

Exploring Cultural Harmony at Temples: A Historical Tourist Destination and It's Effect on Fostering Intercultural Understanding

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Abstract

This study aims to explore local beliefs by highlighting elements of local wisdom and culture present in Chinese temples. Temples, particularly on the north coast of Central Java, have been recognized for their tourism potential as they reflect the local culture. The effort to promote Chinese temples as tourist attractions is expected to bring novelty and expand tourism in Java's coastal districts, establishing them as historical destinations. One example is the Po An Thian Temple in Pekalongan, which, through its ceremonies and rituals, is projected to become a prominent tourist destination in the city. Using an ethnographic approach, this study seeks to gain a comprehensive understanding of local beliefs at Po An Thian Temple. The presence of the local deity Tek Hay Cin Jin, the birthday ceremony of the divinity Sin Long Tay Tee and Tek Hay Cin Jin, as well as the Pintoe Dalem Street Festival, contribute to Po An Thian Temple's popularity as a tourist site.

Keywords: *Po An Thian temple; local beliefs; north coast; Sin Long Tay Tee; Tek Hay Cin Jin.*

INTRODUCTION

The temple is often referred to as a site of Tridharma and Taoism worship due to its spiritual significance. However, its role extends beyond religious practices; the temple also serves social, cultural, and tourism purposes. Several studies have examined the temple's role as a sacred space for Chinese worshippers (Zou & Bahauddin, 2024; Hartati et al., 2020). In addition to its religious function, the temple plays a crucial social role, acting as a center for social control and community engagement. This is evident in festivals and rituals such as *Cioko*, or *Sembahyang Rebutan*, which also reinforce social networks within the community (Wahyuni & Hartati, 2021; Hartati et al., 2020).

This research examines the temple from the perspective of its potential to attract tourists. Temples have long been discussed as

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tourist destinations, as highlighted by studies from Shinde (2021) and Wu et al. (2020). As religious tourism sites, temples can have significant financial impacts. For instance, in China, where temple culture originated, the Shaolin Temple in Henan Province is a major cultural heritage site and an international tourist destination (Wang et al., 2021). Similarly, the goddess Mazu holds an important place in Chinese religion. Recognized by UNESCO in 2009 as an irreplaceable cultural heritage, Mazu is worshipped across regions such as Fujian, Guangdong, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia. As the ocean goddess, Mazu is believed to have control over the Dragon King of the Four Seas and is the patron deity of those whose livelihoods depend on the sea. In Taiwan, Mazu worship is especially significant, with Jenn Lann Temple in Taichung becoming a popular religious tourism destination. Each year in March, during Mazu's birthday, thousands of pilgrims visit the temple, drawn by its high-quality tourist services (Chang et al., 2020). This shows how temples, like those dedicated to Mazu, can evolve into key religious and tourist attractions.

Indonesia, like China, Taiwan, Singapore, and Malaysia, has temples that serve as popular tourist destinations. These temples often host festivals that attract visitors, such as the Capgomeh festival with the Gotong Toapekong ritual and the Dragon Boat Festival, both of which are celebrated to honor the birth of the temple's primary deity. To further enhance their appeal as tourist attractions, the rich local culture and beliefs expressed in these Chinese temples in Indonesia should be actively promoted and preserved.

Local wisdom is evident in various aspects of temple life, including ceremonies, customs, the deities worshipped, and the food offerings that serve as a form of interaction between people and the gods. These elements are shaped by local culture, which significantly influences the ceremonies held at Chinese temples. The impact of local culture on these practices can be understood in different ways: as reliance (Hartati, 2023), acculturation (Desprosianasari & Hartati, 2019), or hybridity (Azizi, Hartati, 2019).

Acculturation as a concept for tourism development has been widely implemented, as demonstrated by the influence of Chinese culture on batik motifs, such as those in Pesir Batik (Lukman et al., 2018; Budiarto et al., 2024; Widayat, 2022; Sartini, 2016). These culturally blended motifs can attract tourists. Similarly, the Calengsai dance, which fuses Banyumas and Chinese cultural elements in Banyumas Regency (Saputri & Kuncoro, 2023; Tjaturrini, 2020; Tjaturrini & Supriadi, 2022), also has the potential to serve as a unique tourist attraction.

This article explores local beliefs by highlighting elements of local wisdom and culture in Chinese temples, particularly those on the coast of Central Java, as potential tourist attractions. It aims to demonstrate how understanding and promoting the cultural significance of these

temples can enhance tourism development in Java's coastal districts, transforming them into historic tourist destinations.

One notable example is the Po An Thian Temple in Pekalongan, a city renowned for its batik. Founded in 1882, the Po An Thian Temple not only contributes to Pekalongan's cultural richness but also enhances its appeal as a tourist destination. The temple's traditions and ceremonies are a reflection of the area's local wisdom, adding to its unique charm.

METHOD

This paper is based on research conducted using a qualitative, ethnographic design. Qualitative research is defined as a naturalistic approach that relies on non-numerical data, focusing on understanding and exploration rather than explaining or manipulating variables. This contextual and interpretive approach emphasizes processes and development over final products or results (Nassaji, 2020).

The ethnographic method was chosen because it provides a view of the community under study from an insider's perspective (emic). According to Smith, as cited in Zilber, ethnography examines actions within a broader structure that integrates both 'local' and 'translocal' realities (Zilber, 2020). In this study, the primary data collection methods included in-depth interviews, observation, participant observation, focus group discussions, and literature reviews. Ethnography allows the researcher to resocialize by immersing themselves in the norms and meanings of the community being studied, gaining insights into their social world. This direct interaction and firsthand experience help the researcher understand the role of local belief ceremonies within the temple.

Participatory observation is a key component of ethnographic research, requiring a research process that allows the ethnographer to engage in in-depth observation. This method enables the collection of concrete data on behavior and direct experiences, helping researchers understand how people act and communicate in various contexts (Murchison, 2010). In this study, observations were conducted during the Rebutan or Cioko prayer ceremony.

Stewart defines Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) as structured group conversations on a specific topic, facilitated by a professional moderator (Sim & Waterfield, 2019). In this research, the FGD was moderated by a specialist in Chinese culture and held at the Po An Thian temple, with the participation of temple authorities and management.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Po An Thian Temple

Po An Thian, a name derived from the Hokkien dialect meaning "the palace of the mustika of salvation," is regarded as a center of worship that offers protection and prosperity to its community. Established in 1882, the temple was originally dedicated to several

deities, including Sin Long Tay Tee, Tek Hay Cin Jin, Kwe Lak Kwa, Khay Lam Tay Ong, and To Te Kong. Now, 142 years later, the temple still honors these deities and has expanded its altars to include goddesses such as Kwan Yim, Mi Lek Fo Sat, Kwan Seng Tee Koen, Tjay Sin Ya, and Sam Tay Cu Na Cha.

Sin Long Tay Tee, the temple's primary deity, plays a significant role in healing, serving both the local and surrounding communities as the god of medicine. Visitors come daily to the altar seeking both medical and non-medical care. Treatments involve drinking water and medicinal oils. To receive treatment, individuals write their names on a piece of paper; Chinese names are written in red, while others are written in white. The temple priest then prays over the water, performs the *pwapwe* divination, and if the divination shows blades opposing each other (indicating a positive response), the water is administered to the person seeking medical relief.

In addition to providing medical water, Po An Thian Temple also offers medicinal oil, which is produced during a special oil-cooking ritual. This ritual takes place on the birthday of the god Sin Long Tay Tee, which this year falls from Friday, May 31 to Sunday, June 2, 2024. The medicinal oil ritual is highly regarded in traditional Chinese medicine and involves cooking medicinal herbs in boiling oil for 12 hours. During this process, the oil is infused with amulet papers and mantras associated with Sin Long Tay Tee to attract divine energy and enhance the oil's therapeutic properties (Irawan Siregar, 2023).

The temple's medicinal oil attracts many non-Chinese individuals seeking affordable treatments, reflecting a healthy and supportive relationship between Chinese and non-Chinese communities. The birthday of Sin Long Tay Tee is celebrated annually in the fourth month of the Lunar calendar, with a major festival held every five years. During these celebrations, the *wanso* (devotees) bathe in therapeutic oil. Other significant events at the temple include Chinese New Year, marked by the *ciswak* (decline *bala*) ceremony, the scramble prayer (*Cioko*), and the birthday celebration of Tek Hay Cin Jin (*sejit*).



Figure 1. Po An Tian Temple Pekalongan



Figure 2. The Main Deity, Sin Long Tay Tee

The tribute to Tek Hay Cin Jin at Po An Thien

One notable feature of Po An Thien Temple is the shrine dedicated to the god Tek Hay Cin Jin. This altar has been part of the temple since its establishment in 1882. Tek Hay Cin Jin, also known as Ze Hai Zhen Ren, is a local deity specific to Indonesia, rather than a deity found in China. This god is revered as the patron of merchants and fisheries. Respect for Tek Hay Cin Jin is unique to a few temples in Indonesia. Besides Po An Thien Temple in Pekalongan, other temples honoring this deity include Tek Hay Kiong Temple in Tegal and Tek Hay Bio Temple in Semarang. Additional temples with altars dedicated to Tek Hay Cin Jin include Tiao Kak Sie Temple in Cirebon and Jin De Yuan in Jakarta, although the latter's altar was destroyed by fire in 2015 and has not yet been reconstructed.

Documents from Tekhai Bio Temple reveal that the god Ze Hai Zhen Ren, also known as Tek Hay Cin Jin, was once a historical figure named Liu Guan Ye (Kwee Lak Kwa or Lak Kwa Ya) who lived in Semarang. Born in 1695 as the sixth son of the Kwee (Kwee Lak) tribe, Tek Hay Cin Jin was a Hokkien merchant who transported goods from Sumatra to Semarang by water.

During the historical event of October 9, 1740, the Dutch carried out a massacre against the Chinese community in Batavia (now Jakarta), an incident that affected the entire region of West Jakarta and

spread throughout Java. In response, some Chinese community leaders, including Kwee Lak Koa, Kwee An Say, Oey Ing Kiat, Tan Pan Tjiang, Auw Seng, and Tay Pan, resisted the Dutch alongside Javanese allies. The struggle ended in 1742 with many Chinese leaders being captured and executed. Kwee Lak Koa, who had vanished from the Tegal coast, later reappeared to assist fishermen in Tegal. His efforts gained recognition, and news of his deeds reached China. In honor of his contributions, Emperor Qian Long of the Qing Dynasty bestowed upon him the title Tek Hay Cin Jin (Cangianto & Hartati, 2022).

The worship of Tek Hay Cin Jin, also known as Ze Hai Zhen Ren in Chinese, is a localized practice observed in only a few temples, including Po An Thian Temple. The name *Ze Hai* (澤海) translates to "goodness as vast as the ocean," while the term *zhenren* (真人) refers to a Taoist level of enlightenment, signifying someone who has achieved spiritual awakening and understands the nature of life and death without fear (Zhang Xingfa).

The presence of Ze Hai Zhen Ren altars in various temples along Java's north coast indicates a widespread veneration of this local deity. Worshiping Ze Hai Zhen Ren is aimed at fostering ideal social conditions and prioritizes the wisdom of local Chinese figures to develop a belief system. This local worship is also reflected in the temple's art, such as the two sculptures of Ze Hai Zhen Ren's guards depicted as Javanese, symbolizing the protection offered by local, Javanese people (Cangianto & Hartati, 2022).



Figure 3. The Altar of Tek Hay Cin Jin



Figure 4. The Invitation of Tek Hay Cin Jin Ceremony

Source: Instagram poanthian.pekalongan

The local beliefs at the Po An Thian Temple

The temple is a sacred space deeply influenced by local beliefs, which are defined as the truths held by a particular community. Traditions within a culture evolve over time and are passed down through generations. In the context of Nusantara traditions, these practices are often linked to inherited ideas, forming the basis for the local beliefs observed in the temple.

One of the local beliefs is the reverence for ancestors. This reverence is carried out as a cultural heritage that deserves to be preserved and upheld to become a valuable aspect of a culture. The reverence is directed towards local sacred figures. These sacred figures, or those who are sanctified, possess abilities beyond ordinary humans, enabling them to assist the community. Honoring these local sacred figures in the temple is an expression of gratitude from the temple's founder to the ancestors in the temple's region. (Hartati et al., 2024)

One fundamental value in the local community is the respect for ancestors, which is considered a cultural legacy that must be preserved and nurtured. This respect is extended to local sacred figures, who are sometimes regarded as sanctified individuals with extraordinary abilities that benefit society. At the temple, honoring these local sacred figures represents a gesture of gratitude from the temple's founder to the ancestors of the surrounding region, reflecting the deep connection between the community's values and their spiritual practices.

The Po An Thian Temple in Pekalongan, Central Java, embodies elements of native Javanese culture alongside its Chinese influences. The veneration of Tek Hay Cin Jin not only highlights the integration of local cultural practices but also serves to raise awareness of the historical collaboration between the Javanese and Chinese against the Dutch East India Company (VOC). This collaboration is evident in several coastal villages where Javanese and Chinese communities work together.

For instance, Javanese fishermen in Tegal and farmers in Indramayu actively participate in Ze Hai Zhen Ren festivals. Fishermen believe that the 'holy water' from Ze Hai Zhen Ren can calm turbulent

sea waves and enhance their catch, while farmers hope for a bountiful harvest as a result of their reverence.

Such practices reflect a harmonious relationship, aligning with Geertz's perspective that beliefs, especially among neighbors, should foster collaboration and mutual aid. This is exemplified by the widespread participation in slametan ceremonies, which are seen as communal activities that unite various aspects of social life and personal experience, thereby reducing uncertainty, anxiety, and conflict (Geertz, 2017).

Javanese culture has significantly influenced Chinese culture in Indonesia, particularly due to political factors. After the Indonesian period of Presidential Instruction Number 14 in 1967, the integration of Chinese individuals and communities into Javanese society became more pronounced. This instruction imposed restrictions that severely impacted Chinese cultural practices. It prohibited the celebration of Chinese New Year, performances of Chinese arts, and the operation of Chinese language schools. Chinese citizens were also required to adopt Indonesian names. Chinese religious ceremonies were restricted to temple grounds or family homes, with public expressions of Chinese culture being curtailed. The government justified these measures by citing public order concerns and arguing that Chinese festivals, such as Chinese New Year, were not Buddhist holidays and thus lacked sufficient grounds for public celebration (Justian Suhandinata, 2009).

The core principle of Chinese belief is encapsulated in the phrase "*jingtian zunzu*" (敬天尊祖), which means to worship Heaven (*Tian*) and honor ancestors (*zu*). In this belief system, ancestors are specifically honored by their direct descendants, while deities (*shen*) are revered and worshipped by broader groups and families. Ceremonies are conducted to seek guidance from the divine or to express gratitude. These rituals serve as a means of connecting with the spiritual realm and acknowledging the influence of both ancestors and gods in daily life.

Tribute to Tek Hay Cin Jin

One of the local beliefs at the Po An Thian Temple involves the veneration of the local god Tek Hay Cin Jin. This deity is honored with a special ritual for Tek Hay Cin Jin's birthday, or Sejit, which this year is celebrated on March 2, 2024. The ceremony takes place at two locations: the Po An Thian Temple and Pasir Kencana Beach in Pekalongan.

The ritual begins in the morning with collective prayers inside the temple. Following this, the statue of Tek Hay Cin Jin, known as the kimsin, is carried to Pasir Kencana Beach. The procession to the beach is accompanied by drum music, creating a vibrant atmosphere. At the beach, an altar is set up, and the kimsin Tek Hay Cin Jin is placed on a prominent chair at the shrine table. The altar features a variety of gifts, including coffee, flowers, bananas, betel leaves, incense, and hio. Additionally, trays of red and white porridge are placed on the beach.

The ceremony includes a *paipai* salutation, where participants face the seashore. After this salutation, the ritual dedicated to Tek Hay Cin Jin commences. Following the ceremony, the red and white porridge is distributed, while some offerings are wrapped in *kimcoa* paper and tossed into the sea. This ritual at Pasir Kencana Beach reflects local traditions and values, particularly the practice of sea alms, which is common among the north coast communities of Java. Sea alms, performed primarily during the Islamic months of Shawwal and Muharram, is a traditional practice of coastal and fishing communities, intended to express gratitude to God for the blessings received.

After the beach ceremony, participants return to the Po An Thian Temple, where the final ritual for Tek Hay Cin Jin is conducted in the temple courtyard. This practice exemplifies the integration of local traditions with the worship of Tek Hay Cin Jin, demonstrating cultural harmony within the community.

Temple Ceremony

Ceremonies in Chinese temples are significantly influenced by local beliefs and culture, as seen in Pekalongan where Javanese culture impacts the rituals. Both Chinese and Javanese cultures share a common emphasis on honoring ancestors, highlighting their similarities. Based on information from sources such as Instagram accounts for Po An Thian Pekalongan and the official accounts of TITD Po An Thian Pekalongan, the following ceremonies are performed at the temple:

1. Chinese New Year: Celebrates the lunar New Year with a significant ritual that involves a large prayer and a full supper. During this festival, a *ciswak* ritual is performed at Po An Thian to ward off misfortunes not caused by karma or wrongdoing.
2. Birthday/Wanso of Sin Long Tay Tee: This ceremony marks the birthday of Sin Long Tay Tee, the primary deity worshipped at the temple.
3. Birthday/Sejit of Tek Hay Cin Jin: This ritual celebrates the birthday of Tek Hay Cin Jin, another significant deity honored at the temple.
4. Day of Perfection of the Goddess Kwan Yim: A special day dedicated to honoring Kwan Yim, the goddess of mercy.
5. *Rebutan/Cioko* Prayers: These prayers are part of traditional ceremonies performed at the temple.

These ceremonies reflect the integration of local beliefs and traditions into the rituals at Po An Thian Temple, illustrating how local cultural elements shape and influence the practice of Chinese religious customs.

1. The methods and equipment used in ceremonies are crucial to their execution. In Chinese culture, ritual items typically include *hio* (incense), oil, candles, and *kimcoa* paper. At the Po An Thian Temple, during the Tek Hay Cin Jin birthday celebration, incense is burned along with *hio*. Another important ceremonial item is

the *tampah*, which is used to hold offerings such as flowers, coffee, and bananas. The use of the *tampah* reflects Javanese cultural influence, as it is traditionally made from woven bamboo and wrapped in leaves. According to local beliefs, offerings placed on a *tampah* are more likely to be accepted, while the absence of a *tampah* or a bamboo *tambir* wrapped in leaves might render the offerings ineffective (Ariyanti, 2016). Additionally, the ritual at Pasir Kencana Beach incorporates both *tampah* and kimcoa paper, symbolizing cultural harmony between Chinese and Javanese traditions. Flowers also play a significant role in these ceremonies. For instance, during the Tek Hay Cin Jin's birthday, flowers are used as ceremonial tools, and *telon* flower water is employed to cleanse and wash the face during the *rebutan* prayer process. The use of flowers not only serves practical purposes but also reflects the influence of Javanese culture (Celerina Dewi Hartati, 2023), enhancing the sense of harmony in temple ceremonies.

2. In rituals, food serves as both a means of communication and a cultural symbol. Cuisine in rituals carries personal, social, and spiritual significance (Harris, 1998; Lupton, 1994; Mintz & Du Bois, 2002), similar to the ritualistic nature of Thanksgiving or Christmas meals, which are obtained, prepared, and consumed with specific significance (Wallendorf & Arnold, 1991; Ratcliffe et al., 2019). At the Po An Thian Temple, the food served during rituals reflects the integration of local culture. For instance, during the *Rebutan/Cioko* prayers, traditional local dishes are provided, including tumpeng rice, peyek, gereh, serundeng chicken, fried milkfish, and traditional snacks such as *gemblong*, *nagasari*, *klepon*, and *semprong*. These offerings not only enrich the ritual experience but also highlight the presence of local cultural traditions within the temple's practices.

3. Ceremony Room

Sacred spaces are locations set apart from the ordinary, designed to foster a connection with the supernatural. In this theological framework, the cosmos is divided into three realms: earth, heaven, and the underworld. While Western interpretations of sacred spaces may differ, Chinese beliefs encompass a variety of sacred places, including family altars, temple roads, temples, mountains, and procession routes (Celerina Dewi Hartati & Rudyansjah, 2021). At the Po An Thian Temple, the concept of sacred space extends to Pasir Kencana Beach, where the Tek Hay Cin Jin god's birthday ceremony is held. This ritual transforms the beach on Java's north coast into a holy site. The sacredness of the space is often reflected in cultural rituals, with the sea or beach serving as a central element of cultural reverence (Kabir, 2018). This integration of sacred space into the ceremony underscores the connection between cultural practices and the physical environment. Food offerings to the sea as a sacred in

Javanese culture is similar to Chinese culture. Sacrifice to mountain and water spirits was already a state ritual in the Shang dynasty (ca. 1600–ca. 1046 BCE) and continued in the Zhou to Qin dynasties (ca. 1046–206 BCE). From the Western Han (206 BCE–8 CE) to the Northern Song (960–1126) eras, imperial courts gradually formed a ritual system of mountain- and water-directed state sacrifices, consisting of the five sacred peaks (wuyue 五岳),¹ five strongholds (wuzhen 五鎮), four seas (sihai 四海), and four waterways (sidu 四瀆), which was mainly constructed by the Confucian ritual culture. This system lasted through the end of the last imperial dynasty (Qing) in 1911 (Jia, 2021)

Po An Thian Temple: A Historical and Religious Tourism Destination

The Po An Thian Temple has the potential to become a prominent historical and religious tourist attraction, similar to other well-known temples both domestically and internationally. Just as *Lasem*, with its batik, antique buildings, and historic temples, has become a popular destination with its unique charm (Wulandari et al., 2020), the Po An Thian Temple can leverage its distinctive traditions and ceremonies to attract visitors. Wutai Shan (Mountain) has become one of the most visited religious destinations in northern China, primarily by citizens of the People's Republic of China (PRC). According to local, provincial, and national authorities, these overwhelmingly ethnic Han Chinese visitors are tourists, not pilgrims (Shepherd, 2018)

One example of its potential is the successful Pintoe Dalem Street Fair, which was held during the Chinese New Year festivities. This three-day event featured UMKM vendors from Pekalongan, Semarang, and Surabaya, offering a variety of Chinese New Year trinkets and gourmet items. The fair also included vibrant performances, such as lion dances and sintren, showcasing the temple's cultural significance and appeal. By continuing to host diverse events and celebrating its unique traditions, the Po An Thian Temple can further establish itself as a significant tourist destination.

Po An Thian Temple hosts a grand cultural and religious parade to celebrate Capgomeh, the 15th and final day of the Chinese New Year festivities. This vibrant parade features nine deity palanquins, one incense palanquin, and a lion dancer, and serves both as a cultural event and a tourism booster for Pekalongan City. The celebration, known locally as *Gotong Tandu Tepekong* or '*Gia Ang*,' represents a significant instance of interfaith collaboration, drawing participants from various ethnic backgrounds and religions.

During the Kirab, nine palanquins carrying gods and goddesses are paraded through Pekalongan City, with one palanquin circulating throughout the area to worship the Almighty and dispel negative energy. The parade is enhanced by the lively performances of lion dancers, marching bands, and traditional bamboo music. Additionally,

traditional arts such as *sintren*, *jaranan*, *jamang*, and *bantengan* are showcased, further enriching the event's cultural experience.

Tek Hay Cin Jin's birthday ceremony, which takes place at both the Po An Thian Temple and Pasir Kencana Beach, presents an opportunity to develop a unique tourist attraction. The ritual includes the *melarung* offerings, a tradition connected to the sea alms or nyadran ceremonies on Java's north coast. Pekalongan City is rich in tourist potential, bolstered by its diverse traditions. One notable example is the enormous *lopis* tradition in Krapyak Kidul, celebrated annually on 8 *Syawal*, seven days after Eid. This event features a massive *lopis*, a traditional rice cake, which has been prepared over five days, weighs about five quintals, and stands approximately two meters tall (Syarif et al., 2022). It is necessary to make advertisements for temples to promote temple festival activities. Guangzhou temple has attracted worshippers from all ages and both sexes and from areas far beyond the immediate neighborhood of the temple and that the temple's advertising and promotion attract a substantial number of new worshippers while also drawing previous worshippers back for repeat visits (Lang et al., 2005)

Both the *lopis* tradition and the ceremonies at Po An Thian Temple highlight the city's cultural pluralism, showcasing a blend of various backgrounds and beliefs (Murti Sri Budiarto et al., 2024). These traditions offer a compelling narrative of cultural unity and diversity that can be preserved and promoted as a significant tourist attraction.

CONCLUSION

The Po An Thian Temple offers a range of functions, including significant potential for promoting tourism. Understanding and incorporating local beliefs and traditions at the temple—especially those related to the local god Tek Hay Cin Jin—can enhance Pekalongan's appeal as a tourist destination. The rituals and cultural parades organized by the temple demonstrate cultural harmony and showcase Pekalongan City's peaceful blend of culture and religion. Pekalongan, recognized as a UNESCO Creative City, aims to foster cultural diversity and tolerance, as evidenced by the traditions and ceremonies practiced at the Po An Thian Temple. To fully capitalize on this potential, it is crucial to maintain and strengthen collaborations with the Pekalongan city government, tourist office, and other community stakeholders.

Events such as the ceremonial and cultural parades, as well as the Tek Hay Cin Jin anniversary celebration, hold substantial tourism potential. The integration of local god figures and ceremonies related to the Sea Alms tradition, alongside the giant *lopis* tradition, can further enhance the temple's attractiveness as a coastal tourism destination. Considerable tourism potential is held by events such as the ceremonial and cultural parades, as well as the Tek Hay Cin Jin anniversary celebration. By including local deities and rituals associated with the Sea Alms tradition, in addition to the huge *lopis* custom, the temple's appeal as a coastal tourist attraction can be further augmented. By

leveraging on these unique cultural features, the Po An Thian Temple can contribute as an important starting point for unlocking the true potential of destinations for tourists.

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