

4.8.2. Beliefs and Superstition concerning flowers

Examples:

- When the plants or flowers are sown by children, they are believed to grow better since the budding power of the child is infused to the plants, compared to those sown by adults.
- If we plant the flowers which are stolen from others, they are believed to bloom better.
- In Bhutan, flowers represent both beauty and sacredness. So, if you grow lots of flowers and offer them at the altars, or at sacred sites, you will be blessed with beautiful children at present and you will be reborn as a beautiful person in the next birth.
- If the plants and flowers grow very well, the person who planted them is said to have “green fingers.”

4.8.3. Beliefs and Superstition on Animals

Examples:

- The generic name given to big black snake is *buemen* which literally means “no snake” but bad omen. So, seeing such a reptile is considered ill-luck and misfortune will strike the person or his/her family. It is believed to be the messenger of death which has assumed the form of snake to frighten you and scatter away your soul. The soul once scattered will have to be consolidated and strengthened. For this, a special ritual *la kug* (ref. earlier section on this topic) is performed to restore the soul and to ward off such misfortune. In this ritual, a replica of the snake is made with dough and left outside facing the direction/site of the place where the snake was encountered.
- If a dog, especially of your own, howls throughout the night or dig a hole in the ground around your house, it is considered a bad omen. It is believed that they can sense an impending disaster, which makes them cry.
- If a cat licks its front paws and then wipes its face, it announces the arrival of guest at home.
- Brawling of cats is considered bad omen as it is believed that cats fight over the spirits of dead people.
- If a black cat crosses the road when you are making a

journey, it indicates ill omen. It could be a failure of your mission or obstacles could occur.

- If an owl hoots, it is just a call to the beaver to bring food but hearing it laugh is ominous and warns of death. Again, if owl is seen in the morning or afternoon, it is believed that ill-luck will befall the family. Therefore, the Bhutanese call an owl, the bird of bad omen.

4.8.4. Beliefs and Superstition concerning Pregnant Women

Examples:

- Different kinds of food the pregnant woman dreams of are taken to symbolize the sex of the unborn child. For example, dreaming of pumpkin, turnips and peaches are believed to indicate the child as female while dreaming of radish and pear indicate the birth of a son.
- It is also believed that when a pregnant woman menstruates during her pregnancy the baby born to her will be the reincarnation of a renowned lama or a celebrant since the baby is believed to be cleaned and purified in her womb.
- If the pregnant women has made the bed wet unconsciously in her sleep for the first time, it signifies that the child born will be rich and successful.
- During her pregnancy the woman should not dye her hair as it means the mother is stealing the baby's fairness.
- Sex of a baby is felt by the movement in the womb. If the movement is felt more on the left it is a sign of a baby girl and conversely if the movement is on the right side the child will be a boy.
- If the pregnant mother loses her charms and becomes dull the baby is believed to be a girl since the mother's beauty is taken by the baby but if the mother has her glowing looks on her face the baby is believed to be a boy.

4.8.5. Beliefs and Superstition on Children

Examples:

- When the baby is born it is considered to be impure (drip) until the cleansing ceremony is performed early in the morning on the third day after its birth.