

CHAPTER IX

PRIESTS

“The one was called Datu Mengkamma’
the other was named Karaeng Ma’loko-loko.
They watched over the complete number of
a hundred prohibitions for The field
lying at the head of the firmament.”

(Merok: 121)

The Sa’dan-Toraja have various categories of priests and priestesses, each with a specific competence in the enactment of rituals. In one and the same ritual different priests may officiate. Besides other persons also fulfil fixed functions in ritual, persons who occupy a position which is otherwise secular. By virtue of their supernatural descent *adat*-chiefs — the *puang* and the *to parengge’* — naturally have a significant role in the celebration of any important feast. Part of their functions the chiefs can delegate to the priests, especially the recitation of litanies. Other roles are not transferable. It is the leading member of society who, officially at least, takes the initiative to hold a community feast; execution of the ritual, recitation of the pertinent litanies and the presentation of offerings are, to a great extent, the prerogatives of a priest who has his own, inalienable functions.

There are six principal categories of priests:

1. the *to minaa*;
2. the *to menani*;
3. the *to indo’ padang (bunga’ lalan)*;
4. the *to mebalun* or *burake bombo*;
5. the *to burake tattiku’* and *to burake tambolang*;
6. the *to ma’dampi*.

Perhaps the *to ma’gandang*, ‘he who beats the drum’, should also be included. He officiates at the *bua’ kasalle*-ritual. We did not include the *paita*, the seers who have knowledge of fortunate and unfortunate days. They are consulted on all sorts of occasions, both ritual and profane, but do not officiate as such in ceremonial functions. Nor did

we discuss the *sando*, a priest who functioned only in Mendetek, in this chapter. Neither did we mention the *manakka*-priest of Simbuang, who functioned in the *manakka*-ritual, a part of the great *bua*'-ritual in that region. Essential information concerning religious functionaries was first presented by Van der Veen (1924). (For magic see Vol. II.)

IX.1 The to minaa

Because the *to minaa* officiates in so many rituals, he necessarily is the first to be discussed in the present review. Many *to minaa*, moreover, are well-versed in mythology, litanies and *adat*-prescripts. This priest is, as it were, a scribe in a society without script or scripture. Some *to minaa* possess really capacious memories — matched, it is true, by a few *to parengnge*'. The recitation of the *Passomba Tedong*, the consecration litany of the *kerbau* sacrificed at the *merok*-feast, is not a task for just any *to minaa*. In Kesu' its recitation from start to finish lasts twelve hours. The style of the litany is ornate and discursive; parallelism and metaphors abound. Today, therefore, the *to minaa*'s use of language is difficult to comprehend.¹

Minaa means literally 'rich in thoughts'. Among the occasions at which the *to minaa* officiates are the *merok*-feast and a later phase of the *aluk rampe matampu*'. Although the latter is part of the mortuary ritual, the *to minaa* does not function as a death priest. He occupies himself with the ancestor worship of this ritual, with veneration of the *to matua*, just as during subsequent conversion rituals he will address himself to the *deata*, the ancestors of the East. Furthermore two *to minaa* have responsibilities during marriage rites. Divination is also consigned to the care of these priests. This *ma'biangi* (see Van der Veen 1929) is resorted to when someone is seriously ill. Sickness, according to the Sa'dan-Toraja, is the consequence of transgression. The *to minaa* must investigate whether the sick person has violated either the *adat*-regulations (*aluk*) or taboos (*pemali*). Should a violation have been committed, then one half of the divining reed with the convex side turned upwards (*lumbang*) will fall to the right of the *to minaa*, while the other half with its hollow side turned up (*tungara*) will come to lie at the priest's left side after the reed has been cut down the middle. Should the right hand half of the reed fall in the *tungara* position and the left hand one in *lumbang* position, then this is an indication that no transgression of *adat*-regulations or taboos has been perpetrated. The cleaving of the reed takes place on a board, 'the head cushion of the reed' (*allonan biang*). During the divination,

the *to minaa* sits in the *sali* (the central room of the house, site of the hearth) with his face to the northeast.

During the *bua' kasalle*-feast, a *to minaa* eulogizes attending personages of respect (*ma'singgi'*). The priest also interprets the meaning of the particular situation of the organs of a sacrificial pig or cock, or the omen announced by the cry of a certain variety of screechowl. Whereas the priest's incantations have the past for their content, his divining activities concentrate on the future. Before warriors entered battle, the *to minaa* prayed that their efforts would be blessed. He then stood on a hill with a staff in his left hand. When the Toraja set out to revenge the death of one of their number, the *to minaa* raised a shield (*unnambo' balulang* = to sow the shield) and implored a blessing. Before a headhunting expedition departed, the *to minaa* crowed like a rooster (A. C. Kruyt 1923/24: 312). Then the party set out. Should they return with a head, the *to minaa* would sacrifice a pig, the head of which would be fastened to the front wall of the house (of the family of the deceased for whom revenge had been taken?). In Rante Tabang the severed human head would be set on the neck of the Toraja villager who had lost his own. When, subsequently, the latter was buried, the head of the *parepe'-kerbau* (see VIII.1) was conveyed to his rock-grave (Van der Veen 1924: 386).

A distinction is made between more and less accomplished *to minaa*. The *to minaa manakka* is an extremely gifted official who knows all rituals in detail, whereas the *to minaa ulu manuk* is a *to minaa* whose services are repaid with no more than the head of a chicken, because he is unfamiliar with the great sacrifices.²

When presiding at major rituals, the *merok*-feast, for example, the *to minaa* wears a *maa'*-cloth on his head, the ends of which hang down his back. This head-dress of the *to minaa* also receives mention in the *Passomba Tedong* (Merok: 152-153). In addition he wears a long jacket, *bayu lamba'* (*lamba'*: a kind of fig tree; metaphorically: rich, respected) which is left open in front. This jacket probably is of Arabic origin and borrowed by the Toraja from the Buginese; a picture of this jacket is found in Matthes' *Ethnographische Atlas bevattende voorwerpen uit het leven en de huishouding der Boeginezen* [Ethnographic Atlas including artifacts from Buginese life and household], photo XIV, fig. 18.

Like so many other important figures, people and things among the Sa'dan, the *to minaa* also has a celestial ancestor: *Londong diLangi'* ('Lord in the Firmament'); next to this forefather, people in Kesu'

also cite Kambuno Langi' (*langi'* = heaven; *kambuno* = a parasol made from the leaves of *Corypha gebanga*, the fan-palm), also known as Ta'dung Kaissanan. In Pangala' other ancestors reported are La'lang Langi' ('Parasol of the Heaven'), or Batare Palinge, one of the eight children of Datu Laukku'. Pong Tambuli Buntu, one of the eight children of Pong Tandi Minanga, is yet another mythical *to minaa*. Van der Veen lists yet more names (1923/24: 375ff.). With all these mythic figures, emphasis is placed on the priests' heavenly origins and, at times, on their divine descent. Pong Tambuli Buntu was the first *to minaa* who came down from heaven to earth to sacrifice during a marriage ceremony. He did likewise when the legendary carpenters, Pong Kate'bak or Kateba' and Pong Pande Patangnga' were about to build a house. Whether the latter is one and the same as Tandi Minanga's son is not clear. The son of the god Tandi Minanga escaped from the flood that inundated Rura (cf. VI.3) and, together with two other *to minaa*, officiated at the sacrifices made during the *la'pa' kasalle*-ritual to atone for the incest that had been committed. The activities of other mythical *to minaa*, Kambuno Langi', for example, were largely confined to the precincts of heaven.

The heavenly origin of the *to minaa* adds to their status. The position appears in most instances to be inherited, yet this is not a fixed rule. In Pangala', only a *to makaka*, a person from the class of free men can be a *to minaa*, but in Ranteballa also a *kaunan*, a slave, could officiate. Elsewhere, too, in Ma'kale and Kesu', this possibility is not precluded. Yet, a priest from the *kaunan*-class can never make an offering at a ritual or feast given by a prominent *to makaka* (Van der Veen 1924). It seems that *to minaa* can be called to their office by a certain dream, one in which activities connected with *to minaa*-hood play a role, e.g. the beating of a drum. In Nonongan a man can succeed his father as *to minaa*. One becomes a priest as an adult, after gaining knowledge about rituals, learning to recite the litanies, and mastering the right way to express oneself. One can also become an apprentice to a *to minaa*. Women seldom become *to minaa*. In general the status of any *to minaa* depends both on his social position and on his personal qualities.

For a *to minaa* no special burial rites are observed, except if he was of noble descent. A good case of the latter is the funeral celebrated in the 1920's for the father of the *to parengge'* (*adat*-chief) of Pangala' where two *to minaa* sang the praise of the deceased. Such eulogies for the dead are restricted to persons of eminence. In Ma'kale

and Kesu' the wording of the death chants sang over a dead *to minaa* differs from that raised for other people.

Dr. Van der Veen kindly provided me with the following particulars concerning the *to minaa*. Of the role of this priest during a mortuary ritual, one can say that he does not officiate over that which constitutes the essence of the ritual offering to the soul of the deceased (that is the function of the *to mebalun*), but rather that he lends assistance by reciting the relevant litany which he alone knows. Moreover, the *to mebalun* (the death priest), is so contaminated by the sphere of death that he is not permitted to execute certain solemn, more or less sacral actions such as the consecration of the *pa'karu'-dusan*, the *kerbau* which is considered to die simultaneously with the deceased (a component of the mortuary ritual observed for a *puang*).

The *ma'nene'*, Van der Veen maintains (and here he is seconded by B. Sarungallo), falls under the *aluk rampe matampu'* (the West-oriented rituals) even though the action takes place at the rock grave. The *to minaa* fulfils an important function in this ritual (see Vol. II; The Chant: 7f.). He officiates also during the *ma'pakande to matua*, the offering to the ancestors. Although these are the 'ancestors of the West', he apparently is not contaminated by contact with the sphere of death. In sacrificing a black hen during this *ma'pakande to matua*, however, he does become involved in the ritual to ward off evil powers.

The *to minaa* furthermore presides over rites of consecration such as the previously mentioned *massurak*, the blessing of the *pa'karu'-dusan*. Such rites of consecration probably all aim at keeping evil influences at bay. Thus, for example, the *to minaa* consecrates the pig that is put to death during the *menammu pare*-ritual; the *to indo' padang* (the priest who is of utmost significance in the rice ritual) performs the sacrifice.

At the *mangrara banua* (the feast consecrating an important house), the *to minaa* recites the blessing over the pig that will be sacrificed, praying that the form of its gall bladder may be auspicious. Here the carpenter or the *to parengnge'* conducts the sacrifice proper (but he can invite the *to minaa* to replace him).

The *to minaa* often is active in warding off harmful, injurious influences, for example during the *mangrambu langi'*, designed to expiate incest. Also in case of sickness or bad dreams the *to minaa* is called upon.

In this context Van der Veen also mentions the functions of the *to minaa* and the death priest during the ritual of the *ma'tomatua* in Balusu, known there as *mangula'i*. Pigs and one *kerbau* are slaughtered in front of the grave; the death priest, 'the one who swaddles the corpse in its winding sheat', performs the sacrifice which is presented to the deceased. The following evening an offering is presented to the ancestors at the western side of the house of mourning; now it is the *to minaa* who makes the offering. This rite in turn ushers in the conversion ritual, performed to transfer the soul of the deceased from the sphere of the West to that of the East, the sphere of the *deata* or the gods.

IX.2 The *to menani*

Another functionary is the *to menani* who officiates at the *buu'* (*la'pa'*) *padang*-feast in Kesu' and Ma'kale. An account of his role will be presented in our description of this ritual (Vol. II). In Kesu' only members of a certain *tongkonan* (Buntu Karunanga in Angin-angin) are eligible for this office. No reason for this restriction could be uncovered.

To Siuang Tanduk, 'The one who carries a horn', was the first *to menani* who came down from heaven (Van der Veen 1924: 393). At the above-mentioned feast, this priest wears imitation horns made out of sugar palm-leaves.

IX.3 The *to indo' padang*

The *to indo' padang* is well-informed about the *aluk padang*, the *adat* and ceremonies connected with arable land (in this instance, the rice fields). The priest's title (*indo'* means mother) might suggest that the priest could be a woman. Yet, the *to indo' padang* is invariably a man. *To indo'* can be translated as 'the one who mothers', a metaphorical expression for, 'the one who bears responsibility for' (the ritual of rice cultivation); it is the priest's task to promote the growth and ripening of the rice. *Indo' padang* thus means 'mother of the land', 'keeper of the soil'. There are various priests of the rice; the pre-eminent *to indo' padang* is the *bunga' lalan*, 'the one who goes first along the way' (of the rice ritual). This *to indo' padang* is the leader of the ritual: he is the first to sow rice, the first to plant the young shoots and also the one who brings the requisite offerings. In short, he has the same function as the 'leader of the rice' among other Indonesian and Southeast-Asian peoples. Yet, this priest also officiates

at *mangrara papa*, the feast of the renewal of the roof of the parent-house. The association of the ritual of the rice with the roof of the *tongkonan* is not an obvious one; I can merely comment that both feasts are connected with the upperworld. The mythical ancestor of the *to indo' padang* is Datu Mangkamma', one of the eight children of Datu Laukku'.³

IX.4 The *to mebalun*

The *to mebalun* is 'the one who swaddles corpses in their winding sheat', a name indicating one of his specific tasks. He is also called the *burake bombo*, the priest of the *bombo*, and is the 'outcast' of Sa'danese society. Tradition has it that the eight offspring of Datu Laukku' all chose a craft, except for one. He beat his sister to death and became the first *to mebalun* (Kruyt 1923/24: 142).⁴ Van der Veen names Pundu Kasisi' as the first wrapper of the dead (1924: 391). Contact with the deceased who have not yet been transported to the sphere of the gods makes him impure. Aversion to (and thus presumably fear of) the *to mebalun* is strongest in Ma'kale and, to a somewhat lesser degree, in Rantepao. In the district of Ma'kale no one will set foot in the house of a death priest though the priest himself is allowed to enter the house where the deceased is kept. His services are needed there. To summon him to perform these services, people throw a stone against the wall of his house three times, calling out, "You have to come quickly, for your seed is rotting" (Kruyt 1923/24: 141). In Kesu', too, this is common practice. The priest knows what it is all about, and calls in turn, "When does the feast start?" The answer is, "In three day's time".

When the *to mebalun* wants rice, he goes and sits at the side of the road and cries, "Here is someone who has need of rice". Informants told me that in Kesu' the residence of a *to mebalun* stands some distance apart from other houses. He may not enter the homes of others, but they all are allowed to enter into his. He is the sole individual who is permitted to eat rice during a mortuary ritual. For all others — relatives and guests — this is taboo. The *to mebalun* has his own spring; he may not take water from other wells, and he is obliged to keep at a safe distance from anything connected with the *deata* or the *to dolo* (ancestors who died long ago and thus are purified).

The taboos cited above do not exist in Mamasa. In the Sa'dan region the wrappers of the dead are, as a rule, people from the lowest class,

the *kaunan*. A. C. Kruyt (1923/24: 142) reports, however, that in the Rantepao region also *to makaka* can be death priests.

A *to mebalun* cannot serve as any other kind of priest. Although his children usually are less tainted by the contagion of death than he himself is, they are not allowed to become a *burake tambolang* or *burake tattiku'* (for information about these priests, see section 5 below). Van der Veen (1924: 396) has told how the son of a *to mebalun* in La'bo' (Kesu') received a calling to become a *burake tambolang*, but no one was willing to make use of his services.

The *to mebalun* or *burake bombo* is the priest of the impure dead, the *bombo*. Other names for this functionary include *parengnge' matampu'* (= the chief of the West) and *burake matampu'* (= priest of the West). Puya, the kingdom of the dead, lies in the West. He conducts the ritual for the dead until attention turns to the gods whereupon he cedes precedence to the *to minaa*.

The name *burake bombo* is unknown in Kesu'. In Nonongan (which historically belongs to the federation of Kesu') and in Buntao' people use the term *to parengnge' matampu'*, Lord of the West. Elsewhere (precise locations are not specified) this priest is known as *to minaa to mombo*, the priest of souls (A. C. Kruyt 1923/24: 142). In the *puang*-regions (at any rate in Ma'kale and Sangalla') the wrapper of the dead is called *to ma'kayo*. *Kayo* is the name of the grey heron; in this context, it is of interest to note the title of a *burake*-priest to be discussed in the next section, i.e. the *burake tambolang*. The *tambolang* is a large, black and white, long-legged wading bird. Apparently, here the *to ma'kayo* is regarded as the counterpart of the *burake tambolang*.

In contrast to the immediate family members of the deceased and to those who have stepped on the sleeping mat of the dead person, and in contrast, too, to the deceased himself, the *to mebalun* is allowed to eat rice during a certain period of the death ritual (the period during which he officiates). A *kaunan*-woman prepares this rice; she is known as the *to massanduk bo'bo'*, 'the woman who ladles out cooked rice' (A. C. Kruyt 1923/24: 144). According to F. K. Sarungallo (Kesu') the *to mebalun* is also allowed to take as much meat from the slaughtered pigs and buffaloes as he wants. In addition he receives rice and money as compensation for his services (see also Kruyt 1923/24: 143).

For a description of the death priest's apparel, see the account of the ritual for the dead observed for Sia Sa'pang in Kesu' (Vol. II).

Although I was unable to attend the ceremony, informants told me that the *to mebalun* wore a special hat while carrying out his duties. The hat was made from the sheathes or spathe of the areca palm; a reference to the hat crops up in the death chant (*badong*):

“Ne’ Sara, he was summoned then;
He wears the dried areca leaf.”

(The Chant: 32, verse 148)

Finally, the family of the deceased and the local *to minaa* consult the *to mebalun* about the sequence and the number of rites to be observed and also the length of the period within which these are to be celebrated. The death priest is aided by an assistant, the *to pabalian* (the generic term for a helper or aide).

IX.5 The *to burake*: the *to burake tattiku'* and the *to burake tambolang*

All of the priests discussed thus far have been men. The most important religious functionaries among the Sa'dan-Toraja, however, are a woman, the *burake tattiku'* and an hermaphrodite, a man dressed as a woman, the *burake tambolang*. They fill the leading roles during the *la'pa' kasalle*-feast which J. Kruyt has described as the *bua'*-ritual (1921: 45-78 and 161-187). Unlike the *to minaa*, the *to indo' padang* and the *to mebalun*, the *burake* (and this holds for the *to tambolang* as well as for the *to tattiku'*) cannot boast descent from a celestial ancestor. Only Ne' Kendek of Salu (Kesu'), the informant of A. C. Kruyt and H. van der Veen in 1923/24 identifies an 'ancestor' of the *burake tattiku'*: Burake Manakka, the gifted *burake*, the cat who sought the mice for their *bua'*-feast (see A. C. Kruyt 1923/24: 289, as a story about the cat this was reported in the same year by Ne' Pande in Angin-angin, Kesu'; cf. above VII.6.2). Van der Veen, however, points out that this is not a general accepted explanation of the origin of the *burake*.

The *burake* only makes his appearance in myth after the descent of the ancestor to the earth (cf. VI.3, Myths concerning the consequences of incest). In addition they are mentioned in the litany recited during the *merok*-feast (Merok: 147ff.). The fact that so little is reported concerning the descent of the *burake* probably increases the significance of these priest(esse)s, or at any rate contributes to the air of secrecy which enshrouds them. The word *burake* means impotent, or hermaphroditic. Possibly, the Bare'e-Toraja word *wurake*

provides an alternate (though hardly more enlightening) explanation; *wurake* is a spirit of the air. However that may be, the Sa'dan have come to conceive of only the *burake tambolang* as impotent or hermaphroditic (usually he is a transvestite). According to Kennedy's informant W. Papajungan all *to tambolang* were hermaphrodites. Wilcox was told that the *burake tambolang* of Makula' (Tokesan) was an hermaphrodite. In Wilcox's opinion, however, this priest was a sexual invert. Yet, all this is contradicted by the experience of Dr. Van der Veen who stated that many *burake tambolang* were married, and often fathers of children before they received the calling to enter priesthood (1924: 396). He adds, however, that after assuming office as *burake* they can marry a man.⁵ The name *tambolang* possibly refers to the dualism of this priest. *Tambolang* is the name of a certain stork said to be black and white.⁶ According to the Toraja, the *burake tambolang* is half-man, half-woman ('above' a woman, 'below' a man). Little is known about the clothing worn by the priestess, the *burake tattiku'* (*tattiku'* is the name of a small bird; Latin name unknown). Among her attributes (as among those of the *to burake tambolang*) belongs the *garapung*, a small musical instrument with a handle;⁷ the instrument makes a clattering sound because two strings of beads click against the drumhead. This instrument, the clapper drum, is also known in other parts of Southeast-Asia.⁸

When, during the harvest-season, the *burake tambolang*, made 'her' rounds — he is considered to be female — then 'she' had to be received by the *sawah*-owner who slaughtered a pig for 'her'. As recently as two generations ago the *burake tambolang* still enjoyed much respect. Should 'she' appear on the battlefield, then fighting stopped. The esteem accorded to this 'priestess' can also be deduced from the ritual for the dead celebrated for a *burake*. When 'her' corpse was carried out of the house of mourning then part of the front wall, the north wall, of the house was broken away (cf. VIII.1.6).

According to Van der Veen, this treatment pertains only to the *burake tambolang* not to the *burake tattiku'* (1924: 397). Whether the token of honour (the bunch of rice-stalks is given to the *burake tambolang* as 'she' passes through the *sawahs*) also is bestowed on the *burake tattiku'*, is not known. Certainly, however, the *burake tambolang* is more highly regarded than the *burake tattiku'*. The latter is always a woman, apparently in most instances an older woman. Besides hermaphrodite, the word *burake* also means impotent, empty, in this case probably reference to someone who has reached an age

where she can no longer bear children. More often than not a *burake tattiku*' succeeds her mother. As a rule she belongs to the class of the *to makaka* (the free) and can be married to a *to minaa*.

The calling of a *burake tambolang* to priesthood is, emotionally, a more complex process than that of a *to minaa*. A single dream is sufficient inspiration for a *to minaa*, whereas the *burake tambolang*'s summons takes the form of a state of ecstasy which, according to Van der Veen, can last up to three or four months. Undoubtedly the *tambolang-to-be* goes through a period of tension in which auto-aggression is observable. In trance he/she presses a sword against the flesh without incurring a wound, etc. Afterwards a kind of rebirth follows: the *to tambolang* is 'created anew by the *deata*' (as a woman) to quote one of Van der Veen's early informants (1924: 395). Probably the calling comes at a somewhat advanced age; we noted that often he was already a married man and a father when he entered priesthood. The medical officer W. Meyer at Makassar has reported that the *burake tambolang* is not an hermaphrodite. This priestly function in days gone by when war was more a constant preoccupation presumably offered men of peaceable disposition a 'way out'. It is possible that the priest's calling has something to do with a feeling of being summoned to play the part of a guardian of the balance between upperworld and underworld on this earth. The office, it goes without saying, is not one which can be inherited.

A *puang* can never be a *to burake tambolang*, even though both figures belong to the foremost members of Sa'dan society.

The position of the *burake tattiku*' and of the *burake tambolang* has diminished in significance as a consequence of the spread of Christianity, education and the influence of modern times in general. Furthermore, the feast at which they officiate, the great *bua*'-feast, is often very costly. As early as 1923 Kruyt reported that, in those days, such feasts had already become extremely rare because expenses were virtually prohibitive.⁹ This is true of Kesu'. Yet, such celebrations are still held elsewhere, in Tikala among other places. Here the feasts entail less expenditure than they did in Kesu'. In Simbuang the *burake* is also summoned to participate in the rite which is observed when a house has been finished (*ma'burake*). In Pangala' the *burake tattiku*' also officiates in the course of the *merok*-feast; it is she who sprinkles the sacrificial buffaloes with hulled rice. The role of the *burake* will be further discussed in our account of the *bua*' (*la'pa*') *kasalle*-feast (Vol. II).

The *burake tambolang* is a man dressed like a woman; the *burake tattiku'* is a woman. What is remarkable is that during the *bua'*-feast the *burake tattiku'* appears wearing the clothing of the opposite sex. At a certain phase of the celebration, she binds her hair up like a man, takes a sword and shield in hand and dances together with another *to burake* around the *tangdo'*.¹⁰ The dance is something of a war dance or a dance of exorcism. During another phase of the ritual the *to burake tattiku'* and the *to ma'gandang* enact a parody of a marriage proposal. The *burake tattiku'* then plays the part of the bride.¹¹

The *burake* is the most important functionary during the *bua'*-feast, a celebration considered as a feast to nurture communal welfare, to promote the prosperity of man and beast, and is also a fertility feast. The *burake tattiku'* (and *to tambolang* as well) act as the promoters and protectors of the spiritual and secular well-being of the community.¹² At the same time the *burake* (in Kesu' at least) stand in their turn under the protection of the *deata* ('gods') of Kesu'. Both categories of *burake* are referred to as *burake deata*, the *burake* of the gods, or, the *burake* who are involved in the ritual of the gods. Mabuchi (1964) has pointed out that the prestige of the priestess derives in part from her power to curse.¹³ In this context the myth of Rura is instructive, in the course of which the *burake* pronounces a curse (cf. VI.3).

It is not certain whether or not the *burake* enters into a trance. Van der Veen's *Woordenboek* (12, v *aloe*k) gives two definitions for *mangaluk*: 1. the invocation of the *deata* by the *burake*; 2. a demon possesses someone. Such possession is not connected to the *burake*, however. She comes exclusively in contact with the gods and is not possessed by the souls of ancestors. (When attending at a *bua'*-feast on the slopes of the Sesean in 1970, I saw no signs of trance in the *burake tattiku'* during the *mangaluk*.)

The *to burake tambolang* and the *bissu* of the Buginese either both emerged from the same type of priest (comparable to the *berdache* among the Zuni, see Benedict 1934; chapter IV, the Pueblos of New Mexico: 41-52) or else the *to burake tambolang* owes its origin to Buginese influence. The region where this priestess of the '*berdache*'-type functions borders on Luwu', but the *bissu*-type associated with agriculture is more common in Segeri whereas it is absent in Luwu'. On the other hand, one also encounters the term *bissu* in Mamasa and Pitu Ulunna Salu on the western border of the Sa'dan region.

Here the *bissu* officiates at the *melangi'*-feast, a feast comparable to the *la'pa' kasalle* of the Sa'dan. The priestess (a woman, no *berdache*) then climbs into a banyan tree, a gesture symbolizing contact with the upperworld (Merok: 147).¹⁴

Among certain Dayak tribes (Iban, Olo Ngaju) both sorts of priests were known, a woman and a man dressed as a woman, just as among the Bare'e-Toraja.

Below follows some further information about the last *burake tambolang* in Tana Toraja (data acquired in 1975). As a result of the tireless efforts of informant Johanis Lobo' I finally met the *to burake tambolang* in a village in Sangalla'. The priest's name is Tumba' Upa' (*tumba'* = to spring up, also a second name for the *anak dara* during the great *bua'*-feast; *upa'* = prosperity, fortune). In contrast to the *to burake tattiku'* who still officiated during the great *bua'*-feast celebrated in Riu, the *burake tambolang* had not performed any of the duties of his office in a long while. What is worse, he (or 'she') had lost esteem and was pestered by local youths. That is why he had taken refuge in a house in this village somewhere in the *puang*-regions; a family had taken him in with loving hearts because after the *burake tambolang* had in the past said a blessing over this couple, they indeed produced children after long years of barrenness.

The *burake tambolang* was approximately seventy years old (his own estimate of his age was much higher). He had curly grey hair, fine, rather feminine features, and, for all his years, surprisingly sturdy limbs. The *burake* had a bag in which he carried such as collection of junk that he looked like a tramp. The priest still had the *garapung* with him; he made continual music on it. Tumba' Upa' conveyed the impression that he was not completely sane; this provoked the taunts of the young. Moreover, the memory of the priest had sorely suffered. This interfered with the collection of exhaustive information. The following data emerged from our meeting:

He was born in 1850 and was thus 125 years old (a boast which practically everyone present accepted as true). His birth was miraculous. His mother had been pregnant a full year when in 1850 in the village of Makula' in Sangalla' she brought a son into the world. When after several days, however, she wanted to light a fire in the hearth early in the morning, she saw a small child lying there. She drew this child out of the hearth; it turned out to be a girl. Then she called her husband. The two of them examined the baby carefully and reached the conclusion that it was their newborn son who had been turned

into a girl. The parents raised the girl until she was practically full-grown. Thereafter Tumba' Upa' received the inspiration which converted her into a *to burake tambolang* (it proved impossible to find out what form the inspiration took).

The *burake* then told us that during the great *bua'*-feast he climbed upon a wooden platform (apparently the *gorang*) where he sang the praise of those in attendance. In Riu this *ma'singgi'* is a task which falls to the *to minaa*. The praise extends to the prominent members of the society, the *to parengnge'* and the *to matua ulu*.

During the *bua'*-feast, the *to burake's* apparel consisted of a yellow sarong (*dodo kuni*) or a sarong studded with coins (*dodo uang*). When asked if he climbed the *barana'*-tree to stay there for a while as is the custom in Kesu', the *burake* answered, No.

After the rice harvest, the *to burake* went from village to village with his *garapung*, praying for a blessing over the rice that had been stored, praying that it would multiply (see the second song sung by the *to burake tambolang*), all the while rattling with his *garapung*. Tumba' Upa' demonstrated how he sang and played. The manner of singing closely resembled that of the *to burake tattiku'* who officiated at the great *bua'*-feast in Riu. Tumba' Upa' also confirmed that he is able to bless childless married couples so that they become fertile.

Here follows the first song of the *burake tambolang* Tumba' Upa' from Sangalla', transcribed by Johanis Lobo' (1975); Dutch translation by Dr. Van der Veen:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Inde diong sanggandangku | Here then is my fellow priestess, |
| 2. padangku ma'giring-giring. | my companion in office who rings
the bell. |
| 3. To laen-laen dadinna, | Someone of a remarkable birth, |
| 4. to senga' panggaranna. | of an extraordinary creation. |
| 5. Mara'na tonna ditampa, | Alas, when she was brought into
being, |
| 6. tonna diammun elo', | when her (mother) had put into
her mouth what she desired. |
| 7. Apa nakande indo'mu tom-
niu | What did your mother eat when
for your sake she acquired an
appetite, |
| 8. dipangngidenan, to dikom-
bong | You who were formed in her
belly, |

- | | |
|---|---|
| 9. lau ri tambuk to ditampa i
bannean | who were brought into being in
her womb? |
| 10. Allo ia umpelobo'i, bulan
undaranai. | The sun, he causes her to prosper,
the moon takes care of her. |

Second song of the *burake tambolang* Tumba' Upa' from Sangalla', transcribed and translated as above.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Pare tambun dao lingai', | The rice has been set in the
ground above in heaven |
| 2. pare mandoti londungna. | the dark brown, long-haired glu-
tinous rice (?) |
| 3. Pare umbena' rupana, | The rice . . . (?) is her form. |
| 4. langngan dirembu pemala' | Upwards incense is burned above
the offering, |
| 5. ditangkean bulu manuk | in the hand chicken feathers are
held over it, |
| 6. ladisuru' diong pangrante
mali'na ¹⁵ | to offer it on the drying floor of
the rice |
| 7. sola rampean ponnona, | filled even to all its edges, |
| 8. dipasala sumanga' na, | her life spirit is fended off, |
| 9. dipasitammu oranna, | she is connected with the stalk
that contains the ear which is to
be cut off. |
| 10. dibangunan memba' ka'len
di, | She is raised up, multiplying all
the time |
| 11. to diong rara manuk. | as a result of the blood of the
cock. |

Finally, we must turn to the geographic distribution of *burake tambolang* and *burake tattiku*'. They never appear in combination in any one region. They are local variants confined to distinct geographical areas as indicated in table IX.1.

It is difficult to explain this mutual exclusion. As far as the *puang*-realms are concerned, Mengkendek, Ma'kale and Sangalla', one might ascribe the position of the *burake tambolang* to Buginese influence. Yet, in other places where the *burake tambolang* officiates, in Madandan for example, the Buginese influence is of less intensity than in *puang*-regions. On the other hand, the occurrence of a *burake*

tattiku' in Nonongan could be related to the importance of the female ancestor in this area (the previously mentioned Manaek). Again, this is an *ad hoc* explanation which is not valid for the other districts where a *tattiku'* officiates.

Table IX.1: *Geographic distribution of burake tambolang and burake tattiku'*

<i>Burake tambolang</i> in the district of:	<i>Burake tattiku'</i> in the district of:
Mengkendek	Balepe'
Sangalla'	Riu
Ma'kale	Pangala'
Buntao'	Tikala
Madandan	Dende'
Tikunna Malenong (Kesu')	Piongan
La'bo' (Kesu')	Banga
	Taleon
	Malimbong
	Nonongan (Kesu')

IX.6 The to ma'dampi

The *to ma'dampi* is a medicine man, or woman, who performs in the *maro*-ritual and at *ma'bugi'* (see Vol. II). The mythical medicine woman is Indo' Belo Tumbang, also known as Indo' Bunga Sampa' (cf. the *Passomba Tedong*, Merok: 142ff.). She is the female protective spirit who watches over the medicine as it is used in the *maro*-ritual.

In most instances the office of the *to ma'dampi* is hereditary. Below there follows a brief biography of Ne' Banne, a man of Kanuruan in Nonongan. He is not only a *to ma'dampi* but a *to minaa* and a *to indo'* as well. Through the combination of his offices he is an extremely busy person. Here I shall restrict the account to his functions as a *to ma'dampi*.

Ne' Banne must act on behalf of three categories of gods and spirits:

- a. the first (and most important) is Datu Maruru', the spirit who induces smallpox. Datu Maruru' is not simply an evil spirit; he falls within the sphere of the *rampe matallo*, the rituals of the East. His name means, literally, the Righteous Lord. He has

- provided Ne' Banne with specific instructions about how to cure smallpox;
- b. the second group is that of the *deata*; these gods were the ones whom he first encountered;
 - c. the third group of spirits assisting him, are the *to diponene'*, the ancestors.

Ne' Banne does not consult Datu Maruru' every time a new case arises, for curing smallpox has become a routine affair. If he bungles his work, Datu Maruru' becomes angry. Even a *to ma'dampi* can err; he must abide by the instructions once given to him. It was in 1922 that he 'met' Datu Maruru' for the first time (in a dream). Ne' Banne has brought many persons back to health. He must stick to the guidelines provided by Datu Maruru' or this spirit will punish him — by throwing a stone at him, for example, or by hiding Ne' Banne's betel pouch. Other *to ma'dampi* also have such a protective spirit and all these spirits have a name; one medicine man was reported to have a protector of the name Kurre Sumanga' ('Thank You', or more exactly, 'come, *sumanga'*).

Ne' Banne does not officiate at *maro* and *ma'bugi'*-rituals; he confines himself to the treatment of individual cases of illness in his village. He cures smallpox by rubbing the patient's sores with water from a *kandian lau* (a water jar fashioned from a calabash). In the water he has placed leaves from three plants: the *passakke*, *darinding* and *tananti*.¹⁶ He uses three water jars, because a different *kandian lau* is required for each kind of spirit assisting him.

When a patient summons Ne' Banne he does so by sending a mediator with *sirih-pinang* (betel and areca nuts). Ne' Banne cuts the nut in half and sees whether he detects auspicious signs.¹⁷ Then he addresses a prayer to his three categories of helpers. Then he proceeds to his therapeutic work, becoming, as he himself put it, 'crazy'. From his words must be inferred that he enters into a trance. Should the patient recover, then Ne' Banne receives payment: for Datu Maruru', 7 'dimes' (Indonesian: *ketip*) and 36 small bundles of rice (1 bundle = one *sangkutu'*); for the *deata*, 5 'dimes' and 36 *sangkutu'*; for the *to diponene'*, 6 'dimes' and also 36 *sangkutu'*. He may not receive any less, neither is he allowed to ask for more; this would enrage his spirits. They fixed his payment when they proposed to him that he become their 'messenger'.

Ne' Banne is always busy as a result of his triple function and

sometimes his offices conflict with each other. Once while he was performing as a *to indo'*, for the rice cycle had already begun, Ne' Muda, a prominent personage in his village, Kanuruan, called upon him to come to treat his three sick children. Since rice and illness belong to different spheres which are not compatible with each other (disease must be kept far from the rice),¹⁸ Ne' Banne was at a loss to do. His perturbation was all the greater because one of Ne' Muda's children had already died before the medicine man was sent for. Fortunately, improvement took place rapidly, releasing Ne' Banne from a difficult choice.

Ne' Banne must submit to certain taboos; he may not wear black clothing; during particular phases of the moon (*bulan sampe* and *bulan sombo*, waning and waxing moon, respectively) he may eat no pork. In the room of a patient there may be no black objects (black is the colour of the mourning).

Ne' Banne has not grown rich from his three functions. He told how he became a medicine man: he was a rich man's righthand-man and helped him pay out wages to those who worked on his *sawahs*. Once after helping to hand out pay, Ne' Banne felt ill and lay down on a *sawah* dike. Someone saw him there, a man called Ne' Ranggina and in order to comfort him, he tread with his foot on Ne' Banne's stomach. Ne' Ranggina thought that by so doing he had brought the patient relief, but meanwhile Ne' Banne had fainted. Ne' Ranggina was taken aback and with four other men brought Ne' Banne to the hospital. Ne' Banne stayed there for some time but was then sent home. He did not return to his own house, but rather to the home of the above-mentioned Ne' Muda. There he fell asleep but then a number of tiny spirits came to tease him. At first he mistook them for small children. They were of a yellow colour, with yellow hair and yellow teeth (this is a common description of the appearance of the *deata*). He also felt something cold in his heel; these were the *linggis*¹⁹ of the *deata* who were stabbing him there. No blood flowed, however. Next — also in his sleep, but with eyes wide open — Paragusi came (see V.4.4). This visitor placed a stomach (complete with intestines) next to Ne' Banne and said, "This is the stomach of the dog that belongs to X". But Ne' Banne answered: "It might well be *my* stomach and intestines!" He did not accept Paragusi as a protecting spirit or tutor because he found him to be an evil spirit (intestines are the food of the *batitong*, werewolves). The whole time that Paragusi was in his vicinity, Ne' Banne was afraid: the spirit was

dreadfully large, and had a long beard. The following day Ne' Banne learned that the dog of X was indeed dead.

Then Datu Maruru' came and at the same time the *to diponene*' appeared as well as the *deata* who had teased him. They provided him with the means for curing the sick: into the water jar described above, the *kandean lau*, they poured water and then added *passakke*, *daun buangin*, *kuni* (curcuma), *manik riri* (yellow beads) and *pamuntu* (scrapings from a piece of an iron pan). They also told him that the medicine could only be used for one specific illness (i.e. smallpox, perhaps also chicken pox). The healing substance had to be used, however, in the name of Datu Maruru'. In the past days, Datu Maruru' explained, smallpox came at set times, but at present (the time when Ne' Banne was presented with the medicine) everyone is struck who first drinks water from the well in which 'I' have sown the disease. Since their first encounter, Ne' Banne has seen Datu Maruru' now and again (who, he said, is yellow like the gods and wears a dress 'like you' — the last remark concerning me). He also catches glimpses of the *to diponene*' (who look like Toraja) and the yellow-tinted *deata*, but he no longer sees them as frequently as he once did.

IX.7 The burake and the priests of neighbouring peoples;

Summary

The *burake tambolang* displays marked similarity to the *bissu* of the Buginese and the *sanro* of the Makassarese. An antiquated word for *burake*, indeed, is *bingsu*; the term is still used at the *merok*-feast (Merok: 146f., verse 755). The *bissu* of the Buginese is also a homophile (?), a transvestite or a 'hermaphrodite' with a religious function: in Luwu' and at princely courts elsewhere in South-Celebes, these priest(ess)es used to be the guardians of regalia. In Segeri, near Pare-Pare, the *bissu* took the lead in the cycle of rice cultivation by performing the ritual ploughing. The *bissu* are also masters of medicine. This function is not allotted to the *burake tambolang*, nor is officiating during the rice cycle.

It is beyond doubt that some connection exists between the Buginese (Luwu'nese) *bissu* and the Sa'danese *to burake tambolang*. Whereas the latter officiates at a feast aimed to promote the well-being of a larger group, the *bissu* in Luwu' is a court dignitary, the keeper of the regalia on which the overall prosperity of the kingdom depends. In Segeri (also Buginese territory) the *bissu* is the foremost functionary in the rice ritual.

The *to burake tambolang* is associated with the polarity as well as the balance between upper- and underworld, day and night, man and woman. In the person of the *to burake tattiku'* the scale would appear to rise a bit upwards towards the realm of the upperworld. The titles bestowed on these two categories of priests are borrowed from birds: the large *tambolang* (stork), the small *tattiku'*-bird.

The *burake bombo* is the priest of the impure dead; he performs in mortuary rituals, those of the lefthandside, those of the southwest.

The *to minaa* guides men along the path of life. He officiates at rites of transition, is the keeper of the traditions of the ramage or *adat*-community and performs at the *merok*-feast celebrated by the host and his kinship group. He is the priest who functions in the world of man.

Finally, there is the *to ma'dampi*. He is one of the two shamans of Sa'dan-Toraja culture. The other is the *to burake*, both the *tambolang* and the *tattiku'*. The *to ma'dampi* is a typical example of the type of shaman medicine man found in so many parts of the world (only in the district of Balepe' does the *to burake tattiku'* also minister to the sick). Both the *to burake* and the *to ma'dampi* undergo at the outset of their official lives the so-called 'shaman-disease' which manifests itself in psychic tension, trance phenomena, dreams, and disturbances of memory, etc. (cf. Eliade 1964, chapters II-IV).

All those priests we shall meet again in Vol. II of this book which is devoted to the description of the ritual and ceremonial life of the Sa'dan-Toraja. They are the masters of ceremony who immediate between the people and their gods and thus see to it that calamities be averted and man and beast be blessed with peace.