

Maria Dlugosz SSpS

Mae Enga Myths and Christ's Message

**Fullness of Life
in Mae Enga Mythology and
Christ the Life (Jn 10:10)**

1998

Steyler Verlag, Nettetal

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	I
Table of Contents	III
Glossary	XI
Introduction	1
Part One: Systematic Reflection and Critical Evaluation of the Traditional Mae Enga Concept of Life	10
<i>Chapter I: Life in the Mae Enga World: the Land, the Times, the People</i>	<i>10</i>
A. The Area of Research	11
1. Location	11
1.1 Melanesia	11
1.2 Papua New Guinea	11
1.3 Enga	12
1.3.1 Mae Enga	13
B. Change and Exchange	14
1. Pre-Colonial History	14
2. Colonial History: Changing Times, Spaces, Forms of Wealth	17
3. The Growth of the Catholic Church	22
3.1 First Contact	22
3.2 Growing into a New Community	23
3.3 Towards a Greater Lay Involvement	24
C. Community of Life	28
1. Settlement and Forest	28
1.1 Social Structure	28
1.2 Forest	32
2. Female and Male	33
3. Warfare and Peace	36
3.1 Warfare	37
3.2 Peace Negotiation	39
4. Leadership	40

4.1 <i>Tee</i> : Pigs as Exchange Objects	42
4.2 <i>Mali</i> : Singing and Dancing as Life Celebration	45
Conclusion	46
<i>Chapter II: Life is Maintained and Enhanced</i>	48
A. "Religion" as Totality of Life	48
1. Worldview	50
2. Aitawe and Sky-Beings	52
2.1 Aitawe - Source of Life	53
2.2 Sky-Beings	56
3. Ancestors, Ghosts, Spirits and Demons	58
3.1 Ancestors - Guardians and Mediators of Life.	59
3.2 Ghosts of the Recent Dead	61
3.3 Demons - Threats to Life.	63
B. Ritual as Renewal and Re-creation	64
1. Description of Ritual	65
1.1 The <i>Topoli</i> - Ritual Specialists.	66
1.2 Ritual - Communication with the Sky-Dwellers	68
1.2.1 <i>Kana Kai</i>	69
1.2.2 <i>Anga Wai Pingi</i>	70
1.3 Ritual - Communication with Ancestors and Ghosts	71
1.3.1 <i>Imbu</i>	71
1.3.2 <i>Yainanda</i>	72
1.4 Magic and Sorcery.	74
1.4.1 Magic	74
1.4.2 Sorcery	75
1.5 Interpreting Rituals	76
2. Rites of Passage	77
2.1 Birth and Childhood	78
2.2 <i>Sangai</i>	79
2.3 Girls' Puberty	83
2.4 Marriage	84
2.5 Burial and Funeral	89
3. Interpreting Mae Enga Rites of Passage	90

C. Traditional Mae Enga Concept of Life	92
1. Community	93
2. Relationships	93
2.1 Aitawe	95
2.2 Ancestors	96
2.3 Environment	96
Conclusion	97
Part Two: The Mae Enga Mythology and Its Contribution to the Traditional Concept of Life in Its Fullness	98
<i>Chapter III: Myth as a Means of Communicating the Sacred</i>	<i>98</i>
A. Myth-telling in Mae Enga.	98
1. The Problem with “Myth” Today	98
2. Description of Myth in the Mae Enga Context.	100
3. Function of Myth	102
4. Different Types of Mae Enga Myths.	103
5. Main Topics and Themes	106
6. Circumstances	107
7. Myth-tellers and Listeners	108
B. Symbols in the Mae Enga Mythology	110
1. Role of Nature	112
1.1 The Sun and the Moon	112
1.2 Environment.	113
2. Significant Birds.	114
2.1 Yaka Lai	114
2.2 Yaka Laima	115
2.3 Yaka Kambi.	115
3. Plants	115
3.1 The Lepe Plant	116
4. Animals	117
4.1 Pigs	117
4.2 Possums, Snakes and Insects	118
5. Stones	118

C. Heroes as Life Bringers	119
1. General Characteristics	119
1.1 Origins	120
1.2 Mission	121
1.3 Values and Beliefs	121
1.3.1 Community	121
1.3.2 Relationships.	122
1.3.3 Exchange.	123
2. Heroes and Founders	123
2.1 Culture Hero	123
2.2 Dema Hero	124
2.3 Hero Founder	125
Conclusion	125

<i>Chapter IV: Mae Enga Myths as Means of Passing on Wisdom of Abundant Life</i>	127
--	-----

A. The Lepe Plant Origin Myth.	128
1. Different Versions of the Lepe Plant Origin Myth	128
1.1 The Lepe Plant Origin Myth from Keman Area	128
1.2 The Lepe Plant Origin Myth from Kandep Area	130
1.3 The Lepe Plant Origin Myth - by Yohannes Yongamano	132
2. Contextual Analysis	135
2.1 Actors of the Myth.	135
2.2 The <i>Lepe</i> Plant Origin Myth - a <i>Dema</i> Myth.	136
2.2.1 Symbols of Death and Life	137
2.2.1.1 Symbols of Death.	137
2.2.1.2 Symbols of Life	138
2.3 The Myth and <i>Sangai</i> Rites	138
2.3.1 Aspect of Life.	139
2.3.2 Aspect of Female-Male Relationship	140
2.3.3 Transformation	141
2.3.4 Physical Appearance and Internal Values	142
3. The Meanings and Power of Symbols.	143
3.1 The Lepe Plant and Its Meanings.	144
3.1.1 Mystery	144
3.1.2 Life Continuity	145

3.1.3 Transforming Power	145
3.1.4 Life-giving Relationships	146
3.1.5 Purity of Heart	146
3.1.6 Communion.	147
3.2 <i>Taiyoko Penge</i>	148
3.2.1 Blood and Its Meaning	149
3.2.2 Blood - Life-giving and Life-sustaining Power	149
3.2.3. Brotherhood and Solidarity	150
4. Theological Reflection.	150
4.1 Life-giving Death.	150
4.2 Acceptance as Participation in True Life	151
B. Titi Akali Puio Myth	152
1. Different Versions of the Titi Akali Puio Myth	152
1.1 Wandu and Wanduli.	152
1.2 Akali Kimala	154
1.3 The Titi Akali Puio Myth by Lawrence Kambao	156
1.4 The Titi Akali Puio Myth by Agnes Lemano	158
1.4.1 Actors in the Myth.	160
2. Titi Akali Puio - the Hero	161
2.1 Life Situation	162
2.2 Mission	162
2.3 Journeys, Discoveries, Transformations.	164
2.4 Values	166
2.4.1 Community - The Way	166
2.4.2 Law - The Guard.	167
3. New Status	169
3.1 Kamongo - Akali Taki Petenge	169
3.2 Titi Akali Puio - Culture Bringer.	170
C. Waitini Origin Myth	171
1. The Myth	172
2. Life Situation	174
2.1 Akali Waitini	174
2.2 Nele.	175
2.3 Food as Means of Life Continuity	175
2.4 Food as Means of Communion	176

3. Journeys and Transformations	177
3.1 Nele's Journeys	177
3.2 Transformations	178
3.3 Marriage and Continuity of Life	179
3.4 Marriage as Communion.	181
4. True Life and Its Symbols	181
4.1 Men's House	182
4.2 <i>Pau</i> Tree	183
4.3 <i>Sapili</i> Leaves	184
D. Critical Evaluation	185
1. Mystery of Life	185
2. Aitawe - the Source of Life	186
3. Community	187
4. Relationships	187
4.1 Life-giving Death.	188
Part Tree: Continuity, Discontinuity and Challenges between the Mae Enga Concept of Life and Christ's Gift of Life	191
<i>Chapter V: Kerygmatic Reading of Jn 10:10 in the Mae Enga Context . .</i>	<i>192</i>
A. The Person and Message of Jesus According to John	193
1. The Term "Life" in the Gospel of St. John	193
1.1 <i>Zoè</i> - Eternal Life	194
1.2 <i>Zoè</i> - Knowledge of God.	195
2. Jesus Christ the Giver of Life.	197
2.1 Jesus - the Word of Life.	198
2.2 Jesus - the Bread of Life	199
2.3 Jesus - the Resurrection of Life	200
2.4 Jesus - the Light of Life	202
2.5 Jesus - the Way, the Truth and the Life.	203
B. Jesus' Life - The Gift and the Call to Communion	204
1. Pasture - Life in Its Fullness	205
1.1 Beyond Plenitude	206
1.2 Communion.	207

2. The Names of Jesus in the Context of Jn 10:10 and Jesus' Names and Titles in Mae Enga	208
2.1 Jesus - the Gate	209
2.2 Jesus - the Shepherd	210
3. The Main Characteristics of the Shepherd	212
3.1 Laying Down His Life	212
3.2 Knowing His Sheep Intimately	215
C. Jesus' Church - Sacrament of Communion	217
1. Creating a New Community of Life	218
1.1 Community	219
1.2 Relationships and Exchange	220
1.3 A Universal Brotherhood	222
1.3.1 Reaching out to All	223
1.3.2 The Sick and Disadvantaged	224
1.3.3 Women	225
2. Proclaiming the Message of Life	227
2.1 Word and Ministry	227
2.2 Integral Liberation	228
2.2.1 Cultural Liberation	229
2.2.2 Liberation of the Whole Person	230
3. Jesus Christ - New <i>Topoli</i>	231
4. Jesus Christ - the Conqueror of Evil	233
5. Celebrating Life	236
5.1 Through, in and with Jesus	237
6. Who Do You Say I Am?	239
Conclusion	242
General Conclusion	244
Appendix: Myths and Other Narratives	248
Bibliography	290
Maps	303
1. Pacific Cultural Areas	
2. Provinces of PNG	
3. Enga Region	

4. Enga Main Languages and Dialects
5. Colonial Divisions of Melanesia
6. Major Routes of the *Tee* Cycle

List of Pictures:

1. Ambum Stone	16
2. Traditional PNG Currency	21
3. Men's House	30
4. Women's House	31
5. <i>Mali</i> in Mae Enga	45
6. Diagram of Mae Enga Worldview	51
7. The Bachelors Emerging from Seclusion	82
8. Mae Enga Bride	86
9. Lepe Plant	131