

Myths and Ritual for Rice Spirits Bambarazon among the Rungus

By

YUTAKA SHIMOMOTO

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Introduction

Bambarazon is the term used by the Rungus to identify spirits associated with rice cultivation. The following discussion introduces their beliefs regarding the spirits as found in Rungus folklore and rituals.

The Rungus, numbering 10,881, live in scattered longhouses in Kudat District¹ in the northern corner of Sabah, Malaysia. They are assumed to be a sub-group of the Dusuns/Kadazans, the largest ethnic group in Sabah. Their primary occupation is swidden farming, particularly rice, maize, and manioc, on the hillsides.

1. Department of Statistics, *Annual Bulletin of Statistics, Sabah*, (Kota Kinabalu: Department of Statistics, 1974).

Rice is the traditional and the most important crop for the Rungus. They believe that rice was first brought to them by the rice spirits, Bambarazon, in the remote past. Bambarazon take care of rice so the Rungus praise Bambarazon by sacrificing fowls and pigs in order to receive good harvests. If the Rungus neglect the ceremonies, they will expect poor harvest.

In the religious concepts of the Rungus, Bambarazon are a group of good spirits. Their country is situated in a place beyond the sea although no one can explain the details of their country. One villager reported that Bambarazon live at the edge of the *Piromitan* layer where good spirits reside.² Above the *Piromitan* layer, there is another layer, *Monkulun*, where the most powerful spirits (or Gods), Sambavon, Kinoringan, and Minamangun live.³ These spirits on the *Piromitan* and *Monkulun* planes protect human beings from suffering sickness, death, and other bad events but they do not take care of rice. Only Bambarazon can take care of rice. Therefore, I can say, Bambarazon are extremely important spirits.

During my stay in a Rungus village, I observed that the younger Rungus pay little attention to Bambarazon. As a result, only some old men remember the prayer and folk tales about Bambarazon. In the near future, it is likely that no one there will remember the rice spirits, Bambarazon. The following myths and a prayer represent an effort to preserve these beliefs beyond the present generation.

Chapter I

Myth I

Once, as a man from a Rungus village was walking along a pass, he noticed a dog walking along the trail near him. The man noticed that when the dog wagged its tail, seeds flew from it and were spread around the roadside. But, because the seeds were unfamiliar to him, the man thought nothing of it and continued on his way home.

Later, the man had a dream. In the dream a person appeared and asked him, "Why didn't you take this rice seed? Why don't you sow it? It is a gift to you." When the man awoke, he remembered the seeds the dog had spread and returned to the spot. He collected the seeds and sowed them. From that time on, the Rungus have cultivated rice

2. *Piromitan* is a layer in the sky. There are *Luma'ag*, *Divato*, *Lugu*, and *Onkusi-gal* spirits on *Piromitan*. All spirits help human beings.

3. *Sambavon* is stronger spirits than any other spirits on *Piromitan*. *Minamangun* is the creator and the most powerful deity. *Kinoringan* is the second deity.

regularly.

Myth II

Once, a Rungus village man had twin children, a son and a daughter. As the years went by and the twins reached the age of fifteen, they found that they felt such great love for each other that they did not wish to look for other marriage partners.

Their father was so deeply worried about the matter that he asked the village head and other people of his village for a solution. The problem of the twins was discussed and argued for three months. Eventually, the villagers decided that the twins must immigrate to a new land. So the village head, the father, and his twins began their search for an uninhabited land. Finally, they found a suitable place. The village head and the father left some food for the twins and returned home.

After five days, the twins had eaten all the food, and they had begun to starve and grew weak. They lay still for five more days, and soon they knew they were dying.

One morning when the twins woke up, there beside them were two plates of rice and vegetables. They were very surprised, and asked each other, "Who has put these plates here? We do not know who has offered the food to us but we would like to have it again." They ate the food and thus did not die that day. The next day the same thing happened, then the next day, and the next day after that. But still they did not know the source of the food.

At last, after another week, they discovered an old woman bringing the food. And when she was discovered, she said to them, "After you have finished eating, come to my house." When they had finished eating, they followed the old woman.

The house of the old woman was a great distance away and took a very long time to reach. Finally, they arrived at a big tree. The woman said, "This is my house. You can sleep here." The twins could not see any house, but they slept on the spot.

Each morning and evening, the old woman offered food to the twins. This continued for a week, then one day the old woman said, "I will give you a *parang* (machete) and other equipment for cultivation. You have to reclaim the land."

The old woman left the twins with the equipment and the rice and maize seeds. As she was leaving, she added, "Do not burn this big tree because it is my house." The twins then slashed the jungle foliage and burned it. They then sowed the rice and maize. They also built a house near the rice field.

One day, the old woman informed them, "When the crops have ripened, you can harvest them. Until the harvest, I will bring food to you everyday."

Time passed, and the rice and maize were harvested. After the harvest, the old woman disappeared. The twins had baby twins. The children grew up and married each other and had baby twins. This marriage of twins continued for many generations.

Myth III

Once, a Rungus man travelled for a long period of time and eventually came to a sea. He there obtained a small sail-boat and continued his journey until he arrived at a distant shore where he came upon a large red house in which many red men lived.

One of the red men asked him, "Who are you?" "I am a Rungus and I am on a journey," he replied. "Ordinarily, I would eat you, but I will let you go this time. However, you must leave immediately," warned the red man. The Rungus man left and went to the next house. This house was just as large as the previous one and again the same thing happened. In all, he visited seven houses, but none welcomed him. So, he had to continue his journey.

Finally, he arrived at another house and asked if he could stay there. The people in the house welcomed him and offered him food and accommodation. He said to the people, "I am a Rungus. Who are you?" The people replied, "We are Bambarazon." Carefully, he looked at Bambarazon, and noticed they had body burns. The Rungus man asked them, "What happened to you Bambarazon?" And Bambarazon replied, "There was a man who burned the *Sulap* (rice storage hut) before he finished the rice harvest. This is why we have body burns."

He stayed with Bambarazon for seven days and they gave him the directions to his homeland. On his way home, he re-crossed the sea. The crossing went well although he did not use the sail.

When he arrived home, he met a farmer who complained of his long run of poor harvests. He asked the farmer for detail of his methods, and the farmer replied that he had burned his *Sulap* before he finished the harvest.

He remembered Bambarazon and their burns. Thus he advised the farmer to sacrifice some chickens to Bambarazon. The harvests began to get better each year. Then one night, the farmer had a dream and heard voices saying: "You have pleased us Bambarazon. But for your final sacrifice, you must have the *Magahau* ceremony.⁴ After he

4. *Magahau* ceremony is the rite of sacrificing fowls and pigs to Minamangun,

celebrated the Magahau ceremony, he continued to receive good harvests.

Explanation

According to Myth I, rice was brought to the Rungus by a dog. So that every year when the Rungus harvest their rice, a small portion of rice is first given to the dog of the house-hold.

Myth II suggests that agricultural know-how of rice cultivation was introduced by a woman. The common factor of these two myths is that rice was introduced to the Rungus by someone in the distant past.

Myth III describes the relationship between the Rungus (rice cultivators) and Bambarazon (rice spirits). Bambarazon, who live in a distant land beyond the sea, are the keepers and protectors of rice. So if people do not pay respect to Bambarazon, Bambarazon will take revenge on the people by bringing them poor harvests.

Chapter II

A Brief Description of Rice Ceremonies

The rice ceremonies are carried out only in the *Tagad* field.⁵ The Rungus believe that Bambarazon travel from their home to the *Tagad* field by boat each rice season. When the Rungus sow rice in a *Tagad* field, they place a stake (*Lotung*), 3 inches in diameter and 2 feet long, at a certain place in the *Tagad* field.

Around the *Lotung*, seven small holes are made into which the rice is sown along with the seeds of several varieties of flowers. This is the garden of Bambarazon. The *Lotung* is for securing the rope of the Bambarazon's boat. In addition to serving as a mooring place, some Rungus maintain that the *Lotung* also serves as a temporary home of Bambarazon until the farmers have constructed a *Sulap*⁶ in the *Tagad* field to which Bambarazon are believed to migrate.

Before the harvest, the Rungus build a *Sulap* in the *Tagad* field. This is considered the actual house of Bambarazon. During the harvest, Bambarazon protect rice from evil spirits. When the Rungus thresh rice, they sacrifice a number of fowl to Bambarazon to secure the rice until the end of the entire village's harvest. *Pangalapik* (text follows)

Kinoringan, and Bambarazon. The Rungus believe that they will obtain good luck, fortune, treasures, good harvest, and other good things after performing this ritual. This ceremony is usually carried out after the rice harvest.

5. The Rungus cultivate four types of fields, such as *Tagad*, *Pinotigaha*, *Taras*, and *Gopu*. The *Tagad* is the most important and biggest in size.

6. The hut in which the Rungus temporarily store the rice during harvest.

is a name of the prayer which is recited after threshing rice. When the rice season is finished, the Rungus free Bambarazon from their duties so that the spirits may return home. To speed the return journey, the Rungus make a small wooden sailboat for the spirits and provide them with miniature *parangs* (machetes) and spears plus a ration of rice. These supplies are hung from the ceiling of the Sulap where the spirits make their home.

Text

- Posikai ku i Komburongo, Rukahai ku i Rinokizan,* 1
Amu ku dara om posikan, Tida ku dara om rukahan,
Nokodop dati i sinundu, Nokoturu dati i linodun,
Monimpa ki Komburongo, Mangampot ki Rinokizan,
Nunu ngaran ka i tiposik, Kuran tondo mala iti rukou,
- Timpa ka ilo Bolizan, Ampot ka ilo Bozugan,* 2
Mongulok mongogomos humongkob humamok,
Agazo kinokurangan ka i parai,
Natigagang novurosi i Tinongkob,
Ilo no otiposik ku, Alo no otirukou ku,
- Monimpa ki Komburongo, Mangampot ki Rokizan,* 3
Tomod ku do om ginuling, Silo ku po om dinuat,
Nilaan ku no laid, Nihudan ku no ong antad,
- Timpa ka dilo Bolizan, Ampot ka dilo Bozugan,* 4
Ogum no ma i sakot, Asapou no ma i rikut,
Ogum no i kokozuvan, Asapou no i katagazan,
Minihubang po ma i Valahan, Mibulungkut po ma i Rurumilit,
Amu ku ima om posikan, Tida ku ima om rukahan,
Aso sundu do rozohon, Tida lodun do ompodon,
Opodok ko no Komburongo, Odoring ko no Rinokizan,
Ikau no ma pinosikan ku, Ikau no ma rinukahan ku,
Kisundu ko no do rozohon, Kilodun ko no do ompodon,
- Kogom po ma i kapampangan, Kotudung po ma i kadandakan,* 5
Kogom po ma i vaig, Kotudung po ma i bavang,
Kogom po ma ilo tanapu, Kotudung po ma i tarantai,
Kogom po ma i hamadon, Kotudung po ma i harason,
Kogom po ma i numpodon, Kotudung po ma i nuluhon,
Kogom po ma i kopuron, Kotudung po ma i kadaraman,
Kogom po ma i Kolomongis, Kotudung po ma i Kolombuku,
- Pangalabaan do riniba, Pongunsapatan do sinahau,* 6
Ko ilo po o pinosikan ku, Alo po o rinukahan ku,
Aso sundu do rozohon, Tida lodun do ompodon,
Ikau no tu Komburongo, Silo no ma om Rinokizan,

- Kisundu ko no do rozohon, Kilodun ko no do ompodon,*
- Kogom po ma i kavut, Kotudung po ma i dingarak,* 7
Kogom po ma i dumarun, Kotudung po ma i rasam,
Kogom po ma i buluntung, Kotudung po ma i simbakol,
Kogom po ma i Nabalu, Kotudung po ma i Sinungkok,
Asavat dara i Nabalu, Imbang dara i Sinungkok,
Amu ku om pinosikan, Tida ku dara om rinukahan,
Aso sundu do rozohon, Tida lodun do ompodon,
- Nokungkilad po ma i gonit, Nokungkasal po ma i podou,* 8
Nokogom po ma i garangadau, Kotudung po ma i purusidang,
- Kogom po ma i vulan tavang, Kotudung po ma i pagahavon,* 9
Kogom po ma i Pangasakan, Kotudung po ma i Pitounan,
Amu ku ima om pinosikan, Tida ku ima om rinukahan,
Aso sundu do rozohon, Tida lodun do tompodon,
- Opodok no i Komburongo, Odoing no i Rinokizan,* 10
Ilo no ma o pinosikan ku, Alo no ma o rinukahan ku,
Kisundu Soribaungavan, Kilodun Sorimpuklangit,
- Timpa ka i Komburongo, Ampot ka i Rinokizan,* 11
Ilo ko no Bolizan, Anaron ko no Bozugan,
Nilaan nu i ngaran ku, Nihudan nu i tondo ku,
Ngaran ku om Soribaungavan, Tondo ku om Sorimpuklangit,
Ponginud-nginud po Bolizan, Panandan-nandan po Bozugan,
Sumiliu oku po do rokizan, Ma'al oku po do humaji,
- Turu no i tinikaman ku, Valu no i inikahan ku,* 12
Turu no i tinulunan ku, Valu no i tinabazan ku,
Turu no i tinulunan ku, Valu no i tinabazan ku,
Noposik ngavi i todop ku, Norukou ngavi i turuu ku,
- Sizong ka dilo Bolizan, Gongo ka dilo Bozugan,* 13
Posik pamangol inan, Rukou pamatog diri,
Ikau no tu rokizan Soribaungavan, Humaji Sorimpuklangit,
Soriguguro ka i tinan ku, Sorugintako ka i diri ku,
- Ilo ogi ma om noposik, Ilo ogi ma om norukou,* 14
Rokizan no i Komburongo, Humaji no i Rinokizan,
Mingkakat no om magavuavu, Mundihi no om mogolisovu,
Prongod no ko Kolomongis, Osonong no ko Kolombuku,
- Limbukon minakaikakai, Korohon Minuriukuriu,* 15
Anak apui ka i migasazou, Laing damal ka i mikohundang,
Migasazou ka ilo Sulap, Mikohundang ka ilo Lagou,
- Sizon ka dilo Rokizan, Gongo ka dilo Humaji,* 16
Asi ku dikau Bolizan, Ara ku dikau Bozugan,
Ombo no ka i sulungan ku, Nunu no ka i pakazon ku,

- Timpa dilo Bolizan, Ampot ka dilo Bozugan,* 17
Toronongo ka i Rampazon, Tondopoho ka i Kovingon,
Rampazon ka di sumandak, Kovingon ka di dinazang,
Ontoko no i kahahatas, Todo i kororontob,
- Timpa ka dilo Rokizan, Ampot ka dilo Humaji,* 18
Anu oku monunsulung, Tida oku manampakai,
Sinuripan do takangau, Pinizuran do obuzang,
Akangau nope i minonurip, Obuzang nope i minonizul,
Akangau i Bambarazon, Obuzang i Pukanason,
Ong odomon i minonurip, Otuzu i minonizul,
Silo oku i om mononsulung, Alo oku i om manampakai,
- Tilombuso ka i Rampazon, Gintuvao ka i Kovingun,* 19
Sinuripan no do todomon, Tinizuran no do totuzu,
Odomon nobo i Bambarazon, Otuzu no i Pukanason,
- Timpa ka dilo Rokizan, Ampot ka dilo Humaji,* 20
Silo oku i om monunsulung, Alo oku i om manampakai,
Sinuripan no do todomon, Tinizuran no do totuzu,
Togiranai no do mononsulung, Saratanai no do manampakai,
- Rozoho no ka i Rokizan, Ompodo no ka i Humaji,* 21
Rokizan Soribaungavan, Humaji Sorimpuklangit,
Anak apui migasazou, Laing damal mikohundang,
Sizong ku dilo Rokizan, Gongo ku dilo Humaji,
- Asi ku dikau Bolizan, Ara ku dikau Bozugan,* 22
Mongintoron ko po do Sulap, Mongundorong ko po do Lagou,
Silo ku po om mimpanau, Silo oku po om milulumpa,
Panau no yongong-ongongon, Lumpa no ogid-ogidon,
Burul no i ponuropikon, Umpod no i ponurantadon,
Olungan ma om navazaan, Avasan ma om novilitan,
- Nangaasak no ngawi i tolungan, Nongotiti no ngawi i tavasan,* 23
Laba do kinosunduwo, Talib do kinoloduno,
Monondikot ka dilo valai, Manandavot ka dilo pogun,
Valai ka di Mogulungung, Pogun ka di Moginanau,
Mogulungung ka riniba, Moginanau ka sinahau,
Sizong ku di Mogulungung, Gongo ku di Moginanau,
- Asi ku di Tanganganak, Ara ku di Toporoi,* 24
Imatai ka di kougad, Antagai ka di kokukuriu,
Kougad ka dilo tazam ku, Kokuriu ka dilo livun ku,
Turu manuk ki kandavai, Valu i pizuk kikombura,
Minuli ka di Kukurungan, Minalik do i Tuuvagan,
Turu vogok ka i toitom, Valu lumavun ka i dolondom,
Minuli do insod-insod, Minalik do insung-insung,
Kavid di Tanganak turu sombozo, Kiit no i Toporoi valu sombilit,

- Imatai no ka i kougad, Antangai no ka i kokuriu,
 Nunu ka i kinoimatan, Kuran ka i kinaantangan,
 Rokizan ka i Komburongo, Humaji ka i Rinokizan,*
- Sizon ku di Mogulungung, Gongo ku di Moginanau, 25
 Nunu ka i tomod di panau, Kuran ka i tukon di lumpa,
 Mad panau nu do tolihago, Lumpa nu do tosigarau,
 Mangazou ka i tomod nu, Manangkoi ka i tukon nu,
 Hodi Madi do totoron, Ali Kazin do toindon,
 Nivantai kud Garangadau, Nilundoi kud Purusidang,
 Magkapul ka i tomodon nu, Molodok ka i tukon nu,
 Hodi vasoi do totoron, Ali bolizung do toidon,
 Nivantai kud Garangadau, Nilundoi kud Purusidang,*
- Lamazag no po i tomodon nu, Lumamak no po i tukon nu, 26
 Hodi alud do otoron, Ali binta do toindom,
 Nivantai kud Garangadau, Nilundoi kud Purusidang,*
- Timpa ka di Rokizan, Ampot ka di Humaji, 27
 Modsuht oku di Bambarazon, Mogkukui oku di Pukanason,*
- Monimpa ka i Mobulungung, Mangampot ka i Moginanau, 28
 Nilaan ku no bo laid, Nihudan ku no bo mantad,
 Mongulok mongogomos X,
 Nokuli bo i Bambarazon, Nakabalik bo i Pukanason,
 Avazas olizas pogi i parai X,
 Aso Bambarazon Pukanasonm
 Nokuli nakabalik,
 Ponilombus ko sisi Obintoun, Gumintuwa ko sisi Oburindau,
 Minozo no di pompod do barat, Minilit no di tompok do ribut,
 Anu noi laid po diri, Tida noi muut po mala,
 Nokorikot no ka di valai, Nakadavot no ka di pogun,
 Valai ka di Obintoun, Pogun ka di Oburindau,
 Rokizan Soribaungavan, Humaji Sorimpuklangait,*
- Sizong ku di Obintoun, Gonto ku di Oburindau, 29*
- Imatai ka i kougad, Antangai ka i kokuriu, 30
 Kougad ka dilo tazam ku, Kokuriu ka dilo livun ku,
 Turu manuk kikandavai, Valu pizuk kikombura,
 Minuli ka di Kukurangan, Minalik ka di Tuuvagan,
 Turu vogok ki toitom, Valu lumavun ki dolondom,
 Minuli do isod-isod, Minalik do insung-insung,
 Kavidi i Tanganak tutu sombozo, Kiit i Toporoi valu sombilit,
 Nunu ka i kinoimatan, Silo ka i kinaatangan,
 Rokizan Soribaungavan, Humaji Sorimpuklangit,*
- Sizong ku di Obintoun, Gongo ku di Oburindau, 31*
- Asi ku dikau Rokizan, Ara ku dikau Humaji, 32*

*Nunu tomod di panau nu, Kuran tukon di lumpa nu,
Mad panau nu do tolihago, Lumpa nu do tosigarau,
Mangazou ka i tomod nu, Manangkoi ka i tukon nu,
Hodi Madi do totoron, Ali Kazin do toindon,
Nivantai kud Garangadai, Nilundoi kud Purusidang,
Magkapul ka i tomodon nu, Molodok ka i itukon nu,
Hodi vasoi do totoron, Ali bolizung do toindon,
Nivantai kud Garangadai, Nilundoi kud Purusidang,
Lumazag nopo i tomod nu, Lumamak nopo i tukon nu,
Hodi alud to totoron, Ali do toindon,
Nivantai kud Garangadai, Nilundoi kud Purusidang,*

*Timpa ka ilo Rokizan, Ampot ka ilo Humaji,
Modsuhut oku di Bambarazon, Mogkukui oku di Pukanason,
Mongulok mongogomos X,
Nokuli bo i Bambarazon, Nakabalik no bo i Pukanason,
Avazas olizas pogi i parai X,
Aso Bambarazon Pukanason,*

33

*Timpa ka di Obintoun, Ampot ka di Oburindau,
Nimot nontong ku i Bambarazon Pukanason,
Minuli minibalik,
Avazas olizas pogi i parai X,
Nokuli nakabalik i Bambarazon Pukanason,
Monondikot ko sisi Mongintanou, Manandavot ko sisi Mongindudul,
Kinumpugan no do Bambarazon, Puladan no do Pukanason,
Kinumpugan no do parai, Kinotimungan no do randoi,
Tilombuso no ka i panau nu, Gintuvao no ka i lumpa nu,
Valai di Mongintanau, Pogun di Mongindudul,
Rokizan Soribaungavan, Humaji Sorimpuklangit,*

34

*Imatai ka i kougad, Antangai ka i kokurii,
Turu mamuk i kandavai, Valu pizuk i kombura,
Minuli do Kukurungan, Minalik do Tuuvagan,
Turu vogok di toitom, Valu lumavun di dolondom,
Minuli do tinsod-insod, Minalik do tinsung-insung,
Nunu ka kinoimatan, Silo ka kinaantangan,
Rokizan i Komburongo, Humaji i Rinokizan,*

35

Sizong ku di Mongintanou, Gongo ku di Mongindudul,

36

*Nunu ka i tomod di panau nu, Karan ka i tukon di lumpa nu,
Mad panau nu do tolihago, Lumpa nu do tosigarau,
Mangazou nopo i tomodon nu, Manangkoi nopo i tukon nu,
Hodi Madi do totoron nu, Ali Kazin do toindom,
Nivantai kud Garangadai, Nilundoi kud Purusidang,
Magkapul nopo i tomodon nu, Modlodok nopo i tukon nu,
Hodi vasoi do totoron, Ali bolizung do toindom,*

37

- Nivantai kud Garangadau, Nilundoi kud Purusidang,
Lumazag nopo i tomodon nu, Lumamak nopo i tukon nu,
Hodi alud do totonon, Ali binta do toindon,
Nivantai kud Garangadau, Nilundoi kud Purusidang,*
- Timpa ka dilo Rokizan, Ampot ka dilo Humaji,* 38
*Modsuhut oku di Bambarazon, Mogkukui oku di Pukanason,
Mongulok mongogomos X,
Avazas olizas i parai X,*
- Timpa ka di Mongintanou, Ampot ka di Mongindudul,* 39
*Avazas olizas pogi i parai randoi X,
Numpug notimung siti dohon,*
- Sizong ku di Mongintanou, Gongo ku di Mongindudul,* 40
- Ingodi ka i tandaha polozon,* 41
*Iponubali nu iponumboros nu,
Timpa ka i Rokizan, Ampot ka i Humaji,
Tidi andaha polozon X,*
- Ipongongoi ipangalun pinarai rinadoi X,* 42
- Timpa ka di Mongintanou, Ampot ka di Mongindudul,* 43
*Onuvo no alapon no tandaha polozon X,
Ovito koluno iti pinarai rinadoi X,
Sampai Bambarazon Pukanason X,
Ovito kokuno nuno ngavi,
Sampai i vangun nasip rodiki ongom vangun X,
I vogok i manuk oviton nu no ngavi,
Kodopuan kolintipan,*
- Maganak mulaig no X,* 44
*Osogit osorui no X,
Inovit no mitonduli, Kinalun no misumbalik,
Rokizan Soribaungavan, Humaji Sorimpuklangit,*
- Monondikot ka dilo Sulap, Manandavot ka dilo Lagou,* 45
*Rinumuvab sinumukol no,
Kinumambang kinumukal no,
Nopungahan nopuzuvan no,
Ilo Lingkut vozui,
Vogok manuk kadapuan kolintipan,
I vangun i nasip rodiki onggom,
Nokorikot nakadavot no ngavi,*
- Olungan do rurumuvab,* 46
*Avasan no do susumukol X,
Küüü rikirikirikirik T'Odu Bambarazon Pukanason,
Moguwung mongkobot kono sid Lingkut vozui,
Otiru okodou no,*

I parai randoi.

Translation

Bobolizan⁷:

"I wake up Komburongo.⁸
If I do not wake him up,
Perhaps he can not wake up."

Komburongo:

"Why did you wake me up?"

Bobolizan:

"X⁹ wants to thresh rice, but he is afraid 2
That a large quantity of rice will be lost.
(Bambarazon) are afraid of *Inonkob*¹⁰ (because of the noise from threshing
rice.)¹¹
This is why I wake you up."

Komburongo:

"I asked you in jest. 3
Of course I knew the answer already."

Bobolizan replied, 4

"Many grasses covered (the rice field),
Many small trees covered (the rice field),
*Valahan*¹² made dense growth,
But I do not want to wake them up.
Because they are not skillful (enough to fetch Bambarazon).

Komburongo is very small in size. 5

It is you, whom I wake up.
Because you are more skillful (at fetching Bambarazon).
Although there are big rocks,
Although there is the flat field,
Although there are straight hill-slopes,
Although there are camphor trees,
Although there are *Kolomongis* trees¹³,

They help the people, 6
But they are not the ones I will wake up.
Because they are not skillful (to fetch Bambarazon).

7. Priest.

8. Sweet flag plant (Komburongo's material form).

9. The name of the man who threshes rice is used here.

10. The portion of the hut on the hill where the Rungus store the rice.

11. Bambarazon do not like noisy places.

12. A variety of vine.

13. *Mongis*, the tree where bee hives are found.

- It is you, Komburongo
Who are skillful. 7
- Although there are clouds,
Although there is rain,
Although there is a rainbow,
Although there is the *Nabalu*,¹⁴
Nabalu is higher (than other mountains),
I do not want to wake them up.
Because they are not skillful (to fetch Bambarazon).”
- Lightning flashed (in the sky). 8
- “Although there is the sun,
Although there is the full moon,
Although there is the *Pangasakan*,¹⁵
I do not want to wake them up.
Because they are not skillful (to fetch Bambarazon). 9
- Komburongo is very small (in size). 10
It is you, whom I wake up,
Skillful *Soribaungavan* (*Komburongo*).”¹⁶
- Komburongo replied, 11
- “You are clever Bobolizan.
Because you know my name.
My name is Soribaungavan (*Komburongo*).
Bobolizan, wait for a while,
I want to take the form of a man.
- I have seven layers of mats, 12
I have seven layers of sarongs,
I have seven layers of pillows,
I have awakened indeed.
- Oh! Bobolizan! 13
I have awakened completely.
I am the man named Soribaungavan (*Komburongo*).
Nudge my body,
- I awake immediately. 14
I have become a man.
I arise and earth falls (from my back).
I am more beautiful than the Kolomongis tree.”

14. The place in which the soul journeys after death, sacred place of the Rungus (Mt. Kinabalu).

15. The name of a star. When this star appears, the Rungus sow the rice.

16. Komburongo changes his name during conversations with the spirits, i.e., uses the name, *Soribaungavan*, *Tangananak*.

- Limbukon*¹⁷ scratched at the soil. 15
 A small fire flared (in the field).
 The Sulap will move about.
- Bobolizan: 16
 "Oh! Komburongo!"
 Komburongo:
 "Come Bambarazon!
 Where is a (*Tapi*)¹⁸ which I may bring (to Bambarazon)?"
- Bobolizan: 17
 "Come to *Rampazon*¹⁹
 Where the women go.
 Bring the (*Tapi*) which was made just now."
- Soribaungavan (Komburongo) replied, 18
 "I will not bring it.
 (If I bring the *Tapi* which) is made by an unchaste woman,
 An unchaste woman made it,
 Bambarazon will be unchaste.
 If a chaste woman made it,
 Then I will bring it (to Bambarazon)."
- Bobolizan: 19
 "You must try to see the *Rampazon*.
 It (*Tapi*) is what the chaste woman made.
 Bambarazon will be chaste."
- Komburongo: 20
 "It is what I will bring (to Bambarazon).
 A chaste woman made it.
 I will bring it soon."
- Bobolizan: 21
 "Praise, the man
 Soribaungavan (Komburongo)!"
 A small fire flared.
 "Oh! Komburongo!"
- Soribaungavan (Komburongo): 22
 "Come! Bobolizan!
 Stop at the Sulap.
 I am going now.
 I will skip along.
 I will go up and down the mountains

17. A bird.

18. An undergarment which Rungus women wear beneath their sarongs.

19. The place where the Rungus women hang the *Tapi*.

And across the tidal river, too.

All tidal rivers will dry up. 23

I am skillful (at drying up the tidal rivers)

For I go to the house.

The house of *Mogulungung*.²⁰

Mogulungung looks down on the people (from the sky).

"Oh! Mogulungung!"

Mogulungung: 24

"Come *Tangananak (Komburongo)*!

Look! My livestock have been frightened.

You frightened my livestock.

Seven white chickens,

Came back to the *Kukurungan*.²¹

Seven black pigs,

Came back to the pigsty.

Don't frighten (my livestock), *Tangananak (Komburongo)*.²²

Look! My livestock have been frightened.

What do you want

Komburongo?"

Tangananak (Komburongo): 25

"Oh! Mogulungung!"

Mogulungung: 26

"Why did you come here?

(I ask you) because you come here so suddenly.

Did you come for headhunting?

I will lend you a *Madi*.²³

I put the *Madi* on the *Garangadau*.²⁴

If your purpose is to collect camphor,

I will lend you an axe.

I put the axe on the *Garangadau*.

If your purpose is sailing,

I will lend you a boat.

I put the boat on the *Garangadau*."

Komburongo: 27

20. A spirit.

21. The bamboo basket into which the Rungus put their chickens each evening and which is hung from the side of the house.

22. This time there are seven *Komburongo*. See the text: i.e. *Tangananak turu sombozo*. (Seven friends including a *Komburongo*). When the priest begins the prayer, he puts six *Komburongo* on the ground and holds one in his hand.

23. A short knife used for headhunting.

24. The name of a big box. I have no detailed information about *Garangadau*.

"I go to fetch Bambarazon."

Mobulungung:

28

"Of course I knew the answer already.

X threshed rice

And Bambarazon went home.

X's rice disappeared suddenly.

There is no Bambarazon (at the Sulap).

(Bambarazon) went home.

You should go to *Obintoun*.²⁵

You should find the wind (for sailing).

Before long,

You will arrive at the house.

The house of Obintoun,

Soribaungavan (Komburongo)."

Soribaungavan (Komburongo):

"Oh! Obintoun!"

29

Obintoun:

30

"Look! My livestock have been frightened.

You frightened my livestock.

Seven white chickens,

Came back to the Kukurangan.

Seven black pigs,

Came back to the pigsty.

Don't frighten (my livestock), Tanganganak (Komburongo).

What do you want

Komburongo?"

Soribaungavan (Komburongo):

31

"Oh! Obintoun!"

Obintoun:

32

"Come! Soribaungavan (Komburongo)!

Why did you come here?

(I ask you) because you came here suddenly.

Did you come for headhunting?

I will lend you a Madi.

I put the Madi on the Garangadau.

If your purpose is to collect camphor,

I will lend you an axe.

I put the axe on the Garangadau.

If your purpose is sailing,

I will lend you a boat.

I put the boat on the Garangadau."

25. The name of a spirit.

Komburongo: 33

"I go to fetch Bambarazon.
X threshed rice
And Bambarazon went home.
X's rice disappeared suddenly.
'There is no Bambarazon (at the Sulap).'"

Obintoun: 34

"I saw Bambarazon
Who was going home.
X's rice disappeared suddenly.
Bambarazon went home.
You should go to *Mogintonou*.²⁶
That is where Bambarazon meet.
That is where rice gathers.
You should go the place.
The house of Mogintonou,
Soribaungavan (Komburongo)."

Mogintonou: 35

"Look! My livestock have been frightened!
Seven white chickens,
Came back to the Kukurungan.
Seven black pigs,
Came back to the pigsty.
What do you want
Komburongo?"

Soribaungavan (Komborongo): 36

"Oh! Mogintonou!"

Mogintonou: 37

"Why did you come here?
(I ask you) because you came here suddenly.
Did you come for headhunting?
I will lend you a Madi.
I put the Madi on the Garangadau.
If your purpose is to collect camphor,
I will lend you an axe.
I put the axe on the Garangadau.
If your purpose is sailing,
I will lend you a boat.
I put the boat on the Garangadau."

Komburongo: 38

"I go to fetch Bambarazon.

26. The name of a spirit.

- X threshed rice
X's rice disappeared suddenly." 39
- Mogintonou:
"X's rice disappeared suddenly,
All (Bambarazon) are gathered at my place." 40
- Komburongo:
"Oh! Mogintonou!" 41
- Mogintonou:
"Where are your chickens
in payment?" 42
- Komburongo:
"There are X's chickens
to fetch the rice." 43
- Mogintonou:
"I will take X's chickens.
You take all X's rice
and Bambarazon.
Take all of
the luck and ability of X.
Take all pigs and chickens
and treasures (gongs). 44
- X has a baby. 44
X is cool (X is healthy).
Take all of them,
Komburongo!
- Go back to the Sulap. 45
The rice is full now.
The rice is sufficient.
The *Lingkut*²⁷ is full.
Pigs, chickens, treasures,
Fortune,
All have come.
- The tide is high in the river. 46
X's tide in the river is high (fortune is good).
Kiiiiiiiiiii . . . irikirik²⁸ Bambarazon!
Don't go away from the Lingkut,
Keep the rice always in the Lingkut."

27. A wooden rice container.

28. A special call to Bambarazon.

Explanation

Komburongo is a "sweet flag (*Acorus calamus*)" plant as a spirit with a certain special power. It is the messenger in the Rungus religion.

The priest praises the Komburongo and asks the spirit messenger to fetch Bambarazon and rice. The Bambarazon's disappearance results from the noise of the rice threshing in the Sulap; a noise which it does not like.

The Komburongo sets off for his journey searching for Bambarazon; he travels from place to place with a gift for Bambarazon—a Tapi (an undergarment). The Komburongo inevitably encounters other spirits whom he asks if they have seen Bambarazon. He changes his name twice to *Soribaungavan* and *Tangananak*, but I am not certain if it is to disguise his identity or if it has other implications.

The spirits ask Komburongo questions concerning head-hunting, camphor collection, and sailing the sea by boat; questions which were of importance in the past.

After the Komburongo's interlude with the two spirits, he finally meets a third spirit named *Mogintonou* whom he asks the return of Bambarazon to the farmer. *Mogintonou* agrees but requires a payment; Komburongo pays in kind with chickens. The Bambarazon are returned to the farmer and with them good fortune also returns: chickens, pigs, etc. There the prayer ends.

Table 1

Item	<i>Bambarazon Family</i>		
	Name	Second Name	
father	Luzungpamagun	Tunouponidong	
mother	Korombugang	Kolintaban	
children (male)	Tindak ngavang	Simbul lagid	
	Sokungavang	Timboulagit	
	Momuruntung	Manimbakol	
	Turug tambong	Tobou rondong	
	Tindak ngadau	Ri'dang runat	
	Vatang rizut	Geh'geu loni	
	Lingao haji	Sarurimboi	
	(female)	Ginuguran	Sinintakan
		Tinonduan	Tinatalan
		Rinombuvan	Pinutungan
Binolobou		Tinolidu	
Pinantakan		Pinansaaran	
Pinuliai		Sinulihang	
Bambarazon's country	Sinumpalad	Sumpaladong	
	Surung rumuvab	Kumbang sumukol	

Chapter III

Summary

A Rungus priest said that Bambarazon lived in a very distant land called *Surung rumuvab*. Nobody knows where exactly *Surung rumuvab* is, but the priest said it was in *Pintigavan do Tavang* (the place where the sky reaches the horizon). In this place, there is a wide river, on the banks in which Bambarazon live. The Bambarazon's family consists of parents and seven sons and seven daughters (see Table-1).

It is said that every rice season Bambarazon come to the rice field by sail boat. When the rice season is finished, Bambarazon then return to *Surung rumuvab* by sail boat. This is why the Rungus make a small sailboat (3 inches in size) and place it on the rice container *Lingkut* after harvest.

According to the Rungus, they have sailed to Palawan Island of the southern Philippines in the distant past. On these occasions, the Rungus would purchase and/or capture men of Palawan Island. They would sacrifice these men in a certain ceremony. The existence of the canoe and the folk tales among the Rungus leads me to believe that they have a belief that all fortune and happiness come from beyond the sea's horizon.

It is evident from the myths that rice was introduced to the Rungus by a certain group of people. It was probably before the introduction of maize to Borneo because there is no religious ceremony for maize among the Rungus.

It is possible that those people with their dogs must come from beyond the sea by sailboats. From where is uncertain but the Rungus have myths concerning a Deluge. According to this myth, the earth and the sky occupied opposite positions to those of the present day. One day, Minamangun (the creator) decided to change the positions of the earth and the sky, so he created a Deluge. It should be noted that, even today, the Rungus believe that the earth is flat.

In conclusion, it is interesting that the myth of the introduction of rice to the people from a dog's tail (Myth I) and the myth of the Deluge are strikingly similar to myths found in Indochina.²⁹ Conjecture on the significance of this similarity is necessarily speculative but raises questions of diffusion or, at least, early contact.

29. George L. Barney, "The Meo of Xieng Khouang Province," *Christianity: Innovation in Meo Culture, A Case Study in Missionization*, (Master's Thesis, University of Minnesota, 1957), p. 33. J. H. Hutton, *The Angami Nagas*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 269. Ōbayashi Taryō, *Inasaku no Shinwa*, (Tokyo: Kobundō, 1973), pp. 196-198.

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