

A Study of Relationship between Health Care Deity and Thai-Kui group in Sanka District, Surin Province

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Abstract

San ArYhaJuay is a ritual of Thai – Kui people which had believed and practiced from ancient time. The ritual was inherited by generations informed of processes, components, and offerings. There was historical evidence indicated that Thai - Kui people have moved from Champasakarea. This study was aimed to study belief of Thai –Kui people on health care deity, the relationship between Thai – Kui people with health care deity and prior of health care deity for Thai – Kui people. The proposed of San ArYhaJuayritual was to connect to health care deity annually of planting and harvest time. This sacrifices aimed to worship the deity divided into 2 aspects 1) the 3rd-month sacrifice to worship their products and 2) the sacrifice to ask for an abundance of agriculture and water. This traditional culture showed the relationship between Thai-Kui people and health care deity that the deity was majored priority and respected the group from the past till nowadays. The deity was believed as angel dwelled in the sky but people placed the shrine for them mostly in the South of the village and turn its front to the East. The deity was believed to protect and treat people to well-being. For Thai – Kui people, wherever they have settled down, the shrine will be built to worship health care deity and San ArYhaJuayritual will be arranged annually.

Keywords: San ArYhaJuay, Health Care Deity, Thai-Kui Group, Surin Province

Introduction

The human believes of supernatural power, ghosts, ancestor spirits, black magic, and magic spell evoked rituals, worship, offerings, ceremony included its processes and offerings. The believed were developed and presented in a related ritual from the past until nowadays. It was indicated by evidence from the past that human's living necessary such as products, raw material, water, food, and habitat included their wishes of happiness relied on natural such as a river, mountain, forest, and herbs. So, these made people depend on and close to nature tightly because of the need for food, survival, and abundance from supernatural power. The power of nature doesn't need to explain by science because of human need shelter. Even human try to explain the power of supernatural power but seems its over human capacity to understand or prove. So, there came a belief that there was some power existing (RabaebThitayano 1987). For this reason, there tried to find sacred objects based on the belief of their survival. Therefore, people became to worship and asked their wishes to a sign of the power such as big trees, a mountain, an anthill. People believed that there will be some power dwelled in the sacred objects. The sacred objects can give prosperous and penalty to human. So, the human who practices worship to the objects will be protected (Book division of Mahamakut Buddhist University. 1984: 169). It's can say that the sacred was another way to support human mentally. After that period, human believed that there was some power or spirit dwelling in the human body, animal, things or even places. It cannot see my eyesight and people called this power "ghost" or "spirit" which both subjects cannot separate from each one clearly. Generally, people believed that human will become to ghost or spirit when they die and still stay around (Thida *Mosikarat and Chamnong Thongprasert*, 1995). Moreover, there was another spirit which more powerful than general ghost or spirit called Thevada (angel). The belief of spirit and angle was a part of life for Thai Kui people, it was a strong belief system. They practices worship to health care deity who has supernatural power and played an important role in their living. The deity was a sign of weather, water, and abundance. This belief has long last from the past until now expressed by people's worship annually.

Objectives of study

1. To study the belief of Thai – Kui people on health care deity
2. To study ritual, process, and offerings which people offer to health care deity
3. To study the relationship between Thai – Kui people and health care deity

Scope of study

1. The scope of the document, the documents used in this study were academic documents presented in various resources such as documents of ritual, belief, and cultures which emphasized on ritual and belief of ThaiKui people to health care deity.

2. The scope of the area, the study area were Baan SalaSamakkee, Sob Sub District, SankaDistic and Baan Sagad, Sagad Sub District, SankaDistic, Surin Province

3. The scope of informants, the informant was selected by propulsive selection from experts, a well-informed person as followed, 2 ritual conductors, 5 local experts, 20 participants, 1 village leader, and 2 monks.

4. The scope of time, a period of time for this study was January – August 2017.

Criteria of study area selection

1. There still existed of strong belief and practice in the area.

2. There were numbers of Thai Kui experts and participants on the ritual in the area.

3. Identity and tradition of the ritual had been well maintained in the area.

Methodology

1. The literature reviewed from related conceptual, theory, and researches together with consulted experts in order to scope the framework of the study.

2. Surveyed the study area, Baan SalaSamakkee, in order to study the general context of the area and information background of the ritual.

3. Prepared data collection by coordinated to the related organization in the area for permission and make an appointment with informants to collect data.

4. Collected data in the area by in-depth interview and observation together with voice recorded and photographed.

5. Analyzed data by listened and reviewed the information from the voice recorder. Summarized the data from in-depth interview and observation and concluded in each aspect of the study framework.

6. Report the result of a study using descriptive analysis technique together with the conclusion in each aspect.

Result

The result will be shown in each aspect according to objectives of study as follow

The belief of Thai-Kui people to health care deity, Thai Kui people have preserved, inherited and practiced this traditional culture until nowadays. This belief was originated to response basic need of human such as weather problems, drought, abundance. The healthcare deity was called “ArYhaJuay” in Thai-Kui language. ArYhaJuay was believed as a supernatural power god who can give water and abundance in farming time and also guardian god. Thai Kui people built a shrine for ArYhaJuay in the South of the village, the front of the shrine was turned to the East. Inside the shrine, there were models of man, woman, guns, a photo of elephants and horses and stone which believed that dwelled by some spirits.

The ritual, process, pattern, and offering had believed and practiced long years until nowadays. People give high priority to this ritual and practice annually. People practice the ritual 2 times a year, on the 3rd day of the 3rd waxing moon the ritual will be held to offer the harvested agriculture product to ArYhaJuay and on the 6th day of the 6th waxing moon, the ritual will be held again to ask for water and abundance of agriculture. The important components in the ritual were 1) offerings which included fruits, good smell objects, colorful flowers, Bai Sri, Colored cloths and a photo of elephants, horses, men, and women 2) people which included a ritual conductor, ritualists who will be confirmed the time and place of ritual.

Then, the ritual will be held annually with the process, traditional culture, the structure of belief which led relationship between people in the group and between people and ritual. In the term of people and supernatural power in the ritual, there was a prediction using boiled egg and chicken chin. The prediction was believed to influence their living. So, the ritual has been related to Thai Kui people from birth to death.

The relationship between Thai-Kui ethnic group with healthcare deity

The relationship presented obviously such as Thai Kui people practiced their worship of health care deity or ArYhaJuay which believed as a sign of abundance, water, and agriculture products. Most of Thai Kui people relied on nature to do their farm work. So, the relationship to this deity was close and strongly presented by their worship annually from 1,000 years ago.

Ethic values

The ethic values found in the ritual were the value of moral support and the value of morale promotion. The morale presented in the ritual was gratitude that people practice worship to their health care deity based on belief. This moral can be used as a tool to plant morality in social while ritual can be used as a tool to gather people. It was a tool to promote morale at the mental level and to assist social behavior control.

Conclusion

From the result of a study on the belief and ritual, it can be concluded as follow;

Thai Kui people believed in supernatural power especially in health care deity or ArYhaJuay. ArYhaJuay was believed as a protection and abundance god.

From analytical of the ritual role in Thai Kui society, the ritual was not only to worship and pay respect to the deity but it played an important role to influence people's living in aspects of education, career, history, a way of living in both family and social level. Gathering of people in the ritual made communication and relationship which influence to economic. The culture of practicing expressed their respect to elderly people. So, it can say that the gathering of people to practice ArYhaJuay ritual influenced social well-being in family level, village level, and social level because the rule has been created and accepted by the member.

Suggestions

1. Policy suggestion, local curriculum on belief and ancestor spirit should be created by primary school and secondary school in order to learn and develop the local wisdom of culture, tradition, belief, and ritual. Then, develop the wisdom to be practical and inherit to next generation with awareness and pride of their own local culture.

2. The related organization of culture and local tradition should support activities in order to promote community development and good quality of life.

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