

# The *Suruhanos*: Traditional Curers on the Island of Guam

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**Abstract.**—Despite multiple phases of colonial heritage, the *suruhanos* have managed to pass down a relatively unique body of knowledge in the unwritten method of apprenticeship learning. A belief in Catholicism is the major crosscultural influence. The *suruhanos* have an extensive knowledge of the natural environment, as evidenced by the lists of medicinal plant remedies compiled in this report. Interaction with the physical-biotic environment involves a rapport with the *taotaomona* or spirits of the island's ancient inhabitants. The *suruhano* concept of disease is characterized by a belief that illness results from either spirit causes or natural causes. In either case, an integrated system of curing is typical of most *suruhanos*. Through a comparison of the techniques of several main informants, it was found that, despite individual preferences, the *suruhano* method of curing involves medicinal plants, mystical body lotions, dietary advice, massage and a curing power. Patients believe the power of the *suruhano* to be the only method of dealing with many illnesses and currently find it still adaptive to maintain a choice of utilizing the services of either a traditional curer or Western physician. A competitive nature and isolationist personality lends an air of mystique to their presence and they are highly respected members of the community. They instill confidence in their patients as a naming process identifies illness, relieves patient anxiety, and enables patients to generate their own healing resources. The *suruhanos* possess natural psychotherapeutic abilities in addition to the indeterminate functional effects of the plant medicines and massage technique.

## Introduction

Around 1500 B.C., an aboriginal people migrated to the high volcanic islands of the Marianas from the direction of Southeast Asia. These people are now known as the precontact Chamorro. As Micronesians, they established multiple chiefdoms and matrilineal descent groups as the social organization underlying a fishing, gathering, simple horticultural society. Among them were craft specialists, who were experts in the manufacture of tools, canoes, shell money, and fiber nets. Also, as in most societies, there were those who were knowledgeable concerning the treatment of illness.

The early Chamorro lived a relatively peaceful, well adapted life until the sixteenth century when Ferdinand Magellan discovered the Marianas Islands. Actually, it was more of a discovery for the islanders than for Magellan because Magellan saw only a bit of the past. The Chamorro saw a lot of their future. Their sporadic, intrasocietal warfare was soon abandoned for collective resistance against the superior forces of the conquistadores. After fifteen to twenty years of fighting, the Chamorro uprisings were extinguished. The decimated islanders were

forced into central village locations, missionization, and an *encomienda* peasant-type subsistence. They now had iron to bring them out of the Stone Age. Spanish colonists soon established Guam as a resupply point in the Pacific, on a trade route between Mexico and the Philippines. Inter-marriage between islanders and people with Filipino, Spanish, and Mexican ancestry led to the emergence of the Chamorro Mestizo.

With massive technological change and the introduction of new flora and fauna, the westernization of the Chamorro people throughout the successive Spanish, American, and even Japanese dominance has nearly obliterated many indigenous cultural activities. The people still fish, but from fiber glass boats with monofilament line and steel hooks. Gardens are still tended, but the plants are mostly introduced. Postcontact tradition such as the fiesta with tortillas and red rice are considered to be Chamorro culture.

The most intact survival of a cultural activity of the precontact Chamorro is practice of the *suruhano* curing. These male and female traditional curers or practitioners of native medicine exist today as living representatives of a past way of life. They have also been affected by Westernization, but to a slight extent, because the bulk of their knowledge and practice is still in its precontact state.

The *suruhano* or traditional folk doctor of Guam is a cultural adaptation that has persisted through time as a consequence of the continued demand for the practice. A measure of successful adaptation is the good health of the people in a culture that is interacting with a specific environment. The main function of the *suruhano* is to promote good health within the community in which he practices. The maintenance of good health involves using a body of knowledge and beliefs in the prevention and cure of body ailments which, in turn, enhance the survival potential of a population. Thus, the *suruhano* is seen as a single cultural adaptation to the Guam ecosystem, which facilitates adaptation on a large scale. For without good health, other forms of cultural activity are naturally affected. Originally, the belief that curers could improve the state of health of an individual by using their power, knowledge, and material objects arrived on Guam with the first migrations from islands in Southeast Asia and either actual curers or the concepts of curing were brought on initial migrations. Each individual village probably had one *suruhano* just as the existing villages of present day Guam each have one or at most two *suruhanos*; for there is usually mistrust among them and interaction between two *suruhanos* in respect to their profession is mostly when an older *suruhano* decides it is time to pass his knowledge and abilities on to a younger person.

The *suruhanos* are men, but there are also some women curers termed *suruhanas* that still practice the traditional methods of curing patients. Generally, the two sexes are both competitive and have little regard for the abilities of the other. The lack of interaction between the *suruhano* and the *suruhana* is much greater than the mistrust between two *suruhanos* or between two *suruhanas*. A factor that probably adds to the difference between the *suruhano* and the *suruhana* is that the practice is usually learned by a member of the same sex as the person passing on the knowl-

edge. This has resulted in some minor consistent differences between the practices of both sexes, but the basic underlying patterns of traditional medicine are prevalent in both groups.

Both the *suruhano* and the *suruhana* have so completely adapted to the Guam environment that it is difficult to trace their practices to parallel activities of the curers of ancient Southeast Asia beyond the fact that they both have powers that are most effective when used in conjunction with material objects such as plant medicines. Since the male *suruhano* is most prevalent on Guam, the bulk of my experience and discussion is concentrated on their activities, but a more detailed account of the *suruhana* and her practice will follow my description of the *suruhano*.

This paper is about a particular practice that exists within a unique cultural setting. Even more specifically, it is about a few individuals who are at the matrix of the practice. Due to the secretive nature of the practice, it would be difficult to impersonally describe a random cross section of the population of curers on Guam. Thus, a few well informed informants and their ideas, beliefs, actions, *materia medica*, and case patients are discussed in detail. The *suruhanos*, especially Juan Q. Cepeda, the main informant in this report, demanded a personal interest and participation. So the researcher's role is indicated in some descriptions as an inextricable influence in the development of a specific response.

### Methods

The research methodology is one of purely participant observation in respect to ethnographic description of the *suruhanos* because of the scant amount of literature to be reviewed concerning earlier accounts of the practice.

An ethnoscientific approach provided the basic framework for the compilation of data. The behavioral phenomena are described in emic terms, so that a cognitive model is built. This enables the reader to see how the curers view themselves within their own cultural setting. From emic description, etic principles are derived in order to make the information relevant on a comparative basis. The premises of Ward H. Goodenough provided the basis for this approach. In one of his works (1970: 112) he states, "... emic description requires etics and by trying to do emic descriptions we add to our etic conceptual resources for subsequent description. It is through etic concepts we contribute to the development of a general science of culture." The final section of this paper provides a more anthropologically operative look at *suruhano* curing and attempts crosscultural comparison with other curers as well as tracing direct lines of crosscultural influence on the *suruhanos* themselves.

Prevading the ethnoscientific approach is a research perspective of ecological anthropology and adaptive functionalism. As man interacts with his physical biotic environment, each cultural phenomenon that relates to subsistence or survival has a function or a purpose as it is used to satisfy a desired need. If a learned trait brings the intended result, it has a positive or adaptive function and may become established with a degree of continuity. If a trait does not provide results in the minds of the persons concerned, it is maladaptive, failing to enhance the survival

potential of a population.

**Juan Q. Cepeda, *Suruhano***

In his experiences with aboriginal curers of Australia, John Cawte (1974: 29) has outlined three personality types: mystic, sociopathic, and altruistic. He states, "The mystic doctor is an introspective individual, preoccupied with dreams and the spirit world. . . The sociopathic doctor is a manipulative individual whose personal interest in medicine and the law is calculated from the prospects it offers for power and profit. . . The altruistic doctor is a shrewd, alert man who is more identified with the aims of society and the adjustment of individuals." These personality types can be accurately used in the characterization of the three main informants in this research. Juan Cepeda, the eldest of the three, is a master of curing as his charismatic appearance and mannerisms, self-reliance, uncanny perceptive abilities, and thought capacities truly give him a mystical personality, as these traits are not common to the average person within the culture. Jose Quintanilla is a jovial person with an intense desire for recognition and high status. His extroverted nature tends to cause suspicion among new acquaintances from cultures other than his own, as it is expected by many that a curer be mysterious; however, Jose uses his smile as a psychological asset and a sincerity underlies all interaction with patients. Miguel Ungacta, the altruistic curer, is compared to Juan's well rounded personality and Jose's overt expressivity, a quiet individual who constantly broods over the social problems affecting members of his community. Juan, Jose, and Miguel all primarily key on the individual's health problems, but Miguel is also preoccupied with group maladaptions such as crime and pollution and correspondingly projects a more pessimistic view of the present and future as compared to Juan and Jose's incessant optimism. However, this concern with social problems is not detrimental to patients and his curing methods yield results that are extremely favorable.

The first thing Juan Q. Cepeda told me on my initial visit to his home in Chalan Pago was, "I am the pain doctor, not the city doctor." This distinction means that he is a traditional *suruhano* medicine doctor, far removed from the practice of Western medicine. If his knowledge and practice is placed in an anthropological category, Juan is a curer. Like sorcerers, he uses material objects in the art of curing illness. A sorcerer, though, is sometimes known to direct harm and Juan only heals people, and he is never known in the community as a sorcerer. He says that a few people are ignorant of his powers and think of him as a witch or witch doctor, but if people are to benefit from his expertise, they must believe in his knowledge. If they are nervous and afraid, he cannot help them.

Specifically, Juan cures afflictions that fall into his following categories:

1. Shortness of breath (mostly tuberculosis)
2. Problems of sleeping
3. Loss of appetite
4. Body pains (most illnesses)
5. Inability to bear children



6. High blood pressure
7. Temperature control (fevers and chills)
8. Paralysis and shaking (from stroke and diseases of the nervous system)
9. Mental illness
10. External skin disorders
11. Problems of the eyes, sinuses and ears.

His medicine for these problems is made from wild plants that he collects from the jungle. Most plants are collected in the Pagat area on Guam's northeast coast, but a few are collected in other areas.

When entering the jungle, the *suruhano* asks permission to gather the desired plants by speaking to the *taotaomona*, the spirits of the old people. Juan has never seen the *taotaomona*, but has felt their presence and the trees are seen to sway from their movements. The *taotaomona* mostly come out at night and Juan never ventures into the jungle to collect medicine at night; thus, he never sees them. He tells the *taotaomona* what plants he is taking and who he is treating. He also tells them what the illness is that he is attempting to cure. He learned the proper permission phrases from Mariano Charfauros, an old *suruhano* who once treated a problem that Juan's wife had. Juan says that his wife was *atmariao* (mentally ill) and he was so thankful that she was cured that he asked the old man to teach him his knowledge of curing. Since then, Juan, now sixty-five years old, has been using the techniques that were taught to him.

Juan wanted to be sure that I recorded that he first learned medicine as a result of the old *suruhano* curing his wife. It was important that the community recognized legitimate reasons for his change in status and role. I wasn't sure that his wife would appreciate people knowing that she once suffered from a condition that her husband referred to as "crazy." I soon learned that I was wrong. Everyone who has a face-to-face relationship with Juan and his wife knows that she was cured of this problem and she is his primary proof that the medicine he learned from the old *suruhano* is effective. Juan says that he has also cured other *atmariao* or mentally ill persons.

In 1946, Juan's wife was washing clothes outside at 6:30 P.M. when she felt something touch her shoulder. It was too dark to see what it was that has touched her and she decided that she had better go inside. Soon her arm started to become sore and in three weeks she could not raise her arm. Then she became *atmariao*, losing her grip on reality and acting irrationally. Juan took her to the Navy hospital where a doctor made an incision, probably for drainage, on the inside of the elbow of the immobile arm. He commented to Juan that she had lost blood, possibly referring to the fact that an infection can drastically consume a person's blood supply. His wife was given two blood transfusions and medication. Because of this Juan surmised that a vampire *taotaomona* had drained his wife of her blood. Hence, he summoned the old *suruhano* to treat his wife who was released from the hospital, but was still suffering from mental distress. The old *suruhano* came from Agat village in southern Guam and administered his medicine and massage.

Soon after, she fully recovered, much to the surprise of everyone. Juan, who was working in a bakery at the time, was especially impressed when the old *suruhano* also cured a painful abscess on the back of his head. So, Juan offered to pay the man by supplying him with baked goods and helping him collect and prepare medicines for one year. After the one year payment period, Juan asked Mariano Charfauros if he could train him to be a *suruhano*. The old man consented and Juan practiced under his supervision for another full year till Mariano said he was proficient enough to practice on his own. That night, in 1949, Juan went to the evening Rosary at his church and asked the Blessed Virgin Mary to give him strength to go out and help the people that needed his ability to cure. He feels that he gained a power to cure and that his prayers were answered.

Juan hasn't changed the techniques that he first learned and he still uses the all-purpose combination of medicinal plants in most of his cures. The plants do not have known specific functions, but act in conjunction with each other to provide a cure. None of the ingredients can be left out, for each of the plants is equally important. The plants are usually crushed in a *lusong* (a basalt stone mortar) that was taken from an ancient precontact Chamorro village site. The stone does not impart any power, but is functional as the perfect tool for the job.

The leaves, stems, and roots of thirteen plants are crushed into a pulp with the mortar and a stone pestle. The pulp is kept in the freezer until it is needed. When a batch of *amot fresko* (fresh medicine) is made, it can be used to treat a number of patients who are most often family and friends in the community. Juan helps anyone that comes to him free of charge. Most patients, though, pay him a few dollars or more often give him a produce item. This method of payment is the traditional reciprocal exchange that has persisted since the *suruhano* practiced in the ancient past.

Juan's curing is his primary interest, but he also participates in peripheral activities that provide for added income. He has a large hog ranch and has developed a large chicken house for egg production. He has six children and his only unmarried son will some day take over his egg-producing business because that son is the only one who prefers the life of traditional subsistence. Juan also does a great deal of fishing and coconut crabbing for household food.

Juan thinks of himself as the best doctor in the world. There are other *suruhanos*, but he says that their knowledge of medicine is inadequate and that they lie to people and often fail to cure them. He also says that many times they don't even collect their own medicine. Juan doesn't yield to the requests of patients for what he terms "special medicines." These are plants or remedies that are different from the thirteen ingredients in his all-purpose combination. The same medicine is used for all ailments and if a person wants a different special medicine, Juan will suggest that the person go to another *suruhano* who will yield to his request. He is certain that other *suruhanos* and *suruhanas* are inept because they can be tricked. His ability to diagnose the exact pain location through the use of his power, observation and questions lead him to the exact source of the problem. In Juan's

view, a person can go to another *suruhano* and tell him that he has a pain in his left shoulder when the pain is actually in his right shoulder. The other *suruhano* will treat the left shoulder. Juan would be able to tell that he was being tricked just by observing the person and using his power. Also, Juan visually examines the symmetry of the patient's body to determine the source of the illness. If a swelling or recession on the surface of an arm or leg is detected, this may indicate illness. Juan also looks to see the clarity of the patient's eyes and the droop of the eyelids. He has seen so many ill persons that he detects a number of clues that aid in diagnosis (Table 1). In the line of questioning, Juan asks the patient if he sleeps well or has had regular bowel movements, for lack of sleep and irregularity are indications of illness. With a woman patient who has borne children, Juan will often check the chronological record of past pregnancies. The number of miscarriages and the time gaps between her oldest and youngest child when the woman was not pregnant gives Juan insights into the severity of a woman's weakness. If a woman has had recurrent miscarriages or too many infertile years, her body is more prone to develop illness and long-term treatment is most likely needed. Miscarriages are especially indicative of patient weakness because it is thought to be the result of a mother passing on her disease or weakness to the child.

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Table 1. The diagnostic variables in Juan Q. Cepeda's determination of illness areas.

MENTAL:	<b>Power</b> —the ability to determine an illness area by a particular feeling state of the <i>suruhano</i> .
VISUAL:	<b>Eye-lid Position</b> —the degree of closure or drooping of the eyelids. A weak person's eyes are less open.
	<b>Skin Texture</b> —rough, dull skin surface indicates illness as compared to smooth, shiny skin.
	<b>Body Movement</b> —erratic movement as compared to graceful movement indicates illness.
	<b>Body Symmetry</b> —a swelling or recession on one side of the body as compared to the same spot on the other side indicates illness.
QUESTIONING:	<b>Sleeping Problems</b> —restless sleep, dreaming or sleep-walking indicate illness.
	<b>Number of Bowel Movements</b> —irregularity indicates illness.
	<b>Past Diet</b> —having eaten the wrong foods may be a cause of illness.
	<b>History of Fertility</b> —recurrent miscarriages of women of child-bearing age indicates illness.
TOUCHING:	<b>Skin Texture</b> —rough, dry skin indicates illness.
	<b>Tissue Thickness</b> —thick, stiff muscles indicate illness.
	<b>Vein Protrusion</b> —collapsed or invisible veins indicate illness.
	<b>Symmetry of Pulse</b> —a weak pulse in a body limb as compared to the same spot on the other side of the body indicates illness.
	<b>Symmetry of Body Heat</b> —a difference in heat in one limb as compared to the same spot on the other side of the body indicates illness.
	<b>Reflex Actions</b> —lack of movement when a nerve center is bombed indicates illness.

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injury such as a broken bone, a burn, or a cut. He does not treat these problems and feels that the Western physician is most capable in this capacity. He also feels that the Western physician is not as capable as himself in the treatment of illnesses. His diagnoses and treatment are felt to be superior.

Once a patient has been diagnosed, a dosage of the medicinal tea is given. The dosage is never exact or standardized. A feeling of how much is needed to cure the person is sensed by Juan. The tea is drunk by the patient, but if the person has an open sore or a skin rash, the medicine is also applied topically to heal the skin.

Occasionally, Juan advises pregnant women by mostly recommending diets and helping the expectant mother to sleep well because if the woman does not sleep well or eat right, it is thought that the baby will "melt." Juan doesn't deliver babies because he says that he is not interested in this sort of work, but that his wife has acted in this capacity before. For a woman who desires to become pregnant and is unsuccessful or suffered recurrent miscarriages, Juan gives the patient his medicine. The medicine itself does not promote fertility but cures the patient's illness that is thought to prevent pregnancy or a healthy delivery.

Dietary advice is given to all patients because Juan feels that some foods have illness-producing qualities. Commercial foods have poisons in them that people are not aware of and many people are thought to become ill because the poisons build up in their systems. Most of Juan's dietary advice is to reduce protein because protein facilitates the building of pressure in the nerves and the veins, the areas where most illnesses find their source. Mostly, Juan advises against eating fatty meats, soft-boiled eggs, milk, butter, cheese, vegetable oils, coconut oil, chicken or bone stock soup with oil, and alcoholic beverages. He recommends that patients eat lean meat, rice, sugar, hard-boiled eggs, fish, vegetables, bread, salt, coffee, and tea.

Every affliction is thought to be the result of a clot in a vein or air in the nerves. Varicose veins are visible proof of this concept of illness. Juan always administers massage along with his medicine and dietary advice. As with the medicine, the massage partly acts as a vehicle for his own power and partly to displace the clotted blood or air bubbles that are considered harmful. The old *suruhano* who taught Juan how to massage used a pounder made from the heart of a banana tree to "bomb" the flesh of his patients. The massage is called *matantan* or "bombing" by the *suruhano*. This is because of the vigorous force with which the patient is massaged. Juan feels that the banana stalk pounder scares the patients; so he most often uses his hands to massage the patient. If the patient is overweight, a lead weight is concealed in the palm of the hand and slipped from the pocket when the patient isn't looking. The small lead ingot gives greater force to the massage, but Juan doesn't let his patients know of this technique for fear that it would frighten them. He demonstrated the technique of "bombing" by repeatedly thrusting his fingertips into my forearms or pounding my shoulders with his fists. It was a painful demonstration, but he doesn't bruise the skin and the pain is gone quickly because he concentrates the massage on nerve centers, which sends split-second electric sensations of pain shooting throughout the body. Afterwards, the patient is relaxed

and feels refreshed. On a frail or very sick person, his massage is much less forceful.

Besides diagnosis by means of power and visual perception, the pressure areas that cause illness are determined by feeling the patient's skin surface. If it is tight and the underlying muscle is thick, massage is used to displace the pressure. Release of the pressure is determined when the flesh softens, veins protrude on the skin surface, and the air in the nerves is released from the mouth in the form of a belch or more preferably from the gastrointestinal tract. Juan compares the air bubbles that are to be found in the nerves to a blown-up balloon. The walls of the nerves become thin and taut. If the bubbles burst and the flesh "melts," the illness becomes serious. Sometimes a person comes to the *suruhano* too late and then Juan can predict the person's death. The more clots or air bubbles detected, the more the massage is needed. Juan said that the massage must be given daily and it must be hard to displace the air, for the flesh can melt as "when wood is left in water and it rots". He said that if I were sick and ten little babies massaged me everyday, it would not help, but if he massaged me everyday, I would be cured. There is only one spot on the body that Juan massages lightly. That is around the eye sockets. If a person has crossed eyes, Juan feels that the nerves around the eyes are out of balance. He says that there are clusters of nerves between the corner of the eye and the eyebrow. If one eye does not follow the other eye, Juan massages the nerves for the bad eye and this "balances the scale."

An area that has been operated on by a Western doctor is not massaged because the *suruhano* does not want to be blamed for further complications that could arise from the work of a physician who cuts nerves and blood vessels in a human body. He may attempt to relieve the pain in such an area by massaging around it and giving the patient medicine, but he can not assure the patient of a cure.

Juan said that he has cured people with serious illnesses such as paralysis, blindness or memory loss that results from stroke. Many of his patients also suffer from *lytiko* or amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (A.L.S.), a disease of the central nervous system that causes progressive paralysis. Other patients have *bodig* or parkinsonism dementia which results in progressive degeneration of speech ability and body tremors. Patients with these diseases cannot be helped to a great extent by Western physicians and often resort to the *suruhano*, who with his positive reassurance and sincere concern help to relieve much of the depression and fear which accompany such illnesses. Patients with *bodig* or *lytiko* receive the full course of treatment and the extremely high incidence of these afflictions on Guam has probably contributed to the perpetuation of the demand for *suruhano* service through time. The frequency of A.L.S. on Guam is 100 times greater than in the rest of the world (Reed et al., 1966).

It is felt that the longer a person waits or spends with Western physicians, the harder it will be to cure the patient. Juan feels that cancer is the most difficult illness to cure. He has succeeded in relieving some of the immobility and pain of terminal victims, but feels that he needs more time and experience in his treatment of this disease before he can cure it with the success that he has with other illnesses.

Juan hopes that someone else will take up where he has left off when he is too old to practice medicine. He was anxious that his methods be recorded because he feels that much of the money and time being spent in Western research is being wasted.

Juan has specific reasons why he feels Western medicine is inferior to his. Juan projects optimism in the presence of his patient, even if his inner feelings tell him differently. He feels that Western doctors tell the patient too much about their illness and this worries the patient. This worry "eats away" at their strength, compounding the ill effects of the disease and prolonging a cure. Juan tells the patient very little about the nature of the illness, only that he has detected pressure and he will soon relieve the pain.

The initial contact with the patient and the recognition of the problem is an important process, as it relieves the anxieties of a patient; for, someone other than himself is aware of the problem. E. Fuller Torrey (1973: 16), in his holistic discussion of the functions of traditional curers, has termed this naming process the principle of Rumpelstiltskin. The ability to name the problem relieves a significant portion of anxiety.

Another failing of Western medicine in Juan's own crosscultural comparison is that Western doctors give too many different medicines to their patients, of which they are not fully aware of all of the effects and allow patients to refill prescriptions. Juan feels that constant supervision of the person taking the medicine is required. That is why he prefers only three or four patients who require daily treatment and observation. Of course, this would be difficult for a Western physician with his enormous patient inventory.

Juan reads very little and has gained most of his knowledge from experience. He said that he wanted to visit the nearby island of Rota to teach the people his knowledge because like the Guamanians, many of them are wasting their time, money, and hopes on Western medicine. Rota has the necessary plants to make medicine. He also thinks that the United States and other countries have valuable medicinal plants, but people do not know how to use them; thus their value is lost.

Local *taotaomona* spirits cause many of the illnesses that Guamanians have, just as vampires and other monsters are thought to afflict Americans. Not all of the *taotaomona* are malevolent and not all illnesses are caused by the spirits, but if a person invades their territory and does not ask permission, especially if the person destroys part of the environment without reason, the spirits are thought to touch a person causing bruises or a swelling known as *pukpuk maipe*. The *suruhano* can cure a *taotaomona*-caused illness with his powers and treatment. Juan has many stories to tell of the effect of the *taotaomona*. He spoke of some hunters who "shot up" the jungle and came out with bruises on their bodies without having felt any blows to the skin.

Anyone who believes in Juan's power and medicines will be treated by him today, but when he was younger he didn't massage young women because he thought about "life" (sex). Now, though, he says that he is old and does not feel "life"



so much. He will still ask a woman's husband for permission to massage the patient in order to avoid any conflict. He emphasized that the woman's breasts are not massaged, only the area surrounding them. Massage is best performed with the clothes removed, but can also be applied to a fully clothed patient. The patient is usually seated throughout the massage, but an extremely ill person can be massaged while lying down.

By massaging the proper area, which might not be the actual painful area, the pressure is released. Juan says that it is like when the clouds move away and the sky becomes clear. He knows that the "bombing" is extremely painful, but he says that it is only "natural pain" and that the end result is the relief from the more serious and deeper "other pain." Juan compares his "bombing" technique to dropping a grain of rice into a full glass of water. If the rice is dropped close to the water's surface, the water is not displaced, but if the grain of rice is dropped far from the surface, the water splashes from the glass. Thus, the harder the massage, the more pressure is displaced.

*Tuba* vinegar, called *palai*, is applied during the massage because it helps to allow for a smooth flow of power from the *suruhano* to the patient. The *palai* is made by tapping the flower sprout of the coconut palm and mixing a small amount of rain water to the *tuba* sap. The mixture is stored in glass jugs and allowed to ferment for a couple of years. The *palai* is spread on the patient's skin surface during the massage. Milk can also be used, but the *tuba* vinegar is preferred. Coconut oil is not used by Juan because it is not acid and would act to retard the flow of power by closing the pores in the skin.

If a patient has a headache, Juan may massage the hips. It is up to the particular feeling of the *suruhano* about the patient and his detection of pressure as to where the concentration is applied. Massage is used for all ailments, but is especially intense and used more frequently with a paralyzed person; for this type of person has an excess of the undesirable pressure. Juan feels that a person who is becoming paralyzed should recognize the early symptoms of paralysis by the numbing needle-like sensations in the fingers. The person should then seek immediate help from the *suruhano*.

Treating an area other than the painful area is parallel to the methodology of Chinese acupuncture; however, Juan says that acupuncturists can only cause some temporary relief and cannot cure because they do not have a complete knowledge or power. Juan also comments on the operations of Filipino faith healers who are reputed to reach into a person's body with their bare hands and bring out illness-causing objects such as straw, nails, tacks, and wire. He has talked to patients who have experienced such operations that heal instantly, leaving no scar. Juan feels that such activities are most likely trickery and that they would not affect a lasting cure such as he can.

Juan's massage can cause alterations in body temperature. He states, "I have the power to make you hot if you are cold or cold if you are hot, but I must use something (referring to either his massage, *palai*, or medicine)." Fever, or "over-

heating” as Juan calls it, causes dreaming and talking in the sleep. This problem is curable by his techniques.

One afternoon, I was fortunate to find Juan willing to explain further about his own power. It was easy to claim that one has power, but I wanted to know how he felt about this unseen entity. He said that when preparing to treat a patient, he “changes his brain,” meaning he utilizes a different state of consciousness when curing. He concentrates on the patient the night before the treatment and builds power. A part of this change in mental intensity is the looking back and remembering all similar patients that he has had and cured of the specific illness that he is currently dealing with. He draws power from these past experiences that are stored in the brain. This concentration of thought does not detract from his other activities. Since power is drawn from experience, the older one is, the more power one has. Sometimes the patient is affected by this power buildup before Juan even comes into his presence. Some patients feel an intensity of pain building up as Juan prepares to cure them. Juan spoke of one man who had a pain buildup until the pain in his head became unbearable. At this point, the patient knew that Juan was coming and looked out his window. Upon seeing Juan approaching, much of the pain washed from his head. Juan also spoke of a current stroke patient who could tell exactly when Juan left his house to visit him for treatment, even though Juan came at a different time each day. He would become tense and his muscles would ache and his wife said that she could not speak to him when he was in this state because he was too irate. As soon as Juan arrived, he would calm down and the pain would leave his body. Other patients have said that they see visions of Juan’s face in their windows when he is building his power. However, the patient being affected by Juan’s power in his absence is not always the case, but his power does work everytime he has physical contact with the patient and he is always drawing from past experiences to gain that power.

Juan said himself, that he does not fully understand this gift from the Virgin Mary. He cited an experience that happened when he first started treating patients. He picked up a bottle of the *palai* and it started foaming, bubbling and fuming. He felt that this was due to his power somehow flowing into the *palai*; however, he has never been able to cause this reaction again or control the flow of his power so specifically. To Juan, this incident was an indication that he was definitely in possession of a unique ability.

### Collecting in the Jungle

On a subsequent visit to Juan’s house, we went to his ranch in the Pagat area on the northeast coast of Guam. The purpose of this trip was to gather medicinal plants for Juan’s all-purpose combination (Table 2). Juan said that during the past week, his reputation had reached the nearby island of Rota and he was asked to visit and teach some of the people his knowledge. He flew there for a few days and then returned home after a positive response from the Chamorros of Rota. He promised to bring back to them some of his medicine for the sick people on the

Table 2. Medicinal plants combined for medicine of Juan Q. Cepeda.

TAXONOMIC CLASSIFICATION	ENGLISH NAME	CHAMORRO NAME	COMMENTS
<i>Entada pursaetha</i>	Snuff-box bean, Large sea bean	<b>Bayogon dangkulo,</b> <b>Gayi dangkulo</b>	A climbing vine found island-wide. The leaf and stem are used. The seeds are poisonous.
<i>Mucuna gigantea,</i> <i>Canavalia maritima</i>	Small sea bean	<b>Bayogon dikike,</b> <b>Gayi dikike</b>	Both of these species of vine are collected as one ingredient. The leaf and stem are used. <sup>1</sup>
<i>Peperomia mariannensis</i>	Peperomia	<b>Potpupot</b>	A fleshy herb collected at Pagat. It has moisturizing qualities.
<i>Piper guahamense</i>	Wild Piper	<b>Pupulu ñ aniti</b>	This member of the pepper family is collected at Pagat. Both the stem and leaf are used and have an aromatic fragrance.
<i>Melothria guamensis</i>		<b>Ahgaga</b>	A rare climbing vine only found in northern Guam. Both the leaf and stem are used.
<i>Cassytha filiformis</i>		<b>Mayagas</b>	A leafless wirelike vine collected at Pagat.
<i>Randia cochinchinensis</i>		<b>Sumak</b>	A shrub, both the leaf and stem are collected at Pagat.
<i>Hedyotis foetida</i> var. <i>mariannensis</i>		<b>Paudedo</b>	A shrub, both the leaf and stem are collected from Pagat. It has an ill-smelling leaf.
<i>Elatostema calcareum</i>		<b>Tapun Ayuyu</b>	An herb, both the leaf and stem are collected at Pagat. This plant has moisturizing qualities.
<i>Asplenium nidus</i>	Bird's nest fern	<b>Galak Dangkulo,</b> <b>Galak Feda</b>	Both the leaf and root are collected at Pagat.
<i>Microsorium punctatum</i>	Strapleaf fern	<b>Galak Dalalay</b>	Both the leaf and the root are collected at Pagat.
<i>Phymatodes scolopendria</i>	Fern	<b>Kajlao</b>	Both the leaf and root are collected at Pagat.
<i>Davallia solida</i>	Fern	<b>Pugua Machena</b>	Both the leaf and root are collected at Pagat.
<b>Supplementary Ingredients</b>			
<i>Vigna marina</i>		<b>Akangkang</b> <b>Marilasa</b>	A yellow-flowered vine found growing on the beach. Both the leaf and stem are used.
<i>Nervilia aragoana</i>	Water-root orchid	<b>Seiyaihagun</b>	A rare orchid found in the jungles of northern Guam and more commonly on Rota. Also used as a special medicine for pinkeye. The leaf and the bulb are used.
<i>Erythrina variegata</i> var. <i>orientalis</i>	Coral tree	<b>Gaogao</b>	A large common tree found island-wide. The leaf is used. <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The leaf of both of these climbing vines is collected at the Naval Communications Center and are very similar in structure. It is difficult to determine whether it is a confusion or Juan's own taxonomic classification that causes him to consider both species as one. The *Mucuna* is most often called **bayogon dikike** or **gayi dikike** and the *Canavalia* is known as **akangkang tasi**, but other combinations I have recorded contain both species.

<sup>2</sup> It does not matter whether a plant is flowering or producing spores, but dead flowers, dead leaves, or dead seeds are discarded. Dead or rotted roots are also discarded. The youngest leaves are preferred, but it is not crucial in regards to the effectiveness of the medicine. All of Juan's main and supplemental ingredients are indigenous to the island of Guam or naturalized by the Chamorro. The supplementary ingredients were learned from Mariano Charfauros, but rarely used by Mariano or Juan. They are nonessential to success in curing. Their specific functions as supplements have been forgotten.

island. Also during the previous week, two Guamanian *suruhanos* who practiced in other villages came to Juan and asked if he would teach them his methods of curing. The two men were Miguel Ungacta of Ordot village and Jose S. N. Quintanilla of Santa Rita village. They had heard that Juan felt that it was time for him to pass on his knowledge to others and decided to see if the older Juan knew some techniques that they could apply to their own knowledge and practice. *Suruhanos* are generally isolationist in personality and practice when it comes to interaction with other curers, but they do learn and pass on information orally when they feel the time is right.

Hence, on this collecting day, Juan had to gather three times as much medicine, so that he could make a batch for himself, some for his new associates, and some to take to the island of Rota. Jose Quintanilla accompanied Juan this day to help with the collecting.

Entering the ranch area, Juan walked ahead of the car and removed the tire traps that were designed to discourage trespassers. They were made of heavy planks that were studded with long spike nails, then imbedded into the dirt road and camouflaged with grass. Parking in a field with a large grazing cow, we walked down a steep path lined with a chain guide rail. Juan would leave his large cloth collecting sack on the main trail and would go to precise spots in the jungle where he knew he would find a particular species of plant. The side trails were marked with scarred spots on the trees. Juan demonstrated how to uproot the *galak* ferns from rotted stumps and clean off the decayed debris from the long roots. The dead and old leaves were stripped from the plants because the youngest leaves are the most desirable for making medicine. Upon returning to the main trail and the collecting sack, he cut the tops from the long strap-like leaves of the ferns. Later the plants were more thoroughly cleaned back at his house. We moved along to collect *paudedo* and Juan crushed some of the leaves to let me smell the unpleasant pungent odor of this particular segment of his plant combination. Further along the trail, we met his son who had been hunting blackbirds. Juan sent his son down another trail to collect other species for his medicine. We stopped along the trail to overlook the coast that was far below. Juan's land covered the high area we were standing on, all the way to the water's edge. The land was filled with coconut palms and Juan said that he had planted all of the palms himself around his ranch.

The climbing was tiring and Juan's new associate, Jose, waited at the car, complaining of a backache. Jose had earlier said that he was mostly interested in learning Juan's massage techniques because he had his own medicines that he considered more powerful than anyone else's. After moving out of Jose's earshot, Juan said that I should politely listen to Jose, but that Jose still had a lot to learn about medicine. Juan wanted his new *suruhano* friends to accept all facets of his knowledge or none at all, because each part of his system of curing is indispensable. So I also listened to the fifty-year-old Jose, but constantly had to reassure Juan that I knew he was the master of curing.

Juan was afraid that I would confuse his medicine with Jose's, but I found out



that many of Jose's methods of curing are similar to Juan's. Jose also believes that illness is the result of blood clots or air bubbles in the nerves causing pressure that can be detected by heat. Jose has practiced fewer years than Juan and specializes in specific ailments, but will treat most any problem. He also has an all-purpose combination of plants, but uses only five ingredients as opposed to Juan's thirteen. His plants are different than Juan's and he collects most of them in swampy areas. Jose claims that his medicine is especially effective on patients that have venereal disease, insomnia, or are "spitting blood." It is also given to women who desire pregnancy. He administers his medicine which is not crushed, but boiled into a tea and the patient is supposed to become hot and sweaty after drinking it. The sudorific medicinal tea is drunk in the evening and the patient is instructed to sleep covered with an excess of blankets to promote sweating. Then at 5:00 A.M., the patient has to get up and take a shower. Jose says the patient is much better after this treatment and feels "light as a bird."

Jose is particularly well known for his ability to help older women, who have had recurrent miscarriages or are barren, to have healthy babies. He says that as long as a woman is still menstruating, his medicine will open the tubes inside a woman and sexual intercourse with the husband will guarantee to impregnate a woman with a healthy baby. This is a particularly desirable ability because of the values placed on fertility by the Catholic beliefs of the Chamorro people.

Jose's grandmother taught him medicine and he feels that there are many sick people who need his services. In his opinion, there are more illnesses now than during the Japanese occupation when people lived off natural foods. Now the people are weak and dizzy from eating too many fatty foods from the stores. Jose firmly states that the people of today have an easy life, but that it is actually an easy death. Like Juan, Jose says that there is fresh medicine all over the world and that it is not the "dead medicine" that people buy in the pharmacy. Also like Juan, Jose believes in the *taotaomona* and asks permission when entering the jungle.

After collecting the desired plants at Pagat, we drove to the Naval Communication Center in northern Guam to collect *ahgaga* and *gayi*. While in the jungle, Juan told me about another medicinal plant called *seiyaihagun*, a wild orchid that is sometimes used independently of the combined medicine. He said he must go to a special place to collect this plant because it is rare these days, due to the predations of the giant African snail (*Achatina fulica*) that was introduced by the Japanese as a food item. The African snail consumes almost any plant in its path and has caused widespread destruction of useful plant life on the island. *Seiyaihagun* is primarily a special medicine plant that is used to cure pinkeye. The juice from the orchid's fleshy stem is squeezed into the eye through a cloth strain. It is logical that Juan would use a special medicine for the eyes which are very delicate. However, his all-purpose medicine is so mild that it can also be dropped into the eyes to cure irritations.

On the way back to Juan's house, I asked him if the wild plants were more powerful if picked in the jungle than if they were grown in the home garden. His

reply was that as long as they are alive, they work the same, but the plants soon die in the garden. He said that it is not right for them to grow there, meaning that they survive best with the exact environmental prescription of sun, soil, and moisture in their natural jungle habitat. Many of the plants collected grew on mosscovered rocks and in rotted leaf mold on the jungle floor.

### Cleaning the Medicinal Plants

Cleaning the medicinal plants was an all-day job. Jose Quintanilla and Miguel Ungacta were there to participate.

Usually, *suruhanos* follow an isolated practice, but Juan had let it be known that he wanted to pass on his knowledge. A seminar in traditional medicine on Guam is not a typical occurrence and I was fortunate to be an accepted participant. All of these men knew that I wasn't planning to become a *suruhano* myself, but agreed that their methods should be recorded. At times, they were doubtful about disclosing some of their guarded methods, especially when members of their families told them not to release this information because it is of no concern to non-Guamanians; however, the *suruhanos* decided that other people would be interested in their activities.

The first procedure in the plant-cleaning operation was to unload the collecting sacks and separate all of the different species into unmixed sections. The separate piles were of relatively uniform size in amount. The piles were lined up under a trellis of grape vines in Juan's backyard so that the medicine and the men would be shaded. The fern roots took the longest to clean because they had to be scraped to remove the fuzzy brown roots that covered the thick rhizomes. The dead leaves were removed from all of the leafy plants and vines. Juan said that this was very important because other plants mixed in with the medicinal plants might be poisonous.

As we worked, I talked with the other *suruhanos* that had come to benefit from the knowledge of their senior, Juan. We were careful to let Juan have the final say on all points of discussion. Listening to Miguel, I learned that he has many patients and enjoys visiting them because he gets lonely. He is a retired U.S. Navy serviceman who has travelled widely and is an avid reader. He has always held on to the traditional concepts of curing on Guam, but considers Western medicine to have more merit than Juan gives it. This is due to his wider range of crosscultural experience. He feels that diseases can be spread from one person to another and that a union of Western medicine and traditional Chamorro medicine would yield optimum results. Like Juan and Jose, he also believes in the *taotaomona* spirits and their illness-causing potential. Miguel feels that he has a power to cure people because he was born "feet first." He had come to Juan in order to broaden his experience and improve his own techniques. When Miguel treats a patient, he explains to them that his powers may seem supernatural and his methods peculiar, but they are natural to him and there is nothing to fear. A supernatural phenomenon is explained as only a natural phenomenon that isn't understood. He feels that

there is nothing mysterious about his power. It is an ability which he feels was given to him by the Good Lord.

Jose Quintanilla was as enthusiastic in his conversation as during my first meeting with him and he instructed me on the curing of syphilis. After a particularly graphic and accurate description of the symptoms of this disease that was first introduced by the Spanish colonialists, he informed me that the patient drinks his all-purpose medicinal combination just before going to bed in the evening. The patient covers up to promote sweating through the night. At 4:00 A.M., the patient gets up and soaks the genital area in cold water for five minutes, after which he takes a shower and is cured.

Jose drifted from this topic to his favorite subject, helping women to become fertile with his medicine. To prove his effectiveness in this specialty, he convinced me to drive to a nearby village where we visited a patient who told me that she had miscarried previous to her current four months state of pregnancy. This time she expected to have a healthy baby because of taking Jose's all-purpose medicine.

Having proudly shown me his latest accomplishment in his specialty, we returned to Juan's house where he had separated the scraped roots and leafy plants into three separate and equal portions of each species. There were to be three separate batches of medicine "smashed" the next day. Juan usually prepares a small amount in his ancient *lusong* mortar, but for an amount this size, he had constructed a larger mortar. This new mortar was a significant adaptation to his new relationship with the other *suruhanos* and the growing number of patients, due to his increasing reputation around the island.

A large wooden box, about one cubic yard in volume, was filled with cement and a five-gallon can placed in the center so that a pocket would be molded. After the cement hardened, the can was removed and a pumice grind stone was used to smooth the depression in the large cement mortar. Juan gathered some remnants of the plant cleaning operation and placed the leaves into the mortar. They were then smashed to clean the inside of the mortar. The juice was rubbed into the cement and the crushed leaves were left in the mortar overnight, so that the following day's pounding of medicine would not be spoiled by the smell of the cement in the finished product. The pestle that is used to pulverize the plant material was a long wooden pounder that was originally used to pound rice to remove the hulls.

### The Preparation of the Medicine

After a full day of collecting and a full day of cleaning, the third day was spent in the long and arduous task of "smashing" the plants into the *amot fresko* medicine. A full eight hours saw Juan, Jose and Miguel taking turns pounding the leaves into a wet, dark green, fibrous pulp. First, the leaves and roots were rinsed in large pots with clean water. The fern roots were pounded first. They are difficult to crush, but are most important, for according to Juan, the roots contain most of the medicine. Other *suruhanos* use only leaves and Juan considers this a failing. Next, the leaves were slowly added till the *lusong* was filled with a complete batch.

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A constant rhythmic pounding into the center, slowly crushed a small amount of the plants at the bottom. Each stroke pushed some of the material in the top layer to the bottom where it was slowly pushed back to the top along the sides. If a leaf from the overhanging *iba* cherry tree fell into the mortar, it was quickly removed so that the *amot* would not become contaminated.

At the end of the day, the medicine was fluffed by hand in a large pot to separate any of the leaves that might be stuck together and insure an even mixture throughout the entire batch. In earlier years, only a small amount of this medicine was made at a time because it quickly spoiled. With the advent of the refrigerator-freezer, though, Juan could make large amounts. About two quarts of the pulverized plant material was rolled into a tubular shape in aluminum foil. The three batches that were prepared resulted in seventeen rolls. Each roll contained approximately enough medicine to treat six people for a week. The medicine was put into Juan's freezer and he commented that it would remain viable for a year, although it rarely lasts that long because he has many patients.

The excess medicine was placed in a cloth and balled up so that Juan could prepare some for all of us to sample. The cloth "tea bag" was placed into a two-quart bowl of water and squeezed till the water turned into a dark, greenish-brown, opaque liquid. The tea bag was then put into the refrigerator, for the medicine can be extracted in this fashion a total of five times. One of Juan's traditional practices is to drink a cup of his mixture first before giving any to other people. After he tested the final product, we all drank some of the prepared medicinal tea. Having smelled the pungent odor that exuded from the mortar while the medicine was being prepared, I was surprised to find that the taste was very mild, not bitter, sweet or like perfume, but a slight chlorophyll vegetable taste that wasn't unpleasant at all.

I inquired if the medicine could be administered to a person of any age and whether the dosage was affected by the severity of the patient's illness. Juan said that he gives a dosage depending on his combined feeling about how ill the person is and how old they are. Even small babies can be given the *amot fresko*, but they only receive a small amount. A pinch of the plant material is boiled in water, strained, and put into the infant's bottle. Most adults receive from one to two cups of the medicinal tea daily.

Sitting and talking with the *suruhanos*, it was found that all of the beliefs and practices that they uphold fall into a logical framework of thought about illness and provide an essential function within the village communities. The supposed supernatural phenomena and the illnesses that affect members of the population are explained and treated with positive results providing the proof. An example of the *suruhano* logic is Juan's belief that if he becomes ill, it is because the *taotaomona* spirits have a particular dislike for one of his patients. When he treats such a patient, the affliction is transferred to him. Then, he must cure himself with his own methods. Juan has always been exceptionally healthy, so that this logic is rarely needed. Nevertheless, it is applicable, just as when the *suruhano* fails to cure

a patient, it can be said that they waited too long to see the *suruhano* and the damage is irreparable or that the *taotaomona's* influence proved stronger in that case. Most of the time, though, the *suruhano* is successful in curing *taotaomona*-caused illness. An unexplained phenomenon such as illness can be explained as the activity of spirits and the *suruhano* is the primary means of dealing with this belief.

### Collecting Jose's Medicine

Another visit with Juan, Miguel and Jose found them comparing human anatomy and ailments to those found in pigs and cattle. None of them have ever seen the inside of a human body, but they have all butchered livestock. The diseased tissue found in livestock is proof of their "melting flesh" concept of internal illness. They have examined the vile contents of animal tumors and determined them to be the result of pressure from air bubbles and blood clots. They said that in both humans and animals, pressure in the limbs is not as serious as pressure in the vital organs or the brain, which causes "deeper pain." Wild pigs are healthier than domesticated pigs and when they are butchered, they do not usually contain diseased organs. The *suruhanos* feel that this is because the wild pigs eat natural foods that contain medicines, while domestic hogs eat slop that is human food and contains poisons or is too rich in fats and protein. This correlation is logical, but fails to consider that a diseased wild pig has a lesser chance for survival than a domestic pig that does not have to search for food each day.

Jose, having convinced Juan that he should show me and Miguel his own knowledge of medicinal plants (Table 3) that were different than Juan's decided to take us on a collecting trip. Juan made excuses, saying that some of his young chickens needed to be rearranged in the chicken house, so that he would not have to tolerate listening to Jose's praise of his own medicine that day. Juan will never stray from his own combination plants as will Jose and Miguel. Miguel was especially interested in both Juan and Jose's combinations because he had previously only used "special medicines" for specific ailments and was enthused about learning an all-purpose plant combination.

Table 3. Medicinal plants combined for medicine of Jose S.N. Quintanilla.

TAXONOMIC CLASSIFICATION	ENGLISH NAME	CHAMORRO NAME	COMMENTS
<i>Zea mays</i>	Corn silk, Corn flower	<b>Batbas, Espiga</b>	Both of these parts of domesticated corn are used as one ingredient.
<i>Bambusa blumeana</i>	Bamboo root, Japanese bamboo	<b>Hale Piao</b>	The roots of this thorny bamboo are used.
<i>Phragmites karka</i>	Swordgrass, Reeds	<b>Kariso</b>	The young sprouts of this grass are used.
<i>Rynchospora corymbosa</i>	Sedge	<b>Chachachak</b>	The heart of this grasslike plant is peeled from the sprout.
<i>Sporobolus virginicus</i>	Beach grass, Salt grass, Beach dropseed	<b>Totóput</b>	The thin sprouts of this sand-dwelling grass are used.

It was interesting to find that the first ingredient Jose collected was the flower and silk from domestic corn. We went to a house in Mangilao, a community in Central Guam, where he had spotted a stranger's crop and asked the man if he could take some of the blossoms. The owner readily consented and Miguel started a conversation with the man. The farmer gave Miguel some seed corn to plant and allowed him to pick some small limes (*Citrus aurantifolia*) with which to make lemonade. Miguel called them *lemondemelon* and said that lemonade made from them would relieve coughs from the cold or flu. This remedy has been used a long time by Guamanians and is also recognized in the Southern United States where this same species of lime grows. In the United States, it is the Vitamin C content that is thought to aid in the relief of cold symptoms. It has also been reported that Pahang Malays sip the juice of this same species of citrus for relief from coughs (Gimlette and Thompson, 1971: 149).

The next stop on the collecting trip was in Maina, a river bed valley in Central Guam, to collect the roots from *hale piao*, also called "Japanese bamboo" by the Guamanians. It received this name, not because it was introduced from Japan, for it was growing on Guam before their arrival, but because of the thorny undergrowth of branches around the base being reminiscent of barbed wire. After using a machete to cut the roots from the base of the long bamboo poles, the *suruhanos* left this river bed area to collect plants in Santa Rita Village in southern Guam. In a swampy area which was formerly wet rice paddies, Jose collected two types of marsh grass. Only the hearts and the young sprouts were taken. The next stop was at Adelup Point, a beach in central Guam, to collect a beach grass that grows along the shore. This was the fifth and final ingredient.

I asked Jose how long he could preserve his medicine. He said that he can only keep it for three days in the refrigerator before it is spoiled. He doesn't freeze his medicine like Juan. Therefore, he collects very little each time he needs it. He boils the medicinal plants and bottles the tea in glass jugs that are distributed to his patients. Tasting the medicine, it was found that it had the flavor of cooked yellow squash and the appearance of tea. The most obvious effects of Jose's medicine are that it promotes the buildup of gas in the intestinal tract, which in turn causes the recipient to become constipated. The expulsion of gas from the gastrointestinal tract is an intended and desirable result, for this is thought to be the reduction of an illness-producing agent.

During the day that Jose's medicine was collected, Miguel pointed out some special medicinal plants that he recognized. At Santa Rita, he pointed out an herb called *batones* (*Hyptis capitata*) from the buttonlike flowers. It is crushed and applied to open cuts to aid in healing and the prevention of infection and tetanus. At Adelup Point, Miguel found a beach morning glory vine (*Ipomoea pes-caprae*), known as *alaihahi*, that is boiled into a tea for the treatment of chicken pox. The constant recognition of useful plants for both food and medicine provided the bulk of the conversation between the two *suruhanos* during that day. It is their most complete body of knowledge that makes them unique among the other members of the community and provides them with endless enjoyment.



## The Treatment of Patients

### Case One

Hearing of a man living in a southern village, who was in need of his service, Juan arrived on his initial visit to treat a patient. The man's arms were completely paralyzed. Talking to the patient, Juan learned that he had been paralyzed with *lytiko* for two years and Western physicians had been unable to reverse the condition. The preliminary questioning as to how the man felt and reassuring explanations about the required treatment helped to put the patient at ease. Juan always projects a positive outlook when speaking of curing. He has no room for doubt in a system that he feels is nearly perfect. Even more important, he does not want the patient to form doubts.

Juan asked the patient to try and raise his arms which was an impossibility and examined the patient's legs which were extremely weak, but allowed for slow walking. Next, Juan prepared two cups of medicine and after taking the first swallow, had the patient drink the entire amount. This dosage would be repeated once each day for an indefinite length of time.

Juan literally "bombed" the patient with jabbing fingertips and closed fists. The forceful massage was a systematic approach that concentrated on the pressure areas that Juan detected with his power and exploring touch. The pressure areas were determined to be on the sides of both arms, the base of the neck, and the tops of both hands. The symmetrical location of these areas was directly related to the symmetry of the paralysis.

The pressure areas were massaged repeatedly with great strength and the patient felt little pain because of the paralysis. During the massage, the *tuba* vinegar called *palai* was applied to the pressure areas and also rubbed on the forehead and chest. The *palai* contained two-year-old vinegar that wasn't made by Juan, but given to him as payment from another patient.

After concentrating on the crucial areas, the massage was extended from these points along the shoulders and up and down the arms, around the neck and forehead to further displace the blood that was loosened from the pressure areas. As Juan proceeded, the patient began to feel pain increasingly down his arms and into his hands. He even demonstrated that he could move his arms and fingers a bit more than was previously possible. The veins in his arms, being previously invisible, now protruded up and down the arms. According to Juan, this sign was most encouraging and he decided to increase the strength of the massage along the arms by reverting to a technique that he rarely employs. This was to use a pounder made from the base root and inner core of the banana tree. This measure seemed to be contradictory to earlier statements that he preferred not to use this tool, but absolute continuity is not a requirement of the practice of curing and the severity of this case called for a measure that was previously known to be effective and felt to be applicable at this time.

Juan sent one of the man's sons to cut and bring a small banana tree from the garden. The base was split open and a pounder about eight inches in diameter

was shaped with a machete. The tool had a rounded end and the hard rubberlike consistency of the pounder gives greater strength and accuracy to the massage without bruising the patient. It was interesting to see that Juan's expert touch, despite the strength behind his blows to the patient, seldom bruises the skin.

After completing the massive massage of the arms, the banana stalk pounder was used to massage up and down the legs with the heaviest concentration being directed to the top of the feet. This was a preventative measure to prevent the formation of debilitating pressure in the legs such as that which paralyzed the arms.

Finally, the patient, who was previously sitting, was supported in a standing position while Juan pounded the patient's buttocks with his closed fist.

The patient was impressed by the progress of only one initial visit and so was Juan. The progress was pain, but pain was felt where there had been none before. The patient, though, according to Juan, would be particularly difficult to cure because of the severity of the paralysis and many more treatments would be needed.

After further visits, over a span of several weeks, the patient's eyes became clearer, his slurred speech improved and he could flex his fingers with greater strength than before. Most of all, though, he enjoyed the company and attention he received from the *suruhano* and was trying hard to follow a treatment in which he had faith. This was important because paralysis patients on Guam are many times, not only restricted by their disease, but socially restricted by family members as well.

#### *Case Two*

Another patient which received extensive and long-term treatment with favorable results was an old friend of Jose's. They both worked for the Navy as civilian truck drivers. The patient was retired for two years when on a day in July, five months before treatment by the *suruhanos*, he was stricken with paralysis on the right side of his body as a result of a stroke. He got up early in the morning and went to the outdoor bathroom. A cold breeze hit him and he passed out on the ground. Jose said that he shouldn't have gone out without enough clothes on to let his body slowly adjust to the change in body temperature from the warm bed to the cool outdoors. The wind caused him to pass out from the heat that filled his body. In Chamorro, it is called *pasmu*, meaning a person is afflicted with paralysis because of a quick temperature change from hot to cold which causes the body heat to expand and damage internal parts of the body. Since that day, this patient had been unable to walk very well and one arm is paralyzed. He said that he was never sick a day in his life until that morning. He displayed pictures taken of him in his corn field in July, just before he was afflicted.

On the day I met this patient, Miguel gave the massage and administered Juan's medicinal tea. Both Jose and Miguel told how Juan came with them two days before and gave this patient his course of massage. Juan "bombed" the man so hard that he frightened him into fainting. The patient's wife cried and Miguel and Jose were worried, but Juan was composed and unaffected by this occurrence and applied the *palai* to the patient's chest and forehead. The strong scent of the vinegar worked like smelling salts and the man quickly resumed consciousness and the

massage was continued.

At the end of the treatment, the two *suruhanos* were paid with papayas, limes and guavas. Jose used a long pole to knock down the fruit from the large trees in the patient's front yard.

This patient especially believed in traditional medicine because his mother was a *suruhana*, but like most Guamanian patients with serious illnesses, the Western physician had been consulted first. For minor ailments, though, such as backaches, skin rashes, and sore throats, a person often visits the *suruhano* first. The patient's mother also believed like Jose, that not allowing the body to adjust to a temperature change or exposure to the wind can cause illness in some people. The patient's *suruhana* mother always covered herself with an excess of clothing and a hat to shield herself from debilitating wind. This is a practice that emerged and largely disappeared, for an excess of clothing is not essential today and most certainly was not a practice in precontact days when people wore almost no clothing at all.

The curers of Mexico adopted the European concept of drafts causing illness, as they believe that winds can penetrate the body, causing paralysis and other ailments. Richard L. Currier (1966) writes of the Mexican belief, "Night air is especially threatening, and almost every man who ventures outside the house after dark keeps a corner of his blanket or serape pulled up over his nose and mouth, to prevent the night air from entering his body." The Mexican concept of the hot-cold balance of the body entered Guam through the trade route and its influence is seen Jose's methodology.

On a subsequent visit to this patient, Jose and Miguel returned to give the patient further treatment. This visit brought a change in the treatment, which had previously been to administer Juan's method of treatment. Jose feels that a patient should sweat when taking medicine. He decided to promote heavy perspiration in this patient, so that some of the illness would be "sweated out." There is "natural sweating" and "other sweating," which is the removal of poisons and heat from the body. Jose directed Miguel to boil Juan's medicine into a hot tea. He prefers his own medicine to make a patient sweat, but he had run out of his since the last collecting trip. Giving the patient the hot tea, they then had the man lie in bed. It was already 85 degrees in the shade and they closed the windows in the room to make it hotter and prevent a breeze from hitting the patient. They wrapped the patient in three sheets, a bed spread, and a woolen army blanket. His head and feet were wrapped in towels and extra pillows were placed around his body. Lying there, looking like a mummy, with only his eyes and nose exposed to the air, the patient perspired for an hour and a half. Then, Miguel slowly unwrapped him over a half hour period. Little by little, he was exposed to the room temperature and had to urinate in a jar because it was too soon for him to be exposed to the outside temperature in the outhouse. Miguel mopped the sweat from the patient's body and changed his pajamas before spending an hour massaging him. Meanwhile, Jose picked more papayas for their payment, knocking them from the trees with a long, forked stick. The ones that weren't caught smashed to the ground and

were quickly consumed by the band of chickens and ducks which followed Jose around in anticipation of such accidents.

A closer look at this patient's yard showed that he had spent a great deal of time raising a wide variety of fruit and otherwise useful trees. There were many varieties of citrus, two species of guava, cooking and eating bananas, *iba* sour cherries, avocados, tapioca and *achiote*. One large cultivated tree was *ahgao* (*Premna obtusifolia*). Jose said that it is used for medicinal purposes. The leaves are boiled into an analgesic tea that is taken for backaches. Next to the breadfruit tree in the man's backyard was a tree that is a close relative of the breadfruit, but has only recently been introduced to Guam. It was the jackfruit (*Artocarpus heterophyllus*), known by Guamanians by its Tagalog name of *langka*. This large tree was of the age to bear its large sweet and edible fruit, but it had been barren. The trunk of the tree looked as if it had received the brunt of the owner's wrath, but it had actually received treatment that was designed to stimulate the bearing of fruit. The owner had slashed the bark with large gashes up and down the trunk and driven large nails into the tree. At the base of the trunk, a six-inch long spike about one-half inch thick, had been driven directly into the center of the tree, all to no avail. This is a common practice throughout the island as evidenced by the massive scarring seen on many of the mango and avocado trees in people's yards. Jose explained the Guamanian's scientific reasoning behind this attempt to promote fertility. He said that the reason a tree doesn't bear fruit is because too much of the tree's growth is put into the leaves. Thus, if the bark is scored or spikes driven into the tree, the leaf growth will diminish and more fruit will bear. This is not just a primitive scientific reasoning, but a functional action because it does sever the vascular bundles within the tree, that bring nutrients to the leaves. A tree that is lacking in nutrients will sometimes tend to put more energy into fruit as a natural insurance that the species will be perpetuated.

During the weeks following the initial treatment of this same patient, the relationship between Juan and his two associates fluctuated. Some days he was pleased with their methods of treating patients and the results, but on other days, he was utterly disgusted with their actions. Juan had the privilege of visiting both Jose and Miguel's patients and advising them as to the treatment that was needed to cure a specific ailment. One afternoon, Jose came to Juan and said that the stroke patient was getting worse. Juan attributed this to the inconsistency in Miguel and Jose's techniques, shifting from one kind of medicine to another and the improper application of Juan's medicine as when they boiled it to give to the patient. Juan also said that Jose's medicine was inferior and that Miguel massaged too weakly. Jose and Miguel were perfectly aware of Juan's methods and preferences, but still considered their own methods to have merit. They continued to allow for Juan's dominance because he had already established a positive status within the community and for him to teach them his methods would ultimately enhance their own reputation and experience.

Juan decided that he would treat the stroke patient himself and would con-



tinue to teach Jose and Miguel if they would drive him to the patient's house each day and not interfere with the treatment. Juan said that he felt compassion for this patient and that he was sure that he could cure him. In the future, he would refer his associates to less serious cases until they improved because he did not want to be responsible for their actions.

The following day, Juan went to the patient's house. The patient was indeed worse. He was feverish, weak and frightened. Juan proceeded to swab the patient's sweating back and chest with the *palai*, not to insure a flow of power just then, but to cool the patient off and relax him before proceeding with the massage. Juan detected black marks on the man's chest and back. Juan told the patient that they were blood clots and that he would cure them. He used the banana stalk pounder again, as with the *lytiko* patient in Case One.

Most of the massage was directed to the arm that was paralyzed. Juan detected the pressure area to be on the side of the paralyzed upper arm. Proof of this was seen in the fact that when Juan "bombed" this spot, the air in the nerves was displaced for an instant and the immobile fingers flexed at the same moment, a reflex action.

During the massage, the patient cried from the pain, but Juan kept reassuring him and giving him short rests. Juan never lost his unblinking composure and intense concentration on the patient. Juan had said earlier that both Jose and Miguel had worried looks on their faces when a patient is in pain and this would only cause the patient to worry more.

After a few more weeks of daily treatment, the patient reached a new phase in the treatment as a result of his rate of recovery. Juan tested the man's walking which was greatly improved. When the patient was first treated, he could only walk a short distance by stiffly lifting his paralyzed leg high off the ground and thrusting it forward. After only three weeks of treatment, he could walk long distances, unassisted and with a greater fluidness of movement. His arm was still paralyzed, but his attitude, strength, and appetite had drastically improved.

After demonstrating his improved mobility, Juan had the patient sit in bed with both arms at his side and his hands on his knees. Then, he moved back about ten feet from the patient and visually examined the body symmetry of the patient who was only clad in shorts. If a recessed area was seen on the patient's skin surface in comparison with the same spot on the other half of the body, this meant that more blood was needed in that area. If a bulge was seen on the skin surface in comparison with the other half of the body, that area needed massaging to displace the clot or air build up. Juan was pleased this day that the patient was almost "even."

Next, Juan checked the symmetry of blood pulse in the patient's legs by squeezing both of the legs with both of his hands at the same time and in the same symmetrical location on each leg. This was done by starting at the feet and working up to the inner thigh. If a difference in pulse is detected, the leg with the slower pulse is developing pressure from the clot or air bubbles in the nerves.

The legs were then checked again in a symmetrical examination in the same procedure except the backs of Juan's hands were used to detect a difference in heat from one leg to the other. If a spot on one leg is hotter than the same spot on the other leg, this evidence is taken to mean that pressure is forming in that area. Juan also performed the examination for heat difference and pulse difference on the patient's arms in the same manner as the leg examinations, starting with the patient's hands and working up to the shoulder. The symmetrical examinations are only done on the legs and arms.

Hence, besides his power which can determine the origin of illness, Juan also uses visual alignment and symmetry of pulse and body temperature to detect illness.

After this extensive examination by Juan's extremely sensitive hands, he massaged the patient lightly, only rubbing the man's arm and leg muscles with the palms of his hand. The bombing, *palai* and medicine were no longer needed because the patient had reached a stage in his recovery, when Juan felt that most of the man's clots and air bubbles were removed. The symmetry tests confirmed this. After Juan lightly massaged the patient, he pinched the skin along the paralyzed arm and watched how fast it snapped back. This was not a symmetrical test, but designed to check the thickness of the tissue that had been under concentrated massage. Juan said that the patient would no longer need the "bombing," but that he still needed daily visits from the *suruhano* to insure that he did not slide backwards in his recovery. The light massage is not called "bombing," but termed by Juan as "touching" to insure that his power still entered into the patient's body.

After the treatment, the patient, his wife, and Juan talked about the patient's voice that had been improving. His speech was not as slurred as when Juan first met him. His wife said that she knew a *suruhano*, who lived in the Harmon area of northern Guam, who massaged patients' tongues to bring back their voice. Juan said that he used to massage people's tongues but that he did not perform this service anymore because he was afraid he might get bitten.

During a later visit the patient told Juan that when he slept and awakened, he sometimes found his paralyzed hand had moved from his side to his upper chest. He could not understand why he could move his hand in his sleep and not when he was awake. Juan told him that this was not a mysterious occurrence, but an indication of the man's capability to move his paralyzed hand. This was proof that Juan had alleviated the problem of pressure from clots and air bubbles. Juan said that nervousness and fright that the patient felt in response to his illness was keeping him from consciously raising his arm. He told me that he would work on building his confidence with continued daily visits and reassuring conversation.

### *Case Three*

One afternoon, Jose Quintanilla, Juan, and Miguel went to visit a patient of Miguel's who had a skin affliction. This older Guamanian man lived in a central village and had suffered from a fungus skin disease for about ten years. His condition had progressively worsened to the point that he could not go out into the sun or bathe often because both of these activities irritated his condition. He had visited

a number of dermatologists without results. His dark brown skin color was mottled with pinkish white blotches of skin that completely lacked the melanin pigmentation and most of his body surface was itchy and scaly. Since meeting Miguel, he said that he was much better and hoped for a recovery from the problem. Miguel had been giving him the standard massage, medicine, and dietary treatment. The only difference was that the patient was also given body baths in Juan's all-purpose medicinal combination. The crushed plant material was boiled in a large pot in the outdoor cookhouse. Once a day, the medicine was rubbed over the man's skin and allowed to dry.

On this day, Juan came to see Miguel's patient and administered the massage. The patient grimaced from the bombing and said, "It really hurts, but I like it. I want to get well." The patient also said that his neighbor was a *suruhana*, who was especially adept in the curing of children, although she also cures adults. He told me that she also uses massage and medicinal plants to supplement her own power; however, he preferred to have Miguel treat him.

#### *Case Four*

After treating Case Three, Juan had to return home, so Miguel and Jose went to another of Miguel's patients. Again, this was an elderly man who was suffering from an itchy fungus. The patient had the problem for a couple of months. He also said that he had been to Western doctors without relief. The interesting difference between this patient and the patient visited previously was that this man felt that the *taotaomona* spirits had caused his illness. He also received the regular treatment and the body baths in Juan's medicine. When Miguel applied the initial spreading of the *palai* on the patient's forehead, I noticed he rubbed it in the sign of the Cross. This was to ward off the *taotaomona*.

The patient talked about his encounter with these spirits of the jungle. He was clearing land on his ranch property when strange events began to occur. He burned off a section of the land three times in the typical swidden method. Each time he burned the land, he noticed that the coral rocks that litter the ground were not being discolored by the burning which usually turns them from white to gray. This was a warning, but he neglected this phenomenon and continued to work till late at night. Then, at 9:00 P.M., he saw a bright light at a distance. The light started coming closer, becoming brighter and smaller, until a pinpoint of intense light was right before his eyes and blinding his vision. He fell to his knees and lay blinded for a half hour till the light began to recede in the direction from which it had come. He had regained his sight, but this occurrence happened again several times and then an itching began to plague his body. He then decided to stop visiting the ranch and let his son take over the property.

I later asked Juan if he also used the sign of the Cross when applying the *palai* to the victim of the *taotaomona*. He gave an affirmative response and added that he puts special magical ingredients into the *palai* vinegar, which are especially for the treatment of *taotaomona*-caused illness. He burns white chicken feathers, cotton soaked with his own sweat, and palm fronds into ashes. He adds these ashes,

garlic, and sometimes fresh green onion leaves, along with Holy Water to the *tuba* vinegar. This mixture is used on all patients and is especially effective in ridding a person of the presence of the *taotaomona*. Other *suruhanos* and *suruhanas* use some of these same ingredients in their *palai* and also have some of their own unique combinations of magical ingredients. The use of Holy Water and the ashes of palm fronds is the result of the Catholic influence, which also introduced the Cross as a symbol to the Chamorro Guamanian. According to Juan, other ingredients, such as garlic and onions, were learned from horror movies with vampires. He realizes that movies are acted performances, but feels that they are representative of actual phenomena in the realm of spirits.

Juan doesn't use the *palai* when massaging a pain in his own body. He bombs the desired area with his hands or bangs the area against a wooden post. Instead of the *palai*, he applies his own saliva to the pain area. This is practice that is never performed on others.

#### *Case Five*

During one afternoon, Jose left to see a patient of his in a southern village of Guam. This middle-aged lady had suffered from headaches for the past six years. She had been to physicians on the island and in Japan and had not been helped. She had been to physicians on the island and in Japan and had not been helped. She had also been to the island of Ponape to visit a traditional curer, but did not find relief. Lastly she visited a man in Merizo in Southern Guam, who took a needle from his pocket and pinching the skin directly between the woman's two eyes, pushed the needle through the skin. This measure also provided no relief. Jose said that he had never heard of this method, which he termed the act of a crazy magician or a rooster doctor—one who is only fit to treat chickens. Both the lady patient and Jose said that this man was not and did not consider himself to be a *suruhano*. In many societies that have traditional systems of curing, there are those who follow the traditionally sanctioned course of gaining cultural acceptance and those who attempt to appoint themselves to the status of curing. The charlatans almost never achieve a level of distinction.

Since Jose has been treating this woman, she says her headaches have gone, her eyesight has improved and she has lost some unwanted pounds from Jose's sweating procedure. Jose said that most of the patient's weight loss was in the area of her stomach, which was filled with "bad air." This air was dispelled because Jose instructed the woman to use his medicine as a douche besides drinking a cup of the hot tea everyday. All of Jose's woman patients receive two glass jugs of his prepared medicine. One portion is for drinking and one is used as a douche, but the contents and preparation of each is exactly the same.

On a subsequent visit to this patient, Juan came along to watch Jose's treatment. When we arrived, the patient's aunt was sitting on the back porch preparing betelnut. She was eighty-seven years old and was using a small basalt stone mortar and pestle to pulverize the betelnut so that her lack of teeth were not a hindrance. She had an old cracker can that contained her betelnuts, lime and betel pepper leaf.



An old pair of curve-bladed scissors were used to split the nuts of the areca palm. Juan massaged the old woman because her lower back was hurting her. He had her drink some of his medicine and then used some of the remaining tea as a *palai* when he lightly massaged the woman's feet, ankles and back. After massaging the old woman, Jose's lady patient asked Juan to give some of his medicine to her ten-year-old son because he was sleepwalking lately. Juan massaged the boy and had him drink some of the medicine despite his grimaces and unwillingness to be treated.

Juan watched as Jose massaged the lady. As Jose massaged her back, Juan visually saw the air in her back being displaced to the side of her right upper arm. Juan rushed over and touched the swelling on her arm and exclaimed, "I can feel the air moving into her arm!" He was so excited and tense in his sensory perception of this unanticipated phenomenon that both his arms became covered with goose bumps as he felt the bad air actually moving through the woman's nervous system. As the woman belched during the massage, some of this bad air was released. Most patients belch several times during the course of massage and some patients belch as many as fifty consecutive times during the course of a half hour's treatment. The patient knows that he is expected to belch or otherwise pass air and may involuntarily produce these reactions in response to a total psychological confidence and participation in the curing process. The medicine aids in the development of air in the digestive tract, but is only a partial cause for this reaction.

On that day, it seemed if the entire family of Jose's headache patient was treated. Juan also treated her daughter for sinus blockage. Juan prepared his medicine by squeezing the cloth tea bag in only a small amount of water to produce a concentrated liquid medicine. The girl sat in a chair and tilted her head back while Juan filled both of her nostrils with the dark liquid. He said that his procedure will cure any sinus problem.

#### *Case Six*

One of Jose's long-term patients was a victim of Parkinson's disease and constantly shook with body tremors as he sat with a blank apathetic stare at the *suruhanos*. Jose had the patient remove his entire clothing and lie in bed. The clots and air in this man's body were determined to be mostly in the groin area. Jose lightly bombed around the genital area with the banana stalk pounder to displace the pressure. The rest of the body received the standard massage. Jose continued to treat him and his shaking had been greatly reduced, allowing him to feed himself, a task that he could not perform previous to treatment by the *suruhano*. Jose did not have confidence in the possibility of a total cure because the patient had undergone surgery to relieve his condition. A cure cannot be assured when internal veins and nerves have been severed.

Most of the patients that I was taken to see were long-term patients because the *suruhanos* wanted to impress me with the fact that they could improve the health of people with severe illnesses. The many patients with minor ailments are taken

for granted and the cures are usually fast and simple. For an ear infection, Juan cleans the patient's ear with a cotton swab. He then takes another swab and wets it with the *palai* vinegar and has the patient apply it deeper into his own ear because the patient can judge better where his own ear drum is and Juan does not want to damage this sensitive area.

Another of his cures for minor problems is for a woman who has recently born a child, has breasts filled with milk, but cannot start the milk flowing for the child. Juan will ask the patient's husband to forcefully suck out the first milk to "clear the passage." The husband occasionally declines this request, then Juan will perform this function himself.

#### *Case Seven*

I met Miguel one morning and we went to the house of a long-term patient, who Miguel said had lost some of his memory. He was sixty-seven years old and had suffered a stroke and like many of the other steady patients, this man's right side was paralyzed. His walking was stiffly, but he could get around fairly well. His right arm was completely paralyzed and he had difficulty speaking. Also his mental faculties were obviously dulled. Miguel thought that he had an attack similar to the stroke patient in Case Two. According to Miguel, this patient had gotten out of bed too fast without his body adjusting to the temperature and humidity. Miguel also felt that the *taotaomona* may have had a hand in causing the illness. According to the patient's wife, the patient had been progressing nicely with Miguel's treatment and could go out into the garden and do light work such as weeding with his good hand.

First, Miguel prepared a glass of Juan's medicine for the patient to drink. He then had the patient undress except for his shorts. The patient sat in a chair as Miguel applied the *tuba* vinegar *palai* to the man's forehead in the sign of the Cross with his fingertips. He then patted a few drops on the top of the man's head and rubbed some down the middle of the patient's back and on the center of his chest. Next, he used a different *palai* and applied it to the patient. Miguel's own *palai* is an old remedy that is prepared by crushing young, red betelnut (*Areca catechu*) with some *pupulu* betel pepper leaf (*Piper betle*). The crushed plant material is put into a cloth ball and dampened with water. The cloth ball was used as a sponge in the application of the betel *palai* to this patient. Miguel said that soon after the patient suffered from his attack, he had him drink a few drops of this mixture as a medicine, but that it is only effective soon after a person has an attack. After several days, a different medicine such as Juan's all-purpose combination is administered. Miguel took the cloth sponge and applied the betel *palai* in the sign of the Cross on the forehead, then to the cheeks, back of the neck, the complete back, front of the neck, both arms, entire chest and then to both legs in this order. The man received a complete body bath in this fast drying film except for the feet and groin area. This initial use of two *palai* types is in contrast to Juan and Jose who only sparingly apply the vinegar *palai* to the concentration spots during the massage instead of before the massage. The only time Juan extensively used *palai* before

his massage was for feverish patients to cool them off. This patients was not feverish.

During Miguel's massage, the first step was to massage the patient's forehead with jabbing fingertips. Then he massaged the back of the neck and shoulders by squeezing the flesh with his hands, a method rarely used by Juan. Miguel had the patient lie down and he massaged the man's back and legs in Juan's style of closed fist pounding, only not so hard as Juan. Then he exercised the man's legs. Both the good leg and the weak one were bent at the knee as Miguel opened and closed them. He then had the patient roll over on his back and he applied the betel *palai* to the man's groin area. Next, he exercised the man's paralyzed arm that was locked in a right angle at the elbow. He opened and closed the man's arm thirty times, then rotated the arm at the shoulder joint another thirty times. Then the patient dressed himself and Miguel had him walk around the living room for exercise. The final exercise was to stand and lift the good leg, bending it at the knee thirty times. The bad leg was then exercised by swinging it forward and backward about fifteen times while the patient supported himself on his strong leg. The entire treatment lasted an hour. Miguel has most of his patients with problems in physical mobility go through exercises. Juan has told Miguel that exercise is useless in treating these problems, but Miguel still held on to his own methods in many cases.

Miguel occasionally treats loss of appetite by using a grindstone to abrade some rust powder from a piece of rusty metal. A pinch of this powder is mixed with a raw egg and a shot of whiskey. When drunk, this remedy acts to restore the natural level of hunger in a person. In older times, whiskey was distilled at home with fermented rice. This liquor was called *agi* and was preferred for this remedy, but home-brewed whiskey is a rarity today. So, Miguel substitutes with commercially produced whiskey. For loss of appetite, Juan uses his all-purpose medicine. Juan's methods are the closest to precontact native medicine because he uses only

Table 4. *Amot tabadiyo*, a medicinal combination for the treatment of stroke.

TAXONOMIC CLASSIFICATION	CHAMORRO NAME
<i>Asplenium nidus</i>	Galak Feda
<i>Microsorium punctatum</i>	Galak Dalalay
<i>Hyptis pectinata</i>	Mumutong Paloan
<i>Entada pursaetha</i>	Gayi Dangkulo
<i>Mucuna gigantea</i>	Gayi Dikike
<i>Canavalia maritima</i>	Akangkang Tasi
Subfamily Papilionoideae	Akangkang Halumtano
<i>Cassia</i> sp.	Amot Tumaga
<i>Bambusa vulgaris</i>	Patnitos Piao

Note: I was not able to visually examine all of the ingredients of this combination, so the taxonomic classification is only tentative. The value in this list is in its comparison with Juan Cepeda's medicinal combination which is often used for stroke. Both combinations have four ingredients in common. In the above combination, only the leaves are used except for the *Bambusa* (bamboo) from which the sprout is used.

plants that were originally indigenous or early naturalized to the island. The rust-chicken egg-whiskey special medicine of Miguel utilizes three ingredients that are postcontact in origin.

Miguel has another medicinal combination that is used by other *suruhanos* (Table 4). He learned the combination from another friend, who passed it on to him. He planned to try this medicine which was supposed to be good for attacks, such as stroke. The combination is crushed and made into a fresh tea like Juan's or it can be boiled into a hot tea like Jose's medicine. The name of the medicine was *amot tabadiyo* which means medicine for an attack that is accompanied by a bleeding nose. Later he went to Juan's house, and discussed the ingredients with him and Juan said that he was familiar with this combination, but that he would not use it because only four of the ingredients were good. Naturally, they were the ingredients that he uses in his combination.

### Special Medicines

Upon arrival at Juan's house one afternoon, I found his wife was boiling a mixture of special medicine to administer to a friend. I asked Juan why she didn't use his all-purpose medicine and he told me more about special medicines that are used by a wider range of people, including his wife (Table 5). They are home remedies for minor ailments and his power, all-purpose medicine, dietary advice, *palai* and massage are not needed for such small problems as those that can be cured with special medicines. Juan brought out a small notebook in which were listed various remedies for minor ailments. He had other people write down the names of the ailments and the required plants. The lists were dated 1925 and the paper was so old, the ink blurred, and the words roughly spelled, that it was difficult to discern much of the writing. Juan more recently used the same book to record some of his patient's problems. Since he had learned his more powerful medicine from Mariano Charfauros, Juan has labeled his notebook: Dr. Juan Q. Cepeda, Chalan Pago, Medicine Log Book. Despite the difficulty in deciphering the contents of the notebook, Juan, his wife and Miguel remembered most of the remedies. These remedies are commonly used in Guamanian households and are subject to diversification in use.

For nervousness, one mixes *gagap* flour with sugar and water and drinks the mixture.

For diarrhea, one boils three of the immature fruits of *lada* with the shell and heart of three cracked *pakao* seeds and the roots, stems and leaves of three small plants of *maigo-lalo*. The resulting bitter tea is drunk once a day until the problem is cured. The analgesic effects are almost immediate, for one's sense of pain both internally and externally is dulled. The *lada* is the pain killer and is used in many other remedies for this reason. It has been recorded that *lada* (*Morinda citrifolia*) is also used in pain-relieving remedies on Ponape in the Eastern Caroline Islands of Micronesia (Riesenberg, 1948: 420). The *pakao* seed is said to be the ingredient that cures the diarrhea and the *maigo-lalo* helps to soothe the throat and the digestive



Table 5. Medicinal plants of Guam which are used for specific ailments.

TAXONOMIC CLASSIFICATION	ENGLISH NAME	CHAMORRO NAME	COMMENTS
<i>Abutilon indicum</i>		<b>Matbas</b>	An indigenous wild herb that is an antipyretic used to reduce fever.
<i>Areca catechu</i>	Betelnut	<b>Pugua</b>	The immature nut of the red betelnut is crushed and the juice extract is taken to relieve the effects of stroke. It is also used as a <b>palai</b> . Betelnut is commonly chewed by the islanders as a refreshment and mild narcotic. The nut contains arecoline which is an alkaloid that acts as a vermifuge, killing parasitical intestinal worms. (Nelson, 1951: 460) The islanders are not aware of this effect, but it is a definite latent and positive effect of the habit.
<i>Artocarpus altilis</i>	Breadfruit	<b>Lemai</b>	The sap from the base of the leaf is applied to a scratched eye, a laceration of the surface of the eyeball.
<i>Barringtonia asiatica</i>	Fish-kill tree	<b>Putting</b>	The bark of this indigenous tree is boiled into a tea that is taken as an antidote for eating poison fish.
<i>Blechum brownei</i>		<b>Jatbas Babui</b>	An indigenous, wild herb used in an astringent douche mixture.
<i>Caesalpinia major</i>	Wait-a-bit	<b>Pakao</b>	An indigenous thorny shrub. The seeds are cracked and boiled in a preparation taken for diarrhea.
<i>Cassia alata</i>	Candlenut	<b>Take-biha, Anadose, Akapulko</b>	A naturalized introduced shrub from Mexico. The juice from the crushed seeds is applied topically to the skin in the treatment of ringworm.
<i>Cassia</i> sp.	Senna	<b>Amot Tumaga</b>	A naturalized shrub that is used in the treatment of throat inflammations. Many of the <i>Cassia</i> species are considered laxatives. (Nelson, 1951: 419)
<i>Citrus aurantifolia</i>	Lime, Key lime	<b>Lemondemelon</b>	The juice of the ripe fruit of this introduced tree is mixed with water and sugar to make a lemonade that relieves coughing.
<i>Citrus sinensis</i>	Wild orange	<b>Lalangha</b>	The peel is boiled into a tea that is taken to relieve the effects of stroke. Orange peel contains a component of Vitamin C which is essential in the maintenance of the walls of blood vessels (Nelson, 1951: 88).

Table 5. (Continued)

TAXONOMIC CLASSIFICATION	ENGLISH NAME	CHAMORRO NAME	COMMENTS
<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	Taro	Sunin Agaga	The early morning dew that collects in the leaf of this food plant is thought to be an excellent eyewash.
<i>Columbrina asiatica</i>		Gasusu	This indigenous vine is found near the seashore. The juice of the young leaves is used in many medicinal preparations and singularly as an analgesic.
<i>Cyperus rotundus</i>	Nut grass, Edible sedge, Chufa	Chaguan Umatag	An indigenous common garden herb that is used in the treatment of ulcers. This herb is commonly used as a medicine and food item throughout the world. The root nut has a high oil content.
<i>Eclipta prostrata</i>		Titimo	An indigenous herb. The juice from the crushed leaf is applied to chapped lips or a sore mouth.
<i>Euphorbia hirta</i>		Golundrina	A common garden herb used in an astringent douche mixture.
<i>Ficus prolixa</i>	Banyan	Nunu	The aerial roots of this large indigenous tree are used in medicinal combinations to stop internal bleeding from injury or applied to open wounds as a styptic.
<i>Heliotropium indicum</i>		Bitbena	An indigenous herb. The juice of the crushed leaf is applied to chapped lips or a sore mouth.
<i>Hibiscus tiliaceus</i>	Hibiscus tree	Pago	The crushed blossoms of this indigenous tree are applied to boils to draw out the infection.
<i>Hyptis capitata</i>	Buttonweed	Batones	The leaf of this indigenous herb is crushed and applied to skin lacerations to aid in healing and in prevention of infection and tetanus.
<i>Ipomoea pes-caprae brasiliensis</i>	Beach morning glory	Alaihai, Alalag, Tasi	An indigenous, beach-growing, ground vine. The leaves and stems are boiled into a tea that is taken in the treatment of chicken pox.
<i>Momordica charantia</i>	Wild cucumber	Hagun Admagoso	The leaves of this indigenous, wild vine are boiled and one cup of the tea is taken daily for treatment of diabetes. It is thought to lower blood sugar.
<i>Morinda citrifolia</i>	Indian mulberry	Lada	An indigenous small tree. The young fruits are used in many medicinal combinations as an analgesic pain reducer.

Table 5. (Continued)

TAXONOMIC CLASSIFICATION	ENGLISH NAME	CHAMORRO NAME	COMMENTS
<i>Nervilia aragoana</i>	Water-root orchid	Seiyaihagun	A rare indigenous, terrestrial orchid. The juice from the crushed bulb and leaf is strained and applied to pinkeye.
<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	Sacred basil	Adbahakat	An introduced spice plant that is used to perfume palai.
<i>Phyllanthus amarus</i>		Maigo-lalo	An indigenous common garden herb that is used in the preparation of medicines for chapped lips, diarrhea and is an ingredient in an astringent douche.
<i>Phyllanthus marianus</i>		Gaogao Uchan	An indigenous shrub that is commonly used in medicinal combinations. Its specific function is unknown.
<i>Physalis angulata</i>		Tumatis Chaka	An indigenous herb. The leaves are crushed and applied to chapped lips.
<i>Physalis lanceifolia</i>		Tumatis Chaka	A close relative of the above herb. It is used for the same purpose and is often considered to be the same plant by the Guamanians.
<i>Piper betle</i>	Betel Pepper	Pupulu	The leaf of this plant is chewed with betelnut and lime and crushed with the young betelnut for use as a curing palai.
<i>Premna obtusifolia</i>		Ahgao	The leaves of this large indigenous tree are boiled into an analgesic tea.
<i>Psidium guajava</i>	Guava	Abas	An introduced fruit tree with edible fruit. Eating the fruit relieves diarrhea and the leaves are included in an astringent douche.
<i>Punica granatum</i>	Pomegranate	Granada	An introduced fruit tree with edible fruit. The leaf tips are used in a preparation for ulcers. In other areas of the world, the bark of this tree is boiled for a tea that destroys intestinal worms, but I have never heard of it being used in this capacity in Guam.
<i>Tacca leontopetaloides</i>		Gaggap	A wild indigenous water plant. The flour prepared from the root is used as a tension reducer in the treatment of nervousness.

Table 5. (Continued)

TAXONOMIC CLASSIFICATION	ENGLISH NAME	CHAMORRO NAME	COMMENTS
<i>Taeniophyllum mariannense</i>	Orchid		A common indigenous leafless orchid that is found on the bark of trees. The roots are crushed and the juice is used as a nose drop for sinus problems.
<i>Thespesia populnea</i>	Portia tree	<b>Binalo</b>	The bark of this indigenous tree is boiled for an astringent douche.
<i>Urena lobata</i>		<b>Dadangse Ahgaga</b>	An indigenous herb that is used in various medicinal combinations, probably as an antipyretic.
<i>Zingiber officinale</i>	Ginger root	<b>Asngut, Mangnu</b>	An introduced aromatic spice. The root is used to perfume some <b>palai</b> mixtures, usually those made with coconut oil.

tract. All three ingredients are extremely bitter to the taste and the tea that results from boiling them together is difficult to drink. This was the remedy being prepared by Juan's wife that day, after her friend had tried eating *abas* (guava fruit) to remedy the problem.

For a problem known to Juan as "bad tonsils," but can also include a swollen uvula or sore throat, a tea brewed from medicinal herbs known as *tumatis chaka* and *amot tumaga* is administered.

For rectal ulcerations or blood in the feces, the leaf and stems of *chaguan umatag*, the immature fruit of *lada* and the *hagun* (leaf tips) of *granada* (pomegranate tree) are crushed into a pulp and molded into a small pellet that is administered as a suppository. *Done machaleg* (hot pepper) is avoided when treating this illness, for it will only further irritate the condition. The suppository method is possibly a postcontact development because *granada* is an introduced and cultivated fruit tree that was brought to Guam on Spanish voyages. However, there are other remedies in suppository form that do not contain nonindigenous plants.

For chapped or cracked lips or sores in the mouth, the juice from crushed herbs known as *titimo*, *tumatis chaka*, and *maigo-lalo* can be applied individually or combined. This remedy is most often applied to small infants that have sore mouths as the result of bottle and breast feeding.

Juan said that the *gasusu* vine that grows near the ocean is used in many *suru-hana's* medicinal combinations to cure a wide range of afflictions. It is most commonly used as an analgesic pain reducer. The Guamanian will crush the leaves with water to extract the juice which provides a refreshing beverage that relieves headache.

Another common ingredient in the combinations of other curers is the sap from the aerial roots of the large banyan or *nunu* tree. The sap from this tree is said to stop internal bleeding from injuries and if applied to open bleeding wounds acts as a styptic to stanch the flow of blood.



The leaves of *golundrina*, *maigo-lalo*, *hagun abas*, and *jatbas babui* are boiled into a medicinal tea that is used as an astringent douche to constrict the vagina of a woman who has born children. This mixture is popular among older women and is widely known as *amot laboratorio*. The primary function of this douche is to provide for more pleasant sexual intercourse.

### ***Taotaomona* Belief**

The *taotaomona* or spirits of the old people is an ancient belief, now having the function of spirits and guardians of the jungle. They might have originally guarded against intrusion into another chiefdom's territory and they now act in a conservational capacity by causing illness to disrespectful persons who misuse the environment or enter into their living areas. They are believed to mostly come out at night, but respect must be employed in daylight hours as well. Their favorite abode is around the *nunu* or banyan tree (*Ficus prolixa*), a large tree that grows in moist shaded jungle areas. These trees send long aerial roots from the upper branches to the ground, giving the trees and eerie look. The *taotaomona* may also inhabit the reefs at night and are thought to warn night fishermen of their presence with green lights that flicker over the waters. The stories that are told about confrontations with the *taotaomona* and their abilities are characterized by great variation, but some of the beliefs are relatively constant. The spirits are thought to show their faces to people rarely. If one is sighted, only the back of the head is usually seen or a void is present in the location of the face. Female *taotaomona* are usually dressed in long flowing white robes with long white hair and the scent of wild lemons pervades the air surrounding the spirit. The *taotaomona* are also thought to be able to make themselves invisible or transform themselves into any animal or monstrous form.

The easiest way to bring forth the wrath of one of these spirits is to enter the jungle without asking permission and to hunt wildlife or collect plant life that is in excess of what is needed for subsistence, to willfully destroy part of the environment, or to eliminate body wastes on the *taotaomona* territory without asking forgiveness.

Most of the stories told of encounters with the *taotaomona* involve the collecting of food in the jungle or on the reef. Juan Cepeda has many interesting experiences to tell about the *taotaomona*, but like most islanders, he has never seen one. Most of his experiences have taken place on his ranch property. When Juan first cleared a path from the inland entrance to his property, down to the sea coast, he asked the *taotaomona* for permission to cut the path. He stressed that the path would be used by "us" (he and his family). According to Juan, it is important to always express the need to use the environment as benefiting more than one's self. Juan only cut his path straight through his property and did not put in extensive side trails because this would anger the spirits.

Juan built his ranch and spent nights there, fishing and catching coconut crabs. He had a dog chained farther up the trail who barked once for every person who

passed by. According to Juan, the dog never barked at animals. At night, Juan could count the barking and sometimes he determined eight people had passed by the dog. But, when no people arrived at the ranch, he surmised that the dog had barked at eight *taotaomona* walking through the jungle.

One night, Juan put out his coconut crab bait before dark and then had to wait till 9:00 P.M. to check the bait. He did not want to sleep because he was alone and there was no one to wake him at nine o'clock. Despite his efforts to stay awake, he had a powerful urge to sleep and did so. Exactly at nine o'clock, he suddenly awakened when he felt something bite his foot. He awoke to find his foot hurting from the teeth marks that even broke the skin. Then, Juan verbally exclaimed to the *taotaomona*, "Thank you for waking me, but you really hurt me."

On another night, Juan suspended food on the end of a thin wire hung from a tree branch to keep the rats from eating it while he slept. The next morning he found that the food had been eaten. This was interpreted to mean that the spirits were hungry.

Not all of Juan's *taotaomona* experiences have happened at night. Just after a large typhoon, the trees were stripped of their foliage and Juan easily spotted a cluster of fruit bats hanging from some branches. The bats are considered to be a delicacy when cooked with coconut milk. Juan was so close to the bats that if he blasted them with his shotgun, at that distance, he would have torn the flesh too much. So, he backed off and pulled the trigger. When he approached the target area, blood was dripping all over, but the bats had disappeared. The *taotaomona* had collected the quarry. In another similar incident, Juan and his sons spotted a cluster of bats on a cliff side. When bats are scared, they closely follow the cliff line in evading flight. So Juan and his sons bracketed the bat's lair from above, below, and in each direction along the cliff line. When one of them opened fire, the bats flew in both directions and were turned back by the surrounding fire until all of them had presumably been killed. When the hunters went to collect the bats, they saw a headless deer running from the area, and found only blood and no bats. Again, this was a strange occurrence attributed to the whims of the spirits.

On another occasion, Juan was fishing with his nets in a river outlet when he felt something tugging his nets to the bottom of the river. The nets had floats attached to them and could not sink. Nevertheless, the nets slipped from Juan's grasp and his sight. He took a long stick and tried to poke around the bottom of the river to locate the nets, but they were gone.

One day, an elderly friend of Juan's stopped by to chat and buy some of his eggs. The old man told a story that contains a consistent belief. This belief is that the *taotaomona* live near large trees and the ground is clean under these trees as if the area had been swept clean with a broom. This man was a member of a post-WWII patrol looking for Japanese stragglers when he came upon a large breadfruit tree near the beach. No leaves had fallen from the tree and the ground was unusually clean. He instructed his men not to disturb the area, especially not to urinate or

defecate in this place while they rested in the clearing. He was positive that the area was the abode of the *taotaomona*. He also said, "I don't believe in any spirit except Jesus Christ, but I know that there are *taotaomona*. They have been here a long time." Another older Guamanian once told me, "I'm not sure if there really are *taotaomona*, but I ask permission when entering the jungle because I have nothing to lose by doing so and everything to gain if there are *taotaomona*."

Some people have suggested that the illness causing function of the *taotaomona* arose to combat the Spanish dominance in early colonial years, but most Guamanians feel that the *taotaomona* mostly affect Guamanians and rarely afflict outsiders. It is not likely that the ability of the *taotaomona* to cause illness was directed against the Spanish, because the Guamanian has rarely been able to control the activity of the spirits. There have been stories of men who have had an exceptional rapport with the spirits, but these people were more the instruments of the *taotaomona* rather than vice versa. Mostly, the only capacity that a person has for changing the activities of the *taotaomona* are preventative in nature.

The ancient *kakahna* sorcerer, (not to be confused with the *suruhano*, who performs only in a helping capacity), were once able to direct evil against enemies by using material objects. These malevolent sorcerers failed to survive the Spanish colonial onslaught because the total dominance of the conquistadores and missionaries was not conducive to the aggressive actions of any group other than their own. The *kakahna* was reputed to have been able to direct the wrath of the *taotaomona* but, unlike the *suruhano* was unable to survive. Catholic doctrine was not as harsh on curing and a person could be a Christian and subscribe to traditional medicine without a conflict of beliefs. As in most cultures that experience a shift from traditional ideological beliefs, the primitive beliefs are not discarded, but only re-explained as phenomena that are part of the realm of the new higher spiritual entity. Thus, one may find a *suruhano* praying to the Blessed Virgin for assistance in his curing the afflictions caused by the *taotaomona*. Even today, most Guamanians who subscribe to the treatment of the *suruhano* and believe he has power, feel that God gave him the power to help people. At no time is the *suruhano* or the *taotaomona* revered as ideological replacements for Catholicism. The *suruhano* is a person of specific knowledge and ability that provides a curing service, using a gift of power that is not contrary or conflicting against the realm of God.

Another factor allowing for the perpetuation of the *suruhano* is that the colonialists carried a number of new illnesses to an island whose inhabitants had little resistance to such devastating afflictions as small pox, venereal disease, and measles. The early Chamorro was said to be an unusually healthy and robust person who suffered from little that couldn't be cured with native medicines. With an increase in illness, due to the colonial presence, there was a corresponding increase in the demand for the services of the *suruhano* curer.

### **Curing Patients on the Island of Rota**

During one phase of my experience with the *suruhanos*, we visited the nearby

island of Rota in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Songsong village, the only village on the island of Rota, is situated on a peninsula so that the ocean borders it on two sides and a mountain wall borders the inland side of the village community. The ocean breeze constantly cools the open-windowed houses, but the village is exposed to typhoon winds and a nearby cave in the base of the mountain wall is used for shelter during severely inclement weather. Most of the houses are constructed of plywood and corrugated tin with large outdoor cookhouses that have earthen floors. The lifestyle of the Chamorro people is at a level comparable to that of prewar Guam. Unlike the Guamanians, there are not extensive fruit trees planted in housing locations, but most Rotanese have farms that contain the fruit trees and vegetables necessary for subsistence. Quite a number of cattle are also raised. The conspicuous lack of barking dogs and no-trespassing signs attribute to their open-hearted friendliness and the close interaction between everyone residing on the small island of only forty-six square miles.

The three families that we stayed with share a common cookhouse and eating area between them. Extended family residences are common throughout the Marianas. Jose Hocog and his family live in one house. He had visited Jose Quintanilla and Juan on Guam and had invited them to stay in Rota for a while and treat some of the villagers. Jose had been visiting the village by himself on previous visits and both Juan and he have been giving Jose Hocog advice as to how to treat minor ailments of the villagers by himself. Jose and Juan come to treat the more serious cases. There are no resident *suruhanos* on Rota, but several *suruhanas* reside in the village. However, they are all very old and retired; for, they do not have the strength to collect and prepare medicines and massage all of the people who need their services. The Chamorros of Rota rely heavily on special medicines and many herbs are grown in backyard gardens for use in home remedies.

Jose had visited Rota several times and built a large patient clientele and a positive status within the community. He knows almost every family in the village and gained their confidence through curing quite a number of local people of various ailments. Word of his successful cures travelled fast through the village. On this trip, Jose brought Juan because one patient had a particularly serious illness that needed his more experienced touch. Juan brought three rolls of his frozen medicine and a large jar of *palai*. He had trouble convincing the young agricultural inspectors to let this plant material on the island, but after a lengthy explanation, they consented to let it enter without being fumigated. The medicine was divided among several families.

The first family treated was one in which Juan was particularly concerned due to the involvement of the *taotaomona*. For this case he added fresh green onion leaves to the *palai*. The Rotanese are particularly concerned with the spirit world despite the prevalence of the Catholic church and its beliefs on the island. In relation to their belief in the *taotaomona* which is more prevalent than on Guam, they are more conducive to the treatment and beliefs of the *suruhano* curers and submit to their diagnoses and methods with unparalleled confidence. On Guam,



people visit the *suruhano* after seeing a Western physician. On Rota, many people would tend to visit the *suruhano* first despite the presence of an adequate dispensary of Western medicine.

The Rotanese are primarily subsistence farmers and fishermen. The men work on the ranches and farms and hunt deer, fruit bats and coconut crabs, while the women cook, fish with nets on the shallow reefs, and take care of other chores. Jose Hocog's wife uses throw nets to catch *kechu* and *tiao* (small reef fish) that are a popular food item. In the backyard, a pet fruit bat hangs upside down in a chicken-wire cage and is fed ripe papaya. Nearby is a cultivated *aggak* (*Pandanus tectorius*) that is used to weave food baskets and sleeping mats. The mature leaves are boiled in fresh water, dried, and cut into strips before being woven into mats.

While visiting the other village families, several traditional subsistence activities were visible. The first family that Juan and Jose treated for various ailments, paid the *suruhanos* four large chickens and two dozen eggs. No one was charged a fee of money or produce. Many of the families do not have much money for exchange, but most reciprocated with items of produce. Juan received twenty-five pounds of yams from one man and bananas from another. At another patient's house, Jose was given twenty pounds of cucumbers. Nearly all of the patients gave cantelopes which were consumed before we left the island.

In all, fourteen patients were treated during a three-day visit. While visiting the patients, it was found that most of the people participate in the common subsistence practices of farming and fishing, but most have a specialty, providing goods or services that are valuable in reciprocal exchange or for monetary payment, besides being useful for their own purposes. In Jose Hocog's house, it was pandanus weaving that was done. Another villager raises chickens and eggs, feeding them grated coconut. Another man raises pigeons as a food item. One family was even rendering salt from sea water. A large metal trough of sea water is boiled for days, adding sea water as the evaporation causes the salt to become encrusted on the sides of the trough. The salt encrustations are scraped off and placed in a burlap sack suspended over the heated trough to further purify the salt as the steam and heat rise from the boiling mixture below. The marine salt is favored for salting fish.

Many of the people weave their own throw nets for fishing. A commercial twine is used, but the weaving shuttle (needle) is carved from bamboo and constructed in the same design as shuttles taken from archaeological sites of the precontact Chamorro.

Most of the houses have a brick oven in the back that is used for baking food. These large box-shaped, Spanish-style ovens contain a fire that heats the bricks and cement to a high temperature. The ashes are then swept out with a broom made of pliable dried weeds that are tied in a bundle. The food is placed inside the small door on a long wooden paddle to cook from the heat retained in the oven. Juan Cepeda used this type of oven when he was a baker before he learned the art of curing.

Rota is only thirty-two miles from the north coast of Guam, but the vegetation

is markedly different. The development, Westernization and population increase on Guam has caused the disappearance or confirmed the rarity of many plants and trees, but these trees such as the *ifit* (*Intsia bijuga*) which is valued for its hard, termite-resistant wood, grow in virgin forests on Rota. Juan was able to collect the *seyaihagun* (*Nervilia aragoana*), a terrestrial orchid with medicinal properties that has nearly completely disappeared on Guam. In the center of the village was a large *alangilang* tree (*Cananga odorata*). The flowers of this large tree produce a lovely scent that fills the night air. The islanders take the blossoms and soak them in coconut oil to make a perfumed body lotion or *palai* that is used to scent the skin, applied before entering the jungle to prevent the *taotaomona* from bothering a person or placed on swellings to rid a person of the spirit-caused illness. The Rotanese feel that the *taotaomona* do not like sweet or pungent odors and garden spices are added to coconut oil as a home remedy, a curative and preventative perfumed *palai*. Most of the villagers grow *adbahakat* (*Ocimum sanctum*), sacred basil, a sweet-smelling herb and fry the leaves with ginger root (*Zingiber officinale*) in coconut oil to make a perfumed *palai*. Florida Water is also purchased and used as a perfumed *palai*. Florida Water is a commercially produced and imported bottled liquid, consisting of mineral water, perfume, and alcohol. The villagers and Juan both consider it to be very effective in warding off malevolent spirits. The belief in its curative properties finds its roots in the Spaniard, Ponce de Leon's discovery of the Fountain of Youth in Florida, a natural spring from which flows water with curative and rejuvenating properties.

#### A *Suruhana* on the Island of Rota

Maria Ncing is a seventy-four-year-old *suruhana*, who lives in Songsong village. She is Jose Hocog's mother-in-law and lives in a house adjoining his. Maria Ncing is retired now, but once had a flourishing practice in the village. She is now content to spend most of her time weaving mats, watering plants in the yard, and preparing her betelnut for chewing. It was interesting to compare her concepts of disease and medicinal combinations with those of the Chamorro Guamanian *suruhanos*, for they are very similar. Maria Ncing gave her patients massage, *palai*, power, and medicines, but unlike the *suruhanos* and like other *suruhanas*, she gave no dietary advice. Despite this, Juan said that he thought her remedies were exceptionally good.

I learned that Maria also believes that air and thick blood are responsible for illness and that the *taotaomona* cause these blockages that are known as *chetnon maipe*. Her *palai* mixture for application to these areas is made of coconut oil, salt, Holy Water, green onion leaves (fried in the coconut oil), and *patma* (ashes of burned coconut fronds). If the pain area was particularly severe, she would apply the *palai* and wrap the sore spot with young *lada* leaves (*Morinda citrifolia*) for one evening. She would not attend a patient or prepare any medicines in the evening for fear of encountering the *taotaomona*. In addition to her curing, Maria Ncing delivered babies and could change the position of the child in a pregnant woman if necessary.

Maria Ncing has an all-purpose medicinal combination that contains many of the same ingredients as in Juan's medicine (Table 6). Juan said that her medicine is good, but that she also adds some bitter ingredients such as *pakao* seed (*Caesalpinia major*). Juan prefers to separate bittertasting medicines from mild or aromatic medicines in his use of plants. Along with her all-purpose combination, Maria has some special combinations such as *amot gotpe*, which is boiled into a tea that is drunk in the treatment of internal injuries with internal hemorrhaging (Table 7). *Amot galobuk* is a combination of crushed leaves with salt and coconut oil that is used as a suppository for rectal infections (Table 8). *Amot saquiyayas* is a boiled tea that is taken for painful muscles and joints due to strain, arthritis, or gout (Table 9). In this combination is included the only purely mineral ingredients that I have found mixed with plants. Maria includes salt and *tararanas*, which is the

Table 6. *Amot Tinino*, Maria Ncing's all-purpose combination. All of the plants are boiled, not crushed, and collected fresh. All species in this table are indigenous to the Mariana Islands.

TAXONOMIC CLASSIFICATION	ENGLISH NAME	CHAMORRO NAME	COMMENTS
<i>Randia cochinchinensis</i>		<b>Sumak</b>	The leaf and the stem are used.
<i>Hedyotis foetida</i> var. <i>marianensis</i>		<b>Paudedo</b>	The leaf and stem are used.
<i>Cassytha filiformis</i>		<b>Mayagas</b>	A leafless vine. The entire plant except for the root is used.
<i>Elatostema calcareum</i>		<b>Tapun Ayuyu</b>	The leaf and stem are used.
<i>Piper guahamense</i>	Wild Piper	<b>Pupulu í aniti</b>	The leaf and stem are used.
<i>Phymatodes scolopendria</i>	Fern	<b>Kajlao</b>	The leaf and root are used.
<i>Davallia solida</i>	Fern	<b>Pugua Machena</b>	The leaf and root are used.
<i>Caesalpinia major</i>	Wait-a-bit	<b>Pakao</b>	The opened seed is used.
<i>Tacca leontopetaloides</i>		<b>Gaggap</b>	The leaf is used.
<i>Cassia</i> sp.	Senna	<b>Amot tumaga</b>	The leaf and heart are used.
<i>Physalis</i> sp.		<b>Tumatis chaka</b>	The leaf and stem are used.
<i>Colubrina asiatica</i>		<b>Gasusi</b>	The leaf and stem are used.
<i>Abrus precatorius</i>	Coral bean, Prayer bead, Crab's eye	<b>Hale Kulales</b>	The root of this vine is used. The seeds are deadly poisonous.
<i>Callicarpa candicans</i>		<b>Masigsig</b>	The leaf and stem are used.
<i>Maytenus thompsonii</i>		<b>Luluhot</b>	The leaf and stem are used.

Table 7. *Amot Gotpe*, Maria Ncing's medicine for internal injury. All the species in the table are either indigenous to the Mariana Islands or early naturalized by precontact Chamorro.

TAXONOMIC CLASSIFICATION	ENGLISH NAME	CHAMORRO NAME	COMMENTS
<i>Caesalpinia sappan</i>		<b>Sibukao</b>	The leaf and stem are used.
<i>Ficus prolixa</i>	Banyan	<b>Hale Nunu</b>	The aerial root is used.
<i>Heliotropium indicum</i>		<b>Bitbena</b>	The leaf and stem are used.
<i>Cocos nucifera</i>	Tuba vinegar	<b>Binagle</b>	Fermented sap from the coconut tree is added.

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<i>Ficus prolixa</i>	Banyan	<b>Hale Nunu</b>	The aerial root is used.
<i>Heliotropium indicum</i>		<b>B̄tbena</b>	The leaf and stem are used.
<i>Cocos nucifera</i>	Tuba vinegar	<b>Binagle</b>	Fermented sap from the coconut tree is added.

Table 8. *Amot Galobuk*, Maria Ncing's medicine for rectal infections. Only the leaf is used to make the suppository. All species mentioned in the table are either indigenous to the Mariana Islands or early-naturalized by the precontact Chamorro.

TAXONOMIC CLASSIFICATION	ENGLISH NAME	CHAMORRO NAME	COMMENTS
<i>Phyllanthus amarus</i>		<b>Maigo-lalo</b>	A garden herb.
<i>Euphorbia hirta</i>		<b>Golundrina</b>	A garden herb.
<i>Blechnum brownnei</i>		<b>Jatbas Babui</b>	A common wild herb.
<i>Cassia</i> sp.	Senna	<b>Amot Tumaga</b>	A wild grass-like plant.
<i>Physalis</i> sp.		<b>Tumatis Chaka</b>	A wild herb.
<i>Piper betle</i>	Betel pepper	<b>Pupulu</b>	A vine that was introduced by the precontact Chamorro and is mostly cultivated.
Sodium chloride	Salt	<b>Asiga</b>	A mineral.
<i>Cocos nucifera</i>	Coconut oil	<b>Lana niyog</b>	The oil rendered from the meat of the mature nut. Added for lubrication.

Table 9. *Amot Saquiyayas*, Maria Ncing's medicine for muscle or arthritic pain. Unless otherwise indicated, all the species mentioned in the table are indigenous or naturalized by the precontact Chamorro in the Mariana Islands.

TAXONOMIC CLASSIFICATION	ENGLISH NAME	CHAMORRO NAME	COMMENTS
<i>Pandanus tectorius</i>	Textile pandanus	<b>Bingan Aggak</b>	The young leaf tips of this cultivated plant are used.
<i>Cocos nucifera</i>	Coconut	<b>Binag Niyog</b>	The heart of the young leaf sprout in used.
<i>Hibiscus tiliaceus</i>	Hibiscus tree	<b>Hagun Pago</b>	The dried leaf is used.
<i>Dioscorea alata</i>	Yam	<b>Hagun Dago</b>	The dried leaf is used.
<i>Dioscorea esculenta</i> var. <i>fasciculata</i>	Wild yam	<b>Hagun Nika</b>	The dried leaf is used.
<i>Jatropha curcas</i>	Physic nut	<b>Tubatuba</b>	The dry leaf is used from this introduced plant.
<i>Dactyloctenium aegyptium</i>	Crab grass	<b>Chaguan Kabayo</b>	The leaf is used.
<i>Piper betle</i>	Betel pepper	<b>Pupulu</b>	The leaf is used from this cultivated vine. It gives an aromatic flavor to the medicine.
Sodium chloride	Salt	<b>Asiga</b>	A mineral.
Carbon	Black soot	<b>Tararanas</b>	A mineral.

black soot powder taken from the ceiling of the cookhouse. In Malaya, the soot from the kitchen is sometimes taken by mouth for fever and is known as *arang para* (Gimlette and Thompson, 1971: 6). Soot is nearly pure carbon. After administering this medicine, the massage is concentrated on the abdomen.

It is interesting to note that in *amot saquiyayas*, two species of yam from the genus *Dioscorea* are included in the combination. Yams in this genus are extensively

used in both Central America and the Orient for they contain cortisone and steroids used in the relief of arthritic pain. It is possible that the varieties in the Mariana Islands also contain steroids which would account for their presence in a remedy designed to relieve muscle and joint pain.

### The *Suruhana*

In comparison with the *suruhano*, the *suruhana* also uses plant medicines and *palai* to cure patients along with massage and power. She rarely prescribes dietary advice, but mostly, the basic system of curing is not altered by a difference in the sex of the curer. The major difference is in the specialties of the *suruhana* and her participation in a ritual called the Novena. Most of the clientele of the *suruhana* are women and children although they are capable of curing male adults also. It is usually the mother who takes a child to the *suruhana* if results are not favorable from a prior visit to the family doctor. Usually, the *suruhana* has a store of medicines that she, her patients, or a member of her family have collected and they are usually special medicines for specific ailments rather than all-purpose combinations. The *suruhana* rarely collects her own medicines.

Since the *suruhana* is concerned mostly with women patients, they are especially adept in obstetrical and gynecological problems. The *suruhana* is familiar with the frequency, flow, and consistency of the female menstrual cycle, morning sickness and other related female bodily functions. They also specialize in promoting fertility and have the power to touch a woman and "open her tubes" or "tip the uterus into a more favorable position." I have not heard of a *suruhana* performing abortions or giving birth control advice, but the precontact *suruhana* might have acted in this capacity. The present day *suruhana* may also deal with birth control, but it would be extremely secretive because of the confidentiality that is needed in closeknit communities and the dominance of Catholic ideals.

The most unique function of the *suruhana* is when they preside over the Novena, a ceremony that is mostly attended by women for the purpose of praying for the release of an illness that is affecting a member of a family. The prayers are to a patron saint, asking the saint to aid in the recovery of the ill person. There are nine consecutive nights of prayer attended by family members and sometimes close friends. According to one anthropologist (Thompson, 1974: 191), the Novena originated as an expression of gratitude for the protection of the people from a devastating earthquake in 1902. The Novena is not always for the aid of an ill person, but may just be a celebration of thanks.

In the numerous private Novenas commemorating specific occasions showing gratitude to a saint, the *suruhanas* often preside over the services. If the *suruhana* is unable to cure her patient through the use of herbal medicines, she may visit the various parishes throughout the island in search of the "saint who controls the illness" possessing her patient. When this is discovered, the *suruhana* conducts a Novena in the home of the sick person in an attempt to rid them of their disease. If she is successful, she may continue the Novenas annually as a gesture of appreciation (A. Moore: 1974).

It is interesting that some of the Novenas are for sick persons and some are just celebrations of appreciation. It seems logical that the *suruhana* may have once performed rituals, possibly summoning the *taotaomona* or more likely in attempts to rid a person of the presence of a *taotaomona*. The emergence of the Catholic oriented ceremony or Novena may have stimulated the merging of both worlds, that of the *suruhana* and the *taotaomona* and that of the Church and the patron saints. By having the *suruhana* look for a person's patron saint, the transition from one cultural institution to another would not have been as drastic. It is possible that in times previous to a knowledge of saints, the Holy Trinity and the Virgin Mary, the *suruhana* or *suruhano* may have received their gift of power from the *taotaomona* or other spiritual entities. There may have been a greater reliance on the spirit world in curing.

The main evidence suggesting the merging of traditional ideology and curing with Catholic missionization is seen in the Novena decoration. *Leston* ribbon fern (*Ophioglossum pendulum*) and *fadang* (*Cycas circinalis*) leaves are the most commonly used as decorations that are placed in the house to give a tropical jungle effect to the room environment. This is considered mostly as traditional decoration today, but may have arisen as an attempt to give the jungle-dwelling *taotaomona* more mobility in a person's house. I have been told that all of the decorations are collected from the deep jungle. They are mostly indigenous ferns. This indicates that the original function of the decoration may have been to extend the environment of the spirit from the jungle to the home environment or vice versa and allow for the spirits uninhibited passage into or out of the presence of living man.

#### A Chamorro Guamanian *Suruhana*

Rosa Quichocho's maiden name is Tenorio and she is the niece of a *suruhano* by that name, who became well known on Guam for his alleged partnership with the *taotaomona*. He is dead now, but is well remembered. Even Juan Cepeda said that he was a powerful *suruhano*, who was able to talk to and persuade the *taotaomona* to intervene in his behalf. He taught his niece his medicine and Rosa Quichocho also learned curing techniques from her father.

Rosa uses massage, medicines, power and *palai* to cure her patients. She gives no dietary advice. Her massage is not as forceful as that of the *suruhano* and is characterized by rubbing and pinching the flesh. Her daughter and herself feel that a person is born with the gift of a curing massage ability. Bennett was born "feet first" and is thought to have a greater power to cure with massage than her mother and concentrates on this facet of curing.

Plant medicines are used by Rosa Quichocho in her system of curing. She usually collects her medicines in the jungle and grows some in the backyard. They are special medicines for specific ailments. Some of the medicines are boiled into a tea and others are crushed to prepare a fresh tea. The dosages vary depending on the illness. For swollen areas of the body, a *palai* made from chewing *gasusu* leaves (*Columbrina asiatica*) is made by the *suruhana*. The juice and saliva are



applied to the swollen area to relieve the pain. Pain is the result of air in the body.

Rose Quichocho has a power, but the power is part of the ability to cure. She cannot treat ailments without the patient identifying the illness. She treats both sexes and is especially good with children. Many of her male patients are relatives. Unlike other *suruhanas*, she does not help women achieve greater fertility. Also unlike other *suruhanas*, she does not preside over Novenas for sick people. She gives Novenas for religious events and her daughter participates in the Christmas Novena by singing Nino Jesus, a religious hymn.

Rosa believes in the *taotaomona* and so does her daughter, but spirit-caused illnesses are usually treated by the more experienced mother. Bennett mostly treats minor ailments such as infections and sprains. Bennett's cure for an eye infection is to rub her thumbs along the patient's eyebrows. She was only able to relate a couple of her mother's specific remedies. An example of a specific medicine used by her mother is a remedy for a baby with a sore, white tongue. The mixture was said to include *tumatis chaka* (*Physalis* sp.) and *maigo-lalo* (*Phyllanthus amarus*).

The practice of this mother and daughter illustrates that a change in techniques can occur between two generations of *suruhanas* in the same family. They also point out some of the differences in techniques between themselves and other *suruhanas* and *suruhanos*. This is primarily the result of secrecy, but the function of these *suruhanas* is the same as with others despite the lack of a common existing store of information on curing.

### An Analysis of *Suruhanos* Curing

Having the opportunity to observe and converse with several *suruhanos* during the course of my experiences with Juan, it became apparent that despite differences in technique and the specialization preferences of a particular *suruhano*, the basic underlying system of curing is a pattern of five components that are common among all of the *suruhanos* that I met. They all employ the five components of their personal power, dietary advice, massage, *palai* and medicines as an integrated system in their function of curing disease. Disease is defined as an alteration of living cells or tissues that jeopardizes survival in their environment (May, 1968: 75). Each segment of the *suruhano* system is crucial in the curing process but is unable to act alone to produce the results possible with the complete integrated system. Since this basic system is prevalent among practicing *suruhanos* that previously had no face-to-face relationships with each other and were not taught by a common instructor, it is likely that this basic approach has been passed down intact from precontact times with only minor innovations as far as plant usage, dietary advice, massage technique and *palai* ingredients being employed to combat the blood clots and air bubbles in the nerves that are felt to be the major cause of affliction by all of the *suruhanos* I talked with.

All three *suruhanos* feel that pressure, indicated by heat and thickness of body tissue, is responsible for most painful ailments. The viewpoint that pressure is

from blood clots and air bubbles is the result of their scant knowledge of human internal anatomy, which is mostly learned from the butchering of animals and international media, such as television. They apply this knowledge to their sensory perception of pressure areas.

Many of the world's folk curers are concerned with purifying the blood stream or insuring a smooth flow of blood. They are familiar with the circulatory system because it is easily perceived. Other body systems, as well as multiplying microorganisms, are not so easily detected as with viewing protruding veins, feeling a pulse or watching blood flow from an open wound. Thus it is logical that bruises, swellings, varicose veins and pain are thought to be blockages in the circulatory system and in some instances folk curers are accurate in this diagnoses by Western standards. The concept of pressure is also common among primitive peoples because infections do cause recognizable swelling and tightness of the skin. The *suruhanos* are extremely adept in the recognition of infection and apply their treatment accordingly. It is likely that the *suruhano* originally attributed most of their concepts of illness as being caused by *taotaomona* spirits. Today, with the increased knowledge of the *suruhanos*, the *taotaomona* only cause some illnesses and other ailments are just plain bad luck. On the other hand, the disease theory of the *suruhanos* may have always been characterized by a dualism of natural causes and spirit causes.

A thorough chemical analysis of the ingredients of Juan's all-purpose combination of medicinal plants is needed before an accurate appraisal of the importance of the medicine as a facet in the entire curing system can be determined. The reduction of psychosomatic complications in any patient can be reduced by the feeling that the medicine will cure. Possibly, the plants contain nutrients, vitamins and minerals such as other green leaf vegetables. This may possibly balance the dietary advice to cut down on specific foods.

The precontact Chamorro *suruhano* may have had a latent function of providing for minerals and vitamins from green-leaf medicines to supplement a heavy, starch-fish diet. Especially if a person was weak or anemic, a dosage of vitamin-laden medicinal tea would give added strength. The use of medicinal herbs may have originally arisen with a dualistic function of curing and as a diet supplement with the two being closely aligned with one another even today.

Many of the patients of the *suruhano* favor the aromatic taste of the medicinal teas and in relation to the lesser degree of diverse flavors available to the precontact aborigines, a taste and subsequent demand could arise for an aromatic drink. When viewed in respect to other extensive habits such as coffee drinking and betelnut chewing, the regular desire for aromatic herb teas may have existed in many ancient tropical settings where herbs are plentiful.

A medicinal tea can be preventative as well as curative, for not only being beneficial if taken when sick, if taken regularly, it may prevent ailments if it is a nutritional supplement to the regular diet. Besides preventing normal growth, reproduction, and the assimilation of essential chemicals into the human body, vitamin deficiency will also lead to neural dysfunction which becomes manifested in abnormal

or maladaptive behavior within an individual. This is especially extensive in deficiencies of the Vitamin B complex which can result in behavioral problems such as depression, irritability, memory loss, ideas of persecution and insomnia (Peterman & Goodhard, 1954). Thus, the precontact psychotherapeutic qualities of the *suruhano* may have extended beyond his personality projection and ritual action and encompassed the prevention of mental illness as a result of the vitamins in medicinal preparations as they physiologically contribute to the metabolic processes of the central nervous system. In the prevention of disease, whether by vitamins or medicinal ingredients, there is prevention of mental distress because depression is the common companion of debilitating disease.

In order to maintain normal body growth and to prevent vitamin deficiency diseases, humans must ingest a variety of vitamins. The precontact Chamorro diet consisted mainly of fish and starches and coconut oil. The starches were taro, *fadang* (*Cycas circinalis*), breadfruit and rice. In fish and from sunlight, one can receive vitamin D and in rice there is vitamin B. Sufficient vegetable oil and vitamin E are found in coconut meat and the coconut water contains sucrose. Taro, *fadang*, and breadfruit have a high starch content. Necessary vitamins such as vitamins A, C, K, and the B complex: thiamin, niacin, riboflavin, and other components are primarily found in large amounts in green-leaf plants. Vitamins function as enzymes and prevent deficiency diseases such as beriberi, pellegra, scurvy, rickets, and osteomalacia (softening of bone). Vitamins also function as enzymes or organic catalysts that make possible the complex chemical reactions of the physiological life processes. The possible incompleteness of the staple diet of the precontact Chamorro was compounded by the cooking, drying, preserving (breadfruit), and soaking (*fadang*) which further break down the vitamin content of foods. Thus, the fresh, vitamin-laden medicinal tea of the *suruhano* and *suruhana* could have been of extreme importance as a dietary supplement.

The *suruhanos* do not know of any adverse reactions that patients may have to their medicines and I have never seen any during my experiences with the curers. There seems to be no conflict between drug ingredients in the combination medicines. This is unusual because the chances for adverse reactions drastically rise when combinations of drugs are introduced into a person's system. Centuries of testing and observation are responsible for an absence of negative reactions because a plant with an adverse effect would tend to be discarded as an ingredient. In Juan's all-purpose combination, there are a number of ferns. The ferns, worldwide, are generally devoid of toxins and many species are used medicinally and as nutritious food items. Other ingredients in Juan's medicine probably contain medicinal ingredients, but may have also been added for other reasons. The excessive moisture in succulent ingredients such as *potpupot*, *tapun ayuyu* and *seiyai-hagun* add moisture to the dry mixture of crushed fern roots and other leaves. The mucilaginous nature of these ingredients may guard against harsh effects of other ingredients. The *pupulu n'aniti* is admittedly an aromatic which gives a fresh good taste to the prepared medicinal tea, much as its close relative *pupulu* betel

pepper is added to other medicines and chewed with betelnut. It is also possible that an ingredient may be multipurpose in scope.

The fact that the all-purpose combinations of the *suruhano*s have such a wide functional scope, spanning extremes in body metabolism, being used to lower high body temperature and vice versa, and to lower high blood pressure, and vice versa, attributes to the value of the medicine, but also lends to the argument that part of the effects of the medicine are psychological when taken in conjunction with the incessant optimism of the *suruhano* and his positive reassurance to a believer. Thus, the placebo effect may be responsible for some of the patient's response to treatment. The placebo is an agent employed with or without some ritual, but always with the suggestion or implication of its power or helpful properties (Fischer & Dlin, 1956). A doctor-patient relationship is essential to its use (Kurland, 1960).

From observation of the many *suruhano* patients, it became obvious that the success of the *suruhano* is not the sole result of the basic components of their system of curing, such as their enormous knowledge of medicinal plants. The optimism and personality projection of the curer himself is of vital importance in curing, for it relieves psychosomatic complications which in turn leaves the patient stronger to combat further ills. This is not a latent process in the mind of the *suruhano*. In Juan's instruction to Jose and Miguel, they were constantly reminded that an air of optimism and an occasional joke provide the patient with boost of energy. Patients who are very ill do not usually recognize the deliberate attempt by the *suruhano* to put them in a better mood, but are almost always receptive to psychotherapy because they are looking for a change already when the *suruhano* is called in to help. Chamorro Guamanians find it hard to adjust to hospital treatment. The hospital is generally considered a place where one goes to die or physically degenerate. This is the opposite of many Westerners who automatically feel that they are in good hands when they enter a clinical atmosphere. The *suruhano* patients seem to be more readily conductive to the interpersonal ties that develop between the patient and the *suruhano*. There is confidence that there is community concern for the patient's welfare and that the patient is directly in the hands of a respected community member.

The importance of psychotherapeutic treatment is especially evident in Jose's all-purpose combination of medicines because it probably contains less medicinal ingredients than Juan's. The effect of constipation is more of a physiological effect than a medicinal effect as the result of the use of roughage plants in his combination. Jose's medicine contains corn blossoms, bamboo and other grasses. The bamboo roots probably contain similar ingredients as the edible sprouts that they are closely attached to. Also, it has long been known that the young sprouts and hearts of grasses are a roughage food, used by humans in many culture areas as a food item and by many animals as a staple food. The use of corn is postcontact, as corn was introduced by the Spanish from Mexico. The use of corn directly corresponds with the Spanish Catholic influence on fertility. Corn pollen was a symbol of fertility throughout the Americas at the time of its introduction to



the island. Jose's medicine is reputed to increase fertility; however, Jose is not aware of specific functions of separate ingredients of the medicine that was taught to him.

As for the dietary advice given by the *suruhanos*, it is difficult to determine a correlation between the advice against high caloric fatty foods such as bacon, whole milk and fried chicken, when the same advice is given to fat, thin and all sizes of people in between. The *suruhano* has no knowledge of cholesterol and is not concerned with the patient's weight as much as the belief that these foods are high protein and promote the buildup of pressure areas. Generally speaking, though, a low cholesterol diet would be beneficial to most people. An epidemiological study (Reed et al., 1970) that compared the health effects of westernization and migration on Chamorros living in Rota, Guam, and California found that the serum cholesterol level of the three groups were markedly different. The more westernized a group was, the higher the level was. Thus, Guam had a higher intake than Rota and California had a higher intake than Guam. So, the increased significance in dietary advice against cholesterol directly parallels an increase in the consumption of cholesterol.

All of the *suruhanos* emphasize the dangers of alcohol consumption and feel that it will deteriorate the body. Juan is so adamant about patients following his dietary advice that if he senses that a person is disregarding his prescriptions, he will cease to treat that person, for his power will be negated by an improper diet. Dietary advice was not as important in precontact times. Most of the foods advised against are postcontact in origin except for coconut oil which has always been extensively used in cooking on the island. It is possible that in precontact times, dietary restrictions may have been linked to food taboos. E. Fuller Torrey (1973: 109) has found that Iban curers of Borneo determine one source of mental illness to be the result of the violation of a taboo against eating an animal that is forbidden under the laws of the ancestors.

With regard to the massage, many people feel that the therapeutic effects of this treatment are beneficial. Massage relieves the pain from overworked muscles or stimulates the blood flow and feeling in underworked muscles; however, the *suruhano* is not solely concerned with these effects. He is also concerned with the flow of his own personal power into the patient by way of the *palai* that acts as the conveyor for this entity, which is unseen, but very real in the mind of the patient and the *suruhano*.

Juan's most guarded secret involves the use of the *palai* vinegar when massaging his patients. Originally, he told me that the *palai* insured a smooth flow of power from the *suruhano* to the patient by opening the pores of the skin. The *tuba* vinegar also cools off a feverish patient; however, I was not giving this measure ample credit in the system of curing as I originally considered it only a subfacet of massage and power. One day Juan told me that the *palai* itself is an as important part of the system as either massage, power, medicine or the diet. For in the *palai* are mixed special ingredients that are responsible for the smooth flow of power and the warding

off of *taotaomona* influences. This practice takes on the quality of a magic ritual as it gives the *suruhano* reassurance of his power. The ingredients are produced by burning cotton soaked with the sweat of the *suruhano*, white chicken feathers and palm fronds. These ashes and Holy Water obtained from the church are mixed with the garlic and the *tuba* vinegar. Other *suruhanos* and *suruhanas* have their own *palai* mixtures with magical ingredients. As for Juan's *palai*, chicken feathers are European in origin and palm fronds and Holy Water are Spanish Catholic in origin.

Many of the world's curers have adopted the early European concept that garlic (*Allium sativum*) wards off evil spirits. In Malaya, a garlic paste is sometimes pressed into the ears of a person who is possessed by an evil spirit (Gimlette & Thomson, 1971; 14, 15). As with most primitive curers who come in contact with Western religious influence, the Chamorro *suruhanos* do not discard their own beliefs, but merely adopt the new mystical beliefs of the colonizer into their own *materia medica*. When Christian missionaries used the concepts of vampires and werewolves to frighten the Haitian voodooists into discarding their pantheon of spirits, the Haitians merely adopted them into their belief system. The Aztecs of Mexico chewed the seeds of a morning glory vine (*Rivea corymbosa*), a hallucinogen, as an ideological ritual. When the Spanish missionaries instructed the Indians, the Aztecs merely began chewing thirteen seeds, one for each man present at the Lord's Supper. The *curandera* of today, the Mexican counterpart of the *suruhana*, still practices this same combination of ancient and Christian ritual (Kreig, 1966: 79-81).

In Juan's *palai*, it is the human sweat and in Rosa's *palai* it is her own saliva, that are probably the most traditional and key ingredients. It is part of the curer himself, but is detached from the body to provide a more lasting contact with the patient. In effect, the curer gives the patient part of himself and his power. Thus, the *palai* is an interface enabling a one-way flow of power between the *suruhano* and the patient.

Juan is hesitant to disclose his belief in magical ingredients because he does not want to detract from his scientific use of plants, massage, and diet. Mystical rituals tend to frighten people and if the patient is scared of the *suruhano*, his psychotherapeutic influence is nullified. The magical beliefs or supernatural power that accompanies the use of medicinal plants is important to the curer, but many times acts to discredit natural medicine in the eyes of a Western observer. But, it must be understood that medicinal plant use did not arise from belief in power, but vice versa. Magic and power arose as a result of the nature of the effects of experimentation with plant medicines. Thus, medicine usually has a definite functional effect and is not just an adornment of ideological ritual.

Bronislaw Malinowski's (1948) analysis of the functions and integrated nature of the cultural imperatives (magic, science, and religion) is especially applicable to Juan's system of curing (Fig. 1). These three behavioral concepts are harmoniously interwoven as the ingredients of *palai* give added confidence to the scientific validation of medicinal plants, massage and diet. The power of the *suruhano* is under the shadow of religious dogma, not to mention the direct intermixing of

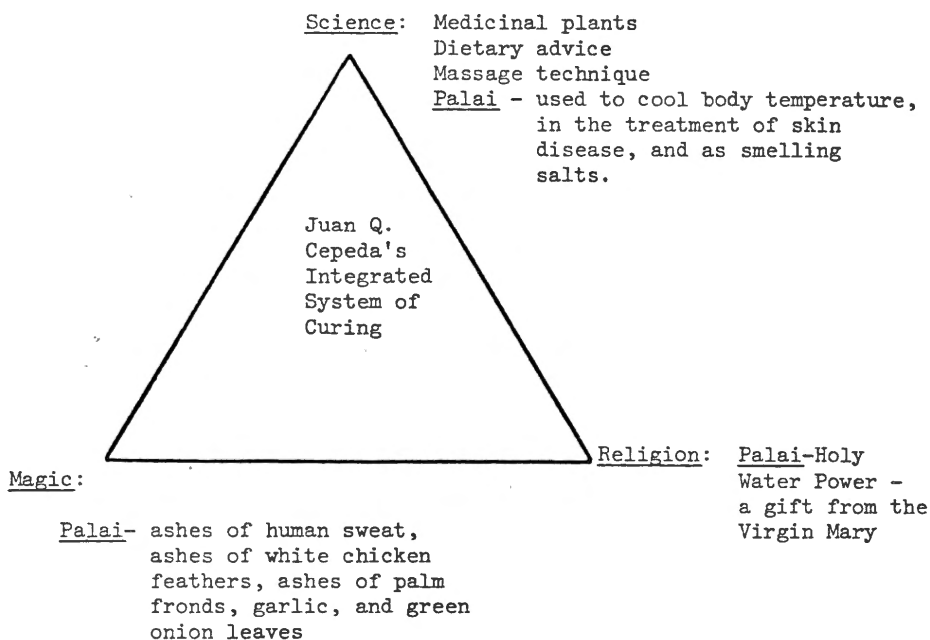


Fig. 1. Conceptual integration in *suruhano* curing.

Holy Water, an institutionalized magico-religious symbol with purely traditional magical substances.

Experimentation with plant medicine was probably the first facet of curing to arise as the result of primitive man's intimate knowledge of the behavior of animals in his environment. Most animals instinctively chew on plants of medicinal value when sick and avoid poisonous or ill-tasting flora. Juan points out the leaves of medicinal ferns that are chewed by the deer as confirmation of their value and compatibility with the physical composition of living animals.

If one questions the intellect of primitive man, he needs only to look at the hundreds of life-saving plant remedies that were perfected by these people and passed on to the more complex social systems. Most medicinal or hallucinogenic plants were deeply rooted in primitive ideology because their effects were so mysterious, bizarre, disastrous, or rewarding as to further the awe and respect one had for the environment. A dependence on plant medicines results in an integrated link between man and his surrounding flora. Recognition of this interaction is environmental consciousness at its highest level.

In the consideration of crosscultural influence on *suruhano* curing, the actual practices of other cultures' curers are blocked in their flow of knowledge from one culture to another for two reasons. One is secrecy, for the general population is usually not aware of the intricacies of curing. And when they travel, it is usually only the basic functions of curing such as massage or diet that are passed on to others. Many times, it is the common home remedies that are passed on, such as the movement of candlenut *take-biha* (*Cassia alata*) from Mexico to Guam as

a cure for ringworm. The other blockage in the crosscultural flow of knowledge of curing is that curers themselves rarely travel because their practices are designed in response to their own unique physical-biotic environment and the needs of their community members. If Juan Cepeda were to move to the United States, he would be hampered by a lack of the necessary plant ingredients in his medicine and his lack of rapport with the local spirits. The curer is an adaption, deeply rooted in a specific cultural setting.

An example of a blockage in the crosscultural flow of knowledge on curing is seen in the Mexican *curandero* use of *achiote* (*Bixa orellana*) seeds in curing. The juice of these red seeds is applied to skin infections and measles (Kreig, 1966: 282). *Achiote* was introduced in Guam from Mexico and gained such popularity as a spice, that red rice now holds the distinction of being part of Chamorro tradition; however, the medicinal aspects of *achiote* never reached the *suruhano* from *curandero*. All of the *suruhanos* I have met grow *achiote* in their home gardens, but have never heard of using it as it is used in curing all through Central and South America. Also, the *suruhano* has used his own preparations for skin disease for so long in conjunction with other facets of his curing system that the emergence of new phenomena has a difficult time gaining entry into their realm of knowledge and practice. It is only the result of the persistent dominance of Catholic missionization for more than 300 years which has forced the *suruhano* to introduce Western concepts into his methodology.

Most of the original concepts of illness, curing techniques, and knowledge of medicinal plants had no problem entering Guam because they were carried by the same members of the culture that was originally using those methods. The speculation as to the direction of Chamorro migrations from the islands of Southeast Asia finds tangible evidence in the fact that most of the indigenous flora in *suruhano* medicines are also indigenous to islands in Southeast Asia. It is very possible that the earliest islanders not only brought food plants such as taro, coconut, betelnut, betel pepper, bananas, and sugar cane on initial migrations, but also carried medicinal seeds and roots to propagate these valuable plants which are essential to survival.

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I was fortunate to have established a rapport with a cross-section of the *suruhanos*



on the island, but obtaining information about a *suruhana* would have been an impossibility without the help of a friend. Some of the information on the *suruhana* was recorded by Anne Moore, an accomplished ethnographer and graduate of the University of Guam. I provided the questions and assembled the data that was obtained, but Anne Moore established the vital rapport. The use of a female assistant was essential, for just as the *suruhanos* reveal more to men, the *suruhanas* speak more freely to women. My research assistant was able to obtain information and permission to record the information from her neighbors, a mother and daughter, who are both practicing traditional methods of curing. The twenty-two-year-old daughter, Bennett Quichocho Fontaine, is learning her mother's knowledge and spoke for her forty-nine-year-old mother, Rosa Tenorio Quichocho.

Anne Moore's father, Philip H. Moore, an authority on Guam's plants, provided much of the taxonomic classification of the flora listed in this thesis.

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