

NOTE ON TEXT



Notes on Language, History and Currency

Throughout the text, I have followed Okell's (1971) guide for transcribing Burmese words that appear in their original characters in the glossary. I alter the writing with a dash (-) for the purpose of pronunciation in a few cases and do not accentuate the transcribed words, which results in the absence of any signs for tone variations but eases the reading for non-Burmese specialists.

The Burmese language uses a number of honorifics that indicate relative age as well as status. 'U' and 'Daw' are the male and female honorifics that are used in practice as a respectful 'Uncle' or 'Auntie', even when people are not related. They denote seniority. 'Ko' and 'Ma' stand for 'brother' and 'sister'. A senior monk, usually head of a monastery, is called 'Hsayadaw'. For bibliographic purposes, Burmese authors are catalogued by their names without the honorific.

People's names have been anonymized for ethical purpose when the persons are still living. The names of villages have not been anonymized as they are indicators of some of the ways in which the landscape has been shaped in the past.

The reference to 'Myanmar' rather than 'Burma' here reflects the fact that the military changed the name of the country from Burma to Myanmar in 1989 in a movement of 'Myanmafication' (Houtman 1999). The people of Myanmar are still known as 'Burmese' (*Bama*). I use 'Myanmar' when speaking about the country after the change and 'Burma' when talking about it before the change. I use 'Burma/Myanmar' when referring to the country or state in general terms.

Many names are used to refer to different political spaces at various periods. My area of study was part of the 'nuclear zone' of the late precolonial kingdom. It became part of the Lower Chindwin District during the early phase of the colonization of Upper Burma. The term Upper Burma was first used by the British to refer to the central and northern area of what is now Myanmar. After the Second Anglo-Burmese War of 1852, Lower Burma was annexed by the British Empire,

while Upper Burma remained independent under the Burmese Empire until the Third Anglo-Burmese War of 1885. After independence in 1948, the country was gradually divided into seven ethnic states and seven regions. Currently, our area of study is located within Monywa Township, Sagaing Region.

Throughout the text, I quote Myanmar kyat in US dollars to allow non-Myanmar specialists to compare the magnitude and value of amounts cited. For post-2011 amounts, the rate has been calculated at the average market rate during the bulk of my fieldwork between 2013 and late 2018: 1400 kyats to US\$1 (with annual variations of +/- 200 kyats).