

# Pu'al Rite

AYANGAN IFUGAO, IFUGAO PROVINCE, NORTHERN LUZON ISLAND, NORTHERN PHILIPPINES. *This is the death rite practiced by the Ayangan Ifugao in the municipality of Mayoyao.*

THE AYANGAN Ifugao conducts some preliminary rituals before the *pu'al* proper:

The *mumbaki* (ritual specialist) invokes the *liblib'adjan deities*. The final prayer of this invocation goes:

*"Do not again spear/ the stomach of the Ifugao (people)/ and we shall offer a chicken to be put in the chicken's basket/ we shall perform the pu'al of this dead/ as died (name of the dead)."*

Then he invokes the *pinaching* ghost-deities. The final prayer for this invocation goes:

*"Do not again steal/ this cooked rice/ and this cut-in pieces (meat) which is the pu'al/ the pu'al of (name of the dead) who died."*

After this, the *mumbaki* kills two small chickens in the ordinary way: one for the "stomach ache-deities," and one for the *pinading*. The sacrificial prayers are as follows:

*"Here your victim/ stomach ache-deities of the Underworld/ stomach ache-deities of the Skyworld/ stomach ache-deities of this house grounds/ do not spear again, etc."*

*"Here is your victim/ pinaching ghost-deities of the Underworld/ pinaching ghost-deities of the Skyworld/ pinaching ghost-deities of these villages/ do not again spear, etc."*

If no chicken is offered for these two classes of deities, the *mumbaki* just invites them to drink rice wine, adding this in the final prayer of the invocation:

*"Here then is the rice wine,"* (or a similar expression).

When there is much wine he recites an invocation to the Star-deities so that drunken people will not make trouble invoking the Night-beings of the Underworld, the Night-beings of the Skyworld and the Star-deities. All these rites are held inside the house before a small jar or a wooden plate with rice wine. Likewise, the *mumbaki* recites the *abu-wab* myth in the house:

*"Are living Bagan and Wigan at Ducligan/ were in good condition/ their chickens and pigs and their children/ they farmed and farmed their rice and fields at Ducligan."*

*"Got sick Wigan/ their father/ was sick and sick Wigan/ and they ate their rice/ and they offered Welfare (Honga) sacrifices with pigs and chickens./ The third day/ died Wigan their father."*

*"They go look for bamboos/ they make the death chair/ and they put on the death chair their father Wigan/ Says Bagan, 'Where is he who will do the lukat rite (namely, this magical tale, after which they are allowed to bring down the rice bundles from the storing place) of this rice?"*

*"When went to the middle the sun/ looks down Wigan of the Skyworld/ and says/ 'Are they then not going to bring out the rice/ so that they may eat it toward (the funeral meal of) their father Wigan who died?"*

*"Jumps down then Wigan of the Skyworld/ to the house of Bagan and Wigan of Ducligan/ and says,*

*'Are you then not going to bring out your rice?'/ Says Wigan the Ifugao/ 'We did not for no one to do the lukat rite.'*

*"Wigan of the Skyworld says, 'Let me get some rice.' Wigan of the Skyworld goes to the storing place. He sees hidden among the rice bundles the Earthquaker of the Underworld, the Thunderer of the Skyworld, the Deity Giving-Growth of the Underworld, the Deity of the Skyworld, the River Deity and the Deity of Lagud."*

*"Wigan of the Skyworld says, 'Let us get the rice of Bagan and Wigan, for their father died.' They say, 'Yes, let us get their rice.'*

*"They get and bring down the rice bundles. Wigan of the Skyworld gets a shifting basket and removes the grains from the rice ears. The rice becomes plenty. He gets four mortars and pulls off four of his fingers to be their pestles."*

*"Wigan of the Skyworld says, 'Use these pestles to pound your rice. Your rice will multiply. Let it be your food for three days. If you have too much then let it be your food afterwards.'*

*"Wigan of the Skyworld says, 'Where are your pigs?' Wigan the Ifugao says, 'We have no pigs.' Wigan of the Skyworld says, 'Let me get some pigs.'*

*"Wigan of the Skyworld leaves to look for the pigs of the relatives of Bagan and Wigan of Ducligan. The relatives bring pigs to the house of Bagan and Wigan because their uncle Wigan died."*

*"Wigan of the Skyworld says, 'Here are the pigs. Give them to the people to eat.' Bagan and Wigan distribute meat to the people."*

*"Wigan of the Skyworld says, 'Kill two pigs tomorrow. Kill two pigs again the day after tomorrow. Food will be plenty. Then you bury your father Wigan. And you will live. Your rice, pigs, chickens and children will multiply.'*

*"On account of this, Bagan and Wigan live at Ducligan. Their rice, pigs, chickens and children multiply."*

Above are the rites preceding the sacrifices offered for the deceased.

Before proceeding to the proper *pu'al* sacrifices, the priest kills a full-grown chicken, not in the ordinary way. He nips the throat of the chicken with his fingers until it dies, saying:

*"Here this you put in the chicken's basket, Inyapuban (name of deceased woman) and you bring it (chicken) to your father Haguban, and your mother Inlingta, so that it may be your chicken in the Skyworld, let it be prolific in the Skyworld, and do not come back, Inyapuban, to the house of Inggolyo and Angivan (names of daughter and husband), and do not get the people, and do not get Inggolyo and Angivan and their children."*

The bile sac is inspected. If it is bad then he kills a second and even a third. If still bad, then they offer a pig, killed through strangulation with a rattan cord about its throat. The priest, in the meantime, recites:

*"Here your present, Inyapuban, and bring it to your father, Haguban, and your mother, Inlingta, so that it may be your pig in the Skyworld, let it be prolific in the Skyworld and do not return, Inyapuban, to the house of Inggolyo and Angivan, and do not get the people, and do not get Inggolyo and Angivan and their children."*

After this, they proceed to the proper *pu'al* rites. They kill one or more pigs in the ordinary way, rarely some three or four chickens. The sacrificial prayer for each of the victims is as follows:

*"Here, your pukal (funeral victim) Inyapuban, and you bring it to your father, Haguban, and your mother Inlingta, and you get it (the soul of the victim), and we shall eat, all of us, for we put you on the death chair, for you died, Inyapuban."*

Immediately afterwards, they prepare the meals. The strangled animals are cooked in another pot than the *pu'al* proper animals, which are served to everyone. The strangled animals are given only to old people/aged relatives. The pieces may be taken home by the old people.

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