

Classification and Characteristic Analysis of Hindu Temple in Southeast Asia

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Abstract: India is the birthplace of great civilization in the South Asian Subcontinent, which has a profound impact on religious and cultural activities in Southeast Asia. Hindu temples are the material carrier of Indian culture and an integral part of Indian society. Combining sociology and other related disciplines, this paper analyses and discusses Hindu temple architecture, which adds new elements to contemporary religious architecture design.

1. Introduction

India is the largest country in the South Asian subcontinent and it has the second largest population in the world. It has many races. Ancient India is one of the four ancient civilizations. Indian culture has deeply influenced most Asian countries and served as a bridge for cultural communication between East and West. Ancient Indian architecture is colorful. It is different from western classical architecture. It has absorbed foreign architectural culture for many times. Hindu temple architecture is a typical product of Indian native culture. It has diverse architectural styles, precise decoration, diversity and unity. Based on the Hindu cultural foundation, this paper makes an analysis of Hindu temples, and summarizes the development process and characteristics of Hindu temples. The purpose is to provide new ideas for contemporary religious architecture design.

2. The development of Hinduism

Hinduism is the native religion of India, it was set up at the beginning of the eight century, whose predecessor was the Brahman of India. Hinduism is one of the major religions in the world. The literary and artistic, lifestyle and thinking systems of Hinduism are all infiltrated by Indian philosophy.

Hinduism can be traced back to the Vedic teachings of the Harapa culture in the 20th century BC. The Vedic teachings used the vast number of Vedic books from the Aryans as the theoretical basis. The Vedic believes in the closure of many gods. The prosperity of the Vedas has paid attention to the sacrificial activities. The warriors used for combat became Kshatri, and the Indian aborigines in the social stratum became the Sudra, gradually forming the Hindu system.

The origins of Hinduism can be traced back to ancient times. The Aryans were nomads. Later they entered Europe and became the ancestors of the European-speaking nation, and some entered the Middle East to become Aryan. The native Hinapa culture and the foreign Aryan culture are constantly exchanged and integrated, and the Vedas are formed on the basis of the Aryan Vedic books. Around the 10th century BC, through a series of religious reforms, it evolved into Brahmanism. In the 8th century, Brahmanism reformed and absorbed the Shaman thought of Buddhism, eventually forming Hinduism. Hinduism is multi-sourced and leads to the diversity of Hindu culture ^[1].

The development of culture has its own unique system, and religious culture can run through many historical periods. India's east, west and south face the sea, and the natural environment is relatively closed, which makes the Hindu culture independent. Hinduism runs through the history of India. In Hinduism, the religious philosophical thoughts such as the goddess of the Brahma and Shiva are the same.

3. The origin of the Hindu temple

Indian literature and art all reflect its cultural characteristics. Hindu temple architecture is an inseparable part of Indian society and religious culture. Hinduism's predecessor Brahman religious rituals were dominated by killing sacrifices. Early Brahmanism did not require permanent religious building facilities. At the beginning of the 4th century, India entered and many times, and many dynasties focused on promoting the traditional Indian culture and pushing the Indian classical culture to the peak. During this period, a large number of religious artworks were produced, and the architectural intentions of the Indian classicism were established. ^[2] Jiduo eras are considered the beginning of Hindu temple architecture.

In the middle ages, India reformed the brahmanism and transformed it into Hinduism with a more complete system of religious theories. The mysticism of Hindu art style permeates the modeling field such as temple architecture. Kings everywhere often use religious thoughts to publicize their lofty missions, the king used religion to maintain his rule, and Hindu temples began to be built all over India, which virtually strengthened the cohesion of the country. India's medieval period was considered as the golden age of Hindu temple construction.

During the period of islamic rule, Islam had a profound influence on India's religious culture and thought. The period of islamic rule in India was the decline of Hindu temples.

After the establishment of the republic of India, India got rid of the colonial rule of Britain, and the ancient Hinduism rose again. At this time, most of the Hindu temples imitated the construction of the middle ages, and were built with reinforced concrete, showing worldly charm.

4. Classification of Hindu temples

Hindu temple is the material carrier of Hindu culture, with rich and changeable shapes and exquisite and complicated details, which is connected with the cosmic symbol and the world of gods, and reflects the diversity and inclusiveness of Indian religious culture. Hindu temples are of various types and can be divided into Shiva Temple and Brahma Temple according to the worship of gods. According to the roof form of the Hindu temple, it can be divided into Sikhara-style and Gopura -style and mixing type ^[3].

Sikhara refers to the tower-like roof of the Hindu temple Garbhagriha. The Sikhara roof is similar to the corn shape, and is covered with a round cake-shaped crown stone. The arched Sikhara may stem from the ancient bamboo architecture that used to cover the Vedic altar and its architrave and bulge on the surface are related to masonry method which applied on Sikhara. Form a soft bending overall shape. The Sikhara roof has different design features due to the proportional relationship, combination mode and engraving skills. The Sikhara roof present a solid and independent sculpture, and the huge Sikhara rises up with a extremely strong trend of rushing upward.

The Vimana refers to the pyramidal roof above the Garbhagriha of the Hindu temple. The Vimana temple was formed around the 8th century. It is usually based on a square formation plane. The small temple decorated in a row around the Vimana is covered with a helmet. The hat-shaped roof has a cylindrical dome at the top, which creating a rich and pleasing visual effect. The roof eaves of vimana usually have a horseshoe window niche, which means the abode of the spirit of vimana. Later, the temple became more bulky because of the pursuit of large scale.

The towering four-cone roof over the courtyard gate of the Gopura temple shaped in the 13th century. Gopura roofs are usually constructed of lighter materials, such as brick, wood, and plaster, contracting layer by layer from the bottom up along the long sides. The surface is covered with various stitches and figurines. Cylinder shape strip cover stone lies on the Gopura top, causing the dominating effect along with the unceasingly increase in height ^[4].

The origin of the Gopura roof is related to that of vimana. If bottom plane is rectangle, the roof usually adopts Gopura style. The Madurai Minaksy temple in Tamil Nadu is a representative of the Gopura-style temple, whose surface is decorated with colorful statues, arranged densely from top to

bottom, appearing secular gorgeous.

5. Features of Hindu temples

Hindu temple architecture in Southeast Asia has undergone many changes in style, which has a unified source of Hinduism. They show some common features in architectural layout and functional changes. The traits of Hindu temple mainly include the factors like the front gate, external wall and water areas. The architectural factors perhaps present in anywhere in every different district inside the temple. For instance, the core temple and other construction areas in the Hindu temple are divided by the pool areas. The separations of the temple's external area mainly mean the boundary between the heaven and the real world, to show the levels of a vertical space by means of the separation in a flat space.

Only Brahman has the access to enter the main hall of the temple to hold religious rituals. The external districts of the temple are divided into different patterns according to different functions. The Hindu temple in Southeast Asia does not emphasize the use of material, but only emphasizes the creation of its external form and overall space^[5]. Built purely to meet spiritual requirements, and focused on pursuing profound art. The Hindu temple in Southeast Asia pays more attention to the visual effect of external perception. The temple uses a lot of embossing techniques. The frequency and scope of reliefs are obviously more than that of statues. Statues generally appear indoors, and the Hindu temples in Southeast Asia emphasize intuitive artistic expression, not affecting believers through the implicit internal symbolism. In line with Southeast Asian cultural traditions and thinking habits. The Hindu Communication Center has made use of geographical conditions to create broad visual effects. The construction of Angkor Wat is related to the huge stone source. In coastal areas, the champa mainly built temples by burning red bricks, forming the magnificent Angkor Wat and the sophisticated artistic style of the champa tower. The Hindu temples in Angkor Wat are large in scale, and the reliefs can represent grand scenes and complex epic plots. The bas-relief of the tower refers to the main image of the gods and the mid-emotions of the epic. Balbromon of Bali believes that that the practice is best done in lush vegetation, close to water, to promote the spiritual influence of Hinduism. Bali takes full advantage of the terrain and highlights the role of the natural environment in promoting spiritual activities.

The construction of Hindu temples is closely related to the construction of cities. The glory of Hindu temple architecture cannot be achieved without the strong support of the rulers. Hinduism is no longer the main form of faith in Southeast Asian society, and its influence in Southeast Asia is less than that of the three major religions. Hinduism has been unable to obtain the strong support of the rulers, and the local influence mainly depends on the close combination of Hinduism and traditional belief forms. Hindu temples successfully attract traditional sacrificial activities to the temple. The brahmanism of the chan ethnic group combines the worship of Hindu gods with animism to worship other indigenous gods, and the Hindu rituals of the chan people and the Balinese islanders embody the combination of the worship of almighty gods and the worship of ancestors.

6. Conclusion

Hinduism is an important form of India's cultural influence in southeast Asia, the Hindu temple reflects the same religious origins and diversity of localization process, which closely linked with the migration of southeast Asia, in order to adapt to the southeast Asia natural and cultural environment, a lot of localization changes were made, thus help it gain a solid popular base and form a distinctive southeast Asian Hindu architectural style.

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