

SEAMEO CHAT INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON
TRADITIONS IN A CHANGING WORLD

550 Jataka Stories In The Development of Myanmar Traditions Through the Ages



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Scope, Questions and Methodology

- Chronological Sequences which 550 jatakas were started and developed in
- S** • The origin of the Relief-Tradition; Tradition of Buddhist Visual Art (Pre Bagan Periods)
- The dawn of Relief and Mural Jataka in Bagan period
- (Post Bagan periods) 550 Jatakas were continuously maintained to Modern Time
- Q** • When was 550 arrived in Myanmar?
- How it was arrived in
- Which period it had been arrived and developed?
- How was 550 between religious and social aspect?
- M** • Study based on the Archaeological evidences
- Study based on the Field Works and Historical Documents
- Descriptive and Analytic Methods

Introduction

- ❁ The early evidences of 550 Jatakas were only found in Early Bagan Period
- ❁ Before Bagan, the traces of 550 Jatakas may also be seen as *Mahanipata* reliefs of Thi Kya Phaya and Kalyani Sima of Thaton.
- ❁ In Sri Ksetra, the terracotta relief which the man was depicted in sitting position may be *Temi Jat* suggested by U Mya.
- ❁ Evidently, 550 Jataka completely found in Early Bagan Period
- ❁ The present days, 550 Jataka was still important for the civic education
- ❁ Jatakas were developed from 10 to 550 and reduced to 547

Sequence concerning the Tradition of 550 Jatakas

- ❁ **The early evidences of 550 Jataka concerning the Southeast Asia can be seen in those of Borobudur c. 9th century AD.**
- ❁ **To say about the visual depiction of Buddhist Jataka, the dedications of King Asoka are marvelous original evidences e.g. those of Bharhut , Sanchi Stupa and Ajanta Cave paintings. As for the reliefs, those of Sanchi and Bharhut relief sculpture were mostly famous. But the evidences of terracotta plaques which depicted the Buddhist Jatakas can only be found in the excavation of paharpur region.**

(A Pakistani Buddhist, 1947, 45)

The Early Traces of 550 Jataka in India and Southeast Asia

- ❁ The Jatakas are among the oldest motifs which are pictorially represented in India, and even today they yield favourable models for sculptors and painters in all Buddhist countries. In India, we find scenes from the Jatakas in sculptures at Bharhut 3rd century BC (Vincent A Smith, 1958, 135) Sanchi 2nd century BC (Vincent A Smith, 1958, 135), Bodh Gaya 1st century AD, Amaravati 2nd century AD and Nagajunakonda 3rd century AD as well as in the paintings in the Ajanta Caves 6th century AD. As in India, so also in other Buddhist countries, the Jataka tales found spontaneous popularity with the monks. Hence, the hundreds of Jataka portrayals decorate the Stupa of Borobudur in Java (Ananda Coomarswamy, 1927, 101).

- ❁ **Pyu Period**
- ❁ **Bagan Period**
- ❁ **Post Bagan Periods**
- ❁ **Present Days' 550 Jataka**

Pyu Period

- ❁ *Relief Culture of Buddhist Iconography*
- ❁ Tradition of Terracotta
- ❁ Tradition of Stone carving
- ❁ Technology of Ceramics and Sculpturing
- ❁ Aesthetics of Narrative Reliefs regarding the religious thematic factors_ Buddhism and Brahmanism
- ❁ Textual and Contextual evidences of Reliefs
 - e.g. Gold-Leaves embossed Manuscript
 - e.g. Terracotta Reliefs depicted the Eight Scenes of Buddha Bio

Controversial Speculation



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အုတ်ချပ်ပုံ။

- It was suggested that those of Temi prince was illustrated in terracotta relief.
- But it may be controversial with the speculation of Bodhisattva or Pyu royal role.

- Temi Jataka (No.538) of Mahanipatta found in Pyu Period Khinba Mound, Hmawza

U Mya; Votive tablets of Burma, Part II,
Plate no. 8

Kyon Tu Reliefs



Terracotta Reliefs depicted the bull fighting and audiences



Terracotta Reliefs depicted the group of dancer and musicians

Early Reliefs of Pyu Period

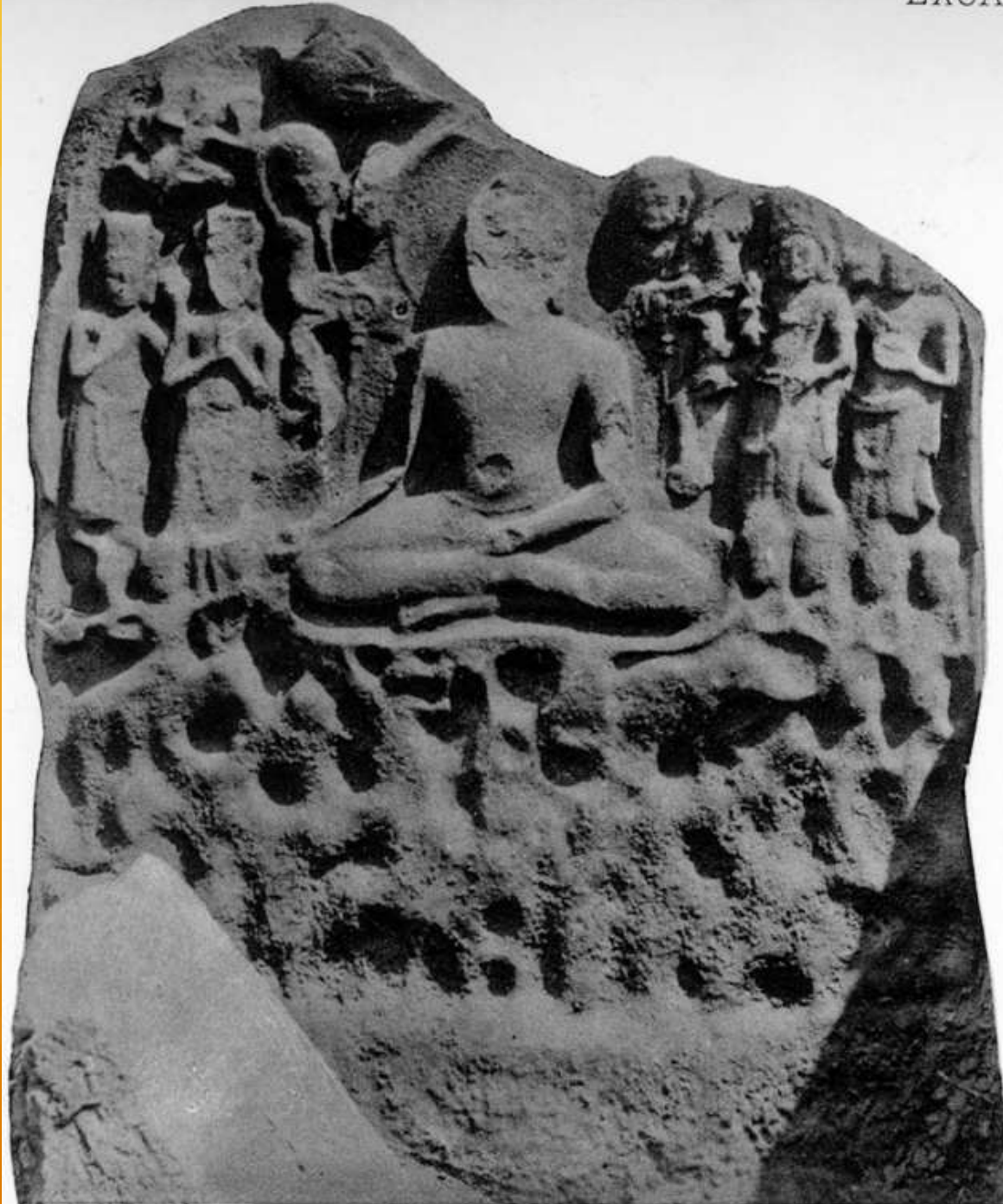


PL 20_ Terracotta Relief
(after Kyaw Myo Win)



Halin_ Sandstone Reliefs illustrated
the appearance of Pyu People in

EXCAVA

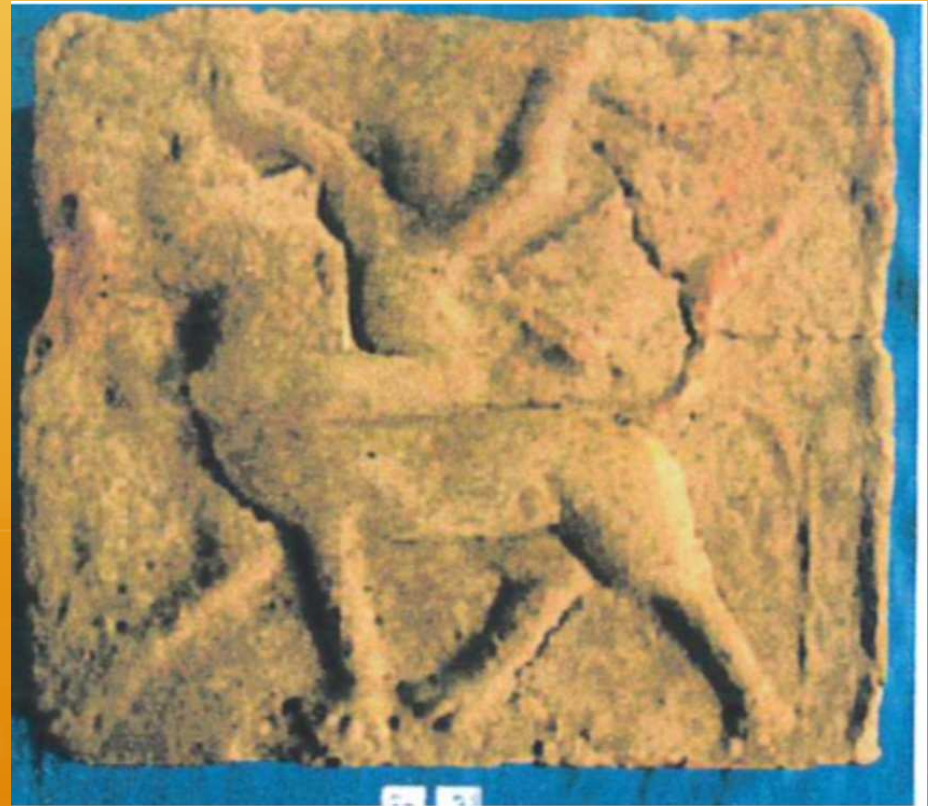


- Stone Reliefs in over-life size found in Sri Ksetra, Phou Gaung Gan Gone
- Buddha flanked by Audiences including Men, Spiritual gods and Brahmans

Tradition of Making Relief in Pyu Period



Terracotta Relief found in Sri Ksetra



Terracotta Relief found in Pinle
(Maing mao)

Twante Yoke Sone Stupa (Pictorial Stupa of Twante) Terracotta Reliefs of Narrative scenes





Terracotta
Reliefs
depicted on of
the
Mahanipata
the Great 10
Jatakas of 550
Jatakas found
in Thi Kya
Phaya, Thaton.

It was
suggested by
U San Win as
Mahosaddha
Jataka. ?

Terracotta Plaques of Mahanipata Jatakas inlaid in the terraces of Thi Kya Phaya, Thaton



24"x24"x?

Bagan Period

- ❁ **Early Bagan Period**
- ❁ **Middle Bagan Period**
- ❁ **Late Bagan Period**

- ❖ **Interior**
- ❖ **Exterior**

- ❖ **Terracotta**
- ❖ **Glazes_ Ceramics**
- ❖ **Murals**
- ❖ **Ink glosses**



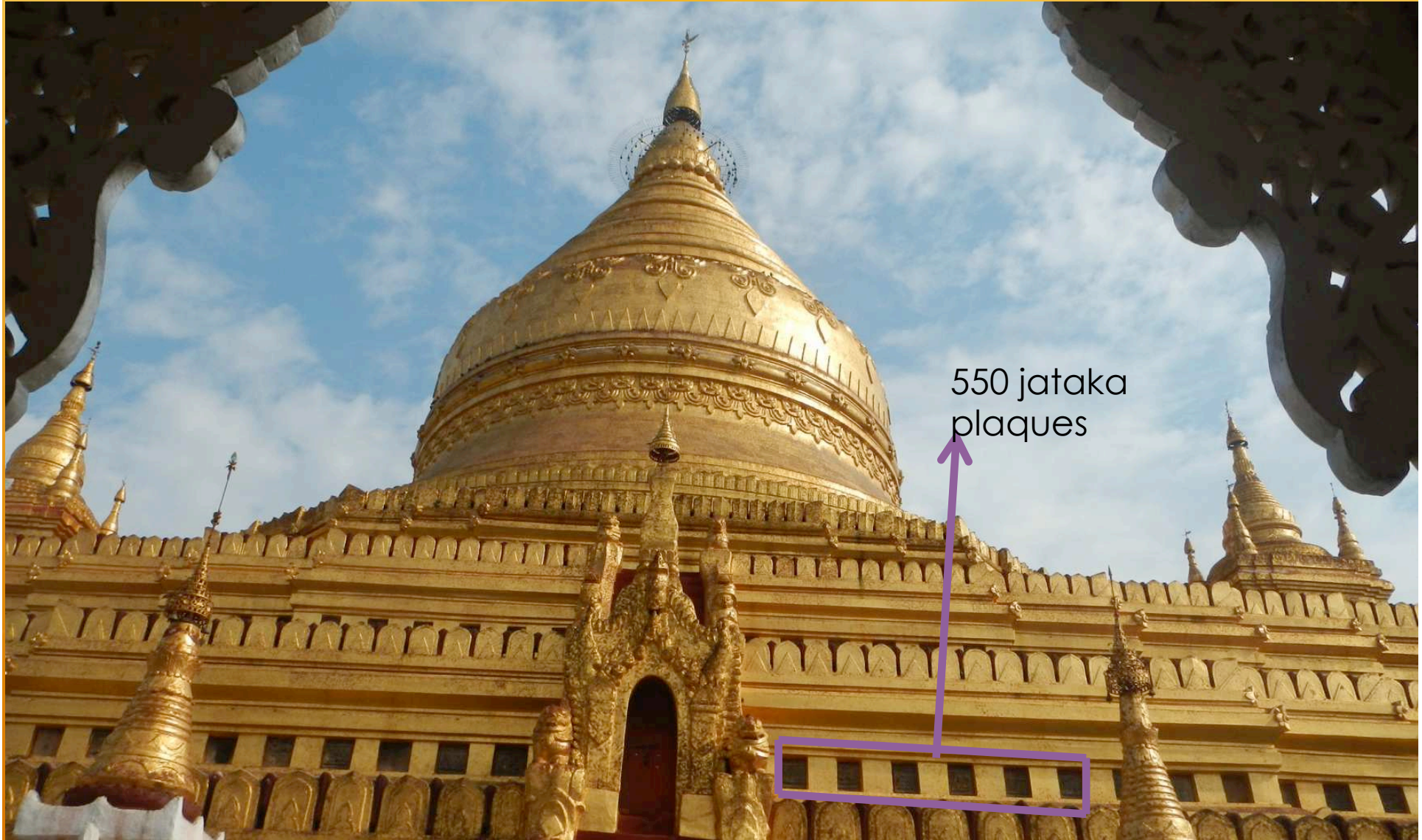
Terracotta reliefs of 550
Jatakas found in
Shwesandaw stupa, Early
Bagan period,
11th century AD

(Luce: OBEP. III.)





Shwezigon 550 Jatakas



550 jataka
plaques



Murals of 550 Jataka in Ananda Temple







**550 Jataka Murals of Nagayone
Temple
11th century AD**



**550 Jataka Murals of Myingaba
Gubyauk Gyi Temple
Early 12th century AD**

- **The Early Phase of 550 Jatakas mural
in Bagan**



Glazed Plaques of 550 Jataka Reliefs found in Dhammarajaka Stupa

Lokahteikpan Temple





Mingalarzedi Stupa





Glazed Plaques of 550 Jataka Reliefs found in Mingalazedi Stupa

Murals of 550 Jataka found in Thayanbu Temple



Post Bagan Period

- ❁ **Pinya Period**
- ❁ **Innwa Period**
- ❁ **Taungoo Period**
- ❁ **Konbaung Period**
- ❁ **Colonial Period**





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ဥမ္မာဒန္တီနှင့်ရုံရွှေတော်
OHNMARDANTI & ESPECIALLY
LADY. IN WAITING



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WIDURMATAKA

Present Days' 550 Jataka

- ✿ **Civic Education**
- ✿ **Colloquies**
- ✿ **Proverbs**
- ✿ **Instances**
- ✿ **Distance between Buddhist Texts and the people**

Discussion

- ❁ **Importance of 550 in Myanmar**
- ❁ **Dissemination of 550 from India and Sri Lanka**
- ❁ **Moving of 550 traditions through many ages**
- ❁ **Education of 550 and artistic achievement**
- ❁ **Sociocultural aspect of 550 in Myanmar**

Conclusion

- ❁ **550 is the cradle point of Myanmar civilization**
- ❁ **550 is the importance of Civic Education of Myanmar since Bagan Period**
- ❁ **550 is the origins of Myanmar tradition, art, craft and moral role.**
- ❁ **Concerning the 550 Jataka, it may be both of Tangible Cultural Heritage and Intangible Cultural Heritage**
 - e.g. Sculpture and Painting (TCH)**
 - e.g. Tradition of Bed Time Stories, Craftsmanship,
Proverbs and Instances in daily life of the people (ICH)**
- ❁ **550 must be learned to have much more knowledge and inspiration to manipulate the societal challenges of Myanmar in present days to future generation.**