

Bali in the World of Buddhism

By

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Abstract

Archaeological evidence indicates that contacts between India and Bali have already occurred at the late second century BC. Several Indian potteries such as Rouletted wares or Arikamedu type 1, Arikamedu type 10, Arikamedu type 18, and Arikamedu type 141 were found at Sembiran and Pacung sites in the Northeastern Bali. Gold foil eye covers, glass and stone beads have also been found in several sites in Bali. XRD and NAA analysis on potteries, as well as a chemical analysis on glass beads suggest that Indian origin of these artifacts. Sembiran and Pacung sites in the northeastern coast of Bali produce the largest Indian potteries in Southeast Asia. Bali seems to be located on the strategic trade routes connecting eastern and western Indonesia.

The second waves of contact between India and Bali occurred around 800 AD. Several hundred of clay stupas which contain *ye te mantras* and Dhyani Buddhas have been discovered in Bali. Bali seems to be involved as a part of the international spread of Buddhism at that time.

By the late ninth century Buddhist monks have been mentioned in the Balinese inscriptions. This suggests that Buddhist community has already existed in the Balinese society at least in the late ninth century.

Buddhism and Hinduism were considered as official or state religions by the early tenth century AD. The Balinese inscriptions dated in the early tenth century AD mentioned that Buddhist and Hindu priests were members of royal assembly or *pakirakiran i jro makabehan*. The Buddhist and Hindu priests were prominent members of the royal assembly. At the same time, there were several Buddhist centres in India such as Nalanda, Waranasi, and Amarawati were transferred to local places in Bali. The high functionaries or priests who resided at Nalanda or Waranasi were mentioned in the Balinese inscriptions. In addition, the hermitage at the Pakerisan river was named Amarawati at the early eleventh century AD. Bali seem to be part of Cultural Geography on Buddhism at least around 800 AD and still continue to the present.

Introduction

Archaeological discoveries suggest that the beginning of contacts between India and Bali have already occurred at the late second century BC. Several Indian Rouletted Wares, Arikamedu type 10, Arikamedu type 18, Arikamedu type 141, a sherd with Kharosthi or

Brahmi script, and coarse dishes of Indian ware were found at Sembiran and Pacung in Northeastern Bali. Sembiran and Pacung in Northeastern Bali produced more than one hundred Indian sherds, the largest Indian Rouletted sherds which never found yet in Southeast so far (Ardika, 1991; Ardika et.al. 1997: 194). Sembiran and Pacung which are close to the village of Julah could be the ancient harbour or port site in Northeastern Bali (Ardika, 2013). A complete rouletted ware bowl has been found at Kobak Kendal in west Java, though to have been part of the kingdom of Taruma (see fig 1). It should be noted that rouletted ware sherds were also discovered recently at Batujaya, West Java (Djafar, 2010: 97-98, fig. 3.57).

Rouletted ware were manufactured in India and/or Sri Lanka perhaps between 150 BC and AD 200. The earliest rouletted ware probably appeared in Bali and Indonesia in AD 1-200 (Ardika and Bellwood, 1991: 229). Some rouletted wares at Sembiran were found in a layer in association with a large black-slipped storage jar tempered with rice husk; this has been dated by AMS radiocarbon to 2660 \pm 100 BP (Ardika and Bellwood, 1991). However, recent excavations at Sembiran and Pacung produced an AMS date obtained from charcoal at 2.9-3.0 m depth at SBN XIX is 142 cal BC-AD 25 (S-ANU 37107). Pacung trench IX, on the other hand, revealed a dense beach cemetery, with more elaborate burial practices, including the use of jar burials and richer burial goods. The sites have produced a cultural sequence starting from the late second century BC for the burials, to the twelfth century AD, a date represented at 2.2 m depth at Sembiran, just below the ash layer. At 95.4% probability, the bayesian model of eight direct AMS dates from the bones of seven Pacung individuals, and one from charcoal closely associated with burial XIII, indicates that the burials started between 163 cal BC and AD 13 and ended between 51 cal BC and AD 137 (Calo *et.al.* 2015: 381).



Figure 1. Rouletted sherds, Arikamedu sherd of type 10, and a complete rouletted ware bowl from Kobak Kendal, West Java

X-ray diffraction (XRD) analysis has been performed on one rouletted sherd from Sembiran IV, four from Anuradhapura, and three from Arikamedu. All have essentially the

same mineral: mainly quartz with traces of mica, muscovite, potassium feldspar, and plagioclase feldspar. The XRD result conclusively supports an India origin (Ardika and Bellwood, 1991: 224; Ardika, 1991; Ardika et.al. 1993).

In addition to XRD analysis, nine samples of rouletted wares (two from Anuradhapura, two from Arikamedu, one from Karaikadu [Tamil Nadu], three from Sembiran, and a single sherd from Pacung) have also been subject to neutron activation analysis (NAA) for 20 rare elements. The result indicates that all the rouletted ware are so close in composition with that of a single manufacturing source is suggested for all the samples listed. The rouletted sherds form separate cluster in principal components and average link cluster analysis from sherds of presumed Balinese manufacture (Ardika and Bellwood, 1991: 224; Ardika et.al, 1993).

Apart from rouletted wares, two sherds of Arikamedu type 10 have also been found at Sembiran. Outside Arikamedu, this type of pottery has also been at the site of Chandraketurah in West Bengal, and Alangankulam on the Vaigai river in Tamil Nadu (H.P. Ray pers com; Ardika and Bellwood, 1991: 224). No information is at present available on its occurrence elsewhere.

A sherd of Arikamedu type 18 was also found at Sembiran (fig.2). The sherd of apparent Arikamedu type 18c was reported from Bukit Tengku Lembu in Northern Malaya (Sieveking, 1962: 29; see fig.2a).

An inscribed sherd was found in Sembiran VII. The sherd is black-slipped inside and outside and the fabric is coarser than that of the Rouletted ware, Arikamedu type 10 and type 18. Three characters are clearly visible on the inside surface of this sherd (see fig.2). According to Prof. B.N. Mukherjee of Calcutta University the script is Kharosthi, and his preliminary reading is *te sra vi* (Ardika, 1991: 53, fig. 4.4; see fig. 2b). Mukherjee (1989 a,b; 1990a,b) believes that a group of people who used the Kharosthi script extended their interests from Northwest India to West Bengal, where they became very active as traders from about the last quarter of the 1st century AD to about the beginning of the 5th century AD. These traders probably conducted maritime commerce with Southeast Asia and reputedly had access to a supply of central Asian horses (Mukherjee 1990a:2).



Figure 2. A sherd of Arikamedu type 18, an inscribed sherd of Kharosthi or Brahmi script, and gold beads from Sembiran

Early Evidence of Buddhism in Bali

The appearance of archaeological evidence such as gold foil eye covers, Indian Rouletted wares and several Arikamedu type potteries, glass and stone beads indicate the beginning of contacts between India and Bali around the late second century BC. Contacts between India and Bali might have also involved Buddhism and Brahmanical priests.

Clay stupas and seals of Buddhist *mantras* or formulas have been found at the villages of Pejeng and Tatiapi, Gianyar regency in the 1920. The total number of clay stupas were discovered at these villages 1053. In 1943, T. Resing and C.J. Grader recommended these stupas were kept at Museum Bali in Denpasar. There are 758 seals of Buddhist formulas now still kept at Museum Bali in Denpasar (Astawa, 2007: 28-29; 32-33). It should be noted that Pejeng is also a find place of the biggest bronze drum in Southeast Asia, even in the world. The drum is 198 cm high and 100 cm in diameter (Kempers, 199:). Pejeng is also considered as the centre of Buddhism and Hinduism during the classical period of Old Balinese kingdom between the 9th and 14th century AD. This phenomena suggest that the Indianization was a continuous process from pre Hindu or prehistoric time up to the appearance of Early State in Bali.

Clay stupas and seals were also discovered during the construction of swimming pool of Hotel Angsoka, at the village of Kalibukbuk, Buleleng regency, North Bali in 1991. The Hotel Angsoka is located about 100 m from the beach of the northern coast of Bali. The number of clay stupas were found at the Hotel Angsoka 90.

In 1994, archaeological excavation was conducted by the Branch Office of Archaeological Research Centre Denpasar at the land belong to Mr. Ngurah Sentanu. About 42 complete and several fragments of clay stupas were found inside a hole of the real stupa with ground plan 2,60 x 2,60 m which is made of bricks at Kalibukbuk. The excavation is not far from the Hotel Angsoka and about 600 m from the beach (Astawa, 2007: 30-31). In

addition, two figures of stupas were also discovered inside the clay stupas of Kalibukbuk, Buleleng, North Bali (see figure 4). The discoveries of a real brick stupa and clay stupas at Kalibukbuk indicate that the spread of Buddhism in Bali might have been started from the northern coast to the inland sites of Pejeng and Pegunungan in central Bali.

The relief of stupa inside the clay stupas found at Kalibukbuk are very similar to the miniature of stupa at Pagulingan temple and the relief of stupa at the ravine of Petanu (Kempers, 1991: 125; fig. 90; see figure 4). Based on the similarity of the shape of the relief of stupa at ravine of Petanu and the lotus cushion-crowned of Blanjong inscription, Bernet Kempers (1991: 126) believes that the date of these objects are contemporary namely from the early 10th century AD. However, Stutterheim suggests that the relief of stupa and the Buddhist statues which were found at Goa Gajah contemporaries of Borobudur, in Central Java dated from mid 9th century AD (Kempers, 1991: 126-127, fig. 91; see fig. 7).

Seal of Buddhist *mantras* or formulas were also discovered at the temple of Pagulingan, Tampaksiring, Gianyar regency in central Bali. About 62 broken seals with 2-4 cm in diameter were found at Pagulingan temple during the restoration of foundation structure. The foundation of the structure is octagonal in shape which is similar to the miniature of stupa discovered at the temple during the restoration process (Astawa, 2007: 33-34, see fig. 4). The archaeological service of Bali restored the stupa at Pagulingan temple with octagonal based or foundation (see figure 6).

The seals are stamped with a well known recitation of faith, so called *ye-te* formula (figure 3). Similar clay seals and stupas were also discovered near Borobudur in Central Java (Kempers, 1991: 95-96).

The texts on seals are in *Siddhamatrka* script. On the basis of palaeography, the date of the seal is estimated from 800 to 1000 AD (Griffiths, 2014: 183; fig. 12). Two pieces of gold foils, a silver foil bearing a few aksaras, and a terracotta tablet bearing *ye dharma* formula were discovered during the preparation for reconstruction of Pura Pagulingan, at Tampaksiring, Gianyar regency. The foundations of Pura Pagulingan showed an octagonal groundplan.



Figure 3. Clay stupas, Dhyani Buddha and seals of *ye-te dharma* stored at Bali Museum

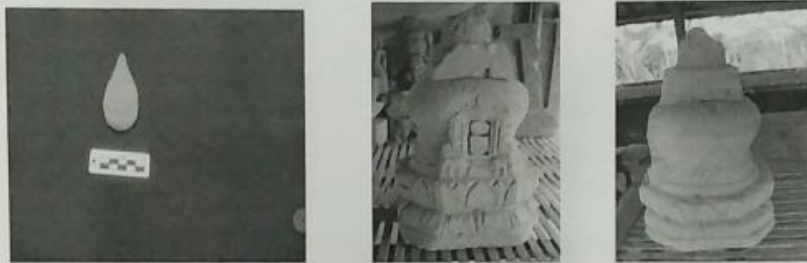


Figure 4. Relief of stupa inside the votive found at Kalibukbuk, and a miniature stupa at Pura Pagulingan view from the front and back sides



Figure 5. Relief of stupa at the Petanu ravine and its reconstruction (Kempers, 1991, fig. 89 and 90)

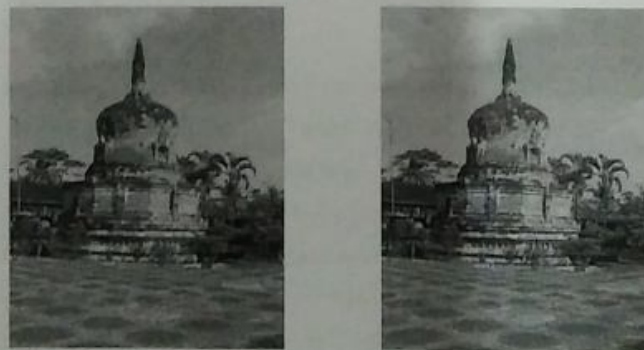


Figure 6. Reconstructed stupa at Pegulingan temple

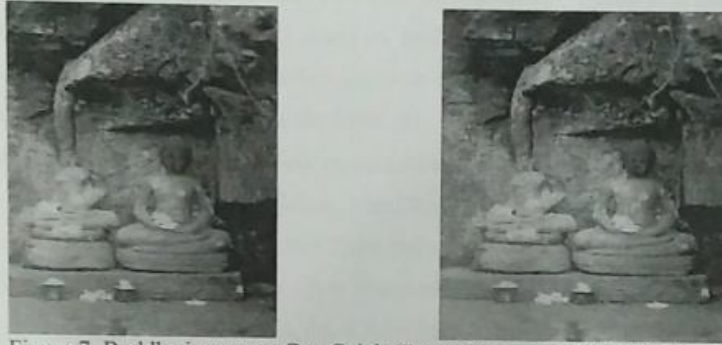


Figure 7. Buddha images at Goa Gajah (Bernet Kempers, 1991:126, fig. 91)

The appearance of *dharanis* and *mantras* in Bali suggests that the island is an integral part of the ancient Buddhist world. Griffiths (2014: 186) argues that the text used in this part of Buddhist world must have been quite similar to the text that were used in other Buddhist countries.

There are 43 fragments of votive tablets were found at Blandongan, Batujaya in West Java (Utomo, 2012: 4-5). This site also produced Indian rouletted wares. This phenomenon is similar to Bali, where the appearance of the Indian rouletted wares representing the first Indian contact with Bali, and it was followed by the discovery of clay stupas suggesting the second waves of the contact between India and Bali.

The Inscriptional Data

It is interesting to note that the Balinese inscriptions dated from the late 10th up to 11th century mentioned several place's names in India such as Waranasi, Nalanda, and Amarawati. These place's names were associated with court of justice, high functionary, the residence of Buddhist priests, and the name of a shrine or a sacred place.

The inscription of Sembiran B dated from Saka 873 or AD 951 states III.2. *...da dikara di panglapuan di waranasi tuha dara* (Goris, 1954: 72-73; Ardika and Beratha, 1996: 106). It is translated as follows: the honorable *Dhikara* (functionary) of court of justice at Baranasi/Waranasi is Tuha Dara. The inscription of Gobleg, Pura Desa II dated from Saka 905 or AD 983 mentioned lib.2. *...da senapati waranasi tuha neko,...*(Goris, 1954: 79; Ardika

and Beratha, 1996: 123). Translation: the high functionary or army commander (*Senapati*) at Waranasi is Tuha Neko.

The term Nalanda was first mentioned in the inscription of Serai AII, dated from Saka 915 or AD 993. The inscription stated as follows: Va. 5. *...mpungku di nalenda dang upadhyaya dhanawan* or the Buddhist priest at Nalenda (Nalanda) was Dang Upadhyaya (*honorefic teacher*) Dhanawan (Goris, 1954: 83; Ardika and Beratha, 1996: 135-136). It is interesting to note that Tuha Gato was mentioned as *Senapati* at Waranasi in this inscription. On the basis of the inscription of Gobleg, Pura Desa II dated from AD 983 and the inscription of Serai AII, dated from AD 993 that Tuha Neko was replaced by Tuha Gato as *Senapati* (army-commander or high functionary) at Waranasi.

The inscription of Bwahan A dated from Saka 916 or AD 994 noted that the Buddhist priest at Nalanda was Dang Upadhyaya Dhanawan and the Buddhist priest at Waranasi was Dangacaryya Sucandra (Goris, 1954: 86; Ardika and Beratha, 1998: 35). This inscription indicates that Nalanda and Waranasi were residence of Buddhist priests. In addition, the inscription also mentioned Brahmanical priests (*kasatwan*) as well as Buddhist priests (*kasoghatan*) were members of court functionaries.

The inscription of Tengkulak A dated from Saka 945 or AD 1023 mentioned the hermitage (*katyagan*) at Pakerisan river called Amarawati (Ginarsa, 1961: 4-8 ; Ardika and Beratha, 1998: 86; see fig. 8). The Balinese inscriptions indicate that the Indian place's names such as Waranasi, Nalanda, and Amarawati were transfered the to the local place in Bali. These places are associated with the centre of Buddhism in India. Amarawati was the Buddhist influence site in the lower Krishna valley under the Mauryas (Ray, 1994: 140). However, it is still not clear whether the Balinese might have gone to the Buddhist centres such as Waranasi, Nalanda, and Amarawati and other places in India or they knew the places cognitively? New data from India or Bali are needed for further studies.



Figure 8. The Gunung Kawi rock arts named Amarawati

Conclusion

The beginning of contact between India and Bali might have already existed at the late second century BC. Bali seem to have been located on the spices trade routes that connecting the eastern and western Indonesia.

The second waves of contact between India and Bali might have occurred around the 8th century AD. The discoveries of clay stupas, seal of Buddhist mantras, the relief of stupa, the Buddhist stupas and the images of Buddha indicate that Bali was part of the world of Buddhism around 8th century AD.

Inscriptional data from the early 10th century AD suggest that Buddhism and Hinduism became the official religions in Bali. Priests of Buddhism and Hinduism were members of the court functionaries in ancient Bali. At the same time, the Buddhist centres in India such as Waranasi, Nalanda, and Amarawati were transformed to the local places in Bali.

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