

THE FAMOUS THREE TEMPLES IN BAGAN

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Abstract

The Research composition of 'the Famous three Temples in Bagan' is presented in three parts: introduction, body of the text and conclusion. In the introduction, under the heading of Bagan era is the heart of the Burmese people as it is an era that has shone brightly in the spirit of unity, culture and culture of the Burmese people. According to the history of the Mon Kingdom in Burmese history, it was established in 29 A.D. on the site of Yonhltkyun. According to Sayar Zaw Gyi in his book, Union Historical Milestones, King Pyin Oya founded Bagan in 849 AD to unite and rule the eleven districts of Pyu, Mon, Thet, and Burman. When the city was built, a brick wall was built around it. There are 12 gates on the wall. The Sarapā Gate on the brick wall built by King Pyin Oya built a palace in the city and can still be seen in the old city of Bagan. The body of the text is presented in among the stūpa pagodas in Bagan, we will summarize 'the Famous three Temples in Bagan' was called "Thick-Dhammayangyi, Hight-Thatbyinnyu and Art-Ānandā. In the conclusion, presentation is made on the overall view of the Research..

Key Words: "Dhammayangyi, Thatbyinnyu, Ānandā"

Aim and Objectives

In assessing 'the Famous three Temples in Bagan' from the religious point of view rather than from the point of view of literature or history, it will be found that it is invaluable. This is a research that will continue to take place of importance in the heart of new generations.

Introduction



Figure-1, Bagan Map

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The Bagan era is the heart of the Burmese people as it is an era that has shone brightly in the spirit of unity, culture and culture of the Burmese people. According to the history of the Mon Kingdom in Burmese history, it was established in 29 A.D. on the site of Yonhlotkyun. According to Sayar Zaw Gyi in his book, Union Historical Milestones, King Pyin Oya founded Bagan in 849 AD to unite and rule the eleven districts of Pyu, Mon, Thet, and Burman. When the city was built, a brick wall was built around it. There are 12 gates on the wall. The Sarapā Gate on the brick wall built by King Pyin Oya built a palace in the city and can still be seen in the old city of Bagan. Of the 55 dynasties in Bagan, Anawrahta and Kyansittha were capable and ruled the country for peace and prosperity. King Anawrahta (1044-1077) ruled Bagan for 33 years. King Anawrahta worshiped Shin Arahāṃ and converted to Buddhism. He worked to make the religion flourish. The King Kyansittha (1084-1112) under the guidance of Arahāṃ, was able to bring peace to Bagan. Under the leadership of these King Anawrahta and Kyansittha joined together with the people and built many pagodas. Regarding the number of Pagodas and monuments in Bagan, there is the traditional figure which was composed like a rhymed couplet for memorization. It runs thus:

“Hle-Win-Yoe-Thān, Ta-Nyan-Nyan, Bagan Payabaung”

The four words in the first line give us the figure 4446. There are 4446 pagodas in Bagan. According to Shwe-la-thar, war-war-win, Paya-Ye-Choo-Sinn, 446 Pagodas river banks collapsed. The damage was also caused by natural disasters such as earthquakes, weather disasters, and other causes. Now there are only more than 2000 left. According to the Bagan Archeology Division’s observation, 2217 of the 1968 censuses were found. There are 3122 pagodas left in the old city of Bagan due to various disasters. Of these, 389 pagodas were destroyed by a strong earthquake on August 24, 2016.¹

Dhammayangyi Temple



Figure-2, Dhammayangyi Temple

^၁ ပုဂံ၊ သခင်ကိုယ်တော်မှိုင်းနှင့်အခြား၊ နှာ ဗာ-ငါ။

Dhammayangyi Temple is noted for its massiveness. It is a temple Pagoda. The meaning of Temple is a hollow vaulted base. Architecturally, the building is a temple to modernism. It is said that King Narathu built it in (A.D. 1170) and finished it in 3 years. The king reigned only 3 years. He was killed by eight Indians sent by the Indian king of India in conflict under the guise of Punṇa. The daughter of the Indian king was executed out of anger. Because of this enmity, Narathu was assassinated by the Indians and become known as the Kalagyamin. According to some historical researchers, during the reign of the King Pathama Parakkamabāhu (1153-1186), Narathu collected exorbitant taxes and unjustly killed the merchants of Ceylon in 1165. Others think that because of some treasures secretly hidden inside they were blocked. There is yet another theory put forward by some historians- Narathu was a tyrant who had committed many political killing, his old father Alaungsithu, his elder brother Min-Shin-Saw, and his queen Pe-thida were his victims. After building such a massive religious movement, repented Narathu, so obsessed with his crimes and so overcome by remorse, blocked the inner corridors, windows and light wells so as to rescind his sins.

The Dhammayangyi Cave is one of the largest pagodas in Bagan. It can be seen from four distances and it is shape like an Egyption pyramid. One of the unique features of this cave is the architectural right of the brick wall. The bricks were cut with a machete and then glued together so that they could not even be sewn together. Bridges and interior walls are strong. The shape of the foundation is similar to that of Ānandā. It is square in shape and has sensory portals on four sides. It is a kind of Greek cross-legged dance like Ānandā, it has a two tiered roof and four steps up. Above that, Kundaung (Pyramidal Spire/ Sikhara) and the peak are destroyed. Inside this massive wall, access to the outer tunnel road is limited and the inner tunnel road is blocked. It is unknown at this time what caused the closure. Was it blocked during the reign of another king? Other caves, you can reach from the outer tunnel road to the inner tunnel road to the statues in the central pillar.¹

In ground plan it resembles that of Ānandā which was built by his royal grandfather Kyansittha. Besides the cement applied to the blocks and that applied to the walls of the structure proved to be of the same type and belonged to the same period. Some scholars surmise that since the super structure was so big, massive and heavy that

¹ ပုဂံစေတီပုထိုးများ၊ နှာ-၂၇။

the vaulted corridors and chambers underneath could not bear the weight above for very long. A little bit of them had to be blocked soon after the completion of the structure. The eastern side has a huge Buddha image in the niche, and this side is open. Perhaps there are similar Buddha images at the other three sides that were blocked. The remarkable feature of this temple is the excellent technique of brick-laying. Although only mud mortar was used, the massive structure has survived several earthquakes of the past centuries due to its best brick-laying method. Bricks were laid so close and neat that they looked as if they were just one piece. The seams are not visible and it is said that even a needle could not pierce them. The same is true of the fencing brick walls. Sandstones were cut with scientific precision in the shape of wedge and carpenter's square and used in the spans, arches, and at the corners of the walls. At the four corners of the structure are spans bridging the two thick walls. In other big temples built by Bagan, kings such as Thatbyinnyu, Gawdawpalin, Htilominlo and Pyathadgyi Paya, the same construction technique was used in brick-laying walling and spanning. There used to be a pole plate at half the wall's height on which one could walk about because some iron bars, stone blocks and stone slabs and holes still remain to prove it.¹

There is a big Buddha image of hard-stone in the eastern devotional hall. It was sculpted out of a single piece. In style and posture it resembles those images of Anawrahta's time. There is a spiral staircase inside the hall. It leads to the upper storey.²

Thatbyinnyu Temple



Figure-3, Thatbyinnyu Temple

As this saying goes, Thatbyinnyu Temple is noted for its Loftiness. It is Thatbyinnyu Temple was built by King Alaungsithu in A.D. 1144. It is the tallest structure in Bagan. The name "Sabbaññū" is an original name. It is one of the attributes of the Buddha. "Sabbaññū" means "Omniscience" which the Buddha attained on becoming enlightened. In the Temple are circumambulatory vaulted corridors, four-terraced devotional stūpa, vihāra (monastery) and the library. It is a big complex structure with

¹ Bagan Pagodas, (Vol.II), 113.

² Ibid,114.

seven terraces in all facing east. According to Buddhist history, king Aloungsithu, in (1113-1163), consulted with the monks and nobles and built a cave to resemble the Pubbārāma monastery in Sāvatti. It is believed that the cave was not only used for worship, but also for the worship of ancient monks and for the use of Pagoda. It seems to refer to the omniscient consciousness of the Buddha. The cave is located southwest of Ānandā Pagoda.

The cave is the largest seven-storey structure around Bagan. The lower and upper floors are adorned with three-tiered diamond -studded Pagodas. Both common windows have two skylights, allowing for better lighting inside the walls. The cave is 201 feet long from his shoes to his bird's nest. The front Sensor is wider and when you enter, you will see a large staircase to go up. At the beginning of the main stairway the Dvārapāla guardian deities stand facing the entrance. At the end of the stairs, there is a small floor and the central pillar is doubled. Through this small floor, you will reach the attic on the front sensor roof by the perforated stairs that penetrate the two walls. To the west you will find a large image of the Buddha in the Gandhakuṭī. This is the third floor, and there is a tunnel road. If you look to the east, you will see Tuyintaung (Taywintaung), Dhammayangyi of Sūlāmaṇi Ānandā on the northeast side of Dhammayangyi of Tuyin. If you look to the northeast, you will see of Shwesiegoun, Htilominlo, If you look to the west, you will see Nathlaung- Kyaung, Pathotharmyar, Ngakywenadaung, Tantkyitaung. There will be a staircase on the third floor to the fourth floor. If you go up the stairs from the outer sensor of that floor, you will reach the foot of kundaung. A Pagoda was erected on top of kundaung. The rear sensory roof still has Kyaiktango wreaths. There are large bell towers of King Alaungsithu in the southwest corner of pagoda. It is said that a small cave pagoda next to the cave was named Greekchoo Pagoda. It is said that the pagoda was built in Greek style, with one brick per-ten thousand bricks.¹

On the upper terrace there is a big image of Buddha made of brick and plaster, sitting on a lotus throne. Its head was damaged by the earthquake of 1975. A dolomite Buddha image was discovered inside the damaged head. It is now on display at the archeological museum, Bagan. As in the case of Dhammayangyi Temple, brick laying technique used in Thatbyinnyu was excellent. The bricks in the walls on the upper terrace were laid horizontally and vertically in an alternate style. When the earthquake of 1975

^၁ ပုဂံ၊ သခင်ကိုယ်တော်မှိုင်းနှင့်အခြား၊ နှာ ၂၄-၂၆။

pealed off some plasters from the walls of the image house, it was found that stone bricks were used in these walls up to eight feet high. At every corner of the structure stone in the shape of carpenter's square were inserted for strengthening. In almost every arched span, sandstones were laid between bricks to serve as keystone. The vaulted arches of the image house are gambrel spans which have no wooden or iron beams, only voussoirs were used. Here also stone bricks were used at equal intervals with the main keystone at the central apex of the span to lock all the radiating bricks in the span. This indeed is a wonderful architectural technique of ancient Bagan. For the durability of the whole structure the terraces were made curvilinear.

In the ground floor on the north, south and west sides are big images of Buddha made of brick and cement. They are original. Seventeen other images are later additions. On the ceiling and walls of the vaulted corridors on the western entrance are found original mural paintings. A pair of Buddha's footprints and the picture of Sakka and Brahma paying homage to the Buddha are found on the ceiling. Besides there are ornamental back drops of the throne and fine stuccos.

There is a cave pagoda on the north-east of the precinct. It is traditionally known as "Tally Pagoda". It is said that for every 10,000 bricks used in the construction of Thatbyinnyu one brick was kept aside to count the total number of bricks used in the whole structure. The "Tally Pagoda" was built of the bricks so kept aside. On the south-east stand two big stone posts which supported the cross bar on which a bronze bell of extraordinary size was once hung. The bell was dedicated by King Alaungsithu to Thatbyinnyu. The bell had disappeared. On the capitols of the two stone posts are found floral designs carved out of stone. The big bell was vandalized long ago. Judging by the space of 18 feet between the two stone posts, the bell must have the diameter of at least 15 feet in which case it could have been larger than the Mingun Bell in size if not in weight. Thatbyinnyu is situated at the south-east corner of the city wall. There was a wall fencing it. Now only the northern arched gate of the wall remains. In 1990 when the site on the west of this arched gate was excavated, the foundation of the fencing wall was discovered. It seems that at one time the bricks from the fallen wall were taken to be used in repairing the city walls because it was found that some bricks in the city walls were of the same size as that of the bricks of Thatbyinnyu.¹

¹. Bagan Pagodas, (Vol.II), P.34-35.

Ānandā Temple



Figure -4, Ānandā Temple

As this saying goes, Ānandā Temple is noted for its Grace. Among the many pagodas built, Ānandā Cave is one of the most beautiful architectural works of Bagan. Ānandā Temple was constructed in Kozathetkayit 452 M.E (A.D. 1091) by King Kyansittha. He was also known as Htihlaingshin. His regnal title was “Srī Tribuvanāditya Dhammarājā” meaning “the King of Justice who shines like the sun over three auspicious worlds”. Ānandā Cave is filled with a series of four-mode caves with four modes.

It looks like a sack that enclosed with a drawstring. This is because the Greek tribes converted to northwestern India during the conversion of Buddhism and invented a large number of religious sculptures and murals. The builders of the Ānandā Cave are Mon and Indian. The Four Leading architects are the four fathers of the masonry, 400 architects and 4000 workers. Sixty iron hills were dug at the foundation. Thirty pillars of iron were paved with dragon stories, and the tomb was planned to be erected from the top thirty. Inside the temple, there are statues of arahants. Deities such as Wisdom, Ancient histories indicate that seven images of the Buddha were erected, such as that of the hunter-gatherer Ngayaman with a shotgun, and that the king of Htihlaing, would do good deeds here. The doors of the shrine are also mechanized, and if one door is opened, all are said to be open. The upper shrine is also decorated with statues of bodyguards, statues of deities and ancestors, statues of King Kyansittha, rings and tunnels. Inside the cave, the four great images of the Buddha an upright position and the walls are thick and strong. The sculptures and masonry of the statues are also very close to the volume of the pagoda. The walls of the ramparts, which are narrowed upwards, are also decorated with elaborate compartments.¹

About half of the walls at the bottom depict the demi god battles and defeats of the Blessed one, who sits in the shade of a Bo-tree on the other hand, tens of thousands of demigods came after the victory over the sacred Bo-tree and the Golden Throne and

¹ ပုဂံ၊ သခင်ကိုယ်တော်မှိုင်းနှင့်အခြား၊ နှာ ၇၆၁-၇၆၂။

becoming the true Buddha. At the Bottom, the content is written in Mon Language, which is a key to opening the Mon language library for researchers studying Mon Language.

The first, second roof, and the upper three steps are partially framed with 547 scenes. The most notable feature is the three-storey, three-storey structure from the second roof to the upper three levels, with 309 compartments for this reason alone.¹

Ānandā Cave deserves to be recorded as a magnificent building not only in Bagan but also in the world around the spread of Buddhism. At that time, Buddhists were still being hunted down in India. The clergy were forced to flee their homes. Some fled to Bagan, where the Dhamma flourished. Of these, eight Indian monks came to King Kyansitta. For three months, King Kyansittha spent his time self-serving, listening to sermons, and listing to local knowledge of India. I especially liked the Ānandā Cave in the Udayagīri Mountains in Orissa, which was praised by the monks. So he similarly built and donated the Ānandā Cave.

When the lower shrine was donated, it was closed only after the monks had given a sermon. The similar magnificent donation was made to the upper shrine. On the day the pagoda was a great earthquake and heavy rain. When these strange signs appeared, the thought arose, "Will my goodness last for 5,000 religions?" He called for a fly, and the king even said that he had trampled on the elephant. According to the flying squirrel, the four flying squirrel fathers were kept under foot and trampled by the elephant. He is happy only when he is strong and steadfast.²

At the far end of the dark southwest, at the feet of the huge locast, two statues of the same size as a living person were kneeling on an ax. Both statues have been worshiped there for over 800 years. One of the statues is Shin Arahāṃ and the other is King Kyansittha who donated it to Ānandā. The Ānandā Pagoda will be magnificent in the future, according to King Kyansittha's wishes.³

Ānandā Temple is like a museum. You can study all kinds Myanmar arts here-architecture, stone sculpture, stucco, glazed plaques, terracotta, wood carving, artwork of blacksmith etc.⁴ There are four different versions regarding the name of this temple.

1. Some say Ānandā after the name of his brother Ānandā.⁵

¹ ပုဂံ၊ သခင်ကိုယ်တော်မှိုင်းနှင့်အခြား၊ နှာ - ၇၆၃။

² ယင်း၊ နှာ ၇၆၄-၇၆၅။

³ ယင်း၊ နှာ - ၇၆၆။

⁴ Bagan Pagodas, (Vol.II), P.3.

⁵ လက်ရာစုံစွာအာနန္ဒာ၊ နှာ-၇။

2. When King Kyansittha asked eight Arahants to provide him with a design for the religious monument he was about to build, they created the image of Nanda Mūla Cave Hall held to be in the Himalayas and it came to be known as “Nandamū” which in course of time corrupted to sound “Ānandā”.
3. The Sanskrit word “Anand” means “very delight”. The name “Ānandā” must have been derived from this Sanskrit word.
4. There is a Pāḷi word “Ānantapaññā” which means “the endless wisdom of the Buddha.”

Finding and Result

Dhammayangyi Pagoda is famous for its large size and excellent brick work. In the construction of the Thatbyinnyu Pagoda, the king of the Alaungsithu imitated and worshiped to Visākhā the donor of *Pubbārāma* Monastery, which was built under the strict supervision of Venerable Moggalāna. According to archaeologists, the Ānandā Pagoda is similar to the Pāhāpū Pagoda in Bangladesh and the Nakhon-pathon Pagoda near the old city of dvāravatī, west of Bangkok. Bagan Art and Architecture can be studied at Ānandā Pagoda.

Conclusion

Dhammayangyi Temple is the largest in massive size, Thatbyinnyu Temple is the tallest in height, and Ānandā Temple is the most graceful with all artistic decorations. Thatbyinnyu, from the base to the finial is 201 feet high. The famous three Temples in Bagan is the land mark of the Buddha Sāsana. There is a rhyme traditionally sung by the people of Bagan, which runs:

“Thick-Dhammayangyi, Hight-Thatbyinnyu and Art- Ānandā”

It is said that every Myanmar should visit Bagan and without visiting Ānandā you cannot be said to have visited Bagan. The Ānandā Pagoda Festival is held around January every year, and is a Pagoda a market selling local and traditional items.

Acknowledgements

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- ၁။ (တက္ကသိုလ်များသမိုင်းသုတေသနဦးစီးဌာန)၊ ပုဂံစေတီပုထိုးများ၊ ရန်ကုန်တက္ကသိုလ်နယ်မြေတက္ကသိုလ်များ ပုံနှိပ်တိုက်၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့၊ ၂၀၀၄။
- ၂။ ပုဂံ၊ သခင်ကိုယ်တော်မှိုင်းနှင့် အခြား၊ စိတ်ကူးချိုချိုပုံနှိပ်တိုက်၊ ရန်ကုန်၊ ၂၀၂၀၊ ဖေဖော်ဝါရီလ။
- ၃။ မင်းဘူးအောင်ကြိုင် ၊ လက်ရာစုံစွာအာနန္ဒာ အောင်ချမ်းသာပုံနှိပ်တိုက်၊ တာမွေမြို့နယ်၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့ (တတိယအကြိမ်)၊ ၁၉၉၇၊ ဇန်နဝါရီလ။
- ၄။ မြန်မာစာအဖွဲ့ဦးစီးဌာန၊ အင်္ဂလိပ်မြန်မာ-အဘိဓာန်၊ တက္ကသိုလ်များပုံနှိပ်တိုက်၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့ ။
- ၅။ သိန်းစိန် (ဒုတိယဝန်ကြီး)၊ ပြန်ကြားရေးဦးစီးဌာန၊ ပုဂံဘုရားပုထိုးများ (ဒုတိယတွဲ)၊ ဂျီ-တီ-စီ ပုံနှိပ်တိုက်၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့ ။
- ၆။ ဟုတ်စိန်၊ ဦး၊ ပါဠိ- မြန်မာ-အဘိဓာန်၊ သာသနာရေးဦးစီးဌာနပုံနှိပ်တိုက်၊ ပြည်ထောင်စုမြန်မာနိုင်ငံတော်၊ ရန်ကုန်၊ ၁၉၉၉။
- ၇။ အရှင်ဥက္ကမသာရ စာဆိုရှင်ဆရာတော်(ညောင်ဦး) ပုဂံရေးဟောင်းနယ်မြေရှိ သမိုင်းဝင် တန်ခိုးကြီးဘုရားများ၊ မြိုးဝေလျှံ ပုံနှိပ်တိုက်၊ ကျောက်တံတားမြို့နယ်၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့ ၊ သြဂုတ်လ၊ ၂၀၁၆ ခုနှစ်။

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