

Indigenous Collaboration: The Case Study of the Myanmar Hluttaw (1885-1886)*

Myo Oo**

I. Introduction

This study re-examines the indigenous collaboration in Myanmar, studying the case of Myanmar Hluttaw practiced in Upper Myanmar in 1886.

Thamine Thutethana Uzihtana, the Department of Historical Research (DHR), is the national historical research department, which succeeded the former historical research institutes and is taking the leading role in the social science academic arena in Myanmar. It has mainly focused on Myanmar history and published books and articles under the supervision of the Myanmar Historical Commission (MHC). The MHC, which had been established on 26 January 1955 by the former prime minister U Nu, modelling the Indian Historical Records

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** HK Research Professor, Institute for Southeast Asian Studies, Busan University of Foreign Studies.

Commission (Kyaw Nyein 2004, 1), is the most authorized historical research institute in the independent Myanmar. The unexpected turns in Myanmar politic in 1962 had moved the Commission's preposition from the Prime Minister Office to the Ministry of Culture. Under the Ministry of Culture, the title of the MHC had also been changed to the Nainggan Thamine Thutethana Uzihtana (The Department of the State Historical Research) on 28 September 1972. The department under the new title was performed research activities under the Ministry of Culture from 1972 to 1984 (Kyaw Nyein 2004, 4). Though the department has been changed names and aim under the distinctive period, the present research will focus on the articles published by the department during this period, by the reason mentioned later.

During this period, the department had published five research journals and five books, which all of them are scholarly respectable. Of the publications of the department, though all Myanmar historical periods were covered, more than half of them focuses on the modern Myanmar history. Of the publications, the research on the historical events happened after the Third Anglo-Myanmar War (1885), have taken the most part of the publication. Regarding the Hluttaw performed between 1885 and 1886, the department had published four articles in the series of its research bulletins titled *Researches in Burmese History*, and two books. Therefore, it should be assumed that the writing of the Hluttaw might be called a heat debate since this account has been published in three bulletins out of the five and in the two books out of five, by the department (Kyaw Nyein 2004, Appendix 5).

The researchers who had participated in the heat debate are U Hla Thein and Daw Kyan: both of them were Research Officers in the branch of the Colonial Period. U Hla Thein, who had an educational background in the United Kingdom, published certain articles and Daw Kyan has contributed a number of research articles and books on the British Colonial Period. Their researches debate on the account of the Hluttaw are as follows.

U Hla Thein documented the process of British administration in Upper Myanmar in his first article presenting the account of the Hluttaw, entitled “Ahtet Myanmar Pyi hnite Byitisha Okechoke-ye Pannet-chapon (The Introduction of British Administration in Upper Myanmar (1886))” in *Researches in Burmese History* 1 (1977). In this article, he simply documented the initiation of the British Administration in Upper Myanmar. In his next article titled “Myanma-min Hluttaw go Byitisha-do phyat-thein-singa” (How the eradication of the Myanmar King’s Hluttaw by the British) in *Researches in Burmese History* 3 (1979), he narrated the account of the Hluttaw stating how it came to an end when the British started the civil administration in Upper Myanmar (1979,67-80). In *Researches in Burmese History* 5, the final bulletin of the department, Hla Thein published his revised and English version article entitled “The Introduction of British Administration in Upper Myanmar (1885-1886)” with slightly different title only in the period (179-202). He, in this article, portrays the scenery of British administration which started immediately after the annexation of Upper Myanmar from a rather moderate perspective, including a wide discussion of the case of Hluttaw (181-202). In short, from the imperial historical

perspective, he has embraced the initiation of the British administration in Upper Myanmar as an alternative way led by the administrative crisis at the time being.

Responding his second article, Daw Kyan has published an article titled “Lord Dufferin Mandalay tho Laryork Khesinga” (When Lord Dufferin Visited Mandalay) in *Researches in Burmese History* 4 (1979). Daw Kyan is one of the leading Arakanese intellectuals and an outstanding researcher who has published many scholarly respectable works in the colonial period. Like other research articles and books of Kyan, she holds the post-colonial perspective in this article. In this article, she has criticized the Dufferin’s eradication of the Hluttaw that it was his performance to fulfill the will of the merchants in Yangon and England who were calling for the occupation of Upper Myanmar (Kyan 1979a, 176). It is, thus, needed to grasp the reason why the Hluttaw collaborated, even immediately after the annexation the Third War, in order to understand the indigenous collaboration of the Myanmar noblemen.

As mentioned above, the focus of the Hla Thein’s articles and the Kyan’s focus on the introduction of British administration and the eradication of the Hluttaw from the different perspectives. Since the focuses of the above mentioned articles are primarily set on the reason why the Hluttaw came to an end, the reason why the Hluttaw had been allowed to collaborate the British administration immediately after the occupation in the Upper Myanmar, has been portrayed faintly. The aim of this article is to re-examine the historical formation of the indigenous collaboration of the Hluttaw, composed of Myanmar noblemen, to the British administration. In short, while

the Hla Thein's articles and the Kyan's have paid emphasis on the conception of the British administration in 1886, the current study aims to fill the gap in the post-colonial discourses in Myanmar studies presenting the historical formation of the indigenous collaboration of the Hluttaw to the British administration between 1885 and 1886.

This study adopts a discursive analysis to re-examine the reasons why the Hluttaw, composed of the grandees of Myanmar King's Court, had collaborated to the colonial administration during the immediately after the annexation of the British in Upper Myanmar. For this purpose, this study uncovers the historical background which paved the way for the indigenous collaboration of the Hluttaw led by the intellectual Myanmar court officials.

II. Indigenous Collaboration in Myanmar Context

In the post-colonial discourse, it is well known that the function of agents and indigenous collaborators are largely discussed. Since 1980s, Ronald Robinson has firstly found the indigenous collaboration adopting a peripheral approach which had challenged the Eurocentric theories of Imperialism. Robinson has uncovered the role of "the Europeanized collaborator" in imperial rule which had been ignored by the imperial historians, showing the importance of indigenous collaboration in the process of establishing imperial rule (1981). Edward Said, a famous scholar of literature, has also suggested a concept which is distinctive other and us in the western gaze. Said pointed out the requirements of a mutual understanding

of both sides in his seminal work “Orientalism” (1977). Recently, Homi Bhabha designed a psychoanalytical approach in colonial discourse which focuses on the psychological complexities of the colonial relationship tracing the post-colonial identity formation. Bhabha’s research stresses the function of “mimic men” and “intermediary” or “broker” that played the vital role in the process of transnational entanglement by crossing cultural boundaries. In addition, the words of “hybridity” and “in between space” have also been conceptualized on the emphasis on the reciprocal complexities of the colonial encounter and the innovative sites of collaboration (Bhabha 1994). In short, in the writing of cultural history, the role of indigenous collaborator should not be ignored.

In Myanmar studies, there are only two research works on the indigenous collaboration. In his article entitled “Other Colonial Studies: The Historical Development of Ethnic Relations in Burma and Construction of Coloniality among the Karen,” Lee Sang Kook pays an attention to a particular context where the importance of the understanding of the historical formation of coloniality in association with the Karen, revealing the limitations of Homi Bhabha’s approach (Lee 2012). The other work on the indigenous collaborators in Myanmar is the Thant Myint-U’s famous book title *The Making of Modern Burma*. In this book, though Thant Myint-U has hinted the collaboration of the Huttaw as a local collaborator in a few lines, by giving a reason for the abolishing of the monarchy in the Upper Myanmar (Thant Myint-U 2012, 7), he has primarily emphasized on the British officials’ attempt finding local intermediaries in Upper Myanmar to replace local administrators within the context of the

very substantial changes in a small section of Chapter Eight (210-218) titled “The Searching of Intermediaries.” While Lee’s articles focus on the collaboration of Karen ethnic and Thant Myint-U on that of individuals in Upper Myanmar, there is another case of indigenous collaboration with the British administration in Colonial Myanmar, that is, the case of the Hluttaw composed of King Thibaw’s officials.

Unlike above mentioned cases of agents in colonial Myanmar, in Myanmar historical context, the stance of the Hluttaw was that it was an attempt expected to practice a new governing system in Myanmar under a new Myanmar king enthroned by the British authority. A group of King Thibaw’s ministers were reformists, composed of ministers and officials, intellectual noblemen in the Myanmar court, and the reformists led the court, the Hluttaw which collaborated to the British administration immediately after the Third Anglo-Myanmar War (1885). Though the collaboration had performed only four months, since the court took the position of the Supreme Court during the transitional period in Mandalay, at least in reality, the case of Hluttaw should be re-examined.

As shortly introduced in the introduction, the scholars have described the reason why the Hluttaw came to an end in the early part of 1886. The purpose of this article is to expand and deepen the indigenous collaboration through the Hluttaw in 1886, tracing the historical background of modernization, its limitation and the attempts of the reformists, which led the performance the Hluttaw as an intermediary in the administration of Upper Myanmar. By the term reformists, borrowed from Thant Myint-U, in this article means the officials who had tasted western education and who had witnessed

western governance in the diplomatic missions to Europe and who wanted to reform the administration pattern into the western line.

Ⅲ. The Modernization and its Limitation in the Mandalay Palace

It is possible to see the one reason why Myanmar intellectuals tried to modernize their own country in the Yadanabon Period in the article entitled “Yadanabon Setyon-mya” (Yadanabon Factories) by Daw Kyan Kyan published in *the Union of Burma Literary and Social Journal* as follows:

The effects such as the loss of the Lower Myanmar to the British after the two Anglo-Myanmar wars, the closer relation with the western countries which have already developed in industry, and the condition which has been closed the danger of occupation by the imperialist, made Myanmar realized that, for the survival of their own country, they have to try for the development of their country (Kyan 1988, 140).

For this purpose, Myanmar intellectual led by the kings had attempted to modernize the kingdom building factories (Kyan 1988, 140-179) and trying to change the administrative system during the Yadanabon period (Achepeya 1977, 97).

A. The Modernization

Modernization in this context means industrialization and administrative reform. The awareness of the British imperialism paved the way for the industrialization and administrative reform in Upper Myanmar led by Myanmar leaders, exactly King Mindon, his smaller brother, Crown Prince Kananung, and the court officials (Maung Htin 1992, 43).

Since the time of King Mindon, some Myanmar diplomatic missions were sent to India and Europe for the purposes of buying-selling. The first mission sent to the British territories was to Bengal at the end of 1854 led by Mingyi Minkaung Yaza, the second was to London led by the Kingwun Mingyi in March 1872 (Woodman 1962, 158-159, 192). The third mission to Bengal was by the Kingwun Mingyi in November 1875. In addition to the British territory, King Mindon sent the missions to Paris led by Maha Minhtin Yaza on 26 February 1856 (Vivian Ba 1962, 21) and the second mission led by Kingwun Mingyi on 7 March 1874 (Nisbet 1901, 38). During the missions, Myanmar officials had got a chance to study the development of Western countries. Having seen the development of the West triggered the establishment of industrialization in Upper Myanmar.

The first and foremost attempt of industrialization by the Myanmar court was sending state scholars to the European countries and India, which had been a part of the British Empire, to study technology for the modernization of their country. On the account of the state scholars sent abroad during the Yadanabon Period, there are three

articles, namely, “Shega Pyinnya-thin-mya” (State Scholars in Old Days) in *Myawaddy Magazines* (November 1969) by Maung Maung Tin, “State Scholars during the Late Konbaung Peiod” in *The Cultural Bulletin* (September 1961, 59-73) by Daw Kyan, and “The list of the State Scholars” in *the Journal of Burma Research Society* (1979, 42 (1) 2: 95-102) by Kyan. While Maung Maung Tin has narrated about the six students who had been sent to a school in Calcutta in his article, Kyan has described about the 20 state scholars in her first article and listed up the other 32 state scholars sent to the western countries and India in her next article. In the Tin Naing Toe's book entitled *The Dictionary of the Court Officials*, the countries in which King Mindon had sent his students are documented. According to this book, the students were sent to Shimla, to France in 1862 and 1865, to Kolkata in 1863, to England in 1869 and 1870 (Tin Naing Toe 2012, 71-72, 115, 116, 184). The total amount of state scholars have been guessed 90 who sent abroad for their studying during the time of King Mindon (Maung Htin 1992, 44).

Tracing back the list of schools would help study the purpose of sending state scholars of Myanmar kingdom. Generally, the state scholars had studied in language schools first and moved to other technical schools such as law schools and gun factories. Students sent according to this order were Maung Kyan Thee, Maung Than, Maung Shwe Yoe, Maung Tha Ku, Maung Shin, Maung Tha Kan, Maung Bo Kaung, Maung Nyo Yaung, Maung Saung, Maung Nyo, Maung Kan Ye, Maung Shwe Kywin, Maung Lu Hla, Maung Ya Hnone, Maung Khwe, Maung Hme, Maung Thaug, Maung Pan Zan, Maung Lu Tha and Maung Kya to study in Calcutta, Indian. Some of them

had got a chance to study in law schools and some in gun factories in India (Kyan 1988, 145). Other students, such as Maung Boe It, Maung Boe Seo, Maung Tun Lin, Maung Boe Htin, Maung Nyo, Maung Phyu, Maung Inn sent to Bengal in 1974, also studied English language, first, and then moved to technical schools, military academies and law schools (Kyan 1988, 145-146). Maung Myu sent to France studied chemistry (Kyan 1988, 145). The student sent to England had also studied in gun factories (Kyan 1988, 145). Thus studying technical schools and law schools were main purpose of the state scholars sent by the Myanmar king.

With the help of foreign technicians, King Mindon, Prince Kanaung and the court officials, built over 50 factories in Upper Myanmar with the aims of the modernization of the country (Maung Htin 1992, 43). Of the factories which had been established during the Yadanabon Period, the nine factories which have been documented are the Gun Factory, the Weaving Factory, the Dock, the Saw Mill, the Iron Factory, the Sugar Mill, the Mint, the Indigo Factory, the Sagaing Iron Factory (Kyan 1988, 140-141). In addition to them, there were four gun factories in Mandalay (Kyan 1988, 151). In gun factories, there were about 100 workers, including 12 Indians (Kyan 1988, 150). In these gun factories, not only Burmese technicians who studied in the Indian and western countries, but also foreigner technician also worked (Kyan 1988, 148). Mr. Glass, the technician who led the producing cannon in the gun factories (Kyan 1988, 149). Building these factories was a dream of Myanmar leaders at that time.

When the students came back to the country, they had served as officials. Working in respective department, they had translated since

and technology books from foreign language into Myanmar. Some title of translated books were geology, mineralogy, zoology, anatomy, physiology, chemistry, history, moral history, natural history, geography, mathematics, arithmetic, plane geometry, solid geometry, spherical geometry, algebra, mensuration, architecture, plane trigonometry, spherical trigonometry, astronomy, navigation, military (science), machinery and etc... (Maung Htin 1992, 44-46).

One of the purposes sending state scholars abroad was to administer factories. For this purpose, King Thibaw sent state scholars to India, Italy, France and England (Kyan 1988, 144). The students, therefore, performed as the court officials when they came back to the Upper Myanmar, for example, Maung Myu became famous as Thangyet Wundauk Mingyi Minhla Maha Sithu after he came back to Myanmar (Kyan 1988, 145).

It is a vital important factor that British imperialism directly stimulated the industrialization in Upper Myanmar. Next small section, the reason how the experience of Myanmar diplomats in the West made the industrialization in Upper Myanmar will be discussed.

B. The Limitation of the Modernization in the Mandalay Palace

There was an event which triggered the modernization led by the Myanmar leaders. It was Kinwun Mingyi's Diary which enlightened King Mindon, his smaller brother Crown Prince Kanaung and the court officials. Kingwun Mingyi recorded his diary (later known as the Kingwun Mingyi's Diary, and which has been translated by Bagshaw

in 2006) in his mission to England in 1873. Thanks to the Kinwun Ming's Diary, King Mindon and the Myanmar court officials could have got a chance to learn the development of England in this diary. They regarded the development of the England as it has been a merit of legislating the constitutional monarchy and tried to reform the administrative system practicing in the Myanmar kingdom replacing the absolute monarchy by the constitutional one (*Achepya* 1977, 60, 97). It was the departure of the reformation in Myanmar king's court. The reformation itself did not, however, support the reform will be discussed in this small section.

In the early part of the administrative transformation, King Mindon had initiated a salary system in 1861, abolishing the system which granted towns and villages to the ministers and royal lineages as their appendages. The salary system limited the income of hereditary officers such as Myosa, Ywasa and court officials, and the system invited the dissatisfaction of these officials (*KBZ* iii, 299-295). By the initiation of the salary system in Myanmar court, there was a big difference between the high ranking officials such as the king, the queen, the ministerial officials, and staffs in low level. While the salary of the King Thibaw was between 60,000 to 70,000 rupees, that of a low rank staff was six or seven rupees. The difference between the highest and the lowest salary amounted to 10,000:1 (*Achepya* 1977, 92). Though the salary system was a part of the administrative reform, it made big difference between officials and staffs in terms of income.

Though the salary system was not successful, King Mindon had succeeded in establishing new four departments such as the

department of manufacturing, the department of defense, the department of agriculture and the department of treasury (Maung Htin 1992, 68-69). In addition, he tried to legislate codes to prevent corruption in the courts, since he had learned that the case increased since the time of King Pagan, his brother (Yi Yi 1962, 11). Moreover, he had tried to help his subjects in their civil and criminal cases, enacting new laws and regulations which seems to prevent the corruptions of judges and officials in the court (Ohn Kyi 2004, 87).

King Mindon passed away on 1 October 1878, without preparing his successor. Thus, choosing a new king became a very important term for the reformists. Kinwun Mingyi, leaders of the reformists, aimed to adopt a proper administrative system of ministries along the Western lines (Thant Myint-U 2004, 158). In short, for the purpose of administrative reformation in Upper Myanmar, Kinwun Mingyi and his followers agreed with the Middle Palace Queen who has no son, but was ambitious, choosing Prince Thibaw, who was in love with a daughter of the Queen, as the king. The death of King Mindon in the midst of administrative reformation, made King Thibaw enthrone and led to the end of Myanmar kingdom.

Transformations in the administration continued in the time of King Thibaw. The first attempt of Thibaw was to extend the department and the amount of department increased from ten to fourteen on 11 November 1878. Some of these departments, however, were not last long and some were abolished in March 1879, after five months of their establishment. After that, nine departments had been set up for the administration of the King Thibaw (*Okechokepon* iii, 242). Due to the reason that the administration was not able to work, the new

administration, which composed of ten departments had been set up again in 1883. In this way the administration at the time of Thibaw was not stable (*Okechokepon* iii, 242). Though transformations in the administration in Myanmar kingdom was modeled the British constitutional monarchy through the Kingwun Mingyi's Diary, since the Kingwun Mingyi, the leader of the reformist wing, did not well understand it, the constitutional monarchy incorporated to the Myanmar became conflict with the absolute monarchy which settled down in the kingdom (*Achepya* 1977, 97).

In this way, the reformists' expectation could not appear under the reign of King Thibaw, who was a weak king, and Suphaya Latt, who was a strong-welled Queen. In order to educate, therefore, Yawmingyi U Boe Hlaing, a leading reformist, wrote a large collection of essays for the young king. It is *Raza Dhama Thingaha Kyan* or "Treaties on the Compassionate Disposition of Righteous Government." According to Thant Myint-U, this book limits the royal authority and argued in favor of constitutional government. It was an exhortation to Thibaw to rule through the cabinet and in the interest for all subjects and to consider even wider-ranging political reforms (Thant Myint-U 2004,159). The reformists' aim could not come true again.

The reformist, who could not fulfill their ambition, indulged in fantasy while the British had not yet decided the future administration of Upper Myanmar after the Third Anglo-Myanmar War. This attempt of the reformists led to the collaboration of the Hluttaw composed of the Myanmar noblemen.

IV. The Third War and Indigenous Collaboration

British annexation of Upper Myanmar within a very short time paved the way for the administrative crisis creating an almost entirely new administration. Regarding the difficulty of the British force in the administration, Browne has given a reason that due to the British had conquered the Myanmar in a short period, they had no room to prepare the administration of Upper Myanmar immediately after the Third Anglo-Myanmar War (Browne 1888, 288). Quoting his statement, Myanmar scholars Hla Thein and Kyan relate their articles on the abolishment of the Hluttaw or the introduction of British administration in Upper Myanmar (Hla Thein 1979, 68; Kyan 1979a, 161).

A. The Third Anglo-Myanmar War and Traditional Myanmar Political Culture

It is worth studying a brief history of the wars between the Myanmar kings and the British in order to understand the colonization process by the British in Myanmar step by step.

Myanmar totally waged three wars with the British. The expansion of the Myanmar kingdom to the west during the Konbaung period encountered the threat of the British imperialism. The root cause of the First Anglo-Myanmar War (5 March 1824-24 February 1826) based on the affairs happened in border areas between the British India and the Myanmar kingdom such as Manipur, Cachar and Arakan. These clashes led the First Anglo-Myanmar War (Maung

Maung Tin 1967, 369-425). On 5 March 1824, Ford William declared war on the Myanmar kingdom and the war ended with the defeat of Myanmar army, giving the British total control of Assam, Manipur, Cachar and Jaintia and Arakan Province and Tanintharyi. In addition to the loss of these areas to the British, the Myanmar was also forced to pay an indemnity of one million pounds sterling and sign a commercial treaty (Htin Aung 1967, 214-215).

The Second Anglo-Myanmar War was started on 5 April and end on 20 December 1852. In December 1851, the governor of Yangon fined the captains and two crews 1,000 rupees for the reported customs violations. Dissatisfying the judgment, the Indian Governor-General Lord Dalhousie dispatched two vessels of Royal Navy with an ultimatum that the Myanmar governments rescind the fine and the governor should be immediately removed. Though the Myanmar government accepted the terms, on 18 February 1852, Dalhousie sent a new ultimatum, demanding four items including one million rupees to cover the costs of having had to prepare for war (Banerjee 1947, 13). Without waiting for the reply from Myanmar, joint British naval and ground forces seized Yangon, Patheingyi, Mottama (Banerjee 1947, 14), and Pegu (Thein 1967, 151). In December, the areas Yangon, Pegu and Pyi, later Lower Myanmar, were declared as the newly occupied territory and it became a new province of the British Burma (Thant Myint-U 2004, 23).

The Third Anglo-Myanmar broke out from 14 to 19 November 1885, last only 15 days. The root cause of the war was the British business interest. As a reason of the succession crisis in Upper Myanmar in 1878, the official diplomatic relations between the

countries all stopped. The British soon became concerned about contacts between Myanmar and France during the 1880s. In May 1883, a high-level Myanmar delegation left for Europe. Officially it was to gather industrial knowledge, but they made negotiations with the high level French officials in Paris. In 1885, the French officials tried to establish French Bank in Burma, a concession for a railway from Mandalay to the northern border of British Burma (Nisbet 1901, 74). The immediate cause of the Third Anglo-Myanmar War was on the dispute between the Bombay-Burma Timber Corporation and Myanmar officials. The timber company was fined 300,000 rupees by the Taungoo Forest Office on 12 August 1885. On 30 October, the India Governor-General immediately sent an ultimatum which the Myanmar court could not be acceptable. When the Myanmar authority did not accept the demands, the British expeditionary forces crossed the borderline on 13 November 1885 (Nisbet 1901, 84-85). Though there were serious fighting in Minhla, Gwegyang and around Sinbaungwe, the British occupied Mandalay on 28 November. The result of the war was King Thibaw of Myanmar was exiled to India and Upper Myanmar became a part of British Myanmar.

The condition immediately after the war led the misunderstanding in the Upper Myanmar, based on traditional Myanmar political culture. A famous author and political critic, Kyaw Win, has summarized the traditional political culture of Myanmar in his book entitled “*Case Studies of Myanmar Politic (1948-1988)*”. In his book, he has shared his finding that “if one reconsider Myanmar history, he would often see revolutions led by *min-long* (king-to-be) respective historical periods. It makes the attachment of *min-long hmyaw wada*

(the concept of look-for-king-to-be) (or millenarianism), a tradition which looks forward to a *min-long*, from the heart of one who had dissatisfied his ruler” (Kyaw Win 2012, 19).

Kyan has also described the traditional political culture of Myanmar in her book entitled “*the State in Myanmar 1885-1886*,” informing the condition of the people under misapprehension in 1885 and 1886 (Kyan 1978). Due to the incident was too rapid, even though they had got a shock; the inhabitants misunderstood the situation under their nose. Without considering that it would be a great change for their future, the inhabitants had lightly thought of that as a *min-pyaung min-lwe* (enthronement of a new king by way of assignation or revolution to the old one). Because this event was a common in feudal Myanmar society and it had used to happen in the respective dynasties. Therefore the inhabitants had simply waited for a new king (Kyan 1978, 9). Taking a heart of the concept of look-for-king-to-be, the inhabitants and noblemen had expected the enthronement of a prince, in secret. It was true that the inhabitants simply believed that the British enthrone a prince in the place of King Thibaw (Kyan 1978, 9). One more reason why his concept attached firmly to the subjects in the feudal Myanmar society was because even the subjects had merely seen their king and had no idea about him (Kyan 1978, 73). For the country folks, a direct ruler of them were *myo-thugyi* (head of town) and *ywa-thugyi* (village head), not a king. Therefore *min-pyaung min-lwe* as not a vital importance for them, if they had been ruled by a true local ruler, they regarded that it was an emphatic exclamation of surprise (Kyan 1978,73).

Kyan has not failed to note the understanding of the officials in

and out of Myanmar, a Christian priest and a Chinese merchant on the situation in her book as follows. Because of the rumor that a Myanmar prince who in favor of the British would enthrone, the court officials, like the subjects, misunderstand the annexation of the British to Upper Myanmar as the dethronement of Thibaw (Kyan 1979a, 162). Therefore, the ministers, the officials and people who were in royal circles solely kept in mind that the prince who would enthrone, should be in a relationship with them (Kyan 1979a, 162). Not only the people in Myanmar who were abroad believed that the British enthrone a Myanmar prince. It was the Myanmar Ambassador to France who lived in Paris, Mingyi Maha Minhla Sith Sorbone-educated (Kyan 1978, 10). In addition to Myanmar, in the circle of Christian mission, the same expectation existed. The Rev. J. A. Colbeck of the S. P. G. has expressed that if the British ruled Upper Myanmar appointing a Myanmar prince as a ruler, the country would be ease of administration. The prince whom he wanted the British authority appointed was the Prince Nyaungyan, his close friend (Colbeck 1892, 58, 63; Kyan 1979, 162). Being witnessed the situation which trying to keep the *status quo* before replace an old administration pattern with a new one and there was no obvious change in this stage, the head of Chinese ethnicity in Bamadaw had also made a remark that “though the actor had changed, the setting was still usual” (Kyan 1978, 12).

One factor which misled the inhabitant was proclamations issued by the British officials. The Commander General of the expeditionary force, General Prendergast, issued a proclamation in Shan and in Myanmar dated December 15th, 1885. This proclamation was aimed

at the peace and tranquility of the country ordering that the heads of towns and villages should keep in mind to protect their people from robbery in this proclamation. It misled the people that the annexation of the British would end with *min-pyaung min-lwe* as usual. As the essence of the proclamations issued by the General Prendergast took the same line of order done by the palace when ever a new king came to the throne, the subjects could not understand their future near (Kyan 1978, 12).

B. The Administrative Crisis in the Upper Myanmar

After the incorporation of Upper Myanmar into the British Empire, the British officials tried to find out ways and means to govern it effectively and economically. Regarding the future administrative pattern, the British official considered to remodel the country into a buffer state, or a protectorate, or a regency rule or a theocratic kingdom with an ecclesiastical dignitary as head of state (Woodman 1962, 246). Referring Hla Thein's article, the administrative crisis, which had been a hot debate on the account of the British officers' decision on Myanmar kingdom, will briefly be informed.

Turning Myanmar into a buffer state, a Myanmar prince had to be chosen and he would be throne as a new king. The new king should be independent in internal matters and the British would concern only its foreign relations. After a closer examination, the British remarked that, "Ava has neither the elasticity, nor the ultimate power of resistance which a buffer state ought to possess," based on her recent easy victory which was a definite affirmation of the

inherent of the country to fend for itself (*PLI* 1886, No.4). Having turned down the model of a buffer state, the British officials next tried to turn the Upper Myanmar into a protectorate state. For this proposition as well, the British would have to enthrone a Myanmar prince. For various reasons the British disapproved and disliked the choice of anyone of the princes who was alive. The officials thought that this choice would also require the support in the form of troops and armaments. The opinion of the British at the time being had reflected in the Nisbet's note that "any royal line that might be placed on the throne would have been able, without great assistance from British troops, to maintain his authority with any prospect of success..." (1901, 106). For various reasons the British disapproved and disliked the choice of anyone of the princes who was alive (Hla Thein 1985, 184).

After discarding the proposition of the "Protectorate" form of government, the British official considered another concept of regency rule. For this model British tried to consider whether it might be desirable to set up the minor son of the late Nyaung Yan as the destined occupant of the vacant throne, with British officers administering the State in his name and on his behalf until he should come of age fifteen. By the reason of too much cost and less effectiveness, this model also discarded again (Hla Thein 1985, 185). In the final model considered by the British authorities was to transform a theocratic kingdom, in Myanmar. The British officials, however, who have been modeling an effective and economic government soon found its drawbacks and they rejected this model again.

The difficulty in choosing an appropriate government form for Upper Myanmar out of proposed four, paved the way for the initiation of direct administration of the British Burma Government. Hla Thein quoted a statement from the *PLI* that “permanently placing the civil administration of the country in the hands of British officers, at the same time that the position occupied by its former kings was assumed by a Llama or some similar ecclesiastical dignity, such as is found in other Buddhist States” (*PLI* 1886, No. 14; Hla Thein 1985, 185).

On 1 January 1886 Upper Myanmar was annexed to the British Empire. At the time being, as the future of Myanmar was still in the process of discussion between the Secretary of State, the Government of India and the Chief Commissioner, the British authority allowed the Hluttaw to continue its daily deliberations under their supervision. Many senior minister of the Hluttaw who recognized the conquest of the British were appointed as the members of the Hluttaw. They were retained as a consultative body and worked in the old Hluttaw building (Nisbet 1901, 107; Hla Thein 1985, 185). The noblemen who continuously led the Hluttaw were Kinwun Mingyi, Taunggwin Mingyi, Pin Atwinwun, Paukmyaing Atwinwun and Dapayin Wundauk U Mye (Ohn Kyi 2004b, 144).

In order to decide the future of Upper Myanmar, the Governor-General came to Myanmar in February 1886. Accompanied by many of his top civil and military officials and Lady Dufferin, the Governor-General's party arrived in Yangon on 6 February and reached Mandalay on board the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company steamer *the Mindon* on 12 February (Dufferin 1889, 182; Hla Thein 1985, 185). During his trip to Mandalay, on a thorough analysis of the

political situation the Governor-General decided that Upper Myanmar should be made a direct charge of his (Hla Thein 1985, 186). In this way, the Hluttaw came to an end. The Hluttaw was totally last four months, from December 1885 to 31 March 1886 (Ni Ni Myint 1988, 159).

V. Discussion

The purpose of this article is to fill the gap in the post-colonial discourses in Myanmar studies presenting the historical formation of the indigenous collaboration of Myanmar Hluttaw in 1886. For this purpose, this article reviewed existing researches in this arena and traced the background historical conditions supported the establishment of the indigenous collaboration.

In order to inform the discourses on the collaboration of the Hluttaw, this article firstly reviewed existing researches. The Myanmar Historical Research Department is the only one state-ran research department and post-colonial discourse is one of the important research agenda in it. Among the publication in this arena, two books and four articles by two outstanding Research Officers emphasis on the case of the Hluttaw. Though these two researchers had a hot debate on this topic, they failed to highlight the indigenous collaboration of the Hluttaw in 1886. In addition to these researches, in the same arena, there are representatively two researches conducted outside Myanmar. Lee (2008) has paid attention to a particular context where the importance of the understanding of the historical formations

of coloniality in association with the Karen. Thant Myint-U (2012) has shortly hinted the collaboration of local administrators.

Secondly, the historical background of modernization in the late 19th Century in Myanmar, which based the whole story under study, and the limitation of the modernization attempted by the officials, had been highlighted in the next section. The threat of British imperialism in Myanmar was the only one push factor for the modernization of Mandalay. The lack of succession act in Myanmar Palace and the immature experience in the reformation led the King Thibaw's enthronement.

This article finally discussed the political condition in Mandalay immediately after the annexation of the British to Upper Myanmar, presenting the nature of the traditional political culture of Myanmar and the proclamation gave misinformation to the inhabitants. Immediately after the Third-Anglo Myanmar War, in a moment while a new administration has not yet been replaced, the inhabitant in Upper Myanmar had mistakenly understood the condition. Having considered the traditional Myanmar political culture and given information by the proclamation issued by the British authority, led the misunderstanding that it was an enthronement of a new king by way of assignation or revolution to the old one, to the inhabitants in Mandalay. On the other hand, the British authorities considered four administrative models to replace the former administration of Upper Myanmar. This confusing moment in the both sides led the establishment of the indigenous collaboration in Upper Myanmar.

As the discussion so far, in colonial Myanmar, the stance of the Hluttaw was an attempt which expected to replace a new

administrative system in Myanmar led by a new Myanmar king enthroned by the British authority. The Hluttaw, led by the reformists composed of ministers, officials and intellectual noblemen in the Myanmar court, collaborated to the British administration immediately after the Third Anglo-Myanmar War. Since the court took the position of the Supreme Court during the transitional period in Mandalay, at least in principle, it is wise to re-examine the case of Hluttaw.

The study is just a spring article which re-examines the indigenous collaboration led by the reformists which composed of ministers who had tasted western education and witnessed western governance in the diplomatic missions to Europe. Due to this purpose of this article is to fill the gap in the post-colonial discourse studying only the collaboration of the Hluttaw, it has excluded detail account on the political condition after the Third Anglo-Myanmar War. However, it would help sharing the conception of indigenous collaboration of the Myanmar Hluttaw to the British administration.

Key words: Indigenous collaboration, the Hluttaw, intellectual court officials, administrative crisis, traditional Myanmar political culture

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<Abstract>

**Indigenous Collaboration:
The Case Study of the Myanmar Hluttaw (1885-1886)**

Myo Oo
(Busan University of Foreign Studies)

This study re-examines the collaboration of Myanmar noblemen, studying the case of Myanmar Hluttaw practiced in Upper Myanmar in 1886. After the Third Anglo-Myanmar War (1885), though Myanmar King Thibaw had been deposited to India, the Myanmar Hluttaw, composed of Myanmar noblemen, allowed to continue its daily deliberations for four months from December 1885 to 31 March 1886. In Myanmar historiography, post-colonialism has been taken the main role, especially in independent Myanmar, though on the role of indigenous collaboration does not distinct from this perspective. This study historically traces the collaboration of Myanmar noblemen to the British administration immediately after the war. This study aims to help understanding of the historical formation of coloniality in Upper Myanmar, drawing on the case of the Myanmar Hluttaw.

<국문요약>

토착적 협업:
1885-1886년 미얀마 의회(Hluttaw) 사례

묘우
(부산외국어대학교)

이 연구는 1886년 상부미얀마의 미얀마의회(홀룻또) 사례 연구를 통해 미얀마 상류층의 협력을 재검토한 것이다. 제 3차 영국-미얀마 전쟁(1885) 이후 띵보(Thibaw)왕이 인도로 유배되었지만, 상류층으로 구성된 미얀마의회는 1995년 12월부터 1996년 3월 31일까지 4개월간 매일 심의를 지속할 수 있었다. 미얀마 역사편찬에 있어서 포스트 식민지는 주요한 역할을 해 왔는데, 특히 독립 미얀마에서 토착민의 협력은 이러한 관점과 동떨어진 것은 아니다. 이 연구에서는 전쟁 이후 즉시 미얀마의 상류층이 영국 식민당국에 협력한 자취를 역사적으로 검증했다. 미얀마 의회의 사례를 바탕으로 상부 미얀마에서 식민성의 역사 형성을 이해하는 것이 이 연구의 목적이다.

주제어: 토착민의 협력, 홀룻또, 상류 법원공무원, 행정위기, 미얀마 상류층, 전통적 미얀마 행정문화