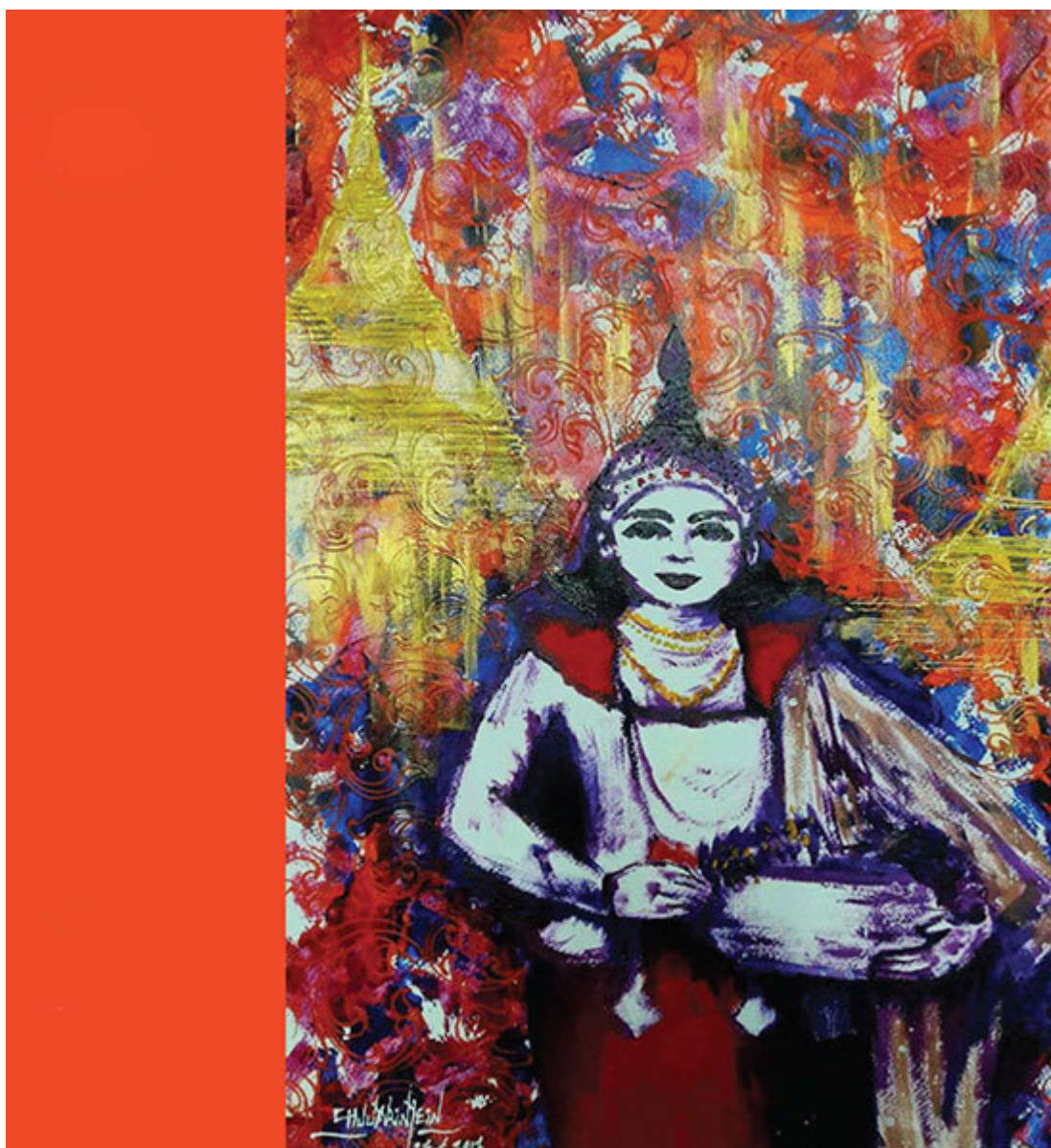


The Queen

Shin Saw Pu was a queen who listened to her heart. Learn why she was so beloved, even after she gave up her crown.



The Queen
Alyson Curro

Let's Read



The Asia Foundation



Queen Shin Saw Pu was sailing down the Irrawaddy River. It was dark. The moon was her guide. It was 1429 in Inwa, an ancient city near Mandalay in central Myanmar. Queen Shin Saw Pu of Inwa was unhappy, and she was doing something about it. Ever since leaving Bago, the queen had missed her home and family. When her husband, the king of Inwa, died in battle, she made a daring decision. With the help of two monk friends, she escaped.



When the sun came up, she hid in the jungle.



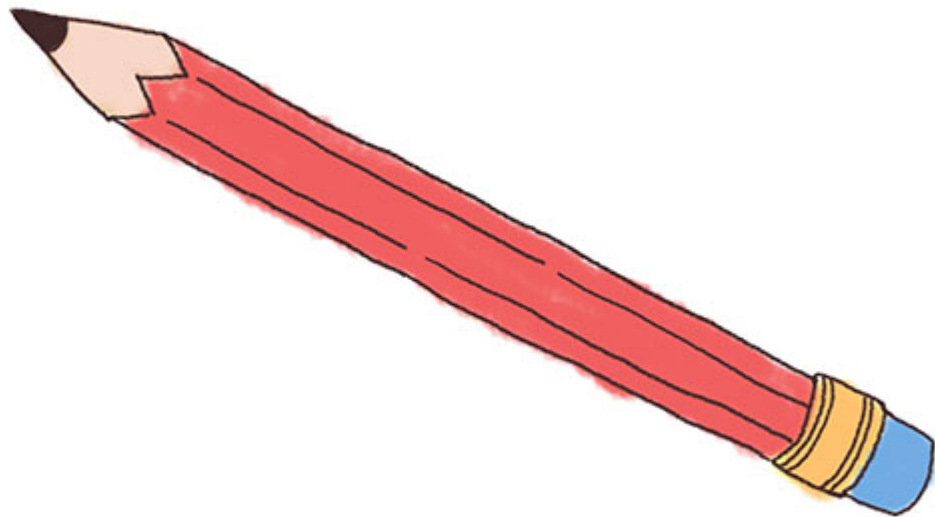
Queen Shin Saw Pu made it to Bago, and her family gave her big hugs. They had missed her too. By 1454, all the men in her family had ruled as king of Bago. Shin Saw Pu was the only remaining heir, so it was her turn. She did a good job. Queen Shin Saw Pu's peaceful kingdom prospered, while the men in neighboring kingdoms fought one another.



But after a few years of ruling her kingdom, the queen decided she wanted something different and gave up her crown. People were surprised, but she was listening to her heart.



Shin Saw Pu moved to Yangon to be close to Shwedagon Pagoda and dedicated the rest of her life to prayer and other religious activities. She also made Shwedagon the Buddhist shrine and icon it is today. She had her weight in gold hammered into thin sheets, called gold leaf, and she covered the pagoda with them. Later rulers (all men) followed her example, and, even today, visitors decorate Shwedagon with gold leaf. Shin Saw Pu was a queen, but she is celebrated today for the accomplishments she achieved without a crown.



Use these prompts to write your own story on a piece of paper. When are you happiest? What do you love doing? Life can be tough sometimes. Describe a tough moment in your life that you overcame. Tell a story of your future. What do you dream of doing?



Draw your portrait on a piece of paper.

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