

## The Foreign Presence in Mandalay during the Konbaung Period: A Review of the Urban Area

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### Introduction

Mandalay has many faces. As the last capital of the Konbaung Dynasty, Mandalay is considered the origin of the traditional Myanmar culture. A wide variety of handicrafts remain in practice today and are a focal point of the Buddhist practice. However, Mandalay cannot be discussed in only the narrow framework of Myanmar culture. Mosques, Hindu temples, and Chinese temples stood in a row along its streets, demonstrating the complex history of this city.

However, the study of Mandalay's diversity remains limited. The urban area of Mandalay lies around a square castle, and the towns are ordered as a grid. Such an extremely orderly city attracts attention from researchers, and arguments concentrate on interpretation of the design, the centricity and the cosmology of the city.<sup>(1)</sup> In addition, a viewpoint assuming Mandalay as a model of the traditional capital of continental Southeast Asia was dominant for a long time.

It is necessary to reconsider Mandalay as a hub in the regional trade network. Henry Yule, who visited the city during the Konbaung period records prosperous local trade activity. According to his account, various merchant groups including Chinese and Muslim possessed commercial quarter. The presence of a variety of religious buildings and

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communities in contemporary Mandalay is difficult to understand without paying attention to the commercial characteristics of the city.

Recently, the study of the commercial importance of Mandalay has gradually developed. For example, Thant Myint-U acknowledges the commercial importance of the urban area.<sup>(2)</sup> From the viewpoint of economic history, Schendel explains in detail a variety of commercial activities of the merchant group based in Mandalay.<sup>(3)</sup> However, still too few studies address how these various groups were placed in the spatial structure of Mandalay. This paper collects basic information and creates a rough sketch of the formation of Mandalay.

I suggest in advance that foreigners assume a considerable part of the city's functions occur in the urban area. In the western part of the city, the commercial space stood along the *Shwe ta* waterway. However, the military was concentrated in the eastern, northern, and southern parts of the moat. In military duty, people of various backgrounds provided services for the needs of the royal authority. However, the openness of the social structure did not divide dwellers by ethnicity or religion in the city in those days, and personal relationships with the sovereign were indispensable. Based on such characteristics, we review Mandalay as an inland port city.

## I . The Process of Mandalay's Construction

### 1.1. Construction of the Capital

Features of Mandalay, such as the concentric city structure, town division by a grid pattern, and the commercial area along the bank of a river were established in Inwa and Amarapura, the location of the previous capital, and Mandalay inherited these. However, not all buildings were new: Mandalay subsumes older villages and areas from as long previous as 18 centuries. Old and new elements mix in the city's formation. In this chapter, we survey the process of Mandalay's construction.

Amarapura functioned for a long time as the capital, although the Konbaung Dynasty frequently moved the capital. Many elements of Amarapura were succeeded in Mandalay. Amarapura was founded during the reign of King Badon (1782 -1819), who succeeded the throne in 1782. The capital was built in between the northern coast of *Taung saman* Lake and Ayeyawaddy River, constructed on an orderly grid pattern that put the Buddhist monument near the palace area. The total length of the city wall is 2,000 *ta* (one *ta* is almost equivalent in 3.2 meter), and the length of one side of the square is 500 *ta*. The inside of the city wall contains 144 divisions, which remain the same in Mandalay.<sup>(4)</sup>

A commercial area formed in the southwestern part of the city, near the Ayeyawaddy River. Various groups lived in the space, according to an European account.<sup>(5)</sup> Related place names and religious buildings remain today, showing us some of the old city structure. For example, near the *Phaya son-cu* (three pagodas), it is said that there was a village populated by captives from Ayutthaya. *Tarok tan* means Chinese street, and it is home to an old Chinese temple, which was erected in the early 18th century.

Inwa replaced - Amarapura as the capital during the reign of King Sagaing (1829 -37),

but it switched back soon afterward. In 1855, the British dispatched a diplomatic mission to Amarapura for negotiations. As a member of the mission, Henry Yule wrote a detailed record. The activities of merchants, including Chinese and Indian Muslims in the city, were also recorded, and the record indicates relations between foreign merchants and the king were stable in the capital.<sup>(6)</sup>

The fresco of *Kyauk taw-kri* Pagoda in Amarapura shows vivid urban landscape. It shows people in various costumes with piled up products, and thus we can have a glimpse of the form of trade conducted in Amarapura.<sup>(7)</sup> In those days, Amarapura had some large markets that connected external commercial networks across the Shan Hills, the central plain along the Ayeyawaddy Valley, and the maritime world via the river. Mandalay and Amarapura functioned as commercial hubs for external trade, as Amarapura formed many years before Mandalay.

Why did King Mindon (1852 -1878) demand the construction of a new capital? This is a classic question, but it is difficult to answer due to the insufficiency of historical materials. It is possible that King Mindon meant to demonstrate his legitimacy by constructing the new capital because he had taken over the throne through a coup d'état against his brother, King Bagan (1846 -1852). From the military view-point, Amarapura was vulnerable to British attacks due to its close proximity to a river, so perhaps the new king chose land farther from the river.<sup>(8)</sup>

*Konbhaung chet Maha raja wan taw kri* (the Royal Chronicle of Konbaung Dynasty) records discussion regarding the rightness or wrongness of constructing a new capital.<sup>(9)</sup> The main point of discussion is the validity based on old prediction. It was eventually confirmed that the ground under Mandalay was the land where Buddha foretold prosperity when he visited it once, and all Buddhist priests and persons of high rank supported the plan. King Mindon ordered the construction of the new capital in 1857, and supervised the design of the city himself. Building construction began that year.

A detailed record on the construction exists, when the design was drawn up in 1857, the leveling of the palace construction area and the arrangement of materials began. When construction of the palace was complete, the walls and moat were constructed. The full length of the city wall is 2,400 *ta*, for commemoration of the completion of Buddha era, 2,400 years. The city area was divided into a grid, similar to Amarapura, with 144 blocks in the inner castle. One side of the inner city divides into 12 *pra* (pronounced 'pya'), and one *pra* is equal to 50 *ta*. So, the size of one basic block is 50 *ta* square. Construction of the royal palace was completed in early 1858, and King Mindon held a ceremony inaugurating the new royal palace.

After 1859, construction of the city area surrounding the royal palace was pushed forward. In the city area, the base unit of the town was also a division of one side of 1 *pra*. Decisions regarding land use in the town were almost complete in the early 1860s, and land allotments for settlers from Amarapura were decided. Thus, the frame of the city was formed.

In this way, the structural method for Mandalay was similar to the previous capital of Amarapura. The practice of dividing the town into square blocks and allotting those blocks to various groups was succeeded in the new capital. Various human resources were allotted

in the orderly planned urban area. This was the basic pattern of the city during the late Konbaung period. However, all of Mandalay was not newly constructed: some city areas were older than the construction of the new capital.

## 1.2. Inclusion of Old Mandalay

The area included in the urban area of Mandalay did not appear in historical materials until after Mandalay's construction in the mid-19th century. Before the construction of Mandalay, this area was a base of river transportation and religious sites, with flourishing traffic. The commercial area of the bank of the Ayeyawaddy River prospered for a long time and continued un-affected the division of city area during Mandalay's construction. In this section, we review the "original Mandalay," which was along the riverside and was incorporated into the royal capital of Mandalay.

Mandalay Hill is the origin of the name of the city, and it was known for a long time as Mandalay. This hill, located at the northeastern side of the city, is a hillock less than 100 meters, but it is a remarkable landmark of the area. As the Mount Popa in Bagan functioned as a religious site, Mandalay Hill was also a sacred site of the Ayeyawaddy Valley. In the construction of the royal capital, the authority allotted land for many Buddhist monasteries around the hill.

However, the old harbor area ranges to the north and south along the Ayeyawaddy River. It is called the *Min-tai i-kin* district, spreading out to the south from *Nnaung kwai* village in Mandalay's northwest corner. This area is dotted with pagodas dating back to before the construction of the capital, and there are the old place names such as Merchant Street or Block near a renowned pagoda.

*Min-tai i-kin* has been used as a name for Mandalay until today, but it is said that it was the old village name according to historical documents.<sup>(10)</sup> In Monrwe Sayadaw's "*Raja wan Khyup*," edited in the 18th century, the *Min-tai i-kin* area was developed when the king stayed in the area during the construction of Mingun pagoda.<sup>(11)</sup> Prominent pagodas such as *Ratana miju*, *Khyam-sa kri*, and *Khyam-sa ra* form a line in the district. These pagodas attract many foreign merchants during festival time.<sup>(12)</sup>

*Go wein* Wharf was a main river port of Mandalay on the south side of *Min-tai i-kin*. Next to the wharf, is the oldest Chinese shrine in Mandalay. Its name is *Jin duo yan*, and it is meant for worship of the land god. According to the tradition of the shrine, it was founded in the early 17th century. Merchants came from the southwestern part of Yunnan to set up the base of the river trade on this land, and it is said that it prospered. It is said that it was a center of the river trade until the construction of the modern steamship wharf.<sup>(13)</sup>

The south side is called *De wan*. It is said that this is a place name that dates back before Mandalay. There is a place called *Sam lyet maw* that is an old wharf. It was old and appeared to be called *Sa-ret maw*. Traders and transporter, boatmen congregated in the waterside space between *Min-tai i-kin* and *Sam lyet maw*.<sup>(14)</sup> The whole area from *Min-tai i-kin* to *De wan* functioned as an early trade center.

According to the records of the European such as Gouger and Crawford who came to the area in the early 19th century, the name "Myede" appears quite frequently as a place name for an area on the Ayeyawaddy River's left bank before Mandalay's construction. For

example, according to their records, it was a base of international trade, and a merchant came there regularly from Yunnan. After the rainy season, the trail beyond the mountainous district of Yunnan passes Bhamo and reaches this area.<sup>(15)</sup> Myede, as written on those maps, and the *Min-tai i-kin* district refer to the same geographical area.

The business quarter along the river was linked to the inland area by a waterway. The *Shwe ta* waterway, which connects the Ayeyawaddy River to *Mattara*, is one of the main waterways. This waterway was created in the reigns of King Badon. There is agricultural land around *Mattara*, and people who maintain the waterway live there. It is said that *Sanga ja* waterway, located west of the *Shwe ta* waterway, was dug in the Inwa era.<sup>(16)</sup>

The commercial area along the river functioned as the hub of a trade network developed around the 17th century at the earliest. Because of the city's characteristics, this district may be referred to as "Original Mandalay". It is thought that original Mandalay established regionality based on its importance in the international commercial network, the religious importance of the *Taung pron* festival and Mandalay Hill, and its service as a base for construction work on the Mingun Pagoda during the reign of King Badon.

In this way, the whole area along the river functioned as a trade base attracting foreign merchants from about the 17th century. Its existence began to be known abroad. It had not only international commercial significance but also the significance to connect the plains of Myanmar and the mountainous district. The technique of city design from Amarapura was introduced into a place already presenting many important city characteristics as a commerce base, and the capital of Mandalay was formed.

### ***1.3. The Administrative System of Mandalay***

Few historical materials address the administrative system of Mandalay, and it is difficult to clarify many details, but we draw up an outline.

Mandalay has three concepts of the boundary. Early one is "*Shwe kro sat ne* (the land marked off by golden rope)" which introduced on 1857 at the same time with drawing the city plan. Under this concept, the boundary of Mandalay was established naturally into north, south, east, and west. Secondary, another concept called "*Chan khre phoun* (soldiers surround a battle elephant)" was introduced on 1863. This concept demarcates the boundary of Mandalay in detail and forbid to kill animals in the boundary. The city area was divided into north, south, east, and west, and each division was called *a-pran* (pronounced 'a pyin'), which means "outside the castle."

Each *a-pran* was divided into wards. The total number of wards was 54, with each name derived from the Pali language. It is unknown how the administration actually functioned, but there seemed to be some geographical unity.

The person in charge of the city administration was called *Mro wan* (pronounced Myo un). *Mro wan* was also the name for the administrator of local cities, and the Mandalay *Mro wan* functioned similarly to local *Mro wan*, keeping the peace and maintaining civil order. However, the Mandalay *Mro wan* position was split between several individuals. Under the reign of King Mindon, Mandalay had four *Mro wan*, and under the reign of King Thibaw (1874 -1885) it had three. They worked at the *Shwe roun* (Eastern Office), which also functioned as a criminal court in the east side of the royal palace.

The *Mro wan* has would have *Thaung hmu* (captains of 1,000 soldiers) as subordinates to combat crime. *Tara roun* (law court) dealt with civil affairs, and the criminal court dealt with criminal affairs. In 1869, the joint court was founded by both the Myanmar and the British authorities to settle civil affairs between merchants belonging to different nationalities.

For the foreign community, the authority chose and appointed prominent people from each community. In this case, socially and economically influential people were often chosen and given official posts and ranks so that they functioned as mediator to link the authority with foreigners. For example, *Kula wan* (pronounced ‘Kala un’) was the government official who managed foreigners from far west. In the early 1860s, an European traveler, Bastion, received support from the Portuguese *Kula wan*, Mr. Cemaratta, while staying in Mandalay. It seems that *Kula wan* was in charge of looking after newly arrived foreigners.<sup>(17)</sup>

The basic unit of the city was a grid-formed block (*pra kwet*). This block was called “*wan* (pronounced ‘win’, mean residential land)”. The city had a large street, according to *pra* on the royal castle. The size of a win was essentially 1 *pra* square. Stores stood along the road, and the center of a *wan* was often employed as a religious facility, if it was an open space, or as an assembly room. Because placement of professional groups was carried out according to the *wan* unit, we can study the allotment pattern for the foreign community by researching the history of each *wan*.

The town allotment of Mandalay was completed after the royal palace’s completion in 1863.<sup>(18)</sup> The royal family and high ranking persons received the allotment of land inside the castle, and influential foreign merchants, military personnel, and craftspeople were assigned to the urban area outside the castle wall. Therefore, the place name is associated with each resident group. Most of such residents were forcibly immigrated from Amarapura.

In this way, Mandalay was established in form by both elements of the city, Amarapura’s method of city construction and the riverside area’s old commercial functions. Sovereignty combined both elements of the city. An administrative system based on personal relations with the sovereign was built, and various groups were moved to the orderly city blocks. Based on this understanding, the following chapter considers the placement of each group.

## II. Commercial Community of Mandalay

### 2.1. Placement of the Business District and the Commercial Group

How were the commercial facilities of Mandalay and the foreigners with commercial functions placed within the city? The commercial area ranged along the river. However, after the construction of Mandalay, the commercial center moved inland alongside the *Shwe ta* waterway. In that area, Muslim inhabitants’ *wan* with a mosque demonstrates their prominent presence there.

The western and southwestern sides of the castle are a commercial quarter in Mandalay. Commercial quarter continue from *Su rai* market located on the northwest corner

of the moat to the northern outskirts of Maha muni great statue. Here, the existing water transportation network formed in the axis from Mandalay's past construction. It is thought that *Shwe ta* waterway and *Sanga ja* waterway controlled distribution as the main traffic lines.

Old markets exist in allotments in Mandalay, and six place names are known: *Malwan* market, *Rahaing* market, *Nnaung pan* market, *Jhe khyo* market, *Yodaya* market, *Nnwan paung* market.<sup>(19)</sup> Those are formed along the *Shwe ta* waterway. The *Shwe ta* waterway became a drainage point in the colonial period, and it lost its water traffic function at that point, but, before then, the waterway was wide, and it is said that many people traveled it.<sup>(20)</sup>

It was a custom to make a sand pagoda along the *Shwe ta* waterway. Thai captives who were taken in the Ayutthaya war at the end of the 18th century were made to settle at places such as *Monti cu* (near *Rahaing* market), and *Mintha cu* quarter for waterway management, and they brought their customs with them. Sand pagoda is typical of such customs.<sup>(21)</sup>

Along the *Shwe ta* waterway, the largest market was *Malwan* market, established around the ruins of the residence of the *Malwan* prince. The *Malwan* market has disappeared today, only place name and some wholesaler remains in formerly market area. These place names demonstrate old structure of the market area, divided by product such as rice, various vegetables, and precious metals.

The *Jhe khyo* market, the largest market in Mandalay, was established along the *Shwe ta* waterway. There is a market of the same name in Inwa, and it is said that the market moved to Mandalay via Amarapura. Much is unknown about the history of Mandalay's creation, but the relations with the Muslims of Surat origin in the last years of the Konbaung period are clear. Mullah Ismail had jurisdiction over tax collection in the market, and the influential merchant, whose family emigrated in the mid-19th century, served the King of each generation of Myanmar.<sup>(22)</sup> The Surati mosque, which Ismail erected to the north of the market, still exists.

The area across the *Shwe ta* waterway from the *Jhe khyo* market became the largest broker street in Mandalay.<sup>(23)</sup> The *Pwai ca* (broker) acted as the trade intermediary for inland producers and foreign merchants. A concentration of *Pwai ca* is seen at the site of the *Malwan* market, demonstrating their importance as intermediaries in the market at the time.

In addition, various handicraft industries accumulated around a commercial area. For example, Knife Street was to the north of the *Jhe khyo* market, and a Pot Craftsman Street was in the eastern part. The craftsman town of the *Ein daw-ra* umbrella formed, and, in the plot adjacent to the *Pwai ca* town, the traditional umbrella that priests used was made. According to Bastion, the paper used to the make such an umbrella was brought from Yunnan.<sup>(24)</sup> In addition, there are many place names suggesting the existence of a jewel processing craftsman street, as jewels were an international trade product in this neighborhood. Rubies were exported to the west, and jade was primarily exported to China.

The market would have a management authority, including foreign merchants and tax collectors from the market. Because the existence of *Pwai ca* was indispensable for commercial activity, *Pwai ca*'s street was often adjacent. In addition, various professional handicraft groups were often also nearby. The number of known markets increased to more than Amarapura, reaching more than 20.<sup>(25)</sup> Commercial activity was likely responsible for

this prosperity.

In this way, the commercial area in Mandalay prospered, although it moved from the riverside to the inland. The permanent market constructed along the *Shwe ta* waterway became the main place of exchange, and industry accumulated in its outskirts. The prosperity was supported by foreign merchant activity. However, their activity was dependent on *Pwai ca*. They had a relationship of mutual dependence.

## ***2.2. Residence Area of the Muslim Merchant***

Notably, there is a concentration of *wan* with mosques in the central part of the commercial area. The neighboring *Jhe khyo* market at the southwestern side of the castle had a concentration of Muslims wards.

Muslim merchants residing in Mandalay did not newly arrive with the construction of the new capital. Some accounts show that there were many Muslims from Surat in the former capital of Amarapura from the early 19th century. Such merchants had relations with the king and were given titles such as royal merchant (*Kon-si tau*) and royal buyer (*A-we tau*), and they received special trade privileges. They were also sometimes appointed tax collectors.

*Jhe khyo* market provides an example of the relationship of Muslim merchants to the commercial activity in Mandalay. The family of Mullah Ibrahim, a merchant family from Surat, came to manage the tax collection in the *Jhe khyo* market at the end of the 19th century.<sup>(26)</sup> Ismail, son of Mullah Ibrahim, was active as a financial advisor to the king, and his importance for the kingdom's economy was great. It is said that Surat Muslim families emigrated to Amarapura in the middle of the 19th century.<sup>(27)</sup>

The Surati mosque, which Ismail erected to the north of the *Jhe khyo* market, still exists, along with another mosque also erected by Muslim royal merchants around the *Jhe khyo* market. The *Suthe tan* mosque was established by the influential merchant, *U Maung Kyi*, who was awarded the title of *Suthe* (a man of wealth) from King Thibaw. The *Kyauk* mosque is a large mosque erected by royal jewel merchants.<sup>(28)</sup>

The *Taung bhalu* mosque is in the south of the *Jhe khyo* market. *Taung bhalu* is the name of the Muslim ward in Inwa. It is said that the mosque's founders emigrated from Inwa at the time of Mandalay's construction. According to lineage of the family that erected the mosque, they had a common ancestor named U Nu who was an active merchant and writer under King Badon.<sup>(29)</sup> U Nu was often dispatched to India for trade and collection of Buddhist scriptures.

Most of these mosques are Sunni. The Shia mosque represented the minority in Mandalay, but it was the only mosque east of the *Jhe khyo* market. This Shia mosque was also erected by a merchant who was appointed tax collector (*A-khwan wan*).<sup>(30)</sup>

Methods for studying the history of the Muslim merchants of Mandalay are extremely limited. There are very few historical materials from them, and the formal historical materials of the dynasty hardly refer to their activity. There used to be four historic Muslim graveyards in Mandalay.<sup>(31)</sup> There are gravestones containing personal career details, but all graveyards were demolished during urban construction in the 1990s. Under the present conditions, Muslim merchants' careers are known from a small number of secondary

historical materials.

What kind of business did the royal merchant and royal buyer conduct? Their goods were jewels such as rubies, and silk fabrics. They made use of a network with merchants in Yangon and exported Myanmar articles such as farm products and imported rare textiles. Such trade may have contributed to the formation of the material culture of the royal court.

Although it is said that King Mindon was a very pious Buddhist, we cannot assume his religious policies. Mindon appointed talented individuals to positions of power irrespective of religion. Allotment of residence area was primarily based on religion, but royal intervention in religious practices in each *wan* was rare. The king used influenced foreign residents only indirectly through the *Kula wan*.

In this way, Mandalay's commercial community's presence was significant in the commercial area. Moreover, Muslim merchants had high social status, with personal relationships with the King. Specific personal abilities and natures were regarded as important for relationships with kingship, rather than religion or ethnicity.

### ***2.3. Resident Area of the Chinese and European***

In the commercial area of Mandalay, Chinese and European commercial activity was also prominent. In addition, Mandalay was dotted with markets built by immigrants from Ayutthaya. There are many place names connected with this group in the commercial area.

Mandalay has two Chinese immigrant groups. One is a group from Yunnan that engaged in trade via a land route. The other group is from Fujian, Guangdong, using the sea route via Yangon after the late 19th century. The Yunnan Chinese presence grew significantly in Mandalay, contributing to the naming of today's 80th Street, a main commerce street, as "the Chinese street" (*Tarok tan*), as well as to the building of Yunnan hall.

However, there were very few *wan* with China-like meeting facilities, whereas Muslim merchants had many *wan* around mosques. Why is the residence pattern so different in this case? Most Chinese streets in Mandalay were constructed by immigrants from Amarapura, as with Muslim areas. However, after Mandalay was completed, the majority of Chinese inhabitants did not agree to the relocation of the capital, and they did not emigrate immediately.<sup>(32)</sup> However, the land allotment for Muslims was decided almost at the same time that all Mandalay land allotments were decided. This delay in relocation may have influenced Chinese allotments.

In 1876, Yunnan Hall was built. Some facilities appear to have existed before this, but there is no clear record.<sup>(33)</sup> South of the Chinese street, there is a *Panse* mosque completed in 1868. This was a base for Yunnan Muslims established after the opening of the trade route in Mandalay when the Muslim government gained power in Yunnan. According to the tradition of the *Panse* mosque, religious riot erupted in those days. The residential area for Yunnan Chinese was in the neighboring area of the *Panse* mosque before 1868.

In addition to these, residences for Thai existed. The *Yodaya* market was to the west of the Chinese street. Three pagodas were built opposite the *Yodaya* market. Many bandsmen who sang and danced in the royal court resided in this area, and there was a shrine house worshipping Rama in the *Yodaya* market.

*Rahaing* market to the south of the *Shwe ta* waterway was a locus for emigrants from Ayutthaya. Manufacturers of the noodle dish *Monty*, handed down from Siam, were concentrated in the ward, and a sand pagoda is at the center of the ward.

As for the trace of European community, there is little contrast with the dense Asian monuments. European religious facilities and place names, considered markers of European residence in the Konbaung period, are to the west of the castle. There is an Armenian church that Armenians once attended. A school built by a British father named Marx during the reign of King Mindon is located west of the castle.

The Baptist church, Kelly's church located to the southwest of castle. This church erected by American Baptists in 1887, oldest Baptist church in Mandalay. The Xavier's church, a Roman Catholic Church located on the south of castle, and The Ernest West Memorial Church, a Methodist Church also located on there. These Church were founded during the colonial period.

European residence wards lacks markets for European merchants contrasted with Muslim, Chinese, and Thai residence wards adjoin their markets. However, lack of market did not mean less activity of Europe merchants. Some Europeans gained the king's favor, and there were many merchants who performed large-scale transactions. This should merely be understood as a difference in commercial form.

The commercial area of Mandalay unfolded in the north and south along the *Shwe ta* waterway. The king allotted land for influential people in the orderly divided city area; in particular, Muslim merchants excelled in currying the king's favor. A main market was set along the waterway, and the people who supported commercial activities such as *Pwai ca* or craftspeople tended to gather there. It is necessary to understand the actual situation to study the individual relations between the merchants and the king and royal family.

### III. Professional Units of Mandalay

#### 3.1. Military Units Placement in Mandalay

In the *wan* around the castle, various professional units such as craftspeople and military personnel (*A-hmu tham*) were allotted residence areas as well as merchants. Their backgrounds are diverse because origin of most groups was war captive who was taken from neighboring areas. Existing place name in the city demonstrate their original country. We study the placement of the Mandalay professional units based on such information.

At first, Mandalay was a military installation. The square-shaped castle had parapets set equidistantly, and it was surrounded by a moat. One explanation for the relocation of the capital from Amarapura is that it was necessary to move the castle away from the coast to avoid bombardment from British warships. Mandalay was a city under severe military strain while serving a significant commercial function.

A castle town is a city form built in all parts of the world beginning the middle ages. However, when international commerce developed drastically after the 18th and 19th centuries, the city wall become an obstacle shutting out the city space, and many cities removed the wall and reconstructed the city space for efficient commercial traffic. In

Bangkok, commercial activity was established outside of moats in multiple layers at first, but the moat and city wall were reduced by commercial development at the end of the 19th century. However, in Mandalay, the city space was still surrounded by a city wall in the 1870s.<sup>(34)</sup>

Therefore, the royal court likely had to put considerable armaments around Mandalay. Foot soldiers, cavalry, sailors, and gunners made up the core of the armaments of the Konbaung Dynasty. The military power around Mandalay was made up of these combatants. It was called *A-hmu tham*, (servant). *A-hmu tham* has an obligation to obey King's edict for war or emergency, and in return for the obligation, they has a privilege to avoid peacetime taxation.

*A-hmu tham* units were posted to the north, east, and south of the castle, contrasted to merchants who concentrated in the west of the castle. There was much military *A-hmu tham* north of the castle, and *Su rai* fort was at the northwest corner of the castle. Adjacent to it, gun soldier *A-hmu tham* from Daway were concentrated. Daway *A-hmu tham* is a military unit referring to a household of troops in the royal palace. An assembly hall performing Buddhist events was established in the *wan* of Daway *A-hmu tham* because Muslims had mosques inside their *wan*.

Furthermore, the blacksmith ward was established following this.<sup>(35)</sup> A firearms factory and gunpowder craftspeople were also put there to introduce modern military technology.

There was a ward for *Lanjan* sailors there. *Lanjan* is a Myanmar-like dialect of Lan xang and is associated with the Lao Kingdom. The main force of the water corps was also concentrated in the district of the Ayeyawaddy River coast. A modern shipyard was established in *De wan* in southwestern Mandalay, and the military units of traditional water forces were collected in the neighborhood.

The *A-hmu tham* organization was organized in such a way that every professional ability and combatant and influential person of the groups commanded the whole as a leader. It resembled the segmental social formation seen in the city in early modern times in the Edo period in Japan. When a military unit was made up of foreigners, it might maintain each faith and custom inside or throw it away and assimilate to Myanmar.

As a whole, the fire arms corps was concentrated in the northern side and the firearms factory was established adjacent. To the west of the castle, sailors were concentrated in the land of the Ayeyawaddy River. A cavalry group and the gunner group were on the eastern and southern sides of the castle. Foreigner groups, such as the Muslims were more often incorporated as combatants.

It is thought that the placement of military duty *A-hmu tham* was carried out based on *wan*. Those *wan* are concentrated in the same place according to ability. In the next section, we review the foreign *A-hmu tham*.

### **3.2. Muslim *A-hmu tham***

A lot of *A-hmu tham* placed around the castle included Muslim members. Primary historical materials indicating much about *A-hmu tham* are rare, but we can study the history of the community, religious facilities, and the conditions that remain in each *wan*. At present, we can only show the reconstruction of the outline, but we want to arrange every

possible scenario.

Today, each *wan* of western of the city has a mosque at center of *wan* and inhabitants live around a mosque. The south of the castle included many Muslim *wan* like the western area. Seven mosques in total are concentrated there. It is called *Cakra nwe-cin* ward, and this name comes from the name of the gunner corps, and this district was granted by King Mindon.<sup>(36)</sup>

Gunner corps employed in the district include *Cakra* artillery, the *Mingala* artillery, the *Chu le* artillery, and the *Boun-o* gunner.<sup>(37)</sup> The history of the artillery is old and dates back to the foundation of the Konbaung Dynasty. Many Portuguese employing mercenaries, called *Bharangyi*, were once employed in the Konbaung Dynasty artillery. A collection of *Bharangyi* village exists around Shwebo, the location of the first capital. However, members of the artillery seemed to include not only *Bharangyi* Christians but also a considerable number of Muslims.

The tradition of the artillery was introduced into the existing mosque, but more detailed information appears on a gravestone in the Muslim graveyard. According to the gravestone, the head of the artillery was granted land by the king, and it is indicated there that some mosques were completed with the support of the king.<sup>(38)</sup> There are fewer documents conveying the internal conditions of the community, but the manager of the mosque inherited his position from generation to generation. As for this, even the community will suggest that personal relationships were at the root of the human network.

The east of Mandalay is a district lined with Buddhist monasteries to the south from the foot of Mandalay Hill. The east side is the grain belt, which used the *Aung pin-le* pond. A concentration of Muslim *A-hmu tham* is seen in the middle area between the royal palace and the monastery group. There are the *Kan-sa Kula-pyaw* military unit, which defended checkpoints, and the cavalry.

The mosque called the *Wali Khan* mosque now exists in this district. It is said that it is named after the cavalry captain who erected the mosque. Wally Khan's father was Bain Sat, who served King Sagaing as a cavalry soldier *A-hmu tham* and achieved military gains in the First Anglo-Burmese War. In the Manipur cavalry division, nine corps were organized in total, and many cavalry divisions of Manipur origin were placed around the castle.<sup>(39)</sup>

War captives from Manipur were given important posts as leading figures in the textile industrial arts and as member of the cavalry division in Mandalay. Myanmar called them *Akkapat*, and organized an *Akkapat* cavalry corps. A person of such a blood relationship might be appointed as a high-ranking government official. One *Mro wan* of Mandalay, who erected a mosque east of the royal palace, was of *Akkapat* lineage.<sup>(40)</sup>

The presence of more military personnel is suggested by a gravestone left in the Muslim graveyard. Many Muslims were included in the *Swe sauk* corps, which was the king's guard,<sup>(41)</sup> including the commanding officer. The military personnel of the Konbaung Dynasty were from a variety of lineages.

Therefore, there were many Muslim military officers in Mandalay. What then were their relations with Muslims engaged in commercial activity? Although a document giving a clear answer does not exist, a Muslim family tree suggests a relationship between them. It also shows that their ancestors extended to an older period, in Amarapura and beyond.

Southern gunner *A-hmu tham* and eastern cavalry *A-hmu tham* were gathered in this way, and military *A-hmu tham* of Mandalay were assigned. The relations with the kingship were strong, and they were given the land and construction permission for mosques in return for military duty.

### 3.3. Group of Hindu Origin

The *Punna* (court Brahman) was engaged in various services in Mandalay other than military duty. The *Punna* had significant knowledge of the Hindu Veda; some were Myanmar but many *Punna* emigrated from Manipur and India. Contemporary Mandalay traditional culture was formed by the interaction between such various professional and cultural groups.

The Manipur Kingdom, which was northwest of the Konbaung Dynasty, was a source of precious human resources. Since its founding, the Konbaung Dynasty carried out several expeditions, and considerable inhabitants were brought into the area around the capital. The professional ability of people named *Kassay* for the Cachar Kingdom, to the south of Manipur, diverges into many branches. In addition to the cavalry soldiers mentioned in the previous chapter, there were *Punna* and textile artisans.

Textile technology is a representative example of cultural exchange. Amarapura is the largest silk production center in this area even today; the traditional method of textile production developed there. Such technological transfer was realized during King Badon's Manipur expedition in the early 19th century, and the technique was inherited in Mandalay.

Next to *Wali Khan's* cavalry division's ward, textile industry accumulation is seen in the eastern district of Mandalay. Although the origin of the ward and of the textile industry is unknown, it seems to have been related to *Kassay* inhabitants. In addition, in Bastion's account, the state of the *Kassay* community at the foot of the Mandalay Hill is recorded. According to Bastion, many blacksmiths abandoned their original faith and assimilated into Myanmar culture.<sup>(42)</sup>

The *Punna* had close relation with the king as the court astrologer or as the manager of a water clock in the royal palace.<sup>(43)</sup> King Mindon depended on knowledge from the *Punna* on the occasion of Mandalay's construction. Principal process of construction was strictly scheduled based on *Punna's* astrology although the king was often seen as a particularly devout Buddhist. The *Punna's* background was various, but some *Punna* followed a sacred book written in Bengali and participated in the teaching of the Bengalis in the community.<sup>(44)</sup> Three place names are known now, and *wan* that such *Punna* centered on maintain their original customs.

What kind of life would a foreigner live inside *wan*? Bastion stated that the *Punna's* house was built on the surface of the earth directly contrast to traditional Myanmar's above ground house-type.<sup>(45)</sup> As for the building construction standard, a limited ranked style was used under the dynasty system in those days. However, there was no movement to standardize the inhabitants' house-style. Despite an order limiting meat consumption in the city, equalization of living was not strictly performed in the capital.

The cultural elements brought in by various peoples matured as Mandalay culture. There are many elements from the plural origins of Mandalay's inhabitants mixed up in

Mandalay's handicrafts. The situation is similar for food culture. For example, inhabitants from Ayutthaya made foods such as *Monti* (rice noodles) and *Khailam*, thus establishing a confectionery tradition. The Chinese inhabitants brought the rice noodle, and the Indian Muslims contributed *Danpauk* (biryani).

Handicrafts are also important. A paper manufacturing technique and the gold leaf from China were introduced and became rooted in Mandalay. Buddhist buildings with sublime decorations were constructed in Mandalay based on this material culture.

In this way, Mandalay functionalized a considerable part of the human resources of foreigners. The lineages of the inhabitants who constituted the city were various, but a city system existed because the kingship functioned as a node for human organization. Even if religious and lingual differences existed, this did not become a decisive social fracture, and the individual relationship seemed to be basis of social structure. However, the pattern of this city is not characteristic of only Mandalay and is more likely a structure common to Southeast Asian port cities generally.

## Conclusion

As mentioned earlier, Mandalay followed a construction pattern based on Amarapura. It carried out land allotment of city space in a grid pattern based on the *wan*, a method locating specific groups in specific *wan*. This technique was effective in the placement of the human resources received from neighboring countries.

However, such a city space was built to incorporate a previously existing commercial base; the preservation of old Mandalay was imperative in the construction. Along the waterway, which spanned inland from the commercial area along the river, the commercial center in later years formed. Muslims and Chinese were concentrated in this area, which grew as the new commercial center in the capital city of Mandalay.

By contrast, military personnel were placed in the eastern, southern, and northern parts of Mandalay. As before, foreigners were a considerable part of the population, and each person's religious practices were accepted and religious buildings were constructed. Trace remains exist still today.

On the basis of this characteristic of Mandalay, we note that Mandalay was a city developed within a broader pattern Southeast Asian city formation. We conclude that the city's inhabitants developed an original culture by gathering pieces of each present foreign culture and mixing these with Myanmar culture. These constructed what is now considered traditional Myanmar culture.

The study of Mandalay's social history is in an early stage, still accumulating only basic information. This local characteristic is essential for a future understanding of Mandalay in the context of "Southeast Asia" and "Myanmar" and a more detailed and in-depth study is now necessary.

## Notes

- (1) For example, see Heine-Geldern, Robert, Obayashi, Taira trans., “Tonan ajia ni okeru kokka to ōken no kannen,” Obayashi, Taira, Shinwa, Syakai, Sekaikan, Kadokawa Shoten, 1972, pp. 263 - 90. Tun Aung Chain, “Prophecy and Planets: Forms of Legitimation of the Royal City in Myanmar,” *Proceedings of the Myanmar Two Millennia Conference* 3, 2000, pp. 133 - 55.
- (2) Thant Myint-U., *The Making of Modern Burma*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- (3) Schendel, Jörg, *The Mandalay Economy, Upper Burma's External Trade, c. 1850 - 90*, Ph.D. thesis for Heidelberg University, 2003.
- (4) *Mran ma she hkeit mro nan ti pon ca nit* 1.
- (5) For example, Symes, Michael, *An Account of an Embassy to The Kingdom of Ava, in the Year 1795*, Edinburgh: Constable & Co., 1827. Sangermano, Father Vincenzo, *The Burmese Empire a Hundred Years Ago*, Bangkok: White Lotus, 1995.
- (6) Yule, Henry, *A Narrative of the Mission Sent by the Governor-General of India to the Court of Ava in 1855, with Notices of the Country, Government, and People*, London: Smith Elder and Co., 1858, pp.140- 53.
- (7) Khin Myint Swe, *Urban Society of Amarapura: The Immortal City (1785- 1858)*, Ph.D. thesis for University of Mandalay, 2007, pp.128- 34.
- (8) Natmauk Thwan Shein, *Wan twe nai tay khai si min ne pri*, Ran kun: Gango mrain ca pe, 2009, p. 38. Bastian, Adolf, *A Journey in Burma (1861- 1862)*, Bangkok: White Lotus, 2004.
- (9) *Konbhaung chet Maha raja wan taw kri* 3, Ran kun: Ra pri ca oup taik, 2004, pp.171- 76.
- (10) Natmauk Thwan Shein, *op. cit.*, p. 161.
- (11) Monrwe jetawan chara-taw, *Raja wan khyup*, Ran kun: Kankaw wat ri ca pe, 2010, pp. 139- 40.
- (12) Natmauk Thwan Shein, *op. cit.*, pp. 161, 179.
- (13) Wa Cheng Yunnan Tongsiang hui, *Miandian Mandele <Wa Cheng> Yunnan huiguan shi lue*, 2007, pp. 26- 30.
- (14) Natmauk Thwan Shein, *op. cit.*, p. 283.
- (15) Gouger, Henry, *Two Years Imprisonment in Burma (1824-26)*, Bangkok: White Lotus, 2003. Crawford, John, *Journal of an Embassy from the Governor-General of India to the Court of Ava in the Year 1827*, London: Henry Colburn, 1829.
- (16) Natmauk Thwan Shein, *op. cit.*, p.62.
- (17) Bastian, Adolf, *op. cit.*, p. 100.
- (18) *Konbhaung chet Maha raja wan taw kri* 3, p.214.
- (19) U Maung Maung Tan, “Mantale rap kwet samaing,” *Naing ngan samaing sutesana ca caung* 2, 1978, pp. 101- 04.
- (20) Natmauk Thwan Shein, *op. cit.*, p. 62.
- (21) Tin Maung Kri, *Thai Descendants in Mandalay Around*, Mandalay: Pyinsagan Books House, 2013, pp.34- 5.

- (22) Gravestone at Sulati Mosque (confirmed on May 2013).
- (23) Schendel, Jörg, *op.cit.*, pp.293 -95.
- (24) Bastian, Adolf, *op.cit.*, p. 78.
- (25) U Maung Maung Tan, *op.cit.*, p.101.
- (26) Gravestone at Sulati Mosque (confirmed on May 2013).
- (27) Shwebho U Bha U., *Shwe man hnit titra pri Mranma Mwatcalan to e Atthuppatti*, 1959, pp.162- 72.
- (28) U Maung Maung Kri, *Early Mosques in Mandalay*, 2013, pp.97- 8.
- (29) *ibid.*, pp.75- 7.
- (30) *ibid.*, pp.85- 6.
- (31) *ibid.*, pp.109- 10.
- (32) Bastian, Adolf, *A Journey in Burma*, p. 72.
- (33) Wa Cheng Yunnan Tongsiang hui, *Miandian Mandele <Wa Cheng> Yunnan huiguan shi lue*, 2007, pp.65- 8.
- (34) *Konbhaung chet Maha raja wan taw kri 3*, *op. cit.* p.284.
- (35) Bastian, Adolf, *op. cit.*, p.95
- (36) Shwebho U Bha U., *op. cit.*, p.31.
- (37) U Maung Maung Kri, *op. cit.*, pp.44- 7, 64- 7.
- (38) Shwebho U Bha U., *op. cit.*, pp.182- 3.
- (39) Natmauk Thwan Shein, *op. cit.*, p.118.
- (40) U Maung Maung Kri, *op. cit.*, p.102.
- (41) Shwebho U Bha U., *op. cit.*, pp.186-7.
- (42) Bastian, Adolf, *op. cit.*, p. 95.
- (43) U Maung Maung Tan, *Shwe nan soun wohara abhidan*, Ran kun: Ra pri ca oup taik. 2005, p.187.
- (44) Bastian, Adolf, *op. cit.*, p. 94.
- (45) Bastian, Adolf, *op. cit.*, p. 93.