

Title : RURAL VILLAGE CULTURE: A CASE STUDY OF CHAIYANAM  
TOWNSHIP, WANGTHONG DISTRICT, PHITSANULOK PROVINCE

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The purpose of this research of rural village culture at Chaiyanam township, Wangthong district in Phitsanulok province was to study the general location, history, customs, beliefs, games, art and recorded culture of the Chaiyanam district. This work was qualitative research with data collection through interviewing people in this rural village during a four year period from October 1995 to April 1998.

#### Results of the Research

##### 1. The physical features of the land and history

It was found that Chaiyanam was a township in the Wangthong district of Phitsanulok province with mountains in the north and south. Most of the people were farmers. They were Buddhists. There were three temples: Wat Chaiyanam, Wat Nen-Noi and Wat Kao-Keaw. There were three primary schools: Wat Ban-Chaiyanam School, Ban-Buangpraw School and Rachuprathum School, and only one secondary school: Wangthongpittayakom School. There were seven villages with a population of 4,034 including 1,153 families, 1,965 males and 2,069 females. Most people were rather poor. Transportation in this district was by car, motorcycle, bus, and bicycle.

This rural village was a very old community settled 140 years ago. This village was named after the meaning of the geography, plants, and the appearance of the flowing river. The people who lived in this community were two groups: the original population and immigrants.

## 2. The Culture of the Village.

### 2.1 The living culture.

2.1.1 In choosing their houses, they considered their journey first, their neighbors second, and their workplace last.

2.1.2 There were many occupations in this village. Most people were farmers. The other occupations concerned labor, commerce, government service and employment in the factories. The occupation with problems was that of farming because of the scarce water supply, fertilizers, modern technology, the high principal and the low price for produce which depended on buyers.

2.1.3 Most people ate rice and liked to eat spicy food. They bought food or made it by themselves. The kitchen utensils were charcoal stoves, gas stoves, and electric rice cookers.

2.1.4 The young, old males and females liked to wear plain clothes. They didn't have a special custom about clothes in their village, but they were careful about their dress when they went to the fair or did activities in their society.

2.1.5 They went to see the doctor when they were seriously ill. If they had a fever, some bought some medicine from the drugstore and some used herbs when sick.

2.1.6 They traveled by motorcycle mostly followed by bus and lastly on foot.

2.2 With regard to habitual beliefs, before they built their houses, they went to see the fortune teller. They believed in the charms and fortune telling.

2.3 As for traditional culture, they went to the temple during the Songkran festival, bathed the Buddha images, and paid respect to the monks and elders who lived in this village.

2.4 As for religious culture, the Buddhists had activities on the religious days such as Visakhabucha Day and Makhabucha Day and made Kathin offerings to all the monks in the temple.

2.5 As for family culture, they had customs for the dead. Also, they went to the hospital to give birth and later used a hot water flask for warmth and cleanliness. The men went into the priesthood when they were twenty years old, and the villagers followed the customs for marriage.

2.6 As for customs about their work, they had many occupations in the village: agriculture, commerce, and employment in the factories. The farmers had special customs after they finished work in the field such as Krayasaat cooking and propitiating the spirits.

2.7 As for playing and games, they played Look-Keaw, Mark-Keb at school and at their houses. These are indoor games.

2.8 As for the arts, they practiced 1) painting, 2) sculpture, 3) architecture, and 4) handicrafts. The work was plain and practical made themselves or bought from shops.