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| Annotation    | This paper was referred to the article "The Ramayana in Burma", presented in Guardian Magazine Vol. 20, No.7 (July 1973). Author wrote about the Ramayana's development in Myanmar literature. Three are in prose, 3 are verse and 3 are drama. They are:  
  (A) Prose - Rama Valthu, Maha Rama and Rama Thonmyo [Saya Htwe]  
  (B) Poetry - Rama Thagyin (U Aung Pho), Rama Yanon (U Toe), and Alaung Rama Thagyin [Saya Hun of Akyab]  
  (C) Drama - Thiri Rama, Nataka Kyaw Gaung by Nemyo Nataka Kyaw, Pontaw Rama Pt. 1 by Gaung Ku, Pontaw Rama and Lakkhana, Pt. 1 (1910) by U Maung Gy (Debein) |
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RAMAYANA IN BURMESE LITERATURE AND ARTS

U Thein Han and U Khin Zaw*

In Burma, so far as our researches on Ramayana up to 1972 reveal, the earliest written work is the Rama Thagyo of 1775** by U Aung Phyo. But in 1973 a new find was made of two palm-leaf MSS of the Rama story called the Rama Vatthu,† one in a Buddhist monastery in Pagan-Nyaung-U area and the other in a monastery (Kyaikwaing) near Rangoon. From the study of this Rama story in these two newly found MSS, it is found that the colloquial style, the use of archaic spelling symbols and U Aung Phyo's own admission (that he based his Thagyo on an older Rama story) support the theory to date that the newly discovered Rama Vatthu was reduced to writing in the 17th century.

Oral tradition of the Rama story, however, may be said to have started as far back as the reign of King Anawrahta of the 11th century A.D. In Nat-hlaung kyaung (Vishnu Temple) in Old Pagan are stone figures of Rama and Parasu Rama. So also the Rama story in the Jataka series of terracotta plaques in Petleik pagoda contemporaneously in Old Pagan.

* Advisors in the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of the Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma.


† Photo Copy of the palm-leaf MSS of the Rama Vatthu. Sarpay Beikman, Rangoon, 1974.

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Besides, in a stone inscription in Mon language King Kyansittha (1084–1113) proclaimed to his subjects that he had in a previous existence been a close relative of Rama in Ayodhya. The presence of Vaishnava Brahmans in Old Pagan who played important parts on the royal ceremonial occasions of those days is also one historical factor. All these are pointed out by scholars as the evidences of Rama tradition then extant—handed down from mouth to mouth up to the end of the 16th century, as one Post-Pagan evidence is found in the Epilogue of Suvanna Sama Jataka poem written in 1527. And again there is the mention of Vibhishna by Minkyaung Sayadaw in his commentary on a well-known Epistle in the 18th century, and also a citation of Rama in Padetha Yaza’s Mani Ket play in the same century.

It is, therefore, considered that the oral tradition of the Rama story based on some of Valmiki Ramayana in Old Pagan attained, in the course of 600 years, to the statures of the Rama Vatthu in the 17th century amidst the influences of the Indian recensions and also a result of Burma’s contact with Linzin (Laos), Zinmai (Chiengmai), Ayuthia (Thailand) and Malaya.

**Ramayana in Burmese Literature**

Considering the line of development in the Burmese versions of the Rama story, we can count up to 9, out of which 3 are in prose, 3 in verse and 3 in drama, the last version being published in 1910. They are as follows:

(A) Prose. Rama Vatthu (17th century).  
Maha Rama (late 18th century or early 19th century).  
Rama Thonmyo (1904) by Saya Htwe.

(B) Poetry. Rama Thagyin (1775) by U Aung Phyo.  
Rama Yagan (1784) by U Toe.  
Alaung Rama Thagyin (1905) by Saya Htun of Akyab.

(C) Drama. Thiri Rama (late 18th century or early 19th century) by Nemyo Nataka Kyaw Gaung.  
Pontaw Rama, Pt. I (1880) by Saya Ku.  
Pontaw Rama and Lakkhana, Pt. I (1910) by U Maung Gyi (Dabein).


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Rama Vatthu

It is considered that as the Rama Vatthu of the 17th century has, hitherto, been regarded as the earliest literary version in Burma, a short summary of the Rama Vatthu* may be tolerated in this paper, just for the sake of analysis of its characteristics and of evaluation of its merits.

Speaking in terms of Kandas, the content of the story in the palm-leaf MSS covers seven Kandas from Bala to Uttara, but the story is not told Kanda by Kanda. Instead, it is first narrated in 6 chapters up to Ayodhya Kanda, and then the rest in a single chapter up to Uttara Kanda.

Regarding the characteristics of the Rama Vatthu, 5 points will be discussed in this paper.

Firstly it is found that the plot is well conceived and well laid out. The fore-shadowing of Dasagiri’s physical and moral violence narrated in the beginning of the story serves as a key to gradual unfolding of the plot and makes his downfall inevitable at the end.

Secondly Hindu holiness of Rama in Valmiki Ramayana is replaced by Buddhist holiness in the personality of Rama in the Rama Vatthu. Rama the Bodhisat King is the appellation repeatedly used in the Burmese story. For instance, in the Rama Vatthu, the story describes that Indra implores the Bodhisat Deva and three others in Tusita Heaven to incarnate as men in Ayodhya, and also millions of other Devas to incarnate as mighty Vanaras (Apes) in Kitha Kinda. This description reminds any Buddhist of the account of the birth of Siddhartha, the last Bodhisat prince in the life of Gotama Buddha. Only one word Vishnu is used as a simile in the story, when Sita, in her reply to Dasagiri in the Asoka garden, threatens that he will be killed by Rama, her husband “who is like Vishnu”. Since then the appellation of Rama the Bodhisat has been constantly used in almost all the subsequent Burmese versions except Thiri Rama.

* See Appendix I.

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Thirdly it is found that the author of the Rama Vatthu places emphasis on the human elements, devoting not less than 50 in his work of 80 palm-leaf MSS pages. It appears that he is aware of the spirit of Valmiki Ramayana. His portrayal of Rama as an obedient son, a loving brother, a faithful husband, a chivalrous fighter, a righteous prince and a wise leader; of Lakkhana as an affectionate and loyal brother; of Sita as a chaste, loving and patient wife; of Hanuman as a loyal and efficient lieutenant and of Dasagiri as a sinful and arrogant monarch is impressive and effective.

Fourthly the Rama Vatthu has taste and restraint in the use of the battle scenes which are surprisingly few in number. Only about 4 or 5 battles are described in the Yuddha Kanda section of the Vatthu. It is obvious that human elements and supernatural elements are well balanced in the Burmese story. In other words emphasis is wisely placed on Karuna and Vira Rasas on the one hand and Bhayanaka and Rudra Rasas on the other.

Lastly the Rama Vatthu has several omissions and innovations. For example the episodes of Jatayu, Sampati, Garuda, Kabhanda and of many demon chiefs and fighters are omitted. Regarding the innovations, the following examples are adequate enough for evidence. Familiar Burmese form of address “Maung” is prefixed to Rama several times. King Dasaratha and Valmiki call Rama “Maung Rama”. Another example is the meeting of Rama with Thugyeik (Sugriva) in the forest. After searching for Sita in vain, Rama and Lakkhana take rest at the foot of a big tree on which Thugyeik is forced to hide, after his banishment. The tired Rama resting his head on the chest of Lakkhana sleeps soundly when a giant gadfly comes upon the back of Lakkhana and sucks the blood. Lakkhana, inspite of great pain, restrains himself from driving off the gadfly, lest his brother’s sleep should be disturbed. When Thugyeik notices Lakkhana patiently enduring the pain, the thought of his wicked brother comes to his mind. As he weeps, his big tear-drops fall on the chest of Rama who is rudely roused from his sleep. At the sight of Thugyeik, Rama takes up the bow. Thugyeik comes down and supplicates Rama telling his woeful tale. Later Rama enters into alliance with Thugyeik.

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Considered as a whole, the Rama Vatthu is found to be a simple story, in abridged form, remodelled by the Burmese author and accepted by the people in accordance with the ethical sense and aesthetic taste of the Burmese themselves. The facts of the story are few in number but the story makes no misrepresentations. It maintains the spirit of Valmiki Ramayana both in characterization and plot, and in motivation. In Burmese literature the Rama Vatthu is considered to represent the traditional Burmese version. It has served as the well-spring of later Burmese versions, although the latter bring in several new episodes and new characters in the course of time. However it is found that later versions are fundamentally faithful to the tradition.

Maha Rama

It was probably composed in late 18th century or early 19th century. This version in fact is a mere enlargement of the Rama Vatthu. Prose is simple and dignified. Embellishment (Alankara) is richer. For instance, Sita is described as being born of a lotus bud, instead of the Earth.

Its special feature is the insertion of 4 new episodes in Yuddha Kanda section. They are of Gombadipa (Mahiravana) carrying away Rama to his underworld by his magic; of Yakkhini who transforms herself into the dead body of Sita to deceive Rama; of Gamutiara who transforms herself into a putrid dog to prevent demon Thura Gomban from sharpening his powerful spear, and of the demon Hman-pya burnt to ashes at the sight of his own deadly side-glance reflected in the mirror brought by Hanuman to the battle field.

Rama Thonmyo by Saya Htwe

It was published in 1904. According to Saya Htwe, his work is the product of what he has taken down from the verbal accounts of the marionette dramatists. Several deviations appear in the work. Some of the well-known names have become misnomers. For instance King Janaka has become Maha Zanapada; queen Kausalya, Paduma Thinkha and queen Kaikyi, Kakkaruvati. The most serious
deviation is the account of Sita immediately brought back to Rama by Hanuman after the burning of Lanka. Of the few innovations, the episode of the Bow Contest is one. The Bow Contest invitation parchment with Sita's portrait, blown away by the wind, falls into the hands of Dasagiri in Lanka. A well-known interpolation common to the Southeast Asian versions is the episode of Sita and the she-monkey; and of the miraculous birth of Kusa in Saya Htwe's work.

_Rama Thagyn_ by U Aung Phyo

In this poem U Aung Phyo uses the story of the _Rama Vatthu_ up to the end of Yuddha Kanda. The content of the poem is nearly the same as the content of the _Rama Vatthu_. It is effective both in plot and characterization. U Aung Phyo, a professional balladist, roamed about the country-side and sang his _Thagyn_ which is responsible for the popularity of the _Rama_ story even in remote villages.

_Rama Yagan_ by U Toe

U Toe, poet and courtier composed his _Yagan_ poem in 1784. The poem is incomplete, the last scene being the meeting of Rama with Thungyeik under the Gyo tree (Schleichera Trijuga). There is fundamentally nothing new in the content of the poem, except that the _Rama_ story inspires one of the best poems in Burmese Literature. It is touched up by local colour.

_Alaung Rama Thagyn_ by Saya Htun

Like U Aung Phyo, Saya Htun is a balladist well known both in Arakan and in the valley of the Irrawaddy. He benefits from all the previous compositions so that his work is enriched by the accumulation. However his work is not without Arakanese folk-ways in some dramatic situations. To cite an example. When Dasagiri, in order to test the prowess of Rama on the eve of the Bow Contest, buries his spear deep in the ground and asks Rama to pluck it out, Rama does so easily with his toes.

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Thiri Rama by Nemyo Nataka Kyaw Gaung

The drama was probably written in late 18th century or early 19th century. The dating is still as problematical as the dating of the Maha Rama. According to Nemyo, the drama is definitely a re-presentation based on a certain earlier work. Perhaps that earlier work might have been a production of a Royal Cultural Commission appointed in 1789 in Amarapura, with a view to dramatising "the legends and stories brought from the Gyun (Krom) capital of the Kingdom of Ayuthia and the Yun capital of the Kingdom of Haripunja". However if the production of the Commission were somewhat like the Ramakien (1798) of Rama I, which "was probably written on the model of an older work prevalent in Ayudhya but lost perhaps in the holocaust of 1767",* the Thiri Rama drama ought to bear some resemblance to the Ramakien. But the Thiri Rama drama is found to be a different work. Anyway the earlier work has not been discovered yet or might have been lost.

The drama of Thiri Rama is written both in prose and verse, and in three bundles having not less than 1320 palm-leaf MSS pages. There is no division into Acts but a continuous succession of scenes.

Three remarkable features of the drama may be discussed. Firstly there are some slight variations made in the traditional episodes. For instance, Inda goes to and implores Lord Narayana, instead of the Bodhisat Deva, to incarnate as Rama. Then the coming of uninvited Dasagiri to and the absence of Parasu Rama at the Bow Contest. Kakawun is replaced by a demon; and Gambi by Sappanakha. Maricha takes the part of the enchanted deer.

Secondly some of the well-known episodes are totally omitted. For instance, there is no mention of ten mango fruits in connection with the birth of the ten-headed Dasagiri. There is no longer the meeting of Rama with Thugyeik under


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the Gyo tree. Hanuman knows no gentle stroking by Rama on his back. There is no longer the havoc of Gandam crab at the construction of the cause-way across the strait. There is no Gamuttara disguised as a putrid dog, and no Yakkhani as the dead body of Sita. No longer is there the drawing of Dasagiri's portrait by Sita.

Thirdly new episodes and new characters are introduced in abundance. So much so the Thiri Rama drama looks like a literary off-spring of the two Indian recensions of Bengali and Hindi. But the drama is certainly no translation. The opening of the drama with several scenes dealing with the founding of Lanka by Panthuyakkha, the surrender of Lanka to Dasagiri by Kuvera, the birth of Mahiravana to Appathari the second queen of Dasagiri, the birth of Pasvadithi to the third queen of Dasagiri and etc. is itself a good example. Further examples of the new battle scenes will make a long and tiring list, nearly all of which can be found in the two Indian recensions up to the last episode of Rama stepping into the waters of the Tharazote river (Sarayu) and reappearing as Lord Narayana.

Pontaw Rama, Pt. I by U Ku

The drama is written both in verse and prose. The dramatic situations selected by U Ku in his drama suggest that his theme is the Good withstanding the trials and tribulations imposed by the Evil. The drama opens with the scene of the banishment of Rama, followed by the scenes of the Departure; of Parasu Rama offering his Kingdom of San Pathavra to Rama; of the death of Dasaratha at Ayodhya; of Gambi and the destruction of her two sons by Rama; of the enchanted deer and finally of the abduction of Sita.

Que innovation will be noticed in this drama, which is Parasu Rama's offering of his kingdom to the banished Rama. Perhaps the noble gesture of Guha of Shringavera in the Indian recension is unwittingly transplanted to Parasu Rama of the Pontaw Rama play. This transplantation might be considered a misrepresentation. However how noble Parasu Rama is in this innovation, although he is known to be the great rival of Rama!

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Pontaw Rama and Lakkhana, Pt. I by U Maung Gyi

The drama is written both in verse and prose. It presents the story of the birth of Sita. It appears that U Maung Gyi has used for his drama the information orally relayed by some of his Indian friends in Rangoon. His theme is the love of Sita for Rama.

According to the drama, Sita in her previous existence is Sita Yakkha demoness. She goes to the hermitage of Vasistha where dwell Rama and Lakkhana. As she disturbs the peace of the hermitage, she is killed by the arrow of Rama. Then she becomes goddess Sita Candi in Catumaharit Heaven, still in love with Rama. One day Dasagiri arrives at the Catumaharit and makes love to Sita Candi who, being angry, vows that she be born out of the tusk of Dasagiri, and lays the curse that one thousand demons be killed every time she makes a baby cry. Then she holds her breath and dies. Since then Dasagiri's right tusk gives him trouble until the tusk finally gives birth to Sita. The rest of the story is as usual.

This drama is the last in the line of the Burmese versions, and they still wield an ennobling influence on the Burmese people.

Ramayana in Burmese Arts

Evidences of the appreciation of Burmese Ramayana can be found in Burmese arts and handicrafts, Burmese stage and Burmese music and song.

Handicrafts

In many pieces of lacquerware, in silver and gold thread embroidery, in painting and wood carving, for generations this appreciation is expressed in motifs of design and decoration. In the Pakhan monastery built in the reign of King Mindon (1853-78) is a good example of wood carving. The most prominent example is the story of Rama depicted in a continuous series of 347 stone relief sculptures at Mahā Loka Marazein pagoda in Upper Burma in 1849.
Stage

It is clear so far that the Rama play was performed on the stage in full splendour in the royal palace beginning with the reign of King Bodawpaya (1782–1819). It was not specifically mentioned by name in the Burmese chronicles. But Michael Symes did so in his "An Account of an Embassy to the Kingdom of Ava". It was when he was invited to a Rama play by the Burmese Governor at Hanthawaddy in 1795. In King Thibaw's reign it was specifically mentioned by name in the Konbaungset Chronicle at the Ear-boring ceremony of the young princess in 1884. Thus the Rama play has been extant in Burma from the reign of King Bodawpaya to that of King Thibaw.

Michael Symes said the play was performed in the open air in the compound of the Governor of Hanthawaddy. The audience formed a circle round the arena of the show which was well lit up with flambeaux and lanterns. Still it must have been a far cry from the conditions in the palace in Amarapura. Nevertheless the strides taken by the live-stage development by the time of King Thibaw were nothing short of amazing. Traditionally no drop-curtains nor settings were used on the stage. There were usually two door-ways down-stage for the entry or exit of the actors. In some of the scenes the dancer was to express the theme and portray the moods and emotions through mimetic gestures and posturings, all in stylised forms. Michael Symes also noted that the Burmese marionette stage was flourishing. According to Saya Htwe of "Rama Thonmyo", the Rama play was also performed on the marionette stage.

Dramatic Presentation

With regard to the presentation of the Rama play, there seemed to be not much difference between the practices of those days and nowadays.

If we analyse the Burmese presentation of the Rama play as members of the audience watching the live stage or marionette stage, we notice four techniques. (1) Dramatic words and gestures. (2) Dramatic words interspered with relevant
songs. (3) Dramatic recitative with musical background. (4) Dance and miming to music pertaining to the dramatic situation.

For the first three techniques, the players lift up their masks for dialogue, recitation or singing. For the fourth technique here is an example. When Hanuman, in search of Sita in Dasagiri stronghold in Lanka, enters the citadel, the musical direction to the orchestra is, "Play Chut" (the conventional music of stealth) and Hanuman proceeds dancing the stealthy approach.

We know from musical directions to the orchestras in the drama of Thiri Rama, that Burmese and Yodaya (Ayuthia) types of orchestras were used. The specially composed mood music of modern radio and TV plays was unknown. But there were conventional musical pieces well known to the audience for all moods and situations, as shown by Musical Directions* to both Burmese and Yodaya orchestras.

Over and above the songs and music that belong to the Rama play, we have in the Burmese classical repertoire several songs inspired by the story of Rama and Sita. Some in classical Burmese tunes and some adapted from Yodaya tunes were used in the compositions with such themes as the luring away of Rama by the enchanted deer, the abduction of Sita, the lamentations of Sita in Lanka and of Rama in the Hmawyone forest and the meeting of Rama with Thugyelk at the Gyo tree. Most of them were written in the late 19th century.

Rama Play After 1885

The Rama play on the Burmese stage did not have as happy a fate as the Rama play in Burmese Literature. At the end of 1885 after the annexation of Upper Burma, the Palace Troupe numbering over a hundred were disorganised and

* See Appendix II.

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displaced. Some of them banded together and ventured into the world of public entertainment, thus bringing the Rama play to the masses. Some of them came down to Lower Burma, and in towns where they settled they met Rama Play enthusiasts with whom they formed Rama Play Clubs and taught and coached more Rama Play performers. Of them the two clubs in Rangoon and the one in the delta region are still carrying on the torch of the Rama tradition in the spirit of service to the community.

On the stage of the National Theatre of the Ministry of Culture the emphasis is now on the fourth technique of dance and miming to music in the attempt to revive the popularity of the Rama play both at home and abroad, to capture the imagination of the new generation and to preserve the national heritage of the Burmese people, although the other three techniques are also in use.

Appendix I

[The Rama Vatthu is summarised with all the episodes in the same order of arrangement as described in the Rama Vatthu.]

The first chapter deals with the origins of Dasagiri (Ravana) and his brothers and the story of Bali. The chapter describes how the ten-headed Dasagiri is born to Gonti, as a result of Gonti's austerities and her offering of ten mango fruits to Brahma; and how Kumba Kanna (Kumbhkarna) and Bhibhithana (Vibhisana) are born later.

Then the chapter further describes how Dasagiri is crowned King of Theinkho (Lanka); how he morally degenerates due to his excessive love of intoxicating juice of flowers and fruits offered by the gods; how he insults the Gandhaba Fairy on the Kelathapha mountain; and then how the fairy curses him and descending to the earth enters the holy flames.


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In the same chapter Bali(Vall) in Kitha–kinda (Kishkindha) seizes Dasagiri who yields to the might of Bali and becomes friends.

The second chapter deals with the birth of Rama and the three brothers in Ayuttaya (Ayodhya). It describes how Datharattha (Dasaratha), on one of his hunting expeditions, has unwittingly killed a young hermit; how Datharattha receives two sacred plantains as a boon of progeny; and how his three queens later eat them.

The chapter further describes how, in the mean time the guardian gods of the earth make a request to Brahma through Indra for the destruction of the sinful Dasagiri; how the Bodhisat Deva and three others in Tusita Heaven incarnate as Rama and his three brothers Bharata, Lakkhana (Lakshmana) and Thatrugana (Satrughana); and how the other devas incarnate as Vanaras in Kitha Kinda.

The third chapter deals with the birth of Sita. It describes how the Gandhaba fairy is born of the earth, brought to Theinkho, put in an iron box and sunk in the ocean by Dasagiri; then how the iron box reaches Mithila, the city of king Janaka and how Janaka adopts Sita as his own daughter.

The fourth chapter deals with the Bow Contest at Mithila. At this stage the story of Rama begins to move. The baby has grown up into a beautiful maiden who is now the cynosure of a hundred kings. The problem is solved by Janaka by sending invitations to all of them including Dasagiri. At the Bow Contest, Dasagiri alone is able to lift up the Bow. Although he cannot string the Bow, he insolently demands the hand of Sita.

The chapter further describes how Rama and Lakkhana who, having punished Kakawunma the demon crow accompanies their guru Kotampa to Mithila to see the great Bow and how at the critical moment Rama enters the Bow Contest, lifts up and strings the Bow and wins Sita. Then after the nuptials of Rama and the three brothers at Mithila, they return to Ayodhya. On the way Prashu Rama (Parasu Rama) being instigated by the loser kings attempts to fight Rama, but the attempt is foiled.


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The fifth chapter deals with the banishment of Rama. At Ayuttaya queen Koke (Kaikeyi), being misguided by the malicious Kuppati, enters the House of Anger, reminds Datharattha of his solemn promise, and demands him to banish Rama and enthrone his son Bharata. Then follow the scenes of Datharattha's agonies; of Rama's resolve to uphold the pledge of his father; of Sita's courage; of Lakkhana's loyalty; of the willing consent of Kosalla (Kausalya) and Thumitta (Sumitra); of Rama's pathetic partings; of the sorrows of the people of Ayuttaya; of the Departure of Rama, Sita and Lakkhana; and of their arrival at the hermitage of Balamigi (Valmiki).

The sixth chapter deals with Bharata's attempt to enthrone Rama and the birth of Hanuman. The scenes are of the death of the grief-stricken Datharattha; of Bharata's righteous indignation in Ayuttaya; and of his pilgrimage in quest of Rama and his return with Rama's sandals. Then the story of the birth of Hanuman—how he tries to pluck the red sun mistaking it for his 'kinbon' fruit; how he is struck down by Inda's thunderbolt; how by Inda at the request of his father Wind god, he is blessed with the boon of immortality; then how he becomes an ordinary Vanara as a result of the curses of the hermits; and then how the hermits, at the request of Zambuman (Jambavan), prophesy that Hanuman would regain his might when he meets Rama on the eve of Rama's march to Theinkho.

The palm-leaf MSS has altogether about 80 MSS pages, out of which 40 are devoted to Bala and Ayodhya Kandas in 6 chapters in the Rama Vatthu.

The Rama Vatthu takes up the remaining 5 Kandas in a single chapter. The scenes are of the arrival of Rama, Sita and Lakkhana at a forest near the ocean after the lapse of 11 years; of the banishment of Thugyeik (Sugriva) by Bali in Kithakinda; of the demoness Trighata (Dasagiri's sister) with her two sons Kharu (Khara) and Tuthara (Dushana) coming to the forest camp of Rama; of the destruction of Trighata's sons; of Trighata and Dasagiri at Theinkho; of Trighata as an enchanted deer; of the abduction of Sita by Dasagiri; and of the wanderings of Rama and Lakkhana in search of Sita.

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Then the Rama Vatthu continues the story, i.e., the meeting of Rama with Thugyeik under Gyo tree; Thugyeik and the blood-sucking gadfly on the back of Lakkhana; Rama's alliance with Thugyeik; the destruction of Bali by Rama; Vanara army and Vanara generals; liberation of Hanuman from the curses of the hermits as a result of gentle stroking on his back by Rama; Hanuman's leap; Hanuman in Dasagiri's palace in search of Sita; Hanuman in the Thawka garden (Asoka) witnessing Sita reject Dasagiri; Rama's signet ring; Hanuman's fight with Indasitta (Indrajit); the burning of Theinkho; Hanuman's second meeting with Sita; and his return to Rama with the seven hairs of Sita.

Then the Rama Vatthu continues, i.e., the constructing of the cause-way across the strait by Vanaras led by Hanuman; Hanuman's grabbing of the giant crab Gandham; the march of Vanara army to Theinkho; Aungkut (Angada) as an envoy; banishment of Bhibhithana and his friendship with Rama; Rama's fight with Indasitta and Rama's fall by Indisitta's Serpent-dart in the first encounter; restoring of Rama to life by Suvannapatta root brought by Hanuman from Gandhamāna mountain; death of Indasitta, despite his power of invisibility, hit by the arrow of Lakkhana in the second encounter; Dasagiri's Ritual interrupted by Hanuman; death of Kumba Kanna; Rama's fight with Dasagiri and Dasagiri's withdrawal having lost his ten Makuta crowns in the first encounter; Rama made unconscious by the Thamohini weapon of Dasagiri but immediately saved by Hanuman; death of Dasagiri hit by the Divine Bow of Rama; the Fire Ordeal; Bhibhithana's installation to the throne in Theinkho; demobilisation of Vanara army, except Hanuman who stays with Rama; and the jubilant Return, and the Coronation in Ayuttaya.

Then the Rama Vatthu narrates the story of Uttara Kanda. It narrates Sita's drawing of Dasagiri's portrait; Sita's strong desire for the food from Balamigi's hermitage; washerman's doubt about Sita's fidelity; banishment of Sita; the birth of Lona and Kusha at Balamigi's hermitage; Rama's Ashvamedha Yagna; the capture of the Horse and the fight between Lakkhana and Lona; the fight between Lakkhana and Kusha; the fight between Rama and his two sons; the lament of Sita; misunderstandings cleared and the restoration of the dead to life on the battle field by the holy water of Balamigi; and the return to Ayuttaya of Rama, Sita, their two sons and Lakkhana.

Appendix II

[Some examples of Musical Directions with the beginning bars of the music in staff-notation.]

(1) Chut (Yodaya) – Stealthy movement. Hanuman in search of Sita in Dasagiri’s stronghold.

(2) & (3) Lokanat (Burmese) – March of Rama’s allies.

(4) Nat-chin (Bur.) – The coming & going of devas.

(5) Natchin A-Yaing (Bur.) – Revelry, Commotion, flight.

(6) Tha-gwin (Bur.) – Solemnity, Grandeur.

(7) Le-than (Bur.) – Wind, Storm.

(8) Moh-than (Bur.) – Rain god enters.
Rain of flowers.

(9) & (10) Tya-bwai (Bur.) – Recitative in song.

(11) Samo (Yod.) – Advance of Mahiravana ogre.

(12) Phyin-gya (Yod.) – Returning Kusa and Bala.

(13) & (15) Chut-chan (Yod.) – Rama in despond.
Rama & Lakkhana in sorrow.

(14) Eik-chin (Bur.) – Rama & Lakkhana in repose.

(16) Phyin-Phyat-Phyat (Yod.) – Ogress attendant approaches Sita.

(Note. The above numbers correspond to the numbers on the musical examples in the following staff-notation).