

Chinese New Year in West Kalimantan: Ritual Theatre and Political Circus

Title

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Abstract

Since 2002, when Chinese New Year became a national holiday in Indonesia, spirit medium parades on the fifteen day of the New Year (called Cap Go Meh) have been growing in size in certain West Kalimantan towns, especially Singkawang. This parade in particular has become a major tourist draw-card. Referring to local history, Chinese popular religion and Hakka culture, this article applies a performance analysis methodology to dissect this contemporary phenomenon from religious, historical and inter-ethnic perspectives. It shows how the parades have become enmeshed in current inter-ethnic politics in West Kalimantan, as well as revealing the way that adaptations by the spirit-mediums involved demonstrate their spiritual commitment to their Indonesian homeland.

Keywords

Indonesia, Chinese New Year, social customs, rituals, parades, ethnic relations

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Chinese New Year is the Chinese festival that celebrates the beginning of a new year on the traditional Chinese calendar. The festival is commonly referred to as the Spring Festival (traditional Chinese: 春節; simplified Chinese: 春节; pinyin: Chūn Jié) in China as the spring season in the lunisolar calendar traditionally starts with lichun, the first of the twenty-four solar terms which the festival celebrates around the time of. Marking the end of winter and the beginning of the spring season 1. Chinese New Year (or Spring Festival), the most important festival celebrated across the country- just like what Christmas is for the West. The whole country will be on an at-least-7-day holiday and most Chinese get together with their families, dressing their house in red, cooking family reunion dinner and celebrating the lunar new year. Look at to Day-by-Day Celebrations to know more traditions and taboos during Chinese New Year. Lanterns. There are different types of rituals in China: religious, political, ancestral, and secular. Heaven Worship was the most solemn ritual of the Chinese. It was a form of “communication” between mankind and heaven, usually presided over by the “Son of Heaven” (emperors were regarded as the Sons of Heaven in ancient China). Chinese New Year (also known as the Lunar New Year) falls between late January and mid-February. This year it’s on Saturday 25 January, with the big London celebrations for The Year of the Rat taking place on Sunday 26. The London celebrations are usually on the closest weekend to the

date itself, organised by the London Chinatown Chinese Association (LCCA). Getting to Chinese New Year in London 2020. As with any major event, plan ahead and leave plenty of time. TFL is your best bet for up-to-date travel information on the day. Leicester Square (Northern and Piccadilly lines), Piccadilly Circus (Piccadilly and Bakerloo lines), and Tottenham Court Road (Northern and Central lines) are all a short walk to all the main zones. (Becky Matthews). Chinese New Year or Spring Festival or Lunar New Year 2020 falls on Saturday, January 25, 2020. It is a Year of the Rat. Find out about its traditions, taboos, food, and animal signs). Thus, each time the New Year in China falls on different dates of the usual Gregorian calendar, between January 21 and February 20. The important dates during the period of Chinese New Year 2020: Solar Date.