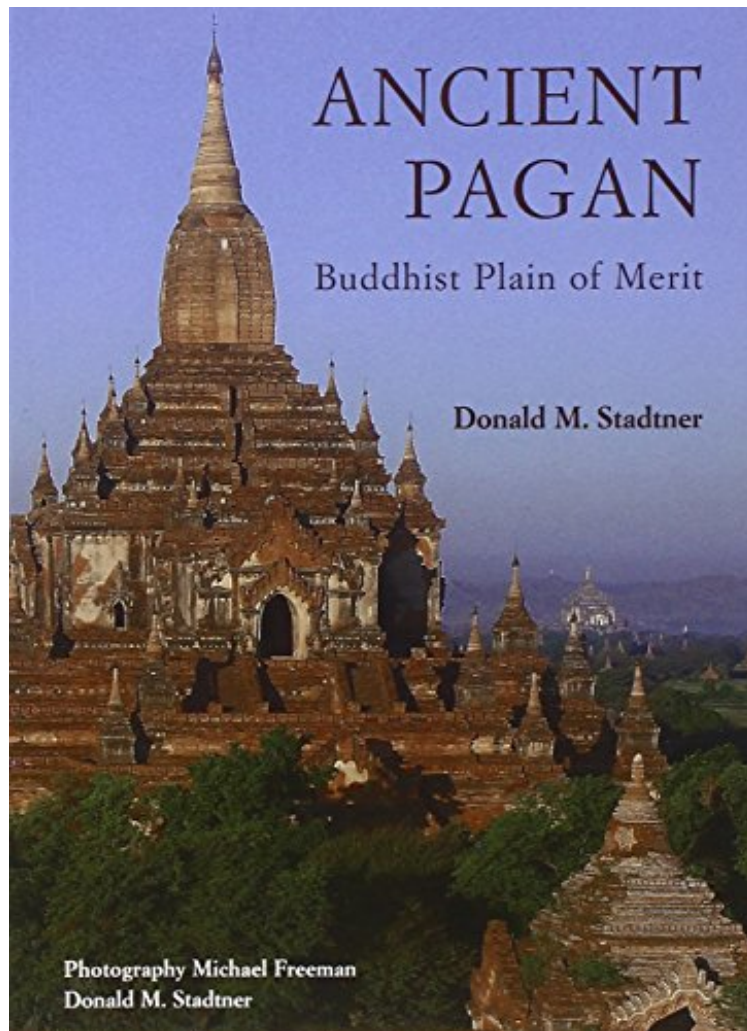


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## Ancient Pagan: Buddhist Plain of Merit

*Donald M. Stadtner*

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**Donald M. Stadtner : Ancient Pagan: Buddhist Plain of Merit** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ancient Pagan: Buddhist Plain of Merit:

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Pagan is the largest and most resplendent centre of Buddhist art in the ancient world. Michael Freemans superlative photographs accompany the text. Donald M. Stadtner, with decades of experience in Burma, has selected thirty-three monuments that highlight Pagan's unique history. Construction at Pagan peaked between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries when the city was home to the country's kings and its chief religious personalities. Local architects mastered complex brick vaulting techniques unrivalled in Asia, while mural painters and stone carvers fashioned a distinctive style of Burmese art. By the mid-fourteenth century the capital had shifted north to what is now the Mandalay region, and the pace of building slowed dramatically. However, the city never lost its special religious and cultural significance, furnishing a field of merit to Buddhists old and new. Burma, now known as Myanmar, was terra incognita in Southeast Asia for many decades, but the lifting of travel restrictions has made this temple city now accessible.

About the Author Donald M. Stadtner is an expert in Indian and Burmese arts.