

THE DEPENDENCE OF JAVANESE CULTURE IN CHINESE TEMPLE CEREMONY

Celerina Dewi Hartati*

China Language and Culture Department, Faculty of Language and Culture, Universitas Darma Persada
Jl. Taman Selatan, Pondok Kelapa, East Jakarta 13450, Indonesia
c.dewihartati@gmail.com

Received: 12th August 2022/ Revised: 18th January 2023/ Accepted: 20th January 2023

How to Cite: Hartati, C. D. (2023). The dependence of Javanese culture in Chinese temple ceremony.
Humaniora, 14(2), 181-188. <https://doi.org/10.21512/humaniora.v14i2.8861>

ABSTRACT

The research discussed the dependence on local culture, in this case, on Javanese culture, in the Chinese temple ceremony. A close relationship between Chinese and Javanese culture could be seen in the cultural interactions between the Chinese and Javanese. This cultural interaction was related to the relationship of the Chinese people with the Javanese cultural values and cultural elements, such as in the ceremony. In cultural interaction, Chinese people were immersed in the values and elements of Javanese culture. Cultural reality had shown, in historical reality, that the Chinese in the past had met, fused, and merged into Java. The research method applied the research was a qualitative descriptive method and case study with an ethnographic approach. This research shows cultural borrowing and dependence on Javanese culture. One of the dependencies of Javanese culture in Chinese culture is ceremony or ritual. Taking the case of the god's birthday ceremony, which is held in temples in Central Java, namely Tek Hay Bio (Semarang) and Welahan, it will be shown that Javanese culture influences Chinese culture. Consequently, the borrowing and dependence on Javanese culture in Chinese culture cause the dominance of Javanese culture in Chinese temple ceremonies and make the loss of some elements of Chinese culture itself (displacement).

Keywords: cultural dependence, Javanese culture, China temple ceremony

INTRODUCTION

China and Java are said to have had a very long relationship. Groeneveldt (1960) has mentioned that the oldest Chinese visit to Java was in 414 when the ship was carrying Fa Xian, a Chinese Buddhist monk who happened to stop in Java due to bad weather. Other information regarding the relationship between China and Java can be seen in late Ming narratives of Javanese peoples and Yuan/Ming-Javanese diplomatic history in three unofficial histories and one vernacular novel. They are Yan Congjian's 嚴從簡 *Shuyu zhouzhi lu* 殊域周咨錄 (Records of Surrounding Strange Realms, 1574, hereafter Realms); He Qiaoyuan's 何喬遠 *Wang Xiangji* 王享記 (Records of Emperors' Tributes, hereafter Tributes) included in his unofficial biographical history *Mingshan cang* 名山藏 (Hidden under the Mountain, ca. 1597-1620); Luo Yuejiong's 羅曰褰 *Xianbin lu* 咸賓錄 (Records of Tributary

Guests, ca. 1591, hereafter Guests); and Luo Maodeng's 羅懋登 vernacular novel *Sanbao taijian xiyang ji* 三寶太監西洋記 (Vernacular Romance of Eunuch Sanbao's Voyages on the Western Ocean, ca. 1598, hereafter Voyages) (Wang, 2020).

Wuryandari (2009) has said that to see the initial meeting or contact between China and Java, there are three oldest manuscripts would be used, namely the Hou Han Shu (Historical Book of the Late Han Dynasty), Fo Guo Ji (Records of Buddhist Countries), and Song Shu (The History of the Song Dynasty). Hou Han Shu is the classical source from China relating to Java from the earliest period, namely from the Han dynasty (206 BC - 220 AD) to before the Yuan (Mongol) dynasty was in power (1206-1368). The texts to be used include the official dynastic history (*zhengshi*) manuscripts in China as well as records of individual Chinese adventurers who contributed to making notes on Java (Wuryandari, 2009).

At the arrival of the Chinese people, they first came without bringing their women. However, over time, they later lived with local women and settled in Indonesia forever. They formed their own community, which became more and more culturally different from Chinese society in China. After several centuries and several generations formed a group called the Chinese-Indonesian group. This group is widely known as the “*peranakan*” group, especially in Java. The Chinese who first arrived in Java were anchored in Semarang, Central Java, and aimed at trading. They were anchored in the Mangkang area, West Semarang district, which at that time could be visited by large junks. Chinese or Chinatown settlements at that time could be found in the Simongan, Mangkang and Ngaliyan, Pekojan, Gang Baru, Gang Besen, and Gang Lombok areas.

In Java, like other places, it can be said that osmosis lasts very long, and most Chinese elements gradually fuse with other elements. The Chinese in Surakarta built Javanese identity from the end of the 19th century to the 20th century. He has stated that the Chinese have placed themselves both as a community and as individuals, becoming one in Javanese society and culture. Through the presence of figures as cultural workers, ranging from Gan Kam, Tjan Tjoe Siem, Kho Djie Tjong, Koo Kiong Hie, Tio Gwat Bwee, Koo Giok Lian, Tan Gwan Hien, Liem Sio Nio, Lim Tan Swie to Panembahan Hardjonagoro or Go Tik Swan, not only shows the desire of the Chinese to ‘become’ Javanese to be accepted by the Javanese people, but they are actually Javanese themselves (Rustopo, 2007).

Chinese culture in Indonesia has become a part of the cultural treasury of Indonesia. Chinese society in Indonesia is very heterogeneous in the sense of origin, historical background, culture, religion, and so on. The diversity of Chinese society groups are started from their ancestral lands because they come from different regions with different language utterances. The diversity of Chinese people can be seen from the languages that are influenced by their areas of origin, namely Hokkien, Hakka, Cantonese, Tiociu, and others. In addition to language, Chinese religious communities are also diverse; some embrace Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism, or a combination of the three called Tridharma (*samkauw*), Islam, Christianity, and Catholicism. Chinese diversity is also influenced by the region in which they live; the Chinese who live in Medan, Singkawang, Surabaya, Sukabumi, or Semarang differ from one another because they are influenced by the area they occupy, and this can be seen from the language or dialect used.

Much research shows the relationship between Javanese and Chinese, such as the acculturation of Chinese with Javanese culture in the language characteristics and its acculturation from Chinese Speakers in Losari, Cirebon regency, West Java (Darheni, 2018). There are many interactions between the various cultures of settlers or immigrants and local Javanese cultures with all their different characteristics and forms. The proof of this acculturation process can be found in the fields of language (dialects, names,

interference, terms). The acculturation in architecture, spatial patterns, and details of buildings can be seen in Lasem city as research conducted by Wijayanti (2021) states that the Chinese-style houses’ architecture has specific characteristics as the result of the cultural blend. Javanese characteristics and architecture influence Chinese-style houses in Lasem. It concludes that there is an acculturation process between Javanese and Chinese architecture that can be found in the ornaments, materials, and layout (Wijayanti, 2021).

Another example of the relationship between Javanese and Chinese that can be seen in acculturation is in batik. Batik’s products have many varieties, one of them is *tok wi*. *Tok wi* is a kind of tablecloth used to cover the facade of a Chinese ancestral altar table during rituals. Batik *tok wi* cloths are made by the Chinese in Java, which is different from mainland China. The difference can be seen from the unique motives developed by the Chinese in Java. This can be seen in a research article about batik *tok wi* cloths as an artifact of rich Chinese Indonesian syncretized culture by Lukman, Setyoningrum, and Rismantojo (2018). The Chinese culture has many symbols, one of which is the most widely used is a dragon. Dragons are often used in batik motifs. Chinese batik makers in Java have developed the dragon’s motif, which is different from mainland China. Dragon ornament in batik cloth can show the long relationship between Chinese and Java. This ornament is often applied to batik cloth because it has a symbolic meaning as a protector and symbol of power, identical to the king. Such as finding research about dragon ornaments in batik cloth shows that Javanese dragons can be found in Yogyakarta and Surakarta (Widayat, 2022).

From the previous studies mentioned, it can be seen the relationship between Chinese culture and Javanese. Chinese culture influences Javanese culture, and here Chinese culture is accepted in Javanese society. Taking a different perspective from previous studies, the researcher sees that Chinese culture is highly dependent on Javanese culture. Chinese culture is very varied and different from Chinese culture in other places because it gets a massive influence from Javanese culture. The research shows the dependence of Chinese culture on Javanese culture in the example of a ceremony or ritual. Taking the case of the ceremonies performed at temples in Java, including Tek Hay Bio (Semarang) and Welahan, it is shown that Javanese culture influences Chinese culture.

A ceremony is an act of religion, religious action, and ritual. Ritualization is defined as formalized behavior that, in several species, follows well-defined expressive codes, especially within courtship and intraspecific conflicts. Ethologists call “rituals” certain forms of communicative behavior aimed at controlling conflicts (e.g., competitive but harmless courtship fights). Although, in the past, the interpretation of rites in the animal domain has influenced the study of rituality in human societies, it is not in the presence of complex languages and thus cannot speak of “meaning” (D’Orsi & Dei, 2018).

Religion broadly as including beliefs, worldviews, practices, and institutions that cross borders, time, and scale from the level of individuals all the way to transnational and transhistorical movements, does not represent many eastern or traditional religious systems, which often emphasize collective practices as much as cognitive beliefs and may lack firmly established institutionalized teachings (Ives & Kidwell, 2019).

METHODS

The research method applied in the research is a qualitative descriptive method and case study with an ethnographic study approach. The researcher uses the ethnography method because ethnography is both something to know and a way of knowing. The research uses ethnography as a method, a theory (theory of description), and a writing style. Informing each of these is an ethnographic sensibility, or a sense of the ethnographic as the lived expectations, complexities, contradictions, possibilities, and grounds of any given cultural group (McGranahan, 2018).

Qualitative research methods are carried out in reasonable situations, and the data collected is qualitative. This qualitative is characterized by the aim of the researcher trying to understand the symptoms in such a way that does not require quantification or because it is impossible to measure the symptoms precisely. The qualitative research method looks for a deep understanding of a symptom, fact, or reality. Facts, realities, problems, symptoms, and events can only be understood if the researcher explores them in depth and is not limited to the surface. It is the depth that characterizes the qualitative method as well as a superior factor (Yusanto, 2020) is also used case studies as research methods to complement qualitative descriptive methods.

In the research, the researchers use an ethnographic approach. This approach describes and interprets culture, social groups, or systems. Although the cultural meaning is vast, ethnographic approaches are usually focused on patterns of activity, language, beliefs, rituals, and ways of life. An ethnographer focuses on local life's details and relates them to broader social processes. The word ethnography is frequently used interchangeably with that of the case study (Parker-Jenkins, 2018). Case studies are carried out by temples, namely Welahan Temple and Tek Hay Bio. Data are collected through interviews with temple administrators, people, and participant observations. The research is conducted during the deity's birthday ceremony and on normal days.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Religion is always associated with the ceremony. Through a study of ceremonies in ethnic groups, it can be understood as a religion of a group. Religious

actions are mainly manifested in ceremonies, so it can be said that ritual is a religion in action. Chinese in Java practices their ritual ceremony that are religious phenomena connected with ancestor worship, also the expression of a shamanic practice, which can be seen in mediumship.

From the case of the Chinese temple's ceremony, it can be seen that religion and culture are strongly interrelated. The merging of religion and culture into one is called acculturation. Acculturation is a social process that arises when a certain group of human beings is confronted with elements of foreign culture in such a way that the elements of foreign culture are gradually accepted without causing the loss of the cultural nature itself. When religion and culture have merged into one, it can be seen in their rituals (Wekke et al., 2018).

The ceremony is the most important thing in religion. Religion is a symbol of collective consciousness in its ideal form that is a means to strengthen collective consciousness, such as religious rites. After the religious ceremony, the atmosphere of religion is brought into daily life; then, gradually, the collective consciousness becomes weaker. Thus, religious rituals play a role in creating collective awareness among the people. In Javanese culture, there are many ceremonies whose purpose is to seek mercy. Javanese usually say *ngalap barakah* (hoping to obtain mercy, salvation, and happiness from the ritual). The ceremony or ritual in its implementation contains something sacred.

Javanese religion has many variations in ceremonies. The ceremony that is often performed by Javanese is *slametan*, a ritual that is always associated with the *abangan*. Geertz mentions three loci of *abangan* religious life: *slametan*, spirit beliefs, and the important role of *dukun* (sorcerer). The *slametan* (communal feast) has a double function; to make the host feel *slamet* (happy/content, safe, well-ordered, and blessed) and to achieve harmony in society. The *slametan* portrays "the general *abangan* ideas of order, their 'design for living'. The *slametan* process shows a syncretism between the *Santris* and Javanese traditional (the elders/shaman and Javanese *petungan* system) elements (Mamahit, 2021).

In the belief of the Chinese, the deities, ancestors, and ghosts are believed to have lived in this world at a certain place and time and continue to need the sustenance of the living and to exert influence on them. The spirits continue to relate, especially to those who make ritual offerings. Chinese religion emphasizes ceremonies are pragmatic offerings given in return for virtue. Ceremonies are an important part of Chinese culture. In the ceremony, there are three components of evolution that stand out: primitive rites appear together with Chinese civilization and play an important role in the early development of Chinese political and religious life. Besides, although these ceremonies continue to exert influence, their superiority gradually gives way to new ceremonies formed in syncretic, philosophical, religious, and

political streams. Finally, popular rituals or ceremonies formed by a combination of popular beliefs, religious ceremonies, and local customs are still practiced in other families, villages, or communities. Rites and rituals aim to direct a person through various phases of human life. The ceremony is believed to be the foundation not only for personal happiness but also for social harmony.

The ceremony is sacred; through the temple ceremony, the Chinese show the concept of sacred. Chinese temples (*kelenteng*) as places of worship of Chinese people have various names because the beliefs of Chinese people consist of Dao, Buddhism, Confucianism, and also folk religion, each of which has their respective designations to refer to their houses of worship, even though in reality their use is often not according to the group of people. The temple can be briefly said to be a building of places of worship of Daoists and *sanjiao* (*Tridharma*). In Java, the temple is better known as the Tridharma Place of Worship (*Tempat Ibadah Tridharma*, shortened to TITD). These temples are the place to take data in this research. Each temple has a main deity, each different from one temple and another. In the temple, there are ceremonies which are all intended to get blessings and safety.

Welahan Temple is one of the oldest temples in Indonesia. This temple is located 24 km to the south of the city center of Jepara, in the village of Welahan, sub-district of Welahan, Jepara district, precisely at Jalan Gang Pinggir No.4, Welahan, Jepara Regency, Central Java. This temple is located in the Welahan market, a legacy of Chinese history in Jepara and an icon of the place. Welahan Temple consists of two temples, namely in the north, where the Heavenly God (*Hian Thian Siang Tee*) resides, and in the south, for the God of Earth (*Hok Tek Tjeng Sin*). *Hian Thian Siang Tee* Temple has two dragon decorations and two fish on the roof as a symbol of prosperity. This temple was founded in 1600, so it is said to be one of the oldest temples in Indonesia and on the island of Java. Because there is no record of when a temple was erected, this makes it difficult to determine when the temple first appeared. However, the Welahan Temple is the first temple to worship the *kong Hian Thian Siang Tee* in Indonesia, following the Grajen Temple and Hok Sing Bio Temple, Semarang.

The existence of the Welahan Temple, according to Mr. Sugandhi, started with a ship from China moving to the port of Banten, which was led by Tan Siang Woe. On the ship, there was a *taosu* (Taoist) who suddenly became ill. Tan Siang Woe treated the *taosu* until it healed. The ship continued to move until Semarang, exceeding its original destination. As a gratitude, the *taosu* bestowed many presents on Tan Siang Woe, such as the statue of *Hian Thian Siang Tee*, books, *kilong* (a type of umbrella), a whip, and a pair of swords. He ordered that all the objects be *hoksai* (altarpieces). However, because they had to go to Banten, Tan Siang Woe left all these items with his brother Tan Siang Djie who lived in Welahan, Jepara.

People who were entrusted did not do *hoksai*, so the objects often emitted sounds and light.

The statue of *Hian Thian Siang Tee* (God of Heaven, and some people call it a god of medicine) becomes an object of struggle for the Tan Siang Woe family for generations until finally being auctioned and owned by someone from Semarang named Tan Jong Tam. However, the object seems to protest when the auction, Tan Jong Tam bamboo, falls so blind his eyes. Since then, the statue has remained in Welahan and is now worshiped at the temple's main altar of *Hian Thian Siang Tee*. Still, according to him, the oldest temple is a temple that is around 100 meters next to it, namely Hok Tek Bio Temple or God of Earth, which is also managed by the Pusaka Foundation.

Unfortunately, the oldest temple is no longer functioning and is used as a warehouse. Instead, a more enormous temple with the worship altar of the God of the Earth (*Kongco Hok Tek Tjeng Sin*) was built next to him in 1980. Mr. Sugandhi has also said that the history of the Welahan Temple has the life story of RA Kartini. Among the handwritten letters sent to Mrs. Abendanon, the wife of the Minister of Education at the time of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, RA Kartini told about the *Hian Thian Siang Tee* Temple, Welahan, which she called had saved her life. As a child, RA Kartini wrote in his letter that she was seriously ill one day. The Dutch doctors could not treat her, then came the Chinese who swept the duchy's garden daily and advised RA Kartini's father to ask for medicine at the Welahan Temple. Special couriers were sent to Welahan, returning home with 'the ashes' *Kongco Hian Thian Siang Tee* and were drinking to RA Kartini. Not long after, RA Kartini recovered from her illness. RA Kartini felt that she had been *kweephang* (*guo pang* 過房) and become an adopted child) of the *kongco* Welahan Temple. Welahan Temple, known as the temple of medicine, continues to survive until now. According to Mr. Suwoto, the manager of the Welahan Temple, every day, many people other than Chinese also visit this temple to ask for treatment, their fate, a mate, to grow crops through *ciamsi* (prediction paper containing poems).

The second temple, the Sinar Samudra Temple or Tek Hay Bio temple in Mandarin, is called 澤海廟 (*Zehai Miao*). Literally, the meaning of the temple's name is the Calming Ocean Temple. Therefore the ornamental ornaments of the temple are dominant water and sea-themed themes. This temple is one of the oldest temples in Semarang. This temple only exists in Indonesia and worships the local deity, namely God *Kwik Lak Kwa*, who earned the title of *Tek Hay Tjien Djien*. *Kwik Lak Kwa* was a hero who fought the Dutch in Batavia in 1740 and fled to Central Java. In his guerrilla struggle against the Dutch, *Kwik Lak Kwa* was known to be a trader as well as a physician, and he healed many people around him. Therefore, for his outstanding services, the local Chinese people made *Kwik Lak Kwa* as a god.

The dependence of Javanese culture on Chinese ceremonies causes cultural changes, including

the practice of Chinese belief. Chinese culture is adaptable and makes Chinese culture varies from one place to another, indicating that the Chinese group is heterogeneous. Research from Crazy Rich Asians (2013), a best-selling novel depicting the life of Chinese characters born and grew up in Singapore and America, respectively, reveals that the Chinese characters are represented through their thought, behavior, and language, which are inclined toward American culture (Winatian, Nafsiah, & Novianti, 2019). That research shows how the Chinese adopt and uphold American culture while maintaining a few aspects of Chinese culture and making culturally hybrid characters. It can be said that cultural dependence explains how people can quickly understand new logic without sacrificing the coherence of what happened before and how they can live on two sides of the culture produced to achieve the purpose of life.

There is a link between cultural hybridity and cultural change, such as in his studies of two village community groups on Seram Island: Sawai and Masihulan. The people in Sawai become a hybridity group because of its association with tradition and colonialism which made it the “legitimate sons” of modernity and globalization, while the residents of Masihulan are caught in the illusion of pursuing modernity and the practice of ancient traditions that cause them to struggle to adapt (Rudyansjah, 2018).

It is similar to the case of the practice of Chinese belief that appears in the ceremony at the temple as a place of worship for the Chinese. Ceremonies at Chinese temples in Central Java show a form of hybridity. The dependence of Chinese culture on Javanese culture is shown in the ceremonies, especially the deity’s birthday ceremonies (*sejit*) in the temples of Central Java. Each temple has a host deity, and the deity is celebrated every year. *Sejit* is a word from the Hokkien dialect, which means birthday, or in Mandarin is *shengri* (生日). Most people understand *sejit* as a birthday or anniversary of the birth of a god. *Sejit* of the deity has three meanings: the deity’s birthday, the day of death/*moksha*/enlightenment/reaching perfection, and the hermit day. The ceremony in the temple, in general, is celebrated for three days. Nowadays, people come to pray, gather, and eat together for blessing and safety (*cia pengan*). Human requests to gods are based on reciprocal and contractual relations between humans and deities. The dish is given to get help.

Food in Chinese culture, in this case in ritual, has an important meaning that can establish the basic structures of Chinese society. Therefore, food is an important component of society. The food offering tradition in Chinese rituals is a form of local wisdom and a medium of communication with Gods and ancestors. Food in Chinese rituals have many symbolic meaning. As stated in research, food offerings imply specific meanings (Kepirianto, Mariam, & Purnomo, 2021).

The Welahan Temple has the main deity Hian Thian Siang Tee; the birthday of this god is celebrated on the 3rd of the third lunar month every year. Every

temple with Hian Thian Siang Te as the main deity is currently doing a god’s birthday ceremony. The birthday ceremony of the god Hian Thian Siang Tee, Welahan, is carried out not in the temple itself but in the temple of the god of the Earth (Hok Tek Tjeng Sin). The reason for organizing it in the place of the Earth god, according to Mr. Suwoto, the temple administrator, is because the Earth God is older than Hian Thian Siang Tee. Celebrating Hian Thian Siang Tee’s birthday at Hok Tek Tjeng Sin temple shows respect to elders. The Hian Thian Siang Tee statue is slashed together with the Hian Thian Siang Tee statue from other temples and moves to the Earth God temple. This also becomes a very unique and special thing because it does not happen anywhere else. Many of the same foundations manage more than one temple, but in implementing several major deities, god’s birthday ceremonies continue to be held in their own temples without transferring to another temple due to the status, hierarchy, or officiality of a god. For example, the Pan Kho Bio temple (Maha Brahma Temple) in Bogor and the Hok Tek Bio Temple, better known as the Mahacetya Dhanagun Temple, is managed and owned by a similar foundation, when a number of the main gods, both Pan Kho and Hok Tek Tjeng Sin, continue to be carried out in each temple and not moved.

Other temples sent the statue of Hian Thian Siang Tee to Welahan to carve together with Hian Thian Siang Tee around the area around the temple. *Kirab* is done on the first day of the *sejit*. This activity is raining to ask the Creator to provide an abundance of fortune, peace, and repelling from all disasters to the people of Welahan, Jepara, and the Indonesian people in general, as explained by Mr. Sugandhi. In China and elsewhere in Indonesia, the marching or carrying *toapekong* is held during the Capgomeh ceremony, but in Welahan is when the god’s birthday is held. This is not only because it shows respect for older people but is also influenced by Javanese culture, known as *Malam Satu Suro*. The Javanese people, especially in Yogyakarta and Solo (Surakarta), carry on the *Malam Satu Suro* tradition, which is the New Year’s Eve in the Javanese calendar and is considered sacred to Javanese people. *Malam Satu Suro* is very close to Javanese culture. The procession of community groups, known as *kirab*, becomes one of the things carried out in this ceremony.

Food is the center of every ceremony. Food in Chinese culture is the most precise way to articulate social relations. Since the time of the ancient Zhou Dynasty, *ding* 鼎 (cauldron) has been the main symbol of the country of China. While in classical Chinese texts, written to be proper Chinese is to have a high level of knowledge and skills related to food and drink. Food can form social ties, become an identity, form values, as a national culture and historical heritage, show locality, become a local symbol, a relationship with the ancestors and the cosmos, and represent collectivity. Food can be functioned as a social institution and value system because in preparing food

to communicate with the community, people must learn it. Food not only serves to represent human relations but also shapes communication between people and the spirit world. Serving food becomes central to every ceremony. Food is related to the ceremonial calendar, related to the past, its relationship to the ancestors and the present. Food implies fulfilling obligations to parents, ancestors and strengthening and reviving social relationships and emotions between friends and family.

All ceremonies in Chinese culture, marked by offering food to ancestors and gods, are expected to eat better than humans on earth. With good food, humans can expect good luck from them in return. Food and drink offerings at ceremonies are important to expressing respect for the gods and ancestors and health and protection in life. Food served in the form of dishes such as whole chicken, whole pork, *ronde*, raw cuisine, tea, and white wine is commonly found in food served at the ceremony of god's *sejit* in the temple. The meaning of food offerings for the gods in the temple during the ceremony first is the meaning of support (供养/*gongyang*). Humans need support from gods, and vice versa; gods need support from humans who respect them. The second is cosmology (宇宙观/*yuzhouguan*). Food is one of the pillars of Chinese culture, related to the opinion of Guan Zhong, who said that primarily a king is the people, and people prioritize economic prosperity. The fulfillment of basic human needs for food makes people able to think of other needs. Besides, food is one form of Chinese way to express themselves. Food is also a form of respect for others. The third is obedience (虔诚/*qiancheng*). Providing serving food shows one's obedience to divine power.

In a *sejit* celebration of the main deities of Welahan Temple, Jepara, and Tek Hay Bio, Semarang, the main altar table is filled with red rice cones (*nasi tumpeng*). This cone rice (*nasi tumpeng*) is a sign of the real influence of Javanese culture. *Nasi tumpeng* in Javanese culture is usually white and yellow, but in the *sejit* celebration in Welahan, *nasi tumpeng* is red, a color of happiness in Chinese culture which is shown in Figure 1. This rice cone in ceremonies in the temple is only found in Java, while other temples outside Java do not provide cone rice as a dish. Besides serving drinks for the deity in the temple, water and tea in temples with local influence, offerings for the local sacred are added with coffee and incense (*hio*) as a means of worship and use other local incense (*kemenyan*).

Deity's birthday ceremonies are usually held for three days, and several performances are displayed during the ceremony. The temples in Central Java provide performances in the form of *gamelan* that presents Javanese songs and *wayang potehi*. Welahan Temple, Jepara, at the birthday ceremony of the god Hian Thian Siang Tee, presents *gamelan* music performances in the temple yard, as shown in Figure 2. Aside from being a means of performance, *gamelan* music is also a means of escorting prayer

in a ceremony. The Welahan Temple Foundation has *gamelan* and *wayang potehi* groups. During the god's birthday, a puppet show (*wayang potehi*) is held. The *wayang potehi* stage is made on the road in front of the temple. *Wayang potehi* is originally a popular art among Chinese people in Java, especially many staged in the Semarang area. *Wayang potehi*, a blend of Chinese and Javanese cultures so that it can continue to survive in its performances, can use Javanese. The story that usually has become a standard *wayang potehi* can also be changed, such as Sun Gokong's *Journey to the West*, which has many versions.

Music becomes a part of the ceremony held in the temple, accompanied by the sound of drums, cymbals, and *muyu* 木鱼 (*Bok kie*/percussion instrument). The ceremony took and welcomed the deity in the temple is accompanied by the sound of the musical instruments. In the temples of Central Java, the ceremony, in this case, the birthday ceremony of the god, becomes very different from other places because it is accompanied by *gamelan* music. The sound of melody and song becomes an accompaniment in the prayer, which is held at the birthday ceremony of the god.



Figure 1 Food Offerings in Welahan Temple



Figure 2 Gamelan Music Accompanied God's Birthday Ceremony in Welahan Temple

Flowers are a symbol of beauty and fragrance. People put flowers on the altar of gods as an offering in addition to decorating and scenting the altar and expect something good to happen in life. Flowers also symbolize impermanence. Fresh flowers that are placed on the altar after changing time and day will

wither. Similarly, the physical body will someday be old, sick, and eventually die. Flowers are the main dish of the deity also not found in the tradition of the temple in China, but in Madiun, namely in the temple of Hwie Ing Kiong, jasmine and roses are the main dish for the goddess Mazupo, the protective goddess of the sea, as shown in Figure 3. Flowers have a meaning in the ceremony as serving and fragrances in the tradition of bathing the statue of the god.

In China, there is no tradition of bathing the statue of a god. Chinese temples in Indonesia have a tradition of bathing the statues of their gods once a year. Bathing the statues of the gods with flower water of seven forms is also a form that gets influenced by Javanese culture.



Figure 3 Flowers as an Offerings

The tradition of bathing a statue of a god once a year is usually done one week before the Chinese New Year ceremony. At present, it is believed that the gods rise to the sky and leave the *rupang* (statue) and the altar on *Cap Jie Gwee* or the 24th of the 12th month or the day before to report what he has recorded for a year. Cleansing the altar of the gods in the temple is a symbol of Chinese devotion to the gods, which is to prepare a clean place for the gods when they return on the fourth day after the Chinese New Year, in addition to cleaning themselves so that when the Chinese New Year arrives, everything is clean to worship. In carrying out this tradition, not only cleaning the altar and bathing the image of the god but all the means of worship must also be cleaned, starting from the incense stick (*hio*) to the serving glass (*cucing*) on the temple altar cleaned too.

To bathe the god's statue (*rupang*), buckets filled with water and seven-kinds-flowers are mixed with white wine to make the *rupang* durable and not easily damaged. If dirt is difficult to clean, then a brush can be used. The *rupang* are then dried with a special cloth to clean them. Once clean, smeared with a special perfume that smelled of sandalwood/jasmine/rake wood, the *rupang* is put back on the altar table. If a *rupang* is damaged, at this time, it can be repaired and glued. The hair and beard on the god's *rupang* are neatly combed. After the statue of the god is bathed, cleaned, and dried, then put back on the altar, as shown

in Figure 4.



Figure 4 The Tradition of Washing Statues

The influence of other Javanese cultures on Chinese culture also appears in respect of weapons, such as cults. In China, there is no known tradition of honoring the weapons. Chinese temples do not place weapons to honor. Unlike the temples in Java, there are weapons in the form of a dagger (*keris*) that received special respect. The tradition of bathing a *keris* as a sacred ritual is a form of Javanese culture that is influential in ceremonies in the temples. This *keris* gets special treatment. Usually, the *keris* is wrapped in white cloth, and in every *malam satu suro*, this *keris* is bathed with water mixed with flowers and oils.

The influence of Javanese culture in Chinese temple ceremonies can be shown there is an impact on local wisdom. The Chinese temple ceremony is a kind of local wisdom that is important to be applied in the community. The Chinese temple ceremony can increase community knowledge and understanding of the meaning of local wisdom. Such as Widyawati et al. (2021) have stated that community is a medium for cultivating a sense of local wisdom, cultivating positive characters according to noble values, and equipping the community in dealing with problems and social conflicts between religious communities.

CONCLUSIONS

From these explanations, the influence of Javanese culture on Chinese culture can be seen in ceremonies performed at temples in Java. God's birthday ceremony is a form of the most significant ceremony in Chinese tradition, which is performed in the temple. For Chinese culture to be able to enter and be accepted by the Chinese in Java, it must depend on Javanese culture and adapt to Javanese culture, while in China itself, there are no such elements, such as the tradition of the Keris cult, bathing the god's statue with flowers. The existence of borrowing and dependence on external elements for Chinese society and culture in Java causes consequences in the form of the loss of Chinese culture itself, and Javanese culture becomes more dominant in a birthday ceremony in the Chinese

temple.

The temples' ceremonies create social integration, in which cultural elements unite the Javanese and Chinese. The most important is the sense of culture and the growing strength of nationalism and solidarity.

REFERENCES

- D'Orsi, L., & Dei, F. (2018). What is a rite? Émile Durkheim, a hundred years later. *Open Information Science*, 2(1), 115-126. <https://doi.org/10.1515/opis-2018-0009>.
- Darheni, N. (2018). The language characteristic and its acculturation from Chinese speakers in Losari, Cirebon regency, West Java: The acculturation of Chinese with Javanese culture. *KnE Social Sciences*, 3(9), 663-686. <https://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v3i9.2731>
- Groeneveldt, W. P. (1960). *Historical notes on Indonesia and Malaya, compiled from Chinese sources*. Retrieved from [https://copac.jisc.ac.uk/search?subject=Chinese Malay Peninsula.&rn=6](https://copac.jisc.ac.uk/search?subject=Chinese+Malay+Peninsula.&rn=6).
- Ives, C. D., & Kidwell, J. (2019). Religion and social values for sustainability. *Sustainability Science*, 14(5), 1355-1362. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-019-00657-0>.
- Kepirianto, C., Mariam, S., & Purnomo, V. F. (2021). Food offering culture at Chinese rituals in Semarang Chinatown coastal community. *E3S Web of Conferences*, 317, 01028. <https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/202131701028>.
- Lukman, C. C., Setyoningrum, Y., & Rismantojo, S. (2018). Indonesian Chinese visual language of 'Qilin' on Lasem Batik ancestral altar cloth (Tok Wi). *Journal of Arts & Humanities*, 7(9), 84-94. <http://dx.doi.org/10.18533/journal.v7i9.1488>.
- Mamahit, F. Y. (2021). Abangan Muslims, Javanese worldview, and Muslim-Christian relations in Indonesia. *Transformation*, 38(1), 31-45. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265378820965602>.
- McGranahan, C. (2018). Ethnography beyond method: The importance of an ethnographic sensibility. *Sites: A Journal of Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies*, 15(1), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.11157/sites-id373>.
- Parker-Jenkins, M. (2018). Problematising ethnography and case study: Reflections on using ethnographic techniques and researcher positioning. *Ethnography and Education*, 13(1), 18-33. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17457823.2016.1253028>.
- Rudyansjah, T. (2018). *Ambivalence of the contemporary world and intricate happiness: The case of two societies in Eastern Indonesia for review only*.
- Rustopo. (2007). *Menjadi Jawa: Orang-Orang Tionghoa dan kebudayaan Jawa, 1895-1998*. Yogyakarta: Ombak.
- Wang, Y. (2020). Java in discord: Unofficial history, vernacular fiction, and the discourse of imperial identity in late Ming China (1574-1620). *Positions*, 27(4), 623-652. <https://doi.org/10.1215/10679847-7726916>.
- Wekke, I. S., Aghsari, D., Evizariza, E., Junaidi, J., & Harun, N. (2018). Religion and culture encounters in Misool Raja Ampat: Marine ritual practice of Sasi Laut. *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, 156(1), 012039. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/156/1/012039>.
- Widayat, R. (2022). Dragon ornaments in the contexts of Batik cloth, and the cultures of Javanese and Tionghoa in Indonesia. *Mudra: Jurnal Seni Budaya*, 37(3), 319-338. <https://doi.org/10.31091/mudra.v37i3.2017>.
- Widyatwati, K., Dienaputra, R. D., Suganda, D., & Mamun, T. N. (2021). The teachings of character in local wisdom study on Labuhan Alit Parangkusumo rituals. *Review of International Geographical Education Online*, 11(3), 527-535. <https://doi.org/10.33403/rigeo.800517>.
- Wijayanti, R. (2021). The influence of traditional Javanese architecture in Chinese-style house in Lasem. *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, 778(1), 012033. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/778/1/012033>.
- Winatian, A., Nafsiah, N., & Novianti, N. (2019). The representation of Chinese characters in Kevin Kwan's Crazy Rich Asians (2013). *Passage*, 7(2), 19-31.
- Wuryandari, N. W. (2009). Jalur proto globalisasi Cina - Jawa: Membaca ulang sumner klasik Cina. In *Prosiding the 5th International Conference on Indonesian Studies: "Ethnicity and Globalization"*. pp. 184-193.
- Yusanto, Y. (2020). Ragam pendekatan penelitian kualitatif. *Journal of Scientific Communication (JSC)*, 1(1), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.31506/jsc.v1i1.7764>.