

Astrological Symbols: The Condiments of Life, Rituals, and Beliefs of Thai People

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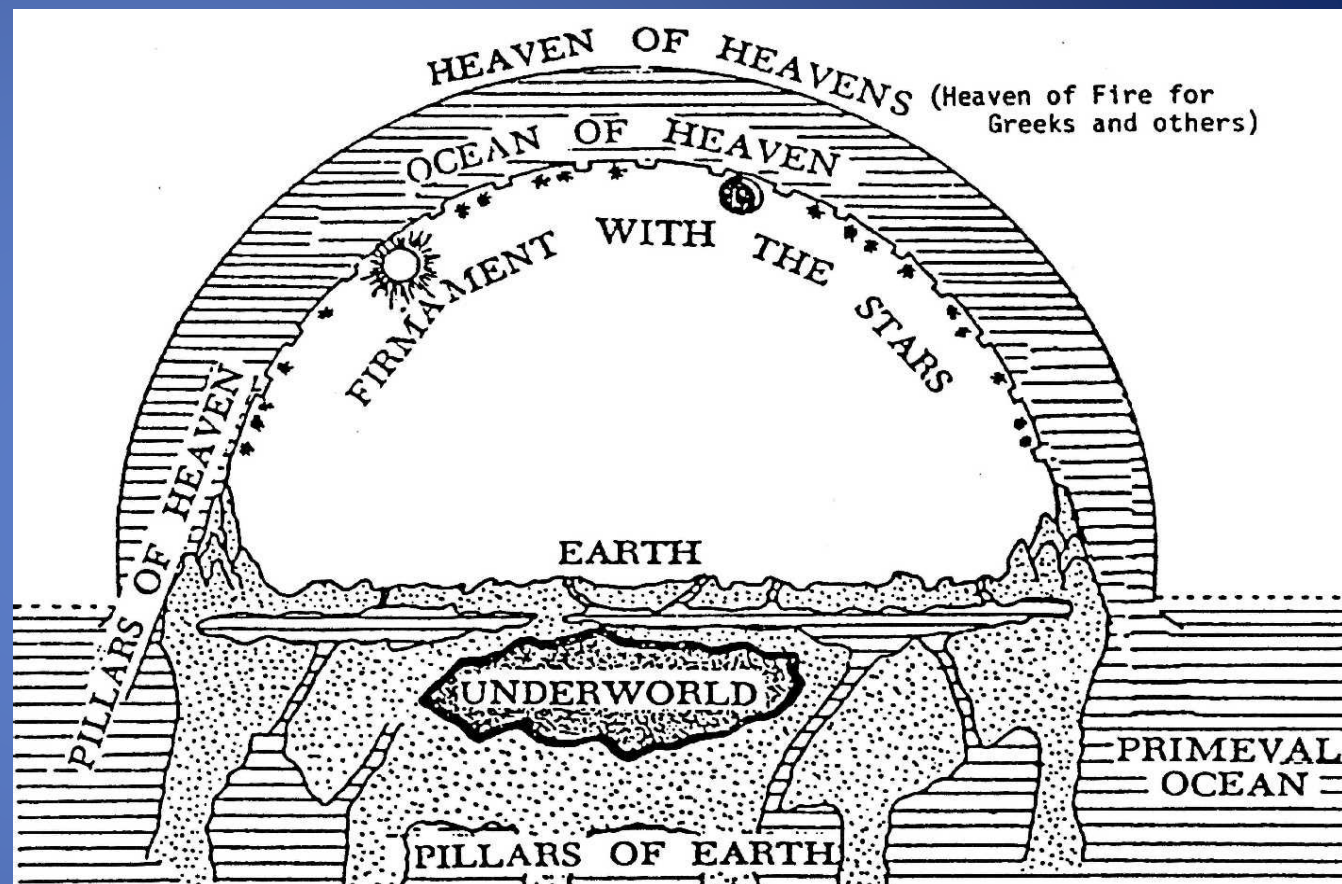
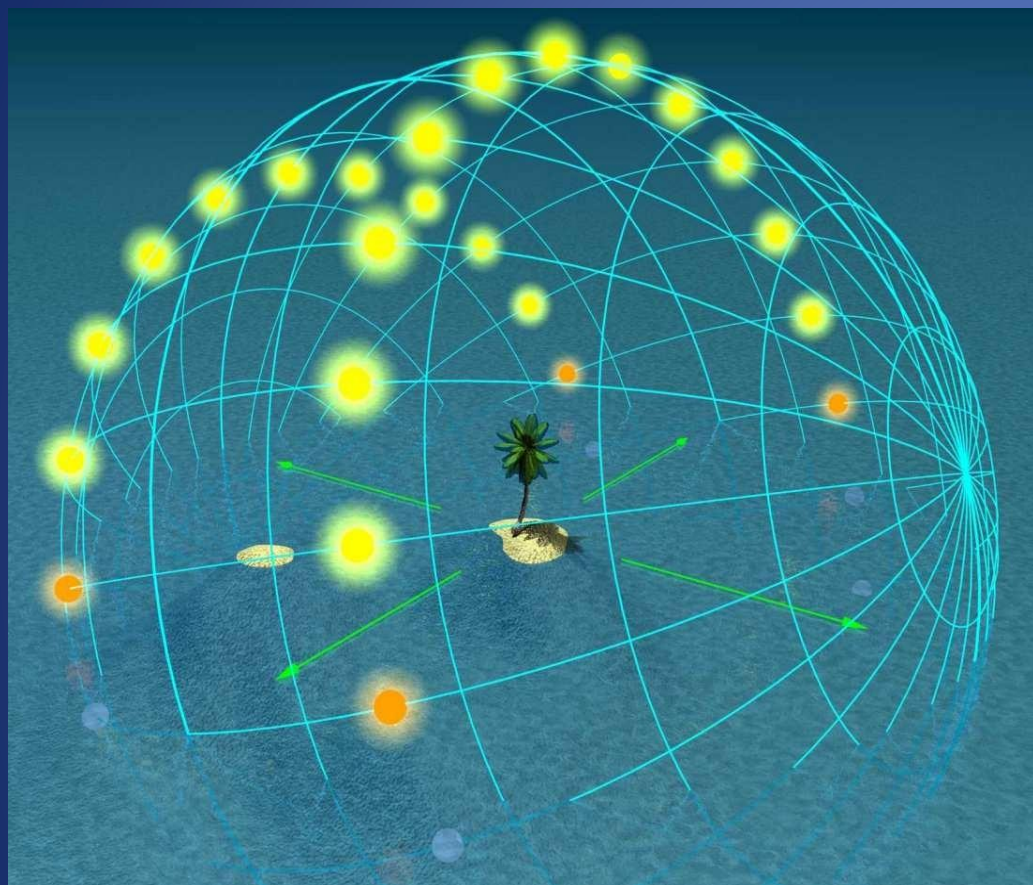
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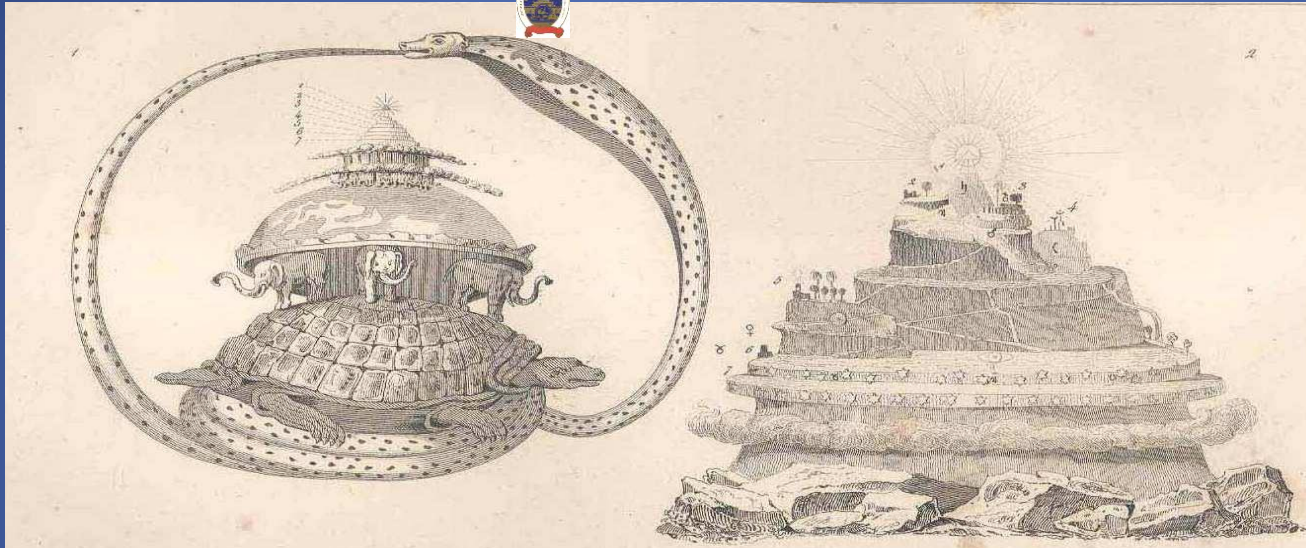
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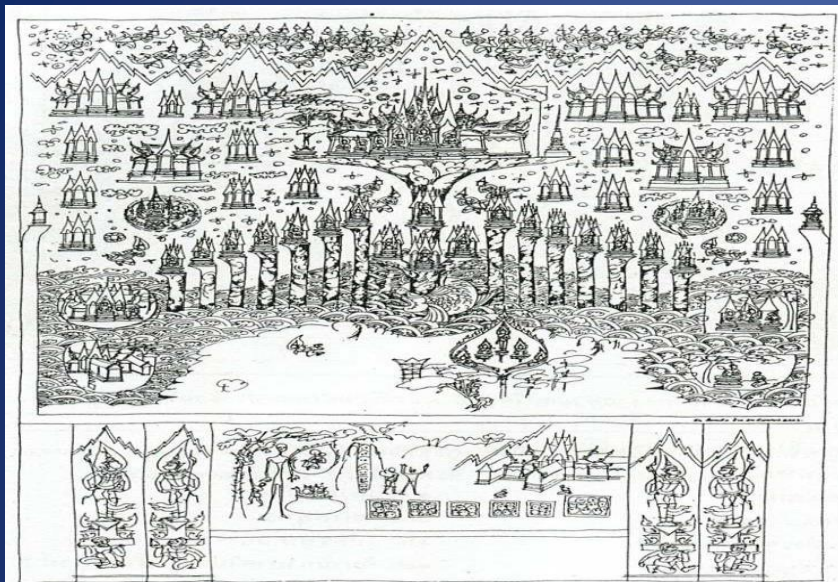
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Ancient cosmic system

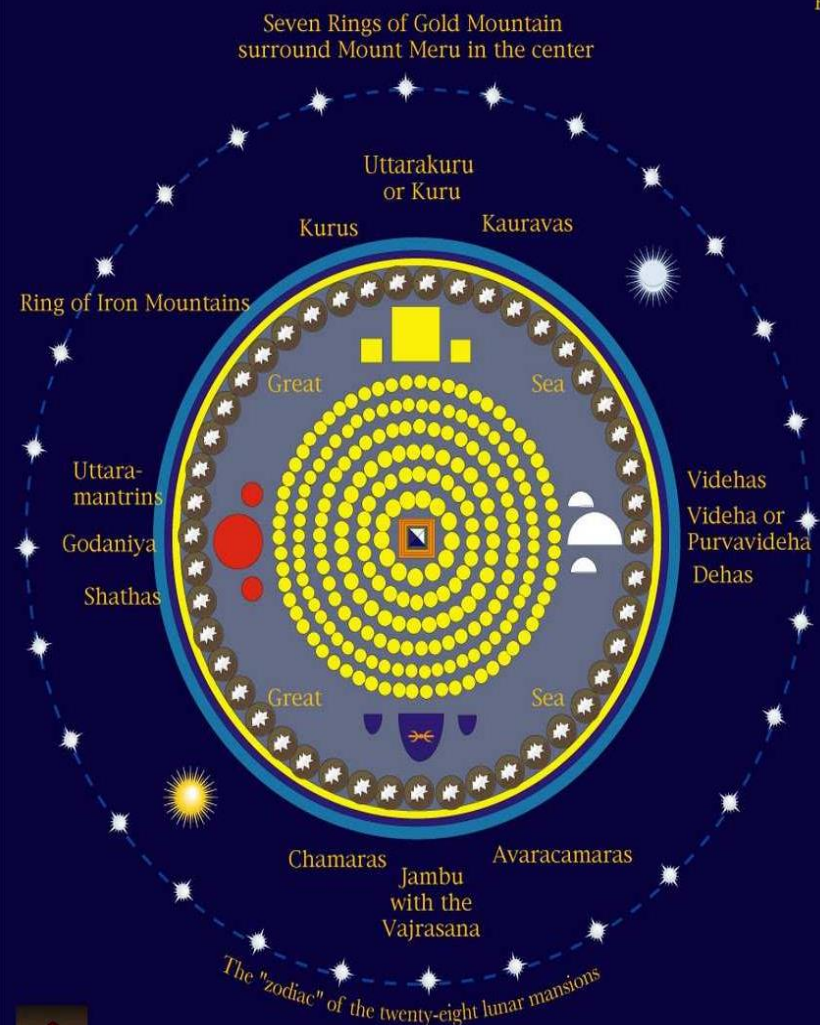






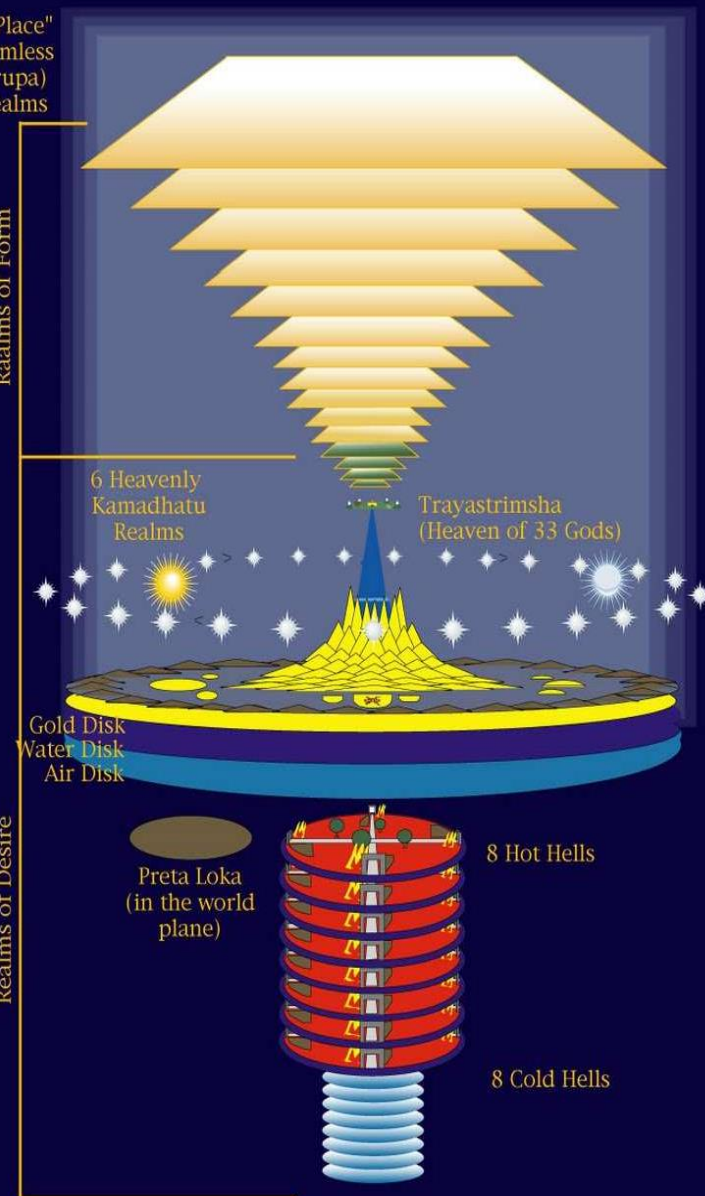


The World System and Continents Surrounding Mount Meru



4 "No Place"
Formless
(Arupa)
Realms

Realms of Form



Astrological Symbols

Thai society is a mostly Buddhist society ingrained with a belief in karma and a combination of other traditional beliefs in supernatural forces or spirits.

The concept of astrology is another important body of knowledge that is integrated into Thai society and is deeply rooted in almost every way of life for Thai people.

LAVA BUN

pic : www.fnthaidairies.com/food-application




Astrology in Thai Society

Calculation sector

Prediction sector

Ritual sector

Arts sector



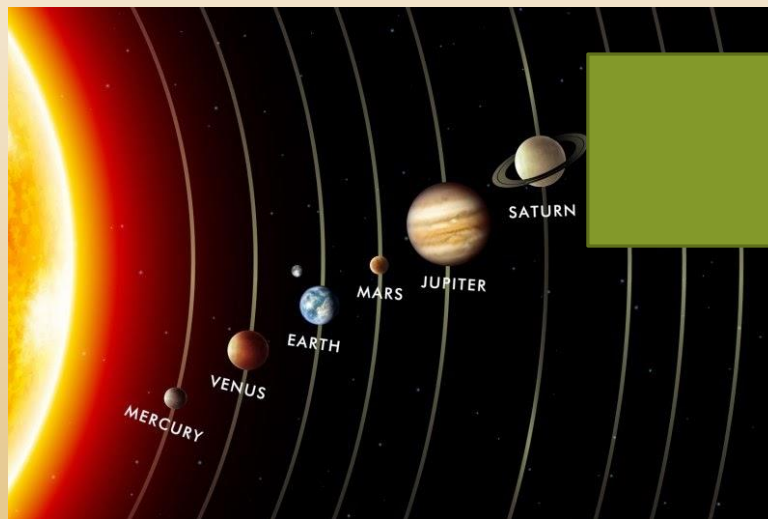
day names:
astrology calculations

How to name the day

SOLAR SYSTEM

The initial arrangement of the planets from the slowest to the fastest orbiting star is

- Saturn **30 years**
- Jupiter **12 years**
- Mars **1 year and a half**
- The Sun(Earth) **1 year**
- Venus **243 days**
- Mercury **88 days**
- and Mon **27 days**



(Photo :<http://nusitcom.blogspot.com/2015/05>)

represent by symbol number is 7-5-3-1-6-4-2

How to name the day

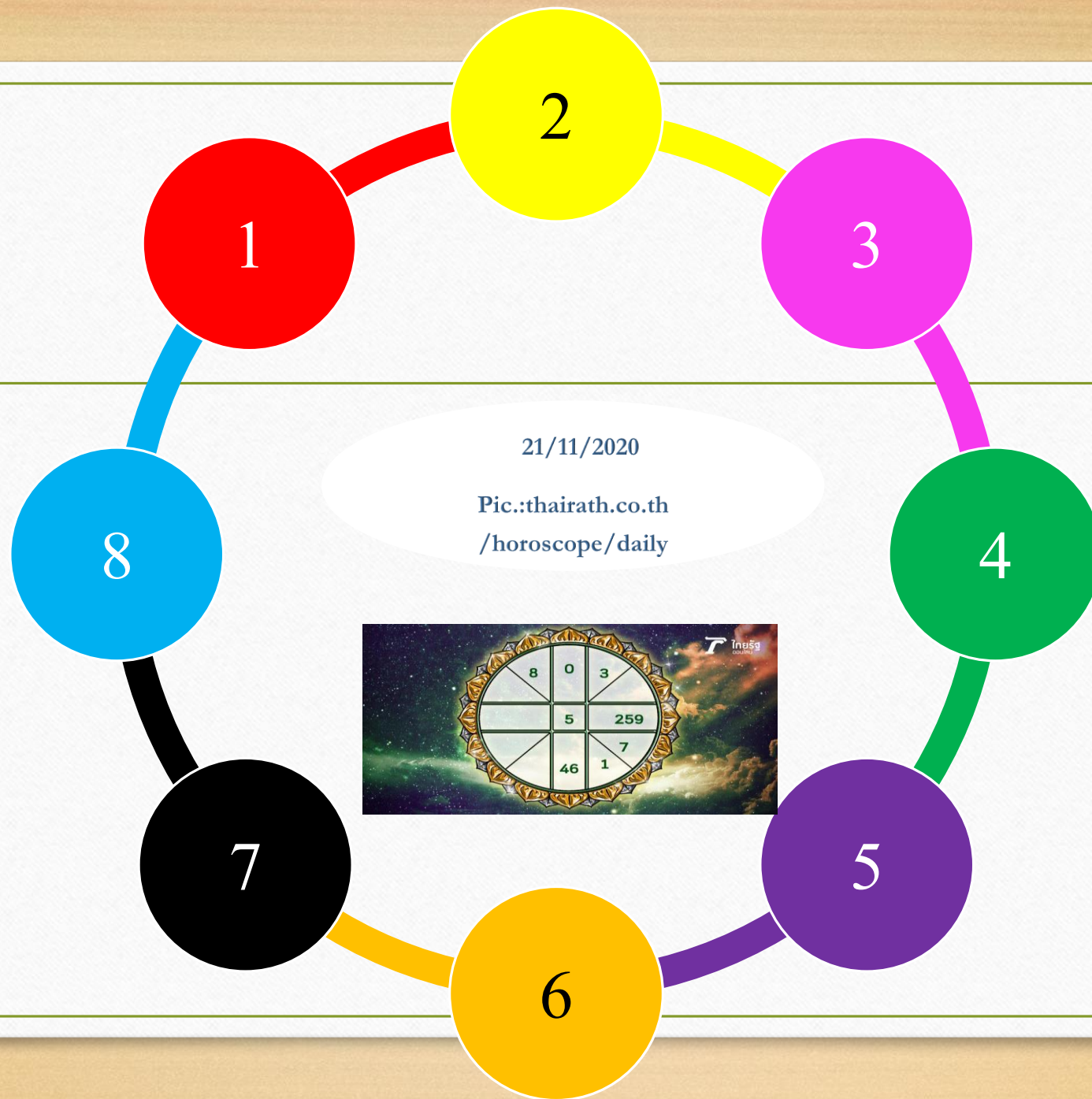
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
1	<u>Satu</u> rn	Jup iter	Ma rs	Su n	Ve nus	Me rcu ry	Mo on	Sat urn	Jup iter	Ma rs	Su n	Ve nus		Me rcu ry	Moo n	Satur n	Jupit er	Mars	Sun	Venu s	Merc ury	Moo n	Satur n	Jupit er	Mars
2	<u>Sun</u>	Ve nus	Me rcu ry	Mo on	Sat urn	Jup iter	Ma rs	Su n	Ve nus	Me rcu ry	Mo on	Sat urn		Jupi ter	Mars	Sun	Venu s	Merc ury	Moo n	Satur n	Jupit er	Mars	Sun	Venu s	Mer cury
3	<u>Moo</u> n	Sat urn	Jup iter	Ma rs	Su n	Ve nus	Me rcu ry	Mo on	Sat urn	Jup iter	Ma rs	Su n		Ven us	Merc ury	Moo n	Satur n	Jupit er	Mars	Sun	Venu s	Merc ury	Moo n	Satur n	Jupit er
4	<u>Mars</u>	Su n	Ve nus	Me rcu ry	Mo on	Sat urn	Jup iter	Ma rs	Su n	Ve nus	Me rcu ry	Mo on		Sat urn	Jupit er	Mars	Sun	Venu s	Merc ury	Moo n	Satur n	Jupit er	Mars	Sun	Ven us
5	<u>Merc</u> ury	Mo on	Sat urn	Jup iter	Ma rs	Su n	Ve nus	Me rcu ry	Mo on	Sat urn	Jup iter	Ma rs		Sun	Venu s	Merc ury	Moo n	Satur n	Jupit er	Mars	Sun	Venu s	Merc ury	Moo n	Satu rn
6	<u>Jupit</u> er	Ma rs	Su n	Ve nus	Me rcu ry	Mo on	Sat urn	Jup iter	Ma rs	Su n	Ve nus	Me rcu ry		Mo on	Satur n	Jupit er	Mars	Sun	Venu s	Merc ury	Moo n	Satur n	Jupit er	Mars	Sun
7	<u>Venu</u> s	Me rcu ry	Mo on	Sat urn	Jup iter	Ma rs	Su n	Ve nus	Me rcu ry	Mo on	Sat urn	Jup iter		Ma rs	Sun	Venu s	Merc ury	Moo n	Satur n	Jupit er	Mars	Sun	Venu s	Merc ury	Moo n

Thaksa or Thaksapakorn : Forecasting method

- Thaksa or Thaksapakorn is a basic nomenclature based on essential astrology.
- Thaksa refers to the eight planets with a specific sort order.
- The most of Thai people generally adhere to and practice it.
- Ancient astrologers and many texts have defined the term astrological advice.

Thaksa Symbols

- Color
- Alphabet
- Number
- Buddha statue
- Mantra Chanting
- Animal symbol
- And So on



Prediction/Prophecy



- ❖ พระอาทิตย์ เป็น บรืวาร
- ❖ พระจันทร เป็นอายุ
- ❖ พระอังคาร เป็นเดช
- ❖ พระพุธ เป็น ศรี
- ❖ พระเสาร์ เป็น มูลละ
- ❖ พระพฤหัสบดี เป็น อุตสาหะ
- ❖ พระราหู เป็น มนตรี
- ❖ พระศุกร เป็น กาลกิณี

- ❖ Sun as a family
- ❖ Monday is age
- ❖ Tuesday is power
- ❖ Wednesday is luck
- ❖ Saturday is property
- ❖ Thursday is diligence
- ❖ Rahu is a Helpers
- ❖ Friday is a misery

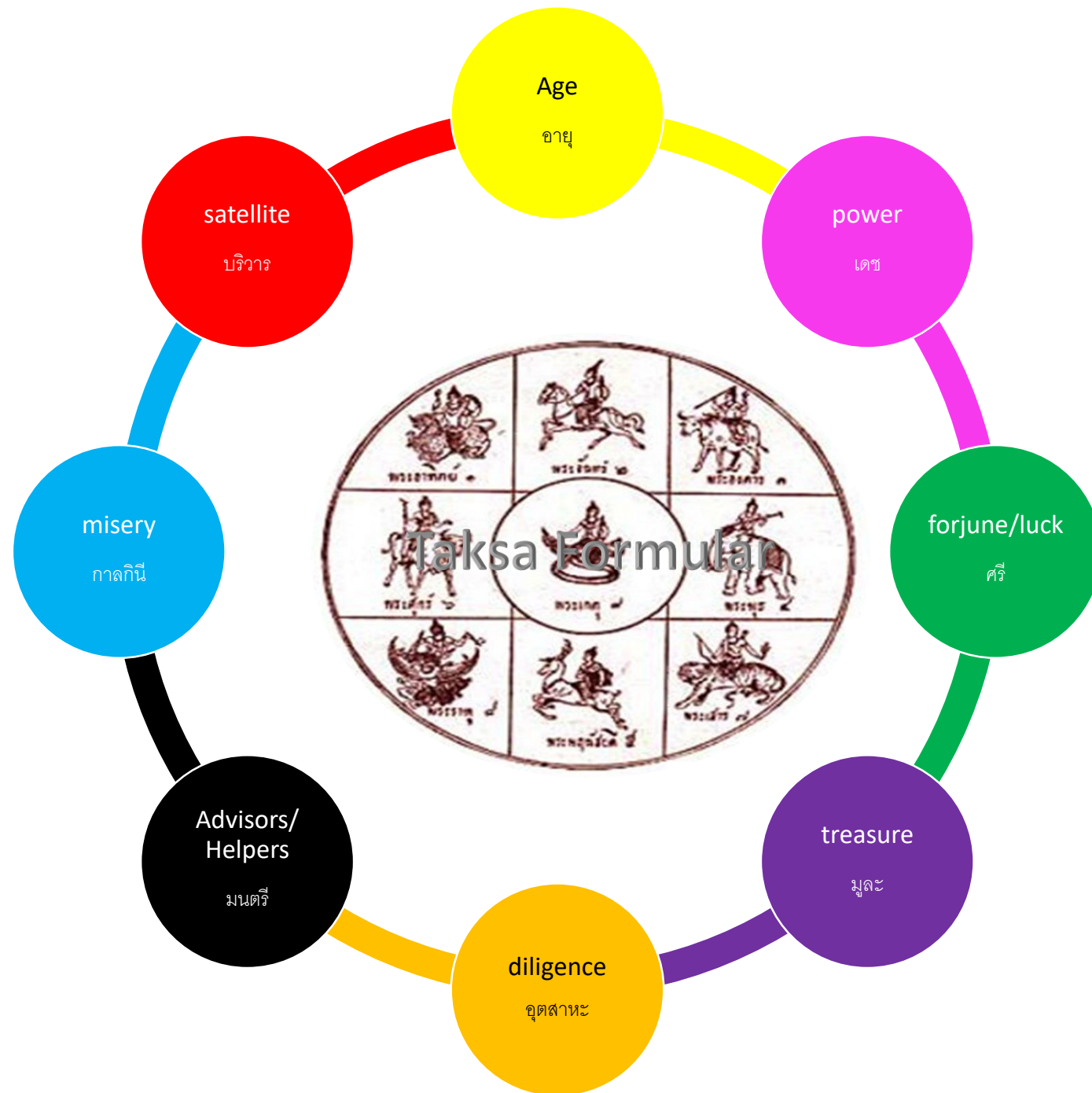


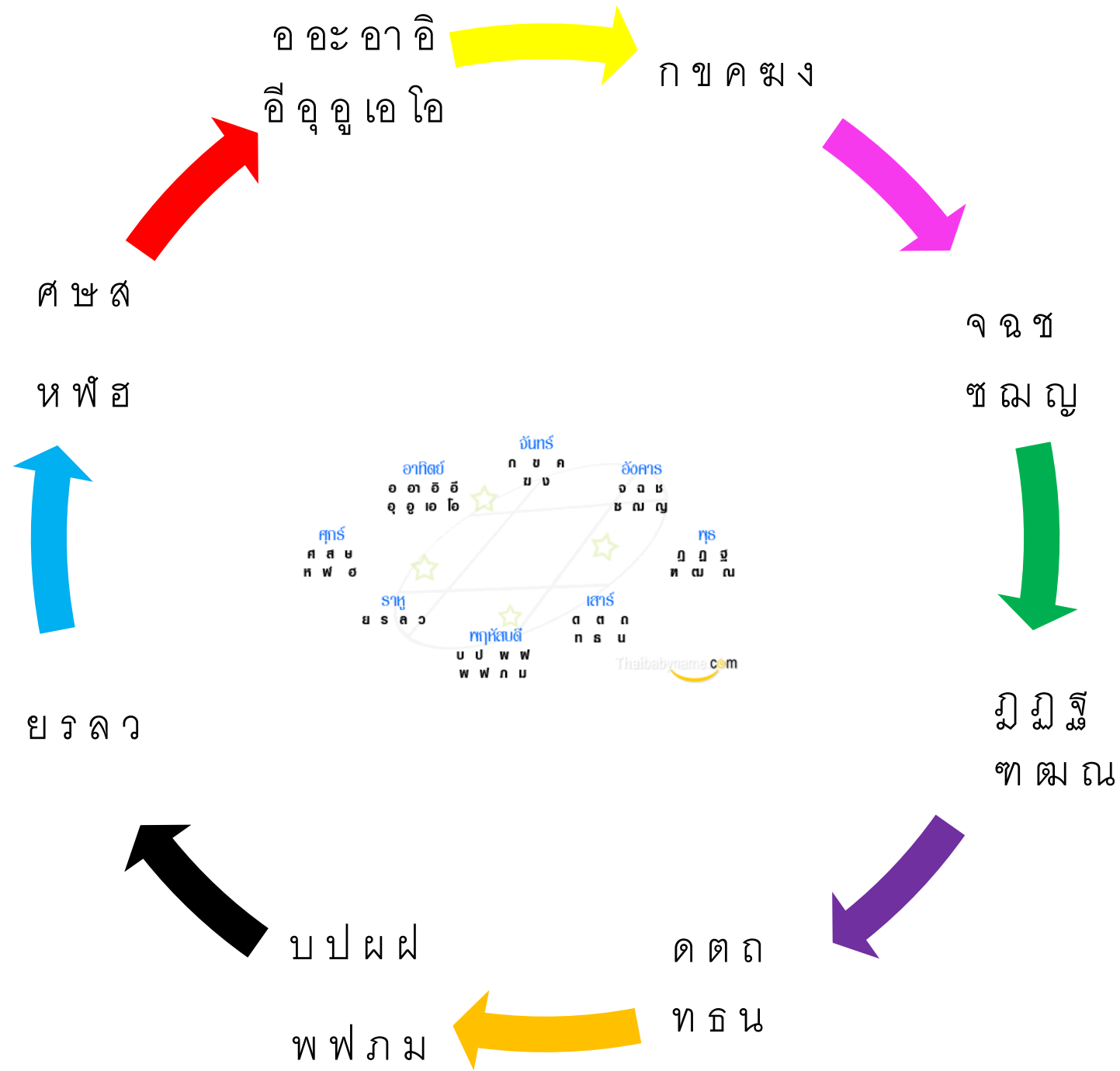
Astrological Symbols

It can be said that astrology is one of the cultural mechanisms that shapes the way of life of Thai people. The principles of astrology are integrated and imitated in almost every element of Thai people's lives, and the relationship between astrology and life can be broadly divided into three levels

1) Individual level

Refers to the use of astrology in everyday life or how it is used to determine individual attributes. Examples of these are found in the counting of days, months, and years according to the Thai astrological calendar system, and Thai naming principles.





Example of a person born on Monday

The misery alphabet is อ อะ อา อี อี้ อุ ู เอ โอ

- กนกกร
- กนกวรรณ
- วรรณพร
- ดวงพร

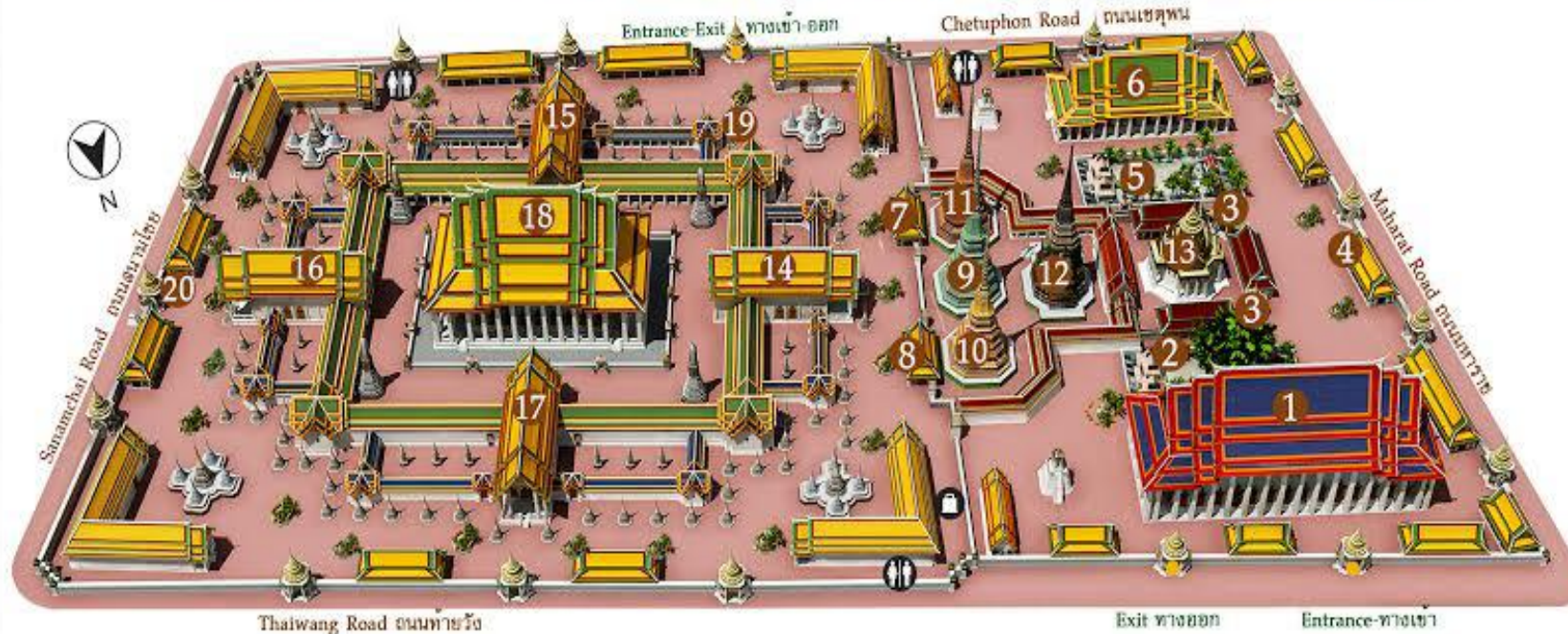


2) social level

Refers to the application of astrology according to certain goals or occasions of a group of people in society. This can be seen in buildings of religious sites and rituals such as the Navagraha Prayer Ceremony, Rahu Worship Ceremony, or Paritta Prayer Ceremony.

แผนผังวัดโพธิ์ • WAT PHO DIRECTORY

วัดพระเชตุพนวิมลมังคลาราม ราชวรมหาวิหาร • Wat Phra Chetuphon Vimolmangklararm Rajwaramahaviham



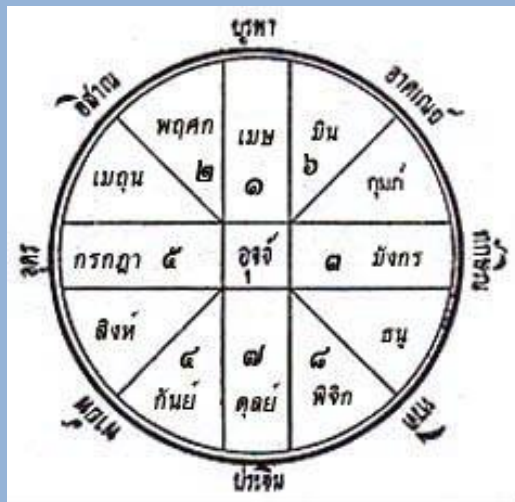
1. พระวิหารพระพุทโธไสยาส
Temple of the Reclining Buddha
2. สวนมิสากวัน
Suan Misakawan
- 3.ยักษ์วัดโพธิ์
Wat Pho's Giants
4. ศาลาราย (โรงเรียนวัดพระเชตุพน)
Sala Raj (Wat Pho Elementary School)
5. สวนจระเข้
The Crocodile Pond
6. ศาลาการเปรียญ
Sala Karnparien
7. ศาลาแม่ซื่อ
Sala Mae Sue

8. ศาลานวด
Sala Nuad
9. พระมหาเจดีย์ศรีสรรเพชญดาญาณ (รัชกาลที่ 1)
Phra Maha Chedi Srisanpethchadayan (King Rama I)
10. พระมหาเจดีย์ดิลกธรรมกรกนิธาน (รัชกาลที่ 2)
Phra Maha Chedi Dilokthama Kornkanithan (King Rama II)
11. พระมหาเจดีย์มุนีปัตตบิหาร (รัชกาลที่ 3)
Phra Maha Chedi Munibutborikarn (King Rama III)
12. พระมหาเจดีย์ทรงพระศรีสุริโยทัย (รัชกาลที่ 4)
Phra Maha Chedi Songphrasrisuriyothai (King Rama IV)
13. พระมณฑป (หอไตรจตุรมุข)
Phra Mondop (Hor Trijaturamuk)
14. พระวิหารทิศตะวันตก (พระนาคปรก)
Phra Vihara in the West (Phra Nagaprok)

15. พระวิหารทิศใต้ (พระปัญญาวัคคีย์)
Phra Vihara in the South (Phra Pancavaggiya)
 16. พระวิหารทิศตะวันออก (พระโลกนาถ)
Phra Vihara in the East (Phra Lokanad)
 17. พระวิหารทิศเหนือ (พระปาลิไลย)
Phra Vihara in the North (Phra Palilai)
 18. พระอุโบสถ
Phra Ubosot
 19. เขมอและฤๅษีดัดตน
Khao Mor and Hermit Statues
 20. นวดแผนไทย
Thai Traditional Massage
- ร้านจำหน่ายของที่ระลึก Souvenir Shop
- ห้องน้ำ Toilet



Direction



Pic.://www.madchima.org/

Kaundinya

At the east

Mahakassapa

At the southeast

Sariputta

At the south

Upali

At the southwest

Ananda

At the west

Kwampati

At the northwest

Maudgala

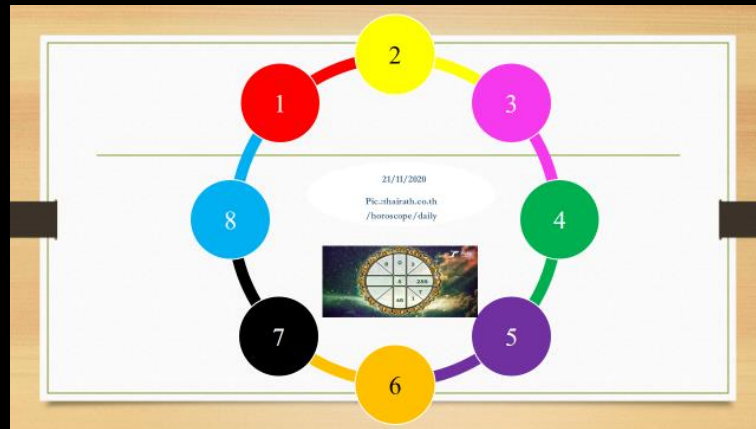
At the north


Rahula

At the northeast


COLORS OF THE NOPPHAKHRO

In the Thai astrological calendar system, offerings in 9 colors are prepared to symbolize all the nine dieties of the Noppakhro.





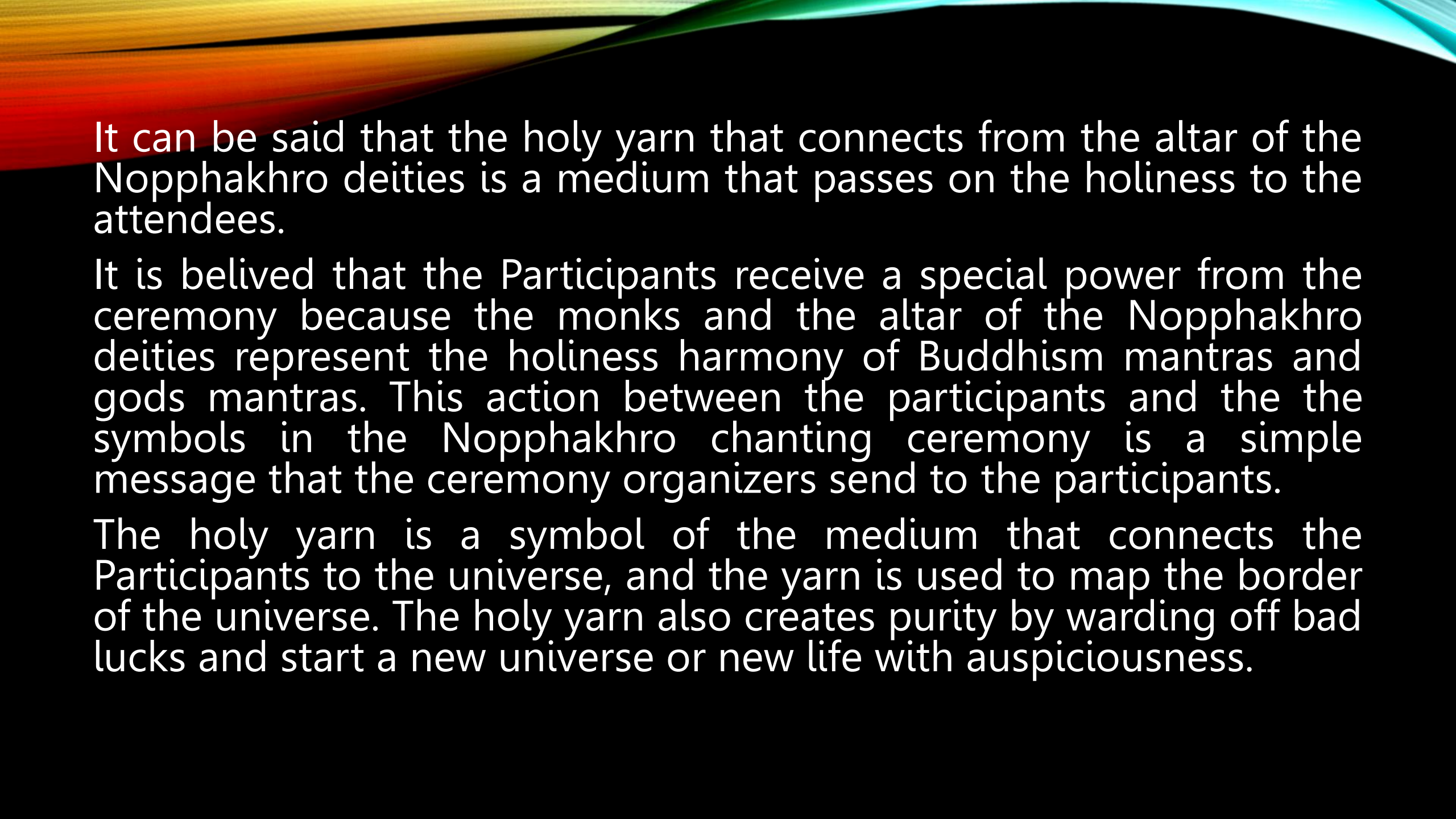
Surya (Sun)	Red candles and flowers
Chandra (Moon)	Yellow or white candles and flowers
Mangala (Mars)	Pink candles and flowers
Budha (Mercury)	Green candles and flowers
Shani (Saturn)	Purple candles and flowers
Guru (Jupiter)	Orange candles and flowers
Rahu	Black candles and flowers
Shukra (Venus)	Blue candles and flowers
Ketu	Goldern candles and flowers



Considering the use of the colors symbolically to represent the nine dieties of the Noppakhro, we can see that colors are connected to basic feelings and emotions of human beings. That is to say, in a period of a human's life, there must be different feelings influenced by the outer world. All the nine colors represent feelings in different situations at a certain period of time. Thus, symbolically using all the nine colors that represent humans' feelings makes the Noppakhro chanters feel good because they have released the imbalanced thoughts and feelings through the use of nine colors in the ceremony.

TYING THE HOLY YARN TO THE HEAD: A SYMBOL OF CONNECTING THE POWER OF THE NOPPHAKHRO DEITIES TO THE ATTENDEES





It can be said that the holy yarn that connects from the altar of the Noppakhro deities is a medium that passes on the holiness to the attendees.

It is believed that the Participants receive a special power from the ceremony because the monks and the altar of the Noppakhro deities represent the holiness harmony of Buddhism mantras and gods mantras. This action between the participants and the symbols in the Noppakhro chanting ceremony is a simple message that the ceremony organizers send to the participants.

The holy yarn is a symbol of the medium that connects the Participants to the universe, and the yarn is used to map the border of the universe. The holy yarn also creates purity by warding off bad lucks and start a new universe or new life with auspiciousness.



WHITE ATTIRE: A SYMBOL OF TRANSITION AND PURITY

Especially in Thai society, wearing white represents auspiciousness and purity.

The color of attires is involved in almost every ceremony concerning transitions and auspiciousness such as

- white attire of Naga (a person who is about to become a monk),

- white attires when observing the Eight Precepts and white attires on Buddhist holidays.

THE FACTOR OF NAVAGRAHA CEREMONY

- ❖ The factor of increasing mental security
- ❖ The factor of reflecting society: the dynamic of invented tradition in the backdrop of the capitalist society

Rahu Worship Ceremony

- Thai belief concerning Rahu is derived from both Hinduism and Buddhism.
 - In Hinduism, Rahu is part of the Kurma-Avatar story, the myth of the churning elixir for immortality, as an important character to explain solar and lunar eclipses.
 - In Buddhism, the character of Rahu is related to cosmology together with a story of Asurindrahu going to pay respect to the Buddha.

the Rahu symbol in traditional Thai art

- In traditional Thai art, the Rahu symbol is portrayed as his face swallowing the sun or the moon.
- This kind of Rahu symbol is found on lacquerware, decorated glass, or sculptures in Buddhist temples and is often seen on the gable or the upper part of the entrance gate to a chapel (uposot) or pagoda. Such appearances of the Rahu symbol is related to the belief that Rahu has a protective function.

Research Findings

- **1.Factors in the Transmission of Rahu Symbol in Thai Art**
 - 1.1 Buddhist space as the center of the universe**
 - 1.2 The Worship of the Next Buddha**



Factors in the Creation of New Rahu Symbol in Thai Art

Popular Buddhism and Capitalism



วัดท่าอิฐ ชลบุรี



วัดเจ้าอาม กรุงเทพฯ



The factor of Rahu as the Universal Symbol in Thai Society

To use of Rahu to explain social circumstances based on Thai social belief in astrology was used as a stratagem to criticize the inadequate performance of the government. Hence, the symbol of Rahu implied criticism of the government through belief in astrology and conveyed the meaning to the readers. The government could not take action against the magazine and also fully understood the implications of the artworks.



Hi monkey year Hi Rahu



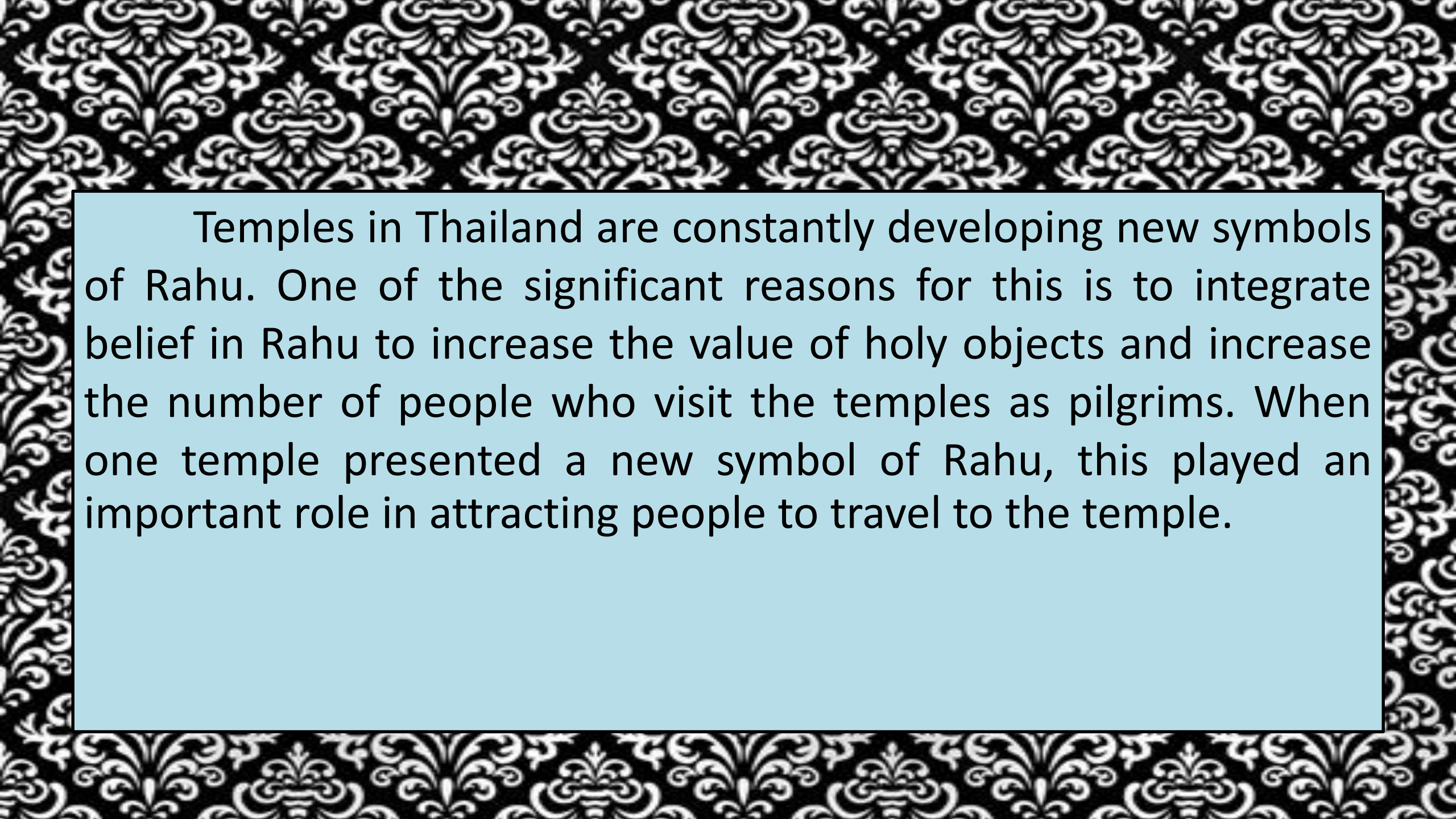


**Creating new meanings of the symbol of Rahu in
current Thai society**

Rahu: The symbol of warding off bad luck

Rahu: The symbol of fortune

Rahu: The symbol of transition and change



Temples in Thailand are constantly developing new symbols of Rahu. One of the significant reasons for this is to integrate belief in Rahu to increase the value of holy objects and increase the number of people who visit the temples as pilgrims. When one temple presented a new symbol of Rahu, this played an important role in attracting people to travel to the temple.

the integration of the belief in Rahu to add value to Thai society was very interesting. Field research data indicated clearly that the creation of the symbol of Rahu in art was originally integration of astrological beliefs, rites and Buddhist commercials.

The increasing production of the symbol of Rahu with higher economic value was an indication of the demand for Rahu by people in society and competition among suppliers to make Rahu products.

Although the symbol of Rahu was very popular, the designers also produced other symbols of sacred objects as mainstream art which were mostly constructed in the temple. Rahu could not survive individually and Rahu art required symbolism of the main belief which implied the role of Rahu as the secondary belief.

However, this portrayal of Rahu as a symbol of secondary belief was successful because it encouraged belief in Rahu to remain secretly in Brahmanism and Buddhism harmoniously with belief in spiritual and Chinese culture.

Furthermore, the emergence of the symbol of Rahu has survived as a tool for measuring anxiety and difficulty of people in society through the original meaning of misfortune.

ASTROLOGY SYMBOLS REPRESENT ILLNESS/DISEASE



CASE STUDY : DOCTOR PRASAD IN LOPBURI PROVINCE



SYMPTOMS OF THE DISEASE

Prasad explain that “Traditional medicine believes that the illness of each person As a result of the imbalance of elements (soil, water, wind, and fire) in the body. to analyze the illness , The doctor must have astrological knowledge to calculate the defects of each element according to the age, season, and various misfortunes.

Symptoms of the disease occurring each day or month, which are related to the birth date of the patient.”

MO THAM APPROACH OF KHON KAEN PROVINCE



- Figure in central point is the representative of those who want to treatment and exorcise
- Krathong and colors are a representative of the 9 planet gods (Navagrah gods) In the universe according to astrological concepts
- The shaman represents the contact with the the 9 planet gods by magic

**USING OF NAVAGRAH GODS
SYMBOLS IN THE TREATMENT OF
CURRENT DISEASES :
CEREMONY TO RELIEVE THE MENTAL
SUFFERING**

USING OF THE SACRED SYMBOL OF THE PRESENT : SPIRITUAL HEALING CEREMONY.

- **At present, the traditional doctor tries to explain the ritual or the symbol of healing to look more rational (In order not to be regarded as ignorant), there are still people who still go to the temple because they do not believe in modern medicine**
- **They will go to treat by monks or lay people who look like a sacred man (Alternative medicine).**
- **At present, Alternative medicine must be registered. The licensee for registration is trying to cut the sacred part. Therefore, the treatment of unlicensed doctors is often secretly done**

THE RITUALIST ALSO USE ASTROLOGICAL SYMBOLS TO CREATE ENCOURAGEMENT.

In this ritual, **The Ritualist (Monks)** use magic that is related to astrology on cosmology, Navagrah Gods (the 9 gods of the planets) for encouragement of Football Club in England.

Flags, colors and the ceremonial altar are The symbols that representing Navagrah Gods (Angel of the planets) .

The ceremony that use supernatural power along with astrology which once existed as a part of medical treatment is now used in the enchantment of charm or to give good luck to sport team as a mean to rally the team in competition.



Magic of
encouragement for
Football Club in
England

INVITE MONKS FROM THAILAND TO PERFORM THE CEREMONY



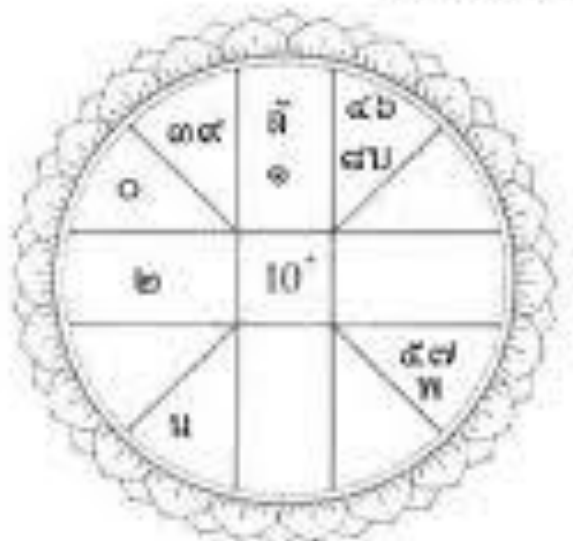


3) NATIONAL LEVEL

Refers to the use of astrology to determine national attributes such as overseeing the nation's future and providing socio-economic forecasts or even political milestones.

HOROSCOPE ASTROLOGY OF BANGKOK

ดวงเมือง Bangkok



รัชกาลที่ ๑

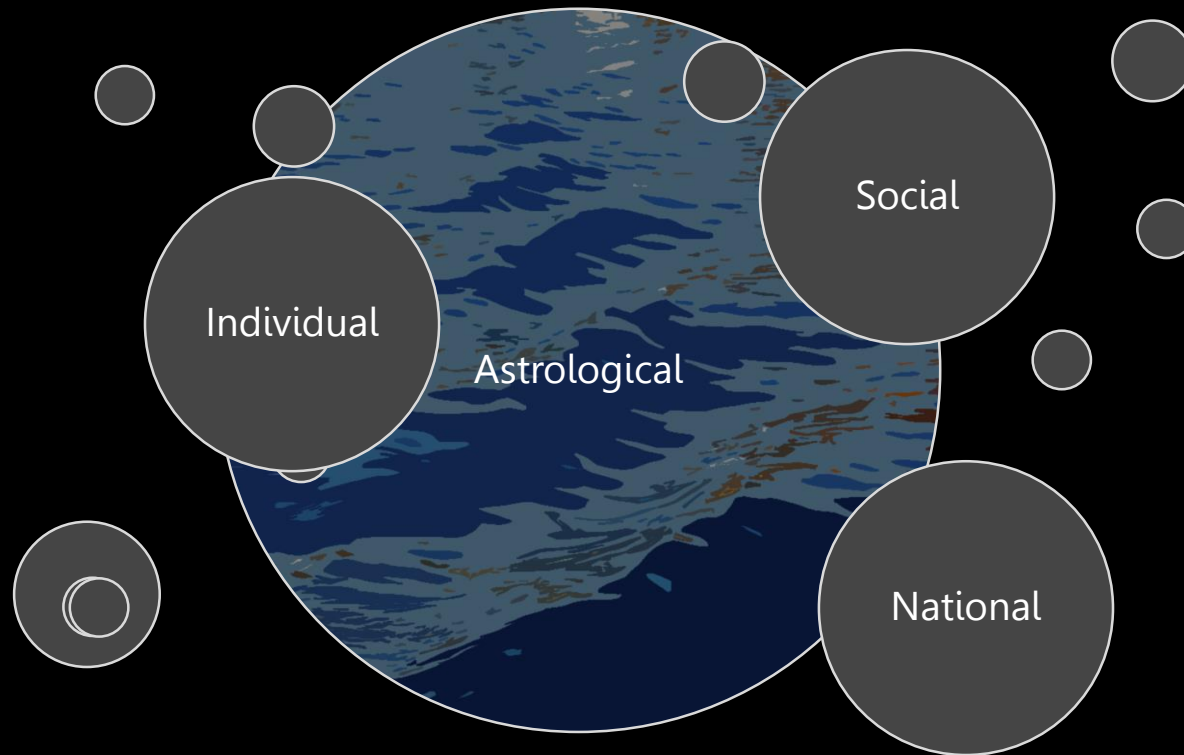
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Disaster



ASTROLOGICAL SYMBOLS





CONCLUDE

With this close relationship between astrology and Thai people in daily life, society, and culture, it can be said that astrology is like condiments in the recipe that creates Thai identity.

Therefore, understanding the astrological symbol system is better understand the way of life of Thai people from another perspective.

**SADA SOTTI BHAVANTU VO.
THANK YOU**

ขอบคุณครับ

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