

## **Influence of Mahayana-Vajrayana School on the Sacred Characteristics of Theravada Vihara in Indonesia**

**Rahadhian Prajudi Herwindo<sup>1\*</sup>, Singgih Salim<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Katolik Parahyangan, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Universitas Katolik Parahyangan, Indonesia

Email: <sup>1</sup>dodo@unpar.ac.id, <sup>2</sup>singgihsalim250593@gmail.com

### **Abstract**

After Buddha *parinibbana*, difference of views between his disciples in interpreting *Dhamma* result in the creation of three main Buddhist schools: Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana. With slightly different philosophies, these schools also have their own unique architectural characteristics to represent sacredness. However, due to the absence of any architectural literature, wide interpretations of Buddhist teachings, and acculturation with local culture, sacred characteristics of Buddhist architecture became mixed and difficult to distinguish. This research aims to study the influence of Mahayana and Vajrayana schools on the sacred characteristics of Theravada Buddhist architecture in Indonesia. Elaboration of Buddhist architecture and sacredness theory are used to analyse case study in surrounding environment, figure, mass structure, spatial planning, and ornamentation scope to obtain comprehensive acculturation picture of Mahayana and Vajrayana philosophy on Theravada vihara in Indonesia. Based on the results of the analysis, it can be seen that the circular shape that was characteristic of the early Theravada school in the architectural form of the monastery began to be abandoned and the use of anthropomorphic Buddha and iconic symbols as ornamentation elements which were only known in the development of Mahayana and Vajrayana schools.

**Keywords:** Acculturation; Sacredness; Theravada–Mahayana–Vajrayana; Vihara.

### **Abstrak**

Setelah Buddha *parinibbana*, perbedaan pandangan antara murid-muridnya dalam menafsirkan *Dhamma* mengakibatkan terciptanya tiga aliran utama Buddhis: Theravada, Mahayana, dan Vajrayana. Dengan filosofi yang sedikit berbeda, sekolah-sekolah ini juga memiliki karakteristik arsitektural yang unik untuk mewakili kesakralan. Namun, karena tidak adanya literatur arsitektur, interpretasi ajaran Buddha yang luas, dan akulturasi dengan budaya lokal, karakteristik sakral arsitektur Buddha menjadi bercampur dan sulit dibedakan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mempelajari pengaruh aliran Mahayana dan Vajrayana terhadap karakteristik sakral arsitektur Buddhis Theravada di Indonesia. Elaborasi arsitektur Buddha dan teori sakralitas digunakan untuk menganalisis studi kasus di lingkungan sekitar, sosok, struktur massa, tata ruang, dan ruang lingkup ornamen untuk mendapatkan gambaran akulturasi yang komprehensif dari filosofi Mahayana dan Vajrayana pada vihara Theravada di Indonesia. Berdasarkan hasil analisis dapat diketahui bahwa bentuk melingkar yang menjadi ciri aliran Theravada awal pada bentuk arsitektur vihara mulai ditinggalkan dan penggunaan antropomorfik Buddha dan simbol ikonik sebagai elemen ornamentasi yang hanya dikenal dalam perkembangan aliran Mahayana dan Vajrayana.

**Kata Kunci:** Akulturasi; Sakralitas; Theravada–Mahayana–Vajrayana; Vihara.

**INTRODUCTION**

Buddhism was first introduced by Siddhartha Gautama, a prince from Sakya tribe who decided to find a way to be free from suffering and become Buddha. After 45 years teaching *Dhamma*, at the age of 80 he *parinibbāna* (died) in Kusinārā after delivering last teaching to his disciples (Coleman, 1999; Varley, 2011). In order to keep *Dhamma* alive, members of *Sangha* held four major conciliations to record Buddha’s teachings in the form of *Tipiṭaka*. During the conciliation process, there were differences of view among *Sangha* regarding *Dhamma*, which is lead to the creation of three Buddhist main schools, namely Theravada (*Hinayana*) which is main teaching of Buddha, Mahayana in 1st century AD, and Vajrayana (Tantrayana) in 6th century AD which combined Mahayana teachings with Tantric (Hinduism) (Newell, 2010; Sarwade, 2015; Syukur, 2022). These Buddhist schools are growing all over the world, namely Theravada developed into South India and Southeast Asia (Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia), Mahayana developed to North (Pakistan, Afghanistan, China, Korea, Japan) and down to Southeast Asia (Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Philippines, and Indonesia), while Vajrayana is more developed in Tibet, Mongolia, China, Japan, and also down to Indonesia (Hunter, 2017). All worship buildings in each country express unique characteristics, which shows that Buddhism are adaptive to other culture (Wang, 2021) as shown in figure 1 and indicates the occurrence of acculturation due to the absence of architectural literature such as *vastusastra* in Hinduism.



**Figure 1. Distribution Map of Buddhist Schools**

Source: en.wikipedia.org

The establishment of worship building cannot be separated from the philosophical values that are believed in every Buddhist school, where this is related to the formation of sacredness (Khanjanusthiti, 2004; Thirathamrongwee & Mongkolpradit, 2021). In terms of belief, Theravada has a fundamental difference compared to Mahayana and Vajrayana schools. The conservative Theravada schools worship only Buddha as the main figure, while Mahayana and Vajrayana schools also worship *bodhisattas* other than Buddha. This practice affects the symbols and worship objects that are displayed, where Mahayana school displays various objects and their abundant offerings, compared to Theravada school which only worships one figure. From artistic point of view, Mahayana was the first school to introduce worship figures in iconic forms, which also influenced architectural and ornaments that are livelier than Theravada schools which worshiped aniconic symbols (Phuoc, 2012). By conducting an analytical study on early Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana Buddhist architecture in India using elaboration of sacred theory,

obtained some characteristics that are commonly seen in architectural elements and configurations suitable with believed philosophy in each Buddhist schools (Singgih, 2021).

**Table 1. Sacred characteristics of Theravada Buddhist architecture**

Sacred Value		Characteristics of Theravada Buddhist Architecture	
UNIVERSAL	Orientation	Following <i>axis mundi</i> with humanistic proportions & addressing four cardinal directions	
	Hierarchy	Worship buildings & sacred areas as highest hierarchy	
	Boundary	Separated from surrounding environment and closed	
	Geometric Shapes	Using proportional and intact geometric shapes combination of squares, rectangles, and circles	
UNIVERSAL	Architectural Cosmogram	Balance	Symmetrical on one axis (bilateral) or multiple axes (radial)
		Repetition	There is repetition of same size architectural elements and form formal (linear) pattern.
		Material Expression	Simple and exposed
		Synergy of Forms	There is synergy between outer figure and inner space
		Zoning Division	There is clear zoning division between <i>Buddhava</i> , <i>Sanghava</i> , and public area
EVOCATIVE	Procession	Linear (worship) and circular ( <i>padakkhina</i> ) processions are placed only in worship buildings	
	Atmospheric Ambiguity	There is difference of spatial experience between sacred area and surrounding space	
SYMBOLIC	Symbolic Element	Symbolic Object	Featuring aniconic Buddhist symbol
		Boundary Guard	Having boundary guards in form of statues and carvings at the front of worship building
		Transition Area	Having transition area (courtyard)

**Table 2. Sacred characteristics of Mahayana & Vajrayana Buddhist architecture**

Sacred Value		Characteristics of Mahayana - Vajrayana Buddhist Architecture	
UNIVERSAL	Orientation	Following <i>axis mundi</i> with gigantic proportion & addressing four cardinal directions	
	Hierarchy	Worship buildings & sacred areas are placed as highest hierarchy	
	Boundary	Separated from surrounding environment and appear closed	
	Geometric Shapes	Using combination of square, rectangular, and triangular shapes that favour high proportions and additives	
	Architectural Cosmogram	Balance	Symmetrical on one or multiple axis
		Repetition	Repetition of elements tends to be gradated (switching in size from large to small)
		Material Expression	Coated with gilding / colour / mural to enrich visuals
		Synergy of Forms	Outer figure and inner space display different expressions (outer figure is emphasized to display largeness)
		Zoning Division	Zoning of <i>Buddhava</i> and <i>Sanghava</i> are mixed due to the statue for worship

EVOCATIVE	Procession	Linear (worship) procession is placed inside worship and living place while circular ( <i>padakkhina</i> ) procession is placed outside
	Atmospheric Ambiguity	Different experience between sacred and surrounding space
SYMBOLIC	Symbolic Object	Featuring iconic Buddhist symbol
	Boundary Guard	Having border guards in form of statues and carvings at the front of worship building
	Transition Area	Having transition area (courtyard)

Indonesia once became one of respected Buddhist development center in the past, as evidenced by the existence of world-recognized temples such as Borobudur, Pawon, and Mendut temples. In Indonesia, Mahayana and Vajrayana are thought to have entered earlier than Theravada (estimated to have existed in 400 AD). This allegation is evident from inscriptions and Buddhist kingdoms that developed in Indonesia such as Sriwijaya and Majapahit which embraced Mahayana school. Theravada later developed in pre-independence period (around 20th century AD) through missionaries carried out by monks from Theravada countries such as Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and Thailand (Busro, 2017). The strong influence of the Mahayana and Vajrayana schools in the past also influenced the symbols displayed on the Theravada school in Indonesia (Dhammadhiro, 2012). It is necessary to understand sacred characteristics of Buddhist architecture in Indonesia to present appropriate Buddhist identity as a holy place. Until now, researchers have not found other studies that study acculturation between Buddhist schools in the architectural aspect, so this research aims to understand sacred characteristics of Theravada Buddhist vihara in Indonesia as building of worship and to determine the influence of other schools in architectural form. By understanding the extent of Mahayana and Vajrayana schools influence on the architectural form of Theravada vihara, this can be a reference for planners in designing and developing Theravada vihara in Indonesia that is in accordance with the philosophical values believed.

## RESEARCH METHODS

### Architectural Characteristics of Sacredness

Sacred comes from Latin word *sacer*, which is separate space and related to hierophany. The opposite of *sacer* is *profanes*, defined as impure and general (Emmett, 2000; Hamilton & Spicer, 2005; Hunt, 2007). Buddhist architecture as study objects will be read based on signs and relationship between architectural signs displayed until they are finally interpreted by observers (Cahyawan & Saliya, 2017; Nöth, 2020). Several architectural characteristics have been defined by experts as an indication for presenting sacred values (Barrie, 2013; Durkheim, 1915; Eliade, 1959; Hoffmann, 2010; Jones, 1993). These sacredness theories are then elaborated and produce indicators to analyse Buddhist architecture next.

**Table 3. Elaboration of sacred characteristics theory**

	<b>Sacred Value</b>	<b>Aspects of Sacredness (Theoretical)</b>
UNIVERSAL	<b>Orientation</b> Building is designed based on the object / direction that is used as a reference	Axial Orientation (Eliade) Location Orientation (Eliade)
	<b>Hierarchy</b> Building is shown to be more dominant than other buildings	Sacred Hierarchy (Durkheim) Architecture as Orientation (Jones) Architecture as Commemoration (Jones) Architecture as Ritual Context (Jones)
	<b>Boundary</b> Building has boundary element that separates it from the surrounding environment	Boundary Element
	<b>Geometric Shapes</b> Building describes basic geometric shapes or its combinations	Shape Orientation (Eliade) Proportion and Geometry (Barrie)
	<b>Architectural Cosmogram</b> Building depicts something perfect as a picture of heaven	Architectural Cosmogram (Barrie)
	EVOCATIVE	<b>Procession</b> Visitor is directed through articulated circulation path into building
<b>Atmospheric Ambiguity</b> There is a difference in quality of space between building and its surroundings		Atmospheric Ambiguity (Hoffmann)
SYMBOLIC	<b>Symbolic Element</b> Building has symbolic objects related to religion / Hierophany	Symbolic Object (Durkheim)
		Symbolic Architecture (Hoffmann)
		Symbolic Archetype (Hoffmann)
		Symbolic Object (Barrie)

### Scope of Sacred Value Analysis

To understand the architecture of its embodiment in the form or space, a typology study approach is used based on the scope of the surrounding environment, figure, mass arrangement, spatial planning, and ornamentation so that it has structural equality when compared in correlation analysis (Herwindo, 2011). The scope stage was chosen to obtain a detailed description of the application of physical characteristics related to the expression of sacredness. Within the scope of the surrounding environment, the analysis will focus on the relationship between the site and the environment in which the site is located. Selection of the right site is important to support the function of the building in it. In the scope of the figure, the analysis will be focused on the outline, composition, texture, and color of the building. Because Buddhist architecture is generally complex consisting of several buildings, the analysis of the figure will be reviewed from the entire building complex and each building.

Within the scope of mass planning, the analysis emphasizes the relationship between buildings and architectural elements on the site. Through this analysis, a configuration that describes a certain belief / response to environmental conditions is seen. Within the scope of spatial planning, the analysis will focus on the configuration of the boundary elements that make up the space (floor, walls, and roof/ceiling) as well as the arrangement of furniture to find out the guidelines for designing the interior space.

In the scope of ornamentation, the analysis is focused on the nature and types of ornamentation. Ornamentation is an art component that is added as a decoration to a product (Gustami, 1980). Ornaments in Buddhist architecture generally have a symbolic meaning and represent a particular belief.

### Case Study

Vihara Jakarta Dhammacakka Jaya was established in 1982 to accommodate worship needs of Theravada Buddhist disciples in Sunter and surrounding areas (Yayasan Vihara Jakarta Dhammacakka Jaya, 2019). This vihara is one of the oldest Theravada vihara in Indonesia and become center of worship activities on religious days, therefore placing it as one of the most important vihara in Indonesia (Buaban, 2021). This vihara is located on Jalan Agung Permai 15 no. 12, Sunter Agung, Tanjung Priok, North Jakarta, DKI Jakarta. This vihara complex consists of four main buildings as illustrated in Figure 2, namely *uposathagraha* (place to hold religious ceremonies for monks), *dhammasala* (place of worship for Buddhist disciples), *kuti* (place for monks to live), and *wisma narada* (place for supporting facilities such as Sunday school, library, and multipurpose room). The reasons for choosing Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya as case study are: 1) it still functions to accommodate Buddhist worship, 2) it is the first Theravada vihara in Indonesia to have *uposathagraha* as facility for monk ordination, 3) it was established as mother temple for other Theravada vihara, and 4) it is often used as reference for other Theravada vihara so it could become a picture of Theravada vihara that were built later.



**Figure 2. Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya Location**

Source: google.maps.com, dhammacakka.org

### Research Type, Approaches, and Analysis Steps

This research was conducted using qualitative methods on case studies of vihara to obtain an overview of sacred architectural characteristics in three Buddhism school and influence from Mahayana - Vajrayana school against Theravada architecture in Indonesia. This sacred image is then described through descriptive approach. Qualitative assessment of vihara is based on elaboration of sacred characteristics from experts, where the results are used to obtain the difference of three main school in Buddhism architecture: Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana.

In general, the research analysis process consists of four steps as follows. First step, studying characteristics that commonly shown at early Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana architecture in India. These objects are used to learn about initial value of Buddhism in form of architecture shape and space and also avoid acculturation from other local culture. Second step, elaborating several theories from previous researchers to obtain several architectural characteristics that could indicates sacredness. The

results are used as a tool in analysing case study. Third step, conducting typological analysis on case study, namely Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya in surrounding environment, figure, mass structure, spatial layout, and ornamentation scope. Through this analysis, expression of sacredness from Theravada vihara in Indonesia could be obtained. Fourth step, the characteristics displayed at Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya are compared with early Buddhist architecture to obtain acculturation aspect of Mahayana and Vajrayana schools on the form of Theravada Vihara in Indonesia.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Sacred Characteristics of Case Study: Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya

Located in residential area, site shape and mass composition of vihara are arranged in accordance with grid plots from developer. Combined residential plots are used to establish vihara site so the axis is similar to surrounding housing (see figure 3). However, this axis is not suitable with characteristics of Buddhist sacred architecture which addresses four cardinal directions. In figure scope, *uposathagraha* and *dhammasala* are designed to display *axis mundi* through the placement of pointed element at the roof, while *kuti* and Wisma Narada do not display this principle even though they display vertical impression. In spatial arrangement scope, orientation is directed at Buddha statue at farthest side of room, similar to Mahayana and Vajrayana architecture. It is different from early Theravada architecture which position worship object at the center of room to give space for worshipper to do *paddakhina* (Phuoc, 2012).

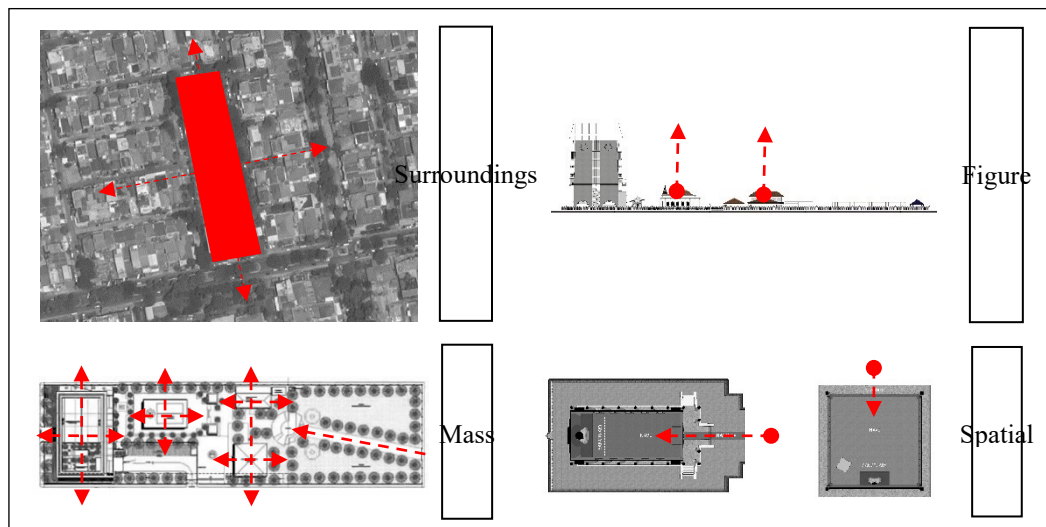


Figure 3. Orientation in Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya

Extensive site and different shape of vihara from surrounding houses display higher hierarchy than the others (see Figure 4). In mass structure scope, among four main buildings, Wisma Narada with enormous shape and dominant position on site presents as the highest hierarchy compared to other buildings. However, highest hierarchy should be displayed from *uposathagraha* as main worship building (there are certain rituals that need to be done to build this building) and is reserved for monks. In spatial context, Buddha statue is placed on a higher altar than people sitting cross-legged.

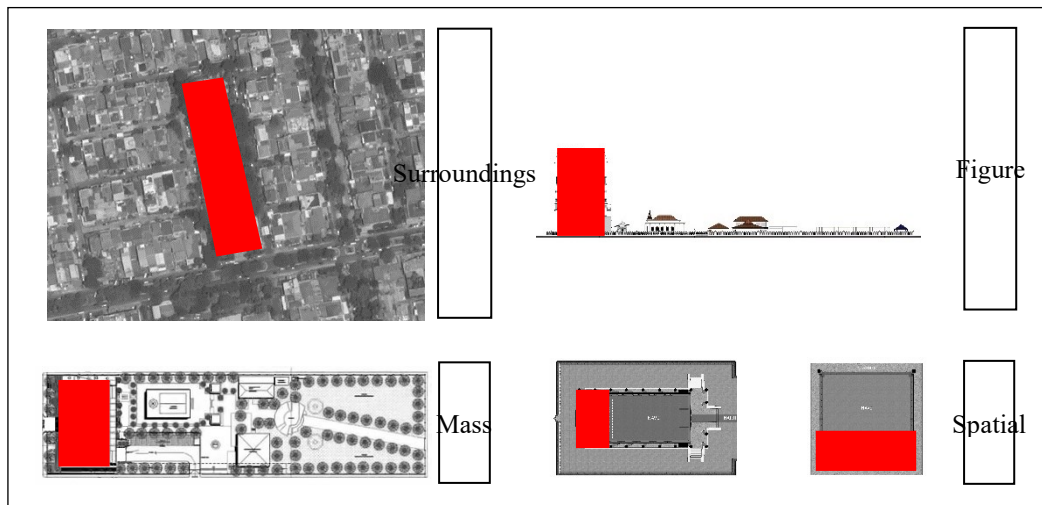


Figure 4. Hierarchy in Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya

Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya has firm boundary from surrounding through perimeter fence (see figure 5). *Upasathagraha* is also surrounded by additional fence that separates it from other buildings and emphasizes its important position. Physical boundary element cannot be found in interior because separation between Buddhist altar area and disciples only based on seating mat placement. In figure scope, *uposathagraha* tend to appear more closed than *dharmasala*, *kuti*, and *wisma narada* with transparent windows. Enclosure and closed figure are in line with characteristics of Buddhist sacred architecture.

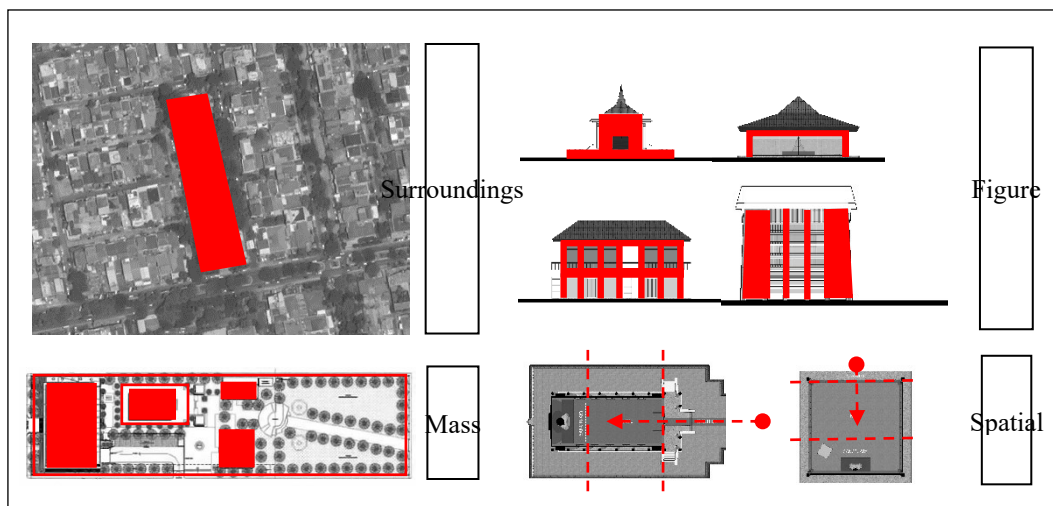


Figure 5. Boundary in Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya

Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya displays combination of basic geometric shapes that could be seen in figure, mass structure, spatial planning, and ornamentation scope. In figure scope, combination of square, rectangular, and triangular shapes is used to form building. Square and rectangular shapes can be found in mass planning scope (building form), spatial planning (furniture shape), and ornamentation (relief's



frame). However, circular shape that is frequently characterise Theravada architecture cannot be found. Intact form is also common in Theravada architectural expression. In *uposathagraha*, there are terrace and entrance stairs on three sides that displays additive geometric shapes which indicate Mahayana and Vajrayana school (see figure 6).

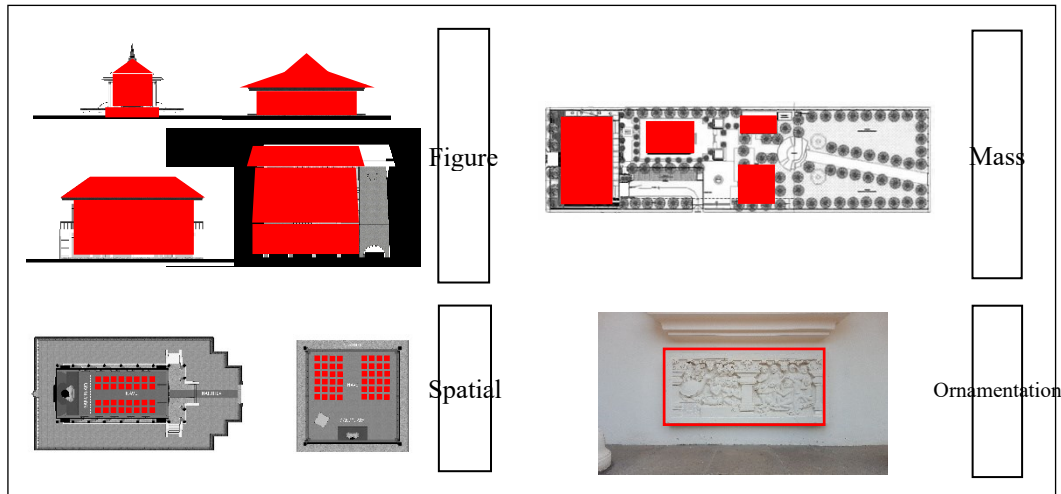


Figure 6. Geometric shape of Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya

With the usage of square and rectangular shapes in four main buildings design, each building displays symmetry on two axes (see figure 7). Symmetry principle is one characteristic in Buddhist sacred architecture that always be shown from three schools. Symmetry cannot be found in figure and mass planning scope due to building mass arrangement. Wisma Narada as the tallest building is placed on front side of site, while at back of site is left empty thus creating heavy impression on one side.

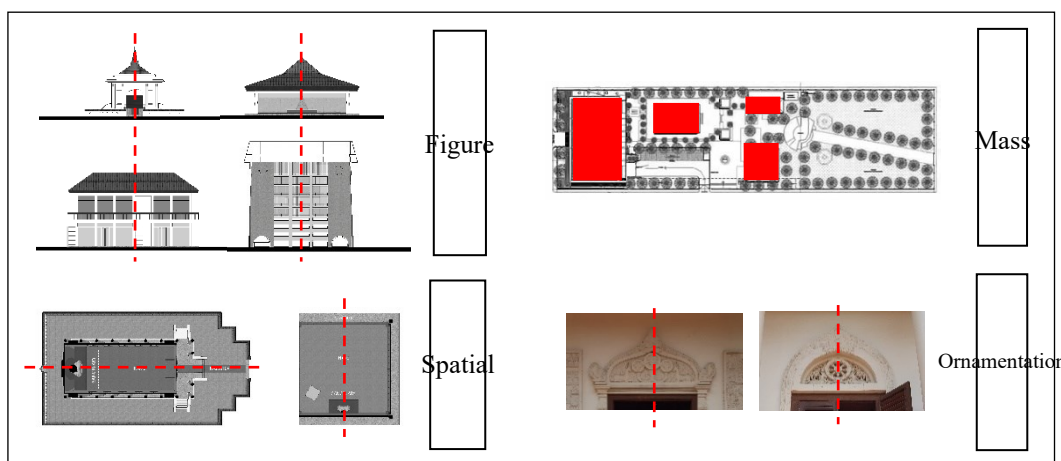


Figure 7. Balance in Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya

Formal impression could be found from repeated architectural elements in building and site design (see figure 8). In figure and spatial planning scope, repeated elements in *uposathagraha*, *dhammasala*, *kuti*,

and Wisma Narada are arranged at same distance in form of columns - beams and pedestals, not gradated as in Mahayana and Vajrayana sacred architecture.

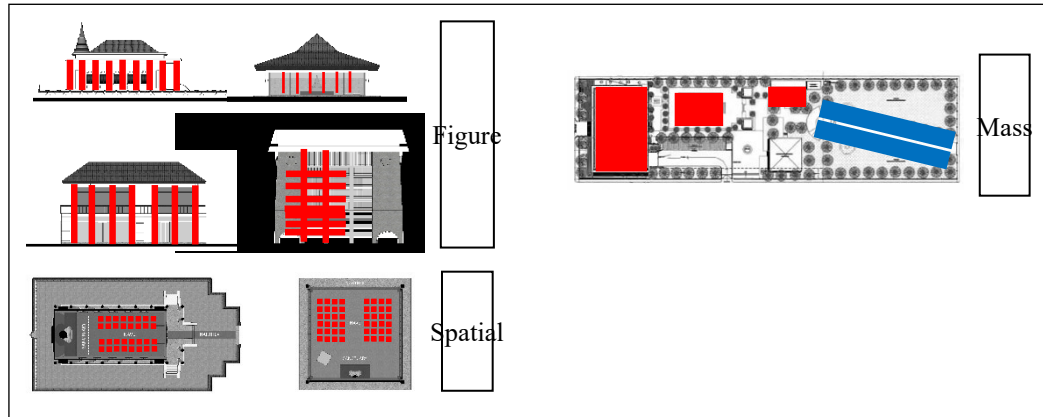


Figure 8. Repetition in Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya

Entire building uses concrete and brick material coated with additional coating (*uposathagraha*, *dhammasala*, and *kuti* are coated with white paint, while Wisma Narada is coated with sprayed cement and grey paint). Coating and reliefs on *uposathagraha* indicate the influence of Mahayana and Vajrayana, although it does not use excessive colour. Theravada school still allows fair use of relief (see figure 9).



Figure 9. Material in Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya

In general, all buildings display synergy between outer figure and inner space (see Figure 10). This can be seen from shape of space that follows the building, except for *kuti* which uses flat ceiling different from sloping roof. Synergy of forms is characteristic of Theravada architecture, where in Mahayana and Vajrayana it is normal to display different expressions.

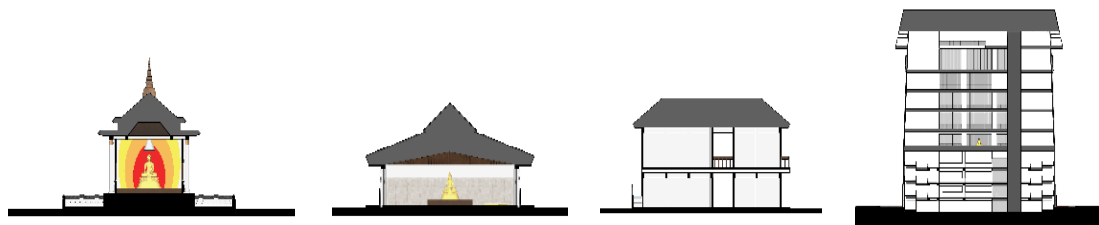


Figure 10. Synergy of form in Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya

Zoning division of Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya can be clearly defined both in figure and mass structure scope (see figure 11). *Buddhava* and *Sanghava* areas are placed at the center of site, while public

area (*wisma narada*) is located at the front of site. This arrangement creates grouping of activities and is in accordance with characteristics of Theravada architecture.

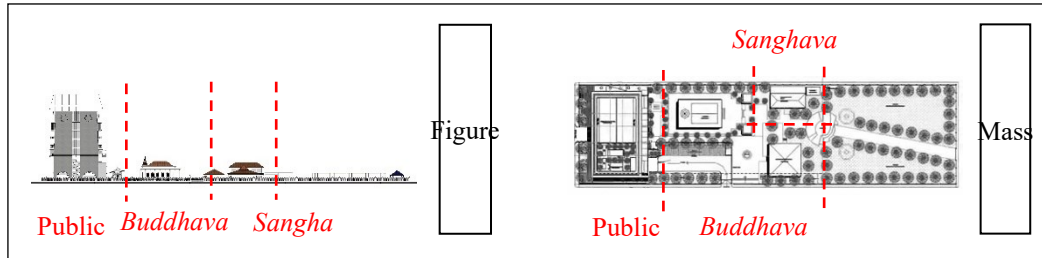


Figure 11. Zoning division in Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya

There are three processions in Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya (see figure 12). From main road, visitors will be directed through *wisma narada*, *uposathagraha*, to the end of *dhammasala* and *kuti*. From side entrance, visitors will see *uposathagraha* first and then *dhammasala*, *kuti*, and *wisma narada*. Meanwhile, from rear entrance, visitors are directed through *dhammasala*, *kuti* and *uposathagraha* until they arrive at *wisma narada*. From these processions, *uposathagraha* as main building seems to be placed in the middle of circulation, so that hierarchy becomes unclear. In spatial planning, there are two types of processions in *uposathagraha* and *dhammasala*, namely linear processions indoors and circular (*padakkhina*) on terrace around (Rodjali, 2007). Outdoor circular procession is similar to characteristics of Mahayana and Vajrayana architecture due to Buddha figures as worship object on the far side of the room and leave no circulation space behind. This marks the acculturation of Mahayana and Vajrayana schools' philosophy on Theravada ritual in Indonesia (Dhammadhiro, 2012).

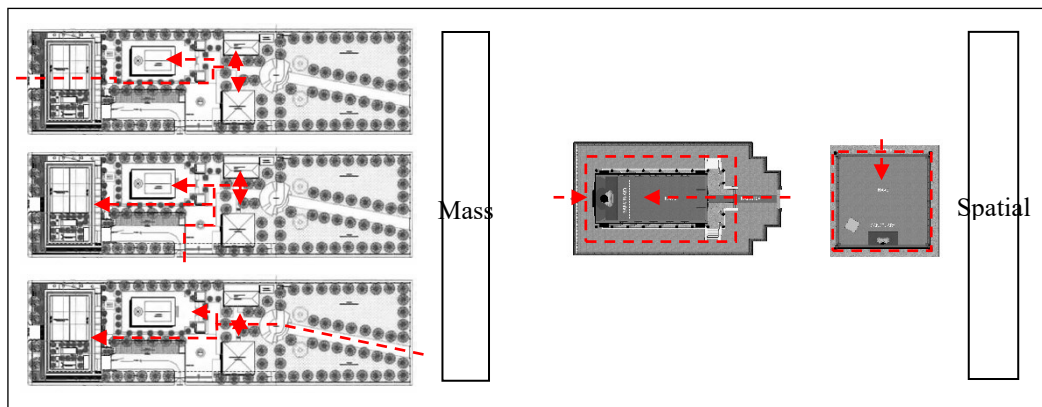
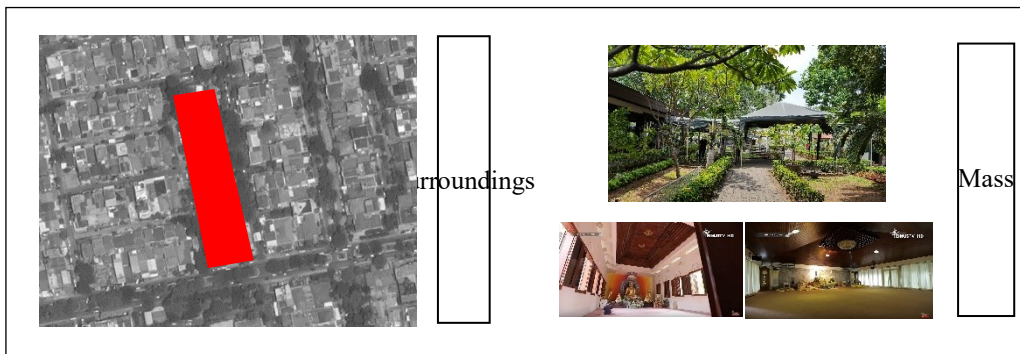


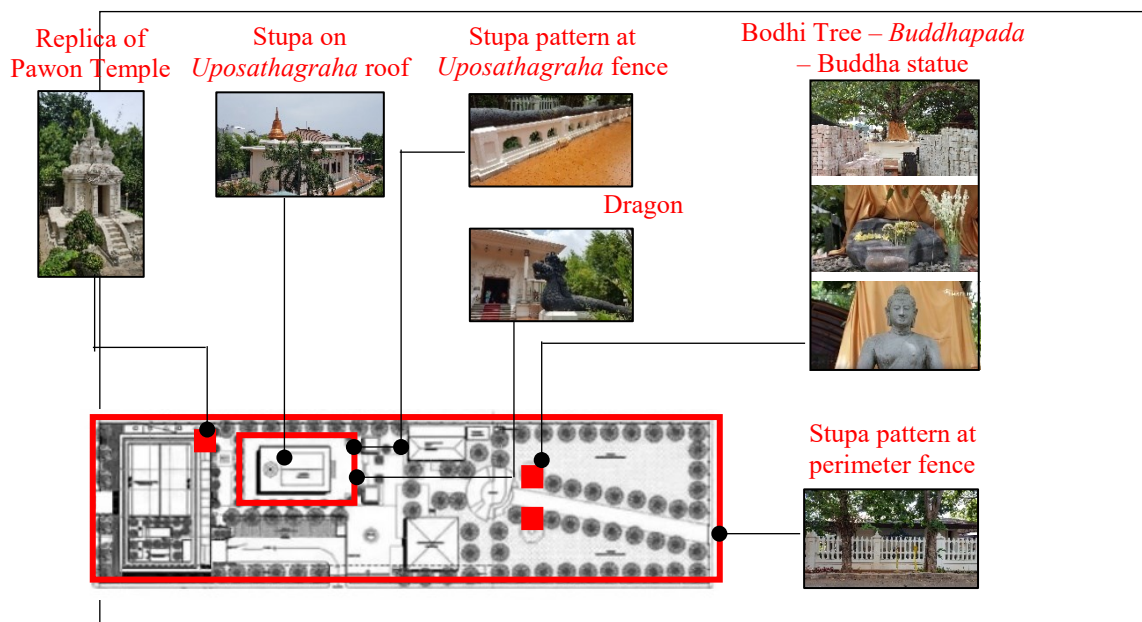
Figure 12. Procession in Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya

The choice of site in residential areas presents crowded atmosphere (figure 13), which is contrary to Buddhist architecture which tends to be separated with profane space. However, open spaces and trees on site creates quiet space and ambiguity with surroundings. *Upasathagraha* and *dhammasala* tend to be closed, creating dark, limited, and quiet space than other space. Transitions from profane (housing) space to worship area creates transition from openness to intimate space.



**Figure 13. Atmospheric Ambiguity in Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya**

There are some symbolic objects in mass and spatial planning scope (figure 14). In mass planning scope, there are pair of Bodhi trees with Buddha statues and footprints (*Buddhapada*) on each tree. In addition, there is stupa pattern at the fences and shape of stupa on *uposathagraha* roof. Replica of Pawon temple is located at the back of *uposathagraha* to store ashes of founders. Dragon carvings can be found on top of *uposathagraha* fence which functions as guard figure. Bodhi trees, *buddhapada*, stupas, and dragons are included in aniconic art from Theravada Buddhism, while Buddha statue indicates iconic art from Mahayana Buddhism. In terms of iconography, stupa displayed on fence shows wide and stepped stupa (similar to Borobudur temple with Mahayana – Vajrayana school), while stupa on *uposathagraha* roof is similar to Thai stupa with Theravada school. The existence of Pawon Temple replica with Mahayana school is also an acculturation indication of Mahayana in Theravada school in Indonesia.



**Figure 14. Symbolic object in Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya**

Several symbolic objects could be found on the outside of *uposathagraha*, in contrast to other buildings with more modern approach (figure 15). On stair railing there are *kala makara* carvings which are correlated as guardian figures (Herwindo & Kedmon, 2009). Different shapes of *Kala makara* can also be found at top of entrance door (peak of *caitya* arch). *Kala makara* began to appear along with Mahayana school development. There are anthropomorphic Buddha (influence from Mahayana) and floral reliefs that fill front and side walls of building. Carvings of *Dhamma* wheel (*Dhammacakka*) are also placed inside *caitya* arch and wall. *Dhamma* wheel on the side wall of *uposathagraha* and *wisma narada* has twelve segments, in contrast to *Dhamma* wheel with eight segments on *caitya* arch. Eightfold *Dhamma* wheel describes noble eightfold path to be free from rebirth and attain *parinibbana*: 1) *Sammā-ditthi* (right understanding), 2) *Sammā-sankappa* (right mind), 3) *Sammā-vācā* (right speech), 4) *Sammā-kammanta* (right action) 5) *Sammā-ajiva* (right livelihood), 6) *Sammā-vāyāma* (right effort), 7) *Sammā-sati* (right mindfulness), and 8) *Sammā-samādhi* (right concentration) (Wijaya, 2008). Twelfefold *Dhamma* Wheel describes *paticcasamuppada*, namely twelve states of mind that can lead a person to repeated cycle of rebirth: 1) *Avijjā paccayā saṅkhārā* (ignorance produces volitional activities), 2) *Saṅkhārā paccayā viññāṇaṃ* (volitional activities produce consciousness), 3) *Viññāṇa paccayā nāmarūpaṃ* (consciousness produces mind and matter), 4) *Nāmarūpa paccayā saḷāyatanaṃ* (mind and matter produce sixfold senses bases), 5) *Saḷāyatana paccayā phassa* (sixfold senses bases produce contact), 6) *Phassa paccayā vedanā* (contact produce feeling), 7) *Vedana paccayā taṇhā* (feeling produce craving), 8) *Taṇhā paccayā upādānaṃ* (craving produces attachment), 9) *Upādāna paccayā bhavo* (attachment produces becoming), 10) *Bhava paccayā jāti* (becoming produces rebirth), 11) *Jāti paccayā jarāmaraṇā* (rebirth brings decay, death, and sickness), and 12) *Jarāmaraṇa* (decay, death, and illness are the result of rebirth) (Dhammavuddho, n.d.). In *caitya* arch, *Dhamma* wheel is accompanied by lotus flower and pair of deer facing each other to form a symmetrical ornament. Lotus flowers carvings can also be found on head and foot of *uposathagraha* column. Siddhartha Gautama in past life was born as deer king who had freed a herd of captured deer, while bloom lotus was correlated with sacred form, perfect enlightenment and purity.

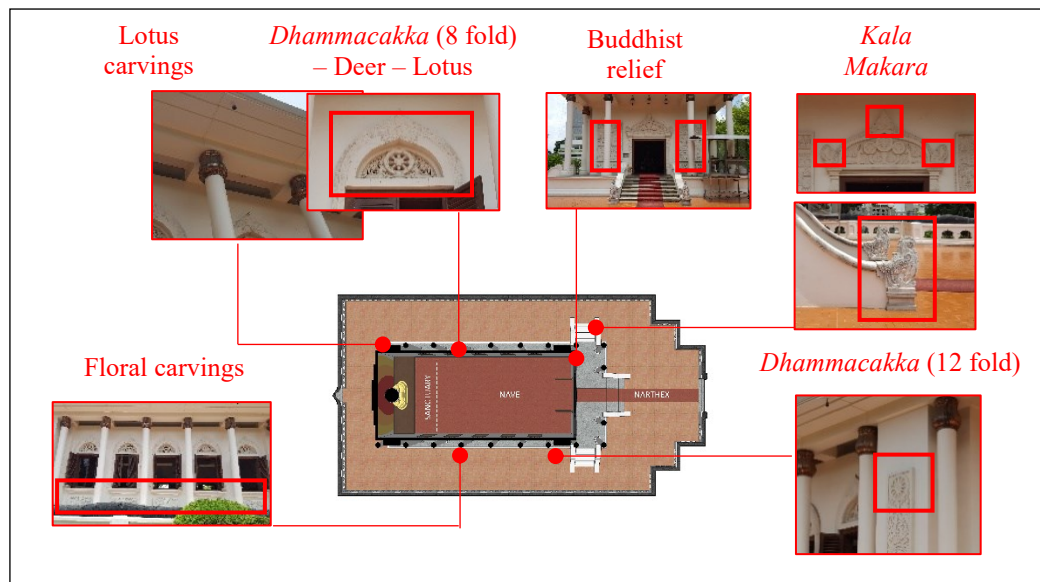


Figure 15. Symbolic object on *uposathagraha*

Buddha statue as worship object is placed in *uposathagraha* and *dhammasala* interior, which is influenced from Mahayana and Vajrayana who worship anthropomorphic Buddha figures. Buddha statues can also be found at *kuti* and *wisma narada*. Buddha statue in *uposathagraha* is complemented with gradative paint behind as representation of luminous Buddha (figure 16).



Figure 16. Symbolic Object in *uposathagraha*

In mass and spatial planning scope, there are some boundary guards could be found at the front and side entrances in form of guard post, while around *uposathagraha* there are dragon carvings on top of *uposathagraha* fence (figure 17). *Kala makara* carvings are placed on stair railing and entrance door of *Uposathagraha* which function to protect sacred building from evil spirits.

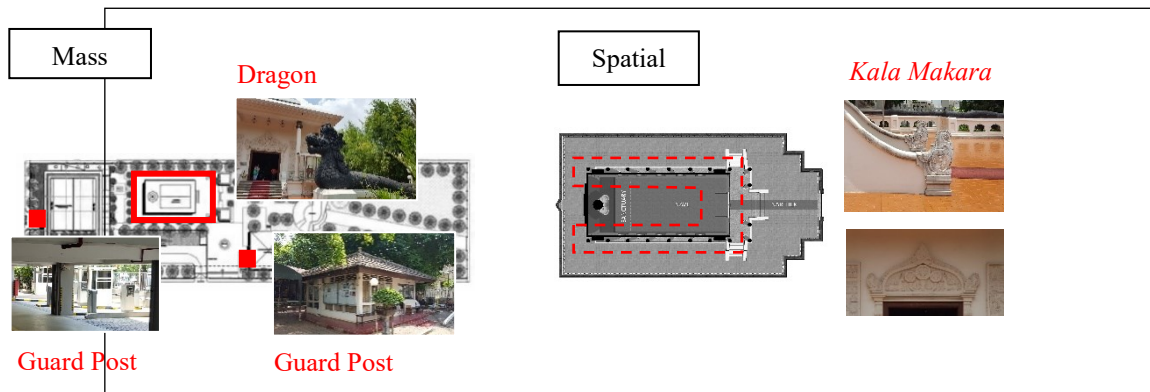


Figure 17. Boundary guard in Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya

Inside Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya complex there are open areas as transitional spaces from profane to sacred space next to *dhammasala* and bodhi tree (figure 18). However, the existence of open areas is not well defined, so it cannot be used properly by disciples for gathering / holding certain activities.

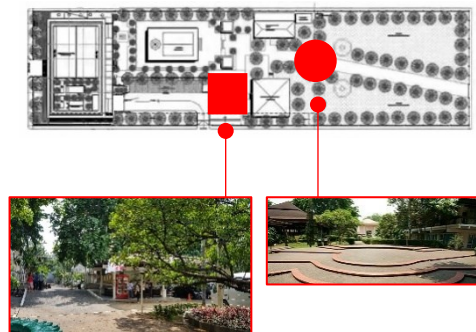


Figure 18. Transitional area in Vihara Dhammacakka Jaya

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of analysis, it can be found that there are several characteristics that form sacredness in Theravada Buddhist architecture in Indonesia which are influenced by Mahayana and Vajrayana. This can be seen from the usage of Buddha figures and shape of stupa as symbols and Buddhist iconography. In addition, *Kala Makara* carvings are also used as symbols to protect sacred buildings from evil spirits.

Configuration of building mass start to abandon some characteristics from early Theravada Buddhism, such as building do not respond to four cardinal directions. Building is designed with combination of rectangular and triangular shapes to create efficient space and respond to tropical climate. However, circular element as in Theravada Buddhist architecture disappears. Circular processions (*padakkhina*) also began to be set aside on the terrace because ritual activities were more focused on linear worship to Buddha statues.

It also can be concluded that Theravada architecture imitates Mahayana and Vajrayana architecture that have developed previously in Indonesia as a reference in developing architectural forms, as can be seen from the usage of architectural elements and principles that are similar with Borobudur and Pawon Temple. In addition, some characteristics that were commonly displayed in early Theravada Buddhist architecture are being abandoned, thus indirectly reducing sacredness of Buddhism. This is understandable because Buddhism is not binding and allows its disciples to interpret *Dhamma* themselves, as can be seen from Buddhist architecture that has been acculturated between schools and local beliefs.

## REFERENCES

- Barrie, T. (2013). *The Sacred In-Between: The Mediating Roles of Architecture*. London: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315881119>
- Buaban, J. (2021). Thai Monks Adaptability in Indonesian Chinese Community. *Journal of Social Sciences Mahamakut Buddhist University*, 4(1), 24–38.
- Busro, B. (2017). *Agama Buddha di Indonesia: Sejarah, Kemunduran dan Kebangkitan*. Bandung: UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung.
- Cahyawan, M. C., & Saliya, Y. (2017). Similarities and Differences in the Spatial Pattern and Form of Buddhist Buildings of Worship on Bali. *Riset Arsitektur (RISA)*, 1(04), 413–426. <https://doi.org/10.26593/risa.v1i04.2758.413-426>
- Coleman, J. W. (1999). The new Buddhism: Some empirical findings. In D. R. Williams & C. S. Queen (Eds.), *American Buddhism: Methods and findings in recent scholarship* (pp. 91–99). Richmond: Curzon.
- Dhammadhiro. (2012). *Buddharupa: Bagaimana Buddhis Menyikapi Obyek Pujaan*. Jakarta: Yayasan Sammasayambhu.
- Durkheim, E. (1915). *The Elementary Forms Of The Religious Life*. New York and London: The Free Press.
- Eliade, M. (1959). *The Sacred and the Profane*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.
- Emmett, C. F. (2000). Sharing sacred space in the Holy Land. In A. B. Murphy & D. L. Johnson (Eds.), *Cultural encounters with the environment: Enduring and evolving geographic themes* (pp. 261–282). New York: Roman and Littlefield Lanham, MD.
- Hamilton, S., & Spicer, A. (2005). Defining the holy: the delineation of sacred space. In A. Spicer & S. Hamilton (Eds.), *Defining the holy: Sacred space in medieval and Early Modern Europe* (pp. 1–23). Hants: Ashgate Aldershot.

- Herwindo, R. P. (2011). *Representasi Candi dalam Dinamika Arsitektur Era Pasca Kolonial di Indonesia*. Universitas Katolik Parahyangan.
- Herwindo, R. P., & Kedmon, E. (2009). *Penggalian Potensi Desain Candi dan Aplikasinya dalam Arsitektur pasca Hindu Buddha di Jawa*. Universitas Katholik Parahyangan.
- Hoffmann, D. R. (2010). *Seeking the Sacred in Contemporary Religious Architecture*. Kent: The Kent State University Press.
- Hunt, S. (2007). Sacred. In *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*. Oxford, UK: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405165518.wbeoss002>
- Hunter, T. (2017). Esoteric Buddhism in Medieval Maritime Asia: Networks of Masters, Texts, Icons, edited by Andrea A. Acri. *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde / Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences of Southeast Asia*, 173(4), 581–583. <https://doi.org/10.1163/22134379-17304007>
- Jones, L. (1993). The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture: A Reassessment of the Similitude between Tula, Hidalgo and Chichen Itza, Yucatan, Part II. *History of Religions*, 32(4), 315–342. <https://doi.org/10.1086/463345>
- Khanjanusthiti, P. (2004). Philosophical Approach to Conservation of Buddhist Monastery in Thailand. *Manusya: Journal of Humanities*, 7(1), 96–109. <https://doi.org/10.1163/26659077-00701004>
- Newell, C. (2010). Approaches to the Study of Buddhism. In B. S. Turner (Ed.), *The New Blackwell Companion to the Sociology of Religion*. Wiley. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444320787>
- Nöth, W. (2020). Handbook of Semiotics. In *Handbook of Semiotics*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv14npk46>
- Phuoc, L. H. (2012). *Buddhist Architecture*. Lakeville: Graphic.
- Sarwade, W. K. (2015). A Study of History of Buddhism and its Contribution to Indian Culture. *Journal of International Buddhist Studies*, 6(1), 35–44.
- Singgih. (2021). *Penerapan Konsep Sakralitas Buddha Theravada pada Pengembangan Perancangan Arsitektur Vihara dan Museum di Vihara Jakarta Dhammacakka Jaya*. Universitas Katholik Parahyangan.
- Syukur, A. (2022). Theological debate among Buddhist sects in Indonesia. *HTS Theologiese Studies/Theological Studies*, 78(4), 8.
- Thirathamrongwee, P., & Mongkolpradit, W. (2021). A Study of the Principles of Three Major Sects for Creating Buddhist Sacred Places. *Nakhara: Journal of Environmental Design and Planning*, 20(3), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.54028/NJ202120118>
- Varley, H. (2011). *The Buddha and His Teachings*. Leicester: Anness Publishing.
- Wang, B. (2021). Buddhist Thought and the Adaptive Development of Contemporary Chinese Dream. *Frontiers in Humanities and Social Sciences*, 1(5), 49–57.
- Wijaya, W. Y. (2008). *Pandangan Benar*. Yogyakarta: Vidyasena Production.
- Yayasan Vihara Jakarta Dhammacakka Jaya. (2019). *Kebangkitan Agama Buddha di Indonesia dan Sejarah Pembangunan Vihara Jakarta Dhammacakka Jaya*. Jakarta: Yayasan Vihara Jakarta Dhammacakka Jaya.