Burma (Myanmar) since the 1988 uprising: A select bibliography

Second Edition

Andrew Selth
Burma (Myanmar) since the 1988 uprising:

*a select bibliography*

2nd edition

Andrew Selth
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Preface to the Second Edition

A bibliography is never complete. No matter how conscientious the compiler there will always be gaps and scope for additions, particularly to select bibliographies. In this regard, Burma (renamed in the 2008 constitution as the Republic of the Union of Myanmar) is certainly no exception. Indeed, several developments over the past three years argue strongly for the preparation of an updated checklist of the English language literature on Burma. Since the first edition of this work was released in July 2012, there has been an increased flow of new, revised and reprinted publications about Burma. A survey of publishers’ catalogues and booksellers’ websites suggests that this trend is set to continue for some time. This activity reflects a high level of interest in the country, not only in official and academic circles, but also among the wider public. This interest is likely to be maintained in 2015, when Burma’s hybrid civilian–military government is due to hold national elections and, in early 2016, to choose a new president. The outcome of these competitions will be critical to the future of President Thein Sein’s ambitious reform program, launched in 2011, and to Burma’s relations with the wider world.

As this edition of the bibliography helps to demonstrate, most of the public (and scholarly) interest in Burma over the past few years has been related to the country’s politics and economy, accounting for the large number of new works in those categories. This has included several important edited works, with chapters provided by a range of noted Burma watchers, covering such issues as the continuing political role of the armed forces, unresolved tensions with the ethnic minorities, the obstacles to further economic development and the growth of civil society. Also, the increased number of postgraduates working on Burma in Western and other countries has led to specialised studies on areas and issues that, until now, had rarely been subject to close examination.

Another factor has been the dramatic surge in foreign visitors to Burma, up from an estimated 310,000 in 2010 to more than 3,000,000 in 2014. Estimates for 2015 range as high as 5,000,000. This has prompted the production of a large number of works which seem designed to cater mainly to tourists, businessmen and armchair travellers. They have included guide books, phrase books, cookery books, collections of photographs and personal accounts of visits to the country. There is also a trickle of novels that are set in Burma or have Burma-related themes. The quality of all these works has tended to be highly variable but, in different ways and at different levels, they have helped fill niches in a market that still seems to be expanding.

Also, it is worth noting that many older books and monographs with Burma-related themes have been revised or reissued. There have long been a few firms (like the Bangkok-based White Lotus Press, established in 1972) that have specialised in reproducing out-of-print books on Burma. However, several other well-known publishers are now producing good quality, hard copy reprints of classic works. It is possible to find soft copies of many more on line, through the digital collections of major libraries, notably (since 1994) the Library of Congress and (since 1995) the British Library. These developments have made many rare books and other research materials much more accessible, helping to revive interest in Burma’s history and culture, on which there are now some excellent studies.

Since 2012, a number of major gaps in the academic literature have been plugged, in part at least. For example, much closer attention has been given to legal issues in Burma, both during the colonial period and since 1948. However, there are still some notable omissions, particularly in the area of Burma’s foreign contacts. For example, there are still no definitive histories in English of Burma’s relations with countries like the US, Japan, the Koreas or Australia. There is also a shortage of serious studies looking at Burma’s role in the strategic competition between China and India, its membership of ASEAN since 1997, and its place in the wider environment of the Asia–Pacific. Over the past few years greater attention has been given to the place of Islam, but there is still no comprehensive or detailed overview of the development of Christianity in Burma.

There has been a revival of interest in foreign books within Burma itself. Under the former military government a wide range of works were blacklisted (as were, of course, many publications in Burmese). Often, the reasons for these bans were not clear, one example being Love and Sunshine in the East, an obscure novel written in 1930 by
The intent behind other bans was more obvious, as in the case of Aung San Suu Kyi’s three books on modern Burmese politics and Bertil Lintner’s graphic account of the 1988 uprising. Under Thein Sein’s more relaxed administration, however, English language versions of these and other banned books are being imported into Burma and are available from local bookshops and street vendors. For those Burmese with Internet access, others can be read on line. Since 2013, an international literary festival has been held in Burma, one feature of which has been the many formerly banned books openly displayed for sale.

At the same time, there has been a revival in the translation of foreign books into the Burmese language. This has included some blacklisted books, notably copies of works by Aung San Suu Kyi. In 2012, a translation of George Orwell’s novel *Burmese Days*, which was also banned by the former military regime, even won a national literary award. There are now Burmese versions of David Steinberg’s popular primer *Burma/Myanmar: What Everyone Needs to Know* and Bertil Lintner’s *Outrage: Burma’s Struggle for Democracy*. Other foreign works which have been translated into Burmese and released in the country have included Robert Taylor’s groundbreaking study *The State in Myanmar*, and Wendy Law Yone’s *Golden Parasol: A Daughter’s Memoir of Burma*. Also on sale in Rangoon is a collection of broadcasts by the BBC’s Burmese language service, summarising my own 2002 study *Burma’s Armed Forces*.

This is in addition, of course, to the bound photocopies and pirated versions of foreign language books that have long been a feature of Burma’s literary scene.

In recent years, there has also been a proliferation of books in English by Burmese authors, and English language translations of Burmese works. The print runs may be small, but they too are having an impact on the local publishing scene. A representative sample has been included in this edition of the bibliography. While many of these publications seem aimed at foreign visitors and foreign residents of Burma, they help represent a return to the lively literary and scholarly traditions that prevailed before General Ne Win’s coup and the introduction of harsh censorship laws. Related to these developments has been the formation of several new literary associations in Burma, as various groups have taken advantage of the lifting of government restrictions in 2012. The Myanmar Publishers and Booksellers Association, for example, holds Burma’s largest annual book fair.

On the bibliographic front, there has also been some movement. The ‘Bibliography of Burma (Myanmar) Research’, last produced by London University’s School of Oriental and African Studies in 2004, is no longer being compiled, but work has continued on some other projects mentioned in the introduction to the first edition of this work. For example, the Heidelberg University bibliography now boasts electronic listings of articles and multi-author documents up to September 2012. There have been several other checklists drawn up over the past three years, most of which have been posted on line. They have tended to be subject-specific, to cater to the wider range of topics now being given attention by students and other researchers. For example, the University of California at Berkeley has compiled a list entitled ‘Myanmar: Women’s Studies Bibliography’. An Australian researcher has drawn up a list of works in English about Burmese marionettes. Most of the major studies of Burma published since 2012 have included extensive bibliographies.

In all these ways, the Burma literature scene is now a vibrant one, reflecting the dynamic state of modern Burma studies. There is every indication that, as the country continues to evolve and grow, so will the demand for fresh and original publications of all kinds.

Since the first edition of this bibliography appeared, Burma watchers and others have alerted me to the existence of a number of works that they felt deserved inclusion. I have also been pointed in the direction of several major reports produced by think-tanks and international organisations. As this remains a select bibliography, and not an attempt to list every English-language publication about Burma released over the past 27 years, I have not included them all. However, many suggestions have been taken up, helping to plug some gaps in the first edition and to fill out a few sections that were rather thin. This edition has also given me an opportunity to record more publications produced by Burma-related activist groups. Such works are often considered to be ephemera and omitted from checklists of this kind. However, they represent a major effort on the part of these organisations over the years and often provide information and views that are not available elsewhere.

To the 928 titles listed in the first edition of this bibliography, another 390 have been added. Most of these new works have been released over the past three years. As before, I have restricted myself to publications produced in English (or, in three cases, English and Burmese), and in hard copy, since the 1988 pro-democracy uprising.
there has been some doubt whether or not a particular work was produced in hard copy, for example by an international organisation with its own website, I have usually erred on the side of inclusion. This is because, in most cases, small numbers of hard copies were produced by these organisations for libraries and for presentation to select audiences, such as donors, journalists and government officials.

In order to make greater allowance for the latest publishing trends, I have slightly relaxed my earlier rule about books printed on demand. This has been to take account of the increasing number of academic theses and self-published works on Burma, some of which have made useful contributions to the field. Also, I have taken the risk of listing a small number of books that have not yet been formally released. They have been included because they are significant works that, as far as I have been able to determine from the authors and the publishers, are confidently expected to be released in 2015. Not to have included them would have detracted from the usefulness of this checklist over time, and left gaps in areas that are currently subject to close attention. Once again, briefings, academic articles, chapters and short commentaries have not been listed, although a few examples are mentioned in the appendix.

This edition of the bibliography follows much the same format as the first. However, to help readers navigate their way through the many subjects covered in the checklist, and to find particular works more easily, I have rearranged a few sections. I have also added a number of additional headings and sub-headings. This has necessitated moving some titles from their original positions and giving them new reference numbers. As before, many of the books named could have been listed under more than one category. Inevitably, the placement of some titles will still strike some as arbitrary but that seemed preferable to duplicating entries or trying to include cumbersome cross references. Individual works can also be found by consulting the consolidated list of authors, editors, translators and photographers provided at the end of this book.

Some other parts of the first edition have been changed. David Steinberg has made a few amendments to his foreword, to reflect developments since the original version appeared three years ago. A small number of editorial changes have been made to the Introduction and a few minor errors in the checklist have been corrected. The appendix has been substantially revised and updated, to reflect the wider range of books now available to a newcomer to Burma (and Burma studies). It has also been expanded in response to the flood of tourists and short-term foreign residents who may be looking for some guidance on reading matter. As with all such exercises, the suggestions made in that essay reflect personal choices, and are based mainly on my own reading. It has also benefited from helpful suggestions made by others in the field, but should not in any way be considered authoritative.

At the risk of repeating myself, let me also briefly address a couple of comments made about the first edition of the bibliography. 17

It is quite true that both the first edition and this one fail to represent the full range of modern Burma scholarship, in that they do not include any works produced before 1988 (apart, that is, from modern reprints), in soft copy or written in languages other than English. Nor does it list any articles in academic journals or magazines. As explained in the introduction to the first edition, this reflects a deliberate decision to restrict the checklist to major works that are likely to be readily accessible to the majority of readers, in terms of both language and availability. It goes without saying that there is a large body of related works that do not fit into these categories. Despite their possible merits as sources on Burma, however, this checklist is not the place to look for them.

It is also acknowledged that the first edition listed at least one work that could be described as racist in content. 18 Indeed, a few books cited below could be so described. Also, both editions of the bibliography include works that represent the propaganda of a repressive military government, as well as publications produced by a highly politicised activist community. No-one could claim that all these works were accurate or balanced. A couple of other books named could be accused of being in poor taste, at least. As stated in the original introduction, however, I have listed titles that cover the full spectrum of opinion about Burma, not just those which express points of view I agree with, or which are deemed by others to be politically acceptable. This reflects my conviction that only by being aware of all attitudes and opinions — both inside and outside Burma — can the ‘fiendishly complex’ challenges facing modern Burma be fully understood. 19

I am indebted to many people for helping me prepare a new version of this bibliography. As always, David Steinberg has been a great support. Contributions have also been made by several other Burma watchers, among them John Brandon, Nick Cheesman, Melissa Crouch, Reneaud Egretan, Nicholas Farrelly, Marie Lall, Jacques Leider, Stephen
I am grateful to them all for taking the time and trouble to help me with this project. The staff of the Griffith Asia Institute (GAI) has once again worked wonders to bring this work to its final stages. To those members of the GAI named in the original acknowledgements, I should like to add Russell Trood, Leong Liew, Natasha Vary, Belle Hammond and Vanessa Lao. The National Library of Australia and its staff constitute valuable resources for anyone interested in conducting research about Burma.

My wife Pattie has provided constant encouragement and support for this project, as she has done for so many others conducted over the past 35 years. I owe her much more than can be recorded here.

Brisbane
April 2015

Notes


3 Interview with Tourist Police, Myanmar Police Force, Rangoon, March 2015.


11 Burma has not signed the 1886 Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, but it is a signatory to the World Trade Organisation’s 1994 Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights. Burma is also a member of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO). Despite the Copyright Act of 1911, promulgated in 1914, no formal copyright procedure has ever been instituted in Burma. In 2004, new copyright legislation began to be drafted based on a WIPO model, but it has still not entered into force.


19 This description of Burma’s problems was coined by Timothy Garton Ash in ‘Beauty and the beast in Burma’, *New York Review of Books*, 25 May 2000.
Acknowledgements

This bibliography — or, more properly, checklist — is in one sense a by-product of four decades collecting and reading books, reports and sundry other publications on Burma (Myanmar). During this period I have incurred debts to many friends, colleagues and fellow Burma-watchers, both amateur and professional. In compiling a work such as this, however, there are some people to whom special consideration is due.

I should first like to record my gratitude to Sayagyi David Steinberg of Georgetown University. Not only has he provided a foreword to this bibliography, but his advice, encouragement and support over the past 20 years has been invaluable. For their varied contributions to this project, I would also like to thank John Brandon of the Asia Foundation, Sean Turnell of Macquarie University, Nicholas Farrelly of the Australian National University, Sally and Barbara Burdon of the Asia Bookroom, Len Lambourne of The Asian Experts and Thant Thaw Kaung of the Myanmar Book Centre.

For their help in this and other Burma-related projects undertaken since I joined the Griffith Asia Institute in 2006, mention must also be made of Michael Wesley, Andrew O’Neil, Stephen McCarthy, Meegan Thorley, Kathy Bailey and Robyn White. At the National Library of Australia, where I was able to complete this project as a Harold White Fellow, thanks are due to Nick Cheesman and Amelia McKenzie.

As always, my greatest debt is to my wife, Pattie Collins. Over the past 30 years she has probably learned more about Burma — and its books — than she ever really cared to know.

Needless to say, any errors and omissions are my responsibility alone.

Brisbane
July 2012
Foreword

by

David I. Steinberg
Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Asian Studies, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, and
Visiting Scholar, School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University

The indefatigable Andrew Selth, fresh from his seemingly myriad major studies, chapters, research papers, blogs and op-eds, has demonstrated once again his catholic knowledge and his capacity for care and detail related to Burma/Myanmar. This new bibliography, which should become an essential reference for those even minimally concerned with Burma/Myanmar, is path-breaking, and is a critical guide to those both figuratively and literally Burma bound, as was his earlier work on the state of Burmese studies.

The publication of this second edition of the bibliography is especially timely. As the state has entered a new incarnation in its "civilized" form in 2011, after 50 years of direct and indirect military control, as most foreign-imposed sanctions have been suspended or lifted, as the iconic Nobel Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi has entered public political life, as Myanmar has hosted the Southeast Asian games in 2013 and chaired ASEAN in 2014, as international businesses seek Burmese opportunities, and as tourism has exploded, there will no doubt be a spurt of new publications, both ephemeral and more lasting, about aspects of Burma/Myanmar. Yet it is essential for those seriously concerned, and even those touristically inclined, to understand what has gone before if they are to comprehend the present, which is never written de novo. This bibliography, then, offers a Virgilian guide to Myanmar’s recent past, and is an essential reference component for both the interested traveller and the dedicated student or specialist.

Burma/Myanmar has been simplistically characterized as isolated and unknown. This may have been comparatively true for a quarter of a century following the coup of 1962, but has been inaccurate for the past generation. In spite of direct rule by junta from 1988 under a regime that was noted worldwide for its repression and human rights violations, the state, known since 2011 as the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, attracted more academic and political interest than might have been imagined from a country previously insulated from much of the West. From the essentially isolationist policies of the Burma Socialist Programme Party under General Ne Win (1962–1988), Myanmar (the name was changed in 1989) began to attract both international media attention and academic concern. In part, this was due to some changes in policy, such as the opening to foreign investment, but perhaps more importantly to the image of Nobel Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, who soon became the international icon of democracy, and whose example and appeal attracted many to enter the field of Burma studies and/or work on the Thai frontier among Burmese refugees. She personally seemed to exemplify the raised concerns over human rights issues in that country.

This bibliography, then, reflects that new era—now past but quintessentially relevant to the present. Scholarship on Burma after the coup of 1962 essentially dried up, as few scholars were admitted for field work, and then only in a few academic “safe” fields. Responsible professors could not advocate dissertation research on a country in which field work was impossible. Tourism was discouraged and internal travel limited. With the quiet opening of Burma after the coup of 18 September 1988, and in spite of the bloody repression of the failed “people’s revolution” earlier that spring and summer, growth in interest in Burma/Myanmar became evident.

This was reflected in both the human rights/democracy advocacy literature, which proliferated especially along the Thai border with Myanmar, and the stirring of disciplinary academic research and quiet field work in-country. Scholars were allowed in, often with tourist visas. We now have a new generation of scholars and published scholarly works in all disciplines. Some reflect internal conditions; others compare, and draw lessons from, the Myanmar experience with
other countries. Especially important have been the contributions of expatriate Burmese scholars who have markedly enhanced study of their country from perspectives that foreigners lack.

The importance of foreign scholarly research on Myanmar is especially salient if one understands the past stringent controls over research and publishing for those within the country. Until 1988, all internal research (even in science and medicine) by anyone employed by the state (which meant all academicians) was considered classified until presented at a state-sponsored research seminar and then formally approved for public dissemination. Since 1988, any research publications have had to meet the mercurial conditions of the official censorship board. History was reinterpreted and rewritten to emphasize the roles of the Myanmar military, and even when classic works were republished, their titles had to change “Burma” into “Myanmar”. For example, *The Glass Palace Chronicles of the Kings of Burma* was published originally in 1923, but in 2008 republished as *The Glass Palace Chronicles of the Kings of Myanmar*. All publications had to list the military-sponsored state objectives.

Burmese expatriates writing abroad, often with family in-country, often had to be circumspect in their analyses, and ardent critics of the regime sometimes neglected balanced reporting. Most books on Burma/Myanmar published abroad were legally banned from Myanmar, but increased travel and new technology have enabled the surreptitious import and distribution of many. With a decline in the easy capacity to read the English of academic treatises, a need for the translation of important works into Burmese has become evident if present trends since 2011 in relaxation of censorship continue.

The result of internal controls has been the especial salience of foreign publications on Myanmar since 1988. They have proliferated and have provided welcome analyses of internal dynamics and external relations. Conditions within Myanmar, however, have resulted in the polarization of external opinions on whether to engage, and if so how, the regime in Yangon and then Naypyidaw. Advocacy literature on all sides of the issue expanded, often based on anecdotal evidence, since few trustworthy statistics emanated from the government. And, as Professor Donald Emmerson once noted, “the plural of anecdote is not data”.

Dr. Selth, in his introduction, provides a fascinating and thorough account of the various previous attempts to engage in bibliographic work, and even specialists on Burma/Myanmar may not have been aware of some of these important contributions to the literature. This is also a service to the field. His professional background in the Foreign Service and security arena, as well as being an Australian, has demonstrated that personal history in this case is an asset, rather than a liability, in preparation of this bibliography. This has meant that Dr. Selth has filled a lacuna often left virtually empty in most bibliographies. As an Australian, his emphasis on works emanating from that country fill a void, because of all Western states, the Australian government and academic community has shown the most continuous and supportive roles in analyzing Burma/Myanmar, and the worldwide audience for serious study of that country needs to recognize this contribution.

There remain gaps needing analysis, and these are demonstrated by gaps in the bibliography, but as Burma/Myanmar continues to attract attention, they likely will be filled. There are no contemporary and serious studies of Myanmar-U.S. relations (although two are in process), of bilateral ties between Myanmar and Russia, or between Burma and each or both of the Koreas. A comprehensive study of Christianity in its socio-political setting is needed. Dr. Selth has wisely avoided including works in preparation on some of these issues, for the time disparities between research and publication may be extensive. Yet the increase in those enrolled in advanced programs on Burma/Myanmar, and those with experience in and on that country will no doubt begin the fill the void.

A corollary of the relative isolation of Burma/Myanmar, its notoriety in the narcotics literature, its strategic location, its long and porous border with Thailand, and its ostensible “exoticism”, have all given rise to a variety of both serious literature and the pulp fiction inhabiting airport book kiosks. The last item may be dismissed, but the fiction field should not be ignored either by the serious scholar or the ardent traveller.

Scholarship and analyses obviously need personal commitments, but they also need institutional bases. Although a variety of international academic institutions and some research organizations teach on and/or conduct research about Burma/Myanmar, their focus is usually Southeast Asia or Asia more broadly interpreted. There is a paucity of international educational institutions solely devoted to that country. There is one in the United States (Northern
Illinois University), one in China (Yunnan National University), one in India (Manipur University), one in Thailand (Naresuan University) and soon one in Australia (Australian National University). The small number of such centres may limit future scholarship and inadequate analyses could adversely affect policy choices. Universities also now tend to focus on disciplinary studies, rather than on area research, which limits university employment opportunities for some Burmanically inclined. A decade and a half ago, a meeting on Burma/Myanmar attended by representatives of most ASEAN governments at that time needed to draw on Western specialists on that country because those in the ASEAN states had no analytical capacity. That situation has begun to be rectified, but clearly the ASEAN states and their neighbours need to expand their sights.

Griffith University is to be congratulated for its interest in opening vistas on Burma/Myanmar. More than two decades ago, it sponsored a major international conference on Myanmar, attended in part by the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade. Since then, especially in the last decade, the steady stream of papers on public policy issues has added significantly to our understanding of that country and its relations with the region.

The serious student, the professional journalist, the potential investor, the policy advocate, and even the prospective traveller to Myanmar will welcome this publication. It is an important contribution to the burgeoning interest in Myanmar, and we are all once again in Dr. Andrew Selth's debt.

Washington DC
January 2015

Notes


Before the rise of a new democratic movement under Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi, Burma (or Myanmar, as the country has been officially known since 1989) was largely neglected by the scholarly community. The difficulty of gaining access to primary sources, and of reading them in the Burmese language, tended to deter all but the most dedicated researchers. Also, from the time the armed forces seized power in 1962, until they took back direct political control of the country in 1988, Burma retreated into isolation and strict neutrality in international affairs. Foreign residents were kept to a minimum and tourists were actively discouraged. Outsiders wishing to study the country tended to be viewed with suspicion, either as potential challengers to the official version of Burmese history or as purveyors of ‘alien cultural influences’. Field work became very difficult and access to reliable data was almost impossible.

Before 1962, there was a small but vibrant academic scene inside Burma, which saw the publication of a number of major works by local figures. Some were published in English or by foreign publishing houses. Under the military regime, however, even local scholars found it difficult to gain access to sources, particularly government records, and their research was subject to official censorship.

There were a number of notable exceptions, but following the coup relatively few serious works were published in the major Western languages about Burma’s history, politics, economy or contemporary society. Occasionally, travel books featured a chapter or two on Burma, but they tended to deal only fleetingly with the state of the country and its people. From time to time, the international news media published stories about particular developments in Burma, but these items tended to be short and lacking nuance. Also, they were not always very accurate or balanced. At the same time, support for geographically-defined ‘area studies’ declined. Starved of funding and unable to conduct original research during the 26 years that General Ne Win ruled the country, many academics turned elsewhere for subjects to explore. Burma studies languished. As David Steinberg observed in 1981, for many years ‘contemporary Burma has been considered terra incognita by many scholars, journalists and development specialists’.

However, since the dramatic events of 1988, when nation-wide pro-democracy demonstrations were crushed by the armed forces, there has been a remarkable resurgence of interest in Burma among scholars and officials. A wide range of important studies has appeared, offering ‘a variety of perspectives that reveal particular and sometimes contested perceptions of the Burmese past, present and future’. Also, over the past 24 years the struggle against military rule by both opposition political groups and the country’s ethnic minorities has been the subject of numerous books, research monographs and reports. Much closer attention has been paid to Burma’s defence policies and foreign relations. New publications have been devoted to aspects of Burmese culture and society. There have also been some important contributions to Burma studies in broader works, covering subjects such as the involvement of armed forces in politics, the development problems of ‘failed’ states and the role of ethnic minorities in Southeast Asia.

This increased level of academic and official interest has been matched by a much greater awareness of Burma among the populations of Western and regional countries, prompting the publication of numerous books designed largely for the mass market. These include travel guides, collections of photographs, novels and cookery books. After a long hiatus, the Second World War’s China-Burma-India (CBI) theatre has attracted renewed interest. In 1998 alone, there were 44 books published on this subject. There has been a flood of political tracts, usually produced by Burmese exiles and activist groups of various kinds. Also, since 1988 think tanks like the International Crisis Group...
and non-government organizations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have commissioned
detailed analyses on Burma-related issues, albeit from quite different perspectives. While most of these publications
have been posted on the Internet, many have also been released in hard copy as reports and booklets.

In these circumstances, the need for a bibliography or check-list of Burma-related publications produced over the
past 24 years has become more pressing.

**Burma Bibliographies Before 1988**

Before 1988, Burma was mentioned to a greater or lesser extent in most bibliographies of South and Southeast Asia.
These included works produced both by commercial publishing houses and official bodies. The most comprehensive
list, however, was associated with an academic journal.

From 1941 to 1991, the United States (US)-based Association of Asian Studies (AAS) published an annual
bibliography of Asian studies as a supplement to its journal, the *Journal of Asian Studies* (and, before 1956, its
predecessor the *Far Eastern Quarterly*). It was wide in scope, but tended to favour the humanities and social
sciences. These bibliographies typically included a list of monographs, journal articles and book chapters on Burma
written in the main Western languages, sub-divided into broad categories such as history, biography, economics and
politics. From 1991, the journal's bibliographies were made available to subscribers in electronic form, with on-line
entries dating back to 1971. Cumulative printed volumes covering the period 1941-1970 were produced in two
separate multi-volume sets, one in 1969-70 and the other in 1972-73.

In addition, Burma was covered in broad works that surveyed published and unpublished sources for the study of
these regions, but rarely in any depth. Burma also featured in more specialised publications that focused on specific
subject areas such as Southeast Asian ethnic groups and languages. One massive bibliography, compiled by Khin
Thet Htar for the World Health Organization in 1981, covered all literature (books, articles, pamphlets, reports and
academic theses) written in English relating to medicine, and allied subjects such as zoology and botany, in Burma
from 1866 to 1980. Such was the general lack of interest in Burma by scholars and officials, however, that prior to
the 1988 uprising there were relatively few bibliographies that looked at the country itself, in all its diversity.

Notable exceptions to this rule included works by the American scholar Frank Trager, who between 1956 and 1973
compiled four bibliographies as part of the Human Relations Area Files’ Burma Research Project at New York
University. Also, in 1979 Michael Aung Thwin produced a short annotated guide to research tools on Burma, for the
University of Hawaii. In 1986, the Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars in Washington DC published
two bibliographical guides to coincide with an international conference on Burma studies being held in the US capital
that year. In collaboration with the Library of Congress, one looked at scholarly resources, while the other listed
international doctoral dissertations. The Wilson Centre followed these works a year later with *Burma: A Study
Guide*, edited by Ronald Morse. It not only had nine country reports but, harking back to these two earlier works, also
included selective guides to scholarly resources and the periodical literature.

Another work that deserves mention in this regard is Denise Bernot’s multi-lingual and multi-volume *Bibliographie
Birmane*. The first instalment, published in 1968, was compiled from Burma-related items found in Paris libraries.
While nominally covering the period 1950-1960, it included numerous references outside that period. This work
was prepared in part to update the Burma section of Henri Cordier’s monumental *Bibliotheca Indosinica*. It was also
designed to supplement the section on ‘Burma and the Burmese’ in the *Bibliography of the Peoples and Cultures of
Mainland Southeast Asia*, compiled by John Embree and Lilian Dotson, and published by Yale University Press in
1950. During the 1980s, Bernot and her colleagues at the National Centre for Scientific Research in Paris planned
to produce two more volumes covering the period 1960-1970. Four fascicules were to cover subjects and another
four would alphabetically list works by author. It appears, however, that the project was never completed. Only four
fascicules were ever published, two organized by subject and two organized by author.

Nor were British bibliographers idle. In 1979, Andrew Griffith of the India Office Library and Records produced a brief
guide to sources for the study of Burma. In 1982, the British Library Board approved a proposal to compile a South
Asia and Burma ‘retrospective’ bibliography. It was designed to be a comprehensive database that would eventually
cover the entire subcontinent (including Afghanistan) and Burma from the introduction of printing technology in the
16th century up to 1900. Not only was it planned to draw on the British Library’s own extensive holdings but also on
works held by institutions like the India Office Library, the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), the National
Army Museum and the Royal Asiatic Society. Support was also to be sought from libraries and archives in relevant countries, including Burma. The project was divided into three stages, but it appears that only a volume on stage one was produced in hard copy. It covered the period 1556–1800.

In 1991, Patricia Herbert, then Head of the Southeast Asia section in the British Library's Oriental and India Office Collections and a Burma scholar in her own right, published what was described as 'the first and most fully annotated multi-disciplinary guide to English-language publications about Burma to appear in twenty years'. Altogether, it contained over 1,500 references in 850 numbered entries, under 30 subject headings. There were brief biographical notes on the authors of each work. Because of its comprehensiveness, extensive annotations and helpful layout, it soon established itself as a standard reference work for scholars, librarians and booksellers interested in publications on Burma.

Ironically, while this bibliography was being compiled, the 1988 pro-democracy uprising occurred in Burma, triggering a major new phase in the country’s national development. Over the next 24 years, the country experienced a series of events that has arguably changed its entire political, economic and social landscape. They have also had a significant impact on its foreign relations and wider strategic environment. This transformation in Burma’s internal and external circumstances was capped by the adoption of a new national constitution in 2008 and the managed ‘election’ in 2010 of a hybrid civilian–military parliament, now ensconced in the new capital of Naypyidaw. In March 2011, to the surprise of almost everyone, President Thein Sein and his government introduced what appeared to be a wide-ranging reform program.

As a result of all these developments, Burma has attracted a higher level of international interest than probably for any other period in its modern post-colonial history. This level of attention is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

Burma Bibliographies Since 1988

The outpouring of publications — of almost every kind, and on almost every conceivable facet of Burma — since 1988 has prompted the compilation of several new bibliographies and checklists designed to bring the record up to date and to help fill gaps in the literature. Some of these works warrant mention here.

From August 1992, the Burma Studies Group of the AAS, based at Northern Illinois University, began printing lists of relevant publications in its bi-annual Bulletin of the Burma Studies Group. Initiated by the Bulletin’s then editor, May Kyi Win, the project was described as ‘an attempt to bring together all current articles and books on Burma in English and other European languages’. The items listed were drawn from popular books and magazines as well as from publications designed for a more academic readership. Entries also covered ephemera such as conference papers, newsletters and even statements about Burma by government officials. One issue included a bibliography of maps of Burma. By 2002, these printed lists had been overtaken by more efficient and widely available electronic databases, but the Bulletin still occasionally has items about new publications.

Since 2001, Michael Charney at London University’s School of Oriental and African Studies has periodically produced a detailed list of sources entitled ‘Bibliography of Burma (Myanmar) Research: The Secondary Literature’. The full document was last updated in 2004, when it appeared on line as a supplement to the twice-yearly SOAS Bulletin of Burma Research. A new version is currently in preparation and will most likely be posted on the Internet in late 2012. The SOAS compilation makes no claims to completeness. Indeed, it is described as a ‘living’ bibliography. It invites contributions from Burma watchers and other scholars, and periodically publishes the details of new works on line. The list of works is already quite extensive, however, running to 264 pages. Importantly, it includes references to journal articles and individual book chapters, categories of publication that were largely omitted from the Herbert volume.

In addition, the library of the South Asia Institute at the University of Heidelberg has long been working on an ambitious bibliographic project, initially prompted by the acquisition of Frank Trager's extensive Burma collection in 1974. Additional titles have been found by investigating the holdings of major libraries and other institutions around the world. Since 2005, four 'pre-print' volumes have been produced, which list alphabetically and cite the locations of a large number of works on Burma, many published since 1988. It seems to be envisaged that, when completed, this bibliography will consist of two major parts. The first will comprise eight volumes, covering monographs, periodicals and official publications on Burma in West European languages. The second part will cover articles in
periodicals and ‘multi-author publications’. A final date for the release of these works does not yet seem to have been set.

Since 1988, there has also been a number of specialized works in this vein. In 1993, for example, Alan Meech published an annotated bibliography of Burma philately which named 536 monographs and journal articles. In 1997, Sun Laichen compiled a detailed list of Chinese historical sources on Burma, which was released as a special edition of The Journal of Burma Studies. In 1998, Eugene Rasor produced a study of sources on the wartime CBI theatre, covering the period 1931-1945. This was followed in 1999 by a bibliography and ‘descriptive catalogue’ of works relating to the 1942-1945 Burma campaign, the longest and arguably the most varied of any fought during the Second World War. Also in 2008, Mandy Sadan published a guide to colonial sources on Burma held in the India Office Records of the British Library. This guide was designed to provide a general introduction to sources for ‘the study of minority histories of Burma’ during the period 1824-1948, but it also touched on works outside this frame of reference.

Other lists can be found on the Internet. The Online Burma/Myanmar Library, launched in October 2001 under the guidance of David Arnott, carries ‘classified and annotated links to more than 30,000 full text documents on Burma/Myanmar’. It also has a section listing a number of bibliographies, library catalogues and checklists of works relating to Burma, and a separate page listing the publications of a number of individual Burma scholars. A search of the world-wide web reveals other works of this nature. In 2008, for example, Gandhimathy Durairaj from the library of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore compiled a ‘select list’ of 723 sources on Burma’s ‘Road to Democracy’. It covered books, journal articles and even audio-visual materials. The same year, annotated bibliographies of Burma’s geology and hydrology were compiled by the US Army Corps of Engineers, probably in anticipation of US involvement in relief efforts after Cyclone Nargis devastated southern Burma.

Most secondary works on Burma published since 1988 have included lists of sources or suggestions for further reading, but in some cases these have been quite comprehensive. For example, Robert Taylor’s revised study of The State in Myanmar has an extensive bibliography of English and Burmese language sources, usefully divided into pre-1988 and post-1988 sections. Other good examples are Monique Skidmore’s edited collection Burma at the Turn of the 21st Century, Donald Seekins’ Historical Dictionary of Burma (Myanmar), Chie Ikeya’s Refiguring Women, Colonialism, and Modernity in Burma and Michael Leigh’s Conflict, Politics and Proselytism. There are other works that fall into this category. One unusual example is Jean-Marc Rastorfer’s 1998 study of books reprinted — or photocopied for resale — in Burma itself. Many of the works listed in his paper were originally published in English.

Content and Methodology

Inspired by all these projects, this bibliography aims to provide a readily accessible selection of books, monographs and reports devoted to Burma that have been published, or in some cases republished, since the 1988 uprising. It is not intended to be exhaustive, either in its listings or in its coverage. As Heidelberg University’s Siegfried Schwertner has written, ‘the collection of publications for a bibliography is a story that never ends, and a complete coverage cannot be achieved’. A conscious attempt has been made, however, to include a wide range of publications representing all the main subject areas and political viewpoints. Broader works touching on Burma, or which include specific chapters on Burma, have not been listed, unless Burma has been specifically mentioned in the main title or subtitle. Also, with a small number of exceptions, entries have been restricted to works that have been produced in hard copy and released for sale or distribution.

The items listed have been produced in whole or in part in the English language. This is because both Burma studies and the wider public discourse on Burma since 1988 have been dominated by English speakers and English language publications, including on international websites. It is important to note, however, that there is also a rapidly growing body of work published in other languages, including Burmese, which reflect the high level of interest now being shown in Burma by scholars, activists, journalists and others in a wide range of countries around the world.

An effort has been made to sight and verify every entry. With only a few exceptions, those works not found in my own collection have been personally inspected, usually at the National Library of Australia or the Menzies Library of the Australian National University. Both have extensive holdings on Burma (in both English and Burmese). Bibliographical ‘ghosts’ and books listed by authors or publishers as ‘forthcoming’ have not been included. These include works described in catalogues and advertised on retail websites, but not yet released for sale. Nor has any attempt been made to list all books described in catalogues and on line as ‘printed on demand’. Not only would this
make the bibliography unwieldy but, certain E-books aside, such works tend either to be reproductions of books published prior to 1988 or uncritical compilations of materials drawn from websites like Wikipedia.

The categories into which the publications in this work have been divided broadly mirror those found in Patricia Herbert’s 1991 bibliography, which in turn follow established international library practice. Additional sub-headings have been included in some places to help readers more easily find books and reports on subjects of particular interest. Where a publication could fit into more than one category — as is often the case — it has been listed once only, according to its dominant themes. If books have been given more than one title, as has sometimes occurred when a book published in Britain has been republished in the United States, or vice versa, usually only the title of the original version has been listed. If a work does not include a place of publication, the country of publication is named, where that is known.

Each publication has been cited exactly as it has appeared in print. Hence, the country is referred to both as Burma and Myanmar. Similarly, the former national capital has been shown as both Rangoon and Yangon (the new form adopted in 1989), depending on the choice of the authors and the publishers.

Authors and editors are listed under the names given on their books. Unless provided, no attempt has been made to identify pseudonyms, although these have long been common in the field of Burma studies. Similarly, Burmese names are cited as they are given on the publications in question, although in some cases hyphens have been removed, for consistency. While strictly speaking this is not correct usage, it is hoped that this will help avoid any confusion arising from the fact that Burmese do not usually have first names and surnames, and many use honorifics or other identifiers as an integral part of their name. Thus, for example, Daw Than Han, Maung Aung Myoe and Ma Thanegi are cited as if the titles ‘Daw’, ‘Maung’ and ‘Ma’ are part of their actual name. The same principle has been applied to names like ‘Tekkatho’ (University) Sein Tin and ‘Theippa’ (Science) Maung Wa. Where first names are clearly given, however, as in Margaret Aung Thwin, Frankie Tun Tin or Ardeth Maung Thawnghmung, they have been recognized and listed as such.

It is happily acknowledged that this bibliography displays a distinct geographical bias, in that it cites a large number of works on Burma that have either been written by Australians or published in Australia. In large part, this reflects my own research base at the Griffith Asia Institute in Brisbane, and the holdings of the National Library of Australia in Canberra and the Australian National University’s Menzies Library. No attempt has been made to correct this bias, as it does not distort the overall thrust of the checklist. Indeed, by including a number of works not cited in other bibliographies it helps to round out the list and demonstrates the increased attention that Burma has received over the past 24 years from Australians and Australian research centres.

No claims are made regarding the academic or literary merit of any of the works listed. As can be seen from even a cursory glance through the titles, they cover a very broad spectrum in terms of style, length, content and purpose. Indeed, given the highly politicized nature of the Burma-watching community over the past two and a half decades, it is perhaps also worth recording that the various personal and political viewpoints represented by the publications in this checklist are noted without comment or wider implication. The bibliography is intended simply to draw attention to the wide range of books and reports on Burma which has appeared over the past 24 years. It is hoped that a work of this kind will help officials, scholars, students and others who might be looking for a readily available directory of contemporary sources, produced by a wide range of authors and institutions.

Indeed, a few works may be considered to have only slight links to Burma. I include in this category three books on Burmese and Birman cats, whose actual ties to Burma are rather tenuous. Following Patricia Herbert’s lead, however, they have been listed for completeness. Given its prominence in some countries as a pet (or a pest), I have also included a book on Burmese pythons. Similar thinking underpins the inclusion of Norval Morris’s book The Brothel Boy and Other Parables of the Law, which uses George Orwell and Burma as a literary device to discuss broader points of British, Indian and Burmese customary law. Also, the bibliography lists a number of novels which have appeared since 1988 and which are either set in Burma or in some way refer to developments there. Some of these books barely qualify for the term ‘literature’, but a selection has been included, both for completeness and to give an idea of publishing trends as they relate to modern Burma.

The appendix provides a comprehensive reading list for those intending to visit Burma for the first time, or who might wish to familiarize themselves with the country before undertaking more detailed studies. It was initially prepared for the Asia Bookroom in Canberra in 2006, but has been updated to take account of various publications which have
appeared since then. Like all such exercises, it represents a highly personal view. However, it is included in the hope that it may help provide an introduction of sorts to a fascinating country of enormous complexity that is still little known and poorly understood. Also, the list refers to a number of works that are not mentioned in this bibliography, either because they were published before 1988 or because they are journal articles or chapters in books.

Brisbane
July 2012

Notes


23 See, for example, R.E. Calder, Guide to Library Resources in Rangoon (Rangoon: Rangoon-Hopkins Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, Rangoon University, 1958).

24 Andrew Selth, ‘Modern Burma Studies: A Survey of the Field’, Modern Asian Studies, Vol.44, No.2, March 2010, pp.401-40. An earlier version of this article was posted on line by the City University of Hong Kong’s Southeast Asia Research Centre. See Andrew Selth, Modern Burma Studies: A View From the Edge, Southeast Asia Research Centre, Working Paper No.96 (Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong, 2007), at <http://www6.cityu.edu.hk/searc/Data/FileUpload/289/WP96_07_ASSelth.pdf>


27 All US forces in China, Burma and India were united in one Command, referred to as the ‘CBI Theatre’. This term has since gained popular currency. However, it was not one of the recognised theatres of the war, since it extended geographically across the boundaries of India Command, and of the South-East Asia and China theatres. See Mountbatten of Burma, Report to the Combined Chiefs of Staff by the Supreme Allied Commander, South-East Asia, 1943–1945 (New Delhi: The English Book Store, 1960), p.7.


30 The print version of the Bibliography of Asian Studies was available as a stand-alone title from 1969–1991, but before then was included as part of these journals.


45 Graham Shaw, *The South Asia and Burma Retrospective Bibliography (SABREB), Stage 1: 1556-1800* (London: The British Library Publishing Division, 1987). As the British conquest of Burma did not begin until 1824, there are few references to Burma in this volume. It was anticipated, however, that Burma would receive greater attention in the volumes covering stage 2 (1801-1862) and stage 3 (1868-1900).


52 Personal communications with Michael Charney, 21 December 2011 and 25 April 2012. In the event, the 2004 version was not updated.

53 S.M. Schwertner, *Burma/Myanmar Bibliographic Project: A collection of publications in West European languages for preparation a Burma/Myanmar bibliography* (sic), 4 volumes (Heidelberg: South Asia Institute, University of Heidelberg, 2005-8).

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59 ‘Online Burma/Myanmar Library’, at <http://www.ibiblio.org/obl/>
66 In one case, the book was published in France but contains several chapters written in English.
68 These exceptions include a number of reports by the Brussels–based International Crisis Group, which initially produced hard copies but later seems only to have posted soft copies on the Internet. That said, many of the reports, academic papers and publications produced by advocacy groups and listed here can also be found on the Internet.
69 For example, Emma Larkin’s 2010 book *Everything Is Broken* was released in the US under the title *No Bad News for the King: The True Story of Cyclone Nargis and Its Aftermath in Burma* (New York: Penguin, 2011). When *Little Daughter* (2009) by Zoya Phan and Damien Lewis was released in the US the following year it was called *Undaunted: My Struggle for Freedom and Survival in Burma* (New York: Free Press, 2010).
71 Other titles include Ko, Saw, Sai, Sao and Sayadaw. ‘Ko’, ‘Maung’ and ‘Ma’, however, can also be integral parts of Burmese names, as in ‘Ko Ko Gyi’, ‘Maung Maung’ and ‘Ma Ma Lay’.
74 See, for example, the ‘FiveBooks Interviews’ conducted by *The Browser* with several authors of works about Burma, at <http://www.thebrowser.com/search?keys=burma&types=interview>
### The country and its people

#### General

5. Gartner, Uta and Lorenz, Jens (eds), *Tradition and Modernity in Myanmar: Proceedings of an International Conference held in Berlin from May 7th to May 9th, 1993*, 2 volumes (Hamburg: LIT, 1994)
21. Selth, Andrew, *Burma Watching: A Retrospective*, Regional Outlook No.39 (Brisbane: Griffith Asia Institute, Griffith University, 2012)

23. Skidmore, Monique (ed), Burma at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005)


25. Thu Ra Myint Maung, The Golden Land of Myanmar (Yangon: Khyap Sa Kha Pe, 2001)


27. Zahler, Diane, Than Shwe's Burma (Minneapolis: Twenty-First Century Books, 2010)

Photography

28. Bader, Michael, et al, 100 Faces of Myanmar (Heidelberg: Kehrer Verlag, 2013)

29. Bieber, Joey, Melting the Stars: An Exhibition of Photographs of the People of Burma (London: Christies, 2001)


34. Buddee, Kim, Once Was Burma: New images from the streets of Rangoon (Roseville: Tour de Force Books, 2012)


37. Dunlop, Nic, Brave New Burma (Stockport: Dewi Lewis, 2013)

38. Everarda, Ellis, Burma: Encountering the Land of the Buddhas (Gartmore: Kiscadale, 1994)


40. False, Thierry, Burmese Shadows: Twenty-five years reporting on life behind the Bamboo Curtain (Alnwick: McNidder and Grace, 2012)


43. Ledergerber, R.A., Burma: The Jewel of Asia: Impressions from Yangon (San Francisco: The Author and Blurb Inc., 2014)


Guidebooks and descriptions

General


56. Courtauld, Caroline, *Burma (Myanmar)* (Hong Kong: Odyssey, 1999)


59. *Discovering Myanmar* (Yangon: Universities Historical Research Centre, 1999)


Win Pe, *Dos and Don’ts in Myanmar* (Bangkok: Book Promotion and Service Co., 1996)


Rangoon (Yangon) and Mandalay


Singer, N.F., *Old Rangoon: City of the Shwedagon* (Gartmore: Kiscadale, 1995)


Yangon: Green City of Grace (Yangon: Yangon City Development Committee, 1999)

Yangon: The Garden City (Yangon: Yangon City Development Committee, 1995)

Pagan (Bagan)


Naypyidaw (Nay Pyi Taw)

Travellers’ accounts

General


Pre-20th Century


103. Alexander, J.E., *Travels from India to England comprehending a visit to the Burman Empire and a journey through Persia, Asia Minor, European Turkey &c in the years 1825-26*, reprint of 1827 edition (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 2000)


20th and 21st Century


126. Forsyth, Patrick, Beguiling Burma: Awe and wonder on the road to Mandalay (Great Yarmouth: Rethink Press, 2012)

127. Ghosh, Amitav, Dancing in Cambodia, At Large in Burma (Delhi: Ravi Dayal, 1998)


144. Syrota, Timothy, *Welcome to Burma: and enjoy the totalitarian experience* (Bangkok: Orchid Press, 2001)
Prehistory and archaeology


160. Stargardt, Janice, *Tracing Thought Through Things: The Oldest Pali Texts and the Early Buddhist Archaeology of India and Burma*, The 7th Gonda Lecture (Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2000)
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General


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Cuisine


Bibliographies and research guides


Appendix

Publications to read before visiting Burma

The following is a selection of monographs and other works in English that may be of interest to those intending to visit Burma for the first time, or who wish to familiarise themselves with certain aspects of the country before pursuing more in-depth studies. The list is not meant to be either authoritative or exhaustive, although an attempt has been made to cover all the main subject areas. Some shorter and more specialised studies have been included, but the essay focuses mainly on published works that help provide a broad introduction to the country and its people, and are likely to be readily available from good bookshops and libraries. Most can also be found on the websites of major on-line suppliers. Anyone wishing to delve more deeply into any of the subjects touched upon below or to pursue special interests is invited to consult the more detailed and scholarly works listed in the foregoing bibliography, or the burgeoning literature on Burma found in academic and professional journals.

A large number of ‘coffee table’ books about Burma have been published over the past 25 years, as foreigners have enjoyed greater access and the market for such works has grown. Many of them contain technically proficient but rather clichéd photographs of the country’s colourful scenery and mixed population. One work notable for its distinguished contributors, however, is Myanmar: Land of the Spirit (Bangkok: Asia Books, 1996). Also worth looking through is John Falconer et al, 7 Days in Myanmar: A Portrait of Burma by 30 Great Photographers (Singapore: Editions Didier Millet, 2014). A more specialised — but lavishly illustrated — volume that describes sites in Burma that are not as well known is Ma Thanegi and Barry Broman, Myanmar Architecture: Cities of Gold (Singapore: Times Editions, 2005). For some stunning black and white photographs, see Nic Dunlop’s Brave New Burma (Stockport: Dewi Lewis, 2013).

After being ignored — or shunned — by the tourist industry for decades, foreign interest in Burma has exploded since 2011, and as a consequence there is now a wide range of travel guides available. The most informative and practical work in English is probably Simon Richmond, et al, Myanmar (Burma) (Melbourne: Lonely Planet Publications, 2014). However, Myanmar (Burma) (London: Insight Guides, 2013) is easier to read and has more photographs. Another well-illustrated guide, with helpful maps, is David Abram’s Myanmar (Burma) (London: Dorling Kindersley, 2014). A different approach is taken in Morgan Edwardson, To Myanmar With Love: A Travel Guide for the Connoisseur (San Francisco: ThingsAsian, 2009). This work is organised by theme rather than by destination. A useful reference book for those wishing to look up basic facts and figures is Jan Becka, Historical Dictionary of Myanmar (London: Scarecrow Press, 1995). If that book cannot be found, a fallback is D.M. Seekins, Historical Dictionary of Burma (Myanmar) (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2006), but some entries need to be treated with caution.


About two thirds of Burma’s population still live in rural towns and villages, but the country is increasingly facing the challenges of rapid and unplanned urbanisation. A first-time visitor to the country would benefit from reading E.C. Cangi, Faded Splendour, Golden Past: Urban images of Burma (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1997). It gives short histories of the former capitals of Rangoon, Mandalay and Pagan. Old Rangoon is well described by Sarah Rooney in 30 Heritage Buildings of Yangon: Inside the City that Captured Time (Chicago: Association of Myanmar


While a little hard to find, a local account of Burma’s resistance to conquest and colonial occupation can be found in Nyi Nyi Myint, Burma’s Struggle Against British Imperialism (1885-1895) (Rangoon: The Universities Press, 1983). The same broad theme is picked up in Maung Maung’s more detailed treatment of the subject, Burmese Nationalist Movements, 1940-1948 (Edinburgh: Kiscadale, 1989). A more recent, and unapologetically sympathetic, look at this subject is Paul Webb, The Peacock’s Children: The Struggle for Freedom in Burma, 1885 – Present (Bangkok: Orchid Press, 2009).

Another book covering the modern period, albeit from a different perspective, is Gerry Abbott (ed), Inroads Into Burma: A Travellers’ Anthology (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1997). It includes extracts from the writings of more than 40 observers of Burma between the 15th Century and current times. Also relevant in this regard is H.G. Trager, Burma Through Alien Eyes: Missionary Views of the Burmese in the Nineteenth Century (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1966). One notable Western visitor to Burma during the 1890s was V.C. Scott O’Connor, who vividly recorded his impressions in The Silken East: A Record of Life and Travel in Burma (London: Hutchinson, 1928). Also worth reading is the chapter on Maymyo (now known as Pyin Oo Lwin) in Barbara Cossette, The Great Hill Stations of Asia (Boulder: Westview, 1998). All these books are complemented well by Noel Singer, Burmah: A Photographic Journey, 1855-1925 (Gartmore: Kiscadale, 1993).

Rudyard Kipling spent only three days in Burma, in 1889. He never visited Mandalay, the city with which he is most often associated, through his ‘Barrack Room Ballad’ of that name. Even so, there is a large body of literature and popular music which trades on his imagined knowledge of the country. Those wishing to learn more about Kipling’s tentative links with Burma might start by consulting the articles found in The Kipling Journal, No.219, September 1981 (available on line). Also relevant is Andrew Lycett (ed), Kipling Abroad: Traffics and Discoveries: From Burma to Brazil (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010). On the ballad itself, its numerous musical settings and its continuing relevance to Burma in literature, art and films, see Andrew Selth, Kipling, “Mandalay” and Burma in the Popular Imagination, Working Paper No.161 (Southeast Asia Research Centre, City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong SAR, 2015).


Burma’s own perspective on the war has been captured in a number of interesting and readable books. For example, the country’s president at the time gives his account of events in Ba Maw, Breakthrough in Burma: Memoirs of a Revolution, 1939–1946 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968). His account complements two classics in this category, namely Khin Myo Chit, Three Years Under the Japs (Sanchaung: The Author, 1945) and Nu, Burma Under the Japanese (London: Macmillan and Co., 1954). Also worth tracking down and reading, if possible, are English translations of two other Burmese books about this period. One is Theippaun Maung Wa (U Sein Tin), Wartime in Burma: A Diary, January to June 1942 (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2009). The other is Kyaw Ma Ma Lay, A Man Like Him: Portrait of the Burmese Journalist, Journal Kyaw U Chit Maung (Ithaca: Cornell Southeast Asia Program, 2008).

There are a large number of books about the infamous Burma-Thai railway. The majority of memoirs, however, have been written by former Allied prisoners of war about operations in Thailand, and do not refer specifically to conditions working on the railway in Burma. Two notable exceptions, giving perspectives from both sides, are Rowley Richards, A Doctor’s War (Sydney: Harper Collins, 2005), and Kazuo Tamayama, Railwaymen in the War: Tales by Japanese Railway Soldiers in Burma and Thailand 1941–47 (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005). The dreadful plight of the thousands of Asian (including Burmese) labourers recruited by the Japanese to work on the railway is spelt out in volume three of the monumental six volume study edited by Paul Kratoska, The Thailand-Burma Railway, 1942–1946: Documents and Selected Writings (London: Routledge, 2006).


There is no definitive history of the nation-wide pro-democracy uprising which wracked Burma in 1988. The best known account, written shortly after the events described and based largely on interviews with eye-witnesses, is Bertil Lintner, Outrage: Burma’s Struggle for Democracy (Bangkok: White Lotus, 1990). A different version of events is given by one of the country’s presidents at the time, in Maung Maung, The 1988 Uprising in Burma, Yale Southeast Asia Studies, Monograph No.49 (New Haven: Yale University, 1999). These two accounts and one other are usefully

On the contemporary period, a first time visitor to Burma should begin by browsing through David Steinberg, Burma/Myanmar: What Everyone Needs to Know (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). Another possible starting point is Donald M. Seekins, The Disorder in Order: The Army-State in Burma since 1962 (Bangkok: White Lotus, 2002) which describes in simple and straightforward terms the development of the military regime up to the turn of the century. The story is picked up by Hans-Bernd Zollner in The Beast and the Beauty: The History of the Conflict between the Military and Aung San Suu Kyi in Myanmar, 1988–2011, Set in a Global Context (Berlin: Regiospectra Verlag, 2012). At a different level, Ian Holliday's Burma Redux: Global Justice and the Quest for Political Reform in Myanmar (Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong Press, 2011) provides a thoughtful description of Burma's problems to that date, and canvases a range of possible solutions. The military regime's point of view — at least, until the advent of a new hybrid civilian-military government in 2011 — is described in Hla Min, Political Situation of Myanmar and Its Role in the Region (Yangon: Office of Strategic Studies, Ministry of Defence, 2000).

The advent of President Thein Sein's reformist government in 2011 has encouraged a flood of new publications. Many approach such questions as governance, economic growth, internal security, civil society and human rights from particular points of view. Not all are very reliable. However, a newcomer to the field can get a balanced overview of the country's daunting challenges by dipping into edited collections of papers written by acknowledged experts, such as D.I. Steinberg (ed), Myanmar: The Dynamics of an Evolving Polity (Boulder: Lynne Riener, 2014). The Australian National University's 2013 Myanmar Update Conference was followed by two publications which canvassed a wide range of current issues. One was Nick Cheesman, Nicholas Farrelly and Trevor Wilson (eds), Debating Democratization in Myanmar (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2014). Other papers from the conference were published in a special issue of the journal South East Asia Research, entitled 'Myanmar's Democratisation', Vol. 22, No. 2, June 2014.

Burma's main opposition leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, has written three books, Freedom From Fear (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1995), Letters from Burma (London: Penguin, 1997), and The Voice of Hope: Conversations with Alan Clements, with contributions by U Kyi Maung and U Tin U (New York: Seven Stories, 2008). Some of her speeches and informal comments have been gathered by Hans-Bernd Zollner and published as Talks Over the Gate: Aung San Suu Kyi's Dialogues with the People, 1995 and 1996 (Hamburg: AberaVerlag, 2014). The world is still waiting for a rigorous and objective analytical study of Aung San Suu Kyi's political thinking and role in modern Burmese politics. However, she has already been the subject of several biographies, most of which describe her political beliefs and achievements in broad terms. These works include Justin Wintle, Perfect Hostage: A Life of Aung San Suu Kyi (London: Hutchinson, 2007), Peter Popham, The Lady and the Peacock: The Life of Aung San Suu Kyi (London: Rider Books, 2011) and Rena Pederson, The Burma Spring: Aung San Suu Kyi and the New Struggle for the Soul of a Nation (New York: Pegasus, 2015). The most critical is Bertil Lintner, Aung San Suu Kyi and Burma's Struggle for Democracy (Chiang Mai: Silkworm, 2011).


One notable aspect of the struggle for democracy and human rights in Burma since 1988 is the extent to which activists from both Burma and foreign countries have used modern communications technology and information-sharing techniques to promote their causes. This has included the publication of a large number of English-language reports, booklets, briefings and pamphlets. Most have been posted on line, through readily identifiable websites. However, many have also been published in hard copy, albeit often in small print runs meant for select audiences. Anyone wishing to become familiar with the scope and content of such publications could start by looking at the
reports released by organisations like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. Although they are often harder to find, a range of other works have been issued by ethnic minority organisations such as the Karen Human Rights Group, and specific interest groups, including the All Burma Students Democratic Front and the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma). A selection has been listed in this bibliography.

Access to the Internet in Burma has long been the subject of close interest by human rights campaigners, among others. A useful introduction to the subject, with a specific section on the implications for Burma, is Shanthi Kalathil and T.C. Boas, _Open Networks, Closed Regimes: The Impact of the Internet on Authoritarian Rule_ (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003). A more focused study is _Internet Filtering in Burma in 2005: A Country Study_, published on line by the Open Net initiative in 2005. In 2009, the Paris–based group Reporters Without Borders issued a report entitled _Internet Enemies_, which included a section that was highly critical of the situation in Burma. On the news media and telecommunications in Burma more generally, a good start is the works of Lisa Brooten, such as ““Media as our Mirror”: Indigenous Media in Burma (Myanmar),” in Pamela Wilson and Michelle Stewart (eds), _Global Indigenous Media: Cultures, Poetics and Politics_ (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008).


Perhaps reflecting the breadth and complexity of Burma's economic problems, there are few books or reports that offer a good introduction to these issues for non-specialists. However, one publication that has been written with the general reader in mind is _Opportunities and Pitfalls: Preparing for Burma's Economic Transition_ (New York: Open Society Institute, 2006). There is also a useful overview of developments since 1988 in Koichi Fujita, Fumihara Mieno and Ikuko Okamoto (eds), _The Economic Transition in Myanmar After 1988: Market Economy versus State Control_ (Singapore: NUS Press, 2009). More comprehensive and up to date is Ian Brown, _Burma's Economy in the Twentieth Century_ (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013). Should anyone wish to explore this subject more deeply, a good start would be P.J. Perry, _Myanmar (Burma) since 1962: the Failure of Development_ (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007). On Burma’s financial system, the best source is Sean Turnell, _Fiery Dragons: Banks, Moneylenders and Microfinance in Burma_ (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2009).


On the many complex and controversial issues relating to the ‘Rohingya’ in Burma, an excellent introduction is Jacques Leider, ‘Competing Identities and the Hybridized History of Rohingyas’, in Renaud Egreteau and François Robinne (eds), _Myanmar in Transition: Studies in Political and Social Metamorphoses_ (Singapore: NUS Press, 2015). If a copy can be found, also worth reading is Jacques Leider, ‘Rohingya: The name, the movement, the quest for identity’, in _Nation Building in Myanmar_ (Yangon: Myanmar Egress and the Myanmar Peace Centre, 2013). Also relevant is the Burma section of Moshe Yegar, _Between Integration and Secession: The Muslim Communities of the Southern Philippines, Southern Thailand, and Western Burma_ (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2002). These works are well complemented by Greg Constantine’s photographic study of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, _Exiled to Nowhere: Burma’s Rohingya_, with a foreword by the author and Burma watcher Emma Larkin (Thailand: The Author, 2012).

There are no major works that specifically examine Burma's security, but a personal and insightful survey of Burma's immediate geostrategic significance is Thant Myint U, *Where China Meets India: Burma and the New Crossroads of Asia* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011). The subject is also introduced by Andrew Selth in *Burma: A Strategic Perspective* (San Francisco: Asia Foundation, 2001). The same author provided a detailed analysis of the Burmese armed forces since 1988 in *Burma's Armed Forces: Power Without Glory* (Norwalk: EastBridge, 2002). For a similar, but later Burmese treatment of this topic, see Maung Aung Myoe, *Building the Tatmadaw: Myanmar Armed Forces Since 1948* (Singapore: Institute for Southeast Asian Studies, 2009). Very little has been written about Burma's police force and intelligence agencies, but their status under President Thein Sein is discussed in broad terms in Andrew Selth, *Burma's Security Forces: Performing, Reforming or Transforming?* Regional Outlook No.45 (Brisbane: Griffith Asia Institute, Griffith University, 2013), also available on line.


Despite being written over 50 years ago, E.H. Shattock, *An Experiment in Mindfulness* (London: Rider and Company, 1958) is still of interest as an autobiographical account by a Westerner studying Buddhist meditation in a Burmese monastery. In the same vein, and equally enjoyable to read, is Marie Byles’ book *Journey Into Burmese Silence* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1962). The *satipatthana vipassana* method practised by Shattock and Byles is explained by one of Burma’s most eminent practitioners in Mahasi Sayadaw, *The Fundamentals of Insight: Discourse on Meditation Practice* (Bangkok: Buddhadhamma Foundation, 2001). The historical roots of this school, and its place...


There are not many children's books in English with a specific Burmese theme, but the number is growing. It is possible to see how the genre has developed over the past 150 years by dipping into it at different stages. A typical early work is G.A. Henty's historical adventure novel *On The Irrawaddy: A Story of the First Burmese War* (London: Blackie, 1897). A later contribution (also set in the colonial period) was W.O. Stevens, *Drummer Boy of Burma* (London: Collins, 1946). Some thirty years later, the Asia Society in the US helped to publish a more culturally sensitive story by P.W. Garlan and Maryjane Dunstan entitled *Orange-Robed Boy* (New York: The Viking Press, 1967). It was illustrated by the noted Burmese artist Paw Oo That. One children's book that can usually be found in Western bookshops now is Jean Merrill's retelling of a Burmese folk tale in *Shan's Lucky Knife* (New York: W.R. Scott, 1960). A more recent multilingual effort is Dedie King and Judith Inglese, *I See the Sun in Myanmar (Burma)* (Hardwick: Satya House, 2013).


The numbers given are those used to refer to the specific works listed. Names appear as they have been given in the bibliography, although entries have been consolidated in cases where both first names and initials have been used. Joint authors, editors, translators and photographers have been listed individually. Other people named in the preface, foreword, introduction and appendix have not been listed.

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