

Life and death in Balantak (eastern arm of Celebes)

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In this article, originally published in 1933, the author describes customs and practices formerly surrounding marriage, pregnancy, birth, and death among the Balantak people of eastern Sulawesi, Indonesia, prior to the introduction of Islam and Christianity. A separate section describes musical instruments and dances.

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by
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Marriage

The regulations that the To Balantak have in regard to persons who are not allowed to marry each other in connection with the degree of blood relationship in which they stand to each other, are the same as those which one finds among other tribes in Central Celebes: only people of the same generation are allowed to marry each other, including first cousins, whether the children of brothers, the children of sisters, or the children of brother and sister. It is allowed to marry the sister of one's brother-in-law; in this way two brothers can marry two sisters. However, it was not permitted to live together with two sisters in a double marriage. This was considered a kind of incest. If someone was guilty of something like that, then in the old time he was flogged by his fellow villagers, and he was deprived of all his possessions (*baube*). Someone like that was a *tobangkas*, a person who had been deprived of his possessions. After such a punishment they left him in peace, if he wanted to continue his life with both sisters as before.

Incest is called *sele*. If this was committed in the worst degree (parent and child, brother and sister), the guilty were put into a large fish trap (*bubu*) made of rattan and thrown into the sea; their blood was not allowed to be poured out on the ground. Committing incest causes catastrophes, *moliu*; cloudbursts arise, through which the land is inundated; [p. 58] cracks arise in the soil, enormous landslides occur.

This also happened in the time when people had just come to live upon earth. At that time there was no other possibility than that brothers and sisters married each other. When as a result of this incestuous relationship the earth was rent, the primal parents of the human race were very upset. Then an old woman came up from the inside of the earth; this was *Kele* 'Woman,' the goddess of our earth, and she informed the alarmed children of men that they had to slaughter a pig and put it into the earth crack. After they had done this, the heavy rains stopped and the crack closed itself. From this experience they learned how to act when once again incest was being committed. If it rains continuously and heavily, and if the earth splits, the priest calls upon the lord of heaven, *Pilogot mola*, who lives in the sun, and begs him to avert the catastrophe. At that occasion a pig is sacrificed to him. This is also done when someone has fallen ill through the bad action of incest committed by others, something that is ascertained by the priest.

When uncle and niece or aunt and nephew had a relationship, they were not immediately killed but were alienated from each other: the man was taken to another village, and the woman put up with relations who lived far away. If these two looked for each other again, the death sentence was passed upon them.

When a man and a woman belonged to different generations, if they were not closely related then the marriage could take place once this was reconciled. The ceremony at which this happened carried the name of *monsiput gogorong* ‘protecting the throat.’ Namely, they believe that *Pilogot mola* punishes incest by cutting off the offenders’ throat, or otherwise the children’s, whom the incestuous couple beget. In every case in one way or another *Pilogot mola* is bringing catastrophes over the [p. 59] offenders. At such an occasion not the priest, but the leader, the *tonggol*, conducts the service. The transgressors’ relatives take one hen, two small baskets (*bobosekon*) with husked rice, and a piece of cotton to the *tonggol*. Then he calls upon *Pilogot mola* and asks him to take what is being offered as peace offering for the incest committed. What has been brought forward is for the supplicant. The offenders are spread over with the blood of the sacrificial animals.

The normal way in which a marriage was achieved (customary marriage law changed after this people transitioned to Christianity) was that the young man, without others knowing about it, went and slept in the girl’s house. He had to take care that nobody caught sight of him. If the relationship was discovered by the housemates, they had to marry.

However, they themselves acknowledge that the regular way in which a marriage is achieved is that someone goes to propose to the girl’s parents for their daughter’s hand. In Balantak the young man’s father or mother takes on this task. He (she) takes along a shell armband (*buso*), but no betel nut. Usually the one proposing asks if he (she) can buy a white chicken. The girl’s parents answer: “We will inform you later on, whether we have one for sale for you or not.” If the proposal is accepted, the girl keeps the bracelet; if it is refused, then the ornament is brought back. This band carries the name of *tako’i* ‘with which one comes for something.’ The girl is always asked for her opinion on the proposal. If she agrees, the marriage usually come about, although it may not be the parents’ wish. If the girl downright refuses to marry the candidate, then it certainly won’t come about. Other things prescribed by the customary law in order to confirm the engagement are not given, but various gifts like food stuffs, especially from hunting and fishing, are exchanged between the two families. [p. 60]

Now and then the girl is abducted, *mampamarerekon*. This happened when she had set her mind on the young man, while her parents kept resisting the relationship. The young man hid the girl in a place far away from her home. Because if her father or her brother would find the couple shortly after the elopement, the young man would be flogged, and the girl would be taken home. If one or two months passed over what had happened, and the couple came back humbly, then they were always accepted gracefully, because nothing could be done anymore about the matter.

If the girl is proposed to during the time that the rice is in the field, they wait until after the end of the rice year to solemnize it, so that when laying out the new fields the man is able to lay out one for himself and his wife too. When both families have come to an agreement on which day the wedding will take place, relatives and friends are informed of this. The girl's relatives come together in the parents' home to help with cooking for the wedding breakfast, the man's relatives assemble in his house so as to take part in the procession, with which the groom is led to his bride. The procession always leaves at dark, between 7 and 9 o'clock. Older members of the family go in front, then the bridegroom comes, and he is followed by older relatives joined by the youngsters and the children. The bridegroom's sword and spear is carried by others, the bride price is taken along in the procession.

When they arrive at the staircase of the bride's home, someone is standing there who prevents the procession from going upstairs. Not until they have given the watchman a machete, a piece of cotton, or something similar, does he allow them to enter the house. Upstairs someone is waiting for the guests to pour water over their feet. Then all of them sit down, and betel nut is handed around. This is first put before the bridegroom, then his mother, and then [p. 61] the other guests without paying attention to their order. The bride is not there; she is in another room.

Marrying is called *mensuo*. When they have chewed at their leisure, the bride price is brought forward. The bride price is called *pensuo*, and it is practically equal for all people; that is the reason why there needn't to be any discussion about it beforehand. Formerly it consisted of the following articles: one *lipa baranda*¹ (a dark colored cloth); one *lipa bugis* (Buginese cloth); one *saluar* (pair of trousers); one *bakoko* (machete); one copper lime box (*papo*); one knife; two women's jackets made of black cotton; two ceramic bowls (*mangko' morikut*), and two large plates (*lean*). Usually the leader, *tonggol*, is there. He receives the bride price and checks if everything is there, after which he hands the goods over to the family.

In a marriage for which no bride price has been given, they say that all of the children who are born of it will die at an early age.

While the *tonggol* investigates the bride price, the bride's relatives ask all sorts of things from the bridegroom's parents. This was taken into account, and the requirements are satisfied as far as possible without having first detracted from them; this goes along with a lot of noise and merriment. The *lipa baranda* and one of the two women's jackets from the bride price are especially intended for the bride's mother.

As soon as the bride price has been passed on by the *tonggol* to the family, an aunt stands up and fetches the girl from the room, in which she has been waiting until now; they have her take her place in front of the bridegroom. Seated this way, various older relatives address all sorts of admonitions to them, which they need for their married life.

¹ [footnote 1, p. 61] If *baranda* here means *balanda* 'Dutch,' then we have evidence here that the inhabitants of Balantak tend to change an *l* into *r*, while the Banggai change an *r* into *l*.

[p. 62] After that, dinner is served. The bride is seated on the right hand of the groom; everyone has his own basket with rice and side dishes in front of him and eats from it. That the couple eat from one basket, or feed each other the food, does not happen here. The meal is prolonged until dawn. At this occasion people do not dance, sing or play. At dawn the guests return home, but the bridegroom's parents stay another couple of days in their daughter-in-law's home.

During three days after the solemnization of the marriage, neither husband nor wife is allowed to withdraw far away from home. They only leave the house for using the toilet and bathing. It is said that they should observe this prescription so as to prevent an ant or other insect from biting or stinging them. Something like that would be *doso*, bringing evil; they would become sick, or they would meet with some accident.

They told me that in Mantok there are quite a lot of single men and women; they couldn't say what the reason for that was. It did happen that men dressed and carried on like women. They call such people *salabai*. Among them, there were some who became priests; others however didn't.

It is customary that the husband lives at his wife's for about three years, and during that time he serves his parents-in-law. Not until after this period are they allowed to build their own home. The husband should always honor his parents-in-law; he is not allowed to refuse satisfying any instruction; he cannot use their dinner things, or enter their sleeping place, or mention their names. If he behaves improperly towards them, he can become sickly: his stomach will set up and become hard, and his face will be yellowish. All this is the result of the curse which will come over him; it is called *mabuntus* or *mabeeng*. When they suspect that the son-in-law has been struck by such curse as a result of showing disregard for his parents-in-law, a crime which he usually is not aware of, then the father-in-law washes [p. 63] his elbow and his knee in a bowl with water, and from this water they have the son-in-law drink; however, he is not allowed to know what he is drinking.

If the husband hits his wife, or if he wrongs her in another way, then he is fined (*loutang*).

Three or four weeks after the wedding the husband leads his wife to his parents' home in order to visit his parents. This is called *mongulikon luus* 'returning the track in the grass.' That is to say, when formerly people passed along the paths through the high grass, through the friction with the body they gave the grass a slanting direction in the way they had gone; this track through the grass is called *luus*. If they returned along the same path, they pushed the grass into a slanting position opposite to the direction when they first went; the track in the grass is thus 'returned' in the opposite direction. The reason is clear why this visit of the couple to the husband's parents' home is called like this. The husband's mother gives four ceramic plates and one piece of cotton to her daughter-in-law at that occasion. This is called *mombokasi* or *mongkobelesi*.

Divorce is called *powo'oli*. If the divorce is requested by the husband, and the wife has not given rise to it or in any case no legal rise to it, the man, if he built a home of his own for his family, has to leave his home as well as all of his possessions, which he acquired during his marriage. In addition he is to pay thirty *rear* (reales) as a fine. If the couple divorces with mutual consent, the possessions are divided into two equal parts, of which both of them receive a share. If, however, there are children, the man has to leave his share to the woman for raising the children. If a divorce is threatened through the wife's caprice or because she became averse to the man, then the *tonggol*, the leader of the village community, first does his best to change her mind. If he doesn't succeed, the woman leaves the house without taking any of their possessions along, unless she is taking care of one or [p. 64] more children, and returns to her parents' home or the home of one of her relatives.

This also happens in cases where the wife has committed adultery (*mogora*). Only in a few cases, when the adulterers were caught in the act, have they sometimes been killed. If the matter was judged by the village leader, the fine was not high: the adulterer was allowed to marry that woman. The divorce was pronounced by the *tonggol*; at this occasion he did not perform a particular symbolic action of some kind, for example cutting a betel or areca fruit or the like.

If a couple is divorced and desires to be reunited, this can happen without any objection. If the desire comes from the man, he usually gives the wife a gift of reconciliation in order to remove all revenge from the heart. Only in cases in which the couple was divorced while making the guarantee that they will never come together anymore, and as a confirmation of their words they cut a piece of rattan, does the priest first need to make this oath powerless, otherwise the reunited couple would be 'eaten' by their oath; this is revealed primarily in this way, that the children born out of this marriage die prematurely.

If the husband dies and does not leave any children behind, half of his possessions pass on to his widow, and the relatives of the deceased take the other half. If the wife dies without leaving children behind the same thing happens: the widower receives half of their common property, and the wife's family receives the other half. If there are children, everything passes on to them; sons and daughters receive an equal share.

Pregnancy and birth

With only a few exceptions, I have never found stories among the inhabitants of Balantak which tell that a woman has been made pregnant by a spirit or by some animal, or stories that a woman gives birth to an animal, or that an animal [p. 65] brings forth a human being. Once there was some talk of a woman who delivered twins, one of which was a squirrel. The father of these twins was the great spirit of the mountain of Tompotika.

They also told me once about a man who married a daughter of ghosts. In the very old times, a man called Kadari went out hunting every day. At one particular spot under a banyan tree his dogs always caught a lot of wild animals. The wild pigs lay down there so as to have a rest, so that the dogs could easily catch them. Once the hunter sat down there to have a rest, and suddenly he noticed that he was sitting on a mortar, and that the banyan tree was a large house. They lowered the staircase, and Kadari was invited to come upstairs. At first he didn't dare accept the invitation, because he wore only a loincloth. Finally he climbed upstairs and stayed a couple of days in the spirits' house (*burake*), where he eventually married one of the daughters.

When man and spirit had been married for some time, the man persuaded his wife to go to his village. She consented under promise that her husband would give her one goat. The couple had three children: the first was a squirrel (*do'u*), the other two were human beings. The squirrel was as intelligent as a human being; he went along to the field, picked vegetables, and did all sorts of jobs. Finally the wife fell into ill health, because the man had not kept his promise to give her a goat. Eventually she died, and when the man went to bury the corpse, it had disappeared. The squirrel also disappeared together with his mother, and later on the other two children could not be found anymore.

The social intercourse between boys and girls was very free, and the result was that a girl often became pregnant outside marriage. They told me that they spent a lot of effort causing an abortion by means of external means, like pressing the stomach on a lying tree, letting oneself fall from a height, carrying heavy loads, and the like. They also knew internal [p. 66] means with which to stimulate an abortion. If after all this the fetus could not be expelled, the girl went deep into the forest as soon as she felt the hour draw near and left the child behind there when it was born. An illegitimate child is called *anak bule*. I speak in the past tense, because it is possible that a favorable change has come about in these circumstances after the people embraced Christianity.

They also know the signs that indicate that a woman is pregnant: the menstruation (*biokon*) stops (when a girl or woman is menstruating she needn't beware of anything). They notice that the woman's appearance changes during the pregnancy, her face becomes yellow, she is sleepy, people who are otherwise diligent leave off their work early, climbing heights quickly bring her out of breath, and the like.

As among all Indonesian peoples, a Balantak woman has to beware of all sorts of things during her pregnancy in order to prevent a sympathetic response from doing damage to the fetus, or that giving birth to the child would be hampered. For this reason she may not eat anything from coconuts or eat any fresh meat, otherwise the child would grow too fat, and could only be driven out with difficulty. She may not throw anything behind her, only in front and to the sides, because otherwise the delivery would take a long time, the child would withdraw instead of pushing forward. She may not take her carrying basket from her back by stripping off first one shoulder strap and after that the other one, like women usually do; but they have to squat, so that the bag is standing on the ground (floor), and they can draw both straps at the same time from the shoulders. If she did it as first mentioned, the placenta would come to lie forward.

She may not sit down in the doorway. When she has come home, she may not leave her carrying basket unpacked, but must remove the contents immediately. All such things would delay the coming out of the child. It is especially forbidden for her to quarrel with others, because this also [p. 67] in a magical way would have a disturbing effect upon the process of birth. The warning which a pregnant woman receives against jostling herself or falling, upon which a premature delivery would easily follow, are more understandable. They say there do not exist any prohibitions for the prospective father during his wife's pregnancy.

Only when the expectant mother is feeling weak and sick, a priest (priestess) is fetched in order to speak to the spirits (*moliwaa*), and to persuade them to render aid by offering a sacrifice. During pregnancy they are particularly afraid of the *puntianak*. They say this spirit is the soul of a woman who died while she was pregnant; this is called *pate kowiwine*. They cannot tell you what the *puntianak* looks like; they believe that she scratches the stomach of a pregnant woman, from which the child dies.

They don't have specific midwives; but in every village there live women who have helped with many deliveries, and in that way have a lot of experience in treating a woman in childbed and a newborn child. They have all a sorts of remedies at their disposal, which work infallibly. Such a woman is called when the woman is about to give birth.

When bearing the woman is seated. Her husband or a relative, man or woman, supports her in the back. Others hold her tight by her hands and raised knees so as to give her firmness so that she can use a lot of strength while driving out the baby.

If the labor is severe, and it is taking a long time for the child to come into the world, the priestess is called, because then something has happened through which a spirit has become annoyed, which now stops the child. Various spirits, *puntianak*, *burake*, are then spoken to (*moliwaa*), and by sacrificing a hen they are induced to set the child free. The cause of the delayed expulsion may be that the woman has taken up with another man, or that the prospective father has approached another woman. Only when they confess this evil to someone else is the taboo broken. The woman confesses her sin to her mother or to the priestess, who keeps it to [p. 68] herself, because if her husband would hear of it, later on this would lead to a lawsuit.

If a woman in delivery is known to be at variance with a fellow woman villager, then she is fetched and peace is made. Sometimes they look to a quarrel that the prospective father had with his parents-in-law as the reason for a delayed expulsion. Then the man's brother comes, and he slaughters a chicken between the prospective father and his parents-in-law. This is called *mamantas sagar* 'cutting the *sagar*'; *sagar* can be rendered as 'weight of suffering' (in this case the woman's suffering during the delivery). The hen's blood is brushed on the foreheads of both parties. In different ways, too, the bystanders try to cooperate in a favorable delivery, e.g. by reversing plates and baskets.

If a woman dies in childbirth, her corpse is treated as that of other deceased, and all death feasts are celebrated for her. Only a needle is stuck into the palms of her hands, and

in every hand they lay half of an oyster shell. Those two halves are not allowed to fit together. People think that the deceased will waste all of her time looking for the fitting other half of the shells, and that she in this way forgets to harm others as a *puntianak*. If the child is alive nothing is added to the corpse of her mother as a substitute of the little baby. The child is given to a woman who can nurse it; if she is the sister of either father or mother, she does this without laying claim to pay. In case she is not closely connected with the family, she receives gifts for her care from those “who love the child.” When the baby doesn’t need a lot of caretaking anymore, she is returned to the father.

People don’t pay a lot of attention to the way in which a child is being born, neither do they attach a lot of importance to it, as is often the case among other Indonesian peoples. It is of no importance in which position the child comes [p. 69] into the world (head upwards or downwards). When it is born with its head lying downward, many people on Celebes think that it won’t live very long. That people in Balantak also consider it as something unfavorable appears from the fact that the baby is immediately turned around, so that it looks upward. When a child is born in a ‘standing’ position—they call this *anak malau*, a child that is going down (e.g. descending the staircase)—no significance is attached to it at all. When a child is born with a helmet, an *anak bakodu*, they say that it is invulnerable to spear or sword, and that no poison, with which they could harm it by means of black magic, will have any effect upon it. The caul is dried, and after that wrapped into red and black cotton together with certain spices; this is used as a talisman.

When the child does not start crying as soon as it is born, people draw the conclusion that it will become a composed and calm (not an ill-tempered) human being. If it is taking a while for it to give signs of life, they suck on it’s nose, or set a piece of bark cloth aflame, so that the smoke may prickle the nose, and it will start breathing.

If the child turns out to be stillborn, the corpse is not buried. They lay it in a tray of tree bark or sago leaf sheath. At the cemetery a little hut is built and the tray with the corpse is hung from the roof of it. People attach great power to such a corpse because it belongs to a human being “who hasn’t yet done any evil.” When such a case arises in the family, then they ask the accompanying spirit (*palolo*) of the stillborn child to protect the brothers and sisters of the stillborn. People try to apply the force which is ascribed to such a corpse for bad purposes too. It does happen, I was told, that someone goes to the hut at night, and pushes on both sides of the stillborn’s corpse; it then [p. 70] starts laughing and sticks out its tongue. That person then bites off the tongue and carries it, together with a stone, on his person. This talisman makes its carrier invisible to others, and so he can play tricks without anyone noticing anything.

The new-born child is not freed from the placenta until after it has come out. The afterbirth is called *balaki’na* ‘the big one,’ in opposition to the smaller umbilical cord, which is called *towuni*. The latter is tied off in three places close to each other, with the fibers of the leaves of the wild pineapple (*paraang*), or with the bast fibers from the *silao* tree (from which the soft parts are removed by scraping with a machete). Then the cord is cut with a sharpened bamboo (*kokorot*), so that the bindings are stuck to the end of the

cord which is attached to the navel. The cord is cut on top of a finger; for this purpose it is covered with a piece of cotton.

The placenta is then washed thoroughly with warm water while it is kneaded with the fingers. When it is pretty well clean, they lay it in a small *basung*, a carrying basket made from the leaf sheath of the sago palm. Underneath in the basket they lay a thick layer of ashes, upon which the placenta is spread out, and it is covered again with ashes. Wrapped in this way it is hung on a beam of the house, close to the fire where the woman in childbed warms herself. It stays there. If the house has fallen into decay, and if the inhabitants move to a new home, the placenta is left in the old home. The spirit of the afterbirth, the *palolo*', protects the child, as well as his brothers and sisters; this spirit accompanies the child(ren) to the new house.

Upon my question if they preferred boys or girls, they always answered that they especially desired girls, because they serve as workers for the work in the garden, while the sons only leave home when they [p. 71] marry. If a couple only has sons, the priest has to get in touch with the deities, which he speaks to (*moliwaa*), promising that they will celebrate a sacrificial feast, if the next child is a daughter.

There never seem to have been albinos in Balantak. People don't appreciate it when a child shows up with a strong similarity with one of the parents; they say, then, that it has appropriated too much of the vital strength of either father or mother, that he (she) has to die within a short while. The only thing they know to do against this is to call in the help of the deities by speaking to them (*moliwaa*) and sacrificing (*mowauwau*) in order to avert the threatening danger.

Twins (*rapi*) are never welcomed with joy in Balantak. People see something ominous in them, especially when the children are of different sexes; they say that *Pilogot mola*, Lord of heaven, has already had them copulate, and this would certainly invoke a catastrophe, *moliu*. One of the two children is consequently given to someone else in order to be raised. This foster child cannot marry his foster sister or brother later on. Formerly one of them was immediately killed by the mother; she pushed with her knee on the child, so that it choked.

A childless woman is called *kamba*. The reason for infertility may be that the Lord of heaven, *Pilogot mola*, decided so; but it can equally be a result of a transgression against the customary law, so that the infertility is a punishment. More than once the oracle indicates that when two people marry, one or another customary law has been neglected, so that the couple will remain without children. The husband and wife are remarried under the painful observance of all sorts of possible customs.

The newborn child is washed, wrapped in pieces of cloth, and laid on the floor. During the first three days it is nursed by the neighbor's wife, and after that they already give it a piece of ripe banana. A piece of banana is also laid on top of the basket into which the placenta has been put. Then speedily a priestess is called, [p. 72] who speaks to the accompanying spirit (*palolo*') of the little child, offers him a hen, and asks him to take

good care of the child. At this occasion the child is taken downstairs. On the premises a stone has been laid, around which vigorous plants have been stuck into the ground: *pokolumba*, *berengketan*, *walanse*. The priestess or the grandmother, who is carrying the baby, counts from one to nine, then from one to six, and finally from one to three, and then pushes the little foot onto the stone, while she wishes the young citizen of the world a lot of prosperity and a long life. After that he is taken back into the house. They don't celebrate a feast at this occasion.

Not until the child is about one month old is it laid into the cradle. This is called *kobatan* (Bare'e: *kobati*). It is made in the same shape as in Poso; it is made of wood. If the cradle is made from the stems of sago leaves (*kumbal*), it carries the name of *bokasan*. The springy slat on which the cradle is moved up and down is called *undangan*. When people manufacture a cradle, no prescriptions are taken into consideration.

The woman in childbed is washed with warm water as soon as the child and the afterbirth are there (or are nearly there); this is repeated regularly during the first couple of days. The stomach is tied up with a cloth, so that it won't hang down on the thighs. People in Balantak are not familiar with a steam bath, which is made by plunging glowing stones into a tank of water so that it starts boiling, and the steam allowed to come against the body of the woman in childbed—a custom which is followed in many regions in Central Celebes. But one thing the woman in childbed should do is warm her self near a fire (*minsarigan*). For this purpose an open fireplace of her own is constructed. The woman lies with her back turned to the fire. If she continues feeling weak, the length of warming is prolonged, sometimes until a month. Other women already finish it after two weeks.

If the delivery passed normally, and if the woman in childbed feels okay, then even just after two days she goes downstairs in order to wash some clothes. She does this without [p. 73] observing any precaution against evil powers. Nothing is forbidden to the woman in childbed. She is allowed to cook and eat everything immediately, whatever she likes. She is especially urged constantly to eat rice porridge as this is considered an excellent means for stimulating mother's milk. With this purpose they have her chew uncooked husked rice too. They are not familiar with 'buying' mother's milk from the spirits or from the souls of the dead. When the swelled up breast is hard, they sometimes call a boy, who is passing along by happenstance and who has not yet known a woman, and they have him press mineral lime onto the painful breast six times with crooked fingers, while he count from one to six. If the mother is not able to suckle her own child, then they have another woman to do that. They feed her during the time she helps him, and at the end of that period she receives a present, the size of which depends on the wealth of the person concerned. On the first visit which the mother pays to her parents-in-law with her child, they give her a couple of plates as a present.

If the mother is alone with her child at home and she has to go out for a moment, e.g. for fetching water, she places her lime box near the child so as to safeguard it against attacks from spirits.

If a child cries continuously, this is *mambara*, ominous to the parents. One of them will die soon.

The child

When the mother is sitting in a lying position with her baby on top of her stretched out legs, she carefully observes her baby's body and looks for a small spots (*ela*) which, depending on their position, indicate what the child will be like and what will happen to the child later on. If there is such a spot underneath the eye, it will have to cry a lot later on, i.e. he will see many loved ones die. If the spot is on the lip, he will [p. 74] become a man who slanders a lot and uses bad words. If there is an *ela* in the palm or on the back of hand, the child will have a lot of prosperity later on because it takes happiness with its hand and holds it. If however the mother sees a spot on the ball of the thumb, then he will often rub his eyes with it, i.e. he will have to cry a lot because of the loss of children. If the child has an *ela* in the center of his forehead, then he shall become a hothead. If on the underarm, it means that later he will carry a lot of children (will have a lot of children who stay alive). If he has one in the neck, he will become an intelligent person who is able to speak well (in a lawsuit he will win his plea).

People never hurry in giving the child a name. Little boys who don't yet have a name, or whose name people don't know, are usually called or addressed with *tatu*, little girls with *ili*. Usually some family member is invited to give the child a name, because the parents don't like to do this themselves. Then father and mother are spoken to by the name of their eldest child: *tama i Sobol* and *tina i Sobol*. It is purported that children aren't adopted while their parents are still alive.

Shortening of teeth (*bagisil*) of boys and girls and the circumcision of boys (*mantatak*) are both practiced, but as among the Poso people both actions take place without the least form of ceremony. Many are familiar with the art of shortening someone else's teeth; this is done with a saw made out of an old machete. As soon as the boy or girl has enough courage to undergo the operation, they go to someone who can do that and have themselves 'treated'; the following day people see them with a deformed set of teeth.

In a similar way boys are circumcised. Boys perform the operation on each other; the foreskin is drawn over a piece of wood, then the edge of a machete is placed upon it, and a blow upon it cuts the skin. No significance is attached to these operations. The only reason which people attach to having this done is that [p. 75] they don't want to feel ashamed toward their age mates who have been circumcised and whose teeth have been shortened.

The custom of making burns on the upper arm is widespread. This is called *mantitil*; both boys and girls make them. People say that he who does not have *titil* on his arms won't have fire in the hereafter, neither will he possess anything to buy it. A bit of tinder from the sugar palm is stuck onto the upper arm and set on fire, after which they quickly

scamper up and down, with the purpose both of having the tinder be consumed by the draught and of being more able to bear the pain.

The children imitate in their games what they see their parents do. Girls like playing 'mother.' Only they were reluctant to make dolls out of wood that have a human appearance. So all sorts of objects are used as a 'doll': a young sprout, the fruit or male bud of banana, an ear of corn. They imitate their mother's cooking, and know how to skillfully wrap the 'rice' (sand), which has been boiled in shells of coconuts as a pot, into pieces of leaf. Boys and girls lay out fields together, during the time that they see their parents do this, and talk about nonething else. Boys like hunting and take along sharp bamboos as spears. The fruit of the *kolondion* growing in the forest functions as a 'pig.' They have it roll down a hill, and then all the boys run behind the fleeing pig and try to hit it with their spears.

At the occasion of a domestic feast or sacrificial ceremonies in the village, many children gather, and the boys come together to exercise all sorts of efforts. They wrestle (*maribobot*) with each other: two boys embrace each other with their arms and one of them tries to throw the other onto the ground. They are also familiar with a particular kind of boxing (*popukul-pukul*). Others kick with their right leg against the right calf of a mate. The instep of the foot hits against the calf of the other one. By turns they place [p. 76] their calf at the other's disposal, the point being who can persevere the longest. This is called *paibinti*. They don't know hitting the fist onto the calf. The *bakurintang* is a game with two rice mortars, the ends of which are rested on two crossbeams. Two men squat at the ends and each one holds one in their hands. In a fixed rhythm the pestles hit twice onto the crossbeams, and then once against each other. A third person dances diagonally over those pestles, while the feet are placed between the pestles in turn. This should happen while the pestles are being hit against the crossbeams. If the dancer is not exactly in time, or if he makes a mistake, then the pestles hit each other at the moment that his foot is stuck between them.

People also love playing tag (*polua-luat*) and hide-and-peek (*mosape-sape*). When the trees have been cut down in the field, the children place a plank over the fallen tree trunk, on both ends of which there is a hole and so they seesaw up and down. This is called *molalantang*. Walking on stilts is also much practiced, this is called *patengkang*; to this purpose a wooden cleat is tied to a bamboo pole or stick, upon which the hollow of the foot is placed on the inside of the stilt. The hands hold the stilt in the upper grip. People make a swing by tying both ends of a rattan to the branch of a tree or to a beam under the house, and sitting upon that they can swing to and fro (*mengkakayode*).

The *paidele* is a game played with pieces of coconut shells or seashells. The players divide themselves into two groups. One places their pieces of coconut shells in one row upon the ground. The others lay their pieces on the instep of the foot, and throw it this way toward the pieces laid down by the first group. Even if only one of the throwing group hits one piece of the other group, the whole group is supposed to have won. Only when none of them has hit the opposing group is the whole group of throwers supposed to have lost, and the roles are exchanged. Sometimes [p. 77] the pieces of coconut shells or

seashells are not thrown, but those attacking walk with their eyes closed in the direction of the pieces lying in a row, and drop theirs at the moment when they think they are above those of the opposing party.

As over the whole of Celebes, the sling (*sasambit*) is well known here too. The simplest form is a blade of cogon grass, which is folded over and held on both ends; a stone is laid in the bend of the leaf, which together with the leaf is swung away. Or it is a piece of wood, to the end of which a piece of clay is stuck, which is afterward swung off the stick; such an object is called *pampalong*. Other kinds of slings, e.g. made of a split piece of bamboo, are unknown.

Lolontup is a popgun, a joint of *Bambusa longinodes* with a ramrod inside. A piece of the earlier mentioned fruit of the *kolondion* is used as 'bullet,' and another piece is used as upper part of the ramrod, so that no air can escape along the side.

For all of the games mentioned above there is no fixed time. Most of the year when the people live spread out over the fields, there is not a great deal of opportunity or encouragement for the children to play. They therefore take the opportunity whenever a lot of them have assembled at special events. Only for spinning a top is the time specified: after finishing the harvest and until the one starts reclaiming the new fields. Outside of that period it cannot be done. The top is called *banggolong*; it has exactly the same form as the one used in Poso. It is made of hard type of wood such as *ontilingan*, *roya*, *tauna*. The string is twined from a dry banana trunk or from the bark of the *waru* tree (*Hibiscus tiliaceus*). It is thicker on one end than on the other; the thick end is tied to the fingers. To set a top spinning is called *monturun langgolong*; to throw a top at one already spinning is called *paibiil*. If one knocks someone else's top out, while his keeps spinning, he has won. If he doesn't hit the other one, then [p. 78] he has 'guilt' (*bageo*), as people say for 'lost.' If one hits the other's top, and both keep spinning around, then they wait to see which one of the two dies first; this is *bageo*. Its owner lays his top on the ground and the other one throws his toy at it without having wound it up. If he misses, he has to set up his top, and the other one may throw at it.

They also know another kind of small top, with which little children are allowed to play at any time, mostly in the home. A wooden or bamboo spindle is stuck through the fruit of the *siloi* tree, which is turned around between the palms of the hand. A couple of children set their tops spinning at the same time (*monturun siloi*), and wait to see whose top keeps turning around the longest.

There are also other games, which are played exclusively during the period of mourning for a dead person. These are mentioned below.

Musical instruments and dances

The musical instruments, with which they enjoy themselves, are the same as those which are found everywhere on Celebes. The *talalo* is a tuning fork made of bamboo, like

the Poso *ree-ree* (see *De Bare'e Sprekende Toradja's*, II, 381). The *taudo* (not *taodo*, as Dr. Kaudern writes) is very similar to the previous instrument, but while the partition underneath the *talalo* is left on the bamboo, it has been removed from the *taudo*. The *talalo* has a hole on both sides; intermittently these opening are closed by thumb and forefinger, so that the tone height changes; the instrument is held with the three remaining fingers. With the *taudo* the bamboo has been cut in at the beginning of both lips, so that the arms of the fork can tremble more easily. The handle of the *taudo* is jammed between little finger and ring finger and the open end underneath rests against the ball of the thumb. They make the arms of the fork vibrate by hitting on the ball of the right thumb, while they vary the tone by opening the tube's aperture on the underside [p. 79] or closing it by pushing the bamboo against the ball of the right thumb. The boys usually bring nightly serenades to the girls with these two instruments, and not with completely honorable and virtuous intentions. These instruments have come to be viewed less favorably after the people embraced Christianity.

The *lele'o* (not *leleo* as Kaudern writes) is a small trumpet made of a rice stalk, in which a lip has been cut; the sound is intensified by placing a funnel on the other side of the stalk made of a rolled up palm leaflet; by hitting slightly on the opening of the funnel with the flat of the hand, they can still make some variation in the sound (Poso *lele'o*, *Tor.*, II, 382).

The *tandilo* is a stringed instrument, called *dunde* in Poso (*Tor.*, II, 383). A piece of wood is planted on top of a coconut, on the other side of which a perpendicular slat is fixed; a string is stretched over this slat; while the shell is pressed against the stomach, they pluck the string with the right-hand fingers, while it can be made shorter through the pressure of the left-hand finger.

The *poponting* consists of a joint bamboo, on both sides of which the partition is left over; from the bark of the bamboo a few strips had been raised, which were kept free by means of little pieces of wood, so that they could tremble; under the strings a whole is cut into the bamboo, so that the bamboo can serve as soundboard (in Poso this instrument is called *tandilo*, *Tor.*, II, 383).

The jew's harp is called *ioring* (Poso *dinggoe* or *woringi*, *Tor.*, II, 384), a strip of the outer bark of the sugar palm frond, in which a lip has been cut. This lip is made to tremble by drawing a small string, which is fixed to the end of the instrument. The instrument is kept in front of the opened mouth by way of soundboard; by making the mouth opening bigger and smaller, they vary the tones.

Of the musical instruments mentioned here, Kaudern has given pictures in his *I Celebes Obygder*, volume II, pp. 104, 265).² [p. 80]

The people are familiar with two types of drums: *gandang* is the usual drum: a hollowed wooden cylinder, which has been covered on both sides with a skin. This drum

² [Editor's note: See also Kaudern's 1927 work, *Musical instruments in Celebes*.]

is used with the dancing, *omosul*, of the priests, for indicating the rhythm. The second drum is smaller, stands upright, and is strung with a skin on only one side; the sound of this *bobolon*, which it is called, is much thinner than that of the *gandang*; it is beaten for indicating the rhythm at a war dance.

Apart from the *lele'o*, which we have already mentioned, they know three other wind instruments. A trumpet, *pepuukon*, is a bamboo tube which they blow into as into a trumpet. When an ambassador of the ruler of Banggai went to the subjects with a message, people went into the mountains with such trumpets, and blew them at intervals. When the population, which lived spread out, heard these tones, the men assembled near the leader's residence in order to learn what was to be done.

The second wind instrument is the flute, *mori-mori*: a joint of fine bamboo, on one side of which the partition is left; the other end is open. At the partition one part has been cut flat and a hole has been burnt on top of it, just behind the partition. Around it they attach a small strap of palm leaf; while blowing the flute, the hole is turned downward. On top of the bamboo four holes have been burnt with equal distances, with which the different tones can be made.

The third instrument is the clarinet, *popiit*; it is made from a length of young bamboo from one side of which the hard bark has been cut away. In the softer bast that lies underneath, a tongue has been cut; the part of the bamboo in which this lip is made, is stuck into the mouth and they blow on it; the *popiit* produces only one tone, because no tone holes have been made in it.

Sometimes they make a kind of chime consisting of fine thin shells, which are hung up together in a forest. When the wind moves the shells, they click [p. 81] against each other and in the way produce quite a nice sound. They don't have any particular aim with this; it only serves as entertainment. Such chimes are called *kapendang* (Kaudern mentions them too in the book mentioned above, II, 281).

A kind of violin is called *araba* (Javanese *rebeb*), but we don't need to pay any attention to this, as this instrument has come via Banggai to Balantak.

The dances, with or without singing, are in every respect connected with religion. The To Balantak don't know the round dances of the Toraja like the *maraego*, *mokayori*, *mokambero* etc., which can be performed at any time. *Omosulen* is a priestly dance without singing, which is performed to the accompaniment of drum and gong, when they are inspired by a spirit. A description of this dance, which is equivalent to *osulen* in the Banggai archipelago, is given in my paper "The *Pilogot* of the Banggai and their Priests" (in *Mensch en Maatschappij*). The larger public was not allowed to *omosul*, which was allowed on the Banggai islands. A variant of *omosulen* is the *mosoiri*, likewise without singing. Apart from priests, this dance was performed by women and girls, or everyone danced on his own, or some held each other's hand. This dancing, however, only took place at sacrificial ceremonies.

The *sumawi* is the only round dance with singing that they know in Balantak. This dance may only be performed at the occasion of a large sacrificial feast, which is celebrated once every five to ten years for the welfare of the whole village community. The feast is also called *sumawi*, after the dance. During one month this dance is performed night after night, at which people moved forward over a wooden floor that has been laid down in a shed set up for this purpose. Men and women (married women are not allowed to participate) walk in a row next to each other, the fingers interlaced with those of his or her neighbor. According to Dr. Kaudern's description, the steps are very easy: with every foot they take two steps and rest on the [p. 82] right foot at the second step. In this way they move from left to right. One man, called *lotu*, leads with singing the strophes, which the crowd repeats indefinitely.

Treatment of a corpse

The To Balantak are convinced, too, that originally it was not man's destiny to die. When *Pilogot mola*, the Lord of heaven, or *Tumpunta* 'the one who possesses us,' had made man, they died, but their soul didn't go to the realm of the dead, but ascended to *Pilogot mola's* residence in the sky. However, he didn't want to have man in his presence, and sent them back to earth. Then the dead corpses lived again and kept on living, because now that *Pilogot mola* did not allow them to die, man threw off his skin in his old age, and, rejuvenated, lived on. The country, however, grew full of people and they walked in each other's way. Then one day a bird flew in, that cried: "The earth shall perish, all people will die, so make a proa so as to save yourselves!" However, only one family believed the bird's word; these people made a vessel and sat down in it. When the sea rose, the whole earth was flooded over. The water rose so high that the proa reached the firmament, lifted up by the water. In this way the passengers arrived at *Pilogot mola*. Then he couldn't do anything else but give them something to eat. First he offered them some shrimp, but they refused them. Then he offered bananas; they accepted these and ate them. A good thing, too, because if they had eaten the shrimps, it would have happened just like before: men would continue to live, constantly rejuvenating when they had grown old, and again the earth would have become full of people and again it should have been brought to a violent end. Now that they had eaten bananas, the same thing happened to them as the banana: when [p. 83] their children became adults (the banana's sprouts), the parents died.

After *Pilogot mola* had given the family some bananas, the water dropped, as well as the proa, until it ran aground on the mountain of Pinuntuan, not far from the village of Mantok. The people left the vessel and founded their first village here.

The inhabitant of Balantak observes daily life with an attentive and distrustful eye. From many incidents he concludes that speedily there should be a death, and he himself could be that dead person. There is a small snake of more than one span in length, with a red stomach, which carries the name of *ule mapalian*. This little animal has the habit of shaping its body into a ring when danger threatens. If people see it on the road, that is a

bad omen, because in that case someone from that person's family has to die. It is not permitted to kill the snake. Sometimes, they say, it suddenly disappears, without anybody knowing where it went. In order to destroy the evil which comes forth from its appearance, they place a tobacco plant in the ground on the spot where they have seen it. In addition, they have to neutralize the threatening evil (*mampepasi ule*) through a small ceremony (*pepas*); to that end a hen is slaughtered so as to make the snake's 'poison' powerless. If a company of five people have seen the animal, five hens need to be killed.

Generally speaking people are afraid of snakes. If one penetrates into the home, this means that one of the housemates is to die; or that a calamity will strike the family. It is permitted to kill the snake, but this does not diminish the evil, which has arisen from the snake's appearing. If a snake crosses the path while someone is going somewhere, he will return back home. People claim that one snake, called *ule asu*, has a head at both ends of its body. In several parts of Celebes people are afraid of this snake, but in Balantak its appearance has no significance. [p. 84]

If a firefly (*poiri*) flies into the home, this in itself doesn't mean anything; but if it settles on someone, that person will speedily lose her husband or wife. If such an insect flies into the fire, there is no doubt that some wild animal has run into one of the snares or traps which they have laid. The next morning they go for a look and find the prediction confirmed.

If people see two inauspicious birds, *dee* (*Phoenicophaeus calyorinchus*), fight together on the road, they have to *pepas* in order to paralyze the evil. Lots of phenomena are *mambara*, bringing calamity, bringing death. For example when people cut down a sago tree, all the signs of which indicate that the pith contains a lot of flour, and it turns out not to be the case; when they set out fish traps and lay snares, and days go by, that they don't catch anything; when while hunting the dogs have surrounded a pig, and people rush up to kill it, but every time they stab or cut wrong; all of these are indications that speedily someone from the family will die.

The belief that dreams predict people death is very strong among these people too. If in their dream people have been transposed to the beach, and if they see a proa sailing in the sea; if people dream that a sago tree is cut down or that a pig or goat is slaughtered; if people see the sun or the moon setting in the dream; or if they see themselves extinguishing a fire, then they are convinced that speedily there will be a death in that house. This is not necessarily the person who had the dream. People fear that one of the children will die, when in their dream they break their comb, or when a piece flies off a machete or ax, or when a tooth falls out.

They try to prevent the effect of such a bad dream by bringing a small sacrifice to the spirits (*burake*) and to the accompanying spirit (*palolo*). By this their help is called in so as not have the dream come true. [p. 85]

But dreams can reassure people as well by predicting that they will have a long life. For example if someone sees himself climbing a coconut tree and reaching the top, or

ascending a mountain to its peak in his dream; if he sees himself dragging long stems of rattan, which he has just cut in the forest, or if in his dream he follows a river stream upward, then he banks on having a long life.

Domesticated animals are observed in order to see that they don't do things which are *mambara*, bringing calamity, because it is always one of the owners of the animals, a member from his family, who will experience the harmful effect of it. If two chickens mate on the ridge of the roof, or if one of them sups from its eggs, this brings evil; in the latter case the hen is killed. It is remarkable that actions of dogs, from which everywhere else on Celebes it is said that they bring evil, are not considered likewise in Balantak. Only when a dog sets up a prolonged, plaintive howl (*mogauang*), they say that an infectious disease is approaching. They then try to find out by means of auguring (*momulos*) what kind of disease is threatening to come, and what they can do against it.

It is not permitted to cry until a sick person has breathed his last, because otherwise this would hasten his death. Formerly the houses consisted of one room, which could be divided into compartments by means of bark cloth or cotton curtains. The ridge was laid in an east-west direction; on the north side the floor was made higher than that in the remaining part of the house, because these were the sleeping places; on the south side they had a fireplace. The people there slept with their heads directed north, and the corpse is laid in the same position. Formerly people did not wash the corpse's head, only coconut water was rubbed into the hair of the head. The dead kept on the clothes in which he died; in addition to these they dressed him in new clothes. There were no particular persons who took charge of laying out the dead; this service of love was rendered by the family of the deceased. The dressed up corpse was wrapped in some pieces of bark cloth, [p. 86] the ends of which were folded over near the head and the feet. The dead lies on his back, with his arms stretched out alongside his body. As long as the corpse is inside the house, no food or betel nut is placed in front of the dead.

From of old corpses have been buried in coffins (*pasarang*). Since embracing Christianity coffins are constructed from boards, but formerly they cut them out of a tree trunk, as they still make boats today. When cutting down the tree from which the coffin was to be manufactured, they took care only that it would not be stopped in its fall by other trees or lianas; if this happened, it was a sign that there would speedily be another death in the family. If someone was wounded while cutting the coffin, it would not heal until after he had made another coffin for another dead.

When the coffin is taken home, a hen is slaughtered; this is called *pilayangi*. Some of the blood is spread out on the coffin, and the bird's wings are tied to the coffin. They say they do this in order to prevent any of the housemates of the recently deceased from following him. When the corpse is laid into the coffin, they place a ceramic plate under his head; near the head and the feet a plate is placed upright against the side of the coffin, as well as along both sides of the corpse; another plate is laid on the stomach. These are the only objects which go into the coffin; anything further they give is laid on top of the grave.

The widow (*balu*) sits to the right of the corpse, the children on the left side. The widow and the children have the hair of their heads wrapped into a cloth of inferior cotton. In addition the widow wears a type of shawl over her daily jacket as a sign of mourning. The Balantak don't have a prohibition against the widow eating rice, as we find in so many areas in Central Celebes. The widow is allowed to talk with men, but she should do this in moderation. From the man's and the woman's family there is one person who accepts mourning as well, and who has covered his head [p. 87] with a cap for that purpose (*tutui*); they are also called *balu*. The widow and the mourners do not take off the cap until stones have been piled on the grave and the sepulchral hut has been built over it. As long as she is mourning, the widow should always take a child along for accompaniment when she leaves the house, because the *mena*, evil spirits, lie in wait for her.

In the old days the corpse stayed aboveground two days and was guarded by family members who had assembled in the house of mourning. In order to shorten the time, they played all sorts of games. Even after the funeral they play those games every time the family assembles in the house of mourning on the days of remembrance, until the last death feast (*batangan*) has been celebrated. Afterwards these games are not allowed to be played anymore.

Among these games, asking and solving riddles (*motangki-tangki*) should be mentioned first. Some of these riddles will be published elsewhere. They enjoy themselves playing with kernels of corn; a square was drawn on the floor with charcoal; on the edge a great many corn kernels were placed in a row, and in the middle only a few. The many kernels represent animals, which are eaten by the few in the middle, unless the animals can block the ones in the middle. The explanation of the game they gave me was very confused, so that I did not understand it. This game is called *mamacan* 'playing tiger.' From this name and from the type of game, it appears that it was imported. Another game with corn kernels is the *pailuan*: a number of kernels, held in the hand, are thrown up, after which they catch them on the back of hand. The more kernels that remain lying on the back of the hand, the more success.

They also know a kind of playing at knucklebones, about which it is said, however, that it was imported. Furthermore they have the *dingkoman*; these are games in which a cord is wound around hands and fingers and is laced up, but in such a way that it can be loosened in one stretch. [p. 88]

Many of those present participated in a musical comedy called *batengke*. There is a group of singers in the house, and another group who have gathered around a big fire on the ground; these two groups answered each other's singing. This is the means, they say, of keeping at a distance the evil spirits (*mena*) which menace the deceased's soul.³

During the last death feast, the *batangan*, an accompanying song is sung for the soul. This is called *motantaie*. In this song all sorts of instructions are given to the dead.

³ [footnote 1, p. 88] Among the To Mori and some clans of the Poso-Toraja, the death song is also called *tengke*, and after this the great death feast is called *motengke* among them.

Namely on this occasion a carry basket has been prepared for the deceased with all sorts of foodstuffs, which are intended not just for him, but also as presents for those who are already in the land of souls. They charge the recently deceased person: if you happen to meet mother, give her this, and if you see father, give him that from the basket. In this song they have the one guarding the city of the dead ask who the newly deceased is, and while singing they inform him of his name. The end of the song is that they tell the dead: “Now you have arrived in the city of the dead. Stay there, and for the time being we will still stay on earth.”⁴

When a distinguished man or woman had died, a member of the leaders’ (*tonggol*) lineage, the people of the same village community were not allowed to go to the field for six days, no noise was to be made, no gong was to be struck, no shouting etc.; in the daytime it was not permitted to make a fire outside the house. For a normal death these prescriptions were only observed for one day. If someone didn’t follow these prohibitions (this is called *mombongkar balu* ‘to overthrow the mourning’) during the mourning for a *tonggol*, he had to pay a goat or a pig as a fine. They never practiced headhunting for a deceased. [p. 89]

They are not familiar with cutting off hair as a sign of mourning. However they do cut down some of the fruit trees which belonged to the deceased; this is called *moratu*. People who are not closely related to the dead can take the fruits of the felled trees.

They are not accustomed to preserving the dead person’s hair or nails.

We now have to get to know the priest of the dead, the *bolian na mena*, ‘priest for the *mena*.’ As we have already seen, the *mena* are evil spirits, which menace the soul (*santuu*) of the deceased, in order to take it with them so that it cannot come in the city of the dead. Therefore the priest has to protect the soul. The priest shows up the second night that the soul is aboveground. He collects all sorts of leaves; these are cut to pieces and laid in a heap on the premises. When in the morning the coffin with the corpse inside is taken down, the *bolian na mena* has it set down next to the pile of leaves, and tells the widow and children to sit beside it. A small portion of food is set in front of each of them, but nobody eats from it. This ceremony is called *posikaan* ‘eating together’; it is the parting meal of the deceased with his family. The *bolian* speaks to the deceased and the children (*moliwaa*), indicating that they now see each other for the last time.

After that the coffin is taken to the grave. Both when he is carried out—which always takes place through the doorway and down the staircase—and during the journey to the grave, the dead person’s feet are directed forward. It does happen that the coffin feels heavy. This happens because spirits of the earth (*tombolo tano*) or *mena*, or even the souls of still-living persons sat down on it, which want to accompany the dead. Then the *bolian na mena* approaches the coffin and speaks to the spirits of the souls in order to request them to get off the coffin. If the procession passes a side path leading to fields, then they

⁴ [footnote 2, p. 88] Such accompanying songs also occur in the group of the East Toraja. See the *jonjoawa* in *De Bare’e Sprekende Toradja’s*, III, p. 544.

strew rice made yellow with *Curcuma (songi)* on the three forked road, “so that [p. 90] the dead person knows that he should go straight on, and not deviate onto the path to the field.”

The grave is not dug until the procession has reached the spot intended for it. The *bolian ne mena* draws a cut in the ground with his machete to indicate how large the grave should be. Then the grave is dug. Here no prescriptions are observed. Formerly they made the grave only waist-deep. As soon as the grave is ready, the coffin is let down with a number of rattan ropes, without wiping out the diggers' footsteps on the bottom first. Nothing is laid into the grave so as to have the coffin rest upon it; the rattan ropes are left inside. Next to the coffin they lay an old machete, and then the hole is filled in.

Very long ago, some old people told me, we did not bury our dead. At that time they were kept in the home for seven days. They made a hole in the bottom of the coffin, through which they strung a bamboo tube, through which the corpse liquid ran away. In the cover a hole was made, so that the developing gases could escape; the clefts between coffin and cover were closed with resin. After seven days the coffin was carried to the field of the dead. There a solid pole was planted in the ground, and onto this pole the coffin was tied some distance above the ground (*nikoot*). After that they could not pay anymore attention to the dead: the poles rotted through and fell down, and the coffins, the wood of which meanwhile had decayed too, broke open and the contents were dumped out. Bones lay spread out all over the field of the dead.

When I asked what had brought about a change in this habit, they answered with the remark that the children said cute things about the bones which they saw when accompanying a funeral delivery and laughed about them: “Look, that is my grandfather!” “Look, my aunt is laughing!” This scoffing made their elders feel so embarrassed that they agreed henceforth [p. 91] to bury the corpses. — Of course this is not the reason. That people still know about this way of handling corpses proves that the change took place presumably only about four or five generations ago, and the most obvious reason for the change is that it happened under pressure from their Banggai overlords.

J. N. Vosmaer mentions something similar about the Tolaki above Kandari in the 1830's: “The practice of interring corpses, after they have lain in wooden coffins, in mountain clefts together with the inheritance of the deceased, seems to be falling out of use more and more; the corpses are mainly confined and then buried” (“Korte Beschrijving van het ZO Schiereiland van Celebes,” p. 96). Here too there is no other reason for the change than the influence which the Moslem inhabitants of the coast exercised upon the people in the interior.

When the priest accompanies the funeral procession, he takes care to bring along a piece of the thorny liana, *ingkoa*. As soon as the grave is filled up, he draws the liana over it. People think that the soul of the deceased is hooked onto the liana. Then it is wrapped in a cloth of white cotton, and given to one of the children of the deceased to carry. At home the liana is laid on a copper platter (*dulang*). For the time being the widow's place is near the liana. In the evening of the funeral day, consequently the third day after the

passing away, two hens are slaughtered and a meal is prepared from them. The *bolian na mena* speaks to the evil spirit so as to prevent them from harming the soul of the deceased. They call this ceremony *mangkabuasemi*, the purpose of which is to separate the soul of the dead from the living. This is *natolu na mian mate* ‘the third (night) of the deceased.’

After seven nights, *napitu na mian mate*, the same thing takes place. Afterwards the liana in the cotton cloth is taken from the copper bowl and stored away in the wardrobe or [p. 92] clothesbasket, where it stays until the actual death feast for the deceased, the *batangan*, is held. Sometimes it takes a year before they can pass on to this, because a lot is needed to feed the guests.

At this death feast the grave, which during the interim was left to itself, is set in order. The first day carries the name of *montukas*. Then a mat is spread out near the wall of the house on the spot where previously the *dulang* stood with the thorny liana. This is taken out of the clothesbasket and laid in the *dulang* in the same way. Above the *dulang* a rattan rope is stretched out, on which is hung all sorts of clothes and cotton cloths, which the family members are required to borrow. The ‘bed of state’ is called *pirate’an*.⁵ The widow and one of the children must sit constantly next to the *dulang* and are not allowed to go away as long as the work on the grave continues, except to meet their necessities. At all meals, food is given first to the bowl in which the liana lies. During the meal the other people sit in a long row, starting at the widow.

As far as the work on the grave is concerned, they first erect the hut above it. Then they collect stones, which are piled up like a wall around the grave; this last activity is called *bawatuan* ‘laying out stones.’

When the wall is ready, a hen and a dog are slaughtered. The *bolian na mena* brushes the blood of the former along the stones, so that the wall may not fall. This ‘brushing’ with blood is called *mangarara’i* from *rara* ‘blood.’ The dog’s meat is prepared and offered as food to those who worked on the grave.

When they have finished everything, the priest prepares a carrying basket, *basung*, in the house of mourning. All sorts of food are put into the basket: rice, corn, [p. 93] taro, yams, bananas, etc. When the basket is full, the priest empties it again in order to pack it again. He repeats this seven times. Finally it is covered with a cloth of white cotton. Now the widow carries the basket to the grave on her back, and everyone participating in the funeral follows her. When they arrive at the grave, the contents of the basket are laid out upon it, and the basket is hung empty in the grave hut. The widow and the children eat some of the food stuffs. This ceremony is called *pamakonon basung* ‘finishing (the death rites) with the carrying basket.’

⁵ [footnote 1, p. 92] The stem *rate* in *pirate’an* is a word that is scattered over a large part of Celebes and which means ‘soul of the dead.’

As long as the *batangan* has not yet been held, the widow lays aside some of her food at every meal for the deceased, which she lays on a plate that has taken the place of the bowl with the thorny liana. At the *pamakonon basung* they lay on the grave: a sleeping mat (*ampas*), a ladle (*sandok*), an earthenware pot (*kuren*), and a number of packets of rice made from plaited coconut leaves (*katupat*), many of which are not filled. From the eaves of the hut a cotton fringe, called *palangas*, is hung up around the grave. On one side of the grave a hole is made in the fringe, in which are placed seven homemade cigarettes. Finally a stake is planted in the ground near the grave, on which flies a flag.

In the very early morning of the day following that of the *pamakonon basung*, the *bolian na mena* goes and throws the liana away; this is called *mamantas kololon* ‘cutting the rope,’ by which all fellowship between the dead and the living is broken. At all occasions it is the *bolian na mena* who speaks to the spirits (*mena*) in order to prevent them from harming the soul of the dead. He arranges whatever is to be done at the death feast, except he doesn’t intrude on laying out and coffining the corpse. The people don’t have any disdain or horror of him. The reward he receives for his interventions consists of four plates and four fathoms of inferior cotton (*balasu*), and at all the ceremonies he gets enough to eat. This pay is given him after the *pamakonon basung*. [p. 94]

When someone died in foreign parts and was buried, when the next of kin heard of it they made a doll from a banana stem, into which were cut a head, arms and legs. This statue, called *bongkot*, was dressed, wrapped in a cotton cloth and buried without clothes. Immediately a hut was built on top of this grave and a wall of stones was erected like they used to do with a corpse. During the third and seventh night after the doll had been buried, the dead was recalled and with that the matter was settled.

We should now still trace what the inhabitant of Balantak believes about the afterlife of the soul. The soul of the living human being is called *santuu*. As long as they suppose that the soul of the deceased has not yet gone to the realm of the dead, *Untuan* ‘the beginning,’ ‘where he has come from,’ they still call it *santuu*. During this period they make as if the dead is still among the living, they talk to him, take care of him.

After the *pamakonon basung*, they say, the dead takes the basket with food stuffs which the *bolian na mena* prepared for him, places it on his back, and makes his way to *Untuan*. After that they don’t talk anymore of *santuu*, but the dead is called *tembunuat*.⁶ On that trip he encounters some adversities: he meets a goat that wants to butt him, combative pigs, dogs, and hands,⁷ that obstruct his every passage. But the dead satisfies all of these animals by offering them something from the basket; then they let him pass. Finally he reaches a point where many paths come together, tended by a guard. The dead asks him to tell which of all those paths he is to follow, but the guard doesn’t answer him.

⁶ Among the Saluan people north of Balantak the soul of the living is called *santuu* and the ‘the soul of the dead’ *teminuat* too.

⁷ [Editor’s note: The word ‘hands’ here is a literal translation of Dutch *handen*, but what the author meant by it is not clear to me.]

Then the dead offers him some betel nut from his basket, and immediately the guard tells him [p. 95] which path he is to follow in order to arrive in the city of the dead. This is repeated a couple of times until he sees the houses where his ancestors live.

Near the city of the dead, however, lies a bridge over a deep abyss. Each end of the bridge is held by a creature. If a dead person has done a lot of evil, e.g. has stolen, has committed incest and adultery, the two creatures overturn the bridge, and the deceased falls into the pan with boiling water underneath. That pan is called *ukuman* ‘punishment’ (from Malay *hukum*); the bridge is called *tetean nggoling-nggoling* ‘revolving bridge.’ If the deceased is fortunate enough to pass over the abyss, he arrives in *Untuan*, the land of souls.

Here life is like on earth. People say that the city of the dead lies high up, and as proof they say that many who are about to die sweat and pant. This can’t be anything other than because they have to climb a high mountain.

The soul of the dead, *tembunuat*, very seldom manifests itself in a priest, and if this happens it is not to render help to man in case of disease or distress. Usually they are exclusively souls that are weighed down by one thing or another that is not to their liking. Often they are the souls of mothers who are unhappy, because their children left behind are not being treated well. They sometimes threaten to take their children away to *Untuan*. Then people have to slaughter a hen in order to reconcile them, and induce them to abandon their intention.

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