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The Netherlands

Candi, space and landscape : a study on the distribution, orientation and spatial organization of Central Javanese temple remains

Degroot, V.M.Y.

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Stellingen

1. In Java, very few shrines are directly associated with inscriptions or possess an iconography complex enough for us to understand their function. The study of temples in relation with one another and with their natural surroundings is therefore an essential tool in specifying the function of Javanese religious buildings.
2. The term “Śailendra architecture” has been used by some scholars to refer to Central Javanese temples built between the end of the 8th century and the middle of the 9th century. In the present state of our knowledge the term is inaccurate: not a single monument can be attributed with certainty to a Śailendra ruler and it is thus impossible to define the characteristics of this “Śailendra architecture”.
3. Considering the temples of Dieng as the oldest surviving structures of Central Java is essentially based on a simplifying vision of human history: what is small and simple is earlier than what is large and complex.
4. The orientation of Central Javanese temples is often in contradiction with the actual building tradition of India, but not with the principles described in Indian treatises on architecture.
5. The reconstitution of the ancient coastline of Central Java as proposed by R. Soekmono cannot be readily accepted anymore. It requires a profound revision and would gain from a truly multi-disciplinary approach, involving a close cooperation between archaeologists, geologists and historians.
6. The concept of localization which has been applied to explain East Javanese architecture and sculpture, is equally useful to understand Central Javanese temple architecture and sculpture.
7. There is an intrinsic limitation to our understanding of past landscapes: we will never be able to see the world the way ancient people did.
8. Temples and settlements are two different things. This, however, does not mean that temples cannot be used to study settlements.
9. If we agree that archaeology is the study of past cultures, then we must promote multi-disciplinary research including art historians.
10. Few things are half as boring to read as an inventory, but nothing is half as enjoyable as doing an inventory.