

sider the head to be the seat of one's magical potency (Sanskrit *ṛddhi*, Muang *lit*). Cutting or washing one's hair on a proscribed day can cause a person to lose his magical potency for a period of one week. An old adage runs: "Cut your hair on the wrong day, and you are wrong for seven days; marry the wrong woman, and you are wrong till you die."

One should never wash one's hair on a Thursday. As for getting a haircut, the basic rule is to avoid Wednesday⁶. Barbers all over northern Thailand close their shops on Wednesday. Getting a haircut on any other day can be either good or bad, depending upon which formula a person chooses to follow. Here are two formulas prescribing the ramifications of getting a haircut on each day of the week:

Table 2

Good and bad days for a haircut

day	prognosis of formula A	prognosis of formula B
Sunday	long life	loss of property
Monday	neither good nor bad	neither good nor bad
Tuesday	strong magic potency	victory over enemies
Wednesday	cannot cut hair	cannot cut hair
Thursday	neither good nor bad	financial gain
Friday	neither good nor bad	financial gain
Saturday	neither good nor bad	riddance of adversity

Agriculture should not be undertaken on Saturdays, as anything planted on a Saturday is likely to be destroyed by blight or animals. Excepting Saturday, each day of the week is claimed by some texts to be especially auspicious for planting a certain type of crop and for some type of agricultural activity; these two rules are not well-known, however. More popular is the formula called "The Locations of *Ketu*" (*keet tok*). *Ketu*, a personification of the descending node in astrology, is associated with different places or things, depending on the day of the week. Activity concerning these places on the days on which *Ketu* is linked to them is dangerous.

Table 3

"The Locations of *Ketu*"

day	location of <i>Ketu</i>	prohibited activities
Sunday	pits	digging ponds, wells or postholes
Monday	roads	travel
Tuesday	fires	cremations, making kitchen hearths
Wednesday	houses	moving into a new house, clearing land to build a house
Thursday	forests	entering a forest
Friday	sleeping places	changing one's sleeping place or residence
Saturday	rice fields	rice agriculture and agrarian rites

⁶ NGINN (1956: 893) reports a similar custom in Laos, which he says is related to the tradition that the Buddha first shaved His head and became an ascetic on a Wednesday. This belief does not appear to obtain in northern Thailand.