

Presentation 4



Tug-of-War as Social and Cultural Processes: Through a Case Study of Huu Chap Tug of War Festival, Bac Ninh Province

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UNESCO's Intangible Heritage Convention, which was adopted in 2003 and entered into force in April 2006 highlighted "Recognizing that communities, in particular indigenous communities, groups and, in some case, individuals, play an important role in the production, safeguarding, maintenance and re-creation of the intangible cultural heritage, thus helping to enrich cultural diversity and human creativity". Article 15 and the article 1 on purposes of the Convention makes further references to issues relating to the participation of communities, groups and individuals. By respecting and empowering practicing communities to define, designate their intangible heritage and engage in protecting ICH, many states have come to acknowledge community as one of the central goals of the convention. In fact, the interrelationship between community and heritage seems to be inseparable. Valdimar Tr.Hasfstein pointed out that "At closer inspection, intangible cultural heritage is practically synonymous with community" and therefore "the purpose of the convention is not only to safeguard traditional practice and expressions, but also, and just as importantly, to safeguard communities" (Valdimar Tr.Hasfstein 2004, p.212)

In light of this perspective, my presentation will examine a variety of tugging rituals and games in Vietnam, in the relation to concerned communities who are not only the bearers of the element, but also the primary responsible parties for the safeguarding of the heritage. Particular attention is given to the diverse expressions of tugging rituals and games, recreated by communities' creativity in their interaction with nature and their history. Moreover, the role and forms of community involvement in safeguarding the tugging rituals and games are also discussed. Although the nature of "community" has proved to be quite variable, the term "community" applied in this paper means communities-of-place, particularly community of the village or town where the tugging rituals and games are practiced.

1. Communities and variety in heritage expressions

There are many variations of tugging rituals and games in Vietnam, characterized by multi-ethnicity and territorial regions. In general, keo co is practiced by different communities across the country, from north to south, mountains to plains. However, tug-of-war concentrates mostly in the Northern midlands, the Red River Delta and North Central region – where the Viet (or Kinh, the majority people) has long resided and is the cradle of the wet rice and Red River civilizations. Besides, the game is also played widely by ethnic minority groups who are the pioneers of rice cultivation in Northern mountainous areas, such as the Tay, Thai, Giay.

As the outcomes of community' creativity in particular ecological contexts and economic and socio-cultural conditions, tugging rituals and games in Vietnam has a variety of traits, meanings and playing rules. In regard to the element's name, the Viet calls it keo co (tug of war), keo song, keo may (rattan cord tugging), keo co ngoi (playing tug-of-war sitting), and keo mo (tugging two connected bamboo trees), the Tay calls it Nhanh vai, the Giay calls it So vai, and for the Thai people it is called Na bai. Tugging rituals and games are often held as a part of spring festivals within villages, marking the beginning of a new agricultural cycle and expressing wishes for bumper crops, prosperity and happiness. Tug of war is often organized in front of a village's communal house or shrine, preceded by commemorative rites to the local protective deities. The materials used in tugging vary

from region to region; they can be made of bamboo poles, rattan cords, or hemp. The selection procedures for the tugging rope and contenders follow particular ritual rules, and in many cases, the winning team and the losing team are arranged by custom to express certain religious meanings and the harmony of nature.

The following brief descriptions of tugging rituals and games of different communities reveal the multiple expressions of the heritage in different aspects, such as tugging materials, tugging techniques, and the related beliefs and customs, etc. These distinct features reflect self-identity and history of each community in the local context, preserve collective memory against oblivion and offer connectivity for community cohesion.

In the village of Huu Chap, Hoa Long commune, Bac Ninh province, people use two joined bamboo trunks as the rope. They select bamboo very carefully. Before the Lunar New Year, the festival organizing committee send people to go around the village to select the best bamboo trunks, which are straight, not too old or too young, healthy in the tops and not infested. The trunks are joined together by means of mortises. The joint is supported by old bamboo because this is the place where players hold on to and which is subject to most pressure. In order to lessen the roughness of the joint, people chop young bamboo into thin pieces and twist them into ropes, which are made into three spirals each consisting of three or four circles of various sizes. The spirals resemble spiders, one female and two male, and embody the male and female, or yang and yin elements. They can symbolize fertility, with wishes for bumper harvests and reproduction of plants and creatures. After the rope is prepared, it is displayed in front of the communal house so that the villagers report to the tutelary god that preparation is finished. Players must be healthy local men who are currently not mourning any death in their families and who are aged 30-37. Each side consists of 35 men. Four other men will act as flag waving men and four others as security guards for the tugging competition. On the 4th day of the 1st lunar month, after the tutelary ceremony which is held in the morning, in the afternoon, the elderly ask gods for permission to start the game. Players take turns to pray to the tutelary god. The rope is now removed from the communal house to the playground. The two teams enter the ground amid spectators' cheering and the senior men' drumming. The players sit along the bamboo. Two from each side hold the joint between the trunks and the rest of the players are behind them.

According to custom, tug-of-war of Huu Chap village are implemented three times. According to custom, the team of the east side wins for the first competition, the team of the west side wins for the second competition, and for the third competition, all the visitors join and support the contenders of the West side team to gain victory. It is believed that a win from the team of the east side will bring favourable weather and therefore a good harvest because it is the direction of the sunrise.

In Thach Ban ward, Long Bien district, Hanoi, formerly Ngoc Tri Village, Cu Linh Commune, Gia Lam District, Hanoi, people use a rope made of rattan inserted through a hole in an ironwood post which is planted on the ground. The players sit on the ground while pulling the rope. This is why the game is called sitting tug of war. The rattan must be between 25 and 30 meters long and five centimeters in diameter. It either end must be of the same size. If one of the ends is smaller or bigger than the other, then it cannot be used. Nowadays, because rattan is getting rare, people tend to replace it with a tailor-made rope which is about 30 meters in length and 5 centimeters in diameter. The post is cylindrical and large and is made of ironwood. It is painted red and the hole is at knee level. When the festive season comes, it is planted on a ground where tug of war is played. Before the contenders play the game, a rope is inserted through this hole. Players must be local men aged 18-35 and their families must live in the hamlet for at least five generations. The men are divided into two teams, Duong, which is in the lowland and on the side of Nghia Tru river, and Cho, which is in the highland. Each team consists of 24 players and one team leader. They sit with one leg stretched and the other bent while pulling the rope. Each team turns their faces to one side of the rope. Customarily, if the Duong team wins over the Cho team, the village will have a lucky year.

Local legend tells that tug of war originated from villagers' wish for enough water for agriculture and their daily lives. In another interpretation, the game also symbolises a snake creeping from a higher to a lower place and therefore practiced as a ritual of praying for floodwater subside. This symbolic act is rooted in the local contexts, as Cu Linh Village is located at the side of the Red River and villagers mainly live on agriculture, particularly rice growing. The gods which local people worship are all related to water. For example, their tutelary god or Saint Linh Lang originated from water and he is also known as Water God. Saint Tran Vu, who is venerated at Tran Vu Shrine has the power to cause winds and

rains, is also called Water Management God. The past Ngoc Tri village festival and the present Tran Vu Shrine festival are dedicated to these gods.

In Xuan Lai Village, Xuan Thu Commune, Soc Son District, Ha Noi, people play tug of war during the Vua Ba Shrine festival, along with other games such as the competition of fetching water for rice cooking; chess playing and wrestling. The festival is held on the fourth day of the first lunar month. The two bamboo trunks which are used for the game normally consists of eight or nine internodes per each trunk which symbolises good fortune. Players must be local men aged 18-35. The hamlet is now divided into 24 residential units or subunits (xom). Each year, two of the 24 subunits send their men to play the game. The subunits take turns to play every year. Each unit sets up a tugging team of five, seven or nine men. The number of contenders must be odd and as a rule, a team stands in the southern direction and the other in the northern direction. They play in three rounds. The first round is for the purpose of warming up, the last two rounds are for competition. Anyhow, the referees do not announce winners and losers. Spectators self-understand and predict the year's harvests based on the results. Customarily, if the southern team wins, rice harvests will be good and the weather hospitable. If the northern team wins, white beans will grow well while other crops will be less successful.

In Huong Canh Town (Binh Xuyen District, Vinh Phuc Province), which was previously three old villages of Huong Canh, Ngoc Canh, Tien Canh, the cord must be made of a long and big rattan with at least 45 meters in length. Rattan cord must be soaked under a pond for 15 days and then dried for 5 - 6 days to make it durable, tough and firm. Moreover, players tug the rattan cord through a ironwood stake which is fixed in the ground and marks the separating line between two teams. The stake is 1.05 meters in height and has 37 centimeters in diameter. There is a small hole (approximately 4 centimeters in diameter) cut through the stake at the point of 80 centimeters high from the ground. When the game begins, the cord crosses this hole and its central point will sit right inside the stake. The referee will use white paint to mark this central point of the cord to decide the winner and loser of the game.

Before the real competition happens, two respected elders perform ceremonial tugging acts. After that, all participated teams tug in three rounds, each round is 20 minute - length until they could define winners and losers. According to the festival regulations, each team has 34 members when they get into the tugging ground: 01 captain, 02 vice-

captains, 01 service-staff, 25 main players and 05 reserve players. There are also 50 standby players waiting outside the ground. Captain and vice-captains must be men with strong leadership and credibility so they can lead the whole team in unity and understanding. Among 25 main players, there are 4 important ones hold their positions close to the tug-of-war stake. These four people must be very strong, enduring, skillful and ingenious in order to protect their team against losing by pulling the cord down to the ground. The rest of the players are divided into ten rows of two and the final one holding the end of the cord. In each row, festival organizers dig a hole with 1.2m in width and 1.4meters in length for players to sit in and sustain their force. One row is 1.5m separated from the other so that players can stretch their legs and half-lie their backs down to pull the cord.

For tug-of-war at Huong Canh Town, tugging tactics are important as much as players' strength in defining the final result of the game. Additionally, the unity among all players and team leaders plays an essential role. Technical secrets in tug-of-war game all lies in team leaders' signals. Each team keeps different secret signals. Once the team leaders (captains) move their flag, or giving some agreed signals, all players are supposed to act precisely and accordingly, such as holding, pulling or tugging the cord, etc. If players miss or misunderstand their leaders' signal, their chance to win the game is limited. Sometimes, when both teams summon up all their strength to tug, the cord is moved back and forth continuously, get burnt and release smoke.

Differently with other tug-of war, it is believed that the game of Huong Canh Town is to depict secret naval trainings on Ca Lo or Canh river (currently belong to Binh Xuyen district, Vinh Phuc province) during the reign of Ngo Dynasty (10th century AD) in order to gain victory on Bach Dang River Campaign against Han invaders (938.AD). Naval soldiers used rattan cords while swimming to pull their boats, surprise their enemy and gain victory. There is also another interpretation is that Huong Canh villagers used to use boats for jar trading and fish-catching from Ca Lo river to Hong river, then up to Tam Giang river and Da river. Rattan cords were therefore used to pull back and forth their boats on the rivers and probably, tug-of-war is a game reflecting the characteristics of daily life of Huong Canh residents.

For the Tay in Khanh Yen Ha commune, Van Ban district, Lao Cai province, the tugging rope is placed in the same direction of the water current with its root at upstream and its

top at downstream. The root portion is always reserved for the elderly. In this sacred ritual, the younger team is told by the shaman to let the elder team to be the winner.

For some other communities of the Tay ethnic group in Lao Cai province, the tugging rope symbolizes a dragon that brings good luck and support for villagers to have good health, good business, favourable weather and bumper crops. The women team is always given a chance to win the game in the even year, with the belief that business in the even year will be good as women are reproductive, and crops will be thriving. There are some abstaining such as the men team is not allowed to hold on the dragon head and eyes (i.e. the root part of the rattan), because the dragon cannot spray water to make rain if its eyes are covered. The women team is not allowed to hold on the top of the rattan because it is believed that the dragon cannot fly if its tail is held.

For the Tay in Trung Do Village, Bao Nhai, Bac Ha district, Lao Cai province, two teams, men and women, play the game to express the tugging of bountiful crops to the villagers. Another interpretation of local people regarding tug-of-war is that this game aims at commemorating the local legendary figures (Prince Vu Van Mat and General Hoang Van Thung) who gained victory in fightings against foreign invaders.

The above-mentioned diversity of tugging rituals and games reflects diversity of communities, because the heritage represents the living expression of the unique traits of the different communities. At the same time, tugging rituals and games share very strong indication of the commonalities regarding the themes of fertility, prosperity, and harmony. It is essentially part of agricultural rituals and thus bears the characteristics of agricultural culture, weather and crops. For example, this agricultural cultural identity is revealed through symbolic acts. As described, tugging rituals and games in Thach Ban, Hanoi, symbolize a snake creeping from a higher to a lower place and practiced as a ritual of wishing for floodwater recession. In the tugging rituals and games at Huu Chap Village (Bac Ninh Province), the team from the east (the direction of the sunrise) customarily wins the game, representing the beliefs for favorable weather and a bumper harvest. For some communities of Tay, Lao Cai Province, the elders' team wins over the youths' team by custom, and the root portion of the tugging rattan cord is always on the upstream side and reserved for the elders, which is a sign indicating wishes for abundant water, etc.

Nowadays, tug-of-war has become popular and widely spread in contemporary life in Vietnam as a joyful folk game, serving to unite community members in rich cultural

expressions. It is appealing to people of all ages and strata because it is easy to play. Although it has a competitive component, winning or losing is not as important as unity, joy, and community harmony. It affirms that this element is a socially inclusive process and performed for the sake of the communities' prosperity and wellbeing as well as to remind the community members of the importance of cooperation.

2. Communities involvement in the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage

This part examines the forms and mechanism of community involvement in safeguarding the tugging rituals and games. Some actors involved in the heritage management are summarised and some other aspects, such as support from authorities, taboos, customs and modifications of the heritage over time are also identified and compared.

One very clear observation from the present study is that a spectrum of degrees of community participation exists, depending on particular local conditions. The grass-roots have played an essential role for the safeguarding of the element. At the same time, communities involvement has been intergrated with the wider framework of government policy, the central and local authorities' governance. Authorities have been facilitating the community involvement by some measures of administrative interventions. In general, the continuation of the heritage has been relied on continued and direct community input. The safeguarding of the element also requires the collaboration of local communities with government authorities. Anyhow, top-down administration needs to fit with the expectations and needs of its creators and bearers.

A cooperative management model which is representative for the whole community seems to be the most popular form of community heritage management. A festival management committee is usually established at the localities and it is also mandated with some forms of formal responsibility by the local authorities. The committee includes the head of village as a government official, representatives of social groups and associations such as the Front for the Fatherland, the Associations of Elders, the Associations of Women, Vereran's Association, Associations of Farmers, etc. In some places such as in Xuan Lai Village, Soc Son Commune, the management of the heritage has been entirely delegated

to the traditional leaders and residents of the village, in which the council of elders has the most influential voice. It should be noted that in Vietnam, village is not only a traditional basic social unit but also the basic geographical administrative unit, which was known as a fairly autonomous body in history. It is also found out that the elderly always play an important role in offering guidance and supervision for the heritage safeguarding. They are regarded as men of wisdom and experience and respected as the guardians of village morals.

The case studies also indicate that although communities have the primary and direct role of performing, maintaining, and distributing ICH, proper safeguarding of the heritage can be better achieved through a delicate balance of heritage management between the community and authorities. Many communities have strengthened their bonds to authorities through relations of administration and further benefited from government supports in terms of legislation, expertise, funding and technical support.

[Table 1] Summaries of community's involvement in safeguarding of the heritage and some related aspects

Name of the festival, location & ethnic group	Forms of community involvement	Taboos and/or related custom	Supports by authorities	Modifications of the heritage
<p><i>1. Rattan cord tugging Festival In Huong Canh Town, Binh Xuyen District, Vinh Phuc Province (by the Viet people)</i></p>	<p>+ The Festival organising committee is established and approved by Vinh Phuc Province's People Committee.</p> <p>+ The Festival organising committee include representatives of the provincial/communal authorities, the Huong Canh communal house's keeper,</p>	<p>+ 25 contenders (in which there are 4 contenders hold the positions near the tugging stake, 21 contenders sit on the hole), and 5 standby contenders for each team. In addition, there are one team leader/captain and two leader assistants for each team</p>	<p>+ Vinh Phuc Province's Relics Management Committee plans and sets up the festival's programme, in collaboration with Binh Xuyen District's Cultural Division</p>	<p>+ The playground of tug-of-war was changed several times. Before 1954: it was next to Khanh Phuc Pagoda. 1960-2009: Tug-of-war playground was in front of Huong Canh Village's Communal House</p>

	<p>representatives of social unions and associations in Huong Canh town...</p> <p>+ Local people participate in the possession from Ngoc Canh Communal House and Tien Canh Communal House to Huong Canh Communal House and in the possession from Huong Canh Communal House to Thuong Shrine for the ceremony of escorting village tutelary god, King Ngo Quyen to Thuong Shrine</p> <p>+14 elders are nominated by local residents to carry out the honour ceremony to village tutelary gods</p> <p>+ Residents of four sub-unit of Huong Canh Town selects tugging team members for their own sub-unit</p> <p>+Residents participate in giving comments, feedbacks regarding the festival's regulations, and festival procedures</p> <p>+Residents contribute finance</p>	<p>+ Every teams compete until the final result is defined. Each team has three competitions.</p> <p>+Contenders should be healthy men from 20 year old and over.</p> <p>+The ritual specialist should be an elder, having a full family with his wife still alive. He should be a moral person and have good voice to read aloud the honor oration</p> <p>+ All the members participate in the ceremony for village tutelary gods should be the respected and moral elderly.</p>	<p>+ Vinh Phuc Province's People Committee guides and organises the Huong Canh festival</p> <p>+ Huong Canh Town's People Committee provides finance for organising the festival</p> <p>+ Local authorities provide awards for contenders and winners</p> <p>+ Local authorities build the playground for tug-of-war</p> <p>+ Central and provincial authorities fund the communal house's renovation</p>	<p>From 2009 until now: a new playground was built next to Canh River</p>
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	<p>for the expenses of the festival which depends on their own capacities.</p> <p>+Team leader of each tugging team and the elderly guide and train contenders.</p>			
<p><i>2.Sitting tug-of-war Festival at Tran Vu Shrine,in Thach Ban Ward, Long Bien District, Hanoi (By the Viet people)</i></p>	<p>+ The festival organising committee is set up by local authorities. This committee includes the Tran Vu Shrine's keeper, representatives of social unions and associations, leaders of local authorities</p> <p>+ People of residential sub-unit selected tugging team for their sub-unit</p> <p>+ Residents contribute finance for the festival's expenses depend on their own capacities</p>	<p>+ Players must be local men aged 18-35 and their families must live in the village for at least five generations</p>	<p>+ Central authorities financed the renovation of Tran Vu shrine in 1997 and 2007, which provided an enabling environment for the element to be safeguarded</p> <p>+ Local authorities guide the organisation of the festival, which is directly implemented by the Festival committee</p>	<p>+ Changes of the festival from Ngoc Tri village's communal house to Tran Vu Shrine in 1989</p> <p>+ Festival time was changed from 12th day of 2nd lunar month (February) to 3rd day of 3rd lunar month (March) in 1989 when the it was first revived.</p> <p>+ Women were allowed to participate in performative tug- of war (but not tugging rituals) in 2006</p>

<p>3. "Kéo mả" Festival in Xuan Lai Village, Xuan Thu Commune, Soc Son District, Hanoi (By the Viet people)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + The festival organising committee is selected and assigned by villagers. The festival organising committee nominates a council of elders who give ultimate consultancies for of the festival procedures + The head of the festival organising committee guide the preparation tasks for contenders + Head of the village organise meetings with village's associations and unions to delegate tasks of organising the festival + Villagers contribute money and rice to make offerings to the tutelary gods, some families donate bamboo trees for tugging rituals and games. + The elderly carry out fundraising activities in the village market to supplement the financial source for the festival's expenses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Healthy young men are selected for tugging team. Each team include 7 to 9 contenders. Two sub-units among 24 sub-unit of the village carry out the tugging rituals and games and 24 sub-units take turns to play every year. + The number of contenders must be odd number. + The bamboo trunk which is used for the game must consists of eight or nine internodes which symbolises good fortune + Members of commemorative rites should be elders + Contenders let their feet and their upper part of their body from belt twist bare 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Local authorities support finance for preservation of the relics + Local authorities support a part of finance for the organisation of the festival 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + The festival has been maintained continuously for the last 100 years and no significant modifications occurred
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	+Selected elders conduct the ceremony in honour of village tutelary gods Etc.			
<i>4. Tug-of-war festival in Huu Chap, Hoa Long commune, Bac Ninh province (By the Viet people)</i>	<p>+ The festival organising committee include elders, representatives of social unions (such as: leaders of the Front for the Fatherland, the Associations of Elders, the Associations of Women, Vereran's Association, Associations of Farmers, Youth Union, Village Cultural Clubs and head of the village, etc. Head of the village play the role as the Chair of the festival organising committee, nevertheless, he usually follows the consultancies given by the council of elders</p> <p>+The elderly council organises meetings to discuss and set up particular sub-boards, such as: consultative board, worshipping rites board, ritual music board, flag waving board, and select the healthy and young</p>	<p>+ Contenders should be from 18 – 40 year old, healthy and unstained families.</p> <p>+ Contenders let their feet and their upper part of their body from belt twist bare</p> <p>+ According to custom, the team of the east side wins for the first competition, the team of the west side wins for the second competition, and for the third competition, all the visitors join and support the contenders of the West side team to gain victory</p> <p>+ Ritual specialist leads the ceremony in honour of village tutelary gods</p>	<p>+ The Festival Management Committee is approved by Hoa Long commune's people committee annually since 2008</p> <p>+ Central authorities provide a part of financial expenses for the festival to be organised</p>	+ Some part of rituals are no longer to be practiced such as firework and water procession

	<p>men of the village, with unstained families to take part in the north and west tugging teams.</p> <p>+Four flag waving men directly guide the rope making procedures, with the participation of villagers in the communal house's yard.</p> <p>+The tugging customs and rules are conducted voluntarily by all contenders, villagers and visitors.</p> <p>+Villagers make contributions to the festivals. Especially, in 1998, villagers contributed finance to renovate Huu Chap communal house because it was partly destroyed in the War of Resistance against French (1945-1954)</p>	<p>should have a full family with his wife still alive</p>		
<p><i>5.Rattan cord tugging of the Tay in Trung Do Village, Bao Nhaj, Bac Ha district, Lao Cai province</i></p>	<p>+ Head of the hamlet and his wife, along with the ritual specialist are in charge of finding the rattan cord</p> <p>+ The head of the hamlet organises meetings with the local residents to delegate tasks for</p>	<p>+ Men and women participate in tug-of-war and they are divided into two teams, one male team and one female team. Each team has 12 contenders.</p>		<p>+ Local authorities financed the shrine's renovation in 2009</p> <p>+ Local authorities designate personnel to take part in the festival</p>

	<p>the preparation of the festival</p> <p>+ Young people and villagers involve in the preparation work at the shrine</p> <p>+ Shrine keeper plays the role as leader of ceremony</p> <p>+ The ritual specialist guides villagers to carry out tug-of war and conduct ceremony</p>	<p>+After tug-of-war, ritual specialist distributed blessed gifts of popcorn and cereal to the villagers to wish for bumper crops</p>		<p>organising committee</p> <p>+ Local authorities provide financial support to organise the festival</p>
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References

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[Figure 1] Huu Chap Communal House. Traditionally, it is a place to venerate the tutelary gods and space for village meeting.



[Figure 2] Tug-of-war Festival in Huu Chap Village in 2010. The biggest spiral resembles a female spider and the two smaller ones represent two male spiders, which symbolize fertility and wishes for bumper harvests.



[Figure 3] The tutelary gods of the Huu Chap village include River God and some historical figures. These gods are venerated through tablet placed on the altar in the palace (cung) of the communal House.



[Figure 4] In 2010, tug-of-war was held on the yard in front of the communal house.



[Figure 5] After the rope is prepared, it is displayed in front of the communal house so that the villagers report to the tutelary god that preparation is finished.



[Figure 6] The head of the village delivers his speech before tug-of-war is held.



[Figure 7] On the 4th day of the 1st lunar month, after the tutelary ceremony which is held in the morning, in the afternoon, the elderly ask gods for permission to start the game. Players take turns to pray to the tutelary god. The rope is now removed from the communal house to the playground.



[Figure 8] The rope is now removed from the communal house to the playground to start tug-of-war.



[Figure 9] The rope is now removed from the communal house to the playground to start tug-of-war.



[Figure 10] The two teams enter the ground amid spectators' cheering and the senior men' drumming.



[Figure 11] The two teams enter the ground amid spectators' cheering and the senior men' drumming. Each side consists of 35 men. Four other men will act as flag waving men and four others as security guards for the tugging competition.



[Figure 12] Four other men act as flag waving men wave the flag and go along the tugging team several rounds before the tugging competition starts.



[Figure 13] Four other men act as flag waving men wave the flag and go along the tugging teams several times before the tugging competition starts.



[Figure 14] Among 35 main players, there are 4 important ones hold their positions close to the central point of the playground. The rest of the players are divided into rows of two.



[Figure 15] Players settle their position on the playground.



[Figure 16] Four flag waving men and four security guards holding their sticks are also referees of the tugging competition.



[Figure 17] According to custom, tug-of-war of Huu Chap village are implemented three times. The team of the east side wins for the first competition, the team of the west side wins for the second competition, and for the third competition, all the visitors join and support the contenders of the West side team to gain victory. It is believed that a win from the team of the east side will bring favourable weather and therefore a good harvest because it is the direction of the sunrise.



[Figure 18] The team from the east (the direction of the sunrise) customarily wins the game, representing the beliefs for favorable weather and a bumper harvest.