gold coloured rice 

1 tray of assorted Burmese cakes
1 dish of assorted Indian cakes
1 dish of mixed preserves
1 dish of pickles
1 tray of 7 provisions

We will leave out the head washing *sai: kram* ceremony which preceded all the ear boring, headdressing, marriage ceremonies, etc. and its preparations as we have neither the time nor the space here for it.

According to Maung Than a special house has to be built for the marriage ceremony in the compound of the princess's *wan*. The description of the house and its arrangement is as follows:

On the couch was spread the princess's mattress measuring 6 x 3 1/2 feet on top of which was placed the prince's mattress. Between them was placed a viss of the best silver. On top was spread a bedsheet and two pillows. With pillow cases?

Around the wedding hall were planted banana and sugarcane while bunches of bananas, coconuts, betel nuts hung from the roof. Under the hall white sand was strewn and a cow and calf of the same colour tied. Articles of daily use were arranged at the cardinal points. In the east placed on stands were a basket of white rice and a brazier; in the south-east an elephant goad, bows and arrow, in the

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1. The varieties of rice and the above were from the pastry clerk.
2. For details see...
LIFE AT THE BURMESE COURT UNDER THE KONBAUNG KINGS

South the Mahāpinnai icon, grindingstone with pestle, in the south-west 2 elephant tusks, in the west a maid carrying gold and silver nuggets in madder dyed sacks, in the north west varieties of cooked rice and in the north seven water pots with flowers. In the centre of the hall were the Pitaka on a stand.

Rice and brazier

Elephant goad and tusks

Mahāpinnai

Food in covered trays

Umbrella, bow and quiver of arrows on a red stand

(a) Makuta crown (b) Ear tubes (c) Calmway (d) Fly-whisk (e) Bhwai, phru scarf (f) Shoes (g) Uggar headdress

Two cakro tai were built in the compounds of the prince and princess's wan. Here both the prince and princess had to wash their hair which was called san: kram khoau.

On the wedding day the prince left his wan's house on an elephant before the first pahuit was struck. His retinue was as follows: two men carrying sun: canes, then offerings to the Three Gems and maitta vessels carried by the
personal attendants. Then eighteen brahmans in two rows. Behind them two rows of pages carrying fans ကြိုင်ရိပ္ဆောင်ရွက်မှုနှင့် ကြိုင်း: a kind of miniature sun-shade. The number of these and their quality depended on the rank of the prince. Then the prince's personal sword behind which was the prince himself on his elephant. Behind him were his attendants bearing his insignias of rank. Then came a number of the sons of various officials, after which were the prince's mounts in full harness. When the prince and his entourage reached the compound of the princess's ဝန့် they waited in the parlour of that official until the propitious moment.

A little while before the wedding ceremony the princess in all her finery escorted by six bridesmaids, relatives and elders left the ဝန့်'s house and ascended the wedding hall. Soon the prince too went there and ascended by the east staircase. As soon as he was seen ascending the steps the attendants သုံးနှင့်သုံးနှင့် acting as door keepers shut the door and asked the prince why he was ascending the stairs. His chief steward အောင်းတွန်း answered for him that as the time being auspicious he had come to take possession of the marriage chambers. Then the door keepers said to the prince “Please ascend and take possession of the building. May you live long and your glory be great and your stay here be quiet and prosperous” and opened the door. The prince then climbed the stairs and sat on the couch to the right of the bride.¹ The princess having changed was now wearing her white thanmein.

The marriage ceremony began with the astrologers announcing that the propitious time was at hand. Then offerings were made to the Three Gems, guardians of the Religion, the parents and grandparents, the guardians of the capital, the palace and central spire. Then the verse beginning with ဗုဒ္ဓဳးရှင်းဗုဒ္ဓဳး နေတာ အောင် ဗုဒ္ဓဳး was recited.

The first business was ear-boring: two princesses who had been given the job pierced the ears of the bride. Then came the hairdressing. The princess’s hair was combed with ivory, sandalwood, male and female combs မွှိစ်ကြမ်း. Then the hair was knotted. Next was the ceremony of headdress wearing. The princess had to put on seven head-dresses in turn and each time an invocation was made:

1. She had to wear the ruby studded မြင်းဖွဲ့ and the words said were may she be as radiant as a nat—သူညှစစ်ကျင်င်း နေတာ မြင်းဖွဲ့

2. Then the မြင်းဖွဲ့, with the invocation: may she be as good as a nat—သူညှစစ်ကျင်င်း မြင်းဖွဲ့

3. Then the မြင်းဖွဲ့ with the invocation she shall sit on the throne—သူညှစစ်ကျင်င်း မြင်းဖွဲ့

¹ Maung Than: op. cit., p. 115
4. Then the *cualn*: with the words: may she receive great wealth—ကြွန်ည္ပုင္းက္ကူးမှု ။
5. Then the *yaññ*: with the words: that she may reign like a nat—လုံးဗုဒ္ဓေးကြောင့် ။
6. Then the *lum*: *tañ*: with the invocation: may she reign in the palace—ရုံးဗုဒ္ဓေးကြောင့် ။
7. Finally the *mrut*: *rac*: with the words: may she reign in a new palace—နေ့ဗုဒ္ဓေးကြောင့် ။

After this a white curtain was drawn round the couch and the princess changed from the white thaneim to one of ornate gold decorated profusely. She also draped over her shoulders a stole gorgeously wrought with pearls, beads and gold tassels. The curtain was then removed and she sat on the left of the prince.

The marriage ceremony now began. An *atwan*: *wan*: and his wife or sometimes two officers, sometimes two ladies, brought a bolt of muslin ပိုင္း ဗုဒ္ဓေး and wound it round the prince and princess reciting the while that they may like the banker’s daughter Visakha ဗုဒ္ဓေး ဗုဒ္ဓေး be rich in children, slaves and retinue. The prince’s right hand was placed over that of the princess’s, water from the prince’s bowl was poured into that of the princess. Then the prince’s zodiac decorated silver bowl ဗုဒ္ဓေး ကြောင့် was placed on top of the same of the princess’s and the water from the princess’s gold bowl was poured over the two hands into the silver bowls.

1. A prince appears to have had his ears bored and hair dressed into a knot ပိုင္း ကြောင့် at a rather tender age and not just before marriage as in the case of a princess. The ceremony was carried out in the Byedaik. In the course of it he had to eat a meal where he was fed seven mouthfuls of rice with seven invocations similar to that of the wedding ceremony. He was also given estates and insignias of rank and retinue. For details see ပိုင္း ကြောင့်: ဗုဒ္ဓေး—ဗုဒ္ဓေး ဗုဒ္ဓေး ဗုဒ္ဓေး ဗုဒ္ဓေး ဗုဒ္ဓေး ဗုဒ္ဓေး ဗုဒ္ဓေး: ဗုဒ္ဓေး National Library 1951 (10)

2. On 6 waning of Tapodwe 1171 (25 Jan. 1810) Bodawpayya passed an order read by na- kham: *canroinm*: ဗုဒ္ဓေး ဗုဒ္ဓေး Bhaya kycuathan ဗုဒ္ဓေး ဗုဒ္ဓေး: The gist of the order was hitherto in marriage ceremonies the right hand of the bride was placed underneath that of the groom. According to the pure *bajdarapay*: ဗုဒ္ဓေး ဗုဒ္ဓေး the groom’s right hand should be placed under that of the bride because he was the supplicant: ဗုဒ္ဓေး ။ So far I have not come across such an instance.
While the hand washing was done an officer invoked that the prince and princess’s lives may be as cool i.e. as placid as this water and that they may be free from all dangers and live to be over a hundred years.

An officer and wife then brought in the food prepared for the marriage repast in trays. These usually contained varieties of meat and fish dishes e.g. အားကိုးကျောက်အောက်ရာ အပွဲရိုး အပွဲရိုး အပွဲရိုး အပွဲရိုး စသည်တို့ စိတ်ပျစ်သည်ကောင်း စိတ်ပျစ်သည်ကောင်း စိတ်ပျစ်သည်ကောင်း စိတ်ပျစ်သည်ကောင်း

From them a leaf platter ပင်က်သားဌားသည် was taken and some placed in it and put on the ဘုရားစီ: က်: ပါဝင် ကိုက်ညီနိုင်၏ i.e. offerings to the devils. Then rice from the prince’s plate was put into that of the princess’s plate. Fourteen balls of rice were made in each of which was placed a pod of garlic and a pepper corn. The prince and princess were fed seven each. With each mouthful one of the seven following invocations were made one after the other

1. Rice that will enable you to live over a hundred years အကြီးအခြေ စိတ်ပျစ်သည်
2. Rice that will help to make your glory great ကျွမ်းကျင်နိုင်စိတ်ပျစ်သည်
3. This rice will free you from the 96 ills ဟိုများများနောက်သည်: အောက်ပါသည်ပါ၏
4. This rice will increase your prosperity and posterity လှုပ်ရှားနိုင်စိတ်ပျစ်သည်: အကြီး စိတ်ပျစ်သည်
5. This rice will give you a plentiful progeny လှုချနေသည် ပျစ်သည်
6. This rice will enable you to be of service to your parents အမိန့်များပါသည်: အခြိန်ပါသည်
7. This rice will help you to serve your subjects and increase their welfare စိတ်ပျစ်သည်: ပါသည်

Then the prince was given seven mouthfuls of soup. The princess was then given seven mouthfuls of rice with the above invocations and then the soup. After this the prince and princess ate from a common plate the marriage repast. When they finished the prince’s hand was placed on top of the princess’s and were then washed together as before the meal. All the while an officer invoked.

1 ပြည်ထောင်စုစီးမှတ်ဝိုင်ပါသည် အုပ်စိုက်သည် စိတ်ပျစ်သည်.
May the prince and princess be as placid as this water. May they live over a century and their glory be great. May the wealth of their descendants and subjects be ever waxing and they be able to serve them.

After this the wash stands, basins and bowls were removed. Then a sanitoau char read out the long lists of presents from the king, queens, officials, etc. Then the brahmans recited mantras and offered the flowers which were placed in gold bowls on gold salvers by the attendants and handed over to the sanitoauchar, who offered it respectfully to the prince and princess. Then the queens with their retinue, the princesses, and officials left in order of precedence. Thus the wedding was brought to a close.

The Installation of the Crown Prince

The next ceremony of importance was the investiture of the Crown Prince. We have an account of the ceremony from Bodawpaya’s time, in 1783, when he made Bagyidaw’s father Crown Prince.

As usual the first requisite was the offerings to the Three Gems, guardian spirits, etc. The ceremony of installation was carried out at the Byedaik. Early that day the seating plan was arranged. A bamboo mat was placed for the prince in the front part of the Byedaik. At a little distance from him, on the east, were the four wankri: ministers in a row. Behind them were the coaubhw: high officials and wantok: on the west side of the room between the double railings were the prince-commanders of the horse: the high officials and awan: The lesser officers too were seated in their respective positions on a slightly lower platform. One pro, kri: mh: and a camron mh: were given the duty of seeing that everybody sat in their proper places.

The Crown Prince came from his residence in his palanquin with his retinue. He entered by the Rwe: gate and descended from his palanquin at the stand. In front of the litter were the four kyun: with gold tops and red handles. He then walked to the Byedaik and sat in his appointed place. His two personal attendants were seated a short distance from him. Behind them were the Prince’s wan and awan: wan

1. 1. op. cit. pp. 115–17
In front of the Prince were spread his insignias of rank — betel container, teapot, etc.

When the auspicious moment drew nigh the king left his apartment and walked along the path covered with mats surrounded by his courtiers. He entered the Byedaik by the great north entrance and took his place on the divan. It is as well to state here that the Byedaik was of two levels and the king was stationed on the higher level which was separated from the rest by a railing of turned wood. As soon as the king was seated the appointed samitouchan came down the north stairs, kneeled and shikoed the Crown Prince and said:

The most glorious King, the Lord of life orders that you shall be appointed Crown Prince and that Wankri: Satui: mahāśīhasū will read out your investiture order and then give it to you.

So saying he handed the order written on parapui between lacquered boards to the wan kri: who came forward to receive it. This was done only after shikoing the Prince. The samitouchan, after shikoing the deed of gifts on a parapui between lacquered boards said to the Prince.

The most glorious king, Lord of life orders that you be made Crown Prince. The deed of gifts is to be read by wanthok Nemyui: sīhasūra, who on finishing will hand it to your wan.

Thus saying he handed it over to the wanthok who came forward to take it making an obeisance to the Prince and sat behind the wankri:

The wankri: then read out the investiture order. An extract will be given below:

My son also is fit to share the great prosperity with me. In the future that sons may in succession (and) grandsons in succession be born of the king on the throne and for ever work for the weal of the Religion and the subjects

1. [Text]
2. [Text]
and be an object of reverence to the people (I hereby) in accordance with my
temporal and spiritual duties at this auspicious moment, with the insignias
of rank, riches, horses, elephants and retinue make you Crown Prince.

After reading it the wankri: handed over the parapuik to the Crown Prince who took
and put it in his betel container. Note the use of the betel container
as a document case.

The appointed wanthok now read the deed of gifts.

The most glorious king, Lord of life at this propitious moment appoints
the Crown Prince. Ten young male elephants, ten female elephants, ten
horses. wan, atwan: wan သင်္ကြန် ဝန်: မသာ: ကျွန်တော် အနွေးကျွန်
nā: khāni သားများက်: က်ားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက်
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men — in — waiting သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက်
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servants of water and betel သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက်
cavalry သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက်
special force? သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက်
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soldiers သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက်
artillery သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက်
fusiliers သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက်
bodyguard သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက်
guards? သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက်
lancers with shields? သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက်
cannon, guns, vanguard သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက်
artisans သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက်
gold and silver bullion? သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက်
bolts of fabric and textiles, slaves and household servants, and tiffs, are given as gifts.

Having read out the above the wanthok after an obesiance handed over the parapuik
to the Crown Prince’s waun.

Now the nā kham pro. kri: mthu: သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက်
officer of ceremonies? left his place and went to the front near the Prince. After shikoing he read
out the appointment order of the two Imrhe. waun သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက်
The men appointed
Lakyaw သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက်
and Siriyay သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက် သားများက်
too had to come
forward and listen. The missive said they were thus raised because they were well

ပေါ်နေဝေးသောင်းကြည်ပါဆောင်းပါမည်ကို
versed in both ecclesiastical and secular matters. In the course of their duties they were to act justly and honestly. They were to have jurisdiction over everything pertaining to the Crown Prince from his elephantry, cavalry, revenues, granaries to bodyguards, personal attendants, pages, slaves etc. If the Prince had any business with the Hluttaw they were to act for him. The text of the appointment order in full was:

The appointment order of the Crown Prince’s atwan: wan Nemyu: ကြည်းချင်းဥေ and Rhweton noaunathā စည်းဝေဝေ့တွင် was read next.

Their duties were to look after the Prince’s public and private affairs and especially supervise the people in daily attendance on him. If any among the Prince’s following was deserving of merit they were to tell him of it that he may reward them according to their deserts. What was needful for the Crown Prince to know must be reported to him. If people wished to have business with the Crown Prince it was through them, so also if the Crown Prince had business with the palace it was through his atwan: wan to the king’s atwan: wan that it should be done. Their most important duty was to supervise the night watches and gentlemen of the bed chamber. The appointment order in full was:

1. နောင်နောင်စိုင်စိုင်စိုင်းရုပ်ရုပ်အမု
Then the other appointments were read one after the other. It is a long and tedious list but it is necessary because it shows that the Crown Prince was given a kingly estate and retinue which differed from the sovereign only in size. They were the wan: mhu: 楚鼻: captains, anok wan 仰-secondary officer in charge of the ladies, the nā khān 鼻 གྲེང་གྲེང་ ལྷོ་: 楚鼻: Burmese sam kham བཤེན་སུམ་ གཞན; Ywan samkhari བཤེན་པོ་ གཞན: 楚鼻: sam, anok wan གྲེང་གྲེང་ ལྷོ་: 楚鼻: officer in charge of the elephants, chan སྲེང་ སྲིན། སྲིན། སྲིན། 楚鼻: clerk to the above, wonhū 楚鼻: officer in charge of the palaquin bearers, cā: 蘇: བླེ་ ཚོག་ བཤེན་ གཞན། 楚鼻: chefs, kyi སྲེང་ སྲིན། སྲིན། 楚鼻: officer in charge of the granary, kyi སྲིན། 楚鼻: clerk to the above, the toøpré mhu: 楚鼻: 楚鼻: officer of the vanguard, lzk chon yu mhu.
In addition to the above the King gave the Crown Prince the following retinue:

30 servers of water and betel
20 guards with dahs
8 gentlemen of the Parináchakon chamber where paritta was recited
34 gentlemen of the Airy Chamber
59 gentlemen of the antechamber
35 personal attendants
25 water servers
30 medicine servers
23 elephant men

Except for the elephant men the remainder were sons of amat. From the above it will be evident that a prince on being created the Crown Prince became in fact the Second King with all the splendour and staff requisite to the position.
LIFE AT THE BURMESE COURT UNDER THE KONBAUNG KINGS

After all these appointment orders were read the king left the Byëdaik. A few moments after his departure the Prince's servers of water and betel came and took away his betel container in which, as we have seen, the Crown Prince's investiture order had been placed. Then two gentlemen-in-waiting approached and helped the Prince to rise and leave. After him left the wankri; then the wanthok; then the rest in order of precedence.

The Crown Prince on leaving the Byëdaik got into his palanquin and with his full suite and others made a royal progress to the Palace of the Heir Apparent. The processional pageant was an imposing one but we are unfortunately pressed for time and cannot give a description of it.1 When the Uparajà reached his new palace he may not go in at once but must wait in his palanquin at the palanquin rest a little east of the east staircase of the antechamber. The phrase describing this wait in Burmese is excellent and worth quoting. ကြက်များကြည်မည်သည့် At the auspicious moment he went up and took possession of his palace. This is completed by a marriage ceremony with the princess who would be the Heir Apparent's Queen.

With regard to Kanaung's installation as Crown Prince during Mindon's reign I have not come across documents relating to it. The Konbaungzat (p. 1346) has a paragraph on the event. It said: In 1853 the Heir Apparent's palace with its quarters was completed. On Monday 11 July 1853 according to the usages of former times, when king's sons or brother's were made Crown Prince, Kanaung was made Heir Apparent with the title of Siripawaramahásudhammarâja. He was also given the insignias of rank, elephants, horses, slaves and the towns to Tapayin, Taungdivgyi Pyinsala Ngamyo and Sale. The following officers too were appointed for him. Crown Prince's w añ, Crown Prince's awan: w añ captains of the guard, officer of the Seraglio; chief clerk: secretaries. The Prince and his attainted bride left the Palace in their respective palanquins for the Crown Prince's palace and at the auspicious moment took possession of it. Then at the auspicious moment the Prince was wedded to his half sister Sirisumratiwâtanâdewi: the Princess of Hlaing, the daughter of Tharawaddy's West Queen.2

1 For details see ကြက်များကြည်မည်
2 For an example of the king's orders to the Hlutaw on the investiture of the Heir Apparent see Taw Sein Ko Selection from the Records of the Hlutaw pp. 12. royal Order of King Mindon appointing Prince Thibaw to be Einshenu.
Coronation—Abhiseka

We now come to the most important court ceremony of all—the rājabhisikī coronation. We shall be using the abridged report of Mindon’s coronation in the Ṛṣya-ratnasūtraśāstra (pp. 19–28) as our source as the other reports are too long for this purpose. On 14 May 1857, Mindon had an abhiseka ceremony. It was Thursday the 7 Waning of Kason and we find that Kason happens to be the usual time for such a ceremony. According to some authorities the abhiseka was held in Kason because the Buddha was born and attained Buddhahood on the fullmoon of Kason. Others say that the abhiseka was celebrated in Kason because it had to be done at the conjunction of the moon with Visakhā.1

We have seen that every ceremony at court was preceded by preparations whose elaborateness depended on the importance of the ceremony. The coronation ceremony being the most important function the preliminaries naturally exceeded that of all the others.

The first requisite was to build three new pavilions. The timber, bamboo, and anes required had to be provided by the asanā. Then the site of the pavilions had to be ploughed up thrice. Once by bankers’ sons sūthe: sa: သင်္ခွန်တွေ: wearingellow clothes, secondly by rich men’s sons sū krway sa: သင်္ခွန်တွေ: dressed in red with silver farrows and lastly by farmers’ sons ton sū kri: သင်္ခွန်တွေ: wearing green clothes with iron farrows. The ceremonial ploughing had to be done with bulls and not by oxen as usual. After the earth had been turned up it had

The Burmese had more than one kind of bhisik. For instance there were the
a) muddābhisikī မိမိဗိုလ်မှု  anointing of the head
b) maheśībhisikī မဟုတ်  the coronation of the Chief Queen
c) uparajābhisikī အံပေါ်  the installation of the Crown Prince
d) jeyya-bhisikī ဗုဒ္ဓ  in order to win victories
e) maṅgala bhiseka မြစ်ခြင်းတွေ  held to celebrate the possession of white elephants
f) sirīya-bhiseka စေ့သည်  to renew one’s glory
g) Ṛṣya-bhiseka ရြစ်  consecration to gain long life
h) maha bhiseka မဟုတ်  celebrated to increase prosperity
i) sakalabhiseka စက်လေး  held to ensure peace in the Empire

Of these the rājabhiseka ရှင်း  which may be synonymous with muddābhisikī was to be held 5 years after accession. maṅga-bhiseka မြစ်ခြင်း 7 years after accession, jeyya-bhiseka 9 years after accession, sakalabhiseka 12 years after accession, while sirīya-bhiseka and Ṛṣya-bhiseka were to be celebrated from time to time. See also စေ့သည်ဖြစ် မည်ဖြစ် မျိုး
to be sprinkled thoroughly with milk, then cow dung, then with grain—barley မှားက်, sesameum, cotton, millet, peas and paddy. Then the area was enclosed by a fence called ဒါး ကော်မာ ကြက်ကလေး.

Various offerings had to be made to the gods. The sacrificial brahmans ထေရဝါဒ had to place Candi ကြက် ပရမ္စော မြို့နယ် and Vishnu မြို့နယ် on carts or chariots and perhaps parade them. Mantras from the ရုမ္မာ ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး work ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး had to be recited. Then one chapter of စန္ဒ္၀ နိုး and twelve brahmans recited စေတီ and ပရိုတ် e.g. that beginning with မိုးမိုင်းဥာဏ် ကားကို ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး called the eight victories, the မေးဗား စေတီ ပရိုတ် ကားကို ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး ratana စေတီ ပရိုတ် ကားကို ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး etc. The ကားကို ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး ကားကို ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး or ordination service too was recited. Finally the sacrificial brahmans recited the စော်စား ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး verse full of propitiousness and sounded the conch. The timber, bamboo and cane for building the pavilions were sprinkled with consecrated water from the ပရိုတ် ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး vessels and the conch shells.

The initial ceremony was that of marking the site of buildings. Four hereditary brahman astrologers and 108 brahmans versed in the astrological arts wearing white apparel waited for the propitious moment for staking the site ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး. The actual staking was done by sailors ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး: wearing brown raiment with gold stakes, ပရိုတ် ကားကို ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး brahmans dressed in red with silver stakes and peasants လေးဗုဒ္ဓဟူး: ကားကို ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး in green apparel with iron stakes. At the auspicious conjunction of the planets seven guns were fired seven times, and gongs, cymbals ကားကို ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး: drums and conches were sounded simultaneously. All the staking was done simultaneously.

The three pavilions were:

1. သီဟော် လော် ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး Lion Seat, which was draped in white and attended by ပရိုတ် ကားကို ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး reciting brahmans
2. ဂျိုး လော် ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး Elephant Seat decorated in red with sailors in attendance
3. မူးဗား လော် ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး Peacock Seat decked in brown looked after by အောင် ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး

These pavilions were built and covered by the အောင် ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး class.

The next stage was the carrying of water for the ṛha. When the time was auspicious eight princesses of high lineage with gold pots, eight daughters of hereditary consecration brahmans ထေရဝါဒီ ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး with silver pots, eight amat daughters of a long line of officers with earthen pots, eight daughters of hereditary bankers ကားကို ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး with brass pots and eight daughters of hereditary rich men မိသားစု ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး with iron pots in all their finery together with eight consecration brahmans. စိန့်ဖွဲ့ ကားကို ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး four ကားကို ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး eight amat; eight bankers; eight rich men; eight farmers and eight heads of ရေ လေး ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး associations accompanied by music went to the river. The water had to be taken from midstream thus the princesses embarked on a နိေဟ်ခီး ကြော်း ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး boat, the brahman daughters in a ရွှေစိုင် ဗုဒ္ဓဟူး
golden boat, the amat daughters in a lwan: kraní .qtæ=udz=boi boat, the bankers' daughters in a hù: mai, ødæ boi boat, the rich men's daughters in a crocodile boat, the consecration brahmanas in an ḍak \(\text{td̪}-\text{ti}  \end{array}\) and the heads of associations  \(\text{wud}-\text{wi}  \end{array}\) in a sare  \(\text{mu}-\text{cu}  \end{array}\) glory? boat. When these boats left the shore seven muskets were fired thrice, the sacrificial brahmanas blew their conches and the harpist brahmanas played on their instruments.

Some men of ferocious aspect were dressed up as bhilū:  \(\text{t̪}-\text{nu}  \end{array}\) guardians of the river. When the water carriers arrived they had to bark out thrice sharply: “Why do you all come”. The purohita replied: “According to tradition, as in the case of his forebears, the King intends to hold an abhisēka ceremony. Thus have we come to draw water”. Then the bhilū: question: “Will he work for the weal of the Religion, the Saṅghā and People and act according to the law?” to which the purohita answered: “The King wishing to act thus wants the water”. Then the bhilū: exclaimed: “Very well! Very well! May the King live a hundred years and look after the interests of the Religion, Saṅghā and People. May his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren prosper”.

When the bhilū: granted permission to draw water, offerings had to be made of gold and silver flowers, gold and silver parched rich  \(\text{mu}-\text{du}  \end{array}\) gold and silver nuggets, the nine gems, oil lights and chandeliers, betel and tea. When the auspicious conjunction was achieved seven muskets were fired seven times, the ten noises  \(\text{mud}  \end{array}\) were sounded, the mantras from the vedas were chanted and the water was drawn. Then the return journey; on the arrival ashore seven muskets were again fired thrice and the procession wended its way to the pavilions.

At the arrival of the water carriers at the pandals the royal path was strewn full of flowers and the cirīṭa:  \(\text{t̪}-\text{nu}  \end{array}\) sprinkled it with water. The parīta was recited by the appointed brahmanas. In the Suhaṣana was kept the water drawn by the princesses and brahmanas daughters. In the Gajasana that of the amat daughters, in the Morasana that of the bankers and rich men's daughters. This is carried out to the accompaniment of seven muskets fired thrice each.

The middle section of the route from the Palace to the pavilions was strewn with flowers and covered above with gold and silver cloth so that not a speck of sunlight fell on the King in his progress. On either side of the path were planted sugarcanes, coconuts, banana palms. In the pavilions themselves all kinds of fruit and flowers were hung: Coconuts, sugarcane, henna, chapśva  \(\text{pa}  \end{array}\) screwpine?, eugenia, thim  \(\text{t̪}  \end{array}\) a species of coffee-wort Nauclea cordifolia, kukkui  \(\text{t̪}  \end{array}\) a species of acacia Albizzia Lebbek, lakpani  \(\text{t̪}  \end{array}\) bombax malabaricum, too were planted so that they may not droop. The streets inside and outside the capital too were lined with banana, sugarcane, coconuts and screwpine trees with fruit. Pots full of water too were kept. Offerings of sweetmeats too had to be made to the eight great nats by the mediums  \(\text{t̪}  \end{array}\) This brings the preliminaries to an end.
At the auspicious conjunction of the planets the ten noises were sounded, fifteen muskets were fired seven times each and the King dressed like Brahma and the Queen like a Queen of the devaloka made a right royal progress to the pavilions. They were escorted by twelve regiments in the van and twelve in the rear in military uniform. Amaī of the left and the right as well as the commanders of the guards accompanied them. The above marched on either side of the canopied way. On the covered path the King and Chief Queen, in their state palanquin studded with the nine precious stones were preceded by one hundred consecration brahmins headed by two cakravartin on each side, the Sasanapuṇi, the Chief Purohita carrying a nine gems studded conch in a gold flower basket in joined hands, then one hundred brahmin astrologers headed by four hurātum in one hundred sacrificial brahmins, one hundred brahmin harpists, one hundred purita reciting brahmins, and one hundred flower offering brahmins. These five hundred brahmins blew on the conch. They were followed by the water drawing eight princesses, eight daughters of brahmins, eight daughters of bankers and eight daughters of rich men. When the King reached the Pavilions the muskets were fired again. Then the Sasanapuṇi Vinayadharm...
and twelve purohitas brought the Tipitaka to the Sīhāsana pavilion and left in there, and proceeded to the Palace where one hundred and eight sanghas were reciting the parittas. Then the pārāśārīmatas washed the Palace.

The King bathed his body in the Morāsana pavilion, proceeded to the Gajaśāna and washed his head. Then he recited the verse

Buddhānca dhammaṃca saṅghāṇca saranaṃ gato upāsakattami deseti / sakyaputtassa sasana sadāgūra mupehitā

Having taken refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, he pointed out the fact of his being a lay-disciple. Always trust in the virtue of the biddings of the Sakyaputta, i.e. the Buddha.

and proceeded to the Sīhāsana pavilion and sat in state on the gold covered figwood (ficus glomorota) seat.

The eight princesses dressed gorgeously and bearing each a clockwise conch studded with the nine gems filled with the water of the five rivers in joint palms stood in front of the King and respectfully poured water on his head one after the other saying the while:

Oh King! please act always as the good and righteous kings from Mahasamatā at the beginning of the world onwards. Oh King! do not be harsh to your vassals, bestow rewards on all deserving people love compassionately everyone as though they are children of your bosom, guard the welfare of everyone, treasure their lives as though your own. May you be free of the obstructions of greed and anger, and give light to the darkness of stupidity. Oh King!

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1. This translation is by courtesy of Mr. Devaprasad Guha.
your actions must be only those that bring you credit, so must your words, your thoughts and zeal.

Then the eight brahmans of pure blood bearing in their joint hands clockwise conches filled with water from the five rivers poured the water of consecration most respectfully on the King's head in turn saying the while:

Please make the Religion and its attributes shine forth. Oh King! love all beings as your own children, their weal and their lives must be as your own. Oh King! do not be harsh to your vassals. Be just, attend to the sayings of the wise, and look after your kith and kin. This you must always do.

It was now the turn of the eight bankers and richmen to pour respectfully on the King's head the water of consecration from the five rivers. They said to him:

Oh King! look after everyone as though of yourself. Guard their welfare as though your own. Do not be harsh to your vassals. Be just in your taxation. Eschew the unjust and the foolish. Consult the wise men and take their advice.

1. မပါကိုက်စားသောအချက်နှင့်အချက်နှင့် အမှန်တကယ်အပြောခု ကျွန်ုပ်များကို နှင်းသုံးသောက်ချက် နှင့် ကျွန်ုပ်များကို နှင်းသုံးသောက်ချက် ကျွန်ုပ်များကို နှင်းသုံးသောက်ချက်

2. မပါကိုက်စားသောအချက်နှင့်အချက်နှင့် အမှန်တကယ်အပြောခု ကျွန်ုပ်များကို နှင်းသုံးသောက်ချက် ကျွန်ုပ်များကို နှင်းသုံးသောက်ချက် ကျွန်ုပ်များကို နှင်းသုံးသောက်ချက်
your actions must be only those that bring you credit, so must your words, your thoughts and zeal.

Then the eight brahmans of pure blood bearing in their joint hands clockwise conches filled with water from the five rivers poured the water of consecration most respectfully on the King’s head in turn saying the while:

Please make the Religion and its attributes shine forth. Oh King! love all beings as your own children, their weal and their lives must be as your own. Oh King! do not be harsh to your vassals. Be just, attend to the sayings of the wise, and look after your kith and kin. This you must always do.

It was now the turn of the eight bankers and richmen to pour respectfully on the King’s head the water of consecration from the five rivers. They said to him:

Oh King! look after everyone as though of yourself. Guard their welfare as though your own. Do not be harsh to your vassals. Be just in your taxation. Eschew the unjust and the foolish. Consult the wise men and take their advice.

1. ပညာရေးမပါဝင်နေရာများသို့ စာရင်း တွေ့မှုစာရင်း စာရင်း တွေ့မှု
2. ပညာရေးမပါဝင်နေရာများသို့ စာရင်း တွေ့မှုစာရင်း စာရင်း တွေ့မှု
The King, as an act of merit on his coronation, set free all prisoners except the enemies of the Religion. Then the King and his pageant returned to the Palace in the order already mentioned. As for the three ceremonial pavilions, they were dismantled and cast into the river. This is in brief the coronation abhiseka ceremony of King Mindon.

The Assumption of the Royal Residence

This is a ceremony closely connected with the abhiseka and usually celebrated shortly after. The preliminaries that preceded the ceremony were somewhat different from the others we have seen so far because it was mostly religious and almost entirely Buddhist. Three tazaungs of three tiers were built outside the Rwe: toawyin gate. In the first tazaung was hung a white cloth on which were painted 500 arahant figures. In this the texts of the First Pitaka were recited by fifty saṅghā on the first day. In the second hung with the figures of 700 arahants were recited the texts of the Second Pitaka by seventy saṅghā on the second day. In the third tazaung, were hung the pictures of 1000 arahants on white cloth. Here on the third day one hundred saṅghā recited the texts of the Third Pitaka.

In the inner city in the first tazaung of the Pitakatuik Library eight Asītī Mahāsāṅkha, Arahant figures were drawn on white cloth and strung up. Here eight rohan recited the Pitaka all night and were offered chwari: in the morning. In the Rhe, wan: office in the east quarter, a picture of the Brahmāloka paying homage to the Buddha on a white cloth in accordance with the verse brahma gaṇa mahesino. In the Lakṣyā wan: office of the right i.e. south quarter was hung a picture of the devata paying homage to the Buddha in accordance with the verse devaghaṇa mahesino. In the office of the western quarter was hung a picture of the gavula doing obeisance to the Buddha according to the verse suhanā gaṇa mahesino and in the office of the left or north quarter was hung the picture of the naga doing homage to the Buddha in accordance with the verse naga gaṇa: mahesino. Moreover in each office were laid out two paritta vessels full of flowers, a basket of white sand blessed by the paritta, a pot containing one viss of oil and one hundred lamps. In each office eight rohan had to recite the Tipitaka all night and were offered chwari: in the morning. Then the paritta sermon was heard after which the oil lamps were lighted with the paritta oil. When the lamps went out, the two brahmans sprinkled the consecrated water and
sand. The same sort of ceremony was carried out in the Main Palace ្ញ ឈារឈ្មោ ែល the Mrenan: ណែសុខ ឈារឈ្មោះ ែល ឈារឈ្មោ along the Byedaik. Toncamut ឈារឈ្មោះ ែល Mrokkamut ឈារឈ្មោះ ែល Anokpwaitak ឈារឈ្មោះ ែល ឈារឈ្មោះ sabbat nain: ឈារឈ្មោះ theatre royal. Hluttaw. Clock Tower, eight towers ឈារឈ្មោះ of the wooden stockade surrounding the Palace, the east and west rumi: office, the four main thoroughfares at the corners of the inner city.

At the eight cardinal points of the Palace were placed the following: In the east were a basket of korni ឈារឈ្មោះ panyan ឈារឈ្មោះ paddy, a basket of the same rice, a brazier? ឈារឈ្មោះ on two red painted stands. At the south east corner were a crossbow ឈារឈ្មោះ a common bow ឈារឈ្មោះ and a quiver of arrows: In the south were a grinding stone, a pestle, three gudgeons ឈារឈ្មោះ cirrhinamorigala stuck together in wood, a wooden icon of Syaav Sinlalei holding an alms bowl. In the north western corner were a pair of elephant tusks and a red carpet? ឈារឈ្មោះ To the west were a cat cage with a red cat and gold and silver nuggets in sacks. In the north west were a gold plated brass tray, a silver plated bowl, a silver plated brass spoon, a tray of rice and sweetmeats. To the south were a pot of clarified butter covered with green leaf, a pot of milk covered with the same, a conch shell filled with kusa grass and flowers. To the north east, were a pot full of water covered with green leaf, a white umbrella with gold top and red handle and pennants.

At the foot of one kranhan tuv ឈារឈ្មោះ — the kranhan pillar of the Nan machon ឈារឈ្មោះ — Main Palace, were arranged a thamein with a border ឈារឈ្មោះ white shawl, a suu ran ឈារឈ្មោះ full sleeved gown, a turban, a pair of bracelets? and a ring. At the foot of the other were placed a pasoe with border, a tight sleeved jacket, a muslin gaungbaung, headdress and ear tubes. (See Pl VII) Underneath the Palace were kept a white mare with a white filly a red cow with a red female calf.

In the middle of the Palace were arrayed one pran of cooked korni ឈារឈ្មោះ panyan ឈារឈ្មោះ ឈារឈ្មោះ rice, a curry of white pumpkin ឈារឈ្មោះ fish fried whole ឈារឈ្មោះ canap ឈារឈ្មោះ pickle? a gold platter ឈារឈ្មោះ a gold bowl ឈារឈ្មោះ a silver spoon, a gilt salver ឈារឈ្មោះ a silver plated cover, a bamboo mat, a rush mat with decorated borders. At the uru ឈារឈ្មោះ post was kept the offering of rice ឈារឈ្មោះ for the uru nat. In the Mrenan: were offerings to the Mahāgiri of varieties of rice. On the east platform of the main palace the chief architect and the wisemen made offerings of rice to the various guardians of the Palace chambers. Bordered rush mats which were covered with carpets and cotton cloth were spread out from the main: tak
king’s staircase to the Nan ma Main Palace. On the right side of the stairs were attendants holding trays of offerings in readiness so that when the King ascended he may make offerings. At each of the following staircases were two bolts of muslin, two bunches of cocoanut, two bunches of bananas, two live banana and sugar cane plants, the 3 stairs of the Mrenan, the stairs to the throne, two stairs of the East Canu, the Byedaik, the north-west stairs of the Mrak Daway Tonicamui Morkcamui and the two stairs of the Anokpwaitak.

At the auspicious moment the King dressed in white wearing the head-dress called bon kri: mwan, sway and ear tubes holding in his right hand a bunch of gold flowers and the Chief Queen holding in her right hand a bunch of gold lotuses circumambulated pradakṣīna—wise round the Palace and came to the Mrenan chon tan covered stairway. At the foot of it was the chief architect who invoked benedictious on the King. At the top were eight Brahmins who did the same as the King ascended. When the King reached the chamber of the Mrenan the propitious verses were intoned. As soon as the King arrived, offerings to the samādevā in the form of gold wings, pearls and coral were made. Five baskets of cooked rice too were showered simultaneously. As he climbed up the stairs to the throne the princesses poured benedictions on him. When he reached the top they struck a silver gong five times. In front of the Lion Throne were stretched paintings of the Palace, Huttaw and Library. As soon as the King ascended the throne the Brahmins made offerings. The eight consecration Brahmins with consecrated flowers, water and conch handed the flowers and water to the King whose attendants placed them on either side of the throne in gold salvers. From there the King proceeded to the Jetawan chon and sat on the couch in the Kyaksare tak.

There a banquet of 170 pots of rice and 170 of curry were laid out. Articles of daily use were spread out—a gold tray of 250 ticals weight (See Pl. VIII), a gold and silver broiled chicken of 22 ticals each, a gold and silver gudeen of 10 ticals each, gold and silver cakes, gold and silver banded snake head of eight ticals each, gold and silver crayfish of 7 ticals each, gold and silver ducks of 26 ticals each.
gold and silver tables, gold and silver mats, gold and silver water stands, gold and silver cots, gold and silver canopies screened off by gold and silver partitions. The delicacies were stuffed into the gold and silver chicken, gudgen, ducks, etc and placed on the gold tray. Before the King and Queen dined offerings were made to the pagodas which agreed with their zodiacal signs and were under the same planetary influences as the Brahma, Sakra, guardians of the central spire the palace and the capital. Food was also scattered on the palace platform and antechambers. Twenty minutes later two cats were fed, then twenty minutes later two persons. Then twenty minutes later the King and Queen ate and after them the princes and amat.

The pagodas and Buddha images within and without the city and the saṅghā received munificent alms for seven whole days. Arrangements too were made for donations to the many pagodas and the saṅghā throughout the realm received the eight requisites. This ends the ceremony of the royal assumption.

There are many more ceremonies we could speak of e.g. the investiture of the titles of the amat, the assumption of the Hluttaw, the Byedaik etc. but we will not do so. In resumé, we have spoken first of the composition of the court: the King, his queens, the Crown Prince, the princes, princesses, the amat and their wives with their ranks and titles. Then we have spoken of the feeding of the first betel which was done on the seventeenth day after birth in which the highlight was to feed the infant betel mixed with camphor and other ingredients. The next ceremony was the nāmakārata, i.e. naming ceremony held on the hundredth day after birth. The name was inscribed either on gold or palm leaf. Next we dealt with the marriage ceremony of a prince and princess of the highest rank. The ceremony was preceded by earorning, shawl-wearing, hairdressing and headdressing wearing ceremonies. The gist of the functions was that the princess tried on one headdress after another while an attendant invoked that she may be as beautiful as a nat, that she may sit on a throne, that she may have a new palace, etc. The highlight of the wedding was the ceremonial binding, the handwashing and the eating of the feast. In the investiture of the Crown Prince the most significant facts were that the Heir Apparent was given a palace of his own and a domestic staff commiserate with his rank which is only a small degree less than that of the King. It is worth noting that the important positions in the Prince’s household were appointed by the King no doubt with a view to the security of his own position. We then dealt with the most important court ceremony of all the abhiseka which was usually held in Kason. The attainment of the Kingship owing to past merits and present glory is analogous to the Buddha attaining enlightenment. The abhiseka may be considered of three parts—the water fetching, the ceremonial bath and the anointment. The most important feature is the King’s oath which flavours very much of a contract theory.

Let us study the rites that accompanied the various ceremonies. Offerings to the Three Gems, the samādeva, the recitation of paritta which accompanied
every ceremony were naturally Buddhist. But there were others which were not quite so. For instance the offering to the Nāḍī nat samā in the Feeding of the First Betel and the Nāmakaraṇa Ceremony. The Nāḍī, we have seen, was head of the Piṭāra nat i.e. a hundred piṭāra. The Siamese believed in a species of spirits known as phi, so one wonders whether the Piṭāra nat was not an import of our intercourse with Siam. The offerings to Mahāpinna, the Kāḷa nat and the Fire Spirit were by no means Buddhist. Nor is the bhut cā cā: pway offerings to the devils which was done before the prince and princess ate the wedding repast.

Of the ceremonies dealt with, the most Indian influenced seems to me to be the abhiseka—the ceremonial ploughing, the offerings to Candī, Paramasīvara and Vishnu, the idea of the water of the five rivers, etc. The assumption of the royal residence by the King and Queen, and the assumption of the wedding house by the prince too were indicative of Indian influence but to a lesser degree—the keeping of a white mare and white filly, a red cow and a red she calf under the Palace and a cow and calf of the same colour under the wedding house. The most Buddhist of the ceremonies were the assumption of the palace when the Tipitaka were recited, figures of arahants were hung up, and generous alms bestowed on the sāṅghā and the pagodas in all the land. No doubt there were a lot of purely Burmese ideas in the ceremonies but I am unable to say which except for the worship of the Mahāgiri. All I can say is that the Court Burman was very catholic in his religious beliefs—he was as ready to invoke the aid of Hindu deities, propitiate devils and spirits as to make offerings to the Three Gems. There may have been survivals of primitive beliefs too in the rites e.g. the placing of the following at some of the cardinal points at the assumption of the palace—the bows and arrows, grinding stone and pestle (firmness), gudgeons (fertility?), the cat (domesticity) etc. It is possible that the offerings made to the deceased royal grandparents and parents which seems to be a sort of ancestor worship was due to Chinese influence. It may therefore be possible to concluded that the ceremonies at the Burmese Court was a composition of native beliefs with a strong admixture of Indian ideas, and for good measure a few from her eastern neighbours thrown in.

(We are very grateful to the Director, Archaeological Survey of Burma, for permitting us to illustrate this article with the sketches that we copied from parapuik Ac 1904/2554, Ac 1925/2563 and Ac 1917/2581 of the Survey Department’s collection and also to the Burma Historical Commission, the Victoria and Albert Museum and John Vickers for the photographs.—EDITOR).