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By

Dr. Vivek Patkar

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The Thirty-seven Dats
A Phase of Spirit-Worship prevailing in Burma,
by
SIR R. C. TEMPLE, Bart., C.I.E.
With full-page and other illustrations.

109363

LONDON
W. GRIGGS, CHROMO-LITHOGRAPHER TO THE KING
1906
In order to understand the daily life and aspirations of the ordinary Burman, it is not sufficient to know that he is by professed religion a Buddhist and to understand what his Buddhism teaches. It is necessary to know also that he is a firm believer in Nats or Spirits, and to grasp how the superstitions connected with his faith affect him in his daily life and notions. There are many references to this subject in the European literature on Burma, but there has, as yet, been no definite study of it.

In this work, I have endeavoured to put together some of the facts about the Nats I have gathered during a prolonged study of them, and I have tried to make the subject clear by illustrating my remarks from collections in my possession, and, in a few cases, from the published works of others. I have noted down for my own information the references to Burmese spirit-worship in every work bearing on the subject that has become known to me in the course of years, but in this volume I have, nevertheless, confined myself to general statements, reserving the details of my information to a future opportunity, by which time I can but hope that the study will have become better known and appreciated. The only part of this book that goes at all into detail, is that connected directly with the Thirty-Seven Nats themselves. In that portion I have taken my own line, although I am aware that it is not exactly that of other students, who, in some cases, have profound knowledge of Burma. However, from a most careful collation of their publications with the knowledge at my own disposal, I feel I am justified in putting forward my views with at least as much confidence as any of my contemporaries can put forward theirs.

In stating the case generally of Animism and Animistic practices in Burma, I have been much more careful in placing the facts, as they appear to me to be correct, before the reader, than in pressing my
private views upon him, and I have therefore not hesitated to incorporate the *ipissima verba* of other writers into my text, whenever these put the facts clearly and correctly. The writers, whose works are thus chiefly drawn upon, are Sir George Scott, in the *Upper Burma Gazetteer*, and in *The Burman*, than whom no clearer writer on Burma exists, except perhaps Taw Sein Ko, whose papers before the Ninth Oriental Congress in London, 1892, and in the *Upper Burma Gazetteer*, have been freely used. The capital *Census Report*, 1901, of Mr. C. C. Lowis, and the works of the profound Catholic missionaries, Bishop Bigandet (*Life and Legend of Gaudama*) and Father Sangermano (*Burmese Empire*), have also been largely used, and so, to some degree, has that romantic and poetic book, *The Soul of a People*. There are other excellent works on the Burmese, notably those starred in the Bibliography attached to this Preface, but I have not used them to any considerable extent for the present work.

For illustrations, apart from the three sets of the Thirty-Seven Nats in my own possession, I have drawn to a small extent upon the *Upper Burma Gazetteer*, and, in three instances, upon Mrs. Hart's *Pictorial Burma* with the courteous permission of Messrs. Dent, the publishers. I have also drawn largely upon a MS. volume, described in Chapter VIII, kindly placed at my disposal by the authorities of the India Office. There are, besides, a number of interesting pictorial references to the Nats in Ferrar's *Burma*, which would have been of value for inclusion in this volume, but unfortunately I have been unable to utilise them. Some of the illustrations now given have been already incorporated into articles of my own in the *Journal of Indian Art* for 1900, and in the *Indian Antiquary* of the same year.

As the present volume is published in the hope of arousing further interest in the Nats and the forms of religion which they represent, in residents in Burma, who can do much towards clearing away difficulties and uncertainties by further research into details, now that the facts of the subject are laid before them in a definite sequence, I have made no attempt to adopt a scientific orthography, but have adopted that in ordinary use among Europeans in Burma and best understood. Also, I would note for their benefit, that many of the names and titles to be found used in reference to the Nats themselves, or to the historical personages on whom the stories about them are fathered, are merely Burmese transcriptions of Pali, and, in a few cases, of Sanskrit words. Every Nat has probably in addition a personal name among the people, which should be worth unearthing.

Examples of Pali or Sanskrit titles are the following:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burmese vulgaar pron. in brackets</th>
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<tr>
<td>Anawrathd (Nawyetd)</td>
<td>Anuruddha</td>
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<td>Athgaya</td>
<td>Asaṅkhyā</td>
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<td>Dāyāka</td>
<td>Dāraka</td>
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<td>Dūtyā</td>
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<td>Eyāwan</td>
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<td>Hanthawd</td>
<td>Hamsāvatī</td>
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<td>Mahāgiri (Māgyā)</td>
<td>Mahāgiri (P. Pajhama)</td>
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<td>Mahāthambawd</td>
<td>Mahāśāntabhava</td>
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<td>Mahābhūthā (Mahābhūtha)</td>
<td>Mahāśāsāra</td>
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<td>Nag</td>
<td>Nāga</td>
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<td>Nagadjar (Nagayit)</td>
<td>Nāgarjuna</td>
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<td>Narabadisatthu (Nayabādito)</td>
<td>Nārāpati Jāyasūra</td>
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<td>Narathdngd (Neydthu)</td>
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<td>Nārātha</td>
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<td>Narasinga</td>
<td>Nārāṣiąha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pali except where marked Sanskrit</td>
<td>Pali except where marked Sanskrit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the use of a good many vernacular terms, current in connection with the Nats, will be unavoidable, a brief Glossary will precede the text. The following Bibliography of the subject will be of use to students, it being understood that the majority of the books noted merely casually refer to the Nats. Those from which the best information is to be procured are starred in the list:

Gazetteer of Upper Burma. 2 parts. 5 vols. Rangoon, 1901.
Hart, Mrs. E. Picturesque Burma. London, 1897.
Indian Antiquary. The. Vols. XIX., XXI., XXII. and XXIII. Bombay, 1890, &c.
Mason, F. Burma, its People and Productions. Rangoon, 1860.
Oertel, F. O. Tour in Burma. Rangoon, 1893.
Sangermano. The Burmese Empire. Rome, 1833; Rangoon, 1885.
Symes, M. Embassy to Ava. London, 1800.
Taw Sein Ko. Tour in the Amherst, Shwegyin and Pegu Districts. Burma, 1892.

A verbal index for ready reference, including every place and person mentioned in the work, will be found at the end of the volume.

I cannot close this Preface without an acknowledgment of the admirable printing and illustrating devoted to Messrs. W. Griggs and Sons, Ltd., and the very careful attention given to them by Mr. W. Griggs Pilly.

R. C. Temple.

Nash, Worcester.
1906.
The Nats of the Devaloka or Nat-world on Mount Mara, or Myinkaw, from the platform of the New Bogale Pagoda at Yangon.

GLOSSARY.

Agni, the God of Fire.
Akkáthásó, the Sky-spirit.
Amabanta, a saint.
Arupá, immaterial worlds.
Arupá Nats, formless, incorporeal beings.
Asura, a demon.
Asurakaya, fallen angels.
Asurinda, King of the Titans.
Athaya Nats (Asuras), Titans.
Athaya Nats (Asuras), Titans.
Athya Nats (Asuras), Titans.
Atma, the soul.
Baliyda Nat (Bali), Lord of the Infernal Regions.
Bali, an ogre.
Baléa, an ogress.
Bdpaw, a worshipper of flowers.
Bédin (Vedánta), Burmese astrology (copying the Indian).
Bédin-sayát, an astrologer.
Bhumi, a place, state.
Bidagat (Fitakattaya), the Sacred Law.
Bó, a military officer.
Bódaw, a royal military leader.
Bódhi, Bó, the sacred fig-tree.
Bódhisattva, a coming Buddha.
Bón (Bhumi), place, state, stage, region, seat.
Brahmá, the Creator in the Neo-Brahmanism or Hinduism; a superior angel in Buddhism.
Bamadé, the Guardian of the Earth.
Bamasó, the Earth-spirit.
Chakra, a supernatural weapon; quoit.
Chatummahárájika, the Land of the Four Great Kings.
Chaturmukha, the four-faced.
Dhatarattha, King of the North.
Dn. Maung Shin, the Tree-Nat.
Dná, charity.
Dvíchá, a head-gear containing an image of Buddha.
Dvichá yathé, a class of ascetic with a peculiar head-gear.
Déva, a spirit.
Dévalóka, the Nat-world.
Dhatarattha, King of the North.
Dvichá, a head-gear containing an image of Buddha.
Dvichá yathé, a class of ascetic with a peculiar head-gear.
Dvíchá, a spirit.
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Dhatarattha, King of the North.
Dvichá, a head-gear containing an image of Buddha.
Dvichá yathé, a class of ascetic with a peculiar head-gear.
Dvíchá, a spirit.
Dválóka, the Nat-world.
Dhatarattha, King of the North.
Gá, a knife, sword.
Ganclabbá Nat Min (Gandharva), a celestial musician.
Ganja, a hemp intoxicant.
Narit, Cape Negrais.

Irachakshu, the Personal-guardian.

Siy, the Guardian of the Grain.

"íkó, a word.

Rkí, the God of Wealth, King of the East.

Nityá Nat, the God of the Firmament.

Máj, Thagyá Nat's wife.

Ayáv, a sacred tree.

Garbhadeva Nat (Sòma), the moon as a god.

Rá, the pleasures of sense.

Sáma, the sacred tree.

Náti, a native of India.

Lá, the Sacred Law.

Máj, a month.

Lo, a sacred cover.

Gangyá, a hermit.

Thagyá, an archangel.

Thadó Minzaw, a legend.

Thadingyut, October.

Sàkya, the God of the Firmament.

Sákya, a monk.

Sàkya, the Church.

Sakasra, the God of the Firmament.

Sàkya, a symbol.

Sàkya, a seven-storied building.

Sàkya, an archangel.

Sàkya, a spirit.

Sàkya, a spirit-medium.

Sàkya, a spirit-medium (female).

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Thagya Nat (Sakra, Indra), the God of the Firmament.

Thakanda Nat (Skanda, Kumara), the God of War.

Thamdayya (Samudra), the ocean.

Thandawgyun, a secretary.

Thaye (Thabat), spirits of those who have died violent deaths.

Then, a sanctuary.

Thenggy (Sangha), the Church.

Thingyan, the New Year; the Water-throwing festival at the New Year.

Thippen, a tree.

Thippinsaung (Yakkha), the Tree-guardian.

Thuyakhi (Asurakaya), a demon.

Tij, an umbrella or top covering.

Tipitaka, the Buddhist Scripture proper.

Tiracchana, animals.

Tuns, a soothsayer.

Uyudaing, a guardian-spirit.

Vamasura, Cupid.

Varin Nat Min, the River-Nat.

Vasu, a terrestrial god.

Vedanta, astrology.

Vessavana, the God of Wealth.

Virulaka Nat Min (Virulhaka), King of the South.

Virupakkha Nat Min (Virupaksha), King of the West.

Vishnu, the Preserver in the neo-Brahmanism of Buddhism.

Wa, the Buddhist Lent.

Vimathuya Nat (Vamadra, Kama), Cupid.

Wuy, July.

Wethawda Nat Min (Vessavana, Kuvera), the Treasure guardian, King of the East.

Win, a governor.

Yahän, a monk of a monastery.

Yahanda (Arahanta), a saint.

Yakkha, the Tree-guardian.

Yakkas, the Tree-spirit.

Yok-sen, the extremity of a village.

Yuzana (Yójana), a measure of twelve miles.

Zabadhek (Jambudipa), the Asiatic Continent.

Zalathinga Nat (Jarasandha), the opponent of Krishna.

Zambu (Jambu), the sacred tree; Eugenia.

Zatunmahärkt (Chatumaharajiká), the Land of the Four Great Kings.

Zayat, a public rest-house.

Zingala Nat (Jangala), the Recorder.
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Chapter VII. Subsidiary Beliefs.
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Popular Representations of the Thirty-Seven Nats.
Hell according to the Burmese.

In the centre are those who are undergoing various punishments. Below these is depicted an unfortunate about to enter and begging for mercy, and near him is to be seen another who is reluctant to go forward and is being dragged and goaded onward. At the bottom of the picture is Thagyâi judging the deceased: behind him are the four executioners. At the four corners are the abodes of the four great executioners—Yamabala, Yamada, Yamaka and Yamamin, the abode of the last being represented as empty.
Udaung.
The Peacock Emblem of Burma, representing the sun, in gilt spangled work on black cloth (kutággá).
1. Thalata Nat.
2. Mahaviri Nat.
29. Thambang Medaw Nat.

30. Bayinmaw Nat.
CHAPTER I.

ANISM IN BURMA.

No one can be long in Burma without hearing of the Nats, and every book on the Burmese—from the writings of the most learned scholars and most competent observers to those of the butterflies of literature, who flutter through the country and write about it—contains more or less elaborate and more or less accurate notices of them, and still it has always been, except perhaps to the profounder and therefore least read writers, most difficult to say definitely what the word actually means, or what the Nats are really supposed to be.

Perhaps the most nebulous ideas of all on the subject are those of the persons who openly secretly believe in them, and yet the Nats pervade all Burma and are in one form or another held in awe by all native population, Burmese or otherwise by descent, whether Buddhist or Pantheistic by faith, whether civilized or savage, whether enlightened so far as Oriental wisdom can teach or entirely ignorant. The subject study thus opened up is very wide, very complicated, and to the student of anthropology of some importance.

The professed religion of Burma is Buddhism, which means that at the present day it is a combination of the two great schools of that faith, the Maháyána or Northern and the Hinayána or Southern. The Northern, debased ritualistic, school is that still prevalent in Népál, Bhútán, Tibet, Mongólia, Corea, China and Japan, the Southern, or puritanical school is that which has sway in Ceylon, Burma and Siam. In Burma, however, there is still a perceptible infusion of the Northern ideas, which retained the main features of the original and indeed later Brahmánism, and fell very far away from the lofty ideas of Buddha himself and his immediate successors. Brahmánism may be described as being at bottom a systematized philosophical Animism and its move in Buddhism has had the effect of preventing the latter faith from killing out the indigenous Animism the peoples among whom it spread.

In Burma Buddhism has certainly not succeeded in destroying the Animism of the people, for all observers see that the Burman, despite his now ancient official adoption, after a long fight, of the purest form of Buddhism, is at heart an Animist, his professed faith being little more than "a thin veneer of philosophy laid on the main structure of Animistic belief." In local parlance the Animist of Burma is a Worshipper of the Nats.

The Burmese Animistic worship, i.e., the worship of Spirits or Nats, does not differ in its essentials from similar worship all the world over, and there is no reason to suppose that the innumerable denizens of the
ANIMISM IN BURMA.

Burmesse Spirit-world differ in origin or character from those of the Spirit-world of other peoples. If we accept the theory that in their earliest form "all men's gods are the corpses or ghosts of their ancestors," and that "there are no prima materia between the Spirit that was once a living man and the Spirit that never was human at all," then it may be safely said that the facts of Burmesse Nat Worship in its various forms are all in support of this theory.

No one has ever known the Burman better than Bishop Bigander and he has told us that the Buddhists of the people forms little or no part of their daily life, and that, although every Burman as a boy must go to monastic school and wear the yellow robe, "in his every-day life, from the day of his birth to his marriage, even when he lies on his death-bed, all the rites and forms that he observes are to be traced to Animistic art not to Buddhist sources. It can only be surmised that he considers it to be the work of the Nats, and when he wishes to commence any important undertaking he propitiates these Nats who are the avatars or representatives of the old Animistic worship. Even the pagans [monks] themselves are often directly in touch with the strong undercurrent of Animistic religion which underlies their faith in Buddhism."

Another most competent observer has said: "To the Burman, and especially to the lower Burman, Nat worship is the most important thing. Every monastery has cloths put over the heads of its monks, as a cover for the Nats, exactly as with the house posts, or the supports of a bridge out in the jungle. Spirit-birds still close up against pagodas; the monks take part in superstitious rites to secure rain or what not. They see other the most expert tattooers and astrologers and fortune-tellers. The Burman has much more faith in the ascendants of lucky and unlucky days and in the deductions from his horoscope than in the virtue of alms and the efficacy of worship at the pagoda."

All efforts of the orthodox Buddhists have been powerless to prevent this. King Mindon, a most zealous defender of the Buddhist faith and well versed in the Scriptures, used all his enormous power and influence against Nat worship, but, in vain, and under the last and learned King, his son Thibaw, it flourished as vigorously as ever. Sir George Scott puts the Burman's mental attitude in this respect with his usual felicity, "As a simple matter of fact, it is undeniable that the propitiating of the Nats is a question of daily concern to the lower-class Burman, while the worship at the pagoda is only thought of once a week. For the Nat may prove destructive and hostile at any time, whereas the acquisition of dharma [merit] at the pagoda is a thing which may be set aside in a business-like way, and at proper and convenient seasons."

Sir George has also further attested the universality of the cult, "At the extremity of every village, if yaun-sun, there is a nat-sun, a shrine for the Nat or Nats of the neighbourhood. This varies very much in size and character. Sometimes it is a mere bamboo cage, hung in a peepul or other tree, or slung on a post, bird-cage kind of construction, with an image inside, and a little hole through which the superstitious might introduce their offerings, tiny water-pots, oil-lamps, and little morsels of food. Often, if the village is larger, the shrine is much more pretentious, assuming almost the size and appearance of a sālo [public rest-house], a bālā記 or roof, gabled and supported with red posts, the platform ornamented, and with a dais at one end, which a representation of the Nat is placed at feast time, which, in imitation of the pagoda festivals, occurs at regular fixed season. At other times these images are kept stowed away in an adjoining chamber, built for this purpose. It is particularly irritating to an educated Burman to see these absurd figures, which remind one nothing so much as the fetishes of the profligate African."

In Upper Burma, the spirit of Nat-worship pervaded all classes under the Native Rule. Certain fees were formally recognized by the Burmese Court, and Ministers of State, even the King, who was the religious as well as the secular chief, attended them in their official capacity, while the ritual to be observed is carefully set forth in the Lawka Byinna, the Shweponnidan and other treatises on Court etiquette and duties.

The attitude of the modern upper classes in Burma towards this worship is well shown in a letter to me, 1892 from an educated Burman. He wrote,— "I have to state that Buddhism and Brahmanism have certain beliefs in common, in consequence of stories handed down from father to son. The wild tribes, which have not received the Religion of Gaudama [i.e., Buddhism], are quite as strong in this primitive faith. Not only is every human being, but also every conspicuous object and every article of utility, a guardian spirit, people die it is said that they become spiritual bodies, requiring spiritual food, and in order that these spirits, Nats, may not harm the living, the latter make certain customary offerings to them. Some persons, who have familiar spirits, make annual offerings to the Nats, and before making an offering a small bamboo or pétal house is built in a grove or near a mountain, wax candles are lighted and minor offerings are made. The festivals are generally performed in Upper Burma. When the ceremonies are over, a pot of water is poured slowly on to the ground, while repeating certain prayers. During the reign of King Anawrathawaw [the great conqueror and Buddhist reformer of the Pagan Dynasty who reigned 1070-1092 A.D.], the people in Pagan worshipped the Nats daily. They used to build a small bamboo structure, called a Nat-house, in front of their own houses and placed offerings in it daily. Whenever the King saw these inedible little Nat-houses, he used to order his officers to destroy them, and had all the figures of the Nats collected into one place and tied together.
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with chains. The figures of these Nats are still to be found in Pagan, in a cave there. When the people came to learn about the order of the King directing the destruction of their Nat-houses, they obeyed it, but they hung a coconut in their own houses to represent them and as an offering to the dispossessed Nats. The figures of the Thirty-seven Nats are still to be seen near the Nyang-ii Pagoda at Pagan [in Upper Burma].

The value of this letter to my mind is that it comes from a native of Burma with a mind untinged with European ideas, who rather neatly betrays his origin to be Talaing by his reference to the coconut. The letter sets the whole question very fairly: The Nats are in fact supernatural beings derived from three separate sources. The supernatural beings of the Buddhists, celestial, terrestrial and infernal, derived from the old Brahmanic cosmogony of India. The tutelary spirits that fill the Earth and all that is thereon, man himself and all the creatures, objects and places amongst which he lives and moves and has his being, derived from the ancient animistic pre-Buddhist beliefs of the people. The ghosts and spirits of the departed. Sir G. Scott tells us that no Burman ever mixes up in his mind the different kinds of Nats and keeps the Spirits of Nature Animistic always quite distinct from those imported from India (Brahmanic).

Naturally, in such conditions as the above, the child is made to drink in the idea of the Nat in all his forms, Buddhistic, Brahmanic and Animistic, especially the latter, from his very cradle. In the graceful and veryhuman ditty, so cleverly translated by Sir George Scott in The Burman, this is clearly brought out.

"But to make black darkness vanish, 
Sweet sleep from my babe's eyes banish, 
Fairies wiled him, 
Dreams begull'd him, 
In his cradle wrapper so snugly, 
Cradle carved with nayas' ugly, 
Carved with Nats and Kings and Princes, 
Every splendour that evinces 
Royal state and princely usance. 
There he slept, when what a nuisance ! 
Comes the light 
To affright 
And scare him back to home from elfin land. *

Nasty, naughty, noisy baby, 
If the cat won't, Nats will maybe, 
Come and punch and punch and rend you. * 

When little boys 
Make such a noise, 
Comes the brownie 
On wings downy, 
Comes the wood sprite. 
In the dark night, 
Witch and warlock, 
Mere and tor-folk. 
Kelpie, nicker, 
Quicker and quicker, 
Gobble all bad babies up. * 

Now I'll sing the eighty ditties,® 
Known in all the royal cities, 
Lullabies so soft and drowsy 
Even the Nat-so'' could not rouse ye."
real terrors for the people, and I have known respectable persons terrified at the prospect of having to take it. In case they might inadvertently leave out something they ought to have told, or might state that which was no really correct. The Book of the Oath affords so much of the Nat-worship of the people that it is here given in its compact form.

"I will speak the truth. I shall be influenced by the laws of merits, only, passion, folly, anger, false opinion, the motives of pride, scepticism, hatred, and revenge; and may all three calamities attend me and my relations, wherever we may be. In respect of water-travelling or river navigation. May the Nats, instead of sacred holy writings and ceremonies, may the gods, the guardian of the sacred river, the gods, the Dharma, the Four Baskets of the sacred laws (Tatagata, the Buddha), the Nats, adorned by the choicest excellent Buddha, destroy the holy writings and ceremonies, may the gods, the guardian deities of the sacred river, destroy these, the gods, the Dharma, the Four Baskets of the sacred laws (Tatagata, the Buddha), the Nats, instead of sacred holy writings and ceremonies, may the gods, the guardian deities of the sacred river, the gods, the Dharma, the Four Baskets of the sacred laws (Tatagata, the Buddha), the Nats, instead of sacred holy writings and ceremonies, may the gods, the guardian deities of the sacred river, the gods, the Dharma, the Four Baskets of the sacred laws (Tatagata, the Buddha), the Nats.

Withal, I and my relations are not in fear all the hideous and land creatures, bears, tigers, elephants, mace and females, demons and ghosts, harrasts, poisonous serpents, the cobra, and the hamadryad, the scorpion and the centipede; may they all be crushed, strangled, and devour us; may the earth open and swallow us up: a thunderbolt from heaven descend and annihilate us, if I speak not the truth.

When we travel by water, may our boats sink and be shattered by storms: may crocodiles, whitefishes, and ravenous fishes, kill and devour us, that we suddenly die, perish, and come to utter destruction, if I speak not the truth.

May the five calamities, occasioned by fire, water, thieves, governors and enemies oppress us: may we be subject to all the maladies of the body; may we be as fools and idiots, afflicted with madness and leprosy, with all kinds of loathsome diseases and evils that deform the body, with itch, scurry, ulcers, deafness, blindness, disfigurement, the plague, and all manner of mental and corporal miseries: may we incur the hatred and punishments of judges and rulers; may we be for ever separated from our forefathers, children, and relations, throughout all succeeding worlds; may fire destroy our goods; lances, swords, arrows, im, knives, and all sorts of weapons cut and pierce and maim our bodies; may I die instantly, vomiting up clotted black blood, before the assembled people, if I speak not the truth.

Moreover, if I speak not the truth, may I and all my family after death be instantly cast into the abyss of hell, there wander for a cycle of worlds through the eight great hells and all the smaller ones, suffering all the torments of these places; not when at length I shall emerge thence, may I become a pâlît (ghost), or a thâvaâk (mara, demon), and thereafter, as a hideous animal, passing through all the wretchedness of the four states of punishment. Finally, when after innumerable worlds I shall at length once more become man, may I be the slave of other men a hundred and a thousand times, if I speak not the truth.

But if I speak truth, may I and all my relations escape the three calamities: may all the ills in the body and all that without the body keep far away: may our wealth, honour, and estimation ever increase, and when we die may we attain happiness of men and dévas [spirits], and speedily entering on the noble path, reach the cloudless peace of Nibbâna."

Shwethalya Nat (No. 25) invoking Nagasunamutapi Nat (No. 11).
CHAPTER II.

ALTHOUGH the influence of the Buddhist religion, in its Northern or, in Burma, unreformed shape, or in its Southern or reformed shape, is everywhere visible, Indian influence on Nat worship is not so great in that phase of it which can be recognised as of Indian origin as might be supposed. The older Brahmanic faith out of which Buddhism sprang as a popular reform, had its deus or gods, its asuras or demons, and its vasis or terrestrial gods, whom many writers distinguish as godlings, and though these have in a sense been taken over bodily by Buddhism as "angels," yet in their translation to Burma they have become moralised and their names, and the ideas and stories connected with them, are eminently of the people. It has well said that the Burmese Nat Pantheon is much more Greek or Scandinavian in form than Indian, with a difference, that the elucidation in their case has been the work of the farmer, in that of the Greeks of the t. and in that of the Scandinavians of the viking.

The underlying cause of the worship of these imported Spirits is fear. Their attribute is power, their d'etre is absolute domination over human aspirations. Their worship is propitiation, so that they may be induced to fulfil human wishes. They may in some aspects be compared with the patron saints of the Christian nations. And all this is indigenous. At any rate it is pre-Buddhist, as it is sheer fear that animates what may called the religious practices of the wild tribes of the country.

The overwhelming character of the Animistic influence on Brahmanic traditions is to be seen in the very popular legend connected with Thadalanaganaing.—Thado, the Conqueror of the Serpents. His is essentially a Brahmanic legend of the very early Burmese "historical" times, and the mythical foundation of Prome in the 11 century b.c. is attributed to his grandson. He is still credited with having procured his demoniacal powers in Northern India. In his honour the three famous pagodas in the delta of the Irrawaddy between Mandalay and Bhamo are said to have been erected. His ancient capital was Tagaung on the Irrawaddy banks, and to-day its cult has been thus described:—"A still more dreaded spirit is one whose representation figures in a shrine at Tagaung, one of the ancient capitals of the country, half way between Mandalay and Bhamo. He appears simply a head on a post, four feet high or thereabouts. A spire-like crown rests on his head, his eyes protrude and gleam in semi-globular wrath, hissing ears and a Punch-like nose complete the likeness, for he has no mouth, and everybody is that of a dragon. Every one avoids his temple as much as possible, but the inhabitants of the village in that direction before they venture to do anything, and passing boatmen kindle lamps and offer flowers, of which he is said to be particularly fond, and fruit, for the Nat has an incorrigible habit of giving people the stomach-ache when he is offended, and death punishes the recalcitrant. 'Tagaung colic' is a recognised ailment in the Burmese faculty."

BRAHMANIC AND BUDDHISTIC INFLUENCE.
Sangermano, the first great enquirer (1782-1816) into things Burmese, gives, in Chapter III, of his Description of the Burmese Empire, what may be called the orthodox view of the beings that live in the world. This is merely a version of Buddhist metaphysics imported straight into Burma among the literate and learned. Indeed, but for the strange forms that the Pali technical terms have taken on in their passage into Burma, one might be reading a book on ancient Indian Buddhist philosophy, representing that form of the old Brahmanic cosmogony which the Burmese affected. Here the Nat is merely the Buddhist-hominid or superior human being belonging to various classes or orders, but also it is remembered the guardian spirit of a town and family, the genius of a locality, rock, tree, cloud and so on. The transition, in fact, from the imported deities to the indigenous Nat is hardly perceptible. One can hardly wonder, then, at the translation of deities by Nat, having become at once universal.

In the orthodox view the deities or nat is a being living a life of happiness, exempt from the ills of humanity, but subject to the pleasures of sense. Officially the Kings of Burma have no Nat, but have passed to the happy state of the Nat. These beings occupy six heavens increasing in remoteness from sensual pleasure as they recede from the earth. The nearest is Zatunshak, which is Chatunaharat by the land of the Four Kings Inhabited by genius. Next follows Tawaddha, or Tawaddha, the Abode of the Thirty Three, where dwell the ruling spirits that interfere with mankind now called the Thirty Seven Nats.

The Burmese, like the Indian, books are not equal to describing the heavens beyond these in detail and the inference is pretty clear that both peoples were interested only in gaining Buddhist sanction to their indigenous worship of the purely animistic genii common to both, and indeed to all the wild world, and of the superior god which both recognised as something higher than the genii.

The very small chance that Buddhist teaching had of ousting the Animism, or indeed of being itself materially affected by it, as we have been to see the case, becomes apparent from a study of the current orthodox form of the legend of the life of Gautama (Burmese, Gaudama), i.e., of Buddha himself. Every phase, every story, and almost every page of the Burmese MS. version of the legend is alive with the ideas involved in animistic faith. But the stories in the Burmese legend are, many of them at least, word for word, those current in the original Indian Pali legends, and therefore the Burmese legend is, in fact, nothing more than the Buddhist Brahmanic legend of India with an indigenous Burmese cast.

Bigandet's Life and Legend of Gaudama is in reality an excerpted translation, with notes and additions, of the Burmese MS., called the Thit-thitthada-adina, which may be rendered by "Praise of Buddha," and purports to contain an account of his doings on earth. Its value in the present connection is that it gives the Burmese version of the Life of Buddha and contains within its pages the orthodox Burmese view of the supernatural world. In this work we have, at the very commencement, the old Buddhist-Brahmanic spirit worship in its Burmanised form, and so onwards throughout its pages. Writes the Burmese author, "I undertake to translate from the Pali text the history of the most excellent Payâ [i.e., the Lord, Buddha] from the period he left his fourth abode of Nats to the time he entered into the state of Nébbân [nirvâna]." In Buddhism, Tussiâ the fourth of the six divôkas, worlds of dévas or angels, receding in a series from the earth, and we here see clearly that to the inhabitants of the Burmese monasteries the Buddhist déva corresponded to their indigenous Nat. The above quotation follows on words included in the opening invocation, which should be purely Buddhist if anything should be:—"I adoré the Law, which the most excellent Buddha has published, which is infinite high and incomparably profound, exceedingly acceptable, and most earnestly wished for by Nats and me capable of wiping off the stains of concupiscence, and is immutable."

The orders of beings, too, are throughout described or assumed as being three, Brahmas, Nats and men. The Brahmis of Buddhism is strictly the highest order of angel, free from sensual passion and insensible to the cold, so that we have here the conception of men, nats or superior men, and Brahmas or superior nats—an common parlance a Brahmi is a Byammi Nat. And lastly, the whole ideas of the Buddhist nether worlds at the hells and the infernal judges correspond, from the general point of view, so closely with the indigenous that it is no wonder that they have been imported bodily into the inherent Animism of the country.

Though of course, as the Burmese legend of Gaudama purports to be a rendering of the Indian, the Nat mentioned so frequently in it belong by nature mostly to the Buddhist cosmogony, yet even here the Animistic apprehension of the supernatural is involved in the belief in these spirits. Witness the following tale, which is emblem of the spirit both of Burmese Animism and of the pre-Buddhist Brahmanism in India. It is a favourite story of the female disciple Thidanta (Sujdta), who was preparing to make her grateful offering to the Nat of the place. She had been keeping one thousand cows in a place abounding with sweet vines; the milk of that thousand was given to five hundred cows; these again fed with their own milk to hundred and fifty others, and so on, in a diminishing proportion, until it happened that sixteen cows fed eight others with their milk. So these eight cows gave a milk, rich, sweet, and flavoured beyond all description. Of the day of the full moon of Kazim [May], Thidana rose at an early hour to make ready her offering, and arrange
at the cows should be simultaneously milked. When they were to be milked, the young calves of their own herd kept at a distance; and as soon as the vessels were brought near, the milk began to flow in streams from the udders into the vessels. She took the milk and poured it into a large cauldron, set on a fire which she had herself kindled. The milk began to boil; bubbles formed on the surface of the liquid, turned to the right and fell down, not a single drop being split; no smoke arose from the fireplace. Four kings of Nats watched while a cauldron was boiling; the great Brahmá kept open an umbrella over it; Thagyá brought fuel and fed the fire. Other Nats, by their supernatural power, infused honey into the milk, and communicated therein a flavour, left as the like is not to be found in the abode of men." The value put on milk and the virtue of keeping cows of course pure Brahmanism, but the direct Indian influence observable here is still more to be noticed in the fact, that, under the Burmese Kings, gamblers, drunkards, cow-butchers, and those convicted of habitually eating beef were proclaimed by beat of drum at all the cross-roads of the capital as malefactors.

What follows in the legend about Sujátá (nowadays the consort of Sakra, or Thagyá Nat, in the Távatimsa heaven), is even more important, because this was the culminating point in Buddha's career as a man, for it was occasion of his attaining Nirvána. He had "the Five Dreams" and these made him sit down under a wæng-ein (Bódhi Tree, Bó Tree). His effulgence there made Sujátá consider that "of course the Nat had gone down from the tree to receive the offering with his own hands." Mistaking Buddha (as Bódhisattva or Bodh) for a Nat, she offered him the golden cup, which was the sign, indeed, of his Buddhahood, and exclaiming: "My Lord Nat, I beg to offer you this food together with the vessel that contains it." The Bódhisattva, understanding what the portent meant, takes the cup and throws it, after spending forty-nine days under the Bódhi Tree, into a river, where it floats upstream until it sinks into a whirlpool. There it "went down to the entry of the Nagás [Serpents] and made its coming in contact with and striking against the three vessels of Buddha, wá, Kaukathan, Gaunagon and Kachaba [Kakusandha, Konagamana and Kassapa]. On the unusual noise, the chief of the Nagás awoke from his sleep, and said: 'How is this? Yesterday, a miracle appeared in the world; to-day, again, there is another.' And in more than one hundred stanzas he sung a new song to Buddha." So the actual passing of the Bódhisattva into the Buddha was accompanied by his being called for a tree spirit or nat, and by his sacred cow going to the country of the nagás or serpents. All of which is worthy of attention in view of the effect that & Burmese Legend of Gaudama is likely to have on an indigenous Animistic faith.

But this is not all for in a still more remarkable tale of an event purporting to have happened in Jétavana (Burmese, Zédawun] Monastery, when Buddha's great follower Ananta [Burmese, Ananda] was tempted to return home and the bride, Zanapadá, he had left behind him, "Buddha took Ananda by the arm, rose with him in the monastery, and men. Here, the grass-cutter Suddhiya presented him with eight handfuls of grass, with which he
prepared a seat for himself. While remaining under the Bodhi tree, he was assailed by Māra [the Evil Spirit Devil] and his hosts on every side: on his right and his left, behind him, in front of him, and over him. To contest, however, could not last long. On the evening of the same day, he emerged forth victorious from the struggle and became free from every passion and tie. At dawn on the following day, he comprehended the Five Sublime Truths and attained Buddhahood. The news of this victory and of this attainment was received by the inhabitants of the three lokas [worlds] with deafening acclamation. While of the King, Sinbyushin (?-776 A.D.), under whom the inscription was engraved in 1774, it is said, "The King observing that the pagoda erected on that hill would not last for ever, resolved to replace it by another, which would last through the 5000 years allotted by Buddha for the continuance of the Religion, and which would be an object of adoration by all men. As he was possessed of such might and power as to cause the consummation of his wishes by the co-operation of the Nats, who watch over the Religion, and by Sakra and other Nats, the elli of the Dīgo Sandaw.shin [umbrella or top-covering of the Shwe Dagon Pagoda at Rangoon] was brought away by Sakra and the Nats for the purpose of being enthroned together with images, dhātus [shrine-models], bone-relics, and hair-relics."

The most popular Buddhistic legend in Burma and perhaps the best known is the Wiñhandayà Zat, representing the Pàli Vessanāḷa Játaka. It is frequently played everywhere in the Burmese “theatre,” and the scenes from it are not only known by heart generally, but are to be seen depicted in wood carving, in black and gold lacquer and in pictures, everywhere. It is part of the life of the people nowadays and in it the import half Indian and half indigenous Nat, in all its aspects, is just as much in evidence as in the “Legend of Buddha just explained.

These considerations lead us naturally to the term Nat:—What is it? One is greatly tempted to derive it at once from the Indian Nātha, especially in view of the probability that before the advent of Indian culture there was no generic term for a “spirit” and that nātha means all that nai does, a protector, saviour, lord, master, chief, and has in India both a lofty and a humble application, both to the mightiest of the gods and the lowest godlings or superhuman heroes. In the Pāli scriptures it is a frequent epithet of Buddha himself. Also might well be argued that the Burmese borrowed it as a designation for the thirty-three angel-inhabitants of the Tāvatimśa (Tāwadéntha) Heaven, who are now represented by the Thirty-seven Nats, the Nats per excell. the innumerable remainder, the last, etc., being merely hangers-on, as it were. Yet I fear that in this controversy, in the absence of better proofs than are at present attainable, I must side with that best of native observers and writers, Taw Sein Ko, who holds that “probably the word is indigenous, and the phonetic resemblance, though striking, is purely accidental.” Nat is, in fact, some indigenous Central Asian or Eastern term that has superseded the imported dhā, because of its happening to exactly translate it, so far as the Burmese are concerned.

An ancient form of Nat worship in Upper Burma was that of the Nagá or Serpent, which was traditional to the religion of Pagan overthrown by the great conqueror Anawrathá in 1048 A.D. But although the Nat appears in almost every chronicle of the Burmese, both in male and female form, and was more than probably, we find it, a direct importation of the Nāga of India, there is nothing in the cult or legends, so far as known, to distinguish the Nagá from the Nat in practice. This worship was merely another form of the common Animi of the country. If we accept the position that, in Burma, Nagá-worship is older than the days of Anawrathá, we must accept it as a remnant of the Northern Buddhist before the date of his Southern reform in the eleventh century A.D., and long before that second great Southern reform of the fifteenth century, which now forms the basis of the existing Buddhism of the country. There are many traces of this old Buddhism throughout Burma and among them is the word pyitá for a “haunting ghost.” The whole modern idea of the pyittá is Buddhistic rather than Brahminic. In Burmese it is spelt prittá, and pronounced correctly pritá and vulgarly pyitth, and it is thus Sanskrit and not Pāli, in which the corresponding form is pīta. It is therefore of Northern and not Southern Buddhistic origin.
The World According to the Burmese.

The Burmese have adopted the cosmography of the Indian Buddhists through Buddhism and with these modifications which the natural surroundings of their own land suggested.

Lawkā (देश), or the World, is conceived as consisting of four great islands situated in space and held together. Each of these islands is flat and is bounded by a very high range of mountains called Sakyavāla (Sakya Chākrawāla). The island which is inhabited by the human beings known to the Burmans is believed to be the southernmost and is named Zambūdēk (Pali, Jambudīpa). It really represents the south-eastern portion of the Asiatic Continent and derives its name from the zambu ( zam bū: eugenia, usually known to Burmans as thabyel) tree, which is supposed to be its distinctive product.

The native map shows Zambūdēk with the zambū tree on its top or northern end. The continental portion of Zambūdēk is shown as being surrounded by the Sakyavāla Range and cut across by the Himavun (Himavanta or Himalaya). The Himalayas form the Fairyland of the Burmans, on and beyond which to the north everything is marvellous. Here are the seven great lakes, including Anawdat (Anūtatta) in the centre, where grows the lotus and whence spring all the great rivers, after forming concentric rings round it. Here also is the jewelled Myinmōdang (Mt. Mēru) with the seven rings of mountains round it.

Below the Himalayan line lies the world inhabited by all the human beings of whom the Burmese have any experience, with the sacred Bō Tree and the sites in the Buddhist Holy Land in the centre. These are quaintly shown by small red squares and circular patches, about and south of the holy trees.

To the south of everything lies the Ocean, Thamōdīya (Sanskrit Samudra), studded with the 500 lesser islands attached to Zambūdēk, on which dwell the inferior peoples that come from across the sea. The roughness of the oceans that divide the great islands prevent communication between them, and so all people from over the sea, including Europeans, must come from one of the little islands that belong to Zambūdēk, on the continental part of which the Burmans and the other Oriental races dwell.

It is interesting to note that all this is "natural" geography. All the seas known to the Burmans are to the South, and the land of great mountains is chiefly to the North and also to the East and West of them. And beyond these dwell people who are marvellous to them, at any rate by hearsay.

As to the form of the map. It is an attempt to copy a coloured European map of the 17th century, as is shown by the method of indicating mountains and rivers especially, and also of depicting men, animals and ships. Perhaps the most interesting point in the copying is the use of the colours for dividing off the different countries and the dotted lines for their apparent subdivisional boundaries, while in fact no countries are named or meant. The compiler has even gone so far as to represent the Equator and the Tropic of Capricorn without having any idea as to the meaning of either expression.
CHAPTER III.

ANIMISM AMONG THE BURMESE.

It is well to give a brief outline of the indigenous Animistic belief of the Burmese in relation to mankind before proceeding to discuss that in regard to the spirit-world.

Man is regarded as consisting of two component parts, body and soul. The soul is his léppyá or butterfly-spirit, called rå by the Karens and kh' by the Chins. This soul can leave the body in sleep or illness and can be recaptured. At death the souls go to the world beneath the earth, where their judge, called Nga 'Fhén by the Chins, sits, watched by his dog, under the Tree of Forgetfulness, where they forget all their past experiences and are able to recall them on re-birth. The good are sent to a heaven, the wicked to a hell. The way to the nether world is by a ferry over a stream; a toll has to be paid and provisions are necessary.

This is the almost universal Animistic faith of the world, but its diametric opposition to the true philosophical Buddhist faith is of importance in the present enquiry. According to Buddhism, there is no soul or self, and when a person dies, his karma or deed-result survives him, and serves as a nucleus of his next existence. But according to the indigenous faith of the Burmese people, the léppyá or butterfly-spirit survives after death, and her lives on as a disembodied spirit in happiness or misery, or is again re-incarnated to continue its course of existence in the flesh."

The general idea of the Burmese as to their purely Animistic spirits has been well put by Taw Sein Ko, the life-long authority on all matters connected with the practical religion of the people. He says, “Tàst is the technical term applied to all disembodied spirits which existed as human beings. The hmaûn are spirits of children, who assume the appearance of cats and dogs. The thayé and thahet are spirits of those who died violent deaths, or of women who died in childbirth, or of those who lived wicked and sinful lives. These spirits are inimical to mankind, and are represented in folk-lore stories as having hideous bodies, as big as those of a man, and with long, huge, slimy tongues, which they could make use of as the elephant would his trunk. They are blood-thirsty and their special delight is to cause the death of human beings. Female spirits, who are in charge of treasure buried in the earth, are called óktasaung. All these spirits, with the exception of the last, are believed to roam about the haunts of men at sunset in search of their prey, and to be specially active in their regurgitations in times of an epidemic, as cholera or small-pox. They are therefore, frightened off during epidemics by making a tremendous jarring noise by beating anything that might come in one's way, as the walls and doors of houses, tin kettles, metal trays, cymbals, &c. These evil spirits are sometimes said to enter the bodies of alligators or tigers, and to incite them to cause great destruction of human life.” All of which beliefs are more or less common to the Animism of any part of the world at any period observable by the modern reader.
The family spirit or house Nat of the Burmese is a true guardian spirit, and under his guardianship every child is ceremonially placed on the seventh day after birth, and he is always propitiated at marriages. Evidence is not wanting to show that he has originally been an ancestor, for Taw Sein Ko tells us that "in such of the households in Barm" as are tenacious of the observance of the faith and practices of their forefathers, the charms, bosoms of parents and grandparents are carefully preserved in cases of glass, and daily offerings of rice and other staples are placed before them, in the same manner as before the images of Indra. At the time of the Bari occupation of Mandalay in 1825, a number of gold images, representing the kings and chief queens of the Alomar dynasty, were found in the palace, together with a book of odes chanted whenever they were worshipped. (This was for two years in the charge of the present writer.) This form of worship finds an exact counterpart in Mongol worship, as good deeds of the monasteries of Chingiz Khan and his family. So also, "in the houses of all Burmese families, cocoa-nuts, with a filet of white muslin or red cloth tied round them, are suspended by cane support from a special post called the nyawdaung. The Burmans have forgotten the origin of the word, or its synonym than, is still used in the Chin language to signify the guardian spirit of a family."

Such are the considerations that have caused it to be generally recognised by students of things Burmese, that the local Nat or representative of the true Animistic spirit,—what Grant Allen, in his Evolution of the Ideas of God, calls "the unknown or generalised ghost,"—really is a mere ghost rather than a heathen deity. Its ubiquity is beyond doubt, from the most secluded hill to the most populous, civilised and socially lofty centre.

The tales connected with these Nats are often just such ghost stories as one is familiar with in Christendom in Europe and in any part of India. As an example we may take the following from a Revenue Settlement Report of the highly civilised and populous Mandalay District, made in the year 1893. It being remembered that Burmese house is so constructed that it cannot well be haunted, and so the haunting goes on in the fields outside.

"There is a considerable body of evidence, which goes to prove that field number 105 of the Kunnizá [cultivated patch] is under the guardianship of onis, bálu, pétész, or of some form or other of disembodied spirits. No man has within human memory taken the produce of holdings in it without bringing grief, calamity on himself, or on his wife and family, or even been able for more than one season to use the produce of the land at all. Recent instances of this are numerous. One U Win cultivated the holding about 1878. While walking past the place one night, he saw what he fancied to be a black pig eating his crops. He pursued it, and arrived within a few paces of it, when it suddenly swelled into an enormous black shadowy form. U Win was so terrified that he took to his bed and died before morning."

"U Win's successor was Maung Myáñ, who died of fever less than a year after he had begun to work the land. Maung Lugyi was then foolhardy enough to try his luck; but his wife died before he got so much as a season's crop, and he fled in terror. Maung Lugyi was followed by Maung Lun, who was scared away by white apparition, which rushed at him one night out of the neighbouring Lemyet-hná Pagoda. Maung Lu was so terrified that he took to his bed and died before morning."

"As to the Minor Nat-sin, the Nat Thi'ppin, and many other places, it is well known that if a man, whatever be his social position, approaches them in an irreverent and mocking spirit he will be struck with headache, fever, or insanity. This is 'proved' by instances innumerable."

"There are certain holdings in the Nannadawázé kwin, which bring sure death to the cultivator and cattle. The first cultivator of one of these holdings was a Manipuri immigrant. U Pawneyán, who, by charm otherwise, obtained good crops from the holding. After the death of U Pawneyán, his successor was watched by the autumn floods subside, when he heard, as it were, the roaring of a whirlpool, and a large wooden log floated to his feet. He picked it up and was cleaning it with the intention of using it, when it suddenly slipped out of his hands and plunging into the water disappeared for ever. Since then the field has yielded the most meagre crops and caused certain death to the cultivator and his cattle. Another marvel is related by Maung Tó, a respectable old resident of the adjoining village of Thayetkan. While a cultivator was ploughing the field now called Kyauktaing Lé [the Field of the Stone Pillar] in the early morning, his ploughshare struck a stone pillar embedded in the ground. All the neighbours were called to see the stone, and they at once pe
of a miracle, as the field had been ploughed for many years and no large stones had previously been turned in the first place, the alluvial nature of the soil rendered it impossible that there could be any large stones without human or superhuman intervention. Then the distance, over a mile, from any village, was against probability of any one having placed the stone there. The inference was obvious, and the villagers at once threw up a small embankment round the spot to keep it sacred. They then ate their breakfast and food cheerfully, after which one of them suggested that they might have another look at the pillar. But the pillar had vanished while they had been eating and smoking within a few yards of it. One of the last men who had worked the holding was Maung San Wai, who had been a friend of King Mindon’s in 1878, and his premature death has caused other villagers from cultivating the field. Another fact of the pillar was worked only a few years ago by Maung Taw, whose buffalo died and whose crops failed, and he had finally to migrate to Lower Burma, leaving nothing behind him but a few debts. It is said that when the annual floods from the Irrawaddy river over a certain portion of the tract, the waters are troubled and as if from winds blowing in contrary directions, small waves rise, which beat and clap against each other like game-cocks fighting. All these disasters or preternatural manifestations are the results of strong efforts made by disembodied spirits to show that power still exists and must be respected in certain localities. Many hundreds of these tales are narrated both in the Burmese language and in the Pali, with perfect grammar.

The Animistic spirit that pervades the cult of the Nat has been well put by Sir George Scott, who says that it is a true, small being, which beats and claps against each other like game-cocks fighting. All these disasters or preternatural manifestations are the results of strong efforts made by disembodied spirits to show that power still exists and must be respected in certain localities. Many hundreds of these tales are narrated both in the Burmese language and in the Pali, with perfect grammar.
most probably representations of a Burmese governor and his family, whose acts of justice, benevolence, a
sympathy were long remembered by the people, and in whose honour these were erected as a mark of esteem
admiration and reverence. The images are in a good state of preservation, as they are in the custody of
medium who gains a comfortable livelihood. An annual festival, which is largely attended, is held in its
honour. It is a strange coincidence that, as in India and Ceylon, these shrines are held in veneration by various
nationalities professing different creeds; which it may be remarked, is the surest sign of the presence of
indigenous Animism in any given form of worship.

And again he tells us that “After the harvest-time of each year, i.e., say about March or April, festivals
honour of Nats as well as of pagodas are held. The Nat festivals are exceedingly popular, and are large
attended by the people. Those at Pagan, Amarapura, Mandalay, and Lower Chindwin in Upper Burma an
ancient and recognised institutions, which used to be supported by the royal bounty of the Burmese kings.
Lower Burma, however, which is inhabited chiefly by people of the Talaing race, Nat festivals have in a larg
measure been replaced by pagoda festivals, because of the long subjection of the country to Burmese rule, a
because of the successful measures adopted by the Burmans for obliterating the nationality of the Talaings, a
for making them merge into that of their conquerors.”

Many years ago, the present writer was investigating the local ghost tales (and they were, as always, I
India, very many) of Ambalá in the Panjáh, where he then lived, and among the most prominent of these was
version of the Headless Horseman. On the fact of the investigation becoming known, the story of the Head
Horseman of Ambalá was corroborated by a superior European official in an “eyewitness” (Casamata Revi
vol. LXXVII, 1883, pp. 182 f.). This survival of Animism amongst modern European Christians is a persisten
as among any other people or faith that may be mentioned, and in Burma, I have the usual proofs of it, a
poetic author of the Soul of a People supporting them. Thus he writes:—

There is one of the Nats live in the tree especially in the huge fig-tree that shades half an acre without the village of among the fern-like fronds of tabas; and you will often see by them such a tree, raised upon poles or nestled in the branches, a little ha
built of bamboo and thatch, perhaps two feet square. You will be told when you ask that this is the house of
Tree-Nat. Flowers will be offered sometimes, and a little water or rice may be, to the Nat, never supposing th
he is in need of such things, but as a courteous and grace thing to do: for it is not safe to offend these Nat
and many of them are very powerful. There is a Nat of whom I know, whose home is in a great tree at a
crossing of two roads, and he has a house there built for him, and he is much feared. He is such a great N
that it is necessary that you pass his house to dismount from your pony and walk to a respectful distance, th
haughtily ride past, trouble will befall you. A friend of mine, living there one day rejected all the advice
the Burmese companions and did not dismount, and a few days later he was taken deadly sick of fever. He w
rejected, and had to go away to the Straits for a sea-trip to take the fever out of his veins. It was a near thing for
that was in the Burmese times, of course. After that he always dismounted. But all were not so proud nor so much to be feared as this one, and it is usually safe to ride past.

^Sometimes these Tree-Nats are given to throwing stones at houses near them, because they have a
dislike to, or been insulted by, some visitor in the house. There is a lady I know who had a house in Ambalá, 
in the compound of which grew several magnificent trees and Nats lived in them. For some reason or
other, these Nats took an enmity to the Burmese servant, and threw stones on the house, so that the lady
her husband could not sleep. For a time they could not discover the reason of this stone-throwing; but w
the servant went away for a few days and the stoning stopped, it became apparent what the cause was. Did
he returned the stone-throwing became worse than ever, and as no means, though many were tried, were effe
in stopping it, it was necessary at last to dismiss the lad.”

And again, “A friend of mine, a police officer who was engaged in trying to catch the last of the rob
chiefs who hid near Pópá, told me that when he went up the mountain shooting he, too, had to make off from
Some way up there is a little valley dark with overhanging trees, and a stream flows slowly along it. It is
enchanted valley, and if you look closely you will see that the stream is not as other streams, for it flows up
It comes rushing into the valley with a great display of foam and froth, and it leaves it in a similar way, tear
down the rocks, and behavior like any other boisterous hill rivulet; but in the valley itself it lies under a sp
It is slow and dark, and has a surface like a mirror, and it flows uphill. There is no doubt about it; anyone c
see it. When they came here, they made a halt, and the Burmese hunters with them unpacked his breakfast
did not want to eat then, he said, but they explained that it was not for him, but for the Nats. All his food was
unpacked, cold chicken and tinmed meats, and jam and eggs and bread, and it was spread neatly on a cloth un
a tree. Then the hunters called upon the Nats to come and take anything they desired, while my friend w
pered what he should do if the Nats took all his food and left him with nothing. But no Nats came, altho
the Burmans called again and again. So they packed up the food, saying that now the Nats would be plesa
Animism Among the Burmese.

It was courteous shown to them, and that my friend would have good sport. Presently they went on, leaving, however, an egg or two and a little salt, in case the Nats might be hungry later, and true enough it was that they did have good luck. At other times, my friend says, when he did not observe this ceremony, he saw nothing to eat at all, but on this day he did well.

The childishness of the beliefs in relation to the Nats is evidence of their genuine Animistic and primitive nature. In the romantic Soul of a People just quoted (291 ff.), a story is told of a Nat who lived in a great yaungkha or sacred fig (Bodhi or Bo) tree and performed the usual miracles on those who offended him. He was the pride of the village, whose inhabitants regularly propitiated him, but he left because an English rest house had been built near. “You see,” the English government officials came and camped here, and didn’t like the Nat. They had fowls killed here for their dinner, and they sang and shouted: and they shot the green geese who ate his figs, and the little doves that nested in his branches.” All which things were an abomination to the Nat, whom no sacrifices or propitiation would call back, to the sorrow of the villagers.

Supernatural Beings

1. Gandhabba Nat Mai (Koundinya), a celestial resident inhabiting the Zeusnatha Heaven. 2. Yakshini, the Tree-spirit, living in the branches of trees.
3. Jananu, the Earth-spirit, guardian of the fields, living in the roots of trees. 4. Akikhan, the Sapang, living in the tops of trees.
CHAPTER IV.

ANIMISM AMONG THE WILD TRIBES.

In order to obtain a grasp of the religious feeling prevalent among the Burmese themselves and to uncover the foundations on which the Buddhism of the country rests, it is necessary to dive into the ideas on religious subjects found to be present still among the many Wild Tribes, as explanatory of the genius of the population in religious matters. Excepting among the Karens, some of whom have a distinct Supreme God, the religion of the Wild Tribes is pure Animism and they have no idea of a Supreme Deity. "It is not merely that they have no name for such a being, but that they appear to know no conception of such an existence," or at best only an extremely vague one. On top of this, which is nevertheless fully retained by the people, Buddhism is being superimposed gradually, even among such savage folk as the Wild Was.

There is among the untutored tribes no worshipping of idols; no fetishism proper, no bowing to stocks and trees; and excepting the Burmese and Shan monks, there are no ministers of religion, no professional priests, no warrior clerical classes. "The mianmin and mawmaw and mianwaun and diviners generally do not devote themselves entirely to spiritual duties. When they are not professionally engaged they follow the same occupation as the rest of the villagers and, as often as not, are rather looked down upon than respected." Animism is indeed the soul of all aboriginal religion in Burma, and Fetishism, being contrary to the genius of the whole population, is only present in such attenuated forms as among Christians and others who believe in an immortal God. There are holy and wishing stones and so on in Burma, as in Christian Europe, but that is all. A well-known example exists on the platform of the Shwe Dagon Pagoda at Rangoon and another "in a Nat's temple in Yangon, before the figure of a spirit called Apé Shwe Myośa. It is a twisted curious-shaped stone with magical powers ascribed to it. The sick come and try to lift it up. If they are successful they will recover health; if, on the other hand, its weight is too much for them, the inquirers will die. Similarly, on ascendent Mandalay Hill, there is a little chapel in which, besides three figures of the baukha, the Brahminy nats, each said to contain a sacred tooth brought from Ceylon, there is a flat, oval stone, with mystic characters inscribed on it. Many resort there to ascertain the probable issue of an intended journey or enterprise. If the stone is heavy, the sign is bad."
ANIMISM AMONG THE WILD TRIBES.

Taw Sein Ko has remarked on the religious idea common to the Chins, Karens, Kachins and tribes in the Burmese Territory that "their adoration and worship are given to spirits, who are exercise interference in human affairs. These spirits may be broadly divided into five classes:

(1) evil spirits, who watch over the interests of individual persons; (2) family or house spirits, who preside over destinies of families; (3) communal spirits, who are the tutelary gods of clans or tribes, and to whose territorial jurisdiction is clearly defined; (4) the genii or dryads, who inhabit trees and rocks, hills and rivers and streams, lakes and seas; and (5) spirits who are doomed to continue their existence in a distant paradise. The person who is adored is the soul which animates human beings, and which is surnamed the devils of old, is legion. The Kachins look upon one Chinun We Shun as the primordial creator of the spirit world, who, with the assistance of the subordinate Nats whom he had called into existence, created out of a pumpkin a man-like thing, from whom the Kachin race is descended. The name of the arch-Nat of the Banyang tribe of Karens is Sawntung. The Naing, or the name of the arch-Nat of the Bangaung tribe of Karens. The Taungthil have both village and house Nats, who are constantly propitiated, and there can be apparently no question that the house Nats are the shades of the ancestors. The same is the case with the Taungyi. The spirit who presides over their harvesting is named Ngah Pyai, or butterfly soul, and receives suitable offerings at the time of the crop-threshing. Among the Chins of Lower Burma, the Ceres of the jungle cultivation is known as Pibiyaw. There she is a leppyai, or butterfly, but assumes the more sombre guise of a cricket. Kozein is the spirit to whom the souls of departed heroes, the worship of whom forms the basis of Shamanism; the genii are haunts of objects of nature, and especially those with which are associated ideas of sublimity and power.

The spirits of these magnificent beings. Each has a particular scourge that he is able to inflict. One is the demon of illness, a second controls fever and ague, some can command a drought at will or sweep away the crops in a storm of rain. Among the Chins of Lower Burma are found traces of ancestor worship in the ordinary spirit cult. Offerings are made by the Southern Chins to the northern spirits they worship, and offerings are made by the Southern Chins to the Northern Nats, which are supposed to have an eye to the welfare of their descendants. These Chins, like Burmans, have a Styx, which after death they cross, though by a thread and not in a ferry-boat. A being named Naing Then appears to combine for them the offices of Charon and Rhacanthus, and a cauldron of boiling water is one of the principal features of their infernal regions. The Chins' hell has certain pot in common with that of the Szi, but it is thought probable that the Szi's Inferno has been largely borrowed from their Burmese neighbours. The Nats of the Palaungs are male and female, and all of them have the names of these magnificent beings.

It has been already remarked that the imported Brahmanic Nats of the Burmese have now the attributes of the Spirits worshipped by the Wild Tribes, and that irresistible power, only to be met by piety, was the root idea leading to the phenomenon both of the legends and the practices. Of the spirits of the Wild Tribes, it has been noted that none are beneficent. "There are no fairies; no good people; there is no Titania, no Queen Mab crowned with cowslips; no Oberon with a diadem of moon-beams; no Ariel, no Robin Goodfellow; nothing like Mustard Seed, Cobweb, or Pease-Blossom. The fairy tales are all grim; the goblins are none of them good-natured. There are no Prince Charmings and no Sleeping Beauties. Signs of totemism are frequent in the shape of amours in animal form and there are abundant hints of cannibalism in the remote past, but the chief characteristic is the recognition of remorseless power and the total ignoring of a happy end for any but one of royal blood."
So again Sir George Scott has remarked that the Karens of Upper Burma and the Kachins, who have no form of indigenous belief than Nat worship, do not regard the Nats “otherwise than as malevolent beings must be looked up to with fear and propitiated by regular offerings. They do not want to have anything to do with the Nats; all they seek is to be left alone. The bamboo pipes of spirit, the bones of sacrificial animals, hatchets, swords, spears, bows and arrows that line the way to a Kachin village, are placed there, not with idea of attracting the spirits, but of preventing them from coming right among the houses in search of their victims. If they want to drink, the rice spirit has been poured out, and the bamboo stoup is there in silence of the libation; the blood-stained skulls of oxen, pigs, and the feathers of fowls show that there has been stint of meat offerings; should the Nats wax quarrelsome and wish to fight, there are the axes and daggers with which to commence the fray. Only let them be grateful, and leave their trembling worshippers in peace and quietness.

For the Karen all nature is filled with Nats, every tree and stone and pool and breath has its spirit. The dead are only separated from the living by a thin white veil, through which, however, the gifted can see and venture to speak to them in words. They attribute to remorseless power to an old being is but the savage’s recognition of the Laws of Nature, and blind propitiation is but the natural demand for counteracting those that appear to be inimical to national or individual welfare. It is all Animism round and simple.

Among the wild Burmese tribes the overwhelming necessity of providing means of protection against the things they so much dread has, as elsewhere in very many parts of the world, led to practical cruelty and loss of human life. Among the Wild Was it has led to head hunting. In the opinion of a Was the ghost of a dead person goes with his skull and hangs about its neighbourhood, and so many skulls posted up outside his village indicate so many watch-dog wundre attached to the village, jealous of their own preserves and intolerant of intruders from the invisible world. Thus every addition to the collection of skulls is an additional safeguard against ill-omened demons, and a head-hunting expedition is undertaken not, as was once thought, from motives of cannibalism or revenge, but solely to secure the very latest thing in charms as a protection against the powers of darkness. It is interesting to note that the head-cutting season lasts through March and April, and that it is in the Was hill fields are being got ready for planting that the roads in the vicinity become dangerous for the outlying Shans. In a word, the little that is known of the practice seems to hint at the fact that the victim selected was primarily a harvest victim.”

Such is the practice among the wildest of the hill tribes, but the same feeling of the absolute necessity for protection prevailed, during native rule, among the most civilised and highest of the Burmans themselves, leading to human sacrifice even in the most modern times, when the occasion was sufficiently poignant. The mental process causing these human sacrifices was no advance on that causing the head-cutting of the Was. In both cases the object was to set up a wadze, an invisible defender of the place against evil spirits, a familiar Nat of the town or palace. When Alompra (Alamgiriyā) founded Rangoon in 1755 he sacrificed a Mon Prince, who, as the Sūle Nāgyl, the Muse of Rangoon, is still worshipped as the guardian of that great workaday Capital. “When Mandalay was founded in 1857, the late Mindon Min, who was generally supposed to be remarkable for his orthodoxy in religion, as well as his comparative readiness to subject himself to modern ideas, consulted, it is said, not the learned and pious amongst his Buddhist monks, a famous fortune-teller, and in accordance with his advice a pregnant woman was slain at night in order that the spirit might become the guardian Nat of the city. It is true that the great influence that Buddhism has gained is admitted by the fact that the alleged human sacrifice is said to have been made at night. But whether the human act was perpetrated or not, there is no doubt that offerings of fruit and food were openly made to the King in the palace to the spirit of the dead woman, which was supposed to have taken the shape of a tree.”

In further evidence of the spread of the custom of human sacrifice it may be quoted that the frontier between Kengtung and Kenghun, now the boundary between British and Chinese territory, was fixed some decades of years ago at Keng Law by the burying of two men alive, one facing north, the other facing south. More and more civilised times two images of Buddha were placed back to back to mark the same place and site. This evidence enables us to trace the custom in the stone figures grasping clubs at the four corners of the city walls of Mandalay, and its survival in jars of various kinds of oil placed under the ruins of the same walls, just as the burying of newspapers, coins and the like, under foundation stones, is a survival of human sacrifice in Europe. The theory on which the custom of human sacrifice is based is again clearly visible in the employment of Brahman astrologers by King Thibaw and his Queen in 1885, during the third and last Burmese War, to chant incantations “so as to establish a
cordon of spiritual guards round the palace stockade, who would protect the royal inmates and drive off the
vincible British soldiery."

It will be thus seen that an atheistic Animism is the genius of all indigenous religion in Burma, common
both the wildest and most civilised people of the country.
CHAPTER V.
RECIROCITY OF INDIAN AND INDIGENOUS INFLUENCES.

ANDREW LANG in his *Custom and Myth* has correctly laid down as an axiom—"What the religious instinct has once grasped it does not as a rule abandon, but subordinates or disguises, when it reaches higher ideas." This accounts for the phenomenon in Burma, as must have been already frequently noticed in the preceding pages, both among the cultivated and the wild tribes in the present day, of an overlay of Buddhism on the indigenous Animism in so many of the practices and beliefs connected with Nat-worship. As Christianity in Europe and as Muhammadanism in Asia, so Buddhism in Burma has strongly tinged, but not destroyed, the older form of belief. A story told in Smeaton’s *Loyal Karens of Burma* explains the whole situation, whether observed in Burma, India, or elsewhere. It relates how some children, left by their parents in a safe place out of the reach of beasts of prey, were, nevertheless, so frightened at the approach of a tiger that, to save themselves, they took some pigs that had been placed in the shelter with them and threw them down for the tiger to devour. "Their eyes, however [so the story runs], were fixed, not on the tiger, but on the path by which they expected to see their father come. Their hands fed the tiger from fear, but their ears were eagerly listening for the twang of their father's bow-string, which would send the arrow quivering into the tiger's heart. And so, say the Karens, although we have to make sacrifices to demons, our hearts are still true to God. We must throw sops to the foul demons who afflict us, but our hearts are ever looking for God." Such is the reasoning of the Karens, who have for some time past become largely Christian. It is good to stand well both with God and Mammon is the practical reasoning, too, of the masses all the world over. They are always eclectic, so far as their general ignorance permits.

This mixture of indigenous Animism and Indian Brahmanic ideas, or rather, perhaps, in the following case it is more accurate to say this overlay of Buddhist legend, comes out pretty clearly in the *Kosaunff*, or personal Nats, "a kind of confusion of ideas between the proper spirit and the butterfly spirit, and representing as it were the genius of each individual, a kind of materialised conscience. They are twelve in number, six good and six malevolent, and regulate the life and doings of their prey, accordingly as the benevolent or the malevolent gain the upper hand."

In vol. I., p. 32ff., of the present writer’s *Legends of the Panjab*, and elsewhere, he has given an account of the Sect of the Lahégi Mehtars, which has arisen among the lowest of the population of the Panjab, the scavengers, and he has there shown that their faith was a mere hagiolatry, a worship of anything that these ignorant people had observed to be considered holy by those with whom they came in contact, and that it was in their limits as eclectic as possible. The *Census Report* of Burma, 1901, contains an instructive account of the Sect of Talaks, or Bapaws, arising among the Karens of Kawkarek, not far from Moulmain in Lower Burma, whose ideas a distinct admixture of Animism, Buddhism and Christianity is clearly traceable.
The following narrative relates to a religious sect called 'Talàkus' or 'Bapaws,' which is not generally known. 'Talàkus' means 'a hermit,' and Bapaw 'a worshipper of flowers,' both of which terms convey the same meaning, as will be seen from the accounts given below. The history or legend of the origin of the sect runs thus:—About a century and a half ago, Bodawthagyà, a celestial being, seeing from the upper regions that the Karens were without God and religion, sent his grandson, Saw Yor, who came down and lived with the Karens at Tawd, a place in Siam, known there as Pramkhun. Saw Yor, having forgotten his identity and mission, became as one of them, attending only to temporal requirements. When his grand sire saw this, he came down to the Earth and reminded him of his mission, which was to teach the people religion and bring them to God. The latter thereupon assembled the Karens in a hall and taught them religion. As they were as simple as the fowls of the air, not being able to worship elaborately or expensively as other races, they were enjoined to pray with leaves. On this coming to the ear of a Siamese official, that functionary paid him a visit and attempted to capture him, on the ground that he was planning a rebellion, when he declared his innocence, informing the official that what he was doing was merely to bring the Karens from ignorance to light and religion, with the result that the official was persuaded to return with a present of Rs. 100. Some years after, when he had converted many to his faith, another Siamese official came to him and, accusing him of trying to subvert the Government, attempted also to secure him. Saw Yor gave him the same account of what he was doing, induced him to return with a present of Rs. 100, and persuaded him not to take him away, as, if that was done, the Karens, whom he had taught, would still again to their former condition. Later on, when his converts grew in number and strength, and he had arrived at a great age, Saw Yor was on the point of paying the debt of nature. He then called two disciples, a Sgaw-Karen lad and a Pwo-Karen lad, to his bedside and asked them to procure wood to make a fire, as he wanted to warm himself. They complied with his request. The Pwo-Karen lad, being the smaller and youngest of the two, brought a smaller bundle than the Sgaw-Karen. When the bundles were set on fire, one after the other, that brought by the Sgaw-Karen lad, being bigger and producing the greater heat, was the more satisfactory to Saw Yor. He again requested them each to light a candle. When they were lit, the Sgaw lad's candle, being the bigger and the brighter, Saw Yor was pleased with it and nominated him his successor, passed away. The Pwo lad was wroth at this and vowed that he would not enter the monastery occupied by the Sgaw, declaring that he was not his superior intellectually or in accomplishments. At this point the Sgaw-Talàkus and Pwo-Talàkus separated, the former adhering to the Sgaw lad, who was afterwards known as Pilkyaik, which means 'grandfather god,' and the latter to the Pwo lad, who became their leader. On the death of Pilkyaik, Thabonyà, also a Sgaw, succeeded him. On the latter's death Saw Pwo, another Sgaw, became a Talàkus and dedicated himself at Kyondò in the Mvyôndà Circle. When he died, Pisko, who is also a Sgaw, succeeded him and was in 1901 at Kyondo.

According to the belief of the Talàkus, parents may pray for their children. When this is done, the children are escaped from that religious duty. Before a Nat-worshipper is received into the sect, he has to bring some pebbles, one for himself, one for his wife, and one for each of his children, wash them ceremonially, place them at the foot of a tree set apart for the purpose, and pray. From that time he and his family are recognized as Talàkus, or Bapaws, and Nat-worship, with all its sacrifices, has to be forsaken. In this they differ from the general body of the Karens, who, although professing Buddhism, are not prohibited from worshipping Nats. They are unlike the Nat-worshipping Karens in another respect also, among whom the breeding of fowls, ducks or pigs is prohibited, though they may eat them. There is no such prohibition among the Talàkus, who may breed and eat them at pleasure.

The greatest religious festival observed by the Talàkus is known as the Feast of the Heap of Fire, which takes place yearly on the full moon of Tabândù [February], when, after three days' worship, a heap of wood about 15 cubits high, brought in by those who attend the festival, is set on fire and reduced to ashes. This is said, has its origin in the warming of the first hermit, Saw Yor, by the fires lit by his two great disciples.

Members of this sect were returned at the Census as Buddhists, because they profess Buddhism also; but they appear, nevertheless, to be a distinct sect, whose reliance is much more on Talàkus and his doctrines. The leaves used by them at worship are, it may be noted, cæsia (Hinayà) leaves.

In the above account, we have, in all its crudeness, the eclecticism which brings about that mixture of Buddhism and Animism so typical of modern Burmese Nat-worship. A like admixture of Buddhism, Brahmanism and Animism in the highest social life of Upper Burma is noted by Taw Sein Ko:—At the court of the kings of Burma no month passed by without their attendant festivals, court functions, and ceremonies. In these festivals three elements of belief are distinctly traceable, viz., Buddhist, Brahmanic, and indigenous. Those held

1 Bodawthagyà, almost exactly transliterated “Antawng Mongkà,” Thabonyà being “Antawng,” and Pilkyaik “Abonng,” and Adson, “a royal military leader.” This is noted to the prevalence of Christianity among the Karens.
June may be taken as an illustration. Examinations in Buddhistic literature were held under the supervision of the State, and the successful candidates were inducted into holy orders. This was followed by a ceremony which was common to ancient India and China. The king himself ploughed with a golden plough, to notify to the people that agriculture was a noble avocation, essential to the maintenance of the community. At this ceremony the Brahman astrologers attached to the Burmese Court invoked the blessings of the gods of the Hindu Pantheon, while the Burmese female mediums, or nat kadaws, made propitiatory offerings to the Nats of the indigenous Pantheon, commonly known as the 'Thirty-Seven Rulers.'
CHAPTER VI.

ANIMISM AND CEREMONIES.

PROPITIATION leads to ceremonies, and ceremonies to the employment of persons who profess to know them. In Burma, "Spirit mediums, people who are able to invoke and exorcise or placate the Nats are common everywhere. In Mandalay, there were regular natsayas, naioks, and naivuns, male and female, who officiated at the annual State spirit feasts and sung the proper chants and offered the proper prayers. In the country, such people (nativums) are sent for in cases of sickness, where ordinary measures fail to restore health. These natvuns are, in the great majority of cases, women. They usually wrap a piece of red cloth round their heads and limit their operations to hysterical chanting and wild whirling dances, again suggesting Mr. Andrew Lang’s theory of obsession as the foundation of religion. But occasionally they do more. In various parts of the Northern portion of Upper Burma, when such a natsaya is called In, a bamboo altar is constructed in the house and various offerings (boiled fowls, pork, plantains, coconuts, rice) are placed on it for the Nat. The natsaya then stands a bright copper or brass plate on end, near the altar, and begins to chant, at the same time watching for the shadow of the Nat on the polished copper. When this appears, the officiant begins to dance and gradually works herself into a state of ecstasy. The state of tension produced frequently causes the patient to do the same thing, with obvious results one way or the other, especially if, as not unfrequently happens, this invocation of the possessing spirit is continued for two or three days. When children are ill, little altars are built, or, if the village is on the Irrawaddy, little boats are made. On these an egg, some of the child’s hair, and some sweetmeats are placed and the whole is consigned to the river. This is called an offering to the Chaungzon Nat, the Spirit of the Meeting of the Waters."

There is nothing unusual in all this from the Animistic point of view. The customs and the ideas can be illustrated from almost any of the wilder peoples of the world. Even the village ceremonies take on Animistic forms, which are familiar to all students, as appears from the following account, by an eyewitness, of some ceremonies at Mingin, on the Chindwin, to propitiate a Nat supposed to have caused a deficiency in the rainfall. The rites were performed in a stretch of thick jungle, about a quarter of a mile from the village. There were about twenty men and as many boys, but no women. Although women are most commonly the hierophants in the exorcism of Nats, they are never present at formal Nat feasts. The natin was a small wooden house on piles at the foot of a fine podunck tree, which was connected with the back door of the shrine by a number of piles of white thread, called the Nat’s Bridge. The spirit ordinarily lived in this tree and only came to the shrine to
secure the offerings. He was a jungle spirit, a hamadryad, but in the same grove lived the Myōnā Nats, the guardians of Māmān, and to them also was erected a platform; a small platform of green bamboo about two feet by one. They were the more powerful as regards Māmān, but had no influence over the weather. Nevertheless, to prevent them from being jealous of offerings made to the woodland Nat, this special shrine was built. It also stood under a large tree. The officiating priest was an old Burman of no particular position in the village. He commenced proceedings by offering a tumbler of kānpyó (rice-liquid) to the Myōnā Nats, and then presented a corked bottle full of the same to the sēkthā 
deity of the pādanā tree. The offering of rice-liquid was followed by another of water in the same order and then little heaps of pickled tea-leaves on large leaves were deposited with the same grandiloquent words customary at the pagoda. This was done by the assembled villagers, and while it was going on, the vaya [minister] sprinkled water all round both shrines, and threw rice in handfuls about them. This rice was furnished by each household in the village, and each had also supplied a fowl and an egg, which were brought to the grove. The officiating priest then recited a long prayer, asking for rain from the north and from the south, for peace and deliverance, and for immunity from evil generally. When this was over, the will of the Nats was sought for, the signs being furnished by the fowls and the eggs. The fowls were cut open from the tail with a dōb [knife] and the entrails were extracted. These were examined one by one by the sēkthā. The chief signs are the length and thickness of the intestines; the greater the more promising the sign. The larger side of the intestines should be turned upwards. Next the eggs were examined. These had been boiled hard and their whiteness was the prinát āuto test. Any discolouration was bad, and the greater this was the more unfavourable the omen. Further details were there, but they were only known to the sēkthā. When this had been done, the fowls' entrails were tied to feathers and hung up round the tree and round the shrine. The service was then over. The congregation took the bodies of the fowls and the eggs and kānpyó [rice-liquid], went home in a body, cooked the fowls, ate them and the eggs, and drank the liquor.

Every village has its guardian or pūnnawng Nat, whose cult is as Animistic as may be. In some ceremonies connected with this Nat, the power of the indigenous faith over the imported Buddhism comes out very strongly, for when in dire need, face to face with an epidemic, the villagers first resort to the guardian Nat and then to the local monastery and the "Buddhist Law," but always to both before deserting a pest-stricken place and after re-entering it.

None of the lower class Talaings would ever think of eating a morsel without first holding up his platter in the air, and breathing a prayer to the village Nat. They are particularly fond of putting up shrines to the Nats under the kētān tree, from the wood of which coffins are frequently made. A feast must be held every three or four years in honour of the village Nat, at which the nāt-kadavj, a woman called the Nat's wife, dances. This is done in order that sickness may be kept away. Should an epidemic actually break out, a very elaborate ceremony is gone through. Probably, first of all, the figure of a spectre, or of a bala [ogre] is painted on an ordinary earthenware water-pot, and this is solemnly smashed to pieces about sundown with a heavy stick or a dōb. As soon as it gets dark, the entire populace break out into yells, and make as much noise generally as they can compass, with the view of scaring away the evil spirit who has brought the disease. This is repeated on three several nights, and if it is not then effective the yātan: [monks from the monastery] are called in to give their assistance. The prior with his followers repeat the Ten Precepts, chant the Payégyī, and then one of the sermons of the Lord Buddha is declaimed, the same by the preaching of which he drove away the pestilence which was devastating the country of Wēthālī [Vēsāll]. If this last ceremony is not effectual, the village is abandoned. The inhabitants leave the sick and the dying to their fate, and go off to the jungle, where each household camps out by itself for a time. Before they return again, the yellow-robed monks, in recognition of their assistance, enter into it. The prior with his following repeat the Ten Precepts, chant the Hymn of Protection, Pārīvāra. Though universal in Buddhism, the Pārīvāra Hymns are unorthodox and are not part of the Tripitaka or Scriptures.

1 See chakra, is a supernatural weapon, from the miraculous quoit of the old Brahmanic gods.
2 The Great Payégyī, Hymn of Protection, Pārīvāra. Though universal in Buddhism, the Pārīvāra Hymns are unorthodox and are not part of the Tripitaka or Scriptures.
Appetites overcome their fear of the Nats, Biimáé, the Guardian of the Earth, and Nágyí, the Guardian of the place where the paddj' is to be stored, and the offerings are usually swept away by the boys of the place, whose marriages, but so strong is the Animistic tendency of the people that monks are nevertheless found by death evil Nats, and witches. With them are others who feign to be dogs, and rush about on all fours, barking and howling; others represent pigs, and grunt and nose about with their noses in the ground. After this performance has been carried on for a certain time, the remainder of the villagers come out in a band, and, through one or more spokesmen, demand of the possessed whether those lying sick at home will recover and whether the bad spirits are satisfied with the offerings. It is specially ordained at these exhibitions that no one shall be called by his real name; such mention, if made inadvertently, would expose the person addressed to considerable danger, even if he should make no sign of betraying himself, for he certainly would not answer. The quasi-tats [ghosts, spirits] always reply that the sick will recover and the plague leave the locality. Thereupon the villagers rush off like madmen into the surrounding forest, and run about hither and thither in a reckless way with an open cloth, or the end of their waistcloth [pasó] in their hands. Some of them suddenly make a plunge with their cloth over a bush or tuft of grass, and then closing it up carefully, hurry breathless back to the village. The léppyás or butterfly souls of the sick man are supposed to have been captured. The pasó, or cloth, is carefully opened and shaken over the patient's head, and the léppyás are supposed to return to their proper habitation. This operation is repeated several times, in case a wrong butterfly might have been captured, or lest the actual one should have escaped on the way. Then everybody returns. The function is not without its danger, for it has happened that the temporary imps have become permanently possessed of evil spirits, and as witches and wizards have proved as great curses to the neighbourhood as any pestilence could have been. Which things are an allegory. The whole ceremony is beginning to get into very bad odour, and respectable people avoid having anything to do with it, while those who have taken a part are ashamed to own it.

Animistic as all this ceremonial is, some of the ceremonies of Burma have so European a ring about them that they make one hesitate to place the natives of the country lower than the European peasant in point of superstition. "The Talangs, and many of the Burmans in the Irrawaddy delta, have a regular Nat-feast just before harvesting begins. The figure of a woman is fashioned out of straw, and portions of female dress placed along with it in a bullock cart. Great quantities of bauk, bayin, 'sticky rice,' are heaped up, and the whole driven in procession round the ripe paddy fields. The figure is then set up in the place where the paddy is to be stored, and the offerings are usually swept away by the boys of the place, whose appetites overcome their fear of the Nats. Búmacé, the Guardian of the Earth, and Nágyí, the Guardian of the Grain, to propitiate whom the feast is held."

The orthodox Buddhist monk never attends a social ceremony. He has no concern with births, deaths, and marriages, but so strong is the Animistic tendency of the people that monks are nevertheless found by death beds, but with the idea of keeping away bális, tásis, and demons. "There is no thought of the monk administering spiritual consolation to the dying man. The general influence of his pious presence keeps away evil spirits, and nothing more. No exorcisms of the yakas can alter the balance of merit and demerit which is already cast up for the dying." As to marriages, the present writer has been present at an upper-class wedding ceremony in Mandalay, which was hardly, in many respects, to be distinguished from one performed among Hindus in India. The craving for a show on so important an occasion and the desire to prognosticate a happy life for their offspring were apparently too great for the Buddhist piety of the wealthy family concerned, and the services of a pónná, or Manipúrí Brahman priest, were called in. A Hindu marriage ceremony, be it remembered, is one prolonged invocation of good luck, highly Animistic in character. It is incumbent on royal personages, all over the world, to be leaders of the national religion, and to be imbued with the religious beliefs of the people they rule over. The Kings of Burma were no exception to the rule, and accordingly we find that their public and official life was filled with popular ceremonies, Animistic in nature, but strongly tinged, of course, with Brahmanic ideas. At his coronation the King was anointed with water, blessed by eight pónnás, and presented with the payékpán or holy flower with supernatural powers, and the pónnás settled on the auspicious day for ascending the throne.

Then, again, the monthly festivals, which formed so prominent a feature in the life of the Court and Capital, were replete with Buddhist-Brahmanic Nat-worship. At the first festival in April, the Thingyán, which is, by the way, common to all Burmas, holy water from the Irrawaddy, as the Ganges of the Burmeses, was brought to the King and distributed by him as doubly sacred,—having passed first through the hands of pónnás—and then through his own. The water was to be used for washing sacred images, which is very Brahmanic in tone. And during this Thingyáaw Feast pónnás invoked the Nats of hōn or fire and gyó (gyaha) or the planets to bless the royal heads.

At the third festival in June, at the Mó-nat-páraw-pwé, Feast of the Worship of the Lord of the Rain (Mána-nátha-páya), the skyddámas, or orthodox Buddhist abbots, prayed the "Ngayán Min's Prayer" for kindly
ANIMISM IN CEREMONIES.

Rain publicly at the Palace; for by legend Nguyễn Minh was a Boddhisattva [coming Buddha] in the form of the King of the Murrel-fish (Snake-head). And the Ponnas, or Hindu astrologers, built two temporary lamaungs (seven-storied buildings), in which were placed figures of the Nat of the Rain in human form, and of the Nat of the Water in that of a frog, alligator or fish. After the prayers, these were thrown into the Irrawaddy, acting as the Ganges. This was too Indian for the Kings and they did not take part in it; only tolerated it.

At the twelfth festival in February was the worship of Nats proper and of the Thirty-seven Nats especially, but most especially of Mahāgiri, Aungzwa-magyi and Ngazishin, of whom more anon. The King also sent offerings to the Nats or nat-balth (ogres) who guarded the four gates of the city.

The following account reveals one of the prettiest developments of ancient Indian Animistic practices to be found all over Burma, and India too for that matter, at the present day. "At the same season [end of the Wā or ‘Lent’ in October] there is an illumination on the river. As soon as it is dark, the villagers row out into the middle of the stream and set adrift a multitude of little oil lamps, each fastened to a little float of bamboo or plantain stems. The lamps are simply little earthenware cups filled with oil, and each supplied with a small piece of cotton for a wick. Thousands of them are sent out by a single village, and the sight from a steamer suddenly rounding a bend and coming upon a bank of these little stars of light afloat on the river is very singular. In the distance it looks like a regular sea of flame, and as there is plenty of oil, on the night of the full moon there is a constant succession of these shoals of twinkling lights floating down the whole length of the Irrawaddy from above Bhamo to China Buckner [top to bottom of the Irrawaddy in Burma], every village sending its contingent.

"This ceremony, called yebaung-hmyawthi, or mhaung-hmyawthi, launching water or fire rafts, is in remembrance of a universally honoured phayd-nge, a lesser divinity called Shin Upagā, who lives down at the bottom of the river in a kyi-pyathat, or brazen spire, where he zealously keeps the sacred days [wa]. In a former existence he carried off the clothes of a bather, and for this mischievous pleasantry is condemned to remain in his present quarters till Aritanayya [Ariya-Mettaya, usually merely Mettaya] the next Buddha, shall come. Then he will be set free, and entering the thiaga [sangha, church] will become a yahinatā [arahanta, saint], and attain Nebba [Nirvana]. He is a favourite subject for pictures, which represent him sitting under his brazen roof, or on the stump of a tree, eating out of an alms-bowl, which he carries in his arms. Sometimes he is depicted gazing sideways up to the skies, where he seeks a place that is not polluted by corpses. Such a spot is not to be found on earth, where every stock and stone is but the receptacle of a departed spirit."

The looted Hindus.

Mahāgiri Nat (No. 2) and his sister Hanumbhakari Nat (No. 3), seized at Pagan about 1820.
The Sensory Beings according to the Burmese
The Sentient Beings according to the Burmese.

Buddhist Cosmogony.

The Burmese ideas of Sentient Beings, borrowed from India, represent a philosophy dealing with the evolution of the soul. First, in the Nether Worlds we have the evil soul; then in the present world we have the neutral soul of man, rising to the higher soul of the angel in the nearer heavens. Next we have the soul getting the better of the body in the Pudic world of the higher angels, and lastly, the soul disassociated from the body in the Araupa, or immaterial, worlds, waiting for Nibbana or dissolution.

In the Burmese Buddhist Cosmogony, all beings are divided into three classes,—Kamê, generating, Rûpa, corporeal ungenerated, (Arupa, incorporeal). These three classes are divided into thirty-one species, each with its dhyana, path, state, stage, region, or seat.

There are eleven divisions of the Kamê, seven happy and four unhappy. The four unhappy divisions are, lowest upward:—Nayi (Niraya), Hell (1); Pità (Pitaka), Ghosts (2); Athayakhe (Asurakaya), Fallen Angels (3); Tavakkhan (Tiracchâna), Animals (4). The seven happy divisions are, lowest upward:—Manokhe (Ma-nussa), Man (5); and then the Abodes of the Nats proper or the Material Heavens, viz., Zatunmahârit (Chatum-mahârajika), the Land of the Four Great Kings (6); Jawadêthi (Jatatisâ), the Land of the Thirty-three Rulers (7); Yatnâ (8); Tushita (Tusitâ) (9); Nâmam‌nârta, the Land of Mára or Man Nat (10); Wûthawadi (Vasavatti) (11).

There are sixteen divisions of the Rûpa or Byammi (Brahma) Nats, beings that are corporeal but ungenerated. The ideas as to these are shadowy, but their names are as follows:—Byammapayadhita (Brahmaparîsajjâ) (12); Byammapayadhita (Brahmapurîhitâ) (13); Mathibynnâ (Mahâbrahma) (14); Payettabh (Parittabhâ) (15); Appamânibâ (Appamânabhâ) (16); Abidhâya (Abhassara) (17); Payettabh (Parittabhâ) (18); Appamânibâ (Appamânabhâ) (19); Thidakhennâ (Subhakhinnâ) (20); Wêkhpo (Vêkaphadâ) (21); Tûkhynâ (Asûnasatta) (22); Shakr (Skhâra) (23); Atâpâ (Atappâ) (24); Tûdâšâ (Subassâ) (25); Tûdâšâ (Subassâ) (26); Akânttâ (Akanittha) (27).

There are four divisions of the Arûpa Nats, formless incorporeal beings, imagined as immaterial suns, waiting in absolute peace for Nibbana (Nirvana):—Alâkhanâ (Alakshana) (28); Wisbun (Vihâna) (29); Akinin (Akkhaññâ) (30); Watthiyâ (Vasaphâ) (31).

The numbers after these names refer to the numbers in the Plate.
CHAPTER VII.

SUBSIDIARY BELIEFS.

It is a phenomenon of human nature that every religion should have its main and subsidiary beliefs and practices, and it is usual to distinguish these two forms of belief by the terms "religion" and "superstition." But when one is dealing with Animism and the Brahmanic parts of Buddhism, it is difficult to maintain the division in this way. It exists, however, and both Animism and Brahmanic Buddhism have their subsidiary beliefs in the forms of divination, astrology, necromancy, magic and charms. It will be seen that the inhabitants of Burma, in following the practices consequent on the ideas involved in the above terms, conformed to the conditions that have made their main faith Animism, overlaid by a form of Buddhism imbued with Brahmanic notions.

The Shans of the British Territory took their Buddhism from the Burmese, so that with them the Buddhist faith is removed a point further from the Indian form than is that of the Burmans, and is therefore a point nearer to that of the indigenous Animism. The Burmese astrology is purely Indian in origin, as its very name *vēdānta* shows, and all the Court astrologers were by way of being "Brahmans" (*Pūṇṇa*, Sanskrit *Punyā*), i.e., descendants of Indian captives from Manipur, Assam and Arakan, and of foreign residents from the time of the Pagan dynasty (11th century). The Shan astrology is, however, not only itself clearly Taoist in origin, but it is dependent on the *Pīhāt*, or Sixty Year Cycle procured from the Chinese. It has overlaid that procured from Burma itself, and is day by day increasing in power, even amongst the most pious Buddhists, including the very wardens of the pagodas. Divination, calculation of lucky and unlucky days, horoscope casting, *et hoc genus omne*, are a living force in governing the lives and actions of the whole population of Burma, and this being so, the influence of Shan astrology cannot but become an overwhelming power in maintaining the Animism which dominates the religious ideas of the country.

The strong Animistic nature of the Shan influence comes out forcibly in the following popular belief. Every day has its presiding Nat, who requires a particular diet. It is well to know this, so as to know what to offer to
the Nat, or what to guard from him. The diet is not complicated in reality, though made to appear so by the astrologers for their own purposes. It may be stated thus. The Nat of the day eats according to the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Waning Moon</th>
<th>Waxing Moon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nats</td>
<td>Nats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>men on the 1st, 6th,</td>
<td>on the 1st, 11th,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fowls on the 2nd, 12th,</td>
<td>on the 2nd, 17th,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ducks on the 3rd, 13th,</td>
<td>on the 3rd, 18th,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dogs on the 4th, 15th,</td>
<td>on the 4th, 19th,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pigs on the 5th, 16th,</td>
<td>on the 5th, 20th,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bulls on the 6th, 21st,</td>
<td>on the 6th, 21st,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buffaloes on the 7th, 22nd,</td>
<td>on the 7th, 22nd,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ponies on the 8th, 23rd,</td>
<td>on the 8th, 23rd,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elephants on the 9th, 24th,</td>
<td>on the 9th, 24th,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This means that you can offer fowls, ducks, dogs and pigs on three days each of the month and guard your Nats, men, bulls, buffaloes, ponies and elephants most carefully, each on three other days. All this is Animistic pure and simple.

From astrology to necromancy is a short step, and witchcraft was recognised by the native Burmese law. The ordinary Animistic nature of this belief comes out in Taw Sein Ko's description of the remedy for witchcraft. Writing in 1901, he says:—"Bewitched persons are restored to health by kmaw-sayás. These doctors attain their qualifications by drinking water, in which ashes of scrolls containing cabalistic squares and mystic figures have been mixed, by taking special internal medicine, or by having their bodies tattooed with figures of Nats, magic squares, or incantations. The afflicted person is brought before a kmaw-sayás and he commands the offending Nat, witch, or spirit to enter and reveal its wishes through the medium of its victim. Sometimes a mere threat is sufficient to scare away the Nat, witch, or spirit, but generally drastic measures have to be resorted to in order to exorcise it, and pungent substances are rubbed into the eyes of the patient, who is also beaten severely! Occasionally, kmaw-sayás are not well qualified and they are worsted, and some of them even get killed. The ill-treatment meted out to the sick person is borne by the spirit, and the former, when cured, does not feel any after-effects of the rough usage."

"At Prome, a few years ago, U Mingyaw Nat became enamoured of a respectable Burmese young lady. His spirit possessed her person and he declared his erotic intentions. The guardian of the girl did not approve of the proposed union, for the status or profession of a nat-budaw (a Nat's Wife, or medium) is not considered respectable, and he married her to a young Burman. The Nat became enraged and the newly-married husband sickened and died, and the guardian was obliged to celebrate the marriage between the widow and the Nat. The lady thus became a nat-budaw and her oracular utterances were highly esteemed. She would drain off jars of toddy and four or five bottles of gin or brandy, and would be quite sober when she regained consciousness. She would even smoke ganja [a hemp intoxicant] in her cigars. After the expiry of about six months the Nat apparently got tired of his lady-love and left her for 'pastures new.' She then lost the power of seeing into the past and future and, to hide her shame, she betook herself to Maiibin, where she died of cholera, perhaps with the approval or connivance of her celestial husband."

Unlike Burmese astrology, Burmese magic seems not to have been greatly subjected to indigenous influences and to be still mainly Indian in origin, the Nats connected with it being chiefly Burmanised representatives of Indian Buddhist personages, vide Taw Sein Ko's description of Ponnaka Nat, invoked for the purpose of doing harm by invisible agency. "Ponnaka is the name of a Nat in the Vidura Jāṅkā, who took the wise minister Vidura to the Queen of the Nagás [Serpents]. The Queen had heard of the wisdom and virtue of Vidura and was eager to hear him preach, and Ponnaka was commissioned by her daughter to fetch him. He did so most effectually by tying him to the tail of his horse. The Ponnaka Nat is capable of doing three things in an invisible manner:—throwing stones at a house, beating people with a stick, burning a house or village."

"It is necessary, of course, to invoke this Nat, and this is done in the following way:—Make a wax image of an ogre on horseback (see fig. 1). The saddle should be made of the pasē [linen-cloth] of a dead man, the bridle should be made of strings used in tying the thumbs and toes of a dead man, and the tail should be made of the hair of a person who has hanged himself. Take the image to a big tree noted for the powers of its presiding

1 M昂y Aungdin Nat, one of the Thirty-Seven Nats, for whom see Chapter XII."
Nat and, after propitiating him with suitable offerings, offer up this prayer: 'O fierce Nat! Vouchsafe to receive my Ponnaka, and let him do my bidding.' After this, bury the image under a tree. If a heap of stones is piled up near the tree, and if Ponnaka is instructed to throw them at any house, a battery of stones will be directed against that house. If an image of Ponnaka be made of a special kind of wood (fig. 2), and if he is directed to assault any given person or persons, the required effect will be produced. The most disastrous consequences are reserved for the image of Ponnaka with the firebrand. This image and the legend round it (fig. 3) should be inscribed on a potsherd and, by intoning the legend, houses or villages can be burnt down by an invisible agency. The following is a translation of the incantation: 'O fierce, strong, and powerful Ponnaka Nat! I pray thee go quickly and burn down such and such a house, hamlet, village, or town.'

All this is somewhat elaborate. The ordinary invocation of Ponnaka is performed by an enterprising bidinsaya, or astrologer. He carries off some cinders and bits of wood from the funeral pyres of people who have been burnt, and collecting a large assortment of such charred pieces of wood, puts them secretly in the house of the person whose feelings he wishes to work on. At night the spirits come and keep up a battery of stones on the unfortunate man's roof, all attempts to find out where the stones come from being quite unavailing.

The commonest use for Burmese magic is to procure invulnerability, and here again the origin is Indian, as the following account from Taw Sein Ko shows, and also the fact that the protective cabalistic squares contain usually invocations in Pali. The great prototype of acquired invulnerability was an Indian King of mythic times, called Pṛisada, or man-eater, now corrupted by the Burmese into Bawdithadd. This king was extremely fond of beef, and one day, the supply running short, his cook served up human flesh instead. He found the taste so excellent, that he gave stringent orders that nothing but human flesh should be prepared for his table in future. The direct result of this command was that the country became perceptibly depopulated, and there was some popular effervescence.

"Vox populi was vox dei even in those days, and the king had to pronounce upon himself the sentence of banishment. He was now free from any restraint imposed by law or public opinion, and his consumption of human flesh was excessive. Eventually, while hiding in a pond filled with lotus plants, he was captured by a Bodhisattva, and, through him, was reconverted into a sociable being, in love and peace with his fellow-creatures.

There are thus three representations of Bawdithadda: leaving his capital with a two-edged sword on his shoulder and holding a human head (fig. 1); crowned with a lotus leaf while hiding himself in the pond (fig. 2); returning to the capital after his reconversion (fig. 3). All or any of these figures must be tattooed in red above
the waist. The vermilion dye must be mixed with human fat and with a potent mixture called ḍāṭhāhun-agālāung-
se, or the water of the five years of the religion, and it is absolutely imperative that the candidate shall
hold a piece of human flesh between his teeth while he is being tattooed.

"Any one who is properly tattooed with the figures of Bawdhithādā is proof against wounds inflicted by
sword, gun, or cudgel. He will be endowed with the qualities, as soon as he has finished muttering the
legends inscribed round the figures, jump and skip without the help of these incantations, he has gone mad. The
tattooed in the manner above mentioned is so great that most aspirants, fortunately
for the public peace, become incumbrably mad.

"The following is a translation of the incantations muttered by a fully qualified Bawdhithādā. For figs. 1 and
3: - "I, Bawdhithādā, who am qualifying to be the great robber chief Angulimalla, am now going fast ahead."
For fig. 2: - "May Bawdhithādā, speedily succeed in capturing him" (the Boddhisattva, King Sutasāma, who recon-
verted him)."

It is, in its subsidiary beliefs, superstitions, aber-glaube as it were, that one has corroborative evidence of
the extent to which Anism pervades the Burmese mind. During the disturbances which followed the
annexation of Upper Burma in 1886, the revolutionary bands were kept together by means of incantations, runes,
cabalas and amulets, based either on pure indigenous Anistic ideas, or on similar ideas imported from Brahmanic
India. And this is the case wherever disturbances are created in any part of the country, even of the most
settled districts. "It is a singular proof of the way in which Anism's worship pervades the Buddhism of Burma,
that many of the most noted seers, ascetics, and tattooers are Anistic. Many of the most stubborn dacoit
leaders were monks, and those who were not, usually had warlock men in their train."

Mohish influence in the town of the Taung District, in favour of Minamar Prince in 1888, comes out in the
crypto-sayings spread about to indicate the proper time to strike on each day, when the situation in other
respects seemed to promise well for an attack. "On Sunday, when the sun casts a shadow ten feet long, the
mountain shall overcome the griffin, swine, griffin bird. On Monday, when the sun casts a shadow five
feet long, the deer shall overcome the tiger. On Tuesday, when the sun casts a shadow eight feet long, the
elephant shall overcome the lion. On Wednesday, when the sun casts a shadow four feet long, the goat shall
overcome the dog. On Thursday, when the sun casts a shadow three feet long, the mouse shall overcome the
cat. On Friday, when the sun casts a shadow twelve feet long, Mahàvatthi (Mahāsattva = Boddhisattva) shall
overcome King Sulani Brāhadāt (Chòp-Brāhadatta). On Saturday, when the sun casts a shadow nine feet
long, the fog shall overcome the snake."

The above method of indicating the hour is Brahmanic, with a Buddhist tinge, but unadulterated Neo-
Brahmanism appears in the following interesting version from Sangermano (Burman Empire, p. ii9f.), of the
famous story of Rāma and Hanumān, out of the Indian Rāmâyana, used for the purposes of magic. "One of the
most potent charms is a handle of ivory or buffalo's horn, upon which are carved several representations of a
certain monstrous ape. The history of this creature is as follows. A Nat of the name of Mān Nat (Māna)
being dead, passed into the womb of a female ape, who shortly after brought forth this famous monster. Its
name is Hanumān, the compound of the word Hanu, signifying an ape, and its former appellation. The
state of this monster was enormous, being four leagues and a half; it was possessed of the greatest agility, for at one
bound it could leap up to heaven, or pass a sea of the breadth of a hundred leagues; and it had besides the
property of transforming itself into an ape of the ordinary size. Its strength was prodigious, as it could break
any mountain in pieces, or transport it from one place to another; finally, it was gifted with immortality, so that
none but the great king, Yāma Min [King Rámä], could destroy it. It could both understand and speak the
language of men. One day, it mistook the sun for a fruit, and having a great desire to eat it, jumped up to it,
and seized it with its hands to bring it down. But the Nat of the sun cursed it for its boldness, and as a punish-
ment sentenced it to be reduced to an ape of the usual dimensions, to lose all its strength, agility, and immortality,
and to remain in this condition till the great king, Yāma Min, should appear, who, by stroking its back three
times, would restore to it, together with its size, all its other great qualities. And in fact, after this malediction,
Hanumān became a common ape, as powerless and as weak as any other of its kind; and so it remained till King
Yāma Min appeared. He, having been informed of the curse and the prediction, and being about to wage war
with the king of the giants, sent for Hanumān, and having stroked its back three times, restored it to its former
state, hoping now to derive great assistance from it in his enterprise. And, indeed, he afterwards employed it in
the most arduous undertakings: and, through its means, obtained a complete victory over the giants, and
recovered his wife from their hands. Wherefore the officials and all the people believe, that by carving the figure

1 This is pure folk-etymology, seeking for a Burmese derivation of the Sanskrit proper name Hanumān, the Monkey-God.
of this monster upon the ivory or bone handles of their daggers or swords, they communicate to them the virtue of cutting through every obstacle, and of warding off the blows of any hostile weapon." This shows that the modern Burmese have not, under the guidance of their Hindu astrologers, been content to go to the pre-Buddhist Brahmanism of India for their magic, but have even used that form of Brahmanism, which is in India post-Buddhist and is indeed modern Hinduism.

Guardian Spirits.

1. Khatthapal, Priest of the Field-guardian (Khattapa).
2. Yalikha Nat Min, Tree-guardian (Yalika).
3. Abyar Nat Min, King of the Trees (Aryapala).
CHAPTER VIII.
THE THIRTY-SEVEN NATS.

We are now in a position to examine the Thirty-Seven Nats themselves, and to grasp the ideas that have led to their existence in the imagination of the Burmese, and the forms they have taken on at the present day.

The Order of the Thirty-Seven Nats belongs to the category of ghosts or spirits of departed heroes, except in one instance, the chief of the Order, Thagyd Nat, who springs from ancient Indian Brahmanic ideas. Now, not only are all the Thirty-Seven Nats, excepting Thagyd Nat, ghosts of departed heroes, but they all, except one other, purport to be the spirits of persons either themselves royal, or directly or indirectly connected with royalty. The stories, as now commonly current, are also not necessarily fastened on to persons very long since dead. The majority of them were alive between the 13th and 17th centuries A.D., and some less than 200 years ago. One was well known to the early Portuguese settlers, and was often mentioned in their accounts. I need hardly point out that this is a strong indication of the stage of civilization to which the modern Burman has reached. I may here say that each of these Nats has his or her own cult, i.e., an appropriate ceremony or festival, and an appropriate place and time for performing it.

Though everybody knows about the Thirty-Seven Nats and everybody talks about them glibly enough, I found that the books passed them over, so far as details were concerned, and I had much difficulty in hunting up vernacular information on the subject, and in obtaining named pictures and images of them. In the end, I managed to procure some outline legends and a complete set of images carved by Burmans in teak-wood, which I believe is unique, unless a collection which I heard was to be sent to Copenhagen Museum in 1895 has been placed there. I propose to explain now a series of illustrations made from the images in my possession, with the aid of the information thus picked up at odd times from various Burmans and my subsequent researches. Quoting so trustworthy an authority as Taw Sein Ko, I would note that, "as a rule, images of Nats are uncouth objects, generally made of wood, with some sort of human countenance. Those of the 'Thirty-Seven Rulers' are being
carefully preserved within the precincts of the Shwezigon Pagoda at Pagan." My specimens are, however, I am glad to say, fine examples of indigenous art.

The following is a list of the vernacular information in my possession. Of books—(1) Mahâgiri Médani
gyinh; pp. 117-179: Disquisition on the Thirty-Seven Nats List at p. 118. Woodcuts: on front cover, No. 10, Aungzwâmagny Nat; on p. 179, Thagyâ Nat. Published at Rangoon, B.E. 1925 (1869). (2) Bound MS. in Burmese: "The Thirty-Seven Nats." Of MSS., unbound—(3) MS. A., a list with very brief notes. (4) MS. B, a list with more copious notes. (5) MS. C., a list with very brief notes. (6) MS. D., a list with notes on each. (7) MS. E., fragmentary notes on Nats Nos. 22 to 31 inclusive. Of drawings—(3) A set of elaborately coloured drawings on a parabâk (native paper) book of all the Nats; no names or descriptions; reproduced in facsimile in this work. (4) A bound set of pencil drawings of the Thirty-Seven Nats, with names and descriptions and occasional notes. (5) A bound set of fine pencil drawings of the Thirty-Seven Nats, with names and notes on each; reproduced on a reduced scale in this work. (6) A bound set of rough tentative pencil drawings of the Thirty-Seven Nats, with names. But this must be more vernacular information available somewhere, for Taw Sein Ko informs us that there is a Book of Thirty-Seven Odes attached to the cult, unless, indeed, he means by this title the Mahâgiri Médani
gyin.

One prominent fact came to my notice from the examination of the data available, viz., that the various lists procured from all sorts of independent sources, were so nearly the same, both in the names of the Nats themselves and in the order in which they were given, that it may be taken for granted that there exists what may be called an authentic list. I have, therefore, taken that which is to be found in a pamphlet containing a popular work, the Mahâgiri Médani
gyin, printed at Rangoon in 1875 Burmese Era (i.e., in 1821 A.D.), with a woodcut representing Aungzwâmagny Nat. No. 10, on the front cover, as my model and the most likely to be authentic. In numbering my images I have followed the enumeration given therein, and may add that my numbering has been accepted by the competent Burmans to whose criticism it has been subjected. I now give what may be called the Authentic List:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Authentic List of Nats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Thagyâ Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Mahâgiri Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Hnasâkawgyâ Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Shwê Nabe Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Thônban Hî Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Taung-ngi Mingaung Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Mintâ Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Thândawgân Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Aungzwâmagny Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Ngàziëshin Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Aungbinlê Sibyûsín Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Taungmagyâ Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Maung Minshin Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Shindaw Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Taung Shwedâ Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Miàyi Aundgin Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Shwê Sippin Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Medaw Shwèsagâ Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Yun Bayin Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Maung Nîbyûl Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Mándalê Bôdaw Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Shwèbyin Naungdaw Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Shwèbyin Nykîaw Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Minthâ Maung Sîaw Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Thûdsagû Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Thadâng Medaw Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Baymûakshin Mingaung Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Ma Sîawks Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Ma Kyawçwà Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Mûakpyêr Shînëa Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Anauk Mîbûy Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Shingôn Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Shingwà Nat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Shin-nêm Nat.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the Upper Burma Gazetteer, Part I, Vol. II, p. 17, the same names as in the above list are given, but in a somewhat different order, which may be briefly compared thus:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&quot;Authentic List&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Upper Burma Gazetteer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 5 26 27 28 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 28 29 30 31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>&quot;Authentic List&quot;</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Upper Burma Gazetteer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 16 17 20 18 19 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 32 33 34 35 36 37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The qualifications for admission into the authentic list are such as might be expected—great prominence, strong personality or striking performances during life; or one of the sudden, cruel, startling deaths; or tragic, terrifying fates, only too common in Burman, as in all Oriental, history.

Why the orthodox number of this Order of Nats is fixed at Thirty-Seven is an interesting question. It no doubt represents the Thirty-Three occupants of the Tâvatimsa (Trayastrimsa in Sanskrit and Tawdântâ in Burmese) Heaven of the old Indian and now Burmese Buddhism. The Pali word Tâvatimsa means "belonging to the Thirty-Three," and the Thirty-Three compose an Order of supernatural beings, with Sakra, i.e. Thagyâ, as their head, just as he is head of the modern Burmese Order of the Thirty-Seven Nats. In another view, which is a confused reference to the old Indian idea of the changing personality from time to time of the chief of a Buddhist heaven, every one of the Thirty-Three is a Thagyâ, and in this view the head of the Thirty-Seven Nats for the time being is one of the Thagyâs.
The Habitations of the Sentient Beings According to the Burmese

Buddhist Cosmology
THE HABITATIONS OF THE SENTIENT BEINGS ACCORDING TO THE BURMESE.

Buddhist Cosmogony.

The accompanying illustration shows how the Burmese imagine that the Earth and Heavens are inhabited. Below the earth are the four infernal regions. In the centre of the earth rises Mount Mēru (Myinnó) with its ruby feet and its faces—ruby to the south, gold to the east, and silver to the west. At the foot of Mount Mēru lies the habitation of mankind. High on the Mount, three-fourths the way up, above the abode of the bala, unda, galáns and other imaginary creatures, lies the Heaven of the Four Great Kings, Zatumahārīt. At the summit lies Tāwadéñthā, the Heaven of the Thirty-threes, whose ruler is Thagyó Nat. Immediately above it in space lies Yāmabón, the Land of Yama, the Restrainer; then Tūthidā, so often visited by Buddha while on earth; then Némnánayādi, ruled over by Mán Nat (Māra, the Evil Principle), whose merits in former lives were so great that all the evil he does cannot bring him down lower; and next Wuthwāwadi, the highest heaven occupied by generating beings. Above these come the sixteen abodes of the Byamná Nats, the real angels of the Burmese, sentient beings who are corporeal but ungenerated. Above these again are the four abodes of the perfect or formless sentient beings, which are not depicted for obvious reasons.

The names of all these abodes will be found accompanying the plate representing the Sentient Beings according to the Burmese.
THE THIRTY-SEVEN NATS.

What I may call the natural grouping of the Nat stories historically, as will be seen later on, supports the
view that the Order of Thirty-Seven is a national reference to the old Order of Thirty-Three, made in con­sequence of that attitude of mind which has induced the Burmese to fit all the classical names of the locali­ties of Indian Buddhism on to territories and places of ace within their own ken. Referring to the "Authentic List," I
find that the stories group themselves thus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group I</th>
<th>2 to 5</th>
<th>12-10-14</th>
<th>37</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group II</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>24 to 30</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group III</td>
<td>7 to 12</td>
<td>10-10-20</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group IV</td>
<td>31 to 32</td>
<td>34-10</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group V</td>
<td>6 to 8</td>
<td>17-33</td>
<td>....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odd Nats</td>
<td>15 to 18</td>
<td>22 to 23</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are two ways, on this plan, of accounting for the four in excess in the Order of Thirty-Seven. In the
first place, Nos. 35, 36, 37 are women with no particular story and more or less obviously thrown into the set.
The story of No. 21 has no connection with any of the others. In the second place, Group V. relates to Nat
stories of persons presumably alive in the 16th and 17th centuries, and so they must all be very modern
inventions or attributions. In either case, these Nats and their stories may be looked upon as thrown in to
make the required number up to Thirty-Seven. It is also to be observed that the last four Nats, Nos. 34 to 37,
are all women, whose stories may have been invented to complete the orthodox number, Thirty-Seven. According
to the Upper Burma Gazetteer, Part I. Vol. II. p. 17, the four superlumious Nats are the wife, sister and niece
(Nos. 3, 4 and 5) of Mahagitii Nat (No. 2), and the younger brother (No. 26) of Shwebyin Naungdaw (No. 25).
But all the above ideas are necessarily conjectures, and I give them merely as theories.

Taw Sein Ko has yet another way of accounting for what he calls the "indigenous pantheon" of Burma. "It
consists of Thirty-Four Nats (i.e. (1) Thagya and his Thirty-Three, but the number Thirty-Seven has attained
a popular fancy because the Book of Odes (by which apparently he means the *Mahagitii* Mentinjatn, as already
noted) is chanted when offerings are made to them, consists of thirty-seven odes, some of the Nats having more
than one ode devoted to them. The odes are strictly speaking, short autobiographical sketches in metre,
revised by modern [authiai] when they are possessed, and are somewhat moral in their tendency, much
as they impress on the audience the sins of treason, rebellion and assassination. In the case of Nats who were
members of the royal family, they give a succinct account of their genealogy.

Taw Sein Ko also classifies his Thirty-Four Nats thus—six ancient heroes and heroines, fourteen roy­alties,
twelve officials of State, one "dealer in pickled tea, who traded with the Shan and Palaung States in the north­east of Burma," and one female, white elephant (i.e. apparently Ngadzishin). The Upper Burma Gazetteer, loc.
cit., classes the Thirty-Seven Nats as twenty royal, sixteen poor and one merchant.

I may well close this discussion by an account of a MS. in the India Office, courteously placed at my
disposal by the authorities for the present work, as it supports my "Authentic List," and throws generally much
light on the subject of the Thirty-Seven Nats.

The MS. is contained in a thick folio volume (305-31 G.6) of the India Office Library, entitled "Burmese
Drawings, Inscriptions, etc., presented by [the second] Lord Wynford in 1849," through Sir James Weir Hogg,
at various periods Chairman of the Court of Directors of the East India Company. The collection was appar­ently
made between 1826 and 1832, or later, by someone interested in the operations after the First Burmese
War of 1824 onwards. It consists, firstly, of 64 sheets of drawings of all sorts, relating to Burma, chiefly by
native artists, mounted on cloth and arranged in folio form; and secondly, of two vocabularies—an English
and a Latin-Burmese-English—of economic plants and products of the country in 26 folios. The volume
commences with some squeezes of inscriptions, and descriptions of the pagoda as a building, and of Buddha's
Foot, *sekka-yadhin,* (11 sheets). It then gives a series of astronomical figures, showing the Burmese adapta­tions of Indian
ideas (16 sheets); representations of Court processions of the period, by land and water (9 sheets); Burmese
pictorial ideas of the terrestrial, celestial and internal worlds and their inhabitants, with representations of the
planets (12 sheets of much importance). Then commences a long series of the Nats, including the Thirty-Seven,
in many interesting and, at times, primitive forms (33 sheets). The whole series of drawings closes with early
lithographs of views of Lower Burma (9 sheets). The collection is accompanied by many notes in pencil and
ink in the hand of Professor H. H. Wilson, who, as Librarian, wrote the letter to the Court which announced
the presentation.

For the present enquiry, the great interest and value of the MS. lies in its representations of the inhabitants
of the worlds, two sets alike in detail, and in its pictures of the Nats. The worlds and their inhabitants are
THE THIRTY-SEVEN NATS.

given in an ascending scale from the lowest to the highest, commencing with the Animal World and going successively up to the Haunting-Ghost World, the Fallen-Angel World, Hell and the World of Mankind, and then the Heavens, from the Chatumaharjika and Tavatimsa to the Mahabrahma, and on beyond that half-way house to the thirty-two abodes of the Formless Beings, Anupaṭṭhātā.

In the great series of Nats are two sets, both obviously purporting to describe the Thirty-Seven. The first gives the list and names exactly as in my “Authentic List,” except that my Nos. 29, 30, 31 and 32 are transposed as Nos. 31, 32, 30, 29. Ngādzhin Nat (No. 11) is repeated in an explanatory form at the end. This is the strongest corroboration of the accuracy of my “Authentic List.” The second set also numbers thirty-seven, but is plainly a spurious one, as it is eked out with four balus, Varuna Nat Min, Thado Minzaw, Kö Then Shin (the Chin “Supreme Judge”), and so on, and it is in any kind of order. It, however, gives some of the Nats in important forms, explanatory of the stories connected with them. There are also scattered throughout the Nat pictures in the MS. valuable variants of the forms which the Thirty-Seven assume in consequence of the traditions current about them. The most interesting of the variants are reproduced in the present work, as are also many of the other Nat drawings which explain its subject.
CHAPTER IX.

HISTORICAL RETROSPECT OF THE NAT LEGENDS.

We have now got so far on our enquiry as to have ascertained that the Thirty-Seven Nats are spirits of departed royalties of Burma or of their connections, and, therefore, before proceeding further, I must ask attention to a very brief outline of that portion of the exceedingly complicated history of Burma, which is covered by the stories connected with the Thirty-Seven Nats. I must, however, remind my readers that there are large portions of territory, forming part at various times of what has been known to us as the Burman Empire, which are not concerned with these Nat stories, such as the Shan States, Tenasserim, Arakan and Manipur. In explaining the history, I regret that I shall be forced to mention names and places which are uncouth and unfamiliar to most European ears, but still, I hope, with the aid of the map prepared for the purpose, to make my story clear and perhaps interesting.

There are three separate races which have had a hand in forming the Dynasties with which we are now concerned: the Burmans, the Shans and the Talaings. As races, they have occupied territories roughly as follows:—the Burmans, the valleys of the Irrawaddy and the Sittang above Prome and Tonghoo; the Talaings, the deltas of these two rivers below those points and of the Salween; and the Shans all the country in the hills to the eastward of Burma. The Talaings are an altogether Far Eastern people allied to the races populating Annam. The three races are all mixed up in the formation of the many dynasties that have held ephemeral sway over the whole or part of Burma, and have constantly ousted each other as ruling races, for a time, in practically all parts of it. Also, at times there have been overlords and subordinate kings, holding more or less independent power together, in the various chief towns or capitals, and these are all alike "kings" in the popular estimation and memory, a puzzling fact that has always to be kept in mind in attempting to grasp the facts of Burmese political history.

As in all Oriental history, the Burmese dynasties commence with two long consecutive lines of legendary kings of Tagaung, as the first general capital, followed by a long dynasty of Prome and later of Pagan, chiefly also legendary in the earlier portions, and alleged to be directly connected with the last dynasty of Tagaung. The Burmese dynasty is said to have commenced almost with the Buddhist era, in 483 B.C., and to have lasted till 1298 A.D., when it gave way to the Shan dynasty of Pinyad and Myinzau. The Shan kings of Burma, however, claimed descent from, and close relationship with, the Burmese kings of Pagan, whom they had ousted. Just before this period, the great conqueror of the Pagan dynasty, commonly known as Anawrathizaw, wrested Pegu and Thaton from their Talaing rulers about 1050 A.D., and all Burma came under the sway of the Pagan dynasty till its fall. The Shan dynasty of Pinyad never held the Peguan territory of the old Pagan kingdom, and from it there broke off the Shan dynasty of Sagaing. Both the Shan dynasties thus set up gave way to the Burmese dynasty of Ava between 1352 and 1364, the members of which claimed descent from all their predecessors, i.e., from the Burmans of Tagaung and Pagan and from the Shans of Pinyad and Sagaing. They, in turn, gave way
to the Burman king Bayin Naung of Pegu in 1551, who became Overlord of All Burma, reigning both in Pegu
and Ava. This general dynasty lasted till 1731, when it was turned out for a short time by a Taungoo dynasty
of Shan origin, which had succeeded in ousting the Burmese from Pegu in 1740. They, in turn, were ousted
from all Burma in 1757 by what is generally known as the Alompra dynasty, claiming an apocryphal royal
descent from Tagaung. Of the Alompra dynasty the last member was King Thibaw, deposed by the English
in 1885. This dynasty reigned successively at Shwebo, Sagaing, Ava, Amarapura and Mandalay.

The Burman conqueror, Bayin Naung of Pegu, claimed royal descent thus. On the break up of the Burman
dynasty of Pagan in 1298, the discontented Burmese nobility formed a chief nucleus of power at Tonghoo and a
minor one at Prome, which led to the foundation of the Burman dynasty of Tonghoo. This took its rise about
1313 and culminated in Tabin Shwedi, who conquered Pegu from the Shan dynasty in 1540, setting up the
Burman dynasty of Pegu, which lasted as such till 1599. Of this, the great monarch was the conqueror, Bayin
Naung. Tabin Shwedi and Bayin Naung were relatives, both claiming descent from the Burman dynasty of
Pagan.

The story of the Taungoo dynasties of the Delta at Thaton and Pegu is wafted in much obscurity, but they
are said to have lasted from 573 to 1050, when they gave way to Anawratha of Pagan. On the break up of the
Pagan dynasty, a Shan dynasty was established at Martaban and Pegu in 1287, and was that
which was destroyed by the Burman, Tabin Shwedi, in 1526. It may be interesting to note here that it was
Tabin Shwedi's dynasty at Pegu that was known so well to the early European travellers and settlers in Burma,
and it was his race of Tonghoo that was known to them as the kings of Brahma or Burmah.

Now the system of the great overlords of Ava and Pegu was to govern outlying provinces by means of
tributary kings. Thus, Tabin Shwedi set up subordinate kings at Ava, Prome, Tonghoo and Martaban. Bayin
Naung, reigning at Pegu, did much the same thing, and so did the kings of the general Burman dynasty which
succeeded him, with Ava for its capital. So that when one hears in legend or story of a king of Prome or
Tonghoo, one has always to ascertain if he was really the king thereof, or only a member of a tributary line more
or less independent of its overlord.

What, therefore, has to be carried in the head for the right comprehension of the Nat stories is roughly this.
There were legendary Burman kings at Tagaung, followed by a connected Burman dynasty at Prome and then
Pagan from 483 B.C. to 1298 A.D., followed in its turn by two contemporary Shan lines at Pinyá and Sagaing up
to 1364. With the last two was a contemporary Burman line at Tonghoo from 1313 to 1540, which, at that date,
became absorbed into the Burman dynasty of Pegu. The Shan lines of Pinyá and Sagaing became merged in the
Burman line of Ava, which was upset by the Burman dynasty of Pegu in 1551. This then became a general
dynasty of Pegu and Ava from 1581 to 1751, giving way to a Shan dynasty of Pegu, which was soon conquered
by the last Burman dynasty of Alompra, lasting from 1757 to 1885. There was also a Taungoo dynasty of
Thaton and Pegu from 573 to 1050, when the country became tributary to the Burmese Pagan dynasty till 1287,
when a Shan dynasty was set up at Pegu, till it was ousted by the Burman Tonghoo line in 1540. Pegu then
became merged in the Burmese Ava dynasty till 1740, when for seventeen years a second Shan line was
established there, giving way finally to the Alompra dynasty in 1757.

The Burma of this history is not a very large territory, and these lines of kings occupied capitals not far
apart. Tagaung and Shwebo are to the north. Then come Ava, Sagaing, Myinzaing, Pinyá, Amarapura and
Mandalay, almost within a stone's throw of each other. Not far south lie Pagan, Tonghoo and Prome. The
rest, Martaban, Thaton, Pegu and finally Rangoon (which, though it has long been a veritable Mecca for
Buddhists, was never really a native capital), are at no great distance apart to the extreme south. At all these
places are signs and buildings innumerable, including inscriptions by the hundred, of the dynasties that once held
sway in them, all in a more or less useful state of preservation. Both the ruins and the inscriptions await the
hand of some fortunate future explorers, who will find themselves aided in their efforts by a great number of local
handbooks, or monastic chronicles, of a general accuracy by no means to be despised.

I have been obliged thus to go into the outlines of Burmese history, as without this much knowledge of it, it
would be impossible to understand the stories of the Thirty-Seven Nats and the innumerable references, both
correct and incorrect, to local history contained in them. For the elucidation of the stories themselves, I shall
now divide them into five groups, more or less connected with each other, excluding from the groups two Nats
who are not directly or indirectly connected with historical royal personages. The two exceptions are Thaipyá
Nat (No. 1), a purely mythological personage, as already explained, and Maung Po Tú Nat (No. 21), who was a
trader killed by a tiger near Pinyá during, I suppose, the period when it was a capital, i.e., between 1298 and
1364 A.D.

I shall next proceed to describe the stories in each group as they are told, and explain briefly their historical
references, after which I shall explain the illustrations group by group. Group I., which may be called the
Duttabaung Cycle, relates to the old legendary Burman dynasty of Tagaung and Prome, and centres about that old-world hero of Burma, King Duttabaung of Prome, ostensibly carrying us back to the days about the foundation of the Buddhist era in the 6th century B.C. Group II., or the Anawrathazaw Cycle, purports to relate to the immediate surroundings of the Conqueror Anawrathazaw of Pagan in the 11th century A.D., but in reality it wanders about in a confused kind of way amongst his immediate predecessors and descendants. Group III., or the Ava Mingaung and Pagan Alaungskithu mixed Cycle, is meant to relate to the Burman dynasty of Ava (1364-1551) in the 15th century. But the stories have become so confused in their references as to equally relate to the days of Alaungskithu of Pagan, a great name in Burmese history, and his successors of the 15th and 16th centuries; to the much earlier kings of Pagan of the 8th century; and to the Shans of Pinya in the 14th century. Group IV., or the Tabin Shwedi Cycle, relates to the great Tabin Shwedi of Tonghoo and Pegu himself; and the contemporary subordinate dynasty of Prome in the 16th century. Group V., or the Bayin Naung Cycle, relates to even later dates connected with Bayin Naung of Pegu and Ava and his successors of the Ava-Pegu dynasty (1581-1751) in the 16th and 17th centuries.

I would draw special attention to the exceedingly modern nature of many of these stories. The centuries B.C., the 8th, and even the 11th century A.D. might be legitimate dates for legendary stories of spirits; but the bulk of these tales belongs to the period contained between the 12th and 17th centuries A.D., so late a date as 1558 being well authenticated for one story, and the still later date of about 1620 being hardly doubtful for another. Even so recent a Conqueror as Tabin Shwedi, reigning from 1530 to 1550, during the time of our own King Henry VIII., and well known to the earlier European settlers in Pegu, who actually fought for and against him in considerable numbers, is himself a prominent Nat.

Note of Indian Origin.
CHAPTER X

THE DUTTABAUNG CYCLE.

GROUP I. of the Thirty-Seven Nats, or the Duttabaung Cycle, consists of Nats Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 13, 14, and 37. That is, it consists of seven Nats with a truly folklore story connected with the early hero, King Duttabaung of Prome. Hence I have called it the Duttabaung Cycle. The outline of the legend is as follows:—Nga Tinde, the Burmese Samson, a blacksmith by trade, was treacherously burnt alive by the King of Pagaung, who had married his sister, Mi Sawme. She thereupon burnt herself with her brother. Nga Tinde married the daughter of the Sea-serpent (Yénaga), and by her he had two sons, who grew up out of two eggs, and were killed in a boxing match ordered by King Duttabaung of Prome. King Duttabaung had a wife of great beauty, whom, owing to a calumny, he neglected and forced to earn her living as a weaver, but he nevertheless had a daughter by her, who died with her mother. All the personages mentioned in the above legend, except Duttabaung himself, became Nats.

The Nats whose origin is in this legend are:—No. 2, Mahāgiri Nat, who is Nga Tinde, the gigantic blacksmith; No. 3, Hnañadawgyi Nat, also known as Golden-checks (Shwé-myet-hna) and Taung-gyi Shin, is his sister, Mi Sawme, whose title as queen was Thiriwundá of Tagaung; No. 4, Shwé Nábé Nat is his wife, the Sea-serpent’s daughter; Nos. 13 and 14, Taungmágyi Nat and Maung Shlabý Nat, known jointly as the Kúdaw Shin, are their sons, Shin Byá and Shin Nyó; No. 5, Thónbán Hlä Nat (the Surpassing Beauty), whose title was the Okkalábá Queen, is Duttabaung’s neglected wife; and No. 37, Shin-hnéi Nat, is her daughter. Mahāgiri Nat, as Min Mágayé, is universal, for he is the En-saung Nat, the guardian of the home. “For his comfort the tops of all the posts in the house are covered with a hood of white cotton cloth, for it is in this situation that he usually takes up his abode. In almost every house, at the end of the verandah in front, you will find a water-
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pot full of jayä-pi, holy water, over which certain gáthas [Pali texts], magic spells, or religious formulae have been uttered by the astrologer, or by the prior of the district. This water, which is replenished once a month, or oftener in cases of danger by disease, or when a member of the family is absent on a journey, is every now and then sprinkled about the house as a protection against bañas [agres], spectres, and tukés [ghosts]. When the water is consecrated in the myanngyá-d [holy-water vessel], which is of a special shape, something like an overgrown Indian spittoon, there are always a few twigs and leaves of the thabí-bin [the sacred Eugenia] floating on the top. These are mostly taken out and hung round about the eaves, but occasionally left in the water. The inordinately superstitious sometimes keep a small thabí-bin growing in a pot in the house, so that its benign influence may keep harm away.

"Taking houses may usually be known by the cocoa-nut hanging up at the south side of the building. This is covered with strips and sages of yellow or red cloth, and is offered to Min Mágayé, whom they call the King of the Nats. Of these spirits, called bajuk in Taing, they say there are thirty-seven distinct varieties, but Min Mágayé rules them all. At the beginning of the wet season, they always wrap up the cocoa-nut afresh, and when the rains are over make new offerings of money, glutinous rice, eggs, jaggary [molasses, coarse sugar], and fruit, in order that the En-saung Nat [or House Guardian] may keep away fever from the household.

"It must not be supposed that the Nat guardian of the house has necessarily any affection for those who have built the place where he has taken up his abode. He probably regards them only with cold indifference, however generous they may be in their offerings, and were he not propitiated by these gifts he would almost certainly display his anger by doing the inhabitants some grievous injury. But then he dislikes his human haunts being intruded upon, and if a stranger comes at an unwonted time, a burglar at midnight for example, it is quite likely that the En-saung Nat will attack him violently, scare him out of his wits, or give him the colic. Thus, without any really estimable purpose in his mind, Min Mágayé may be a considerable protection to his worshippers."

"Taw Sein Ko gives a version of the Mahágíri Legend, which is valuable in several ways. He writes:—""The pantheon is headed by the Mahágíri Nat, Maung Tindé; his wife, Shwé Nábé; his sister, Thdnbán H la; and his niece, Shin-nciui. Maung Tindaw was the son of a blacksmith. Maung Tindaw of Tagaung, the ancient capital, was the son of a blacksmith, Maung Tindaw of Tagaung, an ancient capital to the north of Mandalay. The young man was noted for his great bravery and physical strength, and the king of Tagaung feared that he might become a potential centre of disaffection. He therefore ordered that Maung Tindé should be captured and killed. His would-be victim, however, eluded capture for a long time and remained in hiding. The king then resorted to a stratagem, which is still common in Oriental countries. He conferred honour on Maung Tindé's sister by assigning her a place in his seraglio. After a lapse of some time, the queen was cajoled into negotiating the surrender of her brother on condition that high office should be conferred on him. Relying on the royal offer of pardon, Maung Tindé surrendered himself. But the king did not keep his word. He himself superintended the burning of his dupe under a sagábin [jasmine] tree. Loud were the plaintive cries uttered by Maung Tindé, and his sister, hearing them, rushed to his rescue and met with her death. The cruel king attempted to save the life of his queen, but only succeeded in pulling her head off by the hair. After their death, the spirits of these two, brother and sister, became powerful worshippers."
on those who practised it. In 1785 A.D., Bodawpayá, the great-great-grandfather of the last king of Burma, had new golden heads of the Nats made, and these were replaced in 1812 by the same king with larger and more finished heads of the same metal, weighing in the aggregate about 2½ lbs. These last heads are still in existence and are being worshipped by the people.”

As this is the most important Nat legend of all, I here quote from the Upper Burma Gazetteer. Part I., Vol. II., p. 196, the version usually received:—“The story told varies slightly, but the main points agree in all districts, and the popular version is given here rather than the bald statement of the Nat-book [Mahágíri Médanligáy].

In the reign of Tagaung Min, the king who took his name from his capital Tagaung, or Old Pagan, as it is frequently called, there lived in that city a blacksmith by name Nga Tindaw, who had a son and a daughter. The son was named Nga Tindé, and he was celebrated throughout the whole kingdom as the cleverest blacksmith and the most powerful man of his age. He had great influence in Tagaung and the king was afraid of him, and feared that he would raise a rebellion.

In order to conciliate the blacksmith, the king married Nga Tindé’s sister and gave her the title of Thiriwuné, but still he remained uneasy in his mind and finally told the queen to summon her brother to the palace to receive an appointment. When Nga-Tindé came, he was seized by the royal guard, bound to a sagábin [yellow jasmine, champa], a tree which grew in the palace yard, and burned to death. The queen begged permission to bid farewell to her brother, went up to the burning pile, threw herself into the flames and perished with him.

The fire was put out at once, but both brother and sister were dead and all that remained of them was their two heads, which had not been in any way injured by the flames. The brother and sister became Nats and took up their abode in the sagábin tree, which grew within the palace walls. From this they descended periodically and killed and ate people, particularly those who came near the tree. After this had gone on for some time, the king had the tree uprooted and thrown into the Irrawaddy River. The tree floated down with the current as far as Pagan, where it stranded on the river bank close to one of the city gates. Thiriwuné was then king of Pagan, and to him they showed themselves one night, but not before they had killed and eaten every one who came near the tree. They displayed their human heads and told Thiriwuné of the cruelty of the king of Tagaung. He took pity on them and ordered that a suitable temple should be built on Pópá Hill to receive the Mahágíri Nats and their tree. This was done and the tree was removed to its present position near Pópá, where a portion of it is said still to exist. The Nats, when they were thus properly housed and treated, gave up active destruction and only attacked those who directly offended them.

To further propitiate them, the king ordered that every year in the month of Nayón (June), a great feast should be held in their honour. This festival was regularly kept up until the time of Bodawpayá [1785-1819 A.D.], who presented two golden heads to the shrine, to be kept by the official in charge of the Pópá neighbourhood, and to be brought out every year for the festival. On the day appointed for the feast, the golden heads were carried to the spirit temple. All the officials and people from all parts of the surrounding country gathered together and marched in procession, headed by bands of music and dancers. Ministers were also specially deputed from the Court in Ava or Mandalay to attend the feast with offerings. When the shrine was reached, the heads were placed on the altar and various offerings were made to them, and certain propitiatory rites gone through, after which the heads were restored to the charge of the proper officials. These heads were removed on the British occupation to the Pagan treasury, where they were kept for some years. The special festival has ceased, and the golden heads of Mahágiri are now to be seen in the Bernard Free Library in Rangoon.

The Mahágíri Nats were of great service to King Kyawntthá [1057-1085 A.D.], both before and after he succeeded to the throne of Pagan. In recognition of this, he issued an edict that all his subjects should honour these two Nats by suspending a coconut to them in their houses.

“The brother has assumed the sole credit in many places and figures as the E-aung Nat, the lar familiaris. In every Burman house, not merely in Upper Burma, but even in Rangoon, the coconut representing him will be found hung up. It is usually placed in a square bamboo frame, and over the top of the coconut is placed a piece of red cloth which represents a turban. When there is any sickness in the house or in the family, the coconuts are inspected. The special points are that the water, or milk, should not have dried up and that the stalk should still be intact. If anything is amiss, a fresh coconut is hung up.”

A poetical version of the story of Mahágíri Nat and his sister Thónbán Hlá Nat is given in the Soul of a People, p. 297 ff., as the Nats par excellence of the isolated and much dreaded volcanic eminence in Upper Burma known as the Pópá Hill.

As regards the cult of this group of Nats, the Mahágíri Médanligáy says that a proper shed must be erected, in which plays are performed. While these are going on, the nathadaw, or clairvoyantes, representing the Nats, are dressed to represent several parts, as described in the appropriate chants or Nat-thau, with young leaves of the thábyé tree in their left hands. These they lay down, and then come forward, holding in the
left hand a phalèsōn or betel-box, and in the right a goblet of water, and prostrate themselves three times, rising to their feet before each prostration. Then, putting down the box and the goblet, they sing the Nat-thān or Chant of the Nat:—

"Here do I come, radiant with flowing girdle and satin [phōi] loin-cloth of foreign make, 1 with white muslin cloak and ample sleeves. In my right hand I hold a fan and my helmet is made of palm-leaf gift with pure gold. Aforesaid I was living in Tagaung, whose ruler suspected me causelessly of harbouring evil designs against him. He commanded his Ministers to arrest me and put me to death; therefore I was forced to go and hide me in the jungle. Then the king bethought him of a stratagem. He made my sister Saw Mēyā his chief queen and tempted me back by promise of the office of governor of the capital. When I came back he caused me to be tied to a sagābin tree and there I was burned alive, for sword and spear were alike powerless to do me harm. Thus did I become a Nat. My sister, whom I dearly loved, was named Shin Dwē-hlā or Saw Mēyā, and now I am known as Mahāgīri or Maung Tindē. I pray you of your courtesy let your love for a man of the upper country be as sweet as honey in the Court." Here are introduced instructions to the band to strike up the appropriate music.

"The lady of the golden palace is worthy of love for her grace and beauty. The glory of His Majesty is as that of the sun in all his splendour and magnificence, yet, though he thus shines with resplendence, he beams on the people with a fragrance and a cooling breath like unto a fresh breeze, laden with the odours of the wild jasmine. Hence it is that the countries which own his royal sway are many and varied, and therefore is his capital happy and prosperous. The great mountains of rock covered with sal and maître trees are now the dwelling-place of the Nats. Their retreat is gorgeous with gems and responds to the prosperity of the country. There live Her Majesty the Chief Queen, the lady of the Golden Palace, and there also lives her mighty brother, renowned for his valour and for the strength of his body. These two are by Royal Decree rulers over a stretch of country, over which they keep watch and ward. By Royal Command issued at the desire of a high-born queen, the Chief Queen, whose birth was lowly, was consigned to the dames with her brother and was burned to death. The mighty mountain [Pópā] is now the abode of their ghosts." Then the music breaks in and a frenzied dance begins.

The Chief Queen, the Hnamadaw Taung-gyi Shin, or Siwe Myet-hnā Nat is, at Pópā at any rate, always worshipped along with her brother. But she has a chant of her own. The Nat-thān in her honour runs as follows:—

"With a white scarf wound round my head, a jacket embroidered in silver and gold with wide fringes and tight sleeves, a cotton petticoat [tawān] with an ornamental border, and a gold-laced girdle, I, the Queen of Tagaung, the fondly loved and blameless daughter of the Mungyāgi [head or mayor] of Tagaung, Maung Tindaw, have decked myself and come. I was a true sister to Shin Dwē-hlā, who was younger than 1, and now I live on Pópā Hill with my loving brother Nat, Maung Tindē, who all for his mighty strength and vigour was tied to a tree and burnt, though I pleaded sore that he was brother-in-law to the king. Then in my grief did I hasten to the burning pile and threw myself into the flames. They strove to save me, but all they saved was my head, which parted from my body. Then did I become a Nat and among the Nats I am known as Mahāgīri or Maung Tindē. Pray you of your courtesy let your love for a man of the upper country be as sweet as honey in the Court." Here are introduced instructions to the band to strike up the appropriate music.

What may be called the historical aspect of this legend is also clearly mythological. According to the Mahāyāna or Burmese Chronicles, the reign of King Duttabaung of Prome is placed at 442-373 B.C., and he is stated to be the son of Mahātmālā, the eldest of the blind twin sons of the last King of Tagaung. And as to these twins, there is a legend of the river-borne foundling type, most likely the same in origin as that of the Nat sons of Nga Tindē, who are mixed up in story with King Duttabaung. Duttabaung himself is said to have been drowned in a vessel off Nágāri (Cape Negrais), in the whirlpool where the Sea-serpent (Vēnāgā) drags down ships to destruction: a story which recalls the Sea-serpent wife of Nga Tindē, the mother of the twin Nats. Indeed, about the first four of these 'historical' Nats (Nos. 2 to 5) and also about their connections, Nos. 13 and 14, there are many popular legends generally current among the people, as the cult of this group is almost universal.
The relationship in the legends can be made clearer by the accompanying Genealogy.

Father, unknown, lived at Yetaung in the Thayetmyo District.

- Nga Tinde, No. 4, Shwe Nabé
- Ma Sawmé, Queen Thiriwunda of Tagaung, No. 3
- Hnamadawgyi or Shwe Myet-hnd Nat.
- Shin Byii, No. 14, Maung Shinbyu Nat.
- Shin Nyo, No. 13, Taungmágyi Nat.
- King Duttabaung of Pegu, No. 5, Thónbáin Há Nat.
- No. 37. Shin-némi Nat, a daughter, who died at Tabauk Tawyet.

I may now proceed to describe the illustrations of Group I., or the Duttabaung Cycle, with a brief note on the popular legend attached to each.

No. 2. Mahágiri Nat. One Nga Tindaw, a blacksmith of Yetaung on the Irawaddy, not far north of Prome, had a son named Nga Tinde and two daughters named Má Sawmé and Má Dwé-hlá. Nga Tinde was a man of great strength, said in the Annals of Tagaung to be able to wield a hammer weighing 60 viss (210 lbs.). The noise of his anvil was heard in the king's palace, and the king ordered the valiant blacksmith to be brought before him, but he fled into the jungle. So the king married his sister Má Sawmé, to whom he gave the title of Thiriwunda, and made her his chief queen, and then persuaded Nga Tinde to return, on a promise of making him a high official. But when Nga Tindé did return he was tied to a jasmine tree (augubin) and burnt alive. After his death, Nga Tinde became a Nat and has ever since been worshipped with offerings at a yearly festival in December. This Nat is represented standing in Court dress of a high class, with and without the official head-dress, with a drawn sword and fan, supported by three halus on a kneeling or standing elephant.

As halus will frequently be mentioned hereafter, I would here note that the modern Burmese halú seems to be a confused reference to the Indian Brahmanical and then Buddhist ogre (Sanskrit rákshasi, Pali rakkha, Burmese yëkbá), the malignant Buddhist superhuman being yëkha (Sanskrit yakshe), and some local pre-Buddhist sprite of the people. This sort of confusion has occurred in modern Kashmir and elsewhere.

No. 3. Hnamadawgyi Nat, also known as Shwe Myet-hnd Nat, or Golden-cheeks, and Taung-gyi Shin Nat. When MÁ Sawmé, as Queen Thiriwunda, heard that her brother was being burnt in the jasmine tree, she rushed...
into the fire, and all the king could save of her was her head. After death, she and her brother lived in the jasmine (*michelia champaca*) as Nats at Tagaung, where they did much harm to the people. So the king had the tree felled and thrown into the river. It floated down to Pagan, where it grounded near the Kuppayawgà Gate. It was taken out of the river by Thalakhyaung Min (i.e., Thinlyaung-âgê of Pagan, 520-529 A.D.), who took it to the Popâ Mountain, where I am assured that their heads in gold are still to be seen. Their festival is in December. This Nat is represented as a woman, standing in Court dress of a high class, sometimes with a *nagâ* (serpent) head-dress, supported by a *kalâ* on a kneeling or standing elephant.

No. 4. Shvé Nabé Nat. She was born at Mindon and was the daughter of the Sea-serpent (Yénaga). She went to worship at a footprint of Gautama (Buddha) in the form of a woman. Here she met Nga Tinde, while he was hiding in the jungle, and became his wife. They had two sons, Taungmgyi and Myauk Minshinbyu. She died of grief at her husband’s failure to return to her after he had started to visit his sister at Tagaung. This Nat is represented as a girl standing on a lotus throne, in Court dress of a high class, with a *nagâ* head-dress.

No. 13. Taungmgyi Nat and No. 14. Maung Minshin Nat, also known as Maung Shinbyû Nat and Taungmgyi Myauk Minshinbyu Nat. Nga Tinde’s serpent wife brought forth two eggs near the Munklé River, which were found by a hermit and taken home. After a while, two boys came forth out of the two eggs, and were called Shinbyu and Shin-nyô. King Duttabaung of Prome was told by his Brahman astrologers that two powerful men would soon be forthcoming to overthrow him, and so he had a search made for them. They were brought to him by a hunter, and he ordered them to fight out a boxing-match, possibly as a measure of policy. During the struggle, the younger of the brothers died and became the Nat Taungmgyi, while the elder one died soon afterwards and became the Nat Shinbyu or Maung Minshin, showing the wisdom of the policy. They were
each said to have six hands, and there are figures of them set up to the east of Prome, under the name of Kudaw Shin. This pair of Nats are represented as a couple of soldiers standing on lotus thrones in Court costume. The arms in each case hold a quoit, a dah or sword, and a couple of spears. The six arms plainly show the Indian origin of the cult of the pair.

No. 5, Thonban Nat, also known as Thonban-hla Nat, Surpassing Beauty. She was born at Hanthawadi (Pegu) and was able to change her form three times a day. She was taken to King Duttabaung of Thirikhetaya (Prome), who had heard of her beauty. But his queens bribed the officers to say that she was a giantess and so big that the palace gates would have to be widened to admit her. So he ordered that she was to be kept in a large house outside the gate, where she earned a livelihood as a weaver. Here she built a pagoda called Lim-magyibin Phaya and planted a tree, known as the Lim-magyibin. She was thus deserted by her husband, and after death her loom and its belongings turned into a rock, which is still to be seen. Her title as queen was Okkalaba. This Nat is represented as a girl, standing in the Court dress of a royal attendant, with and without the naga head-dress, supported by a Burmanised representation of the Brahmanic elephant-headed god Garuda, kneeling or standing on a balu driving a standing elephant. The Indian origin of this cult is therefore obvious.

No. 37, Shin-nemi Nat. She was the daughter of Queen Okkalaba, otherwise known as Thonban-hla, and died at the same time as her mother at Tabauk Tawyet and became a Nat. This Nat is represented as a stout girl, with naga head-dress, standing in ordinary Court dress.

Shwé Nabe (No. 37), the Sea-Serpent’s daughter, wife of Mahāgiri Nat.
CHAPTER XI.

THE ANAWRATHAZAW CYCLE.

GROUP II., or Anawrathazaw Cycle, consists of Nats Nos. 16, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 and 36, that is, of nine Nats, whose story purports to centre round the great conqueror, King Anawrathazaw of Pagan. Hence my name for the Cycle. The outline of this group of legends is as follows:—King Kyaungbynd Min of Pagan had three sons, two by one queen, named Kylzo and Sükadé, who deposed their father, and by another queen a third younger one, Anawrathazaw, who became a great conqueror. Kylzo succeeded first and was accidentally killed, and afterwards Sükadé was slain and dethroned by Anawrathazaw. Anawrathazaw had in his service two brothers, named the elder and the younger Shwebyin, natives of India, whom he sent to fetch a holy tooth-relic from China, but slew on their return for resisting his orders. They had a guardian, who was a Brahman and minister to the king, with the title of Mandalé Bódaw. He and his sister were slain at the same time as the brothers.

There are two other connected legends relating to this period. Firstly, King Yinzaw, or Yezaw, of Pagan had a son, Maung Shin, who was killed while swinging. Secondly, Manuhd, King of Thatón, was conquered by Anawrathazaw, and he and his family were all turned into pagoda slaves at Pagan, where one of them died of leprosy.

Of the above-mentioned personages, the wife of King Kyaungbynd Min and her sons, Kylzd and Sükadé, and also Maung Shin, all became Nats. So did the Brahman minister, his sister and his two wards. The leper Prince of Thatón also became a Nat.

The Nats rising out of this group of legends are:—No. 28, Tibydsaung Nat, who is King Sókkadé or Sükadé. No. 30, Yómkshin Mingaung Nat, called also Bayinnáshin Mingaung Nat, is King Kylzo. No. 29, Tibydsaung Médaw Nat, is their mother. No. 27, Minthá Maung Shin Nat, is their brother. Nos. 25 and 26 are the two Indian brothers known as the Shwebyin Naungdaw Nat (the elder) and Shwebyin Nyidaw Nat (the younger). No. 24, Mandalé Bódaw Nat, is their Brahman guardian, who is also known as K yetyok. No. 36, Shingwá Nat, is his sister. No. 16, Nyaung-gyin Nat is the leper relative of King Manuhd of Thatón.

The Shwebyin brothers are perhaps the most popular of all the Nats, and are regarded everywhere, in Upper Burma at any rate, as Shwebyining and Shwebyinngé, the elder and the younger Shwebyin. They are usually represented in the villages as gaudily dressed puppets, with spire-like crowns and royal sharp-pointed swords. Respecting these two Nats, Taw Sein Ko has some valuable remarks, thus:—"The apotheosis of the next Nats in the pantheon, viz., the brothers Shwebyininmaung, follows on similar lines [to that of Mahágiri and his sister]. About the beginning of the 11th century A.D., Anawrathazaw, King of Pagan, had in his service a Kála [Indian] adventurer from the Talaing kingdom of Thatón. This man married a bañ̄i or ogress of Pópá, and two sons were born to him, who were respectively named Shwebyingyi and Shwebyinngé. When these two brothers were grown up, they took service under the king; and when the latter led an expedition to China, to secure the holy tooth of Gotama Buddha, which was enshrined there, they accompanied him. The Chinese emperor appears to have treated the Burmese king with some contempt, and refused to hold any communication with him. Thereupon the two brothers, who led a charmed life and could make themselves invisible, entered the king's palace at night, drew three lines with lime on his body and retired after writing on the walls.
enjoying him to meet the Burmese king. In consequence of this mysterious writing, the two rulers met in a friendly way and entered into a compact of unity and friendship. In the meantime, however, the holy tooth had disappeared miraculously, and Anawrathazaw returned home, suffering from the pangs of disappointment. On the return journey, Shwbyingyi and Shwbyinngæ incurred the royal displeasure and were executed at Wayindok, a few miles to the north of Mandalay. At the same place, the king had built a pagoda called Sudaungbya, and, after its consecration, resumed his journey by boat. On the way down the river Irrawaddyi, the royal boat appeared to be held by the rudder and its progress was stopped. The king consulted his ministers about the mystery, and they informed him that the two brothers, Shwbyingyi and Shwbyinngæ, who were executed by royal command, had become Nats, and that they resented that their valuable services should have been requited by death. It was only when King Anawrathazaw had directed a Nat temple to be built near his pagoda at Wayindok, and ordered the people in the neighbourhood to make regular offerings to the Nats, that he was able to resume his journey and arrive at his capital in safety.

The sketch in Mühāgītā Medanigyaṅ gives little more than appears in the chant translated below. In the case of these Nats the proceedings are more extended than usual. The Nat-inspired women first appear as maules, in pasās or waist-cloths with an ornamental border, wide-sleeved jackets, white scarves thrown over the shoulder, and light red coloured helmets on their heads. In their right hand they have some young shoots of Eugenia. They step forwards and backwards three times before the shrine and then retire to change their costume for embroidered velvet close-fitting jackets, light red native pasās, and hats for their heads, and then with a tray full of plantains in the left hand and a ḍha [sword] in the right, they come forward again and dance before beginning to sing the Nat-than of the elder Shwebyin Nat, which runs as follows:

"With green velvet tunics embroidered in various colours, with light red loin cloths, red turbans, and sashes, we two brothers have adorned ourselves and come hither. We were the two pages in waiting who served Nawyeta [Anawrathzaw] the king, and went before him with naked swords in our hands. Our father was the ʻaṣā, the native Indian runner who was famed for his speed and gained the name of the Royal Runner. Five times he ran to Pöpa Hill and five times he returned with posies of flowers before the king had combed his hair. It fell on a day when he was in Pöpa Hill that our father met with a bullhead, an ogress. They loved one another and cherished their love on the hill. In the fulness of time she gave life to us two at a birth, and when we had grown to youths, the king attached us to his person and called us Shwebyin Naungdaw and Shwebyin Nyidaw. We went with him on his journey to China, and it was through our endeavours that he brought back the relics of the Buddha which he obtained from the Udibwa. When he came back, he ordered a pagoda to be built at Taungbyon, and this was to be erected by all the persons of his court. Nawyeta, the king, went to view it and found two spaces, where there were wanting the bricks, which we brothers had not put in. Then the king was wrath and sent us to our death, and thus we became Nats and the pretty maidens have missed us from that day."

The younger Shwbyin Nat has a Nat-than of his own, as follows:—"I am the younger brother of Shwbyingyi, who is the chief Nat of Taungbyon. The true servant of Anawrathazaw was I, and time and again I and my brother served him at the risk of our lives. But he slew us because he found not the two bricks, which was the share of work allotted to us whilst we were away. On our deaths we forthwith became Nats, but there was no place where we might stay. Therefore we clung to the royal barge and stayed it in its course. Then did the king grant to us the sovereignty over all the country that lies by Taungbyon. Our mother lives on Pöpa Hill, but we two brothers live in Taungbyon. Now all ye pretty maidens, love ye us, as ye were wont to do while we were alive."

These legends have confused and incorrect reference to definite historical facts, which are unfortunately not so connected as the legends themselves. King Ngyaunguzaw Yahan of Pagaṅ (924-957) was a usurper and not of the regular line, but during a long reign of thirty-three years he introduced serpent worship under Ari (Indian) priests all over Burma. He was at length deposed by King Kyiuzo, who in turn was deposed by King Kyiuzo, a son of Ngyaunguzaw Yahan (929-957). Kyiuzo reintroduced the serpent worship and was succeeded by his brother Sokkāda (985-1010). Sokkāda, the serpent-worshipper, was deposed and slain by Anawrathazaw, son of King Kyiuzo, and so of the regular line (1010-1052). Anawrathazaw was the great hero and conqueror and renowned restorer of the Buddhist faith in Burma.

Manuha, King of Thaton, was conquered by Anawrathazaw about 1030, and his whole family were turned into pagoda slaves at Pagaṅ, and the untimely fate of one of these unfortunate, who died of leprosy, has led to his worship as a Nat.

Amongst many other adventures all round his kingdom, Anawrathazaw marched to Yunnān in search of the holy tooth-relic preserved in China, marrying a Shan princess of Maw during the expedition, a fact which has given rise to a popular Burmese play; but he did not get his tooth-relic, and no doubt the legend of the Brahman minister, the Mandalé Bodaw, and his family, is connected with this journey.
THE ANAWRATHAZAW CYCLE.

It is, nevertheless, quite as likely that the story of the Mandalé Bódaw preserves the equally well-known and splendidly tragic tale of King Narathú or Kalakýā Min of Págn (1160-1164). This bloodthirsty monarch began by killing his father, the venerable and revered Alaungslthvi, and during his short reign of four years, he, amongst other crimes, killed his father's widow with his own hand. She was the daughter of the King of Pallikará (Pála of Bengal) in India, and in revenge for her death that monarch sent eight soldiers, disguised as Brahman, to the Burmese Court who slew Narathú and then committed suicide. Hence Narathú's title of Kalakýā Min, i.e., the king killed by foreigners.

Another story seems to be mixed up with this legend. King Yinzaw of Págn had a son, Mintha Maung Shin, who was killed accidentally in a swing. This Min Yinzaw, whose name can also be read Yezaw, is, I take it, the same personage as Ngyangdžaw Yahán, the serpent-worshipper, and thus Prince Maung Shin, the Nat, would be the brother of the royal Nats, Kyizó and Sükkadá or Sûkade.

To clear the relationship of this Group to each other, two Genealogies are necessary.

**Genealogy I.**

Thenzwin, 36th King of Págn, 731-737.

(See Group III, Gen. III.)

| Ngyangdžaw Yahán, No. 29. | Kunzaw Kyaungbyu, 38th K. of Págn, A Brahman |
| 37th K., usurper, 924-957. | No. 27. Mintha Maung Shin Nat. |

Kyizó, 30th K., 979-985, No. 30.

Sûkkadá, 40th K., 985-1010, No. 28. Mbaósaung Nat.

Kyaungbyu Min had, amongst others, three sons: two by one queen, named Kyizó and Sükkadá and the great king Anawratházaw by another queen. Anawratházaw was much younger than the other two. Kyizó and Sükkadá dethroned their father in 348 A.D. (986 C.E.) and Kyizó became king. He was a mighty hunter, pitching his camp at Nyundun on the Chindwin. When twenty-eight years of age he was accidentally killed at Págyi, near Mt. Popá, by an arrow from a huntsman and became the Shomshin Min, and so, in 354 A.D. (992 C.E.), Sükkadá became king and married his step-mother, who was the mother of Anawratházaw. As soon as he was old enough, Anawratházaw rebelled against Sükkadá, who was killed by a lance. When Kyaungbyu Min was dethroned, his family were sent to a monastery, and the king himself was forced to turn monk. On his death Sükkadá became the Tibyisaung Nat. The mother of the above Nat became the Tibyisaung Médaw Nat. Her votaries are women, who carry a rosary and wear a golden head-dress.

I may now proceed to describe the illustrations of Group II., or Anawratházaw Cycle, premising that the description will be according to the people's legends, and not according to the real history of the time.

No. 18. Tibyisaung Nat, No. 20. Tibyisaung Médaw Nat, and No. 30. Yómáshin Mingaung Nat, called also Bayinnáshin Mingaung Nat. Kyaungbyu Min had, among others, three sons: two by one queen, named Kyizó and Sükkadá and the great king Anawratházaw by another queen. Anawratházaw was much younger than the other two. Kyizó and Sükkadá dethroned their father in 348 A.D. (986 C.E.) and Kyizó became king. He was a mighty hunter, pitching his camp at Nyundun on the Chindwin. When twenty-eight years of age he was accidentally killed at Págyi, near Mt. Popá, by an arrow from a huntsman and became the Shomshin Min, and so, in 354 A.D. (992 C.E.), Sükkadá became king and married his step-mother, who was the mother of Anawratházaw. As soon as he was old enough, Anawratházaw rebelled against Sükkadá, who was killed by a lance. When Kyaungbyu Min was dethroned, his family were sent to a monastery, and the king himself was forced to turn monk. On his death Sükkadá became the Tibyisaung Nat. The mother of the above Nat became the Tibyisaung Médaw Nat. Her votaries are women, who carry a rosary and wear a golden head-dress.

In this case, Tibyisaung Nat is represented, both as a young and as an old man, in the costume of a dawikó yathó, or what purports to be such, seated on a lotus throne. Tibyisaung Médaw Nat is represented

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1. This is an unscholarly hyphenated of Burmese Buddhism. The daukhó yathó, or robe, wearing the daukó, a head-gear containing an image of Buddha, is a barbarous, ignorant, religious custom, with some claim to occult powers, living in the jungles.
as a girl kneeling in full Court dress on a lotus or on a lotus throne. The outward turned elbow is an accomplishment of which Burmese young ladies are very proud. Bayinmäshin Mingaung Nat is seated on a lotus throne in full Court dress of a high class, and sometimes with a bow unstrung.

No. 25. Shwébyin Naungdaw Nat (the elder Shwébyin Nat). No. 26. Shwébyin Nyílw Nat (the younger Shwébyin Nat). The two Shwébyins were brothers and the sons of a native of India (in the service of King Anawrathazaw) by an ogress he met with on Mt. Pópa, whither he had been sent to get certain flowers for the king. They also served under the king and were sent by him to China for the holy tooth-relic from the royal palace there. They returned with the relic and the king erected a pagoda for it, requiring a brick from each of his officers. The two Shwébyins failed to supply a brick each, were killed by being castrated and became Nats. Mandale Bódaw was the title of a minister of Anawrathazaw, who was a Brahman and the guardian of the two Shwébyins. He was killed together with them. He tried to get away on a marble elephant, which he could vivify by placing an enchanted white thread round it, but failed and was captured and killed. All three became Nats.

In this case the Mandale Bodaw Nat is represented standing on a lotus throne in the full official Court dress of a minister of the king. He bears a sword, and his right hand is in the conventional attitude of preaching. This appears to refer to his dual character as a warrior and a priest. The two Shwébyin brothers are in the Court dress of officials, seated on lotus thrones, and bearing swords in the right hand or in the right and left hands respectively.
No. 36. Shingwà Nat. She was the sister of the Mandalà Bödaw and was killed at the same time, becoming a Nat. This Nat is represented as a young girl in Court dress, standing on a lotus throne or on a lotus on a throne.

No. 16. Nyaung-gyin Nat, called also Nyaung-gyin O Nat. He was a member of Manuha's family and died of leprosy in the days of Anawratházaw. This Nat is represented as a leper in high-class Court dress leaning on a staff. He has lost the ends of both fingers and toes, and his face is marked with the usual signs of tubercular leprosy.
CHAPTER XII.

THE AVA MINGAUNG AND PAGAN ALAUNGSITHU MIXED CYCLE.

GROUP III., or Ava Mingaung and Pagan Alaungsithu Mixed Cycle, consists of Nats Nos. 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 19, 20, 31, 32, 34, 35, that is of eleven Nats, whose story is supposed to centre round the two kings named Mingaung (a common royal title), who flourished at Ava respectively at the very commencement and the extreme end of the 15th century. But there is some confusion in the legends, caused by the attribution of the Northern Queen (Anauk Mibayá, a regular title of one of the chief queens of every Burmese ruler), who is a principal heroine of the story, to three husbands dwelling centuries apart. And so parts of the legend can be equally well referred to the days of King Thénzwin of Pagan in the 8th century, ancestor of those early Pagan kings about whom much of the legend of Group II. centres, and also to the days of the venerated Alaungsithu of the same dynasty, who flourished in the 11th-12th centuries, to whom likewise part of the Group II. legend can be referred. In fact, in one view, the stories of Groups II. and III. can be looked upon as belonging to the same cycle of legends. Lastly, by what may be considered a natural confusion in the popular mind, the legend of Group III. has been mixed up with the history of the Shan dynasty of Pinyá of the 13th century. On the whole, the knots in the thread of this group of legends demand a good deal of patience in unravelling, and this explains my title for the group: the Ava Mingaung and Pagan Alaungsithu Mixed Cycle. The outline of this group of legends is as follows:—King Sinbyushin Mintañgyi of Ava died of fever and was succeeded by his younger brother, King Mingaung-gyi, who in turn was succeeded by his son, King Thiháthu Sinbyushin. He was murdered at the Aungbinie Lake by the Kingbaung Sawbaá, to be succeeded by his son, who died of fever. Thiháthu Sinbyushin had a concubine, who died very suddenly at Ava. The second (Dúnya) Mingaung’s son was King Shwé Nangyaw, under whom his nephew, Shwé Nawrathá, was murdered by drowning for supposed rebellion.
Mingaung-gyi, by his Northern Queen, the Anauk Mibáya, had two sons, Sithú and Kyawzwá, who quarrelled and killed each other, and this caused the death of their mother. This Northern Queen is also said to have been the wife of King Alaungsithu of Pagán, and so Sithú and Kyawzwá would thus be his sons. Alaungsithu's grandsons both came to the throne in due course, and the younger, Narabadisithu, murdered the elder, Narathéngá, with the help of an officer, one Nga Aungzwá, who was promised Narathéngá's widow as a bride in reward, but was murdered instead.

This same Northern Queen is further stated to have been the wife of King Théngawin of Pagán and stepmother of King Shweólang, which throws back the story of Sithú and Kyawzwá many centuries. King Shweólang's grandson, King Sawmun-hnit, had a son called the Hlaingdet Myóžá, who was cruelly put to death for negligence during a campaign against the Shan, and this caused the death of his mother from grief.

Of the above-mentioned personages, the following became Nats:—King Sinbyúsishin Mintarágyi the father, and King Thitháthú Sinbyúsishin the son, respectively of King Mingaung-gyi, his grandson Kyawzwá, Thitháthú's concubine, and King Dáuyá Mingaung's great-nephew Shwe Náwartha. Also the Anauk Mibáya and her two sons, Sithú and Kyawzwá, and the ill-treated officer Nga Aungzwá; and lastly, the Hlaingdet Myóžá and his mother.

The Nats who take origin in this group of stories are the following:—No. 7, Mintará Nat, who is King Sinbyúsishin Mintarágyi of Ava. No. 12, Aunghinle Sinbyúsishin Nat, who is King Thitháthú Sinbyúsishin of Ava. No. 11, Nga Aungzwá Nat, who is Ngázíshin Kyawzwá of Pinyá, confounded with Min Hlángé of Ava. No. 35, Shingán Nat, is the concubine of King Thitháthú Sinbyúsishin. No. 9, Shwe Náwartha Nat, is the nephew of King Shweó Nángyáw of Ava. No. 34, Anauk Mibáya Nat, who is the Northern Queen of King Mingaung-gyi of Ava (1480-1501); or of King Alaungsithu of Pagán (1085-1160), or of King Théngawin of Pagán (731-737). No. 31 and 32, Mín Sithú Nat and Mín Kyawzwá Nat, are her two sons. No. 10, Aungzwámyágyi Nat, who is Nga Aungzwá, promised the widow of King Narathéngá of Pagán in marriage. No. 19, Shwe Sippin Nat, who is the son of King Sawmun-hnit of Pagán. No. 20, Medaw Shwésagá Nat, is his mother.

The historical references made in this group of legends are even more confused than those of the second group. To commence with the allusions to the Ava Dynasty of the 15th century:—Sinbyúsishin Tarábyá (Min­tarágyi is a mere general royal title), the third king of that dynasty, reigned for seven months between 1400-1401, when he was murdered, and was succeeded by his brother, Mingaung or Mingaung-gyi, who had a chequered career for twenty-one years and died in 1422. His son, Thitháthú Sinbyúsishin, became for a short time the husband of the famous Peguan Queen Shin Sawbé, but was deposed by the Shan Chief (Sawbwá) of Unbaunglé and died in exile in 1426. His infant son Min Hlángé (Little Prince Beauty) was placed on the throne, but was murdered within three months.

Later in the same dynasty came the second (Dáuyá) Mingaung (1480-1501) and his son Shwéólanghíin (1501-1525). With them is associated the legend of the Nat Shwé Náwartha, who is said to have been put to death by drowning for rebellion. I think it, however, far more likely that the two Mingaungs have been mixed up, for the former had a son named Kamarú, who, under the title of Nárathá, was governor of Arakan for his father. He was taken prisoner by the great king, Yázadaríi of Pegu, and barbarously murdered at Bassein about 1496.

That part of the legend which connects the Sithú and Kyawzwá Nats with the first Mingaung is interesting, because the mightiest general that served under that somewhat feeble king was his son Minyé Kyawzwá, who was finally killed in battle in 1416 during his father's life, and was just the kind of personage to have become a Nat in the popular imagination.

The legend, however, that makes out the Sithú and Kyawzwá Nats to be the sons of King Alaungsithu of Pagán (1085-1160), carries us to the group already mentioned, which has arisen around one of the greatest heroes of Burmese history, King Anawratházaw of Pagán (1010-1052), whose great-grandson Alaungsithu was. Alaungsithu's second son, Naraithó, better known as Kályá Min (1160-1164), murdered him in extreme old age, and among other subsequent crimes he is said to have slain his father's widow with his own hands, for which deed he was himself murdered. All this would be good cause for her becoming a Nat. Kályá Min had two sons: one, Narathéngá (1164-1167) killed by the other, Narabadisithu, a great monarch, who reigned thirty-seven years (1167-1204), was a prominent Buddhist reformer, and built the great Gawdápalin and Súlamani Pagodas at Pagán, which made him famous. The great dynasty finally came to a politically feeble end in the learned and pious Kyawzwá, the last King of Pagán (1279-1281), who was killed by the famous three Shan brothers on their founding the Shan dynasties of Pinyá and Sagaing.

One version of the legends connects the Nats Sithú and Kyawzwá and their mother with King Shweólang of Pagán, of whom and his father, Théngawin, I at present know nothing, except that the Chronicles say that they
THE AVA MINGAUNG AND PAGAN ALAUNSITHU MIXED CYCLE.

reigned at Pagan—Thénga-Yáza, the supposed founder of the present Burmese era, and some three hundred years before the great hero of the dynasty Anawratháw. One of Shwelaung's grandsons and his great-grandson both became King of Pagan in succession, as King Muniut (778-795) and King Sawkin-hnit (795-822). They are both mixed up in the legends as King Sawmun-hnit, who put to death that unfortunate Nat, the Haingdet Myózí.

The whole of this difficult set of stories is further complicated by confusing Thiháthú Sinbyúshin (1422-1426) of Ava with Thiháthú Tarishin of Pinlé (1298-1322), the younger and most powerful of the three Shan brothers who founded the dynasty of Myinzaing and Pinyá as successors to that of Pagan in 1298. He married the widow of Kyawzó, the last king of Pagan (1279-1298), whom he had deposed, and nominated her son Usaó (1322-1342) as his successor. Usaó was, however, deposed by Ngázi-shin Kyawzó, his half-brother, i.e., the son of the widow of Kyawzó of Pagan and Thiháthú Tarishin. This is the personage "Kyawzó, King of Pinlé" who is called Ngázi-shin Nat. He reigned 1342-1350 and was succeeded by another Kyawzó, his son (1350-1359). No doubt, the confusion and difficulties connected with this story are due to the unfortunate frequency of the name or title Kyawzó in Burmese history.

No less than four Genealogies are necessary to make clear the inter-relationship of the Nats mentioned in this Group.

GENEALOGY I.

King Sinbyúshin Tarábyá of Ava, 1400-1401, No. 7, Mintará Nat.

King Mingaung, or Mingaung-gyi of Ava, 1401-1422 = No. 34, Anauk Míbayá Nat.

No. 31. Min Sithú Nat.  

No. 35. Shingón Nat = King Thiháthú Sinbyúshin of Ava, 1422-6, No. 12, Aunghmáin Sinbyúshin Nat.

King Min Hánga of Ava, 1426, No. 11, Ngázi-shin Nat.

King Min Nansi, Usurper of same family, 1426-1439.

King Dútiyá Mingaung of Ava, 1480-1501.

King Shwe Nángyaw of Ava, 1501-1526.

Minbyaing Múhrithú.  

No. 9, Shwe Nawrathá Nat.

GENEALOGY II.

King Anawratháwaz of Pagan, 1010-1052.

King Alaungsíthu of Pagan, 1085-1160 = No. 34, Anauk Míbayá Nat.

No. 31. Min Sithú Nat, who was intended to be King Narathá of Pagan (Kalékyá Min), 1160-1164. or his son, King Narathéngá of Pagan = a Queen = No. 10, Aungzwá-mágyi Nat, 2nd husb.

King Narathénge of Pagan = a Queen = No. 10, Aungzwá-mágyi Nat, 2nd husb.

Shan line of Myinzaing and Pinyá, 1268-1364.

Shan line of Sagaing, 1315-1352.

King Thadóm inbyá of Ava, 1364-1367.

King Sinbyúshin Tarábyá of Ava, 1400-1401.  

(See Gen. I.)
THE AVA MINGAUNG AND PAGAN ALAUNGSITHU MIXED CYCLE.

GENEALOGY III.

Thénga, 25th K. of Pagán, 723-731.

A Queen = Thénzwin, 26th K., 731-737 = also No. 34. Anauk Mibaya Nat.

Shwé Laung, 27th K., 737-746.

Tundwin, 28th K., 746-755.

Munlut, 29th K., 755-778.

Sawkin-hnit, 30th K., = No. 20. Médaw Shwésagà Nat.


No. 31. Min Sithu Nat.

No. 32. Min Kyawzwá Nat.

Mintard, called also Mintaryi Nat. He was the son of Sinbyiishin Mintardgyi, and the elder

GENEALOGY IV.

Anawratházaw of Pagán, 1010-1052.

A Shan wife = Kyawzwá, last K. of Pagán, = also d. of King Taryókpyé, = 2nd husb. Thiháthá of Myinzaing Min of Pagán, 1248-1279, and Pinyá, 1298-1322.

Athingaya Sawyun of Sagaing, 1315-1322.

Ngázishin Kyawzwá of Pinyá, 1342-1350.

Uzaná of Myinzaing and Pinyá, 1322-1342, adopted by Thiháthá Tazfshin.

Thadóminbyá of Ava, successor to both lines, 1364-1367.

(See Gen. II.)

I will now proceed to describe the illustrations of Group III., or Ava Mingaung and Pagan Alaungsithu Mixed Cycle, according to the popular ideas.

No. 7. Mintá Nat, called also Mintárgyí Nat. He was the son of Sinbyiishin Mintárgyí, and the elder
brother of Mingaung-gyi of Ava. He died of fever and became a Nat. He is represented seated on a lotus throne, with a fan in full high class Court costume, winged in the Yódayá, i.e., Siamese fashion.

No. 12. Aungbinlé Sinbyoshin Nat. Thiháthu, King of Amarapíra, was the son of King Mingaung. He was killed in some rice lands near the Aungbinlé Lake by the Kôngbaung Sawbwa and became a Nat. This Nat is represented standing or sitting on a lotus, or on a throne, in Court dress, with a swish or fan in the left hand; supported on a one-headed or three-headed elephant, in token of his royalty, no doubt. He is sometimes accompanied by a driver or maháyé in front, and a halt armed or simply an attendant, behind.

No. 11. NgáshelNat. Lord of the Five (White) Elephants, called also Ngáyayang Tagá Nat. Kyawzwá, King of Pinlén, was the son of King Thiháthu and procured five white elephants from over the sea. He died of fever and became a Nat. His Nat is represented as a young girl standing on a lotus throne or on a lotus on a throne, in the Court costume of a royal attendant, and in the attitude of obeisance.

No. 35. Shingón Nat. She was a concubine of Sinbyoshin Thiháthu, who died suddenly at Ava, on returning from a trip to the Aungbinlé Lake, and became a Nat. She is represented as a young girl standing on a lotus throne or on a lotus on a throne, in the Court costume of a royal attendant, and in the attitude of obeisance.

No. 9. Shwe Nawrathá Nat. He was the son of Minbyaung Mákhirthú and grandson of the second Mingaung of Ava. During the reign of his uncle, Shwé Nangyaw, one of his servants, Nga Thaukkýad, rebelled. On this account, Shwé Nawrathá was thrown into the Irrawaddy and became a Nat. This Nat is represented in high class Court dress, seated on a lotus throne, as a Manirúri, with polo mallet and ball. The modern English game of polo came from the Manipúri through English officers in quite recent times.

No. 34. Anauk Mibaya Nat. She was the mother of the Nats, Min Síthú and Min Kyawzwá. She was frightened to death on meeting Min Kyawzwá, after he had become a Nat, on a pony, while amusing herself in a cotton field near Ava. Another legend says she was the wife of Mingaung-gyi, son of Mingyízwa. This Nat is represented as a young woman in Court costume, sitting or kneeling on a lotus throne, and suckling an infant.

No. 31. Min Síthú Nat, and No. 32. Min Kyawzwá Nat. King Thenzwin of Pagán had two sons by his Northern Queen, the Anauk Mibaya, named Síthú and Kyawzwá. He determined to make another son, Síthú, his heir, and in order to avert danger from him in consequence, he sent the brothers, Síthú and Kyawzwá, to suppress the Karens on the Taung-ngá [Tongho] border, which service they performed with great success. Subsequently, they made a great dyke to drain the Myaungdii village, founded by Min Nyaénung and quarrelled over turning water into it; whereupon Síthú killed his younger brother, Kyawzwá, who became a Nat, and revenged himself by afterwards doing Síthú to death by enchantments. Síthú in his turn became a Nat, too. There is another legend, which makes out Min Síthú Nat to be Alaungsithu, son of King Shwegí-dáráká of Pagán. The Nat Min Síthú is represented as a young man in high class Court dress, seated on a lotus throne
in the attitude of preaching; and the Nat Min Kyawzwa as a young man in high class Court dress, riding violently.

The Upper Burma Gazetteer, Part I., Vol. II., p. 247, has a story of these brothers, who are popular Nats:—

“An old king of Pagán had two sons, called Sithó and Kyawzwa, by his Northern Queen, and a son named Shwé Laung Min by the Queen of the south palace. He wanted Shwé Laung Min to succeed him, and, to save that prince from the jealousies and plots of his half-brothers, he sent these two to live at Taungnyo-lémá, and later, when he heard that they had made themselves very powerful, he ordered them further off to Taung-ngú [Tonghoo]. From Taung-ngú the two brothers went and attacked the Karens and, when they came back from their expedition, they built a city called Kúkhán. They dug a number of canals round about it, so that the city came subsequently to be known as Myaungpu-pauk and remains to the present day as Myaungtú-ywá. But there was not enough water in the canals round about it, so the elder brother Sithó murdered Kyawzwa, and Kyawzwa became a Nat. As a Nat, he set on his brother and strangled him, and Sithó became a Nat, too.

A large building was set up for a dwelling-place for Min Kyawzwa and it may be seen still. In the month of Nayón (June) every year a feast is held in his honour with fireworks and cock-fights.”

The Mahágíta Médanigyhn, from which the above story is taken, says that the history of Min Kyawzwa is quite differently related in another chronicle. “In former times, the king of Pagán had four ministers, who were brothers. He gave in marriage to Kyawzwa, the youngest of the four, a girl named Má Bómé, who sold spirits in Pópá Village. They lived happily together for a time, but Kyawzwa became addicted to his wife’s liquor and spent all his sober moments in cock-fighting and letting off fireworks. He died and became a Nat in Kúkhán-gyínýó.” The religious are left to choose which version they please. The main point is the drink, the cock-fighting, and the fireworks.

In the shed erected for the festival of this Nat, the natkados come forward all dressed alike in a red pasó, the end of which is thrown over the shoulder, and a red turban. They imitate the letting off of fireworks and the proceedings at a cock-fight, and they slap their left biceps with the right hand (as a Burman does when he is challenging to a wrestling or boxing bout) several times, and then they dance and set up the Nat-thàan:—

“Here am I come. I, Maung Kyawzwa, the dearly loved husband of Má Bómé of Pópá Village, clad in a spangled red garment, I, who drank deep of strong drink, and loved fireworks and cock-fights. I was the youngest of the four brothers, who long and faithfully served Alaungsíthú, the monarch of Pagán. Daily I went from place to place to gratify my foibles with my fighting cock hidden in my arms and my money in my waist-belt concealed from Má Bómé, the wife of my bosom. Many a main did we fight under the shade of that pipul tree, and many a time did I stroll along the streets, drunk with Má Bómé’s liquors, and many is the time that the pretty little maids picked me up out of the gutter.” Then the corybantic music strikes up and the dancers weave their paces.

No. 10. Aungzwámagyi Nat. One Nga Saung-gyán raised a rebellion at Ngasingú, about six miles to the north of Mandalay, against Min Narathéngá, king of Pagán, and the king sent his younger brother, Narabadísíthú, against him, in the hope that his brother might be killed; so that he might marry his widow, i.e., his sister-in-law, the Wálúwadí Princess. So Narabadísíthú left his servant, Nga Aungzwa, behind, with a promise that if he could kill the king, he should be married to the widow. The king was duly despatched, and Nga Aungzwa
demanded fulfilment of his promise, but the lady flatly refused to marry him, as he was not of the blood royal.

When Nga Aungswa was told of this, he spat on the floor, and used some strong language about the fulfilment of promises. The new king, being enraged at this, had him put to death, whereon he became a Nat. This Nat, who is very popular, is represented as a young man in high class Court costume, with a sword in the right hand, riding quietly.

No. 19. Shwé Sippin Nat, also called Shwé Sit-thi Nat. His title was the Hlaingdet Myözd and he was the son of Sawmun-hnit, king of Pagan. He was sent to suppress the insurrection of Kyaing-thin, son of the Pagan Sawhwa, but spent the time in cock-fighting, and so was put to death by having his legs buried in the earth and being left to die. He became a Nat. This Nat is represented seated on a lotus throne in high class Court dress, with sword uplifted or over his shoulder in his right hand.

No. 20. Mèdaw Shwé-saga Nat. She was the mother of the Hlaingdet Myözd, who became the Shwé Sippin Nat, and died of grief at the terrible end of her son. She became a Nat also. This Nat is represented as a girl in full Court dress, with and without the nayd head-dress, kneeling on a lotus throne, or on a lotus, with her elbow in the fashionable state of dislocation.

Varieties of the Thirty-seven Nats.
1. Shwé Panyi (Mahagyi, No. 2, and his sister Unamadawfpi. No. 8).
2. Shweniyet-hna (Hranmadawgyi, No. 3).
3. Shwé Nale (Mahagyi's wife, No. 14).
4. Num (Htuttahmang's neglected daughter, No. 37).
CHAPTER XIII

THE TABIN SHWÉDI AND BAYIN NAUNG CYCLES.

GROUP IV., or Tabin Shwédi Cycle, consists of Nats Nos. 6, 8, 17 and 33, or only four Nats, purporting to be connected with the surroundings of the conqueror, King Tabin Shwédi of Tonghoo (Taung-nguí), who was the founder of the great Burman dynasty of Pegu in the 16th century. Hence my name for the group. The outline of this legend is as follows:—Tabin Shwédi, who was the son of King Min Kínyó of Tonghoo, became by his conquests King of Tonghoo and Hanthawadi (Pegu), and was murdered by his Minister, Thamin Sawdók. The wife of Min Théngáthú, the keeper of the royal umbrella, died in childbirth and her child, on the death of King Tabin Shwédi, became King Mingaung of Tonghoo, under the popular title of Kuthén Thaken. King Mingaung had a secretary who died of snake-bite. Of the above personages, King Tabin Shwédi himself, King Mingaung, his mother and secretary all became Nats.

The Nats who take origin in this legend are:—No. 17, Tabin Shwédi Nat, who is the great King Tabin Shwédi himself. No. 6, Taung-nguí Mingaung Nat, called also Taung-nguí Shinbayin Nat, who is King Mingaung of Prome. No. 33, Myaukpet Shinmá Nat, who is King Mingaung's mother. No. 8, Thándawgán Nat, who is his secretary, as the name implies.

Historically, the legend tells a confused story. One of the results of the break up of the Pagan dynasty in 1298 was the establishment, about 1313, by nobles of Burmese descent, of a small, and at first subordinate, kingdom at Tonghoo, which in the following century, played a great part in Burmese story. In 1485, Min Kínyó of this Tonghoo dynasty established himself as a ruler of some consequence, and claimed, both through his father, Maháthegayá, and his mother, descent from Kyawzwá, the last king of Pagan (1279-1298). Min Kínyó died in 1530, leaving a son, Tabin Shwédi, who became the celebrated conqueror of Pegu in 1540, a titular king of Tonghoo being set up as one of his vassals. Tabin Shwédi was murdered in 1550 by Thamin Sawdók, a representative of the royal race of Pegu, who succeeded him for three months only. In 1541, Tabin Shwédi attacked and took Prome, putting the subordinate king thereof, Mingaung, and his family to a cruel death. This King Mingaung of Prome seems to be the original of King Mingaung of Tonghoo mentioned in the legend. The following Genealogy will show the relations of the personages mentioned in the legends:—
No. 17. Tabin Shwedi Nat. He was king of Tonghoo and Hanthawaddy (Pegu) and son of Min Kyaw. His Minister, Thamin Sawddk, warned him of ill-fortune and advised him to remove his residence. He did, but, nevertheless, he was killed by his royal sword-bearer (kalut-lci wbda-hm'it), who was the younger brother of Thamin Sawddk, and became a Nat. This Nat is represented as seated on a lotus throne, in Court dress*, with and without wings, with a sword in his right hand.

No. 17. Tabin Shwedi Nat. No. 6. Minjaunji Nat. No. 6. Taung-ngi Nat. He was king of Taung-ngi (Tonghoo), and was known as Kuthen Thaken (Lord of Basena), son of Minye Thadithu by a mother who was a native of Kadii in the Shwebd district. He was seized with dysentery and went to the Paung-laung (Sittang) river to get his health restored, but died on his return from the unlucky smell of onions. This Nat is represented as seated on a lotus throne, in high class Court dress, with a fan in his right hand.

No. 33. Myaukpet Shimmá Nat. She was the wife of Minye Thengdthu, the keeper of the king's golden umbrella. She died in childbirth near Sagaing, on her way to visit her parents, and her child, a boy, was taken

1 See Gen. IV., Chap. XII.
to his father at Tonghoo, and became King Mingaung on the death of King Tabin Shwedi. On his own death he, too, became a Nat. This Nat is represented as a young girl, but also as an old woman, kneeling in Court dress on a lotus throne, or on a lotus throne.

No. 8. Thandawgaw Nat, called also Yebya Nat. He was an assistant secretary to Mingaung, King of Tonghoo, and died from snakebite while plucking jasmine flowers for the king. This Nat is represented in the Court dress of an ordinary official with a fan, seated on a lotus throne.

Group V., or Bayin Naung Cycle, consists of Nats Nos. 15, 18, 22 and 23, or only of four Nats, whose direct reference is not clear, but they are, I think, of a very late date and are connected with the great conqueror Bayin Naung of Pegu and his dynasty in the 17th century. Hence my designation of the group. The outline of this set of stories is as follows:—A son of the king of Ava died whilst in a monastery. A son of Aaukpyetlôn Mingarâ of Ava died of drink. A son of Min Bayin of Ava died from an overdose of opium. Yun Bayin, Chief of Zimmâ, a Siamese Shan State, was conquered by Sinbyumyashin of Pegu and died at Rangoon in captivity in 1558. All these personages became Nats, under the titles respectively of Shindaw Nat, Minye Aungdin Nat, Maung Minbyu Nat, Yun Bayin Nat.

The Nats arising out of these legends are:—No. 15. Shindaw Nat, who is the son of King Nyaung-yân Min of Ava. No. 18. Minye Aungdin Nat, who is the son of King Aaukpyetlôn Mintârâ of Ava. No. 23. Maung Minbyu Nat, who is a son of King Bayin Naung of Pegu and Ava. No. 22. Yun Bayin Nat, who is a Yun Shan chief of Zimmâ.

For the historical facts of this legend, or set of legends, there is very little to go upon, but still, I think, we are now amongst tales of later date than any of the other legends, as they are connected with the descendants of Bayin Naung, the great Peguene monarch of Burmese descent and the real successor of Tabin Shwedi. He was the king known to the Portuguese as Branginoco, through the Talaing pronunciation of his full title, Bayingyi Naupgaw, and reigned from 1551 to 1581. He held both Burma, i.e., both the Ava and Pegu kingdoms, from 1555, as Emperor, with subordinate kings at Ava, Prome and Tonghoo. Bayin Naung’s successor was Nandâ Bayin (1581–1599), who came to an untimely end, and was succeeded by a brother, Nyaungyân Min, the tributary king of Ava, who made himself king of the whole of his father’s territory, being followed in this by his son, Aaukpyetlôn Mintârâ (1605–1628). On his death, his son, Minye Dêkpa, made an unsuccessful attempt on the throne, but was nevertheless de jure king for about a year (1628–1629), the regular successor being his uncle, Thalôn Mintârâ (1629–1648).

The history of the time is one of continuous murder and cruelty of every kind, and, so far as the evidence can guide us, I think we must look on these Nats as belonging to this period. It is indeed pretty clear that Minye Aungdin Nat was a son of Aaukpyetlôn Mintârâ, and Maung Minbyu Nat a son of Bayin Naung himself; and as regards Shindaw Nat, I am inclined to put him down as a son of Nyaungyân Min. In all this uncertainty there is one clear bit of history. The legend says that Sinbyumyashin (Lord of Many White Elephants) of Pegu took as a prisoner the Chief of Zimmâ, who died at Rangoon in 1558, and that his name was Yun Bayin, i.e., King of the Yuns. As a matter of historical fact, in 1547, or thereabouts, Bayin Naung made
his famous inroad into Siam in search of white elephants, taking the king and royal family of Siam into captivity, and especially punishing the Shan State of Zimmè, which fought him better than any of his other enemies, his chief opponents being the Yun Shans.

The following Genealogy will show the relationship of this Group to each other, so far as I understand it.

**Genealogy,¹**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burmese line of Pagan</th>
<th>Shan lines of Playá and Sagaing, ended 1322-1364.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. 22. Yun Bayin Nat of Zimmè, ob. 1558, prisoner of Bayin Naung.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 18. Minyè Aungdin Nat.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minyè Dékpa of Pegu only, 1629-1629.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I will now describe the illustrations of Group V., or Bayin Naung Cycle, in the language of the people, which, of course, is not at all that of history.

No. 15. Shindaw Nat. He was a young prince placed by the king of Ava under the abbot of the Hnàtpyitthaung Payá to be educated at his monastery. While still a novice, he died of snakebite. This Nat is represented as a novice, with rosary and fan, telling his beads.

No. 18. Minyè Aungdin Nat. He was the son of Anauk Thadin Mintaragyi, and died of drink. This Nat is represented as a young man seated on a lotus throne, in high class Court dress, playing on the Burmese harp.

No. 23. Maung Minbyú Nat. He was a prince of Ava and married the daughter of a cavalry officer. He died of an overdose of opium. This Nat is represented as a young man seated on a throne, or on a lotus throne, in high class Court dress, playing on a horn or pipe.

No. 22. Yun Bayin Nat. He was the Chief of Zimmè and was made a prisoner of war by Sinbyûnyûshin of Hanthawadi (Pegu). He died at Rangoon of dysentery in 920 B.B. (1557 A.D.), and became a Nat. This Nat is represented seated on a throne, or on a lotus throne, in high class Court dress, with a sheathed sword.

¹ See Chap. XII.
No. 21. Mraw Minbya Nat.

No. 22. Yan Bway Nat.

Indian Gods as Nats
1. Ny Nat (B текущ, the Sun).
2. My Nat (Agni, the God of Fire).
3. Thaung Nat (Sakra, Indra, the God of the Firmament, and the wife, Indrani).
4. Ewe Nat (Vishnu as Visnuvaraha, the Fourth Avatar).
5. Tike Nat (Shiva, Krushna, the God of War).
THE TWO ISOLATED NATS.

The two isolated Nats, who seem to belong to no group, are Nats Nos. 1 and 21. Thagya Nat, as already explained, is not an historical personage, but belongs to the systematised series of supernatural beings, or Nats, taken from Indian Buddhism, of whom he is the chief. He is also the nominal chief of this and every other series of Nats that the Burmese recognise. He is, therefore, Nat No. 1. Nat No. 21 is probably an historical personage, as he is said to have been a trader of Pinyi, who was killed by a tiger on his way home. Pinyi has never been of any importance, except while it was the capital of the Shan dynasty of Pinyi, which flourished between 1298 and 1364. This would fix his death somewhere between those dates. His name as a Nat is Maung Po Tu Nat.

I have now come to my two last illustrations, of which I will explain that of Maung Po Tu first. He was a trader of Pinyi, and was killed by a tiger on the summit of Mt. Ongyaw whilst on his way home. He is, however, represented as riding a tiger, or what may pass for a tiger, and driving it with a stick, in a Court costume, proper for a very high official, or for a prince of the royal family. There is, perhaps, therefore, some legend giving him a royal parentage or connection.

The other isolated Nat, whose picture I have had to keep to the last, owing to the plan of explanation, is the great Thagya Nat himself, by the common acceptance of every Burman, the prince of all the Nats, of whatever nature or degree: the No. 1 of all lists. The antiquity of his cult is indicated by his name, Thagya, which represents the Sanskrit word Sakra and not Sakka, the Pali equivalent thereof, thus throwing the date of the cult back to the early times when the old debased Northern (Sanskrit) form of Buddhism was current in Burma and before the present pure Southern (Pali) form began to prevail. The Sakra of the Indian Buddhism was the great ancient god Indra of the Brahmans, the Lord of the Firmament, turned by the Buddhists into the lowest of the three great rulers of the heavens, whom they set...
up on adapting the old Brahmanic cosmogony to their reformed ideas. The other two were Mahābrāhma and Māra, the Byamā Nat and Mān Nat of the Burmanese. All three, both in Indian and in modern Burmese ideas, descend when necessary to the earth to interfere in the affairs of men: Mahābrāhma and Sakra beneficially and Māra adversely.

The Mahānati Mahāmayūn gives scant details about Thagyā Nat. He is, it states, the representative of the King of the Thagyás, who lives on the summit of Myinma-бан (Mount Mera). It then tells us that on festival days, in his honour, a large shed is erected, and that in this it is proper to act various kinds of plays. Whilst these are going on, there enter the nat-thau nat-thaung, all dressed alike as men in ornamental bordered pasos or waistcoats, broad-sleeved jackets, and white veils thrown over the shoulders, with shells in the right hand and young sprigs of the eucalyptus (thayrb) in the left. They step forward in a graceful fashion and, standing upright, chant the Nat-thau as follows: — "I am the king of the worlds that are situated in the midst of the four islands, and are surrounded by the Seven Encircling Seas and the Seven Ranges of Mountains [of the Buddhist cosmogony]. The righteous and the pure in heart will I protect, and I will punish such as are ungodly and do evil. Therefore, have I descended from a height of one hundred and sixty-eight thousand yōnasū [yōnas] of twelve miles each, to watch over the good and over the bad, and therefore do I pray that every one may avoid evil and cleave fast to that which is good." Then the music strikes up and the ceremony concludes with the vigorous dancing of the Nat-inspired women.

The great interest in this cult for students of religion is that it combines both spirit-worship and spiritism. The Buddhist-Brahmanic mythology connected with Thagyá Nat has been already alluded to several times in the foregoing pages, but for the explanation of the existence of Thagyá it is needless necessary to state the beliefs again briefly. In the Indian Buddhist cosmogony there are six devākāta, or heavens of angels (devas or nats), or superhuman beings, living a life of happiness exempt from the limitations of humanity, but subject to kama, or pleasures of sense. Of these, the Tāvāntika Heaven (the Tāvāntika of the Burmese) is the second removed from the earth and is situated on the summit of Mount Mera. It is inhabited by the Sakkā or Thagyá angels, of which the archangel, or king, is the deposed god Sakra or Indra of the older Brahmanas and the Thagyá Nat of the Burmanas. Thagyá exercises a wholly beneficent influence over mankind, and when a good man is struggling with adversity, he is made known to Thagyá by his throne becoming hot. He then comes in disguise to the earth for the relief of the sufferer.

Mān Nat is the Indian Buddhist Māra, a much needed abbreviation of the name for the archangel, or king, of the Paranibbāvatāsūvari Heaven, the highest of the devākāta or angel heavens, the sixth from the earth. He is, therefore, more powerful than Thagyá and is the Tempter, or embodiment of the Evil Principle. There is much said about him in the Legend of Buddha, for he constantly interfered with Buddha when on earth, by a series of temptations. His three daughters are Tashh, Rati and Arati (Passion, Love and Discontent), who tempt men to sin. He owes his exalted position to having, in a former existence, exercised in a high degree the virtue of Dāna, or Charity to the priesthood. He is, however, essentially a wicked angel, and his pleasures are those of the senses. Like Thagyá, he constantly interferes in the affairs of men.

Byamā Nat represents the Indian Buddhist Mahābārahman or Brahmā, borrowed from the old Brahmanical faith, but greatly degraded from his position as one of the greatest of the gods to that of an archangel. Mahābrahmā in Buddhism is the archangel, or king, of the Brahmā angels inhabiting the Brahmā Heaven, just as Thagyá and Mān Nat rule their respective Deva Heavens; but the difference between the deva and brahmā angels is that the latter are much more revered and altogether higher beings, free from kama, or sensual passions.

There are twenty Brahmā Heavens, seven of which are inhabited by corporeal and four by incorporeal beings. Byamā Nat, however, is a shadowy power, and though he interferes in the affairs of men, yet he barely does so in a tangible manner, and practically the great supernatural beings who control human life are Thagyá Nat, the Sāvara, and Mān Nat, the Tempter.

Mythologically, these three great archangels of the modern Burman are the descendants, much affected by the indigenous Animism, of the three great original gods of the Brahmanical Trinity—Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva—the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer. But in the Burman of to-day, it is Sakra, as Thagyá, who takes the most important place and is the Nat that is Lord of Life, the Recording Angel, the supernatural being most revered and most respected. At the commencement of the New Year, during the Thagyaung or Water-bathing Festival, so familiar to all foreign residents in Burma, he goes to the Earth for three days. The general public and I well recollect, in the last Burmese War, that in the formation of the most important of these three days at the beginning of the year of 1888, there was a sudden and vivid flash of lightning, followed by crashing thunder, which gave great satisfaction to the people of the royal city of Mandalay, because, it was positive evidence to them of the presence among them of Thagyá himself in the days of their adversity, motion having its root in the very foundation of Indian belief.
A similar pathetic tale is told in *The Soul of a People*—"The highest Nats live in the mountains. The higher the Nat the higher the mountain; and when you get to a very high peak indeed, like Mainthong Peak in Wenthó, you encounter very powerful Nats. They tell a story of Mainthong Peak and the Nats there, how all of a sudden, one day in 1885, the strangest noises came from the hill. High up on his mighty side was heard the sound of great guns firing slowly and continuously; there was the thunder of falling rocks, cries as of someone being dragged a terrible calamity, and voices calling from the precipices. The people living in their little hamlets about his feet were terrified. Something, they knew, had happened of most dire import to them, some catastrophe which they were powerless to prevent, which they could not even guess. But, when a few weeks later there came, even into those remote villages, the news of the fall of Mandalay, of the surrender of the king, of the 'great treachery,' they knew that this was what the Nats had been sorrowing over. All the Nats everywhere seem to have been distressed at our arrival, to hate our presence, and to earnestly desire our absence. They are the spirits of the country and of the people, and they cannot abide a foreign domination."

The visit of Thagya is, as above stated, the occasion of the feast best known to Europeans in Burma, the Water Festival, which commences by the firing of cannon and ends with a general dousing of each other by the youthful members of the populace, and throwing water on all they dare, including Europeans and strangers. I have known a party of young Cooly women, whom I had employed officially, come solemnly to me in Mandalay to ask if I had any objection to having a pot of water thrown over me for good luck! This throwing of water is the popular survival of the washing of the images of Buddha with holy water, enjoined at this season, and no doubt of Indian Brahmanic origin, as has been already noted. It is, in fact, using for carnival purposes an idea that is essentially religious in origin. The Brahmanic cast of the whole festival comes out also very strongly in another ceremony connected with it. A bullock intended for slaughter is bought from a Muhammadan butcher and taken round the village, followed by a festive throng. Its price is collected on the road, and it is then ransomed and set free by the populace as an act of merit, jivita-dána, life-saving charity. That is the modern explanation, though, beyond doubt, by heredity the particular "merit" consists in saving the life of "the son of the cow."

Naturally, Thagya, from his popularity, is variously represented in effigy and picture. He is sometimes drawn as being clothed in royal white, standing on a three-headed white elephant, and having in his hands a *sankh* shell and a swish for keeping off the flies. In my collection he is shown in all his royalty, seated on a lotus throne on the elephant *Eyaw* (Pali, *Eravajja*), on whose august back he makes his annual visit to the Earth. He bears a fan in his hand, and before him is his driver, and behind him a faithful guardian *bali*.

*Indian Goddesses as Nats (Burmans).*

1. Kalyumáti Nat-tha (Kalyum, the True Friend).
2. Miikkä Nat-tha (Miikkä, the True Friend).
4. Sandi Nat-tha (Sandi).

No. 1. Thagya Nat.
No. 1. Thagyá Nat.

No. 2. Mahágiri Nat.
No. 8. Thandawgān Nat.

No. 9. Shwe Nawratha Nat.

No. 10. Auzozwāsāyi Nat.

No. 11. Ngāzishin Nat.
No. 20. Medaw Shwesaga Nat.

No. 22. Vun Bavin Nat.

No. 21. Maung Pa Tu Nat.

No. 25. Maung Mineyu Nat.
No. 24.  Mândale Bóraw Nat.


No. 25.  Shwétyin Naungdaw Nat.

No. 27.  Mintha Maung Shin Nat.
No. 36. SHINGWA NAT.

No. 37. SHIN-NÉMÍ NAT.
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