The kingship and the structure of Old Javanese society: Analysis from Old Javanese inscriptions in the 9th and the early 10th centuries

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Ancient history in Java can be divided into two periods by the location of the center of Javanese culture at the time, that is, the Central Javanese period (from about the 7th century to 929 A.D.) and the East Javanese period (from 929 A.D. to about the 15th century). This research focuses on the 9th and the early 10th centuries in the Central Javanese period and aims to reveal the structure of Javanese society, especially the position of king (kingship) in this period.

In the 9th century, many inscriptions were created in the Old Javanese language by chiefs (*Rake* or *pamgĕt*) or kings. Most Old Javanese inscriptions written at this time concern the establishment of "*sīma*," that is, villages or places whose tax status is altered.

Many previous historical studies of the Central Javanese period have discussed the concept of "dynasty." These discussions are roughly distinguished by their focus: "single dynasty," "two dynasties," and "multiple dynasties." "Single dynasty" regards the *Śailendra* (*Śailendravaṃsa*) and *Sañjaya* families as a single dynasty, while "two dynasties" regards each as a separate dynasty (even though, at some times, these two families were integrated). On the other hand, "multiple dynasties" thinks that there existed other dynasties besides these two families.

With the find of the *Wanua Tengah III* inscription in 1983, these discussions have had to be revisited. This inscription was issued by King *Balitung* (898–c. 910) and describes kings who reigned before *Balitung*, with their dates of ascending the throne. However, in this inscription, relatives of the family or their relationships with each king are not mentioned. As a result, the discussions of "single dynasty," "two dynasties," and "multiple dynasties" have continued until the present day. Jordaan (2003), who supports "multiple dynasties," says that the considerations of Kusen (1994) ("single dynasty") and Christie (2001) ("two dynasties") cannot be accepted because of defects in their historical analyses. Thus, we have a question about "single dynasty" and "two dynasties": Are the converged kings described in inscriptions members of one or two dynasties?

Inscriptions from this period sometimes mention the relatives of a king, but not the relationships of one king to other kings. Chinese reports do not mention that aspect, either. Therefore, inscriptions and other materials are of only limited help in revealing dynastic and family connections of the kings

in this period. However, I do not try here to organize these kings by dynasty. This study analyzes the kings (kingship) by focusing on the reign of each king and the situation at that time, not by focusing on the king's dynasty, because that might cause us to overlook other independent men of power. Of course, I do consider some hypotheses of dynasties discussed in the previous studies cited in this paper.

This research reveals the society and kingship of the Central Javanese period, analyzed from Old Javanese inscriptions. For this research, first the character and contents of inscriptions from this period are overviewed (Chapter 1). Second, I discuss the structure of Old Javanese society and reveal the position of kings, chiefs of *watĕk* (jurisdictions), dignitaries (called *Rake* or *Pamgĕt*), and persons from *wanua* (villages) in this society (Chapter 2). Third, I analyze the content and the economic and political influences of the establishment of a "*sīma*" (Chapter 3). This chapter reveals that the establishment of *sīma* worked as the means of maintaining temples and public works, of royal control over *Rake* and temples (Jones 1984), of enhancing the religious status of the king or *Rake*, of making a friendly relationship between the king and *Rake*, of rewarding officials who rendered distinguished service for the king, of promoting active trade inside and around *sīma*, and of increasing the productivity of villages.

Fourth, the kings mentioned in the *Wanua Tengah III* inscription from this period, especially King *Kayuwangi* (855–885) and King *Balitung*, and the details of their reign are analyzed (Chapter 4). I suggest that the kingship was unstable not only before King *Kayuwangi*'s reign but also after King *Dakṣa*'s (c. 910–915). During the period of King *Kayuwangi*, the kingship became strong, but at the end of his reign his palace seems to have experienced a struggle within his family. For several years after King *Kayuwangi* abdicated his throne, Java did not have a leader. After King *Balitung* ascended the throne, he had to reinforce his kingship and exerted all means to intensify his power. King *Dakṣa*, the successor of *Balitung*, inherited the kingship of his predecessor. However, he did not pass the kingship to his successor. King *Tulodong*, who became the king after *Dakṣa*, seems to have been an outsider. Moreover, we find a king named *Wagīśwara* in a few inscriptions after the reign of *Tulodong*, but perhaps *Wagīśwara* had already died by the time of those inscriptions (he is described as *sang lumah ri kayu ramya*, or "the sacred who buried in Kayu Ramya" in the inscription dated 924 A.D.). After *Wagīśwara*, it is possible that *Wawa* seized the throne by force. By the description that his father was buried in the forest, it is possible that there was a battle before *Wawa* ascended the throne (Barrett Jones 1984: 3). Thus, we can suggest that the reigns after *Dakṣa* were unstable.

Finally, analyzing some models of state discussed in previous studies, I discuss the kings or kingship from this period and reveal how kings maintained their position in this society (Chapter 5). I

conclude that the kings of this period reigned by their own power, not by their blood relations, although I do not exclude the possibility of such blood relations among those kings. I also think that two principal ways kings maintained control over their officials and people were the solid tax-collection system and the establishment of *sīma*. In other words, they did not reign mainly by religion discussed in some models of state, "*segmentary state*," "*mandala model*," or others.