

**BAGAN ART AND SOCIAL LIFE STYLE
(FROM 11th CENTURY TO 13th CENTURY)**

PhD DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

The title of dissertation is "Bagan Art and Social Life Style (From 11th Century to 13th Century)". This dissertation mentions Bagan arts that reflect the social life and life-style of the locals especially performers within the areas of the metropolis and its surroundings. Bagan kingdom developed and flourished from 11th century to 13th century. In 1287, Bagan declined after the Mongol invasion. The political power of Bagan had gradually faded out in the past but Bagan's cultural and art were being continuously flourished in Myanmar later periods. The aim of this dissertation are to examine Bagan city urban areas and boundary limits of Bagan Empire during the Bagan period, to illustrate the performing images and visual arts of the Buddhist canonical texts including *Jātaka* stories, *Mahā Buddhavaṃ* and *Vimanavatthu*, and to analyze the social life-styles of Bagan common people. Attention had been rarely paid to the local interpretation of the texts and their own creation of art and architecture. Although it is said that the themes of visual canons came from abroad meaning that not Myanmar origin, what the most important is, is the local artworks and their talents on canons. This research emphasizes why performers or performing images are used in depicting Buddhist narrative stories even though Buddha prohibits the performance (*Nacca*, *Gīta* and *Vādita*) in practicing *Sīla*. The Buddhist narrative performance is inevitably used to educate and propagate Buddha's doctrine to the common people. The narrative stories of Buddhist canonical texts can be defined as a static performance using for morals and education during the Bagan period. The static performance is composed of visual images of narrations. Among the themes of Buddhist visual art, *jātaka* stories have mostly reflected on social

lives of Bagan people especially on performers. The characters of performers are intermingled as main icons and supporting icons in many *jātakas* and Buddha's life story. *Jātaka* stories, the most reflecting on social life are depicted at the most temples as interior wall painting decoration and adorned at many prominent solid-pagodas as the exterior glaze plaque decoration for the purposes of moral education, propagation of Buddhism and evidential references sometime to be cited. This research studies on the Social Life and Life-style of Common People (*Asañ*) including the Elite Class (*asañ sūkoṇ*, *sukrī*), the occupational lives and life-styles of common folks i.e. *kun sañ*_merchant class of land route and marine and the land lords and farmers and the Social Life and Life-style of Bagan Performance composing with musicians and musical instruments and *pantyā* who are female dramatic performers. The study of social life and life-style had been drawn from the evidences of free born commoners (*Asañ*) are extracted from the list of eye witness of dedicational documents mentioned in the inscriptions and ink glosses of canonical texts and non-canonical texts especially the Bodhisattvas' vocations in the mentioned notes of *jātaka* stories.

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