

# The Great buddhas stupa

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Archaeologists in India have observed that a number of early Buddhist stupas or burials are found in the vicinity of much older, pre-historic burials, including megalithic sites, This includes site associated with the Indus Valley Civilization where broken Indus-era pottery was incorporated into later Buddhist burials.<sup>[7]</sup> Structural features of the stupa- including its general shape and the practice of surrounding stupas with a stone or wooden railing- resemble both pre-Mauryan era cairn burials, as well as pre-historic relic burials found in southern India Some stupas not believed to have been looted have been found to be empty when excavated, as have some pre-historic cairn sites, and animal bones are suspected to have occasionally been deposited at both types of sites. Religious buildings in the form of the Buddhist stupa, a dome shaped monument, started to be used in India as commemorative monuments associated with storing sacred relics of the Buddha. After the parinirvana of the Buddha, his remains were cremated and the ashes divided and buried under eight mounds with two further mounds encasing the urn and the embers.

## Asian stupas

Stupa architecture was adopted in Southeast and East Asia, where it became prominent as a Buddhist monument used for enshrining sacred relics. The Indian gateway arches, the torana, reached East Asia with the spread of Buddhism. Some scholars hold that torii derives from the torana gates at the Buddhist historic site of Sanchi. In Tibet, the stupa became the chörten and the pagoda in East Asia. The pagoda has varied forms that also include bell-shaped and pyramidal styles. In the Western context, there is no clear distinction between a stupa and a pagoda. In general, however, "stupa" is the term used for a Buddhist structure in India or Southeast Asia while "pagoda" refers to a building in East Asia which can be entered and which may be used for secular purposes. However, use of the term varies by region. For example, stupas in Burma tend to be referred to as "pagodas"

Stupas were built in Sri Lanka soon after Devanampiya Tissa of Anuradhapura converted to Buddhism. The first stupa to be built was the Thuparamaya. Later, many more were built over the years, some like the Jetavanaramaya in Anuradhapura, being one of the tallest ancient structures in the world.

## **European stupas**

The Benalmádena Stupa is the tallest stupa in Europe. It is 108 ft high and was inaugurated on 5 Oct. 2003, the final project of Buddhist master Lopon Tsechu Rinpoche. Rinpoche built his first stupa at Karma Guen near Málaga in 1994,

a symbol of peace and prosperity for Spain. Rinpoche went on to build 16 more stupas in Europe before his death in 2003. A stupa was built on the ground of the Kalachakra Kalapa Centre in southwest Styria, Austria, between 2000 to 2002. A stupa based on the bell shaped stupas at Boropodur, Central Java, is located at Amaravati Buddhist Monastery near Hemel Hempstead in the United Kingdom

## **Type of stupas**

### **Relic stupa,**

in which the relics or remains of the Buddha, his disciples, and lay saints are interred.

### **Object stupa,**

in which the items interred are objects belonged to the Buddha or his disciples, such as a begging bowl or robe, or important Buddhist scriptures.

### **Commemorative stupa,**

built to commemorate events in the lives of Buddha or his disciples.

### **Symbolic stupa,**

to symbolise aspects of Buddhist theology,

for example, Borobudur is considered to be the symbol of the Three Worlds and the spiritual stages in a Mahayana bodhisattva's character.

### **Votive stupa,**

constructed to commemorate visits or to gain spiritual benefits, usually at the site of prominent stupas which are regularly visited.

## **Different of stupas :**

42 years of age, Buddha spent a summer retreat in the Tuṣita Heaven where his mother had taken rebirth. In order to repay her kindness he taught the dharma to her rebirth. Local inhabitants built a stupa in Sankassa in order to commemorate this event. This type of stupa is characterized by having a central projection at each side containing a triple ladder or steps.

## **Great miracle**

Also known as the "Stupa of this stupa refers to various miracles performed by the Buddha when he was 50 years old. Legend claims that he overpowered maras and heretics by engaging them in intellectual arguments and also by performing miracles. This stupa was raised by the Lichavi kingdom to commemorate the event

## **Stupa of Reconciliation**

This stupa commemorates the Buddha's resolution of a dispute among the sangha. A stupa in this design was built in the kingdom of Magadha, where the reconciliation occurred. It has four octagonal steps with equal sides.

## **Stupa of Complete Victory**

This stupa commemorates Buddha's successful prolonging of his life by three months. It has only three steps, which are circular and unadorned.

## **Stupa of Nirvana**

This stupa refers to the death of the Buddha when he was 80 years old. It symbolizes his complete absorption into the highest state of mind. It is bell-shaped and usually.

## **Kalchara stupa**

A ninth kind of stupa exists, the Kalachakra stupa. Its symbolism is not connected to events in the Buddha's life, but instead to the symbolism of the Kalachakra Tantra, created to protect against negative energies.

## **Treasury**

All stupas contain a treasury filled with various objects. Small clay votive offerings called tsatsas in Tibetan fill most of the treasury. Creation of various types of tsatsas is a ceremony itself. Mantras written on paper are rolled into thin rolls and put into small clay stupas. One layer of tsatsas is placed in the treasury, and the empty space between them is filled with dry sand. On the thus created new surface, another layer of tsatsas is made, and so on until the entire space of the treasury is full. The number of tsatsas required to completely fill the treasury depends on its size and the size of the tsatsa. For example, the Kalachakra stupa in southern Spain contains approximately 14,000 tsatsas.

Jewellery and other "precious" objects are also placed in the treasury. It is not necessary that they be expensive, since it is the symbolic value that is important, not the market price. It is believed that the more objects placed into the stupa, the stronger the energy of the stupa.

## **Five purified elements**

Although not described in any Tibetan text on stupa symbolism, the stupa may represent the five purified elements

1. The square base represents earth
2. The hemispherical dome/vase represents water
3. The conical spire represents fire
4. The upper lotus parasol and the crescent moon represent air
5. The sun and the dissolving point represent wisdom

## **Benefits of stupas**

Building a stupa is considered extremely beneficial, leaving very positive karmic imprints in the mind. Future benefits from this action result in fortunate rebirths. Fortunate worldly benefits will be the result, such as being born into a rich family, having a beautiful body, a nice voice, being attractive, bringing joy to others, and having a long and happy life in which one's wishes are quickly fulfilled. On the absolute level, one will also be able quickly to reach enlightenment, the goal of Buddhism.

Destroying a stupa, on the other hand, is considered an extremely negative deed, similar to killing. Such an action is said to create massive negative karmic imprints, leading to serious future problems. It is said this action leaves the mind in a state of paranoia after death has occurred, leading to totally unfortunate rebirths.

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