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## **The Batujaya Temple Complex As Vihara In The 7th Century**

**Agustijanto Indradjaja**

Agustijanto Indradjaja is a researcher of Riset Center for Prehistoric and Historic Archaeology, Research Organization for Archaeology, Language, and Literature National Research and Innovation Agency of Indonesia  
*e-mail: [agustijanto2004@yahoo.com](mailto:agustijanto2004@yahoo.com)*

### **Abstract**

The Batujaya Temple in Karawang Regency, West Java is the largest Buddhist temple complex in Java. At least now it is known more than 40 remaining building structures in an area of 2 x 2.5 km. The findings of the remains of the building structure are not only in the form of a stupa but also the remains of other building structures that reflect the complexity of activities at this site. This paper will identify a number of other building components found in Batujaya Temple. Data was collected through surveys and excavations. The analysis was carried out by making a number of comparisons with the findings of other sites. The research succeeded in identifying a number of building components that were needed for a center of worship and teaching (monastery). Based on the identification of a number of archaeological findings, it appears that the Batujaya temple complex is not only used as a worship center but also as a center for Buddhist teachings in West Java. Like the two centers of Buddhist studies in the archipelago, namely Sriwijaya and Ho-ling (Java) in the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD.

**Keyword:** Batujaya temple, Buddha, Vihara

### **INTRODUCTION**

One thing that is known from Chinese sources is the existence of centers for Buddhist studies in Sumatra and Java in the 7th century AD. In the report of I-tsing, a Buddhist monk who traveled to India mentions the existence of a center for Buddhist studies in Foshi (Sriwijaya). It-sing even suggested that Chinese students who want to study in India should study the Buddha religion first in Sriwijaya (Takasusu 2014, 26). Meanwhile, in Java, Hwi-ning (646-666) translated religious books (sutras) into China language was assisted by a Javanese monk named Janabhadra (Poesponegoro, Marwati Djoned 1984, 96). Of course, the Chinese priests went to India to study Buddhism in Nālandā, India which at that time was the largest center of Buddhist studies in the world. Nālandā is also known as one of the most important places where the archipelago received many elements of Indian culture (Bernet Kempers 1933, 3)

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In addition, it is recorded that several influential Buddhist figures have come and settled in the archipelago such as Gunavarman who lives in Javadvipa, Çakyakitri who lives in Sriwijaya, and Dharmapala, a person from Kañci who has taught for 30 years in Nalanda. In addition, there were recorded priests Vajrabodhi and Amoghavajra who stopped at Srivijaya (Poerbatjaraka 1976, 28). and Atiśa who in the 11th century studied in Srivijaya for 12 years before going to Tibet (Damais 1995, 90). And of course the monastery beside the stupa building, it will be equipped with other supporting buildings such as a monastery for their residence.

Soekmono (1974, 118) based on the Kalasan inscription states that a vihara (monastery) is a whole group of buildings consisting of a temple and its vihara. Even though in a narrower sense, a vihara (monastery) can mean a residence for monks. According to Agni (Mochtar 2015, 125) who traced the existence of monasteries/vihara in ancient Javanese society in Old Javanese inscriptions around the 10th century AD, he found that there were at least 10 temples written in the inscriptions. This of course implies that the existence of the monastery as a place of worship and religious studies was not strange to the ancient Javanese people. It's just that archaeological evidence regarding the existence of temples in the Old Javanese era is still difficult to find. Meanwhile, research results in the Batujaya Temple are known to have an area of about 2 x 2.5 km and it is known that there are remains the structure of the building is quite diverse, considering the magnitude and complexity of the findings in this temple complex, the question is whether the Batujaya Temple Complex was a vihara for the study of Buddhism at that time?

## **METHOD**

The research conducted is qualitative. The target of this research is *material culture* and its environment, in the form of buildings. Data collection techniques used are surveys and excavations. Excavation is necessary done at Batujaya temple considering that almost whole the remains of the building were beneath the ground. At the description and analysis stage, all archaeological findings are processed into data by describing the findings, followed by analysis. There are two types of analysis, namely specific analysis, and contextual analysis. Special analysis of the temple building includes analysis of morphology, technology, and art style (Harkatiningsih, et al. 1999, 39).

There are at least four aspects that will be observed in the architectural analysis of Batujaya Temple: (1) Morphological analysis, an analysis of the shape of the building. The variables to be observed are size, facing direction, building plan, and the size of the building parts, both constructive and decorative.; (2) Technological analysis, observing the materials used, construction techniques, and decorative techniques; (3) Stylistic analysis, observing the shape and decoration of all parts of the building, both constructive and decorative. Furthermore, comparisons (similarities and differences) with similar buildings in this complex will be carried out, both obtained from the results of previous research and comparisons with other sacred buildings. (4) Context analysis, observing the relationship of each artifact contained within the scope of Batujaya Temple. Contextual analysis namely observing the relationship of each artifact contained in the Batujaya Temple area such as the courtyard, fences and surrounding buildings. With contextual analysis, the relationship between space and time artifacts can be known. According to Ian Hodder (1987), contextual archeology is the use of the relationship of each element of material culture to explain its interpretation (Dark. KR, 1995). In the explanation stage,

interpretation of the analysis results through comparisons and analogies with other archaeological data is carried out which is expected to help explain the existence of artifacts found and answer research problems.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the history of the Buddhist community, founding India's largest center of Buddhist study named Nalanda has spread the effect to various parts of the world since the 5th-12th century AD, including the archipelago. A thousand monks recorded from various country of the world lives within this complex. There are at least three main buildings that must be present in this center of worship and teaching (monastery), namely the monastery, stupa, and chaitya. Other than this, of course, there are other support buildings like *sala* (mandapa), warehouse, wall, and well (*parivera*).

Order about the development of stupa can be found in the Mahasudana Sutta which describes the Buddha's journey to *mahanirvana*. In the creation, we can find instructions given by the Buddha (who was approaching *mahanirvana*) alone to build stupas in important places in Buddha's life. The construction of the stupa is intended to remember the dead, it's possible this was Buddha's early local tradition, which the Buddha recognized and accepted to spread his teachings.

During the reign of the Asoka Kingdom in India, the king build many large stupas in various parts of the country and in other countries where Buddhism is taught. The main purpose of the stupa is to perpetuate *Sariraka* (relic body) Buddha or Buddha teacher or His Paribautika (his goods). Several times, the stupa was built to commemorate a number of related events with Buddha in places of holy Buddhists (Mini 2021, 4).

By architectural, the stupa building has shape, part middle shaped like a dome that holds relics, the congested cleavage called *Anda* (*egg mount*). Standing on *medhi*, circle or longitude cage shaped. The top of the dome was flat shaped and ends in *harmika*, umbrella shaped part. This is usually made of bricks or rock. All around the dome, a street is built circling the dome. The devotees surrounded the dome through a small street. The road will have a fence of *vedika* wood around as this is the base structure of the stupa. In some of the stupas above *medhi* or stupa base, other part of the *vedika* on top of stupas was also built. Decoration makes *vedika* more attractive. The stupa is also fenced with wood or *vedika* bricks. The stupa is lined with wood or stone which has an entrance with a Torana. A stupa was built on this fence. A door with Torana will have three or four slabs of wood or rock above the door which has an engraved Buddha symbol. (Mini 2021, 4) .

Chaitya's development represents another stage of development in Buddhist architecture. In the early period, Buddhists gathered in open nature such as in gardens and forests to discuss. After Mahanirvana, Buddhists worship the stupa with full respect. Their activity makes the stupa a point center. Their prayers and discussions are at the meeting in the stupa. This also demands more space, and because of that, the stupa was made to be surrounded by an assembly hall, prayer room, and space required for a big community. In expanded form, they are known as Caitya. This Chaitya becomes the center of learning of famous Buddhist wisdom. Caitya is also well decorated with a statue based on a Buddhist story (Mini 2021, 5) .

Meanwhile, the construction of the vihara is found in the Vinaya Ptihaka, The book explained in detail. The construction of the vihara was carried out by a disciple of



the Buddha named Ananda Pindaka. At first, Ananda Pindaka pays attention that in the life of the monks, they have no place to stay to protect themselves, especially in winter. They decided to build 60 places to stay for the monks. Then the first monastery was built at Khetavana.

The book explained that there is only one room for a monk with minimum facilities. Then windows and more many facilities were added to buildings to protect the monks from bad weather, bugs, and disaster natural, etc. In later times, monasteries flourish and turn into houses with such luxury along with Mahayana Buddhism. Some of them develop as a learning centers for Buddhists. The complete monastery has parts such as Vihara (main part), Parivena (private well), Kottakh (terrace), Chinkamasalas (pedestrian hall), Kappiyakuttis (house for well-known figures), Vaccakuti (small bedroom), Jantaghara (bathroom) and Pokkharani (water tank) (Mini 2021, 5) . It seems the existence of monasteries and stupas has parallel development. A monastery site in the Buddhist always at least has one stupa inside. The existence of the stupa becomes a reason for the presence of a monastery (Hutington 2000, 1201) .

With so, if we look to support components from a worship and teaching center, at least we can find stupa, chaitya, and vihara inside the complex. We could find the main components of the building in the Batujaya temple complex. A number of component buildings mainly found in Batujaya are:

#### Stupa

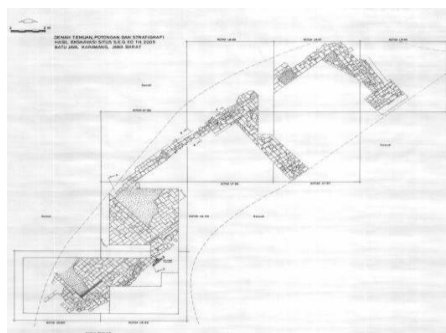
The remains of the stupa were built in the open space found in Segaran I sector (Unur Jiwa). This building is located in the east sea from Segaran V with Batur sized 19 x 19 meters and 4.7 meters high. Above this batur, the stupa was built, this is visible from the installation arrangement brick technique which made circling the middle with a diameter of 6 meters (Djafar 2010, 45) . Apart from the Segaran I sector, other stupa buildings are found in the Telajagaya V sector. However, it seems until now, this stupa building in Segaran I is the largest stupa built in open space. This Stupa in Segaran I the location around 250 meters direction southeast from Segaran V (Unur Blandongan).

#### Chaitya

Chaitya is a closed building that has a stupa that is used for religious activity inside. Chaitya was already known since the 2nd century BC, i.e Chaitya Ajanta was built in the form of a rock-cut Buddhist cave. In Indonesia, chaitya is also found in a row of reliefs of Borobudur Temple. At least there are two reliefs depicting a chaitya building with a stupa inside (Van Lohuizen de Leeuw 1980, 295) . By artifactual, chaitya could be found in Segaran V Temple, Batujaya. This temple is a well-known sized 25 x 25 meters rectangle and has a staircase to enter the main building. However, only the northeast part of the staircase has a gate.

The construction of the gate seems to use arch the structure technique. The advantage of this curve technique is the range of distant openings, which more wide compared to a large monolithic stone lintel. On the main building, a stupa was built on a brick base sized 10 x 10 meters with a height of 1.5 meters. The stupa is covered by mixed stucco with pebbles and after covered by pure stuko without pebbles so that the surface will be very smooth and strong. The main building is given wall brick except on the southeast and northwest wall, the wall brick is also equipped with windows made from wood (Manguin 2006, 247) . The roof of the building is covered by terracotta tile. The

roof is supported by a number of pole wood. That is visible from the findings of two mercy holes 50 cm in diameter on the floor of the corridor which surrounds the stupa building and put pole wood around the stupa. Floor hallway covered by stucco mixed gravel 10-125 cm thick.



**Picture 1** (upper left) : Stupa on Segaran I (Jiwa temple)

**Picture 2** (upper right) : Chaitya on Segaran V (Candi Blandongan) with remains of enter gate in front of east sea ladder.

**Picture 3** : Findings of Mandapa on west side of Segaran V.

**Picture 4** : Remains of Vihara of three rooms in Segaran IId

(Source: Pusat Riset Arkeologi Prasejarah dan Sejarah, Organisasi Riset Arkeologi, Bahasa dan Sastra, BRIN 2022)

## Mandapa

Mandapa is an open building that has a roof but without a wall. This building seems found 16 meters southwest of Segaran V Temple. The results showed that the structure was 60 cm high and was composed of 8 layers of bricks. Beneath this layer of brick is a layer of black soil that is quite dense with pottery. This mandapa is rectangular in shape measuring 10 x 11 meters. This building is an open building where the floor is hardened soil floor with fine brick fragments. On the inside, there are a number of stone pedestals with a diameter of 80-100 cm which are thought to have been used to support wooden poles. It seems the side northeast and southwest respectively have four pedestals with a distance between pedestals of 2 -3 meters. The mandapa building is made with open walls covered with brick tiles roof.

The use of tiles is indicated by the findings of a number of tiles in the excavation pit. Seeing such a shape, it is suspected that the mandapa building has a form like a pavilion building nowadays. The mandapa around the main building has a function like a supporting building for the main building. This means that buildings like this can be found

around the main building which is usually used as a place to prepare all the needs for ceremonies that will be held at the main temple. The position of this mandapa is on the southwest side of the main temple. This means that if the main temple has a direction towards the northeast, the building of the *pendopo* is at the back of the main temple. An open building like this in India known as a *sala* which can use as a place to meditate. One Mandapa with the same shape and size was also found 10 meters from the northwest of the first mandapa. Therefore, until now, there is two mandapa found on the southwest side of the main building (Segaran V) which has a function as supporting building for the main building.

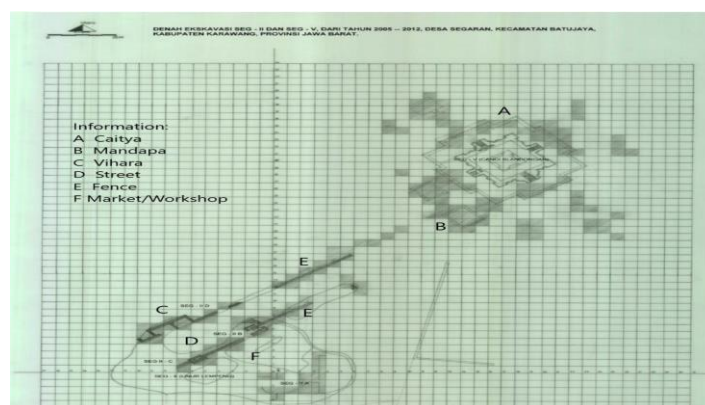
#### Vihara

Finding that thought as a monastery was found around 200 meters southwest of Segaran V. Research results show the remain of a building structure measuring 24.4 meters x 5.5 meters. This building is divided into three rooms with different space sizes from south west to east side. The sizes are the following; room 1 measures 5.9 x 4 meters, room 2 measures 9.6 x 4 meters, and room 3 measures 6.1 x 4 meters. Boundaries between rooms taken form of wall brick with 70 cm thick, composed of 5 layers of bricks. The wall outside the building was composed of 14 layers of bricks to the very bottom. Below bottom brick is soil clay layered with hard sand. Room floor made of brick covered by stucco mixed gravel with 5-10 cm thick. Door to enter the monastery facing northwest (see map 1).

**Picture 5**

Sketch of findins distribution of building structure between Segaran II and Segaran V.

(Source: Pusat Riset Arkeologi Prasejarah dan Sejarah, Organisasi Riset Arkeologi, Bahasa dan Sastra, BRIN,2022)



The main building structure in the monastery complex supported by a number of other components building structure like mandapa which used as a place to do preparation for religious activities or ceremonies carried out in Segaran V. Also, behind the Vihara there is a street with 15-25 meters wide to Segaran V, This dirt road is reinforced with a layer of broken brick fragments and is bordered by a pair of fences that have a thickness of 1 meter. It seems this street connecting the monastery with Chaitya and semi-permanent workshop/ building to the southeast of the monastery (see picture 5). The building was thought as workshop/market because in this area (sector Segaran IIa) the ground surface has been covered by compacted brick fragments of various sizes. Also

found are brick floors made in small spaces (Manguin, Pierre-Yves 2011, 120) . Some important findings are the concentration findings *multisala* beads in damaged condition that appear to be collected in one hole. In this sector also found one well ancient, which wall given big brick sized arrangement. The condition of well's water is very good and can be used for daily use. Different with most residents' water wells whose well water mixed mud.

## CONCLUSION

Research results to findings various building apart from the stupa in Batujaya temple complex imply that activities in the temple is more complex than only the place to worship for Buddhists. Various component building show that other than used for worship, can also be used as center Buddhist teachings around 7th century like Nalanda as center many Buddhist studies that give influence to existence Batujaya temple complex in the past.

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