

## INFLUENCE OF INDIAN CULTURE ON INDONESIA

Sunil Pathak<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> International Archeology Council (India and Southeast Asia)

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Author email: [pthk09@gmail.com](mailto:pthk09@gmail.com)

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### ABSTRACT

*The relationship between India and the Indonesian archipelago has spanned thousands of years, reflecting a rich exchange of culture, religion and trade. Since ancient times, Indian traders have been in contact with the Indonesian archipelago, bringing with them influential commodities and ideas, including Hinduism and Buddhism. The resulting acculturation process resulted in a unique civilisation in the Indonesian archipelago, which is reflected in art, architecture and literature. In addition, shipping in the Strait of Malacca and its surrounding waters became an important route for the spice trade, further strengthening economic ties between the two regions. This paper will examine India's influence on Indonesian archipelago culture from an Indian perspective. The research uses qualitative methods to explore the historical relationship between India and the Indonesian archipelago, focusing on the cultural, religious and trade exchanges that have taken place over thousands of years. The most obvious Indian influence on the Indonesian archipelago is a matter of belief, from which came several other influences such as writing, language, architecture and art. Furthermore, Indian influence is not only found in the Indonesian archipelago, but some findings from the Indonesian archipelago are also found in India.*

**Keywords:** Budha, Hindu, India, Indonesia, relation,

## INTRODUCTION

The relationship between India and Indonesia has a historical connection from the ancient era and most prominently in the religious, linguistic and literary fields. Traditional folklore of India indicates that Indian civilized contacts started in Java from the time of Mahabharata.<sup>1</sup> The spread of the Indinisation in Nusantara was possible in the early century. Thus there are legends that around 20000 families of migrants from Gujarat and Kalinga settled in Java. The traditional folklore holds King Ajshek as the first Indian to settle in Java in the 1st century and who later spread Indian culture and colonization.<sup>2</sup> Java is also known as *Yawdeep* in Indian literature; Indians took religion, scripts and philosophies into the island.

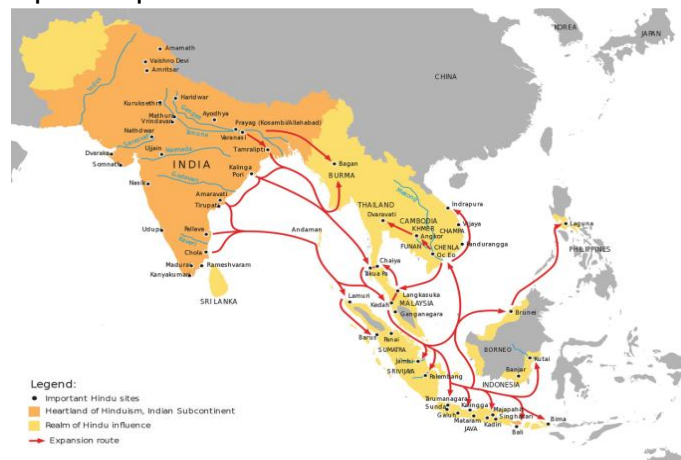


Figure 1. The spread of Hindus from India to Asia  
Source: Collection Kompas

Indian influence in the archipelago is an important aspect in the study of the history and culture of this region. Relations between India and the archipelago have existed for thousands of years, with evidence of interaction through trade, migration, and the spread of religion and culture. Since early times, the archipelago has been an important route for Indian traders bringing goods such as spices, textiles, and other valuables. The presence of these traders not only affects economic aspects, but also leads to cultural acculturation, which can be seen in local art, architecture and traditions.

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<sup>1</sup> Sonu Trivedi, 'Early Indian Influence in Southeast Asia', *India Quarterly: A Journal of International Affairs*, 66.1 (2010), pp. 51–67 (p. 53), doi:10.1177/097492841006600104; S. Supomo, 'Indic Transformation: The Sanskritization of Jawa and the Javanization of the Bharata', in *The Ausronesins Historical and Omparative Ersppectives*, ed. by Peter Bellwod, James J. Fox, and Darrell Tryon (Australia National University, 2006), p. 309.

<sup>2</sup> Si Luh Nyoman Seriadi, 'THE VEDIC LEARNING TRADITION IN THE NUSANTARA AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THIS DAY', *International Jornla on Hindu Culture*, 2.1 (2024), p. 94.

One of the most important influences was the spread of Hinduism and Buddhism, which influenced the social and spiritual structure of Indonesian society. Large kingdoms such as Srivijaya and Majapahit are clear examples of Indian influence, which can be seen in governance, social systems and culture. Through this channel, the archipelago is not only a recipient of culture, but also acts as a centre for wider cultural exchange in Southeast Asia.

Several researchers have studied several studies on the relationship between Indonesia (Nusantara) and India. The first study by Sunu looks at the relationship between India and Southeast Asia which is seen up to the initial relationship. The next study by Supomo examines the beginning of Indianization in Kalimantan, which then spread to Java, and some adjustments. The study of Seriadi explains the relationship between India and the archipelago and its relevance to current conditions. The study that looks at the culture of the archipelago from an Indian perspective is from Leeuw, but this paper only focuses on the influence of the arts. In contrast, this paper spreads over several aspects.<sup>3</sup> This article will explain Indian influence in Nusantara from India Perspective.

## METHOD

This article uses a qualitative research method with a historical and cultural approach. Deborah Court said that the combination of historical and cultural approaches in qualitative research is able to highlight a phenomenon in depth, so that it can reveal the structure and interaction in a phenomenon. So this method is used to understand the influence of Indian culture on Indonesia. This research prioritizes the exploration of narratives, symbols, and cultural artifacts through document analysis and observation. The analysis of this document was carried out by reviewing historical literature such as ancient books and inscriptions. The ancient books and inscriptions used came from Nalanda during the reign of Emperor Devpal. The ancient books and inscriptions were used to trace the relationship between Indian influence and Indonesia. In addition, observations were also made through cultural symbols and artifacts. Where by directly observing cultural practices, both in India and Indonesia, a relationship will be found. These cultural practices include religious rituals, dance, or the use of Indian symbols in architecture and art. After these two stages are carried out, an analysis is carried out to reveal the symbolic meaning, cultural patterns, and their influence on local identity. After all stages are carried out, it is continued with the

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<sup>3</sup> Seriadi, 'THE VEDIC LEARNING TRADITION IN THE NUSANTARA AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THIS DAY'; Supomo, 'Indic Transformation: The Sanskritization of Jawa and the Javanization of the Bharata'; J.E. Van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, 'Indian Influences on Ancient Indonesian Art', *The Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland*, 8.1 (1962).

preparation of an article that emphasizes in-depth descriptions and interpretations of the findings to provide new insights into the influence of Indian culture in Indonesia.<sup>4</sup>

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### India-Nusantara Relevant Studies

Studies on the relationship between India and the Archipelago have been widely studied. Studies on this relationship are mostly focused on the study of the Hindu-Buddhist period. This study will try to see the relationship between India and the Archipelago using several applications and try to explain some of these studies. The applications used to assist in this study include Publish, Perish, and VOS Viewer. In the first stage, Publish or Perish searches for and filters articles. In this first stage, the author searches through the "Keyword" column by entering two words "India" and "Nusantara" by searching for two hundred and fifty articles on Google Scholar. Next, sorting to select relevant articles is then saved in the "RIS/Refmanager" format. The data that has been obtained is then extracted through VOS Viewer by sorting again with the "Minimum number of occurrences a term" setting with the number 4, which produces 31 phrases. From this phrase, a relationship between phrases/studies is then created.

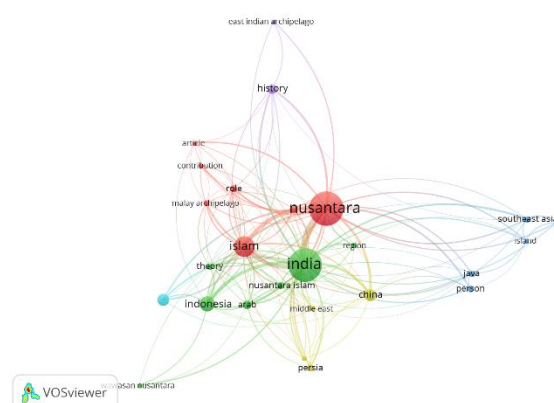


Figure 2. Result of VOS Viewer

The image above shows two main relations between Nusantara and India, followed by several points. The transition of relations between India and the archipelago, from a Hindu-Buddhist foundation to an Islamic one, reflects significant changes in the social, political and economic dynamics of the Indian Ocean region. This change occurred through a long process and involved various factors, such as trade, politics, and the spread of religion. Relations between India and the archipelago began in the Hindu-Buddhist era, with influences coming through cultural, commercial and religious migration. Archaeological evidence, such as inscriptions and temples

<sup>4</sup> Deborah Court, *Qualitative Research and Intercultural Understanding* (Routledge, 2017), p. 18.

(e.g. Borobudur and Prambanan), show the extent of Indian influence in shaping the belief systems, art and politics of the archipelago. Spice trade routes became an important means of cultural interaction. India became an intermediary between the archipelago and the large markets of China and the Middle East, facilitating the spread of religion and ideas from India. The archipelago's monarchy often adopts Hindu-Buddhist legitimacy originating from India, such as the concept of Devaraja (king as god) used by kingdoms such as Majapahit and Srivijaya. The shift from Hindu-Buddhist relations to the Islamic era reflects important changes in the archipelago's social, economic and political system. The spice trade was the main catalyst for this change, while Islamic proselytisation networks played an important role in shaping the cultural and religious identity of the people of the archipelago. This process involved not only adapting to a new religion, but also integrating with pre-existing local values and traditions.

Secondly, what is interesting about this display is that Islam is not about Hinduism and Buddhism. This shows that studies or phrases about Islam are more widely studied based on search engine results. Related research examining the dominance of Islamic terms in networks shows that Islam played a key role in shaping relations between India and the Indonesian archipelago, especially after the Hindu-Buddhist period. Islam entered the archipelago mainly through maritime trade routes in the Indian Ocean. Muslim traders from Gujarat, India, had an important role in introducing Islam to the archipelago, especially in major ports such as Aceh, Malacca, and Java. Apart from trade, Muslim traders also acted as agents to spread the religion. In their activities, Islam was gradually introduced through cultural and economic interactions. Apart from trade, Muslim traders also acted as agents to spread the religion. In their activities, Islam was gradually introduced through cultural and economic interactions.

Research examining the relationship between India and the archipelago in the contemporary era examines the evolution of the relationship in new dimensions including geopolitics, modern economics, and diaspora. India and the archipelago (Indonesia) are located in the strategic region of the Indo-Pacific, which is a major concern in global geopolitical dynamics. This region is a centre of strategic rivalry between major powers such as the US and China. In the modern context, relations between India and the archipelago not only continue with historical interactions, but have also evolved into a strategic partnership encompassing geopolitics, economics and diaspora. The immense potential in trade, investment, technology and culture creates opportunities to strengthen these ties. By capitalising on each other's strengths, India and Indonesia can build mutually beneficial cooperation to address global and regional challenges.

### **Early Indian Influence in Java**

Local folklore has it that it was sage Shresth who started the Indianisation of culture in Java and thus ushering in a new age of amalgamation. Earlier, the Maldivians

referred to the island as Nuskendang, until the Indians changed it.<sup>5</sup> Stories presented when characters like Ajishek and Tritreshtra are recognized are debatable, but the stories depict an actual foundation for the exchange of cultures. Certainly, by the 1st century, the Indian settlers, especially from the eastern and western coastline of the subcontinent, began to establish their trading posts in Java, which is also mentioned in Chinese and Indian literature extensively.

### **Religious and Philosophical Impact**

These two religions, Hinduism and Buddhism, had a deep influence on Java. Historical inscriptions provide evidence of this cultural integration: The Shivalinga of King Sanjay: The existence of a Shivalinga installed by King Sanjay is mentioned in an article published in Changal, Java. It is actually an inscription that boasts about Java as a rich place with many resources, thanks to Hindu gods Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, as per Sanjay.<sup>6</sup>

Statues of Sage Agastya: The abundance of Agastya statues located in Java greatly emphasizes his role of being a holy man. This god crossed the sea to Java according to mythology, thus his task of propagating Indian thought especially that of Shaivism.<sup>7</sup> In principle, Agastya/Siwa Guru/Bhatara Guru statues have characteristics that are already known. The characteristics are the appearance of an old man with a mustache, beard, fat belly, and wearing a crown in the shape of a *jatamakuta*.<sup>8</sup>

Arjuna's wedding site in East Java features hill caves and engravings depicting his marriage to Nagatya Ulupi, which are rooted in Indian mythology.<sup>9</sup> The marriage of Arjuna was adapted in the *Kakawin Arjunawiwaha*. *Kakawin Arjunawiwaha* is one of the oldest manuscripts in Java. This manuscript was written by Mpu Kanwa in the Airlangga period (1019- 1042). *Kakawin Arjunawiwaha* was adopted or part of the *Mahabarata* from India.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Alfa Syahrinar, *Fikih Kejawa Menelusuri Jejak Ijtihad Kanjeng Sunan Kalijaga* (Unisnu Jepara, 2021).

<sup>6</sup> Niken Wirasanti, 'Toponyms and Identity of Canggal Temple Area in Eco-Linguistics Perspective', in *Proceedings of the Fourth Prasasti International Seminar on Linguistics (Prasasti 2018)* (Atlantis Press, 2018), p. 213, doi:10.2991/prasasti-18.2018.39.

<sup>7</sup> PARANAVITANA S., 'Statue at Potgul-Vehera, Polonnaruva', *The Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland*, 2.2 (1952).

<sup>8</sup> Rakai Hino Galeswangi, 'Kajian Arca Agastya Bertubuh Ramping Koleksi Museum Mpu Purwa Kota Malang', *Berkala Arkeologi*, 41.1 (2021), pp. 35–54 (p. 37), doi:10.30883/jba.v41i1.603.

<sup>9</sup> Stuart Robson, *Arjunawiwaha The Marriage of Arjuna of Mpu Kanwa* (KITLV Press, 2008), p. 19; Andrea Acri, 'Review of "Arjunawiwaha. The Marriage of Arjuna of Mpu Kanwa", by Stuart Robson', *Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences of Southeast Asia*, 166.1 (2010), p. 147.

<sup>10</sup> Jiphie Gilia Indriyani and others, 'Adaptasi Cerita Kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha Pada Pewayangan Jawa Lakon Arjuna Wiwaha', *SULUK: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Budaya*, 1.1 (2020), pp. 31–36 (p. 32), doi:10.15642/suluk.2019.1.1.31-36; Ni Nengah Selasih, 'Religious Values Applied By Women In Kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha', *Jurnal Penelitian Agama Hindu*, 6.2 (2022), pp. 54–67 (p. 118), doi:10.37329/jpah.v6i2.1606.

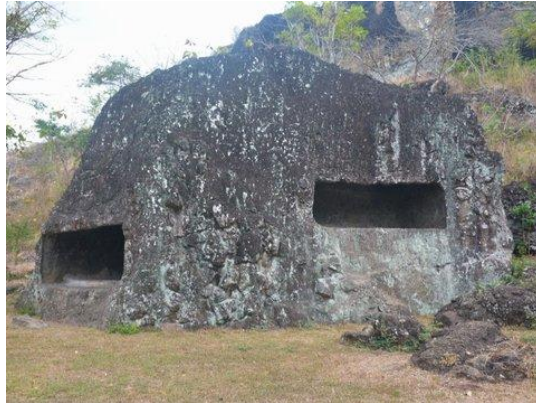


Figure 3. Goa Selomangleng Tulungagung  
Source: Collection Merdeka.com

The Arjunawiwaha story, apart from being adopted in the script, is also applied to several buildings that are sacred or sanctified. Some sacred buildings are found in East Java, such as Selomangleng Cave Tulungagung, Pasir Cave, Surowono Temple, Jago Temple, and Kedaton Temple Probolinggo. Each location has a different story. The Selomangleng Cave in Tulungagung that appears in the picture above consists of seven fields that tell the story of Arjuna's marriage.<sup>11</sup>

#### **Artistic Heritage:**

The Javanese literature and art have marked the emotional sensibility of India as being influenced by India, Javanese original works, and translated works from India. Among these are Narayanatharvasishor Upanishad from Chaturveda in Bali, and Veda Parikram Saar Sehat Kiran which contain mantras for daily prayer. There is pilaf and prayer to gods and goddesses like Shiva, Vishnu, Buddha, Surya, Vayu, Varuna, and Yama, and the major concern is spiritual life.<sup>12</sup>

The art of Java is known to have grown under this culture brew. These walls of the Temple were painted in sanitized form with themes from Indian epics, the \*Ramayana\*, \*Mahabharata\* and \*Jataka\*. Mercury statues in stone and metal, Bodhisattva statue, Tara statue, and Prajnaparamita statue were sculpted in artistic works. This further cements the cultural symbiosis of religious and artistic flows of ideas between India and Java.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Nainunis Aulia Izza, 'PENGAMBARAN SOSOK-SOSOK IDEAL MASA JAWA KUNO: TINJAUAN RELIEF GUA SELOMANGLENG TULUNGAGUNG', *Paradigma: Jurnal Kajian Budaya*, 12.1 (2022), p. 17, doi:10.17510/paradigma.v12i1.550; Anonim, 'Gua Selomangleng Tulungagung, Peninggalan Era Majapahit Di Tengah Hutan Belantara Yang Eksotis', *Merdeka.Com*, 2023 <<https://www.merdeka.com/jatim/gua-selomangleng-tulungagung-peninggalan-era-majapahit-di-tengah-hutan-belantara-yang-eksotis-27302-mvk.html?page=2>> [accessed 28 November 2024].

<sup>12</sup> Arvind Bhagwath, *Understanding Origin of Mythologies*, p. 77; B. K. Chaturvedi, *Vishnu Puran* (Diamond Pocket Books Pvt Ltd, 2017); I Wayan Watra, 'TRI MURTI IDEOLOGI SOSIO-RELIGIUS MEMPERSATUKAN SEKTE-SEKTE DI BALI', *Dharmasmrti*, 9.2 (2018), pp. 114–18.

<sup>13</sup> *Pengaruh India, Islam Dan Barat Dalam Proses Pembentukan Kebudayaan Jawa*, ed. by Soedarsono, Djoko Soekiman, and Retna Astuti (Proyek Penelitian dan Pengkajian

As for modern Indonesia, the archeological findings specify the unexpectedly sharp Indian impact. Meghavati and Sukmavati are not unusual; fate is also closely tied to the frequency of the “Vati” endings of North Indian names. The Megavati river was found in the Pherava Grant in Prevara Settlement.<sup>14</sup> The same is true of the Hindu overland in Indonesia in the past, such as Belahan on Mount Penguang in Java, which is similar to that of India. Founded by King Erling in the 11th century, Belahan and the Petiratan Jaltundo shrine are associated with the Sanskrit Jalraashi and preserve the Java archipelago’s most important Hindu monuments.<sup>15</sup> Ancient Hindu group living in Java still holds the culture; the people of Java are Hindu and, in essence, are a living representation of India in South East Asia.



Figure 4. Ancient Khmer art  
Sources: 4. Dokumentation Kim Tosun



Figure 5. Ramayana Dance  
Sources: 5. <https://theindosphere.com/>

Dating influence from India appears in the old men who come from India. One of the remains which is mentioned in South and Southeast Asia is the Ramayana Dance. This is also related to Nusantara (Indonesia). In the Picture is evidence of the spread or Indianization of Southeast Asia in the art field.<sup>16</sup>

### **Literary and Cultural Connections**

The Ramayana has always been quite influential in establishing the Javanese culture. For instance, rivers of the countries of Southeast Asia, such as the Haryu River of Indonesia, have been christened with the name of the Indian river Sarayu, which forms part of the epic. Likewise, a 5th-century Sanskrit inscription of Kabupaten

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Kebudayaan Nusantara (Javanologi) Direktorat Jendral Kebudayaan Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1985), p. 7.

<sup>14</sup> Prafulla Kumar Mohanty, ‘RIVERS AND RIVERINE SETTLEMENTS IN ANCIENT ODISHAN’, in *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* (Indian History Congress, 2016), p. 34, doi:10.2307/26552620.

<sup>15</sup> Novenda Nurriyah Putri and Octo Dendy Andriyanto, ‘Performansi Ujub Sesaji Sangkan Paran Dalam Tradisi Ruwat Candi Dan Petirtaan Jolotundo Kabupaten Mojokerto’, *JOB (Jurnal Online Baradha)*, 18.3 (2022), pp. 788–812 (p. 7), doi:10.26740/job.v18n3.p788-812.

<sup>16</sup> Anonim, ‘Cultural and Religious Significance of the Ramayana’, <https://Theindosphere.Com/> <<https://theindosphere.com/culture/cultural-and-religious-significance-of-the-ramayana/>>; Kim Tosun, ‘សិល្បៈខ្មែររាជធានីភ្នំពេញ’, *Pinterest* <<https://id.pinterest.com/pin/807973989429691822/>>.



Mogleg in Java shows that certain Indian dynasties like Matram Kalka dominated in that period. The verse composed in the Pallava script enunciates some appreciation of the Ganges and captures the interaction that had developed at the cultural level between the two tracts.

### Temples and Inscriptions

Java and Bali house numerous temples and inscriptions written in ancient Indian scripts:

#### 1. Kalasan Temple

Constructed in the 7th century during the Shailendra dynasty for the goddess Tara, it is used to preserve the inscriptions and sculptures belonging to the ancient Devanagari script. Other scholars, like Brandes, described this temple or inscription as being built in 778 AD. This temple was built in the Rakai Panangkaran period (778). Kalasan Temple is intended to honor female Bodhisattya or Dewitara and other Buddhist priests.<sup>17</sup>

#### 2. Jago Temple

This temple also has some more inscriptions in Devanagari, which shows that it was spread by the Buddhist monks. Candi Jago has been identified with the name "Jajaghu". This name is mentioned in the *Nagarakertagama*. Jago Temple was established as the death tomb of King Wisnuwardhana, who passed away in 1268. After passing away in Mandaragiri, Wisnuwardhana was enshrined in Waleri as Lord Shiva and in Jajaghu as the Buddhist god Amoghapasa. Jago Temple is a combination of Hinduism and Buddhism.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Roy E. Jordan, 'The Tārā Temple of Kalasan in Central Java', *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient*, 85 (1998); Catharina Audrey Gumulya, 'Studi Komparasi Karakteristik Arsitektur Candi Kalasan Dengan Candi Budha Era Mataram Kuno Dalam Mengembangkan Rekonstruksi Virtual', *Jurnal Arsitektur TERRACOTTA*, 4.2 (2023), p. 99 (p. 100), doi:10.26760/terracotta.v4i2.8501; Roy E. Jordaan, 'Tara and Nyai Lara Kidul: Images of the Divine Feminine in Java', *Asian Folklore Studies*, 56.2 (1997), p. 285 (p. 286), doi:10.2307/1178728; Widya Lestari Ningsih, 'Candi Kalasan: Letak, Fungsi Dan Keistimewaan', *Kompas.Com*, 2022 <<https://www.kompas.com/stori/read/2022/12/10/120000079/candi-kalasan--letak-fungsi-dan-keistimewaannya>>.

<sup>18</sup> I Nyoman Suardina and Marina Wardaya, 'Hermeneutic Review of the Meanings of Angling Darma Relief at Candi Jago', *Randwick International of Social Science Journal*, 4.1 (2023), pp. 140–49 (pp. 140–41), doi:10.47175/rissj.v4i1.618; L Kieven, 'Candi Jago: The Cap, a New Fashion of Headgear', in *Following the Cap-Figure in Majapahit Temple Reliefs* (Brill, 2013), pp. 144–45; Allysa Salsabila Dwi Gayatri, 'Sejarah Candi Jago Malang Peninggalan Kerajaan Singasari', *Detik Jatim*, 2024 <<https://www.detik.com/jatim/wisata/d-7363926/sejarah-candi-jago-malang-peninggalan-kerajaan-singasari>>.



Figure 6. Jago Temple

Source: Collection Detik Jatim

### 3. Seplawan Cave

Seplawan Cave, located in Kaligesing Area, Purworejo of Central Java, this cave contains the golden statues of Shiva and Parvati that belong to the period between the 7th and 9th century AD, once again showing that Shaivism was dominant in the regions. The discovery of two statues of Shiva and Parvati in the Seplawan Cave explains the marriage procession between Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati.<sup>19</sup>

### 4. Tirta Devta

Tirta Devta is Hindu pilgrimage of Bali island. The Manukaya inscription, dated 882 Saka or 960 AD, tells that King Chandra Bhaya Singha Warmadewa maintained a spring or holy water (*thirta*) at Air Mpul. Furthermore, during the reign of the King Sri Dhanadhiraja Lancana-Sri Dhanadewi Ketu (*Masula-Masuli*) couple who reigned in 1178-1255, Tirta Empul Temple was built. The construction of the Tirta Empul Temple was intended as a sacred place (*padharman*) for Bathara Indra, designed by I Bandesa Wayah. The view of this supernatural pilgrimage captivates the mind and intellect instantly. In the large rectangular water tank here, there are many cow faces carved on the edge. The streams of water flowing from these cow mouths create a supernatural scene. It feels as if heaven has descended right here, and Indra is showering nectar. Tirta Empul in Bali, Indonesia, commemorates Indra Dev's victory over evil, which was celebrated on Galungan Day, symbolizing good's triumph.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> F.I. Herawati, M.N. Arifin, and M.A.Y. Muizd, 'Development of Kaligesing Area as Geotourism and Education Tourism Kaligesing Purworejo Central Java', in *EAGE-GSM 2nd Asia Pacific Meeting on Near Surface Geoscience and Engineering* (European Association of Geoscientists & Engineers, 2019), pp. 1–5, doi:10.3997/2214-4609.201900443; Museum Nasional Indonesia, 'SIWA DAN PARWATI', *Instagram*, 2020 <[https://www.instagram.com/museumnasionalindonesia/p/B-oFJQTgbWn/?img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/museumnasionalindonesia/p/B-oFJQTgbWn/?img_index=1)>.

<sup>20</sup> I Wayan Ardika, 'The Implementation of Tri Hita Karana on the World Heritage of Taman Ayun and Tirta Empul Temples as Tourist Attractions in Bali', *E-Journal of Tourism*, 2017, p. 85 (p. 87), doi:10.24922/eot.v4i2.36400; I Made Trisna Semara, ST., M.Par, 'AGAMA, MANUSIA DAN LINGKUNGAN SEBAGAI PONDASI DAYA TARIK WISATA DI OBJEK WISATA PURA TIRTA EMPUL, TAMPAK SIRING, GIANYAR, BALI', *Jurnal Ilmiah Hospitality Management*, 5.1 (2018), pp. 91–100 (p. 92), doi:10.22334/jihm.v5i1.46; I Putu Mardika, 'Mitologi Pura Tirta Empul: Sempat DH B Sarkar, *A Note on Atisa Dipankara Dharmakirti and the Geographical Personality of Suvarnavipa*, 1986, pp. 36–41 <<https://api.repository.cam.ac.uk/server/api/core/bitstreams/f5cad05d-cd7d-4fc5-aac5->



Figure 7. Tirta Empul

Source: Collection Jembrana Express

### 5. Belahan Hindu pilgrimage

A lovely historical place known as Belahan Hindu Pilgrimage is situated on Java Island, Indonesia. Growing in the middle of the formidable greenery and abounds in historical temples and statues of gods and goddesses - all this portrays the predominant culture of Hindus on the island. This revered site, which could have been as old as the Majapahit period, is being used for fasting and is an important artifact of the culture. He stresses a look at its natural holy sources of water and beautiful stony furnishing of divine graces.

### Scripts and Linguistic Heritage

Early Nagari and more particularly the Devanagari set the tone for the Kawi script which was written in Java and Bali. It was used in the process of copying Sanskrit and Old Javanese manuscripts toward its disappearance. Many archaeological findings provide evidence for the usage of the Nagari script at early stages in the Indonesian archipelago. The Sanur stone discovered in South Bali and originally dated back to 914 CE can provide evidence for the usage of the Nagari script at the earliest stage possible.<sup>21</sup> An inscription from Nalanda, India, dating to Emperor Devpal's reign, records the donation of villages to Bal Putra Dev, ruler of Swarnadweep (likely Java). This highlights political and cultural exchanges between India and Java.<sup>22</sup>

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4322c1a6bbe0/content>.iracun Oleh Mayadanawa, Air Dipastu Dewa Indra Agar Jadi Obat', *Jembrana Express*, 2024 <<https://jembranaexpress.jawapos.com/taksu/2234642370/mitologi-pura-tirta-empul-sempat-diracun-oleh-mayadanawa-air-dipastu-dewa-indra-agar-jadi-obat>>.

<sup>21</sup> Christopher Ray Miller, 'Devanagari's Descendants in North and South India, Indonesia and the Philippines', *Writing Systems Research*, 6.1 (2014), pp. 10–24 (pp. 16–17), doi:10.1080/17586801.2013.857288.

<sup>22</sup> Anonim, 'Pesan Dari Nalanda', *Pusat Penelitian Arkeologi Nasional Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset Dan Teknologi*, 2016 <[https://arken.kemdikbud.go.id/contents/read/article/sk9rmh\\_1484537914/pesan-dari-nalanda#gsc.tab=0](https://arken.kemdikbud.go.id/contents/read/article/sk9rmh_1484537914/pesan-dari-nalanda#gsc.tab=0)>; Sarkar, *A Note on Atisa Dipankara Dharmakirti and the Geographical Personality of Suvarnavipa*.



Figure 10. Nalanda Statue

Source: Collection Pusat Penelitian Arkeonologi Nasional

The influence of Indian culture on Bali island is also deep. About two or three years ago, a Hindu woman from Bali, Ketut Sukiyantini, sent me a sentence in English on Messenger during a casual conversation: "Tat Tvam Asi." I was startled and asked, "Do you know its meaning? It is a Sanskrit sentence." She replied, "Yes, I know. My grandfather used to say this to me frequently in my childhood. My teachers also used it with students in school a long time ago.<sup>23</sup> Unfortunately, the new generation no longer uses it. However, many Sanskrit words are still used in our daily lives." How deeply is the Sanskrit language ingrained in the daily life of Bali Island? I was astonished. We can say that ocean of Indian culture is unfathomable in Indonesia.

### **Legacy and Ongoing Discoveries**

Indian Culture was introduced since early age at central Java as attested by the archeological evidences in shape of Indian temple, inscriptions and crafts. These findings – a 39-year inscription of Emperor Devpal stating his gifts to Bal Putra Dev of Swarnadeep — emphasize the Indian heritage in Indonesia. Covering from religious texts as well as temple constructions to the linguistic layer seen in many of the ancient scripts, the depth of Indian impact on Indonesian culture is felt when it comes to years, which underlines an extensive prehistoric connection between the two regions.

## **CONCLUSION**

Indian influence in the archipelago has persisted for thousands of years and has played an important role in shaping the history and cultural identity of this region. Early interactions between Indian traders and local communities in the first century AD facilitated the exchange of not only goods, but also ideas, religion and art. This process is evident in the spread of Hinduism and Buddhism, which made significant contributions to the social and spiritual structure of the archipelago. Large kingdoms such as Srivijaya and Majapahit, which developed as a result of this interaction, showed the application of governmental concepts, state administration and cultural traditions influenced by Indian teachings. This influence is not limited to religious aspects, but also includes art, literature, and architecture, as seen in the magnificent temples in Java and Bali that reflect the aesthetics and values of Indian culture.

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<sup>23</sup> Joel P. Brereton, 'Https://Www.Jstor.Org/Stable/43377397', *Zeitschrift Der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 136.1 (1986).

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