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Table of Contents

“1 Too Am A Man”................................................................. 1
Pinthea Bunggu, Simon Tl Els, and Phil Fields

Of Paradise Lost: Orya Myth as Explanation and History.................... 33
Martin Maware, Ruben Supra, Simon Tl Els, and Phil Fields

Of Red Men And Rituals: The Ketengban Of Eastern Irian Jaya.............. 39
Andrew Sims

Myth and Metaphor In Ketengban Pregnancy And Childbirth Practices........ 81
Ann Sims

Being An Mpur Woman: First Menstruation Through Infant Care............... 147
Carol Kalmbach

Controls Of Red And White In The Bauzi Cycle of Reproduction............ 117
Joyce Bidey
"I Too Am A Man"

How manhood is measured, and how scores are settled

Pinhas Bunggu, Simon Ti Elsi, and Phil Fields


Introduction

For the Orya, successfully killing an enemy traditionally marked the transition to manhood and was the normal prerequisite for marriage. Victorious men were given the right to wear as their badge of manhood a nose piece indicating the sex of their victim. As the modern world has impinged upon them, Orya warfare practices have been halted, but the standards by which they measure manhood have yet to be revised. Thus, Orya men frequently express their frustration in the words, "We have become women," and this is a powerful force in Orya social disintegration. The history narrated here by Pinhas Bunggu gives a glimpse of life as it was at the end of the "good old days", and reveals much about why they went to war, how they waged war, and how they made peace. A major underlying motivation for war is found in the words, "I'll show them that I too am a man."

Pinhas Bunggu

At the time we began our field work among the Orya people, Pinhas Bunggu was the head of the Bunggu clan. After living with the Orya people for several months, and not making the progress I had hoped for in learning the language, I asked the village leaders to find a man to teach me the language. Pinhas was wisely selected, and we spent hours and hours together. He took his job seriously, and felt it his personal responsibility that I speak properly. He was the son of Sënwal, the powerful war chief in this story, by his third wife.1 I remember him once lamenting that he did not come up to his father's physical stature, whom he said had thighs like trees. Pinhas, however, was only about five feet tall and about 51 years old in November 1983 when he told me this story. He died of cancer in 1987.

The Bunggu clan are believed to have been the original inhabitants of the entire Guay area, descendants of a man by the same name. The original Bunggu was a country bumpkin, living alone in a crude tree house in the forest. He is the subject of hilarious stories of how he had to be taught the normal things of life: how to kill pigs (he had lived previously only on bird meat), how to have sex, how to kill men in battle, and how to decorate himself afterwards. He divided his land with the other major clan figure, Gwër (also called Guay), who was the main character of the "Paradise Lost" story of Martin Maware.2

Chief Sënwal Bunggu

If Bunggu started as a country bumpkin, his clan had learned its lessons by the time of chief Sënwal, who was certainly a man to be reckoned with. Sënwal was a mambi, which means he was renowned as having
killed men. When young, he had killed first a woman, and then a man, in two separate raids to the coastal village of Marengge. (The coastal language groups to the east of Sairi were the usual targets of Guay’s war raids.) During these two raids, he was the only one who was successful in killing, hence the beginning of his reputation. Later he killed a man from Sawe, one of the Oya villages. Being established as a leader, he was appointed as a chief (korano) by the Dutch government. According to the people, the government realized that unless they worked with this man, killing would continue. He had, however, served for a long time in his position as chief by the time of the events related here, and by that time he was helping the younger men get experience.

Background: Taulie’s Grudge

In saying that men went to war to prove their manhood, other excuses for warring are not ruled out. It is hoped that the following information will help the reader comprehend some of the rationale behind Oya intrigue. The Oya village of Sawe is just a two hour walk from the coastal village of Kaptiau, a village that has its own language. Consequently, there is frequent interaction between the two villages, enhanced by the giving of women in marriage between the groups. Therefore, before Indonesian became the trade language, most people of the two villages could speak at least some of the other’s language. If there were grievances, questions could then be asked of one’s relatives in the other group.

Tobias, the village head (korano) of Kaptiau, was disliked by some of his fellow villagers because he beat some of the people. When Tobias died, Kanggau’s clan was blamed for his murder by sorcery. Since Kanggau was also from Kaptiau, it would, at first, appear that the issue of Tobias’ death would be confined to the Kaptiau people, and not involve Oya people. However, Taulie, a man from the Oya village of Sawe, was the trading partner (dokot) of the deceased Tobias. Taulie, and especially his wife Kubu, had enjoyed trade with Tobias, receiving, among other things, manufactured cloth, which Kubu had used for sarongs. When Tobias died, Kubu refused to be comforted and refused to wear the sarongs. She instead tied only a very short piece of bark cloth around her hips, and as a sign of mourning did not cut her hair. Her behavior served to keep her grudge against Kanggau’s clan alive.

A problem came, however, in that the people of Sawe were too closely related (by marriage and trading partner relationships) to the people of Kaptiau to perform the revenge murder themselves. So eventually Taulie went to Moliga, the traditional mountain hiding place of the Guay people at the southern extremity of the Oya territory to make arrangements. There he gave a ‘grudge arrow’ (o’k roka) to Deigwi, with these words, “Use this to kill Kanggau.” This was not a symbolic gesture. This real arrow was given, with markings that would make it clear that it was from Sawe. Only that arrow would be left at the murder site. After the murder, the same arrow would be saved by the victim’s family, and refitted with a new bamboo point to be used in revenge against Sawe. The revenge, however, did not come to pass, as Pinhas later tells us.

When the warriors from Guay, together with allies from Klatra, arrived within a day’s journey of Kaptiau, Sawel, the senior warrior from Klatra, performed sorcery to entice victims to come out of the village. This involved waving a cassowary bone knife toward Kaptiau and invoicing the name of Kanggau’s paternal grandfather. Pinhas gives the details on how the two victims actually made their fated decision to leave the village:

95. So that’s how it happened, on a Sunday, they killed the two men who were cutting tobacco at Somte Peninsula.8

96. On Sunday, at the same time the people were entering (the church), the two men were coming towards this area.

97. That old man (Kanggau) was going out to pick tobacco, because his nephew (naimif), Yonas, had said (on Saturday).

98. Yonas had come (on Saturday) asking for tobacco,

99. “Give me some tobacco.”

100. Then Kanggau answered,

101. “I’ll go pick tobacco tomorrow at Togwa (river) delta.

102. Don’t you have legs?

103. You never go along.”

104. That is how he spoke to his nephew.

105. Then Yonas said to him,

106. “OK, tomorrow let’s go.

107. Later we’ll go off and cut (tobacco).”

108. But that was the Sunday the dangerous men from Guay and Klatra were going down past Suma (village toward them).

109. He is the one who gave the arrow (in order for the Guay men to kill someone from Kaptiau), Taulie, a Sawe (village) man, and there at Saele Deigwi [Deigwi Bunggu, a man from Guay] secretly took the arrow away.14

War Partners

Pinhas gives a very sketchy account of the killing of Kanggau and Yonas because he was only giving background to the story of the murder of Mr. Umal, which he treated in more detail (see page 10). He is careful, however, to tell who were the killers, since they were the ones to be honored. Following Pinhas’ summary, I will fill in some details, as this portion of text illustrates the war partner relationship between pairs of Oya men.

75. Now (of course) Deigwi had prepared a supply of sago for the purpose of killing Kanggau.

76. But it didn’t happen.

77. He missed (with the grudge arrow given by Taulie).

78. Those two brothers shared the honors.

79. Tahyial [Sawel’s younger brother] killed one, Kanggau himself.

80. The other (Yonas) was killed by what’s his name, Aulu.

81. He (Yonas) ran of course.
Throughout this discussion, I have been calling the kinds of raids just described above as war, which is how the Orya people describe them (eijone, or in Indonesian perang). The preparation period for a war usually lasted two months, in which the primary activity was, as in line 76, preparing sago for the journey. The round trip would take them almost a month, so the sago basket carried by each man must have weighed at least 25 kilograms.

In describing the skirmish briefly, Pinhas does not elaborate on the role of the fighting partners (eijone). This was so much a part of his understanding of how war is fought that he did not think it necessary to explain. Normally fighting partners were close relatives, and in a raid the younger would follow close behind in the steps of the older. Aulu and Paulus11 were true older and younger brothers (aya, oso respectively) from Klatra village. The older always took the lead, so it was Aulu who caught the young man Yonas as he was trying to escape by swimming in the Togwa river. He caught him by the hair and stabbed him with a cassowary bone knife (gwaaho), and Paulus gave the death stab (balakata), also with a gwaaho. Deigwi missed Kanggau with the arrow given by Taulhe, (but the arrow was pulled from the breadfruit tree and shot into Kanggau after he had already been killed). Instead "ahyai (from Klatra) shot Kanggau, and Tidores (from Guay) gave the second shot with a bamboo tipped arrow. Tidores was Tahyl's father's younger brother's son. In the war partner relationship, the younger man was seen as an understudy or apprentice of the older man. Later, at the victory celebration, it was the junior partner who was more lavishly decorated. Thus we see the senior partner enabling his younger relative to become fully initiated into manhood.

Celebrating the Victory

The procedures carried out following the death of the victims again reveal how power for manhood, similar to Polynesian mana, was gained from the death of enemies. Following the deaths, the bodies were stabbed again, and the bone knives (which are naturally hollow) were used to suck the blood of the victims. This was drunk by the one who gave the death stab (Paulus and Tidores), and rubbed on the bodies of both pairs of fighting partners (eijone). A final portion of the blood was drawn up in the bone knife, and the handle plugged with leaves. The knife was then worn with the point up so as not to spill the blood on the return trip to the home village. A portion of this blood was given to the warriors' sons to be drunk or eaten with sago pudding, and the rest mixed with other ingredients and rubbed on the bodies of both victorious war partners at the big victory celebration.

The Orya people I asked see the primary benefit of drinking the blood of enemies as bravery and power. One said, "If that man hears that other people are coming to kill him, he won't fear." Another comment was, "He won't fear like a woman." In addition, others will regard him as powerful and dangerous. It was also mentioned that such a man will also become a better hunter.12 The blood was rubbed on the body also because it was believed to give health and physical strength.

Pinhas relates how the returning heroes celebrated on their way home:

As they returned home, the warriors celebrated with whoops and short spurts of dancing, and happened to just miss meeting Kanali and several other Orya people from the village of Sawe. As it happened, Kanali was on his way back to Sawe, having just visited his trading partner (pokot), the newly murdered Kanggau. Upon hearing the victory shouts of the returning Orya and Klatra men, these Orya people ran in fear, even dropping a few things they were carrying. They did not run in fear of the Orya men, but because they knew that those men might not be far behind in hot pursuit, out to wreak vengeance on any Orya person in their path. They could tell by the victory shouts that the men had killed two people. The winged shaped roots of some trees make good drums when hit with a club. The warriors saw the fresh footprints of the returning Sawe people and beat the roots within earshot of them to communicate their victory. By giving two bursts of "Hauy*yè yè", they communicated that they had killed two people. This also served to warn the same people to be on their guard against reprisals. No one from any Orya village would be able to go to the coast until the scores were settled. Naukel, Kanali's wife, jetisoned her bark cloth blanket as she ran, and as it happened, her true father, the small man Kabawa, danced on it as he went by.13

The warriors also beat the muli when they came within earshot of the home village. The women and children all came out and joined the heroes as they danced and sang their way back to the village. The main victory celebration, however, was carried out after at least a month of preparations since it was not just a celebration of victory, but also carried the function of a male initiation ceremony. This was the first time any of the four men (two pairs of war partners) had killed, so the celebration marked the most important transition of their lives. They were now of age, dangerous, able to protect a wife, and therefore their eligibility for marriage was unquestioned.
At the celebration, the honor of wearing the appropriate nose piece (corresponding to the sex of the victim) was given only to the partner giving the second stab, not to the one who first shot the victim. In this case, since they had killed men, Paulus and Tidore became eligible to wear the longer nose piece (mase te). The hole in the septum had been made when they were still very young, and other decorations had been worn there as they waited to achieve manhood. Other than this victory celebration, there were no other ceremonies performed by the Orya people to mark the transition to manhood.

Covering the Arrow Shaft

Having achieved their goal, the men of Guay and Klatra were now "one up" on the people of Kaptiau. Thus they were not at peace, which is defined by the Orya as having things "levelled out" (pasi okekiu). Clearly, the scores would have to be leveled, because the coastal people, while being the normal target of raids by the men of Guay, were also the source of their trading partners, and some were related to them by marriage. The way this leveling could be achieved was by giving a girl (free of charge) to them, as would say, "to bury the hatchet", or as they would say, "to cover the arrow shaft" (paya keking hip). Ironically, in this case, Tauhie, the man who carried the grudge arrow in the first place, was the one who functioned as the go-between while the negotiations were being made. Until Tauhie made it known to the Kaptiau people, they did not know that the men of Guay were involved in the murder of Kanggau. He also did not reveal that he was the one who gave the grudge arrow in the first place. But his duplicity was revealed at the wedding feast, when the men from Guay brought the girl to "cover the arrow shaft", as Pirinbas relates:

104. That was so, but then they (the Kaptiau people) accepted Sipora, in order to cover the arrow shaft.

105. And that's why Tauhie was startled when he was eating rice, when they told about him.

106. When they (the delegation from Guay) indicated him [at the feast for giving the bride and making peace] they (the Kaptiau people) said,  
   "Oh yeah! So he's the one who gave the arrow!
   They wouldn't have killed him for nothing."

107. Tauhie then therefore was startled (scared out of his skin), when he was eating his rice,
   "Oh-oh, they've just told them about me!" he thought, when they took Sipora down to the coast in order to cover the arrow shaft, when they gave her to the coastal people.
   [Tauhie vigorously denied any part of having given the grudge arrow. By casting doubt on what the men from Guay said he succeeded in saving his own life.]

108. So at that time the coastal people found out like this,
   "Oh... It wasn't for nothing that they killed.
   He's the one who gave the arrow."

109. Back when they were only mad at Guay [because they hadn't yet found out about Tauhie], the coastal people of course saved a big machete up [in the rafters], in order to split open a Guay man.

110. It was his, Trasin's [Kanggau's son's machete], put aside to split open a Guay person.

111. But when they took Sipora down, the woman to cover the arrow shaft, then they found out,
   "Oh, so it was Tauhie who gave the arrow.
   No, it wasn't for nothing they killed."

112. So then they stopped (wanting revenge), and finally Trasin died, what a pity, without killing a Guay person.

113. That big machete was tied up in palm sheathing [sheath from around the nuts], and there it stayed.

114. It had been well sharpened, like a razor, for the purpose of killing a Guay man.

115. So that's the way it has remained until now.

116. The coastal people never did kill a Guay man.

117. Our ancestors had that custom: If a woman is given, then blood can not be spilled again.

118. After that they can not kill anyone.

119. Sipora still lives now, and she has one daughter.

120. Of course they still want Klatra to give (a woman).

121. The coastal people have of course said,
   "Well, they killed two, those two Klatra men (Ta hyal and Aulu) shared the honors of killing two.
   The Guay men just decorated themselves." [Because they were the ones to give the second stab. Note that the coastal people understood the same custom.]

122. So that is why they still say,
   "Oh, if only Klatra would give us a wife, then there wouldn't be anything to complain about.
   It could be finished."

131. So (the anger) for Klatra is still there, so they tell me.

132. That's what I hear.

133. Klatra hasn't yet given a wife to the coastal people.
134. Eventually the coastal people will kill a Klatra man and hide him [so the murder won’t be found out].

135. (I know this) because my mother’s ancestor was a coastal woman.

136. So I hear that (the grudge) for Klatra still remains, but for Guay it is really finished, because they gave Sipora to them.

137. So there is no grudge now for Guay.

The normal method of making peace was followed, that is, arrangements were made for the giving of a girl without bride price. Actually, the debt was not considered paid in full until the woman had a child to take the place of the dead man, which gives significance to the mention of Sipora’s daughter (line 119, above). There are other interesting idiomus used to refer to the role of the girl given in marriage. In addition to “cover the arrow shaft” (apygo keïkinghip, line 104, page 6, the shaft being the part that could be refitted with a new tip for revenge), there is also submerging the head (nodi aitim keïkik nuk, line 125, page 16, and dipping water with the dead man’s skull (nolikam de hose zeïs’hip, line 128, page 17). For the Orya people, the last figure of dipping water pictures the woman giving sago pudding to the aggrieved family. Such a woman was given in marriage to a close relative of the deceased man, in this case to Kanggau’s grandson (aza).

The score was never settled for the second murder, however, so Pinhas predicts that the Kaptiau people will eventually even up the score with the secret murder of someone from Klatra, (line 133, above.) The sharpened machete was ready for revenge, and Daminggus was almost the victim, since the people from Kaptiau mistakenly suspected he was from Klatra. Note below how important family relationships are in order to avoid becoming a victim of retribution:

153. Well, after Guay had killed Kanggau and Yonas, then shortly afterwards father (Sênwal) took us all out (to the coast).

154. But what’s his name, Daminggus, that is Kostan’s father’s younger brother (obwater), [the coastal people] thought about him, “Oh, where is he from?... Oh, where is he from?”

155. Well, Tomas, a man from Kaptiau who was the first Village Head, a relative of my father, from the coast, he was asking.

156. Oh, I forgot to say, we lived there at Togwal delta; father had us live there, he stayed with us.

157. And then Tomas came.

158. Then he went up to his own village and said,

“Well, if it isn’t Sênwal who has come, bringing his children.”

159. Then they (the coastal people) told him (Sênwal),

“What reason do you have to be afraid here?
Did a sow scream in birth pangs for you? [Or ‘Was your mother a pig?’ They said this to refer to the fact that they were related to him.]
"Why should you fear? 
Were you born of a sow? 
Your ancestor, you know, was a girl from here, a coastal woman."

Daminggus of course was afraid.

And again father told him,

"They are just like that; they won't do anything to you.
Of course it would be a different story if a Klatra man had come here.
They can't take you away from me."

That's what he told him when he was afraid.

"As if my ancestor was an interior woman.
My ancestor was a coastal woman."

That's what he told Daminggus, and then he stopped being afraid.

There we lived a long time, and then we came around here again.

After that we lived at Bulop delta [a small stream near Suma], and then we went back (to the coast) to sell meat.

When we finished selling, then we came back to Ululum [area near Guay] and lived there.

Then Yè [Sennwal's older brother] died, and then we left there.

Now the talk is finished.

Mr. Umal's Mistake

The main theme of Pinihas' discourse was the murder of Mr. Umal, which was different in many respects from the previous killings and gives rise to further revelations relevant to Oya war practices and manhood. Umal, whom Pinihas referred to as Tuan, (in Indonesian honorific), was the district officer of the government*, a man from Ambon. His headquarters were in Bonggo village on the coast. He was a very handsome man, a favorite of all the girls, and he evidently used this to full advantage in every village he went to. In Guay however, Yakoba, the young woman he seduced, had been promised in marriage to Nosën. Yakoba had already been presented to Nosën and taken to his house to live with him, but the marriage had not been consummated. Nosën had not yet killed a man, and she rejected him, running instead to the handsome outsider. This happened within a month after the Kapiatua killings. Pinihas lets us in on some of the intrigue:

1. This is about Mr. Umal, who tried to keep his liaison with Yakoba a secret because she had already been given to Nosën.

2. So each time she slept with him he kept it secret.

3. But Markus surreptitiously saw her, when he (Umal) was lowering her with his hand from his window.

4. He was letting her down just at dawn, the chickens hadn't come down yet [from their trees].

5. So that's why Markus told father [bian, in an extended sense, actually Pinihas' father's younger brother, Oika, who was also Yakoba's true father],

"Guess what I saw — Umal hiding Yakoba, Mr. Umal today — I saw him doing it at dawn when it wasn't light yet, lowering her from the window to the ground, so that no one would notice."

6. So he told Markus, his son [actually Markus was Oika's eeye wel, Oika's mother's brother's son],

"Don't spread it around.
What does he think he's doing (with her)?
He'll find out!"

7. Well then, after that my father [his real father] Sennwal, the Head of the village, rang the bell [for people to gather].

8. He gathered them together in the evening, and Boyo [Oika's mare, the husband of Oika's namulu sister's daughter] had whispered to his mose, [Mosa is a synonym of sowe. Here it means brothers-in-law, as described below.]

"When the Head [Sennwal] asks us, 'Who will accompany Mr. Umal to Bonggo village?', when you see me raise my finger, you also raise your fingers."

9. So, then my father [Sennwal] asked,

"I gathered you to see about accompanying Mr. Umal.
No other reason, but for you to show him to Bonggo."

10. Well, right away Mahli [also called Boyo], Wasina, Nosën, Waga, and Syanga (who was still small) all raised their hands.

11. And then they went off.

12. They told him [Sennwal],

"We ourselves will accompany him.
No need for anyone else to go."

13. So he told them,

"Why not?
Go ahead and just you go with him, just your family."
Bow Magic

However, there was a slight complication:

15. Now father [Sénwali] himself also went along, [and that wouldn’t have mattered], but an old woman, Augustine, or Ahiwè [her ear name] was also going along.

16. They could have killed him at Sëyu (a sago swamp near Guay).

17. So he [Sénwali] said to them,
   “A woman is with us.
   You go on and take him farther.”

18. So they took him down the Bidiam [river].

At first, I assumed that Boyo’s party did not kill Mr. Umali at a closer location to avoid disturbing the innocent old lady, Ahiwè. Nothing could be further from the truth. Here Piriis did not elaborate, probably because he did not want to explain the following custom to me. The woman, Ahiwè, was Sénwali’s bow magic partner (lit: bow magic spirit (jana dowal, jana kwała basa dowal)), his older brother’s wife (mosa or sowe). She came along to help Sénwali work magic to ensure a successful killing. If a man was married, his bow magic partner was the wife of his war partner (ejone). This was the case here: Sénwali’s ejone was his older brother Yë, Ahiwè’s husband. War partner families enjoyed very close relations, often eating together and sharing in work projects. Because of this close relationship, the identity of the jana dowal of married men was common knowledge.

The identity of an unmarried man’s jana dowal, however, was kept in strict secrecy. She could be any woman, relative or non-relative. A man’s first jana dowal could be his own mother or his sister, married or unmarried. Before leaving the village each of the men had received a magic cigar from his bow magic partner. The woman would receive tobacco from the man, and sleep with it next to her head. She would then roll the tobacco into a cigar and rub vaginal fluid on it. The man would approach her on the departure morning, but not in her line of vision. The partners would stand back to back, and the woman would give the magic cigar to him, but not look at him. He would leave, again without entering her line of sight. This ritual was to protect the man from being seen by the enemy. The cigar was saved and smoked when the warriors came very close to the enemy village.25 Smoking the cigar gave power to escape penetration by enemy arrows. In spite of their role in helping the warriors, bow magic partners were not allowed to see the murders because this would ruin their effectiveness in working future bow magic sorcery.

After the others left them, Sénwali and Ahiwè took off their loin cloths, and while touching her vulva, he waved a cassowary bone knife (gwahó) in the direction of the prospective murder site, invoking his grandfather’s name, and saying, “Let my sons kill men.” Sexual relations, or any kind of penetration of the vagina during this ceremony were taboo, as this was believed to bring about penetration (by arrows) and death, rather than the victory of the warriors.26 It might be supposed, since the blood of victims gave power, that the meaning of touching the vulva would be to appropriate the power of the woman’s menstrual blood. Again, this is not the case. Menstrual blood was strictly avoided, and this ceremony could not be done if the woman was menstruating.27 Instead it was the vaginal fluid that had the power. The man rubbed the fluid on his body, and especially over his eyes, where it was believed to improve the ability to see the enemy. This ritual was carried on only by the war chief (mambi), so the other men on this trip would not have performed it. Having completed their ritual, Sénwali and Ahiwè returned to the village, and the narrative continues:

19. They took him (Mr. Umali) down the Bidiam river, until they arrived at Bër [a hamlet near Klaatra].

20. Then all of them slept.

21. In the morning, they made stir fried sago for Mr. Umali.

22. The man from Ambon, that policeman, took a bath. [This is the first mention of there being another outsider along.]

23. Mr. Umali himself took a bath.

24. He combed his hair, then they told him, “Eat this stir fried sago.”

25. They gave him some tea in a mug.

26. Then right away Boyo and Nosèn they signaled themselves with their eyes, “Now.”

27. Nosèn did it to Mr. Umali with a machete.

28. Oh but he hit too high, at the base of the skull.

29. But Amus (the policeman) was immediately beheaded by Boyo.

30. His head dangled down (from a bit of skin in front).

31. Well, Nosèn had missed, so he gave him another stroke on neck, and Mr. Umali’s head dangled down.

32. First he stood up like a tree stump, without a head, and his blood squirted up, then he fell.

Another Method of Settling a Score

Boyo (or Mahli) had a separate score to settle that did not involve either Mr. Umali or the policeman. The people of Bër (a small hamlet near Klaatra) had been in on the killing of Kanggau, who was his trading partner. (He had also called Kanggau his older brother, since the older man was a distant kinsman.) Note the terms Boyo uses to speak about settling his grudge (in line 74 below):

70. This is the reason Mahli (Boyo) killed him there: The Guay (and Klaatra) people had killed his trading partner when they killed Yonas and Kanggau.
71. He was his very good trading partner, so he thought like this, "Ha... That Simon, a man is he, a dangerous man is he! (Who does he think he is)!" [Simon was Chief Sawal's Christian name. Sawal was seen to be responsible, since he was the war chief (mambili) of Klata. He was also the man who warded the cassowary bone knife to entice Kanggau to come out of his village.]

72. That's the reason Mahili led them to kill Mr. Umal at Bär.

73. His sister Sapda did not cut her hair [as a sign of mourning and her insistence that revenge be taken], so that's why they killed him there.

74. So when Wasina and Nosn told him to go ahead and kill him at Yalingun headwaters, saying, "Let's do it here," Mahili told him, "Nope, not here. Sawal caused me to lose out by killing my good trading partner for me, Kanggau. [Actually Guay was also involved in it, but since he had married a woman from Guay, he could not hold a grudge against them.] We'll do it at his village, so that he will say, Oh Mahili, too, is a man, is he? Well, is that so? Mahili, too, is a man, so at my village he killed the rotting (decayed) man. (We'll do it there) so Sawal will also know that about me.

Mahili (Boyô) settled the score in this way: The soul of a murdered man is thought to become a malevolent ghost (i ana zi hwa), so by murdering Umal and the policeman at Bär, he forced all the residents to move. In fact, the Oya people will not still not stay at the old village site, but can stay near it.

Note also, (in line 74.) that Boyô's real desire is that the people of Bär find out that he is a dangerous man. Here again we see manhood defined in terms of murder. But the neophyte Syanga, who was still just a boy (perhaps 11 years old), got his first crash course in manhood.

33. Well, Syanga, my older brother (by Siowal's first wife), ran, (but they called to him.) "Hey, we're (inclusive) (just) killing some men so why are you running! Killing men in war is like this."

34. Mahili, or Boyô as he was called, caught him with his hand and brought him back.

My older brother (Syanga) then himself stabbed Mr. Umal with a bone knife (wilef). [Actually, they took his hand and helped him stab Mr. Umal.]

36. After that Markus and all of the men stabbed his body, and then they came up toward here, up to Tahyl Tetik.

[They left all the packages they had been carrying, and took with them only the policeman's carbine rifle.]

The Reaction at Home

There was a mixed reaction to the news of the killing of Mr. Umal and the policeman. Many people were afraid of reprisals from the Dutch government. Yakoba grieved briefly. Siowal, however, had obviously approved of the killings, so his reaction (as given below) is especially puzzling.

37. There we lived.

38. I was small then.

39. Then soon after my father fought with Wasina, with his naîmî (his sister's son).

40. His sons ran from him (Siowal) [not wanting to incur his anger].

41. So my father fought with his nephew there, Wasina, out of anger at the killing of Mr. Umal.

42. But then Pit's father, Nosn [a second man called Nosn, from Klata], shot Wasina with a bamboo arrow (in the leg).

43. Then Wasina sat down (rested), having fought with his mother's brother (baba). [Nosn was a classificatory mother's brother.]

44. It was all over.

This is a confusing narrative, but this is what happened: Nosn from Klata (not the fiancé of Yakoba) was living with Siowal, and both men had been trading partners with the policeman that was killed. Now Siowal had obviously known about the planned murders, since he performed sorcery to help make them successful. He had wanted the young men to get experience, but when his wife's kinsman, Nosn, came from Klata, he feigned anger at the men who killed the policeman. Actually, Wasina should not have been the focus of the anger, since he gave the death stab, not to the policeman, but to Mr. Umal. The other men who were directly responsible for the policeman's death ran off, not wanting to incur wrath over this issue. Wasina, however, decided to stand up to this, with these words, "As if you are the only man, the only man-killer! I also am a man, just as dangerous as you [Nosn and Siowal]!" (Nosn wore a mireny nose piece, indicating he had previously given the death stab to a woman.) After venting his anger, however, he apologized to Nosn, who was also considered his baba (his mother's classified agent). In apologizing, he offered his thumb to be stabbed with an arrow, a traditional way of settling an outrage or legal offense. Nosn took a metal barbed crocodile arrow in his hand and stabbed him in the leg, and also extracted the arrow. This, however, rekindled Wasina's anger, and he took a club and hit Nosn. At this point, Chief Siowal broke up the fight, and gave Wasina two blows with a club to put him in his place. The men put down their clubs, but as we shall see later, Wasina's angry words, "I also am a man," were seen as a threat to Siowal's leadership, a threat Siowal could not abide. For different reasons, Yahom, another resident of Guay, was not happy about the killings, as Pinhas relates:

45. Lore, who lives over there, her father, Yahom, was lame.

46. At that time he cried constantly, like this,

"Oh they'll kill me!
As if I had legs!"

47. So he was apprehensive,

"They shouldn't have killed Mr. Umal.
Misters shouldn't be killed.
Oh, they [the government] will kill us."

48. So because of that father told them,
"You'll be the ones to carry Yahom around."

49. So it was that Mahili [and his group] carried him over to Molga (mountain).

50. So then they did it, took him up to Hiatke village (part of that mountain), brought him up and built a house for him.

51. And so Yahom lived there.

52. And then they celebrated Mr. Umai's death, and so it was finished.

Yahom's apprehensions are understandable. He was lame in both legs (probably a polio victim), and therefore was considered as only half a man. He did succeed in marrying, but only because there was a very undesirable girl (datu/sun) in Guay who offered herself to him. His relatives did not help him with his bride price, since he could not help them, even with garden work. Since the young men were "feeling their oats", Sëwël gave them the task of carrying Yahom on the long journey to Molga, their mountain-top refuge.

The word "celebrated" (wërgweblan) translated above is a word meaning to "decorate the body because of him". The main celebration was preceded by several weeks of hunting and gathering in preparation for a gift exchange. Just prior to the celebration, a red body paint called edwin kaila (lit: butcher bird blood) was applied to the bodies of all four war partners. The warriors presented themselves with victory shouts and the people sang and danced all night. The morning after, a largeness of meat, sago, tobacco and betel nut was given between the clans of the fighting partners. In this case, the second death blows were given by Waisia and Wiaga, so they became eligible to wear the mase te, the long nose piece. Nosën and Boyo, the ones who actually beheaded the two men, were also painted red, but did not yet have the right to wear the mase te.

How Yakoba and Yokbet Fared

When Nosën told Yakoba, "I killed your man," she cried, but only for one night. Later, when Nosën was decorated (wërgweblan), Yakoba was suddenly more taken with him. Having succeeded in killing, Nosën became more desirable. She married him, but they had no children. After becoming a widow, she remarried, but was again barren, and so was divorced. (Barrenness is one of the most common reasons for divorce or, in the old days, for taking a second wife.) She outlawed her third husband before she also died.

Since Mr. Umai was from Ambon, there was no need to settle the scores. The Orya seldom met with Ambonese and feared no reprisals. The policeman, however, was from Bonggo, the seat of district government at that time. A little girl, Yokbet, was therefore given to cover the arrow shaft. Co-author Simon Ti Els estimates that she would have been seven years old or younger.

123. What I first told you, about Mr. Amus (the policeman), I also left one thing out.

124. They also took a wife, Yokbet, the Head of the Village [of Guay], Bertus' younger sister.

125. Her role was to cover the head of the Bonggo mar. [Another idiom for "burying the hatchet".]

126. So she's the one living there, Yokbet, but she didn't marry.

127. She just lives there.*

128. She was given there to dip up water with the (dead) man's skull, but she didn't marry. (Dip water', yet another idiom for "burying the hatchet".)

129. He was also a Bonggo man, so she was to dip water with Amus' skull.

130. They also at Kaptiaw took Sipora, to also dip water with the skulls of Kangsu and Yonas.

The murders of Mr. Umai and the policeman happened around the time the Japanese fled from the invasion of the Allied forces.

67. Oh yeah, I left out one thing.

68. When they killed Mr. Umai, then the Japanese (soldiers) burned him up with the house at Btr.

69. Burned him up with the house, having already become bloated.

The Killing at Betap

Because the land was now in full war, the Dutch government had no time to punish the people for the deaths of Mr. Umai and the policeman. But the Orya people were not content to let foreigners be the only ones to distinguish themselves in battle. Therefore under Sënwël's leadership, they decided to use the general confusion as an opportunity to embark on another war of their own, this time to distant Betap. The people cite two reasons for this war: 1. The people were encouraged by the killing of Mr. Umai and the policeman, and wanted to make an even bigger name for themselves. The big name was also a form of insurance, making others afraid to make reprisals. 2. The people of Betap were held responsible for the devastation of Sigi by a plague of sickness. The people of Betap were believed to be masters of kwimal, a type of sorcery which enables a man to travel in the spirit and inflict internal wounds on an enemy. The spirit will appear in the form of a bird to the victim, but by the time he sees the bird, it is too late. Pinhas continues:

54. For that reason father took us over there to Klatra's territory.

55. Therefore he led us and lived with us at Klatra's territory.

56. So he stayed... and then he gathered the people together, again he was in command.

57. After that he led the people in killing at Betap.

58. At Bo village, they pounded sago for fulfilling the grudge against Betap, then he gathered them, and killed people at Betap.

59. Father took the grudge there, with all the warriors of Guay. [Including Guay, Dore, and Klatra villages]

60. Waisia was the only one he forbade,

"You don't go along.

I don't work with you."
Then they killed at Betap, father leading.

They killed seventeen at Betap, women, men, young girls, also very good ones.

They killed women, men, big men.

They killed so that their partners could decorate.

Then they came back.

Father decorated himself at Sigi.

Others decorated themselves over at Molga.

The casualties at Betap might have been higher, but most of the able-bodied people had gone to another village for a party. Šenwal's victim at Betap was an old man who was squatting on the ground and looking in a mirror while shaving. He belatedly saw Šenwal's approach in his mirror. From this it can be seen that the physical prowess of the victim was not important in defining success in this kind of "war." The blood of the murder added to the reputation of the killer even if he succeeded by treachery, or even if the victim was defenseless. Since Betap is so far from Guay, no girls were given to settle the score.

Desirable Qualities of Men

Attaining the status of manhood does not automatically make one desirable for marriage. Other desirable qualities for men include industriousness and particularly prowess in hunting wild pigs. Having a bad case of tinea (skin fungus infection), however, will make either a man or woman undesirable (datasi, daulsun, masculine and feminine forms). However, if a man with tinea is a good hunter, the parents of the bride will encourage their daughter to marry him, because they know they will get frequent gifts of meat. Pinhas also illustrated this subject when talking about his ancestry, giving the story of datasi man meets daulsun girl. Note even here, however, the fear of treachery:

My mother's ancestor was a coastal woman, Tamwae was her name.

A man from Bébo married her, the coastal woman.

So therefore the coastal people tell me when they meet me,

"No worries about you.

Your ancestor was a girl from here."

They told me (so) a long time ago, shortly after the killing.

But now, I'll tell you about the one I just named. (Tamwae)

There was a man from Bébo, a man with tinea, a man no one would marry (datasi), who went out repeatedly to Kapiu (the coastal village) to see his trading partner.

There he said, in reference to a coastal woman with tinea whom he desired,

"Oh... if only he would give her to me (to marry)..."

So he said to his trading partner,

"Oh, that girl who stays in your house, would you perhaps give her to me?"

And the coastal man said,

"Oh, I don't know, because I think of you,

'He wants to kill her treacherously.'

As if that girl there is good."

Then he said,

"Of course you will, since it is I who will have her."

(The man responded,)

"But others will kill her, from your tribe."

And (the Bébo man) responded,

"Who would kill a man's wife.

I, in my village, am a man no one will marry."

So, after that the (coastal) man asked her,

"Wow, that man from Bébo over there who stays with me, the man no one in Bébo will marry, would you marry him?"

And then she said,

"I would, but I'm a little fearful, like this, 'Perhaps he is acting treacherously to kill me later.'"

So, he (the Bébo man) stayed there, (because) he (the coastal man) told him,

"First walk together here, and stay together for a while.

Then later go up together to your village.

Then bring her back here, then I'll know about you,

'He truly did it to marry her.

He really desired to marry her.

He desired her in a good way.'"
Implications for the Value of Men in Present Society

Orya people enumerate the following characteristics as marking manhood: hair on the chest and back, having a well-developed beard, being dangerous (jarjar), which includes being able to protect a wife, being able to kill, and being able to work sorcery. The transition to manhood, in the days of Pinhas’s story, was marked by having killed a man or having given the second death stab. Having contact with the blood of the victim was an important source of bravery and strength. Men were not decorated for deaths caused by sorcery. Killing was also the method used to achieve status, and Orya chiefs did not inherit their positions, but achieved them by becoming man-killers (mambil).

Some modern alternatives for achieving self-esteem have suggested themselves. In the days of the transition between the Dutch and Indonesian governments, five Orya men left their area and became policemen. All five are now retired, but are very much respected by the Orya people. While this would be one acceptable way for Orya men to achieve status, educational standards for entering the police or armed services are now out of their reach. (Almost no one among the Orya people has more than a 6th grade education. A number have earned grade school certificates through an equivalency testing program, but by that time they had families and were too old to enter the police or armed forces.)

The Dutch and Indonesian governments did not allow the traditional warlike practices of the Orya people to continue, and modern weapons were used to keep the peace. As a result, I have often heard complaints such as this: “I, too, am a man, I, too, have a penis. But when those men came carrying guns, I became a woman.” Note that the opposition they express has very little to do with the governments, or with political issues, but has everything to do with their perceived loss of manhood.

As Orya men have lost their self-respect in their own eyes, they have also lost their position in the eyes of the women. But since men lost their identity, the women, whose identity is defined as a counterpart of man, have also lost their identity. With this loss of identity comes low self-esteem. Only a smoldering anger remains. Old crafts and skills are seen as having no value and are ‘not taught.’ Government workers often express their dismay at not being able to motivate the Orya people to improve their own living standards or to work for the community good. Traditional chiefs also can exert little influence over the people since they are no longer man-killers (mambil).

Given this need for male achievement as they began to enter the world of the twentieth century, it is very significant that Daud Sashe, the prophet of the Orya cargo cult,28 chose to remake the war partner (ajone) relationship. His efforts gave the Orya people what they needed, but clearly, if the Orya are to develop a sense of identity and healthy self-esteem, they must find an acceptable path to manhood.

NOTES

1. Bunggu narrated the story that became the basis of this article. Simon Ti Eis filled out the background history and cultural meanings of the various customs described. Phil Field was responsible for the translation and overall organization of the analysis.

2. Sénwal had three wives simultaneously.

3. Martin Maware’s story is the basis of the article “Of Paradise Lost” in this volume.

4. The Sawa people were angry at one of their own sons, Sénwal’s cousin (Orya kin term: esye), who would not stay at home, but always lived in Mawes. They therefore told Sénwal to kill his own cousin. He went with his war partner to Mawes, where he helped his cousin and asked the cousin to pick a coconut for him. As he was coming down the coconut tree, Sénwal killed him with his machete.

5. In that area of the north coast of Irian Jaya, a village may constitute a separate language group. Kaptiau has a population of around 200.

6. Here I am following the information given me by Simon Ti Eis, and not that given by Pinhas, Pinhas says the transaction happened at Sawa (line 153, page 21).

7. The gwahe is made from the long thigh bone of the cassowary. The wilhe, used later, is shorter, made from the cassowary’s shin bone.

8. Pinhas’s discourse style is typical of Orya story tellers, with conclusions, flashbacks, snatches of plot and background mixed together. For the reader’s benefit, I have reorganized the story to follow chronological order, and have unified some themes. A complete interlinear display of this story, including morpheme by morpheme glosses and free translation, has been placed in the Oxford University Archives and is available from the author. Clarifications directly inferred from the text are given in parentheses, but other clarifications given by Simon Ti Eis are given in square brackets.

9. The Orya kinship system is much like that of the Kaure, which will be described by Dommel in Kaure Kinship: Obligations, Restrictions and Taboos (Irian Bulletin Vol. XX, 1992.)

10. The custom of giving the grudge arrow is translated by the Orya into Indonesian as “to sell a man”, i.e. betray, to be killed.

11. Pinhas used two types of names in referring to characters in his narrative. The earth name is the name given by the family, usually by one of the mother’s relatives about a year after birth. The Christian name is given by a minister at the time of baptism. Most Christian names, such as Paulus, will be recognizable to the reader. At the time of the events of Pinhas’ story, some people had not become Christians (such as Aku), and so only had an earth name. However, others evidently were more frequently referred to by their earth name even though they had Christian names. People often also have more than one earth name. (One reason for the number of names given to an individual is that parents-in-law cannot pronounce the earth names of their sons-in-law or daughters-in-law, and vice versa. They will instead call them by an alternate name, a synonym if possible.) If Pinhas used more than one name, the alternate name is given in parentheses.

12. The people I asked about this did not seem to be able to explain further about the source of the power, whether it was gaining power previously possessed by the victim or from some other source. It is seen as magical. Upon drinking, ones eyes become bright.

13. Other informants say that Kanail and the others were going back to the village, having just been on the coast with Kangau.

14. Most of the names in this story are suffixed with swe, meaning deceased.

15. Aside from a bit of irony, no other meaning is attached to this incident. If Kabawa had known it was his daughter’s blanket, he would have had pity on her and gone around it.

16. The mase te extended on both sides about the width of the face. The mase te that I have seen were made from ivory, perhaps brought into Irian by the Chinese traders. The mieyan, worn to celebrate the killing of a woman, was just about the width of the nose.
17. Another method of making peace was to give a peace child (kwis). This was practiced in cases of severe repeated fighting, in the time before any of the people became Christians. Warriors from an aggrieved group could come to the outskirts of the offending village and shout for satisfaction in the form of a kwis. The village chiefs would confer, and agree to steal a child from a mother in the village. The child would be given to the aggrieved party, and they would take it deeper into the jungle, kill it, and hide the body. (The Orya people’s tradition thus differs from that practiced by the South Coast Sawi people of Irian Jaya, as described by Richardson, in his book Peace Child.) After that, the aggrieved warriors would enter the offending village, and talk and eat with their former enemies.

18. Normally, the obligation to give a girl fell upon the village of the man giving the first blow. In this case, the men who gave the first blows were both from Klatra, so Klatra should have given two girls. Guay should not have been required to give a girl, since Tidoras (from Guay) had only given the second blow to Kanggau. However, since Guay gave a girl to cover the debt that was really Klatra’s, Klatra also later gave a girl to Guay, to “level” scores with Guay.

19. Pinhas reveals quite a different view of the Dutch government than that of Martin Mawere, whose narration was the basis of the article Of Paradise Lost. The Orya people also remember the Dutch for forcing them to carry large burdens as cooiles, for forcing the people to work without pay, and for beating people who were lazy or uncooperative. The Dutch did not like people to spend long periods of time in the jungle away from their villages, and this was resented as it interfered with the normal hunting and gathering lifestyle of the Orya people.

20. The bride price had not been paid, because normally Orya couples live with each other first, and payment is made when it is clear that the man will stay with her. At the time of Pinhas’ story, however, a man who rejected one bride would have a hard time finding other parents willing to give him another.

21. Wasina was also Boyo’s true mosa, Boyo’s wife’s younger brother. The term is reciprocal: Wasina also called Boyo mosa, his older sister’s husband. The term mosa, then, designates mate’s younger sibling, or ego’s older sibling’s mate. The other three men were also Boyo’s extended mosa, that is, they were actually related through Boyo’s wife’s grandfather’s brother’s grandson.

22. This probably took place when Sawal waved the gwafo in the raid on Kapitau.

23. Although the jana dowal tradition is now abandoned, the people still practice a similar tradition for hunting pigs, gwe dowal, but this is practiced with one’s wife.

24. Menstrual blood is feared and avoided by all Melanesian cultures.

25. The ebwin bird is supposedly a bearer of news and the people listen for his omens. The bird is believed to have connections with the world of the dead. The body paint was a mixture of a special red clay which was baked and powdered, coconut oil, and leftover blood from the dead man. It was bright red and long lasting.

26. After going to grade school at Bonggo, Yokbet has now married and has two children. This must have happened after Pinhas told me the story in November 1985.

27. The word translated “kill” in this context is tan, which means kill, or penetrate the skin. It was seldom that a victim would die after being shot just once with the bows that they use.

28. This is described in the article Of Paradise Lost in this volume.
the church, but rather at the urging of the government, to help put an end to tribal wars. All church work ceased from 1943 to 1951 due to World War II and its aftermath. From 1955 through 1960, evangelistic work was started in 16 hamlets, but between 1961-1963, all government and church efforts again ceased because of the killing of a district officer and two policemen in the Orya village of Jadom. Government leadership and religious work have continued from 1964 to the present. The early evangelists sometimes taught literacy classes, and the first government sponsored grade schools were built in the mid-1950’s. The only operational airstrip in Orya territory is in Guay. Sponsored by the church, it was completed in 1976. Accompanied by my family, I began field work in Guay in June 1984.

Paradise Lost — The Myth

Martin Maware is one of the older men in Guay. He was approximately 60 years old when he related this myth to me in July 1989. Afterward, he told me that, although the story may now be told to anyone, originally it was secretly handed down from father to oldest son. He treated the myth almost like the text for a sermon — beginning by recounting the myth proper, then periodically departing from it to give proofs of its validity and to show its effects on history and present day life. It is evident that, for the Orya people, myths are not regarded as light-hearted fairy tales, but are windows through which reality is filtered. Martin Maware himself considers this myth a historical fact. The entire text, as he tells it, however, is quite difficult to follow for those not familiar with Orya's convoluted discourse patterns. I have therefore separated the myth proper from his other points, and used Martin's own conclusions as an outline for the analysis of how this myth reflects Orya worldview. The points of this outline are supported by other fragments of text taken from the same discourse. Clarifications directly inferred from the text are given in parentheses, but other clarifications given by Ruben Supra or Simon Ti Eisi are in brackets. Narration begins as follows:

1. I'm telling the old story, the one about my first created ancestors.

2. About those first ancestors, when Guay came here repeated times, for he kept coming from Orya village.

3. At that time it didn't get dark; it just stayed light.

4. It was here that he saw her repeatedly, that woman who lived here.

5. That woman lived here, so he kept coming to see her, over there at Kanali village.

6. He came there repeatedly.

7. No kidding there was a lot of food, rice and so forth; she lived in great affluence there, where he came up.

8. At that time it didn't get dark; it just stayed light, just like it is light now, only light.

9. There wasn't darkness then.

10. In one day he (Guay) would come up here, kill pigs, and then go back in the evening.

[The explanation for there being evening, but no night, is that the sun would traverse the sky, but after evening immediately reappear in the east.]

67. So of old he came here and went back in the same day, the one I'm telling you about, from Orya, to (kill and) butcher meat here, and then go again with pig meat.

68. Again he would go, come again, again he would stay away and eat it all up, and then come again, and go in the late afternoon.

69. He would come to see that woman, his sister.

11. Finally, great-grandfather thought about staying, "Oh, why don't I go and stay."

12. Well, when he went over there again to Orya, he let his "wife", or rather the one who was like his wife, his lady friend.

13. Over at Orya, then his older brother, Gwër, said, "Come and take this real woman (as a wife), this Irinanese (lit: interior) black skinned woman, a woman like us with black skin. Leave that one alone. The one you're living with now, make this one your second wife." Do you want to live with her; are you thinking, "Sure, let's live together?"

14. However, that white woman didn't want [the three of them] to live together.

15. So after that she went off — taking all her riches, things, and possessions — she packed off, took them all and ran, over there following the Gwir headwaters until she got to Wahwap [place].

16. From there she went off, and from there he didn't know where she finally stopped.

17. Of course he followed her, calling, "Don't run, don't run! I'll live with you both."

18. (And she replied,) "Ha! Why did you marry that girl, that real woman of your stock. What business do you have to marry her and bring her to live with me."

19. Mm..., she went on to become a Dutch woman, a white Dutch woman, and then bore children until she became a nation there.

20. After that, all those things disappeared here, her things, food, canned fish, all kinds of things, rice and so on.
Following the myth (as above), Martin dealt with four points at some length. These I am calling his conclusions. Three other important points (called presuppositions below) may also be gleaned from his text and are seen in the wider Orya culture. These points form the pillars of Orya worldview and are the outline for the rest of this paper.

I. Presumption: Paradise was here
II. Presumption: The source of cargo was here
III. Conclusion: Sin caused darkness
IV. Conclusion: Sex was the original sin
V. Conclusion: The white woman will return
VI. Conclusion: We are family with the white race
VII. Presumption: The white race got the boat

I. Presumption: Paradise Was Here

As seen above (line 7, page 24 and line 20, page 25), the hero ancestor, Guay, and his "sister" lived prosperously, dining on such delicacies as rice and canned fish. In other Orya myths, the list is more extensive, including many kinds of manufactured goods, such as radios and glass for windows. In a creation myth taught by the cargo cult from Jadam, the first created people (including Adam and Eve) lived by "the power of God" at Jadam. "They would only have to think about it, and food would appear before them. Again, they would only have to think about it, and the dishes would be washed and put away." Clearly, the Orya idea of paradise includes material abundance, especially food, and a reprieve from having to work. And it all began right there on their land.

II. Presumption: The Source Of Cargo Was Here

The Orya consider their land as the first magical source for wealth, the place from which all material goods originally came into the world. Note the figure of speech concerning the "bird egg" in lines 115-119 below.

115. That's how it happened.
116. And that is how it will continue.
117. That is why it happens, that even if they [another country, i.e. Japan] do us bad, when that happens the good people from over there [Dutch or Americans] will come to fix things up, saying, "Hey, don't treat them like that. Those are our people."
118. People from your [white] race or your king-like person would say, like this, "Hey, don't wrong them. Let's take good care of the bird egg."
119. Even if one group gets angry at us and wants to do bad to us, well then another group will say,

"Hey, as if we treat bird eggs that way.
This is how we watch over bird eggs.
All that land is ours (our ancestor's)."

In addition to the nurturing a mother bird gives her egg, the figure above presupposes that the mother came from an egg, and hopes further to get something out of the egg. In this case, the founding ancestors of all peoples and the first prototypes of all cargo (material goods) first appeared from the egg, the Orya land. For this reason, that land and its people must be cared for, because, given the right conditions, cargo might come again from the original source.

III. Conclusion: Sin Caused Darkness

It is common in creation myths for a hero ancestor to complete the creation begun by a distant high God. In such myths, the High God withdraws from his creation and becomes distant from Man. In the old Orya myths, however, God does not even come into the picture. The Orya word for the high God is Alap, but the origin for the term is long forgotten. I have been told repeatedly that the old people used to call the thunder Alap's voice, but nothing more about Alap was known, other than that there were "people" also in the sky. Though the word Alap would appear to be cognate to Allah (of both Malayu and Indoneesian), only one old man has told me that the term Alap originated from the time of the Malayu speaking traders. The majority of the Orya believe that it goes back to the creation of their people. One possibility is that they first learned of Alap from other local trading partners on the coast, before the arrival of Malayu speaking traders. In any case, Alap is not seen as a god who had personal interaction with people.

The myth states (line 3, page 24) that paradise was a place of continuous light. Several other Orya myths attest to this as well. The Sun Man myth says that the sun was originally a man from the village of Orya. Though the sky was dark, light would emanate from the man's eyes or from the ground and trees near him. One day he climbed a coconut tree which magically grew taller until it reached the sky, where he became the sun. His rays were so bright that the earth would have been completely scorched had a girl not shot a sago arrow up at him that put out one eye. (More of this is given in the next section.)

In the myth held by the Gweer clan, however, it is the man Guay who "creates" sin and, by this act, brings on darkness. This concept of darkness is so similar to the Christian metaphor that one hesitates to consider it as an original part of a myth predating Christian influence. Nevertheless, it does seem to be supported by other Orya creation myths. The following is an account of how darkness came.

21. They (Guay and the white woman) had lived over there at Kanali village.
22. When he took the real (black) woman then those things they (the white woman and he) had lived with disappeared, but before that they had no problems (they lacked for nothing).
23. But then they learned about sex.
24. They had lived there together without sex, without sex.
25. There was no sex then.
26. Alright, so by marrying that real woman then we all fell into sin, into a bad place.
27. Then we fell into sin, into darkness.
IV. Conclusion: Sex Was The Original Sin

It is universally held by the Orya people that the eating of the forbidden fruit in the garden of Eden is only symbolic (gukt sun de lai blauzimidin, "cutting talk above" as opposed to literal, "straight talk", dam-dam-kem de toran), meaning that Adam and Eve actually had sexual intercourse. This, in the Orya view, was the cause of the fall which in turn caused the loss of paradise. Other myths predating the entrance of Christianity substantiate this belief. Martin refers to one of these, the Sun Man myth, as further evidence that sexual intercourse was, in essence, the forbidden fruit:

45. And now talking about the Sun Man’s children, his offspring — he who could make himself big or small — he, the Sun Man, had children but didn’t know about these various sizes [i.e., sex].

46. He didn’t know sexual intercourse.

47. His sons at first followed in his example, but when again they were shown how to sin by the Jadam man teaching them about sex, then they fell into sin. The myth of the Sun Man, a magical hero believed to have been created at Orya village, is summarized below. The Sun Man, like Guay in Martin’s story, lived with his women without having sex with them. Unlike Guay, however, the two young women he lived with were of his same race, and he, not they, was the source of wealth.

During the day, Sun Man was a young boy, but in the evening he would become a man and kill pigs. One day, when the two women saw him returning in his man form, they desired to marry him. He told them, “Don’t quarrel over me. I will just live with you [without marrying you].” One day when they were preparing to pound sago, he climbed a coconut palm to get the sheathing material used for straining the pulp from the starch. The palm magically grew taller and taller until it reached the sky. There he became the sun. The women made arrows from sago leaves and shouted to him to look down. He did, and the younger one shot him in the eye. If that had not happened, no vegetation would grow on the earth because of the blazing light of both of his eyes. After that, the two young women lived as virgins with the man Guay, but when a man from Jadam came and taught Guay about sex, the two of them turned into one sago storage basket (which is round in shape like a full moon). Some say that basket actually became the moon.11

Daud Sasbe, a man, ironically enough, also from Jadam, was the charismatic prophet of a cargo cult movement which built its teaching on a loose mixture of Biblical stories and Orya myth and custom. Many years prior to his promotion of the cargo cult, at the time the first evangelists entered the territory beginning in 1937, Daud Sasbe was one of the few people who understood Indonesian. He was therefore chosen as an interpreter. His later teaching, however, amalgamated the Genesis creation story with Orya myth, teaching that Adam and Eve, Noah, and even Jesus all came from the Orya area, from Jadam.

This cargo cult movement has been named “Walking Stick Religion” (Agama Tongkat) by Noriwar (Noriwar 1980), since an important symbol of the movement is the walking stick (dute). Cult leaders taught that it was not a literal walking stick (dute) that Moses held over the Red Sea, but that God told Moses and Joshua to trade sexual relations with each other’s wives, and this is what brought about the miracle of the sea opening. The walking stick is thus a phallic symbol, and dute is the term men use to refer to the husband of the woman who becomes his sexual partner. The Orya people find it natural that men would have fighting partners for war, and this is how they see Moses and Joshua.12 In the days when the Orya people practiced war, the wife of the fighting partner (eijone) would give a special cigar to her husband’s fighting partner. Smoking this cigar just prior to battle would protect him. However, sex with the fighting partner’s wife would have been unthinkable; even husbands and wives practiced sexual abstinence before battles.

Note how (in line 45 above) Martin links physical darkness with spiritual poverty. Here again there is striking resemblance to Christian terminology, but the Orya language itself has evidence that this kind of thought is not newly introduced. Orya people often speak of others as having a “dark liver” or “light liver”, referring to the character qualities of ‘evil’ and ‘good’.
If sex is believed to be the original sin, it would be expected that the adherents of the cargo cult would be enjoined to abstain from sex if they wanted to usher in the return of paradise. Evidently this is what was originally taught, but the people could not endure this for long and the opposite teaching developed. Sex came to be viewed as the door (symbolized, in fact, by the vagina) through which paradise would be regained. The cult therefore encouraged men to trade wives, i.e. to have sexual relations with each other’s wives. This trading of sexual favors was not done indiscriminately, but was only between pairs of families, much like the traditional war partner (ejige) relationship practiced by the Oya people. The movement has been opposed by both church and government, and as a result adherents are now very secretive concerning cult activities and teachings. Most people now claim that only those living near the source of the cult or in areas where there are no church-sponsored evangelists still engage in wife swapping. The pervasiveness of the teaching, though, is very evident in Martin’s interpretation of the Genesis creation story, as the following portions illustrate.

121. That man who died up there, Hanha [Daud Sasbe’s earthen name], the man of Jadam, his stories were also in the same vein, stories of how nations went off from there. [A reference to his teaching that the tower of Babel was at Jadam.]

122. His stories also mesh with the book you’re working on (the Bible) (as mine do), they mesh together there.

50. Their thinking should have been like this, “Of course we will live without it (sex),”

51. Of course that woman told him that (repeatedly), “Our children will come without our doing anything.”

52. That, of course, is what she told him.

53. Just like when Adam told her, like this, “Eve, our children, just like he said when he told us not to pick the fruit, they will come without our doing anything.”

54. That woman, of course, said the same thing.

55. So she went off, permanently.

V. Conclusion: The White Woman Will Return

That the white woman promises to come back should come as no surprise to us, since the return of a hero figure is often foretold in Melanesian tales. This return of the hero is often seen as heralding the return of lost prosperity. Here Martin’s account (illustrated in the two text fragments below) does not disappoint us.

56. (She said to him) “We won’t be able to meet again.

   After a very long time you will see me.

   My children will come with skin like mine.”

57. So now when we meet up with one of you (i.e. any white person) we think, “Oh, that is very true.”

58. So therefore that is how it happened, you and all who stay here, who work together with us here, are her descendants.

70. She gave him a promise, when he brought that other woman,

“I assumed that you and I would live together.

How dare you carry on with sin like that!

OK, so go ahead and stay.

See you later.

I will come back around to you from over there.

But not me personally, others with skin like mine shall come to your area.

When you die, your children, grand- or great-grandchildren will see it.”

71. So now we’ve seen it!

72. The seventh generation then, but we have seen it.

73. From the father’s ancestors until now, seven generations, when we met with you all, during the time of the Dutch.

VI. Conclusion: We Are Family With The White Race

As can be seen from the text portions below, the white (lit. red) race is seen by Martin as being related to him, because Gwër and the white woman were like brother and sister.

36. Then right away she packed her things and went off.

37. So that’s the reason, since she had many descendants, that we live as family with you all (white people).

38. You all and us are family, because he lived with that girl only as a sister.

39. That pink skinned woman was like her sister, but then he, her brother, created sin.

48. And so that pink skinned woman went off in anger.

49. If it hadn’t happened that way, my skin could be like yours.

The idea that the Gwër clan and the white race are related was reinforced by a Dutch linguist who passed through Guay several decades ago and commented on the myth, as Martin relates:

74. We climbed a bread fruit tree over there, the Dutch man and I (Martin), at the village Bwasem Short (the old village site near the end of the Guay airstrip).

75. And from there we talked about the story [of the man Guay], there in the breadfruit branches over there, up there we sat, where they had tied up a ladder for him.

76. They had lashed up a ladder there.
77. He also was, they said, a linguist, he had a thing like a shortwave radio, in which you would speak when he would motion and it would pick up that talk, and then he would put it to the ear, and when he pressed the switch, pushed it down, then he could hear the talk, and from that he would write it.

[He may have had a shortwave radio, and that is why they climbed up in the tree, to put up the antenna. But also he must have had a tape recorder.]

78. He also (like you) spoke the language, that man I’m talking about, as if it was his own tongue.

79. So we climbed up, and in the breadfruit tree we talked about that ancestor, Guay,

80. I am really Guay’s, or Gwër’s descendant.

81. The man called Guay was born at the river Guay, which is over in Orya’s (village) area, and so that became his other name.

82. But Gwër is our real family name, his descendant’s name.

[Martin’s clan adopted the name Maware when the Dutch government encouraged smaller clans to join together with larger ones. According to the Orya people, this was to simplify census taking.]

83. His words were passed on through our old ones, the old ones heard them, and I am also telling you.

84. My family tree (or beginnings) and yours start the same.

85. A woman of our race in the beginning had skin like yours.

86. When he and I climbed up in the breadfruit branches and talked, then he told me,

“Oh, truly, that woman came from here to my place.

She then eventually became the king, and that’s why we (Dutch) have a woman for a king.”

87. They call it a president now; now it is president.

“A woman became king, Yuliana’s ancestor, and so you know we keep changing again and again, when one dies, then another goes into her place.”

88. A woman from our stock, that is.

89. And then the Dutch man said,

“You’re right, you know, I am of that stock of that woman who, as you say, went [from here], here.

My stock comes from a woman who came from here.

She is the one who gave birth to us, her numerous children, and that is why she became big (i.e. became a ruler).”

90. That’s what he told me over in that breadfruit tree that we climbed.

91. At that time I was the head of the clan, like Lukas is now [for the Bunggu clan], I was like that, and so he had need of me.

92. He said, “I really need you (to talk to you); let’s climb up in this breadfruit tree.”

93. So then we talked up there.

The fact that I and my family now live in the same house with Kwako, Martin’s son, is seen as further confirmation that our ancestors also lived together as family, as the following illustrates:

202. When she (the white woman) finished rebuking him, — like this, “This should never have happened,” — she then went off and had many descendents, and that is why you (one of her offspring, you and Kwako, Martin’s son) eventually were well suited to each other, like this,

“OK, This is it (where I will stay). We (dual) have joined our hearts.”

203. Your ancestors tried and tried to come, because they thought, “Our ruler lived here together with him,” and so it suits you well, because you are from the sister, and he is from the brother.

204. You at first searched, “Who will I live with? Who will I live with?..”

205. But when you met with your younger brother (Kwako), then the thought clicked with you two, “Oh, this is the one I will share a house with.”

The Orya people feel that they have been treated as family by the offspring of the white woman. This was seen when the Europeans in World War II intervened on their behalf against the Japanese invaders. The Europeans were wanting to take care of their “bird egg”, as Martin mentioned above (lines 115-119, page 26). He claims that even social offenders were treated like family by the Dutch.

187. But at that time they (the Dutch) didn’t beat us.

188. They would just catch us, put us in the jail, and throw food in to us, no kidding, a lot of food.

189. They would just punish us a little, and then let us out.

190. Even a murderer, he was just punished, they would never kill them.

191. That is how it was when Yuliana ruled, touched us, saying about us, “All those are my people.”

192. After all, women aren’t mean.

193. Women are like this: “It doesn’t matter if he beats me.”
194. So the Dutch wouldn't get mad and say, "Let's kill these wicked people."

195. The women of old weren't mean.

196. So she touched us (i.e., ruled us) kindly.

197. Even if a man had killed repeatedly, they would kindly catch him, take care of him, do good things to him, clean up his heart, and then say to him, "Now go home."

198. That's how they did it.

It is natural for the Orya people to think that the white side of the clan would still feel some family ties with their Orya half. This is because they feel that not much time has elapsed since creation. In one of his pauses, I asked for clarification: "You said that you were the seventh generation (line 73, page 31). I don't understand." His response is as follows:

94. Of course, what I said is like this, he gave birth to him, he gave birth to him...

95. It's like this, my great-grandfather on my father's side, the great-grandfather who was after Guay, Guay's son, I forget his name.

96. They didn't tell me his name.

97. The one after that, I also forget.

98. As if I lived that long ago; my father left me when I was little, you know.

99. But what I'm saying today, after that came Sapsi.

100. Sapsi, the third man, first Guay, (counting on fingers) then another, then the second, and this is the third (generation), he gave birth to Tam and others.

101. This one, Sapsi was the third generation who gave birth.

102. But then Sapsi gave birth to Tam.

103. Tam then gave birth to Bék and one other, the sixth generation.

104. However I was E:gr's son [E:gr being the son of Bék].

105. So I'm the eighth generation.

106. I gave birth to the ninth, to Kwako, the ninth generation.

107. That's what I meant before.

108. He is the ninth, Kwako here, counting from the first created man (of our clan).

109. It isn't a long distance in time [from the beginnings].

110. Back then, from when Father God first put the Sun Man on the earth, when he gave (land) to them, "You live here, you live there," that they, the children of men, distributed the land, like this, "You live there, you live there, you live there."

111. From that time, it hasn't been a long time.

112. This is the ninth generation who are living now, those of Kwako's age, from the time that the earth was cursed, when that curse came.

113. Mn, mm, Father God's curse, like that, when Sodom and Gomorrah were burned up, or when Adam and Eve were cursed, when the water covered all (during the flood), and your boat was made.

Martin traces his genealogy back patrilineally eight generations (not counting his son). Simon Ti Eisi (one of the coauthors) traces his back ten generations, and a man from Jadam of the Sasbe clan traces his back a similar number. The names of patrilineal ancestors are powerful in Orya sorcery. For this reason they are kept secret from those not in the family. Those who can trace their lineage back eight or more generations speak of their first ancestors as zi jowen, "created people".

VII. Presumption: The White Race Got The Boat

In Martin's last sentence above, the reference to "your boat" reveals a significant aspect of Orya worldview. This again recalls the teaching of Daud Sasbe of Jadam. He taught that people lived in great prosperity (as they did in Martin's story), until Adam and Eve sinned by having sex. Shortly after God cursed them, he told Noah to build the ark. The ark was built on the mountain where the village of Jadam is located. All those who helped in building the ark were allowed to get on, but for those who didn't help, Noah was told to have a hammer ready. When the water began to rise and they tried to climb into the ark, he was to hit them over the head. (This part of the story is told with great gusto!) The mountain of Jadam was the only one not covered by the water of the flood. As the boat sailed off, the power of God which caused people to live in such prosperity sailed away with it. They say the ark eventually landed in America. Some people say that Jesus was in the boat also. People from Jadam have asked me, since I am American, where that power of God is now and how they can get it back. The reason that Americans, rather than the Dutch, are credited with the power of God is probably because Daud Sasbe began teaching shortly after World War II. The Orya people were much impressed by the fleets of American war planes that flew overhead.

Conclusion

It is clear that the Orya are now awakening to the outside world, and many questions are eroding faith in their oldest stories. It would be disastrous, however, if the stories were suddenly taken away, leaving a vacuum. Accounts such as Martin's tell the people that they are special and give them a sense of dignity. Many forces are presently threatening this sense of worth, including economic changes and failure to gain access to higher education and better jobs. Among the most devastating, though, are the changes that militate against the Orya's concept of manhood, which is the subject of the next paper.
Notes

1 Martin Mawere was the narrator of the Creation Myth which became the basis for this paper. Ruben Supra and Simon Ti Elia supplied the historical information, cultural analysis, and supporting evidence. Phil Fields was responsible for the organization of the analysis.

2 A phonology of the Oya language is to appear in Pacific Linguistics. Berik has been described by Peter and Sue Westrum (1975). Berik and Oya show a cognate similarity of 45%. The cognate similarity between Oya and Sause is only 10%, and between Oya and Mander 26%. These initial comparisons were made by the author, based on 280 words of common vocabulary.

3 To encourage trade, the Chinese traders gave gifts to people who were not their trading partners (dokot) and, at the same time, were said to be negligent in giving fair exchange for gifts given by their trading partners.

4 The Dutch district officer was killed because he had burned down several houses which did not meet government standards. The policemen were killed because of repeated incidents of adultery committed by a group of policemen with one woman several months previous to the killings.

5 Oya myths and legends are considered the property of the clan whose founding ancestors are involved. Even if a story is well known, only those who own the story will relate anything approaching a full-length version of it.

6 The full text with interlinear glosses and free translation has been placed in the Oxford University archives and is also available from the author.

7 Oya orthography uses 'e' for phonetic [æ], and 'i' stands for the central vowel [ɪ].

8 The staple food of the Oya people is sago. Rice, which is not grown anywhere in the area, is considered a delicacy.

9 This quote is taken from a recording I made of cargo cut stories told by a close relative of Daud Sasbe, the deceased leader of the movement.

10 The other place where men are thought to have been created is Jadam. Most of those not directly descended from the village of Oya believe themselves to have originated in Jadam. Those who are not direct descendants of created men came by various spontaneous appearances of people. Other Oya creation myths, and those told by other groups in their general area, include stories such as this: An early ancestor, while hunting, shoots an arrow which misses its mark and sticks high in a tree. Being late in the day, he decides to retrieve the arrow the next day. When he returns, he finds that the arrow has become a village of people.

11 This more frequently told version of the myth contains no mention of the existence of children of Sun Man, but Martin's version contains "spontaneous" children (line 45 and 47, page 4 on page 7).

12 An Oya name for the movement as a whole has not been found. There is no Oya expression corresponding to the Indonesian word agama (religion). There have been other similar movements in other language groups on the coast near Jayapura. These are popularly called "Towel Religion" (Agama Handuk), and "The Simpson Religion" (Agama Simpson). It is likely that Daud Saibbe was influenced by teachings from those areas. More detailed information on the coastal movements is not available to the author, other than it is known that they also involved adultery.

13 Oya trading partners (dokot) which literally means vine or string were usually people from other groups, especially coastal people, with whom they could obtain cloth or other manufactured goods. Fighting partners (eije) were usually close relatives. Fighting partners would often give gifts of meat to each other, and help in work. During war raids, the junior fighting partner would follow in the very steps of his partner, and would give the death stab to attack his partner shot with his bow. They would then share the honor of being decorated for the killing in the victory celebration. (See Fields, I Too Am A Man, 1991b, also in this volume.)

14 The eije relationship is also described in the article I Too Am A Man.
OF RED MEN AND RITUALS:
THE KETENGBAN OF EASTERN IRIAN JAYA

Andrew Sims

Makalah ini menguraikan penduduk dunia dan agama tradisional dari orang-orang Ketengban di Irian Jaya, Indonesia. Studi ini berhubungan dengan kosmologi orang Ketengban dan pandangan mereka tentang alam serta pengetahuan manuasa, baik roh atau arwah-arwah yang besar maupun yang kecil yang mendiami dunia; dan upacara serta kehidupan ritusnya yang memperlihatkan usaha mereka untuk hidup secara harmonis dengan dunia mereka.

Kosmologi orang Ketengban berafakat holistik, yakni tidak terbagi menjadi aspek fisik dan spiritual. Kenyataan bahwa aspek spiritual tidak biasa dihitung oleh orang-orang biasa, hal ini tidak mengurangi kenyataannya, kuesananya dan pentingnya; sungguh hal ini berlawanan. Makalah ini mencoba untuk memperlihatkan bagaimana orang Ketengban hidup secara keseluruhan fisik dan spiritual dalam interaksi dinamis dan tetap dengan dunia mereka dan makhluk yang mendiamiannya. Ini termasuk arwah-arwah yang utama dan kurang utama yang telah hidup di dunia ini sejak penciptaanannya, arwah dari keluarga yang meninggal dan para leluhur, serta pria atau wanita yang tinggal di samping rumah atau di seberang gunung dan di lembah lain. Bagi pria, wanita dan anak-anak Ketengban, kehidupan tidak sejatikaf sekuler atau pun sakral, tetapi merupakan suatu kompleksitas dari hal-hal lain yang harus dihadapi.

INTRODUCTION

This paper is a discussion of the world view and traditional religion of the Ketengban people of Irian Jaya, Indonesia. This study deals with Ketengban cosmology and their view of the nature and makeup of man, the spirit beings, both great and small, who inhabit their world, and their ceremonial and ritual life as it demonstrates their attempts to live in harmony with their world.

Ketengban cosmology is holistic, not compartmentalized into physical aspects and spiritual aspects. The fact that the latter cannot be seen by ordinary men makes them no less real, powerful and important; quite the contrary. This paper attempts to show how the Ketengban live life as a physical/spiritual whole in constant dynamic interaction with their physical world and the beings who inhabit it. These include major and minor spirits who have lived in the world since its creation, the spirits of dead relatives and ancestors, and the man or woman living in the next house or across the mountain pass in another valley. For the Ketengban man, woman and child, life is neither secular nor sacred, but a complex of different entities which must be dealt with.

The Ketengban people live in the eastern highlands of Irian Jaya, Indonesia in the District (Kabupaten) of Jayawijaya, subregion (Kecamatan) Okibap. (See maps 1 and 2) The center of their territory is about two hundred fifty kilometers due south of the coastal port of Jayapura, and is bounded on the east by Amsibib and on the west by Elpomek. They number between seven and ten thousand people living in approximately sixty small hamlets scattered throughout the rugged, jungle-covered mountains. They live in small, round, walled, thatched houses built on stilts one to two meters above the ground. Traditionally these were clearly designated as either men's houses boam ati or women's houses nerep ati. Though men's cult associations are still identifiable by membership in one of the larger men's houses, the strict restriction of men's versus women's dwellings have relaxed somewhat and family houses are more common.

Contact between Ketengban and outsiders began in 1972, and with the construction of airstrips to access this isolated area, eight to ten larger villages of one hundred fifty to four hundred people have formed near these links with the outside world and national culture. Today there is evidence of cultural adaptation to the Indonesian culture, the Indonesian government, and Christianity. Through the teaching by evangelists
from the Dani area to the west and missionaries from the Un evangelized Fields Mission, large numbers of Ketengban have become adherents of Christianity; possibly as high as sixty to seventy percent of the population. It is assessed by their physical culture and daily routines, most of the more isolated Ketengban seem little influenced by the outside contacts. However, those living near the airstrips are seen using modern implements and clothing, and making larger permanent gardens.6

Like most highland peoples of Irian Jaya, the Ketengban are horticulturalists planting sweet potatoes, taro, and manioc. They also raise large numbers of semi-domesticated pigs.

The Ketengban are a patrilineal, patrilocal society. The Ketengban language has been classified as Papuan stock and part of the Trans-New Guinea Phylum (Voorhoeve, Haeschen 1978). There are four dialect areas: the Central, Eastern, Western, and Northeastern, though all are mutually intelligible. Only the Northeastern dialect is markedly different in vocabulary and pronunciation.

COSMOLOGY

The Ketengban people describe the universe as having at least four regions or layers. The uppermost level is im deike 'top of sky', and almost nothing is known about it. The world humans see and live in is believed to be a flat but textured surface which is covered by a dome like an overturned bowl. This dome is not made of any describable material, but is firm though somewhat fragile. The inner surface of this dome marks the upper limit of the sky. The im deike 'top of sky' is above this dome. Everything found in the region between the dome and the surface of the ground is known as the in nitama 'middle sky'. The mountains, valleys, rivers and features of the earth's surface on which humans garden, travel and live is the tua nitu 'earth land/area'. The layer underneath the surface of the earth is known as tua amutura 'the area under the earth'. There is no term for the lowest layer of the universe, which some Ketengban consider to be part of tua amutura. However, all agree that this lowest layer is the abode of the enormous spirit Bawa Bo.

The Ketengban Cosmos

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The Realm of the Sky Beings

In the first and highest layer, im deike, there live sky beings which have never had access to the human world nor is it possible for humans or spirits to visit their realm. It has no connection with great ancestors or spirits of past eras, nor will spirits of the dead ascend to take up residence there in the future. The empirical evidence that sky beings live above the dome of the sky is that the root hairs of their sweet potato and taro plants are visible at night as they protrude through the "soil" so that the ends appear as stationary points of light, the stars. So the sky beings are gardeners, and being aware of the humans in the world below their own, are considerate enough to use their dibble (planting/weeding) sticks with a softer sideways motion. If they used more force and a downward motion as humans do, they might "punch through" the dome of the sky and cause injury or death to humans below with the falling debris.

The Realm of Man

Man lives in the realm between the sky dome and the area under the earth first in his bodily form and after death in his spirit form. As most Melanesians, the Ketengban are aware of and interact regularly with a very large number of spirit beings (Habel, 1973) and most of this interaction takes place in the middle realm, further described in the section on Gods, Spirits and Man, page 54ff.

In this middle realm there are two distinct regions: the im nitama 'middle sky' and the tua nitu 'earth'. The im nitama is the area just below the surface of the sky dome in which the Sun and Moon travel. They are living sibling spirits with the Sun the sister and the Moon her brother. During the day, the Sun travels from the keteng yakan tara 'sun coming-from area' to the keteng ban tara 'sun going-to area'. The Sun's daily journey begins beyond the river farthest east in the universe called Tasin Me where the Creator deity sent her in the beginning era. When she reaches the place where the sky dome and the earth's surface meet, the westernmost edge of the universe, she slips under the earth's surface and travels underground through tua amutura to the east and there awaits the return of her brother, the Moon, and then begins her journey again. The northernmost and southernmost solstices of the sun signal the timing of the two most important cycle of life ceremonies of the Ketengban people. (see section on Principle Life Ceremonies, page 73ff)

Though less active in relation to men than many of the other spirits, the Sun is thought to be very dangerous, but her brother, the Moon, is relatively unimportant.

Just like humans, both the Sun and the Moon have a nonge "body" and a deivo 'essence'. What humans see traveling through the firmament as the sun and moon are the bodies of these beings. Their essence resides under the floor of the most important ceremonial house in Ketengban territory, Bopgon at 'Bopgon house'. A key ancestor, Wengep Leptilen, was the head man of this house and he alone could see with 'spiritual' eyes through the floor into the glowing essence of the Sun and Moon and predict weather patterns. He did not have any controlling power over them, but was the guardian of that spirit house. Secret names for the Sun and Moon are known to initiates of the male cult and can never be spoken openly, especially before women, non-initiates, or children, who do not understand their true nature. These secret names are Tasinpurupuru ni/kepeng 'the spirit woman coming from Tasin (Me)' and Ongopogene 'the (moon) halo'.

Im nitama is also the area in which certain birds fly, clouds produce rain, rainbows appear, and certain types of spirits and spirit specialists travel from place to place. In the early mornings, just as dawn breaks, people can observe starks, kwiri, twinkling or in Ketengban terms, "quivering". Their light is responsible for the Milky Way, kwiri tel, 'star light' or 'shining'. These kwiri, few in number, are different from the plentiful tuber root hairs of the sky beings described above. Though not active in human affairs the kwiri are spirits which at dawn fall into streams, rivers, and ponds in daylight are visible as tadpoles and small fish. Women and non-initiates, not realizing their true nature, regularly eat these, but since this is done in ignorance of the altered state of the spirits, no harm results. Initiated males who know their secrets have to say certain incantations before eating these tadpoles, yet for reasons connected with personal power (section on Principle Life Ceremonies, page 73ff) usually do not eat them.
Few features of the physical world are without spiritual significance to the Ketengban. The rainbow is thought to be spiritually significant and is one totem of the Wisal clan. (See section on Gods, Spirits and Men). It can be a sign of either good or impending doom depending on where it is pointing or resting. If it is overhead or pointing to houses or hamlets it is called Nimil Mi Tu 'the flesh of a child/person'. If seen over an unpopulated area of jungle it is called Dal Mi Tu 'the flesh of a snake's offspring'. The meanings associated with the colors and the interpretations of the presence of the rainbow are an excellent example of the overlapping and interacting of the realms of men and spirits.

If the rainbow is seen near a village, it is a sign that someone (probably from that village) is going to be killed. It can also mean that people are on their way to do this killing. However, if the hamlet is one in which there were many Wisal clansmen (whose yonu 'totem spirit' is the rainbow) it means that they have been feasting and the spirit is now leaving, happily fed and honored. If the rainbow is seen over uninhabited jungle it is a sign that either there is a place where snakes have just been killed by people, or where there are snakes to hunt. Four primary colors in rainbows, recognized by the Ketengban have names assigned to them reflecting these beliefs. (Adjusting the main nouns from person to snake makes the names specific for village or jungle location. ie. bal mi yiype 'blood of a snake') Red is called nimi mi yiype 'blood of a person'; yellow is nimi lin kun 'a bit of human urine'; green is mitu 'gal or bile sack'; and blue or purple is ambupak, the name of a deep purple tree seed, perhaps consumed by the snake or person. All of these are related to things encountered inside the body of an animal or person and also in the 'body' of a spirit, since they are similar to people.

Clouds are called in ketna 'sky smoke' and though their origin is unknown, they temporarily cover the clean sky, much like dirt, smoke, or 'sleep matter' in people's eyes.

At the top of the tua mu'tu 'earth' where humans travel or hunt is the particularly dangerous area of the mountain tops, highest ridgelines, and the largest and most spectacular waterfalls where specific spirits, the parum, reside, described in the section on minor spirits. The lowest part of man's realm is the earth's surface including the mountains, streams, rivers, valleys, flora and fauna. It could also be described as the arena where the drama of life is played out by men and minor spirits. Here men are born, build homes, take wives, garden, raise livestock, and have children. Men receive signs or encounter spirits of various kinds from the physical features and fauna of their world. Certain animals, reptiles, insects or birds may be the embodiment of spirits, or their helpers/messengers. Massive rocks, trees, waterfalls, and certain locations are the habitation of spirits.

When a person dies his spirit may take the form of several kinds of birds. One of these, the deman bird, can give a whole range of signals to the informed man. A long low whistle indicates someone will die; a warbling call which sounds 'wet' means that the spirit's mouth is full of blood and people are coming to kill the kinsmen of the man hearing the call; other distinctive calls could mean that: a) a war party is approaching b) friendly visitors are coming c) someone elsewhere has died - or d) his jungle marsupial trap has captured an animal.

Encountering (and foolishly killing) a white field mouse or a certain marsupial, belog, in the daytime could mean that the spirit it embodied would send many 'children' to destroy crops throughout the area by pest infestation. If many flies landed on people's skin it could mean that someone was committing incest in the area, angering the spirits and leading to massive crop failure from rot (see section on Other Rituals, page 829). Unexplained illnesses, such as a burning cooking fire in the men's house could signal the onset of crops failing to come to full fruition. There are many other ways the spirits interact with men in their realm using flora, fauna, weather, natural disasters, and physical features of the land itself.

In this realm of middle sky and earth the spirits of the dead continue interacting and participating for good and evil in daily life. This is also where the drama of interacting with, appeasing and honoring the major spirits of the Ketengban world is played out in rituals.

Realm of the Major Spirits

The next lower level of the universe is tu amutara 'the area under the earth'. It is mainly characterized as the area through which the major spirits often travel. In this shadowy region there is a vast system of tunnels made from hollow trees (the only tunnel-like formation found in the Ketengban world). The major spirits travel freely and instantaneously via these conduits, co pum 'inside trees (hollow)', to any area they choose. Some of the specific trees forming such tunnels were gogopu, turu, kono, teplem, and waue which have characteristically hollow centers or are soft-wood trees whose centers quickly rot after falling. These are at designated locations of key ceremonial or ritual houses throughout Ketengban territory but are visible only to certain spirit specialists. Through these underground passages and 'terminals' the most important, powerful and malevolent spirits gain access to the realm of men.

During initiations into the male cult these major spirits come out of the holes and participate in the rituals, dancing and feasting. At other times they come out of similar holes to find people whose spirits are 'ripe' for eating and so cause their deaths. These major spirits can also take people's spirits down into these holes resulting in their death. Hollow trees and bamboo in the jungle are extensions of the underground holes for the travel of spirits but only some of them are visible to ordinary people. For example, the spirits can travel through hollow bamboo above ground and climbing up it cause it to bend over to touch the body or the roof top of a 'ripe' or sickly person. This gives access to their body and the opportunity to eat their spirit, causing sickness and eventual death. (See sections on Gods, Spirits and Man, page 544, and Other Rituals, page 821.)

The lowest level of the universe is sometimes undistinguished from the level just described, but most Ketengban do differentiate between them.

From the very beginning a deity has been sleeping in this level under the entire earth's surface, or minimally under the entire Ketengban territory. This deity is Bawa Bo and how he came to be sleeping there is described in the section on Um Bo, but the essential fact for the Ketengban is that he must never be disturbed, and above all must never be awakened. Until recently, saying his name aloud or digging too deeply (such as when planting) was believed to invite disaster by waking him. When Bawa Bo switches or slightly moves in his sleep, there is an earth tremor. When he is disturbed and shifted position a little, there is a major earthquake. Should he ever be angered or awakened, and turn over or move significantly from his slumbering position, all of tua mu'tu 'the earth's surface' would be turned upside down and all living things destroyed. In 1976 there was a very destructive earthquake in the region where life began according to the Ketengban. Many people died, gardens and villages were destroyed, and international relief efforts remain unsuccessful. Ketengban people attribute this to the night that Bawa Bo, upset by large numbers of Ketengban turning to Christianity, shifted in his sleep.

In summary, the Ketengban cosmology is multi-layered, but visualized as a flat solid surface covered with the geomorphical relief of the earth, over which is the dome of the sky, like an overturned bowl. Above the bowl are the sky beings, below the sky dome down to the earth's surface is the realm of man, composed of three sub-regions: the middle sky where the Sun and Moon travel, birds fly, and various meteorological phenomenon take place; the area of the highest mountain peaks and ridges, large waterfalls and rock faces where certain semi-retired spirits live and few men dare to go; and the surface of the earth where man interacts with his physical/spiritual environment, whether as a living being or an ancestral spirit. This is the abode of the minor spirits, and where man communicates most intensely and intimately with the major spirits in his ceremonial and ritual life. Here also are the major spirits' entrances into the realm of man.

The underground layer is the abode and preferred area of travel for the major controlling spirits, characterized by a tunnel system giving access to all areas of the earth by doors which lead from this layer into the world of men. The lowest layer is the sleeping place of Bawa Bo, who could destroy all things by earthquake if awakened.
MANKIND

Figure 2 represents a human being as conceptualized by the Ketengban, i.e. as a tripartate being composed of a nonge, 'body'; a sambala, 'soul/spirit'; and a kange dipu, 'mind'.

![Diagram of the human being with nonge, sambala, and kange dipu labels]

Nonge: Physical Body

The nonge 'body' is that which is able to be seen, touched, and smelled. On the surface or inside the body man experiences physical pain and sickness. Because a person's physical health and prowess affect his daily life, the Ketengban are attuned to bodily functions and sensations. However, the Ketengban who have lived most of their lives without modern medicine appear stoic and unconcerned, even with painful and debilitating injuries.

Through the preparation of both wild and domestic animals the Ketengban are familiar with internal organs and have names for each of the human organs, but have less knowledge of how they function.

Blood is considered a very important component and its loss (visibly from injury or invisibly 'becoming less strong or powerful') is a serious matter recognized as contributing to weakness and death. Blood is thought to be held in a reservoir in the chest and stomach area, but also travels around in the veins. Bodily swellings, especially in the abdomen, are from the pooling of blood and are often precursors of death. Breath, i.e., is an important indicator of life, and the lack of it is a symptom of death although people may be described as dead before the cessation of breathing. Pulse is not a life indicator for the Ketengban.

An intangible feature of bodies is that they may be bupe kupa 'hot', gate 'hard, strong' or bule 'cold' and bourn 'soft, weak'. To maintain a safe and productive life, but particularly during special ceremonies, rituals, and warfare it is best to be 'hot and hard' and avoid being 'cold and soft'. Consequently, men should not eat tadope 
x which might make them cold and soft unless certain incantations are said over them. This is due, first of all, to the belief that tadope are fallen stars which take the form of tadope in the daytime but also because they are of the cold and wet, weak and soft class of foods which if eaten reduce man's power and make him more vulnerable. Water, also, should not be drunk for a certain period before, during, and after ceremonial events and rituals. (Section on Principle Life Ceremonies, page 79f)

There are specific ways to attain hot or cold bodily states. Heat is enhanced by avoiding women, foods other than pork with blood in them, any reptiles, and water. There are certain times when it is desirable for a person to be made 'cold and wet' in order to be unattractive to spirits who might otherwise come to 'eat' them. A person's cold state can be enhanced at such times by their being sprinkled with water and having certain incantations said over them.

Though physical features are less important to the Ketengban than strength, character, and interpersonal relationships, they do distinguish various body types, note differences in skin color or tone, and comment that some people are especially attractive. However, the body and its appearance is of less importance to them than to the average westerner. Though a quick rinse to cool off or remove heavy mud is common, many Ketengban from the more isolated areas may go for months without washing or bathing. (Since prohibitions against water for men are only in effect for certain rituals, they are not a factor in matters of cleanliness.) On the other hand, the Ketengban are seriously concerned by the danger of being spiritually polluted or having one's power diminished by various associations. Eating taboo food causes problems because of the spiritual transgression of breaking rules, thus angering the spirits. The focus of Ketengban taboos is the damage to the spirit/soul and personal power.

Probably the most widely encountered example of spiritual pollution via physical contact in Melanesia is men being contaminated, either directly or indirectly, by menstrual blood. (Lawrence, Meggitt, 1965) For the Ketengban this is the worst imaginable thing that can happen to a man, resulting in widespread catastrophic calamity. (See section on Other Rituals, page 82ff)

Another such physical pollution is possible after a death. The bodies of the deceased are traditionally put up in trees, or on high platforms, although on occasion they might be put in a garden or jungle house. In decomposition the bodily liquids drip onto the ground and anything nearby. If any relatives of the deceased eat foods items growing near the trees, house, or in garden plots nearby, it results in a swelling body and face, forgetfulness, ineffective work, mental confusion, an inability to perceive and avoid danger, and even death. If some excretion from the relative's corpse is even inadvertently consumed with food, a person is said to have er apke beta dyepke 'truly eaten his relative' so no one is ever allowed to eat anything grown near the burial area of a close relative. Non-relatives may eat such food about a year after the death.

Though there might be some physical precipitating event or catalyst, for the Ketengban the root causes of physical problems and sickness are spiritual. Except for warfare, sickness and death are caused by spirits. Therefore Ketengban treatments have to do with the spiritual part of man, his relationships with people, and with the spirits.

Sambala: Soul/spirit Essence

Every person has a sambala 'soul/spirit' which exists before birth. There is no concern as to the origin of the sambala but it resides in the dipu or talem 'heart', although distinct from physical organs or their functions. The soul of a person is their true essence and does not die with the physical body but leaves the body and continues living with the essential personality and characteristics of the person. The soul does not exit the body from any specified orifice, but through the skin except for its final departure in the form of a fire-fly. (See section on Human Spirits, page 67f)

A person can experience soul loss or weakening through the actions of autonomous spirits in the Ketengban world, or through the action of spirits of the dead. This can be precipitated by numerous causes and agents, including breaking taboos, maintaining poor relationships with either people or spirits, action by sorcerers or other spirit specialists, and independent spirit or human malevolence.

The souls of shamans can travel through the air instantly to other places. Certain very powerful spirit specialists can also 'soul-travel' but their bodies also make the journey, though invisible to the average person who cannot see souls either when traveling or after death at which point it is called nimil 'soul's evil spirit. A person's soul may be stolen, eventually resulting in death. One common cause of this is passing behind a fellow clansman. From time to time everyone may have the kana yaya 'clan companion spirit' sitting on the back of his neck or shoulders. This spirit will become angered by a fellow clansman passing behind them. They then steal the offender's soul causing him to become insane and eventually die. Sometimes passing in front of someone, or laughing without explanation in another's presence can have this same result. After the soul is stolen and taken away into the jungle, it gradually 'matures' causing the person to get thin and weak, and eventually die.

The soul can also have its essence 'eaten' by various spirits. (See section on Major Spirits, page 60) In some cases such stolen or damaged souls are recoverable, not through the victim's actions, but through the influence, skill and power of the specialist called to help and the relatives intervening on his behalf. (See section on Other Rituals, page 82ff)
If a person does not die from calamity or sickness, but lives until they have white hair, no teeth, and wrinkled skin, and die in their sleep or while sitting in their houses holding onto the poles around the firepit they are said to have been very good people. The souls of people like this (very few indeed) simply fly away like a bird. When a person dies, the sambala 'soul' does not immediately leave the body to depart to some land of the dead, but remains in the body or nearby the house or hamlet for several days until the body is placed finally up in a tree. When the sambala departs after death they become nimi lok or lok soo 'person's (evil) spirit', and are then greatly feared. The spirits of the dead continue living and are active in the world for a long time. They may be enticed to help man, but are generally malevolent. The deneng 'dead people' as they are also known, have a favorite habitation near the highest mountain peaks and ridgetops. However, they are so busy that they spend little time there.

Kange Dipru: Heart and Mind

The third component of man recognized by Ketengban people is a complex called the kange dipru 'thoughts and heart'. The two facets of this complex are the dipru 'heart' and the kange tenena or kange 'thoughts and mind' which can be discussed separately, but form a single unit in the perceptions of the Ketengban.

The dipru is where a person feels positive emotions such as love, pity, and kindness. Negative emotions are sometimes described as being elsewhere in the body, or as acting autonomously on the person. For instance, one way of describing intense anger is to say muntu kupmere, 'I've got it in the stomach'. Another is yu kupmere, 'anger has got me'. One seemingly negative emotion which does occur in the dipru is ne dipru nitan engennane, 'I am crying in my heart' which describes the kind of sadness engendered by the death of a close friend or relative, or a great disappointment.

The kange or kange tenena is the cognitive part of man with which he decides, forms opinions, makes plans, learns, and reasons.

The kange dipru as a completed complex is not present at birth, as evidenced by infantile behavior, but somehow develops during the first twelve to eighteen months of life. A baby is not fully a person until the personality and mental processes are evident in its responsiveness and behavior. When this point is reached, the child is described as kange konum delipmare 'he has now placed/put his thoughts/mind' meaning that his mental faculties are clearly present and a reasonable degree of responsiveness and learning can be expected. Significantly, (but perhaps also related to high infant mortality) children are not given names or treated as special until after this same twelve to eighteen month age bracket.

Kange is applied similarly to adults. If someone does something stupid or which no one would normally have allowed, they might be scolded with the invective kange meedipmarem di do 'is it because you do not yet have mind/thoughts'. The implication which makes the rebuke more insulting is that one is still mentally an infant. More positively, when discussing what an absent person's response might be to a given situation people say er kange dia 'from his mind' or whatever he decides he will do'.

The kange gives a person the ability to think, reason, and act in a responsible way. When it is adversely affected such as through drinking alcohol, it is said that the kange is 'lost' or 'confused and tangled' thus accounting for their unreasonable or irrational behavior. A similar confusing of the mind can be effected by spirits as mentioned above. It is reasonable then that, for the Ketengban, the point of physical death is when there is no longer any speech or responsiveness to others. Unconscious or comatose people are categorized as dead even though they may still be breathing slightly, and have warmth and pulse.

These two facets of the complex kange dipru have been discussed separately to highlight their distinctives, but the Ketengban describe the two as one and sometimes use the words almost interchangeably, even though generally reflecting the distinguishing nuances for this center of man's emotions and will.

**ORIGINS, TOTEMS AND CLAN FOUNDERS**

Ketengban mythology includes accounts of the assignment of totems to each clan and the way each clan was founded. The following is a summary of part of this mythology.

In the primordial era after the Creator deity Doyp had made the world, he assigned some of the major spirits to helping and guardian spirits for each clan. Most of the animals, birds, and reptiles he created were ordinary, but certain ones were spirits which by his power took the form of these creatures to be the clan totems. This was apparently prior to the presence of human beings since, though the Ketengban do not describe it directly in this way, all people descended from these totem creatures. The general phrase used to talk about this topic supports this conclusion, nimi kwemdings dela, or nimi dela keca, 'the basis of the creation of man (things)'.

Doyp assigned a yorum 'totem' to each predestined clan and sent the yorum to certain Ketengban geographical areas. The Payumka clan has the sanipe 'cassowary' totem and the associated spirit is Cangkener. The Uruwan clan has the totem seremnye bal 'python', and its spirit is Kettleinga Ner. Certain clans have more than one totem and it is not clear whether the spirit took on more than one form, or whether a multiple spirit connection exists. For instance, the Dipur clan has both the kitokeb bal 'specific snake' and the wiyre ma 'lorikeet' totems. More commonly two or more clans share a totem though the implications for their initial descent are unclear. The Kipka, Payumka, and Mul clans all claim the sanipe 'cassowary' as their totem and the Basini and Kukla claim the bisam 'pig'. Though the clan data is not complete what is known is summarized in Figure 3.

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<th>SPIRIT</th>
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<td>Leptiten</td>
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**Figure 3:** Clan Origins, Totems, Spirits
In Figure 3 above * indicates that the clan is a subclan of the unmarked clan above it and + indicates that the clan listed to the left has both totems.

After going to the areas assigned by Do yap, the spirit totems usually had two offspring, a male and a female of their same kind, e.g. snakes and birds from eggs and marsupials had live births, etc. These first two offspring then turned into humans almost instantaneously and soon married and had children. The sons of the totems became the clan progenitors, providing the link with the totem for all future descendants.

For instance, if the totem was a snake, the male offspring became a man, took a wife from some other totem’s female offspring and their children were of the snake totem. The female offspring of the snake totem would be taken as a wife by the male child of another totem and all their children would be of that male’s totem, not their mother’s totem.

Each human clan member has a special relationship with the spirit associated with their totem and can expect to receive from it help in healing, garden prosperity, and war. This help is usually mediated by specialists as described later, although anyone of a given clan can treat their totem spirit. If a particular sickness or calamity is shown to be produced by one of these spirits, then a senior man of that totem’s clan has to remedy the situation by virtue of his special relationship with that spirit. The Ketengban say this is analogous to a man and his dog or a woman and her pig. Just as these animals respond best to their owners, so totem spirits will not answer people not in their clan or under the jurisdiction of his kampae ‘companion spirit’. The following are two typical accounts of clan beginnings. The Dipur clan totem, *kitoko be’ a species of snake*, went to his assigned mountain and crawled into the hole under a ba tree to lay eggs, observed by a Megouke clan woman. The snake eggs hatched and most were male. The Megouke woman came to the site where the snake had gone into the hole and found it was actually a cave. She went inside to investigate. She found a young girl as they encircled her but they turned into men, one of whom seduced her. She later bore children who were the ancestors of the Dipur clan. The spirit connected with this snake totem (Dipur clan) has the names *Arambasia ner or Aramikyap, derived from the place - Aram mountain, the snake’s name - kitoko or kiy, the name of the ba tree, and the word designating either ‘real’, asea, or ‘spirit being’, yap.*

The Wisal clan’s story is similar. The Wisal totem is the kase ma ‘bat’ which went to a big clifl with a spring at its base. There the bat had male and female offspring, which became human. The offspring of the union of the Wisal man and a female of another totem are the Wisal clan. For the Kuki clan, Do yap sent a spirit in pig’s form to a place called Mukupe where he wanted a spirit house built to be called Mukup ‘Mukup house’. The pig had several offspring. Some became men and took a Wisal woman, and their offspring are the Kuki clan. The associated spirit was Mukupapenga ‘the one who went into Mukupi house’.

An example of the accomplishments and contributions of these clan founders is the introduction of fire. Long ago when Do yap was still on his mountaintop dwelling, Limgonai, a fire burned around him encircling the top of the mountain. After the creation and distribution of all things and the birth of the clan founders Do yap was afraid that this fire would burn downwards and consume everything. So he collected the essence of this fire and gave it to a Dipur woman, who put the fire into some slow-burning tinder and stuffed it into her large hollow bamboo ear ornament. She carried this precious fire in her ear ornament for some time, causing her Kpka clan friend to rebuke her for being insensitive to the plight of all the people who did not have fire, being cold and miserable and eating raw food. This criticism angered the Dipur woman and removing the ear ornament containing the fire, she threw it disgustedly onto the ground. A nearby Kpka man saw the fire which had spilled out of the ear ornament, quickly snatched it up, and being a more considerate person, proceeded to share it throughout the area.

And so by this means fire came to the Ketengban and this first fire has several well-known names which all include a reference to the place of origin, Limgonai; to fire, ouke (central dialect), and to the circumstances. The names are: Limbarp ouke ‘fire encircling Lim mountain’; Limkweare ouke ‘fire which came down from Lim; Limmap ouke ‘the fire which stayed/slept up on Lim’; Limbelek ouke ‘the long line of burning fire on Lim mountain’.

**Figure 4**

Ketengban society definitely does not believe that all men (and women) are created equal. The men of clans whose founders had good relationships with the spirits and deities in the primordial era are inherently more powerful than others. In some cases this is because they were assigned responsibility for the ceremonies critical to the continuity or restoration of life and the social order. Other men are chosen by the principal power spirit, *Kain Dyen Ngop* to be shamans and ritual specialists. Some others, because of their relationships, their intelligence, or their good memories are able to aspire to positions of relative spiritual power. But most men are not powerful in themselves or because they have great skill, but only because of their kinship relations. Women are at the bottom of the scale of power and influence, although men occasionally show signs of fear of latent female power.

The following sections describe the major types of Ketengban spiritual authorities.

**Asuru Kwa Neng: Shamans/Divers**

The most spiritually powerful Ketengban men are the *asuru kwa neng* (lit. ‘men with branched eyes’), i.e. shamans. This name refers to the fact that these men have special relationships with the spirits which allow them to see and experience things which normal human beings cannot. These men have been chosen by the spirit of *Um Bo*, head of all malevolent spirits, (*Kain Dyen Ngop*), to be spirit mediators and he controls the hearts and lives of these men. No other spirits ever possess men. These shamans are given ‘spiritual eyes’ to see things in the spiritual realm and are active as divers, healers and helpers, but conversely are feared more than any other human beings because they are so powerful. They lead lives like the major spirits; they are active in killing, traveling invisibly and instantly through Ketengban territory to do evil deeds, they are unstable and unpredictable, and make people uncomfortable in their presence, even while conferring power by association on those in good relationship with them. They are at the same time respected and greatly feared.

When men are arbitrarily chosen to be shamans by the principal power spirit *Kain Dyen Ngop* it becomes obvious to everyone. At certain ‘seasons’ these shamans become increasingly active, and then those destined to become mediators are identified. Whenever *Kain Dyen Ngop* begins to dance (unseen), all the shamans also begin to dance throughout the land. At such times others present in the houses also begin speaking in ecstatic languages, but those who begin to dance and shake are shooting themselves destined to be shamans. After such dancing, the shamans can suddenly disappear, leaving the houses through the firepits (even if a fire was burning), through cracks in the floor or ceiling, or simply by going out the doorway.
Although they are then not seen for a while, they can be heard in the sounds of scraping on the roof tops, whistlings, or rustlings in banana trees or dead trees. All the other men in the men’s house become very frightened, seize their valuables, and run to nearby houses and bar the doors to avoid contact with the shamans.

When the established shamans perform the sangsemma dance and disappear, some of the new mediators disappear with them, which indicates they have begun their new role. The activities and powers of the shamans cannot be taught nor are they apprentices, but the powers are given directly by Kain Dyen Ngop all at once. The timing of the granting of these powers or the onset of a period of shaman activity is unpredictable.

In their altered state the shamans can see the spirits and accompany them anywhere in the land immediately and invisibly. Normal people can see them disappear, or be present when they suddenly reappear after an absence. During that absence they might be seen in many different places, such as high in treetops, on mountain tops or in other inaccessible places.

On some of these journeys the shamans are transported by Kain Dyen Ngop to serve him by killing someone in a different area. Often this is done by shooting people with special isok mare ‘spirit arrows’ supplied by Kain Dyen Ngop. Sometimes this death by arrow is instantaneous, sometimes prolonged and painful, but it is initiated by Kain Dyen Ngop or the major spirits, not by the shamans.

Sometimes the shamans function as messengers for Kain Dyen Ngop. If sorcery has been performed by a specialist (such as killing many people in a particular hamlet) Kain Dyen Ngop sends the mediator of the affected area as a messenger. He suddenly appears in a house of the victims’ relatives and falls unconscious. Those present hear his voice and immediately the house for evidence which would tell where the responsibility lay for the recent deaths. The sign is usually a leaf from a tree or palm from which bows are made but which palm is from a distinctive (usually distant) area and it usually lies in the shaman’s hand or on the ground by the house. This sign shows that people or spirits from the area where those trees or palms are found are responsible. If northern, the sign would be Deir leaves; if southern, wen leaves; from the east, sinim leaves and those responsible are the sinim bo cangane neng or Yare tana neng ‘those shaping (bows) from sinim leaves’, or the people from the Yare area. If those responsible are from the west the leaf is uyar and the people called uyar cangane neng ‘those shaping bows from uyar tree.

If, however, the killers/spirits are from a nearby area the shaman who arrives will shake all over, and dance sangsemma by bouncing rapidly and singing the sang mut song in which the area responsible is named. Though retaliation for sorcery is expected the ultimate responsibility rests on those who are killed because they didn’t give proper respect and gifts to the spirits.

The shamans also sometimes function as lap pena neng ‘diviners’ or ‘explaining people’, although other initiated men can also fill this function. These diviners enable people to learn which persons or spirits are responsible for a sickness or death. After inspecting the person and the illness they can determine what kind of spirit is involved and where it can be found to make an appeasing sacrifice. For instance, large facial swellings accompanied by diarrhea are usually attributed to the spirit Nunupkar ner, and gifts can be taken to a certain high waterfall to appease her. In some cases the shaman might advise calling a man of a particular clan to perform a ritual specific to that clan due to its relationship to that spirit.

Another function of the shamans is related to their office as ‘explainers’, lap pena neng. In this capacity, they report to people whether the major spirits (or the Tau Pena house spirit) are happy with their sacrifices. Men have to set aside vegetable foods, pork, and tobacco and place it on a shelf across from the door of the men’s house to honor the great spirit Um Bo, but the immediate recipient is the spirit Tau Pena who resides on the shelf. The spirits come and take the essence of the food gift, but since they prefer to travel widely to watch everyone they are often not present. Nevertheless, the gifts are obligatory and usually within three to five days the Tau Pena spirits do come to eat the food. However, normal people cannot tell whether the spirits are pleased with the sacrifice or whether further gifts are necessary. The shaman inspects the food on the shelf to determine whether the spirits have eaten its essence and are satisfied. If not, they say, “No, they (the spirits) have turned their backs on you, so further pigs are to be given.” The shaman can also report to the spirits when someone has not made gifts to them.

Another helpful function of the shamans is to locate and return stolen sambala ‘souls’ to their owners’ bodies before they become weak and die. The spirits of the dead, nimi isok, sometimes steal people’s souls and hide them in the jungle. The shaman can, if entreated, ask the major spirits or Kain Dyen Ngop where these are hidden, go and bring them back, and with a ritual reinsert the soul into the person. If they accidentally happen on a stolen soul hidden in the jungle they can return it if they are so inclined. If one shaman steals a person’s soul and is taking it away, another shaman if quickly asked, might catch up with him and convince him to give it back.

The shaman can also reverse certain kinds of sorcery. This is most effective if the sorcery has been initiated and performed by a human as opposed to a spirit. The shaman can be told by the major spirits or Kain Dyen Ngop where to find the small bundles of ‘leavings’ used in sorcery. Upon retrieving them and performing a ritual, the first sorcery will fail. A similar intervention can stop sorcery by a shaman of a different area. Although the shamans do not fight one another they sometimes argue or negotiate to gain a ‘reprieve’ for someone. For instance, if a shaman shoots someone with a isok mare spirit arrow’ from Kain Dyen Ngop, takes blood from the victim, travels to a place where spirits live and eats it, the person will surely die. However, if another shaman can be induced to go there and intervene before the blood eating takes place, a ritual can be performed by him to restore health to the dying person.

Another type of healing performed by the shaman is to ‘pull out’ certain spirits which are eating a person’s heart; or to grasp and remove the ‘spirit arrows’ shot into them by spirits. (See section on Other Rituals, page 828f).

The shamans can also use their influence to protect people by driving away the ancestral spirits of another group during warfare. These ancestral spirits assist their living relatives in fighting, but the shamans can only temporarily succeed in ritually driving them away since such spirits cannot be killed, and will return on another occasion.

If a shaman has been instructed by Kain Dyen Ngop to kill his own relative whom he really likes, he might refuse to carry out the directive. This could result in his being punished by death, but more likely by other means. For example, Kain Dyen Ngop or the spirits might take the disobedient shaman on their travels, but leave him stranded high in a tree, on a mountain peak, a house top, a rock or some other difficult place. Kain Dyen Ngop might choose to hit him on the head with a rock or piece of wood, resulting in a deep sleep which may last for several days. The shaman is aware of the punishment upon waking.

Mem Delyo Neng: Ritual Specialists

Ritual specialists known as mem delyo neng were given responsibility by Um Bo for carrying out the major ceremonies and rituals of Ketengban life. Um Bo assigned certain ceremonies and rituals to designated clans and the ritual specialists are in charge of these. The ritual specialists are not spirit mediators like the shamans (asuru kwa neng) but are responsible to determine the correct time or season to hold the rituals, to insure that rituals are correctly performed, and also to determine whether a ceremony needs to be performed again. Having assigned people to begin preparations for the ceremonies, the ritual specialists have to insure that everything is done in accordance with the instructions given by the deity Um Bo in the beginning, because they are scrutinized by his spirit Kain Dyen Ngop. Their activities are discussed in the section on Principle Life Ceremonies, page 73ff.

The responsibilities for the ceremonies, rituals and incantations assigned to the specific clans are passed within the clans to each new generation. Those ceremonies and activities appropriate to Leptalen clansmen, for example, can be learned only by Leptalen men, and no other clan can be successful in doing them. Every ritual or ceremony is intended to accomplish certain things related to specific causes, problems, or needs which are the special jurisdiction of specific spirits and further, none can be successful
without the help of the principal power spirit Kain Dyen Ngop. (See section on him below). Each clan has to deal with the totem spirits and companion spirits with whom they have relationships, and cannot influence the Kamaya ‘companion spirit’ or totems yonua of other clans or groups.

The only exception to this are firstborn sons, who are considered ‘related’ to their mother’s clan’s kamaya ‘companion spirit’ and privileged to also learn the ceremonies in her clan’s domain. Good relationships with these men are desired because they can be called upon in situations needing ceremonies or rituals from either their father’s or their mother’s clan.

The ritual specialists choose their firstborn sons as apprentices and this role cannot be declined or resisted. The firstborn sons are taught the incantations, songs, rituals and ceremonies of their father’s clan and are called du ngeng ‘elders’.

Younger sons are generally not taught these things, but a ‘back-up’ system is allowed. When the second (but no other) son is initiated, he can be taught some of the rituals and incantations by his father or sometimes by his older brother. This is insurance against the loss of this crucial knowledge should the father and eldest son die before the eldest son himself has a son old enough to be initiated. This second-born son of the original father is allowed to teach the firstborn son of his elder brother (the eldest son) when he comes of age and is himself also allowed to practice the incantations and rituals.

Kwetena Neng: Healers / Nimi Kerdon Neng: Sorcerers

These two categories of practitioners, the nimi kwetena neng ‘healers’ and the nimi kerdon neng ‘sorcerers’, though having different goals, nevertheless have relatively equal power and influence. In fact, some people are able use their spiritual powers to heal in some instances and to cause sickness and death in others. In either case, the sources of their powers are the same spirits discussed throughout this paper. Here they are grouped together since the focus is on their relative power and influence among the Ketengban. Healers are appreciated and respected. Sorcerers while deemed necessary to punish wrongdoing, exert pressure, or get revenge, are more feared than respected.

One marked difference between these two types of specialists is that nimi kerdon neng ‘sorcerers’, unlike any other class of spirit specialists, can be women. Such women are all very old, the sisters of ritual specialists and are the most feared sorcerers because their power is great and they are characterized as capricious, mean, and evil. Perhaps this fear is greater because this is the one area where women can exert power over men.

Sorcerers and healers are specialists associated with individual clans and spirits, who are very dependable in times of need. But it is essential to determine which of them has the necessary connections for any given problem and shamans and ritual specialists may be called on to make that determination if it is not obvious because of their clan membership. They can also deal with spirits with whom they have relationships, either the clan totem spirits, the Kamaya companion spirits, or the ancestral spirits. But shamans are notoriously unpredictable and may do harm rather than good, so given a certain problem a person usually solicits their services merely to divine what person or spirit is responsible and then select a sorcerer or healer from the clan most likely to succeed in getting revenge or solving the problem based on his relationship to, or knowledge of the spirits and rituals in question.

The skills for healing and for cursing people are not necessarily handed down through filial lines. Other people can be taught the appropriate menya penya ‘incantations’ and rituals. Specialists may select their apprentices or a person may ask a specialist to take him as an apprentice. It does not seem that women can make such a request or teach these things to other men, though they may occasionally teach other old women some specific things.

Kwetena Neng: Initiates

The second category in Figure 4 kwetena neng, refers to any man not a specialist in ceremonial or ritual life, unless it is in ceremonies for healing or cursing, but who has been initiated into the male pandanas cult. Membership in the cult gives him the privilege of participating in all the male ceremonies, feasts, and rituals and it opens the door for advancement into a more powerful category. Membership also gives the right to eat important ritual foods like pandanas and certain cuts of pork, and generally to get greater amounts of pork and other food at feasts. Members of the cult or the men’s round house are associated with important people, privy to knowledge, conversations, and discussions related to the spiritual/ceremonial life of the community and also form the network of mutually beneficial obligations so important to life in Melanesia. Simply being able to participate in these things gives status above the last four categories on the chart.

Nofet Neng: Non-Initiate

A nofet neng ‘non-initiate’, is considered less than a full adult. He is usually pre-pubescent and cannot associate with initiated men during ceremonial or ritual periods, which puts him in a class with women and other things which relate to spiritual weakness and pollution. Since initiations are held approximately every three to five years, it is possible to be in the early teens and still be uninitiated. Competition and jealousy arise when some young men close in age are full members of the male cult and others are not. In order to avoid this there is a “half-way” arrangement worked out during the initiation. If men know that their young male kinsmen are not quite old enough to participate in the initiation rites they can still gain some privileges for them. Just before the regular initiation candidates are taken to the secret enclosure, these younger boys are formally introduced to the ceremonial specialists and the candidates. One of their initiated kinsmen, usually a du ngeng ‘elder’ or a men ngeng ‘ceremonial specialist’, puts the boy into a large net bag and hangs it around his neck. With the boy suspended on his body he enters the men’s house at the first stage of initiation and hands the child to one of the men deyo ngop ‘ceremonial head men’. This man takes the net bag with the child and holds it out in front of him, walking around the circle of candidates preparing them for the ceremony. Then the boy is handed back to his male relative and sent back home again, not participating further in the initiation. The only processes for him the right to eat some otherwise taboo foods until he can be fully initiated. The most important of these foods is kain ‘pandanas’, which is, except for pork, the most important social and ritual food for the Ketengban. This is a small privilege, because for most Melanesians, and the Ketengban, feasting is not just an opportunity to consume a great deal of food, but is an important time of cementing alliances, incurring mutual obligations, honoring and validating the spirits. This introduction does not give these boys the right to be present at ceremonies or rituals or to hear about taboo subjects, but does move them higher up the scale of power and importance than women and other things which pollute.

Finally there are the Ketengban women, who have the least power and influence, with the exception of the old women sorcerers. Women have very few rights and privileges and no socially recognized avenues of power. Their normal work load is extremely heavy and never finished. Even today, when many of men’s former responsibilities, such as warfare and ritual / ceremonial life are no longer practiced the work in gardens and pig-raising still are basically the responsibility of women. It is common to see men sitting talking or taking a nap almost any time of the day. When a man goes to the gardens, he likely returns with only a small net bag of food, just enough to contribute to the evening meal in his men’s house. Women, on the other hand, almost never rest or relax during the day, but depart very early for the gardens, are gone almost all day, and return heavily loaded with three or four large net bags of tubers, greens and firewood, often with a child on top and a pig behind on a rope.

Many of the most nutritious and ceremonially important foods were, but are not now strictly taboo to women. Even to look at some of these foods, like pork back fat or inner stomach fat, certain taboo cucusus (marsupials), or red pandanas, can result in death at the hands of initiated men. To be seen anywhere near the main ceremonial locations is to incur suspicion of having seen men in their taboo red paint, ending in a quick brutal death, with the body thrown into a cave or down a hole.
Small girls can be promised as wives to men well before puberty and neither they nor their female relatives are allowed to have a part in the decisions regarding these arrangements. Women are considered to be the primary and most dangerous source of spiritual pollution via their menstrual blood, augmented by the fact that they eat so many ‘cold, wet and weak’ foods like frogs, tadpoles, insects, small birds, and lizards.

Ketengban women are, however, very important to the men, through little privilege results from this worth. Women raise pigs and children, care for and harvest gardens, and the benefit of this work is acknowledged in the large bride prices paid for them. A man and his male kinsmen gain wealth through pigs, large gardens and bride price, all of which contribute to his ability to enter an expanding network of mutually beneficial obligations. Without the labor of his wife(s) and close female relatives a man’s potential in developing these alliances is severely hampered.

In spite of their general powerlessness there are at least two ways in which women can deal very significant, devastating blows to men. The first way is, tragically, suicide. Such women often take a nursing child along, and usually kill themselves by throwing themselves off a high cliff or into a raging river. In view of the extremely limited options open to them it is more clear why suicide is attractive to them and how it is effective. In one blow, the husband loses his wife, chief gardener-pig raiser, his investment in future female children through whom to gain bride price, a possible son and heir, and incurs much trouble. He will still probably have to pay some if not all the bride price, have strained relations or even fights on account of her death with his wife’s clansmen, have to get his gardens and pigs taken care of through other female relatives, and might soon have to incur further debts and potential trouble in arranging for a new wife. This is no small blow and even the threat of a wife committing suicide is a serious concern for men.

The second way a woman can exert power and create trouble for her husband, or the group in general, is by inviting the attentions of other men, especially men of other clans or areas. This causes tensions and the expenditure of time, effort and even goods in settling such a problem. Her husband may be killed in the resulting fray or the woman herself can even lose her life, but this does not seem to be much of a deterrent. Sometimes sorcerers of either sex put curses on a woman to cause her to behave seductively and cause this kind of trouble for someone. There are specific rituals to prevent this irresponsible behavior. A further means of dealing a significant blow to a difficult or unresponsive husband is infanticide.

In summary, there are no rigid castes or classes among the Ketengban, but there is a hierarchy of power and authority among men and women related to spiritual/ritual beliefs. The men with the most power are the shamans (asuru kwa neng) who are chosen by the principal power spirit Kain Dyen Ngop. The next most powerful are the mem delyo neng ‘ritual specialists’, and then kwetera ‘healers’ and nimi kerdon neng ‘sorcerers’. These are followed by the kwet neng, all initiated males having no spirit associated special function, but who are full members of the male pandanas cult. Finally there are the noter neng ‘non-initiates’, women, and children of either sex below nine or ten years old.

GODS, SPIRITS AND MAN

Figure 5 below lists the categories of spirits recognized by the Ketengban and their relative importance, authority/power, and origin. In the diagram higher vertical ranking indicates greater authority and length of existence. Spirits on the same level are equal in power and came into existence at about the same time. A solid line joining two categories indicates that the second is derived from the first. Dotted lines are only to guide the eye of the reader. The spirit categories will be discussed as discrete entities, but the Ketengban do not systematize information in this way, leading to what appears to westerners be overlapping or missing information. The timing and relationships between the various areas and beings are not always clear, even to the Ketengban who related it to us. The spirit categories will be described starting from the top of the chart and moving down from left to right.

Ketengban Spirit Categories

**DOYAP**

- Clan Founders
- Bawa Bo
- Um Bo
- Kain Dyen Ngop (Memeduman Ngop)
- Major Spirits
- Minor Spirits
- Recent spirits of dead
- Waning spirits of the dead
- Corpse of the spirit of the dead

**Figure 5**

**Doyap: The Creator**

Doyap, or Doyap, is the earliest known being who resided on top of Mount Mandala, known as Limgonai. He created the physical universe including humans and animals. Due to this foundational accomplishment, he is also known by several secret names including Limdoyap 'Doyap of Lim Mountain', Nimi Delyo Ngop 'Man who is the Source of men', Nimi Nai Ngop 'Father of Man', and Nimi Kweldim Ngop 'Creator of Man'. Like many creator deities in Melanesian mythology, (Habel, 1978) Doyap created the universe, then disappeared and is no longer active in the daily life of his creation. He delegated the responsibility for maintaining life and order to other spirits. Though it is said that Doyap created all that is, the detailed description of his activities refers to the western quarter of Ketengban territory. This, too, is typical of Melanesian mythical figures who create one key geographical area. However, Doyap's creation includes the traditional areas of all the Ketengban clans, and all their clan founders. Doyap's location during creation, place of retirement and current residence is Limgonai, and its center is the ice cap of Mount Mandala.

First, Doyap made two very large waters, Bime and Tanihe which began to pool and became even greater. During this process Doyap created everything visible including people, flora, and fauna, everything found in the sky or on land. During this period, Doyap's sister and brothers were living with him but had nothing to do with creation. His brothers were Limtola, and Lim Kwerer (also known as Kwerer) and his sister was Limkwerepkor ner.

While Limtola and Doyap were on top of Limgonai mountain having a conversation, the Bime and Tanihe waters began to argue about which would be first to overflow the holding area into the valleys Doyap created. All created things were now floating on the waters and as Doyap and Limtola talked, finally the Bime water broke free first, being greater in mass and more powerful, and rushed down the mountainside in a great wall of water. This great flood carried the most prized items of Doyap's creation including people, pandanas, prized banana species, sago and animals. This water flowed into the Bicroman area, or the Bi river valley system. The Tanihe waters overflowed next, but went toward the western and northern lowlands taking the residue of created things, such as sago, cassowaries, fish and a few people. Details of subsequent events in that area are not known to the highland Ketengban.

Doyap and his brothers followed the great rush of water and resulting landslide down from the mountaintop to the Bi river valley system, deciding to finish the dispersion and assigning of things from there. Lim Kwerer was primarily responsible for this and when they arrived he said that if he did not quickly intervene
all the best things would flow out the northwestern-most lowland valley openings and be too widely scattered. His intention was to have the best things and majority of the population within the Bi valley system, so he quickly placed his hardwood brush-cutting 'blade' in the narrow neck of the lowest valley mouth damming up the Bi waters and stopping the flow of things it carried. This constituted the first major division of creation.

Doyap's brother, Lim Kwerer, also had the responsibility of assigning lands, social responsibilities, and ritual authority, thus ordering life for all creation. He assigned totem animals, birds, or reptiles embodying a companion spirit to each established clan. (see section on Origins and Totems) Doyap, as the oldest most powerful deity, began to prepare the first spirit house with the help of Lintola and Kweremper at a place called Bapgon, Mergekin or Monggoniyc. This became the most important spirit house, called Bapgon ait or Mergekin ait, and is the site where the initiation cycle always begins.

As his initial act in building the spirit house, Doyap planted the first ironwood house pole, which was found in the debris carried down in the flood from Limgonai. He gave instructions for finishing the house, having begun the important part, and then went to place the support poles for two additional spirit houses in two nearby areas, Depesaban and Peremgonban.

After Doyap had gone (not to return again), his sister Kweremper ait, 'she will come down woman' began to have children. These children were all men-eating female spirits which became the most malevolent and powerful spirits of the land. Some of these will be mentioned in the section on major spirits, but one of them was an extremely important spirit, Ketingna ait, who was instrumental in multiplying the inhabitants of the land.

Also present during this primordial era were a few of the clan founders or progenitors: a Wisal woman, a Lepitatun man, a Monggon man, a Kipka woman, a Meliku man, and a few others. While Kweremper was bearing female children, her brother Kwerer, the Wisal woman, Lepitatun and Meiku men went back to the original spirit house site, Bapgon. These three first clan founders had decided to follow Kwerer's instructions to hold an initiation for young men. They put all the initiates up in a tree on some fern leaves and were dancing and holding the initiation ceremony underneath the tree. After a very long time, the initiates became dehydrated (having no water to drink), filthy, emaciated and covered with flies. Excrement had also accumulated under the tree. Trying to better their situation, the Lepitatun man killed a marsupial (cuscus) and gave it to them to eat. But since there was no fire yet, they had to eat it raw and it only worsened their condition. At this point Kwerer came and saw the terrible situation. This led to the next stage of development and the most critical event in preserving the life and ceremonial/social order of the Ketengban people.

Um Bo: Sacrificial Deity

Doyap's brother, Kwerer, is of a type found in many Melanesian cultures, classified by some as a Dena deity (Flannery, 1979), whose death turned into a creative process and whose essence remains in the items involved in his death. Further, the Ketengban partake of his essence during the ritual pig feasts he established as part of their life.

At this point in the mythology a major transformation took place. When Kwerer came and saw the terrible situation resulting from the people's attempts to hold the first initiation according to his instructions, he proclaimed two things. First, that his name be changed from Kwerer to Um Bo. In some accounts Umpe) and second, that a radical intervention was the only way to repair the damage and allow life to go on. Um Bo (Kwerer) told the Wisal woman and the others that putting the initiates up in the tree was wrong and this had caused the boys' skins to dry up and be ruined, in addition to the rest of their despicable condition. Then he announced that he would give his own life and body as a sacrifice to repair the damage. Then Kwerer, who was now Um Bo, instructed the Wisal woman to kill him, cut up his body and cut off the grease from his inner parts. The people were to take the grease and rub it over the dried ruined skins of the initiates to restore them. Furthermore, this was to be repeated for men everywhere in perpetuity and Um Bo gave specific instructions for the process and attendant ceremonies.

Then the Wisal woman took a bilim tuya 'pig rope' and tying Um Bo to a dekne tree, shot him with a bow and arrow. When the arrow hit Um Bo, he became an enormous pig, and screaming shrilly from the fatal wound leapt into the air breaking the pig rope. Now bleeding in his death throes, Um Bo bounded through the air in a great circular path throughout Ketengban territory stopping briefly in numerous places. Each place where he landed became a clan center, a key initiation house, or another important ritual house. Among others he landed at Yapinlinban, Paumban, Keraperban, Malkondam, Soupleyu, Depesaban, and finally returned to Monggon or Monggoniyc where Doyap had begun the first spirit house. In many of these places he did something characteristic of dying pigs, such as squalling, urinating, bleeding, defecating, and rolling in a pool with each such action usually reflected in the name of these important places.

Finally the people at the initiation/killing site heard a great commotion coming from the Depesaban area and said to the Lepitatun man, "Since you are of the dog totem and can thus run faster than we can without tiring, you go there to see if he has died at Depesaban." So the Lepitatun man ran up there and saw Um Bo was there dying, but when the Lepitatun man said he would go and report it, Um Bo told him not to do so. He wanted to return to the original spirit house site at Monggoniyc and die there.

Upon arriving at Monggoniyc he instructed the Lepitatun man to divide up his body and then he died. In accordance with his instructions the Lepitatun man cut off the pig leg which formerly had been the arm on which Um Bo, when he was still Kwerer, had tied his sekne 'fire-starting vine'. He then stood aside as the Wisal woman finished cutting up Um Bo's pig body. After steaming his parts in the cooking pit, they took them out and the Wisal woman and Monggon man finished dividing the portions and laying them in display for distribution among those present. This type of display at feasts remained important throughout their ritual-dominated past and can even be seen to a degree today.

The names of many other clans began at this feast since their names are words which recall the part their founders played in this process. For example, a woman there was collecting small bits of discarded meat, bone, or fat and putting them in a net bag while the larger portions were being displayed. The verb kina 'putting into a net bag' has as its past participle form kipka, and the clan name used for the descendants of that woman is Kipka. Another person present was handing razor sharp pieces of bamboo, traditionally used as knives, to those cutting up Um Bo's pig body. The Ketengban word for bamboo knife is pa, an older secret word for cutting instruments is yemba, and these combine into the clan name for this person's descendants, Payumka. There are many names formed on this kind of pattern.

Before all the displayed pieces could be handed out, Um Bo sent a sudden strong wind. Immediately all the pieces of meat and fat and the people watching or holding them were blown into the air and all came down in the places where as Kwerer, he had previously decided they should be. Many of these places where pieces of Um Bo's pig body landed, with or without people holding them, became population centers or important locations for ceremonial/ritual houses, and their names often refer to that particular body portion. For instance, araya means breast bones and the place where that portion of Um Bo fell is called Taramuly. The word for 'neck' is kume, and the village area where it landed is called Kumurye. All the progenitors thus dispersed to what is now their traditional land, many of them places where Um Bo had fallen during his death throes, took with them portions of Um Bo's body containing his power and essence and placed them in the spirit houses they built. They were to then continue forever symbolically partaking of Um Bo's essence in every pig feast, ceremonial or common, throughout all later generations.

Another major transformation took place upon the death of Um Bo. When Um Bo allowed himself to be killed to restore good skins to the initiates and ensure continuing life for the people, he released his spirit or became a spirit. Only his body as Kwerer-Um Bo died, because his essence is eternal. Upon death his transformation to an immensely powerful spirit known as Kain Dey Ngap 'the Pandanas Eating Man' was completed and he rules all other spirits.
Progression in Identity Of Doyap's Brother

(LUM KWERER) KWERER
Form man-like UM BO KAIN DYEN NGOP
Work ordered life pig spirit
Nature disinterested sacrificed himself head of evil spirits
Due passivity benefactor evil/avenging
honorng/obeying placating/appeasing

Figure 6

Two other events resulted from deep grief over Um Bo's death. He brother Lintola became so saddened that he left the area and went down to the lowland area where the great Tanie river flowed. The Highland people know little else about him though people from the Tanie river system could probably relate his story. The culture hero Bawe Bo (see the section on Realm of the Major Spirits, page 43) was so deeply grieved that he went under the earth's surface and entered a deep sleep.

Kain Dyen Ngop: Ruler Spirit

The spirit of Um Bo, Kain Dyen Ngop, is the most powerful spirit and he rules all other spirits. Though most propitiation and petitioning of spirits is done with reference to Um Bo, his closest connection now with humans is his spirit Kain Dyen Ngop and all must be done through him, though in Um Bo's honor.

There is a key difference between Um Bo's character before his sacrificial death and what he is now as Kain Dyen Ngop. Um Bo was benevolently concerned with the welfare of man. He established Ketengban social order and ritual life. In the end he gave his life and substance to restore the first initiates and complete the ceremony without which boys could not become men, and life could not be lived in harmony with the universe. Kain Dyen Ngop, on the other hand, is characterized by a mean and angry disposition. He strikes fear into Ketengban hearts by being prone to cause disaster and death for even minor infractions or slightings to his honor. There is a never-ending necessity to placate him. He is described as evil and capricious whereas Um Bo is never referred to in this way. This dichotomy parallels the way humans and the spirits of the dead are characterized: the living person may have been a jovial, generous person, but his spirit is likely to be dangerous. The visible and tangible is usually predictable and good, but the unseen tends to be malevolent.

Kain Dyen Ngop is like men in some respects. He decorates himself with feathers, ear plugs and other ornamentation. A certain type of pandanans, an important ceremonial food with which he is particularly concerned, is his dancing ornament. This variety of pandanas, Alum kain, is very long, straight, and red and men want their dancing ornaments and pandanas to meet these same standards.

Pandanus Dancing Ornamentation

Figure 7

This dancing ornamentation is wound around the neck hanging down the back. Kain Dyen Ngop also wears colorful net bags decorated with feathers, uses nose bones, necklaces, arm and leg bands, and carries a bow and arrows with which to shoot men. He can also give these arrows to other spirits to use. He has gardens, and though he has no wives, he does have has many younger sisters. (see the section on Major Spirits) His children are those humans whom he has chosen for spirit mediation, asuruk kwa nang, and the ritual specialists, mem deyo nang.

Though greatly feared, he is respected as the sustainer of life. He never forgets, and if made angry will certainly punish, either directly or through the spirits under him. Though not omnipresent, he can move quickly and travel constantly. His habitations include certain huge rocks, or especially large trees like the gu, bor, we and ink. His essence remains in the pandanas mentioned earlier, Alum kain, and is able to take this form, in which manifestation he is secretly called Emdam Ngop 'near the pandanus one'.

He or his essence also inhabits all the mem all 'major ceremonial and initiation houses', mem mutu, 'taboo places'; such as Bopgon, Dopoiban, Dangar, Namnamban, Depesaban, and Elpah.

Kain Dyen Ngop is jealousely concerned with the proper running of the social order and ritual/ceremonial life which as Um Bo he gave instructions for and set in motion. He is the spirit from whom all other spirits must get permission to do their good or evil. He ultimately polices and judges all of life and controls all prosperity and production.

The companion spirits of the clans and male heads of spirit houses are assigned by him and are under his rule and jurisdiction. The sorcerers, spirit mediators, diviners and other ritual specialists receive their instructions from him. The clan companion spirits report oversights and misdeeds to him and he gives permission to punish or kill, or does so himself. Because of the close relationship between Kain Dyen Ngop and the ceremonial/ritual life of the Ketengban people, further details about him may be found in the section on rituals.
Major Spirits

The three distinguishing characteristics of these major spirits are that they are female, originate from the earliest era, and are fiercely malevolent. These spirits are the daughters of Dyap’s sister, Kweyekor Ner. Relative to man or ancestral spirits, they are pre-existent and eternal. They were never human beings, nor do they inhabit or possess humans or give power to them. Further, they are extremely powerful and dangerous to male humans and are described as man-eating. Though they may be enticed to help people by certain rituals or food gifts they are almost exclusively responsible for sickness, death, and calamities.

As previously explained, the two principal power spirits are Kain Dyn Ngop and Memeduman Ngop. Though Kain Dyn Ngop is the supreme ruler of all spirits, Memeduman Ngop has nearly equal powers over the major spirits assigned to him and is possible that he is the simply the eastern dialect equivalent of Kain Dyn Ngop. Both of these nim kamaya ‘highest ranking principal spirits’ have a large group of powerful female spirits under their direction. Both the kamaya and the isok ner ‘female spirits’ come up into the realm of man through the holes in hollow trees or near special sites. They then travel through the sky or return to the tunnels under the earth’s surface to their next destination. These female spirits are always moving, watching and listening for infractions of Um Bo’s regulations, and looking for people’s hearts and spirits to eat. Though killing is their main business, it is almost always because of some wrongdoing on the victim’s part. Eating a person’s spirit does not cause a special relationship between one of the female spirits and the victim, nor is the spirit completely removed from the body. The female spirit eats the essence of her victim, so the person dies.

Though the permission of Kain Dyn Ngop and Memeduman Ngop must be gained to cause sickness and death, the work itself is almost always done by one of these malevolent female spirits unless the two principal power spirits are extremely angry with the person and wish to kill them personally. If sudden catastrophic illness or death strikes it is a sign that Kain Dyn Ngop or Memeduman Ngop is directly responsible. Usually prolonged illness and a slower death then it is caused by one of the malevolent female spirits. Experienced diviners may recognize individual sickness as the work of certain ones of these female spirits.

It is necessary to determine which spirits are causing trouble or carrying out punishments at a given time. Since rituals, including those used for healing, have been assigned to various clans, once the origin of a sickness has been determined, then it is usually necessary to find a person from the clan with the particular incantation or skill necessary to perform the ritual on the basis of their relationship to their totem spirits. A person’s own clansmen may be powerless if the calamity is caused by spirits associated with a different clan, or if the necessary incantations are owned by a different clan. However, spirit dominance is not rigidly delineated and the spirits may cooperate across group or clan lines.

If a spirit related to a particular clan cannot carry out a requested killing or some other curse alone, they may cooperate with other powerful area spirits to do it. Spirits do not fight among themselves as humans do, but may have arguments at times about killing people, although some arrangement is usually reached and the killing accomplished. Each major spirit has a specific name or names, most of which were known only to spirit head men, spirit mediators, sorcerers, and healers. The names usually give a main characteristic of the spirit or information about her habitat or actions. There are too many of these spirits to describe individually, but a few will serve as representative examples.

1) Limusukor ner ‘coming-down-from-Limgonai-mountain woman’ has several other names depending on her actions or point of departure, and is very dangerous. As Limusukor ner she is always seeking people who are weak or becoming ill from the action of other spirits. When such a person is found, she sits outside their house and sniffs the air like a dog or a pig. Sick people have an odor detectable to spirits just as ripe fruit attracts bats and such people are called ‘ripe’, using the same word as is applied to fruit. Limusukor ner sniffs to find the person and then enters the house to eat the essence of the victim’s heart, tamela/dipu, and/or spirit, sambala, causing their death. If however, a shaman is available who, being aware of her presence, is able to see her sitting near the house, he will usually advise that the sick person be taken out and left in the jungle where she can eat their spirits without having the chance to see others she might also want to eat. This spirit is also known as Ketilinga ner ‘travels-all-about-like-the-sun-woman’ as a reminder that she travels to many areas and is present at the major initiation ceremonies (see the section on Principle Life Ceremonies, page 739) participating in the feasting and dancing.

She has an insatiable appetite for pig and other small animals. Being quickly dissatisfied with offerings at ceremonial times she is likely to cause sickness, especially a disease where the victim gradually declines until death. She particularly watches that no one kills and eats pigs without honoring Kain Dyn Ngop/Um Bo and offering some to him, causing such offenders or their relatives to become sick. If proper offerings are made but the site improperly cleared of evidence of this secret ritual, then she again causes sickness and death. This evidence could be bits of banana leaves with pig grease, burnt wood, or arrow heads laying about where they could be observed by non-initiates instead of being carefully hidden or destroyed in the fire. Such careless disrespectful acts incite her to rise from the ground nearby and inflict sickness.

2) Nimi dipu doroporner ner ‘she - is - going - to - take - men’s(people’s) - hearts - out woman’ or Bondam ner ‘near-holes woman’ is likely to come out of small, holes in man’s realm to eat people’s spirits. Such holes are usually near trees or fire poles of a man’s house, and though normally invisible to common men, any small dark hole is suspect.

3) Ungka ner is another female spirit who brings sickness and eventually eats the breath, speech, heart or blood, resulting in death.

4) Manarkor ner is the spirit responsible for the growth and fertility of pigs. Whenever pigs are to be killed she has to be informed in advance. This is to avoid the appearance of a person exhibiting too much self-initiative which would be dishonoring to her. Slighting her this way implies the intention of feasting on the pig without giving some to Kain Dyn Ngop or Memeduman Ngop and the spirits of relatives. Although pigs are the mutable items of exchange, especially for bride price, sometimes it is also necessary to set aside other items for her. The person places pig meat and other bride exchange items in her honor on the special shelf on the wall across from the door of the men’s house. Failure to do so angers her, bringing retaliation in the form of sickness in pigs or people, or a refusal to help women raise their pigs resulting in their sickness, mange, running eyes and death. This causes financial insecurity and has serious long range consequences, such as the inability to offer appropriate spirit sacrifices, make good bride payments, and enter into mutually beneficial obligations and alliances with others.

5) Two other major female spirits are Oleolum nunuk corner ‘from - Ole - waterfall woman’ and Oleolum kunka ner ‘she - is - going - to - be - at - Ole - waterfall woman’. Though spirits which frequent certain locations are discussed in the section on minor spirits, these two are distinct due to their greater power and activity. Oleolum nunuk corner approaches villages and looks in at the men seated in the men’s house. She then cause huge swells of their faces and noses, diarrhea, or other intestinal ailments. Her partner, Oleolum kunka ner, comes after other spirits have caused sickness and death and cuts up the body when it has been placed in the tree. She divides the body with the other spirits who come, but when they leave, she takes out the intestines, cleans and eats them raw. She employs a similar tactic with living people who are sickly, taking their intestines, straightening them out, and squeezing the contents into her mouth. After that the victim announces that their breath is leaving and they are soon to die. The victims experience great pain and become hysterical, jumping up, moaning and yelling, and pounding the house walls in their death throes. This activity is a sign that Oleolum kunka ner, (secret name), or Oleulumdam ner ‘the woman near Ole waterfall’ (common name) caused the illness.

These two spirits also frequent burial areas of the Dipur, Wisal, and Monggon clans. From there they seek ‘ripe’ sickly people, so those burial places are shunned. If these spirits should enter the abdomen of a person they cause sicknesses that person becomes a carrier and the spirits return with them to the village causing all the people there to die.

Though there are many such spirits the evil work they perform is much the same, causing sickness or calamity, and eventually eating or stealing the spirits, hearts or other vital parts of people, causing their
death. These spirits respond quickly and viciously to infractions of respect, honor or sacrifices, and obeyed the principal power spirits’ wishes to punish people. They sometimes capriciously kill people on their own, although usually the victim has done something wrong. But they never do anything for people on their own initiative. Such requests as human beings usually to cause someone else’s death, have to be sought with long-term giving of pig or other foods, and by the correct recitation of certain incantations. Although it is possible to entreat these spirits, even with the correct prescribed rituals, it is not possible to force their compliance. If they are pleased and happy with the offerings, then they might be disposed to grant the supplicant’s wishes, unless certain shamans and healers who have direct contact with the principal power spirits stop or reverse their actions. (see the section on Other Rituals, page 82) These spirits sometimes use the services of shamans, providing them with spirit arrows to shoot into people, and then leaving the final decision of whether to kill in their hands.

The major Ketembang spirits do not play mischievous pranks but are on deadly serious business. They will, however, give hints of impending doom to people, frightening them. For instance, they might invisibly touch someone with their cold hands, signalling that death was near. Or if when a corpse was in the house with relatives before being put up in the tree its eyes might suddenly open and look at a specific person indicating the approaching death of that person. This signifies that the dead person’s spirit has met the female spirit and heard this information directly. If a shaman sees a spirit sitting outside a house, and looks inside at the people sitting there, the one about to die appears as though his skin has been burned off and only bones remain.

As another sign of coming death the spirits can leave charcoal in a person’s net bag or place a bit of it in the common pandanas eating container in front of the victim. As the people squat around the food eating, the victim, eventually finding the charcoal in his portion, is warned of impending death. If signalled by charcoal, death is a certainty and nothing can be done to stop it, even though the principal power spirits allowed the spirits to warn the victim. The spirits sometimes slyly cause people to make a deadly mistake by leaving a pandanas leaf, stick, or piece of bamboo on trails or places where the intended victim will pass. When an unsuspecting person removes it or brushes it aside he triggers his own death. These spirits can also kill people by natural disasters like flash floods, landslides, and falling trees or rocks.

When people wish to do evil to others, they either directly ask the spirits with whom they have a good relationship, or ask an intermediary to get a sorcerer to entreat the spirits, paying him later with a stone axe, piglet, or other valuable. The middleman later gives either part or all of it to the sorcerer. This contracting for a death is called but dokotena ‘sending coldness’ and the indirect method is often used if the particular spirit needed is related to another clan.

One major male spirit who had a special place and function was Limdepunge, ‘the one who died at Lim mountain long ago’. He is also called Limdepung, the ‘rotten/stinking man of Lim’; Limbulayong, ‘the cold man of Lim’; Limkirim, ‘the shaking-eye man of Lim’; or Denia Deyo Ngop ‘the source-of-death man’. Only the last name listed is not taboo and can be spoken in front of the uninstructed.

When Doyap created all things, but before the flood of waters swept everything off Limgonal mountain, he also made Limdepunge, then a man. Limdepunge was ordained to be the first man to die, and then to become the head man of death. All the spirits of the dead are under him and considered to be his children along with a few special death-related spirits who live near the mountain tops. If he had not died or had been able to change his skin, then mankind also would not die, but because Doyap created him all people died. Unlike Melanesian myths attributing death to a stupid mistake (Flannery, 1979), the Ketembang say that he was chosen for it by Doyap.

Death occurs when a major spirit (not Limdepunge), or Kain Dyan Ngop or Memeduman Ngop, causes sickness and/or eats someone’s spirit, heart, or other vital part. When this process is completed the spirit which brings death itself is Limdepunge or his subordinates, such as Dening, Denbulung isok, Potongyawa, or Parambuna.

In summary, there are many major Ketembang spirits, most of which are the daughters of Doyap’s sister, Kwerekpker ner, and are extremely powerful, malevolent and greatly feared. They function as subordinates to Kain Dyan Ngop and/or Memeduman Ngop and carry out their bidding, policing men’s affairs and punishing transgressions and insults to themselves or their superiors by eating people’s vital parts causing sickness and weakness. Eventually, death itself is accomplished by Limdepunge and his helpers.

Minor Spirits

Spirits categorized as minor spirits in this paper are similar to those called nature spirits in other areas of Melanesia (Havel, 1979). They are not powerful like the major spirits just discussed, nor are they deities. Though some were present in the primordial era, none have clear origins, like the female children of Kwerekpker ner. They are described in terms of their usual locality or actions. These minor spirits, although clearly evil and capable of causing serious problems and even death, are more likely to cause less deadly mischief. Their power and activities vary, but none are as fearsome as those designated herein as major spirits. None of them take human form to trick or seduce people, except for one minor spirit which does seduce young unmarried women. Though they are often linked to certain characteristic places or things, and some have animal forms, none have been described as ‘the spirit of the waters’, ‘spirit of the trees’, or ‘spirit of a particular animal’. They simply frequent those places or have the forms of the animals.

There appear to be two subsets of these minor spirits although these distinctions are not articulated by the Ketembang. The spirits in animal form tend to be more powerful, while the less powerful spirits are usually encountered in certain places or things. None of these spirits initiate action but rather are only messengers of the Kamaya spirits, the principal power spirits, and the major female spirits, reporting to them and doing their bidding.

Of those spirits in animal, reptile or bird form, the two most feared and powerful are Tau pena, who appears as a certain taboo cuscus (marsupial), (also known secretly as Bumigeteka, Waye, Ayamphi, or Auye) and Nimi Dyan Bisam ‘man-eating pig’, logically in the form of a pig or porcupine, however when warranty of mention are in the forms of the weir bird, the ibi or sanip cassowary, and the small aisekskmwo cuscus.

Tau Pena is the most commonly encountered minor spirit because he is the policeman and helper of every man’s house, residing in a special place high on the wall directly across from the doorway. This position enables him to see everything, including what takes place outside near the house and also puts him in an honored position above everyone, making it impossible for anyone to pass behind him and reminding all of him each time they enter. His job is to carefully watch the members and activities of the men’s house, especially in regard to food consumption. His concern is that the proper gifts be given and rituals performed in honor of Kain Dyan Ngop/Um Bo, and also that food be shared with the ancestors. Food, especially ceremonially important foods like pandanas and pork, can never be eaten casually. There is always a ritual to be performed, a incantation to be said or some portion to be given to Tau Pena and thus by extension to Kain Dyan Ngop or Memeduman Ngop. In addition the ancestral spirits have to be honored by food portions. Larger food items like big taro, pandanas, or pork are never to be eaten outside the hamlet or men’s house unless for a specially designated ritual or ceremony. Small portions of less prized foods can be eaten in gardens or jungle houses, but a portion has to be brought back to share in the men’s house. Therefore, Tau Pena is always looking for food coming into the house or evidence that food has been eaten outside and not legitimized by proper ritual. Gift portions of food, pork, or tobacco are often placed on his wall perch and he either ‘eats the essence of this himself or safeguards it for Kain Dyan Ngop or Memeduman Ngop’s return.

He is limited to being at home, and cannot travel, but this is offset because the spirits of the dead (see the section on Human Spirits), are very mobile and report infractions to him. The spirit of a man’s dead father could report to Tau Pena that his son ate food in the jungle and did not bring a portion for the ancestor, asking Tau Pena to have him made ill, or killed. Tau Pena would become angry over the arrogance of ignoring the two principal power spirits (and the snub to himself) pouting, crying, and turning his back on those in the house. When Kain Dyan Ngop or Memeduman Ngop returns from his travels, this illicit disrespectful food consumption would be reported to him by Tau Pena. Kain Dyan Ngop or Memeduman
Ngop could then punish the offenders as previously described or could decide to use Tau Pen, who would then "grip the person with his teeth and claws." Tau Pen was also given some responsibility for large taro and potato gardens, helping to make them more fruitful.

The second most powerful minor spirit is Nimi Dyen Bisam 'man eating pig'. His secret names are Engdopu, Mokupapu, Untungtu, Mokup dooptupu bisam, which reflect his characteristics and his actions. They mean ‘taking the ripe’ (or), ‘crumming into his mouth’, ‘very black one from Uri mountain’, and ‘he comes from Mupuk spirit house following and interfering with men.’ This pig spirit is owned and cared for by Kain Dyen Ngop or Memeduman Ngop and has a red streak painted on his cheek to mark this ownership.

When corpses are finally placed high in a tree, this spirit pig comes from a hole near the tree or a hole near a special pole planted there. Having smelled the ‘ripeness’ of the corpse, he eats the spirit and/or body of the person, or roots around the tree or pole causing the body to fall down to the ground, which is extremely disrespectful. Another problem posed by this pig/spirit is related to the outcappings of rock near the doorways of certain ceremonial or ritual houses. Since these outcappings go deep underground and cannot be moved, it is believed that they are the snout of this pig, although it is never mentioned lest it anger him.

If certain rituals are not carried out correctly (see the section on Principle Life Ceremonies), then he will open his enormous mouth and all those present and perhaps people everywhere will fall in and be consumed. During another ritual ensuring plentiful harvests (see section on Other Rituals, page 82ff) water spouts from a spring carrying items used for garden fertility. This water is believed to be coming from this pig spirit’s nostrils and penis because of its constricted nature, quantity and forcefulness.

Nimi Dyen Bisam ‘man-eating pig spirit’ also helps in obtaining rattan vine needed for part of another ceremony. This particular species of vine, tawar tapke, is essential because Um Bo had wrapped it around his arm as a fire-starting vine. When hunting this vine, it is auspicious to find some with the roots already severed near the ground, or with the topmost leaves already wrenched. This is evidence that Alrend Dyen Bisam had cut it to let the thing go well in the ceremony. Repeating the pig spirit’s name so he will be pleased and not open his mouth, the people then happily bring the vine to the ceremonial house.

A less powerful spirit in cassowary form is Sanipe, or ibi. This cassowary spirit, like the pig spirit, is larger than normal. Sometime in the far past Um Bo realized how powerful the cassowary was and sent him down to the lowlands where fewer people live and the ground is flatter and less rocky. Since the cassowary when angry aggressively kicks with its powerful legs, in the highlands this could dislodge large rocks and cause them to fall, killing people and destroying gardens.

Sanipe cassowary spirit is a messenger from Kain Dyen Ngop or Memeduman Ngop of impending doom, using a sound reminiscent of a distinctive cassowary noise. Again when angered, a cassowary will make a sudden forceful sound in its throat while jerking its vestigial wings up. (The sound is alarming, somewhat reminiscent of pulling apart a large piece of velcro simultaneously with rushing and a "pop.") When a person has done wrong but Kain Dyen Ngop/Memeduman Ngop is not going to kill them immediately, he will sometimes send them a warning by calling Sanipe in the lowlands to bring his huge leg. A sudden ear-splitting clap of thunder directly over someone's roof is actually this cassowary spirit snapping his bowstring which resembles the sound a normal cassowary makes. The Ketengban liken it to being slapped hard on the ears or on the head by a huge hanc. This is Kain Dyen Ngop/Memeduman Ngop's punishment to the offender and his relatives in the house with him, but is also a harbinger of sickness and death.

Such a warning is merited if someone in the house or their relations has killed a person who honored Kain Dyen Ngop/Memeduman Ngop and was his mawa ‘to keep possession’ or mwa site ‘real child’.

Another cause for rebuke is surreptitiously eating food items either of remarkable size or growing in plain view in gardens or near houses without honoring the spirits and sharing the food. If these items are from the local tape of the essential plants growing in the gardens - taro, yams, banana, etc. - they might be eaten secretly without angering Kain Dyen Ngop. However, because many people have seen this food and perhaps commented on its special size or quality, and will recognize that it is missing, this is selfish and disrespectful behavior. The power of the Sanipe is also recalled in several items used in some of the rituals. (see the section on Other Rituals, page 82ff)

Four other less powerful and less active spirits are the sago palm cuscus, the snake, the wevi bird ‘rainbow lorikeet’, and the lowland river creatures such as eel-fish, fresh water crabs, and prawns.

The cuscus, Alseksekmope, characteristically lives among sago palm fronds and thickets. There are extensive sago swamps in lowland Ketengban territory, and many sago palms have been planted in wet areas as high as 370 meters above sea level. This spirit does not travel much, but is important to remember and appease whenever normal houses and shelters, or ceremonial and ritual houses need to be built. Since sago palms are frequently used as thatching material, this spirit is encountered while collecting thatch. When thatch is carried to the building site of any spirit houses, he rides in the thatch and when it is incorporated into the roof, it is said to represent his hair or fur. For at least one major ceremony, only men from the Basidumon clan grouping can collect these foods because of their special assigned association with this spirit. Alseksekmope can be placated and pleased by being given raw meat, while incantations are recited, which has variations on "I am taking your fur/hair" and repeating his name.

The minor spirit chosen to represent those in the form of birds is the wevi (which is the rainbow lorikeet). This bird spirit watches for those who transgress Um Bo's pandanas-eating protocol at important feasts, rituals, and ceremonies. The Leptilai clan has the privilege and responsibility of eating pandanas before anyone else. Similarly, when pandanas ripens in season the Leptilai clan has the right to pick the first ones for the whole territory and only then are other clans permitted to pick pandanas. Should anyone disobey these two regulations the wevi spirit will punish them, and report it to Kain Dyen Ngop/Memeduman Ngop. The wevi will chase the offender with its talons and sharp beak causing discomfort, difficulty in eating, and even death.

In the lower elevations where the rushing tumbling streams slow down to form pools there are minor spirits in the forms of a certain fish, eels, fresh water prawns, and crabs. The fish here is common to many irian Jaya rivers, and having whiskers resembles a catfish but is black, has more slimy skin, and has a dorsal fin on its back and a fin on its stomach extending its entire length. This makes it look like an eel with the head of a catfish. All these water creatures embody the same minor spirit which cooperates with the spirits of the dead or major spirits in finding certain ‘ripe’ people whose spirits can be eaten, like newborns, new mothers, menstruating women or their relatives. They sense tiny bits of food, body dirt, blood, orvernix (washed off newborns) in the waters that flow by them. These bits of matter associated with humans carried downstream from their source attract these spirits, who either report it and its human source to the major spirits and the spirits of the dead, or come themselves to cause sickness and possible death.

The second subset of minor spirits differ from the first, not in their activities, but in that they are characteristically found in certain areas and take no special shape.

The first of these is the kambo neng spirits who are encountered near mountain peaks and ridgetops, and are known to live particularly in thickets of a broadleafed plant, ongala, which grows in poor soil near ridgetops or rock outcroppings. (The ongala plant recalls the primalordial era in that this was the leaf on which the first initiates were seated up in the tree when Um Bo decided to sacrifice himself.) The kambo neng spirits can also be found in farms growing on cliff faces or near waterfalls and sometimes come to villages to cause trouble. These spirits can cause madness and irrational behavior in people. Sometimes the shamans make use of this power and take the invisible 'children' of these kambo neng off the wall in a man's house and throw them into a group of men causing everyone to become temporarily possessed and to speak in ecstatic languages. Kambo neng are trouble makers in that they come down into hamlets during the night and have sexual relations with attractive unmarried girls, resulting in various social problems and tensions when the girls either become pregnant or demonstrate behavioral changes commensurate with illicit sexual relationships.
Another type of frequently encountered minor spirit lives near waterfalls, especially the many large spectacular ones common in the Ketengban area. Each spirit’s name basically means ‘the spirit woman near such-and-such a waterfall’. For example, the mountain with the largest waterfall is the Ate, the word for waterfall is me lum, and the words for ‘near’ and ‘woman’ are dam and ner respectively. Thus the Ate spirit’s name is Ate melum dam ner ‘the spirit/woman living near the Ate mountain waterfall’. Some better known spirits of this type are Ure melum dam ner, Ole melum dam ner or Otelum kunka ner, Pale lumdam ner, and Wayo lumdam ner (the first two syllables are the mountain’s name). These waterfalls are usually in remote places and travel near them is relatively uncommon. These spirits cause people to fall off the cliffs faces near their waterfalls, or bring a polol-like withering of the legs in men and vaginal bleeding in women, which all can result in death.

A more subtle and likely danger results from coveting property guarded by these spirits. If someone traveling through the jungle sees a desirable thing, such as eggs from a ‘home chicken’ or ‘creep chicken’, or a tree whose young leaves are a favorite vegetable, or bark material for baskets, they have to be very careful not to say anything aloud about it. Remarkably how good it looks, that it would be nice to have, or anything similar will bring repercussions from these spirits. Interpreting those remarks to mean that the speaker’s spirit wants to guard and use that item, the minor spirit will reserve them for the speaker’s spirit, and then cause them to sicken and die so his spirit can return and care for the item.

A more violent example of this reportedly happened to a friend a few years ago. His leg was badly broken and he is still crippled because he saw a tree near a waterfall which he wanted to use in construction. We were told that when he cut it down, the spirits pushed him off the cliff causing him serious injury. (The tree itself almost landed on another companion.) He did not die because his relatives recognized the problem, and being of the Kulka clan with the pig totem, sacrificed a pig in honor of these spirits and saved his life.

The cagynp enge are spirits typically found in deep pools where two rivers meet, pools formed by water from narrow rocky gorges, or pools at the base of waterfalls. They can also leave these pools and live in a species of bamboo called lai, or on exposed rocks or mountainsides, but they do not live in or behind waterfalls. They steal people’s spirits and hide them in invisibly fenced small holes in the jungle. Such stolen spirits are immature and so are raised as humans raise pigs. Sometimes little crying noises can be heard when walking through the jungle, and people then know that they are passing such an enclosure. The immature spirit remains there in the hole covered by a flat rock at the base of a tree, in a cave or other ‘spirit house’. The longer it remains there, the weaker and sicker its owner becomes until he finally dies.

Two other minor spirit types are the giremban neng and the panaypan neng who are male and wield axes called erip yo and galipo yo. Their particular task is to assist Kain Dny Ngop/Memuduman Ngop by felling trees. Kain Dny Ngop sometimes gets strong winds (not spirits) from the Nandrip ati and Nankwep ati spirit houses and uses them to bend large trees in preparation for felling them onto people he wants to punish. The two spirit groups shop to punish the trees spirit lives near cliffs, in narrow river gorges whose rock walls almost meet, tall trees, narrow passes between mountain ridges, caves, pools and swirling water or whirlpools.

There is also a set of female spirits in the form of banana trees. In the beginning Doyap planted several kinds of banana trees near the big ceremonial houses at Depessan and Bopong. Later Kwerekpor ner’s female child, Ungka ner, bore daughters in the form of banana trees at these same locations. These banana tree daughters of Ungka ner are only important in that pig feasts it is important to use this type of banana leaf to cover the ground before and during the cooked pork. This is a way of recalling Ungka ner, honoring her daughters, and indirectly honoring Kwerekpor ner, Doyap’s sister.

Another set of spirits are under the authority of the head spirit of the dead, Limdepung. His subordinates inspect people who have given sicknesses or have had their vitals or spirits eaten by major spirits. When these minor spirits determine that the time is right, they deliver the death blow dana deyo keca ‘that which causes death’. They also hasten death by performing “leavings sorcery” on people. The bundle of leavings (e.g., hair, fingernails, faeces, food, or any other item closely associated with the intended victim) they prepare is left in a cave, pool, or hole so that the person will get sick and die. (see the section on Other Rituals, page 82ff) A general term for these spirits is Denbulung isok ‘those spirits who gather the dead’. Their names are Dening, Potongaya, and Parumbuna, meaning, ‘death people’, ‘loss of hair’, and ‘gatherers of deaths’ respectively. They live in caves, large trees or on mountaintops.

There is a final category of being about which very little is known. Whether they are spirit or some subhuman race, they are the only type whose physical appearance is described. Nothing is known about their activities, but they live on the edges of the universe to the north and west of Ketengban territory where the sky dome meets the earth. They look like people but they have tails like dogs or pigs. Those to the north are called Ambubuna neng and those to the west, Uyserkebong neng.

Human Spirits: Spirits of the Dead

Like most Melanesian societies (Habel, 1979), the Ketengban venerate their ancestors, both the recent dead and long dead. As noted in the section on the soul, a living person is called sambala, but it becomes isok sese ‘true (evil) spirit’ or nimi isok ‘person’s (evil) spirit’ when freed at the person’s death. The characteristic habitation of the spirits of the dead is on mountaintops, but they are so active that descriptions of them locate them in many other places. When residing on the mountaintops they live in ease and plenty. They marry and have children, and have human-like social and political structures. The pool and waterfall spirits are the main ones to marry the spirits of the dead. (Occasionally these spirits desire a living woman and in order to marry her cause her death.) The spirits of dead men can take wives from the spirits already living on the mountaintopss or remain single until a living woman they like dies. It is not possible to marry one’s own spouse in spirit form.

The Ketengban do not distinguish between ancestors who have recently died and those who have been dead longer. All are considered dangerous although occasionally are benevolent. Their presence may be signalled by small sounds, breezes, and fires. Almost anyone may have dealings or encounters with the ancestral spirits but specialists are usually more effective in such interaction than common people.

Though usually seen only by specialists, these spirit ancestors are frequently present among the living, and participate in Ketengban social and ritual life. They are often interested in and help with the lives of their living relatives. They appreciate the display of traditional wealth at bride price exchanges, or the display and offering of special foods and sacrifices in their honor and eat the essence of these foods via the aroma.

Even though a person was congenial and helpful in life, they may not be friendly and kindly disposed toward their kin after death, and it is almost certain that they will be malevolent to non-relatives. Though entreated to perform benevolent services on behalf of the living, the spirits of the dead are believed to be dangerous, and unpredictable. Counting their favor may result in prosperity and health and incurring their wrath may result in sicknesses and seasons, other calamities, or even death. These spirits are especially present in their own bones, some of which are kept in ritual houses, or one’s houses. Skulls are very useful and at one time scores of them might be found in certain spirit houses. They were sometimes used as pillows, though not on a daily basis.

As the chart of the Ketengban spirit hierarchy (Figure 5, page 55) shows, the spirits of the dead are less powerful than the major female spirits and some minor spirits like Tau Fena or Nimi Dyan, but seem to be equivalent in power with most minor spirits and with human ritual specialists. They are less frequently active than most minor spirits, and as equally active as human beings, primarily in connection with kin in their own areas. They may be entreated to harm people further away, being able to travel anywhere instantaneously. Unlike the major spirits, the spirits of the dead do not use the underground ‘hollow tree’ tube system but travel through the air, im nitama, or on the earth’s surface, tual mutu and are sometimes visible to common people. The ancestral spirits do not assume any form other than the fiery. They do not possess or empower people, but enter a person’s body to eat the essence of that person’s heart, dipin/tilema, or soul/spirit sambala. They do not enter animals but can cause sickness and death in pigs.
If someone has not maintained a good relationship with a relative, after death the spirit of that relative can cause the death of the living person or get other spirits of the dead or spirit beings to kill them. On the other hand, if a person has had a good relationship with a relative, the spirit of the dead relative can argue in defense of the living person with other spirits bent on harming him and sometimes prevent his death. Quarrels over a human’s fate can occur between all types of spirits, but no spirits can harm each other. They are said to be related by clan lines like humans.

The spirits of the dead have the power to steal away a person’s sambale ‘soul’ and take it into the jungle (just like the cuysep ne ng’ pool spirits’, in the section on Minor Spirits, page 639) where they hide it in a hole, cave, or tree base and fence it in. These captured souls can be heard crying. If discovered early, this problem is treatable as described in the section on Other Rituals page 628. When, however, the captured soul ‘matures’ and is ready to make gardens like the ancestral spirits, the spirits of the dead report this to the major spirits who then ‘eat’ the essence of the soul causing the still living (but sick) person’s death.

The soul is released at death, but does not usually depart the body, nonge, or nimi genna ‘person burial package’ right away. After the initial three to four day period of grief and wailing the body is wrapped in a certain type of tree bark. The spirit might take temporary trips during this period, but always returns to the body. Then the body is put up on a small enclosed platform in a treetop, or on scaffolding near a cliff face. It is essential that these be near village houses (especially if the person was greatly loved or very prominent) so that people can continually see the place and remember the person, and so the dead person’s spirit and the living have easy access to one another. Secondly, it is disrespectful and a sign of lack of affection to put the body far away from the house. Should relatives come from a distance to see the body and discover it has been placed too far away from the hamlet, or not be able to see its face they will be insulted and angry and might kill the boy, and steal or kill a woman.

If the person was of no particular consequence or there is no danger of retaliation by relatives, the body might be placed farther away or in a jungle garden house. In the latter case, the walls, fire pit, and floor of the house are dismantled, and the body put on a platform just under or over the original roof.

Most frequently, the body is placed in a tree near relatives’ houses. Both the bark around the body and the wall of the enclosure in the tree have openings so the dead person’s face is visible. The body is placed in either a standing or sitting position, and the hole in front of the face covered with bark clouts which can be lifted for visual inspection by relatives coming from a distance to visit the body, or for periodic inspections of the purification process. This little window also allows observation of the final departure of the soul as it leaves to live as a nimi isok, ‘person’s (evil) spirit’ or isok siis, ‘(evil) real spirit’ which are sometimes also called deneng, ‘dead people’.

On the first night after the body has been placed on the scaffolding or in the tree, several brave men stand beside nearby houses and watch carefully for the final departure from the body of the nimi isok. This is signaled by the isok taking the form of a bright fire-fly, mira, falling from the eyes of the corpse. When the fire-fly falls it is carefully watched to see where it will go. If it flies towards the house of the closest relatives (those watching), they attempt to catch it and throw it into the fire of the house. This does not harm the spirit, but prevents anyone in that house from being ‘biten’ in the heart by the fire-fly, resulting in stomach sickness characterized by pain, sulphur burps, and heartburn. This stage of the sickness is treatable, but because those bitten are often people that the spirit senses are engkupare ‘ripe’ for sickness and death, they usually die. If the fire-fly heads for another hamlet area, then someone will certainly die there soon. Those villagers can be warned if the watchers are so disposed, if the fire-fly flies in some other direction, then someone somewhere will die, but it will not be anyone nearby.

The spirits of the dead can also cause sickness and death in pigs. This might happen because the owner of the pig had not properly or frequently honored the dead. It could also be revenge by a living relative via the services of the ancestral spirits for not having been given enough food gifts or sacrifices, or by having their plans to kill someone counteracted by the rituals performed by another person.

The spirits of the dead do not usually take food from gardens and there are no elaborate rituals for sharing a portion with them, or leaving sacrifices to them in special places. However, whenever people are eating or feasting it is important to think of these spirits and sometimes set food aside for them, or bring some back to the house to put upon the shelf of Tau Penca (see the section on Minor Spirits, page 639) which might be shared with them. The important thing is not to anger the spirits by eating special food items found in the jungle without bringing some back to the house. When so angered, the spirits of the dead report to Tau Penca, who might report to Kain Dyen Ngop and get permission for the ancestral spirits to cause sickness or kill the offenders. Generally, as long as one honors these spirits by thinking of them and saying their names quietly while eating, they come quietly and take partake of the food. If at a feast, a portion of pork out of the pot is thrown out as this pork is considered raw or if it is pandan sauce tastes bitter, it is because these spirits have eaten some of it. This cannot be prevented.

Sometimes people can entice the spirits of their dead relatives to punish people they quarrel with, especially for slight offenses. For instance, if an older person feels that his junior relative has not been generous enough in sharing he can ask ancestral spirits of his own, or of that junior kinsmen, to kill the offender, his children, or his pigs. If done directly the death is attributed to being hit with a spirit maca ‘walking stick’, or mare ‘arrow’. These spirits can also kill by “leavings sorcery”, or by asking the major spirits to do it. Such killing between kinsmen was called wina ‘dividing or choosing’, referring to dividing the affection (jealousy) and choosing which relatives to keep and which to dispose of for being a drain on the network of mutual obligations. Difficulties in sorting out these events is frequent, because the ancestral spirits, unlike the major spirits and Kain Dyen Ngop/Memedumun Ngop who kill for wrongful behavior, often kill capriciously, whether the person has done anything bad or not.

If the spirits of the dead ask the major spirits or Kain Dyen Ngop/Memedumun Ngop to kill someone, they might make the person go crazy and fall on a stake, desire illicit relations with women and get killed in the resulting trouble, get killed in battle, or fall from a tree. If the Kamaya spirit, Kain Dyen Ngop or Memedumun Ngop initiates a killing, he can use ancestral spirits from any area under his jurisdiction. This particular kind of killing is often arranged by older women via their male kinsmen (or directly if she is a sorceress) because some junior man is not sharing generously enough with female relatives. The spirit men, men dieyo neng, can arrange such killings via ancestral spirits, major spirits, or Kain Dyen Ngop/Memedumun Ngop. Once such a killing is requested, the clan of the person responsible for initiating it must be determined so that someone from that clan can try to intervene. Using the services of unrelated specialists is ineffective.

Another lethal method used by spirits of the dead is to slowly eat the essence of a healthy person’s parts, weakening them until they are ready for one of the major spirits like Ketengnera to eat the person’s talem na dipru ‘heart’, causing death.

The Ketengber say that when the soul (sambale) leaves the body and becomes an isok, this is not the end of its developmental process. After a very long time, the nimi isok also ‘die’ and become a lower class of spirit being called parum. They live near mountain peaks and high ridges and are not as active as isok. It is not possible to placate them with gifts and sacrifices, as their names are not known. They do not travel frequently, but when they descend from their ridgetops they kill people or have sexual relations with women, usually young unmarried women.

When the parum eventually finally ‘die’ or become inactive they take the form of petrified ironwood tree hearts and are called ketamin ko kola ‘heartwood of ironwood trees’. This is the ‘essence’ of the dead spirit, which although inactive, are nonetheless dangerous for anyone but initiated men or spirit specialists to handle. These ironwood hearts are sometimes placed in spirit or ceremonial houses, especially if their shape is unusual or if they are “Y” poles. The outer layers of bark and softer wood which quickly rot and fall off the ironwood tree are thought to be the body (talo tu ‘dirt’) of the deceased spirits of the dead.

RITUALS

This section will give an overview of the most important Ketengber traditional ceremonies and rituals and the rationale behind them. Like all Melanesians, traditional religion as practiced by the Ketengber is part
of the warp and woof of their daily lives. (Lawrence, 1965). Theirs is an integrated holistic approach making few distinctions between sacred and secular. The system of rituals, both great and small, is so complex and extensive that this paper can do no more than touch the surface.

For this paper the term "ceremony" refers to those major events which are basic to ongoing life and prosperity, require the mobilization and participation of all the clans in a region, and are so extensive in their preparations and performance as to be possible only on a cycle of four to five years. There are two of these Principal Life Ceremonies: the Kwet and the Youwa.40

"Rituals", for purposes of this paper, are the almost endless variety and number of specialized practices which form most communication between Ketengban men and the spirits. These are on a smaller scale, may be carried out by relatively few people, may be the special province of a certain clan, and are usually performed as often as needed. Some of these were quite important and had to be precisely performed, but did not involve large scale mobilization of people and resources. The two Principal Life Ceremonies took months to complete, whereas rituals could be completed in a few days or even moments.

Categories of Rituals

For this paper a classification of rituals is imposed for the sake of clarity. This classification scheme is not articulated by Ketengban people, but is helpful in understanding the rituals. Again, these are but a sample of the ritualized actions which were commonly practiced by the Ketengban people, but which have now been almost entirely abandoned.

In the listing below, these rituals are grouped according to three primary areas of concern: a) prosperity b) protection or healing, and c) punishment or causing disaster.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>MAIN PURPOSE</th>
<th>RITUAL SPECIALISTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRINCIPAL LIFE</td>
<td>Kwet deirina</td>
<td>Initiation of young males</td>
<td>mem deiko neng: ritual specialists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEREMONIES:</td>
<td>Youwa</td>
<td>Restraining major spirits</td>
<td>mem deiko neng: ritual specialists</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>closing the holes'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROSPERITY:</td>
<td>Kain yumna</td>
<td>'First fruits' and preventing crop failure</td>
<td>-same-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dyen morona</td>
<td>Heal crop failure</td>
<td>-same-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kain ouna</td>
<td>Insure good sweet potato harvest</td>
<td>-same-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uyop dona</td>
<td>Insure good general harvest</td>
<td>ritual specialists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kwarng elikke lingna</td>
<td>Insure large sweet potato harvest</td>
<td>-same-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Am siringna</td>
<td>Insure large taro tubers</td>
<td>-same-</td>
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PROTECTION OR HEALING:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>MAIN PURPOSE</th>
<th>RITUAL SPECIALISTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Loupla dona</td>
<td>Restore crops after major failure/rot due</td>
<td>ritual specialists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>to breaking incest taboo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Am kiringna</td>
<td>Save lives threatened by spirit activity</td>
<td>initiated males who know incantations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yu dyena</td>
<td>Repel a curse put on by a person</td>
<td>-same-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dyen putana tep yangna</td>
<td>Repel crop failure caused by pests</td>
<td>-same-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mi me pona</td>
<td>Prevent infant deaths</td>
<td>any adult male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nong kina</td>
<td>Returning lost soul to its owner</td>
<td>shamans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Isok mar dorona</td>
<td>Removing spirits or spirit projectiles</td>
<td>shamans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mi deipra</td>
<td>Protect initiates from pollution by newboms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>talwilimna</td>
<td>Protection against retribution or revenge killing</td>
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</table>

PUNISHMENT OR REVENGE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>MAIN PURPOSE</th>
<th>RITUAL SPECIALISTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wina</td>
<td>Cause death directly by spirits of the dead or their arrangements</td>
<td>initiate men, or adult women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mun dangna</td>
<td>Ask major spirits to cause deaths.</td>
<td>-same-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nimi gereng dona/ker dona</td>
<td>Cause deaths by leavings sorcery</td>
<td>mostly women some men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Me bungna pona (from lowlands)</td>
<td>Cause a person's death</td>
<td>men or women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Baimer pona</td>
<td></td>
<td>-same-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wasban pona</td>
<td></td>
<td>-same-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Merei deirina</td>
<td></td>
<td>-same-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bul dokotena</td>
<td></td>
<td>-same-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nimi house pona</td>
<td></td>
<td>-same-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gongona</td>
<td></td>
<td>-same-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nong kina</td>
<td>Steal the soul of living persons</td>
<td>-same-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deito dangna</td>
<td>Return or steal the soul of living persons</td>
<td>-same-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
contiguous magic is bundling leftovers of a person's food (which remain in sympathetic contact with him) and putting them under a menstruating woman's skirt or sinking them in the river to cause his death.

The Kwet and Youwa cycle, by incantations, sacrifices, and passing on sacred songs and knowledge, is to entreat favor from the great deities and their regulative underlings, or at least prevent harm from them. Although coercion is not possible, they try by incantations, invocations, and offerings to insure a specific result, often a reversal of action attributed to a certain spirit. Though the spirits are not obliged to benefit humans on the basis of these rituals, the Ketengban spend considerable time and resources to build the reciprocal relationships with spirits so important in their human relationships. The spirits resemble humans in 'form', emotions, and character. They reside and are active in man's world, though they have powers and travel by extraordinary means. The Ketengban social-political system and religious system is described well by Lawrence's comments regarding the Ngaing of the Rai coast:

"The pragmatic quality of both systems of relationships is understood and expressed in roughly the same terms. A man fulfills his social obligations in order to make other persons with whom he has human relationships 'think on him' (inahol ra) and fulfill their obligations towards him in turn. Similarly, the aim of ritual is to make deities and spirits 'think on' human beings and confer benefits on them. But the activities of gods and spirits in helping mankind have no mystical quality. They are believed to take place on the same plane of existence and are, therefore, just as real as those of human beings working together at any joint task. Though the Ngaing regard work in any important undertaking as a compound of secular and ritual techniques, they assume that both have the same validity. Both are found from the same source (the deities) and both involve cooperation between beings who inhabit the same geographical environment." (Peter Lawrence 1965, p. 218).

Principal Life Ceremonies

The two most important ceremonies were the Kwet deirina 'putting the initiation' to initiate young men into the male pandurasi cult; and the Youwa, in which the major spirits were returned to the invisible holes out of which they came. The Ketengban say this was 'closing the doors' on these necessary but dangerous spirits. The Youwa ceremony coincided with the return of new initiates to the villages and normal life. Their re-entry period was called teru panga 'sprouting of branches', an appropriate metaphor as the new initiates came back to the village and added new members to the power base of men in the cult.

These two ceremonies, always performed in tandem, took about six months each to complete, and the preparation time for them was also around six months, so that the full ceremonial cycle took approximately eighteen months. These periods were defined and regulated by the sun's position in rising and setting during the year or its northern and southern solstice. (See Figure 8 next page) When the sun reached its highest point in the southern sky, that is, the December solstice, then preparations for the ceremonies began. These preparations continued for the entire time that the sun was descending to its 'lowest' northern point, or the June solstice. At that time, the circuitous journey to the Kwet initiation houses began. At each of the eight to ten houses the same initiation ceremony was carried out. The sun, a living female spirit, was said to be wearing her net bag during this time, while watching men on earth. Should she reach the uppermost point of the initiation ceremonies around the circuit not be finished she might come down and put everyone into the bag and carry them off and consume them, so it was imperative to keep watch and finish on time. By the time of the southern solstice, all the initiations should have been completed, and the 'closing of the doors' would begin. The Youwa or teru panga ceremony reversed the initiation path as the head spirit men made their way back around the circuit of spirit houses to 'close the doors' on each house in turn, finishing at the starting point of Bopogon spirit house by the summer solstice.

The extensive preparations, number of people involved, time between groups of initiates, major commitments of resources and time, and the great importance of these two ceremonies precluded having them more often than every four to five years."
Diagram Of Principal Life Ceremonial Cycle

A = B: Preparations start
B = C: Begin Kwet initiation
C: Finish Kwet begin Youwa
D = E: "Closing the doors" cycle
E: Return to normal routines

Figure 8

Kwet deirina: Initiation, Preparation Phase

When the chief ritual specialists feel that certain criteria have been met and that it is nearly time to begin preparations for initiation, they secretly send out the word to all kwet neng 'initiated men'. The criteria are that sufficient pigs have been raised, enough boys have reached early teen years, and the roofs of previous Kwet houses have completely rotted away. Then in utmost secrecy preparations begin.

The actual time to start, at the sun's southern solstice, is calculated in the following way. Most of the villages in the Central dialect area (from which this data was gathered) are oriented in a north to south line. However, when looking at the whole area, they are found along an east to west axis in the valley systems on the north face of the eastern highland ridges. The rivers in each valley run from the higher southern elevations towards the lower northern elevations. Thus when looking toward the rising sun from within those valleys it appears that the sun is gradually climbing in the sky from its low point in the north to a high point toward the highest southern ridgetops.

The preparations begin secretly so that women and children do not realize what is going to happen. A time consuming task is to hunt, kill, and smoke enough of several types of cuscus needed for offerings and sacrifices. The most important of these is the sakale cuscus. Gardens must be plowed to provide enough food for the feasting, especially certain species of sweet potato, taro, and sugar cane. Pigs must be arranged for, as well as certain kinds of net bags, body decorations, feathers, and special ceremonial items. All this required a significant period of preparation time. All these items are taboo for noudet neng 'non-initiates' and women, and even speaking about them in front of non-initiates is forbidden.

One significant step in preparation is to choose a certain type of pig from the Miodoban area and take it on the initiation circuit to the sites of the future initiation ceremonial houses. The pig is passed from man to man between certain key clansmen and in each place fed for a period of weeks. The travels of this pig take several months and follow the route that Um Bo took (when dying in the form of a pig). It must stop and be fed in each location where Um Bo stopped, which then all become sites of initiation ceremonial houses. The pig finally returns to the site of the first initiation in history at Bogopan ait at the westernmost Ketengban territory where a Dipur clan man gave Um Bo, in the form of the dead pig, to the elder of the Lepitilan clan.

This pig is called the Molikuya pig in the hearing of women, but the secret name Ore pig is used with initiated men. This pig represents the essence of Um Bo who became a pig and allowed himself to be sacrificed to make possible the completion of the first initiation and the ongoing life of the people. The Ore pig is always the first to be eaten at the beginning of the initiation cycle and it is killed secretly at night and cooked. It was eaten first by the eldest Lepitilan clansman and then finished by members of that clan since they were charged with primary responsibility for the proper conducting of the Kwet ceremonies. It was a Lepitilan man who had gone to find Um Bo in his pig form just before his death, and at that time Um Bo instructed him to symbolically kill him 'again' and 'eat him' by proxy or symbolically in the Ore pig and so initiate men in perpetuity.

The Ore pig also represents the other pigs subsequently killed during the ceremonial cycle. Um Bo instructed men to think of him when killing and eating this pig and other pigs, and to take the grease from the pig's body and rub it on initiates' skins to restore them, so they could become men and live well. Some of the fat and grease of this Ore pig was set aside for use in each of the initiation locations. The parts of the Ore pig which could not be consumed by the Lepitilan elder and his clansmen had to be buried the next day under the Bogopan house floor. This was the first initiation site, where the first spirit house poles were set, and the site of the house in which the Wisal, Dipur, and Lepitilan clan founders placed Um Bo's pig jaw bone, the rope which bound him at his sacrifice, and the banana leaves from the pit in which his parts were cooked before they were eaten in a type of eucharistic feast. This important event in the mythology is re-enacted in the eating of the Ore pig, representing the essence of Um Bo, at the beginning of each Kwet cycle.

Just as the location of the Kwet house at Bogopan is established in the mythology, most of the other initiation houses find their roots there as well. Their names usually refer to a portion of Um Bo's body taken there for division and eaten by the clan founders, or to something he did while dying as a pig. For example: Keraperban is the location where Um Bo's keram 'kidneys' were taken. Malmokondam is where Um Bo (as a suffering pig) got into a mokon 'pool' to cool off. Tanalip is where his yan tang 'soles of his feet' were placed. Taramuly refers to the ceremonial house where his taram yo 'breast bone' was put. Um Bo's rib and abdominal wall, tapeka boi, was deposited at another initiation location, Tapadam. Um Bo's travel and subsequent consumption in the form of a pig by the earliest clan ancestors in these significant places make them legitimate locations for initiations into the male pandanas cult.

Another important preparation is building the kwet spirit houses. In each location there are two main houses on a hilltop with a fence at the base of the hill, marking off the area as taboo for any noudet neng 'non-initiates', or women. The very tall fence made from closely woven poles can be built ahead of time and is one to two hundred meters from the initiation houses at the top, making it impossible to accidentally stumble onto the initiation site. Passing through the single small entrance hole in this fence by any woman or non-initiate results in immediate brutal death.
One of the two large round houses on the hilltops is used for a pre-initiation ritual, and the other for the actual initiation, but there are also less important sleeping shelters for the neophytes during the months of instruction.

All the materials such as thatch, wood poles, mud for fire pits, and vines are gathered and put near the site for the ceremonial house. On the designated day all the men who are to take part gather and build the entire building in one night by the light of handheld torches. It must be finished by morning so no one can see the building process or the sacred things which are put in the house. During the building the men are strictly forbidden to drink any water, or to eat anything weak or "cooking" such as snakes, frogs, or tadpoles. More importantly they must be careful not to have any contact with women, and continue to avoid any sexual contact with all women prior to and all throughout the initiation period in their area. This avoidance also extends to food prepared by menstruating women, which might have contacted any surface possibly defiled by women's secretions. So women chosen to provide the men's food during these ceremonial periods are usually older sisters of the ritual specialists and they must prepare the food while on their knees. Sitting may defile the floor and food can be inadvertently defiled if laid on the spot. Any physical contact or association with such food or water results in getting weak and soft just like those items. Further, this angers Um Bo resulting in famine and the death of people from starvation. The food which did grow then would not be energizing or satisfying.

The head man for the ceremonial house in each area must sit and hold onto one of the four poles encircling the fire pit during the building process. These four poles extend from the ground to the roof of every Ketengban house. During the process of tearing down the remains of the old ceremonial house, and building the new structure, this man must sit holding the pole without letting go, oblivious to any dirt or debris falling on him, and not eating or drinking anything. The other men can handle any canine to quench their thirst, but he cannot even have this until the house is finished. His job is to honor and stav off the major spirits by repeating their names quietly and gripping the pole. This homeopathic magic of gripping the pole where the spirits are present is to grip the spirits themselves. It is also to avoid misunderstandings by the spirits who may think that the men are going to tear down a key spirit house and not rebuild it, especially before the new structure begins to take shape.

Partaking Phase. Once the fence and two houses are built, the initiation ceremonies can begin. The many novices are escorted to the fence around the taboo area with great fanfare by hundreds of initiated men. The sisters of the head ritual specialists for the area follow along behind the men and boys, but put net bags over their heads wrapped fore and hand of Um Bo which was given to the Lepotan man while he watched Um Bo’s body being cut up long ago. The forearm and hand which remained fresh forever, was bloody, and had long fingernails was held in a certain way. One clan elder puts his hand palm up on the floor and all the other elders put their hands on top of his, on the other, forming a tower of hands. Then Um Bo’s severed hand is placed on top of their stacked hands. As each initiate enters the preparation house he must first take a bite or sucking briefly on a large piece of taro which has a piece of smoked taboo sakale cuscus inserted in it. This deposited a substance inside their bodies that would protect them from having their sambala ‘soul’ eaten by the major spirits, isoke. In Ketengban mythology this type of taro was given to children during the primordial era to keep them alive and its essence remains in the end of the intestines to prevent spirits from eating the soul. The sakale cuscus is taboo to non-initiates and is a powerful representative of the major spirits.

After the boys have bitten or sucked the taro/meat package, they enter the house, stepping lightly on the pile of elders’ hands with Um Bo’s hand on top. Then moving further into the house the boys form a tightly packed group around the fiercely burning fire pit. The men around the walls dance, chant, sing and pop their bow strings, and keep the boys in the center close to the fire. The heat is to make the boys (and the men) sweat as much as possible to cleanse them of weak and cold fluids that would lessen their power and make them soft and weak. Loss of these weakening fluids also aids them in their previous power-draining associations with the food women and children eat like birds, frogs, tadpoles, and snakes. Men participating in these intense ceremonial affairs must be made hard, hot, dry and thus, strong, by sweating away the fluids.

After the period of sweating the men and boys proceeded into the central Kwat enclosure. There the initiated men of the pandanas cult again sing, snap their bowstrings and dance around the initiates. This process was called kwet weraengna ‘hurting/looking out for the initiation’ and it lasts all night. Sometimes the shouting and bow-snapping becomes so frantic and loud that the young boys faint from fear and exhaustion, or soil themselves with urine, feces, or vomit.

During this night the initiates must continually look at the sky, never at one another or at the ground, so they do not miss the arrival of the great spirit in the form of a snake-like piece of sugar cane. This event is called sembete (note the similarity to the term for soul or spirit, sambale). The boys watch for it intently all night, never certain when it may arrive. When it arrives (right over the gathered boys) they are supposed to jump up and attempt to grab the sugar cane and pull it down to earth where it will be torn to pieces as they all try to grab it. The first boy to grab the gwe’ sugar cane’ and pull it down from the sky will be greatly blessed. He will be a good, moral, prosperous, successful, and people will listen to him and give him these things. Such a high incentive makes the grabbing of the captured sugar cane frantic. Once on the ground, the cane is pulled out from under the feet of the boys by the men around them.

This sembele sugar cane called jikman ganwe or men ganwe can only be eaten by the head spirit men; if the new initiates eat it they will be eating the source of their spiritual power and a substance rightly only to be consumed by their spiritual elders, and would be mening keca ‘eating their own substance’, something too closely related to their own spiritual power. (This same term is used in discussing incest). This would result in losing their minds, or in doing anti-social things like not listening to elders, stealing, fighting relatives, and perhaps resulting in being killed.

The boys are also strictly forbidden to eat or drink anything from the time they take the taro/meat sample into their mouths until the initiation ceremony is completed the next day. The initiated men, however, take turns going up and down the hill to feast on pig, cucusc, sugar cane, etc. If the novices eat food or drink water during the ritual, they incur Um Bo’s wrath and punishment on the people at large. At best the gardens will fail, and what does grow will not taste well but go to mush when cooked. At worst, the world will turn over and all people and living things be destroyed.

The sembele is timed to arrive just before dawn. On the morning of its arrival the boys are led out of the initiation enclosure into the jungle where they are given their first drink, which is sacred water from Limgonal, the habitation of Doiyap, the Creator. The water is in special gourds held in two hands by the spirit head men who lifts it to the lips of the boys one by one, giving them a drink while chanting, "Ai me gwynen, Limal me gwynen", ‘I am dipping Al water, I am dipping water from Lim mountain’. Al refers to a pool which heals and restores life, just down the hill from a main spirit house location. Lim mountain was the original home and origin of Lim and Doiyap and later Um Bo.

Cleansing and Teaching Phase. The new initiates next undergo a sort of baptismal cleansing. This takes place in a prepared pool where be wood, the kind of wood that Um Bo had been tied to at his death, is used to dam up and deepen the water while incantations are said. Each boy is taken singly into the pool, the head spirit man holds his head, says some incantations and sings a song, and then immerses him in the water. When he comes out of the water his body is scraped with the same kind of wood damming the pool to cleanse him from his childhood associations with women, consumption of weakening foods, and
Reentry Phase. Word is sent ahead to the villages that the men and boys, now absent six months, are on their way home. The people from the villages, including the elders and relatives of the boys gather food and pigs for a feast and prepare a large pit along the trail on the return route. This great display of food is also to honor the malevolent female spirits, the spirits of dead ancestors, and Kain Dyen Ngop, who had been participating in the initiation ceremonies. Honoring them lavishly makes them happy and prevents them following people back to their villages to eat the essence of people there.

An additional precaution is taken by building a tall fence across the main trail on which the new initiates would travel in returning to their home villages. This fence has only one hole in it through which the head spirit men and boys pass. Specific kinds of rotten wood, moss, water and melted pig grease are mixed together and put in a large bark basket. As each man approaches the hole he is sprinkled all over with this mixture squeezed from a moss sponge, then he steps into the bark container and passes through the fence. Certain nuye pene incantations are said during this process which include major spirit names and phrases saying 'I am making your hands heavy and your feet heavy (paralyzed), I am turning your face away and closing your eyes.' Then sprinkling a mixture of rotten wood and cold water on their bodies will cause the 'hot' and powerful spirits to think of these men as 'cold' and not want to eat their essence. This is an example of sympathetic magic of the homeopathic variety. The incantations are a combination of wish fulfillment and sacred invocations intended to prevent the spirits coming.

The hole in the fence was finally covered with certain banana leaves and all the initiation leaders and the initiates go home, going first to the men's houses to eat any leftovers from the big feast that morning, and sharing the food with any male (initiated) relatives not present earlier.

Renaming Phase. The initiates are given new names at a ritual where the head spirit men cooks pandanas. While squeezing the oily red sauce from the steamed fruit they take pieces of the inner membrane and give it to the boys while declaring their new names saying, "Your mothers and sisters have called you 'X' but now your name is 'Y'." Upon eating the kain tang 'pandanas membrane', the new name becomes official. The names are previously chosen by each boy's male relatives in consultation with the spirit head men. The final step of the boys' re-entry into normal village routine is to reintroduce them to their mothers using their new names.

The fathers of the boys had already ordered certain kinds of cuscus to be killed and smoked in preparation for this. The smoked meat is tied to each boy's right arm and he is taken by a shaman to his mother's house as his mother waits inside. A hole has been cut high in the wall opposite the house door and approaching it on the outside the shaman lifts the boy's right arm and inserts it through the hole, announcing the boy's new name. The mother lightly shakes his hand, takes the cuscus meat with fire tongs, and eats some of it. The spirit man and boy then return to the men's house, eat taboo portions of a sacrificial pig and go to sleep.

The next day the shaman and the boy return to the mother's house with small pieces of meat and some fat from the sacrificial pig. This time they enter by the door and the mother and other female relatives move around the wall out of the way. The fat and meat are waved while incantations are said indicating that these items represent the essence of Um Bo and Kain Dyen Ngop. This honors the spirits and assuages any anger at the boy for now associating with women, eating food prepared by women, or eating food put on the floor where women might have sat. Though during the Kwet ceremonies the initiates have been forbidden to have anything to do with women, their houses or their kinds of food, the rules have now been revised upon their re-entry into village life. This wavering ritual informs Um Bo and Kain Dyen Ngop that although the rules have changed, the boy will only do these things if the proper incantations are said beforehand.

Yowua: The 'Closing of the Holes'
The Yowua ceremony must take place immediately after the initiation and training period and serves to insure that the major female spirits who lent their power and participated in the initiation activities are now satisfied with proper veneration bestowed upon them and would therefore return to their 'holes' under-
ground. As explained in the section on spirits these malevolent spirits can travel from place to place in an instant via a tunnel system of hollow trees underground. Most ‘terminals’ of this system are invisible holes near the main ceremonial and ritual houses. Since the spirits come from these holes in order to go empower the initiates, they now must be induced to return to the holes. The invisible doors to the holes need to be closed to prevent the spirits from roaming and looking for men’s souls to eat. Therefore, the shamans revisit each spirit house during the next six months feasting in the spirits’ honor, and inviting them back into their holes so that the doors can be shut.

The second purpose of the Youwa ceremony is to placate the enormous man-eating spirit pig Nini Dryen Bisam or Mukup adi Bisam, who is always looking for people to eat. This spirit pig is ready and waiting just underground near the Youwa houses and needs to be kept from opening his huge mouth and devouring everyone.

The third purpose of the ceremony is to insure a good harvest. A special ‘spirit garden’, mem wa, is planted and the Youwa ceremony provided with sacred raw materials for planting other gardens in the coming year.

The Youwa ceremony, described only briefly here, lasts only four to five days, but the preparation and waiting time between stages takes several months. The ceremonies are done for the whole area in an overlapping fashion, not one after another serially. Pigs, taboo cuscus, sugar cane, various decorations, and feathers are gathered for the extensive feasting to honor the spirits. Then the Youwa house must be rebuilt on the traditional site after the old remains are cleared away.

Only men from designated clans can collect the sago fronds and wood for the Youwa houses since they are representative of Um Bo’s hair, beard, and eyelashes. Specific guardian spirits of these materials must be appeased and only certain clans like the Kwace, Kulka and Minhe have the authority to do so. When the men come bringing these materials, people meet them on the trail with partially cooked, bloody meat so that the spirits would think that the people were so anxious to ‘honour’ them that they didn’t even have time to properly cook the meat. The red color also pleases the spirits.

The actual house construction takes place much as for the initiation houses: at night, in secrecy, with two Bidoman clansmen sitting patiently on each side of a spirit pole in the house with their index fingers pressed on opposite sides of the pole. They do this during both the building process and the four to five day feasting and ceremony. The pole is an ironwood tree heart thought to have been planted by Um Bo in the beginning. Building at night prevents non-initiates from seeing this highly sacred pole.

When the house is built the taboo cuscus and pigs are secretly killed and feasted on, but no water is drunk; sugar cane is used to quench thirst.

After two or three days a second stage ritual is performed. The ritual specialists and shamans instruct the other men to gather at a designated spring on a hillside or cliff. On that day the spring has mysteriously dried up. The men squat in a semi-circle in front of the dry spring in anticipation. The Kulka ritual specialist responsible for this ceremony holds a specific kind of water gourd in his hands and taps it at the mouth of the spring while chanting incantations.

After a time, the assembled company hears the first rumblings and gurgling of moving water, and suddenly the water spurs from the spring with such force that it sprays the assembly of men. The water comes out carrying many powerful sacred objects to be used in future rituals, especially those related to garden fertility. These items include bits of stone, hardwood, bone, cowrie shells, and fossils. Some are only visible to the shamans so they collect these and give them to the headman responsible for the ritual who then distributes them to others. All these are then stored on the wall opposite the entrance in the special sacred place in men’s houses and have power to promote garden fertility and healing.

These aids to man purportedly spurt from the nostrils and penis of the man-eating spirit pig. This is evidenced by the forceful way they came from the spring, and because secret names of the spirit pig are in the incantations chanted while the gourd is held in front of the spring.

On the last day of this second stage, a spirit garden is cleared and planted. Sacred items are buried with the potato shoots and incantations are said indicating that the garden is in honor of the spirits. A large tree is left standing in the middle of this garden plot with its limbs cut off. Young men climb it and working down from the top paint black and red designs all over the tree. The spirits, pleased by these interesting designs in their honor, are distracted from normal gardens where they might steal or ruin the harvest.

Then the men wait for several weeks until the mem wa ‘taboo garden’ needs weeding and the roof of the Youwa house needs repair. Again, special animals, pigs, and other food are collected for another two-day feast and the spirit garden is weeded. On the third day of this feast, the prohibition against water is lifted. On the fourth day a pandanawan feast is held and the ritual to ‘close the holes’ of the spirits is performed.

Rock outcroppings serve as steps at the doorway of many of these spirit houses. These have been worn smooth and rounded by years of use and are thought to be or represent the snout of the man-eating pig. Nini Dryen Bisam, and the place where he and other spirits emerge from the ground. The ritual specialist takes some designated pork and fat and saying incantations to keep the spirit pig happily underground partially burns some of it to make a strong odor. This meat and fat is repeatedly rubbed on the rocks and incantations are chanted to please the spirits so they will be induced to stay there and not follow the people to their villages. More of this meat and fat is rubbed on, or burnt on a flat rock which is ritually turned over to cover the invisible hole from which the spirits came, thus closing their door to the world of common men.

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(Kwamuk)
When the travelers reach the place near the border they encounter a high fence across the trail with a small door cut in it, which has been recently prepared for their arrival. Everyone loudly announces that now since they are almost into the eastern or Memeduman area, they will stop, rest, and have a feast in the spirits’ honor. The special feast which has been prepared beforehand and carried in the nets is produced and a feast held. Some of the spirit head men go through the fence and paint red and black designs on the eastern side. The spirits, having followed through the fence door, will be interested in the area on the side of the fence markings, and not care to return back through the fence. Many gifts and sacrifices are left hanging on the eastern side of the fence to placate and entice the spirits to remain there. As an additional ploy they rub the scent gland of the sakale cuscus on a flat rock, turn it over and while saying incantations, place it with the scented side down on the ground by the door on the eastern side of the fence.

Afterwards, they sleep on the western side and early in the morning men station themselves all about the area. With their stone axes they cut many medium-sized trees almost through. The scent gland of a taboo cuscus is heated in the fire to release a strong odor and then is rubbed on an arrowhead belonging to the head ritual specialist. He then waves it over the heads of other men who stand with their bows drawn ready to shoot. Then, upon a signal, with great shouting, all the trees prepared earlier are felled at once, and simultaneously, the arrows are shot into the air in an easterly direction. The spirits follow the enticing scent of the taboo cuscus on the first arrow along the trajectory of all the arrows into the east.

During this commotion everyone else runs into the jungle away from the main trails as fast as possible and from there they secretly make their way back to the previously abandoned village. The cumulative effect of all these actions is sufficient to dupe Memeduman Ngop and Memeeberkerok into thinking that everyone has moved to the east under their jurisdiction. This is sure to stop crop destruction and insure plentiful future harvests.

Protection/Healing. Six rituals from the protection and healing category are discussed below: the kulmana kwetena for preventing sudden death, am kirinnga for healing adult illness, nong kina for returning a lost soul, isok mar donora for removing spirits or spirit projectiles, mi pe pona for protecting newborns from soul-eating spirits, and yai kova for insuring long life for a newborn.

Kulmana Kwetena: Protection against sudden death. Kulmana Kwetena ‘healing the thunder’ refers to the fact that the thunder is a sign that, having incurred Kai Dyen Ngop’s anger, someone is about to be suddenly and violently killed. The person might have killed someone Kai Dyen Ngop did not want killed or eaten food in a selfish and arrogant way, not honoring to the spirits. This meant that they had secretly eaten something such as pork, pandanas, or large taro which was noticeably large and special without honoring Kai Dyen Ngop and bringing some to share in the men’s house with others and to offer to Tau Pena. This was especially bad since everyone could see that a particularly large or notable item of food was gone, and knew the proper procedure had not been followed. (See the section on Minor Spirits, page 63ff)

Kai Dyen Ngop, learning of the transgression, sends for the ile or sanipe spirit, who like his cassowary namesake makes a loud explosive sound when angry. The spirit does this by snapping his bowstring, as evidenced by the great clap of thunder. All the men instantly recognize this thunder as a signal of death and someone knowing the appropriate incantations to avert this is quickly called.

The remedy is sympathetic magic of the homeopathic and contagious types. If the thunder is very loud, then the ritual specialist takes a rock and wipes sweat from the guilty person’s armpit on it, then placing it near the firepit poles and pressing down on it while chanting incantations like: “I am smoothing down your ruffled feathers, I am pressing your bow to the ground, I am detaching the string from your bow”. Alternately, the names of certain long snakes thought to be spirit snakes are spoken while the specialist says “I am breaking your many ribs so you are limp, not rigid, I am smashing your head, go back to your place”. Then the rock is tossed out into the rain where the heat from fire and armpit will be cooled, and so, by association, the anger of the spirit.

When this ritual is performed at each initiation site and at the designated Youwa house shutting all the ‘doors’, it is felt that the major spirits are safely at rest unless something else arouses their anger.

Other Rituals

Dyen Morona: Prosperity/Fruitful harvests. Most Ketangban ritual categories include a myriad of specific rituals and detail. Those listed on pages 70 and 71 at the beginning of the section on rituals are simply representative and only one prosperity ritual is described here.

Most prosperity rituals are invocations to bring fruitfulness of crops or livestock, but the Dyen Morona is particularly interesting because although similar to the Kain Ouna and the Uyop Dona prosperity rituals, it is also distinctive in that it employs manipulation. The Dyen Morona ritual, carried out with great seriousness to deal with crop destruction by pests, is an enormous ruse designed to fool Kain Dyen Ngop. Perhaps this is the reason it is possible because it is his distant presence in the eastern territory where he is generally referred to as Memeduman Ngop, which is being addressed. Memeduman Ngop, being associated with the people and territory of the east is not a benevolent figure to people of the Central and Western areas. This ritual takes considerable effort and mobilization of people and resources; in the practical Melanesian way (Lawrence, 1965, p. 7), everything has specific reasons and purposes, and here the purpose is to follow Um Bo’s specific instructions in order to halt or avert crop or livestock failure.

When small marsupials that feed on tuber crops flourish and multiply, they dig up the gardens and eat or destroy the tubers along with the vines. Kain ‘pandanias’ can be camaged and mutilated by veri parrots, and koute ‘owis’ destroy fyese da ‘breadfruit’. This calamity is thought to be caused by Memeduman Ngop and his sister, a female spirit variously called Nupaemkorner or Memeeberkerok, who are angered when men from the central area take wives from the east, particularly from different tribes. When Memeduman Ngop and Memeeberkerok’s children are removed from their jurisdiction by this marriage, it causes a reduction in the gifts given to them. They then in anger send the marsupials, birds, and rodents to eat the crops and cause famine. The famine takes place in the home areas of the offending grooms/husbands.

The strategy for stopping the destruction and insuring plentiful harvests is to perform a masquerade to make Memeduman Ngop believe they not only intend to send back the eastern women, but also that most of the population from the affected area will go with them. The areaal bereft of people is then of no interest to the spirits, and Memeduman Ngop believes he is gaining new people to honor him in the east.

When pests start destroying crops the people go to the village where someone has married a woman from Memeduman nere the east and reminds everyone of the danger that Memeduman Ngop and Memeeberkerok will bring huge net bags, fill them with the food from their gardens and take it away. Furthermore, they may then bear additional spirit ‘children’ who will cause deaths and crop failure in the area. Then everyone present in that village, with great noise and commotion, begins to collect things in their net bags as if to make a major move. They take all of their valuables, stone axes, special feast foods, fire tongs, chickens, etc. These full nets are given to the eastern women or those associated with them, who put them on their heads as if prepared to leave. Other people pound on walls, pour water on hearth fires, throw things out of the houses, uproot small bushes and trees and throw them about, and generally make a commotion demonstrating their definite rejection of and final departure from the area. Small children, old people and others not participating in the ritual quickly and quietly hide under debris or on a trail until everyone has left the village. They are forbidden to start fires or indicate their presence. Any sign of valuables or people remaining in the village will make Memeduman Ngop realize he is being duped.

Just before the procession leaves the village, the head spirit man take bloody pork and wave it over the people’s heads. This is done because the spirits like red, and like a dog following a person danging a tasty morsel, they will follow the group away from the village, eager to eat the pork sacrifice. The heavily laden people then set off down the trail toward the east, to a place near the eastern border. There is constant announcing of the departure, and pounding and shouting along the trail to show they are starting life anew in a distant location.
If the thunder is not so loud, then the incarnations are said soothingly while stroking sweat from the specialist's armpit onto the firepit poles from top to bottom. By association this is smoothing down the raised feathers of the cassowary or smoothing down the hair of the man-eating spirit pig which may have been called to eat the person. In this case the rubbing is analogous to rubbing the pig's stomach which calms him so he lays on his side as any domestic pig is known to do.

Am Kiringna: Scraping the taro. This ritual can be performed by the shamans or the ritual specialists and is effective in healing certain sicknesses, or preventing a person's death if he has offended a spirit. Besides sickness, one sign of such an offense is that the sacrificial food and tobacco put on Tau Pena's shelf or left hanging in a net up in the rafters is not accepted by the designated spirit, but this can only be discerned by the shamans. Four or five days after the offering is made the shaman inspects it to determine if the spirits have eaten it and been satisfied. If not, death is sure to follow unless this ritual is performed.

The shaman bakes a large am 'raw potato' in the fire. After taking it from the coals he wipes the sweat from his armpits on it, and then scrapes off the ashes and outer layers with a bamboo knife. The scrapings fall on the head, neck, and shoulders of the sick or endangered person while the shaman or specialist says incantations using the names of the indicated spirits, and stating the desired result, as 'You are going to be solid and hard like an ironwood tree. You are going to be hot and firm like this taro. You will not be sickly and die nor will your children.'

Then the ritual specialist turns his back on the victim but faces the Tau Pena shelf. He holds the taro in his hands behind his back and the victim eats from it, while the ritual specialist announces to the spirits that the man named has killed pigs and made offerings in addition to the ones which were rejected. Further, the man is teaching the bodies to offend sacred pigs and pandanu, proving that he is a good person. This also demonstrates that he is the mawu 'treasured possession' of the ritual specialist, and by extension, the spirit, and should therefore be spared.

The ritual specialist then gives the taro to the man who eats most of it and shares the rest with other men and his children who are also in danger. Pork or pandanu offered to the spirits in connection with this ritual is shared among these same people and with the specialist. During this period, no water (cold, weak) can be drunk because it will weaken the effectiveness (heat) of the magic.

Nong kina: Returning a lost soul. The nong kina ritual serves to combat the perpetual danger of having a person's sambala 'soul' stolen and hidden in the jungle or mountaintops by a major spirit or the spirits of the dead. If the proper offerings of pork and pandanu are made, and if the shaman has a good relationship with Kain Dyen Ngop at the time, then help is possible. Kain Dyen Ngop tells the shaman where to find these hidden souls. The shaman goes, and upon hearing the whining of the strangers he finds the flat rocks which mark and close the hole where the souls are being kept. These rocks are identifiable by the fingernail scratches underneath made by the souls trying to get out. The shaman then captures the soul, invisible to normal men, and wrapping it and the rock in dried pandanu leaf fibers, puts it in a net bag. Holding it with both hands, the shaman brings it to the victim's men's house where all men can hear the soul's mewing.

This bag is placed on the victim's chest, which holds it with both hands while the shaman completes the ritual by saying incantations with the names of the indicated spirits, invocations for the person to live, and naming the measures taken to incapacitate and banish the spirits. After a time, a yeri bo leaf, which has a red back recalling the blood sacrifice of Um Bo, is waved in circles over the victim's head. The shaman then jumps up and runs around in the house, pounding on and grabbing at the walls as if to catch an insect, eventually catching the invisible mira lightening bug, or the 'eye' of the victim's spirit. (see the section on Human Spirits) This flying of the mira causes dizziness and blurred vision in sick people.

A hissing sound emanates from the hands of the shaman holding the mira and he places it on the victim's head at the site of an infant's fontanel. The shaman then blows softly on this spot while saying spirit names and incarnations telling the soul to return to its owner. Then a piece of string is tied around a bit of hair over the spot to 'close the door' where the soul might again escape. This string should not be removed, but must rot or fall off by itself as a sign that the soul is solidly in place and the person will live.

Iok Mar Dorona: Removing spirits or spirit projectiles. The final healing ritual to be described is very common and has endless variations for specific symptoms and sicknesses. This iok mar dorona ritual is to repel a spirit who is eating a person's heart, stomach, or soul, or to remove a iok mare 'spirit arrow' which has been shot into a person's body by a major spirit or by the shaman on the orders of the major spirits.

The spirits feeding on a person's soul are often the female Kataingna ner or Yarni ner. Their removal involves using wedina, which may be either a piece of fat and skin from a sacrificial pig or the scent gland of the sacred sakale or Tau pena cuscus which has been smoked and long kept on the shelf for sacred objects. The shaman puts this bit of meat or fat on a stick and heats it until it smells strongly. Then, chanting incantations and speaking spirit names and ancestral names, he waves this over the victim's head with the red-backed yeri bo leaves. The sight and smell pleases the spirits, recalling past sacrifices and gifts made to them, and deflects their interest from the person to eating these favorite wedina foods. The shaman also takes sukoluola 'grease-soaked banana leaves' from pit-cooking the sacrificial pig and rubs it along the victim's body and stomach. Then with a quick gripping and jerking motion, he 'pulls out' the spirit and throws it out the door. Finally, some water (hot and cold) might be thrown out the door to chase away the spirit. Each kind of spirit makes a characteristic sound when leaving a person: spirits of the dead make guttural sounds; the sakale or tau pena cuscus spirits make growling sounds like a small dog; while Kataingna ner and Yarni ner make clicking sounds accompanied by short yelps, gasping, or crying.

These same procedures are also and more frequently used in removing spirit arrows or other objects from people. Having removed them, the shaman then lays these items, such as sharp bones, rocks, and hard wood splinters on a banana leaf for display. Not all are deadly, but all of these cause sharp stabbing pains until removed.

Mi Me Pona: Preventing death of newborns. Soul-eating spirits are particularly likely to attack newborns, being attracted by the smell of the vernix and blood on their bodies. Newborns are never washed lest the water carry their scent to the spirits, who will then track the infant and kill it or steal its soul. As Anne Sims reports in this volume, there are many rituals to prevent or overcome spirit problems for newborns.

The name of this ritual mi me pona 'killing children' (by) water refers to the baby's scent carried by water in various ways, attracting the spirits. If rain or water splashes on the child near a river, the smell is borne by the water which rises from the riverbanks, or small water insects to the habitation of the spirits. Thus the blood might contact tree or plant roots dangling in the river which carry the scent to the spirits. Similarly, ants perform this same function for the spirits on dry ground, and thus carry the scent transmitting news of the baby to the spirits who then come to kill it.

To prevent this, the husband or maternal male relatives prepare a number of small packages of various fragrant leaves over which incarnations have been said. These leaf packages are put in the house and net bags in which the child is carried to suppress the scent. Whenever the mother travels out of the village she drops these packages on the trail at key points in the areas she frequents, stepping on them to crush and release the fragrance, thus masking the scent of her child from searching spirits. Laying the child on these leaves in the carrying net also masks the newborn scent and protects the baby as the mother travels about.

This ritual is unusual because women have a direct participating role in performing it. The packages can be prepared by a ritual specialist or by any initiated man, but once made and thrown from a distance to the door of the woman's house (men cannot approach the house or child for a long time to avoid pollution), the job is the mother's. Women understand only a minimum about the ritual, but know that it is essential.

Yai Koura: Protecting the life of an infant. This ritual to protect the life of a child is for mothers who have had several stillbirths or infant deaths. Again the mother plays an initial role since men carefully avoid menstrual pollution, but the remainder of the ritual, especially the incarnations, is performed by men.
After the birth, but before the umbilical cord is cut, the mother takes a bamboo knife and severs the infant's little finger at the second joint. The severed portion is wrapped in leaves and handed to the helper woman who carries it with fire tongs and gives it to a man knowing the marye pena incantations. Careful not to touch it, the man buries it in a garden hole, and plants either leiyong 'an edible leafy vegetable' or pawawaye 'type of banana' over it. Both of these plants have extensive tangled root systems which are very difficult to uproot, and continually put new shoots for many years, i.e. they are both tenacious and self-propagating. The homeopathic and contagious magic imparts the characteristics of the plants to the infant by way of its finger, to encapsulate and protect it by the root system and give long healthy life by self-rejuvenation of the new shoots coming up.

A similar process is employed to prevent children's death and insure further children, especially males. The proper incantations are said near a boy's house and a kwa am yai or 'branched taro shoot' planted because it produces multiple branched tubers. This is to protect the boy and insure that more boys will be born.

Near a newborn girl's house incantations are said and a gwai am 'sugar cane taro' which does not produce a tuber, but only edible leaves, is planted. This indicates a preference for male children since no tubers are produced. However, the girl's life is protected since sugarcane taro is the favorite food of the infant-eating spirit Daryankar ner 'She -will -come -from -Dai -mountain woman'. This plant is particularly plentiful in the Daisialal river valley where Um Bo sent many of the first women to live and has always been traditional food for females. Daryankar ner sees this plant in her honor and eats it instead of the female infant. (Arne Sims, this volume).

Punishment/Disaster

As the listing of the ritual categories on pages 71 and 72 shows, there are many different rituals in the punishment category. Only one subcategory, the Nimi ker dona, or Nimi gereng dona is clearly contagious magic of the 'leavings' variety with an almost endless variety of methods but all are typical of those well documented throughout Melanesia.

Any initiated male who knows the incantations can do this type of sorcery, or a ritual specialist or shaman can be asked to do it. Counteracting such sorcery has to be done by spirit mediators, shamans, a clansman associated with the particular spirit (if known) or, most effective, the person responsible for the curse. Punishment rituals are unique in that some of the practitioners are old women. These women are greatly feared, not because their magic is more powerful, but because they are believed to be more vindictive, easily offended, and less predictable.

The rituals follow familiar patterns. Something from the presence of, or having close association with a person, such as left-over food, nail parings, hair, faeces, or some small personal possession, is secretly collected. The sorcerer usually packages the 'leavings' in leaves, or a green bamboo tube and then does something to it which is efficiently transmitted to the victim because the item remains in sympathetic association with them.

The sorcerer basically determines what sort of death the victim will suffer by what he does to these packages. If the bamboo tube is burned in the fire, or crushed between rocks, the death will probably be sudden and violent. If the package is left to rot in the jungle and be eaten by insects or hung in a remote tree or 'drowned' in the river, then the death might be slow and painful.

If someone realizes that nimi ker dona has been worked on his relative, a shaman might find the packaged leavings in time because Kain Dyen Ngopi will sometimes tell shamans where these packages are by subtly glancing in their direction while traveling with the shaman. The shaman can then indicate by a show of fingers to the relatives, the size and number of the packages and thus how many pigs or pandananas are needed for the healing ritual. Occasionally the package might be 'bound in the sorcerer's house or on their person. One such nimi ker dona sorceress concealed the leavings package under her skirt next to her vagina, exposing the victim by contagion to her vaginal secretions and menstrual blood which would result in a wasting disease and death. Such vicious sorcery could be punished by immediate death at the hands of the victim's relatives, and in this particular case, this is how the relatives responded.

The rituals listed on pages 70 and 71 are some of the ones available to the Ketengban who want to cause harm to others or their possessions. Sorcery can be directed at humans, livestock, or gardens. Sometimes relatives of the target person are killed, and even the sorcerer's close relatives are not exempt if they are offensive. For instance, one ritual uses a bakke (sayur lilin in Indonesian), cattail-like vegetable, to cause trouble for the sorcerer's own married daughter because the groom's clan has not paid enough bride price, or the bride's mother has not been getting what she considers to be her fair share of bride exchange items. This kind of bakke, covered with fine red nettle-like hairs, is struck on the fire poles in the young bride's house and rubbed over the floor where she sits, and on her nets. The names of female spirits such as Ketelinga Ner are said along with incantations specifying desired results. The fine red hairs on the vegetable represent the pubic hairs of the spirit effecting the punishment. The stinging quality is important because it makes the girl restless in her house. She will not sleep well, will not stay in one place, and will be unhappy working until she either runs away to her mother's village, or becomes promiscuous. Any of this behavior can cause her, her husband and his clansmen serious trouble, and possibly even death.
Notes

1. My wife and I began living among the Ketengban people and analyzing their language in January, 1981. We have lived among and worked with the people for nine years. The present study is a compilation of material gathered from personal conversations with and observations of the people during that entire period. To finish this paper an intensive time of inquiry and confirmation of data took place for approximately five months in 1989. The core group providing this material consisted of ten men and four women. Several of the men had been head men responsible for various of the ceremonies in their areas and/or whose close kinsmen had held such responsibility. All these men were past initiates in the Kwet ceremonies and had either carried out or been present during the performance of the ceremonies described. Their ages ranged from thirty-three to fifty-five. The Eastern, Central and Western dialect areas were represented in this group. Some material was gleaned from everyday occurrences, some from questions and probing, and some from lengthy texts on these subjects recorded during the period of study.

2. At the present time Ketengban culture is in a period of transition. The Principle Life ceremonies and major rituals have been totally discontinued. However, there are still many hamlets remote from contact with outsiders, and it is difficult to determine the details of how they are living at present with respect to more minor ritual belief and practice. In many ways the cosmology and world view of the people has not changed a great deal. However, Christianity has unquestionably had a significant impact on their beliefs in that it has freed them from the fear of the spirits and the need to placate and honor them. Due to the difficulties of speaking truthfully for the entire language group, and to the understanding that their view of the physical and parts of the metaphysical universe has not changed appreciably, and to the difficulties in trying to change tenses in the paper to be both accurate and coherent, this entire paper is written in the present tense. The section on rituals is the one where this will be the most misleading. Please accept my apologies. Use of the present tense there is not meant to indicate that the rituals described there are in current practice at this time.

3. The souls of living people do not form relationships or any kind of alliances with the spirits of deceased persons, or with other autonomous spirits. Therefore, though one's offensive behavior may result in attack on one's spirit, one cannot in any direct way develop an advantageous relationship between other spirit beings and one's own spirit.

4. It is interesting that with the entrance of Christianity, the Ketengban, on their own initiative, speak of the experience of believing Christ and the teachings of the gospel as taking place in the kanye digru, but that the Holy Spirit resides not in the kanye, but in the digru.

5. There is frequent overlap among the categories of spirit specialists. Some asuru kwa neng 'shamans' can heal, some mmir defio neng 'ritual specialists' can both heal and curse, and some men who are neither officially recognized as shamans nor ritual specialists may have some power to heal or curse.

6. Infanticide occurs from many different motivations not related to a struggle for power or influence within a marriage. However, even in very recent times this has been done, as in the past, as a means of punishing or hurting men. It appears that the greatest number of infanticides (for whatever motives) were of female children.

7. There are slightly differing versions of Ketengban mythology from different dialect or geographical areas. This is not surprising since regular outside contacts began for these people only in 1972. Previous to that, warfare, aspects of the social system, their spirit beliefs, and the rugged terrain limited travel and sharing of information between areas. Some mythological accounts mention a ruler spirit called Memeduman Ngop. His name usually occurs in connection with the eastern third of Ketengban territory. I suspect that he is the eastern equivalent of the central and western Kain Dyen Ngop, and perhaps he was incorporated into these accounts as men heard his name mentioned as a powerful spirit. Details of his origins are not available in the area of our research, but the deeds attributed to him in relation to men parallel those of Kain Dyen Ngop. Therefore, Kain Dyen Ngop and Memeduman Ngop are either the same spirit known by different names or two different spirits of equivalent power, but the lack of additional information about Memeduman Ngop prevents a conclusion at this time.

8. At certain times these rock outcroppings will be rubbed with pig grease and special rites will be chanted to calm the great pig in much the same way that one can rub the snout or stomach of a domestic pig to pleasure him and calm him down.

9. Again it must be made clear that these ceremonies and rituals have largely disappeared among the Ketengban due to the acceptance of Christianity, but because the change is still in process they are presented in the present tense.

10. When the Ketengban elders who used to be spirit specialists began to relate their view of past life and ritual practice, they emphasized that it was absolutely essential to understand these two ceremonies if the other ceremonies and rituals were to make sense. They said it was important to start with the Kwet and the Youwa ceremonies because if these two were not carried out precisely and regularly nothing else in life could operate as it should, catastrophic disaster would result, and probably all life on earth would cease to exist.

11. These ceremonies having ceased. The time frame is estimated by the ages of those men who were initiation mates, and by their own estimates of the approximate length of time and period during the year.
References


MYTH AND METAPHOR
In Ketengban Pregnancy and Childbirth Practices

Anne Sims

Kebanyakan kepercayaan-kepercayaan dan kebiasaan-kebiasaan orang Ketengban yang berkaitan dengan masa hamil dan melahirkan berasal dari mitologi mereka. Sebagai contoh, perhatikanlah kisah di bawah ini:


Analogi antara penjitaran dan kelahiran ini adalah bahwa lembah yang terlihat dengan air dan yang menahan segala yang hidup dan subur adalah lembah dari anak di dalam kandungan. Ngaru kecil yang terubah menjadi bagian akhir dari lembah itu melambangkan jalan kelahiran. Dengan cara yang sama di mana seorang anak yang lahir karena pecahnya air kuburan, maka segala yang hidup dan yang disimpan di dalam dunia bermula dari air kelahiran.


Introduction

Many of the beliefs and practices of the Ketengban in regard to pregnancy and childbirth are rooted in Ketengban mythology. Consider, for example, the following account of creation:

At one time all of creation existed on a mountain top called Limogal. Doyop (the principal cultural hero and creator) wanted to see this life spread farther beyond the area of Limogal so he dispersed it from the mountaintop. The two main rivers, the Bime and the Tanime, also had their origins here. These rivers, which were like living beings, had been gradually building in a common pool behind dams. They competed with each other to see which would break out first. Finally, as Doyop was sending everything off the mountain, the Bime River simultaneously burst forth and rushing down the mountainside carried with it the best of all that was created—people, animals, and plant life. It filled up the large valley system that is now known as the Bime area and started to flow out through the gorge at the lower end. There it spread out into the lowlands. Umbo (the other main cultural hero who was responsible for disseminating instructions concerning how to live) saw this and was distressed by it. He knew that if this happened everything would be too widely dispersed, and would become diluted and therefore weakened. He wanted all of this life to thrive and remain concentrated, so he took his knife, which was a piece of hardwood sharpened on both edges,
and inserted it across the gorge to stop the waterfall.

The analogy between creation and birth is compelling: the valley filled with water and bearing in it all that is living and fertile is symbolic of the child in the abdomen. The small gorge opening at the lower end of the valley represents the birth canal. In the same way that a child is born in the breaking out of amniotic waters, so all living and created things were originally carried into the world in the rushing water of the Eime River.

Many Ketengban customs regarding pregnancy and childbirth are rooted in and validated by their mythology and their metaphors. In the paragraphs which follow, I describe details of such practices and beliefs. To begin with, a brief sketch of Ketengban society will serve to set the background for this study.

The Ketengban

The Ketengban people live in the Star Mountains of eastern Irian Jaya in the district (kabupaten) of Jayawijaya and the subdistrict (kecamatan) of Okibip. They are scattered throughout a rather large geographical area of montane forest ranging in altitude from approximately 600 meters to 2000 meters elevation. They have traditionally lived in small hamlets and villages along the mountain ridges and in the valleys with the highest concentration of population running roughly east to west through the area.

During the last 15 years with increased governmental and other outside contact, eight large villages, ranging in size from 100 to 400 people, have come into existence. Five of these are situated near grass airstrips. The remainder of the population still reside in smaller hamlets.

Even with increased outside contact, however, the Ketengban remain primarily a monolingual group, with approximately 8000 to 10,000 speakers. The language (also known as Kupel) is classified by Voorhoeve and Heeschen as a Papuan (Non-Austronesian) language of the Trans-New Guinea phylum and as a member of the Mek family of languages (Heeschen, 1978).

Ketengban social structure includes patrilinial exogamous clans. The system of kinship terminology follows a straightforward troquois type and patrilocal residence is practiced (Sims, 1966:16).

The Ketengban are horticulturists and plant gardens located on the mountainsides and along the river beds near their villages. The staples produced by these gardens include sweet potatoes, manioc, taro, pandanrus, bananas and a variety of green leafy vegetables. In addition, several crops have been introduced since the early 1970’s such as papaya, jackfruit, maize, squash, cucumbers, onions, tomatoes, peanuts and soybeans.

The division of labor is such that men are primarily responsible for cutting, burning, and fencing the garden plots. Once this work is done, the work of planting and maintaining the site through weeding and harvesting falls to the women. Sago, although not plentiful, is also found in the lower altitudes. Processing sago is a joint effort by men and women, with the former doing the actual tree cutting and chopping and the latter completing the work.

Animal protein sources include domesticated and wild pigs, numerous varieties of marsupials and birds, tadpoles, and frogs. Men hunt for the marsupials and birds and are the primary consumers of these animals. On the other hand, tadpoles, frogs, large insects, and smaller rodents like field mice are considered to be foods only for women and children. Women and children often dam the nearby streams in order to catch tadpoles. Women are also the primary caretakers for domesticated pigs, but ownership and disposition of pigs is the prerogative of men.

The Ketengban are traditionally animistic in their beliefs and world view. Christianity was introduced with the entrance of Dani evangelists and missionaries of the Unevangelized Fields Mission (UFM) in the early 1970s. Today roughly between 60 and 70 per cent consider themselves to be Protestant Christians.

The last 15 years have been marked by a great deal of social change. The Ketengban have not been particularly averse to new ideas from the outside, and indeed in many instances have welcomed them. The changes that have come about have affected all areas of life, including pregnancy and childbirth which is the topic with which this paper is primarily concerned. For this reason I have tried to describe this life process as it occurred both in former times (by use of the past tense) and as it occurs in the present day (by use of the present tense). One of the most noticeable differences in the present is the marked absence of rituals and ceremonies involving the veneration and appeasement of spirits. These practices were primarily carried out in hopes of achieving positive outcomes and avoiding calamity in the various aspects of bearing children. Another change is the diminishing concern by men regarding pollution from vaginal blood and secretions, a common preoccupation in Melanesian cultures (Fairthorn, 1976:87).

Although pregnancy and childbirth practices are fairly uniform throughout the Ketengban area it should be noted that there are some variations between the four major dialect areas - referred to simply as Eastern, Central, Northern and Western. The information for this paper was gathered in Omban, one of the eight larger villages located in the Central dialect. For the sake of consistency and because of incomplete information from the other two dialects, this discussion is primarily concerned with the Central dialect area residents.

In regard to present day practices, I would also like to note that Omban is one of the villages that has undergone the most social change. More isolated areas, even within the Central dialect, may not have experienced change to the same degree.

MENSTRUATION

For the Ketengban, as in many Papuan cultures, liquids carried the connotation of coldness, softness, and weakness. Blood lost by women either through menstruation or birthing, as well as other vaginal secretions, were viewed by men as particularly dangerous pollutants. For the reason special care was taken to avoid contaminating men with these liquids, through either direct or indirect contact. These precautions were especially important during the period surrounding the carrying out of special rituals and ceremonies, including male initiation, and during war.

In the past, there were special menstruation houses that went by several different names: bari ati, samai ati, yuan ati, and yaliyatt, with the first the more commonly used name. Although these houses were used as dwellings for menstruating women, the women were not restricted to them for the entire time. They were free to go about some of their daily routines such as gathering firewood and feeding pigs. If a woman saw men approaching on the trail, though, she was obliged to call out a warning to them that she was a menstruating woman. The men would then take a different path to avoid contact with her. She also could not cook food for men during this time. It was feared that the food which was to be consumed by the men might inadvertently come in contact with the floor, her skirt, or her hands which in turn were likely to have been polluted by her secretions.

A girl’s first period was referred to as samikweria and succeeding ones as bari ati. Older women today report that there were no special ceremonies or equivalents of male initiation rites for girls. Only after she was pregnant would they explain to her about childbirth.

It was desirable for a girl to be married before or shortly after her regular cycle of periods began. If not, there was fear of attempted intercourse by a spirit. Since girls could be betrothed while still quite small, they at times would go to live with the future husband’s mother, nin, or clan sister, mal ner, from the time they were old enough to leave their own mothers, at approximately seven or eight years of age until they were old enough to begin living with their husbands. This arrangement could begin before regular menses was established.

In the process of change over the last fifteen years, these restrictions have been lifted. Today women stay in their own houses, sitting on leaves when the flow is heaviest and are free to go about their daily routines. There does not appear to remain any inordinate concern about them preparing food for men or sharing their dwelling space.
PREGNANCY

Pregnancy is believed to occur following frequent intercourse. According to the Ketengban, intercourse must take place daily for a period of several weeks in order for conception to occur. As expected, the first sign of pregnancy to a Ketengban woman is the cessation of the menstrual period. The lethargy and nausea that are commonly experienced are believed to be the result of the woman’s blood pooling in her abdomen to form the baby. A fetus is thought to receive nourishment by tilting its face up and opening its mouth to catch food as it drops to the mother’s stomach while she is eating. This also accounts for the meconium present after birth, which is thought to be the feces resulting from food ingested by the unborn infant. The placenta is believed to be a protective cushion for the child while in utero.

Now as in the past, there are no work restrictions per se for a pregnant woman. She carries on her daily routine as much as she feels like doing so. If tired or ill, she just stays home for the day or does less work.

In the past there were a number of foods that were considered taboo for women in general, whether or not they were pregnant. These foods had been designated by the Ketengban hero, Umbo, as ones to be eaten in his honor and portions of these were to be left for him and other spirits as sacrificial gifts. Only initiated men were allowed to eat these foods. The list included the following:

- Kain
- Tarkai, doug
- Diliman, wauwam
- Bikne gwei
- Pakar, surmid
- Lilin mar
- Kapang tu
- Bisam tu

Ketengban term | English gloss
---|---
Kain | Red pandanus
Tarkai, doug | Species of bananas
Diliman, wauwam | Species of taro
Bikne gwei | Type of sugarcane
Pakar, surmid | Species of sayur
Lilin mar | Type of green leafy plant
Kapang tu | All species of cuscus
Bisam tu | Most parts of the pig

Other than these food taboos for all women in general there have never been any additional food restrictions during pregnancy. Several women have commented that if there is any one food that tends to nauseate one more than any other during the first trimester, it is manioc (tapioca).

Sexual relations during pregnancy are not prohibited but depend on the preference of the couple. However, women may sometimes be reluctant to have sexual relations for fear the unborn child’s skin will be damaged.

Prior to Conception

Garangna ailen ritual. In the past a special ritual called garangna ailen or potong kepmanu was performed for newlywed girls. The ritual was carried out before pregnancy in order to ensure that she and her husband would be prolific. The husband, along with his male relatives, would kill a number of cuscus (a kind of marsupial) and gather these together with netbags, axes and other trade goods. The male go-between who had originally requested the bride’s hand for the husband then arranged with her parents the time for the ritual to take place. When the time came, the go-between would take a live cuscus from the husband and hang it around the wife’s neck in a net bag. The bride went to the doorway of her mother’s house and while still standing outside, leaned forward into the doorway. Her mother would greet her without looking at her, and say, “Oh, have you had a boy or a girl?” She would then take the net bag off over the girl’s head and put it on the floor. After killing the cuscus which was inside, she took its kidneys and liver and cooked and ate them while the girl was still standing in the doorway. Not until this was done would the girl be invited into the house. When the rest of the animal had been cooked the bride’s mother, father, brothers and other designated male kinsmen ate the rest of it.

The primary purpose of this ritual was to appease two major spirits called Kettingna Ner and Yami Ner. These female spirits posed the greatest danger for women and children. The kidneys and liver of the marsupial, which represent the hearts of people, were eaten by the mother in honor of and by proxy for these two spirits. This act was taken in hopes of satisfying them and diverting them from eating the hearts of the bride and her future children. On this occasion, time could not be taken to cut up and cook the whole cuscus for to do so might make these two spirits impatient. They might just decide to forget about the cuscus and eat the heart of the new bride.

Although this ritual was usually carried out for newlyweds before any children were born to the couple, it could also be performed for a woman whose children consistently died. In this case, it was said that the spirits responsible for the children’s deaths were hard to satisfy; they expected more food offerings to be given. Therefore, this same ritual was carried out in order to appease them.

Wina ritual. The mother of the bride played one of the primary roles in the garangna ailen ritual. However, if she was displeased with her daughter, her son-in-law or his family, she could be the catalyst for trying to bring about some calamity in their lives. The type of situation that might provoke her to such action would be shameful behavior on her daughter’s part, such as extramarital sexual relations. An inadequate brideprice (in the mother’s eyes) paid by her son-in-law and his male relatives might also incur her anger. This sorcery was known as wina and although often set in motion by the mother of the bride, it was ultimately carried out by men. The mother would complain and any kinsmen who could be classified as her brother or grandfather could call on spirits to whom they had access by virtue of their clan membership to bring about misfortune in the couple’s lives. For example, the young bride might subsequently be barren or all her children die. Another possible result could be that she or her male kinsmen who had not been sufficiently generous with the brideprice, would be murdered.

In the case of an inadequate brideprice, the spell could be reversed by the same men who had cast it. If at a later time sufficient brideprice was paid. This further payment would need to be accompanied by feasting and dancing hosted by the kinsmen of the husband. The bones of the marsupials that were eaten at these feasts were placed in a pile as they accumulated and then thrown into the fire all together. The men would pronounce a spell menya by saying, “Just as I’ve thrown many bones in the fire, the girl will have many children.”

Birth House

Sometime during a woman’s pregnancy, a birthing house would be built if one did not already exist for her hamlet. This was a structure separate from the menstruation houses. While these houses were not far away, they were always situated downstream and lower than the village itself so that odors or anything that might be contaminated with blood would always be carried away from the village by wind, rain, or river water.

Husband’s Role

The building of the birthing house could be arranged by the husband, but he could not take any part in the construction of it. For him to do any hard labor, such as driving support poles into the earth, stomping the wet clay down for the firepit, or wrapping and tightening vines, could result in the baby’s passage being obstructed later during birth. Similarly, while his wife was actually in labor he avoided this same type of work or any actions that might be analogous to tightening or shutting off the birth canal. Conversely, he would often loosen his rattan waistband and the bindings on his axe in hopes of facilitating the delivery.

Another symbolic precaution of this nature was taken by the husband prior to the child’s birth. Several times throughout a woman’s pregnancy, especially towards the end of it, the husband might come up beside his wife, while she was sitting or lying in the hut, and surreptitiously slide the string of her skirt down with his toe while saying quietly or silently, "Umbo, I’m taking your knife out. I’m opening the way.”
This statement refers to the creation myth mentioned in the Introduction. It is symbolic in the sense of removing the obstruction that prevents life from flowing out, being born with the passage of water. It also is a means of venerating or appealing to Umbo, perhaps the most important cultural hero. Showing allegiance to him and doing things in the way which he prescribed reduces the risk of interference in the birth by malevolent spirits, since they, too, are in many respects subject to him.

The husband could also be helpful in a practical way by placing some food and firewood in the birthing house just prior to his wife’s entering it.

Miscarriage

Miscarriages are referred to as kain para. This is the Ketengban term for the process by which pandanuses or leaves bundle themselves up and start forming a fruit which soon rots and dries up the bottom. The analogy to a miscarriage is obvious. The pandanus is normally formed and comes to solid maturity within the enfolding fronds of the palm which then finally open and release the fruit. Sometimes, however, the pandanus dies and rots inside resulting in draining liquids, and so it is with a human miscarriage. What should have been a viable infant, formed to maturity in the womb for some reason dies and is lost in a flow of blood.

The Ketengban are not really sure what causes a miscarriage. In the past, the explanation in some cases was that a spirit had entered the woman’s stomach and squeezed the baby to death. Initiated men kwet neng did not go anywhere near these women for several weeks for fear of contamination. To prevent further miscarriages, the garangana ailin ritual described above was sometimes performed.

Women today are much less likely to suspect spirit involvement in miscarriages and most say they are not sure what the cause is other than the possibility of working too hard in the early months of pregnancy.

LABOR

Banana Ritual

Between the time a woman felt the first twinges of labor pain but before she went to the birthing house, her husband could again make an attempt to ensure a safe, speedy delivery for his wife. To do so, he and a few other men would bake and serve the women tawanye bananas. As they were giving them to her they would repeat over and over the menya, or spell which included the words, “Dumdum, dulu yama, tawane.” The recited words were the names of several species of eels and catfish from the lowlands area. The banana skin recalled the slipperiness of these eels and fish. The names recited and the bananas eaten were to aid the baby’s wet, smooth body in slipping out utilizing a type of homoeopathic magic (Ryan, 1972:1003).

The significance of using tawanye banana is that it was the original banana species that came down from Limgonal mountain during the dispersion of created things and became the first and most important staple for the people. It is said that sometime in the distant past, in the primordial era, children were kept alive by feeding them tawanye bananas during a famine. Thus the associative symbolism is a dual one: slippery items for smooth delivery, and a staple that has been considered to be life sustaining from the earliest known era (see the section on yale kouna ritual).

Me Tu Tan Dyena

In the past, once labor had begun the woman left the village and proceeded to the birthing house. She also began a total abstinence from drinking water that lasted until several days after the birth, referred to as me tu tan dyena. If this taboo was transgressed, it was thought that several calamities involving rain would befall the child in his later life. For example, on days of special ceremony involving feasting, dancing, brideprice payment and the like, it would rain until the next morning resulting in everyone returning to their homes unsatisfied and feeling as if they had come for nothing. Another such problem would result from such transgression so that on garden clearing days it would rain and the work could not be finished. Similarly, hunting trips would be rained out, leaving everyone involved miserable and with nothing to eat. To avoid all these potential future problems, it was crucial that the woman not drink water.

Participants

Melimma nerepe. Among the Ketengban, there are no women who are considered to be midwives either by virtue of special training or experience. In the past, more often than not, a woman delivered alone but there could also be one or two melimma nerepe, literally ‘helping women,’ assisting her with the birth. The melimma nerepe could be any close friend or female kinsmen. The overriding concern was to protect the men, particularly the recent initiates, from any immediate contact with the delivery. Keeping the number of women involved and all of their paraphernalia to a minimum proportionately reduced this risk to the men.

If a woman really wanted to serve as a melimma nerepe to a friend or relative who was delivering, she left all extra food, net bags, and grass skirts in the village and went to the birthing house with only the essentials.

The birthing houses used in the past no longer exist today. For the most part women give birth in their own houses in the village or if labor begins while in the garden or jungle, they may also give birth in a bura at, literally ‘outside house’ which is a small jungle house. If alone in the jungle or at night, a woman may still give birth without any assistance.

Nowadays, a woman is usually assisted by one or two women, who as in the past are usually either relatives or close friends. Although they often sit around chatting with one another when their services are not needed at that moment, their purpose is to be quietly supportive of the mother, getting whatever she may require.

Other participants. Since the taboos about women’s blood only exist in vestigial form today, men, including husbands, may be present and on rare occasions even assist with the birth. Children can be present, but smaller children are usually taken off by the father or another woman or girl. Older ones usually play outside with friends. Often other people drop by the house to see how the labor is progressing. How many actually come into the house or stay around is generally determined by the woman in labor. Some prefer more privacy while others are not so bothered by the presence of others who are not involved. The women who assist her melimma nerepe are usually sensitive to this need and ‘run interference’ for her.

A closed door indicates a wish for privacy. If the labor is particularly long or difficult, many people may gather around the house. I observed on one occasion a large crowd gathered around outside in the middle of the night. Bonfires were burning, people chatting and women weaving netbags. They were there out of curiosity and although concerned about their friend, a ‘light-hearted’ atmosphere prevailed.

As labor progresses, the melimma nerepe gather leaves to place under the woman during delivery. Banana leaves are first placed on the floor of the house and on top of these are laid various kinds of green and dried leaves balting bo, minkong bo.

Positions and Procedures During Labor

During labor the woman stays around her house, but often, especially if the labor is prolonged, takes walks outside in the vicinity of the village. As she feels a contraction coming she grabs hold of the rafters of the house, the fireplace poles or the hands of one or two people. Gripping one or the other of these items, she hangs on remaining in a squatting position until the contraction passes.

It is forbidden to lie down or to sit with the legs together during labor or delivery. There is the belief that if the mother is in a prone position, the baby will become confused and try to come up the throat. This is not an unreasonable assumption in that there is no concept of the baby being contained in the uterus which has only one opening at the cervix. Rather, the baby is seen to be in the abdominal area but not otherwise contained in any kind of enclosure. Both the aperture in the throat and mouth and that at the vagina are thought to be open to him, being more or less a continuous track through the body.
Though commonly used in treating pain and sickness, the use of nettles in childbirth is discouraged, but not strictly adhered to. Many Ketengban believe that using nettles could result in the child being born with sores or a rash similar to that caused by rubbing nettles on the skin.

Labor pains of greater intensity in the back indicate that the child will be a boy and labor pains of greater intensity in the front, a girl. Other than this, the Ketengban feel there is no way to predict the sex of the child.

Complications
If there are complications in birth, a 'wait and see' attitude is usually adopted rather than taking any overt action. If the baby is long in coming, one possible explanation is that blood has pooled at the cervix making it difficult for the baby to pass through. In such a case, a person can come behind the mother and put their arms around her with hands meeting over the top of the uterus. Gentle pressure is applied to assist in expelling the baby. If an arm or leg presents first, the danger to both mother and child is recognized and again they wait it out, rather than trying to manipulate the appendage or body of the infant.

BIRTH

As the time for the delivery approaches, the woman squats or kneels over the leaves that have been put down for her. In the past she would also call out that the birth was about to take place. All kwet neng 'initiated males' who were within hearing of such a warning would run off, fall on their faces on the ground and cover their faces and ears with their hands. This was done to shut out the infant's first cries and the birthing smells. To have heard these cries or to have smelled these odors was believed to result in severed intestines and death.

Cutting the Cord Disposing of the Placenta

After birth the woman waits until the placenta is delivered before cutting the umbilical cord. In the case of a retained placenta, the women are reluctant to cut the cord. They fear that the cord will go back up into the mother's body preventing the placenta from delivering at all. They are concerned that this would result in a serious infection and possibly even the mother's death.

In the past, after tying off the cord with a piece of natural fiber, the cutting was always done by the mother. This was accomplished with a strip of razor-sharp bamboo, called pa. Although pa is still the most commonly used instrument today, it is more often one of the female helpers who does the cutting, rather than the mother. The cutting of the cord should be done with a downward motion because it is believed that to cut with an upward motion causes the babies to urinate during its infancy in a long, high stream, while a downward motion causes the urine to fall. After being severed, the cord is given no special cleaning or other care.

In the past, the mother was the only one to dispose of the placenta. Either wrapping it up in the leaves on which she had given birth or just carrying it in her hands, she placed the bundle in the fork of a tree (if possible) overhanging a cliff. This mode of disposal was to prevent contamination of either people or domesticated animals. If such was not possible, it would be put off in a remote area of the jungle. So great are these concerns with birth contamination that among the neighboring Eipomek women, even the mothers themselves must avoid touching either placenta or baby until the vernix has been wiped off (Schliebenhovel, 1977:128).

In present day practice, the attending women help wrap the placenta in the leaves on which the baby was born and put down fresh ones for the mother. They then take the bundle off, burying the placenta and discarding the leaves at the edge of the village.

Although the people are not as concerned as they were fifteen to twenty years ago, there are still negative connotations associated with female blood and fluids. Care is taken to avoid contact with the blood and the women assisting are careful to wash their hands well. Any blood that has gotten on the woven floor of the house is washed off. If any falls through the floor to the ground beneath the house, the dirt there is turned over and water poured on it. It is still believed that if any animals, such as chickens, dogs, or cats ingest the blood, they will become sick and die.

Deformities and Deafness

In the past, deafness and some deformities were believed to be the result of the mother's indirect contact with a cuscus. All species of these small marsupials were taboo to women. If her husband had, for example, either eaten one and then had intercourse with his wife or if he had brought some of the meat even to the porch of the house and she had inadvertently smelled it, the spirits would be angered and retaliate against the child.

Crippled or deformed limbs are still thought to be the result of the baby being in an odd position as it is forming within the tight confines of the mother's stomach. Again, although it was not specifically mentioned by people interviewed, based on other traditional beliefs about miscarriages and birth defects, it can be presumed that in the past spirits were also thought to be involved in this misfortune. Arm and leg presentations were definitely seen to be caused by malevolent spirits.

Complications

Death of child. In former times if a child was stillborn or died soon after birth, the mother herself disposed of the body by placing it in the fork of tree branches as is done for the placenta. Alternatively, it could be placed in a cave or in the roof area of a bua att, 'jungle house.' The house would then have its' lower walls removed and be abandoned.

Death of mother. If a woman died while in the birthing house, other women would take the body outside and there carefully lay it on some leaves prepared for that purpose. From there men would come and using the leaves so as not to touch her, lift her body onto a length of bark. It was crucial that they not actually touch her with their own bare skin. Once the body was wrapped and tied up in the bark, it was disposed of by placing it in a cave or throwing it off a cliff.

If the baby survived, the melimba nenepe, 'helping woman,' or some other woman (if no one had helped) would take the child and care for it. If the baby later died, it was presumed that the dead mother missed her child and had come back to reclaim it.

In present practice, the handling and burial of both stillborn babies and women who die in childbirth are no different from those of anyone else who dies.

Infanticide

As in many other Papuan groups, infanticide was practiced among the Ketengban in past decades. One of the primary reasons for infanticide seems to have been a wife's desire to take revenge on her husband. The aggravating offense on his part could be that he was not providing enough materially for her in the way of garden land or pigs, that he was treating her harshly, or that the brideprice he gave had not been large enough in the first place. She might also try to punish her husband out of jealousy over a second wife.

Female infanticide might also be urged by the husband. His wishes, however, were not always followed. At most times in a woman's life, she was subject to rules and regulations dictated by the men and the spirits. During this one period of time, though, while she was alone in the birthing house, she was in a sense more the master of her own fate than at any other time. If she chose to do away with her child, that was her prerogative. Furthermore, if she was alone no one else need necessarily know. She could let it be known that she had killed the child or claim that it was simply stillborn.
The mother alone was the one to dispose of the child, and it only occurred in the birthing house. This result was obtained either by not cutting the umbilical cord and simply leaving the child until it died or by more aggressive action. Two reported methods of the latter sort were either striking the child repeatedly with a piece of firewood or stuffing the mouth full of rocks until it choked to death.

In recent years the only case of attempted infanticide that we know of occurred in the village of Ombian. In this case a woman became pregnant by a man other than her husband. Shortly before the baby was born, her husband informed her that he wanted her to do away with the child when it was born. It is reported that he said, "The baby is not mine and I do not want to hear it crying in this house." She delivered the baby alone at night by herself, cut the umbilical cord, wrapped the baby in leaves and placed it in the outhouse. People found the child the next morning and it was cared for by women from her own clan. However, the baby died when about six weeks old. (There were several women taking partial responsibility for the child but no one taking primary responsibility, so the child probably died of accidental neglect.) The prevailing sentiment in the village, which was fairly strong, was that what the woman had done was really wrong. Although the women caring for the child were concerned for its welfare, there was resentment expressed by them towards the mother for having shirked her responsibility and surprise that she was apparently lacking in maternal instinct.

Sex of the Child

Since the Ketengban are a patrilineal, patrilocal, and male dominant society, it appears that the preference in the past was for male children. Parents today accept a child of either sex. Generally no comment is made that would indicate feelings about the matter. On occasion, though, have heard mothers express pleasure at having a daughter who will grow up to help them in the gardens and with the pigs, even if only on a temporary basis until she is married. Others have commented that a male child will eventually be a hunting partner of his father and a help to him in heavy work when the father is older.

Twins

When asked today, the Ketengban say that twins have always been accepted, being seen as neither a blessing nor a curse. They are not really sure what causes multiple births. In the past it was taboo to refer to twins as kwa naye, literally 'forked children', as they are called today. Rather amsu naye, 'children the same age', was the term openly used. Even though informant says there was never any danger from spirits in connection with this word taboo, in every other case of name or other specific word taboo of this kind, the fear of reprisal from spirits is a prominent factor. Secondly, given the somewhat unusual nature of multiples and the fact that objects not easily explainable were attributed to spirit activity, it would seem anomalous for this circumstance to avoid such an interpretation.  

Yale Kouna Ritual

If a woman had given birth to one or more children who were stillborn, or who died shortly after birth, upon the delivery of her next child the yale kouna ritual was performed in order to protect the lives of this child and any succeeding children. The procedure was as follows: Immediately after the birth, the umbilical cord was cut, the mother would sever the little finger of the baby's right hand at the second joint. The severed finger would then be wrapped and carried with tongs by the melimeta nurse, the woman assisting in the delivery, to the village. There it was taken with another pair of tongs by either a man or a woman and buried in a hole made in the ground with a stick. On the top of this spot, as incantations were said, one of two types of plants—either a leiyong, a jungle green, or a tawanye banana were planted. The roots of both of these plants are very extensive and both put out prostrate numbers of additional shoots for many years. The belief was that just as the root system would over time tightly circumscribe and enclose the severed finger in the package, the life of the child would be protected. Further, just as these plants regenerate themselves putting out fresh growth continually, it was hoped that the child would enjoy a long and prosperous life. Again, this is an example of sympathetic magic of both the homeopathic and contagious types (Ryan, 1972:1003). In the former case, the characteristics of the plants will be reflected in the child's life. In the latter case, this will take place because the fingers, remaining in sympathetic contact with the child though physically removed, is efficacious in transmitting these benefits to him.

The choice of these plants also bears cultural significance regarding two of the primary female spirits: Yami Ner and Limbal Ner. The leiyong is covered with fuzzy hairs which were thought to represent the pubic hairs of Yami Ner, a female spirit. The second female spirit, Limbal Ner also has life-giving connotations. Not long after the world was created there was a partial famine. The only remaining food was the tawanye banana. Limbal Ner feeling pity for the small children, chewed some of this banana up and fed it to them thereby contributing to the ongoing life of mankind via these early children. By venerating her in this way, and by using that same substance which sustained life during an earlier crisis, assistance is sought for ensuring the life of this child.

The yale kouna ritual was also understood to be predictive in nature. If the plant dried up, it was believed that the child would die before reaching adulthood. If the plant thrived then the parents could assume that their child would also thrive and they could go about planning for it, with every expectation of a long and happy life.

POSTPARTUM

Care of the Child

Mi kawa. In the past it was forbidden to bathe a newborn. The vernix, blood, and other fluids from the birth plus any dirt that adhered to the child were left on it. All of this residue collectively was referred to as mi kawa. If the baby were to be bathed or to come into any contact with water, bits of the mi kawa would fall to the ground and possibly be carried off by ants to various places which were inhabited by spirits, primarily Kettingina Ner and Pontiana Ner. *The spirits might pick up the scent of the child from these bits and come to eat it or to woo its spirit away. A child whose spirit was being approached in this way by one of these spirits would become ill with malaria, yoni pu, languish, and eventually die. For this reason also women could only eat uncooked potatoes. They would brush the dirt off with their feet, bake them in the fire, then peel the skin off and eat them.

Because of possible contamination with women's blood through the mi kawa, men were not allowed to touch or be near newborns. If a man did come into such contact, he would become ill with mi deir tal wallimma or mena tal wallimma. These sicknesses were characterized by stomach and intestinal pains eventually resulting in severe intestines and death. No man could be around a child until it was three months of age. After this time men neng 'ritual specialists', and kwet neng 'initiated men', could be in contact with them. For noupet neng, 'non-initiates' the time span was six months because they were younger and their spirits considered weaker. Once the mi kulkul, whitish appearance of a newborn, had disappeared and the baby's skin become noticeably darker, any male could be around the child.

As an extra precaution against possibly contaminating a man through the mi kawa, a woman could not carry sweet potatoes in a net bag near the child. The potatoes were carried instead in a bag in her hands in front of her, with the child in a net bag on her back. After three to six months, however, she would reverse the arrangement carrying the child in front and the potatoes behind her.

Fathers today still do not show much of an interest in their infant children either by giving affection to or talking about them. Women contend that the men are this way because they consider the care of infants to be woman's work. But in fact, the men seem to be even embarrassed if the subject is broached. Considering the taboos of the past, it is perhaps not surprising that this kind of social response should persist. In a general way, it was felt that calling special attention to a new child in any way could result in the spirits noticing it or singling it out for attack.

Nowadays, after the placenta is delivered and the cord cut, the women wipe some of the excess blood and vernix off with leaves or a cloth, make sure the child is breathing and then lay it on a net bag, cloth, or leaves to dry off. It is believed that should the baby stay wet, it may become sickly and die.
There is considerable variation in bathing practices for newborns. Many are never bathed; others, particularly those whose mothers have had more outside contact, are bathed almost daily beginning a few days after birth. Newborns are usually bathed in the village rather than in the cold river. Some mothers heat water in cans, dipping it out with their hands to wash the child’s body.

Not long after birth, one of the women present holds the baby in her lap and applies slight pressure, gently kneads the head with an upward motion. The purpose of this action is to hasten the bones growing together at the fontanel.

Feeding. An infant is not nursed by its mother until her breast milk comes in. The colostrum is considered unhealthy for the child, so in the interim period one or more older women may nurse the child. Thereafter, nursing is understood to mean that milk is used as one of the primary ways of comforting a crying child. If a mother becomes pregnant, she stops nursing her youngest child. It is rare for a child not to be weaned before the next is born. In the past, sexual relations were not resumed until the child was able to chew and swallow food on its own.

The first taste of solid food that a baby had in the past is sometimes given today is tara (am). Long ago when Doway first created the world, it is said that a woman had a crying child who could not be comforted. She tried giving it breast milk but it refused and kept on crying. So she took a bit of tara, chewed it up and gave it to the child. This succeeded in quieting the child and Ketengban mothers have done so ever since.

There is a second and perhaps a more substantial reason in the eyes of the Ketengban, for giving tara to newborns. The spirits, it seems, were always on the lookout for people who had become sick and stopped eating. In this weakened condition they were considered ‘ripe’ for the spirits to eat their hearts or souls. If a newborn was only getting breast milk and the spirits did not see any residue of tara inside the lower-end of the child’s intestines, they would regard the baby as they did sick people who were not eating. Therefore, the mother may nurse the child, therefore the oral medium for the child, so long as the taste or essence then go into the end of the intestine to be seen by the spirits. Seeing this substance the spirits would think, “They want to keep this child. This one is not for me to have,” and would leave the child alone. Again this practice has its roots in the mythology as described earlier.

Frettfulness, Crying. The cause of fretful, crying babies is often traditionally associated with harrassment by spirits. One of these spirits was Kinoadapakor Ner, a female spirit who would take the form of a type of owl, described as having a wide ‘frog mouth.’ She would come to the house flapping her wings to startle the baby, causing it to cry. Crying until the child was tired and would eventually choke and die. To combat this the mother would take a piece of ba co and waving it around at the ceiling, she would throw it up to punch a hole in the roof and fly out. As she was doing this she would repeat the spell, “I am breaking your wings. I am making you weak.” By performing this action she was removing the spirit useless and thereby ending the harrassment. By forcibly propelling the stick out of the house, she was by associative magic expelling the invisible owl; in essence, exorcising the spirit from the house.

Another cause for excessive crying could be remedied by offering the offending spirit pork to eat. The cheek of a freshly killed pig was placed in the house on the edge of the small wood-drying platform over the fire facing the door. In this way the spirit could see the pork from the front door and be enticed into eating this instead of bothering the baby. The cheek of the pig is important because this is the spot on which the great cultural hero Umbo was thought to have marked his own pigs with red clay as a sign of ownership. The sacrifice of the pig jowl venerates him, recalls his presence and entreats his power to expel the threatening female spirit, who is ultimately under his authority.

Care of the Mother

During the time that the woman stayed in the birthing house, she subsisted on food that she or her husband had brought there prior to her entering it. He could also bring food, firewood and more leaves for her to sit on after the delivery. Standing at a distance from the house, he would lay the items down, call to her and then leave. When he was gone, his wife could come and retrieve the things. An attending woman melimina nerepe, if there was one, could also provide what was needed.

Today, as in the past, the melimina nerepe, assist in caring for the postpartum woman for the first several days until she is able to get around by herself. They dispose of the leaves she has been sitting on and the ones the baby has defecated on and keep her supplied with fresh ones. They also bring her water, food, and firewood. This, in fact, what happens in most cases. However, if she happens to have either no relatives or very few relatives living in her village, she may get very little assistance of this kind. Her husband may bring her some of these things, but in this case the food is usually meager since men are not the gardeners.

Foods. There are several foods that are considered good to eat after giving birth, mostly those that are felt to be soft and tasty and easy on the stomach. Some of them are traditionally eaten by women at this time, although in questioning women about this, they do not feel any compulsion to continue this tradition. A few of these are gwei am (see gwei am in section on Reincorporation) and tollope, two types of jungle greens, and kekere, a type of wild raspberry. Whereas two types of suggarana were eaten in the past to aid in bringing in the mother’s milk supply, papaya is now the preferred food. After these initial foods, sweet potatoes, bananas, manioc and whatever other staple foods that appeal to her at the time are eaten. In the Ketengban woman’s opinion, it is important for her to eat in order to fill up the now empty space where the baby was. In actual fact, from what I’ve observed, women eat nearly anything that is brought if it tastes good to them. Some women are well-cared for and others have very little to eat. This is a reflection in part of how good a network of kinsmen and mutual obligations the woman has operating nearby.

Me tu tanyena ritual. As mentioned earlier, there was in times past an obligatory abstinence from water for the first few days after the birth. Mothers who had given birth to a male child got their first taste of water on the third day and those who gave birth to a female child on the fourth day. The difference was attributed to the fact that the spirits of males were considered to be stronger than those of females and could therefore handle water better. This first drink was given by a man from a specific type of gourd, called buku mau. This recalls Ketengban mythology which says that from the beginning, all the waters were stored by Doway in a buku mau at Limgonai mountain, the center of creation. Rain was thought to be the result of this gourd being tipped over on the different mountain tops. Small streams and rivers were from small holes or the overflow from the gourd. In as the men gave the water they repeated within the woman’s hearing, ‘Mukup, dopono, kwakwa,’ which means, “I am diverting the waters of the Mukupe and the Doponge Rivers.” These two rivers are the main ones flowing off the mountain top where one of the main yora ceremonial houses was built. This was built only so for the benefit of the woman hearing it. The actual spell was said under the man’s breath or in his mind. For the woman to hear these taboo words would have resulted in great calamity.

REINCORPORATION

Traditionally, the day following the breaking of this water fast, the mother returned with her child to her house in the village. Before she came, the mam neng, ritual specialists, performed a ritual near the door of the house. The scent gland of a cuscus was rubbed on a rock, which in turn was placed upside down on the ground on top of the scent gland in front of the doorway to the house. This was done as a divinationary measure against the female spirits, Kittenga Ner and Yami Ner, who might try to steal the spirit of the child. Thus, if the spirit approached the house and caught the scent of the cuscus, she would think it had been killed for her, eat that and leave the child alone. The significance of the rock being turned over was to buban dengdongona ‘shut the door,’ metaphorically, of the rotten, hollow trees through which these kinds of spirits characteristically entered the world of men. These hollow trees formed a sort of underground tunnel transit system through which powerful spirits traveled about the land. A certain type of tree nut was also placed under this rock in hopes of preventing the child from experiencing an early death; for just as the tree nut falls quickly to the ground, the child could die before reaching old age. Two pieces of ba co were also important in the ritual. One was placed alongside the climbing pole leading from the ground to the house and remained there for some time afterwards. The second piece was stuck in the ground on top of
the rock with the scent gland and nut under it. This one could be taken out soon. As the woman entered the house, she had to touch or grasp the piece stuck in the ground and step on the other placed alongside the pole ladder lest the precautions taken earlier fail to be effective.

In addition, if the child was a male, a type of taro, called kwa am yel was planted nearby. This particular species always produces at least two tubers, which are branched into two joined tubers instead of a single root. It was thought that to plant this type of taro would ensure more male children being born to the mother, if the child was a female a gweir am was planted. This plant resembles a taro plant but produces no tubers so it symbolized the hope that no more female children would be born. It is said to have grown plentifully in Dalibalal, the river area where the cultural hero, Umbo, told women to dwell. Thus, the leaves of it have long been considered a staple for women. Dayyanak Ner, the female spirit originating from this place also had a great liking for this plant. By planting it near the house of a newborn female child, it was thought that she would eat the plant leaves instead of eating or taking away the spirit of the baby.

Me Pona

From the time of a baby’s birth until about six months of age, precautions were taken to ward off attacks by three specific types of spirits. This was effected by the use of leaf bundles called me pona. These bundles could be prepared by either men or women but were more commonly made by the woman’s husband, by her melimna nerepe, or even later by the woman herself. If the husband prepared the bundles for her before she left the birthing house, he would either give them to another woman to give to his wife or he would stand at a distance from the house, toss it near the door, call to his wife and then leave. This distance was maintained to avoid any possible contact with blood or secretions from the birthing process.

The bundles consisted of any of the following types of leaves, all of which were considered to have a strong, pleasant smell: kekkel bo, golum bo, kulambaro bo, nor bo, and warup bo. The main function of the leaves was to camouflage the baby’s scent with their own smell, thus preventing the spirits from picking up and following the child’s trail in order to steal its soul or ‘eat’ it. These bundles were placed on mountain tops, river banks, densely wooded areas and any other places that spirits were known to inhabit. This ritual was a daily occurrence that was repeated any time the mother ventured outside of the immediate village area. After putting the bundle on the ground, she would step on it first before proceeding down the trail or crossing the river. In the instance of placing me pona bundles on a river bank, the regular creatures living in the water like frogs, tadpoles, bugs, eels and the like were thought to be looking for things like mi kawa (see the section on mi kawa) to come to them to eat. The smell from the leaves would drive them away, thus preventing them from taking any mi kawa which might fall into the water there into areas where the spirits lived, thus inciting them to follow the scent and cause the child’s death.

The three types of jungle-dwelling spirits who are thought to steal a child’s soul are:
1. Gup-gup Ngo - who pick up a person’s scent and follow them,
2. Epu Ngo - who see the person,
3. Co Yapre Ng - who do not cause the baby to become suddenly ill and die, but prevent it from thriving and therefore it eventually dies while still an infant.

Return to Daily Routine

Finally, the mother goes to the river to bathe after the heaviest bleeding has slowed and she feels strong enough to get around. Bathing usually takes place around the second day, but may not be until a week or more after the birth. She usually resumes her daily routine of gardening and caring for the pigs by the fourth or fifth day after giving birth, taking her newborn with her in a net bag wherever she goes.

CONCLUSION

Thus I have attempted to show how Ketengban pregnancy and childbirth practices are rooted in their mythology and reflect their world view.
References


Being an Mpur Woman: First Menstruation through Infant Care

Carol J. Kalmbach

Orang-orang Mpur adalah sebagian di antara kelompok suku-suku yang terdapat di daerah "Kepala Burung" Irian Jaya yang menggunakan kain tenunannya yang antiik "kain timur" sebagai bagian dari "maher" atau "mas kawin mereka". Kain timur dan perlengkapan mas kawin yang lain membantu mengimbangi sanak keluarga dari wanita yang tidak lagi bekerja bagi kelebarganya dan terutama akan kahilangan anak-anaknya yang akan menjadi bagian dalam keluarga suaminya. Oleh karena masalah ekonomi menyenggalkan dalam tukar menukar mas kawin, maka orang Mpur yang berasal patrilineal seusanggihnya lebih berkeinginan beranak wanita daripada pria. Adat dan kepercayaan mengenai perkawinan, kehamilan, dan masa meraawat anak telah mengalami banyak perubahan sejak 50 tahun terakhir, dan keadaan yang laju serta keadaan yang masih bertahan sampai sekarang membuatkan suatu pandangan sekilas tentang pandangan dunia orang-orang Mpur.

Introduction

The Mpur people are among the groups in "the bird's head" region of Irian Jaya who use antique handwoven pieces of cloth called kain timur, as part of their "brideprice" or "bridewealth". Kain timur and the other items of bridewealth help compensate a woman's kin group for the loss of her labor and especially for the loss of her children, who will become part of her husband's kin group. Because of the economics involved in the bridewealth exchange, the patrilineal Mpur actually desire female children more than male children. Customs and beliefs concerning marriage, pregnancy and childbirth have undergone many changes during the past 50 years, and both those of the past along with those which have endured to the present provide a glimpse of the Mpur worldview.

Background

The approximately 5000 Mpur speakers live in the Amberbaken and Kebar areas of the Manokwari Administrative District of the province of Irian Jaya in Indonesia. About half of them live in the Amberbaken area along the north coast of the Bird's Head, and the other half live over the mountain ranges to the south (two days' walk away) in the Kebar valley. The Mpur language is a stock level isolate of the West Papuan phylum. It has previously been known in the literature by the names Amberbaken (Voorhoeve 1973) and Kebar (Kalmbach I983 unpublished). My research was done in Anjai, located in the center of the Kebar valley. Many families in Anjai have relatives on the coast whom they visit frequently.

Elevations in the Kebar valley are in the range of approximately 600 meters. Temperatures vary from the upper 20°C to 32°C mid-day. The people are horticulturists whose main crops are cassava, types of taro, sweet potatoes, various green leafy vegetables, various types of bananas, and peanuts, their cash crop which they export from the area in large quantities.

Mpur houses are constructed mainly of bamboo for both walls and floors. Sago palm thatch is used for roofing, but more and more people are acquiring corrugated metal for roofing. The largest village in the Kebar valley is Anjai. The village proper (not including the government post and its residents) is made up of 56 residences and over 300 people. The Mpur follow patrilineal descent and practice patrilocal residency. They are divided into two major groups by dialect. One group, called Aciw lives mostly in the Kebar valley, and the other, considered more prestigious is called Sinir and dwell mostly on the coast. These are divided into clans or families, each having a family name. Girls marry outside their clan and often outside the language group.
According to Miedema (1984:23) the Dutch built their first post in Anjai in 1937. The present villagers only remember that the Dutch first came by foot from Sackooro on the coast a long time ago. The first Christian evangelist to go to the men came from Biak to a village in the eastern part of the area on December 12, 1947, and in 1948 Derek Prawer, another evangelist with the Dutch Reformed Church, came to Anjai. They also remembered that a man by the name of de Jong came in 1951 to arrange for work on the airstrip. The Dutch Forestry Post was located near the village until the Dutch left West New Guinea in 1963, also when the Mpur had their first contact with the Indonesian government.

In the research process of making a village map and taking a census in Anjai, I found that there were 50 women residing here who have born children. Only one married woman was considered barren. As of January 1989, when that census was done, the average number of births per woman was 4.36 (with a range of 1 to 13), and the average number of living children was 3.3 (with a range of 0-8). Most deaths occurred before the age of five. (Out of 218 live births, 54 of the children died, which constitutes a mortality rate of 25%.) In 1989 an immunization program was initiated in Anjai. Presumably this will lower the death rate since many deaths were due to measles and whooping cough.

My husband and I first came to Anjai in 1982. Data for this paper was acquired through texts collected orally from Mpur people, a questionnaire made up from material from those texts, and my own observation. I interviewed an equal number of older, middle aged and younger mothers. Since most women do not know their ages, I had to refer to major events like, "Were you born before or after the first evangelist arrived?" Also all information was gathered in the Mpur language. My husband talked to men to get a sample of their current opinion on subjects such as menstrual blood and childbirth.

**Menstruation**

An Mpur woman related the following account of how a girl went through her first menstruation (kasin) in the time period before the first evangelist arrived and told the people to refrain from this practice.

"We who live here, when we had our first menstruation, we stayed in a shelter outside the village. They didn't call us by our name but by the name neko/noon (child of red earth). We were given a tea made out of tree bark. Then we were forbidden to eat almost everything. We could only eat cassava and bananas. We could eat no pork. We stayed out there in the shelter for a long time—one, two, or three months. Then when we were allowed to enter the village again, we bathed, washed our dirty clothes, and were dressed up in traditional clothes consisting of long strings of beads and arm bands. Then we came back to the village. We could eat what we wished. That was in the old days. When the Gospel came we had no more food taboos during first menstruation and we stayed in our homes. That is how it is now.”

Two older women also recalled their first menstruation. It was after the time the Dutch had set up a post and before the first evangelist arrived, that is, in the 1940’s. They said they stayed out in the forest two to three months. One remembered some food taboos, especially pork and pineapple, but the other did not. They both remembered drinking the bark tea. The traditional dress in which they returned to the village was made of bark cloth with long strings of beads worn criss-crossing their torso. In subsequent periods of menstruation and for childbirth, these women also reported going to a little shelter outside the village for each of their menstrual periods and childbirth.

Another older woman experienced her first menstruation shortly after the first evangelist arrived. She was not obliged to go out in the forest, however, the evangelist had told the people that the practice was wrong. As it turned out, she later became the wife of the same evangelist.

Girls experience their first menstruation at about age sixteen. Now, only family members are aware of it. The girl is secluded in her own home and at some time her parents and/or maternal uncle give her a tea made from a type of tree bark called nitek jarukem. The purpose of the drink is so that she will not have heavy or excessive bleeding during her successive menstrual periods. Some still do not eat pork, deer meat, ground kangeko, and a type of rodent called kirir for two or three months. During her first period she is allowed to go to the river to bathe, but does not go to the garden.

For subsequent menstrual periods women no longer go out to the little shelters. Even so, when people refer to one having a period they still say, metaphorically, ncapye (she sits outside). Another common term for menstruation is e wot man (to see the moon/month). Nowadays, some follow no food taboos, while others continue to refrain from eating pork until the bleeding stops. Most stay at home, going out only to bathe. They do not go to their gardens, feeling that if they do so at this time, the pigs will come and eat up their crops. Some women, however, are also beginning to ignore this taboo.

**Marriage and Divorce**

Jelle Miedema, in his book De Kebar, has documented the inter- and intratribal relationships brought about by marriages, especially the trade in kain timur, a very important part of the bride price. Until recently the Jagoans used this kind of marriage, this was a second marriage. At present, however, more and more young people are choosing their own spouses. Even so, the young man still does so through his parents, who approach the parents of the girl to come to an agreement regarding brideprice. The brideprice displays that we have observed in Anjai typically include three to five pieces of kain timur; bolts of new cloth, including both multicolored prints and plain red (used for loincloths in isolated areas); both old and new dishes; arm bands made from shells; long strings of beads; and cash. These items of traditional wealth are laid out on mats for all to observe and to be counted by both parties. A piece of bamboo is laid beside each item, and all such pieces are collected in a bundle (kra) at the end of the exchange as a “receipt” for the groom’s family. Some grooms now, however, are using a notebook.

Concerning the appropriate age for marriage, older women said that a girl may marry before her first menstrual period, and that this was not unusual for their generation. They felt a girl was old enough if she had a cleavage between her breasts. Younger women, on the other hand, now say that a girl marries sometime after her first menstruation, but never before.

Ideally a couple should not live together until after the full brideprice is paid. In reality most couples are allowed to live together after a part is paid. There are many living in Anjai who have been married more than 10 years with part of the brideprice still unpaid.

Several couples whom I know have had children before any of the brideprice was paid and before living together. In these cases, when they did begin living together it was with or in the vicinity of, the bride’s family, where compensating service such as helping out in the gardens was rendered by the young husband.

Once the bride price is paid, the couple is free to go live in the husband’s village, or if they are from the same village, to the area of the village from which the husband comes. The wife always retains her maiden (family) name. Sometimes now, at church, she may be referred to by both her maiden and married names, e.g., Amanda Ajo-Asetone, where Ajo is her maiden name and Asetone her husband’s family name. The children take the father’s family name.

Out of 75 women of marriageable age and above in Anjai, five are divorcees and 17 are widows. Conversely, for men there are four widowers who have not remarried. There are also three divorced men, one living alone and two who have remarried. (There may, however, be more divorced men who have remarried of whom I am not aware.) Divorced and widowed women return to live with their parents or brothers and work in their gardens.

A man may divorce his wife, a woman may divorce her husband, or the divorce can be by mutual consent. If a man divorces his wife, he loses because he gets no brideprice back. If a man wants to marry another woman, he typically divorces his first wife; this is the main reason for divorce in Anjai. (The men say that there is no peace if there are two wives.) A woman can divorce her husband, but she, too, loses for usually her husband has to pay her a brideprice. In September 1989 Nerce divorced her husband Lambert but because this was a second marriage for both of them her family had not insisted on brideprice being paid, so it could not be paid back. (It appears that this is optional for a second marriage.) If a couple mutually agrees to divorce, however, there is no payback of brideprice—a type of “no fault” situation.
Domestic disputes can become fairly violent. In general it is the man who beats his wife, and usually this occurs after he has drunk palm wine—but not all women take it passively. Our neighbor, for instance, once hit her husband over the head with a plank of wood, which immobilized him for about three weeks. Wife beating, however, is not generally given as a reason for divorce since it is fairly common, so much so that I was given the names of all the men in the village who do not beat their wives.

There are five Mpur terms for sexual intercourse. The five terms are ranked from very rude to polite in this order: docobem, dobinayem, domakbrayem, domukriyen, and dodokayem. All can be used to describe sexual relations between a man and wife, although the most polite one would usually be used. The less polite ones are used to refer to premarital sex and adultery. When sexual infractions are discovered, those involved are closely related to those of a brideprice. If a man has seduced another man's wife and he is considered the initiator, he must make a payment to her husband. If both participants are at fault, then the man makes a payment to the woman's husband, and she to the man's wife. The culmination of reparations is a ceremony called de swamp parkara. During my time in Anjai I have only witnessed and recorded one instance in which the man made the payment. We observed a de swamp parkara in 1994, which came about as follows:

In July 1984 A. Areks was angry at P. Ajoice because P. had seduced A's wife. P. had to pay a fine. The day of the event the Ajo family danced through the village with a pig tied to a pole. P.'s family gave A's family a pig, cerbom and teba (types of kain timur), and arambus. Then the men of the two families danced, the Areks men on one side of a bamboo pole held by two men, and the Ajo men on the other side. The pole is called nan beliw or taboo bamboo. A man chosen by the Areks family chopped the bamboo through the middle. The pig was then shot with a bow and arrow. (I was later told that the pig is a symbol of how the guilty man should have been killed.) Finally, the two families shook hands and danced together, for now they were at peace.

Marital conflict can have other serious consequences. Mpur women for example, often commit suicide to take revenge on their husbands. This is how one woman describes it:

"I am talking about women in the Bird's Head who eat a poisonous root called akar boro in Indonesian, and in Mpur sumut. If we women in the Bird's Head are married and our husbands are mad at us, then we go and eat sumut. After we have eaten it and die, our brothers, fathers, mothers, and sisters will make our husbands pay a lot of kain timur. They make them pay cerbom and teba, which are two kinds of kain timur, and a pig. So if our husbands are angry with us, we go and eat sumut so our husbands will have to pay."

I know of two incidents of women taking poison. In the first, a woman across the valley committed adultery. When her husband got angry with her, she took poison and killed herself. In the second case, a woman was angry with one of her sons who was living with and wanting to marry a woman from the neighboring Meyah language group. Since this woman's family was suspected of killing an Mpur person and making two others seriously ill by sorcery, the mother took poison to protest the marriage, though apparently not enough to cause death since she did not actually die.

Pregnancy

Mpur women all agree that pregnancy is a result of a sexual relationship with a man. Some realize that they are pregnant when they cease menstruating, others do not recognize it until their abdomen expands and they feel movement.

In regard to methods of determining the due date for birth, there was no consensus. Each woman I interviewed answered differently, although they generally counted the months either from the last period or from when they felt the baby move. They said they counted from three to nine months. I have observed, however, that they often do not know how old their babies are, e.g., calling a 6-8 month old only one month old, so it would follow that they also do not pay serious attention to the number of months in a pregnancy.

When a woman is pregnant, she is not allowed to eat the fish menap (Indonesian: ikan kabus, a type of pike fish), a large type of cooking banana, the cheeks of a pig, catfish, and cassowary and hombili (the latter two are taboo for all females at all times). Not all women, however, follow all the taboos; some, for example, only avoid the pig and cassowary. They feel that if they eat cassowary they will have a difficult labor, retained placenta, and a sick infant. The husband in most cases also refrains from eating the cheeks of the pig, for fear he will not have success in hunting wild pigs. They refrain from intercourse once the wife's abdomen begins to enlarge.

At all times women fear they will become bald if they eat hombili or cassowary. The cassowary feathers are used, however, in a type of ritual for healing. Karen women, who live to the west, do, by contrast, eat the cassowary, and according to Miedema (1984:178) Mpur women who eat cassowary will pregnant will have children particularly susceptible to witchcraft by the Karen.

When miscarriages occur, the main reason given by the Mpur is that the woman was working too hard or carrying too heavy a load. If the fetus is complete, it is buried in a coffin. If the miscarriage occurs early in pregnancy, the blood clots, etc., are simply washed away in the river or buried.

When asked about methods of contraception, many Mpur women wondered why anyone would want to prevent conception, since they feel children are a blessing. Some, however, said they drank a type of bark tea to prevent conception. This tea is made from a different bark (nicek banonjan) than that used at first menstruation (nicek jarukum). A friend who used it still got pregnant, however, and there is no specific regimen on how to take it. Others said that once pregnant a woman may try to induce abortion by working extra hard or by putting pressure on her stomach. Some say a woman may also eat green pineapple to bring about a miscarriage, although I know of no one who has tried this. As to modern medical techniques, women are afraid to use the injectable contraceptive (Depo Provera) that the local clinic offers. With that medicine the woman may seldom have a period, which means to her that her "blood turns to stone" in her womb. Miedema (1994:179), further, refers to a plant called uafu. He was told it was used to prevent pregnancy and only needed to be planted in the garden to be effective. The women I talked to were, however, unaware of such a plant.

One woman in the village is barren. Most of the women I interviewed do not have any explanation for her barrenness. One woman explained this particular woman's barrenness as due to the fact that her brideprice had never been paid.

Concerning medicinal remedies for barrenness, the Mpur make use of a small plant that grows abundantly on the Kebar plain, it is called nan bongum in Mpur and daun Kebar in Indonesian. It is considered to have properties useful in enhancing fertility for both men and women. It can be drunk as a tea, cooked in vegetables, and even fed to dogs, cows, or pigs. Some say that it can be self-administered, but others claim that it is proper to give it secretly to someone else with appropriate words whispered over it.

Childbirth

In answer to my questions about childbirth, both in the past and at present, an Mpur friend summed matters up as follows:

"This is about having babies. When we are in labor only our true relatives sit with us, no other people. That is, our sister or mother or aunt. In the old days no one else went with the woman in labor because they were afraid of the blood. They were afraid of getting pneumonia from it; it was taboo. Therefore, no other people went with us except our true relatives. They came to help us and the baby, to cut the cord, to take care of the placenta and all the necessary things. Other people were afraid of the blood. Our husbands didn't come with us as they too were afraid of getting pneumonia or a heavy body (i.e., becoming susceptible to accident, being gored by a pig, etc.). For them to come with us was to invite trouble. But now when we have a baby, our relatives or anyone can accompany us, can cut the cord, or take care of the placenta. They are not afraid of the blood. Because the Gospel came, they are not afraid of getting pneumonia. God says we have to help one another, we must love our neighbor as we love ourselves. In the old
days it was different. Our husbands didn’t sleep with us. They were afraid of pneumonia and heavy bodies. But now once the cord falls off the infant, they sleep with us.”

Childbirth normally takes place in the home. It may also take place in the gardens. Though some women give birth alone, most have several women around them, often including their mothers if they are living. Husbands also may witness the birth, but no other men or children are allowed to watch. Traditionally there were no midwives or women in the village whose specific role was to help with births. At present one woman has had some training by a health worker and is sometimes called upon to help.

About the only preparation a woman makes for the upcoming birth is to make a small birthing mat for the baby. Otherwise they use any mat in the house (ideally a new one about half a meter square). When in labor, the woman generally bears the contractions quietly. (I was told that two women in the village scream during contractions, but that this is unusual.) As contractions occur in closer intervals, the woman will hold tightly to a cord suspended from a beam and squat or kneel above the mat. If other women are there, they will assist by supporting her from behind. There is a phrase de’ek took, which refers to a procedure used by some older women to help the baby come down. The woman in labor is bathed, and with her hands the older woman massages the abdomen, both lifting and pushing.

Once the child is delivered, it is placed on the new mat and they wait for the placenta (tokum, lit. ‘baby’s sibling’) to be delivered. The cord is not cut until the placenta is delivered, even if delayed up to a day. The cord is not usually tied off (though the woman trained by a government health worker does it) and, although scissors or a razor blade may be used, normally the umbilical cord is cut with a piece of bamboo.

Jelie Miedema (1984:178) was told, in fact, that a specific kind of bamboo called tuf in Indonesian and nan in Mpur had to be used. However, women use any kind of bamboo and were surprised to hear that in the past it had to be a specific type. The sex of the child determines how the cord is cut. The cord is measured to the knee of the infant, and if it is a girl the bamboo knife cuts from above down through the cord. If it is a boy the bamboo cuts up through the cord. This is because the girl will need to cook and often looks down, and a boy shoots birds and needs to look up. The infant is not tucked, covered, or fed until the placenta is delivered. It just lays on the mat. If the placenta is retained longer than a day, they then cut the cord anyway, but until it is cut the baby lies unattended, and uncovered.

The husband or a woman attendant buries the placenta and afterbirth. It is wrapped in a cloth or piece of plastic or put in a can, and may be buried in the kitchen if the kitchen is not on pilings but on the ground or anywhere outside if the kitchen is on pilings.

Immediately after the cord is cut, the baby and mother are bathed. The child is wrapped in cloth. Older mothers wait about 12 hours before offering the child the breast. Younger women will offer it earlier if the child cries. The mother and child stay in their home on the bed platform for about four or five days or until the umbilical cord drops off (Mpur women say a girl’s cord falls off more quickly than a boy’s). Then when the woman’s postpartum bleeding ceases a few days later, she resumes normal duties and goes about the village. This is referred to as de to jaan or “they enter or go up into the house/village”. Even though customs have changed, lexical terms surrounding this event relate to the former custom of the birth taking place outside of the home and the village.

There is now no special ritual or manner in which the mother and child leave the house for the first time. Miedema (1984:178-9) was told that when the mother and baby left the birthing shelter, the child had to face outwards so it would not get ill. If it was a girl, the mother had to leave the shelter holding the baby in one arm and weeding with the other so the girl would be very diligent in the garden. If it was a boy, she had to hold a machete or bow so that he knew what he would be expected of him.

I was unable to get data on postpartum depression. When I tried to describe it, the women could not figure out why a woman would cry a few days after the delivery, although they could understand that a woman might cry during childbirth.

Miedema (1984:179) reports that twins were seen as a sign that the woman had committed adultery. The last born would be killed; unless the first was a boy and the second a girl; then the first born would be killed, because girls bring in the wealth at marriage. At present there are two sets of twins in Anjai, twin girls about six years old and a boy and girl born in June of 1989. When asked whether this was good or bad, most felt that twins in general were good; it just meant more work for the mother. However, because twins are smaller than single births, they might not survive. None of the women interviewed knew what caused twins to be conceived.

The term for stillbirth is toon mbra. Most women do not know why this happens. One thought it was because the mother worked too hard, the same reason as for miscarriages.

Infant Care

In 1985 I asked a woman to give me advice on infant care. This is what she said:

“The women here in Anjai, if we have a baby, we do not eat a rat called kotoo and do not go out at night. If we eat kotoo, then the child will have pneumonia and will have seizures (or be demon possessed). If we go out at night, a kind of bird called wangkot will take the child’s spirit or shadow. We do not eat a fish called menap. If we eat menap, the child will have shaking chills. We don’t eat catfish, because he will get shaking chills. So when we have a baby we have these taboos and don’t eat these things. If we do not watch what we eat and eat something taboo, the baby will always be sick and will die. We do not eat the leaves of a certain tree called pusera (Indonesian: sayur genemu). We do not eat catfish because the child will get sick.”

Ideally, as noted earlier, the child is nursed first about 12 hours after birth, although younger mothers nurse the baby earlier if he cries and seems hungry. A mother’s milk normally comes in the second day, or third if it is a first child. Mpur women say putting the child to the breast encourages the milk to come in faster. If it seems the milk is not coming in, charcoal made from burning sago leaves is rubbed around the nipple, and the breasts are massaged with hot water. The sticky substance inside the sweet potato skin is also sometimes rubbed around the nipple.

Most mothers still follow food taboos while breastfeeding. Prohibited items are two types of rodents called kotoo and keril, and the fish menap. Young children are not allowed to eat these things either. Mothers leave their infants with other nursing mothers when they go to the river to wash clothes or go to the garden for a short trip. Mothers only hesitate to let others nurse their babies if they do not follow the same food taboos.

The baby is started on solids about the time he has his first tooth. The mother can then leave the baby with his grandmother or aunt if she goes to the garden. Infants are carried in a sarong almost all the time. If not the mother, then the sister, brother, grandmother, aunt, or father carries him. Children do not start walking earlier than 18 months, but by two years they are pretty steady on their feet.

A child is generally weaned when the mother is pregnant with another child or between the ages of two and three. A few mothers continue to nurse the first child through pregnancy and tandem feed both children after the birth of the new baby, but they feel that if a child breastfeeds too long he will be weak and sickly. Weaning begins when the mother goes off to the garden for longer and longer periods of time. She then makes several overnight trips to the garden, leaving the child with the father and older children. Some women rub chilli pepper around the nipples of their breasts so that the child will not like the taste. After a weaning period one woman said, “My daughter doesn’t sleep with me anymore. She sleeps with her father in a different room.” That meant that the child was fully weaned.
Endnotes

1. *Kain timur,* literally "eastern cloth" because, even though it came from the west, that is parts of India (Miedema 1984:74), "it was intended as merchandise for the East Indonesian Archipelago, from where for centuries up until World War II, they were imported into the Bird's Head." (Miedema 1985:56)

2. Note this is slightly younger than age 18 which was reported by Malcolm (1970:293-328) as the age of the first menses for Bunda, Chimbu, and Lumi women in the highlands of Papua New Guinea.

3. Lamber’s first wife died and so he took a second wife, Nerce. Nerce had a boy, Dominggus, in her charge, an orphaned nephew. He had seizures often when young and seemed slow mentally. In June 1988 he went hunting with Lamber’s son Derek, who was about 17 years old. When they found a wild pig Derek ran after it, but Dominggus, about 10 years old, could not keep up. Later when Derek went to look for him, he could not be found. A search party was formed, including the local police, but even though they found some tracks, he was never found. Nerce demanded payment from Derek. In September 1989 payment of kain timur and money was made to Nerce’s family. Nerce also divorced Lamber shortly after the incident.

References


Miedema, Jelle. 1984. *De Kebar 1855-1980. Sociale Structuur en religie in de Vogelkop van West-Nieuw-Guinea.* Dordrecht: ICG Printing BV. As *De Kebar* is written in Dutch, I wish to acknowledge the help of Corrie Boer Burung in orally translating large portions of *De Kebar* onto cassette, so that I could use the information already gathered by Jelle Miedema.


CONTROLS OF RED AND WHITE IN THE BAUZI CYCLE OF REPRODUCTION

Joyce Birley

The Bauzi are a group of some 1500 semi-nomadic hunting and gathering people whose territory extends westward from the Mamberamo River to the North coast and as far south as the Lakes Plain Region in Irian Jaya, Indonesia (see map). Bauzi is a non-Austronesian language, classified as belonging to the Geelvink Bay phylum, East Geelvink Bay Stock-Level Family. (Voorhoeve, C. L., 1975:51)

Up until recent years the Bauzi customarily built isolated homesteads along an extensive river system throughout their territory. A portion of the population are still based in these isolated single family shelters; in other areas longhouses are used. During the 1970's and the 1980's, a number of Bauzi grouped together at seven village locations, but continue their semi-nomadic subsistence patterns, using the village as a base of operations and a location for planting bananas, taro, and tapioca — their main staples along with jungle roots and fruits. The Bauzi also harvest sago from the rain forest, though it is not one of their main staples. Men supplement the food supply by hunting wild pigs, kangaroo, cassowary, opossum, and other birds and animals. Fishing also provides a protein source.

INTRODUCTION

Bauzi men are the hunters in a society which expends its greatest effort on hunting and gathering. Men are assisted in hunting by their dogs, which not surprisingly, become very valued possessions. So much so that people mourn the death of a good hunting dog just as they would that of a kinsman. Women, on the other hand, pose a special threat to this entire subsistence enterprise. Specifically, female body fluids present special dangers to men, and to their dogs. Great care is taken, therefore, to prevent contamination from female urine, faeces and particularly menstrual blood.

Symbolically, maleness appears to be linked to the color white (like semen), while being female is associated with the color red (like menstrual blood and the fluids of the birthing process). Plants, animals and natural substances which are either red or white are, further, thought to be of value in rituals and remedies which have to do with conception or contraception, with contamination to men or dogs by females. Red vs. white distinctions turn up again in the context of food restrictions during menstruation, in connection with sexual intercourse, or during pregnancy and childbirth confinement.

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Menstruation House
At the time of a girl’s first menses, her mother is expected to go with her and explain how to care for herself in a separate menstruation house. The girl also learns what to do before returning to the husband’s house once her menses are completed. It is not unusual for a newly married couple to live in close proximity to the wife’s parents not only until the husband has proven himself to be a competent provider for his family, but also until the young wife can handle her marital duties. The menstruation house is generally a small, walled, raised platform with leaf-roofed constructed downstream from the husband’s house in the area of the local latrine, close to the river. Dogs are never allowed to go to this part of the riverbank for fear that they should eat human faeces or ‘become bad’ through contact with the menstrual fluids.

Foods Allowed. While in the menstruation house, women must adhere to all the food taboos associated with being there. Specific foods allowed during this time include:

- tapioca
- bananas
- white sweet potatoes
- cucumbers
- papaya
- the white celery-like stalk at the top of the palm tree
- the root of a jungle vine
- a small jumping redant if it falls into the water
- snakes
- jungle hen it killed with a bow and arrow in opposition to dogs
- buffalo fruit
- a possum-like animal

The Victoria-crowned pigeon to and the Pinon Imperial Pigeon maki are allowed to be eaten whether caught by a dog or shot with bow and arrow.

Foods Taboo. Foods considered to be taboo during the time of menstruation are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOOD</th>
<th>RESULT IF EATEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. bahe (taro), ubo bozola (red sweet potato), kesi (sugarcane)</td>
<td>Pigs will eat all of that food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. doho (pig), bhi o (cassowary), ali lokea (possum), bekmo (lizard), zou (jumping redant)</td>
<td>Dogs become poor hunters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. all water animals, fish, (ama, fuma, fââ zila tan)</td>
<td>The water spirit will commit adultery with Bauzi wives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. gogehe o (bush hen eggs), bhi o (cassowary egg), mok o (lizard egg)</td>
<td>Pigs will eat all the eggs of that species.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Food Preparation. During the time that a woman remains in the menstruation house (from 2 - 10 days on a norm of around 3 - 5 days) she must prepare her own food at a fire in the house. Food is most often brought to her uncooked. If, however, a food such as broadfruit is prepared at her husband’s house, it must be cooked in a fire separate from the one that the husband normally uses. If the husband must bring the food to his wife, he is only allowed to come within approximately 20 feet of the menstruation house leaving the food for her on the ground to be picked up after he leaves. He may talk to his wife but only from a
distance. If the woman needs to get extra food such as the palm celery or breadfruit, she may go find it as long as she wears her loin cloth in such a way as to prevent any menstrual fluids from dropping on to the ground. She must also walk in the edge of the water avoiding contact with the riverbanks. Generally speaking, she is not allowed to eat any animal whose killing involved a dog. Often, foods and animals with red coloring (i.e. resembling blood) are prohibited. Similarly, plants with red coloring are used in ceremonies of magic to remedy curses involving the cycle of reproduction.

Remedy for Menstrual Taboo

Taboo foods may not be eaten on the day that the woman returns to her husband's house. If, for example, she returns from the menstruation house and her husband brings her a pig and he and dog have just caught, the wife must wait until the next day to eat her portion. In the meantime, it is carefully tied up to the rafters so that dogs and other animals cannot get it. The cassowary bihi is considered a much more powerful animal than the pig, however, so upon return from the menstruation house, a woman must avoid that meat for five days. Should she eat either cassowary or pig either accidentally or simply out of hunger, her husband and his dogs will no longer be able to bag those animals in the hunt. There are, however, special rituals that can be performed by the husband and wife to remedy these and other related infractions, e.g.:

1. Vem tau firmam bak 'Dog hairdivining' followed by Ittam bak 'Remedy'

   Vem tau firmam bak: The husband performs a procedure of divination to determine if in fact the curse on the dog was caused by breaking the pig eating taboo after menstruation. He attaches a tuft of hair from the cured dog to the top of a small stick. Takes the stick to a brick wall and, while he is assured that he has divined the cause. If the crab has made actual contact with the hair and then returns to its hole, the man assumes that the pig will hunt well once the 'remedy' firmam bak is carried out.

   Ittam bak: The husband searches for special vines dagil and lo et tilabo which he holds together and rubs across the dog’s teeth as though sharpening them. Following this, he takes a stem from the etu plant and rubs the dog with the etu stem and the two previous vines. While rubbing the dog, the man tells the dog "Se... om dho anadia modo, dema lahi birria modo, om dho etu bimoza. Dihasi woulameam otemma bomehe." Se...Either at the time pig was eaten, or at the time a man had intercourse with his wife, you became cursed and could not hunt well. Tomorrow when you are taken out, hunt well." The etu stem then tied to the house rafters, and the next day the dog is expected to perform its hunting duties well.

2. Vem nigate/nigute loom bak

   This procedure is performed only by women under her husband's direct request. The wife may use either lekes 'a possum-like animal, kohu 'breedless' or mel 'sego pudding' in its cooked state. After speaking whisper talk aha dax directly onto the food, she gives a portion of the food to the offended dog to eat. The wife then opens the dog’s mouth and spits/blows into it, and then blows onto the anus of the dog. In this way, the dog's ability to hunt pig is restored.

3. Vem ket ohum bak

   In the case where a dog has licked menstrual blood or blood incurred during a delivery, and thereby lost its hunting ability, either the owner or his wife can perform a ritual to remedy the situation. After the woman informs her husband that the dog had indeed consumed menstrual blood at the menstruation house, the procedure begins with obtaining an etu leaf. After a palm fruit is extracted from the tree, he cuts the stem rocks and drops them into the water. The dog is then given a stick to stir the water causing it to steam. First, the dog is held over the water with her heart close to the vapor allowing the dog to breathe in the steam. Then it is completely immersed in the steam. Finally, after some of the water is sprinkled over the dog, and he is given some to drink, the owner rubs the etu leaf on the dog. When related by a woman, this procedure follows a slight variation. That

   is, at the time that she next enters the menstruation house, she may scrape some of the dried blood from the mat where she usually sits and place it into a palm bark basket. Filling the basket with water, he heats rocks and drops them into the water causing the water to bubble and the blood flecks to disintegrate. Then the dog is placed into the water and held against the dog's chest in the vicinity of the heart. When the water cools slightly, it is poured over the entire dog, chest in the vacant of the dog. Finally, the dog is thrown into the river and thereby renewed in its ability to catch game. This, and the next procedure are the only times, as far as the author is aware, that menstrual blood is used to effect a cure.

4. This procedure, although there is no specific name, involves a woman inserting scrapings of dried blood from the menstruation house into cooked tapioca root or a sweet potato-like jungle root. She then gives the food to the offended dog, and upon consumption, the dog is expected to hunt well even as early as the following day.

5. Koba vem no edem bak 'Magic shell sharpening of dog’s teeth'

   The owner of a contaminated hunting dog takes a magically ended petrified shell koba and opens the dog's mouth. He then draws the shell across each tooth as though sharpening them and says koba mo lele... (pig sound)..., koba otele... (cassowary sound) become stronger quickly (pig sound)...koba cassowary... (cassowary sound). After one of these rituals has been carried out, the next time that the dog catches either cassowary or pig, the woman and children are not allowed to eat certain parts of them. Prohibited portions are the lower legs and feet, the head and neck, the tail and surrounding buttocks, and in the case of the cassowary, the colored parts found on the neck. Only the man and his dogs or the adult male ritual specialist koba momos are allowed to eat any of these parts.

Preventative Measures

A woman is never allowed to go to the gardens during her menses. If the fluids should get on the produce, it is feared that pigs will come and eat the food, leaving the family to go hungry. To help occupy the woman, or to help keep her occupied until she can get her period over and go on hunting, a menstruating woman typically weaves string bags or, as mentioned above, goes hunting under her temporary hut but are mixed with ashes by the woman when her menses are completed so that the jungle animals will not come and eat any of it. They should do so, the water spirit bohe bass will come and try to have sexual relations with her. As a precaution, they do it under a log or some brush out of reach of any potential enemies.

SEXUAL RELATIONS

Along with the taboos of menstruation, there are also prohibitions concerning sexual relations kumbak fihambak. A woman typically preadolescent at marriage, learns about sex from her husband. The man himself learns either from his father or his peers. It is generally the man who initiates intercourse. Normally, a man and his wife have intercourse every 4-5 days except during her menses as described above. When longhouses were prohibited, and the men and women slept separately, it was more the norm for the couple to perform the sexual act. When children are with them in the rain forest or garden areas, they are not instructed to play in a specified area until the parents return from a spot further away. In case a man has two wives, he is expected to give equal attention to them both to prevent jealousy.
Food Taboos

Certain foods are also tabooed to be eaten before or after intercourse. These are:

1. a type of fish bouzi. If eaten, the next child will be born feet first.
2. catfish alibohe. If eaten, the next child will die.
3. pig doho. If eaten, dogs will be unable to hunt well.
4. cassowary bihi. If eaten, the man's joints will begin to hurt oha faidem kikem bak ied. (Whisper talk', in which a ritual specialist whispers appropriate incantations over an object, however, can remedy the problem).

Effects On Hunting And Raids

As with menstruation, intercourse can affect hunting skills. In this case, however, the effect is a positive one. If a man has, for example, gone pig hunting accompanied by his wife and his dogs have not been successful in cornering game, he may suggest having sex with his wife to enhance the success of the dogs. Some men have relations with their wives at the beginning of the hunting trip to hasten the killing of pig or cassowary.

Another reason for having sexual relations before hunting could be that after a pig is killed and eaten, a man may not have sexual relations with his wife for 10 days (two hands finished' in their counting system). If this taboo is broken, a man's dogs are affected and pig-hunting is doomed to failure. Similarly, when a crocodile or turtle has been killed, a man cannot have intercourse for 20 days (two hands, two feet finished; another man's thumb coming') to allow all traces of the food to be removed from his intestines. There are two possible results from breaking this taboo. First, the violator's skin becomes (like that of the crocodile) rather scaly. Secondly, there is fear that the fish spirits will become angry and come to have sexual relations with his wife. (See further below.)

An impending raiding trip is a special occasion on which a man usually has intercourse with his wife. The reason given is that he wants his wife to produce a child to carry on his name in case he is killed. There is no indication, however, that this act is expected to afford the man any extra fighting abilities.

Mok Taboo. On the woman's part, should she eat a mok lizard (a general class of lizard), she may not have intercourse for 2-3 days. If a man, on the other hand kills a mok and has intercourse with his wife, he may dream that two men he recognizes are coming to kill him through sorcery on a bit of his hair ahaqfot. If he should become ill and lose weight, he tells his father or older brother of his dream, but not that he and his wife have broken the mok taboo. The father approaches the two men who appeared in the dream and asks why they are planning his son's death. Should the two men swear innocence, suggesting that the son has probably broken the taboo, the father returns to the son and confronts him. If the son's wife becomes fearful and confesses that the son caused her to commit the offense, the father enlists the adult men in the village to remedy the potentially fatal situation. The ceremony is as follows:

All the adult men and older teenage boys who have been initiated assemble at a full grown ironwood tree fihu with bush knives, a traditional bead necklace, and a piece of red cloth. At the base of the tree, they stick the knives into the trunk base in a rising staircase fashion, hang the necklace on one of the lower branches and drape the red cloth over the topmost knife. The men then take special arrows begha kihoda and score the tips with the white faces of the degat bird. These are leaned up against the trunk all the way around the base. Next the men surround the tree, looking up into the branches while the teenage boys sit on the ground in a circle behind the men.

The men call up into the tree, asking whether it was the mok who made the man sick. Often times a mok will run down the tree and they will kill it, or leaves fall from the tree, confirming that it was, indeed, the mok who caused the illness. The teenagers gather these fallen leaves so they may be crushed and mixed together in someone's hand with sand and more white (bird) faces. One man there takes the skull of a mok caught previously and sticks the long thorn alahaso from the Sanquet tree through the back of the skull into the brain area. In a two-footed hopping fashion,

holding the skull and thorn close to his groin area, he hops about making the hissing sound of the lizard. This performance completed, the party return to the man who has by this time become sick. They bring the leaf mixture and each man in turn smears some of it around the victim's joints and nose. Pulling each toe and finger until the joints make a cracking sound and stretching each limb, they tell him to become well. From that point on, it is expected that he will gradually recuperate.

PREGNANCY

Bearing children to increase the population or to carry on the family name is foremost in the minds of Bauzi people. Since children are a natural expectation from the marriage agreement, in cases where no children are forthcoming, there are serious implications and remedies must be sought. One's first impression in this regard is that the woman is usually considered to be at fault. (There are strong reasons for this kind of belief as we shall see.) Deeper investigation, however, reveals that barrenness is sometimes believed to be the man's fault. The reasoning is, that if a man is able to produce semen, he is considered productive. If, however, there appears to be no semen present, or if the semen is not of a white consistency, but rather clear, then the man is sterile maile - 'also barren'. This condition is disastrous, for there is no ritual that can be performed to make a man capable of bearing children. If the wife is anxious to have children, her response is often to leave her husband and run away with another man who "does have good semen". Even if she stays, however, and shames her husband by speaking openly of his condition when talking with other women, his reaction to such complaints is typically to beat her with a jungle vine or a bush knife about her upper arms.
Ritual Barrenness

Any woman who leaves her infertile husband and runs away with another man, takes a very grave risk. Usually, her enraged husband will put a curse on her to cause her barrenness in her second marriage. He does so through whisper talk and a red leaf in a couple of ways. In the first method, the original husband uses a special red leaf in the following way. When his former wife returns to the village for a visit in someone else's house, he watches to see where she usually sits when she awakens in the morning. He then secretly places the red leaf under the board where she sits so that when she sits in that spot the next morning, she will become barren male. If, however, she sees the leaf, the intended spell will fail and she will continue to produce children. In the second method, the first husband whispers onto a nape or arrow and, when the wife is asleep, secretly draws the arrow back at her. If the woman has fled, the husband can also perform this procedure on one of her footprints. The expected effect again is the barrenness of the disloyal woman.

Once a curse of barrenness has been put on a woman, it is critical for her that it be resolved before her former husband dies. Otherwise, the effects can never be broken. If it is a result of whisper talk, the victim can request the assistance of another man who is also proficient in whisper talk. This ritual specialist takes a new waistband and performs whisper talk onto it. The woman then puts this new waistband on and within 10 months anekahau sofoula becomes pregnant. After having borne a couple of children and seen that the curse is truly broken, she is expected to give the practitioner a knife for having done his job well.

Natural Barrenness

In some instances a woman's barrenness is not a result of any known magic against her. Again whisper talk can be performed to make her fertile. As in earlier cases, a ritual specialist performs whisper talk over the waistband, passing it around her waist and rubbing it down her abdomen. After wearing the waistband, she too can within a period of time, expect to become pregnant.

Contraception

If, on the other hand, barrenness is not a problem, and in fact the wife feels she is pregnant too often, there are three types of contraception to which she may resort.

In the first method, obtaining a special white flower cha tasima o fawu from the rain forest, the wife prepares it in a sago cake and eats it. The flower is thought to go into the womb to prevent her from becoming pregnant. If she wishes to reverse this action in the future, she may request help of a male ritual specialist. Then the next time she returns from the menstruation house to the sleeping house, she sits on the floor completely unclothed except for a covering over her lap. The practitioner then brings a pliable broad green leaf capable of holding water along with a red leaf she has gathered earlier to where the woman is sitting. Placing the red leaves in the water, he performs whisper talk cha dae and smells the water over the woman's torso with the red leaves. Then taking some tree bark fibers of sotokoa and tying them around her waist to make a waistband the woman inserts her new loin cloth into the band. The practitioner then inserts part of the red leaves into each side of a second woven waistband. When these leaves dry out over the next days, the woman puts them onto her sleeping floor to disintegrate in time. Through this procedure she is expected to become pregnant in about three months.

Other methods of contraception involve use of the palm-like plant sagoi. For example, a woman can secretly cut the sagoi pant and simply eat the white celery like section flu from the top of it. Or thirdly, she may cut the leaves of the plant and prepare them in a sago cake, again with the expectation of preventing her from becoming pregnant.

Male-Female Preference

Although there are isolated instances in which children are not desired for a period of time, in most cases, couples are excited when the wife becomes pregnant. The husband envisions a son who looks just like him, whom he will help through initiation into manhood, and who will carry on the family line. Moreover, since the Baulzi practice patrilocal residency, a son also increases the numbers of the general population of the village. Girls, on the other hand, will be of some help in pounding sago and gathering firewood and food. Once they are married, however, unless their husband is from the same village, they are typically taken to distant villages, bearing their children there, and maintaining only limited contact with their parents. Thus, whenever a girl infant is delivered, the mother says to her newborn daughter "You will just be taken away to your husband's land". On a day after birth she feels. Even so, one positive and important aspect of bearing girls is the wealth that they bring in bride price, which typically consists of: bush knives, axes, pots, cloth, traditional beads and nosepieces, and sometimes, dogs.

Though predicting the date of delivery has not been customary, there are ways to predict the sex of the unborn baby. The most common indication is by the color in the nipple of the mother's breast. If it takes on a dark hue onto gihobule, the infant is thought to be a girl, and if the coloring remains light onto bozoa, the infant will be a boy. Some women feel that if they are extremely tired during their pregnancy, if the stomach sits high or low or if they have certain types of sexual relations during conception, some tendencies concerning the child's sex can be predicted.

Conception

A woman first becomes convinced of her pregnancy, not surprisingly, when her usual monthly menstrual cycle is absent for one or two months. The next confirming factor is that the abdomen begins to enlarge, followed by the quickening of the fetus.

When queried as to how conception takes place, most people refer to the woman's having retained the semen completely at the time of intercourse. This means that the semen enters the womb and causes the blood to coagulate 'in knots' vaeala bugia, accounting, of course, for its failure to flow from then on. A recurring theory in local indigenous conceptions of conception (Cook and O'Brien, 1960:479). There are different versions of how the fetus then forms. This subject is taboo for men to discuss even among themselves, but they draw their own conclusions from having seen the development of fish and animals killed in the rain forest. Most men feel that once the initial solidifying of the semen and fluid in the womb occurs, the eggs are the next to be formed. After that, it seems to be anyone's guess. Among the women, some have not thought about the subject, while others feel that the baby was created with successive acts of intercourse in the following order: head, arms, legs, outer body, internal organs, genitalia. When the fetus is felt moving about, the baby's creation has been completed, and it has then only to increase in size until delivery. There does not seem to be any opinion as to how and when the person's soul is obtained, nor is it thought that the spirit of a dead ancestor could return in the body of future children.

Normal Activities

During pregnancy normal patterns of intercourse are followed. In fact, having sex after the baby begins to move is even thought to enhance the delivery process by shortening the time. The woman's general activities also remain the same except when her enlarged abdomen interferes with safe climbing of breadfruit trees and other strenuous activities. It is not uncommon for the husband to help his wife in her responsibilities when she is excessively tired, as long as she does not seem to be getting lazy as a result.

Insuring Health of Fetus

During pregnancy the best way to ensure the health of one's baby is to observe all the appropriate taboos. Some restrictions are specific to the unborn child and others to the general welfare and maintenance of the family unit, for example:
1. If a pregnant woman is lying down, and her husband sees her stomach moving because of the activity of the fetus, his legs will become weak when he goes hunting.
2. If she eats a pig stomach, the husband will be unable to kill pig.
3. If she eats the lizard called nok, it will grab the fetus, and the child will not be delivered.
4. If she eats turtle, the baby will develop an abscess on its thigh.
5. If a woman eats the red snake (betum), it will cause the child to develop ear infections.
6. If she eats the Victoria-crowned pigeon (toy), the child will drool.
7. If she eats crayfish (molba), its claws will tear the lining of the placenta, and the child will have to be delivered immediately when it is born.
8. If she eats the reddish brown cassowary egg (bihi o boza), it too will cause abscesses on the child.
9. If a woman eats a hawk (tuha), just as the claws of the hawk grip a branch, so the feet of the child will become like a hawk's claws. They grasp the womb, and the fetus will not be able to be delivered.
10. If she eats the intestines (ala), liver (yarm), eyes (fako), brain (veiso), or backbone of a pig, her husband's dogs will be unable to hunt pig. Even after the dogs are "made better," the child will, therefore, be deprived of any pig from the dog that cornered the pig. It may, however, eat pig caught by the other dogs.
11. If a woman drinks pork broth (doho vaksa), the child will be born with birth marks (ala / sokoba gihobule).

CHILDBIRTH

Among the Bausi there are no women considered to be exceptionally practiced at assisting a woman during delivery. Usually, on her first delivery, a woman delivers her child completely unaided. At the first delivery, however, either the woman's mother, mother's mother, or older sister may remain with her to instruct her. It is believed, however, that if another woman who is not related sees her blood, the other woman will become blind.

Normal Delivery

When the first sign of contractions (alimahade) appear, an expectant woman goes to the menstruation house and gathers a supply of soft broad leaves, placing them on the ground beside the house. When contractions begin, a woman is well advised to go immediately to the menstruation house. Failure to do so could bring misfortune to the family. For example, should she remain at home and eat pig just brought in from the hunt in the last hours before delivery, her baby will be affected. Specifically, the child is prohibited from eating pig caught by the dog whose game his mother had eaten. Should the child do so during its breastfeeding years (as long as three years), the hunting dog can be expected to run far away. If that particular dog dies, the curse is broken and pig that other dogs catch can be eaten by that child. In light of possible complications of this sort, women usually retire to the menstruation house at the first sign of labor.

The normal position for delivery is for the woman to be on her hands and knees. Having made a soft bed of leaves for the baby to fall onto, the delivery proceeds until the child and placenta deliver. The husband never participates in the delivery except possibly to sit a distance away with his back to his wife, but encouraging her or asking if she needs food brought to keep up her strength.

During a normal delivery, the baby is allowed to drop onto the cushioning leaves without any protective assistance of the mother. To touch any of the fluids surrounding either the infant or the placenta is taboo, so she does not try to gently guide the head down to the leaves. No action is considered necessary on the mother's part to cause the infant to begin breathing. However the action of falling onto the leaves is sufficient to start it. If the baby does not breathe at this point, it is considered dead and is buried still attached to the placenta when that delivers. Even when the infant seems to be fine and healthy, the mother does not try to assist it until the placenta is delivered and examined. This is the crucial moment that will determine whether the baby will live or be buried alive. The woman carefully spreads the placenta out flat with a stick so as not to break the taboo of touching it with her hands, examining the lining carefully to see if it is torn. At the same time, others who hear the infant crying out to the woman, "Have you given birth to a good baby," referring actually to the placenta rather than the infant. If the placenta is not torn, she responds affirmatively, and proceeds to cut the cord. The procedure is prescribed as follows. She sharpens the edge of a new piece of bamboo (dim) by pulling off some of the string-like fibers that run its length. She then, first holds the umbilical cord by means of a leaf at the end nearest the infant. With the other hand and a leaf she milks the cord toward the placenta. Measuring the cord against the infant, she cuts it at a point about mid-way down the length of its thigh. The cord is not tied, and other than draining a covering over it to keep the flies off, is not cared for in any manner. The mother pours water over the infant to remove any other fluids than the cheese-like substance covering the baby. Then with a cloth she wipes a bit of the cheese-like material, which is thought to be the husband's semen (dát ita fáu). After clearing the mouth of any foreign matter with a sideways sweep of her finger, the mother puts the baby to her breast. Although, scientifically, putting the infant to the breast reduces uterine bleeding, the Bausi, not surprisingly, make no such association. From birth and during the infant's early weeks, it is placed on its side, for some feel that placed on its back, the infant's gall bladder will burst open and the child will die. Although their reasoning here is not clear, possibly from experience with game animals, the people have observed that the gall bladder contains a very toxic substance which can on contact destroy surrounding meat.

Treatment of Placenta

At the birthing time, the placenta is bundled into a large flat leaf (sem et, or un etba) and hung up either in the fork of a tree branch or buried at the base of a tree stump. In either case, the ground under the bundle, or around where it is buried, is cleared of debris so that any exudates that drip from it can seep into the ground. In some areas, the bundle is tied to a branch over a small pool of water that contains no marine life, for it is believed that if lizards and small wildlife eat the fluids, the child will die.

After 10 days the bundle is spread out on the cleared ground and washed with water brought in a section of bamboo. The placenta is then put out in the sun to dry and eventually disintegrate. If it is not washed and the jungle lizards and other animals (ibu, mum áme) and eat the placenta, the child will become sick.

In which case, if the child's stomach swells, the father's remedy involves use of a previously pounded sausage tree whose root mid-section has holes oiled by large black beetles. Chopping off the root section up to destroy the beetle holes, the man washes the fibers in the river and finally, burns them to affect the cure of his child.

Care of Umbilical Cord

The infant's umbilical cord falls off in about 3-4 days during which time the mother and infant live in the menstruation house. The child is bathed daily out in the sun which exposure probably promotes both the drying of the cord and the prevention of infection. Once the cord falls off, the mother takes it to either a banana-like tree mud or to a new root of a pandanus tree e omoa gahade trees. Chopping off the root section up to destroy the beetle holes, the man washes the fibers in the river and finally, burns them to affect the cure of his child.
very likely to beat her with a jungle vine or bush knife on her upper arms and shoulders, fearing that if his dogs lick the fluids, he or his dogs will be bitten by a snake or gored by a pig.

Taboos Affecting The Newborn

Once back in the family circle, the woman’s life is still controlled by numerous taboos. Though none relate
to normal sexual activity, the following food taboos apply:

1. If the mother eats turtle fetafa, her child will develop a wavy rash eabe in the groin.
2. If she eats the kuba bird, the infant will drool aha vao.
3. Eating the cassowary egg causes abscesses oubuli on the child.
4. If she eats a certain rodent species feli the child will develop sores keabedo on its body.
5. If, finally, she eats hawk tuha, her baby will lose weight ketahalo.

In passing, it may be noted that there are in Bauzi ritual no procedures to ensure that the fontanelle veibe will close properly.

The newborn infant can fall ill, however, for other reasons than food taboo violations. For example, the mother may be suspicious that there had been a termite nest ketombo in the peak of the roof of the menstruation house. If so, she can cut the nest down and burn it and, in fact, break the entire menstruation house apart. It is reported that she may even see a snake that appears to have two heads, one on each end muam anek. Such a snake is most certainly the cause of the illness and must be killed. Otherwise, however, it is concluded that the termites must have been the cause.

IN-LAW BIRTH COMPENSATIONS

So far in this discussion all the activity has centered around the couple having the baby and the husband’s family among whom they live. However, the wife’s parents now reenter the picture in significant ways.

When word reaches the wife’s distant parents that their daughter has given birth, they may wait for the couple to come visit them, or they themselves may travel to where their daughter resides. Either way, when they meet, they and their immediate family typically demand payment for their daughter having borne a child for her husband and his family. This view is compensated as a compensation for the parent’s sadness in seeing that their daughter is no longer a little girl, but having become (due to her husband) a woman. The birth price usually includes items such as: axes, bush knives, pots, dogs, clothing, and cloth. These gifts are the same type and distribution as those of the bride price. Each parent, male sibling of the wife and her mother’s brothers (whom she calls ab) must be satisfied with the birth compensation.

$ = male
O = female

If, for example, one of her brothers does not get a gift, even if the couple cannot afford it, there can be serious consequences. If he chooses to, the offended brother can perform whisper talk aobene aha duce data aconfa to make the child lose weight and eventually die. His procedure is first to cut a section of bamboo and fill it with water. After whispering into the water, he makes a cord of leaves and, carefully to avoid spilling any of the water, pushes the cord into the end of the bamboo covering it with a broad leaf laid in place. Then climbing under the roof peak, he finally ties the bamboo there. Should the water accidentally spill on route, the child can be expected to lose weight quickly and die within 3-4 months. Otherwise, the child loses weight slowly. Faced with such illness, the mother may remember that they never paid her brother his birth price. Upon inquiry, he is likely to say, “Yes. You didn’t give me anything when my niece/nephew gaeta was born so I did it.” Give me something quickly, and I will undo the curse.”

Once compensated, he will take down the bamboo with the water and pour it out onto the ground. Then taking the broad taro-like plant leaf and root, he pours fresh water from the bamboo into the leaf bundled and gathered at the top. Holding the leaf of water over the mother and child, he perforates the bottom of the leaf and lets the water pour out over them. The ritual completed, the child is expected to gain weight and recuperate.

DIFFICULT AND UNUSUAL BIRTHS

In every delivery, the handling of the placenta is always of critical importance. If the placenta remains undelivered, the woman is allowed to take a leaf and, holding onto the protruding umbilical cord, very gently pull in order to extract the placenta. One woman suggested that they could also insert a finger into the vagina and pry the placenta out, but this does not fit the normal pattern and observation of taboos mentioned above (i.e. prohibitions against contamination from touching vaginal fluids). In the rather uncommon case that bleeding does not stop quickly after delivery of the placenta, frequent baths in the cold river are thought to slow the loss of blood.

Excessive Fatigue

Sometimes a woman will be unable to complete delivery because of fatigue, especially in the case of a first birth. In such a situation, the woman’s mother (if she is on hand) or another female relative, will often stick a pole into the ground in front of the woman trying to deliver. Then standing in a leaning position, legs spread and holding onto the pole, the woman in labor pulls against it to gain extra leverage and pushing force. Alternatively, the woman’s mother or relative, holding her around the ribs, can gently lift upward toward the woman’s shoulders. Pushing down on the woman’s abdomen, however, is thought to cause the baby’s death. If all goes well, the infant is delivered at this point, but should there still be difficulty, there are other procedures that can be carried out. The quickest is for the husband to take his hunting bow down from the rafters and release the bowstring, which in turn, releases the baby quickly from the womb. That failing, the husband or the father of the woman may perform whisper talk in the following manner. Obtaining a leaf from the ena tree, he whispers and spits into the leaf. The leaf is then given to the woman’s mother, who swears the spit by means of the leaf over the woman’s abdomen with the words, “Se...deliver quickly.” Se...taho faile.

Stillbirths

Stillbirths are usually thought to be caused foremost by carrying heavily laden string bags. It may also be caused by other strenuous work such as climbing breadfruit trees or pounding sago late in the pregnancy. Others believe it is from a woman lying on her back in later pregnancy. These infants are buried still attached to the placenta. This procedure also applies to fetuses that are miscarried. Further, if a woman bleeds intermittently prior to her actual labor and delivery, the baby that results will also be buried, even if it is apparently healthy.
Unusual Positions

Some babies are born in unusual positions. In some such cases, assistance is given; in others there is none. If the child presents itself in a transverse position, it will generally turn of its own accord and be delivered normally. If not, it will die in utero and be buried when it finally is delivered. In any case, the woman does not try to manually reposition the infant during labor to allow it to be delivered. If the feet come first, the mother is allowed to grab the feet and try to pull the head out because the head usually gets stuck, but it is more common for these babies to die. When the infant’s shoulders present itself first, it has little chance of survival. After it is delivered, another woman wraps the dead infant in the broad leaves of the breadfruit kohu tree that are turning brown and tying it up with a vine mudolo, she buries it directly in a dirt grave.

Premature and Malformed Infants

Premature (very small) and malformed infants are usually buried alive. The procedure is the following. After a shallow grave has been dug, a red leaf febóhó é is put onto the floor of the grave, and the small infant is placed onto the leaf along with the placenta that is still attached. Another similar leaf is laid on top of the infant. Sticks are then wedged in crosswise above the top leaf to keep the weight of the dirt off the child. The top leaf prevents the dirt from falling onto the baby’s face and body. Finally, dirt is filled in on top of the crosswise sticks. If only the woman gives birth alone, then she must carry out the burial on her own. Once in a while, a woman will keep a very small child, which she carries around completely covered. This is because she fears the husband will associate the premature baby’s lighter skin with her returning to the sleeping house too early and thereby contaminating him and his dogs. Occasionally too a full-term child of very light coloring is also born. When this happens, the child is not allowed to eat snake, lizard, or cassowary eggs. If it does, it will die.

Death in Childbirth

Whenever a woman and her child die in childbirth they are buried in the same grave. If however, the child lives, it will be kept and given to one of its aunts or grandmother, if they are capable of nursing it. A woman’s death in childbirth is always considered the result of sorcery performed against her at some time in the past. The author witnessed one case in which, before a woman died, she revealed that she had had a dream that someone had come and cut off a piece of her loin cloth and performed sorcery on it. From then on, she was convinced that she would die and so she did, in spite of the intense medical treatment that she was given. Her newborn child was reared by a close relative.

Infanticide

Bauzi men have a strong desire to have male children. Occasionally, however, a situation arises in which a man’s wife has had a series of only female children (perhaps 3 or 4). The husband’s patience may, in this case, run rather thin in waiting for a son. He may also think about the taboo of female infants urinating on the floor or below the house causing his dogs on contact to fall in the hunt. Thus, if his wife gives birth to yet another girl, he may in anger order his wife to dispose of the child by burying it alive. In which case, it is the wife’s responsibility to either bury the infant herself or have it buried by another woman. This is emotionally overwhelming for the woman, because the infant can be heard for up to three days crying under the ground for something to eat. Fear of her husband’s beatings or threats of death, usually force her, nevertheless, to comply with his wishes. The mother goes through a brief mourning period following the child’s death.

Twins

Being pregnant with twins, is not a cause for joy, but rather sadness for one of the babies will have to be buried alive. A woman begins to suspect twins when her abdomen becomes exceptionally large and high. Some practices, however, are thought to prevent twins. One of these is avoiding bananas or breadfruit seeds in which two of the fruit have grown together and have, therefore, the appearance of twins. Also, a woman who is only a few months pregnant should always sleep on her side, for sleeping on her back can cause the infant to divide and become twins. Initially, very general reasons for disposing of one twin were given, such as the difficulty of trying to care for two small infants when traveling or, in the case of attack, moving quickly from one place to another. It was, further, thought that a mother would be unable to feed two infants, and that they would both die. Others mentioned that the second born is weaker and would probably die anyway so it was better to dispose of it early in its life.

The total picture regarding twins in the Bauzi culture only becomes clear in the light of certain basic assumptions. First of all, when twins are born, the first baby is considered to be the creation of the husband’s semen and is always kept. The second twin born, however, is said to be the offspring of the fish spirit bohe bas and is always discarded. The second twin is conceived, it is said, when a woman goes to collect breadfruit alone and the fish spirit, taking on the appearance of her husband comes and suggests having intercourse with her. Since even his voice resembles that of his husband, she usually complies. The only part of the fish spirit that is not like her husband is his crocodile-like teeth, which he takes great care to conceal from her even when talking. After having sexual relations with her, he instructs her not to tell anyone about it, and she becomes dizzy. When she comes out of this dizzy state, if she fails to tell anyone of her experience, she will die. If she does, on the other hand, she will live, but will give birth either to twins or a child with flipper-like arms and legs resembling the crocodile. As a consequence of these beliefs, the second twin was traditionally buried alive.

The treatment of twins is changing, however, due to the influence of other local cultures. There is now a greater tendency to give up the second born twin for adoption to another childless couple. In three known instances of twins born in the last seven years, the second twin had been either adopted in this way or kept by the parents. However, in two of these instances, the second born twins have both died and informants told me that they expect the second born twin in the third set also to die in childhood.

RED AND WHITE SYMBOLISM

The Bauzi divide the color spectrum as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COLOR</th>
<th>RANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. gihobut</td>
<td>dark blue to black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. bezt</td>
<td>orange, red hues, brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. buhet</td>
<td>true red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. gahald</td>
<td>green (also medium blue)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. fauket</td>
<td>white (also light yellow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. haut</td>
<td>deep yellow as in the yellow variety of pandanus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Throughout this study on reproduction among the Bauzi people, there has emerged an interesting contrast between the color red bezt relating to women and the color white fauket to men. In some instances, the colors straightforwardly associate red with menstrual blood and white with semen. In other instances, however, objects of one color are used to counter the effects of objects of the opposite color. I detail next some ways in which the colors red and white appear to take on symbolical significance in use by the Bauzi culture.

Red

1. Red foods: red sweet potato, reddish brown bush hen egg, reddish brown cassowary egg

Use: A woman may not eat these red foods during menstruation.

Hypothesis: Eating red foods further aids and abets the red condition of menstruation. Rather, white (e.g. tapioca, below) serves to counter rather than exacerbate the red situation.
2. Colored parts of cassowary
   Use: A woman may not eat the colored parts of a cassowary the first time a dog that has been treated for contamination (including menstrual) brings one home.
   Hypothesis: Contaminating red effects once dispelled may be reintroduced by red contact for a period of time.

3. Red cloth
   Use: Used in ceremony when a woman has broken the taboo of having intercourse after eating lizard (resulting in her husband's illness). As described earlier, a red cloth is the uppermost item placed on the tree trunk.
   Hypothesis: The red cloth represents the woman's contaminating role in her husband's illness.

4. Red leaf in vamaha dae ('whisper talk')
   Use: Used to put a curse on a woman who rejects her husband because of sterility.
   Hypothesis: Red as the symbol of ritual contamination usually by a woman is here turned against her for scorn her husband's lack of white (semen).

5. Red leaf
   Use: Used by a ritual specialist to counteract the effects of a white leaf and sago cake prescribed as a female contraceptive.
   Hypothesis: Red cancels white, returning a woman to her original (fertile) state.

6. Deep reddish bozi nipples
   Use: Predicts the birth of a female child.
   Hypothesis: Redness is the intrinsic symbol of femaleness.

7. Red leaf feboh ët
   Use: Used to bury a premature or malformed infant alive. Hypothesis: Red is the hallmark of the contaminated or corrupted.

White

1. White foods: tapioca, bananas, white sweet potato, cucumbers, green papaya, palm celery, taro, banana, jungle hen, breadfruit seeds kohu
   Use: A woman may only eat these during menstruation.
   Hypothesis: White counters and lessens the effects of red, in this case preventing excessive loss of blood (i.e. keeps her from losing too much blood).

2. White leaf lo et liabe
   Use: Rubbed on the teeth of a dog contaminated by menstrual blood.
   Hypothesis: White counteracts the contaminating effects of red.

3. Sago pudding/breadfruit seeds
   Use: Fed to a dog contaminated by menstrual blood.
   Hypothesis: As with the white leaf procedure, white food counteracts the effects of red food.

4. Clear (white) water
   Use: Used by women to wash a dog contaminated by menstrual blood.

Hypothesis: Clear (white) water counteracts and dissolves any contaminating red effects on the dog.

5. White leafed plant eetu
   Use: A dog contaminated by menstrual blood is passed through the slit stalk of this plant and the plant, with white leaf intact, is rubbed on the dog.
   Hypothesis: White counteracts the ill effects of red.

6. White faeces of the degar bird
   Use: Smear on arrow tips to remedy a man's illness due to his wife's eating lizard before having intercourse. It is also rubbed on the man's body in sand and leaf mixture.
   Hypothesis: White (representing maleness), counteracts the contaminating effects of red femaleness.

7. White celery from the palm-like plant sago
   Use: Eaten by women as a contraceptive.
   Hypothesis: The white (male) principle counters normal red (female) processes of conception.

8. Light coloring of the nipples during pregnancy
   Use: Predicts the male sex of an unborn child.
   Hypothesis: Light (white) coloring is the intrinsic mark of maleness.

Basic Principles of Symbolic Interaction

These uses of the colors red-white in Bauzi can be categorized into one of three basic principles of interaction which may be stated as:

1. Each category possesses inherent traits (see chart below).
2. Each category (particularly RED) compounds its own inherent effects.
3. Each category counteracts/weakens its opposite.

Dualistic Sets

The following dualistic sets of Red vs. White categories illustrates the way in which these principles work themselves out.

Some Basic Oppositions in Bauzi Color Symbolism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RED</th>
<th>WHITE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood (menstrual)</td>
<td>Semen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Values:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Positive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life-threatening</td>
<td>Life-giving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contaminating</td>
<td>Restoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Taboos:

1. Red food during menses  No taboo
2. Red meat (cassowary) from newly decontaminated dog

Sorcery:
1. Red leaf 'whisper' for rejecting infertile husband

Uncompensated brother gets revenge; as water in bamboo diminishes, so the life of the newly born child

(cf. also Briley, page 3)

Divination:
1. Reddish nipples, female child
2. Red leaf burial of malformed infant

Cures:
1. Red cloth after eating lizard
2. Antidote to white leaf contraceptive

1. White foods counter menstrual effects
2. White leaf counters dog contamination
3. Clear water + steam + white leaf; counters dog contamination
4. White faeces counter wife's lizard taboo
5. Sago celery; contraceptive
6. Fresh water gives life

Though the Bauzi do not verbalize an association of the color red with menstrual blood and being female or the color white with semen and being male, the symbolism seems compelling especially in the context of pregnancy and childbirth. Dualistic parallels of this sort are, of course, well-known across Irian Jaya and Papua New Guinea (e.g. Brennan, 1977), but little has been reported for the Lakes Plain groups.

FOOTNOTES

1. My husband, David Briley, and I began our study of the Bauzi language in December 1975 under the auspices of the cooperative program of Cenderawashi University and the Summer Institute of Linguistics.

2. The major part of this study was done in the Bauzi village of Noiadi, with some contribution from Bauzi people at Solom. I wish to acknowledge the assistance of the following people: Te, Elina, Felina, Tesao, Buto, Tomat, and Esi.

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