

The Javanese Hegemony in Cambodia for 120 Years (682-802)

Martin Darma Setiawan

Universitas Pelita Bangsa, Indonesia

*correspondence email: air_bersih@yahoo.com

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Abstrak

Artikel ini menjelajahi hubungan sejarah dan geopolitik antara Jawa dan Khmer pada abad ke-9, dengan fokus pada prasasti Sdok Kak Thom. Membahas lanskap sosio-kultural Asia Tenggara pra-Angkor, termasuk budaya Chenla-Kamboja dan Thalassocracy Sriwijaya, menggunakan teori kolonisasi dan perdagangan budaya untuk menganalisis dinamika antara Jawa, Sriwijaya, dan Kamboja. Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan metode multidisiplin untuk meneliti hubungan Jawa-Khmer pada abad ke-9. Mengintegrasikan analisis sejarah, investigasi arkeologi, interpretasi teks, kerangka teoritis, dan analisis perbandingan. Hasil penelitian ini menyarankan tiga pembagian dalam Kerajaan Sriwijaya: Kedatuan, Samaryyada, dan Mandala, yang melayani tujuan perdagangan, politik, dan spiritual. Ini menguji pembangunan candi selama periode Mataram-Sriwijaya di Jawa, dengan menekankan peran masyarakat Kalang, signifikansinya dalam sistem varna, dan stratifikasi sosial Austronesia. Artikel ini juga mengevaluasi keterlibatan Sriwijaya dalam pembangunan candi dan ekspedisi maritim, mengusulkan impor pekerja terampil. Ia menyimpulkan bahwa pembangunan candi di Jawa kemungkinan melibatkan mobilitasi cepat pekerja terampil, yang difasilitasi oleh aktivitas dan aliansi Sriwijaya, dengan masyarakat Kalang memainkan peran yang signifikan.

Kata Kunci: *jawa, kamboja, sriwijaya, candi.*

Abstract

This paper explores historical and geopolitical relations between 9th-century Java and Khmer, with a focus on the Sdok Kak Thom inscription. discusses pre-Angkor Southeast Asia's socio-cultural landscape, including Chenla-Kamboja culture and Sriwijaya Thalassocracy, using colonization and cultural trade theories to analyze dynamics among Java, Sriwijaya, and Cambodia. This study employs a multidisciplinary method approach to examine Java-Khmer relations in the 9th century. It integrates historical analysis, archaeological investigation, textual interpretation, theoretical frameworks, and comparative analysis. The results of this research suggest three divisions within the Sriwijaya Kingdom: Kedatuan, Samaryyada, and Mandala, which served trade, political, and spiritual purposes. It examines temple construction during the Mataram-Sriwijaya period in Java, with emphasis on the role of the Kalang people, their significance in the varna system, and Austronesian social stratification. This article also involves Sriwijaya's involvement in temple construction and maritime expeditions, encouraging the importation of enabled workers. He concluded that temple construction in Java likely involved rapid mobility of activated workers, facilitated by Sriwijaya activities and partnerships, with the Kalang community playing a significant role.

Keywords: *java, cambodia, sriwijaya, candi.*

INTRODUCTION

According to Coedes (1964), in the year 682 CE, Cambodia faced an invasion from Java. The invaders, deploying approximately 50 ships and 20,000

Javanese marines, received assistance from Sriwijaya. Notably, Java's military activities were not limited to Cambodia but also extended to Champa. Vietnamese historical tradition recounts an invasion in

767, where Champa was attacked by forces from Kun-lun and Da-ba or Cho-po (Java). The intensity of these incursions persisted, with the last significant assault recorded in 787, as documented in the Yang Tikuh Inscription issued by King Indrawarman.

This dominance over Cambodia endured for 120 years until 802 CE when Jayawarman II, also originating from Java, successfully liberated the region and established the Angkor Kingdom. Soewadji Syafei, in his analysis, posits that King Jayawarman II of Cambodia may be identified with Rakai Panunggalan mentioned in the Mantyasih inscription (Tjahjono 2008) from the Shailendra dynasty in Central Java. Nevertheless, additional evidence is required to substantiate this hypothesis (Syafei 1981).

The historical scenario involves a series of invasions and military actions originating from Java, impacting Cambodia and Champa, ultimately leading to the establishment of the Angkor Kingdom under Jayawarman II's leadership in 802 CE. The potential identification of Jayawarman II with Rakai Panunggalan awaits further supporting evidence, as highlighted by Soewadji Syafei in his review. So, what is the scenario?

Java and Khmer, in the 9th century, the Sdok Kak Thom inscription played a central role in unraveling the geopolitical and geo-spiritual relations of that time. Understanding this historical period is

crucial for comprehending the complex dynamics that shaped the relationship between the two regions. By delving into historical archives, inscriptions, and relevant theories, this paper aims to detail and analyze this relationship within a contextual and academic framework.

The 9th century was a significant period along the Southeast Asian trade corridor, where interactions among cultures, politics, and religions shaped the roadmap of the region. During this time, major powers such as Java and the Sanjaya-Sailendra Dynasty pioneered in depicting cultural traces and influences in Southeast Asia.

The Sdok Kak Thom inscription, located in modern-day Thailand, provides significant insights into the relationship between Java and mainland Southeast Asia. A thorough analysis of the inscription's contents can reveal traces of diplomatic, trade, and religious interactions that shaped the character of the relationship between the two regions.

METHOD

The research method employed in this study adopts a multidisciplinary approach integrating historical analysis, archaeological investigation, textual interpretation, and theoretical frameworks to comprehensively explore the historical, cultural, and geopolitical interactions between Java and Khmer during the 9th century.

1. **Historical Analysis:** Historical records, inscriptions, and secondary literature are utilized to reconstruct political events, diplomatic relations, and military activities between Java, Sriwijaya, and Cambodia during the 9th century. Notable works consulted include Coedes (1964) for insights into Java's expansionist strategies and Higham (2016) for the political dynamics of Southeast Asia during this period.
 2. **Archaeological Investigation:** Archaeological surveys, excavations, and analysis of material culture are conducted to uncover tangible evidence of trade routes, economic activities, temple construction, and cultural exchange between Java and Khmer. This includes studying artifacts, temple structures, and urban settlements. Relevant studies include Damayanti (2014) for archaeological evidence of Java-Khmer interactions.
 3. **Textual Interpretation:** Classical texts, inscriptions, and epigraphic sources are examined to decode symbolic meanings, ideological underpinnings, and religious beliefs embedded within Java-Khmer relations. This involves linguistic analysis, paleographic studies, and contextual interpretation. Key sources include Syafei (1981) for textual analyses of inscriptions and historical chronicles.
 4. **Theoretical Framework:** Theoretical frameworks such as colonization theory, cultural trade theory, and religious diffusion theory are employed to interpret historical phenomena and formulate analytical frameworks. Coedes (1964) provides insights into Java's expansionist strategies, while Guy (2018) contributes to understanding cultural exchange and economic interdependence in shaping regional power dynamics.
 5. **Comparative Analysis:** Comparative studies with contemporary civilizations such as Sriwijaya, Champa, and Dvaravati are conducted to identify commonalities, differences, and shared influences in socio-political organization, religious practices, and architectural styles. This comparative approach enhances contextualization and cross-cultural understanding. Relevant comparative studies include analyses by Higham (2016) and Damayanti (2014).
- By integrating these methodological approaches and consulting relevant scholarly literature, this research aims to offer a nuanced and comprehensive analysis of Java-Khmer relations during the 9th century. It seeks to contribute to a

deeper understanding of the historical narratives, cultural dynamics, and geopolitical interactions that shaped Southeast Asian history and heritage during this period.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Reasons, Objectives, and Research Questions

The reason for writing this paper is to provide a comprehensive examination of the historical, cultural, and geopolitical interactions between Java and Khmer during the 9th century, particularly focusing on the significance of the Sdok Kak Thom inscription. By delving into the socio-cultural conditions of pre-Angkor Southeast Asia, the paper aims to uncover the complexities of political structures, religious beliefs, and economic activities that shaped the region.

Furthermore, the paper seeks to analyze the influence of Java and Sriwijaya on Cambodia and Champa through military activities, trade relations, and religious diffusion. It explores potential connections between rulers of Java and Cambodia, highlighting the need for further evidence to support historical hypotheses.

Additionally, the research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of temple construction in the Nusantara and Indochina regions, particularly examining the role of Sriwijaya in shaping architectural styles and religious

practices. By investigating the process of transferring temple-making technology from Indochina to Java, the paper seeks to elucidate the mechanisms of cultural exchange and diffusion in ancient Southeast Asia.

Overall, the primary objective of writing this paper is to offer new insights into the historical narratives and cultural dynamics of Java-Khmer relations during the 9th century, providing scholars and researchers with a nuanced understanding of the region's complex past.

This paper aims to address several fundamental questions. How did the political and cultural dynamics in Java, Sriwijaya, and Cambodia interact with each other? Can the Javanese-Sriwijaya Hegemony in the region be seen as a result of colonization, or are there other factors such as trade, human trafficking, and diplomacy playing a central role?.

Theoretical Framework and Previous Understanding

In constructing a robust framework for this study, various theories and scholarly interpretations are employed to elucidate the historical and geopolitical dynamics between Java and Khmer during the 9th century. The colonization theory of India serves as a foundational pillar, offering insights into the expansionist strategies employed by dominant powers in shaping the socio-political landscape of Southeast Asia. Coedes (1964) argues that Java's

military incursions and subsequent establishment of hegemony over Cambodia may reflect a broader pattern of imperialistic expansion akin to the Indian subcontinent's historical precedents. This theory suggests that Java's political ambitions extended beyond mere trade relations, aiming for territorial control and ideological influence.

Complementing this perspective is the cultural trade theory, which emphasizes the role of cultural exchange and economic interdependence in fostering diplomatic relations and shaping regional power dynamics (Guy, 2018). By examining the material evidence of trade routes, archaeological findings, and cultural artifacts, this theory provides a nuanced understanding of how economic interests intersected with political ambitions, influencing the interactions between Java, Sriwijaya, and Cambodia.

Moreover, interpretations of classical texts, such as inscriptions and historical chronicles, offer valuable insights into the ideological underpinnings and symbolic meanings embedded within the geopolitical relations of the time (Syafei, 1981). These textual analyses allow for a deeper exploration of the religious and spiritual dimensions of Java-Khmer interactions, shedding light on the role of divine legitimacy and cosmological beliefs in legitimizing political authority and fostering alliances.

Furthermore, the spiritual and religious aspects of the Java-Khmer relationship are central to understanding the cultural milieu of the time. The influence of Hindu-Buddhist cosmology, rituals, and iconography on political ideologies and statecraft cannot be overstated (Higham, 2016). Java's adoption of Hindu-Buddhist belief systems and their subsequent dissemination throughout the region facilitated cultural assimilation and provided a shared religious framework upon which diplomatic ties were often established (Damayanti, 2014).

Through meticulous analysis of primary sources and secondary literature, the study aims to unravel the intricate web of geo-spiritual and political influences that governed the relationship between Java and Khmer during the 9th century, elucidating the underlying mechanisms driving cultural diffusion, diplomatic negotiations, and military conflicts.

Social-Cultural Conditions of Southeast Asia Before the Angkor Period Before 6 CE

Chenla-Kamboja Culture

The Chenla civilization, an ancient glory in Southeast Asia, created a rich historical, cultural, and architectural legacy (see map in Figure 4). This article describes the cultural development, leadership, and architectural heritage of Chenla by

detailing inscriptions, archaeological findings, and works of historians such as Higham (2016), Coedes (1968/2014), and Miriam T. Stark (2017).

Chenla, reaching its peak influence between the 6th and 9th centuries CE, created an important transitional phase in Southeast Asian history. This research investigates the cultural dynamics, political structure, and architectural achievements of this civilization. In the 6th century CE, Chenla emerged as the successor to the Funan Kingdom, playing a significant role in shaping the political and economic map of Southeast Asia (Higham, 2016). Its peak influence occurred for several centuries followed by the transition to the Angkor-Khmer Empire.

Chenla did not become a unified state but a collection of city-states and kingdoms connected by a broader culture and politics. Its rule was dispersed among local nobility, including rulers such as Bhavavarman I (6th century), Mahendrarvarman I (late 6th century), Ishānavarman (late 6th to early 7th century), and Jayavarman I (late 7th century) (Coedès, 1968) (see figure 5).

Agriculture, particularly rice cultivation, formed the prosperous economic foundation of Chenla. Sophisticated irrigation systems enhanced agricultural yields and societal well-being. Trade between India and China solidified Chenla's position as a commercial hub.

Chenla was a melting pot of beliefs, with Hinduism and Buddhism coexisting alongside the local Austronesian indigenous faith. Inscriptions and archaeological findings reveal artistic and religious wealth reflecting a unique cultural synthesis. Temples and religious structures characterize Chenla. Places of worship, as seen in inscriptions, reflect a fusion of indigenous beliefs with the influences of Hindu India and Mahayana Buddhism. Although many Chenla temples were built with easily perishable materials such as wood and brick, they made a significant contribution to the architectural heritage of Chenla.

Architectural and cultural similarities with Dvaravati, a neighboring culture in Southeast Asia, indicate interaction and exchange between these two civilizations. Although Dvaravati, centered in Thailand, had distinctive features of Buddhist art, cultural exchange with Chenla located in Cambodia and Laos likely occurred, although the details of this similarity require more in-depth archaeological analysis.

Chenla, with its unique culture, decentralized political structure, and architectural achievements, significantly contributed to the history of Southeast Asia. Despite challenges in reconstructing its history, inscriptions, archaeological findings, and historical research shape a

more complete narrative of the glory and transition of this civilization.

Documenting the history of Chenla rulers is challenging due to the limited and fragmented nature of available records. The region was marked by a decentralized political structure with various city-states, and leadership was likely scattered across various localities. Furthermore, the transition from Chenla to the Khmer Empire complicates the historical narrative.

Some rulers associated with Chenla are mentioned in inscriptions and historical records (Higham, 2016). The following list may not be exhaustive, and the given dates are approximate but can illustrate their contributions:

- a) Bhavavarman I:
Period: Around the 6th century CE.
Contribution: Expanded Chenla's influence, mentioned in various inscriptions.
- b) Mahendravarman I:
Period: Late 6th century CE.
Contribution: Associated with diplomatic relations with China; sent embassies.
- c) Ishānavarman:
Period: Late 6th to early 7th century CE.
Contribution: Known for building temples, indicating cultural and religious activities.
- d) Jayavarman I:
Period: Late 7th century CE.
Contribution: Expanded Chenla's

territory and influence in Southeast Asia.

During Jayawarman I, the influence of Chenla extended to countries in the southern islands such as Java and Sumatra. This is indicated by the fragments of stucco statues, terracotta statue fragments found in the Artifacts of Batujaya Temple, Karawang, West Java (Damayanti 2014). This could have happened due to the presence of workers from Chenla and its surroundings. The question that arises is who brought them and how did the process occur?.

The Sriwijaya Thalassocracy

When I Tsing, a Chinese monk, visited Sumatra, he anchored at the Bhoga estuary also known as Sriboga or Sri-boja, now Musi River (J. Takakusu 1896). The identification between Sriboga and Sriwijaya is still debated. According to the inscription at Kedukan Bukit, Sriwijaya is considered different from Sriboga.

Mythology mentions that around 600 CE, the Sakala Bhra tribe in the South Sumatran hinterland, known as the Descendants of the Gods, inhabited the mountains and northern valleys around Mount Seminung. The origin of this tribe is Minanga Tuwan, considered the capital of the first state, located in mangrove-filled swamps. They spoke Proto-Malay or Old Malay, the precursor to the Komering language in the upstream region of South Sumatra.

To explain the geopolitical model of the mandala theory proposed by Manguin (Manguin 2002), it highlights the relationships between the upstream and downstream through the *kadatuan*, *samaryyada*, and mandala systems. The initial myth states that the unification of rival tribes was led by a powerful and magical king named *Jaya Naga*, later titled *Da Punta Hyang*, meaning the Sacred Great King, by the inland communities. The title *Pu-Yang* is still known in the upstream of South Sumatra for elders or those with high supernatural powers.

Following Manguin's mandala concept, *Jaya Naga* united several tribal groups in the South Sumatran hinterland originating from three mountains: Mount *Seminung*, Mount *Dempo*, and *Bukit Kaba*. This alliance system became the origin of the *Marga* governance system in the upstream of South Sumatra. Through alliance traditions, *Vala Sriwijaya* could unite the upstream, downstream, and even the surrounding islands of Sumatra.

From a local alliance, *Vala Sriwijaya* evolved into the *Kedatuan* or Malay City-State between the 7th and 13th centuries CE, exerting strong political influence from the Malacca Strait to the South China Sea. *Sriwijaya*, primarily as a political entity and major urban settlement, became the first large-scale state known in Insular Southeast Asia, reaching economic prosperity in the 9th to 10th centuries. Evidence suggests Palembang

was likely the political, religious, and economic center of *Sriwijaya* from the 7th to the 11th centuries. This rapid development and maritime trade continued as *Sriwijaya's* political center expanded to the river basin area north of modern *Jambi* in the late 11th century.

Thus, *Pariangan* in *Tanah Datar*, West Sumatra, serves as a pilgrimage destination in the Classical Era. To reach this area, preparations are made at the river estuaries, which can be considered as gateways to *Parahyangan*. In subsequent developments, it became a center for settlement and trade of exotic commodities obtained from upstream regions. One such commodity is spices, which in the past could be used as medicine or other pharmaceutical ingredients with benefits in the West. For instance, *Barus Camphor* was used as medicine (Hamidpour et al., 2013), and various types of spices were used in traditional medicines (D'Souza et al., 2017). Undoubtedly, these various spices were introduced by pilgrims returning from the upstream regions. Another use of spices is as a remedy for stab wounds and also as a potent doping agent, which is very useful in combat. According to myth, spices can be further processed into a remedy that provides resistance against sharp weapons, thus becoming "invincible."

Moreover, gold was abundant in the upstream regions of Sumatra, such as

Tanah Datar, Muara Sijunjung, and others (Septia et al., 2020). This attracted traders, leading to the development of settlement patterns and trade activities shaped by river currents. Settlements and trading activities were generally found near river estuaries in the Strait of Malacca or the Bangka Strait. In the upstream areas, at the estuaries of the main rivers and their tributaries, secondary and tertiary centers were found. Therefore, security service providers would be in demand. Spices, along with medicine, are one of the main commodities used for individual power enhancement.

In the furthest upstream regions, as producers of commodities, reaching the sea involved passing through several ports to reach the main port that exported goods abroad (Bronson 1978).

Pierre Yves Manguin (Manguin 2002) further offers a concept regarding the political dependency between upstream and downstream. This concept is developed from the structure of the Sriwijaya kingdom, which, in modern terminology, is considered a state. Sriwijaya's society was diverse, with social stratification, and it belonged to the Austronesian Malay ethnic group. The language used was Malay and its derivatives, generally similar to the language carved in inscriptions.

Political power at that time could be primitive, where the control system was

managed by Vala assigned or more precisely by the Datu. Vala is a team whose job is to defend and manage the flow of commodities for the interests of the Datu so that it runs according to demand.

Hulun or, literally, "sahaya," is a group that works for datu either as a slave or a freelancer. Hulun can be independent individuals or teams working as service providers in collecting commodities.

From this concept, it implies that there are two sides to the upstream-downstream relationship: trade, where the River Estuary or Kedatuan plays a role as the control center, and from a spiritual perspective, where Mandala located at the furthest upstream serves as the destination for spiritual journeys. Geopolitical models like this are typical in the vicinity of major river estuaries such as the Mekong, Citarum, and other large river.

From a trade perspective, cities were built as hub connectors for commodity flow routes, with these hub points serving as commodity storage locations.

From a spiritual travel perspective, settlements were built as hubs or stopping points to enhance spiritual understanding in preparation for the ultimate spiritual journey's endpoint. The starting point is generally at the river estuary as the initial gateway for pilgrimage journeys with major temples along the way. During the

journey, there are stopping points with intervals of generally one day's travel or about 20-30 km, depending on the terrain, which can be in the form of Yoni or ancient worship sites. The end of the pilgrimage journey is the Mandala, where the most ultimate places of worship are located.

Returning to Vala, in addition to playing a role as a connector for trade between upstream and downstream, it also serves as a service provider for spiritual activities. Interestingly, in many inscriptions such as the Kapur City inscription (Bangka), Ligor (formerly the Khmer region in Thailand), Balas Pasemah (South Lampung), Telaga Batu (Palembang), etc., the term VALA SRIWIJAYA is mentioned. If the understanding of vala is indeed as mentioned by Manguin, then Sriwijaya is an armed group that, in its profession, requests retribution from the datu for security services, and the datu can also use the vala to control the vanua in Samaryyada within its jurisdiction. Because these vala operate regionally, their inscriptions are found in various regions.

In its development, the political structure of Sriwijaya as a state, as mentioned, is still debated, such as the form of alliance that can bind various regions (Claessen, Bki, and Christie 1995). Based on the model proposed by Manguin, the spiritual connection between

upstream and downstream is expected to contribute to uniting the Sriwijaya Alliance as a sovereign political structure.

Based on this assumption, vala can play a role as a catalyst in the construction of various temples, whether Hindu, Buddhist, or other beliefs, in the archipelago.

Sriwijaya's Influence on Temple Construction in the Nusantara and Indochina

The existing inscriptions note that Sriwijaya, in its role as Vala, declared a strong influence, indicating sovereignty to control a territory (Ramadhant 2020 and Baskoro 1994). While the role as a ruler provides opportunities, there is also opposition, evident in the Kota Kapur Inscription, Karang Brahi, and Palas Pasemah Inscription, clearly reflecting the actions of Vala Sriwijaya against opponents or opposition. The Talang Tuwo Inscription shows that Sriwijaya had control over its territory and demonstrated efforts for preservation and protection of nature.

Although these inscriptions do not explicitly mention a direct relationship between Sriwijaya as Vala and the construction of temples, simultaneously, many temples were built in Sumatra and Java within the sovereignty of Sriwijaya. Research by Ayeris and Herwindo (2023) indicates similarities in the form of temples in Java and Sumatra, raising

questions about the possible involvement of Sriwijaya as Vala in the construction of temples.

During that time, military power required strong adherence to the adopted religion, and the Malay people at that time followed Mahayana Buddhism (Samad 2004). This religion originated in Gandhara between the 3rd and 1st centuries BCE and later spread to Sumatra, Central/Eastern India, and Thailand. Records (Bottenberg 2010 and Ayeris 2023) show that Mahayana Buddhism had already developed in Padang Lawas and Muaro Jambi from the 4th to the 8th centuries CE.

Mahayana Buddhism in Sumatra is believed to have originated from Gandhara, influenced by Greek culture. Sculptures of Buddha in Gandhara, with similarities in the folds of the fabric, indicate Greek cultural influence (see figure 2). The earlier spread of Buddhism in Sumatra and then to Java, with Buddhist architecture influenced by Hindu teachings, is significant. The relationship between Sriwijaya and Ancient Mataram also influences this discussion, considering Ancient Mataram was closely related to Sriwijaya.

Despite the limited remains of Buddhist architecture in Sumatra, many temples were built, indicating the simultaneous spread of Buddhism and Hinduism in Indonesia. In Buddhist architecture, although there is no

prominent literary evidence, the almost simultaneous spread of Hindu-Buddhism and how Buddhism incorporated some theories from Hindu religious architecture (Perdana 2022) played a significant role in the development of Buddhist architecture. So, what was the role of Sriwijaya as Vala in the construction of temples in the Nusantara and Indochina?

Śrīwijaya can be imagined as a mobile marine force unit roaming Sumatra in the 7th century CE, centered in South Sumatra. According to myths, this force could operate beyond the island after the unification of the 3 main tribes in South Sumatra: the Rejang Tribe, the Tumi or Komerling Tribe, and the Melayu Tribe, supported by the fierce Komerling Command unit. With a strong force, this unit once dominated the western part of the Nusantara, the Malay Peninsula, and the southern part of Thailand. The Vala Sriwijaya unit became the force securing the entire waters of the Malacca Strait and organized political power effectively.

According to the Kota Kapur Bukit Siguntang and Palas Pasemah Inscriptions, an increased understanding of Sriwijaya's civilization in the late 7th to early 8th centuries can be found. These inscriptions depict that Sriwijaya successfully expanded its influence to the southern part of Sumatra, Bangka and Belitung Islands, and even to Lampung. In this context, Sri Jayanasa, a leader of Sriwijaya, is remembered for organizing

and launching military expeditions to "Bhumi Jawa" to establish the authority of Sriwijaya, especially over those who refused to submit under its influence.

The inscriptions also describe an important narrative mentioned in the Wangsakerta Epic, detailing historical events in the late 7th century CE in the Tarumanagara Kingdom. Linggawarman, the last king of Tarumanagara based in Purwalingga, had descendants through marriage to Dewi Ganggasari from the Indraprahasta Kingdom (present day Cirebon). Their two daughters, Dewi Minawati or Manasih, and Sobakancana, became central figures in forming a political alliance through marriage with rulers of subordinate kingdoms.

In this context, Dewi Minawati was betrothed to Tarusbawa, who ruled the Sunda Sambawa Kingdom (now Bogor), an entity still under the umbrella of the Tarumanagara Kingdom. Meanwhile, Sobakancana, Linggawarman's youngest daughter, was betrothed to Dapunta Hyang Sri Jayanasa of Sriwijaya. Due to these events, the power of Tarumanagara shifted to Sri Maharaja Tarusbawa, his son-in-law from Sundapura, a region previously under the control of Tarumanagara.

Tarusbawa's action of moving the center of power inland to Sundapura, now Bogor Regency, created a significant political shift. At the same time, the subordinate region of Galuh, led by

Wretikandayun since the early 7th century CE, decided to act independently as a separate kingdom. The agreement between the Galuh and Sunda Kingdoms to share territory, with the Citarum River as its boundary, reflects the political dynamics of that period.

From this, it can be concluded that the location of Purwalingga, believed to be at the mouth of the Citarum River (now around Batujaya, Karawang Regency), controlled by Vala Sriwijaya, raises considerations about the history and archaeology of that place. Geographic factors, such as the branching of the river to the west, which flows into the Cibeet River originating in Sundapura (Bogor), and Galuh located at the headwaters of the Citarum River (now Bandung), form the basis for speculation about the existence of a temple in that river branch location, still known as Tanjung Pura. With the marriage between Dapunta Hyang Jaya Nasa and Princess Sobakencana, an alliance between Tarumanagara and Sriwijaya began, marking the hegemony of Sriwijaya with Mahayana Buddhism in West Java. This influence of Buddhism on Sundanese culture can be seen in Sundanese literary works (Saptono 1994).

After this alliance, the Batujaya temple complex, especially the Blandongan temple, transformed into a Buddhist temple, which before the 7th century was a Vishnu temple. This temple

is estimated to be the first Buddhist temple in Java.

It is not coincidental that the site plan of the Blandongan Temple or SEG V site is similar to the plan of Dwarawati period temples such as Wat Phra Men in Nakhon Phatom. This argument leads to the interpretation that the artifacts of Batujaya, if they are indeed contemporaneous with Dwarawati temples (around the 6th or 7th century CE), there

is a possibility that skilled craftsmen who made them came from the same Khmer civilization (Damayanti, 2014).

The correlation between Mon Dwarawati-Batujaya is further clarified by the presence of stucco statues with round faces, flat and wide noses, thick lips, and large eyes. Such features depict the characteristics of the first-generation Austronesians, where Melanesian features are still prominent (see figure 1).



Figure 1. (a) Indigenous People (Negrito) scattered across Indochina and Nusantara
(b) Batujaya Stucco Statues
(c) Dvaravati/Funan Stucco Statues

According to the legend, the indigenous people who built these temples were individuals with special positions and were supposed to be strong and resilient. In Java, these people are referred to as "orang kalang" (Suryanto 2003). In Khmer, "orang Kalang" is translated as strong people. This can be verified by inputting "orang kuat" from Indonesian to Khmer in A Dutch researcher in his book titled "Die Kalangs Auf Java," A. B. Meyer (1877), concluded that the Kalang people, whom he considered to have racial connections with Negrito or Semang, were endemic

throughout Southeast Asia from Cambodia to Papua in the first millennium (Muslichin 2011).

Examining inscriptions from the time of Diyah Balitung, it is often mentioned that the Kalang people were *Ḍihyan* people tasked with serving the gods. They played a significant role in maintaining places of worship or temples in the Sima region and were frequently referred to as the Kalang people, the builders of temples (Titi Surti Nastiti 1982). In the social stratification or varna system, they were

classified as a group of workers dedicated to the gods.

How did the Skill of Making Temples and Carvings Begin

According to the architectural study of Sumatran sculptures in the Palembang temple complex, there is a similarity in artistic style with northern India, especially the Nalanda region, and a direct influence of the Gandhara style (see figure 2). The influence of Mahayana Buddhism and the art of Nalanda is believed to have entered through the influence of the Sriwijaya kingdom. Meanwhile, the ornamentation of the Batujaya temple complex, which includes high-relief sculptures using stucco material, resembles the Dvaravati period temples in Thailand. The layout of the Blandongan Temple or the SEG V site itself is more similar to the layout of Dvaravati period temples, such as Wat Phra Men in Nakhon Phatom. The Dvaravati culture, along with Chenla, developed the culture of temple construction after the Funan period (Damayanti 2014).



Figure 2. Comparison of Greek Statues with Gandhara

Regarding the Southeast Asian region still falling within the scope of Austronesia, human strata, according to the Austronesian perspective in Sunda, is divided into 4, namely; (1) Sang Hyang, (2) Rakyang, (3) Dhyang (Dayang), (4) Guruhyang/Guriang. Where: (1) Sang Hyang is the gods ruling the universe with all their follower creatures, (2) Rakyang is the avatar of the gods acting as executors on Earth, (3) Dhyang is the servant of the gods who at that time could protest a little (Legislative), and (4) Guruhyang is the Resesi hermit in Mandala who sets the standard of truth for the gods on Earth (Judicial). This is seen in inscriptions during the time of Diyah Balitung (Titi Surti Nastiti 1982) where Dapunta is the eldest or Resi while Rakai or Rahyang is the incarnation of the gods that must be obeyed.

After the Indianization of the caste concept brought by the Wedhas was not fully adapted, it was slightly modified in Austronesian societies, as seen in Bali to this day (Sadnyini 2016), and the term caste is more referred to as Varna, which in Sanskrit means color.

Who Were the Temple Builder in South East Asia

In the period before the 7th century, a number of temples had been built in Cambodia and Champa. In Cambodia, particularly during the Chenla period in Isyanapura, now known as Kompong Thom,

there were about 150 temples. One of the largest temples was the Pra-Angkor Sambor Prei Kuk Temple Complex, built during the reign of Isanawarman in the Shivaism architectural style (Guy 2018).

In Champa, places of worship or temples also began to be built, and one of the oldest is My Son, located near the city of Hoi An on the Thu Bon River. Bhadravarman I established My Son in the 5th century AD. Additionally, there is Po Nagar in Kauthara, a harbor consisting of six temples and a pillared hall. Po Nagar was established before the 7th century AD, but the wooden structure at the site was burned down in 774 AD by Javanese raiders (Vickery 2003).

Considering the period of Javanese attacks on the Mainland along with the period of (1) the onset of the Sriwijaya thalassocracy (Djafar 2014), (2) the spread of the Siva doctrine initiated by Agastya (Noerwidi 2007), (3) the onset of massive temple construction in Java (Indradjaja and Degroot 2018), and (4) the fact that there were no large temples built in Java before the 6th century except in Batujaya, Karawang, West Java.

It is possible to hypothesize that there was an influence of temple-building traditions spreading from Indochina, particularly Chenla/Funan and Champa, to the Central Java region as a result of Javanese attacks on Cambodia.

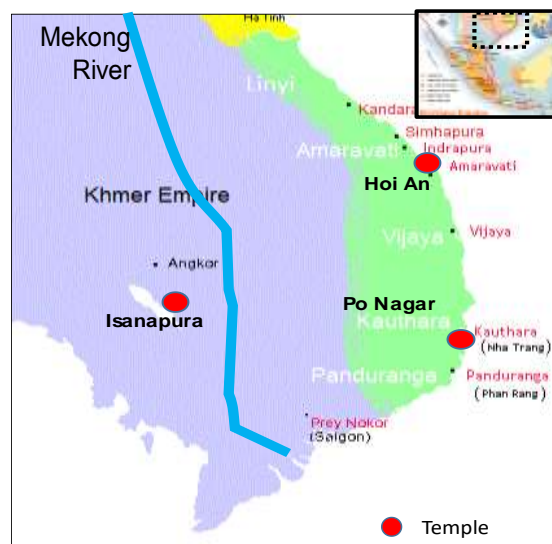


Figure 3. The temples that were built in Indochina before the 7th century

Where in these attacks, besides plundering, were also aimed at taking hostage the temple builders. The locations of these attacks can be seen in Figure 3 and Figure 4.

How was the Process of Transferring Temple-making Technology from Indochina to Java?

According to Vickery, based on Coedes' analysis, rulers defeated in Funan may have fled to Java, where they established the Sailendra dynasty. The family of Jayavarman II may have sought refuge in Java during succession turmoil. However, there is another possibility that they, along with their followers, were forcibly taken to Java as a result of one of the maritime attacks mentioned above, in 774 and 787, and along the coast of Champa, thus affecting Cambodia.

Upon arrival in Java, these hostages were indoctrinated in the Shiva doctrine

of Agastya, and subsequently, massive temple construction flourished. In the third and fourth generations, some of their descendants settled in Java, while others returned to Cambodia and established the Angkor Kingdom.

In Cambodia and Champa According to (Dinh 2014), like most Austronesian societies, the Angkor Empire from the Funan era, Chenla, never fully became a democratic country, although it was socialist. Social stratification in Chenla is not as extreme as the Indian caste system. Chenla has many levels of hierarchy starting with the king who is seen as the human form of the gods to the lowest hierarchy of humans.

- a) The highest level is the king and his family. In total, Khmer was once ruled by 28 kings for more than 600 years. Existing inscriptions show that the kings never violated religious laws and they had great power over the kingdom.
- b) The next level in the hierarchy is the household, which consists of those entrusted with regulations and legal officials. Social stratification is very extreme, even the common people are divided into three separate groups:
- c) Knum and the strong people (The Klang) bound to monasteries and temples. Although the Knum and the klang are extensively described in ancient inscriptions as 'performing work for the gods' in which could be

the back bone of the temple builder. they can be bought and sold like common slaves.

- d) Farmers, soldiers, construction workers (grouped into one class).
- e) Even among them, there is a lot of division of labor: (a) There are herders who tend to sacred cows, (b) fruit pickers, (c) guards,
- f) Other laborers like weavers, clothing workers, secretaries, kitchen cooks, and others employed as singers, dancers, and musicians in temples.

There is also a Varna indicating the place of origin, such as Varna Vikrant, Varna Vijaya, which indicates that this group is related to Vala Sriwijaya (Mabbett 1977).

In construction management, there are three aspects to consider in achieving success: (1) Man, (2) Material, and (3) Method. In Java, materials are abundant; therefore, "Man" and "Method" need to be imported from outside. In this regard, the procurement of scholars as "engineers" who possess methods, referred to as Knum in Cambodia, and strong and resilient workers, known as Kalang people in Cambodia, is necessary.

Dinh and Mabbett have provided convincing information about the capability of a society to be mobilized for the construction and maintenance of temple projects. This tradition is generally continued in Java, thus the temples in Java in the early 7th century are similar to

those in Mon-Khmer-Dvaravati. (Damayanti, 2014).

CONCLUSION

In this writing, we begin with an introduction that reflects Soewadji Syafei's efforts in 1981 to associate King Jayavarman II of Cambodia with Rakai Panunggalan from the Syailendra dynasty in Central Java. However, further evidence is still needed to support this hypothesis. The focus then shifts to the Sdok Kak Thom Inscription as the central analysis to unravel the geopolitical and geo-spiritual relations between Java and Khmer in the 9th century.

The historical background in the 9th century becomes key to understanding the complex dynamics shaping the relationship between the two regions. Major powers such as Java and the Sanjaya-Sailendra played a crucial role in shaping the cultural footprint and influence in Southeast Asia. The Sdok Kak Thom Inscription in Thailand provides significant insights into this relationship.

The importance of Chenla, an ancient civilization in Southeast Asia, is traced, covering its heyday between the 6th and 9th centuries AD. Chenla created a crucial transitional phase in the history of Southeast Asia, influencing culture, politics, and architecture in the region. Sumatra, with the myth of Sriwijaya as a unifier of feuding tribes, shows its

strategic role in Manguin's geopolitical mandala.

Sriwijaya, emerging as a Malay city-state (kedatuan) between the 7th and 13th centuries AD, played a central role in the political and economic map of Southeast Asia. Palembang, as the political, religious, and economic center of Sriwijaya, becomes a continuously evolving research focus.

The invasion of Java allied by Sriwijaya to Cambodia could be believed to have been solely for recruiting labor in the construction of temples in Java during the ancient Mataram period from the 7th to the 9th century. This was due to a shortage of skilled labor in Java.

It is evident that Sriwijaya played a crucial role as Vala. Sriwijaya, through an alliance with Tarumanagara in Java, maybe with other city states, significantly influenced the development of Buddhism in Java with the construction of temples in Batujaya. The architectural legacy of Buddha in Sumatra and Java reflects the spread of Buddhism concurrently with Hinduism in Indonesia. Sriwijaya, in its role as Vala, might have been involved in temple construction, with possible connections to temples in Java such as those in Batujaya. Was Jayawarman II also part of this alliance politic?

Skilled labor, according to legend, was the Kalang people, considered to have a relationship with negrito or Semang, creating a correlation between Mon

Dwarawati-Batujaya and the Kalang people. The Kalang people played an important role in the maintenance of temples during the time of Diah Balitung. In Austronesian terminology, the Kalang people are Dhyang whose duty is to serve the gods.

Although the Indianization of the caste concept was not fully adopted, modifications occurred in Austronesian societies, as seen in Bali. The Khmer state from the Funan to Chenla period was not entirely democratic and socialist, but its social stratification was not as strict as the Indian caste system. Chenla had a hierarchy involving the king, officials, and various levels in society, including slaves divided into specific groups.

The construction of the Batujaya temple complex and other complexes required skilled labor. In the late 7th century AD, Sriwijaya allied with Tarumanagara in Java, possibly bringing expertise and labor from outside Java, perhaps from Cambodia. Sriwijaya's thalassocracy, in its relationship with the myth of Javanese colonization of Cambodia, can be explained as an effort to acquire skilled labor.

Temple construction in Java rapidly developed in the 7th century AD, possibly with the help of labor from Cambodia, where they are referred to as strong people. In the descendants of Diah Balitung's time, the Kalang people, who played a role in the maintenance of

temples, were respected and granted tax exemption in return. Temple construction in Java did not involve coercion but rather devotion to the gods.

For centuries, the influence of India, Cambodia, and Nalanda has shaped the art and architecture of temples in Java. This influence can be seen in forms such as Borobudur, which combines Khmer and Nalanda styles and eventually finds its distinctive pattern. Despite conflicts with the Cola from India, this influence continued to affect temple construction in Java and its surroundings for centuries to come.

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