

Article

The cult of Muslim Saints *WALI PITU* in Bali.

An Islamic new movement.

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1. Introduction

In Indonesian Islamic society, there is a long history of pilgrimages to the tombs of Islamic saints, which is called *ziarah*.¹ The foremost of these is the pilgrimage of the nine Islamic saints who brought Islam to Indonesia in the 14th century or played an important role in the acceptance of Islam in Java, known as *Tis'atul Auliya'* or *Wali Songo* (where *Wali* means "saints" and *Songo* means "nine"). Their tombs are found in nine locations, primarily in eastern and central Java, and they are viewed as holy sites. It is not difficult to understand the popularity of the worship of Islamic saints and the pilgrimage to the tombs of saints on the island of Java where Islam is the majority religion. However, it is not widely known that there are also seven tombs of Islamic saints, known as *Sab'atul Auliya'* or *Wali Pitu* (where *Wali* means "saints" and *Pitu* means "seven"), on the island of Bali, where 90% of people adhere to Hinduism.

This study discusses the process of the transcription of pilgrimage spaces from Java to Bali, the meaning that they have in Bali, and, above all, their meaning and function in the relationship between Muslim and Hindu adherents. Since the discovery of these tombs of Islamic saints in 1992 in Hindu-majority Bali, many Muslims, primarily from the Java, have started making pilgrimages

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to Bali. *Wali Songo* are known by all Javanese Muslims and it is no exaggeration to refer to them as “heroes”; however, there are seven Islamic saints, *Wali Pitu* in Bali who played an equally important role in Muslim society on the island since the 14th century. Their tombs are found in seven locations in Bali. However, this fact does not receive much attention even among researchers of the island of Bali.

In Java and Bali, there are nine and seven sacred sites, respectively, and these joint pilgrimage spaces can be seen as comparable. This is not by chance; rather, it is thought that the Javanese *Wali Songo* grave system was downsized and “transcribed” to Bali. It was the *kyai* Islamic leader Zaen Arifin Assegaf (“Arifin” hereafter) and his disciples who made this transcription. The transcription of the pilgrimage spaces was performed in two stages by Arifin and his disciples. Therein, certain scenarios existed that enabled the transcription in each stage. The divine revelation and Arifin’s writings are essential to understanding the Arifin scenario. The scenario of the disciples was influenced by the political, economic, and tourism trends of Indonesia. Because of the transcription that was made alongside these scenarios, “*Makam Keramat Wali Pitu Bali*” (the sacred space of a saint’s tomb in Bali) was newly created in Bali, and it has continued to develop.

This paper clarifies the creation process of Islamic holy places in Bali, where Hindus are the majority, and considers the meaning of the pilgrimage to Islamic saint graves and the related religious tourism as a phenomenon of modern religious practice.

2. Social background and summary of prior studies

In the Republic of Indonesia, a country with the world’s largest Islamic population, the island of Bali has a unique majority of Hindu adherents, and the concept of “the people of Bali” is often seen as being synonymous with “Hindu adherents.” However, in reality, since long ago and even today, Muslims have migrated to and settled in Bali from Java and other islands.² In this situation, the 2002 and 2005 terrorist bombings by Jemaah Islamiyah³ led to a reconstruction of the identity of the people of Bali. Because of such terrorism, the tendency to

emphasize the unique customs of Hindu society was aroused, which motivated a heightened awareness of Islam.⁴ Moreover, the Bali provincial government made intervention and operatory movements toward the compulsory acceptance of Bali culture for the minority Muslim community.⁵ The recent changes in Bali society to differentiate and control Islam on the island of Bali have multilateral effects, and concerns are inevitably developing about the possibility of causing religious disputes in the future. However, there is another major phenomenon that is both parallel with and contrastive to such movements to exclude adherents of other faiths: the popularity of pilgrimages to the tombs of Islamic saints on the island of Bali. This is not widely known among Hindu citizens; however, a major social phenomenon is the religious tourism whereby many Muslims visit Bali from Java and other islands to make a pilgrimage to the *Wali Pitu* tombs of the Islamic saints in Bali.

Slama (2014) states that the worship of Islamic saints and pilgrimage of saints (*ziarah wali*) manifests as an entanglement of modern Indonesian economics, politics, and tourism, and it serves as a means of building bridges between adherents of different faiths. Furthermore, looking at global Islamic society, in regional societies of Islam such as Iraq, Iran, and Egypt, the worship of Islamic saints and pilgrimage of saints is commonplace despite some minor differences in the definitions of “pilgrimage” and “saint” and regardless of the sect, be it Shia or Sunni. Regarding the pilgrimage to the tombs of saints by Muslims in Egypt’s vast grave area, “The City of the Dead”, Otoshi (2018) wrote in detail about the saints of the time as well as their miraculous tales and anecdotes, the studies of the pilgrimage texts, and societal functions of the grave area of Cairo. The role of the tombs of saints in Egypt and their positioning in society are not necessarily merely abstractions of religious harmony but are often seen as such. In contrast, Kawano (2009, 2010, 2017) analyzed the religious practice of the people at *Jaram*,⁶ the tombs of Islamic saints in Kerala, south India, and clarified the characteristics of Kerala in south India in the sense of the merger with other religions in a cultural anthropological study.

The foregoing shows that pilgrimages of saints (to the tombs of saints) are practiced in cities around the world where many Muslims live together and that

they are important to these societies. While it may initially seem contradictory that the location of the *Wali Pitu* tombs of Islamic saints, which is the theme of this paper, is found in a Hindu-majority area, discussing the background of this occurrence is worthwhile. Moreover, because the existence of *Wali Pitu* on the island of Bali, where different cultures coexist, shows connectivity that crosses the minority-majority relationships and ethnic/religious relationships, it is essential to the study the relationships between the two in Bali society.

This study first considers the worship/pilgrimage of saints in the world of Islam and on the island of Java. Next, the formation process, functions, and roles of the tombs of Islamic saints in Bali are clarified, and the pilgrimage and worship of saints as a religious practice in modern times is examined in addition to the merger between religion and tourism that causes such a phenomenon.

3. Pilgrimages to the tombs of saints in Java: *Wali Songo*

3.1. Ziarah pilgrimages in Javanese Islam

In general, there is a strong trend in the world of Islam for pilgrimages or visits to holy sites as a religious practice, such as the pilgrimage to Mecca. As this is counted as one of the five pillars and six articles of faith (profession of faith, prayer, alms, fasting, and pilgrimage) that constitute the core Muslim beliefs, the positioning of the pilgrimage is firmly placed. However, from a historical perspective, as with the Mecca pilgrimage, visits to saints or the tombs of saints have long been practiced in Muslim societies around the world. In countries and regions where there are many Muslims, some kind of grave (regardless of differences in shape or name, such as the tomb of a saint, a mausoleum, or a domed grave, as well as regardless of whether the entombed person was a saint) will be constructed, and people will visit or pilgrimage to nearby graves. In Arabic, the visit or pilgrimage to a grave is generally called “*ziyārah*” and is considered as a practice that is distinct from the *haji* main pilgrimage to Mecca. Otoshi (2018: 30-31) states that distinctions between *haji* and *ziyārah* in Islam are not found in other religions; therefore, this classification is a characteristic of Islam. Moreover,

Otoshi indicates that those who are unable to make the Mecca pilgrimage for some reason may make a *ziyārah* to a local grave as a substitution for, and in imitation of, the pilgrimage to Mecca.

Pilgrimages to the graves or tombs of saints in Islamic society in Java are called *ziarah* in Indonesian (originating from the Arabic word *ziyārah*), and such pilgrimages have long been practiced. All over Java, there are numerous Islamic holy sites (caves), graves of saints, tombs of saints, shrines⁷, etc., and pilgrimages to the tombs of saints have long been rooted in people's daily lives. Further, there are many characteristic customs and beliefs, with deceased royalty, religious leaders and village founders (*cikar bakar*) being viewed as saints whose graves were endowed with *barakah*⁸ (a divine blessing), thereby turning them into sites for pilgrimage as well as the worship of saints (Chambert 2002: 138).

Among these, one cannot discuss Java *ziarah* without talking about the pilgrimage to the graves of the nine *Wali Songo*, who played a particularly important role in the acceptance of Islam in Java in the 14th century. The *Wali Songo* are known by all Indonesian people, and in Java, they are still worshiped as saints at present. Their graves, called the graves of the *Wali Songo* saints (*Makam Wali Songo*), are located primarily in eastern and central Java (Figure 1), and they are crowded with pilgrims who consider them as holy sites. The pilgrimage to the graves and the worship of the *Wali Songo* was founded in the era of the Suharto administration (1968-1998), known as the New Order (*orde baru*) (Slama 2014). However, with regard to pilgrimages and shrine or grave visits as a regional custom, Indonesian people have long been accustomed in making pilgrimages to graves. For example, there is a custom of visiting the grave of one's relatives prior to the month of Ramadan, and pilgrimages are made to the guardian spirits (*dhanyang*) by the village chief during the cleansing of the village (*bersih desa*) (Chambert 2002: 133). Furthermore, in 1999, after Abdurrahman Wahid became President, what had been a mere visit to a grave until then was expanded to a pilgrimage to the tombs of saints, which became established as a new phenomenon. During his term as President, Wahid repeatedly made pilgrimages to the *Wali Songo* tombs on many occasions, which was cited as being not a political activity but a practice of Islam, so much so that the people

humorlessly said, “He spends more time talking to dead people (saints) than to living people (the citizens)” (Slama 2014). The pilgrimage to the tomb of a saint by a state ruler gave this practice legitimacy as being without issue for Islam. Later, the pilgrims of the *Wali Songo* pilgrimage greatly increased to include powerful national leaders as well as common people.

In recent years, there has been a surge in pilgrims during national holidays in the Islamic calendar, especially during *Mawlid* (birthday of Muhammad) and *Muharram* (one of the four sacred months). Because of severe congestion, there are some tombs of saints where the visiting time is limited to “up to 6 minutes” (Chambert 2002). Pilgrims have increased alongside improved infrastructure, and growth is continuing. Currently, people typically hire a bus for the village and perform *ziarah* to the tombs of saints. In this regard, Chambert (2002) and Fox (2002) noted this as a new form of group movement. In other words, many people from Java can regularly engage in the practice of *ziarah*, and even people who had never left their own village before were heading to the tombs of saints along with a guide for the purpose of a pilgrimage or a shrine visit. The fact that such movement is possible is an essential topic when discussing modern Indonesia.

Additionally, this kind of *ziarah* practice is being promoted by the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Indonesia’s largest Islamic organization,⁹ which may be another major factor concerning why people are setting out on pilgrimages. Having said that, while pilgrimages and visits to holy sites are practiced not only in Indonesia but also by Muslims located around the world, regardless of whether they are Sunni or Shia, these practices have also been subjected to criticism by scholars of all denominations. The scholars, called Islamic ideologists, strongly criticize the pilgrimage of saints and worship of saints as being *bid’a*, that is, an act that is not found in Islam, or as being *shirk*, that is, idol worship or polytheism. Similarly, even in Indonesia, with regard to *Wali Songo* worship and pilgrimages to the tombs of saints, Muhammadiyah, the second-largest Islamic organization in the country, has also heaped criticism on the practice of *ziarah* as being unlawful from the perspective of respecting *tauhid*, that is, monotheism. However, it should be noted that there has never been any act of violence against the tombs of saints in Indonesia.

3.2. Pilgrimage to the graves of the Wali Songo saints

The following nine people are generally considered to be the *Wali Songo*, who played an important role in the acceptance of Islam in Java:¹⁰ Maulana Malik Ibrahim (Sunan Gresik), Raden Rahmat (Sunan Ampel), Raden Makhdum (Sunan Bonang), Raden Qasim (Sunan Drajat), Ja'far Shadiq (Sunan Kudus), Raden Paku (Sunan Giri), Raden Sahid (Sunan Kalijaga), Raden Umar Said (Sunan Muria), and Syarif Hidayatullah (Sunan Gunung Jati) (titles shown in parentheses). They are said to have propagated Islam while incorporating elements of traditional Javanese arts and customs (*adat*). Therefore, the people of Java are said to have more readily accepted the Islamic faith. (Their biographies are not relevant to the content of this paper and are thus omitted.) They are said to have been active in the 15th century, but even now after so much time, students in Java are taught about them in public schools and obviously in Islamic schools. Further, as their lives have been serialized on TV, for example, they are part of the living history of Muslims in Java. People view them as being important figures in the history and society of Java.

Pilgrimages to the *Wali Songo* tombs tend to increase year after year. Near the tombs of saints, there are endless parking lots, diners, simple lodging facilities, shower rooms, souvenir shops, and more that adorn the towns near the tombs, which are becoming increasingly leisure oriented. Such developments can be clearly seen in the number of pilgrims. In 2014, a total of 12.2million pilgrims visited the *Wali Songo* tombs. Of these, 3000 were foreigners (agr. 2018).¹¹ The graves visited by the largest numbers of pilgrims are those of Raden Rahmat (Sunan Ampel) in Surabaya, with approximately 1.9million visitors, and Raden Sahid (Sunan Kalijaga) in Demak, with approximately 1.6 million visitors. Moreover, the economic effect from the *Wali Songo* tombs as a whole was estimated as 3.6trillion-rupiah (\$260million) in 2014 alone (agr. 2018).¹² The pilgrimage to the tombs of saints not only raises the religious spirituality of Islam but also can be understood as providing touristic elements that allow for cultural experiences and traditions at the holy site, which is considered as one of the

factors behind the increase in pilgrims. The pilgrimage to the *Wali Songo* tombs is an aspect of religious, social, and political life for many Javanese Muslims, and the numbers show that such pilgrimages are part of their daily life.

4. History of the tombs of the *Wali Pitu* saints in Bali: Based on transcription scenarios

4.1. “Discovery” of the *Wali Pitu*

As aforementioned, *Wali Songo* are still revered by Javanese Muslims today. Similarly, in Bali, there are seven Islamic saints, and their graves are found in seven locations on the island. In Java and Bali, there are nine and seven holy sites, respectively, and these two homologous pilgrimage spaces are viewed as being in dialogue with each other (Figure 1). On this basis, it is easy to imagine that there is a strong connection between the Bali *Wali Pitu* tombs and the Java *Wali Songo* tombs. This is not a coincidence; rather, it is thought that the system of the Java *Wali Songo* tombs was downsized, so to speak, and “transcribed” to Bali. This is no simple metaphor. As seen below Arifin, an Islamic leader from Sidoarjo in East Java, and his disciples made this transcription.

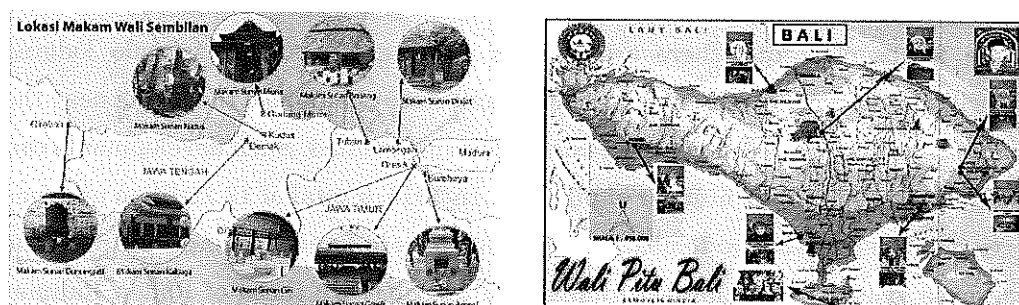


Figure 1. Homologous pilgrimage spaces
(Left: Wali Songo; Right: Wali Pitu)

Source: Left: Angh (2017)¹³, Right: photographed by author

When and how were the Bali tombs of saints discovered? This process begins with a divine revelation received in a dream by Arifin in 1992 (1412 on the Islamic calendar: *Hijri*).¹⁴ According to Arifin’s publication, “*Sejarah Wujudnya Makam*

Sab'atul Aulia WALI PITU di BALI” (A History of the Advent of the Sab'atul Auliya', the Seven Saints of Bali) (2012: 26-27), in 1992 (1412 *Hijri*, month of *Muharram*), Arifin entered a state of deep meditation called *metafisika eksakta*¹⁵ in which he had a dream where he faintly (quietly) heard the “voice of God”(*hātif* : an Arabic term literally meaning “whisper”) such as that of a revelation to Muhammad. This revelation was gradually revealed to Arifin, as shown in the following four *hātif* (sacred messages). These four *hātif* and translations are as following:

First Revelation (*hātif pertama*)

*Wis kaporo nyoto ing telatah Bali iku kawengku dening pitu piro piro
Wali. Cubo wujudno.*

It is abundantly clear that the area of Bali is under the care of the seven saints. Make them manifest.

Second Revelation (*hātif kedua*)

*Ono sawijining pepundhen dumunung ono ing telatah susunaning siti
sasandingan pamujaan agung kang manggon sak duwuring tirta kang
kadarbeni dining suwitaning pandita ojo sumelang.*

There is a holy site in a location atop a high ground beside a great temple that overlooks the water. A priest cares for this place. Fear not.

Third Revelation (*hātif ketiga*)

Waspadakno pitu iku kaperang dadi papat.

Know that these seven saints are in four groups.

Fourth Revelation (*hātif keempat*)

*Pitu kaperang dadi papat iku pangertene, kapisan wis kaparo nyoto,
kapindo istijrot wujud kembar, kaping telu wis lair ning durung
wujud, kaping papat, liyo bangso.*

Seven divided into four means the first is already manifest and known, the second is a miraculous site with double graves, the third is alive and his grave does not yet exist, and the fourth is from overseas.

Regarding the aforementioned revelations, the following study is made on the basis of an interview with the guardian of the site, known as *Juru Kunci*, which was conducted during a field study. In the first revelation, "It is abundantly clear that the area of Bali is under the care of the seven saints" refers to the manifestation of the graves (*wujudno / wudkan*). In the second revelation, the specific locations of the graves are seen. These graves are located in a huge Hindu temple at the water's edge, and the priest resides there as guardian (*Juru Kunci*). This grave was found to be the grave of Ratu Mas Sepuh, which was first discovered in 1992.¹⁶ In the third revelation, it is suggested that the seven graves are divided into four locations. In the fourth revelation, the method of finding them is revealed. The first grave is the aforementioned Ratu Mas Sepuh, the second is the site of the tombs of the twin saints, namely, Habibi Ali Abu Bakar Al Hamid and Sye Maliana Yubuf Al Baghdn Al Maghiribu in Karangasem. The third grave refers to Sayid Ali Bin Umar Bafaqi, but in 1992, when Arifin received the revelation, Sayid Ali Bin Umar Bafaqi was still a living saint; therefore, the grave did "not yet exist." Later, in 1999, after he died and was buried at the age of 117, Arifin stated that he found the grave. The fourth grave refers to that of Syeh Abdul Oqdir Muhammad from China.¹⁷ The revelation only refers to five tombs of saints. However, in reality, after the first five graves were discovered in 1992, Arifin went on to discover a total of seven graves by 1999.

Table 1. Seven Saints and Burial Places

Name of Tomb	Name of Entombed Saint (Name of Saint)	Location	Karomah (miracle)
① Makam Keramat Pantai Seseh	Pangeran Mas Sepuh / Syeh Achmad Chamdun Choirussoleh / Raden Amangkuningrat	Mengwi	Walking on the water, faith-cure.
② Makam Keramat Bedugul	Chabib Umar Bin Maulama Yusuf Al Maghribi	Tabanan	psychokinesis
③ Makam Keramat Kusamba	Chabib Ali Bin Abu Bakar Bin Umar Bin Agil Al Khamid	Klungkung	Manipulating strong winds and fireballs.
④ Makam Keramat Kembar	Syeh Maluana Yusuf Al Baghdi Al- Maghribi	Karangasem	Avoiding the eruption of Mt. Agung in 1963.
⑤ Makam Keramat Kembar	Chabib Ali Bin Zainul Abidin Al Idrus	Karangasem	-----
⑥ Makam Keramat Karang Rupit	Syeh Abdul Qodir Muhammad / The Kwan Lie	Buleleng	Development of the tomb after the saint's death.
⑦ Makama Keramata Loloan	Chabib Ali Bin Umar Abu Bakar Bafaqid	Jembrana	Having lived 117 years. Presence of the tomb being predicted by Arifin

Source: Produced by the author based on Arfin, 2012

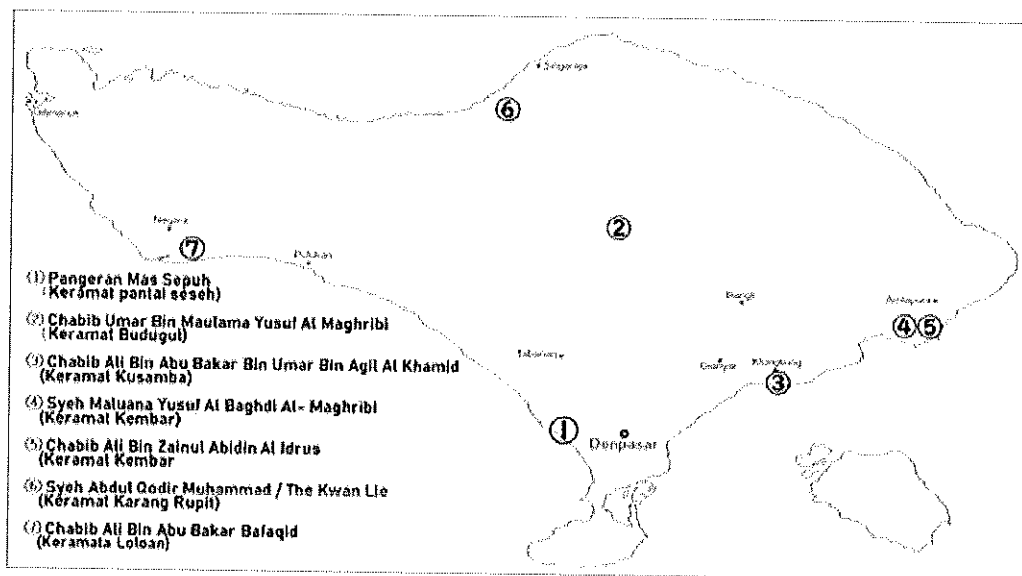


Figure 2. Locations of the *Wali Pitu* tombs
 (Produced by the author)

4.2. Discovery of *Wali Pitu* and their “creation”

In 1999, the last grave was found, and since then it has successfully become and continually developed as a pilgrimage site, which has involved two “scenarios”. There is one scenario in which the *Wali Songo* religious space was transcribed to *Wali Pitu* by Arifin, and another scenario in which, after his death, a tourism space was transcribed there by his disciples. First, the scenario of Arifin will be discussed. Arifin said, “Later, *Wali Songo* pilgrims will take an interest in *Wali Pitu*” (Alifin 2001: 58). It can be understood that he searched for *Wali Pitu* using the *Wali Songo* pilgrimage as a model. This is because when he started the search for *Wali Pitu* in 1992, as stated above, the *Wali Songo* pilgrimage was already established as being legitimate, and it had successfully become a holy site of the tombs of saints.¹⁸ Therefore, by arranging the pilgrimage space in association with *Wali Pitu*, it was thought that *Wali Pitu* would also certainly become legitimate. In addition to this, Arifin used the word “discovery” with regard to *Wali Pitu*, but, simultaneously, engaged in its “creation.” Barth (1993: 178-179) makes reference to the history and legend that the descendants and disciples of

the *Wali Songo* traveled to northern Bali to proselytize. Therefore, since before *Wali Pitu* was discovered, there were Islamic saints (*Wali*) in Bali. However, at that time, the Bali saints had not taken form as objects of worship like the *Wali Songo*. This was when Arifin systematized the *Wali Pitu*. He emphasized the relationship between the two holy sites of Wali Songo and Wali Pitu, thereby “creating” Wali Pitu. Chabib Ali bin Umar Bafaqih of Jemberana was a Hadhrami Islamic scholar of translocal prominence, Khabib Ali bin Zainal Abidin Al Idrus of Karangasem (as his family name indicates) was also a Hadhrami *sayyid* (Slama 2014). The point is that (Bafaqi and Al-idrus) their authority as saints derives from their lineage. Being Hadhrami *sada / sayyid* (descendants of Muhammad) became an important component of the *Wali Pitu*, and by making a connection between *Wali Songo* and *Wali Pitu*, it can be said that a claim was made for the legitimacy of the *Wali Pitu*.¹⁹

Wali Songo and *Wali Pitu* have a homologous relationship, and yet there are also special characteristics to the *Wali Pitu* alone. These characteristics are considered as important factors for the existence of the *Wali Pitu* in Bali Hindu society. First, this can be seen in the fact that the graves are located in a Hindu society. However, the most significant divergence from the *Wali Songo* is the “sense of difference” in the existence of the *Wali Pitu*, that is, the symbolism that represents tolerance and diversity. This point can be confirmed in various forms for each of the *Wali Pitu* graves. Several specific examples of this are introduced below.

4.2.1. Grave of The Kwan Lie (Syeh Abdul Qodir Muhammad) (name of the tomb: Makam Keramat Rupit)

The Chinese saint The Kwan Lie is a figure that is supported not only by Muslims but also by Hindus in northern Bali. For that reason, his grave attracts many Hindu pilgrims in addition to Muslims. Furthermore, many Buddhist pilgrims, including ethnic Chinese Indonesians and Singaporeans, pilgrimage to the tomb as well. That is why there is an incense burner in front of the grave. This grave is a form of blending between China and Islam. In the past, pilgrims at the entrance

to the grave were met with a poster that stated the typical greeting used in the world of Islam (*assalamu 'alaikum*) and greeting in the Balinese language (*rahajeng rawuh*). (This has now been replaced by a new, magnificent signboard.)

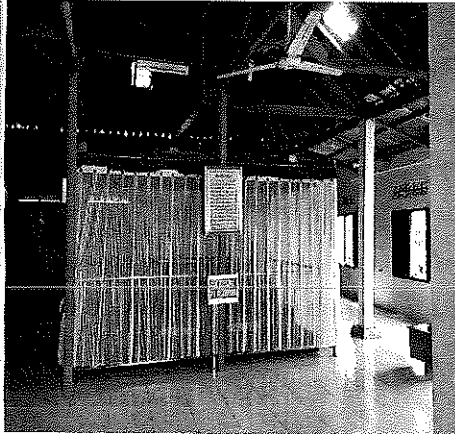


Figure3. The grave of Kwan Lie
(background)
(photographed by author)

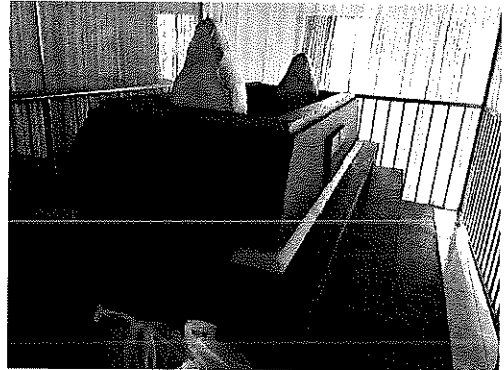


Figure4. The grave of Kwan Lie
(foreground)
(photographed by author)

4.2.2. The grave of Syeh Achmad Chamdun Choirussholeh (name of the grave: Makam Keramat Pantai Seseh)

The *Juru Kunci* at this grave inside the Hindu temple is a Hindu priest (*pemangku*).²⁰ There is a split gateway (*candi bentar*) in front of the grave that is said to divide the realm of the Hindu gods from the realm of humans. Further, the building has Hindu-style architecture (Figure 5). Looking carefully at the grave, the combination of Islam and Hinduism is seen in various forms. First, behind the inner grave, there is a ceremonial umbrella (*tedung*) that is used in Hindu ceremonies. A *tedung* is usually symbolic of bringing the descent of the gods to earth, with red signifying Brahma, black signifying Vishnu, and white and yellow signifying Siva. However, here, the *tedung* is green, which is a holy color in Islam. Moreover, a headdress (*udeng*) that is worn by men during Hindu ceremonies has been placed above the head of the saint's grave (head of the gravestone) (Figure6).



Figure 5. Outside of temple
(photograph by author)

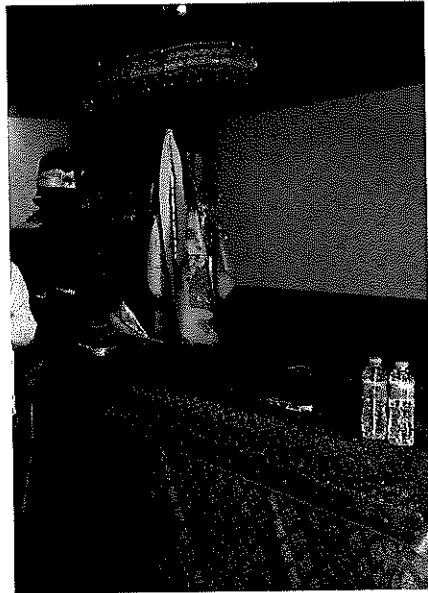


Figure 6. Inside of temple
(photograph by author)

The grave name sign in front of the tomb bears the words “Pura Keramat”. Pura is a Hindu temple and Keramat means a holy place, or an Islamic grave. Translated literally, it means “Hindu temple for the grave of an Islamic saint.” The aforementioned *tedung* and *udeng* are symbolic items that exist in both religions, while the “Pura Keramat” grave sign linguistically denotes a spatial coexistence between the two religions. This represents an idea of similarity between the two religions, both symbolically and linguistically.

4.2.3. The other graves

A poster showing the seven saints can be found at all of the *Wali Pitu* graves (Figure7). It should be noted that on this poster, behind the saints, both a mosque and the *candi bentar* of a Hindu temple are displayed. This emphasizes the double role the site plays as a sacred Islamic mosque as well as a sacred Hindu temple.

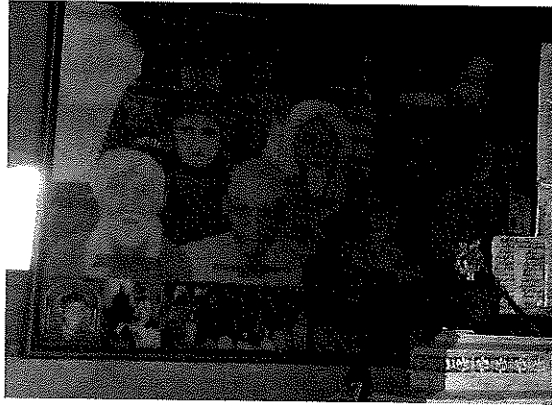


Figure 7. A poster of the seven saints and two holy sites
(mosques and Hindu temples)
(Photograph by the author)

4.3. The role of the *Wali Pitu* in Balinese society

Based on the aforementioned, it can be surmised that Muslims accept adherents of different faiths, and they have a particularly harmonious stance toward Balinese Hindus. Pilgrims come to holy sites from various regions. For Muslims, a holy site (pilgrimage site) can be said to have the function of displaying something that is widely believed in the Islamic faith. The *Wali Pitu* site, in particular, has an additional role in of asserting that different religions can coexist and have a harmonious relationship among Indonesians who come from various regions to practice *ziarah*.

After the Bali terrorist bombing incidents of 2002 and 2005, exclusionary tendencies in Balinese society were strengthened, and there was an increasing insistence on Balinese identity in terms of protecting local culture and going back to what is “truly” Balinese. Manifestations of this can be seen in the revival and reorganization of traditional Bali dances, such as *Tari Rejang*,²¹ the revival of temple visits for ceremonies in formal dresses, the *Ajeg Bali*²² that asserts the preservation of Bali traditions, and so on. However, the fact that the graves of the

Wali Pitu exist alongside Hinduism gives basis to the Muslims who wish to affirm the harmony between religions.

Arifin, by means of divine revelation, tracked down the *Wali Pitu* tombs in Bali and transcribed the system of the *Wali Songo* tombs. While there is a strong connection and homology between the two, there are points of difference in the practice of Islam in Java and Bali. Why did Arifin set about transcribing the *Wali Songo* to an area where the majority of the population adheres to other faiths? The clearest motivation is that he received a divine revelation. Therefore, this was not Arifin's own idea but a definitive order, and Arifin only had to discover locations that already existed. However, behind this, Arifin's own motivations were at work. By creating the *Wali Pitu* using the *Wali Songo* as a model and placing it in a Hindu society, he wished to represent the reasonableness of Islam in not being unilaterally devoted only to itself and to achieve a peaceful representation of the tolerance of Islam. Arifin titled one of the chapters in his book as "*Toleransi dan akulturasi Islam di Bali*" (Islamic tolerance and cultural acceptance in Bali) (2012: 22-24.). This chapter can be summarized by the assertion that "Islamic adherents in Bali always unite and cooperate with the people of Bali and live with respect for them. We are tolerant within the majority community." In this work, Arifin refers to the temple of *Pura Langgar* (*pura*: Hindu temple, *Langgar*: places of worship for Muslim) in Bangli.²³ Although this is not a *Wali Pitu* tomb, it is a location where Hindu ceremonies and Islamic worship take place in the same space. When speaking of harmony between the two religions, Arifin states that this temple is similar to the *Wali Pitu* in that it aptly symbolizes the beauty of Islamic tolerance and cultural acceptance. Attention should be given to the fact that Arifin calls the tolerance of Islam and harmony with Hinduism "something beautiful."

The *Wali Songo* transcription by Arifin, who directly received the revelations, was an act of creation that had the objectives stated above and can also be seen as a religious effort. However, the transcription was not completed by Arifin alone, and after his death (2001), the *Wali Pitu* graves were transformed to incorporate a social context covering politics, the economy, and tourism. From

here, the scenario of the *Wali Songo* transcription by Arifin's disciples begins; this scenario is described below.

After the death of Arifin, his disciples set up Arifin's foundation Al-JAMALI in Bali and Java (the origin of the name of the foundation is taken from the letters of each of the home areas of the founding members—Jawa, Madura, and Bali). The disciples promoted the *Wali Pitu* pilgrimage, transcribing the *Wali Songo* tourism space and creating tourism that included religious practice. The concept of *Wisata Religi*, or religious tourism, introduced by the government, likely had a strong influence on these events. According to Slama (2012), in 2006, the Ministry of Tourism, having discovered the market value of the pilgrimage of saints, set up a project, coordinated the infrastructure, etc. Additionally, religious tourism *Wisata Religi* was introduced as an official type of tourism that accompanied religious practice. Therefore, *ziarah* that has the implication of tourism is positioned as a spiritual religious practice of Islam, which is then logically commercialized. In other words, by promoting the *Wisata Religi* of the government, forms of *ziarah* that combine the aspects of religious practice and tourism/leisure newly appeared in religious practice.

In the 2000s, the Al-JAMALI foundation conducted promotion activities in Java and the other islands as “Wali Pitu: a new form of *ziarah*” (*Fenomena baru ziarah Wali Pitu*) and continued to develop the *Wali Pitu*. By combining tourism and religion, religious tourism on the Hindu island of Bali was promoted. At that time, in Java, the *Wali Songo* pilgrimage was already creating economic market value, and the *Wali Pitu* in Bali used that as a model with the same aim. In front of the tombs of saints, Bali local products (fruits, local foods, and silverwork), Bali traditional medicines (*jamu*), and saint/pilgrimage-related goods (posters and badges of saints, t-shirts, DVDs, etc.) were sold, and low-cost accommodation exclusively for pilgrims were prepared. In this way, the pilgrims who came from Java and the other islands were treated not only as pilgrims but also as domestic tourists. The differences between the *Wali Pitu* pilgrimage and the *Wali Songo* pilgrimage are the commercialization that combines the pilgrimage with beach resorts and tourism in the southern commercial area of Kuta and the strong support for the idea of leisure, which are major characteristics of the *Wali Pitu*

pilgrimage. Muslims from Java and the other islands often view Bali as a tourist location for visitors from overseas. For Islam, Hindu Bali is an unusual place, and there are sometimes concerns about access to places of worship. However, the attraction of the *Wali Pitu* may be the possibility to have a dialogue with the saints (pilgrimage) without such concerns, while visiting a place that is completely different from the Muslim world on a low budget. Indonesians from Java and the other islands now come to the international tourist location of the island of Bali without religious or financial concerns, while domestic Muslims are able to set foot on the Hindu island. This is the *Wali Pitu* "creation and transcription" scenario of the disciples.

Another reason for the success of the *Wali Pitu* tombs may be connected to the origins of Arifin. For the *Wali Pitu* to function and develop as a legitimate site, the origins of the person who discovered the *Wali Pitu* are important. Therefore, the Al-JAMALI foundation turned Arifin into a personage with a special significance as a descendant of Muhammad(*sada*). In 2006, the foundation changed his name from Toyib Zean Arifin to Habib Toyib Zean Arifin Assegaf, making him a deity.²⁴ Many pilgrims visit the grave of Arifin for ziarah, although he was not a saint himself.

5. Conclusion

Arifin transcribed the *Wali Songo* "religious space" to Bali. After his death, his disciples transcribed the *Wali Songo* "tourism space" to Bali. These are the two paths by which the pilgrimage space was created and transcribed from Java to Bali. In this paper, the two paths have been presented as "scenarios", and the site has been discussed from both perspectives. By means of the transcription outlined in these scenarios, tombs of Islamic saints and a pilgrimage space were newly created in a Hindu-majority area. Something that was a pure religious practice was recreated and converted into a product with religious significance by incorporating the strong influence of market principles. A powerful factor in modern culture is the combination of religious practice and leisure (tourism).

Makam Wali Pitu Bali, the pilgrimage to the tombs of saints in Bali, satisfies both the religious and leisure requirements and is set to make a huge contribution to the new development of Muslim and Halal tourism in modern Indonesia.

Until today, Hindu-Islam relations have been described as a relationship of harmonious (peaceful) coexistence. Through the study of the *Wali Pitu* tombs of Islamic saints, which has been the subject of this paper, it has been clarified that this coexistence has been realized through the efforts of the Muslim minority to integrate with Hindu society or through cultural transformation. Bali Muslims claim that they are members of Balinese society, and their concessions to Balinese society can be seen in the *Wali Pitu* tombs and the *Wali Pitu* pilgrimage.

In addition to this, the harmonious relationship between different religions achieved by the *Wali Pitu* is seen at the locations of the graves, in the descendants of the *Wali Songo* disciples, and in the guardian (*Juru Kunci*). For example, the graves are found in villages where there are only Hindu adherents and in villages of both Muslims and Hindus. Two of the seven *Wali Pitu* locations are in Muslim residential areas, while the rest are managed in connection to Balinese society. These facts are the basis to the coexistence in Hindu-majority Bali. Additionally, with regard to increasing Islamization in Indonesia, the acceptance of the *Wali Pitu* in Balinese society has the function of appealing to Islamic adherents from Java and other islands who come to Bali on pilgrimages. In recent years, in Indonesia, religious conservatism is spreading throughout society, and attention is being given to the issue of social intolerance. Presently, in comparison to the *Wali Songo* pilgrimage, the *Wali Pitu* pilgrimage is still at a small scale. However, if the *Wali Pitu* pilgrimage continues to expand, a topic for future studies will be the question of whether the pilgrimage will work as a force against radical Islam through a representation of tolerance and diversity, or whether the expansion of the pilgrimage to the tombs of saints will be seen in Balinese society as something to beware because of the expansion of Islam, causing a further strengthening of Bali identity.

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¹ In this paper, words, vocabulary, and ethnic terms that have a special meaning are included in the original language (Indonesian, Balinese, or Javanese).

² Islands other than Java are referred to collectively as the “other islands.”

- ³ These crimes were attributed to the Indonesian radical Islam party, Jemaah Islamiyah (“JI”).
- ⁴ For example, Kurasa (2009: 89) suggests that the occasional minor skirmishes between communities actually tended to produce tense relationships.
- ⁵ There are even reports stating that *candi bentar* (Balinese Hindu split gateways) were constructed in Muslim villages for the purposes of Lomba Desa (village contest sponsored by the Republican Government) or Lomba Desa Adat (traditional village contest sponsored by the Provincial Government) (Setia 1994: 409).
- ⁶ A word originating in Arabic used in Kerala that refers to the tombs of Islamic Sufi saints or martyrs (Kawano 2017: 3).
- ⁷ As for the tombs of saints, various names are used depending on the origin of the tomb and the saint, such as *makam*, *pundhen*, and *keramat*, but all of them are viewed as sacred. In this paper, all of them are referred to with the general term “tombs of saints” (*keremat*).
- ⁸ Specifically, a supernatural power bestowed on saints by Allah.
- ⁹ According to Slama (2014: 114), Wali Songo pilgrimage tours are often planned by the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU).
- ¹⁰ The nine saints named above are generally seen as the Wali Songo based on the Javan manuscripts, “*Babad Tanah Jawi*” (Imanaga 1987: 2-3, Hirose 2013: 228-229). However, there is no consistency in the information on who should be included in the Wali Songo, and according to historical records, there are sometimes more than nine saints who are included in the Wali Songo. This is why it has been indicated that the name “the nine saints” is more important than how many Wali Songo there actually were, or who they were (Arai 2011:162-166).
- ¹¹ “Bulan Ramadan Waktu Tepat Wisata Ziarah Walisongo,” CNN Indonesia, 17 May 2018. <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/gaya-hidup/20180517125745-269-298934/bulan-ramadan-waktu-tepat-wisata-ziarah-walisongo> (last access: March 20, 2020)
- ¹² Ibid.
- ¹³ “Manhaj Dakwah Wali Songo Sebagai Pendekatan Dakwah – Wacana Keharmonian Islam Nusantara Di Sabah” Blog, Angah Sunan, 29 May 2017. <http://angahsunan.blogspot.com/2017/05/manhaj-dakwah-wali-songo-wacana.html> (last access: October 19, 2020)
- ¹⁴ It was common in ancient Arabia for the discovery of graves to be made by means of a “revelation” in a dream. The speech of a holy person who appears in a dream (often Muhammad) had great significance and “dreams” played a major role. The graves discovered in this way are normally referred to as being visionary tombs of saints. There are various holy sites located around the world apart from these, such as skull sites (discovery of skulls) and relic sites (discovery of hidden treasures) (Otoshi 2018: 92-100).
- ¹⁵ In addition to the state of deep meditation known as *metafisika eksakta*, the inspiration known as *petunjuk bathiniya* was used in search for the graves.
- ¹⁶ Otherwise known as Syeh Acmad Chamdun Choirussholeh/Raden Amangkuningrat.
- ¹⁷ Name in Chinese: The Kwan Lie.
- ¹⁸ According to Otoshi (2018), tombs of saints and saints do not always have support, and there are cases in which the creation of a saint or their tomb ends in failure when religious merit cannot be achieved for reasons such as suspicion over the discovery or the anonymity of the entombed. Even if a site is asserted to be the grave of a saint because it was seen in a dream, it will not be made the grave of a saint if the saint is not identified and if their story is not developed.
- ¹⁹ There are some differences between the writings of Arifin and the folklore of local areas with regard to historical anecdotes on the saints, but other texts should be referred to concerning this.
- ²⁰ Of the total six grave sites, Muslims who have lived in Bali since long ago have acted as Juru Kunci at five of them. Only the grave above (Syeh Acmad Chamdun Choirussholeh) has a Juru Kunci who is a Hindu priest from Bali.

²¹ There are various types of *Rejang* that have been reorganized as *Rejang Renteng*, which will be the ceremonial dance in Bali from now on.

²² This used to be an exercise to assert the preservation of the traditions of Bali. However, since the terrorist incident, it has become an exercise to limit the Indonesian people that come from Java and other islands to increase security in Bali.

²³ As a Hindu temple, it is a temple to Pura Dalam (temple of the dead) that deifies the God Siva. In the case that ceremonies or holidays from the two religions are scheduled for the same day, they are held as joint Hindu/Islam events.

²⁴ However, in the writings of Arifin, there is no reference to his genealogy. Moreover, after the death of Arifin, his writings were published in four volumes, with corrections and revisions made by his disciples. However, no reference is made in this essay regarding the content, as it is not within the scope of this essay.

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