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The Gadang of Isabela and Nueva Vizcaya: Survivals of a Primitive Animistic Religion

GODFREY LAMBRECHT

THE Gadang are a people who inhabit the northern part of the province of Nueva Vizcaya and the southern part of the province of Isabela in the island of Luzon, Philippines. They are the *naturales* of the towns of Bayombong, Solano and Bagabag, towns built near the western bank of the Magat river (a tributary of the Rio Grande, also called the Cagayan River) and of the towns of Santiago (Carig), Angadanan, Cauayan and Reyna Mercedes situated along the Rio Grande. All of them are christianized and civilized.

Besides these Christian Gadang, there are pagan and uncivilized Gadang living in a number of villages situated in the mountains and hills west of Isabela province. According to the census of 1939 the pagan Gadang numbered approximately 2,000, of whom some 1,400 lived in the outskirts of the Kalinga and Bontok subprovinces of the Mountain Province and some 600 were residing in the municipal districts of Antatet, Dalig and the barrios of Gamu and Tumauini. Dalig is ordinarily said to be the place of origin of the christianized Gadang.

The same census records 14,964 Christians who spoke the Gadang language. Of these, 6,790 were in Nueva Vizcaya and 8,174 in Isabela. Among these there were certainly some 3,000

to 4,000 who were not *naturales* but Ilocano, Ibanag or Yogad who, because of infiltration, intermarriage and daily contact with the Gadang, learned the language of the aborigines.

This paper deals with certain survivals of the ancient pagan religion of the Gadang which have survived to the present despite their christianization.¹ The christianization of the Gadang is relatively recent inasmuch as the valiant Spanish missionaries did not start with the evangelization of the tribe before 1750. Nowadays these survivals are called "*gaggangay na manannacamira*" (the customs of our ancestors). We made our researches exclusively in the towns of Bayombong, Solano, Bagabag and Santiago, where some 6000 *naturales* live. The *centro* of Bagabag, i.e. the *población* is almost homogeneously Gadang.

We have been able to obtain first hand information, not only from people who witnessed the rites, but also from those who took an active part in them and could recite the prayers and invocations as well as explain the various ritual terms and actions. Since the writer is a Catholic missionary he could not be present when the pagan sacrificial rites were actually performed. However we are satisfied that our information is accurate. Daily contact with the people during more than twenty-five years has brought to light many things which have to a large extent corroborated the data received from our various informants. Moreover, to ascertain the reliability of the information we subjected our informants to cross-examination. We made them repeat their recitations a second, a third, a fourth time or otherwise tested their statements. We do not claim to have recorded all the old customs still existing in the afore-

¹ This article is excerpted (revised and rearranged) from an unpublished doctoral dissertation presented by the late Rev. Godfrey Lambrecht C.I.C.M. in 1949 to the University of Santo Tomas. Permission to publish was obtained from the University authorities by the author's brother, Father Francis Lambrecht C.I.C.M., who checked the text. The article as presented here follows a different arrangement from the original.—Editor.

mentioned towns, but we think our descriptions are fairly complete.²

OUTLINE

In discussing the survivals of the pagan Gadang religion we might conveniently divide our material as follows:

1. The two kinds of rites.
2. The performants of the rites:
 - a. The *mahimunu*,
 - b. The *maingal*.
3. The supernatural beings:
 - a. The spirits,
 - b. The ghost-deities,
 - c. The ghosts.
4. *Uali and Pattaliat*.
5. Possession.
6. The belief of the people.
7. Some comparative elucubrations:
 - a. Similarities with the Ifugao,
 - b. Differences.

I. TWO KINDS OF RITES

There are two kinds of sacrificial rites among the Gadang: the *uali* and the *pattaliat*. The term *uali* simply means "offering" in ordinary speech. But it is applied to all sacrifices

² In citing native Gadang words, the spelling and orthography follow norms established by Father Martinena O.P. in his manuscript grammar of the Gadang language, who follows in general the Spanish spelling and orthography. Since the natives themselves have learned to spell their words in the Spanish manner whenever they write in their own language, we thought it preferable not to make any changes although in our opinion Father Martinena's use of double consonants seems often unjustified. Vowels and consonants are therefore pronounced as in Spanish. In particular "c" before *a*, *o* and *u* is pronounced as in *cat*, but when the *k* sound is followed by *e* or *i*, the Spanish spell it *qu*. The hard *g* sound (as in goat) is likewise spelled *gu* if *e* or *i* follows. The semi-vowel *w* (as in wall) is always written *u*; consequently if a *u* occurs before or after another vowel or between two vowels, it should be pronounced as the *w* in wall (e.g. *uali*).

which are not *pattaliat*. The Spanish missionaries have adopted the term "*acqueuali*" (prefix *acque*, stem *uali*) to signify the Sacrifice of the Mass.

All rites on the other hand in which something is given *in exchange* for the soul of the sick person to the spirits, ghosts or ghost-deities without ritual segregation of part of the victim or offering are called *pattaliat*. Some of them are also called *maacau* or *pangacau* rites, in which the soul of the sick person is said to be ritually "restolen" from the spirits.

We shall explain the precise nature of *uali* and *pattaliat* rites in greater detail later on (see *infra*: section 4). The various *uali* and *pattaliat* rites which we have studied in detail may be grouped as follows:

1) The *uali* sacrificial rites: a) *anitu* rites in Isabela and in Nueva Vizcaya; b) ritual purchase of a houseyard; c) construction of a new house; d) *quiring* rites; e) consecration of a *maingal*; f) daily sacrifices.

2) The *pattaliat* sacrificial rites: a) the *maacau* rites; b) possession, leading to subsequent *pattaliat* rites; c) rites for the ghosts of the deceased.

In addition to the above, we have also found certain superstitions and customs, namely those: a) in connection with birth and infancy; b) in connection with marriage; c) in connection with rice culture; d) in connection with hunting and fishing; e) in connection with lightning, thunder and earthquakes.

2. THE PERFORMANTS

Apart from occasional performers in this or that rite, the regular shamans are divided into two classes: the *mahimunu* and the *maingal*.

a) THE MAHIMUNU

Mahimunu (prefix *mahi* and stem *munu*, to examine) means the one who examines. The word, therefore, points to his chief power or ability: by examining, say a betelnut

chew, he is said to discover the supernatural cause of an illness or the interference of one or other spirit in a given case. He can, in consequence, declare what particular performance is required towards recovery. In other words, he is primarily some kind of a ritual physician prescribing a supernatural treatment.

He is moreover a conciliator since he can call and bring back the soul of a sick person which was "stolen" by a spirit: he is said to snatch it, steal it from the spirit, because the offering he gives in exchange for the soul makes the spirit yield.

He can be called a magician, but he is not a sacrificer, for he never performs *uali* rites unless he be also a *maingal*.

Almost all the *mahimunu* have inherited their *mahimunu*-ship by belonging to what we may call a *mahimunu*-kin, that is, a family which is by custom and by tradition entitled to the so-called benefits of magico-religious performances. He was chosen by his father, grandfather or other relative to be initiated in the various particularities of the ritual. Initiation, however, did not confer on him the *mahimunu* ability or power, but merely qualified him to make use of the latent power that was already in him as a descendant of *mahimunu* ancestors. Those who do not belong to such a lineage simply cannot become shamans of this kind; they admit it and say: *Auan sicuami* (that is not for us.) They cannot, unless the spirits themselves signify to them in a dream that they are and should exercise that function. *Mahimunu*-ship in those exceptional cases is called *bunga na gafi*, the fruit of the night.

Nowadays the power of the *mahimunu* in general is believed to have weakened considerably. Even those who belong to such families admit the fact, though they may still "submit to custom" as they express it.

b) THE MAINGAL

The word *maingal* means brave; a shaman of that kind is therefore "a brave man" or "a brave woman." In former times, someone who had proven his muscular strength and his

skill in an encounter with enemies was called *maingal*. Tradition in Bayombong speaks of a certain Biuag of Cabagan, who was called to Manila to give a demonstration of his strength. In Bagabag a certain Lacay Enrique is still reputed to have been a very strong *maingal*; some of his descendants are still living and they claim to have known him.

How were these and others able to prove their strength and skill in order to be worthy of being called *maingal*, strong? By killing one or more Ifugao, their neighbors to the north, and their hereditary enemies, *calinga*. This means that the ancestors of the Gadang of today were headhunters, as were the Ifugao and the Igorots. They too organized war expeditions (*mangngayau*) into the region of their enemies, lay in ambush along the paths leading to their villages, threw their spears at those who happened to pass by and brought home the heads of those whom they killed. And it would seem that those war expeditions were not of a purely defensive character but were expeditions in revenge for heads taken by the Ifugao. It is clear that anyone who brought home the head of an Ifugao was called a strong and brave man, a *maingal*, a war leader.

But these *maingal* of old were not only battlefield heroes. The strong soulstuff that was in them enabled them (it was believed) to overpower not only those who came with poniard and spear, but also those other enemies of their happiness, those troublesome spirits who fought with no double-edged swords or sharp spears but with invisible weapons that gave fever and all kinds of diseases. Of course they could not kill the spirits as they killed the Ifugao, but they could force them to accept their terms, they could induce them to make a stable contract by offering a kind of contract-sacrifice, on account of which those spirits were bound to safeguard and protect them. These contractual sacrifices are by far more powerful than the mere exchange sacrifice of the *mahimunu*.

These assertions, in our opinion, emerge from the facts we have observed: the *uali* performances are indeed essentially different from the *pattaliat*. Those various *uali* rites were performed in the past by the *maingal*; even though we must

suppose that they have been corrupted to a certain extent in matters of secondary importance, we can not but maintain that they are a faithful expression of tribal beliefs with regard to the powers of the *maingal* upon the supernatural beings as well as upon the people. These rites not only corroborate but even prove what the old people of today most emphatically affirm.

First, in all those *uali* rites the *maingal* display their heroism and bravery, either by means of ritual discourses³ or by simulating a war expedition⁴ or by an actual fighting with a ghost-deity.⁵ In other words, the *maingal* want to give the impression to the *carangat* that they possess that strong soul-stuff which endows them with certain powers over their malicious actions.

Second, they force the *carangat* to accept their terms. They, as it were, dictate the stipulations of a bilateral contract which could be formulated as follows: "You, *carangat* (spirits), shall give back the soul you took hold of,⁶ or you shall protect this household and its offspring.⁷ We on our side will pay our dues by giving you a feast, we will kill a pig for you and offer you all those little things you are fond of: rice cakes, tobacco, betelnuts, gin. Moreover, we will make it clear that these offerings are not intended as a mere exchange, which would not impose any further obligations, for we will cut off a small piece from the vital parts of the pig(s) and prepare these for you. We will, in other words, perform the *uali* rite, and this shall be the authentic sign of our bilateral contract."⁸

Third, the fact that these various rites are always performed in favor of a married couple (who buy or occupy a

³ As in the *quiring* rites, the ritual purchase of a houseyard, the consecration of a new house, the *anitu* rites in Nueva Vizcaya.

⁴ E.g. the consecration of a *maingal*.

⁵ E.g. *anitu* rites in Isabela.

⁶ As in the *anitu* and *quiring* rites.

⁷ As in the consecration of a new house, the ritual purchase of a houseyard. Cf. *accallalaqui* or *accumaingal* as mentioned in the *anitu* rites of Nueva Vizcaya.

⁸ See *infra*: section 4.

houseyard or who have their house consecrated or to whom health must be restored though only one of the two is ill), or in favor of two children, a boy and a girl, simulating in that case a married couple,⁹ shows that what is wanted from the *carangat* is not merely ordinary protection or bare restitution of a sick person's soul. What the *maingal* performant wants is that the *carangat* should leave the household in peace forever in order that the strong soulstuff that exists in the couple (since they are descendants of *maingal* ancestors) would have its normal development. This may be deduced from the fact that it is taboo to perform either of the *uali* rites more than once for the same couple, except in one case, namely when the sick person becomes himself a *maingal* through the repetition of the *anitu* rites in Bagabag. This means that a relapse or any future misfortune is not to be expected. If nevertheless a relapse does come, it is believed to be caused by the malicious action of other spirits, not those who were forced by the *maingal* to accept the terms of his contract.

Finally, we call attention to some peculiarities of secondary importance. When we come to describe the ritual costumes of the performants or enumerate the ritual objects needed, we shall often have to use the adjective red, reddish. Red is undoubtedly the color of war, for it is the color of blood, and its display emphasizes the *maingal's* display of power and strength which culminates in the amputation of the pig's head: it makes one think of a simulated cutting of a man's head.

Such were the *maingal* in former times. They are believed to have had these powers of mediation or of a go-between with the *carangat*, and to have exercised the function of sacrificers in the strict Gadang sense. Their social condition was, moreover, that of a *mayaman*, that is, they belonged to the rich and influential families in their respective localities.

These functions and powers (including their strong soulstuff) the *maingal* of old transferred to their descendants, male as well as female. Hence we can speak of a *maingal*-kin. There are today a number of families who declare that their ances-

⁹ As in the *quiring* rites.

tors were great *maingal*; these perform those strange rites in the river bed and at or in their houses. The others affirm: *Auan sicuami*—that is not for us.

All the descendants of the great *maingal* of old are said to have inherited that strong soulstuff. They are potential *maingal* priests and priestesses. In order to become *maingal* shamans who will be regarded as authorized performants of those particular rites, they ought to be consecrated.

The male *maingal* shamans appear to be more important than the female. The male *maingal* function as leaders: they command, they scrutinize the bile-sacs, they offer the victims. The female *maingal* simply obey and their role, although essential and not secondary, is subordinate. They are not consecrated, but on account of their lineage they are thought to possess that strong soulstuff of their kin. It is of course only ritual strength and bravery, but just that is needed to be able to take a nactive part in the rites.

Nowadays, though a number of men claim to be authentic *maingal* by inheritance and consecration, the great majority of the people assert that their shamans have lost much of their powers, strength and influence. Still the rites are being performed, and no one belonging to a so-called *maingal*-kin would take the risk of being reproved by refusing to submit to custom when the old people, the upholders of custom, tell them to. The reign of custom still exists, but it has weakened, so much indeed that the *maingal* have thought it advisable to insert in their prayers and invocations some expressions about reluctance and unwillingness attributed to those who submit to the rites.

The fact that the powers and prestige of the genuine Gadang shamans have weakened considerably has created a class of fake *mahimunu* and *maingal*. The people, still believing in the existence of malicious spirits, are in need of some performants who, they hope, can neutralize the molesting action of those spirits, but genuine *mahimunu* and *maingal* are rare or their power doubtful. Therefore, a few among the Gadang have thought that perhaps a lucrative position might be open

for them; they made their own job and became magicians, quack doctors, illness specialists, fake *mahimunu* and *maingal*. Some of them even went to Ifugaoland for inspiration and they now treat one or other particular illness in accordance with Ifugao ritual patterns, invoking the Ifugao *Bugans* and *Wigans* and what-nots. If their performances seem to have been successful, they win some prestige among a people who are still so very superstitious.

Moreover, in our opinion, it would seem that the *mahimunu* power is but a degeneration of the *maingal* power, since in the localities where the old Gadang religion is more rampant and more often displayed, namely in Isabel, there are no *mahimunu* but only *maingal*, no distinction being made between the two functions.

3. THE SUPERNATURAL BEINGS

The various rites which we have studied in detail show with great evidence that faith in three different classes of supernatural beings has survived among the Gadang: the *carangat*, the *maingal*-ghost-deities, the *caralua na pinatay* or ghosts. All of them are endowed with spirituality in the Gadang sense: they are represented as having wives and children; they need clothes, they can be hurt, they eat and drink, they chew and smoke; in a word they are human-like. They have a kind of body which is invisible and impalpable: say, spiritual. They marry, but in a spiritual manner; their offspring inherit their spiritual qualities; they dwell in a fixed abode, they can not be seen there but they sometimes can be heard; they are touched by men, but no contact is felt; when they eat, drink, chew or smoke, they eat the "soul" of the pigs, chickens and cakes, drink the "soul" of the liquor, chew the "soul" of the betelnut, smoke the "soul" of the tobacco, and they dress themselves with the "soul" of the clothes that are to cover their spiritual body. They are not only human-like but also Gadang-like, since they are represented as having the same desires and tastes, joys and sorrows as the Gadang.

All supernatural beings are feared, and although their powers may differ from class to class, from individual to indi-

vidual, they all have this power in common: they can molest man by means of illness or other misfortunes.

a) THE CARANGAT OR SPIRITS

The term *carangat* is applied to all those supernatural beings who have never been human. The term is in no way a specific Gadang term, for the Yogad and Itaves use it, the Ibanag say *carango* and the Ifugao *kalangat*.

The Gadang as well as their civilized and uncivilized neighbors believe that the *carangat* are essentially evil spirits: they are thieves of the living man's soul and so cause disease and death. If they are said to protect or safeguard anything, their protection is merely negative, i.e., they abstain from doing harm because man has induced them to keep quiet.¹⁰ Whenever they are believed to have molested man or to harbor a bad intention towards one or more persons or families, their molestation or their bad intention can be averted by an offering.

They can cause various kinds of diseases, but they are specialists in fevers, such as malaria and those diseases in which fever is symptomatic.

It seems strange that they are not believed to cause stomach illnesses (diarrhea, dysentery, cholera etc.). These are almost always regarded as natural diseases and are therefore treated by medicine. This is odd because in a tropical country it is likely that abdominal illnesses would be imputed to some malicious action on account of their frequency. But our informants most emphatically affirm that no shaman will ever indicate a supernatural treatment for any such disease, nor is there any ritual treatment for them. Notwithstanding his assurance, we remained suspicious. We therefore consulted the rituals of their neighbors, the Ifugao, and we saw that the Ifugao believe in a special class of stomach ache spirits called *liblibayu* or *liblibayan*, entirely unknown to the Gadang of today. It seems possible that the ancestors of the Gadang

¹⁰ As in the ritual purchase of a houseyard or the consecration of a new house.

believed in other classes of spirits. If those of today believe in only one class, it is possible that belief and worship in only one class has survived. In the *quiring* rites and in what we have termed daily sacrifices, certain ritual expressions referring to stomach aches seem to justify our assertion.

The *carangat* are said to live in trees (mostly in tall *balete* and *salamagui* trees), in big stones (mostly river bed boulders), in wells and in the ground (especially in houseyards and fields). The various rites speak of offerings that are hung up in trees or put at the foot of trees or on top of big stones. The *carangat* are called lice of the ground and are represented as having their residence in the ground.

The ritual in use in Isabelá gives the names of four chief *carangat*: *Dumadaga*, *Siloit*, *Adayag* and *Alucasianan*. *Dumadaga* is said to be the king of the *carangat*. His name suggests the idea of increase; according to our informants he is the Increaser. In what that increase consists, we can not say. He has two wives: *Siloit* and *Alucasianan*. The word *siloit* means the whizzing noise made by reeds when they are rapidly moved to and fro; therefore we could call *Siloit* the Whizzler. She is believed to make a whizzling noise when she comes upon the invitation of the shamans. The word *alucasianan* means "provided with narrow loins"; *Alucasianan* may therefore be the female spirit with her narrow loins. *Adayag* is interpreted as the Wobbler, perhaps so called on account of his peculiar gait. He is a kind of minister to *Dumadaga*.

Do these chief spirits also live in trees, stones or in the ground like their innumerable brethren and subordinates? Are they worshipped in the same way? These are questions we shall attempt to answer when we shall explain the nature of the sacrifices among the Gadang.

b) THE GHOST-DEITIES

The ghost-deities are the ghosts of *maingal* men and women. When a *maingal* dies, his or her soul goes to the Downstream Region (*Dilod*) where he or she continues to live that former strong, *maingal* life in a spiritual way.

That the ghost-deities have gone to the Downstream Region appears from the fact that, in the rites, they themselves claim to have come from there. The strong soulstuff that was and still is in them enabled them to impose their terms upon the spirits and even to make friendship with them; they are indeed called the friends of the *carangat*. On account of that friendship they have become a kind of go-between in favor of their descendants. They can persuade the *carangat* to come to the place where sacrifices are offered by the living *maingal* and can induce the *carangat* to accept the offerings and consequently to give up their malicious intentions. The ghost-deities, are, therefore, primarily allies of their own people, in particular of those who belong to the *maingal*-kin.

Like the living *maingal* the *maingal*-ghosts like to display their strength and bravery. They do this in a conspicuous manner, for they are represented as fighting with the live *maingal* and can overpower them, and they do so for the same reason as the live *maingal*, viz. in order to force the *carangat* to accept their descendants' terms, which they consider their own.

They are also, like the live *maingal*, the upholders of custom. They are represented as punishing or reproving those who show reluctance in complying with the requirements of custom. They may even go to the extreme in their punishment: cause illness, threaten or cause death, and so force their descendants to acknowledge the necessity of complying with custom and the power that is in them by favoring them with offerings.

The various rites mention the names of some ghost-deities. They are: *Daurauin*, *Ambatali*, *Carinuan*, *Gatan*, *Lumanindag*. Tradition speaks of a certain *Aggabau*. The shamans call *Aggabau* the chief of the ghost-deities. They interpret his name as being the Onlooker-From-Above (*gabau* means high mountain). He was the first man and during his life was called *Guiladan*. His ordinary abode is in the midst of the clouds, *so lutap na dulam*. He is not invoked *ex professo* except in the case of extreme necessity, i.e. when all the other ghost-

deities have failed to come upon the invitation of the live *maingal*.

Carinuan is the wife of *Aggabau*. Explaining her name, the shamans (our informants) say that she is the brightest and the lightest of all, *cabbaggauan a mabaggau*. She is most transparent and subtle: *par levibus ventis*, comparable to the wind. *Carinuan* (prefix *ca*, stem *rinu*, suffix *an*): *rinu* means clarity and lightness.

Dauirauin as his name indicates is the ghost-deity that roams around. *Ambatali* is the Metamorphic. He is said to take the appearance of one or other animal and even that of a man; in the latter case, the color of his skin may turn black if it is red, or red if it happens to be black; for this reason he is also called *Amalibali*, the Changeling. When he takes the form of a water buffalo, he is called *Macanuang* (*nuang*, water buffalo). The ordinary abode of *Dauirauin* is on top of the mountain, while *Ambatali* lives in the clouds.

About *Gatan* and *Lumanindag* we know nothing but their names.

Although these chief ghost-deities are believed to have once been men and *maingal*, we think that they represent mythological ancestors of the Gadang, notwithstanding the fact that there are *Aggabau* families in Santiago and Bayombong, *Carinuan* families in Santiago and *Ambatali* families in all Gadang towns. Mythology in general is often obscure, shows confusion, sometimes contradicts itself. In this case, the assertions of the shamans as to the whereabouts of those chief ghost-deities display confusion and contradiction. They are said to come from the Downstream Region (*maggabuatcami si Dilod*), and yet live in the clouds or on a mountaintop.

c) THE GHOSTS

The ghosts are the souls of the deceased, *caralua na pinatay*. They too may molest their descendants for one reason or another. Long lasting illnesses are ordinarily imputed to them, which may demand a special supernatural treatment.

4. UALI AND PATTALIAI

Worship of the supernatural beings is manifested chiefly through oblations and sacrifices. The Gadang however make no distinction between mere oblations and those sacrifices in which something is destroyed in one way or another. For them all offerings are either *uali* or *pattaliat*, two terms which we shall now explain a little more at length.

A *pattaliat* is a mere exchange having the character of a supplication. The spirit(s), the ghost deity(ies) or the ghost(s), as the case may be, are said to have caused disease by stealing the soul of the sick person; they hold that soul and therefore they are asked to return it and in its stead to accept an offering. Man, as it were, tells them: "Please give back the soul you took away; we will give you in exchange for it anything you want (*talianmi*, *taliatanmi*).” Consequently, it is of the greatest importance to know exactly what will be acceptable to the supernatural thief, lest the sick person be not cured. In some cases (cases of possession or alleged possession) the thief himself reveals what he wants. In other cases it is the *mahimunu* (and a fortiori the *maingal*) who can solve the problem. That is the idea of *pattaliat* offerings.

A *uali*, on the other hand, is an offering which has the character of a bilateral contract. The spirits have their rights, and these may not be violated by the Gadang. They are the owners of the land on which the Gadang live, on which they have constructed their house and which they transfer to their descendants. Are the spirits not called lice of the ground, invisible but nevertheless present, just like lice hidden in the hair? Their superiors, *Dumadaga* with his wives and first minister, though they may not reside in the abodes of their subordinates since they are said to be ordinarily in the Downstream Region, nevertheless own the whole country, and an offence against the rights of their subordinates (who, after all are perhaps the descendants of the Increaseaser) is equally an offence against them and against their supreme dominion over Gadang-land.

Besides that, these property rights are inalienable, i.e. the land cannot be bought from the spirits by the Gadang, it can be rented only. If the Gadang pay them the rental amount, they allow them to use the surface of their property.

The Gadang believe that they pay the rental amount, first, when they decide to occupy a new lot: this is the ritual purchase of a houseyard, which is not really a purchase of the land, but of its usufruct. Secondly, when they erect a new house on the lot. This we call the consecration of a new house. Thirdly, when the spirits themselves signify to the Gadang that they are indebted, that a new rental amount is due to them. They do so by causing illness. In some cases they are quite in a hurry to claim payment: they cause debility in one of the children (preferably a boy, the first or second child).¹¹ In other cases they make either the husband or the wife deadly sick.¹² In a few cases they let the shaman signify their desire: the *anitu* rites (in Nueva Vizcaya) are then preventive of illness by a kind of advance payment.

The *anitu* performance is regarded the last rental amount to be paid, except when the spirits hold that a new debt has been contracted, which is then being paid by the *accalalaqui* performance, but only in Nueva Vizcaya, and there only rarely. These various payments are not the various installments of the purchase price, for whenever another married couple comes to live in the house new payments are due.

All these various rites are not mere offerings but bilateral contract-offerings, and they are that because of the *uali* proper, which is the characteristic and essential offering in all such performances.

Whenever primitive people, who can not write and make official documents, make contracts of importance, they signify this outwardly in one way or another, and they do so in the

¹¹ *Quiring* rites.

¹² *Anitu* rites in the river bed.

presence of one or more go-betweens who lead the negotiations.¹³ In our case the rental payment to the spirits are the pigs, rice cakes, cigars etc. or rather the "souls" of these. But the outward sign which makes it clear that these are really offered as payments, is the *uali* rite proper. The *maingal*, who is the go-between, cuts small pieces from the vital parts of the pigs, cooks them slightly, puts them on a plate with cakes and tobacco and finally offers them to the spirits of the ground, saying the sacrificial prayer. After that they are sure that they have paid what they owe and that, consequently (in cases of illness) the sick person will necessarily be cured. It is remarkable how strongly the people (those who believe, of course) insist on this and even declare that the sick person is already cured before the end of the performance. Could they possibly have so strong a belief, if they did not consider their performances as having the force of a contract, which binds the other party, i.e. the spirits, as well?

But one might say: How do they know that the spirits have agreed to the price and have accepted the payment? They know it through the omen of the bile sac, and in one instance, namely in the *anitu* rites as performed in Isabela, the spirits themselves, *Dumadaga* and *Adayag*, prove it for they are said to come to suck the blood out of the pig's heads. The omen of the bile sac is nearly always good and therefore the people are not at all surprised that the spirits almost always accept the payment offered to them.

And, after all, why should they have their doubts if they admit that their *maingal* shamans, men who possess strong soulstuff, can force the spirits to accept their own conditions? It is for this reason that the *maingal* profusely display their strength and bravery and call on their allies and ancestors, the *maingal* ghost-deities who are the friends of the spirits, and make them act as supernatural go-betweens to tell the

¹³ See Francis Lambrecht *The Mayawyaw Ritual* (Publications of the Anthropological Conference, Catholic University of America) Vol. IV No. 4 ("Property and its Ritual") and No. 5 ("Priests and Go-Betweens").

spirits: "This is the amount to be paid, an amount recognized by custom, you can not but accept it."

Custom, as a matter of fact, is the supreme argument among primitive people, and in all contracts it is custom that stipulates the amounts to be paid. If this is so among living men, why should it not be the same between men and spirits, who are Gadang-like? Furthermore, the description of the rites shows that the ghost-deities insist on the observance of the law of custom, for they are represented as inspecting the things prepared for the performance in order to make sure that nothing is lacking, that the whole is acceptable to them.

Although the amount payable may be fixed by custom, there still remains a margin: the size of the victims and the quality of the things offered may or may not satisfy the spirits. But here again the ghost-deities, on account of their friendly relations, strength and skill, can persuade the spirits to accept the price offered. Their influence is great, it is necessary and they know it, for they affirm that they really came to help; they declare that they have helped a great deal.

From all this it appears also that those *carangat* who are the owners of the land together with their chiefs residing in the Downstream Region or in the neighborhood of the river are the hardest to control. As a rule they demand greater offerings and the diplomacy of the *maingal* is needed to make them cease molesting man or to prevent them from doing so. On the other hand, the good result of the *uali* performances is more stable, since in general they need not be repeated. The other *carangat*, who live in stones, trees, wells, springs, are more capricious; the *maingal* know that and therefore, whenever *uali* sacrifices are performed, they give them something (cigars, betelnuts) as if they would address them and say: "Keep quiet, don't be envious because the spirits of the ground have been favored."

In all sacrifices, more particularly in the *uali*, there are some rites of secondary importance. The most conspicuous are those in which chickens are killed. The head of the cock is cut off with one blow of the knife, a hen is made to flutter

around the sick person, and the like. We think that these are done for the sole purpose of knowing the future or of detecting what is hidden.

In one of the performances we shall describe (the rites consecrating a *maingal*) the *uali* is directed to the ghost-deities, not to the spirits. In this case the contract is entered into between the new *maingal*-man and the *maingal*-ghost-deities; the amount payable should then not be considered the payment of a debt or rental but that of the wage due to the ghost-deity(ies) for the consecration.

What do the people say if no good results are obtained? Those who do not believe, and they are many, have of course a ready answer; but those who do believe say that the *mahimunu* made a wrong diagnosis. He thought it was a supernatural illness and it was just a natural one, that it was a *pattaliat* performance which was enacted whereas it should have been a *uali* performance, or vice-versa. Or else in *pattaliat* cases, they may say that the shaman failed to find out what the molesting spirit exactly wanted. This, however, will never be brought forward in the case where a *uali* ended in failure, for they are sure that they were not mistaken: they display victory, plant flags on the float that carries off the illness. If, in fact, the performance proves to be no victory, they will say that the illness was treated the wrong way.

5. CASES OF POSSESSION

It may seem a hazardous statement to affirm that the Gadang attribute such extraordinary powers to their *maingal* as to be able to force the spirits to accept their terms. We do not think that our interpretation, based on the very rites, is exaggerated, because these are not the only manifestations of extraordinary powers attributed to their shamans. There are also the alleged powers of inducing possession.

A *maingal* of either sex, even a *mahimunu*, is believed to have the power of inducing the supernatural beings to take possession of him or her, to speak through his or her mouth, and that not only in exceptional cases but every time some

specific rites, say the *anitu* rites in the river bed, are performed. This is, in our opinion, a far greater power: possession is represented not only as happening casually or as depending entirely on the will of the supernatural beings, but also as being caused by the shamans.

6. THE BELIEF OF THE PEOPLE

Those among the Gadang, who neither believe in the existence and power of the supernatural beings in which their ancestors had faith, nor want to have anything to do with whatever may be in connection with it, are very few. The greater number retain from the old pagan religion some belief, although they may strongly affirm that they reject it completely. They observe a number of taboos and in times of danger of suffering, say, an illness that endangers life and seems incurable with medicine, they may call a shaman and may even submit to the *anitu* rites if they are pressed by the old people to do so. They would say: "Who knows? It worked before, it may work now." Or else: "It is hard to go against the will of the old people, who may, after all, not be entirely wrong."

Besides these there are a number of families who openly admit that they belong to the *maingal*-kin and the *mahimunu*-kin (in Nueva Vizcaya) and really believe and comply with the customs of their ancestors. They are very few in those towns where Tagalogs and especially Ilocanos have settled in great numbers, but they are more numerous where the Gadang population has remained almost homogeneous. Still not all the members of such families, who affirm that their ancestral customs should be complied with and upheld, submit without reluctance, as we have said already; so that we may safely conclude that with the disappearance of the older generation the major manifestations of the old pagan religion may soon disappear too.

7. SOME COMPARATIVE ELUCUBRATIONS

Some historians and ethnologists believe that, before the first immigrations of the Malays proper, some tribes belonging

to a Mongoloid race which had some Caucasian affinities, had established themselves in the Philippines, especially in the northern part of the island of Luzon, namely in the valleys of the Rio Grande de Cagayan and some of its tributaries. They call these "Pre-Malayans" or also "Indonesians" and classify the Gadang among them. They base their assertions on some physical characteristics. They would, in our opinion, have a hard time justifying their statement also on linguistic grounds. All those tribes speak beyond all doubt a language which very much resembles that of their Malay neighbors even grammatically, and if there exist remnants of another language which might be termed the original one, these have not been sufficiently studied to admit as corroborative evidence of a Mongoloid origin.

Can our description of survivals of an old religion add some probability to that opinion? In answering this question we would say that our descriptions of the Gadang often display similarity with the religion of the Ifugao, the immediate neighbors of the Gadang, who are admittedly primitive Malays, not "Pre-Malays" or "Indonesians," and nevertheless the Gadang show some religious characteristics which seem foreign to the religion of the Ifugao and other primitive Malays.

a) SIMILARITIES WITH THE IFUGAO

Among the Ifugao beliefs that show some similarity to the Gadang, we may point out the following which we find in the comprehensive work of Father Francis Lambrecht in his *The Mayawyaw Ritual*, especially "Rice Culture and Its Ritual"¹⁴ and "Illness and Its Ritual":¹⁵

1. The *kalangat* spirits among the Ifugao are essentially evil spirits. They give illness, steal human souls, they live in trees, stones, rivers and springs, while their chiefs dwell in the Skyworld or in the Underworld. They are called *bibyo*, *pinading*, in some places *kalangat*.

¹⁴ *Publications of the Catholic Anthropological Conference* (Washington D.C.) Vol. IV No. 1 and No. 6.

¹⁵ *Journal of East Asiatic Studies* (Manila) Vol. IV No. 4

2. The Ifugao shamans, called *mumbaki* or *mumbuni*, are also believed to have magic powers; whenever they perform some rites they invoke the deceased shamans; the Gadang *maingal*, however, have strong powers hardly comparable with those of the Ifugao performants of rites.

3. Among the Ifugao, if the sacrifice is directed to the *kalangat*, the soul of the pig or chicken is given in exchange for the soul of the sick person, also other things (clothes, ornaments etc.). The shamans put part of the liver, the bile-sac, some hair or feathers of the victim(s) in a kind of ritual box; chickens are usually killed over that ritual box so that the blood may drop in it; in other words the vital parts of the victims are the object of special attention, as in the Gadang *uuli* performances.

4. The Ifugao shamans also put in that ritual box a betelnut, chewing leaf and lime (a prepared chew) and recite an invocation by which they send the betelnut to invite the spirits and allure them to come. For this reason the betelnut is said to know whether the sick person will recover or not, i.e. the betelnut knows if the spirits will come and, consequently, accept the sacrifice. This shows a striking similarity with Gadang performances in connection with betelnuts.

5. Like the Gadang, the Ifugao give secondary offerings to their supernatural beings, such as rice, rice wine, betelnuts, blankets, clothes etc. and these are moreover often arranged for the offering in a way almost identical with the Gadang practice.

6. The supernatural beings of the Ifugao (like those of the Gadang) are represented as man-like and Ifugao-like: they have some kind of a spiritual body, they eat, drink, chew the spiritual element of the victims and offerings, marry and have spiritual children.

7. The Ifugao have their ritual dances and speeches in which they boast of their deeds of bravery. They use gongs

and drums to call the spirits. They have even their Wobbler, counterpart of the Gadang *Adayag*.

8. The color red has also among the Ifugao a special significance: it is the color of fire and of blood, the color of the sun-deity which is the deity specially invoked in all rites that are connected with fighting and that speak about red leaves, red fires, red augurs and the like.

9. The Ifugao have also their ritual possessions. Their shamans when possessed tremble, tell their name, reveal what is to be offered, and the like.

10. The Ifugao shamans, scrutinize the bile sacs, consult the augurs as do those of the Gadang. Even the same augurs are considered bad among both tribes.

11. A great number of superstitions and taboos among the Gadang, especially in connection with rice culture, exists also among the Ifugao.

This is by no means a complete enumeration of resemblances in religion between the two tribes, but they show sufficiently, we think, that the Gadang religion of which we have only survivals, has either considerably undergone the influence of the Malay tribe nearest to them, or else that both peoples may have mingled for some time in the past.

b) DIFFERENCES FROM THE IFUGAO

But there are some characteristic and salient features in surviving rites which seem to be specifically Gadang and which possibly point to an earlier Pre-Malay culture. We have in mind the *anitu* rites in the Magat river bed as performed in Isabela.

Indeed, the character of these rites, the whole ambiance, the way of acting of the shamans, the things enacted, the *uali* itself, seem strange and incongruous in the ritual pattern of the Ifugao and the Malays of northern Luzon. The Gadang themselves see in this *uali* rite proper something characteristic, essentially different from all other rites that do not have it: it sanctions a contract with the supernatural beings, as we

have said, which contract must, moreover, be made by a *maingal*.

Besides, the idea of a *blood* suction is several times emphasized in these rites. *Dumadaga*, speaking through the mouth of the possessed *maingal* says that he came to taste blood. The *maingal* in these rites clearly affirms that *Dumadaga* repeatedly asks for blood. *Dumadaga* and *Siloit* are specially invited to suck blood at the moment that the *uali* is offered. In fact both these chief spirits are said to come and suck blood from the pigs' heads. Would this not insinuate a further corruption of the blood sacrifices of the Semang (Pygmies) and the Sakai (Pygmoids)? According to Schmidt the blood sacrifice of the Sakai is already a degeneration of the Semang's;¹⁶ a further corruption may have occurred among Pre-Malays or "Indonesians" who according to Schmidt have been in contact with those Pygmies and Pygmoids, among them the Jakudn tribes, who dwell in the south of the Malay Peninsula. If it seems already more magical among the Pygmoids, why should it not further have developed its magical element and acquired an animistic character in such a way that it ceased to be essentially a blood sacrifice but kept a blood-rite?

The aforementioned Semang and Sakai believe in spirits which they call *Cenoi* and have a priesthood termed *hala*. The Jakudn worship *Hantu* spirits and have a priesthood termed *poyang*. Those *Cenoi* and *Hantu* spirits are represented as dwelling near a river and seem to resemble those whom the Gadang call *cutu na lubag*, lice of the ground. The *hala* and *poyang* priests are those who have to counteract the evils those spirits bring about, and their methods in doing so are more magical and animistic among the tribes that are less primitive.

We merely refer to these because we suspect that the Gadang must have brought their strange rites in the Magat river bed from somewhere, perhaps from those regions where those primitive tribes live and with whom they may have come in contact in the course of their migrations.

¹⁶ *Uhrsprung der Gottesidee* Vol. II Chapter 2 pp. 146-257.

These are then the survivals of an old religion, concealed and covered by christianization and civilization in such a way that they are not so easily noticed unless intense research, purposely made, bring them to light. Beyond all doubt, many of them, and most certainly those sacrificial rites in the Magat river bed, will have disappeared within a comparatively short time and nothing but a number of superstitions and occasional offerings to the evil spirits will survive for sometime, for the law of custom is now definitively abrogated among the Gadang.