

## CHAPTER 4

### DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis in this chapter will be based on the content of the drama *Phu Yai Lee Kub Nang Ma*. The data will include characteristics of the characters, the conversations and dialogues, character beliefs, community behavior in Klong Ma Hon, Suphan Buri, which is the main location of the drama.

However, of the fourteen episodes in the series, only the episodes and scenes relevant to the two frameworks SEP and PROUT proposed in the previous chapter will be selected. The data will be analyzed chronologically and scenes from the series to clearly show the development of the characters and the entire community.

To start with, the play introduces the main female character, Khun Ma, who lives and works as a model in Bangkok before moving to Klong Ma Hon. Then, the setting switches to Klong Ma Hon. Here, a flashback scene introduces her grandmother, Yaai Wan to the viewers.

#### 4.1 Episode One

Phu Yai Lee, the main male character, goes to Yaai Wan's funeral. He recalls the conversation between himself and Yaai Wan as she collected eggs from her chicken.

She kept only two eggs and gave the rest to Phu Yai Lee and said, “ผู้ใหญ่เอาไข่ไปจันเพ็งเก็บมา เอาไปร่วมกับโครงการอาหารกลางวันของเด็กๆที่โรงเรียน” “Phu Yai, take these

eggs and share them with the students in the lunch project at school. I just collected them.” (00.11.17)



Figure 4.1: A screenshot showing the eggs Yaai Wan shares with the school lunch project.

The exchange and figure 4.1 show that Yaai Wan was able to supply her own food. She raised her chickens, collected their eggs and cooked them for food. The surplus eggs were shared with the school children in the community. Moderation is vividly employed here. As stated in “What is Sufficiency Economic” about moderation, the products not needed for sustenance should be sold or shared with others (15). Yaai Wan practiced this idea originated by King Bhumibol Adulyadej by sharing her eggs to students in school. This scene also shows how moderation is promoted in school. The school lunch project teaches students to learn how to be self-reliant by growing plants and raising chickens for eggs and fish so that the homegrown products which are pesticide-free can be cooked by the teachers so that students will receive a healthy lunch every day without having to buy from the market. Moreover, spirituality, one of

PROUT's characteristics is featured here. Yaai Wan knew that she had enough food for herself and realized that many students in school needed more food. She kindly thought of others and was generous enough to share her eggs to support the school lunch project. She did not only think about herself but also think about the well-being of the students. Consequently, Yaai Wan had established a good relationship with other members in the same community. Not only children benefited from her generosity but also teachers and parents appreciated what she had done. Stronger community ties were formed as a result.

After Yaai Wan's funeral, Phu Yai Lee comes back home. He looks at the photo which he took with his family on his graduation day, and thinks of Yaai Wan. Yaai Wan supported him from his primary school to his university level. Once, Nang Pui, Phu Yai Lee's mother hesitated to support his education when Yaai Wan offered to help out. She said to Nang Pui, “เรียนยังไงมันก็ต้องเรียน ... แม่ปุยไม่ได้กำลังดูถูกแค่การศึกษาแม่ปุยยังดูถูกตัวเองอีก ทำไมไม่คิดว่าลูกเรียนจบออกมาแล้วจะได้เอาวิชาความรู้มาพัฒนาบ้านเรา โลกมันเปลี่ยนไปเยอะละทำไมเราย่ำอยู่กับที่” “He has to study anyway... Mae Pui, you not only look down on education but also look down on your son. Don't you think when your son graduates, he can apply his knowledge to help develop our village. The world has changed but why do we remain the same.” (00.18.00) Nang Pui could have doubts about supporting Phu Yai Lee's education for various reasons. She might think it would not be worth it or she did not think she could financially afford in doing it. However, Yaai Wan was trying to convince her to realize the importance of education. Although Yaai Wan grew up in a small remote village and was uneducated, she realized that education had become more important for each individual as well as for the development of the community. In a rural area such as Klong Ma Hon, almost everyone

is focused more on developing farming skills rather than education. This is because their lives are related to agricultural activities, so operational farming competence is in greater need. Nonetheless, Yaai Wan placed a high value on education, and told Phu Yai Lee, if he wanted to further his education, she would provide him with financial support. Based on SEP principles, Yaai Wan showed her reasonableness and self-immunity through her explanation to Nang Pui. It can be obviously seen that Yaai Wan was aware of the changes in society and that education would eventually be the most important tool for people living in a rapidly changing world. She also foresaw that in the future, people who did not have education would be left behind as they would have few resources to survive and to sustain themselves. In her suggestion to Phu Yai Lee, reasonableness is employed. Yaai Wan understood that the economic circumstances were changing and people need to be well prepared for the changes. Education would help them gain knowledge and experience to help better their lives, socially, morally and economically. Evidently enough, one needs to invest time, money, and resources, and, for a college degree, the investment can be high. However, Yaai Wan was reasonable enough when she thought that the investment she made would benefit not only Phu Yai Lee but also the whole community.

Earlier, Phu Yai Lee has sent the letter to Khun Ma, informing her about Yaai Wan's death. He thinks that Khun Ma will possibly come to visit so he asks Pued to clean the house.



Figure 4.2: A screenshot displaying the structure and interior of the house.

Yaai Wan's house has a wide open area, with a lot of windows around the house, and a covered balcony. In the house design, Yaai Wan had again exercised reasonable decision-making based on logical considerations and possible effects. A house is designed and built by taking into consideration the highest benefits from the house structure. Various factors, such as weather, and function are considered. Due to hot weather in Thailand, houses, especially in rural areas, are constructed to support these conditions. Yaai Wan's house has a wide open space to release hot air during the daytime. Many windows around the house which are always open during both daytime and nighttime allow the breeze to blow through keeping her and other members of family cool and comfortable without resorting to air conditioning. A veranda is not only used as a communal spot to receive visitors but also sometimes serves as a dining place. For instance, in Episode 3 and 4, Phu Yai Lee's family members have dinner together at a veranda. The house with a suitable house pattern and structure yields great economic advantages. Yaai Wan and other villagers' houses are designed similarly.

They are made from readily available and reasonably priced wood. Furthermore, this procures a long term benefit. When air-conditioning devices are not needed, they do not need to be worry about the electricity bill and the maintenance costs. All in all, they have savings which can be spent on other necessities. Up to this point, their reasonable choices correspond to the five practical ways in which saving is a first priority.

#### 4.2 Episode Two

This episode focuses on Khun Ma’s first visit to Klong Ma Hon. When she arrives, Phu Yai Lee is there to pick her up and she misunderstands that Phu Yai Lee is a boatman so she asks him to take her to Yaii Wan’s house.



Figure 4.3: A screenshot displaying Phu Yai Lee driving a motor long-tailed boat.

The PROUT principles of maximum utilization and rational distribution are applied in the scene. Proutist Universal Organization states in “5 Fundamental Principles of Prout” that people must set a standard for the equal distribution of natural resources (pars. 3). A canal, a natural resource which belongs to the village, flows

through Klong Ma Hon. Therefore, everyone has equal rights to the canal as a central water supply and means of communication. The villagers are rationally utilizing the water from this canal in their rice-farming, and fruit-tree cultivation. Furthermore, PROUT principles also state that everyone must utilize the natural resources to obtain the highest benefit from those resources (pars. 3). The canal is also used as a waterway, which is a traditional means of transportation for people in Klong Ma Hon. As can be seen from figure 4.3, Phu Yai Lee is using a motor long-tailed boat to fetch Khun Ma from the station. The villagers learn to utilize the existing natural wealth, the canal, effectively. Similarly, the principle of self-reliance and effective natural resource and environmental management are reflected here. Sachayansrisakul explains that natural resources must be carefully and efficiently used which will result in a sustainable environment (*NIDA Development Journal* 12). By obtaining benefits from and sharing the canal as collective wealth, the villagers would try their best to maintain the good condition of the canal and exercise efficient water management for shared benefit. Finally, this will lead to the sustainability of the environment as a whole since the canal will be kept clean and everyone will have a fair share in water utilization.

In the following scene, Khun Ma and Pued are going to cook but she could not find an electric cooking pot. Pued says, “ถึงแม้ว่าที่นี่จะมีไฟฟ้าใช้ แต่คุณยายวันแกไม่ใช้หม้อหุงข้าวหรอกจ้ะ แกใช้หุงเตาฟืนแทน แกบอกว่าข้าวที่หุงได้จะหอมอร่อยกว่ากันเยอะเลย”

“Although we have electricity, Yaai Wan didn’t cook with the electric cooking pot but with the wood brazier instead. She said the rice was more scented and delicious.”

(01.08.00) Khun Ma, who comes to visit Klong Ma Hon for the first time, gets used to modern appliances. In the city, people make use of various electrical equipment in their daily life. Thus, Khun Ma is confused why Yaai Wan did not use the electronic cooking

pot when electricity is available. From the conversation above, Yaai Wan, through Puded's narrative, preferred the scent and the taste of the rice which was cooked on the wood brazier. However, at the same time, her act indicated the concept of self-immunity which includes adaptability when circumstances change. For example, everyone should be able to cook from the bonfire or charcoal brazier when the electricity blacks out. As has been said earlier in episode 1, Yaai Wan was aware of changing circumstances. Again, in this episode, Yaai Wan believed that everyone should be well-prepared in case there was an emergency. Thus, she attempted to set an example for everyone, starting with her family members, by using a wood brazier and rarely using an electric cooking pot. Her idea confirmed that she was aware of a possibly unpredictable situation, such as an electrical blackout or an electricity shortage. By applying self-immunity idea, everyone can respond to and deal with unpredicted situations, using knowledge, wisdom and skill.

Khun Ma starts to survey the village and the paddy fields she inherits from Yaai Wan. She meets Phu Yai Lee while he is collecting the golden apple snails in the field. She is wondering what he is going to do with them. Phu Yai Lee then explains, “นี่มันหอยเชอรี่ไง มันร้ายกาจ ลงนาไหนก็เหี้ยนไปหมด นี่ก็จับมันมาแล้วเอามาทำปุ๋ยสิ” “It is a golden apple snail which is very destructive. It can devour the whole crops in the paddy fields. I'll kill them and make fertilizer.” (01.22.00) From the scene, the golden apple snail is a pest which causes problems for the farmers because it eats crops and rice in the fields. Phu Yai Lee is aware of this problem because he knows that if this problem is ongoing, the villagers will face a great loss to their crops. To arrive at a solution, he demonstrates the principle of knowledge. He carefully investigates the related key



factors to find the most appropriate solution. He first uses his personal knowledge. With a degree in agriculture, Phu Yai Lee is able to apply his training to this situation. He makes full use of not only the theories from text books but also his experiences in rice farming in finding the solution. Phu Yai Lee does not want to use chemicals to kill the golden apple snails because he has learned that chemicals can be a harmful substance to people and the entire environment since the residual long-term contamination can make soil unfit for any kind of agricultural activity. The negative long term effect on nature is his main concern. From the principles featured on the Proutist Universal Organization's webpage, one of the concepts is methods of utilization, which mainly focuses on nature ("5 Fundamental Principles of Prout"). By applying this principle, Phu Yai Lee, finally, selects the method which has a less harmful effect on nature. Thus, he collects the snails and plans to utilize them to full use. He will make compost from the snail carcasses and use them as fertilizer for rice plantation. Both the pests are eliminated and the soil is enriched. Moreover, plants will grow well and the whole process has no undesirable impact on the growers and the environment. His systematic and sensible thinking in considering the related conditions make an appropriate choice. All in all, the final outcome ensures sustainable environmental practices.



Figure 4.4: A screenshot showing the pigsty near Phu Yai Lee's house.

Later on, Khun Ma visits Phu Yai Lee's house and meets Nang Pui while she is feeding her pigs in the pigsty. The New Theory, based on SEP, concerning land division, is illustrated in figure 4.4. Phu Yai Lee' family raises pigs in the area divided proportionally. According to The Chaipattana Foundation, ninety percentage of the area must be used for storing water, farming and animal husbandry ("Philosophy Sufficiency Economy"). Phu Yai Lee has divided his land between pigsties and chicken coops. He utilizes his entire area appropriately. From this kind of land management, self-reliance is a result. Nang Pui raises pigs for both consumption and trade purposes. Nang Pui does not need to buy pork from the market for her family. In other words, raising pigs results in fewer food expenses. Also, Nang Pui earns extra money. The surplus after household consumption can be sold to increase the family income.

### 4.3 Episode Three

After staying in Klong Ma Hon for a while, Khun Ma returns to Bangkok. After taking her to the bus station, Phu Yai Lee stops by Phu Yai Mod's shop, which sells agricultural equipment, fertilizer and insecticide, in the market. Phu Yai Mod and his daughter, Pathum, ask why Phu Yai Lee does not buy a new car because the roads in the village have been repaved and are now in good condition. Phu Yai Lee says, “ไม่ดีกว่าจะน้ำมันก็แพง อีกอย่าง ฉันชอบขับเรือมากกว่า ลมมันเย็นดี” “I'd better say no. The fuel is so expensive and I prefer a boat to a car. I love the cool breeze.” (00.41.00) It is obvious that Phu Yai Lee practices moderation. He does not want to buy a car. Although the roads in the village are in good condition, he insists on using the boat. Phu Yai Lee is happy to travel by boat. Travelling by boat in the canal, he is able to enjoy nature along the canal and feel the fresh breeze. At the same time, the boat does not cause air pollution problem as the exhaust pipe of a car does. Travelling by boat is currently rare. Some people, such as Phu Yai Mod, become more materialistic and ignore old wisdom. What Phu Yai Lee has done is to maintain the old village traditions. Furthermore, Phu Yai Lee also practices reasonableness, in terms of economy. After comparing the advantages and disadvantages of buying a car, he reasonably decides not to waste money on a new car. Firstly, the cost of fuel, which is an unavoidable expense, is very high and depends on the global factors. Phu Yai Lee does not want to take a risk if the cost keeps rising constantly and he cannot afford it. Secondly, the exhaust from cars causes air pollution which will affect the ecology. The air in the village will be polluted. Phu Yai Lee has a responsibility to the environment. His concern with the

entire environment takes a priority. Here, the concept of morality is applied. However, Phu Yai Lee is not miserly either. He uses a motorcycle and a bicycle occasionally. Though his motorcycle is old, it is in good condition and is serviceable. The function is more important than luxury. Besides, some people in the village cycle to work in their farms and paddy fields. Cycling is not only environmentally friendly but also good for exercise. The ordinary and simple means of transportation have health benefits. Up to this point, people in the community are satisfied with what they have and feel that they are equal. No one possesses a luxurious car or a fancy bike. In conclusion, moderation is practiced by the whole community.

#### **4.4 Episode Four**

Khun Ma decides to return to Klong Ma Hon after she finds out that her boyfriend, Pradit, has a relationship with another girl. In this episode, Khun Ma is trying to learn and adopt a rural lifestyle. She visits Nang Pui while she is cooking.



Figure 4.5: A screenshot showing Nang Pui cooks with homemade wood charcoal.

Both the method of utilization and personal knowledge are applied. Phu Yai Lee, as a leader of the village, realizes that the cost of liquid propane gas keeps rising because of variable international situations. Therefore, he tries to solve the problem by seeking alternatives to using gas. He encourages the villagers to make use of resources they have at home. Dried wood is widely available in Klong Ma Hon. Phu Yai Lee considers finding some use for them to supplement their reliance on propane gas. Applying his knowledge, he finds out that using charcoal helps to reduce fuel expenses. For this reason, he turns dried wood to fuel. As can be seen in figure 4.5, Nang Pui is cooking with the homemade charcoal which finally becomes her preferred way of cooking. Phu Yai Lee' selected method of utilization responds to the current situation and helps people cut expenses. Besides, his stock of charcoal could be shared with the school lunch project or other community members, as needed. He does not store the resources only for his family but he also rationally distributes these to the community for their ultimate utilization. When there is an event organized at the temple, he takes

the charcoal for the congregants. As a leader of the village, Phu Yai Lee is always concerned about his community members. He follows the religious doctrine which teaches everyone to be virtuous; not only being good to yourself but also to others. This obviously reflects his moral leadership, one of the PROUT principles, and generous spirit which are the most important qualifications for a leader. Likewise, people in Klong Ma Hon also have spiritual values as Phu Yai Lee does. Nang Ma says that people in Bangkok donate money so Nang Pui says, “ที่นี่เงินไม่ได้สำคัญที่สุดหรอกจ๊ะ มีอะไรก็ช่วยกันไปไม่มีอะไรก็เอาใจนี้แหละช่วย” “Money is not the most important thing here. We help each other out as much as we can. Though we have nothing to give, we help with our heart.” (01.17.50) In Klong Ma Hon, people value spiritual concerns more than material concerns. The villagers are not from rich families who have a lot of money. When there is a festival or event in the village, they offer physical support and materials or other resources. For instance, Phu Yai Lee shares the charcoal with the temple and school. Most of the time, they assist by cooking, setting and cleaning the area. They build sympathy not with money, but with their generosity. As a result, close relationships and the unity among the community members are established.

In their free time, family members are gathering together inside a veranda, where there is a television. Although Phu Yai Lee’s family has a modest lifestyle, not spending money on unnecessary items and planting homegrown vegetables, they have a television (see figure 4.6).



Figure 4.6: A screenshot presenting leisure time for the family.

Reasonableness is applicable at this stage. There are many benefits Phu Yai Lee gains from watching television. Firstly, he is able to keep up with the world news that might affect his life and his village. The news widens his and all of his family members' perspective so that they are able to prepare for changing situations appropriately. Secondly, Phu Yai Lee and his sisters are able to gain knowledge from television programs. His two younger sisters are studying so that they need to have certain information resources to complement their studies. Thirdly, television provides entertainment during their leisure time. After considering all these reasons, Phu Yai Lee decides to spend his money on this kind of technology because he is going to gain advantages when compared to the costs of purchase and electricity. In addition, all family members are spending time together while watching television. It is an opportunity for them to chat and share the experiences they have learned each day.

Again, it weaves a close relationship which strengthens the family.

#### 4.5 Episode Five

Yaai Wan's cremation ceremony is depicted in this episode. Many villagers attend the cremation. Nang Pui explains to Khun Ma that everyone loved and respected Yaai Wan because she always helped them. She says, “แกเป็นตัวอย่างให้เห็นว่าหมู่บ้านเล็กๆอย่างเราก็พึ่งพาตัวเองได้ ไม่ต้องรวยล้นฟ้าเป็นมหาเศรษฐี แต่ก็มีความสุขตามประสาเราได้โดยที่ไม่ต้องเบียดเบียนใคร” “She showed us that a small village like ours could be self-reliant. We don't need to be rich but we are happy and do not exploit others.” (00.30.50) The idea of moderation is applied here. Yaai Wan was a role model for people in Klong Ma Hon in terms of being self-reliant. During her lifetime, she did good things for her community. She spent what she had and used what she made. She tried hard to persuade the villagers to have a moderate lifestyle. She used natural resources such as charcoal and firewood. All of this local wisdom reflects Yaai Wan's moderate life. During a time of globalization, money is an important factor in our lives. People believe that the rich are the happiest because their money can buy anything. In contrast, money was not important to Yaai Wan. She was happy with her moderate life in a small village like Klong Ma Hon.

After the cremation, Khun Ma starts her village life. She and Pued are going to cook so Pued suggests her to collect the eggs. They fill one basket with eggs. Pued tells her to keep a few eggs to cook and sell the rest. Later on, Pued returns home and gives thirty baht to Khun Ma. She is very happy and says, “นี่เป็นเงินก้อนแรกของการเป็นชาวนาของฉันเลยนะ ฉันภูมิใจจังเลย” “This is my first money from being a farmer and I'm so proud.” (00.54.00) Again, moderation is clearly presented. The products which are surplus should be sold. Khun Ma earns thirty baht from selling eggs at the local market.



Khun Ma is so proud of this money though it is not much. Living in the city, she has to buy eggs and other food. On the other hand, living in the village, she earns money from selling them. This implies self-immunity concept. Khun Ma learns how to earn money in a different way when she has to live in a different condition. From this point on, Khun Ma gradually changes her attitude and lifestyle and starts to change to fit in to her new community.

Afterwards, Khun Ma determines to start farming. She goes out to the paddy field and starts to pull out the grass. Phu Yai Lee suggests her use a hoe to mow the grass (see figure 4.7).



Figure 4.7: A screenshot of Phu Yai Lee teaching Khun Ma to use a hoe.

Phu Yai Lee uses a hoe, a traditional and primitive piece of farming equipment, to mow the grass. In the past, when technology was not available, the farmers plowed the soil manually. They used the hoe and the buffalos pulled the plough. Also, farmers did not use any pesticide so the soil remains uncontaminated. Phu Yai Lee maintains

this old tradition and teaches Khun Ma to do the same. PhuYai Lee does not use the tractor to plough the soil because the cost is high. He knows that the villagers do not have the ability to shoulder this expense. Also, the profit they should gain after selling their harvest will be less after the deduction of the cost of the tractor. From this reason, Phu Yai Lee encourages everyone to use manual equipment such as a hoe and buffalos. These do not harm the ecology and the environment. The principle of reasonableness is employed here. He considers a long term effect before making any decision regarding farming methods. Also, he uses his knowledge and personal experience. Finally, methods of utilization is practiced here. He chooses the best method which is also friendliest to the environment and, at the same time, he can help people cut expenses and raise profits. Then, PhuYai Lee leaves Khun Ma and goes to pick some gourds from his field (see figure 4.8).



Figure 4.8: A screenshot of Phu Yai Lee picking a gourd from his field.

Once again, moderation is explicitly reflected. Phu Yai Lee tells Prathum, who comes to visit him: “เก็บเอาไว้กิน เหลือจากกินก็เอาไปแจก เหลือจากแจกก็เอาไปขาย” “Keep

them for food. If some are left, I'll give them to others. The rest is going to be sold.”

(01.33.30) In Phu Yai Lee's fields, many kinds of vegetables are grown. The main purpose is for consumption in the household. He picks some of them to cook.

Sometimes, if there are a lot of vegetables left over, Phu Yai Lee will share them with his neighbors. Finally, if there are still remaining vegetables, he sells them at the market and earns extra money. Consequently, people are healthy because the vegetables from the fields are fresh and pesticide-free.

#### 4.6 Episode Six

Phu Yai Mod visits Phu Yai Lee and Nang Pui and tries to sell pesticides and herbicides to them. He promotes the advantages of using these chemical products which will save them time, manpower, and labor. Finally, they will gain a lot more harvest and money. Nang Pui wants to try the chemicals but she defers to Phu Yai Lee's decision. Phu Yai Lee says, “หากประหยัดเวลา ประหยัดแรงงาน แต่คนต้องตายผ่อนส่ง ผมไม่เอาด้วยหรอก และอีกอย่างนะผู้ใหญ่ผมทำร้ายแผ่นดินผมไม่ได้หรอก ตารางวาเดียว ผมก็จะไม่ใช้เด็ดขาด” “If it helps save time and manpower but we have to die slowly, I don't want it. Also, I can't harm my motherland so I won't use it even for a square meter.”

(00.00.10) Reasonableness is employed again. Phu Yai Lee refuses to buy a pesticide from Phu Yai Mod. He reckons that pesticide may help farmers save time in getting rid of pests and weeds in the fields. However, he does not focus only on the advantages but also on the impact of using the chemical substances. His knowledge and experience are vividly applied. He certainly sees that chemicals are harmful to both soil and humans themselves. Presently, the farmers in Klong Ma Hon do not use chemicals so the rich soil still yields good crops. The organic fertilizer which they use does not leave residue

in the soil so that it is still safe and fertile for later cultivation. On the other hand, if people continuously use substances such as chemical fertilizer and pesticide for a long time, the soil fertility will be gradually reduced. As a result, the soil is no longer fertile and suitable for planting anymore. Lastly, the land becomes barren and the farmers will have no use of their land. This clearly presents that Phu Yai Lee considers self-immunity a priority. Furthermore, chemicals left on the agricultural products are dangerous for everyone who consumes them. As stated earlier, Phu Yai Lee and other villagers eat some vegetables from their own land. As soon as they use chemical substances with their crops, they are unable to consume them, otherwise they slowly accumulate toxins in their bodies. Thus, he encourages his community to avoid this hazardous situation. Altogether, a chemical-free community becomes sustainable and balanced.

After Phu Yai Lee turns down his offer, Phu Yai Mod goes to see Khun Ma and sells her a set of insecticide and a pesticide spray machine. Then, Khun Ma starts to spray her paddy fields.



Figure 4.9: A screenshot of Khun Ma spraying the insecticide.

Having very little knowledge about farming and herbicide, Khun Ma overuses the insecticide and uses it disproportionately. Moreover, she dresses in normal clothes. From figure 4.9, she is wearing jeans and a long-sleeve shirt, without a mask on. Phu Yai Lee is passing by and sees she is spraying the herbicide. He complains, “ยาฆ่าแมลงที่คุณใช้นี้มันไม่ได้ฆ่าเฉพาะหญ้าของคุณ มันยังฆ่าปลา ฆ่าแมลงรวมทั้งฆ่าตัวคุณด้วย แล้วนี่คายังไง เสื้อผ้าไม่ใส่ป้องกันให้มิดชิด” “The insecticide you are using is not only killing the grass but also fish, insects, and yourself. And why do you spray the pesticide without protective clothes?” (00.14.30) He implements his knowledge in this scene. Phu Yai Lee learns and experiences that the insecticide has side effects on the user. His carefulness is very obvious. He is well aware that the insecticide spray may cause harm to Khun Ma. She has never used the insecticide so she does not realize that she is possibly allergic to it or receives negative health effects. Thus, protection is the best way to shield herself from the risk. Here, Phu Yai Lee considers the situation with a degree of self-immunity. He is worried because Khun Ma is spraying without the mask

on so she is breathing in the chemical. The chemical could cause a health problem such as respiration problems and lung disease. Her ignorance will lead her into trouble in the long term. Also, the chemicals can cause adverse consequences on the ecology. The insecticide in the air comes into contact with agriculture products which later become food. It means that they will eat poisonous crops. Also, the toxin contaminates the canal which the villagers use for the water in their daily consumption. Aquatic animals such as fish, crabs and prawns are also dying because of the toxic water. The entire ecology is adversely affected. Phu Yai Lee, who has an idea of global governance, does not want this to happen. He wants everyone to live with nature harmoniously. He believes that nature and humans rely on each other. Thus, he wants Khun Ma to learn not to harm nature either directly and indirectly. On the other hand, he teaches Khun Ma to live sustainably and aims for a balanced ecological system.

Living in Klong Ma Hon, Khun Ma has to do both household jobs and field jobs. Thus, she wants to hire Nang Phin to do the house work for her. She offers her 15,000 THB a month. Nang Phin says, “หมื่นห้า มันเยอะไปค่ะ จะจ้างมาเป็นเจ้าของบ้านหรือ พิณขอซัก 2,500 บาทก็พอค่ะ” “15,000 is too much. Are you hiring me for a house owner? 2,500 baht is enough.” (00.41.00) Nang Phin does not accept the pay which Khun Ma offers because she knows that it is too much. Her belief in moderation is vividly seen. Nang Phin knows that the housekeeping job is not a hard job for her and does not require any special skill. Thus, she only needs 2,500 a month. Nang Pui does not want much money because she rarely uses money each day. In Klong Ma Horn, a rural area, the cost of living is low so this amount of money is enough for Nang Pui. From her action, morality is also apparent. In terms of honesty, Nang Pui does not take advantage of

Khun Ma's innocence and good will. Nang Pui is not greedy but rather is sincere and honest when she says how much is appropriate for her job. Nang Pui is satisfied with what she deserves and does not selfishly take more than she needs. In addition, spirituality is employed as well. In a small village, people are sincere and not greedy at all. In this case, Nang Pui is willing to work for Khun Ma because she is a niece of Yaii Wan, who she respected. Nang Pui was beholden to Yaii Wan when she was alive. Thus, she wants to return her kindness by helping Khun Ma out. Nang Pui's sincerity starts a warm relationship between her and Khun Ma. This is a first step to strengthen the community. When people are not selfish, sincerity and generosity are stimulated, then people warm to each other and a peaceful community will certainly result.

Two of Khun Ma's friends are coming to visit her so she asks Nang Pui to cook for her. Nang Pui says: “พืชอบออกไปหาเก็บผักรอบๆบ้านมาทำให้กินดีกว่านะจ๊ะ” “I will collect some vegetables around to cook.” (00.55.00) Moderation is applied here again. Nang Pui represents people in Klong Ma Hon who consume natural products from their gardens. She is not going to spend Khun Ma's money to buy food from the market. The backyard garden is the first choice she thinks about. Homegrown vegetables are considered good for the economy as well as being healthier. People in the old days ate herbs as a medicine. This is the reason why they are healthy. The homegrown plants are clean from chemicals. Besides, self-immunity is portrayed throughout the scene. Khun Ma learns from Nang Pui that all the backyard vegetables are edible. She realizes that if she happens to be broke, she will not starve as long as she knows how to cook with natural crops and ingredients.

Referring to Phu Yai Lee's current status, he is studying in a graduate program. In the daytime, he is working in the fields and as a leader of the village. In the nighttime, he spends hours studying and searching for new information related to his job.



Figure 4.10: A screenshot presenting Phu Yai Lee's computer in his office.

In figure 4.10, Phu Yai Lee is working in his office which has a computer and printer. Reasonableness is definitely applied. Even though all these devices are expensive, they are beneficial to Phu Yai Lee. He uses them to search for updated news so he can keep up to date with current news and situations. Phu Yai Lee absolutely understands that learning is an endless process. Having his own computer allows him to gain knowledge. Phu Yai Lee never stops learning and looking for the most current knowledge which he can use. He is a leader of the village so the villagers' well-being is his responsibility. He needs to work very hard not only for himself but also for the whole community. He knows that his diligence and knowledge will lead the community through any possible problems and hardships. For these reasons, he decides to utilize



these devices. Similarly, maximum utilization of all potentialities is employed. Phu Yai Lee devotes himself to helping people in his community, physically and mentally. He assists the farmers in their paddy fields when they need his advice. Sometimes, they come to see him at his house to consult about problems they have in agriculture. Phu Yai Lee is trying his best to help them get through those situations. His ability in agriculture and his devotion for the benefit of all help foster peace and happiness in the community.

One day when Khun Ma sees Phu Yai Lee and Wao, his worker, preparing the liquid fertilizer in the field (see figure 12), she questions why they do not use the dry granule fertilizer she has seen before. Phu Yai Lee explains that it is a chemical fertilizer. The one which he uses is an organic fertilizer made from food scraps. He also says, “ปุ๋ยเคมีใช้ไปนานๆมันตะกิดสารตกค้างทำให้ดินกระด้างและก็มีปัญหาอื่นๆตามมาอีกมากมาย” “Using chemical fertilizer for a long time causes residue and a barren soil. Then, many problems will follow.” (01.20.40)



Figure 4.11: A screenshot of Phu Yai Lee and Wao mixing the organic fertilizer.

With his knowledge and experience, Phu Yai Lee does not throw away food scraps. He mixes them together and makes an organic fertilizer. From this practice, he does not need to worry about waste management in the village because all the scraps will become useful fertilizer. Also, it helps the farmers not to waste the money to buy chemical fertilizer which is quite expensive. An organic fertilizer, which stems from local wisdom, might not be as fast or as effective as chemical fertilizer but it is finally worth it in the end. Besides, the organic fertilizer is environmentally friendly. It decomposes and does not leave any residue in the soil. In this regard, the idea of reasonableness is obvious. Phu Yai Lee is aware that the residue in the soil will decrease the soil fertility which directly affects the product yield. If the soil is not well-prepared or infertile, the rice and other agriculture products will not grow perfectly which means the income of the farmers would also decrease. As a result, their earnings will not cover the expenses they have put in. Then the problems concerning soil infertility, reduction in crop produce, and profit loss, among many others will continue. Because of his concerns, Phu Yai Lee eventually decides to make a full use of food scraps to produce organic fertilizer to sustain the entire environment in the common interest of the community.

#### **4.7 Episode Seven**

Pradit comes to visit Khun Ma and fights with Phu Yai Lee because he is jealous. Khun Ma is angry at him so she leaves him at home and goes to work in the paddy field as usual. He comments that Khun Ma will starve to death. Then, Phin, who comes to clean the house says, “เป็นชาวนาไม่มีวันอดตายหรอกคุณ ถึงข้าวของจะแพงเราก็ยังมีข้าวเก็บไว้กินเองไม่ต้องง้อใคร” “Being farmers, we will never starve. Although the goods

are expensive, we still have our own rice to eat.” (00.05.00) Phin’s statement implies the idea of self-immunity. Rice farming is the main means of living of Thai people and rice is the staple of Thailand. In each year, the farmers produce a lot of rice to sell and to store in their barns for annual consumption. Phin, as a farmer, is aware that the economic situation is able to change at any time. The variable circumstances can affect the price of the consumable goods directly. However, Phin does not worry much about this problem. She believes that she and other farmers will survive well. This is because she still has rice in the storehouse and has her own pigs, chicken and fish. She has her own backyard garden and vegetables in the field she can eat. In her daily life, she is not going to spend any money because she is able to make use of almost everything nature has to offer. She only needs to buy the necessary consumable goods such as cooking oil, seasoning and a few others. The possibly unfavorable situation will not have great effects on her life. She is able to adjust and adapt herself to the current conditions because she has the proper awareness and preparation.

Phu Yai Lee participates in the village meeting to discuss the village budget regarding the irrigation project. Phu Yai Lee has a strong opinion about this project.



Figure 4.12: A screenshot of Phu Yai Lee participating in the village meeting.

From figure 4.12, Phu Yai Lee presents his point of view to the meeting with reasonable and logical explanations. His reasonableness is clearly presented in his opinion. He logically considers the importance of the project which should be beneficial to everyone in the village. In this case, irrigation is not the most important thing for his district. All the fields are able to use water from the main canal equally. Building and maintaining the irrigation system will take a lot of money. Phu Yai Lee disagrees with the budget on the project which he does not consider important and does not yield the highest benefit. He says, “ผมว่าการที่เราเองประมาณแผ่นดินมาใช้แต่ไม่เกิดประโยชน์ มันยิ่งเสียเปล่ามากกว่า” “I think if we use the budget uselessly, that’s even more wasteful.” (00.32.10) Phu Yai Lee’s consideration is based on the maximum utilization and rational distribution concept. He suggests that the budget is distributed every year for more practical projects to develop the community. Thus, he does not think it is a good idea to waste the money which could be better used in other projects in more needy areas. His way of thinking reflects a sense of equality. He not only thinks about

what he can do and get for his own village but also thinks about other villages where the budget will be more needed and useful. Also, floor and ceiling, the PROUT concept which mainly focuses on equality of all is his main concern. He does not want to cause any unfairness or inequality between the villages. Thus, the strategy to decrease the gap between developed and undeveloped villages is to have the budget fairly allocated to all villages as Phu Yai Lee suggests in the meeting. All in all, Phu Yai Lee represents the moral leadership, putting overall benefit as a first priority. As a result, the peace and prosperity of the community can be maintained.

From this meeting, Khun Ma finally finds out that the boatman is Phu Yai Lee. She is very angry so she decides to go back to Bangkok. A few days later, Phu Yai Lee comes to apologize and she softens her opinion of him. One day, Khun Ma sees the protest of the farmers (see figure 4.13).



Figure 4.13: A screenshot of the protest against the government and the capitalists.

In this scene, economic democracy is very obvious. The farmers have the right to call for an appropriate price of the rice they deserve from the government. The farmers rightfully expect a good high price for their rice. When they are offered a low price from the government and the capitalists, they are depressed because it surely results in economic loss and inequality. They have put up with this unfairness as much as they can. However, when this happens repeatedly, they can no longer shoulder the burden of these expenses. Finally, they have to stand up for what they deserve. At this point, the proper adjustment among utilizations is applied. In this situation, all the potentialities, bodies, minds and spirits of the farmers drive them to stand up and face the government. They take action without violence to better their lives. Their bodies, minds, and spirits are mobilized for this purpose. They have the right to express how they feel and what they need. This is because they know exactly what they need to survive. They know how much they have invested in the grain, fertilizer, and labor. They know the appropriate price to cover all the expenses and to leave enough margin for them to make a living and justify the effort. The farmers are trying to improve their own economic situation by starting to involve themselves in the economic reform. When the government, who is supposed to treat them justly, takes advantage of them, they have to do something to voice their concern and to create fairness in society. Otherwise, injustice between the rich and the poor will still exist and even widen in the society. Everyone regardless of social status should have a good quality of life. The floor and ceiling concept is also implemented in this situation. Equality should be promoted and no one can take advantage of others. In this case, the farmers are oppressed as they are in a lower economic position so they have to accept whatever the government authorities offer. The disparity in living standards still remains. The action

of the farmers in the scene is a good start to resolve this problem. Only when an agreement is reached which is fair to every party will everyone be satisfied.

#### 4.8 Episode Eight

Khun Ma decides to return to Klong Ma Hon again after she sees how much the farmers are suffering from the imposition. She is very compassionate because she thinks of Yai Waan, who was a farmer as well. Thus, to welcome Khun Ma, Phu Yai Lee buys her a new stove. She is concerned about the gas but Pued shows her natural gas which Phu Yai Lee makes from pig dung (see figure 4.14).



Figure 4.14: A screenshot showing the equipment for producing the natural gas.

Phu Yai Lee employs self-immunity clearly. He is trying to look for alternative energy sources to replace propane gas. To apply his knowledge and experience, Phu Yai Lee produces the natural gas from pig dung. He turns the waste (pig dung) into a useful alternative gas which can be used in the household. He uses the basic equipment which is available around the house such as plastic gas tanks, tubes and pipes to make

the gas production set. This is the local wisdom and technology which Phu Yai Lee has learned and experienced. This kind of fuel alternative is very useful to Khun Ma and other villagers who follow this practice. Firstly, it helps with dung management. Khun Ma does not need to take away the pig dung or waste time to get rid of it. She only collects and puts it in the tanks to prepare for the composting process. Secondly, putting the dung in the tanks with the caps on conceals the foul smell. Thirdly, the most important advantage, this kind of gas helps save money on cooking gas. Khun Ma raises her own pigs so she will have this natural substance to use as long as she has the pigs. Besides, the dung which is left over from gas composting can be used as manure. Whereas others throw away the waste which they think as useless, Phu Yai Lee turns it into a useful and valuable resource.

Moreover, except from the gas from pig dung, Phu Yai Lee also creates an organic pesticide by burning charcoal and teaches everyone in the village to produce it (see figure 4.15).





Figure 4.15: A screenshot of Phu Yai Lee demonstrating the process of making organic pesticide.

Knowledge is initially applied. Phu Yai Lee learns that during burning the firewood to make charcoal, there is a smoke which is actually useful for agriculture called “น้ำส้มควันไม้” or “bamboo vinegar”. This is the local wisdom which has been carried on from generation to generation. Phu Yai Lee follows this wisdom because he realizes that there are many advantages to using the natural pesticide. Agriculturists will spend less on insecticide and herbicide. Also, they are able to avoid using the chemical substance which has negative effects on the agricultural products. Self-immunity is also employed. The pure natural substance has neither effect on consumers or on crops. Phu Yai Lee thinks of the physical health of all people in the community. He insists that everyone consume nontoxic vegetables. Their health and nutrition come to his attention at this stage. If people are healthy, they are able to develop a sustainable community. Furthermore, moral leadership is employed. Phu Yai Lee, as a leader of the community, is diligent and always searches for a better way to help his people to

improve their well-being and to improve their quality of life. The majority's welfare and happiness are the goals of a good leader and Phu Yai Lee has proven himself in this regard.

To fit into her new environment, Khun Ma sometimes explores the village, such as shopping in the local market and going to the temple. One day, she goes through Yai Waan's personal belongings. She finds some old clothes. At first, she thinks about donating them but finally she has a better idea and reuses them when Phin says, “คุณนายวันแม่จะสมถะ แต่ก็พิถีพิถันเรื่องการกินและการแต่งตัว บางทีก็เห็นคุณนายเย็บเสื้อผ้าเองด้วยตัวเองเลย” “Though Khun Nai Wan was not superfluous, she was particular with food and clothing. Sometimes, she sewed her own clothes.” (00.25.01) Moderation is clearly seen here. Yai Waan was certainly a moderate person. In fact, she was considered a rich person in the village. However, she loved to cook her own food and sew her own clothes instead of buying from shops in the local market. This shows she had the dressmaking skills and applied them to save expenses on clothes. Also, reasonableness is reflected. Yai Waan was the old lady who stayed in the house most of the time so she knew that the luxurious clothes were unnecessary for her. Thus, spending a lot of money on expensive outfits was not her priority.

Similarly, Khun Ma starts to practice moderation. Although she is a model, she does not wear fashionable clothes like other city ladies. When she is in Bangkok, she wears stylish clothes for her job. When she moves to Klong Ma Hon, she gradually changes her style to dress more like a village lady. When she finds Yai Waan's old clothes, she uses her creative skills in fashion to turn the traditional blouse and skirt into a vintage-style dress. She does not buy new clothes because she realizes that all Yai

Waan's clothes are still in good condition and the style is not out of date. Thus, she makes full use of the clothes left in a wardrobe and is able to save a lot of money. In this situation, the method of utilization is also clearly presented. Because of the change of time, place, and the environmental conditions, Khun Ma needs to adjust herself to be in harmony with other people in the village. She knows that if she still dresses in the modern style, she will be different and out of place. She wants to develop a closer relationship with others so she needs to blend in and become one of them. Changing style is one of the ways she is trying to cope with the change in terms of living conditions and new surroundings. Eventually, Khun Ma changes her lifestyle and a sense of unity is developed.

One night, Thong Bai, one of the villagers, comes to see Phu Yai Lee to borrow some money. However, he denies the loan to him and says, “ที่สำคัญที่สุด เราต้องสอนให้เขารู้จักพึ่งตนเอง ผมเชื่อว่าทุกคนสามารถอยู่ได้หากรู้จักพอเพียง” “The most important thing is to teach them to be self-reliant. I believe that everyone can survive if they are moderate.” (00.36.20) Phu Yai Lee applies reasonableness in this situation. Being the chief of the village, his main duty is to be responsible for the well-being of all members. In this case, Thong Bai asks to borrow some money from him but he does not lend it to him. It does not mean he is unsympathetic to others. On the other hand, he knows very well about the traits of every single community member. Thong Bai is a single man who always drinks and gambles. If he lends him money, he will surely spend it unwisely and wastefully. He considers the eventuality that this loan might cause Thong Bai to be in more financial trouble. He has a good enough reason to deny Thong Bai's request. Moreover, self-immunity is employed. Phu Yai Lee believes that if everyone lives in the middle path, no one will be in trouble and will be successful in life. He is

confident that if being moderate is promoted among all the members, the entire community will become peaceful and no one will have to face difficulty. Being moderate is the best assurance of economic solvency from Phu Yai Lee's point of view.

After some time passes, Khun Ma and Phu Yai Lee begin to go out to the field together. Sometimes, Khun Ma takes the buffalo to the field. She thinks that riding the buffalo is an alternative way to help the farmers to save on fuel expenses. Phu Yai Lee perceives this so he says:

ถ้าชาวบ้านเห็นความสำคัญของควาย ก็คงจะมีอะไรหลายๆอย่างที่ดีครับ อย่างน้อยต้นทุนในการทำงานก็ลดลงฮวบฮาบเพราะว่าเราไม่ต้องใช้น้ำมัน เดี่ยวนี้ควายไถนาไม่เป็นแล้วนะ เขาต้องเปิดโรงเรียนสอนไถนากันเลยทีเดียว... เพราะเขาเห็นว่ามันไม่ทันสมัยไม่ทันใจ ผู้ควายเหล็กไม่ได้ ความสำคัญของควายก็ถูกลดลง เพราะเขาเห็นว่ามันเป็นภาระ เลยจับส่งโรงฆ่าสัตว์หมดครับ

If the farmers know the importance of buffalo, many things might be better. At least, the cost will decrease because we don't need to use fuel. Buffaloes no longer know how to plough anymore so there is a buffalo school to teach them... They think the buffalo isn't as fast as a tractor. Its importance is decreasing as people think they are a burden. So, they send them to the slaughterhouse (00.51.55).

Self-immunity is an obvious influence on Phu Yai Lee's idea. Since fuel costs are one of the main reasons for the high production cost, using buffaloes instead of tractors will help lower expenses. If the farmers rely on the traditional way of ploughing by buffalo, they are not going to worry about fuel costs. Then, they can focus problems such as the quality of the seeds, the production system, and water management. Additionally, using buffaloes is environmentally friendly. Buffaloes do not cause any pollution that would degrade the environment in Klong Ma Hon. Thus, the villagers will not have the problem of air pollution from tractor smoke. A healthy body

leads to a healthy mind and spirit which will form a strong sustainable community in the end. Likewise, Phu Yai Lee does not only think about himself but also thinks about the entire community. Moral leadership is applied. His concerns are all about the well-being of others. He always takes the problem of all members into his consideration and tries to find the best solution based on moral wisdom. This is one of the outstanding virtues of Phu Yai Lee as the leader of the community.

#### 4.9 Episode Nine

At the end of Buddhist Lent, people in Klong Ma Hon make merit at the temple by offering food to monks. Khun Ma also participates in this ceremony for the first time. While she is walking home with Phin, she says, “ฉันเพิ่งรู้ว่ากับข้าวที่บ้านเค้าเอาไปถวายพระ ถ้าเหลือทุกคนก็เอามาแบ่งกลับบ้านกันทาน” “I just realize that if the food which the villagers offer to the monk is left over, everyone can share and take it home” and Phin replies, “อย่างนี้แหละจะ มีก็แบ่งกันกินแบ่งกันใช้ตามประสา” “Yes, we always share what we have.” (00.45.00) Moderation is clearly represented here. People in Klong Ma Hon are religious, generous, and kind. On the Buddhist holy days, people rarely buy food but normally cook to give a food offering to monks at the village temple. When they cook, they cook a lot which is enough for several meals. Sometimes, they share food with their neighbors. This creates a good relationship among people in the community. This is different from the life of people in the city in which people do not really reach out to others. What they take to the temple is usually what they buy from street vendors, which is very easy and convenient for them. Thus, the communication and the relationship within close communities do not exist. Also, the scene presents the

morality of people in the village. They follow the Buddha's teaching that everyone should commit only good deeds. Sharing is one of the simple ways of doing virtue.

One night, Pued goes to Khun Ma's house, asking her to help read his essay about family. Pradit, who come to visit Khun Ma, says that Pued is an orphan because he does not have a mother. Pued is very angry so he pushes Pradit down the stairs and runs away to hide in the temple. Phu Yai Lee and Khun Ma find Pued and Phu Yai Lee says, “ถ้าเิ่งรู้จักอดทนอดกลั้นก็ไม่เกิดเรื่องแบบนี้ขึ้นมาหรอก คนเรามันจะกล้าไม่กล้าจะแค้นไม่แค้นมันอยู่ที่ใจ ต่อให้เขาเยาะเย้ยถากถางเิ่งมากกว่านี้แต่ถ้าเิ่งไม่ตอบโต้เขาเขาก็เหมือนคนบ้าที่พูดพล่ามอยู่คนเดียว” “Only if you were patient, it would not happen. Everything depends on our heart. If you don't heed his insults, he will only look crazy babbling nonsense.”

(00.29.30) Phu Yai Lee's morality is obviously seen. Phu Yai Lee teaches Pued to be more patient and tolerate insults. In this case, Pued fights back with physical violence which is an unacceptable response for children to use when dealing with people of Pradit's age. Pued should have more restraint in handling the situation. Phu Yai Lee believes that being calm and not responding to bad words is an appropriate way to react. Violence is not the best solution. Conscientiousness is the most important principle and should be promoted from childhood to shape a mature person. Moreover, a proper adjustment among utilization is applied. If Pued has more patience and awareness, he will be able to control his physical actions and not react to Pradit violently. Pued can avoid troubling situations if he can control his emotional and physical reactions. Phu Yai Lee does not want Pued to be aggressive with elders so the best way is to control his own response instead of controlling others. If everyone is able to practice this, the community will remain peaceful and harmonious.

After the end of Buddhist Lent period, there is always a festival called “Kathin,” a traditional festival when people make merit by donating money to build or to fix the temple in the village. Klong Ma Hon follows this tradition (see figure 4.16).



Figure 4.16: A screenshot of people participating in Kathin Festival.

The spirituality of the villagers is well-represented in the festival scenes. Religion is the core value which brings all people in the community together. Everyone in the village will help each other to prepare and set up the venue for the festival. During the preparation, the sense of unity is fostered among them. A closer relationship is developed. They spend more time together and share a moment which binds them closely together. As a result, the harmony in the community is achieved. Secondly, proper adjustment among utilization is again employed here. People in Klong Ma Hon believe that religion can help them to have a better life if they commit good things according to the Buddha’s doctrine. They not only believe in the teachings but also practice them by taking action and participating in any religious activities. Their spirit and body cooperate in the activities willingly. Similarly, maximum utilization of all

potentialities is employed. Everyone helps to organize and prepare the festival to their best capabilities. Some who are good at construction help set up a pavilion. Some who are keen to cook prepare the meals. Those who have management skills plan the program. All commit themselves to their jobs and aim for the success of the festival cheerfully. This is a simple way to create unity in the community which is valuable and significant.

The main activity on the festival day is the parade consisting of a tree which is decorated with banknotes donated from the owner of the tree, to the temple. Phu Yai Mod's tree is full of banknotes. Pued wonders if Phu Yai Mod, who donates a lot of money, will get more merit than others who donate less or not at all. Phu Yai Lee then says:

เรื่องของบุญ จะได้มากได้น้อยมันไม่ได้เกี่ยวกับเราต้องทำบุญด้วยเงินมากหรือ  
ด้วยเงินน้อยอยู่ที่ใจมากกว่า การทำบุญด้วยเงินบาทเดียวผลอาจจะได้บุญมากกว่าเงิน  
ร้อยบาทด้วยซ้ำไปถ้าตั้งใจทำบุญจริงๆ เพราะฉะนั้นไม่ต้องไปน้อยใจหรือว่า  
กลัวน้อยหน้าใครและก็ไม่ต้องไปแข่งกับใครด้วย มีแค่ไหนก็ทำไปแค่นั้น

More or less merit doesn't depend on the amount of money donated. It depends on the intention. If you really intend to do it, only one baht donation can even probably yield more merit than with one hundred baht. It doesn't matter how much money we offer to make merit, it depends on the intention. So, don't be hurt and feel inferior to others or compete with others. Just give from what you have. (01.09.00)

Moderation is clearly presented in the scene. Phu Yai Lee gives a modest donation. One should donate according to one's ability, not go beyond their ability to give. The most important thing is good intention. Money does not rate the value of human beings. One baht is valuable for the poor while it is of little value to rich people. Thus, making merit is not a matter of how much one gives but rather what one's deepest



intentions are. Additionally, when one makes merit by making donations, one must not put oneself in financial peril. Sometimes, people just want to be praised by others for what they donate and ignore the main purpose of making merit. The social value which has changed over time makes people focus on the value of money more than the value of spirit.

#### 4.10 Episode Ten and Eleven

In a conversation with Luang Phor, Phu Yai Mod offers to build a bigger temple hall, not because he is religious and wants to contribute to the community. He only wants to feel flattered for making the donation. However, Luang Phor has a different thought. He does not want the temple to be famous because of its style of construction. His focus is on a person's spirit. Luang Phor says, “ถ้าวัดนี้มันจะดังก็ขอให้มันดังในฐานะที่เป็นศูนย์รวมจิตใจที่สงบและก็พ้นทุกข์ ให้อุบัติธรรมเจริญนี้มันไม่ได้วัดกันที่วัดดูต่อให้วัดนี้มีโบสถ์ที่ใหญ่ที่สุดในโลก แต่ถ้าญาติโยมไม่เข้าใจธรรมะหรือเข้าใจธรรมะผิดๆมันก็เปล่าประโยชน์” “If this temple will be famous, it should be known as a place where the mind can at peace and free of suffering. The development is not measured by material. Though we have the biggest chapel in the world, if people don't understand or misunderstand Dharma, it's useless.” (00.11.19) The ideas presented here are morality, one of the two conditions of SEP, and spirituality, one of the fundamental principles of PROUT, which similarly emphasize virtue. According to Buddhism, the temple binds people together and is the place which promotes a person's mental well-being. Luang Phor wants the temple to be known as a place that exemplifies those values. Understanding the ethics and Buddhist doctrines correctly is the most important principle. Morality is the core value which shapes and shields the community from spiritual harm, a safe place for living one's life.

Consequently, moral standards will be uplifted for the individual and the community as a whole. If everyone behaves in a good manner, refuses to commit any sin and encourages each other to adhere to Buddhist teachings, the community will be shielded from any crimes and dangers. This is what Luang Phor wants to see. The construction of a big temple with elaborate architecture, does not guarantee social harmony whereas ethical behavior does.

Afterwards, Phu Yai Lee confronts an issue with his family. Chalao, his younger sister and Wao, his worker, elope after Phu Yai Lee finds out they have a relationship. He disapproves of the relationship because Chalao is still in school and too young to think about family or even about romance. He thinks she should focus on her studies only. Then, he has an argument with Khun Ma when she tries to calm him down and persuade him to allow his sister to have a boyfriend. He says, “ชายวันท่านเคยบอกว่า การให้ศึกษากับคนมันจะเป็นอาวุธอย่างเดียวที่จะให้ชาวบ้านอย่างพวกเราเอาไว้รบรามาฟันกับการถูกเอารัดเอาเปรียบได้” “Yaai Wan once said that education was the only weapon against exploitation.” (01.08.45) Knowledge is clearly valued here. Phu Yai Lee refers to Yaai Wan’s point of view that education was the most important thing for everyone, especially for the farmers like herself and others in Klong Ma Hon. Farmers have been taken advantage of because of their illiteracy. Almost of them are uneducated so they have no knowledge or ability to protect themselves from the shrewd brokers or the authorities. Yaai Wan was aware of this so she pointed out that education was necessary for everyone. This is the main reason why she supported Phu Yai Lee’s education when he was young. Likewise, Phu Yai Lee encourages his two sisters to attain higher education. Importantly, he worries that women are likely to be deceived

more easily and he does not want that to happen. Self-immunity is then applied here. In modern society, it is evident that weaker or uneducated people will probably easily become victims. Moreover, he is concerned that without enough education, they might have to struggle hard in society and possibly fail professionally. Thus, he believes his sisters should be well equipped with education to protect themselves.

Thereafter, Khun Ma, who provides shelter for Chalao and Wao, takes them to apologize to Nang Pui for doing wrong and violating the social norms. This solves the crisis. Everyone accepts Phu Yai Lee's perspective about education while he allows his sister to continue her relationship with Wao under his supervision.

#### **4.11 Episode Twelve**

It is the harvest season and everyone is ready for fieldwork. Phu Yai Mod is trying to persuade the villagers to rent his imported threshing machine to help save time and energy. He leases the machine at a high rate to earn higher profits. Phu Yai Lee tells Khun Ma that he completely disagrees with Phu Yai Mod's actions and says, “ผมไม่เห็นด้วยแม้แต่การที่ต้องไปเช่ารถเกี่ยวข้าวของตู้ใหญ่โหมด...ผมกำลังจะอธิบายว่าทางเดียวที่จะทำให้พวกเราลืมตาอ้าปากได้คือการหยุดหนี้และตัดทอนรายจ่ายที่ไม่จำเป็นทิ้งไปซะที่เหลือมันก็จะป็นรางวัลของเรา” “I disagree on renting the harvest tractor from Phu Yai Mod...I'm going to say that the only way to help us thrive is to stop making debt and cut down on unnecessary expenses. The rest is our reward.” (00.06.15) Phu Yai Lee sees wisdom in moderation. From Phu Yai Lee's point of view, farmers have many burdens regarding the rent of paddy fields, pesticides, and fertilizers. Some of them have taken out bank loans. They must sweat in the fields without knowing how much balance they will have

after delivering the rice produce to the mill and deducting all the expenses. Some of them have made no profits. Being moderate is Phu Yai Lee's solution. He believes that if the farmers stop wasting money on unnecessary activities and expenses, they will actually have more money left. Making an organic fertilizer is an example. They are able to save money by producing organic fertilizer instead of buying chemical fertilizer. They should be aware of their financial status so they can plan how to reduce unnecessary expenses. Phu Yai Lee suggests that everyone must be moderate and modest. If they can practice moderation and reduce debt, they will actually earn more money from their harvest in the end. Although this is not the best way to better the economy, it is a better way to learn how to plan and to think logically.

According to his idea, Phu Yai Lee wants to help his villagers to improve their financial standing so he proposes an old tradition of Thai farmers, Long Khaek Gieow Khaow (ลงแขกเกี่ยวข้าว). This was an event when people gathered together to help each other harvest rice. They will rotate to everyone's paddy fields in the village and help for free. Thus, Phu Yai Lee, Khun Ma and her friends who visit her, promote this idea by organizing a meeting and making an announcement in the village, the market and the school.



Figure 4.17: A screenshot of the meeting regarding Long Khaek Gieow Khaow.

Economic democracy is employed. Phu Yai Lee believes that everyone is able to help each other by calling for the rights they deserve. He explains the process of Long Khaek Gieow Khaow and its benefits. He stresses the benefits of gathering together and negotiating the price with the millhouse. Farmers ought to be able to express what they need in order to cover their expenses. Unity will create more bargaining power to request an appropriate price when selling the rice. This is a way to react to the unfairness in pricing. As a result, a fair win-win situation will be created. This is the beginning of a better economic dynamic. In short, if the farmers pool their power, they are able to make demands to improve and reform their economic situation.

Although some of the farmers are not interested in Long Khaek Gieow Khaow at first, they reconsider after learning more about the benefits and eventually join the activity. (See figure 4.18).



Figure 4.18: A screenshot of the farmers joining in Long Khaek Gieow Khaow.

The scene clearly presents spirituality. All are assisting each other to carry out the work. Sincerity and sympathy is more important than concerns about money. Everyone works hard from field to field, with smiling faces. It shows how strongly they are bound together, physically and spiritually. They feel like they are members of a big family who need to support each other to achieve success. To reach this goal, maximum utilization of all potentialities is applied. All members are trying their best to help them reach the goal. Those who are physical fit and know how to harvest work in the paddy fields, those who are good at cooking prepare meals for all. Some walk along the side of the field to entertain and cheer them up in case they are discouraged by the work. This creates harmony in the community. As a result, stronger relationships and a harmonious community are developed. Furthermore, this is a good chance to preserve the tradition, Long Khaek Gieow Khaow.

Before starting the activity, Phu Yai Lee gives a short speech to welcome and thank everyone for coming. He says, “ใครจะไม่สนใจความทุกข์ของพวกเราที่ข้างเขา ไม่มีใครที่จะดูแลพวกเราได้นอกจากพวกเรา เราต้องรักใคร่กลมเกลียวกันและดูแลกันอย่างวันนี้” “It doesn’t matter if no one cares about our hardship. No one will take care of us except ourselves. We need to hold on to each other and take care of one another as we do today.”

(00.32.40) This shows the concept of self-immunity. Phu Yai Lee does not want everyone to wait for government assistance but instead to rely on each other. He needs everyone to keep their own needs in mind as well. This corresponds with the Thai proverb “God helps those who help themselves” (ตนเป็นที่พึ่งแห่งตน). Phu Yai Lee does not think it is a good idea to beg for sympathy from others about one’s problems and difficulties without trying one’s best to solve the problems alone. The way to protect and take care of oneself is to love and to be in unity. Self-reliance must be promoted from childhood. In addition, moral leadership is implied. Everyone in the community is facing the same problem and situation so they understand each other, how they feel, and what they should do. When everyone in the community develops self-reliance, they also have more awareness about the responsibilities of the whole community. In short, Phu Yai Lee wants everyone to keep in mind that as long as they are in harmony with the group and take care of each other, they will be able to get through the hardships in the end.

At the end of harvest, Khun Ma has a conversation with Phu Yai Lee on the way home and expresses her perspective that it would be great if everyone realizes that being moderate is not a torment but actually a way of sustaining happiness. As a result, people will not leave their hometown. Phu Yai Lee totally agrees with her and says:

ถ้าพวกเขาตั้งสติได้เขาจะเห็นว่าไม่มีผืนดินผืนไหนในโลกนี้ที่มันอุดมสมบูรณ์และสวยงามเหมือนแผ่นดินผืนนี้อีกแล้ว ไม่รู้จะไปดิ้นรนหาอะไรกันทั้งที่ปู่ย่าตายายก็ได้สั่งสมเอาไว้ให้หมดทุกอย่างแล้ว ประเทศเราเป็นประเทศเกษตรกรรมไม่ใช่อุตสาหกรรม ทำไมต้องพยายามหาอะไรมาขุดเยียดให้เราพวกอยู่ได้

If they come to sense, they will see that there is no land which is more plentiful and beautiful than this land. I don't know what they are struggling for since they have everything their ancestors have left them. Our country is an agricultural country, not industrial. Why do they try to force something else on us? (00.38.34)

Maximum utilization and rational distribution are given importance. Thailand is an agricultural country, which has rich, fertile land. Natural resources such as fertile soil, and water resources, are assets which everyone is entitled to make a living from. Phu Yai Lee's statement shows his pride and positive attitude towards his motherland. He recognizes that Thailand is the best place since everyone owns natural resources which are inherited from generation to generation. All have the right to possess land and make the best reasonable use of it. Phu Yai Lee's point of view is that if everyone rationally uses all of these resources to the best value, they do not need to struggle for other things or move to the city or abroad. Certainly, Phu Yai Lee believes that if people realized how valuable the land farmers is, carefully considered how to utilize what they have, and knew how to develop their resources, they will actually live happily in their motherland.

#### **4.12 Episode Thirteen and Fourteen**

Phu Yai Lee finally proposes marriage to Khun Ma and she accepts. However, they have to wait because Phu Yai Lee decides to be ordained into the monkhood before getting married. A modest ordination ceremony is organized according to tradition.



Unluckily, during his monkhood, Chaluay, his youngest sister, runs away from home to Bangkok. A villager sees her get into Pradit's car after he tells her that he has a job for her in Bangkok. When Phu Yai Lee learns this, he asks permission from Luang Phor to go to Bangkok for her, but Khun Ma is already ahead of him. Indeed, Pradit deceives her into making a pornographic film. Chaluay does not want to do it but she cannot escape. Finally, Khun Ma and Phu Yai Lee arrive and help her. Reverend Lee says, “คิดใหม่เถอะ ใช้ความรู้ความสามารถที่พวกโยมมีใช้สร้างสรรค์งานดีๆ ให้โลกนี้มันน่าอยู่ขึ้น คิดแต่สิ่งดีๆ ทำแต่สิ่งดีๆ...พวกโยมเคยคิดบ้างไหมว่าความสุขของชีวิตจริงๆมันคืออะไรกัน” “Rethink about it. Make use of your knowledge and ability to create nice things to make this world a better place to live. Think and do only good things. Have you ever thought what the real happiness in life is?” (00.30.35) Again, morality is obvious. Phu Yai Lee tries to convince the filmmakers to be more honest and aware. He believes that if anyone applies the intelligence and knowledge to do useful work, it will make society a better place and everyone will be happy. Ethics must be the principle for every occupation. Religious doctrines teach people to be good and conduct themselves in a proper manner and think appropriately. In short, good thinking will lead to good behavior and this will surely result in a better life. Nevertheless, people might do wrong things sometimes. Knowing what is wrong and being willing to make it right is always acceptable. In this case, for example, the filmmakers finally become aware of the immorality and dishonesty in what they are doing. They have a renewal of conscience and are ready to stop doing it. Spirituality is also applied. When they consider the impacts of their sins to the community, they feel guilty and no longer want to degrade society. The sense of responsibility to community arouses them to turn their back on that wicked job and start an honest job. At this point, moral leadership is obviously seen. People have to think

and be concerned about the community as a whole rather than personal gain. As long as everyone is concerned with the effects on the community, conflicts within the community will decrease.

The end of the drama depicts the happy ending after Phu Yai Lee leaves the monkhood and plans a wedding ceremony with Khun Ma. He wins her heart with his goodness. He proves that although he is only a rural man without fame and wealth, he is good enough to take care of her from now on. Eventually, all members in Klong Ma Hon live in their harmonious community peacefully and happily.