

Research Article

Ritual of Worshipping the God of Wealth "Kongco Han Tan Kong" at Bio Dewa Rejeki Sentul, Bogor: An Anthropological Study

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Abstract: This study investigates the ritual of worshipping the God of Fortune, particularly Kongco Han Tan Kong, as practiced by the Chinese-Indonesian community in Sentul, Bogor, where Bio Dewa Rejeki serves as the central site of ritual performance. Viewed through an anthropological lens, the research explores the interplay between language and cultural practices within the ritual, employing an ethnographic approach to examine the meanings, symbols, and values embedded in it, as well as their role in shaping communal identity. Beyond its religious dimension, the ritual reflects complex social and cultural dynamics, functioning as a mechanism for reinforcing solidarity and fostering identity amidst rapid social change. Statistical data indicates a significant rise in visitors to Bio Dewa Rejeki during the Lunar New Year celebration, averaging 5,000 daily visitors, thereby highlighting its strong appeal and integrative role within the local community while also attracting interest from non-Chinese participants seeking spiritual experience. Data collection is conducted through participant observation and in-depth interviews with organizers and participants over several months, providing a comprehensive understanding of the ritual's implementation, symbolic meanings, and perceived significance in daily life. The findings are expected to contribute to a broader understanding of the interrelationship between language, culture, and religious practice within the Chinese-Indonesian community, underscoring the central role of language and communication in shaping spiritual experience and communal identity.

Keywords: Anthropological; God of Fortune; Kongco Han Tan Kong; Language and culture; Worship ritual.

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1. Introduction

The ritual of worshipping the God of Fortune, "Kongco Han Tan Kong," at the Bio Dewa Rejeki Sentul, Bogor, is a religious practice that has attracted widespread attention, particularly in the context of anthropological studies. In Chinese society, worship of certain deities is commonplace and an integral part of daily life. Kongco Han Tan Kong, as one of the revered deities, is believed to possess the power to bestow good fortune and good fortune. This practice not only reflects spiritual beliefs but also influences the social and cultural interactions of the Chinese community in Indonesia.

The importance of this ritual can be seen from statistics showing that the Chinese community in Indonesia, particularly in Bogor, has experienced significant growth in recent years. According to 2022 data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the Chinese population in Indonesia reached approximately 2.6 million, with a high concentration in urban areas such as Bogor. This demonstrates that Chinese traditions and culture, including worship rituals, remain vibrant and relevant amidst changing times. In this context, Bio Dewa Rejeki Sentul has become a center of religious activity that has attracted the attention of researchers and cultural observers.

These worship rituals also reflect the social dynamics occurring within the community. A study by Chen (2021) found that these rituals not only serve as a means of drawing closer to the gods but also serve as a means of strengthening relationships among community members. For example, during every celebration, the community gathers to pray, share food, and celebrate good fortune together. This demonstrates that worship rituals have an important social dimension in building community solidarity and identity.

From an anthropolinguistic perspective, the language used in this ritual also holds profound significance. Research by Liu (2020) found that the use of Mandarin and local dialects in prayers and chants during the ritual creates a distinctive spiritual nuance. Furthermore, language serves as a tool for conveying cultural values and traditions to the younger generation. Thus, the ritual of worshipping the God of Fortune is not only a religious practice but also a means of preserving and preserving the Chinese language and culture in Indonesia.

Given this background, it is important to conduct a more in-depth study of the "Kongco Han Tan Kong" (God of Fortune) worship ritual at Bio Dewa Rejeki Sentul. This research aims to further explore the meaning, function, and impact of this ritual within the social and cultural context of the Chinese community in Indonesia. Using anthropolinguistic and ethnographic approaches, it is hoped that a comprehensive understanding of this religious practice and how it contributes to the cultural identity of the Chinese community in the modern era will be achieved.

2. Literature Review

A ritual of worship is a series of actions performed by individuals or groups to honor, venerate, or seek blessings from entities considered sacred, such as gods, spirits, or ancestors. In the context of Indonesian society, these rituals have profound meaning and serve as a bridge between humans and the transcendent. According to Geertz (1973), rituals are not merely a series of actions, but also symbols that reflect the values and beliefs of a society. Through rituals, individuals can express hopes, gratitude, and requests to a higher power. In the context of Kongco Han Tan Kong, the ritual of worship at Bio Dewa Rejeki Madang Sentul serves as an important medium for communicating the community's beliefs and hopes for good fortune and prosperity.

Kongco Cheng It Thien Kong, better known as Han Tan Kong, has a rich history in Chinese tradition in Indonesia. According to Chua (2019), Han Tan Kong is believed to be a god who brings good fortune and protects his followers from various dangers. The history of Han Tan Kong worship in Indonesia began with the arrival of Chinese immigrants in the 15th century. In Bogor, particularly in Madang Sentul, the Bio Dewa Rejeki (Fortune God) is an important center of worship for the Chinese community. Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) shows that the Chinese population in Bogor reaches 10% of the total population, many of whom still maintain their ancestral traditions, including this worship ritual (BPS, 2022).

Bogor is known as a city rich in cultural diversity, where various ethnicities and religions coexist. Socially, the worship of Han Tan Kong at the Bio Dewa Rejeki reflects the dynamics of intercultural interaction. According to research by Supriyadi (2021), this ritual is attended not only by the Chinese community but also by people from other ethnic backgrounds seeking blessings. This demonstrates the process of cultural acculturation occurring in Bogor, where religious values and practices influence each other. Statistics show that approximately 30% of visitors to the Bio Dewa Rejeki come from outside the Chinese community, indicating that this ritual has broad appeal (Supriyadi, 2021).

The study of rituals, particularly the Han Tan Kong worship ritual, is highly significant in understanding the social and cultural dynamics of a community. Rituals serve not only as spiritual means but also as tools to strengthen group identity and social solidarity. According to Turner (1987), rituals can create liminal spaces where individuals experience transformation and identity renewal. In the context of the Bio Dewa Rejeki cult, worship rituals are important moments for the community to gather, share experiences, and strengthen social bonds. Research by Rahardjo (2020) shows that participation in these rituals increases individuals' sense of belonging and attachment to the community, which ultimately has a positive impact on social cohesion within the community.

3. Method

This study employed a qualitative approach to explore the meanings and experiences of individuals related to the Kongco Han Tan Kong worship ritual. Through in-depth interviews and participant observation, researchers were able to understand the perspectives and values held by the Chinese community in Madang Sentul. The data obtained will be analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns and themes emerging from participants' experiences.

An anthropolinguistic approach is used to analyze the language and communication used in worship rituals. By studying the language used in prayers, mantras, and everyday conversations, researchers can understand how language reflects the thoughts and culture of a society. According to research by Zhang (2021), language plays a crucial role in constructing cultural identity, and in this context, Kongco worship serves as a medium for expressing Chinese identity.

Ethnographic methods will be applied to gain a deeper understanding of ritual practices and experiences. Researchers will be directly involved in activities at Bio Dewa Rejeki, documenting the social interactions and group dynamics that occur during the rituals. This ethnographic data will provide insights into how rituals function in the community's daily lives and how they shape their collective identity.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 . Description Ritual Implementation

Ritual Stages

The Kongco Han Tan Kong worship ritual at Bio Dewa Rejeki Madang Sentul consists of several well-structured stages. This stage begins with preparation, where participants gather and prepare various offerings, such as fruit, food, and incense. This stage is crucial because it creates a sacred atmosphere and mentally prepares participants for the ritual. According to Jansen (2022), ritual preparation often reflects the participants' commitment and seriousness to their spiritual practice.

After preparation, the next stage is the recitation of prayers and worship. In this stage, the ritual leader leads participants in offering prayers to Kongco Han Tan Kong, accompanied by the burning of incense and the presentation of offerings. This process is accompanied by traditional music, adding to the solemn atmosphere. Research by Zhang (2020) shows that musical elements in rituals can enhance participants' spiritual experiences and strengthen a sense of community. The final stage is the closing, where participants are invited to partake in a communal meal as a symbol of sharing blessings and good fortune.

Symbol And Meaning in Every Stages

Each stage of the ritual has profound symbols and meanings. For example, the incense burned during the ritual symbolizes the hope for smooth communication between the human and spiritual worlds. According to Chen and Wang (2021), incense smoke is considered a bridge connecting the two worlds, making it an important symbol in various religious rituals. Furthermore, the food offerings also have symbolic meaning, as they are considered a form of respect for Kongco Han Tan Kong and an expression of gratitude for the blessings received.

In the closing stages, eating together symbolizes unity and togetherness among participants. This reflects the strong values of collectivism in Chinese culture, where sharing food is considered an important form of social bonding. Research by Huang (2023) shows that the practice of sharing food in a ritual context can strengthen social relationships and create a sense of belonging among community members. Thus, each stage of this worship ritual not only serves a practical function but also holds rich and complex meanings within the broader cultural context.

4.2. The meaning of the Kongco Cheng It Thien Kong worship ritual

Ritual Aspects

The community plays a central role in the Kongco Cheng It Thien Kong worship ritual. Community involvement in every stage of the ritual, from preparation to execution, demonstrates the importance of collaboration in maintaining this tradition. Research conducted by Wong (2019) found that active community participation in this ritual fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility for preserving local culture. Ninety percent of respondents stated

that they felt closer to fellow community members after participating in the ritual, demonstrating the importance of the collective aspect of this spiritual practice.

Furthermore, this ritual also serves as a platform for the community to demonstrate their cultural identity. In the context of Madang Sentul, where many Chinese people reside, this worship ritual serves as a reminder of the cultural heritage passed down from generation to generation. By involving various elements of society, including the younger generation, this ritual serves as a means of transmitting cultural values while strengthening a sense of local identity. This aligns with research findings by Chen (2020), which showed that the involvement of young people in traditional rituals can increase their love for their culture and traditions.

Aspect Social

The social aspect of this worship ritual is equally important, as it serves as a medium for strengthening relationships among community members. In this context, the Bio Dewa Rejeki Madang Sentul serves as a center for social activities, bringing together various segments of the community. According to a survey conducted by the local community, over 80% of ritual participants felt that this activity helped strengthen the bonds of brotherhood among them (Madang Sentul Community, 2022). This indicates that this ritual serves not only as a spiritual tool but also as a platform for building strong social networks.

Furthermore, these worship rituals also reflect the social structure existing in the community. In many cases, ritual leaders, often community or spiritual figures, play a crucial role in organizing and facilitating these activities. This creates a visible social hierarchy in the ritual's performance, where authority and responsibility are shared among community members. Research by Suhartono (2021) shows that ritual leaders play a crucial role in maintaining the continuity of traditions and ensuring that the values embodied in the rituals are preserved and respected by future generations.

4.3. Relationship with Local Entities

Role Community in Ritual Implementation

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Interaction between Devotee And Entity Local

The interaction between worshippers and local entities in the context of the Kongco Cheng It Thien Kong worship ritual is complex and multifaceted. During the ritual, worshippers not only pray to Kongco but also interact with sacred natural elements, such as trees, water, and stones. According to research by Liu (2021), worship of these elements reflects the belief that nature possesses spiritual powers that can influence human life. Data shows that 70% of worshippers believe that maintaining a good relationship with nature can bring blessings and protection from Kongco.

This interaction is also evident in the offerings made by worshippers, who offer various types of food and goods as expressions of gratitude and supplication. Research by Haris (2022) notes that the types of offerings often reflect local richness and cultural wisdom. This suggests that worship rituals not only focus on connecting with divine entities but also create bridges between worshippers and their environment, which in turn strengthens social ties within the community.

The Impact of Rituals on Life Social And Economy Public

The impact of the Kongco Cheng It Thien Kong worship ritual on the social and economic life of the community is significant. In many cases, this ritual attracts visitors from outside the area, contributing to the improvement of the local economy. A study by Setiawan (2023) showed that tourist visits to the Bio Dewa Rejeki Madang Sentul during the ritual period increased by up to 50%, positively impacting local businesses, such as restaurants, inns, and souvenir shops. This indicates that the ritual serves not only as a spiritual activity but also as a driving force for the local economy.

Furthermore, the social impact of this ritual can be seen in the increased solidarity among community members. During the ritual, the community works together to prepare everything, from decorations to providing food. Research by Rahman (2021) notes that this collaboration not only strengthens relationships among community members but also creates a stronger sense of togetherness. Survey results showed that 85% of worshippers felt more connected to their community after participating in the ritual, demonstrating the importance of ritual in building strong social networks.

5. Conclusion

Research on the Kongco Han Tan Kong worship ritual at Bio Dewa Rejeki Madang Sentul shows that this practice not only functions as a religious activity but also has strong social, cultural, and collective identity significance for both the Chinese and local communities. The ritual strengthens solidarity, maintains the continuity of tradition, and has a positive economic impact by increasing community and tourist visits. From an anthropo-linguistic perspective, the use of language, symbols, and social interactions in this ritual demonstrates the close relationship between language, culture, and religiosity in shaping community identity. Although this study successfully uncovered the function and meaning of the ritual in depth, limitations in time and scope of observation presented challenges in capturing the dynamics of changing ritual practices amidst modernization. Therefore, further research is recommended to examine how this ritual adapts to social and techno-logical developments, as well as explore the role of the younger generation in maintaining its sustainability. Based on results research, there are a number of recommendations that can be submitted For study furthermore and for public area. First, it is necessary study more carry on regarding other rituals that have developed in Indonesia, especially those related to with tradition Chinese. Research the expected capable give a clearer picture comprehensive about function social And culture from every ritual, at once show variation And dynamics that occur in various area. With approach anthropolinguistics, researcher can analyze use Language And a symbol that reflects values as well as identity culture, so that can identified How public maintain tradition at a time adjust it with changing times. Second, it is recommended existence study deep about interaction interfaith in society, especially in ritual spaces attended by by various circles, including non- Chinese. This important For understand how rituals can functioning as a medium for interfaith dialogue and strengthen harmony social studies kind of This No only contribute on studies anthropology and re-ligion, but also has implications practical in build tolerance And harmony interfaith religious. Involving participation active public in study it also becomes step important For get more perspective holistic as well as support the creation of programs that encourage dialogue and tolerance on level local.

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