

Borobudur



Borobudur, also transcribed Barabudur (Indonesian: Candi Borobudur, Javanese:

ꦑꦤ꧀ꦢꦶꦧꦫꦧꦸꦢꦸꦂ, romanized: Candhi Barabudhur) is a 9th-century Mahayana Buddhist

temple in Magelang Regency, near the city of Magelang and the town of Muntilan, in Central Java, Indonesia.

Constructed of gray andesite-like stone,[1] the temple consists of nine stacked platforms, six square and three circular, topped by a central dome. It is decorated with 2,672 relief panels and originally 504 Buddha statues. The central dome is surrounded by 72 Buddha statues, each seated inside a perforated stupa.[2] The monument guides pilgrims through an extensive system of stairways and corridors with 1,460 narrative relief panels on the walls and the balustrades. Borobudur has one of the world's most extensive collections of Buddhist reliefs.

HISTORY, CONSTRUCTION

History

Hindu clerics appealed to the people of Java for generations, a fact that architect and author Jacques Dumarçay finds first mentioned in 450 AD.[25] Influence of the Sailendra and Sanjaya dynasties followed. Dumarçay says that de Casparis concluded that Sanjaya and Sailendra shared power in central Java for a century and a half, and that de Casparis traced alternating succession from 732 until 882.[26] During this time many Hindu and Buddhist monuments were

built on the plains and mountains around the Kedu Plain. Buddhist monuments, including Borobudur, were erected around the same period as the Hindu Prambanan temple compound. In 732 AD, King Sanjaya commissioned a Shivalinga sanctuary to be built on the Wukir hill, only 10 km (6.2 mi) east of Borobudur.[27]

There are no known records of construction or the intended purpose of Borobudur.[28] The duration of construction has been estimated by comparison of carved reliefs on the temple's hidden foot and the inscriptions commonly used in royal charters during the 8th and 9th centuries.[28] Comparison of an Indian architectural process across temples, and acknowledgment of who was in power, enabled Dumarçay to approximately date the construction of Borobudur in five stages.[29] Loosely, the Sailendra began c. 780, and continued stages two and three c. 792 through to an unremarkable fourth stage during their decline c. 824.[30] The Sanjaya completed Borobudur's fifth stage c. 833.[30][a]

Etymology

In Indonesian, ancient temples are referred to as *candi*; thus locals refer to "Borobudur Temple" as *Candi Borobudur*. The term *candi* also loosely describes ancient structures, for example, gates and baths. The origins of name Borobudur, is derived from Boro for big and Budur for Buddha.[8] Dutch scholar J. L. Moens says the court poet Mpu Prapanca referred to a holy sanctuary at "Budur" in 1365.[9] Stamford Raffles mentioned "Bóro Bódo" and described the temple in his 1817 book on Javan history.[10][11] In a footnote, Raffles says, "Bóro is the name of the district, and bódo means ancient." [12] Most *candi* are named after a nearby village. If it followed Javanese language conventions and was named after the nearby village of Bore, the monument should have been named "BudurBoro". Soekmono says Raffles thought that Budur might correspond to the modern Javanese word Buda ("ancient")—i.e., "ancient Boro".[8] He also suggested that the name might derive from *boro*, meaning "great" or "honorable" and Budur for Buddha.[8] However, another archaeologist suggests the second component of the name (Budur) comes from Javanese term *bhudhara* ("mountain").[13]

Another possible etymology by Dutch archaeologist A.J. Bernet Kempers suggests that Borobudur is a corrupted simplified local Javanese pronunciation of *Biara Beduhur* written in Sanskrit as *Vihara Buddha Uhr*. The term Buddha-Uhr could mean "the city of Buddhas", while another possible term *Beduhur* is probably an Old Javanese term, still surviving today in Balinese vocabulary, which means "a high place", constructed from the stem word *dhuhur* or *luhur* (high). This suggests that Borobudur means *vihara* of Buddha located on a high place or on a hill.[14]

REDISCOVERY OF BOROBUDUR

Rediscovery

Following its capture, Java was under British administration from 1811 to 1816. Britain's representative and governor-general was Stamford Raffles, who took great interest in the history of Java. He collected Javanese antiques and made notes through contacts with local inhabitants during his tour throughout the island.[41] On an inspection tour to Semarang in 1814, he was informed about a big monument deep in a jungle near the village of Bumisegoro.[40] He sent Hermann Cornelius [nl], a Dutch engineer who, among other antiquity explorations had uncovered the Sewu complex in 1806–07, to investigate. In two months, Cornelius and his 200 men cut down trees, burned down vegetation and dug away the earth to reveal the monument. Due to the danger of collapse, he could not unearth all galleries. Cornelius reported his findings to Raffles, including various drawings. Although Raffles mentioned the discovery in only a few sentences in his book, and did not visit the site himself, he has been credited with the monument's rediscovery, as the one who had brought it to the world's attention.[40]

Christiaan Lodewijk Hartmann, the resident of the Kedu region, continued Cornelius's work, and in 1835, the whole complex was finally unearthed. His interest in Borobudur was more personal than official. Hartmann did not write any reports of his activities, in particular, the alleged story that he discovered the large statue of Buddha in the main stupa.[42] In 1842, Hartmann investigated the main dome, although what he discovered is unknown and the main stupa remains empty.[43]

RESTORATION OF BOROBUDUR

Restoration

Borobudur attracted attention in 1885, when the Dutch engineer Jan Willem IJzerman [id; nl], chairman of the Archaeological Society in Yogyakarta, discovered that the temple base enclosed a hidden foot.[45] Photographs made in 1890–1891 revealed reliefs on the hidden foot; the coverings were then replaced.[45] The discovery led the Dutch East Indies government to take steps to safeguard the monument. In 1900, a three-member commission formed to plan protection, and in 1902, the commission submitted a threefold proposal.[48] First, collapse could be avoided by resetting the corners, removing stones that endangered the adjacent parts, strengthening the first balustrades and restoring several niches, archways, stupas and the main dome. Second, care should be maintained and water discharge should be improved by restoring floors and spouts. Third, all loose stones should be removed, the monument cleared up to the first balustrades, disfigured stones removed and the main dome restored.[48] In 1905, the proposal was approved, and the total cost was estimated at that time around 48,800 Dutch guilders (equivalent to f1,392,279 in 2022).[48]