

THE YALI: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

The Yali and Their Environment

The term "Yali" has come to be used to designate the people who populate the valleys of the northern watershed of the central Jayawijaya mountain range to the north of the "Grand valley" of the Balim river in Irian Jaya, Indonesia. It also applies to those who inhabit four valleys of the southern watershed of the same range, whose rivers, the Kwik, Heluk, Seng and Solo, feed the Balim river, near where it leaves the mountains and begins its devious course across Irian Jaya's southern lowlands. Most published material on the Yali to date has focused on those who occupy a specific area of the northern watershed (comprising the Yahuli and Ubahak river systems), known as Yalimo (place of the Yali), located roughly between 139°15' and 139°30' east longitude and 4° and 4°20' south latitude.¹ Nevertheless, the more extensive Yali grouping was earlier identified as a linguistic unit, one of the three sub-families of the greater Dani family, designated by the term "north Ngalik" being a specification and application of the name given by many lower Grand Valley Dani speakers for those living "outside the rim" or "outside the ranges" that enclose this wide, isolated, highland valley.³

The term "Yali" itself is not a self-appellation, but is the application of one of two terms which those now so designated use of people in opposite directions of the east-west trade route; Yali means those to the east and is contrasted with Hupla, meaning those to the west. However, three distinct, major dialectal differences of the Yali language have been identified: 1) the Pass Valley (Abenaho) dialect spoken (by +/- 5000 people) in the northern extremity of the Yali area around Pass Valley, Landikma and Apahapsili; the 2) Angguruk dialect spoken (by +/- 15000 people) in the area known as Yalimo; and the 3) Ninia dialect of (the +/- 9500) Yali of the southern watershed.⁴

The focus of this paper, with reference to the use of Scripture in an oral culture, is specifically this latter group, who inhabit the Kwik, Heluk, Seng and Solo Valleys of the southern watershed. The reasons for this are that my own experience and research have been limited to this area. Three different missions have worked and consequently, churches of differing ethos have been established, in the three dialectal areas.⁵ However, in terms of Yali culture, most of what has been described by Koch and Zöllner⁶ for Yalimo is true for the Southern Yali also, although there is one significant difference in that in the area of study, an additional, western, religious tradition has met and existed alongside the major eastern, religious tradition common to all the Yali.⁷

The four valleys of the southern watershed, which are the domain of the Yali focused on in this study, are located by the geographical co-ordinates of 139° 10' to 139° 20' east longitude, and between 4° 20' and 4° 34' south latitude. The area is extremely rugged. The northern boundary which separates this southern branch of the Yali from its Yalimo neighbour, is part of the central range of Jayawijaya mountains which rise to over 4000m

above sea level. Spurs from this central range descend in a space of a mere 40 kilometers to the lowlands, which form the southern extremity of Yali territory. The severity of the steep forested slopes and ridges is accentuated by numerous limestone cliffs and outcrops, which in places, constrict each of the four rivers into impassable gorges. In the past, travel from one valley to another, and from one side of a valley to the other, was quite limited, but this was perhaps more because of the restrictions imposed by hostilities and the rigour of scraping an existence in such an environment, than because of the difficulties of travel in rugged terrain.

The eastern boundary of the Southern Yali area is a high mountain spur separating the Solo valley from the Indol valley which is inhabited by the eastern neighbours — traditionally referred to as Yali but now known as Kimyal. The western border is the west side of the Kwik valley where there is considerable intermarriage with their western neighbours — members of an offshoot of Lower Grand Valley Dani. In the border villages of east and west, there is noticeable bilingualism or diglossalism. This is not surprising in the west, since Hupla and Yali are both closely related members of the Greater Dani family.⁸ However, Kimyal in the east belongs to the Mek languages.

Yali Economy and Subsistence

Because few level places exist, and because of the advantage of higher positions overlooking the approaches to a settlement in the event of hostilities, Yali villages are located on ridges between 700m and 2200m altitude. Villages vary in size from eighteen or fewer huts housing a population of perhaps 70 people, to much larger villages comprising several dozen huts accommodating 250 to 300 people. The huts are round structures with vertical split board walls, and conical roofs thatched with bark and usually topped with pandanus leaves. Central to the structure of the house are four *e fisingge* "house poles", set vertically in the ground in the pattern of a square, which serve to help support a sleeping loft and the roof timbers. The ground floor is raised on beams several inches from the ground and covered with *bisi* pandanus bark. The sleeping loft is usually constructed from *findayo* bamboo reeds laid on and bound to the ceiling joists, which are in turn fastened with vine near the top extremity of the wall boards. Fireplaces are formed with clay in the square space demarcated by the house poles — one on the ground floor for cooking, light and heat, and one in the sleeping loft for heat. Access into a hut is through a small door, which can be closed by slotting loose boards into place.⁹

Most villages consist of several clusters of huts, each cluster or ward comprising a large men's hut (*yua*) and its associated women's or family huts (*homja*). In addition to the main or 'base' village, there are hamlets and homesteads which Koch defines:

A hamlet is a group of houses which are temporarily occupied during agricultural seasons by people who have their permanent residence in the 'base' village. A homestead, on the other hand, is the home of one man and his family who, for one reason or another, moved away from the village and established a permanent residence in one of his gardens.¹⁰

Traditionally, the *youa* was inaccessible to women, girls and uninitiated boys, but now is used in the evenings for informal Christian meetings for the associated families. The Yali are subsistence farmers involved in a continuous round of cultivation and other activities directed towards survival in a demanding and rigorous environment. A good rain- and wind-tight hut is essential for comfort at all altitudes, but especially in the higher villages, and this responsibility belongs to the male division of labour. House building is usually completed in a day, but prior to the introduction of the steel axe and bush knife, the preparation and collection of materials to build an average *homia* might take weeks — even months — if new wall boards had to be prepared.¹¹

Other male activities include making of implements such as the digging stick (*kisim*) for wives and daughters, adze or axe hafts (*yaha ombo*), bows (*sehen*),¹² and arrows,¹³ or other useful items such as water vessels (*ikwag*) made from gourds (*hobut*) or bamboo (*bohweap*), plaited pig tethers (*kumbi*), and sewn, pandanus leaf raincapes (*ilit*). Some of these activities can be carried out by firelight in the evenings, but the gathering of materials necessarily occupies the twelve hours of daylight.¹⁴

However, for Yali men, most daylight hours are occupied in gardening work and the husbandry of pigs. This entails the clearing of virgin or secondary forest by tree felling, and the cutting of undergrowth, grasses, shrubs etc; moving of heavy logs and poles to form crude fences and to demarcate sections of land for different owners and users; gathering branches, twigs and roots into piles for burning; and digging the soil with large pointed poles (*keam*) in preparation for planting. Fences are necessary to keep out both domesticated and wild pigs from those garden areas in process of cultivation or still being harvested. The men also build fences around pig huts (*wam obam*) and those huts which are used to accommodate pigs in the village. Domesticated pigs usually return to these pens each evening, where they are fed sweet potatoes and other vegetables as available, and then are shut into their huts for the night. In the morning they are let out to root (*ambiang wauk*) in the forest or gardens now left fallow. The men control the breeding of pigs by selecting the breeding boars and castrating (*ouhali wauk*) other young or runty males. The significance of pigs for the Yali cannot be overstated. It is not so much that the pigs provide nutrition or sustenance, but that they serve to constitute or consolidate social relationships, or are used for cultic-ritual functions.¹⁵

Labour responsibilities for women, apart from the bearing and rearing of children until they are introduced formally into the society of Yali males by initiation into the men's huts (*youa kwelap-enepuk* and *wit bal-enepuk*), mainly pertain to gardening and cooking. Often at first light, women leave for the gardens, which may be anything from twenty minutes' to an hour's walk away. Several net bags (*sum*) are suspended from their heads to hang down their backs. In one of these might be a raincape (*ilit*), a cooked sweet potato or two, and a length of bamboo tubing (*fili*). During the course of the day, lizards, frogs, grasshoppers and other edible insects will be collected in the bamboo tube, in which they will later be roasted. In her hand each woman carries her sharpened digging or weeding stick, and on her shoulders, or in a net bag lined with leaves, each mother will carry her unweaned child.

To the women falls the responsibility of planting newly prepared gardens, weeding and cultivation of the various crops, and the bulk of the harvesting. At dusk each day, the women trudge back to the village, up the steep slopes, where they have been working all day, whether in blazing sun or in rain. Sometimes a woman will add a pile of sticks or a bundle of cut firewood to the already heavy load of harvested vegetables plus the infant — sitting on her shoulders, or cradled in her arms in order to suckle as she walks along. Back in the village, the women set about preparing the evening meal, by cooking vegetables in the ashes of the fire, or by steam cooking with heated stones in a bark cylinder (*kou*) lined with moist leaves, or in a bundle of large *hulubi* leaves. In addition to these major responsibilities, the women snatch odd moments through the day or in the evenings, to roll string (*hekel soalduk*) on their thighs, from previously selected and prepared bark and plant fibers. The string is then used to weave net bags (*sum yihiruk*) or to make string skirts.

The staple crop of the Yali is the sweet potato (*siburu*) supplemented with yams (*beim*), taro (*hom*) and other vegetables. Animal protein intake is small and irregular, consisting of the small animals and insects caught and eaten by women, occasional pork (*wam ino*), marsupial (*bak ino*), or bird meat (*suwe ino*), or perhaps the eggs of some bird — especially those of the large megapode (*belak*). The diet is often inadequate as evidenced by cases of kwashiorkor and marasmus.¹⁶ This is probably partly due to deficiencies in the cultivated vegetables caused by low fertility of soil and aggravated by the heavy rains which leach the intensely cultivated slopes, which have gradients of 45-60°. General inadequacies of the diet are accentuated by periodic crop reductions and crop failures or losses caused by heavy rains, landslides and crop disease,¹⁷ or when the whole community has been distracted from making new gardens by revived hostilities or other events such as an unusually good yield of the mountain pandanus nuts (*werema*).

An Integrated Cosmos: Religion and Social Organization

Much of what has been written in general terms concerning Melanesian epistemology and worldview is applicable to the Yali and is worth repeating here in synopsis, by way of introduction to specific Yali religious belief and practice. Melanesians have an essentially holistic understanding of life, in which both empirical and non-empirical aspects are always closely associated and are seen to function in an integrated relationship. Thus the Melanesians' worldview is of an integrated cosmos including living and dead people, spirits, animals, plants, mountains, streams etc.¹⁸ The focus of Melanesian religion is the "continuation, protection, maintenance and celebration of Life, Life with a capital 'L'".¹⁹ The Melanesian is not concerned with just biological existence, but with cosmic life and renewal, where there is spiritual and physical well-being experienced in all aspects of the integrated cosmos. This is achieved through the ritual maintenance of right relationships with man and spirit, and with living and dead, and through the accumulation and balanced distribution of indigenous wealth. These are "technical means to a spiritual end" — a life of peace and harmony, and of general well-being of the group.²⁰ They are the Melanesian "Search for Salvation" where "salvation" is the realization of a cosmos in which all things and all beings are in perfect equilibrium. This religious worldview is generally based on myths which interpret or explain present

conditions in terms of historical-mythical events which disrupted the pristine past. These give rise to a hope of reestablishment of those lost conditions, or the expectation of an improved future situation which is, in effect, a recovery of that primeval age. What John G. Strelan writes in *Search for Salvation* about Melanesian cargo cults is generally applicable to Yali religion:

The salvation which is sought... embraces such things as deliverance from present troubles and oppression, peace, wholeness, healing, health and well-being. This salvation will be achieved, so it is believed, when the ideal models for man's behaviour and his social institutions which were established in the historical or mythical past are actualized and restored in the present age.²¹

Siegfried Zöllner, who worked for fourteen years as a missionary among the Yali of Yalimo, and whose definitive work *Lebensbaum und Schweinekult*²² is the only, but comprehensive, publication about Yali religion, has rightly focused on the Yali oral tradition of myths, as well as sacred formulae and songs, as the key to an understanding of Yali religion. He has observed that Yali religion consists of a two-layered structure:²³ The mythology of the 'primeval pig' explains the origin or creation of the Yali people through the killing of this primeval animal. This myth is realized in a series of rites in which the ritual killing of a pig is central, and the purpose of which is to recall the origin, and to confirm the existence, of Yali society. The second corpus of myths focuses on the Yeli, which Zöllner calls "Urbaummythik" (primal tree mythology), because in Yalimo this mythology narrates the felling of the Yeli tree, through which the primeval period of earthquakes was brought to an end. Among the Southern Yali much more diverse Yeli mythology exists: Yeli is also a rock pillar which is felled; a primeval pig (*wam*) or echidna (*dabi*) which is shot,²⁴ and in one version, a giant earthworm (*dung*), but the focus is the same as in Yalimo. Medicine men (*ap hwalon*)²⁵ realize this mythology in ritual treatment of sick people and in other ritual acts which are directed at preventing or countering adverse circumstances such as unusually severe inclement weather, which threaten the welfare of Yali society, which is always understood in terms of health and well-being of people, pigs and gardens. Thus the purpose of rituals, which are associated with this corpus of myths, is to stabilize the present life of society by focusing on particular threats to the *status quo*.²⁶ The central religious rite was known as Moroal; and the central healing ritual was called Selam.

Another myth, while not central in Yali religion, is worth mentioning here, because it is held in common with other members of the greater Dani family, and because it explains the loss of the pristine condition and also gives rise to the expectation or the possibility of the recovery of that state. This is the mythical "race" between a snake and a bird. One Southern Yali version narrates how in primeval times, before death was known, the message of rejuvenation was to be delivered to mankind by the *kaliye* snake. The message was simply: "Nabelal-habelal" (my outer skin your outer skin),²⁷ which would be valid and effective when pronounced by the snake in the hearing of man. However, the snake, forced to proceed on its belly along the ground around rocks and trees, was overtaken by the pied chat (*ebebulo*)²⁸ who flew directly through the air and called out his cry of mourning, "Fong! Fong!"²⁹ One of the recently composed Yali hymns alludes to this myth, reinterpreting it:

The message of *nabelal-habelal*,
 even while it was with us,
 The message of Nahamut-hahamut,³⁰
 even while it was in our hearts,
 We would have taken *nabelal-habelal* for ourselves
 But since Adam and Eve did wrong (we didn't get *nabelal-habelal*)
 We would have taken Nahamut-hahamut for ourselves
 But since Adam and Eve did wrong (we didn't get *nabelal-habelal*)³¹

The hymn goes on to claim that the message of *nabelal habelal* came through the message of Jesus, and that those who receive His message will go to heaven, implying that *nabelal habelal* will be realized there. This shows that the Yali believe that prior to the intended arrival of the snake, *nabelal habelal* was destined to be their experience, and that the bringing of the message was to effectuate it. But the untimely coming of the bird was the disruptive element which effectively denied them this blessing, and explains the presence of death in the present time. Thus this myth exemplifies the underlying concept that the present state is not as was experienced in the pristine age, and the lingering hope of the recovery or the realization of such ideal conditions.

Myth also explains the structure of society. A dualistic feature, which explains the origin and existence of the exogamous moieties and their associated clans, recurs in several myths: There are two large tree rats Houli and Hwesali, or the two primal ancestors which they represent, Siringon and Samahun, who shoot the Yali animal; or there are a woman and her son — the woman orders the son to shoot and kill her, which he does and she becomes a pig. Or, in another version, the woman tells her son to look behind the hut, where he sees a big sow which he shoots. The son then butchers and cooks the pig and puts the different parts into two separate piles. In the morning he awakes to find that these have turned into people. Each of these myths, and others, support the exogamous moiety principle and explain the origin of the different clans. Sexual intercourse between members of the same moiety *babi* (glossed as 'incest') is the most heinous transgression known to the Yali. But *babi* is also used for any sacrilegious act — for example, trespass of a non-initiate (*kubilon*) inside the yard of a sacred hut (*ousabam*), or into the hut itself, or the disclosure of sacred knowledge (*ousale*), secret names (*tuñuram*), or formulae (*hwal ale*), in the hearing of non-initiates.³² Any such act endangers cosmic stability, and therefore poses a serious threat to the welfare of Yali society. This might be manifested by sickness or infertility of people, pigs and gardens, and by unusually inclement weather, landslides or devastating earthquakes. Through the imposition of the severest sanctions (see previous footnote) the occurrence of these has been remarkably infrequent, and whenever, perchance, such has occurred, or is alleged to have occurred, ritual action has been taken to restore the *status quo* — to stabilize the Yali cosmos. From this it is evident that the established structure of Yali society is part of the structure of the "biocosmos" which must be preserved at all costs.

Within the named moieties (Kobak and Bahabol) and their associated clans or sibs, which comprise Yali society, a complex Omaha type kinship system exists.³³ Typical of a Melanesian society, this system prescribes how people live and interact with one another

in respect of such matters as marriage, death, rites of passage, land tenure, conflict settlement and so forth. Yali kinship revolves around four groups or sets of relationships, and members of each group are bound to fulfil any obligations implicit in that set of relationships. Patrilineal relatives (*ori* and *erekwi*) who form the first group, tend to reside patrilocally, and the male members belong to the same men's house (*youa*). The men are expected to be loyal to each other and to assist one another in house building, land clearance and the making of gardens; to defend members involved in conflict, and to avenge the deaths of any of their number killed in conflict or reprisal.

Mother's patrilineal relatives (*amusi* and *amumsi*) comprise the second set, the significance of which is that it acknowledges the relationship of the child to the mother's clan, and the role the mother plays in giving birth to and raising children. The importance of the mother's brother, particularly in transition rites, is reflected in the mirror relationship of the third set, the sister's children, who are not terminologically distinguished from one's own children (*omaliki*). The fourth set comprises the affinal relatives through either wife or sister (*ombarikisi*). Husbands are obligated to provide pigs regularly for their wife's or wives' brothers.

Personal relationships are therefore maintained through reciprocity, that is, by helping and being helped, by giving and being given both goods (usually pigs) and physical assistance — both formally in ritual contexts and informally in a process extending over a long period of time, indeed sometimes over a lifetime. Reciprocity may be either negative or positive, and since a person is expected to assist his kin in relation to other people, he may become implicated in a process of negative reciprocity towards those outside his immediate community. If kin relationships are the building blocks of Yali society, then reciprocity is the mortar which binds each member together.³⁴

Yali social organization, as is basically typical of New Guinea highlands societies, can be described as egalitarian and unstratified,³⁵ and therefore leadership in Yali society is not clearly defined. In fact, both Koch and Zöllner state quite categorically that the New Guinea "Big Man" phenomenon, where a local group leader achieved his political status by personal power, and which is reported for other highland societies, is absent in Yali society.³⁶ However, both writers acknowledge the existence of those whom the Yali of Yalimo designate *ap souon* "big men". These are men who are able to assume an influential position within a fairly restricted locality, because of three identifiable characteristics: Physical fitness, oratorical skill and assertiveness, and clever manipulation of pig exchanges.³⁷

This description is applicable to such leaders among the Southern Yali, but the term *ap humon* (Southern Yali equivalent of *ap souon*) is not used in this way. Rather, the term *ap nenowe unuk bogdeg* "the man our-older-brother-of-the-supported-name" is applied to those who have the three characteristics listed above. The three-fold definition is further amplified by the Southern Yali to acknowledge that such a person is a man of his word — that is, his oratory can be backed by his actions and wealth; he is a man of self-control — not easily swayed by others, nor reacting to hostility; he is not a thief in other words, he is not a likely source of social trouble through ordinary theft (*yoholi angge wauk*), pig

theft (*wam uwan angge wauk*), or wife-stealing (*homi balduk*). His sphere of influence might extend to two or three villages, but normally was restricted to his own locality where his advice and authority were directed for the common welfare, in such matters as pig keeping, gardening and conflict.

Since the introduction of Indonesian government administration, the term *ap nenowe unuk bogdeg* has ceased to be used in the traditional way, though the same characteristics are what gain respect for both government appointed local officials, and for church leaders.³⁸ but the Southern Yali always insist that *ap hwalon* were far more important than *ap unuk bogdeg*. This opinion is sustained by Zöllner's description of Yali religion, which emphasizes the centrality of the primary *selam* healing ritual and the significant role of medicine men.³⁹ Yali religion is concerned with the whole of life — man in his cosmos — whether it be in relationship to ancestors or to living kin; whether it be within the non-empirical or the empirical environment. *Ap hwalon* were therefore functioning at the heart of Yali life.

History of Contact

It is not known precisely when the southern Yali, as they are known today, had their first contact with the "outside world" beyond their "Hupla", western, and "Yali" eastern neighbours. For the southern Yali, the earliest known contact occurred when members of an expedition, using a floatplane, landed on the Balim river just south of the mountains, and then proceeded up a mountain spur which separates the Seng and the Balim rivers. Their journey brought them near the village of Uwar, where some of the middle aged and older men vividly remember the encounter. One of my informants, a man named Belak, who was a small boy of six or seven then, to the consternation of his father and other kinsmen, was dressed in western clothing by the expedition members, who indicated by sign language that they wanted to take him away with them. Nothing further untoward resulted from that expedition, but an enamelled metal cooking pot and some steel knives were left behind.⁴⁰

I have been unable to determine with certainty when, or which expedition, this was, but it may have been in 1937. In May of that year, Dornier and Fokker floatplanes were used to explore for gold in the upper reaches of the Lorentz, Brazza and Digul rivers. Since the Brazza and Lorentz rivers flow south to the east and west of the Balim river, and thus bracket the area in question, it is quite likely that it was members of this expedition who were the first outsiders to enter Yali territory.⁴¹ Whether the above date is correct or not, it was about this time, and into the period of World War II, that the Yali began to see aeroplanes flying overhead or nearby. The phenomenon filled the Yali with trepidation and presentiment as to what such an event might forebode. The only concept to which they could relate it was the Yeli, which, according to myth, had flown through the air making a *bururum* noise such as was made by the aircraft. This evoked the disruptive activity of the primordial period — the earthquakes — which had to be stabilized by the shooting or felling of Yeli and, therefore, throughout the area rituals, which recalled and realized that stabilization, were performed by the *ap hwalon*. One informant who would have been quite a small child at the time, said that his mother pushed him into a hut and

hid him with a *kou* bark cooking cylinder, and then in the evening, brushed him all over with the feathers of a *konggou* "frogmouth" (a night bird), in order to ward off any sickness that might have been brought by the flying spirit. .

Another possible early contact is one widely recounted and sung about by the Yali. This story originated not too far from Uwam, scene of the encounter mentioned above. When an expedition of white men appeared, wielding bush knives (*luhi*) and steel axes (*melahan*)⁴² with which they could easily cut down saplings and fell trees, the Yali begged to be given some, but the expedition members refused. A man called Yelibuk therefore organized and led a massacre of the white men, and the Yali took the knives and axes for themselves. According to my informants, however, although the song about Yelibuk mentions Fisikuruk, a place near Uwam, the incident occurred in an area a little south-west of the region presently occupied by the Yali, where a different language is spoken. Thus this account is not verifiable as fact, but it is nevertheless indicative of early contact with white people, and of the discovery to the Yali of a new dimension to the known cosmos.

Apart from some trade for salt into the Balim valley near Kurima, the Yali of the Heluk valley had no contact with the outside world until 1961 when Stanley Dale and Bruno de Leeuw of the Regions Beyond Missionary Union trekked in from Hetigima via the Mugwi valley. They arrived in the northern Heluk, and set up camp on a sloping plateau known as Yabironggoma, between the villages of Yabi and Balinggama, which at that time were involved in hostilities.⁴³ In some way, through Western Dani porters and by sign language, Dale was able to communicate his desire that the warring Yali should make peace. It was taken by the Yali as a command, and a traditional peace ceremony (*dog belapuk*, "to set down the war arrow") ensued on May 23, 1961, with the exchange of peace settlement pigs (*anggerang owam*, "kidney pigs").⁴⁴ From Yabironggoma, Dale and de Leeuw moved to a ridge called Yerino, not far from the sacred Kwalu hut at Ninia, and began to construct an airstrip with sporadic and reluctant help from the Yali. When the airstrip was opened in March 1962, the name Ninia was used for identification, probably as having wider application than Yerino. Dale was joined soon after that by his wife and family, and set about learning and analysing the language with a view to preaching. In his eagerness he was soon conducting "a daily Gospel meeting" for the men who came to work with him on the strip or in house building.⁴⁵ In this way, the Southern Yali began to experience increasing encounter with other peoples and other worldviews, that were to bring about far-reaching effects in Yali society. The peace that was established in the northern Heluk in May 1961 was never to be broken, and within relatively few years had gradually developed in both meaning and extent throughout the whole Southern Yali territory.

Endnotes for chapter 1

1. For example, see Koch (1967) and Koch in Cook and O'Brien (1980:233); and Zöllner (1977:16-18).
2. See Bromley in *Oceania* Vol. XXXVII (4) pp.298ff..
3. See Bromley in *Irian* Vol. II (3) pp.3-9.
4. See Silzer and Heikkinen in *Irian* Vol. XII pp.56-57.
5. The Netherlands Reformed Congregation in the Pass Valley area; the Gereja Kristen Injili with missionaries from the Rheinische-Missions-Gesellschaft and the Nederlands Hervormde Kerk in the Yalimo area; and the Regions Beyond Missionary Union in the southern area.
6. Koch (1967, 1974, 1980); Zöllner (1971).
7. See Wilson in *Irian* Vol. XIV, pp. 3-13.
8. Bromley in *Oceania* (1967) pp.289,303.
9. Some huts also accommodate pigs, and have an internal, partitioned pen, and an additional pig door.
10. Koch (1967:45).
11. To fell a hardwood *sahai* tree necessary for durable wallboards would consume a full day when using the stone adze.
12. There are two types of bow: those made from a mountain tree called *suon* and those made from a palm called *sugnim* available in lower, warmer areas. The latter, highly prized, requires a lot of careful preparation.
13. There are four kinds of arrow: 1. dog "man arrows"; 2. *minggin* "pig arrows"; 3. loun — "animal arrows"; and 4. soap bird arrows.
14. Hours of sunrise and sunset vary very little at this latitude from approximately 5am. to 6pm.
15. Zöllner (1977:39), cf. Koch (1967:19).
16. These were identified to the writer by Dr. E M C Cousens OBE, and Drs. Spence and Jean Alexander during surveys in or near the area. Cousens (1977), S Alexander, J Alexander (1981).
17. See e.g. Zöllner (1977:10). In the Holuwon area in 1986, there was widespread occurrence of a sweet potato blight at altitudes below 1500m. A similar blight reportedly occurred in 1966/67.
18. See e.g. Whiteman (1983:64-68) and Whiteman in Mantovani (1984:87-97).
19. Whiteman in Whiteman (1984:91).
20. Whiteman (1983:64-68), and Whiteman in Mantovani (1984:87-97).
21. Strelan (1977:62).
22. Although I do not read German, I have gained access to this excellent publication through the kind assistance of Drs. Jan A Godschalk who read and orally translated the entire book for me. He also gave me a copy of his draft synopsis of Zöllner's book which is shortly to be published in the *Point* series of the Melanesian Institute.
23. A third element, the *Kwalu* transition rite, (of western origin) exists for some of the southern Yali, but all Yali acknowledge these two strands from the east as essential and central to Yali religion.
24. Informants who tell this version of the Yeli myth say that the tree/pillar versions are a parabolic or cryptic representation of the "true" (i.e. *their*) account. Adze blows to each side of the tree/pillar are, in fact, the arrows shot into each side of the animal by the two primal ancestors of the two exogamous moieties.
25. In Yali, *ap* means "man" or "people"; *hwalon* consists of *hwal* from the stem of the verb "to take care of" or "to keep in order", and *on*, a nominalizing suffix which can be glossed "type/kind". In an article in *Irian* XIV (1986:3-13), I inadvisedly glossed *ap hwalon* as "shaman". "Caretaker" might be an etymologically more appropriate gloss, but Zöllner's use of "medicine man" is quite apt, though *ap hwalon* did not generally use medicine *per se* in their healing rites.
26. See Zöllner (1977:46-64); also Kamma (1978:114-120).
27. *Abelal* is the outer skin shed by various reptiles. This ability symbolizes continuous rejuvenation, perhaps even "eternal life".
28. The pied chat (*ebebulo*) has white shoulder patches which are compared to the mud which people daub on their bodies when mourning. In villages of lower altitude, the bird which features in the myth is Blyth's hornbill (*sibine*) which also has patches of white on its body.
29. *Fong watuk* is "to mourn".
30. A synonym for "outer skin".
31. Yali hymnbook no.81.