

9987118

MALAY STUDIES
DEPARTMENTAL LIBRARY

THE WORK OF THE BOMOR IN KELANTAN

Academic Exercise in Fulfillment
of the Requirements of the Honours Degree
In Malay Studies

By

ZAINAL ABIDIN bin SULONG

Perpustakaan Universiti Malaya



A515846246

SINGAPORE

UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA

APRIL, 1957

PERPUSTAKAN
JABATAN PENGAJIAN MELAYU

06 JUN 1995

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page No.

INTRODUCTION

A. Introduction	1
B. Purpose	1
C. Scope	1
D. Method	2
E. Acknowledgments	3

CHAPTER I. THE ROLE OF THE BOMOR

A. Definitions	4
B. The Relation of the <u>Bomor</u> to the Villagers	5
C. Brief History of the Office of <u>Bomor</u>	7
D. The Popular Origin of the Office	9
E. The Privileges of a <u>Bomor</u>	10
F. Succession to the Office	11
G. The Younger Generation	12
H. The Training of a <u>Bomor</u>	13
I. <u>Tanggong</u> , or Innate Aptitude	14
J. Fees	15

CHAPTER II. THE PRINCIPLES OF THE BOMOR'S BELIEFS

A. The <u>Jinn</u>	16
B. The <u>Hantu</u>	17
C. Familiar Spirits	20
D. The <u>Semangat</u>	22
E. The Spirits of the Dead	23
F. The <u>Angin</u>	23
G. The Concept of Illness	24

CHAPTER III. JAMPI-JAMPI, OR INCANTATIONS

- | | |
|--|----|
| A. Definition and Interpretation of <u>Jampi</u> | 27 |
| B. The Practice of <u>Jampi</u> | 27 |
| C. The <u>Perlenas</u> | 32 |
| D. The <u>Jampi Angin</u> | 33 |

CHAPTER IV. KAMPONG MEDICINE, TRANCE CURES AND CHARMS

- | | |
|----------------------|----|
| A. Kampong Medicines | 36 |
| B. Trance Cures | 37 |
| C. Charms | 38 |

CHAPTER V. THE KAMPONG MIDWIFE

- | | |
|---|----|
| A. The Role of the <u>Bidan</u> in the Kampong | 43 |
| B. The <u>Bidan's</u> Fees | 44 |
| C. <u>Pantang</u> , or Prohibitions | 45 |
| D. The Birth of a Child | 45 |
| 1. Rituals at Delivery | |
| 2. <u>Naik Buayan</u> , The First Entry Into the Cradle | |
| 3. Shaving of the Hair | |
| 4. The Medicine of the <u>Bidan</u> | |

CHAPTER VI. SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND COMMENTS

- | | |
|---------------------------|----|
| A. Summary of Conclusions | 49 |
| B. Comments | 50 |

APPENDICES

MAP

BIBLIOGRAPHY

LIST OF APPENDICES

		<u>Page No.</u>
I.	Explanation of the Origin of the <u>Bomox</u>	i
II.	Brief Description of the Performance <u>Main Peteri</u>	ii
III.	The Origin of <u>Hantu</u> , or Ghosts and Spirits	v
IV.	The <u>Langsuir</u>	v
V.	The <u>Plesit</u>	vi
VI. - XVI.	Malay Text of Various <u>Jampi</u>	vii - x
XVII.	Specific Diseases and Afflictions and Their Remedies	xi
XVIII. - XX.	Malay Text of Various Love Charms	xviii
XXI.	The <u>Melanggang</u> or <u>Berlenggang</u> Ceremony	xix
XXII.	Malay Text of a <u>Perlenas</u> Used by a <u>Bidan</u>	xxii
XXIII. + A-R	Malay Text of Various <u>Jampi</u> Not Referred to in the Essay	xxiii
XXIV.	Photographs	xxdiii

INTRODUCTION

A. Introduction

Centuries of political subjection by foreign powers and religious influences from external sources transformed the culture of the Malays into a synthesis of foreign cultural features and the indigenous ones. One has only to walk into a Malay kampong today to notice these intermingling features, deriving from animistic, Hindu and Islamic beliefs.

B. Purpose

The purpose of this study is, first, to glance at these intermingling features, approached from a particular aspect of the social life of the Malays - the part played by the honor, or medicine-man, in society. Secondly, it is to examine, as far as possible, the institution or the office of the honor itself, giving close attention to the nature of the honor's work and the position he occupies in relation to his fellow-men.

C. Scope

The writer realizes that a proper study of this kind needs far more time than he was able to devote. He therefore had to limit his observations to the northeastern State of Kelantan. Kelantan was chosen for two reasons. First, the writer was born there, speaks the local dialect and has some understanding of the ways of the people. Hence it seemed likely that he would be able to get information which would normally be refused to strangers. Secondly, the State is known to have typical cultural features of its own. Because of its geographical isolation and lack of

communication with the rest of the Peninsula, many of the ancient customs and beliefs of its people still remain as they were many hundreds of years ago.

For the sake of thoroughness, the writer found it necessary to limit the survey to several kampongs only. It was concentrated in the kampongs of Kubang Kerian, Chichal, Demit, Lundang, Kenali and Bangkok, covering an area of about four square miles. In all, seven homors were interviewed.

Secondly, the writer realised that there are two broad divisions of the homor's magical activities, which are popularly termed "black" and "white" magic. The realm of black magic, which consists of malefic charms and poisons, is the most difficult to probe. It is enshrouded in mystery and secrets. Hence, the writer failed to gather, within the limited time at his disposal, any substantial information concerning it. This study is therefore concentrated on the homor's function as a man of medicine, though a small section is devoted to a study of love charms.

Apart from obtaining first-hand information, the writer consulted written sources for verification and explanation. These books are listed in the bibliography.

The writer made frequent visits to the area for the purpose of collecting data during the months of September and December, 1956, covering a period of seven weeks.

D. Method

At the outset of the survey, the writer was faced with three major difficulties: funds, time and co-operation. Lack

of funds prevented him from making a sample survey of each district of the State of Kelantan. Apart from this, the time at his disposal was too short for any thorough survey to be accomplished. The writer was also faced with lack of co-operation. The sort of information that he was trying to obtain is regarded as a very valuable trade secret. The writer's first task was therefore to break this barrier of non-co-operation by establishing friendly relations with the honors, to secure their sympathetic interest in the purpose of this survey. The writer was fortunate in that he already knew three of them and, with their help, the first hurdle was overcome without difficulty.

Most of the honors are illiterate and for this reason no method other than personal interview was possible. The difficulty here lay in choosing the appropriate moments when the honors had time to talk. Some of them insisted on Tuesday, starting at twelve noon, because they believed these to be a good time and a good day for giving away one's knowledge, while others preferred the night, because that was when they least expected to be called away. Hence the writer had to suit his time accordingly and many valuable free hours had to be wasted.

E. Acknowledgments

The writer wishes to thank all the honors, particularly Pa' Kar of Chichal for his untiring efforts to assist, Pa' Chu Daud of Kubang Kerian for allowing the writer to study his book of jamani and medicine, To' Da Seripah of Chichal for the information on midwifery, Pa' Kot of Demit and Haji Awang of Lundang, and others who gave their valuable assistance during the course of the survey.

APPENDIX XXIV

PHOTOGRAPHS



Ingredients derived from trees



Ingredients derived from trees



Ingredients derived from trees



Ingredients derived from trees



Ingredients derived from
bezoars, stones and
bones

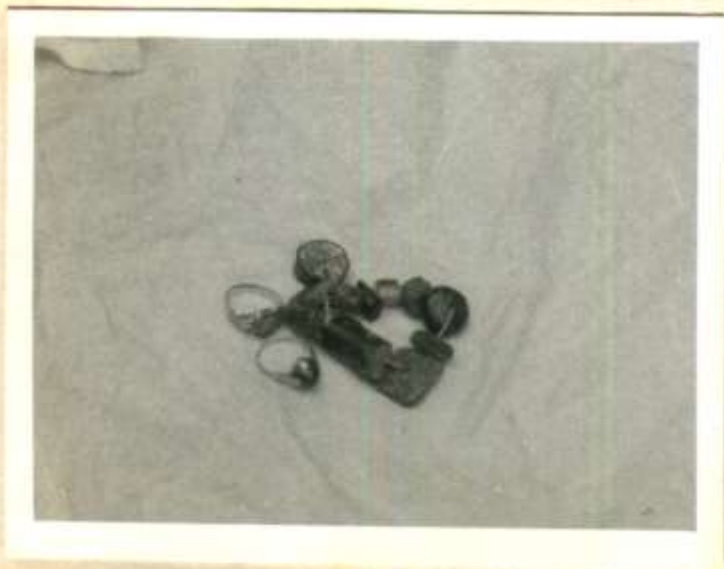


A tiger bone



Bidan Kampong To' Su

Bidan Kerajaan
Nik Kalthom



Rings and pieces of wood
worn by Bomor Pa' Chu Daud
for protection against evil
spirits

MALAYA

