

The expansion of “Bengal Civilization” to Tibet, Myanmar, and Indonesia during Pala Period: the relationship of Agricultural Tools, Buddha Image and Temple Style etc.: Re-evaluation of “Ploughing” Terracotta in Bagan

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by

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This presentation is revised and added from the past presentation below:

Terracotta depicting “drawing a plough” from Ranir Banglo, Moinamoti, Bangladesh and Ananda Temple, Bagan. Myanmar

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Introduction: Week Relation between Myanmar and Bangladesh

- **Currently, people in Myanmar, Bangladesh, and even Japan tend to consider that Myanmar and Bangladesh have a weak relationship historically.**
- **Myanmar: Theravada Buddhist**
- **Bangladesh: Sunni Muslim**
- **Two countries belong to different international political /administrative regions :**
- **South Asia and Southeast Asia**
- **SAARC and ASEAN**

Introduction: Few studies covering two countries

- These biases may have a significant influence on people, including scholars of history, geography, tropical studies, and area studies.**
- The comparative studies covering Bangladesh and Myanmar or crossing the national border between South Asia and Southeast Asia are not commonly conducted.**

Introduction: Overlooked or Ignored the studies on the relationship of ancient Bengal to Southeast Asia ; ex. Pala and Bagan?

- **Haroun-ER-Rashid,1974,"Ancient Association between Bengal and Thailand", J. Asiatic Soc.Bangladesh,Vol.XIX,No.3 ;25-37**
- **Haroun-ER-Rashid, 1979-1981, “ Importance of Pagan in Bengal Art History”, J. Asiatic Soc.Bangladesh(Hum.), XXIV-VI:109-115.**
- **Md.Mokammal Hossain Bhuiyan,2000,"A Note on Bengal-Myanmar Contacts in the Ancient and Medieval Period", J.Asiatic Soc.Bangladesh(Hum.), 45(2):179-182.**
- **Charlotte Kendrick Galloway, A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of The Australian National University, November 2006, Burmese Buddhist Imagery of the Early Bagan Period (1044 – 1113)**

Introduction: Strong historical relationship between two countries indicated by recent studies.

Rila Mukhejee 2018 “Silver Links! Bagan-Bengal and Shadowy Metal Corridors:9th to 13th Centuries”(Goh Geok Yia et al ed. 2018. Bagan and the world:153-178)

Lwin and Han, 2017 “11th century in Images of Brahma in the Buddhist Art of Bagan (circa 11-13th century), paper presented at “Bagan Metropolis July 9-15, 2017 SOAS University of London Southeast Asian Art Academic Program, <https://www.soas.ac.uk/saaap/news/file125695.pdf>

**Heather Elgood, 2017 “The significance of North East India in the development of the sculpture of Bagan”, paper presented at “Bagan Metropolis July 9-15, 2017 SOAS University of London Southeast Asian Art Academic Program with SEMEO-CHAT
https://www.academia.edu/84862984/The_significance_of_North_East_India_in_the_development_of_the_sculpture_of_Bagan**

- Rila Mukhejee has clearly stated the strong economic linkage between Bagan and Bengal;
- “Throughout its history, Southeast Asia has been plagued by a shortage of labour; Bagan was no exception. The issue of labour becomes important for Bagan, requiring fixed units of value. Although located in the dry zone, Bagan harnessed a system of perennial rivers by constructing dams, sluices, weirs and channels(Aung-Thwin 1985,p.97). Raids into the southeastern Bengal delta were common from the 12th century; inscriptions frequently mentions” Indian”, probably from Assam and Bengal, settled in Bagan(Aung-Thwin 1985,p.97;Wicks 1992,p.125 mentions an inscription of 1164 where six “Indian” slaves were exchanged against one elephant, and forty slaves exchanged against one horse).”

- Thein Lwin and U Min Han have stated the cultural linkage of both the Countries ;
- “Especially, Buddhism was flourished in Bagan period during the 11th century to 13th century A.D. The numerous stupas, temples and monasteries were witnessing the people of Bagan. Originally most of the walls and vault ceilings of monuments in Bagan were adorned with mural paintings. "The earliest murals at Bagan, which are dated to the 11th century, have strong stylistic similarities with the pictorial art of northeast India, the Bihar-Bengal region, notably Nalanda-Bodhgaya. There were both push and pull factors involved in the arrival of Indian art styles in Bagan at this time. The growth of a Buddhist regime would have naturally attracted artists and architects experienced in creating Buddhist works. After the decline of Buddhist sites in India, or at the very least in the creation of an environment in which Buddhists generally, including artisans, would have been motivated to find a more accepting the culture. At Bagan, the imported Indian models were assimilated and transformed into genuinely local formations.(Bautze Picron, 2003)”

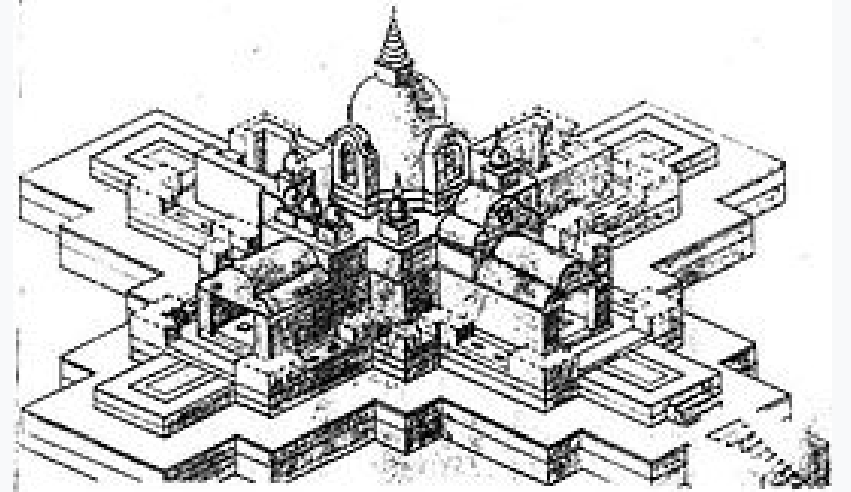
Only Strong Similarity among Three Temples of Temple Style in Ancient South and Southeast Asia

- **Somapura Mahavihara**, Mahayana Buddhist temple in Paharpur, Bangladesh; 8 C -11 C
- **Candi Sewu** is an eighth century Mahayana Buddhist temple located 800 meters north of Prambanan in Central Java, Indonesia.
- **Ananda Temple**, located in Bagan, Myanmar is a Buddhist temple built in 1105 AD during the reign (1084–1113) of King Kyanzittha of the Pagan Dynasty.

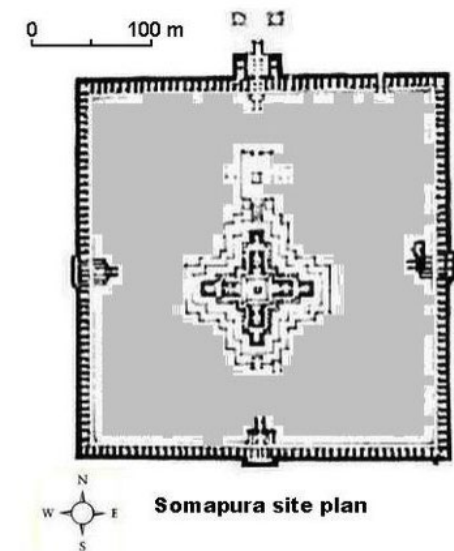


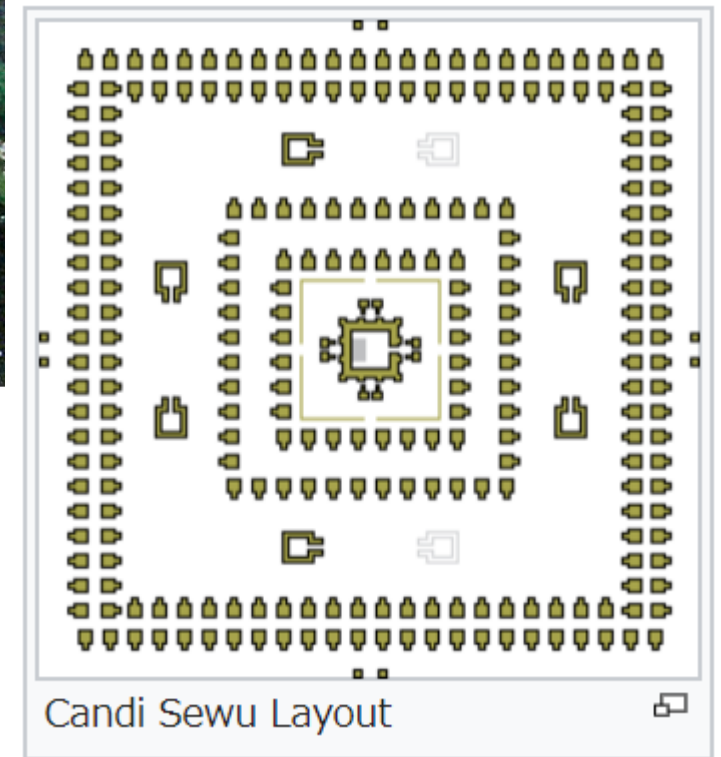
Somapura Mahavihara in Paharpur, Badalgachhi Upazila, Naogaon District, Bangladesh is among the best known Buddhist viharas in the Indian Subcontinent and is one of the most important archaeological sites in the country. 8 C -11 C.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Somapura_Mahavihara



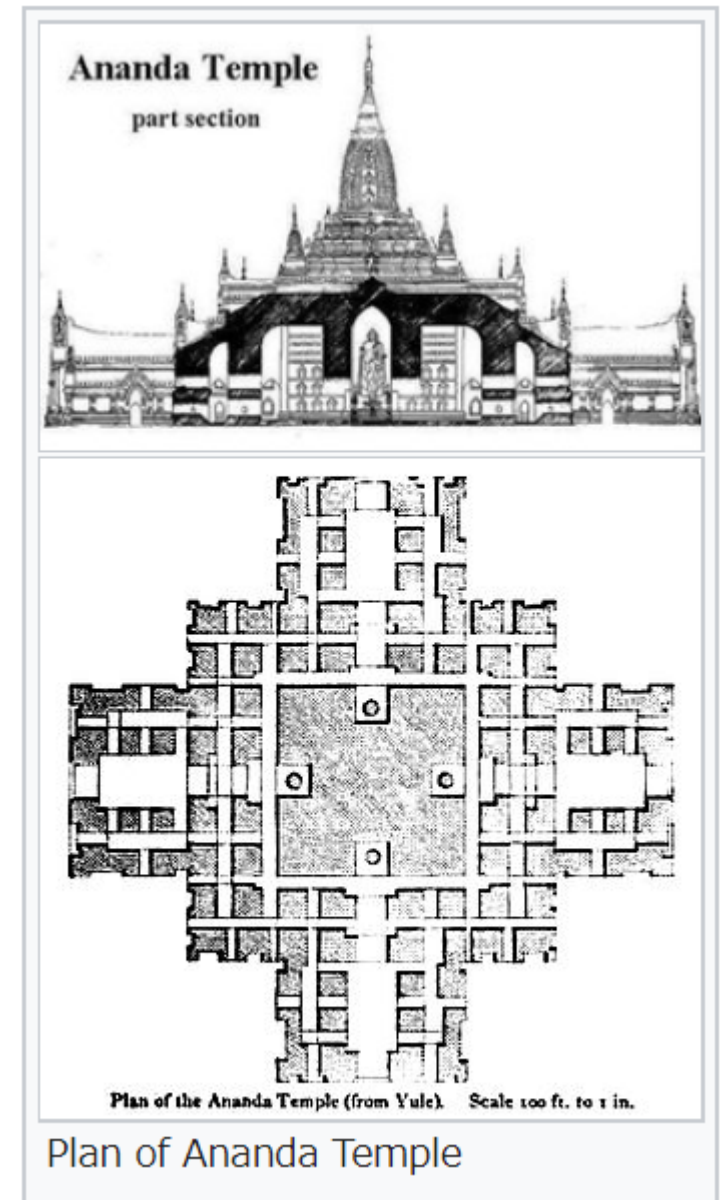
Model by Mohammed Ali Naqi





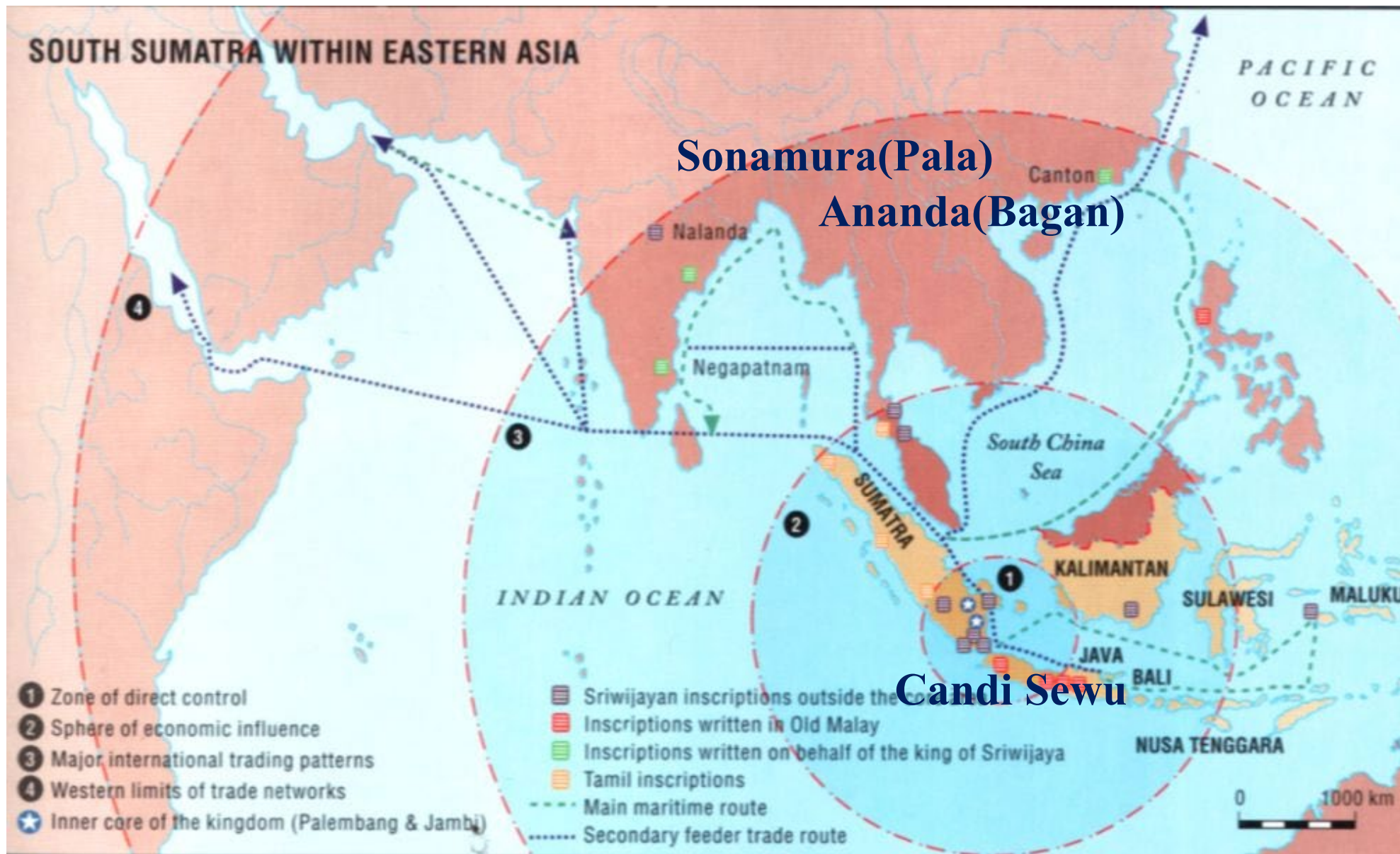
Candi Sewu is an 8 C Mahayana Buddhist temple located 800 meters north of Prambanan in Central Java, Indonesia.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sewu>



The Ananda Temple, located in Bagan, Myanmar is a Buddhist temple built in 12C (1105 AD) during the reign (1084–1113) of King Kyanzittha of the Pagan Dynasty.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ananda_Temple



Sea Road between 8 C and 12 C

Source)Revised and added the map from Indonesian Heritage Series No.1Ancient History:83p

Atiśa Dīpaṃkara Śrījñāna (982 - 1054 CE) was a Bengali Buddhist religious leader and master from the Indian subcontinent. He was one of the major figures in the spread of 11th-century Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhism in Asia and inspired Buddhist thought from Tibet to Sumatra. In 1013 CE, he traveled to the Srivijaya kingdom and stayed there for 12 years and came back to India(Bangladesh).

Bikrampur, the most probable place for Atiśa's birthplace, was the capital of the Pala Empire as it had been of the ancient kingdoms of southeast Bengal. Though the city's exact location is not certain, it presently lies in the Munshiganj District of Bangladesh.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ati%C5%9Ba>



Bilateral tie relation during Kyanzittha(1084-1112 A.D.)

- His first queen, Abeyadan from Pattikera(Presently Cumilla greater district region, South east Bengal)
- Abeyadana Temple (1090 CE) by Kyanzittha for Abeyadana



Source)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abeyadana_Temple

Source)Haroun-ER-Rashid, 1979-1981



Source)Heather Elgood 2017 The significance of North East India in development of the sculpture of Bagan



Figure Tara with two lotuses Abeyadana temple Bagan 11th century

Source) Heather Elgood 2017 The significance of North East India in development of the sculpture of Bagan

“In Bagan, fresco painted temples become common in the eleventh to thirteenth century. Many depict the Jataka stories, which are tales of the former lives of the Buddha. However one or two of temples are remarkable for exhibiting a selection of imagery, which echoes some of the iconography associated with **the Vajrayana** or Mahayana school of Buddhism from the Pala school of North-East India. The Bagan temple which exhibits this most clearly is the eleventh century Abeyadana temple. On the north side of the entrance hall there are eight rows of Jataka frescos with titles in the Pali language and descriptions in the Mon language; and often the number of the Jataka tales. **There is also an image of the goddess Tara who is shown with a curvilinear body, dressed in royal attire. On her left side there is a white lotus and on her right side there is a blue lotus.** (Heather Elgood 2017, Quoted)”

The Vajrayana has developed remarkably during Pala period in ancient Bengal and Indonesia then extended into Tibet

Theoretical Frame: Technological Dissemination by Agriculture-Cultural Complex (Nakao)

- As a concept, a culture, a technology, etc. is usually transmitted from one place to another place as a form of complex, the farming technology of Bagan was surely influenced from Bengal during 11-13 Centuries.
- The mystery of the traditional farming implements in Bagan is that a harrow or “Tun” is usually used instead of plough or “Te”. The word of a plough has not been found in the inscriptions of the archaeological materials of Bagan (Ando et al. 2006 Study Note on Harrow(Tun) Farming in Pagan, Myanmar, JSTA Vol.50.Extra Issue2 :49-50).
- Therefore, this presentation aims to re-think this mystery by re-thinking of the overlooked Terracotta depicting “drawing a plough” from Ranir Banglo, Moinamoti(Cmilla), Bangladesh and Ananda Temple, Bagan. Myanmar, as a symbolic phenomenon of the Bengal Civilization, spread in accordance with a form of complex, the farming technology, Buddhism and the Temple Style.

Methodology

- The field work on the glazed terracotta was conducted in Ananda Temple, Shezigon Pagoda and Dhamma Yazika Pagoda on Jan.19,2011 in Bagan, Myanmar.
- The terracotta depicting “drawing a plough” was investigated in the regional director office, the department of Achaеology, the government of Bangladesh on Nov.1,2018 in Moninamoti, Cumilla , Bangladesh.
- The investigation in Ananda temple was conducted again on July 26,2011 by Mr.Myint Thein and Photo of Ploughing in Ananda terracotta was taken at that time.



Ranir Banglo, Moinamoti, Bangladesh



Ananda Temple



Shezigon Pagoda

Result and discussion

- The terracotta of Photo 1 (hereafter this is called “MPTP: Moinamoti Plough Terracotta Plaque”) of Photo1 was excavated from Ranir Banglo Mura Mainamati or Queen Moinamoti Palace in 1997.
- The glazed terracotta of Photo2 (hereafter this is called “AFTP: Ananda Plough Terracotta Plaque”) is set up in the outer wall of Ananda Temple. Ranir Banglo Mura Mainamati was constructed in 9-10 C and Ananda Temple was in 1091.



Photo1 MPTP (By Ando)



Photo2 AFTP (By Thein)

- It can be considered that MPTP was made in 10-11 C and APTP was in 11-12C. The motif of terracotta plaques of Moinamoti is mainly animals and country everyday life etc.. That of Bagan including Ananda temple is Jataka or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births. APTP is the Jatka story No.389.
- The Jatka story of No.389 mentions "One day he had gone to the field with his men, and giving them orders to plough...." (Cowell ed. The Jataka Vol.III-IV, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers:184).

Jataka Story No.389 in Ananda and Shezigon

- We could the other terracotta plaques of the Jatka story No.389 in Shezigon Pagoda and Dhamma Yazika Pagoda, but their depicting design is a harrow or Tun such as that of Shezigon Pagoda (Photo3, hereafter this is called “SPTP:Shezigon Plough Terracotta Plaque”). Shezigon was constructed between 1059 and 1090 , mostly at the same time as Ananda temple.



Photo3 SPTP (By Ando)



Nangol(Bengal Plough)



Te (Burmese Plough)



Ate of Rakaine



Harrow of Bangladesh



Share of Tun(Harrow)



Tun(Harrow)

Discussion

- **The artisan who made SPTP (also known as the terracotta of Dhamma Yazika Pagoda, mentioning Jatka No. 389) may have considered a plough a harrow or Tun, but the artisan who made APTP knew that a plough was not a harrow or Tun. It means that at least a farming implement, such as a plough, was introduced into Bagan from Bengal as technological knowledge, along with the Pala-style Buddha statue and temple, or was already present in Bagan.**

Discussion

- The shape of plough in terracotta of Ananda Temple is more similar to Ate in Rakaine or Nangol in Bangladesh. The 1855-56 Report of the administration of Pegu recorded that the Malay plough was procured to Tooungoo from Penang, Malay, but no Burman was persuaded to use one of the ploughs (courtesy of Mr. Myint Thein).
- It means that the plough introduced from “Pala” may have disappeared during the Bagan period, or the plough and harrow were introduced from “India” or “China” earlier than the Bagan period; however, we do not know the agriculture system of the Pyu period.
- Anyway, the Chinese historical documents recorded that Thai people migrated into upper the Ayeyarwady River from southern China (11-13C?), used to prepare the land manually without cattle force and plough (even harrow). It means that Burmese migrated from south China may have met the plough and harrow at the Bagan period. Shan (Thai) got Te (Plough) later, after settlement at the present place from China, most probably, based on the shape and casting iron of Plough share, too.



Nangol(Bengal Plough)



Te (Burmese Plough)



Ate of Rakaine

Conclusion

- Therefore, I would like to conclude this presentation as follows;
- Burmese may have accepted a form of complex of agricultural technology, Buddhism, and Temple style as an influence of Bengal Civilization (Pala) during the Bagan Period.

Thank you for your attention

At Ananda Tempe, Jan, 2011.

