

**KANKANAY
CEREMONIES.
PP. 343-384**

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Kankanay Ceremonies. pp. 343-384 by C. R. Moss

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INTRODUCTION

TERRITORY OF THE KANKANAY

Since the Kankanay have been studied very little, the exact extent of their culture area is not at present certain.

The Igorot of northern Benguet, and almost all of the people living in Amburayan and southern Lepanto, speak the same dialect, have similar customs, and call themselves by the same name, "Kakanay" or "Kankanay." The people of this group have no important cultural features by which to distinguish them from the Nabaloi, and linguistics is the only basis on which they may be classed as a separate unity.

The inhabitants of northern Lepanto call themselves "Katangnang," speak a variation of the dialect spoken in the southern part of the sub-province, and have some customs, such as communal sleeping houses for unmarried boys and girls, which are more similar to certain customs of the Bontoc than to any found among the southern Igorot.

It might also be mentioned that the towns of northern Lepanto are comparatively large and compact like those of Bontoc, while the Kankanay of southern Lepanto as well as those of Benguet and Amburayan live in scattered settlements. Another difference is the amount of authority exercised by the *baknang* or wealthy class. In

northern Lepanto the *baknang* are comparatively unimportant, while among the southern Kankanay they are as powerful as among the Nabaloi.

However, the best authorities regard practically all the Lepanto Igorot as Kankanay. This seems to be advisable at present, but it is not improbable that a more thorough study of the Katangnang in the northern part of the sub-province will result in their being classed as a separate group.

Regarding the Igorot of northern Lepanto as Kankanay, the territorial limits of the tribe are approximately as follows:

On the north, the Lepanto-Bontoc sub-provincial boundary; on the east, the western boundary line of Ifugao; on the south, a line passing near the southern limits of Alilem and Bacun, then through the southern part of Kapangan between the barrios of Kapangan and Datakan, then through the township of Atok a little north of the central barrio, and then through the southern barrios of Buguias; and on the west, a line passing through the foothills of Amburayan and Lepanto.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE AND TRAITS

In personal appearance the majority of the Kankanay are very similar to the Nabaloi except for the fact that they have hardly benefited as much through contact with the outside world. Except in the case of those who live near the sub-province of Bontoc, it is rather difficult to distinguish a Kankanay man from a Nabaloi.

The women of the two tribes are easily distinguished by a difference in dress, since the Kankanay women wear a waist instead of a jacket, and a plain skirt instead of the kind with the folded effect worn by the Nabaloi.

In personal traits the Benguet Kankanay are similar to the Nabaloi, but farther north the people are more self-assertive and independent. The difference in this respect between the *cargadores* of the various culture areas is noticeable. In Benguet they will generally carry without protest whatever size load they are given, but in Bontoc the *cargador* decides exactly how much he will carry. While waiting for his load, the Benguet man will probably remain out in the road, the Lepanto man in the yard, the Ifugao on the porch; but the Bontoc man comes into the house and acts as if he were in all respects the equal of the one for whom he carries.

INDUSTRIAL LIFE

In agriculture and the industrial arts the Kankanay and the Nabaloi have made about equal progress, and practically everything that might be said of the one applies equally to the other. The standard of living is about the same, except that as a rule the Nabaloi have more rice. The houses and the method of their construction are similar, but there is a larger proportion of good houses among the Nabaloi. The household furnishings of the two peoples consist of the same or of similar articles.

CUSTOM LAW

The custom law of the southern Kankanay differs from that of the Nabaloi only in unimportant details.¹

The order of inheritance is the same, and the general principle that property must go to the next generation and that parents, brothers, and uncles can hold it in trust only, applies to the southern Kankanay as well as to the Nabaloi. Another principle of common application by the two tribes is that all relatives of the same degree, whether male or female, inherit equally.

The southern Kankanay and the Nabaloi also have similar customs in regard to marriage, and children are betrothed by their parents in the same way. Among the northern Kankanay the young people choose their own spouses as they do in Bontoc.

Divorces among the Kankanay are rather frequent, though they claim that they are never divorced after children have been born. I know of two cases of divorce, however, between Kankanay wives and their Nabaloi husbands after there were children.

In general, the customs of the southern Kankanay and the Nabaloi regarding the discovery and punishment of crime are the same; but a larger proportion of cases are settled by the Kankanay according to their old custom law, since the Nabaloi have lately become more prone to take their troubles to the white officials.

All the ordeals known to the Nabaloi for discovering criminals or testing the veracity of witnesses are used by the Benguet Kankanay. In addition to these they have the test called *manman*, decided by looking at the gall of two chickens furnished by the respective contestants. The Kankanay as well as the Nabaloi contestant always appeals to the sun.

¹ See my *Nabaloi Law and Ritual*, present volume, pp. 236-271, 1920.

Taken as a whole the custom law of the southern Kankanay and the Nabaloi is the same; and judging from the information at present available we may conclude that all the Igorot groups administer justice according to the same basic principles.

COMPARATIVE CULTURE

There is little difference in the amount of general knowledge possessed by the Kankanay and the Nabaloi, but the latter are probably a little more advanced in this respect. Whatever may be said of their native culture, the Nabaloi are certainly showing a greater readiness to adopt civilization than any other Igorot people.

Comparing the general Kankanay culture to that of the neighboring groups, I should say that it is lower than the culture of the Nabaloi and higher than that of the Bontoc. In some respects it is superior to the culture of the Ifugao or Kalinga, while in other respects it is inferior.

CEREMONIAL SYSTEM

GENERAL COMPARISON WITH THE NABALOI

The Kankanay ceremonial system is similar to that of the Nabaloi.² The rituals are the same in general purpose; they are based on a similar belief in spirits; the important elements of both systems are sacrifice and prayer; and the functions of the priests are the same. The ceremonies of each group must be given in their appropriate places, and a particular sacrifice must be offered in connection with each, though there is probably more latitude of choice among the Kankanay than among the Nabaloi.

There are Kankanay ceremonies corresponding in purpose to nearly all the Nabaloi ceremonies, but as a rule the spoken ritual is quite different. Some of the corresponding ceremonies are called by the same name, and some by different names. In a few cases ceremonies called by the same name are celebrated for entirely different purposes by the two groups.

There is not the same uniformity in the ceremonies celebrated in the various towns of the Kankanay as there is in those of the Nabaloi. As a rule the same rituals are held in the towns of northwestern Benguet, in Ampasungan of Lepanto, and in Bacun of Amburayan.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 280-335.

Buguias and Mancayan have the majority of these ceremonies, but not all. On the other hand, a few are celebrated in the latter towns which are unknown in the former.

From the data available, it seems that there is even more difference between the ceremonies of the northern and southern Kankanay than there is between those of the latter and the Nabaloi. It is quite certain, however, that all the Lepanto ceremonies have not been recorded, and when this has been done the rituals of the two sections may show a closer resemblance than at present appears to be the case.

SPIRITS AND DEITIES

The southern Kankanay have no term by which a supreme ruler of the universe is designated, and it is doubtful if any Kankanay, with the exception of a few who live near the coast, have any conception of such a personage. The translation of "Lumawig" as God in connection with the description of some of the ceremonies presented in Robertson's publication on the Igorot,³ may be explained by the tendency of the Ilokano township secretaries who did the recording, to interpret Igorot rituals in terms of the Christian religion.

It seems that all the Igorot tribes that have so far been studied recognize Lumawig as one of their great culture heroes. The Benguet Kankanay say that he once lived on earth and was one of them, and that when he died his soul did not go to the mountains with the souls of the other Igorot, but ascended to the sky, where it still remains with the souls of Kabigat, Amdoyaan, and the other great heroes of the past. All the culture heroes are objects of worship.

The *kakading* are the souls of the dead. They go to the mountains but sometimes return to their villages and cause sickness in order that sacrifice will be necessary. The *tanong* and *amud* are souls of ancestors.

The Kankanay as well as the Nabaloi believe in the existence of spirits other than the souls of the dead, which cause sickness or bad luck. Their concept of the special functions of each class of spirits, however, is not in all cases the same as that of the Nabaloi. The belief in the *amdag* which catch the souls of the living with a net, and in the *pasang* which prevent the birth of children, is common to both tribes. On the other hand, the *ompasit* and the *timungau*, malevolent spirits of the Nabaloi, seem to be regarded rather as culture heroes

³ Phil. Jour. of Sci., IX, Section D, 465-527, 1914.

by the Kankanay. In addition to the *amdag* and the *pasang*, the southern Kankanay recognize the following:

The *dagas*, spirits which live with the people in their dwelling houses.

The *bilig*, spirits which live in the pasture or timber lands near the settlements.

The *pinading*, spirits which live in the high mountains, and correspond in some respects to the *kakaising* of the Nabaloi.

The Kankanay belief in *Messeken*, *Akodan*, and the other inhabitants of the underworld is the same as that of the Nabaloi. The belief regarding the underworld seems to be held in common by all the Igorot tribes and to extend to the Tinguian of Abra.

The Kankanay in a very few ceremonies pray to the sun and moon, but it is not probable that they pray to groups of stars as do the Nabaloi. The elements are frequently personified in the sacred stories, but it is not probable that prayer is offered to them.

PURPOSE

The Kankanay make ceremonies for the same general purpose as the Nabaloi. The majority of them are celebrated primarily against sickness, or to avert calamities, such as crop failure. Incidentally, all public ceremonies secure the good will of deities and spirits, and cause the giver to live long, be lucky, and become rich. The matter of personal pride and desire of power is also an important factor, and it is said that the most expensive *cañao* celebrated by some of the Lepanto Kankanay is given for no other purpose. I think this is doubtful, however, and believe it probable that all *cañaos* possess some religious significance, even when the givers have a material motive.

Another reason for ceremonies given by a member of the Kankanay *baknang* might be interesting. He stated that if he did not give the *mandit* and other public *cañaos* at frequent intervals, all his livestock would be stolen, but that as long as the people knew that they would consume the larger number of his animals, they were willing that he should have the trouble and responsibility of raising them.

PRIESTHOOD

As with the Nabaloi, the *mambunong* is an institution; though the Kankanay have more occasions on which they address the spirits and deities without his intervention than the Nabaloi. Except in