

SIGNIFICANT FEATURES OF STUCCO ART FROM ANCIENT MONUMENTS IN BAGAN

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Abstract

Plaster moulding or stucco carving is one of the Ten Myanmar Traditional Art. Stucco art can be found for decorative purpose in Bagan monuments such as, temple, stupa, monastery, saim, umin, and pitakatike. Mostly stucco carving are decorated exterior and interior of Bagan ancient monument. In Bagan monuments, there are varieties of decoration such as wall painting, stucco carving, stone carving and wood carving. Buddha image, Indra, Nat, Barhma, Man, Hinssā, Lion, Makara, Ogre, Lotus, Banyan leaf, Mythical bird, etc. concerning Buddhism are used as the decorative stucco art, protective stucco art, great honourable stucco art of ancient monuments. There are stucco carvings concerning Hinduism, such as Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, Ganesha and avator of Vishnu. The people of Bagan worshiped Htaeravata Buddhism, Mahayana Buddhism and Brahmanism. Most of the stucco arts are damaged because of natural disaster, such as earthquake and heavy rain. Therefore in this paper, some of the rest of stucco arts are described. During Bagan period, Bagan art and architecture were developed to great extent in Myanmar. For these reasons, the period is called Golden Age.

Introduction

The remains of stupas, temples and monasteries were made mainly of bricks. In stupas and temples, there are reliefs and effigies of the Buddha religious texts enshrined deep within their structures. Stucco art was widely used to embellish on the stupa, temple, monasteries, saim, umin and pitakatike. The exterior part of the temple, the stucco art is decorated in the plinth, pilaster, arch pediment, bell shape dome, alms bowl, terraces, corner stupa, main building, square tower and so on. The interior part of the temple, the stucco art is decorated in arch way and drapala. In some of the monastery, the stucco arts are decorated in roof line, forepart arch and top of the main building. In most of the stupas, the stucco motifs are adorned in hemispherical dome, terraces, corner stupa, kalatha pot and so on. Some of the upper part of the temples and saim are embellished with stucco art of pyathatt or tiered tower.

Discussion and Presentation

From some of the stupas, temples and monasteries, the stucco arts presented in this paper are as follows: Arch, Entrance Pillar, Terrace, Exterior wall of the main building, Bell shape dome, Pyathatt, Throne, Lower part of the pahto and Forepart.

Arch

On the eastern entrance arch of Phyat-Sa-Shwe-Gu, the figure of lion in the mouth of Makara is curved on the corner pediment. Fig 1. Lotus buds, Lotus flower and Kainayar are also decorated below the band of the arch. Fig 2. At Vinido temple, the arch of the entrance is double arch in east. On the lower arch, the Banana Bud and flame pediments of the arch are decorated with Nat figures. Fig 3. On the upper arch, where on the top of the lotus bud between the two flames is embellished with Garuda (mythical bird). These figure is sitting on the lotus bud. Fig 4. On the southern part of the curly arch, Hinssā is standing on the lotus flower. Fig 5. In the east, the flame pediment of the arch is embellished with lion figure. Fig 6. The corner

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pediment on the arch of the lateral porch is decorated with lion on both sides. Fig 7. At Nandapyannya temple, there are double entrance arch on the northern part. The seated ogre is on the banana bud of the lower arch and also elaborated with floral arabesques. Fig 8. At Pantha Ku Ma Htae Temple, the entrance has double arches. On lower arch, there is the figure of lion jump out from the Makara mouth on the corner pediment. Fig 9. In these arch, all of the pediments have lion figures respectively and decorated with floral arabesques. Fig 10. On banana bud of this double arch, the figures of Nat, sitting on the throne are decorated. Fig 11.

Entrance pillar

In the east of Tha-Mann-Phaya Temple, these are two pillars of entrance. Beside these pillars, these are figures of Brahma holding an umbrella and Indra. Fig 12. These figures are significant features of stucco art. In Thanbula Phaya Temple, Lion, Hinssā and floral arabesques are decorated on pillars of the entrance on the north. Lion and Hinssā are in circular floral arabesques. Seated ogre, Lion, Hinssā with floral arabesques can be seen ornated on the pilaster of the entrance on both sides. Fig 13. On the pillar base of the entrance pillar of Pantha Ku Ma Htae Phaya, the Nat figure is sitting on the throne.

Terrace

In the south east of the Nandapyannya Temple, there are corner ogre and 2 birds below the corner stupa of terrace. These two birds are surrounded by bosses. Fig 14. In the north west of the terrace, there is remnant figure of lion below the corner stupa of the terrace. Fig 15. In the southeast, there are also remnants of bird (Hinssā) below the corner stupa of the terrace. At Nat-Gi-Phaya Temple, the Nat figures are embellished on the crenulated parapet of terrace of on all four sides respectively. Fig 16. These Nats are holding lotus in their hands. These stucco art of Nat figures are sitting with Mahayarzalilarsana. These Nat figures are embellished with bosses between them. These Nat is assumed to be Tainsi Nat figures. Some of the Nat figures are damaged.

Exterior wall of the main building

On the western part of exterior wall of the Myae Bon Tha Phaya Hla Temple, frieze and ogre head can be seen in good condition. Fig 17. In north and southern part of Than Bula Phaya Temple, below the terrace of main building, Nat figure with frieze and ogre can be seen alternatively. These Nats figures are not with throne. Fig 18. The gesture of seated ogre, on the southern part of the main building is meant to protect from disaster. Floral arabesques and Banyan leaf are also decorated. Fig 19. On the eastern wall of the main building of the Phwa Saw Sutaung Pyae Monastery, these are intact elephant birds. Fig 20. On the main building, the figure of ogre raised Nat with two hands can be found together with lotus buds and floral arabesques. Fig 21. At Lay Myat Nar Monastery, seated ogre; Hinssā, Garuda, Kaniyar, Makara, and other figures. Fig 22, 23. On the Phwa Saw Sutaung Pyae Monastery, seated ogre; Hinssā, Garuda, Kaniyar, Makara, and other figures. Fig 24.

Bell shape dome

At the Tha-Mann-Phaya Temple, the ogre head with frieze and Nat figures are alternatively adorned on the bell shape dome and upper part of these figures have ogre head. Fig 25.

Pyathatt

At Myae Bon Tha Pahyahla Temple, on the eastern part of entrance arch, it is built the seven planes of stage to the square tower (sikhara). Nat figures are embellished on each corner curve of the planes of stage. Fig 26. These Nat figures appeared from the lotus flower which worship to Buddha. Only five figures of Nat can be seen.

Throne

In Laymyathnar monastery, northern part of the wall of main building, these are ogre head with floral and Nat figure, alternatively. Each of the Nat figures is seated on the throne in worshipping. Almost these figures are damaged, except the two Nat figures which are sitting on the throne. One of the throne is depicted flower petals and another one is embellished the figures of ogre raised Nat with two hands. Fig 27. On the east and south wall of the main building, seated Nat figures are on the thrones. These thrones are made lions on both side. Other significant feature is the seated figure of Nat on the ogre head as throne. Fig 28.

Lower part of the Pahto

A number of figures of the bird with fish, deer with horn, peacock with floral, lions, lotus flower and Nat figures are found on the lower part of the temple No.747. Fig 29, 30, 31.

Forepart

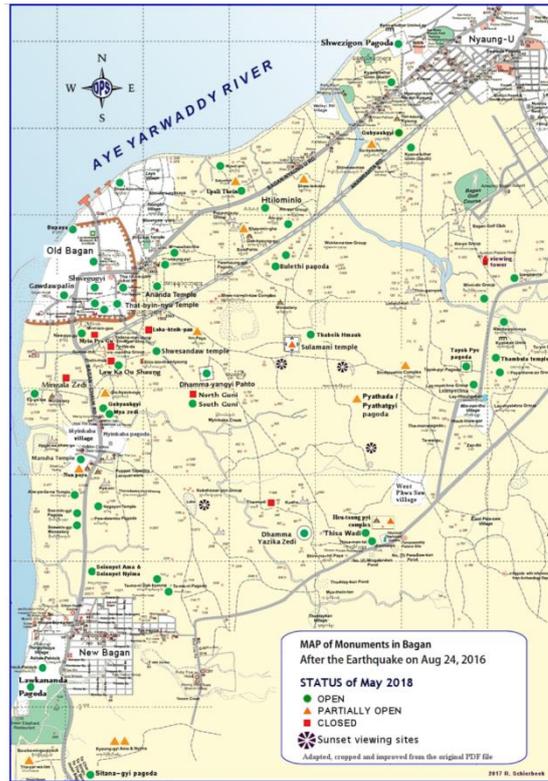
On the temple No.698, various styles of man, musicians, (harpist, playing drummer), dancers, bird, man riding on the horse with floral arabesques are found on the pillars of the west forepart. Fig 32, 33.

Summary and Conclusion

This paper gives a chance to study of stucco art in Bagan. On the stucco art, it is found that Stucco art of decorating, Stucco art of worshipping, Stucco art of protection and Stucco art of supporting. These stucco arts can be seen Buddhism and Hinduism. The stucco art of Bagan, this is one of the obvious features of Bagan art. The decorative stucco art concerning universe were adorned on the temple. During Bagan period, Bagan art and architecture were developed to a great extent in Myanmar. For these reasons, the period is called Golden Age.

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Map. Source from Google Map



Fig 1. From Phyat Sa Shwe Gu, Lion, Makara



Fig 2. From Phyat Sa Shwe Gu, Kainaya, Lotus buds and Lotus flower



Fig 3. From Vi Ni Do Temple Nat figures

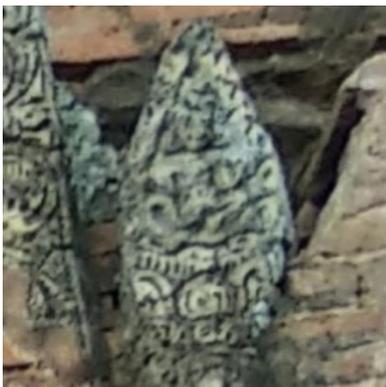


Fig 4. From Vi Ni Do Temple Lotus bud with



Fig 5. From Vi Ni Do



Fig 6. From Vi Ni Do

Garuda



**Fig 7. From Vi Ni Do Temple
Corner pediment
with Lion**

Temple Hinssā



**Fig 8. From Nandapyannya
Temple, seated ogre**

Temple Lion



**Fig 9. From Pant Tha Ku
Ma Htae Temple,
Makara with Lion**



**Fig 10. From Pant Tha Ku
Ma Htae Temple,
Lions**



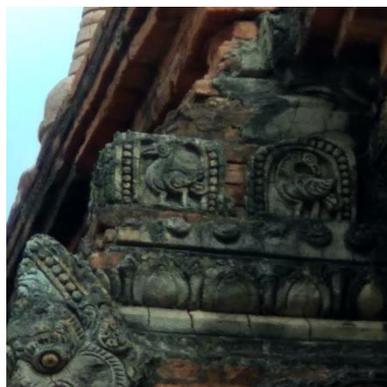
**Fig 11. From Pant Tha Ku
Ma Htae Temple, Nat
figure with throne**



**Fig 12. From Tha Mann
Phaya Temple,
Brahma and Indra**



**Fig 13. From Than Bu La
Phaya Temple, seated
ogre, Lion and
Hinssā**



**Fig14. From Nandapyannya
Temple, ogre head
and two birds**



**Fig15. From Nandapyannya
Temple, Lion**

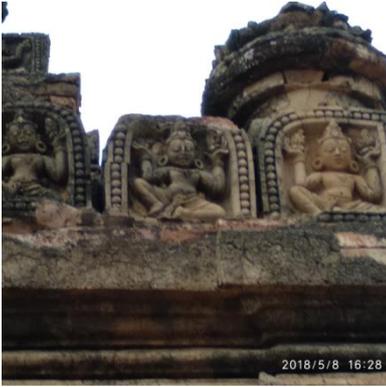


Fig 16. From Nat Gi Phaya Temple, Nat figures



Fig 17. From Myae Bone Thar Phayahla Temple, ogre head and floral arabesques



Fig 18. From Than Bu La Phaya Temple, Nat figures, ogre heads and floral arabesques



Fig 19. From Than Bu La Phaya Temple, Bayan leaf and floral arabesques



Fig 20. From Phwa Saw Sutaung Pyae Monastery, elephant and bird



Fig 21. From Phwa Saw Sutaung Pyae Monastery, Nat figure with ogre head and floral arabesques



Fig 22. From Laymyatnar Monastery, Makara, Garuda and Kainaya



Fig 23. From Laymyatnar Monastery, seated ogre and bird



Fig 24. From Phwa Saw Sutaung Pyae Monastery, Makara, Garuda and Kainaya, Hinssās



Fig 25. From Thaman Phaya Temple, bell shape dome with Nat figure and ogre head



Fig 26. From Myae Bone Thar Phayahla Temple, seven planes with Nat figures



Fig 27. From North Laymyatnar Monastery, flower petals throne and ogre as throne



Fig 28. From East and South Laymyatnar Monastery, Lion throne, ogre head as throne

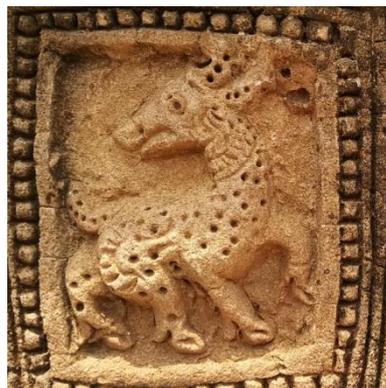


Fig 29. From Temple No. 747, deer figure



Fig 30. From Temple No. 747, peacock figure



Fig 31. From Temple No. 747, bird with fish



Fig 32. From Temple No. 698, man riding on the house and other



Fig 33. From Temple No. 698, musicians and dancer