

by May the grains form and then ripen till golden yellow and harvest would then commence in late June or early July.

C. The Social Structure

The society is stratified. Those occupying the upper ranks are the **kadangyan** or the traditional rich families owning several large terraced fields that are inherited from ancestors. In the agricultural cycle, work on the rice fields of the kadangyan is given precedence over those of the other members of the community owning small plots. There is a dumupag or the designated family from the kadangyan class who leads in all agricultural activities particularly the huowah or post harvest ritual-activities. The dumupag is chosen through consensus by the village elders and the mumbaki or village priests, on the basis of the extent of rice fields owned and social stature held in the traditional society. The dumupag necessarily emanates from the kadangyan family that owns the widest and biggest number of rice fields which are believed to be the oldest among the terraced fields in the area. Being the lead family, the dumupag has the exclusive privilege to declare the commencement of harvest and calls on everyone in the community to join the harvest starting off with his/her rice fields. Only after harvest is completed in the rice fields of the dumupag can the **umuonub** or the family with the second largest rice fields start harvest in his/her rice fields. Then it is followed by the **mikatuo** or the family with the third largest rice fields, followed by the **makap-at** or the family/families with the fourth largest rice fields. In all the foregoing, harvesting is a cooperative labor shared by the community members along with the respective owners of the rice fields. A harvester receives five bundles of rice from the rice field owner in exchange for a day's work. Only after the rice crops of the makap-at are harvested will the small rice field-owners harvest their crops. And since the fields of the latter are small, harvesting can be done simply by them.

4. The Enactment of the Punnuk

(1) Community participation; colorful and celebratory

At around nine o'clock in the morning, the members of the three communities, joining the punnuk, start marching through the rice-terraced embankments towards the direction of the River Hapao. The predominant red color of their traditional attire is a stunning contrast to the greenish vegetation in the surroundings. Red colored leaves of the **dong-a** (also called dongla) (*Cordyline fruticosa* (L.) A. Chev. family Agavaceae), believed to be attractive to the gods, are embellished on their heads. The tinaggu is swayed and the pakid is constantly raised by the men carrying them while a bunch of the dong-a is waved by the rest of the participants to the tempo of boastful shouting, goading and cheering in unison by the participants.

(2) Imploring blessings from the gods

The cheering and exchange of pointed criticisms to put down the confidence of the opposite group/s becomes more feverish as the participants approach the river embankment. The first two groups arriving at the designated area in the river are the first to compete in the tug-of-war. But before the game begins, a participant called **munggopah** from one of the competing groups recites a 4-line prayer imploring blessings from the gods: **Daya**, of the sky, **Laud**, of the sea, and **Bago** the god of the earth, not just for a good game but also for their community's health and well being. And this would be promptly followed by a recitation of another 4-line verse from the munggopah of the opposing group also addressed to the gods imploring that bounty and good luck shine on them.

(3) The Game, tug-of-war

After the versifications, a tinaggu is then thrown at the very midst of the river by one of the opposing groups and in a split of a second their pakid strike the tinaggu and get stuck on it, and the tugging ensues. The constant pulling by each group invites deafening shouts and cheers from those on the river embankment eagerly hoping for a victory on their side. The group that pulls with greater, concerted strength can bring the tinaggu closer to their side, sometimes even pulling along the opposing group, and attaining victory in the game. The winning team then faces-off with the remaining group for another round of game. The challenges to another round/s can go on as long as there is still a tinaggu to pick and pull, and until everyone gets tired.

(4) The winner and the losers

Whoever wins the most number of rounds in the tug-of-war is declared the over-all champion, not only in the punnuk but of the entire harvest season. The losers go home feeling forlorn as it is generally believed that their harvest would be easily consumed and thus will not last till the next harvest season while those in the winning side are all euphoric, oozing with confidence that the forthcoming year would indeed be a year of plenty and that their rice granary will always be full if not replenished every time. Further demonstrate sportsmanship and camaraderie, the men who still have the strength to spendengage in a wrestling game called **bultong** or **dopap** before everybody takes a bath in the river.

5. Significance of the traditions related to harvest, and the huowah –baki, inum, and punnuk

- **religious** - as shown in the rituals of baki, inum and in the recitation of verses at the river to thank the gods for the harvest and implore the gods' continued assistance in the life of the community for the whole year;