

A Study on Kyaikkatha: An Early Urban Settlement in Lower Myanmar

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Abstrak

Sittaung-Thanalwin region in Lower Myanmar is an ecological niche for human settlement. Evidences of human activities in the region are seen through various archaeological sites or settlements along the coastal area between the rivers Sittaung and Thanlwin (Salween). In Lower Myanmar, scholar, U Aung Myint, discovered one major site Kyaikkatha and other small scale sites, namely, Sittaung, Kawhtin, Kadaikgyi, Kadaikkalay, Katkadit, Kelatha (little Zothoke), Ayethama, Winka, Zothoke (big Zothoke), Lagonbyi (Sampannago), Wagaru, Laming and Ye in present day Mon State. In 1980, U Aung Myint undertook an exploration program at Kyaikkatha. After the exploration, an excavation team conducted systematic digging at Kyaikkatha in March 1986. Excavation continued occasionally at Kyaikkatha throughout the years between 1995 and 2000. It is known that Kyaikkatha, the old city, reveals a kind of monumental civilization exposing four religious structures (a stupa and three monasteries). This essay looks into the distribution of features within Kyaikkatha and infers on its social, political, and religious organization. This essay is also about a new discovery of an early urban settlement located at the apex of the Gulf of Muttama (Martaban) where a lost city of Suva¹;ahumi flourished in the ancient days. By means of aerial photographic observations, the site had been noticed recently, which was by followed some excavations. More systematic and detail surveying may be needed to know more about the site and its features for comparison to other similar settlements of through-out mainland South East Asia.