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## **This book is dedicated to U Bo Kay**

The main text and drawings are from the book in Burmese written by U Bo Kay, archaeologist and protector extraordinaire of Bagan and his colleagues. He was born in 1924 in Patheingyi in the delta to a Mon family. In 1958, while working at the Department of Post and Telecoms, he was so interested in the history of Bagan that he participated in the week-long conference on Bagan era culture held in Bagan with a paper on the Bagan stone inscriptions.

The authorities were much impressed by his knowledge and zeal, and he was transferred to the Department of Archaeology by the following year. From 1960 to 1962 he was apprenticed to archaeological officer U Mya of the Mandalay branch of the Department of Archaeology. From 1962 to the time he retired in 1985, apart from six months of study at the Department of Archaeology of India, he lived in Bagan, refusing offers of promotions which would

mean leaving the place he loved with all his soul; he did not even like to visit other places and leaving Bagan was something he refused to endure. He wrote under the name Bramahso Mon Bo Kay. In 1976 he wrote "A Guide to Research in Bagan."

### **Myanmar owes a lot to his endeavours**

He was the passionate custodian of all the temples of Bagan, and affectionately known among his friends as the Guardian Celestial of this ancient city. He was extremely protective of the near 3000 temples and pagodas, and he knew the details of every single one. He was also the main driving force behind the establishment of the Bagan Museum.

U Bo Kay passed away on 24 February 1989. The loss is immeasurable for Myanmar scholars and historians as well as the devotees of Bagan from all over the world.