

Archaeological Evidences from Makkhaya Old City

Min Lwin*

Abstract

Makkhaya is among the ancient site of Myanmar old cities and various types of evidences related to earliest societies were found. Early people lived in Makkhaya period by period. Their traces were found in this site with many evidences. They are stone and wooden images of the Buddha, city wall, religious monuments, structure remains, stone inscription, wall painting, wood carving, human figure marked brick and animal figure marked brick and pot and potsherd, etc. Recent archaeological investigations on this site reveal its cultural levels associated not only with historical context, but with Prehistoric context of even Neolithic cultural level, passing through Metal Age, followed by Pyu Culture.

Keywords: Religious monuments, Neolithic cultural level, passing through Metal Age, Pyu Culture.

Introduction

In Makkhaya region Pyu, Mon, Shan and Myanmar lived. But culture advanced in this site period by period. It can be found that structure remain, surface finds religious building and other ancient monuments. In this site many sources have been collected mainly on the datas and evidences such as background history, location and its environment, topography, burial remain, stone inscription and Old Mon village. Makkhaya ancient site is situated in Kyaukse plain, known as cultural context to historical character of Bagan and Post Bagan periods. In fact, lying at the junction of Zawgyi and Myit Nge Rivers, this area is provided by variety of environmental features of water supply and other lowland and highland natural resources – which serves as to the favourable condition for the early settlements. There are considerable numbers of survival remains of religious structures and ruins of its cultural evidences which cover at and around the region. But, these remains have been more or less ignorant manner in former accounts. Indeed, recently bearing evidences from the site reveal some more information, added up to its cultural level. These evidences include material remains of Neolithic culture, Metal Age context, and of Pyu culture, as well as those of historical context, particularly of stone inscriptions.

Location and its Environment

Makkhaya is situated in Sint Kkaing township, Kyaukse district, Mandalay region, beside Yangon-Mandalay road. It is on the junction of Zawgyi river and Duttha-waddy river.¹ Makkhaya is located in the east of Shan Yoma ranges, in the west of Panlaung river, in the south of Kyaukse district and in the north of Patheingyi township and Amarapura township. It is in the dry zone, about 250 feet above sea level.² 65 percent of the ancient town is flat land and 35 percent is formed with plateaus. One of the Geologists said that most of the rock in this area is metamorphic rock. The city wall is in rectangular. The gate way is in the south of the wall.

* Lecturer, Department of Archaeology, Yadanabon University

¹ See Map.1

² Aung Nyein Chan, *ရုပိုမိုလော့ဘိုဝေ့နှင့်မြတ်မြတ် (Record on Field Trip at Makkhaya)*, 2004, p.3 (Hereafter cited as Aung Nyein Chan, *Record on Field Trip at Makkhaya*)

Topography of Makkhaya

The old Makkhaya City is located at junction of Zaw Gyi River and Duttha-waddy River which is three miles north along the Duttha-waddy River to Tabyat Tha. There is a village called Kyune Oo at the eastern bank of Zaw Gyi River across from Makkhaya. The Zaw Gyi River was flow at the south and east part of the city walls. In the west is Aebya Village where pagodas built by Myanmar and Mon people are found. In the Myit Nge or Duttha-waddy River is flowing, Kinbet (uif;buf) known as Kin Village (uif;½Gm) in the north. Presently, Makkhaya is located at Aebya site number 36/1 in Sink Kaing Township. At the place, old city brick walls and broken pieces of pots are found.

Indeed, this area is provided suitably by natural geographic feature of water supported not only by two main rivers of Myit Nge and Zawgi, bult also by surrounding natural lakes of Ta On Inn and Min Hla Tank. The soil is fertile and so the fruits and seeds can be grown well in its land.³ Otherwise, it shows that the region of Makkhaya old city is favourable to ancient settlements.

Background History of Makkhaya

The city was founded by Amattaya during the reign of Anawratha in Bagan period.⁴ Therefore the city was called Amat Taya (*one hundred high official of the Myanmar royal court*) and now the name is pronounced and known as Makkhaya.⁵ The walls are seen to be two and a half furlong from west to east and three furlong from south to north. The main entrance gate is found at the south. At the southern end in the city many pagodas can be seen. Makkhaya is in Kyaukse nine districts. Some evidences that the Stone Age people lived have got from nine districts. There are many legends as to the antiquity of Makkhaya but the fact remains that Stone Age dwellers had inhabited the region, for it was founded close to a Stone Age site of Eabya village. There, chippings of stone left form cutting weapons had been found in large piles. In the vicinity, many stone axes and stone adzes as well as clay and shell beads had been found. Also, seven miles south of Makkhaya, when the banks of a stream between Belin and Nabepin villages collapsed, skeletons, stone tablets, clay pot and bowls, multi-coloured clay beads as well as bronze bracelets and spearheads were found.⁶

Pyu people had lived in Makkhaya from the earliest time of Pyu to the fall of Pyu or the raise of Bagan period. Mon people also lived in Makkhaya according to some historical records as well as the evidence of Mon villages that are in Makkhaya ancient town area are named with Mon words. Many ancient buildings and religious buildings, ceti and temples are the evidence of peoples living in that area; Myinsaing, Makkhaya, Tamoak, after Bagan period and before Pinya.⁷

According to ancient Myanmar Chronicles, as regard to the name of Makkhaya, the *Zabukoncha* Text reveals that it was early named as *Maggadhar* [𑜋𑜧𑜨𑜫], meaning the City of Prawn or Crab King, which was ruled by from King Thirisandar to King Saw Oo Swa with 160 kings, and also known as its names in derivation to *Magkadar* [𑜋𑜧𑜨𑜫] and *Makkhar* [𑜋𑜧𑜨𑜫]. In some variant sayings, it is asserted that the city was built by *Amattaya* (100 Ministers of the Myanmar royal court) during the reign of King Anawratha of Bagan period.⁸ Therefore the city was called Amat Taya and now the name is pronounced and known as Makkhaya.

³ See Map.2

⁴ Aung Nyein Chan, *Record on Field Trip at Makkhaya*, 2004, pp.46-50

⁵ Ashin Kutala Bhiwansa, *ru©&m0Ho (History of Makkhaya)*, Yangon, Shwe Say Gandar Press, 2006, pp.28-30 (Hereafter cited as Bhiwansa, *History of Makkhaya*)

⁶ Wing Maung (Tampawaddi), "Ancient City of Mekayya on the Kyaukse Plains", *Enchanting Myanmar*, Vol.6, No.3, July-September, 2007, p.27 (Hereafter cited as Wing Maung, "Ancient City of Mekayya")

⁷ Bhiwansa, *History of Makkhaya*, pp.28-35

⁸ Aung Nyein Chan, *Record on Field Trip at Makkhaya*, 2004, pp.46-50

In fact, the name of Makkhaya is found in the lists of the Eleven *Kha-ruin* (11 Villages) of Lay Dwin in Bagan Period. These 11 *Kha-ruins* of 11 Villages are also called as *Malacsā* 11 *Kha-ruins*, and they are as follows:

- (1) Pinlè (*Pañlay*);
- (2) Myitmana (*Plañmanā*);
- (3) Myittha (*Malacsā*);
- (4) Myinggondaing (*Mrañ Khun Tuin*);
- (5) Yamon (*Raṇun*);
- (6) Panan (*Panan*);
- (7) Mekkhaya (*Makkharā*);
- (8) Tapyettha (*Taplat sā*);
- (9) Thindaung (*Sanbon*);
- (10) Tamot-hso (*Tamut*); and
- (11) Hkanlu (*Khamlu*).⁹

According to ancient Myanmar Chronicles, as regard to the name of Makkhaya, the *Zabukoncha* Text reveals that it was early named as one of the ancient pyu region.

List of Ancient Pyu Regions

Sr No	Site	Town	Region
1	[BmOwlyl ([Nvit)	Ouivul	ppfult
2	wrily yl	tif0a' o	ppfult
3	ru&m yl	aumulqna' o	rEav;
4	y, iv, f yl	aumulqna' o	rEav;
5	aumitpif yl	Aefarm	ucsf
6	အလွကပ္ပ ချို	jritrl	rEav;
7	&hyBub yl	jritrl	rEav;
8	v, fult yl	ritb; 6-c%ff (pul pvit? azmitvit? Muyit? v, fult? ryip&)	rau6

Neolithic Evidences

Makkhaya region is popularly known as the historical site founded after Bagan Period, recently archaeological investigations indicate to prehistoric cultural context before Bagan. It has been proved by the traceable remains of Neolithic stone tools, potsherds and pottery, finger-marked bricks and traceable evidences of burials.

As Neolithic context, some considerable numbers of the chippings, flakes, and parts of polished stone artifacts have been found at Aebya village. In its vicinity, it is recorded that many polished stone axes and stone adzes as well as clay and shell beads have been found.¹⁰

In additional accounts, recently field study in this site yielded some sample remains of polished stone artifacts have been collected, and the statistic data on these samples are 24 pieces.

⁹ (a) Gordon H, Luce, *Old Burma Early Bagan*, Vol. I, New York, J.J. Augustin Publisher, Locust Valley, 1969, p.13

(b) Than Tun, *acw&[mitjrefm&mZoi! jrefm&mZoi!bmwr! tr&Mvpl(Ancient Myanmar History: Studies in Myanmar History Number One)*, 3rd ed., Yangon, Inwa Publishing House, 2002, pp.129-130 (Hereafter cited as Than Tun, *Myanmar History*)

¹⁰ Wing Maung, "Ancient City of Mekayya", p.28

Majority of these findings are of flakes by means of the manufacture of polished stone tools, and few of the fragmented part of polished hand axes.¹¹ Moreover, associated with these evidences of stone artifacts, some fragmented pieces of potsherds have been recovered at this area. In fact, although these potsherds are uncertain in primary context to the flakes of stone artifacts, some sherds reveal coarse fabric and texture of grey in colour – which are probably similar features of Neolithic pottery.¹² Indeed, according to the local informants, considerable numbers of stone artifacts of Neolithic context have also been found in the project of water sharing canals from Myit Nge River at Aebya Village. In fact, in the aspect of geographical setting, Makhaya and some evidenced Neolithic sites of Shwesaryan and Taunggaing as well as Taungthaman at its end are lying along the river bank of Myit Nge. So, the area of Makhaya probably provided to the related unit for thriving of Neolithic Culture in the valley.

Metal Evidences

As the Post Neolithic level of cultural phase to Makhaya area, it is reported that some 7 miles to the south of it, when the banks of a stream between Belin and Nabepin Villages collapsed, skeletons, stone tablets, clay pots and bowls, multi-coloured clay beads as well as bronze bracelets and spearheads were found.¹³ It indicates that some remnant of the material remains from this area shows up to Bronze Age Cultural context – similar to those found from Samon River Valley, near the Makhaya region.

Pyu Evidences

Indeed, Pyu cultural evidences from Makhaya are in considerable scale. According to the sayings of local people, Pyu burial urns, pottery and other antiquities have been found near Aebya. As other provided evidences, finger-marked bricks – those of Pyu character have been covered in the ruins of brick structural remains. One reliable account to Pyu burial system, the cemetery has been excavated near the Stupa No.(43), just to the southwest of the city wall. Although there are faint features in exposure, some traceable remains of bone fragments and of pots have been discernable at present condition.¹⁴ By these evidences, the region of Makhaya unfolds its existence since in the time of prehistoric cultural level and successive phase of Pyu culture.

Historical Context

Archaeological evidences from Makhaya are in fact mainly of historical context, particularly in Bagan and Post Cultural Phases. They can be found in the following two remain groups:

- (A) Structural Remains
- (B) Other Material Finds

¹¹ See Fig.1

¹² See Fig.2

¹³ Wing Maung, “Ancient City of Mekayya”, pp.28-29

¹⁴ See Fig.3

(A) Structural Remains

(a) Structural Remains of City Layout

The structural remains for the city layout of Makkhaya are of only traceable manner. The ruined city walls have 500 yards from north to south alignment and 400 yards from east to west. It has been mentioned that there are 8 gateways and additional one for taking out of the death, so there were totally 9 gateways of the city.¹⁵ Noticeably, the corners of this city walls had rounded features just like those found from the Pyu cities. In the middle of the walled city, located to the north of Shaw Yaung Taw pagoda, but now in absent feature, the palace site belongs to 600 ft long in north to south and 450 ft in east to west.¹⁶ In fact, the eastern part of the city was lost away by the erosion of Zawgyi River.

(b) Structural Remains of Religious Buildings

Structural remains of religious monuments from Makkhaya old city are related to Bagan, Pinya, Innwa, Nyaungyan and Konbaung periods. The remains of these Buddhist monuments are distributed at and around the ancient city – 4 ancient pagodas to the south of Makkhaya, and about 40 monuments in the middle of the city site.¹⁷

Among these religious structures, the outstanding monuments are Makkhaya Shwezigon Ceti, Shwe Yaung Taw Temple, Shwezarti ceti, Yarzargyi pagoda, Shwebonpwint pagoda, Innkon pagoda, Shinpin Seit-O pagoda, Hlaingshe pagoda, Paunglaung pagoda, Paha-ma-myin and Du-ti-ya-myin pagodas.¹⁸ At Aebya, there are also a group of 8 pagodas, known as *Aebya Shitszu teik Pagodas*.¹⁹ In fact, the majority of the monuments have been carried out by conservation and reconstruction, and so as the limited studies in this term paper, three famous monuments and one monastic remains have been approached.

(1) Makkhaya Shwezigon

Makkhaya Shwezigon Ceti is contributed to the Late King Uzana of Pinya Period after Bagan. It is 2 furlongs far from southwest of the ruined city.²⁰ It is square in plan with projection, measuring about 163 ft 6 inches on each side. Each corner has a mythical feature of *Manu Siha* (half human- 2 half lions figure) in stucco work. There is a form of bulbous dome like as Bagan Shwezigon, decorated with ornamented bands of *Kittimukha* frieze, and lotus patterns in modern art of work, resting on three terraces. To approach these terraces, the stairways have been arranged in four sides. Originally around the exterior walls of the terraces, it might have been decorated with the glazed plaques of 550 *Jatakas* stories of Buddha, and some of them are now maintained in the Shwe Yaung Taw temple.

In fact, this ceti was taken to conservation work in 2008, and at present, it belongs to 137 ft high, resting on the 200 ft in plinth height.²¹ In survey study, the first terrace is found to be 12 ft 3 inches, and the second and third to 11 ft 7 inches on each height. The average-width of the stairways belongs to 10 ft 7 inches.

¹⁵ Wing Maung, "Ancient City of Mekayya", p.25

¹⁶ Nyant Nyunt (Kyaukse), *၂၀၀၈ (History of Makkhaya)*, Kyaukse, Maha Gandharyon Monastery, Shwese Gandha Makkhaya Literature Series (2), pp.78-79 (Hereafter cited as Nyaunt Nyaunt, *History of Makkhaya*)

¹⁷ According to the local sayings, at and around Makkhay there are 126 pagods in list.

¹⁸ See Fig.4

¹⁹ See Fig.5

²⁰ (a) Wing Maung, "Ancient City of Mekayya", p.25 (b) See Fig.6(a) and (b)

²¹ See Fig.7

(2) Wall Paintings in Shwe Yaung Taw Pagoda

Shweyaungtaung Pagoda is 25 feet high and can be seen two furlong away from south-western of Nan-U monastery. About three hundred feet on the east of the pagoda a road laid bricks in about thirty feet wide can be seen. On each side of the road there are two lions of thirty feet high. In some places cement lays bare and bricks can be seen, as written in 'Record of Research on Makkhaya'. In the book, brick vaulted arches at the base of the temple are intact. At each side of the cardinal points there is each Buddha statue. The type of the temple seems to be of Bagan era. The temple remains in a state of good preservation except the west wing that is a little renovated. Some say that the temple was established by Pyu before Bagan era but others say that it was built in the reign of King Anawrahta.²²

In the temple, wall paintings can be found. Most of the themes are the lives of the Buddha. Most of the murals were depicted in temples of Bagan and Innwa eras, so, works of art in Shwe Yaung Taw temple probably dates back to be Early Bagan era. Just base of the fresco glosses are written. But syntax seems poor.²³ Composition is likely good enough. At the base in one fresco of four great omen it runs, 'When our Siddhattha, Buddha-to-be leaves for the garden with four militaries, he will see the four great signs and ask his charioteer.' Words such as Buddha-to-be, garden and charioteer are misspelling. There are two strange things in the temple. In one corner at the central pillar at which side stands a Buddha image that depicts a figure of Bheikkhuni or a nun. At the right corner of the image in the eastern gate there is a figure of Bheikkhuni too. One member of the pagoda trustee explained that the figure was redepicted as those of other sides faded.²⁴

The second thing is that a fresco partitioned with glass panes which is in the north-east corner of the temple. It is said to be three dimensional pictures.²⁵ There are human figures in the picture. They are in a queue like rowers paddling a boat. The artist drew three men in a single man or one upon another. But the viewer can see only when he scrutinizes the drawing. Two men are depicted in a single dimension. Such excellent skill is mysterious enough. It is known as three-dimensional mural.

Through a figure of a Bhikkhuni in the mural painting the temple dates back to Bagan era. But by means of symbols on the bricks, it seems to be Pyu era. So, it may be surmised that Pyu established the temple firstly and then a certain king of Bagan renovated it.²⁶

(3) Shwezati Ceti

It is situated in the east of Aebya village. The plan of the Pagoda belongs to more or less square in shape, measuring about 69 ft 9 inches in south and north and 68 ft 11 inches in east and west. Above it is resting the circular base that look like octagonal stupa of huge massive form, and then also two terraces with corner stupas, and 28 projecting corners. It is also built on slightly higher platform with 4 flights of steps. One noticeable fact is that there is a building assumed such as religious building near Shwesati Ceti.

(4) Monastery near Shwezigon Ceti

It is situated in the south of the Zigongyi. Being in lost of its superstructure, it has been identified by monastic structural remains of late Bagan or Post Bagan period. There are two entrance ways in each side of the front wall at east face and the throne was placed in the middle of these two entrances.²⁷ Inside the structure, there is a central cell - which served as to

²² Aung Nyein Chan, *Record on Field Trip at Makkhaya*, 2004, pp.52-54

²³ See Fig.8

²⁴ Aung Nyein Chan, *Record on Field Trip at Makkhaya*, 2004, pp.46-50

²⁵ See Fig.9

²⁶ Aung Nyein Chan, *Record on Field Trip at Makkhaya*, 2004, p.52

²⁷ See Fig.10

the chief monk of the monastery. In construction technique, over the archways of the entrances are found to be made up of radiating arch with wedge shaped key bricks and wooden lintels. The bricks styles placed in the walls are identified by vertical and horizontal order in turn toward the upper part. In survey, this structure is measured in 110 ft long in the east side, and the inner cell in 22 ft 9 inches long on each side.²⁸ The brick sizes used in this structure are to be found in 1 ft 8 inches x 8 inches x 2 inches.

(B) Other Material Finds

Other Material finds in historical context from Makkhaya old city include stone inscriptions, glazed plaques, wooden objects and terracotta objects.

(a) Study on Stone Inscription

As epigraphic evidences to Makkhaya old city, there are two inscriptions in study. The first one is recovered from the renovation work at an ancient ceti near southern city wall – by means of removing ruined brickbats and earth from the eastern entrance hall of it. It belongs to 15 inches high, 10 inches wide and 0.7 inches thick.²⁹ Bearing with 10 lines in inferior inscribed manner, it reveals the donation of oil post to the ceti, made by Panyan of Bagan in 687 M.E (i.e. C.E 1325).³⁰

In fact, the most important inscription, provided to the primary source for the Shwezigon Ceti and the history of Makkhaya has been found at the temple to the southwest of it, known as Mingyi Yannaung Gu. According to this inscription, Makkhaya Zigon was donated by King Uzina in C.E 1325. It is in a large size type with the dimension of 6 ft 6 inches high, 3 ft 1 inch wide and 6 inches thick, bearing with 21 inscribed lines. The top part of this inscription is also decorated with the figures of god and floral designs, usually similar adornment of Pinya period work.³¹ According to this inscription, valuable information about Makkhaya Zigon Ceti have been known that it was donated by King Uzana in 687 M.E (i.e. C.E 1325) by means of encasing the original small one over the large ceti with the dimension of 102 ton. In fact, this inscription is the mixed inscribed one, known as *Sint Htoee*, because the later parts of this inscription show the different character of inscribed alphabets, smaller rather than those of the former parts, revealing to the donations of religious monuments around the Makkhaya Zigon and their necessities in 716 M.E (i.e C.E 1354) after 29 years later the establishment of Makkhaya Zigon Ceti.

In Makkhaya ancient city, many inscriptions were found a certain inscription in a monastery and copied it. It is a stone slab of one and half feet in width and half written. It is oval shape.

This inscription was about the donation of a person named “*Nga Hlut Su Te*”. In this inscription, he offered to human and deities or spirits. He can’t accept, someone intends to destroy for his donation. He was prayed about the good life to all over the life especially living uppermost, living in ground and living in water.

At the corner of north-east of Myazigon pagoda campus, there is a deteriorated stupa. An ancient stone tablet can be found the arched way of their stupa. Style of carving script is Bagan's style. Now this stupa is called “Kyauk Saya” (ausmufpm&) stupa, which was reconstructed by the monk of Myazigon monastry. This stupa may be the model of Myazigon pagoda so that the stone tablet is put the stupa.

²⁸ See Fig.11

²⁹ Nyaunt Nyaunt, *History of Makkhaya*, pp. 65-66

³⁰ See Fig.12

³¹ (a) Wing Maung (Tampawaddi), “*ru&mpnfc&wmausupm (olir [lw) Op&emrif&ub\ bOr&v&wrt*”

(“Makkhaya Zigotaw Inscription (or) Record of the Life of King Uzana”, *ru&ma&pnfc&qmityg;rm*: (*Articles on Makkhaya Shwezigon*), Makkhaya, Shweyaungdaw Monastery, 2009, p. 50

(b) See Fig.13

The votive tablet discovered inside the stupa is similar to tablet of Bagan period. The script at the base of the tablet also painted that it is from the time of Bagan dynasty. People had probably settled down at this place before Bagan period. So it is possible that the law suits on the own ship of the farms and construction religious structures at Makhaya.³²

One of the stone tablets which were carved with ancient Mon script can be found at Kyauk Saya. According to this inscription Mon people probably settled down at Makhaya. The names of the villages of "Taline Yama" (wvdkif;&mr) and "Mhon Kha Yaing" (rkefc½kdif) in this region were found in the inscription.

Little stone inscription near Phayahla (bk&m;vS) Pagoda had been studied. This inscription is a record that Monk U Pa Li Maha Htay had renovated temple at his birth place. Scripts are carved on both sides of the tablet. The old script carved previously becomes faded and they were carved again to make them clear and some more new script was also added. Each side has fifteen lines of Myanmar scripts which are from 800 years ago. It was found that the scripts are very clear and they are historical heritage, cultural heritage and literature.³³

(b) Glazed Plaques

Glazed plaques found at Makhaya old city are preserved in Shwe Yaung Taw Temples. Nearly all of these plaques were removed from Makhaya Zigongyi Ceti. Although some of the plaques are broken into pieces but considerable numbers are in a good condition. All glazed plaques are depicted the lives of the Buddha from 550 *Jatakas* stories.³⁴ Each of plaque consists of gloss of concerned episode. In fact, the stylistic illustrations on them show in manner of those found at Shwezigon, Dhammarazaka and Mingalar Cetis from Bagan. Among these plaques, survey and rubbings works are studied in 6 plaques such as of *Kassapa Mand + Jataka*, *S + lavan @ gar @ ja Jataka*, *Va @ @ upatha Jataka*, *Saku @ a Jataka*, *Kapota Jataka*, and *Val @ haka Jataka*.³⁵ Average dimension of these plaques is found to be 8 inches to 10 inches on each side.

(c) Wooden objects and Terracotta objects

Wooden objects recorded in Makhaya are the sculptural objects in the figures of Buddha images and Nagas heads. The work of art features on these figures reveals elaborate depiction of long tongues and crest.³⁶

The marks of the bricks are numeric, animal figures, sole of human and paw of animal and floral scroll. When numerical bricks are studied, there are many characteristics. Why are some bricks incised with such numeric?

As terracotta objects, considerable numbers of votive tablets, pottery of libation jars and water-dippers, and clay pipes which were recovered from Makhaya old city are also preserved at Shwe Yaung Taw Temple.³⁷ Indeed, considerable numbers of terracotta objects of the fragmented remains of libation jars have been recovered in the field survey in Aebya villages.³⁸

(d) Figure Marked Brick from Makhaya

³² Aung Nyein Chan, *Record on Field Trip at Makhaya*, 2004, pp. 58-59

³³ Aung Nyein Chan, *Record on Field Trip at Makhaya*, 2004, pp.96-97

³⁴ See Fig.14

³⁵ See Fig.15

³⁶ See Fig.16

³⁷ See Fig.17 (a) and (b)

³⁸ See Fig.18(a) , (b) and (c)

The expedition team got Shweyaungdaw Pagoda at west side there remains a row of bricks. Some bricks have marks and they are studied. The marks of the bricks are numeric, animal figures, sole of human and paw of animal and floral scroll. When numerical bricks are studied, there are many characteristics. Why are some bricks incised with such numeric?

These are not vague to be scratches but they are digits indeed. But it is difficult enough to distinguish what digits they are. Among such numbers they are oval, crescent, centre-dotted oval and 'la' shape. But the bricks belonged to Pyu era and it seems to be a conception of Pyu. It is surmised to be the secret numbers used by the architects of Shwe Yaung Daw pagoda. But it seems to be the number of workers or donors. As digits mean number, they may be brick donors or relics of the Buddha.

On the bricks of fauna, there are lion, tiger and seeming elephant. It is supposed that these animals would exorcise evil forces and prevent from disasters and they are probably the guardians of the pagoda or secret guardians.

It is awesome that there are soles and paws on bricks. Why are the marks made? The sole mark on the brick is not different from that of human today. So, if the brick seems to be of Pyu era, the shape of Pyu man does not differ from that of modern man. The same goes true for Bagan bricks. Some authors write that when someone wants to see Pyu, the ancestor of Bamar, he could look at his image in the mirror. It is supposed to be the soles of the brick-maker or the donor of the pagoda.

The paws of animals are hoofs of buffalo, cow and horse and claw feet of tiger, dog and cat. It can be conjectured that ancient men offered the meats of such animals to the pagoda as offerings. But as wild beasts haunted there and as an evidence the paws are incised on bricks.

Bricks of floral designs likely reveal artistic work, decoration and durability. As such queer bricks are found in the compound of the pagoda it is likely archaic. If the date is supposed to be early Stone Age, Shweyaungdaw pagoda seems to be older than Bagan era.

Conclusion

Although Makkhaya is generally known as to the historical site of Bagan and Post Bagan Period, archaeological culture on this site lights since in Pre Bagan Context from even Neolithic phase of Prehistoric culture. In comprehensive study on the material remains from this site, the cultural validity of it can be pointed out as follows:

- (1) The informative and surface finds of stone artifacts and flakes at and around Makkhaya prove to that of in Neolithic site, possibly of workshop site in character. It is also provided by the fact that as strategic position, Makkhaya area is located on the river bank of Myit Nge river, along with the other evidenced Neolithic sites of Shwesaryan, Taunggaing, and even Taungthaman at its end, so formed as one domain in the cultural catchment cluster in Myit Nge Valley of late Stone Age culture in archaeological landscapes of Myanmar.
- (2) After the Stone Age as Metal Age cultural context, though on faint manner in exposures of direct evidences for it, some considerable numbers of bronze artifacts have been reported in its environs. In fact, in the ancient environmental context, the region of Makkhaya is situated in the close orientation to the clearly Metal Age cultural sites of Samon Valley. It is indicated that the Metal Age culture has not appeared in this area.
- (3) As regard to the Pyu culture from this site, traditional accounts mentioned that this area was of early Pyu settlement. Indeed, reliable evidences come from the remains of Pyu burial urn and skeletal remains through out of both informative finds and archaeological excavation. This fact shows that Makkhaya related to Pyu culture.
- (4) Indeed, the rich sources of evidences from this site are of historical context revealing Bagan Period and Post Bagan periods of Pinya, Innwa, Nyaungyan and Konbaung. Very considerable numbers of Buddhist religious structures and antiquities of concerned periods

cover at and around the site. So, although the important status in urbanized character is lost in these days, ancient Makkhaya might have been in its existence with flourished settlement pattern in his heydays.

In fact, to the more interpretation on the validity of its cultural levels, the further thorough study and the survivals of its archaeological remains in preservation and conservation work is essential to Makkhaya.

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