

Subject: AGREEN Report for the Month of March 2021
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Title: Baki: The Fundamental Ifugao Theism



Hongan di Page. A thanksgiving harvest ritual performed at the Nagacadan Rice Terraces to express gratitude to the gods for the abundant harvest. It also prays for more abundance in the next harvest season.

The traditional Ifugao theism is animistic where the forces of nature and the ancestral spirits influences the lives and beliefs of the Ifugao people. There are 7,000 legion of entities that the Ifugao reveres that compose of gods, goddesses, deities, nature spirits, fairies, and many more unseen forces. The Ifugao universe is subdivided into five (5) regions namely the *Kabunyan* (Skyworld), *Dalom* (Underworld), *Lagud* (Downstream Region), *Daya* (Upstream Region), and *Pugao* (Earth Region). The unseen forces dwells in the four (4) regions except for *Pugao* region where human settlements are found. Despite the introduction and practice of Christianity in Ifugao, the strong belief system of its people continues to bind them through the intergenerational passage and practice of oral and heritage traditions.



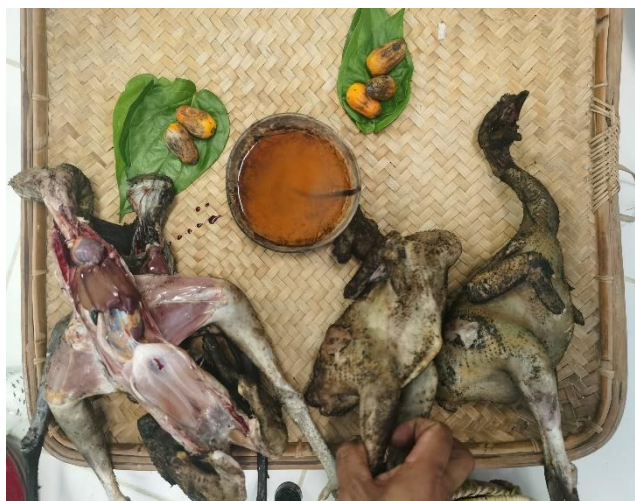
Baki or the Ifugao ritual and ceremonial prayer, performed by a *mumbaki* (Ifugao ritual specialist) or a group of *mumbaki*, is the connecting medium of the Ifugaos to the ancestral spirits and the unseen forces to beseech prayers for good harvest, health, prosperity, and blessings. The *baki* can be construed into five (5) categories basing from the elements of the ritual such as the intention of the ritual, processes, and tools being used.

Ifugao rituals can be categorized by the following:

Categories	Associated Rituals	Translation
1. Stages of Life	konong; kulibag; gutud; oban; inagumo; dawdawak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-birth - For protection, safe delivery, ease labor pain, gain favor from ancestral spirits and gods
	tihlop; bagor/bagol; paad; lahun; gamugamun; tikom; among; folay; pudong; eheb; hapat; inlawit; tikleb; agamid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birth - For good health and appropriate behavior, guidance, healing, drive bad spirits, thanksgiving, child's dedication
	Kolot; bumalihung	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childhood - Ceremonial first haircut for a child, guidance and blessing
	Moma; imbango; halud; goguie; kaihing; mambili; pugog; momon	<p>Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marriage proposal; courtship, marriage engagement, close family ties
	Intanig; banga-bangad; bubun; fong-fong; chalong; Pahang; timbal; habeng; padit; bahliw	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marriage - Formal marriage; thanksgiving; good fortune; wedding celebration
	Yabyab; hongga	<p>Aging</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Healing, thanksgiving, blessing
	Mun-ontad; otong; gamugamun; bolang; bohwat; pktang; agamid; alim; kibkiblu; hagad; haligunup; bunnig; dangli; dah-na; dah-lop; bah-wat; katlu; balon; habuhab; leben; hangbo;lawit; am-am; palad; kolili; batbat; bogwa; panikloban; mumfu-a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Death • Transfer of the dead, wake, mourning, for spirit guidance, acceptance of spirits by the gods, burial; exhumation and bone cleaning
2. Agriculture (Rice Terracing)	Hongga; loh-ah; ulpi; hagophop; alup; hipngat; botok; bolnat; panga; lupeng; iguang; in-apoy; piingil; hab-ok; pekde; ani; punnuk; huwah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rice sowing, planting and thanksgiving • Field cleaning • Harvest abundance • Harvest • End of harvest
3. Health and Wellbeing	Chinopchop; inyohag; tobang; inlawit; hongga; konong; lawit; tagibel; apah; tinongol; pakidal-dalanan; pinakla; waddanom;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healing • Strength and good health • Work and travel
4. Politics	Hidit; hinalupe; madmad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconciliation
5. House Construction	Hogop; hongga; balog; agamid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • House blessing - Thanksgiving

The Ifugao Team facilitated a documentation of a welfare ritual called “*pakidal-dalanan*”. It is a ritual for health, protection and wellbeing for people who are traveling and working outside their villages. This ritual required the offering of six (6) native chickens; rice wine; ritual paraphernalia such as winnowing basket, rice, betel nut, and other wooden containers. It was also done to pray for safety amid the pandemic incidence. The ritual performed covered the following five (5) mysteries/segments that also represents the unseen forces that the mumbaki beseeched to:

Ritual Segments	Translation	Description
1. Munkontad	Messenger	This segment invokes the unseen force/s as the messenger selected by the mumbaki to travel from its dwelling place to the ritual site to listen to the intent of the ritual.
2. Tinungul	Ancestral spirits	This segment prays for the ancestral spirits to intervene in sending the prayer to the higher being.
3. Manah-haut	Deceiver	This segment casts the deceiver gods and bad forces to be saturated in the midst of the ritual and the fortune of the person/people hosting the ritual.
4. Gah-idon	Prayer	This segment prays for the intent of the ritual that include safety during travel; health; safety from accidents, wounds, snake bites; positive mindset; forgiveness to foes; good working management; dispelling of ill will and intentions among the ritual host/s among others.
5. Maknongan	Ifugao god	This segment prays to the gods for the acceptance of the intent and wish for protection and continues blessings. It also serves as thanksgiving to the gods for the good fortune.



The respect of the indigenous communities to their land is evident in how they personify the landscape, performing rituals, and rites before activities are done. For instance, the "*hongan di page*" or agricultural cycle ritual is a series of rituals done before any of the rice culture tasks are done, to appease the gods. During land preparation, a ritual is performed to placate gods who might be disturbed. Before a stone wall is constructed, rituals are completed to protect the workers from accidents. After the stone walls are in place, rituals are done in thanksgiving and to request the permanence of the structure. Before seedbeds are prepared, this is announced to the gods. A ritual is also performed to ensure that the seedlings will sprout and grow. Thus, it continues until harvest, and even before storing the harvested grains. It is said that Ifugaos believe that many endemic trees, such as *Ficus* spp. are associated with spirits, so they conserved them. Through these indigenous practices of personifying nature, one could see the intimate relationship of nature and culture in the rice terrace landscape. Ifugao farmers know the relationship between forest and rice field cultivation; thus, they ensure intensive indigenous practices on watershed protection.

Despite the strong practice and acculturation of Christianity in Ifugao, these belief systems are still relevant as it conforms in the modern norms. The rituals and associated traditional practices preserve the progressive values of the people that include strong family ties, filial piety, the intergenerational stewardship of the rice terraces system, respect of nature, good will and promotion of peace and prosperity.

As the World Heritage Committee has recognized it, the Ifugao is a community producing a landscape based on the sustainable use of natural resources for generations, such that one (culture) is nothing without the other (nature). ##