



## THE EXISTENCE OF BOJONGMENJE TEMPLE: THE COLLAPSE OF TARUMANEGARA KINGDOM AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SUNDANESE KINGDOMS (VIII-X CENTURY)

### *Eksistensi Candi Bojongmenje: Runtuhnya Kerajaan Tarumanegara dan Berdirinya Kerajaan Sunda (Abad VIII-X M)*

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#### **Abstrak**

*Candi Bojongmenje merupakan salah satu artefak sejarah Jawa Barat. Publikasi seputar Candi Bojongmenje tidak banyak dibandingkan candi-candi lainnya di Pulau Jawa karena literatur yang membahas candi ini masih sedikit. Candi Bojongmenje ditemukan pada 2002 di Kampung Bojongmenje, Desa Cangkuang, Rancaekek, Kabupaten Bandung. Keberadaan candi ini diketahui sejak abad VIII M terkait erat dengan keruntuhan Kerajaan Tarumanegara dan berdirinya Kerajaan Sunda. Tujuan penelitian ini untuk mengkaji eksistensi Candi Bojongmenje sejak abad VIII M pasca runtuhnya Kerajaan Tarumanegara pada abad VII M dan berdirinya Kerajaan Sunda Abad X M. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode sejarah, dimana penulis melakukan proses Heuristik, Kritik, Interpretasi dan menyajikan hasil penelitian dalam bentuk Historiografi. Hasil penelitian membuktikan, keberadaan Candi Batujaya sejak abad VII M menjadi bukti runtuhnya Kerajaan Tarumanegara pasca penyerbuan Jayasana dari Kerajaan Sriwijaya dan sempat eksisnya kebudayaan Budha di tanah Sunda. Keberadaan Candi Bojongmenje sejak abad VIII M menjadi bukti masih eksisnya kebudayaan Tarumanegara di daerah pedalaman pasca penyerbuan Sriwijaya yang menjadi cikal bakal berdirinya Kerajaan Sunda pada abad X M.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Candi Bojongmenje, Kerajaan Tarumanegara, Kerajaan Sunda.*

#### **Abstract**

Bojongmenje Temple is one of the artefacts of West Java's history. However, it has not been discussed widely in comparison to other temples across Java Island, because the literature that discusses this temple is still small. Being found in 2002 in Kampung Bojongmenje Cangkuang Village, Rancaekek, Bandung, it sheds a lot of lights on the downfall of Tarumanegara in the seventh century and the establishment of Sundanese kingdoms in the tenth century. This study describes the significance of the temple over the two highlight events. This research uses historical methods, where the author conducts heuristic process, criticism, interpretation and presents the results of this study in the form of Historiography. The results prove, the existence of Batujaya Temple in the seventh century AD became the cause of the collapse of tarumanegara kingdom after the invasion of Jayasana from Srivijaya Kingdom and the existence of Buddhist culture in sundanese land. Keberadaan Bojongmenje Temple in the eighth century AD became evidence of the existence of Tarumanegara culture in the hinterland after the invasion of Srivijaya which became the forerunner of the establishment of the Sunda Kingdom in the tenth century AD.

**Keywords:** Bojongmenje Temple, Tarumanegara Kingdom, Sunda Kingdom.

## INTRODUCTION

In the studies of culture, the essence of men takes its toll in identity and subjectivities. A person is a product of his social engagement, in which environmental setting, dreams and public perceptions help shape his overall character (Barker, 2005, pp. 217–219).

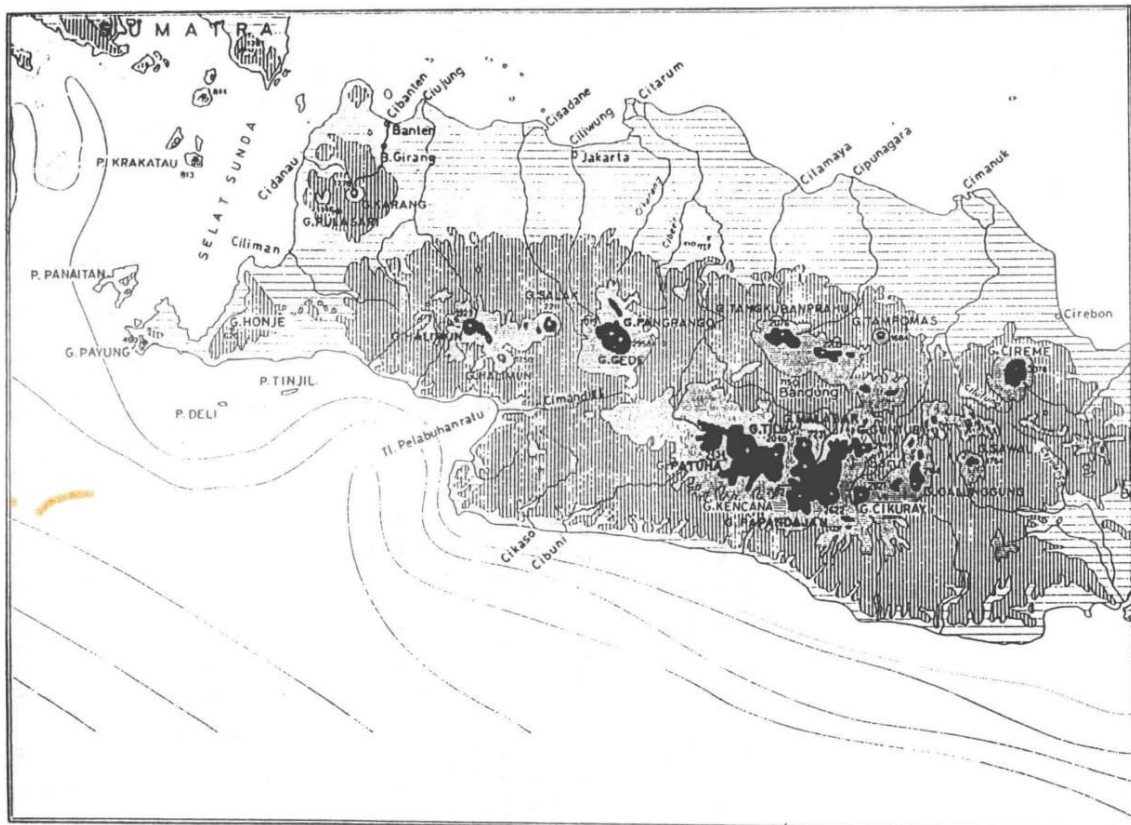
Identity and subjectivity have always gone hand in hand, cultural ties (*Culturegebundenheit*) and the spirit of a certain time (*Zeitgeist*) in a certain place. In the light the current study, Candi Bojongmenje (temple) is discussed, following the collapse of Kerajaan Tarumanegara (Tarumanegara Kingdom) and the the establishment of Sundanese Kingdoms, all being part of the history of West Java of Sundanese ethnicity.

Bojongmenje is a Hindu temple, confirmed by the finding of the fragments of Nandi statue and those of yoni (Widyastuti,

2006). Currently under further investigation and renovation, not much can be gathered concerning the initial structure and function of the temple.

Bojongmenje is located at Kampung Bojongmenje RT 003 RW 002, Desa Cangkuang, Kecamatan Rancaekek Kabupaten Bandung, at  $107^{\circ} 48'110'' - 06^{\circ} 57'958''$ ; the area of which is mostly highland of  $\pm 698$  meters above sea level. It is right under the local cemetery of people from Desa Cangkuang with the total area of  $843 \text{ m}^2$ , surrounded by concrete fence built by textile factories, near Cimande river, being  $\pm 75 \text{ m}$  in distance from the site (Figure 1).

Bandung was a rural area in the height of Tarumanegara Kingdom. Based on the radiocarbon dating released by Balai Arkeologi Bandung, Candi Bojongmenje is estimated to be from the 8<sup>th</sup> century, and has



**Figure 1.** The map of West Java in 1997, with Banten still being intact (Source: Guillot, Nurhakim, Wibisono, 1996/1997).

been officially appointed a cultural heritage through a governor's decree: *Surat Keputusan Gubernur No. 910/Kep.189/Dalprog/2003*, in reference to *UU No. 5 Tahun 1992* on Cultural Heritage.

Tarumanegara has been acclaimed the oldest Hindu kingdom in Java, based on such inscriptions as Ciaruten, Pasir Kolengkak, Kebon Kopi I, Tugu, Pasir Awi, Muara Cianten, and Cihandiang and some other reliable reports from China (Sumadio, 1990, pp. 39–42). Despite some reports on *Holotan* or *Haratan* being older than Tarumanegara in light of the notes from Liu Song (420 – 479) according to Munoz (2009), the latter is considered the first Hindu kingdom based on the official accounts. *Holotan* disappeared from the map in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, most likely being seized by Tarumanegara. More lights on Tarumanegara surfaced following the discovery of Batujaya Temple in Karawang, widely assumed to be built in two phases: the 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> period and the 7<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> one, respectively (Djafar, 2001, pp. 3–4). However, the existence of Batujaya as a Buddhist temple stands in opposition to the faith embraced by the majority of Tarumanegara: Hindu.

After the reign of Tarumanegara came to an end, the accounts by C. Guillot become the main reference of how life went on from that point in time Munoz (2009, p. 290). History has it that later Banten Girang and Pajajaran were established in the 10<sup>th</sup> century in the region occupied by the Sundanese.

The current study aims to find out historical data contained in Bojongmenja spanning from the collapse of Tarumanegara to the establishment of Sundanese kingdoms. This detailed record contributes new data, which enables the public to cover the highlights in between the periods.

## METHOD

This study relies on historical approach, which in the words of

Kuntowijoyo (2013, p. 64) follows in the methods of history recording. The steps the study has gone through are as follows: topic selection, data collection, internal and external analysis and writing department.

To begin with, the writer conducted literature review through books, magazines, and articles. With literature search being through, the writer made a trip to Bojongmenje on July 16, 2018, to Balai Arkeologi Jawa Barat on July 16 and 23, 2018 and to the library of the Faculty of Cultural Sciences of Padjajaran University on July 26, 2018 respectively. Acquired from the heuristic search were primary data like images of the stones of Bojongmenje and other supporting resources. Those found items were then analyzed to come up with credible data. In the third step, being the last one, in reference to the chronological order, the conclusions were formulated (Nina, 2016, pp. 15–16).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

An historical object has always been related to another one. The invasion of Jayasana of Sriwijaya in the 6<sup>th</sup> century resulted in the establishment of Buddhist temple of Batujaya. Bojongmenje Temple on the other hand, marked the significance of Tarumanegara.

### 1. The Downfall of Tarumanegara (8<sup>th</sup> Century)

The history of Tarumanegara is provided in a recorded relation to Soui Dynasty in 528 and 535. It is said there that it was once called *Holotan* and also *To-lo-mo*. Fahsien, a Buddhist priest, was stated to drop by at Yepoti (Yawadhipa/Java), believed to be Tarumanegara (Sumadio, 1990) in (Widyastuti, 2013, pp. 142–143). The account indicated the scant numbers of Buddhists as opposed to far greater believers of both Brahmin and Animism. A report from Tang Dynasty has it that they once welcomed a messenger from Tolomo in 666 and 669.



**Figure 2.** The Tugu Inscription at the National Museum (Source: Kemendikbud Direktorat Jendral dan Kebudayaan 2019).

The word Tarumanegara was derived from a plant name *tarum*, a Sundanese for indigo plant (Nicolaas, 1931, p. 29). Later publications are of the same opinion: Hardjadibrata and Sijthoff in Wessing (2011). On the other hand, Rosidi (2000) holds on to a conviction that the label comes from Citarum River. Despite the controversy, the naming follows the general practice where it is either taken from flora or fauna nearby. An example would be Majapahit; consisting of the plant “maja” and the taste “pahit”, the two words finally give birth to Majapahit (Knappert, 1977).

All in all, the most sensible scenario is to relate Tarumanegara to the existence of Citarum River. *Tarum* has been widely used in batik craft, as laid out by Krom, being endorsed by Willemine Fruin-mes and Hermanus de Graaf in Wessing (2011, p. 326). However, the spectrum is getting more perplexing considering no statement bluntly saying indigo to be the main export commodity is found (Wessing, 2011, p. 326). Generally speaking, it is hard for an object of less value to be kingdom-related.

Seven inscriptions are confirmed to be Tarumanegara-associated: Ciaruten, Koebon Kopi I, Pasir Kolengkak, Muara Cianten, Pasir Muara (found in Bogor) Tugu (North Jakarta) and Cihandiang/Lebak (Pandeglang, Banten) (Widyastuti, 2013, p. 143).

Of all the inscriptions containing Tarumanegara, Tugu is the one with the most mentions. One thing to be more desired is that it does not accommodate specific dates, days and months (MNI, 2019). Inscribed in the fifth century in old Pallawa and Sanskrit, it was found at Desa Tugu in the eastern part of old Jakarta (Miksic, 2004, p. 237). Ruled by a king named Purnawarman, the territory of the kingdom spans from South Banten, rich in gold mining factories, rhino horns, herbs and spices to the area of Cibuaya and Batujaya, where indianized settlements were recovered (Figure 2) (Saptono, 2012, p. 33).

The reign of Purnawarman was also recorded in Ciaruten, bearing the palm and foot prints of the king who believed in Hinduism. Poerbatjaraka managed to



**Figure 3.** Jiwa, another Buddhist temple, at Batujaya Complex of Karawang (Source: Perpustakaan Nasional RI, 2014).

translate the inscription (Widyastuti, 2013, p. 144), which goes:

*“vikkranta syavani pateh srimatah  
purnnavarmmanah  
tarumanagarendrasya visnoriva  
padadvayam”* meaning: *“these are the  
footprints, resembling those of Dewa  
Vishnu<sup>1</sup>, of Your Majesty Sang  
Purnavarman the King of Taruma land,  
the mighty one”*

An account from Fa Hsien confirmed that Buddhism was not the major religion in the kingdom which, in the seventh century, came to its downfall under the attack from Jayanasa of Sriwijaya, following the successful mission over Melayu, Bangka and Sunda Strait.

The defeat Tarumanegara suffered from Sriwijaya was indicated in Palas Pasemah and Kota Kapur both issued by the victorious kingdom; the former inscription was found in the bank of Way Pisang, South Lampung. While Lampung was said to be conquered, *Bhūmi Jawa* refused to bow down to the invading kingdom. Kota Kapur inscription (608 S or 686 AD) was found near Sungai Menduk of western Bangka, primarily condemning wicked actions and those defying the king. Also noted were the efforts taken to take care of *Bhūmi Jawa* refusing to kneel to Sriwijaya (Saptono, 2012, pp. 23–34).

P.V. van Stein Callenfels as noted by Saptono (2012) proposed that “*Jawa*” or Java is not a proper noun or name; rather, it



**Figure 4.** A field trip to interview the caretaker of Bojongmenje, Ahmad (Source: The author, 2018).

<sup>1</sup> The Association with Vishnu’s feet was meant to indicate that Purnawarman was both the ruler and the protector of the people.



**Figure 5.** The peak of Bojongmenje Temple (Source: The author, 2018).

indicates being outside. The inscription was made to mark a foreign trip Sumadio (1990, pp. 58–59). Moreover, the successful expedition to a new territory led up to the creation of the inscription (Boechari, 1986, pp. 33–56). Latest report on that matter highly points to *Bhūmi Jawa* being a persistent kingdom in seventh-century Java, which is Tarumanegara (Saptono, 2012).

According to Dalsheimer, Batujaya Temple and the statue of Vishnu were highly influenced by Tarumanegara (Soeroso, 1998, pp. 6–7), a view shared by Djafar (2001), pointing out that it mainly took influence from fifth to seventh century Tarumanegara and seventh to tenth century Sriwijaya.

The conclusion that Batujaya is a Buddhist temple is evidenced in the head of the statue (arca), the decorative material from stucco and votive tablet, all in line with the traits of Sriwijaya Kingdom (Figure 3).

## **2. The Establishment of Bojongmenje in the Seventh Century Bandung**

Bojongmenje catapulted to fame in 2002 when the caretaker Ahmad Muhammad discovered chunks of stones believed to be part of the temple located at Kampung Bojongmenje, Desa Cangkuang,

Kecamatan Rancaekek, Kabupaten Bandung, Provinsi Jawa Barat (West Java Province) (Figure 4).

Sitting on a public cemetery, it is 24 kilometers away from Bandung, at 6° 50' 47" S latitude and 107° 48' 02" E longitude (The topographic map of Sumedang, 4522-II, in Djubiantoro (2005, p. 82)).

Bojongmenje occupies a bumpy ground at an altitude of 675 masl. To the west are Sungai Cikijing, Sungai Cimande, and Sungai Citarik respectively. It is bordered by mountainous areas on the north and east, including Gunung Bukitjarian (1282 m), Gunung Iwiriwir, Pasir Sambul (949 m), Gunung Kareumbi, Gunung Kerenceng (1736 m), Gunung Pangukusan (1165 m), Pasir Sodok, Pasir Panglimanan, Pasir Dangusmelati, Pasir Serewen (1278 m), and Gunung Buyung (The topographic map of Sumedang, p.4522-II in Djubiantoro(2005, p. 83)).

The people from Sunda really appreciate their local folklore. Etimologically, Bojongmenje consist of two basic words: *Bojong* and *Menje*; the former refers to a cape-shape and the latter is a plant. Bandung was used to be covered in water due to the clogged flow of Citarum River at

the area of *Sanghyang Tikoro*, near present-day Padalarang (Djubiantoro, 2005, p. 82).

Bojongmenje is unanimously a Hindu temple due to the discovery of the ladder fragments, antefix<sup>2</sup>, peak<sup>3</sup>, other stone blocks, being part of the temple body, Nandi statue and Yoni<sup>4</sup> fragment (Widyastuti, 2006, p. 73). It

is estimated that Bojongmenje dates to the eighth century (Figure 5) (Widyastuti, 2006, p. 73).

The conclusion being drawn thus far, saying that Bandung was a rural area when being invaded by Sriwijaya was affirmed by the inscribed texts in Prasasti Tugu. Tugu



**Figure 6.** Banten Girang and its surrounding I. Kalunjukan; II. Asem Reges; III. Banten Girang; IV-V. Telaya; VI. Banusri; VII. Pandaringan; VIII. Alas Dawa (Source: Guillot, Nurhakim, Wibisono, 1996/1997).

<sup>2</sup> Antefix is a crown decoration of triangular shape on the top wall generally of tendril motif with gods ornaments. It is usually placed at the edge of every part of the temple, as to picture it taller than it actually is, commonly observable in old-classic, middle-classic, and new-classic period. It was stupa and not Antefix which was used at the top of the temple.

<sup>3</sup> The peak of a temple is of the highest point, signaling the realm where gods and the calm souls rest in forms of *stupa*, *ratna*, *wajra*, or *lingga semu*.

<sup>4</sup> The foundation of a statue or *lingga* is of the aim to channel water to the statue. Yoni symbolizes feminity.

indicated the making of a river and the hand over of 1000 live stocks (cows) from the King Purnawarman to the Brahmin (Saptono, 2012). Saraswati (1981) offered a much stronger proposal saying that the center of Tarumanegara was on the north coast area, as can be seen in the finding of Vishnu statue of Cibuaya I dan II.

Following the downfall of their beloved kingdom, the true devotees of Hinduism moved to the rural area like Bogor, Lebak Banten, including Bandung. On the then palace complex in the north meanwhile, Sriwijaya erected a Buddhist temple, Batujaya.

### 3. The Establishment of Sundanese Kingdoms (The Tenth Century)

The rise of Sunda kingdoms in the 10<sup>th</sup> century has a lot to do with the defeat of Tarumanegara to Sriwijaya, leading up to the erection of Batujaya Temple in Karawang. The two major kingdoms of Sundanese lineage are Banten Girang and Pajajaran.

#### a. Banten Girang Kingdom

In most of the literature reviews discussing the kingdoms in the areas occupied by people of Sundanese origin,

Banten Girang was said to be the predecessor of Pajajaran. The leading evidence would be the vast settlement of Malay impressive defense system (Figure 6) (Munoz, 2009).

Banten Girang was characterized by the assimilation of three cultures: Central Java, Sriwijayan culture and the Sundanese. The Central Javanese-tending Banten Girang is discernable in the temples built at the hillside of Gunung Pulasari, Pandeglang, Banten, identical in architectural design to *Candi Siwa* in Central Java Province. Sriwijaya's cultural touch is apparent in the model of the fortress, of Malay style. The last but not least, the introductory language through which a dispute was resolved is where the Sundanese influence has come into use, a mix of both Malay and Javanese from the Royal representative (Munoz, 2009).

Given the three components manifested in Banteng Girang rich culture, anomaly can be discerned when considering the investigations conducted by Guillot in Munoz (2009), pertaining to "*Sunda*" to be exact. In an inscription found in Central



**Figure 7.** Jawa Incription in Citatih, or famously known as Sanghyang Tapak, engraved in Kawi script and Old Sundanese (Source: Museum Nasional Indonesia, 2020).



Java, dating its origin back to 880 years ago, it was suggested that Sunda was a name used to label the southern part of Java and West Java, and was not in common use until the seventeenth century.

The defeat suffered by Balaputra in 856 forced Sailendra to abandon Central Java and to submit power to Sanjaya, making Sriwijaya independent from Central Java. Munoz (2009) theorized that there might have been an agreement of both Sailendra the Javanese landlords and other allies concerning a century-long reign of Sailendra in Central Java.

Balaputra and the family of Sailendra were allowed three options: bowing to the new ruling house, stepping aside or taking death penalty; they ended up choosing the second, and opted to find a new land. Christie (1991) revealed that to follow in the footsteps of the defeated king was common in the past; and in the case of Sailendra, it was to the territory under Sriwijaya's influence.

With mountainous areas being through, they finally managed to reach a location near Sunda Strait. Those Javanese people pledged loyalty to the welcoming kingdom. The life they lived there was pointed out in the temple of Gunung Pulasari.

Getting protected, they maintained political affairs with the descendants of King Sindok from East Java, thanks to the same faith embraced by both parties: Shiva, as opposed to that of their superordinate's, Buddhist. The same faith aided the top-ranked officers of Banten Girang to move on from Sriwijaya to the kings in East Java, thus motivating King Dharmavasa to plan an attack on the Buddhist kingdom in 990 ruled by Maharaja Culamanivarmadewa.

Culamanivarmadewa, with the assistance of his allies successfully took revenge through a full-power military assault in the Sunda Strait, Lampung and Banten Girang, sending the Javanese back to their rightful place. The scaled attack was intended to banish all the Javanese aspects,

taking its pinnacle in the collaboration with Prince Wurawari to destroy the royal palace of Dharmavamsa.

Java inscription (1030) indicated that the royal center of Sunda Kingdom was relocated to the mountainous region in the south (Munoz, 2009), being ruled by a king named Jayabupati. Jayabupati was at a cross road, questioning the status of Airlangga (the successor of Dharmavamsa), being inferior over Sriwijaya, while being forced to deal with fellow Sundanese who loathed him, finally ending up in the bankruptcy of his administration. With that said, a century-long reign of the Javanese officially came to an end (Figure 7).

In a word, Banten Girang was a kingdom run by the Javanese under the protection of Sriwijaya following the downfall of Tarumanegara. Much later, however, due to the unfaithful nature of its top tier, the kingdom was punished by their superior, being casted to the rural area (1030).

#### **b. Pajajaran**

Sunda region was nothing but a Sriwijaya-controlled area after the unfortunate end of Banten Girang, with a lot of trade centers coming to the surface on both sides of the strait (the eleventh – the thirteenth century). Zhao Rugua and *Zhu fan Zhi* in Munoz (2009) identified Banten by *Sin'to Sunda*, a pepper-producing land, which coincided with the time in which Sriwijaya was on the decline. The fourteenth century Banten was the most prosperous one. A century later, with Majapahit in the brink of a downfall, King Pakuan from Pajajaran subducted Banten Girang.

The naming of Pajajaran or Pakuan Pajajaran has been investigated in a lot of discussions (Herlina, Sarigendyanti, Darsa, Falah, & Budimansyah, 2013, p. 140). A popularly shared opinion reveals that the name was associated to the abundance of local fern growing in an aligned manner. The view was also held by G.P Rouffaer, relating it to the same context practiced in neighboring kingdoms in such noble titles as



**Figur 8.** Prasasti Batutulis at Kelurahan Batu Tulis, Kecamatan Bogor Selatan, Kota Bogor (Source: Dinas Pariwisata dan Kebudayaan Provinsi Jawa Barat, 2011).

*Paku Alam* and *Paku Buawana*. The word *Pakuan* is parallel in meaning to *Maharaja* (emperor), making it in the same stature as that of Majapahit. To add to the already strong claim, the script of Carita Waruga Guru suggested that *Pakuan Pajajaran* is strongly linked with the local fern (*paku*).

The rise of Pajajaran was believed to be the reincarnated kingdom of then Tarumanegara. After a long time of sidelining on the rural area of Bogor, as indicated in the inscribed texts of Prasasti Batutulis dating 1455 Saka (1533) (Figure 8).

According to the translation provided by Poerbatjakara in Munoz (2009), the texts go:

*a. This is a memorial stone of Raja Prabu Purna; b. He was awarded the title Prabhu Guru Dewatasarna; c. A title by the courtesy of Sri Baduga Maharaja, Raja Pakuan Pajajaran; d. Raja Dewata set up Pakuan; e. He is the son of Dewaniskala, passing away in*

*Gunatiga; f. The grandson of Rahyang Nikalawastu Kantjana, passing away in Nusalarang; g. He made the carriages pass through the mountain, set up temporary settlements and a samida<sup>5</sup>, stretching over talag<sup>6</sup> of Mahawijaya; and, h. He who (i) in the year of Saka.*

A king named Ratu Purna, also going by name Sri Baduga Maharaja established Kota Pakuan alongside Pajajaran Kingdom, the territory of which equaled that of the old Tarumanegara, spanning from Cirebon to the east of Sunda Strait (Munoz, 2009). In Sundanese, the word city is referred to as *Dayeuh*, meaning a fortified city.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the historical data, the existence of Bojongmenje Temple since eighth century is a cultural product of the Tarumanegara society who firmly maintain their traditions as Hindus and prefer to migrate to remote areas such as Bogor,

<sup>5</sup> Samida is a forest from which the woods needed to set up a temple are procured

<sup>6</sup> Talag is parallel in meaning to “Telaga”, meaning lake

Bandung, to Kawali after the Sriwijaya invasion as a Buddhist kingdom in the seventh century. In the remote area, they built various cultural products, one of which was Bojongmenje Temple, a Hindu temple that functions as a place of worship as in the Tarumanegara tradition.

The establishment of the Bojongmenje Temple indicates that the successor of the Tarumanegara Kingdom still exists even though it was in the remote area. This existence created a new power in the tenth century for the establishment of the Sunda Kingdom including the Kingdom of Banten Girang and the Kingdom of Pajajaran. The Kingdom of Pajajaran, whose capital is Pakuan, is believed to be the reincarnation of the Tarumanegara kingdom since the sixth

century as the historical base of the cultural identity of the Sundanese Ethnicity.

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