

Part III

The Ritual

Many people understand that ritual is the sacred activities and not in the same part with culture. Such understanding diverts from the truth.

Dr. King-Kaew Ultakorn explains that Ritual is a kind of process leading to the wishing goal. What we have to do has its methodology containing the plan and step. For example, the farmers need the paddy rice they have to conduct rice growing procedure starting from: land preparation, ploughing, sowing seedling paddy, taking care of harvesting, rice threshing and barh filling

The activities ritual procedure reflects two ideas: spirit and symbol.

1. Idealistic procedure This means the ritual is done through spiritual touching. All ritual is done through spiritual touching. All ritual activities are concretes such as the spiritual warming ceremony of the Goddess of rice. All farmers believe that there is the real body of the Goddess of rice. When they conduct the ritual activities, farmers believe that all they have done are lively things, and Godsacknowledge everything.

Besides the ritual causes the confidence that makes the ritual doers having sureness of mind. This is what they said, “ritual is both food and medicine on growing all kinds of wishing emotion.”

So ritual is the activity basing on the belief that “Mind affects body and outside things”. Human tries to create ritual to strengthen the spirit for all purposeful activities.

2. Idealistic Symbol For all ritual activities, some complementary things must be done such as materials, actions and verbals; all of these are symbols and they cause the emotional powers within mind, creative ideas and great imagination for firmly human spiritual firmness

So the ritual is the mindful affairs aiming for spirit and strong confidence.

The important ritual in Baan-Koke village are spiritual warming, avert a catastrophe by a magic means, human massage and roasted and rice warming spirit etc.

Spiritual Warming

Spiritual warming is the traditional ceremony and performed in case of:

1. Welcome Visitors This done to honor an friendship building
2. Farewell to the leaving people This is done to call for spirit to go and protect the leavers.
3. Welcome the guests the host believes that the guests spirit longs for their own location and staying in the new place may not make their spirits happy.
4. Sickness recovering This is done to boost up the patient's spirit and congratulate for their recovery.
5. Ordination applicants This is done before the ordination applicants going to be the Buddhist monk.
6. New house warming This ceremony is for the happiness of the house owner. It is the blessing ceremony for the couples to lead the happy life in the new house.
7. Pet's spiritual warming This is the old tradition for their great gratitude for the animals that have done great good deeds for human. These pets are elephants, horses, cows, oxen and buffalos.

The Activities for Spiritual Warming

This ceremony will conduct in the evening, and all the materials will be prepare in the morning or during the day. All kinds of food will be ready for the guests. In the morning, the host will invite relatives, close friends and neighbours in the village to participate the ceremony in the evening The spiritual warming set and complementary will be placed in front of the spiritual receiver. All ceremony participants will sit cross legs around the set. The master

of the ceremony will set hear the set and start the performance with certain tune of chanting. During the chanting, the master of the ceremony will offer the spiritual receiver the auspicious rice. The sacred thread will link from the bowl setting near the set to the surrounding people to hold. At the end of the ceremony, the surrounding participants will tie the sacred thread around the wrists of the spiritual receiver. The big feast will start immediately after the ceremony.

Materials used in the Spiritual Warming Ceremony

- Boiled hen
- Boiled eggs
- Spiritual warming set with 3 spires
- Clothes
- Talcum powder
- Looking glass
- Comb
- Sacred thread
- Flowers
- Joss stick and candles
- Liquor
- Banana
- Rice grain
- Dessert

Words for Spiritual Warming

[in Thai local words]

2. Human Aversion Ceremony

The human or people aversion will be performed when the people are in bad luck. The banana barks will be brought to make a square cup and divided into 9 rooms within the cup. In each room containing 9 kinds of meat: meat, fish, black rice, red rice, coccinia indica, hot pepper leaves etc. At the corners of the banana cup, there are flags sticks with different colors according to the days

Monday – Light Yellow

Tuesday – Black

Wednesday – Light green

Thursday – Yellow

Friday – White

Saturday - Black

Sunday – Red

In each room there also be the sculptures of tiger, naga, rat, lion, person, dog, elephant, cat, pagoda, and ox. The sacred thread will be bound around the flag corner. There will be 4 ceremonial flags stick around the house corners, but this would be done by the master of the ceremony.

The banana cup appearance:

| | | |
|-------|--------|----------|
| Tiger | Naga | Rat |
| Lion | Person | Elephant |
| Cat | Pagoda | Ox |

How to count to check your bad luck

The woman starts counting from the lion turning anticlockwise with one reduction from your present age.

The man starts counting from the elephant up to the present age.

Anyone ending on Saturday (number 7) and number 9. He/She is in bad luck. The aversion ceremony should be done.

3. The sending 9 rice wraps ceremony

This ceremony will be conducted when the child or children cry without reasons. The 9 rice wraps plus 5 baht, betel nut, betel leaf will be brought with the child/children facing the west. The master of the ceremony will chant the Mantra with the knife holding in hand. The ceremony will be ended by sacred thread binding to the child/children arms.

Materials used in the ceremony

Five baht of money, betel nut, betel leaf

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Pepper wrap | 6. Red rice wrap |
| 2. Salt wrap | 7. Sour soup wrap |
| 3. Meat wrap | 8. Sweet curry wrap |
| 4. Fish wrap | 9. White rice wrap |
| 5. Black rice wrap | |

4. Human/People Massage (Herbal Massage)

Materials used

1. Seven herbal local roots and barks
2. Boiling pot
3. Covering cloth
4. Stove

Boil herbal medicine for 2 hours then bring 2 wild banana leaves to cover the pot and make a hold in the middle. Take the pot out of the stove and covering the person and herbal pot with the cloth. The herbal massage will start from 9-12 and 3-6 and last for 2-

3 days. Every person needs 3 herbal pots; the last pot will mix with water for bathing and drinking. The herbal massage will help physical improvement after birth giving, bad food taking. If the patient ignores, they may face various physical sickness such as stiff neck and faint.

5. People Roasted

This activity will be done in case of:

1. High falling or got hurt from buffalo and ox.
2. Curing of internal injury.

Build a rough high bed with Long 4 poles and putting planks of wood on the poles. Lay "Plao" leaves on the wooden planks and let the sick person lie down on the leaves. Make a fire under the bed but make sure it will not be too hot keep doing like this until the patient gets better.

6. Rice spirit warming ceremony

This tradition has been doing for a long time up to present. The ceremony will be conducted during the well growing rice. The land owner will make "Bai-Si" set flowers, betel nut, betel leave and the lump of rice from the temple. All of these will be taken to the rice field with a three prong of branch. Stick the three-prong on the land and lay the "Bai-Si" set on the prong. The villagers believe that this ceremony will help getting most rice harvesting; if they fail to do so, the outcome will be bad. This is why the villagers keep this traditional ceremony on.

7. Buffalo and Ox spirit warming ceremony

Oxen and buffaloes are the great gratitude animals for their being hand workers for our staple food producing the rice. Every year the farmers will perform the ceremony of buffaloes and oxen spirit warming for the auspicious life of these wonderful animals.

Spirit Warming Time

1. Some farmers do the ceremony before the first day of rice farming
2. Some do after the harvesting time.

Both of these are good times up to their convenience. The preparation is the same as ordinary spirit warming but adding paddy rice, young grasses, rope, perfumes to pour on oxen and buffalo. Then bind the sacred thread to both horns of the animals, blessing and apology begging them; then let them go.

Word for buffaloes and oxen spirit warming

Etc.

Bai-Si materials

- Three points Bai-Si
- Roast Sugar cane
- Roast crab
- Roast apply snail
- Some food that buffaloes like.

8. Home Aversion Ceremony

This ceremony will be done in cause of someone, not the member of the house, died in the house. The materials used are flowers, joss stick, candle, banana, coconut, boiled rice, sweets, soap, talcum powder, toothpaste, money etc. Buddhist monks are invited and the villagers will be surrounded by the sacred thread while the monks are chanting. After the monks blessing, the villagers will return homes. The next day in the morning they will offer food to the monks after chanting. And the villagers will do their aversion at the pile of sand and rice using a gun, a triangle cup containing flower, egg, money, joss stick, candle, fish meat, boiled rice, sweet. The triangle cup is set at the pile of sand and rice, and a Buddhist monk will conduct the chanting. At that time, a villager will shoot the gun 1 shot to the egg in the cup. If the egg is not broken, bad luck is still in

the house. The gun will be shot again aiming at the other two sides of the cup without shooting limit.

9. Sorcerer's dance ceremony

Usually this ceremony will be held in April at the time of Song-Kran festival. The grandfather spirit of the village will be invited by the sorcerer answering the villagers' questions about the events within the village.

The sorcerer will put on the clothes that used to be dressed last time, and the villagers will offer food to the sorcerer. All villagers will offer food to the sorcerer. All villagers will participate the ceremony. The village spirit will exorcise the woman who then shakes heavily. The villagers will ask any questions they need to the exorcist who then answers them. This ceremony will not perform on Wednesday because the spirit will not take any food this day.

10. Ghoul Exorcise Ceremony

In the old days, the raising of ghouls is normal. The son or daughter will inherit this tradition from their parents. If the ghouls are neglected, they will possess some villagers. Usually the person who is possessed is coward, or he/she may do something irritating the ghouls raiser. The ghouls exorcising needs 5 bowls of 8 money of 104 baht, flowers, joss stick and candle. The exorcist will use the tiger fang or wild sedge drawing the body of the ghouls possessors. If the ghouls does not exit, the blangka plants and mantra whip beating. When the ghouls gets out of the ghouls possessor, he/she will vomit and is not get any hurt.

11. The Hypnosis of dying during Pragnaney Ceremony

In the old days, the physician treatment is not very good as it is now. Birth giving will be done by local midwife. Some women experience difficult delivery, and the child or the mother or even both may die. If they both die, the villagers believe the spirits are strong and fierce. The exorcist will hypnotise the spirits by nailing the forehead, shins, legs and hands. Of the dead body before taking for

cremation. If the dead body's face turns to be red, this indicates the spirits are not conquered. The exorcist has to repeat until the dead child is out and both mother and child could be cremated.