

- A perfect blend of Myanmar history and classical poetry.
- Meiji lively depicts the portraits of former ancestors and classical poets during absolute Monarchy.
- This book covers the gist knowledge about classical poetry and Myanmar history which young generation should know and a handy reference for the people and the scholars who are interested in Myanmar history and literature.
- In addition, the author describes the classical poems with a literary touch.
- 'Amnesty-Winning Poems During Myanmar Monarchy' won the first prize for Sarpay Beikman Manuscript Award for 2015. The author spent about 3 years to complete this book.



THE AUTHOR

Meiji Soe (May Ji Soe) was born in the city of memories – Toungoo (Kaytumadi) – where the Second Myanmar Kingdom was established. She received Honours degree in English from the University of Yangon and worked in a publishing industry and a top Management company for about a decade. Reading, writing and music are her passion. Currently, she lives in Bahan Township, Yangon together with her family.

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Foreword

This is my second attempt. After hearing genuine encouragements from my dear readers to my first book 'Culture & Beyond – MYANMAR', I slowly recharge my emotions and carefully decided to try again. When I listened to my inner voice about the topic for my second book, I found that I am bound to write a subtler subject matter.

To write this book, I have to travel back to my literary journey which I passed in my University years and the History land, too. This time, I revisit these two worlds with the writer's awareness and I have found so many wonderful things after I revisited these two amazing worlds which I did not notice before.

To complete this book, I have explored so many books about Myanmar history, literature and poetry both in English and Myanmar languages. I often went to the museums, libraries, rare-book shops; seek advice and opinions from teachers and historians; visited archaeological sites like Bagan, Mandalay; approached to monks (for Pali language). There is always an inner rejoice whenever I get a spark of idea or apt usage for my writing. I found some of the Myanmar classical poems translation in English by great masters and I presented their original touch together with their names in this book. I sincerely hope that those great masters will pardon me for using their nice translation and I am very thankful to them because it saved my time and brainstorming energy.

Translating Myanmar classical poems is quite interesting to me although it is a tough job. We need to catch up a poet's original theme. It is not like a Mathematical formula. There are some secrets and hidden meanings behind their beautiful words. In this account, it is important to know

their background stories before we translate or criticize their masterpieces. Or we may betray the poets' feelings by swaying from their original meanings. Sometimes, I feel that I was a bit like Sherlock Holmes because I have to trace back all their backgrounds, to dig the history, to investigate the poets' hidden feelings and to seize their original themes to reveal it to the readers. Even after I catch one thing up, I need many double-checks again with other records to make it sure.

Words fail me to express the gratitude of Three Gems, my parents and teachers, all supporters and mentors to complete this book. Also I am very thankful to my family members for their understanding while I was writing this book. Please understand me for not mentioning all of their names individually.

There was a little change inside me while I was writing my second book. I noticed that my heart becomes a little bit more open although I do not know the real reason. So may I say that this little book is like my heart opener?

As this novice writer is not knowledgeable enough to comment on the Myanmar history like other historians or scholars, I simply share what I have read in the chronicles, history books and hear-say. In other words, I emphasize more on the literary point of view. If the readers find any weakness or any misinterpretation in my writing, that blame will go to the author only.

With kind thoughts,
Meiji Soe
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