

## **BOROBUDUR TEMPLE AND THE SACRED HEART SHRINE: Studying the Buddhism and the Catholic Pilgrimage Sites In South Java**

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### **Abstract**

This article examines pilgrimage sites in Indonesia's religious traditions that play an important role in emphasizing the inclusive dimension of Indonesian people in general. This study examines the dimensions of religious pilgrimages in the religious traditions of the dominant religions in Indonesia, namely Buddhism and Catholicism. The research was carried out in the context of Central Java, namely Borobudur Temple as a Buddhist site and the Temple of the Sacred Heart as a Catholic site. This study reveals several aspects of the similarities and differences in the dimensions of pilgrimage sites according to both traditions. In conclusion, this article shows that Indonesian society is a society that is open and accepts the presence of religious sites in public spaces and accepts the functions of these religious sites as part of tourism.

**Keywords:** Borobudur Temple, The Temple of Sacred Heart of Jesus, Buddhism, Catholic, Pilgrimage Sites

### **Abstrak**

Artikel ini membahas situs ziarah dalam tradisi keagamaan di Indonesia yang berperan penting dalam menekankan dimensi inklusif masyarakat Indonesia pada umumnya. Kajian ini mengkaji dimensi ziarah agama dalam tradisi keagamaan agama dominan di Indonesia, yaitu Budha dan Katolik. Penelitian ini dilakukan dalam konteks Jawa Tengah yaitu Candi Borobudur sebagai situs Budha dan Candi Hati Kudus sebagai situs Katolik. Penelitian ini mengungkap beberapa aspek persamaan dan perbedaan dimensi situs ziarah menurut kedua tradisi tersebut. Kesimpulan dari artikel ini adalah bahwa masyarakat Indonesia adalah masyarakat yang terbuka dan menerima keberadaan situs religi di ruang publik serta menerima fungsi situs religi tersebut sebagai bagian dari pariwisata.

**Kata Kunci:** Candi Borobudur, Candi Hati Kudus, Buddhisme, Katolik, Situs Ziarah

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Chris Park (2005) in his book *Religion and Geography*, mentioned that religion and geography became one of the discussions in religious studies that still received little attention. Eventhough the field of study is essentially emphasizing the reason religion is so strong in some places related to the phenomenon of sacred place and sacred space. Kim Knott (2005) affirmed pilgrimage as part of a study on the way in which religious geography discusses the theoretical point of view between religion, space and territorial (488). The idea of the sacred place originates from the division of the world to the sacred and profane. In fact, the world religions create a specific religious geography in which the attitude and behavior of believers is influenced by the sacred place. Pilgrimage is one of the manifestations of the importance of 'sacred place' for believers (Park, 2005). Chris Park further explained that many religions describe a particular place as a sacred and this depiction often encourages the pious people to visit the holy sites in pilgrimage and holds the responsibility of religious authorities to protect their place for the benefit of future generations.

The article would like to draw on the differences and similarities between the depiction of Pilgrimage in Buddhism and Catholic sites in central Java. This article is expected to be specifically able to convey a typical Javanese pilgrimage site. What is the uniqueness of the pilgrimage practice in that place in Indonesia and how its significance for social relations. This paper focuses on comparisons in two religious traditions with a view to deriving the theological ideas as basis understanding of religious practice. Therefore, this article will not examine much of its religious texts but how religious practices live in the evolving cultural changes of society.

## 2. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 2.1. Studying Pilgrimage: From Traditional to Post-Modern Perspective

According to the dictionary of *Collins English Dictionary* (1979), pilgrimage is “a journey to a shrine or other sanctuary 'and a' pilgrim 'as a traveler to the shrine as an activity of his religious submission” (258). Such a journey often involves a large number of people, who travel long distances with a wide variety of intents and purposes, often for special-aunt festivals. Pilgrimage is of a certain nature to the universal religion and ethnic religion, and is found in various religions of the world (Park, 2005).

In the perspective of pilgrimage studies, one of the most widely cited scholars in this pilgrimage study is Victor and Edith Turner in his book *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture* (1978) affirms that in the traditional view, the motivation of people doing pilgrimage is to enjoy spiritual satisfaction and comfort. On the other hand, it also means that many people will do such a purification of the soul and the promise of the fulfillment of desired goals when they visit the sacred sites. Likewise, many people doing pilgrimage is because of the reasons to fulfill religious requirement or obligation (such as pilgrimage to Mecca for Muslims) and pilgrimage which is a willingness to promise and oath like the early Christians who traveled to Palestine and Rome. Turner argue that the hierarchical social relationships of their structured society disappeared and

switched into normative communities that encourage social interaction among participants. On the journey and to the sacred sites, pilgrim enjoys an undifferentiated and unstructured community of parallel people (Turner, 1973).

In contrast, Coleman and Eade (2004) refer a pilgrimage through a largely place-centred approach to the culture of sacred travel. Recent studies have returned from focusing on the place on the movement to, within and from places, on the journey itself and on its mobility. Coleman and Eade attempted to reframe pilgrimage in the context of several ideas that interconnected one another from the movement. Coleman and Eade attempts to formulate pilgrimage in several frames: The term 'movement as performative action', pilgrimage can be seen as bringing transformations of the various kinds which then become the idea of the sacred space. 'Movement as embodied action' sees pilgrimage as producing effects physical, practices and experiences. This emphasizes the spiritual journey, they are willing to walk away and feel the experience of the journey rather than towards the destination of pilgrimage through the fastest route. In the context of local conceptions of mobility, place and space are referred to as 'movement as part of a semantic field', there is no fixed, original idea of movement which may be described to explain the different pilgrims and pilgrimage experiences. 'Movement as a metaphor' is not important to question whether the physical journey really took place. They refer to the journey of the soul, the inner pilgrimage, through the cosmos, and live as the search for all the metaphorical uses of the movement.

According to Eade and Sallnow as quoted by Chris Park (1994), the traditional view of pilgrimage to a sacred place is understood as “the power of a miraculous shrine is seen to derive solely from its inherent capacity to exert a devotional magnetism over pilgrims from far and wide, and to exude of itself potent meanings and significances for its worshippers... its power is internally generated and its meanings are largely predetermined (Eade & Sallnow, 1991; Park, 1994). While in postmodern view “a pilgrimage shrine, while apparently emanating an intrinsic religious significance of its own, at the same time provides a ritual space for the expression of a diversity of perceptions and meanings which the pilgrims themselves bring to the shrine and impose upon it. As such, a cult can contain within itself a plethora of religious discourses (Eade & Sallnow, 1991; Park, 1994).

One traditional practice of understanding of Pilgrimage practice is written by Chan Khoon San in his book *Buddhist Pilgrimage* which contains the experience of the trip to the 8 holy places in Buddhism. According to him, in Buddhism, understanding plays a key role in the process of one's spirituality. So, for the purpose of pilgrim, it is imperative to understand that a pilgrimage is essentially a spiritual journey in veneration of the Blessed One. He stressed that veneration cleans up one's thoughts, words and deeds and through that activity, many nobles qualities can be developed.

Meanwhile, Hinmon in his post-modern perspective classifies the anthropological approach to multi-cultural interaction in the sacred space. In his typology, he divides the holy journey focused on individual motivation, and the characteristics of the sacred journey. According to Hinmon, there is a wide spectrum of his research experience in Tibet that reflects the extent to which

differences in hopes and motivations bring people to pilgrimage trips in Tibet. There is a difference between contemporary pilgrimage and traditional pilgrimage practices in Tibet. According to Morinis's research as quoted by Hinmon, (2002), most pilgrims can be categorized into one or more of the pilgrimage types that include: initiatory, wandering, devotional, instrumental, normative, and obligatory journey (Hinmon, 2002).

The above discussion confirms that in the traditional view, meaning merely arises from the internal space of the place itself which emanates and suppresses its meaning for pilgrims not from the pilgrim itself, whereas in postmodern expressions not only derive from the value of religion itself but also comes from the diverse perceptions and meanings that pilgrims carry and have against the shrine itself. From this perspective, a broader reading of the religious significance of the contemporary pilgrimage phenomenon is possible.

## **2.2. Borobudur Temple and the Sacred Heart Shrine**

In order to trace the legitimacy of Buddhist and Catholic teachings on pilgrimage, it should be emphasized that the legitimacy of the rituals performed and the cultural legitimacy of the communities surrounding the pilgrimage sites. This legitimacy is important because that is where we can know and understand the position of pilgrims in these two religions.

In the history of Buddhist pilgrimage, the earliest rules and monastic life schemes of Buddhists are described in the tripitaka, in which there is virtually no acknowledgment of the obligations and benefits of pilgrimage. However, in practice, the initial interpretation of the spiritual values of Buddhism, especially the sacred place, has been done. Buddhist relics are enshrined more than commemorate the master. The legacy of the Buddha is also the basis for the legitimacy of government. The kings who keep the relics are held responsible for the relics. The earliest centers of Buddhist pilgrimage are the places that are associated with the life and teachings of the great master (Buddhis Studies, 2008).

According to the interpretation of the Vinaya Sutra known as the 'Lung-Treng-Tik' di Tibetan by first Dalai Lama (1392-1474), the Buddha said to have emphasized several times about the importance of pilgrimage.

"Bhikkhus, after my passing away, all sons and daughters who are of good family and are faithful should as long as they live, go to the four holy places and remember: here at Lumbini, the enlightened one was born; here at Bodh Gaya he attained enlightenment, here at Sarnath he turned the wheel of Dharma; there at Kusinara he entered Parinirvana. Bhikkhus, after my passing away there will be activities such as circumambulation of these places and reverence to them. Thus it should be told to them for they, who have faith in my deeds and awareness of their own, will travel to higher states. After my passing away, the new Bhikkhus who come and ask of the doctrine should be told of these four places and advised that a pilgrimage to them will help purify their previously accumulated Karmas and actions." (Maha Parinibbana Sutta 5.16–22).

The idea of a pilgrimage came from the Buddha himself. The origin of the division of spiritual work may be found in the ancient text 'Mahaparinnibbana Sutta' from 'Digha Nikaya' which was articulated within 100 years of the Buddha's death. Before his death, the Buddha advised in this 'Mahaparinnibbana'

that the pious disciples should visit this place and look upon them with the feelings of reverence, reflecting on certain events of the life of the Buddha associated with those places. In the time of the king of Aasoka, there were additional four temples of Savatthi, Sankasia, Rajagaha and Vesali that were closely associated with the Buddha and described his miracles, were added to the pilgrimage itinerary. That is then what makes the eight places as the Eight Great Places of Pilgrimage (San, 2002).

Similar to Buddhism, Pilgrimage practice can be traced from the normative perspective of Catholic religious teachings. Catholic has a long history as part of abrahamic Religion. Pilgrimage in Catholic can be traced back to the original place that was built is Jerusalem (c.a 957 B.C.). All male Jews are required to dedicate themselves to the three major feasts: those are Pesach (the Feast of Unleavened Bread, or Passover), Shavu'ot (the Feast of Weeks, or Pentecost), and Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles, or Festival of Ingathering), as per God's ordinance in Deuteronomy 16:16-17 (Eleonore, 2010).

The earliest record that can be traced in the Bible is Pilgrimage which refers to the 4th century before the birth of Jesus, when the aristocrats and people of other religions, more precisely the Jewish men traveling to the holy land Jerusalem on Pilgrimage three times a year, to celebrate the festival. (Enongene and Griffin 2017, 24). In medieval times, many people who travel on Pilgrimage use symbols such as a scallop shell or a special head cover that marks them as pilgrims. Historically, traditional pilgrimage activities were associated with penance. Some Catholics believe that Pilgrimage is a social process as well as an interior and takes place either on an individual or in a group context.

Early Pilgrims character as written in Genesis (23: 4) mentioned that when Abraham told him "I am a stranger and sojourner with you identifying himself as a traveller on pilgrimage, Jacob, speaking to Pharaoh in Genesis (47: 9), stated:

"The days of the years of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage. Further reference to pilgrimage occurs in the Book of Psalms (39: 12): Hear my Prayer and my request, Lord Jehovah, and give heed to my tears and do not be silent, because I am an inhabitant with you and a Pilgrim, like all my fathers. For Christian, perhaps the clearest demonstrations of pilgrimage are evident in the life of Jesus, as He Followed his parents on pilgrimage to Jerusalem: Every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover. When he was twelve years old, they went up for the feast, according to the custom of the feast. When they had fulfilled the days (of the feast), his parents started home, unaware that the boy Jesus had stayed behind in Jerusalem (Luke 2: 41-43).

The basic geographical character of this religious pilgrimage activity remains uncertain. The location of pilgrimage within the Buddha is separated as well as the shape of his movements. Surely, pilgrimage to a different location is different because each community is influenced by its place and history. In its development, the practice of pilgrimage in Buddhism continues to develop. According to Holt when doing research on Pilgrimage in Sinhalese, Sri Lanka, confirms that throughout Buddhist history in the South and Southeast Asia,

Buddhists have practiced their religious pilgrimage to sacred places according to the preserved tradition of the Buddha's physical heritage. Holt proves that during the formative period of Theravada Buddhism in Sri Lanka, it provided a starting point for the spiritual orientation of many lay traditions. As a focused monastic community and learns to read and interpret the Buddhist teachings that exist in 'dhammakaya'. The laity began to take the heart of the Buddha through the worship of the remains of the physical body of Buddha or 'rupakaya' (Holt, 1982). As for Catholics, Pilgrimage is not practiced universally by Catholic Christians, but in its history there are some important places for Catholics. In Catholic Christianity, Rome has been referred to as a City of God (Leppakari, 2017). In addition, in its development, several other popular Pilgrimage sites are hiking the Camino de Santiago, and in the context of organized groups such as tour groups to Rome, Lourdes, Velankanni and Fatima and other famous places in Marian's sanctuary in Europe (Stoddard, 2010).

### **2.3. Pilgrimage Sites as Sacred Sites**

Pilgrimage in the world's major religions does not merely concentrate their pilgrimage to truly recognized and holy places globally. But pilgrimage has its local dimensions. Here it is important to read the historical setting of the entry of Buddhism and Catholicism in Indonesia, especially in its development in central Java.

In the wider context of Indonesia, Buddhism has a fairly long historical background in Indonesia. History records that the Buddha was in his golden age in the Sailendra dynasty of Mataram (mid-eight to mid-ninth century), Srivijaya (seventh to thirteenth century) and Majapahit (thirteenth to fifteenth centuries). In Java, Buddhism appeals to the decline for losing its aristocratic power. By the time the Dutch had fully established their authority on Java, Buddhism almost completely vanished from view as a living religion. Certainly the Dutch did not classify it as one of the religions practiced by the Javanese. The latter is regarded as Muslim or Christian: there is no such alternative as syncretistic Jawi Religion of Javanese or Buddhist Religion from Tengger being recognized. However, in the mid-20th century, Buddhism once again established itself as a living religion (Brown, 2008).

Similar with Buddhism, South Central Java is quite unique because of the important presence of Christian Catholicism and the dynamics that distinguish it from the intersection with Javanese and Islamic cultures. The Catholic presence in this area is based on the earliest period of the Catholic mission under Dutch Jesuit Missionaries in the late 19th and 20th centuries (Laksana, 2014). Central Java marks the point of richness and dynamics of religious and cultural diversity among the four elements of Islamic presence, the center of Javanese culture (with various elements of early local Hindu, Buddhism and indigenous beliefs and practices), the Sultan's crucial role and the important presence of Christianity and Catholic (Laksana, 2014).

Therefore, the selection of this location is taken in the middle of Java. It is in this area that the indigenous Javanese in their history and spiritually connected with each other. On the religious side of the center, this is an important area for the presence of important and fundamental Catholic and Buddhist sanctuaries in

Java as well as Islam as the greatest religion. On a wider scale, this area has various concentrations for other religious shrines such as Hinduism through its Prambanan Temple, as well as Buddhism with the presence of its Borobudur temple. Looking at such a fact, it is impossible to depict all pilgrimage sites for religions but this will be chosen only pilgrimage sites in Buddhism and Catholicism.

Meanwhile, Borobudur as popular tourism object in Indonesia is widely visited by various people from different religious backgrounds. Borobudur was built between the 8th and the 9th century, and represents the biggest monument known in the Buddhist world. According to Kandah Jaya, the founding of Borobudur is believed to be influenced by the transmission of Buddhists in the medieval period who undertook a mission through a sea route known as pilgrimage activities, at that time India was often regarded as a source or donor and far east as a destination or recipient. Other places between these two places or areas are considered as transitory points in between long journeys. And the center of Java is between this place. The study of Borobudur allows us to capture the historical portraits of the Buddha in Java at the beginning of its construction. This opinion reinforces the important position of Borobudur as the center of the International Buddhas in the history of the Buddha's transmission of the sea route. It is also important in providing perspective in Buddhist development in Indonesia as well as the development of the Buddha as a whole (Kendahjaya, 2004). According to Setyawati Soelaiman, Borobudur was the center of teaching Buddhism in the 8th century AD. This condition allows the Javanese to build Borobudur (1981). Until now, Borobudur itself is a center of Buddhist studies that affect many pilgrims from Indonesia and abroad.

According to Hariani Santiko, Buddhism's teachings on tolerance and diversity can also be seen in fragments of karmawibhangga carved on one wall of the foot of Borobudur temple. explains that the word "karma" means "deeds" and "wibhangga" means "plot, wave". According Santiko, the relief is intended to describe the Law of Karma, the flow of human life as a result of his past life behavior. In Buddhism, karma applies to all people, be it kings, officials, priests, as well as people who do not have any titles. In his findings, while conducting studies on reliefs and temple remains in 1973, Santiko concluded that the "great religious tolerance" of the Śailendra kings. Although the king is a Buddhist Mahāyana, he allows the people and their subordinates to embrace religion according to their choice.

Likewise, as a place of religious pilgrimage, the important annual festivals still held in Borobudur Temple is the commemoration of Waisak Day. Every year thousands of Buddhists and hundreds of monks from all over the world took part in the procession. This activity is mainly done in the form of walking as far as 3.5 kilometers from Mendut to Borobudur. Procession followed prayers at Mendut Temple, led by monks from 14 councils of Indonesian Buddhist Council (Walubi) at 3 PM. Waisak Day is an occasion for Buddhist to practice real Buddhism. While the ceremony of Waisak in the courtyard of Borobudur temple at 2:15:39, remember the three important events of the Buddha that is at birth, get enlightenment and died (*National Geographic*, 2014).

Similar to the historical fact of the uniqueness of the Borobudur site as a relic of Buddhism above, the Church of Ganjuran or known as The Sacred Heart Shrine can also be understood in the same context. This Church is located in Ganjuran, Bambanglipuro, Bantul about 17 kilometers south of Yogyakarta City. This church complex stands on 2.5 hectares of land including parking lots, temples, churches, rectory, and several other buildings. This Church was built in 1924 by two brothers from Holland Joseph Smutzer and Julius Smutzer. They are the managers of the Gondang Lipuro sugar factory. This early development was helped by architects from the Netherlands, J Yh Van Oyen. In 1927, to perfect this place made a temple called the Temple of the Sacred Heart, with the decoration of the lotus flower and Jesus statue with Javanese clothes (Kunjana, 2016). What is interesting about this temple is the inculturation of Catholic and Javanese culture. The inculturation of European, Javanese, Buddhist and Hindu Cultures is embodied in the Temple of Ganjuran Kudus Heart, its acculturation form is patterned Hindu-Javanese architecture (Mataram and Majapahit) (Krestanto, 2015). The Sacred Heart's important festival is a big religious feast held on Sunday in June on the Sacred Heart's solemnity. Historically, these festivals and processions have become part of popular practice in Javanese Catholicism (Laksana, 2014).

#### 2.4. Sacred Sites as Symbol of Inclusive Dimension of Religion in Indonesia

An interesting phenomenon in the context of the tourism tradition in Indonesia is that there are many tourist attractions which are sacred sites in certain religious traditions but have become the main attraction for various religious adherents. Two of the most popular pilgrimage sites in Indonesia is the Borobudur Temple and Sacred Heart Shrine. the Director General of Buddhism in Ministry of Religious Affairs, Dasikin said that Borobudur Temple was originally not a tourism place, but originally a worship place for Buddhist. In addition, this temple became a destination visited by many tourists (*Kompas*, 2004).

Based on my personal experience when visiting this place, many people from various religious backgrounds visit and make pilgrimages to the Borobudur. I found that there are many people who are not the Buddhist doing pilgrimages and performing rituals inherent to Borobudur. In my interview, several people admitted that they believed that Borobudur did not only belong to a certain religion or Buddhism. According to Pak Sucoro, Borobudur has become a sacred place in his community. He said that their ancestors had made Borobudur a place to perform various rituals. Pak Sucoro and his community held the cultural festival which named as "Ruwat Rawat Borobudur". He admitted that what they did as kind of respect the Borobudur as the sacred places (Pak Sucoro & Team, Interview, 2018).

The similar image is also represented in religious activity in Sacred Heart Shrine. An interesting procession of this activity is a communal meal held two days or a day before the celebration. This joint meal party was attended by people from various religious backgrounds who generally came from Java. Joint prayer activities led by leaders of various religious representatives. According to Laksana's note, the celebration of a joint meal followed by people from this



religious background strengthens the brotherhood of faith, it is also held as a form of preserving Javanese culture. More than 300 people are following this procession, of which 100 are Muslim (2014, 160). At the Sacred Heart Shrine, every Thursday to Sunday at 5.30 WIB the Church will hold Mass in Javanese and chants accompanied by gamelan. The daily Mass is held in the Church. On Christmas Eve and every Saturday afternoon, Mass is held at the temple grounds every 17.00 (Brisik. id, 2004).

Here, it can be equated that both places have special annual special rituals and if in the days usually visitors come from various circles. This place then became the most visited as a place of pilgrimage in Java, especially pilgrims who come from outside these two religions. No matter what religion, many people visit and do their religious activities in these sites. The pilgrimage activity in sacred sites from particular religion is not always identical or limited for the religious background as many public frequently assume it. From the sacred sites in Buddhism and Catholics, many people each other coalesce and transform their ritual either individually or communally. This perspective is also argue against the perspectives which always identified the religious sites which is only belong to the adherent of the religion where it is known publicly.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

Buddhists not only come to Borobudur but also visit the Holy Sacred Heart Church because of the religious values that are united there. In addition, the people who come on pilgrimage to Borobudur also do so. It turns out that sacred and sacred places can be an arena for interfaith gatherings and diverse community backgrounds in Christian and Buddhist religions. This study restore the religious spirit in society that they may not come to the mosque in urban areas, not come to church or other places of worship according to their own belief. However, the change of our society can be seen from the extent to which they visit historical sights that have sacred values.

On pilgrimage sites in Buddhism and Catholic in Indonesia shows that Pilgrimage practice is able to give colorful plurality of diversity in society in Indonesia. Historically there has never been an issue of destruction of pilgrimage sites in Indonesia rather than the destruction of other places of worship. Typical values of pilgrimage are actually able to make people aware that the sacred space and sacred place at this time occupies an important position in asserting the diversity of society.

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