Khamu in Laos. 1961/1965

[s.l.]: [s.n.], 1961/1965

https://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/QNLMI5PCVSGNJ8T

Lessons in the Khmu' Language

by

William A. Smalley

CONTENTS

Notice to the User of these Materials

All of this material on Khmu? is still in provisional form and must be used with caution. Check everything with informants. Please call errors to the attention of the author.

The lessons (but not the introduction on Khmu? culture or the collection of Khmu? texts) involve a knowledge of the Lao writing system, but anyone who does not yet know the Lao writing system can probably make out with the materials because the Romanized is included as well.

As I am able to do so, I will be adding to the lessons. Anyone studying Khmu? should get in touch with me to find out whether or not more material is yet available. Write to

William A. Smalley
Thailand Bible House
150 Sathorn Road
Bangkok, Thailand

I will be very happy to consult in person or by mail with anyone studying the Khmu? language.

New numbering begins here

TEXTS

Here follow many of the Khmu' texts which I have collected. They consist of stories, legends, accounts of Khmu' life, and many other subjects. In their present form they will provide reading matter for the student.

The texts are not written in Lao script because I have not reached that point yet. Neither are they organized or graded in any way. Eventually they will be worked into the lessons at the appropriate points.

These texts are subject to error even more than the materials included in the lessons. Some of the texts were collected early in my period of study. They should be checked with informants as they are used, but they will be substantially correct. Whenever an informant objects to a rendering in the material change it for your study purposes, even though in some cases what is in the text would also be satisfactory.

As you learn to pronounce Khmu' through the use of the lessons, and as you learn the Romanized transcription in the lessons, you will find that you are able to read these stories aloud. When you can do so, you can read them a sentence at a time to your informant, and he can give you the meanings of the words and sentences. You can study these, building up your vocabulary. Then you can learn to recite these texts, or the ones which interest you the most, learning to say them interestingly and fluently. Mimic your informant as you do so.

APPENDIX

In the following pages there are some miscellaneous materials which will eventually be incorporated in the lessons. In the meantime study them with your informant, because most of them have to do with problems of grammar, vocabulary, or idiom.

Preliminary Remarks

My field work, among the Khmu', upon which these lessons are based, was under the auspices of The Christian and Missionary Alliance. The assignment was linguistic research in the Khmu' language, preparing for the development of written literature in Khmu', literacy education, translation of the Bible, etc. My original assignment was for one year only, and during that year I concentrated on phonemic problems and the beginning of the analysis of grammatical structure. At the end of that year I was reassigned to work permanently as a missionary to the Khmu'. During my second year in Luang Prabang, however, I was the only missionary in residence, which meant that I had many mission responsibilities. I continued with the analysis of the grammatical structure resulting in my Outline of Khmu' Structure, a technical grammer of Khmu', written for linguists, and finally published in 1961. I also collected a body of Khmu' texts from the informant Siang Thii. At this point my work was interrupted by the unsettled political and military situation in the country. Khmu' analysis was dropped in favor of other projects in Vietnam.

During the months when I was working on Khmu' I lived in Luang Prabang itself. Approval of a move to a Khmu' village had been granted by the mission, and preparation for constructing a bamboo house had begun when my stay was interrupted. This fact has considerable bearing on my knowledge of Khmu' language and culture. Because I was planning for residence among the Khmu' I had deferred systematic study of Khmu' life simply making notes when anything came to my attention or aroused my interest. Most of my knowledge of Khmu' culture came through conversation with Khmu', and through the texts which I recorded as part of my linguistic analysis. The year 1953-1954 was to have been spent in the study of Khmu' culture, more extensive exploration of Khmu' vocabulary and idiom, and participation in Khmu' life, but this never came about.

On my return to the United States in 1954, and after the completion of the manuscript of my Outline of Khmu' Structure in 1956, I turned sporadically to the preparation of these lessons, to the editing of my texts for publication, and to the compiling of a dictionary, all of which should be useful materials for the learning of Khmu'. These materials are being assembled in the present form as a "first draft", to make them available to missionaries who may want to learn the Khmu' language. In this project I have been greatly assisted by the Foreign Department of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, which has provided me with part-time clerical help. All of this work has had to be done in spare moments on odd evenings for my part, so the provision of this clerical help has been absolutely indispensible.

In 1961 I had an opportunity to visit Luang Prabang and to record some new data as well as to check some of the work that I had done. However, the work contained here must still be considered unchecked at almost every point. The implications of this for study will be given in the study directions at various points.

January 15, 1961

Ethnographic Notes on the Khmu?

These notes were originally prepared in somewhat different form for the Human Relations Area Files as background contributing to the preparation of a gazetteer and map on the ethnic groups of Southeast Asia. They represent a very sketchy, incomplete knowledge of Khmu? ways, but insofar as they go, they should be useful to the person working with Khmu? people.

Please note that it is very likely that there are both mistakes and over-generalizations in this summary. It should be taken critically, and doubtful statements discussed fully with Khmu? people to find the true situation. In this way the document can be a kickoff for a more accurate picture of the Khmu?.

A bibliography is appended at the end, and references in the text (such as Izikowitz 1951:24) refer to the author, date of publication, and page.

Name

Here follows a list of all of the names for Khmu? which have come to my attention, with comments.

Khmu?. This is a morphophonemic spelling (a spelling based on the language structure) of which the phonemic base is /kʰmhmuʔ/. /ʰm/ is morphophonemically predictable on the basis of rules outlined in Smalley, 1961 (p. 16), and will be handled in the lessons that follow. The word khmu? means 'people' (as opposed to animals, rice, etc.) or to a group of people by that name, speaking the same language or sharing the same culture (as opposed to jə? 'non-Khmu?').

Khmu. Same as the above, with ? removed for typographical convenience or because the writer did not hear it or think it important.

Kʰmhmuʔ. The phonemic base for Khmu?.

Kamhmu?. Conventionalization of Kʰmhmuʔ.

Khamuk. Term used in Thailand. I have heard it used by Thai in Chiengmai and Seidenfaden (1958) used it.

Khamu. Used in Halpern, 1957.

Kha. This is a Lao word, a generic term for any of the "Indonesian" peoples of Laos, corresponding to Vietnamese Moi. Its central meaning is that of 'slave,' and it is pejorative. Lao will refer to the Khmu? as Khmu?, Kha, or Kha Khmu?.

Kha Khmu?. Lao term for the Khmu?.

Tsa Khmu?. Term used by Roux and Tran-van-Chu (1954). According to them, Tsa is the Black Thai equivalent of Lao Kha.

Tsa Muong Sing. According to Roux and Tran-van-Chu (p. 297) the Khmu' were called this by the Black Thai, after the area where they were concentrated in the north.

Mou or Kha Mou. Used on the Carte Ethnolinguistique and in some of the French literature. This results from a false etymology. Hearing /kʰmhmu'/ pronounced sometimes by the Lao as [khamu] or [khamu'], a false analogy was made with the Kha Lamet, Kha Hok, etc. The real Lao analogy, as indicated above, is Kha Khmu'.

Phouteng, Phou Teng, or P'u Ting. These are different spellings of a Lao expression meaning, roughly, 'people who live high up,' referring to the fact that the Khmu' are a hill people. This is a polite expression covering the same peoples as the pejorative Kha, the "Indonesian" group.

Laoteng or Lao Teng. A Lao expression meaning 'Lao who live high up' or 'mountain Lao'. This is of the same significance as Phouteng, except that it emphasizes the Laotian nationality of the people. This term had not come into use, or at least not into widespread use when I was in Laos. More recent writing about the cultures of Laos refers to it, however (Halpern 1960:62).

There are several subdivisions of the Khmu', each with its own name. At least one of these names is independently found in published materials being listed there usually as another variety of Kha. At least one other of these is referred to in such fashion by the Lao of Luang Prabang. The Khmu' generic term for a subgrouping of this kind is tmɔɔy. It is used in combination with the name of a specific subgrouping to give combinations like Tmɔɔy Rɔɔk, 'the Rɔɔk subgroup'. It is also used in the sense of 'stranger', or 'unfamiliar'. There are dialect differences between the tmɔɔy, and some are considered more "backwoods" than others.

Hok, Kha Hok, Rɔɔk. The Tmɔɔy Rɔɔk is one of the larger Khmu' subgroups. The Lao, who have no initial /r/, call them Hok or Kha Hok. They are often listed in the literature as a separate group from the Khmu', but the Khmu' count them as one of their subgroupings. The Khmu' of the Luang Prabang area look down on the Rɔɔk as being backwoods and unacculturated (to Lao culture). I have not made a study of the Rɔɔk dialect, but one of the notable features apparent in conversation with Rɔɔk is that it lacks voiced stops. Voiced stops in the Khmu' of Luang Prabang area correspond to aspirated stops at the same point of articulation in the Rɔɔk. I believe that the Rɔɔk villages lie to the north of Luang Prabang, but have no direct knowledge of their distribution. In 1961, when visiting some Khmu' villages in northeast Thailand, I was told by Khmu' there that my Khmu' speech sounded like the Rɔɔk who lived to the north of them. I have no way of knowing whether this group of "Rɔɔk" has the same dialect characteristics as the ones which I heard in Luang Prabang, or not. I rather doubt it, if I sound like them!

Kha Ksak, Ksak. The Tmɔɔy Ksak are an unusual group living in the range of hills above Xieng Ngeun, to the southeast of Luang Prabang. This group is included by the Khmu' as one of their own groups; it has Khmu' culture, but it speaks Lao with its own particular accent. The Ksak have completely switched over from Khmu' language to Lao in the last two generations. The old men can still talk Khmu', but the younger ones cannot. Khmu' is never used in the village among the villagers. The Lao language of the Ksak shows some of the same characteristics as Lao words borrowed into Khmu'. For example, Lao /b d/

are pronounced [ʔm ʷn] in Ksak. In addition to the fact that they have taken on Lao speech, the Ksak are notable for the fact that they are the Khmu?used in important ceremonies in Luang Prabang, when special attention must be paid to the spirits.

Tmɔɔy Mee. The most numerous subgroup in the Luang Prabang area. This is the group with which I had the most contact.

Tmɔɔy Lɨɨ. A subgroup in the Muong Sai area. Also another group, speaking quite a different dialect, in northeast Thailand, Nan Province, near Pua.

Tmɔɔy Rmeet. A group about which I have no information.

Khuen. "...identical with the Khmu?, the difference being only that the Khuen have adopted Buddhism." (Izikowitz:1951:24). I have no personal knowledge of them.

Linguistic Affiliations

Haudricourt (1953:122) classifies the Khmu? language in the Palaung-Wa family whose members are found largely in Burma. Izikowitz (1951:20-21) considers Palaung-Wa a sub-grouping within Mon-Khmer (which includes Cambodion, Muong, Cil, Maa, Sre, South Vietnam, etc.) and considers Khmu? to be a member of it. Greenberg (1953:280) sides with Schmidt in considering Palaung-Wa and Mon-Khmer as parallel groups within Austroasiatic stock, rather than subsuming the one in the other. I have made no systematic study of the problem, but impressionistically I find Khmu? more like the Môn-Khmer languages of South Vietnam than like Lamet (Izikowitz 1951), or Lawa (brief personal contact in Thailand), at least in basic vocabulary. This was also Greenberg's impression when he was directing my doctoral study. Details of language relationships in this area remain very fuzzy. Of the general fact that Khmu? is in some way included within Mon-Khmer there can be no doubt.

Race and Population

The Khmu? look like other Mon-Khmer-speaking peoples. They are darker than the Lao, on the average, sometimes quite dark. Occasionally you see wavy hair. There is a strain of red hair in some of the Khmu? communities along the Lao border in northern Thailand, according to missionaries there.

In Smalley 1961 I guessed at a population of 100,000 for the Khmu? in Laos, allowing myself a 50 percent margin of error. Recent data in LeBar and Suddard (1960:240) and Halpern (1961a) make this seem a reasonable guess (and cut down the margin of error) although the figures in Halpern's different tables conflict with each other enormously, reflecting the chaotic sources. The Khmu? are without doubt the largest "Kha" group in northern Laos, and the only important one in Luang Prabang and Xieng Khouang provinces. There are Khmu? in Sayaboury, Nam Tha and Phong Saly provinces as well. Figures on minority mountain groups in Laos tend to be underrated rather than overrated in government statistics because these people are more inaccessible, avoid being counted, etc. Perhaps they are underrated also because Lao officials do not like to find that the Lao are probably a minority in the country.

I have no way of guessing the Khmu' population in Thailand.

History

The "Kha" groups, of which the Khmu' is the largest in northern Laos, are the oldest extant groups in the country. The Lao consider them their "older brothers" in this respect (in their more romantic moods, that is. They do not have "older brother" respect for them.) The legend of the gourd (LeBar and Buddard 1960:8) is shared by the Khmu' with minor variations. In fact, no two versions, Lao or Khmu', that I have ever seen have been exactly the same, except for the fact that the Khmu' and other "Kha" came out of the hole made with the sooty poker, while the Lao came out of the hole made with the drill. This accounts for their lighter color in the legend.

One Khmu' legend (Smalley, ms.) has the ancestor of the Ksak as the older brother of the original king of Luang Prabang. They set out to find a place to found the city of Luang Prabang, riding in different canoes, the Ksak in a brass one, and the king in a leather one. They raced along, and the Ksak arrived there first. He planted a marker on the top of the tree, and they argued about who got there first. The king won out because he insisted that his marker was higher, and therefore must have been first. Ksak had to go off and live on the mountain, and the king took over the city. This theme of the Khmu' being tricked and deprived of their rights is a common one in my texts.

As the Lao filtered into the area from South China, took over the river valleys and gained the political ascendency, they left at least one power to the older inhabitants. So far as the Lao are concerned, the Khmu' have more power over the spirits of the area, and the Ksak are the ones who are by tradition tied to the Lao court to serve as particularly potent shamen for special ceremonies. There are annual ceremonies in which the Khmu' are involved, as well as the famous instance of the Khmu' purifying the royal palace in Luang Prabang after it was built and before the king took occupancy.

The significance of the Khmu' role in the court of Luang Prabang, and in Buddhist ceremonies which also involve the spirits, becomes sharpened with the realization that they played the same role historically in the ancient kingdom of Nan in Thailand. According to a prince of the former kingdom of Nan, which was a major Buddhist center, and reminds me much of Luang Prabang, the old records show that the Khmu' were considered to have the key to the control of the spirits of the area. They are still the most powerful shamans of that area, as they are also in the opinion of the Lao of Luang Prabang.[1] Seidenfaden reports that the Lawa had a similar function in the ancient kingdom of Chiengmai (Seidenfaden 1958:119).

Political Incorporation and Acculturation

The Khmu' village units are incorporated into the Lao system of civil control, just as are Lao villages. Khmu' are headmen of Khmu' villages, and report to their superiors, the Tasseng along with Lao headmen. The Khmu' have no political importance or role beyond this, except as they are drafted into the army, pay taxes, or vote. In this, however, they are not much different from village Lao.

---

[1] This information was supplied me by Mr. Garland Bare.

The Khmu? of Luang Prabang area are furthermore heavily acculturated toward Lao life, although there are many differences as well. Most Khmu? around Luang Prabang know Lao, and some know it very well. A very few can read and write in it. With the exception of the Ksak, however, they maintain their own language among themselves.

Those Khmu? of this area which maintain their cultural identity are not Buddhists, but many individuals have become Buddhist along with passing into Lao cultural identification. A few Khmu? have spent time in a Buddhist wat in order to learn to read Lao. My principal informant, Siaŋ Thii, was such an individual. He did not become Buddhist, nor did he give up his Khmu? identity. Izikowitz (1951:24) reports a group of Khmu? who are Buddhists in Nam Tha.

The original Khmu? male garment was likely a breech clout very similar to that worn by tribes of South Vietnam (see also Izikowitz 1951:111). I once saw a Khmu? so dressed in Luang Prabang. He said he had come from two weeks walk away. He startled me with his resemblance to men in the south. The standard clothing for men near Luang Prabang now is the same as that of the country Lao. It is either ragged western-style shorts or trousers with or without shirt, or indigo-dyed homespun, usually obtained from the Lao.

Khmu? women dress like poor country Lao except for the addition of the turban which they wear around their heads. It is interesting to note in the pictures published by Roux and Tran-van-Chu (1954:facing 327) that the Khmu? of his time (1920's) and area (the northern most provinces) were dressed in a manner partly reminiscent of the Meo and partly of tribal Tai. The Khmu? which I have seen in Thailand were dressed like the country Thai. A very few Khmu? women have taken on the Lao skill of weaving.

Men and women around Luang Prabang sell directly in the market there, and some rice is brought in from a distance and sold, whereas an older pattern was to deal with a Lao intermediary. When they can scrape together a little cash, Khmu? will buy enamel pans, earthenware or metal pots, flashlights, and even watches. A few Khmu? children go to school in Luang Prabang.

An occasional Khmu? village has a few irrigated ricefields. This is not common, nor are these holdings the major part of the ricefield planting for the village, but they do represent radical acculturation.

I believe that thousands of fully assimilated Lao are of Khmu? descent. Passing takes place constantly, as does intermarriage. Mixed families may live in Lao communities and grow up Lao. This has doubtless been going on for centuries. The only way to get out of the class of "slaves" and "savages" is to pass into Lao culture, if this can be done. On the other hand, in spite of all the acculturation which goes on, habit, fear, the spirits, and tradition keep the Khmu? as a distinct group.

Sources of Food

Agriculture is the main source of food, and will be discussed separately below. Next comes gathering, hunting, trapping, and fishing, but I do not know in what order of importance. Some Khmu? have a few animals such as pigs, sometimes goats or buffalo, plus chickens and ducks.

Hunting is done by individuals with crossbow or flintlock gun (for highly prosperous Khmu? only). Only men hunt. Fishing is by net, by fishtraps, by damming water and poisoning it, by catching with the hand. Trapping is by all kinds of devices including deadfalls, nooses, spear traps, and a host of ingenious devices identical with or similar to those reported in Izikowitz (1951:184-194). Hunting and fishing are for nearly all kinds of available animals and fowl, large and small (a notable exception being each person's totem animal, which is taboo). In the Luang Prabang area large game is scarce, which is one of the many reasons for the impoverished state of the Khmu? there.

The number of foods gathered in the jungle is bewildering. I have no idea of the names of scores of leaves, roots, shoots, etc., which I have seen eaten. Those I do know include bamboo shoots, honey, mushrooms. That there are so many jungle plants which the Khmu? eat does not mean that they can sustain life by gathering. When there is a rice shortage the Khmu? in the Luang Prabang area suffer. Normally hunting, fishing, and gathering can only supply a minimal amount of meat and a little variety to the diet.

Domesticated Plants and Animals

Rice is the Khmu? staple. They have many varieties, but all glutinous. Other crops include corn, bananas, sugar cane, cucumbers, beans, chilis, scallions, water cress, cabbage, egg plant, tobacco, and occasionally cotton, flax and opium. The most common domesticated animals are chickens, ducks, pigs, and dogs. Buffalo are the most valued, but few Khmu? can afford them. Goats are sometimes to be found, as are cats. Chickens, pigs, dogs, and especially buffalo are important sacrifices.

Agriculture

Swidden farming is the prevelant form of rice cultivation, although some of the more acculturated Khmu? in suitable locations have made wet ricefields. I do not know of any village were wet fields produced a large percentage of the rice crop.

Permanent cultivation techniques, where they are used, are borrowed from the Lao. There is no problem of many Khmu? learning the techniques because so many work for Lao from time to time as hired laborers. The barriers to a wider spread of permanent field cultivation include cost (because many Khmu? do not have the buffalo needed), initial labor (because it is less work any given year to make a swidden than to prepare the ground for a permanent field), yield (because a swidden will produce more, acre for acre), taste (because the Khmu? like the taste of the swidden varieties of rice better), and tradition. One Khmu? village was located very near an extensive set of wet ricefields that had been abandoned by their Lao owners for several years. The owner had gone into politics. Although they discussed it at times, the Khmu? made no effort to obtain these fields through purchase or rental, or to cultivate them as sharecroppers.

The Khmu? are not active innovators, and have a rather apathetic outlook toward their lot. Fertilizer is not used in wet ricefields except for the chance fertilization of animals grazing in the fields, and Khmu? are too poor to have many of them. The water used is rain water, or water from mountain streams which

do not have a heavy sediment of top soil to enrich the fields. If it were not for the amount of territory needed to support a population by swidden agriculture, the Khmu' would probably be right in feeling that they are better off with swiddens.

In the Luang Prabang area there are serious problems in finding enough swidden fields. The Khmu' realize the necessity of a long fallowing period. However, informants told me that fallowing in the Luang Prabang area was no longer than 7-8 years, and sometimes it was necessary to make a field sooner than that. A field is used for two or three years, perhaps with non-rice crops only at the end. Corn, beans, gourds, cucumbers, and a variety of other plants are planted in the swiddens along with the rice.

There is a definite system of rotation of fields. Decision as to which fields are to be used in a given year are made on the basis of length of time in fallowing, convenience, omens, and consultation with the spirits. Although the swidden fields are not legally owned by anyone, the last village to have used a field is considered to have rights over it, and people from no other village should use it. Someone using a field over which he does not have rights must pay a fine. The fine set by tradition is so small now, in the face of inflation, that some people have been known to prefer to pay it rather than forego using the field. Among village members the swidden plots are assigned by group decision of the headman and elders.

Because of the rotation system, the Khmu' do not move their village widely. They may move a little ways because of some calamity, anger of the spirits, personal grudges, etc., but do not range the way the Meo do. The Khmu' say the Meo have a very different system of cultivating swiddens without normally returning to the same fields again. I have not checked this with the Meo, but Khmu' informants maintained this is why the Meo move so much.

Some of the principal implements used in swidden agriculture are the machete for clearing the fields prior to burning, the iron-pointed digging stick, the hoe used in weeding, and the knife used in harvesting (which may also be done without any instrument). Baskets are used to transport the grain. Winnowing may be by large fans of woven bamboo strips. These tools do not differ from those of the Lao.

Many Khmu' maintain small garden plots in or near the village. In these are grown sugar cane, vegetables, bananas, and occasionally an assortment of other fruits and vegetables.

Industrial Arts

The Khmu' show the greatest handicraft skills in weaving baskets, trays, stools, low tables for food. Another skill not so characteristic of the Luang Prabang area, but of the north, is making net string bags. The baskets and other objects woven of bamboo are made of thin strips formed by splitting special species of bamboo, and shaving down the strips between knife and fingers or thumb. Rattan is woven in some objects like stools. The work is done by men. These manufactures objects are a small source of income when sold on

the Luang Prabang market. I have also seen woven trays and low tables which Khmu' have brought into the town of Nan in Thailand and traded to merchants there.

Khmu' in the Luang Prabang area do not do much blacksmithing except to repair tools. I believe that they do more in more remote areas. Silk of cotton weaving is not characteristic of the Khmu', but a few more acculturated women have learned to do it.

Markets and Trading

Halpern (1957:4-9; 1958:69-74) reports the trading institution of the Lam. I am not familiar with it from the Luang Prabang area, where the Khmu' I knew did their trading in the Luang Prabang market or with passing Mec, Ho, and Lao traders. The institution of the lam, however, is very much in keeping with the traditional Khmu' role of subordinate but symbiotic relationship to the Lao. The lam was usually a Lao who served as an intermediary between the Khmu' and the outside world of traders and government.

> Traditionally the Khamu came to him whenever they had some forest products to sell or wanted to buy salt or clothing. Then the Lam would arrange the trade with a merchant, although he himself sometimes engaged in commerce directly with the tribal peoples. Lam is distinctly a reciprocal relationship: head taxes levied by the French were often paid for by the Lam, and in return the Khamu worked in the fields of their Lam, when necessary and supplied him with game and forest products he might need. In those cases where the Lam was also their merchant he enjoyed complete monopoly, with all of their trade funneled through him. The relationship between a Lam and the Khamu was not formalized, and depended largely on individual personalities. Thus a man might be the Lam for a few tribal families or for entire villages. He might be the Lam to these people by inheriting the position from his father; or, if the Khamu found he was dishonest in his dealings, they would seek another. (Halpern 1957:4).

The last sentence of the quotation from Halpern sounds decidely idealized to me. Khmu' have traditionally feared to cross the Lao. Khmu' still complain that when they come into market with produce the Lao through whose villages they pass will sometimes search through their things, taking what they want with little or no payment. Khmu' have no effective redress. To the Khmu' the Lam would be a powerful figure, and few whom I knew would dare to cross a powerful Lao. Nor could they do it with impunity.

In the Luang Prabang area now the principal Khmu' trading takes place through barter in the village (primarily with traveling traders who are usually Ho), taking goods to Luang Prabang, and trading with neighboring villagers. If a deer is shot or trapped, or a large fish caught near enough to Luang Prabang to get the meat to market, Khmu' may bring it in for barter, or for a little cash. In the same way, forest products may be brought in. These include firewood, charcoal, banana leaves, bamboo shoots, rattan, honey, beeswax, tubers, roots, edible greens, materials for medicine, etc. Garden and swidden products such as sugar cane, bananas, some other fruits, betel leaf, scallions, chilis, cucumbers, corn, etc., are also brought in. So are manufactured articles like baskets, stools, mats, trays, and brooms.

In all of these cases the Khmu? may bring the goods and sell them directly in the Luang Prabang market, or may sell them to a storekeeper. Khmu? people set out their wares on the outskirts of the market, laying out their produce on banana leaves. Usually the amounts are small, and the cash they get is in very small amounts.

Khmu? in the Luang Prabang area do not usually have a rice surplus, but those from farther out may be that fortunate. Sometimes such people will carry the rice over the mountains to the nearest river where they will build a bamboo raft some twenty feet long and eight feet wide. It is made by tying bundles of bamboo together and covering them with a platform of woven bamboo and mats. This is then covered with a bamboo-leaf or mat awning. The rice is transported downstream on this raft and sold in Luang Prabang. Forest produce and manufactured items are sometimes brought down as well. When all is sold, and when the Khmu? have bought what they want to take back with them, they walk home, a walk of from eight days to two or three weeks.

Outlying Khmu? also trade lac, benzoin, oranges, and even occasionally opium, which are not so common immediately around Luang Prabang.

Another traditional source of Khmu? income is through working as laborers for Lao, Chinese, Meo and more recently French and Americans. The Lao have considered them subject to corvée labor, but have also hired regularly to do agricultural work and other coolie labor. In the season when agricultural duties back home are not pressing, Khmu? come into Luang Prabang from some distance looking for work. They are hired to work in gardens, to carry water, to work on roads, etc. They do the same in Lao villages.

The small amount of cash which the Khmu? raise in these ways, or the goods which they barter, are used to obtain salt, clothing, cloth, tools, utensils, blankets, and some prestige luxury goods - if there is enough, which usually there is not. With a few individuals it goes for opium. For some people it also pays taxes. Or, it may be used for the purchase of animals needed for sacrifice. Some Khmu? do not have enough salt the year around, and all but the most prosperous are very raggedly dressed. Some families do not have a single blanket in mountains where 40° is known at night for a brief period of the year, and where walls are nothing but woven bamboo.

One Khmu? institution has to do with the distribution of meat in the village and to relatives. It applies only to large wild animals shot or trapped, and to domesticated animals killed for sacrifice. The hunter making the kill, or the person making the sacrifice distributes the meat as follows. People classified as taay 'older brother' get the forequarters; those classified as hɛɛm 'younger brother' get the hindquarters, ?eem 'wife's brother' or 'mother's brother's son' get the sides, and the headman gets the filet.

Division of Labor by Sex

A rigid division is not always maintained on everything, but the following lists are approximate.

Men	Women	Both
clearing forest	planting seed	weeding
hunting	splitting firewood	harvesting
trapping	fetching water	carrying
basket making	gathering	cooking (men are considered better)
iron work	milling rice	fishing
gathering firewood	washing clothes	shaman
making charcoal	feeding animals	
trade involving men's produce and long travel	cleaning house	
distant travel	trade involving women's produce	
headman	making alcohol	
	ginning cotton (rare)	
	weaving (rare)	

"Carrying" as listed in an occupation of both men and women, but there is a difference in the mode of carrying. Women normally carry heavy loads in baskets on the back, supported by a strap going around the forehead. The weight therefore hangs down on the head and neck. There may be additional supports around the shoulders. Men do not like to be seen by outsiders carrying in this fashion. They carry in the Lao manner of baskets suspended from the two ends of a pole over the shoulder, or hanging in a bag from the shoulder. Women also carry in this latter fashion sometimes, but not their heaviest loads.

House Type and Settlement Pattern

Khmu? houses are similar to those of the country Lao, but much poorer on the average. The poorest ones are built on the ground, but whenever possible they are built on piles. Characteristically they are entirely of bamboo except for the piles, and for crossbeams and some of the supports of the floor and roof, which may be of wood. These may be wood poles, or may be roughly shaped with a machete. The roof is most typically of thatch, although split and flattened bamboo shingles are used by the more prosperous Khmu?. Khmu? houses range in size from 8' x 10' to 20' x 30' (estimated). The roof is a gable roof with fairly steep pitch, extending out over the walls about 2' to 3' for protection.

Underneath a house built on piles the Khmu? will store firewood, bamboo, and large objects. In the rare case where an acculturated Khmu? household has women who weave, the loom is under the house. Animal pens are often under the house, or buffalo may be tethered there, if there are any. The rafters of the

house provide another storage area. Baskets of dried foods, extra traps, seed rice, and valuables may be stored there.

The furnishings of the house are very simple. In addition to the hearth, there is a shelf for the hrooy gaan 'house spirit,' a shelf over the fire for drying food, bamboo for arrows, etc., sleeping mats rolled up in the daytime and spread out at night, a few utensils such as basins, pots, water containers (often of bamboo), and perhaps an old suitcase for extra clothing. More prosperous families may have kapok bed pads, mosquito nets, and a greater variety of tools, clothes, and utensils.

For several months, after the rice has begun to sprout, and until the harvested grain has been carried to the barns, many Khmu? live in small huts in the ricefields. This is done to save the long walk from village to fields, and to protect the fields from animal and bird marauders. The field hut is often built off the ground to help visibility, but is usually little more than a platform with a roof. A minimum of utensils is kept there.

The houses and barns of a Khmu? village are built fairly close together, often on the mountainside. The earth is scraped clear of vegetation, and one of the few places where you seed deep erosion in Laos is in these villages. Sometimes several small hamlets some distance apart may be under the same headman. The village is not moved with great frequency if the site is a good one, and if there is no calamity to make people fear it.

Political Organization and Social Stratification

As mentioned before, the village is the largest effective political unit so far as the Khmu? are concerned. The Khmu? do have a relationship to the nation of Laos through their headman, who reports to the Tasseng, to pay taxes (sometimes), but this is of no functional significance. Whereas Khmu? economics is closely tied in with that of its neighbors, politically the Khmu? have no interest outside the village, and want to be left alone.

Even the lineages, although they do structure kinship and restrict marriage, do not provide a great deal of social framework outside the village, and no political structuring that I have seen.

Within the village the headman is chosen by the Lao government. He is usually a more prosperous and more able Khmu?. He does have considerable prestige and authority in the Khmu? villages I have seen. The elders sit in informal judgment of cases and make important group decisions. Even women, however, will speak their piece, and the discussion is general.

Religion

In the Luang Prabang area Khmu? who become Buddhist usually assimilate to Lao life in other ways as well. Khmu? villages are not usually Buddhist. There may be a few exceptions. As mentioned earlier, Izikowitz (1951&24) reports a group of Khmu? Buddhists.

Scattered over northern Laos there are roughly two thousand Khmu? evangelical Christians. These people are usually clustered in "Christian villages" where the community is predominantly Christian, but a few households are also to be found in other communities of traditional religion as well (see Smalley 1960:63ff).

Traditional Khmu? religion centers around spirits called hrooy (the phii of the Lao and Thai). These spirits are associated with a wide variety of natural phenomena and events, and some additional ones. Here are some of the principal ones (see also Roux and Tran-van-Chu 1954:309ff.). Two stand out in my texts as being mentioned the most often. These are hrooy gaaŋ 'house spirit' and hrooy hɔɔ (apparently one of the most powerful of the jungle spirits). Two others are particularly feared because they possess people and make them dangerous. These are hrooy poop and hrooy sɨɨ. The latter flies around in the evening with flames coming from its mouth. It is particularly dangerous. Hrooy poop are constantly being detected and people in whom they reside ostracized from the village. They are greatly feared as the cause of calamity. Others appearing in my texts are spirits of the village, jungle, mountain, rock, water, sun, one particularly identified with the shamans, and two unidentified ones.

The only religious practitioners are shamans. These may be men or women. They determine the spirit causing illness or calamity, and prescribe the sacrifice. They officiate in ceremonies designed to predispose the spirits to give good crops, etc. Ceremonies in honor of the spirits are performed when the house posts are set, at certain points in the rice growing cycle, in times of calamity. The importance of the Khmu? as shamans par excellence was mentioned above. Sickness is a focal point of religious concern, and a large part of the shaman's function is in curing. It is interesting to see how this function is associated with the Christian minister as well on the part of Christians. They want Western medicines from him.

On occasions when important spirit ceremonies are held the entrance to or exit from the village becomes taboo for varying periods of time. A special sign made of strips of bamboo (see the desing in Roux and Tran-van-Chu 1954:335) is used to indicate that the village is sealed off. This same symbol has much the same meaning to some of the other groups in the area as well (see Izikowitz 1951: 54, 155, 220, 250, 255). The sign also prevents some kinds of spirits from intruding. If anyone should ignore the sign and come into the village it will cause trouble, sickness, death, because it will hurt the feelings of the spirit. Indemnity must be paid by the transgressor.

The Khmu? bury their dead in the jungle. I do not know what the ceremonies are in connection with death, except that the Khmu? fear the soul of the dead man coming back to the village. Elaborate precautions are taken for a roundabout return to the village by the burial party, as as to confuse the ghost. On their return the mouth of the chicken is split open and the blood used to make marks on the knees of the burial party, as protection.

Socialization and Life Cycle

Temperamentally the Khmu? of the Luang Prabang area feel and act inferior to all other groups. In northern Thailand this is also true except that the Thin and the Yellow Leaf people are lower in the pecking order. The Khmu? show

apathy and cultural disintegration. There is little zest for life. The ancient symbols of prestige, gongs, jars, and buffalo are gone - or nearly gone in the case of the buffalo, for few Khmu? can afford them. The Khmu? described by Roux and Tran-vanChu, and others referred to by Izikowitz, on the other hand, do not seem as apathetic. The few I saw in the Xieng Khouang area also seemed more vigorous and prosperous.

Part of the reason for Khmu? apathy is economic. They are desperately poor. They have also been the traditional slaves of the Lao. They have little political recourse. When the king's free-roving elephants tear down their barns to eat their grain there is not much they can de effectively.

They are ripe for a messianic movement. Some Khmu? have found help, and what might hopefully lead to a reintegration, in Christianity. Others have turned to looking for the return of the traditional culture hero, Ciaŋ. He gave the Khmu? their culture in the first place, and he is now waiting in a cave in the north with all kinds of modern material goods - refrigerators, airplanes, etc., - waiting to come out and give all of these things to the Khmu?. I do not think that this movement had started when I was there, but it is reported by Halpern (1960:63; 1961:144). In 1961 I found it in Thailand, where it was associated with Communist propaganda in the minds of many Khmu?, but where it was also taken seriously by others. Halpern reports that in the Luang Prabang area some Khmu? stopped making ricefields and made big sacrifices to induce Ciaŋ to come to them.

Birth takes place in the home, with midwives and members of the family helping. The infant is carried constantly by the mother, and fed whenever it cries. The mother carries the infant or small child in a shawl at her side or on her back, or slung in front, if she is feeding it. The child sleeps in this shawl on the mother's back while she works in the field or gathers in the jungle, pounds rice or winnows it.

As the child is able to move around it is always in the care of an older child or of an adult if the mother is not at hand. Small children who can run around are often left in the village with elderly people when the parents work in the field. Play consists of making toy traps, crossbows, houses, etc., and using them - not to speak of toy airplanes and cars, which they make from bamboo.

Children begin to take on household and other chores as soon as they are able to do so. A child will trudge behind his mother or father, carrying a small load, but a replica of the one the adult is carrying. Children soon assume the tasks of carrying water, splitting firewood, feeding the animals, etc. Girls begin to learn the skills of winnowing (by tossing in a tray) and other female chores as soon as they have the strength for them. Boys begin to hunt with small crossbows, begin to weave baskets, begin to fish, etc.

I am not aware of any formal age-grading. A girl from fourteen on up may be married. Boys are married a little older. There is no puberty initiation or any formal symbol of adulthood. As they mature they reach the age of wisdom of respected older adult, provided they haven't died because of the appalling illness to which they are repeatedly subjected.

Marriage and the Family

Marriage is arranged through the paying of a bride price, feasts, and drinking of alcohol. It generally involves also a period of service by the husband in the wife's family, but the husband's family brings gifts which are used for the feast. These include one or more pigs, chickens, alcohol, and money.

In many cases the people involved are too poor for this outlay. A man and woman may simply start living together. However, a more prestigeful solution when the prospective bridegroom's family is too poor to pay the required bride price is for the groom to move into the bride's father's house more or less permanently, and become a part of the household, with his labor available to the father-in-law. If the family eventually digs up the needed bride price, the couple may then move out. Residence with the wife's family is, in any case, usually three or four years, at least, when a new home may be set up, or the couple may move to live in the home of the husband's parents if it is not crowded.

Monogamy is the predominant form of marriage. Polygyny (multiple wives) occurs. I expect it would be more common if Khmu? were not so poor. It is sometimes sororal (marriage to sisters). At any rate the first wife calls the others 'younger sister,' while they call her 'older sister.' Divorce is easy unless it is an adultery case with a fine involved. Adultery cases are decided by the elders. In the case of the wife this involves a repayment of twice the bride price. In the case of the husband he pays a fine. If the wife dies while the husband is living in here family home, their belongings and children stay with her parents, and he returns to his parents' home. If she dies after a new home has been set up the children are more likely to be brought to his parents' home.

Preferred marriage for a man is his mother's brother's daughter, for a woman her father's sister's son, or in either case any more distant relative going by the same kinship term. Marriage within the father's patrilineage (father's line of kinship inheritance, as will be explained below) is forbidden, as is marriage with anyone ceremonially included within that patrilineage by the ceremony of dividing the meat mentioned above.

Patrilineages are totemic (cf. Izikowitz 1951:85ff.) That is, they are associated with an animal or object which is taboo to them. Khmu? believe that penalty for touching the totem animal or plant is that the offender will automatically be burned by the touch. Penalty for killing or eating the animal is to have the teeth fall out and to die young. Each totem has a different origin myth, often based around some kind of incident where the ancestor of the lineage was killed under circumstances associated with the totem. The lineage names which I have collected are: three different tiger lineages (ta? rwaay deer, ta? rwaay reh, ta? rwaay tooc siim khfaŋ), four bird totems (ta? tgɔɔk, ta? cnrɛ?, ta? cle? deet, ta? siim ?om), one plant totem (ta? twa?), two other animal totems (ta? tmɔɔŋ, ta? tmɔɔŋ hɔɔl), and an unidentified totem (ta? slɔɔk).

As has been indicated in the above description, the form of the domestic unit is not fixed beyond the nuclear family. Whether married children live very long with their parents is a matter of convenience, and other flexible factors. I have never seen any large extended family households. Khmu? houses are small, and it is rare for more than three nuclear families to be under one roof, I would judge.

Kinship System

Missionaries are often puzzled by the relationships of the people around them. Other peoples make distinctions where we have none, and make no distinction where we make them. There are an amazing number of types and variations of kinship structure throughout the world, and interestingly enough, what relatives call each other is often a clue to some of their marriage customs and views on such questions as incest. This happens to be true in the Khmu?, as we will see.

We give the Khmu? kinship system here in some detail in the hope that it will help you master its intricacy in a more thorough way than missionaries usually do. This, when studied properly, becomes one of the simpler and more obvious parts of the culture - as natural as breathing to the people, though very strange perhaps to the foreigner. People usually call each other by the relationship term rather than by their names, and family lineage is reckoned much farther than we bother with it. Informants did not have much trouble telling me that they would call the great grandchild of their wife's grandmother's brother, in all directions - and they are most of them different.

The missionary who learns to speak Khmu? will not have to learn to use all of the terms we list here. Many of them are synonyms, for one thing. But if he enters into the life of the people, and lives among them, he will find most of them useful, and he will hear them all the time. Let him beware, when he preaches, that he knows just what relationship is intended by such Biblical words as "sister", "brother", etc. This is one place where sloppy translation can lead to all sorts of trouble.

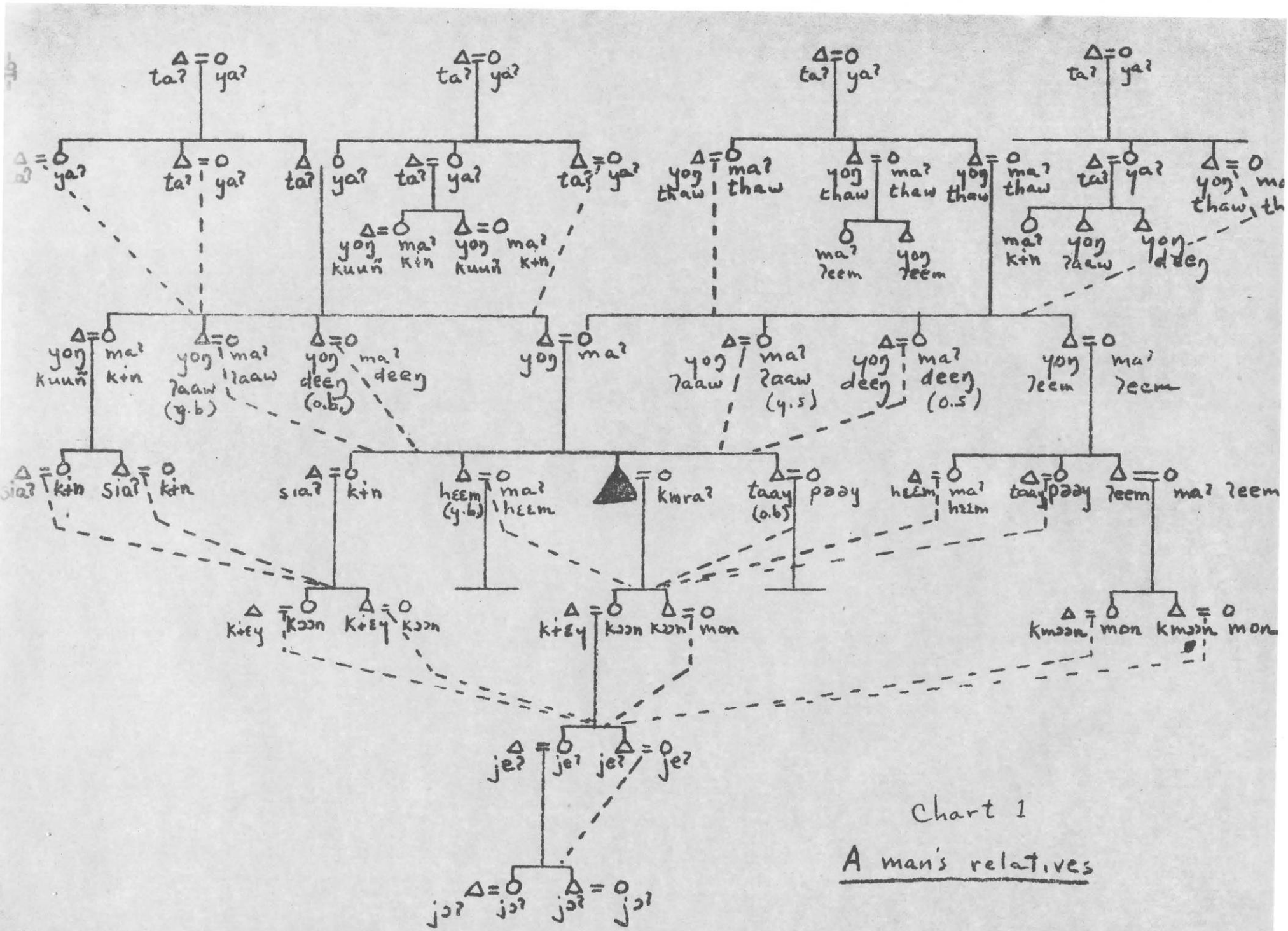
In presenting this system we must again caution you that details may differ from area to area, and of course there may be mistakes.

As you work through the following discussion it will be helpful to make constant reference to Chart 1 and Chart 2, and for that purpose some preliminary explanations will be helpful. All of the kinship terms plotted on the chart are seen from the point of view of the person represented by the large black triangle. The person who occupies this position is called Ego in anthropological terminology. Ego is a male. All triangles on the chart are males, and all circles females.

Notice the equasion sign (=) which ties Ego to a woman whom he calls kmra? 'wife'. The equasion sign indicates marriage. The vertical line coming down from the marriage sign indicates children. Thus, Ego's male child is called koon and his female child is also koon. Female koon marries a man whom Ego calls kaey, and their children are called je?, etc. Horizontal lines tie siblings together. The dotted lines are used simple to save drawing out the children of all the marriages. In the kinship terminology offspring of different relatives are sometimes called by the same terms, and when that happens a dotted line is drawn from the various other marriages which result in children called by the same terms.

With this much information you should be able to follow the discussion by finding the different relationships on the charts as you go along.

A list of all of the kinship terms which we have uncovered is given here, by generations. A few terms occur in more than one generation and are repeated for each. An important feature of the system is that for some relationships the term


ta? ya?
ya? ta? ya? ta?
yoŋ kuuñ
ma? kɨn
yoŋ ʔaaw (y.b)
ma? ʔaaw
yoŋ deeŋ (o.b)
ma? deeŋ
yoŋ
ma?
yoŋ thaw
ma? thaw
yoŋ ʔaaw (y.s)
ma? ʔaaw
yoŋ deeŋ (o.s)
ma? deeŋ
yoŋ ʔeem
ma? ʔeem
sia?
kɨn
hɛɛm (y.b)
ma? hɛɛm
kmra?
taay (o.b)
paay
kɨɛy
kɔɔn
mon
je?
jɔ?
Chart 1
A man's relatives

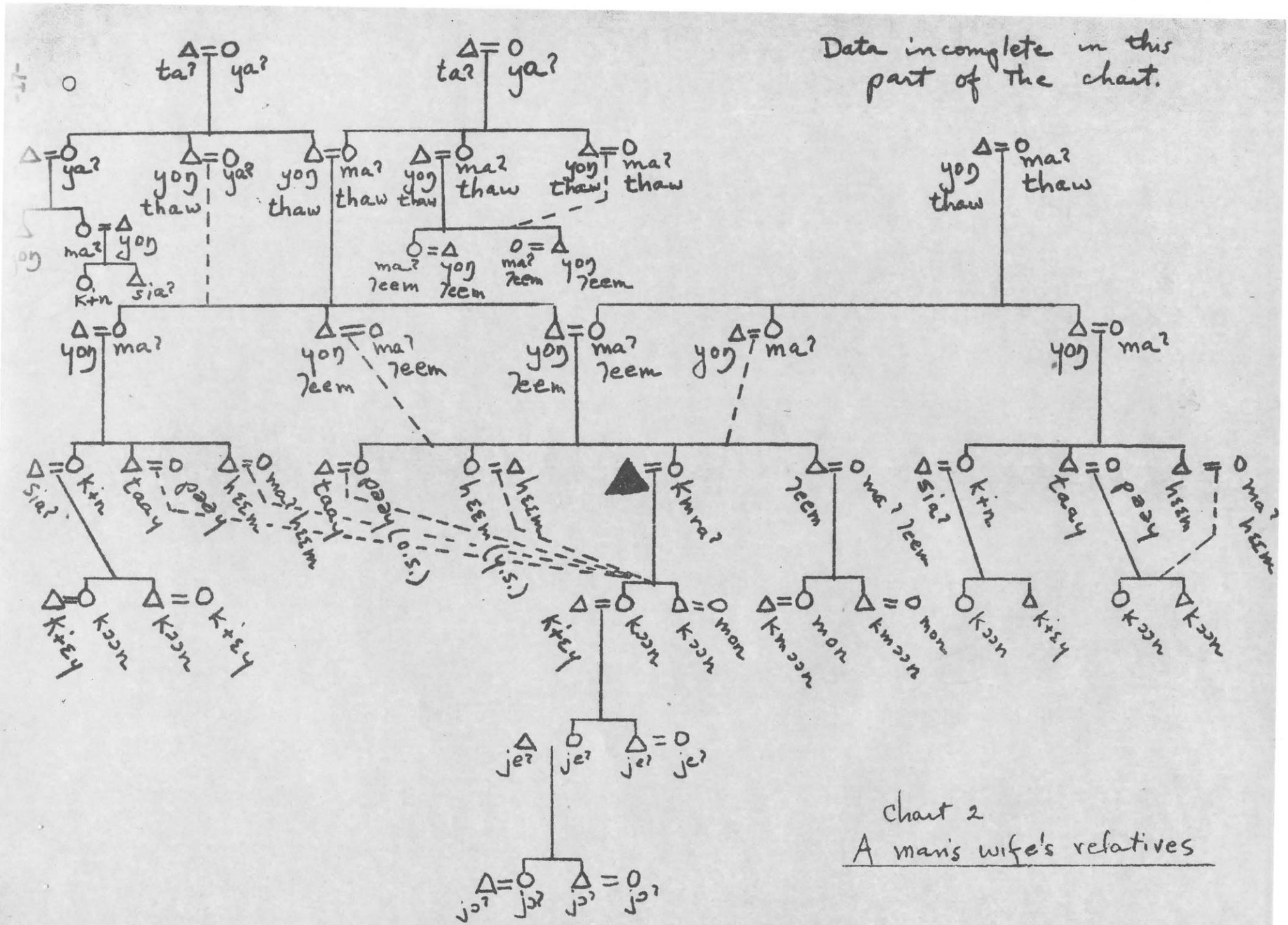


Chart 2
A man's wife's relatives

is different when spoken by a man and by a woman. (Charts 1 and 2 show only the men speaking.) These differences are indicated with the notation ms (ie, man speaking) and ws (ie, woman speaking). In such cases we will consider that the man and woman are husband and wife so as to keep our viewpoint clear. The definitions which follow are not complete ones. They just give the most frequent and nearest uses of the term. As we shall see, the system interworks so that what may be a very distant relationship by our way of thinking is a close one by theirs. An approximate translation is given in quotation marks. In order to understand these terms, find them in their various occurrences on the charts. This is laborious, but very important.

Great grandchild generation (third descending), one term:

jɔ?. m or ws. any individual of this generation. "Great grandchild"

Grandchild generation (second descending), one term:

je?. m or ws. any individual of this generation or their spouse (husband or wife as the case may be). "Grandchild".

Child's generation (first descending), several important terms:

kɔɔn. ms. child, sister's daughter, brother's child, wife's sister's child.
ws. child, sister's child, brother's daughter's husband. This term is also applied by both men and women to the spouses of anyone they call kɔɔn, although there are other, more specific terms for these on the chart, as we shall see. Note that it is used for some relationships we would call nephew and niece, but not all. The reason will be explained later.

kaey ms. daughter's husband, and kɔɔn's husband, sister's son.
ws. daughter's husband, any kɔɔn's husband, husband's sister's son. "son-in-law". (note that it also means "nephew" for some of the relationships left out under kɔɔn.)

prhaa. same as kaey.

mon. ms. son's wife, any kɔɔn's wife, wife's brother's daughter, wife's brother's son's wife, mother's brother's son's daughter, mother's brother's son's son's wife.
ws. son's wife, any kɔɔn's wife, brother's daughter, brother's son's wife. "daughter-in-law" (And "niece" in some of the relationships left out of the kɔɔn group.)

kmun. same as mon.

kmɔɔn. ms. wife's brother's son, mother's brother's son's son. This term is not used by women, who address the individual so called by their husbands as hɛɛm.

hɛɛm. ws. brother's son. "Nephew". (Note another addition to what we call nephew. (The term hɛɛm will be listed again below in other connections.)

The Speaker's Generation, several important terms:

kmra?. ms. wife. (For special terms for plural wives, divorcees, etc., see below.)

gle?. ws. husband

kɨn. ms. sister, father's sister's daughter, mother's sister's daughter, wife or any sia?,wife's father's sister's daughter, wife's mother's sister's daughter.
ws. husband's sister, husband's father or mother's sister's daughter, wife of any kuuñ, father's or mother's sister's daughter. "man's sister"

mook. same as kɨn.

sia?. ms. sister's husband, any kɨn's husband, father's sister's son. "brother-in-law" and "cousin" (one of many terms). Women do not use this term, but kuuñ.

prhaa. same as sia?

kuuñ. ws. husband of any kɨn, husband's father's sister's son.

taay. ms. older brother, wife's older sister.
ws. older sister's husband, husband's older brother.

pɔɔy. ms. older brother's wife, wife's older sister, mother's brother's older daughter.

ma? deeŋ. ws. older sister, husband's older brother's wife.

yoŋ deeŋ. ms or ws. In this generation the same as taay. see below.

?aay. In this generation the same as taay.

hɛɛm. ms. younger brother, wife's younger sister, mother's brother's younger daughter.
ws. younger sister, husband's younger brother.

?aaw. ms. wife's younger sister's husband.
ws. younger sister's husband, husband's younger brother.

ma? hɛɛm. ms. younger brother's wife, wife's younger brother.
ws. younger sister, husband's younger brother's wife.

?eem. ms. wife's brother, mother's brother's son.
ws. brother.

pree. ws. same as ?eem, but generally applied to own brother, and not to some of the more remote relationships possible.

ma? ?eem. ms. mother's brother's wife, mother's brother's son's wife, wife's brother's wife.
ws. brother's wife.

Parent's Generation (1st ascending)

yoŋ. ms. or ws. father, spouse's father, spouse's parents brothers. Also used for most individuals such as yoŋ deeŋ, yoŋ ?aaw, as an abbreviation.

ma?. m or ws. mother, spouse's mother, spouse's parent's siblings. Also used in place of many terms which contain the word ma? as part of them.

ma? kin. m or ws. father's sister.

yoŋ kuuñ. m or ws. father's sister's husband.

yoŋ deeŋ. m or ws. father's older brother, mother's older sister's husband.

ma? deeŋ. m or ws. Father's older brother's wife, mother's older sister.

yoŋ ?aaw. m or ws. father's younger brother, mother's younger sister's husband.

ma? ?aaw. m or ws. father's younger brother's wife, mother's younger sister.

yoŋ ?eem. m or ws. mother's brother.

ma? ?eem. m or ws. mother's brother's wife.

Grandparent Generation. (first ascending):

ta?. ms. father's father, mother or father's father's brother.
ws. own or husband's grandfathers, and their brothers.

ya?. ms. father's mother, father's father's sisters and father's mother's sisters.
ws. own or husbands grandmothers and their sisters.

yoŋ thaw. ms. mother's father and his brothers, wife's grandfathers and their brothers.

ma? thaw. ms. mother's mother, wife's grandmothers and their sisters.

Greatgrandparent Generation (second ascending):

ta?. m or ws. all males

ya?. m or ws. all females.

At this point the system must seem tremendously complicated. Some missionaries are tempted to say that relationships are very loose, and that the people do not understand real relationships because of the way such systems differ from what we consider natural, but such systems are generally internally consistent, and by going at it in several different ways, we can see what it is.

First, we notice that the major complications come in child's generation, speaker's generation, parent's generation, and grandparent's generation. The others are so simple but they may be immediately learned.

Second, we notice something very different from the English system, in that there are kinship names for the spouses of relatives. If we go through the list we see that men who are called by the terms in the first column below have wives who are called by the terms in the second column, and visa versa.

male	marries	female
kɔɔn	"	mon
kŧey	"	kɔɔn
kmɔɔn (ws: hɛɛm)	"	mon
sia? (ws: kuuñ)	"	kŧn
taay	"	pɛɛy (ws: ma? deeŋ)
hɛɛm	"	ma?hɛɛm
?aaw	"	hɛɛm
?eem	"	?eem
yoŋ	"	ma?
yoŋ kuuñ	"	ma? kŧn
yon deeŋ	"	ma? deeŋ
yoŋ ?aaw	"	ma? ?aaw
yoŋ ?een	"	ma? ?eem
ta?	"	ya?
yoŋ thaw	"	ma? thaw

Table I.

Note this fact: it is this list which is the clue to the structure of the kinship system. Notice that any man I call "child" (kɔɔn) marries my wife's brother's daughter or my mother's brother's son's daughter (mon). Any woman I call "child" (kɔɔn), marries my sister's son. In other words, daughter's husband and my wife's brother's son are the same person in the system. and my daughter's husband and my sister's daughter are the same person. To put it another way, if a brother and sister have children, the brother's daughter can marry the sister's son but if two brothers or two sisters have children they may not marry.

This type of arrangement is called cross cousin marriage. The children of brother and sister are cross cousins. The children of sister and sister or brother and brother are parallel cousins. But notice that with the Khmu? not all cross cousins even can marry. A man's son and his sister's daughter are cross cousins, but they may not marry. This is a special type of single-direction cross cousin marriage. Here is the appropriate information taken from chart one to make it simpler.

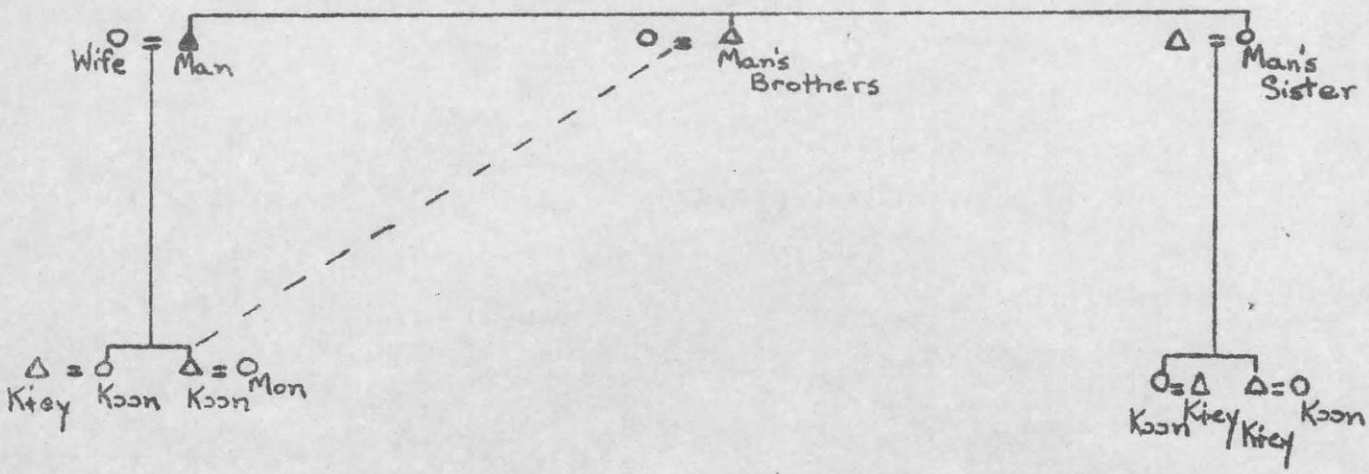


Table II.

Note how a female koon marries a kiey, and a male koon marries mon. Note that kiey is the same as sister's son. The dotted line shows that the children are called by the same terminology.

When we study this diagram from the standpoint of the men's daughter marrying their sister's sons, we see that all the girl koon marry kiey. This does not mean that a girl has to marry this type of cross cousin. She may marry outside of the family in actual practice. But she may marry the cross cousin described, or anyone else she considers to be of the same relationship, and may not marry any other persons within the system.

That brings us to another important feature of the system, namely the fact that relatives which we consider very distant are called by the same terms used for ones own child, sister's child, sister, brother, father, mother, etc.--in fact, almost all of the kinship system--are applied to the most extensive and distant relationships imaginable, and all according to a perfectly logical system to which cross cousin marriage is one key./ Another key is the important fact that a term of relationship is applied to a person and the line of his relationship is determined. One immediately knows what to call all of his relatives. Another way of saying it is that if a man calls a woman "sister" (kin) and knows that she is descended from a sister of his father, father's father, or father's grandfather, even if she is his tenth cousin, he will call her husband sia? and her children kiey and koon, and her brothers sia? and her mother ma? kin etc. That means there is less to remember, and it makes the system workable.

In Table III ya? and ta? are grandmother and grandfather, i.e., father's parents. Notice that (men speaking) my daughter (any female koon) can marry any kiey but no koon. The koons are parallel cousins, and the kieys are cross cousins. In the second place, notice all of the kin. All of the kieys have a kin for a wife. This means that my daughter may not only marry my sister's son, but also my father's sister's grandson, whether the line comes through a man or woman. Notice further that she may marry my father's brother's (older or younger) daughter's son because my father's brothers are the same as my father, so far as my father's children. For that reason I call my father's brother's children brother and sister.

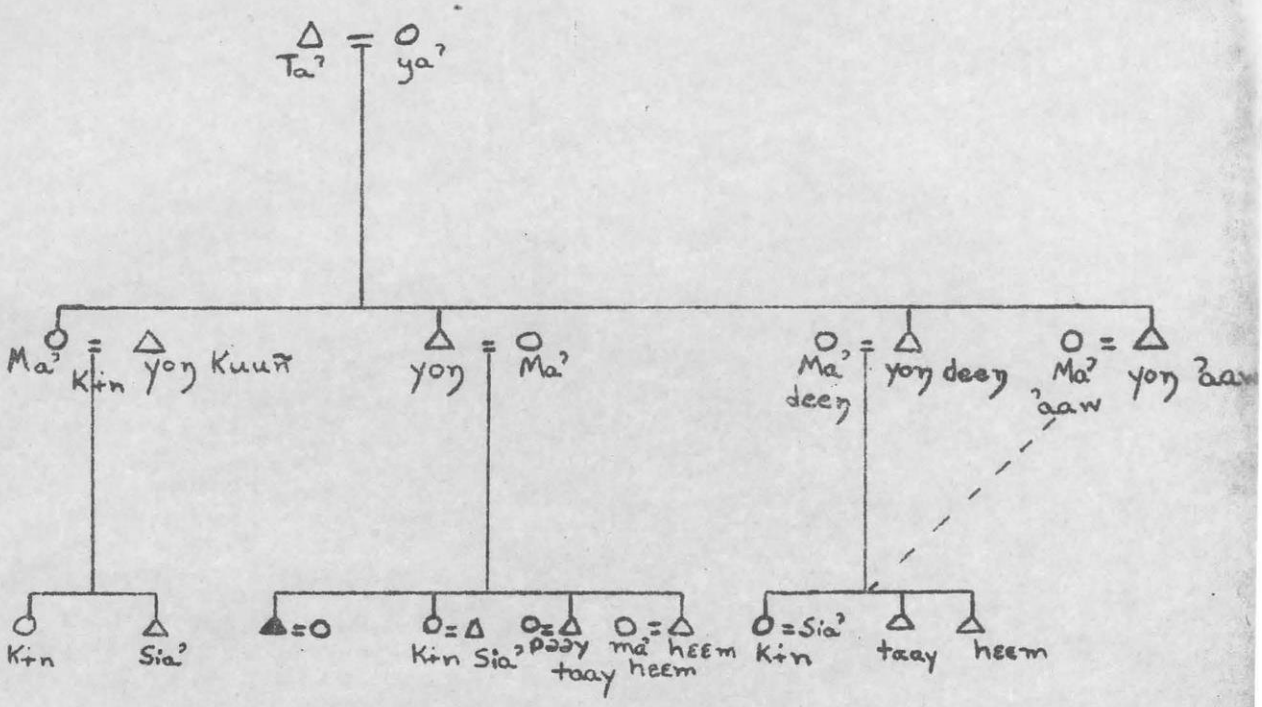


Table III.
Father's line from the point of view of ▲

Turning back to Chart 1 we see that the same pattern is repeated over and over again, so that my father's father's sisters line is a cross line all the way down, and my father's father's brothers' line is a parallel line except when they have daughters, and it becomes cross from there on.

There is nothing logically different about my father's mother's line, though it looks different. Here Grandmother's sister' line is not a cross line, because they are not brother and sister, so the offspring are like those of grandfather's brothers. Grandmother's brothers have lines like all of the other ta?. As soon as either of these lines runs through a daughter, however, then it becomes cross, and runs into my father's sister or my sister's class.

The thing to remember in figuring out the mother's line is that the male speaker is now being figured as the son of a sister. Just as my daughter may marry my sister's son, so I may marry my mother's brother's daughter. Thus, I and my brothers may marry any peey or female heem. The children of my mothers sisters are again like my brothers and sisters, so my daughter can marry the son of any girl in that group. My son can marry the daughter of my mother's brother's son because she is the cross cousin of the sons of these distant "brothers and sisters".

My mother's father's sister's line is a cross line which follows the same pattern as my father's mother's sister's line, whereas the children of my mother's father's brother are the same as my mother's brothers and sisters. My mother's mother's sister is again parallel, giving children equivalent to my mothers siblings, but my mother's mother's brothers are cross lines, following the pattern of my mother's brothers.

The important thing about my wife's family, Chart 2, and my relationship to it, is that my wife's brothers are called by the same terminology as my mother's brothers sons, and my sons can marry their daughters. This becomes obvious when

we remember that my sons are my wife's sons, and that my wife is the sister of her brothers, so that here again the pattern is repeated - a man's daughters marry his sister's sons. There is a difference, however between my wife's line and my mother's line, in that all the relatives of my wife's parents generation, except the yoŋ ʔeem (potential fathers-in-law) I simply call by the same term as for mother and father without distinction. My wife does the same thing in speaking of my relatives.

I call, therefore, my wife's mother's line the identical terms I call my mother's line, except for the simplification to maʔ and yoŋ in my wife's mother's generation. My wife's father's father's line is a cross line for me (except for the line of my wife's father's sister), as it would naturally have to be for me to marry my wife. My wife's father's father's sister's line is parallel, his brother's line is cross except when it goes through a woman, such as his daughter. My wife's father's mother's brothers and sisters' lines are all cross - plenty of wives for me there.

Note: man may marry any woman he calls taay or hɛɛm (i.e. wife's sister, m's b's da.) Such a person is the daughter of a yoŋ ʔeem. Woman may marry any man she calls taay or hɛɛm, who is in turn the son of a maʔ kin. If the woman is the man's wife they will all be taay hɛɛm to each other becuase terms are not applied to the same people by the different sexes.

So far we have been considering only those terms used by a man when he is speaking. When a woman is speaking (his wife) she uses the same term for the same individual in certain cases, and in others not. For jeʔ and joʔ (grandchild and great grandchild) there is no difference. Everyone a man calls by these terms his wife does also. The same is true of the Great grandfather - great grandmother taʔ-yaʔ, but in between some relationships are called the same and some are different.

Some of the changes in terminology are automatic in the system.

Husband says	Wife says
kmɔɔn	hɛɛm (only difference in "child" generation)
siaʔ	kuuñ
pɛɛy	maʔ deeŋ or taay
maʔ ʔeem (wife of ʔeem)	niŋ

Each furthermore, generally calls the parents' siblings of the other yoŋ-ma .

Some terms carry the same definition when spoken by man or woman, (husband and wife) but therefore apply to different people: maʔ kin, yoŋ kuuñ, yoŋ deeŋ, maʔ deeŋ, yoŋ ʔaaw, maʔ ʔaaw, yoŋ ʔeem, maʔ ʔeem. These are all of the parent generation.

A woman uses the yoŋ thaw-maʔ thaw terms only for her husband's mother's parents, and her mother's mother's brother.

Obviously this explanation has been too complicated to assimilate at one sitting. Its value will be to serve as a reference when kinship terms begin to emerge. Don't let them go by default, but trace them down with the help of the charts and discussion, and explore them with your informant.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I believe that the following bibliography contains all of the most important materials on the Khmu', as well as some books listed because they are referred to above. (May 1, 1962).

Greenberg, Joseph H.

1953 "Historical Linguistics and Unwritten Languages," in Anthropology Today, ed. by A. L. Kroeber. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Halpern, Joel M.

1957 "Trade Patterns in Northern Laos," paper read to the Ninth Pacific Science Congress (duplicated). (The Khmu' institution of the lam is featured.)

1958 Aspects of Village Life and Culture Change in Laos, New York: Council on Economic and Cultural Affairs, Inc. (The Khmu' are well included in this survey.)

1960 "Laos and her Tribal Problems," Michigan Alumnus Quarterly Review, Vol. LXVII, No. 10, pp. 59-67. (A survey of inter-ethnic relationships in Laos.)

1961a "Population Statistics and Associated Data," Laos Project Paper No. 3 (duplicated).

1961b Laos Profiles, Laos Project Paper No. 18 (duplicated). (Includes brief "profiles" of two Khmu' individuals.)

n.d.a "Economic and Related Statistics Dealing with Laos," Laos Project Paper No. 11 (duplicated).

n.d.b "The Natural Economy of Laos," Laos Project Paper No. 17 (duplicated)

n.d.c "The Rural and Urban Economies," Laos Project Paper No. 18 (duplicated).

Haudricourt, André-G.

1953 "La Place du Vietnamien dans les Langues Austroasiatiques," Bulletin de la Société Linguistique de Paris, Vol. 49, pp. 122-128.

Izikowitz, Karl Gustav

1951 Lamet: Hill Peasants in French Indochina, Göteborg: Etnografiska Museet. (Repeated references to the Khmu' and comparisons with them in this, the best monograph on any of the "Kha" groups of northern Laos.)

Larson, Donald N., and William A. Smalley

1962 Manual of Language Learning. Privately duplicated. Enlarged annually

LeBar, Frank M., and Adrienne Suddard (eds.)

1960 Laos, Its People, Its Society, Its Culture, New Haven: Human Relations Area Files.

Nida, Eugene A.,

1957 Learning a Foreign Language, New York: Friendship Press.

Roux, Henri, and Tran-van-Chu

1954 "Les Tsa Khmu'," in Quelques Minorités Ethniques du Nord-Indochine, Saigon: France Asie Nos. 92-93, pp. 297-357. [Reprinted from Bulletin de l'École Francaise d'Extreme Orient, Vol. 27 (1927), pp. 169-222.] (This paper is the most complete ethnographic statement on the Khmu', but in a time and place very different from Luang Prabang today. It is by a French army officer, written in the 1920's concerning Khmu' around Lai Chao, North Vietnam.)

Seidenfaden, Eric

1958 The Thai Peoples, Bangkok: The Siam Society, pp. 118-119.

Smalley, William A.

1960 "The Gospel and the Cultures of Laos," Practical Anthropology, Supplement, pp. 63-69. [Reprinted from Vol. 3, No. 3, pp. 47-57.] (Includes a brief statement on Khmu' temperament and cultural disintegration.)

1961 Outline of Khmu' Structure, New Haven: American Oriental Society Essay No. 2. (The only phonemic and grammatical material on Khmu'.)

1962 (?) Orthography Studies (in press).

ETHNOGRAPHIC NOTES ON THE KHAMU

By

Frank M. LeBar

The Khamu

Final Report to National Research Council, Bangkok

Frank M. Lebar, Ph.D., Human Relations Area Files-Yale University

Chiengmai, April 27, 1965

Introductory Note

I wish to acknowledge the assistance of the National Research Council in carrying out my research on inter-ethnic contact and assimilation, with special reference to the Khamu, during the period August 1, 1964 through April 30, 1965. I am also indebted to the Public Welfare Department and to Mr. Prasit Disavat, Director of the Hilltribes Division. Various officials in Chiengmai, in particular the Governor and Major Pairojn of the Border Police have helped me with letters of introduction and in other ways. I have from discussions with various members of the faculty of the University of Chiengmai, and with Dr. William Geddes and the staff of the Tribal Research Center.

The background of my research interests, and an outline of the methodology used, will be found in my Interim Report to the National Research Council, dated February 15, 1965.

Orientation

The Khamu are a relatively unknown Non-Khmer-speaking people found primarily in northern Laos.[1] They are linguistically and culturally related to a large number of named groups of swidden-farming hilltribesmen in Laos (called by the generic term "Kha"), in Vietnam (where they are called "Moi"), and in Cambodia (where they go under the generic term "Phnong"). Remnant Non-Khmer groups in Thailand include some immigrant Khamu from Laos, as well as Lawa, T'in, Yumbri, Chaobon, and Kui. Linguistically

related groups in Burma include the Palaung and Wa tribes. The best known of the Mon-Khmer language groups are the ancient Mon of Burma and Thailand (represented today by the Talaing and remnant groups in central Thailand) and the Khmer of Cambodia (ancestors of the present-day cambodians).

The Mon-Khmer stratum is generally regarded as relatively old in this part of Southeast Asia, predating the arrival of Thai speakers and even more recent arrivals such as Miao, Yao, Lahu and Lisu. Most Mon-Khmer groups at present occupy an intermediate foothill zone between lowland wet rice growers and true mountain tribes such as Miao and Yao. They engage primarily in swidden farming with supplementary wet rice fields in some cases. Groups such as Khamu, Lawa, Kui and T'in are heavily acculturated due to long and intimate contact with surrounding populations; in many cases the indigenous culture pattern has been altered beyond recognition. The present fragmented distribution of these peoples would indicate that they were once more numerous and that they perhaps occupied a larger area than at present. Whether they were formerly plains dwellers who were later pushed back into the hills and into an economically less advantageous zone by the Thai and Lao is a moot question at this point. Some of the Laos have a tradition of a former "Khamu King" and of having once founded a great city; whether such traditions have any basis in fact, I do not know but it is my impression that Khamu culture must at one time have been richer in content than would appear from an examination of contemporary remnant groups. The Lao regard the Khamu as their "older brothers," the original inhabitants of the area, and as having great power over the indigenous spirits. Ceremonies at the Luang Prabang court still utilize Khamu in

this capacity - and they formerly played a similar role in the old principality of Nan (cf., Smalley, 1964). The legend of the lak muang within the old walled city of Chiengmai portrays the Lawa in a similar role (cf., Sanguan Chot Sukrat, Traditions and Customs of the North. Chap. 14. Bangkok; 1962. in Thai). My major interest in the present fieldwork has been the study of inter-ethnic contact and assimilation in the hills of northern Thailand and adjacent areas. This is in the context of a broader interest in the definition of "hilltribesman" vs. "lowlander" in the ethnic history of greater Southeast Asia, including southern China. Questions as to how "fixed" these categories are when viewed in historical perspective; and the conditions - cultural, historical, and ecological - that make for contact, acculturation, and assimilation, and for the apparent fact that some groups assimilate much more readily than others. Within this overall focus, the history of contacts between the older stratum of Mon-Khmer speakers and the intrusive Thai-speaking populations of Thailand and Laos offer a potentially fruitful field for study.

Although the Khamu are found primarily in Laos, there are immigrant villages across the border in Nan dating back possibly 150 years. In addition there is a history of Khamu immigrant labor (males) into Thailand during at least the last 80 years. Much of this was artifically stimulated by the labor requirements of European teak firms, but even such contrived immigration took advantage of what seem to have been existing patterns within indigenous Khamu culture making for cultural fragmentation and psychocultural subordination to more dominant groups - possibly the result of a long history of contact with Thai-speaking Lao. The study of this continuing movement of immigrant male Khamu into Thailand emerges, then, as the study of a

special aspect of a more general, long-standing, phenomenon - the cultural and physical absorbtion of swiddenfarming, hill-dwelling Khamu speakers by lowland-dwelling Thai (Lao) speakers.

Ethnicity in Laos

Smalley (1964) estimates as many as 100,000 Khamu in northern Laos, making them the largest "Kha" group in the area. There are many Khamu speakers in Luang Prabang and Xieng Khouang provinces, as well as in Sayaboury, Nam Tha, and Phong Saly provinces. They are found in the Lai Chao area of North Vietnam, and Khamu speakers have been reported as far east as upper Thanh Hoa province of North Vietnam. This rather wide dispersal has meant that the Khamu have been in contact with a variety of languages and cultures, with resulting differential acculturation and the evolution of named subgroups - some of which at least show dialect variation. The word "Khamu", therefore can refer to a number of named populations, probably having at one time a common culture and a common language. In fact practically all the dialects are mutually intelligible, indicating that acculturative and assimilative changes cannot have taken place too long ago. These subgroups are lumped together as Khamu (Khamuk, Kha Khamu) by the Lao and Thai. Smalley (1964) says that Khamu derives from the indigenous kumhmu' _____, meaning "people." When they come to Thailand members of various subgroups use only the name Khamu, in this respect probably conforming to prevalent Thai usage.

The generic name for subgroupings of the kind just mentioned is tmɔɔy _____. Around Luang Prabang and in Sayaboury the Tmɔɔy Moo are most numerous. The Tmɔɔy Ksak are a smaller subgroup southeast of Luang Prabang. North of the Nam Hou (generally between the Nam Hou and the Nam Tha) Khamu

speakers are referred to as Tmɔɔy Rɔɔk - although the Lao call them Hok or Kha Hok. The term Rɔɔk or Hok appears to be used in a somewhat broader sense, also, to mean "backwoods" Khamu, i.e., less acculturated Khamu speakers wherever they may be; thus the acculturated Khamu on the middle Yao river in Nan province refer to those on the upper Yao as Tmɔɔy Rɔɔk , saying that the latter live higher in the hills and retain more of the old customs, including the loincloth worn by men.

North of the Nam Tha, in the region of Phukha, Muang Sing, Muang Nam Tha and Muang Sai, Khamu speakers refer to themselves generically as Khamu or Pru, but also distinguish such categories as Khamu Lu (Lue), Khamu Yuan, and Kwaen. These latter names reflect the fact that in this area Khamu have come into contact with a variety of Thai immigrant groups from the Sip Song Panna and north Thailand. Here the Khamu by all accounts live closer to a lowland environment, in relatively frequent contact with Thai-speaking lowlanders. Buddhist practices, if not outright acceptance of Buddhism, appear to be strong here. My information indicates that Khamu immigrants into Thailand from this area are generally more successful (in Thai terms) than those who have come in from south of the Nam Tha -- the Tmɔɔy Rɔɔk area which appears, at least, to be somewhat less acculturated. Buddhism apparently has less impact in this Rɔɔk area, and old forms of wealth are associated with a socio-religico-economic complex involving status mobility through acquisition of wealth, and an attempt to control wealth by marriage within related families.

My data indicate a marked similarity between this Rɔɔk culture type and the Lamet (Khamet or Rumet) in the mountains south of Tafa on the lower Nam Tha, described by Izikowitz (1951). The cultural parallels are so many, and so detailed, that one wonders whether, in fact, the Lamet

and Khamu should not be considered as originally belonging to the same culture type. Either this or there has been extensive borrowing by Lamet from Khamu, or visa versa. The two languages, however, although related, are not mutually intelligible - at least the Khamu unanimously state that they cannot understand Lamet.

Two further findings from data are of interest at this point. First, I interviewed and gathered data on well over 100 Khamu immigrant males in all parts of north Thailand, all of whom came originally from locations north of Luang Prabang. I am unable to account for this, unless the answer is simply that recruitment for the old teak industry could most easily draw on the Nam Tha and Nam Beng areas - both conviniently across the border from Chiengkhong and Chiengkham. Secondly, I never met a Khamu speaker in Thailand who would identify himself as Tmooy Kok or Kha Hok. Although many individuals were pointed out to me as such by other Khamu, later questioning invariably produced a flat denial. This tends to confirm the supposition that among Khamu speakers the term Kok or Hok carries a pejorative connotation.

The Indigenous Culture

Below are listed a few salient features of contemporary Khamu culture as found in functioning Khamu villages. I have included only the more generalised traits that would seem to be applicable to relatively unacculturated Khamu. These data have been drawn from my own interviews with immigrant males in Thailand, my observations of refugee Khamu villages north of Muang Ngamp (Nan Province) and south of Chiengkhong (Chienggrai Province). I have also drawn on what Smalley (1964) was able to obtain from observations and analysis of linguistic texts in the Luang Prabang Province.

Economy: Glutinous rice grown in swiddens is the staple food. The fields are worked by small swidden groups, the membership of which tends to remain fairly constant from year to year. These groups tend to be made up of relatives since village endogamy is permissible and freely practiced. I have no information to indicate that such groups are regularly composed of patrisib members or, for that matter, that members must be kinsmen.

Villages of 100 or more houses, containing up to 1,000 inhabitants, do reportedly occur, probably in areas where some wet rice can be grown. Smaller villages of 20-50 houses are more usual, however. Acculturated Khamu tend to live in nuclear households

so that under such conditions village population would average 80 to 200 persons. Hill villages are built on sloping ground, often on the side of a ridge or spur, at altitudes of from 2,500 to 3,000 feet. Water is carried from a stream somewhere below the village. Houses of unacculturated Khamu are built close to the ground, normally with the downhill raised on short piles, in a kind of split-level style. Under aboriginal conditions these houses, with raised platforms inside for sleeping and sitting, are relatively large and well-made and can accommodate 10 to 20 more people. Auxiliary structures include a community or men's house (ศาลา), sometimes more than one in a village, where male gather to gossip and work at odd jobs and where visiting males can sleep. Village elders meet in the ศาลา to consider cases of misconduct and dispense justice - usually in the form of a fine. These structures do not differ markedly from the ordinary house type.

Agriculture as a source of food is supplemented by gathering and, to a lesser extent by hunting and fishing. Hunting is chiefly of small animals using traps; crossbows appear crude and little used. The Khamu raise pigs, chickens, ducks, and (if they afford it) buffalo. The latter, together with pigs and chickens, are used chiefly in connection with religious sacrifice. Animal husbandry is not developed to the extent that is among the Meo and some other groups.

Under aboriginal conditions men with large families seem to have been able to accumulate some wealth through sale and barter of rice. In more acculturated villages today, however, the economy appears relatively poor and undeveloped, and villages suffer from periodic food shortages. The material culture inventory, even under aboriginal conditions, appears to have been relatively meager, pottery making and weaving being absent (although a few women in acculturated villages do weave) and blacksmithing limited largely to repair of tools. The Khamu get silver neckbands from the Meo - and in fact most of their forms of wealth, which were considerable in former times, have been obtained from outside sources. They are, however, quite good at carpentry and at work in bamboo and ratten.

To supplement their more or less chronic food shortage, many villages nowadays barter manufactured goods with outside groups, but the main source of outside income, and of new wealth brough into the community, has for decades been the movement

of men out of the village in search of wage labor. This pattern of leaving the village temporarily to seek work is a distinguishing characteristic of Khamu (and the neighboring and closely related T'in and Lamet). The Khamu have sought employment chiefly in the lowland - to some extent in Laos but chiefly in Thailand. But they will also work for Meo and Yao if the opportunity arises.

Social Organization Totemic patrisibs, ta, are theoretically exogamous, but in practice exogamy is probably limited to the patrilineage. There are many named sibs (named for totemic animal, bird or plant), each with an origin myth involving a legendary ancestor and accounting for the fact that his descendants cannot eat the totem. To eat the totem means loss of one's teeth and an early death. The sibs are widespread and several are usually represented in any one village. I have no information that these sibs functioned in any way other than controlling marriage.

Preferred marriage is with a MoBrDa and, in cases of wealthy families, betrothal is arranged at an early age by the parent. A brideprice is normally given by the boy's family, and brideservice is common. Residence after marriage is usually initially matrilocal, although this varies considerably. Under aboriginal conditions the household appears normally to consist of an extended matrilocal family, with as many as 10 to 20 or more persons under one roof. Acculturated Khamu, on the other hand, usually reside in small, unclear households.

The focus of Khamu culture, as found in the area south of the Nam Tha (and paralleled in many respects among the nearby Lamet), is a socio-religio-economic complex involving accumulation of wealth and its display and distribution in the form of lavish household ancestral rites. It is this complex of activities which, under unacculturated conditions at least, motivates much of Khamu behavior and gives to life a meaning and purpose beyond mere existence. The status of wealthy man (akamool, from a "to have" and Khamool or Khamuun "money" or "wealth") can be achieved through hard work and the accumulation of money and traditional forms of wealth. A large family is a great advantage in this struggle - daughters whose husbands bring in bridewealth and additional labor for the rice swiddens, and sons who may marry advantageously. Polygyny is allowed and plural wives can be an economic asset if a man can afford the initial expense. Wealthy families sometimes consolidate their position by arranged

marriages between sons and daughters. The status of akamcol is an honored one and such a man is listened to with respect. But his status is only fully achieved when he (and his household) can afford a properly lavish ancestral ceremony, including the sacrifice of buffalo and the distribution of much food and liquor. At such times the jaan, large cylindrical bronze drums which the Khamu say they obtain from the Karens of Burma, are displayed and sounded. These, plus ancient pottery jars and knives and spears (some fancy worked silver scabbards) are family heirlooms - the symbols of a man's wealth. The jaan, together with money, buffalo, and cloth figure as bridewealth in marriages between wealthy families. The desire to accumulate wealth and its importance in marriage, has undoubtedly been a motivating factor in the movement of younger men out of the villages in search of wage labor.

Religion: Traditional religion is largely animistic in content, centering on a variety of spirits, hrooy, including spirits of the village, household, forest and swidden. The poop, possibly a borrowing from Lao, are dangerous as well as frightening, and a person possessed by one of these himself becomes dangerous to others and may be driven from the village. Ancestral spirits figure largely in Khamu ceremonial.

Cyclical village-wide ceremonies, feeding the village spirits on behalf of village welfare, are conducted by priest-shamans who also function in curing illness. Sacrificial rites on behalf of the village as a whole are conducted in front of the village gaang, the central men's house which on such occasions takes on the characteristics of a community house. Khamu shamans and sorcerers have a wide reputation among both Lao and Meo - ; the Lao at least, believe that the Khamu have a special power over the spirits of their indigenous area.

The all-important household ancestral rites are conducted, not by the priest-shaman, but by the male and female head of the household. These are held periodically, usually when enough wealth has been accumulated or in case of serious illness within the family. The ceremony is called liang hrooy ta'ya' (feeding thespirits of the grandparents). A buffalo is sacrified before the sacred second door of the house (this doorway, located in the rear wall, opposite the main door, is normally barred throughout the year). The head of the buffalo, as well as the meat and other sacrificial foods and implements, figure in a series of elaborate rituals lasting over a 3-day period. The buffalo head

is ceremonially introduced to the ancestral spirits by being borne through the sacred second door, and all of the family's food during the 3-day period is cooked over the sacred hearth (a second hearth area, to the right of the sacred door, normally taboo to all but members of the family; it is here that the family's rice is cooked). The skull and horns of the sacrificial buffalo are later stored in this area, which is the seat of the ancestral and house spirits. Related families are invited to this ceremony and there is considerable drinking of rice liquor and courting among the people. Much of the food is distributed to the rest of the village at the men's (community) house.

The Khamu legend of the gourd - an origin legend accounting for the peopling of the earth by Khamu, Meo, Thai, etc., and containing a deluge motif as well as brother-sister incest - is similar in outline to the same myth as recounted by the Lao. Although versions I have collected vary in detail, they are also remarkable similar to the origin legend of the Lamet as reported by Izikowitz (1951). The Khamu also have many stories featuring a culture hero, chuang, as well as stories about the exploits of a trickster hero - some of which account for Khamu culture traits such as the custom of swiddening on the hillsides.

Entry into Thailand

The entry of Khamu into Thailand in relatively large numbers appears to date from about 1880 OR 1890, when the increasing demands of the European teak firms for forest labor stimulated the annual recruitment of young Khamu from from their villages in Laos. Prior to this time Burmese foresters had been working the teak forests of north Thailand for some decades under concessions granted by the local princes. I have been unable to determine, however, whether they utilised Khamu labor to any extent. I have also been unable to determine, from the historical sources examined thus far, the extent to which Khamu might have been brought into Thailand prior to the 19th century. There is some evidence that the prince of Nan, about 1830, raided up toward the Sip Song Panna, bringing back Khamu and other "Kha" as prisoners of war - and it is even said that Khamu and T'in helped to build the old city walls of Nan. But the Khamu refugee villages in northern Nan are of relatively recent date and it is impossible to date the entry of other Khamu into Nan Province much earlier than about 150 years ago.

It is reasonable to suppose that the early Thai kingdoms, such as Lannathai in the north, made use of "Kha" tribal peoples as labor in the construction of city walls and as bearers and auxiliary forces during warfare - and that these people were obtained during population raids on surrounding territories. As mentioned, however, I have thus far been unable to obtain any concrete evidence for this.

Recruitment for the Teak Industry I do not know how this pattern originated, but by the 1890's, the recruitment of Khamu from Laos as labor in the teak forests was well organized and on a relatively large scale. During the hight of this recruitment period an estimated 300-400 Khamu came into Chiengmai, alone, annually. World War II interrupted this pattern, but it was renewed, on a lesser scale, in the years immediately following. With the gradual phasing out of European teak cocessions and the emergence of the government-controlled Forest Industry Association, the old role of the Khamu as forest labor and mahout has largely been taken over by Thai and Karens. Until the closing of the Lao border years, however, the Khamu continued to come into Thailand in relatively large numbers, chiefly as seasonal hired labor in connection with the tobacco industry. Despite restrictions on illegal entry, many Khamu still cross the border annually, and a Khamu resident in Thailand has little difficulty communicating with his relatives back in Laos if he wishes to do so.

Recruitment for the teak industry was carried on by men called naaj hɔɔj - presumably from Thai naaj rɔɔj (Lao naaj hɔɔj), "leader of 100's." These men were themselves Khamu who had already worked in Thailand, knew the "ropes" and the routes from Laos to such places as Chiengmai and Lampang. Their usual method was to recruit a group of 15 to 30 or more young men and conduct them to a place of employment in Thailand. Recruiting appears to have been done chiefly in the Nam Beng-Nam Tha area, as well as to the north of the Nam Tha as far as Phong Saly. Usual routes were either via Chiengsaen to Chiengrai and thence south to Chiengmai via Doi Saket, or else via Chiengkhong or Chiengkham and thence south to Lampang. The naaj hɔɔj was responsible to a boy's parents to get him safely to Thailand, find him employment, and at the end of a 2 or 3 year period, bring him back again safely. For this he received a sizeable commission, taken as an advance against the boy's annual wage at time of employment. Having disposed of a group in this fashion, the naaj hɔɔj returned to Laos where he spent the

following season recruiting another group. These men usually recruited within a limited area, where they were known and trusted. Their return from this business was not inconsiderable, and many such individuals retiredwith their savings from active recuiting and set themsleves up in Thailand as merchants or traders. In many cases, their recruiting activities took them through portions of Burma and it was not uncommon to set oneself up as a trader in Burmese goods, traveling back and forth periodically to Burma for the purpose. As a result, a good many Khamu now resident in Thailand have some knowledge of Burma or possess contacts there. Some have married Shan or Haw women are able to speak some Burmese, Shan, or Haw.

In Chiengmai and Lampang, centers for the European teak firms, there developed the institution of the naaj hɔɔj njay (the "big" naaj hɔɔj). These, again, were Khamu who had "made good" in Thailand - owners of shops and men of considerable prestige among their fellow Khamu - even to the extent of being known back in Laos as successful "overseas" Khamu, owners of many broze drums and other goods so dear to the Khamu. These individuals acted as "clearing houses" for newly-arrived Khamu seeking employment, and a new arrival could be sure of a place to stay in the compound of the naaj hɔɔj nyaaj until he found a job. Today, in Chiengmai, the original naaj hɔɔj nyaaj has been dead for some years - but another Khamu shop owner has inherited this position, and although teak labor recruitment and the originization that went with it have long since disappeared, this man's shop is still a clearing house for news and for Khamu moving in and out of Chiengmai.

Khamu who came here to work received a small annual wage plus housing and rice. Those who managed to save some money used it for the purchase of gongs, cloth or silver and returned to their home village, where many presumably concluded successful marriages and rose to the status of akamool. Others, less fortunate, lost their money in gambling and drinking, and these for the most part never returned to Laos. A good proportion of these " failures" (in Khamu terms) married Thai women and their descendants are today in the process of "becoming Thai."

Number of Khamu in Thailand During my 9 monthsin north Thailand I was able to visit personally most of the areas where there are known to be Khamu, with the exception of the Chiengkham-Payao area. The following figures represent my " educated guess" as to

the number of ethnic Khamu (Khamu born in Laos or Thailand of Khamu parents) presently living in north Thailand. These estimates, which have consciously been kept on the conservative side, do not include the south, there are said to be Khamu in the Bangkok area and some around Kanchanaburi, but I have no knowledge of how many.

Changwat Chiengmai. Total 800 - 1,000. In Chiengmai municipality alone there are an estimated 200. There are Khamu working on Miang plantations in the Maetaeng-Chiengdao area, and at the tin mines at Baw Gaew. There are Khamu in Amphur Fang trading in opium and other goods. There are also Khamu in mixed villages in the hills between Li and Lamphun.

Changwat Chiengmai. Total 1,500 - 2,000. This figure includes the hills between Doi Saket and Wiang Pa Pao, where there are perhaps 100 Khamu living in Thai villages along the road and on tea plantations and in mixed miang villages in the hills back from the road. Likewise another 100-200 in the Wiang Pa Pao-Mae Suai area. Chiengmai municipality contains an estimated 100 Khamu, and in Amphur Chiengsaen there are between 300 and 500 Khamu working on tobacco stations, hauling water, and working in hotels. in the Chiengkhong area estimated 200-300 are found in villages south of the town, on tobacco stations, and hauling water and working at menial jobs in town. There are probably at least another 300 in the Chiengkham-Payao area.

Changwat Nan. Total 2,000 - 3,500. There are mixed Khamu-Thai villages near Sea, south of Nan town; in commune Baw along the road between Nan and Pua, in the hills east of Pua; and along the middle Yao river valley west of Pua. Above Muang Ngaup there are refugee villages of pure Khamu stock, and there are both mixed and pure stock villages on the headwaters of the Yao. Gordon Young (Hilltribes of North Thailand, 1961) reports a total of 30 villages with about 3,500 persons. However, if we are counting ethnic Khamu, it appears to me this figure may be high.

Changwat Lampang. Total 500 - 1,000. This includes an estimated 50 or more Khamu in Lampang municipality. Others in outlying areas and in the foothills of the Wang river drainage. These figures may be too low.

Elsewhere. Total 200 - 300. Including Amphur Phrae, Maehongsorn, and Mae Sariang areas.

The above estimates total 5,000 minimum and 7,600 maximum.. Since these estimates are on the conservative side, it would probably be safe to say that the ethnic Khamu presently in north Thailand do not exceed 10,000. Their numbers then would be less than those for Meo, Yao, Karen and Lahu; but they are probably more numerous than either Akha or Lisu. They appear to total about the same as Lawa. (Comparative figures from Gordon Young). I would estimate that of this total, between 800 and 1,000 live in a city or town environment.

The Khamu Increment within North Thailand's Population. Attempting to estimate the number of descendants of Khamu-Thai or Khamu-other mixed marriages is difficult and subject to great error. The following estimates of annual immigration of Khamu to primary points within Thailand would seem reasonable, however:

Chiengmai	300 per year 1890-1930 (40 years)	12,000
	150 per year 1930-1960 (30 years)	4,500
Lampang	150 per year 1890-1920 (30 years)	4,500
	50 per year 1950-1960 (30 years)	1,500
Chiengsaen	300 per year 1930-1960 (30 years)	9,000
Chiengkhong	200 per year 1930-1960 (30 years)	6,000
Elsewhere (exclusive of (Nan)	100 per year 1890-1960 (70 years)	7,000
		44,500

That of these 44,500, approximately 20 percent (one out of every five) stayed in Thailand and married, the total of primary mixed marriages for this group would come to 8,900.

Nan province needs to be considered separately in this context. Captives

(Probably including women) were brought into this area as early as 1850. Migrations of whole villages from Laos into Nan have occurred at least since 1920. Assuming a village population totaling 3,000 over the period 1920-1960, and that 10 percent of these married with Thai or other non-Khamu each year the total of Primary mixed marriages over this period would come to 12,000. Male captives remaining in the area and contracting mixed marriages might be expected to raise this figure to 13,000.

Adding this 13,000 to the figure of 8,900 already obtained, give a grand total of some 20,000 primary mixed marriages. Assuming an average 3 children per marriage, first generation descendants might be expected to total 60,000. Descendants of these in turn would come to 180,000.

In summary, it might be reasonable to assume a total of between 150,000 and 200,000 descendants of Khamu-other marriages added to the northern Thai population during the period for which we have any kind of reliable information, i.e, 1850 to date.

The Khamu Desire to Emigrate The fact that Khamu males do leave their home villages in search of work is well established. The intriguing question remains: what is it about Khamu which causes them to seek employment and experience outside their own cultural milieu and which makes for the characteristic Khamu cultural subordination to more dominant groups with whom they come in contact? The following two variables would seem to offer at least a partial explanation of this phenomenon:

Ecological and cultural correlates of intermediate zone occupation. The Khamu and other Mon-Khmer tribes occupy an intermediate zone of low forested hills, above the plains-dwelling Thai but below the mountain-dwelling Meo and Yao. Ecologically, this appears to be a disadvantageous area, a prime breeder of malaria vectors and a poor area for agriculture due to dense jungle regrowth and the ravages of insect pests and animals. Culturally, it may be considered a primary contact zone - the meeting place of lowland traders going up into the hill and mountain peoples coming down to the plains. Considerable mobility and contact of diverse ethnic groups charactarize this zone, particularly during the dry season. This mixture of peoples and the need to communicate for purposes of trade fosters multi-lingualism, a marked characteristic of the Mon-Khmer and Karen tribes inhabiting this zone. These outside stimuli might be

supposed over time to have contributed to cultural fragmentation and a certain loss of cultural identity - thus predisposing these intermediate zone inhabitants to the adoption of alien values and to migration out of their ecologically disadvantageous habitat to the plains below, where they are rapidly absorbed by dominant lowlanders such as the Thai.

Disruption of indigenous culture patterns. It would seem that Khamu culture was at one time richer than it appears today. Judging from what informants were able to tell me, the indigenous culture pattern in Khamu areas south of the Nam Tha resembles strongly that of the Lamet in the same general area. A prominent feature of both cultures is a socio-religico-economic complex involving status mobility through acquisition of wealth (traditionally bronze drums, jars, jewelry, buffalo), and an attempt to control wealth by marriage within related families. The desire for wealth - in order to contract an advantageous marriage, achieve status as a "wealthy man," and honor the family ancetors in periodic sacrificial feasts and ceremonies - motvates a large segment of behavior in both Khamu and Lamet.

It is possible that this traditional pattern was undergoing disruptive changes, or was experiencing the culmination of a series of such changes, about the time that the teak industry expanded in north Thailand, with a consequent demand for imigrant labor. The gradual expansion of the Lao northward, the coming of the French, increasing contacts with Thailand, the gradual introduction of a money economy, changes in traditional trading patterns, new markets and lessened demand for traditional products from the hills - all these could have had a disruptive effect on the old patterns whereby new wealth was brough into the system. As a result young men, in particular, were motivated to go outside in search of new sources of wealth with which to return and participate effectively in the traditional and expected fashion. Certain it is that in the 1930's Izikowitz found Lamet young men eager to go to Thailand to earn money with which to purchase bronze drums and other forms of wealth; and my Khamu life histories collected in Thailand contain many referrences to precisely this same behavior, similarly motivated.

Assimilation

Assimilative Roles The Thai stereotype of the Khamu is that of a steady worker, slow and somewhat stupid, but also honest and loyal. Khamu are said to make good watch-men, gardeners "boy" and cooks. Many Khamu, apparently content to conform to this stereotype, are found in just such positions where they may have worked years for one

family. Some Khamu are employed as rent collectecters in urban markets, a tribute, apparently, to their reputation for honesty. I have been told repeatedly, by Thai and Europeans alike, that Khamu are easily "trained," and that they have no self-confidence, no pride, and no initiative. And many Khamu, particularly those who came here in the old teak days, appear at least outwardly to conform to these stereotypes. Such individuals appear to seek out situations where they can rely on a protector or employeer and in which they are required to do little thinking for themselves. Individuals of this type are often found in urban environments, most often married to Thai women. Their children find jobs in the city, marry other Thai, and pass as Khon Muang known as luuk kɛɛng (half-breed) only by those acquainted with their history.

Many Khamu, on the other hand, have found their way back to the foothills, or have come directly to the hills from Laos, and in these areas they are typically employed as mine or plantation labor. Many, however, have settled permanently in hill villages of mixed Thai and Khamu ethnicity, engaged in the picking and processing of wild tea, miang. In some cases, villages of this kind are reported to have been settled first by Khamu, with later increments of Thai. In other cases, as the commune Baw and Yao River areas of Changwat Nan, Khamu and Thai are found in mixed villages, growing rice by swiddening surrounding hillsides. In all such cases the Khamu or part Khamu households in these villages resemble those of their Thai neighbors. There is little in the way of house type, furnishings and style of living to distinguish Khamu from Thai. In these mixed households the husband and wife invariably speak northern Thai, the wife, if she is of northern Thai origin, rarely knows more than a few words of Khamu, and the children even less. Although Khamu men married to Thai women have told me that they hope to teach their children the old Khamu legends, they have, in the same breath, affirmed that they want their children to grow up Thai. In these mixed villages about the only thing that labels one man "Khamu" and the other "Thai" is language; the old named patrisibs, although known, are no longer functional and the old ceremonies are fast disappearing. Even in a village such as Wang Maw in Commune Baw, in which 18 of 28 houses contain at least one Khamu parent, the language is predominantely northern Thai. This is true whether the husband is Khamu or whether the wife is Khamu. Even in some

households in which both husband and wife are Khamu (i.e., born in Wang Maw of Khamu parents) the family speak northern Thai together. It is obvious that the "Khamu" element in such villages will disappear whithin another two or three generations. Children of those mixed marriages, if they move to the town or city, may attempt (often successfully) to pass as Thai, denying entirely their Khamu heritage.

Still a third type of adjustment is that of males who have come alone to Thailand within the past 20 years - since World War II. These men are most often found in urban environments as samlaw drivers or as coolie labor in ice plants, sawmills and rice mills. Many have married and these typically have large families of young children. They live precariously in flimsy houses, sometimes crowded together in the compound of a "patron" e.g., someone who worked with the old teak firms and associated with Khamu. Such men may lead "quiet lives of desperation," finding release in alcohol and sometimes getting into trouble with the law. They are not as "settled" as their older compatriots - the holdovers from the old teak days - who may own their own home or perhaps a shop and who enjoy the respect of the Khamu community and are at least accepted as "honest Khamu" by the Thai.

Among the never arrivals, the youngsters of 18 or 19 and the young men of 20 or 25 - resident in Thailand for a decade or less - are the least settled of all. Frequently "caught" in Thailand by the development of the war in Laos, they have few ties left at home and have not yet put down roots in Thailand. Relatively few of them are married, they live, often together in groups, on the compounds where they work gasoline station, tobacco stations, hotels, etc.

The Patron Relationship A great many Khamu situations in northern Thailand are structured around what might be called a patron relationship, whereby the Khamu subordinates himself to a person of some wealth or influence in return for a kind of paternalistic care and patronage - ranging from economic security to the making of material arrangements and provisions for educating children. Khamu, particularly of the older type, appear to seek relationships of this kind, and a single relationship may ramify to include a succession of Khamu over a period of several decades. It is not infrequent that contemporary residence patterns among Khamu, as in Chiengmai, reflect the existence of patron relationships no longer active.

This pattern may represent an adaptation of a somewhat similar arrangement in northern Laos - the institution of the lam, whereby wealthy or influential Lao acted as middlemen and protectors for populations of hilltribesmen in their trading relations with lowlanders. My Khamu informants were unable to confirm this pattern in Laos, but it is mentioned for the Khamu north of Luang Prabang by J.M. Halpern ("Trade Patterns in northern Laos," paper read to the Ninth Pacific Science Congress, Bangkok, 1957). Alternatively, the patron relationship as I found it may be related to older patterns of feudal patronage in Thai society, whereby slaves attached themselves to households of important men (C.F., K. Landon, Thailand in Transtition, Bangkok, 1939. PP.178-79.)

Marriage The Khamu physical type is not markedly different from that of the northern Thai, particularly the rural northern Thai who are themselves by all accounts the result of mixture with an older Austroasiatic Stratum (chiefly Lawa). That is to say, many Khamu would fall well within the range of the northern Thai somatotype. The Khamu on the whole have darker skins than the Thai, but there are many Thai with skins as dark as most Khamu. Khamu men on the whole vary in stature more than do Thai men as a whole, but again there are many Khamu who are well within the Thai average. Khamu faces are characteristically somewhat "craggy" in cheekbones and rather wide nostrils. But again, these features are present, either singly or in combination, in many rural Thai faces. All this adds up to the fact that insofar as physical appearance is concerned certainly they are not as different, in Thai terms, as are the Meo and Lahu. This fact has probably contributed to the relative ease with which Khamu and other MonKhmer speakers have intermarried with Thai, and the impressive numbers of such marriages over the years. It would also seem a reasonable supposition that the Khamu genotype, when mixed with that of the Thai, would produce offspring more "Thai" in appearance than would that of a Meo-Thai intermarriage.

Given this relative similarity of physical type, it is obvious that many Khamu, if dressed in Thai costume, could pass on first inspection as Thai. The real test, and the one actually used by most Thai, is that of language, i.e., degree of accent and knowledge of stereotyped speech patterns. Most males among the Khamu and other hill tribes speak some northern Thai, but usually with an easily detectable accent. The Thai ear is keenly attuned to slight differences and nuances in speech and many of the standard ethnic jokes poke fun at the person's accent or missuse of words. The Thai

enjoy playing with words and with double meanings - most of which is lost on the tribesman who knows only market Thai. But the Khamu who learns Thai sufficiently well can relatively easily pass as Thai. And the children of Khamu men married to Thai women invariable grow up speaking northern Thai, at home and with their peers, usually children of Thai parentage.

Immigrant Khamu males married to Thai women tend to marry somewhat outside the normal Thai pattern. Their wives are very often girls who have left their own families or whose parents are no longer living. Frequently they are girls who have migrated into urban centers to find work, and (like the Khamu) live within the compound of the family or firm employing them. In about 10 percent of my cases, the girl's parents (either one or both) are non-Thai, i.e., Karen, Haw Chinese, Khamu. However, cases of descendant of Khamu intermarrying appear to be relatively rare. As a result of this marriage pattern, most families live neolocally, i.e., apart from the families of either the husband or wife. Moreover the wife's families is frequently poor or far away and visiting back and forth is rare or completely absent. As a result the children of such marriages are not normally reared within an extended family milieu - as is the case with many Thai marriages where the couple live near or with the wife's parents. I am unprepared at this point to say what this might mean for the psychocultural development of the children of such marriages and whether assimilation necessarily takes place more or less rapidly under such circumstances. It is probably true, however, that the influence of the Thai wife in a situation of this kind may be even stronger than it is normally. Presumably a naturally strong personality, when thrown on its own in this fashion, would react with assertiveness and vigor.

Communication Recruitment of Khamu labor for the north Thailand teak industry was handdled in large part by the Khamu themselves. Khamu recruiters made periodic trips back and forth to Laos, and Khamu headmen in Chiengmai and Lampang maintained in each place a combination headquarters for new arrivals and clearing house for information and job placement. These headmen were known to practically all Khamu in Thailand., as well as to Khamu in Laos intending to come to Thailand. There was thus in existence a rather effective communications network, functioning independently of whatever formal communications were maintained by the teak companies and foreign consulates. Something

of this informal network remains in effect today; there is still an unofficial headman in Chiengmai and Khamu still go back and north across the border. Khamu in Mae Sariang keep abreast of news of Khamu in Chiengmai; Khamu in Chiengmai often have fairly recent information about their families in Laos; and I have at least one personally documented case of the news of a man's wife's death reaching a relatively remote hill village in a matter of 5 days - a distance of over 80 kilometers from Chiengmai, the latter 20 kilos of the route passable only on foot.

These examples illustrate the fact that male Khamu born in Laos but resident in Thailand retain an awareness of their Khamu-ness even though they acculturate in many ways to the northern Thai way of life. Among themselves, they continue to speak Khamu, even after having lived here twenty or thirty years.

Crime and Subversion

The Khamu population in Thailand is composed largely of immigrant males, many relatively recently arrived from a war-torn area and with ties in an area now held or controlled by communist or Pathet Lao forces. Some of these men are drifters, with few ties of any kind. Considerations of this kind naturally raise a question concerning the potential for crime and subversion in such a population.

My own investigations, although they turned up a few isolated instances of involvement in petty robbery and probable involvement in the opium traffic, lead to the conclusion that the Khamu, on the whole, are at present no more involved in these problems than any other group in north Thailand - and if anything, they may be less involved. However, there are, I think, certain potential factors that might lead to eventual trouble.

It is necessary, first of all, to distinguish between what might be called the old Khamu and new Khamu types. Typical of the former is a man of my acquaintence in Chiengmai. Now aged 57, he came here when he was 17 years old and went to work for a European teak firm, rising eventually to the position of hua naa, or foreman over a group of some 20 employees, including northern Thai, Karens, and other Khamu. Shortly before the war he settle in Chiengmai, married a local girl, and they now have two

grown children, both gainfully employed in Chiengmai. This man owns his home and the land around it, is a devout Buddhist, and for many years has been employed in a position of trust by a local family. His ties are obviously here in Thailand, and there is little if any possibility that a man of this type will ever get into trouble.

The new Khamu type can perhaps be illus-trated by a man about 45 who came here some 15 years ago. His home in Laos was the Sip Song Panna and as a younger men he apparently associated much with Haw Chinese in that area, learning to speak the language and learning also the care handling of horses. On his arrival in Thailand he went to work for Haw trader, this work taking him on caravan trips over much of the northern hill area and into Burma, where he learned to speak some Shan. He also came in frequent contact with Meo and picked up a working knowledge of that language. Five years ago he settled in a foothill Karen village where he married a Karen girl. He now has a sufficient, if not fluent, knowledge of Karen, and in addition speaks northern Thai with little or no accent. He keeps horses and goes on frequent trading trips to the Meo in the hills near his village. This man's wide fund of experience, his special linguistic and other talents, his knowledge of the hills, and his obvious air of self-confidence and all-around ability would make it relatively easy for him to engage in a variety of illicit or under-cover activities if he were so inclined. And in fact there is evidence that he is engaged at least part time in the opium traffic.

This second case illustrates at least two characteristics of a good many of the newer Khamu types. Their previous experience in Laos is likely to have brought them into contact with either Haw or Meo - a fact that can predispose them some association with these same groups here in Thailand. Secondly, in Thailand those Khamu often settle in an intermediate zone between the lowland and the mountains - a primary contact area crise-crossed by trails, and frequented by lowland traders on their way into the hill people on their way to the lowlands. It is an ideal area in which to make contacts, and engage in illicit trade if one is so inclined. It is also a kind of communications centers, where news can be picked up., or passed on, and where rumor can be generated.

Many of the newly arrived Khamu, such as those living on tobacco stations in the

Chiengkhong area, are young men whose lives, and often whose homes have been disrupted by the war in Laos. They appear confused and unsettled, their home ties broken, and without roots here in Thailand. Most are unmarried and have little contact with the older, more settled, Khamu types in the area. Although I found no evidence of such, it is a fact that groups of this kind provide prime targets for Communist subversion from across the border. The fact that many of these youngsters have relatives living in Communist-controlled areas makes them additionally sensitive as potential targets.

That the Pathet Lao and Communists have not overlooked the Khamu as propagan-da targets is illustrated by their use of the old Khamu culture hero, Chuang. The Khamu refugees above Muang Ngaup in Nan speak of the Phuak Chuang in Laos - a group or movement made up of Lao, Meo, Khamu, etc., whom they identify as Communist. Repertedly these people pressured the refugee Khamu to join them, promising a "new king" (a new Chuang) who would bring the Khamu material goods and riches, and by implication promising a better life for the Khamu than they had under the capitalist French and Americans. I discovered that other Khamu, e.g., those on the Nae River in Nan, had also heard of this movement - but I found no evidence that any of them had succumbed to this prepaganda.

Footnote:

1. The language and culture of the Khamu around Luang Prabang have been studies by William A. Smalley ("The Khamu," PP. 112-117 in Ethnic Groups of Mainland Southeast Asia by Frank M. Lebar, Gerald C. Hickey and John K. Musgrave. New Haven: Human Relations Area Files Press, 1964; Outline of Khamu Structure. New Haven : American Oriental Society, Essay NO. 2, 1961). Khamu in the area of Lai Chae in North Vietnam have described by Henry Roux ("Les Tsa Khamu, "PP. 297/357 in Quelques Minorites Ethniques du Nord-Indochine. Saigon: France Asie, Nos. 92-93, 1954. Reprinted from an earlier paper dated 1927). There are numerous references to Khamu in a study of the Lamet, a "Kha" group in Haut Mekong Province of Laos (Karl G. Izikowitz, Lamet: Hill Peasants in French Indochine. Goteborg: Etnografiska Museet, 1951).

(The above was typed up at the USAID Vang Vieng Office. Please excuse the several typographic errors.)

CIAŊ: KHMU? CULTURE HERO

WILLIAM A. SMALLEY

In 1957, when he was doing anthropological fieldwork in Luang Prabang, Laos, Joel M. Halpern discovered that there was a kind of cargo cult and messianic movement active among some of the Khmu?, a Mon-Khmer speaking minority "hill-tribes" group of the area. The messiah, who was going to come and rescue the Khmu? people from their poor life and low economic condition was Ciaŋ,[1] and Ciaŋ was going to bring with him all kinds of wonderful goods and riches to be distributed among the Khmu? faithful.

Movements of this kind have developed hundreds of times in the history of the world, when people who are suffering cultural disintegration and economic deterioration seek to find relief for their condition through religious means. The phenomenon is called a messianic movement when there is belief in someone who will come as a great leader to save his people; it is given the label of cargo cult when it includes the belief that enormous quantities of consumer goods are available to be distributed to those who perform the proper magico-religious ceremonies.[2]

Before Halpern's reports appeared, I indicated that the Khmu? of the Luang Prabang area at least were in a disoriented condition of cultural apathy, which had implications for the development of some

---

1. Joel M. Halpern, "Laos and Her Tribal Problems," "*Michigan Alumnus Quarterly Review*, Vol. 67, No. 10 (Dec. 3, 1960), pp. 63-64, and *Laos Profiles*, Laos Project Paper No. 18, Department of Anthropology, University of California, Los Angeles, (June 1, 1961), pp. 144-145. In the first of these references Halpern spells the name of Ciaŋ as *Djiung*. In the second source he refers to him simply as the Khmu? "king", which is apparently what his Khmu? informant in that case called him. For those readers who know Thai, the name in Khmu? spelled with Thai characters would be เจียง.

2. An excellent discussion of the characteristics and significance of modern messianic cults is Vittorio Lanternari, *The Religions of the Oppressed*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963.

sort of religious movement.[3] My observations were based on my contacts with the Khmu? of Luang Prabang from 1951-1953, when I was doing linguistic research as a missionary among them. The basis for this evaluation was that the Khmu? in the area with which I was familiar had lost the symbols of their traditional culture such as the great bronze drums and jars which represented economic and religious power. Their accounts of earlier times showed more cultural vitality formerly than the meager existance they were living now. Above all, they were an apathetic people, with little spark. They had a feeling of inferiority to the Lao, and to the West.

Halpern's reports fitted perfectly with this slightly earlier picture of the Khmu?. He found that a myth had become prevelant that Cian "the white king of the Khmu?" was living in a vast cave in the north. With him in the cave were enormous quantities of goods, both traditional and Western, including airplanes, rice, blankets, and guns. If the Khmu? would stop working, sacrifice their livestock, and feast as a sign of respect, Cian would gain the magical power to break out of his cave and bring to them the fabulous wealth which he had. He would distribute it among them.

In the light of what we will see below, one of the very interesting details in Halpern's account is that Cian had been born in this cave, without parents, and was still too young and weak to emerge, but when the proper rites were performed he would gain the needed strength. The Khmu? who had been reported to see him in his cave had not been able to bring out any of the wealth because Cian had not given them permission.

At the period of Halpern's investigation the Khmu? would often make predictions of Cian's appearance at critical times in the planting season, and some had been in danger of starving to death. The Lao government officials arrested some who propagated the myth, and forced resumption of work in the fields.

---

3. William A. Smalley, "The Gospel and the Cultures of Laos," *Practical Anthropology*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (1955), pp. 47-57; reprinted in the *Practical Anthropology Supplement* (1960), pp. 63-69.

In 1961 Garland Bare reported that the movement was known among Khmu? in Thailand[4] where it was taken seriously by some Khmu? and associated with Communist propaganda by others. Frank M. LeBar, in his investigation of Khmu? in Thailand, reports that Khmu? refugees from Laos speak of the "*phuak chuang*", 'Cian group', made up of Khmu?, Lao, Meo, and others, whom they identify as Communists.[5] It would seem that Communist propaganda had partially succeeded in turning the present Khmu? search for a new cultural identity and for economic improvement through magical means to its advantage in promoting Cian as the Khmu? messiah.

But any such conclusions can be only tentative until there has been a fuller ethnographic study of the Khmu? and of the Cian cult. In spite of the recent interest of several scholars[6] in Khmu? culture the group is very poorly known. In fact, one can best get an over-all

4. Personal communication. See William A. Smalley, "Khmu," in Frank M. LeBar, Gerald C. Hickey, and John K. Musgrave, *Ethnic Groups of Mainland Southeast Asia*, New Haven: Human Relations Area Files Press, 1964, p. 114. Khmu? in Thailand probably number only a few thousand by comparison with an estimated 100,000 in Northern Laos.

5. Frank M. LeBar, unpublished report to the National Research Council, Thailand, April 27, 1965. LeBar refers elsewhere in his paper to Cian as a culture hero about whom the Khmu? have many stories.

6. In addition to Halpern, LeBar, and Smalley, Kraisri Nimmanahaeminda has had a long interest in the Khmu?. Boonchuey Srisavasdi has included them in his books in Thai on the hill tribes of Thailand, and includes pictures of them in his *The Hill Tribes of Siam*, Bangkok: Khun Aroon, n.d., pp. 172-182. The most complete sketch of Khmu? culture today (described for the area around Luang Prabang, Laos) is Smalley, "Khmu" op. cit. See also Gordon Young, *The Hill Tribes of Northern Thailand*, Bangkok: The Siam Society, pp. 56-64. The major older source is Henri Roux and Tran-van-Chu, "Les Tsa Khmu," in *Quelques Minorités Ethniques du Nord-Indochine*, Saigon: *France Asie*, Nos. 92-93, pp. 297-357 (reprinted from *Bulletin de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient*, Vol. 27 (1927), pp. 169-222). The LeBar research is still unpublished. In addition to the Halpern references listed earlier, see his repeated references to the Khmu? in the following papers: "Trade Patterns in Northern Laos," *Eastern Anthropologist*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (1958), pp. 119-124; *Aspects of Village Life and Culture Change in Laos*, New York: Council on Economic and Cultural Affairs, 1958; *Economy and Society in Laos: A Brief Survey*, New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies Monograph Series No. 5, 1964.

view of what Khmu? culture is approximately like by reading *Lamet: Hill Peasants in French Indochina*, by Karl Gustav Izikowitz.[7] The Lamet are very similar to the Khmu? in culture patterns, and there are frequent references to neighboring Khmu?. However, for background in depth on Khmu? cultural disintegration and the need for revitalization as seen in the Cɬaŋ cult, nothing will substitute for intensive field investigation.

A full understanding of the traditional place of Cɬaŋ in Khmu? mythology, and of the reinterpretation which is taking place in the Cɬaŋ cult will have to wait for such a study. It is the purpose of this paper to present a little more information to add to the present very sketchy picture. This new information consists of brief texts about Cɬaŋ collected while I was doing linguistic field research among the Khmu? of the Luang Prabang area in Laos,[8] plus a few notes on the texts. The information is scanty because I did not know then that the legendary Cɬaŋ would be revived (or was being revived?) as a messianic figure, to return and save the Khmu? peoples. Furthermore, I had allotted time for more systematic ethnological research after the main problems of Khmu? grammar had been worked out, but my planned period of investigation was cut short.

My informant[9] had standing instructions to be prepared each day to tell me a "story" of some kind. These stories were transcribed and analyzed. They were necessarily short, and dealt with a wide variety of subjects, ranging from techniques of agriculture to legend and myth. On three occasions he told me about Cɬaŋ, and these texts have been reproduced below. They have been arranged into chronological order, and are presented in sequence, separated by asterisks. The third section was actually recorded first, followed by the first section the next day. The second section was recorded some time later.

---

7. Göteborg: Ethnografiska Museet, 1951.

8. The information on Khmu? grammar obtained at that time has been published as my *Outline of Khmu? Structure*, New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1961 (Essay No. 2). The field work was done in Laos under the auspices of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, 1951-1953.

9. The late Sian Thii of the village of Nɔɔŋ Hɛɛw, south of Luang Prabang.

It is highly probable that what is presented here is only a small fragment of the Cɨaŋ legend, which probably exists in considerable variety as well. A literary translation is presented first, followed by comments. Then the Khmu? text with interlinear word-by-word translation follows.

From the beginning, they tell the story of Cɨaŋ. A Khmu? husband and wife had had many children. The mother become pregnant for three years and finally Cɨaŋ was born.

When the time for the delivery finally came, the father was not home. He had gone to cut down a tree from which to make a rice mortar.[10] The mother bore the child by herself.

As soon as he was born, the child fell through the floor of the house, and dropped to the ground.[11] He stood up and asked his mother, "Where is Dad?" She told him that his father had gone to make a rice mortar.

So he ran after his father. He went along the path toward where the tree was cut, calling "Dad, Dad."

The father answered, "Who is it?"

The son answered, "Me!"

The father called out, "Run! The tree is going to fall!"

"Never mind, let 'er fall!" was the child's[12] reply.

The tree came down. The son caught it on his shoulder and carried it off to the bathing-place at the river. He let it down from his shoulder and dropped it there. Then he took a bath.

About then along came a caravan of people who were on a trip selling buffalo, pigs, and bronze drums.[13] They took off their

10. The approximate size of the tree, important to subsequent events in the story, may be seen by the object which was to be made out of it. It would need to be fifteen inches or more in diameter.

11. A house on stilts, with a bamboo floor is assumed here.

12. The wording of the text implies a relatively small child.

13. The Khmu? around Luang Prabang when I knew them did very little trading. They were too poor. However, the texts which I collected had frequent references to trading expeditions, and Frank M. LeBar (personal communication) was frequently told of Khmu? trading expeditions by his informants. The bronze drums referred to in the text are of the type sometimes called "Karen drums" They are often

clothes and hung them on the tree which the boy had carried there. They also tied the animals to branches of the tree, and went in to bathe.

When the boy had finished bathing he said to the other people, "Untie your animals, so that I can carry my tree off on my shoulder and go home."

They said, "If you can carry this tree on your shoulder we'll give you the animals and goods—all of them."

So the boy said, "Really? Are you telling the truth?"

He was able to carry off the tree, so they gave every thing to him.

This boy was Ctaŋ. He died twice. When he died once he came back.

* * *

Ctaŋ was the one who originally gave the Khmu? their customs and possessions. He taught us everything—taught us trapping and basket making, taught us to eat all kinds of food. He taught us to set traps in the mountains so that we could eat mountain animals. He taught us to set traps in the water so that we could eat water animals.[14] Every custom we have, every possession, Ctaŋ established or made, coming right on down to us at the present time. He taught the Khmu? to make mountain ricefields.[15] He taught the Lao to make wet ricefields. He had the Khmu? live wherever there were mountains, and

to be seen in Buddhist temples in Thailand. They are most easily identified by the small frogs which stand on each other's backs, usually three high, at four equal intervals around the edge of the flat surface of the drum. These drums were of extreme importance as symbols of wealth and prestige in Khmu? culture, and were used for religious purposes and on other occasions of significance. They had entirely disappeared from the Khmu? of Luang Prabang by 1951.

14. Khmu? have a wide variety of traps and snares, very similar to the ones reported by Izikowitz for the Lamet, op. cit.

15. Like the other hill tribes of southeast Asia, the Khmu? traditionally cultivate "swiddens", ricefields made on the mountain slopes. To do this they cut and burn the forest, moving their fields from place to place over a cycle of years. One of the reasons for their present impoverished condition around Luang Prabang is that the population has grown too large to be supported by this kind of agriculture in the space available.

had the Lao live wherever there were lowlands. This was so the Lao could cultivate wet ricefields, and the Khmu? mountain ricefields.

* * *

When Cɨaŋ died it was dark for seven days and nights. All the animals wailed, but it did not get light. All the animals that existed, every kind of animal, all were wailing.

One day a *gɔɔy*[16] was wailing. The hornbill said to her, "You damned pointed nose, stop wailing. As pretty as I am, it doesn't get light when I wail."

The *gɔɔy* went away angry. All the animals were wailing, but it did not get light. They called to the *gɔɔy* to come and wail also.

The *gɔɔy* answered, "If you want me to wail, pound out some gold and paint my mouth."

So they pounded out some gold and painted the snout of the *gɔɔy*. The gɔɔy started to wail, and cried out "Hweh hweh, hoot, hoot,[17] oh Cɨaŋ!"

The other animals exclaimed, "Good going Miss Seeŋ Keew!"[18] In a few moments a rooster crowed.

They called a *hryool*[19] to come and wail. The *hryool* said, "I'll wait and wail for father and mother for ever."[20] The *hryool* is still wailing to this day. And so it is down to the present, ever since Cɨaŋ . . .[21]

Cɨaŋ, then, is clearly a Khmu? culture hero, responsible for Khmu? culture. He is not a spirit or god, probably not an ancestor. He was the Prometheus of Khmu? mythology, in that he was responsible for bringing to the Khmu? the good things that they have. There are, of course, the usual inconsistent touches of any mythology:

16. Unidentified animal, which the informant described as a chipmunk-like animal with a yellow snout.

17. This represents the cry of the *gɔɔy*, as the Khmu? mimic it.

18. According to my notes this is "the name of the *gɔɔy*." I do not know its significance.

19. Unidentified animal or bird.

20. This is the origin of the *hryool*'s characteristic cry today.

21. My notes are not clear enough to translate the last three words of the text.

Cɨaŋ's parents had house and axe, the people whom he met had domesticated animals, clothes, and bronze drums, all very much a part of traditional Khmu? culture, before Cɨaŋ brought these to them. But anachronisms are to be expected.

Cɨaŋ, furthermore, was a being of extraordinary powers. He had the ability to talk, and had super-human strength from the day of his birth. In Khmu? legend extraordinary births seem to be preceded by three year pregnancies. This is true not only of Cɨaŋ's birth, but also that of the gourd out of which the ancestors of the Khmu? and the Lao came. It also was born by a woman after a three-year pregnancy.[22]

Not only was Cɨaŋ's birth superhuman, and his strength, but his death was marked by seven days and nights of darkness, and by the wailing of all animal life.

In the light of subsequent information, one of the most intriguing lines in the text is the brief remark that Cɨaŋ died twice. "When he died once he came back." At the time I transcribed this legend it seemed to me that this was only one superhuman characteristics among many. Now I wonder if this was an original part of the legend, or if it was growing up at this time as a part of the beginning of the Cɨaŋ messianic movement. Or, was there more than one appearance of Cɨaŋ in legend, and is the modern reappearance simply an additional one?

The Cɨaŋ of legend, then, provided a ready-made figure for a modern messianic leader to do again what he had traditionally done, bring goods to the Khmu? people. Once he brought drums, techniques of making mountain ricefields, religious customs. Now he would bring airplanes, refrigerators, stocks of food.

Something had to explain the fact that he had not yet come. Somehow, Cɨaŋ, the modern missiah, was being delayed. He had been born. A Khmu? had been reported to see him in his cave with the treasures. He had not come because he was not strong enough yet to break out of the cave. The Khmu? must perform ritual acts to bring him out.

22. Smalley, unpublished Khmu? texts.

This rationalization reported by Halpern is decidedly at variance with the probably more classic view of Cɨaŋ represented in the legend recorded here. Cɨaŋ's original birth produced a creature who would have been confined by no natural cave, we would judge from the tone of the story. Where the implications of legend and the actual situation clash, a rationalization has grown up.

In 1951-1953 I observed that the Khmu? were ripe for a messianic movement, and I collected these brief fragments of a presumably rich set of legends about Cɨaŋ. The process of combining legend with psychological need may have begun by then, but within three or four years after I left, Khmu? in this area were performing those rites which were designed to bring Cɨaŋ to them.