

Study on Encased Stupas and Temples of Bagan

Than Aye*

Abstract

The meaning of encased monuments is a type of Buddhist religious structure whose inner monument was enclosed by an outer one. Encased monuments can be seen either due to earthquake or human destruction; both the outer and the inner ones are being exposed to the human eye. Most of the monuments have collapsed, thus exposing the inner encased one. Even though the outer shell was totally destroyed, some encased monuments remained just the inner encased one. The aim of this paper is to know the period when the encased monuments were built in Bagan.

Key Words: Encased Monuments

Introduction

Bagan has many material remains of archaeological evidences. These remains include two main kinds such as religious monuments and non-religious or secular buildings. In fact, the former one see in enormous numbers and according to the inventory list, there are totally 3122. These can be classified into 8 main types such as Stupas, Temples, Monasteries, Theins, Tipitaka libraries, the Foundation palaces; Rock cut caves and Image houses. Among them, the Buddhist monuments in architectural type of stupa and ceti reflect the significant feature to evolution of its processes. Particularly, it is strongly provided by the structural remains in encased monument type - meaning to inner monument covered by the outer one.

The encased monuments can be found scattered all over the place surrounding in Bagan. There were (71) monuments identified as encased monuments at Bagan city: encased stupas (52 stupas), encased Temples (16 Temples) and encased images (3 encased images). Among them encased stupas and temple's list will be described in this paper.

Background History of Encased Monuments

The feature of encasement is by no means a recent innovation, for it dates back to the earliest day of the solid shrines. According to the Buddhist literature, the earliest evidences to the religious ritual Practices in encasement of Buddhist monument can be seen at the history of Shwedagon Pagoda. In its hoary legend, Taphussa and Bhalika from Okkala (now at Yangon) went to India for taking trading venture. They met the Buddha under the sacred Bo tree and offered Him honey cakes. Having partaken the cakes presented by them the Buddha bestowed on them eight scared hairs from his head. On their return they were deprived of two hairs by the king of Ajetta and another two by the king of Nagas. Arriving at Okkala they were greeted by king Okkalapa who held a great festival in honour of the scared relics. With the help of Sakka, king of the Gods, a site on Theinguttara Hill located outside the gates of Asitanjana was selected to lay the foundation of a pogada for enshrining the relics. On digging for the foundation on the site, relics of three preceding Buddhas, namely the stuff, water-diper and lower garment were recovered. These were buried again with the sacred hairs brought by the two brothers.

* Associated Professor, Dr, Department of Archaeology, Yadanabon University

When the relic over the relic chamber was erected a golden pagoda enclosed in a silver one which in turn was enclosed by a series of tin, copper, lead, marble and iron pagodas, finally a brick pagoda was built to encase the whole series of smaller pagodas. It was only twenty-seven feet high. And then, the epigraphic evidence for the art on encasement of the Buddhist religious monuments is found in the stone inscription of Bagan. It is known as Ananta Sura's inscription and it is situated in the shed within the precinct of Leymyatnha complex at Minnanthu village in Bagan. Actually there are three inscribed stone pillars of Ananta Sura and wife (No. 2, No.6, No. 81 B). These inscriptions were established in ACE 1223 to ACE 1235 in the first half of the 13th century of Late Bagan Period. In this inscription, it runs as;

". . . At this place around, the tank called Amana (Minnanthu), planted many toddy palms in a monastery around. then enclosed it with two- walls, made of brick and within (these) walls upon of brick and within (these) walls upon a find platform (the plinth of which is in the shape of Kalasa pot and then constructed a hollow-pagoda (temple). When enshrining that hollow-pagoda; encased the relics of the Holy Body in a Sandawood casket, a gold (casket), a silver (casket), a gilt and jeweled (casket) an ivory (casket), a red copper (casket), a gilt and jeweled within a stone (miniature) pagoda. (more over) offered reverently and set therein cushions of gold, cushion of silver, parched rice of gold, parched rice of silver, parched rice of silver, gold chandeliers and silver chandeliers. As for the stone (miniature) pagoda, it was painted and criss-crossed with copper wire. The spire was made of gold. Above the spire (we) set up a gold umbrella, hung with pearls and coral. wrapped (the whole miniature pagoda) up to the spire with seven folds of cloth and on the cloth were stamped the gold seal of the Kyattannuiy. There was a image of the lord cast of thirty (ticals) of gold, a silver image of the lord cast of thirty (ticals) of gold, a silver image of the lord cast fifty (ticals) of silver and a gilt image of the lord made of marble. Over these also spread gold and silver umbrellas. enshrined all these various things. . ."

The earliest evidence for the Buddhist stupas in Mynammar was foundation of KKG-3, one of the excavated mounds in Beikthano City. The foundation of the Stupa KKG-3 has three concentric rings. The inner most ring and the outermost ring have the extensions of square brick foundation at the four cardinal directions. The outer extensions may be the stair cases and the extensions from the inner ring must be pedestal for the Ayaka pillars, like the great stupa at Amaravati of India. To compare to the Amaravati, the great stupa of KKG-3 (Beikthano) was smaller in stupa size and wider in walk ways. Out of two circular walkways around the central stupa, the inner is higher than the outer.

In fact, elaborate characteristic feature of the Pyu Stupa occurred on the encased stupa of Thaug Pyae Kone at Sri ksetra. After removing the outer stupa, the particular arrangement of the stupa consists of multiple terraces, bell shaped edge, belt, dome, harmika, chattravali, and lotus bud shaped finial. The earliest stupa in Bagan may be nearly or exactly the same shape as Pyu miniature stupas. The proof is that the glazed stupa, Ngakywenadaung, was the same as the form of relic casket and miniature terracotta stupa from Sriksetra. The earlier stupas stand on the low circular terrace while the later stand on the square and higher terraces.

Another early type stupa which is exactly like the Baw Baw Gyi stupa, from Sri ksetra, was stupa No.1973 near Taung Bi village in Bagan. These two types of stupas, Nga Kywe Nadaung and Stupa No.1973 were the true Pyu type stupas of Bagan area for the earliest times. The stupa slightly changed in style from Baw Baw Gyi, was the Myin Kabar stupa (No.1328). Three circular terraces had been changed to octagonal shape single terrace. The bell shaped end at the bottom of the belt is more prominent and the chattavali is taller from Thaug Pyae Kon encased stupa and also the Chattavali style from Gupta period miniature stupas. The second bell shape stupa of Bagan from the earlier period was the encased stupa No. 1960, called Scovell encased stupa. The bell shaped stupa on the square terrace was put with two extensions. Stupa and terrace were put again on the square base. These types of stupas from the pre Anawratha period can be found in many places around Bagan area.

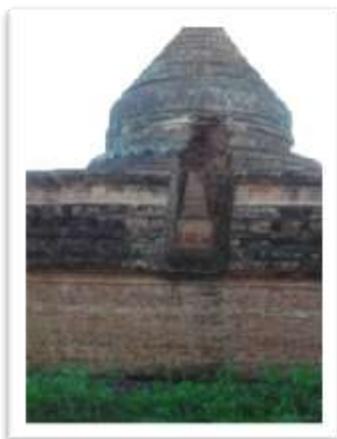
There are three reasons for building an encased stupa or a stupa within a stupa. These are : (1) The original donor built the inner stupa. It was small in size. When the second donor decided to build a bigger one in the same site, the larger stupa encasing the smaller one came up. (2) When the smaller inner stupa was originally built, it was mostly designed to be used as a sacred place to keep the Buddha's relics. After doing this, the donor built a larger stupa to encase the smaller one. (3) The donor decided to build a stupa encasing the smaller stupa which was either in a very bad shape or about to collapse.

There were (71) monuments identified as encased monuments at Bagan city. They can be divided into three categories:

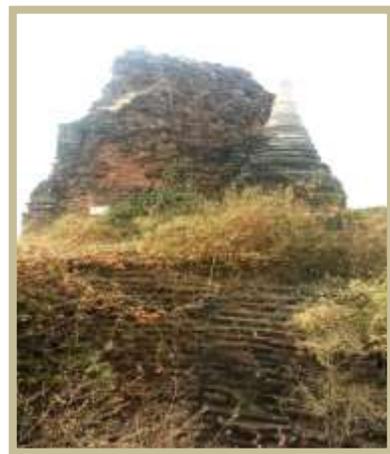
1. Encased stupas (52 Encased stupas)
2. Encased Temples (16 Encased temples)
3. Encased images (3 Encased images)

Encasing

Encased stupas can be seen either due to earthquake or human destruction; both the outer and the inner stupas are being exposed to the human eye. Most of the monuments have collapsed, thus exposing the inner encased one. Even though the outer shell was totally destroyed, some encased stupas remained just the inner encased stupas.



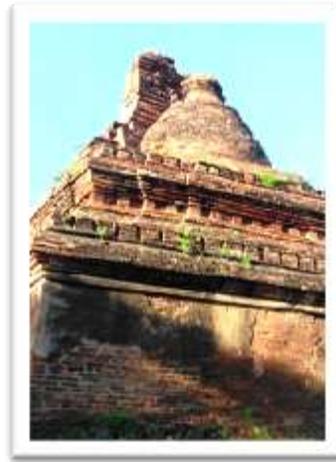
Monument
No.1689



Monument
No-345



Monument
No.1905



Monument
No.289

Encasing means that a pagoda is built over another pagoda by enclosing the earlier-built pagoda. There are three kinds of encasing of pagodas. They are:

1. Encasing a pagoda by a pagoda of larger dimension,
2. Encasing a pagoda by a pagoda by raising the floor to a small extent,
3. Encasing a pagoda by a pagoda by lateral extension.

In other words, when a pagoda built by one's grandparents is repaired, a larger pagoda is built over the floor of the grandparents' pagoda is type one. By raising a little of its level is type two and the pagoda is built over the grandparents' pagoda by lateral extension is the third type. Thus the encasing pagoda is larger in dimension.

Uplift

The type of structure built by raising the level of the original floor will be described. There are three types of such structure:

1. Building an equal-sized or slightly larger-sized pagoda by encasing the older pagoda,
2. Building a pagoda over the older one by raising the floor level to a greater height by encasing the older pagoda.
3. Building a pagoda over the older one without lateral extension by encasing the older pagoda or building a slightly larger pagoda by slight lateral extension.

Table List of Encased Stupas at Bagan

No.	Measurement	Period	Name	Type	Outer Stupas Size
1	1	11	Shwezigon	stupa	very large
2	1059	11	-	stupa	small
3	1193	11	Paw Daw Mu Hpaya	stupa	small
4	1639	11	A Twin Zigon	stupa	small
5	1037	12	-	stupa	small
6	1086	12	Seinnyet Nyima	stupa	small
7	1155	12	-	stupa	small
8	1158	12/13	Kyauk Myet Maw	stupa	small
9	1250	12	-	stupa	small
10	1397	13	-	stupa	small

11	1469	12/13	-	stupa	small
12	1626	12	-	stupa	small
13	1631	12	-	stupa	small
14	1632	12	-	stupa	small
15	1689	12	-	stupa	small
16	1690	11	Scovel Paw Daw Mu	stupa	small
17	1696	12	-	stupa	small
18	1754	12	-	stupa	small
19	1855	12	-	stupa	small
20	289	12	Hsutaung Pyi	stupa	small
21	329	13	-	stupa	small
22	348	13	-	stupa	small
23	404	13	-	stupa	small
24	445	13	-	stupa	small
25	531	13	-	stupa	small
26	726	13	-	stupa	small
27	805	13	-	stupa	small
28	819	13	-	stupa	medium
29	855	13	-	stupa	small
30	1003	13	-	stupa	small
31	1065	13	-	stupa	small
32	1183	13	-	stupa	small
33	1313	13	-	stupa	small
34	1367	13	-	stupa	small
35	1547	13	-	stupa	small
36	1663	13	-	stupa	small
37	1666	13	-	stupa	small
38	1722	13	-	stupa	small
39	1755	13	-	stupa	small
40	1827	13	-	stupa	small
41	1870	13	-	stupa	small
42	1872	13	-	stupa	small
43	1905	13	-	stupa	small
44	1944	13	-	stupa	small
45	1962	13	-	stupa	small
46	2004	13	-	stupa	small
47	2014	13	-	stupa	small
48	2065	13	-	stupa	small
49	2132	13	-	stupa	small
50	2133	13	-	stupa	small
51	2143	13	-	stupa	small
52	345	12/13	-	stupa	small

Table List of Encased Temples at Bagan

No.	Monument No	Period	Name	Type	Size	Storey	Faces
1	956	11	-	Temple	Medium	1	North
2	996	11	-	Temple	Medium	1	-
3	1182	12	-	Temple	Medium	1	East
4	1697	12	-	Temple	Medium	1	-
5	194	13	Shwe Mot Htaw	Temple	Medium	1	East
6	1022	13	Po-daw-mu-hpaya	Temple	Medium	1	East
7	1225	13	-	Temple	Medium	1	East
8	1638	13	-	Temple	Medium	1	-
9	1698	13	-	Temple	Medium	1	-
10	1796	13	-	Temple	Medium	1	West
11	2129	13	-	Temple	Small	1	North
12	1047	13	mound	-	Medium	-	-
13	919	14	mound	-	Small	-	-
14	920	14	Shwe-Mot Htaw	Temple	Small	1	East
15	1956	17	Shwe-Mot Htaw	Temple	Small	1	West
16	1944	19	Shwe-Mot Htaw	Image house	Medium	1	East

Conclusion

By studying the Table of encased stupas, inner one is Stupa type in Bagan. So, smaller inner stupa was enclosed by larger outer stupa. According to Table of encased temples, No-956, and No-996 are remains of the encased stupa, without the outer or inner stupas. No.1225, No-1158, No-289, No-2014, No. 920 and No. 1956 are clearly seen. Inner stupa is smaller than outer Temple. It is assumed that smaller inner stupas were enclosed by larger outer Temples. The smaller encased stupas were built during the early period of Bagan era, and the enclosed outer Temples were built in the 12th and 13th century.

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