R. Dentan

Ceremonies of innocence and the lineaments of ungratified desire; An analysis of a syncretic Southeast Asian taboo complex

In: Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde 156 (2000), no: 2, Leiden, 193-232

This PDF-file was downloaded from <http://www.kitlv-journals.nl>

ROBERT KNOX DENTAN

Ceremonies of Innocence and the Lineaments of Ungratified Desire An Analysis of a Syncretic Southeast Asian Taboo Complex

What is it men in women do require?

The lineaments of gratified desire.

What is it women do in men require?

The lineaments of gratified desire.

William Blake, *The Question Answer'd*, 1793-1799.

(Blake 1994:143.)

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;

The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere

The ceremony of innocence is drowned ...

W.B. Yeats, *Prayer for my Daughter*, 1920.

(Rosenthal 1962:91.)

We see them only as eccentrics or as survivors ... locked into a religious fantasy-world; they are quaint historical fossils ... But where social or political assumptions or enquiries into value are at issue, then the answer must be very much more complex.

The danger is that we should confuse the reputability of beliefs, and the reputability of those who professed them, with depth or shallowness. (Thompson 1993:107-8.)

Introduction

Contents

This essay describes and analyses a belief system of the Senoi Semai, a group of almost 30,000 Mon-Khmer-speaking indigenous people (Orang Asli) of west Malaysia (Dentan 1979). This group is well-known for its avoidance of violence, which is connected with its beliefs.

ROBERT KNOX DENTAN, who obtained his PhD at Yale University, is Professor of American Studies and Anthropology at the University at Buffalo. Specializing in anthropology/ethnography, he has previously published *The Semai; A Nonviolent People of Malaya*, and, with three co-authors, *Malaysia and the 'Original People'*, among other titles. Professor Dentan may be reached at 318 Beard Ave., Buffalo NY 14214-1710, USA. E-mail address: rkdentan@acsu.buffalo.edu..

I call the ritual system connected with these beliefs 'ceremonies of innocence'. The word 'innocence' comes from a Latin root meaning 'doing no harm'. The system consists of ceremonies and restrictions Semai say people should respect if they seek to avoid the 'dispiriting accretion' of hurt that afflicts many societies.

[...] a mentally punishing recapitulation of the futile chase after self-respect which constitutes much of her 'working day' [...]. What was happening here? Accumulation, she thinks, that's all, just the dispiriting accretion of nine-to-fives, of petty betrayals, minor sarcasms, slights, injustices, and plain rudeness collecting like refuse under a rotting wharf until one blighted morning all the fish are dead, there's no place left to swim. (Wright 1994:4.)

This essay discusses the relevant rituals and the rationale behind them not merely as expressions of 'primitive religion' but also as reflections of a serious analysis of the nature of violence and doing harm.

One danger in ethnography is disrespect. Western liberals – and most ethnographers are both Western and left-liberal on social issues – are willing to concede that 'primitives' have wonderful religious systems, systems which sometimes allow them to live more simply and harmoniously with each other and with their environment than do the peoples who write ethnographies. But we ethnographers don't want to treat the ideas of these people as morally or intellectually equal to our own. Somewhere in the back of our minds remains the notion that they are backward compared with Aristotle or Kierkegaard, 'survivors' caught up in a maze of pre-scientific assumptions which we know or believe to be untrue. We tend, many of us, to confuse their lack of formal education and of political or economic clout with philosophical shallowness (Thompson 1993:107, 108). Yet, where our own clinical and social sciences have not solved the problem of violence in our society, to some extent the Semai seem to have done so in theirs.

Let us assume at the outset that the Semai are not basically different from other people. That seems pretty safe. All people, Semai as well as ourselves, have pretty much the same biology and live on the same planet. The Semai ceremonies of innocence and the associated congeries of ideas must serve, like other ideas, to make sense of the world. So the question we need to ask is: what is this about, this sense that if you don't show up on time for an appointment, the person waiting for you may die? That if someone asks you for food, or sex, and you don't provide it, he may die? That not keeping the Semai equivalent of kosher rules may destroy the universe?

To describe the complex and sophisticated Semai conceptual scheme for the prevention of violence I have had to use a lot of Semai words in this paper. I have also included passages in the Semai's own words (in English translation) wherever possible, in order to give an idea of the data from

which I draw my understanding and to let the people represent themselves, in accordance with recent American ethnographic practice. Such quotations from Semai will be followed in parentheses by the place at and year in which I recorded the relevant statement or conversation. This may make for cumbersome and confusing reading. But the reader need not get caught up in the particularities of Semai thinking and verbal categories. It is not necessary to struggle with all the Semai words, either. The Semai ethical scheme elaborates a few basic themes, giving a broad definition of violence and underlining the importance of self-control, the danger of unsatisfied desire, the need for tidiness, and the ever-present threat of chaos.

The narrow path

The idea of the 'narrow path' that Semai walk comes from Bah Tony Williams-Hunt, a one-time Semai activist now become a Malay (most of our conversations were about current concerns). To the Semai, paths represent the way a person can get safely through the jungle, with all its myriad dangers, natural and supernatural. Semai history is a geographical history, concerning a trek from place to place, written on the land itself. People will show you the spots where certain events in their history took place, making paths the objective correlates of time: here the slavers whetted their swords; here we ambushed them while they were bathing (see Dentan 1999). Semai familiars are believed to guide adepts¹ with whom they are in love along recognizable, hyper-real paths. Of course, the path occurs as a common human metaphor (see, for example, Berger 1975:203): the origin of the English word 'deviance' is the Latin for 'off the path', and 'the Way' is a pervasive metaphor for observance of the rules in Buddhism, Taoism, Islam and Christianity.

For the Semai, straying from the path leads to spiritual damage. By killing an animal, the embodiment of forest demons, one severs the link between humans and demons, for example. Trancing, as I've tried to show elsewhere, restores this link. However, people can do spiritual damage to each other, too. In Semai terms, certain acts are liable to wound other people's *sngii'*, their will or consciousness or sense of self. Semai argue that the violence involved in such acts represents a kind of irresponsibility or carelessness,

¹ Among ethnographers who work with Malaysian indigenes, the term 'adept' is the standard word for a status resembling that of a 'shaman' in other societies. It translates the predicate *-hala'*, 'to have access to *nhala'* or *hnala'* (from the root *-hala'* with prefixed or infix (-) *n-* or (-) *ng-* transforming it into a noun), spiritual power'. Semai usually attribute this skill to the fact of having a demonic 'wife', *knah*, or 'lover', *guniik*, who embodies the power, as in the possibly cognate Hindu notion of *sakti*. Adepts are not 'mediums', since the power may, but does not necessarily, speak through them. Moreover, since different people have different access to that variable power, it is more appropriate to use a word which is both an adjective and a noun than to use a noun like 'shaman', which refers only to a person with an invariant essence of status, rather than to both the variable skill and the practitioner of that skill.

which, along with other sorts of irresponsibility or carelessness, can upset the cosmic order. Their key metaphor for such acts, corresponding roughly to English 'violence', is *srngloo*, 'hunting down and killing'.

Bah Tony tried to draw a diagram showing how people maintain or upset the balance on which cosmic order depends. A modified version of this is as follows.

COSMOS

Material/visible beings <--- hunting / being hunted ---> Immaterial/invisible beings
[= disruption of spiritual linkage]

Humans usually fit here

Humans maintain ORDER by:

1. observing the rules of social behaviour
e.g., non-violence, sharing food, respecting elders,
so that Humans [Senoi Semai] may endure
2. observing the rules of ritual,
e.g., to placate the earth when clearing a new plot

Demons usually fit here

CHAOS/calamity follows from:

1. breaking the rules, e.g.,
  - (a) punan/phunan
  - (b) srngloo
  - (c) tnghaank
  - (d) t[r]laac²
  - (e) pnali
  - (f) tolah

adepts and midwives <----- guniik-adept trance -----> guniik familiars
[restoration of spiritual linkage]

The path winds through the dangers of carelessness. Humans can avoid these dangers by observing certain rules. One might call these rules taboos, but their operation is not automatic. When Semai set a spear-trap for pigs or deer, they break a small sapling along the path that leads to the trap, so that people walking by and paying attention to where they are going can take heed. The traps won't be actually on the path, because they are not trying to kill people, so with luck the people would get by anyway. The rules are like that. You're safe if you follow them, but if you feel safe anyway, you may ignore them.

The skinny anthropologist, notebook out as usual, is trying to make a list of *maay* *Tluup* ['eastern Semai', see Dentan 1979] food taboos. He and Mrlooh, a tense, beautiful, curly-headed man of about his own age, are seated in the front room of

² Although many people use these two words interchangeably, strictly speaking the word *-trlaac* means 'to cause or bring about *tlaac*, or chaos', the infix *-r-*, like the prefixes *tr-* and *pr-*, being causative. The root *-laac* refers to annihilation: *-laac kuuy*, 'head devastation', denotes baldness, while the reduplicated verb *-lic-laac* means 'to throw a tantrum, create chaos'. In this paper, the roots of verbal or adjectival predicates are preceded by a hyphen (-). So the predicate *-halaa* denotes 'being an adept', the noun *halaa* 'an adept'.

the little house which Mrlooh shares with his wife's mother, Busuw, whose name Mrlooh cannot mention and whose presence he cannot explicitly acknowledge without showing lethal disrespect. It would be the form of violence Semai call *tolah*. He wants some tapioca Busuw is cooking, so he says to his wife, Dmeet, 'Would you ask the old lady to pass a piece of tapioca?' Dmeet turns to her mother in the next room; but before Dmeet can speak, her mother, who has overheard Mrlooh's request, has taken the tapioca out of the embers to pass to her daughter, carefully not laying eyes on Mrlooh. Dmeet then relays the root to Mrlooh.

Eight months pregnant, Dmeet, as beautiful a woman as Mrlooh is a man, kneels in the kitchen. Three peeled tapioca roots, previously cooked, roast in the coals like fat pale carrots, giving the air a faintly musty, bready aroma. Dmeet is roasting a side dish, too, wrapped in the thick green *sanung* (*Phrygium* sp.) leaves a few people grow for that purpose. You can use these leaves for plates, too, if you have meat and don't want to disrespect the animal the meat comes from by mixing its flesh with the faint traces of fish or fowl or mushroom on your plates. That would be another form of violence, *pnali*.

'Okay, *prook slaay* ["swidden rodent", *Rattus rattus argiventer*]', says the anthropologist. 'Can people expecting a baby eat *prook slaay*?'

'No. The baby will squeal.' Like the rat.

'Any other reason?'

'The baby's eyes will be red.' Also like the rat.

'What about people who have just given birth?'

'Not for weeks. The claws will scratch the womb.'

'What about menstruating wom[...] What's Dmeet eating?'

Mrlooh looks over his shoulder and smiles. 'That animal, the gnawing one.'

'?'

'I've asked her and asked her not to, but she says, "I've never had any trouble being pregnant". She just doesn't worry about it.' (Teiw Tluup, 1962.)

Women pregnant for the first time, however, are much more likely than Dmeet to be careful about what they eat, because they are uncertain about the outcome of their pregnancy. The great anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski observed a similar pattern in the Trobriand Islands: deep sea fishing, dangerous and risky, generated many taboos; but lagoon fishing, humdrum and safe, generated few (see Nash 1979:163). Observing the rules makes people feel safer. If they feel safe anyway, the rules are burdensome, and the people ignore them.

Like most non-hierarchical peoples, the Semai have worked out these rules for themselves and live up to them more or less. What regularity of behaviour there is stems not just from people's sense of the stupidity of taking the unnecessary chances from which observance of the rules protects you, but also from: (1) the fact that everyone depends heavily on everyone else for economic, social and spiritual support, and (2) the omnipresence of social control and lurid gossip that are pervasive in most small, isolated communities everywhere in the world (Moore 1978:16).

These rules require self-control. Hegel says in his famous essay on *Herrschaft und Knechtschaft*, or dominance and subordination, that subordination and the fear from which it springs are prerequisites to self-control, indeed, to any sense of selfhood (Arthur 1983:69-70). But he may have it partly back to front. Perhaps Semai notions of selfhood and self-control stem from their recurrent defeats by and sporadic subordination to representatives from the slaver states that dominate their history, but their self-control makes further subordination, to their own leaders, for example, unnecessary. Indeed, as I have suggested elsewhere, further subordination seems to destroy self-control. Conservative political theorists argue that in human societies people's appetites have to be controlled somehow: if they control themselves they don't need to have others control them (Burke 1982:48).

Semai ceremonies of innocence turn people's attention away from obsession with self and to the importance of other people's needs. They help guide minds away from gratifying only the person's own desires. Non-observance means you live *rawuuc*, 'without rules, at random' (Diffloth 1976a:243), always endangered because of your intemperance, your spiritual untidiness, your lack of care for the spiritual welfare of other humans and the world.

Speculative history

In a society of equals, there is no authoritative locus of knowledge except that which a particular person is willing to accept at a particular time. Therefore the terms discussed below are interchangeable to a degree. The interchangeability shows up most clearly between groups; in reports by different ethnographers. For example, Jah Hut, a people related to the Semai, use *pehunan* to refer to failure to observe dietary rules; their *bes pehunan*, 'pehunan demon', is

[f]ound everywhere on the ground. Makes people wish to eat anything as long as it is digestible [... T]he spirit can also eat human beings who are powerless against him.

Protection by *tangkal* (a charm worn around the neck, arm or waist) may be obtained from the *pyang* [adept, shaman]. (Werner 1975:471.)

Most Semai would call flouting dietary rules *pnali'* and use the word *punan* or *phunan* for frustrating someone's desires.

Similarly, Semai regard killing certain birds, or even imitating their song, as supernaturally risky. The rule is not to mock them, *-lk-luk* or *-luhent*, so that killing them or copying their call is dangerous. The taboo categories are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Thus sandpipers and wagtails are *pnali'* (taboo at all times) because they are 'wives of The Lord' – the fearsome, stupid god of thunder – who would avenge any disrespect to them as *-trlaac*. Mixing foods which should be kept separate (*pnali'*) may bring on a violent

thunderstorm (*-trlaac*); people told me in Pahang state in 1962, as they told Evans in Perak forty years earlier (Evans 1923:200). Incest or disrespectful behaviour towards one's in-laws (as in the example of Mrlooh and his mother-in-law above) is *-trlaac* as well as *tolah* (Evans 1923:232). The overlap indicates not that Semai thinking is confused, but that the basic idea underlying all these categories is the same, despite the apparent hodgepodge of terms and practices they give rise to.

It is therefore probably not important that many of the words for these taboos are not Semai, or even Mon-Khmer, but come from alien sources, Hindu-Buddhist or Islamic. The ceremonies of innocence do not have their origin in Semai society alone, but in a larger context that includes the more powerful societies with which the Semai have been in contact for over a millennium, as is true for most societies (Moore 1978:12). The situation, however, is one of recontextualizing 'foreign' ideas, and thus changing their meaning, not just 'borrowing' them.

A classic example of a similar case in English is the schoolboy word 'jiz-zum' or 'jizz' for semen. You won't find it in most dictionaries, but all the boys I grew up with knew it (we were too scared to ask the girls whether *they* did – my boyhood was long ago). The word comes from the Arabic *jism*, which means something like 'flesh', as opposed to spirit. The fact that we didn't know that is another example of European forgetfulness about the centuries in which Europe was a stagnant backwater to the vibrant civilization of Islam, from which came mathematics and science. But we didn't know any of that, either. Our use of the word was not Sufi usage, nor a European reaction to Arabic superiority. You would not have learned much about American schoolboy sex in the mid-1950s by reading Sufi texts in Arabic. By the same token, reading Pali Buddhist texts is not very helpful in understanding Semai notions like *pnali*, although the word *pnali* itself is a nominalized form of the Sanskrit word *pali*.

The Pali Buddhist influence may stem from contacts with Hinduized Mon and Khmer traders and colonists. Though Semai gloss *maay sraa'*, a phrase they use to describe themselves, with a Malay phrase that means 'jungle people' or 'hinterland people', *sraa'* seems cognate with a Khmer word that means 'realm' or 'kingdom'. The first kingdom in the Semai area seems, in fact, to have been Gangga Negara, a Hinduized statelet existing perhaps as early as 150 AD. The Malay name 'Bernam' for a Semai heartland river, moreover, may come from Khmer *phnom*, mountain, as in the name of the present capital of Cambodia, Phnom Penh. It seems possible that the ancient kingdom which the Chinese called Funan (AD 50-550) – yet another version of the word *phnom* – had a trading post or even a colony in southern Perak (see Andaya and Andaya 1982:16-7, 20-1; Benjamin 1996; Wheatley 1964:41-51).

At least some ancestors of Semai were probably Mon or Khmer traders,

colonists or refugees fleeing the onslaught of pirates and slavers. These refugees brought fragments of their Hindu and Hinayana Buddhist beliefs with them, fragments which would have fitted in easily with indigenous beliefs if both had grown from a common source, as perhaps they did (see Dentan in press).

The main difference between standard Buddhist doctrine and its less formal Semai equivalent is that the former stresses that desire in and of itself engenders frustration and suffering; whereas the latter holds, with William Blake, that it is the frustration of desire that creates spiritual and physical problems. Like Javanese, for example, Semai worry that merely frustrating a child's wants may sicken or kill the child (Keeler 1983:154). Actually inflicting pain on a child in this view would be disastrous, although threats are not so dangerous (see Keeler 1983:155).

Unlike Americans and most Europeans (Kehoe 1988), Semai assume that normal social life is peaceful. Thus one informant, Ngah Hari, talking about the fact that *bsik* (spectacled leaf monkeys, *Presbytis obscura*) travel in gangs (*geng*), said 'but they fight'. This 'but' reflects Semai assumptions. To prevent fighting, what you need to do is to prevent desires from getting out of hand by gratifying them, preferably beforehand. The lineaments of satisfied desire are a sign that all is well, that *slamad*, contentment and social peaceability, is intact and safe. The Semai pursue *slamad* with the same intensity that Americans pursue happiness.

The violence of frustration

P[h]unan

'We *br-mage*' [share, especially small portions of food]. We're not like Malays. See, when my daughter cooks she sends food to her mom's house; when her mom cooks, she sends food to my daughter; and to the Assistant Headman or Rhii's parents. (Teiw Waar headman, 1992.)

[W]e don't agree that coercion produces *phunan* because you only suffer *phunan* if you couldn't get something that you want badly. (Juli Edo, quoted in Dentan 1992:256 n6.)

The word *punan/phunan* is cognate with Malay *ke(m)punan* (Evans 1920:70), which officially means 'long for; yearn; disappointed, dissatisfied; nervous, be in a quandary' (Awang and Yusoff 1986:476, s.v. 'kempunan'). *Punan* results from frustrating someone's desires, especially hunger or desire for food. The offended party will become accident-prone or susceptible to disease. Commensality is a key Semai metaphor for sharing in general and fostering in particular. A foster-child is a *knoon prncaa*, 'a child one causes to eat'.

Sharing is one of the main underpinnings of traditional Semai peaceability. It occurs in the form of what anthropologists call 'generalized reciprocity'. That is, you share whenever appropriate, without calculating how much you've shared with a particular individual, because you know that over time sharing within the community tends to balance out, leaving a residue of goodwill and willingness to help out in time of need. Semai talk freely about the benefits of this system, particularly, and at length, during the communal meetings, *bicaraa*, they hold to restore peaceability when someone's actions have disrupted *slamad*, public safety and peaceableness. Among lowland Semai in Perak, putting someone into *punan* by not sharing is a 'sin', *tnghaan* (see below), and may lead a community to hold a *bicaraa*, though usually the only consequence is a spate of outrageous and malicious gossip.

Failure to share undermines *slamad*. People should try to help each other out, to meet any legitimate request. Conversely, they should accept any proffered gift. Rejection of the request or the gift is apt to hurt the other person's feelings and so lead to frustration. Like many Southeast Asian peoples, traditional Semai say that unsatisfied desires imperil the people who feel the frustration.

The concept of *hoin* [to be satisfied or sated, with eating, dancing, bathing, sex, and so on] is often used [by Semai] in post hoc explanations of the occurrence of illness or misfortune. In such cases, however, the frustrated want was usually only dimly recognized, if it was recognized at all at the time of the presumed frustration. More commonly it is identified in retrospect only after some misfortune has occurred [...]. (Robarchek 1977:766.)

During the first trimester of pregnancy the foetus is particularly susceptible to *punan*, perhaps because the younger you are, the 'softer' and more timorous your head-soul (Dentan 1978). Pregnant women at this time are prone to cravings. Not satisfying them can kill the foetus. It is especially important to share food with expectant mothers.

The concept of *punan* serves as a sanction against failure to share. It also obfuscates the fact that Semai sharing need not reflect a disposition to be more generous than other people. Semai do, however, draw the comparison. As a lowland Perak man said in 1963: 'You go to big cities like Kuala Lumpur, you'll see Chinese beggars, Indian beggars, Malay beggars, but you won't see any Semai beggars. We look after our people, even though we're the poorest people in the country.'

In fact, Semai share according to the principles of 'demand sharing' (Peterson 1993), although, in conformity with the principle of *punan*, people, who want to partake of someone else's food or other belongings usually drop heavy hints that they want something rather than make their demands outright: 'I haven't had any rice for *days*', someone may say, or 'I have no side

dish for my rice'. But the demand to share is clear and should not be frustrated.

Srnloo' and mnuur

[...] if three men have planned to go on a journey, or to fell jungle together, but one man remains at home without saying anything (i.e. excusing himself from going), it is thought that, if one or other of his two friends fall sick, he is the cause of the illness. In such a case, the two who have started on their journey will immediately return, and the third man must say spells for the recovery of the patient. If, however, before his companions start, the man who stops at home makes some excuse for not going, no ill-fortune which they encounter can be ascribed to him [...] There is a *Dana Sirlok* [...] spirit [which] attacks persons to whom promises have been made and broken. Thus, if a man has agreed with another to go on a journey, and subsequently leaves his friend in the lurch, the *Dana Sirlok* will accompany the traveller in his friend's place [...] and will attack and kill him in the shape of an elephant, a tiger or a snake. (Evans 1923:246.)

Sharing is the economic basis of Semai peaceability. The social basis is honesty and the resultant trust. A breach of that trust has much the same results as a refusal to share. You hurt people's feelings, and they cannot trust you. Since they can't trust you, they can't cooperate with you. And you can't fix that, as I overheard a man, Bei' Luus, saying to Bah Kalib, his younger kinsman of the same generation (*mnaang*), promising to come up with his share of Kalib's wedding expenses:

A wound to *sngii'* is incurable. A wound to my arm I can medicate, but there's no medication for wounds to *sngii'* [feelings]. Whenever you run into someone who's *tipu'* [cheated, deceived] you, you think, 'He *tipu'* me', and you can never be close again, not even if you're *tne'-mnang* [elder and younger kinsmen of the same generation]. (Teiw Waar, late 1991.)

Bei' Luus used the Malay word 'tipu' in this context; whereas the Semai word is *-krdey*, the causative form of *kdey*, 'to be ignorant, not to know', with the connotation 'to make a fool of' (see Means and Means 1986:50, s.v. 'kedei'). A great deal of talk at communal meetings/trials (*bicaraa'*) revolves around the importance for *slamad* of avoiding *krndey*.

Long says that Malays from the 'Housing Bureau' camped out in her house without paying rent and made her cook for them – hard for her, since she wasn't familiar with Malay cooking requirements. They said that if she and her husband would hoe out a flat area they'd get a [prestigious, Malay-style] plank house. The couple did hoe the flat area, but the house did not materialize. She said, as her father had said earlier about a similar promise from the Bureau of Indigenes'

Affairs, that the hurt wasn't not getting the house but the 'duplicity', *tnipu*. (Teiw Waar, 1992.)

This is not to say that Semai do not *-krdey* non-Semai. There is an elaborate vocabulary, called *nroo' krndey*, 'deceitful speech', which people use to mislead dangerous outsiders. After you have hunted down and killed an animal, the embodiment of *nyanii'* demons, you do not use the animal's proper name until you have defecated its meat. Instead, you use a special *nroo' krndey* byname, in the same way as you use slang terms for 'Malay' when a Malay who speaks a little Semai is around. Why ask for trouble?

The connection between duplicity and killing is clear in other contexts as well, as, for example, when an adept, after a seance, implores the demonic spirits which have attended, 'Don't deceive me, don't let me down'. A demon on the hunt for human souls takes on deceptive forms before killing the humans concerned, appearing perhaps as a beautiful person of the opposite sex. Deceiving people, letting them down, thus is part and parcel of hunting people down and killing them. It has the same potentially fatal results as putting someone into the state of frustration that results from *punan*. Indeed, as Evans (1923:294-6) says, in Malayo-Polynesian languages the word *punan* and its cognates have the connotation of being trapped (but see Benedict 1975:102, 280-1). In other words, failing to share, failing to cooperate after promising to do so, is exactly parallel to hunting, snaring and killing – a person can die as a result.

The Semai sense that by misinforming others one may endanger their welfare is liable to frustrate people who are unaccustomed to Semai ways. So a Malay Special Forces officer reported the following conversation with a Semai headman in north-eastern Pahang state, near *maay Thluup*, in which he asked the headman if there were any fish in the river. The parapolice wanted to dynamite fish but not to waste the hand grenades they had with them. The headman replied: 'Better stick your head in and see for yourself. If I say there aren't any fish, and there are, you'll be angry. If I say there are fish and there aren't, you'll be angry. So I'm not saying anything.' (Kuala Lumpur, 1993.)

Similarly, a person who is setting traps should observe a series of ritual precautions akin to those associated with *sringloo'* if the traps are to catch game. The trapper should manufacture his traps in secret, indoors or somewhere deep in the woods. He should avoid salt, meat, fish, bananas, chillies and cooking oil. He should not wash himself, or even get caught in the rain or ford a large river, lest his scent alert his prey. Most significantly, he should avoid human contact. If he meets someone he knows and the person is not sensitive enough to avoid addressing him, he should say only, 'Don't talk to me, I'm going home'. He should avoid sex, and even sleeping next to other people. Animals are people 'in their own country', so that the trapping he is

engaged in is profoundly antisocial, both violent and deceitful.

I suspect that a reluctance to contaminate others with an action of this kind underlies the fact that Semai talk about the relevant restrictions as reflecting *mnuur*. Juli Edo, a Semai anthropologist, says:

[D]oing something you don't want to do produces 'mnuur' (example: say your parents asked you to get some food from the jungle but you insist on not doing it. And if you go without your own wish, you might have an accident or [be] bit[t]en by [a] snake) [... People usually talk about *mnuur*] when there is loss of life on that day [...]. (Juli Edo, quoted in Dentan 1992:256 n6.)

You have to deceive and trap your food, but you know that it is a bad thing to do, and you don't want to do it. Being forced to do what you do not want to do is spiritually harmful, and you -*muur*.

The wages of sin

[G]nghaan' and tnghaan'

The concept of *nggern-haq* is largely responsible for the complex system of food sharing and exchange [...]. An individual is said to incur *nggern-haq* if he willingly withdraws from sharing [... He] would experience extreme difficulty in obtaining food (for example, ill luck in hunting or fishing); or else, the food which he has will cause him discomfort or illness. On a wider perspective, an individual would also be subjected to *nggern-haq* if another in a different hamlet dies of starvation, while there is sufficient food available with the former [...]. *Nggern-haq*, therefore, instills a sense of co-responsibility in the manner in which food is distributed and consumed. (Nicholas 1994:39-40.)

Gnghaan or *nghaanh* is a blanket term which covers a wide range of actions that upset social relations with humans or animals, including *srnloo'*, or killing a harmless creature for sport. *Gnghaan'* - *maay daad*, 'dead people *gnghaan'*', on the other hand, occurs when one of your kinsmen dies suddenly, without your knowledge. Any sort of unexpected event may startle your head-soul, which is likely to take flight, leaving you feeble and endangered. The death causes an unexpected break in social relations. Even though you don't know about it, it makes you *knjiib nyawa'* 'i luuy, 'sense [the death] in your own life'. You feel tired, weak, and so dizzy that you're likely to fall – the symptoms of head-soul loss (Dentan 1978:121-3). After you find out what has happened, the feeling usually goes away, although the best thing is to have a feast five (Waar River, Perak hills), six (north-eastern Pahang) or seven (lowland Perak) days after the death. The feast 'closes the grave'. Indeed, at Mncak, in southern central lowland Perak, you literally close it by putting a

cement slab on top of it. That locks away the evil influence of the dead.

An example of *ngghaan'* from the Waar River area involves not burying a corpse in the Semai way (in a roofed grave, face down to keep the dirt off, wrapped in a mat, with personal belongings like a blowpipe, darts, machete, pot, favourite cassettes). Everything then is likely to go wrong for the offending kinsmen: they might fall and hurt themselves badly, look for fruit in the fruit season but find none, or 'their innards might be hungry', that is, they might suffer frustrated desire, in this case called *tnghaan'*.

The word *tnghaan'* seems to come from Pali *tanhaa*, 'lust; desire, human passion' (Childers 1875:495). The connotation here also is of being 'startled', taken aback. For the Semai, however, it refers to the supernatural misfortunes that attend on bad behaviour, most notably on not sharing with others. Unresolved passions are dangerous to the person who feels them.

Unlike *punan* and the related *srnloo'*, *tnghaan'* affects miscreants, not victims. If, for example, Long treats Ngah badly, not letting him visit him or not sharing food with him, Ngah will suffer *punan*, but Long will suffer *tnghaan'*, so that there is no reason for the community to discipline Long. 'Never mind', people will say, 'he'll get his *tnghaan'*'. Hence the saying 'We don't fear other people, we fear *tnghaan'*'. Perak Semai, however, as indicated above, may hold a *bicaraa'* to pressure offenders to admit their guilt and compensate their victims, and thus to restore *slamad*, social equilibrium and peace.

Killing someone or threatening them is normally *tnghaan'*, says Ngah Hari, the Perak lowland intellectual whose ethnographic wisdom has inspired a generation of anthropologists. As a consequence, your vision dims and you get thin, sick, and feeble. You have committed a 'sin' (here he uses the Sanskrit word) and God (Jnaang, 'Ancestor') has cursed you: It is not *tnghaan'* to kill someone who is threatening to kill you, he adds, though you should *-cagòòh*, pray, first.

For example, Bah Tanggè, a 'terrorist' during the Communist uprising of the 1950s, committed no *tnghaan'*, as the terrorists forced him to follow them, he killed no one himself, and he gave himself up. But although another man, Bah Planken, according to Ngah Hari was also forced to follow the terrorists (but see discussion in the linguistic notes below), he *juuy nroo' maa'y*, 'did what the others said', killing people and not surrendering. He therefore did commit *tnghaan'*, says Ngah Hari.

Tolah

Good manners, for Semai, involve deferring to people older than oneself. The Semai describe the attitude underlying this deference as *snnng'òòh*, a word I have usually translated as 'fear' but which, in this context, means something like 'respect' (even in English, a few centuries ago, fear and respect both fitted under the label 'fear'). When Semai children would be cheeky or obnox-

ious to me, their parents would urge me to 'Srng'òðh them', make them fear. The Semai idea that old people have more spiritual power, *hnalaa'*, than younger ones may explain why they are thought to deserve greater fear/respect. When old people figure in dreams, they usually represent demonic powers. People refer to such powers by kinship terms like 'parents' or 'grand-parents'. The name of the Perak Semai high god, Jnaang or Ynaang, means 'grandparent' or 'ancestor' as well as 'Lord'.

The greatest respect/fear entails complete avoidance, as in the example of proper behaviour between a Tluup Semai man and his mother-in-law I have already given. A man should never address or look at his mother-in-law. Indeed, sharing a house is testing limits and could be *tolah*. The rules of avoidance between a woman and her father-in-law are less strict, though only slightly so, and between a person and his or her spouse's elder sibling and elder sibling's spouse less again. The terms for in-laws are modifications of the terms for consanguines: of that for 'grandparent' for parents-in-law and for 'uncle' or 'aunt' for older siblings-in-law. This usage both manifests and enforces the correlation between relative age and respect.

Tolah can rationalize deferring to or avoiding Malays. A Semai headman at the Betau Relocation Scheme told a Malay anthropologist

Senoi [Semai] don't dare get intimate with Malays for fear of *tolah*. Because Malays are superior, because Malays believe in the Lord God. Malays are circumcised and ritually pure. Not Senoi. That's why Senoi are unclean [...]. If they want to become Malays, they must get circumcised and ritually purified. They can't live like Senoi. (Hasan Mat Noor 1989:107; translation by RKD.)

This statement may be a straightforward reflection of the sort of attitude which psychoanalysts call 'identification with the oppressor' or 'Stockholm syndrome', in which people protect themselves by adopting the attitudes of the violators, in the same way as people who were beaten as children often themselves become child beaters in adulthood (Freud 1966:109-21). Many of the Malays Semai meet at Betau despise the Semai, and 'introjecting' (uncritically accepting) this attitude paradoxically makes Semai like Malays and thus may protect them from feeling the pain of Malay contempt (see, for example, Flannery 1994:94, 113).

Of course, this tactic also suggests that there is no reason for Semai even to try to be like Malays. Thus, by appealing to Malay bigotry, the headman excuses himself from any obligation to urge the Semai to accommodate government assimilationist programmes. I have seen headmen do this deliberately, to obfuscate their resistance to Malay plans. It also provides people aware of the tactic with a source of amusement, in much the same way as the stories people tell about people fooling the powerful and dangerous Lord God of thunder. This tactic, 'camping', is common among people who reject

the dominant gender identity scheme in Euro-American society: 'I embrace and impersonate the degrading image because there is no way out of the stereotype except to embrace it, to critique it by ironically assuming its vestments [...]. I can't refuse it.' ('Drag queen', quoted in Clemons 1993:14.) Camping requires a 'double consciousness', W.E.B. Dubois' word for a milder form of 'identification with the oppressor', the 'sense of always looking at oneself through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity' (Dubois 1979:3).

Awareness of Malay contempt pervades the Semai consciousness, so that Semai talking about how Semai do things always contrast this with the Malay equivalent (Dentan 1976).

In this context, the opposite of fear/respect is love and intimacy. In the Tluup area your spouse's younger sibling and younger sibling's spouse are *mnaay*. 'Mnaay' is a modification of the word for 'other people', that is, people to whom you owe no respect. *Mnaay* have what anthropologists call a 'joking relationship' with each other, teasing and flirting and sometimes having sex with one another.

And that brings up the recurrent problem with human love, namely that it easily becomes sexual. The Semai express abhorrence at the idea of incest or sexual contact across generational boundaries – the same sort of repulsion, I think, that most Americans feel at the sexual violation of children. But among the Semai, young people might want to initiate sexual intimacy with much older ones, as well as the other way around. This kind of behaviour manifests an attitude people call *sumòòk*, a word which conflates two Malay words meaning 'uppitiness' and 'incest'.

Such disrespect both is and produces *tolah*. The particular *tolah* involved may reflect the sexual element of the misbehaviour. For example, the person's genitals may bleed or swell up to enormous size, afflictions which do sometimes occur and require an explanation. Or the *tolah* can take the appalling form of a violent thunderstorm or an upsurge of cold water from beneath the earth and the huge dragons that live there – the kind of calamity implicit in the notion of *-trlaac* (q.v. below).

Conclusions

People bring up the wounds to their feelings only if the physical events which they construe as consequences are serious. Semai usually avoid discussing their emotions. 'What's the point?', they ask. But the continuity between damage to one's feelings and damage to one's body makes the connection between hurt feelings and physical harm plausible. The victim can ask for a present, a 'fine', payment of which repairs the damage which an offender has done to his *sngii*. Or the victim may have a curative ceremony performed for him, in which several people focus on the patient, showing

their concern by bathing and often massaging the affected parts of his body. The cure for spiritual violation, in short, is to get some token of love.

Cataclysmic disrespect

Lkniuk: Pnalii' and Trlaac

Wa' Rhii', a six-year-old girl, pretends to attack Bah Ly, a boy a year older, with some Magic Markers we brought for the kids to play with, striking at his face and, when he turns to flee, striping his back with bright yellow lines.

RKD: *Wees katiir!* [Quit squabbling!]

Elder man: That's not *katiir*, it's just *tntood* [play-acting]. You should say, 'Quit it, don't *-lkluk* [fool around], it's *trlāac*. *Br'amii' breees* [Just act like friends].' (Teiw Waar, Perak hills, 15 January 1992.)

The tidiness and safety of the cosmos is fragile, Semai say. You need to be careful and not stray off the path. Disrespect for the cosmic order produces cataclysmic events: an enraged, terrifying, stupid, violent thunder god will wipe out the settlement; or the cold waters beneath the earth will burst forth, bearing dragons and obliterating all traces of human life. There are two sorts of violation involved here: (1) mixing particular categories, especially of food, as if the cosmic order the Semai think their language reflects were so fragile that human whimsy could destroy it; and (2) the more general violation of disrespecting that order.

Pnali'

[P]ali [...] is not a guide, but a table of prohibitions; not 'Thou shalt' but 'Thou shalt not [...]'. Pali proscriptions are extremely numerous, and a number of different categories are distinguished. [...] Pali surrounds man like a fence, keeps him within the bounds of hadat [proper behaviour], and leads him on the right path. Pali prohibitions are like warning notices placed at dangerous places on man's path, to turn him back from unsafe byways and to prevent him losing the way and coming to harm [...]. Breach of hadat and transgression of pali are identical, for it is pali to violate the hadat and to heed the pali is to live in and by hadat. (Schärer 1963:75-6, and see 106, 140.)

Semai observe rules of kosher. There are four basic categories of food you should not mix together: meat, fish (or aquatic animals generally), birds, and fungi. You need separate dishes for each type of food. Most people cannot afford that, and so keep plates only for fish dishes, while putting the other

foods on banana leaves. You should even cook these foods over separate fires, so that the smoke doesn't mingle.

More refined food taboos also belong in this category. For example, once a man has brought a bearcat (*Arctitis binturong*, Malay *binturong*) into his house, he cannot take it out until he is ready to distribute the cooked meat to his friends and family. The cook should avoid using certain immiscible spices, and so on. These are permanent taboos, unlike the other dietary taboos, which apply only in particularly risky conditions, like pregnancy or menstruation.

Failure to respect the proper order of the cosmos has cataclysmic effects, Semai say. When, before I was at all fluent in Semai, I was trying to explore the question of what would happen if one mixed spices with bearcat, the woman I was talking to finally laughed and threw her hands into the air. 'BOOOM!!!!', she yelled, and, sweeping the air with her arms, added, 'This whole settlement would be buried in mud and we'd be underneath it'.

Trlaac

A storm comes up very fast; heavy rain, hard wind, much thunder and lightning [... Men] are out in the rain, pounding the ground with heavy pieces of firewood and shouting 'go down, go down!' The headman shouts to the others 'hit, hit, hit!'. (They are trying to keep Ngku's [thunder god's] wife [...] an enormous horned dragon, from bursting up out of the ground bringing with her a torrent of mud and water that would sweep away the hamlet [...]). The headman comes into the house shouting 'burn *Kijai* (resin)'; someone answers that there is none. Headman shouts 'We are all going to die because we don't have any incense!' [...]. The headman is shouting his spell to Ngku: 'What's the good of this, your doing it so hard?' He shouts at kids to cut their hair. Runs back outside, pounds the ground shouting 'Go down!' Bedlam; people running in and out of the house screaming at each other above the storm. Many people outside pounding the ground [...]. (Robarchek 1979:558.)

The devastation that ensues from disrespecting the essential nature of things (namely the integrity of cultural categories), Semai insist, is not just 'a story of the old people', not just a myth.

There are hot springs in upriver Sungkai in Perak state, near Jeram Kawan, people told me in 1991. Many generations ago, people there wounded a pig-tailed macaque. (Bah Sabad, 'Mr. Convulsions', is one of its bynames). Instead of letting it go, as people usually do with animals wounded but not killed, they dressed it up and, a man standing behind it holding its small black hands stretched out as if crucified, bounced it around as if it were a human being, dancing.

Semai do that, or used to. I watched a young man named Pl'iinh, grinning widely, do that to a wounded langur during a pilgrimage we were making with a

ritual expert to the barrow that marked the grave of a local spirit.

Pl'iinh released it afterwards, having broken the membrane that keeps 'the people with tails' (a name for animals and *nyanii*' demons) segregated from the human world. He had mocked what the langur was, its integrity as a creature, and changed it into what it should never have been, a mock person, just as *nyanii*' take human form to devour and destroy real people.

We pilgrims escaped. But in the hills of Sungkai that time long ago, a great storm came, the earth gave way beneath the feet of the people who mocked the macaque, their houses breaking down, collapsing, falling in, their world pulling apart at the centre, nothing solid or familiar left, nothing to hold on to, no toehold, no love, just falling, whirling, sinking, the water sucking everything under, nothing left but fear like a great wind and the black subterranean floods pouring from the depths of the earth, and in the underwater dimness the gigantic cold dragon writhing upward toward the grey light to destroy them all. Then silence, settling like dust under the tarnished pewter sky. (Mncaak, lowland Perak, 1962.)

Semai told the same story to Evans three quarters of a century ago (Evans 1923:202-4). The menace is real, permanent. Everyone knows this story, has always known it. This is what happens when you break the rules.

The world is a system of which humans are a part, says Bah Tony. Disrupting the system unleashes the sort of systemic violence I have tried to sketch and requires the sort of rituals Robarchek so brilliantly describes in the epigraph to this section of the present article. Not respecting a monkey's monkey-ness, treating it as if it were a human being, violates its integrity. Imitating the call of certain birds that the Semai associate with thunderstorms is disrespecting the boundary between people and birds. This sort of transformation is an aspect of the shamanic power the Semai tricked the thunder god into giving them. Uncontrolled by adepts, this power manifests itself in thunderstorms.

It is, of course, foolish to trifle with creatures associated with thunderstorms. For instance, it would be *trlaac* to destroy the nest of a sort of carton ant, *laas kduuk Nkuu*' (*Dolichoderus* sp.?), 'the Lord's noose trap ant', which 'only works when it's wet' and is thus associated with thunderstorms, like many other creatures.

Blood, especially women's menstrual and puerperal blood, has special powers, akin to those symbolized by tigers and thunderstorms, say the Semai. A special *trlaac* associated with bleeding at these times is *trlaac Bah Gôr*, 'Mr. Growl *trlaac*', breaking which risks transforming the woman into a tiger, for which 'Mr. Growl' is a byname. A menstruating woman who accompanies a fish poisoning expedition, mixing specific categories of powerful poisons, for example, might mutate into a tiger (see, for example, Dentan 1988).

But the basic danger is losing self-control, from which all other misdeeds flow. That is why adults are always yelling 'Trlaac! Trlaac!' at children who

are screaming or laughing or being otherwise childishly noisy. Except along the Waar River, where people say that children are always yapping and snapping at each other 'like dogs', most Semai traditionally neither expect children to fight with each other nor punish them physically for fighting. Kids show a remarkable degree of self-control even during the most violent kinds of play. Tluup boys and girls in the 1960s used to fight mock battles with sticks, flailing away at each other, without ever actually hurting each other (see photos in Alland 1981:146; Dentan 1989:101, Pl. 2). Similarly, when in the 1970s little boys in Mncaak were quite taken with the martial arts they saw at the movies and groups of half a dozen six- to twelve-year-old boys would engage in karate fights, no blows ever landed on their targets, though the oldest would quite convincingly fall to the ground 'wounded'. Although our house-mate Bah Robert (six) used to engage my daughter Wa' Sarah (also six), who wasn't used to Semai-style mock battles, in this sort of contest constantly, she said he almost never actually touched her and, when he did, was always gentle. On the Waar in the 1990s, however, where kids used to dress up as soldiers, there was some actual bullying and squabbling among the children.

During a thunderstorm adults may grill children about whether they've committed *trlaac*. They may yank a tuft of hair from the head of a child who admits to having acted childishly and beat it with a pestle or machete against a log or stone, or throw it into the fire to fool the Lord into thinking the children concerned have been punished.

Self-restraint also may make adults sound gruff and unfriendly, so that conversations between them seem to be hostile, until an offhand gift or a big smile reveals the underlying affection (as sometimes happens in Chinese or New York Yiddish conversations). Children start learning this style of talking as they approach puberty, at nine or ten years old.

Semai are clear about avoiding emotional display, not wanting to weep or grieve openly (*-jaap*) when someone they love is going away, for example. A woman from Mncaak in Perak state said that Christianity had taught her how to deal with grief, by 'trusting in the Lord'. But most people, when overcome, retreat into their houses until they are able to compose themselves. Similarly, the need to temper the expression of emotion requires that when two people who love each other meet each other again after years, they may say nothing, not touch each other, or even smile, but may just start walking along silently together.

This self-restraint, which comes from respect for other people and the cosmos in general, is more important than merely avoiding physical violence. For example, watching dogs copulate is *-trlaac*, in part because you're likely to laugh, and beating dogs badly is *tnghaan'*. But

A bitch at Teiw R'eis in the Perak foothills was in heat. The male dogs wouldn't leave her alone. Three little boys decided to protect her – Rmpent, 9 years old, Tkooy, also 9, and Grcang, 12. Rmpent beat a couple of dogs in the morning for fighting over her, just enough to stop the fight.

'Trlaac!', I said.

'No way', he said crossly. 'Only if we -lkluk'.

But at dusk the same day, Grcang, armed with a flashlight and stick, and his younger brother Tkooy, still naked from his evening bath but wielding a burning brand, chased the dogs away, running around and laughing uncontrollably. Their laughter at the dogs was *trlaac*.

Discussion

We're very careful about hurting people. We avoid it. We did the same intelligent thing the Tuup River people did during the Emergency. The Pale People [British] usually stayed in town [Kampar, in Perak state]. When they came through here, we supported them. The Jungle People [Communist terrorists] killed a *mnaleeh* [nubile girl], but we gave them tapioca and other food when they passed through. We really hate getting mixed up in other people's fights [uses the Malay word *gaduh*]. We want to live *slamad*, in peace and security.

That's why we don't steal things. Malays are always stealing things, but we don't. The surprising thing is that it's the richer people who steal things. We don't want trouble. Besides, we don't want to be rich. As long as we have enough to eat, that's enough. If you're rich, you get endless hassles, no *slamad*. That's why we don't want to be rich. We want *slamad*.

The only time we hurt people is when we drink [booze]. Booze makes us talk *rawuuc*, irrationally, act *rawuuc*. People here go into town and drink with their Malay and Tamil Indian pals. After a while they go in and drink by themselves [...]. No, not like in Mncaak [a settlement next to Kampar], never before 10 a.m. (Reconstructed conversation with Bah Minòor at 'Icek, Teiw R'eis, Perak foothills, 11 April 1992. Eye infection prevented verbatim notes.)

I have argued elsewhere (1992, 1997, 1999) that much of the tone of Semai society is the outcome of a past history of slavers too powerful to resist sporadically raiding the Semai to steal their children for sexual and other purposes. Slavery of the sort they suffered involves the slavers' denying that the enslaved have any humanity worth respecting, thus making them into jural non-persons, or *abdi* in the Malay version of the Arabic word (Buchori 1994:8-9; Dentan 1997:105-7; Mabbett 1983:61). Cross-culturally, this denial of humanity is common in social interactions, especially when one party has far more power than the other. I have a friend who spent a long time on death row for being present at the murder of a police officer. In prison he was

repeatedly humiliated and beaten. But the mistreatment the memory of which still most pains him still was the prison guards' litany: 'You're *nothing*, mother-fucker. *Nothing*. You're dead. You're not even *there*.' That still hurts.

As in other societies beset by intermittent slave raids,

[r]unning away was perhaps one of the earliest and easier forms of resistance to slavery. But this action stood little chance of success unless unoccupied or untamed land could be found where slaves could establish communities and evolve their own social organization [...]. (Chevannes 1994:11.)

Semai had such unoccupied land available to them. In the communities they set up there, the horrors of the outside world made it necessary for people to stick together. The outside violence made it important to evolve a system of taboos which prevented people already under stress from causing further stress to each other. As the Malay proverb goes, *Hilang luka tinggal parut*, 'Wounds disappear, scars remain'.

Only with each other could Semai feel human and valuable. Mutual dependence was not merely economic, although traditional. Semai were keenly conscious of such economic dependence, but people were also closely dependent on each other for emotional support. Failure to share food or to show up on time was experienced by the wronged party as a denial of his humanity, it seemed to me. In these circumstances such actions (or lack of action) constitute the sort of betrayal that has dire results among other peoples in other places (see, for example, Freyd 1996).

There are thus several directions that further research could take. First, it might be useful to explore how similar ideas function in other Southeast Asian societies that are more or less violent than the Semai in order to determine whether the ideas constrain the behaviour or vice versa. Are the Semai relatively peaceful because they have pacific ideas, or do they have such ideas because they are relatively peaceful? The notes at the end of this essay may prove a useful guide in such investigations. Second, students of peace might want to look at historically independent, peaceable peoples to see whether they have similar ideologies – research at which I myself have already made a stab (Dentan 1992, 1994). Finally, it might be useful to take Semai ideas seriously and to investigate how they might apply to problems of violence in the Western or Westernized societies to which most readers of this journal belong.

To keep an already long paper from getting completely out of hand, I have decided to sketch only the latter program.

American ideas of violence

The English term 'violence' covers a lot of territory. In general, definitions of violence in the West have created a concept that seems uselessly vague.

Scholars as usual blame the phenomenon rather than their definition of it. Violence, they say, assumes many forms. It lacks homogeneity, could be 'physical' or psychological, visible or invisible, instrumental or metaphorical' (Elsass 1992:157). In definitions like this, 'violence' has no empirical content. It is an intangible essence, a shape-changing entity that occasionally manifests itself in the real world, with deplorable consequences. It is hard to see how this sort of essentialist formulation differs, basically, from the Semai notion of *nyanii*, 'demon'. It is certainly no more sophisticated.

In this context, one can distinguish a folk concept of violence and a politically leftist concept. In the former, violence has a core, 'physical violence', and a periphery, 'symbolic violence'. Here the mere word 'violence' makes people think of 'physical violence' first. The distinction has consequences. Americans generally support the idea of providing shelters for physically battered women, but tend to pooh-pooh emotional abuse (Klein et al. 1997; see also Gordon 1988).

The atmosphere in America at the time I did my first fieldwork generated a much wider definition of 'violence'. People were using the word to refer to flag-burning, to being outvoted, to sit-ins by members of an explicitly non-violent movement, and so on, in short, to any sort of pressure or hierarchy (Salmi 1993:1-13, 17, 22). It wasn't enough to talk about the destruction of Native American culture or the institutionalized neglect of African American children: people had to talk about 'genocide'. But I remembered the first photographs of the death camps which I had seen as a child, and the rhetoric seemed overblown and self-serving. As the first definition was narrower than the Semai version, so the second seemed somewhat wider.

Semai ideas of violence in an American context

The first time I tried to understand the Semai interpretation of, for example, showing up late as physical violence, I was working with American ideas of violence buried in the back of my mind. How wonderful (though weird and primitive) it was, I thought, that people should be so non-violent that their sanction on bad manners was to punish the victim, not the culprit, knowing that while you might want to be rude, you wouldn't want to actually hurt him physically. That 'actually' is ethnocentrism speaking.

But many of the world's people say that strong emotions can make people sick, for example by creating an 'imbalance' (for a Guatemalan example, see Cosminski 1977a, 1977b). Semai notions are not unique. Nor, in this area, do Semai ideas seem more vivid and confused than Western ones. Let us not conflate the poverty and obscurity of the people with an imagined poverty and obscurity of their thought. Suppose that the Semai equation of symbolic and physical violence is correct, and not just superstition.

Many Semai explanations of diseases, especially childhood diseases, refer

to being startled, often by events which do not seem very startling to an outsider (see, for example, Dentan 1978:121-2, 1988; see Flannery 1994:10-1, 52-4, 59, 122, 136, 146). This sensitivity to the unexpected is one of many Semai attitudes that suggest responses to stress. The pervasiveness of timidity, 'learned helplessness' (Gelles and Straus 1989:140-59) and sensitivity to loss as approved attitudes exemplify such ideas. What is important to understand in this context is that the stress which slaving produced and which Semai customs seek to minimize can produce physical changes.

Organisms avoid stress when possible. Stress thus produces a 'fight-or-flight' response. The production of neurotransmitters rises sharply. Epinephrine (adrenalin) readies the body for effortful activity, producing among other things anxiety and an exaggerated startle response. Norepinephrine alerts the brain, and endorphins temporarily mute the feeling of pain. Prolonged stress depletes the supply of these chemicals (and another neurotransmitter, serotonin) and leads to the sort of depression that also seems common among the Semai. Over a long period, people everywhere respond to stress by becoming likely to fall sick: with depression, colds, hypertension, gum disease, increased accident-proneness due to inattentiveness, and so on. Under stress, wounds heal more slowly. Many Europeans think that stress causes cancer or other diseases (see Herzlich and Pierret 1987). It is therefore not particularly primitive for Semai to assert that stressing people (or the cosmos) by treating them (or it) with disrespect might increase the likelihood that they will suffer sickness, accident-proneness or collapse (for a clear summary discussion, see Kramer 1993:115-27). Stress also makes people more solicitous of their children's welfare and of their social ties.

The reason Semai taboos seem strange at first is that the Semai couch their insight in terms that outside observers find unfamiliar. Having no special vocabulary to express probability, the Semai have to talk as if treating people or nature with disrespect produces disaster. But they know that, for example, children break *trlaac* rules all the time, and that collapses of the earth are rare. The question, they say, is whether you want to run needless risks. Adults prefer not to.

The other factor that estranges Euro-American observers from the actually rather humdrum Semai observation that the stress of disrespect can have physical consequences is the Euro-American obfuscation of the connection between disrespect and physical damage. Euro-American folk norms roundly condemn physical violence. When an African-American teenage boy kills a companion for sneering at his expensive sneakers, American social workers talk about a 'culture of violence', which insanely responds to 'symbolic' or 'verbal' disrespect with 'physical violence'. Americans are horrified when white middle and upper class schoolboys pick up easily available weapons of destruction and massacre the schoolmates who have mocked, humiliated

or shunned them; homophobic bullying is part of school life, and the children should 'grin and bear it' (Pollack 1998:3-18). The Semai concept of violence makes the behaviour of adolescent American men seem less incomprehensible, 'testosterone-crazed', 'psychopathological' or 'cultural' (but see Parry 1998).

In fact, as this Semai taboo system suggests, the difference between 'symbolic' or 'verbal' violence and 'physical' violence is a good deal less sharp than Western Cartesian thinking seeks to make it. I suspect that the reason people in my society stick with it is that it is people with little power who resort to what we call 'physical' violence: black people, poor people, school-children. The people who run things, whose experience constitutes the hegemonic ideology, commit 'symbolic' violence: contempt, 'downsizing', breaking appointments, making applicants or 'clients' wait for hours. The physical injuries come more slowly by such means, but they do come, and to recognize them would undermine the legitimacy of the social arrangements which allow some people to hurt others without risking anything.

Semai taboos do many things, of course. Any set of rules has many 'functions', as anthropologists used to say. But one thing their rules embody is the felt unity of physical violence on the one hand and making people feel worthless and powerless on the other. Existentially and psychologically, there is not a big difference in the results, however different the means people use to bring the results about. In Semai discourse, and in some Euro-American ones, both sorts of attack wound what the Semai call *sngii*, the human spirit. If you treat people as if their needs don't matter, as if their feelings don't count, then they get sick; eventually they may even die. If you don't share food, if you don't show up for an appointment, you frustrate other people's hopes and expectations, damage their sense of themselves as worthwhile people who deserve to be treated with respect; and you hurt them physically.

I leave it to the reader to decide which way of thinking is the less sophisticated.

Linguistic notes and comparative ethnological minutiae

Research completed and proposed

The Semai fall into a number of distinct subgroups. The references here are to *maay Thuur*, who lived in north-eastern Pahang state in 1962; *maay Mncaak*, near the town of Kampar in central lowland Perak in 1963, 1975, 1991-1992; *maay Waar*, along the Woh River in southern Perak, 1991-1992; and several settlements along the Teiw R'eiis in the central Perak foothills in 1992. North of the Semai live the closely related Temiar people. I visited Semai in 1961-

1963, 1975, 1991-1992 and 1993, on grants from the Ford and H.F. Guggenheim Foundations, and with the permission of the Malaysian Department of Orang Asli Affairs.

There are many other Southeast Asian peoples whose ideology includes concepts similar to those this essay discusses, as the following notes suggest. Many of these peoples have also suffered sporadic slaving of a kind similar to that the Semai experienced (Dentan 1992, 1997, 1999). After all, '[t]he most important pre-colonial institutions in Southeast Asian political economy were slave-raiding and coerced trade' (Hoskins 1996:3). Many of them, like the Kubu mentioned in the text, manifest 'negative peaceability' similar to that of the Semai (see, for example, Howell 1989b; Gibson 1989).

Fieldwork among such peoples or library research should reveal the relative usefulness of the political ecological model of peaceability (Dentan 1992) and of approaches with stress models of cognitive or moral ideology (for method, see Fox 1980). The more limited the area, the greater the investigator's 'control' of extraneous variables. These notes constitute a beginning set of references. When conducting such research, a serious problem will be to generate an operational definition of (non-)violence, preferably one which can apply cross-culturally, at least within a limited area, like Southeast Asia, or smaller 'field of ethnological study' (De Josselin de Jong 1980). This essay is just a beginning stab at such a definition. Indeed, in the book I am trying to write on the topic, this essay is to be followed by another, treating 'violence' as any destruction of jural or individual 'personhood', of the sort that occurs in death camps or in the transformation of free people into *abdi*-style slaves with no rights whatsoever.

Characters

When Semai I talked to asked me to use their correct names, I have done so. Usually these names are their Semai names, however, and not the official 'passport names' on their identity cards. Thus their privacy is assured. There are four exceptions, namely the characters featuring in the news stories reported in the note on *trlaac*, whom I name as a token of respect for the dead, and three public figures: Tony, Ngah Hari and Planken. For sketch-portraits of Bah Tony and Ngah Hari, who have been very influential in forming outsiders' idea of what Semai are like, see Tan 1993, Anonymous 1996, and Dentan 1993 (pp. 12-3). Bah Tony is also described and cited in the text. Ngah Hari is the Mncaak intellectual whose insights have guided a generation of ethnographers, and in many ways is my father.

Punan

The word *punan* refers primarily to generalized reciprocity. Not helping out those who have helped you is *nynakaa'*, says Bah Tony, using an unusual

word which has come into Semai via Malay from Hindi *jenaka*. The original meaning is something like 'farce' or 'comedy'. Thus the sense is something like that of Semai *lkruk*, which ethnographers usually translate as 'mockery', but which in this essay I gloss as 'disrespect' and discuss under the heading *trlaac*. Ngah Hari says, however, that it means *bi-'òòr-hi-nye'*, 'someone tells or asks one to do something and one doesn't want to'. Some people are just like that, he says, and don't want to mix with others, don't chip in for weddings. In the Semai context, these two interpretations are less dissimilar than they would be in a Western one.

The most detailed discussion of Semai sharing and its decline is that by Gomes (1991). The most detailed recent discussion of *punan* and related concepts among Orang Asli and other Southeast Asians is by Hickson (1997). The Semai word for a request is *smmaań*, from *-smaań*, to ask for something (Diffloth 1976a:237). For further discussion of the Semai concept of *punan*, see Dentan 1970 (p. 56), Gomes 1986 (pp. 205-6), Juli Edo 1990 (p. 110), 1992 as quoted in Dentan 1992 (p. 256 n6), and 1998 (pp. 293, 300, 326-7 n2), Hickson 1997, Means and Means 1986 (p. 80), Robarchek 1977 (pp. 767-9), and Robarchek and Robarchek 1995 (p. 6). The equivalent Temiar term is *perenhood*. In Semai, the word *prnhood* would refer to a condition in which one is made sick or in pain (*pohood*), and *prnhòdd* to a condition in which one is led to desire (-hood) something. Thus the Temiar terms might be polysemic descriptives rather than monosemic references to the basic concept. For related concepts among other Malaysian indigenes, see Amran Kasimin 1991 (pp. 39-40, 246-7 n), Bock 1985 (p. 112), Endicott 1988 (p. 117), Evans 1920 and 1923 (pp. 39, 237-9, 294-6), Hickson 1997, Howell 1981 (pp. 135-7, 140-1), 1989a (pp. 183-91, 200-9, 230), and 1989b (p. 56), Wazir-Jahan 1981 (pp. 91, 96-7, 226-8, 263), and Werner 1975 (p. 471). The term and concept are widespread in Austronesian-speaking areas, for example:

The state of danger [...] called *kemponan* [...] is commonly accepted throughout Borneo as an outcome of refusing any food, cigarettes, or a betel chew. A person may also be put into the dangerous state of *kemponan* if they go into someone's house and are not offered such refreshment. (Peluso 1996:533 n; see Keeler 1983:154.)

Malays call the spiritual condition involved *kecewa*, 'disappointed, frustrated, sad at not getting what was hoped for [...] unsuccessful, fail' (Awang and Yusoff 1986:445, s.v. 'kecewa'). The latter word may be cognate with *cewe*, a Malay dialect word for the sort of deceptive byname Semai use to avoid mentioning the real name of an animal they are hunting or trapping for fear of alerting it and therefore failing to catch and kill it (see section on *srnloo'* and *mnuur*).

Srnloo'

The Semai anthropologist Juli Edo (1990:94-100) recounts a long folk-tale illustrating the concept of *srngloo'*. The best extensive discussion of Semai *srloo'* is by Robarchek (1977:769-70). *Srnloo'* demons resemble tree demons, *nyanii' jhuu'* (for details see Dentan 1988:862-3, 865).

Among the Temiar, closely related northern neighbours of the Semai, the word *-srlòd'* means 'hunt successfully' (Benjamin 1976:146). Temiar *sernlòdòk* (Roseman 1991) is, without a doubt, cognate with Semai *srnloo'*. According to an Indonesian friend, the equivalent term in Javanese is *caruk*, which in Malay means something like 'to swallow whole' or 'be greedy'. A Javanese friend said, however, that *càrok* refers to violent people, 'like Madurese gangsters'. It is conceivable, though unlikely, that the words are cognate.

The equivalent Semai term from the word for trapping is *-sa'-se'*, 'to trap successfully'. An ineffective noose trap, *nye' -h'huu'*, will not ensnare, because the trapper's actions *-kree'*, 'alert', the prey (for the complex relationship between *kree'* and *-truu'*, 'supernatural piercing', see Dentan 1988). Ritual avoidance is *prmbu'*.

For lists of Semai bynames used in hunting, see Dentan 1967 and Evans 1923 (pp. 232-6); see also Roseman 1991 (pp. 142-3). The *cewe* vocabulary mentioned in the note on *punan* seems limited to an area formerly under Mon or Temiar control, though insular Southeast Asian peoples use a similar vocabulary (see, for example, Freeman 1968; Friedberg 1980, p. 273).

Tnghaan' and gnghaan'

Although all Semai know the words, the concepts of *tnghaan'* and *gnghaan'* or *ngghaanh* seem more salient in Perak than among the more isolated *maay Tluup* (see, for example, Gomes 1986, pp. 206-7). For a long time I thought the semantically similar terms were dialect variants of the same word, but apparently they are not. For equivalent terms among the Temiar, closely related northern neighbours of the Semai, see Benjamin 1967 (pp. 77, 82-98, 163) and Roseman 1991 (pp. 48, 50, 82, 85). Some meanings of the Temiar term *gnhaa'*, however, are close to those of Semai *punan* (Jennings 1995:46-7; Roseman 1991:132-6), and Semai sometimes use the words as near-synonyms for failure to share and its consequences (Gomes 1986:206). It may be that the Malayo-Polynesian (Austronesian) word *punan*, which probably comes from the same root as English 'taboo', was simply papered over an indigenous Aslian (Mon-Khmer) word that referred to a similar concept. It is possible, however, that the word *gnghaan'* comes from a Pali word *gantha*, for 'fettering', as in the phrase *ganthanakilesò palibuddanakilesò*, 'fettering lust and hampering lust' (Childers 1875:321-2).

The Batek, a group of Malaysian foragers, use the word *tenghan* in the

sense of 'forbid', according to a personal communication by Lye Tuckpo (3 March 1998). The latter adds: 'I don't think the supernaturals do any *tenghan*; rather, what happens when you break taboos is an "automatic process", as you say ...'.

Aslian-speaking peoples like the Semai often use words with similar sounds to refer to similar entities. Thus words resembling *tnghaan*' (1) suggest demonic possession (similarly to the connection between startle reactions and soul loss) and (2) may explain why the Semai regard dragonflies and damsel flies as supernaturally dangerous. First, Semelai *tenon*, perhaps cognate with *tnghaan*', refers to 'soul loss' due to tree demons (Hood 1993:72). Jakun *tenung* or *tetenung*, which Amran Kasimin glosses as 'incurring the stare (of evil)' and which is cognate with the Semelai term, occurs when one succumbs to a demonic succubus, sees blood in the forest or collects eggs from the forest (Amran Kasimin 1991:43-4). Werner (1975:582-3) translates the Jah Hut phrase *bes tnung* as 'staring' or 'tiger-stare' spirit. The Btsisi' also associate the term with the gaze of tigers, which are the epitome of demonic power (Werner 1973:257-63). These variants of the word *tnung* seem cognate with a Malay word for 'seer', a person who in Semai terms would be in possession trance. The stare and the association with tigers suggest that people may regard this light trance as preliminary to or evocative of possession trance, not necessarily a good thing at all.

This set of associations, in turn, may bear some relevance to the fact that the Semai regard dragonflies and damsel flies, *tanung*, as extremely dangerous, so that playing with them is even more *trlaac*, taboo (see text), than playing with the moths and butterflies which may be wandering *ruwaay*, head-souls (Dentan 1988:27). Tluup Semai parents complained to us several times about the difficulty of stopping children from playing with butterflies and dragonflies, for instance from trying to hit them with a stick. Among the Jah Hut, a related group of western Malaysian indigenes, the perhaps cognate term *bes tanung*, which Werner (1975:579) translates as 'calm-river spirit', is associated with apnea and epileptiform seizures, that is, concomitants of trance. Dragonflies, which eat mosquitoes as they emerge from stagnant water, would be associated with 'calm rivers'.

Gnghaan' misbehaviour includes *-duus* (from Sanskrit-Malay *dosa*, sin or offence against divine law), to be rude, to owe debts and not pay them. All children *-duus*. The notion of sin is relatively minor, however, as in this story.

Cacat, a woman in her early 40s: In my grandparents' generation, someone went out to spear frogs at night. A reticulated python seized him, wrapped itself around his waist like a loincloth.

Lang, 14, her son: Around his neck.

Cacat: It dragged him into the water, where he fainted. His familiar spirit [*guni-ik*] talked with the python. "This man has no *dosa*." Finally the python let him go.

When the man got home he asked what day it was. He'd been unconscious for three days.

Anthropologist: So you need to have no *dosa*.

Cacat: So you need to have a familiar spirit to negotiate for you.

Ngah Hari uses the Malay word *dosa* to translate the Semai word *tnghaan'*. Murder, he says, making people sick and killing cats are *tnghaan'*. The Semai word *bnamey*, from *-bdamey*, covers killing a dog or cat or other harmless animal, being unkind to a person. It seems cognate with Malay *damai*. But the Malay word refers to peace, freedom from disorder or the gratification of desire, for example post-coital satisfaction. The Semai words, however, refer to stupid cruelty and thus connote the opposite (Means and Means 1986:14, 17, 31, 66, s.v. 'bedamei', 'benamei', 'damei', 'namei').

Ngah Hari says homosexuality (he's become homophobic over the last couple of decades) is *tnghaan' ya Tuhan*, sin in the eyes of the Lord (Allah or Yahweh), but not *ya hii'* in our own eyes. *Tnghaan'* makes you skinny and weak, your mouth gets dry, you are covered with sores. But nowadays people are *modun*, modern, he says, and don't respect shamanic power or *tnghaan'*.

Klip, a Methodist from Teiw R'eis in the Perak foothills, says that Christians use the word *dosa* for sin, not *tnghaan'*. He was upset to hear of homeless people in America, but said: 'It's like *tnghaan'* [not to provide them with shelter]. In your country they build houses for dogs, don't they? But it's not really *tnghaan'* or *dosa*. It's more as if you just didn't have a country.' This is not just a Christian convert's idiosyncrasy.

Among Semai friends, I am always reminded of the overriding rule of behaviour governing their lives, *tenhak*. In essence, this rule requires an individual to be responsible for the good and well-being of others. This rule is so encompassing that one is said to have committed *tenhak* if, for example, someone in a distant land dies of hunger while you yourself have more than enough to eat. You are deemed responsible for his death and would have to suffer the consequences. This may seem extreme but *tenhak* also translates into everyday living via concepts of sharing, satisfying of needs, and what is generally perceived to be proper behaviour towards other individuals, whether Orang Asli [indigenous people like the Semai] or not. (Nicholas 1994:45.)

Children learn about *tnghaan'* early, but it is not the most salient part of 'aggression training'.

I gave crayons to three kids, a boy aged 2, and two girls aged 2 and 3, each sitting on their mother's lap. When the girls got their crayons or paper, the boy would go over and try to snatch them. '-*Trnghaan*', said the littler girl's mother, 'You're causing *tnghaan*'. The girl seemed unperturbed. But when he tried to grab the crayons from the other girl, his sister, she scratched at his face, and both burst into tears of rage. Their mother pulled them apart. The girl stopped crying right away, and the

mother suckled the boy. 'That's what we do when children fight', said another woman, 'give them the breast'. The rest of the time, when the boy grabbed at the crayons, they distracted him by showing him interesting things or by telling him his parent's elder brother [RKD] was watching. (Mncaak, Perak lowlands, 1991.)

The story of the two terrorists runs as follows:

Bah Planken was a notorious terrorist, allegedly responsible for at least one massacre of Semai by Chinese terrorists, although apparently he himself never killed anyone. He 'had an evil heart' (*nicneec i nòds*). He seemed normal until *ki-pluud langwiik*, he 'joined the demonic dizziness', i.e. the terrorists. He was a Raja Lang-wiik, a terrorist king (from *-lwiik*, to suffer pre-trance disorientation).

As the headman of the Bot area on the Waar River in lowland Perak, he thought he had a claim to the hereditary power which the sultan of Perak bestowed on some Semai leaders after the abolition of slavery in the early twentieth century (Juli Edo in press). Other Semai thought the claim arrogant and ignored it, until the mostly Chinese Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army rose up against the Japanese and armed him, promising to honor his claims to power. Leary denies that any force was involved in his subsequent alliance with the insurgents in the Emergency.

Planken was 'arrogant', *sumbang*, speaking only with his Chinese entourage. He *-yr -suk*, ordered men hunted down at night with torches, Bah Ruwek from the upper Waar and another man from Rnsat. He may have killed his own wife.

There was a story that he was an adept who was forced to join the rebels. One time the soldiers caught him and he *-jurhee*, flew away as adepts can, leaving them holding his loincloth. His familiar was a tiger, the only kind that lets you *-jurhee*.

In December 1953 he was killed, apparently by Semai Home Guards who were acquaintances or kinsmen (*kawad*), perhaps for a large reward and perhaps because he was in league with demons, *nyanii*, which made him too dangerous to capture. Two British people who had worked closely with Semai took credit for inspiring this assassination (Gouldsbury 1960:138; Leary 1995:78-80, 128-31, 149, 185; Noone 1972:163-5).

Tolah

This term, of Arabic origin, reached Semai via Malay *tulah*, 'misfortune' or 'calamity', specifically misfortune due to uppitness' (Juli Edo 1998:255 n14; Wilkinson 1901, II:610, s.v. 'tolah'). In Malay, *takut tulah* denotes 'fear at angering one's parents', *takut tulah baginda*, 'fear at getting misfortune for a discourtesy to a ruler' (Wilkinson 1901, II:610). For example, in the classic Malay history *Sejarah Melayu*, princesses of low rank who sleep with a sultan suffer *kedal tolah*, 'tolah chloasma' (Shellabear 1961:26). Javanese *katulah* similarly refers to an 'offense to the spirit of an honored or famous person' (Wessing 1978:175). Parenthetically, Semai stories about the origin of local sultanates in arrangements with Semai usually specify that the Semai suffered from ring-

worm, one of the external signs to Malays of Semai dirtiness and inferiority.

In Austronesian languages, the term usually connotes incest (see, for example, Schärer 1963:106). Intimacy with one's older opposite-sex in-laws is *tolah* for the Semai, with a fairly clear implication of sexual impropriety. Among the eastern Semai, as among the Orang Ulu of Johor (Jakun), even talking to one's parent-in-law can make one impotent, lethargic or moribund (Amran Kasimin 1991:29; Dentan 1975:58, 1979:74-5).

I use the American word 'uppity' for this because it connotes arrogance on the part of a social inferior and thus seems a better translation of the Malay word *sumbung* and its cognates than just 'arrogant' (for examples of usage see Juli Edo 1990:109 and 1998:357; Wilkinson 1901, I:151, s.v. 'bongkak', II:599, s.v. 'tombong'). Given the Semai concern with keeping the boundaries of conceptual categories tidy, it is worth mentioning that a cognate Malay word *congkang* or *congkak* means something like 'upset; reversed; muddled up; tangled; spoilt by confusion' (Wilkinson 1901, I:234) as well as 'proud, conceited, arrogant' (Awang and Yusoff 1986:187, s.v. 'congkak'). Lack of deference upsets the social order. Malay *sumbang* refers to 'revolting' and 'incestuous' violations of custom, but seems to lack the connotation of cross-generational sex which the Semai term has; after all, Malay slavers kidnapped Semai children so that the buyers could, inter alia, violate the children sexually. Semai narratives about the slavers usually say that the latter are *sumbung* (Dentan 1999).

For Semai, *tolah* diseases include nasal lesions associated with yaws or syphilis; inguinal prolapse, pain or swelling due to filariasis; vaginal pain, prolapse or persistent bleeding (Dentan 1988:861). Semai in Perak subscribed to the Malay notion that sitting on a pillow resulted in *tolah* boils on the buttocks (Abdul Jalil 1961:16). Stepping over someone's extended legs is *tolah*. Bleeding haemorrhoids, however, were a form of *trlaac*.

A comparison with the Maya concept of *tsik* is enlightening. For this discussion, I depend entirely on the work of Danziger (1991) and McClusky (1998). *Tsik* also involves deference along lines determined by generation and relative age. *Tsik* is not an emotion but proper deferential behaviour, which children learn first by observing the formalities that younger people should adopt towards older persons and then those that obtain between kinsmen of particular categories. In other words, good manners come first. They create the relationship rather than reflecting it. Then, like Semai children, Maya children learn that they can expect cooperation and support from such people. As among the Semai, mockery, rudeness and sexual intimacy are incompatible with *tsik*. As among the Semai, failure to observe *tsik* connotes sexual intimacy. Finally, adults 'have' *tsik* if they behave morally by Maya standards and participate in civic activities. *Tsik* serves to check individualism, quarrelling and violence (Danziger 1991:219), just as 'dissing' elsewhere

encourages these social ills. A failure of *tsik*, like a violation of Semai taboos, is an assault on the natural order associated with natural disasters like thunderstorms and floods (Danziger 1991:67).

The notion of *tsik* stresses positive feelings (Danziger 1991:72-4), while the Semai ideas under discussion here reflect more circumspect, even fearful, attitudes. This stress on *sng'òdh* in an interesting way replicates the notion of 'respect' in the violent life of young men from the relatively powerless strata of American society, in which people often feel worthless and helpless. For some of them, making people afraid of you is one way to show that you deserve respect. 'Dissing', showing disrespect, may simply involve a refusal to appear afraid. The appropriate response to dissing in that case is physical violence, which proves that the victim is of even less importance than the violator by making him afraid. And sex can be part of the disrespectful violence that reinspires respect in its victim, as, for example in rape, particularly homosexual rape. For Semai 'double consciousness' see Dentan (1976, 1997:100-1).

Tolah also reflects, encourages and obfuscates the normal conditions poor people face in Malaysia and elsewhere:

Poorer, lower class individuals are less inclined to approach government offices or press their concerns on officials than are wealthier, higher class persons, irrespective of their ethnic status [...]. Also, dealings with government offices and officials are more costly in several respects for poorer, lower class persons: they must pay for transportation to the office, pay petition writers to prepare written documents, and spend time traveling and waiting. Better off, higher class persons, by contrast, are able to provide their own transportation and can read and complete the necessary documents themselves. (Winzeler 1988:92.)

The idea of *tolah* may make it possible for Semai to preserve some serenity in the face of the frustrations produced by 'violation' and political powerlessness.

An old friend of mine said that using the name of anyone older than oneself is *tolah*. In fact, even if they're younger but have children of their own, you should use their teknonyms. Still, he added

I was talking with a kid just the other day. The kid says, 'In the old days, I was afraid to say my father's name, for fear of *tolah*. Even when somebody asked my father's name [as Malay officials do], I wasn't willing to say it. But now I dare to say it even if nobody asks me to. If it's *tolah*, there's always the hospital.' (Knik, Perak foothills, 1992.)

Pnali'

This word probably comes from *pali*, which refers to the sacredness of Pali texts. In Pali, the word *paliboddho* and its derivatives refer to 'hindrances'

(Childers 1875:321-2), as in the phrase *ganthanakilesa palibuddanakilesa*, 'fettering lust and hampering lust'. Cognate terms occur among other Aslian speakers like Btisi' (Wazir-Jahan 1981) and Temiar (Roseman 1991:136, 203 n6). For discussion, see Juli Edo (1990:109-10).

The ideological complex involves the notion of violating borders, especially category borders. For example, Javanese *pamali* refers to 'stepping on the border between dry land and water' or being 'outside at dusk (the border between two days)' (Wessing 1978:152). Among the Murik, an Austronesian-speaking people of Borneo, a perhaps cognate word *mali* denotes 'to change state, metamorphose' (Blust 1974:171). Given the Semai sense of the fragility of categorical boundaries; it would make sense that mixing ritually immiscible categories of food should result in the metamorphosis that is so salient elsewhere in their religion.

The four mutually opposed categories of food the mixing of which is taboo are 'meat', *munhar*, from mammals; 'birds', *ceep*; 'fish', *kaa*; and 'fungi', *btiis* or *btees* (Dentan 1967, 1970, 1979:36-7, 1988; see also Endicott 1979:73-6). On the Tluup in 1962 these terms referred primarily to habitat. Thus 'fish', *kaa*, included amphibians and turtles. Perak Semai classification stresses integument, so that all creatures with feathers are *ceep*. As in other Aslian languages, however, the criteria for inclusion in these categories are multiple (Dentan 1988; Endicott 1979:74-5).

There is no generic Semai term of Aslian origin for either 'animal' or 'mammal' (see Endicott 1979:74). Perak Semai sometimes use the word *mrgaas*, a shortened version of a Malayized Sanskrit word *mergasetua*, 'beast', in the sense of 'animal'. A common use of *mrgaas* is as a euphemism for *raak* or *rgraak*, 'tiger' (Nabitoepoeloe 1950:7). Conversely, tigers synecdochically represent animals and the demonic shamanic power they embody. For details of this system, see Dentan 1970, 1988.

Trlaac

I have heard the word translated as 'squabble' or 'squabbling' above pronounced as *katii*, though Means and Means (1986:49) give *katir* as the Semai for 'annoy', 'irritate' or 'pester'. In any case, the point is that fooling around and harassing someone, disrespecting him, is the issue, not fighting or quarrelling.

The word *trlaac* seems to be the causative form of a verb *-lic-laac*, 'to annihilate, to be violent', which is used, for example, for a child throwing a tantrum, or as in *laac kuuy*, 'head devastation', that is, baldness. The verb usually translated as 'mock' is *-lk-luk*, as when people dress up a monkey like a human being, blurring the line between humans and animals, or when they imitate a bird's call, crossing the boundary between humans and birds. The sense is close in some ways to the American slang word 'diss', from 'disre-

spect'. The behaviour concerned violates the animals' integrity, their essential selves, and releases all the powers of chaos. Ngah Hari, the lowland Perak intellectual, says that if *tò'mtuul prndaad mnatak*, 'instead of truly killing animals', you *-luk* them, you have committed *tnghaan*', q.v. For further discussion of *trlaac*, see Juli Edo 1990 (p. 110) and 1998 (p. 290), and Robarchek 1979 (p. 558), whose wonderful description of Semai thunderstorm rituals deserves to be read in its entirety.

The Temiar equivalent of *trlaac* seems to be *misik*, apparently of Malay origin (Jennings 1995:35; Roseman 1991:136-7, 203 n8). This term may come from Sanskrit *visha*, via Hindi *bisha* and proximate Malay *bisi*, 'sluttish, immodest, lewd, licentious'. For the Semai, the word for the sort of licentious behaviour which the Malay term covers would be *trlaac*. Semai at Mncaak in Perak state use the word *misik* to refer to a disreputable secret shared by a few people (for example, the hiding of terrorists from counterinsurgency forces), in contrast to *cniim*, a secret no one talks about (see Means and Means 1986:26, 28, s.v. 'cenem', 'cernem').

The equivalent term used by Orang Ulu and Semang is *celau* (Amran Kasimin 1991:40-2, 246-7 n; Evans 1937:179-80). The Ngaju, a South Borneo people, also say that the mocking of animals and sexual misdeeds violate the cosmic order, risking cosmic collapse through thunderstorms and floods, but refer to the thunder god as Raja Pali (see *pnali*') (Schärer 1963:98-9). The Ngaju also have an analogue to the anti-storm 'blood sacrifice' of the Semai and other Orang Asli (Schärer 1963:100).

This sort of suspension of the safe and familiar occurs in fact as well as myth. So in October 1973 a limestone tor in Gunung Cheron collapsed on a longhouse, killing 40 people. About a quarter of a century later there was a heavy downpour lasting three hours. During the small hours of 29 December 1987, Gunung Keledang, a limestone tor in Semailand near Ipoh, began to disintegrate, causing two major and three minor landslides. At 6.20 am, as the sky turned blood red and yellow-green – a sign to the Semai that *nyanii*' demons are swarming everywhere – the face of Gunung Tunggal, another tor in Semailand, began to collapse. A section of this tor had collapsed earlier, in 1918, when illicit slaving still flourished. This time two waves of rocks and mud buried a man alive in the shed where he was working, while the flood of debris partially buried and injured his mother and a fourteen-year-old kinsman. Three other Semai escaped. About twenty people from the Semai settlement dug the fourteen-year-old out of the mass of greasy stones and dark sticky mud (*New Straits Times* 1987)...

This sort of collapse afflicts other indigenous peoples in Malaysia as well. For example when mud slides buried parts of the Genting Highlands golf resort, or a landslide at Teiw Bipòk (Malay Kuala Dipang) buried 39 Semai alive on 31 August 1996.

In all these cases, Semai survivors mentioned dark subterranean waters and great tectonic dragons. For the rather heated discussions about the connections established by the Semai and related peoples between blood, thunder and the mockery of animals, see Dentan in press; Freeman 1968 and 1987; Needham 1967; Robarchek 1987a, 1987b; Schebesta 1927. For this complex as it involves birds, among other Malaysian indigenes, see Benjamin 1967:357-8; Endicott 1979:63, 70-7; Evans 1923:153 n; Lye 1994:114).

The Shakers, a pacifist Anglo-American sect, shared the Semai notion that 'playing around' with animals, wild or domestic, is spiritually dangerous and to be forbidden (Dentan 1994; Goonan 1994:12). The psychological dynamics of these taboos are unclear, but I suspect they have something to do with the importance of self-control and the sense that playing around, especially with other living creatures, undermines the self-restraint on which community serenity depends.

REFERENCES

- Abdul Jalil Hj. Noor, 1961, *Pesaka Orang Tua-Tua*. Singapore: Al-Ahamadiah Press.
- Alland, Alexander, 1981, *To-be Human*. New York: John Wiley.
- Amran Kasimin, 1991, *Religion and Social Change among the Indigenous People of the Malay Peninsula*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- Andaya, Barbara Watson, and Leonard Y. Andaya, 1982, *A History of Malaysia*. London: Macmillan.
- Anonymous, 1996, 'Orang Asli Want in on Development Talks', *The Star*, 16 April.
- Arthur, Chris, 1983, 'Hegel's Master/Slave Dialectic and a Myth of Marxology', *New Left Review* 142:67-75.
- Awang Sudjai Hadirul, and Yusoff Khan, 1986, *Kamus Lengkap*. Petaling Jaya: Pustaka Zaman.
- Benedict, Paul K., 1975, *Austro-Thai Language and Culture; With a Glossary of Roots*. New Haven: Human Relations Area Files Press.
- Benjamin, Geoffrey, 1967, *Temiar Religion*. Ph.D. thesis, University of Cambridge, Cambridge.
- , 1976, 'An Outline of Temiar Grammar', in: Philip N. Jenner, Laurance C. Thompson, and Stanley Starosta (eds), *Austroasiatic Studies*, Part 1, pp. 129-88. Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii.
- , 1996, *Rationalization and Re-Enchantment in Malaysia; Temiar Religion 1964-1995*. Singapore: Department of Sociology, National University of Singapore. [Working Paper 130.]
- Berger, John, 1975, 'Historical Afterword', in: John Berger, *Pig Earth*, pp. 195-213. New York: Pantheon.
- Blake, William, 1994, *The Works of William Blake*. Ware, Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions.
- Blust, R.A., 1974, 'A Murik Vocabulary', in: Jerome Rousseau (ed.), *The Peoples of Central Borneo*, pp. 153-89. [Sarawak Museum Journal 22, special issue, n.s. 43.]

- Bock, C.; 1985. [1881], *The Head-Hunters of Borneo; A Narrative of Travels up the Mahakkam and down the Barito; Also Journeyings in Sumatra*. Singapore: Oxford University Press.
- Buchori [Bukhori], Mochtar, 1994, *Sketches of Indonesian Society; A Look from Within*. Jakarta: IKIP Muhammadiyah / Jakarta Post.
- Burke, Edmund, 1982 [1791], 'Letter to a Member of the National Assembly', in: Russell Kirk (ed.), *A Portable Conservative Reader*, pp. 47-8. Harmondsworth: Viking Penguin.
- Chevannes, Barry, 1994, *Rastafari; Roots and Ideology*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- Childers, Robert Caesar, 1875, *A Dictionary of the Pali Language*. London: Trubner.
- Clemons, Walter, 1993, Review of *Divas to Die For*, in *The New York Times*, 28 February:14.
- Cosminski, S., 1977a, 'The Impact of Methods of the Analysis of Illness Concepts in a Guatemalan Community', *Social Science and Medicine* 11:325-32.
- , 1977b, 'Childbirth and Midwifery on a Guatemalan Finca', *Medical Anthropology* 1:69-103.
- Danziger, Eve, 1991, *Semantics on the Edge; Language as a Cultural Experience in the Acquisition of Social Identity among the Mopan Maya*. Ph.D. thesis, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.
- Dentan, Robert Knox, 1967, 'Semai Mammal Taxonomy', *Malayan Nature Journal* 21:17-28.
- , 1970, 'Labels and Rituals in Semai Classification', *Ethnology* 9:16-25.
- , 1975, 'If There Were no Malays, Who Would the Semai Be?', in: Judith A. Nagata (ed.), *Pluralism in Malaysia; Myth and Reality*, pp. 50-64. [Contributions to Asian Studies 7.]
- , 1976, 'Identity and Ethnic Contact; Perak Malaysia 1963', in: Tai S. Kang (ed.), *Intergroup Relations; Asian Scenes*, pp. 79-86. [Journal of Asian Affairs 1-1.]
- , 1978, 'Notes on Childhood in a Nonviolent Context; The Semai Case', in: Ashley Montagu (ed.), *Learning Nonaggression; The Experience of Non-Literate Societies*, pp. 94-143. London: Oxford University Press.
- , 1979, *The Semai; A Nonviolent People of Malaya*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. [Fieldwork edition.]
- , 1988, 'Ambiguity, Synecdochy and Affect in Semai Medicine', *Social Science and Medicine* 27:857-77.
- , 1989, 'How Semai Made Music for Fun', *Echology; A Green Journal of Theoretical and Applied Sociomusicology* 3:100-20.
- , 1992, 'The Rise, Maintenance and Destruction of Peaceable Polity; A Preliminary Essay in Political Ecology', in: James Silverberg and J. Patrick Gray (eds), *Aggression and Peacefulness in Humans and Other Primates*, pp. 214-70. New York: Oxford University Press.
- , 1993, 'A Confessional and Memorial of Orang Asli', in: Hood Salleh, Hasan Mat Noor, and Kamaruddin M: Said (eds), *Orang Asli; An Appreciation*, pp. 1-14. Kuala Lumpur: International Convention Secretariat, Prime Minister's Office.
- , 1994, 'Surrendered Men; Peaceable Enclaves in the Post-Enlightenment West', in: Leslie E. Sponsel and Thomas Gregor (eds), *The Anthropology of Peace and Nonviolence*, pp. 69-108. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.
- , 1995, 'Bad Day at Bukit Pekan', *American Anthropologist* 97:225-31.

- , 1997, 'The Persistence of Received Truth; How the Malaysian Ruling Class Constructs the Orang Asli', in: Robert L. Winzeler (ed.), *Indigenous Peoples and the State; Politics, Land, and Ethnicity in the Malaysian Peninsula and Borneo*, pp. 98-134. New Haven, CO: Yale University, Southeast Asia Studies. [Yale Southeast Asia Studies Monograph 46.]
- , 1999, 'Spotted Doves at War; The Praak Sangkiil', *Asian Folklore Studies* 58:397-434.
- , in press, 'Against the Kingdom of the Beast; An Introduction to Semai Theology, Pre-Aryan Religion and the Dynamics of Abjection', in: Geoffrey Benjamin and Cynthia Lau (eds), *Tribal Communities in the Malay World; Historical, Cultural and Social Perspectives*. Leiden/Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.
- Diffloth, Gerard, 1976a, 'Minor-Syllable Vocalism in Sino-Tibetan Languages', in: Philip N. Jenner, Lorraine C. Thompson, and Stanley Starosta (eds), *Austroasiatic Studies* 1, pp. 229-45. Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii.
- , 1976b, 'Proto-Semai Phonology', *Federation Museums Journal* 13 (n.s.):65-74.
- Dubois, W.E.B., 1979 [1903], *The Souls of Black Folk; Essays and Sketches*. New York: Dodd, Mead.
- Elsass, Peter, 1992, *Strategies for Survival; The Psychology of Cultural Resistance in Ethnic Minorities*, translated by Fran Hopenwasser. New York: New York University Press.
- Endicott, Kirk Michael, 1979, *Batek Negrito Religion; The World-View and Rituals of a Hunting and Gathering People of Peninsular Malaysia*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- , 1988, 'Property, Power and Conflict among the Batek of Malaysia', in: Tim Ingold, David Riches and James Woodburn (eds), *Hunters and Gatherers, 2, Property, Power and Ideology*, pp. 110-27. Oxford: Berg.
- Evans, Ivor H.N., 1920, 'Kempunan', *Man* 38:69-70.
- , 1923, *Studies in Religion, Folk-Lore and Custom in British North Borneo and the Malay Peninsula*. London: Frank Cass.
- , 1937, *The Negritos of Malaya*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Flannery, Raymond B., 1994, *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder; The Victim's Guide to Healing and Recovery*. New York: Crossroad.
- Fox, James J., 1980, 'Models and Metaphors; Comparative Research in Eastern Indonesia', in: James J. Fox (ed.), *The Flow of Life; Essays on Eastern Indonesia*, pp. 327-33. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Freeman, Derek, 1968, 'Thunder, Blood and the Nicknaming of God's Creatures', *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 37-3:353-99.
- , 1987, 'A Succinct Rejoinder to Clayton A. Robarchek', *Journal of Anthropological Research* 43:301-6.
- Freud, Anna, 1966 [1937], *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defense*, translated by Cecil Baines. Madison, CT: International Universities Press. [Revised edition.]
- Freyd, Jennifer J., 1996, *Betrayal Trauma; The Logic of Forgetting Childhood Abuse*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Friedberg, Claudine, 1980, 'Boiled Woman and Boiled Man; Myths and Agricultural Rituals of the Bunaq of Central Timor', in: James J. Fox (ed.), *The Flow of Life; Essays on Eastern Indonesia*, pp. 266-89. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- Gelles, Richard J., and Murray A. Straus, 1989, *Intimate Violence; The Causes and Consequences of Abuse in the American Family*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Gibson, Thomas, 1989, 'Symbolic Representations of Tranquility and Aggression among the Buid', in: Signe Howell and Roy Willis (eds), *Societies at Peace; Anthropological Perspectives*, pp. 60-78. London: Routledge.
- Gomes, Alberto G., 1986, *Looking-for-Money; Simple Commodity Production in the Economy of the Tapah Semai of Malaysia*. Ph.D. thesis, Australian National University, Canberra.
- , 1991, 'Commodification and Social Relations among the Semai of Malaysia', in: Nicholas Peterson and Tōshio Matsuyama (eds), *Cash, Commoditisation and Changing Foragers*, pp. 163-97. Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology. [Senri / Ethnological Studies 30.]
- Goonan, Kathleen Ann, 1994, *Queen City Jazz*. New York: Tor.
- Gordon, Linda, 1988, *Heroes of Their Own Lives; The Politics and History of Family Violence*. Boston: Penguin.
- Gouldsbury, Pamela, 1960, *Jungle Nurse*. London: Jarrolds.
- Hasan Mat Noor, 1989, 'Pengumpulan Semula Orang Asli di Betau; Satu Penelitian Rengkas', *Akademika* 35:97-112.
- Herzlich, Claudine, and Janine Pierret, 1987, *Illness and Self in Society*, translated by Elborg Forster. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press. [Originally published as *Malades d'Hier, Malades d'Aujourd'hui*, Paris: Payot, 1984.]
- Hickson, Andy, 1997, the website 'Punan and Violence', at <http://www.Temiar.com>.
- Hood, Mohd. Salleh, 1993, 'Man, Forest and Spirits; Images and Survival among Forest-Dwellers of Malaysia', *Southeast Asian Studies* 30-4:63-74.
- Hoskins, Janet, 1996, 'Introduction', in: Janet Hoskins (ed.), *Headhunting and the Social Imagination in Southeast Asia*, pp. 1-49. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Howell, Signe, 1981, 'Rules not Words', in: P. Heelas and A. Lock (eds), *Indigenous Psychologies*, pp. 133-43. London: Academic Press.
- , 1989a, *Society and Cosmos*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- , 1989b, '"To be Angry is not to be Human, but to be Fearful is"; Chewong Concepts of Human Nature', in: Signe Howell and Roy Willis (eds), *Societies at Peace; Anthropological Perspectives*, pp. 45-59. London: Routledge.
- Jennings, Sue, 1995, *Theatre, Ritual and Transformation; The Senoi Temiars*. London: Routledge.
- Josselin de Jong, P.E. de, 1980, 'The Concept of the Field of Ethnological Study', in: James J. Fox (ed.), *The Flow of Life; Essays on Eastern Indonesia*, pp. 317-26. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Juli Edo, 1990, *Tradisi Lisan Masyarakat Semai*. Bangi, Selangor: Penerbit Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. [Monograf Fakulti Sains Kemasyarakatan dan Kemanusiaan Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia 16.]
- , 1998, *Claiming our Ancestors' Land; An Ethnohistorical Study of Seng-oi Land Rights in Perak Malaysia*. Ph.D. thesis, Australian National University, Canberra.
- , in press, 'Traditional Alliance; Contact between the Orang Asli and the Ancient Malay State', in: Geoffrey Benjamin and Cynthia Lau (eds), *Tribal Communities in the Malay World; Historical, Cultural and Social Perspectives*. Leiden/Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.
- Keeler, Ward, 1983, 'Shame and Stage Fright in Java', *Ethos* 11:152-65.

- Kehoe, Alice B., 1988, 'Legitimizing the Study of Peace', in: Robert A. Rubinstein and Paul L. Doughty (eds), *Symbols, Social Action and Human Peace; Papers in Honor of Mary Lecron Foster, Human Peace* 11-4:1-4.
- Klein, Ethel, Jacquelyn Campbell, Esta Soler, and Marissa Ghez, 1997, *Ending Domestic Violence; Changing Public Perception / Halting the Epidemic*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Kramer, Peter D., 1993, *Listening to Prozac*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Leary, John D., 1995, *Violence and the Dream People; The Orang Asli in the Malayan Emergency 1960*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Center for International Studies. [Ohio University Center for International Studies Monographs in International Studies, Southeast Asia Series 95.]
- Lye, Tuck-Po, 1994, 'Batek Hep; Culture, Nature, and the Folklore of a Malaysian Forest People', Master's thesis, University of Hawaii, Honolulu.
- Mabbett, I., 1983, 'Some Remarks on the Present State of Knowledge about Slavery in Angkor', in: Anthony Reid (ed.), *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia*, pp. 44-63. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- McClusky, Laura, 1998, 'Here, our Culture is Hard'; *Narrative Ethnography, Domestic Violence and 'the Young Women's Revolt' in San Antonio, Belize*. Ph.D. thesis, University of Buffalo. [In press, Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.]
- Means, Nathalie, and Paul B. Means, 1986, *Sengoi-English, English-Sengoi Dictionary*, edited by Gordon P. Means. Hamilton, Ontario: Joint Center on Modern East Asia, University of Toronto [and] York University.
- Moore, Barrington (Jr), 1978, *Injustice; The Social Bases of Obedience and Revolt*. Armonk, NY: Sharpe.
- Nabitoepoeloe, B.W.F., 1950, *Sengoi (Sakai) First Primer; Bup Minacha Mai Sengoi Pasak*. Geneva, Switzerland: Lutheran World Federation.
- Nash, June, 1979, *We Eat the Mines and the Mines Eat Us; Dependency and Exploitation in Bolivian Tin Mines*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Needham, Rodney, 1967 [1964], 'Blood, Thunder and the Mockery of Animals', in: J.M. Middleton (ed.), *Myth and Cosmos*, pp. 271-85. New York: Natural History Press.
- New Straits Times*, 1987, 'Man Crushed in Rockfall', *New Straits Times*, 30 December: 1-2.
- Nicholas, Colin, 1994, *Pathway to Dependence; Commodity Relations and the Dissolution of Semai Society*. Clayton, Victoria: Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University. [Monash Papers on Southeast Asia 33.]
- , 1997, 'Putting the "People" in EIAs; Assessing Environmental Impacts on Indigenous Peoples', Paper presented at the Malaysian Nature Society Environmental Impact Assessment Seminar, Kuala Lumpur, 9 March.
- Noone, Richard O.D., 1961, 'Communist Subversion of the Hill Tribes (Lessons Learned During the Emergency in Malaya)'. [Mimeograph: HQ Senoi Pra'ak.]
- , 1972, *Rape of the Dream People*. London: Hutchinson. [= *In Search of the Dream People*. New York: Morrow.]
- Parry, Richard Lloyd, 1998, 'What Young Men Do', *GRANTA* 62:85-123.
- Peluso, Nancy Lee, 1996, 'Fruit Trees and Family Trees in an Anthropogenic Forest; Ethics of Access, Property Zones, and Environmental Change in Indonesia', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 38:510-48.

- Peterson, Nicholas, 1993, 'Demand Sharing; Reciprocity and the Pressure for Generosity among Foragers', *American Anthropologist* 95:860-74.
- Pollack, William, 1998, *Real Boys; Rescuing our Sons from the Myths of Manhood*. New York: Holt.
- Robarchek, Clayton A., 1977, 'Frustration, Aggression and the Nonviolent Semai', *American Ethnologist* 4-4:762-79.
- , 1979, 'Learning to Fear; A Case Study of Emotional Conditioning', *American Ethnologist* 6-3:555-67.
- , 1987a, 'Blood, Thunder, and the Mockery of Animals; Derek Freeman and the Semang Thunder-God', *Journal of Anthropological Research* 4-4:273-300.
- , 1987b, 'Response to Freeman', *Journal of Anthropological Research* 4-4:307-8.
- Robarchek, Clayton A., and Carole J. Robarchek, 1995, '"They Who Eat Our Souls"; Animism and Ethics in Semai Religion', MS of a Paper Presented at the 94th Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, 15-9 November, Washington, D.C.
- Roseman, Marina, 1991, *Healing Sounds from the Malaysian Rainforest; Temiar Music and Medicine*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Rosenthal, M.L. (ed.), 1962, *Selected Poems and Two Plays of William Butler Yeats*. New York: Macmillan.
- Salmi, Jamil, 1993, *Violence and Democratic Society*. London: Zed Books.
- Schärer, Hans, 1963; *Ngaju Religion; The Conception of God among a South Borneo People*, translated by Rodney Needham. The Hague: Nijhoff. [KITLV, Translation Series 6. Originally published as *Die Gottesidee der Ngaju Dajak in Süd-Borneo*, 1946.]
- Schebesta, Paul, 1927, 'Religiöse Anschauungen der Semang über die Orang Hidop (die Unsterblichen), 2', *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 25:5-35.
- Shellabear, W.G. (ed.), 1961, *Sejarah Melayu (The Malay Annals)*. Singapore: Malay Publishing House. [Siri Kesusasteraan Melayu Lama Bil. 9.]
- Tan, Joceline, 1993, 'Voice of a Minority', *Malaysian Business*, 16-30 September:34-6.
- Thompson, Edward Palmer, 1993, *Witness Against the Beast; William Blake and the Moral Law*. New York: New Press.
- Wazir-Jahan Karim, 1981, *Ma' Betisek Concepts of Living Things*. London: Athlone. [London School of Economics Monograph on Social Anthropology 54.]
- Werner, Roland, 1973, *Mah-Meri Art and Culture*. Kuala Lumpur: Muzium Negara.
- , 1975, *Jah-Het of Malaysia; Art and Culture*. Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Universiti Malaya.
- Wessing, Robert, 1978, *Cosmology and Social Behavior in a West Javanese Settlement*, Athens, OH: Southeast Asia Program, Center for International Studies, Ohio University. [Papers in International Studies, Southeast Asia Series 47.]
- Wheatley, Paul, 1964, *Impressions of the Malay Peninsula in Ancient Times*. Singapore: Eastern Universities Press.
- Wilkinson, R.O., 1901, *A Malay English Dictionary*. Singapore: Kelly and Nash, 2-vols.
- Winzeler, Robert, 1988, 'Ethnic Groups and the Control of Natural Resources in Kelantan, Malaysia', in: A. Terry Rambo, Kathleen Gillogly, and Karl L. Hutterer (eds), *Ethnic Diversity and the Control of Natural Resources in Southeast Asia*, pp. 83-97: Ann Arbor: Michigan Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Michigan. [Michigan Papers on South and Southeast Asian Studies 32.]
- Wright, Stephen, 1994, *Going Native*. New York: Delta (Dell).