

# UBAT NE BANAR IT PALAWAN

Ethnomedicine  
of the Palawan people  
of Mount Domadoway,  
Palawan, Philippines

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Published by  
University of the Philippines Medical Alumni Society in America  
Delaware Valley Chapter  
Manila, 2012

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Palawan community of Mount Domadoway (Palawan, Philippines)

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University of the Philippines Medical Alumni Society in America  
(UPMASA) Delaware Valley Chapter

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(UPMASA) Delaware Valley Chapter

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*Ubat ne banar it Palawan* means true medicine of the Palawan people

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## Reminder

The indigenous knowledge and practices contained in this book were generously shared by the Palawan community of Mount Domadoway, Palawan, Philippines. Any information from this study to be used for further academic research or commercial purposes should have the free and prior informed consent of the knowledge-owners: the Palawan community of Mount Domadoway. The knowledge-owners and the authors of this book should be properly acknowledged and cited if information and/or photos from this publication shall be used.

Any commercial benefits which may arise from the utilization of the community's indigenous knowledge should be shared with the Palawan community of Mount Domadoway, Palawan, Philippines.

The scientific names of the plants in this study were purposely not included. Likewise, photographs of these plants were sparingly used. Interested researchers and other parties who wish to pursue further activities should obtain permission from the Palawan community of Mount Domadoway through the Domadoway Foundation, Inc. Requests to be channeled by letter to the University of the Philippines Manila, Ermita, Manila, Philippines 1000.





## Message from the Domadoway Foundation

Natutuwa ako talaga. Akong isang matanda na si Tito Mata, ay nakaabot sa isang gawain na paggawa ng libro upang ingatan ang maaaring mawalang kultura naming mga Palawan.

Mapalad tayong lahat na mga katutubo na inabutan ng ganitong gawain. Isipin natin ang lupa na ginawa ng Panginoon natin. Iyong Empo na tinatawag natin. Ginawa Niya ang lupa na pinanggalingan ng gamot na *banar*. Ng ating tubig at pagkain. Ng ating bahay at baro. Lupa na batayan ng ating kultura.

Ano ang ginawa ng ibang tao? Nagkanya-kanya. Nagbenta ng lupa, nagsangla, namera. Sana ay hindi ganito.

Dapat nating ingatan ang lupa. Saan ka kukuha ng gamot kung walang lupa? Ng tubig at pagkain kung walang lupa? Marami ang gamot natin. Hindi lang isang daan. Marami tayong gamot talaga. Gamot na *banar*, tawag natin.

Ang kultura at lupa ay dapat ingatan.

Maraming salamat sa lahat na tumulong sa paggawa ng mahalagang librong ito.

TITO S. MATA  
Tagapangulo



## **Message from the University of the Philippines Manila**

Isa na naman pong produkto ng malikhaing kaisipan ng mga guro at mananaliksik ng UP Manila ang matutunghayan natin sa pamamagitan ng aklat na ito. Binabati ko po ang lahat ng nasa likod ng pananaliksik at pagbuo ng mga nilalaman nito – mga mananaliksik, manunulat, editor, at ibang kasapi ng editorial team na nagtiyaga upang ito ay mailimbag.

Ang aklat pong ito ay patunay ng yaman ng kalinangan nating mga Pilipino. Naidokumento at naisalarawan po nito ang yaman ng mga paniniwala at mga kaugalian ng komunidad ng Palawan tungkol sa mga sakit at pagbibigay lunas sa mga sakit.

Maituturing po na isang tanging obra ang aklat sapagkat dito ay binigyan ng kaukulang pagkilala ang komunidad ng Palawan sa Bundok Domadoway bilang pangunahing may-akda.

Batid po natin na ang yaman ng kultura ng mga Palawan at iba pang kapatid nating katutubo ay nakasalalay sa yamang handog ng lupa at kalikasan. Sa mga kaalaman at aral na taglay dito, sana po ay makiisa ang lahat sa pangangalaga ng yaman ng kanilang kalikasan, at gayundin sa yaman ng kanilang kalinangan.

Nagpapasalamat po tayo sa ating mga kapatid na Palawan, sa UP College of Medicine at National Institutes of Health, sa UPMASA Delaware Valley Chapter na sumuporta sa gawaing ito, at sa iba pang tumulong sa pagbuo nito, tulad ng Department of Health at Haribon Palawan.

MANUEL B. AGULTO, MD  
Chancellor



## **Message from the UP Medical Alumni Society in America Delaware Valley Chapter**

In today's economic climate and high cost of health care delivery problems, we welcome research endeavors that will help solve the cost of expensive new drugs developed in the USA and Europe which is priced beyond our countrymen's means and find our own local solutions for our own people. Our chapter of the University of the Philippine College of Medicine (UPCM) alumni here in America recognizes the value of your work and possibly provide new sources for drug development from our local plants. We hope that the information gleaned from this effort will lead to further research and hopefully to development of new drugs that Filipinos and other nations that are deprived from expensive new agents can benefit from.

The Delaware Valley Chapter of the UP Medical Alumni Society in America (UPMASA) is honored to sponsor the research and consequently the publication of this book on the 'Ethnomedicine of the Palawan people of Mount Domadoway, Palawan, Philippines.' An undertaking of this nature and scope helps our understanding of indigenous diseases and the practice of healing them through the use of local plants and various herbal preparations. It is one of the avowed goals of the UPMASA to elevate the standards of medicine globally. To help the local people of Palawan we must first understand their culture in terms of traditional medical practices. In doing so, we hope to bring them as well to the forefront of accepted medical pharmacology



and therapeutics in the rest of the world. It is important that we respect their traditions while we keep true to our goals. As alumni of the UPCM, we are never far from our homeland and its interests; health and well being inspire us to support endeavors such as this.

Congratulations to the team of Dr. Sid Sia, the UP College of Medicine, and the Palawan people of Mount Domadoway, Palawan.

Arachelle Baduel Jose, MD  
Emmanuel C. Besa, MD  
on behalf of the Delaware Valley Chapter of UPMASA



Palawan script: ITTO BANAR NE OBAT IT PALAWAN (True medicine of the Palawan people) by Tito S. Mata

# 1

## Introduction

The University of the Philippines Manila, through the National Institutes of Health (Institute of Herbal Medicine) and College of Medicine (Department of Pharmacology) has an ongoing initiative on the documentation of the indigenous healing practices of selected Philippine ethnolinguistic groups. This initiative has received support from the Philippine Institute of Traditional and Alternative Health Care, the Philippine Council for Health Research and Development, and the University of the Philippines Medical Alumni Society in America (UPMASA) Delaware Valley Chapter.

The initiative carries out the following activities: documentation of the plants and other natural products utilized as medicinal agents by Philippine cultural communities; documentation of the people's beliefs and practices in health, disease, and healing; promotion of culturally-sensitive basic health education for the indigenous peoples; and assistance in the advocacy of protecting the people's ancestral homelands, as well as conserving the biodiversity of their domain's ecosystem.

In 1997 to 1998 an ethnomedical study among the indigenous peoples of Palawan island was conducted by a research team from the University of the Philippines Manila in cooperation with the Batak, Palawan, and Tagbanwa communities. The project was supported by the Traditional Medicine Unit (now the Philippine Institute of Traditional and Alternative Health Care) of the Department of Health and the UPMASA Delaware Valley Chapter.

## **Selection of study areas**

The ethnomedical study on the Palawan people was conducted in Mount Domadoway, in sitios within the municipality of Sofronio Española, Palawan, with support from the Domadoway Foundation, Inc., Haribon Palawan, and the local government of Sofronio Española.

The Palawan community of Mount Domadoway was chosen after consultation with non-government organizations working for the welfare of the Palawan people, such as the Haribon Palawan. Criteria used for the selection included: community has a reputation for indigenous medical practices, ie, presence of actively practicing indigenous healers; community lives in or near the forest; community is known to have continually practiced its indigenous traditions; community has a stable peace and order situation; and community can be accessed using available means of transportation within a reasonable period of time.

## **Gathering information**

Participant observation and interview were the two primary techniques utilized to gather data. The researcher lived with the community for more than four months (August to November 1997 and April to May 1998). She observed their way of life, shared their food and dwelling, participated in the economic activities of the village, learned the Palawan language, was built a personal toilet by the men, was suspected to be a cement firm employee by some and a religious missionary by others, got malaria, and was well-received by the people.

Interview of key informants such as elders, traditional healers, and family caregivers (parents, grandparents, older siblings) were conducted to gather a more in-depth explanation of the behaviors observed by the researcher.

The first couple of weeks in the area were the most difficult for the researcher. The fact that they spoke a different language was a great barrier to effective communication. The key informants, usually elders in the community, spoke limited Tagalog. Although middle-aged men and women understood and spoke Tagalog, they appreciated efforts of the researcher in learning to speak the Palawan language. The researcher was also lent an English-Filipino-Palawan dictionary prepared by US Peace Corps volunteers in the late 1980s.

Ocular survey was conducted to identify, together with key informants, the different plants with medicinal use in the area being utilized by the Palawan people.

A guide questionnaire was developed specifically for the study. This defined the variables which were relevant to the research. However, the researcher did not allow this instrument to limit her observation and inquiry. Relevant topics or issues that were observed and heard during the immersion were included in the information gathered.

Out of the eleven sitios of the Palawan people in Mount Domadoway, four were covered. The said sitios included Katbagan, Pamoaran, Suked, and Malangsi. A total of 31 key informants were interviewed: 4 traditional healers and 27 elders and family caregivers.



## Publication

The study report was presented to representatives of the Palawan indigenous community, the local government units, and the non-government organizations on the 26<sup>th</sup> of November 1999 at the Haribon Palawan office in Puerto Princesa City. A final technical report was then prepared.

In 2009, the UPMASA Delaware Valley Chapter expressed interest in imparting the output of the study to a wider audience. The organization sought to promote a better understanding and recognition of the rich healing culture of the indigenous peoples in the Philippines. Researchers from the Institute of Herbal Medicine of the National Institutes of Health, University of the Philippines Manila, returned to the Palawan community of Mount Domadoway to seek their consent regarding the publication of the study. The community responded positively. It was also agreed upon that the book would have a version in the Palawan language. Tito S. Mata, a Palawan elder and chairman of the Domadoway Foundation, Inc., recommended a Palawan title for the book – *Ubat ne banar it Palawan*, which translates to ‘True medicine of the Palawan (people)’. This publication, thus, provides an opportunity to raise awareness about the inextricable link between the people’s ancestral domain and their culture. The Palawan people depend on the wealth of the land for all aspects of life, including their health and well-being. They have since time immemorial depended on the land for their food, medicine, dwelling, and other means of livelihood. The land is their thread to their ancestral roots, cultural life, and spiritual vigor. With the influence of mainstream cultures and the onslaught of illegal logging, and quarrying and cement manufacturing proposals, Palawan cultural traditions which are intertwined with their natural environment are at risk.

## **Towards culture-sensitive health care**

The Palawan people's vast knowledge of the plants in Mount Domadoway (and the twin Mount Tawis) have long been a crucial component in the maintenance of their health and in managing their illnesses.

Presently, no government health facility may be found near the Palawan settlements in Mount Domadoway. However, understanding the distinct way of life and perspective of the Palawan people may prepare government and non-government health workers in their prospective plans to work with the indigenous community. Effective and culture-sensitive health services may be attained when there is respect towards the indigenous knowledge and practices of the people. It is important to involve the community and seek their point of view regarding the said services, so they may express their felt needs and say what approaches are acceptable to them. Medicinal plants that are deemed safe to use may be integrated with the health services to be provided.

## **Purpose of the publication**

Many practices have died along with healers who were not able to pass on their knowledge to others. Ethnomedical documentations such as this publication may sustain the rich healing traditions of the Philippines' diverse cultural communities. The Palawan people, for example, may refer to this book for the healing traditions of their elders.

This book is an important instrument which may be used as proof of the knowledge and practices which the Palawan people of Mount

Domadoway possess and have rights to. Studies such as this show the community's long relationship with the land where they have cultivated these healing practices, among others. These are evidences of their right to protect and manage their indigenous traditions and ancestral land.

Through this book, it is hoped that more people become aware that cultural communities have their own way of life and world views. This is reflected in their concepts of health. Each people have a distinct way of attaining health and well-being. They have valued traditions which have been passed on to them by their ancestors. On the other hand, the people also recognize the non-indigenous practices that may be useful to them. However, it is them who will decide what steps they will take to realize their individual and collective welfare.

With this awareness and with their consent, we may then support them as they manage and conserve their ancestral land's rich biodiversity which they greatly depend on, and also assist them in continuing the valued traditions which they desire to maintain.

## 2

# The land and the people

### Palawan people

The Palawan people are one of the indigenous communities of Palawan island. They live in the highlands and foothills of the southern mountains of the island (Eder 1993, Revel 2006). Other cultural communities who live in Palawan province include the Agutaynen, Batak, Cuyonon, Kagayanen, Mapun, Molbog, and Tagbanwa aside from the Tagalog, Bisaya, and Ilonggo, among others (Lewis [ed.] 2009).

The Palawan people are a distinct ethnolinguistic group, speaking their own language also referred to as Palawan. Various authors may refer to this ethnolinguistic group and language, as Palawan, Palawano, Palawanon, Palaweño, Pala'wan, and Palaw'an (Macdonald 2011, Revel 2006, Lewis [ed.] 2009, NCIP 2006, National Museum 2011, Hobbes 2000, Boquiren 2003).

The Summer Institute of Linguistics listed 3 Palawano or Palawan languages: Central Palawano (or Quezon Palawano, Palawanen, Palaweño), Brooke's Point Palawano (or Brooke's Point Palawan, Palawan, Palawanun, Palaweño) in southeastern Palawan, and Southwest Palawano (Lewis [ed.] 2009).

In this book, we prefer and use the term Palawan.

## **The land**

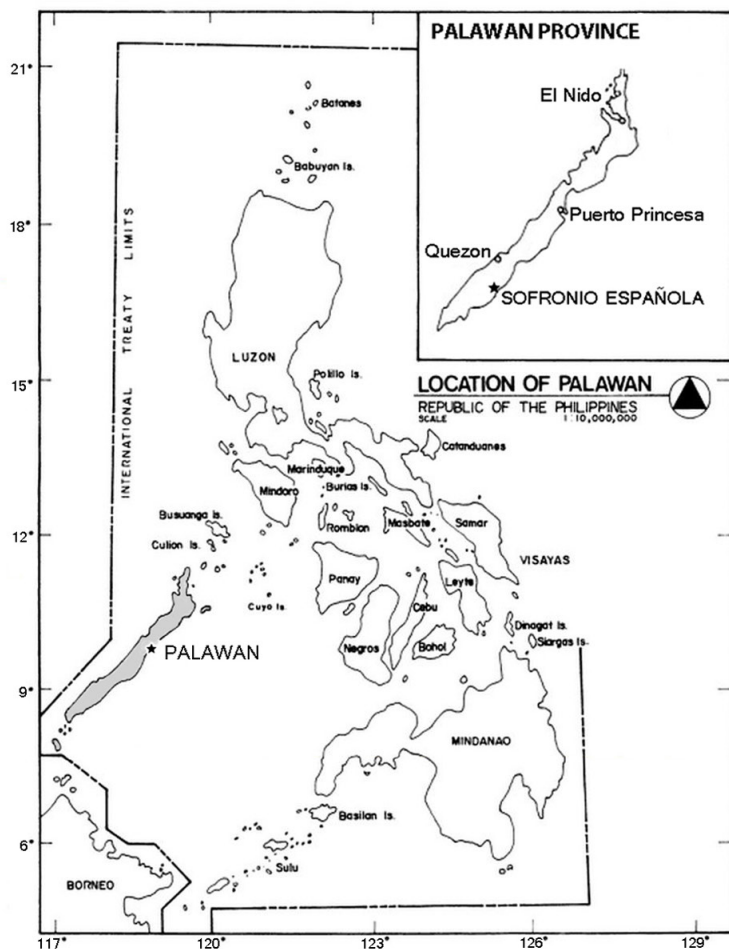
Palawan island, a part of the Sunda Shelf (Revel 2006), is situated in the western and southern portion of the Philippines (Eder 1993). Unlike the rest of the Philippine islands, which were formed from volcanic eruptions of the so-called ring of fire, Palawan belongs to the Asian plate. The island has the good fortune of having no volcanoes and earthquakes, and is away from the typhoon belt.

Palawan is the fifth largest island in the country and is known for its rich biodiversity. The Palawan people are scattered in various areas in the southern part of the island. Those in the municipality of Sofronio Española, southwest of Palawan island, reside in Mount Domadoway and in the lowland area surrounding it. Eleven Palawan settlements can be found on this mountain: Sitio Katbagan, Magangok, Malangsi, Olisiao, Sinolay, Suked, and Tagdao in Barangay Abo-abo; Sitio Abokayan and Pamoaran in Barangay Panitian in the municipality of Sofronio Española; and Sitio Kaborayan and Kanangkaan in Barangay Pinaglabanan, in the municipality of Quezon.

The four sitios included in the study were Katbagan, Pamoaran, Suked, and Malangsi, all in Sofronio Española.

## **Mount Domadoway, wealth and woes**

The ancestral domain of the Palawan people covers 2,530.66 hectares of Mount Domadoway and Mount Tawis, based on the certificate of Community Forest Stewardship Agreement (CFSa) issued them on the 26<sup>th</sup> of August 1987. This was granted to the



Adapted from Figure 1 of Eder JF. On the road to tribal extinction: Depopulation, deculturation, and adaptive well-being among the Batak of the Philippines. Quezon City: New Day Publishers. 1993, p20.

Palawan people to create a protection status for their ancestral domain. The CFSA also sought to conserve the distinct features of Mount Domadoway, where the Palawan reside, and Mount Tawis, where they also obtain resources for food, medicine, livelihood, and all other aspects of their life (Haribon Palawan 2008).

The CFSA area is considered a limestone forest corridor. The landforms consist of hard rock surface, cave ecosystems, and limestone mountains. There is also a 0.8 km underground river. The forested portion of the domain is 1,046 hectares. Thirty percent of the entire CFSA area is moderately steep while the rest is characterized as flat to rolling. The tropical limestone forest has been inhabited and utilized by the Palawan people since time immemorial and is identified as a closed canopy primary forest. The CFSA area in the two mountains is managed as a strict protection zone. The eleven Palawan settlements are considered a buffer zone. Aside from forest and settlement areas, land is used for swidden farming (*kaingin*) for rice and cash crop planting (Haribon Palawan 2008).

The CFSA was issued to the Domadoway Foundation, Inc., the organization of the Palawan people of Mount Domadoway. US Peace Corps volunteers, Ken Munis and Ann Koontz-Munis, among others, assisted the Palawan in obtaining the CFSA. Other groups who have worked with the Palawan are Haribon Palawan, Environmental Legal Assistance Center, Inc. (ELAC), Nagkakaisang mga Tribu ng Palawan, Inc. (NATRIPAL), Tanggapang Panligal ng Katutubong Pilipino (PANLIPI), which all belong to the Palawan NGO Network, Inc. (PNNI). These non-government organizations assisted the community in opposing a cement firm who wanted to operate in their ancestral land during the 1990s up to the early 2000s.

Haribon Palawan continues to work with the Palawan people of Mount Domadoway in obtaining their ancestral domain title and the conservation of their land's natural environment. In the most recent survey of the said agency, the environmental state of the Palawan ancestral domain was graded as fair to good. Swidden farming which has long been practiced by the people, wood handicraft making, and mining and quarrying exploration activities have been identified as threats to the ecosystem. The latter had created conflict among the Palawan, as some were in favor of the cement firm while others were not (Haribon Palawan 2008).

The Palawan people, through the Domadoway Foundation, Inc. and the Haribon Palawan, have been trained in conducting biodiversity monitoring and reforestation programs, among others, as part of their Ancestral Domain Sustainability Development and Protection Plan (ADS DPP).

### **Access to the area**

The foot of Mount Domadoway is approximately a 3 ½ hour bus ride (about 145 km southwest) from Puerto Princesa City, the provincial capital. Other modes of transportation include jeepneys and air-conditioned vans.

To reach Sitio Katbagan, where the researcher resided, one must hire a motorcycle or tricycle from the foot of the mountain in Barangay Panitian to Sitio Tagtuba, then upon reaching the said area, hike upland for approximately 1 to 2 hours. Able-bodied Palawan women and men who are used to this path are able to complete the journey in just 30 minutes.



## **Place names**

The names of the Palawan settlements in Mount Domadoway reflect the wealth of water and plant resources in the area. Some names also symbolize significant natural and historical events.

Sitio Kaborayan was named after large beans (*borey*) that once grew in the area; Sitio Kanangkaan from jackfruit (*nangka*) which were once abundant; Sitio Katbagan from *tebeg* trees, which, according to the Palawan, may induce lactation.

Sitio Malangsi was named so because a body of water located in the area has a fishy (*malangsi*) taste. A folktale is recounted in another part of this book. Sitio Pamoaran's name originated from the tumbling down (*ne puar*) of a great tree due to a flood; the course of the tumbled tree has become a watercourse (*ruran*).

## **Bodies of water**

The Palawan people have settled near sources of water in Mount Domadoway. Most of these bodies of water have a corresponding story regarding the origin of the names.

### In Sitio Katbagan

Ambolongen is the largest among the three streams in the sitio. People come here everyday to fetch drinking water, take a bath, and wash clothes and cooking pots. Carabaos are led to drink and soak themselves in an area which is several meters from the bamboo pipe (*pansor*) where the people take a bath. It is told that there once was a great drought (*lakag*) in the land. Its extent was



PHOTO BY MGU APARENTADO

View from Mount Domadoway.



PHOTO BY MGU APARENTADO

Residents of Sitio Katbagan fetching water from Ambolongen stream.

so great that it reached the sea. Fish died and the stench reached the mountains. During that time, the stream produced only a very small trickle of water that both humans and animals had to compete for a drink. The people placed a bamboo cover (*bolong*) to keep the animals from drinking from the stream now known as Ambolongen.

Magiget refers to the water which is seemingly unmoving and inaudible. The Magiget stream flows silently even when its water level rises during rainy days. It is much smaller than Ambolongen, but its water is also used for drinking and cooking purposes.

Pasi is a very small and shallow stream, but people can use the water for drinking and cooking. It is named after a large *pasi* tree that grew beside the body of water. *Pasi* trees bear small fruits, less than an inch long with a diameter the size of a little finger. It is red and edible when ripe. When unripe, it is green and sour, but may already be picked and stored in a large type of basket (*kukuluan*) for ripening. It is told that one should not swallow more than three *pasi* seeds for it is believed that one will not be able to pass stool and eventually die.

These bodies of water create distinct boundaries and territories in Sitio Katbagan. When a Palawan from the said sitio is asked where he/she lives, instead of saying Katbagan one will answer Ambolongen, Magiget, or Pasi, depending on which is their main source of water. Some may also say “Look, someone from Magiget has arrived.”

### In Sitio Pamoaran

Pamoaran is the largest stream in the sitio. Like the Ambolongen, people come here to fetch drinking water and take a bath. At a distance from the main source, they allow the carabaos to drink and immerse themselves in mud. According to the elders, there was a great tree in the area that was felled (*ne puar*) by a flood and this has become a watercourse (*ruran*), the Pamoaran stream.

Getab stream is the source of water for the residents of Getab as the Pamoaran stream is too far from Getab, the place that separates Sitio Pamoaran and Sitio Abokayan. The stream is utilized for drinking, cooking, and bathing. Their elders said that long ago, a part of the land caved in (*rumintab*) and water suddenly sprang from it. This is how the stream, and its name, came to be.

Lanipga stream is named after a large *lanipga* tree that grew beside it. *Lanipga* wood is light, smooth and reddish. The stream is smaller than the Pamoaran, but water from it may also be used for drinking and cooking.

Mangkopa is named after a large *mangkopa* tree that grew beside the stream. It is the smallest among all the streams in Pamoaran. The water is used for drinking and cooking.

Similar to Katbagan, the streams where people obtain their water create defined territories in Sitio Pamoaran.

### In Sitio Malangsi

How the stream and sitio got the name Malangsi is recalled in this tale: A legend tells of a rich (*mentiri*) Palawan who had much rice and animals. He also owned several *babandil* (a type of gong) and a wild pig with fangs. One day, Muslims came to steal the Palawan's possessions, but the wild pig attacked and killed 4 or 5 of them. Their intestines were hurled up to the tree branches and their blood dripped on the stream. To this day, the water has retained what the people refer to as the fishy (*malangsi*) taste of the Muslims' blood. Despite the taste of the water, which others describe as rusty, Malangsi stream is still used for drinking and other purposes such as cooking and bathing.

Liang lagoon is found in the distant end of Sitio Malangsi. Its name comes from *ne liang* which means to be in the middle. The said lagoon was named so because it is surrounded by three small mountains.

It is believed that the Malangsi flows from the Liang. Being the largest body of water in Domadoway, people from different sitios such as Katbagan, Suked, Pamoaran and even from the far-off Sitio Kanangkaan come to swim here especially during the summertime. Even non-Palawan visit this place, considering that the road is just about a 30-minute walk to Liang. The people describe the water as icy cold in the middle, which must have been 10-feet deep before the El Niño phenomenon occurred. There is a portion of the Liang that is good for drinking and is separated from the swimming area by a row of rocks.

Palawan elders share that if their streams are dry, they can get water from trees and vines in the forest. They obtain water from the roots of the *sambolawan* (*amogis*) and *taloto* tree and the vines of the *anopol* and *lakadbulan*. A person may also chop one meter of the *pasongan* plant's stem or trunk and immediately place it on one's mouth. They relate that one may survive in the forest for one month by drinking the water obtained from the said plants.

## Climate

Mount Domadoway has Type 1 climate. The northeast monsoon occurs from December to April, a moderately dry season. The rainy season is from May to November, the time of the southwest monsoon (Haribon Palawan 2008). The Palawan call the dry season *mesgit*, meaning sunny, and the wet season, *medlek* meaning rainy. They expect the rain to come in April or May, when they are supposed to begin planting rice. Some of them note, however, that this cycle seems to have changed over the past few years.

Some local terms related to weather include: *mesgit* (*tag-araw*, sunny, dry season), *lakag* (*tagtuyot*, drought), *dodlog* (*ambon*, rain shower), *delek* (*ulan*, rain), *medlek* (*tag-ulan*, rainy season), *liyod* (*baha*, flood), *kilat* (*kidlat*, lightning), and *doldog* (*kulog*, thunder).



# 3

## History

According to the Palawan elders, after the land and the skies were created by *Empo*, they the *katutubo* (indigenous people) were placed on this land called Palawan. There were the Batak, Palawan, Tagbanwa, and the Tao't Bato (Konoy). They spoke different languages but all of them lived in one land. The Batak were found in the north while the Palawan people lived in the middle of the land. They say that is why they are called the Palawan people.

Other elders recount that they have been living in Mount Domadoway for as long as they can remember. They claim that they were born in the area where they are presently residing. They did not come from further up or down the mountain.

### Folk stories

In the early days, the ancestors of the Palawan found it difficult to go to places beyond a certain great mountain, so they struck its top using a bolo (*tokew*). This split into two (*dowa*) mountains, what is now known as Domadoway and Tawis.

According to the community, the early Palawan used to live in caves and took shelter from the rain by hiding under large rocks. One day, a man who was perceived to be out of his mind was seen building what was to be the first nipa hut (*kubo*). The others



laughed at him and said: “You really are crazy!” The man responded, “Let’s see who gets wet when it rains.” Sure enough, the man was right. And so the others began to build their own nipa huts.

### **Coming of Muslims**

The Palawan lived in the mountains and lowlands. When the Muslims arrived, many fled to the mountains in fear of the newcomers who wore clothes that they had never seen before. They were afraid they would be harmed by the people who were very different from them. Time passed and the Palawan people became used to the Muslims. Some returned to the lowland areas. They began to interact with each other. Muslim leaders called *datu* appointed some Palawan as *arungkaya* or *panglima* to oversee smaller areas. The people who wore tree bark for clothes began to barter their produce such as rice for Muslim clothes like *serwar* (pants), *badyo* (upper garment), and *tapis* (wrap-around cloth). They also exchanged goods for *siburan* (container of *tinapey*, rice wine), *agong* and *babandil* (types of gongs), *manas* (necklace made of beads), *galang* (shell bracelet), and *singsing* (ring).

### **Arrival of Westerners**

An informant claims that it was the Americans who greatly influenced and practically changed their manner of clothing, by distributing tents and clothes during what he believed was the war time.

In the early 1980s, the New Tribes missionaries came to Domadoway. A certain Gertrudes Saus was said to have lived among the Palawan people for five to eight years while a companion was assigned to stay with her for one or two years. Because of this, the Palawan, who then had no religion and commonly practiced *turon*, (calling of *diwata*, 'benevolent deities who are mediators between humans and the supreme being' [Novellino 2001, Revel 2009]) were converted to Protestantism. The extent of this influence was tremendous such that there are currently churches in 10 out of the 11 sitios of Domadoway. The people continue to hold worship services on Wednesday afternoons (*Tengan*) and Sunday (*Lingguan*). All but a few shamans (*balyan*) have stopped practicing *turon*.

In 1983, US Peace Corps volunteer Chack Crimen, arrived in the area and helped establish the Domadoway Foundation, Inc., organizing the Palawan community in Domadoway (Magallanes, undated). Each sitio chieftain was made a member of the Foundation's Board of Trustees, and the board elected a chairman, Tito Mata, from among them.

Ken Munis and Ann Koontz-Munis, came to Domadoway in 1985 and stayed in Sitio Suked. During their time in the area, they assisted the Palawan people in obtaining the 25-year Community Forestry Stewardship Agreement (26<sup>th</sup> of August 1987). They also helped build the elementary school in Sitio Suked (May 1987) and the Domadoway Foundation, Inc. was strengthened as leaders were encouraged to attend seminars in Sitio Suked while the chairman attended meetings in different parts of the country.

Lauren Anne Arnold lived in the Sitio Katbagan for one or two years during the early 1990s. She was part of the US Peace Corps

agroforestry training unit. She taught the people regarding agriculture and is especially remembered for the different trees, such as jackfruit and citrus trees, which she planted in Domadoway.

### **Introduction to Christianity**

The people say that they practiced no religion prior to the coming of the New Tribes Missions. They believed in *Empo*, an invisible being who created and takes care of the heavens, water, the earth, as well as everything that grows in it. The coming of the New Tribes Missions changed their religious orientation. The missionaries discouraged the practice of the *turon* (calling of the *diwata*) because, according to them, this was comparable to calling on false gods. They also introduced the Bible and Jesus Christ which they referred to as the one true God.

The people attend church services regularly. One woman asked, “If God is not real, who made the heavens and the earth, then?” Most of the Palawan people share this same faith. They await the day when “our bodies will be transformed into heavenly bodies” and “there will be no more American, Bisaya, or Palawan. We will be as one when Jesus comes.”

The missionaries also trained men in every sitio to become pastors, to continue the work when they leave the area. Aside from delivering sermons every Sunday, pastors are also involved in decision-making processes in the community. When a decision has to be made, for example, to allow the separation of a husband and wife, the pastor gives the biblical point of view regarding the matter.

Some people express regret that they threw away and sold their things which were used for the *turon*, specifically the *babandil* (gongs). Now, *babandil* may only be found in a few households. Others wondered, '*Bakit pagbawalan mo (ang turon), Panginoon din yan?*' (Why should *turon* be prohibited when it is also an instrument of God?)



Churchgoers singing during a Sunday worship service.

### **A school in the mountain: Palawan education**

In 1987, a three-room elementary school located in Sitio Suked (considered the center of Domadoway), was built through the collaborative efforts of the municipality of Brooke's Point (Española was then a part of Brooke's Point) and US Peace Corps



The elementary school in Sitio Suked.

volunteers, Ken Munis and Ann Koontz-Munis. Patinti Sapit, the oldest living chieftain, claimed that the Peace Corps couple asked him what he thought Domadoway lacked and he said *iskulan* (school). The land on which it was built was donated by Patinti's daughter-in-law, Ramia Patinti. Since the school is located in Sitio Suked, it is Patinti's responsibility to watch over it, keeping children from damaging the windows and doors. After more than a decade, the school building is in a state of disrepair.

Another schoolroom was built a few years ago through the efforts of a certain Erning Casuagan, an ex-military man living in Tumarbong, a place near Sitio Malangsi.

## **Prominent Palawan individuals**

In Domadoway, a person is considered popular if he has much material possessions, has accomplished things for the community, or has reached places that the majority have not. For example, Palawan people who have been to far places such as Manila or Mindanao are accorded great admiration by the people. The people's impression is even magnified if that person has traveled by plane. The interior of an airplane is unimaginable to them, and its ability to fly, incomprehensible.

### Tito Mata

The most well-known individual today would be Domadoway Foundation Chairman Tito Mata. The majority of the people acknowledge him as the bold and courageous leader who kept a cement company from claiming their land. He says that although he has had no formal education, he went to seek the help of government officials and non-government organizations, spoke on radio programs, and held meetings to convince his fellowmen to cherish their land for the sake of the future generations. It is, without a doubt, through his efforts and wisdom that they are still free to live in and make use of the land that rightfully belongs to them and their ancestors. This is why the people recognize his worth.

### Bales Isim

Bales is known as the man who goes to Manila to deliver handicrafts. He is also the one who has an electric generator. Bales started his business by making handicrafts himself. He delivered his products to a store within the vicinity of the airport in Puerto

Princesa and befriended a businessman. This businessman expressed interest in bringing handicrafts to Manila. The first time Bales went to Manila, he was accompanied by his friend. Later on, he learned how to travel by plane or ship all by himself.

# 4

## Material culture

### Food

#### Rice

Rice (*emey*) is the staple food of the Palawan. It is planted once a year (late April to early May) and harvested four months later. If an average-sized family (four to five members) harvests 10 to 12 sacks of rice, this may last until the next harvest. The Palawan eat rice three times a day – in the morning, noon, and evening.

If they run out of rice before the next harvest, they buy rice from the market (*taboan*) during market days (Mondays in Quezon, Wednesdays in Labog, and Saturdays in Panitian).

Before rice is steamed, they use a winnow (*nigo*) with which they toss the rice in the air to rid it of chaff and other foreign particles, otherwise, the cooked rice will have an unpleasant taste. They wash the rice once before it is cooked. They estimate the amount of broth (*doro*) to be added. When the broth comes to a boil (*susa*), the fire is lowered by removing excess firewood.

#### Rootcrops and bananas

When the people run out of rice, or have no money to buy any, they eat root crops such as sweet potato (*sanglay*), cassava (*sanglay-kayo*), yam (*obi*), taro-like rootcrop (*apari*), and banana





PHOTO BY LYDIA V. ISRAEL

Harvesting rice which is the staple food of the Palawan.

(*ponti*). These are usually boiled. Salt is never added while cooking because they say that they do not know how to approximate the right amount. Those who wish to do so may add salt as they consume the food. Cassava and bananas may also be pounded and mixed with coconut meat.

When a person runs out of mature bananas, one can ask from others and he/she will be free to take as much as he/she wants. The Palawan only take reasonable amounts.

### Vegetables

Different types of vegetables (*ingley*) that may be found in the forest are the *sapwa't batbat* (core of *batbat* plant), *tumbu't bago* (young leaves of *bago* plant), and *kulat* (mushroom, around 30 edible types). It is the older people who go to the forest to gather these vegetables. In some areas near houses, people may gather *patitit* (bitter young leaves), *tumbu't sanglay* (young leaves of sweet potato), *antak* (string beans), *kepayas* (papaya), *rabong* (core of bamboo), and less frequently, *sapwa't niyog* (core of coconut trees). It is considered bad to cut coconut trees. Children often accompany their parents when gathering these plants. Vegetables are usually steamed or cooked in coconut milk without any spices. Salt is added during mealtime. Some Palawan have been using monosodium glutamate, an influence of the lowlanders.

### Marine products

During market days, the Palawan go to the market (*taboan*) to sell their harvest of *sigop* (tobacco), *bawang* (onion), and *ponti* (banana). With the money they make, they buy *seda* (fish) and

other marine products such as *balong* (jellyfish), *pagi* (stingray), *begisan* (shark), squid (*kanos*) and seaweed (*lato*). The seaweed and jellyfish are usually washed once with water and are then consumed. Sometimes they do not wash the seaweed anymore and begin eating it as they head back to the mountain. The shark is steamed while the stingray may be boiled, roasted, or smoked and dried under the sun. The stingray, when smoked or dried has a very unpleasant smell and taste, but the people prefer to prepare it this way to make it last for a few more days.

### Meat

When someone in the neighborhood catches a *baboy talon* (wild pig), he shares it with his relatives and other neighbors. The pig is held over fire. After this they scrape out the hair. The internal organs are usually thrown away, except for the liver, which they believe to be nutritious. The meat may be placed in a bamboo shoot and cooked over fire, boiled in a pot, or roasted.

Palawan households also raise a small number of chickens. Chickens are eaten when the Palawan have no other food. These are also cooked during special occasions such as the last day of school (*bakasyon*). The chicken is usually roasted, but some households cook it with papaya and ginger (*iningley*).

At times, the people, including children, are able to catch small birds. A living bird is placed over fire and turned occasionally until it dies. When it dies, its feathers are removed and it is cut in half to expose all the internal organs. These are thrown away and fed to the dogs or cats. The bird is then thoroughly roasted.



Palawan households raise chickens which are cooked during special occasions or when there is nothing else to eat.

### Bread and coffee

Bread (*galitas* or *bangbang*) is bought in the market and is not usually part of the regular meal. The Palawan like to buy colorful ones. Children do not appreciate bread very much when it does not have pink or violet colored filling. It is eaten as a snack in the morning or afternoon with instant coffee, when available.

### 'Junk food'

'Junk food' is also popular among the Palawan. When parents go to market to sell their products, they usually bring home some brightly colored crackers, candy, and bubble gum for the children.

It does not matter whether they were able to make only P30.00 or so. They have to bring something home or their children would be very disappointed.

When they make a considerably large amount of money, say, P100.00 or more, they are able to buy soft drinks at P9.00 per bottle. They also like to eat ice candy to relieve themselves from the heat.

## **Special food**

### During *rapat*

A wedding (*rapat*) is considered by the Palawan to be a major occasion. In early days, the families of both the man and woman prepared *tinapey* (rice wine) as early as four to six weeks before the *rapat*. They also made *panyaram* and *minelmel* (rice cakes), and cooked *pinuso-puso* (sticky rice placed in shaped coconut leaves and cooked in coconut milk), and *nilutlot* (sticky rice placed in bamboo shoots and cooked in coconut milk).

Today, *rapat* food is more costly since pork and chicken are usually served and it is only the groom's family who shoulders the expenses. The amount of pork and chicken prepared for the affair is the subject of much talk among the people. This is because families who can afford to provide one or two pigs are considered affluent. A large amount of rice is prepared (two or more sacks) because a great number of people are expected to come, in this instance, because of the meat. Everyone who comes is served and may eat as much as he/she wants.

### During *bilangan*

*Bilangan* or *polawan* is equivalent in the Tagalog culture to the *lamay* (wake or vigil). During this time, family and friends gather in the deceased person's house to tell stories, eat, and keep vigil. In the Palawan culture, it is done on the fourth and seventh nights after the dead is buried.

When it is a spouse who dies, the *bilangan* on the seventh day after he/she is buried is also the day that the husband and wife separates (*pagbutas*). On that day, the family of the deceased prepares rice, meat (in this case, chicken, because the occasion is not as big as a wedding), and vegetables such as coconut core and papaya – all cooked in coconut milk. Before anyone is served, it is the widow or widower who first partakes of the food.

A relative places a little of each of the mentioned food on a banana leaf, divided in the middle by a wooden ladle (*luwag*) – the left side being the woman's and the right being the man's. A small amount of sugar is added. An elderly relative of the deceased calls the deceased to come and eat with his/her spouse for the last time. The living spouse eats his/her share. After he/she has consumed everything, the banana leaf is torn, separating the left from the right side. The untouched food is wrapped in the banana leaf. The elder holds this and bids the deceased not to come near his/her spouse again, for they now have different lives to live since they have been separated by death. He/she must now go with *Empo* (God). After this, the guests are served the same food but without the sugar.

During *pagbangunan*

*Pagbangunan* refers to the day when a woman who has given birth has already regained her strength. A chicken will be roasted for her – an *upa* or *meninileg* (hen) if she gave birth to a girl or a *lumbo* (rooster) if the child is a boy. The mother must consume the whole chicken. The people cannot say why this is done, except that it has been the tradition of their forefathers.

During *sanggop*

*Sanggop* or *pasalamat* (thanksgiving) is a Protestant influence on the Palawan. Whenever they have something to thank God for, such as having given birth safely, having been spared from an accident, or having been healed from an illness, the involved family voluntarily brings food for the entire congregation. They usually bring a large amount of bread (bought the day before in the market), instant orange juice drink (placed in wash basins and pails), and a pack or two of candy. After the Sunday church service, a member of the family giving thanks speaks a few words and explains what they are thanking God for, or utters a short prayer of thanksgiving. After this, everyone is given an equal share of bread, juice, and candy.

Thanksgiving days for the harvest of rice are scheduled by the people themselves. During the early harvest days, the people gather in church for the annual *Pasalamat it Ilew* (*pinipig* in Filipino, roasted and pounded young rice). Every family brings to church a generous amount of *ilew* prepared in different ways – plain and dry, dry with sugar, dry with sugar and shredded coconut meat, or with sugar and coconut milk.



*Pasalamat it Emey* (thanksgiving for rice) being held.

In the latter parts of the harvest is the *Pasalamat it Emey* (rice). The people bring rice and viands to church and eat with the rest of the congregation after the Sunday church service.

### Tinapey

*Tinapey* (rice wine) was an important part of weddings and in the *balyan's* (shaman) performance of *turon* (calling of *diwata*) for treating swidden farm (*kaingin*) of pests. *Tinapey* was also used in the *turon* for treating a sick person.



## Clothing and ornaments

### For women

In the early days, women wore *tapis* (wrap-around cloth) made from the bark of the *aga* tree. It was difficult to wear the pounded bark, so they adopted the *tapis* of the Muslim. Along with this, women used the Muslim *badyo*, a blue long-sleeved blouse with *anteras* (sequins) on the neckline, especially during occasions such as weddings. They adorned themselves with elaborate *manas* (necklace made of beads) and *galang* (shell bracelet). Today, the *badyo* is less frequently worn. Only the elderly women still wear them to church and during weddings. Others use the *badyo* as a



PHOTO BY LYDIA V. ISRAEL

Doklema Saro wearing *badyo*, *tapis* (*patadyong*), and *manas* beside children dressed in lowlander attire which the people have adopted as their common clothes.



Residents of Sitio Malangsi (and the researcher) wearing varied types of clothing. Only a few men continue to wear *baag*.

scarecrow. The young and middle-aged women prefer wearing a shirt and skirt or *tapis*. The varied types of *tapis* which the women wear are the *solindang*, *patadyong*, *malong*, and *kosta*.

Instead of *manas* (Muslim necklace), younger women prefer gold-plated necklaces and earrings bought in the market. Those who knew how to make the *galang* (shell bracelet), on the other hand, have already passed away and the remaining *galang* are now family heirlooms.

#### For men

In the early days, men wore *baag* (loincloth) made from the bark of an *aga* tree. Some would also borrow the *baag* of a relative or

neighbor if he did not have one. When the Muslims arrived, they brought *serwar* and *balyang* (pants). If they had rice to spare, Palawan men would exchange it for *badong* and *karis* (bolo), worn on each side of the waist.

Today, no more than a couple of men may still be seen wearing *baag*. According to them, this change occurred because whenever they went down to sell their crops, people would talk among themselves and were often overheard saying “I’ve seen a monkey.” Sensing that it was them being spoken about, the Palawan felt ashamed and began dressing themselves the way the lowlanders did.

There also was a time when the men used the *kantiyu* – a pair of black long sleeves and pants with a red sash and a *bakes* (belt). This attire was especially used during the *turon* (the Palawan way of calling on a *diwata*). On the otherhand, women doing *turon* would wear *badyo* and *tapis*. Today, both the use of the *kantiyu*, *badyo*, and the practice of *turon* have greatly diminished.

## Houses

Like in most cultures, it is the men who build the houses. The Palawan proudly claim that *ransang* (nails) are all that they need to buy when building a house, whereas the *Bisaya* (referring to a non-foreigner and non-Palawan) have to purchase all the materials required for construction. Others still use *uwey* (rattan) for tying materials together, eliminating the need for nails.

They gather building materials such as wood and bamboo from the forest, but they never cut down large trees. The roofing



PHOTO BY MIGU APARENTADO

Some houses have roofs made of galvanized iron sheets.



PHOTO BY HYDIA V. ISRAEL

Palawan houses are commonly elevated several feet from the ground.

materials are either nipa or coconut leaves (usually two layers to protect from the rain) called *sapaw*, flattened bamboo (*paspasan*), and in several cases, galvanized iron sheets. The posts are small diameter trees, the flooring, bamboo, and the walls, *sawali* (bamboo slats). The houses are usually elevated, several feet from the ground, and are commonly not enclosed by a fence.

There is no specific time for house building. A visitor who announces his intention to live in the area for a long period of time (a year or more) may be built his own house if he informs the people a month or so before he actually comes to the area.

#### Typical house structure

The structure of houses vary - from one big room where everything is done (cooking, making handicrafts, receiving visitors, sleeping) to one that has a separate bedroom, receiving room, and cooking area. The cooking area is usually adjacent to the house or within the house itself to keep from having to go out at night when it is dark.

#### Typical furnishings

Houses are usually without furniture or fitment except for, in some cases, a table, which is not used for eating meals but as a place for water containers, children's toys, salt, and coffee, among others. They have plastic or ceramic plates and some have thermos bottles.

In the kitchen are found several metal pots which they buy from the market, *luwag* (ladles) made of wood and coconut shell bound together by *langking* (nylon) or rolled *kulit it bago* (skin of bago

stem), and plastic gallon containers. Plastic gallon containers are popularly used to store water for drinking and cooking purposes. These containers are cleaned once or twice a week by filling them with sand and pebbles and shaking them vigorously.



PHOTO BY MGL APARENTADO

Nowadays, softdrink liter bottles are commonly used to store water from their springs.

### Musical instruments

The *babandil*, a type of gong, was used for *turon* (calling of *diwata*) or *rapat* (wedding). In those circumstances, 3 or 4 *babandil* were played simultaneously. It could also be used to call a *maninikeg* or *mengengpet* (birth attendants) if a woman was about to give birth.

People would give warnings that one must not strike the gong if there is no *turon* or *rapat*. It would be like calling a *diwata* for no reason. The *diwata* may get angry and inflict one with an illness. This is called *pesekitan ke diwata*.

Aside from the babandil, the Palawan also adopted the *agong* and *gabbang* (bamboo xylophone) from the Muslims.

The *suling* (flute) and the *tuganggang* made from bamboo are Palawan instruments sold as handicrafts.



Tansio Topiat beside his *agong* and *kibut* (jar for *tinapey*, rice wine) heirlooms.





PHOTO BY INDIA V. ISRAEL

Sayap Bantol playing the *gabbang*, a bamboo xylophone.



## **Baskets**

The *kukuluan* is a large basket made from *buri*. It is tied to the head using a cloth. *Kuluin* means to put on one's head. Fruits may be placed here for ripening.

The *bebgasan* is a soft basket where rice is stored. It is also made from *buri*.

*Tabig* (baskets) made from bamboo strips and rattan are also woven by the Palawan, such as *lawas*, which is made from *buho*. It may be used for keeping rice or bread.



PHOTO BY MGL APARENTADO

The Palawan weave various types of baskets such as the *lawas*.

# 5

## Economic activities

### Livelihood

#### Farming

Whether for rice, onions, or tobacco, it is the men who prepare the planting area by clearing it (*ririk*) of unwanted growths. Both men and women take part in planting and harvesting. The women perform more of the harvesting part, because it is not considered to be a very difficult task. Often, during the harvest season, men are left at home to take care of the young children while the women harvest the rice.

#### Making handicrafts

Men carve (*okir*) handicrafts such as plates, *inlam* (containers), and different animal figurines such as birds and fish. They make use of the *anilao*, *bonot-bonot*, *kamilit*, and *lingkabong* trees. They also make musical instruments made of bamboo like the *suling* (flute) and the *tuganggang*. These instruments are usually designed by placing a coconut shell over fire. The lighted coal is then used to draw different designs, the most popular of which is the Palawan script. Nowadays, women also help in carving designs.

Women weave *tampipi* (wallet) and containers for glasses made of dried *buri* leaves. Sometimes these leaves are dipped in coloring



PHOTO BY INDIA V ISRAEL

Palawan men carve (*okir*) designs on wooden plates.



PHOTO BY INDIA V ISRAEL

Slicing tobacco (*sigop*) leaves into thin strips.

and dried to achieve color variations. They also weave *tabig* (baskets) using bamboo strips and *uwey* (rattan).

These handicrafts are brought to Puerto Princesa, usually by the men, once or twice a month. Most of them have regular buyers in the airport, the market, and offices of non-government organizations. If the products they deliver are previous orders, they are paid in cash. If not, they are paid the next time they bring their products.

Others sell their products through Bales Isim of Sitio Suked, who makes regular trips to Manila.

### Fishing

Men sometimes go to the sea in the Isumbo and Panitian areas to catch fish. They go in groups of 5 to 10. They leave the home during nighttime and return early the following day. They may use boats to go to deep parts of the ocean and catch fish with hook and nylon. Other times they stay in the shallow area and use a spear instead. An individual is able to catch different kinds of fish which are only for family consumption. They also give one or two to their in-laws.

Women and children, on the other hand, go to the sea during low tide (*atian*). They use a net (*siyod*) to catch small crabs (*karowasan*) and shrimps (*udang*). They also feel the presence of shellfish (*bakalan*) under quickly moving feet (*kepkapen*).



## 6

# Political structures and processes

### Community management

Both men and women have the freedom to attend meetings, to hear information regarding different matters and participate in decision-making, when needed. An example of this is when a problem arises in a couple's marriage. All the elderly relatives of the man and woman gather to offer advice and guidance to settle the problem. Both sides will be heard. If the issue cannot be settled, the opinion of the elders greatly influence the course of the marriage, that is, whether the man and woman will continue to live together or if it would be better that they separate. However, others cannot be forced from their decision.

Through observation, it is notable that the men more actively participate in meetings concerning their land and in issues such as developments regarding the plan to put up a cement plant in Domadoway. When asked why, the men say that, although women are welcome to join the said activities, the distance of the meeting place proves to be the restriction. When meetings are held in a different sitio or in the lowland, the woman will be out of the house for a long time if she goes with her husband. There will be no one to attend to the needs of their children. In a few instances, though, women opt to come to the meeting and bring their children with them.

## **Power holders: then and now**

### The reign of the Muslims

When the Muslims arrived in the land of the Palawan, they greatly influenced the way of life of the people.

Muslims, who were *maiseq* (quick-tempered), ruled over the Palawan, who quietly accepted their sovereignty. The barrio then was referred to as *napan* and it was governed by a *datu*. Smaller areas within the barrio were under supervision of a Palawan *arungkaya* (also called *satya* or *panglima*) and a *pangarapan* meaning “trusted” (next in rank to the *arungkaya*). They were chosen by the *datu*. When problems arose in the barrio, it was the *pangarapan* who first tried to resolve it. If the problem could not be settled, it was made known to the *arungkaya*. If he failed to settle the matter, that was the only time that it was brought to the attention of the *datu*, for if every problem was brought to him, he would have too many problems to handle.

“There was still no (Philippine) President then, but we already had our own laws,” say some informants. Problems then ranged from the less serious – stealing of material possessions, to the worst – stealing of another man’s wife. In the case of the former, the thief would only need to return the things he stole or its equivalent. But in the latter, the *datu* would ask the offended man what he desired to be done to the adulterers. *Gentungan* (death) could be asked and be granted. The *datu*, however, had the power to veto the man’s decision and just pose a fine on the offenders, usually 40 *salapa* (small metal boxes).

When an *arungkaya* died, his son inherited (*sosobliyen*) the

position. Today, this is not practiced anymore because many people desire to be in position. There are no more *datu* and the governance of what is now known as a *sitio* has been left to the *arungkaya* and the *pangarapan*, now called the chieftain and the *segundo*, respectively. In most cases, these two are elected by the people themselves, who choose those who are *maseod* (wise), can speak in public, do not lie, and perform their responsibilities diligently. In some sitios, however, chieftains and *segundos* are assigned by the head of the barangay.

### Formal leadership

The 11 sitios of Domadoway are part of three barangays: Pinaglabanan (in Quezon), and Abo-abo and Panitian (in Sofronio Española). According to the people, there are certain barangay officials who may be approached whenever problems arise, but most Palawan are reluctant to do so because they have heard that most of the said officials are in favor of the planned construction of a cement plant in Domadoway.

### NGOs operating in the area

Haribon Palawan is the primary non-government organization that operates in the area. They have been in the area since 1996 and the Palawan appreciate them for their support in foiling the establishment of the cement plant.

Aside from Haribon Palawan, other NGOs who supported the Palawan community in the campaign against the cement plant were the Environmental Legal Assistance Center, Inc. (ELAC), Nagkakaisang mga Tribu ng Palawan, Inc. (NATRIPAL), Tanggapang Panligal ng Katutubong Pilipino (PANLIPI), which



all belong to the Palawan NGO Network, Inc. (PNNI).

Occasionally, when they go to Puerto Princesa to sell handicrafts, Haribon Palawan has reserved a place in their office where the people can stay and spend the night. (Other indigenous peoples, such as the Batak and Tagbanwa, are also welcome.) At times, some of them even sleep in the house of Haribon Palawan vice-president, Boy Magallanes.

The organization focuses on community organizing. At this time though, a community organizer (CO) has not yet been assigned to Domadoway.

Haribon Palawan may endorse the candidacies of certain persons for national and local positions. The Palawan people, in gratitude to the them, vote for those endorsed by the organization.

Others support groups in the area include Philippine Association for Intercultural Development (PAFID) who conducted validation of the Palawan ancestral domain.

### **Peace and order situation**

The Palawan often assure visitors that as long as they are in Domadoway, they have nothing to be afraid of. They differentiate themselves from the lowlanders who cause a lot of troubles such as disrespecting women, theft, and many instances of taking advantage of other people. They think of themselves as righteous compared to the lowlanders because in their area, there are no cases of crimes such as rape or murder. They even challenge others to check prison rolls and they are sure that one will not

find a Palawan.

The people also have their own theory about the El Niño phenomenon. They consider it God's punishment for the worsening sins of man. An example of this is *sumbang* (incest). A few years back, this was unheard of. Now that some people are committing this sin, God has caused the El Niño to occur. In the past summers, their sources of drinking water never dried up, but recently, the water levels in countless streams have been greatly reduced.

### Conflict resolution

Usually, the parties concerned in a conflict, along with their families, meet with the elders of the community. The problem is settled by identifying who is at fault.

If it is a minor case, the person at fault usually pays the offended party an amount, which is to be decided by the elders. In other times, one is just given advice by the elders and is warned against repeating the act.

If it is a major case, such as adultery, it will not be put to a resolution as easily as a minor case. Much time will be spent by the families of all parties concerned in coming up with a decision. Whether the man and woman stay together as husband and wife depends on whether the woman forgives her husband and whether the woman's family forgives the man. In any case, he is bound to pay a great sum of money to the husband of the woman with whom he committed adultery, for the shame brought upon that man. This amount is to be decided upon by the elders.

### Presence of armed groups

The people claim that there are no armed groups in the area.

### Incidence of crime

Crimes such as rape and murder are known by the Palawan only through the radio or hearing news from lowlanders. When Palawan men fight, they exchange blows, but it never reaches a point that one person kills another. They attribute this to the fact that most of them do not drink *tinapey* (rice wine) anymore. Drinking *tinapey* causes drunkenness, which, they believe alters one's state of mind, causing a person to commit different sorts of misdeeds.

# 7

## Social institutions

### *Tunang*

*Tunang* was widely practiced by the early Palawan. When two women are pregnant at the same time, they may decide to betroth their children in the future, provided one will be a boy and the other, a girl. The two women bring their bellies into contact as a symbol of the arrangement they have made, with the knowledge and consent of their husbands. This will be done in public so many people, such as elders and the *arungkaya*, would be witnesses to the arrangement. If the children turn out to be of the same gender, they will treat each other as brothers or sisters.

After they both give birth and while the children are still very small, their relatives tell them “This is your husband” or “This is your wife.” Even during this time, the families treat each other as if they are already in-laws. There are exchanges of food (chicken, bread) and services (helping the other family with planting or harvesting rice) between the two families. In most cases, the children get so much used to the idea of marrying each other when they grow up that they do not hesitate or express any complaint at all when the time comes for the marriage. In some instances, however, one or both children do not want to marry the other. In cases like this, they cannot be forced to do as their parents wish and in the end, it is their decision that prevails. This means that all the food and services given to the other family are wasted. Due to this flaw in the custom, *tunang* is not as popular

today as it was back then.

### ***Deydey***

*Deydey* refers to the process when the elder of a man's family goes to the elder of another family to ask if their son or grandson may marry their daughter or granddaughter. He will give a *salapa* (small metal box) containing *manas* (necklace), *singsing* (ring), and *panyo* (handkerchief), as a sign that the man desires to be engaged (*deydey*) to the woman. It will be a short discussion and the answer is given immediately.

If the man or woman breaks the arrangement, for example because he/she prefers another individual, a fine (*bandi* or *ongsod*) must be paid because the elder or parent has been humiliated.

### ***Tatab***

A man's uncle/older brother shall visit the uncle/brother of the woman he desires to wed, bringing with him a *salapa* containing *manas* (necklace), *singsing* (ring), and *panyo* (handkerchief). The woman's relative tells the man's relative when he should return to see if the *salapa* he brought will be accepted or not. The woman is asked if she would like to marry the man. If she declines, the *salapa* is returned. If she agrees to the marriage, the man's relative is informed that the *salapa* has been accepted. The woman's relative will tell him when the man's entire family should come to them. This is usually scheduled after a week or two. The man's family must bring *tinapey* (rice wine) because the *bityara*

(dialog) and *rapat* (wedding) will be performed on the day that the woman's family has decided on.

### ***Bityara*: dialog**

Before the *rapat* (wedding) is performed, grudges between the man and woman's families are first settled through the *bityara*. *Bityara* is a generic term for dialog, whether settling other problems in the community or coming up with a decision. Members of the woman's family (up to the second or third degree of consanguinity) bring up problems (*tulak*) that they have had with the members of the man's family (up to the same mentioned degree of consanguinity). Problems such as "Your son threw a stone at my son two years ago" or "Your uncle falsely accused me of stealing a chicken." The man's family pays for each offense. The elders, who may or may not be relatives of either family, determine how much must be paid. When the *bityara* is done, the *rapat* is carried out.

### ***Rapat*: the Palawan wedding**

For the *rapat*, the man's family provides the bride's clothes and the woman's family provides the groom's clothes. The men used to wear long pants and a polo shirt and the women their native *badyo*. Times have changed, however, and the women now use a shirt and a skirt, instead.

The main part in the *rapat* is the joining of several strands of hair of the man and woman using a pea sized amount of *saleng* (tree sap) and coconut oil, symbolizing a union that is meant to last for

the rest of the couple's lives. An elder in the community, who may or may not be a relative of either family, performs this task. In earlier times, after their heads are joined, their relatives approach them and cover their heads with any kind of cloth such as *patadyong*. Piles of cloth may be placed on top of them showing their family members' happiness for their marriage. The community elder, lays his hands on their head, and prays for *Empo* to bless their marriage.

*Tinapey* (rice wine) in a *siburan* (jar) is positioned in between the couple who are sitting on chairs made of bamboo and facing each other. Four *bansok* (straw for the wine) are placed on the jar, one leaning towards the man, the other in the direction of the woman, and the two remaining are placed on opposite sides. The man and woman each take a *bansok*, bend slightly forward, and sip a certain amount of wine. The elder who will check if they have taken enough will then tell them when to stop. He holds the hands of the man and woman that is grasping the *bansok*, then says '*Tebes ne rapaten.*' They are now married. The piles of cloth covering them are removed.

After this, the man holds *maman* (betel chew) components in his right hand while the woman grasps a cigarette stick, also in her right hand. They carefully exchange these articles using the said hands and try not to drop anything, as this is considered a bad omen. The man smokes the cigarette and the woman chews the *maman* briefly then set it aside.

The fathers of the couple will then sip wine from the jar. The mothers shall also do the same.

Anyone who wants to come and watch the *rapat* may do so. The

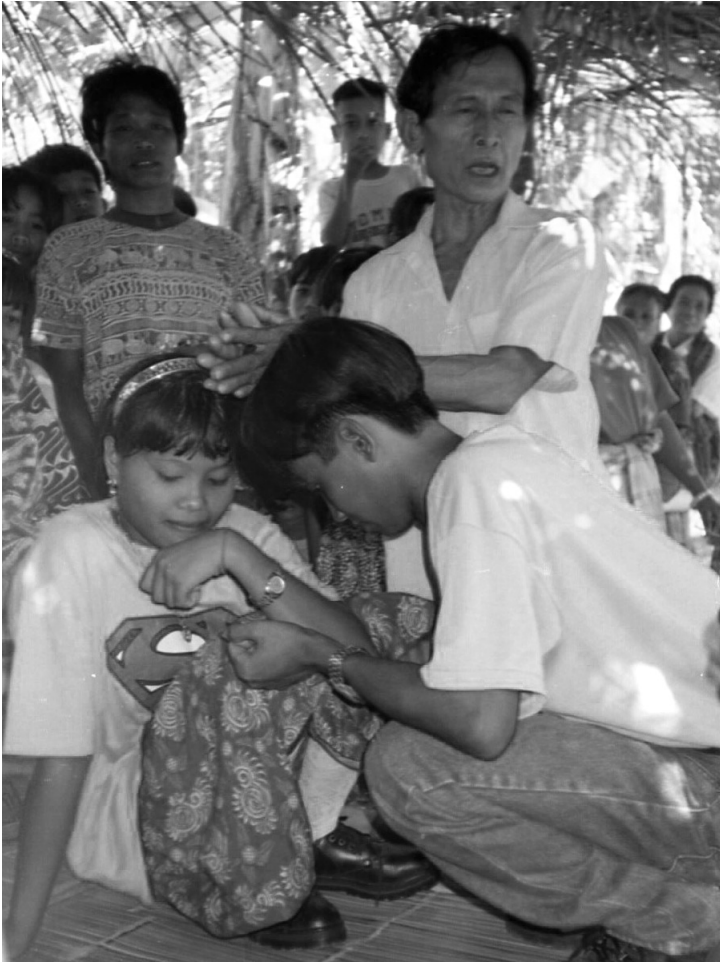


PHOTO BY LYDIA V. ISRAEL

Sawi-sawi Magas, an elder, joins together the strands of hair of the bride and groom, using a small amount of tree sap (*saleng*) and coconut oil, symbolizing the union that will endure for their lifetime.



*bityara* is normally a very short process and the *rapat* immediately follows. It may be done at any time of the day.

In one particular case, a woman was very sickly when she was young. Her parents made an *adyal* or promise, if the woman would get well from her illness they would deliberately prolong the *bityara* when she gets married. The *bityara* started at near midnight and ended at daybreak.

In a *rapat* with a short *bityara*, food is served once. In cases where the *bityara* and the *rapat* are done at different times of the day, food is served twice. Some people go home after eating and may or may not return to watch the *rapat* itself. On the other hand, some people stay and sleep in a big *kubo* with bamboo benches made especially for the occasion. The relatives of both parties stay and participate in the preparation of food for the following day. They also do other tasks such as fetching large amounts of water.

After the *rapat*, a newly married couple must live with the woman's parents for a year or so before they can live on their own. If the livelihood is more productive in the area of the man, the families may also agree upon the couple staying there.

### **Settlement patterns**

Palawan families usually cluster together. The only time a man leaves his parents is when he gets married (except for a few who prefer to build their own *kubo* and live by themselves). When a man gets married, he commonly leaves his own family to live with his in-laws. However, as mentioned earlier, if it would be more economically practical to stay with the man's family, the couple

may do so. There are those who say that couples are now given more freedom to choose where they want to settle.

Very old couples still live by and fend for themselves. When a partner dies, however, the widow or widower is taken by one of his/her children to live with him/her and his/her family.

### ***Pagbutas*: the Palawan way of separation or divorce**

If, at any time during the marriage, either of the couple finds a serious fault in his/her partner which cannot be worked out or forgiven, the marriage may be terminated. An example of this is when the man or woman is proven to have committed adultery. The matter is brought to the attention of the elders of both families. The elders of both families and the leaders in the community, along with the couple, try to work things out by holding a series of *bityara* (dialog). The offended party will be asked whether he or she can forgive the trespass or not. If he or she can forgive the offender, they resume living together as husband and wife, but with a lot of counsel and warning from the elders, so that one will not repeat his/her actions. If he or she cannot forgive the one at fault, the marriage is brought to an end (*pagbutas*) and the offender pays the offended party an amount which is determined by the *hukom* (group of elders).

Palawan couples, however, may not just decide to separate from each other without a valid reason. If it is proven that a man wants to be separated from his wife because of the involvement of a third party, he pays the woman a substantial amount of money (determined by the elders) and he gets none of their conjugal property because he caused the woman humiliation.

If it is the woman who wants to be separated from her husband because of another man, that man pays the husband a substantial amount of money (*bandi* or *ongsod*) and the woman gets none of their conjugal property, again because of the humiliation that was caused. As an informant puts it, the only things an offender gets are the clothes that he or she is wearing.

### ***Pagbutas* due to the death of a spouse**

The day a spouse dies is not the day of separation of the man and woman as husband and wife, but seven days after the spouse is buried.

Within seven days after a man, for example, dies, his *korodwa* (soul) goes to every place he has gone to while he was still alive – including Manila or Puerto Princesa, or just nearby sitios. On the fourth day after he dies, his soul is believed to come back to his own house. That is why all his friends and all the members of his family gather in his house – to “welcome” him. The people tell stories and eat fatty food prepared by the relatives of the deceased. Some stay overnight.

On the seventh day after his death, they believe that the man’s soul will leave permanently. As to where he goes, the people do not know. Others believe that he crosses the *buluntong* (rainbow) but they are not sure where it leads to.

On that day, a ritual will be done in the *bilangan* or *polawan* (wake) wherein food will be prepared for the widowed person and the deceased. This is placed on a banana leaf and divided in the middle by a wooden laddle (*luwag*) – to distinguish the man

and woman's share. The deceased is called by an elder relative for his last meal with his spouse. After the living spouse consumes her portion of the meal, the banana leaf is torn in half and the food for the deceased is wrapped in it. While clutching this, the elder forbids the deceased to approach his spouse again, since death has already separated them.

### ***Kababalowan*: the widow remarries**

A woman may remarry approximately a year after she is widowed. A man who wants to marry her comes to her brothers and cousins and asks permission to do so. He brings a *salapa* (small metal box) with him and asks the woman's second and third cousins, "Is any one taking her to be his wife?" If everybody answers no, the man tells his intentions. The woman's brothers and cousins come to her and informs her that this man intends to marry her. If the woman declines, the *salapa* is returned. If she says yes, the *salapa* is accepted by the woman's brother, or, in his absence, a cousin. The process and the *salapa* are both called *kababalowan*. The *salapa* is to be kept for always. One may not step over it or sell it. The person who does so will suffer from a condition they call *busong* – the stomach will enlarge, excrete a white fluid, (which is the milk one sucked while still an infant) and burst.

If the widower wants to remarry, he must give *salapa* to the family of his deceased wife to replace the loss of their daughter or sister. It is considered disrespectful if the man gets married without giving *salapa* to his deceased wife's family. If this happens, he must pay a fine which will be discussed by elders.

## **Gender roles**

In Domadoway, men and women have shared responsibilities such as cooking, fetching water, and taking care of the children. Both carry out economic roles such as planting and harvesting rice, onions, and tobacco, and making handicrafts. They also have roles in community management such as attending meetings and having one's opinions heard. But through participant observation, one can differentiate the functions of Palawan men from those of the women.

## **Household**

It is more often the woman who cooks for the entire family and cleans cooking pots. She takes care of the young child – feeding, bathing, and putting him/her to sleep. Men are the ones who repair parts of the house which are in bad shape. Both men and women go to the forest to gather firewood. If the men are not around, women put the carabao in places where it should be throughout the day: in grassy areas in the morning, in the water at noon, and back to the grassy area in the afternoon.

## **School**

Very young children are brought to school by their parents. If the school is near their home, girls may attend classes. However if it is a long walk, it is common that only boys are sent to school.

The teachers complain that many of the children do not come to school regularly, despite encouragement and constant reminder.

The original number of students dropped as the months went by.

Only a few complete elementary schooling. The teachers feel that the children do not see the need to go to school, as “they will just be planting rice and making handicrafts when they grow-up.” They cite some of the older girls and unhappily predict that in one or two years, these children will get married, without ever reaching high school.

The nearest secondary school is found in Barangay Panitian. Because of lack of finances and the distance of the school, most parents opt not to send their children to high school anymore after they graduate from elementary school. However, they feel very strongly about the need to send their children to school. Parents often tell their children to go to school so that they



PHOTO BY INDIA V ISRAEL

Recognition day in Sitio Suked Elementary School.

“would not end up like them.” By this, they mean not being able to read or write. They also find mathematics difficult, which is why they say people take advantage of them when they are buying or selling goods in the market. On several occasions, when a child would make excuses not to come to school, the parents (usually fathers) would punish the child by making him perform the tasks of older people like clearing the fields and planting crops.

### **Speaking Palawan and non-Palawan languages**

The young and old speak the language which they also refer to as Palawan. According to the community, today’s Palawan is not the same as the one spoken by their elders. The “old” Palawan is richer, as they describe it, and only the very old people will be able to understand it.

A great number of men know how to speak Tagalog. They say that they learned this because they were able to have some schooling and they also interact with lowlanders when they go to the market to sell their crops or to Puerto Princesa when they deliver their handicrafts. Many women can understand Tagalog but are less able to speak it because they are less exposed to formal education and interactions with lowlanders. The very old and the very young speak very limited Tagalog.

Some of the men knew several words in Ilonggo, Ilocano, and Bicolano. They would readily show off their knowledge by translating, “Where are you going?” in different Philippine languages.

It is English, though, that they find very difficult to learn. Some

of them confessed that they had asked the Americans who came to their area to teach them some English words, but they do not remember anything anymore. Some approached the researcher and asked her to translate statements such as, “*Bakit mo ako pinagtatawanan?* (Why are you laughing at me?)” They say it would be nice if they could understand a little English, a language which, to them, seems like the sound made by birds.

### **Communication: from conversation to radio and movies**

An essential aspect of the Palawan peoples’ lives is communication by use of the spoken word. Almost everyday, they go to each other’s house (*manumbaloy*) and spend long hours chatting about everything under the sun – what one dreamt of last night or the night before, who is going to Puerto Princesa City on a certain date, what happened in church, or a coming wedding. Most of the time they bring their handicrafts and work on them while chatting.

During the night, if the children are not yet asleep, elders tell stories and give guidance while chewing *maman* (betel).

There are some who know how to write and send messages through letters. For example, if a man from another *sitio* will not be able to attend a meeting, he sends a messenger bearing his letter. The reading of the letter is not exclusive to the one to whom it was sent. As soon as he is done reading it, he relays the message to anybody who asks or lets that person read it himself.



### Letter writing

Nowadays, young people often write letters to profess love to another person. Usually, it is the boy who does this by sending his letter through a messenger. In one case, though, it was the girl who sent the boy a love letter.

The writing of love letters is a new manner of professing affection for another person among the Palawan. In earlier days, it only took a direct question like “Would you like to be my wife?” and it would be answered right then and there. A girl who tells a boy “Don’t say that again” means she is saying no. If she says “I’ll ask my father and mother first,” this indicates a yes.

### Radio programs

Most households have a transistor radio. DZRH, Radyo ng Bayan-Palawan, some FM, and foreign station signals reach the area. Their favorite station is Radyo ng Bayan-Palawan because it airs live messages and announcements which the people anticipate every time a fellow Palawan goes to Puerto Princesa. It is how they know if someone is returning home to Mount Domadoway. They hold radio announcers in high regard because they “must have had a lot of education” to know so many things. The people heed whatever advice they hear from them. They often tell their children, “What did Irene (the announcer) say? That children should obey their parents.” Aside from the news, health topics are also discussed and medicines advertised.

On Sundays, they look forward to “Tanggol Kalikasan”, a program co-anchored by Boy Magallanes, who is the vice-president of Haribon Palawan. During weekdays, at 7 in the

evening, “Leon Montero: Code name: Latigo” is aired. This is the radio program that they listen to religiously. If one misses an episode, he is surely going to ask those who were able to follow the radio drama.

### Movies

Young people are able to watch Tagalog movies in the house of Marcito Acoy, the vice-mayor of Sofronio Española. He uses an electric generator since he resides in Panitian where electricity is still not available. Every Saturday, from 8:00 AM to 12:00 noon, they show two Tagalog movies (mostly action films), for which they charge P5.00 per head.

Some of the young people, when going to Puerto Princesa to sell their handicrafts, also grab the chance to watch Tagalog films in cinemas.

### Dictionary, bibles, and ancestral land documents

There are some written articles in every home. Each household was given a copy of the Palawan dictionary (compiled by Ken and Ann Munis), which translates Palawan into Tagalog and English. The missionaries, on the other hand, gave them Bibles (Old and New Testaments) and other Bible-related literature. They also have a Palawan hymnal which was prepared by the Christian Translators Fellowship and contains popular hymns such as the “Doxology,” “Amazing Grace,” and “On Higher Ground.” Some political materials have also reached the area.

Tito Mata still keeps the books that were left by the Americans, although he says he could not understand a word. He also keeps

the documents pertaining to the Domadoway Foundation, Inc. and their ancestral domain claims being facilitated by Haribon Palawan. The elders who were able to attend seminars during the time when the US Peace Corps volunteers were in the area have kept handouts and other written mementos from those gatherings.

### Mobile phones

Nowadays, most Palawan households have mobile phones and these are used as principal means of communication.

## 8

# Knowledge and practices in health

### Concepts of health and illness

The Palawan people do not have a local term for “healthy.” After the researcher explained the term, consciously not giving too many clues about the mainstream idea of “health,” the people described a healthy person as one who had *menonga’y ginawa* (good breathing, ie, no signs of difficulty in breathing), *menonga’y bilog* (body is in good condition), is able to work, is free of illness, and is *mererembo* or *metambek* (fat). Some of them equate being fat with having a strong body.

A person is considered ill when he/she has different patterns of breathing (*lein-lei’y ginawa ya*). Pain is also a sign of illness, especially if it is intense enough that the person is unable to work.

*Rasay* is a term meaning “seriously ill.” They also describe this as the person having “50-50” chance of survival. Aside from the given signs of illness, a person is considered *rasay* if he/she is unable to walk and talk. Family members know that an infant is *rasay* if one has a deep *bubun* (anterior fontanelle).

A person is dying when he/she takes fast but short breaths (*singap*). One is already dead when he/she stops breathing and his/her shoulders finally fold in and then out (*kayobkob*). Some dead persons pass urine or stool. According to their elders, the person’s *arimpuro* (cowlick) will open and release his/her

*korodwa* (soul). While the body is not yet buried, the *korodwa* sits on the part of the body near the head. That is why nobody must sit or walk around that area where the deceased lies.

## Causes of illness and death

### Lianen

Illness can be caused by *lianen* (unseen beings). The *lianen* usually live in large rocks and trees such as the balete. The *lianen* do not like be disturbed. If a person makes noise, plays around, urinates, or defecates in its area, the *lianen* may get a person's spirit. When men intrude on the *lianen's* territory they too may be hit by the arrow of the *lianen* who could be hunting for food using a *sepokan* (blowgun). The unseen *besley* (arrow or dart) will be embedded on the person's body causing pain; this is called *marep*. The healer, *manenegpa*, will extract the arrow.

### Ranga-ranga

Illness can be caused by the *ranga-ranga*, the spirit of the deceased (*korodwa*) which is left on earth when one dies. The said illness is called *seblew* (*bati* in Tagalog). The person will contract the illness that caused the death of the person, for example, the spirit of a person who died of a head ailment will cause head afflictions. Mentioning the name of a dead person, walking on burial grounds, or coming near a dead person's soul may all cause sickness. One must look for a person who knows the incantation (*tawar*) for *seblew*. This will be uttered a certain number of times into a small amount of *apog* (lime). A cross is then drawn on the affected part using the *apog*.

A sick person need not directly go to a healer. In his/her stead, a relative may go to the healer who will direct the relative what to do, after being told of the ailment. If, for example, the person has stomachache, the healer will instruct the relative to put a cross mark on the stomach using *apog* (lime). He will tell the relative of the patient to go home. He shall then transmit the appropriate incantation through the air. This is called *pakirim*.

### Kumakan

It is known to all that *balyan* transform themselves into the widely feared *kumakan* (also known as *memanew panew* or *merat na taw*, an evil person). Just as there may be good and evil people, there may be benevolent and malevolent *balyan*. The *balyan's* soul (*korodwa*) leaves his/her body and flies, especially at night. Its spirit roams to eat unborn children, post-partum mothers, and infants. The *kumakan* also devours the sick and corpses.

A child inside the womb may die because the *kumakan* may exchange its beating heart with the heart of a banana. The *balyan* is responsible for the people in his area; a child from his area will taste bitter to him as a *kumakan*. Thus, he will exchange the children in his area for the children in another *kumakan's* area.

Apparently, the *kumakan* is visible. The people refrain from going out just before night fall and during the night for fear of seeing a *kumakan*. The *kumakan* is not invincible, though. One can strike the *kumakan* with a sharp bolo and, although his *korodwa* will not sustain a wound, once the *korodwa* returns to its body, the malevolent *balyan* will suffer pain on the part where he was struck. If the bolo used in striking him was previously used in shredding tobacco leaves, the malevolent *balyan* will die because

of the heat of the tobacco leaves' sap.

### Other causes

Certain illnesses such as cough, may be caused by the elements, such as wind.

Some people get sick because they are destined to get sick, with unexplained reason. This is called *sanged* or *sesengden*. Some diseases may also be seasonal.

### **Health-seeking behavior**

Palawan people self-medicate, whether by using plants or commercial drugs or, oftentimes, both, before going to anybody else for treatment.

If a child is sick with, for example, *sakit it ulo* (headache) and *egnew* (fever and chills), his parents and grandparents (who usually live nearby) assist each other by getting medicinal plants.

These are usually used as poultice to relieve the headache or as a decoction or sponge bath to lower the body temperature by causing perspiration. If these treatments are not effective, western drug formulations such as Alaxan, Medicol, Cortal, and Biogesic are given, when available. Sometimes, they even go to the village center to buy medicine.

Depending on the severity of the illness, as assessed by the child's verbalization of pain and/or discomfort and level of activity, the medication is continued until one gets well. If the child shows



PHOTO BY MGU APARENTADO

Pounding leaves to be used as poultice for *sakit it ulo* (headache).

neither improvement nor deterioration, the medication is either maintained or other treatments are used. If the condition worsens, they seek the help of a person who knows of treatments aside from those already used. This person may not be a *balyan* (shaman) who communicates with the *diwata*, but simply one who knows how to heal (*megkeseod mengubat* or *mengungubat*). Usually, these persons are the elders in the community, but sometimes, there are certain people (not necessarily old) who specialize in healing particular illnesses.

Aside from the *balyan*, the Palawan shaman, there are those who specialize in different illnesses. However, a *balyan* may have one or more of these abilities or roles.



## Seeking help beyond traditional treatments

The people say that it is difficult to live far from doctors and hospitals because when emergency situations arise, death claims the lives of patients while they are being transported to health facilities. Although the people still make use of natural products, mainly plants, in healing their sick, many of them confess that they are effective only for mild to moderate cases. For severe cases, those that cannot be treated by their plants, the people now resort to bringing their sick to doctors. When they have no money to spend for the cost of consultation and, at times, hospitalization, they usually borrow from those who have extra money, or seek the help of NGOs, government offices (such as the Department of Social Welfare and Development), or politicians.

The two most common health problems encountered by the people are *sakit it beteng-suka tey tey*, and *sakit it ulo*. *Sakit it beteng* is defined as abdominal pain while *suka tey tey* is vomiting and diarrhea. Matial Tamat of Sitio Pamoaran thinks that this illnesses may be due to unclean drinking water, as their springs are open and exposed to different elements in the environment. Because of this, he was planning to make a request (addressed to politicians) to give material support for the building of encasements around each spring in Sitio Pamoaran that is used for drinking. *Sakit it ulo*, on the other hand, is defined as headache. Sometimes it is accompanied by *egnew*, fever and chills.

Along with these is a problem related to the birthing process. People have reported cases of post-partum deaths because of the retention of the *inulunan* (placenta) and some *aring*. As mentioned before, *aring* are fingerlike projections of the placenta which, when retained, may cause death.

Stillbirths, and neonatal and infant deaths have also been reported by the people. *Apas* refers to when a newborn child does not breastfeed and dies after one or two days. It is called *apas megurang* if the child lives for a week and a half and also does not breastfeed.

Others explain that the child was already weak to begin with when he/she was inside the womb, that is why he/she did not breastfeed when born. If the child is born healthy then suddenly dies, the death is attributed to the dreaded *kumakan* (one who eats), which is attracted to the infant's fragrance. People also blame the *lianen* – invisible beings who are capable of taking a person's soul. The Palawan explain that the souls of very young children are not as strong as the souls of adults, which is why children are particularly prone to this condition.

### **Traditional medicine vis-a-vis modern medicine**

The Palawan people, including the healers, recognize that there are illnesses which may only be treated by traditional medicine. In the same light, there are conditions which may only be treated by modern medicine. Thus, a person with a 'traditional ailment' may die if he is brought to the hospital.

They recognize that both systems of health care are necessary in the area.

## Knowledge and practices on pregnancy

A Palawan woman suspects that she is pregnant when she misses her period (*dugo*). For example, an informant says her period comes on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of every month. If, one time, it does not come on the 8<sup>th</sup> day and in the succeeding weeks, she would suspect that she is pregnant. This suspicion is confirmed if she still does not have her period a couple of months later.

During the early part of pregnancy, when the bulge on the abdomen is not yet noticeable, some women experience vomiting (*suka*), while others do not. But all informants confessed that they experienced *pag-ibgen*. *Ibeg* means saliva. In this case, it means “that which makes the pregnant woman salivate.” The food desired by the woman could be anything from *doro’t niyog* (coconut juice) to *mailew ne nangka* (unripe jackfruit). Most of them, however, experienced craving for the unripe *mempalam* (mango). There is even such a thing as *mempalang-boblong*. This means that although it is not the season for mango trees to bear fruit, they do bear several for the pregnant woman to be able to fulfill her *pag-ibgen*. In some instances a woman may crave for certain food that she does not usually eat.

Some Palawan say nothing bad happens to the pregnant woman (or the fetus) if she does not get what she wants, except that she will not be able to get it out of her mind all day and might even dream about it. Another thing is that, after the baby is born, he/she will salivate excessively. Others say that a woman may die because her *pag-ibgen* was not fulfilled; thus, a responsible husband should exert effort to fulfill her craving.

Clues as to the baby’s gender can be derived from the *pag-ibgen*. If

the woman craves for *lada* (pepper), she will give birth to a boy. She will have a girl if she craves for *tuey* or *bornok* (kinds of shellfish).

*The story of the pregnant woman and the jackfruit*

*Once there was a pregnant woman whose pag-ibgen was the ripe jackfruit. She asked her husband to find her one, although it was not the season of jackfruit. "Go ask from the Muslims," the wife pleaded. So the man went to the Muslims and asked for the fruit, explaining that his wife was pregnant and was craving for it. The Muslims gave him permission to take as much as he wanted. The man did take as much as he could, but he ate it while he was still up in the tree. He went home and told his wife, "The Muslims wouldn't give me any."*

*Days passed and the woman's craving did not subside. She pleaded with her husband to ask the Muslims again. Off went her husband. The Muslims let him take as much as he wanted, but just like the first time, he ate them all and went home telling his wife "I found nothing." The woman wanted jackfruit so badly that she asked her husband to keep looking.*

*Her husband went to the Muslims a third time and again asked for the fruit. The Muslims said that there weren't any ripe ones anymore, but that the man could take an unripe one, if he liked to. The husband took an unripe jackfruit home and hid it from his wife. He placed it in a kukuluan (large basket) to allow it to ripen.*

*One day the man went out and the woman was left alone in the house. The jackfruit, which had ripened by this time, was emitting a very sweet scent. Because she wanted it so much, she took a very*

*small portion (just a part that contained one seed) and ate it. Then she was content.*

*When her husband came home, she said, "The jackfruit has ripened." "There is no jackfruit," the husband answered. "Yes, there is, in the kukuluan. I even took a small portion and ate it."*

*Upon hearing this, the husband was filled with rage. He took a bolo and struck his wife's belly. She died instantly. The fetus was exposed and he saw that it was sucking on the piece of jackfruit that his wife ate. He thought to himself "So it was the baby who craved for the jackfruit all along."*

### Care for the mother and child during pregnancy

The woman first feels the *gibek* (literally, this means "noise," but in this case it refers to "movement") of the fetus, probably, on the fifth month. During this time, the *maninikeg* (male birth attendant) is already able to feel the fetus with his hands. He gathers *ingley it mentong* (vegetables for the pregnant). The names of these plants are unknown. They are soaked in water and the infusion is taken by the woman once a month for the next four months to prepare for the complete expulsion of the placenta and any accompanying *aring* (fingerlike projections of the placenta which may cause death when retained). After the fourth dose, the woman pays the *maninikeg*. Around 10 years ago, the entire regimen cost only P25. Three to five years later, the price increased to P80.

As the *eldew net sekitat mentong* or day of delivery nears, a piece of cloth (any kind), called *egen*, is tied around the top of the

pregnant woman's abdomen. By this time, the child has become very active. The purpose of the *egen* is to prevent the fetus from reaching the *atey* (liver), just in case his/her movement perforates the very thin *bebtangan* (uterus) and kicks open the *letep* (door) that separates it from the liver. The liver is where a person's life is situated. If the fetus reaches the liver and kicks it, the mother may die.

### Knowledge and practices on child delivery

At the onset of labor pains, the woman's husband prepares the things needed for the procedure. He ties a *dudurienan* (bamboo which will be kicked by the *maninikeg* when he forcefully pushes the uterine fundus) securely to the floor. He lays down a *datag-datag* (strips of flattened bamboo made into a mat) where the woman must lie.

He puts a *wag* vine around the pillars of their house to keep *merat na taw* (evil persons) from coming near. He begins to burn firewood and coconut husks for a process known as *tigebuwen*. Smoke is generated to mask the combined scents of the mother (fishy because of blood) and the infant's (fragrant) that might attract bad spirits.

Anyone is allowed to watch the delivery. From the very young to the very old, relatives and neighbors fill the place where a delivery is to take place. While most people just come to watch, others perform supportive roles such as heating water for the woman to drink and cooking *binolbog* (porridge) for her to eat after she gives birth. Men stand by to help in case the *maninikeg* is not able to facilitate the expulsion of the placenta and *aring* and in case he

runs out of strength, as he has to push very forcefully in performing the task.

Two persons are vital to the Palawan birthing process: the *maninikeg* and the *mengengpet*. Although the people have never heard of a Palawan delivery that took place without either one of them, they are sure that it is going to be disastrous. They believe the fetus may even come out through the anus or the child may kick the *letep* (door separating the uterus and liver).

### The role of the *maninikeg*

When the woman is already having birth pains, the *maninikeg* is able to predict when the baby is just about to come out by deeply palpating the woman's abdomen. He positions his body directly over the woman's body. His feet are on both sides of the woman's head. The woman's arms are held tightly by two persons (may either be men or women) for she may slide down due to the force of the *maninikeg*'s pushing (*sikeg*). Some men may also assist in pushing (*sambew*), placing their hands on top of the *maninikeg*'s hands. The *maninikeg* occasionally takes short periods of rest and waits for the woman's contractions (*busog*) before he starts pushing again. He continues doing so until the *mengengpet* says that both the baby and the placenta are out. At this cue, he grabs the muscles around the umbilicus and asks the woman for any pain. If pain is present, he applies heated leaves of *payong* to the woman's abdomen, until both he and the *mengengpet*, along with the woman, agree that there is no *aring* left. These *aring* have life. When left inside the placenta, these may reach the *letep* and *atey* (liver) and eat it, causing maternal death.

As soon as all the products of conception, ie, the infant, the

placenta, and *aring* are expelled, the *egen* cloth is tied around the hypogastrium to keep the uterus from slipping down.

### The role of the *mengengpet*

The *mengengpet* is a woman who positions herself on the foot area of the pregnant woman. A woman giving birth is covered with a blanket from her waist down to her feet. The *mengengpet* places her hands under the blanket and waits for the placenta to be expelled, constantly telling the *maninikeg* what she is feeling with her hands. It is the *mengengpet* who cuts the baby's cord (*pused*) and places the placenta in a *denoman* (bamboo water container). After giving the baby a bath, she touches the woman's legs and stomps once on the floor. She reaches for the woman's right and left hand and again stomps on the floor. This process is known as *pinamigatan*, which will protect the woman from post-partum illness.

## **Knowledge and practices on infant care**

### Lactation and breastfeeding

Right after the *meraga* (infant) is born and the *mengengpet* cuts the cord and gives him/her a bath, he/she is brought to the mother for the first feeding.

The first milk is described as *malaget* (sticky) and does not flow continuously, that is why it is discarded. This is done every time the woman gives birth. It is believed to cause many different illnesses to infants.



If the woman has little or no milk a couple of hours after she has given birth, she must “buy” milk from the *tebeg* tree. The *tebeg* is *metagek* (sappy). The mother’s *galang* (shell bracelet), *manas* (beads), or even a plastic ring that comes with junk food must be hung on a *tebeg* branch as a sign of “buying” milk from the tree. The ‘payment’ must be left on the tree for one to two days, until the mother has milk. The sap is applied to the breast. A young *tebeg* leaf is soaked in a glass of water and drunk. The remedy will result to the mother having sufficient milk.

The newborn naturally sleeps all day. From time to time, he/she is awakened by a cold bath, otherwise, the people say, he/she will not feed. The newborn is bathed and fed five or more times a day, ie, whenever the mother or a relative thinks that he/she is hungry. The *bubun* (anterior fontanelle) does not signify anything related to hunger or satiety.

### Bottlefeeding

Some young mothers say that they would like their children to get used to being bottlefed. They say that this is so because they cannot do much work when they have an infant who needs to be fed often. On the other hand, others think that there is no need for the bottle. They say that a woman can work while the baby sleeps, go home when she thinks the baby has awakened, feed the baby, put him to sleep again, and then go back to work.

### The life stages of the Palawan

Stage/ approximate age	Description	Common ailments
<i>Meraga to meraga-raga/ menge-yegang</i> 0 to 2 years old to 3 to 4 years old	From birth up to the time when the child: -is weaned -is able to walk stably -is able to talk in phrases and short sentences -is still cuddled by parents, especially by the mother -is hung on a cloth ( <i>bebat kebley</i> ) attached to the body of a parent or older sibling when walking far distances -still runs around with no clothes on -may not yet be left alone in the house -may not yet go to other houses by him/ herself	<i>Segew-segew</i> or <i>sanged-sanged</i> -a condition characterized by the persistent crying of a <i>meraga</i> especially in the afternoon and at night. Aside from crying, <i>meraga-raga</i> complain of seeing scary beings which are invisible to other people. Others explain that the unseen is showing an object such as a flower to the child. One cries because he/ she wants to reach for it. The treatment is to utter an incantation on water which will be used to wash the child's face. If it is not effective, one may try other treatment such as plants and other incantations.

<p><i>Kay nga kelang yegang</i> (literally translated, this phrase means “not yet big child”) 5 to 8 years old</p>	<p>From <i>meraga-raga</i> up to the time when the child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-is able to talk in long, complete sentences</li> <li>-is not cuddled by parents anymore</li> <li>-may be left alone in the house</li> <li>-may begin going to school</li> <li>-may help fetch water, cook rice, catch birds, harvest rice and onions, come along with elders in gathering vegetables and marine products, take care of younger sibling</li> <li>-young girls are told to carry equal amount of water containers (<i>denoman</i>), on their left and right shoulders, so that when they grow up, their breasts will be of the same size.</li> </ul>	<p>From <i>meraga-raga</i> to <i>budyang/subur</i>, <i>lebew</i> (chicken pox)/ <i>tipdas</i> (<i>bulutong-tubig</i>) usually occurs. According to the Palawan, this is a non-communicable ailment characterized by the appearance of water and pus-secreting vesicles and pain all over the body. The body will also feel hot.</p>
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<p><i>Budyang-budyang</i> and <i>subur-subur</i> (very young lady and very young man) 9 to 13 years old</p>	<p>From <i>kay nga kela</i> up to the time when the child: -is usually in Grade 1, 2, or 3 -still plays with children belonging to the opposite sex but begins to form same- sex groups to which he/she allocates a great deal of time -may already have a <i>deydey</i> (boyfriend/ girlfriend) -washes own clothes, fetches water, cooks, helps in harvesting and pounding rice Girls: -begin to use hairclips and refuse to have hair cut -begin to prefer the <i>tapis</i> (wrap-around cloth) over the <i>simpan</i> (short pants) -play games such as pretending to cook rice Boys: -play games such as preparing a small piece of land for planting</p>	
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	-take care of the family's carabao	
<i>Budyang and subur</i> equivalent to adolescence	From <i>budyang-budyang</i> and <i>subur-subur</i> up to the time when the person: -gets married and starts a family of his/her own -does all the previous responsibilities mentioned, except that there are more economic functions to perform such as making handicrafts, selling products in the market, and being involved in community activities	There are no rites of passage from childhood to womanhood or manhood. The only recognized difference between <i>kay nga kela</i> and <i>budyang / subur</i> is the body size. Circumcision and menstruation are not considered significant indexes of passing from one stage of life to another.
<i>Umetngan</i> equivalent to young to middle adulthood	Characterized mainly by: -providing food for the family by performing economic functions -performs parental and grandparental roles	

	-involved in the decision-making process in the community	
<i>Megurang</i> late adulthood	<p>Characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-hair turning white (<i>bura</i>)</li> <li>-ability to continue working in the field but experiencing easy fatigability, diminished vision and different ailments</li> <li>-may have grandchildren to the knees, elbows, and cheeks (chronological order that means a grandchild is getting farther and farther away from his/her grandparent's kiss)</li> </ul>	<p>Except for those mentioned above, no other illnesses are specific to any age group. Both the young and old suffer from the more common <i>sakit it ulo-egnew</i> (headache with fever and chills), <i>sakit it beteng-suka tey tey</i> (abdominal pain accompanied by diarrhea and vomiting).</p>



## 9

# Traditional healers

### Types of healers

#### The *maninikeg*

The *maninikeg* is the man who assists in childbirth. By palpating the abdomen of a pregnant woman who is near term, he is able to know the exact time when the woman is going to deliver. During delivery, he forcefully pushes the uterine fundus until all the products of conception are out, ie, the infant, the placenta, and any *aring* (fingerlike projections of the placenta which may cause death when retained).

There was a time when only Patinti Sapit of Sitio Soked knew how to *sikeg* (assist in child delivery). Women and their families from all over Domadoway would build a *nipa* hut close to Patinti when the day of delivery is about one or two months away.

Today, many have learned the techniques of a *maninikeg*. They claim that nobody formally taught them the ways, but that they gained knowledge and skill by watching others do it and by actually helping during emergency cases.

#### The *mengengpet*

The *mengengpet* is the woman who assists in childbirth. Her responsibilities include catching the infant as it is delivered,



coordinating with the *maninikeg* whether the placenta has been expelled already or not, and expressing whether she thinks there is some *aring* that has been retained. She also cuts the cord, places the *inulunan* (placenta) in the *denoman* (bamboo water container), bathes the infant, and washes the mother.

### The *mememala*

The *mememala* is someone who can see a *kumakan* or *memanew panew* (a *balyan*'s spirit who leaves its body) who comes close to a pregnant woman and intends to eat her unborn child. The *mememala* instructs a pregnant woman to stay inside the house. He/she then commands the *kumakan* to go away. He/she gives a warning that if something bad happens to the child, he/she knows which *balyan* the spirit comes from and he/she will go to his/her house. The *kumakan* heed his/her directions.

### The *ilot*

The *ilot* specializes in treating *liso* or bone dislocation. According to the people, he uses painful massage techniques, but keeps the affected part from swelling and actually puts the bones back to their original positions. There are *ilot* who are also a *maninikeg*.

### The *manenegpa*

The *manenegpa* may be either male or female. He/she specializes in treating *marep* – a condition which the people describe as “body pains, as if there were thorns embedded on one’s flesh.” The *manenegpa* utters an incantation (*tawar* or *batya*), blows on the painful part, grabs the muscles on that part, twists it, and pulls out whatever object that has been embedded on it.

The *manenegpa* is able to extract different things such as *ransang* (nails), bamboo sticks, or *besley* (arrow or dart).

The people say that an individual may have multiple animal souls. The *lianen* who are hunting for food may be targeting one's bird or monkey soul using its *sepokan* (blowgun). That is why one gets *marep* and a *manenegpa* may pull a *besley* from the body.

### ***Balyan*: the Palawan shaman**

A *balyan* heals the sick by performing *turon*, calling of the *diwata*. He/she may also be able to diagnose the illness and identify the plants, and particular incantations to be used. He/she may use a *boldong* instrument (made of *boho* or *tering* type of bamboo that has no hole in the middle and no joint-like partitions) to conduct *sokodan* (consultation). One will ask questions such as "Was it caused by a *lianen*?" then stretch his/her arms to measure the instrument. If the length of the *boldong* does not change, the answer is no. If it is yes, the *boldong*'s length will increase.

Other tasks the *balyan* may perform include ridding swidden farms of pests.

There are benevolent and malevolent *balyan*. The spirit of the malevolent *balyan* may eat the unborn child, post-partum mother or infant, as well as the sick and corpses.

### The making of a *balyan*

In the Palawan culture, a person who sees a *taw't kakayuan* (person of the woods) is meant to be a *balyan*.



Demonstrating how the *balyan* back then used an instrument called *boldong* when conducting *sokodan*, to determine the cause of illness and which treatment to use.

A person may also become a *balyan* through a dream.

If a person, a Palawan or lowlander, wants to become a *balyan*, one must seek the help of a *balyan* who is willing to impart everything he/she knows. There is even a mountain in the Domadoway area, which is called Pinagbolayan. This means that a *balyan* taught a student to become like him/her in that mountain. Both the *balyan* and the student must perform *turon* twice a month for eight consecutive months (depending on the *balyan*), each time preparing *tinapey* and fatty foods such as chicken, eggs, *pinuso-puso*, and *nilutlot* (sticky rice cooked in bamboo shoots). *Parina* (solidified tree sap) may also be burned. Its fragrance will attract the *diwata* who are purposefully being called and whose

help is being sought.

On the eighth month (or depending on the *balyan* or *diwata*), the student performs *turon* for one last time. Two or more (sometimes eight) platefuls of sticky rice is placed on his/her head. If the *diwata* do not approve of the student, they will get mad and cause the plates to fall as he/she leaps toward a long distance. If the *diwata* are pleased, they would keep the plates from falling. This is how a person who claims to be a *balyan* is affirmed or rejected.

Tito Mata's grandfather, who was a *balyan*, also used plates to determine if he could heal the patient. If he placed a plate on his head, leapt a far distance, and it did not fall, it would be a sign that he could heal even the most grave illness. If the plate would fall, he could still attempt to heal the patient as best as he could but he would also recommend that the person consult other *balyan*.

### Palawan healer profiles

The researcher was able to interview three *balyan*: Tansiong Tima of Sitio Katbagan (also known as Ketket), and Salimbak Tamat and Melia Magas (also known as Nono), both from Sitio Pamoaran, and one *mangungubat*, Patinti Sapit.

Tansiong Tima and Salimbak Tamat continue to practice the *turon* (calling of the numerous *diwata*) to diagnose illnesses and learn the plants and *tawar* (incantations) which are to be used in healing a particular patient. Melia Magas and Patinti Sapit (who, contrary to what the people say, denies that he was ever a *balyan*) have been drawn to Protestantism. They still heal by using plants

and other natural products, saying these materials were given to them by *Empo* (God) for this purpose. However, Melia Magas does not practice the *turon* anymore because in her new faith *diwata* are believed to be false gods.

Each of the four healers confessed that his/her healing knowledge came from the *diwata* (benevolent deities who are mediators between humans and the supreme being [Novellino 2001, Revel 2009]). They are believed to be servants of *Empo*. They say that *diwata* appear in what they describe to be “dreams.” According to their description, the *balyan* seems to be asleep, as his/her eyes are closed. But he/she is able to walk and climb stairs, and speaks in a voice different from his/her own. In this “dream,” a *diwata* appears, disguised as someone the *balyan* knows. The *diwata* teaches the *balyan* which plants are used for particular ailments and the incantations that go with some of them. After the *balyan* “wakes up,” he/she will not remember the things that happened, but recall the knowledge that the *diwata* shared.

Being a *balyan* seems to run in the family. Tansiong Tima says that his uncle was a *balyan*. Salimbak Tamat says that his great grandfather (Apo Kambingen), his grandfather (Apo Inggal), and his father were all *balyan*. However, they say that anybody may be taught and trained to become a *balyan*.

### *Tansiong Tima*

Tansiong Tima is more popularly known as Ketket. He claims that when he was about the same age as his son, Victan (who must be 8 to 10 years old), he suffered many different kinds of illnesses. He became weak and did not have the appetite to eat rice. A *diwata* appeared in his dream and said, “If you will not perform *turon*, you will die.” He did not give his dream much attention and he did not get well either. The *diwata* again appeared in his dream saying, “If you do not call on me, you will die. Prepare *tinapey* (rice wine), *minelmel* (type of rice cake), and *pinuso-puso* (sticky rice cooked in shaped young coconut leaves with coconut milk).” He prepared all these, performed *turon*, and got well from his illnesses.



PHOTO BY LYDIA V ISRAEL

Tansiong Tima with his children.

Tansiong says he has been healing the sick even before he was married, about the age of his eldest daughter, Rolinda, who must be 11 or 12 years old.

It is believed that Tansiong was poisoned a few years ago in Pulot, Sofronio Española. He engaged in a drinking spree with some

Palawan friends who lived in Pulot. He was so drunk that he slept in one of his friends' house that night. The morning after, he was offered coffee. As soon as he got home, he was coughing. Weeks and months passed and he began experiencing more signs of poisoning. Aside from the constant productive cough, his voice changed, and he experienced weakness such that he could not go to the *taboan* except by riding a carabao.

He tried to heal himself and was almost well until he went to Puerto Princesa City, drank a couple of beers with Haribon Palawan officials, and ate pork as *pulutan*. Pork is a contraindication to the herbs which Tansiong was using. His condition was getting worse, as he already experienced vomiting of blood. The poison is believed to burn the *tatbungan* (throat) causing voice changes, the *tubo* (that which connects the *tatbungan* to the stomach) causing vomiting of blood, and the *tiney* (intestines). Death occurs once the intestines are completely burned.

Because Tansiong believes that he does not have much time to live, he has begun teaching his wife about his healing knowledge. He is also considering teaching his children.

Aside from being a *balyan*, he does not have any other responsibility in the community.

*Patinti Sapit*

Patinti claims that he must be over 100 years old by now, considering that his grandchildren already have grandchildren of their own.

Aside from being a *mengungubat* (healer), Patinti was also the only *maninikeg* for a long time and the only *mememala* that the people could name. He also serves as the chieftain of Sitio Suked, and thus, is a member of the Domadoway Foundation Board of Trustees.



PHOTO FROM DOMADOWAY FOUNDATION 2007 AND HARIBON PALAWAN



At his age, Patinti still maintains his own *uma* (swidden farm), and lives with his wife and an adopted son, who must be seven or eight years old. He is able to go to distant sitios to attend to different matters and even to Puerto Princesa City when Haribon Palawan asks him to attend a meeting.

Patinti boasts of being the one who suggested to the US Peace Corps volunteers, Ken Munis and Ann Koontz-Munis, that what Domadoway needed was a school. He shares that he has assisted in the most number of childbirths compared to any other *maninikeg*. He also proudly says that he has been named by the Office of the Southern Cultural Communities (OSCC) to be the Palawan “Tribal Chieftain,” and that he is the only one who owns *sosobliyen* (inherited) stones which he uses to facilitate the expulsion of the *inulunan* (placenta) during childbirth.

When he was younger, Patinti says that his *korodwa* (soul) would know whether another person was walking behind him or ahead of him, and that he could order the *kunem* (dark clouds) not to rain. He was also always accurate in telling when a woman was supposed to give birth by palpating her abdomen.

One of his daughters has already learned many of his healing practices simply by watching.

Patinti refuses to accept payment when treating illnesses or assisting in child delivery, because he said that the medicine is from *Empo* (God).

*Salimbak Tamat*

Salimbak Tamat saw a *taw't kakayuan* (person of the woods) when he was still very young. In the Palawan culture, a person who sees a *taw't kakayuan* is meant to be a *balyan*.

Salimbak was the former chieftain of Sitio Pamoaran. He says that there must have been 80 *uma* (swidden plots) from the time he was born up to now, which makes him around 80 years old. He was not swayed by the Protestant faith, and continues to practice *turon* up until the present. Coming from a family of *balyan*, he



PHOTO FROM DOMADOMAY FOUNDATION

boasts of his great grandfather, Apo Kambingen, who only had to lift his palm to the air and would be given plant medicines by different *diwata*. Salimbak says Apo Kambingen lived, died, and was buried in a cave in Bundok Tawis.

Salimbak claims to have healed “everyone” because he serves as the doctor in his place. Among his many patients was Tansiong Tima, (another *balyan*), people from other sitios, and even people from the barrio, including Muslims.

He presented a manner by which a lost object may be found. He says that he must be the only one who knows this technique. One must get 4 pieces of any kind of wood, each should be about 2 inches long. These are arranged one on top of the other. A *tawar* (incantation) is uttered and the *balyan* hears the pieces of wood speak. In this process, he also discovers whether the missing object was stolen or simply misplaced. If the object was stolen and the bottommost piece of wood speaks, this means that the object will not be found no matter how hard the owner looks for it. Finding the object is more likely if the piece of wood that speaks is closer to the top.

### *Melia Magas*

Melia Magas began healing even before she was married. It was a long time ago, and she could not remember how old she was then. She remembers, though, that she was around 12 years old (similar to her granddaughter’s age) when she heard that the Japanese were here. Although Melia does not perform the *turon* anymore, for she has been going to church since the missionaries came, she still serves those who come to her to ask for medicinal plants. She

is also the most well known *mengengpet* or woman who assists in childbirth. The people say that Melia is the only *mengengpet* who refuses to accept any form of payment for her services, when others charge as much as P500 nowadays. She could not give any reason why she does not accept payment and only says *kay ko* (“I do not want to”).

She thinks it would be good to pass on her knowledge so that not only a few people know how to heal. Although no one has come up to her yet and ask to be taught, Melia says she is willing to teach anybody who approaches her.



PHOTO BY LYDIA V ISRAEL



# 10

## Materia medica

### A. Single plant preparations

*Table 1.1 Abang-abang for sakit it betis beke braso*

Use	For <i>sakit it betis beke braso</i>
Local name/s	<i>Abang-abang</i>
Part/s used	Roots
Preparation	Obtain roots of the plant. Soak it in a bowl of water.
Direction for use	Rub the roots on the affected part.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it betis beke braso</i> refers to pain felt in the legs/feet and arms.

*Table 2.1 Bageng for tawan beke katel caused by lupa leaf*

Use	For <i>tawan beke katel</i> caused by <i>lupa</i> leaf
Local name/s	<i>Bageng</i>
Part/s used	Stem
Preparation	Cut stem and extract the juice.
Direction for use	Apply juice on affected part.
Additional information	<i>Tawan</i> refers to wound while <i>katel</i> refers to itch caused by contact with the leaf of the <i>lupa</i> plant. The <i>bageng</i> plant has tiny bumps on its stem which is similar to what happens on the skin when one has <i>buridas</i> .

*Table 3.1 Bago for sakit it beteng-suka tey tey*

Use	For <i>sakit it beteng-suka tey tey</i>
Local name/s	<i>Bago</i>
Part/s used	Bark
Preparation	Get a small piece of bark. Remove its outer layer using a knife. Boil the bark in a glass of water.
Direction for use	Drink the decoction until the pain subsides and diarrhea stops.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it beteng</i> refers to abdominal pain which is often accompanied by <i>suka tey tey</i> , vomiting and/or loose bowel movement.

*Table 4.1 Balinad to have a female child*

Use	To have a female child
Local name/s	<i>Balinad</i>
Part/s used	Fruit
Preparation	Get a piece of fruit.
Direction for use	The woman must ask the fruit for a female child. The fruit should then be placed on the armpit for about 2 minutes. Afterwards the fruit is eaten. The fruit should also be placed under a woman's <i>tapis</i> (wrap-around cloth).

Table 4.2 *Balinad* for *kirey-kirey*

Use	For <i>kirey-kirey</i>
Local name/s	<i>Balinad</i>
Part/s used	Fruit
Preparation	Get a piece of fruit.
Direction for use	Hold the fruit, which is shaped like an open clam. Let it touch the eyebrows while performing biting motions with it. Count 1 to 9 (one for each biting motion) and say “ <i>Labi, galad!</i> ” (It is done!) afterwards.
Additional information	<i>Kirey-kirey</i> refers to pain on or around the eyebrows which occurs at daybreak and intensifies as the sun continues to come up.

Table 5.1 *Banag* for prevention of *banta*

Use	To prevent <i>banta</i>
Local name/s	<i>Banag</i>
Part/s used	Leaves
Preparation	Boil several leaves in a small amount of water.
Direction for use	Apply the decoction all over the patient's body.
Additional information	<i>Banta</i> refers to relapse. This medicine is taken so that a mother who has just given birth or a sick individual who is recuperating will not get weak or sick again.



*Table 6.1 Banwa't limatek for tawan*

Use	For <i>tawan</i>
Local name/s	<i>Banwa't limatek</i>
Part/s used	Leaves
Preparation	Pound a sufficient amount of leaves and express juice.
Direction for use	Apply juice onto the wound. Repeat the process until the wound dries up.
Additional information	<i>Tawan</i> refers to wounds.

*Table 7.1 Bawing for beklang it megpanew-panew dot merayo'y tenan*

Use	For <i>beklang it megpanew-panew dot merayo'y tenan</i>
Local name/s	<i>Bawing</i>
Part/s used	Stem and leaves
Preparation	Cover the stem and leaves with any piece of cloth.
Direction for use	The parent must carry this cloth wherever he/she takes the child.
Additional information	<i>Beklang it megpanew-panew dot merayo'y tenan</i> refers to keeping a child, especially infants, from getting sick when traveling to different places.

Table 8.1 *Bebesalan for sakit it ulo*

Use	For <i>sakit it ulo</i>
Local name/s	<i>Bebesalan</i>
Part/s used	Young leaves
Preparation	Pound a sufficient amount of young leaves.
Direction for use	Apply as poultice on the forehead and temples. Any kind of cloth may be used as bandage. Repeat the process until the patient gets well.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it ulo</i> refers to a headache.

Table 8.2 *Bebesalan for salibegbeg/samban*

Use	For <i>salibegbeg/samban</i>
Local name/s	<i>Bebesalan</i>
Part/s used	Young leaves
Preparation	Pound a sufficient amount of leaves and place these in a glass. Pour water into the glass.
Direction for use	Let the patient drink the infusion while another person counts 1 to 8 and says “ <i>Labi, galad!</i> ” (It is done!) If it is <i>salibegbeg</i> , fetch the person’s soul where he left it.”
Additional information	<i>Salibegbeg/samban</i> refers to a condition wherein a person leaves his/her house feeling well but returns home ill. This is caused by an invisible being that greets or notices the person, but the person is not able to respond.

*Table 9.1 Bengkel for kedel*

Use	For <i>kedel</i>
Local name/s	<i>Bengkel</i>
Part/s used	Bark
Preparation	Get a sufficient amount of bark and pound thoroughly. Express juice from plant material.
Direction for use	Apply the juice over area/s with <i>kedel</i> .
Additional information	<i>Kedel</i> refers to patches of hairless, hardened skin seen especially in animals. This medicine may be used for dogs.

*Table 10.1 Beyabas for sakit it beteng-suka tey tey*

Use	For <i>sakit it beteng-suka tey tey</i>
Local name/s	<i>Beyabas</i>
Part/s used	Young or mature leaves
Preparation	Boil a handful of leaves in 1 glass of water. Wait until the decoction becomes reddish and half the initial volume remains.
Direction for use	Drink the decoction. Repeat until the patient gets well. If <i>beyabas</i> is not effective, try other plants which have a more bitter taste.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it beteng</i> refers to abdominal pain often accompanied by <i>suka tey tey</i> , vomiting and/or loose bowel movement.

Table 11.1 *Biga upeng mewgad i bolbol it tepa*

Use	<i>Upeng mewgad i bolbol it tepa</i>
Local name/s	<i>Biga</i>
Part/s used	<i>Papa</i> – plant part just below the leaf
Preparation	Remove the leaf and take the <i>papa</i> . Heat plant material over fire.
Direction for use	Press the hand or foot with the <i>bolbol i tepa</i> (worm's hair) against the heated plant material. This area is characterized by pain, in some cases, swelling, and in later stages, necrosis.
Additional information	<i>Upeng mewgad i bolbol it tepa</i> refers to removing worm's hair that entered a person's hand or foot when he/she accidentally touched or stepped on it. If embedded deeply, it will be painful and will take time to remove.



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**Biga**

*Table 12.1 Bowang-bowang for meg tey't dugo*

Use	For <i>meg tey't dugo</i>
Local name/s	<i>Bowang-bowang</i>
Part/s used	Roots
Preparation	Scrape the outer layer of the roots of both plants. Mix and soak them in water.
Direction for use	Drink the infusion. Repeat the process until the patient gets well.
Additional information	<i>Meg tey't dugo</i> refers to blood-streaked stool.

*Table 12.2 Bowang-bowang for sakit it beteng-suka tey tey*

Use	For <i>sakit it beteng-suka tey tey</i>
Local name/s	<i>Bowang-bowang</i>
Part/s used	Roots
Preparation	Scrape the outer layer of the roots of both plants. Mix and soak them in water.
Direction for use	Drink the infusion. Repeat the process until the patient gets well.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it beteng</i> refers to abdominal pain often accompanied by <i>suka tey tey</i> , vomiting and/or loose bowel movement.

Table 13.1 *Buri for ilo*

Use	For <i>ilo</i>
Local name/s	<i>Buri</i>
Part/s used	<i>Bulus</i> – a very young leaf that is still rolled inside the plant
Preparation	Chop the <i>bulus</i> into small pieces. Boil these in a glass of water.
Direction for use	Drink the decoction until vomiting stops.
Additional information	<i>Ilo</i> refers to vomiting caused by eating certain food for the first time.

Table 14.1 *Delapas for daser-daser it iked*

Use	<i>Daser-daser it iked</i>
Local name/s	<i>Delapas</i>
Part/s used	Young leaves
Preparation	Cut four ¼-inch pieces of young leaves and soak these in half a glass of water.
Direction for use	Drink the infusion every morning for 4 days.
Additional information	<i>Daser-daser it iked</i> refers to cough.



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**Delapas**

Table 14.2 *Delapas* for *daser-daser it iked* of adults

Use	For <i>daser-daser it iked</i> of adults
Local name/s	<i>Delapas</i>
Part/s used	Young leaves
Preparation	Collect several young leaves.
Direction for use	Eat the young leaves. Repeat the process until cough disappears.
Additional information	<i>Daser-daser it iked</i> refers to cough.

Table 14.3 *Delapas* for *daser-daser it iked* of infants/children

Use	For <i>daser-daser it iked</i> of infants/children who cannot yet be left unsupervised
Local name/s	<i>Delapas</i>
Part/s used	Roots
Preparation	Wash roots thoroughly. Soak these in a glass of water for 2 hours or so.
Direction for use	Let the infant/child drink the infusion. Repeat until cough disappears.
Additional information	<i>Daser-daser it iked</i> refers to cough.



*Table 15.1 Dengingi for marep*

Use	For <i>marep</i>
Local name/s	<i>Dengingi</i>
Part/s used	Roots
Preparation	Scrape and pound outer layer of roots.
Direction for use	Apply as poultice on the affected area. Replace roots when dry and if the patient is still not relieved.
Additional information	<i>Marep</i> refers to body pains, as if something is embedded in one's flesh.

*Table 16.1 Dinakep for sakit it ulo*

Use	For <i>sakit it ulo</i>
Local name/s	<i>Dinakep</i>
Part/s used	Leaves
Preparation	Collect several leaves and place these in a glass. Fill the glass with water.
Direction for use	Apply the infusion on the entire body of the sick person.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it ulo</i> refers to a severe headache.

Table 17.1 Egunoy/mansarunay for tawan

Use	For <i>tawan</i>
Local name/s	<i>Egunoy/mansarunay</i>
Part/s used	Leaves
Preparation	Collect and pound several leaves. Express juice from leaves.
Direction for use	Pour juice over wound to stop bleeding. One may also apply leaves as poultice on the wound to stop the bleeding. One's hands, or any kind of cloth, may be used to keep poultice in place.
Additional information	<i>Tawan</i> refers to wounds.



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**Egunoy/mansarunay**

Table 18.1 *Egupit* for *meglaked i bilog it meraga*

Use	For <i>meglaked i bilog it meraga</i>
Local name/s	<i>Egupit</i>
Part/s used	Sap
Preparation	The infant's parent must cut the body of the plant and collect a sufficient amount of sap.
Direction for use	Apply the sap all over the infant's body.
Additional information	<i>Meglaked i bilog it meraga</i> refers to the appearance of wheals on the entire body of an infant. It is caused by the intentional or unintentional cutting of an <i>egupit</i> tree by the infant's parent.

Table 19.1 *Eluyew* for *dederengdangen*

Use	For <i>dederengdangen</i>
Local name/s	<i>Eluyew</i>
Part/s used	Bark
Preparation	Get a small piece of <i>eluyew</i> bark. Boil it in a glass of water and wait until half the initial volume remains.
Direction for use	Drink the decoction.
Additional information	<i>Dederengdangen</i> refers to an amount of blood normally expelled during childbirth that is retained in the uterus.

Table 20.1 *Emelong for sakit it nipen*

Use	For <i>sakit it nipen</i>
Local name/s	<i>Emelong</i>
Part/s used	Roots
Preparation	Boil a sufficient amount of roots in a glass of water until half the initial volume remains.
Direction for use	Use the decoction as a gargle. Repeat the process until pain subsides.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it nipen</i> refers to a toothache.

Table 21.1 *Empelungew for diagnosis of illness*

Use	For diagnosis of illness
Local name/s	<i>Empelungew</i>
Part/s used	Outer layer of stem
Preparation	Scrape a small amount of the stem's outer layer.
Direction for use	Rub the scraped stem on any painful body part. If the patient feels the stinging pain naturally caused by plant, the illness is only minor/mild. If the stinging pain is not felt, the illness is serious.

*Table 21.2 Empelungew for sakit it ulo-egnew*

Use	For <i>sakit it ulo-egnew</i>
Local name/s	<i>Empelungew</i>
Part/s used	Young leaves
Preparation	Pound a sufficient amount of young leaves.
Direction for use	Apply as poultice on the head and temples using a blanket or handkerchief as bandage. Repeat the process until pain subsides.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it ulo-egnew</i> refers to a severe headache with fever and chills.

*Table 22.1 Enderamey for sakit it ulo-egnew*

Use	For <i>sakit it ulo-egnew</i>
Local name/s	<i>Enderamey</i>
Part/s used	Roots
Preparation	Scrape a sufficient amount of roots.
Direction for use	Apply as poultice on the head and temples. Repeat the process until the patient is well.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it ulo-egnew</i> refers to a severe headache with fever and chills.

Table 23.1 *Enterungan for binanget ket elupian*

Use	For <i>binanget ket elupian</i>
Local name/s	<i>Enterungan</i>
Part/s used	Sap
Preparation	Collect sufficient amount of sap.
Direction for use	Apply sap on the bitten area. The pain will subside in less than an hour. A <i>tawar</i> or <i>batya</i> (incantation) is part of the treatment.
Additional information	<i>Binanget ket elupian</i> refers to a centipede bite.

Table 23.2 *Enterungan for binanget ket ido*

Use	For <i>binanget ket ido</i>
Local name/s	<i>Enterungan</i>
Part/s used	Sap (with incantation)
Preparation	Collect a sufficient amount of sap and utter the incantation 8 times.
Direction for use	Apply sap on the bitten area “to remove the rabies”.
Additional information	<i>Binanget ket ido</i> refers to a dog bite.

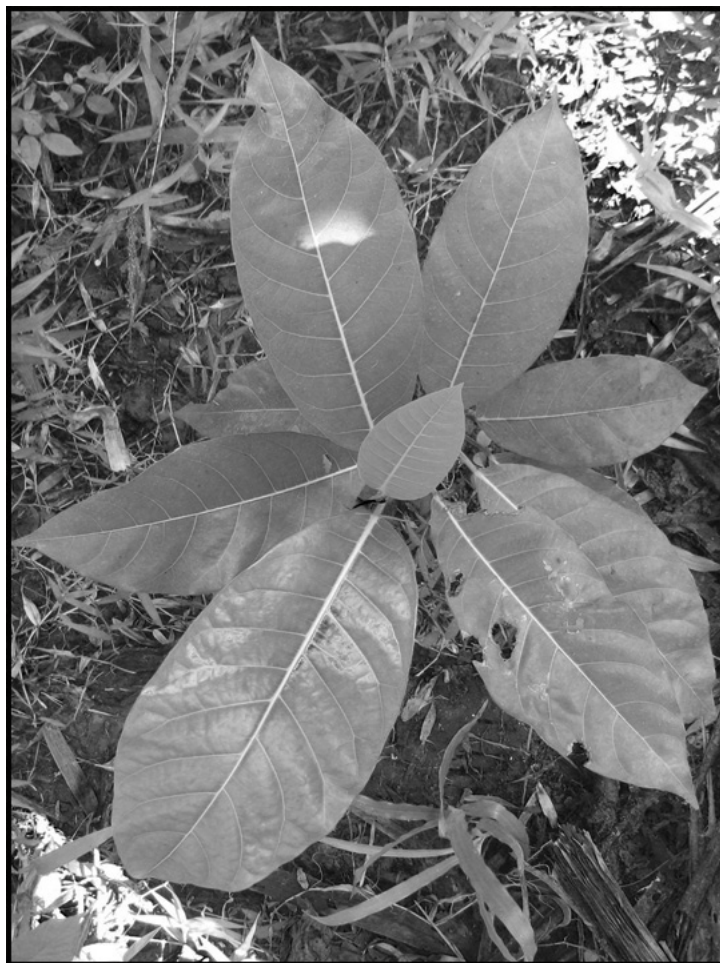


PHOTO BY NOREEN B. MATA

**Enterungan**

Table 23.3 *Enterungan for sakit it ulo-egnew*

Use	For <i>sakit it ulo-egnew</i>
Local name/s	<i>Enterungan</i>
Part/s used	Leaves
Preparation	Collect 3 pieces of leaves.
Direction for use	Place leaves on forehead and temples, secure with cloth. Remove when plant material dries. Repeat process until headache disappears.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it ulo-egnew</i> refers to a severe headache with fever and chills.



Table 23.4 *Enterungan* for *sungkar*

Use	For <i>sungkar</i>
Local name/s	<i>Enterungan</i>
Part/s used	Young or mature leaves
Preparation	Pound a sufficient amount of leaves and extract its juice.
Direction for use	Express juice from plant material and apply onto the affected areas. Repeat the process until the wounds dry up.
Additional information	<p><i>Sungkar</i> refers to mosquito bite-like wheals that usually grow under the lower lip and chin and sometimes in the head. They are itchy, painful, and secrete pus.</p> <p>Contraindications: eggplant, tomato, yam, pork, chicken, and egg. Eating of these food may be resumed a month after the wounds have all dried up. However, the <i>balanak</i> fish may not be eaten for an unspecified length of time or the illness will recur.</p>

Table 24.1 *Kamilit for sakit it ulo-egnew*

Use	For <i>sakit it ulo-egnew</i>
Local name/s	<i>Kamilit</i>
Part/s used	Bark
Preparation	Boil a small piece of bark in half a glass of water.
Direction for use	Drink the decoction. It should cause the patient to perspire within a couple of hours. Repeat the process until headache disappears.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it ulo-egnew</i> refers to a severe headache with fever and chills.

Table 25.1 *Kapal-kapal for sakit it ulo-egnew*

Use	For <i>sakit it ulo-egnew</i>
Local name/s	<i>Kapal-kapal</i>
Part/s used	Leaves
Preparation	Pound a sufficient amount of leaves.
Direction for use	Apply as poultice on the forehead and temples using any kind of bandage. Replace the leaves when the poultice dries up and if the patient is still not relieved.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it ulo-egnew</i> refers to a severe headache with fever and chills.



PHOTO BY AGU ARRENTADO

**Kapal-kapal**

Table 25.2 *Kapal-kapal for sakit it bilog*

Use	<i>Sakit it bilog</i>
Local name/s	<i>Kapal-kapal</i>
Part/s used	Leaves
Preparation	Pound a sufficient amount of leaves.
Direction for use	Apply as poultice on the affected part of the body. Use any kind of bandage.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it bilog</i> refers to any pain in the body.

Table 26.1 *Kapok for liso*

Use	For <i>liso</i>
Local name/s	<i>Kapok</i>
Part/s used	Outer layer of bark
Preparation	Scrape a sufficient amount of the outer layer of the bark. Place this over fire and add a small amount of coconut oil.
Direction for use	Apply as poultice on the affected area. Any kind of cloth may be used as bandage.
Additional information	<i>Liso</i> refers to a bone dislocation.

*Table 27.1 Kaymito for sakit it beteng-suka tey tey*

Use	For <i>sakit it beteng-suka tey tey</i>
Local name/s	<i>Kaymito</i>
Part/s used	Bark
Preparation	Boil a small piece of bark in water.
Direction for use	Drink the decoction. Repeat the process until the patient gets well.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it beteng</i> refers to abdominal pain which is often accompanied by <i>suka tey tey</i> , vomiting and/or loose bowel movement.

*Table 28.1 Kedlem for sakit it beteng*

Use	For <i>sakit it beteng</i>
Local name/s	<i>Kedlem</i>
Part/s used	Leaves
Preparation	Soak the leaves in hot water and wait until they soften.
Direction for use	Drink the infusion. Repeat the process until the patient gets well.
Additional information	This <i>sakit it beteng</i> refers to epigastric pain.

Table 29.1 *Kelelepnit/kulegbew for marep*

Use	<i>Marep</i>
Local name/s	<i>Kelelepnit/kulegbew</i>
Part/s used	Leaves
Preparation	Pound several leaves.
Direction for use	Apply as poultice on the affected area for about an hour. Repeat the process until pain disappears.
Additional information	<i>Marep</i> refers to body pains, as if something is embedded in one's flesh.

Table 29.2 *Kelelepnit/kulegbew for marep*

Use	For <i>marep</i>
Local name/s	<i>Kelelepnit/kulegbew</i>
Part/s used	Roots
Preparation	Pound a sufficient amount of roots.
Direction for use	Apply as poultice on the affected area. Repeat the process when dry and if the patient is still not relieved.
Additional information	<i>Marep</i> refers to body pains, as if something is embedded in one's flesh.

*Table 30.1 Kelempiney for sakit it beteng-suka tey tey*

Use	For <i>sakit it beteng-suka tey tey</i>
Local name/s	<i>Kelempiney</i>
Part/s used	Roots
Preparation	Wash roots thoroughly with water to remove soil. Boil the roots for a few minutes.
Direction for use	Drink the decoction. Repeat the process until the patient gets well.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it beteng</i> refers to abdominal pain which is often accompanied by <i>suka tey tey</i> , vomiting and/or loose bowel movement.

*Table 31.1 Kelilibon for linog*

Use	For <i>linog</i>
Local name/s	<i>Kelilibon</i>
Part/s used	Leaves
Preparation	Tear the leaves into small pieces.
Direction for use	Sniff odor of torn leaves until dizziness subsides.
Additional information	<i>Linog</i> refers to dizziness.

Table 31.2 *Kelilibon for meg dugu'y edong*

Use	For <i>meg dugu'y edong</i>
Local name/s	<i>Kelilibon</i>
Part/s used	Leaves
Preparation	Roll one leaf into a size that will fit the nasal orifice.
Direction for use	Place the rolled leaf into the nasal orifice until bleeding stops.
Additional information	<i>Meg dugu'y edong</i> refers to nosebleeding.

Table 31.3 *Kelilibon as pang-urew*

Use	As <i>pang-urew</i>
Local name/s	<i>Kelilibon</i>
Part/s used	Outer layer of the stem
Preparation	Scrape the outer layer of the stem. Boil in a small amount of water.
Direction for use	Drink the decoction.
Additional information	<i>Pang-urew</i> refers to abortifacient.



*Table 31.4 Kelilibon for sakit it beteng-suka tey tey*

Use	For <i>sakit it beteng-suka tey tey</i>
Local name/s	<i>Kelilibon</i>
Part/s used	Leaves
Preparation	Heat several leaves over fire.
Direction for use	Apply as poultice on the abdominal area. Any kind of cloth may be used as bandage.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it beteng</i> refers to abdominal pain which is often accompanied by <i>suka tey tey</i> , vomiting and/or loose bowel movement.

*Table 31.5 Kelilibon for sakit it ulo-egnew*

Use	For <i>sakit it ulo-egnew</i>
Local name/s	<i>Kelilibon</i>
Part/s used	Outer layer of the root
Preparation	Scrape a sufficient layer of the outer layer of the roots and boil in a glass of water.
Direction for use	Drink the decoction. Repeat the process until headache disappears.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it ulo-egnew</i> refers to a severe headache with fever and chills.

Table 32.1 *Kembe for alapap/buridas*

Use	<i>For alapap/buridas</i>
Local name/s	<i>Kembe</i>
Part/s used	Leaves
Preparation	Collect and pound several leaves.
Direction for use	Apply the pounded leaves on the affected area/s. Repeat the process until the <i>alapap/buridas</i> disappears.
Additional information	<i>Alapap/buridas</i> refers to <i>tinea versicolor</i> or <i>an-an</i> .



PHOTO BY NOREEN B. MATA

**Kepayas**

Table 33.1 *Kepayas* for *sakit it beteng-suka tey tey*

Use	<i>Sakit it beteng-suka tey tey</i>
Local name/s	<i>Kepayas</i>
Part/s used	Roots
Preparation	Get a handful of roots and wash thoroughly. Boil the roots in a small amount of water.
Direction for use	Drink the decoction until the pain subsides and diarrhea stops.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it beteng</i> refers to abdominal pain which is often accompanied by <i>suka tey tey</i> , vomiting and/or loose bowel movement.

Table 34.1 *Keyeyansong* for *meg tey't dugo*

Use	For <i>meg tey't dugo</i>
Local name/s	<i>Keyeyansong</i>
Part/s used	Roots
Preparation	Scrape a large amount of the outer layer of the roots. Add water and place over fire and wait until it comes to a boil.
Direction for use	Drink the decoction. Repeat the process until the patient gets well.
Additional information	<i>Meg tey't dugo</i> refers to blood-streaked stool.

Table 35.1 *Korebingen it niyog for sakit it beteng-suka tey tey*

Use	For <i>sakit it beteng-suka tey tey</i>
Local name/s	<i>Korebingen it niyog</i> – a very young coconut that does not have meat yet
Part/s used	Coconut juice
Preparation	Obtain a <i>korebingen</i> .
Direction for use	Drink the juice until the pain subsides and diarrhea stops.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it beteng</i> refers to abdominal pain which is often accompanied by <i>suka tey tey</i> , vomiting and/or loose bowel movement.

Table 36.1 *Kortang for marep*

Use	For <i>marep</i>
Local name/s	<i>Kortang</i>
Part/s used	Young leaves
Preparation	Pound several young leaves.
Direction for use	Apply as poultice on the affected area. Remove when dry and repeat the process if the patient is still not relieved.
Additional information	<i>Marep</i> refers to body pains, as if something is embedded in one's flesh.

Table 37.1 *Kulegbew* for *sot*

Use	For <i>sot</i>
Local name/s	<i>Kulegbew</i>
Part/s used	Leaves
Preparation	Boil a sufficient amount of water. Add 4 leaves and wait until they soften.
Direction for use	Drink the decoction.
Additional information	<i>Sot</i> refers to blood formations in intestines shaped like a snake, spider, etc.  Contraindications: sugarcane, string beans

Table 37.2 *Kulegbew* for *sunggur*

Use	For <i>sunggur</i>
Local name/s	<i>Kulegbew</i>
Part/s used	Leaves
Preparation	Boil a sufficient amount of water. Add 4 leaves and wait until they soften.
Direction for use	Drink the decoction.
Additional information	<i>Sunggur</i> refers to colic.  Contraindications: sugarcane, string beans

*Table 38.1 Kunit for tawan it ayop*

Use	For <i>tawan it ayop</i>
Local name/s	<i>Kunit</i>
Part/s used	Root crop
Preparation	Pound a sufficient amount of root crops.
Direction for use	Apply as poultice on the animal's wound.
Additional information	<i>Tawan it ayop</i> refers to animal wounds.



PHOTO BY NOREEN B. MATA

**Kunit**

Table 39.1 *Lakwas* for *alapap/buridas*

Use	For <i>alapap/buridas</i>
Local name/s	<i>Lakwas</i>
Part/s used	Root crop
Preparation	Get one or more rootcrops (quantity depends on the extent of ailment). Wash plant material thoroughly. Pound and add a small amount of kerosene.
Direction for use	Apply on the affected area/s. Repeat the process until the <i>alapap/buridas</i> disappears.
Additional information	<i>Alapap/buridas</i> refers to <i>tinea versicolor</i> or <i>an-an</i> .



PHOTO BY NORRIN B. MATA

**Lakwas**



Table 40.1 *Langan for mepeglangan*

Use	For <i>mepeglangan</i>
Local name/s	<i>Langan</i>
Part/s used	Leaves (with incantation)
Preparation	Collect several leaves. Place in any kind of container and pour water into it.
Direction for use	Wet the head and the entire body with the infusion.
Additional information	<i>Mepeglangan</i> refers to headache that occurs every other day. This illness is described as <i>sesengden</i> (unexplained reason, it will just occur).

Table 41.1 *Lengat for sakit it beteng-suka tey tey*

Use	For <i>sakit it beteng-suka tey tey</i>
Local name/s	<i>Lengat</i>
Part/s used	Roots
Preparation	Boil a sufficient amount of roots.
Direction for use	Drink the decoction. Repeat the process until the patient gets well.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it beteng</i> refers to abdominal pain which is often accompanied by <i>suka tey tey</i> , vomiting and/or loose bowel movement.

Table 41.2 *Lengat* for *sunggur*

Use	For <i>sunggur</i>
Local name/s	<i>Lengat</i>
Part/s used	Roots
Preparation	Boil a sufficient amount of roots.
Direction for use	Drink the decoction. Repeat the process until the patient gets well.
Additional information	<i>Sunggur</i> refers to colic.

Table 42.1 *Lomboy* for *sakit it beteng-suka tey tey*

Use	For <i>sakit it beteng-suka tey tey</i>
Local name/s	<i>Lomboy</i>
Part/s used	Bark
Preparation	Get a small piece of bark. Remove its outer layer using a knife and boil the bark in a glass of water.
Direction for use	Drink the decoction until the pain subsides and diarrhea stops.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it beteng</i> refers to abdominal pain which is often accompanied by <i>suka tey tey</i> , vomiting and/or loose bowel movement.

Table 43.1 *Marirang* for *alapap/buridas*

Use	For <i>alapap/buridas</i>
Local name/s	<i>Marirang</i>
Part/s used	Young or mature leaves
Preparation	Collect and pound several leaves.
Direction for use	Apply the pounded leaves on the affected area/s. Repeat the process until the <i>alapap/buridas</i> disappears.
Additional information	<i>Alapap/buridas</i> refers to <i>tinea versicolor</i> or <i>an-an</i> .

Table 44.1 *Merenggewiri* for *linog*

Use	For <i>linog</i>
Local name/s	<i>Merenggewiri</i>
Part/s used	Leaves
Preparation	Tear the leaves into small pieces.
Direction for use	Sniff the odor of the torn leaves until dizziness disappears.
Additional information	<i>Linog</i> refers to dizziness.

Table 44.2 *Merenggewiri* for *sakit it nipen*

Use	For <i>sakit it nipen</i>
Local name/s	<i>Merenggewiri</i>
Part/s used	Roots
Preparation	Scrape the outer layer of the roots. Discard the scraped outer layer and boil the roots.
Direction for use	Use the decoction as gargle. Repeat the process until pain disappears.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it nipen</i> refers to toothache.

Table 44.3 *Merenggewiri* for *sakit it ulo-egnew*

Use	<i>Sakit it ulo-egnew</i>
Local name/s	<i>Merenggewiri</i>
Part/s used	Roots
Preparation	Wash roots thoroughly. Boil a sufficient amount of roots in water.
Direction for use	Take a swallow of the decoction.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it ulo-egnew</i> refers to a severe headache with fever and chills.

Table 45.1 *Mererenggo for sakit it beteng-suka tey tey*

Use	For <i>sakit it beteng-suka tey tey</i>
Local name/s	<i>Mererenggo</i>
Part/s used	Bark
Preparation	Get a small piece of bark. With a knife, remove its outer layer and boil the bark in a glass of water.
Direction for use	Drink the decoction until the pain subsides and diarrhea stops.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it beteng</i> refers to abdominal pain which is often accompanied by <i>suka tey tey</i> , vomiting and/or loose bowel movement. The <i>mererenggo</i> plant has a very bitter taste.

Table 46.1 *Nito for kambasa*

Use	For <i>kambasa</i>
Local name/s	<i>Nito</i>
Part/s used	Roots
Preparation	Boil a sufficient amount of roots in a glass of water.
Direction for use	Pour warm decoction on the affected area. Repeat the process until the wounds dry up.
Additional information	<i>Kambasa</i> refers to athlete's foot.

Table 47.1 *Niyog-niyog for sakit it ulo-egnew*

Use	For <i>sakit it ulo-egnew</i>
Local name/s	Niyog-niyog
Part/s used	Fruit
Preparation	Cut the fruit in half.
Direction for use	Rub the inner portion of the fruit on the forehead. Repeat until headache disappears.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it ulo-egnew</i> refers to a severe headache with fever and chills.

Table 48.1 *Panasip for tawan*

Use	For <i>tawan</i>
Local name/s	<i>Panasip</i>
Part/s used	Young or mature leaves
Preparation	Pound a sufficient amount of leaves and extract the juice.
Direction for use	Pour the juice over the wound to stop the bleeding and to dry the wound.
Additional information	<i>Tawan</i> refers to wounds.

Table 49.1 *Payong* to expel *inulunan* and/or *aring*

Use	To expel <i>inulunan</i> and/or <i>aring</i>
Local name/s	<i>Payong</i>
Part/s used	Roots (with incantation)
Preparation	Remove the soil from the roots with bare hands or by washing with water. Pound the roots. Place it in a glass and fill it with water. Utter the <i>tawar</i> (incantation).
Direction for use	Apply the infusion on the woman's abdominal area until the placenta and any <i>aring</i> are expelled. This is determined by the woman's complaint of pain and the <i>maninikeg's</i> (male birth attendant) palpation of the abdomen.
Additional information	This is done to help a woman who has just given birth expel the <i>inulunan</i> (placenta) or any <i>aring</i> – fingerlike projections of the placenta, which, when retained may reach the liver and cause death.

Table 50.1 *Pelu-pelu* for *liso*

Use	For <i>liso</i>
Local name/s	<i>Pelu-pelu</i>
Part/s used	Vine
Preparation	Remove leaves from the vine. Pound the vine.
Direction for use	Tie the pounded vine around the affected part. Replace the plant material when already dry. Repeat the process until the patient is relieved.
Additional information	<i>Liso</i> refers to bone dislocation

Table 51.1 *Penwen/tegbak for beklang it korodwa taweng natey*

Use	For <i>beklang it korodwa taweng natey</i>
Local name/s	<i>Penwen/tegbak</i>
Part/s used	Stem and leaves
Preparation	Gather <i>penwen/tegbak</i> stem and leaves.
Direction for use	Place the stem and leaves on the path leading to the house, inside the house, or anywhere near the sick person, until he gets well.
Additional information	<i>Beklang it korodwa taweng natey</i> refers to keeping the spirit of the dead from coming near the sick.

Table 51.2 *Penwen/tegbak for tawan nge kay megnonga*

Use	For <i>tawan nge kay megnonga</i>
Local name/s	<i>Penwen/tegbak</i>
Part/s used	<i>Bulus</i> – a very young leaf that is still rolled inside the plant
Preparation	With a bolo, cut the plant near the base. Take the <i>bulus</i> . Ask it to let the wound form a scar.
Direction for use	Crush the <i>bulus</i> with bare hands and apply as poultice on the wound. Any kind of cloth may be used as bandage.
Additional information	<i>Tawan nge kay megnonga</i> refers to non-healing wounds.



*Table 52.1 Pituro for megkatel i bilog*

Use	For <i>megkatel i bilog</i>
Local name/s	<i>Pituro</i>
Part/s used	Leaves and fruit
Preparation	Pound a sufficient amount of leaves and fruit. Extract juice.
Direction for use	Apply the juice on the affected body parts.
Additional information	<i>Megkatel i bilog</i> refers to itchiness of any body part.

*Table 53.1 Pungo-pungo for marep*

Use	For <i>marep</i>
Local name/s	<i>Pungo-pungo</i>
Part/s used	Roots
Preparation	Pound a sufficient amount of roots.
Direction for use	Apply as poultice on the affected area. Repeat the process when dry and if the patient is still not relieved.
Additional information	<i>Marep</i> refers to body pains, as if something is embedded in one's flesh.

Table 54.1 Rita-rita for tawan

Use	For <i>tawan</i>
Local name/s	<i>Rita-rita</i>
Part/s used	Leaves
Preparation	Collect and pound several leaves. Extract juice.
Direction for use	Pour the juice over the wound to stop bleeding.
Additional information	<i>Tawan</i> refers to wounds.



PHOTO BY MGU APRENTADO

**Rita-rita**

*Table 55.1 Saleng to prevent banta*

Use	To prevent <i>banta</i>
Local name/s	<i>Saleng</i> (generic term for sap of trees)
Part/s used	Sap
Preparation	Light the sap with matches or a lighter. Place a wooden plate over it and wait until part of the plate is burned. Scrape the coal with a knife and place it in a glass. Add a small amount of water.
Direction for use	Drink the infusion.
Additional information	<i>Banta</i> refers to relapse. This medicine is taken so that a mother who has just given birth or a sick individual who is recuperating will not get weak or sick again.

*Table 56.1 Segeng for daser-daser it iked*

Use	For <i>daser-daser it iked</i>
Local name/s	<i>Segeng</i>
Part/s used	Roots
Preparation	Wash roots thoroughly.
Direction for use	Chew the roots and swallow the juice. Repeat the process until cough disappears.
Additional information	<i>Daser-daser it iked</i> refers to cough.

*Table 57.1 Seket-seket for seryew*

Use	For <i>seryew</i>
Local name/s	<i>Seket-seket</i>
Part/s used	Roots
Preparation	Scrape the outer layer of the roots and place in a half glass of water.
Direction for use	Drink the infusion once a day for 4 days.
Additional information	<i>Seryew</i> refers to stomatitis.

*Table 58.1 Senek (leaf of teban plant) for dedereandangan*

Use	For <i>dederengdangen</i>
Local name/s	<i>Senek</i> (leaf of <i>teban</i> plant)
Part/s used	Leaves
Preparation	Get a couple of <i>teban</i> leaves. Pound and place them inside a funnel-shaped <i>senek</i> leaf. Place them over fire and wait until the leaves are warm and withered.
Direction for use	The <i>maninikeg</i> grabs the muscles of the part of the abdomen from which the woman feels pain and vigorously applies the leaves. The leaves may be reheated and reused.
Additional information	<i>Dederengdangen</i> refers to an amount of blood normally expelled during childbirth that is retained in the uterus.



PHOTO BY NOREYN B. NATA (PLANT), MGU APARENTDO (LEAF)

**Senek**

The leaf is shaped into a funnel.

Table 59.1 *Sensanamog* for *orser*

Use	For <i>orser</i>
Local name/s	<i>Sensanamog</i>
Part/s used	Roots
Preparation	Cut eight 1-inch pieces of roots and boil these in 1 glass of water until the decoction turns red. Divide decoction into 4 parts.
Direction for use	Drink 1 part of the decoction in the morning, noon, afternoon and night.
Additional information	<i>Orser</i> refers to ulcer.

*Table 60.1 Seray for sakit it beteng*

Use	For <i>sakit it beteng</i>
Local name/s	<i>Seray</i>
Part/s used	Leaves
Preparation	Obtain ample amount of leaves. Boil it in water.
Direction for use	Drink the decoction.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it beteng</i> refers to abdominal pain.



PHOTO BY NOREEN P. MATA

**Seray**

Table 61.1 *Seringit for bawas*

Use	For <i>bawas</i>
Local name/s	<i>Seringit</i>
Part/s used	Fruit
Preparation	Pick the smallest and lightest fruit there is.
Direction for use	Throw the fruit against the back of the person unable to have children so lightly that he/she should not notice it. If he/she notices and asks about it, answer <i>tawey</i> , which means 'I don't know'.
Additional information	<i>Bawas</i> refers to the inability to have children.

Table 62.1 *Teban for intestinal worms of a carabao*

Use	For intestinal worms of a carabao
Local name/s	<i>Teban</i>
Part/s used	Roots near the stem
Preparation	Soak roots in water for a specified duration of time.
Direction for use	Let the carabao drink the water.
Additional information	This can also be used as fish poison.



*Table 63.1 Telinga-baboy for bawas*

Use	For <i>bawas</i>
Local name/s	<i>Telinga-baboy</i>
Part/s used	Root crop
Preparation	Soak the rootcrop in water and leave for a night.
Direction for use	The following day, divide the infusion into 4 parts and drink one part in the morning, noon, afternoon and night.
Additional information	<i>Bawas</i> refers to the inability to have children.

*Table 63.2 Telinga-baboy for iked due to raston*

Use	For <i>iked</i> due to <i>raston</i>
Local name/s	<i>Telinga-baboy</i>
Part/s used	Root crop
Preparation	Peel the rootcrop and soak it in a glass of water.
Direction for use	Drink the infusion.
Additional information	<p><i>Iked</i> due to <i>raston</i> refers to cough caused by poisoning.</p> <p>Contraindications: pork, bagoong, banana (<i>banggi</i> or <i>turdan</i> kind), and pineapple for at least a year.</p>

Table 63.3 *Telinga-baboy upeng kay lengwan*

Use	<i>Upeng kay lengwan</i>
Local name/s	<i>Telinga-baboy</i>
Part/s used	Root crop
Preparation	Peel the rootcrop.
Direction for use	Eat the peeled rootcrop before drinking alcoholic beverages. The number of rootcrops one eats depends on how much he is going to drink.
Additional information	<i>Upeng kay lengwan</i> refers to avoiding getting drunk.

Table 64.1 *Terong for tawan*

Use	For <i>tawan</i>
Local name/s	<i>Terong</i>
Part/s used	Young leaves
Preparation	Collect and pound several young leaves. Extract juice.
Direction for use	Pour the juice over the wound to stop bleeding.
Additional information	<i>Tawan</i> refers to wounds.

## B. Multiple plant preparations

Table 1. *Balatong beke sulung-manok for ugyap*

Use	For <i>ugyap</i>
Local name/s	1. <i>Balatong</i> 2. <i>Sulung-manok</i>
Part/s used	1. Seeds 2. Leaves
Preparation	Extract juice from the <i>sulung-manok</i> leaves. Heat the <i>balatong</i> seeds in a frying pan. Pound the seeds. Mix the juice and the pounded seeds.
Direction for use	Apply the mixture on the affected areas.
Additional information	<i>Ugyap</i> refers to large wounds in different parts of the body. A larger wound could already be present inside the body.

Table 2. *Balinggod, kamantis, beke sanglay-kayo for kambasa*

Use	For <i>kambasa</i>
Local name/s	1. <i>Balinggod</i> 2. <i>Kamantis</i> 3. <i>Sanglay-kayo</i>
Part/s used	Young leaves
Preparation	Mix and pound the leaves. Heat these over fire and extract the juice.
Direction for use	Pour the juice over the wound. Repeat the process until the wound dries up.
Additional information	<i>Kambasa</i> refers to athlete's foot.



PHOTO BY NOHEEN P. MATA

**Sanglay-kayo**

Table 3. *Biserser beke saleng* for marep

Use	For marep
Local name/s	1. <i>Biserser</i> 2. <i>Saleng</i> (generic term for sap of trees)
Part/s used	1. Outer layer of stem 2. Sap
Preparation	Scrape the outer layer of the stem of <i>biserser</i> . Add a small amount of <i>saleng</i> .
Direction for use	Apply as poultice on the affected area. It will adhere to the skin even without bandage. When it no longer adheres to the skin, it has no more therapeutic effect. Repeat the process until pain disappears.
Additional information	<i>Marep</i> refers to body pains, as if something is embedded in one's flesh.

Table 4. *Boyo beke elibetbet* for sakit it ulo-egnew

Use	For sakit it ulo-egnew
Local name/s	1. <i>Elibetbet</i> 2. <i>Boyo</i>
Part/s used	Leaves
Preparation	Take several leaves from both plants. Mix and pound the plant materials.
Direction for use	Apply as poultice on forehead. Headache will disappear in less than 2 hours.
Additional information	<i>Sakit it ulo-egnew</i> refers to a severe headache with fever and chills.

Table 5. *Dapog-dapogan beke penwen/tegbak for beklang it korodwa taweng natey*

Use	For <i>beklang it korodwa taweng natey</i>
Local name/s	1. <i>Dapog-dapogan</i> 2. <i>Penwen/tegbak</i>
Part/s used	Roots
Preparation	Wash roots thoroughly. Place in a glass and fill it with water.
Direction for use	Apply the infusion on the entire body of the sick person.
Additional information	<i>Beklang it korodwa taweng natey</i> refers to warding off souls of the dead so they will not approach the sick.

*Table 6. Gengas, lupa, nito, beke senek for barangas*

Use	For <i>barangas</i>
Local name/s	1. <i>Gengas</i> 2. <i>Lupa</i> 3. <i>Nito</i> 4. <i>Senek</i>
Part/s used	1. Bark 2. Bark 3. Roots 4. Leaves
Preparation	Collect a small piece of bark from the <i>gengas</i> and <i>lupa</i> trees. Scrape the outer layer of the <i>nito</i> roots. Place all the plant ingredients into a funnel-shaped <i>senek</i> leaf and pour water into it.
Direction for use	Let water from the leaf drip onto the wound eight times.
Additional information	<i>Barangas</i> refers to a very painful wound which takes a long time to heal.



PHOTO BY NORELYN B. MATA

**Gengas**

Table 7. *Langan beke senek* for *mepeglangan*

Use	For <i>mepeglangan</i>
Local name/s	1. <i>Langan</i> 2. <i>Senek</i>
Part/s used	1. Leaves or stem 2. Leaves
Preparation	The patient himself must find a <i>langan</i> plant. In cases where the patient's pain is severe, another person will then look for the said plant. He/she must take a leaf or part of the stem while whispering, asking the plant not to cause the patient's headache, if it is the one causing it (this process is called <i>nengnang</i> ). One will also admit to the plant that it is more powerful than the patient. The leaf or stem is then cut into 4 parts and placed in a funnel-shaped <i>senek</i> leaf.
Direction for use	Pour water into the leaf. Let the water from the leaf drip onto the patient's <i>arimpuro</i> (cow-lick), down to his face.
Additonal information	<i>Temeyok</i> refers to folding the <i>senek</i> leaf into a funnel shape for application of medicine. Others describe this ailment as <i>sesengden</i> (unexplained reason, it will just occur).



Table 8. *Lengba, merenggewiri, beke ponti for ikat*

Use	For <i>ikat</i>
Local name/s	1. <i>Lengba</i> 2. <i>Merenggewiri</i> 3. <i>Ponti</i>
Part/s used	Roots
Preparation	Mix and pound the roots.
Direction for use	Apply as poultice on the affected area. Repeat the process until swelling subsides.
Additional information	<i>Ikat</i> refers to pain and swelling of any body part. It may cause death if untreated.  Contraindications: guava, calamansi, kamote

Table 9. *Lupa beke senek upeng mewgad i bolbol it tepa*

Use	<i>Upeng mewgad i bolbol it tepa</i>
Local name/s	1. <i>Lupa</i> 2. <i>Senek</i>
Part/s used	1. Roots 2. Leaves
Preparation	Get a sufficient amount of <i>lupa</i> roots. Wash it thoroughly and place inside a funnel-shaped <i>senek</i> leaf.
Direction for use	Pour water into the <i>senek</i> leaf and let it drip onto the affected body part.
Additional information	<i>Upeng mewgad i bolbol it tepa</i> refers to removing worm's hair that entered a person's hand or foot when he/she accidentally touched or stepped on it. If embedded deeply, it will be painful and will take time to remove.

### C. Other natural products

Table 1. *Baboy talon* for *lebew/tipdas*

Use	For <i>lebew/tipdas</i>
Local name/s	<i>Baboy talon</i>
Part/s used	Meat and bones
Preparation	Soak several pieces of bones in a glass of water.
Direction for use	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Have the patient drink the infusion.</li> <li>2. Have the patient eat a small amount of meat.</li> <li>3. Place these materials near the person suffering from <i>lebew/tipdas</i>.</li> </ol>
Additional information	<i>Baboy talon</i> refers to a wild pig. The above-mentioned measures will shun away <i>lebew/tipdas</i> . <i>Lebew</i> refers to chicken pox and <i>tipdas</i> refers to <i>bulutong-tubig</i> .

Table 2. *Bolbol it manok* for *bolbog*

Use	For <i>bolbog</i>
Local name/s	<i>Bolbol it manok</i>
Part/s used	Feather
Preparation	Pluck a feather from any kind of chicken.
Direction for use	Poke the ear several times with the hairy end of the feather to induce the release of water trapped inside the ear. Do this twice a day (morning and afternoon) until no more fluid flows from the child's ear and one does not show signs of poor hearing.
Additional information	<i>Bolbol it manok</i> refers to a chicken feather. <i>Bolbog</i> refers to otitis media. The community explains it as a condition where water entered a person's ear/s and was retained there for a long time. It usually occurs when a child is taking a bath. If the water is not removed quickly, an unpleasant-smelling greenish/yellowish fluid will come out from the ear/s and the child will have hearing problems.

Table 3. *Oriseng* for *segew-segew*

Use	For <i>segew-segew</i>
Local name/s	<i>Oriseng</i> – soot that has accumulated at the bottom of the cooking pot
Preparation	Scrape a small amount of <i>oriseng</i> from the bottom of a cooking pot.
Direction for use	Apply it on the eyebrows of a child suffering from <i>segew-segew</i> . Keep doing this until the infant's crying is abated and the young child no longer complains of seeing invisible beings.
Additional information	<i>Segew-segew</i> refers to a condition common in infants and very young children. In infants, it is mainly characterized by crying, especially in the afternoon and at night. Aside from crying, very young children complain of seeing scary beings which are invisible to others. Others explain that the unseen being is showing an object such as a flower to the child. One cries because he/she wants to reach for it. Another treatment is to utter an incantation on water which will be used to wash the child's face. If it is not effective, one may try other treatments.

Table 4. *Paspasan* for *salibebeg/samban*

Use	For <i>salibebeg/samban</i>
Local name/s	<i>Paspasan</i> – flattened bamboo roof thatch
Part/s used	Bamboo trunk/stem
Preparation	Take a piece of <i>paspasan</i> that is several inches long. Break it into smaller pieces and soak these in a glass of water.
Direction for use	Have the patient drink a small amount of the infusion.
Additional information	<i>Salibebeg/samban</i> refers to a condition wherein a person leaves his/her house feeling well but returns home ill. This is caused by an invisible being that greets or notices the person, but the person is not able to respond.

Table 5. *Piece of wood* for *banit-banit*

Use	For <i>banit-banit</i>
Part/s used	The piece of wood where pots are hung during the process of cooking
Preparation	Remove the piece of wood from the cooking area. Soak it in a glass of water.
Direction for use	Have the patient drink a small amount of the infusion then gently stroke the wood on the patient's neck for about eight times (this depends on the healer).
Additional information	<i>Banit-banit</i> is a condition characterized by a painful <i>tatbungan</i> (throat) and difficulty in swallowing.



# 11

## Ailments

*Table 1. Banit-banit*

Name of ailment	<i>Banit-banit</i>
Cause	<i>Sesengden</i> or <i>sanged</i> (unexplained reason, ailment just occurs)
Description	Believed to be a prelude to cough and colds
Signs and symptoms	Painful <i>tatbungan</i> (throat) Difficulty in swallowing
Treatment	The piece of wood where pots are hung during the process of cooking (Refer to Chapter 10)

*Table 2. Ikat*

Name of ailment	<i>Ikat</i>
Cause	Invisible things in the environment which cause illness.
Signs and symptoms	Pain and swelling of any part of the body
Treatment	<i>Lengba</i> , <i>merenggewiri</i> , and <i>ponti</i> (Refer to Chapter 10)
Special notes	The patient who is being treated must refrain from eating calamansi, sweet potato, cassava, guava and coconut. It may cause death if untreated.



Table 3. *Iked*

Name of ailment	<i>Daser-daser it iked</i> (cough)
Cause	<i>Lianen</i> or 'hangin'
Description	<i>Daser-daser it iked</i> refers to cough. When trees and other plants begin to bear flowers, and when the time for harvesting rice has begun, insects and other animals are attracted to the said plants. These insects and animals may bear the souls of <i>lianen</i> (unseen beings). When they come near people, they will cause them to cough. This type of cough can be differentiated from cough due to poisoning by using a special diagnostic instrument ( <i>boldong</i> ).
Signs and symptoms	"Ordinary" cough that just comes and goes, not severe
Treatment	<i>Delapas</i> ; <i>segeng</i> (Refer to Chapter 10)
Special notes	The patient who is undergoing treatment must refrain from eating salty and sour food.

Table 4. *Kambasa*

Name of ailment	<i>Kambasa</i>
Cause	A person's feet was soaked/exposed to mud and rainwater puddles that have urine or feces of a pig or cow.
Description	<i>Kambasa</i> is <i>alipunga</i> in Tagalog
Signs and symptoms	Swollen toes; presence of wounds between the toes ( <i>sisilangan</i> ) that are itchy and secrete water and pus; in severe, untreated cases, the nails are detached from the big toes.
Treatment	<i>Nito</i> ; <i>balinggod</i> , <i>kamantis</i> , <i>sanglay-kayo</i> (Refer to Chapter 10)

Table 5. *Katel*

Name of ailment	<i>Katel-katel</i>
Cause	This illness is seasonal. One may obtain this if a person who is afflicted with <i>katel-katel</i> takes a bath and the water he uses flows to another person. One will only be afflicted if both have the same 'blood'.
Signs and symptoms	Presence of small, itchy papules on the entire body
Treatment	<i>Pituro</i> (Refer to Chapter 10)

Table 6. *Lebew/tipdas*

Name of ailment	<i>Lebew/tipdas</i>
Cause	<i>Sesengden, sanged</i> (unexplained cause, it will just occur), some diseases may be seasonal
Description	<i>Lebew/tipdas</i> refers to chicken pox and <i>bulutong-tubig</i> . The community describes it as a non-communicable illness common during childhood that takes about two weeks to disappear.
Signs and symptoms	Appearance of water and pus-secreting vesicles; pain all over the body; non-itchy
Treatment	<i>Baboy talon</i> (Refer to Chapter 10)  The patient must drink much water, as heat may build up inside the body and cause death. He/she must not be allowed to take a bath, because this will aggravate his condition. He/she must stay inside the house because if he/she is exposed to too much air, the <i>lebew/tipdas</i> may “enter the body” and cause death.

Table 7. *Marep*

Name of ailment	<i>Marep</i>
Cause	A person is believed to have multiple animal souls ( <i>korodwa</i> ). The <i>korodwa-begit</i> (bird soul) or another animal soul was blowgunned by a <i>lianen</i> (invisible being) hunting for food and this caused the illness.
Signs and symptoms	Body pains, as if something is embedded in one's flesh
Treatment	<i>Dengingi</i> ; <i>kelelepnit/kulegbew</i> ; <i>kortang</i> ; <i>pungo-pungo</i> ; <i>biserer</i> and <i>saleng</i> (Refer to Chapter 10)  Consult a <i>manenegpa</i> . The <i>manenegpa</i> is someone who specializes in treating <i>marep</i> . He calls on the <i>diwata</i> of the walls and floors, <i>Mengkebegbeg</i> and <i>Mengkebiringbiring</i> , utters an incantation, blows on the painful body part, grabs the muscles around it, and pulls out whatever object is embedded on it.

Table 8. *Mepeglangan*

Name of ailment	<i>Mepeglangan</i>
Cause	<i>Sesengden</i> (unexplained cause, ailment just occurs)
Signs and symptoms	Headache that occurs every other day
Treatment	<i>Langan</i> ; <i>langan</i> and <i>senek</i> (Refer to Chapter 10)

*Table 9. Pantak*

Name of ailment	<i>Pantak</i>
Cause	Witchcraft or <i>kulam</i> in Tagalog
Description	Application of witchcraft by an unknown person, often an adversary
Signs and symptoms	Pain on different body parts
Treatment	<p>Consult a <i>maseod</i> (wise) person to make sure whether the illness is caused by witchcraft or not. He/she will crack an egg onto a plate. If the illness is due to witchcraft, the <i>maseod</i> will see who is causing it.</p> <p>One must also consult a person who knows the incantation against witchcraft. He/she will utter the incantation in a glass that contains mongo beans and an egg. After he/she utters the incantation, the mixture is placed in the following body parts in this order: both temples, forehead, neck, chest, both sides of the chest, both elbows, both knees, and both legs.</p> <p>Another manner of treatment is by soaking a piece of red cloth in a glass. A small amount of water is poured into it. An incantation against witchcraft is uttered on the glass. The patient must drink this once at noon and once in the afternoon for one week.</p>

Table 10. *Raston*

Name of ailment	<i>Raston</i>
Cause	Ingestion, inhalation or reception of a poison
Description	Poisons may be incorporated in food, smoke, a pat, or something that was used to draw a line in front of a person. There are two types of poisoning: <i>raston-maniblek</i> and <i>raston-manahon</i> .
Signs and symptoms	<i>Raston-maniblek</i> - necrosis of the lips, tongue and chin that is followed by death two hours or so after being poisoned; <i>Raston-manahon</i> - productive cough that becomes more severe with time, accompanied by voice changes (as the poison burns the pharynx); easy fatigability; and weight loss. If left untreated, will lead to death four to eight years after the person is poisoned.
Treatment	<i>Telinga-baboy</i> (Refer to Chapter 10)
Special notes	The patient must refrain from eating pork, pineapple, and a banana variant called <i>pisang</i> . The patient is brought to the <i>balyan</i> for consultation or <i>sokodan</i> using a <i>boldong</i> ( <i>boho</i> , <i>tering</i> types of bamboo may be used). By using the <i>boldong</i> one will be able to differentiate between cough that was caused by poisoning or the <i>daser-daser</i> type. The <i>boldong</i> is a type of bamboo that has no hole in the middle and no joint-like

	<p>partitions. Its length depends on how long the sidestretched arms of its owner are. When a person consults someone who owns a <i>boldong</i>, the owner silently asks the <i>boldong</i> to help him diagnose the illness. For example, to differentiate between ‘ordinary’ cough and cough that was caused by poisoning, the owner asks his <i>boldong</i>, “Is this cough caused by poisoning?”</p> <p>The owner stretches his arms to measure <i>boldong</i>. If the answer is “no,” its length does not change. If the <i>boldong</i>’s answer is “yes,” it lengthens by a couple of inches or so. Through this, one will know what illness the patient has, its cause, and what medicine to use.</p>
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*Table 11. Sakit it beteng-suka tey tey*

Name of ailment	<i>Sakit it beteng-suka tey tey</i>
Cause	Drinking of unclean water
Description	Abdominal pain often accompanied by vomiting and diarrhea
Treatment	<i>Bago; beyabas; bowang-bowang; kaymito; kelepiney; kelilibon; kepayas; korebingen; lengat; lomboy; mererenggo</i> (Refer to Chapter 10)

Table 12. *Sakit it ulo-egnew*

Name of ailment	<i>Sakit it ulo-egnew</i>
Cause	Staying under the heat of the sun for a long time, mosquito bite
Signs and symptoms	Severe headache; increased body temperature; and chills
Treatment	<i>Empelungew; enderamey; enterungan; kamilit; kapal-kapal; kelilibon; merenggewiri; niyog-niyog; elibetbet</i> and <i>boyo</i> (Refer to Chapter 10)

Table 13. *Salagad*

Name of ailment	<i>Salagad</i>
Cause	Invisible things in the environment which cause illness. Others describe this ailment as <i>sesengden</i> (unexplained reason, it will just occur).
Signs and symptoms	Pain on the <i>barabawan</i> (hypogastric area); oliguria; hematuria; in severe cases, the person passes small stones with his urine.
Treatment	A rare tree that has no name is used to treat this condition. A piece of its bark is taken and boiled in a glass of water. After the patient has drunk the decoction once or twice, he/she will be able to urinate without frequency or urgency.



*Table 14. Salibegbeg/samban*

Name of ailment	<i>Salibegbeg/samban</i>
Cause	A person, greeted/noticed by an invisible being, was not able to respond.
Description	This refers to a condition wherein a person leaves his/her house feeling well but returns home ill.
Treatment	<i>Bebesalan; paspasan</i> (Refer to Chapter 10)

*Table 15. Seblew*

Name of ailment	<i>Seblew</i>
Cause	Mentioning of the name of a dead person; walking on burial grounds; coming near a dead person's soul that is left on earth when one dies ( <i>ranga-ranga</i> )
Description	<i>Seblew</i> ( <i>bati</i> in Tagalog) can also be called 'iningkot ket natey' (the dead asked you a question). The person contracts the illness that caused the death of the person causing <i>seblew</i> . For example, if the cause of death of the <i>ranga-ranga</i> was a stomach ailment, it will cause stomachache to the person it greets/notices.
Treatment	Find someone who knows the incantation for <i>seblew</i> . The incantation will be uttered eight times into a small amount of <i>apog</i> (lime, powdered shells used for <i>maman</i> or betel chew). A cross is then drawn on the affected part, eg, the abdomen, using the <i>apog</i> .

Table 16. *Seblew*

Name of ailment	<i>Seryew/ugam</i>
Cause	heat inside the body; another illness may be causing this
Signs and symptoms	Stomatitis; appearance of painless, white, milk-like substances in the mouth
Treatment	<i>Seket-seket</i> (Refer to Chapter 10)

*Table 16. Sot*

Name of ailment	<i>Sot</i>
Cause	<i>Sesengden, sanged</i> (unexplained reason, it will just occur)
Description	Blood formations in a person's stomach in the shape of different animals such as: snake ( <i>sot-enipa</i> ), millipede ( <i>sot-lumbaged</i> ), worm ( <i>sot-luyluy</i> ), small river crab ( <i>sot-karapay</i> ), grasshopper ( <i>sot-peyatong</i> ), and others. If the <i>sot</i> is not expelled, the condition will result to loss of strength as evidenced by inability to stand up, and in severe cases, death.
Signs and symptoms	Severe abdominal pain which may or may not be accompanied by vomiting and diarrhea; sensation that something in the abdomen is crawling or walking ( <i>megbaker</i> ); pain "on the liver area" (directly above the umbilicus) which is accompanied by vomiting
Treatment	<i>Kulegbew</i> (Refer to Chapter 10).
Special notes	The patient receiving treatment must refrain from eating sardines and other oily food, as they are believed to revitalize dead, but unexpelled <i>sot</i> .

Table 17. *Sungkar*

Name of ailment	<i>Sungkar</i>
Cause	Invisible things in the environment which cause illness. Others describe this ailment as <i>sesengden</i> (unexplained reason, it will just occur).
Signs and symptoms	Appearance of mosquito bite-like papules, oftentimes under the lower lip and on the chin but may also affect the head. These are itchy and painful, and secrete pus.
Treatment	The person who is suffering from <i>sungkar</i> must refrain from eating the following: eggplant, tomato, oily food such as pork, chicken and eggs, and the fish <i>balanak</i> . All except <i>balanak</i> may be eaten a month or so after the wounds are completely healed. <i>Balanak</i> may not be eaten for an unspecified length of time because it may cause a recurrence of <i>sungkar</i> .

Table 18. *Tingken*

Name of ailment	<i>Tingken</i>
Cause	A person's soul was taken by <i>lianen</i> or <i>taw't kakayuan</i> (invisible beings)
Description	<i>Lianen</i> usually take the souls of those who have offended them or their dwelling by making too much noise, playing, urinating or defecating near their homes, which are usually large rocks and trees like the balete. If left untreated, this condition will lead to death. Each person possesses a certain number of animal spirit ( <i>korodwa</i> ). If one has skill in climbing trees, one of his <i>korodwa</i> is the monkey. If one can speak eloquently one of his <i>korodwa</i> is the frog. If, for example, the <i>lianen</i> takes a certain <i>korodwa</i> from the person, it seems that his certain ability will diminish.
Signs and symptoms	Rolling up of eyeballs; stiffness of the entire body/arching of the back; stiffness of the hands and arms, directed towards the back; weakness; weight loss; presence of many other illnesses, eg, cough and headache. The symptoms will also depend on what animal <i>korodwa</i> the <i>lianen</i> took from the person.
Treatment	Informants say that only "first class" <i>balyan</i> are able to cure this ailment. The <i>balyan</i> must perform <i>sokodan</i> , diagnosing the illness using a <i>boldong</i> instrument. Through this he/she will know what animal will be given to the <i>lianen</i> (for example a chicken). Then the <i>balyan</i> will call for a person to accompany him/her to

Treatment	<p>bring the animal to the forest or where the person got sick. The <i>balyan</i> will say 'Here is the animal that you want, return the spirit to me.' The animal is left in the said area. Then the <i>balyan</i> will return to house of the patient to perform <i>turon</i> (calling of <i>diwata</i>) to heal the patient. The <i>korodwa</i> of the person is said to already follow the <i>balyan</i> back home after the animal is left for the <i>lianen</i>. The sick will gradually get well.</p> <p>A person who sees the chicken left in the forest should not take it or else the <i>diwata</i> will get angry. The one who is caught taking the animal must pay a fine, two jars of <i>tinapey</i> (rice wine) with <i>minelmel</i> and <i>pinuso-puso</i> (rice cakes).</p>
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## List of community informants

Palawan community of Mount Domadoway, Palawan

Romelyn Amping	Sawi-sawi Magas
Sayap Bantol	Kelmina Manse
Almina Binsitan	Samuel Manse
Toto Binsitan	Jonito Mata
Alpio Bosio	Kilia Mata
Eyong Bosio	Leonila Mata
Jelme Bosio	Norelyn Mata
Rosita Bosio	Senelia Mata
Tiungli Bosio	Sinio Mata
Israel Inalaw	Simpio Mata
Bales Isim	Tito Mata
Morsino Kadang	Mylene Salim
Kalkon Karorong	Ado Sapit
Aplina Kanang	Likme Sapit
Ebbie Kanang	Patinti Sapit
Misola Kanang	Doklema Saro
Dalia Kombil	Masola Sudala
Daminia Langkasan	Matial Tamat
Sabing Langkasan	Salimbak Tamat
Melia Magas	Tansiong Tima

We apologize for any omission in the list.





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