

Chinese Coin in Bali: Historical, Religious and Touristic Perspective

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ABSTRACT

From the historical perspective, China and Bali had a millennium cultural diplomatic relationship. This evident can be seen from tangible and intangible cultural heritage, such as Chinese coin, folklore, architecture of temple etc which represent the cultural acculturation between Bali and China. Due to the booming of Chinese tourist visiting Bali from 2015-2019 the stakeholder in tourism utilized the Bali-China cultural heritage as tourism attraction. The Chinese coin was used by Balinese people as religious artefact on Hindu religion as the prominent element of the offering and became the tourism attraction for Chinese tourists and also as souvenirs as well. This research used the theory of “commodification of the past” from GJ Asworth (1991) to explain the function and the meaning of Chinese coin not only for religious artefact but also touristic function. The collecting data used observation, structured-interview, and library research. The data analysis used qualitative data analysis from Miles and Huberman (in Sugiyono, 2011). The data analysis involved some procedure, such as data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. The research show that by using the intrinsic and extrinsic interpretation it can explain the intrinsic value (historical religious perspective) and extrinsic value (touristic perspective). The intrinsic value of the utilizing the Chinese coin in Hindu religion due the function and the meaning as cultural artifact. And the extrinsic value is the using of Chinese coin as cultural artifact could has the new meaning as tourism attraction by creating the storynomic to build the emotional attachment, the place attachment, and the social bond between China and Bali which had cultural diplomatic relationship.

Key Words: intrinsic, extrinsic, emic, etic, storynomic, commodification

1. INTRODUCTION

The Chinese studies in Indonesia recently to become hot issues, since China as the new emerging tourists market in the world. It is very important especially for Bali since the Chinese tourists became the top one inbound tourist traveling to Bali. In addition, Bali had more than one millennium cultural diplomatic relationship with China. There was a huge and magnificent influence not only in term of culture, but also in architecture, religion, art, the way of thinking, language etc. The number of Chinese tourists coming to Bali can be explained as follows.

No	Countries	Year 2013	Number	Year 2014	Number	Year 2015	Number	Year 2016	Number	Year 2017	Number	Year 2018	Number	Year 2019	Number			
1	Australia	I	826.385	I	988.786	I	966.69	I	1.117.933	I	China	1.385.850	I	China	1.361.512	I	China	1.241.128
2	China	II	387.533	II	585.922	II	688.469	II	975.152	II	Australia	1.062.039	II	Australia	1.169.215	II	Australia	1.186.057
3	Japan	III	208.115	III	223.205	III	228.185	III	232.151	III	India	264.16	III	India	353.894	III	Malaysia	613.509
4	Malaysia	IV	199.223	IV	217.159	IV	190.381	IV	218.928	IV	Japan	249.399	IV	England	270.789	IV	India	374.043
5	Singapore	V	138.397	V	178.174	V	167.628	V	180.770	V	England	240.633	V	Japan	261.666	V	England	287.201

(Source: bali.bps.go.id. 9 February 2018)

Bali is one of the preferred destinations of Chinese tourists. Before pandemic Covid 19, Chinese tourists have become the new emerging tourist market in Bali. The number of direct Chinese tourist arrivals in Bali has significant increases from 2013-2019. In the 2013-2016, Chinese tourists ranked the 2nd highest after Australian tourists, but since 2017 the Chinese tourists have become the 1st rank until 2019.

These data showed that the percentage of Chinese tourists visiting to Bali comparing to the total number of foreign tourists coming to Bali as follows. In 2013 the percentage was 11,82 % from the total numbers (3,278,598); in 2014 the percentage was 15.5 % from the total numbers (3,766,638); in 2015 the percentage was increased to 17.20 % from the total numbers (4,001,835); in 2016 the percentage became more increasing to 20,11 % from the total numbers (4,927,937).

The most increasing was in 2017 attained 24.32 % from the total numbers (5,345,421) (Denpasar Government Tourism Office, 2013; 2016;2017). The average of the growth number of Chinese tourists from 2014 until 2017 was 19.3 % per year. Due to the highest Chinese tourist visiting Bali before Covid-19, some tourist stakeholder in Bali, such as Bali Safari and Marine Park had utilized the folklore of mixed married between the King of Ancient Bali named Sri Haji Jaya Pangus with Chinese daughter named Kang Ching Wei. The folklore had been modified with the title “the Legend of Balinese Goddesses”. This creation was in line with the concept of macro-localization. Macro-localization involves the expanding of boundaries locality as well as making some local ideas, practices through the process of localizing-folklorizing, ethnicizing and exoticizing a destination in the context of tourism global.

From the historical perspective, China and Bali had a millennium cultural diplomatic relationship. This evident can be seen from tangible and intangible cultural heritage, such as Chinese coin, folklore, architecture of temple etc which represent the cultural acculturation between Bali and China. Due to the booming of Chinese tourist visiting Bali from 2015-2019 the stakeholder in tourism utilized the Bali-China cultural heritage as tourism attraction. The Chinese coin was used by Balinese people as religious artefact on Hindu religion as the prominent element of the offering and became the tourism attraction for Chinese tourists and also as souvenirs.

This research focuses upon the question about “how do the Balinese people can conserve

the ancient Chinese-coin as historical legacy from the perspective of religion, and tourism”. Until now the customary villages in Bali are still using those artifact as living monument on religious daily life of Hindu religion activities but the stakeholder at customary tourism village do not yet to take a good advantage by using it as tourism attraction. This research offers conserving strategies for customary tourism village which has Bali-Chinese cultural acculturation by utilizing the ancient Chinese coins not only to fulfill the function and the meaning for religious activities but also to fulfill touristic function. This effort could give contribution for conserving the historical artifacts in the future.

2. OBJECTIVES, METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE

This paper summaries an investigation of the Chinese ancient coins as living culture that still use as religious artifact until now. Further it will discuss some of the customary village had developed as tourism destination could take a good advantage regarding the using of Chinese coins as artifact of Hindu religion by creating the storynomic from the perspective of religion and history. The existing of Chinese coins in Bali do not yet conserve as “cultural heritage patrimony” so that this investigation will recommend local government to establish the regulation for conservation.

An extensive literature review such as Putra (2011) and Sidemen (2002) was undertaken to understand the existence of Chinese coin as living culture and to obtain a robust understanding the Balinese culture principle and practices imbued by Hindu religion that have been incorporated into Balinese tradition. Data collection used observation, structured interview, and library research. Interpretation of data used emic perspective that “cultural behavior should be studied and categorized in term of the inside view-the actor`s definition-of-human events” (Pelto in Jennings,2010:126). Data analysis used the qualitative analysis involving some procedure such as data collection, reduction, presentation and conclusion. This research utilized the theory commodification of the past i.e. emic interpretation to explore the intrinsic value of

Chinese coins from religious perspective and etic interpretation to explain the extrinsic value of Chinese coins from touristic perspective to create the storynomic based on the uniqueness of cultural DNA (GJ Asworth,1995; McKee and Gerace,2018).

3. RESULT

3.1 The History of Chinese Coin

Based on the archeological excavation, the first contact between Bali and China was proven through the discovery of the bronze mirror at the archeological site, the Pangkung Paruk Village in Buleleng regency. It is estimated come from the King of Wang Mang from Xin dynasty who reigned 8-23 AD (Ardika, et.al.,2017). It was found out in the sarcophagus as buried object. Based on archaeological data, China's trade relations with Bali through the northern coastal port of Bali (Manasa and Julah village in Buleleng regency) have been existed from 7-8 AD. Numismatic study showed that the existence of Chinese coins were identified from Tang Dynasty (618 - 907 AD). (Fred B. Eisenman, 1995: 114).

Photo 1.1. The Bronze Mirror From Han Dynasty The 1st Century



(Source: Ardika et.al.,2017)

Folklore mentions a marriage story between the King Sri Aji Jaya Pangus with a Chinese woman named Kang Ching Wei (1178 - 1181 AD). Representation of this marriage is enshrined in the traditional Balinese art called *Barong Landung*. *Barong Landung* is a couple of huge doll which the groom is displayed with black skin, protruding teeth, loose hair, and

wearing black and white clothes. The bride is expressed with white skin, oval face, slanted eyes accompanied by smiling lips, bleached blond hair, wearing a white or yellow-shrouded with geometric lines sarong showing a Chinese girl. Based on the legend and historical data showed that in the 12th century there has been contact between China and Bali.

Photo 1.2 the Figure of The Huge Doll called *Barong Landung*



(Source:

<https://www.google.com/search?q=barong+landung&safe=strict&tbm=isch>)

When Gajah Mada was appointed to be the Minister of Majapahit Kingdom, he had conquered Bali in 1343 AD. Since that time, the Majapahit Kingdom had used Chinese coin as a tool of transaction in *Nusantara* archipelago including Bali as the colonies of Majapahit. Export China coin to *Nusantara* archipelago has been undertaken by the Kingdom of Majapahit (Aelst 1995:357-390). China's coins as currency system had already introduced during the Tang Dynasty (618-906 AD). This coins have circle shape with a square hole in the center which have diameter 25 mm and it's weigh approximately 3.5 grams.

Photo 1.3 The Map of The *Majapahit* Empire and *Nusantara* Archipelago In 14 Century



(Source:

<https://www.google.com/search?q=peta+zaman+kerajaan+majapahit&safe>)

The units of values in China called *qian*, in Majapahit kingdom called *picis* and in Bali called *keteng*. During the reign of the Tang dynasty was produced about 100 million to 327 million *qian*. Under the rule of the Sung Dynasty (960-1125 AD) the numbers was increased to 800 million *qian*, even in the beginning of the 11th century had produced about 1.8 billion *qian*. The huge production was reached in the year 1078 AD which had produced nearly 9 billion *qian*. (Hartwell, 1980:87-93).

Photo1.4 Chinese Coin as Currency in Nusantara Archipelago From 12 Century



(Source: http://www.coinbooks.org/esylum_v16n42a21.html)

The relationship between China with Bali in term of trade is also evidenced by discovering of traditional written script that show the role of the Chinese people. The script was written on palm leaves called *Lontar* using Balinese language. Those written script consist of *pangeling-eling* (land owner certificate), *surat padol* (pawn). The traditional manuscript described the role of the people of China as a seller of opium, as a creditor or a vendee of land by using Chinese coin as a valid transaction. This data showed that Chinese people had dominated the economic transaction and trade in Bali since that period. The using of Chinese coin in Bali as a historical evident utilizing it as the currency to fulfill the economic functions.

3.2 Chinese Coins as Living Culture in Bali

In modern time, the function of Chinese coin had change to become the traditional/religious function. The intrinsic value of Chinese is based

on the Hindu religion philosophy in Bali is teaching the five holy sacrifice, such as (1) *Dewa Yadnya* (offering to the Lord in all its manifestations); (2) *Rsi Yadnya* (offerings to the sages and priest); (3) *Pitra Yadnya* (offerings to the spirits of the ancestors); (4) *Manusa Yadnya* (offering to humanity); (5) *Bhuta Yadnya* (offering to the devil or demon). The use of Chinese coin as one of ritual artifact called *sesari*. *Sesari* reflects a core offering as the embodiment of the noblest values presented to the God used on *kewangen*. It is made from taper cone of banana leaf, which it crown decorated with fragrant flowers, which has background palm leaf carving. The crown ornament is inserted with a pieces of Chinese coin as *sesari*. Altogether the Hindu ritual in Bali always use Chinese coin as ceremonial artifact (Sidemen, 2002:149).

Photo 1.5 The Use of Chinese Coin as Part of Ritual Artifact Called *Kwangen*



(Source: <https://www.google.com/search?q=hiasan+kwangen&safe=strict&tbn>)

Chinese coin is also used as artifact of the ceremony of establishing the new holy family temple or the new public temples. The function of those kinds of Chinese coin is to provide magical powers (spiritual power) for holy buildings so that the ancestors and the God would like dwell in such a place.

Photo 1.6 The Family Temple In Bali



(Source:

<https://www.google.com/search?q=sangguh+ke+mulan+rong+tiga&safe>

The Balinese people believe that the Chinese coins are of five elements of metal (*panca datu*). The five elements expressed the symbol of the five deities symbolized by the essential color of Chinese coin which made of the blend of five metals such as (1)the yellow color of brass as a symbol of the God *Mahadewa*; (2) the red color of copper as a symbol of the God Brahma; (3) the black color of iron as a symbol of the God Vishnu; (4) the white color of silver as symbols of *Iswara*; (5) the gray color as a mix of the four elements of metals became a symbol of Lord Shiva *Mahadewa*.

Photo 1.7 The essential Color of Chinese Coin Being Made of The Five Metal Blending and Their Characters



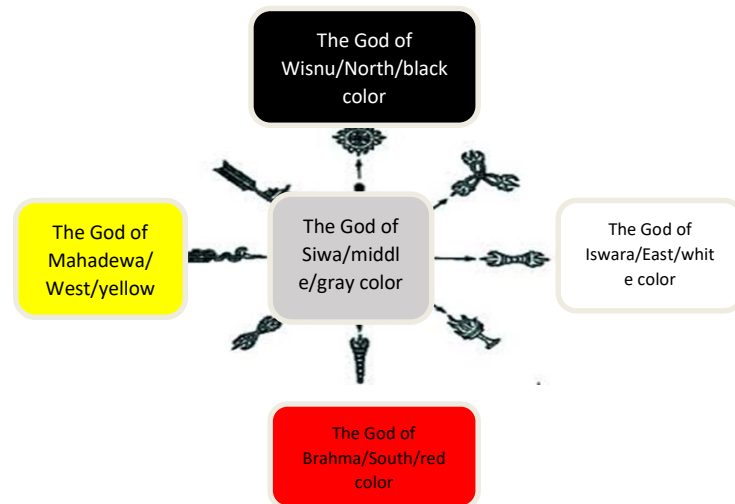
(Source:

http://www.coinbooks.org/esylum_v16n42a21.html)

In addition, there is written symbols (characters) on the observe and the reverse of the Chinese coins which is believed by the Hindu religion in Bali has a religious meaning, such as (1) Thai ping 太平 means peace; (2) Zhi Dao 知

道 means happiness; (3) Xian Ping 先平 means tranquility, harmony; (4) Jing de 景德 means generosity; (5) Tian Xi 天喜 means luck; (6) Ming dao 明道 means the path of light; (7) Jing you 经由 means of salvation; (8) he Zhi 和纸 means harmony and peace; (9) Xi Ning 西宁 means calmness; (10) Jia Ding 嘉定 means goodness; (11) Zhi da 志达 meaningful desires will be accomplished; (12) Hong wu 红武 means glory; (13) Yong le 永乐 means happy forever; (14) Kang xi 康熙 means well-being, prosperity; (15) Dao guang 道光 meaningful way without a hitch (Harthawan, 2011:108). The meaning of the characters are believed by Balinese people that their prayers will be bestowed by God or ancestors according to their hope.

The Chart 1.8 Five Main Gods Who Guard the Five Cardinal Direction According To Hindu Cosmology



3.3 The Storynomic of Chinese Coin

The storynomic of Chinese coins as living culture in Bali is created based on etic interpretation for giving the new function of those artifact. Etic interpretation to explain the extrinsic value of Chinese coin from touristic perspective to create creatively and innovatively storytelling based on the uniqueness of cultural DNA. The storynomics could establish the three kind of attachments, such as place, emotional, social bond between China as tourist generating region and Bali as tourist destination region. The place attachment of Chinese coins will give information about the origin of Chinese coins, the

emotional religious attachment will explain about the using of Chinese coins as ritual artifact on Hindu religion in Bali, and social bond will give information about the similarities of cultural genetic elements. It means that Chinese coins is still used by the Balinese people as dowry, custom payment of fines at some customary village in Bali (Sendra et.al., 2021).

There is no Balinese Hindu religion ceremony is completed without using Chinese coin as the artifact of offering. The history of its usage in Bali can be traced back to 886 AD when money had been utilized for trade. The Chinese community was estimated to have existing in Bali before the 9th century. The discovery of old Chinese coins in archeological excavation proved that Chinese coin was widely used in daily economic transaction. The most reliable method to verify the age of those coins was by making a comparison to the history of coins in China. Since the Han Dynasty, the coins have been produced as a currency.

Bali, as part of the international trading hub, was exposed to the usage once widely used by merchants as a tool for barter or trade. Chinese coin or *ban liang* from the era of Han Dynasty to Qing Dynasty (1644-1912 AD) have been found in Bali, proving once again that Bali have had contact with China as far back as 2,000 years ago. There are also coins from the T'ang Dynasty, Song Dynasty and Ming Dynasty. The latter was found during an excavation in the site of Pengukur-Ukuran Temple, Pejeng Village Regency of Gianyar Bali. Pejeng was the center of the ancient Balinese kingdom, under the rule of Warmadewa Dynasty. Although after Indonesia was colonized by the Dutch who introduced their own currency, the Chinese coins were still widely used as common people's currency. There are still Balinese who remembered the time when they shopped in the market with the coins or paying fine to customary village using a stringed Chinese coins.

Gradually, the usage of Chinese coins was declining especially when Indonesia gained its independence and issued its own currency, rupiah, on the 1950s. But the Chinese coins are still widely used in Bali as part of the offering ritual

in its Hindu belief. The coins are used in *pitra yajna* (the ceremony for the ancestors). The ceremonies used the coins in a different part of the rituals, such as in the cremation ceremony the coins are burnt with the dead body or drowned in the sea or lake as part of the offerings in *Mapekelem* ceremony. It caused the shortage stock of it and prompted the Balinese people to make duplicates especially for the purpose of rituals and art.

Photo 1.9 The Cremation Ceremony In Bali Which Utilized Chinese Coin as a Ritual Artifact



(Source: <https://kesrasetda.bulelengkab.go.id/informasi/detail/artikel/10-upacara-ngaben-dalam-agama-hindu>).

In the village of Kamasan in Klungkung regency as the center of local product of imitation coins, the local people utilizing them

to create various statue of the God and Goddess, such as the statue of *Bhatara Rambut Sedana*, the God of Wealth by using a hundreds of coins are tied together to formed its body while the hand and the face are made of beautifully carved wood. Thus, the usage of Chinese coins in Bali is evolving (<http://litebali.com/ancient-chinese-coins-of-bali/>)

Photos1.10 The Chinese Coin Duplicates In The Form of Statue Called *Bhatara Rambut Sedana* The God of Wealth and The Various of Bali Hindu's Accessories



(Source: <http://litebali.com/ancient-chinese-coins-of-bali/>)

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

From the historical perspective, China and Bali have a millennium cultural diplomatic relationship so that Bali and China have the similarities of cultural genetical element, because Indonesia (Bali) had involved in the Silk Road Trade. There was a huge and magnificent cultural influence not only in religion, art, architecture but also the way of thinking, language etc. In term of tangible heritage the Balinese people still

conserve the Chinese coin as living cultural artefact on Hindu religion.

Chinese tourists before Covid-19 had became the new emerging tourist market in Bali and effort need to be undertaken to attract more and more Chinese tourist in the Situation of New Normal Covid-19. Accordingly, the Bali-China cultural acculturation must be creatively and innovatively utilized to promote Bali in Chinese tourist market as cultural tourism destination. Original Chinese coins are widely used as a souvenir, causing the amount of Chinese coins circulating in Bali to decrease. Therefore, the Bali provincial government have to make regulations so that souvenirs using original Chinese coins are prohibited which being replaced with local products.

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