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The Role of Witnesses in *Thet-kayit* Contracts in Early Modern Myanmar

In the modern Myanmar language, *thet-kayit* refers to date or year, but in the Konbaung Period, *thet-kayit* signified not only date or year but also any dated contractual deeds. I have collected 364 *thet-kayits* from the Meiktila region, which is located in central Myanmar, one of the economic centers of the Konbaung dynasty, and which covers more than 120 villages under the Governor of Taungoo. Although *thet-kayits* reveal the socioeconomic relations at that time and the scope of information in *thet-kayit* documents is widespread and abundant, this paper focuses on the witnesses, particularly the role of religious persons as witnesses to contracts. Religious persons are respected by the people of Myanmar because of their dedication to Buddhism and they also played a very important role in economic transactions.