



VISHNU TEMPLE AT ANGKORWAT CAMBODIA

Dr.M.Padmaja

Asst.Prof. CSEAPS, SVU, Tirupati.

B.K.Rangaswamy

Research Scholar, Anthropology, SVU, Tirupati.

KEYWORDS :

Hinduism spread in Cambodia by practice and not by force. It is relevant that after the countries were invaded foreign religions were forced on the natives country on this, Hinduism or Buddhism spread over other countries without invasion. Now the only Hindu country in the world is Nepal, which is also in trouble of keeping its identity as a Hindu country Buddhism is still practiced in many countries like Sri Lanka, Yangon (Burma) Thailand, Vietnam, Japan, China and many other countries.

Vishnu temple is located in Cambodia with in 500 Acres, It is said that about 39 kings ruled the country in the Angkor period. Some of them were famous and contributed much to the khemer culture architecture and temple construction indraverman I built a temple Preachko

Angkorwat is a wonder on earth showing the caliber of supremacy of Hindu knowledge in terms of architectural science combining together with cosmology, astrology, numerology and historical events of India religion Located in Northwestern Cambodia, Angkor, the Capital of the ancient Khemer Empire was possibly founded around the 9th Century A.D. by King Jayavarman II. However, the city reached its peak glory in the 12th century under Kings suryavarman II and Jayavarman VII

Astrology

The Hindu temple, as a conception of the astronomical frame of the universe, serves the same purpose as the Vedic altar, which reconciled the motions of the sun and the moon. Lord Vishnu carries a very powerful golden chakra called Sudarshan Chakra with enormous killing power and geminating golden rays in his first finger. This is why perhaps it is more aimed on solar correlations as compared to lunar. This indicates the relation of Lord Vishnu and Sun God. This represents how Hinduism has deepened its roots in Angkorwat.

ABOUT CAMBODIA

The present Cambodia in South East Asia (Indo-China), with Thailand and Gulf of Thailand on the West, Laos and Thailand on the North, Vietnam on the East and Vietnam and Gulf of Thailand on the South, with 1,81,035 Sq. Km., with a maximum of 580 Km. East-West and 450 Km. North-South and with a population of 13 million people is a small country still limping towards modern civilization. Once a civilized country still limping towards modern civilization. Once a civilized country, at its best in Angkorian period, with parts of Thailand, Vietnam and Laos in its control become a protectorate of French in 1864, got independence in 1953, again in the war with Vietnam and after that the horrifying Khmer Rouge regime and then the elections in 1993, with the king as its head, after which the country started to progress slowly. Even today the rural area is very backward, mainly depending on agricultural activities, depending on rains and river water, without electricity, living in high raised thatched houses, human in the upper portion and animals in the ground level. Even the road in the rural area is very bad with our asphaltting or even without metal.



view of angkorwat from the entrance

Angkor Wat is the largest Hindu Temple in the world and also the second largest temple in the world. Angkor Wat is the largest in the sense that the total area comprises of 500 acres and it is 213 feet in height from the ground level and is a little less than the height of the gopuram of the Tanjavar temple and is equal to the height of the Cathedral of Notre Dom in Paris. Recently another groupm is constructed in Murudeshwar, near Udipi in Karnataka State, which is higher than Tanjavurgopuram This spectacular site is a proud accomplishment to Hinduism, which spread from India to the Far East Asia. Angkor Wat is compared to TajMahal of India, the Great wall of China, with regards to its grandeur, Hinduism was at its pinnacle in Cambodia in this period.

HISTORY OF THE TEMPLE

Angkor means capital city and Wat means temple. Earlier they used to call it is Nagara. This temple was constructed by Suryavarman II in the 12th century. This massive Hindu temple was dedicated to Lord Vishnu It is believed that the construction of the temple took 30 years and the king died before its completion. Contrary to Hindu temples this temple faces the west and the carvings on the corridor walls (bas-reliefs) are to be seen from left to right and in the process one has to walk anti clock wise which means 'apradikshanam'. This raised some doubts about the temple, which after the death of the king, was it used as his tomb. Ashes were found 27 meters deep from the third floor of the central sanctuary which were kept later in the mausoleum. Originally this temple was called as Angkor only and after Buddhism was adopted and after the image of Buddha was erected there, and then it was called as Angkor Wat-Khemers believe that this temple was built by Viswakarma, the architect of the Gods. But there is also a belief that it was designed by Divakara Pandita, the chief advisor and minister of the king, who was a brahmin. Angkor Wat with its five towers symbolizes the Mount Meru at the centre of the universe; the outer wall signifies the edge of the world and the surrounding moat, the ocean. The temple itself is of one Sq. Km. area

and the length of the compound wall is about 5.5 Km. The moat is 1500 meters on east and west side and 1300 meters on north and south sides, It is believed that 2000 people lived in this temple city



Angkor wat from the elevated walkway?

It seems about 3.86 lakh workers worked to construct the Temple. About 6400 Sculptures were engaged for carving .about 40,000 elephants carried and stone from PhnomKulen hills which is about 50 km. away. Apart from elephants 700 bamboo ramps (boats) were engaged to carry sand stone through Seam Reap River. At that time it is believed that there were 1300 dancers in Angkor Wat. During the civil war fierce battle took place in Angkor Wat and the bullet holes on the pillars are visible. On the first corridor the stature of Vishnu is kept .it seems the Vishnu status was recovered and brought back in 1993 there is another status of a lady without head and hands and is supposed to be the status of Lakshmi There are lot of Apsara carvings. It seems there are about 1500 Apsara (Dancing Girls) carvings in Angkor Wat with about 36 different hair dresses and different ear rings . The figure of each Apsara in different from other in one way or other in their pose or hair style or nail or ear rings etc. It is beloved that the Apsaras were born by the churning of the ocean of milk.



Apsara

Vishnu

This was earlier covered with wooden structure. This was used by the king as a meeting hall as well as Apsara dances were conducted there. The dances conducted on Cambodian new year day (13th to 15th Aril) have more importance as the king with royal family attends. This terrace in provided as a link between the first ad the second levels. At the entrance tower the stone windows look like carved wooden windows. The figure of Apsaras is carved at the bottom of each column. One many of the pillars. The inscriptions are either in Sanskrit or in Khemer. From the center, we walked toward the main temple. One the second level in the third enclosure are the galleries where one witness the bas reliefs the corridors are richly carved they are divided into eight parts. Four parts on each side and the other four in the corners. The outer rectangular corridor from the tower the galleries are there and the inner walls are carved with bas reliefs. The total length of the corridor is deep our even the minute details were intricately carved. Ever the roof is carved with decoration. But some parts of the roof are damaged. Each side the corridor is divided into two parts by a central hall which has a passage to outside as well as towards inside to approach the main towers. The galleries are supported by 60

evenly spaced columns that provide light on the inner walls which are decorated by bas reliefs.



Corridor



Apsaras



Corridor leading to main temple

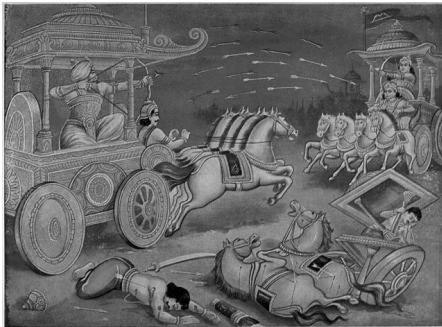


Western gallery south wing

KURUKSHETRA BATTLE

The battle of Kurukshetra is carved throughout on the half of the west gallery on the south side in the south west corner scenes from Ramayana are carved. Then on the south wall on the west side it is

carved with the army of king Suryavarman II and then on the east side it is the judgment of yama. Which is about heaven and hell. The beliefs of Hindus about 37 heavens and 32 hells are described. After the judgment of yama people going to heaven are carved on the upper side and the people going to hell are carved on the lower side. In the east gallery on the south side of the east gallery the churning of the ocean of milk was elaborately eared with gods demons on each side holding the serpent vasuki and churning the ocean. There are some inscription in the north side of the east gallery. This work was supposed to be done in the 16th century by the Buddhist monks. These carvings are in unfinished stage. Even though Buddhist monks had done the work it belongs to Hindu mythology. The first half of the gallery, it is the east side of the north gallery, is carved about the victory of Krishna over Baanasura. These scenes are also believed to be carved by Buddhist monks. The second half of the north gallery on the west side is about the battle of the Gods with demons. In the North West corner are the scenes from Ramayana and along the west gallery on the north side we see a depiction of the battle in Lanka.



Water Festival :

The water Festival takes place over three days in November all over Cambodia, with the biggest celebrations along the Tonle Sap River in front of Royal Palace in Phnom Penh.

The water Festival was first celebrated in the 12th century, around the time of Angkorian King Jayavarman VII. The King's Navy helped usher in the Cambodian fishing season. The festivities made the gods happy and secured good harvests of rice and fish in the upcoming year.

Another story in that Bon Om Touk was a way for the king to prepare his navy for battle. There are carvings at Bayon Temple. At Banteay Chmear that show naval battles similar to the boat races in present-day celebrations.

The festival is celebrated in very province, but many Cambodians make a special trip from the provinces to the capital city, Phnom Penh. They usually spend at least two days enjoying the festivities. In Phnom Penh people gather for big boat races, illuminated floats, amom salutation and eating of special rice made with banana or coconut juice.



Many people spend all their time at the boat races, finding a spot along the river, laying out a picnic mat, eating and drinking, and cheering for their teams. Boat race participants usually arrive a few days before to practice along the Tonle Sap River. The boats are often sponsored by individual donors and government officials.

At night, after the races, you will see people floating small, handmade boats in the river along with many, many floating candles. Different Government ministries create their own larger illuminated boats later in the evening there are beautiful fireworks displays that last around 20 minutes.



Conclusion:

Vishnu temple is located in 500 acres at Angkor Wat Cambodia, this is the world largest Hindu temple. Pallavas migrated from South India to Cambodia. Jayavarama and Suryavarama, ruled Khmer Empire and constructed the temple architecture beautifully and wonderfully. It is a great landmark of Hinduism Architecture even today. The procession and water festival is celebrated every year at Cambodia.

REFERENCES

1. John F. Cady. Southeast Asia: its Historical Development, 1964 McGraw-Hill Book Company, USA. p.no.89,90
2. John F. Cady Southeast Asia: its Historical Development, 1964 McGraw-Hill Book Company, USA. p.no.97
3. Ebiha 1968:471-472. A Tale of two temples.
4. Dr.M. Padmaja "SAPTHAGIRI" Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams illustrated monthly July, 2010
5. Monalilja-2008 Nias press Malaysia power, resistance and women politicians in Cambodia.
6. Monalilja power, Resistance and women politician in Cambodia by Nias press Malaysia.
7. Yashihara, K. 1988. The rise of ersatz capitalism in southeast Asia, Singapore: Oxford university press.
8. www.cambodia.com.