MUSIC IN THE MONOGIT RITUALS OF THE KADAZAN OF PENAMPANG, SABAH, MALAYSIA

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Abstract

Sompongungan gong ensemble music with sumazau dancing characterises coastal Kadazan social celebrations at weddings, feasts, church festivals, and nowadays at concerts and tourism events. It also occurs in traditional ritual ceremonies. This paper investigates the role of sompongungan and gandang drum music in monogit rituals of the Kadazan of Penampang. The monogit is organised by a household to promote the fertility of rice plants, to ensure the family’s health and fertility, to cleanse family members from bad dreams, to cleanse the house from evil spirits, and to “feed” the miontong or house guardian spirit. Priestesses or bobohizan preside over rituals and sacrifices according to prescriptions in the inait, long chanted ritual poetry. Drumming and sompongungan performance outline the framework for ceremonies, provide a vehicle for the bobohizan to enter the spirit world through conscious trance, and support sumazau