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INTRODUCTION

The ruins of Bagan cover a tract of country measuring about 16 square miles along the east bank of the Irrawaddy. The monuments which are now in all stages of decay were erected mostly from the 11th to 13th centuries A.D. when Bagan was the seat of the Myanmar dynasty. Tradition, corroborated by local chronicles, has it that a long line of fifty-five kings ruled over this kingdom during the twelve centuries, namely, beginning from 108 A.D. (See chronological List). The present walled city of Bagan is ascribed to King Pinyinbya, the 34th king of the dynasty, who in 874 A.D. transferred the capital from Tampawadi, now known as *Pwasaw*. The latter was built by Thaiktaing, the 12th king, and there were two other capitals, namely, Thiripyitsaya built by Thiligyaung, the 7th king and Paukkan (Yonhlutkyun) built by Thamodarit, the founder of the dynasty in 108 A.D. But the authentic history of the dynasty as supported by epigraphical evidence begins only with the reign of Anawrahta (1044-77 A.D.). In 1057 Anawrahta conquered Thaton and brought back to his capital the Theravada scriptures in Pali, a large number of Buddhist monks, and artists and craftsmen of every description. From the Mon monks the Myanmar received their alphabet, religion and scriptures. It was from this momentous date that there began the extraordinary architectural and artistic activity which, in a little more than two centuries, covered the city and its environs with thousands of splendid monuments of every shape and size, the inner walls of most of which are decorated with beautiful frescoes.

It is said that in the palmiest days of Bagan the pagodas and monasteries could be counted by the myriads; even now the remains of about 5,000 can still be traced.

Among the religious buildings in Bagan, as elsewhere in Myanmar, the pagodas consist mainly of two types. The first is the bell-shaped stupa of solid brickwork raised on a series of receding terraces and crowned by a finial. The term *zedi* which is derived from Pali *cetiya* is applied to such structures. They were erected either to enshrine some relics of the Buddha or of a Buddhist saint or else to commemorate some sacred spot. Each has, therefore, a sealed-up chamber often in the basement and sometimes in the *dhatugabbha* which lies between the bell-shaped section and the finial. The second is a hollow vaulted temple mainly for enshrining the Buddha image. It is a square in plan with sometimes projecting porches or vestibules. A series of receding roofs rise above the chapel and finally a bell-shaped stupa or a curvilinear finial tops the structure. On these general types are evolved

various forms of pagodas and temples by introducing different architectural and decorative features. Thus the architectural types at Bagan may be further classified as below :

- (1) Stupa whose dome is modelled on a reliquary, *e.g.* Bupaya ;
- (2) Stupa whose dome is modelled on a tumulus; *e.g.* Lawkananda, Shwezigon Shwesandaw, Mingalazedi ;
- (3) Stupa of Sinhalese type, *e.g.* Sapada, Pebingyaung ;
- (4) Temple based on North Indian model, *e.g.* Ananda ;
- (5) Temple of Central Indian type, *e.g.* Mahabodhi ;
- (6) Temple based on South Indian model, *e.g.* Gawdawpalin, Sulamani ;
- (7) Cave temples based on Indian model, *e.g.* Kyaukku Umin, Kyanzitha Umin ;
- (8) Ordination hall, *e.g.* Upali Thein ;
- (9) Library: Pitakat Taik,

Again, the square temples dominated by Mon influence are distinguished by their dark corridors which are dimly lighted by perforated windows and the bright frescoes of variegated colour with Mon writing on the walls, *e.g.* the Patothamya, Nagayon, Abeyadana, Kubyaukgyi, of Myinkaba, Nanpaya etc. The typical Myanmar temples like the Shwegugyi, Thatbyinnyu, Sulamani, Htilominlo and Gawdawpalin are bright and airy within, with imposing plan and height. The Ananda and Dhammayangyi are intermediate forms.

Besides being royal and holy, Bagan had been a solemn seat of serious study particularly of the sacred Pali language. As a famous university Bagan, though later in date, was not perhaps inferior to the old universities of Taxila (now in Pakistan) and Nalanda in India. Here, for several centuries, not only throughout its long line of kings but also when the dynasty had died out and Ava had replaced it, lamps of learning continued to burn, as evidenced by its structural remains of the 15th-16th centuries A.D. Brick monasteries of Old Bagan are often of two storeys which consist of about ten-foot square cells round a central square hall with marks of missing wooden gables on their facades to indicate the long forgotten timber building in front of each.

The style of the Bagan temples and pagodas in its large and principal lines can ultimately be traced to North-Eastern India, but it has characteristics, all its own, which entitled it to rank as a style apart: In fact, the Myanmar had evolved a new national art different from the originals particularly in ornamental details and artistic adornments.

The end of the thirteenth century witnessed the fall of the Bagan dynasty. Thousands of pagodas were despoiled by the invaders and vandals and the king, who fled from the Chinese, is believed to have dismantled a considerable number of the monuments to collect materials for building forts. Since then the great mass of the religious edifices were left to decay and ruin and today we see no more than a hundred splendid monuments which attract and retain attention and since their foundation, have remained as places of worship.

Chronological List of the Kings of Bagan

The dates given below closely follow those in the Hmannan Yazawin (The Glass Palace Chronicle) except for revisions made for the period after 1044 A.D. in the light of inscriptional evidences. The names of All-Myanmar kings are in capital letters.

Name	Relationship	Period A.D.	Remarks
1. Thamudarit		107—152	Founder of Bagan.
2. Yathekyauk	Pyusawhti's preceptor	152—167	
3. Pyusawhti	Son-in-law of Thamudarit	167—242	
4. Htiminyin	Son	242—299	
5. Yinminpaik	Son	299—324	
6. Paikthinli	Son	324—344	
7. Thinlikyauk	Son	344—387	
8. Kyaungdurit	Son	387—412	
9. Thihtan	Son	412—439	
10. Thuyai	Usurper	439—494	
11. Tharamunhpya	Grandson of Thihtan	494—516	
12. Thaiktaing	Son	516—523	
13. Thinlikyaukngne	Son	523—532	
14. Thinlipaik	Brother	532—547	
15. Hkanlaung	Brother	547—557	
16. Hkanlat	Brother	557—569	
17. Htuntaik	Son	569—582	
18. Htunpyit	Son	582—598	
19. Htunchit	Son	598—613	
20. Popa Sawrahan	Usurping priest	613—640	
21. Shwe Onthi	Son-in law	640—652	
22. Peithon	Brother	652—660	

Name	Relationship	Period	Remarks
23. Peittaung	Son	660—710	
24. Minhkwe	Brother	710—716	
25. Myinkywe	Usurping groom	716—726	
26. Theinkha	Court's nominee of the blood	726—734	
27. Theinsun	Son	734—744	
28. Shwelaung	Son	744—753	
29. Htuntwin	Son	753—762	
30. Shwemaik	Son	762—785	
31. Tun Lat	Brother	785—802	
32. Sawkhinhnit	Son	802—829	
33. Kholu	Son	829—846	
34. Pinyinbya	Brother	846—878	
35. Tannet	Son	878—906	
36. Sale Ngakhwe	Usurper, of the blood	906—915	
37. Theinkho	Son	915—931	
38. Nyaung-u Sawrahan (Taugthugyi)	Usurper	931—964	
39. Kunhsaw Kyaunghpyu	Son of Tannet	964—986	
40. Kyiso	Son of Nyaung-u Sawrahan	986—992	
41. Sokkate	Brother	992—1017	
Historical			
42. ANAWRAHTA	Son of Kunsaw Kyaunghpyu	1044—77	
43. SAWLU	Son	1077—84	
44. KYANZITTHA	Brother	1084—1113	
45. ALAUNGSITHU	Grandson	1113—67	1113-1160 ?
46. NARATHU	Son	1167—70	1160-1165 ?
47. NARATHEINKHA	Son	1170—73	
48. NARAPATISITHU	Brother	1174—1211	
49. HTILOMINLO	Son	1211—34	
50. KYASWA	Son	1234—50	
51. UZANA	Son	1250—55	
52. NARATHIHAPATI	Son	1255—87	
53. Kyawswa	Son	1287—98	
54. Sawhnit	Son	1298—1325	
55. Sawmunit	Son	1325—69	