

Brother against brother, friend against friend

For some years now I have been a regular reader of [Aung Naing Oo's reminiscences](#) published by *The Irrawaddy*. He was a senior figure in the All Burma Students' Democratic Front and writes about his time on the Thailand-Burma border with an unusual mix of humour, insight, compassion and courage. I always enjoy learning from what he has to say.

Aung Naing Oo's most [recent installment](#) describes the realities of Burma's civil wars for those who ended up fighting their former friends and family members. In the mountains along that border I have, on occasion, heard similar stories from former fighters lamenting the tragically intimate and internecine character of their wars.

The horrors of civil wars are almost impossible for those of us who live in peaceful situations to ever fully grasp. But I think we should try. Thanks to Aung Naing Oo we have a lyrical voice that can help us to understand.