

The Remnants of Ancient Java as a Sign System in Bagelen Central Java

Niken Wirasanti

Department of Archeology, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Gadjah Mada
Jl. Sosio Humaniora, Bulaksumur, Sleman, Yogyakarta - Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: wirasanti@ugm.ac.id

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14710/ihis.v6i1.13425>

Abstract

This research explored the cultural traces of the Ancient Mataram community in South Kedu, Bagelen region, Central Java. There are abundant archaeological data to study these traces – Hindu and Buddhist statues, *lingga-yoni*, *lingga* pathok, rings, lamps, and five inscriptions, namely the Watukura (902 AD), Kayu Ara Hiwang (911 AD), Sipater (circa 900 AD), Ayam Têas (901 AD), and Pendem (881 AD). In addition, there are more than 26 archaeological sites in Bagelen region. Statues, *lingga-yoni*, lamps, and rings are correlated with the contents of the inscriptions, all of which show how the system and social structure of the residents worked and functioned in Bagelen region. These artifacts are a system of sign that describes the religious activities during the Rakai Watukura Dyah Balitung period of the Ancient Mataram. The research was aimed to obtain an overview of how material culture as a sign system is interpreted by the community. The research method used was a structural approach by analyzing signs and meanings of artifact data and inscriptions. The findings showed how the manifested culture in Bagelen region reflected a certain spirituality concept with local and cultural identification.

Received:
January 15, 2022

Revised:
May 30, 2022

Accepted:
June 4, 2022

Keywords: Inscription; Statue; Bagelen; Ancient Mataram; Local Cultural Identity.

Introduction

In IX-X century AD, South Kedu Region (Central Java) of Bagelen area was part of the Ancient Mataram Kingdom civilization. The palace of Ancient Mataram Kingdom moved several times as written in the inscription *medang ri bhumi Mataram*, *medang ri poh pitu*, and *medang ri mamratipura* (Boechari, 1976/2018, p. 178; Wuryantoro, 2012, p. 128; Poesponegoro, 2009, p. 149). The glory of the Ancient Mataram Kingdom has been revealed in a number of inscriptions and temples concentrated in the fertile plains on the axis of Borobudur Temple towards Prambanan Temple. This means that in these two areas, the intensity of temple findings with magnificent and monumental architectures are very high, which is known as “the royal temples”, and the palace is estimated to be close to the location of the “royal temples”.

Inscription data show that in the IX-X century AD in Java, there was no

centralized administration (Sedyawati, 1985, p. 264), while Kulke (1991 in Wirasanti, 2015, p. 103) made an interpretation based on the Canggal Inscription (773 AD) that the traditional structure of Old Javanese was a kingdom surrounded by several communities (*watak*).

Furthermore, the kingdom is a palace and the king ruled in a capital called Medang, surrounded by rural areas which at that time was probably not an actual urban center, but a large village. An area describing a center surrounded by villages is called as *bhumi*. One of the Ancient Mataram village known as *watak* Watukura, is currently located close to the estuary of the Bogowonto River, part of Purwodadi District, Purworejo, Central Java (Poesponegoro, 2009, p.123, Munoz, 2009, p. 326).

Toponym Watukara connects to Rakai Watukura Dyah Balitung, who was based Mantyasih Inscription (902 AD), became one of the kings of Ancient Mataram. The title *rakai* bore by Balitung showed that before crowned as the king of Mataram (899-911 AD), he was a ruler in (*watak*) Watukura (Boechari, 2018, p. 74 ; Wibowo, 1964, p. 148). Based from this fact, an assumption emerges that *watak* Watukura (Bagelen) was once an Ancient Mataram palace. In addition, the work of Penadi (1993, p. 6), which refers to van Der Meulen's opinion from Parahiyangan script and Babad Tanah Jawi script about the name of Bagelen which is equated with Ho-Ling or Haling that is the short name of *Bhagahalin* (Bagelen), suggests that there was a kingdom located in the valley of the Bogowonto River. Moreover, still referring to the writing of Penadi, Bagelen is similar to Pagelen as contained in Babad Tanah Jawa (the History of Javanese Land), a kingdom that was originally ruled by King Kahulun.

Regardless of whether or not it was true, it is interesting to study that in Bagelen region, there is a fairly large spread of artifacts in the forms of statues of Ganesha, Siva-Parvati, Agastya, Lingga-Yoni, Lingga *Pathok*, stupa, and *pipisan-gandik*, all of which are currently kept in the Tosan Aji Purworejo Museum. In 1915, the Dutch (*Inventaris der Hindoe- Oudheden*) (1914, p. 357) recorded the findings of Hindu or Buddhist statues namely Saraswati, Shiva, Ratnasambawa, Maitreya, Padmapani, a number of gold rings, silver rings, and bronze lamps. It was stated that these objects were brought to the Batavia Museum (Jakarta), and some were kept in the Leiden Museum.

These artifacts which are presented in Tosan Aji Museum each has certain meanings in accordance with their functions, either in religious activities or daily activities. The relations among these objects can be traced from five inscriptions found in the Bagelen area, namely Kayu Ara Hiwang Inscription (911 AD) found in Central Boro, and Watukura Inscription (902 AD) found in Watukuro, Sipater Inscription (approx. 900 AD) found in Jenar Kidul, and Pendem Inscription (881 AD) found in Tawang Sari. Another inscription, which is Ayam Têas 1 (901 AD), was found in Purworejo Region of Central Java, but the location of the finding is unknown. Archaeological data findings widespread in the Bagelen region with five inscriptions from

the Ancient Javanese period illustrate that the Watukura Bagalen region had an important role in the period. Watukura is a *lungguh* area of Balitung before he become a king of Ancient Mataram. As a *watak* area, Watukura had a vast territory with a number of villages as mentioned in the Watukura Inscription.

However, the Bagalen region as part of the Ancient Mataram region with quite complete archaeological data has not attracted much attention from researchers. It means that, so far, the many writings and discussions are mainly about the important role of Bagalen during the Islamic Mataram period until the independence of Indonesia. In fact, artifacts and inscriptions of the Ancient Javanese period found in the Bagalen region are part of the historical journey of Bagalen. Therefore, the study of Bagalen in IX-X century AD is important to be conducted since it will complete the series of historical descriptions and cultural processes of pre-Islamic Bagalen period. This paper is expected to begin as well as complete the overview of the community activities in the pre-Islamic Bagalen period.

Artifacts and inscriptions of the Hindu-Buddhist period became markers of religious activities as well as showing the role of ritual ceremonies in the daily life of the Bagalen people at that time (Geertz, 1973, in Magetsari, 1980, p. 438). This is interesting to study, and questions arise on how to "read" the markers of the local and cultural products of Bagalen people at that time and what elements and kinds of socio-cultural interactions are maintained to preserve the local and cultural identity of Bagalen in IX-X century AD.

Methods

This research was synchronic and conducted by studying the artifacts of the X century AD in the South Kedu area of Bagalen, which is currently a district in Purworejo Regency. The research locations consisted of Purwodadi District, Bagalen District, Banyuurip District, and Ngrombol District. These regions are concentrated with archaeological sites, a number of artifacts and five inscriptions, three inscriptions (Watukura Inscription, Kayu Ara Hiwang Inscription, and Sipater Inscription) with known locations of their discoveries, and two inscriptions were found in Purworejo without mentioning the place of discovery (Pendem Inscription was found in Kaligesing District, and Ayam Têas 1 Inscription was found in Purworejo). At the research locations, there are 26 archaeological sites with artifacts that are partially kept in the Tosan Aji Museum and some are still at their original locations.

The data, which are artifacts and inscriptions, were studied by means of a structural analysis (Fredinan de Saussure semiotics) which was an attempt to identify the structure of various thoughts, expressions, and behaviors of the community based on the five inscriptions found in Bagalen region. It means that the structural analysis did not take account of the causal relationship of a phenomenon, but a concept was viewed as complex and a set of elements that were related to one another (Piliang, 2012, p. 152). Statues, Lingga-Yoni, and

Lingga *Pathok* can be meaningful when these artifacts are in relation to the elements on the inscriptions that are structured stages in the ceremony of establishing a region as a *sīma*. To determine its structure, the data were analyzed and the result was a syntagmatic-paradigmatic axis describing religious practices that served to maintain the sustainability of socio-cultural relations. Furthermore, the discussion section shows the relations between the components that form the concept of religious communities.

From the discussion, it can be interpreted that the artifacts are associated with the contents of the inscriptions, and therefore a series of markers of a magico-religious concept is intertwined. This means that an overview of the pattern of socio-cultural relations that is continuously integrated forms a local cultural identity.

Results and Discussion

Bagelen is an area that is now administratively the Bagelen District of Purworejo Regency, located between the Cicingguling River in the west, to the Menoreh Mountains in the east, and the southern slopes of Mount Sumbing in the north, to the Indian Ocean in the south. This region has several rivers, namely Bebang, Bedono, and Bogowonto. In its history, Bagelen has been a fairly large and fertile area. In 1901, Bagelen region was administratively removed, and since then Bagelen has been a part of the Purworejo Regency (Setyawati, Sudiby, Ibrahim, 2018, p.20).

In the IX-X century AD, Bagelen was a part of the Ancient Mataram Kingdom whose territory was comprised of Central Java and parts of East Java. Ancient Mataram Kingdom was a kingdom that emerged during the reign of King Sanjaya who was given the title *Rakai Mataram Sang Ratu Sanjaya*, enthroned in Medang, and the palace built by Sanjaya was located in Poh Pitu (Boechari 1976/2018, p. 159; Poeponegoro, 2009, p. 123; Wirasanti, 2020, p. 131). The location of Poh Pitu is estimated around the Kedu region (Magelang), and during the reign of Dyah Kayuwangi the center of the Ancient Mataram Kingdom was moved to the southeast of Kedu and centered in *medang ri mamrati* (Çiwagrha =856 AD), estimated around Prambanan area (Darmosoetopo, 2003, p. 37).

Interpreting the Contents of the Inscriptions

One of the Kings who ruled in Ancient Mataram was Balitung with the title *Sri Mahārāja Rakai Watukura Dyah Balitung Sri Dharmmodayana Mahasambu* ruling in 898- 912 AD. As many as 45 inscriptions of stone and bronze created during his reign were discovered. The title *Rakai* shows that Balitung was once a ruler with the *lungguh* area in Watukura, and the location of Watukura is estimated in Central Java which currently contains the toponym of Watukuro Village in Purwarejo District. This title indicates the position of ruler in a *watak* (Poesponegoro, 2009, p.123; Boechari, 2018, p.91).

Inscriptions from the reign of the King Balitung found in Bagelen region are Watukura I inscription, Kayu Ara Hiwang inscription, Sipater inscription, Ayam Têas, and Pendem inscription. The inscriptions record the establishment ceremony of *Sīma* for religious buildings, that is dharma Pangastulan building (Watukura Inscription), religious buildings in Kayuarahirang (Kayu Ara Hiwang Inscription), and religious buildings in Ayam Têas. The Sipater inscription (900 AD) explains the maintenance of the dam.

The word *Sīma* is derived from the Sanskrit word *sīman* which means boundary or edge (Zoetmulder, 1982, p. 1092). The word boundary in a broader sense is a plot of land that is reserved (Darmosoetopo, 2003, p. 93). Through *manusuk sīma* ceremony, it means that the land is exempted from taxes and other obligations by the government with the aim that the locals are responsible for the sustainability of maintaining and preserving religious buildings. Furthermore, this means that the tax which used to be submitted to the government through the tax collector (*manilaladrawhaji*) now is handed over to the caretaker of *sīma* to be utilized for various purposes of the implementation of religious rituals, such as preparing offerings, and paying for the cost of building maintenance.

Sīma for the purposes of maintaining religious buildings is known as *sīma punpunan*. Darmosoetopo (2003) distinguished various *sīma* land giving: 1) *sīma makudur* (religious ceremony leader) given to *makudur* who has given contribution to the king, 2) *sīma kapatihan* that is given to *patih*/vice-regent who has given contribution to the king, 3) *sīma Kajurugusalyan* that is *sīma* land for areas in which metalsmith are managed; this consisted of blacksmith, goldsmith, coppersmith, and brass smith. According to Darmosoetopo, the term *sīma punpunan* is always related to *Bathāra* or religious buildings and refers to Boechari (in Darmosoetopo, 2003, p.109); *punpunan* is an area adjacent to the center of the kingdom. Boechari's opinion on the term *punpunan* when associated with Watukura inscription, which became the *lungguh* land (*watak*) of Balitung, has attracted the attention of many parties to suggest that the *lungguh* area of Balitung in Watukura was close to the center of the kingdom.

Based on the inscriptions in Bagelen region there are a number of villages designated as *sīma* lands. Some of the names of the villages can still be traced to the toponyms today. In Watukura inscription, the Watukura region is comprised of the villages of Babadan, Matapanas, Payaman, Buhara Suwul, Buhara Unduh, Buhara Hoya, Buhara Tengah, Buhara Panganten, Bareng, and Antulan. The name Buhara Tengah is estimated to be the toponym of what is now known as Boro Tengah Village, in which Kayu Ara Hiwang inscription was discovered (Atmojo, 1991, p. 21). Still according to Atmojo (1984), the name of the villages stated in Sipater Inscription with the current toponym are Wlahan Village (Bragolan Village, Purwodadi District), Parowutan (Palutan Village, Ngombol district) bordering with Candi Village,

and Sipater (Kapiteran Village, Kemiri District). The villages written in the inscription describe a village (*wanua*) which was a settlement that merged with gardens, rice fields, dry lands, rivers, valleys, meadows, and forests. Gardens, rice fields, or forests are selected to be used as *sīma* lands for religious buildings. In his writing, Pradana (2017) interprets the contents of Kaladi inscription (909 AD); forests were selected as *sīma* lands and then used as gardens planted with flowers, and these flowers became an important part of the means of religious ceremonies called the *pancopacara*. There are two kinds of offerings that must be prepared in religious ceremonies, namely fire offerings (for *sang hyang Brahma*) and offering of goods for *sang hyang kulumpang* in the form of cloth, gold coins, and other equipment (Darmoseoetopo, 2003, p. 114). More specifically, these can consist of agricultural equipment prepared for *sīma* ceremony, such as *wadung* (a tool for splitting wood), *patuk* or *betel* (for splitting stones), *rimbas* or *pêtèl* (a tool for cutting or shaping), *lukai* or *kudi* (a weapon), *têwêkpunukan* (a machete with sharp protrusion on its back), *gulumi* (fork-shaped tool), *kurumbhagi* (knife), *kris* (*keris*), *linggis* (crowbar), *wungkyul* or *wungkil* (a tool for raking soil or grass), *dom* (needle), and *tatah* (a carpenter's tool). Other sets of equipment are tableware and lighting equipment that consist of *pandyusan* (a metal bowl for washing hands), *tabas* or *talam* (an offering tray), *saragi panganan* (cutlery), *saragi minuman* (drinking utensils), *kampil* (rice container,) *kawab* (pan to cook dishes), *pangliwetan* (a tool for cooking rice), *padamaran* (small lamp of bronze), and *papanjuan* (lamp). The next equipment sets are betel container and *pancopacana*. Equipment belonging to *pancopacana* are *kamwang* (flowers), *gandalepha* (*boreh*), *dhupa* (frankincense), *dipa* (*duplak* lamp for the ceremony), and *kawitta* (?). Sometimes offerings for *sang hyang kulumpang* can also include chicken, goat, and buffalo head.

Agricultural equipment for *sīma* ceremony was the equipment used daily in the paddy fields, in other fields, or in the forest. The rural environment around *sīma* was comprised of a forest area, rice fields, and dry lands, and this illustrated a fertile environment with abundant water sources. The Watukura inscription, *Kayu Ara Hiwang* inscription, *Ayam Têas 1* inscription, and Pendem inscription implicitly mention that the fertile lands for *sīma* were designated for religious buildings close to the countryside. Other inscriptions, which are Linggasutan inscription (924 AD), Sugih Manek inscription (915 AD), and Muncang inscription (944 AD), explicitly state that there were rice fields and dry lands in rural environment (*wanua*). The people were obliged to maintain religious buildings located near their residence. To maintain and preserve religious buildings, a number of caretakers were responsible for this maintenance (Setianingsih, 1991, p. 3; Wirasanti 2015, p. 39). Setianingsih's study mentions that Poh inscription (905 AD) provides complete information about the obligations of religious building caretakers in *Wanua* villages in Poh, Rumasan Village, and Nyu Village, all of which were *sīma* for *sang hyang caitya* while the village officials were

responsible for maintaining, preserving, decorating, and organizing offerings ceremonies (*mahaywa* for a king who were “*didharmakan*” in *Pastika*).

Watukura inscription (902 AD) mentions that religious buildings caretakers namely *sang karmma* consist of *mamuju*, *upakada*, and *dewakarma*. *Mamuju* was the person in charge of organizing religious ceremonies and offerings during the performing of the ritual to *Bhatāra*. *Upakalpa* was the person in charge of preparing the ceremony offerings to *Bhatāra*. The task of *dewakarmma* was cleaning the courtyard of religious buildings. The person in charge of caring for and cleaning the religious buildings called *byapāra* (Darmosoetopo, 2003, p. 161; Wuryantara, 2012, p. 132; Pradana, 2017, p. 51).

Kayu Ara Hiwang inscription mentions people who are known as *parhyangan* who were in charge of praying to call the gods. Ayam Têas inscription mentions that *wadihati* is a religious caretaker who assisted in performing ceremonies in villages. In another inscription, the Panggumulan inscription, four people are mentioned that they were in charge of preparing lights at the time of *sīma* ceremony. There is also a caretaker called *mulawuai* as a person in charge of providing water during the ceremony (Setianingsih, 1991, p. 3). The *sīma* (religious building) caretaker or custodian showed that there was an organizational structure of persons in charge who were responsible for the sustainability of *sīma* lands for religious buildings. These persons in charge received gifts from the king, such as money and cloth (*wdihan*).

Preparation of designating a region for *sīma* was started with defining the boundaries of the village. Kayu Ara Hiwang inscription (901 AD) mentions a number of villages that became the boundary of the *sīma* land in Kayu Ara Hiwang. In addition, the king awarded the persons in charge who had contributed to the maintenance of religious buildings in Parhyangan (*sīma ni paryan*) in a number of villages (Padamuan, Mantyasih, Asampanjang, Pupur, Taji, Kasugihan, Lamwar, Panggumulan, Lamwar, Langkyang, Sru Ayun, Poh, Kolungan) with cloth (*wdihan*), one *kati* (0.625kg) of silver coins (*pirak kati* 1). Some persons in charge received gold coins as much as one *suwarna* and two *masa* (*mas su 2 mā*), and a ring of *prāsāda* type (*simsim prāsāda*) (Pradana, 2017, p. 52; Wuryantoro, 2012, p. 138).

In addition to the inauguration of *sīma*, Sipater inscription (900 AD – estimated), tells about the expansion (maintenance) of a dam (*dawuhan*) to improve crops in a number of villages, namely Wlahan, Pariwutan, Kayuara, Kayuantan, Haluh and Sipater (Atmojo, 1985, p. 233). The existence of this dam can be associated with efforts to increase agricultural products. Agricultural products, in addition to being daily needs and traded goods, they are also used for the purposes of religious ceremonies on the *sīma* land. Darmosoetopo (2003) mentions that the cost of *sīma* establishment ceremony spent in Taji village that was attended by 592 people was 57 *kadut* rice of, six buffalos, and 100 chickens (Taji inscription, 904 AD). Many kinds of rices and side dishes were

served, and there were *skul matiman* (rice cooked with steamer), *skul dinyun* (rice cooked with *jun* (pot), and *skul liwet* (rice cooked with *pangliwetan*). The Watukura inscription (902 AD) mentions a festive dish including a side dish of fish (Haryono, 1997; Wurjantoro, 2012, p. 133).

The menus at the banquet for the establishment event of *sīma* were prepared from farming products obtained from rice fields, dry land, and fish ponds from local villages. The surrounding villages of *sīma* land (*wanua tpi siring*) and villages that utilize water from dams gave an overview of the Bagelen area at that time that was fairly densely populated and had fertile land and water resources.

Interpreting the Artifacts

From the structure of the regional or territorial planning of the Ancient Mataram Kingdom, it can be reconstructed that the center of kingdom with the palace of Sri Maharaja (*kadatwan*) consisted of *watak* led by a *rakai*, and the smallest unit of area was *wanua* consisting of residential sub-units called *duku*. The regional layout describes the conception of a space in which there was a center as a core of power that radiates energy outward towards the periphery (Raharjo, 2011, p. 26; Wirasanti, 2015, p. 104). Furthermore, the terms center and periphery are developed. A center is located in the middle of the culture that illustrates the great tradition while group of farmers develop the small traditions (Rahardjo, 2011, p. 430; Sadyawati, 2012, p. 282; Bhattacharjee, 2016, p. 5). Mostly, small traditions do not develop through reflective ideas. These traditions would develop by themselves in a village whose residents cannot write, or these are only obtained without full awareness of doing the refining. On the other hand, great traditions are developed by a small group of elites (thinkers, religious experts, and poets) with full awareness that these should be passed down to the next generation (Rahardjo, 2011, p. 249).

The concepts of great traditions and small tradition are used to describe artifacts (especially statues) found in the Bagelen region. Its regional structure, the palace and the surrounding areas that consisted of villages (*wanua* or *thani* and hamlets *anak wanua* or *anak thani*) along with the *lungguh* land, is a *negaragung* or the core area. Outside the *negaragung*, there were areas ruled by the *Hajj* or a vassal king. Balitung, before marrying the crown princess and taking the royal throne, was a *Hajj* from the Watukura area with the title *rakai* (Boechari, 2018, p. 90; Darmosoetopo, 2003, p. 49).

Bagelen region in the IX-X century AD as a part of the Ancient Mataram civilization is marked by cultural products in the form of statues of Siva-Parvati, Ganesha, Agastya, Lingga-Yoni, Lingga *Pathok* (*watu sīma*), and *pipisan-gandik* in a variety of shapes and sizes. The artifacts are now stored in the Tosan Aji Purworejo Museum. Iconographically, the statues can be recognized through the features of their attributes. However, it can be said that the workmanship and creativity of the locals are of high quality. It means these

locals had the ability to combine various elements to produce a distinctive form in the Bagelen region. Workmanship and expression of statues create a different *binary opposition*, such as statues from Prambanan Temple and statues from the Kedu area (Borobudur) which are iconographically and icononomically similar to the rules of the *Silpasastra* script (Figure 1).



Figure 1. From left to right depiction and workmanship of statues Bagelen (Tosan Aji Museum), statues from Prambanan (Candi Prambanan), and statues from Banon Temple (Kedu).

Source: Suroto, 2020; https://candi.perpusnas.go.id/temples/deskripsi-yogyakarta-candi_prambanan_8 (retrieved in 2020); Bernet-Kempers, 1959.

According to Soekmono (1986, p. 236), as an art enshrined in religion, the prevailing benchmark is not the splendor or the beauty that is generally considered to be the core of quality assessment, but its function whether or not the work fulfills its function as a religious object according to the views of the community. In this case, Sedyawati (1986) adds that there is a power of transformation given by the local identity. Another opinion is stated by Raharjo (2011) that to understand a civilization as a whole, a society should not be seen separately. In fact, small and great traditions always relate to each other dynamically.

Statues, Lingga-Yoni, and Lingga *Pathok* currently displayed in the museum seem meaningless. However, they will be meaningful if these artifacts are associated in a network context with the content of the inscriptions to form a sign system describing the concept of religious ceremonies. Denotatively, the content of the inscriptions with their artifacts shows the life of the people at the Hindu and Buddhist period. In this case, there was no Indianization process which meant that the local culture adapted to the foreign culture, but what happens was that the local culture was able to process foreign culture according to the characteristics or in accordance with the interests of the supporting communities (Magetsari, 2016, p. 14). One of the peculiarities of the local culture can be observed from the statues discovered in the Bagelen region (some of the statues are kept in the Tosan Aji Purworejo Museum), all of which iconographically also have a distinctive workmanship, different from the statues discovered in Prambanan region and Kedu region (Borobudur).

Interpreting the Space of *Sīma*

The inauguration ceremony of *sīma* for religious buildings brought consequences that were changes to the status of the land and its supporters. This meant that *sīma* had a legal power; there were fines for those who violate or damage *sīma*; there were no tax levies on *sīma* land which must be handed over to the kingdom. *Sīma* land designation process is written in the inscription attended by royal officials, village officials residing around the area designated to be the *sīma* (*tpi siring* or *siringan*), and witnesses from the four villages (*panyatur desa*) or the eight villages (*pangasta desa*), and these villages would be located in the four directions of the wind or the eight directions of wind (Darmosoetopo, 2003, p. 94). The process of classifying the universe into five and nine groups describes a space as a sign because it has a meaning and is conventionally assigned certain functions. *Sīma* land inauguration with witnesses from officials/residents from villages located in the four or eight directions of wind was a signifier. The markers of the layout are a concentric concept that is an opposition of one village in the middle surrounded by other villages in a circular manner. Koentjaraningrat (1984) argues that the dualism of the center facing the outer circle can become a chain structure of category three when the center is considered as category one, and the outer circle as category two, three, four, and five. From this description, it can be concluded that the ritual practice of religious ceremonies revolves around the center world that connects or bridges the human world and the upper world. The purpose is to obtain blessing (*slamet*), prosperity, and harmony (Setyobudi, 2013, p. 88).

Structurally, a space is seen as a structure (Hoed, 2014, p. 113). In the designation of *sīma* whether based on the Watukura inscription or Kayu Ara Hiwang inscription or Ayam Têas 1 inscription, there were village boundaries that formed a space. A more complete explanation is obtained from Panggumulan inscription (902 AD) and Kuramwitan inscription (869 AD) which mention the description of the village boundaries marked with installations of peg markers *pathok* (*Lingga Pathok/watu sīma*) which is often called as *sang hyang*. As for *sang hyang watu sīma* and *sang hyang watu kulumpang*, they are the middle of *witana* and precisely at the midpoint of *sīma* land (Darmosoetopo, 2003, p. 136; Soekmono, 1974, p. 319). Kancana inscription (860 AD) mentions that *sīma* stones (*sang hyang*) were planted in the eight directions of wind and overlooking religious buildings and statues of Buddha (Suhadi, 1983, p. 152; Darmosoetopo, 2003, p. 121).

...sira paduka mpungku i boddhimimba an panusuk dharmma sīma lpas irikang i bungur lor mwang ikang ing asana tanêmana wungkul asthadeçanya maka don pangadêgana sang hyang prāsāda sthana nira sang hyang arca bodha...
 [...Paduka mpungku di Boddhimimba who determines *sīma* for buildings in Bungur Lor and in Asana, so that the peg stone *pathok* are

planted in the eight directions, the purpose is to establish *prāsāda* of the statue of Buddha..]

Mamali inscription (878 AD) provides a more detailed information about the installation of the *sīma* boundaries in all four directions (Darmosoetopo, 2003, p. 122)

...swasti cakawarsitita 800, marggasira māsa daçami kr sna paksa wurukung kaliwuan aditya wara tatkāla nikanang lmah ning kbuan karāman i mamali watak mamali winli rakarayan i sirikan...sāma ni kanang prāsāda nira i gunug hyang...i sampun ika umadeg ikang rāma makabaiban ing pahing mesuk dwadaçi krsna...sinusukanya ya watu sīma srang dū.... [...happy year Saka 800 Marggasira month date 10th of the dark moon Wurukung Kliwon Ahad when the garden land in Mamali watak Mamali was bought by Rakarayan I Sirikan. made as sīma for prāsāda on Mount Hyang after the rāma standing attending the ceremony in the morning (pasarana) Pahing date 12th part of the dark moon planted peg stones pathok at every corner point of the sīma ...]

Paradah inscription (943 AD) also mentions *sang makudur* put *sīma* stones at the boundaries (corners) of *sīma* land in Pradah and Tagi [*i tlas sang wahuta hyang kudur umaratistha sang hyang wungkal susuk ing sahinga i pasaga i tagi*]. Tajigunung inscription (901 AD) mentions that these stones (*sīma*) were planted precisely at the corners of the village designated as *sīma* (Haryono, 1999, p. 18).

The term *sanghyang kulumpang* according to Bochari (1977) is a stone mortar that has similar shape to Yoni. In the *sīma* ceremonial process, *sanghyang kulumpang* is paired with *sang hyang watu tēas* or *sanghyang watu sīma*, a small monument similar to Lingga. Both artifacts became a central marker of ritual in the enactment of a *sīma* ceremony with the sign of the magico-religious concept that became the official symbol of the *sīma* land inauguration. In the inscriptions, it is mentioned that all village leaders paid obeisance to the *sang hyang watu sīma* (*manamwah ikanang rama kabaih ri sang hyang watu sīma*) (Kartakusuma, 1996, p. 405).

From the description, it can be interpreted that *sang hyang watu sīma* and *sanghyang watu kulumpang* and the statue were placed at the central point of orientation in the *sīma* land inauguration ceremony. The audience were sitting in groups encircling *watu sīma* and *kulumpang*. In the center of the yard during the ceremony implementation, *sang makudur* cast a spell, cursed those who disturbed the *sīma* land while slaughtering a chicken on *sanghyang kulumpang*, and finally threw a chicken egg on *sanghyang watu sīma*. Based on inscriptions (Darmokusetopo, 2003; Kartakusuma, 1982), there were sanctions for those who violated *sīma* provisions, and these were in the forme of fines and curses symbolized by the act of cutting the neck of a chicken on *watu kulumpang*, and breaking a chicken egg on *watu sīma*.

The ceremony ended with a banquet accompanied by dance performances (*arawan hasta*), mask dance (*atapukan, matapêl*), drum music (*mapadahi*), singing (*menmen, manidun*), and a comedy show (*ma-banol*). From this description, it appeared that the party supplies that must be prepared

were quite a lot, especially the dish at the end of the event. The Panggumulan inscription (902 AD) mentions a feast of various types of foods, namely *matiman* rice with a variety of salted fishes such as snapper, *kadiwas*, *layar-layar*, shrimp, and *hala-hala* as well as eggs. As for the vegetable dishes, two cows and a goat were slaughtered and cooked provided (Haryono, 1997, p.5).

The inauguration ceremony of Taji Village *sīma* was attended by 592 people, required 57 *kadut* of rice, six buffalos, and 100 chickens (Taji inscription 901 AD) (Darmosoetopo, 2003, p.133). To ensure food availability, agricultural yields through a good irrigation had been increased. Sipater inscription mentions the maintenance of a dam (*dawuhan*) to increase food production in Wlahan Village, Priwutan Village, Kayuara Village, Haluh Village, and Sipater Village (Atmojo, 1985, p. 233).

An inauguration ceremony of *sīma* was a ritual activity marked by the order of the ceremony (Haryono, 1999, p. 16; Darmosoetopo, 2003, p. 113; Kartakusuma, 1996, p. 408) starting from the selection of *sīma* land followed by: 1) giving *pasek-pasek* (gifts that can be in the forms of money, cloth (*wdihan*), a ring (*simsim*), 2) offerings equipment; 3) A priest or ceremonial leader *sang makudur* cutting a chicken’s neck and breaking chicken eggs; 4) *Sang Makudur* worshiped *sang hyang watu têas*, 4) cast curses to those who violated *sīma*, and 6) the *sīma* inauguration ceremony was ended with a banquet accompanied by dance-music performance.

The phases of a *sīma* inauguration ceremony carried out one by one in the same space and time formed a system of markers that explained religious behaviors related to a magico-religious concept. Stage-by-stage *sīma* inauguration was an important ceremony because there is a change from a common space to a sacred space related to constructing temples and placing statues. These stages are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. The Details of *Sīma* Inauguration Ceremony

Preparation	→ Implementation	→ Closing	
Designating <i>sīma</i> land	Gift hand-over (ring, cloth)		
Preparing statues, Lingga-Yoni, Lingga <i>Pathok watu sīma</i> , rings	Sitting around <i>watu sīma</i> , Statue and or Lingga- Yoni	Banquet	magico-religious concept
Preparing items for gifts	<i>Sang Makudur</i> conducting rituals		
Preparing offerings	Installation of Lingga <i>Patkok (watu sīma</i> at the four/eight directions of <i>sīma</i> boundaries	Dance and music performances	

The theory of sacred space explains rules and orders that must be obeyed. The order of behavior situated in a space that is interpreted as having

mystical and spiritual values (Danesi, 2020, p. 324-328). In terms of space, there is a sacred space and non-sacred space. *Sīma* land as a sacred space is marked by the peak of the event when *Sang Makudur* cast spells and was witnessed by the audience from the villages around the *sīma* land. The peak of the *sīma* event is a sign of presenting the cosmic force that allows men to build a sacred space.

The order of *sīma* designation obtained from the inscriptions for religious buildings shows similarities from the preparation, implementation, and closing of the event with the concept of inaugurating the sacred space. The connotative meaning of the solemn atmosphere was then developed characterized by the power awoken by *sang makudur* when casting curses and oath spells followed by the slaughtering of chickens and throwing eggs, all of which were able to give a certain meaning that was transcendent. The phenomenon of *sīma* inauguration ceremony was then continuously held in different spaces and times, and eventually the meaning of this religious ceremony (*sīma*) becomes part of culture and a "myth".

Conclusion

Bagelen region with the toponym of Watukuro Village became part of the cultural history of Ancient Mataram (IX-X AD). The Watukuro Village is associated with Watukura inscription and is always associated with the *lungguh* land (*watak*) of Rakai Watukura Dyah Balitung before crowned a king. The evidence of the glory of pre-Islamic Bagelen period is marked by five inscriptions and artifacts displayed in the Tosan Aji Museum, and some artifacts are still located in the historical sites of Bagelen region.

The artifacts and inscriptions appear to be of no value, but if they are deciphered and identified one by one, they become markers of the life of ancient Javanese communities during the Hindu-Buddhist period. Furthermore, these artifacts become meaningful when strung with inscriptions arranged in order (syntagmatic-paradigmatic) forming a network of relations into a system of markers with a magico-religious concept. In this context, the series becomes a unity of meaning that describes the practice of *sīma* land inauguration ceremony for religious buildings. Several inscriptions from different dimensions of space and time explain the inauguration of *sīma* land as characterized by the pattern and structure of formal order in maintaining its sacredness. The peak of the event is the casting of curses followed by prohibitions that must be obeyed and giving sanctions for those who violate the sacred land. The *sīma* land inauguration ceremony involved royal officials, village officials, and all local residents; it was witnessed by residents from the surrounding villages showing how the community maintained its identity as a religious society.

Acknowledgement

We would like to express our gratitude to the Faculty of Cultural Sciences of Universitas Gadjah Mada which funded this research, which was conducted in the Bagelen region, and the publication of this article. We would also like to thank the Department of Archeology of Faculty of Cultural Sciences of Universitas Gadjah Mada that facilitated and supported the undertaking of this research.

References

- Atmojo, S. K. (1984). *Prasasti Sipater dan prasasti Wankud*. Pusat Penelitian Arkeologi Nasional, Unpublished.
- Atmojo, S. K. (1991). *Identitas Bagelen dalam kaitannya dengan masalah hari jadi Purworejo*. Unpublished.
- Bernet-Kempers, A. J. (1959). *Ancient Indonesian art*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, & Harvard: University Press.
- Bhattacharjee, S., Bora, J., & Beypi, J. Interaction between great and little tradition: The dimension of Indian culture and civilization. *International Journal of Research in Engineering*, Vol 6, 1-7.
- Boechari (1962). Rakryān Mahamantri i Hino, Sri Sanggramawijaya Dharmaprasadottunggadewi. *Laporan Konggres Ilmu Pengetahuan Nasional Kedua*, Jakarta.: 53-84.
- Boechari (1977). Manfaat studi Bahasa dan Sastra Jawa Kuna, ditinjau dari segi sejarah dan arkeologi. *Majalah Arkeologi*, 1(1), 5-30.
- Boechari (1985/2013). Kerajaan Mataram kuna sebagaimana terbayang dari data prasasti. Makalah di Museum Nasional 1 November. In *Buku Melacak Sejarah Kuna Indonesia lewat Prasasti*. (pp. 183-197) Jakarta: Gramedia.
- Darmosoetopo, R. (2003). *Hubungan Tanah Sīma dengan bangunan keagamaan di Jawa pada Abad IX-X TU*. Yogyakarta: Prana Pena.
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of culture*. New York: Basic Group.
- Haryono, T. (1997).). Makanan tradisional dari Kajian Pustaka Jawa, *Makanan Tradisional dalam pandangan budaya dan keamanannya. Dies UGM ke -47*, Yogyakarta: Unpublished.
- Haryono, T. (1999). Sang Hyang Watu Têas dan Sang Hyang Kulumpang: Perlengkapan ritual upacara penetapan Sīma pada masa Kerajaan Mataram Kuna. *Humaniora*, 11(3), 14-21.
- Kartakusuma, R. (1996). *Obyek upacara Sīma pada masyarakat Jawa Kuna Abad IX-XMasehi (Kajian awal tentang Lumpang Batu berdasarkan Prasasti Panggumulan dan Prasasti Rukam)*. Yogyakarta: API. 412-413
- Koentjaraningrat (1984). *Kebudayaan Jawa*. Jakarta: Balai Pustaka.
- Kulke, H. (1991). Epigraphical references to the city and the state in early Indonesia. *Indonesia* 52, 3-22 Magetsari, (1980). *Kemungkinan agama sebagai alat pendekatan dalam penelitian arkeologi klasik*. Jakarta: PIA II, Unpublished.

- Penadi, R. (1993). Menemukan kembali jatidiri Bagelen dalam rangka mencari hari jadi. *Research Report*, Lembaga Studi dan Pengembangan Sejarah Budaya, Unpublished.
- Piliang, Y. A. (2012). *Semiotika dan hipersemiotika: Kode, gaya dan matinya makna*. Bandung: Penerbit Matahari.
- Pradana, Y. (2017). Kebijakan penguasa dalam pelestarian bangunan keagamaan pada masa pemerintahan Rakai Watukura Dyah Balitung (898-910 Masehi). *Amerta*, 35(1), 1-74.
- Sedyawati, E. (1986). Local genius dan perkembangan bangunan sakral di Indonesia. Dalam Ayatrohaedi (Eds). *Kepribadian Budaya Bangsa 186-192*. Local Genius.
- Setianingsih, R. M. (1991). Sekilas tentang petugas bangunan suci di dalam masyarakat Jawa Kuna. *Diskusi Ilmiah Epigrafi*. Yogyakarta: Unpublished.
- Setyawati, N. A., Sudiby, and Ibrahim, Y. (2018). *Kajian hari jadi Kabupaten Purworejo*. Unpublished report from UGM and Regional Government of Purworejo.
- Soekmono, R. (1986). Local genius dan perkembangan bangunan sakral di Indonesia. In Ayatrohaedi (Eds). *Kepribadian Budaya Bangsa*. Local Genius.
- Setyobudi, I. (2013). *Paradoks struktural Jakob Sumardjo, menggali kearifan lokal Budaya Indonesia*. Bandung : Penerbit Kelir.
- Suhadi, M. (1983). Status tanah/desa perdikan di Jawa. *REHPA 1*, Pusat Penelitian Arkeologi Nasional, 151-180.
- Wibowo (1964). Sedikit tentang tahun permulaan pemerintahan Balitung. *MISI*, II(2), 147-154
- Wirasanti, N. (2015). *Lingkungan candi abad ix-x masehi masa mataram kuna di poros Kedu Selatan – Prambanan* (Doctoral Dissertation). Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta.
- Wirasanti, N. Murwanto, H. (2020). Reconstruction of a Javanese civilization cultural landscape in 8 ad based on Canggal inscription in Gendol Hill complex, Magelang, Central Java. *Indonesian Journal of Geography*, 52(1), 128-134.
- Wurjantoro, E. (2012). *Prasasti berbahasa Jawa kuna abad viii-x masehi koleksi Museum Nasional Jakarta (alih aksara dan terjemahan)*. Jakarta: Museum Nasional.
- Zoetmulder P. J. (1982). *Old Javanese English dictionary*. Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff.