



THE ANCESTRAL STUPAS OF SHWEDAGON



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Abstract

The **SHWEDAGON** of *Yangon* is the unique land mark Pagoda of the country of *Myanmar*. This paper tries to present the evolution of the Stupa types from the very earlier time in *India* to the *Gupta* period (3rd-7th century A.D.) through *Maurya*, *Sunga*, *Gandhara* and *Andhra* dynasties, from the North-west frontier to the south of *India*; and then it continues to the evolution in early *Myanmar* through *Pyu*, *Bagan* and *Hansawady Mon* dynasties up to the

existing *Shwedagon* Pagoda's architectural style, lastly renovated by the *Mon* queen *Shin saw pu* and king *Dhamasedi*, which went up to the height of 302 feet, until the summit of the golden umbrella was added by king *Mindon* of *Mandalay* in the early 19th century.



THE ANCESTRAL STUPAS OF SHWEDAGON

WIN MAUNG (TAMPAWADDY)¹

Shwedagon of Myanmar



The *Shwedagon* is the most glorious and the most famous pagoda in *Myanmar*, which is situated at *Yangon*², the port city of *Myanmar*. A stupa 326 feet high on top of a hillock is completed coated with thin sheets of real gold plates, brilliantly shining in the sun light. According to the old *Shwedagon* chronicle, it is said that, this stupa existed since the very earlier time, contemporary to that of the Lord Buddha, enshrining the holy hair relic of the Buddha, which were given to two merchant brothers of *U-kalar pa*³ by the Lord Buddha; a few days after his Enlightenment. Not only the hair relic of *Gotama* Buddha, but also the other holy relics, such as the *robe*, the *walking stick* and the *water filter* of the previous Buddhas, *Kaku sanna*, *Gona gamana* and *Kasapa* were enshrined inside the relic chamber of *Shwedagon*. The most inner stupa, built by king *U-Kalar pa* and two merchant brothers, was only 60 feet high. The stupa was frequently enlarged, at least seven times, by the later *Mon*

¹ Traditional architect and individual archaeologist, Mandalay, Myanmar.

² E-96.14948, N-16.79801

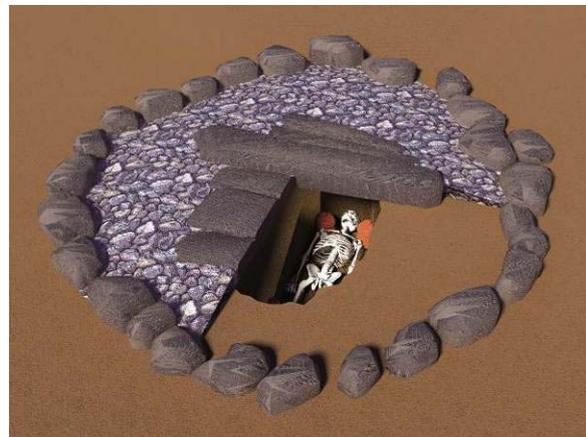
³ Ancient name of the present Yangon

kings, including the *queen Shin saw pu*, up to the height of 302⁴, feet by encasing a new one on top of another. The *Shwedagon* pagoda was situated at the lower *Myanmar* country, mostly ruled by the *Mon* kings, many kings from the upper *Myanmar*⁵ also used to renovate the *Shwedagon*, when the stupa was damaged or collapsed by earth quakes. King *Bayin Naung* from *Hamsawady*, and his son king *Nanda, Anauk bet lun min* from *Innwa*, king *Alaung paya* from *Shwebo* and his descendant kings of *Kone baung* dynasty up to the king *Min Don*, used to renovate the pagoda by donating colossal bells and by putting new golden umbrellas, decorated with thousands of valuable precious stones. Out of three colossal bronze bells, donated by the kings, the bell of king *Dhamasedi*⁶ was lost and later only two bells found, the bell of king *Thar yar wady* and the bell of king *Singu min*⁷ were found and placed on the outer platform of *Shwedagon*.

The existing architectural design of *Shwedagon* is very popular among a lot of monks and Buddhist people, not only in *Myanmar*, but also in foreign countries, who copy the replica stupas of *Shwedagon* in various sizes, starting from a small model to the life-sized copy of the *Shwedagon* pagoda.

Megalithic Burials of India

The early stupa, which enshrined the bone relic of a holy person, was very similar to the early megalithic burial grave of Central and Southern *India*. During the **megalithic period**⁸ the body of a dead person was buried inside the pit, together with the pots bearing offerings and metal utensils. The pit was covered with cap stones at the ground level where a shallow mound on top of it was added with chipped stones. Around the stone heap, a row of stones was placed to encircle as the **fencing**⁹. Sometimes the skeleton was found, buried inside the stone **cist**¹⁰ under the cap stone.



⁴ existing height is 326 feet, enlarged by the *Myanmar* king

⁵ *Innwa, Shwebo, Amarapura* and *Mandalay*

⁶ which was the biggest of all in weight

⁷ actually donated by king *Sin byu shin* of *Innwa* at 1779

⁸ 2500 B.C.

⁹ Circle stone

¹⁰ Tank made of several stone slabs

The earlier Buddhist stupas, looked almost similar to the *Jainish* stupas, which appeared earlier than the Buddhist. The cremated relic of a holy person or *Arahat* was put inside the burial urn and placed at the foot of the pit, which was usually chosen on top of a hillock, and covered with a capstone at the ground level. To be a monument, stones were overlapped on top of the cap stone as to create a hemispherical stone-heap where an umbrella stood on top of it and served to glorify¹¹ the monument, as illustrated in the early Indian silver coins.



Around the heap of stones, there was a circular walk-way for chanting along in a clockwise direction. The walk-way or the procession path was encircled by a stone rail or stone fencing, which led to a single entrance gate.

These burial topes were the prototypes of the later Buddhist hemispherical shape stupa built with bricks or stones, like the most famous stupa of *Sanchi*. A slight difference between the megalithic burial and the Buddhist stupa is as follows:

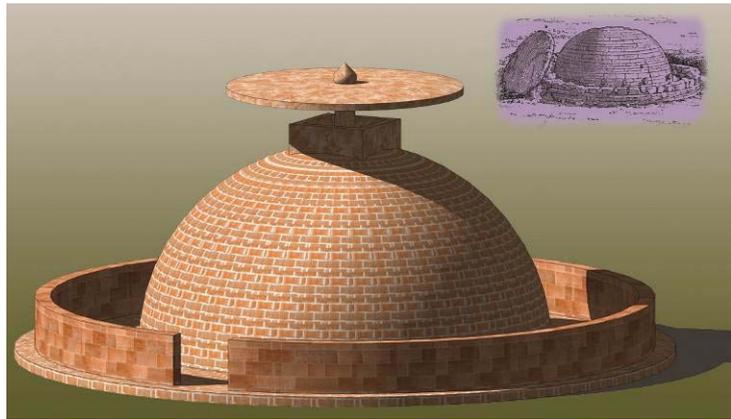
- (a) A megalithic burial was typical for burying a human skeleton, together with pots and other utensils, while a Buddhist stupa consisted of bones and ashes which were buried inside a burial urn or relic casket.
- (b) The megalithic burials were of ordinary laymen, while the Buddhist stupas or topes were for holy and glorious persons like Buddha and his disciples¹².
- (c) A megalithic burial was a kind of preparation for the next life, whereas a Buddhist stupa was only a monument for a holy person who could escape from the cycle of re-birth.

¹¹ In 550 Jataka tiles, every Bodhisatta were illustrated as figure with the umbrella on top of his head

¹² To know that a monument belonged to a holy person, they used to put a real umbrella on top of the monumental stone heap

Hemispherical Dome Type Stupas

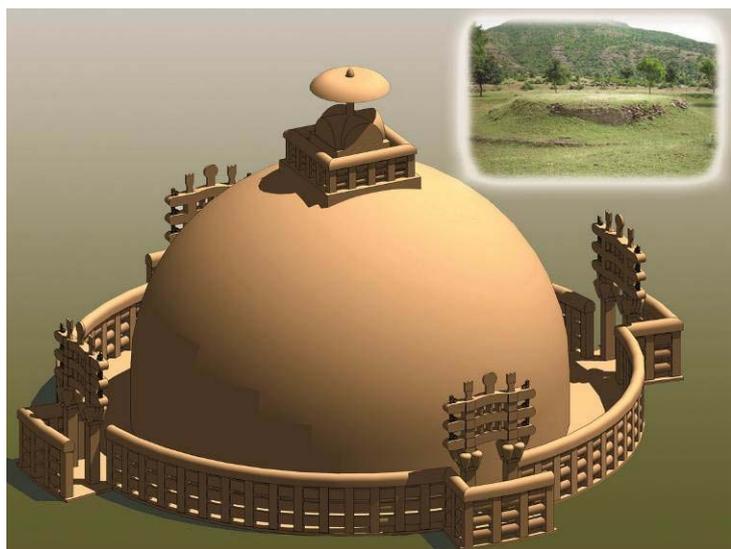
According to the Buddhist canons, there were few stupas in existence after the Buddha life time¹³. Most of the early stupas or topes were usually constructed during the *Maurya* dynasty¹⁴, probably at the time of the great emperor, King *Asoka*, enthroned in



the central *India*. His Buddhist missionary monks, who went to the North West frontier of *India*, also tried to make medium-sized stupas in that area. The existing document was the stupa of *Chakpat* from *Swat* valley¹⁵.

The site was excavated in 1896 by *Mr. A. Caddy* who discovered a small stupa in the form of a simple hemispherical dome, about 20 feet in diameter. This unique stupa was probably one of the earliest types of stupa found in *India*. The dome was gorgeously completed and was encircled by the base of a wall about 30 feet in diameter, assembled with the debris of a circular stone disc of 11 feet in diameter. It was the *chattr* or umbrella, which crowned the stupa, the *harmika* portion which was totally damaged and lost. The umbrella, the dome and the wall or the rail were all created with a very simple masonry and without any decorations.

Stupa of *Bharhut* probably was one of the earliest stupas in *Ganga* valley, which was situated at the *Madhya Pradesh* and was founded in the middle of the 3rd century BC, one century earlier than the great *Sanchi* stupa. Both stupas, *Bharhut* and *Sanchi*, were beautifully decorated with the fine carvings of sandstone on the railings and gateways. *Bharhut* stupa was of an earlier architectural style which had single procession



¹³ At Vasali

¹⁴ 320 - 130 B.C.

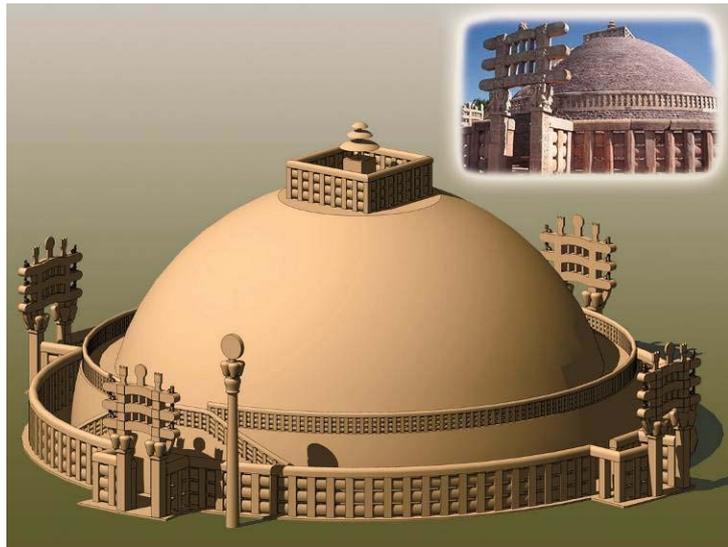
¹⁵ North West frontier of *Pakistan*

path at the ground-level, while *Sanchi* stupa had two procession paths, one at the ground level and another at the base of the dome. The carving style of the figures which depicted 550 *Jataka* tales of the Buddha seemed to be earlier than the style of the figures from *Sanchi* stupa, which were the later contributions at the *Kushan* period¹⁶. At the center of *harmika*, there was a replica made of a wooden rail, and an umbrella which was set as a single stone disc, while *Sanchi* stupa had three tiers of umbrella or *chata vali*.

The diameter of the dome of the great stupa of *Bharhut* was 70 feet, and was surrounded by the circular rail of 90 feet in diameter. There were four entrance gate ways at the four cardinal directions. The approximate height of the umbrella on top of the *harmika* was 60 feet, as the decorated gate ways were about 25 feet in height.

General Cunningham of the *India* archaeological department started to excavate the old mount of *Bharhut*, where many of the stone railings and gateways were found to bore the base reliefs, which were later taken to the *Kolkata*¹⁷ museum.

The great stupa of *Sanchi*, was a unique example of the hemispherical dome shape stupas of *India* situated at *Bopal*, in *Madaya Pradash*. The dome of the *Bharhut* stupa mentioned above was put on the 9 foot high circular base called *Drum*, and without a procession path on top of it. The great *Sanchi* stupa had the double procession paths, the first at the ground level between the stupa and the rail, the second on top of the base of the dome together with



a small size railing like the one at the ground level, which imitated the style of a wooden rail¹⁸. Although there were four entrance gate-ways at the ground floor, there was only a single stair case at the southern part of the dome at the upper floor, which could be stepped up through a single staircase¹⁹ that was changed to triple-tier type or *chata vali*.

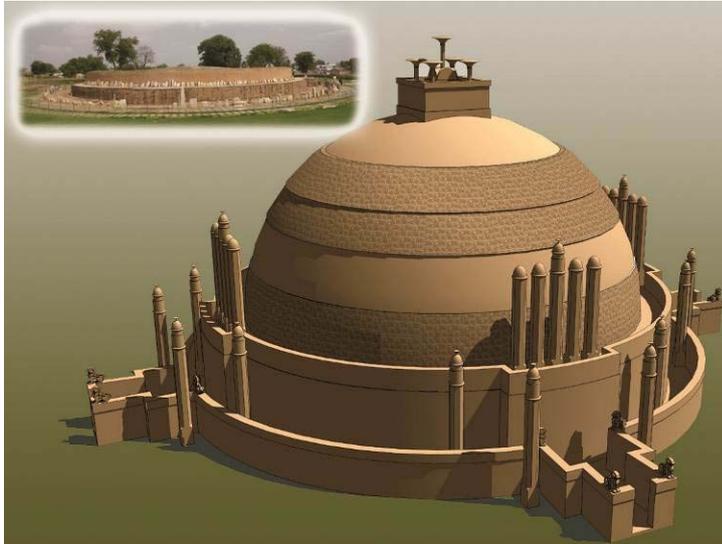
¹⁶ 1st century A.D

¹⁷ Former Calcutta

¹⁸ the column, three cross bars and the coping rail on top of it

¹⁹ which had the double stairways that were parallel to the circumference of the dome. And the style of the umbrella was on top of the dome

The old, brick and cement masonry was done during the Mauria dynasty by the great king *Asoka*, and while the outer renovated stone dome and the beautifully carved **stone gateways**²⁰ were added at the time of the *Kushan* kings. The diameter of the dome of the great stupa at *Sanchi* was 105 feet and the outermost circular rail was 150 feet in diameter. The total height up to the top of the triple -tier umbrella was 70 feet.



At the time between the decline of the *Mauria* dynasty and the rising of the *Gupta*²¹ dynasty, there were two or more Buddhist sites in Andhra²², while the *Nagajuna konda* and *Amaravati* historical sites, where a thousand large size, medium size and small size dome shape stupas were situated. One of the famous stupas was the great stupa of *Amaranti*.

Many architectural influences were taken from *Mouria* architecture which were added with some of their local architectural styles. The most prominent creations were the *Ar-yaka* columns and the multiple umbrellas on top of the *harmika*²³. At the base of the dome, not like the *Sanchi* stupa entrance, *torana* or the gateways were moved to the outer most squared fencing wall, instead of at the entrance gate of the outer circular wall. The belt band, the base part of the dome, lower part of the upper processional path and all rails were richly decorated with the beautiful base-relief figure including the present and previous lives of Buddha.

Inside the *harmika* rail on top of the dome, many scholarly conjectures reconstructed the central *chatavali* and another four single umbrellas at the corners of the *harmika*. So totally there were seven umbrellas. The diameter of the dome was 150 feet, much bigger than *Sanchi* and the diameter of the outermost circular rail was 200 feet, from the entrance

²⁰ *Torana*

²¹ 3rd to 7th Century A.D.

²² which was known as *Karlinga*

²³ At the four direction of the base of the hemispherical dome, outside the drum, there were four extended oblong pedestals, on top of those, each stand five vertical columns, capped by the miniature stupas. And that pedestal at the bottom of the columns was used as the stair case to climb up to the upper processional path.

wall to the other opposite entrance wall was 250 feet. It may be the biggest solid stupa of the dome type, ever built in *India*²⁴.



*Chandra varum*²⁵, a rarely known Buddhist site was excavated not very long ago, consisted of a stupa very similar to the great stupa of *Amaravati*. Unlike the *Amaravati* stupa, which had two processional paths²⁶, the stupa of *Chandra varum* stupa had three processional paths, the third one on top of the second path.

If we compare the stupas from both *Mauria* and *Andara* dynasties, the evolution of the hemispherical dome shape stupas was as follows:

- (a) Increasing in diameter of the dome;
- (b) Decorative base-relief on the rail and gateway became richer and richer;
- (c) The umbrella on top of the *harmika* became smaller in size and increased in the numbers of umbrella;
- (d) The processional path also increased in number from single path at the ground level to triple path at the later times.

In the later dynasties the development of the dome shape stupa, from the *Mauria* dynasty to the *Andra* dynasty, had suddenly stopped and their influence completely disappeared in India after the 3rd century A.D. The plan of KKG-3, one of the excavated mount in *Beik thano* city, central



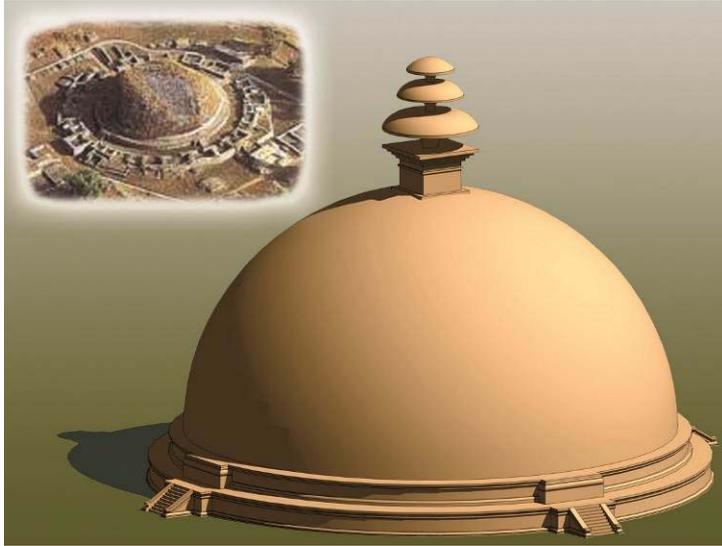
Myanmar, had many influences from *Amaravati*. And it was the earliest evidence for the Buddhist stupas in *Myanmar*, which belonged to the 2nd century A.D. and the last ones to be

²⁴ but now, the whole stupa was totally destroyed and badly damaged. So the stupa of *Sanchi* became the largest of all stupas now existed in good condition.

²⁵ by the river of *Gundla komma*, near the small town *Alampuri*, to the south of *Hyderabad*,

²⁶ one at the ground floor and the other at the base of the dome, on top of the circular base or drum,

influenced by *Andhra* arts. Like India, the later stupa types had no more developmental continuation in Myanmar.



The great emperor king *Asoka*, after his second Buddhist *Council*, sent the missionary monks to *Gandhara* and surrounding places where the monks built some dome shape stupa in that area, like *Dhamarajika* at *Taxila* valley and *Manikyala*²⁷ in *Panjab*²⁸. Those colossal solid brick stupas were mostly the replicas of the great stupa at *Sanchi*, added with some

local architectural styles of Greeko Roman Arts, like the row of vertical columns at the circular base platform or drum. Instead of the single stair way²⁹ like *Sanchi*, *Dhamarajika* had four stair cases, which was perpendicular at its circumference. And the railing like hollow *hermika*³⁰, at the top of the dome also became solid together with some extensions at its top part.

Improving the Base in Kushan period

In the *Kushan* period³¹, the shape of the early dome stupa from *Mauria* architectural style had been improved. The dome was put on the circular base, decorated with a row of vertical columns, and it was put again on two or three other circular bases, to increase the height of the whole dome up to the



²⁷ existing *Manikyala* was the creased stupa, while the earlier smaller stupa built by king *Asoka* was inside that bigger stupa

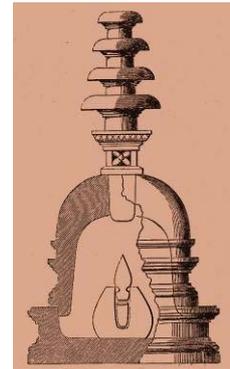
²⁸ South of Islamabad, near the Army Museum

²⁹ which was parallel to the circumference of the base

³⁰ Hermikas from Sanchi and Bharhut were only rail types, with hollow inside

³¹ 25 – 80 Centuries A.D.

height, equal to the length of the diameter of the dome or more than that, like the relic casket recovered from the chamber of the stupa of *Manikyala*, found by *Cunningham*, while in the older style, the height of the dome was only half of the diameter of the dome. Again the improved dome shape new stupa was put on the wider square platform, which was also decorated by the double rows of vertical columns. Sometimes it bore the images of Buddha in stucco between two columns. There were four small corner stupas on top of the corners of raised square platform, and also a single³² stair case together with the landing.



This new style of *Kushan* period dome shape stupa was very popular in *Gandhra* area of *Kushan* dynasty, like the *Gombaduna* stupa form Swat valley, there were other similar type of stupas in *Gandhara* region³³. A few examples were *Shingardar* stupa, Stupa of *Sirkap*, *Mohra Maradu* stupa, central stupa of *Takh-i-bahi* monastery complex and stupa of *Rhamala*, etc.

Again in *India*, during the Gupta period, hemispherical dome on tall cylindrical base was set on the square raised platform together with the stair case. This style of the stupa from *Kushan* period, at *Gandhara* area, continued to be used with the addition of some improvements.

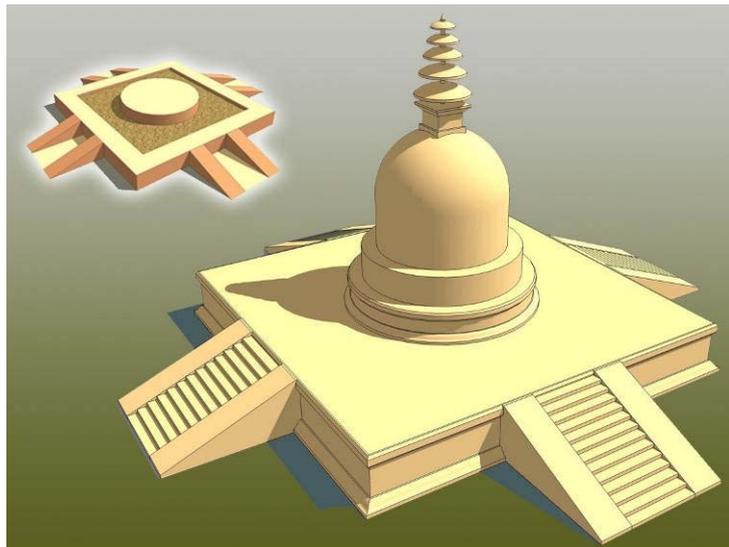


During the *Gupta* dynasty architecture period, they added the pediment form arches, at four sides of the dome's base. Figure of lions on the side rails of the stair case. The ratio of the corner stupa compared to the main stupa became bigger, number of the tiers of the stone discs from *chatavali* increased and reached up to seven till nine in number. The reconstruction model of the great stupa of *Nalanda* Buddhist University from *India* was a clear example of the *Gupta* dynasty architecture, much influenced by the *Kushan* Arts. Not only at the *Ganga* valley, but also in the late *Andhra* period, it had the influence of *Gupta* new architectural style of the great stupa at *Nalanda*.

³² sometimes four stair cases from four directions

³³ of *Taxila* valley, *Peshwar* valley, *Swat* valley and also at *Panjab*

In *Myanmar*, since late *Pyu*³⁴ period, it was influenced by the *Gupta* period architectural style of *Nalanda*. The discovered stupa at *Gwe bin tet kon*³⁵ was the similar form like the great stupa of *Nalanda*. Dome capped tall cylindrical stupa was set on top of the raised square platform, which was beautifully decorated by the terracotta relief figures³⁶. There were four stair cases from four directions, which were excavated in *Sri ksetra*.



Similar medium size stupa foundations were excavated and discovered at other *Pyu* city sites like, *Han lin*, *Beik thano*, *Pinle(Maing maw)* and *Ta gaung*, which had a single³⁷ stair case, similar to the stupa of *Nalanda*.



In later *Gupta* period, after the raised square platform was removed, the tall cylindrical stupa was set again on the low circular terraces like the stupa of *Sarnath* in India, *Baw baw gyi* stupa from *Sri ksetra*, was a similar stupa without pediment niches at four directions in Myanmar was built, in a very simple form. The shape of *harmika* was changed to the circular form, *chatavali*, which was touched to each other without a central pole, and was with a lotus bud at its finial. Finally the bottom part of the cylinder started to change to the bell shape. A complete bell shape stupa from *Pyu* period was discovered during an excavation of a mound near *Thaung Pyae Kon* at *Sri ksetra*, in 1926. The bell which was set on the circular platform with the combination at the shallow circles of various sizes belonged to the late *Phu* period³⁸.

(a) *THUPA RAMA* from *Sri Lanka*

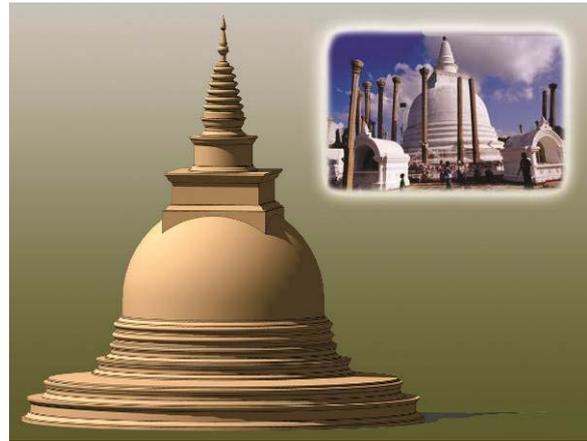
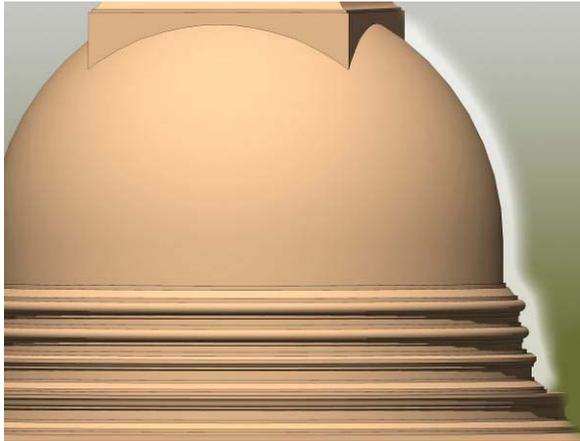
³⁴ 2nd B.C.-2nd A.D (Early *Pyu*), 3rd - 9th century A.D (Late *Pyu*)

³⁵ A mound near the outer wall, South-East of *Sri Ksetra*

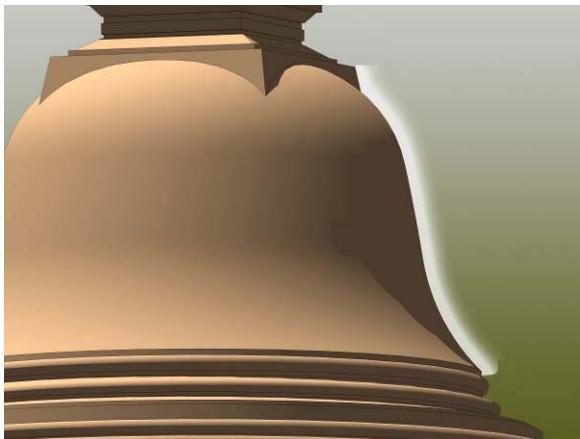
³⁶ The figure of the man holding the sword and ridding on the horse

³⁷ some had double

³⁸ 7th - 8th century A.D



(b) *PHRA PATHON* from *Thailand* and



(c) *BORO BUDUR* from *Indonesia*



Bell Shape Dagobas

During the later periods the bell shape stupa or *dagoba* were very common in south east Asia Buddhist countries, especially at *Myanmar* and *Thailand*. There were three famous colossal bell shape stupas in three Buddhist countries.

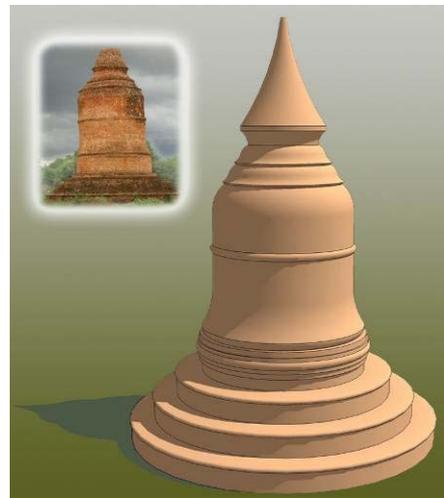
If we carefully study the bottom of the bells, we can clearly see that the bell of *Htuparama dagoba*, which roughly looks like a bell shape. In detail, actually it was a combination of three circular rings at the bottom of a spherical dome.

The *Phrapathon chedi* from *Thailand* which was built in the time of King *Asoka*, its stupa was in a perfect bell shape, but this bell shape was renovated at the time of *King Rama* the IV³⁹, by encasing the old *non bell shape* stupa. The last restoration was done in 1975.

The bell of *Borobudur*, which belonged to the 8th century A.D, was built with volcanic lava stones, and was the only genuine and earlier bell shape pagoda. Probably the prototype of the bell shape stupa was started by the *Borobudur stupa* of *Indonesia*, in Southeast Asia.

Bagan Stupa by the King Anawrahta

During the *Bagan* period,⁴⁰ King *Anawrahta*, after acquiring the 30 sets of the *Tripitaka* from *Thahton*, the *Mon* capital of lower *Myanmar*, built many stupas in the *Bagan* plane, although there were already a few earlier stupas before his time. Stupa No: 1973 near *Taungbi* village at *Bagan*, was an earlier stupa, in tall cylindrical shape exactly looked like *Baw baw gyi* stupa from *Sri ksetra*, which may be earlier than the king *Anawrahta*. He improved the circular base to octagonal base, by setting the belt decoration in the



middle of the cylinder and by adding multi-tiers of *chatawali*, on top of the dome, of which its most bottom disc was a newly improved form of the old *harmika*. This kind of stupa type can be seen on *Myin gabar* stupa. Then, the stupa of *Loka nanda*⁴¹, was developed by increasing the single platform to three tiers of octagonal platform, or terrace, together with stair cases from four directions.

³⁹ King *Mong kut* 1851-1868

⁴⁰ 11th - 13th century A.D

⁴¹ jetty of *Bagan*, near *Kyauk saga* village

After conquering the lower *Myanmar*, king *Anawrahta* took many *Mon* architects and masonry workers to *Bagan*. They created a new style with the combination of *Mon* and old *Pyu* architectural styles. Then the stupa of *Shwe san daw* of *Bagan* appeared with a complete bell shape stupa on top of the five square terraces, and stair cases from four directions which climbed up to the base of the bell.



Finally King *Anawrahta* and his successor, King *Kyan sit thar* created a great stupa of *Shwe sigon*⁴², by changing upper two square terraces into octagonal and circular terraces, and added four corner stupas on top of the third terrace. This new style of stupa was so popular among the *Myanmar* people, that all the royal merit of the great stupas from later period continued to use this style and the proportion of *Shwe Sigon* pagoda from *Bagan*, not only till the end of *Bagan* dynasty, but up to the later period of *Mandalay*⁴³.



⁴² At Nyaung Oo, 4 miles North East of old Bagan

⁴³ Mandalay, founded at 1859 A.D.

Architectural style of Shwedagon



Although there were many changes, during the evolution time of the architectural components and forms of the stupa, from the early *Myanmar* period, after the creating of *Shwe Sigon* stupa in early *Bagan* period⁴⁴, it was as perfect and grand, as the new *Bagan* stupa style, which was still popular with only small changes during the later periods, like *Shwedagon*.

The differences and similarities between *Shwe-Sigon* of *Bagan* and *Shwedagon* of *Yangon* were as follows:

- (a) The first or lowest terrace, in square shape with some shallow extensions outside, had no changes.
- (b) The second and third terraces, which were square shape like the first terrace in *Shwe Sigon*, were changed to octagonal terraces at *Shwedagon*.
- (c) The fourth and fifth terraces⁴⁵ were nearly the same as *Shwe Sigon*, instead of single circular terrace at *Shwe Sigon*, *Shwedagon* was changed to five circular terraces.
- (d) The bell together with the belt in the middle and garland flower above it was also the same as *Shwe Sigon*.⁴⁶
- (e) *Chata vali* or the *Phaung Yit* in *Myanmar*⁴⁷ was also the same with their two stupas.
- (f) Up turn and down turn lotus and a row of beads from *Shwe Dagon* was with the same shape but increased in height compared to *Shwe Sigon*.
- (g) The greatest change was at the finial of the stupa under the metal umbrella. At the upper *Myanmar*, the lotus bud at the top was *Kah Ye Thee*⁴⁸ which was in

⁴⁴ 11th century A.D

⁴⁵ the octagonal terrace and circular terrace

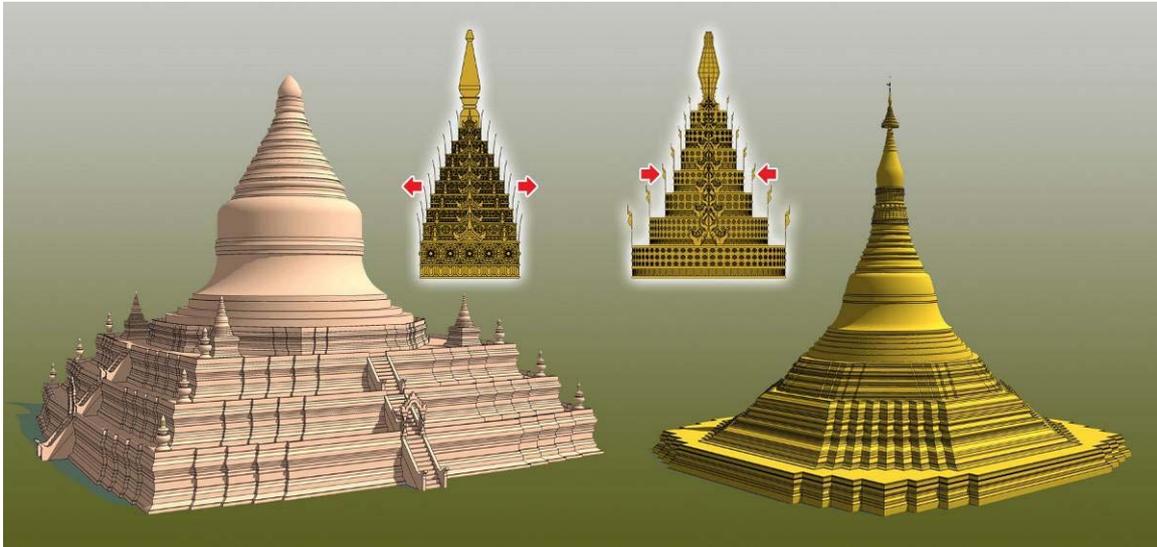
⁴⁶ the garland flower of *Shwe Sigon* was added only at the renovating time of *Shwe Sigon* by king *Bayin Naung* at 16th century A.D.

⁴⁷ tiers of rings

⁴⁸ The fruit of star-flower (Indian medlar, *Mi musopsefengi*)

a very short form. But in lower *Myanmar*, especially in *Mon* areas, instead of lotus bud, they set the *Hnet pyw hpu*⁴⁹, in a longer form.

- (h) The metal umbrella of *Shwe Sigon* donated by the king *Thaya Wady* was in *Chi Win*⁵⁰ form.⁵¹ The umbrella of *Shwedagon* donated by the king *Min Don* was in *Ma Gaik*⁵² form.⁵³



Although the second, third and fourth terraces of *Shwedagon* were roughly called octagonal terraces, the octagonal form of the fourth terrace was simply built by eight straight line, while the octagonal form of the second and third terraces were delicately built of zigzag lines at four corners⁵⁴ it was a very popular form in 16th and 17th centuries of *Nyaung yan* Period.

Four corner stupas of *Shwe Sigon* were also changed to the satellite stupas on top of the first square terrace at *Shwedagon*, while stair cases of *Shwe Sigon* had disappeared.

⁴⁹ Banana(plantain) bud

⁵⁰ A ball of yarn taking from a spindle

⁵¹ The middle parts of the umbrella tiers extend outward

⁵² royal crown

⁵³ The middle parts of the umbrella tiers extend inward.

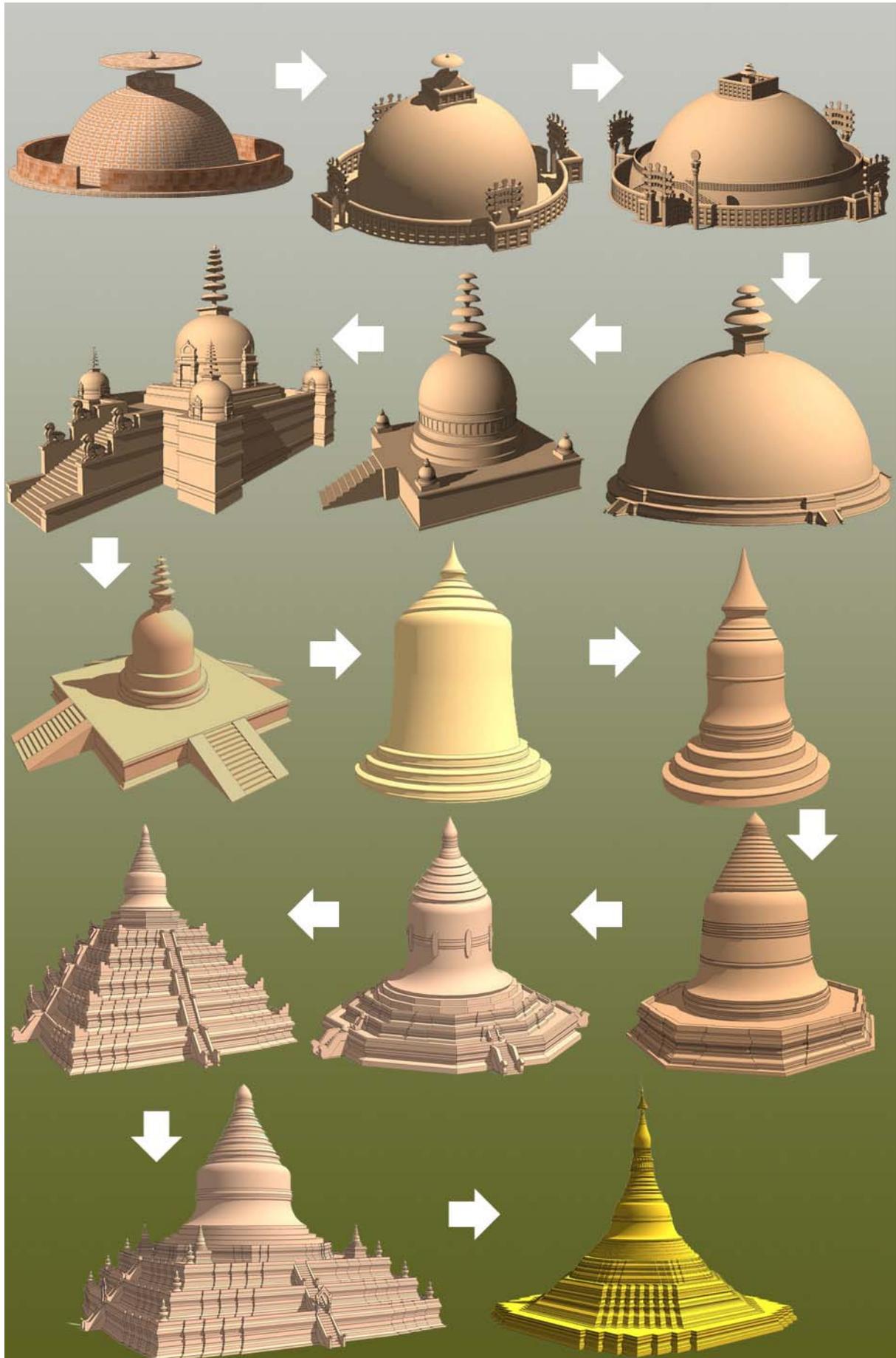
⁵⁴ In Myanmar , *Kho Nann Choo*

Conclusion



In conclusion, after studying the ancestral stupas of *Shwedagon*, the evolution can be explained as follows:

- (a) The hemispherical dome shape stupa like *Sanchi* was the earliest form in *India* during *Mauria* dynasty.
- (b) Although there was a small change at the *Andhra* region like *Amaravati* stupa, the biggest change happened during the *Kushan* dynasty in *Gandhara*, by setting the dome on top of the drum or circular terraces.
- (c) The dome was changed to a tall cylindrical form and was put on top of the square base during the *Gupta* period. It was influenced by the early *Pyu* architecture, in *Sri Ksetra, Myanmar*.
- (d) During the *Bagan* period, especially at the time of king *Anawrata*, a complete bell shape stupa had been created and placed, first on top of the octagonal terrace and again on top of the three square terraces.
- (e) Finally, the *Bagan* style bell shape Stupa's terrace was improved by mixing with some *Mon* influences, which completed the final architectural style of the great golden Stupa of *Shwedagon*.



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