

**DHAMMA YAUNGCHI CETI**  
**THE PAGODA OF THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA**



by  
**Sayagi U Chit Tin**

assisted by  
**William Pruitt, Ph.D.**

*Published by*  
*The International Meditation Centres*  
*In the Tradition of Sayagi U Ba Khin*  
*Dhammadāna Series 12*  
*Fourth Edition*  
*Revised and Enlarged*

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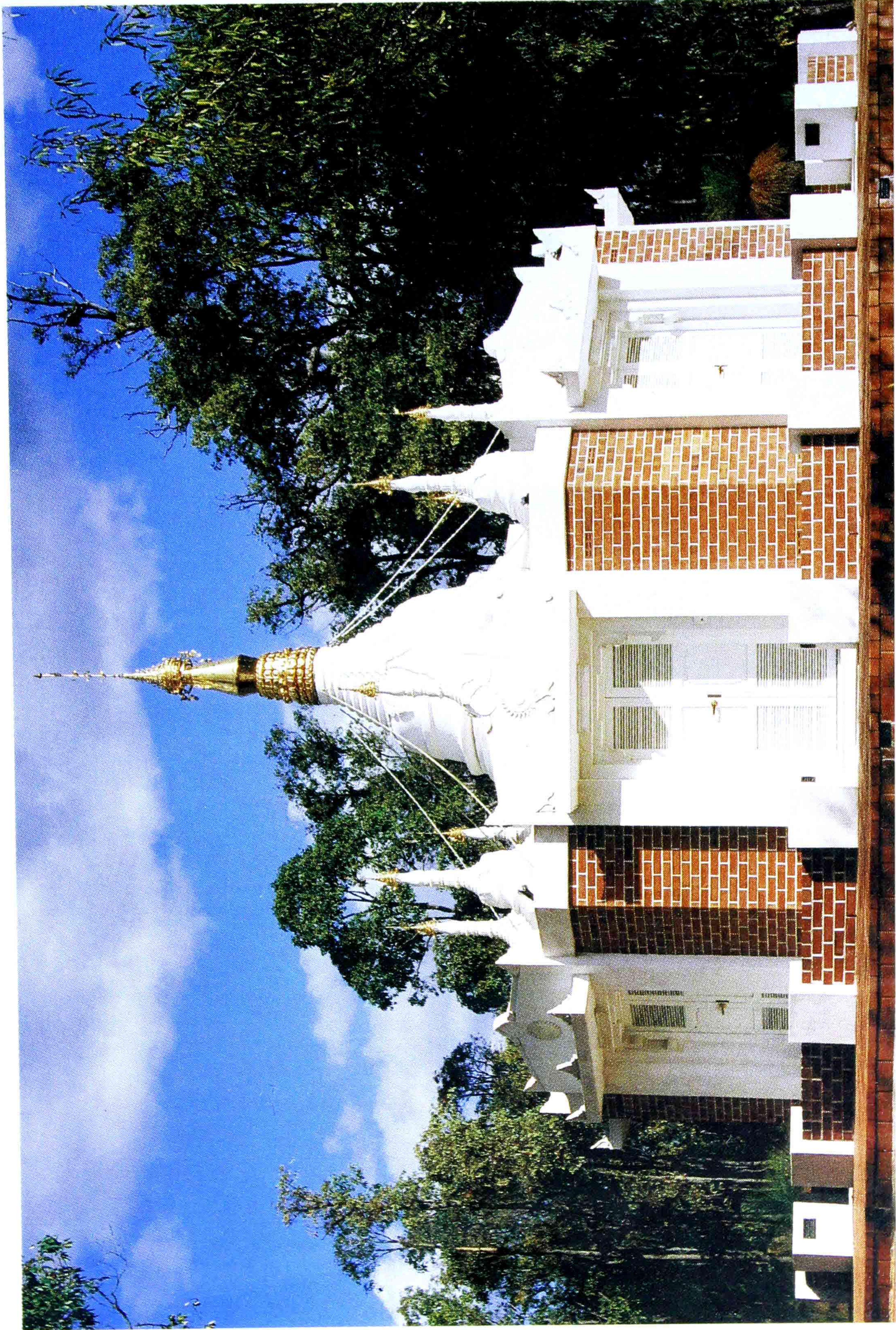
**Dedicated to our much revered Teacher  
the late Sayagyi U Ba Khin  
(Thray Sithu)**



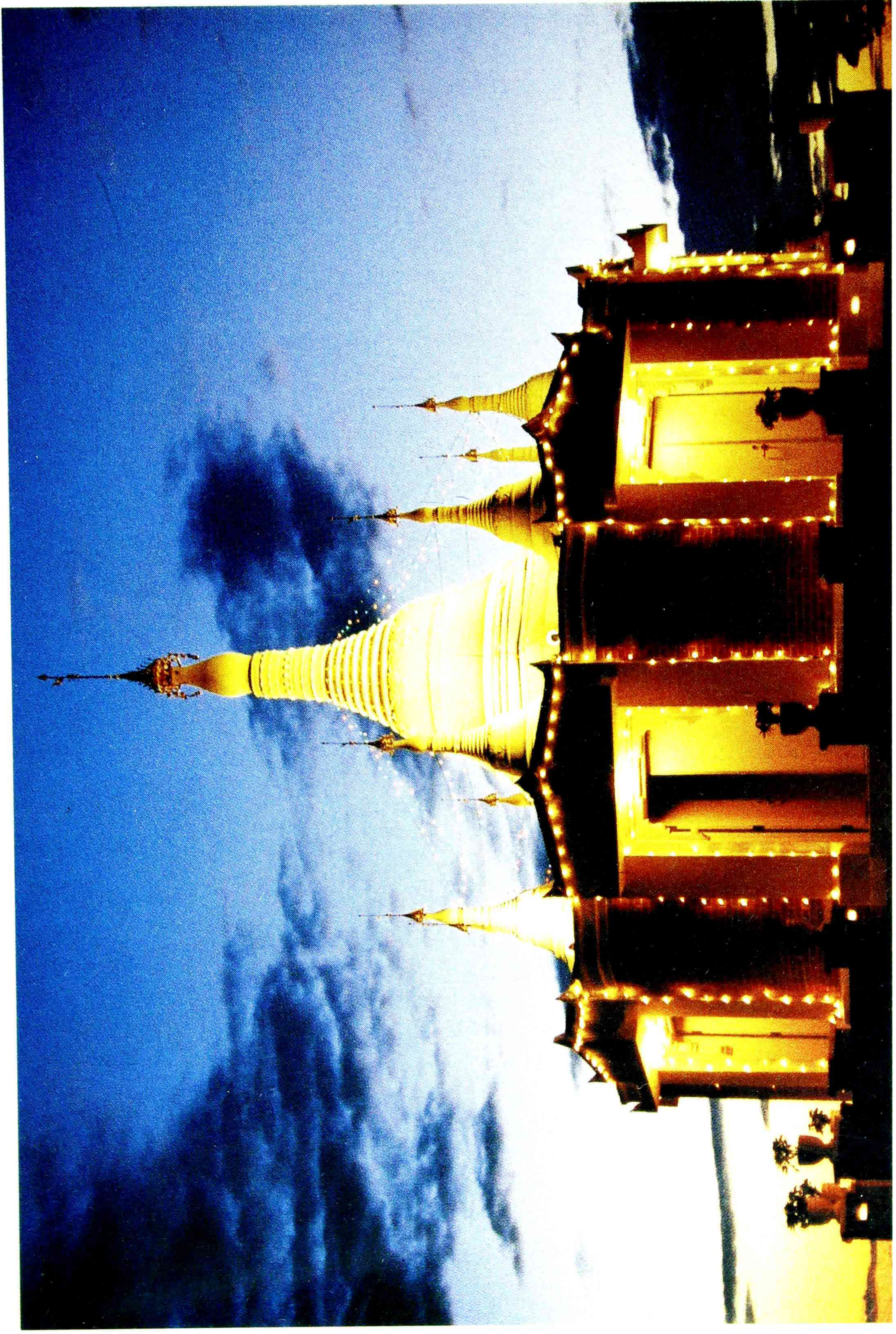
*The Pagoda of the Light of the Dhamma, IMC-Yangon*



*The Pagoda of the Light of the Dhamma, IMC-UK*



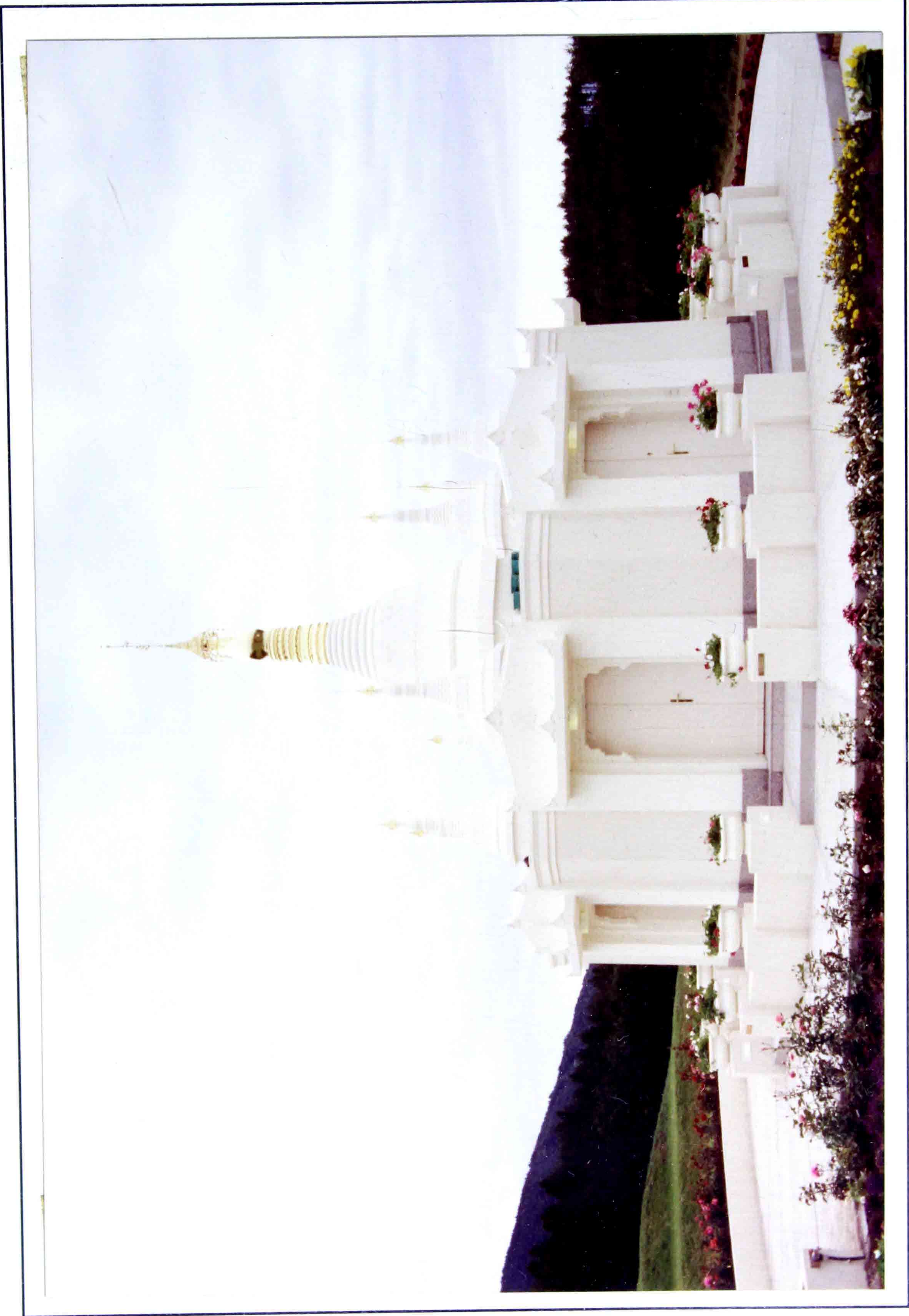
*The Pagoda of the Light of the Dhamma, IMC-WA*



*The Pagoda of the Light of the Dhamma, IMC-USA*



*The Pagoda of the Light of the Dhamma, IMC-EA*



*The Pagoda of the Light of the Dhamma, IMC-Austria*

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*Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammāsambuddhassa.*

## Introduction

Sayagyi U Ba Khin was a man of great vision. He foresaw the spread of the true Buddha-Dhamma all around the world. He practised it and taught the Teachings of the Buddha in Yangon, Myanmar, at the International Meditation Centre he founded. He taught the Dhamma from 1951 in his Accountant General's Office Meditation Room until he founded IMC-Yangon in 1952. From May 1953, Sayamagyi Daw Mya Thwin assisted him, and after his demise, Sayamagyi and I continued to teach together with Sayagyi U Tint Yee and Sayagyi U Ba Pho. We left Myanmar in October 1978, but the latter two Teachers have continued to teach there ever since. They have tried their best to keep up the standard of teaching the Dhamma according to Sayagyi's wishes. Their fame has spread, and now the centre has grown by leaps and bounds, leaving no room for new buildings to be constructed. Each ten-day meditation course has full capacity, and it has been necessary to limit the number of students there to 120 for each course. One ten-day course is normally taught each month, but some months it is necessary to teach two courses or more due to the number of students who are registered. This is especially true of periods like April and May during the Water Festival holidays.

After Sayagyi's demise in 1971, his close disciples carried on his work. Mother Sayamagyi and I came out of Myanmar in 1978 to serve Sayagyi's Worldwide Dhamma Mission. We knew that our Teacher had made an *adhṭṭihāna* (strong determination) to fulfil his *pāramīs* (perfections) by firmly establishing the true Buddha-Dhamma throughout the world. It is deeply satisfying to us to see the second generation in this tradition helping us carry on the mission.

We have trained thirty Regional Teachers who are carrying on this teaching mission in their respective countries—both

in countries with International Meditation Centres and those with an officially organized group. At some of the centres, a ten-day meditation course is held each month; at some centres and in some countries, week-end retreats are regularly held. Each year, Mother Sayamagyi and I travel throughout the world to give a ten-day course at each centre and for each group if our health permits.

Now that there are five International Meditation Centres outside Myanmar, all with Dhamma Yaungchi Cetis (Light of the Dhamma Pagodas), we mark the end of an important phase in the history of Sayagyi's Worldwide Dhamma Mission. Much work lies ahead as all of us continue to grow in the Dhamma, helping these centres to build on what has been established. We are confident that if we are careful to follow our Teacher's example, we will be successful.

This edition of the *Dhamma Yaungchi Ceti: The Pagoda of the Light of the Dhamma* incorporates texts printed in previous editions that were brought out in connexion with the pagodas built at our centres. The text on the building of the pagodas records how the plans were adapted to meet the conditions of the climate and the nature of the land at each centre. We can see in this account how the students at the various International Meditation Centres and the Trustees responsible for the centres made a strong determination to undertake such a difficult task. They gave whatever help was needed, including labour *dāna* in keeping with the Buddhist tradition.

We are very grateful to the Bhikkhu-Saṅgha, which has helped us by encouraging us and by attending our consecration ceremonies.

We owe special thanks to the members of IMC Builders and to the skilled students of the various countries where the pagodas were built for their special contribution. They have been supported in their endeavours by all the students around the world who wished to participate in this great cause, which

will fulfil the wishes of our Teacher Sayagyi U Ba Khin. They have been of great help to the Teachers and Assistant Teachers who are working for Sayagyi U Ba Khin's Worldwide Dhamma Mission.

We wish to thank the students of Myanmar together with their teachers Sayagyi U Tint Yee and Sayagyi U Ba Pho for their contributions of pagoda *htis*, Buddha statues, and plaques inscribed with the important Dhamma Suttas and Abhidhamma texts.

Our students have asked me to also mention that they feel a deep sense of gratitude to Mother Sayamagyi Daw Mya Thwin. They realize that she has given up many comforts in order to dedicate herself to the cause of Sayagyi's Worldwide Mission. They feel that without her, it would never have been possible to build the five Dhamma Yaungchi Cetis outside Myanmar in countries where it is difficult to even hear mention of the Triple Gem: the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha. They have found that they encountered many obstacles when they set out to build their pagodas, but Mother Sayamagyi in her great devotion to the Buddha-Sāsana has shown them how to overcome the difficulties.

We hope that this book will help everyone who reads it to appreciate the importance of the Buddha-Dhamma, our Teacher Sayagyi U Ba Khin, our International Meditation Centres, and the role the Light of the Dhamma Pagodas play in putting the Teachings of the Buddha into practice.

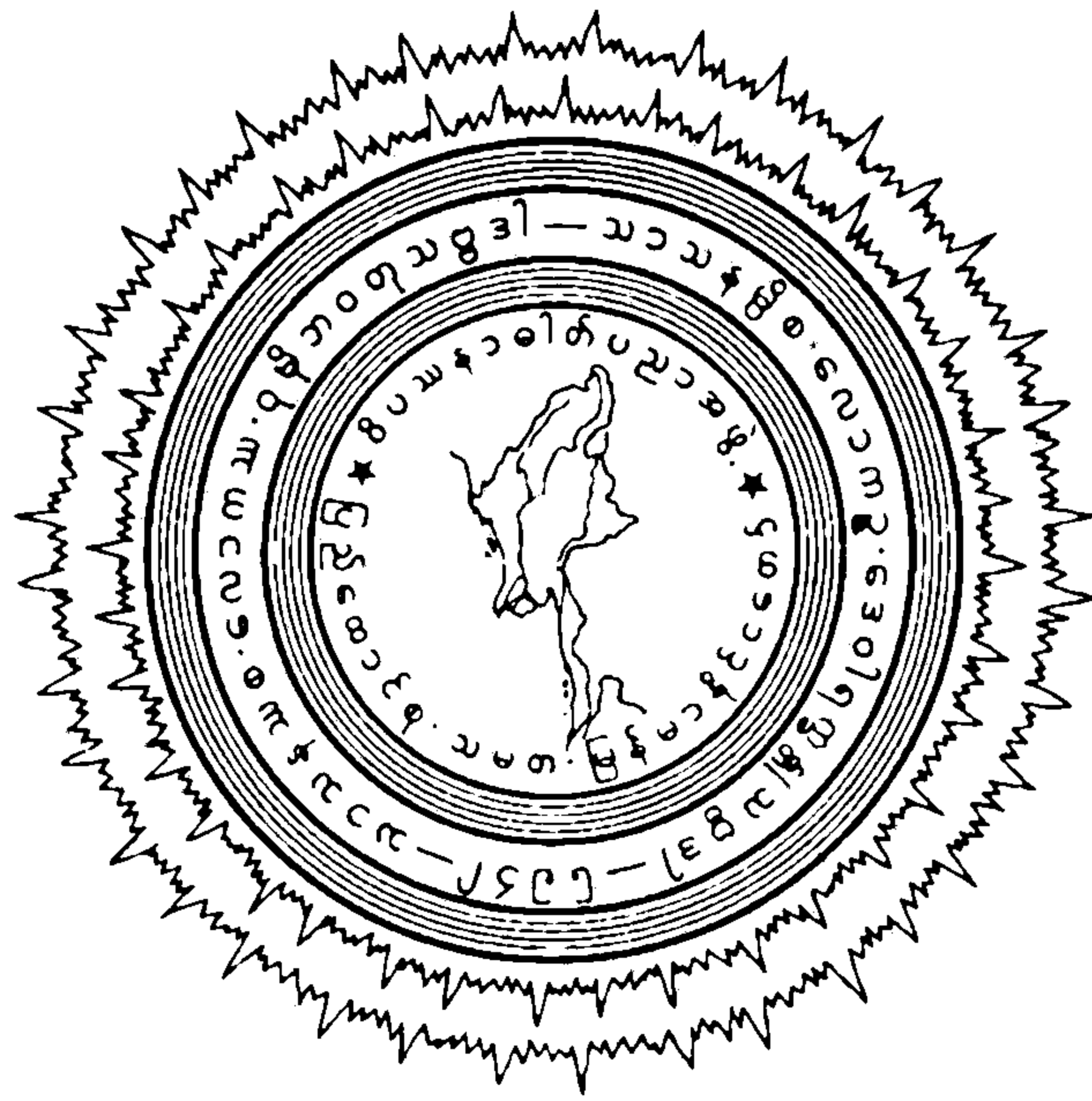
May the Light of the Dhamma shine forth in the world!  
May all beings be happy and may peace prevail in this world!

Sayagyi U Chit Tin  
International Meditation Centre, Austria  
August 2, 1992

**Text of Sayagyi U Ba Khin's plaque in the Light of the Dhamma Pagoda,  
Yangon, Myanmar**

(ဗောဓိဓာတ်ဖွင့်)  
ဇယျမင်္ဂလာဂါထာတော်များ

အနေကဇာတိသံသာရုံ၊  
သန္တာဝိသံအနိဗ္ဗိသံ၊  
ဂဟကာရံဂဝေသန္တော၊  
ဒုက္ခာဇာတိပုနပ္ပုနံ၊  
ဂဟကာရကဒိဋ္ဌောသိ၊  
ပုနဂေဟံနကာဟသိ၊  
သဗ္ဗာတေဖာသုကာဘဂ္ဂါ၊  
ဂဟကုဋ်ဝိသင်္ခိတံ၊  
ဝိသင်္ခါရဂတံစိတ္တံ၊  
တဏှာနံခယမဇ္ဈဂါ။



ဓာတ်ပညာအဖွဲ့တံဆိပ်

ဘုရား၊ တရား၊ သံဃာ ရတနာမြတ် (၃) ပါးတို့၏ ကျေးဇူးမြီ၊ ကျေးဇူးကြွေး  
တို့ကို ဝန်မလေးရအောင် ဆပ်ပေးပူဇော်သော အားဖြင့်

“ဓမ္မရောင်ခြည်”

ဤစေတီတော်ကို တည်ထားပူဇော်၍ (မင်္ဂလာ - ဖိုလ်ပညာ) တရားတော်  
ကို ပေးလှူခြင်းတည်းဟူသော ဓမ္မဒါနအမှုတို့ကို ပြုကြပါကုန်အံ့။

ဒေဝါသနင်း သကြားမင်းနှင့် တက္ကသိုလ်သနာတော်စောင့် နတ်မင်းကြီး  
အပေါင်းတို့သည် လိုအပ်သောအား၊ လိုအပ်သောအစောင့်အရှောက်၊ လိုအပ်  
သော အကူအညီတို့ကို ပေးတော်မူကြပါစေကုန်သတည်း။

၁၃၁၄ ခု၊ ကဆုန်လပြည့်နေ့။  
ရန်ကုန်မြို့၊ ၁၉၅၂ ခု၊ မေလဂရက်

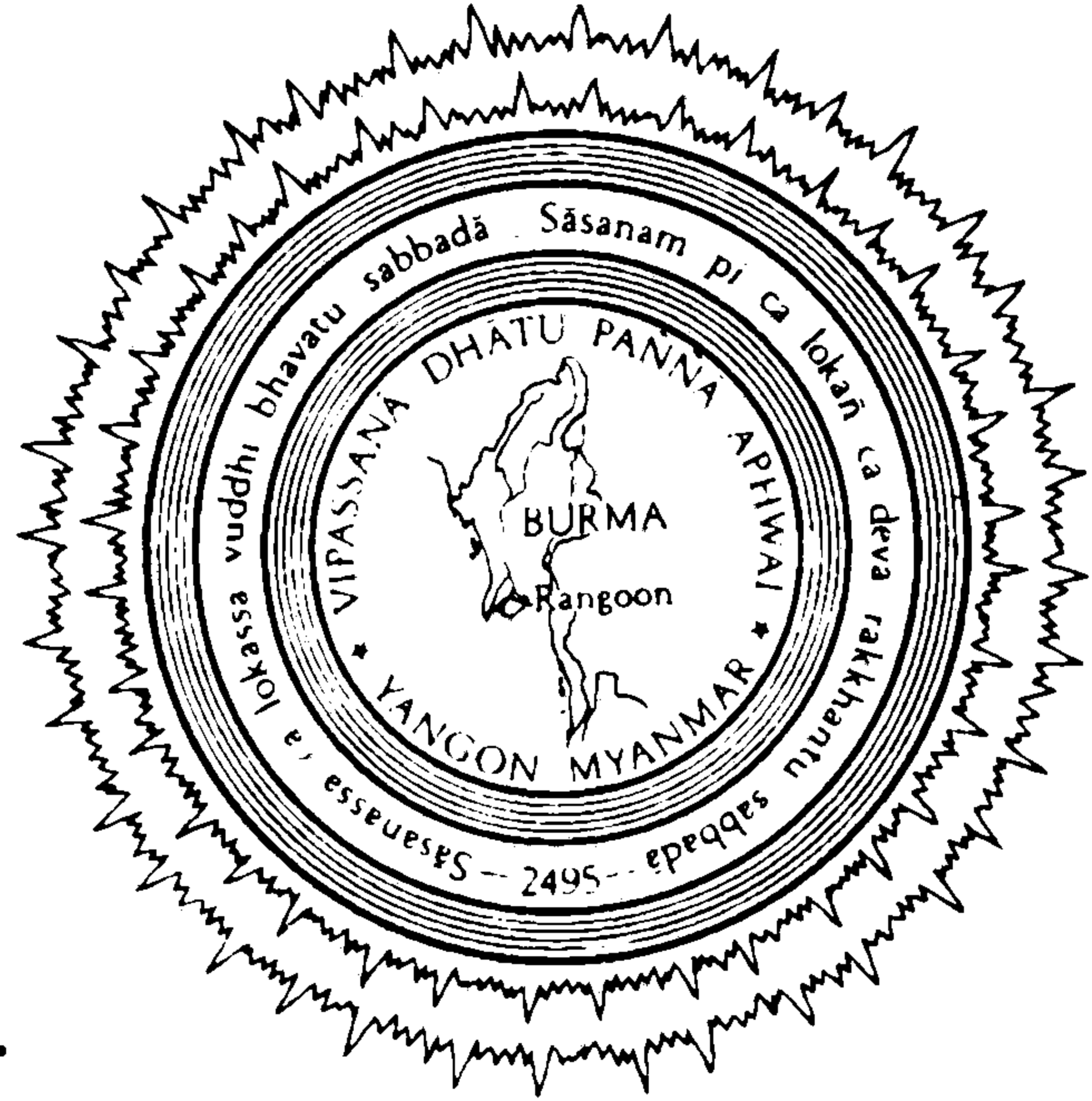
ဘခင်  
ဥက္ကဋ္ဌ  
ဝိပဿနာဓာတ်ပညာအဖွဲ့  
ပြည်ထောင်စုသမတမြန်မာနိုင်ငံတော်

Translation of Sayagyi U Ba Khin's plaque in the  
Light of the Dhamma Pagoda, Yangon, Myanmar

**AWAKENING OF BODHI-DHĀTU**

Jayyamaṅgala Udāna Gāthā

Aneka-jāti-saṃsāraṃ  
sandhāvissaṃ anibbisaṃ,  
Gaha-kāraṃ gavesanto,  
dukkhā jāti punappunaṃ.  
Gahakāraka diṭṭho 'si,  
puna gehaṃ na kāhasi,  
Sabbā te phāsukā bhaggā,  
gahakūṭaṃ visaṅkhatam.  
Visaṅkhāra-gataṃ cittaṃ  
taṅhāmaṃ khayam ajjhagā.



In order to solemnly honour, venerate, and appropriately repay the debt of gratitude owed to the exalted Triple Gem: the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Saṃgha, this pagoda

The Dhamma Yaung Chi Ceti  
was built to make it possible to practise the giving of the Knowledge of the Paths (Magga-Pañña) and the Knowledge of the Fruition States (Phala-Pañña) — the gift of the Buddha Dhamma.

May all the guardians of the Buddha-Sāsana — the Four Great Deva Kings with King Sakka as their chief — provide the necessary strength, the necessary protection, and the necessary assistance.

Full-moon day  
of Kason. 1314 (B.E.)  
May 8, 1952

Ba Khin, President  
Vipassanā Dhātu-Paññā Aphwai  
Rangoon, Burma  
(Yangon, Myanmar)

## Plaque in the Light of the Dhamma Pagoda, IMC-UK

The plaque above reproduces the original plaque attached to the south wall of the shrine room of the Light of the Dhamma Pagoda at the International Meditation Centre, Rangoon, Burma (Yangon, Myanmar). The Sayagyi U Ba Khin Memorial Trust built this Pagoda at the International Meditation Centre in the United Kingdom following the design of the Dhamma Yaung Chi Ceti in Rangoon. Sayamagyi Daw Mya Thwin and Saya U Chit Tin, two senior disciples of Sayagyi who were present during the construction of Sayagyi's Ceti, guided the Sayagyi U Ba Khin Memorial Trust, U.K., in the building of this Pagoda. They are continuing the work of spreading the Buddha-Dhamma in accordance with Sayagyi's desire, born out of great loving kindness and compassion, that the Teachings of the Lord Buddha may continue to spread and remain established for a long time to come.

Ciraṃ Tiṭṭhatu Saddhammo.

Sayamagyi Daw Mya Thwin                      Saya U Chit Tin  
Teachers of Vipassanā Meditation,  
International Meditation Centre, United Kingdom  
Heddington, Full-moon day of Thadingyut 1351 (B.E.)  
October 14, 1989

## Plaque in the Light of the Dhamma Pagoda, IMC-WA

The plaque above reproduces the original plaque attached to the south wall of the shrine room of the Light of the Dhamma Pagoda at the International Meditation Centre, Rangoon, Burma (Yangon, Myanmar). The Sayagyi U Ba Khin Memorial Trust built this Pagoda at the International Meditation Centre in Western Australia following the design of the Dhamma Yaung Chi Ceti in Rangoon. Sayamagyi Daw Mya Thwin and Saya U Chit Tin, two senior disciples of Sayagyi who were present during the construction of Sayagyi's Ceti, guided the Sayagyi U Ba Khin Memorial Trust, W.A., in the building of this Pagoda. They are continuing the work of spreading the Buddha-Dhamma in accordance with Sayagyi's desire, born out of great loving kindness and compassion, that the Teachings of the Lord Buddha may continue to spread and remain established for a long time to come.

Ciraṃ Tiṭṭhatu Saddhammo.

Sayamagyi Daw Mya Thwin                      Saya U Chit Tin  
Teachers of Vipassanā Meditation.  
International Meditation Centre, Western Australia  
Mahogany Creek,  
Full-moon day of Tabaung 1349 (B.E.)  
March 14, 1987

## Plaque in the Light of the Dhamma Pagoda, IMC-USA

The plaque above reproduces the original plaque attached to the south wall of the shrine room of the Light of the Dhamma Pagoda at the International Meditation Centre, Rangoon, Burma (Yangon, Myanmar). This Pagoda at the International Meditation Center in the United States of America follows the design of the Dhamma Yaung Chi Ceti in Rangoon. Sayamagyi Daw Mya Thwin and Saya U Chit Tin, two senior disciples of Sayagyi who were present during the construction of Sayagyi's Ceti, guided the Board of Directors of the International Meditation Center, U.S.A., in the building of this Pagoda. They are continuing the work of spreading the Buddha-Dhamma in accordance with Sayagyi's desire, born out of great loving kindness and compassion, that the Teachings of the Lord Buddha may continue to spread and remain established for a long time to come.

Ciraṃ Tiṭṭhatu Saddhammo.

Sayamagyi Daw Mya Thwin                      Saya U Chit Tin  
Teachers of Vipassanā Meditation,  
International Meditation Centre, U.S.A.  
Westminster, Full-moon day of Nayon 1353 (B.E.)  
May 27, 1991

## Plaque in the Light of the Dhamma Pagoda, IMC-EA

The plaque above reproduces the original plaque attached to the south wall of the shrine room of the Light of the Dhamma Pagoda at the International Meditation Centre, Rangoon, Burma (Yangon, Myanmar). The Sayagyi U Ba Khin Memorial Trust built this Pagoda at the International Meditation Centre in Eastern Australia following the design of the Dhamma Yaung Chi Ceti in Rangoon. Sayamagyi Daw Mya Thwin and Saya U Chit Tin, two senior disciples of Sayagyi who were present during the construction of Sayagyi's Ceti, guided the Sayagyi U Ba Khin Memorial Trust, N.S.W., in the building of this Pagoda. They are continuing the work of spreading the Buddha-Dhamma in accordance with Sayagyi's desire, born out of great loving kindness and compassion, that the Teachings of the Lord Buddha may continue to spread and remain established for a long time to come.

Ciraṃ Tiṭṭhatu Saddhammo.

Sayamagyi Daw Mya Thwin                      Saya U Chit Tin  
Teachers of Vipassanā Meditation,  
International Meditation Centre, Eastern Australia,  
Sunshine, N.S.W., the tenth day of the waxing moon  
of  
Hnaung Tagu 1353 (B.E.)  
April 12, 1992

**Translation of the plaque in the Light of the Dhamma Pagoda,  
IMC-Austria**

The plaque above reproduces the original plaque attached to the south wall of the shrine room of the Light of the Dhamma Pagoda at the International Meditation Centre, Rangoon, Burma (Yangon, Myanmar). The Sayagyi U Ba Khin Meditationsgesellschaft built this Pagoda at the International Meditation Centre in Austria following the design of the Dhamma Yaung Chi Ceti in Yangon. Sayamagyi Daw Mya Thwin and Saya U Chit Tin, two senior disciples of Sayagyi who were present during the construction of Sayagyi's Ceti, guided the Sayagyi U Ba Khin Meditationsgesellschaft, Austria, in the building of this Pagoda. They are continuing the work of spreading the Buddha-Dhamma in accordance with Sayagyi's desire, born out of great loving kindness and compassion, that the Teachings of the Lord Buddha may continue to spread and remain established for a long time to come.

Ciraṃ Tiṭṭhatu Saddhammo.

Sayamagyi Daw Mya Thwin                      Saya U Chit Tin  
Teachers of Vipassanā Meditation,  
International Meditation Centre, St Michael Gurk 6,  
Austria.

the full-moon day of Dutiya Waso 1355 (B.E.)  
August 2, 1993

## **DHAMMA YAUNGCHI CETI THE PAGODA OF THE LIGHT OF DHAMMA**

With the opening of the pagoda at the International Meditation Centre in Austria, there are five Dhamma Yaungchi Cetis<sup>1</sup> in the West built under Sayamagyi's and my supervision and guidance. The model for all the pagodas was built by Sayagyi U Ba Khin in 1952, at the International Meditation Centre, 31A Inya Myaing Road, Yangon, Myanmar. All these pagodas built in the West were built by our meditation students. They founded a group of skilled students who call themselves IMC Builders and recruited more students with various skills in each country where the pagodas were built. From the outside, the pagoda looks like a traditional Buddhist shrine,<sup>2</sup> but inside, it is unusual as it was designed by Sayagyi U Ba Khin for teaching the Dhamma. There is an elevated central room directly under the main dome. Eight rooms or cells in the shape of truncated triangles surround this central room and are surmounted by smaller domes. The central room is for the teachers and seven of the surrounding cells hold five or six meditation students each. The cell to the south contains a statue of the Buddha on the traditional Myanmar golden throne. These cells are entered directly from the outside by separate doors, and doors between each cell and the central room allow the teachers to work directly with a student or students in one cell without disturbing meditators in the other cells.

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<sup>1</sup> *Yaungchi* means "a ray of light" or "a coloured ray of light" in the Myanmar language, so we can translate the name by "The Pagoda of the Light of the Dhamma."

<sup>2</sup> For information about early pagodas in Myanmar, see Sujata Soni, *Evolution of Stupas in Burma, Pagan Period: 11th to 13th centuries A.D.* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1991).

The other five pagodas are all modelled on the one in Yangon, Myanmar. The first Dhamma Yaungchi Ceti is in Western Australia at Lot 78, Jacoby Street, Mahogany Creek—a suburb of the city of Perth. This pagoda was built in 1987, by the Sayagyi U Ba Khin Memorial Trust. As with all the Dhamma Yaungchi Cetis outside Myanmar built by us, Mother Sayamagyi and I guided the construction work, and we were present for the ceremonies to dedicate the pagodas. The traditional way of dedicating a pagoda in Myanmar is to crown the spire above the dome with a *hti*, usually translated “umbrella.” This umbrella or parasol is a symbol that goes far back in the history of India and adorns royalty or a sacred person or object. In the case of the Dhamma Yaungchi Ceti, there is a large *hti* for the central dome and smaller ones for the eight surrounding domes.

The dedication ceremony in Western Australia took place on the auspicious day of the full-moon of the month of Tabaung in the Myanmar calendar (March 14, 1987). Sayadaw U Paṇḍicca and his deputy, Ven. U Candāsīri, were invited to come from Myanmar to perform the consecration ceremony in the traditional Myanmar way. There were also two other Myanmar monks present and six Thai monks who happened to be present in Perth at that time. It was an impressive occasion. Many local residents attended as well as people from the Myanmar community in Australia who were happy to avail themselves of this rare opportunity.

The second Dhamma Yaungchi Ceti is at the International Meditation Centre, U.K., in Heddington near Calne, Wiltshire, U.K. Much careful planning was necessary for constructing a building that would withstand the rigors of the English climate and harmonize with the other buildings at this Centre. Bath stone and handmade bricks were used for the lower structure. The domes are of reinforced concrete covered in plaster using ground Bath stone. The pagoda was dedicated on Abhidhamma Day, the full-moon day of the

month of Thadingyut in the Myanmar calendar (Oct. 14, 1989). A group of six bhikkhus led by the Venerable Dr. H. Saddhatissa participated in the dedication ceremonies.

The third Dhamma Yaungchi Ceti is at the International Meditation Centre, U.S.A., in Westminster, Maryland. Several new building techniques were used in constructing this pagoda,<sup>1</sup> which was dedicated on May 27, 1991, Mahāsamaya Day, the full-moon day of Nayon in the Myanmar calendar.

The fourth Dhamma Yaungchi Ceti is at the International Meditation Centre, Eastern Australia at Sunshine near Newcastle, N.S.W. The pagoda was dedicated on the tenth day of the waxing of the moon of Hnaung Tagu 1353 B.E. in the Myanmar calendar (April 12, 1992).

The fifth Dhamma Yaungchi Ceti is at the Internationales Meditationzentrum Österreich in St. Michael, near Klagenfurt, Austria. The outside of this pagoda is slightly different than the others. Traditional building practices dictated a stucco exterior rather than an exposed brick exterior. The dedication ceremony took place on August 2, 1993, Dhammacakka Day, the full-moon day of Dutiya Waso, led by the Saṃgha of Myanmar led by the Myaungmya Sayadaw U Ñāṇika (Agga Mahā-Paṇḍita).

## **The Types of Cetiya in the Theravāda Buddhist Tradition**

Pagodas have played an important role in the history of Buddhism. Two terms in Pāli are used to designate pagodas: *cetiya* (a mound) and *thupa* (“summit,” Sanskrit: *stupa*). These terms generally refer to monuments built in honour of the Buddha or one of his disciples. The Buddha told Ven. Ānanda that four types of individuals are worthy of a Thupa:

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<sup>1</sup> See “Notes on the Construction of the American Pagoda,” written by Craig Storti using information supplied by Dave Young in the 1991 edition of this booklet (pp. 23-41).

a Buddha, a Pacceka Buddha, a real disciple of a Buddha (*pakati-sāvaka*), i.e. an Arahāt, and a Universal Monarch. He emphasises that the bhikkhus should devote themselves to advancing in the Dhamma and leave the honouring of the Buddha's relics to the laymen. The Thūpas will be useful to the laymen, for they will be able to make merit there by giving offerings, paying homage, and feeling reverence in their minds. This will lead to rebirth in higher realms of existence.<sup>1</sup>

Many pagodas are solid mounds enclosing relics. But others are hollow inside, including corridors and cells for meditation. As we have seen, the Dhamma Yaungchi Ceti is of the second type.

The first Cetiya associated with Buddha Gotama are connected with his Great Renunciation. When he went forth from lay life as a Bodhisatta, he cut off his hair and threw it in the air. The Deva king Sakka took the hair and enshrined it in the Tāvatiṃsa Deva world on the summit of Mount Meru in the Cūlāmaṇi-cetiya.<sup>2</sup> His princely clothes were taken by Mahābrahmā Ghaṭikāra to the Brahmā world and placed in the Dussa-cetiya.<sup>3</sup>

Other Cetiya were erected to house strands of hair given by the Buddha after his Awakening. These are mentioned in the commentaries and chronicles. The Buddha is said to have given eight strands of hair to the first two lay disciples, Tapussa and Bhallika.<sup>4</sup> According to the Myanmar tradition, these disciples placed the hair given to them in a Cetiya that they built the Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon, Myanmar. According to the Mahāvamsa,<sup>5</sup> the Buddha also gave strands

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<sup>1</sup> See *Dialogues of the Buddha*, II 154-157; *Ten Suttas from Dīgha Nikāya*, pp. 273-276.

<sup>2</sup> Jātaka, I 65.

<sup>3</sup> See *The Chronicle of the Thūpa*, p. 26.

<sup>4</sup> See *Samantapāsādikā*, V 961, and *Manorathapūraṇī*, I 383.

<sup>5</sup> Chapter I, vv. 34-36.

of hair to the Deva Mahāsumana when he visited Sri Lanka, and these too were placed in a Cetiya (the Mahiyaṅgana Thūpa).

After the Mahā-Parinibbāna of Buddha Gotama, his bodily relics were divided into eight portions and given to various lay people who built Cetiya for them. Cetiya were also built for the ashes from the cremation and for the urn that held the ashes, so ten Cetiya were built in all. *The Chronicle of the Thūpa* (Thūpavaṃsa) gathers together the various stories about these relics from the Pāli canon, commentaries, and chronicles, and a full account would be too long to give here.

In Myanmar, the word *ceti* is used to designate five sorts of sacred sites or objects. As we shall see, these do not all mean monuments or pagodas.

1) A *Dhātu ceti* is a pagoda including bodily relics (*saririka-dhātu*) such as hair, teeth, collar-bones, or pieces of bone.

2) A *Uddisaka ceti* (in Myanmar, *uddissa*) is a pagoda that includes images such as statues and paintings.

3) A *Paribhoga ceti* is a pagoda that enshrines an article used by the Buddha, such as a robe, bowl, etc. The Bodhi tree under which the Buddha attained Awakening is also included in this type of Ceti, and is an example of a Ceti that is not a building.

4) A *Dhamma ceti* is a place where the texts or the Buddha's Teachings are kept, either a library or a cabinet containing the texts.

5) A *Pāda ceti* is a footprint left by the Buddha—either a footprint that tradition says he actually left, or a copy or painting of a footprint. This type of Ceti is another example that is not a building.

## The Bodily Relics

After Buddha Gotama's Parinibbāna, his body was cremated and two types of bodily relics remained:<sup>1</sup> (1) unbroken relics (*asambhinna-dhātu*), which are the two eyeteeth, the two lower canine teeth, the two collarbones, and the frontal bone; (2) broken-up relics (*sambhinna-dhātu*) of various sizes. The smallest were like jasmine buds the size of mustard seeds; the medium-sized relics were like pearl-coloured grains of rice broken in two; the largest ones were like golden peas broken in two. There were sixteen *nāli* measures of these broken-up relics, and they were divided into eight portions of one *doṇa* each.<sup>2</sup>

## Images

Most pagodas will include images of the Buddha. These images can take the form of statues or paintings. In Myanmar, the statues usually depict the Buddha seated with his legs crossed and his right hand touching the earth. This represents his taking the earth as his witness that he had fulfilled the perfections (*pāramīs*) when he was challenged by Māra on the night of Awakening.

The five Light of the Dhamma Pagodas at the International Meditation Centres in the tradition of Sayagyi U Ba Khin have five Buddha statues on the traditional golden thrones. One large Buddha statue is in the south or the east

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<sup>1</sup> See *Dialogues of the Buddha*, II 190f.; *Ten Suttas*, pp. 299 (note 2), 302f.; *Buddhavaṃsa (Chronicle of Buddhas)*, Ch. XXVIII; and *Epochs of the Conqueror*, pp. 52-54.

<sup>2</sup> In Myanmar, a *nāli* is taken to be equal to one *pyi* (two pounds). Two *nāli* measures equal one *doṇa*.

cell, and four small Buddha statues are on the upper lintel under the golden dome of the pagoda. These five Buddha statues represent the five Buddhas of this auspicious aeon (*Buddha-kappa*): Kakkasanda, Koṇāgamaṇa, Kassapa, Gotama, and the coming Buddha Ariya Metteyya. These five pagodas are therefore *Uddissa-cetis*, just like the pagoda built by Sayagyi U Ba Khin in Yangon. And all these pagodas contain the inscriptions of important Suttas and texts from the Abhidhamma (Paṭṭhāna, Uddesa, and Niddesa) [see p. 18 below]. Sayamagyi and I, together with the IMC Builders and the Trustees of the Sayagyi U Ba Khin Memorial Trusts who are the pagoda *gopakas* (guardians), have been very careful to meticulously follow in Sayagyi's footsteps.

In the Myanmar language, the term *Uddissa-ceti* also refers to the doubles of himself (*Nimitta-Buddha*) that the Buddha created during his lifetime. The first time he did so was during the seventh rains retreat (*vassa*) when he taught the Abhidhamma to his mother in the Tavatimsa Deva world. Teaching the Abhidhamma took three months, but the Buddha needed to have his meals, so, in order not to interrupt the discourse, he created a double of himself to carry on the teaching when he went on his alms round. When the Great Occasion occurred during the fifteenth year after his Awakening, the Buddha realized that only another Buddha was capable of asking the appropriate questions to initiate the six discourses that he taught to the Devas and Bramhas who had come to pay respects to him and the five hundred Arahāt bhikkhus with him. So he again created a double, and the Nimmita-Buddha asked the questions.

### Items used

The most important item that was useful to the Buddha was the Tree of Awakening (*Mahā-bodhi*). According to the introduction to the Kalinga-bodhi Jataka (no. 479), the

Buddha himself established the Bodhi Tree as an object worthy of offerings. When the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana Monastery, he used to go on tours to teach the Dhamma. Lay people who came to the Jetavana with offerings of flowers found that the Buddha was absent, so they left their offerings at the entrance to the Perfume Chamber where the Buddha lived. Anāthapiṇḍika, who had given the Jetavana, requested Ven. Ānanda to ask the Buddha if some place could be established for these offerings. The Buddha told Ven. Ānanda that there are three types of Cetiya: 1) those for bodily relics (*sārīrika*), but those are made after the Buddha's Parinibbāna; 2) those for items used (*pāribodhika*); and 3) those by dedication (*uddesika*).<sup>1</sup>

The Buddha explained that the Bodhi Tree is an appropriate object for a Cetiya both during a Buddha's lifetime and after his demise.<sup>2</sup> So Ven. Ānanda prepared a place at the Jetavana Monastery for a Bodhi Tree and Ven. Moggallāna went to the tree where the Buddha attained Awakening and caught a seed as it fell from the tree. Anāthapiṇḍika planted the seed and King Pasenadi of Kosala had a wall built around it. This tree served as the focal centre for offerings by the lay disciples when the Buddha was not in residence.

After the death of the Buddha, it became the established practice for Bodhi Trees to be planted near pagodas and in monasteries. One of the most famous trees is the one grown from the southern branch of the original tree and which was sent to Sri Lanka by King Asoka.

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<sup>1</sup>This is also called *uddissaka*. See *The Illustrator*, pp. 249f., which says a Cetiya of an item used is the Bodhi Tree, a Cetiya by dedication is an image of the Awakened One, a Cetiya with a relic is a monument with a relic-chamber containing a relic.

<sup>2</sup>The text (Jātaka, IV 228) seems to discourage Cetiya with images: "A (Cetiya by) dedication is without material base as it is only mental" (*uddesikaṃ avatthukaṃ manamattakena hoti*). An alternate reading, however, simply says, "A (Cetiya by) dedication and (one of) an item used are possible" (*udissakaṃ paribhogihañ ca sakkā hoti*).

After the Buddha's Parinibbāna, many of the articles used by him were enshrined in Cetiya. These included his bowl, staff, lower, robe, etc.<sup>1</sup>

### The Dhamma (The Teachings)

According to the introduction to the Bhikkha-parampara Jātaka (no. 496), there was a layman who asked the Buddha about how to show honour to the Dhamma. He was able to give food and robes to the Buddha and the Saṅgha, but he did not know how to show honour to the Dhamma. The Buddha answered that he should show honour to Ānanda, the Treasurer of the Dhamma. The layman invited Ven. Ānanda the next day and gave him rich food and robes. Ven. Ānanda considered these gifts more appropriate for Ven. Sāriputta, the Commander of the Dhamma, so he took them to the Jetavana Monastery and gave them to him. But the chief disciple decided the gifts should go to the supreme Buddha, the Lord of the Dhamma, and gave them to the Buddha. The Buddha saw that there was no one above himself and so accepted the gifts.

Another use of the term *Dhamma-cetiya* is found in an incident that occurred when King Pasenadi of Kosala visited the Buddha.<sup>2</sup> The king praised the Buddha in the highest of terms. After the king left, the Buddha told the bhikkhus that the king had spoken testimonies to the Dhamma (*Dhamma cetiyāni*),<sup>3</sup> and that they should learn the king's words of praise.

<sup>1</sup> See *Chronicle of Buddhas*, Ch. XXVIII, vv. 8-12; *Epochs of the Conqueror*, pp. 53f.

<sup>2</sup> *The Middle Length Sayings*, II 301-307.

<sup>3</sup> This term is explained by the commentary (Papañcasudinī, III 355) to mean "words of respect for the Dhamma (*Dhamma cittikāra-vacanani*). To whichever of the Three Jewels respect is paid, it is paid to all. Therefore, if paid to the Lord, it is paid to the Dhamma, and so the Lord spoke of 'testimonies to the Dhamma.'" (See *The Middle Length Sayings*, II 307, note 1.)

For several centuries the Dhamma taught by the Buddha was memorized and passed down by the Saṅgha. Around the first century A.D., the texts were written down, and today Buddhists are very careful to treat books containing Dhamma texts with respect.

Many monasteries contain buildings that serve as libraries, or a special cabinet will hold the books and manuscripts. When King Mindon of Myanmar had the Fifth Council held in Mandalay in 1871, he had the three collections of the Pāli canon (the Tipiṭaka) inscribed on 729 marble slabs. These are housed in the Kuthodaw Pagoda in Mandalay.

It is also the practice to put plaques inscribed with texts on the walls in pagodas. The Dhamma Yaungchi Ceti in Yangon, for example, has extracts from the Pāli canon engraved on brass slabs that are embedded in the walls. The texts include the Paṭiccasamuppāda, Paṭṭhāna, Dhamma-cakkappavattana Sutta, Anattalakkhaṇa Sutta, etc. Similar plaques with these same inscriptions have been put into all the five pagodas built in the Sayagyi U Ba Khin tradition, a practice which makes the name—The Light of the Dhamma—a true characterization of this kind of pagoda.<sup>1</sup>

## Footprints

There are at least four occasions during the Buddha's lifetime when he made a determination (*adhiṭṭhāna*) for his footprint to be seen by people who would be attracted to the Dhamma. The Buddha left a footprint to be seen by the Brahman Māgandi and his wife.<sup>2</sup> Māgandi wanted to give his daughter in marriage to the Buddha, but the wife realized when she saw the footprint that the Buddha was free of sensual desire. When the Buddha explained to the couple how he reached that state, they became Sotāpannas.

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 86f. for details on how these plaques were installed in all five pagodas.

<sup>2</sup> *Buddhist Legends*, I 274-277, III 31f.

The Buddha also left a footprint to be seen by the hunter Kukkuṭamitta.<sup>1</sup> The hunter thought the Buddha had set free the animals caught in his nets, so he tried to shoot the Buddha with an arrow. As soon as he drew his bow, however, he was frozen to the spot. His seven sons went in search of their father and drew their bows also, but they too were paralyzed. Their mother, who had become a Sotāpanna when she was a girl, came with her seven daughters-in-law in search of her husband and sons. When she saw them, she cried out, “Do not kill my father!” The hunter and his sons changed their attitude and the Buddha allowed them to lower their bows and arrows. Then he taught them the Dhamma, and the father, the sons, and their wives all became Sotāpannas.

On two occasions the people who saw the Buddha’s footprints knew the marks of a Great Man, and seeing “the wheel-marks with their thousand spokes, with their rims and hubs and all their attributes complete”<sup>2</sup> helped inspire confidence in the Buddha in them. The Brahman Doṇa encountered the Buddha on the road between Ukkatṭhā and Setabbya and asked about the Buddha’s future lives, but the Buddha declared that he had gone beyond the world and was now a Buddha.<sup>3</sup> Doṇa was later to be responsible for distributing the relics of the Buddha after the cremation and in that way disputes were avoided among those who laid claim to a portion of the relics.

The Brahman Bāvarī sent a group of his disciples to ask the Buddha a question. A Brahman had demanded money from Bāvarī, but he was not able to pay. Angry at this, the Brahman said that in seven days Bāvarī’s head would split into seven pieces. A Deva told Bāvarī that the angry man did not know about “heads” or “head-splitting.” He should ask the Buddha. Bāvarī’s disciples followed the Buddha from place

<sup>1</sup> *Buddhist Legends*, II 276-280.

<sup>2</sup> *The Gradual Sayings*, II 43.

<sup>3</sup> *The Gradual Sayings*, II 43-45.

to place and finally caught up with him and were able to ask Bāvari's question and questions of their own.<sup>1</sup> They did not lose heart in their long search for the Buddha because he left a footprint (*pada-nikkhepa*) in front of the Perfume Chamber in the Jetavana Monastery.<sup>2</sup> The answer to Bāvari's question was that the "head" means ignorance, and the "head-splitter" means knowledge, faith, mindfulness, concentration, resolution, and energy.

These four footprints were only seen by those whom the Buddha intended to see them. They will not be obliterated even if elephants and other wild beasts tread on them, if the rain from a violent storm poured down, or if roaring winds beat on them.<sup>3</sup> These footprints faded out once their purpose had been served.

Other footprints left by the Buddha are still visible today. We will give the stories connected with three of these footprints mentioned in the commentaries.

The Buddha left two footprints when he went to see Ven. Puṇṇa in the Sunāparanta district. Ven. Puṇṇa had taken a meditation subject from the Buddha and returned to Sunāparanta after the Buddha determined that he would be able to maintain his self-control and calm (*damupasama*) among the fierce, rough people of Sunāpananata.<sup>4</sup> The commentaries<sup>5</sup> tell the story of how Ven. Puṇṇa invited the Buddha to come for the dedication of a sandalwood monastery. The Buddha took 499 Arahats with him and on the way taught the recluse Saccabandha, who lived on a hill of the same name. The recluse became an Arahata and joined the Buddha as the 500th bhikkhu. After the dedication, the Buddha visited the

<sup>1</sup> Sutta-nipāta, vv. 976-1031.

<sup>2</sup> Paramatthajotikā, II 584.

<sup>3</sup> *Buddhist Legends*, I 275.

<sup>4</sup> *Kindred Sayings*, IV 34-36; *The Middle Length Sayings*, III 319-322.

<sup>5</sup> Sāratthappakāsinī, II 374-379 = Papanācasūdanī, V 85-92. See *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names*, II 220f.

Nāga king living in the river Nammadā. He left his footprint on the bank of the river for the Nāga king to honour. Then he went to the Saccabandha hill and left a footprint on the top of a piece of solid rock, just as if he had been stepping on a lump of moist clay.

In Myanmar, Sunāparanta is considered to refer to a district on the west bank of the Irrawaddy River near Pagan. The footprint on the bank of the Nammadā River is at a place named Shwe-set-taw, thirty-five miles from Minbu. Minbu is approximately halfway between Yangon and Mandalay. The footprint is on a rock on the west bank. On the east bank, just across the river, is to be found a hill with the footprint left for Saccabandha in a rock on its summit. The Shwe-set-taw Pagoda Trust takes care of both footprints, and each year there is a festival for them. This festival is held in conjunction with the Kyaung-daw-yar Ceti, the pagoda built to commemorate the Buddha's visit with the 500 Arahats. In 1978, Mother Sayamagi and I led a pilgrimage to these places, accompanied by sixty foreign and local meditation students. We travelled in a Hino bus from Yangon to Magwe, which is across the Irrawaddy River from Minbu. The trip up took a day and a half. On the return trip, we visited the city of Prome. This is an ancient city where sites are being excavated and interesting archaeological finds are being made of the culture of the Pyus, the first settlers of Myanmar.

This was our second visit to see the footprints. In 1969, we went to Mandalay by train and then took a steamboat down the Irrawaddy to Nyung-U. From there, we visited Pagan, a former capital of Myanmar that is world renowned for its many pagodas and temples. We visited several of these, including the Ānanda Temple and the Shwezigon Pagoda. From Nyung-U we continued by steamboat to Minbu to see the footprints.

Near Kyaung-daw-yar there is a small river, a tributary of the Irrawaddy, and each year a special type of fish comes

during the period of the rains retreat (*vassa*). They arrive on the first day of the retreat and leave when it is over. Each leap year, the Myanmar calendar has thirteen months. Two months are put in for Waso, and the rains retreat begins on the full-moon day of the second Waso. As the Myanmar calendar follows the changes of the moon, some months have thirty days and some have twenty-nine. Even so, the fish arrive on the correct day each year. They only eat vegetarian food and do not eat after noon on Uposatha days as a sign of observing the precepts. Tradition says that they have been coming ever since the Buddha's first visit to Kyaung-daw-yar. Every year, many pilgrims go there from all over Myanmar to witness the fish, which are different from other species of fish found in Myanmar. The local people used to gild these fish with gold in order to identify them when they returned the following years. The fish can only be fed from the east bank, where Kyaung-daw-yar is situated.

The Shwe-set-taw Pagoda Trust takes care of both footprints. They are open to the public for veneration only during the season with fair weather. After the annual festival, the footprints are sealed behind strong iron grills with locks and keys. During the rainy season, the Nammadā River floods and the lower footprint is under thirty feet of water. The only people there are a few forest-dwelling monks who meditate at that site. Soon after the rains are over, the Trustees arrange for repairs to the roads and bridges for the festival. The site is in a forested, hilly region, but no wild animals are to be seen along the way during the festival period, and there is no occasion for accidents or disasters of any kind.

There is also a well-known footprint in Sri Lanka. According to the *Mahāvamsa* (I, 77), the Buddha left a footprint on

the top of Samantakuta Mountain for the Deva Mahāsumana.<sup>1</sup> This was on the Buddha's third trip to Sri Lanka, where he went to prepare the way for the arrival of his Teachings after his demise. Today, the mountain is known as Adam's Peak and several different traditions have arisen around the footprint.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A thirteenth-century poem in Pāḷi by Vedaha Thera, *Samantakūṭavaṇṇanā* (*In Praise of Mount Samanta*), gives an account also (vv. 753-90).

<sup>2</sup> Niels Andersen reports these in his article, "A Footprint on the Mountain," *The West Australian* (May 7, 1988, p. xxii): "According to legend this is the spot where Adam first set foot after being cast out of heaven. He left behind a single footprint as permanent and sacred proof. To most Buddhists it is Sri Padda, the sacred footprint left by Gautama Buddha himself. Hindus insist that it actually belongs to Lord Shiva. Catholics prefer the claims of their own candidate, St Thomas the Apostle. Others, of more romantic persuasion, call it Amanaladande, the Butterfly Mountain, after the clouds of yellow butterflies which swarm over its slopes for a short time each year. Whatever their reasons, for more than 1000 years countless pilgrims have made the arduous 7km climb at least once in their lives. Most make the climb at night so that they can reach the summit in time for the spectacular sunrise."



*The Light of the Dhamma Pagoda, IMC-Austria,  
about four weeks before the Opening*

## **FULFILLING SAYAGYI'S *ADHIṬṬHANA-PARAMI***

### **The Opening Talk for the Consecration of The Light of the Dhamma Pagoda, IMC-Austria**

Venerable Sayadaws, Mahā Theras, and Bhikkhus, Upāsakas and Upāsikās, members of our Dhamma family and friends of the Dhamma,

We have come together here today to dedicate another Dhamma Yaungchi Ceti, another Light of the Dhamma Pagoda. This is the fifth pagoda of this type to be built in the West under Sayamagyi's and my supervision following the design of the pagoda built in 1952 by our teacher Sayagyi U Ba Khin at the International Meditation Centre in Yangon, Myanmar.

For forty years now, Mother Sayamagyi and I have been serving the Sayagyi U Ba Khin Worldwide Dhamma Mission. Since coming out of Myanmar in 1978, we have seen Sayagyi's mission gain a firm footing all around the globe. There are five International Meditation Centres outside Myanmar—in the United Kingdom, Western Australia, the United States, Eastern Australia, and this centre in Austria. All of them have the same type of teaching pagoda that Sayagyi designed for his centre in Yangon. These Light of the Dhamma Pagodas are an essential element in a meditation centre as they represent the first part of the Triple Gem: the Buddha, the Self-Awakened One who taught others how to attain true happiness.

We are confident that it will not be long before all the centres will add on a Dhamma Hall, Teachers' house and students' living quarters as we have at the IMC-UK in England and at the IMC-WA in Perth. A Dhamma Hall represents the second Gem: the Dhamma, the unique Teachings of a Buddha that show the way to the perfect happiness of Nibbāna. Three of the centres have a Teachers' residence.

Our centres are for lay people, and as they are not monasteries, members of the Bhikkhu-Saṅgha do not live in them. The Teachers' residence, however, serves as a symbol for those who practise the Buddha's Teachings and keep them alive; in other words, the third Gem, the Saṅgha.

During the seventeen years Mother Sayamagyi assisted Sayagi U Ba Khin in teaching the Buddha Dhamma at IMC-Yangon, we saw the way all those who worked sincerely, as our teacher instructed, benefited greatly. We have continued to teach the same technique selected by our teacher as most appropriate for lay people, and we find that all over the world, people can expect to benefit in the same way. Our students have worked very hard to establish centres, associations, and organisations in many countries of the world. Thanks to their efforts, many are getting a taste of the Dhamma.

These centres are especially important as they provide the teachers and students with the best sort of conditions to work in. When a merchant from Rājagaha in India first proposed to build a monastery for the Buddha and his disciples, the Buddha pointed out the advantages of having such a protected place in which to meditate. He repeated the words he pronounced on that occasion when Anāthapiṇḍika offered the Jetavana monastery to the Saṅgha of the four quarters both in the present and in the future.

In monasteries, the Buddha said, monks are able to protect themselves from the cold, from the heat and from beasts of prey, from creeping things, gnats, from rain and hot winds. They are able to develop concentration and insight with ease. The Buddha praised the gift of a dwelling place as the highest gift that can be made to the Saṅgha by laymen. Therefore a wise man who has his own interest at heart should have charming dwellings built for those who are learned in the Dhamma. With a purified mind he should give food and drink, clothing and lodgings to the upright. Then they are able to teach him the Dhamma that dispels all ills, and

knowing the Dhamma, he will attain Nibbāna and be free from taints.<sup>1</sup>

The International Meditation Centres will be working in the future to provide, in addition to Pagoda, Dhamma Hall, and Teachers' residence, good accommodation for the students, so that they can learn to understand the Eightfold Noble Path that leads to Nibbāna. We have seen a rapid expansion of the Sayagyi U Ba Khin Worldwide Mission. Now that we have this solid base, we can all work together to make sure that the roots of the Dhamma are firmly planted so that the Teachings of the Buddha will benefit many for a long time to come.

We shall now request the members of the Saṅgha with us here today to recite the texts that are traditionally used in Theravāda Buddhist countries when sacred structures such as pagodas or shrines are consecrated. The main text that is recited is the Paṭicca-samuppāda, Dependent Origination. This is the law of cause and effect, the truth on which the Buddha reflected at the foot of the Bodhi tree on the eve of the full-moon day of Vesākha. And as the sun rose, he attained the state of a Fully Awakened Buddha.

May you all be fully awakened!

May the pure Dhamma long endure!

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<sup>1</sup> This is a paraphrase of the translation by I.B. Horner, *The Book of Discipline*, V 206. For the story of the merchant, see pp. 205f. For the story of Anātha-piṇḍika, see pp. 229f.

# THE CONSECRATION OF THE DHAMMA YAUNGCHI PAGODA AT THE INTERNATIONAL MEDITATION CENTRE, U.K.

Sayadaw U Ñāṇika (Agga-Mahā-Paṇḍita)

Venerable Sayadaws, Mahā-Theras, and Bhikkhus, Upāsakas and Upāsikās, sisters and brothers, and friends of the Dhamma, today is a very auspicious day. It is a highly pleasurable occasion for both the Bhikkhu-Saṅgha and for lay devotees. We Burmese (Myanmar) monks are very proud and very happy to have such an opportunity as this—participating in the consecration ceremony for the Dhamma Yaungchi Pagoda at this International Meditation Centre. The title of the pagoda explains what sort of pagoda it is: this building is a pagoda that sheds forth the Light of the Dhamma.

I would like to explain this in more detail. The word *cetiya*, or *caitya* in Sanskrit, means a thing or place that people revere and respect. Before the advent of the Buddha in India, there were various types of *cetiyas*. Primitive people in both the East and the West thought that large trees, important mountains, dense forests, etc., were the dwelling places of spirits. They ascribed unusual phenomena such as floods, thunder storms, droughts, famines, and severe infectious diseases to these spirits. So they deified these spirits and tried to propitiate them with sacrifices in their search for a refuge, for mental peace and security. And they built them structures which come to be named *cetiyas* in Pāli.

When the Buddha appeared in the world, he saw the futility of this kind of refuge. As he said in the Dhammapada (verses 188-189):

*Bahuṃ ve saraṇaṃ yanti pabbatāni vanāni ca  
ārāmarukkhacetyāni manussā bhayatajjitā.*

*N' etaṃ kho saraṇaṃ khemaṃ, n' etaṃ saraṇaṃ uttamaṃ,  
n' etaṃ saraṇaṃ āgama sabbadukkhā pamuccati.*

Many people, spurred on by fear, go for refuge to mountains and forests, to shrines of trees in parks.

Truly, this is not a refuge of safety, this is not the ultimate refuge.

Approaching this refuge does not deliver one from all miseries.

So what sort of refuge should be searched for? The Buddha's answer to this question was that true refuge was to be found in the highest wisdom. In order to obtain wisdom, a person must take the Buddha as a teacher, the Dhamma as instruction, and the Saṅgha as guide. Under their guidance and protection, one should cultivate the knowledge of the four-fold Truth (*Catu-sacca-ñāṇa*), especially the most operative of these, namely, the Noble Eightfold Path that leads to the cessation of suffering. This knowledge or wisdom is referred to by the Buddha in the Dhammapada (verses 190-192) as follows:

*Yo ca Buddhañ ca Dhammañ ca Saṅghañ ca saraṇaṃ gato,  
cattāri ariyasaccāni sammappaññāya passati.*

*Dukkhaṃ, dukkhasamuppādaṃ dukkhassa ca atikkamaṃ,  
ariyaṃ c' aṭṭhaṅgikaṃ maggaṃ dukkhūpasamagāminam.*

*Etaṃ kho saraṇaṃ khemaṃ, etaṃ saraṇaṃ uttamaṃ,  
etaṃ saraṇaṃ āgama sabbadukkhā pamuccati.*

But whoever has gone for refuge to the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Saṅgha, (that person) sees the Four Noble Truths.

(1) Misery, (2) the arising of misery, (3) the overcoming of misery, (4) the Noble Eightfold Path leading to the cessation of misery.

Truly, this is a refuge of safety, this is the ultimate refuge. Approaching this refuge does deliver one from all miseries.

This is why, when his chief disciples died, the Buddha himself had the bodies of Venerable Sāriputta and Venerable Mahā-Moggalāna cremated and the remains enshrined in *cetiyas*. In this way, the remains of these disciples became fields of merit, for ordinary people were afterwards able to make merit by paying respects at the *cetiyas*. This type of meritorious action leads to much profit in the human plane and in the planes of divine happiness.

The Buddha explained that the remains of four types of people are worthy of respect and of having *cetiyas* built for them: (1) Teaching Buddhas, (2) Pacceka Buddhas, (3) Arhats, and (4) Universal Monarchs. After the great extinction of the Buddha, his relics were taken to different countries and enshrined in innumerable holy places such as *cetiyas* and stupas. So in Buddhist countries such as Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, you have the inspiring sight of pagodas dotting the green landscape, towering on the crest of hills, beautifully situated beside a river bank, or nestling in a valley.

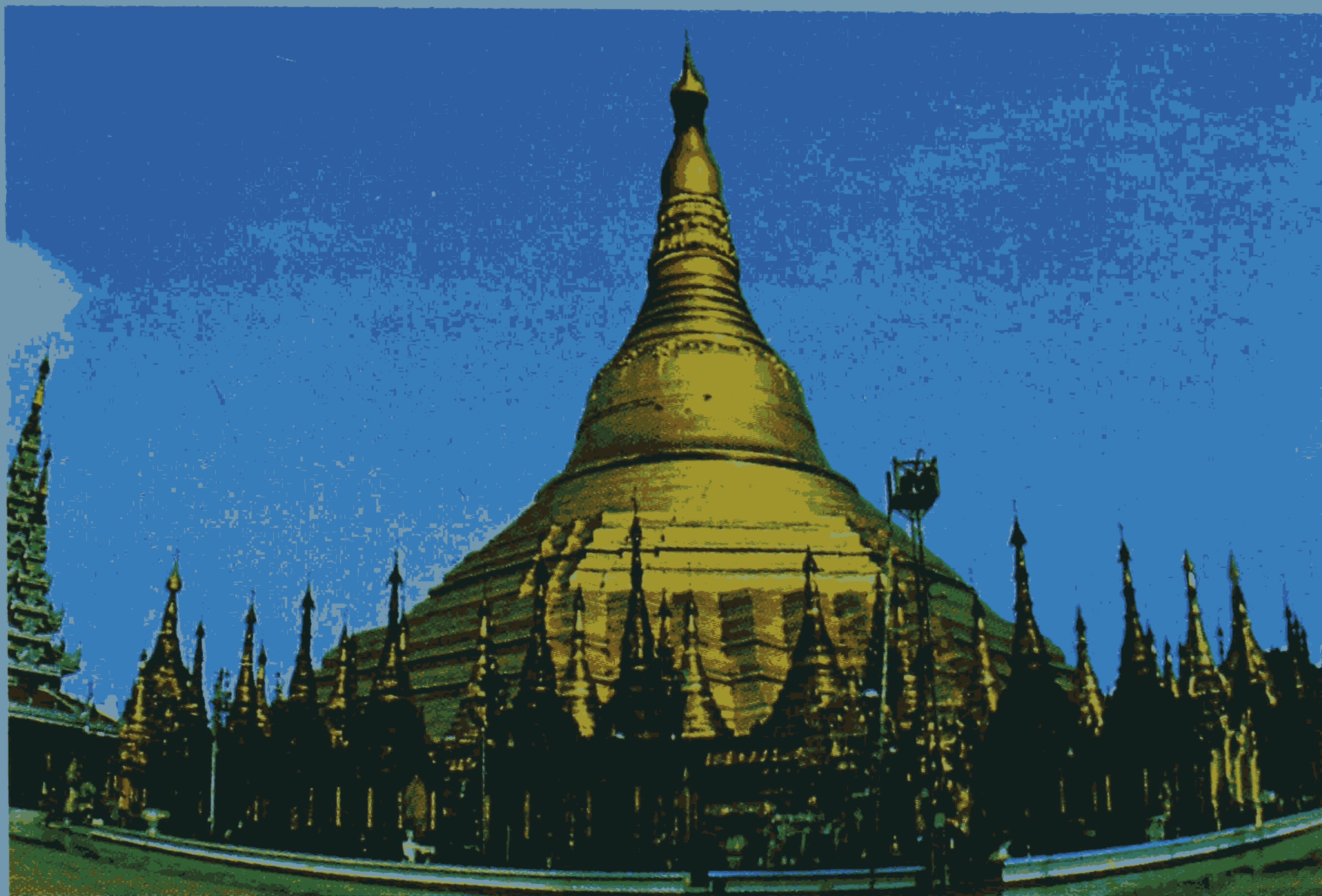
I would like to tell you about the two important pagodas that were established in non-human planes for the relics of the Bodhisatta before Prince Siddhattha became the Buddha. When Prince Siddhattha made the Great Renunciation, he went to the banks of the river Anomā. It is there he took off his princely garments, cut off his hair, and put on the robes of an ascetic. The garments were taken by Mahā-Brahmā Ghāṭikāra and placed in the Dussa-cetiya (the Pagoda of the Garments) in the Brahmā world. The Deva king

Sakka took the hair and enshrined it in the Tāvatiṃsa Deva world in the Cūḷāmaṇi-cetiya (the Pagoda of the Topknot and the Crown Jewel).

The art of building religious or spiritual structures has called forth some of the best of the characteristic genius of human beings over the ages. It has resulted in many different forms, shapes, and designs of *cetiyas* or religious buildings throughout the ages. There have been developments in the creative imagination and artistic inventiveness and a free exchange of ideas between various countries. In Myanmar, we possess many priceless pagodas and stupas, such as the famous Shwedagon, one of the wonders of the world.

Pagodas have been built of many different sorts of material: gold, silver, bronze, wood, brick, clay, and even sand. The *cetiya* built for the relics of Buddha Kassapa, who was the Buddha before Buddha Gotama in this auspicious aeon (*bhadda-kappa*), is said to have been made of gold bricks. One man who made a gift of a golden brick to that *cetiya* was born during the time of our Buddha Gotama and as a result of his gift, his body had a golden complexion. He ordained in the Saṅgha and became an Arahāt and one of the leading disciples. His name was Mahā-Kaccāna, and he was the chief of those who could expound in full a brief saying of the Buddha's. Another Arahāt among the monks during the time of the Buddha, Vasabha, had made merit in a past life through building a *cetiya* out of sand in order to pay respects to the Buddhas by gilding it and offering flowers and perfumes because he could see no one else worthy of his respects. As a result of this, Ven. Vasabha gained Arahātship with ease (*sukha-paṭipadā*) and through quick comprehension (*khippā-bhiñña*)—and prior to that, he had enjoyed many lives as a human and as a Deva.

We might ask about pagodas like the Shwedagon, “Why are Buddhists so anxious to build such an enormous pagoda without any place for human beings to reside?” The simplest



Shwedagon Pagoda, Yangon, Myanmar

way to answer this question is to say that it is because the Buddha's relics are reverently and devotedly enshrined there. These relics are impregnated with the Buddha's Enlightenment and *Nibbāna-dhātu*. Enlightenment and *Nibbāna-dhātu* are inseparably, inextricably bound up together. They are related as subject (*ārammaṇika*) and object (*ārammaṇa*). For those who can develop a good appreciation of *anicca*, *Nibbāna-dhātu* also develops in them, and such people will feel the presence of those elements. This *Nibbāna-dhātu* is precious, and where precious elements exist, precious things of the mundane sphere will naturally throng and assemble.

Here, in the centre founded by the Sayagyi U Ba Khin Memorial Trust, the Dhamma teachers, headed by Mother Sayama and Saya U Chit Tin, have so effectively organized the courses that the International Meditation Centre has managed to live up to the guidelines laid down by Sayagyi U Ba Khin.

May I conclude my short speech with a wish on behalf of the Saṅgha and myself:

May you continue to work for the Dhamma, self-sacrificingly and energetically. May your centre provide students with practical instruction and guidance, and with instruction in Buddhist theory alongside the practice. May all of you be well and happy. May all of you obtain the highest bliss of *Nibbāna*. May your centre shed the Light of the Dhamma forever, in every direction.

**A SPEECH GIVEN AT THE 21st MEMORIAL  
SERVICE FOR THE LATE SAYAGYI U BA KHIN,  
HEDDINGTON, U.K., Jan. 19, 1992**

Sayadaw U Ñāṇika (Agga-Mahā-Paṇḍita)

Venerable Bhantes, Upāsakas, Upāsikas and friends of the Dhamma. It is a great pleasure to have the opportunity to see all the disciples of Sayagyi U Ba Khin following the example set by him and to give you a short talk. This is the second time that I have come here, and this time it is to participate in the twenty-first memorial service for the late Sayagyi U Ba Khin; the first occasion was on Oct. 14, 1989, three years ago, when the opening ceremony for the Dhamma Yaungchi Pagoda was held.

Here I would like to mention an unexpected event that took place recently in Perth, Western Australia. On the second day after my arrival in Perth I was invited to accept *dāna* at the U Ba Khin meditation centre there, and much to my surprise I saw a pagoda there that is the same size and of the same style as the one here. In addition, there is a magnificent Dhamma Hall, etc. Seeing this centre made me very happy. At that time I gave a short Dhamma talk, both in English and in the Myanmar language. Then in Sydney, I also had the good fortune to chant some Suttas and Parittas<sup>1</sup> when ground was broken to lay the foundations for another Dhamma Yaung Chi Pagoda.<sup>2</sup> Afterwards, I gave the traditional talk called *anumodanā* (which literally means a talk which encourages the merit performer and makes him rejoice in his act). Of course, I never met Sayagyi during his lifetime, but I know about him through his articles and booklets and a biography written by U Ko Lay and Saya U Chit Tin. When I was in Myanmar Pyi, even then, I had already been pleased

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<sup>1</sup> Verses of protection.

<sup>2</sup> The fourth Ceti outside of Myanmar.

with regard to his noble conduct and magnificent undertakings such as his organization of the practice of the Dhamma for his disciples, both natives of Myanmar and foreigners. Now, when I see such successful organizations promoting the practice of the Dhamma in the West, including this country, my surprise and happiness are greater than words can express.

These bring to my mind very clearly the great events concerning many lay disciples in the Buddha's time. You have perhaps heard of such devout lay disciples as the merchant Citta, Prince Hatthaka Ālavaka, and other householders such as Visākhā, Dhammadinnā, Ugga, Cūla-Anāthapiṇḍika, and Mahā-Anāthapiṇḍika, to mention only a few. The commentary on the Saṃyutta-nikāya (*The Kindred Sayings*) says that each of these laymen had five hundred followers who, like them, practiced the Dhamma.<sup>1</sup> We are told that they performed deeds of merit together as a group, meritorious actions such as observing the *ariya-kanta-sīla* ("the virtue loved by Noble Ones"), namely, the pure, unbroken virtue respectfully maintained by Noble Persons; going together to the Buddha and the members of the Saṅgha to listen to the Dhamma; rendering service to elderly monks; attending on sick bhikkhus; looking after huts and cells to serve as shelters; mending buildings in poor repair, etc. Sometimes they took turns fulfilling the needs of the five categories of the Buddha's disciples who go forth from the household life: monks (bhikkhus), nuns (bhikkhunīs), male novices (sāmaṇeras), female novices (samaṇerīs) and female probationers (sikkhamānās). At times they meditated together.

I would like to give here the story of a layman called the householder Citta.<sup>2</sup> He had attained the stage of a Non-

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<sup>1</sup> Sāratthappakāsini III 223.

<sup>2</sup> Citta-gahapati.

Returner or Anāgāmi. On one occasion he declared his attainment of the Jhānic states to the Jain teacher, Nigaṇṭha-Nātaputta.<sup>1</sup> It was his encouragement that enabled a man who had been his friend when he was young, the naked ascetic named Acela-Kassapa, to obtain the higher ordination in the Saṅgha established by the Buddha and later become an Arahat.<sup>2</sup> There was another famous lay disciple named Dhammika Upāsaka. He was also a Non-Returner, well-versed in the Tipiṭaka, and he used to go to the Buddha together with his five hundred followers. He turned his warehouses and storerooms into meditation cells.

Sayagyi U Ba Khin's attainments were so great we might wonder if he did not attain the first stage of a Stream-Winner, or even the third stage of a Non-Returner, the stage many people believe his teacher Sayathet Gyi attained.<sup>3</sup> He was a rare personality, the type of person it is very difficult to encounter in the present age. Even though he was very busy in the high government post of Accountant General, he was able to carry on his everyday practice whole-heartedly and energetically. I know he had very deep devotion to the Dhamma. One day he went to Upper Myanmar Pyi where he received the higher ordination at the Ingyinbin Meditation Centre near Shwebo under Ven. Webu Sayadaw as his preceptor. It seems he was not satisfied keeping the ordinary *sīla* of the five precepts or eight precepts and occasionally the ten precepts;<sup>4</sup> so he took the higher ordination and greatly strengthened his concentration by means of the Higher Training in Morality (*adhisīlasikkha*). As the Buddha explained in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, higher morality provides a great support for concentra-

<sup>1</sup> Saṃyutta-nikāya IV 298f. (*Kindred Sayings* IV 206-208).

<sup>2</sup> Saṃyutta-nikāya IV 300f. (*Kindred Sayings* IV 208-210).

<sup>3</sup> Sayagyi U Ba Khin and Sayathet Gyi made no claims concerning their attainments.

<sup>4</sup> Before retirement as Accountant General of Myanmar when he reached the age of 55, Sayagyi observed the ten precepts each month from the new-moon day to the full-moon day.

tion and strengthens it, just as higher concentration in turn greatly enhances the efficacy of penetrative wisdom.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, as you know, Sayagi recited passages of the Paṭṭhāna very often.<sup>2</sup> Even though he had not seriously studied the profound teaching concerning the abstract nature of causality, I believe, he had very deep confidence in the Buddha's Awakening and in the great benefits that result from the recitation of those passages that were taught by the Buddha. For this reason he used to encourage his disciples to do the same in order to enjoy the uncaused (*asaṅkhata*) element in the innermost mind.

Let us return to the story of the householder Citta. Not only did he develop Insight (*vipassanā*), he was also well versed in the texts (Tipiṭaka). He discussed knotty problems of the Dhamma with elders such as Ven. Isidatta,<sup>3</sup> Ven. Godatta,<sup>4</sup> etc. At times, he even took the lead in these discussions, answering some of the elders' questions about the highest attainments (*vimutti*). In the same way, I have heard Sayagi's disciples say that Sayagi settled many confusing, complicated problems that came up in the meditators' practice. Judging by these qualities, it can rightly be said that Sayagi was in the fourth type of lay disciples described by the Buddha to the layman Mahānāma: those who are beneficial both to themselves and to others.<sup>5</sup> "When ... he has achieved

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<sup>1</sup> Dīgha-nikāya II 81 (*Thus Have I Heard*, p. 234).

<sup>2</sup> He recited the Paññavāra section at noon on Sundays at his centre in Yangon. On all special religious days in the Buddhist calendar he also recited the Suttas appropriate to the occasion, such as the Dhamma-cakka-ppavattana Sutta, the Anatta-lakkaṇa Sutta, Paṭṭhāna, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Saṃyutta-nikāya IV 283ff. (*Kindred Sayings* IV 192-196).

<sup>4</sup> Saṃyutta-nikāya IV 296f. (*Kindred Sayings* IV 203-206).

<sup>5</sup> Aṅguttara-nikāya IV 220 (*Gradual Sayings* IV 149f.). The other three types are: 1) an [ordinary] lay disciple who has taken the triple refuge, 2) a lay disciple who is virtuous through keeping the five precepts, 3) a lay disciple who works for his own welfare but not for the welfare of others.

faith himself,” the Buddha explained, “and strives to compass faith in another; has achieved virtue himself ... renunciation ... longs to see the monks ... to hear the true Dhamma ... is mindful ... reflects ... when he knows both the letter and the spirit of [the] Dhamma and walks in conformity therewith and strives to make another so to walk then, Mahānāma, a lay disciple helps on his own welfare and the welfare of another.”

This means that a lay disciple who tries to grasp the meaning of the Buddha’s Teaching himself, who tries to follow the Teaching exactly, and who encourages others to do the same—such a disciple acts both for his own benefit as well as for the benefit of others.

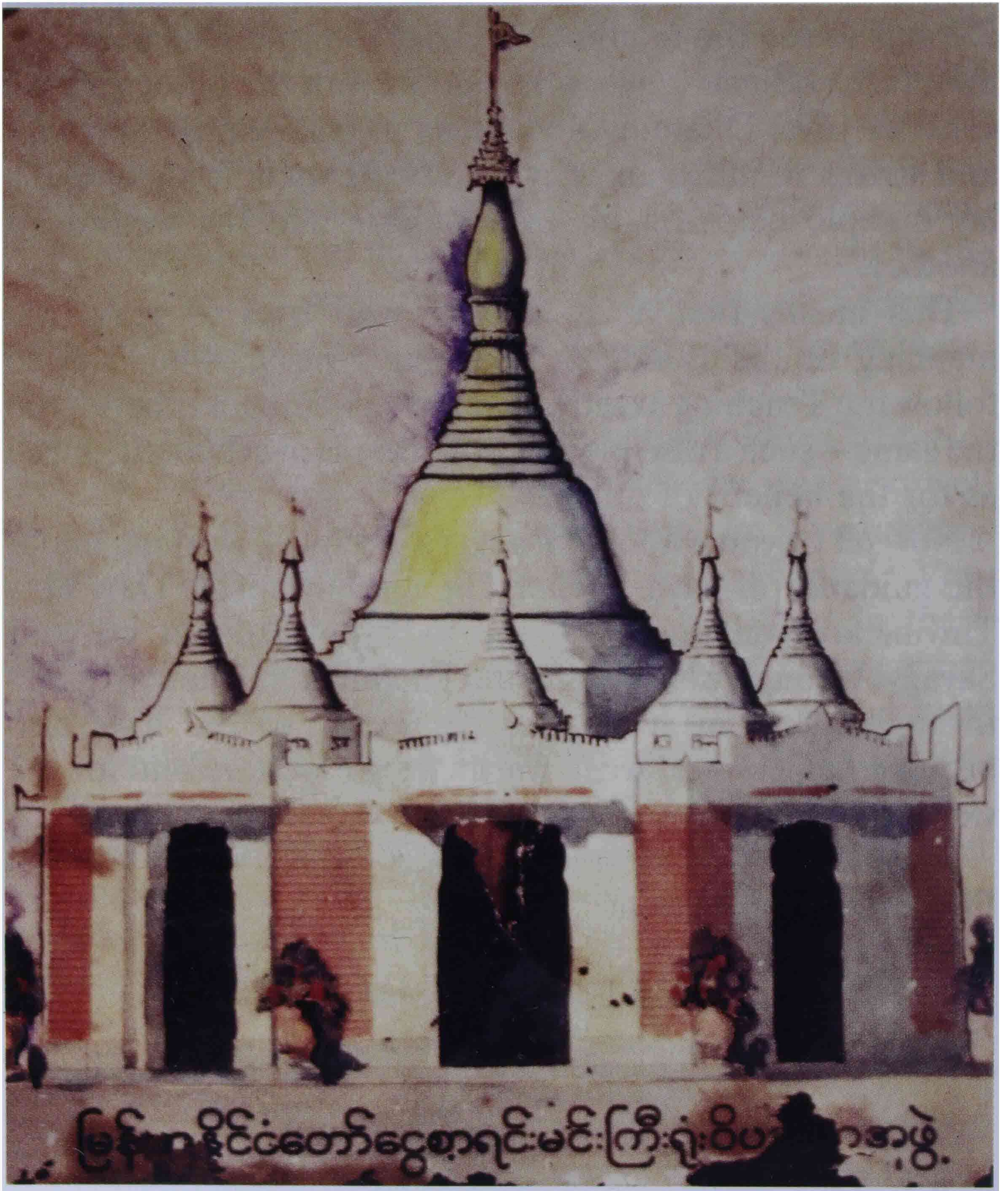
Now all of you who are Sayagyi’s disciples, working under the guidance of Saya U Chit Tin and Sayamagyi Daw Mya Thwin, are walking along the path pointed out by your Sayagyi through establishing the Dhamma in yourselves and through spreading it all over the world, so you have also become helpers who work for their own welfare and for the welfare of others.

I would like to conclude this short speech with a verse in Pāli and its translation:

*Buddhasāsanam ciraṃ thātu;  
Ciraṃ sabbe Dhamma rata;  
Sabbe papontu nibbānam,  
Sabba-dukkha-khayaṃ varam.*

May the Dispensation of the Buddha long endure!  
May all beings delight in the Dhamma for a long  
time to come!  
May all beings attain Nibbāna,  
The most excellent cessation of all suffering!

Sādhu, Sādhu, Sādhu!



Architect's Drawing for the Dhamma Yaungchi Ceti, IMC-Yangon

## THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA<sup>1</sup>

*Kaṇhaṃ dhammaṃ vipphāya sukkaṃ bhāvetha paṇḍito*  
*Okā anokam āgamma viveke yattha dūramaṃ.*

*Tatrābhiratim iccheyya hitvā kāme akiñcano*  
*Pariyodapeyya attānaṃ cittak'lesehi paṇḍito.*

*Yesam sambodhiyaṅgesu sammā cittaṃ subhāvitam*  
*Ādānapaṭinissagge anupādāya ye ratā*  
*Khīṇāsavā jutimanto te loke parinibbutā.*

A wise man should abandon the dark practice and cultivate  
the bright one  
After leaving (the sensual pleasures of) home for the  
homeless (life),  
(And by living) in seclusion, which is hard to enjoy.

A wise man should wish for delight there  
After leaving behind sensual pleasures, possessing nothing;  
He should purify himself from defilements of the mind.

Those who have thoroughly developed their minds in the  
factors of Awakening  
Delight in giving up attachment and in not grasping.  
Free from taints, shining ones, they are perfectly quenched  
in this world.

Dhammapada, vv. 87-89; Saṃyutta-nikāya V 24;  
Aṅguttara-nikāya V 232f.

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<sup>1</sup> This text was prepared for the opening of the Dhamma Yaungchi Pagoda at IMC-USA. It has been adapted for this booklet.

Light plays an important role in the Buddha's Teachings. In his first discourse to the group of five bhikkhus (Pañca-vaggiyā) who had followed him when he began his quest for the end of suffering, the Buddha describes how he attained Awakening through thoroughly understanding the Four Noble Truths. He explains that as he mastered each of the Noble Truths, light arose along with vision, knowledge, wisdom, and higher knowledge.<sup>1</sup> After he became a Buddha, he spent several weeks in the vicinity of the Bodhi tree where he attained Self-Awakening.<sup>2</sup> During the fourth week, he sat in the jewel house provided by the Devas and contemplated the highest doctrine, the Abhidhamma. He contemplated the teachings found in the first six books of the Abhidhamma, but as soon as he came to the doctrine contained in the book of *Conditional Relations* (Paṭṭhāna) his body began to emit six-colored rays of light. These rays were so bright they spread throughout the entire world-system and went on to illumine an infinite number of world-systems. Such is the power of the knowledge and understanding developed by a Buddha. This light of the Buddha-Dhamma can dispel the darkness of the world. This light of the Buddha-Dhamma is greater than the sunlight we see by day, the moonlight we see at night, or firelight that can burn both day and night.<sup>3</sup>

That is why Sayagyi U Ba Khin choose the name Dhamma Yaungchi Pagoda—the Pagoda of the Light of the Dhamma—for the Pagoda at the International Meditation Centre in Yangon, Myanmar (Rangoon, Burma). When Pagodas following the same design were built at Centres in the tradition of Sayagyi U Ba Khin in Western Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Eastern Australia, the same name was used. Now, with the dedication of the fifth Pagoda of the Light of the Dhamma at the International Meditation Center, Austria, these beacons of light are spread around the globe.

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Vinaya-piṭaka, I 9f.; Saṃyutta-nikāya, V 420ff.

See *The Expositor*, pp. 16-18.

<sup>3</sup> *The Gradual Sayings* II 142f.; *The Kindred Sayings* I 22f., 67.

These Pagodas are used for teaching and practising the Buddha-Dhamma. And, as many people who have tried Buddhist meditation know, it is possible to experience the fact that the more a person purifies himself or herself the more light there will be. This is especially striking in developing a concentrated mind. As Sayagyi U Ba Khin pointed out, a person who makes “a determined effort to narrow down the range of thoughts of his wavering and unsteady mind” can reach a stage where “the mind becomes freed from hindrances—pure and tranquil, illumined within and without. Outside, it is represented by light, which is just a mental reflex, with the light varying in degrees from that of a star to that of the sun. To be plain, this light which is reflected before the mind’s eye in complete darkness is a manifestation of the purity, tranquillity and serenity of the mind.”<sup>1</sup> Seeing this mental light, however, is not what we mean in Buddhism when we say a person is Enlightened (or Awakened). True Enlightenment or Awakening only comes through using a concentrated mind to gain insight into the true nature of conditioned existence. When we truly “see the light,” so to speak, it will be much more than just a mental reflection before the mind’s eye.

The universe as described by the Buddha includes thirty-one planes of existence. There are four lower worlds below the human plane where there is great suffering. These planes are dark. Above the human world there are six planes in which celestial beings, Devas, enjoy great sensual pleasures, and there are twenty Brahmā planes in which all sensual desires are left behind. The Deva planes and the Brahmā planes are very bright. In between these lower planes and higher planes is our human plane of existence. The human plane is a mixture of dark and light. It is the best plane for appreciating the true nature of conditioned existence for while suffering on the human plane can be great, it will not necessarily make it impossible to cultivate good thoughts, and while there

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<sup>1</sup> *What Buddhism Is* (1989), pp. 16f.

maybe intense pleasures, they are not so constant that a human being forgets the existence of suffering.

Conditions in the human plane vary over time. When a Buddha is living in the human plane, that is the period when attaining the true happiness of Nibbāna is open to the maximum number of beings. After a Buddha attains final Nibbāna, his Teachings may live on for a period. This was the case for the last Buddha, Gotama, and we are extremely fortunate to be living during a period when the Teachings of a Buddha are available. These Teachings are like a great light dispelling the darkness of our world, and the light of the Buddha-Dhamma is infinitely more important than the light of the celestial worlds of the Devas and Brahmās, for the light of the Buddha-Dhamma leads to the complete destruction of all suffering, to Nibbāna.

We should not look on the light of the Dhamma as opposed to the light of the celestial worlds, however. As the Buddha pointed out, the darkness of the lower worlds and the brightness of the higher worlds comes from the immoral and moral actions that lead to those worlds. If we commit dark deeds they will lead to dark results.<sup>1</sup> The Buddha defined “dark deeds” as being harmful deeds committed by physical, verbal, or mental actions. Dark actions can be summed up as actions done because of shamelessness and recklessness (*ahirika-anottappa*).<sup>2</sup> If, on the other hand, we do bright deeds, we will obtain bright results. “Bright deeds,” the Buddha said, are physical, verbal, or mental actions that are harmless. Bright deeds are summed up by the two types of motivation that protect the world: conscientiousness and fear of blame (*hiri-ottapa*).<sup>3</sup> But it is also possible to commit deeds that are dark and bright and which will lead to mixed results. Those of us

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<sup>1</sup> *The Middle Length Sayings* II 57f.

<sup>2</sup> *The Gradual Sayings* I 46.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

on the human plane are experiencing the results of a mixture of dark and bright deeds, good and bad deeds, done in past lives.<sup>1</sup>

The Buddha spoke of four types of people with regard to the dark and the bright.<sup>2</sup> Some people are born into a dark situation, that is to say, they are poor or physically handicapped. If they do only evil physical, verbal, or mental deeds, then they are headed for another dark existence. If, on the other hand, they do good physical, verbal, or mental actions, they will go to a bright existence. Some people are born into a bright situation, that is to say, they are rich and physically handsome. But if they do evil, they will go to a dark existence; if they do good, they will go to another bright existence.

The highest goal, however, is achieved by actions that are neither dark nor bright, actions that lead to the ending of all renewed existence.<sup>3</sup> The difference between ordinary good actions and actions that are neither dark nor bright is the mental volition accompanying the acts. If our aspiration is a future human life, or a future life in a celestial world, then our action will be an ordinary good action. If our goal is to attain Nibbāna, however, the action is done in the hope of going beyond the good and evil of conditioned existence and such an action will be neither dark nor bright.

Venerable Nāgasena gives a vivid description to King Milinda of how brightly the disciples of the Buddha shine once they have reached Nibbāna.<sup>4</sup> The disciples, he says, “shine forth in splendor, illuminating the whole world of Devas and men, brightening it in its heights, in its depths, from horizon to horizon, with a brilliant glory,” for they wear the jewels of right conduct, concentration, knowledge, emancipation, insight (which comes from the assurance of

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<sup>1</sup> Earth Devas and beings in some of the lower realms also experience mixed results.

<sup>2</sup> *Kindred Sayings* I 118-121; *Designation of Human Types*, pp. 70-72.

<sup>3</sup> *The Middle Length Sayings* II 57f.

<sup>4</sup> *The Questions of King Milinda* II 220-229.

emancipation), and the sevenfold wisdom of the Arahats. The Buddha told his disciples that they would benefit greatly by associating those who make the Teachings shine, those who bring the light.<sup>1</sup> By this, he meant those who are endowed with virtue (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*), wisdom (*paññā*), deliverance (*vimutti*), vision and knowledge of deliverance (*vimutti-ñāṇa-dassana*); those who admonish (*ovādakā*), who are able to instruct (*viññāpakā*), who do instruct (*sandassakā*), who arouse others [to make the effort] (*samādapakā*), who fill others with enthusiasm (*samuttejakkā*), who gladden others (*sampahaṅsakā*), who are competent teachers (*alaṃsamakkātāro*), and who are able to see and experience the true Doctrine (*saddhamma-rasa-dassanampahaṃ*).

As we look around the world today we can see more and more darkness. The world needs all the light it can get. It is our fervent hope that this Pagoda of the Light of the Dhamma in Austria together with the other four Pagodas in the West in the tradition of Sayagyi U Ba Khin will be able to introduce some of the light the world so desperately needs.

Truth Will Triumph!

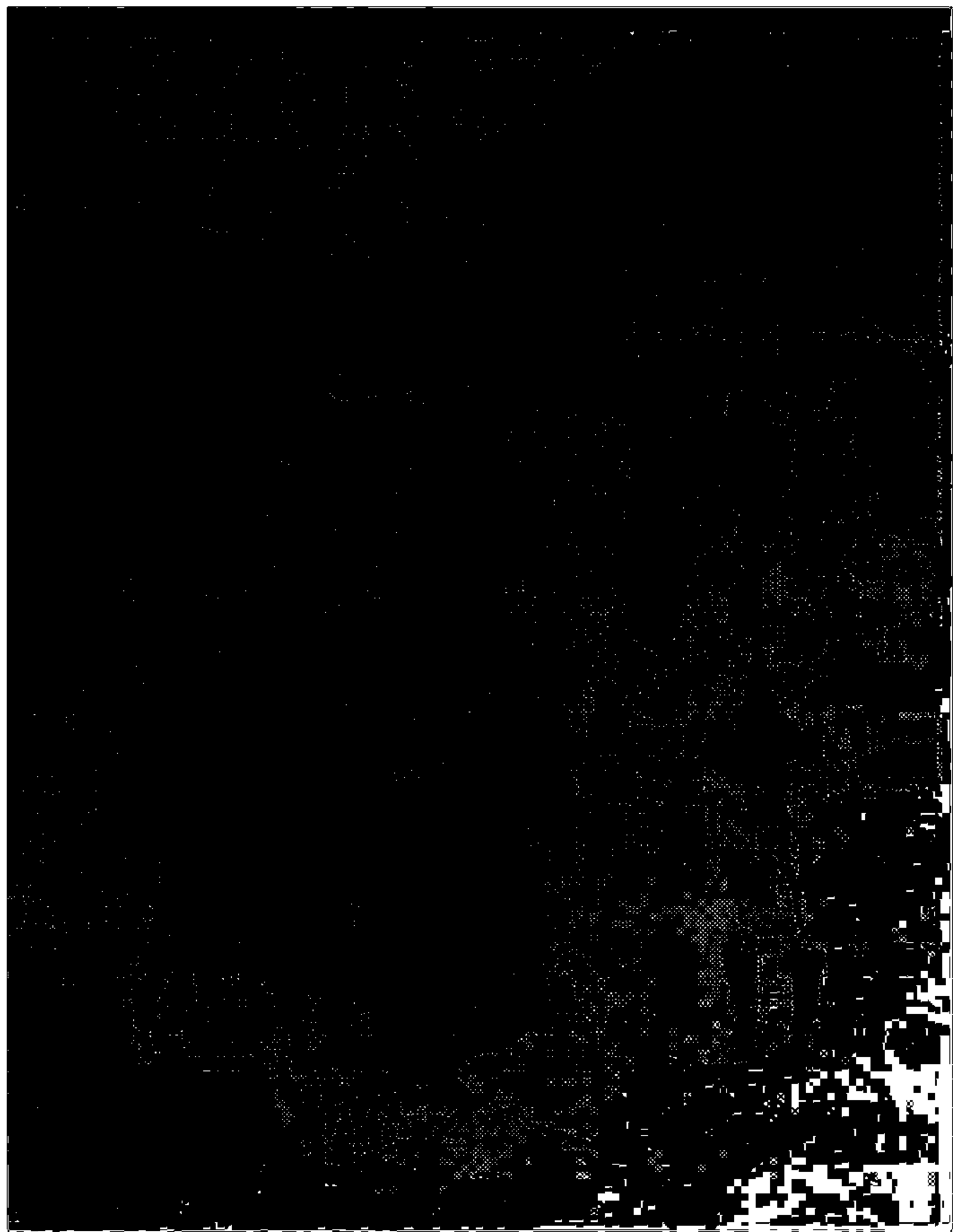
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<sup>1</sup> Itivuttaka 107ff. (*Minor Anthologies II* 191f.).

## THE *ADHITṬHANA* OF SAYAGYI U BA KHIN

Several events in Sayagyi U Ba Khin's life are of importance for the Light of the Dhamma Pagodas at the International Meditation Centres around the world. We hope that they will serve as an inspiration to all our students as they support these centres and benefit from them.

Sayagyi U Ba Khin arrived at Venerable Webu Sayadaw's



Webu Sayadaw followed by Sayagyi U Ba Khin as a Dullabha-bhikkhu

Ingyinbin Meditation Centre on June 17, 1965. He was to ordain as a Dullabha monk for a week. He was accompanied by two disciples, one of whom, U Hla Tun, was to be his attendant while he was a monk. At around five o'clock that evening, U Hla Tun began to shave Sayagyi's head in preparation for his ordination. Much to their surprise, Ven. Webu Sayadaw suddenly appeared, squatted down in front of Sayagyi, and picked up some of the hair that had been

shaved from his head and was on a towel spread in front of him. Without uttering a word, the Sayadaw left, taking the hair with him. Taking note of this, Sayagyi instructed U Hla Tun to save some of the hair shaved from his head in an empty plastic medicine bottle. Ven. Webu Sayadaw had a monk's alms bowl wrapped in a robe that was carried at the head of a procession around the parameter of the large compound every evening after sunset. This procession was made to protect and sanctify the meditation centre.

When Sayagyi returned to IMC-Yangon after his ordination, he brought back the hair that had been saved in the

plastic bottle and placed it in the shrine room of the Light of the Dhamma Pagoda at IMC-Yangon. We brought out half of the hair when we came out of Myanmar in 1978, and we have followed Sayagi's example by having some of the hair placed in small caskets and enshrined in the other Light of the Dhamma Pagodas for the gain and good of many. There is also the example of the Bodhisatta Siddhattha. When he went forth on the Great Renunciation, he cut off his long hair with his sword. Sakka, the Deva king, took this hair to the Tāvātimsa world and enshrined it in the Cūlāmaṇi Pagoda.

When Sayagi was ordained as a bhikkhu on June 18, 1965, he received the name Ven. U Kusala and the bhikkhu accompanying him received the name U Tejinda. They were allotted a newly built monastery which just needed some cleaning up to be complete. Ven. Webu Sayadaw immediately summoned the villagers who used to come to the monastery to give labour *dāna* and had them clean inside and all around the new building, and he also had them prepare good approach roads to the dwelling. He had all this done the very evening of the ordination. He was keen for Ven. U Kusala to use the new building and would not wait with the preparations for the next day. U Hla Tun, Sayagi's attendant, was thinking out loud, saying, "The Sayadaw might as well wait for tomorrow to build the road. We could use the little lane that was used by the construction workers."

Sayagi overheard him saying this and responded, "Hla Tun, do Devas approach on side lanes? How would a king approach our monastery?"

U Hla Tun replied, "A king will always come by the king's highway, reverend sir."

"Then how will Devas and Brahmās come? Will they not use the king's highway?"

"They will, reverend sir."

So Sayagi told U Hla Tun, that whatever needed to be done had to be done properly and immediately and that Ven. Webu Sayadaw knew this.

There was another incident during Sayagyi's stay at Ingyinbin that he related to us when he returned to Yangon. Very late that same evening after the ordination Webu Sayadaw wanted to clear the spot where he had been born. This was only about half a mile east of the meditation centre. He intended to build a pagoda to mark this auspicious place. The villagers contributed all the necessary labour the next day. Sayagyi, however, spent the early part of the night at the new monastery, occupying the front room. He got up at midnight, draped the robes correctly over his shoulder and went alone to the Sayadaw's birthplace, without the knowledge of U Tejinda and U Hla Tun, who had his sleeping place in a hut close to the monastery at the rear. He went to the spot the Sayadaw had indicated by cleaning the ground there. Sayagyi meditated there, recited the Paṭṭhāna and the Mettā, Maṅgala and Ratana Suttas and did the needful for the sanctification of the site. Sayagyi understood the meaning of the Sayadaw's sudden desire to build a pagoda. He donated, through his attendant U Hla Tun, three hundred Kyats towards the pagoda and two hundred Kyats for the renovation of the encircling walls of the Bodhi trees.

The whole sky was overcast with white clouds from the morning of June 17th, when Sayagyi's party left Maymyo for Ingyinbin, until Sayagyi disrobed again seven days later. The photographer they called from the nearest town, Khin-U, to take pictures of Sayagyi as a monk, had to wait for a long time until the thick clouds parted so there was enough light for him to take a good photo. This overcast sky, which provided cool, agreeable conditions, is another unusual occurrence of Sayagyi's ordination.

The great honour paid to our Teacher Sayagyi U Ba Khin by Ven. Webu Sayadaw, who was reputed in Myanmar to be an Arahat, makes us feel we are justified in looking on Sayagyi as a great person (*puggala-visesa*) possessing qualities that go beyond those of an ordinary teacher. Teachers,

known as good friends (*kalyana-mittas*), are to be considered as in the same category as the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Saṅgha, and parents, so we feel that we are honouring and venerating our Teacher in a most appropriate manner by enshrining his hair. The benefits are quite visible and impressive, for meditation courses held at our centres are very successful and the Light of the Dhamma Pagodas draw the attention of many people. As a result, many people are able to make progress.



Ven. Webu Sayadaw

Ven. Webu Sayadaw had visited IMC-Yangon in 1953, his first visit to lower Myanmar and his first visit to a place other than his own monastery. He meditated there and taught the Dhamma to those who came to listen to his discourses at the centre. There were certain times—especially after the early dawn meal—when those of us who were with Sayagi had a good opportunity to attend on the Sayadaw and listen to the special talks he gave when alone with Sayagi’s disciples in the quiet atmosphere of the centre.

On one of those occasions, he told us, “During the time of the Buddha, many humans, Devas, and Brahmās came to the Buddha, and many of them obtained what they aspired to, namely, the Nibbanic peace within. Would it be possible to count how many of them there were?”

“No, venerable sir,” was our reply.

“How about today?” the Sayadaw asked us, but when no one answered, he went on, “It is the same as at the time of the Buddha. Many are gaining what they aspired to. Would

it be possible to count those who are able to fulfil their aspirations?”

“No, venerable sir,” we replied.

“Why is that?” he asked. “It is because this is the same type of period as then, a period of liberation (*vimutti-yuga*), the same sort of existence (*bhava*). Keep up your practice. Don’t hesitate to make your aspirations. Don’t think that your aspirations will aim too high or be too great. Then live up to your aspirations.”<sup>1</sup>

When Sayagyi U Ba Khin built his first International Meditation Centre in Yangon, he made a solemn determination (*adhiṭṭhāna*) that “The Truth of the Buddha-Dhamma Must Triumph.” He put up a sign in the Dhamma Hall so that everyone would see: “Truth Must Triumph!”

When he built the Dhamma Yaungchi Ceti at IMC-Yangon, Sayagyi had a plaque inscribed with the Buddha’s first declaration after attaining Awakening (*pubba-vacana*), the Verses of the Declaration of the Auspicious Victory (*Jayyamaṅgala Udāna Gāthā*):<sup>2</sup>

I have run through countless births in  
journeying-on, seeking but not finding the  
builder of the house. Being born again and  
again is suffering.

You are seen, housebuilder. You will not  
build a house again. All your rafters are broken.  
Your ridge-pole is torn asunder. The mind has  
arrived at the extinction of conditioned pheno-  
mena. The complete destruction of cravings has  
been experienced.

<sup>1</sup> For details on the aspirations made by Buddhists, see *Dhamma Texts* by Sayagyi U Ba Khin, pp. 60f.

<sup>2</sup> The Pāli for these verses is given with the translation of Sayagyi U Ba Khin’s plaque, p. 2.

Below these verses, Sayagyi added his *adhiṭṭhāna*, which he signed as president of the Vipassanā Research Society (Vipassanā Dhātu-Paññā Aphwai) on May 8, 1952 (the full-moon day of Kason, 1314 B.E.):

In order to solemnly honour, venerate, and appropriately repay the debt of gratitude owed to the exalted Triple Gem: the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Saṃgha, this pagoda

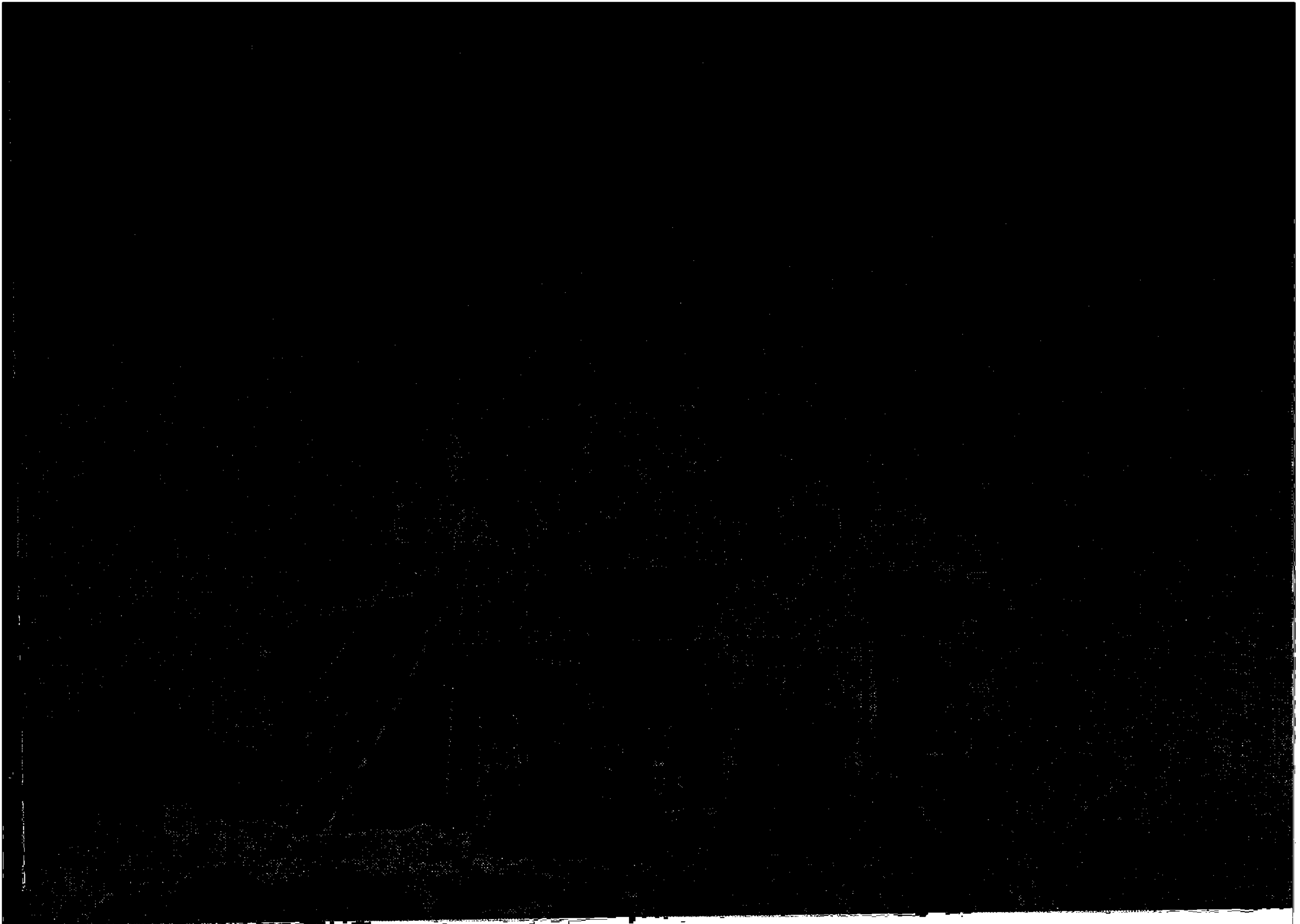
#### The Dhamma Yaungchi Ceti

was built to make it possible to practise the giving of the Knowledge of the Paths (Magga-Paññā) and the knowledge of the Fruition States (Phala-Paññā)—the gift of the Buddha-Dhamma. May all the guardians of the Buddha-Sāsana—the Four Great Deva Kings with King Sakka as their chief—provide the necessary strength, the necessary protection, and the necessary assistance.

In connection with this determination, we might mention that after teaching his students during the day, Sayagyi would have a session in the evening when the normal schedule for meditating was over, after 9 P.M. During this period of special teaching, only three people were in the pagoda: Sayagyi, Sayamagyi, and me. Sayagyi's close disciples knew of this but kept it to themselves.

A number of other plagues were also put in the central cell of the pagoda, and they were inscribed with the texts of important discourses (*suttas*) and sections of the Abhidhamma (Uddesa and Niddesa). [See pp. 86f.]

Sayagyi U Ba Khin knew from the start that building the International Meditation Centre and the Dhamma Yaungchi Ceti in Yangon would not be easy. Even he encountered many obstacles when he built the first Light of the Dhamma Pagoda. But with his great determination, he was able to



Building the Dhamma Yaungchi Ceti at IMC-Yangon

overcome all obstacles. We would like to say here that Sayagyi's great determinations are still working, and though we have encountered many obstacles in almost all the countries where we have built pagodas, we finally won through each time and Sayagyi's worldwide Dhamma Mission continues as smoothly as when he was with us here in the human world. We continue to teach true Buddhist Meditation, as taught by the Buddha and passed on to us by Sayagyi U Ba Khin.

With the dedication of the pagoda at the centre in Austria, we will have five pagodas in the West built under our supervision and guidance where we can teach the Dhamma. Special effort is made on certain days: Sundays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and important full-moon days such as the one commemorating the Buddha's First Discourse (*Dhammacakka-ppavattana*) and Abhidhamma Days. On these days we meditate three separate hours during the day, making these

hours of strong determination (*adhiṭṭhāna*). The final session (7:30-8:30 P.M.) is the hour Sayagi told us to solicit *mettā* blessings and *Nibbāna-dhātu* blessings. According to our ability to appreciate the Dhamma, we are able to actually feel the presence of the *Nibbāna-dhātu* and *Mettā-dhātu* of the Triple Gem and our teacher. We all know that if this session is held in a Dhamma Yaungchi Ceti, it is totally different from when we meditate in an ordinary place elsewhere. The students therefore understand the importance of these pagodas and of the International Meditation Centres around the world, each built in the exact style of Sayagi's pagoda and centre in Yangon.

Sayagi installed five Buddha statues: a large statue in one of the cells (either the south or the east cell) and four small statues on the upper lintel right under the big dome in the four cardinal points of the compass. This makes the pagoda a Uddissaka (or *Uddesika*) Pagoda. The five Buddha statues symbolize the present auspicious world cycle (*kappa*) in which there arise five Sammā-sambodhi Buddhas: Kakkusanda, Koṇāgamana, Kassapa, Gotama and the coming Buddha Ariya Metteyya.

Sayagi also enshrined the most important *suttas* inscribed on brass plaques. These include the two first discourses of the Buddha as well as others with the Paṭṭhāna (Uddesa and Niddesa). These make the pagoda a Dhamma Pagoda as well as a meditation shrine providing meditation cells.

We make known to everyone who comes to our centres that we are Buddhists. We only teach the Dhamma that was taught by the Buddha. Sayagi used to say that even if that meant some students would not come, "we are happy. We give without expecting anything. If they do come, however, we are also happy because we can teach them what the Buddha taught." Our attitude is the same as our Teacher's. We will not alter this teaching in any way, for if we did, the wise would not approve and our teacher would not approve.

Sayagyi published a booklet on meditation in the Myanmar language entitled *The Basic Study of the Teachings and Their Correct Application (Pariyatti achaigan & Paṭipatti aphywayhman)*. He mentioned in this booklet that this Dhamma Yaungchi (Light of the Dhamma) text was the first in a series, and he welcomed comments from all those in Myanmar so that comments and clarification could be included in the future for the benefit, good, and gain of many. Ven. Webu Sayadaw sent a reply in which he praised Sayagyi for bringing out a booklet that would be understood by true Buddhists and serious Dhamma associations whose objective was to encounter the pure Buddha-Dhamma. But he also mentioned that some people might not understand correctly and might react negatively. Sayagyi was mindful that it was best not to get involved in discussions and better to keep up the actual practice of the Buddha's Teachings. He took Ven. Webu Sayadaw's advice and did not publish any more booklets.

In this connection, we are reminded of Ven. Vappa's utterance after he gained Arahantship on the fifth day when the Buddha was teaching the five ascetics at Isipatana near Baranasi. Ven. Vappa was the second ascetic after Ven. Koṇḍañña to attain Nibbāna:

*Passati passo passantam,  
apassantan ca passati.  
Apassanto apassantam  
passantan ca na passanti.*

He who sees, sees who can see and who cannot see.  
He who cannot see, sees neither the one that does  
not see nor the one that sees.

Theragāthā v. 6

Truth Must Triumph!

# **BUILDING THE PAGODAS OF THE LIGHT OF THE DHAMMA**

## **A comparison of the Methods and Materials used in the Building of the Pagodas at IMC-UK, IMC-WA, IMC-USA, IMC-EA, IMC-Austria**

Five Pagodas of the Light of the Dhamma have been built at International Meditation Centres in the tradition of Sayagyi U Ba Khin outside Myanmar (Burma) with the blessings, guidance, and supervision of Mother Sayamagyi and Sayagyi U Chit Tin. They are all based on the same model: Sayagyi's own Light of the Dhamma Pagoda at IMC-Yangon. At the same time each pagoda is different from the others in a number of ways, depending on such factors as local weather conditions, the site itself, the composition of the soil, the nature of available building materials, the construction timetable, and the nature of local building regulations. These notes will record the various adaptations made to the pagodas in each location, with particular emphasis on how the construction of the latest pagoda, in Austria, compares with that of the four previous ones.

On all the pagoda projects, the weather seemed to support the work that we were doing. During the Perth project from January to the opening, there were only two days on which it rained: the day the gilded banana bud and lotus were lifted onto the main bell and the day the *htis* were raised. Actually, they were not heavy rains but only light drizzle. A band of clouds circular in shape passed by above the pagoda during the crowning. As the Teachers were present, they recollected that the same thing happened in November 1952, when Sayagyi himself raised the *htis* at his pagoda in Yangon. Sayagyi was very pleased to witness the unusual phenomenon and so we were very happy when we saw the same thing happen in the West during the crowning ceremony. In England, the project took seven months to complete, and it was

one of the warmest, driest summers on record. In America, the majority of the pagoda work was carried out during the winter months, which were very mild for the area, and work could proceed without much delay. In Eastern Australia, the climate is mild and the pagoda was completed in just five months. The heavy rains always came at the appropriate time and did not slow down the project. Here in Austria, the autumn was mild and long, so we could complete the foundations before the winter set in. The short winter enabled us to start working outside again in February, and spring has been mild and dry, which is ideal for building. These favourable weather conditions allowed the building process to proceed unhindered, the result no doubt of the blessing and protection solicited and given by our Teachers as stated in Sayagi's plaque "Awakening the Bodhi-Dhātu."

These notes proceed from the ground up, considering each construction element in the order in which it is normally undertaken—from site preparation to completion of the structure.

## I. DESIGN

### *IMC-WA*

Trustees: the five Trustees of the International Meditation Centre, Western Australia, organized the drawings and planning permission that enabled the pagoda to proceed. It was these Trustees in Western Australia who built the first pagoda in the West.

Members of IMC Builders at the time: Dave and Debbie Young, Patrick McMurray, Tim Booth, Steve Bayer, Gail Eadie, Jonathon and Sharon Snowball, Wayne Homer, Rod Cheney, Ron Battersby and Bianca Di Bua. All the local students assisted with labour *dāna* and catering as time permitted.

The pagoda in Perth was the first built outside of Myanmar. It is an exact duplicate of Sayagyi's pagoda in every aspect except for the size of the cells which were increased in size, and the four succeeding pagodas are approximately the same size.

### *IMC-UK*

**Trustees:** The eleven Trustees of the International Meditation Centre, United Kingdom, and Dave Young organized the drawings and planning permission for this pagoda. This involved a tremendous amount of work by all the Trustees as the planners were very strict in their requirements.

**Members of IMC Builders:** Dave and Debbie Young, Patrick McMurray, Ray Shrimpton, Larry Palmer, Chris Fixsen, Dave Borrie, Wale Bächler, Patrick Luce, Theo Doppenberg, Edi Klima, Ueli Grossenbacher, Jim Shannon, Sara Freeman, and Maria Drost-Nissen.

The pagoda in England was constructed to suit a damper, colder climate. The design was modified to include an outer corridor at the rear of the meditation cells, an innovation that was intended to keep the rain out of the cells and to keep the warm air from dissipating directly to the outside. This innovation caused us to make the centre room smaller so that the students' cells would be of sufficient size. The floor of the corridor is made of Botticino Classico marble tiles and is thus impervious to water damage, while the floors of the cells are made of European oak. Over the main entrance (the North entrance) a canvas awning was erected in an attempt to keep the rain off the meditators as they arrive and leave the pagoda.

*IMC-USA*

Directors: It was the volition of the Directors of the International Meditation Centre, U.S.A., to build a pagoda on their new site in Maryland. Dave Young organized the drawings and the Directors obtained permission to build a pagoda on the site.

IMC Builders: Dave and Debbie Young, Patrick McMurray, Wale Bächler, Ray Shrimpton, Patrick Luce, Ueli Grosenbacher, Jim and Kyoko Emery, Larry Palmer and the local students who assisted with labour *dāna* on the weekends.

The climate in Maryland features long, hot summers and cold winters with snow and freezing temperatures. As rain is infrequent, an outer corridor was deemed unnecessary. (Cost was also a consideration here.) In the warm months, students enter their cells directly from the outside. In the winter, students generally enter through the West entrance (opposite the Buddha cell) and reach their own rooms by means of side doors at the rear of each cell. In effect, these side doors constitute a de facto corridor at the rear of the cells and allow students to move freely inside the pagoda without exposing the warm cells directly to the outside air (except at one entrance). The floors of the students' cells are made of Botticino Classico marble to protect against rain damage, and the Teachers' room and the shrine room are made of American oak.

*IMC-EA*

Trustees: The six Trustees of the International Meditation Centre, Eastern Australia, obtained the Development Approval and the building permits based on drawings developed for the American pagoda by Dave Young.

IMC Builders: Dave and Debbie Young, Patrick McMurray, Peter Lankas, Dave and Suzy Robb, Ray Shrimpton, Patrick Luce, Wale Bächler, Camille Van Vooren, Ueli Grosenbacher, Charlie Owen, Tom Pengelly, Annie Lewis,

Judith Knapp, Richard Walsh, Mick and Jacquie Price and local students who provided facilities and catering.

Because Sunshine enjoys a mild climate year round, it was decided that the meditators could use the exterior entrances



Mother Sayamagyi and Sayagyi U Chit Tin marking the location of the Dhamma Yaungchi Ceti at IMC-Austria

and no corridor or inner connecting doors would be necessary. Another factor in this decision was the construction timetable which called for the pagoda to be built in a relatively short time. The design also incorporated the skills available among the students (IMC Builders).

### *IMC-Austria*

The Five Trustees obtained planning permission using new plans for the pagoda based on the design for IMC-USA.

IMC Builders: Dave and Debbie Young, Patrick McMurray, Ray Shrimpton, Patrick Luce, Wale Bächler, Werner Läubli, Ueli Grossenbacher, Camille Van Vooren, Charlie

Owen, Franz and Eveline Zelsacher, Franz and Irmgard Neuner, Erich and Ursula Kucher, Hubert and Susanne Knaus, Barbara Engel, Manfred Hungerländer, Renzo Fedele, and Josef Hrovat.

Mother Sayamagyi and Sayagi U Chit Tin came to Austria on May 31, 1992, for a one night stay at the centre to chose the exact location for the pagoda. It was necessary that the trip be made on such short notice because the planning application had to be submitted quickly in order to start the work in 1992.

All the permissions to build the pagoda were granted in record time without any problems. In Austria, change of use and permission for new buildings normally can take one to two years. In this instance, the entire process took only six months. Final permission was given November 16, 1992, the ground breaking was on November 19th, and the pagoda was opened on August 1st, 1993.

The drawings for the pagoda were prepared by IMC Builders in England from May to September. The design was based on the American pagoda plan because of the similar climates. The side doors at the rear of the cells are incorporated in this pagoda as well. The engineer's drawings from the U.S.A. were used directly and approved by an Austrian engineer.

The differences in Austrian building practices and materials were taken into consideration as will be described later on.

## **II. THE SITES, EXCAVATIONS & FOUNDATIONS**

### *IMC-WA*

The pagoda in Perth is on the highest point of a gently sloping piece of land. There are no hillocks or valleys on the property and the actual site of the pagoda is quite flat. The

soil is a mixture of stone and sand. The foundation consisted of simple concrete ground beams which rested in a shallow excavation of the surface of the soil.

### *IMC-UK*

The site is on flat, low ground to the west of the main house. The surface soil is damp clay which in drought conditions is prone to severe drying and shrinkage that would cause a building to crack and break up. Accordingly, the site had to be excavated to a depth of 2.1 metres, to the more solid dry clay beneath. At this depth a solid concrete raft 300mm thick was poured, and from this point the central columns and the interior and exterior walls were built up to ground level.

### *IMC-USA*

The site is at the very top of a steep hill with a panoramic view of the surrounding countryside. The soil conditions were ideal for construction. Because of the cold winters and freezing temperatures, the bottom of the foundations must be at least one metre below the surface to prevent freezing water from damaging the building. Accordingly, the top of the hill was excavated to the level of the bottom of the foundation (less one metre from the finished floor level). The footings and foundation walls were poured on flat ground and backfilled.

### *IMC-EA*

The Sunshine pagoda is situated at the southern edge of the plateau that was excavated by a method known as cut and fill: the top of the plateau was cut off and taken to the edge where it was used as fill below the southern side of the

building. The filling was done under the supervision of a geo technical engineer and tested stringently to a compaction of 95%, making it more dense than the actual plateau itself. The foundation was then poured as a complete reinforced raft, 450mm in thickness.

### *IMC-Austria*

The location of the pagoda is on a ridge above the existing centre building with panoramic views of the nearby mountains and valleys. The foundation was built in exactly the same way as the American pagoda. The hillside was cut away to the bottom of the footings. The footings and foundation walls were built on this flat land. The foundations, once completed, were then backfilled with a sand-gravel mixture. The foundations are 1.2 metres (4 feet) deep, well below the frost line for this area.

### **III. SLAB INSULATION, CENTRAL COLUMNS & EXTERIOR WALLS**

Due to the colder climate, the American, English and Austrian pagodas have under-floor insulation. The under-floor heating systems in these pagodas consist of electric heating-cables embedded in the concrete floor slabs. No slab insulation was required in the milder climate in Australia, but the Eastern Australian pagoda has a forced air heating and cooling system.

All of the pagodas have eight reinforced concrete columns arranged around the central cell. These columns extend from the footings up through the floor slabs and support the main roof slab, the dais stand, and the large central dome.



Setting up the entrances as in IMC-USA

With the exception of the American and Austrian pagodas, all the pagodas have double brick exterior walls; that is, a selected face brick on the outside with a common brick interior face and a cavity between the two. In the U.K., this cavity is insulated because of the weather. In America, the interior walls were timber framed, allowing for the use of more insulation on the exterior walls against the harsher climate. In Austria, the exterior walls were built with a wide insulating brick. An added 75mm layer of insulation was placed on the exterior of these bricks, and this insulation was covered with 25mm of sand cement stucco. In Austria, exposed brickwork is not the norm.

#### **IV. MATERIALS AND EXTERIOR FINISHES, TO ROOF LEVEL**

##### *IMC-WA*

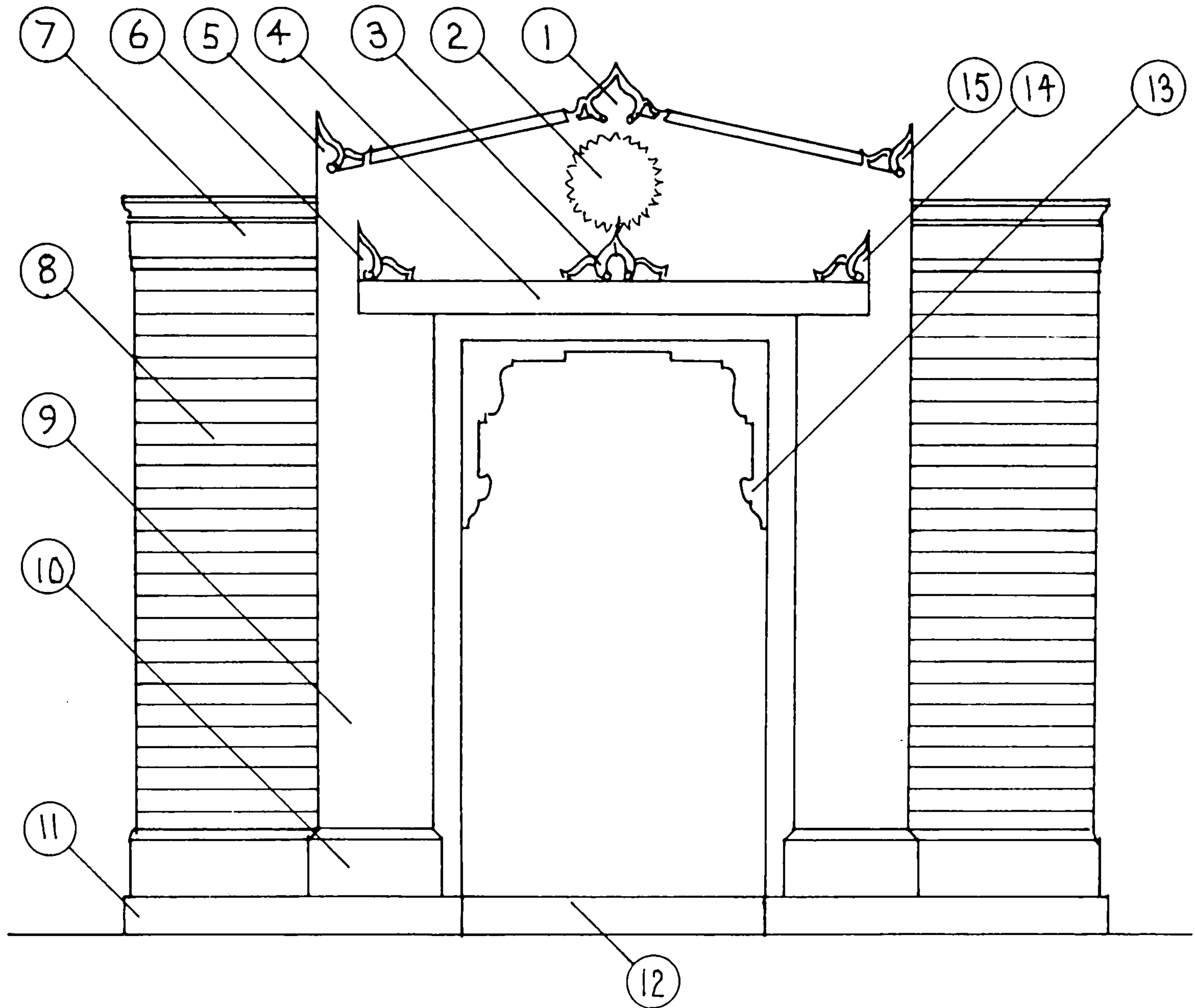
Entrances: The entrances in Perth consist of a stucco coat applied to a common brick. The stucco is made with a combination of white sand and white cement which results in a pure white finish that does not need to be painted. The canopy over the doors was poured in concrete and forms an integral part of the roof slab. The fascia pieces between the entrances were likewise done in stucco, and the skirting around the pagoda is made of Italian (Carrara) marble.

Brick: The exterior brick in Perth is a bright red manufactured brick which was also used for the knee walls. The piers of the knee walls are brick finished in white stucco. Small lights were embedded in the bricks of each of the 24 piers, thus setting a precedent for all the following pagodas.

Terraces and Doors: The inner terrace is made of poured white concrete and the outer terrace is a wide brick path. The exterior doors are made of Jarra, a native Australian wood, and feature the same louvred style as in Sayagi's pagoda in Myanmar. These doors were painted with a white automobile paint and fitted with gold-plated handles.

##### *IMC-UK*

Entrances: English planners are specific about what materials and finishes will be permitted on buildings near older buildings or near structures of architectural or historical interest. Accordingly, Bath stone (limestone) was required for the entrances, skirtings between the entrances, fascias, quoins, ornamental parts over the doors, and knee wall pier caps. A tread made of long-lasting granite was placed in the



- |                             |                           |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Centre Gable Finial      | 9. Precast Entrance       |
| 2. 24-Point Wheel over Door | 10. Marble Skirting       |
| 3. Centre Canopy Finial     | 11. Marble Step           |
| 4. Canopy over Door         | 12. Granite Entrance Step |
| 5. Left Gable Finial        | 13. Corbel                |
| 6. Left Canopy Finial       | 14. Right Canopy Finial   |
| 7. Decorative Render Fascia | 15. Right Gable Finial    |
| 8. Brick Panel              |                           |

*Fig. 1: Decorations on the Entrances*

stone at each of the entrances and similar granite steps were used in the subsequent pagodas.

**Brick:** Planners required a handmade brick in a pattern matching the brick in the existing main house, which is a Flemish bond with dark headers.

**Terraces and Doors:** The paths around the pagoda were done with square flagstones, as specified by the planners. The exterior doors are made of American Oak, a long-lasting hardwood more likely to withstand the effects of a wet climate on an exterior wood surface. These doors feature a traditional European double raised panel (louvres are inappropriate in the English climate), and are fitted with bright brass handles.

### *IMC-USA*

**Entrances:** In the U.S.A., IMC Builders experimented with a building technique known as tilt-up construction, which proved to be quite successful and also shortened the construction time. The entrances were made by pouring concrete into a fibreglass mould the exact shape of a finished entrance. When the concrete had set (after seven days), the entrance was lifted from the mould (and stored away) to make way for the next pouring. Eventually, all eight entrances were then tilted or lifted into place on the floor slab. The entrances and the eight central columns then formed the sole support for the roof slab (which could be poured before the exterior walls—which are load bearing in other pagoda—were erected). Once in place, these precast concrete entrances were then painted. For the fascia between the precast entrance panels a decorative polyester moulded piece was used. For the skirting around the exterior base the same Carrera marble used in Perth was chosen.

**Brick:** Between the entrances, a selected brick panel was built. The panel is purely decorative and has no structural significance. The knee walls were made of the same brick, and the pier caps were made of concrete and then painted.

Terraces and Doors: The terraces were poured in white concrete.

The exterior doors of insulated metal (complete with rubber door seals) were chosen to protect against the severe climatic conditions. The doors are fitted with stainless steel handles selected with the hope they will not tarnish.

### *IMC-EA*

Entrances: The tilt-up method used in the U.S.A. was used here, with appropriate refinements. Rather than storing the completed entrances, each one was lifted directly from the fibreglass mould into its final resting place on the floor slab. A much stronger concrete was used, allowing us to pour a new entrance every four days (as opposed to ten in America). In addition, the entrance mould in E.A. included the canopy over the door as an integral part (the canopies were added later in the U.S.). An innovation was made on the decorative fascia. This time Patrick McMurray made the decorative fascia with a sand cement render. We decided to paint the exterior ourselves. All the IMC Builders helped as necessary. As in the U.S., the skirting was once again of Carrara marble.

Brick: A selected face brick panel was built between the entrances, but unlike the one in the American pagoda this panel is structural, due to the decision to use a different kind of formwork for the roof slab (see ROOF SLAB below). The knee walls were made of the same face brick and the pier caps were once again made of concrete and then painted.

Terraces and Doors: The terraces are made of poured grey concrete. The exterior doors are a laminated wood core door with a waterproof composite board veneer. The frames for these doors are Tasmanian oak, a hardwood that is resistant to termites. The doors and frames are painted. The doors are fitted with stainless steel handles.

*IMC-Austria*

Entrances: The same technique used in E.A. was used here, but as the entrances were made in the heart of the winter when temperatures did not rise above zero centigrade, a temporary shed was built over the entrance form and a diesel jet heater was run for four days until the concrete was strong enough to withstand the freezing temperatures. After four of the entrances were made, they were lifted into place, and thereafter, as each entrance was finished, it was lifted into place.

The skirting around the pagoda was not done in marble as in the other pagodas but in a light-coloured granite (Bianco Sardo). Granite is necessary in this area as the winter freeze can damage the softer marble.

Brick: As mentioned earlier, exposed brick is not common in Austria. The exterior walls and knee walls were done in stucco (the final coat had paint mixed in) and no pier caps were put on the knee walls.

Terraces and Doors: The terraces were made wider than previous pagodas to give more room for the students. The exterior doors were custom-made out of laminated wood over an insulated core to the very high standards expected in Europe. They were completely finished in the factory, including paint, hardware and internal trim. They were fitted on site by the manufacturer.

**V. THE ROOF SLAB***IMC-WA*

The roof slab, as in all the pagodas, was poured monolithically—that is, at one time and with no joints. On this pagoda, all the brick walls—exterior walls and the interior radiating walls—had already been built at the time of the roof

pour, so the plywood deck (to receive the concrete) was built at roof level inside each of the rooms. Meanwhile, the octagon walls for the small domes (over each cell) and the curb around the perimeter of the roof slab (the fascia) were formed in plywood. A curb was also formed at the base of the central octagon which supports the main dome. Finally, the canopies over the entrances were likewise formed as part of the roof slab. Reinforcing steel was added to the plywood deck, and the pour proceeded by means of pumping a waterproof concrete mixture onto the roof in the desired thickness.

### *IMC-UK*

The U.K. roof slab was prepared in exactly the same way as that in Perth but required more complicated formwork in order to accommodate the outer corridor behind the students' cells. While no waterproofing additive was used in the concrete, a 20mm waterproof asphalt barrier of 20mm was added later.

### *IMC-USA*

As noted earlier, the roof slab in the American pagoda is supported entirely by the central columns and the eight entrances, which meant that as soon as the entrances were in place, a plywood platform could be built under the entire area of the roof, simplifying and speeding up the installation. The octagon walls for the small domes and the wall for the large dome were poured only as starter walls and completed when the main dais slab was poured. The actual pour was done with the use of a pump truck. Some time later, a waterproof membrane was added, spanning the construction joints between the poured roof slab and the precast entrance panels.

*IMC-EA*

The roof slab of this pagoda offers yet another variation on the theme. In this instance, in order to simplify and speed up construction, IMC Builders experimented with a thin metal deck form which was placed over the finished interior and exterior walls over the entrances. This is known as a sacrificial form, as it is absorbed into and becomes part of the finished concrete surface it supports. An added advantage of metal forms is that they require very few support props, and they have more strength and resistance than standard plywood forms, and this in turn saves time and money.

In E.A., the brick walls were begun after the fifth entrance was in place and completed the day after the last entrance was up. The metal deck form was installed the next day and, after the reinforcing steel was added, the roof was poured with 100% water-proof concrete. Work began on the dais forms the day after the roof pour.

On this pagoda special waterproof joint materials were used at the joint between the roof slab and the precast entrances. These special rubber strips, recently developed in Japan, expand up to three times their original size whenever they come in contact with water and effectively plug any small gaps that might be present. The walls for the small dome were poured at the same time as the roof, thus eliminating any need for waterproof joints in that instance. This method of construction has proven to be very successful and quite quick.

*IMC-Austria*

The roof slab of this pagoda is again different from the others. The formwork for concrete is a component system and only suitable for square or rectangular buildings. Plywood is extremely expensive here, and as sawn wood is relatively cheap in this area, it was decided to revert to the very old

fashioned method of fabricating the concrete formwork; that is, wooden planks laid over wooden joists. The concrete, reinforcing steel and water-proofing system were the same as the previous pagoda. In Austria, it is not accepted practice to add waterproofing agents to the concrete mix before pouring,



Pourring the large dais roof slab (IMC-Austria)

therefore a rubber waterproofing membrane was painted over the finished roof slab for added protection.

## **VI. LARGE DAIS ROOF SLAB**

### *IMC-WA*

The dais slab in Perth was suspended on short columns above the roof slab, and a perimeter brick wall was then built around the exterior of these columns and later rendered with sand and cement plaster. On the interior, the eight-sided

section that can be seen just above the circular opening in the ceiling of the centre room was finished with a coat of plaster applied to the brickwork and later gilded.

### *IMC-UK*

The dais walls and slab were poured with waterproof concrete. A cavity wall was formed with an outer single course of brick. This cavity was insulated. On the interior eight sides of the dais wall, a wood frame was built and electric heating panels installed, which were then covered with sheets of plaster board and later gilded.

### *IMC-USA & IMC-EA & IMC-Austria\**

A new technique was used with the American pagoda. As noted above, in the past the walls and ceiling of the dais have been made of concrete and subsequently needed to be finished (either with plaster or dry wall) before they could be gilded. As this is a very cramped working space, this finishing process was difficult and time-consuming. In this pagoda, a wooden mould of the dais was made by Wale Bächler, and from this mould a fibreglass dais was cast and set in place, which meant that the fibreglass inner walls and ceiling of the dais needed no further finishing before being gilded.

The same process was used for the pagoda in E.A. and Austria with minor modifications.



Putting in place the small domes (IMC-Austria)

## **VII. SMALL DOMES**

### *IMC-WA*

Eight small octagon slabs were poured on the ground. The formwork was erected, using a large inflatable ball to obtain the curved dome area seen from the inside of a cell. These slabs were then hoisted onto the small dais walls on the roof, and a team of plasterers then made the small domes in situ, using pure white sand and cement. Later, finished plaster domes were attached to the inside of these domes.

### *IMC-UK*

Eight small octagon slabs were made, with holes through the centre. A pre-made plaster dome was inserted through the hole and the plasterers then applied a sand and cement

exterior render coat to make the final shape of the small dome. These domes were then hoisted onto the small dais walls on the roof and a final render coat, using a special mortar mix of white cement and crushed Bath stone, was applied, giving a finished colour exactly like that of the Bath stone entrances.

### *IMC-USA\**

In the U.S.A., IMC Builders decided to make the small domes themselves in the workshop. Patrick McMurray did all this work successfully. To begin with, a plaster model in the shape of the inside of the dome was made. This model was then taken to a nearby town where eight copies of it were cast in fibreglass, and these copies then served as the base upon which the exterior of the dome was built, in the following steps:

1. Each fibreglass dome was fitted through the hole in the precast cement base which serves as the roof slab for the small dome's dais.

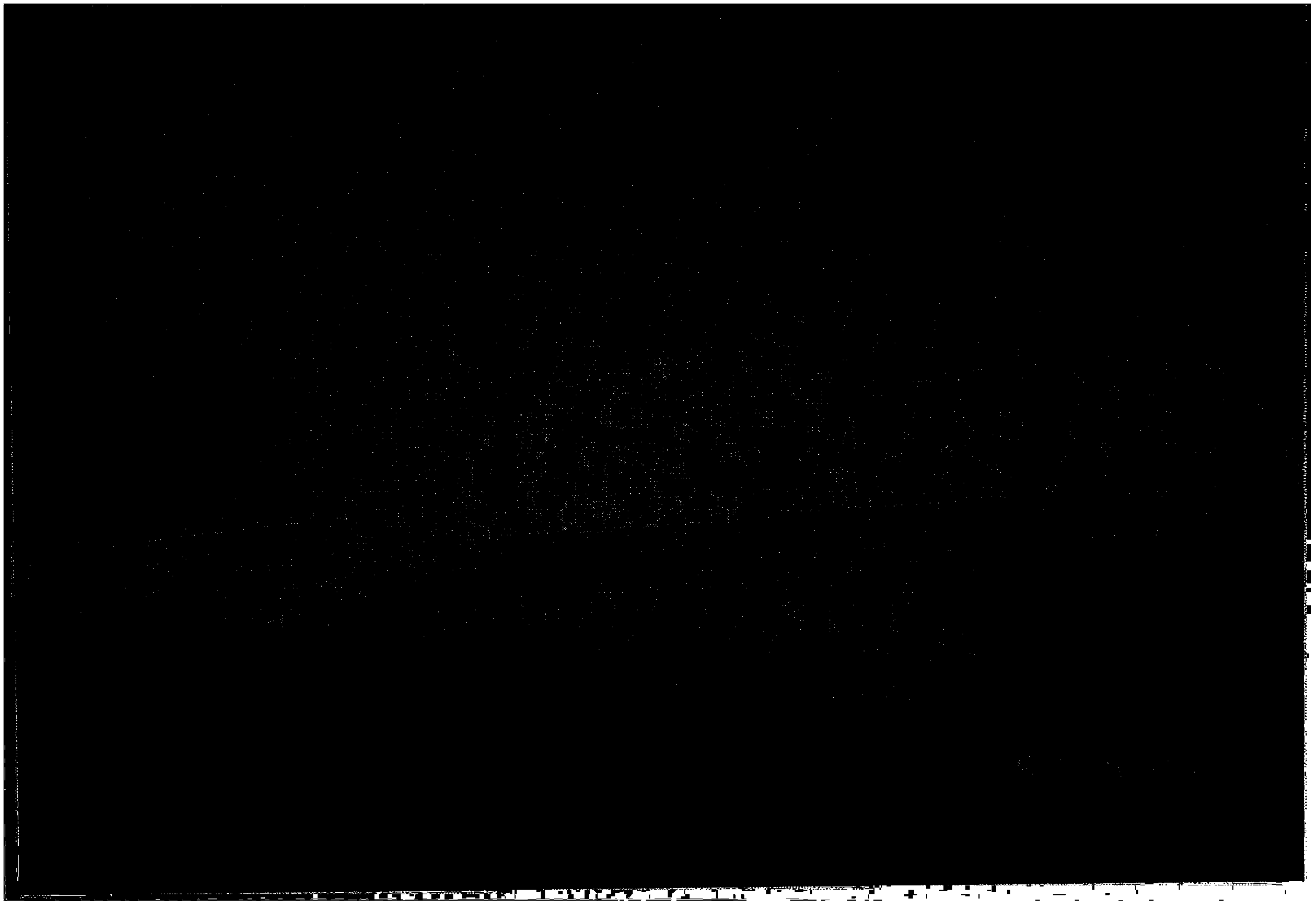
2. A 3/4-inch layer of insulating foam was sprayed all over the fibreglass surface.

3. Three layers of reinforcing steel mesh were added up to within two inches of the finished surface.

4. Small batches of a special mixture known as Octocrete were then applied with a trowel, starting at the top.

5. As the Octocrete began to harden, a metal template bearing the profile of the finished shape was rotated continuously around the dome (from a pivot fixed in the centre) cutting the required lines into the Octocrete.

The entire process took two days for each dome, or a total of 16 working days for the 8 small domes. The octocrete used in this process is a cement based product containing a number of chemical additives which cause it to harden quickly and thereby permit it to be troweled or carved soon after it is applied.



Construction of th big dome (IMC-Austria)

### *IMC-EA*

Once again, Patrick McMurray with the help of Mick Price and Patrick Luce made the small domes, using the same techniques described above, the only difference being that a standard sand, cement and lime mortar mixture was used in place of Octocrete. Many of the parts needed to manufacture these small domes were sent down from the U.S.A., thus saving considerable time.

### *IMC-Austria*

Patrick McMurray, helped by Patrick Luce, made the small domes as described above. There was one change, however, in insulating the domes. Instead of using foam, a cement based product with insulating qualities called Thermoputz was used. Patrick made a cone out of wire mesh that fit over

the small inner dome, and the Thermoputz was poured into the cone which held it in place until it set hard.

## VIII. LARGE CENTRAL DOME

### *IMC-WA & IMC-UK*

A fully reinforced concrete dome was erected on top of the large dais roof slab. The process involved constructing an inner and outer wooden and ply curved-shaped dome, which was then filled with waterproof concrete. Next, a team of plasterers ran the main dome in sand and cement render with a metal template pivoted at the top centre. Brick bats were used to fill areas that required more than 100mm of render. The top coat was made of pure white sand and cement which did not require painting. At Splatts House, the central dome was built exactly as in Perth. The top coat was done in the same mixture of Bath stone, sand and cement mentioned earlier in order to match the entrances.

### *IMC-USA*

The large dome was built by Patrick McMurray in the same way as the small domes, except that most of the work was carried out in place on the roof of the pagoda. As in the case of the small domes, a fibreglass inner dome was made in Hanover, Pa., from a plaster model. This structure was then lowered into place on the top of the dais roof, and the exterior of the dome was then created in the same five steps described under SMALL DOMES above. (The banana bud and lotus for the central dome were made separately in the workshop and put into place after the dome was finished. Unlike the small dome, the large dome, including the banana bud and lotus, has a ventilating shaft running through its core.)

The use of the fibreglass inner domes offers a number of important advantages. To begin with, fibreglass is relatively thin, which makes it possible to apply a thicker layer of insulation to the domes without decreasing the amount of space enclosed by the dome. Fibreglass inner domes, as opposed to concrete, do not need any further finishing before they can be gilded, and they should also cut down on the amount of condensation. Moreover, with the inner dome already in place, it was not necessary to build the central dome from scratch (with forms and concrete) but simply to apply the shape to the existing base.

### *IMC-EA*

The process used in the U.S. was adapted quite successfully for this pagoda. The fibreglass inner dome was manufactured in exactly the same way, but this time the insulation was added at the time of manufacture. The fibreglass dome was fixed down onto the dais slab and three courses of brick were then placed around its base. These bricks were in turn wrapped in the rubber membrane which was attached to the dais slab and which serves as the primary waterproofing barrier. The brickwork was then continued out and up to follow closely the three steps that support the main bell (secondary waterproofing barrier—the same Japanese product described earlier—was used under these bricks). Bricks were also laid under the turban area.

A special centering and levelling device was assembled to attach the centre vent tube to the top of the fibreglass dome. The vent tube was then used as the pivot for the template which cut the shape of the main dome. A 60mm waterproof sand and cement render coat was applied to a minimum of three layers of wire mesh over the bricks to give the rough shape of the dome, and a final 40mm coat of sand, cement and lime render was then applied over another three layers

of wire mesh. This entire process, which had to be done without a break, was begun at 6:30 A.M. and finished at 12:30 A.M. the following morning by Patrick McMurray, Patrick Luce, Ray Shrimpton, Camille Van Vooren, and Aaron Gilchrist. As in the U.S., the finished dome was later painted the same colour as the entrances.

### *IMC-Austria*

The process for this dome was the same as in E.A. except for a few changes. Bricks were laid over the entire inner dome to form the bell shape and the insulation (Thermoputz rather than foam) was poured between the bricks and the inner dome. Then many layers of mesh were nailed on, and the mixture of sand and cement render was then applied over them. This time the dome was built in three days instead of in one day as above. First, Patrick McMurray, Patrick Luce, and Werner Läubli built up the turban area; the next day the middle of the bell was formed and on the third day the steps at the bottom of the bell were done. The finished dome was then painted the same colour as the entrances. It was decided to use a special paint on all the domes which can easily be gilded over without any other special preparations.

## IX. ORNAMENTAL DECORATIONS

Below is a list of all the ornamental decorations which appear on a pagoda:

### *Large Bell (dome)*

Large Banana Bud	Band on Large Bell
Large Lotus	Large Floral Pieces
Large Turban Rings	Steps for Large Bell
Large Bell Shape	Dais Platform

*Small Bells*

Small Banana Buds (8)

Small Lotus (8)

Turban

Small Bell Shape

Band on Small Bell

Small Floral Pieces

(8 each = 64)

Steps for Small Bell

Dais Platforms

*Entrances*

Centre Gable Finial

24-Point Wheel over Door

Left and right Gable Finial

Centre Canopy Finial

Left and right Canopy Finial

Left and right Corbel

*IMC-WA*

The large banana bud and the large lotus, made of copper and brass, were shipped directly from Yangon for this pagoda. They were then gilded by the electroplating process and installed on the main dome in the presence of the Saṅgha and Mother Sayamagyi and Sayagyi U Chit Tin. The rest of the decorations were first drawn by a student in Perth (Sharon Snowball) based on photographs, sketches, and discussions with Dave Young about the pagoda in Yangon, and these drawings were then given to a retired ornamental plasterer who made full-size mockups of each piece. The mockups were then taken to an ornamental concrete manufacturer who made the moulds and the finished pieces. The completed elements were then attached on site using epoxy.

*IMC-UK*

The firm of plasterers who made the domes also made the ornamental parts for the domes, based on sketches and mockups from Perth. The large banana bud and lotus were made out of concrete, and the outer layer was coated with 10mm of Bath-stone coloured render. The entrance decorations were all hand carved in Bath stone by the stone masons.

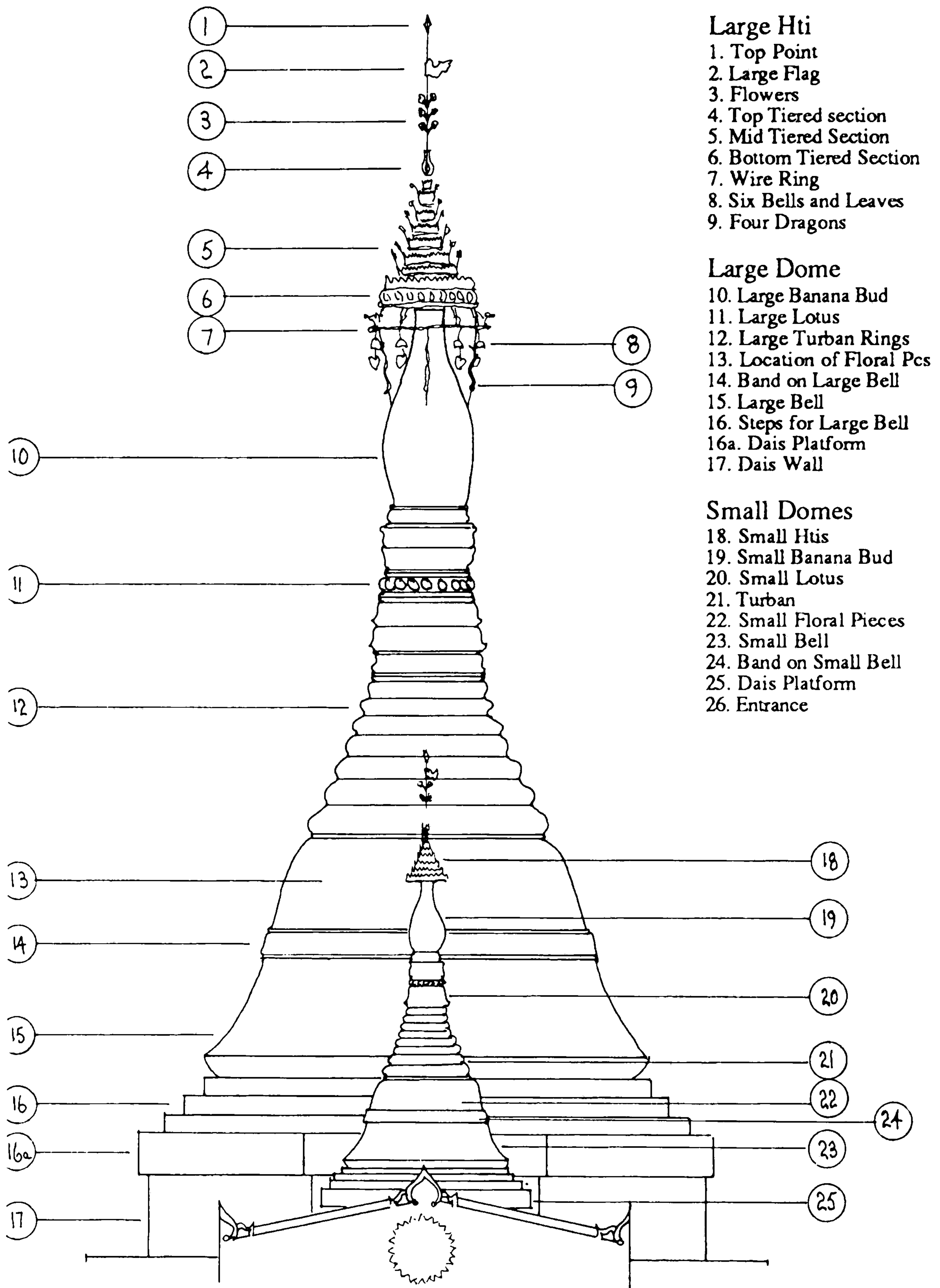
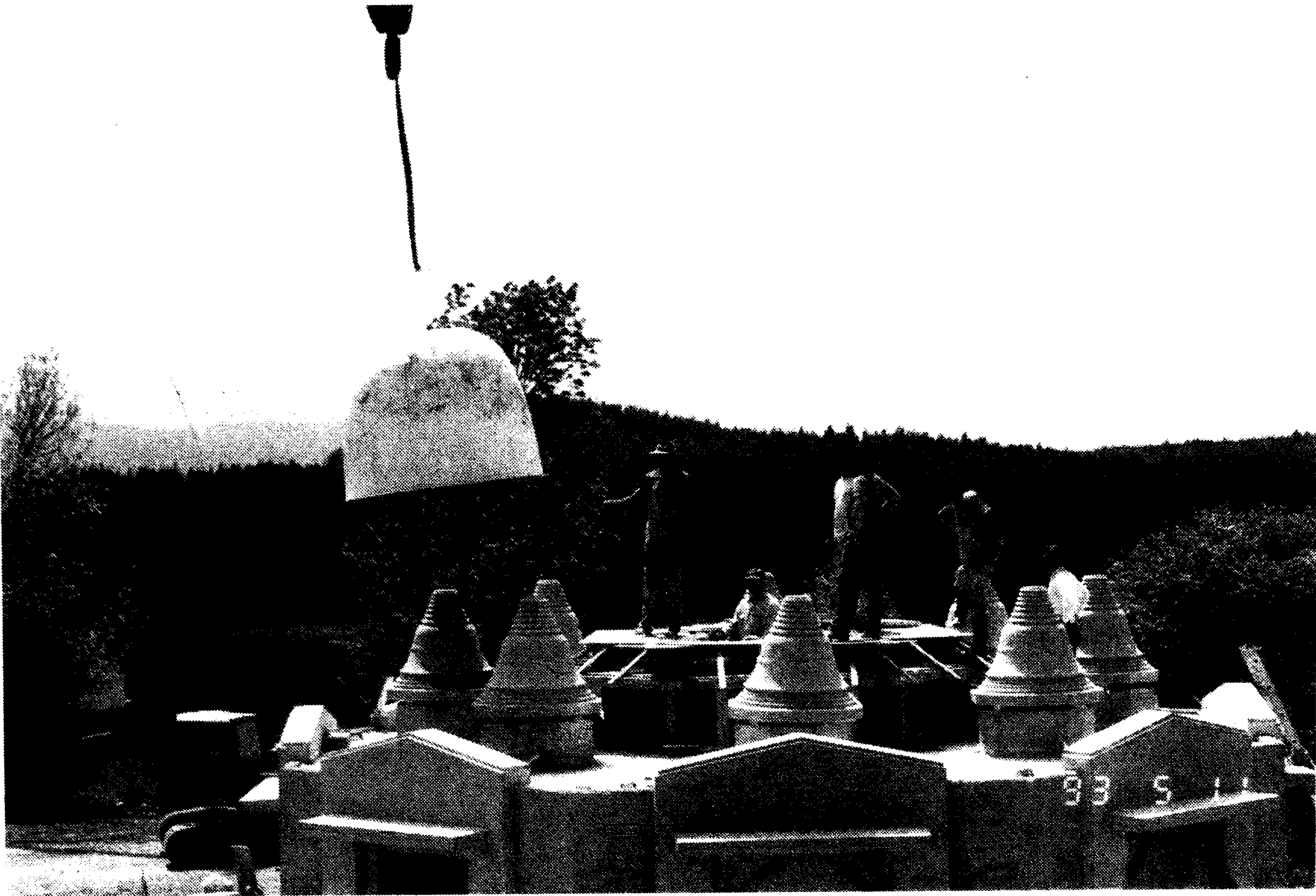


Fig. 2: Large Dome and Small Dome with their component parts



Putting in place the inner form for the main dome (IMC-Austria)



Finished main dome with the eight smaller domes (IMC-Austria)

*IMC-USA*

In the U.S., IMC Builders decided to manufacture all the parts themselves. Wood carvings of the entrance ornaments in the U.K. were made by Chris Fixsen and shipped to America, along with a plaster mockup of the small banana bud and lotus. Full size mockups were made of all the other parts on site by Dave Young (large lotus, floral pieces, and some finials). Rubber moulds were then made by Dave Young and Ray Shrimpton for all the parts (except for the large banana bud), and Ray poured all the moulds with a special polymer cement mixture. The finished pieces were then painted.

The large banana bud was made by Patrick McMurray the same way as the small domes (see above), the floral pieces for the domes were manufactured in fibreglass from a fibreglass press. Sixty-four small floral pieces and eight large ones were produced.

*IMC-EA*

The large banana bud and the large lotus on this pagoda were gilded by Ueli Grossenbacher and Camille Van Vooren before installation. When the trustees heard of the fund opened by Mother Sayamagi & Sayagi U Chit Tin in the U.S.A. for gilding the banana bud and lotus there, they requested and received permission from our Teacher and the local council to gild the banana bud and lotus. They were installed on March 18, 1992, the full moon day of Tabaung, in the presence of the Trustees, IMC Builders, and many local students.

Because of the success they enjoyed in America, the builders decided once again to manufacture all the parts themselves. The mockups used in the U.S. and the mould for the large lotus were sent from the States, saving a great deal

of time, but all the other moulds were manufactured in E.A. The fibreglass floral pieces were made by the same firm that made them in America and then shipped to Australia. The banana bud was made in the same way as in the U.S.A.

The material Ray Shrimpton used to pour the shapes here was quite different from that used in the U.S.; it was a prepared grout mixture, similar to that used in heavy industry primarily to set large manufacturing machines. The grout sets at an unusually strong density (64MPa) and is quite inexpensive.

### *IMC-Austria*

As in E.A., the large lotus was poured in the rubber mould made in America. Ray Shrimpton made new rubber moulds for all the other ornamental parts and he poured them using a sand cement mixture similar to the products used in America and E.A. The large banana bud was made in the usual way by Patrick McMurray. Ueli Grossenbacher and Camille Van Vooren gilded the large banana bud and large lotus.

## **X. HTIS AND PLAQUES**

The following is a list of the parts of a *hti*:

### *Large Hti*

Top Point (Diamond Bud)

Large Flag

3 Flowers

Top tiered section

Mid tiered section

Bottom tiered section (ring)

Wire ring

6 Bells

6 Leaves  
4 Dragons

*Small Hti*

Top Point (Daimond Bud)

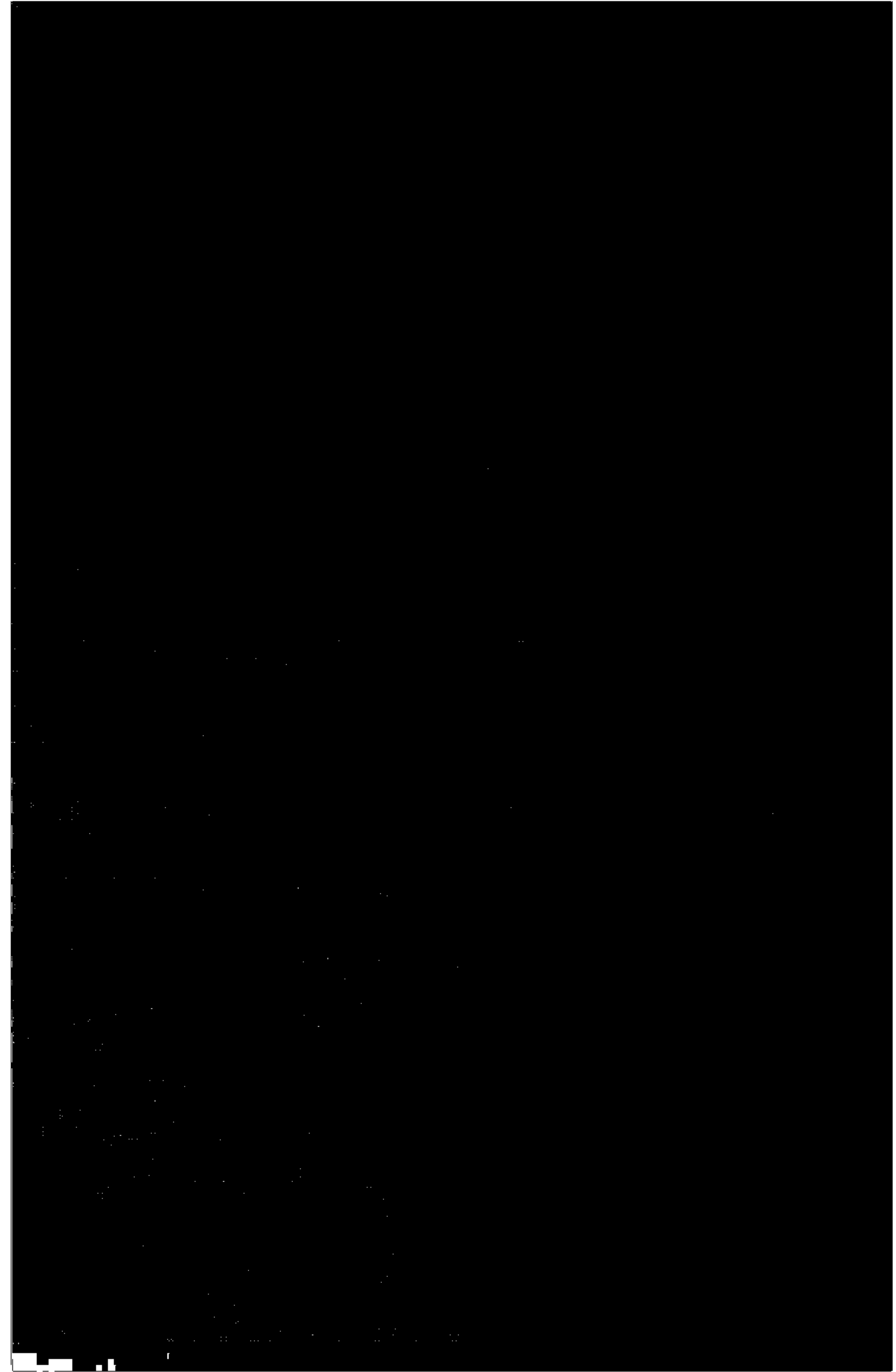
Flag

2 floral pieces

Top tiered section

Bottom tiered section

Wire rings



The 52 plaques consist of the following texts, arranged as indicated:

1. On the octagon panels:

*Paṭṭhāna:*

Twenty-one plates, starting over the Buddha cell and running clock wise for five panels. The first four panels have four plates each, and the fifth panel has five. The last panel is over the entrance cell.

*Anattalakhana Sutte:*

Ten plates, starting on the panel next to where the Paṭṭhāna ends and running for the remaining two panels. The first panel has three plates, the second four, and the third three.

2. On the columns:

*Adhiṭṭhāna:*

Four plates, two in Burmese, two in English, on the column to the right of the Buddha cell.

Big lotus and big banana bud  
(IMC-Austria )

*Udana:*

Four plates, starting on the column next to the Adhiṭṭhāna and running for one more column, two plates per column.

*Dhamma-cakka-ppavattana Sutta:*

Thirteen plates, starting on the column after the Udana and continuing around to the Buddha Cell. The number of plate per column is 3, 2, 3, 2, 3.



The Buddha preaching his First Sermon: The Dhamma-cakka-ppavattana Sutta

The *htis* and the plaques on all the pagodas are exactly the same. In each instance, they were manufactured in Yangon as the *dāna* of the Teachers, Sayagyi U Tint Yee, Sayagyi U Ba Pho, and the students in Myanmar and then sent to the five sites. The four Adhiṭṭhāna plaques, recently added to all the pagodas, were made in the U.K. The four Adhiṭṭhāna plaques include two for Sayagyi's plaque (one in the Myanmar language and one an English translation) and two for the explanation by the Teachers (one in the Myanmar language

and one an English translation); in Austria, the plaques with the translations are in German.

All the *htis* and plaques were gilded in the country where the pagoda was being built except for Austria. The gilding method used in all the pagodas, except Austria, is known as electroplating. It is a lengthy and complex process involving many steps. At IMC-Austria, the *htis* were gilded by Ueli Grossenbacher at his work-shop in Switzerland. With Ueli's advice, we decided to apply gold leaf on the *htis* instead of electroplating as on the previous pagodas. The work was relatively inexpensive and the quality of the workmanship is very high. The *htis* shine beautifully. The plaques were gilded by a local electroplating company.

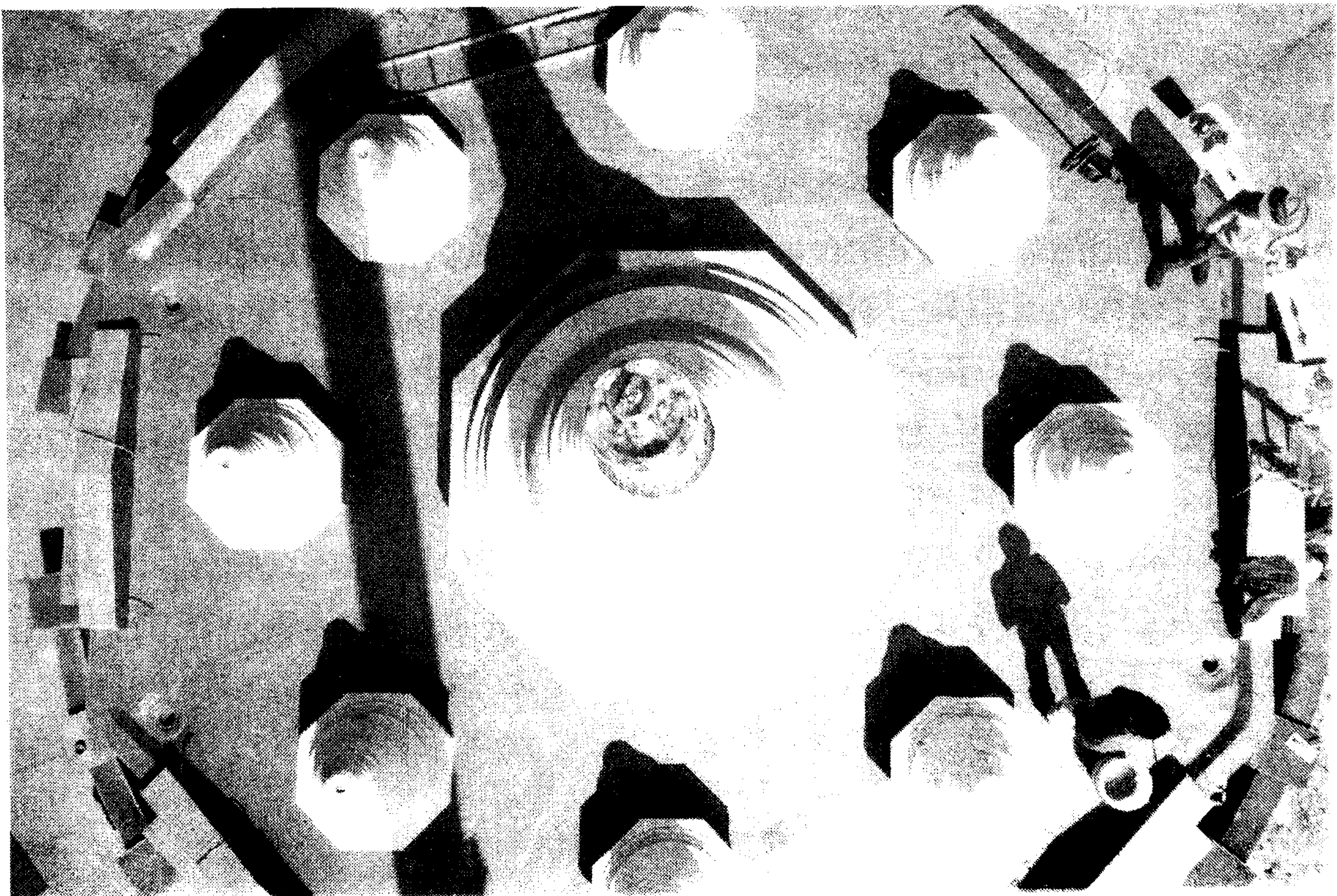
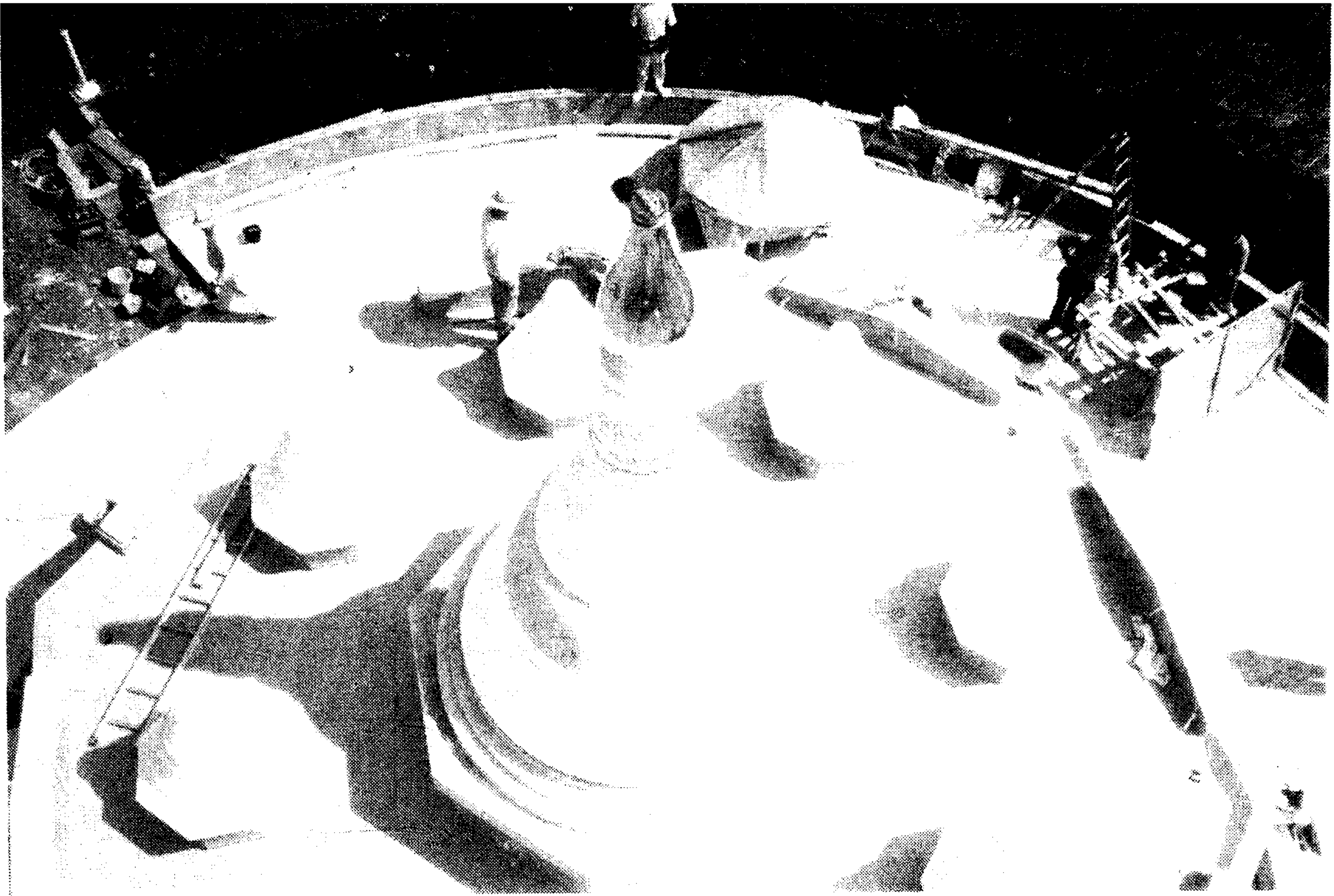
## XI. BUDDHA STATUES AND THRONES

For the Buddha cell of each pagoda, a large Buddha statue and gilded throne were given as *dāna* by our Teachers and the students in Myanmar. The four Buddha statues and thrones placed at the four cardinal points on the dais slab shelf inside the main dome are likewise the *dāna* of our Teachers and the Burmese students. The five Buddha statues represent the five Buddhas of this auspicious aeon.

## XII. INTERIOR FINISHES

### *IMC-WA*

The inside of the main dome and the octagon walls (between the dome and the roof slab) were hand plastered in white hardwali plaster to which gold leaf was then applied. The circular dais slab edge and the main dome slab edge were finished square and also covered in gold leaf. The doors to the central Teachers' room, made of Australian Jarra, are louvered as in Yangon. The floor throughout the pagoda is a



Top views after the big lotus and banana bud have been put up  
(IMC-Austria)

parquet floor made with Jarra and laid in a herringbone pattern. The south cell is the Buddha cell. The overall width of the Perth pagoda, to the outside wall, is 9.14 metres (30 feet).

### *IMC-UK*

Several innovations were made in the interior finishing of the English pagoda. The interior of the main dome was run with a template, which gives a smooth evenly curved finish to the plaster. The rings which mark the dais slab edge and the main dome slab edge were decorated with an ornamental plaster fascia. On this pagoda, the gold leaf was applied in the traditional manner by Jim Shannon and Ueli Grossenbacher, using loose gold leaf set in an oil base.

The doors to the central cell are of American oak and are louvred as in Perth and Yangon. In this pagoda, because of the weather corridor, the Teachers' room and the students' cells are smaller in size. If the overall size of the pagoda had been enlarged to accommodate the corridor, then the domes and entrances would have had to be enlarged proportionally in order to achieve the same general appearance as the pagoda in Yangon. The floor in the south cell (the Buddha cell) was later built by Wale Bächler to the same level as the floor in the Teachers' room so that the throne for the Buddha statue was at the right height (a feature now incorporated into all the pagodas). The overall width of the pagoda is 9.73 metres (31 feet 11 inches).

### *IMC-USA*

Here the main dome, as mentioned earlier, was not formed with reinforced concrete but in fibreglass, resulting in a wonderfully smooth base for applying the gold leaf. The ornamental fascia rings for the circular slab edges were made

in the workshop by Patrick McMurray and Patrick Luce and later attached, a process which turned out to be easier than doing them in place. Once again, the gold leaf was all done by Ueli Grossenbacher. The centre room and the Buddha cell floors are made of strip American oak flooring installed by Dave Young and Wale Bächler. Bottocino Classico marble tiles were installed in all the students' cells. The louvred doors are of American oak. The east cell is the Buddha cell. The overall width of the pagoda is 8.84 metres (29ft).

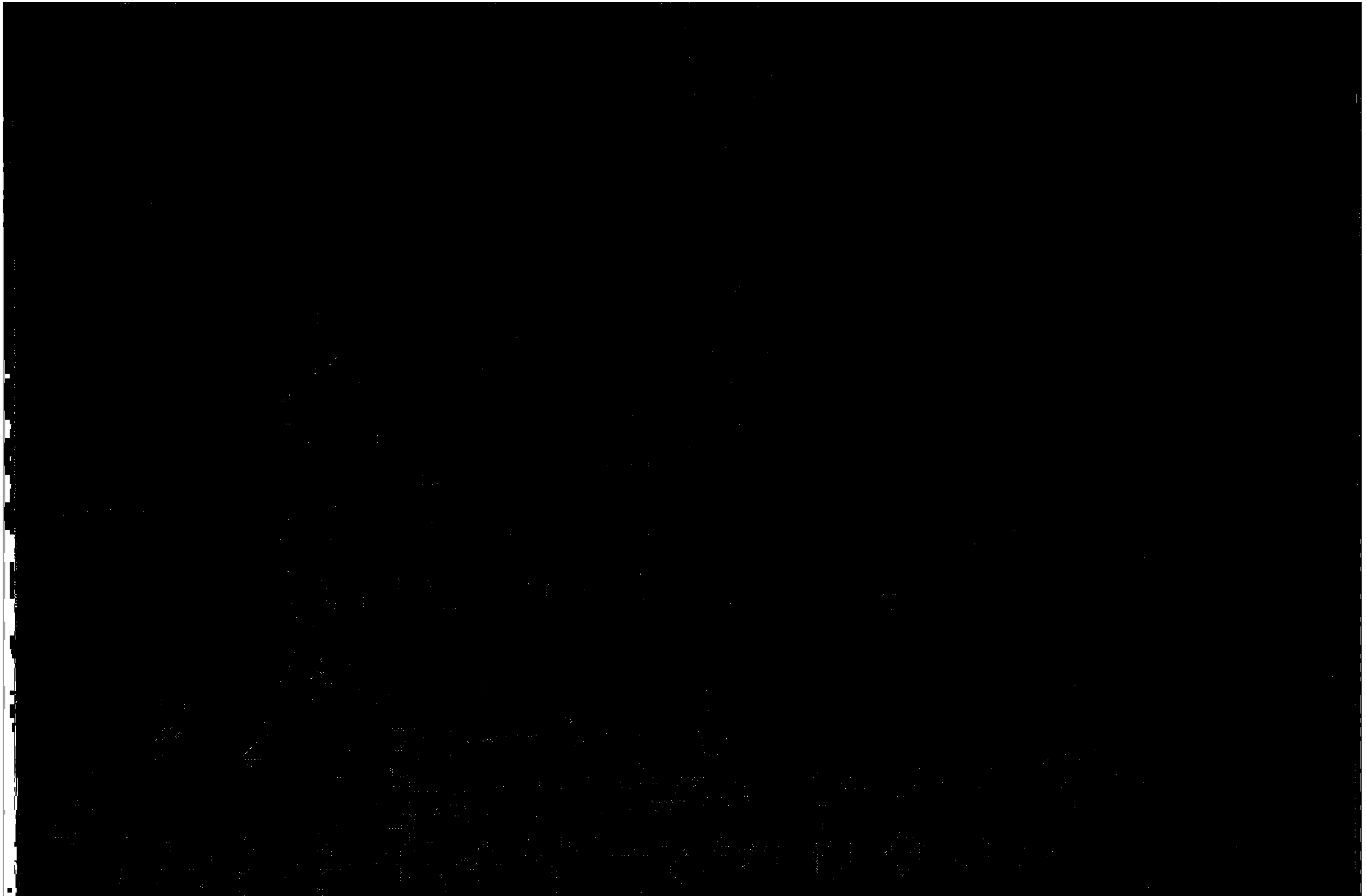
### *IMC-EA*

The interior finishing was essentially the same as in the U.S. Here an inner main dome was made of fibreglass from a plaster mould made by Patrick McMurray and Patrick Luce. The finish on this fibreglass dome came out very smooth and was an excellent base for applying gold leaf. The inner ornamental fascia rings for the circular slab edges were made on site under a tarpaulin shelter by Patrick McMurray and Patrick Luce. The gold leaf work was done by Ueli Grossenbacher, assisted by Camille Van Vooren. A brushed box parquet floor in a herringbone pattern was installed in the Teachers' room and the Buddha cell. All the interior painting was done by IMC Builders (Patrick Luce, Wale Bächler, Camille Van Vooren, Ray Shrimpton, Debbie Young, Suzy Robb, and Tom Pengelly). The students' cells were finished with Italian marble tiles just as in the U.S. cells. The interior louvred doors are made of Tasmanian oak. The south cell is the Buddha cell. The overall width of this pagoda is 8.84 metres (29 feet).

### *IMC-EA Landscaping*

After the major earthworks, Dave Robb took on the design and implementation of all the landscaping work. Dave Robb and his helpers, Tom Pengelly and Peter Lankas, created the

transition from construction chaos to well-ordered clear surroundings appropriate for a pagoda. The work included paths, walls, banks, garden beds, drainage, concrete work, and clearing, as well as planting lawns, roses and trees.



Work on the concrete path around the Pagoda (IMC-Austria)

### *IMC-Austria*

With the exception of the beech wood parquet floor in the centre room and the Buddha cell and the American cherry wood louvered doors to the centre room, the interior of the pagoda is identical to all the others. The east cell is the Buddha cell. The overall width of this pagoda is 8.84 metres (29 feet).

## *IMC-Austria Landscaping*

Because the pagoda was cut into a ridge on a hillside, it was decided to terrace the banks above the pagoda, so five terraces were made, each about four metres wide. The first terrace directly above the outer pagoda path was turned into a raised rose garden. For the opening, 200 roses were planted in this garden. The other four terraces were seeded with grass. The edge of the forest on the hillside above the pagoda was cut back a further ten metres. The hollows and depressions in the hillside around the pagoda were filled with soil from the pagoda excavation. A flat area was cut on the lower southwest quadrant where the tent for the opening ceremonies will be placed.

## CONCLUSION

Our Teachers, Mother Sayamagyi and Sayagyi U Chit Tin, have, in accordance with the tradition of the Buddha and their teacher Sayagyi U Ba Khin, always acted out of loving kindness and compassion for all living beings. This made them build the five Light of the Dhamma Pagodas which will illumine the world and benefit everyone who beholds them and admires their beauty. Our debt of gratitude to our Teachers, who allowed us to support them in this great task of loving kindness and compassion, is immeasurable. We would like to thank them for their protection and guidance and pay our respects to their great qualities.

We would like to express our appreciation to Sayagyi U Tint Yee and Sayagyi U Ba Pho and the students in Myanmar who donated all the *htis*, the plaques, the Buddha statues and thrones, and we thank the Trusts in Western Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, Eastern Australia, and Austria for making the strong determination to build these

pagodas—thus giving many people the opportunity to participate in this meritorious action.

And we would also like to thank the students at each of the International Meditation Centres and the students around the world who contributed to the building of these pagodas through *dāna* of materials, money and labour.

We understand that the building of a pagoda is a meritorious undertaking, and we are profoundly grateful to our Teachers for making possible this unparalleled opportunity. We wish to share the merits of these great efforts with all beings of the Thirty-One Planes of Existence, and in particular with all the Brahmās and Devas who protect the Buddha-Sāsana.

Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu!

*\* Passages preceded by an asterisk are quotations taken from construction notes on the American pagoda published as the third chapter of Dhammadāna Series #12.*

