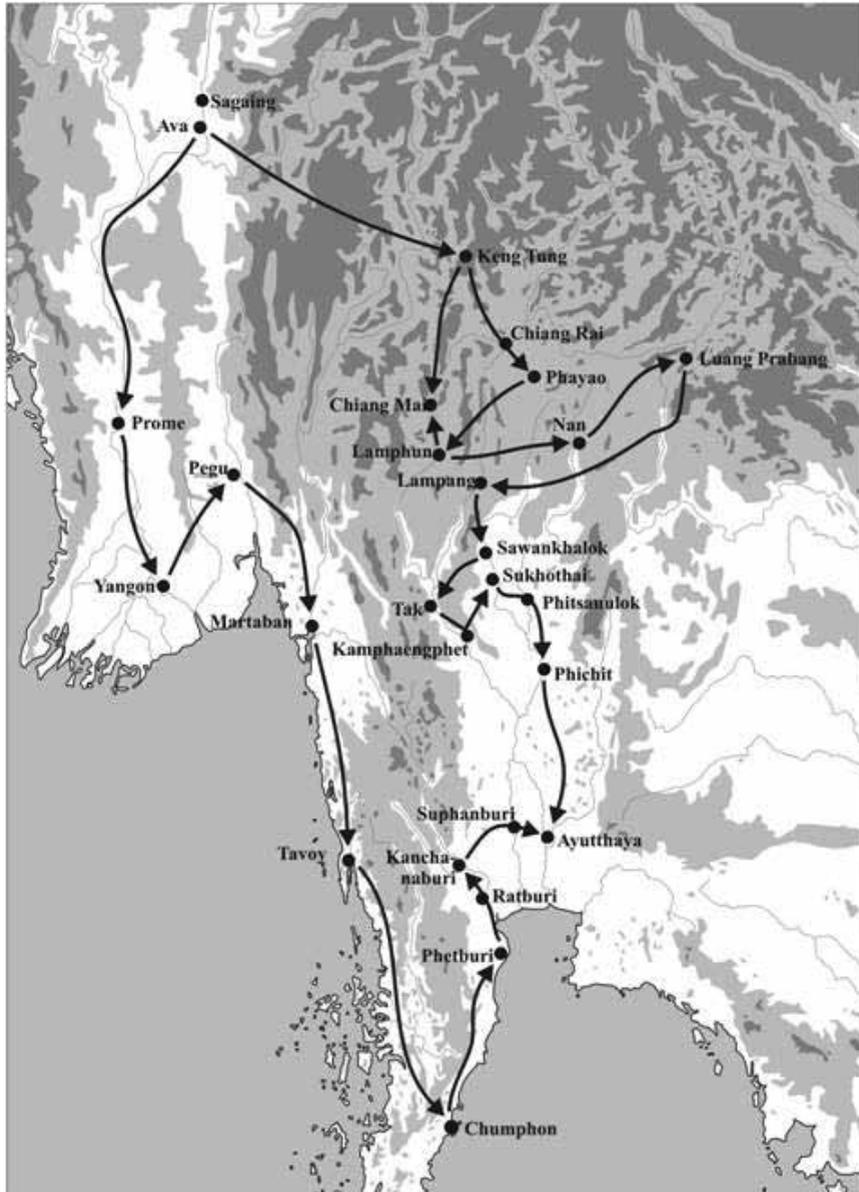
#### STANZA 2

The phases of the war, investing and conquering Yodayar, will be described in sequence like making a string of pearls with selected beads of equal size. Glorious, sacred, and illustrious Alaungpaya conquered the lands of Kyawkathe–Myetname [Vietnam], Phrae, Nan, Yun [Chiang Mai], and Siam, subjugating them as vassal states and compelling them to pay annual tribute. During the reign of King Naungdawgyi,<sup>3</sup> donor of a golden stupa in Mahananda Lake, the Kandwin Zigon, these lands stopped paying tribute to the king. Furthermore, peace could not prevail because leaders in these regions fomented turmoil or committed crimes and looting in the outskirts of these eastern regions. Therefore, King Naungdawgyi dispatched an army to search out and arrest the leaders of those rebels or troublemakers and to occupy Chiang Mai where few Myanmar royal servants were present and no garrison stationed.

<sup>1</sup> Founder of Konboug dynasty, reigned 1752–60, capital at Shwebo.

<sup>2</sup> Reigned 1763–76, capital at Innwa (Ava).

<sup>3</sup> First son of Alaungpaya, reigned 1760–63.



**Map 1.** Routes taken by Myanmar armies from 1765 to 1767

## STANZA 3

The four nobles assigned to march to Chiang Mai were Abaya Garmani, Thiri Raza Thingyan, Taingyar Min Gaung, and Minhla Thiri. In overwhelming Chiang Mai, many victories were won because the seven commanders of three army columns attacked the enemy fiercely and without respite like a musth elephant. After laying waste fifty-seven districts of Chiang Mai including Chiang Mai, Lampang, Nan, Phrae, Maing Thwin, Chiang Saen, and Phayao, town guards were left to garrison Chiang Mai in order to prevent a recurrence in the future. The Myanmar army brought back princes and princesses, grandsons of kings, chieftains, prisoners, elephants, and horses as well as gold, silver, and gems from Chiang Mai. They arrived at the palace of Sagaing in the month of Tabaung, ME 1124 [March 1763] and presented these spoils to the king.

## STANZA 4

Not long after the conquest of Chiang Mai, King Naungdawgyi died.<sup>4</sup> In accordance with the auguries and oracles, the glorious king Hsinphyushin, acme of the nation, ascended the throne at a propitious time in Buddhist Era 2307, Kosa era 1125 [29 November 1763]. He ruled Sagaing and Ava.

## STANZA 5

In the early reign of Hsinphyushin, Nwemano, ruler of Lamphun laid waste fifty-seven districts of Chiang Mai including Maing Saen, Maing Hlyin, Maing Nyut, Maing Law, Maing Pin, Maing Hin, Maing Hsat, Maing Sut, Maing Kin, Maing Han, Maing Pan, Naing Maw, Maing Paw, Maing Win, Naung Khwin, Lawin, Maing Long, Maing Htar, Maing Tar, Maing Nin, Chiang Tung, Chiang Kaung, Thalaw, Phayao, Chiang Kwon, Phrae, Nan, Chiang Won, Maing Thong, Maing Nyaung, Maing Hit, Maing Hae, Chiang Ye, Chiang Saen, Maing Kwat, Chiang Lap, Chiang Wine, Maing Kung, Maing Nyat, Maing Ngaw, Maing Tain, Maing Pawn, Maing Sin, Maing Pu, Maing Khinm Thamat, Maing Pai, Bukwar, Maing Nwe. His rank was not Sawbwa or Sawkan,<sup>5</sup> or Zarpar<sup>6</sup> but only chief thief or rebel. Only when he was suppressed would the upheavals caused by him and other chieftains from the Chiang Mai region cease. Thus Hsinphyushin, as a gesture to show his martial prowess, decided to quell all these rebels.

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<sup>4</sup> On 28 November 1763.

<sup>5</sup> Two terms for a Shan chief, meaning “lord of the sky.”

<sup>6</sup> A ruler over a territory larger than a village but smaller than a town.

## STANZA 6

Rural villages in far-flung areas made submissions to the king in unison that Nwemano, who resembled filthy scum on the surface of a lake, should be suppressed by the glory and the power of the king's august royal personage once and for all. Therefore, the king appointed Naymyo Thihapati as supreme commander of the Zimme [Chiang Mai] column, and Kyaw Gaung Kyaw Thu, Thiri Nanda Kyaw Htin, and Thiri Yaza Thingyan as commanders to march on Chiang Mai on Tuesday, the 6th waxing day of Taboung month ME 1125 [6 February 1764].<sup>7</sup> The Zimme column marched approximately nine stations up to Thanlwin [Salaween] jetty and crossed the Thanlwin River by nine ferries or fords at Htar Saen Nyut, Htar Bar Hlaing, Htar Zagar, Htar Pa, Htar Theh, Htar Hpyant, Htar Wint, Htar Pa Lu, and Htar Bar Yu. When they heard of the Zimme column's approach, rulers of towns in the Chiang Mai region fortified their respective towns. When the Zimme column advanced to Keng Tung, they met a messenger from the Chiang Mai town guard and thus received information about the region. General Naymyo Thiha Pati sent an army under the command of Kyaw Gaung Kyaw Thu, Thiri Yaza Thingyan, and Tuyin Yama Kyaw along the Maing Pu–Maing Tha route to suppress the rebellion around that region.

The ringleaders, Nge Thu Tit and Nge San Khong, after sending their families to take refuge in the Lwai Lon mountain range, besieged Phayao town with the strength of twenty-four armies. Naymyo Thihapati also sent a contingent under the command of Thiri Nanda Kyaw Htin to deal with Phayao while the main army took the Maing Thwin–Kyaing Ye [Chiang Rai] route. When the Myanmar army overran the Lwai Lon mountain range, besiegers of Phayao were so afraid that they joined forces with Nwemano at Lamphun town.

Naymyo Thihapati's army continued marching on Lamphun town. Unable either to take or secrete his family, Nwemano fled, abandoning elephants, horses, and weapons. The Zimme column demolished all threats in the fifty-seven districts of Chiang Mai and captured a large quantity of elephants, horses, and prisoners of war.

## STANZA 7

I will relate the victories over Maing-lon Kha Pin [Luang Prabang] as another noteworthy episode. Upon receiving a royal order to seize the town of Maing-lon Kha Pin in Lan Xang, the army marched from Nan<sup>8</sup> on the 8th waxing day of Tazaungmon month, ME 1126 [31 October 1764]. Armies led by Naymyo Thiha Pati went by the water route passing thirty-nine stations to reach Maing Laik,

<sup>7</sup> This date tallies with that in U Maung Maung Tin, *Konbaung-set Maha Yazawin-daw-gyi*.

<sup>8</sup> The Zimme column remained at Nan town during the rainy season.

which lay adjacent to Lan Xang. Infantry units under deputy commander Tuyin Yama Kyaw went by the land route, passing fifteen stations to arrive at Maing Lon Kha Ping within a few days. The town of Maing-lon Kha Ping was built between the Nam Khan River on the eastern side and the Mekong River at the rear of the city. The king of Lan Xang and his nobles with a force of 1,000 war elephants, 2,000 horses, and 50,000 troops assembled on the bank of the Mekong behind the city and attacked the Myanmar troops. The Myanmar army valiantly repulsed the enemy's attack, forcing them to retreat into the city. Many weapons were captured from the battle and over 10,000 corpses were piled up by the Myanmar army beside the Lan Xang creek [Mekong River]. The Myanmar army crossed the Mekong River and established camp by the river. They erected fighting towers near the town, placed big guns on platforms, and bombarded the city day and night. Half the city was devastated. Although they still held the remaining portion of the city, the king and the people surrendered in fear of the constant bombardment by big guns and cannon from nearby hillocks and knolls.

#### STANZA 8

The King of Lan Xang, court nobles, and rulers of nine Maings namely Maing Lon, Maing Pan, Maing Han, Maing Nyin, Maing Thwin, Maing San, Maing Lar, Maing Hnaung, and Moe Thayn swore an oath of loyalty. When the Lan Xang battle was over, three princesses, a minister's daughter, 1,000 slaves, gold and silver, 500 each of cannon, muskets, war elephants, spears, swords, shields, *myin toe*,<sup>9</sup> *myin shay*,<sup>10</sup> *ver le khaway*,<sup>11</sup> and three Lan Xang court nobles were sent to the royal foot of the king. The army marched from Maing-lon Kha Pin on the 5th waxing day of Tagu month, ME 1126 [25 March 1765] and arrived at Lampang on the 10th waxing day of Kason month, ME 1127 [28 April 1765]. While stationed at Lampang during the rainy season, difficulties arose for the armies because of flood. After a sword was brandished, summoning up the God of the Waters, and a royal order read out, the water receded to make room for the armies.

#### STANZA 9

The first part from stanzas 1 to 8 describes how the Myanmar armies conquered Chiang Mai, which lay in the midst of a ring of nine Kengs, and the Kingdom of Lan Xang [Luang Prabang], before investing Siam.

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<sup>9</sup> A sleeveless jacket worn by soldiers.

<sup>10</sup> A full-skirted coat worn by soldiers.

<sup>11</sup> A gorget (protective armour worn on the neck and shoulders) with upswept wings.

❧ SECOND PART ❧

STANZA 10

I will describe praiseworthy events in the right way so that they may be talked about perpetually.

While the Zimme column was stationed in Lampang during the rainy months, an order arrived from the king which amounts to an order of Saka [Indra], the celestial ruler of Tavatimsa. The royal order stated that since the times of the grandfather and great-grandfather of Hsinphyushin, Siamese kings had acknowledged Myanmar suzerainty by sending sons, daughters, elephants, and horses. In Hsinphyushin's reign, they ceased paying tribute. Therefore, the Dawei [Tavoy] column led by General Maha Nawrahta, and commander Satu Garmani was dispatched to Siam through Muttama and Htar Raik on the 8th waxing day of Nattaw month, ME 1126 [30 November 1764]. The Zimme column was to march to invest Ayutthaya, in combination with the Dawei column encamped at Kani village,<sup>12</sup> from two directions.<sup>13</sup>

STANZA 11

Even if Hsinphyushin's order were to march on Mount Meru, valiant troops from the Zimme column would gladly march fearlessly on it were they so commanded. Due to Hsinphyushin's order, they chose not to wait out the rains but on the 8th waxing day of Tawthalyng month, ME 1127 [22 August 1765], a day of victory and auspiciousness according to the omens, they marched from Lampang to Ayutthaya by land and water routes. The nine brigades of the Zimme column included 300 war elephants, 300 horses, and 20,000 troops. On the route during the march, they fought unflinchingly to quell such towns as Tak, Yarhai,<sup>14</sup> Kamphaeng Phet, Sawankhalok, Sukhothai, Rathama, and Phitsanulok which resisted the Myanmar army. In these battles, the Siamese were completely routed and dispersed. Casualties on the enemy's side were high.

<sup>12</sup> This may be the place called Luk Kae in Thai sources (location unknown). See Damrong, *Our Wars with the Burmese*, p. 323, and Richard Cushman, *The Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya*, p. 494.

<sup>13</sup> According to *Konbounset Mahayazawindawgyi*, they stayed at Tavoy for the rainy season and marched from Tavoy to Ayutthaya on the 10th waxing day of Tanzaungmon month, ME 1127 (22 October 1765). After storming the towns of Phetburi, Ratburi, Suphanburi, Kanchanaburi, Chainat, and Singburi, the column was stationed at Kani village, a distance of five stations to the west of Ayutthaya.

<sup>14</sup> Perhaps Raheng.

## STANZA 12

One hundred and fifty cannons, big and small, for shot of one to fifteen *viss*,<sup>15</sup> were captured along the journey and sent to Chiang Mai. In the month of Tabotwe, ME 1127 [January 1766], the Zimme column established camp at Pa Thoke village.<sup>16</sup> Troops from the Zimme column fought in concert against every defending enemy, whether at the base of the wall or outside the town, and achieved success in capturing a number of prisoners, elephants, and horses. Their skills were equal to those of celestial warriors. Just as an eagle swoops down unerringly on its prey, these fearless warriors fought relentlessly when confronted with the enemy.

## STANZA 13

Four officers from the Zimme column were assigned to deliver elephants, horses, and cannons back to the royal foot of the king. When the Zimme column had reached Pa Thoke village, the Dawei column under the command of General Maha Nawrahta left Kani village and pitched camp at a place 1,000 *tar*<sup>17</sup> from the west of Ayutthaya.<sup>18</sup> When the Siamese king was informed by court mandarins that the two Myanmar columns had arrived, he pronounced that during the months of rain, Ayutthaya was covered with water and there was no land in sight. The Myanmar army camps would face difficulties and they would have to retreat. Any Myanmar soldier had to be captured alive. With a great deal of determination to attack the Myanmar armies, the Siamese king sent forces of great strength by both land and water routes to give battle.

## STANZA 14

I will vividly describe the significant events and battles, selecting various episodes showing how the Siamese tried hard to defend the city, how difficult it was for them to fight with Myanmar troops, and how they were defeated. The Zimme column stationed at Pa Thoke village established nine brigades on both sides of the Mae Ping River.<sup>19</sup> They stocked provisions of food and assembled elephants,

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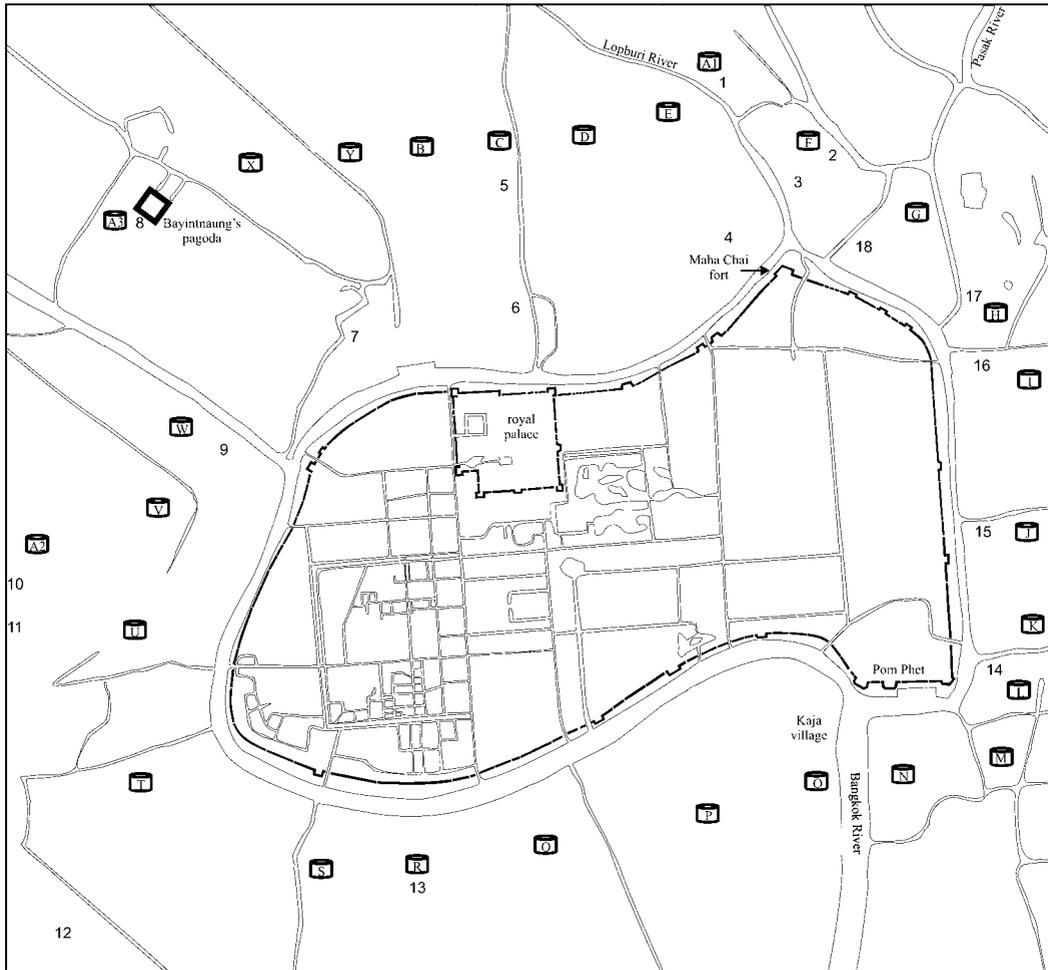
<sup>15</sup> A *viss* is 100 ticals or 1.625 grams.

<sup>16</sup> Pa Thoke is perhaps the Pasak River. But according to the Thai sources, this camp seems to be on the Lopburi River about 7–8 km north of the city, around Wat Pa Fai (now disappeared) and Wat Sopsawan. See Damrong, *Our Wars with the Burmese*, p. 329, and Cushman, *Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya*, p. 501.

<sup>17</sup> Heights are measured in *taung*, equivalent to 19.5 inches (49.5 centimeters), and distances in *tar*, equivalent to 7 *taung* or 136.5 inches (3.5 meters).

<sup>18</sup> This may be the place given as Sikuk in Thai sources, and located 300 *sen* distant, i. e., 12 km. See Cushman, *Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya*, p. 501, and *Khamkaikan chao krung kao*, p. 163.

<sup>19</sup> The Mae Ping is the tributary of the Chao Phraya that flows through Chiang Mai. Perhaps because the Myanmar troops knew this river, they applied the name to the whole length.



Locations of Burmese stockades according to the Thai chronicles

- 1 Elephant enclosure
- 2 Wat Kuti Daeng
- 3 Wat Sam Phihan
- 4 Wat Nang Phluem
- 5 Wat Si Pho
- 6 Wat na Phramen
- 7 Wat Monthop
- 8 Wat Phukhaothong
- 9 Wat Ka Rong
- 10 Wat Tao
- 11 Wat Suren
- 12 Wat Krachai
- 13 Wat Daeng
- 14 Wat Ko Kaeo
- 15 Wat Phichai
- 16 Wat Nang Chi
- 17 Wat Krachom
- 18 Wat Monthop

Schematic locations of Burmese forts according to *Yodayar Naing Mawgun*

- |    |                     |   |                            |
|----|---------------------|---|----------------------------|
| A1 | Naymyo Thiha Pati   | L | Taza Bala Kyaw             |
| A2 | Maha Nawrahta       | M | Thidi Kyaw Thu             |
| A3 | Satu Gamani         | N | Mingyi Zayathu             |
| B  | Shwe Taung Sithu    | O | Nanda Udain Kyaw Htin      |
| C  | Ponya Kyaw Htin     | P | Bala Nanda Kyaw Htin       |
| D  | Chaug U Bo          | Q | Letwe Kyaw Swa             |
| E  | Kyaw Gaung Kyaw Thu | R | Yan Ngu Thiri Kyaw Htin    |
| F  | Giri Naya           | S | Nandamaik Sithu            |
| G  | Tuyin Yama Kyaw     | T | Shwe Taung Letwei Nawratha |
| H  | Tuyin Yan Kyaw      | U | Letyar Bala                |
| I  | Thiri Thara Kyawswa | V | Thiri Yanamaik Kyaw Htin   |
| J  | Thiri Yaza Thingyan | W | Thidi Kyaw Htin            |
| K  | Shwe Taung Kyaw Swa | X | Thiha Dhammarat            |
|    |                     | Y | Bala Pyan Chi              |

**Map 2.** Forts at Ayutthaya, 1765–1767

horses, and troops. The Siamese king ordered Banya Kuratit to attack the Zimme column with a force of 1,000 cannons and 50,000 troops.<sup>20</sup> Forces under deputy commanders Tuyin Yama Kyaw, Kyaw Gaung Kyaw Thu, and Shwe Taung Situ countered valiantly and as a result, the Siamese armies were worsted and retreated in defeat. Over 1,000 war elephants, 500 cannons, and 1,000 prisoners of war were captured. Likewise, two Siamese columns each having a strength of 50,000 troops under the command of minister Byathan and Banya Tet attacked the Dawei column, which was stationed at a distance of 1,000 *tar* from the rear of Ayutthaya. The same thing happened and the Siamese armies re-entered the city. Since many troops, elephants, and horses were lost in those battles, the strength of Siamese armies was reduced by a great number just as water dries up in a weir. When the rains came and floods rose, the Myanmar armies had difficulty finding dry ground.

#### STANZA 15

When the water level around Ayutthaya city rose, the Myanmar troops laid brick walls, raised mounds of earth around their fortifications, and constructed many war boats. The Siamese minister Byathan came out with a force of 2,000 war boats and 500 sampans<sup>21</sup> with a full load of weapons to attack the Myanmar armies. The Myanmar war boats closed on the Siamese craft, and used grappling irons to draw alongside and board them, slashing and hacking at the enemy. Though all the crew on board died in action, the minister did not lay down his arms. The captain of the artillery forces, San Tun, brought his boat alongside the minister's boat in order to capture him alive. The minister, with a weapon in his grasp, jumped on the boat to arrest the Myanmar captain but was taken down by a blow with a ramrod from San Tun. The minister was captured alive.<sup>22</sup> In this battle, the Myanmar army seized 50,000 prisoners of war, sampans, and war boats including river craft.

#### STANZA 16

General Maha Nawrahta pardoned the lives of 50,000 prisoners and treated them well. They were provided with food and shelter. He ordered a search for people who, on the arrival of the Myanmar armies, had escaped and fled to the sanctuary of forests and mountains. Those who had hidden away were allowed to live again with their families peacefully in villages and towns. The chiefs of those people

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<sup>20</sup> In the Thai sources, this seems to be Phraya Khlang. See Damrong, *Our Wars with the Burmese*, p. 341, and Cushman, *Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya*, p. 506.

<sup>21</sup> *Than ban*, a small boat with a flat bottom, used on rivers and coastal waters.

<sup>22</sup> According to the Thai sources, this is Phraya Petchburi, who died in the battle. See Damrong, *Our Wars with the Burmese*, p. 350; Cushman, *Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya*, p. 513; *Khamkaikan chao krung kao*, p. 164.

who had taken refuge with the Myanmar armies were made to swear an oath of allegiance and allowed to enter royal service.

The Siamese with a force of 1,000 war boats and 500 junks came out from the city<sup>23</sup> to attack the Zimme column. While the Siamese were stationed at Hsin Kyoun [elephant enclosure], the Myanmar army sent fifty war boats to hide on both sides of Mae Ping River near U-yin village.<sup>24</sup> Brigades under the command of Kyaw Gaung Kyaw Thu, Tuyin Yama Kyaw, Shwe Taung Si Thu, and Banya Yan Tai lured the enemy from Hsin Kyoun to U-yin village. When the Siamese troops reached the spot where Myanmar army lay in wait, they were ambushed from three directions. Within the blink of an eye, the Siamese force was completely routed. The Myanmar army captured 500 boats and sampans, many weapons, and prisoners. The entire country trembled with fear after this debacle.

#### STANZA 17

When the capital of a country is besieged by a great number of land forces, water forces, elephants, and war boats of another country, and is not able to repulse the enemy, it may resist by closing the city gates and walling them up inside completely with bricks so entry and exit from the city can be done only by scaling up and down the walls with the use of ropes.

When the water from the rivers round the city subsided and the hot, dry season arrived, the Siamese king made another attempt to fight with a total strength of 40,000 to 50,000 troops fully equipped with arms.<sup>25</sup> However, the Siamese king's plan for victory over the Myanmar armies met with failure and he suffered a great loss in one snap of the fingers. Having failed in several attempts, the Siamese king built many ships, sampans, and boats to strengthen the naval forces. On the land front, he built fifty masonry bastions with a width of 500 *tar* outside the city walls. The stocks of food, elephants, horses, weapons, and troops were replenished.

#### STANZA 18

The second part from stanzas 10 to 17 has described how the Siamese launched a number of offensives yet all these efforts were in vain. Even though the Siamese defended from within the city wall, they were still vulnerable. Therefore,

<sup>23</sup> According to *Konbaung-set Maha Yazawin-daw-gyi*, the Siamese force had 1,000 war boats, 500 *tonkin* (cargo barges), 50,000 troops, mortars, and cannons.

<sup>24</sup> U-Yin translates as garden or plantation. This is probably Three Bo Trees, around 5 km north of the city. See Cushman, *Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya*, p. 511; *Khamkaikan chao krung kao*, p. 163.

<sup>25</sup> According to *Konbaung-set Maha Yazawin-daw-gyi*, the Siamese king dispatched an army under the command of Minister Bayar Taik to fight General Maha Nawrahta's army and another army under Minister Bayar Byanarit to engage the army of General Naymyo Thiha Pati. The forces of each army consisted of 300 elephants, 500 chariot-mounted guns, and 30,000 troops.

they fortified the city by closing the main gates, guarding the moat with numerous war boats, and building fifty bastions. It shows the difficult task that the Myanmar army faced in attacking Ayutthaya.

### ❧ THIRD PART ❧

#### STANZA 19

Preserve the events which I will reveal now for eons. The Siamese strengthened the defense of Ayutthaya by building fifty outlying bastions, replenishing their weapons, elephants, horses, and troops, strewing the fields with iron spikes, tree stumps, and impediments for elephants and horses, and digging thorny pits outside the city. Seeing the situation, General Maha Nawrahta consulted with his commanders on strategies to take the city.

#### STANZA 20

In close consultation, General Maha Nawrahta said that since they bore on their foreheads a royal order that the country must be taken before long, they could not stay idle but must find the quickest way to overcome the Siamese capital. As the Siamese had strengthened their land and water forces to oppose the Myanmar armies, they should apply the stratagem used by the embryo Buddha, Mohosadha the sage, who built a city with an underground tunnel.<sup>26</sup> Only if they built forts close to the enemy's bastions, could the city be easily captured. The commanders of the armies unanimously agreed to this plan.

#### STANZA 21

The building of outlying forts by Myanmar armies working in unison—an event which will be known forever until the world disappears—proceeded as follows: At a distance of 400 *tar* from the northeastern side of the city, General Naymyo Thiha Pati built a masonry fort with a circumference of 350 *tar* and height of seven *taung* [cubits]. Shwe Taung Sithu established a fort 200 *tar* in circumference and seven *taung* in height on the western end of the north of Ayutthaya. Beyond that fort [to the east], another fort with a circumference of 150 *tar* was constructed by Ponya Kyaw Htin. On the eastern side of the river which flows down to circle Ayutthaya, Chaung U Bo established a fort with a circumference of 150 *tar*. Beyond

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<sup>26</sup> In the *Mahosodha Jataka*, enemies fail to take the city of Mithila by siege but then lure its king to nearby Culani through stories of its beautiful princess. When the king then faces death, Mahosodha reveals to him a tunnel he has built from the Culani palace back to Mithila, enabling the king to escape with the princess.

that fort, Kyaw Gaung Kyaw Thu erected a fort near the elephant enclosure, with a circumference of 300 *tar* and height of eight *taung*.

#### STANZA 22

On the south of that spot, Giri Naya established a fort with a circumference of 150 *tar*. The string of forts southward from here was constructed by Tuyin Yama Kyaw, Tuyin Yan Kyaw, Thiri Thara Kyawswa, and Thiri Yaza Thingyan. The circumferences of these forts were 170, 170, 170, and 300 *tar*. These forts were all situated on the northern and eastern sides of Ayutthaya.

#### STANZA 23

Other forts surrounded the city on the south and west. To the southeast of Ayutthaya, Shwe Taung Kyaw Swa erected a fort with circumference of 150 *tar*. To the west of it, another fort was constructed by Taza Bala Kyaw with the circumference of 170 *tar*. Beyond that fort, Thidi Kyaw Thu built a fort with the circumference of 200 *tar*. Likewise, beyond that fort, Mingyi Zayathu established a fort with a circumference of 200 *tar*. These four forts were situated to the east of the Bangkok River running south from Ayutthaya. An iron chain was stretched in a straight line across the Bangkok River to obstruct the passage of boats along the river, controlling the entry and exit of the city.

#### STANZA 24

From the place where the iron chain was stretched obstructing the passage like a guardpost, the forts to the west will be described in sequence. Nanda Udain Kyaw Htin erected a fort with a circumference of 150 *tar*. The forts in a row beyond this were built by Bala Nanda Kyaw Htin, Letwe Kyaw Swa, Yan Ngu Thiri Kyaw Htin, and Nanda Maik Sithu. Their circumferences were 150, 170, 170, and 150. To the north of the fort built by Nanda Maik Sithu, Shwe Taung Letwe Nawrahta built a fort with a circumference of 170 *tar*. A string of forts running northward was built by Letyar Bala, Thiri Yanamaik Kyaw Htin, and Thidi Kyaw Htin with circumferences of 170, 180, and 170.

#### STANZA 25

To the north of the fort built by Thaikdi Kyaw Htin, Thiha Dhammarat constructed a fort with a circumference of 200 *tar*. In front of it, a fort was erected by Bala Pyan Chi with a circumference of 200 *tar*. All these forts were constructed along the outer bank of the moat of Ayutthaya.

Satu Gamani built a fort with a circumference of 300 *tar* encircling the pagoda built by Bayintnaung, 500 *tar* from the northwestern side of Ayutthaya.

At a distance of 1,000 *tar* from that place, General Maha Nawrahta established a fort with a circumference of 500 *tar* and height of nine *taung*. By virtue of good organization and control, the commanders and the thirty-one brigades were able to build forts as strong as fortresses of iron, by ensuring that their men put their hearts and souls into this project.

#### STANZA 26

As thirty-one Myanmar brigades built forts confronting the fifty outlying bastions of Ayutthaya to lay siege to the city, the people of Ayutthaya felt constrained and suffered hardship. As reinforcements, 20,000 men and hundreds of elephants from nearby villages of Sawankhalok, Phitsanulok, Sukhothai, and Baner marched to Kut Taw village and camped there at a distance of five *tai* [5,000 *tar* or approximately 17.5 km] from the north of Ayutthaya. When the Myanmar army came to know of this, they sent Thiri Yaza Thingyan of the Zimme column with a force of 3,000 troops against them on the eastern side and Thiri Yana Kyaw Htin from the Dawei column with an equal force on the western side.

A select contingent of 1,000 of the best men among the Siamese who had surrendered was directed to march as a vanguard and give battle under the command of Diva Sakathu. The Siamese thought these people were more reinforcements from other towns and villages and were caught unawares. In the battle, the Siamese were totally routed and ran away in every direction aimlessly.

#### STANZA 27

The third part from stanzas 19 to 26 has described the difficulties in investing Ayutthaya as it was surrounded by rivers and tributaries, the gates of the city were shut tight, and the city was well fortified with fifty outlying bastions. The memorable episode of the Myanmar army erecting forts confronting the Ayutthaya bastions is here recorded for posterity.

### ❧ FOURTH PART ❧

#### STANZA 28

Clearly note the description of events I am now about to make. Having shut the gates tight and built fifty outlying bastions to defend the city, the Siamese placed big guns and cannon on numerous ships and boats and fired incessantly. They attacked the Myanmar army with countless millions of Indians, Panthay [Chinese Muslims], Chinese, Malays, and Siamese. Despite these attacks, they suffered reverses several times and their strength was gradually diminished just as water dries up in a weir.

As a fish caught in a fish trap, the whole city of Ayutthaya became frightened and panicky. After consulting with his nobles, the Siamese king, who had become listless, dispatched a missive through his courtiers to sound out the interest of the Myanmar army.

#### STANZA 29

An excerpt from this missive will be presented here. The Siamese ministers hereby convey a message through minister Banya<sup>27</sup> who has shrewd insight in dealing with various matters under the ruler of the Dwarawati country in the region of Ayutthaya, the possessor of white, red and striped elephants, to the generals endowed with diligence, bravery, and knowledge who carry a royal order on their forehead from the lord of living things, the ruler of Ava, sovereign over other white-umbrella bearing kings, and the possessor of gold, silver, amber and ten-gem mines. Since the times of their grandfathers and great-grandfathers, the two countries of Siam and Ava were free from war, united as a single sheet of gold, in peace and tranquility. Tribute of elephants and horses was duly paid and envoys sent regularly. However, because of the disloyalty and rebellions of the Talaing [Mon], Ayutthaya could not pay tribute or send envoys to the royal foot of the king. Ayutthaya will continue to pay tribute of elephants and horses as was the tradition and custom.

#### STANZA 30

After receiving the letter written in Shan language [Siamese], the generals, seconds-in-command, royal listeners,<sup>28</sup> and commanders sent a reply to the Siamese ministers in the following manner. Generals and commanders who are servants of the lord of living things, the ruler of Ava, sovereign of a hundred white-umbrella-bearing kings convey information to the Siamese ministers. When we observe the present situation of the war between the two countries, the discrepancy is so wide that it is like weighing one plant seed on one side of the most balanced scales against one *viss* on the other. If it is true that you will send sons, daughters, elephants, and horses as was the ancient practice, then a pair of cannons from the city of Ayutthaya should be sent to the Myanmar armies first. If you disagree and want to make war, a thousand men from the Siamese side can fight with a hundred from the Myanmar side, or ten thousand with one thousand in similar fashion. Just as our breath blows away cotton, we will destroy them to death.

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<sup>27</sup> According to the Thai chronicles, Kalahom conducts this negotiation; see Cushman, *Royal Chronicles of Ayutthaya*, pp. 518–19.

<sup>28</sup> An officer who presents applications, petitions, and so on to the king for decision and relays the king's orders to persons concerned.

While negotiating for about a month, the Myanmar army erected three forts parallel to each other with a circumference of eighty *tar* and height of ten *taung* to dig tunnels from the edge of the moat to the base of the walls.

#### STANZA 31

After establishing the three newly built forts, the Myanmar armies dug five underground tunnels from these forts to the base of the city walls. Just as the troops from Widaihayaza country in the Mahosadha Jataka dug a tunnel and threw the earth removed while constructing the tunnel into a river, the earth removed in digging the five tunnels was secretly conveyed into the river. When all the tunnels had reached the base of the wall, Byamunari, the brother-in-law of the king,<sup>29</sup> came out with a force of 5,000 troops to attack the Myanmar army. Having not a shadow of a doubt about the strategy of the Myanmar army, they were eager to attack the Myanmar army with new vim and vigor. The Siamese army fired cannons aimed at the newly built forts. However, just as the footprint of a bird in flight does not appear on the ground, not a single cannon ball hit the Myanmar army. The result was only a waste of cannon balls and more heat at the muzzles of the guns.

#### STANZA 32

Though Byamunari promised the Siamese king that he would capture the three Myanmar forts and fought aggressively, he was unable to turn this promise into reality.

In accordance with the precedent of capturing the flying town of Thantwe<sup>30</sup> in former times by virtue of intelligence and diligence, the Myanmar army placed fuel such as firewood, bamboo, and dried grass at the end of the tunnels and set fire to the base of the walls which ruptured and collapsed. A mass of smoke and tongues of fire rose up from the burning walls as the world ended in flames.

The thunderous sound of the wall's collapse resounded around the earth and up to the sky. This momentous and immortal event will be known forever until the extinction of the world.

#### STANZA 33

The interior and exterior of the city of Ayutthaya was darkened with clouds of smoke and resounded with crashes like thunder. Exchanges of cannon fire were as boisterous as the splashing of a big whirlpool. At that time, 5,000 Myanmar sword-

<sup>29</sup> According to the Thai sources this may be Chamuen Si Sorak, see Damrong, *Our Wars with the Burmese*, p. 353.

<sup>30</sup> Sandoway, capital of Rakhine (Arakan), a town which by legend could fly in the air.

bearing troops penetrated into the city. Though they knew they would be defeated, the Siamese ministers Banya and Banya Kuratit still tried to defend the city. They reorganized 10,000 Siamese troops and commanded them to fight back against the Myanmar army. The two ministers came to disaster because they could not rely on their troops just like the boatswain of a crashed boat whose bow and stern have been demolished. It was the same as grass, litter, and silk-cotton<sup>31</sup> blossoms that must be blown away in a storm.

Just as Garuda swoops down on Naga, the Myanmar armies overran the city and palace of Ayutthaya, known otherwise as Ayujapura, Dwarawati, or Yuan, on the night of the 10th waxing day in the month of Tagu, ME 1129 [8 April 1767].

#### STANZA 34

Before the arrival of the Myanmar armies, the Siamese King Ekathat, who was merely of Sawbwa rank, proclaimed loudly that he ruled in the realm of human beings just like Saka ruled in Tavatimsa. When he tried to escape, no one recognized him as king, and he was hit and killed by a bullet. Because Ayutthaya suffered in the same way as everything on earth is scorched by the intense heat of seven suns which are said to rise nearing the extinction of the world, the palace, buildings with tiered roofs, and even brick houses were inflamed by fire and overwhelmed with smoke. The moat and the river outside the town were clogged with corpses, and the water extremely loathsome with the color and smell of blood.

The Myanmar army carried away 700 elephants fit for a king to ride, 100 boats, 10,000 guns inlaid with gold and silver, as well as matchlocks and flintlocks, making a total of 2,550 guns, big and small, made of bronze and iron, including a pair of big cannon crafted in the shape of a *makara*,<sup>32</sup> cannon shaped in the image of a Nayar,<sup>33</sup> chariot-mounted cannon, bow-mounted cannon, elephant-mounted cannon, city-destroying cannon, enemy-repulsing cannon, and *thar thut* cannon.

One big gun with a length of twenty *taung* and width of two *taung*, and other big guns for shot of thirty to forty *viss*, were either destroyed or thrown into the sea.

#### STANZA 35

Among the great quantity of muskets, matchlocks, guns, and cannons— with barrels short and long, of large and small calibers, big and small in size— that were seized, four gigantic cannon should be mentioned as a record for posterity. Each of these four cannon was made of brass and iron and measured six *lan* [36 feet] in length. The outer circumference of the breech was five spans of men's hands,

<sup>31</sup> *Le*, the kapok tree; *Ceiba pentandra*, a variety of bombax with lush white flowers.

<sup>32</sup> A mythical sea monster resembling a crocodile.

<sup>33</sup> A mythical animal like a serpent or dragon (different from a *nāga*).

and the muzzle was a full cubit wide, so the barrel could easily accommodate a man. There was a variety of ordnance including solid cannon balls each weighing fifteen, twenty, or thirty *vis*s, some manufactured in China and others in the Shan States or the West; canister rounds or case shot designed to split into four parts when launched; chain shot made of spheroids or half-spheres linked together by chain; cannonade shells packed into bags and sheathed with wire; grenades fitted with fuses; and grapeshot that scatters into a lethal wedge-shaped pattern, with stocks enough to deter a siege. From this great heap of ordnance only a selection of remarkable weapons were taken and the rest cast into the river.

Magnificent elephants and horses, gold and silver, boats and barges, princes and princesses and their retinues, more than 2,000 in number, over 800 queens bearing titles “Bra Om” and “Bra San”, royal regalia like ruby-trimmed mirrors, and rubies worth a kingdom were carefully inventoried by the commanding generals and presented in due course to the concerned authority.

#### STANZA 36

The fourth part from stanzas 28 to 35 described how Ayutthaya was a vast city with abundant means of sustenance. Its land and water forces were strong with guns aplenty.

Outside the town, fifty outlying bastions and the moat protected the city from danger. In addition, the natural barrier of river, stream, and sea seemed to hinder an enemy from reaching Ayutthaya. During the reigns of past kings, the king himself took the command of a great force of boats, elephants, horses, and troops to invest such a city as Ayutthaya in Siam. To overcome Siam, one invasion was not enough. It required several attempts covering a long period of months and years. In the present reign of King Hsinphyushin, mere minister generals, seconds-in-command, and commanders who were trusted servants of royalty were assigned to invest Siam. The three big countries of Chiang Mai, Lan Xang, and Siam were conquered within a span of five years.

### ❧ FIFTH PART ❧

#### STANZA 37

Taking all the past events into consideration, one should believe that the conquest of Chiang Mai, Lan Xang, and Siam with their palaces was solely the result of the power and glory of Hsinphyushin. In ME 930, on the 6th waxing day in the month of Thidingkyut [11 October 1568], the possessor of white and red elephants, King Bayintnaung, ruler of Hanthawaddy, on a par with the six levels of the celestial realms, surrounded by Hanthawaddy’s thirty-two towns including Dagon,

Kyaik Katha, Myaung Tangyar, Hmyaw Pi, Maw Lon, Phaung Lin, Kawliya, Ma Kaw, Kyauk Maw, Dun Zayit, Kyauk Sit, Htan Tawgyi, Za ywe Thon, Yamarnago, Arkayain, La Gon Byee, Byapati, and Lonsanu, marched on Siam.

I will relate and record the armies that marched on that occasion in sequence. The commander and deputy commander of the army deployed at the front of the king's armies were Thiri Zeya Kyaw Htin and Letwe Yanathu. The commander and second-in-command of the army of the right were Thet Shay Kyaw Htin and Let Yar Yanathu. For the army of the left, Nanda Kyaw Htin was the commander and Letwe Yanamaik the deputy commander. The commander of the rearguard was Baya Kyaw Htin and the second-in-command was Dharma Thiri. Each army had 100 war elephants, 1,000 horses, and 10,000 troops. Therefore, the king's armies included 400 war elephants, 4,000 horses, and 40,000 troops.

#### STANZA 38

General Maha Uparat's column consisted of eleven brigades including Maha Uparat's brigade. The deputy commanders were Letwe Kyaw Thu in Mo Kaung Sawbwa's brigade, Deva Kummara in Mo Maik Sawbwa's brigade, Zaya Thura in Banya Dalla's brigade, Athawat in Thiri Thawdharma's brigade, Letyar Khin Mon in Banya Einra's brigade, Saka Yoda in Yaza Thingyan's brigade, Yama Yoda in Anawrahta's brigade, Saw Tai Kan in Banyarsat's brigade, Zweya Thanran in Nay Myo Kyaw Htin's brigade, Abaya Zaya in Nanda Yoda's brigade, and Zaya Kyaw Htin in Maha Uparat's brigade. Each brigade comprised 100 war elephants, 1,000 horses, and 10,000 troops.

#### STANZA 39

Pyi Thado Dharma Yaza's column consisted of eleven brigades including Pyi Thado Dharma Yaza's brigade. The deputy commanders were Zaya Taman in Mo Nyin Sawbwa's brigade, Letyar Zaya Thaya in Bamaw Sawbwa's brigade, Yaza Taman in Banya Pat's brigade, Htaw Maing Ye in Min Maha's brigade, Nanda Thura in Banya Phru's (Banya Maru) brigade, Mani Deva in Baya Thingyan's brigade, Zaya Kyawthu in Emondra's (Emondaryar) brigade, and Nanda Kamar in Thiri Zaya Nawrahta's brigade, Letyar Pyit in Thikayar's brigade and Manipura in Nandapa Kyan's brigade. With the exception of Pyi Thado Dharma Yaza's brigade which had 200 war elephants, each brigade included 100 war elephants, 1,000 horses, and 10,000 troops.

#### STANZA 40

General Taungoo Min Gaung's column consisted of eleven brigades including Taungoo Min Gaung's brigade. Deputy commanders were Tuyin Yoda

in Hsei Baw Sawbwa's brigade, Thiri Nandarar in Hseni Sawbwa's brigade, Thiri Manarat in Abaya Garmani's brigade, Tuyin Shwe Taung in Banya Bye's brigade, Byon Kamar in Thetawshay's brigade, Zaya Yodar in Thamain Epaye's brigade, Paikamar in Baya Kyaw Thu's brigade, Tuyin Bala in Thamain Ngao Khwin's brigade, Thiri Gonarat in Nanda Thuriya's brigade, Thiri Dharmarat in Nanda Thingyan's and Zeya Yanamaik in Taungoo Min Gaung's brigade. Each brigade contained 100 war elephants, 1,000 horses, and 10,000 troops.

General Innwa Thado Minsaw's column consisted of ten brigades including Thado Min Saw's brigade. Deputy commanders were Tuyin Thiri in Nyaung Shwe Sawbwa's brigade, Letwe Nanda Thu in Oung Baung Sawbwa's brigade, Saka Deva in Mo Nai Sawbwa's brigade, Tuyin Thidi in Yokayat's brigade, Sana Yoda in Min Kyaw Htin's brigade, Thiri Yodar in Thamain Thanlite's brigade, Ponya Deva in Banya Bayan's brigade, Ponya Yawdar in Thamain La Gon Eain's brigade and Thiri Zeya in Nanda Zeya's brigade.

#### STANZA 41

The total strength of those forty brigades can be calculated as 4,400 elephants, 44,000 horses, and 440,000 troops. General Min Ye Kyaw Htin commanded five brigades. The deputy commanders were Tuyin Yazar in Banya Thay Lon's brigade from Chiang Mai, Tuyin Pyitsi in Banya Thanlan's brigade, Bawga Thayna in Banya Nan's brigade, Swanar Yazar in the Keng Tung Sawbwa's brigade, and Nanda Thiri in General Min Ye Kyaw Htin's brigade. The combined total of the four wings and forty armies of Hanthawaddy Hsinphyumyashin with the armies from Chiang Mai and Keng Tung amounted to approximately half a million men.

Ayutthaya had strong moat and walls and possessed numerous weapons. During the present reign of Hsinphyushin, this conquest of Ayutthaya and its palace and the capture of many prisoners of war with a few armies in a short period were on a par with the event in which millions upon millions of Gyun [Khmer] troops were defeated by only four warriors namely Kyansittha, Nga Htwe Yu, Nge Lone Let Pe, and Nyaung U Phee during King Anawrahta's reign which will be recorded forever in the myriad cycles of the world.<sup>34</sup>

#### STANZA 42

In the *mawgun* which will remain until the extinction of the world, the praiseworthy, brave, vigorous, and united men of the Myanmar armies who marched to Siam during Hsinphyushin's reign will be described in order.

<sup>34</sup> At the request of the King of Pegu, Anawrahta (1014–1077), founder of the Bagan kingdom, sent four warriors to repulse a Khmer attack on the city. These four warriors are named in all the major Myanmar chronicles.

In the brigades of the Zimme column, the deputy commanders in General Naymyo Thiha Pati's brigade were Kyaw Htin Thiha Thu and Tuyin Yama Kyaw, while the royal listeners were Tuyin Yan Kyaw and Shwe Taung Si Thu, and the adjutant was Thway Thout Letwe Sakakyaw. There were 1,000 guns in this brigade. In Kyaw Gaung Kyaw Thu's brigade, the deputy commanders were Thiri Zaya Kyaw and Giri Nayar, while the royal listener was Wailu Thingyan, and the adjutants were Shwe Taung Ye Htin, Taman Kyaw Thu, and Saka Thidi Kyaw. There were 500 guns in this brigade. There were 900 guns in Banya Law's brigade which established its reputation around the Anyar region in upper Myanmar. In Thiri Yaza Thingyan's brigade, the deputy commanders were Sada Thiri Kyaw Htin and Eidra Kyaw Swa, while the royal listeners were Thamana Ponyar and Dipa Yazar, and the adjutant was Dipa Nayar. There were 500 guns in Pyan Chi Kyaw Htin's brigade and 500 horses in Ye Gaung Kyaw Swa's brigade.

#### STANZA 43

In the Yun brigades, the deputy commander in Thiri Nanda Kyaw Htin's brigade was Nanda Thiri Kyaw Htin, while the royal listeners were Shwe Taung Yanathu and Udai Saka Kyaw, and the adjutants were Tuyin Saka Thu and Pyan Chi Ye Hla. Each of the seven brigades of the midland Shan sawbwas, namely Nyaung Shwe, Yut South, Mo Nai, Le Char, Maing Kaing, Maing Saik, and Maing Lon, included 500 infantry troops carrying guns and spears. The cavalry units commanded by Nara Shwe Taung, Dipa Ye Htut Kyaw, Nara Pawza, and Khetta Nara were composed of 500 horses each. All enemies feared the armies from the Zimme column.

#### STANZA 44

In the Mottama [Dawei] column which advanced by a water route, the deputy commanders of General Maha Nawrahta's brigade were Naymyo Gonarat and Tuyin Yan Aung Kyaw, while the royal listeners were Deva Kyaw and Letwe Kyaw Swa, and the adjutants were Thway Thout Ye Gaung and Shwe Taung Kyaw Swa. In this brigade, there were 1,000 troops carrying either guns or bows. In Thiri Zeya Kyawswa's brigade, the deputy commanders were Shwe Taung Bala and Sanda Garmani, while the royal listener was Thiha Nara Kyaw Gaung, and the adjutants were Thara Yazar, Thiri Nara Kyaw Thu, and Letyar Thidi Kyaw Thu. In this brigade, there were 500 war boats and 1,000 gun troops. In Nawrahta Kyaw Swa's brigade, the deputy commanders were Bala Nanda Kyaw Htin, Tuyin Ye Gaung, and Shwe Taung Letwe Nawrahta, while the royal listener was Thidi Kyaw Htin. In this brigade, there were 500 each of lance and firearm troops.

In Satu Garmani's brigade, the deputy commander was Shwe Taung Pyan, while the royal listener was Bala Yan Aung, and the adjutant was Thidi. In Thiri

Yanamaik Kyaw Htin's brigade, the deputy commanders were Nanda Phitsi and Shwe Taung Thiri Kyaw Htin, while the royal listener was Pyan Chi Zeya Kyaw Swa. There were two adjutants in this brigade. In marching on Siam by land and water routes, the general of the land armies was Naymyo Thiha Pati and the general of the naval forces was Maha Nawrahta. The two generals, royal servants of King Hsinphyushin, were able to annihilate all enemies and overcome all dangers.

#### STANZA 45

The Myanmar general was stable and firm. He was well-versed in the art of war. His command was respected by his subordinates and he took effective control of the armies. Commanders, seconds-in-command, royal listeners, adjutants, and bloodbrothers<sup>35</sup> were endowed with courage and valor. Only 40,000 land and water forces with a few auxiliary forces ended the Dwarawati affair. They carried off over 500,000 prisoners of various races. They were distributed with 300 families for each commander; 50 families for each deputy commander, royal listener, and adjutant; and two families for each of the troops. The Myanmar armies marched from Siam by both land and water routes on the 3rd waxing day of Nayon month, ME 1129 [30 May 1767] and reached Innwa in the month of Waguang [July/August 1767].

#### STANZA 46

The fifth part from stanzas 37 to 45 shows that owing to the capabilities of the generals, seconds-in-command, commanders, deputy commanders, royal listeners, adjutants, and *thwe thout*, the two columns of the Myanmar brigade under the command of General Naymyo Thiha Pati and General Maha Nawrahta conquered Chiang Mai, Lan Xang, and Ayutthaya with only 40,000 troops. The enemies were defeated as if they were lopped by the adamantite weapon of Saka.

❧ FINIS ❧

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<sup>35</sup>*Thwe thout*, meaning men who swear brotherhood by drinking each other's blood mixed in a bowl, a crack fighting force.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND RESEARCH NOTES

Acting on advice from Professor Sunait Chutintaranond, Director of the Institute of Asian Studies at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, I conducted research in various libraries in Myanmar. In following up the reference “Tin–38” in Daw Ye Ye Khin’s doctoral thesis at Yangon University, I found the *mawgun* text. My critical edition of the Myanmar original is being published in Yangon. This English translation was made as part of my study in the Master of Arts Program in Thai Studies, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University. My revised thesis, published by Chulalongkorn University Press as *The Portrayal of the Battle of Ayutthaya in Myanmar Literature*, also contains this translation along with further material on the historical context, literary background, life of the author, and analysis of the poem’s contents. Readers wanting more detail may consult that volume.

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