

BELIEFS OF THE SACRED SPIRIT: A STUDY OF POSSESSED CEREMONY IN KELANTANESE VILLAGE

¹EYO LENG YAN, ²ROSDEEN SUBOH

Drama Department, University of Malaya, Malaysia
E-mail: ¹eyolengyan@gmail.com, ²kudin@um.edu.my

Abstract - The Peranakan Chinese community's belief of sacred spirits and deities remains strong to this day. They worship these spirits in the home, in temples and the workplace to seek protection and wellbeing, and to be granted wealth and prosperity. These spirits and deities are celebrated in grand ceremonies every year as a way of commemorating and showing appreciation for their protection of humans. Utilising the field research method, this study was conducted in Kampung Pasir Parit, a Chinese Peranakan village in conjunction with the Datok Janggut (sacred spirit) site transfer which took place on January 5, 2018. This study aims to examine the process behind the 'possessed ceremony' or known as 'lok tang' by the local community, including casting some focus on intercultural relations.

Key words - Sacred Spirits and Deities, 'Lok Tang' ceremony, Kelantan's Peranakan Chinese, Intercultural Relations

I. INTRODUCTION

The study of spirits and possession isn't a new field of exploration and it has been observed that of late, a lot of researchers are becoming interested in conducting research into this area (Spiro, M. E., & d'Andrade, R. G., 1958, Lewis, I. M., 1971, Pounds, W., 1990, Boddy, J., 1994, Jackson, P. A., 1999, Caciola, N., 2000, Murni Hermawaty, 2008, Atkinson, Q. D. & Bourrat, P., 2010, Muhamad Luthfi Abd. Rahman, 2011, McNamara, P. & Bulkeley, K., 2015 and Romiduk Maryono Sinambela, 2015). Spirit possession refers to an external power that enters an individual's body and in turn imbues that person with extraordinary powers or makes him stronger than usual (Boddy, 1994). In western culture, this kind of behaviour is associated with interpretations of mental illness, demonology and others (Mischel, 1958).

Intrigued to know more in depth about this 'possession', I conducted a study related to the 'possessed ceremony' or 'lok tang' spirit of Datok Janggut (sacred) that continues to be practiced by the Peranakan Chinese community in Kelantan. Most of Kelantan's Peranakan Chinese comprises Hokkien farmers who migrated from the extreme hardship of China more than 300 years ago. The settlements of Kelantan's Peranakan Chinese are concentrated along the banks of the Kelantan River to make it easier for them to obtain their source of water for agricultural activities. The Peranakan Chinese who have experienced cultural assimilation share a similar lifestyle with the Malays in terms of dressing, economic activities, architecture, leisure activities, food and speech (they speak in Hokkien mixed with Malay in the Kelantan and Siamese dialect). However, in terms of religion and belief, they still adhere to the religion and beliefs of their ancestors.

The Peranakan Chinese community are Buddhists and strongly believe in sacred spirits¹ and deities². They worship various spirits and deities, including Datok Janggut (beard), Datok Api (fire), Datok Kolam (pool) as well as the seven 'Datok' brothers, namely Datok Merah (red), Datok Putih (white), Datok Panglima Hitam (black), Datok Biru (blue), Datok Kuning (yellow), Datok Merah Jambu (pink) and Datok Hijau (green) as well as Ho Ya (tiger spirit). Meanwhile, the deities that are worshipped include the God Nazha (Tai Zhi), Guan Gong (the God Guan Seng Tir Kun), Fa Zhu Gong, the God Wu Kong (Monkey God), Tua Pek Kong (Gods of Prosperity), Ngo Kok, Tiu Kong Seng Kun (the God Kwan Seng Tee), Heng Tua, Keng Choo, Ji Gong, Goddess Ma Zhu (Goddess of the Sea), Goddesses Guan Yin and others. They believe that these sacred spirits and Gods can protect them from calamities, provide them with good health, wealth and healing.

II. POSSESSED CEREMONY OR 'LOK TANG'

These sacred spirits and Gods often appear during the 'lok tang' ceremony, entering the body of the person chosen to be the intermediary (known as Tang Ki). Tang Ki is the name given to the person who has been possessed and he will often exhibit the mannerisms and characteristics of the spirits or Gods that have entered his body. It is believed that the spirit which possesses the body of the person chosen as the intermediary enables that individual to hurt

¹ Spirits that inhabit the earth. These spirits are regarded as sacred because in their past lives, they were great and highly respected individuals. When they passed away, people began to idolise and worship them.

² These deities, believed to have existed in ancient Chinese history, were great, honourable and highly respected and when they died, their spirits were believed to have gone to the heavens and became Gods.

himself without actually feeling any pain, communicate with the Gods, dispense advice to devotees and cure a person's illness. In order to explain more in depth about this 'tok lang' ceremony, a study using the field research method was conducted in a Peranakan Chinese village, namely Kampung Pasir Parit, Pasir Mas, Kelantan. This ceremony was held in conjunction with the moving of the spirit of Datok Janggut, the spirit worshipped by ancestors of yore right to the present generation, to a new site (home).

Datok Janggut is the spirit that has been residing on and guarding the landlord's land for generations ever since the first generation, i.e. the people who first opened up the land and lived on it. In the olden days, humans were animists, believing in certain spirits that inhabited the large rocks, trees, hills and the spirits of their forefathers. These spirits were respected and revered in the hope that they would help balance their lives from any disturbances (Yuszaidy, 2001). Despite the fact that no one actually knows what Datok Janggut's background is or what he looks like, but based on Tang Ki's character, the individual possessed by the spirit, it can be described as an old man, possibly in his 70s, who has a long white beard, carries a cane, wears a white sash and possesses a booming voice.

Datok Janggut loves to drink coconut water and it is an item that must be prepared every time there is a 'possessed' ceremony. This is different from the other Datok spirits who are said to be Muslims as they only eat halal food. Datok Janggut is believed to be Chinese as he consumes non halal food, which include pork and wine and because joss sticks/incense sticks are used during the 'possessed' process. Datok Janggut was originally only a small mound (heap of earth in the shape of a small hill); however, the current landlord, Koh Boon Chuan had fashioned a 'statue' in the character of the real Datok Janggut. Today's ceremony is essentially to move Datok Janggut to his new home as well as celebrate the move in a grand ceremony. Koh had also invited a wayang kulit troupe and silat masters to watch by all the Datok spirits.

Tang Ki, the one who will be possessed by Datok Janggut is Koh himself, a fifth generation Koh family member, who is 50 years of age. The intermediary for the spirit of Datok Janggut has been chosen from among the Koh's family and this is inherited from generation to generation. According to Koh, only select people can be chosen to be possessed by this spirit, and they're normally those who are weak of spirit and have the appropriate date of birth. This sacred spirit would choose individuals whom it considers to be suited with its soul and is 'fated' with it. Prior to being possessed by this spirit, he had suffered severe fever which lasted for several weeks.

The doctors themselves would not be able to detect the cause. He who underwent traditional healing has been informed that he would be healed by 'someone', namely an unseen being. Meanwhile, his wife had dreamed about her husband being haunted by an unseen power as a sign that he would become a Tang Ki later. His body was often be possessed by other beings and each time this happens, he would end up behaving so strangely and his wife will think that he is mentally disturbed. This situation go on for five years and is considered a test before the actual possession takes place in the real world. He began to realise that he had been chosen as the intermediary for the spirit of Tok Janggut when his body no longer feels comfortable and his heart feels like exploding every time he attends a prayer ritual that involves the 'lok tang' ceremony elsewhere. He officially experiences the spirit of Tok Janggut in him at the age of 42.

On the day of the event, the villagers arrive at Koh's house from early morning to prepare for the ceremony, including getting ready the items needed for the 'lok tang' ceremony as well as to build the special shed for the wayang kulit (shadow puppet) performance in the night. Among the items required for this ceremony include an altar, sash, candle, prayer papers (gold and silver), amulet paper, fruits, chicken meat, raw eggs, a bowl of rice, sweets, rice mixed with salt and turmeric, plain water, whipcord, banners, stamps, ba gua (Chinese religious motif), incense, pencil brush, red colouring and also statues of the Gods. All these things are placed on the altar in the order that has been pre-determined. Among the deities that are placed on the altar are the God Nazha (Tai Zhi), Tiu Kong Seng Kun, Guan Gong, Sheng Tian Ta Di and Tua Pek Kong (Gods of Prosperity), while the tiger spirit (Ho Ya) is placed under the altar. Accompanying items that are required for this 'possessed' ceremony include the tandu (stretcher) and a small drum known as 'ben'. This ceremony is not held solely for the move to the new home; it is also to give 'soul' to the specially carved statue of Datok Janggut, and also to ward off any bad luck or to return all the bad things to avoid any harm from befalling his future generation. Thus, to complete this ceremony, the aid of the other Gods is needed. The intermediary (Tang Ki) to these Gods would be possessed by the respective Gods and together they will give their blessings to proceedings. The Gods who 'lok tang' for this ceremony are the Gods Tiu Kong Seng Kun, Fa Zhu Gong, Ji Gong, Su Wu Kong, Ho Ya and Tok Peran, the Goddess Guan Yin and Datok Merah, Datok Hijau, Datok Putih aside from Datok Janggut himself. I'm duly informed that the spirits which 'lok tang' on the day of the incident are those that have been worshipped by the ancestors of the Koh family from a long time ago until today. The ceremony commences with the summoning of the spirit deities through mantras which are recited by the

assistants of the intermediaries to the deities, and accompanied by music from the 'ben' and the movements of the tandu. The tandu serves to summon Tang Ki to the altar in addition to organise the flow of the ceremony. If the spirits of the Gods have actually entered into Tang Ki's body, that individual will start to mimic the behaviour of these deities, such as their mannerisms, tone of voice, and pronunciation. Each deity has its own behaviour. Only the intermediary's assistant (known as Tok Minduk cum interpreter) is able to understand the conversations of the possessed intermediaries (of the Gods). The intermediary's assistant is normally a close relative of Tang Ki, such as the offspring, sibling or wife. For example, the intermediary's assistant to Koh Boon Chuan who 'lok tang' the spirit of Datok Janggut is his own wife, Ga Siew Lan, 43. On the day of the incident, Koh had 'lok tang' four different spirits, namely the spirits of Pek Wang Koo (human spirit), tiger spirit (Ho Ya), Datok Janggut and finally, Tok Peran. The period of 'lok tang' for the intermediary to the deity spirits varies; some take very little time while others take longer.

In addition to the recitation of the mantra, smoke from the incense also plays an important part in hastening the process of 'possession'. When the 'spirits begin to appear' or 'capture' the intermediary spirit, a physical transformation would ensue. They will lose their balance, start swinging (bending the body forwards and backwards rhythmically) and their faces will be turned in the direction of the incense smoke in front of them. Once the 'possession' commences, they will bang on the table and start hopping on one leg. Their eyes will become smaller and reduced to slits, while their bodies will immediately start to shiver. Standing, Tang Ki will remove his clothes and shoes, his stomach and pelvic will be thrust forward, his mouth will pout and his breathing will grow louder, while his head will move from left to right. His whole posture will be stiff. By this time, everyone will know that full possession by a certain spirit has taken place on Tang Ki. Once the possession has started, the intermediary's assistant will start to put on Tang Ki the appropriate items. Then, Tang Ki will wrap a piece of red cloth around the waist and a whip on their neck, while a banner would be waved several times. This whip would be flicked several times to ensure the safety of a place or thing as well as to ward off any evil disturbances; meanwhile, the banners, which come in many colours, represent the identity of the spirits which have come to possess.

The possessed Tang Ki exhibit supernatural characteristics, in that they are transformed into powerful beings with an extraordinary immune system. According to McNamara and Bulkeley, supernatural denotes "non-human entities with autonomous powers and intentions. Their bodies may

not be clearly seen, but they do have minds and they frequently have unusual powers far beyond the capabilities of ordinary agents such as flying, time-travel, and mind reading" (2015). They can slice their tongue with a sword until it bleeds as well as put a burning joss stick onto their tongue and all over their body without feeling any pain. Tang Ki also do not wear shoes and yet will feel no pain when walking on sharp stones or glass. The speech intonation also varies between the different spirits. Some have slower intonations while others may possess louder, rougher, softer or melodious ones. According to Koh, only selected people can be possessed by these deities. Those chosen tend to be the ones who truly believe in the existence of these spirits and wholeheartedly worship them through prayer ceremonies or by involving themselves in 'lok tang' ceremonies. The individual chosen is also said to be someone who has a weak spirit, often falls sick and believed to have a short life span. It is believed that the bodies that are lent for this 'spirit possession' are in turn reciprocally rewarded by the extension of their lives. Once selected as an intermediary to the deities, that individual must observe some prohibitions and taboos such as not eating anything that's smelly (they have to eat vegetables without onions and garlic), drinking only water or plain tea, cleansing themselves from all evil and not sleeping with the wife during that one week period before 'lok tang'. However, these taboos and prohibitions need only be adhered to by the Tang Ki who will 'lok tang' deity spirits and not by those who will only 'lok tang' the Datok spirits as it is believed that the deity spirits are supreme beings who reside in the heavens (first layer), while the Datok live on earth/ground (second layer).

During this Datok Janggut worship ritual, it can be observed that from the start to the end of the process, there appears to be a storyline that is delivered through the role of the God on the 'tandu' and Tang Ki. Tandu is like a 'support tool' that aids in the luring of certain spirits to enter the body of the individual that will act as the intermediary (Tang Ki). They will give a sign or some kind of guide for the humans to act (sign and action). The proceedings are arranged by the spirits that have descended and humans act according to the will of the spirits, including the items required for the ritual, a suitable time to commence and end the ceremony as well as the way to place an object somewhere. The ritual begins with the smoking of the tandu (stretcher) and the statues of the deities, which are placed on the tandu. Subsequently, this tandu will start to search for (spirit) intermediaries and invite them to the altar one by one to begin the 'lok tang' ceremony. Tok Minduk or the interpreter will begin chanting some mantras and one by one the deity spirit will enter into the bodies of the intermediaries (of the spirits of the deities) leading to their eventual state of 'forgetfulness'.

The possessed Tang Ki will then put into statue of Datok Janggut some spirit or soul by reciting some mantras while writing down sacred verses using a pencil brush dipped in red dye fluid onto the statue. These deities also write some 'verses' on the amulet paper using the blood from the tongue which had been sliced by the sword as well as from the piercing of the flamed joss sticks. This amulet paper is then stamped with the seal of the Gods together with the 'bagua' (Chinese religious motif) and presented to the host to be posted on Datok Janggut's new home as well as at several places where the ceremony is taking place, including in the home as well as the wayang kulit shed as protection against any misfortune or bad luck during the course of the ceremony.

The statue of Datok Janggut will then be shifted to the new home. Once that process has been completed, Datok Janggut's spirit enters Koh Boon Chuan's body. It requests for a sling cloth to tie around its body. Not long after, the spirit of Datok Merah begins to enter the bodies of the other spirit intermediaries, followed by Datok Hijau and Datok Putih as well as the other Gods, namely Ji Gong, Fa Zhu Gong, Heng Tua and Goddess Guan Yin who has also come to visit and bless Datok Janggut's new home. These Datoks recite some spells into a big bucket of water to be sprinkled onto the villagers at the end of the ceremony to bless those who have turned up for the occasion.

Koh Boon Chuan, who has been possessed by the spirit of Datok Janggut is then possessed by the spirit of Tok Peran. With this, his character suddenly transforms into an old hunter. The aim of this 'possession' is to illustrate that Tok Peran's spirit is present in the host's home, protecting his house and his surrounding compound. This 'possession' is a sign that Tok Peran has also come to 'visit' to celebrate the ceremony in addition to bestowing his blessings. Once the 'lok tang' ceremony is completed, Tang Ki will inform the intermediaries's assistant that they will return to their original place from where they came. With this, they are given healing through the sprinkling of the special water (spell water) as well as a closing mantra.

Tang Ki will begin to swing their bodies several times, banging the table for those who are standing, and patting the floor for those still seated and lowering his body backwards as a sign that the deity spirits have left their bodies. During this time, someone has to be behind Tang Ki to receive them so that they don't fall to the ground. The villagers who come for this occasion have to cleanse themselves with the special water which has been 'recited over' by the Datok spirit. This water is sprinkled to all the villagers who will form a line. This process is believed to prevent any misfortune or bad luck from befalling the villagers as a result of this ceremony.

III. INTERCULTURAL RELATIONS

This ceremony illustrates the intercultural relations as there is a mix between Chinese and Malay cultures. The intercultural relations refers to a group of people who practise diversity in culture and religion in addition to having a good relationship with one another. They are able to accept cultural differences with respect and live in harmony. It refers to an interest in other cultures, lacking ethnocentrism, possessing language skills, cultural sensitivities and others (Anderson, P.H Lawton, L., Rexeisen, R.J., & Hubbard, A.C. 2005:2)

This 'possessed' ceremony is accompanied by the opening music for the wayang kulit performance as well as a silat performance, which originates from the Malay culture. I am made to understand that the Datok spirit enjoys these traditional performing arts such as wayang kulit, menora and silat. This coincides with the nature of Datok himself, who is of Malay descent and for the Chinese Datok Janggut, who has undergone cultural assimilation with the local culture. The proof is that Datok Janggut is able to speak fluently in Malay with a Kelantanese dialect and can write in Jawi. This is further illustrated by the behaviour of the other Datok spirits during 'lok tang' who utter the same greetings as the Malay Muslims, like 'Assalamualaikum' and responding back with 'Walaikumsallam'. In other words, there are elements of 'Malayness' during this 'possessed' ceremony of Datok Janggut, Datok Merah, Datok Hijau and Datok Putih where these Datoks appear to also offer the same kind of greetings upon meeting.

The worship of the Datok is said to have taken roots in Kelantan since the migration of the Chinese to Kelantan more than 300 years ago. The Chinese who came here were predominantly from the group who wanted to escape extreme poverty in their homeland. Travelling by ship, they transitted along the banks of the Kelantan River and began building their settlements there. These Chinese people brought with them the customs and beliefs of their ancestors. They worshipped deities (Tu Di Gong). Their journey from China was perilous and it was because of this that they brought with them the statues of their deities to worship so that they would be blessed throughout the journey (Zinitulniza, 2016: 8 & 15). When they arrived in Kelantan, they saw that some of the Malays prayed to supernatural powers (mounds of earth or trees), in a worship ritual that was almost similar to their worship of Tu Di Gong (deity statue). As a result, the method with which the Malays worshipped supernatural powers was combined with that of the Chinese worship of Tu Di Gong. And thus emerged statues that combined elements of Malay and Chinese. It shows that there is a meeting of two cultures – of the Chinese and Malay cultures - where they both worship deities and at the same time, also worship

Datok spirits which are Malay in orientation. In other words, this belief arose as a result of the practices of these two different cultures, namely the Malays and Chinese albeit in ways that are similar. As a result, the deities and Datok will appear together in every 'lok tang' ceremony. In this 'lok tang' ritual, it can be seen that there is an intercultural relation, namely the combination of the deities and sacred Datok, who each plays a role in blessing as well as facilitating the worship ceremony of Datok Janggut. The possessed spirits are also patient and the evidence of this can be seen when their request is slow to be met. They would not erupt in anger or rage despite the fact that according to history, these deities were originally fierce warriors. These spirits also display a loving predisposition and love children. It was observed that when the tiger spirit or Ho Ya emerged, the possessed Tang Ki actually bite into an apple and gave some to the children who were nearby. This trait shows the intercultural relations between humans and deity spirits, namely that they respond to each other.

It was also observed that throughout the whole of the 'lok tang' ceremony, there was intercultural communication, namely communication between humans and spirits. According to Allwood, J. (1985: 1-5), intercultural communication denotes communication that transcends different cultural boundaries. When two parties with different cultural backgrounds interact with each other or one another, an intercultural communication is said to have occurred. Intercultural communication occurs when individuals are influenced by different cultural communities when interacting. In other words, the success and failure of intercultural communication depend on one's understanding of that (different) culture. In this ceremony, Tang Ki, who is possessed by the deity spirit communicates with the intermediary's assistant (humans) in conveying certain wishes and demands. Only the intermediary's assistant understands Tang Ki's speech. It is difficult for normal human beings to comprehend the language used by the deity spirits for they use ancient Chinese. Tang Ki, who is possessed by the Datok spirit speaks wholly in Malay with Kelantanese dialect and is easily understood by everyone. Meanwhile, Datok Janggut is able to communicate in Hokkien and also Malay because he is Chinese, but has experienced cultural assimilation.

There is a concept of collaboration, namely cooperation before, during and after the ceremony. This collaboration can be seen in two stages, namely the cooperation among people as well as cooperation among the deities and Datok. Prior to the start of the ceremony, it was observed that the villagers came to offer their assistance to the host, whether to help set up tents, or the shed for the wayang kulit performance, organising the tables and chairs, preparing the items for worship as well as cooking food for the guests and all the villagers. This concept of 'community

collaboration' or 'gotong royong' is synonymous with the lives of the local Malays and also the Peranakan Chinese where all duties are carried out together. This practise has helped to strengthen their sense of unity. Meanwhile, during the ceremony, it was observed that the youths and especially the children, also played their part during the 'possession' process, assuming the role of the 'tandu' (stretcher) carrier, drummer (or ben) and preparing whatever was required by Tang Ki.

What caught my attention during this ceremony was the presence of an old man who helped Tang Ki who was undergoing the process of healing by giving him a massage. When asked, he replied that the massage was done voluntarily in order to lessen the tiredness in Tang Ki's body having undergone such a lengthy process of 'possession'. It was a form of cooperation that was truly noble. Aside from cooperation between people, this cooperation could also be seen among the possessed spirits themselves, namely cooperation between the sacred spirits and the deities. For example, in the process of 'release' or warding off misfortune from the villagers, it was observed that this is carried out collectively. At the beginning, the process was carried out by Datok Janggut and Datok Merah, and they were followed suit by the Goddess Guan Yin, the Gods Ji Gong (Gods of Wealth), Fa Zhu Gong, Heng Tua, Datok Hijau and Datok Putih who all came to help ward off misfortune. Not long after, Datok Janggut took with him some joss sticks and gold prayer papers, headed for the shadow puppet shed for the process of warding off misfortune. There are some differences in the methods used by the deity spirits and sacred Datok when it comes to warding off misfortune. The deities would use blood or red ink to write the verses on the prayer papers, while the Datok spirits would use liquid lime as well as put markings on the human body or on certain places such as pillars, doors and walls.

This ceremony also proves that humans and nature are dependent on each other for survival. This is something that was practiced by the local community in the past where they truly believed in the existence of supernatural powers, which they worshipped in the form of rocks, hills and mounds for protection for themselves and also for their agricultural produce. Being Muslims, it was prohibited for them to worship statues. The Chinese immigrants who arrived in Kelantan had assimilated this practice into their process of worship. The supernatural powers contained in the form of mounds and hills were carved into statues but given their identity as a Malay, for example with a songkok (head piece) and sampang. This shows that relationship between the Malays and Chinese have existed for so long. As a result, the Chinese have adapted the local's way of life into their own (cultural assimilation), including in terms of beliefs and customs. These beliefs are inherited from

generation to generation and continue to be preserved and worshipped to this day. This shows their great respect and loyalty to their ancestors even though it's not an easy thing to worship the remains left by their ancestors. Datok Janggut meanwhile is worshipped every 15th day of the month and is celebrated in a special ceremony every year which falls on May 22nd according to the Chinese calendar.

The arts of wayang kulit (shadow puppet play) and silat are yet another evidence of the existence of a intercultural relations among the Kelantan people. Both these arts are traditional performing arts of the Malays, yet are loved by the Peranakan Chinese community. The art of wayang kulit is an apt illustration of the intercultural relations as the Tok Dalang (puppet master) is Chinese, while the musicians comprise a combination of Chinese, Malays and Siamese.

CONCLUSION

After having observed this 'lok tang' process, questions arose as to how these deity spirits were able to enter an individual's body and for that person to be able to transform his character and assume the 'role' of a warrior as enshrined in ancient Chinese history, namely whether the factor of 'possession' is due to the mantras that are recited, or that the spirit of the statue of the deity worshipped has spread or transferred to the individual, or it is the spirit within the individual himself and how is it that the person possessed has power beyond the ordinary and how the injuries sustained from the piercing of the sword and flame can be healed after drinking the 'holy' water? Does the existence of ancient Chinese characters signify that their spirits are still on this earth? These questions require a comprehensive study so that they can explained and perhaps a scientific method can be used to prove the 'special abilities' of these intermediaries to the deity spirits and what are the long term effects on the health of the body as these injuries (on their bodies) can cause bacterial infections and so on.

Although this 'possessed' ceremony is regarded as pure superstition by some parties, however, it is an 'alternative' form of belief just like the medical field which requires people to rely on alternative medicine when the disease is incurable through modern medical treatments. It is considered as the concept of 'surrendering to fate' or 'to endeavour' in order to ensure a harmonious life as well as for protection. Sometimes it creates a conflict between ancient practices and modern practices. It is possible that this practice will disappear when the older generation is no longer around as the new generation has no interest or have the skills to continue the practice of this tradition.

Although this practice is considered strange and does not appear to make sense, it did happen and it was as if the possessed person was incarnated into those people who had lived in the past and enshrined in ancient Chinese history. Future research need to consider exploring the cultural and psychological dynamics that underlie these ritual practices. This ritual practice is likely to evolve into a unique culture for the Peranakan Chinese as the way of worship has been enhanced with art performances, modern and colourful equipment, which also includes prayer paraphernalia, Tang Ki's costume and also the way the ritual venue is presented. It can also be used as a scientific research material for those undertaking research on intercultural relations.



"Tang Ki" was blessing and giving 'soul' to the specially carved statue of Datok Janggut.



Datok Janggut was writing down sacred verses onto the new home.

REFERENCES

- [1] Allwood, J., "Intercultural communication", Papers in Anthropological linguistics, vol. 12, pp. 1-25, 1985.
- [2] Anderson, P. H., Lawton, L., Rexeisen, R. J., & Hubbard, A. C., Short-term study abroad and intercultural sensitivity: A pilot study", International Journal of Intercultural Relations, vol. 30(4), pp. 457-469, 2006.
- [3] Atkinson, Q. D. & Bourrata, P., "Beliefs about God, the Afterlife and Morality Support the Role of Supernatural Policing in Human Cooperation", Evolution and Human Behavior, vol. 32, pp. 41-49, 2011.

- [4] Boddy, J., "Spirit Possession Revisited: Beyond Instrumentality", *Annual Review Anthropology*, vol. 23, pp. 407 - 434, 1994.
- [5] Caciola, N. . "Mystics, Demoniacs, and the Physiology of Spirit Possession in Medieval Europe", *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 42(2), pp. 268 - 306, 2000.
- [6] Jackson, P. A., "Royal Spirits, Chinese Gods, and Magic Monks: Thailand's Boom-Time Religions of Prosperity", *South East Asia Research*, vol. 7(3), pp. 245-320, 1999.
- [7] Lewis, I. M., "Ecstatic religion: An anthropological study of spirit possession and shamanism", Penguin Books, 1971.
- [8] McNamara, P. & Bulkeley, K. , "Dreams as a Source of Supernatural Agent Concepts", *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 6 (283), pp. 1 - 8, 2015.
- [9] Mischel, W. & Mischel, F., "Psychological Aspects of Spirit Possession", *American Anthropologist*, vol. 60, pp. 249 - 260, 1958.
- [10] Mohd. Yuszaidy Mohd. Yusoff, "Music and Ritual in Cam Society in Vietnam", *Jati*, vol. 6, pp. 159 - 171, 2001.
- [11] Muhamad Luthfi Abd. Rahman, "Mek Mulong: Between Performances and Medical Rituals in Malaysia", *SOSIOHUMANIKA*, vol. 4(1), pp. 93 - 110, 2011.
- [12] Murni Hermawaty Sitanggang, "Critical Analysis of Possible Concepts in Satan Possessed", *VERITAS*, vol. 9(2), pp. 209-227, 2008.
- [13] Norenzayan, A., & Hansen, I. . "Belief in Supernatural Agents in the Face of Death". *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, vol. 32, pp. 174-187, 2006.
- [14] Pounds, W. . "Enchi Fumiko and the Hidden Energy of the Supernatural". *The Journal of the Association of Teachers of Japanese*, vol. 24 (2), pp. 167-183, 1990.
- [15] Spiro, M. E., & d'Andrade, R. G. . "A Cross- Cultural Study of Some Supernatural Beliefs". *American Anthropologist*, vol. 60(3), pp. 456- 466, 1958.
- [16] Romiduk Maryono Sinambela, "Monsak, Martial Arts Society of Toba Sumatra: Relationships between Music, Movement and Possessed", Thesis, Science University of Malaysia, 2015.
- [17] Zinitulniza Abd. Kadir. "Kelantan Peranakan Chinese: Synthesis of the Mainland and Malay Malayan", Institute of Translation & Book Malaysia Berhad, 2016.

★★★