

A STUDY ON THE CULTURAL EVIDENCES OF HANLIN

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Abstract

The Pyus set up their city at Hanlin. Hanlin city is one of the earliest city states of the Pyu and it is famous for its fabulous culture not only in Myanmar but also in the world. Cultural evidences such as kind of city walls, brick buildings, entrance to the city, coins, earthen wears, beads, bronze, silver and gold ornaments and inscriptions are sound proof of cultural developments of Hanlin Pyu. The funeral urns and burial ground, found in Hanlin indicate that Hanlin developed from Bronze Age to Pyu Period. The sources that need for the research are collected from libraries, books, newspapers, journals, and Hanlin field study trip. This research paper is combined with the theoretical and practical knowledge.

Key words: Pyu, Hanlin, Culture, evidence, inscription

Introduction

The earliest people of Myanmar are Mon, Pyu, Thet, Thaw, Kadu, Chin, and Kayin. Among them Pyu has entered Myanmar from northeast route and then they had settled in upper and central part of the Ayeyawaddy and Chindwin Valley in about 2nd century B.C. (Burma socialist Program Party, 1970). Pyus had lived up to Kabaw regions in Chindwin Valley and from Shwebo region to Pyay in the south of Ayeyawaddy Valley. Pyus have settled from upper Shweli River to lower Mottama in thirty two towns (G.H. Luce, 1970). It can be studied that twenty towns of the Pyu have been found in present day. Hanlin is situated between North Latitude 22°28' and East Longitude 95°46', 11 miles southeast of Shwebo which is the land between the Mu and Ayeyaddy Rivers. The Chinese are the first people to record about Pyu people. According to the Chinese record it is known that the original place of the Pyu was Yonchan in the Yunan province of Southern China (Chit San Win, 2011). They had live in Yonchan (present day Paungshan) and called they themselves as Tu-law-chu, the Chinese called them as Piao and the Javanese called them as Tu-le-chu. G.H Luce said that Tircul which was found in Hteehlaingmin Inscription is similar to Tu-law-chu. Therefore Tircul is the Pyu and finally they were conquered by Nan Cho. Bamar called them as Pyu. Concerning the Pyus who are called various names, some scholars say that Pyus are Tibeto-Burman race and some say that they are Thai - Shan race (Dr. Than Tun, 1968). The cultural evidences were collected in Hinlin archaeological museum and historical sites, It is described the 1905 excavation of ancient city Hanlin led by Taw Sein Kho, excavated findings of the coins, bricks and a stone inscription in Sanskrit language from that time excavation, then the six excavations of the Department of Archaeology from 1958 to 1963, excavated findings of various types of pots, evidence of manufacturing various iron

implements of iron chain, hook, awl, chisel, tongs, scraper and various sizes of small knife, sword, axe, arrow-head, super, pitch fork and spikes, various and semi-precious beads, Pyu inscriptions, urns and the recent findings of burial ground. According to the excavated findings, Hanlin would have been developed the successive historical periods from the Bronze Age to Pyu period and left cultural heritage. For the long historic period and cultural development had been recognized the list of World Heritage by UNESCO in 2014.

Aim and Objectives

The main aim of this research paper is to study on the cultural evidence of Hanlin.

The objectives of study are as follow:

- to preserve cultural heritage of Pyu
- to expose unique feature cultural heritage of Pyu
- to expose unique feature of Pyu city, Hanlin

A Study on the Cultural Evidence of Hanlin

Hanlin is situated at Latitude 22°28' North and Longitude 95°46' East and lies about 11 miles Southeast of Shwebo which is the land between Mu and Ayeyawaddy Rivers. Hanlin is a rectangular in shape and its length is about two miles in the east and west and one mile in the north and south. It is also known that Hanlin is described as San-t'o in the Chinese records. A low hill lies between Hanlin and Ayeyawaddy River. Moreover a slope around Hanlin runs Ridge which separates Mu Valley from Ayeyaddy Valley thus Hanlin has two slope factors. In the southeast of Hanlin, it can be found that a pond formed by damming up open end of a ravine called ta-phet-se Kan in Myanmar. Hanlin Inn is also situated in the southeast of Hanlin City. (Ma, Thida Myint, 2006)

It can be found that the city wall is no more original in form and it could have been damaged. It is said that Hanlin city wall had been constructed with only brick and there was a moat outside except on the southern part of Hanlin. There is also a bulwark running parallel to it, paved with limestone on the north, east and west of moat. It can be studied that there were no farm lands in the enclave wall area. The landscape of inner place area is about 400ft above sea level in the northwestern part and it downs about 350 feet to the south eastern part of Hanlin city. (Ma, Thida Myint, 2006). It can be studied that it would have been harder than Beikthano in water supply problem. Hanlin had been cultivated by irrigation system because town situated in arid lands of Central Myanmar. Hanlin is situated on a branch of China trade route which crossed northern Myanmar. At the present time, regions which lie on the trade route between China and Myanmar include Shwebo region and thus it can be assumed that Hanlin or Shwebo region on the way of trade route between India and Southeast Asia. It is said that there are hot springs near Hanlin old city and these are also significant facts. Among them some hot springs has heat temperature 106 F, 114 F respectively. The Pyu people who lived in Hanlin city were the agriculturalists and they had inhabited in the plain region, only 300 feet height above the sea level and made their cultivation based on Nagyon tank. Shwebo, Kyaukmyaung, khinoo, Seithhon, Htepin, Hlepin, Hladaw, Mouksokhon, Wetlet, Sataung, Padu and Shamemakar would have been the supporting areas of Hanlin. It can be assumed that Hanlin developed between the A.D 4th and 9th Centuries. (Ma, Thida Myint, 2006). According to archaeological excavations, the development of Hanlin Pyu city can be studied. Like Beikthano, Hanlin city had been constructed by the moat and palace wall and there are two walls. One city wall is enclave for palace or citadel site and another is for the whole city. The evidences from excavations indicate that there is a moat outside the enclave wall. On the East and west of outside city walls, there are two walls and exterior wall is about one mile from East to west and two miles from south to north and it is rectangular in shape. It is assumed that Hanlin was influenced by the culture of Beikthano in the early Pyu period to be exactly speaking from A.D 1st Century to A.D 3rd or 4th Centuries. However, it can be assumed that this city had come to have its own culture from A.D 7th century to 9th century. (Ma, Thida Myint, 2006). In 1905, the excavation of the ancient city Hanlin had been carried out the team led by Taw Sein Kho and the nine plots were excavated at that time. It can be studied that the excavations found the coins, bricks and a stone inscription in Sanskrit language. In addition, the years between 1958 and 1963, the six excavations had been done by the Department of Archaeology. (U Aung Thaw, 2017). The excavation revealed the evidences on the art and architecture of Hanlin Pyu because the nineteen mounds had been excavated under the codes of HL (Hanlin). It is, said that HLI, HL 2, HL 6, HL 7

and HL 9 are known as the palace mound; naturally included the walls and barriers had been uncovered. (Ma, Thida Myint, 2006). In the excavation of HL 2, the two brick walls running from north to south were discovered. At HL 6, a wall running from the east to the west had been excavated. Although these walls from HL 2 and 6 were not connected, the directional way shows their architectural concepts in building structure because the two walls would have been merged together in somewhere. (Ma, Thida Myint, 2006). HL3 is located near the gate of the ancient city wall and a structure likewise the wall was found in the excavation. It runs from the east to the west, the main brick wall running from the east to the west is 105 feet long and the maximum breadth from north to south is eleven feet and the minimum breadth is eight feet. The structure would have been a barricade because it does not appear to be a residential building; no utensils were found in the area. (Ma, Thida Myint, 2006). HL 4 is located in the southern part and city wall had been excavated. Some part of the city wall was unearthed; the breadth of the city wall is 29 feet and 6 inches, but it is uneven in thickness. HL 5 is located between the interior city wall and the outer city wall to the south of the ancient Hanlin. From that excavation, a square structure with a porch in the east had been excavated. The main hall is 44 feet from east to west, and 43 feet and 3 inches from north to south. The south wall of the porch is 20 feet and 6 inches in length and its northern wall, is 22 feet in length. In the building, the five burial urns, if two types of the smooth surfaced and decorative relief had been found. (Ma, Thida Myint, 2006). HL5, HL 8, HL 12, HL 13 and HL 15 had been recognized as the sites for burial urns or religious structures. HL 8 is located at the southern city wall and a square structure had been discovered and the structure is the vaulted roof with a tapering top was surrounded. At the foot of the exterior of the square structure, burial urns, human bones and other bones had been found. The building walls were smooth and there was no architectural decoration. From the excavation some brick platforms, charred human bones, gold ornaments and burial urns had been yielded. (Ma, Thida Myint, 2006). HL 9 is located within the palace ground and a rectangular brick structure of 120 feet long and 38 feet wide had been found in the excavation. The walls bent 19°96' towards the west. The excavation within the structure did not reveal many historical evidences. It can be assumed that the structure had not been a permanent human dwelling, but merely a site for mass gathering. (Ma, Thida Myint, 2006). HL 10, 11 and 17 were sites where entrances to the city and the representing the works of urban architecture had been found. According to the historical records on Hanlin, there were 24 gateways to the city of Hanlin, The excavation of HL 10, 11 and 17 reveal that each of the three gateway to the city was seventeen feet wide, and ran like two handrails towards the residential quarters. The layouts of the gateways were similar to each other, and about forty human bones were unearthed at the south-east gateway of HL 17 and that is a

significant discovery of the excavation at Hanlin Pyu city. (Ma, Thida Myint, 2006). HL 14, 16 and 19 were the sites of general structures and objects were excavated. The study of the remains excavated at Hanlin indicates that the architecture was high status. Of brick of various kinds, not only brick of the maximum size of 22 inches long, 9 ½ inches wide and 3 inches in breadth, but also bricks of the minimum of 15 ½ inches long, 8 inches wide and 2 ¼ inches in breadth were found. Sometimes, some bricks were too large, and so were not well baked. The masonry work was of poor quality. Red earth plastering was used for building every structure. The structure is similar to Beikthano building. It can be assumed that Beikthano and Hanlin had similar works of architecture. The status of the Pyu architecture can be seen thus; the what with a tapering top was surrounded by a square structure; the circular structure was surrounded by a square; and the circular structure was structured by a rectangular structure. These structures represent the building related to the religious beliefs. (Myint Aung, U. 2007) The discovery of 156 ironware's from the excavation of the ancient Hanlin reveal the evidence of manufacturing various iron implements. These implements could be divided into two groups of weapons and utensil tool. The utensil tools included iron chain, hook, awl, chisel, tongs, scraper and various sizes of small knife, where as the weapons were sword, axe, hatchet, arrow-head, supper, pitch fork and spikes, etc. (Myint Aung, U. 2007). Iron wares were used for domestic and defense purposes. The instances of iron handicrafts were swords of various sizes, daggers of various sizes, arrow heads of various sizes, axes of various sizes, hatchets of various sizes, shot-put ball, pitch-frock and spikes of various sizes. (Myint Aung, U. 2007). From the excavation of the ancient Pyu city Hanlin, fine earthen pots and broken earthen pieces had been found. The artworks of the Pyus of Hanlin can be found in various types of pots; water pots, cooking pots, water cups and incense burners or oil lamps. Those pots were made of red clay on the potter's wheel. Although the pots were not painted, there were some scratches and drawings, twists, rectangular seals, human figures, peacock, Srivisa, conch shell, two fishes and the Kalasa pot. The discovery of a variety of pots such as water jug, cooking pot, earthen bowl and plates can be assumed that making pottery would have been played a significant role in the economy of Hanlin. (Myint Aung, U. 2007). It can be studied that there are different types, sizes and patterns in Hanlin pottery and they are; 16 kinds of Water Storage pots, 12 kinds of minimum size pots, 12 kinds of small size pots, 6 kinds of earthen bowls, 6 kinds of cooking pots, 4 kinds of jars, 9 kinds of earthen cups, 2 kinds of water cups, oil lamp and varieties of pots (Myint Aung, U. 2007). As the historical evidences, the excavation of the Halin discovered the bronze bracelet, a broken bronze pot, three bronze mirrors, small gold rings, six gold rings for adult ornamentation gold and silver beads, gold plates supposedly to be taken for hair coils or necklaces, 90 stone beads, 64 tourmaline beads and

13 crystal beads, the earthen beads in various shapes of circular, crescent, triangular, sharp cornered, twisted cornered and half-sharp cornered, 64 tourmaline beads and 13 crystal beads. All those excavated findings reveal the skillful art of the Pyus of Hanlin. (Myint Aung, U. 2007). It is said that symbolic silver coins had been found in the Hanlin excavation, and there are four sizes of Hanlin coins; 1 ½ inches, 7/8 inches and 5/8 inches and smallest size with symbols of Srivisa, the Sun and dot. There are differences among the size of symbols because of the coin's size. The significant feature is that Hanlin coins did not have the conch-shell symbol of Beikthano and Sriksetra. It is said that the coins would have been used as the currency or the decorative things. (Myint Aung, U. 2007). In Hanlin excavation, the burial urns had been found in the buildings and it indicates the burial sites of the Pyus. The Pyus burnt their death and then stored the ashes in the urns. The excavations had been implemented in 2005 in Hanlin and newly findings of Bronze tools, utensils, stone ring, stone axes, earthen pots, urns and tools of the potter and Bronze Age burial ground had been found in the nearest place of Nagayon tank, south of Hanlin old city. Nevertheless, earthen pots painted with yellow color, Bronze bracelets and rings, human bones, gold and silver rings had been excavated. (Naing Zaw, 2011). In 2014, the Archaeological excavation had been implemented in HL 28. It is said that 140 earthen wears; cooking pots and pans, oil lamps and burial ground had been discovered. In burial ground, eighteen stone beads had been found in the neck and hands of the skeleton, 300 beads made of animal bones, thirty two broken pieces of glazed beads, Bronze chisel, iron adze and iron spear had been uncovered. (Naing Zaw 2011). It can be said that HL 28 would have been Bronze Age burial site because Pyu burial urns have not been found in HL 28 and Hanlin city would have been developed from Bronze Age to Pyu period. HL 29 is located in the outside place of city, 500 feet from the Southwestern city wall of ancient Hanlin and 285 items of the earthen pot and pans, earthen plate, painted pot with red, pink, light yellow and white colors, thirty two stone rings with green, white and black colors and thirty stone beads, eight Bronze tools; spear, axe and adze and thirty nine sand stone slabs had been yielded in the excavation. (Naing Zaw 2011). It can be said that sand stone slabs would have been used as the marks of the burial place that would have been concerned with Maha Theylar belief. (Naing Zaw 2011). HL30 is situated in the outside place of the city, 1050 feet from the southwestern corner of city wall and thirty four human skeletons and all of them had been headed to the north. (Naing Zaw 2011). In 1905, an inscription had been found at the eastern corner of Hanlin city wall and it is similar to the Pyu alphabets that inscribed on the Sriksetra urns. (Maung Ko Oo (Thapyay Nyo 1970). It can be assumed that inscription marks of a late person. In 1929, an inscription had been excavated from the Southern part of previous one and it included eight lines. There is no

interpret an inscription, it can be assumed that it had been written about a Queen. (U Aung Thaw,2017). The third inscription had been excavated in Hanlin and it is four feet in height and four feet and six inches in length. It is also known that inscription stands out I reliefs in the upper and lower part of inscription but it is indecipherable one. (Myint Aung ,U .2007). As archaeological excavation, the Buddhism flourished in Pyu city Hanlin. In the excavation of Hanlin, a tourmaline slab written in the alphabet of southern India in A.D 5th century which reads Daradarman, meaning “ Donor” had been unearthed. Such kind of Pali-inscribed object probably illustrate the fact that the Buddhist sect whose members worship of the Buddha image did not make an influence in Hanlin. No religious structure was found in the excavation of Hanlin but later a relief image of Buddha and some evidences of the Pali literature and Pyu inscriptions had been found. The excavation of the Hanlin Mound Structure No.1 revealed the finding of an amber seal. It was made a relief, so the script could be read comprehensively, without turning to the reverse; it reads as “ Daya Darnan”, the donor. (U Bo Kyin U Bo Kyin 2012).Hanlin being situated on the south side-track of the China Trading Road of the Han period crossing the northern part of Myanmar, it could be assumed that trading might have prospered considerably. Since there had been a direct inland route connected with India at that time, Hanlin might also have existed as a trading centre with a lot of contacts with the northern India. Since Hanlin was situated on the trade route , there may be have existed handicrafts and trading as well as agriculture economy and people would have had an easy life, enjoying peace and prosperity. The lidded pot with stupa figure had been excavated in Hanlin excavation and it can be assumed that Buddhism developed in Hanlin city. According to the Chinese Chronicles, the Pyus sent their children, at the age of seven to monastery. At the monastery, monks taught the children not only morals but also education. At the age of twenty, young men keep on doing the monk hood or return to layman. It is known that the Pyus believed in the Buddhism. The excavated urns indicate the burial rites of the Pyus and the types of burial urns; the stone urn for the ruling class, the metal burial urns for the well-to-do and the earthen urn for the common people. It can be assumed that the Pyus, once the greatest people in Myanmar history had lived with the high standard of social form and culture. The excavations at Hanlin the years between 1905 and 1958-1963 exposed the Pyu cultural evidences. Nevertheless, the excavated findings of Hanlin in the years 2000’s indicate the evidences of the Bronze Age settlement. It can be studied that Hanlin city developed in its historical period from the Bronze Age to the Hanlin period and improved its cultural status during the A.D 4th and 9thcenturies. The political and social development of the Pyu would have been taken place after trading contact with India and spread of the Buddhism. The technical developments of the societies in Southeast Asia resulted in the cultural development of the Pyu

society. The Pyu made their contacts with Southeast Asia and India and it created the development of Pyu urbanization and cultural improvement.

Conclusion

Hanlin old city is one of the ancient Pyu cultural development cities. The evidences from the excavations in Pyu cities are sound proof of the cultural development . The improved in arts and architecture, political structure, writing system, and beliefs in Brahmanism, and Buddhism. Therefore the Pyu built their buildings with the excellent architectural designs and City gates. The Pyu produced the art; beads made of stone, gold and silver, gold and silver Coins decorated pots and urns and architecture; huge brick building from others took place and the remaining evidences indicate firmly their artistic skills and architectural concepts. It can be studied that Pyus at Hanlin were literate people and inscriptions, clay tablets Stone seals, gold plates, silver and bronze tablets are significant features of Hanlin Pyu. No Religious structure was found in the excavation of Hanlin but later a relief image of Buddha and some evidence of the Pali literature and Pyu inscriptions had been found in Hanlin. From Hanlin excavation, four kinds of symbolical coins had been found and it can be assumed that trading business would have been developed in Hanlin. The reason is that Hanlin was situated on the trade route of India, Myanmar, Southeast Asia and China. Nevertheless, symbolical coins, found at Hanlin had been discovered in Beikthano, Sriksetra, Khmer and Thailand. It can be assumed that Hanlin developed trading contacts at home and abroad. The Pyus at Hanlin adorned the earthen beads, gold beads, amber beads, agate beads, Multicolored beads and jade beads. Ornaments of artistic value were found in the excavation Of Hanlin such as gold and silver bracelets and gold and silver beads ,a hundred small gold rings, six gold rings for adult ornamentation, gold beads and gold plates supposedly to be taken for hair coils or necklaces. Thus, it indicates that cultural development of Hanlin Pyu city. It can be found that Pyu at Hanlin a skilled in melting of iron because of the discovery of 156. Ironware’s from the excavations. The ironware’s are the evidence of manufacturing various iron implement of weapons and utensil tools. The utensil tools included iron chain, hook, awl, chisel, tongs, scraper and various sizes of small knife, where as the weapons were sword, axe, hatchet, arrow-head, super pitch fork and spikes. Nevertheless, stone relief that resembles stone relief of India, Gupta period had been excavated in Hanlin, thus Hanlin Pyus skilled in sculpture. The artworks of the Pyus of Hanlin can be found in various types of pots; water pots, cooking pots, water cups and incense burners or oil lamps. Those pots were made of red clay on the potter’s wheel. Although the pots were not painted, there some scratches and drawings, twists, rectangular seals, human figures, peacock, Srivisa, conch shell, two fishes and the Kalasa pot. It is said

that Hanlin's pottery can be classified into two kinds of domestic pots and funeral urns. The excavations at Hanlin the years between 1905 and 1958-1963 exposed the Pyu cultural evidences. Nevertheless, the excavated findings of Hanlin in 2000's indicate that Pyus of Hanlin period developed in high artistic arts and architecture. The Pyus, once the greatest people in Myanmar history had lived with the high standard of social form. According to evidences from excavations, Beikthano, Hanlin, and Sriksetra are capital cities of the Pyus. The evidences indicate that capital were political centers, cultural centers and the most developed in religion. The twenty Pyu towns have being discovered .In excavation at Hanlin, the coins found in Hanlin are similar to the coins of Beikthano.It is said that the coins would used as the currency or the decorative elements. (Ma, Thida Myint, 2006). The most significant feature of the Pyu is the invention of Pyu scripts and own writing system that based on the southern Indian alphabets.It is also known that the Pyus worshiped God Vishnu, Siva and Brahman in Brahmanism and Mahayana sect and Hinayana Buddhism because of the excavated findings. (Ma, Thida Myint, 2006).In Hanlin excavation ,the ironware's had been discovered and it reveals the evidences of manufacturing various iron implements. Iron wares were used for domestic and defense purposes. From the excavations, some brick platforms charred human bones, gold ornaments and burial urns had been yield at Hanlin. The significant findings of the Bronze Age tools utensils and burial sites show the continuously development of historic time at Hanlin city. These cultural evidences indicate that Pyus of Hanlin period would have developed in high artistic arts and architecture. In present day, Pyu is an extinct race of the disappearance of their language, literature and culture. However the Pyu , the greatest people in Myanmar are regarded as one of the architects of Myanmar civilization.(Dr.Than Tun 2006)

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