

THE MAMANUA BELIEF SYSTEM

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Introduction

The Mamanua (Konquista, Kongking, Amamanua, Mamaw) of Northeastern Mindanao as a people have remained of interest to this writer up to the present. He came to know about them as a student in the Surigao High School, when, on occasions, he went with his father to the Mindanao Motherlode Mines (also called Mabuhay) to deliver goods to the customers of his father's tailoring shop. While there he met this dark skinned people mixing with the workers in the said mine. They were there to sell a variety of goods, viz., split rattan, wood of the fishtail palm, occasionally a wild chicken, wild boar's meat, deer's meat, etc. The fact that he could communicate with them in Surigaonon led him to several conversations with them. This continued every time he went with his father to Mabuhay. This interest was kindled in him due to the fact that they were different from the other ethnic groups (Tagalog, Ilocano, Waray, Ilongo, etc.) working in the mine. He learned from the Mamanua themselves that they lived in the surrounding mountains, around Lake Mainit and the banks of the rivers.

This interest in these people remained latent until the time when the writer did his graduate studies under Prof. Dr. Rudolf Rahmann, S.V.D., especially in his lectures on the Negritos of Southeast Asia. Finally, after completing his academic requirements, he started rooting around for the Mamanua. He went to the many places which they had indicated. After gathering preliminary data, he reported to his professor in Anthropology that he wanted to do his thesis on them. At first, his mentor was not convinced and said that there were too few of them for him to be writing about. But this writer persisted, taking pictures of them, their settlement, their mode of making a living, etc. and sending these pictures to his professor. Finally, Dr. Rahmann consented. So he began his research work among them, starting as early as 1952. Finally, he

wrote his thesis on the Mamanua as a start. As a later consequence, a larger version came about comparing the Mamanua culture to the rest of the Negritos of the Philippines (the Manide of Bicol, the Baluga of Northern Luzon, the Ati of Negros and Iloilo) and the Southeast Asian Negritos (the Andamanese of Andaman Islands, the Semang of Malaya, etc.). Basically, this paper discusses only the Mamanua.

The Mamanua As A Race

Generally, the Mamanua are chocolate brown in color with kinky or frizzly hair. Many of them still possess the characteristics of the pure Negrito, but a large number of them are descendants of Mamanua and Manobo intermarriages. Thus they are lighter in complexion and much taller. This mestizo group still retains, to a large extent, their Negrito features, e.g. curly hair, and even Mamanua women, married to Bisayan men, have children resembling more the Negrito than the Bisayan. Garvan in his early reports says that the Mamanua at the beginning of this century were still "full blooded Negritos in every respect — physical and cultural."

As said already, there is still the pure Negrito type among the Mamanua. The pure Negrito type has a low, narrow, receding but bulbous forehead. The nose is short and squat with flaring nostrils. The root of the nose is depressed and the bridge is short and low. The hair is kinky or frizzly. Their skin is chocolate brown and they are about five feet tall.

Their total number is hard to determine. At the time of the thesis work of this writer, there seemed to be about 500 Mamanua in the mountain range between the Pacific coastal town of Bacuag and the barrio of Kitcharao (now a municipality). Something like 200 were found in the hilly countryside around Lake Mainit. There were about 75 in barrio Sibahay near Lanuza, Surigao. This last figure was obtained thru correspondence. Of about this thousand people, most are Mamanua-Manobo mestizo, although a significant number remain to be still pure Mamanua.

In 1910 Beyer gave the total number of Mamanua to be 3,850. Other writers disagree and say that this figure may be too high now. Garvan states that during the Christianization of the Mamanua there were 1,000 baptized Mamanua. This number, however, may have decreased due to intermarriages with other population groups and also by the enslaving and ruthless killing of Mamanua on the part of the other tribes. The former phenomenon of intermarriage continues even today thus further depleting their numbers. And because they also have somehow taken the steps to become marginal farmers, they intermarry more and more with the surrounding ethnic groups.

Mamanua Physical Environment

The Mamanua, to a large extent, is a creature of his environment. Of this he knows so much that his knowledge is truly amazing.

Basically, the Mamanua belong to the hunting and food gathering group. It may also be noted that some Mamanua already have become marginal farmers, as in Ipil, where some Mamanus families have come to own titled lots. The same is happening around Lake Mainit where some Mamanua own pieces of untitled lots. But to a large extent, he is still a hunter and food gatherer for, after planting their crops, he continues to engage in his old activities. Some Mamanua have been seen and met in Baybay, Leyte by this writer. Asked what they were doing there, they said that they were gathering rattan. And some Mamanua are said to have travelled as far as Samar Island gathering rattan. They continue still to remain as hunters and gatherers. This way of life necessitates a good knowledge of the flora and fauna in the environment.

Around Lake Mainit they are found in the interior areas of the municipalities of Kitcharao, Sison and Mainit. In San Roque, near the western portion of the lake, they even have a Mamanua cemetery, probably a remnant of their Christianization. It may be noted that during the dry season the Mamanua living in the scattered barangays of the towns mentioned congregate along the shores of Lake Mainit for their fishing activities. This large lake

spans the provinces of Surigao and Agusan. The western part of the lake is stony. Here the Mamanua fishermen catch goby called *pidyanga*. The sizes of this fish vary from that of a large thumb to the size of one's arm. The lake is low during the dry season, and the fishes have been noticed to go upstream in the tributaries. These tributaries are: from the north, the large Mayag river; from the east, the Mahayahay river; and finally to the south, the Colorado river. The outlet of the lake is the Tubay river, which is large during the rainy season and small in the dry season.

On the lake's southern part today there are ricefields cultivated by the Christian lowlanders. Near its eastern shores are mudflats that favor the growth of the fresh water snails, i.e. *egi*. Here the lowlanders have put up small scale duckery projects. The *egi* is utilized as feeds by the duck raisers. In the southern portion, during the later part of the dry season, the Mamanua put small temporary settlements. Here they go fishing and hunting along the shores of the lake. The eastern portion of the lake, towards the town of Mainit, is rocky and a second growth forest dominates. In this second growth forest monkeys and the various kinds of parrots, *kalaw*, *tariktic* and other birds, still abound. Crows are found here in this craggy portion of the lake in large numbers.

In the upper portion of the Mayag river, especially in Kantugas, is a Mamanua settlement. Now it has been converted into a culture change project by the diocese of Surigao. Earlier records show, however, that this area was a reservation put up for the Mamanua. But the lowland Christians have taken over and have planted coconuts. Only a small portion has been left along the banks of the river Mayag, and on this small portion is found the settlement. Towards the east of the river is a mountain, called Pako. Here the Mamanua have a small settlement too. Now and then this settlement becomes very small, especially during times of difficulty in obtaining food. For then, the families go down to the coconut plantations to work for the Christian farmers. Prominent among these coconut plantation owners is the Acheron family, the children of which are half Mamanua, since their father is married to a Mamanua woman. Here in their coconut farm the Mamanua help and eke out a living.

To the south of the lake, the Mamanua are found along the banks of the large Colorado river. Here they fish and cultivate small pieces of land for their other needs. And when fiestas come in the nearby barangays they leave their settlement to attend them.

On Mahayahay mountain they have a settlement of more or less twenty to thirty households. This is located on the top of the mountain. Since Lake Mainit is nearby (ca. 5 km. away), they stay in this place and go to fish in the lake. If they are not fishing, they gather forest materials to be sold later in the different *tabo-tabo*. From the sale of their products they buy things for the family needs. They may also go hunting or trapping in the surrounding forests, especially during the rainy season.

The Use of the Knowledge of the Physical Environment

It can be said without fear of contradiction that the Mamanua is well versed in his own environment. His knowledge of this is vast. Whether in a single hut or in a settlement, the Mamanua normally build their houses near a stream or a river bed. This is important for him for it is a source of water, his most immediate need, and during certain times of the day such bodies of water can be a source of small fishes and crustaceans. During the nights when there is no moon, he fishes the whole length of the body of water with the help of a resin torch. It must be noted that the Mamanua considers it bad to defecate in the water.

When living as a single family, they build a hut in a small clearing near the water-bed, as mentioned, or on a ridge. The latter practice is done so that if there is any danger that threatens, it is easy to take flight. Usually, for the single hut, only the immediate vicinity of the house is cleared; the rest is left alone. So if he feels like going out hunting or trapping in a few minutes he is already in the forest.

In the forest he is alert and happiest. He listens to the bird calls which he can easily decipher as the call of the *limokon* (turtle dove), the *manatad* (ground dove), the *saliksik* (kingfisher), the *balu* (imperial pigeon), or the *punay* (yellow-green dove). The

have a different cooing call. On the other hand, he is able to recognize the *kalaw* (the large hornbill) which utters a loud cry during early morning, noon and dusk. The second hornbill is the *awid*, similar in color to the *kalaw* but smaller in size. Its call is somewhat like aah, a ah..." The third kind of hornbill is the smallest. The female is black in color but the male is black and white. As it feeds on the fruits of two wild bananas, *agutay* and *pakoy*, it continues to cry out "tariktik-tariktik". Of course, easily recognizable by them is the crow. It calls out its name "uwak-uwak-uwak" as it flies. Recognized also by the Mamanua are the different kinds of parrots, viz., the *kayangag* (red-billed parrot), the *kanawihan* (gray-billed parrot), the *abukay* (white billed and white feathered parrot) and the *periko loro* (the white billed but green feathered parrot). In addition to them, they also know the *uwak-uwak* (the raven). They recognize the hawk family from the smallest, the *sicop* (falcon), to the *banog* (the kite) and the *mana-ol* (monkey eating eagle). The diving bird, called *sili*, is known to them, as this exists in the waters of Lake Mainit. They recognize the different moor hens and the two kinds of wild duck. All these birds are seen by the Mamanua in the lake.

Sometimes the Mamanua builds his hut or a group of huts near the shores of the lake. Well at home in this environment, he therefore makes a living in this body of water. He collects the *soso* (long sized, fresh water snails) and the *egi* (short sized, fresh water snails). The latter are plentiful in the lake. They also collect the giant fresh snails called *kanbuhay*. These are sometimes eaten raw by them. Different fishes are caught by the Mamanua, viz., the *bonog* (small goby), *pidyanga* (large gobies), *casili* (eels), *hayo-an* (mudfish), *gingaw*, *pigok*, (small sharks of the fresh water variety), *languog*, etc. Also in the lake and its tributaries are caught *kagang* (crabs), *ulang* (small, fresh water shrimps), and the *padyi* (giant fresh water shrimps).

The Mamanua who live near the seashore, i.e the Ipil, have learned to extract a kind of marine worm called *tamilok* from rotten timber in the sea. They eat this animal raw. Furthermore, they also have learned to catch marine species of fish.

Other animals caught near or around the lake are the *ibid* (iguana), the *hayo* (monitor lizard), and the giant bull frogs. Of the

crocodiles, the Mamanua have only heard stories. The crow is sometimes trapped by the Mamanua, since they are plentiful in the lake. The *amo* (monkeys) live in the trees lining the lake shores. The Mamanua have a trap for them which will be discussed later on. Sometimes, however, they are able to catch a monkey by surprise while it is feeding on the *egi* or *balinkokogo* (land snail). The *lagasao* (deer) and the *bo-og* (wild boar) are trapped and hunted by them.

In the nearby forest, the Mamanua are able to gather forest products. The most common are the following: *payasan* (a kind of rattan), *kalapi* (another kind of rattan), *yantok* (also rattan) and many smaller species of rattan; the wood of *pugahan* (fishtail palm), *anahaw* (palm brava) and *anibong*; and to a lesser extent the wood of *idyok* (sugar palm). The wood of the first three palms are used by lowlanders for flooring and axe handles. On the other hand, the *cabo negro* from the *idyok* is used as a roofing material. Furthermore, the *idyok* and *pugahan* are sources of starch.

Other Means of Making a Living

Trapping and Hunting

Trapping and hunting depend very much on the knowledge of the fauna as well as the pattern of behavior of the animals. The Mamanua know how to trap birds, wild chicken, monkeys, deer, and wild pig.

They have several kinds of traps for the wild animals. One of them is the *lit-ag*. This trap is made of resilient sapling that pulls the noose tight around the game, and a triggering mechanism laid out on the ground. Once the animal steps on this, the noose is pulled by the sapling and the animal is caught by the leg. This trap is effective for wild chicken, ground dove, the two kinds of lizard mentioned, and the *singalong* and *milo* (both civet cats). The *hugpit* is mainly used for catching the monkey. When the monkey snatches the bait from the trap, the piece of log — a part of the trap — falls on the monkey. Thus the monkey is pressed between two logs, and is killed. The second monkey trap is

structure. This is baited with camote attached to a trigger mechanism. As soon as the bait is touched, the door falls shut and the animal is caught inside. Usually it is taken out alive. A simple trap is made out of matured coconut. A small hole is bored through the husk and the shell to allow the hand of the monkey to enter. A piece of camote is placed inside the coconut as a bait. As soon as the monkey clutches the camote in his balled fist he cannot get out. There is a tug of war until the animal is tired out. He is unable to get out his hand because his balled fist is larger than the hole. He is not smart enough to let go of the camote. When the trapper comes he kills the animal. The last kind of trap is the *atub*. This consists of four heavy logs tied together. A trigger mechanism is placed on the ground. As soon as the animal touches the camote bait, the logs fall on it. It is killed immediately.

The other trap is for the wild pig and deer. This is a spear trap with the trigger mechanism placed on the path of the animal. As soon as the animal brushes against the trigger mechanism, the spear is released and propelled by a strong sapling. It therefore impales the animal. Sometimes the game will have been dead for one or two days and the meat will have begun to rot before it is found. The Mamanua, however, still brings home the catch. It is eaten as "hot meat." Another trap for these two animals is the *gahong*. This is a deep pit dug in the path of the animal. The pit is cleverly camouflaged and so, the animal unknowingly steps on the cover. The animal falls through and is caught by the trapper. A variation of this is to place pointed stakes in the trap. The animal that falls through is impaled and killed.

Smaller devices are designed by the Mamanua to catch the *limokon* (turtle dove). They place gummed sticks over a decoy bird's cage. Then a call is made by the trapper. This is answered by the decoy. Turtle doves nearby come to investigate and alight on the gummed sticks. They are caught by the trapper. They also have a wild chicken trap that use a decoy. This trap consists of standing rattan loops that surround the decoy cock. The trapper makes a crowing sound which is answered by the decoy. A nearby wild rooster will resent the presence of another cock in his territory. So he comes running towards the decoy spoiling for a fight. In the process, he gets caught in the trap — called *karang*. The trapper comes to get the caught wild rooster.

Fishing

Hunting and trapping do not play a very important role anymore due to the deforestation. Fishing therefore has become one of the more important activities in Mamanua life. They usually fish in the river and in the lake. One method of fishing is called *panampong*. Here, a branch of a river is surveyed to determine if it is possible to divert it by putting up a small dike. If so, they begin to build the dike. First, large stones are piled up, then smaller stones, then sand. Finally, banana leaves are placed against the flow of the current. The water is directed towards another direction and that part of the dike becomes dry. It becomes easy for the Mamanua fishermen to collect the crabs, fishes, fresh water shrimps, frogs, etc. Later they place the *bayantak* at the end of the ring stream branch. They say that the animals in the water will follow the receding waters, and hence enter into the *bayantak*. Where there are large stones, and eels are suspected to be living underneath them, they use pesticide, i.e. *tubli*, to kill them.

During dark nights they will come up with torches made from the resin of *lauan* or *pili* trees. They will torch the entire length of the river. Fish and other animals are caught with the hand or wire spears, called *bidyo*. And if an eel is sighted, a *nudyo* will be used to kill it. Another method of fishing, to catch the large mudfish, is termed *pamagyay*. The *bagyay* is a large three pointed wire spear. This is propelled by several strands of rubber band. The fisherman looks for a place where young fingerlings of the mudfish are gathered. He watches over this place patiently without moving. As soon as the mother fish comes up for air, it is shot with the *bagyay*. A good fisherman may catch up to ten large mudfish by this method.

Sometimes, at the shore of the lake, they make a fish trap called *dumpil*. This takes advantage of the flow of water and the lowering of its level. Only small fishes are caught in this kind of trap. Sometimes none.

Women and children help also in gathering small animals. They collect *egi*, *soso* and *kanbuay* from the shallow portions of the rivers and the lake. They will fish with their hands. This is called *panguot*. The fisherman simply places his hand

of large stones and, if lucky, he may be able to catch fish, shrimps and crabs. Small fishes like *pait*, *bonog*, small *tilapia*, and others are caught in this manner. Also, when they are lucky, they catch the slow moving large fresh shrimp called *padyi*.

Hunting

Hunting is done by the Mamanua men with their dogs. The deer or wild pig is chased by the dogs. These animals, when tired out, will seek haven in a water hole. There the animal is cornered and killed. If the hunter is able to borrow a shotgun, he goes hunting with it. If lucky, he comes home carrying a wild pig or a deer. If his sallies have been without luck, then certain ceremonies are performed.

Honey gathering

The Mamanua gather honey from three kinds of honey bees: the *liguan*, *kiwot*, and *putyokan*. The *liguan* store their combs in cavities in trees. They are attracted outside of their home by torches during the night. In their attempt to put out the fire, the *liguan* are killed. The honey gatherer is free, therefore, to take out the honey combs. On the other hand, the *putyokan's* honey comb is suspended from a branch of a tree. The bees are lulled to sleep by use of tobacco smoke. When they are all asleep, the honey comb is harvested. The *kiwot* are small bees and do not sting. Their small amount of honey is gathered by putting one's hand inside the cavity where the combs are stored. The Mamanua also eat the larvae of the bees.

Agriculture

The Mamanua practice a crude kind of horticulture. Like the Christian lowlanders, they also make *kaingins*. First, they cut the underbrush; then they cut small trees; and, finally, the large trees are cut down. The branches are lopped off. A period of about a month is made to pass so that the *kaingin* will dry up. Then this is fired. The clearings are started about the last week of March. By

the third of April the clearing is fired and prepared for planting. It should be noted that, in the clearing, the heavy labor is provided by the men; and so is the fencing of the clearing. The planting is done by cooperation of the sexes, including the children. These Mamanua farms are small and, on the average, from thirty to forty square meters. Some are larger. A few of the Mamanua have acquired titles to their lands through the help of some lowland Christians.

Their main crop is camote. After five to six months, the tubers are matured and are harvested. They continue harvesting for a while, for the vines also yield tubers. All other crops planted are secondary. They plant also certain kinds of *gabi*, i.e. *karlang*, and *ubi*. Some Mamanua have been encouraged by local officials to slowly plant money crops such as coconuts. They may plant coffee and cacao trees. However, they do not know how to prepare the seeds.

In their farming activities, they use the ever-present *nudyo* for cutting the underbrush and for general cultivation. Trees are cut with the aid of an axe which, if they do not own it, they borrow from some Christian friends. For drilling the corn and rice holes, they continue to use the digging stick. This implement is a stick about a meter long and as thick as a man's arm. One end of this stick is sharpened and used for drilling. For rice, they favor the flat wood of the *pugahan* for drilling. For making mounds for planting camote, they use the *nudyo* or *bolo*.

Forest Products for Sale

The Mamanua gather many forest products that are marketable. Notable among them are the varieties of rattan, viz., *payasan*, *kalafi*, *yantok*, etc. These are gathered and cut to lengths of three meters. Then, later, they are split into one centimeter wide splits, cleaned and hung up to dry. A person can clean as much as 600 splits of rattan a day. They are sold by bundles of 100 splits, called the *mano*, at the prevailing price. Presently, they gather rattan and convert them into poles ca. 300 centimeters long. These are bought by the agents of the rattan furniture-makers. Other palm products that they gather are the *pugahan*, *anibong* and *anahaw*.

Anibong is often sold as posts for fish corrals. The other two palms are split and made into boards for flooring. They may also be sold for axe handles.

Orchids are gathered by the Mamanua and sold. The most common varieties sold are the tiger and the dove orchids. Some orchids are sold to the lowlanders as components of a love potion called *lumay*. Together with the *anibong* poles, *diliman*, a kind of fern used for tying parts of the fish corral, are also used. They also sell *nito*, a black colored fern used for decorating basketry.

They collect resin, called *sayong*, from the *lauan* tree. This and the sap of the *pili* nut tree are sold. Dried *baliw* and *pandan* leaves are vended for weaving mats and small containers. Medicinal plants, called *pamughat*, for newly delivered mothers, are also sold in the market. Edible fungi, called *olaping*, *ohong*, *labit* and others, are gathered when plentiful and brought to market for sale. The most common wild fruits they sell are the *kalapi*, *pili* nuts, and *itlog sa lagsao* (wild rambutan).

It must be noted that the Mamanua also have handicrafts. They make and sell *ayat* (baskets for shoulder packing), hammocks, and *bayantak* (a fish trap). The last item is made out of bamboo and *bamban*.

Working for Wages

The Mamanua hire themselves out to the Christian farmers as farm workers. If a father is thus hired, the whole family comes with him and they work. Hence, they have to be included in the meals prepared; but the father is the only one paid as a hired hand. They may work as wood-fellers. In the past, they were hired by the mine administrators to cut trees for timbering purposes. Among the fellers, a one meter in diameter *lauan* — or any tree for that matter — would take less than half a day to cut. The women hire themselves out as house-helpers, but usually they go home in the evening. The home services are rendered only to close friends. As workers, they are usually honest although there have been reports of malfeasances.

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Domesticated Animals

Some domesticated animals are kept by the Mamanua. They keep chickens, dogs, and pigs. These animals are never in large number since, when they move, they are excess baggage. Pigs are kept to be slaughtered, when needed, during curing and full moon prayer ceremonies. Chickens are seldom killed to be eaten, but they are saved for certain rituals. Sometimes the Mamanua are able to catch a baby monkey which is kept as a pet in the family. Turtle doves are kept in cages since they are used as decoys for trapping. Dwarf roosters are kept to be made as decoys for their chicken trap.

Food Preparation

As already mentioned above, the staple food of these people is steamed camote. Among the Mamanua who are in more or less permanent settlements, i.e. culture change projects, the usual fare is either corn grits or rice. In the forests, however, camote and other root crops are the mainstays. They have other sources of food when they run out of supply of camote.

The *kuyot* is a wild form of yam. This is poisonous when not properly prepared. The Mamanua, on the other hand, know how to prepare and depoison these roots. They peel the hairy tubers and slice them into thin slivers. A large hole is prepared in the ground. This is lined with wild banana leaves, and then the sliced roots are placed inside this hole. Boiling water is then poured into the pit until it is almost full. Later, they cover up the hole with banana leaves so that the heat will not escape. The mixture is left to cook the whole day. The next day, the half-cooked roots are taken out. Then a blanket is spread under running water. It is stretched out and the four corners of the blanket are tied down or held by pieces of stones. Then the slivers of *kuyot* are spread out on the blanket and the water is allowed to wash away the poison. Now and then the roots are stirred. These are allowed to stay soaking in water for almost one day. By then the poison will have been washed away. Then the washed roots are taken away and dried. They place these in a basket. The owner can take a portion and cook it with coconut milk or just plain water. Occasionally, the *kuyot* is cooked with sugar or simply fried.

The *pugahan*, when about to bear flowers, has part of its body enlarged. If this happens, the *pugahan* is adjudged to have plenty of starch. This is cut down by the Mamanua, and later cut into stumps of about a meter and a half. It is split open and the pit is mashed with a wooden hammer. The mashed pit is taken out and placed in a cloth container stretched out on the opening of a petroleum can. Water is allowed to cover the mashed pit and this is stirred. The starch passes through the strainer and settles at the bottom of the can. The process is repeated until all the stumps are finished. If they are lucky, they will have almost a canful of *pugahan* starch which is pinkish in color. The starch is then dried. It is cooked in this powdered form into a favorite dish called *kinaboy*.

The *idyok* (sugar palm) is another source of starch. However, since this is smaller and shorter than the *pugahan*, the yield is small. The Mamanua say it is easier to work on the former than the latter. The *pugahan* has stiff pit fibers. The powder of the *idyok* is cooked in the same manner as the *pugahan*.

Besides the plants mentioned, they also collect wild *ubi* in the forest. This is also steamed. They gather the heart of the bud of various palm trees, like the *pugahan*, *anibog*, etc. These are boiled in water, with salt added to taste, and then eaten; the soup is drunk.

A variety of other things are eaten besides the above, viz., the flesh of wild swine. This is either roasted or boiled in water, with salt added to taste. Sometimes they eat the fat of the wild pig raw, and it tastes like coconut, they say. Deer, *kalaw*, *kabog* (large fruit bat), etc. meat are cooked in the same manner as the pork. Large frogs, called *bakbak*, and grubs of the large beetles are cooked in banana leaves and eaten too. On the other hand, the larvae of the honey bees are eaten raw.

Houses and Material Possessions

The Mamanua today build different kinds of dwellings. This is reflective of their changing culture. On a hunting and food gathering activity they put up a windscreen. Leaves of wild

bananas and *tikoy* (young *payasan*) are used for roofing. They lie on the ground when sleeping, usually near a fireplace. They also put up this windscreen when they are on a trip to another place and stay there overnight. When contracted to cut trees and other jobs the Mamanua also put a windscreen where they may rest. The latter windscreen is complemented with a small platform about sixty centimeters from the ground. This has a flooring of round timber.

In their semi-permanent settlements, the Mamanua build huts. These will have small posts that are crossed to form a series of X's. The hut will be elevated about a meter or so from the ground. They do not use nails. Rattan and vines are used to tie the parts of the house together. The huts may vary from two to three meters in width and may be longer in length. The elevated roof allows the tallest in the family to stand in its center. These huts have no walls. They reason out that, in case there is danger of attack, the family can easily jump out. A notched log or bamboo serves as a stair. It maybe noted that this hut appears like two windscreen, put together.

The Mamanua who have travelled and worked with the lowlanders imitate their house form. In this type of housing one may seem a bench, *baliw* container and probably an empty milk carton. The usual practice of the Mamanua is to build their settlements between the Christian lowlanders and the forest.

It must be noted that Mamanua settlements are never permanent. One may find them settled near the shore of Lake Mainit, and the next time they will be encountered in another place. For this reason it is really difficult to make a physical count of them.

The material possessions of an average Mamanua are few. Rarely will an adult have more than one change of clothing. (Once, when we were making pictures of them, I had to wait so that one person could borrow a shirt from somebody.) An average Mamanua has a trusty *nudyo* (bolo) worn around his waist. He may have a *sinagdan* (spear). He no longer has the bow and arrow, although early reports say they had them. This implement is now substituted by a spear-like wire implement called the *tabak*, and the spear-gun called *bagyay*. Some also have small wire spears

called *bidyo*. The *bagyay* is used for hunting the big fruit bats called *kabog* at night when they come to feed on the flowers of the *kapok* tree. They may also have a red colored handkerchief used for a headband. Some Mamanua still use armlets made from the bristle of the wild pig. But this is slowly being substituted by the aluminum bracelets. They may have a G-string but they seldom wears it.

Women wear cheap earrings made out of brass wire or aluminum. Young girls paint their lips and their faces with red coloring obtained from cheap red paper. Tattooing and scarification are practiced by the Mamanua. The latter serves a medical purpose. Trophies, such as skulls of wild pig, antlers of deer, jaws of wild cats, head pieces of the large fresh water shrimps, and the large tail portion of the mudfish are placed in conspicuous places to be easily noticed by a visitor. Teeth-filing and blackening are still in practice. The women used to wear wooden or bamboo combs, but these have been substituted by the cheap plastic kind from the Chinese traders.

Mamanua Social Life

As a social group the Mamanua have various social practices to keep their tribe in existence.

Marriage

The Mamanua marry early. The girls get married about age fourteen or fifteen, and the boys not later than seventeen years. (One instance was brought to the attention of this writer of a girl already having a baby at age fourteen in Kantugas.) Practically all of them living in one community are related. The normal pattern of the residence of the marriage is patrilocal, although the newly married couple may come to live in the group of the bride. If this happens, it is just for a short time.

Young men and women used to come to meet in various religious and social activities. Now they meet in dances, for they come to attend benefit dances held in other communities. It is usual for a man to make known his intentions of marriage through

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Young men and women used to come to meet in various religious and social activities. Now they meet in dances, for they come to attend benefit dances held in other communities. It is now common for a young man to make known his intentions of marriage through

a go-between. If the girl shows some interest, she is sent small gifts by the admirer. The relations continue. Meanwhile, the man gets a ribbing from his friends and so with the girl. Gifts are given to the girl's parents and her relatives. Then the parents of the man come to negotiate with the parents of the girl. In these negotiations a bride price (*bogay*) is demanded. This is not paid immediately, and may consist of a piece of cleared land, spear, a *bagyay*, etc. The delivery of the demanded articles is to be made on a future date. During the period when they are not yet married, the young man usually serves his future parents-in-law. He stays in their house and there fetches water, splits wood, goes out on a hunt with his future father-in-law, and other like services so as to show them that he can already support a wife. Later, he may go home to his own community. This custom is called *pangagad*.

Marriage ceremonies of the Mamanua are simple. They are not uniform, however. Usually, the parents may ask the barangay chairman to officiate. If this is not possible, a Mamanua father, or his surrogate, may officiate and act as a "priest". The exchanging and eating of a rice ball is common in the marriage ceremony. While the couple are eating the rice, their hands are clasped by the officiant. Instead of rice, sometimes the young man and woman may drink from a coconut shell. Afterwards, they are pronounced man and wife. Meanwhile, the groom starts paying his bride price.

In another case, the girl may run and hide in the nearby forest. The groom must seek her out. If found, he brings her to the place where the marriage ceremony is performed. A dance is held later on, with the groom beating on the gong.

On occasions where the parents cannot agree, but the couple are in love, they may elope. As soon as the couple is found, they are brought to the house of the woman. They are made to kneel down before the mother of the girl and beg for forgiveness. Later, the boy is covered with the skirt of the mother, until he perspires, as his punishment. Then both parents are called, and the marriage is performed by the officiant.

Typically, the Mamanua marriage is monogamous. The writer has not seen a Mamanua polygamous marriage. If a married

woman has illicit relations with another man she will be confronted by the elders. She will be made to choose between her lover and her husband. If she chooses her husband, the transgressing male is made to pay a fine for dishonoring the husband. And in case the woman finds her lover better than her husband, and she chooses him, then the lover must pay the price demanded by the aggrieved party.

It must be noted that the Mamanua woman who has had an extra-marital affair that has produced an offspring will have difficulty in finding a husband. Hence, pre-marital affairs are taboo.

Childbirth

After nine months of pregnancy, the mother is then ready to deliver the child. Such delivery is an easy affair for the mother. This is credited to her use of a certain vine, called *tagaymo*. Actually, this may be due to the exercise she gets daily while helping to make a living. The belief about the *tagaymo* is based on their belief that a she-monkey does the same. In case a female midwife is not available, a male midwife assists. The newly delivered mother is then nursed to her feet. They make her drink the soup of the *kalapi*, *payasan*, and a vine called *badyi*. The drink is a tonic to the nursing mother and will increase her production of milk for the baby. The Mamanua gather together a vine and some barks of trees called *pamughat*. These are boiled and the concoction is drunk by the newly delivered woman. It is said to prevent the swelling of the womb after birth. The normal food given to the nursing mother will be rice or corn grits (if available) and camote. Together with this will be the heart or the bud of the two rattans mentioned above. Lately, they have learned to include green *paya* and meat in the diet of the newly delivered mother. All the plants mentioned enable the mother to produce more milk for the infant.

The newborn is bathed in cold water but, if coconut milk is available, this is substituted for the water. Coconut milk is given to the newborn as a purgative. In a few days the mother is up and about helping in making a living. As soon as the mother is able to move about the care of the child is left to an elder sister. The

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mother comes now and then to nurse the baby. The baby is rocked to sleep in a rattan hammock. When one year old, the baby is weaned by placing a bitter extract of the *pangiyawan* or from hot pepper on the tips of the nipples of the mother. Soon after, the child learns to take solid food. (In the past, this writer noticed that there was a child who was weaned when about ten years of age in Mahayahay.) When they are on the go, if the child would demand the mammary gland of her mother, the mother would oblige and stop to nurse the child.

About a month after birth, the child will be named. In many cases they are given two names: a Mamanua one and a Christian one. An informant told me that a boy was called *goyay* (leaves of camote) in Mamanua and Francisco in the Christian way. In the presence of Christians, his second name was used. However, among themselves, he was *goyay*. Sometimes the child is named after the place of birth or after a tree near where he was born.

Family and Group Life

The Mamanua family is close-knit. The father is considered the leader of the family and the mother takes care of the house. Both the sexes know the division of labor. The boys usually go with their fathers on hunting, trapping, and fishing trips. From this they learn all the skills needed for this kind of work. The boy continues to accompany his father until he has learned all the things needed and then he can go on his own. They also experience wood cutting. As children, they practice making small-scale traps, and even try to trap their own chicken — all part of the game. The girls, on the other hand, go with their mothers. With her, they learn how to recognize the plants to be collected as food. Poisonous plants for fishing are made known to both boys and girls. They learn how to prepare them. The *tubli* roots are pounded before being released into the water where fish abound. This is the same thing as in the case of *tigao* leaves. They learn to prepare *tuba* by mixing a certain proportion of tobacco and ashes. These pesticides are seldom used by the Mamanua. Some boys and girls, who are especially talented, are taken into apprenticeship for training as *sukdan* or *tambayon*. The training will last until they are able to perform the various rituals and ceremonies.

In the settlement, the catch of a hunter, trapper, or fisherman is divided among the members of the community. So the saying that, "if somebody eats, everybody eats" is true among them. Leading the local group among the Mamanua is a headman chosen for being the best hunter, trapper, fisherman, woodcutter, and spokesman of the community. He proposes decisions to be approved by the elders of the group. Usually, he leads the community in transferring from one place to another. Negotiations with the community, like buying forest products and handicrafts, are made through the headman. Occasionally, a *sukdan* or *tambayon* is the headman, as in the case of Ama Damil of Mahayahay. He functioned as a political, as well as religious leader. In Kantugas it was noticed that the headman was a woman. She led her small group of Mamanua who were not participants in the culture change project. A quarrel within the community is submitted to the headman for adjudication. In case it gets out of hand, the headman brings this to the chairman of the barangay.

Spiritual Life

The Mamanua from Matinaw, Mainit, Mayag, Sison, Kantugas, Pako, Mahayahay, etc., believe in a God who is powerful and who sees everything that takes place on earth. This is Magbabaya. Below him is a powerful *diwata* called Ongli. The former is said to live in the heavens, in the easterly direction, and is said to live in a cave. He is just like a man and appears to be like fire. He commands the thunder and lightning. Nobody who sees him lives to tell of the experience. Tama is a lesser *diwata* and is said to be the herder, or sometimes the owner of the game. Lower spirits are also called *diwata* and it is said that their favorite abode is the *balete* tree or other large trees. In case of an unsuccessful hunt, the Mamanua offer a sacrifice to the *diwata*, Tama, who will then release a pig or deer. They also believe in the lesser spirits, the *engkanto*. These can be divided into the good and the harmful ones. They are said to appear like ordinary men. They say that the *engkanto* can fire invisible arrows into the breast of a man, to make him spit blood, and to kill him. The good ones help them in their various economic activities.

Among the Mamanua is found a group of practitioners who practice traditional healing. They are called *tambayon* or *sukdan*. They can be divided into two: those who cure by ceremonies alone and those who cure by the use of medicinal plants. Occasionally, these skills can be combined in one person. This was the case of Ama Danil. The *sukdan* gets his curing powers from the good *diwatas*, by dreaming dreams, by inheritance, and by training. As mentioned above, talented boys or girls may be trained to be *sukdan*. One Mamanua *tambayon* was well-known for his capability to cure any snake bite, as well as bites of centipedes and scorpions.

Various ceremonies and rituals are performed under the supervision of the *sukdan*, except minor ceremonies like the *tapa* to decoy animals. In the ceremonies performed, the whole community participates. The *bakayag* ceremonies, witnessed by the writer, were of two kinds. They will be described below.

The first was the full-moon prayer ceremony. Here the participant was not only one community but several communities. The prayer-ceremony started as soon as the full moon began to rise. The ceremony consisted of prayers led by the leading *sukdan*, in this case, by Ama Danil assisted by a minor female *tambayon*. Afterwards, the betel nut chew was passed around for all the adults participating in the ceremony. After the prayers and the petitions, there followed dancing by the participants. The first dance was by the main *sukdan*, followed by the minor *tambayon*. Later on, all the other participants danced. The dancing was individual, without pairing and a single gong provided the music. Now and then, petitions were made. The main *tambayon*, when he danced, fell into a trance and he had to be carried from the dancing floor to his seat. The dancing, which alternated with petitions, lasted until the full moon set. Characteristic of this event was the fasting that lasted through out the duration of the ceremony. Only the children were allowed to eat. Cooking for the rest of the participants' first meal started the next morning.

The second *bakayag* witnessed by the writer, was an offering for someone who got well after a long illness. This started early in the morning in the interior of Mahayahay and was led by a *tambayon*. Near the settlement was constructed a platform, high and wide enough to allow a person to pass underneath.

festooned with young coconut leaves. On the top of the platform was placed a sacrificial pig. The *sukdan* danced around the platform, at the same time brandishing his spear. He uttered prayers and thanksgiving chants. Later, several petitions were addressed to Magbabaya. After this the *tambayon* went up on the platform and pierced the side of the pig. Blood spurted out. The cured person was then made to pass under the platform, dripping with blood. All those who wanted to be purified by the sacrifice did the same. The pig was later butchered and the members of the settlement partook of it. All in all, the ceremony lasted about two hours.

A ceremony performed by a Mamanua owner of a decoy dove or rooster is called the *tapa*. The bird or fowl is subjected to smoke so as to remove the curse. The burning coals in a coconut shell container are sprinkled with *kamangyan*. This smoking container is passed several times under the animal until the curse is removed. Next time the trapper goes trapping, he will come home with a catch.

Another ceremony performed is the *hongod*. This is done before planting the vines of camote. A pregnant woman with a child on her back, plants the first seven mounds. She utters a prayer that the camote roots will be like her — carrying the child, one over the other.

Still another ceremony is performed by a *tambayon*. It is performed for someone who has been harmed by the bad *diwata*. This is preferably done near a *balete* tree. On a small low table, cakes, little pots filled with boiled rice, the flesh of white chicken, tuba, mallorca cigars and cigarettes are offered. The *sukdan* prays and traces her relationships with those of the evil spirits. The aim is to propitiate the angered *diwata*. It is expected that, after the offering, the patient will get well.

The ritual of releasing a white chicken is performed for the *diwata*, Tama. The prayer petitions him to release a wild pig or deer that will be caught by the hunter. This is especially done after many hunts, when the hunters come home empty-handed. The white chicken is protected and is not to be harmed.

When a hunter catches a wild boar or deer, a portion of the liver is cut. Then this is thrown back into the forest so that the good *diwata* may partake of the catch.

Other Beliefs

The Mamanua believe in two kinds of witches. The spiritual kind lives in the grasses and trees. On the other hand, the human-like witch exists like human beings. Usually the second kind are said to have a craving for human flesh and can change their form from human beings to animals. They can also fly. Both sexes can become a witch; and this is transmitted to the favorite offspring. The spiritual kind can harm people, too.

Another belief is that certain spirits carry disease from one place to another. Such a spirit is said to ride on a boat and where he gets off the disease will strike.

As concerns the eclipse of the sun, the Mamanua believe that the sun is going to be swallowed by a large serpent. To prevent this, they make a lot of noise to frighten the serpent.

The Mamanua are afraid of thunderstorms. They believe that someone has angered the god of thunder and lightning and that this person will be punished by being struck by a thunderbolt and changed into stone. This is also the punishment, according to them, if relatives get married. The burning of land leeches will cause thunder; and so with making dogs and cats fight. Imitating the call of certain birds, they say, may cause thunder too. Certain large wasps should not be harmed for they will cause a thunderstorm. Copulating dogs and other animals are not to be looked at or laughed at, for this will cause a thunderstorm. The earth, according to the Mamanua, has been created by their Supreme Being. According to their myth, in the beginning there was only one kind of man. Lightning, however, struck the earth and those who were singed became black. This was the origin of the Mamanua. The blood sacrifice of the Mamanua during a thunderstorm has been reported by Garvan. In the process of performing the sacrifice, they expell their breath through their teeth. They may also cut pieces of the *badyang* during a thunderstorm. The pieces when

thrown into the fire, make a crackling sound. The sound stops the thunderstorm. To stop a thunderstorm the Mamanua drive the point of their *nudyo* (bolo) into the ground.

Fetching water in cooking utensils, such as pots, frying pans, etc., is forbidden among the Mamanua. To do so, according to them, will bring about heavy rains, and consequently, flooding of the rivers.

The Mamanua respect the cicada. It is believed, by them, to be the child of the first man and woman.

They show respect for the moon. Fires are reduced to a smaller blaze as the full moon rises. And during the full moon ceremony, the Mamanua look at the moon with reverence.

Finally, they believe that houses can rise toward heaven.