

# History and Value of Nawa Gapura Marga Raja From the View of Cirebon Indonesia Community

Fadhly Abdillah<sup>1\*</sup>, Setiawan Sabana<sup>2</sup>, Imam Santosa<sup>3</sup>, Yan Yan Sunarya<sup>4</sup>

Doctoral program in visual Arts and Design, Faculty of Arts and Design, Institut Teknologi Bandung,  
Ganesha Street No.10, Lb. Siliwangi, Coblong District, Bandung City, West Java 40132,  
E-mail: fadejack@students.itb.ac.id

## Abstract

Nawa Gapura Marga Raja, better known as “Lawang Sanga” among the people of the Cirebon Palace is defined as an ancient building with nine doors that is said to have been built by Prince Wangsakerta around the 17th century, 1677 AD to be exact, during the leadership of Sultan Sepuh Pangeran Syamsudin Martawidjaja. The building is a silent witness to the history of Cirebon's development until now. The uniqueness of this building is that there are nine gates in one building area, which correspond to the number of gates in the Sunan Gunung Jati burial complex. This historical study of Nawa Gapura Marga Raja based on the Cirebon community's point of view, aims to analyze and gain knowledge related to history and the cultural values contained in it. Sources of data were collected in the form of buildings, ancient manuscript literature studies and interviews with philologists, Cirebon culturalists, Cirebon historians, observers of Cirebon culture, Kasepuhan Palace family, also Kasepuhan Palace tour guides and caretakers. The research method used is oral history. That is the method of recording people's conversations and then analyzing their memories of the past, which is then cross-checked with its theoretical aspects. The results of the study obtained an understanding of the history of the Nawa Gapura Marga Raja, related to the Karatuan which became the forerunner of the kingdom in Cirebon, namely Keratuan Singhapura, which is also the birthplace of Prince Cakrabuana, the ancestor of Prince Wangsakerta. Nawa Gapura Marga Raja contains noble values, the result of acculturation of religion and culture at that time, including the value of hybrid culture, togetherness, respect, as well as symbolic values related to the traditional culture of the Cirebon people when communicating with God.

**Keywords:** Cirebon, Nawa Gapura Marga Raja, Cultural Values, History.

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## 1. Introduction

Cirebon is one of the cities located on the northern coast of West Java, which became the entrance from the sea for various cultures, religions, and even people from abroad to the mainland of West Java (see Figure 1). Cirebon city is a city that is very open to various kinds of acculturation which until now its existence can still be enjoyed. Based on the information from the Cirebon Government Office, the regional structure that shapes Cirebon City consists of 5 sub-districts with an area of 37.36 km<sup>2</sup> or 3,735.8 hectares, with a population of 272,263. Harjamukti is the sub-district with the largest area (17.62 km<sup>2</sup>). Geographically, Cirebon City is located at a position of 108.33° East Longitude and 6.41° South Latitude on the north coast of Java Island, the eastern part of West Java, extending from west to east 8 km<sup>2</sup>, north to south 11 km<sup>2</sup> with a height of 5 meters above sea level. Thus, Cirebon City is a lowland area bordering; to the north: the Kedung Pane River, to the west: the Banjar Kanal River/Cirebon District, to the south: the Kalijaga River, and to the east: the Java Sea.

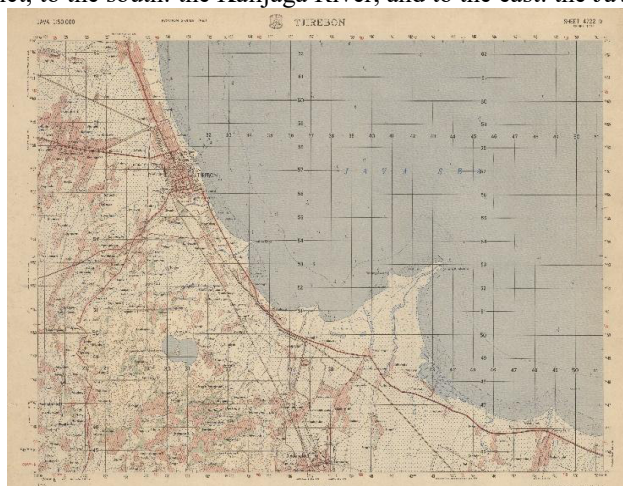


Figure 1. Cirebon Area Map

Cirebon is one of the international port cities which was quite busy and famous in the past. Many foreign traders stop by, even to settle in this area. (Murdiastomo and Bauty 2020:63), also known as a society with a hybrid culture or awareness of self-culture (the self or *al-ana*) is dissolved in other cultures (the other or *al-ākhar*) (Humaedi 2013:283) and acculturation or mixed society. This causes Cirebon cultural products to be more valuable. The creation of a cultural network makes the people of Cirebon City often bring up various cultural phenomena and their social transformations in a different form from mainstream cultural centers, both Sundanese and Javanese culture (and language) (Humaedi 2013:281), so that Cirebon is nicknamed the Little Archipelago. The Cirebon Palace began to stand at the end of the 15th century. At that time, its existence became an important port that connected the trade routes of the islands in the archipelago. The location of the Cirebon Sultanate is on the north coast of West Java which is the borderline between Central Java and West Java.

Cirebon is not only known for its historical and cultural strength, but Cirebon is also famous for its diversity of historical artifacts, one of them is its gate. There are many historical gates in the city of Cirebon, some located in the palace environment and others scattered outside the palace environment. Gate is a form of building that has aesthetic value in addition to its technical function as a dividing gate between the following areas. The gate has a role as a marker for someone entering a certain environment. This role is supported by the presence of a gate that is always in the entrance or exit area on a person's travel route in an environment. If someone has difficulty recognizing their position, they will often try to find a gate where someone initially enters an environment at the beginning of their travel route (Wardhana, Indraprasti, and Fitriana 2017:22).

The diversity of gates forms in Cirebon can be found in several historical buildings, such as the gates of the Kasepuhan Palace, Kanoman, Kacirebonan, Keprabonan, the nine gates of the Sunan Gunung Jati cemetery, Nawa Gapura Marga Raja or Lawang Sanga (the entrance to the Kasepuhan Palace from the sea), the gate of the Sunyaragi Cave Water Park, even Lawang Gede (the entrance to the Singhapura Palace) which is located in Cirebon district. In particular, the Nawa Gapura Marga Raja building is recorded in the Wangsakerta manuscript entitled *Pustaka Rajya Rajya I Bhumi Nusantara*, parwa 1, sargah 1. In the manuscript, the building of Nawa Gapura Marga Raja or Lawang Sanga is written in the form of *chandasangkala* (number of the year the Nawa Gapura Marga Raja was built). The manuscript is a master book on the history of the kingdoms in the archipelago, which was compiled in a workshop or *gotrasawala* activity in 1677 at the Kasepuhan Palace. This activity was attended by almost all royal representatives from the archipelago, even advisors from all religious representatives in the archipelago from almost all over the world (Ayatrohaedi 2017:29-30).

The existence of the Nawa Gapura Marga Raja as a historical heritage artifact that witnesses the development of Cirebon is interesting to study. Knowing the history and cultural values contained in this building is an important knowledge to understand, as one of the efforts to preserve historical artifacts as the basic principle for their successors. The researcher uses the oral history method to answer historical problems and the values contained in the Nawa Gapura Marga Raja from the point of view of the Cirebon people. An oral history is an act of recording people's conversations (which are interesting to talk about and then analyzing their memories of the past (Abrams 2016:1)). Which is supported by secondary data in the form of ancient manuscripts, books, and journals as aspects of theoretical considerations. The purpose of the study is to find and obtain information about the historical aspects and cultural values contained in the Nawa Gapura Marga Raja building.

Efforts that are made to answer this question are by fulfilling the existence of the data. The data used in this study are primary and secondary. Primary data is more emphasized on the existence of ancient manuscripts that discuss the history of Cirebon, the object of Nawa Gapura Marga Raja, as well as oral history from Suwari, caretaker of Nawa Gapura Marga Raja, R A. Opan Safari as Cirebon philologist and culture, Cirebon historian, Made Casta as Cirebon cultural observer, Husen H as the family of the Kasepuhan Palace as well as a tour guide, Elang Ayi and representatives of Kuwu from Mertasinga Hasanudin Village, Hawe Setiawan as Sundanese cultural practitioner, and also Elang Hilman as observers of Cirebon history and culture from the Kacirebonan Palace. The existence of primary data is supported by secondary data in the literature review in the form of journals and books. The completeness of this literature review is quite important in presenting data in the form of comparisons and analysis of the gate, Cirebon history, and socio-political-cultural conditions at that time.

The review process that was carried out consisted of several steps. First, collecting data through direct observation accompanied by documentation (photos), as well as conducting interviews with resource persons, which is then followed by collecting data from scientific articles in the form of journals, books, and writings from electronic media. Second, the data that has been collected is then analyzed to find the same pattern from the message structure of the interview which is then related to supporting data in the references. The process of synthesizing the data that has been collected is done through analysis, description, and interpretation. The results are expected to provide an overview and answer the questions asked.

The object of research is the Nawa Gapura Marga Raja, historical artifacts in the form of buildings with nine doors or gates, which are located on the edge of the Kriyan River, Mandalangan Village, Kasepuhan Village, Lemahwungkuk District, Cirebon City.

## 2. Method

The study was conducted using a descriptive analysis method with oral history approach. That is the method of recording people's conversations and then analyzing their memories of the past, which is then linked to its theoretical aspects (Abrams, 2016). The historical study of Nawa Gapura Marga Raja based on the perspective of the Cirebon people through oral history approach, aims to analyze and gain knowledge related to history and the cultural values contained in it. Sources of data were collected in the form of building forms, literature study of ancient manuscripts and interviews with philologists, Cirebon culturalists, Cirebon historians, Cirebon culture observers, Kasepuhan Palace family, Kasepuhan Palace tour guides, and caretakers. The research method used is oral history.

This study uses several steps in data collection, starting from looking for data through written sources or literacy in the form of manuscripts and Cirebon history books, then conducting in-depth interviews with the informants in which finally all the data is analyzed by data triangulation to find conclusions.

## 3. Result and Discussion

The following are examples of questions asked to informants related to the Nawa Gapura Marga Raja building;

Tabel 1. List of Questions

No.	Questions
1.	Based on your understanding, could you please explain your understanding of Nawa Gapura Marga Raja/Lawang Sanga?
2.	Could you please tell me the history of this building based on your understanding?
3.	Concerning this building, what are your views on Prince Wangsakerta's figure?
4.	What values are contained in this building and what is the relationship between this building with Cirebon society or culture according to your understanding?

Source: Personal Interview Results

Tabel 2. Results of interviews with informants

No.	Informants and Interview Results
1.	<p>Name: <b>Dr. R.A. Opan Safari Hasyim, M.Hum.</b>                      DOB (Date of Birth): <b>Cirebon, 9 May 1967</b>                      Died: <b>Cirebon, 13 May 2021</b>                      Education: <b>Doctoral Program of FIB UNPAD</b>                      Address: <b>JL Raya Kedawung no 491 RT 04, RW03 Blok Paltudinh Kec Kedawung Kab Cirebon.</b>                      Occupation : <b>Lecturer, Cirebon Cultural, Cirebon Philologist</b></p> <p><b>Time and Place:</b> Wednesday, 26 – June – 2019, Sunyaragi Cave Cirebon</p> <p>He is a cultural expert born at Cirebon, who is very focused on the development of the Cirebon City, especially in matters of art and culture through manuscripts.</p> <p>I really support the theme brought up by Mas Fadhly, visual people rarely want to raise the issue of manuscripts, especially the Prince Wangsakerta Manuscripts. It is clear that if we are going to have a deeper study, we must understand the history, and origins of a civilization, whether it will be used for economic, social, cultural, art, or any form of communication, it all started with the manuscript.</p> <p>Particularly, Prince Wangsakerta's manuscript. It has not been studied that much, especially for someone who concentrates on visual communication. In God's will, I will help and support Mas Fadhly's research.</p> <p>My message is, raise the name of Nawa Gapura Marga Raja, not Lawang Sanga. This building is one of the silent witnesses of the development of the Islamic Kingdom in Cirebon, in the form of Keratuan. This is the first entrance from the sea (south) to enter the Cirebon Kingdom, especially the Pakungwati Palace. However, after the Pakungwati Palace was developed and became the Kasepuhan Palace, the Nawa Gapura Marga Raja was no longer the entrance, because the entrance was shifted to the north of the palace.</p> <p>The most important thing is that the number nine that appears according to the number of gates in this building represents the number of Nine Walis in Java, which also corresponds to the number of holes in the human body.</p>

<p><b>2.</b></p>	<p>Name: <b>Permadi Budiatma</b>                  DOB: <b>Cirebon, -</b>                  Education: -                  Address:-                  Occupation: <b>Cirebon Chinese Elders</b></p> <p><b>Time and Place:</b> Wednesday, 26 – June – 2019, Sunyaragi Cave Cirebon</p> <p>As a Chinese elder in Cirebon City, I really welcome the theme raised by Mas Fadhly. It's clear that there are lots of Chinese artifacts that we can find in Cirebon, whatever their shape, whether it's in the form of pottery, porcelain plates, armor, boats, buildings, etc. So, it is clear that the Chinese are closely related to Cirebon City.</p> <p>I am very closely related to the palace because I am originally from Cirebon, even though I still have Chinese descent. Many of my relatives mingle with the Keraton (palace) community. Cirebon is unique. Regardless of the history or other story behind them, once Cirebon people, they will always be a Cirebon people even though many have the background of Javanese, Sundanese, Arabic, Chinese, and European. They are all Cirebon people as long as they were born and raised in the culture and civilization of the city of Cirebon.</p> <p>In Cirebon, there are several areas that are dominated by Chinese ethnics and all of them mingle with the local community. Even in the Sitiwinangun area, there was an area where the Chinese people were the majority, has now become a Tourism Village that helps support the economy of the local community, and even the government.</p>
<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p>Name: <b>Dr. H. Wawan Setiawan, M.Sn.</b>                  DOB: <b>Subang, 21 November 1968</b>                  Education: <b>Doctoral Program FSRD ITB</b>                  Address: <b>Jl. Sersan Bajuri, No. 5, Blknng Kios JNE, Bandung, 40154</b>                  Occupation : <b>Lecturer of DKV FISS UNPAS, Cultural Practitioner, Director of the Sundanese Cultural Institute UNPAS, Deputy Chairperson of the Sunda Study Center Foundation</b></p> <p><b>Time and Place:</b> Monday, 12 – August – 2019, Dr. Wawan Setiawan's house</p> <p>An understanding of the manuscript in the Cirebon context is really needed. Manuscript is the root of information about the history of the establishment of a place, in this context, the Prince Wangsakerta Manuscript.</p> <p>Try to learn about what is wrong with the manuscript, and what you can take from it. So, the first thing you have to do is find and read the manuscript, of course, you need assistance from the experts who understand the manuscript such as Dr. Rafan Safari (Cirebon) and Mr. Undang (UNPAD), also please visit the Sri Baduga Museum in Tegalega, they have several translated copies of Prince Wangsakerta Manuscripts.</p> <p>These hundreds or even thousands of manuscripts, especially the Prince Wangsakerta manuscript, were first discovered by Atja, a philologist who had worked at a museum in Jakarta, and later became the head of the West Java Museum, Sribaduga in Bandung. He had been a teacher of Ajip R, one of the historical figures of Sunda while studying in high school. According to Ajip R, when Atja found the manuscript, he became interested in using the Prince Wangsakerta Manuscript as material for writing a dissertation.</p>
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p>Name: <b>Suwari</b>                  DOB: <b>Cirebon</b>                  Education: <b>SR</b>                  Address: <b>Mandalangan Village, Kelurahan Kasepuhan, Kecamatan Lemahwungkuk</b>                  Occupation: <b>the caretaker of the Nawa Gapura Marga Raja</b></p> <p><b>Time and Place:</b> Saturday, September 26-2020, Location: Nawa Gapura Marga Raja</p>

	<p>People think that if you want to make a pilgrimage, you must start at the Sanga Gate, then go to other places. Nawa Gapura Marga Raja means gate nine because there are nine gates consisting of 6 gates in the main building, two gates on the outside of the main building, and 1 separate gate at the back of the main building. The function of Lawang Sanga is as a place to anchor boats from various kingdoms in the archipelago and abroad. Before the guests go to the Pakungwati Palace, they will first go through the Nawa Gapura Marga Raja gate. It is said that the gate is closely related to the history of the walis, where the walis meet to discuss and carry out da'wah and spread Islam in Java. After the discussions were finished, they departed using a boat from the Kriyan river to the sea to carry out their respective duties. It is also used as a way out for the royal family when there is an attack on the palace.</p> <p>This building is also a way out for the royal family, if there is an attack on the palace and Nawa Gapura Marga Raja is a form of Islamic intervention in the physical forms of the Cirebon cultural landscape. Nawa Gapura Marga Raja is also a building with symbolic meaning that plays a role in the cultural process tradition of Cirebon community. It is called "Syafaran-Rebo Wekasan", which is the last Wednesday in the month of Safar, which according to the people of Cirebon, the month of Safar is the month of frequent occurrence of unwanted disasters. Therefore, we are encouraged to do prayers and other activities to ward off evil. They often perform those activities in this building, starting from prayer to ngrab or traveling by boat through the Kriyan river (starting from in front of this building, until entering the city). The "Penunggu", or better known as the Jin Penunggu, stands at every gate and the building. Hence, it's only natural that something abnormal happens when you intend to fly a drone for aerial photo purposes.</p>
5.	<p>Name: <b>Dr. Casta, S.Pd., M.Pd.</b>                  DOB: <b>Cirebon</b>                  Education: <b>Master S2</b>                  Address: <b>Cirebon</b>                  Occupation: <b>Secretary of Disporabudpar Kabupaten Cirebon</b></p>
	<p><b>Time and Place:</b> Sunday, 27-Sep-2020, Casta's house</p> <p>That the building functions as a Syahbandar and is influenced by the very great development of Islam.</p> <p>Nawa Gapura Marga Raja was influenced by the acculturation of Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Chinese, and even Europe. It can be seen from the parts of the building.</p> <p>The architectural concept is also influenced by the cultural concept of the Cirebon people, especially the concept of religiosity. It is about the concept of the Cirebon community approach when communicating with God.</p>
6.	<p>Name: <b>Ir. H. Yoyon Indrayana, MT</b>                  DOB: <b>Malang, 22 July 1966</b>                  Education: <b>S2</b>                  Address: <b>Komp.Graha Pitaloka Blok C.11, Jl. Sekar Kemuning, RT.002/RW.013, Kel. Karyamulya, Kec.Kesambi, Kota Cirebon.</b>                  Occupation: <b>Lecturer, Head of Cirebon Heritage City</b></p>
	<p><b>Time and Place:</b> Saturday, 19-June-2021, Kota Pustaka Cirebon Office</p> <p>I did make the gates in Cirebon, especially the city gate. I used to create or design the gate based on the request, as long as they like it, I will make it. But, there is one city entrance gate that I made based on an analysis of the historical buildings here, especially the Kanoman Palace. I tried to adopt one of the gates there, namely the Si Blawong Gate.</p>
7.	<p>Name: <b>Raden Haryanto</b>                  DOB: <b>Cirebon, 11 Sept 1968</b>                  Education: <b>SLTA</b>                  Address: <b>Kmp. Mandalangen RT 05/RW 02 Kel. Kesepuhan Kec. Lemahwungkuk Kota Cirebon</b>                  Occupation: <b>Cirebon Kasepuhan Palace Tour Guide</b></p>
	<p><b>Time and Place:</b> Saturday, 19-Jun-2021, Kasepuhan Palace Cirebon</p>

	<p>Nawa Gapura Marga Raja or local people here are more familiar with the name Lawang Sanga. Back then, when Prince Cakrabuana built the Pakungwati Palace, I think according to the information I got, either from reading, or information from ancestors, it seems that the building already existed, even before the Palace Pakungwati was developed into the Kasepuhan Palace by Sunan Gunung Jati.</p> <p>It seems that in the past, this building did function not only as a gate, it may also function as a guarding fort because it is supported by one piece of evidence in the form of a mound inside the palace, which is a place for guards, named Mount Indrakila.</p>
8.	<p>Name: <b>Raden Mohamad Hilman</b>                  DOB: <b>Cirebon, 2 June 1960</b>                  Address: <b>Jl. Gn Malabar IV, No. 122</b>                  Education: <b>S1</b>                  Occupation: <b>ASN (Badan Arsip Cirebon)</b></p> <p><b>Time and Place:</b> Saturday, 19-Jun-2021, Kantor Pusaka Cirebon Office</p> <p>This building is the first entrance to the Cirebon Kingdom, from the sea, through the Kriyan river. The concept of the encounter between seawater and freshwater becomes a concept of religiosity that we can understand as the concept of the encounter between men and women, which ends through the Nawa Gapura Marga Raja.</p> <p>Nawa Gapura Marga Raja, in my opinion, was built long before the 17th century, probably built at the end of the 15th century along with the first mosque in Cirebon called the Pajalagrahan Mosque, or the floating mosque. It's just that the shape is not what it is today. And in the 17th century, to be exact In 1677, when the gotrasawala was held, Prince Wangsakerta took the initiative to renovate the building into the entrance gate to the Kasepuhan Palace, as the entrance for invitees in gotrasawala activities for 21 years.</p> <p>The concept of nine gates is related to the concept of the nine walis, nine holes in the human body, Lawang Sanga, as well as the cultural concept of the Cirebon people recorded in the Babone Patarekatan manuscript. Regarding the dignity of nine which is associated with the concept of human religiosity in Cirebon, is divided into three realms; the spirit realm consisting of "Ahadiyah, Wahdah, and Wahidiyah", then the rahin realm consisting of "Spirits, Mistal, and Ajsam", and the last one is the world realm, consisting of "Human, Kamil, and Kamil Muhammil".</p> <p>Keraton (Palace) is a sacred area, then Nawa Gapura Marga Raja is a profane area that becomes a filter for anyone who will enter that sacred area. If we connect it with the hole that exists in humans, there is one hole that becomes the exit and entry of something sacred.</p> <p>NNawa Gapura Marga Raja also has something to do with the burial complex of Sunan Gunung Jati on Mount Sembung. The complex has nine steps which are represented by nine gates as well, where to reach the truth, we have to go through nine steps and nine gates.</p>
9.	<p>Name: <b>Yovita Adriani, ST.</b>                  DOB: <b>Temanggung, 14 June 1969</b>                  Address: <b>Jl. Rajawali Timur II, No. 31. RT.03/11. Cirebon</b>                  Education: <b>S1 Arsitektur</b>                  Occupation: <b>Architect, Cirebon Cultural Heritage Expert Staff Member</b></p> <p><b>Time and Place:</b> Sunday, 27-September-2020, Pedati Gede Pekalangan</p> <p>NaNawa Gapura Marga Raja is a building that is part of the Kasepuhan Palace. Although it is outside the Keraton area, it is still part of the palace. Due to the poor condition, we, together with architects, and cultural and historical activists, worked together to improve the condition of the building. It's because the building is one of the historical pieces of evidence that accompanies the development of the Cirebon Kingdom to this day.</p> <p>This building is a blend of architectural concepts, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and Chinese.</p>
10.	<p>Name: <b>Hasanudin</b>                  DOB: <b>Cirebon,</b>                  Address: <b>Mertasinga Village</b>                  Education: <b>Former Secretary of Kuwu Mertasinga Village</b>                  Occupation: <b>Deputy Kuwu of Mertasinga Village</b></p> <p><b>Time and Place:</b> Friday, 12-February-2021, Elang Panji's house</p>

To get to the capital city of Karatuan Singhapura via Lawang Gede can be accessed via the Caipalrasah canal, a small river from the coast into the mainland. This river can only be passed by small boats, as for the large boats, it enters through the bondet.

Keratuan Singhapura is an extension of the Galuh Kingdom. This Keratuan is the forerunner of the establishment of the Islamic Kingdom in Cirebon. We can confirm that Prince Cakrabuana, a founding figure of Cirebon, is the son of Prabu Siliwangi who married Nyi Subang Larang, who is the son of the ruler of the Kingdom of Singhapura.

There are similarities between Lawang Gede and Nawa Gapura Marga Raja, apart from being the entrance, as well as the position, and technique of entering the building.

Source: Personal Interview Results

Based on the interview results and supported by historical data in the form of manuscripts, archives, old maps, and photos, it said that before the Kingdom of Cirebon was established, there had been a kingdom on the coast named Karatuan Singhapura. Karatuan was an extension of the Galuh Kingdom, which was the forerunner to the growth of the kingdom in Cirebon. It started when Prabu Siliwangi married the king's daughter from Karatuan Singhapura, then had three children. Two of their children named Prince Walangsungsang with his younger brother Nyai Larasantang, traveled to the Parahyangan forest and arrived at Cirebon Girang. There, he studied, married, had offspring, until he became an influential man, and founded a kingdom in Cirebon called Keraton Pakungwati (Atja 1986:30-35). Pakungwati Palace is located in Mandalangan Village, Kasepuhan Village, Lemahwungkuk District, Cirebon City. At the back of the palace, there is a historic building that is very influential in the development of the Cirebon Kingdom until now. The building was named Nawa Gapura Marga Raja or better known as Lawang Sanga.

#### 4. Karatuan Singhapura, The Forerunner of the Kingdom in Cirebon

According to Prince Aria Cirebon in the Tjarita Purwaka Caruban Nagari manuscript, the forerunner of the Kingdom in Cirebon was Karatuan Singhapura, the kingdom that was built in 1373, right on the northern coast of Cirebon and bordering Indramayu. The kingdom was an extension of the Galuh Kingdom. Furthermore, according to Opan Safari, the first king was Prince Surawijaya Sakti, then Ki Gedeng Tapa until he died, and the reign was completed in Karatuan Singhapura (1445 AD). According to Hasanudin, a former kliwon (representative of Kuwu Mertasinga Village, period 2014-2020) to go to the capital city of Karatuan Singhapura via Lawang Gede (see Figure 2), can be accessed via the Caipalrasah canal, a small river from the shoreline to enter the mainland. Only small boats can pass through this river. Meanwhile, large boats can enter the area through the Bondet River.

The relationship between Karatuan Singhapura and the Pajajaran Kingdom occurred when Prabu Siliwangi (Raden Pamanah Rasa) married Nyai Subang Larang (daughter of Ki Gedeng Tapa) in Karatuan Singhapura in 1422 AD. A year later she gave birth to 3 children, namely, Prince Walangsungsang, Nyai Larasantang, and Prince Sengara. Feeling that he does not receive the same treatment as his brothers from different mothers, Prince Walangsungsang left his father's palace, wandering deep into the Parahyangan forest. Long story short, Prince Walangsungsang arrived at the hut of Ki Gede Danur Asih, a Prawa Buddhist priest, and fell in love with his daughter, then they got married. Not long after, Nyai Larasantang came after her brother.



Figure 2. Lawang Gede, the gate of the Karatuan Singhapura

After that, the husband and wife, along with Nyai Larasantang traveled to Amparan-Jati Hill and studied Islam with Syech Datuk Kahfi. After Ki Gedeng Tapa, the 2nd King of Karatuan Singhapura died, Prince Walangsungsang refused to lead Karatuan Singhapura. He only inherited property from Karatuan Singhapura which was used to develop the Pakungwati Palace and also built an armed force (Atja 1986:35).

#### 4.1. Pakungwati Palace

After Prince Walangsungsang was crowned Pangraksabumi with the title Ki Cakrabumi, on the orders of his teacher, Prince Walangsungsang went on a pilgrimage to Mecca with his wife and sister, Nyai Larasantang. After returning from Mecca, he replaced his father-in-law, Ki Gedeng Alang-Alang, as Mbah Kuwu Cirebon II, precisely in the year 1445 AD (Atja 1986:35). Then he built the Dalem Agung Pakungwati Palace, in the Hindu Majapahit architectural style. Even though it was in the form of an Islamic sultanate, this building was established as a center for the spread of Islam. Several forms of gates and buildings inside have various ornaments and ceramics with typical Chinese motifs. This building was named after his daughter, Ratu Dewi Pakungwati, who later married Syarif Hidayatullah who was known as Sunan Gunung Jati.

In 1497 AD, with the approval of his uwa (aunt), Prince Cakrabuana, Syarif Hidayat, was appointed Tumenggung who ruled Cirebon with the title Susuhunan Jati, Sunan Jati, or Sinuhun Jati Cerbon. This position was accepted by the guardians, even though it only covered the entire Sunda-Coastal region, and the Walis confirmed the control of Sunan Jati to become the administrator of Islam throughout the Sunda region, which is domiciled in Caruban. The palace is located in Pakungwati, the Pakungwati Palace (see Figure 3) is the first form of the Islamic Kingdom in West Java. This is the forerunner to the establishment of the Kasepuhan Palace which will become the center of the Cirebon government. Kasepuhan Palace has a name that comes from the Sundanese language, namely Sepuh which means Old. The Kasepuhan Palace began with the establishment of a Kingdom in Cirebon with the name Pakungwati Palace (I. H. Agustina, Hindersah, and Asiyawati 2017:169).



**Figure 3.** Patilasan Pakungwati Palace

In the Dalem Agung Pakungwati Palace complex, there are three important buildings; including the Petilasan Pangeran Cakrabuana, Petilasan Sunan Gunung Jati, and the house of Prince Cakrabuana. This petilasan is used by the Walis to carry out the high-level discussion and to arrange strategies in war. The development of the Pakungwati Palace occurred in 1483 AD, during the leadership of Sunan Gunung Jati. The old palace of Dalem Pakungwati was expanded and added with complementary buildings as well as a 2.5-meter-high perimeter wall, with a thickness of 80 cm on a land area of 20 hectares. Furthermore, for safety purposes, a 2-meter high wall was built around the capital, covering an area of 50 hectares (Erwantoro 2012:174).

#### 4.2. History of Nawa Gapura Marga Raja

Putera or Raden Resmi or Panembahan Adi Kusumah or Panembahan Girilaya ruled as its king. He has 3 sons, they are called; Prince Samsudin Mertawijaya, Prince Badridin Kertawijaya, and Prince Wangsakerta or Abdul Hamid. At that time, there were various conflicts, until there was a time when his two older brothers were captured by Mataram, Prince Wangsakerta replaced his two brothers in ruling Cirebon, and tried hard to free his two brothers. With the help of the Sultan of Banten, finally, the efforts made were successful. Prince Wangsakerta, with the permission of his father Pangeran Girilaya, his two brothers, and the blessing of the Sultan of Banten, in 1677 AD to be exact, formed a committee called the Wangsakerta committee for the gotrasawala event, a seminar activity attended by historians representatives from the kingdoms of the archipelago, advisor to representatives of religions in the archipelago, consisting of Prince Wangsakerta as the head of the activity and Prosecutor Pipitu as the executor (Ayatrohaedi 2017:20). This gotrasawala activity lasted for approximately 21 years (1677 AD - 1698 AD).

In one of the Wangsakerta manuscripts entitled *Pustaka Rajya Rajaya I Bhumi Nusantara*, sargah 1, parwa 1, it is stated:

awighnam astu / Swasti / Telas sinusun mwanng sinerat sayampratar tan henti/ de ning pirang sang  
manurat sinerat ri sasakala / nawa gapura marga raja/ Eka suklapaksa / Srawana masa // \* nihan ta /



mangdadyakna dirga yusawastisanira sang manurat sang amaca / Sang angeugeuh mwanng sang angupakareksa pustaka / tasmata yudian hana kaluputan athawa kasasar ing serat sastreki / waraksamakna ta // mapan tan hana nusekang luput sakeng salah mwanng kepwan pun (Manassa 2008:196)

**It means:**

Hopefully, nothing goes wrong, and may it bring good luck. It has been compiled and written day and night without stopping, by the writers of Nawa Gapura Marga Raja (1599 Saka/1677 AD) on 1 paro of the bright month of Srawana (2 July). Thus, may a long life for those who write, read, save, and maintain this manuscript. So, if there are errors or mistakes in this literary writing, please forgive (us).

Nawa Gapura Marga Raja is Chandrasangkala from the 1st half of the bright month of Srawara 1677 AD. Denotatively, it can be interpreted as Nawa=nine/sanga, Gapura=door/gate, Marga=road, Raja=King/messenger of the king. So, "Nawa Gapura Marga Raja" means nine gates, the way for kings/kings' messengers.

During the gotrasawala activity, Prince Wangsakerta and Prosecutor Pipitu initiated a protocol concept for this activity to run smoothly. In addition to arranging the arrangement of events, the concept of activities relates to the flow or entry and exit of the invited delegates. One of them is making a gate building as the entrance for the invitees as envoys from the kingdoms in the archipelago. In addition to functioning as a marker for someone to enter a certain environment (Wardhana, Indraprasti, and Fitriana 2017:22), this gate also functions as a land fortress. The location for the fort establishment is generally placed in a strategic place, which is related to the purpose of the fort building, for example, the government center, trade routes, or ports (Marzuki 2020:59).

#### 4.3 Values Contained in Nawa Gapura Marga Raja

Nawa Gapura Marga Raja is made with a very strategic and thorough concept, one of it is the number of nine gates contained in 1 building area. This building originally functioned as the main gate of the Pakungwati Palace from the Java Sea, precisely next to the Kriyan river, approximately 1 km from the Java Sea. In addition to being the entrance gate for envoys from the kingdoms in the archipelago from the sea, according to the Cirebon historian, Made Casta, this building also served as the entrance, as well as a Syahbandar or monitoring place, as well as the entrance for Islamic religious broadcasters at that time (see Figure 4). Since the ruling time of Sunan Gunung Jati, Cirebon has been an international port as a stopover for ships of traders that connect the Middle East, West Asia, and East Asia (Hidayat et al. 2020:146-147). Cirebon historian, Made Casta, said that Nawa Gapura Marga Raja or Lawang Sanga, in its construction process, was influenced by the values of very strong Islamic ideology, mixed with Hindu, Buddhist, and Chinese concepts. This is related to the concept of Wali Sanga, which was at that time a period of the development of Islamic symbols on the island of Java, especially West Java.



Figure 4. The Floor Plan of Nawa Gapura Marga Raja

As a community that lives in the coastal area, which is very familiar with the acculturation, the Cirebon people not only accept and are influenced by culture from outside (of the country) but are also very strong with the concept of transcendence in Islam. According to the Cirebon cultural observer, Husen Hendriyana, said that the value of building artifacts is closely related to the core teachings of Tasawuf, which describes the Illahiah emanation that forms transcendent values, namely 1) repentance, 2) patience, 3) poverty, 4) zuhud, 5) taqwa, 6) tawaqal, 7) mahabah, 8) makrifat and 9) sincerity (ikhlas/ridho). This is as contained in the value of the nine gate building at the tomb of Sunan Gunung Jati on Mount Sembung. Suwari, the caretaker, said that Nawa Gapura Marga Raja means gate nine because there are nine gates consisting of six gates in the main building, two gates on the outside of the main building, and one separate gate at the back of the main building (see Figure 5).

According to him, the function of the Nawa Gapura Marga Raja is as a place for boats from various kingdoms in the archipelago and abroad to dock before the guests go to the Kasepuhan Palace, they will first pass through the gate. This building is also a way out for the royal family if there is an attack on the palace, and Nawa Gapura Marga Raja is a form of Islamic intervention in the physical forms of the Cirebon cultural landscape. Interventions in the Cirebon area were carried out with the main aim of supporting the development and spread of Islam (Rosmalia and Prasetya 2017:76).

According to Raden Haryanto, better known as Elang Ayi, a family member of the Kasepuhan Palace, as well as a tour guide, stated that in Hindu and Buddhist views, the nine gates in this building reflect the holes in the human body. Furthermore, the concept of the hole is identified as a door or a place of entry and exit, while the body is identified as a house, residence, or shelter. Suwari also said that the architectural concept of this building tends to be following the Hindu-Buddhist concept of Majapahit, it can be seen from the basic structure of the building and the roof shape (joglo-shaped) which we can find in Hindu-Buddhist buildings in Java.

According to the Cirebon philologist and cultural expert, R. A. Opan Safari Hasyim, the architectural concept of this building is a combination of Javanese Hindu-Buddhist, Chinese, and Islamic architectural concepts. The building structure and roof in the Hindu-Buddhist joglo style, thick walls in European (Portuguese) architectural style, foundations, horses, and supporting visual elements in Chinese style, and the number of nine gates are closely related to Islamic concepts. Nawa Gapura Marga Raja is also a building with a symbolic meaning that plays a role in the traditional cultural process of the Cirebon people, which is called "Syafaran-Rebo Wekasan", which means the last Wednesday in the month of Safar, which according to the people of Cirebon, the month of Safar is a month where the unwanted disaster often occurs. Therefore, we are encouraged to pray and do other activities to ward off evil. This building is often used to carry out such events, starting from prayer, to ngirab (traveling by boat through the Kriyan river, starting in front of this building to enter the city). Traditional culture is all elements of culture that are still being passed on, inherited, and continue to be carried out without experiencing much change until now (Yana et al. 2020:208).

Nawa Gapura Marga Raja is a building with thick brick walls plastered and surrounded by walls made of red bricks. Although it seems less integrated with the form and function of the existing building, the brick material fence later became the hallmark of buildings in Cirebon City (Purnama 2013:129). According to Suwari, the caretaker of Nawa Gapura Marga Raja, if you want to make a pilgrimage in Cirebon City, you must start from Lawang Sanga, after that we can make pilgrimages to other places in Cirebon. This is because the concept of Cirebon City is like a whole building, when we enter, it should be through the main entrance. According to Opan Safari, this building is indeed a small part of the Kasepuhan Palace Cirebon complex (see Figure 5), which actually, at first it also served as the entrance to the palace. However, as it progressed, the entrance shifted to the north, precisely in front of the palace square. Nawa Gapura Marga Raja is one of many buildings that is undergoing a process of infrastructure development in the form of a fort that functions as a boat base at the Kriyan River, which is located in the back area of the Kasepuhan Palace (Murdiastomo and Bauty 2020:67). The Kasepuhan Palace area, which was founded in the 14th century, still has recognition from its people. Although the legal aspect of the Kasepuhan Palace no longer has authority over the people, the people still recognize Sultan Sepuh as their king (I. Agustina et al. 2013:39).

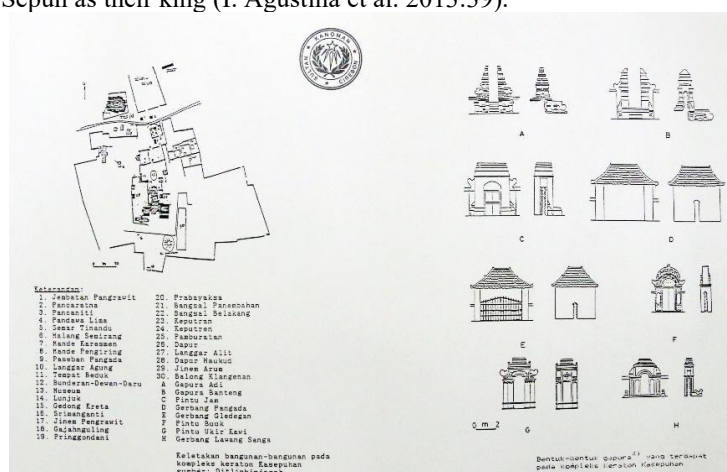


Figure 5. The Floor Plan of the Kasepuhan Palace, along with the positions of several gates

## 5. Conclusion

Karatuan Singhapura is the forerunner to the development of the kingdom in Cirebon. It is evident that the founder of the Cirebon Sultanate was a direct descendant of Karatuan Singhapura, which was none other than the expansion of the Galuh and Pajajaran kingdoms. Prince Cakrabuana, who was the first son of Prabu Siliwangi

from Pajajaran and Nyai Subang Larang from Singhapura, had a big role in establishing the Islamic Kingdom of Cirebon, including building the Pakungwati Palace, which was the forerunner of the Kasepuhan Palace. In 1677 AD, the 5th Sultan of the Kasepuhan Palace, namely Panembahan Girilaya, with the approval of his first and second sons, also the Sultan of Banten, assigned his third son, Prince Wangsakerta, to compose a historical story of the development of the kingdoms in the archipelago.

In carrying out the noble task of his father, Prince Wangsakerta together with Prosecutor Pipitu, in addition to carrying out gotrasawala activities, also initiated the renovation of a building or gate that formerly functioned as a fortress of defense into a gate building to welcome the envoys of the kingdoms who were invited to this activity, the building named Nawa Gapura Marga Raja, which means nine gates for the way of the kings or messengers of the king.

The building has a very high historical value in the development of the Islamic Kingdom in Cirebon. In addition, the building contains noble values related to the cultural concept of the Cirebon people, including; the number nine which corresponds to the number of gates in this building corresponds to the number of holes in humans, then also corresponds to the number of Walis in Java, which indeed at that time Sunan Gunung Jati was crowned the leader of the Nine Walis, then also related to the concept of Lawang Sasanga, or nine holes in the female genitalia, as recorded in the Babone Patarekatan manuscript by Prince Jakmaningrat, from the Keprabonan Palace. Moreover, the number of nine gates in this building is related to the nine dignity of the cultural concept of the Cirebon people. Of all the relations of concepts and values, it is narrowed to the number of one door or hole to goodness.

In addition, the concept of building structure and function contained in the Nawa Gapura Marga Raja is following the concept of Lawang Gede, a gateway to the Kingdom of Singapore which was the forerunner of the Islamic Kingdom of Cirebon. As for the relationship between Lawang Gede and Nawa Gapura Marga Raja, apart from being the gate or entrance for the guests and even envoys from other countries into the palace area, both of them have to go through the water route; Lawang Gede goes through the Ciplasa canal, while Nawa Gapura Marga Raja goes through the Kriyan river using a small boat. The structure of the gate building also has similarities, in addition to the form of thick white walls, as well as the use of wooden doors at the main gate.

The architectural concept of this building is influenced by the values of a very strong Islamic ideology, mixed with Hindu, Buddhist, and Chinese concepts. The structure of the building and roof in the joglo style of the Hindu-Buddhist era, foundations, horses, and supporting visual elements in the Chinese style, also the number of nine gates, are closely related to the concept of Islam ([Wali Sanga/Nine Walis](#)).

This building is placed outside the palace area and is included in a profane building because the palace is a sacred area for the people of Cirebon. However, even though it is located in a profane area, Nawa Gapura Marga Raja is still considered sacred by the Cirebon people, especially the surrounding community, because it contains noble values, the result of the acculturation of religion and culture at that time, as well as symbolic values related to the traditional culture of Cirebon society when communicating with the Creator.

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