

“Wat Kokprasat”, A Transformation of Ancient Khmer Temple into a Modern Buddhist Pagoda

Rujittika Mungmunpantipantip¹, Viroj Wiwanitkit²

¹Private Academic Consultant, Bangkok Thailand.

²Honoary professor, Dr DY Patil University, Pune, India.

Abstract

There are many ancient archeological sites in many countries worldwide. The fate of the ancient site in the present day is an interesting issue. In architecture, the conservation of the ancient site is needed. The transformation of the ancient religious site by local people into the new pattern might exist. Here, the authors present cases of “Wat Kokprasat”, a transformation of ancient Khmer temple into a modern Buddhist pagoda, which specifically existed in Indochina.

Keywords: Temple, Ancient, Pagoda, Khmer, Transformation.

Introduction

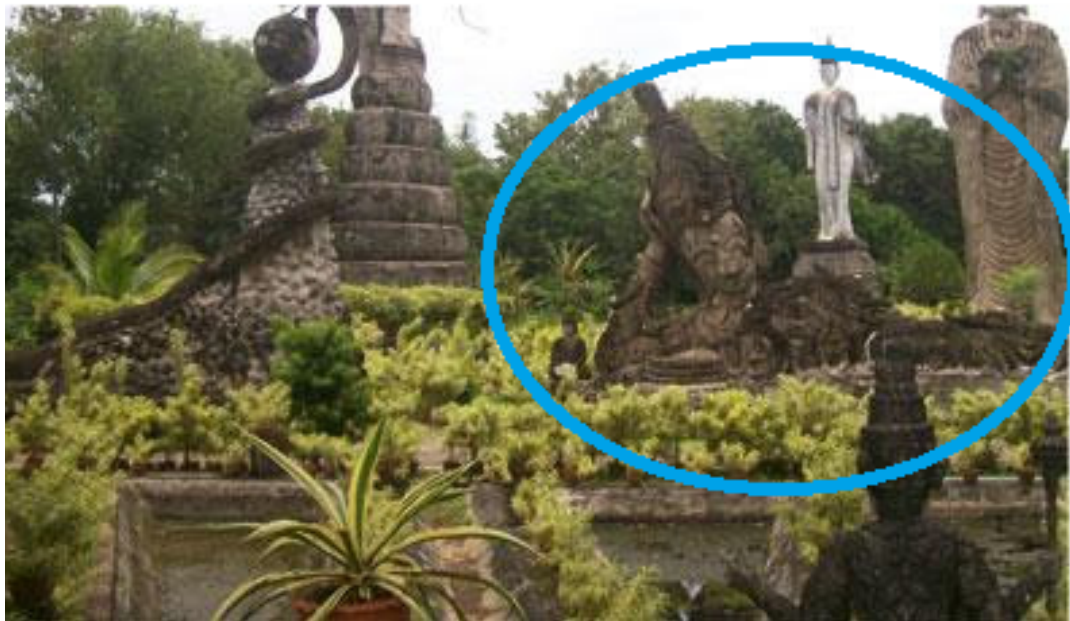
There are many ancient archeological sites in many countries worldwide. The fate of the ancient site in the present day is an interesting issue. In architecture, the conservation of the ancient site is needed. The transformation of the ancient religious site by local people into the new pattern might exist. Here, the authors present cases of “Wat Kokprasat”, a transformation of ancient Khmer temple into a modern Buddhist pagoda, which specifically existed in Indochina.

Case studies

In Thailand, there are some ancient Khmer temples. Most of the ancient temples locate at northeastern region. Many temples are ruined. The transformation from ancient into modern religious sanctuary also occurs. Wat Kokprast is set at many ancient sites. The famous ones are at Srakaew province, Nakornrattchasrima province, Buriran province and Surin province. The Wat Kokprasat is usually constructed at the area of old ruined Khmer temple and there might be ancient artifacts at that area.



A. Wat Kokprasat, Chumni District, Buriram province



B. Wat Kokprasat, Banplai, Surin Province

Figure 1. Some famous Wat Kokprasat (new structures are in blue circles).

Discussion

In Cambodia, the Khmer style temple was originated. There are numerous ancient Khmer temples in Cambodia. Some are well protected and listed in world heritage. Some are abandoned. This is different from Thailand, some ancient Khmer temples are already transformed.

Wat Kokprasat is a specific transformation. The change from ancient site into modern Buddhist pagoda/monastery occurs. Monk usually lives there and local people usually visit to pray and religiously practice. The conservation of ancient structure in the area of Wat Kokprasat usually occurs. Also, there are usually many new religious artifacts at the same area.

The way that the local people preserve the ancient by transformation is a local wisdom. It might be a way that the last long usage of the religious site will occur. In fact, this is not the single way that transformation of ancient Khmer temple occurs in Thailand, another famous well-known transformation is the transformation of the old temple into the new public health center.

Conflict of interest: None

References

1. Wiwanitkit V. Arogayasala in present Thai culture: Adaptation of ancient public health primary care system. *Ann Trop Med Public Health* 2017; 10: 471-2.