

## The Symbolic Values of Borobudur in the Tribuana Manggala Bakti Tradition



### Nilai Simbol Borobudur dalam tradisi Tribuana Manggala Bakti

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<p><b>Keywords</b>  <i>Tribuana Manggala;</i>  <i>Bakti;</i>  <i>Values;</i>  <i>Symbols;</i>  <i>Borobudur;</i></p>	<p><b>ABSTRACT</b>                      Borobudur Temple is a cultural heritage consisting of various symbols. The Borobudur symbols contain spiritual values and moral education. Tribuana Manggala Bakti is one of a series of Vesak celebration activities in Jatimulyo Village, Kulon Progo. This activity is a Buddhist religious activity with a combination of Javanese culture. This research aims to describe the symbolic values of Borobudur in the Tribuana Manggala Bakti tradition. This research used a holistic descriptive method. The research results stated that Tribuana Manggala Bakti is a religious cultural product containing social, cultural, and spiritual values. Tribuana Manggala Bakti consists of elements of celebration, <i>amisa puja</i> procession, <i>puja bakti</i>, animal release, tree planting, and performing arts. Each of these elements is in harmony with the symbolic values of Borobudur depicted on the reliefs. Jatimulyo Buddhists strive to integrate Buddhist teachings and Javanese culture. Tribuana Manggala Bakti's cultural construction functions as a revitalization of Borobudur values, a means of strengthening Buddhist identity and strengthening interfaith unity. Tribuana Manggala Bakti is an event that transforms religious, artistic and cultural values.</p>
<p><b>Kata Kunci</b>  <i>Tribuana Manggala</i>  <i>Bakti;</i>  <i>Nilai;</i>  <i>Simbol;</i>  <i>Borobudur;</i></p>	<p><b>ABSTRAK</b>                      Candi Borobudur sebagai warisan budaya terdiri dari berbagai simbol. Simbol Borobudur mengandung nilai spiritual dan edukasi moral. Tribuana Manggala Bakti merupakan salah satu rangkaian kegiatan perayaan Waisak di Desa Jatimulyo Kulon Progo. Kegiatan ini merupakan kegiatan religi Buddha dengan perpaduan budaya Jawa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan nilai simbol Borobudur dalam tradisi Tribuana Manggala Bakti. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif holistik. Hasil penelitian menyatakan Tribuana Manggala Bakti sebagai produk budaya religi mengandung nilai sosial, budaya, dan spiritual. Tribuana Manggala Bakti terdiri dari unsur perayaan, prosesi <i>amisa puja</i>, puja bakti, pelepasan satwa, penanaman pohon, dan seni pertunjukan. Masing-masing unsur tersebut selaras dengan nilai simbol Borobudur yang tergambar pada relief. Umat Buddha Jatimulyo berupaya mengintegrasikan ajaran Buddha dan Budaya Jawa. Konstruksi budaya Tribuana Manggala Bakti berfungsi sebagai revitalisasi nilai Borobudur, sarana memperkuat identitas umat Buddha dan memperkokoh persatuan antar umat beragama. Tribuana Manggala Bakti sebagai ajang transformasi nilai religi, seni, dan budaya.</p>
<p><b>Article History</b>                      Send 18<sup>th</sup> Nopember 2023                      Review 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024                      Accepted 6<sup>th</sup> May 2024</p>	<p>Copyright ©2024 <a href="#">Jurnal Aristo (Social, Politic, Humaniora)</a>                      This is an open access article under the <a href="#">CC-BY-NC-SA</a> license.                      Akses artikel terbuka dengan model <a href="#">CC-BY-NC-SA</a> sebagai lisensinya.</p>



## Introduction

Borobudur as a cultural heritage is the pride of the Indonesian people. Borobudur as a national identity is used as a spiritual vehicle, educational media, and tourist commodity (Yatno, 2022a). (Hermawan & Rohman, 2016) in their research stated that Borobudur Temple is a holy site used as a *Dhammayatra* destination or a visit to a holy place. Borobudur Temple is a Buddhist historical place (Yatno et al., 2023). Eliade stated that "The Sacred" is an element of "The Absolute", emphasizing that the temple as a sacred space is a place where power manifests itself from profane to sacred (Vidal-Casellas, 2019). In this study, it is explained that the intention of tourists to visit Borobudur Temple is at least based on two things, including the sacredness and the description of tourist destinations. Borobudur Temple has also been studied by Metusala et al. (2020), stating that in the Lalitavistara relief there are several plant species that are not found in the Lalitavistara Sutra text. This shows that the plant reliefs in Borobudur are a reflection of the plant diversity of past Javanese society. Based on this, it can be said that this research is different from previous research. Based on this description, it can be said that Borobudur as a sacred building contains symbolic values. The focus of this research is on the symbolic values of Borobudur Temple contained in the Tribuana Manggala Bakti tradition.

The aesthetic splendor and spirituality of Borobudur Temple have received world recognition through UNESCO. Strategic utilization of social media forms Borobudur branding (Latifah, 2024). The beauty of Borobudur architecture such as ornaments and reliefs deserves to be used as a superior commodity in the tourism sector. Behind its beauty and splendor, Borobudur Temple has a high value of spirituality and moral education for human life. Borobudur is a cultural landscape. A cultural landscape is a product of interaction between nature and humans characterized by a balanced relationship between ecology and humans which is always evolving in space and time (Fatimah, 2015). The Borobudur Saujana Heritage has experienced changes as influenced by inadequate environmental management, yet the continuity of Borobudur Saujana can still survive due to the behavior of the people who still maintain traditional culture with Javanese philosophy (Rahmi et al., 2012). Buddhist symbols function as a medium of communication in responding to the inherent meaning of Buddha (Qin & Song, 2020). Borobudur Temple is a symbol of multiculturalism and tolerance (Yatno, 2022b) (Yatno, 2022c). Based on this, Borobudur as a building of symbols contains various noble meanings that can be used as guidelines for community behavior.

Indonesian society is a multicultural society that lives together, coexists and interacts with each other while adhering to the values, norms and personality of the nation (Boty, 2017).

As the Jatimulyo community in Kulon Progo, Yogyakarta, they consist of Buddhists, Muslims, and Christians. The Jatimulyo community lives side by side, in harmony, and peace, which is marked by the achievement of the title as Pancasila Village. Jatimulyo people realize that each religion has a ritual system, such as in celebrating Vesak, Jatimulyo Buddhists hold the Tribuana Manggala Bakti cultural ceremony.

Tribuana Manggala Bakti is a cultural product containing a ceremony to take the holy water of Vesak, plant trees, and release animals as a form of devotion to nature conservation (Suharno & Sartini, 2022). The Tribuana Manggala Bakti ceremony begins with a procession arranged to move every year. This tradition was first carried out in 2016 which included a series of ceremonies such as taking the holy water followed by preservation of the natural environment in the form of tree planting and animal release. In 2016-2022, this activity was centered in Mudal River Park, while in 2023, the Tribuana Manggala Bakti procession was centered at the top of the Tumpeng mountain. According to Surahman, the change of the activity's main venue is one of the ways to promote the Jatimulyo area as a tourist village. Tribuana Manggala Bakti is offered as a tourist attraction. The changeable main venue of Tribuana Manggala Bakti is a form of gratitude to the universe. Tribuana Manggala Bakti is an activity based on religion and culture, one of which is seen from the Javanese traditional clothes used.

The Tribuana Manggala Bakti ceremony is a form of concern of the Jatimulyo Village Buddhists in preserving nature. From a historical perspective, Jatimulyo Village is an area of the Ancient Mataram Kingdom. Modern archaeologists are able to reconstruct the southern Central Java region such as Magelang and Yogyakarta as the center of the royal capital. One of the relics of the Ancient Mataram Kingdom is the Borobudur Temple (Sekiadi & Wiyanto, 2022). Borobudur as a Buddhist spiritual center in the past has a variety of religious socio-cultural values that can still be applied in life today. Based on this description, this research aims to describe the construction of Tribuana Manggala Bakti's cultural identity from the perspective of Borobudur symbolic values.

According to (Rozi, 2013), identity construction can be understood as cultural dynamics and change. Culture is a product of previous cultural processes, and cultural products are always open to reinterpretation. Thus, culture is not static and able to change. Tribuana Manggala Bakti is a ritual. As stated by Anthony Wallace, rituals can be divided into five according to the type of reach, including ritual as technology, ritual as therapy, ritual as mythical ideology, ritual as savior, and ritual as revitalization (Windiatmoko & Mardiyah, 2018). Ritual culture implies many symbols. George Herbert Mead in the theory of symbolic

interactionism stated that language and words are a system of symbols that are used to give meanings to various things, thus symbols or texts are the representations of messages. Meanwhile, Herbert Blumer interprets symbolic interaction as a process of interaction in forming meaning or significance. Borobudur as a temple building has high aesthetic value. According to Immanuel Kant's aesthetic theory, aesthetics refers to art, ethics and morality (Moses, 2017). Kant, through his theory of regulatory deontology, emphasizes good actions as obligations and bad actions as prohibitions (Brimantyan, 2022). Belief is seen by Douglas as a symbol of society. Meanwhile, society is symbolized as a human body, where the constructive elements attempt to create and control order within humans. According to Douglas, there is a relational relationship between humans and society (Atasoge, 2019). Douglas stated that symbols function not only to organize society but also to express its cosmology. In his book about natural symbols, it is said the physical body can have universal meaning as a system. Individuals and society are understood as two bodies which can sometimes create tension. For Douglas, this can be a trigger for the development of meanings. Religion as a guide to life is interpreted through texts, rituals and works of art as symbols that help create myths and expressions of the moral values of religious communities (Oza, 2021).

The symbolic value that will be revealed in this research refers to the symbolic value implied in Borobudur Temple which is associated with the Tribuana Manggala Bakti tradition carried out by Jatimulyo Buddhists. The construction of this research depends on the accuracy of the concept descriptions as the central point of the literature, including values and traditions. The value of Borobudur was researched by Subandi under the title 'Commodification of Buddhist Religious Values in the Borobudur Temple Area'. It was explained that there was a shift from use-value to economic-exchange value in the Borobudur Temple area. According to Subandi, religious values are a way of living between humans and God as well as between humans and humans to obtain happiness in life in this world and in the world after death (Subandi, 2018). The symbolic value of Borobudur was also revealed by Yatno, where commodification in the Borobudur area is the commercialization of symbolic value, and Buddhist religious symbols are seen as a commodity that can be bought and sold to gain material gain (Yatno, 2020). Based on the explanation, the symbolic value discussed in this research refers to the sacredness of Borobudur Temple reflected in its architectural design, such as the top stupa which has the highest value symbolizing the achievement of enlightenment or Nirvana.

The second concept is tradition. According to Suharno, Tribuana Manggala Bakti has philosophical values, referring to Max Scheler's opinion that the Tribuana Manggala Bakti

ceremony is more directed towards spiritual values and holiness where humans are seen as spiritual and religious beings (Suharno & Maharani, 2023). Legitanti et al stated that the Tribuana Manggala Bakti ceremony is a combination of Javanese and Buddhist traditions, which is marked by the ritual of the earth dimension with the planting of trees, the water dimension with the release of fish, and the air dimension with the release of birds (Legiyanti et al., 2019). Based on this description, it can be concluded that the scope of this research is different from previous research, which is more focused on the Tribuana Manggala Bakti tradition seen from the perspective of the symbolic value of Borobudur.

## **Method**

This research is qualitative research with a holistic descriptive approach, by looking at the Tribuana Manggala Bakti phenomenon held by Jatimulyo Buddhists as a whole. This research observed the Vesak activities from May to June 2023. This research aims to obtain authentic data regarding the picture of life of the Jatimulyo community, especially regarding the Tribuana Manggala Bakti ceremony. The technique for determining informants used purposive sampling, by taking samples from the Jatimulyo community with certain considerations, including Buddhist religious figures and community leaders. The data validity test was conducted through the credibility test by applying triangulation of technique, source and time. After getting an overview of the Tribuana Manggala Bakti phenomenon, it was then interpreted through the symbolic values of Borobudur Temple. In analyzing the symbolic values of Borobudur, documentation was utilized, both printed and electronic.

## **Conclusion**

### **Vesak Day Celebration**

Celebrating holy days is an activity of all religious communities. Celebrations have a symbolic meaning which in general is a process of repeating memories, where religious people reflect on the virtuous qualities of the teachings as a guide for self-introspection in achieving life goals. Various rituals or ceremonies are held during holy day celebrations as an effort to increase belief and spirituality. As Buddhists do on Vesak Day, they commemorate three important events in the history of Buddha Gautama's life, namely birth, attainment of Buddhahood, and *parinibbana* (death). Vesak is celebrated every Vesak month which usually falls around May. Buddhists generally celebrate Vesak in temples or monasteries. The Vesak celebration is a form of gratitude for being able to know, understand and practice the *Dharma*. The form of Vesak activities is adapted to each cultural wisdom, such as in Jatimulyo Village,

Kulon Progo, a series of Vesak activities are carried out through the Tribuana Manggala Bakti ceremony. Tribuana Manggala Bakti is a traditional ceremony characterized by Buddhism which includes *amisa puja* processions, releasing animals, planting trees and performing arts. Tribuana Manggala Bakti is an icon and cultural symbol of the Buddhist community of Jatimulyo Village. This cultural symbol is a reflection of the values of Borobudur Temple.

### **Tribuana Manggala Bakti and the Symbolic Values of Borobudur**

Tribuana Manggala Bakti as a cultural product is a concept or philosophy of Javanese culture which contains the meaning of harmony between humans and nature, humans and humans, and humans and Almighty God. The Tribuana Manggala Bakti concept includes local wisdom values that prioritize harmony between humans and nature as well as respect for ancestors and traditions. This concept can be seen as a reflection of Borobudur Temple, of which Borobudur as a sacred building contains teachings regarding the path to achieving spiritual balance and social harmony. Borobudur Temple as a cultural product not only has aesthetic value but also has religious value (Sentot et al., 2023). Thus, it can be said that there is continuity in the symbolic values of the Borobudur temple with Tribuana Manggala Bakti, which can be seen through the form of celebrations, *amisa puja* processions, *puja bakti*, animal releases, tree planting and performing arts. Tribuana Manggala Bakti is an annual routine ceremony carried out by Jatimulyo Buddhists. In 2023, Tribuana Manggala Bakti was held on July 2.

### **Celebration**

The Vesak celebration carried out by Jatimulyo Buddhists has spiritual, identity, social relations and community economic functions. Spiritual functions can be seen from the aspect of concentration of mind and self-control, such as *puja bakti* (devotional service), meditation, and *athasila*. *Athasila* is the practice of eight moral exercises. Before Vesak, Buddhists carry out a Month of Dharma Appreciation activities. The identity function can be seen from the form of Vesak activities which are characterized by Buddhism, emphasizing the celebration of religious holy days as a strong marker of personal or community's identity. The function of social relations can be seen from the participation and support of the Jatimulyo community in making Tribuana Manggala Bakti activities a success. This can be seen from the participation of non-Buddhist communities who helped run the event smoothly. Tribuana Manggala Bakti activities are a vehicle for strengthening mutual cooperation behavior and tolerance between

religious communities (Eko Siswoyo, Ngadat, Tri Yatno, 2024). Viewed in a social context, holy day celebrations are used as a tool to strengthen social ties within a community and across communities, as stated by Fiese & Tomcho (2001) that holy day celebrations are a marker of diversity. When celebrating holy days, families and community members come to the house (Mirjana, 2009).

An overview of the celebration is seen in panel 29 of the Lalitavistara relief of Borobudur Temple. This panel narrates a series of ceremonies welcoming the birth of Prince Siddharta Gautama. Based on the historical life of Buddha Gautama, Prince Siddharta was born in 623 BC in Lumbini Park. It is narrated that the leaders and people of the Kapilavastu Kingdom held a great celebration as an important moment of the arrival of a great spiritual leader. Prince Sidharta's birth was predicted to bring teachings that could help humans achieve enlightenment and liberation from the cycle of rebirth (samsara). The description of celebratory activities is also seen in panel 152 of the Jataka relief of Borobudur Temple. In this panel it is narrated that the King sits on the left with many people next to him.



Figure 1. Jataka relief panel 152 (left), Buddhists celebrating Vesak (right)

Source: (Anandajoti, 2020) (left), Authors, 2023 (right)

### ***Amisa Puja* Procession**

A procession is one part of a ceremony or celebration and takes the form of a formal parade. Religious processions can help improve spirituality and social cohesion, as Jatimulyo Buddhists do during Vesak. The *amisa puja* procession was carried out for one hour, from 08.00 to 09.00 WIB, starting from the people's market to Mount Kelir. The *amisa puja* procession is a reflection of Borobudur values contained in panel 34 of the Lalitavistara relief. This panel narrates the procession to the temple. *Arak-arakan* in the Indonesian dictionary means walking together in a procession. *Arak-arakan* is also referred to as procession, as in the Tribuana Manggala Bakti tradition using the term *amisa puja* procession. *Amisa puja* is a form of respect for the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. The materials used in *amisa puja* are candles,

incense, water, flowers, and fruit. The *amisa puja* is carried in the procession and offered at the altar. According to (Legiyanti et al., 2019), *amisa puja* in Tribuana Manggala Bakti has the meaning of unity. In the context of society, it can be interpreted as a manifestation of three-religious harmony. Borobudur relief panels about processions are depicted in a series of groups of people carrying out processions by holding various kinds of objects or religious attributes, such as ritual equipment, musical instruments, and other religious symbols. The description of the procession is also seen in Jataka relief panel 309 as follows.



Figure 2. Jataka relief panel 309 *Arak-arakan* (left), Tribuana Manggala Bakti procession (right)

Source: (Anandajoti, 2020) (left), Authors, 2023 (right)

Figure 2 narrates the procession of Tribuana Manggala Bakti as a reflection of Jataka relief panel 309. The panel narrates the procession of nobles when performing activities to honor Buddha. Borobudur Temple implicitly shows the activities of past Indonesian society. The relief reflects mutual respect, cooperation, and a sense of unity. Similar conditions are also seen in the Tribuana Manggala Bakti procession, where Buddhists from various social classes unite to celebrate Vesak. The Vesak celebration in Jatimulyo Village receives full support from the community and local government. This can be seen through the enthusiasm of non-Buddhist community in supporting and playing an active role in helping the success of the Tribuana Manggala Bakti. This condition makes Jatimulyo Village get the title of Pancasila village.

### ***Puja Bakti***

*Puja Bakti* of the 2023 Tribuana Manggala Bakti was held on the hill of Mount Kelir from 09.15 - 10.15 WIB. The term *puja bakti* terminologically consists of "puja" and "bakti". *Puja* has the meaning of respect, while *bakti* is defined as implementing the *Dharma* (Buddhist teachings) in everyday life. The term *puja bakti* comes from Sanskrit which means 'worship' or 'devotion' (Temon, 2021). *Puja bakti* as a ritual system has an important role in the formation of beliefs. *Puja bakti* is also known as devotional service, a means of showing loyalty to the



religion one adheres to (Acep, 2019). In the context of Buddhism, *puja bakti* is an act of respect, a form of devotion to the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. *Puja bakti* is a means for Buddhists to increase spirituality, as is done by Jatimulyo Buddhists during the Tribuana Manggala Bakti ceremony. The behavior of these Buddhists reflects a spirituality that leads to self-development, a search for the meaning of life and a deeper exploration of reality based on the Buddha Dharma. The description of *puja bakti* is reflected in the Jataka relief panels 251-253 as follows.



Figure 3. Jataka relief panels 251-253 (left), Tribuana Manggala Bakti puja (right)

Source: (Anandajoti, 2020) (left), Authors, 2023 (right)

### **Animal Release**

Animal release is one of the traditions of Buddhism. Animal release is called *fang shen*. The word *fang shen* comes from Mandarin, consisting of two words 'fang' meaning release and 'shen' meaning living creatures. The *fang shen* tradition aims to release living things into their habitats. *Fang shen* has the meaning of respecting life. *Fang shen* is not only the act of releasing animals, but also saving animals that are sick or in distress (Latifah dan Ary Budiyanto, 2020). Animal release was carried out after the *puja bakti* of Tribuana Manggala Bakti, which started at around 10:20 WIB. Buddhists believe that by releasing living creatures to their habitats, the creatures feel back in the wild and happy. This tradition is a practice of Buddhist precepts, which is to avoid killing living things by returning living things to their ecosystem. The creatures used as a means of *fang shen* include fish and birds. The Tribuana Manggala Bakti ceremony is a concrete form of developing love in order to maintain the balance of the natural ecosystem, as depicted in panels 134-139 of the Jataka relief as follows.



Figure 4. Jataka Relief Panel 138 on animal life (left)  
Bird Release on Tribuana Manggala Bakti (right)  
Source: (Anandajoti, 2020) (left), Authors, 2023 (right)

Jataka relief panel 138 in Figure 4 tells the ecosystem of birds living in trees, flying in the air seen at the top, and the ecosystem of fish in the water at the bottom. This relief panel depicts animal life living in the wild. Narrated in the panels before and after are including monkeys, buffaloes, birds, wolves, and elephants living in the forest. The relief about the forest and the animals is a representation of the life of the forest ecosystem, and the existence of a sustainable ecosystem in the forest indicates an ecological balance. The Tribuana Manggala Bakti ceremony carried out by releasing animals is part of the attitude of caring for the survival of various animals and forest ecosystems.

### Tree Planting

Tree planting is part of environmental conservation act that fulfills the needs of ecosystems, both animals and plants (Duguma et al., 2020). Tree planting is a solution to a number of environmental problems, such as climate change, water shortages, and pollution (Pataki et al., 2021) (Holl & Brancalion, 2020). Tree planting at the Tribuana Manggala Bakti event began around 10:30 - 11:30 WIB. The survival of human life is very dependent on the natural environment, where trees are able to produce oxygen, produce food, prevent soil erosion, and provide animal comfort. Moreover, trees also have an aesthetic function for the environment. The balance of the natural ecosystem is the target of the Tribuana Manggala Bakti ceremony, where tree planting is one of the practices of applying *bija niyama* and developing loving kindness (*metta*) (Dwiyono Putranto, Ngadat, Tri Yatno, 2024). An illustration of the balance of the ecosystem is seen in panels 95-96 of the Jataka relief as follows.



Figure 5. Jataka relief panels 95-96, forest as a natural ecosystem (left),

Tree planting at Tribuana Manggala Bakti (left)

Source: (Anandajoti, 2020) (left), Authors, 2023 (right)

The relief narrates the flora and fauna ecosystem in the forest. The forest is where the animals live. Planting trees at the Tribuana Manggala Bakti ceremony is a concrete manifestation of Buddhists in order to maintain the natural ecosystem. Tribuana Mangggala Bakti is an activity that covers three dimensions of life, namely water, land and air. These three dimensions are the three elements of life. The water dimension is symbolized by the release of fish animals, the air dimension is symbolized by the release of birds, and the land dimension is symbolized by planting trees. Trees planted on earth function to absorb water, resist soil erosion, and produce oxygen, as preached by Buddha in the *Vanaropha Sutta* that through the act of caring for nature, caring for trees, is the path to a happy realm. In the level of Buddhist concepts, caring for nature is good *karma*, as explained in the *Saddharmapundarika Sutra* that love for nature should be done holistically like rain watering nature, where rain does not choose in watering nature. Borobudur Temple reliefs with high artistic beauty become an educational space for forest and animal conservation. The diversity of flora and fauna is a natural wealth as well as the inheritor of the continuity of natural ecosystems. Relief as a symbol that has artistic value and beauty can be used as a reminder to take care of each other and preserve the flora and fauna ecosystem.

### Performing Arts

Performing arts are part of a series of Tribuana Manggala Bakti activities. The performing arts began at 13.00 - 16.00 WIB and continued at night from 19.00 - 22.00 WIB. Performing arts are created based on worldview values, as creative activities carried by a constructive spirit through symbolic actions (Rohendi, 2016). Performing arts emphasize aesthetic value rather than technical value (Biggs, 2011). Performing arts are beneficial for both artists/ performers and audiences as art connoisseurs. For performers, performing arts are

an opportunity to express creativity and gain recognition, while audiences as spectators can enjoy performing arts from an aesthetic and emotional perspective that can be used as inspiration for work and action. Tribuana Manggala Bakti as a cultural product is utilized as a space for creativity by Buddhists and the Jatimulyo community. Tribuana Manggala Bakti's performing arts function as entertainment as well as a means of transforming social values and preserving nature. The narrative of the performing arts is depicted in panel 233a of the Jataka relief as follows.



Figure 6. Jataka relief panel 233a, male and female dancers (left),  
Tribuana Manggala Bakti art performance (right)

Source:(Anandajoti, 2020) (left), Authors, 2023 (right)

Jataka relief panel 233a depicts dance activities, as in the *Pratama Krida* dance performance performed in 2023 which is a form of artistic activity of the Jatimulyo Buddhist community. According to Surahman, the *Pratama Krida* dance performance is one of a series of performances depicting Tribuana Manggala Bakti, while the next series can depict the *puja* of Mandala Bumi Sambara, Gati Vanaropa, or Robini Tirta Amerta. This shows that every element of Tribuana Manggala Bakti, including the earth, air, and water dimensions, can be used as a source of artistic inspiration. Besides the *Pratama Krida* dance performance, there were also gambyong dance, jatilan, karawitan, children's art performances, and *ketoprak* art performances.

Jatimulyo Buddhists produce the Tribuana Manggala Bakti culture that indirectly creates public space. The public space built by Buddhists is a space for cultural socialization as well as an effort to maintain the existence of Buddhists (Yatno, 2023). Tribuana Manggala Bakti is used as an iconic art product by the Kulon Progo Regency Government. This activity is in line with Village Regulation Number 8 of 2014 which regulates the protection of springs, protection of rocks, and wildlife. This art performance is supported by the government including the cultural office, tourism office, social office, empowerment office, cooperative and micro, small and medium enterprises office, Religious Harmony Forum and Jatimulyo

Village government. Through Tribuana Manggala Bakti activities, it is hoped that it can be used as a means of unity between religious communities, a place for value transformation through cultural arts, increasing tourism assets, and improving the economy of the Jatimulyo community.

### Symbolic Values and Cultural Construction of Tribuana Manggala Bakti

The behavior of Jatimulyo Buddhists in the Tribuana Manggala Bakti tradition seeks to integrate elements of local traditions with Buddhist teachings. Tribuana Manggala Bakti activities such as celebrations, *amisa puja* processions, *puja bakti*, animal releases, tree planting, and art performances implicitly contain noble Borobudur values. An overview of the value of Borobudur symbols and the cultural construction of Tribuana Manggala Bakti is as follows.

**Table 1. Borobudur Symbolic Values and Tribuana Manggala Bakti cultural construction**

<b>Name of Activities</b>	<b>The Borobudur Symbols</b>	<b>Symbolic Values</b>	<b>Cultural Construction</b>
Celebration	- Lalitavistara Relief panel 29 - Jataka Relief panel 152	- Reflection - Spiritual - Solidarity	- Strengthening cultural identity - Cultural socialization
<i>Amisa Puja</i> Procession	- Jataka Relief panel 309 - Lalitavistara Relief panel 34	- Sacred - Regularity	- Spiritual expression - Cultural socialization
<i>Puja Bakti</i>	- Jataka Relief panels 251-253	- Spiritual Beliefs - Self-reflection	- Veneration/ Reverence - Cultural socialization
Animal Releases	- Jataka Relief panels 134-139	- Mercy - Deliverance - Sincerity	- Ecological behavior - Cultural socialization
Tree Planting	- Jataka Relief panels 95-96	- Environmental conservation - Aesthetics - Ecosystem balance	- Ecological behavior - Cultural socialization
Performing Arts	- Jataka Relief panels 233 and 318	- Creativity - Aesthetics - Education - Entertainment	- Expression of creativity - Strengthening cultural identity - Cultural socialization

Source: Authors' Data, Processed (2023)

Based on table 1, it can be seen that the Vesak celebration in Jatimulyo is a reflection of the Borobudur symbols which contain the values of respect for Buddha Dharma as well as

self-introspection through contemplation of the Buddha's virtuous qualities. This behavior can trigger increased awareness and spirituality of Buddhists. The Vesak celebration is a sacred time that can be used as an effort to improve daily behavior, thus the people are able to live a more ethical and meaningful life. Eliade stated that humans as *homo religiosus* have universal-behavioral characteristics as religious people (Dadosky, 2010). Seen from the construction of identity, the Vesak celebration activities of Jatimulyo Buddhists are an effort to maintain tradition, strengthen identity, and socialize culture. Likewise, the procession activities of Jatimulyo Buddhists are a reflection of the Borobudur symbols which contain the values of sacredness, spirituality, unity, and harmony. Jatimulyo Buddhists perform the Tribuana Manggala Bakti Procession as a spiritual expression, in which by contemplating the Buddha's virtuous qualities, religiousness will increase. This procession activity is part of the spiritual and cultural expression of religious people.

The highlight of the Tribuana Manggala Bakti ceremony is the *puja bakti*. *Puja bakti* is a Buddhist ritual activity by reading the holy *parittas* in front of the Buddha altar. *Puja bakti* is a form of Buddhist devotion to the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha as well as a means of self-reflection on behavior, both through speech, actions, and thoughts. *Puja bakti* can help Buddhists increase spiritual awareness and develop inner peace. *Puja bakti* is a time to reflect on life, reflecting on actions and behavior. Activities after the *puja bakti* are animal release and tree planting.

The values contained in the animal release include compassion, liberation, and sincerity. The animal release is a reflection of an attitude of compassion (*karuna*), freeing creatures from attachment to live in the wild according to their habitats. *Fang-Shen* is also part of training oneself to learn sincerity through material sacrifices (money to buy birds, fish, etc.) for the benefit of other beings. In a Buddhist context, this is an act that generates good *karma* that can help spiritual-moral development in the present and future. Likewise, tree planting has environmental conservation, ecosystem balance and aesthetic values. Tree planting is an effective way of reducing soil erosion. Moreover, trees as oxygen producers help human survival, and also providers of resources, such as wood, food, and medicines that are beneficial to humans. The cultural construction of releasing animals and planting trees is that humans always live in direct contact with nature, so the balance of the ecosystem needs to be maintained and preserved. This good behavior needs to be socialized to various corners from generation to generation. Tribuana Manggala Bakti activities also include performing arts, including dance, *Jathilan*, *karawitan* and *ketoprak*. This activity is an exploration of creativity, which has educational, aesthetic and entertainment values, as the cultural identity of Jatimulyo.

Tribuana Manggala Bakti seen from Anthony Wallace's perspective is a ritual that functions as a revitalization of the value of Borobudur. Borobudur as a Buddhist scriptural monument contains noble values. The onslaught of modernity and global capitalism are currently a challenge as well as a threat to the sacredness of Borobudur. Borobudur as a sacred building is interpreted as a symbol or text that forms a symbolic system. The symbolic system built in the Tribuana Manggala Bakti ceremony contains the meaning of three dimensions, including the dimensions of water, air and earth, as Blumer said that the interaction process contains meaning. Tribuana Manggala Bakti is an interaction process that gives a message to humanity to always protect the universe, which in the Javanese context, it is called *memayu hayuning bhavana*. This activity is a form of community concern for environmental sustainability that is in line with the regulation of Village Regulation Number 8 of 2014. In terms of Buddhism, environmental conservation is a good deed as implied in the *Vanaropha Sutta*. Referring to Douglas' opinion, the symbols implied in Borobudur Temple not only organize the order of social life but also include protecting and preserving nature.

## Conclusion

The cultural heritage of Borobudur Temple is a representation of Buddhist teachings. The symbols implied in Borobudur can be interpreted from various contexts, such as religious rituals, art, and preserving the natural environment. The Borobudur symbols can be interpreted in various ways, both from spiritual, economic and aesthetic aspects. Tribuana Manggala Bakti as local wisdom plays an important role in transforming the symbolic values of Borobudur. From an aesthetic perspective, Borobudur is an andesite stone structure decorated with reliefs along the corridors and walls. Viewed from a spiritual context, Borobudur contains moral values that can be used as guidelines for daily behavior, for example, firstly, the Vesak celebration as reflected on the Jataka relief panel 152 which is about celebrations. The concept of celebration has been carried out by society since the time of Buddha, as seen in the celebration of the birth of Prince Siddharta Gautama. The second example is the *Amisa Puja* procession, which is a walking activity carrying Buddhist religious symbols, animals and plants. The image of the procession is reflected in the Jataka relief panel 309. The third is the *puja bakti*, which is a means for Buddhists to strengthen their beliefs and strengthen their sense of compassion towards other beings. The description of *puja bakti* is reflected in panels 251-253 of the Jataka reliefs. Fourth, releasing animals or *fang-shen* is a Buddhist culture in the context of developing compassion for all beings. The description of *fang-shen* is narrated in the panels 134-139 of the Jataka reliefs. Fifth, tree planting is a socio-ecological activity,

considering that human awareness of environmental sustainability is the main capital in maintaining ecosystem balance. The description of tree planting is implied in the Jataka relief panels 95-96. Sixth, Tribuana Manggala Bakti's art performance is an expression of creativity in the context of transforming socio-ecological values. Tribuana Manggala Bakti is an expression of the three dimensions of life implied in the *Vanaropha Sutta*. Thus, it can be said that Tribuana Manggala Bakti as the local wisdom of the Indonesian people is in harmony with the values of Borobudur, Buddhist teachings, and the concept of nature conservation. This research has not analyzed the Buddhist socio-ecology in depth, thus future researchers may study Buddhist religious literature to get a comprehensive picture of the socio-ecology.

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