

Symbolism of Buddhist Architecture in Indian Building and Structure

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Abstract:- The birth of Buddhism in India had led to the emergence of worship buildings for devotees of Buddhism. It started from during the reign of Asoka in India in 3 AD. Asoka founded the architectural features and certain famous elements that reflected Buddhist architecture found on monuments and temples. In this writing, the author discusses the architecture of Buddha based on the chronology of the reign of the kings in India, as well as describing the concepts and elements found on the buildings. The author also utilized the qualitative method as the main analytical method based on the content. The findings of this study show that Buddhist architecture continues to influence the features and elements of worship buildings alongside the development of Buddhism in different nations around the world.

Keywords:- *Worship building, Buddha architecture, concept, elements.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The development of architecture in India is regarded as very interesting in the development of human civilization around the world. This is because all the world architecture has close relationships with religious rituals of the human. The Buddhist worship buildings in India had a distinctive architecture that was influenced by the ruling party in the past. It is not only reflected in the building of the temple, but its own value in the design of the building. In this study, the author found that Buddhist architecture in India emphasized the concept of ritual and worship that influenced the design and elements of the temples around the world, in line with the expansion of Buddhism of the time.

II. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Among the objectives of this study were:

- To identify the chronology of Asoka's reign in India as the starting year of Buddhist architecture.
- To explain the characteristics found in Buddhist architecture.
- To know the significant influence over the worship building in world civilization.

III. REVIEW OF METHODOLOGY

In this study, the qualitative method was used to focus on methods of data collection and data analysis. Both the formulations were more suitable to be used as a review of materials examined using the data. The author used data collection in setting up research and observations followed by the method of content analysis. The observation method helps a writer to view a religious building by using methods of photography. The use of this method helps the author to make clarification based on an in-depth study.

IV. HISTORY OF INDIAN ARCHITECTURE

India is a country that is famous for its Indus River Valley civilization and human history. Apart from the famous Indus and Gangga River, the nation is renowned for its Hinduism ritual and practices. A lot of its buildings are based on the Hindu religious symbols and beliefs. The birth of Buddhism in India has also immensely contributed to the influence in architectural designs in regional and other structures.

The field of architecture grew as a result of the influence of Buddhism, followed by the Hindu religion. Historically, early Buddhism in fact was more advanced than the Hindu religion. This is because the role played by the ruler had changed the circumstances during which a Hindu King, Asoka, professed Buddhism.

V. BUDDHIST ARCHITECTURE

In the discussion of the architecture of Buddha, Asoka played a major role in the spread of Buddhism in India. However, Buddha himself warned his students to not worship him as a God, but in the first century Ad Buddha was worshipped as a god. In this review of the architecture of India, the author divided Buddhist architecture into 3 main phases;

- The Government of Mauri
- The Government of Shunga
- The Government of and haras

A. *The Government of Mauri*

The history of the spread of Buddhism in India in the beginning depended on the deed of Asoka of Maurya Empire. Asoka was the grandson of Chandragupta, the founder of Maurya Dynasty. He was a ruler who professed Buddhism after leaving the Hindu religion (Sen. T.T, 2010) the spread of Buddhism was a process that happened slowly and steadily in certain surroundings.

The Mauri Government under the reign of Asoka in 300 century AD brought Buddhism. Asoka was devoted to this religion until the existence of Persian influence in Buddhist architecture. During his era, buildings such as the pyramid and Zingurat had similar construction principles where the foundation became bigger and the structure became smaller with the increase in height. This principle became the main focus in Buddhism architecture (Chopra. P.N, 1983).

Among the elements identified in Buddhist architecture, are the Stambh as monumental pillars containing carvings of sacred verses from the Pali Scriptures which served as a tool for the spread of Buddhism. The pillars have a height of 40 feet and weighing 50 tons and at the top of the pillars there are carvings of animals, the cosmos and even bodi trees (Zulkifli H, 1985) The Stambh as were the brainchild of Asoka himself, which later became a symbol of grandeur during his reign.

In addition, there is a Buddhist Boudhanath structure made of heaps of rocks and later became a mound to indicate that it is a shrine. The mound turned into of a half circle. With the spread of Buddhism, Boudhanath was carved with words on the stone. Stupa is usually erected beside carriageways, Buddhism worship complexes and also across the road. The earliest Boudhanath fence that still exists is available in Bharhut (still available at the Museum in Calcutta), that originates from the 2nd Century BC CM is known as Sanchi, measuring 16.5 meters tall (H. Musterberge, 1970). Most of the Boudhanath built were similar to the Stupas in other countries that practice the teachings of Buddha (Sarkar, 1996). At the peak of the reign of Asako, there were 84,000 pieces of various Boudhanath objects.

B. *Government of Shunga*

In the reign of Shunga in the Sanchi province, Boudhanath were enlarged and the buildings were repaired. The Vedika or fence surroundings the Boudhanath was made of wood and was later replaced with stones. With the erection of the stone Vedika, the Boudhanath constructions was strengthened and were considered sacred elements which served as the fence of the Boudhanath Government of Shunga.

Torana was a gate away which was essentially a traditional village element made of bamboo, while the two pillars were made of stone with a height of 10.3 meters. On the surface of the stone, there were sculptures that described the tale of the Buddha. Overall, the torana was considered as the sacred gateway to the Boudhanath.

C. *The Government of Andhras*

During the Government of Andhras reign, war often erupted with other territories, but the spread of Buddhism was not affected, but it grew rapidly. The change appeared in architecture, such as when the hollow Stupa was modified by using brick, making it hollow and shaped like a bicycle wheel. The marble Stupa Amaravatiis, the largest Stupa in India contained carvings of big and majestic statues. This Stupa was made of white marble as its main material and monument which is still remembered by the Indian community and are very popular in Buddhist literature.

The concept of Buddhist art is related to the concept of Buddhism itself. Buddhism originates from India and the founder was Gautama Siddhartha. In this religion, there are numerous concepts which are very complex to describe. It deliberates on human existence, especially the philosophy of life, the question of morality and family. The word Buddha was retrieved from Sanskrit, which means waking up, an enlightenment away from the light of truth. It has its own secret book Tripataka which means Three Baskets with its own teachings.

Today, there are two main sects in Buddhism, Theravada Sect which means small vehicle and Mahayana Sect which means large vehicle. Both denominations were named based on the number of followers and their influence. For example, a small vehicle has few followers and vice versa (Anderson, Norman, 1976). In Buddhism, there are four 'truths' known as 'the Four Noble Truth Philosophy' which emphasizes on Dukka (sad), Samudaya (the reasons for sadness), Nirodha (destruction) and Magga (eight roads heading towards the formation of morality).

In Buddhist philosophy, the stambha (the cause), is an Indian symbol known as the statue of a lion. There are photos and writings describing the teachings of Buddha on the statue. Stambha in Banares is the first place Buddha delivered a sermon while the four Lions indicate that Buddhism teachings will spread around the world. The Elephant symbolizes the revelation of the Buddha in his body, while the cow is a symbol of birth and the horse is the ultimate servitude. There is also the lotus that symbolizes the Sun, indicating perfection.

In the human mind, Buddha made the lotus as the symbol in the thoughts of a person. This is because the lotus bears fruit when it blooms. Every human being is like the lotus that contains the seed of Buddha and a blooming flower as mentioned before. That is why pillars erected by Asoka have lotus carved as the symbol of Buddhism.

Based on the author's point of view, Buddhism is growing and has a major influence in rural India as the Hindu teachings contain injustice and favors the Brahmin and Ksyatria caste and assume that only these people can reach Nirwana. This is the reason that caused the spread of Buddhism around the world, which led to the existence of

various forms of architecture, a result of the influence of the religion.

VI. FINDINGS FOR RESEARCH

In line with the expansion of Buddhism in the world, the architecture influenced by Buddhist elements and symbols evolves extensively in the world civilization. It can be seen in Indonesia through the Borobudur Temple. Elements and concepts used in Buddhist architecture indirectly influenced the architecture of Hindu and Muslim through certain elements such as stambh as, tarona etc.

VII. CONCLUSION

The birth of Buddhism in India indirectly became the main factors of the development of Buddhist architecture based on devotees of the religion. It continues to grow in line with time and has a great influence to the worship buildings existing around the world. Elements of architecture in places far away from India have its own uniqueness which has no relation to the immediate surroundings, which obviously shows that they are influenced by Buddhist elements and symbols.

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