Notes and Reviews

Denise Bernot: *Dictionnaire birman-français*. Fascicule 1.
Paris: SELAF, 1978. 227pp.

    Denise Bernot's Dictionnaire birman-français (DBF) is undoubtedly
one of the most ambitious Burmese dictionary projects ever undertaken.
In respect of number of entries it takes second place only to the great
dictionary of Stewart et al, and that is far from complete and is unlikely
to be continued beyond the letter 'a.[1]

    This first volume runs from ka to kussinārum - the claim on the title
page that it covers ka to kya is either an error or must be interpreted as
ka (inclusive) to kya (exclusive). To indicate how the completed DBF
would compare in size with other major Burmese dictionaries so far
published in whole or in part, I list below the approximate total numbers
of their entries, either as stated by the compiler, or envisaged
(if the dictionary is not yet completed), or estimated by a calculation
based on a rough average of the number of entries per page.

number of entries		reference	languages	published to date
70,000	est-env*	Stewart 1941-	B-English	'a to 'a-sā:
40,000	env	Bernot 1978-	B-French	ka to kya
50-60,000	est-env			
35-45,000	est-env	Wan 1952-	B-Burmese	ka to end cha
30,000	stated	Chen Yi-Sein 1962; 1969	B-Chinese	all
29,000	stated	Minina 1976	B-Russian	all
28,000	stated-env	Mran-mā-cā 1978-	B-Burmese	ka to end ya
18,000	est	Judson 1893+	B-English	all
17,000	stated	Esche 1976	B-German	all
11,000	est	Cornyn 1958	B-English	all
5,000	stated	Ignatenko 1961	B-Russian	all
5,000	est	Nwe Don: Phrū 1969	B-Burmese	all

    est = estimated; env = envisaged; stated = stated.
    See above text for discussion.

    I give two figures for total entries against the DBF since
although Bernot herself states that the number is around 40,000 (p. 7)

my rough calculations comparing what she has done so far with the same
stretch of the alphabet in completed dictionaries suggest that the final
total will be rather higher. The table shows that the DBF is likely to
contain more entries than even the comprehensive Takka-suil Mran-mā 'a-
bhi-dhān (Wan et al 1952-) which had to suspend progress in the early
1970s. It is a mighty undertaking for anyone, and the more so for someone
working with little assistance and with many other duties besides
lexicography. It looks as if the DBF when completed will fill about 20
or 25 volumes of the size of this first one.

The introduction modestly claims that the DBF is designed to meet
the needs of French-speaking students learning Burmese, but in view of
its comprehensive coverage it will surely be consulted by a far wider
range of users than that, and by users well beyond the learning stage.

Entries for the DBF have been collected from existing dictionaries
and from contemporary writing and speech. Entry-words are listed in the
same type of alphabetical order as that of the two Burmese-Burmese
dictionaries, and each entry contains an indication of the word's
pronunciation, a grammatical classification, and a short set of French
equivalents - e.g.

ku /kù'-/ v. soigner, prescrire des médicaments (p. 97)

Many entries also give an example sentence - sometimes several -
with a translation into French. Where appropriate there is a restrictive
label (e.g. mathématique, en désuétude, argot), and in some cases an
illustration. Source language is noted for loanwords, and - an
innovation in Burmese lexicography - entries for nouns give the appropriate
'classificateur' (i.e. numerative).

The text has been typed for reproduction on separate Burmese and
roman typewriters, a feat of heroic endurance and application, but also
a cause of erratic spacing. Misprints are surprisingly few, except in
the phonological transcription.

So much for the overview. There are comments to be made on all these
features.

1. Sources. The principal sources from which material for the DBF
is gathered are listed on pp. 16 and 17. Besides the standard dictionaries
and reference books they include a selection of short stories published
in magazines in the 1950s and 1960s, a couple of novels, collections of
folktales, some newspapers, and passages from a school reader. These
texts have evidently been ransacked for entries and examples: example
sentences taken from them are given references to work and page. The
other interesting group of sources is made up of Bernot's own notes on
Burmese crafts, agriculture and flora, and on her recordings of stories
and other material, all collected on her visits to Burma. To have the
information available in previous publications brought together in one
work and presented in one language would have been immensely helpful in
itself; but the additional material contributed from Bernot's own
researches increases the coverage and helpfulness of the DBF very
considerably.

One puzzling point in the introduction is the emphasis laid on the distinction between 'classical' or 'written' Burmese on the one hand, and 'modern' or 'spoken' Burmese on the other. The suggestion is that the dictionaries consulted for the DBF are strong on the former and weak on the latter, and that the DBF aims at righting the balance (see for example p. 10). SInce the written/spoken distinction in Burmese is almost wholly confined to grammar words (markers, postpositions etc), which form only a minute fraction of the lexicon, it is hard to see why this should be given such prominence. The mystery deepens when one sees that the allegedly 'classical' dictionaries give quite adequate coverage to words that are restricted to modern colloquial: see for example ko, kui:, and ka-ne. in the Burmese-Burmese dictionaries.

I suspect that what Bernot may have had in mind is her example sentences. It is certainly true that the majority of the Burmese-Burmese dictionaries' examples are from older literature and in the literary style, while the DBF gives most examples in modern colloquial. There are signs however that some of these are of suspect authenticity. The examples given under ku (p. 98), kai-lā: (p. 113) and kan-to.chwam:loṅ: (p. 186), contain an uneasy mixture of literary and colloquial grammar words, suggesting that sentences from literary sources have been hastily and incompletely colloquialized in order to bolster the colloquial content claimed for the dictionary.

2. Coverage. Given that the DBF has more entries than the large Takka-suil Mran-mā 'a-bhi-dhān (Wan et al 1952-, (TMA)), what kind of entries does it add to the TMA's? To get some idea of the answer I selected at random that part of the two dictionaries that begins with kuiy and ends with kuiy-thū:kuiy-khywan - a stretch that is probably no more misleading than any other. Allowing for a small difference in alphabetical order, the DBF has 69 entries against the TMA's 50. Since the TMA has four entries that are omitted from the DBF, the DBF has in effect 23 additional entries.

Some of these additional entries are those awkward phrases and compounds well known to lexicographers because they fall in the large grey area between items like, say, lose heart, which have a clear claim to inclusion in the dictionary and items like lose umbrellas, which no dictionary would attempt to include. An example is kuiy-kyui: cwan. 'sacrifice one's own advantage': the DBF already has kuiy-kyui: 'one's own interest', and in a later volume will no doubt have cwan. 'discard, disregard', so users will have been well enough served without a separate entry for the phrase. On the other hand kuiy-kyui: cwan. is a fairly common collocation, and making an entry for it may ease some user's labour.

The remainder of the additional entries, about a third of the total, are genuinely useful additions to the TMA list. Some are compounds that for some reason were missed by TMA, e.g. kuiy-tō-pwā: 'statue de Bouddha', and kuiy-khwai-lak-lhaññ. 'aide, personne qui partage le travail'; and others are semi-specialized technical terms, like kuiy-chak-'a-mrwā 'frère(s) siamois', kuiy-ta-khram: se 'devenir ... hémiplégique', kuiy-twañ:krañň.ka-ri-yā 'speculum'.

A high coverage of terms from science and technology, both traditional and modern, is noticeable elsewhere in the volume. There are for example numerous names of flora and fauna, of parts of oil presses, bullock carts and fish traps, terms from medicine and engineering, and an impressive bunch of compounds beginning with kin: meaning 'real number', 'integer', 'constant', 'binomial' etc. Some of this richness is no doubt the result of a judicious use of the excellent Pañña-rap wo-hā-ra-myā: (Pañña-re: 1971) but for much of it we must thank Bernot's own researches in the crafts and flora of Burma.

The entries include more English loanwords than I would have judged necessary for a Burmese-English dictionary e.g. the Burmese forms of 'catholic' p. 138, 'collodion' p. 133, and 'kangaroo' p. 154; but in a dictionary for French speakers generosity in this area is clearly justified. The inclusion of kak-chak 'cassette de magnétophone' p. 138 is an index of how up-to-date the coverage is.

One other source of additional entries is Bernot's practice - not always followed - of giving the full treatment to both forms of a word with alternative spellings. Whether this is deliberate or inadvertent is hard to tell, but surely

> kut-khyoṅ:khyoṅ: 'à l'affût sous une apparence tranquille, indifférente' p. 179

and

> kup-khyoṅ:khyoṅ: 'avec une reserve feinte, ou apparente, avec une modestie apparente, une bonne tenue apparente' p. 211

are the same word? And likewise for

> kat-kat-sat-sat 'de manière contradictoire, provocante, en cherchant la difficulté' p. 173

and

> kap-kap-sap-sap 'de façon pointilleuse et avec acharnement, dans les moindres détails' p. 204

3. Alphabetical order. This is an essentially trivial problem, but one that inflicts on the user a disproportionate degree of frustration and irritation. The system currently favoured in Burma is the one that lists all open syllables under one consonant before the closed syllables, and order the latter by final consonant. This system has several disadvantages (see Okell 1968), the worst of them being the undecided status of final -y and -m, and its inability to cope with non-standard finals. The two Burmese-Burmese dictionaries, though compiled by what is essentially the same body of lexicographers, use two different versions of the system.

Given the current predominance of this system in Burma, Bernot no doubt felt obliged to use it herself. She adopts an order close to that of the earlier dictionary (Wan 1952-) but incorporates a few modifications of her own. Unfortunately these do little to remedy the inherent

deficiencie$ of the system: witness the unhelpful vagueness of one of her rules on closed syllables: 'lorsque la consonne finale de syllabe...ne joue strictement aucun rôle (how can it fail to play any rôle?) et que la syllabe est realiséé comme une syllabe ouverte (how is the user to know?), nous l'avons classé parmi les syllabes ouvertes' (p. 12).

It is a pity that she did not choose some version of the Judson type of alphabetical order, which though by no means perfect, is to my mind definitely kinder to the unfortunate user.

Another opportunity is missed in the treatment of the prefix 'a-, the prefix that is sometimes there and sometimes not. Words that can take it lose it, sometimes optionally, as in

('a-)krwe: taṅ 'owe a debt'

in other cases a- is lost with the passage of time, as in

modern ka-le:, obsolete 'a-ka-le: 'child'

modern moṅ,   obsolete 'a-moṅ   'brother';

but it is most often lost in compounds or set phrases, e.g.

'a-khwaṅ.   'permission'

khwaṅ. pru   'give permission'

pro-khwaṅ.   'permission to speak'

or

'a-saṁ   'sound'

saṁ-pruiṅ   'in chorus'

ray-saṁ   'sound of laughter'

It is found with many noun bases and is theoretically combinable with all verb bases as it is a regular and productive means of forming nouns from verbs.

Bernot is clearly well aware of all this (see p. 11), but she errs in using it as an argument for putting 'a-words at the end of the alphabet rather than at the beginning. The error of course likes in assuming that they must go either at the end or at the beginning. In either position the information given in their entries will either duplicate, or contrast informatively with, the information given under their bases. The sensible course therefore is to treat each 'a-word in the same entry as its base, so that, for example, 'a-khwaṅ. and khwaṅ., and the phrases and compounds beginning with either, all appear at the same place in the dictionary.

I have argued elsewhere (Okell 1968) the case for dispersing the 'a-words in this way, and the arrangement has since been successfully put into practice (Esche 1976). It is a pity that Bernot has not followed suit.

Even in the small sample of the lexicon covered in this first volume examples of the inconvenience and wastefulness of separating the 'a-words from their bases are easily found. For example, when the DBF reaches the

letter 'a-, entries for the following words will duplicate the information given under the unprefixed form:

    'a-koñ = koñ   'appelation péjorative' etc p. 159

    'a-kuik = kuik   'germe, pousse' p. 150

    'a-kui = kui-kui   'frère aîné, tu' p. 123.

And how helpful it would have been to have, for example,

    'a-kan.'a-sat marhi 'unlimited, indefinite'

      alongside kan.sat 'délimiter, fixer' p. 182;

    'a-kun-'a-kya khañ 'bear the cost'

      alongside kun-kya 'dépenser' p. 193;

    'a-koñ:mrañ-wā-da 'optimism'

      alongside koñ: 'être bon' etc p. 160;

    'a-kū-cā-re: 'assistant clerk'

      alongside kū 'aider' p. 105

- instead of having the pairs separated by 20 volumes.

There is one entry that suggests that Bernot is beginning to appreciate the difficulty. Under kuiñ: 'être courbe' p. 169 she does actually mention 'a-kuiñ: 'grosse branche'. What is she going to say when she eventually reaches 'a-kuiñ:? Another entry illustrates the problem perfectly - and, to my mind, makes the solution glaringly obvious. On p. 153 we find:

    kañ: ... v. poétique, désuet, se former (fruit); actuellement, seul est employé le déverbatif: 'a-kañ: (-kañ:) fruit au début de sa formation, ex. sa-rak-kañ: 'petite mangue à peine formée'.

If only all the 'a-words were treated along these lines!

    4. Pronunciation. The indication of pronunciation is the weakest aspect of the whole work. I am sure that many of the pronunciations given are wrong, though it is difficult to judge any particular case with complete confidence as the transcription that Bernot has devised is complex in principle, and seems to be almost unmanageable in application.

    To deal with the problem of the voicing of syllable-initial consonants in close juncture, the transcription makes use of 'archiphonèmes'. These are written in capital letters, and represent either the voiced or the voiceless form of a consonant, to be selected according to the phonological environment. In other words, a given archiphonème, say /S/, is to be pronounced /s/ after a glottal stop and /z/ after other syllable finals. Thus

    /kɔʔ`Sɔ/ p. 142 represents [kɔʔ`sɔ]

    /ku'`Sa/ p. 98 represents [ku'`za].

The advantage of this device is that it shows that the syllable in question may be found with the alternate form in other environments; and it is certainly handy for suffixes, e.g.

    -kui /-Ko/ 'enclitique' p. 122

shows that -<u>kui</u> will be pronounced /-ko/ after a glottal stop and /-go/
elsewhere. Nonetheless, my guess is that the students for whom the
dictionary is designed would prefer to see an unambiguous /k/ or /g/
where one is called for, particularly as the dictionary provides no
chart of correspondences between voiced and voiceless consonants. Perhaps
Bernot's students can take this in their stride.

There are also, to my mind, some theoretical snags about the system.
One is that if you want to show that a given morpheme may have a voiced
initial here and a voiceless one there, why limit this information, as
the DBF does, to non-first morphemes in compounds? Surely it is no less
important to know that the same possibilities exist for, say,

   <u>kā</u> /ka/ 'to fend off'

as when it occurs in

   <u>mui:kā</u> /ˋmo ga/ 'protection against rain'?

But under <u>kā</u> the DBF gives only /ka/, not /Ka/; and so on for the
hundreds of entries affected.

Another problem is that of 'extended voicing' (see Okell 1969 p. 16).
It is well known that a word like <u>khā:pat</u> 'belt' may be pronounced
/khəbaʔ/ or /kəbaʔ/ or /gəbaʔ/ - the choice depending on tempo, degree
of formality, individual habit and other factors. The DBF transcription
seems to have no policy for this range of alternatives. Some of the
consonants concerned are written in lower case and others in capitals;
e.g.
   /kəˋSa bɔ/ vs /KəˋSa bɛʔ/ p. 31.
The latter contingency - an archiphonème following a blank - is in fact
not covered in the brief explanation of the system on p. 13.

Besides these faults in design, the system gives rise to a number of
further problems in practice. One is that it provides no symbol for a
voiced dental fricative, unless /θ/ is to be read as an archiphoneme.
Either way, we cannot tell whether we should say /θ/ or /ð/ in, for
example,

   /kamaˋˋchaN θa/ p. 88, actually pronounced /...ða/

   /ˋkeN θe/   p. 91,   "   "   /...ðe/

   /kaNˋθoNˋPa/   p. 221,   "   "   /...ˋθoN/

   /kuˊθaˊ/   p. 105,   "   "   /...θaˊ/.

Oddly enough there is an example of the symbol /ð/. This is s.v. <u>kā-ya-siddhi</u> p. 90, where unfortunately it is misused: the pronunciation
requires /θ/.

A second puzzle is the capitalization of nasals and laterals. By
analogy with the obstruents one would expect a capitalized continuant
to be voiceless after a glottal stop and voiced elsewhere. This does
seem to be the case in some examples; e.g.

   <u>ka-le:myak-nhā mraṅ</u>   /...Na.../ p. 72, i.e. /n̥a/

kok-1huiñ: /...ˋLaiN/ p. 148, i.e. /ˋ]aiN/

ka-le:thin:cha-rā-ma /...Maʹ/ p. 72, i.e. /maʹ/

kummā-rī /...Ma.../ p. 98, i.e. /ma/.

But if this is the rule why are so many voiced continuants written in lower case when the rule requires capitals? - e.g.

ka-yā:praññ-nay /...nɛ/ p. 60: Why not /Nɛ/?

ka:lip /...leʔ/ p. 96: Why not /Leʔ/?

kuiy-mwe: /...ˋmwe/ p. 130: Why not /ˋMwe/?

And why are there voiceless continuants written with capitals in environments where by the rule they have to be voiced? - e.g.

ka-mhya /...Myaʹ/ p. 89: pron. /m̥yaʹ/, rule says /myaʹ/

ka-lum̃-cum̃-mhwa: /...ˋMwa/ p. 79: pron. /ˋm̥wa/, rule says /ˋmwa/.

The confusion is well illustrated by several cases in which the same morpheme, with the same pronunciation, is written sometimes one way and sometimes another:

kok-cuik-ma /...Maʹ/ p. 142

kuiy-lup-moñ:ma /...Maʹ/ p. 134

kuiy-wan-saññ-ma /...maʹ/ p. 136

and

kuiy-tuiñ-'up-khyup-mhu /...Muʹ/ p. 127

ku-suil-koñ:mhu /...Muʹ/ p. 105

kā-kway-mhu /...m̥uʹ/ p. 85.

And what are we to deduce from the contrast between upper and lower case in, for example,

/kələNɛʔˋθue/ vs /kələnaN/ p. 102; or

/kɔʹLaʔkɔˋLaʔ/ vs /kɔʹlaʔ/ p. 114-5?

 A third puzzle is that upper case is quite often used for the initials of syllables which could not conceivably be subject to juncture voicing. They are parts of polysyllabic loanwords, and therefore totally different from Burmese morphemes that may appear in other environments and have alternative realizations; e.g.

/koʔiNKa/ p. 136 from Pali anga

/kəlyanaʹ puʹthuSiN/ (sic) p. 79 from Pali putthujana

/kaPɔliʔ/ p. 87 from English carbolic

/kaPuN/ p. 87 from English carbon

/kɛʔSHɛʔ/ p. 138 from English cassette

/gəriN shɔTa/ p. 67 from English soda

- and with this last compare

/kɔ's(ə)ti? shɔda/ p. 114, also from English <u>soda</u>.

This same objection applies to a number of entries for Burmese monomorphemic polysyllables, i.e. where the capitalized syllable is not a morpheme that occurs elsewhere and so cannot be regarded as subject to juncture voicing; e.g.

/'kɔNKiN/ 'ciel' p. 161

/kɛ Pa/   'mendiant' p. 112

There is no justification for assuming that the second syllables of these words ever have voiceless initials.

There are also examples of the same problem in reverse; e.g.

/kuli'gɔN/ p. 107

/ko bi' yiN bi'/ p. 130

/kə'Sa bɔ/ p. 31

Here the /'gɔN/ and the /bi'/ and the /bɔ/ are morphemes that do occur elsewhere as /'khɔN/ and /phi'/ and /phɔ/. Why are they not written /'KHɔN/ and /PHi'/ and /PHɔ/?

These few examples are perhaps enough to show not only that the transcription system of the DBF is hard for the reader to interpret, but also Bernot herself apparently has considerable difficulty in operating it. Perhaps that is why she occasionally adds a 'phonetic transcription' to clarify her phonological version; e.g.

/ka pyaN-/ [ka pya-]   p. 87

/kama' PaiN/ [kama'baʔ] p. 88

/KəTe/ [kəde] p. 98

/KəTo'/ [gədo'] p. 108

- with which incidentally compare

/kəTo'/ [kədo'] p. 98

for the same word under an alternative spelling.

As a result of the complexities of the transcription, compounded by errors of typing, and vitiated further by simply getting the pronunciation wrong, there is much misinformation on almost every page. For example:

s.v.:	for:	read:
<u>ka-rui-mui-chuṁ:</u> p. 66 /...'SoN/		/...'shoN/
<u>kañ-chā</u> p. 151 /...SHa/		/...sha/
<u>kuiy-tuṁ:luṁ:</u> p. 127 /...'ToN'LoN/		/...'toN'loN/
<u>ku-la-sa-magga</u> p. 99 /...θaməga'/		/...θəmɛ?ga'/
<u>ka-tuik-ka-twan:</u> p. 43 /...kəTai?Kə'tuN/		/KəTai?Kə'TuN/

ka-taññ:ka	p. 44	/kə.../	/Kə.../
ka-le:thin:ge-hā	p. 72	/...ˋtheN.../	/...ˋTHeN.../
ku-naññ:	p. 98	/...ˋmi/	/...ˋni/
kuiy-ñwe.	p. 124	/...Nueˊ/	/...ŋueˊ/
ka-thi-ka-pā:	p. 47	/...kəˋpa/	/...KəˋPa/
ka-ma-khya	p. 58	/...maˊ.../	/...mə.../
ka-ra-wik	p. 63	/...Uai?/	/...Ue?/
kō-ma-rhañ	p. 118	/...ʃaN/	/...ʃiN/
kō-mī-rhañ	p. 118	/...ʃaN/	/...ʃiN/

and so on.

One last curiosity should be mentioned. Some of the DBF's entries contain a startling /f/ or /v/; e.g.

kā-phrū: /kaˋfyu/ p. 87, from English curfew

kā-bā /kavə/ (sic) p. 87, from English cover

kō-prā: ... pha-lañ /filiN/ p. 117, from English film.

It is true that Burmese with a knowledge of English will use /f/ and /v/ in the appropriate places in loanwords, but they are strictly educated variants of the standard /phy/ and /by/, and they have no place in the Burmese phonological repertoire. There is even less excuse for Bernot's

ku-la-phā-sim /kuˊlaˊfa θeN/ p. 99, a plant name where

the ph does not represent an original /f/.

In con.: "sion then I would beg Bernot to rethink her transcription, even at this late stage of her progress with the DBF. In particular it would help if she abandoned her archiphonèmes and simply wrote voiced and voiceless consonants as required - after all the user can usually look up the entry for the morpheme concerned to see if it is ever pronounced otherwise. She also needs some rule for extended voicing; and it would be easier on the eye if she put her accents over the vowel instead of confusingly before and after the syllable. I am sure that some revision along these lines would make life easier not only for users of the DBF but also for Bernot herself. The prospect of changing the transcription part-way through is of course abhorrent; but isn't the prospect of 20 more volumes of muddle even worse?

5. Grammatical classifications. The range of classes is deliberately restricted to a simple list. The introduction (p. 14) mentions only 'nom', 'verbe', and a rarely admitted 'adjectif'; and among the particles 'enclitique nominale' and 'enclitique verbale'. The list of abbreviations (p. 18) addes to these 'marque modale' and 'marque verbale', but we are not told how these classifications are arrived at. Finally the text allows 'verbe auxiliaire' (e.g. s.v. koñ: p. 161), 'marque finale' (e.g. s.v. ko p. 119), and perhaps others.

It would have been helpful to have some indication of the criteria for these classifications. Limiting the suffixes to 'nominale', 'verbale' and 'modale' means that the DBF excludes the information that some suffixes (e.g. ka, ko, kui) can follow both verbs and nouns.

One very helpful typographical device, first used for Burmese I believe in Cornyn 1958, and now adopted in the DBF, is the use of a following hyphen for verbs, as in

ka- 'danser' p. 27;

and a preceding hyphen for suffixes, as in

-ka 'enclitique nominale modale' p. 27.

Auxiliary verbs get a hyphen at both ends, as in

-koñ:- 'verbe auxiliaire' p. 161.

This conveys a lot of information at a glance.

6. Glosses. As far as I can tell - that is to say allowing for my own deficiencies in both Burmese and French - the glosses of the DBF are admirable. Inevitably there are a few errors, but they are mainly in somewhat out-of-the-way words and are not substantial enough in quality or quantity to detract from the value of the work as a whole. The following are examples of the sort of errors I noted.

ka-rui.bhu-rā: p. 66 is a 'tally pagoda', built from the bricks accumulated by taking one brick from each load or batch of bricks for use in the main pagoda under construction; not a 'jedi construit de matériaux de premier choix'.

ka-roñ:tī:luṁ: p. 67 is the name of a piece of music with a distinctive rhythm played before the opening of a traditional stage show: not a 'batterie circulaire de tambours' - and anyway the drum circle is not used in its preformance.

Apart from rare aberrations of this kind, the glosses seemed to me remarkably accurate and concise. In particular the entries for the names of flora and fauna are more informative than those of the TMA, and have the added advantage of including a Latin name - often several: see e.g. ka-na-cui: p. 50.

7. Examples. The DBF is generous with its examples, all of which are translated, and they are particularly valuable in a dictionary covering languages and cultures as diverse as Burmese and French. Most of the DBF's examples are helpful, and the translations of them are often excellent; e.g. s.v. kui-kañ: p. 123:

kui-kañ: cwai-mi-rañ bha-wa chuṁ:prī-bhai
'Si vous vous adonnez à la cocaïne vous êtes perdu'

and s.v. kan.lan.kan.lan. p. 181:

'a-khu-to. kan.lan.kan.lan.nai.sū-ka pā-'uṁ:may
'maintenant, il va encore nous encombrer de sa présence'

There are a few errors in the translations; e.g. s.v.
ku-lā:tak khok p. 101:

> chwam: phun: pe:ran is 'to have their meal'; not
> 'pour qu'on leur fasse offrande de nourriture'

and s.v. kup nhip p. 211:

> kup-nhip-thā:le. rhi-tay is 'they press down'; not
> 'couvrez   en tassant'

- but such errors are rare.

The only serious reservation I have is that the examples sometimes don't earn their keep. How much information, over and above that given in the glosses, do the following, for example, convey?

> s.v. kok 'manche...' p. 140 (the bow of a Burmese harp):
> 'On adapte le manche'

> s.v. kō 'colle' p. 115:
> 'On importe de la colle de l'étranger'

> s.v. kak chwai p. 138 (play the game of kèq):
> 'Là, un groupe de gens joue au kèq'

8. Restrictive labels. These are helpful, and seem to be mostly present where necessary. I noticed, however, that neither under ka 'si' p. 27 nor under kā: 'quant à' p. 94 is there any indication that these items are restricted to the literary style.

9. Illustrations. Like example sentences, illustrations are often clearer and shorter than descriptions, and the DBF is much enriched by having been able to include a line drawing on almost every second or third page. Their value is well exemplified by the illustrations for kak-poñ (part of a bullock cart) p. 138, kuiñ:thok (a method of trapping fish) p. 170, kun:pat-krwak-rhok (kind of batten) p. 201, and many others.

Again, as with the example sentences, I have reservations about some. On p. 175, for example, there is a drawing of something that looks like a grave and a headstone, and I have been unable to relate it to any of the nearby entries - 'grammatical subject', 'separate', 'velvet', 'be obstructive'. I wonder too if the outline sketch of a duck-like bird with a pouched beak would actually help anyone identify a ko.yañ (p. 114) - and if it really is a toucan, surely the beak should be a similar shape but upside down? The illustration for ko. 'être courbe et retroussé' p. 113 is a drawing of part of a woman's face with only very slightly curved eyelashes.

10. Etymologies. The most frequent attributions for loanwords are predictably to Pali (or Sanskrit) and English, though there are also some made to Hindi, Chinese and other languages. Inexplicably, a number of obvious loans are not noted as such; e.g.

> kaññā p. 37: from Pali kaññā 'young girl'

> ko-lā-ha-la p. 120: from Pali kolāhala 'rumour'

> kā-ma-rā-ga p. 88: from Pali kāma-rāga 'lust'

kañ-tañ: p. 151: from English <u>canteen</u>

kī:wī:ñhak p. 88: from English <u>kiwi</u>.

Conversely, there is one attribution to English that probably should not have been made: Bernot derives k̄o 'glue' p. 115 from English <u>scotch</u>, apparently from its application to scotch tape. I haven't gone to the lengths of finding out how old the company concerned is, but k̄o meaning 'glue' is attested from the 1860s and I doubt if scotch tape was known in those days. Anyway k̄o is an unlikely form for <u>scotch</u> to take. The <u>Mran-mā-cā 'aphwai.</u> 1978 gives its etymology as 'Japanese, Chinese, Shan, Mon'.

There is perhaps a sign of anglo-french rivalry discernible in attributions such as k̄u-de:tā p. 106 (coup d'état) to French, and kañ-tā-ghā-tañ p. 151 (kindergarten) and kuiñ-jā (Kaiser) to German. It is much more likely that such words reached Burma through English rather than direct from the original languages. And I wonder what justification Bernot has for claiming that <u>kan</u> (p. 183) is an abbreviation of 'Américain' rather than 'American'?

It is surprising that the DBF is so parsimonious with its attributions to Mon. They could have been made, for example, for <u>ka-sa-poñ:</u> p. 80, <u>ka-d̄u:</u> p. 48, <u>ka-nu-ka-mā</u> p. 51, and others.

11. <u>Classifiers</u>. It is thoughtful of Bernot to have taken the trouble to note the appropriate numerative for the nouns in her dictionary. They are not always given, and those that are included are inevitably restricted to one or two obvious ones: the DBF gives no hint of the richness of choice available in poetic or elevated styles (see e.g. Becker 1975). Students however will no doubt be grateful for this information, which is not readily available anywhere else.

Future Burmese lexicographers, taking their cue from Bernot's helpful move, might also consider noting the placement of the negative prefix <u>ma-</u> in polysyllabic and 'tied-noun' verbs. Students have problems in choosing between, say,

<u>kuik-ma-phai.</u> and <u>ma-kuik-phai.</u> 'not bite off', or

<u>kun-ma-k̄u:</u> and <u>ma-kun-k̄u:</u> 'not trade'.

12. <u>Production</u>. Bernot and her collaborators have struggled manfully with the problems of matching typewritten Burmese and roman scripts, and, given the difficulties, they produce a remarkably legible page. I saw no misprints in the French. There are a few here and there in the Burmese script, e.g.

<u>ke-si</u>	for:	<u>ke-ti</u> p. 110
<u>kuiñ-mre</u>		<u>kuiñ:mre</u> p. 170
<u>kuiñ:ruiñ:</u>		<u>kuiñ:rhuiñ:</u> p. 170
<u>kui-d̄i-'añ</u>		<u>kui-dañ</u> p. 129
<u>k̄u:la-kan khat</u>	<u>k̄u:ka-lan khat</u> p. 107

By far the highest proportion of errors is in the phonological
transcriptions, which are exemplified above.

12. Conclusion. The DBF's wide coverage and accurate glosses make
it a very substantial addition to the existing range of aids to the
study of Burmese language and literature. Its value is enhanced by its
examples sentences and illustrations - though not all of these contribute
- and by its notes on context restrictions, loanword sources and
numeratives.

On the debit side, the indication of pronunciation is unreliable,
and the transcription, besides having serious structural defects, is
liberally peppered with errors. The DBF is also marred in a minor way
by errors and omissions that are probably due to hasty compilation:
the omission here and there of a numerative, a label, a donor language;
words listed out of order (e.g. ku-mā-ra and ku-mā-rī p. 98, which
should appear after ku-ma on the following page); the incomplete listing
of grammatica.. classes; hasty colloquialization of some examples;
and perhaps the claim on the title page to cover ka to kya, and
occasional entry of the same word under different spellings.

Bernot has undertaken an immense task, and still has a long way
to go. The drudgery element would be vastly eased if only she could
have access to a word processor or a computer with the appropriate
facilities. Either way, all concerned with Burmese language studies
will hope fervently that she will be able to forge her way through
to the end of the alphabet.

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[1]To avoid the typographical problems presented by Burmese script,
Burmese words and letters mentioned in this review are transliterated:
see the table in Okell 1971 p. 65.