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**Sacred Spaces, Shared Souls: Interfaith Harmony  
at Taman Kemaliq Lingsar, Lombok, Indonesia**

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## SACRED SPACES, SHARED SOULS: INTERFAITH HARMONY AT TAMAN KEMALIQ LINGSAR, LOMBOK, INDONESIA

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### Abstract

*This study examined the phenomenon of socio-religious interaction between the Hindu and Islamic communities of Wetu Telu in Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar, Lombok. Using a qualitative approach, this study aimed to understand how Taman Kemaliq becomes an acculturation space that facilitates and reflects interfaith harmony. The research uncovered shared histories and religious practices that affirmed communal identity and religious tolerance through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and document analysis. The results showed that Taman Kemaliq is a place for religious rituals and a symbol of harmony and collective identity. Simultaneous religious practices, such as rarak kembang waru ceremonies for Muslims and odalan ceremonies for Hindus, provide a platform for both communities to express their own beliefs and traditions while strengthening social relations between communities. This research found that Taman Kemaliq was a sacred place that united differences through ritual practices and strengthened tolerance and harmonious interaction between religious communities in daily life. The study offered new perspectives on religious and cultural practices as tools of inclusive social development and their potential to inspire interfaith harmony. These findings are important for anthropological, theological, and cultural studies, and they show that Taman Kemaliq can be a real example of multicultural societies managing diversity and creating harmony.*

**Keywords:** *Harmony; Hinduism; Islam Wetu Telu; Socio-Religious Interaction; Syncretism.*

## A. Introduction

As a country with rich religious and cultural diversity, Indonesia is often faced with maintaining harmony amid potential conflicts. This diversity is not only about differences in beliefs and practices of worship but is also closely related to ethnic, local political, and economic identities, all of which can be a source of social friction (de Jong & Twikromo, 2017). Within this context, Indonesia has institutionalized pluralism and tolerance through its national philosophy of *Pancasila* (the foundational philosophy of Indonesia that emphasizes pluralism and social harmony), which serves as a guiding principle for fostering interfaith harmony and addressing diversity constructively. This framework has inspired various policies to promote inclusivity and reduce inter-group tensions, making Indonesia a valuable case study in managing pluralistic societies. In complex multicultural and multireligious frameworks, these differences can enrich societies and result in tension and conflict, especially if sensitive issues are not handled wisely (Ferdman, 2017; Suradi et al., 2020). Thus, the initiative to explore and understand harmonious practices is a vital step in fostering dialogue and strengthening the foundation of sustainable harmony amid Indonesia's social mosaic.

The harmonious coexistence of Hindu and Islamic *Wetu Telu* communities in Lombok exemplifies a model of interfaith harmony sustained through shared traditions and mutual respect. Religious leaders, such as *Tuan Guru* (Muslim leaders) and *Pedanda* (Hindu priests), play pivotal roles in promoting values of brotherhood, including the concept of *Semeton Sasak* (kinship among Sasaknese Muslims) and *Batur Bali* (kinship with Balinese Hindus), which emphasize familial bonds between Balinese Hindus and Sasaknese Muslims (Suprpto, 2015a). Cultural integration is another cornerstone, as seen in traditions like *merariq* (a wedding custom) that blends Islamic teachings with local practices, demonstrating the adaptability and tolerance of *Wetu Telu* communities (Ardiansyah & Masrokhin, 2023; Djawas et al., 2023; Umam et al., 2024). Rituals such as the *Perang Topat* (Topat War) serve as practical manifestations of interfaith collaboration, symbolizing civic



engagement and strengthening communal bonds despite challenges from puritanical movements (Suprpto, 2017). The practice of moderate Islam, or *Islam Nusantara* (a uniquely Indonesian interpretation of Islam promoting tolerance and peaceful coexistence), prevalent in Lombok, fosters dialogue and mutual understanding among diverse groups (Mutawali, 2016). Additionally, thoughtful spatial arrangements, such as the *karang* (territorial blocks) that separate Balinese and Sasak communities, reflect historical considerations aimed at maintaining social order (Sulaiman et al., 2024; Widana et al., 2023). These elements, combined with state and community efforts to manage conflicts and enhance mutual assistance initiatives, highlight how Lombok's religious and cultural practices operationalize the principle of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity) as a lived reality, ensuring stability and harmony in a pluralistic society.

Previous research related to religious dynamics in Lombok has been extensively conducted. Studies have identified the critical role of religious leaders in maintaining social harmony, particularly in situations where governmental intervention is limited. For instance, Suprpto (Suprpto, 2015a) highlights how figures such as *Tuan Guru* (Muslim leaders) and *Pedanda* (Hindu priests) utilized their influence to pacify communities, mitigate conflicts, and reinforce customary laws. Telle's (2014, 2016) work underscores the significance of ritual practices and spatial arrangements as central to interfaith identity negotiations, while also documenting changes in these practices within Lombok's evolving social landscape (Haji Munir, 2023; Hamid et al., 2024; Winengan, 2019). Other studies, such as Ridho (2017), reveal that the dynamics between Hindus and Muslims vary significantly, oscillating between harmony and tension, depending on the orthodoxy of the Muslim groups involved. Similarly, Hamdi and Smith (2012) examine internal and external conflicts within the *Nahdlatul Wathan* organization (an Islamic organization in Lombok), which expanded into politics and economics, and note the challenges posed by elite decision-making processes that often lacked transparency.



In addition to these discussions on leadership and rituals, contemporary studies have emphasized the importance of spatial and symbolic elements in fostering interfaith relations. For example, Widyapuspita, Hartanti, and Rahma (2021) explore how the *Tri Mandala* cosmology (a Balinese spatial concept dividing sacred, intermediate, and profane zones)—traditionally used in sacred and secular spaces—can inform the design of environments that support interfaith engagement. Their findings illustrate how spatial arrangements serve theological functions and mediate social interaction. Similarly, Budasi and Satyawati (2021) highlight the ethnolinguistic dimensions of traditional architecture in Bali, demonstrating how cultural elements embedded in physical spaces contribute to social cohesion. These insights provide a valuable lens to understand the role of *Taman Kemaliq* (a sacred space in Lombok used for interfaith rituals) as an acculturation space, where spatial and symbolic arrangements enable continuous interaction and dialogue between Hindu and Islamic *Wetu Telu* communities.

While previous studies have examined the role of religious leaders and rituals in shaping interfaith relations in Lombok (Suprpto, 2015b, 2015a), gaps remain in the literature. Prior research has predominantly focused on the influence of religious figures, such as *Tuan Guru* (Muslim leaders) and *Pedanda* (Hindu priests), or ritual practices. However, specific investigations are scarce into the socio-religious interactions facilitated by acculturation spaces, such as *Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar* (a sacred space in Lombok shared by Hindu and *Wetu Telu* communities for interfaith rituals). Notably, the lack of in-depth research into the socio-religious interactions in these spaces between Hindu communities and Islamic *Wetu Telu* communities (a syncretic Islamic tradition in Lombok) has not been deeply explored.

This research will address this gap by examining *Taman Kemaliq* as a microcosm of socio-religious harmony in Lombok, utilizing qualitative methods to gain a more nuanced understanding of the social and religious dynamics involved. The novelty of this research lies in its in-depth exploration of how social interaction and theological acculturation occur within *Taman*

*Kemaliq*. By examining the intersection of religious practices and social dynamics, this study offers a fresh perspective on how acculturation spaces can foster interfaith understanding. Unlike prior studies, which often generalized ritual dynamics, this research highlights the significance of spatial and symbolic acculturation, demonstrating how shared spaces mediate interreligious harmony. This research is expected to provide new insights into the practice of peaceful coexistence amid religious and cultural diversity.

## **B. Method**

This research was conducted using a qualitative approach, focusing on *Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar* (a sacred space in Lingsar Village shared by Hindu and *Wetu Telu* communities for interfaith rituals) in Lingsar Village, Lingsar District, West Lombok Regency, as the central location of the study. The research design followed three systematic stages: (1) preparation, which included formulating research questions, selecting informants, and obtaining necessary permissions; (2) data collection, involving direct observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation; and (3) data analysis, which combined descriptive and interpretive qualitative approaches.

The data collection method included direct observation of phenomena at the research site, with particular attention to religious rituals, spatial arrangements, and symbolic practices. Observations were conducted during key events such as the *Perang Topat* (Topat War, a ritual involving the symbolic act of throwing *ketupat* [rice cakes]) and the *Mendak* ritual (a ceremonial procession to honor deities), allowing the researcher to document interactions and symbolic meanings in real-time. During the *Perang Topat*, the observation focused on the ritual sequence, the roles of Hindu and *Wetu Telu* community participants, and the symbolic significance of the *ketupat* as a medium for interfaith dialogue. The researcher systematically captured the interactions using detailed field notes, photographs, and video recordings to ensure a rich contextual understanding.

For the *Perang Topat*, the observation process included pre-ritual preparations (such as the distribution of *ketupat* among community members), the ritual itself (which involved the symbolic act of throwing



*ketupat*), and the post-ritual interactions (where participants collected the scattered *ketupat* to be used as fertilizer for agricultural purposes). These stages were observed to capture the physical sequence of events and the emotions, dialogue, and cultural meanings expressed by participants. The thematic focus included interfaith cooperation, symbolic meanings, and communal unity expressed through the ritual.

In-depth interviews were conducted with religious leaders, community leaders, culturalists, and literati from Balinese Hindu and Sasak Islamic *Wetu Telu* (a syncretic Islamic tradition in Lombok) ethnicities. Informants were selected using purposive sampling techniques based on specific criteria such as their involvement in religious rituals, knowledge of local traditions, and active roles in community activities (Sugiyono, 2012). Semi-structured interview guides were used to explore the participants' insights into the rituals, symbolic meanings, and socio-religious dynamics. Interviews were conducted in multiple sessions, recorded with consent, and transcribed verbatim for further analysis.

Documentation and literature studies were integrated to enrich the collected data (Arikunto, 1998, p. 236). Historical records, local manuscripts, and published studies on Taman Kemaliq were reviewed to provide supplementary insights and triangulate findings from observations and interviews.

Thematic analysis was employed to identify recurring patterns and themes from the collected data. The analysis began with coding the observational data, focusing on recurring symbols, participant interactions, and expressions of interfaith collaboration. For instance, in the *Perang Topat*, themes such as "symbolic reciprocity", "gratitude to the divine", and "communal harmony" were identified as central to understanding the ritual's socio-religious significance.

The qualitative descriptive approach aimed to describe the socio-religious situation in *Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar*, while the interpretive framework was used to delve deeper into the meanings behind complex symbols observed during the rituals (Patton, 1990, p. 190). Mead's (1932) theory of symbolic interaction and Blumer's (1969) interpretive frameworks



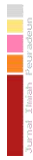
were applied to analyze how shared symbols, such as the *ketupat*, functioned as a medium for theological acculturation and socio-religious interaction. This analysis highlighted how rituals like the *Perang Topat* serve as dynamic spaces for interfaith dialogue, reinforcing communal solidarity and mutual respect. Data triangulation was employed by comparing results from observations, interviews, and document analysis to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. This rigorous approach ensured a comprehensive understanding of the socio-religious dynamics at *Taman Kemaliq*.

### **C. Result and Discussion**

This study uses a qualitative approach to explore social and religious interactions in *Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar*. Through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis, we managed to collect data that provided in-depth insights into how religious rites and symbols facilitate and reflect interfaith harmony. The results obtained not only reveal the importance of the shrine as a space of acculturation but also how shared practices can strengthen tolerance and harmonious interactions between different communities. The following results and discussion sections will elaborate on these findings in more detail, providing a broader picture of *Taman Kemaliq's* contribution to interfaith dialogue in Lombok.

#### **1. *Taman Kemaliq Lingsar* Temple as a Strengthening Node for Religious and Social Interaction**

*Pura Kemaliq Lingsar* (Lingsar Temple), built in 1759 in Lombok, symbolizes spiritual unification efforts between the Sasak and Balinese people. This temple was constructed on the initiative of King Ketut Karangasem Singosari to integrate the two cultures internally. This sacred site is unique in that it consists of two main parts: the *pura* (temple), which is designated for Hindus, and *kemaliq* (a sacred space), which is reserved for the Sasak community, particularly adherents of *Wetu Telu* (a syncretic tradition blending Hinduism and Islam). The name “Kemaliq” is derived from the Sasak language, meaning sacred or holy, referring to the spring water at the site, which has long been venerated by the Sasak people as a place of *moksa*



(spiritual liberation), according to Raden Mas Sumilir, one of the prominent figures of Islamic *Wetu Telu* (Kabupaten Lombok Barat, 2023).



Figure 1. Spring Water (Aik, Mual), Symbolizing the Acculturation of Hindu Theology and Islamic *Wetu Telu* at Lingsar Temple, Lombok Island

Religious activities conducted at *Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar* involving Islamic *Wetu Telu* and Hinduism include the *Perang Topat* (Topat War), a ceremony symbolizing the culmination of interactions between these two religious communities. The *Perang Topat* is an annual ritual before the rice planting season to express gratitude to the Creator and strengthen communal and spiritual bonds. Based on observations, during the *Perang Topat* ritual, participants from both communities gather to exchange *ketupat* (rice cakes) in a symbolic act of dialogue and reciprocity. One informant, Jro Mangku Gde Rai, explained: “Through this tradition, we express gratitude together and learn to respect each other’s ways of worship” (interview, November 8, 2023). This interaction exemplifies the shared commitment to mutual respect and the integration of ritual practices across religious boundaries.

In this celebration, *ketupat* serves as a symbol of returning agricultural produce to its origin, which will symbolically become fertilizer for new crops (Jayadi et al., 2018). Based on interviews with Jro Mangku Gde Rai (a religious leader in *Pura Gaduh*) and Soeparman Taofik (a leader in *Kemaliq*), it was revealed that the implementation of the *Perang Topat* is sociologically a medium for interaction between the Balinese Hindu community and the Islamic *Wetu Telu Sasak* tribe (interview, November 8, 2023). At the same time, the ceremony reflects the implementation of *bisama* (a vow or instruction). As Anak Agung Angelurah Karangasem stated: “As human beings (referring to

Balinese Hindus and the Islamic *Wetu Telu Sasak* tribe), we are obliged to express gratitude to God (*Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa*) in our way, and once a year, this is done together during the *piodalan* ceremony (*pudjawali*, a temple festival), which is accompanied by the tradition of the *Perang Topat*".

Before the *Perang Topat* (Topat War) ceremony takes place, several rituals, including the *Mendak* ritual, must be performed. This ritual welcomes holy spirits from Mount Rinjani, considered powerful supernatural entities, and spirits from Mount Agung. *Mendak* is a vital process that integrates Hindu and Muslim communities, along with other groups, in their participation in *Pujawali* (a Balinese term for a temple festival) at *Pura Aiq Mual* (Lingsar). All these communities gather in spiritual unity to honor the significant guest. Based on an interview with Jro Mangku Wayan Purna, he explained that the *mendak* procession (Balinese language) means "to welcome", referring to welcoming God in all manifestations (Gods and Goddesses). Based on observations and an interview with Ida Pedanda Ranutawang, it was explained that the *mendak* tradition is carried out the day before the *pudjawali* (a term synonymous with *piodalan*, a Balinese temple festival) as part of the *ngadegang* procession (Balinese language), which means *ngelinggihan* (enthroning) *Ida Bhatara* (God) in all manifestations. The *Mendak Tirta* (holy water ritual) at *Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar* is performed at *Kemaliq Pura Lingsar* and then *linggihang* (enthroned) at *Pura Gaduh* (a Hindu holy site) located above the *jeroan* (inner sanctum) of *Kemaliq Lingsar* (interview, November 10, 2023).

Another ritual is *Ngilehang* (twisting) *Kebon Odeq* or *Kaoq* (a symbolic sacred object), performed after the *Mendak* procession. This ritual involves a procession where participants circle *Kemaliq Lingsar* three times, both inside and outside. The *Baris Dance* (a traditional Balinese warrior dance) symbolizes war troops and is choreographed as a ceremonial guard force during this ritual. The procession's core participants carry *Kebon Odeq*, flanked by men bearing *tombak* (spears), *payung agung* (royal ceremonial umbrellas), and *tunggul* (ceremonial flags or standards). The ritual also includes the parade of a buffalo out of *Kemaliq Lingsar*, which is then slaughtered as an offering. The meat is shared among the community, reaffirming the unity between spirituality and daily life. Based on empirical

observations and interviews with Ida Pedanda Gde Keniten, it was revealed that the tradition of *ngilehang* (twisting) around *Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar* in Hindu tradition, known as *Maepade*, originates from the word *pade* (Balinese language), meaning “the same” or “feet”. This refers to the equalization of animal spirits used for *upakara* (ceremonial offerings). According to the tradition, animals used in *Maepade* rituals, when reborn, are believed to experience a spiritual elevation. The term *pade*, meaning “feet”, also signifies that the animals used in the *Maepade* ritual are those with legs—such as chickens, ducks, or geese (two-legged) and dogs, goats, cows, or buffaloes (four-legged) (interview, November 10, 2023).

The ceremony concludes with the placement of *Kebon Odeq* at the *Kemaliq* altar, where participants, led by *Pemangku* Hindus (Hindu priests) and *Amangku* Muslims (Islamic religious leaders), present their offerings. At this stage, Hindus and Muslims collaboratively create and perform offerings based on their respective *i'tiqad* (personal faith or belief) and intentions, reflecting a profound syncretism of religious beliefs and customs integral to Lombok society. This tradition has persisted since the Karangasem dynasty. Based on the author's interviews with *Panca Putra* (a Hindu literati) and *Inaq Sap* (a *Pemangku* of *Kemaliq*), it was revealed that the *Perang Topat* tradition, accompanied by the *pujawali* ceremony (*piodalan*, a Balinese temple festival), is conducted jointly by the Balinese Hindu and Islamic *Wetu Telu* communities once a year at *Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar*. This practice dates back to the reign of the kings of the Karangasem dynasty in Bali (interview, November 25, 2023).

All stages of the ritual are centered on *Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar* (a sacred site shared by Hindu and *Wetu Telu* communities). The core activity of the *Perang Topat* (Topat War) ritual is the throwing of *ketupat* (rice cakes) at each other. In this tradition, participants who are outside the walls of the temple and *Kemaliq* or in the garden participate by catching *ketupat* thrown from within. Participants are divided into two groups based on their positions: one group gathers at the top near the temple door, and the other assembles at the lower front door of the *Kemaliq*. The Hindu community typically gathers above the temple (*jaba Pura Gaduh*, the outer courtyard of *Pura Gaduh*), while the Muslim community gathers in front of the *Kemaliq*.



*Figure 2. Social and religious acculturation among ethnic Balinese Hindu communities and Islamic Wetu Telu Sasak tribes through the tradition of Perang Topat at Lingsar Temple, Lombok Island*

As the tradition progresses (Figure 2), *ketupat* is thrown by the Hindu community from the temple area as a symbolic “weapon” in the *Perang Topat*, and the Muslim community reciprocates from the *Kemaliq* area. After a few minutes of intense *ketupat* throwing, the tradition concludes, and participants collect the scattered *ketupat* to take home and use as fertilizer for their plants, ensuring nothing is left behind. Based on interviews with Ramlan and Inaq Sarman, *according to the beliefs of the Sasak tribe, ketupat, and eggs, remnants of the Perang Topat, are gathered and later sown in rice fields because they are believed to enhance soil fertility and result in abundant agricultural yields* (interview, November 25, 2023).

The interaction between Hindu and Muslim communities during the *Perang Topat* ritual is a manifestation of religious harmony and a reinforcing pillar of socio-religious interaction. Using Mead’s theory of symbolic interaction (Mead, 1932), this ritual can be interpreted as a shared symbolic act where *ketupat* becomes a medium for dialogue and negotiation. The act of throwing *ketupat* represents not just competition but a reciprocal exchange that embodies mutual acknowledgment and respect. This finding expands Mead’s theory by demonstrating how such symbols transcend individual interactions to foster broader communal solidarity. Furthermore, the presence of rituals like *Mendak* (a welcoming ritual) and *Ngilehang* (a circular procession) adds layers of theological acculturation, aligning with Blumer’s emphasis on shared meanings constructed through interaction (Blumer, 1969). Suprpto (Suprpto,



2017) states, “*Perang Topat* serves as a symbol of a peaceful relationship between Sasak Muslims and Balinese Hindus”. Thus, the *Perang Topat* expresses the spirit of unity and tolerance, acting as a bridge connecting two traditions and beliefs through joyful celebrations and mutual appreciation.

This study argues that *Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar* exemplifies how sacred spaces can function as interfaith dialogue and cultural negotiation sites. By integrating rituals, spatial arrangements, and theological symbolism, *Taman Kemaliq* serves as a microcosm of interfaith harmony, demonstrating the potential for shared sacred spaces to mediate religious diversity. Compared to international studies on interfaith spaces, such as Meagher’s (2016) work on sacred spaces fostering emotional interaction, the findings from *Taman Kemaliq* highlight how rituals and local traditions play a central role in sustaining coexistence. This research contributes to the broader discourse on interfaith dialogue by presenting *Taman Kemaliq* as a model for managing diversity through cultural and theological acculturation.

While the *Perang Topat* (Topat War) ritual and other traditions at *Taman Kemaliq* reflect exemplary interfaith harmony, maintaining such harmony is not without challenges. Informants noted occasional tensions stemming from external socio-political pressures, such as differing interpretations of rituals or competition over local leadership roles. For example, *Pemangku Kemaliq* (a leader of *Kemaliq*, Inaq Sap) stated: “*The balance we have here requires constant communication and adaptation, especially when external factors, such as local elections, threaten to polarize communities*” (Interview, November 25, 2023). This observation underscores the fragility of harmony in spaces like *Taman Kemaliq*, which rely heavily on mutual understanding and shared traditions to bridge differences. These findings align with Durkheim’s theory on the function of religion in strengthening social ties but also highlight the need for continuous efforts to adapt to socio-political changes (Durkheim, 1915).

## 2. Religious Social Symbols and Interactions

*Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar* reflects the synergy between Hindus and the Islamic *Wetu Telu* community in Lombok. Within this sacred complex are



two primary structures: *Lingsar Gaduh* (a temple designated for Hindus) and *Kemaliq* (a sacred space for the Islamic *Wetu Telu* community of Sasak ethnicity). The architecture of *Taman Kemaliq* adopts the *Asta Kosala-Kosali* principle (a Balinese architectural philosophy), which is reflected in the division of *Tri Mandala* (three zones): *Jaba Pura* (outer courtyard), *Jaba Tengah* (middle courtyard), and *Jeroan Pura* (inner courtyard). These zones represent the three universes (*Bhuana Agung* or macrocosm): *Bhur Loka* (earth), *Bwah Loka* (sky), and *Swah Loka* (heaven). Each space within this complex affirms the Hindu philosophy of the relationship between humans, nature, and divinity. This conception results from the synthesis of two traditional concepts with binary opposition characteristics (*Rwa Bhineda* in Balinese Hindu culture), namely inside-outside (*luan teben* in Balinese) and the sacred-profane dichotomy (cf. Patra, 1984: 17).

The sacred-profane conception is reflected in the spatial layout of the three-zone division known as the *Tri Mandala* concept (“three-zone conception”). The three areas are: *Nista Mandala* or *Jabe Sisi* (the outermost area, least sacred), *Madya Mandala* or *Jabe Tengah* (the middle transitional area, moderately sacred), and *Utama Mandala* or *Jeroan* (the innermost and most sacred area) (Budasi & Satyawati, 2021; Widyapuspita et al., 2021). Among these zones, the *Jabe Sisi* area is considered the least sacred, while the *Jeroan* area is regarded as the most sacred, with the *Jabe Tengah* serving as a transitional space with medium sacredness.



Figure 3. The statue of a pair of dogs on the Kemaliq Lingsar arch symbolizes the acculturation of Hindu and Islamic *Wetu Telu* theology at *Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar*

Within the complex, Hindu religious symbols dominate. For example, *Pralingga* or *Pengastulan* (a shrine used for Hindu worship) is adorned with white and yellow cloth, which holds significant meaning in Balinese Hindu rituals. Meanwhile, the Islamic symbolism of *Wetu Telu* is represented by the statue of a pair of dogs at *Gapura Kemaliq* (the *Kemaliq* gate). According to Sumertha, this statue reflects theological acculturation between the two ethnicities and religions. In both traditions, the dog holds value not only in a social context as a guardian and hunter but also in a religious aspect. In Hindu mythology, the story of the dog accompanying Yudhishtira to heaven symbolizes *Subhakarma* (good deeds).

This dog symbolism is rooted in the concepts of *Subha* and *Ashubha Karma* (good and bad deeds), where “Asu” (dog) in Javanese represents actions that determine whether one achieves *moksa* (spiritual liberation) or reaches heaven. In Hindu belief, temples are seen as replicas of *khayangan* (the abode of gods), accessible only to those who behave righteously, as depicted by animal-shaped *dwarapala* (guardian figures) in many temples across Bali and Lombok. These figures signify the enduring influence of totemism in Hindu religious practice. The placement of dogs as sacred animals in Hinduism, as explained by Ida Pedanda Ranu Tawang (a Hindu priest) and Jro Mangku Wayan Purna (a *Pinandita* or Hindu lay priest), is also evident in the implementation of the *Bhuta Yajna* ceremony. Specifically, in the *Upakara Caru Panca Kelud* (a Hindu offering ceremony), *Blang-Bungkem dogs* (a specific type of dog) are used as ceremonial offerings (interview, November 25, 2023).

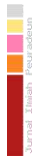
Although there is debate among Muslims about the status of dogs as unclean or sacred animals, the statue of a pair of dogs above the *Gapura Kemaliq* (*Kemaliq* gate) at *Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar* suggests that Islam *Wetu Telu* (a syncretic Islamic tradition in Lombok) tends to view dogs as sacred animals. This historical debate includes views from various *mazhabs* (Islamic schools of thought) (Bukido et al., 2022). First, the Shafi'i and Hanbali *mazhabs* consider dogs to be entirely unclean. Second, the Hanafi *mazhab* views dogs as essentially sacred, except for the wet parts, such as saliva. Third, according to the Maliki *mazhab*, dogs are considered sacred, both dry and wet.



In Islam, despite these sectarian disagreements, dogs are seen as creations of Allah and are mentioned in the Qur'an, particularly in Surat Al-Kahf (Istiqomah & Hanifah, 2022). The story of the Qithmir dog, which accompanied seven young men known as *Ashabul Kahf* (the Companions of the Cave), illustrates this. These young men, along with their dog, sought refuge in a cave and were granted protection by Allah SWT. This narrative symbolizes loyalty and spiritual purity, as the dog is believed to have accompanied the young men to heaven.

At *Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar*, the *Wetu Telu* Sasak tribe integrates Islamic teachings with ancestral beliefs, incorporating elements of animism, dynamism, and totemism, while intertwining Hindu religious and cultural values, particularly in traditional death ceremonies and the veneration of *kramat* (sacred objects with spiritual power). This deep theological acculturation between Islam *Wetu Telu* and Balinese Hinduism transforms *Taman Kemaliq* into a dynamic space for socio-religious interaction and communication on Lombok Island and in West Nusa Tenggara. Prior research highlights that religious practices act as forms of communication that convey spiritual messages, foster shared identities, and strengthen community bonds (Arens, 2011). Furthermore, interfaith spaces like *Taman Kemaliq* align with Williams and Ruparell's (2014) concept of dialogue networks, enabling reciprocal exchanges that deepen mutual understanding and enrich socio-religious relationships. As both a sacred site and a social laboratory, *Taman Kemaliq* illustrates how shared symbols and rituals transcend individual traditions, fostering organic solidarity and interfaith harmony in a pluralistic society, reaffirming its role as a mediator of pluralism and coexistence.

In the encounter of these two rich cultures, symbols often become vessels containing diverse meanings, reflecting the dynamic interplay between cultural identity, memory, and interpretation. As Jankowska (2022) notes, symbols serve as tools of collective memory and cultural identity, facilitating communication between communities while preserving unique traditions through processes of creative transformation (Kamarudin, 2022). The pair of dog statues at *Gapura Kemaliq Lingsar* exemplifies such multi-interpretation symbolism. For the Islamic



*Wetu Telu* community, the statues might represent the sacred Qithmir dog, signifying spiritual cleanliness and loyalty. Meanwhile, the statues may symbolize guardianship or protection for the Balinese Hindu community, rooted in Hindu mythology and teachings. These two interpretations, though distinct, demonstrate the richness of symbolic meaning and the freedom of religious and cultural expression that coexist in Lombok.

The difference in interpretation or contestation of symbols between the Islamic *Wetu Telu* community and the Balinese Hindus should not be viewed as a contradiction but rather as a complex and dynamic socio-religious tapestry. This phenomenon affirms that diverse approaches to religious symbols can coexist harmoniously, as manifested in the religious and social life of *Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar*. While the two communities may not entirely agree on specific symbolic interpretations, they maintain peaceful interaction and mutual respect for each other's traditions (Basri, 2021; Nurjanah et al., 2024). This reflects a profound form of interfaith tolerance and understanding, where differences serve not as barriers but as bridges connecting various dimensions of spiritual life (Susanto, 2024).

### **3. The Influence of *Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar* in Inter-Community Relations**

*Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar* (a sacred site shared by Hindu and *Wetu Telu* communities) on Lombok Island is not only a symbol of the spiritual uniqueness of Islam *Wetu Telu* (a syncretic Islamic tradition) and the Balinese Hindu community but also a microcosm for understanding the dynamics of broader inter-community relations. The findings from *Taman Kemaliq* offer insights into how sacred spaces foster interfaith dialogue, aligning with global theories on religious coexistence and the functionality of sacred spaces. At the same time, it provides a specific case study relevant to Indonesia's pluralism policies, demonstrating how national philosophies like *Pancasila* (Indonesia's foundational philosophy emphasizing pluralism and harmony) manifest in local practices that emphasize coexistence and collaboration (Bukido et al., 2022). As Ahiokhai (2019) suggests, sacred spaces that integrate

hospitality and shared rituals visibly affirm respect and understanding among religious communities. *Taman Kemaliq* reflects this through rituals such as the *Perang Topat* (Topat War), which serves as a participatory medium for dialogue and mutual acknowledgment.

Furthermore, the collaborative nature of rituals like *Mendaq* (a welcoming ritual) and *Ngilahang Kebon Odeq* (a circular procession involving sacred objects) echoes Galal and Hvenegård-Lassen's (2023) concept of atmospheric tuning, where sacred spaces create atmospheres that invite shared spirituality and transcendence among diverse participants. Unlike the mere physical proximity of sacred spaces discussed by Agrawal and Barratt (2014), *Taman Kemaliq's* dynamic rituals actively encourage interaction, fostering attitudinal shifts and building bridges between Hindu and Muslim communities.

In a similar vein, Safei and Armstrong (2023) emphasize the dual role of sacred spaces in both spiritual and social dimensions, as seen in the Grand Mosque of Bandung, which not only functions as a place of worship but also addresses pressing urban social challenges. This dual functionality is reflected in *Taman Kemaliq*, where the integration of Hindu and Muslim traditions addresses not only spiritual coexistence but also fosters solutions to potential inter-community tensions through collaborative rituals. Additionally, *Taman Kemaliq* aligns with Kujawa-Holbrook's (2017) perspective on sacred spaces as pedagogical tools for interreligious learning, grounding spiritual experiences in rituals that encourage both coexistence and active engagement.

Small yet impactful exchanges within this space resonate with Kuppinger's (2019) findings on how inclusive sacred geographies can dissolve invisible boundaries and nurture community among diverse groups. By integrating localized traditions with shared spiritual practices, *Taman Kemaliq* challenges global narratives of religious conflict, demonstrating how sacred spaces can transform into platforms for sustainable interfaith harmony and cultural learning.

*Taman Kemaliq* is often seen as a center of religious symbiosis that supports social harmony, where symbols such as dog statues represent acculturative theology by blending the religious values of Islam *Wetu Telu* (a



syncretic Islamic tradition) and Balinese Hinduism. This integration mirrors the transformative role of symbols and rituals in fostering reconciliation and multicultural tolerance, as highlighted by Mahmuluddin (2024), who emphasizes the ability of shared symbolic spaces to challenge historical power dynamics and promote unity in divided societies.

Rituals such as *Mendaq* (a welcoming ritual) and *Ngilahang Kebon Odeq* (a circular procession involving sacred objects) at *Taman Kemaliq* further strengthen communal relationships by embodying shared meanings that transcend individual traditions, akin to the Neo-Platonist perspective of symbols as divine imprints facilitating unity with the divine (Boulnois, 2011). The throwing of *ketupat* (rice cakes) during the *Perang Topat* (Topat War) serves as both a theological and anthropological symbol, aligning with Mircea Eliade's concept of symbols as constructs that integrate individuals into their cultural and religious identities (Neacșu, 2024). Additionally, these rituals reflect Paul Tillich's theory of symbols, which highlights their role in revealing ultimate realities and fostering dialogue with the divine (Krajnc, 2014).

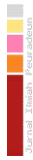
*Taman Kemaliq*, by creatively leveraging existing symbols and rituals, acts as a microcosm of peacebuilding, illustrating how these cultural elements can bridge differences, subvert historical tensions, and cultivate enduring interfaith harmony in multicultural contexts. These rituals provide a practical application of Durkheim's (Durkheim, 1915) theory on religion as a unifying force. However, *Taman Kemaliq* also offers a unique expansion of this theory by demonstrating how shared rituals in pluralistic settings can lead to the creation of "organic solidarity" that transcends religious boundaries.

Furthermore, the concept of *Pancasila* (the foundational philosophy of Indonesia that emphasizes pluralism and social harmony) is reflected in the religious practices at *Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar*. Casram (2016) highlighted that diversity, when integrated with mutual understanding, lies at the heart of Indonesia's socio-political framework. At *Taman Kemaliq*, differences in beliefs are not perceived as barriers; instead, they serve as opportunities to explore and appreciate universal values. This sacred site has become a space where religious doctrines are manifested through rituals, fostering the

practice of living together in harmony. This aligns with Khatami's (2001; 2007) concept of a "dialogue between civilizations", where interfaith spaces act as platforms for bridging cultural and religious divides. The integration of Hindu and Islamic *Wetu Telu* elements at *Taman Kemaliq* serves as an operationalization of this concept, showcasing the practical value of sacred spaces as mediators of pluralism.

The concept of inclusive sacred space represented by *Taman Kemaliq* (a sacred site shared by Hindu and *Wetu Telu* communities) is an important example of creating a space that fosters positive social and emotional interaction between followers of various religions while designing an environment that encourages visual and intellectual exploration. By integrating Hindu and Islamic *Wetu Telu* (a syncretic Islamic tradition) elements, *Taman Kemaliq* demonstrates how sacred spaces can be designed to support diversity and interfaith dialogue. Aligned with Meagher's (2016), study on sacred spaces fostering emotional interaction, the findings from *Taman Kemaliq* expand on his ideas by showing that localized sacred rituals, such as the *Perang Topat* (Topat War), enhance emotional engagement and communal solidarity through tangible, participatory practices. Unlike Meagher's focus on the emotional interaction fostered by spatial designs, *Taman Kemaliq* emphasizes the dynamic role of rituals and local traditions as mediators of interfaith understanding. This presents an opportunity to refine Meagher's framework by considering how participatory rituals, rather than spatial aesthetics alone, can sustain interfaith coexistence in multicultural settings.

The harmony created at *Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar* reflects Durkheim's theory (Durkheim, 1915) on the function of religion in strengthening social ties. In the context of *Taman Kemaliq*, the different religious ceremonies and practices carried out by the two communities result in "organic solidarity", where those differences become essential for greater social cohesion. Additionally, *Taman Kemaliq* contributes to global discussions on religious pluralism by providing a functional model for managing diversity through shared rituals and mutual respect. Essentially, *Taman Kemaliq* is a religious site and a social laboratory where harmony can be observed and studied as a growing and continuous phenomenon,



embodying Durkheim's principle of the social functioning of religious practice (Utami et al., 2023; Zulkarnain et al., 2024). This situates *Taman Kemaliq* within a broader theoretical framework, where sacred spaces are not static monuments but evolving arenas for interfaith dialogue and negotiation.

*Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar*, with all its symbolism and rites, significantly contributes to the formation and maintenance of inter-community relations in Lombok. As highlighted by Turner (1969) in his study of the rite process, *Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar* serves as a "liminal arena", where conventional social structures are fluid, providing space for reconciliation and cross-cultural understanding. Turner's concept of "liminality" is particularly relevant here, as *Taman Kemaliq* demonstrates how sacred spaces can become transitional zones that allow participants to transcend social and religious hierarchies, fostering equality and mutual respect. Through inclusive and ceremonial religious practices, this space encourages the process of "communitas", creating a deep sense of unity among adherents of different faiths. This is especially important in Indonesia, where cultural and religious heterogeneity often requires continuous adjustment and mediation. Globally, this reinforces the potential of sacred spaces as tools for navigating cultural and religious diversity, offering lessons applicable to other regions facing similar challenges.

More broadly, *Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar* (a sacred site shared by Hindu and *Wetu Telu* communities) challenges dominant narratives that often portray religion as a source of conflict. Through harmonious practices between communities at *Taman Kemaliq*, we observe the practical application of the "dialogue between civilizations" concept initiated by Khatami (Khatami et al., 2001; Petito, 2007). By focusing on dialogue and mutual understanding, these two communities exemplify how differences can serve as bridges rather than sources of division. This final point solidifies *Taman Kemaliq's* role as a global model for interfaith spaces, highlighting its relevance for both academic discussions and practical applications in fostering peaceful coexistence.

From a global perspective, the harmonious practices reflected in *Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar* have significant impacts in addressing the challenges of religious pluralism and cross-cultural tensions. As a shared sacred space, *Taman Kemaliq* demonstrates how differences can be

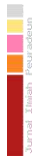
transformed into collaborative strengths through the integration of rituals and symbolism that foster interfaith dialogue. Furthermore, the practices at Taman Kemaliq align with the concept of “organic solidarity,” where religion functions as a unifying force capable of bridging social and cultural differences (Durkheim, 1915). Rituals such as *Perang Topat* reflect profound theological symbolism, where *ketupat* serves as a medium for symbolic dialogue that integrates the Hindu and Wetu Telu communities (Jayadi et al., 2018; Suprpto, 2017).

Additionally, the approach applied in Taman Kemaliq resonates with Meagher's findings, which identify sacred spaces as mediums for profound emotional interaction (Meagher, 2016). However, Taman Kemaliq extends this concept by demonstrating how participatory rituals, rather than merely spatial aesthetics, can enhance emotional engagement and communal solidarity. This also enriches the idea of sacred spaces as pedagogical tools for interfaith learning, which not only fosters harmony but also supports the sustainability of interfaith dialogue (Kujawa-Holbrook, 2017).

In an international context, Taman Kemaliq is not only a local model for managing diversity but also contributes to the global discourse on religious pluralism. The practices at Taman Kemaliq show that sacred spaces can serve as social laboratories for creating cross-cultural harmony, aligning with the philosophy of *Pancasila*, which emphasizes diversity as the foundation of social harmony (Casram, 2016; Tabrani ZA et al., 2024). Thus, Taman Kemaliq offers an important lesson on how local traditions can provide practical solutions to global challenges, making it a relevant model for building sustainable peace in multicultural societies.

#### **D. Conclusion**

The study's main findings reveal that *Taman Kemaliq Pura Lingsar* (a sacred site shared by Hindu and *Wetu Telu* communities) in Lombok is more than just a sacred place; it is a vital center for affirming and celebrating socio-religious interaction between Hindu and Islamic *Wetu Telu* (a syncretic Islamic tradition) communities. Through the events of the *Perang Topat* (Topat War), this ritual not only defines religious aspects but also serves as a



medium of dialogue between communities, using *ketupat* (rice cakes) as a symbol to celebrate fertility and harmony. These practices strongly align with Indonesia's national commitment to pluralism and tolerance, as reflected in policies that encourage interfaith understanding at both local and national levels. The interaction fostered in *Taman Kemaliq* confirms that differences in beliefs can coexist and, more importantly, strengthen values of tolerance and harmony in daily life.

The novelty of this research lies in its in-depth exploration of the unique contribution of theological acculturation in *Taman Kemaliq*, which has not been widely addressed in previous scholarly literature. By situating the findings within the broader context of Indonesia's pluralism framework, this study underscores the importance of integrating local traditions into national tolerance policies. This alignment highlights the potential for *Taman Kemaliq's* practices to inspire similar initiatives in other diverse societies. The research contributes to scholarship by illustrating how the architecture and symbolism of the Lingsar Temple complex reflect a synergy between Hindu beliefs and Islamic *Wetu Telu*, resulting in a harmonious form of coexistence. Furthermore, these findings suggest that the religious and cultural practices in *Taman Kemaliq* can serve as a model for inclusive social development and interreligious harmony, providing new insights into anthropological, theological, and cultural studies.

Although this study provides valuable insight into interfaith harmony in Lombok, some limitations must be noted. The most significant limitation is the restricted geographical scope, as the research focuses solely on one specific location in Lombok, making it challenging to directly extrapolate findings to other contexts or regions with differing socio-religious dynamics. Additionally, the study is potentially affected by temporal variation, given that social and religious practices can evolve over time, reflecting only the conditions at a specific period. Moreover, while the qualitative methodology employed offers profound insights, it has limitations in producing broader generalizations. Future research with more comprehensive quantitative or mixed-methods approaches could provide a more thorough and representative understanding of the complexity of socio-religious interactions across various locations and historical contexts.



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