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**NEW FINDS  
IN NORTHERN CENTRAL JAVA**

**Sri Soejatmi Satari**

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### INTRODUCTION

The northern part of Central Java has until recently failed to attract the attention of archeologists. One reason could be that except in the regency of Semarang, no temples were discovered, compared to the abundance of remains in the southern part of Central Java dating from the Sailendra period, like the temples of Borobudur, Prambanan, Plaosan and Sewu with marvellous sculptures scattered all over the area. One of the few writers was H. J. Dons (VBO, 1825, 40) who wrote about the archaeological remains around the Merbabu Mountain and the temple of Gedong Sanga in the regency of Semarang. J. F. G. Brumund, whose account was recorded in "Bydragen tot de kennis van het Hindoeïsme op Java" (VBO 1868, 33) visited the area between Tegal and Demak. From his account we gather that Brumund found only loose objects such as inscriptions and smaller items. No mention was made of foundations or remains of the temples around Unggan.

Sri Sujatmi Satari

Dr. N. J. Krom, in his "Inleiding tot de Hindoe Javaansche Kunst" (1919, 433-439) divided the art of Central Java into two main groups, basing his opinion on these finds. Firstly the immensely Hinduized Central Javanese Art, comprising the area surrounding the Dieng Plateau, Kedu, Yogyakarta, Surakarta, and Semarang. Secondly, areas situated more to the west, whose art flourished later on, the main characteristics of which are fewer finds of statues and a gradual absence of temple ruins. In these areas indigenous aspects of art came forward, as shown by sculptures with traits of the so-called Polynesian statues, especially in the regencies of Pekalongan and Tegal.

It is possible that due to their location nearer West Java where there were kingdoms from the 5th century, North Central Javanese art was influenced by that of West Java.

A survey carried out by the National Research Centre of Archaeology in 1975-1976 covered the regencies of Pekalongan, Batang and Kendal. After re-checking previously discovered sites there was a search for new ones, and new finds came indeed to light, scattered all over the coast and up to the mountainous areas. These included inscriptions, temple remains including foundations and statues. The first two will be mentioned briefly while more attention will be paid to the statues.

Paper presented at the 3rd Conference of the International Association of Historians of Art, Bangkok August 22-26, 1977.

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## INSCRIPTIONS

Almost all the inscriptions were found in the regency of Batang. A new inscription in the subdistrict of Gringsing on the coast north of Batang, consisting of 5 lines, written in Sanskrit with Pallawa characters was also discovered. It is supposed to be one of the oldest inscriptions in Central Java. But the thinly engraved writings made it difficult to decipher them properly. Several meters from the site of the inscription is a site which seems to have been that of an old bathing place, called the Bale Kambang, in which potsherds were found scattered on that of the lowest level. Two stone ducks, temple fragments and a makara originating from this site were moved to the site of the inscription.

Other new finds of inscriptions were concentrated around the northern slope of the Prahu Mountain, in the district of Reban and Blado, among others:

- a. The inscription of Sojomerto dating from the early seventh century (Buchari, 1966, 241–251), which mentioned the name of Dapunta Selendra.
- b. The inscription of Indrakila (district Reban), dating from the ninth century, mentioning the name of Dihyang (Dieng). This inscription is now kept at the Archaeological Office in Prambanan.
- c. The inscription of Banjaran (Reban), found in a coffee plantation. Very thinly engraved and consisting of 13 lines, it is written in Old-Javanese character. The deciphering and reading of this inscription is still not completed. (Berita Penelitian Arkeologi, 1977, 30).
- d. The newly discovered inscription of Kepokoh (Blado), which is written in Old-Javanese characters, using a mixed language: Sanskrit and Old Javanese. No mention was made of a date or name, but this inscription must be of a later date than that of Sojomerto.

## FOUNDATIONS AND TEMPLE RUINS / REMAINS.

Some finds worth recording are :

- a. Remains of a brick temple at Kangkung in the regency of Kendal from which some ornamented antefixes and pinnacles, one Durga and one Ganesa have been moved to the town.  
The Durga is eight-armed, of which the six rear arms are raised in a parallel pose, each holding a camara (?), a knife, a pasa, a trisula, a sankha and a parasu, while each of the forehands grabs the bull's tail and the demon Mahisasura's hair.
- b. Unlike the brick temple of Kangkung which was situated on the coast, remains of temples made of stone or brick were also found up-hill, in the subdistrict of Mijen, Boja and Limbangan. This is not so surprising in view of the fact that

these places border on the regencies of Semarang, where the pure Central Javanese art flourished, like the temples around Mount Ungaran and the temple compound of Gedong Sanga.

Those three sites yielded brick temple foundations, temple stones, yonis, statues and temple fragments.

- c. Traces of Hindu sanctuaries have been found in a well-preserved condition on the northern slope of the Prahū Mountain, right on the other side of the Dieng compound, covering a space of about 18x24 meters. Located in the district of Bawang, regency of Batang, it consists of several temple fragments and statues: a lintel decorated with a kala head and ending in stylized *makaras*, padma-shaped pinnacles, a *yonī*, small *linggas*, high *padmāsanās*, a mortar and its pounder, a nandi and a ganesa. An open space in the village of Kepyār, which people still use as a graveyard, yielded some temple fragments such as temple summits showing traits of the Dieng style. Besides there was a richly decorated kala head with a style, resembling that of the Penanggungan of East Java.

After this brief account of the inscriptions and temple remains, we turn now to the statues.

## STATUES AND SCULPTURES

The statues in the three regencies are divided into three main groups, in accordance with their characteristics.

### 1. Pure central Javanese statues and sculptures.

These are products of what Krom denotes as the intensively hinduized Central Java Art. (Krom, 1919, 433-439). It comprises statues with south central Javanese and Dieng characteristics which might have originated from those areas and were then scattered from Pekalongan to Kendal. The collection in the house of the Resident of Pekalongan (R.O.D., 1914, 131) includes a statue of Durga. Besides there were a sitting Siva and Visnu obviously potrait statues of royal personages, as is shown by the *anjali* pose of Siva, and the fact that Visnu has his hands in his lap, in a meditation pose, a flower lying in his right palm, instead of holding the usual attributes. Similar statues are also found in the regency of Kendal, viz. that of royal personages and a sage depicted as a god. Some of them ride on anthropomorphic *vahanās* like *garuda* and *nandi*.

### 2. Statues and sculptures showing local traits.

In this case the statues either preserve the megalithic tradition and Polynesian features or develop traits diverging from the pure Central Javanese ones.

- a. A Polynesian statue depicting a standing person with crossed arms is found at Tlagapakis, Pekalongan, side by side with a Ganesa with the usual classical features.

- b. Another Polynesian-styled statue in the form of a Ganesa is still kept in the tea-plantation of Jalatiga, Pekalongan. It has small legs and only two arms, hanging stiffly at the sides. The Polynesian appearance is enhanced by the rounded shape, the incised eyes and trunk and the unadorned and rigid body (op.cit. 1976.6).
- c. A stone statue of Wisnu is found in the district of Tersono, regency of Batang. It is already badly weather-worn, with its feet half buried in the ground. It is four-armed with plump limbs and a rather large head and wears a conical headdress, Its ears are adorned with a pair of *kundalas* or earrings. In each of his hands he holds a *sankha*, a *gada* and a *cakra* while the object he holds in his right forehand is still undiscernible. He is flanked by two accolytes or more probably his consorts, Sri and Laksmi. Elaboration of the limbs and the head are similar to that of the first Visnu image of Cibuyaya, West Java (Boisselier, MCMLIX, 210–226), which displays South East Asian features. It is likely that what we have here is an example of a statue influenced by West Javanese art.
- d. An interesting find, to which we will refer again, is a sculptured stone, popularly called the "watu gajah" or elephant stone, found in the under district of Wono-tunggal, Batang. It was reported as being a prehistoric object, but further investigation revealed that it could not be classified as one, but dated from the classical period. It seems that megalithic traditions were still being carried on, including an archaic way of carving. As a whole it is not unlike the megalithic Batu Gajah statue of Pasemah which represents a warrior riding an elephant (v.d.Hoop, 1932 34–35, pl.89–95).
3. Statues and sculptures under the influence of East Java art.
- A surprising phenomenon in North Central Java is the presence of late East Javanese traits in its archaeological remains. This is shown by :
- A. Some statues from the regency of Kendal,
- a. A yaksi or a camaradharini, standing with her right hand holding a camara over her right shoulder (R.O.C.1911.130). She is wearing a dhoti and a turbanlike headdress. On the relief of Borobudur is depicted a camaradharini who belongs to a king's retinue and who acts as a door-guardian of the palace (Siwaramamurti, 1961.21.pl.1).
- b. A Mahakala with a bulky head, goggle-eyed and with fangs. His right hand is holding up a club. This kind of statues are found in the regency of Madiun, East Java.
- c. A punakawan- like statue, wearing an ankle- length wraparound skirt. This kind of dress has been preserved till the end of the Majapahit period (Satya - wati Suleiman, 1975, 8). Moreover it has snakes as necklace, bracelets and armllets. Its frontal look and pancanakha nails mark it as Kertolo, attendant of Panji the legendary prince of Kahuripan, in the wayang gedog, the shadowplay with a repertoire of Panji stories. (see Pigeaud 1938,pl. XLVII, opposite p. 476).



B. Sculptures from the regency of Pekalongan:

- a. A stone statue of Doro, representing a divinity with four arms. His outward pointing feet stand on a pair of horned, open-jawed nagas. Its unfinished prabhamandala is intended to be carved the Majapahit aureole (compare with B. Kempers: Ancient Indonesian art. pl. 262), while the gesture of the forehands and the headdress display some traits of ancestral statues. This divinity might pass for Batara Guru, the popular personification of Siva in the Javanese shadow-play.
- b. A lingga-yoni from Petungkriyono, the yoni of which is decorated with a coiling naga having wide open jaws and horns, wearing a pair of *kundalas*. Here we find the pure East Javanese features, in contrast to the Central Javanese nagas which are smooth and close-mouthed. The naga is seen resting on a base ornamented with a protruding front part and hind legs, suggesting a turtle. (pl. no. 1).

After reviewing the finds, especially the statues and the sculptures of the three regencies, we shall now return to the two interesting items mentioned before, the "elephant stone" of Wonotunggal and the lingga-yoni of Petungkriyono.

#### THE "ELEPHANT STONE OF WONOTUNGGAL

As was stated before, this sculpture still maintains the megalithic tradition in appearance. The upper part of the stone fitting in a groove on the surface of the lower part, has vanished. Both sides of this stone are carved, each with a different relief. The left side shows an elephant's head, a fore and a hind leg, but they seem not to fit each other. Next to one leg there is something that looks like a ribbon or a plough. This leg rests on the rear part of a creature with a kind of tail. (pl. no. 2).

The right side consists of an elephant's head, its foreleg and body, with a human hind leg. Still another leg wearing an anklet rests on the arm of a winged being which holds a kind of lotusbud or a weapon. And at last there is a big elephant's rear leg which does not belong to the smaller one. (pl. no. 3).

What does this complex jigsaw puzzle mean? It is made even more complex by the lack of the missing upper part. While we still have to guess about the relief on the left side, we shall try to solve the problem presented by the right flank.

Here we have three main elements: an elephant, or maybe two, a winged creature and its rider. A plausible explanation for this puzzle should be sought in the Hindu mythology. The Bhagawata-Purana (T.A. Gopinatha Rao: 1914. 266) narrates the story of the deliverance of Gajendra, the king of elephants by Visnu.

Gajendra was caught by a crocodile while quenching its thirst in a watertank on the mountain Trikuta. By praying and offering a lotus flower it besought the help of Visnu. The god heard his prayers and descended by mounting his vehicle, the garuda. He



Pl. 1. The lingga yoni of Petungkriyono, with naga on the base Pekalongan.



Pl. 2. The left side of the "elephant stone" of Wonotunggal.



Pl. 3. The right side of the "elephant stone" of Wonotunggal.

Pl. 4. Kari-Varada, Visnu on Garuda  
killing the crocodile. Mysore State.  
(Gopinatha Rao, pl. LXXX, fig. 1)



hurled a disc towards the crocodile and so released Gajendra from its suffering. The crocodile then assumed its former shape as a gandharwa.

Iconographically, when this story is depicted on a relief or a statue it is called Visnu Varadharaja, meaning Visnu as king among boon-bestowers or benefactors, or Karivarada, benefactor to the elephant Gajendra. Sculptures of this kind are common in the southern provinces of India (op.cit.268). A sculpture depicting the Karivarada is found in Mysore State (op.cit.id). Here the figures are carved one on top of the other. Visnu is seen mounting his wahana, the garuda. Beneath the garuda the elephant is seen praying to Visnu with a lotus in its trunk while a crocodile is biting its hind leg. A cakra on the back of the crocodile, represents Visnu who kills the monster. (pl.no.4).

A Varadaraja sculpture is kept in the Varadarajasvamin temple at Dadikkombu. Here the figure of Gajendra and the crocodile are absent.

After analyzing the sculptures found in South India and comparing them with the sculpture of Wonotunggal, it is not too rash to conclude that our statue also represents the Karivarada. Ignoring the big elephant's leg, we see here Visnu's right leg resting on the arm of the garuda which holds a lotus bud or an ankusa in its hand. The crocodile is not shown here. But what is lacking here seems to be completed by the left side of the sculpture. On this side the Gajendra is seen squirming frightfully while the crocodile is crawling on its back. The crocodile is depicted with a human leg, and what looks like a ribbon or a plough beneath it must in reality be its tail. Thus we have here the only sculpture in Indonesia which narrates the tale of the Karivarada.

#### THE LINGGA-YONI OF PETUNGKRIYONO

This object is found deep in the hinterland of Pekalongan, in the district of Petungkriyono. It consists of a yoni supported by a naga which coils its body around the base of the yoni and twists its tail around its own chest (C.den Hamer, 1893 CXXI-CXXII).

The naga is of East Javanese type, with open jaws and a pair of horns on each side of its head, the lower ones of which wear kundalas. The kundalas have the shape of nightshades (*solanum melongena*). Likewise kundalas are seen adorning a statue carved on top of a bronze bell from Trenggalek, East Java (14<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> century) now kept in the Central Museum of Jakarta.

The body has finely carved scales decorated with antefixes on its corners and sides. Smaller antefixes adorn the body's base. The naga wears a pearl necklace with a triangular pendant (Op.cit.1977.26.8). On the flat pedestal a pair of hind legs, a tail and a head, which probably represents a turtle, can be perceived. This was not mentioned in den Hamer's description.

A pedestal supports the naga and the yoni. The yoni itself is plain, except the spout end on which is carved a winged sankha. A lingga is placed on top of the yoni, decorated with tumpal (triangular) motifs around an octagonal base. Two smaller linggas of equal size stand on a row on the yoni's canal, in front of the main lingga. But these linggas probably belong to another pair of yonis, for near this remarkable lingga-yoni still another turtle-like pedestal was dug out of the ground. The small-sized yoni fits the small lingga perfectly. The height of the large yoni reaches to 1.50 m, and is oriented to the West, while the height of the small yoni is up to 29 cm.

Let us first take into view some decorated yonis with or without lingga which are kept in the Central Museum of Jakarta coming from several parts of Central and East Java :

- a. A combination of a yoni and a naga is most common, as is displayed by collection nos.366a and 390b.

No. 366a is an octagonal-formed yoni, the upper rim of which is decorated with a meander-like design and hanging antefixes or stylized winged *sankha*, while the body and the base have a padmasana-formed plinth. The naga supporting the spout is of early or middle East Javanese type, as is shown by the horns, the crown beside the jewel on its head and the closed jaw with ridges on the upper side. (pl.no.5)

- b. In Hindu mythology and sculpture the naga is frequently accompanied by a garuda.

Those two creatures are mortal enemies, particularly when it concerns the amrta (nectar of immortality), yet inseparable because they represent two contrasting aspects of life (light and dark, good and evil, etc.), indispensable to keep the balance in the universe.

Coll.no.359 shows a garuda squatting in a relaxed position on the left side of the yoni.

The unusual long spout of the yoni is supported by a naga dating from the late East Javanese period, i.e. with open jaws, protruding tongue and double horns with hanging kundalas like those worn by the naga of Petungkriyono. A crown is on its head. (pl.no.6).

A yoni with naga and garuda is also standing in the Museum of Sumenep, Madura, but that naga is of the early or middle East Javanese type, and richly decorated (pl.no. 7 & 8).

- c. Besides those two creatures a yoni is sometimes, although rarely, adorned with a turtle as illustrated by nos.360a (pl.no.9) and 5791 (V.B.G.XXXI,CICVIII). Here three nagas spring out from the base of the yoni, each having a garland and jewels cascading from its mouth. A turtle perches on their heads and this again carries an anthropomorphic garuda which holds its arms upwards thus functioning as a gana, supporting the spout of the yoni. No.360 has also a kalahead put on the yoni's spout.



Pl. 5. An octagonal yoni with a high pedestal.  
Coll. No. 336 a, Central Museum of Jakarta.



Pl. 6. A yoni decorated with garuda and naga.  
Coll. No. 359, Central Museum of Jakarta.



Pl. 7. A yoni in the collection of museum of Sumenep, Madura.



Pl. 8. Detail of yoni No. 7  
The naga has ridges on the upper jaw.

The nagas are carved in the Central Javanese manner, smooth-headed with a ratna or jewel on its top.

A recent excavation carried out in Patengteng on the island of Madura yielded a yoni with ornaments consisting of a naga with closed jaws and a small object protruding beneath it, which on closer examination appeared to be a turtle's head. (pl.no.10).

A similar piece was also found during the survey carried out in Kendal (Op.cit.1977. 44).

We come to the conclusion that most of the decorations are Visnuitic i.e. the winged sankha, the garuda and the turtle. The question now is: why have lingga and yoni, symbols par excellence of Sivaism, such dominantly Visnuitic characteristics? We will consider first the function of the yoni in the Hinduistic rituals. Used as a pedestal for a lingga, a yoni is also referred to as pindika or pitha (T.A. Gopinath Rao 1916,99). The yonis in its country of origin are usually plain in form and should be square, octagonal or circular in plan. The upper surface from which the lingga is protruding is also shaped as to allow water to flow freely towards the waterspout during the rite of ablution. The yoni when represented alone is referred to as the chalice or water vessel (Alain Danielou 1964: 230-231). Thus water is an essential element in connection with the yoni, and is in this case considered as amrta.

The quest for amrta in which deities and asuras have taken part is depicted in the Samudramanthana or Amrtamanthana. Stones adorned with scenes from this story were found in Ampelgading, East Java, in Pejeng, Bali and in Sirahkencong, East Java. The one from Ampelgading has next to devas and asuras (S. Soejatmi Satari, 1975:11) also dancing asuras and an apsara at the bottom, while instead of one there are two nagas used as ropes.

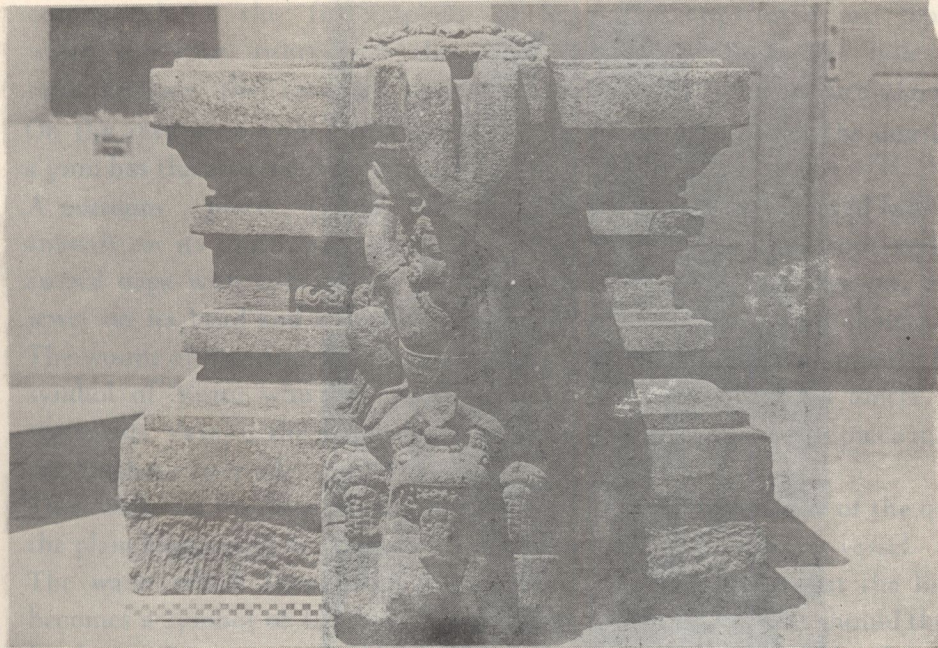
The amrtamanthana from Sirahkencong is now kept in the Central Museum of Jakarta (Soekmono, 1952: 35-39). This sculpture comprises a round padmāsana, a kurma or a turtle as an avatara of Visnu, a naga entwining the mountain Mandara on the slopes of which are carved animals, woods and flames, devas and asuras pulling at the naga Vasuki. The horse Ucaihssrava is seen springing out of the ocean of milk. (Juynboll HH. Adiparwa 1906.31ff). (pl.no.11).

The top is surrounded by four smaller ones, each of them having a hole from which water must have flown.

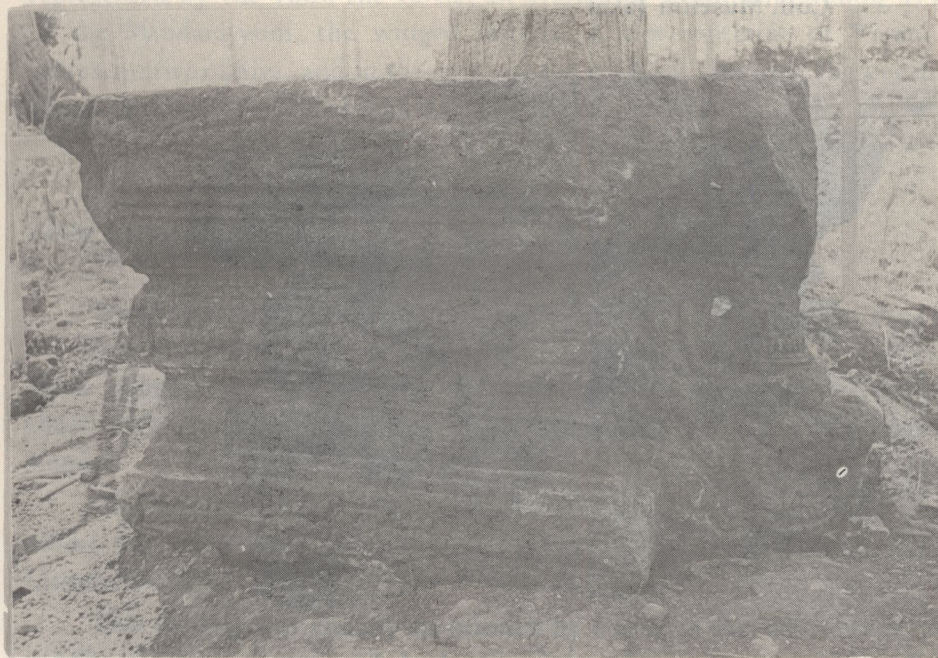
Another larger hole is also carved at the bottom of the sculpture. So this sculpture must have been used for ceremonial purposes.

In Hindu iconography the lingga is sometimes depicted as a mukhalingga and in that case might also have five faces. One corresponds to Isana, which should be put on top of the mukhalingga and the other four are aspects of Siva which face North, South, West, and East respectively (Op.cit.II.64). Both sculptures, that representing the samudra-manthana of Sirahkencong and the lingga yonis, serve the same purpose i.e. to perform the rite of ablution. Therefore the five tops of Sirahkencong also-





Pl. 9. Yoni decorated with a Garuda, a turtle and three Nagas.  
Coll. No. 360 a, Central Museum of Jakarta.



Pl. 10. Yoni found in Paténgteng, a village on the island of Madura.

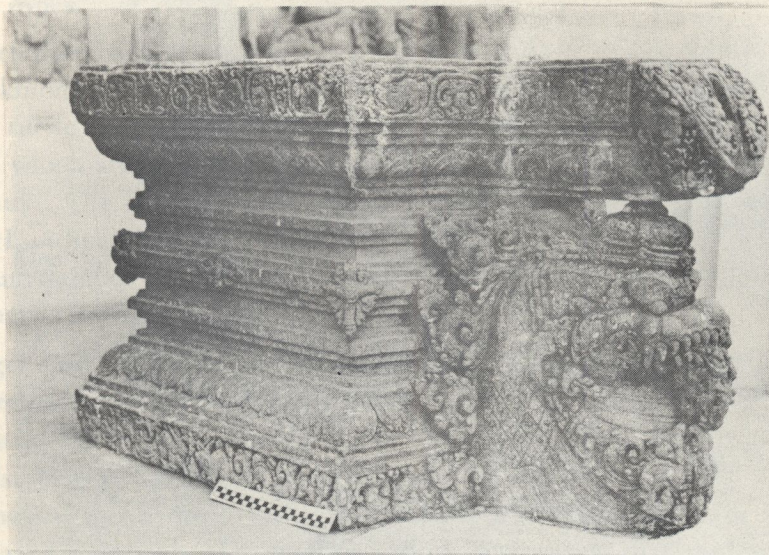
The nagas  
or jewel  
A recent  
a yoni with  
protruding  
(pl. no. 10)  
A similar  
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Pl. 11. The Samudramanthana from Sirah Kencong, East Java. Coll. Museum Jakarta.



Pl. 12. Yoni richly decorated with fauna and floral motives.

correspond to the five aspects of Siva. The uppermost top represents Isana, while the four other tops the other aspects of Siva. The holes on the four tops indicate the cardinal points towards which the caturmukha must turn. On the reverse, a yoni with its accessories might also depict the amrtamanthana, as a yoni has the aspects of an amrta vessel.

A museum piece (pl.no. 12) displays a yoni finely carved with creepers and animals on its upper part, a stylized winged sankha on the spout and a beautifully carved naga with cobrahood, horned but still without kundalas yet, a crown and a jewel on its head and a necklace consisting of a pendant and a chain across its neck. The woods of Mandara are represented by the creepers and the animals, the sankha is a symbol of Visnu who has an important role in the quest for amrta, and the naga represents Vasuki, the serpent god. Considering the carvings this piece might date from the Singhasari period.

Thus while on the ornamented lingga-yoni is depicted the scene of the quest for amrta the plain lingga-yoni or yoni alone represents the amrta- or water-vessel.

The water which flows from it gives life to all beings, so that the lingga-yoni also becomes a symbol of fertility. When not placed in a temple it should therefore be put in places where water would fertilize the surroundings, i.e. amidst the rice-fields. It is not surprising that most lingga-yoni in Indonesia are found in these places.

We will return to the lingga-yoni of Petungkriyono. Surrounded by rice-fields it is in the first place a symbol of fertility. But here we clearly see that it represents also the amrtamanthana: the naga Vasuki coiling its body around the Mandara mountain represented by the yoni, the turtle, an avatara of Visnu, functioning as the underlayer of the Mandara-yoni, the winged sankha as representative of Visnu, the lingga as representative of Siva, and in this case, as the stick for churning the ocean of milk, from which the amrta will be obtained.

## CONCLUSION

North Central Java had a blooming political and cultural life in the classical period, i.e. from the seventh century till late in the fifteenth century. This is proved by recent finds, consisting of statues and sculptures which range from the Polynesian type to those with East Javanese traits, found in the regencies of Pekalongan, Batang and Kendal.

The Northcoast of Central Java could have been the important coast of "Ho-ling where the ruler lives in the capital of Sho-Pho" (see Wolters, *Early Indonesian Commerce*, 1967, p. 216).

This Ho-ling was already mentioned by I-tsing in the 7th century. (Wolters, 1967, p.185) Ancient towns and harbours along the coast must have flourished while sanctuaries or sacred objects for religious purposes were created further inland, in the

mountainous areas.

A close relationship was maintained with West Java, considering the finds of Visnu statues, sculptured in the same style both in Krawang (West Java) and Batang (Central Java).

Krom might be right in his assumption that both provinces have influenced each other in turn during the course of the eleventh century.

## CONCLUSION

North Central Java was a prominent province in central Java in the classical period, i.e. from the seventh century till the thirteenth century. This is proved by recent finds, consisting of stupa and sculpture, which represent the Javanese type to those with East Javanese forms, found in the regions of Batangas, Batang and Kendal.

The Northern part of Central Java could have been the western part of the kingdom where the ruler had his capital at the end of the 7th century (Wolters, Early Indonesian Commerce, 1967, p. 216).

This Ho-lung was already mentioned by I-tsing in the 7th century (Wolters, 1967, p. 185). Ancient towns and harbours along the coast must have flourished while sanctuaries erected by the foreign religions were created further inland in the

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS :**

- R.O.C.** : Rapporten van de Commissie in Nederlandsch – Indie voor Oudheidkundig Onderzoek op Java en Madoera.
- R.O.D.** : Rapporten van den Oudheidkundigen Dienst in Nederlandsch – Indie.
- V.B.G.** : Verhandelingen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen.

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