

Myanmar Literature Project

မြန်မာစာပေစီမံကိန်း

Hans-Bernd Zöllner (ed.)

Working Paper No. 10:15.1

Material on Khin Khin Lay, Two Books about Germany

Passauer Beiträge zur Südostasienkunde

Working Papers

ISSN 1435-5310

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Druck: Universität Passau

Printed in Germany

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I. Introduction (Hans-Bernd Zöllner)

Countering Burmese Inclinations towards Germany in the Service of British Propaganda

This volume complements the previous Working Papers of this series in a double way. First, it adds to the information provided in Working Paper 15 on how Germany was perceived by writers contributing to the publications of the Nagani Book Club and Tun Aye's Myanmar Publishing House. Second, the publication history of the books introduced here tells a very interesting story which contributes to the history of Nagani thus complementing the information on Nagani offered in Working Papers 1 and 1.1.

The reader of this Working Paper is recommended to start with a look at the excerpt of Khin Khin Lay's autobiography written in 1961. It tells the story of how she was prompted by an officer of the British Propaganda Department to write books in order to counter Burma's general public's inclination towards the "dictatorial" regimes of the day, specifically Germany. "Rays of War" and "Enemy of the World" are the result of this initiative. The former is a small book telling the story of a British nurse who was sentenced to death and executed by the German authorities in World War I. The latter is a novel set in contemporary Europe around the beginning of World War II without making use of any real figure of history.

The episode throws a light on the degree of the sympathy towards Germany according to the assessment of the British authorities and their Burmese assistants. In addition, the idea to counter this empathy by distributing novels written by an upcoming female Burmese author illuminates the limitations of the influence on public opinion exerted by the non-fiction books published by the Nagani Book Club introduced in Working Paper 15.

It may be regarded as rather ironic that Khin Khin Lay from the many publishing houses in Rangoon just chose the Nagani Press to print her two novels since Nagani was decidedly anti-British. This choice caused some irritation which is reflected in the response of Nagani's manager Tun Shwe on an article in the *Thuriya* (Sun) newspaper suggesting that the publication of Khin Khin Lay's books by "Nagani" might indicate a change in Nagani's policy.¹ The reply was published in April 1940, one month after "Enemy of the World" was widely circulated in Burma at the end of the booklet "World War and Burma" written by Aung San and other authors.

¹ See document IV.1 in this volume and Working Paper 8 of this series, pp. 123-125.

Tun Shwe claims that Nagani's policy has not changed and differentiates between the Nagani Book Club and the Nagani Printing & Publishing House Ltd. While the further pursues a policy of anti-imperialism, the latter carries out a variety of "job work" in addition to printing Nagani books like "many religious books as well as all kinds of invitation cards, including wedding invitations etc. etc.". Therefore, the Nagani Book Club could not be held responsible for Khin Khin Lay's "political books".¹ The manager promised, however, to add a new phrase together with the Nagani seal in the forthcoming Nagani publications in order to forestall any misunderstanding. The dragon-logo appeared on the title of "Rays of War" after referring to Khin Khin Lay as holder of the copyright and as publisher of the book. "Enemy of the World" did not contain the seal. It just informed the reader that the book was "printed at the Nagani Press".

Problems before a "Non-Political" Political Publishing House

The problem behind the clarification attempted by Tun Shwe lies in the "mixed identity" of the project as a book club promoting a certain policy. The first public announcement of the Nagani Book Club signed by Soe, Than Tun and Nu claimed that the new enterprise was special being neither "of [the] political groups mushrooming nowadays" nor "like an ordinary book club".

Two years later, a different terminology was used. On the back page of "Rays of War" after advertising Hla Pe's "Political Map of the World"² information about the character of Nagani was given stating that it is not a political but just a book association followed by an enumeration of the venture's four bestsellers all of them introduced as "translations": Nu's adaptation of Dale Carnegie's "How to Win Friends and Influence People", Ba Thoung's novel "Pan-tha-ma-sa-u" based on Thomas Hardy's "Tess of D'Urberville", Zeya's partial translation of van Loon's "The History of Mankind" and Hla Shwe's work on the happy relationship of man and wife.

Such books could be classified under one of the two categories of Nagani books mentioned by Tun Shwe in May 1940, "books of knowledge" that "do not support or encourage imperialism". The first category, books "that expose and attack imperialism" is not mentioned in the booklet authored by Khin Khin Lay and "co-published" by Nagani.

¹ The British authorities in their quarterly records of books published in Burma classified "Rays of War" as a "biography" of Miss E. Cavell and "Enemy of the World" as "fiction". According to Tun Shwe, Nagani Press printed a third book by Khin Khin Lay entitled „Picture of the World“ (*Kaba Yokesone*). The book could not be identified in the official records. However, another novel titled Goun-myin-thu printed at the Nagani Press was listed. Publication date was May 1940, 2000 copies were printed.

² See below, p. ; for the book, see Working Paper 13 of this series.

Between the founding of Nagani at the end of 1937 and the publication of Khin Khin Lay's books significant changes had occurred both globally and in the small world of Nagani. The war had broken out in Europe and Nagani had been split into two companies after Tun Aye had established his own book publishing enterprise.

Both events affected the relationship of political and knowledge promoting activities of Nagani. After the outbreak of the war, Burma as part of the British Empire was at war with Germany. Any obstruction of Britain's warfare could be punished under the Defence of Burma Act which had been implemented on February 29, 1940. The Freedom Bloc founded on 1st October 1939 by three parties including the *Dobama Asiayone* to which Nagani was closely connected personally¹ and politically had formulated a package deal between Burma's support of the war on the side of the British and the promise of independence by the British. Given these circumstance, it could be regarded advisable not to stress the political anti-British character of Nagani.

Whereas the change of the international situation and its effects on Burma's home policy might be regarded as a factor inducing the Nagani management to employ a more cautious language in propagating their goals for tactical reasons, the internal rift revealed a fundamental dilemma related to the problem if certain means were justified to achieve an intended end. Nagani's policy was to fight imperialism and capitalism associated with it by publishing books revealing the nature of both evils. For the task of publishing, however, capital was needed.² The attempt to rely on different kinds of donors failed and the idea to issue shares was brought up thus turning Nagani into an economic and thus capitalist enterprise. Tun Aye objected to the plans because he wanted to strive for his political line purely without any commercial "pollution".

The parting of ways did not resolve the dilemma. Tun Aye's Publishing House had to pay its bills and take into account what books were interesting for the public.³ Nagani on the other hand continued to be a political book club and did not just turn into a book selling company. Both publishing houses developed the "mixed identity" that was proclaimed at the beginning the into "split identities". Nagani was split but each house in itself could not quite harmonise the political aspiration and the economic realities. For Nagani, the split was more obvious just because its superior popularity as the article in the *Thuriya* article shows. In the response of Nagani's manager the political sphere of the enterprise was separated from the company's economic activities.

¹ For the personal contacts, see Khin Khin Lay's memories on her visit to Nagani's office on Scotts Market pp. 70-78 below.

² See vol. 1 of this series, pp. 23-24; 38-44.

³ For example, he published a book on Mata Hari and on Occult Science.

“Nagani” split into an entity still pursuing its original ambitious policy aiming at Burma’s independence and a publishing house operating just as any other “limited” company. This statement revised the statement on the back side of Khin Khin Lay’s first book which stated that Nagani was just a “book association” the products of which were read by all sectors of Burmese society from the Prime Minister to the common citizen.¹

These inconsistent statements may reflect a crisis in Nagani’s identity after Tun Aye had quit the post of the venture’s manager. On the other hand, they show that the terms “policy” and “political” could be used in an oscillating way pointing to another dilemma.

The declaration that Nagani was an enterprise serving the whole people and no “political association” suggested that the term “politics” was related to “party politics”. The club’s “unchanged policy” asserted by Tun Shwe defined as anti-imperialism implying the goal of the whole country’s liberation from imperialist British rule. This double negative definition of “politics” as non-partisan and serving the interest of all people of Burma against a common enemy concealed the problem of how to deal with political diversity which had at least contributed to the split of the book club.

The distinction between a “political” and a “non-political” aspect of Nagani went with a shift in the classification of Nagani’s publications. “Anti-imperialist” literature was discriminated from books propagating “general knowledge” with the exclusion of works supporting “imperialist ideology”. How these two features were related to each other and to the two sides of Nagani as an enterprise pursuing a specific policy and a “general” economic venture was not clarified.

Politics Based on a Combination of Knowledge and Science

The books advertised in “Rays of War” are a case in point. First, Hla Pe’s “Political Map of the Word” was introduced as a “book never been published in Myanmar”.² It contained information about politics and wanted to enhance the knowledge about politics of the readers. Ba Hein, the book’s editors, in his foreword expressed Nagani’s hope about the fruits of the dissemination of such information:

Political engagement cannot be based merely on goodwill. It is our ardent hope that political writers who are broad in scope and can provide constructive advice to the nation will emerge

¹ For the text, see below p. 69.

² See below, p. 24.

and the readers will extract points of essence from our publications, complied with foresight, and make use of them in the struggle for national liberation, after reading them analytically.¹

Here, an understanding of politics comes into sight which is similar to Aung San's point of view expressed in his essay "Many Kinds of Politics" published in early 1940.² According to Aung San, politics is based on science that is the principles of cause and effect as taught by the Buddha.³ Following Soe's interpretation of Socialism⁴ Aung San states that cause and effect are connected by the dialectical process of thesis, antithesis and synthesis.

Ba Hein in his foreword recalls a conversation with Soe taking place in prison. The latter deplores the lack of knowledge about the world on the part of the rural population. Soe suggests Ba Hein to write a book on world history and he himself one on "fundamental science". Being too busy with other books, they abandon the idea. Hla Pe's book, Ba Hein continues, is short of being the "world history" envisaged but a book of "great benefit" deserving special merit because it teaches how to read maps a skill which even most educated people in Burma are not familiar with.

In this perspective, the book advertised in Khin Khin Lay's booklet on the life of the British nurse like other Nagani books can be seen as modules in the great attempt to make the Burmese populace politically mature. Knowledge was needed and analytical insight into the laws governing the life of human beings throughout history.

As the enumeration of "The best four of Nagani" in Khin Khin Lay's first book illustrates the wide range of topics which could be regarded as useful to be known by the Burmese. There is Nu's translation on Dale Carnegie's world bestseller on how to become a successful and ethically sound businessman.⁵ Then there is the adaptation of a well known British novel highlighting the problems of industrialisation for the poor and the double moral standards in gender relations.⁶ The third book covers the history of man and was written for the grandchildren of the author.⁷ The last one is about the preconditions of a healthy and happy togetherness of married couples.⁸ The foreign models of

¹ Working Paper 13 of this series, p. 18.

² Aung San (1940) Many Kinds of Politics. *The Writings of General Aung San*. Compiled by Mya Han. Original Myanmar Text Translated into English by Retired Ambassador Thet Tun. Yangon, Universities Historical Research Centre (no year): 50-61.

³ Aung San 1940: pp. 51-52.

⁴ See Working Paper 10 of this series.

⁵ Dale Carnegie's book „How to Win Friends and Influence People“ was first published in October 1936.

⁶ Thomas Hardy's „Tess of the D'Urbervilles“ came out in 1891

⁷ Willem van Loon's "The Story of Mankind" was first published in 1921 and one year later was awarded a prize for outstanding children's literature.

⁸ The English model for Hla Shwe's „Husband and Wife“ could not yet been identified.

all these “best books” represent the mainstream of contemporary Western knowledge and were reprinted many times. Their contents are absolutely not revolutionary and needed “foresight” as well as analytical abilities in order to contribute to the goal of national liberation.

Khin Khin Lay, the Independent Writer cum Entrepreneur

The managers of the Nagani Book Club struggled with the task of making literature a tool in the service of gaining national independence. The British authorities used a Burmese writer to counter Burmese sympathies for the British enemy in the war, Nazi Germany. Writer Khin Khin Lay, having contact with both sides, represented another aspect of a writer’s role in society. It may be helpful to look into her memoirs and point out some characteristics of her self-image as a writer compared against Nagani’s attempt to combine political engagement, the dissemination of general knowledge both comprehensible for the broad public and economic survival.

Khin Khin Lay in her autobiography presents herself as a determined, independent minded and self-assured person who is striving for the success of her various activities as a writer, publisher and businesswoman. Her choice of Nagani as the printing agency of her novels was mainly motivated by the fact that she had bought some Nagani shares before. Besides, Nagani’s propagating of independence against the old guard of politicians who were regarded as selfish might have played a minor role. With regards to politics, she was shared the mainstream public opinion.

After having finished her business deal with Nagani, she cut ties with the company and concentrated on her own enterprise. It is interesting to note that she married Nagani’s manager Ohn Khin after divorcing her first husband. Ohn Khin left the Book Club after having conducted the deal of printing the two books with Khin Khin Lay. The manager under the name Mogyo had published the biography of José Rizal¹ and one of the three Nagani books on Sun Yat Sen. According to Maung Zeya, both books were actually written by Thakin Ba Thaung.² After the war, Ohn Khin became the owner of *Bamakhit* (Burmese era) newspaper established during the time of the Japanese occupation and printed at Dagon Khin Khin Lay’s printing press together with his wife and published another magazine called *Mogyo* (thunder).

These personal details may lead to the conclusion that Khin Khin Lay just used Nagani as a means to pursue her personal aims. Moreover, her impressive career as a writer cum entrepreneur may be regarded as representing the mainstream Burmese notion towards the literary business. The strong

¹ See Working Paper 7 of this series.

² See Working Paper 1.1 of this series, p. 64.

individual striving for personal independence through his literary talents might be typical and Nagani's attempt to organise a collective of writers for achieving the independence of the country can thus be seen as an exception of the rule.

Inconsistencies

Besides such complex issues as how to assess the relationship of literature, politics and economics in Burmese society the case of Khin Khin Lay's encounter with Nagani gives rise to discuss some details.

To begin with, in her autobiography Khin Khin Lay writes that "Rays of War" was based on "world-famous Florence Nightingale".¹ This is obviously wrong and causes the question why she used this name instead of the historic heroine of her book, Edith Cavell. The answer to this question might have some consequences on the assessment of the autobiography as a whole.

Other discrepancies related to the novel are about numbers. In her autobiography she informs about the size of the book, "only 80 pages" or 5 sheets à 16 pages. The published book, however, had just 47 pages plus one for advertising the "Political Map of the World") that is three sheets. Further, according to Khin Khin Lay's recollection, 50.000 issues of the booklet were printed. According to the records of the Judicial Department listing all printed books in Burma, however, the number was only 5.000. A corresponding inconsistency can be discovered in the numbers given for the second book printed by Nagani Press. According to Khin Khin Lay, it had 160 pages and 100.000 issues were printed, "the first ever largest amount of circulation". The list kept by the government gives the numbers of 108 pages and 50.000 copies respectively.²

All these discrepancies cannot fully be clarified but lead to the conclusion that Khin Khin Lay's autobiography might be regarded as a mixture of facts and fiction as her novels are. This assumption is substantiated by Kyaw Hoe's remark that the book telling the story of Edith Cavell "could not be found" but was known from the government's list.

Another point is the author's retrospective comparison with a Nagani book about Japanese atrocities in China, "Japanese Spy". The book being a translation of a publication of the Left Book Club came out first in March 1939 and was republished some months later. The translator, Ba Tin, later was killed by the Japanese during their occupation of Burma. Khin Khin Lay refers to this incident as an argument against those pre-war critics of her two books on Germany calling her "a lackey of the

¹ Below, p. 74.

² In her autobiography, Khin Khin Lay mentions a second pre-war edition of the book which is not mentioned in the official list.

British“. If Germany would have invaded Burma, she might have suffered the same fate as Ba Tin. Here, the author portrays herself as a clear- and far-sighted political analyst in Burma’s pre-war days a role which is not supported by her mainstream behaviour in those days and during the Japanese occupation.¹

About this Volume

Besides the bibliographical information provided by Kyaw Hoe’s thesis and two book reports, this volume contains some additional material. For an assessment of “Rays of War”, information about Edith Cavell’s biography is provided as well as two essays illuminating two aspects of how the life and death of the British nurse was perceived and used later. For Gordon Brown, the politician, she is a model reminding him to behave humbly, historian Peter van Alfen informs about the exploitation of the story in Belgium and other European countries. Both invite reflections on the veneration of heroes and heroines in Burmese history.

The last section reproduces the comment of Nagani’s manager after Nagani had printed the two books, the part of Khin Khin Lay’s autobiography dealing with the books and an article of the Myanmar Times on the occasion of the author’s 100th birthday.

As usual, further contributions to this volume are welcome. They will be included in later updates.

Hamburg, July 2010

¹ According to Khin Maung Zaw’s book report her printing press printed the state’s newspaper Bamakhit during the time of the Japanese occupation.

II. Material on *Rays of War*

1. Kyaw Hoe, Bibliographical Information

(Translation: Georg Noack)

35) Khin Khin Lay, Daw Dagon: The Rays of War. Yangon: Nagani, 1939 - 47 Pages

This is the writing of the “Life story of Miss E. Cavell”. Published on 27 November 1939 in 5000 copies sold for 2 annas each.

Though this book could not be found, we know about it from the list of books published by the government. Nagani hurriedly published many important propagandistic works for their country in the years 1939-40 just before the war. Booklets like this with less than 50 pages were published and distributed for free to the members of the club. But the club made them also available at very low prices to other persons so that everybody could afford to buy and read them.



Title Page, Reproduction

2. Aye Aye Myint, Critique of Dagon Khin Khin Lay's *Image of War*

(Translator: Richard Zatu)

Dagon Khin Khin Lay's 'Image of War' is a translation published by Nagani Publishing House. It was first published at the beginning of the Second World War. The reason why the author wrote the book was to expose the cruelties and atrocities of Nazi Germany. The Image of War had documented how the Germans who had occupied Belgium at the beginning of the First World War had inhumanly tortured the prisoners of war they had arrested. It also recorded how the English nurse Mrs Cavell who was in Belgium had humanly treated the sick and the wounded no matter whether they were friends or foes so that they could live on. In so doing she had even risked her own life.

Biography of the Writer

Dagon Khin Khin Lay was born on February 20, 1904 in Mandalay. Her father was U Myat Kyaw, Township Officer of Kyaukpadaung and her mother was Khin Khin Latt of Wetmasot. She came from noble family. She studied up to Anglo-Burmese 7th standard. She was taught the Myanmar customs and ancient Myanmar writings by her grandfather who was chief of Wetmasot. She began writing novels such as Nwe Nwe and the Alinyaung at the age of 12. She was the earliest woman novelist in Myanmar.

Beginning with 1920 she began writing articles in the Dagon magazine. She wrote under the pen name Ko Ko Lay about sorcery stories. Beginning in 1930 she wrote movie scripts for the A-1 Motion Picture Company. She established and headed the Pyidawset magazine in 1921 and Dagon Khin Khin Lay Publishing House and Taingbyo Pyibyo Printing Press from 1939 to 1940 and Yuwady Journal from 1947 to 1962. She was also one of the executive members of the writers' association. She wrote over 30 novels, 50 short stories, travelogues and numerous other articles. She also wrote an autobiography titled "Sixty Years" in 1961.

Some of the well-known novels of Dagon Khin Khin Lay were Sarsodaw (Writer), Ta Thet Hlya (One Life), Gon Myint Thu, (High Class), Gon Nient Thu (Low Class), Myaing Yan Pyaw (Rural Born) and Kaba Yanthu (Enemy of the World). She wrote the introduction to Yadanabon and Yadanabon Conclusion. She had been writing a series of articles in the Yuwady Journal and a special section in Yuwady until her death.

She died on June 23, 1981 in Yangon.

Gist of “Image of War”

It was 1914, the beginning of the First World War. Belgium, the country captured by the Germans, was in ruins as the result of the war. The worst part of the occupation was that all the people of Belgium were under the subjugation of the German military personnel and were downtrodden and afraid.

During that period, an English woman by the name of Mrs Cavell was living in that country although she had had the chance to go home to her native England at the beginning of the war. For one thing, she was unwilling to leave the nursing hospital she had founded and the wounded and suffering people. For another, she had come to love the people of Brussels. She had cared for with equal kindness all the suffering people that came to her hospital irrespective of races or whatever. After the Germans captured Brussels, she helped wholeheartedly the German soldiers with her nursing skills. The German military, on their part, had also come to respect her very much.

Mrs Cavell had a friend named Madam Rebec. Madam Rebec had, since settling in Brussels, honestly earned her livelihood and had even become prosperous by keeping a chicken farm and selling milk and cheese. Since the beginning of the First World War she had been delivering milk and cheese to the homes of English, Belgium and German military officers.

Mrs Cavell walked to the home of Madam Rebec on a certain morning full of dews. On arrival at the front yard she saw that the doors were strangely closed. Why? Because, although it was a bad wartime, it was so peaceful that it was not necessary to close one's doors. So Mrs Cavell anxiously pushed the closed door and entered into the room. The living room was unusually quiet. She became even more anxious and looked about other rooms. In one room she found Madam Rebec embracing her 18-year-old son Jack and listening attentively to what her son was telling her. Jack was in an agitated manner and his body was covered with wounds. According to him, he was a Belgian soldier who had a hairs' breath escape from the German hands and that the one who tried to escape with him had been wounded with German gunfire and stayed behind.

Mrs Cavell, as she wanted to help her friend, made some noises. When Madam Rebec knew that Mrs Cavell had arrived, she was even more worried for her son. She therefore requested Mrs Cavell who had some connection with German soldiers to leave the room. But Mrs Cavell told her friend that she was just a nurse who helped any class of people and that she was equally anxious just like her. Only then did the anxiety of Madam Rebec disappear. At that moment the German soldiers arrived at the front yard. Madam Rebec thought the soldiers came to arrest Jack. She was

so apprehensive she did not know what to do. But with the advice of Mrs Cavell, Madam Rebec faced the German soldiers with a poker face. Mrs Cavell had managed to take Jack with her through the back door to her hospital. The German soldiers came to Madam Rebec's house to stay there temporarily. But Madam Rebec knew that the soldiers were looking house to house for the three Belgian soldiers who escaped. As she was concerned she went to Mrs Cavell's hospital and told her about it. After that Jack was transferred to the underground room which was a safe house of the nursing hospital. Not long after that the German soldiers came to the hospital and inspected all the wards. Jack had just escaped again.

After the wounds on the body of Jack healed, both women decided to send Jack to a far away place so as to escape from the danger of German soldiers. Then they sought help from a boat owner who was the husband of their nursing friend. At first, the boatman refused as he was afraid of the Germans. But after his wife requested him he agreed to send Jack to the frontier areas. Afterwards, with the help of the same boat owner, Mrs Cavell secretly looked after the prisoners of war who escaped from the arrest and tortures of the German like Jack in her hospital. In this way the noble work of saving lives by Mrs Cavell remained safe and uninterrupted from the Germans.

Although the German military combed all of Brussels looking for the prisoners of war who escaped from them, they could not find the POWs and were irritated. In this respect, they began to suspect the English nurse Mrs Cavell and therefore entered her hospital and looked for them. But they only found some ordinary patients and German military patients and found no other evidences. In fact, Mrs Cavell's secret nursing room was underground the hospital and was disconnected with other wards of the hospital. The secret door to the secret room was covered with a large cabinet full of bottles of medicines. Mrs Cavell on her part believed that her nursing job was a just one, continued to do her work without being afraid risking all the dangers that could befall her.

One day, from the reports of German scouts in the border areas, the German military came to know that the prisoners of war who escaped from Brussels could be seen every now and then in the frontier areas. They, therefore, waited in the frontier areas for a man who was looked after and sent by Mrs Cavell. They found him and arrested him. By interrogating him, the German found out about the secret underground room of Mrs Cavell's. They came to know that criminals who ran away from the military were accepted and cared for and were sent to the border areas. Meanwhile, they also learnt the fact that a British military plane crashed in the suburban area of Brussels and that Mrs Cavell was looking after the pilot of the plane. In connection with this, to arrest the pilot

dead or alive, a young German major in the military arrived at the nursing hospital of Mr Cavell's. Then he went straight to the secret underground ward. He saw in his own eyes Mrs Cavell treating and caring for the seriously wounded British pilot. The German military officer sternly looked at Mrs Cavell with hateful eyes. Mrs Cavell just gave a glance at the German major and continued treating the wounded steadily without any sign of fear. The German military major, pitying the British pilot with about the same age as him, left the room.

Mrs Cavell looked after the British young man whenever she had the time. The young man also considered Mrs Cavell as a mother and a benefactor and was greatly attached to her. He came to respect and praise Mrs Cavell's noble mentality and the risks she had taken bravely.

The German military personnel, who were not satisfied for having seen a crashed plane and some blood and not find the man, arrived back at Mrs Cavell's hospital for the second time. Mrs Cavell was anxious for the patient as she thought that this time he was not going to escape arrest as in the previous time. So, while the German soldiers were searching, Mrs Cavell sent a signal by shouting her speech to the young British soldier so that he could run away. After that the German soldiers entered the secret room and searched. Only after they came out from the secret room without finding the pilot that Mrs Cavell breathed a sigh of relief. Then a gun fire was heard from the back of the hospital. Then the German soldiers dragged the British young man along. He could not stand properly as he was wounded on the leg with gun shots. Mrs Cavell was deeply hurt because her efforts to save him came to nothing. She was anxious for the life of the young man than for her own. She hugged the young man who was already wounded at many places. Disregarding the beatings and the preventions of the German military police, she earnestly begged for the release of the young man. At last Mrs Cavell fell down on the concrete floor as the result of the beatings and pushing of the German soldiers.

Then Mrs Cavell and the young man were sent to prison. In the prison she tore her own clothes with which she wrapped the wounds of the young man. The arrest of Mrs Cavell who had not only earned the love and respect of the people of Brussels but of the German military officers spread throughout the city. The people of Brussels who were very afraid of the Germans began to criticize the Germans as being unfair as regards to this affair. The military governor ruling Brussels was also deeply concerned with the matter. Mr Robson, secretary of the American government, also protested that a person who was honest and upright and kind to people irrespective of races like Mrs Cavell should not be arrested.

In prison Mrs Cavell looked after the English soldier so that his wounds would soon heal without even caring about her own dangers. She was grief-stricken with the terrible fate of the little soldier. She always tried to protect him from the cruelty and brutality of the German soldiers in the jail. Later, the German military officers brought Mrs Cavell and the English soldiers to court for trial. In the court, Mrs Cavell said with dignity and without fear that it was her duty to look after all the suffering people who came to her and that it was with her wishes to save all the suffering people no matter whether they were friends or foes with her nursing skills that she had chosen to be a nurse and that she had already cared for more than 200 prisoners of war. The German military tribunal decided to punish Mrs Cavell in the most lenient way of the military law -- to death. The young military pilot was also sentenced to death so that he would no longer suffer too much pain much longer. It was the most civil and sympathetic way of the German people.

Since Mrs Cavell had already foreseen her future, she was not in the least afraid. She believed that compared to her single life it was worth all the lives of the suffering people she had saved. The next day she was taken out from the jail for execution. When she arrived at the place of execution, the English soldier could hardly stand up because he was suffering so much that he was about to die. The German military officer ordered that the young man's two hands be pierced with two spears and pinned on the wall so that he could be in a standing position. Mrs Cavell could not stand it and embraced the young man to her body so that the young man could stand. The execution time was close. Mrs Cavell was gazing without a wink as a way of the last farewell to Brussels where she had worked and lived for many many years and to the nursing hospital that belonged to her and to all the patients that she had cared for and would leave behind. Then the simultaneous reports of gun fires were heard and Mrs Cavell and the young military pilot fell down together on top of the other. It could only be seen unclearly amidst gun smokes.

Meanwhile, people of Brussels who were in a ward of the hospital that Mrs Cavell had set up were holding a prayer service silently to mourn the death of Mrs Cavell who, like a mother, had kindly cared for them. At the same time, the German military patients that Mrs Cavell had treated free of charge did not care about the gun shots that killed Mr Cavell and were having a good time drinking and enjoying themselves inside another ward of the hospital.

Evaluation

Dagon Khin Khin Lay's *Image of War* is a book that tells the cruelty and atrocities of Nazi Germany. It is also a book that documents the attitude of fascist Germans who occupied Belgium at the beginning of the First World War and some of the things they did at that time.

The book clearly portrays the mentality and conviction of Mrs Cavell, an English nurse who was in Belgium at the beginning of the First World War. It also partly reflects the nature of the nursing job, the attitude nurses should adopt and the duties of nurses that usually related to world wars. Although Mrs Cavell was an English woman, she had no allegiance to any races or regions. She buried herself heart and soul with a firm belief in her nursing job. She ought to be one of the role models in the history of nursing. Although she had the chance to go back to her native England at the beginning of the First World War, she had chosen to stay and carry on her nursing work based in Belgium.

From a private nursing business, she managed to establish a nursing hospital. She earned the trust and respect of the people of Brussels. Before the outbreak of the First World War, she treated the English, French and German people living in Belgium with equal care. Even after the capture by German of Belgium, she earned the trust and respect of the German military officers because of her innocent nursing spirit. Mrs Cavell, in carrying out her nursing work, did not engage in discrimination against any body because of their political, social, economic and racial backgrounds or skin colours. She had treated whoever was suffering with the noble conviction that she had to save them. But during the war and during the height of racial hatred and cruelty, the innocent and kind-hearted nurse had sacrificed her life for the benefit of the people so that the next generation of the people of the world would gain new insights.

Mrs Cavell had full nursing spirits. She had treated and cared especially for those who were suffering from diseases and who were seriously wounded in battles without discriminating against friends or foes. She only thought of their freedoms and well-beings. In doing this she did not care about the danger that could befall her. The first person she had saved was Jack, the son of her friend Madam Rebec. Jack was a German prisoner of war who had escaped. The German military had followed him. As a result of her common sense and her spirit of sacrifice and risk taking, she had not only managed to help him escape from the German soldiers but also treated the wounds Jack had sustained at her secret hospital ward. Moreover, she had sent him to the remote frontier areas. Similarly she had also treated and looked after other people who had run away from being

German prisoners of war and sent them to the border areas. Mrs Cavell did not work for political, racial or monetary reasons. She had done her nursing work exceedingly well with a noble attitude as a nurse should.

The nursing spirit dwelling in Mrs Cavell's heart was very rare. She was a very noble and sympathetic human being who helped and cared for any suffering people during the war with no thought of her well-beings.

The spirit of Mrs Cavell who had helped and cared for the English air force pilot sacrificing her own life was difficult to possess by every nurse. It was indeed a noble and correct attitude.

The account in Image of War translated by Dagon Khin Khin Lay was a comparison of the war which was violent and brutal and the nursing job that was tender and delicate. It was also the revelation of the cruelty and atrocities of Fascist Germany. Since the book 'Image of War' was published at the beginning of the Second World War, the author had managed to instill political awareness in the Myanmar people of that era about the imperialism and warmongering spirit of the Nazi Germany led by Hitler who captured weak and small countries and had tried to rule the world. Moreover, one could know about a nurse like Mrs Cavell who should be a role model for the world.

3. Translation of the Book's Final Pages¹

Remarks

All this was the traditional mentality of the Germans at the time of King Kaiser in 1914. Most of the Germans these days would be much worse at a time when Hitler, the rash and greedy dictator, is wreaking havoc on the world. Germany with lawless behaviour went on occupying small nations that were leading independent life, finally targeting Poland. It was much like the wolf relishing the meat of a lamb. Ruthlessness and selfishness of Hitler have gone so far that even certain Nazi members and the German people have had to suffer. Under such circumstances, there have broken out uprisings and riots among the Germans time and again. Some of them are feeling so bitter that they would kill on sight Hitler, the god of Nazis, wielding his influence throughout the nation. Even the patriotic Germans themselves cannot stand the atrocities of the dictator. The peoples of other nations eager to win back their freedom would disgust the Germans as if they are the ogres never hesitant to suck blood and eat the flesh of the people.

Dagon Khin Khin Lay

Written by Dagon Khin Khin Lay

Shwe Sun Nyo, the novel to be published soon

The following short stories will also be in circulation soon.

- 1) The enemy of the world
- 2) The dancer
- 3) The storm

Will be available at the agents in every town.

¹ Pp. 46-47.

4. Ute Köster, Commentary on Aye Aye Myint's Book Report

Dear Daw Aye Aye Myint,

thank you very much for your review of the book „Image of War“ by Dagon Khin Khin Lay. In my opinion, it is very interesting to see how Nazi Germany, which is a very emotional time in German history and still a very sensitive issue in Germany, is perceived by non-Germans. In order to avoid the same mistakes in the future, this issue is being discussed a lot in our society.

I was asked to have a look at your review and write down unclear aspects and questions that come to my mind.

All in all, I like your review a lot and your description of the content is very detailed.

But I think there are two problems visible for the reader throughout the review. First of all, you use the words “fascist” and “Nazi” in the context of the First World War. But fascism as mass movement didn't occur in Germany before the late 1920s. Second, you don't seem to be aware of (or you don't mention) the fact that the British used the author for their own advantage and their propaganda. I will try to make my point of view a bit clearer with a few examples:

- a) You say „the reason why the author wrote the book was to expose the cruelties and atrocities of Nazi Germany“. In this sentence you find both mistakes mentioned above: a. The plot of the book is set in the year 1919 in the beginning of the First World War. How can it relate to the cruelties of the Nazi Germany, which started with Adolf Hitler in 1933? For us, very sensitized Germans, this sounds like an equalization of the Germans with the Nazis. This might need some further explanation. b. Reading the biography of the author, it becomes quite clear that the book was written for exactly the aim that you mentioned. But it is also obvious that this aim was the aim of the British governors, not only to inform the Burmese public about the Nazis, but also try to enhance their prestige in the Burmese society. This background should have been made clear in the beginning of the book review, in order to provide a more objective insight into the book. This information sets the book into a completely different context and is very important for understanding the Burmese colonial history and the colonial politics.
- b) In the evaluation, the mistake of the seeming equalization comes up again. You say: „...attitude of fascist Germans who occupied Belgium at the beginning of the First World War.“ When we talk about fascist Germany, we talk about Nazi Germany with Hitler as its

leader from 1933 onwards. Again, the sensitive German reader would feel attacked by an equalization of Fascists, Nazis and the Germans in general.

- c) In the last paragraph you claim that the author managed to instill political awareness about Nazi Germany. The question is, why did the author want to instill political awareness? The answer is clearly mentioned in the autobiography of the author: it served the propaganda of the British colonialists, trying to show that the enemies of Burma at that time, the British, are better than the Germans. Without doubting the cruelties of the Germans under the Nazi regime, the historical and political frames have to be considered, so as to obtain an objective opinion about what happened, to be aware of different political aims of different countries, to have the full picture of history.

The story is in a way a very moralistic story and shows what is really important in life. Since wars continue in the world, it is still up to date, making it very important to inform about wrong systems and to discuss such issues – both nationally and internationally.

Thank you very much for your contribution to this very important issue.

I am very thankful to have had the chance to be part of a project establishing a scientific dialogue between Myanmar and Germany. Furthermore I hope that my comments are useful for you and I would be happy to receive your answer and carry on with the dialogue.

With warm regards and best wishes,

Ute Köster
Essen, 14th of July

5. Translation of the Information on the Book's Back Cover

a) Inside

The World Political Map

The Nagani selection published in December 1939

- A kind of book never been published in Myanmar before
- Referring to a world famous book with 42 maps, Thakin Hla Pe has compiled it with the introduction of Ko Ba Hein to enable Myanmar public to easily understand the world politics
- A hand book for everybody interested in politics around the world
- Will find it hard to understand the causes of war news in their perspective just reading the newspapers
- With the World Political Map in hand you'll understand the whys and wherefores

b) Outside

Nagani – no political association

It is a book association disseminating knowledge by translating world famous fine books and distributing the translated works at low prices.

Nagani is a book association

Nagani books are read by all - starting from the prime minister down to the commissioners, officers, clerks and rural folks.

The best four of Nagani

1. How to win friends and influence people (Translated by Thakin Nu)
2. Pan Tha Ma Sar Oo (A translation of Thakin Ba Thoung)
3. Mankind (Translation of sections from the World History by Zeya)
4. Lasting relationship between man and wife (Translated by student leader Ko Hla Shwe)

6. Biography of Edith Cavell from Wikipedia¹

Edith Cavell (pronounced /kævəl/; rhymes with 'gravel') was born in Swardeston, a village near Norwich, where her father, the Reverend Frederick Cavell, was priest for 45 years. After a period as a governess, including for a family in Brussels 1900 -1905, she trained as a nurse at the Royal London Hospital under Matron Eva Luckes. In 1907, Cavell was recruited by Dr. Antoine Depage to be matron of a newly established nursing school by the name of L'École Belge d'Infirmières Diplômées on the Rue de la Culture in Brussels. By 1910, "Miss Cavell 'felt that the profession of nursing had gained sufficient foothold in Belgium to warrant the publishing of a professional journal,' and therefore launched the nursing journal, *L'infirmière*. A year later, she was a training nurse for three hospitals, 24 schools, and 13 kindergartens in Belgium.

When World War I broke out, she was visiting her widowed mother in Norfolk. She returned to Brussels where her clinic and nursing school were taken over by the Red Cross.

In the autumn of 1914, after the German occupation of Brussels, Cavell began sheltering British soldiers and funnelling them out of occupied Belgium to neutral Holland. In the following months, an underground organisation developed, allowing her to guide some 200 Allied soldiers to safety, which placed Cavell in violation of German military law. German authorities became increasingly suspicious of the nurse's actions, which were reinforced by Cavell's own disregard and outspokenness.

She was arrested on 3 August 1915 and charged with harbouring Allied soldiers. She was held in St Gilles prison for 10 weeks, the last two in solitary confinement, and court-martialled.

The British government said they could do nothing to help her. Sir Horace Rowland of the Foreign Office said, "I am afraid that it is likely to go hard with Miss Cavell; I am afraid we are powerless." The sentiment was echoed by Lord Robert Cecil, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs. "Any representation by us", he advised, "will do her more harm than good." The United States, which had not yet joined the war, did not agree. Hugh S. Gibson, First Secretary of the American legation at Brussels, made clear to the German government that executing Cavell would further harm their nation's already damaged reputation.

The German civil governor, Baron von der Lancken, is known to have stated that Cavell should be pardoned because of her complete honesty and because she had helped save so many lives, German

¹ Without footnotes (editor's note).

as well as Allied. However, the German military acted quickly to execute Cavell to deny higher authorities the opportunity to consider clemency.

She was not arrested for espionage as many were led to believe, but for treason.^[9] Of the 27 put on trial, Cavell and four others were condemned to death, among them Philippe Baucq, an architect in his thirties who was also instrumental in the escapes. Evidence has recently emerged that Cavell was in fact a spy working for the British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), but her espionage role was compromised by her helping of prisoners to escape.

When in custody, Cavell was asked questions in French, with transcripts made in German. This process gave the inquisitor the opportunity to misinterpret her answers. Although she may have been misrepresented, she made no attempt to defend herself. Cavell was provided with a defender approved by the German military governor. A previous defender, who was chosen for Cavell by her assistant, Elizabeth Wilkins, was ultimately denied by the governor. The night before her execution, she told the Reverend Stirling Gahan, the Anglican chaplain who had been allowed to see her and to give her Holy Communion, "Patriotism is not enough, I must have no hatred or bitterness towards anyone." These words are inscribed on her statue in St Martin's Place, near Trafalgar Square in London. Her final words to the German Lutheran prison chaplain, Paul Le Seur, were recorded as, "Ask Father Gahan to tell my loved ones later on that my soul, as I believe, is safe, and that I am glad to die for my country."

Despite efforts by American minister Brand Whitlock and the Marquis de Villalobar, the Spanish minister to Belgium, on Cavell's behalf, on 11 October, Baron Von Der Lancken allowed the execution to proceed. Sixteen men, composed of two firing squads, carried out her sentence along with four Belgian men at Tir National shooting range in Schaerbeek, at 6 am on 12 October 1915. There are conflicting reports of the details of Cavell's execution. However, according to the eyewitness account of the Reverend Le Seur, who attended Cavell in her final hours, eight soldiers fired at Cavell while the other eight executed Philippe Baucq.

There is also a dispute over the sentencing imposed under German Military Code. Supposedly, the death penalty equivalent to the offence committed by Cavell was not officially declared until a few hours after her death.

With instructions from the Spanish minister, Belgian women immediately buried her body next to St. Gilles Prison. After the war, her body was taken back to Britain for a memorial service at Westminster Abbey and again transferred to Norwich, to be laid to rest at Life's Green.

7. Gordon Brown on: "The Heroine who humbled me"¹

*A new book by Britain's Prime Minister Gordon Brown salutes those who have inspired him. In the publication **Courage: Eight Portraits**, he tells the extraordinary story of Edith Cavell, the British nurse, who faced a German firing squad for saving hundreds of First World War soldiers.*

Early in the morning of October 12, 1915, nurse Edith Cavell was driven to the Tir Nationale execution site in occupied Belgium, where a firing squad awaited her.

She faced death as she had faced life, telling the vicar who visited her on the eve of her execution: "I have seen death so often that it is not strange or fearful to me."

In her last solitary moments in her cell, she wrote to her beloved fellow nurses at the hospital where she had saved countless Allied soldiers by hiding them from the Germans.

"I have told you that devotion will give you real happiness, and the thought that you have done, before God and yourselves, your whole duty and with a good heart will be your greatest support in the hard moments of life and in the face of death."

At 2am, the command to fire was given and Edith Cavell was shot dead. In the minutes before her death, she once more showed the courage that defined her every act, and forgave her executioners.

Her courage was not simply a matter of perseverance, of making the best of difficult circumstances from which she could not escape.

She had choices and options throughout her life. But she had a strong sense of duty - a dedication to relieving the suffering of those in their darkest hour.

Sir Winston Churchill said: "Courage is the first of human qualities because it is the quality which guarantees all others."

In the midst of war, this courageous woman's devotion to helping the sick and injured expanded to caring for the hunted and endangered.

Miss Cavell, matron of the Berkendael Institute in Brussels, became Edith Cavell, rescuer and saviour of scores of Allied soldiers behind enemy lines.

The road that led from the English country vicarage where she was born in 1865 to her place of execution in Belgium 50 years later was a long and indirect one.

Her early life in the village of Swardeston in Norfolk was framed by a sense of duty, with the family taking a portion of their Sunday dinner to share with impoverished local families.

From an early age, when confronted with unsatisfied need, Edith chose the course of action over inaction.

As a young woman, she wrote to a cousin: "Some day, somehow, I am going to do something

¹ http://www.nightingaledeclaration.net/history/edith_cavell/

useful. I don't know what it will be. I only know that it will be something for people. They are, most of them, so helpless, so hurt and so unhappy."

At the age of 20, she began work as a governess. In 1888, she inherited a small legacy, which she used to travel to the Continent.

She discovered the Bavaria Free Hospital, where she was apparently known as 'The English Angel'.

It seems this was the beginning of Edith's interest in nursing, and she is said to have given part of her inheritance to the hospital so that it could buy surgical instruments.

Receiving news that her father was seriously ill, she returned to Swardeston to tend to him. When he recovered, she applied to train as a nurse at the Fountains Fever Hospital in London.

What led to her decision is not recorded -training would take many years and she would be in her mid-30s before she could fully practise.

The conditions would be a stark contrast to her work as a governess, with exhausting hours, surrounded by injury, sickness, disease and death. But Edith was undaunted.

She trained under Eva Luckes, a matron who was influenced by Florence Nightingale, and who strove to maintain the newly acquired professional status of nursing.

Edith was clearly ambitious, and restless. But her letters to friends point towards an ambition not motivated by self-advancement, but rather by a knowledge of her capacity to help others.

In 1907, she was presented with the opportunity she craved. Dr Antoine Depage, one of the most respected surgeons in Europe at the time, was looking for a matron to run the Berkendael Institute, a progressive new teaching hospital on the outskirts of Brussels.

In Belgium, nursing still lacked respectability, and the duties of nurses were performed by nuns or lay women who had no other means of income - neither group being medically trained or much concerned with hygiene.

The magnitude of the task Edith had accepted was immense. "I arrived two days ago and found the four houses in much confusion," she wrote in September 1907.

"No servants and nothing furnished but my sitting room! And we have to open on October 1!"

Like Florence Nightingale, Edith had the vision of a pioneer. She explained in the Nursing Mirror what she was trying to achieve.

"The probationers wear blue dresses with white aprons and white collars. The contrast which they present to the nuns, in their heavy stiff robes, and to the lay nurses, in their grimy apparel, is the contrast of the unhygienic past with the enlightened present."

Her courage at taking on such a role - so great an opportunity, but so great a risk of failure - was part of the pattern in her life of action aligned to conviction.

For now, it would help revolutionise nursing in Belgium. Later, it would save hundreds from certain imprisonment and likely death.

For eight years under Edith's direction, the institute fought to earn itself a respectable reputation.

When Queen Elisabeth of Belgium broke her arm, she sent for a trained nurse from the Berkendael.

When news of the outbreak of war came, Edith was in Britain visiting her recently widowed mother. She decided to cut short her visit and return to the institute.

Travel was chaotic, with ports and railway stations almost overwhelmed with panic-stricken people rushing to reach home and safety.

Edith travelled against the current, leaving the shelter and protection of her home for a more dangerous and uncertain future, tending the victim's war would inevitably bring to her hospital.

She was never to return home or see her family again. Britain declared war against Germany on August 4, 1914. Shortly afterwards, Edith and her staff watched the German army enter Brussels.

One of the nurses, Jacqueline van Til, recorded: "I shall never forget the evening before the Prussians entered. We went up to the roof of the clinic and saw the sky towards the East fiery red, while clouds of thick black smoke rolled in our direction. The thunder of the guns was so great that windows were broken round us.

"We were all trembling with fear, and Madame found me sitting weeping. She peered into my face with that powerful gaze of hers, with something mild in it, yet full of firm reproach, and bade me not to give way to my feelings, telling me that my life no longer belonged to myself alone, but also to my duty as a nurse."

A letter Edith wrote to her family in anticipation of the impending occupation shows her great fortitude in the face of terror: "My darling mother and family, if you open this, it will be because that which we fear has now happened, and Brussels has fallen into the hands of the enemy.

"They are very near now and it is doubtful if the Allied armies can stop them. We are prepared for the worse. I shall think of you to the last, and you may be sure we shall do our duty here and die as women of our race should die. God bless you and keep you safe."

As the enemy occupation began, the Berkendael Institute was turned into a Red Cross hospital. Edith instructed her nurses that their first duty was to help the wounded, no matter which army they came from.

Refugees were flooding into Brussels from the fighting. Edith and her nurses gathered clothes and food for them. Among their number were Belgian and other Allied soldiers who had escaped German imprisonment and who needed to be disguised as civilians if they were to have any hope of survival.

The Battle of Mons ensued, in which the British Expeditionary Force was heavily outnumbered and began a fighting withdrawal. In the confusion, soldiers were cut off from their units.

The Germans posted notices warning that Allied soldiers who did not give themselves up would be shot - likewise those who harboured them.

Two wounded British soldiers who had managed to evade capture were passed from safe houses to a convent, and then directed to Edith. She told her assistant matron to give the fugitives beds in the surgical house, and eventually they made a run for the border, escaping to Holland.

Thus began Edith's introduction to the underground movement in the autumn of 1914.

The network would develop into a reasonably sophisticated, audacious and effective resistance operation, working under extremely dangerous conditions.

From the arrival of the first two soldiers until her arrest the following July, she would help as many as 200 people to escape.

Many fugitives arrived wounded and in need of care. Others were Belgian and French civilians who wanted to escape in order to join the Allied forces.

The 'confession' Edith signed in prison describes her role in the operation.

"At first, I hid the Englishmen, sometimes for a fortnight or three weeks in my house, as I was not sufficiently familiar with the means of transport on the roads which they should follow to the frontier.

"Later, guides were put at my disposal. I concealed the men brought to me until favourable opportunity arose for their departure."

Edith asked some British soldiers to write to her family once they reached safety, to let her mother know she was alive. They told of the extraordinary efforts she went to on their behalf, supplying money and securing false documents.

She never refused help to anyone in need, even after the Germans' suspicions had been aroused and her own life was at risk, saying: "Nothing but physical impossibility, lack of space and money would make me close my doors to Allied refugees."

What special quality did Edith Cavell possess that numbered her among those who act when roused to anger, pity or empathy in the face of injustice or suffering?

What was it that opened her eyes to suffering? And what inspired her to do something about it with a resourcefulness and energy that changed the course of many lives?

By June 1915, the activities of the local resistance movement were under closer German scrutiny. Around that time, two soldiers presented themselves to the institute, one of whom was Georges Gaston Quien.

It is thought that he was an agent for the Germans and that he provided the information that led to Edith's arrest.

On August 5, German officers arrived for Edith. She was interviewed at length and eventually put her name to a statement confessing her guilt, so signing her own death warrant.

She was allowed to write a letter to her close friend, Grace Jemmett: "My dearest Gracie. Tell everybody that I am quite all right here. If Jackie [her dog] is sad, tell him I will be back soon. Don't - don't worry. We must hope for the best. Tell them all to go on as usual."

She sent business-like letters to her assistant matron, focusing on the work of the hospital. She asked for a few specific belongings to be brought to her, including the Bible and a beloved devotional work, Thomas a Kempis' *The Imitation Of Christ*. She also requested the clothes she would wear for her trial and execution.

She wrote to her nurses: "In everything, one can learn new lessons of life, and if you were in my place, you would realise how precious liberty is, and would certainly undertake never to abuse it.

"To be a good nurse, one must have lots of patience - here, one learns to have that quality, I assure you. Au revoir, be really good. Your devoted Matron."

After ten weeks in prison, Edith was court-martialled along with her collaborators on October 7 and 8, 1915. She did not deny her role in helping Allied soldiers and, for this, the prosecution demanded death. Three excruciating days passed between the end of the trial and formal sentencing.

After being sentenced to death, she turned to the Bible. In the Book Of Revelation, she marked one passage strongly, dating it October 11. It was to be the last day of her life.

It reads: "I indeed labour in the sweat of my brows. I am racked with grief of heart, I am burdened with sins, I am troubled with temptations; I am entangled and oppressed with many evil passions; and there is none to help me, none to deliver and save me, but thou, O Lord God my Saviour, to whom I commit myself and all that is mine, that thou mayest keep watch over me, and bring me safe to life everlasting."

She also turned to passages in *The Imitation Of Christ*, highlighting: "How happy and prudent is he who tries now in life to be what he wants to be found in death. Perfect contempt of the world, a lively desire to advance in virtue, a love for discipline, selfdenial and the endurance of every hardship for the love of Christ, these will give a man great expectations of a happy death."

On her last evening, just hours before she was led to her death, Edith was visited by the English chaplain, Stirling Gahan, whose church she regularly attended in Brussels.

He later recalled their final hour: "She presented herself at her cell door as calm as ever, just as I had know her when last at liberty.

"When we were alone, she began quietly to speak of things which concerned her most as one who saw the nearness of eternity.

"Then she assured me, in answer to my questions, that she trusted in the finished work of Christ for her soul's salvation and was fully at rest."

She then added that she 'wished all her friends to know that she willingly gave her life for her country' and said: "I have no fear or shrinking. I have seen death so often that it is not strange or fearful to me.

"I thank God for this ten-week quiet before the end. Life has always been hurried and full of difficulty. This time of rest has been a great mercy. They have all been very kind to me here.

"But this I would say, standing as I do in view of God and eternity: I realise that patriotism is not enough; I must have no hatred or bitterness towards anyone."

8. Peter van Alfen, *The Meaning of a Memory: The Case of Edith Cavell and the Lusitania in Post-World War I Belgium* (extracts)¹

In 1919, the Commission de l'Ecole belge d'infirmières diplômées commissioned the sculptor Armand Bonnetain to produce a medal (Fig. 1) commemorating its former director and treasurer, the Englishwoman Edith Cavell and Belgian Marie Depage, respectively. Bonnetain's jugate busts of the two nurses remains one of his most accomplished works, balancing portrait realism with idealism and evoking through their taut faces an elevated sense of emotion that finds its expression in a simple imperative on the reverse: "1915 / Remember!" For us, the timeless reader, now nearly ninety years removed from the events, the voice of the imperative has weakened; it stirs only a sense that the memory is, in fact, lost, and that the medal has become unmemorable except for its artistic qualities.



Fig. 1. Belgium. AE medal by Armand Bonnetain of Edith Cavell and Marie Depage, 1919.

To the viewer in 1919, however, living within the context of immediate post-World War I Belgium, the reaction there to the Versailles Treaty negotiations, and having the modes of Allied propaganda still fresh in one's mind, this medal would stir a host of forceful memories and thoughts. What the medal commanded the viewer to remember went far beyond the two nurses and the acts of the Germans who caused their deaths; it included the contemporary claim to this memory and its use as a political tool.

Edith Cavell and Marie Depage

When the Germans invaded Belgium in the opening days of World War I, Cavell and Depage were heading the medical school that Depage's husband, the famed Dr. Antoine Depage, had founded in Brussels in 1907. With the war came the growing medical crisis of attending to wounded soldiers, which pressed Dr. Depage to leave his wife to go south beyond the eventual front lines in order to establish a hospital in the Ocean Hotel at La Panne. Marie joined him there two months later, while Cavell willingly stayed on in occupied Brussels to run the Berkendael Medical Institute for the Red

¹ <http://ansmagazine.com/Spring06/Cavell>

Cross. Once in La Panne, and aware of the critically short supply of money and provisions for their hospital, Marie volunteered to go to the United States on a fundraising tour. Throughout the winter and early spring of 1914-15, she traveled west to San Francisco and up and down the east coast, eventually netting over \$100,000 and many donated supplies for Belgian Red Cross hospitals

Encouraged by this fundraising success, she had no immediate plans to return, until, in late April, she received word that her younger son was to be sent to the battlefields to join his brother. Anxious to see her son before he faced near-certain death, she booked a passage from New York to Liverpool on the swiftest liner afloat, Cunard's famed *Lusitania*. On May 7, a week after leaving New York, the ship was torpedoed by the German submarine U-20, a dozen miles off the southern Irish coast. Marie Depage drowned along with nearly 1,200 other passengers.

The worldwide response to the sinking was so loud that there can be no question that Cavell, still in Brussels, heard of the *Lusitania*'s fate, but whether she ever learned that her colleague and friend Marie was a passenger is not known. Three months later, on August 5, the Germans arrested Cavell for treason and a subsequent court martial sentenced her to death for assisting in the escape of nearly two hundred Allied prisoners of war, a crime to which she confessed. Despite protests from the Spanish and American ambassadors in Brussels, the fifty-year-old nurse faced the firing squad the morning of October 12, 1915. What exactly transpired has been lost in legend: one soldier protested and refused to shoot the woman, and so was executed for insubordination; moments before the final shots were fired, Cavell fainted and lay unscathed on the ground until the officer present dispatched her with his pistol ([Fig. 3](#)). Whatever the actual events, by break of dawn Cavell was dead, and by evening her body was wrapped in newspaper and buried alongside other victims of the firing squad.

There is little debate today that the Germans were technically justified in executing Cavell for treason and in sinking the *Lusitania* as a belligerent blockade runner. In the case of the *Lusitania*, the Germans had countered the British blockade of their ports with a submarine blockade of British ports; the British in turn responded by arming several merchant ships (sometimes deceptively under neutral flags such as the United States') and issuing orders to all merchant captains to ram submarines when possible, all in violation of the received law of the sea. Thus there was little incentive for German U-boat captains to be chivalrous or spare British liners. Moreover, the *Lusitania*, like many blockade runners, was ferrying military contraband: 4.2 million Remington .303 rifle cartridges, 1,250 cases of (empty) shrapnel shells, and eighteen cases of fuses.

Although technically justified in their actions, the captain of U-20, Walther Schwieger, and the Brussels court martial blundered horribly by sinking the *Lusitania* and ordering Cavell's execution, since the events became two of the most successful focal points for Allied anti-German propaganda, and as such were often linked with each other to further enhance the effect. There was little the Germans could do to counter this; in the propaganda wars, they remained decisively on the defensive.

Atrocity Propaganda

Part of the reason why the Cavell-*Lusitania* propaganda was so effective was due to the emotional groundwork laid by reports of German atrocities filtering out of Belgium shortly after the August 1914 invasion began. The Germans invaded Belgium fully expecting to encounter a *franc-tireur* (literally, "free-shooter") People's Army, as they had in France over forty years earlier. The

obsession with the idea of a civilian resistance meant that advancing and occupying troops believed that old men and young girls everywhere were taking potshots at them from rooftops and from behind walls. The German response to unexplained shots (which often as it turned out were fired by nearby Allied or even German troops) was swift and brutal: scores of villagers would be executed for the purported actions of a few and their houses looted and burned. In Louvain, on August 25, 1914, drunk German soldiers touched off a raging reprisal against such unexplained shots, which resulted in the near destruction of the city, including the killing of 248 citizens and the burning of the university's library, with its esteemed collection of medieval manuscripts.

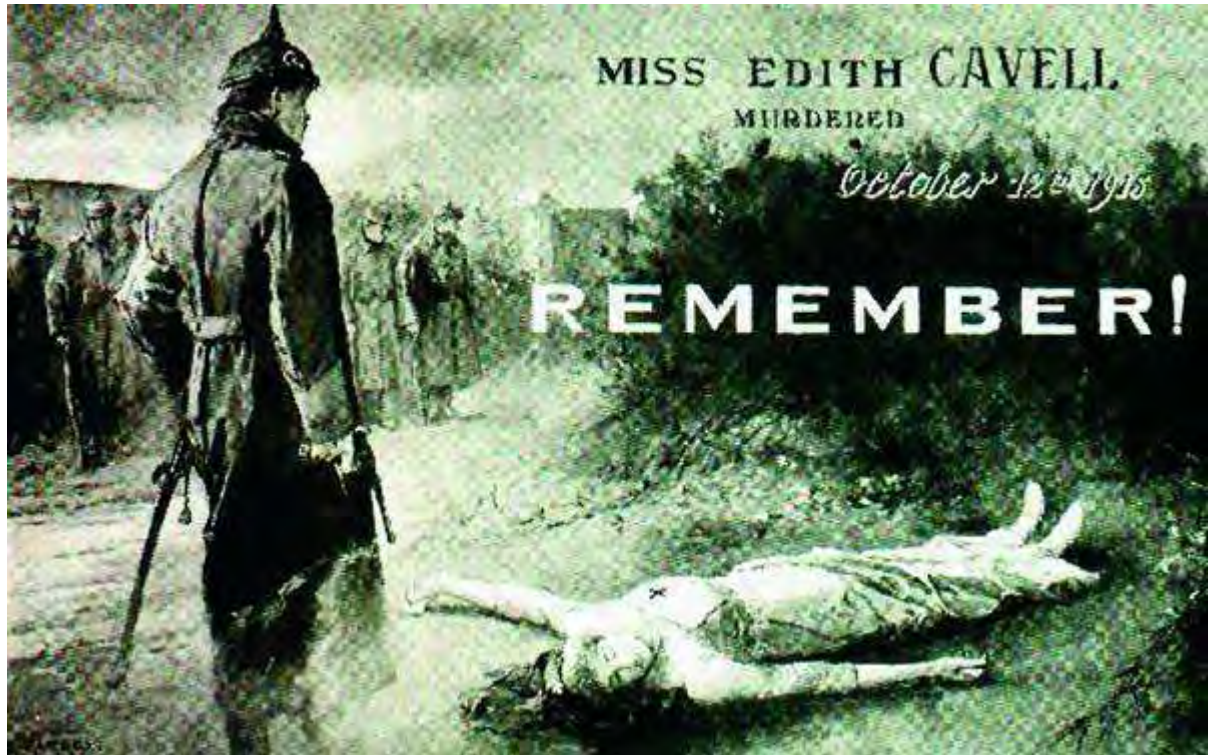


Fig. 2: British postcard, c. 1916, depicting the execution of Edith Cavell.

The actual deeds of the troops were bad enough, but as the stories circulated, reality merged with invention: The Germans became more and more dehumanized, their actions more and more revolting, with particular emphasis on acts committed against women and children. Stories of troops raping and mutilating women and girls in front of their families were sickening, but even those paled in comparison to ones describing the fates of young children: laughing Germans skewered babes with bayonets or maliciously let them live after chopping off their hands. There were documented cases of rape, but none has ever surfaced regarding the reported abuse of children.

Seizing on these stories, Allied propagandists soon began depicting the invasion of Belgium in a pointedly gendered fashion: the violation of women and Belgium were elided. This use of highly sexualized - at times almost pornographic (Fig. 2) - images and words was intended to create moral imperatives, to elicit from British, French, and, eventually, American men an unquestioning desire to join the fight in order to protect their own women, children, and by extension, country from the monstrous Hun. The atrocity stories also made it that much easier for propagandists to reduce the Germans to caricatures of German-ness. Propagandists not only resurrected images of Germanic barbarians from a long-dead age but also parodied the more recent concept of *Kultur* (culture), which, as a nation-building tool following the creation of the German state in 1870, emphasized the

linguistic and cultural particularity of the German people. A personified “Kultur,” the embodiment of perceived Prussian ferocity, was a frequent character in Allied propaganda, as was Kaiser Wilhelm II remade as Attila. Paul Manship’s medal (Fig. 4) is a typical example of these efforts, combining a gendered perspective and marauding Kultur on the one side with a Hun-like Wilhelm on the other.

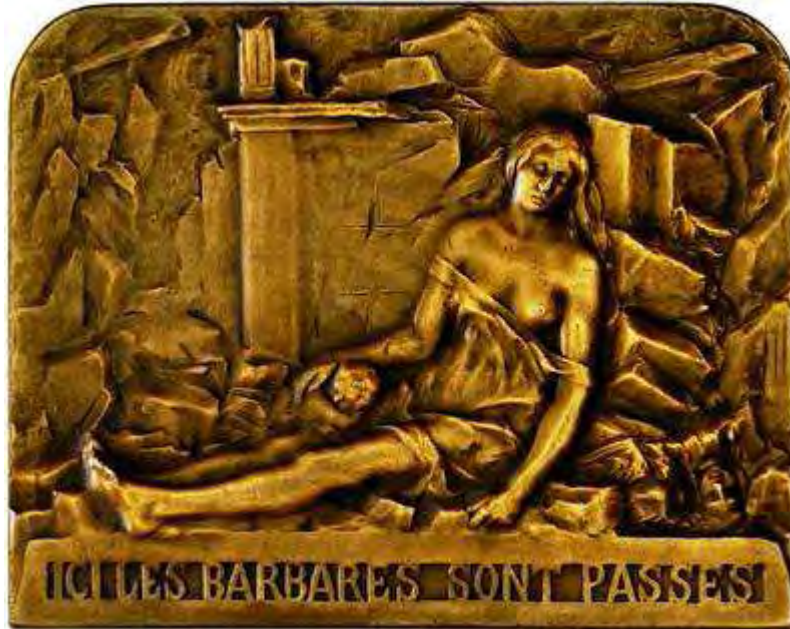


Fig. 3. France. AE medal by Raoul Lamourdedieu, 1917. The inscription on the obverse translates: “The barbarians have passed through here.”



Fig. 4. USA. AE medal by Paul Manship, 1918.

Allied propagandists wasted no time in capitalizing on the sinking of the *Lusitania*, presenting that event in a highly gendered fashion, by focusing more on the women (and children) who lost their lives than on the men. As these gendered images of the conflict began to sway to the Allied cause

the war-leery citizens of the United States, the most powerful country remaining neutral, the worst thing the Germans could have done was execute a woman in such a highly publicized case. Not just any woman, moreover, but a spinster nurse who had selflessly stayed behind in occupied territory to tend to the wounded, both Allied and German. Edith Cavell became an instant martyr and the clearest, most personal example of Kultur's violence against women and thus against all civilization

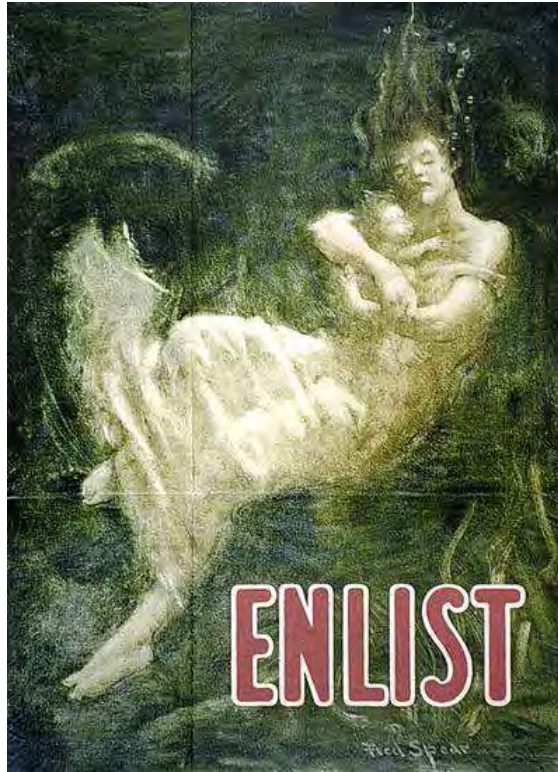


Fig. 5. Enlistment poster by Fred Spear, published in June 1915 by the Boston Committee of Public Safety, depicting victims of the Lusitania sinking.



Fig. 5. Cavell rendering aid to a wounded German soldier while Kultur hovers above. (from a series of six postcards by Tito Corbella on the execution of Edith Cavell; the series was published in French, Italian, and English.)

Belgium Deserted

After the Germans' surrender in November 1918, those Belgians who had lived in exile in Britain, France, and the Netherlands returned home to find their country utterly devastated. Besides the destruction that the fighting itself had wrought, the Germans had systematically picked the country clean, thoroughly dismantling factories, tearing up railroad tracks, and shipping it all, along with any livestock, back to Germany. The intent was to deny Belgium an economic future, and, at least for the immediate future, they succeeded. Unemployment in Belgium was at 80 percent in 1919, and food, clothing, and housing were scarce. As was the case throughout the war, mostly through the Commission for Relief in Belgium organized by the future U.S. President Herbert Hoover ([Fig. 25](#)), the United States provided substantial relief through donations and aid, but even this continued kindness was not nearly enough.

As the Versailles Treaty negotiations got underway in early 1919, it soon became clear that the British and French had no intentions of allowing the Belgians to sit at the table with the grown-ups. As Sally Marks observed (1981: 119), "It was taken for granted that small states would be treated like small children and that great issues should be settled by great powers." At stake were the substantial claims of reparations that Belgium had made against Germany, which were desperately needed to rebuild the country's infrastructure and economy. The fiercely nationalistic British premier, David Lloyd George, however, fought hard to keep the negotiations closed to small countries, particularly Belgium, and quite openly sought to gain more reparations for his own country at Belgium's expense. Interventions by the Belgian king, the only royal to visit the negotiations, and by U.S. ambassadors eventually helped to win for the Belgians most of what they wanted, but not before the Belgian public had grown righteously indignant.

Lloyd George's actions were particularly offensive to the Belgians because the British and French had used the rape of Belgium as a "central metaphor for the War" using it also to set the high moral tone for the Allied cause. It was frequently repeated that the invasion of neutral Belgium was not only an unprovoked act of aggression, so typical of Kultur, but also a gross violation of internationally sanctioned treaty law, and thus a barbarian affront to civilization. The atrocities that followed only generated further sympathies for the country, and the Allies assured Belgium that the avenging and restoration of that country was a primary objective of the fight. All of this, apparently, was now forgotten. A headline from the newspaper *De Standaard* summed up the resentment in Brussels: "Belgium Deserted and Humiliated by Its Allies" (quoted from Marks 1981: 198).



Fig. 6 France. Nickel galvano of Edith Cavell by Georges-Henri Prud'homme, 1915. (Jonathan Kagan collection) 200 mm.

The Meaning of a Memory

It was within this political, social, and economic context that Bonnetain produced his medal of Edith Cavell and Marie Depage. While on the surface a straightforward commemorative piece for two lost colleagues, the medal's greater context meant that it carried an embedded symbolic load. The inscription "1915/ Remember!" sought to steer this symbolism toward narrow(er) interpretations.

Taken as a whole, the medal immediately recalled the martyrdom of Cavell and the sinking of the *Lusitania*, but from a decidedly Belgian perspective.. While Cavell was a universal symbol of martyrdom, albeit with deep Belgian ties, Depage was far from being a universal symbol for the *Lusitania*. As the wife of a high-profile doctor who turned politician after the war, Depage likely achieved notoriety as the most important Belgian to die on the ship. Thus using her to represent the *Lusitania* tragedy would obviously have greater significance for Belgians than it would for others.

Working at the tail end of World War I medallic production, Bonnetain would certainly have been aware of propaganda medals portraying female victims of Kultur, and was likely aware of other works dealing directly with his subject. This awareness would have had influence on his own work and would therefore place his medal in discourse with others. While we cannot be entirely sure that Bonnetain was aware of Prud'homme's 1915 portrait of Cavell (Fig. 6) it seems almost certain, given the close similarities in dress, general style, and lettering between the two works. Bonnetain's response was to develop a portrait far less optimistic and more idealized than Prud'homme's, but still following his use of the traditional format of profile portraiture, which offered a dignified, less sensationalist way of dealing with the subject, compared to what could be expected on more typical propaganda medals. This raised the level of discourse above the obvious and unsophisticated; the emotional content would be less evident and more controlled. But whereas one can picture Prud'homme's confident, almost smiling Cavell voicing her famous pre-execution words of forgiveness ("I realize that patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness towards anyone"), this is not the case for Bonnetain's stern lady, who looks far less forgiving. Moreover, while Prud'homme's portrait appears quite faithful to photographs of the matronly Cavell, Bonnetain has softened her features, making her appear younger (cp. Fig. 7, the same would be the case for Depage too), thus aligning Cavell (and Depage) with the typically younger female victims in Allied propaganda. In subtle ways, Bonnetain has responded to Prud'homme's rather dispassionate work by introducing greater emotional tension, and, by leveraging general familiarity with Cavell and Depage's fates, he has infused the neutral territory of medallic portraiture with the political bias and purpose of the propaganda medal. This politicized reading of the image finds support in the simple inscription on the reverse.

During the course of the war, remembering became a collective, not private, act, and one that was not left to the whimsy of individual choice. It was an imperative to all. In France, state-endorsed societies were organized at both local and national levels to foster the memory of German atrocities and sustain the "sacred hatred" for the enemy. The catch phrase (not to mention name) of the national Ligue Souvenez-Vous!, for example, "ne l'oubliez jamais!" ("never forget!"), commanded the pamphlet reader or poster viewer to maintain the level of anger/hatred necessary to achieve total victory. Similar imperatives to remember and sustain hatred were found in England and the United States as well. The imperative on Bonnetain's medal clearly derives from this public and politically oriented function of remembering, not from the solemn and private realm of remembering the dead. But with the war over and victory in hand, the imperative on the medal would serve a diminished

political purpose if it was intended to sustain anti-German feelings among the Belgians; their daily lives served that purpose well enough. What was meant to be remembered, and the function of that memory, is therefore less than clear. A clue, however, is provided by the inscription itself: it is in English, rather than Flemish or French, which indicates that the intended audience was not necessarily the Belgians but the British (or less likely the Americans), suggesting a new realm of political function.



Fig. 7. Portrait of Edith Cavell c. 1890, around age 25.

On one level, we can certainly interpret the medal as a simple plea to remember the dead; plenty of medals were produced during and after the war to mourn the death of soldiers as a group. Rarely, however, were individuals singled out, and even then only those considered in some fashion heroes. Cavell and Depage were not heroes, but carefully defined feminine victims of Kultur, and their remembrance served less to inspire by example than to instill moral outrage, the outward expression of which seems frozen on the faces of Bonnetain's nurses. But where, in 1919, was this outrage directed? A suggestion offered here is that in their commemoration, the Commission de l'Ecole belge d'infirmières diplômées commissioned a medal that also admonished the British for their disloyalty toward a one-time ally. By re-presenting the martyrdom of Cavell and the *Lusitania* tragedy from the Belgian perspective, the Commission (and Bonnetain) claimed these highly symbolic memories for Belgium, which the British and others had freely used for their own purposes during the war. In the mode of Allied medallion propaganda, they retooled and redirected the appropriated memories back toward the British, demanding both recognition and recollection of Belgium's current and previous suffering. Their claim to the memories meant that the Belgians could now determine their meaning: the imperative to remember commanded the viewer not only to remember the nurses but to remember the rape of Belgium, and, perhaps most importantly, to remember the many broken promises.

III Material on *Enemy of the World*

1. Kyaw Hoe, Bibliographical Information

(Translation: Georg Noack)

42) Khin Khin Lay, Daw Dagon: The Enemy of the World. Yangon: Dagon Khin Khin Lay, 1940.
– 108 pages.

Though *The Enemy of the World* was not published by Nagani, it was printed at the Nagani Printing Press. It was published on 14 March 1940 in 50,000 copies. The price was 6 annas. It does not have a Nagani logo on the inner or outer side of the cover and it does not include a note “published by the Nagani press” anywhere in the book.

However, it is a fictional story written on the basis of the news heard about the Nazi’s cruelty and despicability for the benefit of resistance against the Nazis.

A great amount of copies was distributed. Now, after the end of the war, it was reprinted again.



Title Page of the First Edition



Title Page of the 1967 Reprint

2. Blurb of the 1967 Edition

Dagon Khin Khin Lay's ENEMY OF THE WORLD

- “The Enemy of the World” is more cruel, more wicked, more brutal and more harsh than imperialism, wealthy men and capitalists ... It is foolish and arrogant beyond the limit.
- The Enemy of the World is the enemy of Burma. The national affairs and thinking of Burma were expressed in writing using a pen name.
- It is a bridge between the Burmese literature and those of the world. It is a combined effort of fighting the enemy by the same class of people of literature.

3. The Author's Preface to the 1967 Edition

If you spread the map of the world in front of you, you will find that Burma is as small as a dot, like the seed of a plum among the large countries of the world. Since it is a little slave country under the rule of the government of imperialist English, the world does not know the fact that there is a little country called Burma.

In the western part of the world the fire of the Second World War was raging. It was a time when the people of the whole world were listening attentively and in fear to the terrible and dominating news of the fascist dictatorial Nazi leader of Hitler in Germany and the fascist dictator Mussolini of Italy.

In the mean time, a Burmese lady by the name of Dagon Khin Khin Lay of the little country of Burma had pioneered the attack on the atrocities and wickedness of the dictatorial Nazi policy by writing and publishing a novel (*The Enemy of the World*). In other words, the fascist Nazi policy was attacked with the might of the pen first from a little country that was Burma. The number of copy of the book was a hundred thousand. But the world did not know about it. There was no reason why they should know it because even the country Burma was not yet known to the world.

Writing the wickedness of the fascist Nazi policy even before the world knew about it was not because she had supported the imperialist English. To be democratic slaves of the imperialist English was bad enough. To be the slaves of supporters of fascist Nazi policy was even more worse. She had written the book with the sincere intention of letting the people know about the wickedness of fascist Nazi policy as befits a writer. Contemporary educated people had already read and knew about it and had made no difference by the book. But she wanted to let the simple class of the Burmese farmers know about it. She did not want the people to think highly of the Nazi policy and hope for it. The cruelty and brutality of the fascist Nazi policy would one day give trouble to the whole world (*The Enemy of the World*). That was why the novel was given this name.

Let me repeat this. This novel – *The Enemy of the World* – was written during the Second World War in 1939 when Burma was under the slavery of the English. The writer had never been to the outside world. She wrote the book from what she had heard and from her own general knowledge. From Burma she was able to write about Germany and the German people who lived in a far away place. It was not a translation. It was a novel written through her imagination. She was the first from among the community of writers in Burma who was able to write about the outside world.

She was also the first writer who rebelled and attacked the fascist Nazi policy with the might of a pen.

Again, as the book was bought by the information department and was printed over a hundred thousand copies, it was the first record breaking novel in the number of copies ever printed in Burma.

It was a book seen and read by the masses of the Burmese peasants as well as horse-cart drivers, boat rowers, horseback riders in every quarter and corners of Burma. It was written in such a way that the simple typical Burmese people could easily understand the wickedness of Nazi policy existing in Germany. But a small number of people who were sympathizers of the Nazi policy at the time engaged in a whispering campaign that it was a book that supported the English government by just an overview of the book. It was not a book that claimed that the Nazi policy was bad and the English government was good. In fact, it was to say that the English imperialists were bad and that the fascist dictatorship of the Nazi policy was worse. Nobody was good and we should not long for and rely on anyone. The independence that we wished for should be fought relying on our own strength and capability. This was what I want them to try and to follow the guideline. It was written in a matter of fact way in the preface. It should be assumed that those eyes that could not see this were covered with envious face mask. Later, we learnt that from among those people who engaged in a whispering campaign offered to write such a book.

As for the author, she was satisfied to have done what she wanted at the expense of the government. She wanted to let every class of people know about the Nazi policy. She was satisfied with the purchase of her book by the information department that published it to the tune of a hundred thousand copies and distributed throughout the country. Those who did not like the book could possibly be people who fled the English rule and were unable to write books.

Political affairs and the affairs of state are one and the same thing. Those who were in the forefront in the independence struggle drove out the English and contacted the Japanese fascists headed by a prince and depended on him. When the fascist Japanese arrived they couldn't stand the fascist atrocities. So they secretly contacted the allied English and Americans to rebel against the Japanese. How much had they depended on the English and American? The dark green silk parachute dropped by them had even become the latest fashion for shirts. In this way they again contacted the English and drove the fascist Japanese away.

The reason why the independence fighters again joined hands with the English was because of the prevailing situation of the time as well as a political tactic to obtain independence. It was not because they liked the English. It was rather a political stratagem that everyone could understand.

When the so called democratic people of imperialist English arrived back, the Burmese politicians who loathed the fascist Japanese established Anti-fascist People's Freedom League. The short form of the league was AFPFL. When the AFPFL's time came, they again drove again the English imperialist and their lackeys.

That was why the novel *The Enemy of the World* that rebelled against the fascist Nazi policy four or five years before the advent of AFPFL that would oppose fascism could be called a torch that first lighted the way for fighting the fascist policy. It would not be an exaggeration to call the novel a forerunner in the history of independence struggle.

Whether the novel made history or was left behind at Kamayut, the author of the fiction did not have that much vision. She only had the wish for letting the simple masses of the Burmese people know in advance about the wickedness of fascist Nazi policy. Those who bought the books and distributed them also had the wish to let the Burmese people know that those people who supported the fascist dictatorial policy of the Nazi were worse than them. The book was written and published for the single reason of this.

A writer finds it difficult to write even a paragraph without his belief or objective even if he has to starve or die. It would be very difficult for a writer like the one who wrote a novel such as *Shwe Sone Nyo* that attacked English imperialism and a novel like *the Rebels of Bawdwin* that opposed the wealthy men at the risk of one's life to write openly without one's belief and without a benefit for the country.

In fact, the time was when, according to a song, the dictators of the axis powers of Japan, Germany and Italy were thought highly of and were respected. It was also a time when the Burmese masses of people thought highly of and believed in the propaganda and advertisement with posters on the walls of boats that people in dictatorships were becoming prosperous.

Some people in Burma thought that the German Nazi leader Hitler with swastika arm band was the future ruler of the world. The superstitious, simple and ignorant old men in the countryside thought that the prince saved by Po Po Aung was in fact no other than the present ruler of Germany, Hitler.

At a time when the majority of the people were drinking bitter rain water, *The Enemy of the World* was published. The book told the people about the wickedness of the fascist dictatorial policy of Hitler's Nazi saying it was endangering the world and that it was suppressing the German people themselves. The people would be uncomfortable. Similarly a translation of *Japanese Spy* also appeared later. Those who thought highly of fascism and liked it did not like the book.

But the critics repented when the fascist Japanese arrived and ruled Burma more cruelly than described in the *Japanese Spy*. The people practically witnessed how the Japanese slapped people on the face, pulled finger nails and poured hot water on people. The translator of the book *Japanese Spy* died at the hands of the *kampetai*.

If Burma were under the rule of the German Nazi policy instead of the fascist Japanese at that time; and if the people had the chance to study general knowledge fully enough, the Burmese people would find that the elder brothers of the Nazi German were much more dangerous and fearsome than the younger brothers of the fascist Japanese. The writer would have died before those writers who criticized the book repented and begged for forgiveness.

Even in today's world, the atrocities and brutalities of the Nazi Gestapo has not died as could be seen by the news of Eichmann. Nobody would be able to list and tell us how many people like Eichmann lived in Germany. Books, documents and movies about the cruelty and brutality of the Nazi Germans were published and produced in the millions of copies and therefore uncountable. When World War II ended, a list was compiled at the end and the violence and cruelty of the fascist Nazi came to be known worldwide.

When I recollect the past as I held a pen in my hand, I realized that I had carried out a heavy duty and responsibility at a great risk. Although there were some people who did not like it and criticized it on the surface, I am satisfied and honoured in the end to have written a book before anyone else and standing firmly on the correct side.

Dagon Khin Khin Lay

OBJECTIVE of the writer in 1939.

There are two objectives for writing this book. My first objective is to let the people of Burma know clearly and fully about how even Germans who did not belong to the Nazi party were persecuted and suppressed by the German Nazi up to now since the beginning of the influence of the Nazi policy in Germany.

My second objective was for the Burmese people who wanted and wished for independence and change their masters not to depend on others wasting their time but to rely on themselves and struggle for independence by themselves.

To enable the readers to scrutinize with their own intelligence about the goodness, the badness, the advantages and disadvantages of the Nazi policy, I created a plot and a story and wrote the novel. May you all read it with careful scrutiny.

4. Moe Hein Zaw, Book Report

BIOGRAPHY OF THE WRITER

Dagon Khin Khin Lay was born on February 20, 1904 in Mandalay. Her parents came from an ancient noble family. Her father was Police Inspector U Myat Kyaw also known as U Maung Maung Kyaw. Her mother was Wetmasot Khin Khin Latt. Her grandfather was the ruler of Wetmasot town. She attended a Burmese language school in Kyaukpadaung for up to the fourth standard. She studied the fifth standard at the Magway English language school and up to the seventh standard in Shwebo. Her grandfather taught her Burmese culture, Burmese literature and religious writings. As a result she was quite familiar with the Burmese literature. In 1916, she wrote a novel named Nwe Nwe and sent it to the Thuriya magazine. It was selected as a short story and was published in the Vol. 1, No. 6. of the Thuriya magazine in 1917. She began writing in 1917 and became the earliest Burmese woman novelist in the history of the Burmese literature. Beginning in 1920, she wrote novels and articles in the Dagon magazine. She wrote under the pen name Dagon Khin Khin Lay. She also wrote fictions on sorcery diary under the pen name Ko Ko Lay. Using another pen name of Yadanapon Hteih Tin Hlaing, she also wrote articles on women affairs and Burmese cultural heritage.

Beginning in 1921, she wrote film scripts for the Myanmar Aswe motion picture company. Beginning in 1930, she wrote film scripts for the A-1 motion picture company. Dagon Khin Khin Lay divorced her first husband for incompatibility and married the manager of the Nagani Publishing House U Ohn Khin. She published the Kyidawset magazine in 1921. From the period 1939 to 1941, she established Dagon Khin Khin Lay Publishing House and The Nation Building Printing Press. From 1947 to 1961 she headed and published the Yuwady Journal. Dagon Khin Khin Lay also wrote and published the novels the Rays of War and the Enemy of the World during the Second World War. She printed the state-run newspaper of the Bamakhit during the Japanese rule. After the war ended her Nation Building Printing Press took possession of Bamakhit newspaper and published it as her own newspaper. In October of 1945, she headed the publishing of the Yuwady Journal. In the Bamakhit newspaper, she opened the Yuwady Journal corner and encouraged women writers by giving them Women Writers title and Yuwady title. She established women writers club. She took the responsibility of acting as the executive of writers association. In 1961 she brought out the Yuwady newspaper. She visited foreign countries twice as a tourist. Dagon Khin Khin Lay wrote over 30 full length novels, over 50 short stories, foreign and domestic

travelogues and numerous articles on different subjects. She also wrote and published an autobiography called *Sixty Years* in 1961. Some of Dagon Khin Khin Lay's novels included *Sarsodaw* (writer), *One Lifetime*, *High Status*, *Low Status*, *Forest Born*, *Kyunbonyo* and *the Enemy of the World*. Dagon Khin Khin Lay passed away on June 23, 1981.

Objective

In the preface of the book written by her, she said, "There were two reasons for writing the *Enemy of the World*. One of the two reasons was to let the people of Myanmar know clearly and fully about the repressions and persecutions suffered by the German people who were not members of the Nazi party at the hands of their own German people since the time the Nazi policy influenced the people of Germany up to now.

My second objective of writing the *Enemy of the World* was for Myanmar people who wished to regain independence and had a new master, to work for independence themselves and not to depend on others and hope against hope wasting their time.

I wrote this book in the form of a novel so that the readers themselves would decide for themselves the goodness and badness or the advantages or disadvantages of the Nazi policies. I would like you to read it carefully and critically."

In addition to this, she wrote in the preface of the book that the country of Myanmar would seem very small if one spread the map of the world and studied it and that it was a very small slave state ruled by the English colonialist and was not known to the world and that a Myanmar woman by the name of Dagon Khin Khin Lay had written the *Enemy of the World* which was about the atrocities of fascist Nazi dictators during the blazing of the fire of the Second World War when the people of the world were listening to the news of the fascist dictators of the Nazi leader of Germany Hitler and the fascist leader of Italy Mussolini. In other words, it was the earliest book that attacked fascist Nazi policies with the weapon of a pen from a small nation of Myanmar. Since Myanmar was not known to the world, the book would not be known to the world. She wrote about her book in this way.

She also wrote that writing about the undesirable policies of the Nazi should not be considered as supporting the English colonialists. True to the nature of a writer, she wrote it with the sincere intention of letting the Myanmar people know that to be a slave of the colonialist English was bad enough and that to be a slave of the fascist Nazi was even worse. The contemporary educated people already knew about the policies of fascist Nazi and would make no difference but that she

wanted to let the simple Myanmar peasants know about it. Since the policy of Nazi was so cruel and brutal and was going to give a lot of trouble to the world, she called her book the Enemy of the World. The writer of the book had written it in 1939 during the Second World War when Myanmar was under the English rule. She had never gone outside of Myanmar but wrote the book from her own general knowledge. The book was not a translation. It was written through her imagination. She was the first writer in Myanmar who attacked the Nazi policy through the might of the pen. The book was bought by the Information Department and was printed to the tune of more than a hundred thousand copies. That was why it was the book with the largest number of copies ever printed. In this way she told the people about the book in its preface.

The book therefore became the most widely read book of ordinary people and peasants across Myanmar. It was written in a very easy-to-understand manner the atrocities of the Nazi policy. A very few people who supported the Nazi policy whispered and criticized the book saying that it was written in support of the English government. As a matter of fact it did not say that the Nazi policy was bad and that the English government was good. It said that the colonist English policy was not good and that the fascist Nazi policy was even worse. Nobody should be depended upon. She wanted the people to strive for independence that they wished for with their own ability without depending on others. The writer wrote her intention in no uncertain terms. The author also said that Myanmar had secretly contacted the allied English and Americans when the people could not bear the cruelty and brutality of the fascist Japanese when they arrived after the English were driven out. She also mentioned the fact that the Myanmar people had made into shirts the dark green parachutes dropped by the English and Americans and that they had sought help from the English and drove the fascist Japanese away again and that the reason why the Myanmar government joined hands again with the English was not because they liked the English but because they wanted independence.

It should be recorded that the book – the Enemy of the World -- was a pioneer novel that attacked the fascist Nazi's policy four or five years before the advent of the Anti-fascist People's Freedom League that opposed the fascist policy. The book was written with the single intension of letting the people of Myanmar know about the violence and cruelty of the fascist dictators and their policies. It was difficult for authors to write books that were not beneficial to the country without any conviction. It was a time when the people of Myanmar were influenced by the propagandas that the axis nations of Japan, Germany and Italy were developing fast as the result of their dictatorial leaders. Some Myanmar people thought and said that the swastika arms band with the

German Nazi leader Hitler was something that would overpower the world. The time when the book was published was a time when some people were disturbed. Later, the book 'Japanese Spy' which was a translation appeared. Those who thought highly of the Japanese did not like the book.

When the fascist Japanese actually arrived and ruled the country, those who criticized the book repented as the Japanese committed a lot of atrocities even more than what were mentioned in the book -- such atrocities as slapping on the cheeks, pulling finger nails and pouring hot water on people. The translator of the book was murdered by the Japanese kimpetai. During that time, had Myanmar come under the rule of the German Nazi instead of the fascist Japanese, the people would be even more scared and disturbed. In the same way, those who criticized the author would be killed or deprived of their livelihood. In today's world people still became frightened simply by hearing the news of the German Gestapo and that a large number of books and films were published or produced about the cruelty and brutality of the Nazi Germans. When the Second World War ended, the whole world was indignant and incensed by the cruelty and atrocities of the fascist Nazi policy. So she realized that it was taking a lot of risks to have held a fountain pen and written about it. Although she had borne the denunciation of some people, she was satisfied and honoured to have written the book with a correct belief and conviction.

Summary of the Story

Chapter (1)

It was peaceful and quiet in a beautiful and imposing mansion in the suburban area of the city of Munich in Germany. It was the residence of Adler, a writer. Writer Adler, an over 30-year-old German, was lying on his back on a sofa reading a newspaper without much interest smoking a pipe. As he was fed up with only words and terms about the dictator Hitler's policy of National Socialism called Nazi in the whole newspaper, he put the paper aside and went toward the radio and listened to it. Even over the radio, he heard nothing except the speeches of the Nazis and therefore was not interested in them. Although he would like to listen to international or world news, it had been a long time since he last heard it because it was not only strictly prohibited but the government also issued an order that those who secretly listened to them would be given death sentence. True to the nature of a writer who wanted to live in freedom, Adler shut down the radio and walked to another room. Sophie, the younger sister of Adler, was doing household chores and arranging flowers for decoration of the dinning room. Being an orphan, Sophie was loved and doted on by her brothers who also sent her to medical school. Adler did not buy the repressive idea

of Hitler that said the place of a woman was in the home and that women should get married and give births to lots of children and do household works only.

Then the two persons of brother and sister spoke to each other. Sophie told her elder brother that her younger brother Gobler and his young wife Flava together with Hazit would be coming to have tea with them and that that was why she was decorating the dinning table with flowers. The elder brother had married off his younger brother Gobler, a bank manager, to his loving wife called Flava three or four years ago. Their sister Sophie was in love with a young professor by the name of Hazit who was the classmate of the two brothers during their childhood. The two brothers knew about this and approved of their friendship. While the brother and sister were engaged in conversation, the younger brother Gobler and his wife Flava arrived there holding hands. Then the four people were chatting happily together.

Gobler also loved and doted on his sister Sophie like his brother Adler. Sophie and Flava also loved each other like real sisters. Just as the younger brother asked his elder brother if Hazit had arrived, he also said that once Hazit arrived they would play casino happily together. At that time Sophie and Flava went into the inner room talking. Adler and Gobler were also talking about inside matters in the sitting room. The younger brother told his elder brother that he and his wife had become members of the Hitler party as a result of which his elder brother warned his younger brother to be careful. Meanwhile Hazit arrived. He was warmly welcomed with smiling faces. Then they moved to the dinning room. In this way, a group of friends, brothers and sisters were happily eating and drinking together. After eating and drinking, the elder brother was sitting in the visiting room smoking a pipe. Then the couple of Gobler and Flava also arrived there and cracked jokes together. Then they told Adler that their younger sister and Hazit were in love and that Sophie was considering asking him permission to marry Hazit. Adler had no objection to the marriage and they proposed to play cards. Flava went to the garden where the two lovers were sitting and told them that the elder brother approved of their marriage. Therefore, they fixed the day for their marriage within a few days. Sophie's two elder brothers and her sister-in-law Flava were busy preparing enthusiastically for Sophie's marriage. Hazit and Sophie themselves were very happy. They were already very busy choosing their travel programme for their honeymoon.

Chapter (2)

In this way, the day for their marriage was approaching fast. Hazit came to his friend Adler and his girlfriend Sophie and they talked together. He told them that they were planning to go to Austria

and then to Italy by train. From there they planned to go to Eastern countries. As it was during the Second World War, the elder brother warned them to be careful. During their talks, the elder brother Adler said that it would be a good idea to write freely through his imagination and that he was disappointed as there were too many restrictions. If he continued writing toeing the Nazi's line, the book would not be natural and that it was a bad time and that it was best to live peacefully. Sophie also said that young women had lost all their rights. Adler, therefore, asked Sophie to speak in a low voice as there were Nazi informers all around the place. Sophie said that as there were only three of them in the house nobody would hear them. She lamented that the young women of Germany were not as fortunate as the young women of other foreign countries. The elder brother Adler said that it was a time when the Nazi spies were very powerful like ghosts and evil spirits who had the power to know everything and that they should be careful in whatever they do. Even family members could not trust each other. People dared not speak freely even in beer pubs and restaurants as they were afraid of being arrested. If they speak their minds they were arrested. Once arrested, they never return. So nobody could live quietly in their own country, state or town or village. The German people felt in their hearts that ogres were coming to their places and so were afraid. He also told them about people who were arrested for saying the wrong things and warned them to be careful. They sat there thinking.

At that time, after thinking, Hazit said that if things continued in this way, Germany would be in trouble. He grumbled that he was disappointed with the activities of the Nazi members. The sound of what they said had turned out to be very unfortunate for their little house. The reason was that, it was the very moment when Nazi informers Flava and Gobler arrived at the door of the visiting room and heard what was going on. The couple came to give a set of dresses to Sophie as a wedding present. When Gobler and Flava arrived, Sophie happily welcomed them and spoke warmly to them. Then they unwrapped the gift and liked them. They talked happily about the following day wedding programmes and their honeymoon plans. Meanwhile, Flava's countenance changed a bit and was unhappy and thought only of an excuse to go home. Then she poked at Gobler and invited him to go home. Sophie expressed her disappointment for Flava's early return. But Flava said they would come back the following day early and that they had something to do at home and requested her to be satisfied. Hazit and Sophie, together with the elder brother Adler, went to the opening of the door and watched the car of Gobler being driven away and they were left behind.

Chapter (3)

As he was driving, Gobler watched the unhappy face of Flava and asked if she was all right. Flava said they had an important duty to perform and asked her husband if he had thought about it. Gobler said he had not thought about anything. She told her husband that they were spies for the socialist intelligence organization of the Gestapo police of Hitler and that they should give information to the Gestapo about what Hazit had said. Gobler said what Hazit said was nothing harmful. But Flava said they should know their duties and asked her husband to drive to the Gestapo department and that if he refused to do so she would drive the car herself. Then Gobler begged Flava not to go there. He persuaded her not to take action against what Hazit said as Hazit was his childhood friend and that he was going to get married with his sister Sophie. But Flava said that her duty was paramount and if she failed to do her duty severe action would be taken against her. Gobler told her that the matter was known only to the two of them and that she should not report the matter to the authorities. As Flava insisted, he was in a difficult situation. In the end Flava told Gobler that if they don't go and report the matter, she would file a complaint against Gobler for neglecting his duty. Gobler therefore drove the car reluctantly. As he was driving along he was thinking about the prospect of the Nazi members taking his friend Hazit away and how his sister Sophie would be shedding a lot of tears as a result. Flava reminded her husband and explained the Nazi policy and that as members of the Nazi party they should carry out their duties fully and faithfully. She threatened that failing to do their duties would be disastrous. Gobler had a troubled mind. He was in a quandary. Sometimes he thought about his duties to the Nazi party. Sometimes he thought about the suffering his sister would go through. In the end, at the urging of Flava, they arrived in front of the Nazi intelligence department and Flava took Gobler into the building.

Chapter (4)

On the following day, just as Sophie and Hazit were happy, members of their families were also happy and joyous. Sophie was feeling great with her close friends in the room. Bridegroom Hazit was also in high spirits with some of his friends chatting and smiling. Gobler and Flava came to his sister Sophie wearing broad smiles and helped her with her work. Flava herself entered the room and helped Sophie with her make-up. Gobler looked at Sophie and breathed heavily feeling very tired. He thought about the cruel thing they had done to her. At that time Flava came near Gobler, saw his sad face and warned him to behave himself lest other people should get strange ideas. Sophie, after dressing herself up, came to her brother Gobler and asked him if she was beautiful. Gobler forced himself to smile and told her that his sister was stunning. But unfortunately Sophie did not notice that Gobler was trembling. Later, when Sophie and Flava kissed each other, Gobler

felt like he was playing at the precipice. As the elder brother Adler asked them to go to the church, the people including the bride and bridegroom went to the church in several cars. Gobler was gazing at the people. At that time Flava arrived and warned her husband and they also went to the church.

The church was crowded with the guests. The bride and the bridegroom walked in pair looking and smiling at the guests who were welcoming them. The elder brother Adler, the middle brother Gobler and Flava were already waiting for them near the priest who would solemnize the matrimony. Although Adler was happy that his sister Sophie was going to marry his friend Hazit, Gobler was not happy and was mentally troubled. He was planning to advise Hazit to flee as quickly as possible. But since his wife Flava was shoulder to shoulder with him all the time, his plan did not come to pass. After vowing and exchanging wedding rings in front of the priest, the couple greeted the guests. After their arrival at home, Sophie and Hazit were even more happy and gay. Gobler was still trying to carry out his plan. But there were more and more guests. Besides, he knew that among the guests were Gestapo policemen. Flava caught Gobler by the arm and took him to a remote table and told him about the development of Germany, the progress of the Nazi policy and the increasing number of Nazi members as they sat and enjoyed a bottle of champagne. As a result Gobler got asleep on the sofa under the influence of the champagne. When evening turned to night, the surrounding area was brightly lighted and the sound of music was heard.

The married couple entertained the guests to drinks of wine and some foods and prepared to dance a ballroom dance. The room was crowded by not only Sophie's friends, Hazit's friends, the guests of elder brother Adler, the friends of Gobler and Flava but also with the special force of Gestapo members. A convoy of cars prepared for the honeymoon holiday of the bride and bridegroom was waiting in readiness in front of the house. The bride and bridegroom were dancing together in the main hall as they entertained the guests. Gobler was sleeping under the influence of the champagne but Flava was dancing without the slightest signs of annoyance. Then Flava took several gentlemen and ladies to Hazit and introduced them so they could engage in a conversation. As Hazit and the guests were in conversation, Flava walked past them. At about 10:30 at night the guests had thinned out and just as Hazit intended to go to Sophie, some three or four male guests came near to him and invited him to go to the veranda so they could talk quietly. Although those people were not known to Hazit, he followed them without refusing as they were his guests. When they arrived at the roofless balcony, they saw three very tall and stout men in the remote and dark corner.

Hazit and the two strong men were talking about the moonlit night. When Hazit said he had to go on a honeymoon, the two men grabbed both of his hands very tightly. When Hazit asked the men what they were doing, the two policemen told him in a matter-of-fact way that “he was under arrest.” Hazit was very surprised and when he asked them why he was arrested, they told him that he was guilty and that they (policemen) were the special police spies of Hitler and dragged him along. Whereupon Hazit told them that he had just married and was about to go on a honeymoon and that the policemen were mistaken. The policemen told him that they were not mistaken and that he was arrested after a complaint was made against him. They also told him that they were going over the wall. Although he requested them to give him a little while as he wanted to bid farewell to his wife and the guests, his request was not granted. They told him that it was not necessary to bid farewell to anybody. They shackled his hands and pointed a pistol at him. Hazit said he would follow them but requested them to pass through the room. But since the order said to arrest him without the knowledge of anybody, they climbed the wall fence and went out through the side path.

Hazit was worried for going away without bidding farewell to his wife Sophie. When they arrived near the van of the police spies parked at the dark corner behind the house, he was very sad as he watched the people enjoying themselves at his wedding reception. He bade farewell from the dark to the guests who were enjoying themselves and his beloved wife and his friends and got on the car and followed the policemen. On the way, Hazit dared not think about what the future hold for him. When he thought of the torture he was going to suffer at the hands of the police, he cried and thought of his wife Sophie who would be looking for him in vain. He also thought that Sophie might be thinking that her husband was avoiding the prospect of going on a honeymoon and would hate him for that. He also thought that the two brothers of Adler and Gobler would be looking for him with a lot of anxiety in their hearts. Thinking all kinds of thoughts, Hazit entered into the Gestapo jail with heavy hearts.

Chapter (5)

At the wedding reception, the bride and the guests were still enjoying themselves as they did not yet know that the bridegroom Hazit had been taken away by evil men. Just as the elder brother Adler was chatting with other writers, Gobler was sound asleep snoring loudly. Flava, however, was happy and light-hearted as she had successfully done her duty. At 11 at night, the guests came to realize that it was time for the bride and bridegroom to go on a honeymoon. So they stopped

dancing and crowded the car to see the couple off. Although the bride and the guests gathered there together, there was no sign of the bridegroom Hazit. Each one of them asked questions to each other. They were very worried as they could not find Hazit after a considerable length of time. The guests said they had met him and spoke to him. He had just left their table. Some guests thought that his friends might hide him and looked for him all over the place. The elder brother Adler was also looking for Hazit worrying. Sophie's face fell and went to Flava and asked her what had happened to Hazit. She also asked her sobbing whether he had not told Flava where he was going. Flava pretended not to know anything about it and said that it was not proper for Hazit to go away like that. Sophie cried and shed a lot of tears. Sophie said that his friends would not be making jokes in this way. Flava told her that she hadn't any idea what could have happened. Sophie on her part said that she was unfortunate and ashamed and that she wanted to die and requested Flava to look for Hazit until she found him. Flava told Sophie that she didn't know how to look for someone who had simply disappeared without any trace. Sophie told Flava that if her elder sister (Flava) and her big brothers looked for her husband, they would find him. She said there must be some matter to attend to and begged her to look for him. In this way some guests were worried and bade farewell to her and left for home. Some comforted her and encouraged her. The elder brother Adler made an elaborate arrangement to search for Hazit. Since Adler did not see Gobler, he asked about him whereupon Flava hurriedly came and told Adler that he (Gobler) was asleep because he had too much to drink. Adler therefore went to him and woke Gobler up. Later, when he was told that Hazit was missing and that they had to search for him, his drunkenness disappeared and regained consciousness again. He breathed heavily and his face turned black. He blamed himself for having been asleep. When the elder brother Adler said they had to look for Hazit, Flava said that Gobler and herself would look for Hazit in a different place while Adler would search for him in another place. She coaxed Sophie to remain calm and they left for different places. On the way Gobler and Flava had a heated argument. Flava advised Gobler not to be worried and to forget about his loving kindness while it was the time the Nazi policy was being promoted and that she was going home and go to bed. When Adler asked Gobler if he had not found Hazit, he simply could say he hadn't found him. It was not necessary to look for him as they knew where he (Hazit) was. Saying this Flava herself drove the car to their house. After their arrival at home Flava taught Gobler about Nazi policy over a bottle of wine.

Sophie on her part was expectant of the arrival of her elder brother whenever she heard the noises of cars. Then without entering into the house, she sat in the veranda and recollected the time when she

and Hazit got married. She was wondering if Hazit would be coming home with her elder brother Adler. Or would he return home with her middle brother Gobler. Or would he come back with some of his other friends. Or would he return alone suddenly? She expected him with different thoughts about the way he would come home.

Although her big brother Adler arrived back at dawn the following day, she saw him getting off the car alone. The big brother told her that he could not find Hazit although he looked for him everywhere. As he had returned empty-handed, all her hopes with regard to her brothers had disappeared. While Adler was thinking about Hazit with a heavy heart, Sophie was again expecting Flava and Gobler. In their hearts, they thought that Flava and Gobler were in fact searching for Hazit. Although Hazit on his part was following the Gestapo intelligence police as if he were a criminal, he did not know why he was apprehended. Inside the prison walls, he was thinking about Sophie and all the others who would be looking for him and was worried for them. He was thinking about his wife Sophie who would be crying and suffering. In the past he had read about the cruelty and brutalities of the Nazi members as news items in the newspaper, but now he was experiencing them himself. He was worrying about how things would turn out in the end. He was anxious for Sophie rather than for himself.

Chapter (6)

Even after a day had elapsed, nothing whatever had been heard about Hazit. Gobler and Flava had not shown up. Only the elder brother Adler was looking all over the streets and the homes of friends going out and coming back in his car. Since Gobler and Flava had not come back to her, Sophie even thought of going to their house herself. At that time Flava arrived nonchalantly and told her that they had been looking for him the whole night without success and that they had returned only after daybreak. Gobler, as soon as he got up from bed, went to his office because of an important matter. As soon as he returned they would continue their search for Hazit. In this way Flava tried to comfort Sophie. Sophie, on her part, requested her to continue searching for Hazit even if it was only to know what had happened to him. In this way about three or four days had elapsed without having heard anything about him. Gobler acted in such a way that he was looking for Hazit whenever he was free from work and without coming himself sent Flava only to comfort and console her. Adler and Gobler also said that they had been searching for Hazit as best they could. Sophie had cry and spend all her time in bed.

The big brother Adler asked Gobler to search for Hazit with renewed vigour. As a result Gobler was both sympathetic and guilty conscious. But on the other hand he had his Nazi ties. So he spoke to his elder brother and Sophie in an appropriate way and left them.

Meanwhile England and Germany declared war on each other and the fighting was in full swing. That's why the whole of Germany was mobilized and the people were busy preparing for the war efforts. As the Army had to be provided with food supplies and no foodstuffs came from other countries, the people of the country had not enough to eat. The Nazi members were more and more busy suppressing the people. When the special intelligence unit of the Gestapo was especially busy, the Beer Hall building in Munich suddenly exploded on November 9, 1939 just after Hitler made a speech. A large number of suspected people were arrested indiscriminately in connection with the bomb blast with the result that the jail was full of people. Not only were people who were not members of the Nazi party arrested, but also the rank and file of the Nazi soldiers, administrative officers big and small, military officers high and low, important special Gestapo police officers and some prison officials were apprehended as suspects. As a result the whole country was terrified. In replacement for those arrested, some trusted and friendly people were selected and appointed. In that way Flava had her opportunity. The opportunity was for Gobler who had even informed the Gestapo about his own friend and brother-in-law and was therefore trusted. It was arranged that he would be given an important and strategic post. He was accordingly appointed as assistant prison officer at the jail for political prisoners. Because of the appointment, Flava was very pleased. Gobler himself become self-important. Meanwhile, his sister Sophie requested him to enquire about Hazit. But he said he was very busy and that he would enquire about him later. Sophie, on her part, went to Gobler everyday and begged him and cried. The big brother Adler was not asking help from his younger brother but searched for Hazit in his own way as best he could.

Chapter (7)

The prison officer Gobler, as he went round the prison as it was his duty to do so, witnessed the persecutions and tortures of the prisoners. As a result, Gobler himself adopted the attitude of cruelty and brutality in his heart as if evil spirit had entered into his mind. Sometimes, he himself taught others how to beat and torture prisoners. Since there were too many inmates who were jailed not because they had much fault but simply because they were hated, the prison officials could not cope with criminals such as thieves and murderers but arrested and persecuted only political prisoners. One day, while Gobler went on inspection round the prison, he saw in a room a junior officer

repeatedly beating a prisoner who refused to shout “Hail Hitler” although the junior officer ordered him again and again to do so. Then Gobler got angry and beat the inmate personally. The prisoner himself endured the pain and shouted resentfully that he was not going to shout “Hail Hitler.” Gobler was, therefore, very angry and raised the prisoner’s chin and slapped him on the face with his hand. Then the prisoner’s face showed. Gobler then knew that it was the face of Hazit. Hazit requested Gobler not to tell Sophie that he was in prison.

Gobler also ordered Hazit to shout “Hitler.” Hazit softly and slowly said, “Let me not shout like that. Your leader is a wicked man and a liar and I cannot respect him.” Gobler said it was his duty to beat or strike with a whip until and unless Hazit shout as told. Hazit told him to go ahead and strike him. Hazit said that he could understand that it was the ogre of Nazi that entered into Gobler’s mind that struck him. Gobler was about to drop the whip suddenly when he saw two junior officers which made his mind burn again with the flames of Nazi fire and struck Hazit many more times with the whip. Then Gobler asked him whether he was going to shout. Hazit replied that he would never shout even if he had to die. As a result, Gobler then struck him again. In the end Hazit fell unconscious on the floor. When Gobler looked at the unconscious Hazit, he took sympathy on a friend he used to know. He came to his senses that Hazit was a friend of his. At that moment Gobler saw a small scar on Hazit’s forehead that reminded him of the past.

It was a time when Gobler and Hazit were ten-year-old children who were studying in the same class. One day, on his way from school, Gobler was provoked by some road devils and fighting followed. He was alone and had to fight a group of boys when Hazit suddenly appeared and helped him fight the road devils. Together the road devils fought off Hazit who sustained an injury on the forehead. The scar remained forever as a reminder of the event. Moreover, Hazit had helped the two brothers in everything they did. That was why he had repented for being cruel to a friend. He thought he had overdone it in striking Hazit who reminded him of his sister Sophie. He also thought that the Nazi policy was so cruel. But he also thought that only by doing this he would become great. Then he ordered the two junior officers who were his subordinates to send Hazit to the prison doctor and remained behind. The prison doctors were appointed for writing remarks in saying that some inmates who died from torture had died of some kind of diseases. So Gobler knew that the doctors would not treat Hazit. So he sent a message for the doctors to treat him well and that he should not die just yet. Gobler was frightened and thought about the brutality and heartlessness of the Nazi policy. With the beginning of the government of the Nazi party, wealthy people were arrested and persecuted. Some died and others lost their properties. Some were

released from prison and they found themselves penniless. Goble thought about these and prayed that he would not die. Then Goble decided to save his sister Sophie and his brother-in-law Hazit as much as possible even at the risk of his life.

Chapter (8)

The elder brother Adler enquired Goble about any new development and Goble told him that there was going to be new development very soon. Goble enquired after the health of his sister Sophie who Adler said was mentally ill for one week then and could die as she had been in bed without eating. Then Goble entered into Sophie's room and found her grim-faced and dishevelled. He was deeply touched by the sight. Sophie could only say 'little brother'. She could no longer beg him to find Hazit for her. As he looked at his sister Goble was cut to the quick. He poked his elder brother and took him outside. Then he told his elder brother where he had found Hazit and asked his elder brother an important question that was whether he had a friend in Belgium. Adler told him that he had a very simple and honest gentleman by the name of Mr George Far who lived quietly in a garden at the outskirts of the city of Lyly.[Lille??] Goble asked his elder brother to write a letter to him telling him that he was coming. The elder brother asked Goble in surprise why he should be going. Goble said that it was very important and that he was leaving Germany the day after tomorrow and asked him to pack important and valuable things and to make the car ready and to let Sophie have her hair cut short like a man and put on man's clothing and not to let anybody know about the plan. When his elder brother asked why he had to do this. Goble told him that Hazit was arrested by the Gestapo intelligence group and put him in the Nazi jail. He also told his elder brother that he himself was disappointed with his job and would rescue Hazit and would flee away along with his elder brother. The elder brother asked these questions because he was anxious about his brother and said that he would also be coming along with them. Flava was not to be informed about the flight and they should do as it was planned. Goble asked his elder brother to come with Sophie in military uniform and wait in their car at the prison hospital near the big jail at 10 at night the day after tomorrow.

The elder brother Adler went to Sophie but did not tell her all the truth about Hazit. He told her that they were running away from the Nazi enemy and that all of them including Hazit would be absconding to the Belgium territory. They made necessary preparations. Sophie became mentally active again. Goble, however, did not tell his wife Flava about their decision. His love for Flava had already gone away. But he acted in a normal way in front of his wife so that their plan would

succeed. The next day, as he went round the prison, Gobler casually studied the condition of Hazit, approached him and asked him where he had kept his belongings in a loud voice that the doctors could also hear. Hazit did not understand and said that Gobler was mistaken. Gobler then threatened not to lie and that he would be taken to his home the following day and that he would be interrogated with burning cigarette with which he would be prodded. Later, he told the prison doctor that Hazit had stashed away fifteen thousand gold coins and that he would take him to his house and would ask him by torturing him where he had hidden the money. If he succeeded in obtaining the gold coins, the doctor and he would divide the money equally between them. He instructed the prison doctor to make it ready at 10 pm the following day. The prison doctor easily agreed as he was going to get gold coins. Gobler casually went round and inspected other prisoners.

Chapter (9)

At 10 pm the following night, a car was parked at the side of the prison hospital inside the prison walls. The driver looked like a tall and stout Nazi military officer. In the back seats were four Nazi military officers. The car horn was blown three times. Then Gobler and the prison doctor violently dragged Hazit through the exit door at the side of the jail. Sophie stood straight like a young military officer. But when she saw Hazit, she would like to shout aloud. But she had to put up appearances as she was forewarned by her elder brother. Gobler pulled out Hazit from the prison doctor and asked him for cigarettes and a lighter. Then they got inside the car and drove off. Smith, who served as a military officer at the Seafreight Castle at the border between Germany and Belgium, was welcoming four military officers from Munich. The four military officers arrived on a very important business. Although he was not interested in his job, he was serving the government because he was afraid of the authorities and had no respect for Dictator Hitler. The military officers themselves did not trust each other. There were many of them who would become rebels if the opportunity came. As Gobler knew about Smith, he whispered and told him why they were running. Since the Nazi intelligent officer himself had done this, he was hurt by his own fault. Then he told Gobler that he would take the responsibilities of sending him to the Belgian border. As he permitted them to go, Gobler, his brother and sister together with Hazit got away from the Nazi military.

Meanwhile, Flava was worried that her husband had not returned home the whole night. When she enquired about the news of Gobler, she was informed that Hazit had disappeared from the jail. She

thought that Goble might pity him and took him out. So she went to the home of Adler and found only the quiet and peaceful mansion. As a result of which Flava was angry with Hazit. She even vowed to kill him herself and searched for him in earnest with some policemen and officers. But in the end, as the officers did not know about the disappearance of Goble, Flava was imprisoned for being negligent. As Flava was jailed and tortured, she repented but she had to live in the earthly hell until she died.

Chapter (10)

When they arrived at the home of George Far in Belgium, Adler, with his brother and sister, could breathe a heavy sigh of relief in security. Goble studied the wounds of Hazit inflicted by him and requested Hazit not to blame him and to stay in such a way that Adler and Sophie would not know it. Hazit agreed. The host George Far happily looked after Adler and his brother and sister and fed them. Later he asked them why they had fled in such a hurry. They told him that they could no longer bear the cruelty and brutality of the Nazi policy. They also told him everything including what had happened to Hazit. George Far after listening to this said that he had only heard then about the cruelty and atrocity of the Nazi. The German people, despite the cruelty and brutality of the Nazi had voted for the Hitler government because their lives were in danger. The Nazi did not give other people permission to take part in politics or to form an association. It did not permit the people to accept other people's opinion and tried to force the Nazi policy so as to make it widespread. Nazi informers were sent everywhere to the extent that even family members dared not speak to each other in complete freedom. George Far said that it was amazing to have supported the ideas of a fool and ignorant man. He asked were there not people who were able to compare and contrast the idea in a high standard and intelligent fashion. They told that such people had already been sent to the hellish prison and died and that even churches had been set on fire or confiscated and turned into schools. In this way, the group of people like Adler and George Far talked about the ruthlessness of the fascist Nazi policy. They were firmly convinced that they should rescue their own country of Germany from the bog of Nazi policy where it was being stuck. At the present condition, there were military officers who did not buy the policy of Nazi and wanted to rebel. Goble and Hazit would join the Belgium army and would fight. Adler also said that since he was in a free land, he would quickly write a book about the violence and cruelty of the Nazi members so that the world would know about them. In this way the group of Adler and George Far pledged to rescue Germany with their lives from the bog where it was bogged down over sumptuous dinner and good drinks.

Evaluation

The plot of the book was divided into ten chapters and the author created five main characters in the story. Although the plots were prepared in advance, we can say that the story was natural. Because of the part in which Gobler rescued Hazit and took him to Belgium, the story was exciting to the readers. The character of Gobler was changed into a live character.

By reading this fiction, the readers could easily understand and feel the nastiness and vindictiveness of Nazi Germany. We can say that the writer was able to clearly portray her objective of writing the book.

The book *The Enemy of the World* was written by the author so that the people of Myanmar would know about the brutality and atrocities of fascist Germany. What was extraordinary was that the book was not a translation. It was written from her own literary and general knowledge and her power of observation. It was also unusual at that time that the number of copies of the book ran into six figures. What was also extraordinary was that the Information Department had bought it and published to the tune of one hundred thousand copies. We can say that the book would have been widely distributed among the masses of the Myanmar people. But since fascist Japan had yet to enter Myanmar at the time, some English sympathizers said that the book was written because of her hatred of the English people. But the author explained in details her objective of writing the book in the preface of the second edition. We can say that it was written with the intention of exposing the cruelty and brutality of a system. We can say that the reason the author could create and write such a book during that time and era was not only because of her literary and general knowledge and power of observation but also her reading of foreign books and her natural and innate ability to comment and evaluate the situation of the time. As for today, the book could serve as a reference for studying and knowing the cruelty and brutality of fascist Nazi policy.

3. Franziska Blum, Commentary on the Book Report

Dear Moe Hein Zaw,

thank you for this very interesting contribution and for making „The enemy of the world“ by Dagon Khin Khin Lay available to a wider audience. For being German myself, I am quite familiar with the topic of coming to terms with German history. Anyway, the book seems to offer a new perception of the German atrocities – the perception of a Myanmar writer who although never having been in Germany, delivers a concrete and complex picture of the society during the Nazi period.

Reading your review, I appreciated very much the background information, including the author's biography and objectives for writing the book, which is essential for better understanding the book. It is astonishing that Dagon Khin Khin Lay, as she aimed for, succeeded in letting the Myanmar people know about the atrocities and also the suffering of the German people although she wrote the book at such an early stage – even before the AFPFL came up.

The historical background, furthermore, leads to the question that was brought up reading your report. You state that „what was extraordinary was that the Information Department had bought the book and published it“. In the autobiography, however, Dagon Khin Khin Lay mentions that „an official of the Propaganda Division of the British government was possessed with an ardour to inform the public of the secret affairs of Nazism and emotions of the German people. He felt that a publication in a novel style would be more far-reaching in attracting the people than mere propaganda leaflets and newspapers.“ In fact, the British didn't simply buy the book, but instructed the writing of it.

This opens an increasingly controversial picture on her second aim and the critics the book was exposed to. Is it right to claim that Dagon Khin Khin Lay succeeds in being neutral? And didn't she support the English administration since they paid her salary? On the other hand, it would be far too easy to allow a black and white approach – as the author herself tries to avoid stating in her autobiography: „It did not say that the Nazi policy was bad and that the English government was good. It said that the colonist English policy was not good and the fascist Nazi policy was even worse.“ How does this fit in the picture that the English financed the book then? In this context, it would be very interesting to learn more about the mechanisms of the administration to better understand the room for maneuver of both Dagon Khin Khin Lay and the Nagani Book Club.

In fact, the avoidance of black and white approaches is one of the aspects I consider of rather high actuality. To have an „enemy of the world“ does not mean that the enemies of the enemy need to be your friends. However, labeling attitudes this or that is a common practise in the political daily life all around the world.

Speaking of background, I want to remark a little mistake I found in the review (it might be a mistake in the book as well). There was really an assassination attempt against Hitler in Munich, but it was not on the 9th of November in 1939, but on the 8th. Although many important dates in Germany's history happen to take place on the 9th of November, this one seems to be an exception... The attempt failed because Hitler left the beer hall earlier than usually. The assassin died in a concentration camp in 1945. Opponents of the regime in Germany and foreign countries, however, believed that the Nazis themselves organized the bomb attack in order to enforce the belief of the people that Hitler had capabilities of foreseeing events.

Finally, the brutality and cruelty and the impact on individual behavior, in my opinion, is yet another aspect, that, regrettably, is as up to date as it was, since totalitarian systems still exist in the current world.

As this project was intended to become a dialogue between the Myanmar people and foreigners, and since I am thankful to have comments and further explanatory notes, I appreciate receiving any answer.

Kind regards,

Franziska Blum, Essen, April, 22nd 2010

IV Other Material

1. Nagani's Policy will not be changed¹

(Translation: Khin Maung Saw)

There was an article in the *Thuriya* Newspaper of the 12th day of the waxing moon of the month Tabaung² with the heading "Has Nagani changed their Policy"? Upon reading that article I am obliged to answer that Nagani's Policy will be the same as (it was, as it is and it will be)³. Our Policy will never be changed.

Just for the readers' information, one has to differentiate between the Nagani Book Club and the Nagani Printing & Publishing House Ltd., or Nagani Press Ltd. As the basic policy of the Nagani Book Club is anti-imperialism, we sponsor and publish two types of books. One type is supporting the anti-imperialist ideology and movements. The other type is for general knowledge; however, in any case these books of general knowledge should not support imperialist ideology.

The books such as "Enemy of the World", "The Rays of the War", "The Picture of the World" etc. etc. were written by (Daw) *Dagon* Khin Khin Lay and sponsored by (Daw) *Dagon* Khin Khin Lay Novel House, however, Nagani Printing & Publishing House Ltd., or Nagani Press Ltd., - here I would like to emphasize that it is NOT Nagani Book Club - printed (Daw) *Dagon* Khin Khin Lay's books by order of the author and as a job of a press. She made her own statement about that in her books. Hence, the responsible person for policy and ideas of these (three) books are (Daw) *Dagon* Khin Khin Lay and her (Daw *Dagon* Khin Khin) Lay Novel House. As mentioned before, the Nagani Printing & Publishing House Ltd., (Nagani Press Ltd.) and the Nagani Book Club are not the same.

Nagani Press printed not only her political books but also many religious books as well as all kinds of invitation cards, including wedding invitations etc. etc. Since the Nagani Press needs job offers and money, they print all kinds of orders regardless of the ideology propagated by the text. The Nagani Press did its duty as a press and therefore the Nagani Book Club cannot take any responsibility for the content of those books. Before the Nagani Press was established, all books of the Nagani book Club were printed either by the Lokadan Press or Myanma Film Press. These two presses too, printed our books as the duty of a press and therefore these two presses could not take any responsibility for the ideology contained in Nagani books at that time.

In any case, in order to avoid this problem we will add a phrase "Published with full responsibility for the content by the Nagani Book Club" with the seal of Nagani Book Club in all books and articles published by our club in the future.

I hope that I have stated clearly that the policy of the Nagani Book Club has not changed.

Htun Shwe

Executive - The Nagani Book Club

Seal of the Club

"Published and taken responsibility by the Nagani Book Club"

¹ Editor's note: From back page of the booklet "World War and Burma" (Working Paper 8 of this series)

² It is approximately at the middle of March (translator's note).

³ I put in (-----) for the words or phrases which cannot be read properly in the photo copies or which I had to guess according to the sentence construction (translator's note).

2. Extract from Khin Khin Lay's Autobiography "Sixty Years" (Translation: Ye Nyunt)

Student strikes and boycotts toppled the Dr Ba Maw government and the Galon¹ U Saw government came to power. Although the government took over the administrative power, it was not independent. Named the 91 Department, it was placed under the British governor-general. Decisions on important matters were overruled by the governor-general. It was a time when arrest warrant, with a reward of K 5, was issued over Ko Aung San, the student leader, who simultaneously disappeared. Despite their humiliation of Ko Aung San (later to become Bogoyoke Aung San), no one noticed that he and his companions had risked in any possible means to escape to Japan.

The British government, after investigating the secrets of dictatorial governments, criticized them, saying dictatorship was terrible. Pointing out the secrets of Nazism, it disseminated propaganda that democracy was the right path. However, people were inclined only towards the countries which were practicing dictatorship. There were scarcely any children or adults in the political quarters who accepted the British, favouring fascism whether it was good or bad.

In the meantime, an official of the Propaganda Division of the British government was possessed with an ardour to inform the public of the secret affairs of Nazism and emotions of the German people. He felt that a publication in a novel style would be more far-reaching in attracting the people than mere propaganda leaflets and newspapers that the people sold out by weight. And so, he was looking for a writer who would write a novel with ideas that the official wanted to include.

The author he was looking for should be a person without affiliation or bias towards any particular ideology or individual. He/she should not be a political dogmatist, and must have earned a well-earned pen-name. He/she should be non-aligned to either fascism or democracy, and be balanced in his/her views on the two ideologies. The official was Division² Commissioner (Division Executive Officer) U Kyaw. At that time, U Maung Maung Pyay, working under him, had to look for the person. One day, U Maung Maung Pyay came to my apartment. His family and mine³ had been familiar to each other like close relatives. Maung Maung Pyay and Maung Maung Kyi, two brothers, were playmates of my younger brother Maung Maung.

¹ Galon is the name of a mythical bird, called Garuda.

² Myanmar is territorially divided into seven States (especially the native places of indigenous tribal groups) and seven Divisions (the native places of the main race, Bamar).

³ mine = the author's (Dagon Khin Khin Lay's)

Maung Maung Pyay told me about the Commissioner's conception, and said, "I can't think of other persons than you, Ma Ma Lay.¹ Let me bring you to the Commission so that you can discuss the matter with him. If you are pleased, you can accept it. Otherwise, you can give us your opinions so that we can make changes. If you can help us, it would serve our purpose, in two ways - informing the people of what they should know, and fulfilling a wish of the government." Thus, he would badger me like a child.

As I could not quit my habit, stuck to my bone, of calling them like "Bo Pyay" and "Bo Kyi," I happened to call him - who was in his late forties - "Bo Pyay." Just to relieve my ears, I agreed to meet the Commissioner. "Bo Pyay, I've now come with you because you badgered me. Does your Commissioner know who I am?" I said, showing my pride of not wanting the other party to look down on me.

"Of course, I've told him about you, and he has respect for you. Don't worry about that!" he responded repeatedly.

Sit Yaungchi (The Rays of War)

Just as we had settled down on the seats in a spacious room on the ground floor of the Secretariat Office (the Office of Ministers, in the Socialist era), Commissioner U Kyaw received me warmly with respect. He told me his intention. U Kyaw's Propaganda Office seemed imposing by the British system. It was a room confined only to important persons who managed affairs, separate from rooms for receiving normal guests.

Sometimes, I came across U Aye in military uniform, and sometimes, U Myint Thein, now the Chief Justice. I discussed in details the matters that Maung Maung Pyay had told me about in advance, with U Kyaw, who promised me as much honorarium as I wished to ask for the manuscripts. He said the novels would be printed into books at the printing press of my choice, and that a specific department would be opened for selling the books and for distribution to various districts.

My responsibility was not just for writing novels but also for printing and managing a circulation department that would distribute publications to all parts of the country. Each of the manuscripts would have to be printed in more than 100,000 copies. Despite the existence of a large government printing press, he entrusted all the tasks with me. This would certainly make a rapacious person mouth-water. But, I was not the sort of person who was coveted of money and instead, would be contented with my honorariums. Thus, I had to think of a printing press.

As the costs for compositing to book-binding could not be calculated without knowing the number of pages of the manuscript, I took time with cool mind for writing the manuscript. Just as I need not

¹ Ma Ma Lay = an address to a female, literally "Little elder sister."

produce my own money when the stage of printing came, so also the owners of the printing presses I chose could not afford to spend so much money as to the costs of the books to be published. But they would be coveted of the large amounts of fees they would get. The first manuscript was completed. The theme was based on world-famous Florence Nightingale, who her nursing duties relentlessly under rough circumstances, supported by real-life atrocities in the wars that Belgians and Germans fought, with all the scenes in order.

This manuscript had just over 80 pages only, which was only 5 forms (1 form = 16 pages). The cover design was to be printed on glossy paper. All the costs had been calculated. But I had not decided the printing press. U Kyaw was rather pleased with the title of my choice for the novel "Sit Yaungchi." He liked so much the plot and theme, which vividly shaped the objectives that he was in a hurry to publish it.

Here, I had to ask for the advanced money, and have the manuscript printed at the press I could trust. I was concerned that it would be my responsibility if the work could not be completed on the promised date of delivery.

It was agreed and approved to designate my apartment on Dalhousie Street (now, Anawrahta Street) as the circulation department and to put a line on the book "Published by Dagon Khin Khin Lay Printing Press." Prompted by U Kyaw, U decided to choose a printing press of my favour "Nagani Printing Press."

I am not a political fanatic, nor a chauvinist. I have not followed anyone as a disciple, but form my own moderate opinions within the reach of my knowledge and thought. I was one of the people who were in the forefront with strong ardour for regaining independence. Since I was young or since the first wave of political awakening during the GCBA¹ era surged up, I have contributed my share to the media with the might of my own pen.

However, the GCBA leaders were divided and split up while the association was high on its luck and the people in entirety had trust and reliance in it. Its internal affairs became complicated and its leaders revealed one another's involvements. All its affairs were divulged to the people in the entire country. Since then, my trust in it had collapsed. Later when political organizations which accepted diarchy or 91-Division Administration appeared, I could not form high opinions of them. In my mind, I have regarded them as those who were shouting out and loud before they got positions and as those who were vultures flying over dead dogs. To put it simply, I no longer have belief in politicians who are claiming themselves to be patriots.

¹ General Council of Buddhist Associations

The reception for H G Wells

Naturally, they would resort to various means to grab chances for position or opportunities. On my part, I presented my opinions in a plot of a novel, based on my intellect and knowledge, with the strength of my pen.

The novel "Sit Yaungchi" deals with Florence Nightingale the Great Nurse and the people of Belgium who have been put to trouble by the cruelties of the Germans. These are the truths. I entrusted the service of printing with Nagani Printing Press for the first print of 50,000 copies.

Having bought shares from the Nagani Press, it is my genuine wish for it to prosper further by making large profits. This led me to decide on working with this press. There is still one more work of mine - the novel "Kabah Yanthu" (The World's Enemy) - waiting for a print of 100,000 copies. I have also decided to have it printed at Nagani Printing Press.

Though the managers of the press -such as U Tun Shwe, U Tun Aye, etc - have changed hands, I have never known any of them. Then, I still had to contact the manager. Once I, together with a lady friend of mine, was on our way up the roofed stairway to the Shwedagon platform, when she came across a friend of hers and chatted with him briefly. That gentleman happened to be U Tun Aye, the manager of the Nagani Press. My friend, too, is a Nagani Book Association member and goes to the association to buy monthly issues.

When world-famous writer H G Wells visited Myanmar,¹ some Myanmar writers voluntarily led in going round to the Myanmar writers' houses and solicited cash donations to raise funds for holding a reception for Wells. The fund-raising team was led by writer Saya Tet Toe. I am the sort of person who does not wish to deal with the outside world. But on this occasion, though I wished to stay by myself, I hesitated to refuse their invitation to the reception, and gave my promise to attend. Even then, they assured me they would pick me up lest I might not come.

H G Wells was received with a ceremony on the lawns in front of the Myanmar Rowing Club by the Inya Lake. Early morning on that day, my lady friend came right to my house to ask me to come with her to Scotts Market (Bogyoke Aung San Market). This suited me as I had to collect a piece of silk that I had ordered from a silk shop on the west wing of the market. Though I had completed my matter, my friend could not leave the market as she went round the market, asking the price of this or that. The time to go to the H G Wells reception was drawing near. Even though I prompted her to go back, she slipped into the Nagani book shop.

¹ Most likely, the visit happened in mid 1938 as a stopover on Wells' trip to Australia where he delivered some lectures. For a summary of this journey see Michael Coren (1993) *The Invisible Man. The Life and Liberties of H.G. Wells*. London, Bloomsbury: 200-203. It would be interesting to know if the visit to Rangoon was in any way connected with Wells' affiliation to the Fabian Society which had been promoted in Burma by Deedok U Ba Choe, the early patron of Nagani.

It took a long time waiting for her from outside the shop. Then, she came out and pulled me by the arm into the shop. The man inside was none other than U Tun Aye, whom we had met at the Shwedagon. As I told him about the H G Wells reception, he said they would also go there, and asked me to come with them. My lady friend, who was not a writer, was so keen as to see H G Wells, and said she would also come along with the Nagani people.

Meanwhile, writer Khin Myo Chit came into the shop to ask about a car going to the reception. She called the manager by another name, not U Tun Aye. Only then, did I realize that my friend had introduced me to the manager by the wrong name - that of the previous manager. The present manager's name was Che-lyin Ohn Khin. My friend was rather embarrassed for her mistake.

At the same time, writer Tet Phongyi Thein Pe (Thein Pe Myint) came in. He was also about to leave for the H G Wells reception. Then, all the persons amounted to a number that snugly fit the capacity of the car - three ladies on the rear seat and three men, including the driver in the cabin.

Almost all the Myanmar writers were present at the reception by the Inya Lake. Each of them was introduced to writer Wells. At the close of the ceremony by the evening, commemorative photos were taken.

Two aims

It was accidentally that I arrived at the Nagani Book Association, and met the manager there. Since then, I had come to look for more share-holders. I persuaded people to buy Nagani shares. Sometimes, I compelled them. Very often, the manager came to me to help the association seek more funds. A share cost K 500. Thus, my association with Nagani had become close.

As Division Commissioner U Kyaw had relegated the affair of printing to me, I arranged the matter with the Nagani Printing Press and rented an apartment on Sule Pagoda Road. A clerk was appointed and assigned there. As the Nagani manager took over the matter of distribution to districts, I was relieved of other duties, having to concentrate just on writing.

While "Sit Yaungchi" was in circulation, I completed writing another novel "*Kabah Yanthu*" which had about 160 pages (about 10 forms) (1 form = 16 pages). I had submitted all the costs - for cover design, paper, compositing, printing and binding. Also included were apartment rental and salary for the clerk.

Kabah Yanthu was set with dreadful scenes in which people lived under Nazi dictator Hitler of Germany. The first chapter was opened with a setting of a family in a suburb of Munich. As I had not been to any foreign country at that time, I had to imagine the life of German people leavened with my knowledge about Nazism.

On the first page of the novel, I mention my aim as follows:

Aim

There are two aims in writing this novel. The first is to let Myanmar people see vividly how non-Nazi Germans are experiencing torture and cruelty committed by fellow Germans from the day when Nazism began to dominate the country.

The second aim is to awaken the people to a sense that national independence can be regained only by striving themselves, without hesitation as to whether masters¹ should be changed to induce the cause.

This novel has been written with scenes fitfully placed in the plot so that Myanmar people can examine with their own intellect the positive and negative aspects of Nazism.

Kabah Yanthu was printed in 100,000 copies, the first ever largest amount of circulation that reached every nook and corner across the length and breadth of the country. The distribution was so meticulous in that the copies went from the hand of each district commissioner to village-headman, from village headman to the head of 10 households, from the head of 10 households to the villagers - the complete population.

The outcome was that it drew criticisms from political extremists. Even the writer had been enlisted as a lackey of the British at a time when everyone's tendency was against whatever the British did. However, when Myanmar passed into the era of the Japanese fascism, their sense of understanding became saturated.

Pre-war mentality

When *Kabah Yanthu* novel was printed for the second time and was in circulation, U Kyaw discussed with me publication of a War Journal. As I was supposed to write one or two novels, I agreed with him. But, as the journal would have to include a variety of sectors, I told him I could not assume responsibility. According to U Kyaw, the Administrative Division would provide text and battle photos, an editor would be in hand and a Burmese-English would help do everything needed. I did not need to write but to be the publisher. It would also be printed at the government printing press. So I agreed to be the publisher.

I received Kyat 5,000 per manuscript as an honorarium. As all the costs including that of printing, transport, etc had to be withdrawn under my name and signature, I had to go to the Accountancy Commissioner's Office. What with having to discuss every matter, visiting the Accountancy Commissioner's office and U Kyaw's office, and managing the Circulation Department, I had to

¹ The word "masters" refers to the British or the fascist Japanese (translator's note).

bring the Nagani manager everywhere I went. The volume of work - circulation to many districts and a great amount of copies to be distributed - was so large that it could not be finished within a day.

Meanwhile, a book "The Japanese Spy" was brought out. In it, Japan - like axial countries - was depicted as a dreadful country like Nazi Germany. When Myanmar fell under the Japanese rule, the Kempeitai tortured the author of "The Japanese Spy" to death.

A thought crossed my mind that if it had been Nazi Germany that occupied Myanmar, instead of Japanese, I would have met the same fate. Located far from Myanmar, Germans could not reach Myanmar easily. The Japanese, who live on the same stretch of land with the Chinese, could easily access Myanmar. Their secret connections with Myanmar politicians made it easier to do so. Thus, the Japanese were welcomed with a great hope of reliance. People had thought that they would help Myanmar drive out the British and duly hand over national independence. Political extremists too slammed "The Japanese Spy." Only when these people had first-hand encounter with the Japanese, who peeled the nails off the fingers and poured boiled water on them, were they disillusioned. What followed was the secret plotting to stage another revolution. Myanmar at that time looked like "the monkey that was hit on the head once by the previous master-monk, yet 100 times by the present master-monk."¹ At that time, the British and Americans, who had come to gain military advantages, secretly offered their hands to help dislodge the Japanese.

Politics has its turns with perverse nature. There were many persons who have had pre-war, war and post-war experiences in which they pretended to love ones they disliked. My plots are a presentation of pre-war situations. When distribution of "Kabah Yanthu" was completed, War Journals came out. The Nagani manager could not deal with accounts properly, and so he had to settle the accounts often with Division Commissioner U Kyaw.

Even among the Executive Committee members of the Nagani Association, there were divisions over publication of *Kabah Yanthu* and *The Japanese Spy*. It was my mere wish to add to the funds of the association. The novels were not published by it.

From same intentions to being life-long partners

As I was not a member of the Nagani Committee, I did not know its internal affairs. I was just an outside share-holder. The outbreak of divided opinions among the leading members was heard from the Nagani manager who was groaning about it.

¹ Jumping out of the frying pan into the fire.

Coming across a person wishing to sell a 3-colour printing press, I purchased it with my own money. Then I rented it to Nagani at Kyat 50 per month. My intention was to establish Dagon Khin Khin Lay Publishing House with my own press.

In the meantime, I was so busy that affairs of Dagon Magazine¹ was relegated to the new employees. Poor relations of the employees caused failures to receive manuscripts from contributors. Hence, I decided to write novels by setting up an own printing press.

EC members of Nagani Books Association, led by Thakin Nu, were not pleased with the present manager, who resigned a few days later. As the manager came to my house very often and our relations became close, and also because we were in the same boat of literary world and had same opinions about money-making business, we soon became life-long partners. It was not for carnal desires on which our marriage was based. There were other factors—same minds, same hobbies and same aims.

Soon afterwards, we rented a two-storey house on 47th Street in Eastern Yangon. The upstairs was to be our residence and the downstairs was to be seat of the printing press. I purchased assets such as lead types, their containers and accessories for the printing press with the money saved with my honorariums from writing manuscripts and film scripts. I brought back the printing press hired to Nagani.

Taing-pyu Pyi-pyu Printing Press

Having spent all my money on setting up the printing press, I asked my husband to withdraw my shares from Nagani, but he said he had already withdrawn them and used them up to repay his debts when he left the job. For that, I had to forgive him. When all the necessary things had been procured for the printing press, we had to hire employees, most of whom were those who had transferred from the Nagani press.

The printing press had been registered under the Printing Press Law with the owner's name "Dagon Khin Khin Lay." An advertisement was inserted in the Myanmar Alin and Thuriya newspapers. Since the press was launched, I had to pick up my pen again. Tables were lined up in the office room—for me, a clerk, a foreman, and a peon. I instantly wrote down the manuscript. Once I finished writing one page, I handed it to the compositors. Before they completed compositing it, I had to finish another page. Only when I could race against time, I had more time to look after other things such as checking ledgers and correspondence with agents in rural areas.

At that time, a novel written by a well-known writer was priced 8 pennies, which is an equivalent of K 3 today. The 8-penny novels sold so well that sales agents in Yangon waited in a queue, holding

¹ Dagon Magazine was published by the author, Dagon Khin Khin Lay (translator's note).

banknotes in their hands, on the day an advertisement appeared in the newspaper. Sometimes, the agents jostled one another to grab copies of a novel that arrived on a two-wheeled man-drawn cab from the binding section. So we had to intervene so that every agent got a fair amount of copies.

I was so busy - writing on the one hand and seeing to overall work on the other. However, as the business was my hobby, I did not feel tired, and instead, I felt pleased with myself. The novel "Gon Myint Thu," the first book published by my printing press, attracted so many readers that it had to be printed three times.

3. Centennial anniversary of first woman writer's birth honoured¹

By Khin Nyein Aye Than



THE International Business Centre hall filled with nearly 100 guests to commemorate the centennial anniversary of the birth of Myanmar's first woman writer, Daw Dagon Khin Khin Lay, on February 20.

Born on February 20, 1904 – the year Myanmar's first novel Maung Yin Maung and Ma Me Ma, by James Hla Kyaw, appeared in print, Daw Dagon Khin Khin Lay went on to become a leader in the literary world, a role model to women and the author of more than 500 short stories and 15 books, including her famous autobiography, Sarsodaw (The royal laureate) and Yadanar Bone Ni Dan hnint Ni Gone (The start and end of Yadanar Bone era).

Daw Dagon Khin Khin Lay passed away 23 years ago, but her family and fellow members of the Myanmar literary community celebrated her birthday without her.

She seemed to smile and greet the event's attendees as a large portrait of her loomed over the stage.

"I don't want to talk about her on this day. It hurts me too much," said author Daw Saw Mone Nyin during her speech.

Despite her sorrow, she spoke fondly of the late writer.

"Ma Ma Khin [Big sister Khin] was the one born with literature. She devoted all of her time to literature until her death," she said.

Daw Saw Mone Nyin quoted a Western newspaper that described her as "the first lady of Burmese literature, and still the queen of Burmese literature for nearly half the century."

She had also written a *ratu* (verse), which was recited by Myanmar classical singer Yi Yi Thant. The hall fell silent as Yi Yi Thant rhythmically presented the *ratu* with Myanmar harp.

The ceremony's brochure says that Daw Dagon Khin Khin Lay learned about Myanmar literature and history from her grandfather, Wet Ma Sut Min, who was an expert in these subjects during the Myanmar royal era.

At age 13 she wrote her first short story, Nwe Nwe, for *Thurira* magazine, then the most well-known magazine in Myanmar. It won first prize in their short story contest, and she continued to write for *Thurira* using the pen name Khin Khin Lay.

¹ Myanmar Times 11, 206, 1.-7. March 2004 (<http://www.myanmar.gov.mm/myanmartimes/no206/MyanmarTimes11-206/019.htm>).

“She left school when she was only in the seventh standard. But her knowledge is enormous compared to her school education. One day, I found a lot of dictionaries at her home. She said that she learned by heart at least 10 new English words a day from the dictionary. That’s why she could translate well some English novels,” said her niece Yu Waddy Daw Khin Sein Hlaing.

Daw Dagon Khin Khin Lay also wrote stories for the prominent magazine Dagon, which led to the addition in her pen name.

“Daw Daw Khin was the first female novel writer and also the first female script writer,” said Daw Khin Sein Hlaing, referring to about 20 scripts she wrote for the A1 Film Company since 1930.

After World War II, she became the first woman in Myanmar to publish a newspaper, the Bama Khit (Myanmar’s era). She also founded the Yu Waddy journal in October 1946 and the Yu Waddy Women Writers Association in December 1947.

At the ceremony, group photos of Yu Waddy writers were shown as well as one of Daw Dagon Khin Khin Lay with the American author of The Good Earth, Pearl S. Buck, during her trip to the United States in 1953.

Myanmar artist U Yé Sein spoke about Daw Dagon Khin Khin Lay’s interest in Myanmar art and appreciation of Mahar Gita (Myanmar classical music).

According to the ceremony’s brochure, she funded the construction of the first elevator and a small pagoda at Shwedagon Pagoda. Her nieces said that most of her diamonds, gems and gold were donated there.

A plastic fan was distributed at the ceremony with pictures of Daw Dagon Khin Khin Lay and her book covers. It reads, “May you always be the queen of the Myanmar literary world every life before you reach Nirvana.”

VII. Appendices

Appendix 1

SHORT INFORMATION on the MAKING of the BOOK REPORTS

CHOSEN BOOKS from the bibliography will be provided on a lending basis by the manager [or for people in Myanmar through the Myanmar Book Centre in Yangon (55 Baho Road; telephone 221- TWO REPORTS on each book by different persons are accepted.

LENGHT: 8,000 to 12,000 words (plus special space, if desired);

LANGUAGE of PUBLICATION: English; manuscripts in Myanmar language will be translated;

CRITERIA (must not slavishly be observed):

1. Biographical information about the author/translator, and other contributors;
2. Information about the non-Myanmar sources used in the book; (if the book is a translation, the original English version will be provided, too, if possible;)
3. Summary of the book's contents;
4. Information about the special aim and intended impact of the book at the time of publication;
5. How are foreign terms and concepts translated or transformed into the Myanmar language and the Myanmar context? (May be omitted!)
6. Personal assessment by the reviewer of the book, its impact on later times and its meaning for today

DEADLINE of DELIVERY of the REPORT: December 31, 2005 (the deadline can be extended);

DELIVERY of the REPORTS DRAFTED: Directly to the manager of the project by email or through the Myanmar Book Centre.

COMMENTS and EDITING: The reports will be commented upon by another person. The reviewer may react on the comments and answer the questions as he or she likes. The responsibility for the final editing of the reports is with the project manager.

REWARD: As a financial reward, each reviewer will receive 50 US \$ at the time of submitting the book report and 30 US \$ after the final editing.

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS like recollections of elder people, who remember the impact of Nagani on their life, and essays on subjects related to the club (Nagani Song, Nagani Magazine, the role of literature in disseminating knowledge in Myanmar, etc.) are very much appreciated.

Appendix 2

INFORMATION about COMMENTARIES on BOOK REPORTS

1. The commentaries asked for shall serve two aims

First (and most important): To start a dialogue on Myanmar's intellectual and literary heritage between interested people inside and outside of Myanmar.

Second (and important, too): To check the clarity of the report with regard to the intended publication.

Therefore, the commentator should be interested in Burma affairs and in the general topic of the respective book, but must not know anything about its specific content.

2. Length of each commentary: Must not exceed the space of this paper.

3. Some hints that may be useful to observe in writing a commentary:

Are there any questions that are brought up by reading the report?

If yes, what kind of questions do arise?

Are the criteria listed in the “Short information on the making of book reports” (see attachment) met by the book report?

What information on the book report do I find interesting/exciting or unnecessary/redundant?

Is there anything that I would recommend to the author of the report?

Delivery of the commentary: It would be appreciated if the commentaries could be sent by email to the above mentioned email address. If the author of the report chooses to react on the commentary, the commentator will be informed.

Affairs to come: All participants will be informed about the development of the publishing process of the reports and are invited to participate in future deliberations and activities. - Questions and recommendations are very much appreciated.



Starting with an investigation into the NAGANI BOOK CLUB

The project's
Working Papers
are published by
the **Department of Southeast Asian Studies of Passau University**

Already Published:

- No. 10:1, An Introduction into the Nagani Book Club
- No. 10:1.1, Additional Material on Nagani
- No. 10:2, Thein Pe, *Saya Lun* and *Member of Parliament*
- No. 10:3, Ba Hein and Hla Shwe on Capitalism
- No. 10:4, Thein Pe, *Student Boycotters* (Two Volumes)
- No. 10:4.1, Additional Material on Students, Society and Politics
- No. 10:5, Ba Khaing, *Political History of Myanma*
- No. 10:6, Nu, *Gandalarit*
- No. 10:7, Mogyo, *José Rizal*
- No. 10:8, Three Books on World War and Burma
- No. 10:9, Two Works on the History of the Russian Revolution
- No. 10:10, Soe, *Socialism* and Chit Hlaing, *Memories*
- No. 10:11, Ba Hein, *Students' Revolution*
- No. 10:12, Thein Pe, *Indo-Burman Riot*
- No. 10:13, Two Political Dictionaries
- No. 10:14, Thandwe Maung, *Asoka* and Tun Shein, *First Hand Experience of India*
- No. 10:15, Four Books about Germany
- No. 10:100, Papers Presented at the Burma Studies Conference, Singapore 2006

Some Nagani Books
were scanned and are available on CD.
For details contact
habezett@t-online.de

All Working Papers published until now are available
at
<http://www.zoellner-online.org/mlp.htm>
and at the Online Burma Library
<http://www.burmalibrary.org/show.php?cat=2083>

INVITATION

Readers are invited to participate in the project by

- writing **comments and criticisms** on the contents of this and other volumes of this series;
- contributing **essays** on Burmese/Myanmar literature as a medium between the international world and Burmese society;
- providing **material** that sheds more light on the Nagani Book Club, its context and impact on Burmese intellectual and literary life;
- offering **assistance** as translators and commentators of book reports.

For contributions and questions, please contact:

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