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Meaning of Symbols in the Heavenly-Dao Ritual of the CAO DAI Religion in Tay Ninh Holy See

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Abstract

Ritual is a crucial decisive component of religion's existence. Religious ritual generally manifests through the use of a system of symbols. In Cao Dai religion's ritual, these symbols integrated themselves into a matrix and are manifested through rites, gestures, manners, behaviors, and sounds... which dignitaries and adepts conducted in the process of ritual. From the perspectives of anthropological

research theories and methods, I will decode symbols of Cao Dai religion's Heavenly-dao (Thiên đạo) ritual and thus it clarifies these symbols' sacred meanings which in turn, heralds the doctrine, enhances social solidarity, reproduces and consolidates the faith of Cao Dai Tay Ninh Holy See's adepts.

Keywords: Religion, Symbol, Caodai, Ritual

1. Introduction

When studying a complete religion, it is essential to delve into the understanding of its rituals. This is because rituals constitute a fundamental aspect in the formation, maintenance, and development of a religion. Each distinct religion possesses its own unique set of rituals that symbolize and convey doctrinal meanings throughout their enactment and through various symbols. Cao Dai (officially known as Dai Dao Tam Ky Pho Do) is an indigenous religion that originated in the southern region of Vietnam around the early 20th century, during a time when the contemporary society was facing various challenges in terms of economy, politics, society, and ideology. As a result, upon its inception, this religion quickly attracted a large number of local people to participate. Throughout its formation and development, Cao Dai has branched out into different sects. The Holy See of Caodaism in Tay Ninh is a religious organization that holds the majority in terms of the number of followers. It operates on a large religious territory and is considered the main center of the Caodaist faith. According to statistics from the Church, as of December 2022, the Holy See of Caodaism in Tay Ninh has approximately close to 4 million followers with 566 temples both within and outside the country.

Doctrine, laws, and rituals of the Caodaism religion have been formed through creative synthesis, incorporating various elements from pre-existing major religions (Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, Christianity...) and some folk beliefs to create distinctive features. Rituals play a crucial role in the foundation of Caodaism, serving as one of the main means to convey doctrines to its followers. The rituals of Caodaism can be broadly divided into two categories: Heavenly-dao (representing the relationship between humans and divine beings) and Earthly-dao (symbolizing the cycle of human life). All of these rituals are strictly regulated by the Holy See, including the timing, location, scale, and ceremonial procedures, which carry symbolic significance.

The ritual of the Heavenly-dao is regularly performed at temples with profound meanings. The symbols in the practice play an important role and have significant functions for the spirit and emotions of the followers. They represent reverence and the harmony between humans and divine beings. Therefore, the study on the "*Meaning of Symbols in the Heavenly-dao ritual of the Cao Dai Religion in Tay Ninh Holy See*" will contribute to a better understanding of Cao Dai religious doctrine and the religious beliefs of its followers.

To conduct this research, we used participant observation method to describe the procession of the ritual and its symbols. Additionally, we employed a synthesis of literature and conducted in-depth interviews with certain officials and devotees participating in the ritual to decipher the meanings of the symbols and their functions based on symbolic anthropology and functional theory.

2. Results

2.1 Process of Thien Dao ritual

The Celestial Way ritual of the Cao Dai Tay Ninh Holy See is understood as ceremonies performed to express the devotion and reverence of the followers towards the divine beings on significant days throughout the year. These rituals take place at the Holy Temple, Bao An Tu within the inner area of the Holy See, as well as at the Holy Shrines and Mother Buddha Shrine in local branches. However, only the rituals held at the Holy Temple have all the necessary elements and conditions for the ceremonial practice.

Typically, there are two forms of organization for the Celestial Way ritual at the Holy Temple: The Grand Ceremony (Dai Dan) and the Small Ceremony (Tieu Dan). To understand the meaning of the symbols in the Celestial Way ritual, it is necessary to observe and participate in the Grand Ceremony, especially during the Great Festival of Divine Eminence (on the 9th day of the 1st lunar month), where all the essential ritual elements are present, enabling clear identification and interpretation of the symbols and their functions.

Based on the research materials from the Hanh Duong course compiled by the Cao Dai Tay Ninh Holy See in 1972 (internal circulation), as well as the process of observing and participating in the Great Festival of Divine Eminence at the Holy Temple, we tentatively divide the procession of this ritual as follows:

Before the ceremony takes place, there is a preparation phase that can last for a relatively long period of time. From an early stage, the relevant departments of the Religious Institute have to carry out preparations such as developing a detailed program, organizing personnel to serve the ceremony, arranging fruit offerings, preparing ritual texts, sound, lighting, etc. Everything must be arranged tightly, systematically, and with minimal errors. During the 30-minute preparation period before the ceremony, all service departments and appointed officials must be in their designated positions. Different officials, positions, and believers start to gather, dressed solemnly as required, standing in orderly lines on both sides of the Holy Shrine (males on the left, females on the right) from higher ranks to lower ranks in order to prepare for the worship. Due to limited capacity inside the Holy Shrine, many believers who cannot enter will be arranged in front of the entrance and on both sides of the Holy Shrine.

At exactly midnight, the ritual of worship for the Great Ceremony of the Divine Lord begins. Everyone listens to the recitation and the sound of drums from the Thunderous Sound Ancient Tower (*Ke Trong*), followed by the recitation and the sound of bells from the White Jade Central Tower (*Ke Chuong*). While the bells are still ringing, a dignitary carrying a flag leads the procession of dignitaries, officials, and devotees inside. They divide into two rows, entering the Sacred Temple from bottom to top, then circling around the Heavenly Path to the other side, before descending again and finally moving back up to their designated positions according to their ranks (*Hoan Dan*). Afterward, the Chief Coordinator enters the position at the table in the Heavenly Path called the Internal Ritual Table, while the Deputy Coordinator takes the table in the External Ritual position (*Noi nghi, Ngoai nghi tuu vi*). A dignitary strikes the bell three times, and everyone assumes their positions, with their eyes directed towards the main ceremonial hall (*Thien phong di ha cac tu ky vi*). Once everyone is settled, a

dignitary from the Holy Court Music Department signals the start of the orchestra playing the Tapping Drum and performing a medley of seven prescribed musical pieces (*Nhac tau Huan thien*). As the music reaches its penultimate piece, a designated official ascends the Hiệp Thiên Tower to perform the reverse cleansing of the ritual offerings. A professor affiliated with the Ngọc sect carries a red tray containing the ritual offerings, accompanied by three pairs of yellow, green, and red lantern-holding priests known as the Three-Religion Lanterns, making their way down to the preparation area for the ceremony (*Chinh sat cung pham*). When the incense offering is ready to be presented, the prepared Priests perform the preliminary rituals (*Nghe huong an tien*), and the serving official strikes the bell three times. Everyone performs three prostrations before kneeling down, while other dignitaries, officials, and devotees assume a sitting position in equal alignment (*Giai quy*).

While everyone remained in their stable positions, the distinguished official serving as a ritualist presented incense to the Assistant Master kneeling at the Outer Sanctuary, holding three sticks of incense and then handing them to the Ritualist (*Phan huong*). The Ritualist raised both hands in a circular motion to the level of the face, holding a small stand with incense and sandalwood placed on it, moving with the distinctive mannerisms of the Cao Dai religion from the Outer Sanctuary to the Inner Sanctuary accompanied by the sound of drums and music (*Dien huong*). The bell was struck, and everyone recited scripture¹ and recited prayers (*Nguyen huong*). Afterward, the official in the Inner Sanctuary raised the incense to the forehead with both hands, the music started playing, and from the Nghinh Phong Tower² of the Holy Temple, a female Worshiper³ chanted the Prayer of Incense⁴ (*Thanh kinh tung Niem huong chu*). At the conclusion of the chant, the ritualist carrying the incense placed it on the incense tray (*Thuong huong*), and everyone bowed three times, nodding four times during each bow (*Cuc cung bai*). The female Worshiper continued by reciting the Opening Scripture⁵ (*Thanh kinh tung Khai kinh chu*). When the female Worshiper finished her chant, the male Worshiper from the Eight Trigrams Tower recited the Jade Emperor Scripture⁶ (*Thanh kinh tung Ngọc Hoàng kinh*), and everyone bowed three times, nodding four times during each bow (*Cuc cung bai*). The male Worshiper then sequentially recited Buddhist Heart Sutra⁷, Taoist Heart Sutra⁸, and Sainly Heart Sutra⁹.

¹ Placing palms together and touching the forehead while reciting "nam mô Phật" (homage to the Buddha), moving to the left while reciting "nam mô Pháp" (homage to the Dharma), and moving to the right while reciting "nam mô Tăng" (homage to the Sangha).

² The central stand in the Holy Temple welcomes the officials into the ranks of the Saints.

³ The children of believers are trained to read scriptures.

⁴ Presentation of the scripture offering.

⁵ Opening scripture before reciting the scriptures praising virtuous deeds.

⁶ Scripture praising the virtuous deeds of the Jade Emperor.

⁷ Scripture praising the virtuous deeds of the Supreme Lord Buddha.

⁸ Scripture praising the virtuous deeds of the Ancestors of the Supreme Way.

⁹ Scripture praising the virtuous deeds of Confucius the Saint.

After each chant, everyone bowed three times, nodding three times during each bow (*Cuc cung bai*).

Finishing the reading part of the scriptures praising the merits of the sacred beings, we proceed to the offering of the Triple Jewel, which consists of three items: Fruits, wine, and tea. The ritualists and the Jade Sect priest carry the tray containing the Triple Jewel into the Outer Hall (*Cung hien Tien hoa*). The ritualist kneels down while the Assistant Priest in the Outer Hall arranges the fruits neatly (*Chinh Tien Hoa*). The ritualist holds their hands in a circular manner in front of their face, with a pedestal on which the offering fruits are placed. They step forward in a characteristic manner from the Outer Hall to the Inner Hall, accompanied by the beat of drums and harmonious music sung in a poetic voice¹⁰ by a female minister (*Dien Tien Hoa*). Upon arrival, the ritualist kneels down, and the Chief Jade Assistant Priest invites them to step onto the platform where the Patriarch's throne¹¹ is located. Facing outward, the ritualist presents the flowers for prayer and then returns to their original position. The ritualist stands up and leaves the Inner Hall to return to the Outer Hall, while an official brings the vase of flowers and the plate of fruits to place them on the altar (*Thuong Tien Hoa*). Everyone bows once and nods four times (*Cuc cung bai*). After the flower offering comes the offering of wine and tea, with the same sequence as described above: *Cung hien Tien Tuu/Tien Tra, Chuoc tuu/Diem Tra, Dien Tien tuu/Tien Tra, Thuong Tien tuu/Tien Tra, Cuc Cung bai*.

Following the offering of the Triple Jewel is the *Thuong So* part, meaning presenting the written prayers to the sacred beings for supplication. A high-ranking official of the Holy Church sits in their designated position and moves to kneel in the Inner Hall, accompanied by another high-ranking official to assist with reading the prayers (*So van thuong tau*). The assisting official holds the written prayers with both hands for prayer and then hands them to the official in charge of reading the prayers (*Thanh doc so van*). After finishing the reading, the high-ranking official burns the written prayers, and the ritualist returns to their place (*Cung phan So van*). The female minister recites the Ngu Nguyen prayer (*Thanh tam tung Ngu Nguyen*) and then everyone continues by bowing three times, four nods per bow (*Cuc Cung bai*). All personnel return to their original positions. In some ceremonies, a high-ranking official of the Holy Church will step onto the pulpit to deliver a sermon. When the sermon is finished, the sound of the drum resounds, and everyone listens as the bell rings. They stand up, form three lines, turn their faces towards the Union Celestial Tower, form one line, and then spread out to both sides, listening attentively to the sound of the bell from the rear stage. After that, they listen to three more bell tolls, forming one line. The drum sounds for a while and then stops completely. The officials, clergy, and believers begin to exit in the same order as when they entered, marking the end of the ceremony.

2.2 The meaning of symbols in Thien Dao rituals

Icon is a sign, image, living being or object that represents an abstract concept. It is a specific representation of an

object or something (Doan Van Chuc, 1997, p.78)^[1]. Icon can also be understood as anything that can be considered as a visual symbol of an object that cannot be grasped by the senses or evokes an association (Marguerite-Marie Thiollier, 2001, p.593).

Anthropologist Clifford Geertz believes that culture is expressed through symbols and communal activities. It has an impact on people's perception and thinking about the world because symbols serve as means to convey meaning (R. Jon Mcgee & Richard L. Warms, 2010, p.671)^[7]. Therefore, in order to understand a culture or religion, we need to decipher the meaning of the symbols within that culture or religion. Symbols in the Dai Le Duc Chi Ton ritual of Caodaism include sounds, objects, phenomena, gestures, postures... each ceremonial detail is a symbol. However, within the scope of this article, we will only analyze some of the most fundamental symbols, organized according to the stages of the ritual, which have significant emotional and spiritual effects on the participants to clarify their meaning.

* *Ke Trong and Ke Chuong*

According to the Caodaism Dictionary, "Ke" is a short or long poem used to summarize a sermon or scripture, teach disciples, or offer prayers (Duc Nguyen, 2000, p.23)^[6]. The *Ke Trong* and *Ke Chuong* are two short poems, each consisting of four lines that are recited aloud before beating the drum and ringing the bell.

In terms of form, the sound of the drum and the bell signifies a signal sent to the Three Realms (the heavenly realm, human realm, and earth realm). First and foremost, the sound of the drum and the bell serves as a widespread announcement to all officials, positions, and followers, indicating that it is time to begin the ritual. These sounds resound during the transitional moment between the old day and the new day, in a serene atmosphere, awakening the entire religion and preparing for the journey into the ceremony. On the other hand, according to Cao Dai doctrine, the booming sound of the drum reaches the heavens as a signal to inform the celestial realms about the preparation to receive the sacred beings descending to earth, and to announce the authentic religion of the Supreme Being and the brilliance of His light illuminating the Holy Temple like a White Jade Palace. The resonating sound of the bell descends to the realm of spirits or the Earthly Realm, informing the King of the Underworld to open the gates and release repentant souls, granting them mercy to attend the ceremony of the Divine Highness with the yellow light emanating from the movement of the Great Way.

Philosophically, the *Trong Ke* and *Chuong Ke* are symbolic sounds representing the philosophical meaning of the religion. Cao Dai uses sound to signify and explain the origin of the cosmic universe. The drum is called *Loi Am Co* (Ancient Thunderous Sound), producing a booming sound like thunder, representing Yang; the bell is called *Bach Ngoc Chung* (White Jade Bell), producing a deep resonating sound, reaching far and wide, representing Yin. The initial sound of the drum, rising in the midst of silence, signifies the significance of the first explosion to create the Supreme Ultimate (the Jade Emperor) from which the universe is formed according to Cao Dai's worldview, similar to the "Big Bang" often mentioned in physics and astronomy. After the drumming ends, the lingering sound of the bell serves as a continuation of the drum, symbolizing

¹⁰ Chant each word of the scripture with a melodious tone following the melody of the Ngũ Cung Island music.

¹¹ The rank in the 9th grade, leading among the hierarchy of Cao Dai officials.

the stability and initiation of growth and perfection for all entities within the universe. The drum is placed at the Loi Am Co platform on the right side of the Holy Temple, symbolizing Yin, while the bell is placed at the Bach Ngoc Chung platform on the left side of the Holy Temple, symbolizing Yang. The Yang sound originates from Yin, and the Yin sound originates from Yang, signifying the principle that within Yin, there is Yang, and within Yang, there is Yin. The harmonious interaction and transformation between Yin and Yang create the biological existence of all things.

* Hoan Dan

Hoan Dan is a special ritual that takes place at the Holy Temple on important holidays. In its ordinary sense, Hoan Dan involves the repositioning of worshippers within the congregation. During this ritual, the ranks, roles, and followers are divided into two rows: Males on the left and females on the right, following a specific order according to their hierarchical levels gradually ascending towards the High Altar. The two rows of males and females move in opposite directions, forming two concentric circles, going from bottom to top and then from top to bottom, before returning to their rightful positions based on their hierarchical status.

In terms of form, Hoan Dan is merely a movement ritual where the ranks, roles, and followers enter the inner sanctuary to prepare for the ceremony. Following the guidance of the person in charge ensures that all ranks are promptly arranged and positions are stabilized in an orderly manner. A high-ranking official of the Holy Church stated, *"Only those who understand the liturgy can fully comprehend the meanings of Cao Dai religion. Each movement in the Hoan Dan ritual symbolizes the origin of the evolution of the believer's soul. They must understand and integrate themselves into this ritual. Otherwise, it would be meaningless to go through the motions without knowledge"* (Interview on 30th February 2023, equivalent to 9th January lunar calendar).

Philosophically, Hoan Dan is a symbolic ritual that contains many elements in the worldview of the Cao Dai religion. The movement of ranks, roles, and followers from bottom to top (from level 1 to level 9) represents the evolution from the profane to the sacred, from "Human" to "Saint." Then, they circle through the Cung Dao and continue from top to bottom (from level 9 to level 1), signifying the descent from the sacred to the profane through the creation's system. Finally, they ascend again to their rightful positions at different levels, expressing that this transportation will return everyone to their proper place. This is also the meaning of "Phap Luan Thuong Chuyen" (the Constant Cycle of Birth and Death), which the Cao Dai religion's Divine Dignitary has explained to believers: *"Now, we have completed the Lower Nguyen Three Transitions and started the Upper Nguyen Four Transitions. We call it initiation. Therefore, Phap Luan requires movement. We already know that the Celestial Breath and Terrestrial Breath move as one to achieve Dao. Everyone should know that the Nine-Tiered Tower represents the Nine Heavens' Creation, while the upper palace represents the Palace of the Way. Until now, people have diligently sought Dao, yet they were unaware of it right before their eyes. By going through the Nine Heavenly layers, the soul reaches the Ultimate Highest Nine-Level Deity and goes to Buddhism; then from*

Buddhism to the profane, and from the profane back to Buddhism, cyclically moving like that. That is called achieving Dao" (Nguyen Duc, 2000, p.1491)¹⁶.

Furthermore, the diagram of Hoan Dan's movement symbolizes the transportation and harmony between Yin and Yang within a Tai Chi block. The outer circle of male ranks, roles, and followers represents Yang, while the inner circle of female ranks, roles, and followers represents Yin. The movement of the two circles, Yin and Yang, intertwines within the block, representing the Tai Chi and the position of the Divine Dignitary's rule.

Considering these meanings, participating in Hoan Dan and being able to join the ritual hold a sense of joy and a profound and rare spiritual experience for the ranks and followers. A female official of the Le rank said, *"I don't know if I can go to Hoan Dan or not, but I have to arrive early to secure a spot since many people gather on this holiday. The Holy Temple cannot accommodate everyone, so some have to sit outside. I have to go there around 10 PM to secure a place. Life should experience Hoan Dan at least once. Only by going can one truly feel what it's like; it's very mysterious"* (Interview on 30th February 2023, equivalent to 9th January lunar calendar).

* Huan Thien Instrumental

Huan Thien Instrumental Music, in the Han-Vietnamese sense, means music that soars to the heavens. According to the common understanding of Cao Dai followers, this is the music that welcomes and offers tribute to the Divine Supreme Being and other sacred deities. The music is performed when all ranks, roles, and followers are in their designated positions, standing erect with hands pressed against their chests and facing the main altar, attentively listening to the music as if awaiting the arrival of the divine presence. Therefore, it can be seen as a moment of reflection and true solemnity. The sequence of this ritual begins with the sound of the Tiép Giá drum, followed by the performance of the 7 prescribed Cao Dai religious songs: Xang Xe (1), Ngu Doi Thuong (2), Ngu Doi Ha (3), Long Dang (4), Long Ngam (5), Van Gia (6), and Tieu Khuc (7).

In terms of the philosophical aspect of the Cao Dai religion, Huan Thien Instrumental Music is a symbolic sound that carries within it the significance of the Cao Dai religious worldview. The sequentially performed music from song number (1) to song number (7) represents the stages of the universe's formation. Song number (1), Xang Xe, with its melodic expression, symbolizes the constant movement, sometimes forward and sometimes backward, never staying in one place. It represents a time when heaven and earth were still chaotic, primitive, and undetermined. Song number (2), Ngu Doi Thuong, signifies the five upper realms corresponding to the Five Elements¹², which are light and subtle energies that ascend upward toward the heavens. Song number (3), Ngu Doi Ha, carries the meaning of the five lower realms, corresponding to the Five Elements¹³ as heavy and descending energies that form the Earth. Song number (4), Long Dang, symbolizes the ascending dragon, representing the Yang energy, while song number (5), Long Ngam, symbolizes the descending dragon, representing the Yin energy. Song number (6), Van Gia, conveys the idea

¹² They are the primordial essence of the Five Elements.

¹³ The 5 elements are Metal (Kim), Wood (Moc), Water (Thuy), Fire (Hoa), and Earth (Tho).

that when Yin and Yang harmonize, all things begin to take shape. Song number (7), Tieu Khuc, signifies smallness and brevity, representing the moment when all things are born and given names. The melodies and sounds of these 7 instrumental pieces offered to the Divine Supreme Being contain profound meanings about the formation of the universe, from its chaotic and undifferentiated state without heaven and earth to the separation of Heaven and Earth, Yin and Yang, and the operation of Yin and Yang giving birth to all things. It can be observed that these 7 instrumental pieces of Cao Dai convey the essence of the 7 days in which God created the universe according to the perspective of the Holy Scriptures.

** The offering of Tam Buu*

The offering of Tam Buu, in the Cao Dai religious ceremony, can be considered the most important stage. After welcoming and reciting prayers for the sacred deities, offering Tam Bửu is the moment to express reverence and faith in the Supreme Being.

In terms of the usual formality in ceremonies, offering Tam Buu involves presenting three offerings (fruits, wine, and tea) to the Supreme Being and the sacred deities. Each offering is accompanied by a dedicatory speech by the Giao Nhi and Dong Nhi, expressing their intentions when making the offering. Philosophically, this action symbolizes the faith and belief of each follower. Tam Buu, according to Cao Dai beliefs, represents the three precious elements of Heaven (Sun - representing the sun, Moon - representing the moon, Stars - representing the stars), Human (Body - representing the physical body, Energy - representing the divine spirit, Soul - representing the soul), and Earth (Water - representing water, Fire - representing fire, Wind - representing wind). Through offering fruits, wine, and tea, followers symbolically offer their physical body, divine spirit, and soul to the Supreme Being with deep respect and love.

The ceremonial act of offering Tam Buu is not done in the usual way but follows the distinctive form of Cao Dai religion called "Dien", where both hands are raised to face level with the palms cupped, holding a tray on which the offerings are placed, and stepping in the pattern of the Tam character while moving from the outer ceremony to the inner ceremony, accompanied by drum beats and harmonized music. The character Tam, represented by the Chinese script (心), signifies the expression of loving devotion towards the Supreme Being and the sacred deities. When each offering is presented, the Chanh Phoi su, the highest-ranking official, will carry the offering to the altar of the Giao Tong, turning their back towards the Hiep Thien Dai and the congregants who are in prayer. At this moment, everyone prays together, saying, *"I offer my body/divine spirit/soul to the Divine Supreme Being, you may use it as you please."*

A representative from the Holy See stated, *"Offering Tam Buu means dedicating everything to the Divine Supreme Being, therefore, one is no longer one's own but determined by the Divine Supreme Being. Those in the positions of authority within Cao Dai, once they join the ranks, wholeheartedly follow the Church's teachings without having to worry about difficulties, determined to obey the Divine Supreme Being until death"* (Quoted from an interview on February 30, 2023, corresponding to January 9th in the lunar calendar). Therefore, offering Tam Bửu

symbolizes sacrifice, where followers willingly offer their entire physical body, spirit, and mind, equivalent to sacrificing their lives and souls for the Divine Supreme Being's determination. This is a testament to the faith and belief of Cao Dai followers in the immensely powerful Supreme Being. It represents the main and most important purpose of the Thien Dao ceremony.

3. Conclusion

The symbolic meaning in the ritual of the Cao Dai religion at the Holy See of Tây Ninh is a synthesis of the meanings of all the symbols used in this ceremony. Each symbol has multiple meanings in terms of form and doctrine, but they all revolve around conveying the principles of Cao Dai teachings regarding worldview, human life, and the responsibilities of believers towards divine beings.

The system of symbols is interconnected, ranging from individual symbols such as objects, phenomena, gestures, postures, and sounds, which are presented throughout the entire duration of the ritual. Each symbol carries different meanings and performs a distinct function. When these symbols are linked together, we can perceive the operation of a unified entity, creating harmony within the overall structure of the ceremony and Cao Dai religion as a whole.

Furthermore, during the participation and practice of the ritual, dignitaries, officials, and followers experience unique emotions and spiritual states. The continuous interaction with the system of symbols allows individuals to sense the sacredness and live within that sacred space. This contributes to strengthening and reinforcing faith, enhancing the psychological strength of each individual.

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