Ancient Burma has a recorded history beginning some 3000 years ago with the appearance of 'Abhiraj' a king who represents the Vedic culture of India and whose Sanskrit name means the fearless (abhay) king (raj) as confirmed by the Burmese ambassador to India (U. Than Aung) who says "India and Burma are bound by the golden chains of tradition, religion and culture, as our traditional history begins with King Abhiraj".

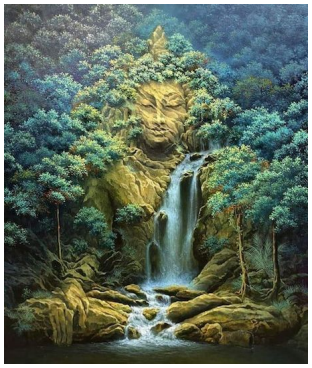
Abhiraj was born into the Sakya dynasty of the Suryavamsas which was the same dynasty in which Buddha took birth and the descendants of Abhiraj who prospered throughout the fertile plains of Burma all possessed names from the Vedic and Sanskrit tradition such as 'Jambudvipa Raja' 'Devata Raja' 'Naga Raj' 'Indra Raj' 'Deva Raj' 'Mahindra Raj' and 'Vimala Raj'.

According to the glass chronicles of Burma the first city which was built by Abhiraj some 3000 years ago was called 'Sangasaratta' a name from the language of Sanskrit whose meaning is the union (sanga) of warriors (saratha) and as previously mentioned this produced a long line of Vedic kings such as 'Madhuraj' 'Suryaraj' 'Mangalaraj' 'Kalingaraj' 'Kamsaraj' and 'Hamsaraj'.

One of the most prominent landmarks of Burma is the 'Irawaddy' a river which flows some 1400 miles before merging into the Sea and a river which has been immortalised as the 'road to mandalay' a poem by Rudyard Kipling which refers to the river 'Irawaddy' as it journeys towards its once capital city 'Mandalay'.

'Irawaddy' is a corruption of 'Iravati' a word from the language of Sanskrit whose meaning is said to be one who possesses (vati) waters (ira) and a river which is named after the daughter of Kashyapa Muni and the mother of the great personality 'Airavata' and within India we find its counterpart the river 'Ravi'.

'Irrawaddy' journeys over 1400 miles across the lands of Burma before merging into the 'Andaman Sea' a name which is a corruption of 'Handuman' which is the Malaysian corruption of 'Hanuman' the great personality and monkey god from the classic of India known as the Ramayana.



Another river which runs through the lands of Burma is the 'Mekong' the sixth longest river within Asia which travels some three thousand miles as it journeys from the Tibetan Plateau through the lands of China, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and into the South China Sea.

'Mekong' is a name which translates as the 'mother of all waters' yet its real meaning can be seen within 'Mae Phra Kongkha' a deity which is worshipped within Thailand whose meaning is 'Mae' meaning 'mother' and 'Kongkha' the Thai name for 'Ganga'.

'Mae Phra Kongkha' is a river goddess from neighbouring Thailand and just as Mother Ganga travels on the back of a crocodile so does Mae Phra Kongkha hence it seems quite obvious that there is a relationship between 'Mae Kongkha' 'Mekong' and 'Ma Ganga'.

The road to Mandalay culminates within the Burmese city of 'Mandalay' which is formed from 'mandala' a word from Sanskrit meaning 'circle' 'region' 'globe' and one which expresses the geometrical (circle) and the geographical (region) as per the micro/macro world of Vedic/buddhist cosmology.

Vedic cosmology describes an egg shaped universe which possesses a cosmic axial mountain known as 'Sumeru' meaning great (su) mountain (meru) and upon this mountain is the abode of the gods known in other cultures as 'Asgard' and 'Olympus' and surrounding this central pivot is a series of circular islands which are known as 'mandalas'.

As the Buddhists spread throughout South East Asia they strove to bring heaven to earth through the introduction of earthly mandalas where the centre is the king who upholds dharma and the middle circle is the princely kingdoms followed by the outer circle which were the abode of independent kingdoms who paid a tributary.

Throughout the lands of Burma there were Kingdoms such as 'Sri Ksetra' a name from Sanskrit meaning the field (ksetra) of fortune (sri) and a kingdom which is over 1500 years old designed according to Vedic/buddhist cosmology and the mandala state.

The original city had a circumference of 13km and a diameter of 4km surrounded by walls which were some 4.5 metres high and throughout there were some twelve gates each guarded by a huge devata and upon each of the four corners was a pagoda.

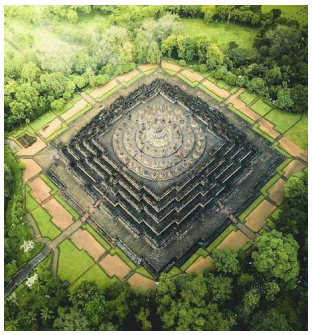
Sri Ksetra was home to three Vedic dynasties known as the dynasty of 'Vikrama' a name of Visnu and the second was the dynasty of 'Chandragupta' a name from Sanskrit meaning that which is protected (gupta) by the moon (chandra) and the third was the dynasty of 'Varman' a word from Sanskrit which also means 'protector' and 'defender'.

Another kingdom was known as 'Waithali' which was the capital of the Burmese state of Rakhine and whose name is a corruption of an ancient Vedic king who was known as 'Visala' a word from the language of Sanskrit whose meaning is 'abundant' 'powerful' 'mighty' and 'great'.

As in honour of him a city within the Bihar state of India was named 'Visalapuri' and in time this became the birthplace of the great spiritual personality 'Mahavira' and also a place where Buddha gave his last sermon hence Visalapuri became a place of pilgrimage for the Jains and Buddhists.

As the culture and the philosophy of Buddhism spread throughout the mountainous region of

the Burmese state of Rakhine they named their capital city 'Vesali' in memory of 'Visalipuri' and over many years this has corrupted to become the name of 'Waithali'.



Another kingdom of Burma and South East Asia was a dynasty known as the 'Mon' a dynasty which goes back in time some 3500 to 4500 years and whose motif and flag emblem was the 'swan' a symbol of purity within Vedic India due to its ability to separate milk from water and its indifference as it glides serenely by.

The importance of the swan to the Mon dynasty can be seen within the Sanskrit name for the swan which is 'hamsa' a word which is then seen within 'Hathawaddy' the capital of the Mon dynasty whose corrupted name originally meant an enclosure (vati) of swans (hamsa).

This emblem of the 'swan' may be an indication of how we got the name 'Burma' as the swan is seen within the Vedic culture of India as the vehicle of Brahma and his wife Sarasvati and if evidence can be found that Brahma had a large influence upon the country of Burma we would have to consider if it is the source of its name.

Ancient India and Burma are pretty much neighbours hence its not too difficult to appreciate that throughout their existence they both shared a common culture and when we consider the vastness of the ancient Vedic culture of India its not too difficult to appreciate who influenced whom.

Burma was once known as 'Brahma Desa' as in the land (desa) of Brahma as explained by Gustaaf Houtman who in his book about Burmese politics says "though modern linguistics might deride such popular derivations we must not forget this is not a consideration held only by the Burmese, for the languages which had early contact with Burma such as India and European romance languages, Burma was constantly referred to as 'Brahma' indeed even today in Hindi we find Burma is referred to as 'Brahma Desa".

And the great poet 'Thakin Hmaing' says "those who lived in Sunaparanta and Tampadipa were known as 'Brahma kind of people' as they worshipped the brahma spirits who derived from the lineage of the Brahma nats living at the beginning of the world which is why in the old Arakanese chronicles 'Burma' is referred to as the country of the eastern Brahmas."

The dynasty of the Mons whose emblem was the swan also held the kingdom of 'Thaton' which goes back in time some 2500 years and the source of this name can be found within the ancient Vedic scriptures of India where it mentions the name of the great devotee 'Sudharma'.

'Sudharma' meaning good (su) law (dharma) corrupts to become 'thudam' which becomes 'thudan' which becomes the Burmese city of 'thaton' which 2500 years ago was the seat of the Mons kingdom known as 'Suvarnabhumi' another Sanskrit name meaning land (bhumi) of gold (suvarna).

As well as kingdoms held in Burma the Mons dynasty held the Thailand provinces of 'Dvaravati' a name from Sanskrit meaning enclosure (vati) of gates (dvara) and 'Haribhumjaya' a Sanskrit name meaning victorious (jaya) land (bhumi) of visnu (hari) all reflecting how the Mons of Burma were an ancient Vedic dynasty.

We also have the state of 'Rakhine' which resides upon the coast of Burma with a population of 3 million people and which goes back in time at least 5000 years and a name which is formed of 'raksa' a word from the language of Sanskrit whose meaning is 'protector' 'defender' 'watcher' and a name which may reflect its geographical location as it 'watches' and 'defends' against invaders.

The official flag of the state of Rakhine is the emblem of the 'Srivatsa' which is an ancient symbol from the Vedic culture of India and a name from the language of Sanskrit whose meaning is the beloved (vatsa) of lakshmi (sri) a description of Visnu.

The first kingdom of Rakhine was 'Dhanyawadi' a name from Sanskrit meaning an enclosure (vati) of rice (dhanya) and this kingdom, established 5000 years ago, produced a succession of Vedic Kings whose Sanskrit names were 'Madhuchandra' meaning honey (madhu) moon (candra) and 'Suryarupa' meaning form (rupa) of the sun (surya) and 'Gunacandra' meaning virtues (guna) of the moon (candra) and many more names such as 'Surya Kula' 'Surya Punya' 'Surya Vimala'.

The royal palace of Mandalay is the last of the formal royal palaces of the Burmese monarchy and we find that 'mandala' also means 'circle of kings' as these mandala states would overlap other mandala kingdoms, a system which was based upon universal principles where the gods were placed within the centre and governed according to the universal laws of dharma.

Mandalas were spread throughout South East Asia as seen in Burma and the cities of 'Sri Ksetra' 'Thaton' 'Pagan' 'Vaishali' 'Pegu' and 'Mandalay' as seen in Thailand and the famous cities of 'Ayuthaya' 'Sukhothai' 'Nakhon Si Thamarat' 'Ramannadesa' 'Dvaravati' as seen in Java and the kingdoms of 'Majapahit' 'Kediri' 'Singhasari' 'Medang' as seen in Malaysia and the powerful kingdoms of 'Tambralinga' 'Langkasuka' 'Sarawak' and within Vietnam and Cambodia we find the mandala states of the Champa and Khmer dynasties.

These mandala cities, in their prime, were divine reflections of the higher spheres mentioned in the Vedas and in Cambodia one such mandala still remains, the mandala state of Angkor Wat (pictured below) its central towers represent mount Meru, the cosmic axial mountain and the five walls and moats represent the mandalas (concentric islands) which spread out from its centre, Meru, the abode of the Gods.

“The adoption of Indian concepts of city planning incorporated a belief in the efficacy of the world axis that connects the centermost point in a properly constructed Mandala city with the city of the Gods above in order to assure prosperity throughout the kingdom below”. – Dr. Richard M. Cooler (Prof. Northern Illinios University).

“What the excavator finds in Burma is often Hindu rather than Buddhist. In some sculptures Buddha appears as an incarnation of Vishnu.” “……their (Burma) traditions, instead of harking back to China, refer to India…..Even their folk-lore is largely Hindu.”(p.6) - G.E. Harvey, History of Burma.

"This was the time of the great Indian expansion, when seafaring merchants fanned out across the Indian Ocean and brought to Southeast Asia a seething ferment of new ideas. From Burma to Indonesia, they established a chain of settlements along the coasts from which they traded for gold, precious stones, perfumes, and spices. The merchants brought with them their religion, Hinduism and Buddhism, their literary language, Sanskrit, their art and technology; and their science and mathematics." (source: Splendors of the Past: Lost Cities of the Ancient World - National Geographic Society. p.186-190).