

IGUALI: Evil spirit in the second layer of heaven. Mentioned in *absogēdi*-documents, section D III 1.

IGUANUPTIGILI: Woman. Guard for the water vessel in the underworld. Mentioned in *Tiegun*, section B III 2.

IGUAOGINYAPILER" [MAS -]: Venus, see PUGSU. Brother of *Ibelele*. Venus also = *Iguaoginyalilel*.

IGUAPANIEKINYALILEL: Colloquially *tapgala*, Spanish garza (heron). His wife, *Inaopindilisop*. Mentioned in *Nēle Sibū*, section B III 3.

INANUPDIKILE: Rain goddess in *Tiegun*, section B III 2.

INUE: Son of *Piler*. Mentioned in *Organ*, section B III 1, as father of *Oloopanilel*.

KALIB (DADA -): A *nēle* who is spoken of as an albino, section B II.

KANA: Son of *Piler*. Mentioned in *Organ*, section B III 1, as father of *Oloopanilel*.

KAPSUS: Expert on eclipses of the sun. Power which puts us to sleep.

KARBAN (DADA -): Mentioned in the *Ibeorgun* document, section B II.

KIGIPE: Chief in the underworld. Mentioned in *Tiegun*, section B III 2.

KIKADIR: Follower of *Ibeorgun*, section B II.

KUCHUKA: Son of *Piler*.

KUBILER: One of the *nēles* after *Ibeorgun*.

KUEDULE: Evil spirit in the second layer of heaven. Mentioned in the *absogēdi*-documents, section D III 1.

KUNGILEL = IBEORGUN.

MACHI OLOTEUIGINYA: Demon who lives in the path of the winds in the fourth layer of heaven. Mentioned in *absogēdi*, section D III 1.

MACHI SAGUIPIPILER: Came after *Ibelele*'s death.

MANINUPDIKILI: Guard for the water vessel in the underworld. Woman. Mentioned in *Tiegun*, section B III 2.

MANIPANIEKINYALILEL: A heron with a yellow bill. Colloquially *tapgala nugar kordikit*. His wife is called

*Maniopindilisop*. Mentioned in *Nēle Sibu*, section B III 3.

MASAR AKBAN: Enemy of *Ibelele*.

MASARTUMMI: One of *ibelelegana*, the *nēles* who came after *Ibeorgun*.

MASINATOPALILEL: Called also *Ulupelel* and *Inatolet*. Called colloquially *ari* = iguana.

MASOLOELIPLEL: The smallest ant-bear. In everyday speech *ukuturba*. Brother of *Oloopanilel*. Mentioned in *Organ*, section B III 1.

MASOLOESAPARIIBELEL: In ordinary speech *kuini*, squirrel. Mentioned in *Organ*, section B III 1.

MASOLOINIPIPILEL: Little gray squirrel. In everyday speech *nikkirgua*. Mentioned in *Organ*, section B III 1, also as the one who felled the world tree by gnawing off the tufts of cloud which were holding the tree. Section B I, the chronicle.

MASOLOKISPAKUALEL: In ordinary speech *ari* = iguana. Wife *Punauaga Olopihindili*. Mentioned in *Organ*, section B III 1.

MASOLOKUIRGIKALILEL: In ordinary speech *usu* = *Dasyprocta aguti*. Chief in the underworld. Mentioned in *Tiegun*, section B III 2. Named in the songs *tulegala yayadule*. Wife *Olouiknidilisop*.

MASOLOKUPYAKILEL: Domestic poultry. In ordinary speech *kanir*. Mentioned in *Organ*, section B III 1.

MASOLOMURKIPIPILEL: The chief of the peccaries. In colloquial speech *uedar*. In the songs he is called *murkidule* for his grunting. His wife *Punauaga Olomurkindili*. Mentioned in *Organ*, section B III 1.

MASOLOPEAKKILEL: In common speech *koe*, deer. His wife *Punauaga Olotendindili*. Mentioned in *Organ*, section B III 1.

MASOLOSEIKALILEL: In ordinary speech *uasa* = Spanish *ciervo*. In the songs it is called *uasebana*. Mentioned in *Organ*, section B III 1.

MASOLOTURKUNALILEL: In ordinary speech *sule* = Spanish *conejo pintado*. His wife is *Puanuaga Olouadili*. Mentioned in *Organ*, section B III 1.

NATULILER: A *nêle* who came after the death of *Ibeorgun*.

NELE IUIGUA NELEGUAGAN: Elephant-like demons living in the underworld. Are mentioned in *absogedi*, section D III 1.

NELE SIBU: One of the *ibelelegana*, who came after *Ibeorgun*. Section B III 3.

NELE TIPILEL: = IBELELE.

NELE UITUILI: He came after *Ibeorgun's* death.

NUSKESU: = Jesus?

OBANTUR: Chief of the dogs, *achu*, in the underworld. Is mentioned in *Tiegun*. Section B III 2.

OLOALIKINYALILEL: Chief at the time of *Ibelele*. In ordinary speech *moli*, = the tapir. In the songs he is called *egir/makadule* from *egir*, to stamp, and *makadule*, man. His wife is *Punauaga Oloekirmaidili*. Mentioned in *Organ*, section B III 1.

OLOANILI: A sister to *Ibelele*. This was her name when marriageable. As a girl she was called *Olopunasop*.

OLOEGEKINYALIGUA: Guard of the coffee river in the realm of the dead.

OLOESAKUINGAPIPILER: Rain god in the realm of the dead.

OLOETINYAPIPILEL: In colloquial speech *pero* = sloth (Spanish *perico ligero*). A brother of *Oloopanilel*. His wife is *Punauaga Olotakinyali*. Mentioned in *Organ*, section B III 1.

OLOIBAKILEL: The chief for *Kâlu Ibakki* that is located in the east in the second(?) layer of the underworld. Mentioned in *Tiegun*, section B III 2.

OLOIKANIPPILEL: Is also written as *Oloikanilel*. Fights against *Ibelele*. His wife, *Punauaga Olopunalisop*, causes earthquakes. Lives in the eighth layer of the underworld.

OLOINPALILELE: Chief of fishes in the underworld. Mentioned in the *absogēdi*-documents, section D III 1.

OLOKAIPILER: Follower of *Ibelele*.

OLOKANAKUNGILELE: One of the *ibelelegana* who came after *Ibeorgun*.

OLOKANIGIDILISOP: Woman who guards a tree in the underworld.

OLOKERKIKALILEL: In ordinary speech *aspan*. Is mentioned in *Organ*, section B III 1. Under the name of *Olokerkekkalilel* there is mentioned in *Tiegun*, section B III 2, a chief in the underworld.

OLOKUADILE: Guards one of the water containers in the underworld. Husband to one of the female guards.

OLOKUNALILEL: Grandson to *Piler*.

OLOKUNGUALILEL: An ape with black skin. In ordinary speech *ulul*. Is mentioned in the story about the creation of the turtles, section C IV appendix, as having been born of the original mother. In *Organ*, section B III 1, he is said to be a brother of *Olopanilel*.

OLOKUNNIKKALILEL: Chief in the underworld. In ordinary speech *sigli*, = wild turkey (Spanish *pavo del monte*). Mentioned in *Tiegun*, section B III 2. Cf. OLONUKNIKALILEL.

OLOKUPILELE: God.

OLONEYLOPANILER: In the realm of the dead he gives orders as to when it shall rain.

OLONITALIPIPILELE: = *Olotualigipiler*. In the «Moon Ship» father of *Púgsu* (Venus), brother of *Ibelele*. In a Cuna story that explains why the moon has black spots in his face *Olonitalipipilele* is identified with the moon. See Wassén in «Journal des Americanistes», Vol. XXVI, Paris 1934, pp. 5—7, and «Ethnological Studies» 4, Göteborg 1937, pp. 16—23.

OLONITULILER: One of the *neles* who came after *Ibeorgun*'s death.

OLONUKNIKALILEL: One of *Ibelele's* enemies = *sigli* = Spanish *pavo del monte*, wild turkey.

OLONUNIKALEL: Porcupine, in ordinary speech *akuanuku*. Brother of *Oloopanilel*. Mentioned in *Organ*, section B III 1.

OLONUNIPILEL: In ordinary speech *uigip* = the middle-sized ant-bear. Brother of *Oloopanilel*, according to *Organ*, section B III 1.

OLONUPTIGILE (= NANA -): A woman who guards one of the water containers in the underworld. Is mentioned in *Tiegun*, section B III 2.

OLOOPANILEL: Ant-bear, in ordinary speech *ibkuk*. Chief in the realm of the dead. In *Organ*, section B III 1, the brothers of *Oloopanilel* are mentioned. They are: *Masoloeliplel* (*ukuturpa*) = the smallest of the ant-bears; *Oloetinyapipilel* (*pero*) = the sloth; *Dada Kalibe* (*uiop*) = bear; *Olonunipilel* (*uigip*) = the middle-sized ant-bear; *Olonunikalel* (*akuanuku*) = porcupine; *Olokunkualilel* (*ulul*) = a black monkey; *Oloturkurkuna* (*uma*) = a red ape; *Olokerkikalilel* (*aspan*) = ?, *Olotikinyalel* (*titi*) = a little ape. The wife of O. is called *Oloakindili*. In *Organ*, *Oloopanilel* is also mentioned as *Masalaipan* and is said to be a son of *Kana*. *Inue* is said to be the uncle of *Oloopanilel* and the same applies to *Olokunalilel*. *Oloopanilel* is also mentioned in *Nele Pailibe*, section B III 4.

OLOPAIKKALILEL: Chief of the white apes. Mentioned in *Tiegun*, section B III 2.

OLOPENKEKELEL: Lives in the realm of the dead. Looks after all trees on the earth.

LOPILIVILELE: He is mentioned in *Nele de Kantule's* story about the creation and has the sons *Kana*, *Inue* and *Mago*.

LOPUNASOP: A sister to *Ibelele*. This was her name when she was a girl. Her name after she became marriageable was *Oloanili*. Cf. *Punauaga Olopunalisop*.

OLOPURGUAKUAYAI: Rain goddess. Guards water containers in the realm of the dead. Mentioned in *Tiegun*, section B III 2.

OLOSEGINYALILEL: Chief of the *uasa*-deers. Mentioned in *Tiegun*, section B III 2.

OLOSISIKKALILEL: Chief in the first layer of heaven.

OLOSUAKINYALILEL: A monkey, in ordinary speech called *sulu*. Chief in the realm of the dead. Mentioned in *Tiegun*, section B III 2.

OLOSUURTUNILEL: = *Ibelele*. In *Organ*, section B III 1.

OLOTAGIKI: In the realm of the dead. Gives the body its functions, the breathing, the hearing and so forth. The same applies to OLOTAGISOP.

OLOTIGEGINYE: One of *Ibeorgun*'s followers.

OLOTINKINYALILEL: A little ape, in ordinary speech called *titi*. A brother of *Oloopanilel*. Mentioned in *Organ*, section B III 1.

LOTLILISOBI: The original mother. See section C II.

LOTURKURKUNALILEL: A red-skinned ape. In ordinary speech it is called *uma* (see the story about the creation of the turtles, section C IV appendix). In *Organ*, section B III 1, this animal is said to be a brother of *Oloopanilel*.

LOUAIPIPILELE: = *IBELELE*.

LOUALA: = *IBELELE*.

LOUELIPLEL: In colloquial speech *yānu*, peccary. He was a chief at the time of *Ibelele*. In *Tiegun*, section B III 2, O. is said to be chief of *yānu*. His wife *Punauaga Olouekyakyali*.

LOUIUIDOR: A follower of *Ibeorgun*.

LOYAKUNALELE: Chief in the underworld as mentioned in *Tiegun*, section B III 2.

LOYEGINYALILEL: Chief in the underworld. See *Tiegun*, section B III 2.

LOUGIPIPILELE: The owner of the water container in the underworld. God communicates the fact to this chief

when there are going to be eclipses of the sun, earthquakes, storms and floods. High Chief in the underworld. Mentioned in *Tiegun*, section B III 2.

OLOYAKKUPLEL: Chief of the winds. See *Tiegun*, section B III 2.

ORKUNALILEL: Son of *Kana*. One of *Ibelele*'s assistants. Changed his name to *Kammib*. He calls the winds. Is mentioned in *Organ*, section B III 1.

ORTON: Chief of the mosquitoes, *kuñ*, in the underworld. See *Tiegun*, section B III 2.

PALIPIL: One of the *ibelelegana* who came after *Ibeorgun*.

PALIUIDUR: Follower of *Ibeorgun*.

PAYLIBE: One of *Cunas*' great wise men. One of the *ibelelegana*.

PILER: = *Olopilivilele*. His sons are *Kana*, *Inue* and *Kuchuka*.

PUGSU: Venus. P. was left-handed. Those who are left-handed are the best harpooners. For this reason *Ibelele* often called upon *Pugsu* (there is a story on this motif). Left-handed persons can be surnamed *pugsu*. The form *pugasu* is also used. In *Tiegun*, section B III 2, one *Pugsu Kalu*, is mentioned.

PUGUR: Grandson of *Piler*.

PUNAUAGA OLOEAYDILI: Woman who guards a river in the realm of the dead.

PUNAUAGA OLOIBIYALISOP: Woman who guards a tree in the realm of the dead.

PUNAUAGA OLOKUKURDILISOP: In ordinary speech *achamom-mor*, a great blue butterfly. Is mentioned in the legend of the felling of the mythical world tree (see p. 161). One *Olokukurdir* is mentioned in *Tiegun*, section B III 2, as chief of the underworld.

PUNAUAGA OLONAKEDIRYAY: Woman, one of the *ibelelegana*, who came after *Ibeorgun*.

PUNAUAGA OLONISKIDI,ISOP: Woman who guards the Cacao River in the realm of the dead.

- PUNAUAGA OLOPUNALISOP: First, wife to *Oloikanilel*, then to *Ibelele*.
- PUNAUAGA PUNYAYSOP: Woman who makes arrows. One of *Ibelele*'s assistants.
- PURGALILER: One of *Ibelele*'s men.
- PURUA IGALA: The way of the wind in the fourth layer of heaven. The *absogedi* in their songs call it *gilu-gilaba-sayla*.
- SUNIBLELE: Star or a planet. Is mentioned in the »Moon Ship». Brother of *Udule*, *Pugsu* etc.
- TIEGUN: One of the great *nēles* who came after *Ibeorgun*. Section B III 2.
- TISNON: Chief of the vampires, *usil*, in the underworld. See *Tiegun*, section B III 2.
- TOLANERGUA: One of *Ibelele*'s enemies.
- TUNAKUPUA: One of *Ibelele*'s men.
- TUMMORKUA (DADA -): Has also the name of *Yaikunapalel*. In ordinary speech *yarmorro* = Spanish »tortuga del monte». His wife is *Punauaga Oloikilisop*. Mentioned in *Organ*, section B III 1.
- TUSI: Evil spirit in the third layer of heaven. The *absogedi* call him in their songs *kilu egobakilu*.
- UAGILEL: One of the *ibelelegana*, who came after *Ibeorgun*.
- UAGUN: A *nēle* after *Ibeorgun*.
- UAKUATUMAGIMAKEGUA: Enemy of *Ibelele*.
- UANAPISKUA: Enemy of *Ibelele*.
- UDUR: The planet Mars? Is mentioned in the »Moon Ship» as *Udule*.
- UIGAR (UIGALE): One of *Olouaipipilele*'s (= *Ibelele*'s) men.
- UKUNAIBE: Rattlesnake. Chief in the underworld. Is mentioned in *Tiegun*, section B III 2.



## Part C.

### Cuna Indian Ideology.

In this section there are published those parts of the Cuna manuscript which at the time of Erland Nordenskiöld's death were to a great degree completed in Swedish or partly translated into English. Nordenskiöld had put into shape a number of his studies so that Mr. Pérez could have an opportunity to criticize and annotate them. After the Indian's return home and gradually as Nordenskiöld's work with the manuscript progressed, he however constantly made additions to these parts, all of which additions are worked in here.

Part of the material Nordenskiöld had time to publish. This is especially the case with the paper published here as number I on the Cuna concepts: »*pūrba, nīga and kūrgin*». This was published in French (1932 c). In the English version given here a great many of the additions made by Nordenskiöld after the printing of the French study have, however, been worked in.

Further special information in connection with the different sections in this part precedes each chapter. The chapters published here are:

- I. About *Pūrba, Nīga* and *Kūrgin*.
- II. Birth and the Coming into Existence of a Human Being.
- III. Word Taboos and Figures of Speech.
- IV. Relations between Human Beings and Animals.
- V. Incantations for Thunder, Rain, Storms and so forth.
- VI. Sympathetic Magic.
- VII. Snakes and Snake Bites, with appendix: Snake Medicine Song.
- VIII. Decoration. Body and Face Painting. With addition: »Dark Indians and White Indians».
- IX. Picture-writings.
- X. Are »*Nūchus*» Representations of Saints?
- XI. Conceptions Relating to Dreams.
- XII. The Concept of God.
- XIII. The Realm of the Dead, and Ideas of life after Death, with the »*Nalub nacruz igala*» song in the original.

ED. ,

# I. About Purba, Niga and Kurgin.

*Pūrba* is the only word which the Cuna Indians who know some foreign language, translate as soul. Thus historians who record the history of religion would likely also translate *pūrba* but I still prefer not to translate it at all. It means so much.

A person's *pūrba* or the sum of his *pūrbas* is, in a way, his invisible, or more correctly, non-material, double. In a certain aboriginal song which is sung at the death of a Cuna Indian, and of which I have a drawing made by Ruben Pérez Kantule from what his fellow countryman Iguatinigiñe had told him, it says, in part: »the *pūrbagana*<sup>1</sup> leave the body together, the hair's *pūrbagana* leave the hair, the fingers' *pūrbagana* leave them, the heart's *pūrbagana* leave it», etc. It is further said that the *pūrba* stands weeping at the end of the hammock and bewails the fact that it must leave its wife, its house, its hunting, etc. After this the dead person in the song is not called *pūrba* any longer, but *nāgibe*. It is evident that every part of the human body has several *pūrbas*, which together form a whole invisible replica of the body.

In this song as well as in several other of the writings, in part very poetic, there is the story about the souls' wandering to and through the kingdom of the dead where the *pūrba* is exposed to all kinds of dangers and remarkable fates. The *pūrba* lives happily through the dangers in the other world in the same way as in this, though under much better and happier circumstances. Only one *pūrba* is spoken about here.

When a person is taken with a severe illness, then his *pūrba* has been carried off by an evil spirit. It may have been taken to the abode of the evil spirits in the nether world. Nor in this case is a plurality of *pūrbas* referred to, but only one *pūrba*. To illustrate this, I will here cite what Pérez has related to me about a couple of cases of illness of this kind.

<sup>1</sup> Plural form. For sake of simplicity written hereafter *pūrbas* in the plural. The same applies to *nūchus*, used instead of *nūchugana*.

Once when a Cuna woman happened to be at the mouth of Rio Narganá, she got frightened by something, and when she returned home she had high fever. Her people then looked up somebody who knew how to send out the protective spirits, the *núchus*. But unfortunately he was wrong in his supposition as to the whereabouts of the *púrba* and sent the *núchus* to seek it on the island of Narganá itself. When it was seen that the woman was getting no better, one of her nearest relatives set out to consult *Néle* of Ustúpu, who has an exceedingly high reputation for being able to discover the causes of illnesses. *Néle* declared that the *púrba* of the woman had been carried off when she was at the mouth of the Narganá river, and that the evil spirits had already taken her *púrba* to the second layer of the nether world and that she was now past saving. The cause of the woman's illness thus having been revealed too late, there was nothing left for her but to die.

As for himself, *Pérez* has been more fortunate in a similar case. He was out in the forest and experienced a fright. Having returned to his hut he felt fever coming on, and the next day he was rather ill. *Pérez* did not know what kind of illness he was suffering from, and his people asked him to give an account of the dreams he had had during the night. He then told them that he had dreamt that he had revisited the place in the forest where he had been the day before. His people then expressed the opinion that his *púrba* had been ravished by some evil spirit. The fever increased, and each time he dropped off to sleep he dreamt of the same spot in the forest. His people then called in a person who, by means of the Spanish pepper chant, (*kaburr tulet*), knew how to dispatch the protective spirits on their quest to rescue the ravished *púrba*. This man sat himself down by *Pérez*' hammock and commenced his singing. While he was singing, *Pérez* went to sleep. While sleeping he saw people arriving at the spot in the forest where he had been. Those were *núchus*. They said to him:

»Let us go home», and he walked home in the midst of them protected from the evil spirits. When P é r e z reached home he awoke, and at the same moment the chant had come to an end. That very day he recovered completely from his illness.

Dreams play a tremendously big rôle with the Cuna Indians when it comes to finding out the reasons for illnesses and such things. Let us suppose that a person has become ill, and dreams about a place where he has been shortly before. The reason for this is that his *pūrba* has been abducted at just this place and is still there. Certain dreams are very serious symptoms of illness. A girl in Narganá dreamed a great deal about dead people. P é r e z brought to *Nēle* a protecting spirit, *nūchu*, which the girl held for some minutes in her hands. *Nēle* explained that it was evil spirits and not deceased people which the girl saw and he said that she should bathe in certain medicines or else she would become insane.

As to the protecting spirits, *nūchu*, I shall speak of them further on (pp. 344—350 and pp. 423—426).

The girl referred to above died because her *pūrba* had been ravished and was not brought back to her body in time. In this case only one *pūrba* is mentioned and nothing is said about how the ravished *pūrba* can contrive to return to its body. Very shortly after the death of a person his soul begins its pilgrimage towards and through heaven. P é r e z' explanation that man possesses two *pūrbas*, one that may be ravished and another that proceeds to another world should be accepted with caution and looked upon as an easy corollary to my question. In the ancient songs are mentioned only the multiplicity of *pūrbas* of the various parts of the human body which together form one *pūrba*. According to P é r e z the Indians say in the case of a less virile attack of fever that it is not the good soul, *pūrba nuédi*, which has been abducted, but a less important *pūrba*. This also shows that the Indians imagine that man has several *pūrbas*.

Not all illnesses are caused by the *pŭrba* having been ravished. Diarrhoea for instance, is not explained in that way, hence it is not possible to cure that illness by chanting, but only with medicine. Illnesses of this kind too are caused by evil spirits but these have neither carried off the *pŭrba* of the sufferer nor in any other way taken possession of him. Nor is malaria caused by the abduction of a *pŭrba*. It is only *Nēle* who can say whether an illness is caused by a *pŭrba's* having been abducted. He does this with the assistance of his helping spirits, *nŭchus*.

That a *pŭrba* can leave a body while a person is alive appears from the fact that it can be abducted. It is said of *Nēle* that his *pŭrba* can voluntarily leave his body. The *pŭrbas* of ordinary Indians can not do this. When a person in his dreams meets someone who has departed this life it is not the *pŭrba* of this departed man which one sees but an evil spirit which has taken the shape of the dead person. When someone related to the Seer *Nēle* that he had been with God, who was dressed in a costume of gold and had a hat of gold, *Nēle* explained that this was not true. What he had seen was an evil spirit which had come to him.

A number of Cuna Indians still believe that their *pŭrba* during sleep or unconsciousness can leave their body. Thus it is very usual that the Indians tell about different kinds of experiences which they have had when their *pŭrbas* have left the body during sleep. One Indian found out from such a dream that his daughter who died when she was little had five children in the next world. One man from Narganá visited the distant village Arquia where the Indians have preserved their old ideology better than those in Narganá have done. One day it happened that he fell down out of a tree and lay unconscious on the ground. No one of the Arquia Indians came forward to help him but all went their own way. When he came to, he asked why they had left him without help, and they said that it was so as not to frighten

away his *pūrba*, in which case there would be a risk that the *pūrba* would not take possession of the body again.

If a person is a magician, *tulekunédi*, he can in dreams injure another person. One time a very sick man came to *Nele*. He had been bewitched by a magician in Cartí. He vomited blood and *Nele* said that he was unable to save him because it was too late. Some time after this *Nele* dreamed that this magician came to murder him with a knife, but the protecting spirits, *núchus*, came between and defended him. *Nele* said that without these spirits the magician would have put an end to him. He did not explain whether it was the magician's *pūrba* which came to murder him.

In the Cuna village Ailigandi there is a person who was born to be a *nele* but who had not bathed in medicine and who therefore did not become a real Seer. It was the women who had seen him being born who knew that he was a *nele*. Several people dreamed that this *nele* came to murder them or they dreamed that he invited them to have a drink and after they had drunk they became ill. Therefore they understood that he was a magician. He himself was not aware of his misfortune. In spite of the opposition of the older people he was clubbed to death by the younger men.

If a person dreams that he is being murdered and he is not able to defend himself he dies without waking. How one can know that this happens *Pérez* has not explained. Sometimes the magician can fail to succeed. One time *Nele* said to *Pérez* that while he slept someone had given him dangerous medicine but it had had no effect. The Cunas do not fear a dead magician's *pūrba*. It is while he is alive that he is dangerous and, as has been said before, he has this quality without knowing about it himself.

It is not dangerous to dream that one is committing a murder oneself. This merely means that one is going to shoot a large animal.

If anyone places in a dead person's hand an egg, eye-lashes,

and strands of hair from his head, this person, according to what most Cunas believe, will in some months meet the *pūrba* of the dead person in a dream. *Nēle* appears however to doubt that it is the departed one whom one meets. According to his ideas it is an evil spirit who has taken the shape of the departed one. In other cases as well, *Nēle* seems to be a little skeptical. The female *nēle* in Ustúpu, *Nelegŭa*, said that she had gone in a dream to a place where she had seen all kinds of large animals and great buildings. *Nēle* said that what the old woman told was purely and simply a lie.

The main interpreter of dreams in Ustúpu is, however, *Nēle*. It is to him that the Indians go in order to find out if their dreams mean illness, accident, good fortune, or just nothing. He therefore has a great influence on the concepts of the other Indians and thus there are now certain contradictions in the ideas about the spirits in Ustúpu, the village where *Nēle* lives, and in the other villages.

When the human *pūrba* wanders through the kingdom of the dead it is exposed to all kinds of dangers as a punishment for the evil which it has done on the earth. It is said, for instance, that the *pūrba* is devoured by wild animals. It is, however, a mistake to believe that the *pūrba* is in this way annihilated. It goes on living. A person's *pūrba* can not cease to exist. The Indian is unable to imagine complete annihilation. Nor can he imagine that life in the kingdom of the dead is very different from that here on earth. The dead people eat, drink, bear children, etc. When one speaks of them one does not call them *pūrbagana*, but generally, *sērgan*, the old. This applies whether one has died as a child or as an adult.

»We and the animals are much the same», *Pérez* once told me. The Cunas do not feel that there is a great gulf between human beings and animals, as the Christians do. Animals not only possess *pūrba*, but their *pūrbas* are like human ones. When, for example, a bird *pūrba* is referred to

it is called *siguitule*, i. e. bird person. Nowhere is it said that an animal has changed into a human being.

When one speaks in songs and incantations about the *pūrba* of animals they are often, but not always, men. We shall see that the plant spirits, on the other hand, are as a rule women.

This line of thought, that the animals' souls are human souls, does not exclude the conception that these animal souls can have the shape of animals in the other world. All the tapirs, jaguars, peccaries, etc. which an Indian has killed will serve him in the next world. If a child dies he may ride to God on an animal which his father has killed.

The *pūrba* of certain animals may in various ways be of service to mankind. A bird called *tibo*, which is found only in the *Tacarcuna* mountains, is used as medicine either by being eaten or by being burned to ashes. This is done with the object of learning songs from the soul of the *tibo*. The late chief Colman of Ailigandi ate eight of these birds. He was the possessor of the finest singing voice of his day. Occasionally the Cunas paint the tongue with the ashes of a bird called *ileksikui*. As this bird is very rare it brings a high price. Worthless substitutes for it may even be palmed off on the unwary. The Indians put down from this bird in their ears and then draw within earshot of conversation carried on in some foreign language, as, for instance, by English sailors, with the idea that it will help them learn that language. It is the *pūrba* of the bird that is their teacher. Before anyone thus makes use of this bird, or other birds, the medicine man addresses a few words to the bird's soul and explains why he has called upon it. He does this in a chant. If a number of similar medicines are to be used, the *matulēdi* speaks a few words to each *pūrba*, using their individual names. Other instances of a similar kind are given in another connection. What I here wish to emphasize is that an animal's *pūrba* may be the teacher of a human being.

It can be dangerous to take medicines in this way in order



to learn something in dreams if one does not know thoroughly the proper use of these medicines. There was an Indian, N a b i g i ñ a, who wanted to learn songs and for that purpose he got several kinds of birds which the Cuna Indians use for learning the medicine-songs and legends about the origin of animals, mankind and plants. Among these was a bird *kiga* which lives in the great virgin forests. This bird screams over the head of a person, or near him, if he is in danger of poisonous snakes, jaguars, or other things. The birds are eaten by the one who wishes to learn something. Before an Indian who has gone in for this practice eats such a bird he pronounces a kind of incantation in which he explains to the *pūrba* of the bird what it is he wants to learn. When P é r e z wanted to improve his eloquence he ate such a bird, after N ē l e had said some words to the bird's *pūrba*. Parrots which know some Spanish or English words are specially in demand. If one eats such a parrot one easily learns foreign languages in dreams. A parrot who knows many foreign words is worth as much as ten dollars.

To return to N a b i g i ñ a, he saw in a dream, women, that is to say the *pūrbas* of birds, who came to him. The women taught him songs and legends. After a month of taking medicines and dreaming, N a b i g i ñ a had acquired a great deal of knowledge and he was also able to find out, with the help of the above-mentioned women, when anyone stole from him or spoke ill of him. N a b i g i ñ a became quite changed and went around like a crazy person saying that he had a wife in another place. N ē l e now discovered through the protecting spirits, *nūchugana*, the dangerous dreams which N a b i g i ñ a had, and he narrated them for all the people of the village, so that N a b i g i ñ a should be forced to bathe in suitable medicine to put an end to the dreaming and so that they should get to know in the village that dreams of this kind are very dangerous. The village rose against N a b i g i ñ a in order to frighten him and to make him tell his dreams, and this he did. He was forced to

bathe in certain medicines in order to stop dreaming in this way, and *Nabigiña* bathed and became well after a month.

*Nabigiña* had learned in dreams several songs about the *pūrba* of birds, the bodies of which he had eaten. While he was asleep he had found out from the women mentioned that his brother and sister-in-law had stolen corn from the corn box he had in the forest. He made an accusation against his brother, who confessed that he was guilty of the theft.

*Nēle* has said that among the birds such as *kiga* there are some which are dangerous to eat and it is these which cause the evil dreams.

A hunter of turtles, *carey*, carries in the prow of his canoe a gourd containing medicine. *Pérez* prepared medicine and took it to *Nēle* who for the space of eight days sang about the manner of the turtles' creation and the way to attract the turtles, exhorting the bird from which the medicine was prepared to assist the hunter, — that is to say, it was to the soul of that bird he was speaking. The medicine that *Pérez* used consisted of a bird burnt to ashes, four cocoa nibs, some leaves of tobacco and of *bisep*, and flowers from the coco-palm tree. The turtle medicine must be carefully hidden away. If anyone else sees it, it will lose its virtue. And the same applies to other medicines that are used in hunting.

A song of the kind that is chanted when one uses medicine consisting of a bird burnt to ashes has been published by *Densmore*. It describes how the bird is burned and how the ashes, mixed with plant medicine, are put into a gourd and taken along in the canoe. When well away from the shore, the hunter addresses the bird's soul as follows:<sup>1</sup>

»When we get out to the ocean  
I will send you down under the water,

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<sup>1</sup> *Densmore* writes, »to the medicine in the gourd.»

I will send you down to attract the turtle;  
 When you get to the bottom of the water  
 You must put on your pretty blue dress  
 So the turtle will come to you.  
 Change your dress many times,  
 If the turtle has on a yellow dress  
 You must put on a yellow dress,  
 If the turtle has on a white dress  
 You must put on a white dress,  
 If the turtle has on a blue dress  
 You must put on a blue dress,  
 You must do this to attract him.  
 When you get the turtle  
 Bring him up to the canoe and I will spear him.  
 Tell the turtle that the man who sent you is not going to  
 kill him,  
 Tell the turtle I will only take off his shell and send him  
 back where he came from,  
 So you will catch many turtles for me,  
 And everyone will say you are a good bird.<sup>1</sup>

Quite as the animals are attracted by the fragrance of *bisep* to come toward the hunter because they wish to love him, the bird's *púrba* in its most beautiful clothes attracts the turtles to a love-tryst which leads to the turtle's taking off its shell.

The Cunas do not as a matter of fact kill the turtles which they catch, but instead take off the valuable shells and let the animals go again, alive, into the sea. This is because it was not long ago that the turtles were people.

It is the fate of many animals to serve human beings. Pérez has thus discovered a song about a shell woman in which she tells that God has created her and her kind for food for human beings, who throw away the shell, which is taken possession of by the hermit crab (see p. 650).\*

<sup>1</sup> Frances Densmore 1926, p. 28.

Even the plants have *pūrba* and even they are people, as a rule women, *inapūndurgana*. There is a song of the cocoa women in white clothes. When the medicine man, *inatulēdi*, goes to get a plant he speaks to the plant's *pūrba*. He gives it »advice» (explains the case to it) as the Indians express it. In order for the medicine or the medicine song to have any effect, one must know the origin of the plant, how it has been given birth by the first woman. When the medicine man goes for medicines in the forest or gives them to a sick person he may not sleep with a woman because then the plant spirits, who are women, will be jealous and will go away and the medicine will be worthless. There are medicine men who are dishonest and break this commandment. The same abstention should be observed by the one who is taking the medicine and by his nearest relatives. *Nēle's* daughter gave medicine to her child. The mother respected the commandment but the father had an affair with another woman and for this reason the medicine was ineffective.

Now it is true that plant medicine contains *pūrba*. The active element in all medicine is its »*inapūrba*». It however does not always have human form, but is imagined more as a power radiating from a spirit in the character of a woman who guards the medicine »*ina etarbe*». How this works out *Pérez* can not explain.

There are helping spirits which also belong to the plant spirits. These good spirits help people in the fight against the evil ones, in other words, illnesses. The Cuna Indians call them *suar nūchugana* or *suar mimmigana*. In the songs they are called *uābānēlegana*. Like everything else here in the world they are the work of God. The Cuna Indians have an incantation in which it is told how the *nūchus* were created by God, and about the *nūchus'* origin, *ēpūrba ēhuiluppu*, but unfortunately *Pérez* is not familiar with this. When God created the world he made, among the plants, first palo balsa, *ūkuruāla*, which is sometimes also called *dionūchulēle*. The Cuna

Indians carve from *škuršala*, *pariašala* and other wood and sometimes from liana vines, figures which so far as Pérez is acquainted with them, are always in the form of human beings. The important thing about these figures is the kind of wood of which they are made and not the carving, in other words, the important thing is the spirits, the *pšrba*, which are found in certain kinds of wood. The most important wooden figures are of *škuršala*. If one has several figures carved, for example, out of *škuršala*, they are all named according to the kind of wood; they have no individual names. It does not matter if the wooden figures are different but they must be of the same kind of wood. All these wooden figures represent European types, and to judge by the kind of clothes, are from the eighteenth and possibly from the seventeenth century, or at least have been copied from old pictures from that time. Pérez has never seen any wooden figure representing a Cuna man or woman with a ring in the nose.<sup>1</sup> There are certain people who carve the wooden figures and naturally some of these have more artistic talents than others (see figs. 25—26).

It is *Ibeorgun* who has taught mankind how to use these wooden figures. And from God originates the song that is chanted when one wishes the tutelary spirits to take up their abode in the wooden figures.

The main business of these benevolent spirits is to combat the evil spirits. It is with their assistance that the medicine man brings back to the body the soul that has been carried off by the evil spirits. How this is done I shall here relate. The reciter of the incantation sits down by the sick person's hammock, underneath which he places a box containing

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<sup>1</sup> Such figures do exist however. In fig. 20 (p. 278) there is one pictured, *GM.* 35.15.72, which I brought home in 1935. The figure, which wears a nose ring, is cut out of a hard, heavy, brown, kind of wood and is certainly very old. It belonged to Mrs. Dove L. Prather in Balboa who added it to my collections. She had received it from the Cunas many years before. ED.

chief of the evil spirits replies: »My subordinates have not done this thing. How can you say anything like that to me?» »Because you have sent your subordinates to the place where our master is», the *núchus* retort.

Then the chief of the evil spirits says to them: »Will you please sit down on my chairs», and the *núchus* reply: »We are not accustomed to sitting on chairs. God has made us without anything to sit on». The reason is that the *núchus* do not wish to be seated because the chief of the evil spirits has chairs that are very dangerous.

»Let us play with our hats», the chief of the evil spirits then says, and hands his hat to one of the *núchus*, who in return hands his hat to the chief who puts it on his head. As it is very heavy he drops to the ground, telling the *núchus* that the hat is of great weight and that he has never known a hat like that.

The *núchus* again ask if the chief's subjects are keeping captive the *púrba* of their master, and the chief replies that it is not there. When this is told to the *núchus*, they raise their hats and let out a noisome smoke in the chief's dwelling, so that he goes frantic. He tells them that he will hand over to them the soul of their master if only they will not molest him with the smoke. And then the *núchus* look everywhere rummaging through the belongings of the chief, in the end finding the *púrba* hidden away in a part of the house, from which they take it out and, carrying it between them, return to the place where the *púrba's* body is.

When they arrive in front of the body, they say to the *púrba*: »This body belongs to you, and you should return into it». When the *púrba* has re-entered, the performer of the incantation says to the *núchus*: »You should keep careful watch and look out in all directions, for the evil spirits might return and pursue the man's *púrba*». When the medicine man finds that the fever has left the patient, then he says to the *núchus*: »Now you may withdraw».

In similar ways the Cuna Indians are constantly employ-

ing *núchus* for delivering ravished *púrbas* from the power of the evil spirits.

*Núchus* are also used as messengers between sick people and the medicine men. As for example when a person at Caimanes, on the Bay of Urabá, fell ill, he took in his hands a wooden figure and held it in the smoke from a brazier, *sianala*, in which cocoa nibs were being burnt. Thereupon a friend or relation of his took the wooden figure to Ustúpu and handed it, together with some cocoa nibs, to *Nēle*. The latter kept it by him in his house for some time, and in a dream its *púrba* told him what kind of disease the Indian away at Caimanes was suffering from. *Nēle* did nothing more to the figure than keep it overnight in his house. After that he explained to the messenger what sort of disease the Caimanes man was suffering from. The messenger went back, taking with him the wooden figure which he returned to its owner. He told one of the medicine men at Caimanes what *Nēle* had said about the complaint, and the latter then sought out the appropriate medicines that had been prescribed by *Nēle*. It is only *nēles* who are able to determine, in this way, the nature of an illness, and this they can do even when they have never seen the patient. Other medicine men, such as *inatulédis* and *absogédis*, also send their wooden figures to *Nēle* so as to learn the cause of illnesses.

Pérez formerly believed that *Nēle* got instruction from the *núchus* as to what medicines to use for different illnesses, but *Nēle* explained to him that those things he learned from the illness demons themselves, but on occasion the *núchus* would give him advice.

If anyone dreams a great deal about deceased persons, a special incantation, *sērgantake*, is sung, and the *núchus* are despatched to heaven to see to it that the gates there are more securely shut so that the dead shall not be able to slip outside.

The use the *absogédis* make of the *núchus* is a very im-

portant one. When a pestilence has broken out in a village, some fifty new figures carved from *ñkuruala* are collected and set up in rows against the house walls, and then an *absogēdi* chants a song telling how the *nūchus* were created, followed by a song to exorcise the pestilence. He keeps this up for several days. When ten days have passed it is said that the spirits embodied in the wooden figures have departed for the mountains or the forests. P é r e z has told me of one occasion when an *absogēdi*, assisted by *nūchus*, succeeded in dispelling an epidemic disease. This happened at a village near Puturgandi. The villagers had cut down some old palms, and from these had come the illness demons that had then struck down the majority of the people with fever.

When an *absogēdi* is performing an incantation in a village it is necessary to maintain perfect silence lest the *nūchus* get vexed for then the *absogēdi* himself may be stricken down. *N é l e* has declared that the office of an *absogēdi* is a very dangerous one.

After an incantation to expell an epidemic those who wish may get permission from an *absogēdi* to scrape off a little of the hats of the wooden figures. These scrapings, which still contain some *pūrba*, one places in ones bath water in order to become more intelligent. It is believed that the wooden figures contain *ina pūrba*, medicine, as long as about six days. We thus see that after ten days the *nūchus' pūrba* goes away but for several days a little *pūrba* still remains which can be used as medicine. With the help of the *nūchus* a person can learn a foreign language in dreams. The *nūchus* can however be dangerous to use for such a purpose. When one makes use of a *nūchu* in such a way one should first inform the *nūchu* about what one wants to learn.

On rare occasions there is placed among the *nūchus* some saint's image, obtained by the Cuna Indians from the Negroes or the whites. But these are said to cause trouble as they make



a dirty mess about them. There may be danger in treating a saintly image of this kind with irreverence. An Indian boy who was playing with one of these things, which was hollow, stuffed it full of dirt and rubbish, and in consequence became seriously ill.

The Cunas do not in any way consider the *núchus* in their possession as tutelary spirits of any sort. If a Cuna Indian is in danger he does not invoke the *núchus* for deliverance. They are of no assistance in any way whatever in hunting or fishing or agricultural pursuits. *Nēle* employs *núchus* in recovering lost property, but Pérez does not know the particulars of how this is done.

The wooden figures are never placed in the grave along with the dead, neither are they set up over the graves. Those that I have acquired — some of which are here reproduced (figs. 25—26) — were probably all of them out of commission for some reason or other when sold to me. It is of importance to bear in mind that not every wooden figure one sees among the Cunas contains a tutelary spirit. Some of them are simply toys.

In the cacao plant, as in Spanish pepper, potent spirits are also inherent, spirits which by those who know their origin and the incantations pertaining to them may be sent out to recover ravished *pūrbas*. This does not apply to the rest of the medicinal plants. It would therefore not be safe to assert, off-hand, that all such plants contain spirits even though they be endowed with souls, or in other words possess *pūrbas*.

When an *inatulēdi* is collecting medicinal plants in the forest he talks to them as if they understood him, but he is not however absolutely certain that they really understand what he is saying. When God created the plants he gave instructions to them, and when the medicine man gathers the medicinal plants he must address them by the same words as God used in the beginning, or else the medicine will be of no use.

When the Cunas wish to acquire the art of eloquence, or learn foreign languages, they burn certain birds to ashes, of which they daub a little upon the tongue. Or occasionally they simply eat those birds. They imagine that the bird's soul will be helpful to them. When it is a question of learning foreign languages, the teacher may appear to them in the shape of a foreigner, *uáka*, or in the shape of an Indian if native songs are the object. The Cunas are probably not quite clear as to whether these teachers are birds' souls or some other spirits that these have called up.

A very important group of auxiliary spirits are the *áküa-lélegana*. These spirits dwell in certain sacred stones, in which they are permanently inherent; that is to say, they do not merely use the stones for temporary habitation. There is an *áküalele* of this kind in the Gothenburg Museum, and, according to the medicine man Charlie Nelson, from whom I acquired it, its spirit was still within it when I left for home. For this stone I paid three dollars, which, according to Pérez, probably means that it possesses three *kálus*. When one comes across an *áküalele* one should take note of the stones that surround it. These may be arranged in circles numbering from one to eight. If there are two circles of stones around an *áküalele*, it is said to possess two *kálus*, and so on. Even the waters of the strongest current are powerless to dislodge an *áküalele*. No *áküa-lélegana* are found in the rivers on the San Blas coast, but on the other hand they are fairly common around Paya. In order to come into proper possession of an *áküalele* it is necessary to know the incantation describing the origin of these stones, as otherwise one may fall ill and die.

Pérez knows only the approximate contents of the incantation. It tells how *Olotililisobi* first gives birth to a man and then to a woman. As usual God is the father of these and of everything else which is born at the same time. *Aküa-lélegana* are made of bullet-shaped menstruation lumps. The clay, *nabsa*, from which the Indians make the brazier,

*sianala*, which is important at the Cunas' incantations, also came into existence in connection with the *ákūalēle*. At the same time with the *ákūalēlegana*, *Olotililisobi* brought into the world evil spirits which abduct human souls, and it is these evil spirits which one can fight against with *ákūalēle*. Thus God is the father of even the evil spirits.

If an ignorant person should smash up an *ákūalēle* he would immediately come down with some disease and, as a rule, would die unless he obtained assistance. The *ákūalēlegana* are used in the same way as the *nūchus* for sending out in search of souls that have been carried off by evil spirits. A song used in these incantations is published in this book, beginning on page 557. It is there reproduced both in picture-script, and in the Cuna language with a Spanish translation in ordinary typography. To what I have there said I would like to add that when this incantation is performed by one who is versed in it, the stones are placed in a bowl of water put underneath the bed of the sick person. At first it contains only a very little water, but in the end it is completely filled and the patient is washed with the water. In some way this becomes charged with the power inherent in the stones. The virtue of the *ákūalēlegana* is transferred to the water in the same way as illness enters the human system. The water gets cool and is thus good against fever. The *ákūalēle* song is among those that are best known. The Museum possesses it in three versions of picture-script. Two of these are drawn almost in identical form by Pérez while the third differs from them considerably and has for its author one Inapigeli, of Ustúpu.

Mention is also made of another kind of stone, the *ákūanāsagana*, which are less powerful and less dangerous than the *ákūalēlegana* to anyone who might by accident break them to pieces. When in the incantation these stones are referred to, it is only a question of different kinds of *ákūalēlegana*.

Finally there are seen among the helping plant spirits, *masartulegana*, which are the guides for the dead to, and through, the kingdom of the dead. There are laid in the graves with the dead, four painted pegs of arrow reed (*caña brava*), *masar*, decorated with small feathers and some glass beads (fig. 21 c). It is their *pŭrba* which follows the dead to, and through, the kingdom of the dead. In the picture-writing one sees them very much dressed up in feather decorations leading the dead person between them through the dangers which beset him on his journey to the other world.

Even the *pŭrbas* in the stones are people. At least those in the *ákŭanŭsagana*, that is, in crystals, are women.

Even objects made by men have *pŭrbas*. When a person dies his possessions are placed beside him, rifles, bows, arrows, etc. Several Indians come also to place with the dead man's belongings, miniature bows, arrows, and so on. These are gifts to their departed relatives which they want to send along with the dead person to the other world. It is the *pŭrba* of the object which they believe goes along with the dead person. In a song at a person's death bed the singer says, »All the *pŭrbas* of the dead one's belongings, you shall now gather together for the dead man».

When a person lies seriously ill one burns around his hut numerous pictures from illustrated papers, books, etc. The *pŭrbas* from these are liberated and they build a sort of store outside the hut. When the evil spirits come they are so busy looking at these things that they have no time to occupy themselves with the sick person.

The *pŭrbas* of all these objects are not thought of as spirits in the same sense as plant and animal spirits. They are *pŭrbas* but they are nevertheless lifeless. Even an object can in some way have several *pŭrbas*. For example, in Narganá where the custom of using nose rings has been abandoned, such rings are, however, placed on the dead women. Otherwise they would come to the other world

without nose rings and that would not do. It is customary after several years to search for the nose ring in the grave and it is used again and then re-buried. Thus it will in the other world be worn by two persons at the same time and in spite of this it lies in the grave.

The heat which comes from the sun is *pūrba*. If one sits near a fire one feels its *pūrba*. The light from the fire is, on the other hand, called *kāet*. If one hears in the forest the shot of a hunting comrade's rifle one says that one has heard the rifles' *pūrba*. The hum from a motorboat which one hears is its *pūrba*. The sound from thunder is *malpūrba*. When one hears the tones from a flute one hears its *pūrba*. The gurgling of a brook is called *pūrba*. One says for example *tī pūrba itogi*, which means »the water's *pūrba* I hear». The sighing of the wind is also called *pūrba*. Even the sound of a person's voice is called *pūrba*. When one hears an animal's growl one says that that is its *pūrba*. Breath, however, is never called *pūrba*. The odor from a flower or an animal is not *pūrba*.

In the creation myths menstruation is called *pūrba* as well as God's seed. In the case of the latter word the fact that one does not say *kuāl-lu* comes from the fact that this word is taboo. But why have they here in both cases chosen the word *pūrba*? It must hang together with the fact that one still understands menstruation as something of the woman's *pūrba* and the seed as something of the man's *pūrba*.

The Cuna Indians call the shadow of a person *pūrba*, but it would be incorrect to consider the shadow as an important part of the person's *pūrba*. It does not matter if one steps on another's shadow. The same is true for plants and animals. They say *sāpi purba ūrbali sigmāla* — »we sit down in the shade of the tree». The shadow of the tree is called *pūrba* but one never says that the shadow is the female spirit which is found in the tree and yet one calls even this *pūrba*.

The reflection of a person in water is called *pūrba* but according to Pérez the Indians do not believe that it is the soul that they see in the water.

An echo is also *pūrba*.

We thus see that *pūrba* is not the same as what we would call soul. When we want to try to understand a Cuna Indian's concepts of *pūrba* we must be very cautious about believing that the Indians are always logical in their line of thinking and that they have an explanation for everything. Pérez himself admits that he does not know how the Indians in many cases imagine the *pūrba* of objects which to us are lifeless, whether they imagine this *pūrba* as a power or as a thinking and acting creature. The thing is quite simply this, that it is a problem which the Indians as a rule have not occupied themselves with.—We should also be very cautious about believing that all the Indians of the same tribe have exactly the same concepts. We have already seen how many Indians believe that one sees ones departed relatives' souls in dreams, while *Néle* believes that it is evil spirits who have taken their shape.

We can not translate *pūrba* as life even if we give this word a broad interpretation. For life one always says *tula*. A dead tree does not have *tula* but it nevertheless has *pūrba*. A piece of bone has *pūrba* but not *tula*.

I said that a person's *pūrba*, or more correctly, the sum of his *pūrbas* is, as a rule, an invisible replica of the body. The Indians speak of several *pūrbas* which together form a whole. In this way one evidently can say, if one sums up all ideas I have gotten from Pérez and from the songs and incantations collected by him, that everything, people, animals, plants, stone, things made by man etc., have invisible counterparts which we sometimes can see in dreams and which leave the body or at least for the most part leave it when it dies. Even when awake we can sometimes feel the manifestations of this invisible world, as in the warmth of the sun, in the noise of the thunder, in

music, etc. Occasionally we can even see *pūrba* as when we see ourselves in a mirror. It is *pūrba* which we see, but not the thinking and acting creature which we are after death.

It is typical of the word *pūrba* that it is never used for the evil spirits, *pōnigana*, although these belong to the world which is generally invisible. One never says *pōnipūrba*. Nor does one call the dead *pūrbagana*, but instead *sergan*, the old. One always means by *pūrba* something generally invisible which is, or recently has been, connected with something material, something visible.

All illness and death is caused by these evil spirits, all evil spirits are illness demons. The evil spirits are everywhere, in the sun, in the moon, in the winds, in old trees in the forest, in caves, and in inaccessible mountains, in the underworld and in the heavens. The earth is built up of eight layers in which evil spirits live. Below the eighth layer is another world. We also have over our heads a heaven which is built up of eight layers. Even in the layers of heaven there are *pōnigana*.<sup>1</sup>

Regarding the origin of the evil spirits *Nēle* has said that before the great flood they have been people. It is unknown among the majority of the Cunas where the *pōnigana* have originally come from. They have nothing at all to

<sup>1</sup> In the Cuna texts we constantly meet with the Indians' conception that both heaven and earth are built up of eight layers. In the drawing, fig. 22, I have reproduced a sketch which *Nordenskiöld* made from *Pérez'* explanation of the Cunas' picture of the world.

The two people, man and woman, stand on the earth plane. Above this there is heaven with its eight invisible layers (A). Round heaven the sun moves and goes down even under the earth, where there are the eight underworld layers. In the fourth one of these are the evil spirits' chiefs and there one learns the best medicines. Beneath the eighth layer there is still another world.

*x* marks a hole in the heaven. A *nēle* once crawled out through this in order to get to the sun. He became bald.

Regarding the rôle of the moon and the stars in the world-picture, *Pérez* did not seem to be able to relate anything, as *Nordenskiöld* has only made a note «luna y estrellas no sabe». ED.

do with the *pūrba* of the newly departed. Therefore it appears that the Cunas, in contrast with the majority of other Indians, do not fear them. Thus it is customary for the Cunas to spend the night in the houses where they bury their dead and unconcernedly to put up their hammocks over the graves. Pérez himself has several times slept alone in these huts and has evidently never reflected upon the possibility that it might be dangerous. Even the *pūrbas* of mur-

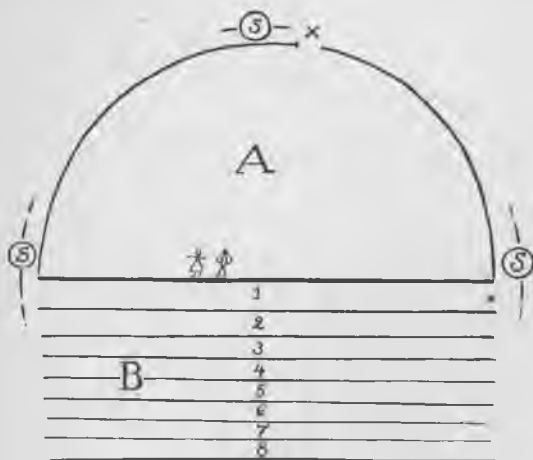


Fig. 22. The Cunas' idea of the construction of the world, according to Pérez. See p. 356.

derers and other criminals do not seem to be feared. The Indians very seldom speak about their dead haunting anyone, and as I have said *Néle* believes that when one dreams about a person who has departed this life it is not this man which one sees in the dream but instead it is an evil spirit who has taken the shape of the dead person. There is a strange exception in the case of murdered people. As the time for a person's death is predestined and a person by being murdered dies too early, his *pūrba* remains on the earth until the proper day of his death.

The evil spirits are enumerable. In the songs written



down by Pérez a great many are mentioned. Many of them have animal names but Pérez maintains that this does not mean that they have the form of animals. When a kind of rash is called crawfish it means simply that the person gets red like a crawfish when he has this illness. Still many Indians imagine that the *pónigana* which have animal names also have animal form. A few demons are described as creatures with fantastic appearances. *Núgaruetchur* has a long snout and sucks human blood. The Cuna name for him means pointed teeth. At the same time *Núgaruetchur* has however human shape. Another evil spirit is half dog, half woman. One female demon is believed to have long hair, and the lower part of the body in the form of a fishtail. One demon, *achusimudubalet*, has a very prominent navel by means of which he moves himself.

Most illness demons have as a rule never been seen by ordinary people. A certain kind of firefly is thought to be the eyes of evil spirits. The green ones come from the sea. If one of these fireflies, *kúnna*, should enter a house, one or another of its inmates will fall ill. The big fireflies, the *túlo*, on the other hand, are harmless. Occasionally one may meet a kind of evil spirit called *nía*, which appears in human form. It may even take the form of an intimate friend. One may think one has met him in the forest, but when one returns home to the village it is discovered that the friend has been at home all day. There are many accounts of meetings with *nias*. A Cuna Indian from Careto met in the forest a man who was carrying on a forked stick a freshwater fish of a kind not found in the rivers on the Atlantic side of the Isthmus of Panama. The man said: »I am no Cuna, I am a *nía*, and I am on my way to the Pacific coast». That demon did not do him any harm. It has even happened that persons have learnt medicine songs from evil spirits that they have met on the road. Once there was a Cuna Indian who was out in the forest but could find no game. Finally he sat down on the branch of

a fallen tree. Then a *nia*, or *pila*, came up to him and asked what he was doing there. The man said that he was out hunting, but that he had had no luck at all. The demon then put a little medicine on the man's tongue in order to make him learn quickly, and then he began to give him instruction in the art of luring the game out, and about the origin of animals, *pūrba ēhuilūpu*, and then he sang. In that way the man learned a good many things, and afterwards he used to sing those songs before going out hunting, and he enjoyed far better luck in hunting than he had ever done before.

A Cuna Indian named Miguel, of Rio Bayano, a pupil of the man just referred to, taught Pérez one of those songs. Miguel is a very capable hunter, and when he goes hunting in the forest he usually brings back with him eight head of game. Before this man made the acquaintance of the *nia*, no Cuna knew of that song.

Occasionally *Nēle* is informed by the *nūchus* when the village is being visited by *nias*.

*Nēle* is in frequent communication with *pōnis*, even with such of them as are invisible to ordinary people. On that account he is also called *pōnikana*. It is the illness demons themselves that are *Nēle's* teachers and that tell him what medicines to use. Along comes, for instance, a rheumatism demon, sits down by the end of *Nēle's* hammock and asks him if there is anything he desires, or anything he wishes to learn. Then the rheumatism demon starts explaining about himself and about the medicine a human being should use in order to get well. When a person has got rheumatism, it is the rheumatism demon that has entered his body. A *pōni* like that of rheumatism cannot carry away the souls of mankind.

Among the evil spirits, *Nēle's* most important teacher was *Núgaruetchur*, but this *pōni* subsequently moved farther east, and now *Nēle* has a teacher who is not so versed in

the knowledge of medicine. When a *pōni* visits *Nēle* he appears in human form.

The Cunas also believe that accidents are caused by *pōnis*. If, for example, anyone happens to swallow a fishbone, this is changed into a *pōni*. Even a chair may be a *pōni* if it hurts a person. It is not to be assumed that the Indians have any definite conception of the exact manner in which this occurs.

Among *pōnis* a distinction is made between those that carry away the souls of human beings and those that enter the body of the ailing person. If, for example, a person is suffering from rheumatism, a certain demon has entered his body. The Cunas do not imagine that some foreign body — a thorn, or something of the sort — has made its way into the sufferer's body, but that he has become possessed by a demon.

I have already mentioned how *pūrbas* in this way ravished by evil spirits are brought back to their respective bodies. When illness has entered into the body of a person, the evil spirit can be killed (or expelled?) by means of medicine.

The evil spirits are, as I already said, very afraid of the Spanish pepper, *kaburr*. This seasoning also keeps evil spirits away from food. When there is a storm there are evil spirits in it and then the Cunas burn Spanish pepper in the prow of the canoe. When in olden times they used the smoke of the Spanish pepper in the battles against the Spaniards it was because they considered the Spaniards evil spirits.

The one who sends out the evil spirits, that is, illness and death, to human beings, is God. It is also he who has created the means of defence against them.

*Níga*.<sup>1</sup>

*Pūrba* should not be confused with *níga*. I shall try to explain the meaning of this latter word.

<sup>1</sup> Pronunciation *neega*.

»Brave» means, in Cuna, *kántikit*, but it is not the same as *níga*; however one must have *níga* in order to be brave. When a person is timid in a serious situation one says *níga suli*, he does not have *níga*. The same thing applies to the one who is shy about appearing and speaking before a large



Fig. 23. How Pérez interpreted the idea of *níga* See text p. 362.

gathering. When a child grows, its *níga* also grows. Before the child has enough *níga* it cannot go alone to the forest. If a person has much *níga* it is a protection against attack by wild animals. All animals also have *níga* and if a wild animal has more *níga* than a person whom it meets the animal makes an attack.

One can improve ones *níga* by wearing a necklace of jaguar teeth, however only exclusively on the condition that

someone »who knows it» has said or thought the incantation about how the jaguar was created, and has done this while holding the necklace in his hand.

When a person is lazy he should use medicine prepared from the nests of industrious ants and even from the ants themselves. Such medicine is called *igli* and with it one improves ones *níga*. P é r e z knows in the village of Playon Chico an old man who when he was newly married was very lazy. His wife got him to bathe in »lazy man's medicine» and then he became very industrious. Even now as an old man he is one of the village's most industrious farmers. One uses *igli* also as a plant medicine, (we would call it fertilizer) but one never says that plants have *níga*. Nor do stones have *níga*.

According to what an old medicine man in Ailigandi has explained to P é r e z, *níga* is even a protection against certain dangerous dreams, in other words, against certain evil spirits. Through certain medicines one can even develop ones *níga*. A person's *níga* can not, like his *pūrba*, be abducted.

When P é r e z was going to explain to me what is meant by *níga* he drew a person and around him a sort of smoke cloud (fig. 23) and afterwards explained that when evil spirits come against this they go around in order to search for an opening and when they fail to find one they cannot get at the person surrounded by *níga*. What that smoke consists of P é r e z does not know, and probably the most of the Indians have never gotten this clear in their minds. It is not *pūrba*. In order to cause *níga* to surround the person one uses a bit of liana, *māmgalkiit*. This forms great entanglements in the trees and one is to search out the middle of the entanglements from eight trees. At the same time one uses several other liana vines such as *sakkuk tūba*, *āsgoga tūba*, *āsgoga tūb ũāũā* and *nikkitūba*. From these liana vines one makes such crosses, + † I, and places these in water which one dashes over onself from a calabash. The same crosses

may be used for several days. They are renewed four times. One takes eight bits of *sakkuk tuba*, and these are shaped like a dog's feet.

If a person's *níga* runs out he dies. It is never said that the dead have *níga*. Neither *níga* nor *púrba* should be confused with *kúrgin*. When a person is unable to learn this has nothing to do with *púrba*. It is the *kúrgin* which is overtaxed.

### *Kúrgin.*

*Kúrgin* means brain but in a great many cases it also means a special bent or capacity, and intelligence. Amusingly enough it can even mean hat. When the human fetus is formed in the womb it receives from *Mû*, which is pictured as a woman, a great deal of *kúrgin* of different kinds. This is shown in detail in two of these Indian's old songs of which I have records from my Panama expedition in 1927, made by Guillermo Haya and another Cuna Indian. The song is sung when a person has a headache, that is when any part of the person's *kúrgin* is sick. The singer does not have to be a medicine man but he can be simply a person who knows the songs by heart [see p. 542].

All *kúrgin*, that is, all natural bents, are localized in the brain. An Indian can have more or less *kúrgin* for hunting and fishing, though the *kúrgin* for each kind of hunting and fishing has its definite place in the brain. They speak of *kúrgin* for tapirs, peccaries and so on. A person can for example have much *kúrgin* for learning foreign languages and for eloquence. One can also have *kúrgin* for meeting poisonous snakes. The Cunas' great medicine man and High Chief *Néle* does not explain that different characteristics have their abode in certain convolutions of the brain but he imagines the brain to be built up of a quantity of points similar to the tops of mountains. *Néle* also says that the brain is like a great field of which part is good and part

is bad. Some people's brains have only bad earth, others only good. Most people have both kinds.

The *kūrgin* can be influenced by medicines. When a good many years ago Pérez returned home from his college at Panama, where he had been exceedingly industrious, he suffered from severe headaches, — as we would say, he had overworked. He sought advice from *Nēle*, who knows everything and understands everything. *Nēle* diagnosed the case thus: that the part of Pérez' brain where the *kūrgin* for scholastic work was seated was filled up and had to be enlarged. Pérez then was made to live in a walled-off portion of his hut, and the prescripton given him was to wash his head several times a day with water in which had been placed certain flowers and other plant parts. After washing with these medicines for ten days, Pérez sent some cocoa nibs to *Nēle*, who in the night burned them on a brazier, *siānāla*, and in his dreams consulted his auxiliary spirits, *nūchus*, as to whether the medicine had been effective. In the morning *Nēle* sent the reply that the medicine was good. The cocoa nibs were brought to *Nēle* by a member of Pérez' family, and subsequently one of his people came to hear the verdict. During the month that Pérez was taking this treatment he twice sent cocoa nibs to *Nēle*. As is usual whenever medicine is taken in this way, he also kept to a strict diet.

By taking medicine Pérez did not learn anything new. On the other hand he developed his possibilities for learning more after going through the cure. It should be observed also that the medicines's spirits did not come to him in dreams.

Many of the Indians take medicines in order to develop their *kūrgin* for study. Thus for example the young people who are sent to Panama to attend the schools there, do this. Now that the Cunas in several villages have founded schools with native teachers, the schoolboys go in for taking medicine in a thorough way in order to learn more easily. It is not

advantageous to be exposed to the smoke from the fireplaces when one is taking medicinal baths. Therefore *Néle* is considering the idea of building a special bathhouse on the nearby uninhabited mainland for the schoolboys of Ustúpu, where each and every one can have his own bathtub and can bathe in medicine which makes it easier for him to learn how to read and write.

Pérez has related to me many instances not only of persons who by means of medicinal baths have improved their *kürgin* for foreign languages, but also of people who have applied the medicine to excess. In the village of Narganá a man bathed in water in which he had put a great many pages from a book and he thereby learned English but at the same time became almost blind. *Néle* declared that he had »gone too strong» on the medicine. Certain talking birds are also used as medicine for learning languages. In Mandinga, for instance, there lives an Indian who for many years dwelt at Narganá. He ate a bird of this kind and learned Spanish without the aid of a teacher. The way to be able to learn by heart the native songs is to bathe in water in which have been placed the scrapings of the skull of a sloth. Or it will also do to bathe in water into which has been laid a *nüchu*, i. e. a wooden figure containing a tutelary genius. This is however dangerous if one does not possess the *kürgin* or aptitude for learning. Insanity may then result, and therefore this medicine is more rarely resorted to. It is therefore apparent that if anyone has the *kürgin* for anything, he can improve it, but he should proceed very carefully about this in case he should not happen to be sufficiently intelligent. A Cuna Indian who was not particularly brainy was beguiled into bathing in water into which had been placed Panama newspapers. This resulted in his becoming halfwitted.

Medicines for learning to read and write Spanish or English are of course a modern notion, but the train of thought upon which this practice is based is no doubt of very remote



antiquity. In the same manner as nowadays there are used a number of leaves of a book or newspaper obtained from the white people as medicine for facilitating the acquirement of knowledge, the native picture - script is used for improving the *kürgin* for the ancient songs. Nowadays leaves of paper are burned, and the ashes used as medicine, where formerly it was presumably wooden panels inscribed with picture-script.

When anybody is taking medicine for, for instance, the better learning of languages, he should not tell other people what he is about, as then the spirits of the medicines, the *pürba*, would vanish away. It is these spirits that, in sleep, are the tutors of the one who takes the medicines. Thus it is through dreams that a person who bathes in, or otherwise uses certain medicines, is able to learn foreign languages and develop his *kürgin* in different directions. When a person is using various medicines to improve his *kürgin*, the medicine man (*inatulēdi*) chants »advice» on certain points to the spirits of the medicines. He tells them why he wants their help.

I said that one can have *kürgin* for meeting poisonous snakes. A person who has much *kürgin* for poisonous snakes is followed by them. One can even have *kürgin* for seeing evil spirits. *Pérez* has time upon time when he has been out in the wild forest come upon poisonous snakes because he clearly had *kürgin* for meeting them. He told this to *Néle* who said that now the time approached when he would be bitten by a snake unless he bathed in water containing a certain medicine. *Pérez* looked up an *inatulēdi* who investigated the matter of suitable medicines. When he collected the medicines he told the *pürbas* what he would use them for. When he had come home he gave them certain information and advice and turned the medicine over to *Pérez*. The medicine man, *inatulēdi*, the first time *Pérez* bathed himself with the medicine, splashed some of the bathwater to the east, west, north and south. Neither the

medicine man nor Pérez pronounced any incantation at this time. After taking medicine in this way Pérez never met any more poisonous snakes. He had become invisible to the snakes. When a child is born with a »victory cap«, that is, is born to be a *nēle* this child has gotten from *Mū kūrġin* for being able to associate in dreams with the spirits and in this way the ability to be a Seer. With certain medicines one can however vitiate the *kūrġin* when one does not wish the child's capacity for being a *nēle* developed. This one always does if the father of the child born to be a *nēle* is living because this man may die if the child's *kūrġin* is allowed freely to develop.

It is evident that the concepts of *kūrġin* play a tremendous role in the life of the Cuna Indians. Even the most educated among them believe that *kūrġin* can be influenced by certain medicines. Pérez himself believes firmly in *kūrġin*. In any event he has gotten from *Mū* or elsewhere much *kūrġin* for studies and it is with the help of this excellent *kūrġin* that I have succeeded in getting an important look into the ideology of a remarkable people.

We have seen that the Cunas' ideas about intelligence, memory, and so forth, even if they are very vague, are not mentioned in connection with the word *pūrba*, a word which the Indians who know Spanish or English translate as soul, but instead in connection with the concept *kūrġin*.

Finally I want to say that it seems to me to be of the greatest importance that there be a continued thorough study of the ideology of the Cuna Indians for many reasons, not least among which is, that we seem to have here a relic of the higher Central American Indian culture. The point is only that in these studies one must never generalize, never be surprised, even when it is not so easy to follow the Indian train of thought. It is of the greatest value that we, through the old songs which according to tradition have been preserved from the most ancient times, largely owing to the Cunas' peculiarly interesting picture-writing, can to a great

extent check the authenticity of current oral material. It is all the more important since when we study the Cunas' religion we must always reckon with the influence from missionaries and other people. This influence on the ideology, looking at the situation as a whole, has been very insignificant in so far as it is a question of new ideas; on the other hand, it is possible that doubts the Indians feel regarding the truth of the old things, doubts which now and then appear, have their origin in what the Indians have learned from outside sources.

## II. Birth and the Coming into Existence of a Human Being.

*Nēle* compares the woman's ova to an open flower into which the man's seed penetrates like a sprout, whereupon *Mū* begins to build up the embryo. It is *Mū* who equips the embryo with its store of characteristics, that is to say, endows it with *kūrgin* in various directions. Already while in its mother's womb, the embryo is a living entity.

There are many things that the mother, and even the father, has to observe during pregnancy. For example, both are forbidden to touch dye-stuffs and sticky substances, as that would lead to difficulties in parturition and might even prove harmful to the child. It may be born blind, or defective in some other way. They are also forbidden to kill snakes, or to look upon animals that are copulating. Should they, however, happen to witness anything of that kind, then they must tell some *inatulēdi*, who will give them medicine which both of them should take, even if only one of them has seen the forbidden thing. A pregnant woman is also forbidden to behold a certain small rodent, *sūle kaynu*, lest the child be born hare-lipped.

The father is further forbidden to employ medicine prepared from spiny plants — as is customary for bringing luck in fishing — because the prickles may prevent the

child from being born into this world. When the *sābdur-guanédi* — the men that have gone out to fetch *sābdur* for a girl who is about to go through the ceremonies connected with her attaining the age of puberty — are returning to the girl's hut, nobody is allowed to set eyes on these men. If any one should happen to see them, his children would be born with dark spots on their bodies. P é r e z has two daughters spotted in this way, and the cause of those spots lies in the fact that on one occasion he looked at the *sābdur-guanédi* men as they were returning home.

When the wife is pregnant the husband may not fish with poisoned bait or spears because in that case the poison would have no effect. If a person lies sick in a hut and a pregnant woman or her husband comes in to see him, the sick person will get worse. If one is invited to visit a sick person and ones wife is pregnant it is best to decline the invitation. This also applies when some one has been bitten by a snake. A man who has a pregnant wife may not gather fruit, because if he does the trees will no longer bear.

By resorting to medicine it is possible to influence the skin color of an unborn child. There was once at Ustúpu a woman who had only very dark-skinned children. She bathed in water in which she had put fruits and bits of the wood of *palo balsa*, *ukurūāla*, and after that she had children who were albinos. *Ukurūāla* is a white kind of tree.

By using medicine, parents are also able to exercise control over the sex of their children. If, for instance, only boys are born to a family, both the father and the mother swallow a certain medicine in order to have a girl child. P é r e z' wife at first had two girl babies, whereupon both he and she took medicine, and then she bore a boy.

While a woman is pregnant she must adhere to a certain strict diet. She is forbidden to eat the flesh of some animals, such as peccary, turtles, deer and the like. Furthermore, she must not eat food that has been highly spiced, nor fish

of certain kinds. During her period of pregnancy she is not expected to do any hard work.

It may be of medical interest to know that »morning sickness» appears, but it is not usual.

There are numerous demons seeking to obstruct the parturition. Among them may be noted *Munékiachu*, the dog demon, *Yárbimunéki*, the eel demon, and others. To this I may here add the following information received from Pérez:

The birth itself takes places in a secluded place so that the children will not see what is happening. The Cunas are exceedingly careful about keeping the children in ignorance of everything that concerns sex. When the older people talk about such things they therefore always use circumlocutions. When a woman has given birth to a child the brothers and sisters are told that the father has been out in the forest where he has seen a deer carrying a little child between his horns. He has overtaken the deer and has taken the child and brought it home, and this is how there has come to be a little brother or sister in the house. This is called *kõe-kãe*, which means »to catch the deer».<sup>1</sup>

Sometimes they also tell the younger brothers and sisters that a dolphin, *uagi*, has come and left a little child on the

<sup>1</sup> The following has been related by Padre Gassó in »Las Misiones Católicas», volume XX, Barcelona 1912, p. 206: »Los padres son en general racatados, tanto que para guardar el candor de los niños cuando está próxima la madre al alumbramiento suele irse al bosque. A los dos ó tres días comparece en casa con el niño. Al verlo los hermanitos preguntan de dónde vino y cuentan los mayores esta historia: Iba tu padre el otro día por el bosque y vió un venado que entre el ramaje de sus cuernos llevaba este niño. Entonces corrió detrás hasta que tras mucho trabajo cogió el niño y se lo regaló á tu madre para que lo críe, y tengamos un niño más que sea tu hermanito. Y llega á tanto el deseo de guardar el candor, que, delante de menores, nadie suele usar palabras que les abren los ojos. Mas, en esta lengua el verbo parir nunca se usa en concreto ni como de acto que tenga visos de presente; y aún es más común usar del verbo originalísimo *koe-kæ*, i. e. coger venados ó de otros metafóricos, que no del *kualulege*, parir. Así dicen: fulana cogió un venado.» ED.

beach. The Indians see to it that children shall not be around when a bitch whelps. They tell the children that it is a kind of worm in the sea which is changed into puppies and when the time for the whelping approaches they go down to the beach with the bitch and throw her out into the water. When she has littered they place the puppies on the beach and then call the children to come and see how the worms have been changed into puppies. P é r e z has seen a girl of marriageable age carry a bitch to the beach and throw her out into the sea because she, the girl, wanted some puppies. The children are told that lizards carry the eggs to the hen. When chickens lay they are closely shut up so that the children may not come to understand how the egg laying takes place. A pregnant animal must not be butchered in the presence of children. This point, that everything concerning sex is to be treated with the utmost secrecy, is very strictly upheld among the Cunas, and it is therefore usual that the girls, and even the young men, when they marry are entirely ignorant in these matters. It is hardly credible that this strict taboo on everything that connects with sex is a matter of protecting the child's innocence, but rather it seems to me to be more likely that it hangs together with the myths about creation, in other words, everything that treats of *Mā* belongs to that wisdom which is concealed from the majority.

As a rule the Cuna women bear children comparatively easily but still very difficult deliveries do occur. In these cases a person who knows the *mā-igala* is called in and this person sits under the hammock of the child-bearing woman and sings.

When the medicine man is preparing his medicine he sometimes hangs up in his hut a basket in which there are some stone axes or other heavy things, like cannon balls from the time of the Spaniards, and this basket is hoisted up and down eight times. The midwife is always an older woman accustomed to managing deliveries. When the mother

is fully recovered she gives the medicine man who has given her medicine a ball of cotton thread. If a woman dies during the delivery she is then *mū giburrgise*. She is dead because of *Mū's* power.

When a woman has given birth to a child the husband is forbidden to work for three days or to go off to the forest. He should be at home resting. If he touches any strange objects the little one may become ill.

It is, as has been said, *Mū*, who forms the embryo in the womb and gives it its characteristics. In what form the Cunas actually picture *Mū* is a question which I must leave open here. *Mū* means, literally, father's mother or mother's mother. In the description of *Nēle Sibū's* wanderings through the kingdom of the dead given here (beginning on p. 295) there is a magnificent city spoken of, a city which is ruled by eight women. Among these is one *Nana Olomaguyriai*, who occupies herself with the task of having human beings formed in the womb. The others are *Nana Olokegepiiai*, who watches over the earth, *Mu Olotagisop*, *Mu Olotākiki Mu Sobia*, *Mu Alesop*, *Mu Aligiiai* and *Mu Olokúndil*. All these are busy with the creation of human life: *Olo sántu, mānisan-tugan aide maidinega* — which means: gold fetus, silver fetus, go down to the place. The word *sántu* is a circumlocution for fetus. It is said of *Mū Olotagisop* and *Mū Olotakiki* in another text that they are the ones who give the human body all its functions, such as breathing, hearing and seeing.

In the picture-writing *Mū* is represented as a woman who occupies herself with forming the fetus. In spite of this *Peréz* looks upon *Mū* not as any kind of female creature but rather as a power, but he admits at the same time that only recently, since he has moved to *Ustúpu*, where the Indians preserve their old ideas better than in *Narganá*, has he heard *Mū* spoken of. It would be of the greatest interest to get hold of a record of *mū ígala*, the song which is sung under the bed of the woman who is bearing a child.

It would be still more important to have a record of the incantation about the origin of *Mū* which should precede the song. In this way one could probably get at the Cunas' old and aboriginal ideas about *Mū*. So far as I know God does not participate in the creation of the fetus in human life. There is not mentioned here any other father than the real father. God is never mentioned as father of anything or anybody other than at the beginning of the world.

### III. Word Taboos and Figures of Speech.

In 1930 I have published a few notes on the world's creation, of which the Cuna Indian Charles Slater is the author. From what I am informed by Pérez, these notes were dictated by a chief named Iguanigdi-pipi, of Ailigandi, to Slater, who took down in translation what was told him. Slater's notes are in a rather defective sort of English, so that they are not always easy to understand. When at length one has succeeded in unravelling his English, one nevertheless is at a loss to make out a good deal of the contents. What is clear is that God creates a woman, and so forth, but it is impossible to understand why she sees souls of so many colors: white souls, yellow, black, dark-colored, spotted, green souls, etc., and that when she has seen all these she proceeds to child-bearing. Here there is mentioned a table on which God spreads out a white soul, etc. When we have learned that the different colored souls signify menstruation of various aspects, that the table stands for the woman's bosom, and that the white soul spread upon the table is the spermal fluid of the Deity, then the whole thing becomes intelligible in an entirely different way. It will thus be grasped how the Indians conceive that the origin of nearly everything in this world derives from the first woman God created, and that God is the Father of all, and that in a most realistic way.



In the spiritual world of the Cuna Indians these legends of the Creation play an immensely important part. Every medicine song must be preceded by an invocation announcing the origin of the medicine, or else the incantation does not act. When the Indians wish to make the animals of the forest come to them, they bathe in water into which they have placed certain medicines.

Before they take this bath they pronounce an incantation. An invocation of this kind is here reproduced in picture-script by way of illustration (Pl. XII). It constitutes the prelude to the song *bīsep-īgal*. Beginning from the left at the bottom of the page, it reads: God, *Olotililisop*, white soul, black soul, blue soul, striped soul, yellow soul, rose-colored soul, red soul, table, white cloth, *olkebicdigiña* and *olkebicdili*. Above the last-mentioned a zigzag line is seen. Next there is the chest, *ulu*, and then an animal and seven cups of various colors, and other things.

In order to understand this incantation it is necessary to know that *Olotililisop* was the first woman created by God, and the mother of all things; that »soul» means menstruation; table is the woman's bosom; white cloth is the skin covering her genital organs; *olkebicdigiña* and *olkebicdili* are the male and the female names of the *bīsep* plant; that the zigzag line means the navel string; that the chest means the woman's womb, and that the cups are the ova that are fertilized by God's semen.

In the same manner metaphors are used in other versions of the story of the world's creation. Whoever is unacquainted with these metaphors cannot understand anything about it. Should children happen to overhear one of these incantations, they could not make anything out of it.

This way of not expressing in direct terms matters pertaining to sex is also employed in everyday life. *Kōē-kāē* as has been said on p. 370 means 'catching the deer', but is used as a synonym for bearing children. The Indians most carefully guard against children having any opportunity of

being present when a bitch whelps as was mentioned on page 371.

Consequently their elder are exceedingly careful not to touch upon these matters in the presence of young people. For example, when a woman is having her menses she says »*an yokorpisskedi*», the literal meaning of which is »I have a pain<sup>1</sup> in my knee», and in the same way she uses other paraphrases.

As it is forbidden for a man whose wife is pregnant to go in to see a person who is sick, he says, in order to explain how things stand, »*kūrgin anikkérba*», which means »I have much *kūrgin*». One says about a woman who is pregnant, *tegide*, which means, »she goes thus». One can also say *turba makuichi*, in other words, »She blooms».

Another kind of word taboo applies in everything which connects with hunting and, in addition, to the relationship between man and animals. It does not do to say, »Tomorrow I shall go out on a tapir hunt», but instead one says, if one is asked, »Tomorrow I shall gather material for weaving baskets.» If one mentions the tapir's name, the animal dreams that one is going to hunt it and it becomes frightened and keeps itself well hidden. If one is going out to hunt turtles one says, »I am going out to drift on the sea». In the same way one must answer in paraphrases when one plans to go hunting for other animals.

All animals and even a number of plants have names to be used in the day-time and other names for night-time. A certain kind of palm tree is called *nālub* by day and *īko dūrrba* by night. If one uses the day-time name at night one will be bitten by a snake. The agouti is called *sule* by day and *nābnona* by night, the latter meaning »earth-head». The corresponding names of the jaguar are *āchumigur* and *mūtikidibya*; the latter word means »night-eye». Snakes see badly and therefore attack by means of feeling. *Nēle* has said that God created them thus. Their »night-name» is therefore *ībyapīti* — »one-eyed». In the day-time one says

*naibe*. Pérez does not know the «night-name» for the parrot *nalu* but he has heard that if one says *nalu* at night one will vomit blood. It is in dreams that the animals hear their names mentioned and it is for this reason that one must use paraphrases at night.

This system of not calling a thing by its proper name is not among the Cunas restricted only to sexual matters, but also plays an exceedingly important part in social life, above all in the chiefs' speeches. To anyone not knowing this, such speeches are often entirely unintelligible. When after my visit to the San Blas coast in 1927, Oluigegiña, the chief of Ailigandí, received a visit from *Néle* among other things he said: «I have heard that your village has been visited by sea-gulls. At first I thought they were from these parts, but by my people I am now told that they came from very far north». The «sea-gulls» were my wife, Dr. Linné, my son Eric and myself.

In a speech which *Néle* chanted after the rebellion of 1925, among other things he said, «A severe storm has passed over this land of ours and the trees were overturned by it. By reason of the tempest, the animals that had made their abodes in the trees were thus dispersed. Now we shall build up again all that the tempest has torn down. According to my way of thinking, we should plant a tree that will last many years, a tree possessing great resistance, and when we have planted it, we also ought to plant others about every village. I think that when our tree bears fruit, to its branches there will come grouse, parrots, and birds from all directions to eat the fruits of the tree. For this reason the tree should be of a kind that bears much fruit. Then we ought to keep the ground about it very clean so that the vultures may not come and besmirk our tree. We should securely fence in the flowers that we are going to plant about our tree. We should plant cocoa trees. We should not plant in the same spot plant several kinds of cocoa trees, for when they grow up and their branches inter-

lace they will do each other harm. It is better to plant each kind of cocoa tree in a group to itself. We should protect well the flowers and the cocoa trees against noxious insects. In that way our ancestors tended their plants; but vultures, pelicans and cuervos have found a way into our enclosures and spread pollution within, where we have albahacas, flowers, cocoa trees and the *igual* tree, then the plants have fallen into disorder, and now, when the tempest is over, we ought to set about planting the tree».

In order to understand *Néle's* speech it is necessary to know that tree means chief, vulture means Negro, and so on. I shall here try to render his speech in plain language. There had raged a tempest, i. e. revolution, in the country, in the course of which had been deposed such chiefs as favored the cause of Panama. During the revolution were killed the Panamanians who, induced to come there by the said chiefs, had settled in the country. Now we are going to reconstruct what the tempest has demolished. In my opinion we should chose as our chief a man whom we may retain for many years, a man who is strong, and when that chief is elected we shall appoint a headman to each village. I think that when the chiefs have got things in order, they will surround themselves with men of mark and such as can speak foreign languages, and thereby derive benefit from the new order of things. For this reason we should elect as High Chief one who possesses great knowledge. And then we must guard against the Panamanians coming to bribe and corrupt our chosen chief. We must take care of our women. We must also look after our men. We should not in the same place settle men of different kinds, as when they get together they might do each other harm. We should carefully protect our women, and our men too, from the Negroes. Such was the way in which our forefathers had arranged our community, but since Negroes, Spaniards and other foreigners came among us, disorder was brought into our community. Now that the revolution

has come to an end, we must begin by electing our High Chief.

Quite poetically a former High Chief, Simral Colman, now deceased, chanted in a speech (p. 100): »The flowers that we possess form our life, and our joy during life. Without his flower, a man lives in sorrow and shiftlessness.» By flower is here meant woman.

When *Néle* set out for Panama, he sang that he was going on a visit to the High Chief of the beasts, i. e. the President of Panama. Many figures of speech of similar kind are found in the texts here reproduced.

Some other examples of figures of speech are: for sail boats, *ulu*; the chiefs say in their speeches *nali* for shark; *uagi* for dolphin; *paca* for whale.

It is possible that this use of figurative language has led to the result that the meaning of certain words has changed even when they are used in everyday language. This is, perhaps how the word *kürgin* for example, besides meaning »hat» also has acquired the meaning of »natural aptitude». *Pürba*, properly meaning »soul», has apparently become the word nowadays most commonly used for »menstruation». Pérez actually had to search his memory in order to find such commonplace words as *oguitchi* and *tidakguitchi*.

It is obvious that it is impossible to understand much of what is related to one by the Cuna Indians unless one knows that many words have a double meaning. We must clearly appreciate the fact that in the songs they use largely words that form no part of the colloquial language, and that in the chiefs' orations there occur figures of speech. Such circumlocution is also customary in daily life, in consideration of the children, when referring to anything connected with sexual matters.

In the Cuna Indians' songs there is so much paraphrasing that it seems almost as if it were a special language. I will give a number of examples. Animals for instance,

call people, that is Cunas, *innaibegan*, which means »owner of the chicha«. This is an evident paraphrasing. Some other examples are:

	in every day speech	in songs
white man .....	<i>uāka</i>	<i>pilatola</i>
woman .....	<i>ōme</i>	<i>ualepungua</i>
man .....	<i>tule</i>	<i>innatonai-be</i> (chicha owner)
medicine man of a certain kind	<i>inatuledi</i>	<i>tulaleleibekua</i>
nail .....	<i>gōnu</i>	<i>gomo</i>
peccary .....	<i>yānu</i>	<i>punaiaie</i>
face .....	<i>uāgar</i>	<i>akugala</i>
plantain .....	<i>masi</i>	<i>ibeniali</i>
rifle .....	<i>kingi</i>	<i>ibetintula</i>

There is also another field within which one uses figures of speech, especially for animal names, and that is in the riddles or enigmas. *Nappi ōmokūet* means »earth — alone — tramp«. In order to be able to guess that this riddle means tapir, *mōli*, one must know that the tapir often tramps hard on the ground probably in order to free itself from troublesome insects.

*Kōimbabāli uāyasiit* is also an enigma. It means »to take by the ear«, and the answer is deer, *kōe*. When the deer is listening he lifts up his foot. *Sāylainse arguāne* means »the head falls first« and the solution is *nalū* the arara parrot, which, when it is shot, falls head first. The peccary *yānu* is called *ūbiuāgar* in the riddles, which means »corn-meal-face«. The tame hen, *kani* is called *negputu*, the house tinamid, that is a tinamid which lives in houses. The jaguar is called »eye night« *mūtikitibya*. The saíno is called *yobleyapane*, »bad smell«.

P i n a r t has published a little list of secret words from the Cunas. Most of these are simply riddles.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> P i n a r t, 1890, p. 99: »Algunas palabras de la lengua secreta de los leles o adivinos«. ED.

*Some Further Notes on Names and Paraphrases.*<sup>1</sup>

In the stories about the Frenchmen, pelikans, *korgi*, and herons, *tabgala*, are mentioned. These terms never mean the encroachments by the Spaniards.

Negroes are called sometimes in fun *kala* (legs) *aratti* (blue) — »blue legs».

Nicknames are used only among good friends. *Robert* *o Pérez* is called among other things *sigá* (beard) *suitt* (long) — »long beard». He is also called *padir*, from the Spanish padre.

In Ailigandi there is an Indian who is called *Oloaligiña* — ant.

A newborn child is called *uarúgua kōe*, literally deer.

A number of abstract conceptions *Pérez* has translated in the following way:

intelligence — *kurgin nōno* (head) *nikkarba* (much). Intelligence can be improved by medicine.

thought, to think — *pínsāet*.

memory — to place in the head — *nōno gīsīe*.

tradition — *igal serret*

The body's five senses: hearing — *itōget*; sight — *takket*; feeling — *kāet*; smell — *ūēt*; taste — *kūlegēt*.

The dead are usually called *sergan* — the old, but also *iblegaletmala* or *purgaletmala*, from *iblege-* to die. The heart beat is expressed by *kuāge tiktīmāke*. The word for invisible is *tāmbalet*. Concerning the name Cuna it is *Pérez*' opinion that it has something to do with *kūngilel*, the name they give to the one who first searched for gold. *Kūngi* the old word for gold. *Kūngilel* should mean the gold people.

It is said that in Cuepti a tribe by the name of *Kuebdi* has lived.

<sup>1</sup> Compiled from notes jotted on loose slips of paper in the manuscript material. ED.

Pérez during his visit in Sweden annotated Walter Lehmann's<sup>1</sup> list of Cuna Indian names for people. Among the mistakes can be pointed out:

11. *Colo-Gua*. Should be *Kologua* and means yellow. Not the name of a person.
13. *Costa*. Spanish word for coast. Not a name.
19. *Hismet*. Corruption of Smith.
21. *Absoguedi*. Not a person's name but a title, *absogēdi* = certain kind of medicine man.
23. *Tsécopa*. Corruption of Jacob. He was grandfather of a chief in Ailigandi known by Pérez.
25. *Niga*. Means »sobrino». In order to be complete it must have another name added.
28. *Mutsisi*. Corruption of Moses.
31. *Pag-La*. This according to Pérez is a tree.

According to Pérez the Cuna text presented by Lehmann in the same work, page 141, taken from Padre Pedro De Llisá's *Catechismo*, belongs to a dialect in Darien.

Among the names for people which are in use among the Cunas there can be noticed such as are in the myths names of spirits.<sup>2</sup> Thus *Olotebiligiña* is a person's name in present day use which is at the same time the mythological name of what is called in every day language *tuluþ*- sea lobster (Sp. *langosta del mar*). By retaining the syllable *tebiligiña*, variations can be formed here as with all Cuna names having four letter prefixes: *olo*, *igua*, *ina* and *mani*, thus, *Olotebiligiña*, *Iguatebiligiña*, etc. used as the name of a person; it appears as a demon's name in the *Organ* and *Tiegun* documents.

<sup>1</sup> Lehmann 1920, Vol. 1, p. 141. After H. A. S. in *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 1873, p. 312.

<sup>2</sup> Nordenskiöld tried to find out an explanation for this by means of a written enquiry to Pérez as to how Pérez' father had chosen the names for his children. The letter was, however, never answered. ED.



#### IV. Relations Between Human Beings and Animals.

The text on turtles follows as an appendix, beginning on p. 388. ED.

Certain animals are the special friends of man. The saw-fish, for example — the *suku* — is an ally of the Cunas and defends them against dangerous beasts. In consequence this fish is never killed. When pieces of a whale are found on the coral reefs, *suku* has killed it. But if an entire whale is found, it is Venus — *Púgsu* — that has killed it with his arrow. The dolphin is another friend of the Cunas. If an Indian capsizes with his canoe, dolphins will come to his assistance and carry him to the shore. Even the rattlesnake, as mentioned in the chapter on snakes, is a friend of man.

An animal that plays an important part in the life of the Cuna Indians — largely as an economical asset — is the *carey*, the water-turtle from which real tortoise-shell is obtained. It must not be killed. Therefore the Indians, like the Chinese, skin the precious plates off the backs of the live animals, which they then again throw defenceless into the sea. If anyone kills one of these flayed turtles he will provoke resentment from the Indians. Like other animals, the turtle was once a human being, and not so very long ago at that.

There are many other animals which custom forbids killing. The reason why is not always known. The deer's exemption may perhaps be accounted for by the fact that it is said to bring the new-born child. Raptorial and insectivorous birds are not eaten, but only such as live on fruit. As medicine, one may however eat birds that otherwise are not eaten for food. Certain animals are not eaten because their flesh is not palatable. Of monkeys only one species is used for food. Ant-bears, sharks and alligators are not eaten. The sloth is not eaten but only killed for medicine. Formerly it was not the custom to eat hens'

eggs, nor turtle eggs, though iguana eggs, on the other hand, were eaten. Cayman eggs are not eaten.

Of all animals, the first specimen of any species that is killed must not be eaten by the one what has killed it. It has to be handed over to the old and experienced hunters, for them to eat. When for the first time Pérez caught a large fish, his grandfather told him that he must not eat any of it himself. The Cuna men carry the spoils of the hunt right into their own huts. Among them it is not the custom — as it is among many other Indian tribes — for the woman to carry the game into the hut. If anybody has killed a tapir he must not keep all the meat for his own family but distribute it among all the inhabitants of his village.

When an Indian kills an animal he sometimes asks the animal's pardon. An instance of melancholy resignation on the part of animals to the fact that in many cases they are given over to the service of human beings we find in a Cuna song, published in this work. It tells of the molluscs that are caught from which the animals are eaten, while the shells are thrown away to become habitations of the hermit crabs.

The Cuna Indians themselves have animal names, that is to say the names that are of pure Indian origin are those of animals. Even Indians known by European names have other names as well, — their true, Indian ones, — which however, they are never very anxious to talk about. If a Cuna Indian is asked what his name is, he turns to some bystander and says: »What is my name?», and lets that man reply in his stead. A circumstance worth noting is that such animal names as are used as proper names are not words employed in colloquial language, but are, on the other hand, the ones that are used in the legends which deal with the era of the great mythic Heroes. If a person's name is *Oloalikingina*, meaning tapir — *alikin*, is the part of the word which means tapir — it does not on that

account imply that he is in any way connected with tapirs. There is nothing whatever to prevent him from killing a tapir or eating the flesh of tapirs.

There are not two persons in the same village with the same name. Pérez says that most Indians do not know what their names mean. That is only known to those who know the traditions. It is quite possible that the peculiar proper names of this category are survivals, while the conceptions connected with them have fallen into oblivion. It speaks for their antiquity that they form no part of modern everyday language.

No clan system based upon totemistic conceptions nowadays exists among the Cunas, but, judging from the names of the different Cuna tribes, it seems possible that once such a system actually prevailed. Among such tribes may be noted the coati people, the *astupin-tule*, the black monkey people, *uma-tule*, the ant people, *igli-tule*, etc.

There are numerous medicines that bring luck in hunting. When two persons are out hunting, and one of them has made use of medicine it is only he who will succeed in shooting anything.

Thus, before going out hunting one may quite appropriately sing, the night before, the vulture song. Pérez does not know that song, but he generally fixes it up with someone else who knows it, before he goes out hunting. It is an excellent thing to bathe in water into which the sweet-smelling *bísep* herb has been put. It is, however, necessary to know the origin of *bísep* and the *bísep* song, which it is customary to sing before setting out. The smell of *bísep* attracts the game to the hunter, to whom the animals wish to make love. Both the song and the incantation regarding *bísep* are here published in picture-script (plates XI—XII). Pérez himself, before going out hunting, has repeated the *bísep* incantation and chanted the *bísep* song. As he intended to hunt agouti, he mentioned that animal in the song.

The subject matter of the *bísep* song will be found in

another place (p. 612). The turtles from which real tortoise-shell is obtained are of very great importance to the Cunas. Quite naturally these Indians therefore take great pains to obtain success in the hunting of these animals. As always, it is very important to know the history of the creation of such game as one proposes to hunt. Like everything else, the turtles are the children of God and the first woman, *Olotililisop*. The first thing she bore was a boy. He was washed, and the umbilical cord cut off. God threw this to one of his assistants, and it fastened round his waist like a hip cord. After the boy there came blood in clots, and this God transmuted into a red color stuff, *măgēba*, designed to be used in face-painting for attracting women. Thereafter was born a girl, and the umbilical cord was flung in the direction of another woman, who was a daughter of God's wife, and fastened round her waist where it changed itself into a piece of string, *mudup*. Thereafter came blood which changed into a red dye substance, *măgēba*, designed to be used in painting the face for the purpose of attracting men. It is for this reason that the women paint themselves a great deal.

After this, *Olotililisop* had white menses, and thereupon she bore the white tortoise which resembled the present-day one. She bore a male and a female, and these, too, each had an umbilical cord. Then God's wife menstruated red matter, upon which the red tortoise was born, first the male and then the female, each with its umbilical cord.

Next, the menses of *Olotililisop* were yellow, and then was born the yellow tortoise, male and female. They, too, had umbilical cords, and these the tortoises made use of in inventing cotton. The afterbirth was changed into big animals.

In the same way the rest of the tortoise species were born. After that the mother had menses that were black, and then she bore the black monkey, *ulul*, similar to the species now existing. First she bore a male, *ulitule*, and then a female,

*ulisop*. As soon as the male was born he touched the genital organs of the sister, and then God said: »That is how you will remain all your life, attracting many women to yourself«. The mother then had red menses, and bore a male and a female of the red monkey, *uma*. They, too, had umbilical cords, and these were changed into hip cords designed to attract the tortoises.

Again the mother bore the sea-lion, *tiachu*, male and female. The blood from their umbilical cords was changed into domestic fowls and other birds. In the same way the umbilical cord of the white tortoise was changed into gulls, ducks and a multitude of other birds. Then the mother had blue menses and bore a large number of plants of different kinds, such as blue *bisep*, etc. These are used for washing the head so as to make one attractive to tortoises. The blood that was spilt on the ground changed into *píryas*, places which tortoises frequent.

From the above will be seen the importance of the umbilical cord in this history of the creation of the world. Among other things it is changed into the cord that the women use for keeping their hip cloth in its place. Therefore this cord plays an important part in Cuna magic when the men are out to catch tortoises. When a woman is about to have her menses, her husband gives her a piece of string, *mudup*, for her to wear until her menstruation is over. After that she hands it back to the man, who ties it round his harpoon. The man then takes a medicine bath. The woman comes to the man, but it is better for him to deny her in order not to lose his strength. She that has worn the string is entitled to one-half of the tortoises that have been harpooned. The woman need not necessarily be the man's wife.

The black monkey, *ulul*, also plays a part in hunting magic. Its heart is burnt to ashes which are carried on the person by the hunter of turtles. This is done because *ulul* was created simultaneously with those animals. In the same way are used all those birds that were created from the

umbilical cords and from the blood that came from them. Even the plants that *Olotililisop* bore on the same occasion are used as medicine in turtle-hunting.

Thus it will be seen how the legend of the creation of the turtles supplies explanation of the different kinds of hunting magic used in the capture of these animals.

As I have mentioned, the turtle having the true tortoise-shell must not be killed. On one occasion Pérez caught a turtle, killed it, and ate of its flesh. After that he was never able to catch any more turtles until he had taken medicine. It will also bring trouble if one eats the flesh of



Fig. 24. Canoe with turtle, wooden toy. *GM.35.15.64*, Cuepti. Coll. Wassén.  
Scale, 1/4.

one of these turtles, as then one's children get the itch and sore eyes.

There are many other kinds of hunting medicine. When going out hunting it is usual to put into one's game-bag beaks of vultures, *mula*, or *mursip*. Eagles' heads are kept in the hut, and before starting on a hunt a few scrapings are taken from the head and placed together with other medicines in the water which is drunk in order to obtain information as to the whereabouts of the game it is intended to seek. Jaguars' hearts are eaten to instill courage. The flesh may be eaten, or the heart may be burnt to ashes which are used for medicine. The face of a jaguar may be used in the same way. The skin on the legs of a jaguar is burnt, and the ashes are used in a foot-bath to give endurance in walking.

Several dances practiced by the Cunas are known by animal names, as, for instance, the coati dance and the tapir dance. Of dances of this description I know the parti-

culars of only one, viz. the *uchae* (agouti) dance, which I have referred to in connection with the puberty festivals.

In the account of the nether world I have mentioned that in that region are punished those that have been cruel to animals. When the Cunas forbid maltreatment of dogs and other animals this should hardly be taken to imply a love of animals in the ordinary sense. We have seen to what extent man may have to depend on animals, and how for reasons of magic one may skin, but not kill, »true» turtles. The Talamanca Indians do not maltreat dogs for the reason that in the nether world they will be carried by a dog across a certain river. The reason why certain animals are not eaten or killed ought to be carefully inquired into in each individual case.

From what I have here given it will be clearly apparent that the Indians believe that animals act and reason in the same way as human beings do. »We and the animals are much the same», as P é r e z once told me.

*Appendix to »Relations Between Human Beings and Animals»:  
The Creation of the Turtles (La Creación de las Tortugas).*

The following Spanish text, catalogued as *GM.31.27.1.* (pp. 39—42) is a record in ink by Ruben Pérez Kantule from the dictation of *Nele* de Kantule in Ustúpu. The translation from Spanish to Swedish on which the English text is based, was made by Nordenskiöld, as was the case with the other notes by him. Nordenskiöld has made a note on the manuscript to the effect that there exist creation stories of the same kind about other animals. He writes further in a note on this: »This incantation (about the creation of the turtles) I do not have in picture-writing but only as written down by Pérez in Spanish but it exists in picture-writing also, and I have a very similar incantation treating the creation of the scorpions. In this we see a representation of *Olotilisobi* expelling red clots of menstruation, and the womb where the scorpions are born is pictured as a house. A way of drawing the womb as a house appears also in another connection. It is very probable that the recording of the incantation in picture-writing as a help for the memory contributes to the fact that the Indians from generation to generation preserve the incantations unchanged».

The incantation in picture-writing about the scorpions, *tiol*, referred to here is given in plates II—IV. It embraces pp. 6—8 of the picture-writing, *GM.27.27.1438*. The place from which it comes is not given. ED.

*Original text.*

Construyó [Dios] una casa de [*kiapapak*] y en medio puso mesa de diferentes colores con sus patas ramificadas y sobre la mesa puso tela blanca y sobre esta otra tela blanca que es mas delgada y sobre esta puso platos o *nogas* y sobre esta *Nana Olotililisop* [se] sentó con la cara hacia Este y sentó arrodillada.

Entonces Dios dijo vamos a criar las cosas para los nietos y vino a la luz un varón y despues se baña al recién nacido en las *nogas* y [cortó el] *simutub* y [lo] tiró adonde [estaba] parado [un] ayudante de Dios y el [cordon umbilical] se enredó en la cintura del hombre y este llamó [*olokuilotub*] ó [*mudup*].

Después del varón salieron sangre en bolas y dijo Dios que este se convirtió en [*Magep*] y hizo para pintar la cara para atraer a las mujeres.

*Translation.*

[God] built a house [*kiapapak*]<sup>1</sup> and in the middle he placed tables<sup>2</sup> of different colors with branching legs. On the table he placed a white cloth<sup>3</sup> and on this another thinner white cloth and on this he placed plates or *nogas*<sup>4</sup> and on this *Nana Olotililisop*<sup>5</sup> sat with her face towards the east. She sank down on her knees.

Then God said: Let us create the thing for our grandchildren and so a boy was born. The newborn child was bathed in *nogas*<sup>6</sup> and he [God] cut off the umbilical cord and threw it to an assistant and the umbilical cord fastened itself round the waist of the man and it was called [*olokuilotub*]<sup>7</sup> or [*mudup*]<sup>8</sup>.

After the boy, came blood in clots and God said that this would change itself into [*māgēba*]<sup>10</sup> and he made it for the men to paint their face with and attract women with.

<sup>1</sup> In eight layers. By this is meant the human body.

<sup>2</sup> Means here the woman's vulva.

<sup>3</sup> The skin of the vulva.

<sup>4</sup> Here is meant that God lay long with his wife.

<sup>5</sup> God's wife.

<sup>6</sup> Here it is a question of real cups.

<sup>7</sup> The umbilical cord.

<sup>8</sup> The name of a kind of thread.

<sup>9</sup> The cord with which the women tie up their dress.

<sup>10</sup> *Bixa orellana* L.



Después vino [una muchacha] a la luz y el *simutub* se echó adonde está otra mujer o hija de madre [*Olotililisop*] y enredo en la cintura y se convirtió en *olokuilotub* ó *mudup*. Y la sangre vino después y convirtió en [*magep*] para pintar la cara y para atraer los hombres por eso la mujer pinta mucho.

Y los nombres de *mudup*:

*Ōloēpirdili* — *Maniēpirdili*,  
*Olosāpurdili* — *Mānisāpurdili*,  
*Mūnāēpirnai* — *Mūnasāpurnai*.

Después la madre vió la *purba sibugwat* y después vino a la luz el Carey blanco parecido a [el] que se encuentra hoy, [vinieron] dos uno macho y otro hembra, tienen también sus *simutub*.

Después [la] madre vió *purba kinit* y *diual kinit*, y después vino a la luz la tortuga roja y vino primero macho y después hembra [con] *simutub* ó *olokuilotub*.

Después [la] madre vió *purba* amarilla y después vino a la luz la tortuga amarilla macho y hembra. Tienen sus *simutub* que las tortugas usaron para inventar el algodón. Y el *eūu* se convirtió en animales grandes.

After this [a girl] was born and the umbilical cord was thrown to another woman or daughter to the mother [*Olotililisop*]. It fastened itself round her waist and was changed into *olokuilotub* or *mudup*. The blood came afterwards and was changed into *mageba* for face painting to attract men. Therefore the women paint themselves very much.

The names of *mudup* are as follows:

.....

After this the mother saw *pūrba sibugwat*<sup>2</sup> and so the white turtle was born like those one finds today. There were two, a male and a female. Even they had their umbilical cords.

After this the mother saw *pūrba kinit* [red menstruation] and *diual kinit*<sup>3</sup> and after this the red turtle was born. First a male came and then a female with *simutub* or *olokuilotub*.

After this the mother saw a yellow *pūrba* [menstruation] and so the yellow turtle was born, male and female. They had their umbilical cords which the turtles used for inventing cotton.<sup>4</sup> Their nest (*e uu*)<sup>5</sup> was changed into large animals.

<sup>1</sup> See the names in the Spanish version. They have been left untranslated by Pérez and Nordenskiöld. ED.

<sup>2</sup> White menstruation. Indicates that she had this kind.

<sup>3</sup> Here *diual* is used in the same meaning as menstruation — *pūrba*. Otherwise it means river.

<sup>4</sup> Here the cotton cord which the women wear round the waist is referred to. With this they fasten a little cloth around the waist. When a woman begins to menstruate the husband gives her a hip-cord for her to wear until the menstruation has ceased. Then she gives it back to the man who

Después vino a la luz la tortuga negra hembra y macho.

Después la [tortuga] azul, hembra y macho. Después vino a la luz la tortuga larga ó *wualalet*.

Después la madre vió la *purba makumaku kuaskuaskua* y vino a la luz *yāuknīnilat*, hembra y macho.

Después la madre vió *purba parpat* y vino a la luz la tortuga *parpat*.

Después las tortugas pequeñas hembra y macho. Después [vinieron] las tortugas blancas ó morros, vinieron como vinieron los careyes.

Después la madre vió *purba chichit* y vino a la luz el *ulul* parecido a lo q'hoy se encuentra y vino macho ó *ulitule* y hembra ó *ulisop*. Y al venir a la luz [el macho] tocó enseguida el organo genital de *ulisop* y entonces Dios dijo usted andaran asi por toda su vida atrayendo a muchas mujeres. Después la madre vió otra [*purba kinit*] y vino a la luz *uma* o *tuleumatule* y *umasop*. Tienen sus *simutup* y convirtió *mudup* para atraer fastens it on his harpoon. The man bathes in medicine. The woman comes to the man but he should deny her in order not to lose his strength. The woman is to have half of the harpooned turtles.

<sup>5</sup> Literally means its (e) nest (*ūū*). Here the afterbirth is referred to.

<sup>1</sup> The heart of *ulul* is burned to ashes and these ashes one takes along when one hunts the Carey. This animal is the medicine for turtle hunting because it was born at the same time as the turtles.

After this the black turtle was born, female and male.

After this the blue turtle was born, female and male. Then the oblong turtle or *wualalet* was born.

After this the mother saw *pūrba makumaku* [frothy menstruation] *kuaskuaskua* [means almost the same] and so *yauknīnilat* was born, male and female.

After this the mother saw *pūrba parpat* [many - colored menstruation] and after this there was born the many - colored turtle.

After this the small turtles were born, female and male. After this the white and round turtles [were born]. They came in the same way as the Carey turtles.

After this the mother saw *pūrba chichit* [black menstruation] and so *ulul* [a black ape] was born,<sup>1</sup> similar to the one that now exists, the male *ulitule* and the female *ulisop*. When it was born it immediately touched the sex organ of *ulisop* and then God said, you shall always remain like this and during your whole life you shall attract many women. After this the mother saw another *pūrba pūrba kinit* [red menstruation] and

los careyes. Despues vino a la luz el león del mar vinieron hembra y macho y *simutub ablis* se convirtió en *aituksikui*. Y después [a] *hūālasikui* [y] *cānir* hembra y macho.

Carey blanco *simutub saila* se convirtió [en] *wuārsikui*, *pāne sibu*, *pāne tūma*, *pātu*, *tōto*, *uirsop* *sucsop*, *pārro*, *taquir*, *nirbaēpāye*, *ūiska*, *yolin*, *kārtur* ó *sikuisis*.

Despues la madre vió *purba aradiki*, y vino a luz *bisepārat*, *āchuēlyāla*, [kōke] y *nōbal* y *bisep sapi* en un día serviran para lavar la cabeza para atraer los careyes.

Despues vinieron [*akepantup*, *wuēsalki*, *māski*, *sārki*, *askae*, *iguatūrbakinit*, *nīsal*, *kōga*, *sābdurkinīt*, *sābdursibuguat*, *sābdurarat*]. La sangre que fué derramado en la tierra se convirtió en *Pirya ūlusunbaābekua pirya*

so there was born *uma* [red ape], the male *tuleumatule* and the female *umasop*. These had their umbilical cords, *simutup*, and they were changed into *mudup* in order to attract carey turtles. After this the sea-lion was born, the female and the male, and the umbilical cord's *ablis* [or *ablisa* = blood] were changed into *aituksikui*<sup>1</sup> and after this into *hūālasikui*<sup>2</sup> and *cānir*<sup>3</sup>, the female and male.

The white carey's umbilical cord was changed into *wuārsikui* [a bird], *pāne sibu* [sea-gull], *pāne tūma* [a bird], *patu* [Spanish pato = duck], *toto* [raven] etc.<sup>4</sup>

After this the mother saw *purba aradiki* [blue menstruation], and so there were born *bisepārat*,<sup>5</sup> *āchuēlyāla*<sup>6</sup>, [kōke]<sup>7</sup>, *nōbal*<sup>8</sup>, and *bisep sapi*.<sup>9</sup> They should be used the same day to wash the head with in order to catch carey turtles.

After this came *akepantup*. .

<sup>10—20</sup>

The blood which spilled out on the ground was changed into *pirya ūlusunbaābekua pirya*.<sup>21</sup> *Ulusunba siksika pirya*. . .<sup>22—24</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A bird. The ashes of this bird are used to attract turtles to the hunter.

<sup>2</sup> Another bird for the same use.

<sup>3</sup> Tame chicken. Used as the above, but also eaten as medicine.

<sup>4</sup> Birds of different kinds which are used, like the above, as medicine in hunting carey turtles.

<sup>5—9</sup> Different plants which are used in the medicine bath for a successful turtle hunt.

<sup>10—20</sup> Ditto.

<sup>21—24</sup> The places where the turtles live. God sent them to these places.

se fue en esta lugar. *Ulusunba*  
*siksika pirya, Ulusunba kōke-*  
*kuapirya, Ulusunba nuseluku-*  
*napirya.*

*Ulul* se mandó por el lugar  
*Turua kundiual* en este río se  
 queda el [*Buki-Buki*].

*Ulul* went to *Turua kundiual*<sup>1</sup>.  
 At this river is located *Buki-*  
*Buki*[?].

## V. Incantations For Thunder, Rain, Storms, etc.

Pérez does not know very much about any Indians who are able to invoke the natural elements but he has, however, given me some information.

Thirty or forty years ago, according to what *Nēle* has related, there came a man from Huala to Puturgandi, and of this man it was known that he was familiar with the song about the lightning. And they asked him if he would sing it. He declined to do it and said that it was impossible to sing this song in the winter. It was only possible in the summer. The people in the village did not believe that he knew how to cause thunder and lightning by means of song.

The man then said that he would sing but that he would not be responsible if any misfortune occurred after his song.

In the night he began to sing about the origin of the lightning and the rain, in other words, how they were created by God, and he explained that in the middle of the night the lightning would strike the house where he had sung and he urged everyone to leave it. They did this. The only ones who were left were the house's pigs.

In the middle of the night the lightning struck exactly in the place where the man had sat and sung, and it killed eight pigs. The house was destroyed. The Indians in the village were enraged and the man had to flee.

*Nēle* has told about a similar incident which occurred during the period of discovery. There was a Cuna Indian near Santa Maria de la Antigua who could call down the

<sup>1</sup> A river.

lightning. He was taken captive by the Spaniards and carried onboard a Spanish ship which sailed away. Out on the sea the man understood that he could not escape and then he sang the song about the lightning's origin. The ship came to a peninsula and some of the Spaniards landed, taking the Indian with them. When they were on land the lightning struck the ship, which burned up. When the Spaniards who were guarding the Indian saw the catastrophe they left the captured Indian, who was then able to escape to Nicocli on the Bay of Urabá, and in this way he was saved. Many Spaniards died. Forty Cunas who were also onboard and who were to be carried away as slaves, were also killed.

Even farther back in time there lived *Kuani*. This was at the same time as the great *nēles* lived. *Kuani* was not born to be a *nēle*. By constantly looking at the sun he had nevertheless acquired the knowledge of a *nēle*. God had sent such a terrible drought that all the rivers had dried up and the *nēles* tried to make rain but were unable to do it. *Kuani*, however, was successful with his song in getting the rain to fall.

Pérez does not know of any modern rain-makers. At any rate enough rain falls, and even a little bit more than enough. *Yõrmosa* is what they call the dry season, from December to June. Then comes the turtle season, *Yankamosa*, which lasts until September. The remaining part of the year is called the south time, *Kigimosa*, when hard south winds are blowing. There does not seem to be any proper division of the year into months, but they do give names to shorter periods. Thus February is *anini*. It is then that the iguana lizards lay their eggs. *Tĩlani*, a flower, has given the next month its name. May is called *olorni* (?) after a certain kind of cricket.

The rain-bow is called *sũe*. One should not point at the rain-bow, for if one does, one will get warts on the hand. When there are two rain-bows the brighter one is looked upon as a man and the other one as a woman.

Thunder is *māla*, lightning is *ibyètt*. When it thunders one places ones machete outside so that it will cut off the lightning. When round lightning appears in a circle (does this mean a ball of lightning?) the carey turtles go up on an island. Once in Ustúpu P é r e z saw such lightning above Isla de las Gallinas. He sent three boys there and they found a carey.

When a star is near the moon it means that some misfortune is going to take place.

One fells trees only at the time when the moon is waning.

In order to invoke a storm the Cuna Indians used to burn Spanish pepper. Whether they sang any incantation in this connection P é r e z does not know.

When there is an eclipse of the sun or the moon the albinos shoot with miniature bows and arrows at the monster which is devouring the sun or the moon.

## VI. Sympathetic Magic.

When P é r e z went to Sweden his wife asked him to bring back pieces of wood from this country. She had heard that it is very cold in Sweden and her purpose was to use them against fever. Wood from a cold country should cure fever. Stones from cold sections are medicine for fever. Constantly one finds among the Cunas a similar line of thinking which is wholly consistent and logical. I shall give a number of examples.

In order to get a beautiful singing voice one places gramophone needles, whistles, and gold and silver bells, in water and then drinks this water.

In order to catch turtles with a thick shell one puts pieces of heavy pots which one has found in the forest, in the bath water.

If one has planted mandioca, one must not lie in ones hammock during the day because then the mandioca roots will get stringy. When one plants mandioca one shall pull

fat women by the leg. This is in order to make the mandioca roots thick. When one plants cotton bushes one shall pull ones scrotum in order that the cotton fibers will be long.

Cleverly made birds' nests are placed in the bath in order that one shall be skilful in weaving baskets.

If one wants to be a skilful canoe builder one sends a piece of wood to an Indian who is known for making excellent canoes. He makes a little model of a canoe out of the piece of wood and gives it to the one who wants to learn. The latter places this little canoe in water and then bathes in this water. He must bathe his whole body.

When a person uses poison in fishing and there are crabs in the water, the poison has no effect. Therefore crabs are a method against drunkenness. They are burned to ashes and these ashes are placed in the water which is drunk. One should not spit in the water when one uses poison in fishing because then the fish recover from the poison.

## VII. Snakes and Snake Bite, with appendix: Snake Medicine Song.

On the mainland, though not on the islands, venomous snakes are common, and accidents are fairly frequent. In the village of Ustúpu, for example, three men have already been snake-bitten this year [1931]. A dark brown kind of snake known as *igarr* is held as the most venomous of all. Its poison is said to bring death within a few minutes. Other venomous snakes are the coral snake, *másarnaibe*: a small one, *püntukkolo*, which has a yellow tail; the *tāpa*, with markings on its back similar to those of our common adder; the arboreal snakes *nibanaibe* and *nābanaibe*, and a few more. Among common venomous snakes there is also the rattle-snake, *ūkunaibe*, but, strange to say, it has the reputation of not attacking human beings. It is even said to defend people against other snakes. The Indians never kill it. Should they happen upon a rattle-snake in their gardens they scare

it away without doing it any harm. If a rattle-snake were killed, its slayer would be pursued by its fellows. The *uéko*, a raptorial bird and a great snake-hunter, must not be killed either. If a *uéko* were wounded, he would tell the snakes of it, and they would take vengeance upon the hunter. When the rattle-snake goes to heaven it changes itself into a railway train.

As already mentioned, certain persons have a *kúrgin* for encountering snakes, and are more apt to be snake-bitten than ordinary people. There are also persons who know how to tame snakes. *Néle* is a snake-tamer. These Cuna Indians never kill a snake; if they did they would lose their power of taming them, and lay themselves open to being snake-bitten. When a snake-charmer sets about taming a snake, he utters a kind of incantation in which he explains how God was the father of the first snakes, and how they were born of *Olotililisop*, the mother-of-all. No one unacquainted with this incantation is able to tame snakes.

If anyone has been bitten by a snake he must not straightway return to his village, but instead he is taken to a special place. Near Ustúpu there is an island which is used in such cases. The medicine man goes to this place accompanied by some of his nearest relatives in order to attend to the patient. The members of the family must arrive there on the same day, or else their presence may entail danger to the snake-bitten person. In 1928 *b* I have, from notes supplied me by Pérez, published a description of the illness that may beset a snake-bitten person, according to the way the poison acts upon him.<sup>1</sup> This description must be known by heart by the medicine man who, by observing the stages of the action of the poison, finds in it instruction as to what medicines he ought to use. The medicine man receives from the family of the patient a string threaded with glass beads of various kinds, in the fashion of a snake, together with sewing needles and fish-hooks. By these things the medicine man is

<sup>1</sup> Republished in this work. See appendix, p. 399. ED.



supposed to be protected from snake-bites. The medicine man ought not to eat Spanish pepper or the flesh of large animals, nor should he consort with his wife.

If a person has been bitten by a snake, the women of his family put on their molas with the wrong side out for the reason that the figures with which it is ornamented might otherwise do harm to the sick man and prevent him from recovering. They also strip off their bangles and ankle rings.

If a man has killed a snake he ties round the neck of his youngest child, who has not yet learned to talk, a cotton thread in order that the child will not become a stutterer. A machete with which a snake has been killed is thereby rendered unfit for use for some considerable time.

If anyone sees a coral snake, *másarnaibe*, there will shortly be a death in his family.

When anyone has been snake-bitten, a host of evil spirits gather, bent upon attacking him. I have heard of a medicine man who collected all sorts of pictures out of trade catalogues and illustrated periodicals. If anybody then got bitten by a snake or became seriously ill in some other way he would burn all those bits of paper, and strew the ashes about the house within which the patient lay. All those pictured objects then changed into a vast shopping emporium, and the evil spirits that were congregating upon the house got so busy looking at all the wonderful things contained in that store that they had no time to spare for the sick person. *Néle* also collects pictures in large variety, although *Pérez* knows nothing about the way he uses them.

*Appendix: Naibe ina — Snake Medicine Song.*

The original of this snake medicine song may be found in *GM.* 27. 27.1444, where it consists of a text written in part in pencil in Cuna, in part in picture writing. The text and picture-writing were published by *Nordenskiöld* in 1928 b, pp. 25—48 and pls. 1—2, but on account of the great number of corrections in spelling and translation which were made in this text during *Pérez*' stay

in Gothenburg I have however considered it best to republish the text and picture-writing here. The two pages of picture-writing appear here as plates V—VI.

Nordenskiöld used in the version formerly printed the form »*macbe* (culebra)» but with the notation »mejor náybe». Here the form used by Pérez, *naibe*, is adopted.

Regarding the meaning of the *naibe ina* text Nordenskiöld wrote in 1928 b, p. 2:

»*Náebe ina* means snake medicine. Here is described the course of a case of illness and the medicines that are the proper ones to employ. It gives an account of what demons are causing this particular illness, and where they are to be found. Presumably *Náebe ina* is a sort of memorandum for the use of those aspirant medicine men, who have to be instructed as to what demons invade mankind in different cases, and what medicines should be used.»...

The original record was made by Pérez in 1926. The teacher seems to have been Oloninipe of the village Ailigandi. ED.

*Naibe ina.*  
culebra medicina

The numbers above the Cuna words refer to the picture-writing,  
pl. V—VI.

2

1) No kichi kōte/ye, pīli pā sega pōni  
Sapo glándula llamo capa tercera hasta [enfermedad]

I

ūlukkūetse. Tāle nāimāli ūlukkūet kudagoē ~~iii~~  
cansado a hombre pierna descansado va sentir(?) esta

3

poni nakkusal. [M.]: bātsāl<sup>1</sup>,  
(la) enfermedad cuando adquirido (está)

4 5 6

bātsālchichitti<sup>2</sup> bātsālmolinakūt<sup>3</sup>, bātsālniskāgasae<sup>4</sup>.  
» negro » anta pierna parecida

2) No kichi pāl(i) kōte pāli āmba pīli  
Sapo glándula vuelve llamar otra vez todavía capa

<sup>1-4</sup> Names of medicinal plants which Pérez did not know the Spanish equivalents for. Many of them probably have only Indian names. [M] indicates the medicine.



<sup>26</sup>  
*kīlakīla* *kūiskūal/tādole*. [M.]: *kūāla*, <sup>27</sup>*kūāla/kōrdikit*,  
 radiendo pinchando escoba(?) amarilla

<sup>28</sup>  
*iskīnkūāla*,<sup>1</sup> <sup>29</sup>*kūālapurriquat*.  
 escoba(?) pequeña

6) *No kichi pāl(i) kōte pāli tāda* <sup>30</sup>*igala* *bāli* <sup>31</sup>*Pūgasu/se*<sup>2</sup>.  
 Venus al.

*A tūle pēga soītāgoe bel nunumāket ittolēge tikalti*  
 vos para va decir con dolor siento costado el

*maimaia bel ittolē(ge) baliye*. [M.]: <sup>32</sup>*tāke*, <sup>33</sup>*tāke/kīnit*,  
 picando con siento ortiga, ortiga colorada

<sup>34</sup>*māltāke*, <sup>35</sup>*tākeae*.  
 cielo ortiga ortiga

7) *No kichi pāl(i) kōte pāli tāda* <sup>36</sup>*igala* *bāli* <sup>37</sup>*Ūdōle/se*<sup>3</sup>.  
 » al

*Pela maimaia ittole tal nunumaket ittole tūle*  
 picando siento hay dolor siento persona

*soītāgoe*. [M.]: <sup>38</sup>*napkīal*, <sup>39</sup>*napkīaltūkuārrat*,  
 va decir » arriba azu

<sup>40</sup>*napkīal/tābu/nūkarkīit*<sup>4</sup>, <sup>41</sup>*napkīal/tābu/nūkarkīit/purriḡuat*.  
 » » diente parece » » diente parece pequeño.

8) *No kichi pāl(i) kōte pāli tāda* <sup>42</sup>*igala* *bāli* <sup>43</sup>*Ōlēle*<sup>2</sup>.  
*Pel(a) nun(u)māke ittole āmba pēga soītapālōe*.  
 todavía(?) vuelve a decir

<sup>1</sup> *iskīn*, little lizard-like animal.

<sup>2</sup> *Pūgaso* or *Pūgso*, as well as *Ūdōle*, *Ōlēle*, *Ūikālīlēl* named in the following, are here the names of illnesses. They are mentioned in Cuna mythology as brothers.

<sup>3</sup> See the above note.

<sup>4</sup> *Tābu* name of a fish.

[M.]: <sup>44</sup> *nāras*, <sup>45</sup> *nārasole*, <sup>46</sup> *nūsñāras*,  
 naranja limon gusano naranja [medicina]

<sup>47</sup> *naraskiit* <sup>ó</sup> *kia*.  
 naranja parece [Sp.]

9) *No kichi pāl(i) kōte pāli tāda igala bāli Ūikatilel(e)*<sup>1</sup>.  
*Nunumakadi anki ōbinēpie ittole soṭtagōe*.  
 dolor mi en quiere vencer (me) siento va decir

[M.]: <sup>50</sup> *tīko*, <sup>51</sup> *tīkokīnit*, <sup>52</sup> *īko*, <sup>53</sup> *īko/kīnit* *nalup*.  
 » colorado » colorado [una palma].

10) *Nō kichi pāl(i) kōte pāli tāda igala bāli bōō /ārat/se*<sup>2</sup>.  
 nubes azul a

*Emīdi tule ōepīe pega kūdagōe*.  
 ahora persona desmayar vos para va sentir(?)

[M.]: <sup>56</sup> *sik/nūgar*, <sup>57</sup> *ñansat/ūala*, <sup>58</sup> *ārar/ūala*, <sup>59</sup> *ārar/ūala/purriḡūat*.  
 diente palo azul palo azul palo pequeño

11) *Nō kichi pāl(i) kōte pāli akūatīnagan/kīne*<sup>3</sup>.  
 bajos los en

<sup>60</sup>  
*akuanūsūksi/ūnnīt/se*<sup>4</sup> *āmba nunumāke/ye pel(a)*  
 gusano de las piedras todavía dolor

<sup>61</sup>  
*mātārre māliūālpā aīnakkūāltāe*. [M.]: *poīsīmas*,  
 con masa subiendo en (la) pierna

<sup>62</sup> *poīsīmasmāchi*, <sup>63</sup> *poīsīmas/ārat*, <sup>64</sup> *poīsīmaskōrdikit*.  
 hijo azul amarillo

<sup>1</sup> See note 2, page 401.

<sup>2</sup> Name of a sickness.

<sup>3</sup> Stone bottom in the sea.

<sup>4</sup> Medicine.

- 12) *No kichi pāl(i) kōte pāli temal/magatipāli pīriagan/kine*  
 mar (en) la alta remolinos en

<sup>65</sup>  
*Uūsibugūa/se<sup>1</sup> pel tūle sūū pīlbīl ittokūs/ye*  
*Uu blanco al con persona vértigo dando vueltas siento ya*

<sup>66</sup> <sup>67</sup> <sup>68</sup>  
*soītagōe. [M.]: ūgla, ūglasē/nikkūat, ūgla/tūbalet,*  
 va decir » pequeño bejuco

<sup>69</sup>  
*ūgla/tūbalet/purriḡuat.*  
 bejuco pequeño

- <sup>70</sup>  
 13) *Nō kichi pāl(i) kōte pāli piriagankine Ūū/chichigūa/se.*  
 remolinos en *Uu negro al*

<sup>71</sup> <sup>72</sup> <sup>73</sup>  
 [M.]: *Naibe/ūāl,* *naibe/ūāl/tūmat,* *naibeūāl/kīnit,*  
 culebra palo culebra palo grande colorado

<sup>74</sup>  
*naibe/ūāl/purriḡuat. Āmba sūū pīlbīl chichi*  
 pequeño también(?) vértigo dando vueltas negro

*immal ēgi selegetanikiti ātākkūs/ye soītagōe*  
 cosas en el flotando pareciendo se ve va decir.

- 14) *Nō kichi pāl(i)\* kōte pāli piriagan/kine*

<sup>75</sup> <sup>76</sup> <sup>77</sup>  
*Uūtūmmatikūibatūrbaūnītī/se. [M.]: kūība, kūībakīnit,*  
 [nombre de enfermedad] al colorada

<sup>78</sup> <sup>79</sup>  
*kūībasago(a), kūībasibugūat. Āmba sūū pīlbīl chichi*  
 de dos colores blanca

*ittodagōe tīa shūlīl pēga/nāoe*  
 va sentir desmayo tal vez vos para estará.

- <sup>80</sup>  
 15) *Nō kichi pāl(i) kōte pāli tikūkūsailaganse.*  
 tikuku jefes al

<sup>1</sup> The illness spirit *Uūsibugūa* is found among the whirlpools in the open sea.

81 82 83 84  
[M.]: *tikukū*, *tikukū/kínit*, *niāachelkala*, *niāachelkalpurriḡūat*.  
colorado [na-diablo] pequeño

*Naīsābūl* *shūli* *maināoe* »*belūālale*»  
pantorilla sin estará forma alargada.

85  
16) *Nō* *kichi* *pāl(i)* *kōte* *pāli* *tikukūsōsōūālūnitse*  
[nombre de enfermedad] al.

86 87 88 89  
[M.]: *sōso*, *sōsōūt*, *silel*, *sileltummadi*. *Āmba* *naīsābūl*  
largo grande pantorilla

*shūli* *maināoe* *bel/kāra/bel/nāoe*.  
sin estará con flaco con irá

17) *Nō* *kichi* *pāl(i)* *kote* *pāli* *sūālinaipīlibalī*<sup>1</sup>  
palo encima

90 91 92  
*ākūikūipūntorkanpīnakolet/se*. [M.]: *Su*<sup>2</sup>, *sukínit*,  
[nombre de enfermedad] híguerón » colorado

93 94  
*sua*<sup>3</sup>, *mālsua*. *Tule* *pīnakolet* *eknākūoe*.  
hobo persona hipo el va quedar

95  
18) *Nō* *kichi* *pāl(i)* *kōte* *pāli* *tūda* *īgala* *bālī*

96 97 98 99  
*āchupīnakolet/se*<sup>4</sup> [M.]: *īnaōlo*, *īnaōlo/kínit*, *kūgtarra*,  
perro hipo al colorado

100  
*kūgtarrachichit*. *Tule* *pīnakolet* *eknākūpaloe* *pīna*  
(muy) negro persona hipo vuelve a quedar hígado(?)  
*īkīlīkil* *kūdagōe*.  
»contraído» va sentir

19) *Nō* *kichi* *pāl(i)* *kote* *pāli* *nāpākūāmākkalet*<sup>5</sup> *ūkākā*  
tierra solida última

<sup>1</sup> The illness demon is found in the top of a tree.

<sup>2</sup> *Crescentia cujete* L.

<sup>3</sup> *Spondias lutea* L.

<sup>4</sup> This demon causes hiccoughs, *pīnakolet* (Sp. hipo).

<sup>5</sup> This demon stays in the earth.

- 101 *kīne nīapurrigūāse.* [M.]: *ūrūakāsib(u), serganūrūa,*  
 en (la) diablo pequeño al *urua* blanca vieja »
- 104 *nū/ūrūa, nū/ūrūa/kīnit.* 105 *A tūle pega soīdagoe*  
 paloma » colorada (esta) persona vos á va decir
- tule purrigūat pūkitar tānisūnie.*  
 persona pequeña bastante está viniendo
- 20) *Nō kichi pāl(i) kōte pālī temalmāgattibali*  
 mar en la fuera
- 106 *tābumāchigan/se.* 107 *[M.]: sāpansību, sāpansīb/senīkkūat,*  
 (de) tābus hijos (los) á » blanco » blanco pequeño
- 109 *sal/sīb,* 110 *sal/sīb/senīkkūat. A tule pega*  
 » blanco pequeño  
 [sal = una planta] .
- soītagōe tule abgan ūāla-ūāla sāaletalege ebo<sup>1</sup> tani/ye.*  
 cuerpos flacos pareciendo dos vienen
- 21) *Nō kichi pāl(i) kōte pālī tāda īgala pālī*
- 112 *ūpsānsailagan/se.<sup>2</sup>* 113 *[M.]: Ūpsān/sībugūat, ūpsān/kīnit,*  
 algodones jefes al. algodón blanco colorado
- 115 *toilūpsān (ūpsānyāragūat), 116 ūpsānārat. A tūle*  
 algodón color humado azul
- pega soīdagōe ūpsānpūkkītār tule tī/se tānisunīe*  
 muchos persona agua en viene a traer
- ābin nūe pūrremālāl/ye.*  
 alístate bien rueca haga.
- 22) *Nō kichi pāl(i) kōte pālī tāda īgala pālī*
- 117 *tādaūluebigēgūase.* 119 *[M.]: īnabūrtakegūamānibogūat<sup>3</sup>,*  
 plata dos reales(?)

<sup>1</sup> Referring to two people.

<sup>2</sup> Here a sickness.

<sup>3</sup> *Mani* from money.



I20  
*īnabūrtakégūa/manipakegūat,*  
 plata cuatro reales

121  
*inabürtakégüamāniātalet,*  
 plata cinco reales

I22  
*inabürtakégüasüittonküënat.*  
 peso uno

*A tūle pēga soīdagoe  
va decir*

<i>ūludi</i>	<i>būlalege</i>	<i>anisi</i>	<i>unīe</i>	<i>petākenye.</i>
canoa	velas	con	se viene	ya fíjate

23) *No kichi pāl(i) kōie pali āmba tādā igala pali* 124

I23		I25	I26
<i>tadqrluebigégñase.</i>	[M.]:	<i>gñalsābugñat,</i> escoba blanca	<i>gñalakordikit,</i> escoba amarilla

I27	I28		
<i>iskingūala,</i>	<i>gūalapurriḡat.</i>	<i>Amba</i>	<i>tule pega soḡdagoe</i>
» escoba	escoba pequeña		

*ūludi                      būlalegetanisünŋe.*  
canoa                    velas con se viene ya.

					129	130	
24)	Nō	kichi	pal(i)	kōte	pali	tada sol	ūlu canoa    yākine adentro

I31	I32	I33
<i>esnorrisailagan/se.</i>	[M.]: <i>tursavila,</i>	<i>tursailasenikküat,</i>
machetes jefes de(los) al	<i>tur jefe</i>	» jefe pequeño

I34	I35						
<i>esa,</i>	<i>esabīlīgā.</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>tule</i>	<i>pega</i>	<i>soīdagoe</i>	<i>an</i>	<i>naīsabul</i>
(?)	» <i>torcida</i>					<i>mi</i>	<i>pantorilla</i>

marziali/sunye.  
comenzando abrirse

25) *Nō kichi pāl(i) kōte pali* <sup>136</sup>*naibetūbākūārat/se<sup>1</sup>.*  
culebra azul a

	I37	I38	I39	I40
[M.]:	<i>naiñal</i> <sup>2</sup> ,	<i>nñsnaiñal</i> ,	<i>aisal</i> ,	<i>aisalkiñlāgña</i> .
		gusano »	(?).	» corto

<sup>1</sup> A non-poisonous snake.

<sup>2</sup> Used in basket weaving.



- 162 163  
*ob/kīnit, ob/kōrdikit. A tule pēga soḍdagoe an*  
 maíz colorado maíz amarillo va decir yo  
*ōba kūmbīe.*  
 maíz quiero comer
- 30) *No kichi pāl(i) kōte pālī yālamūllumūllugan/kīne*  
 cerros en (los)
- 164 165 166 167  
*mulli-mulli/al. [M.]: ob/sibūgūat, ob/chīchit, ob/kīnit,*  
 a maíz blanco negro colorado
- 168  
*ob/kōrdikit. Āmba tule pēga kōtdapale an ōba kūmbīe.*  
 amarillo vuelve llamar
- 31) *No kichi pāl(i) kōte pālī yāla pūrbakīne poni*  
 montaña alma en (el) [espí-]
- 169 170 171  
*mūllimūllikīṛtdi/se/yē.<sup>1</sup> [M.]: sāpi, sāpi/sēnikkūat,*  
 ritu] a árbol árbol pequeño
- 172 173  
*ūasāpi, ūasāpi/purriḡūat. A tule āmba ōba*  
 [nombre de árbol] pequeño maíz  
*kūmbīe pēga sōgetāgōe*  
 quiero comer vos a va decir.
- 175<sup>2</sup>  
 32) *No kichi pāl(i) kōte pālī pīli/pākke/kīne poni*  
 capa cuarta en
- 176 177 178  
*sibūḡūa/se. [M.] mogīla/sibūḡūat, mogīla/kōrdikit,*  
 enfermedad blanca a nube blanca nube amarilla
- 179 180  
*sūagīa, sūagīa/purriḡūat. A tule pēga sibūḡūa taile nāoe.*  
 pequeña blanca parecer va
- 181  
 33) *No kichi pāl(i) kōte pālī pūruasibūḡūa/se.*  
 viento blanco al

<sup>1</sup> The illness demon is found in the mountains.

<sup>2</sup> 174=2, the second of the two pages of picture-writing (pl. VI).



- 205  
*kīnūdi/se.* [M.]: *segun/sāpi,* 206 *segun/sāpiesaiālabālit,* 205  
 colorada a (la) *segun árbol*
- 208 209  
*segun/tūba, segun/tuba/saiālabalit.* A *tūle pega kūénsakabi*  
 bejuco pura sangre
- āgemaikūoe shūlil nukar sandar pāli āriōtāgoe shūlil*  
 vomitando tal vez diente carne entre echará tal vez
- abli(sa) sādūtāgoe.*  
 sangre obrará
- 38) No *kichi pāl(i) kōte pāli temalmagatdibali* 210(?)  
 mar alta (la) en sol
- 211 212 213  
*igala bali*<sup>1</sup> *balusailagan/se.* [M.]: *tākke,* *tākke/kīnit,*  
 camino en (el) ? jefes al. ortiga ortiga colorada
- 214 215  
*māl/tākke, tākkeae.* A *tule bel abagan ugāka/se*  
 cielo ortiga con cuerpo todo en (el)
- arbōgemai kudagoe ūimakkemai.*  
 cayendo quedará sudando
- 216 a  
 39) No *kichi pāl(i) kōte pāli tāda igala bāli pōni*  
 sol camino en (el) enfermedad
- 216 217 218 219 220  
*altēdegūa/se.* [M.]: *nigla, nigla/senikkuat, kūēgi, kūēgi/kīnit.*  
 (?) a ? pequeño ? colorado
- Kalesat/kine tēde yāktagoe abe.*  
 mordida en (la) gota echando sangre
- 221 222  
 40) No *kichi pāl(i) kōte pāli tāda igala bali achu/kīnītdi/se*  
 sol camino en perro colorado al
- 223 224 225 226  
 [M.]: *āskāla, mūchūka, mūchūka/biligūa, yaāla.* Bel  
 torcido con
- kīnītdibi sādumai kūdagoe sol noebie.*  
 rojo puro obrando quedará anus quiere salir

<sup>1</sup> The illness demon is found in the open sea on the path of the sun.





- 48) *Nō kichi pāl(i) kōte pāli pīli pōkine Naibesaila/se.*  
 capa segunda en culebra jefe a

[M.]: <sup>267</sup> *ūesal,* <sup>268</sup> *ūdiūēsāl,* <sup>269</sup> *kōeguk/tuba,*  
 cuchara extranjera cuchara bejuco

<sup>270</sup> *kōeguk/tub/arrat.* *Tūle* *naīsabul* *nōgarle* *maināōe.*  
 azul persona pantorilla abierta? estar va

- 49) *Nō kichi pāl(i) kōte pāli pīli/pākke/kīne*  
 capa cuarta en

<sup>271</sup> *Nōgi/saila/se.* [M.]: <sup>272</sup> *īnatikūbla,* <sup>273</sup> *īnatikūbla/senikkūat.*  
 rana jefe a pequeño

*Yōkol* *kīne* *nogi* *kōleyobi* *kūllalye* *soge.*  
 rodilla en rana parece »gritaba»? dice

- 50) *No kichi pāl(i) kōte pāli pīli/pākke/kīne* <sup>274</sup> *no/saila/se.*  
 capa cuarta en rana jefe a

[M.]: <sup>275</sup> *īnatikūbla,* <sup>276</sup> *īnatikūbla/senikkūat.* *Nō yōbi tūūāūāl*  
 pequeño rana como muslo

*kōllalye* *soida.*  
 »sonando» va decir

- 51) *Nō kichi pāl(i) kōte pāli pīli/pākke/kīne* <sup>277</sup> *argōgo/se.*  
 [especie de] sapo a

[M.]: <sup>278</sup> *īnatikūbla,* <sup>279</sup> *īnatikūblasenikkūat.* *Āmba* *yōkol*  
 pequeño todavía rodilla

*kī(ne)* *kōllalye* *kudāgoe.*  
 en »sonando» va quedar

- 52) *No kichi pāl(i) kōte pāli pīli/pākke/kīne* <sup>280</sup> *sapu/saila/se.*  
 sapo jefe a



	281	282	283	284
[M.]:	<i>ínabrasku,</i>	<i>ínabrasku/tūbalet,</i>	<i>ũĩũĩn,</i>	<i>tĩ/ũĩũĩn/purriḡuat.</i>
		bejuco	agua »	pequeño
<i>Pio</i>	<i>sādumai</i>	<i>māgattakkeyobi.</i>		
chorro	obrando	orinando como		
				285
53) <i>No kichi</i>	<i>pāl(i) kote</i>	<i>pāli</i>	<i>pāli/po/kine</i>	<i>naibe/kābegua/se.</i>
			capa segunda en	culebra dormilón a
	286	287		288
[M.]:	<i>kābegūa<sup>1</sup>,</i>	<i>kābegūasāpilet,</i>		<i>kābegūa/tūbalet,</i>
		árbol		bejuco
	289			
<i>kābegua/purriḡuat.</i>		<i>Kābepierba</i>	<i>tule</i>	<i>kūdāḡōe</i>
pequeña		dormir quiere	persona	va quedar
<i>kēkātākke.<sup>2</sup></i>				
sin despertar.				

### VIII. Decoration. Body and Face Painting.

*With appendix: Dark Indians and White Indians.*

P é r e z looks upon all design merely as decoration. The decorations on the *molos* thus have no magic significance. They do not frighten the evil spirits.

In order to make beautiful objects one should however go in for taking medicines. To make beautiful baskets one should bathe the eyes with a plant having leaves with beautiful designs which look like geometrical figures and animals. In Narganá there is a man who has bathed his eyes with water in which he had placed the leaves of this plant and he draws like a real artist and makes all kinds of beautiful baskets. He can also cut unusually beautiful *molos*. It would be of great interest to know whether he copies the designs which nature has drawn on the leaves of the above-mentioned plant and later uses them on the baskets and cloth.

<sup>1</sup> *Kābegūa* is a plant which, when it is touched, seems to fall asleep.

<sup>2</sup> *kēk* = to be unable.

Body and face painting is still general among the Cunas and the ideas which lie back of this custom must be investigated in each separate case. Here, if anywhere, it is important not to generalize.

I shall give some examples of such painting. *Nikkirkua* is a little squirrel which is grey in color and very difficult to shoot. If an Indian has killed such a squirrel he burns it to ashes and with these ashes he paints his whole body before he takes part in a battle, so that he will not be wounded. With such ashes it is also good to paint oneself on the chest when one plans to visit some person of authority, whether this is a Cuna Indian or a foreigner. This is in order that one shall have poise and be able to choose one's words well.

With the ashes of the humming bird mixed with *māgēba* the Cunas paint themselves in order to be active and swift-footed in war. In a similar way they paint themselves with the ashes of jaguar-heart in order to be brave. In order to be bold in battle they also burn a sparrow hawk to ashes and paint the whole body with this mixed with red dye, *māgēba*. All painting for war is and was, according to Pérez, medicine, and has no significance at all as decoration. War paint is medicine mixed with dye. Snake poison is one of the ingredients in the dye. This can be dangerous when there is a serious wound. During the rebellion of 1925 such war paint was still used.

When one goes to the forest to hunt one paints oneself with medicine mixed as usual with red dye, *māgēba*. This is not for frightening the evil spirits but instead, for attracting the animals. In order to have a good scent for the animal one paints oneself with the organ of smell of the animal which one wishes to hunt, which organ has been burned to ashes. Even ashes from the animal's heart can be used. According to Pérez this is supposed to be an effective medicine. Other examples of painting for success in hunting and fishing are given in 1928 b.

Painting one's cheeks red with *māgēba* at the feasts has

as its purpose the frightening of the evil spirits so that they will not come near. One paints a spot on each cheekbone.

A great deal of face painting is exclusively for decoration, such as painting with caoutchouc mixed with *māgēba*, and the nose painting among the Cunas in Caimanes. A swastika, *kmōe*, is sometimes painted on the face of men as well as women. This ornamentation P é r e z regards exclusively as a decoration.

The women sometimes paint their cheeks and nose with paint mixed with certain medicines in order in this way to attract men to them. If one walks past such a woman and laughs twice at her, one is caught.

A means against nosebleed is to paint oneself on the nose.

P é r e z has no explanation for much of the body and face painting. When a girl for example is going through the puberty ceremonies she is painted blueblack with *sābdur* »in order to cool off the body«, *ōdamipoe*. This one says only regarding *sābdur*, never about *māgēba*. What it actually means P é r e z does not know.

Likewise he has no explanation for the fact that the girl's father comes with a bit of *māgēba* and paints the *kantule*'s face and then gives smaller bits of the same color material to the other men who paint themselves. In the same way the girl's mother paints the *kantule*'s wife and gives small pieces of the color stuff to the other women.

The Cunas even paint the dead with *māgēba*, why, P é r e z can not explain. They do not only paint the dead person but they also comb his hair and dress him in his best clothes.

Even painting of the hunting equipment occurs. Thus there are several medicines which are painted on the tips of the arrows to make the arrows go straight. The red color which is mixed with the medicine has only decorative significance.

*Māgēba* which is the Cunas' red dye, they get from the leaves of *Bixa orellana* L. The leaves are boiled, after which they are dried and pounded to a powder. This is then mixed

with white ashes and of the mixture they make balls. Both men and women make such paint balls.

There are medicines for making oneself invisible. When the Cunas paint their feet with *sábdur* it is to make themselves invisible to snakes.

*Appendix: Dark Indians and White Indians.*<sup>1</sup>

P é r e z is of the opinion that the so-called »black Indians» are those which have the illness *puru-puru* described in the work by Koch-Grünberg. It exists in certain localities. P é r e z relates that foreigners when they have seen such a dark Indian have asked if he belonged to a special race. There is a certain steep rock and if one yells under it one gets this illness, it is said.

»Among the many children who hang about us when we walk along the streets in Cueptí there is a quite white girl. She is an albino. She looks very strange with her white or yellowish-white hair, her red-edged blue-brown eyes which are squinting in the sunlight».

»She is one of the famous white Indians which have made the Cuna tribe known throughout the world. There are, as a matter of fact, more albinos among them than among any other living Indian tribe in all America. The first Spanish conquerors in the sixteenth century mention nothing about white Indians on the Isthmus of Panama and it is entirely out of the question that such a first-class author and expert on Darien as O v i e d o would omit mentioning them if he had really seen them. They are first mentioned by P. A d r i a n d e S a n t o T o m á s about the end of the sixteen thirties. He says that in Darien there were Indians who were as white and blond as Flemish people

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<sup>1</sup> The statements about the dark Indians are from a note in longhand by Nordenskiöld. What I give here about albinos is taken from his work 1928 a, pp. 210—214, and the original quotations from the sources mentioned there I have added. ED.

and that the Indians maintained that they were descended from the first chief who came down from heaven. P. Adrian says further that the children of these white Indians always have ordinary dark-colored skin.<sup>1</sup> Wafer, a doctor who went along with the pirate Dampier, and who lived for several months among the Cunas, has a great deal to say about these Indians. He estimates that there was about one white Indian to every two or three hundred ordinary Indians.»<sup>2</sup>

»Several travellers speak of the white Indians. Padre Gassó says that it was customary for the children who were born white to be buried in their own homes, standing upright, as they were looked upon as children of a demon, »nia». Some of them were saved from being killed by their mothers' love.»<sup>3</sup>

In a very strange document »Declaration of Indepen-

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<sup>1</sup> Salcedo, 1908, p. 130: »Ay en esta prouincia mucha gente blanca y rubia como flamencos, y atribúyese esto á ser descendientes del primero cazique que vajo del cielo, y destos nunca nacen otros semejantes, sino pardos.»

<sup>2</sup> There follows here a further account by Nordenskiöld based on Wafer's well known study which does not need to be quoted here. Nordenskiöld has followed the edition published in Cleveland in 1903, »A New Voyage and Description of the Isthmus of America by Lionel Wafer», reprinted from the original edition of 1699, edited by George Parker Winship. The description of albinos covers the pages 133—136. ED.

<sup>3</sup> Pérez has commented on this statement of Gassó's as follows, »no es verdad». The text by Gassó runs as follows (Las Misiones Católicas, t. XX, p. 229, Barcelona 1912): »Quieren con exceso á los hijos pequeños, pero el que nace albino, el mismo día suele ser enterrado vivo en la propia casa y de pie, pues dicen que no es hijo suyo sino del nia, voz que indistintamente aplican al demonio y al hombre extranjero. — El albino que escapa de la muerte es porque el amor de madre lo substrajo de las miradas del padre, ya que por natural querencia ó necesidad le dió de mamar, quedándose ella en el bosque durante su enfermedad. En ese caso hasta no tener el niño algunos días no volvía la madre á poblado. Pasado el primer ímpetu paterno triunfaba la madre. Hoy se logran salvar algunos albinos aun nacidos en el pueblo.» ED.

dence and Human Rights of the Tule People of San Blas and of the Darien», probably written by Mr. Marsh in collaboration with some Cuna Indians, and published at the time of the rebellion of 1925 there is related a story about a mythic Hero, *Aoba*, who lived at the beginning of time and who was white. Furthermore it is said that after the great flood there came down through the clouds upon the mountain *Tacarcuna* a white man and a white woman, a light brown man and a light brown woman, a brown man and a brown woman, and a dark brown man and a dark brown woman and that from these the Cuna Indians now living have descended. It is the same Mr. Marsh who is responsible for the more or less fantastic information about the white Indians of the Isthmus of Panama which some years ago appeared in the world press.<sup>1</sup>

In 1925, the same year as the Cuna Indians staged their last rebellion, the American biologist Harris carried out a piece of scientific research among the white Indians, who naturally are albinos.<sup>2</sup> He worked out a great many family trees for Cuna families in which white children had been born and he discovered that albinism, or rather partial albinism, appears here according to the same laws of heredity as one finds elsewhere. What Harris however did not explain was the fact that albinism is more usual among the Cunas than in any other Indian tribe. About 0.7 % of all Cunas are albinos or practically albinos. Wafer calculated at the end of the seventeenth century that about 0.33 % to 0.5 % of the Indians were white but in his time child murder was probably more customary than now.

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<sup>1</sup> This «Act of Independence» was published in «Star & Herald», Panama, R. P., Friday, February 27, 1925. Papers by Richard O. Marsh about the white Indians are: *Blond Indians of the Darien Jungle* and *The Mystery of the White Indians*, both in «World's Work», 1925, the first in Vol. 49, No. 2, pages 483—497, and the latter in No. 3, pages 633—645. ED.

<sup>2</sup> Harris, 1926 a, b.

It seems that nowadays according to the Cunas' marriage laws an albino may never marry and it is said to be very seldom that an albino woman marries. R o b e r t o related that he had an aunt who was white. She died unmarried around the age of thirty-five. I heard directly of only one case where a man of ordinary skin color had married a white Indian woman. He was a slightly abnormal older man, O l o s á g u a. They had no children. If one may judge from the statements of the earlier travellers the law against marriage for albinos was formerly not so strict as now.<sup>1</sup>

Albinos are not found everywhere within the Cuna territory.<sup>2</sup> Thus there are no albinos along Rio Caimanes, that is, among the Cunas who live east of the Gulf of Urabá. We never saw albinos among the Chocó Indians. Nor are they spoken of, so far as I know, by other travellers, and they are not mentioned in these Indians' myths. S e l i m o<sup>3</sup> never gave any account of albinos. That they did not appear may as likely as not be because of child murder. It is naturally not out of the question that there are born many more albinos among other Indian tribes than one knows about as it is highly possible that they, as to some extent among the Cunas, are killed because they are regarded as children of evil spirits.

The Cuna Indians call an albino man »ibe» and an albino

<sup>1</sup> The statements made here by N o r d e n s k i ö l d must, it would seem, be modified to fit the present conditions. According to information I myself got in 1935, albinos may marry but they do not as a rule intermarry, though during recent years it has happened more and more often that an albino himself chooses his wife, who may be a white Indian. In former times it was generally only a poor Indian who had to put up with an albino woman or vice versa. R u b e n P é r e z is himself interested in the albino question and he told me in 1935 that the number of albinos appeared to be on the increase. On a trip to Darien he nevertheless found only one old woman who was an albino. Albinos are supposed to be more intelligent than the other Indians. Cf. W a s s é n, 1938, pp. 155—160. ED.

<sup>2</sup> Compare with foregoing note. ED.

<sup>3</sup> A medicine man whom N o r d e n s k i ö l d travelled with. ED.

woman »*ibepúndor*».<sup>1</sup> *Ibe* is also one of the words for sun in the Cuna language. The Cunas imagine a certain connection between the sun, the moon, and the white Indians. I have already related what Wafer has said about the chief *Lacenta's* statement that an Indian woman would bear a white child if she has looked at the moon when she was pregnant<sup>2</sup>.

One need not be surprised that the white Indians have awakened great interest among those who have visited the Cunas. When I see among the Cunas in a few days more albinos than I have seen before in my whole life I think that it is remarkable. They seem, with their blood-shot, blue-brown eyes, squinting in the sun, their strange white skin, which never sunburns, their milk-white or yellow-white hair, most strange in the midst of the normal Indians.»

### IX. Picture-writings.

I have not much to add to what I have said in 1928 *b* and 1930 about the Cunas' picture-writing. It is not because there does not exist more material but because Pérez' knowledge in this field does not include much more than he had already told me, when I published the above-mentioned writings. Nor has Pérez had any reason to learn picture-writing, as he can write down the Cunas' songs in ordinary script.

There is reproduced here a song about *bísepígala* which is sung when one tries, by means of *bísep*, to attract the animals in the forest, and it is used with the incantation which must precede the song. In the incantation every word has a symbol, while in the song there are symbols for

<sup>1</sup> The name *ibegua* is also used. ED.

<sup>2</sup> Wafer, 1903, p. 136: »For so *Lacenta* told me, and gave me this as his Conjecture how these came to be White, That 'twas through the force of the Mother's Imagination, looking on the Moon at the time of Conception; but this I leave others to judge of. He told me withal, that they were but short-liv'd.» ED.



only the most important words. In both cases the picture writing serves as a support for the memory and is used mainly by those who want to learn the incantation and the song. Pérez has given an account of an Cuna Indian who sang a song for him, but in the middle of it his memory failed him. He then looked in a pamphlet containing picture-writing to find the part where his memory had gone back on him and thus he was able to continue the song.

On the San Blas coast almost all the picture-writing is done on paper but formerly they used thin pieces of wood. Such a piece of wood is illustrated in 1930, pls. VI and VII. Here the pictures are painted. In Arquia, which is a place where the Cuna Indians seem to preserve much of their old ideology, Pérez has seen some *pieces of wood with picture-writings on them, in which the figures were carved in relief*. If these are not saved in the immediate future it is likely that they too will disappear. The point is that the Indians take with them into the grave their pieces of wood and papers containing picture-writings.

There are people who use picture-writings for other purposes than the writing down of songs and incantations as a help to the memory. In Ailigandi there is, according to Pérez, a Cuna Indian who for many years has kept a diary in which he every day has noted down storms, angle of the sun, visits in the village by foreigners, etc. It is supposed to be a very well kept book. A more detailed diary, but one written in our script, has been kept by Guillermo Haya in Ustúpu. He notes down in this book among other things, when a child is born, when anyone dies, etc.

Iguanidivippi of Ailigandi, who can not write in our alphabet, uses picture-writing in order to record the history of the Cuna tribe. He is supposed to write English in picture-script symbols. »I» is represented as a sand flea, »when I» as someone who is picking up something.

One wonders whether this is a modernization of picture-writing or whether we have here an older, more aboriginal, form. If the latter is the case, it should be further evidence of the Mexican origin of the Cuna picture-writing.

### X. Are *nūchus* Representations of Saints?

I have taken up the question of *nūchus* in a more detailed way in another connection (p. 344—350): It is certain that the idea of plant-spirits is truly Indian, a point made specially clear in K a r s t e n's excellent work (1926).

The plant-spirits, which are used as helping spirits, appear in certain kinds of wood such as *ukurūāla*, *pariūāla*, etc. and of these *ukurūāla*, in other words, «palo balsa» is the most important.\* They carve out of these kinds of wood human figures which do not have individual names but are designated according to the kind of wood of which they are carved. As I mention in another connection the medicine man, through incantations and songs, can get the helping spirits to take up their abode in these figures. The question is whether the Indians have not formerly availed themselves of these helping spirits without having offered them the chance of living in the afore-mentioned wooden figures. In older works on the Cunas the figures are not mentioned. It is a matter of conjecture whether the Indians have not gotten the idea for these figures from the pictures of saints. It is typical of all the wooden figures that they do not represent Indians but Europeans instead.<sup>1</sup> There is one which seems to be directly copied from the picture of a female saint. Another represents a figure in a cloak(?) with a cross on his back, a third has a cross painted on his breast, a fourth is a good representation of an angel (figs. 25—26).

When the Catholic missionaries told the Indians about the saints the Indians must have felt that there was a great likeness between these saints and their helping spirits. They could readily become identified with each other.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. note on page 345 and fig. 20. ED.



Fig. 25. Wooden figures representing the concept of *nūchus* (see p. 344 and 423). Coll. Nordenskiöld. a) *GM. 27.27.1273*, Cueptí. 1/4. This figure has a cross painted in red on its breast; b) *GM. 27.27.1283*, Kaynora. 1/5; c) *GM.27.27.1282*, Kaynora. 1/5; d) *GM.27.27.1283*, Kaynora. 1/3.



Fig. 26. Wooden figures representing the concept of *nūchus* (see p. 344 and 423). Coll. Nordenskiöld. a) *GM.27.27.1278*, Kaynora. 1/4; b) *GM.27.27.1279*, Kaynora. 1/4; c) *GM.27.27.1285*, Ustúpu. 1/5; d) *27.27.1286*, Ustúpu. 1/4; e) *GM.27.27.1288*, Ustúpu. 1/3; f) *GM.27.27.1274*, Cueptí. 1/3.

Why have they not carved all the wooden figures resembling the pictures of saints? This may connect with the fact that the most of them have heard about the saints but only a very few have seen representations of them. Instead of copying them they have made portraits of the Europeans they have seen.

The Chocó Indians have something similar to *núchus*. They have quantities of wooden figures which they hang up around the miniature hut in which a sick person lies while the incantation is going on. To these figures the helping spirits come while the medicine man is singing, etc. These figures are not carved like pictures of saints nor like Europeans but on the other hand a number of them have the shape of a cross and are even called *curuso* (from *cruz*). This name, may however, not be the original one. It is possible that the figures were originally imitations of the crucifix. Certain wooden figures among the Chocós, however, represent two-headed demons. Here we can see a mixture of old and new. Perhaps originally all the wooden figures were carved as demons and during the influence of the crucifixes which they had seen, the Indians had possibly made a number of them in the shape of the cross. A similar change in the idea may also have developed among the Cunas although we do not know anything about this. It is certain at any rate that the wooden figures which the Cunas carve and use as abiding places for their helping spirits, no longer look like either Indians or demons, but like white people.

## XI. Conceptions Relating to Dreams.

As I have already mentioned in another connection, dreams play an extremely important part among the Cuna Indians in revealing the cause of illnesses, etc. It may happen, for example, that when a person has fallen ill he dreams of a certain spot that he has visited not long ago.