



Historical Processes of Urban Form and Land-Use Change at Shwedagon Pagoda's Surrounding Area in Yangon, Myanmar

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Shwedagon Pagoda is located at the centre of Yangon, Myanmar. It is one of the nation's most respected religious monuments. The objective of this research was to identify the details of the historical processes of urban form and land-use change in the area surrounding the pagoda in relation to political regime transition. This research also focused on the evolving processes of the pagoda festival and its land use in the surrounding area; the festival is a typical occasion during which the relationship between the pagoda and the surrounding area is prominently visible. An interview survey, newspaper review survey, field survey, mapping work, and literature review were conducted to accomplish this research's goals. The pagoda's land property and the land use of the surrounding area have undergone significant changes. This research identified the historical processes through which temporary, multi-purpose open spaces in the area surrounding the pagoda have been divided, fixed for individual land uses, and segmentalized according to role during the pagoda festival. For example, this includes markets and stalls that have been altered for use as permanent shops and restaurants, entertainment and amusement facilities that were enclosed in parks, and smaller forms of lodging that have become hotels.

Keywords: Shwedagon Pagoda, Pagoda Festival, Land-Use Change, Historical Process of Urban Form, Park Establishment, Yangon, Myanmar

1. Introduction

Research Background and Objectives

Asian Theravada Buddhist nations, Buddhism, and royal authorities were deeply connected during the dynastic period. The legitimacy of these royal authorities was guaranteed through their protection of Buddhism¹. Buddhist belief entails the accumulation of merit not only by regularly worshipping at pagodas, but also by constructing or maintaining them². Pagoda festivals are religious events that provide opportunities for large numbers of worshippers from both rural and urban areas to gather at influential pagodas³. During such festivals, temporary multi-purpose, open spaces are (were) secured and utilized in the area surrounding the pagoda. Such areas are necessary to provide facilities and spaces for markets, trading, dining, entertainment, and lodging for worshippers⁴. Through historical and political transitions including colonization and urbanization, the original land-use purposes of these open spaces as they were established during the dynastic period have changed. That is, these spaces have been altered and fixed for specific purposes.

Myanmar⁵ is an Asian Theravada Buddhist nation⁶. As such, Shwedagon Pagoda⁷ (hereinafter "the Pagoda") is situated in the city of Yangon (Figure 1). The Pagoda is one of the nation's most respected religious monuments for those of the Buddhists faith. The Pagoda is located at the centre of Yangon⁸, which was founded as the area's colonial capital. The objective of this research was to identify the details of the historical processes of urban form and land-use change (including the development of parks) in the area surrounding the Pagoda⁹ in relation to political regime transition. This research also focused on the evolving processes of the Shwedagon Pagoda Festival¹⁰ (hereinafter "the Festival") and its land use in the surrounding area; the Festival is a typical occasion during which the relationship between the Pagoda and the surrounding area is prominently visible. Since the area surrounding the Pagoda has been the most important religiously and politically centre in Yangon, the governments have made changes to land use in the area as their political intentions. Considering the urban form and land use change of Yangon, it is, therefore, meaningful to focus on the area where the political intentions remarkably appear in the historical backgrounds.

Related studies were reviewed before conducting this research. The history of Myanmar has been studied by Ma Mya Sein (1944), Noel (1993), Mya Maung (1999), Nishizawa (2000), Yamaguchi (2011), and Nemoto (2014), etc. The history and current conditions of Buddhism in Myanmar have been studied by Ikeda (1995), Kuramoto (2014), etc., while those of the Shwedagon Pagoda have been examined by Win Pe (1972), Mg Su Shin (1972),



Noel (1995), Moore (2000), Philp (2002), Penny (2006), Donald (2013), and Nay Chi Zay Ya (2015), especially in the military regime by Donald (2005). The social history and urban form of Yangon during the colonial regime have been studied by Wright (1910), Webb (1923), Pearn (1931), Osada (2013), etc. Finally, current land-use practices and changes that have recently occurred in Yangon have been studied by JICA (2013), especially in terms of parks by Hirano and Yokohari (2017).

This original research aims to develop an understanding of the historical processes involved in urban form and land-use change in the secret Buddhist area of colonial Yangon. This especially includes changes that took place under the military regime, when official documents had not yet published. This research intends to identify how temporary, multi-purpose open spaces have been divided, fixed for individual land uses, and segmentalized in the area surrounding the pagoda in the historical processes.

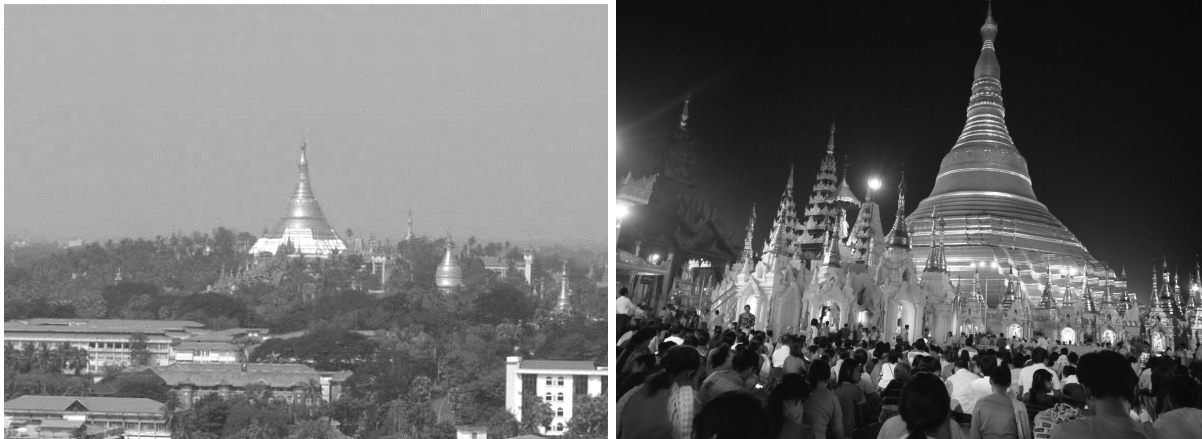


Figure 1: Pictures of Shwedagon Pagoda. The Pagoda stands on Singuttara Hill, which sits at an altitude of 58m. Building height is regulated in Pagoda's surrounding areas (left). Worshipers visit the Pagoda on the full-moon day of Tabaung (around March), when the Shwedagon Pagoda Festival is held (right). [Hirano: 2018]

Research Methodology

This research involved an interview survey, newspaper review survey, field survey, mapping work¹¹, and a literature review. The interview and newspaper review surveys were key methods in this research since official documents have remained unpublished in Myanmar since 1964¹². Interviews were conducted with Shwedagon Pagoda Trustees, the Ministry of Construction, Yangon City Development Committee, shop, park and hotel operators, and worshipers to understand the historical transitions of the Pagoda property, as well as its land use, religious use, park development, and activities involved in the Festival¹³. Copies of the state-owned English newspaper "The Working People's Daily"¹⁴ were reviewed on a biennial basis to investigate transitions in the Festival activities and political treatment from 1967 to 2017, as well as on and around the opening of People's Park in 1989¹⁵. Field surveys of the surrounding area were also conducted¹⁶. The Ananda Pagoda Festival in Bagan was surveyed as a point of reference and comparison. A field survey was then conducted on all 62 parks in Yangon¹⁷. Finally, this research set four historical classifications (i.e., the dynastic, colonial, military (BSPP and SLORC)¹⁸, and civilian regimes) according to key benchmarks regarding changes in politics and the status of Buddhism. In each classification, land use maps were made to visualize physical changes in land use.

2. The Dynastic Regime

Yangon was known as the secret town of the Pagoda¹⁹. Buddhism prospered as a state religion during the dynastic period²⁰. The greatest supporters of Buddhism during that time were the royal authorities, who made a number of donations to the Pagoda that included land property²¹. Donation to the Pagoda has always marked the "control of the delta" and "rule of the country" in Yangon²². This research involved the arrangement of a map indicating the Pagoda's property, and then calculated the area (Figure 2)²³. Calculations revealed that the area of owned lands covered 799 km² during the reign of Queen Shinsawbu, and 280 km² during that of King Dammazedi.

During the late-16th century, Fitch recorded the Festival as involving "the full moon of Tabaung (around March)," and that "the occasions of great religious festivals brought a great press of people"; during "the Festival, a man can hardly pass by water or by land," "they come from all places of the Kingdom," and "such festivals were normally accompanied by a great fair"²⁴. Moreover, the Festival was considered to be a cosmopolitan market



from abroad as well as from rural area²⁵. The image in Figure 3 indicates that religious events used open-spaces in the surrounding areas of the Pagoda during the dynastic regime²⁶.

The field survey of the annual Ananda Pagoda Festival in Bagan²⁷ revealed that it is an important occasion during which people that live in and around the area are able to shop for commodities and experience entertainment, even at present.

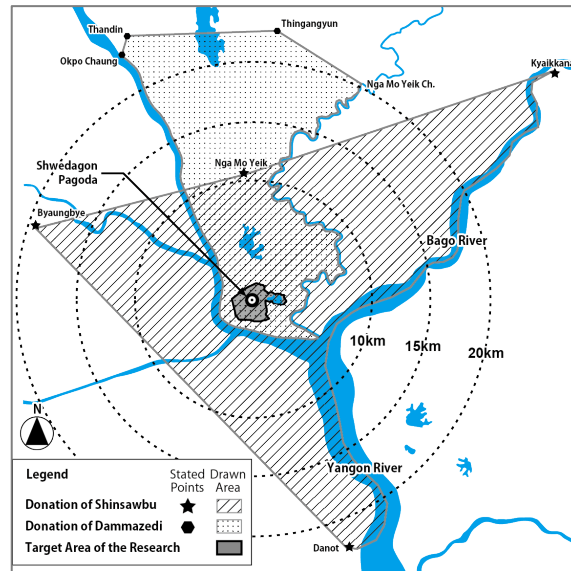


Figure 2: A map indicating the Shwedagon Pagoda's Property during the 15th Century. Pearn (1939) mentioned that Queen Shinsawbu made a land donation during the 1470s, and that King Dammazedi reduced its land boundary so as not to cross the river and canal. Fruit trees were cultivated on the donated land²⁸. [Hirano: 2018]

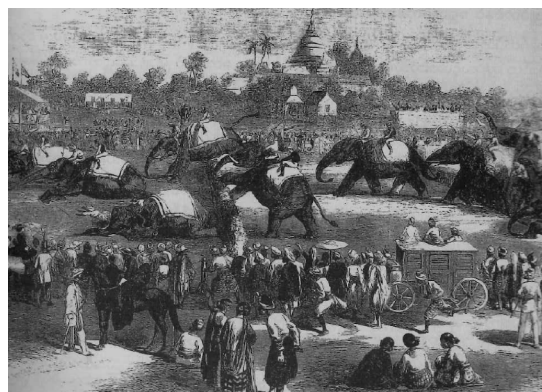


Figure 3: A depiction of the Elephant Event, which celebrated the Pagoda in the open-space in front of the west gate. The image's caption says that the "the surrounding area became fortress and cantonment and such event was not being performed during the colonial regime."²⁷ [Mag Su Shin: 1972]

3. The Colonial Regime

Yangon was colonized by the British in 1852²⁹, at which point Buddhism lost its status under the religious neutral policy. All land owned by the Pagoda became the property of the colonial government³⁰. Numerous small pagodas had been demolished by the 1850s, while fruit trees and related buildings had disappeared by the 1880s³¹. This research created a land-use map describing the surrounding areas, which were mainly under the control of the military as a cantonment (Figure 4). The cantonment contained two parks (described later), a golf course, and a racetrack as well as the arsenal, barracks and a parade ground³². The open-spaces left in the surrounding area depicted in a picture of Mag Su Shin (1972)³³. The Festival had declined in popularity during the early 1830s³⁴, and was fully interrupted as a result of colonization³⁵.

The colonial government established two parks³⁶. This included Cantonment Park, which was the first park in Yangon. It was constructed during the 1960s to provide amenities to cantonment residences at the cantonment



boundary. The park became crowded during band performances at night. The second was the Dalhousie Park, which was constructed during the 1890s³⁷.

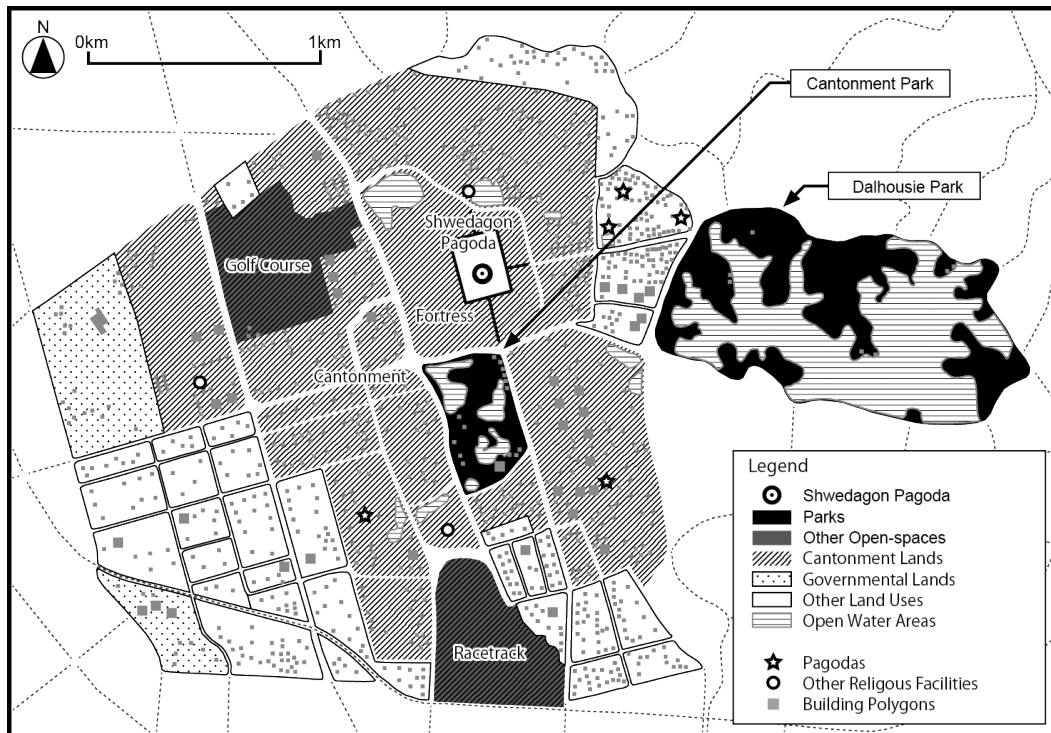


Figure 4: Land-use map of the colonial regime. The map indicates that the Pagoda was surrounded by a cantonment in which entertainment facilities (e.g., two parks, golf courses, and racetracks) were located. [Hirano: 2018]³⁸

4. After Nation's Independence and the Military Regime

After conservation movements³⁹, in 1930, the cantonment relocated to the suburbs of north Yangon, at which point the Pagoda's property was returned to an area of 44.2ha⁴⁰. The Festival also recommenced in 1930⁴¹. Performances surrounded by many worshipers were observed in the space depicted in a picture of Mag Su Shin (1972)⁴² during the Festival.

The BSPP Military Regime

The BSPP military regime adopted socialist policies that resulted in the closing of entertainment facilities and a revocation of the protection of Buddhism⁴³. This research identified situations related to the Festival through newspaper reviews, as follows: "*The Festival was crowded with many worshipers. The west gate was the centre of the Festival activities*⁴⁴." "*Worshipers visited the Festival from the suburbs*⁴⁵." "*A concert was held and lasted through night time*⁴⁶." "*Market fairs and entertainments were held with various communities' participation*⁴⁷." and "*Youths and girls look forward as seasons of birth and flirtation; long nights at the open-air theatre, feasting, and perpetual amusement, the pleasanter*⁴⁸."

This research also identified that the Festival became active on an annual basis, and that the Pagoda's land property and surrounding open spaces were used for markets, stalls, entertainment, and amusements that resulted in temporary crowds of worshipers⁴⁹. Entertainment lasted until dawn at these events⁵⁰.

The SLORC Military Regime

The SLORC military regime returned the protection of Buddhism to Myanmar⁵¹, dispersed propaganda about projects involving pagoda construction and restoration, sent high-ranking politicians to attend ceremonies, and donated to pagodas and monks in various ways⁵². In the meantime, Mahah Wizaya Pagoda, which stands at the foot of the Shwedagon Pagoda, was constructed by the SLORC military as the traditional custom of dynastic authorities⁵³. This research identified top articles in newspapers concerning high-ranking politicians who celebrated and donated to monks in addition to many pages covering the full-moon day of Tabaung (around March)⁵⁴. On the other hand, articles concerning the Festival were less common⁵⁵. This research also identified that Festival activities were limited to prayers and donations while markets, street stalls, and entertainment



activities were prohibited from 1988 to 2012⁵⁶. Shops along the access road to the east gate (these buildings are generally two-storied, reinforced concrete structures) were constructed beginning in 1989⁵⁷. The access gate shops cover a distance of about 200m, and sell treats, goods related to religious donations, and Buddha statues⁵⁸. Amusement facilities were set up in Cantonment Park during the late 1990s⁵⁹. During the same period, supermarkets and hotels opened in Yangon city⁶⁰. Thus, the commercial activities of the area's citizens underwent significant change. In addition, five parks were established in the surrounding area⁶¹. Remarkably, a top page newspaper article detailing its opening ceremony revealed that People's Park opened as the largest park in Yangon by using military land⁶². The newspaper emphasized connectivity of the park and Pagoda as *"the People's Park to link the ancient architecture at the Shwedagon Pagoda and the modern architecture of the Parliament building: creating a place for the residents of Yangon to take a rest,"* and that *"visitors can revere the Pagoda that stands in elegance"*⁶³. The four other parks, Ziwaka Park (0.7 ha, established in 1989), Blood Cleansing Lake Park (0.4 ha, established in 1990), Thirinandar Kan Park (0.8 ha), and Dagon Park (0.8 ha) were constructed during this period⁶⁴.

5. The Civilian Regime and the Present

The civilian regime established freedom of religion under a policy separating religion and politics⁶⁵. The Pagoda's property was limited to 45.6ha⁶⁶. The area contained related stupas, museums, parking lots, service facilities, a backyard, and maintained open-spaces⁶⁷. This research identified that the Festival had not been promoting activities related to markets, shop stalls, or entertainment in the surrounding area at that time. These activities were prohibited under the SLORC military regime, and remained so under the civilian regime with the exception of the access road to the east gate⁶⁸. Parks and large-scale public facilities did not conduct religious activities inside during the Festival, but the number of visitors to the amusement facilities in Cantonment Park and People's Park doubled, and that of shops tripled as usual⁶⁹. According to interviews with 30 worshipers, eight visited the Festival's amusement facilities⁷⁰. It was observed that approximately 130 shops selling commodities and foods temporarily opened on the access road between the permanent shops during the Festival⁷¹.

This research created a land-use map (Figure 5) indicating that military and government lands occupied the south and the west sides. Land use has been changing through rapid urbanization. It was observed that the number of buildings used for housing, monasteries, and commercial activities increased, with a high-density of land use mainly occurring on the north and east sides of the surrounding area. Approximately 75% of these buildings were occupied by monasteries and related buildings over the five-block area on the east side⁷². In addition, Martyr's Mausoleum Park (3.1 ha) was established on the north side in 2013⁷³. Thus, a total of eight parks have been established in the surrounding area⁷⁴.

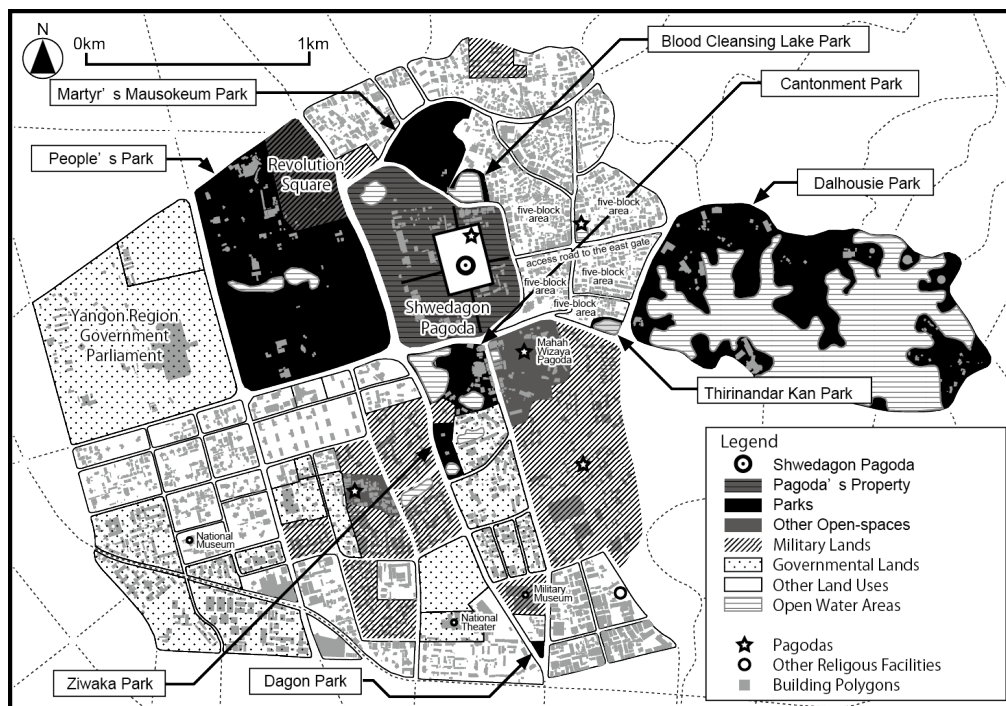


Figure 5: Land-use map of the civilian regime. The map indicates that military and government lands occupied the south and west sides. Many large-scale public facilities exist in these areas, including the Yangon Regional Government Assembly, National Museum, National Theatre, and Military Museum. [Hirano: 2018]⁷⁵



This research also conducted a park facility survey, and identified that five out of all 62 parks in Yangon city contain amusement facilities (e.g., roller coasters, merry-go-rounds)⁷⁶. Two of these parks, Cantonment Park and the People's Park, are located in the surrounding area.

6. Discussion

Pagoda-owned property reached a maximum size of 799km² during the late-15th century due to donations from the royal authorities. As Pearn (1931) pointed out that many worshipers gathered from rural areas and abroad during the Festival⁷⁷. Commodity and goods-trading markets⁷⁸, food and drink stalls, events and entertainment⁷⁹, and lodging for worshipers⁸⁰ were provided in the open spaces of the surrounding area. This research considers that there was a temporally, multi-purpose relationship involving religious use between the Pagoda and its surrounding open spaces, as it can be seen at the Ananda Pagoda Festival in Bagan in the present day.

As Philp (2002) pointed out that the ruler was well aware of the political significance of the Pagoda⁸¹. The colonial government condemned the Pagoda's property and utilized the surrounding area as a cantonment for military activities, living quarters, and ruler demonstrations. The Festival was interrupted, and was not held during the colonial regime until the 1930s. In the meantime, Yangon's first park was established in the surrounding area. The park was used as a space to hold entertainment events such as evening band performances⁸². As Hirano and Yokohari (2017) pointed out, the open spaces were used for people of the ruler's side, not for religious use⁸³. This research considers that the Pagoda was obligated to suspend its religious use activities with the surrounding area for approximately one century.

The Pagoda's property was returned in 1930 when the cantonment relocated to the suburbs. The returned property, however, was limited in regard to the surrounding area. The Pagoda's land was not as expansive as it was during the dynastic regime. The Festival activities resumed at this time, and the surrounding area was temporarily used for markets, stalls, entertainment, and amusement. This research considers that the religious use relationship between the Pagoda and the open spaces of the surrounding area was restored. This was also true regarding political circumstances; the entertainment facilities were obligated to close and commercial activities were limited under the BSPP military regime.

As Philp (2002) pointed out, the SLORC has consciously and actively appropriated Buddhism⁸⁴. Additionally, as Donald (2005) pointed out the SLORC have aggressively transformed Yangon city, and exercised control of public spaces, including the Pagoda to sever or neutralize their historical connections with revolutionary nationalism⁸⁵. On the other hand, the Festival activities involving markets, stalls, and entertainment were prohibited for a 24-year period beginning in 1988 under SLORC military policy⁸⁶. Structured shops along the access road were developed in the surrounding area, and supermarkets and hotels opened in Yangon city, which were triggered by economic policy changes. In the meantime, a total of five parks were established, starting with the opening ceremony of People's Park in the surrounding area during October 1989. Amusement facilities were later set up in Cantonment Park during the 1990s. This research considers that the Festival activities diminished, and the religious use relationship between the Pagoda and the surrounding area was nearly eliminated because areas in which former required the Festival functions took place had been repurposed for permanent shops, supermarkets, hotels, and parks.

Land use has changed to accommodate a variety of commercial, residential, and religious uses in the area surrounding the Pagoda. These changes were accelerated by rapid urbanization movements subsequent to the shift to civilian rule in 2011. Although the open space in the surrounding area contains eight parks and large-scale public facilities, the Festival activities are not conducted in these areas. This research considers that the direct religious use relationship between the Pagoda and the surrounding area was ultimately lost through historical transitions. During the Festival, shops along the access road and amusement facilities in the parks accommodated more visitors for specific land-use purposes.

7. Conclusion

As discussed regarding each of the historical classifications above, the land property and land-use of the surrounding area has changed greatly while the status of Buddhism has been destabilized through various regime transitions. This research identified that the religious use relationship between the Pagoda and the surrounding area weakened during these historical transitions (Figure 6).

The temporary, multi-purpose open spaces of the surrounding area used to play important religious roles, especially when the Festival was held during the dynastic regime. Although such roles were suspended during the colonial regime, they appeared to have somewhat resumed during the BSPP military regime. However, the roles of the surrounding area have nearly disappeared subsequent to the establishment of the SLORC military regime. Through



the development of parks and large-scale public facilities, the open spaces physically remain in the surrounding area today, but have practically changed as religious activities are no longer conducted inside.

This research identified the historical processes through which the temporary, multi-purpose open spaces of the surrounding area established during the dynastic regime were divided, fixed for individual land use, and given segmentalized roles. This occurred especially during the SLORC military regime, which was obligated to prohibit the Festival activities. This research considers that the roles previously required by the Festival worshipers and citizens have been supplemented and replaced in both the surrounding area and Yangon city. This includes the roles of markets and stalls being replaced with permanent shops and restaurants, entertainment and amusement facilities being enclosed in parks, and lodging that was altered into hotels. These drastic changes occurred during the 24-year prohibition period implemented by the SLORC military regime. Thus, the roles of the Festival are no longer needed by modern citizens, except praying and donating.

It is remarkable that the open spaces of the surrounding area have become modern parks as well as many large-scale public facilities such as Yangon Region Government Parliament, National Museum, National Theatre through historical transitions. This adds to the understanding of urban form and the establishment and development of parks in colonial cities. As Philp (2002) and Penny (2006) pointed out that the Pagoda and the Singuttara Hill is the most important religiously and politically centre area in Yangon⁸⁷, the governments have made changes to land use with their political intentions especially at this area in Yangon. It is possible that the governments (especially the SLORC military regime) aimed to establish parks and other public facilities by taking the originality and history of the area into account⁸⁸, which used to involve annual gatherings in which people enjoyed the Festival. It should be also noted that the military regime also made a regulation to control building height, which has currently been enacting, at the surrounding area to conserve the views of the Pagoda and probably to secure the status of the Pagoda. Thus, the value of the attraction and the attention it gathers⁸⁹ of the Pagoda could be used as political propaganda in the historical process of urban form and land use change in Yangon.

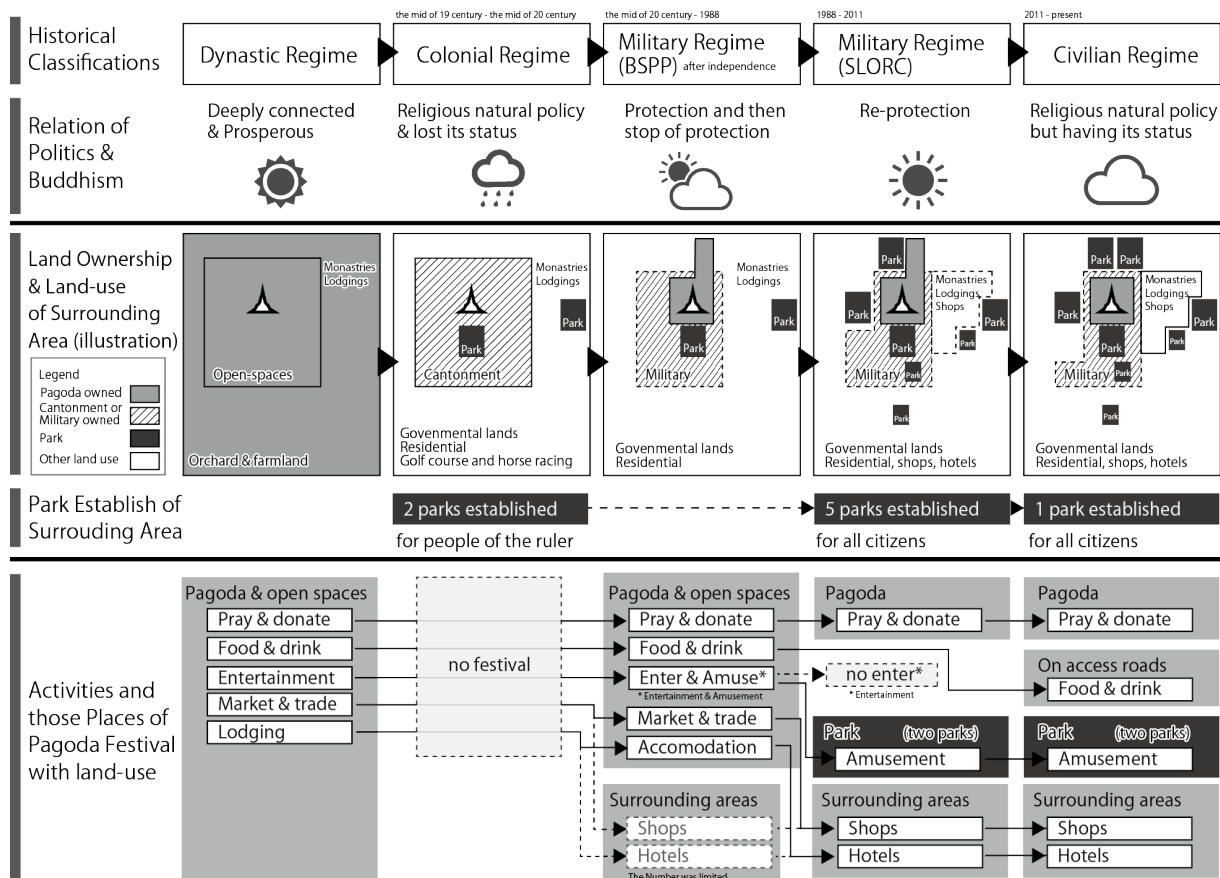


Figure 6: Diagram showing the historical processes of relation of politics and Buddhism, land ownership and land use change of the surrounding area, park establishment, and activities at the surrounding areas when the Shwedagon Pagoda Festival. The land use has changed from open spaces owned by the Pagoda to other land uses owned by British military (cantonment), military, public or individual private through historical process. The parks have been also established and accumulated in the area. The activities of the Festival were taken place in the Pagoda and the open-spaces in dynastic regime has been outspreaded to other land uses. [Hirano: 2018]



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Endnotes

¹ Nemoto (2014), pp.39, and Kuramoto, *monk living* (2014), pp.4.

² Kuramoto, *monk dwelling* (2014), pp.81. Definitions of pagoda, temple, monastery are different in each Theravada Buddhist nations. In Myanmar it is common that pagoda and monastery are separated.

³ There are historically influential pagodas and temples in the major cities of the nations. Large cities, such as Bangkok, Phnom Penh, Vientiane, Yangon, has influential pagodas or temples. Kuramoto, *monk living* (2014), pp.21, mentioned that the larger cities tend to have more potential that pagodas or temples receive more donations.

⁴ According to interviews with Shwedagon Pagoda Trustee and Yangon City Development Committee, stalls, performances, and entertainment facilities used to be set up in open spaces (vacant lands) at the surrounding area and on streets during the Shwedagon Pagoda Festival. The details are discussed later sections.

⁵ Myanmar is located on the west side of the Indochinese Peninsula, has a land area of 676,577 km², and has a population of 51.49 million (Department of Population (2014), Census). In this research, the name of the nation is unified as "Myanmar", although it was "Union of Burma" from 1948 to 1989 after the nation's independent.

⁶ In Myanmar, currently 89% of the population is occupied by Theravada Buddhists, while the remaining 10% is composed of Christians, Muslims, Hindus, the Spiritual Belief.

⁷ Shwedagon Pagoda was said to have been built on a hill, namely Singuttara hill, to pay the holy hair brought back by the Mong Merchants who travelled India 2,500 years ago during the life of Buddha. The height from the terrace to the apex of the Pagoda is about 99m. The Singuttara hill, has been worshiped as a sacred place from the dynasty according to Pearn (1939), pp.1.

⁸ Yangon, the largest city of the nation, is located on the south side of the national land and has an area of 10,277 km² and the population is 7.36 million (Department of Population (2014), Census). It was the capital city until the transition to Ney Pyi Taw in 2006. In this research, the name of the city is unified as "Yangon", although it was "Rangoon" from 1852 to 1989 under the British colony.

⁹ The scope of the surrounding area in this research corresponds to the range of enacted regulations that building height control is being carried out. The government and citizens generally recognize the range of said regulation is the "surrounding area" of the Pagoda.

¹⁰ The Shwedagon Pagoda Festival, officially called as "Buddha Pujaniya Tabaung Festival of the Shwedagon Pagoda", is held for about a week on and before the full moon day in Tabaung that is around March based on the lunar calendar in Myanmar. The Festivals are generally held for the purpose of worship and donation. During the Festival, a ritual religious event that donates the monk robe to the Buddha statues sitting on the four sides of the Pagoda terrace is carried out, meanwhile, the monks chant Buddhist sutra. Other pagodas in the nation has their own festivals which are mainly held in the dry season and summer season (from November to May).

¹¹ Maps were created in this research in the dynastic regime and the civilian regime. Details were written in each part.

¹² The National Archives Department, Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development has not disclosed the official documents from 1963 until the present.

¹³ The interview with Shwedagon Pagoda Trustee (U Maung Maung Win, a board member) was done on 3rd Apr. and 9th Aug. 2017. That of Department of Urban and Housind Development, Ministry of Construction (Daw Aye Aye Myint, the deputy director general, Daw Than Than Soe, the former director, and U Htin Myaing, the former deputy director) was on 16th Aug. 2017 and 13th Feb. 2018. That of City Planning and Land Administration Department (U Toe Aung, the former deputy department head, Tin Tin Kyi, the deputy department head), and Parks and Playgrounds Department (U Hla Win Aung, the deputy department head, and U Min Aung, the deputy department head), Yangon City Development Committee was on 6th Nov. 2012, 26th Aug. 2016, and 24th Feb. 2017. That of shop, hotel, and park operators were done on 14th Feb. and 1st Mar. 2018. That of worshipers visiting the Festival targeting 30 samples in total were done on 1st Mar. 2018.

¹⁴ "The Working People's Daily" changed its name to "New Light of Myanmar" since 1994, and to "Global New Light of Myanmar" since 2014. All articles can be obtained at the Library of Institute of Developing Economies, JETRO.

¹⁵ The articles of the Festival were observed in the newspaper as follows (titles and dates). "At the Great Shwedagon (1967, 24th Mar.)", "Tabaung fullmoon marked (top page) (1971, 11th Mar)", "Shwedagon-scene of Tabaung Festival (top page) (1975, 26th Mar)", "Tabaung Fullmoon Day Observed (top page) (1977, 3rd Mar)", "Fullmoon Day of Tabaung observed in Rangoon (top page) (1979, 12th Mar)", "Fullmoon Day of Tabaung observed in Rangoon (top page) (1981, 20th Mar)", "Fullmoon Day of Tabaung observed (1983, 28th Mar)", "Fullmoon Day of Tabaung observed (1985, 5th Mar)", "Fullmoon Day of Tabaung observed (1987, 14th Mar)", "Shwedagon Pagoda's Tabaung Festival concludes (top page) (1989, 21th Mar)", "Buddha Pujaniya Festival held at Shwedagon (1991, 27th Feb)", "Shwedagon Pagoda Buddha Pujaniya Tabaung Festival concludes (1997, 23th Mar)", "Pagodas, monastries crowded with Buddhist devotees on Fullmoon Day of Tabaung (1999, 1st Mar)", "Meritorious deeds performed at pagodas, religious buildings on Fullmoon Day of Tabaung (2001, 8th Mar)", "Tabaung festival held (2003, 17th Mar)", "Prime Minister cleanses Shwehtidaw of Shwedagon Pagoda (2005, 24th Mar)", "Buddhists perform meritorious deeds on Fullmoon day of Tabaung (2007, 2th Mar)", "Pagodas in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon packed with devotees on Fullmoon Day of Tabaung (2009, 10th Mar)", "Meritorious deeds performed at religious edifices throughout nation on Fullmoon Day of Tabaung (2011, 19th Mar)".



Mar)", "Yangon religious edifices crowded with devotees (2013, 26th Mar)", and "Yangon crowded with pilgrims and holiday-makers on fullmoon day (2015, 4th Mar)". The articles of the Park were as follows (titles and dates). "The People's Square and the People's Park that will reveal history (1989, 7th Oct) and (1989, 8th Oct)", "People's Square and People's Park to be open to public (1989, 9th Oct)", "People's Square and People's Park constructed under special arrangements of SLORC, opened (1989, 11th Oct)", "To rest, recreation and reverence (1989, 12th Oct)".

¹⁶ The visit day of Shwedagon Pagoda Festival was 1st Mar. 2018 and that of Ananda Pagoda Festival in Bagan was 13th Jan. 2018. The interview with Ananda Pagoda Trustee (U San Win, a member of the trustee, and U Aung Kyi, a member of the trustee) was also done on 13th Jan. 2018. Field surveys of building uses and land uses at the surrounding area of Shwedagon Pagoda was conducted from Jun. to Aug. 2017.

¹⁷ The park field survey checking park facilities inside was conducted between Dec. 2017 and Feb. 2018.

¹⁸ In 1948, Myanmar fulfilled its independence from colonial rule. But the nation was governed by military rules, namely BSPP and SLORC, from 1962. BSPP is "Burma Socialist Program Party" started from 1962 by the military coup. SLORC is "State Law and Order Restoration Council" started from 1988 by the military coup to seize anti-government and democratization demonstration. This research set a benchmark during the period of the military regime when the ruler changed from BSPP to SLORC. In this research, the name is unified as "SLORC", although it was changed to "State Peace and Development Council (SPDC)" from 1997.

¹⁹ Osada (2013), pp.24.

²⁰ Since the Bagan dynasty beginning from the 11th century, the dynasty regime has continued until the middle of the 19th century in Myanmar.

²¹ Pearn (1939), pp.22, and pp.297-299, Ma Mya Sein (1944), pp.25-26, and Donald (2013), pp.142.

²² Moore (2000), pp.5.

²³ The map was drawn in this research by means of GIS software according to several location names on the property boundary recorded in Pearn (1939), pp.297-299. The area calculation was done by GIS.

²⁴ Pearn (1939), pp.27-30, mentioned Fitch, Ralph visited the Pagoda in the 1580's.

²⁵ Pearn (1939), pp.72, mentioned that the great festival was held at the full-moon of Tabauing, which its cosmopolitan market to which men and women came even from China.

²⁶ Mag Su Shin (1972), pp.93.

²⁷ The field survey was conducted on 13th Jan. 2018 to visit the Ananda Pagoda Festival which is one of the largest and oldest festivals in the nation. The number of stalls was more than 1,900 which mainly treat commodities such as clothing, shoes, tableware, hardware, furniture, bedding, agricultural machineries, toys, rugs, etc according to the conducted interview with the Ananda Pagoda Trustee and field observations. Amusement facilities for kids was observed to set up. Performances on a stage were also held from 8 P.M. until 5 A.M on every other day.

²⁸ Nay Chi Zay Ya (2015) mentioned the owned lands cultivated fruit trees such as coconuts, palms, mangos and jack fruits, and about 500 workers were also donated for cultivating and harvesting.

²⁹ After the second Anglo-burmese War of 1824, Yangon was declared consolidation to British India and developed as a capital city of one state of British colony and a port city of foreign trade.

³⁰ The Singuttara hill where the Pagoda stands used to be subject to scramble as fortification due to its topographical condition during the wartimes. It was also the basement of the independence movement from the colonial ruler. As a purpose of the surrounding area being occupied as the cantonment, it is considered to secure military defence, to provide good living environment with cooler climate, and to demonstrate ruler's power to ruled. Penny (2006), pp.197, mentioned, the worshippers would be admitted to the Pagoda only through the southern entrance, all other entrances would remain closed for military use.

³¹ Noel (1995), pp.6 and pp.47.

³² Donald (2013), pp.144-145.

³³ Mag Su Shin (1972), pp.45.

³⁴ Pearn (1939), pp.134, mentioned after the first Anglo-burmese War, the trade shrank from around 1830 in Yangon, and it was recorded in 1832 that there were about 10 traders from the Shan visiting the Festival.

³⁵ Pagoda Trustee Interview (2017). Additionally, Pearn (1939), pp.30, mentioned that the fair continued to be held for centuries, until, indeed, the British period of Burmese history.

³⁶ Hirano and Yokohari (2017), pp.373-376.

³⁷ The Dalhousie Park exists at the present which is known as Kandawgyi Lake Park, but it was divided into several parks (total 23.5 ha, excluding the water surface).

³⁸ The map was drawn in this research based on Rangoon Guide Map (1930) published under the direction of Brigadier R.H.Thomas, Surveyor of India. The cantonment boundary was based on Osada (2013), pp. map1. The locations of entertainment facilities, pagodas and individual buildings were drawn based on information written in the Guide Map. Additional information of the parks were from Wright (1910) and Pearn (1939).

³⁹ Penny (2006), pp.202-205, mentioned the details of conservation movement such as the Burma Archaeological Survey (BAS) during the late colonial regime.

⁴⁰ Pagoda Trustee Interview (2017). Firstly 31.6ha was returned in 1930. Additionally, 0.3ha at the east side in 1935, 12.3ha at the west and northwest side in 1939, 0.5ha at the southwestern side in 1950, and then in 0.9ha at the east side in 1961 were returned accordingly. Donald (2013), pp.145, mentioned that the jurisdiction over 654 acres was transferred from the military to the municipal authorities in 1930.



- ⁴¹ Mag Su Shin (1972), pp.241.
- ⁴² Mag Su Shin (1972), pp.241. The image depicting land use in the surrounding area in 1870 after related pagodas and buildings, and fruit trees were demolished.
- ⁴³ After the nation's independence in 1948, the government protected and restore the Buddhism which played the role of uniting domestic peoples in the independence movement. On the other hand, BSPP stopped the protection of Buddhism, which obtained political power and restrained politics, under the policy of separation of religion and politics.
- ⁴⁴ The Working People's Daily (1971) on 11th March
- ⁴⁵ The Working People's Daily (1975) on 26th March and (1977) on 3rd March
- ⁴⁶ The Working People's Daily (1975) on 26th March
- ⁴⁷ The Working People's Daily (1977) on 3rd March and (1985) on 5th March
- ⁴⁸ The Working People's Daily (1977) on 3rd March
- ⁴⁹ Pagoda Trustee Interview (2017)
- ⁵⁰ Pagoda Trustee Interview (2017) and Ministry of Construction Interview (2018)
- ⁵¹ Kuramoto, *monk living* (2014), pp.12, mentioned that SLORC intended to utilize the image of Buddhism for acquiring legitimacy because the regime which began by the coup had problems not to have the legitimacy.
- ⁵² Mya Maung (1999), pp. 266-267, Kuramoto, *monk living* (2014), pp.12, and Philp (2002), pp.1590.
- ⁵³ Mya Maung (1999), pp. 275-276.
- ⁵⁴ The Working People's Daily from 1989 to 2009 during SLORC, the top pages introduced mainly regarding the articles that high rank politics celebrated and donated to monks.
- ⁵⁵ The Working People's Daily from 1989 to 2009 during SLORC, the articles regarding the Festival was not specialized in Shwedagon Pagoda, but these came to be regarding several monasteries and pagodas.
- ⁵⁶ Pagoda Trustee Interview (2017). No clear answer of the reason why it was prohibited was given in the interview. It is considered that the prohibition of the Festival was affected by the policy to prohibit gatherings more than 5 people that the SLORC military regime adopted.
- ⁵⁷ Shop Operators Interview (2018)
- ⁵⁸ Field Survey of Building Uses and Land Uses (2017) and Shop Operators Interview (2018)
- ⁵⁹ Park Operators Interview (2018)
- ⁶⁰ Ministry of Construction Interview (2018) and Hotel Operators Interview (2018). Regarding hotels, interviews with key hotels of Yangon to understand the opening year were done by phone in Feb. 2018. According to it, Kandawgyi hotel opened in 1993, Trader hotel in 1996, Sedona hotel in 1996, and Nikko hotel in 1998.
- ⁶¹ Hirano and Yokohari (2017), pp. 375, mentioned that 43 out of 62 parks (total parks at present) in Yangon were established between 1989 and 1992 during the SLORC military regime.
- ⁶² The Working People's Daily (1989) on 11th Oct.
- ⁶³ The Working People's Daily (1989) on 11th Oct.
- ⁶⁴ Hirano and Yokohari (2017), pp.375.
- ⁶⁵ In 2011, Myanmar shifted civilian regime even under the military regime, and in 2015 civilian regime was established by the national election. The policy separating religion and politics is based on the Constitution established in 2008, but the government gives Buddhism as the special honorable religion of the nation.
- ⁶⁶ Pagoda Trustee Interview (2017)
- ⁶⁷ Pagoda Trustee Interview (2017)
- ⁶⁸ Pagoda Trustee Interview (2017) and practical check by Field Survey of the Festival (2018)
- ⁶⁹ Park Operators Interview (2018) and Shop Operators Interview (2018)
- ⁷⁰ Worshipers Interview (2018)
- ⁷¹ Field Survey of the Festival (2018)
- ⁷² According to the Field Survey of building uses and land uses, approximately 250 buildings out of 335 of 5 blocks at the east side are monasteries or religious related buildings. Kuramoto, *monk living* (2014), pp.18 and pp.21, mentioned that monasteries tend to accumulate around influential pagoda in Myanmar
- ⁷³ The park has a memorial ceremony which is held every year on 19th July when the General Aung San and the others were assassinated. At the beginning, the mausoleum was set up by the Ministry of Religion utilizing a part of military land at the same place in 1952. Afterwards, it became the park in 2013. Hirano and Yokohari (2017), pp.375, and Donald (2005), pp.268-269.
- ⁷⁴ Apart from 8 parks, a military land which has an area of about 13ha at the north of the People's Park has been open to the public as "Revolution Square".



⁷⁵ The map was drawn in this research based on the satellite image (2012). The land use was based on the result of the Field Survey of building uses and land uses at the surrounding area which was conducted from Jun. to Aug. 2017 in this research. Parks boundary were based on data from Interview of the Parks and Playgrounds Department, and Yangon City Development Committee on 6th Nov. 2012. The boundary of military land and locations of public facilities was based on observation through the Field Survey.

⁷⁶ Park Facility Survey (2017-2018)

⁷⁷ Pearn (1939), pp.72.

⁷⁸ Pearn (1939), pp.72, mentioned that the Pagoda still continued to be a centre of pilgrimage and of trade, especially, it was noted, for the Shans (a state of Myanmar), who brought to Yangon the Pegue (dynastic name of Myanmar) ponies for export to India in the Festival.

⁷⁹ Pearn (1939), pp.38, mentioned that the governor, chief men and a greater number of the inhabitants solemnize the festival by consuming a considerable quantity of spirits; there are also performances and dances and fireworks, which are discharged at night-time based on the record from "the History of Syriam".

⁸⁰ Pearn (1989), pp.27-30, mentioned that there were many buildings for lodging of monks and worshipers and planted fruit trees along four gate ways stretching about 2 miles in length at the surrounding area based on the record by Fitch.

⁸¹ Philp (2002), pp.1602-1603, mentioned regarding Shwedagon Pagoda that the British were well aware of the political significance of religious sites and of the performance of religious act as politically meaningful.

⁸² Hirano and Yokohari (2017), pp.377.

⁸³ Hirano and Yokohari (2017), pp.379, mentioned that the established parks were for the rulers according to historical background.

⁸⁴ Philp (2002), pp.1590.

⁸⁵ Donald (2005), pp.258.

⁸⁶ It is possible that one of the background why the government intended to weaken the relationship between the Pagoda and democratic movement since the Pagoda were often used as a base for demonstration and strike by opposition to regime. Donald (2005), pp.257, mentioned the Shwedagon functioned not only as a Buddhist holy site, but also as a public space for political activism.

⁸⁷ Philp (2002), pp.1602-1603 and Penny (2006), pp.205-206.

⁸⁸ According to Mg Su Shin (1972) and Patoda Trustee Interview (2017), the Pagoda was the basement for student demonstrations in 1920, worker strikes in 1938, Pasapara speech in 1945, Aung San Suu Kyi speech in 1988, citizen demonstration in 2007, as examples of representative event.

⁸⁹ Yanagisawa (2004), pp.81, mentioned that importance of historical originality and religious status of the place as a case of Indian religious sanctuary, Varanasi, which originates as the British colony.

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