

# Introduction to Myanmar

*with emphasis on regional  
historical geography and  
political history*

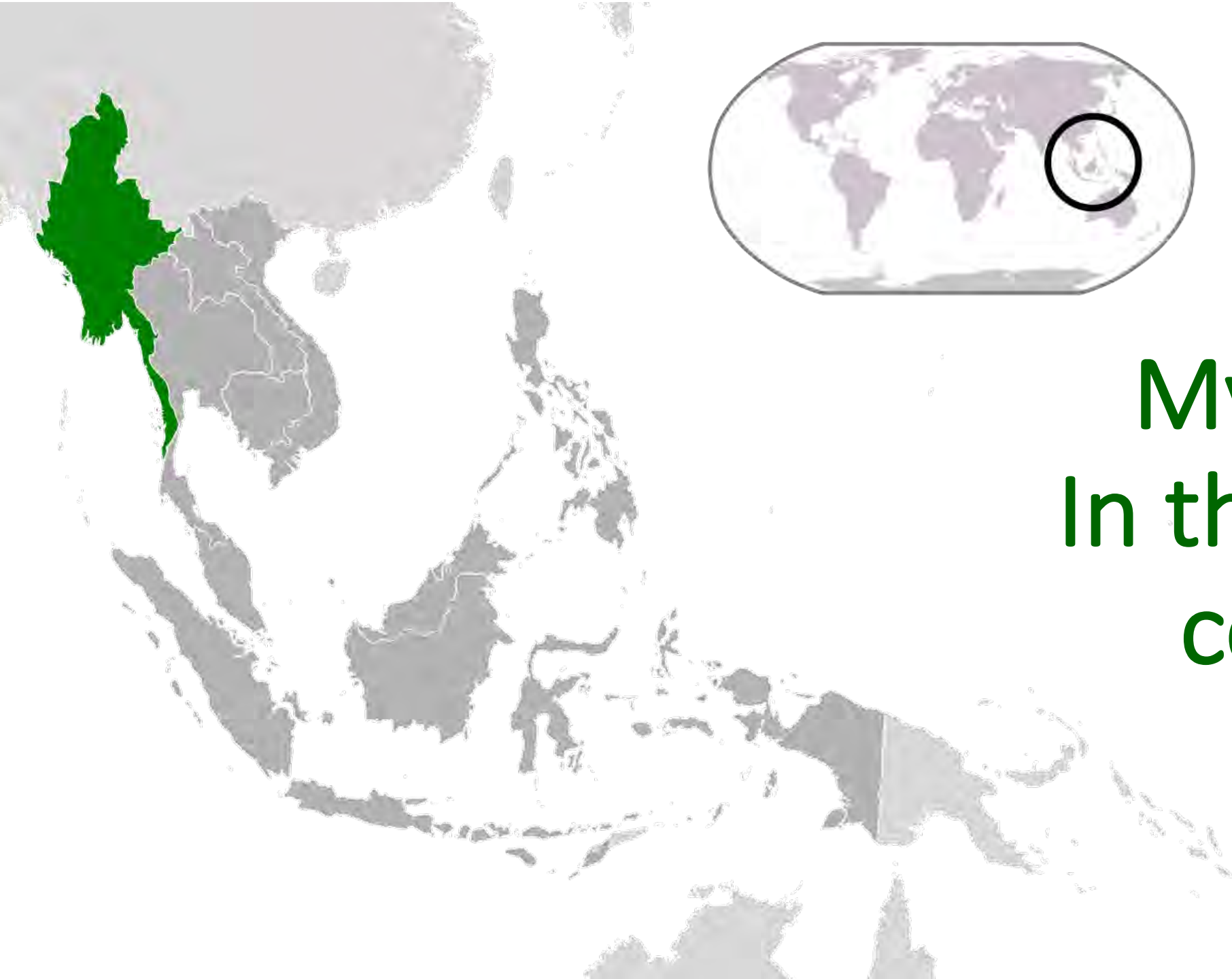
**Mingalaba!**



**805-161 SOUTHEAST ASIAN CIVILIZATION**

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# Myanmar In the ASEAN context



1948–2006

Yangon (Rangoon)  
capital of Burma

2006

Official new  
capital city

**Nay Pyi Taw**

Yangon's Shwedagon Pagoda



# 2016 BBC News

15 October 2016

- The stone is 4.3m (14ft) high and 5.8m (19ft) long
- Reportedly worth an estimated **\$170 million**
- It was found in a mine in the jade-producing **Kachin state**
- Myanmar is the source of nearly all of the world's finest jadeite, a near-translucent green stone.

“Giant jade stone weighing 175 tones has been uncovered by miners in Myanmar”



<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-37670305>

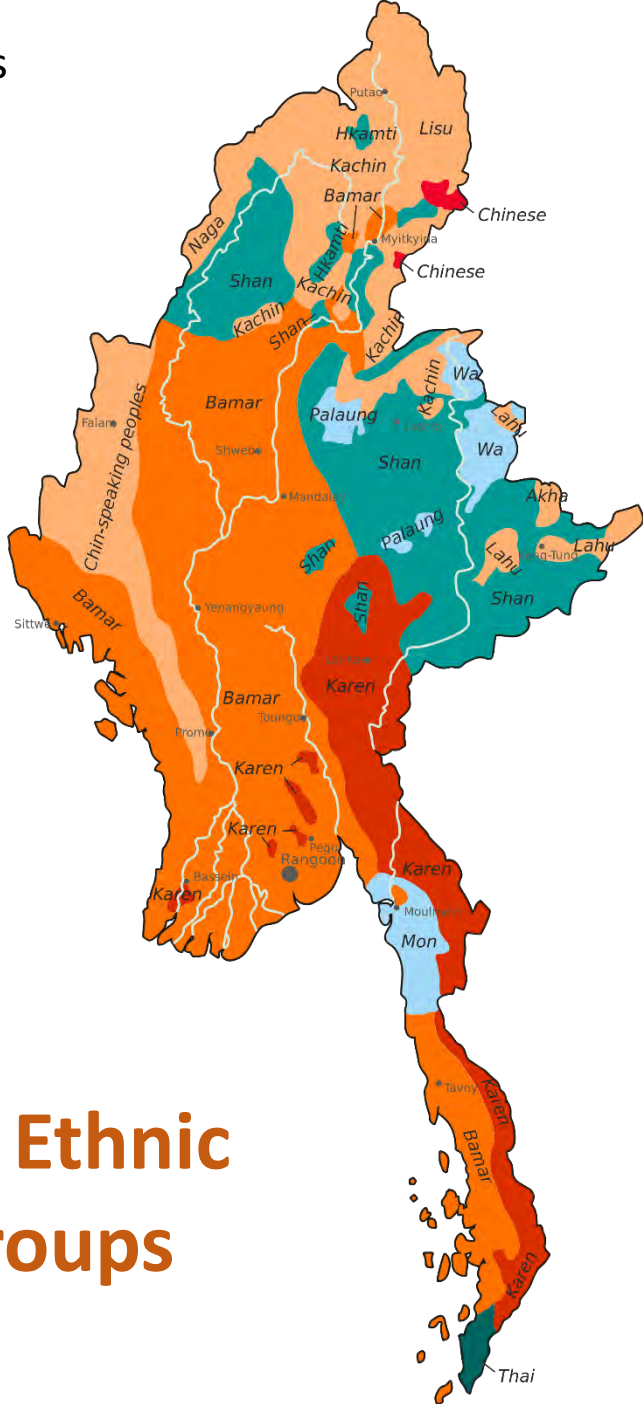
15 October 2016



- The jade industry is responsible for nearly half of the country's GDP
- One of its biggest markets is neighboring China, where it is known as the “**stone of heaven**”



Myanmar is the most ethnically diverse country in Mainland Southeast Asia



135 Ethnic Groups

Ethnic Group	Population Today
Bamar	68%
Shan	9%
Kayin	7%
Rakhine	3.5%
Chinese	2.5%
Mon	2%
Kachin	1.5%
Indians	1.25%
Kayah	0.75%
Wa, Naga, Lahu, Lisu and Palaung	4.5%





Thanaka





“Thanakha” is a yellowish-white cosmetic paste made from ground bark — a characteristic feature of the culture of Burma





# “Thanaka” Class Video 2015

Course Portrait® (Class Music Video) on Burmese Thanaka Culture featuring international students for Southeast Asian Civilization with Dr. Steven Martin and guest lecturer Dr. Aye Nu Khai, Myanmar Language Dept, Dagon University, Myanmar.

*The video was directed by Edward E. Vaughan and edited by John James.*





# Myanmar Pop Music

## YouTube



**LayPhyu+MyoG-Ain Pyan Chain**

<https://youtu.be/KWNm3EL1E0E>



**Min A Twat So Yin - Zaw Paing**

<https://youtu.be/lZZmZWLwBfc>

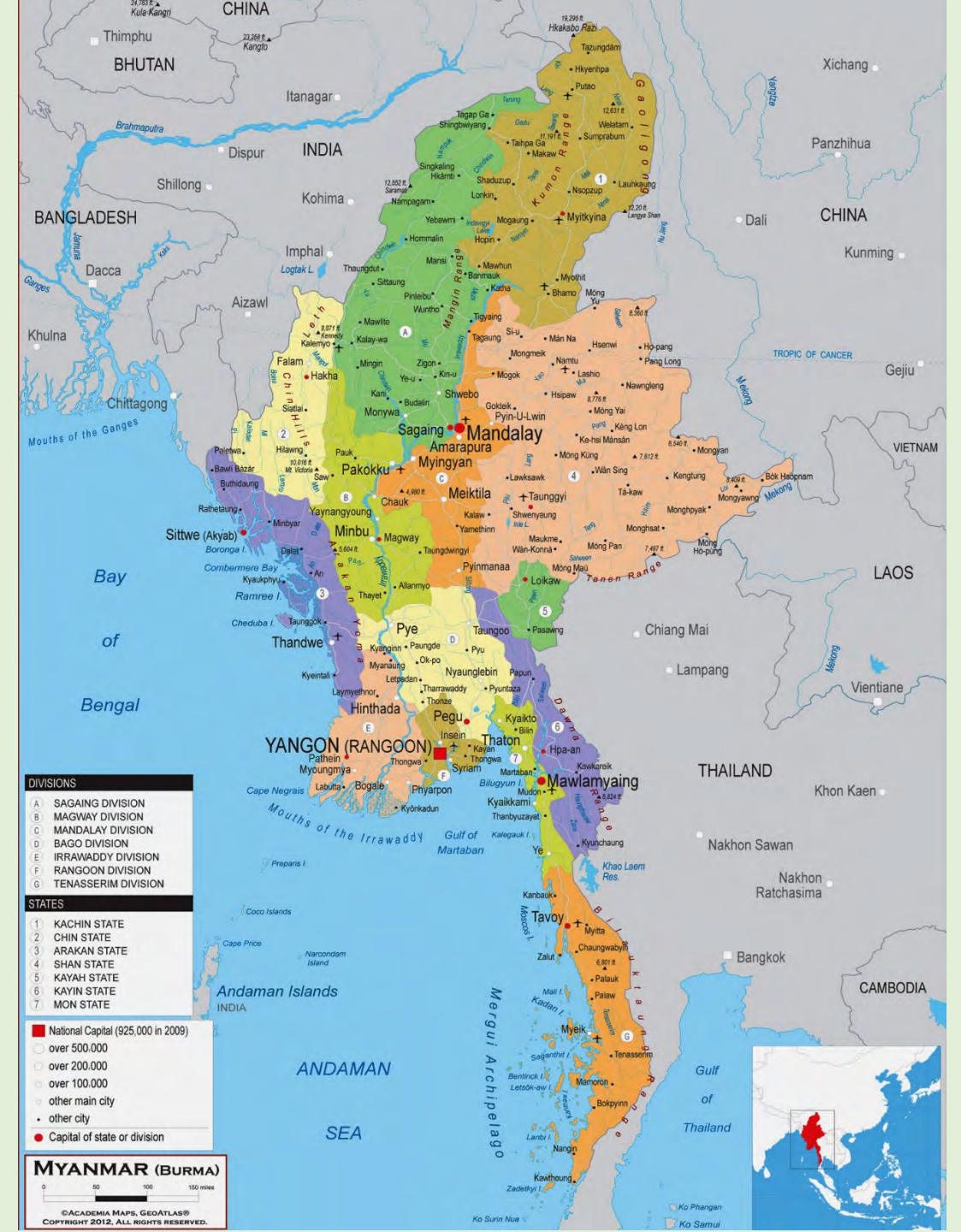


**သနပ်ခါး - Black Hole**

<https://youtu.be/SmH0IXJSkr0>



# Political Geography of Myanmar





The map displays the following locations and regions:

- Surrounding Countries:** INDIA, CHINA, BANGLADESH, LAOS, THAILAND.
- Myanmar States and Divisions:** KACHIN STATE, SAGAING DIV, CHIN STATE, ARAKAN, MAGWAY DIV, PEGU DIV, RANGOON DIV, MON STATE, KAREN STATE, KARENNI STATE.
- Key Cities and Towns:** Thimpu, Dhaka, Putao, Myitkyinao, Bhamoo, Lashio, Shwebo, Mandalay, Kengtungo, Taunggyi, Meiktila, Nanyitaw Pyinmana, Loikaw, Magwe, Akyabo, Kyaukpyuo, Sandoway, Pui, Toungoo, Basseino, Thaton, Moulmein, Yeo.
- Other Labels:** Kunmingo, Vientiane.







Physical  
Geography of  
Myanmar



Myanmar  
(Formerly 'Burma')



Irrawaddy River



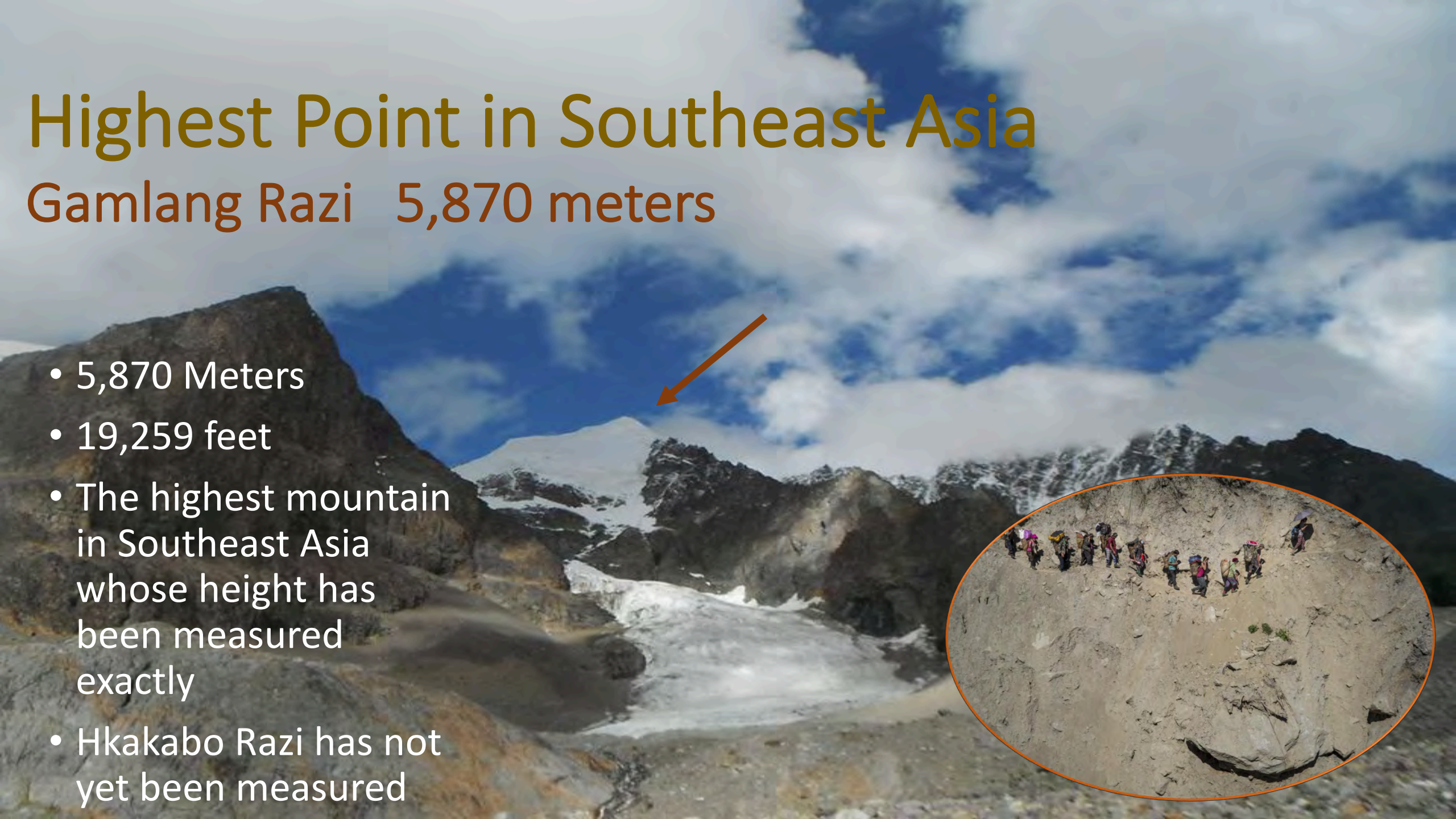
↑  
The Kingdom  
of Ava on the  
Irrawaddy  
River During  
the Konbaung  
Dynasty



# Highest Point in Southeast Asia

Gamlang Razi 5,870 meters

- 5,870 Meters
- 19,259 feet
- The highest mountain in Southeast Asia whose height has been measured exactly
- Hkakabo Razi has not yet been measured





# MYANMAR (BURMA)

## Contemporary Factoids Physical Geography

### Land boundaries

**Total:** 6,522 km

**Border countries:** Bangladesh 271 km,  
China 2,129 km, India 1,468 km, Lao  
PDR 238 km, Thailand 2,416 km

### Natural resources

petroleum, **timber**, tin, antimony, zinc, copper,  
tungsten, lead, coal, marble, limestone, **precious  
stones**, natural gas, hydropower, arable land

### Coastline

**Total:** 1,930 km

### Area

676,578 sq km

### highest point

Gamlang Razi  
5,870 m



### Climate

#### Southwest monsoon

*June to September*

*Cloudy, rainy, hot, humid*

#### Northeast monsoon

*December to April*

*Less cloudy, scant rainfall, mild  
temperatures, lower humidity*



# MYANMAR (BURMA)

## Contemporary Factoids Human Geography

### Ethnic Groups

Burman 68%, Shan 9%,  
Karen 7%, Rakhine 4%,  
Chinese 3%, Indian 2%,  
Mon 2%, other 5%

### Religion

Buddhist 89%, Christian 4% (Baptist 3%, Roman Catholic 1%), Muslim 4%, Animist 1%, other 2%

### Population

56,320,206

### Languages

Burmese (official)

### Major Cities

Rangoon (Yangon) 4.802 million  
Mandalay 1.167 million  
Naypyitaw 1.03 million (capital)

### Literacy

(i.e., age 15 and over can read and write)

Total population: 93.1%

Male: 95.2%

Female: 91.2%





# Political History in Brief

*A Short History of South-East Asia*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2009  
Edited by Peter Church

- **1044**

Pagan empire founded

- **End 13<sup>th</sup> Century**

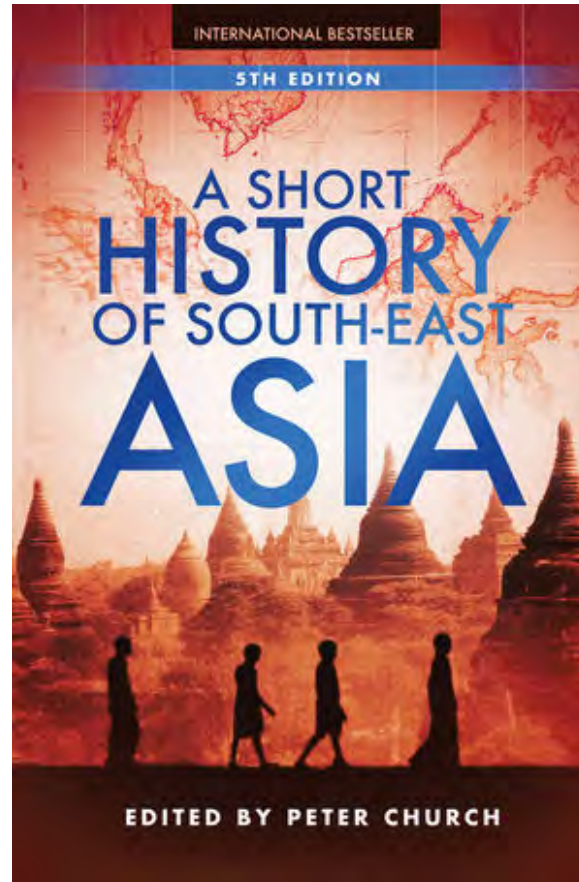
Mongols from China attack and destroy Pagan

- **Mid 16<sup>th</sup> Century**

New Kingdom emerges at Pegu (near Yangon)

- **Mid 18<sup>th</sup> Century**

New Kingdom emerges at Ava (near Mandalay)



- **1824-26 and 1850s**

First and Second Anglo-Burmese Wars result in the loss of territory to the British East India Company

- **1886**

Britain annexes the remainder of Myanmar

- **1946**

Independence granted and the Union of Burma formed

- **1948-1962**

Period of democratic governments



# Political History in Brief

*A Short History of South-East Asia*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2009  
Edited by Peter Church

- **1962**

Military coup led by General Ne Win ushers in “Burmese Way to Socialism”

- **1974**

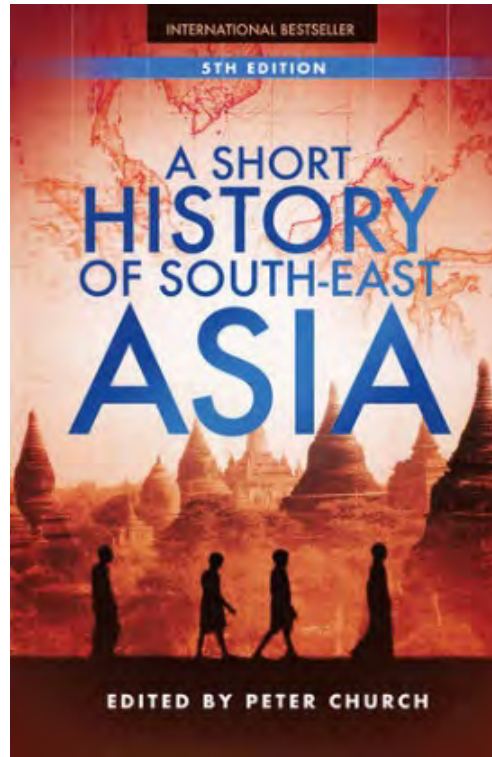
New Constitution and formation of Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma

- **1988**

State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) assumes control under General Saw Maung. Union of Myanmar formed

- **1990**

Elections declared null and void by SLORC



- **1997**

SLORC renamed SPDC (State Peace and Development Council)

- **1997**

Myanmar joins ASEAN

- **2000**

Aung San Suu Kyi placed under house arrest, released 2002, rearrested 2003

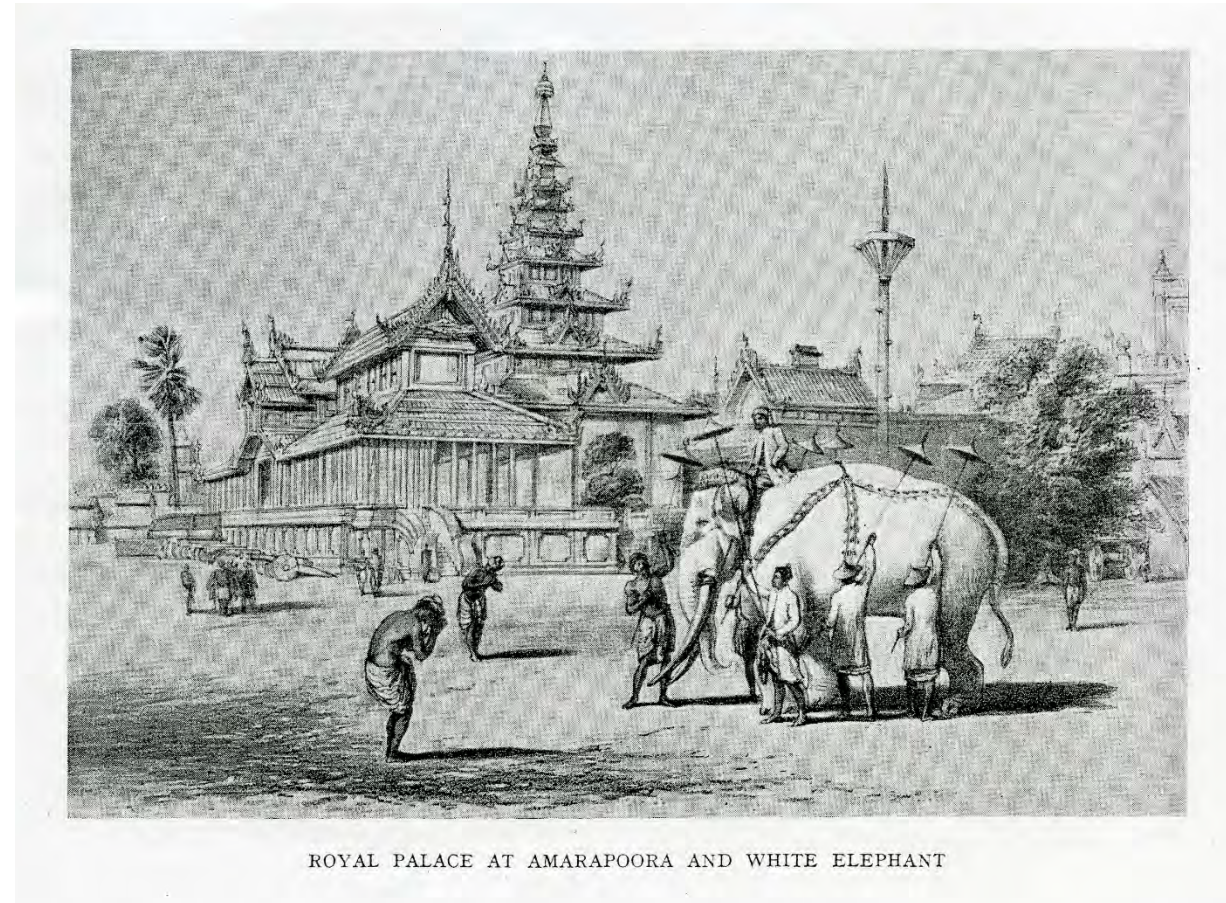
- **2005**

Aung San Suu Kyi remains under house arrest as of late 2003



# 4 Key Periods

- I. **The Pre-historic Period - c. 1100 BC to c. 200 BC**  
Paleolithic and Neolithic sites, Animism, and Karen Bronze Drums
- II. **The Pre-Pagan Period - c. 200 BC to c. 800 AD**  
Mon and Pyu City states: Thaton, Beikthano, Halin, Srikshetra
- III. **The Pagan Period - c. 800 AD to 1287 AD**
- IV. **The Post Pagan Period - 14<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries**  
The Ava and **Konbaung** Periods



**Amarapura** -- founded by King Bodawpaya of the **Konbaung** Dynasty c. 1783



# Prehistory

- **Early cultures existed in Burma as early as 11,000 BCE**

- Early settlement found in the central dry zone
- Scattered sites appear in close proximity to the Irrawaddy River

- **The Neolithic (New Stone Age) – Plants and animals first domesticated and polished stone tools appear**

- Three caves located near Taunggyi at the edge of the Shan plateau dated to 10000 to 6000 BC

- **1500 BCE – Turning copper into bronze, growing rice, and domesticating chickens and pigs**

- Among the first in the world

- **500 BCE – Iron-working settlements emerged in an area south of present-day Mandalay**

- Bronze-decorated coffins and burial sites filled with earthenware remains
- Archaeological evidence at Samon Valley (south of Mandalay) suggests rice growing settlements that traded with **China** between 500 BC and 200 CE
- Changes in infant burial practices that were greatly influenced by **India**, including burying infants in jars depicting family status based on size



**An ancient  
tradition of  
writing:**

*Pre-colonial  
Bronze Tattoo  
Pen Burma*





(c. 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE  
– 9<sup>th</sup> century CE)

Pagan (800–1297)

Small Kingdoms

# States, Kingdoms, Empires & Dynasties



# Pyu Realm (city states)

(c. 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE – 9<sup>th</sup> century CE)

- **2nd century BCE – The Pyu entered the Irrawaddy valley from present-day Yunnan**
  - Found city states throughout the Irrawaddy valley
  - Original home of the Pyu is reconstructed to be Qinghai Lake in present-day Qinghai and Gansu.
  - Likely the earliest inhabitants of Burma
  - Overland trade route from China to India --- Trade with India brought Buddhism from South India
  - 4th century -- Irrawaddy valley had converted to Buddhism
  - Many city-states -- the largest and most important was the Sri Ksetra Kingdom southeast of modern Pyay
  - 638 CE, the Pyu of Sri Ksetra calendar (later became the Burmese calendar)
- **8th-century Chinese records identify 18 Pyu states throughout the Irrawaddy valley**
  - Pyu described as a humane and peaceful people who wore silk cotton
  - Pyu knew how to make astronomical calculations
  - Pyu boys often entered the monastic life at seven to the age of 20
- **Long-lasting civilization – Nearly a millennium (until the early 9th century)**
  - 9th century -- The Bamar entered the upper Irrawaddy valley (The “swift horsemen” from the north)
  - Pyu city states of Upper Burma came under constant attacks by Nanzhao (in modern Yunnan)
  - In 832, the Nanzhao sacked Halingyi, which had overtaken Prome as the chief Pyu city-state and informal capital (Chinese texts detail the plundering of Halingyi, including the capture of 3000 Pyu prisoners)
- **Pyu settlements remained in Upper Burma until the advent of the Pagan Empire in mid 11th century**
  - The Pyu were gradually absorbed into the expanding Burman kingdom of Pagan in the next four centuries
  - The Pyu language still existed until the late 12th century
  - By the 13th century, the Pyu had assumed Bamar ethnicity
  - The histories and legends of the Pyu were also incorporated to those of the Bamar





# Mon Kingdoms

- **6th century** – The Mon began to enter the present-day Lower Burma from the Mon kingdoms of **Haribhunjaya** and Dvaravati (modern-day Thailand)
- **9th century** – The Mon founded at least two small kingdoms (or large city-states) centered around Bago and Thaton
- The earliest external reference to a Mon kingdom in Lower Burma was in 844-848 by Arab geographers





# Began





# Bagan – 9th to 13th centuries (?)

- 2nd century CE: “Legendary” founding of Bagan
- 849 CE fortified by King Pyinbya
- 9th century CE: Bagan was founded by Mranma of the Burmans
- 1044 to 1287 CE: Bagan was the capital of the Pagan Empire



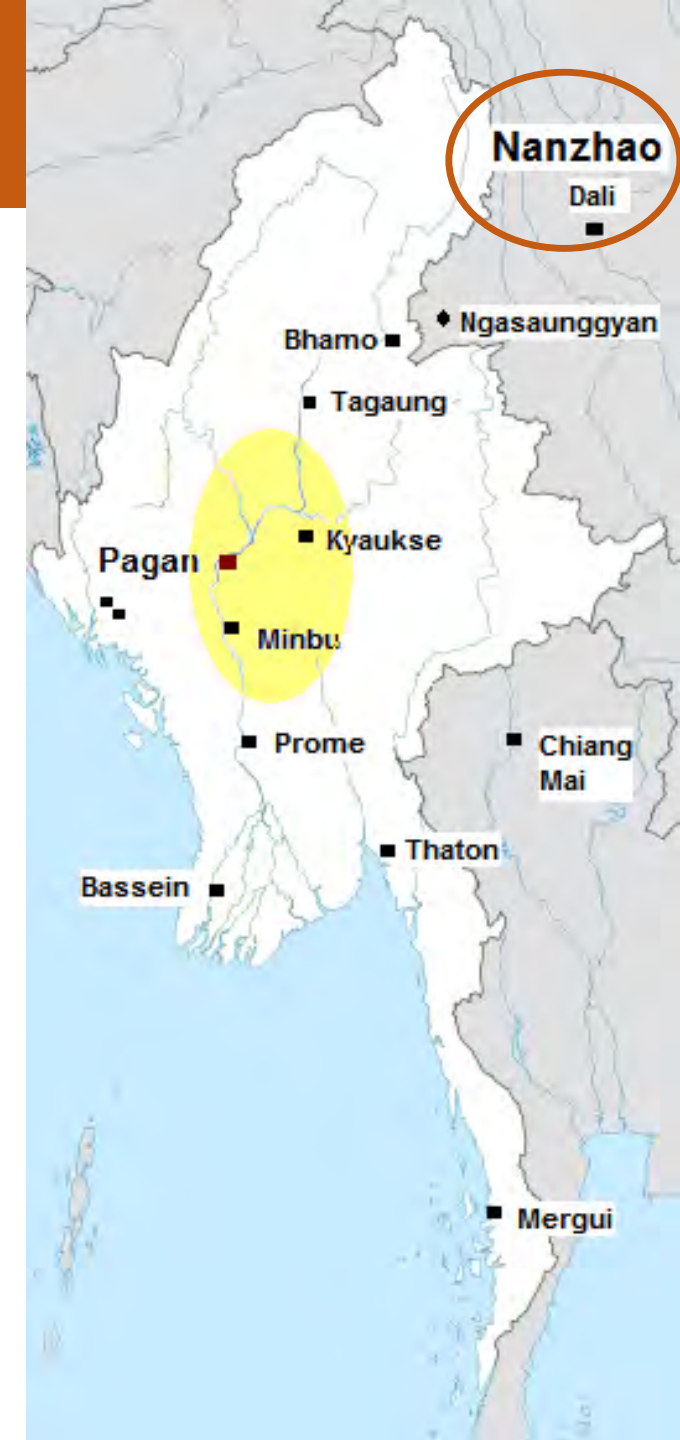
Bagan's prosperous economy built over 10,000 temples between the 11th and 13th centuries

(approximately 10,000 small temples, 3000 monasteries and 1000 stupas)



# Early Pagan Empire

- The **Burmans** arrive with the early 9<sup>th</sup> century Nanzhao raids of the **Pyu** states and remained in Upper Burma.
  - Smaller Burman migrations into the upper Irrawaddy valley might have begun as early as the 7th century
  - Mid-to-late 9th century, Pagan was founded as a fortified settlement along a strategic location on the Irrawaddy near the confluence of the Irrawaddy and its main tributary the Chindwin River
- **Early Pagan** may have been organized to help the **Nanzhao** pacify the surrounding country side
- **10<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> centuries** saw a small principality grow to include its immediate surrounding areas— to about 200 miles north to south and 80 miles from east to west
- **Anawrahta's ascension in 1044**



# Anawrahta The Pagan Prince 1044



အာဇာနည်တော်  
ပြန်လည်ထူထောင်  
AD ၁၀၄၄ ခု ခုနှစ်



## Pagan Empire under Anawrahta

- **1044** the Pagan prince named **Anawrahta** came to power
- 3 decades of expansion
- The First Burmese Empire
  - “Charter polity” forms the basis of modern-day Burma/Myanmar
- Historically verifiable Burmese history begins with his accession



# Began





# Pagan Empire c. 800 AD to 1287 AD [slide 1]

The wealth of the kingdom was devoted to building over 10,000 Buddhist temples in the Pagan capital zone between 11th and 13th centuries (of which 3000 remain to the present day). The wealthy donated tax-free land to religious authorities

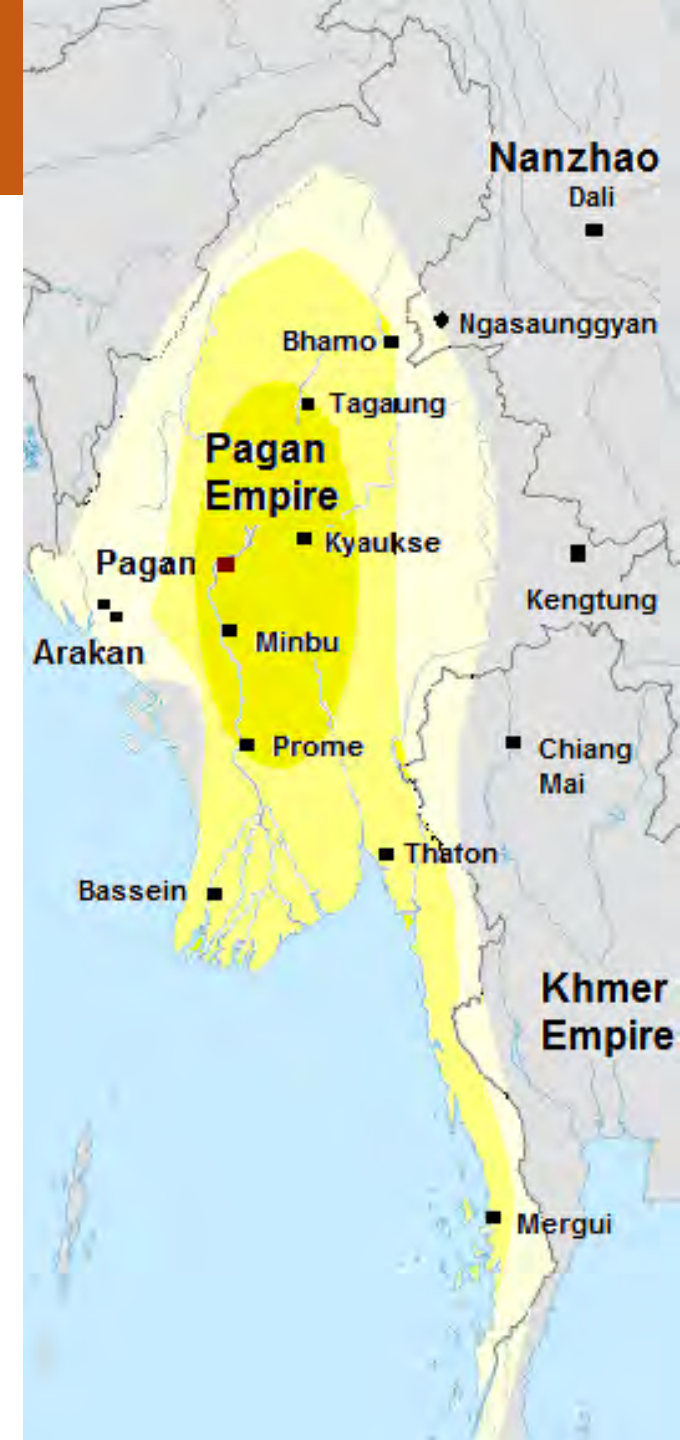
- **Anawrahta's Ascension in 1044 – Anawrahta founds the Pagan Kingdom over a 30 year period**
  - Unifies the regions that would later constitute the modern-day Burma.
  - Late 12th century -- Anawrahta's successors extend their influence south into the upper Malay Peninsula, east to the Salween River, north to the current border with China, and west toward the northern Arakan and the Chin Hills
  - The Burmese claim Pagan's domination over the entire Chao Phraya Valley (Thailand) and the lower Malay Peninsula to the Strait of Malacca.
- **Early 12th century – Pagan emerged as a major power alongside the Khmer Empire in Southeast Asia**
  - Recognized by Song Dynasty China and the Chola dynasty of India
  - Until mid-13th century -- Most of mainland Southeast Asia was under some degree of control of either the Pagan Empire or the Khmer Empire
- **Anawrahta implemented a series of key social, religious and economic reforms that would have a lasting impact in Burmese history**
  - Social and religious reforms later developed into the modern-day culture of Burma
  - Key development was the **introduction of Theravada Buddhism** to Upper Burma after Pagan's conquest of the Thaton Kingdom in 1057
  - Supported by royal patronage, the Buddhist school gradually spread to the village level in the next three centuries
  - Vajrayana Buddhist, Mahayana, Hindu, and animism remained heavily-entrenched at all levels of society





# Pagan Empire c. 800 AD to 1287 AD [slide 2]

- **The Burmese language and culture gradually became dominant in the upper Irrawaddy valley, overshadowing the Pyu and Pali cultures by the late 12th century**
  - Bamar leadership of the kingdom was supreme
  - The Pyu had largely assumed the Bamar ethnicity in Upper Burma
  - The Burmese language (once a foreign language) becomes the lingua franca of the kingdom
- **13th century -- The kingdom went into decline as the continuous growth of tax-free religious wealth**
  - Internal political disorder and external challenges by Mons, Mongols and Shans
  - **The Shan** began to surround the Pagan Empire from the north and the east
  - **The Mongols** conquer Yunnan, the former homeland of the Bamar in 1253, began their invasion in 1277, and in **1287 sacked Pagan**, ending the Pagan Kingdom's 250-year rule of the Irrawaddy valley and its periphery
  - Pagan's rule of central Burma came to an end ten years later in 1297 when it was toppled by the Myinsaing Kingdom





# Small Kingdoms

## Ava (1364–1555) -- The Burmese language and culture came into its own

- Kingdom of Ava (1364) -- successor state to earlier, even smaller kingdoms based in central Burma: Taungoo (1287–1318), Myinsaing–Pinya Kingdom (1297–1364), and Sagaing Kingdom (1315–64).
- Views itself as the rightful successor to the Pagan Kingdom and tried to reassemble the former empire

## Hanthawaddy Pegu (1287–1539)

- **Mon-speaking kingdom** founded after Pagan's collapse in 1287
- Lower-Burma-based kingdom was a loose federation of regional power centers
- Razadarit (1384–1421) unified three Mon-speaking regions and held off Ava in the Forty Years' War (1385–1424)
- Hanthawaddy enters a golden age as rival Ava went into decline
- 1420s - 1530s -- Most powerful kingdom of all post-Pagan kingdoms
- Gifted monarchs foster a golden age with foreign commerce
- Flourishing Mon language and culture, and a center of commerce and Theravada Buddhism
- Conquered by the upstart Taungoo Dynasty in 1539

## Shan States (1287–1563)

- The Shans, ethnic Tai peoples who came down with the Mongols, stayed and quickly came to dominate much of northern to eastern arc of Burma
- Powerful Shan states raided Ava's territory in the early 16th century and capture Ava in 1527
- Taungoo conquers Ava in 1555 and all of the Shan States by 1563

## Arakan (1287–1785)

- Independent since the late Pagan period
- Often caught between bigger neighbors
- Only post-Pagan kingdom not to be annexed by the Taungoo Dynasty



1450

# Taungoo Dynasty (1510 – 1752)

- **1510 – 1599 First Taungoo Empire**
- **1599 – 1752 Restored Taungoo Kingdom (Nyaungyan Restoration)**

- **Early 1480s** -- Ava faced constant internal rebellions and external attacks from the Shan States, and began to disintegrate
- **1510 -- Taungoo** --- Remote southeastern corner of the Ava kingdom declared independence
- **1527 -- The Confederation of Shan States** conquered Ava -- many refugees fled southeast to Taungoo
  - Taungoo was only kingdom in peace and surrounded by larger hostile kingdoms.





# First Taungoo Empire (1510 – 1599)

- **1480s** -- Ava faced constant internal rebellions and external attacks from the Shan States, and began to disintegrate
- **1510** -- Taungoo, located in the remote southeastern corner of the Ava kingdom, also declared independence
  - The Confederation of Shan States conquered Ava in 1527
  - Refugees fled southeast to Taungoo, the only kingdom in peace, and one surrounded by larger hostile kingdoms
- **Taungoo**, led by its ambitious king Tabinshwehti and his deputy general Bayinnaung, would go on to reunify the petty kingdoms that had existed since the fall of the Pagan Empire, and found **the largest empire in the history of Southeast Asia**
  - First, the upstart kingdom defeated a more powerful Hanthawaddy in the Taungoo–Hanthawaddy War (1534–41). Tabinshwehti moved the capital to newly captured Bago in 1539
- **1544** -- Taungoo expanded its authority up to Pagan but failed to conquer Arakan in 1545–47 and Thailand in 1547–49
  - Tabinshwehti's successor Bayinnaung continued the policy of expansion, conquering Ava in 1555, Nearer/Cis-Salween Shan States (1557), Lan Na (1558), Manipur (1560), Farther/Trans-Salween Shan states (1562–63), the Ayutthaya Kingdom (1564, 1569), and Lan Xang (1565–74), and bringing much of western and central mainland Southeast Asia under his rule
- **Bayinnaung** put in place a lasting administrative system that reduced the power of hereditary Shan chiefs, and brought Shan customs in line with low-land norms
  - He could not replicate an effective administrative system everywhere in his extensive empire
  - The empire was a loose collection of former sovereign kingdoms, whose kings were loyal to him as the Cakkavatti (not the kingdom of Taungoo)
- **1581** -- **Overextended empire unraveled** soon after Bayinnaung's death
  - Siam broke away in 1584 and went to war with Burma until 1605
  - 1597 -- The kingdom had lost all its possessions, including Taungoo, the ancestral home of the dynasty
  - 1599 -- the Arakanese forces aided by Portuguese mercenaries, and in alliance with the rebellious Taungoo forces, sacked Pegu
  - The country fell into chaos, with each region claiming a king. Portuguese mercenary Filipe de Brito e Nicote promptly rebelled against his Arakanese masters, and established Goa-backed Portuguese rule at Thanlyin in 1603



## Taungoo Empire 1580



# Restored Taungoo Kingdom (Nyaungyan Restoration) (1599 – 1752)

- **1606** -- One of Bayinnaung's sons, Nyaungyan Min, immediately began the reunification effort, successfully restoring central authority over Upper Burma and nearer Shan states.
- **1613** -- His successor Anaukpetlun defeated the Portuguese at Thanlyin.
  - He recovered the upper Tanintharyi coast to Dawei and Lan Na from the Thai by 1614. He also captured the trans-Salween Shan states (Kengtung and Sipsongpanna) in 1622–26.
- **Thalun** (Anaukpetlun's brother) rebuilt the war torn country.
  - **1635** -- He ordered the first ever census in Burmese history, which showed that the kingdom about two million people.
  - By **1650**, the three able kings—Nyaungyan, Anaukpetlun and Thalun—had successfully rebuilt a smaller but far more manageable kingdom.
- The new dynasty proceeded to create a legal and political system whose basic features would continue under the **Konbaung Dynasty** well into the 19th century.
  - The crown completely replaced the hereditary chieftainships with appointed governorships in the entire Irrawaddy valley, and greatly reduced the hereditary rights of Shan chiefs.
  - It also reined in the continuous growth of monastic wealth and autonomy, giving a greater tax base. Its trade and secular administrative reforms built a prosperous economy for more than 80 years
  - Except for a few occasional rebellions and an external war—Burma defeated Thailand's attempt to take Lan Na and Mottama in **1662–64**—the kingdom was largely at peace for the rest of the 17th century.
- **1720s** -- The kingdom entered a gradual decline, and the authority of the "palace kings" deteriorated rapidly.
  - **1724** onwards -- the Meitei people began raiding the upper Chindwin River.
  - **1727** -- southern Lan Na (Chiang Mai) successfully revolted, leaving just northern Lan Na (Chiang Saen) under an increasingly nominal Burmese rule.
  - Meitei raids intensified in the 1730s, reaching increasingly deeper parts of central Burma.
- **1740** -- the **Mon in Lower Burma began a rebellion**, and founded the Restored **Hanthawaddy Kingdom**, and by 1745 controlled much of Lower Burma.
  - The Siamese also moved their authority up the Tanintharyi coast by 1752.
  - Hanthawaddy invaded Upper Burma in November 1751, and captured Ava on 23 March 1752, ending the 266-year-old Taungoo dynasty



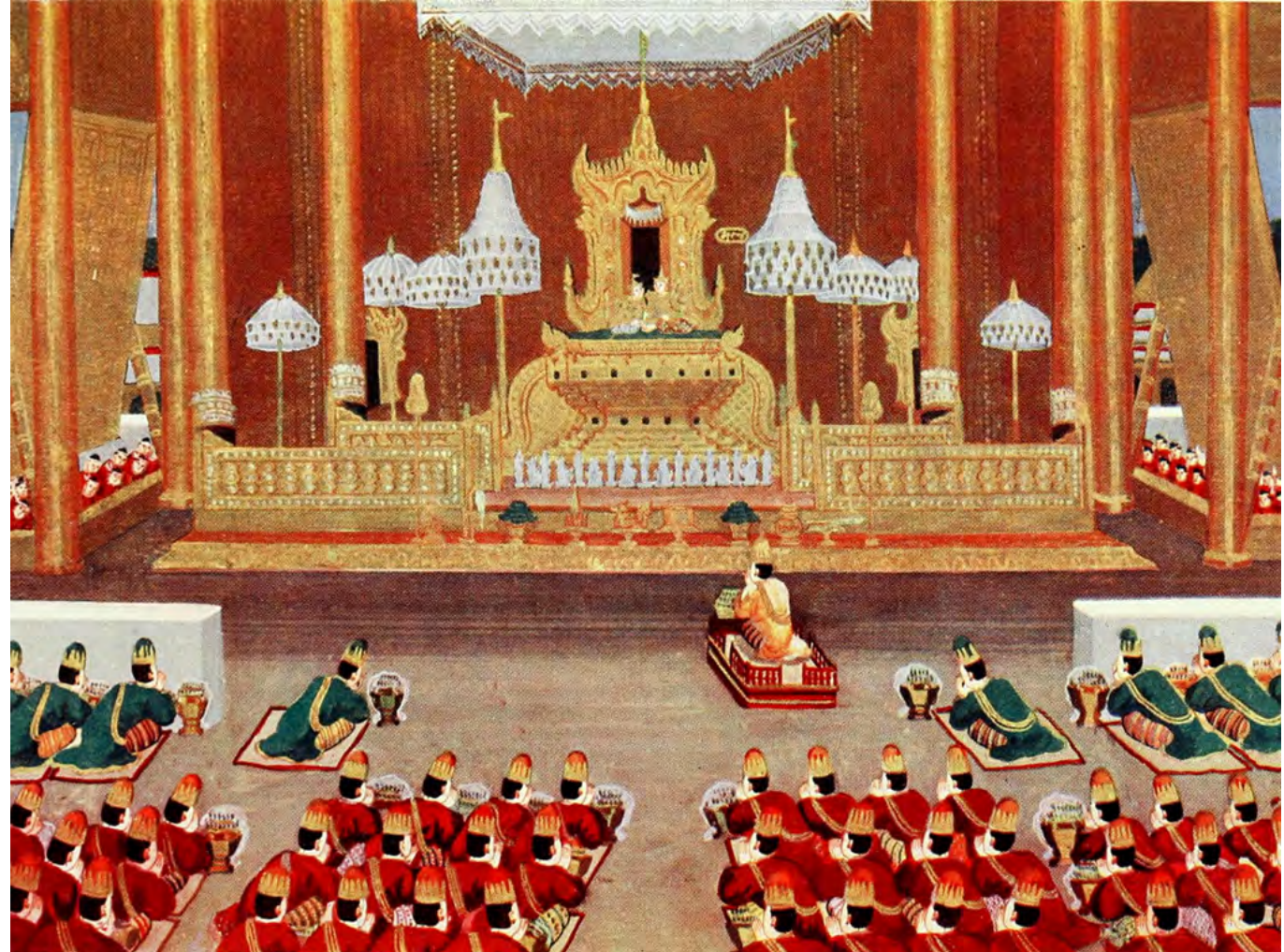
Taungoo Dynasty (restored)  
1650



# Konbaung Dynasty (1752–1885) [slide 1]

## Reunification

- With the fall of Ava, the Konbaung Dynasty rose in Shwebo to challenge the authority of **Hanthawaddy**.
- Highly **militaristic Konbaung Dynasty** went on to create the largest Burmese empire, second only to the empire of Bayinnaung.
- **1759** -- King Alaungpaya's Konbaung forces had reunited all of Burma (and Manipur), **extinguished the Mon-led Hanthawaddy dynasty**
- European powers are driven out (who provided arms to Hanthawaddy—the **French from Thanlyin** and the **English from Cape Negrais**)





# Konbaung Dynasty (1752–1885) [slide 2]

## Wars with Siam and China

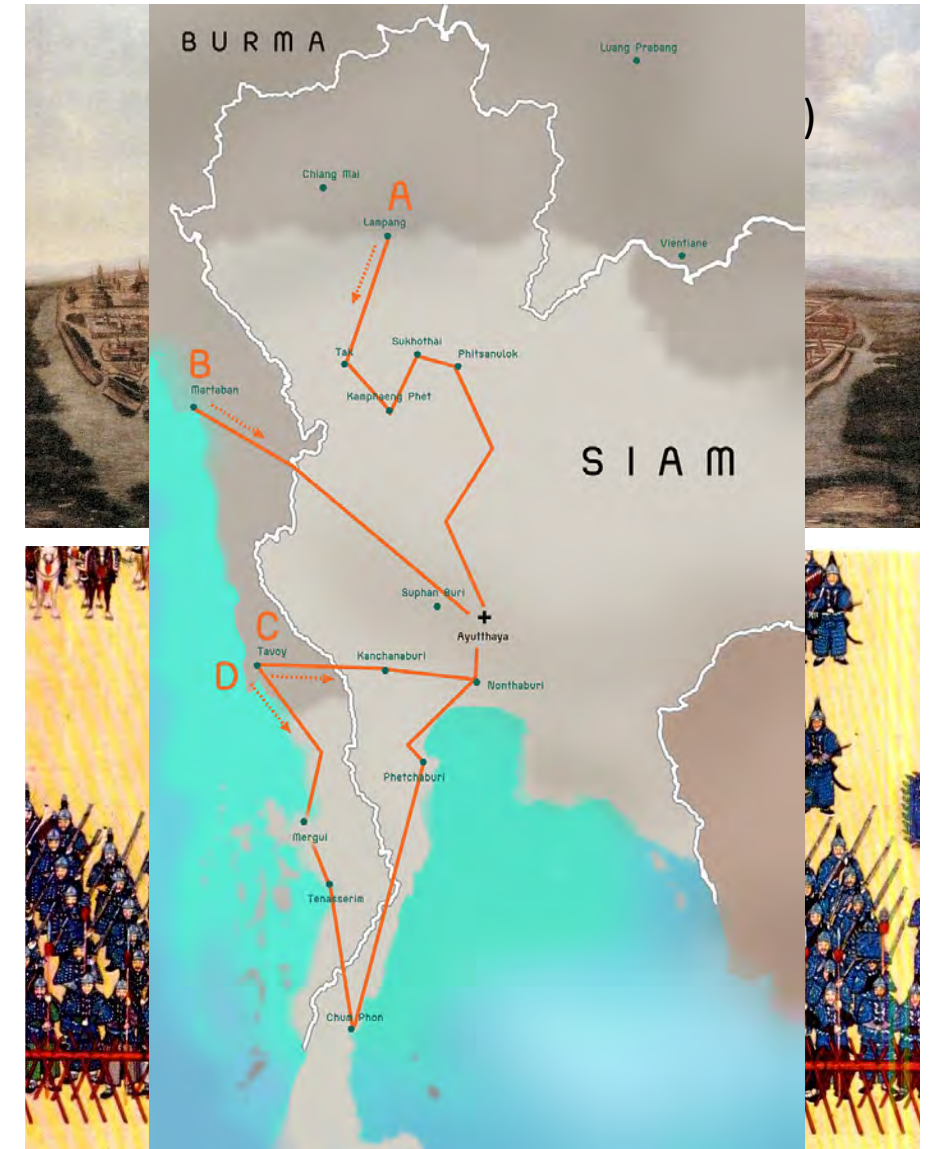
- War with the **Ayutthaya Kingdom**, which had occupied up the Tanintharyi coast to Mottama during the **Burmese civil war (1740–1757)**, and had provided shelter to the Mon refugees.
- By 1767, the Konbaung armies had subdued much of Laos and defeated the Thai.

## Sino-Burmese War (1765–69)

- The dynasty could not finish off the remaining **Siamese** resistance as they were forced to defend against four invasions by **Qing China**
- The **Qing** kept a heavy military lineup in the border areas for about one decade in an attempt to wage another war while imposing a ban on inter-border trade for two decades.

## 1770 – The Ayutthaya Kingdom used the Konbaung preoccupation with the Qing to recover their lost territories

- Went on to capture much of Lan Na by 1776, ending over two centuries of Burmese suzerainty over the region
- Went to war again in 1785–1786, 1787, 1792, 1803–1808, 1809–1812 and 1849–1855 (resulted in a stalemate)
- After decades of war, the two countries essentially exchanged Tanintharyi (to Burma) and Lan Na (to Thailand).





# Konbaung Dynasty (1752–1885) [slide 3]

## Cultural integration continues

**For the first time in history, the Burmese language and culture came to predominate the entire Irrawaddy valley, with the Mon language and ethnicity completely eclipsed by 1830.**

- The nearer Shan principalities adopted more lowland norms.
- The evolution and growth of Burmese literature and theater continued, aided by an exceptionally high adult male literacy rate for the era (half of all males and 5% of females).
- Monastic and lay elites around the Konbaung kings, particularly from Bodawpaya's reign, also launched a major reformation of Burmese intellectual life and monastic organization and practice known as the *Sudhamma Reformation*, leading to accurate state histories.



## Administrative and economic reforms

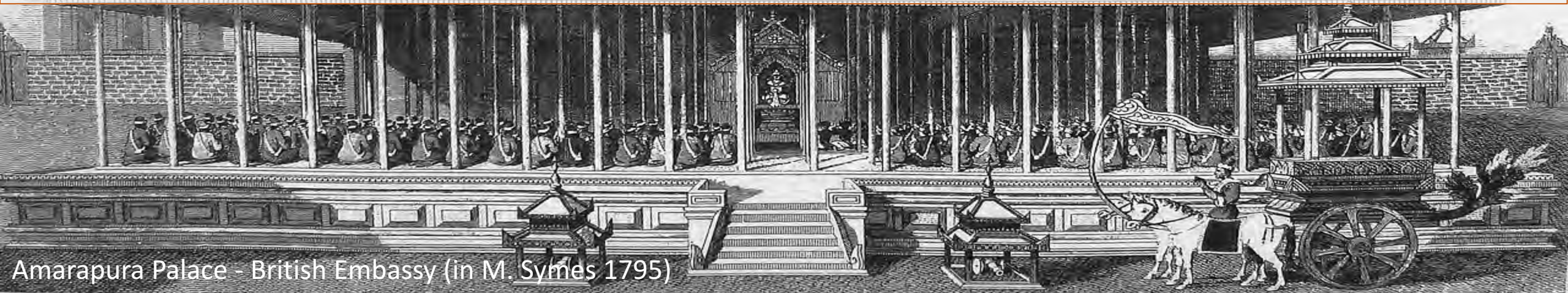
- **Konbaung kings** extended administrative reforms first begun in the Restored Taungoo Dynasty period (1599–1752), and achieved unprecedented levels of internal control and external expansion.
  - They tightened control in the low lands and reduced the hereditary privileges of Shan saophas (chiefs).
- **Konbaung officials**, particularly after 1780, began commercial reforms that increased government income and rendered it more predictable.
- Money economy continued to gained ground. In 1857, the crown inaugurated a full-fledged system of cash taxes and salaries, assisted by the country's first standardized silver coinage.



# Konbaung Dynasty (1752–1885) [slide 4]

## Westward expansion and wars with the British Empire

- Faced with a powerful China in the northeast and a resurgent Siam in the southeast, **King Bodawpaya (the 6<sup>th</sup> king of the dynasty)** turned westward for expansion.
- He conquered Arakan in 1785, annexed Manipur in 1814, and captured Assam in 1817–1819, leading to a long ill-defined border with British India.
- Bodawpaya's successor King Bagyidaw was left to put down British instigated rebellions in Manipur in 1819 and Assam in 1821–1822.
- Cross-border raids by rebels from the British protected territories and counter-cross-border raids by the Burmese led to the **First Anglo-Burmese War (1824–26)**.



Amarapura Palace - British Embassy (in M. Symes 1795)



# BRITISH RULE... First & Second Anglo-Burmese Wars 1824-26 and 1850s

## First & Second Anglo-Burmese Wars

- Lasting 2 years and costing 13 million pounds, the **First Anglo-Burmese War** was the longest and most expensive war in British Indian history, but ended in a decisive British victory.
- Burma ceded all of Bodawpaya's western acquisitions (Arakan, Manipur and Assam) plus Tenasserim.
- Burma was crushed for years by repaying a large indemnity of one million pounds (then US\$5 million).
- In **1852**, the British unilaterally and easily seized the Pegu province in the **Second Anglo-Burmese War**

## King Mindon (1808–1878)

- After the war, **King Mindon** tried to modernize the Burmese state and economy, and made trade and territorial concessions to stave off further British encroachments, including ceding the Karenni States to the British in 1875.
- Hsinbyumashin, one of **King Mindon** queens, ordered the king's heirs to the throne be killed, and royals of all ages and both genders were executed



Along with the death of King Mindon, the British are deeply alarmed by the consolidation of French Indochina...



# “King Thibaw” (1859–1916) – The Last Burmese King

- **King Thibaw**  
(1859–1916)
- Last king of the Konbaung Dynasty
- Sent to exile in India with his family



## The 3<sup>rd</sup> Anglo-Burmese War 1885

- Consolidation of **French Indochina** is of great concern to the British
  - The remainder of Burma (northern Burma) is annexed by the British



The abdication of King Thibaw (by court painter Saya Chone)



Introduction to  
**Myanmar**

*with emphasis on regional  
historical geography and  
political history*

“Kye Zu Tin Bar Dae”

THANK YOU

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Steven Andrew Martin, PhD • Faculty of International Studies • Prince of Songkla University



# Helpful Resources

## The Art and Culture of Burma (by Dr. Richard M. Cooler)

- [http://www.seasite.niu.edu/burmese/cooler/BurmaArt\\_TOC.htm](http://www.seasite.niu.edu/burmese/cooler/BurmaArt_TOC.htm)

## San Jose State University

- <http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/watkins/burma.htm>

## BBC Myanmar profile - Timeline

- <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-12992883>

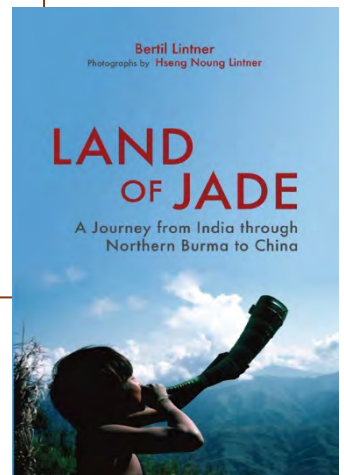
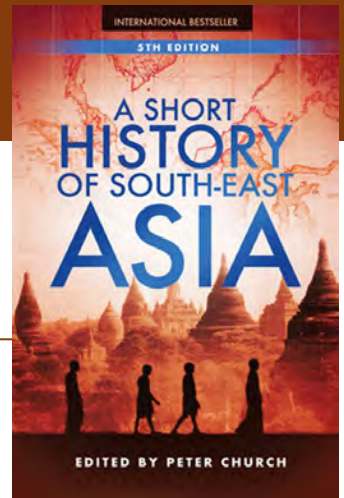
## • Key Wikipedia Pages

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_Myanmar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Myanmar)
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prehistory\\_of\\_Myanmar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prehistory_of_Myanmar)
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pyu\\_city-states](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pyu_city-states)
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mon\\_kingdoms](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mon_kingdoms)
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pagan\\_Kingdom](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pagan_Kingdom)
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taungoo\\_Dynasty](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taungoo_Dynasty)
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Burmese\\_monarchs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Burmese_monarchs)
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_ethnic\\_groups\\_in\\_Myanmar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_ethnic_groups_in_Myanmar)

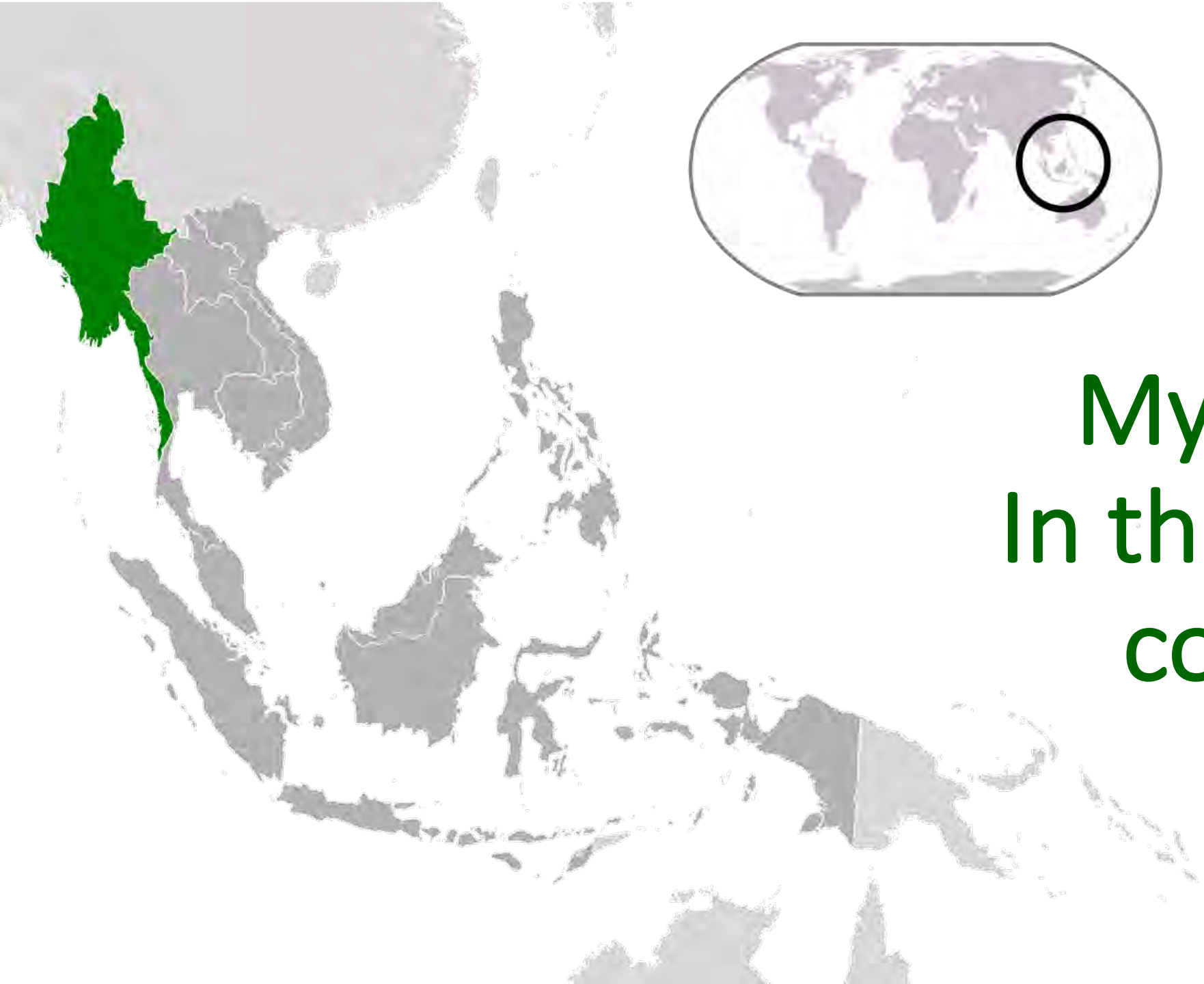
## Books

**Church, P. (Ed.) (2009) *A Short History of South-East Asia*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition.** Singapore: John Wiley & Sons (Asia).

**Lintner, B. (1996) *Land of Jade: A Journey from India through Northern Burma to China*.** Orchid Press Publishing Limited; 2nd edition.







# Myanmar In the ASEAN context