

A Religious Study on the Construction of Oo-Pwar Pagoda and Its Sculptures

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Abstract

This paper is written with the purpose of knowing why Buddhist people worship pagoda and Buddhism is not symbolism. Myanmar culture is an integral part of Buddhism. While there is an abundance of artistic material throughout Myanmar, many people do not know that these artistic pagodas and their sculptures are related with the meaningful background. Therefore, this paper is presented based on Oo-Pwar pagoda in Mandalay. Initially, it is presented which one is worthy to be a pagoda and how many kinds of pagoda are there. And then, the history of Oo-Pwar pagoda and the standard of Myanmar art and architecture of that period are presented. And the construction of pagoda and its sculptures are also expressed. In which, each part of pagoda related with the teaching of Buddha is discussed. This topic is divided into three main parts, namely: meaning of pagoda, the construction of Oo-Pwar pagoda and sculptures in the surrounding of the pagoda. This paper shows the background history, religious and traditional customs of the sculptures. And the fact can be seen that although Myanmar people are Theravāda Buddhists, they also do some of the practice of Mahāyana Buddhism and Hinduism as their own tradition. By doing this research, in the compound of pagoda, the tradition of ancient Myanmar are found evidently. The pagodas can be assumed as the religious things and the invaluable cultural heritages. Therefore, conservation of pagoda is beneficial to develop Buddhist religion and to conserve Myanmar cultural heritage.

Introduction

Oo Pwar pagoda is situated at the Kyun Lone Oake Shaung quarter, Chan Mya Tharzi Township, Mandalay, the central area of Myanmar. It is nearby Maha Muni Pagoda. It was built by a minister named Oo Pwar. Therefore, it is so called Oo Pwar pagoda. He was the minister of King Bagan. The full name of the pagoda is 'Oo Pwar Su Taung Pyae Myat Swar Phayar'. The minister donated the pagoda in 1209 ME (AD 1847). It was during the reign of Kone-baung Period. Therefore, Oo Pwar pagoda is 12 years older than the age of Mandalay city. The height of the pagoda is 126' 6". In the compound of the pagoda, a Dhammayum, Bodhi tree, and some sculptures are found together with the pagoda. They express the high standard of architectural design in ancient Myanmar.

Before I discuss the Oo Pwar Pagoda, the origin of Buddhist pagodas will be presented. The origin of the pagoda is of a funeral mound of a holy person. So in the centre of the Pagoda, there is often a small chamber to enshrine sacred relics. At the centre of every pagoda, there is a small chamber to enshrine the relic. Many years later, the construction of pagoda changed in various forms. But an unchanged

thing of pagoda is containing the relic chamber. In this way, pagoda became symbol of the Buddha. In Buddhism, relic enshrined pagoda is a representation of the *Parinibbāna* of the Buddha (passing away of the Buddha). Therefore, Buddhist people do merit in the pagoda.

The custom of paying homage to the pagoda of Buddhism has been practiced from the Buddha's time until now. According to the time, the construction of pagodas has gradually changed. In Myanmar pagodas are systematically built. The reason may be assumed that this is because of the development of architectural decoration. On the other hand, each part of a pagoda may concern with the abstruse teaching of the Buddha. The purpose of construction will be presented in the framework presented.

In the compound of a pagoda, the sculptures of lions, Hamsa bird, the Bodhi tree and other religious things can also be found. They make the pagoda more glorious. The historical background of these sculptures will also be studied.

Meaning of Pagoda

Myanmar people call pagodas 'Ceti'. The term 'Ceti' derives from Pāḷi words 'Cetiya'. 'Cetiya' meaning 'a place that should be worshipped or 'a place that should be paid homage'. Therefore, pagodas can be defined as 'a place that should be worshipped' or 'a place that should be paid homage'. There are many things called pagodas. They are 'a tree, a grove, a mountain, a shrine for deity, a funeral mound, a pagoda made of sand, a statue, etc.' But the similarities are that they are all 'a place to be paid homage'.

The custom of paying homage to the pagoda has been practiced for hundreds of years. In earlier times, people were afraid of harsh weather and wild animals so they created places to be take refuge in order to protect themselves from dangers. And they also created the place to worship. In this way, the tree, the grove, the mountain, the garden and the shrine for god is called a pagoda.

During the Vedic period, when the holy person and regional governments died, their dead bodies were buried and the ash was buried. Then the funeral mounds were bound with stones as a compound. But they are pre-Buddhist pagodas, not Buddhist pagodas which should be worshipped by Buddhists.

While the Buddha was staying in the Jetavana monastery, Sāvatti, many people used to come to the Buddha together with alms flowers. Anāthapiṇḍika, the donor of Jetavana monastery knew about that. So he told Venerable Ānanda to ask for something which was represented to the Buddha. When the Venerable Ānanda asked, the Buddha gave permission.

Different Kinds of Pagoda

There are three kinds of pagoda which were given permission by the Buddha. These are:

- a. Sārīkacetiya (Dhātucetiya),
- b. Paribhogacetiya and
- c. Uddissacetiya.

Sārīkacetiya is a pagoda in which the relics of the Buddha were enshrined. But that kind of pagoda should be built only when the Buddha dies. Since it is a place to enshrine the Buddha's relics, it is also called Dhātuacetiya.

Paribhogacetiya is a pagoda in which the utensils of the Buddha are enshrined. According to Sayadaw Ashin Janakābhivamsa, is also a temple to place the image of the Buddha and must be called Paribhogacetiya.

Uddissacetiya is an image and symbols which is made with regarding to the Buddha.

Besides, Sāratthadīpanītikā said that there are four different kinds of Pagodas. These are:

- a. Dhātuacetiya,
- b. Dhammacetiya,
- c. Uddissacetiya and
- d. Paribhogacetiya.

Dhammacetiya means a pagoda which is a place to enshrine the text of Pāli, commentaries and Sub-commentaries. Although there are four kinds of pagodas, the majority of Myanmar people know that only Dhātuacetiya will be presented.

Four Kinds of Persons Worthy to take Refuge in a Pagoda

According to the concept of Buddhism, these four kinds of persons are worthy to be enshrined in Dhātuacetiya. They are:

- a. the Buddha,
- b. the particular Buddha,
- c. the Arahant and
- d. the universal monarch.

The relics of their dead body are worthy to be placed in a pagoda. In the world, there are many kinds of people. But only these four kinds of persons are chosen to be take refuge in the pagoda. Because they carry the benefit of all beings they should be considered a holy person. Buddhists believe that taking refuge to a holy person is beneficial. Therefore, their relics are chosen to be enshrined in the pagoda.

And the place to build the pagoda must be chosen. It must be only at the side of main road and at the junction. In this way, travelers and many other people can cultivate good merits whenever they see the pagoda.

The Change of Architectural Design in Pagoda

In Myanmar today pagodas are pyramid shaped. The origin of the pagoda is a shape of the heap of grain in India. After the Buddha passed away, the kings of eight states got the holy relics of the Buddha and built the pagodas. So, they must be considered the first foremost pagodas in Buddhism.

However, the most ancient pagoda is Sanchi pagoda. It was built by Asoka (273-232 BC). The structure of Sanchi is a heap of grain. It was a brick building. The lower part is a global shaped, the middle is a square box shaped and the top is a stick with triple umbrellas. It was surrounded by a wooden fence enclosing a path for the ceremonial clockwise circumambulation, which was a chief form of reverence paid to the relics within it. Sanchi pagoda is a remaining pagoda among the 84000 padodas built by King Asoka. In order to protect from the extreme weather, the king built the pagoda shaped like a heap of grain. Therefore, it can be assumed that the earliest shape of the pagoda is the shape of a heap of grain.

Many years later, the style of pagodas changed gradually. A simple heap of grain shaped changed into the various styles with the architectural decoration. The styles of pagodas are circular shaped, polygon shaped, gun shaped and the shape of plantain bud.

Today, most Myanmar pagodas are a pyramid shape. This style started to change during the reign of King Anawrahtar (AD 1044-1077). From that time on, pagodas were added the parts of terraces and mouldings. The art of building pagodas was also changed into a more Myanmar style. Many Bagan pagodas are found that erecting the small pagodas at the corner of each terrace, adding the adders and gates for deity and building the parts of inverted alms bowl and bell-shaped. These are the changings into Myanmar style.

The architectural design of Myanmar pagodas and their meaning within it are presented by using the construction of Oo Pwar pagoda and its sculptures. This paper is expressed in order to know the fact that Myanmar people follow the instructions of the Buddha, these instruction (Dhamma) are used as the art of Building in Pagoda and the influence of Buddha Dhamma are on the field of Myanmar art and architecture.

In Myanmar, pagodas are built systematically by combining with 16 parts. These are;

1. Sein Phu Daw,
2. Hnat Myat Nar Daw,
3. Htee Daw,
4. Hnat Pyaw Hpuu,
5. Kyar Hlan,
6. Ywal,
7. Kyar Hmauk,
8. Phaung Yit,
9. Balu Pann Swae,
10. Tha Beik Hmauk,
11. Khar Cee,
12. Khaung Laung,

13. Kyinn Wunn,
14. Shit Hmaut,
15. Pit Sa Yan and
16. Pan Tin Khon.

Each part of the pagoda has abstruse sense in religious point of view. The 16 parts of pagoda and their senses are shown briefly as follows;

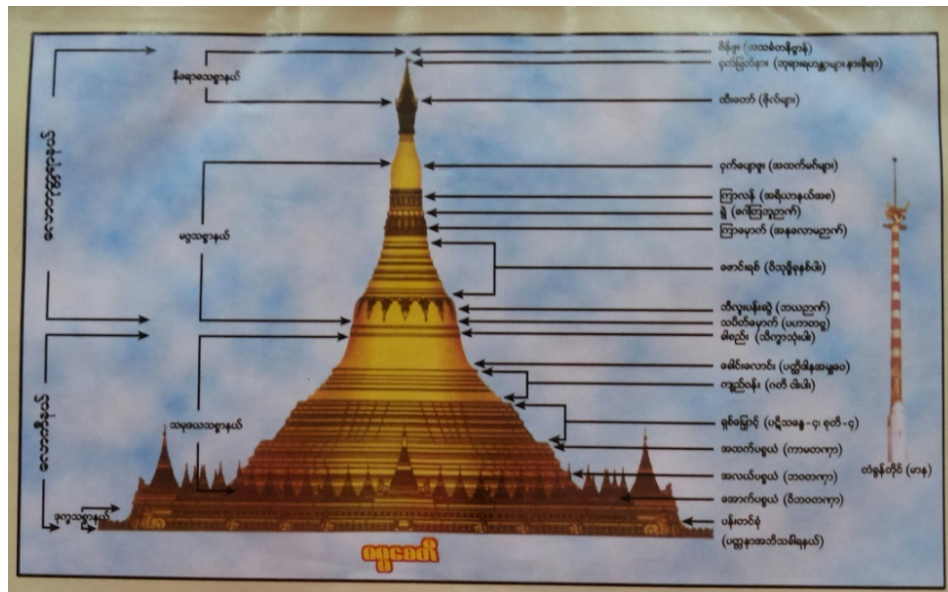


Figure (1) picture of typical pagoda and the senses of each part

Oo Pwar pagoda is an example of Myanmar pagodas. So the construction of Oo Pwar pagoda and its sculptures will be presented to describe the sense of Buddha's teaching. In Oo Pwar pagoda, as it has not the part of Balu Pann Swae, there are only 15 parts.

The Part of Oo Pwar Pagoda

Oo Pwar Pagoda is combined with 15 parts. It is not just architectural decoration. It is illustration the teaching of the Buddha omitting within it. In this chapter, each part of the pagoda is expressed analytically.



Figure (2) Oo Pwar Pagoda



Figure (3) Htee Daw (holy umbrella) in Oo Pwar Pagoda

Sein Phu Daw

At the topmost of Oo Pwar Pagoda, the part of Sein Phu Daw can be seen. In English, Sein Phu Daw means diamond orb. It is shaped like a rose bud. The part of diamond orb in pagoda refers to Nibbāna. Diamond orb is the supreme part of the pagoda. In this way, Nibbāna is supreme in the world and a final goal of Buddhists. Diamond orb and Nibbāna are the same in supreme. Therefore, the part of diamond orb in pagoda is added to show the meaning of Nibbāna.

Hnat Myat Nar Daw

Beneath the diamond orb, the part of Hnat Myat Nar Daw can be seen. In English, It can be translated as noble bird perch. It is decorated with jewels. Hnat Myat Nar Daw represented the existing in the last life of the Buddha and Arahant. The last life of the Buddha and Arahant is close to Nibbāna. So, to express that meaning, Hnat Myat Nar Daw is placed beneath the diamond orb.

Htee Daw

Htee Daw, in English, is called holy umbrella. It is placed beneath the part of Hnat Myat Nar Daw. This part is combined with seven pieces of golden coils. In the lowest part, many golden bells are hanging. Seven steps of holy umbrellas pointed out seven steps of Maggaphalas. These are the different kinds of knowledge provided to attain Nibbāna, namely: the knowledge of Sotāpattiphala, the knowledge of Sakadāgāmimagga, the knowledge of Sakadāgāmiphala, the knowledge of Anāgāmimagga, the knowledge of Anāgāmiphala. Umbrella is a thing to give shade and to protect heat. In this way, seven steps of Maggaphalas can protect the heat of suffering and feeling calm and cold like staying in the shade. Therefore, the part of Htee Daw is placed in the pagoda to illustrate the seven steps of Maggaphala.

Hnat Pyaw Hpuu

Hnat Pyaw Hpuu is a part of pagoda. It can be seen beneath the holy umbrella. The English translation of Hnat Pyaw Hpuu is banana bud. As it is look like banana bud shaped, it is known as the part of banana bud. Starting from the part of Hnat Pyaw Hpuu, all lower parts of pagoda are made of brick and covered with gold painting. The part of Hnat Pyaw Hpuu is used to denote the beginning of Maggaphala. The one who practises to attain Maggaphala is not time like the bud is not time to blossom.

Kyar Hlan

The part of Kyar Hlan is beneath Hnat Pyaw Hpuu. English term of Kyar Hlan is a spreading lotus flower. From the reign of Asoka, lotus flower is used as a symbol of Buddhism. This tradition spread to Myanmar pagoda. Its structure is a round spreading lotus flower. The meaning of lotus flower is the knowledge of Sotāpattimagga, a remaining Magga from above Maggaphala. The spreading style is ready to practise to get upper Maggaphalas. Lotus is noble flower. Magga is the goal for Buddhism. Sotāpattimagga is one of Magga. So Sotāpattimagga is represented by lotus flower.

Ywal

After Kyar Hlan, the part of Ywal can be seen in Oo Pwar pagoda. The name of Ywal is a Myanmar term meaning bright gem like a glass ball. It is round the pagoda. The meaning of this part is to describe the knowledge of Gotrabhū. Gotrabhū is a kind of knowledge which is got before attaining the eight kinds of Maggaphala knowledge. So it is placed under the lowest Magga, Sotāpattimagga (Kyar Hlan).

Kyar Hmauk

Kyar Hmauk is a part of pagoda beneath the part of Ywal. The Myanmar term Kyar Hmauk means an inverted lotus flower. Its structure is the opposite of Kyar Hlan, the petals are facing down round the pagoda. Kyar Hmauk is a part to illustrate the meaning cultivating of Samatha Bhāvanā, the path to attain Jhāna. Jhāna is not the path to Nibbāna. In this level, a person not only attempt to attain Nibbāna (the final goal) but also can go down to the lower level of existences. Therefore, the structure of this part is the shape of an inverted lotus flower.

Phaung Yit

In Oo Pwar pagoda, the part named Phaung Yit is found below Kyar Hmauk. In English, it is called mouldings. The structure is like the rings. It is combined with seven steps of rings. Seven pieces of this part show the seven stages of purification (Visuddhimagga). In Pāḷi literature, there are seven stages of Visuddhimagga: purification of morality (Sīlavisuddhi), purification of mind (Cittavisuddhi), purification of view (Diṭṭhivisuddhi), purification of overcoming doubt (Kaṅkhāvitaraṇavisuddhi), purification of knowledge and vision of what is path and not path (Maggāmaggañāṇadassanavisuddhi), purification of knowledge and vision of path-progress (Paṭipadāñāṇadassanavisuddhi) and purification of knowledge and vision (Ñāṇadassana-visuddhi). Seven stages of Visuddhimagga are to attain the knowledge of Maggaphala. So it is placed under the part of Kyar Hmauk. As the shape of pagoda is in pyramid, the Phaung Yit steps are also in pyramid shaped. Therefore, as a reminding to have purification, the part of Phaung Yit is placed in the pagoda.

Tha Beik Hmauk

Under the part of Phaung Yit in the pagoda, there is a large part called Tha Beik Hmauk. In English, it can be translated as an inverted monk's alms bowl. It looks like an inverted monk's alms bowl. So it is called Tha Beik Hmauk. It refers to the abandoning in the Buddha teaching. In Buddha teaching, there are five kinds of abandoning (Pahāna): abandoning by the opposite (Tadaṅgapahāna), abandoning by repression (Vikkhambhanapahāna), abandoning by destruction (Samucchedapahāna), abandoning by tranquillization (Paṭipassadhipahāna) and abandoning by escape (Nissaraṇapahāna). The meaning of inverting alms bowl is not attachment to all possessions. A person who wants to free from all sufferings, he should not have any attachment. Therefore, it can be seen that this part of pagoda shows the Buddha's teaching not to attach anything.

Khar Cee

The middle part of pagoda is called Khar Cee. It is a small portion existing between two large portions. The English translation of Khar Cee is a girdle. It looks like a string tying the pagoda. Khar Cee describes the three kinds of practice (Sikkhā) that the Buddha taught: morality (Sīlasikkhā), consciousness (Samādhisikkhā) and wisdom (Paññāsikkhā). The aim of forming Khar Cee in pagoda is to prevent not to do bad deeds. Therefore, in order to do three kinds of practice, Khar Cee is added in the construction of pagoda.

Khaung Laung

Under the girdle of pagoda, the bell-shaped dome part can be seen. Khaung Laung is Myanmar word meaning bell. Since it has the bell-shape, it is called Khaung Laung. Bell is used to inform something. In the same way, the part of Khaung Laung is reminding to do ten items of meritorious actions in the Buddha's teaching. These are liberality (Dāna), morality (Sīla), meditation (Bhavanā), reverence (Apacāyana), service (Veyyāvacca), transference of merit (Pattidāna), rejoicing in other's merit (Pattānumodana), listening to the doctrine (Dhammasavana), expounding the doctrine (Dhammadesanā) and straightening one's right view (Ditṭhijukamma). Therefore, the part of Khaung Laung is built to remind all pilgrims to do ten meritorious deeds as the Buddha taught.

Kyinn Wunn

This part of pagoda is called Kyinn Wunn. Kyinn Wunn is forming five circular coils. That five coils show the five kinds of existence: celestial existence (Devagati), human existence (Manussagati), Ghost and lower deity existence (Petagati), animal existence (Tiracchānagati) and damned existence (Nirayagati). The reason of building that part is to know that there are many existences in the world. A person, who does good deed, will get good existences. And a person, who does bad deed, will get bad existences. On the other hand, this is the aim to get the Dhamma knowledge. It can be got through knowing that all beings are wondering about in the world. Therefore, the part of Kyinn Wunn is meaningful in the religious point of view.

Shit Hmaut

Shit Hmaut is a part having eight faces in the pagoda. In English, Shit Hmaut means eight sides. The structure of this part is having eight sides and eight small terraces. Because this is forming with eight sides, this part is called Shit Hmauk. All upper parts of Shit Hmaut in the pagoda are circular shaped. The style of Shit Hmaut is polygonal shaped, not circular shaped. In changing style from circular shaped to polygonal shaped, eight faces part helps to be very well-proportion in pagoda. That part shows the high standard of Myanmar architecture. Eight faces with eight terraces means eight kinds of birth and death. These are- rebirth from egg (Aṇḍajapaṭisandhi), rebirth from mother's womb (Jalābujapaṭisandhi), rebirth with invisible Kamma power (Opapātikapaṭisandhi), rebirth from moisture (Saṃsedajapaṭisandhi), death by decaying of life (Āyukkhayacuti), death by decaying of Kamma (Kammakkhayacuti), death by decaying of danger (Ubbhakkhayacuti) and death by accident (Upaddhedakakammacuti). The reason of building eight terraces in pagoda is that to show there are four

kinds of rebirth and four kinds of death in the world. On the other hand, it is to notice that a person will face up to these sufferings of eight kinds of birth and death, whenever he wonders about in the world.

Pit Sa Yan

Beneath the part of Shit Hmaut, the ladder shaped part can be found in the pagoda. This part is known as Pit Sa Yan. In English, it is called terraces. It looks like a ladder. It has three steps. These are named as A-htat-pit-sa-yan (upper terrace), A-lae-pit-sa-yan (middle terrace) and Aut-pit-sa-yan (lower terrace). In Oo Pwar pagoda, the part of Pit Sa Yan has four angles. Each side is decorated with triple ladders and one gate. They are called Net-hlae-gar (celestial ladders) and Net-moke (celestial gate) respectively. Each corner of upper terrace has a small pagoda. And each of the corners of middle and lower terraces, a vase is placed. They may adopt from the style of Bagan pagoda. The three steps of Pit Sa Yan refer to the three kinds of craving: sensual craving (Kāmatanḥā), craving for existence (Bhavatanḥā) and craving for non-existence (Vibhavatanḥā). In pagoda, the part of Kyinn Wunn and Shit Hmaut are depending on the part of Pit-sa-yan. It is the illustration of craving. These three kinds of craving is a real cause of life. Because of having these craving, the suffering of birth and death and the suffering of getting existence are facing. Therefore, it can be known that in order to show the sense of craving, the part of Pit Sa Yan is built in the pagoda.

Pan Tin Khon

The base part of Oo Pwar pagoda is called Pan Tin Khon (Pedestal). Since it is a base of the pagoda, it is also called Phanat Taw. It is a type of square. At every corner of the part, a small statue of lion is placed. And at every sides of this part, railing of celestial ladder is placed with the decoration of Manussīha and giant sculpture. In the pagoda, Pan Tin Khon is added to place the alms flowers and something like that. This part show one of the Myanmar cultures that Myanmar people use to donate something to pagoda when they worship and wish. So the part of Pan Tin Khon is built to wish something.

The Sculptures and Religious Buildings in Oo Pwar Pagoda

Besides the parts of Oo Pwar pagoda, the sculptures and religious buildings will be presented. In the compound of Oo Pwar pagoda, there are many sculptures and religious buildings.

The Lion Statue

There are two kinds of lion statue in pagoda: the lion statue at the gate and the small lion statue at the corners of the pagoda. Firstly, the former will be discussed.

Oo Pwar pagoda has a wide compound and a large gate on each of its four sides. The main gate of the pagoda is in the West. The first thing that can be seen before approaching the gate is two big lions, which of them are at each side of the gate and face the road. Actually, the reason of placing the statue of the animal 'lion' is not just because of the architectural decoration but also because of the religious belief. By placing the statues of lions at the gate, the sacred pagodas are believed prevent danger.

About the statue of lion, there is a well known traditional story. A group of monks entered a forest and chose a cave to meditate in. In this cave resided and ill tiger. But the monks did not know. Whenever they meditated, the tiger would snatch the last monk and make a good meal of him. The group of monks found their numbers reduced every morning. But one day, the monks were reciting sermons as a prelude to their meditation. A young robust lion happened to pass by the entrance to the cave. The words of the Dhamma gave him peace and tranquility. The lion was mesmerized and literally transfixed in that position. At that time, he saw the tiger preparing to snatch a monk. The lion decided to protect the monks. Then he sat down with hind legs bent, forelegs ramrod straight, paws flat on the ground, with menacing claws prominently displayed. The tiger when it saw that imposing figure at the mouth of cave backtracked and left the place never to return. From that day onward, whenever the monks recite sermons together, they erect a statue of a lion at the gate to protect them from danger. As the time went by it became customary to have statues of lions at the gates of every Pagoda. Therefore, placing the lion statues at the gate of pagoda is the aim to protect the pagoda from danger.

At every corner of the pagoda, a sculpture of lion can be seen. It is similar to the purpose of the lion statue at the gate. But from the architectural point of view, it is placed to cover the angle of the base of pagoda.

Pagoda Platform

From the entrance, the wide pagoda platform can be seen. In the pagoda platform, pilgrims are paying homage, donating, meditating and doing other meritorious deeds. Therefore, the pagoda platform is a place to do good deeds by cultivating the mindfulness of the Buddha.

Small Pagodas

In the compound of the pagoda, there are small pagodas: nine small pagodas near the west wall and two small pagodas near the South East wall. In these pagodas, the names of donors were not mentioned. But it is assumed that there must be more than one donor as the architectural designs of the pagodas are quite different.

Building for Water Pot

At the corner of the pagoda platform, the building for water pots are placed. In each building, there are three water pots. The places where these buildings situated are at the corner of north-west, at the corner of North-east and at the corner of South-west. These were built to donate water to pilgrims. This is a Myanmar tradition found in every place especially in pagodas and monasteries. The buildings for water pots show the character of Myanmar people who want to do merits in any place.

Bell

In the east and west of the pagoda platform, there are two bells. The bells are not a simple style. They are decorated with beautiful floral design and colourful sculptures. The stick to strike the bell is made of wood. The bells are placed to inform sharing merits.

Bodhi Tree

In Oo Pwar pagoda, a Bodhi Tree is planted near the North gate. The Bodhi tree is a kind of Paribhogacetiya in Buddhism. In Myanmar, every pagoda has Bodhi tree. In the pagoda compound, Myanmar people use to water the Bodhi tree as a kind meritorious deed. Especially, every Kason full moon day (Vesak Day), the ceremony of watering the Bodhi tree takes place. Worshipping the Bodhi is not worshipping to a tree. They worship it in relation to the Paribhogacetiya. Watering the Bodhi tree is a kind of paying homage to the Bodhi tree (Paribhogacetiya) to provide the Buddha Sāsana.

Gyo Dai

Most Myanmar people are Theravāda Buddhist. However, some of them are strong believers of Hindu Brahman idea of astrological influence on a person's life. As a result, Myanmar pagoda compounds always have eight planetary posts. These are built at eight directions to represent eight days or planets of a week. Just as the gods of Hindu mythology ride on particular vehicles, the Myanmar planets have their own animal vehicles. These animals become the sign of a planet. (1) Planet in the South is represented by early Wednesday and the tusked elephant. (2) Planet in the Southwest is represented by Saturday and dragon. (3) Planet in the West is represented by Thursday and the rat. (4) Planet in the Northwest is represented by later Wednesday and the tusked elephant. (5) Planet in the North is represented by Friday and the Guinea pig. (6) Planet in the Northeast is represented by Sunday and the Garuda bird. (7) Planet in the East is represented by Monday and the tiger. (8) Planet in the Southeast is represented by Tuesday and the Lion. These are called Gyo Dai, in Myanmar.

In the compound of Oo-Pwar pagoda, they can be found at the foot of the Bodhi tree. At eight sites of Bodhi tree, there are eight Buddha images with a small monastery representing the eight planets. Actually, these are not pure Buddhism and do not concern with Theravāda Buddhism. Instead it can be regarded as a Myanmar tradition derived from Hinduism.

Dhammayon

Oo Pwar pagoda has two buildings called Dhammayon. They are in the east and west of the pagoda. The term 'Dhammayon' derives from the Pāḷi word 'Dhammārammaṇa'. It means the sense of Dhamma. So people try to take mindfulness of Dhamma in that building. Every morning and every evening, people come to Dhammayon to meditate and to recite the Dhamma. In the inner walls of that building, pictures of life of Buddha and the Jātaka tales are hanging. In each building, there is a large Buddha image. Therefore, the building Dhammayon was built for taking the sense of Dhamma.

The Statue of the Donor of Oo Pwar Pagoda

Near the east gate of the pagoda, there is a small brick building to place the statue of the donor of Oo Pwar pagoda. It was built as a record by other people. Together with the statue of Oo Pwar, there is another statue named a statue of Pahtaman Bo Bo Aung. Some Myanmar people believe that he

possesses a mystical power. It is a traditional belief of lay donors. By seeing that statue, it is known that in many religious buildings, non-Buddhists elements can be found.

Dagon Tai

Dagon Tai of Oo Pwar pagoda can be found at the corner of South-east of the pagoda. In English, it can be translated as a flagstaff. It is a tall post created at the pagoda so that people can worship from a distance. The staff is made of brick with a height of over 60 feet. On top of it, the statue of Hin Thar bird is placed. In the Myanmar tradition, the Dagon Tai is a flagstaff to announce that this place is a religious site.

Hin Thar Bird

Hin thar is a kind of bird. On top of the Dagon Tai, the statue of Hin Thar can be found. In the mouth of Hin Thar, a ball is hanging down. It is a thing to balance the Hin Thar statue. In the statue of Hin Thar, a big body is support by a pair of thin legs. The portion of Hin Thar's tail is very large. But the portion of its head is very small. So the statue will lean towards the tail and fall down. So adding a ball in its mouth makes not only to balance the statue of Hin Thar on the Dagon Tai but also to be beautiful.

On the top of the bird, there is a golden umbrella and at the bottom of Dagon Tai, there is a large sculptures of Sakka (the king of god), giant, dragon and Garuna bird. They refer to the story of Javanahamsa in the Jātaka Text of Buddha's teaching. So Hin Thar bird with umbrella is represented to the Bodhisatta. These sculptures are built in order to remind the teaching of the Buddha in that story.

Nagayun Phayar

The image of the Buddha sitting on the coiled tail of dragon is called 'Nagayun Phayar'. It was built in a small lake. The history of this sculpture came from Buddhist canon. The Buddha, four weeks after attaining the Enlightenment, resided near the lake named Musalindā. When the rain fell heavily, a huge dragon in the lake called Musalindā dragon approached to the Buddha and covered from rain. From that happen, people illustrate the Buddha image with a huge dragon sculpture in the pagoda. This is built not only for telling the life of Buddha but also for showing the praise of honorable Buddha. Besides, It can be seen that the influence of Buddhist canon is till over the field of Myanmar art and Arcitecture.

Conclusion

Starting from the Buddha's time, Buddhist people have always paid homage to the Buddha in various ways. And to pay homage, they made places of worship, which represented the Buddha. In previous days, some Buddhist people prohibited the representation of the Buddha in human form, so many symbols representing the Buddha emerged. Among them, the pagoda is a kind of symbol.

In this paper, it can be seen that there are four kinds of pagodas in Buddhism. Therefore, the pagoda is not only the funeral mound forming pyramid shaped but also the tree, image and furniture of the holy person. A pagoda must have a chamber within it. But since there is Udissacetiya, it can be known that there are also other kinds of pagoda without enshrining.

The contrast of paying homage to pagodas between at the pre-Buddhist time and at Buddhist time can be seen in the pagoda. During pre-Buddhist times, paying homage to the pagoda was for the sake of the welfare of worldliness such as helping people from danger. In Buddhism, paying homage to the pagoda is not only for the sake of the welfare of worldliness but also that of unworldly welfare.

With the development of pagoda construction, they built the pagoda with various senses. And by adding the architecture, they decorated gloriously. In this way, the pagoda is built with 16-parts. And the fact can be known that these parts express as follow:

- a. there are 31 abodes in the world,
- b. there is also the path to escape from the world,
- c. the path to Nibbāna is only practicing the Noble Eight Fold Paths and
- d. Nibbāna is supreme.

Furthermore, at the gate of Oo Pwar pagoda, the sculptures of lions are placed. By studying the background of this sculpture, the sense of this sculpture means lion protects the Buddha Sāsana. By studying the sculptures of Hin Thar, Dragon, Sakka, Giant etc, it can be assumed that the Buddhist canon can influence the field of Myanmar culture. In other ways, it can be regarded that the Buddha is the most Honourable One of all beings.

Buddhist people plant banyan trees in the surrounding of the pagoda. Every Kason Full Moon Days, they water that tree as a sacred thing. So it must be considered that Buddhism must be the religion of worshipping the tree. In fact, this is a kind of paying homage to the Buddha. Because the Buddha attempted to attain the Enlightenment under the banyan tree. Therefore, this is not ordinary tree; this is called Bo-tree. Bo-tree is a kind of Paribhogacetiya for Buddhism. So it can be assumed that planting Bo-tree in the surrounding of pagoda and watering as a sacred thing is a kind of paying homage to the Paribhogacetiya.

In the compound of the pagoda, there is also the building called Dhammayon. The purpose of this building can be regarded to resident pilgrim and to do merit by cultivating the mindfulness of the Buddha, by counting the beads and by taking meditation.

Through the pagoda, the religion, opinion and thought of the donors of pagoda can be guessed. And the condition of the religion of that time and that place can be studied. Because of the mixture of religion, in the pagoda of Theravāda Buddhism, the traces of other religion can be seen.

This research can give the knowledge of the purpose of pagoda construction. Therefore, pagodas are needed to be conserved as cultural heritages. This is not only the supporting the Buddhism but also the conservation of Myanmar's cultural heritage.

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