

HINDU GODS AND GODDESSES IN BAGAN

Ph D (DISSERTATION)

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MAY 2012

ABSTRACT

Hinduism, the oldest religion in the world, has long history and it can go back to the Indus valley civilization. In Vedic Period, the Hindu Triad-Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva were not popular. In later Purana Period, their characters developed greatly and they became more superior and in turn, the famous Vedic gods, Surya, Indra and Agni became inferior. Hinduism spread to Southeast Asia with trade as early as the Christian Eras. The whole Southeast Asia was Indianized and Myanmar is no exception. The traces of Hinduism can be witnessed in the ancient city kingdoms such as *Vishnu, Halin, S'riksetra, Thaton, Kawgun cave, Thanhlian, Dhanyavadi, Vesali* and *Myrauk-U* and Bagan. The evidences found on the Hindus temples and its decorative or didactic elements indicate reasonably that Hinduism once flourished in Bagan.