

Toksave bilong ol man raitim buk

Preface

Dispela buk em kamap long 1995, 1999 na 2004 long wanpela wok bung i stap namel long Porer Nombo na James Leach. Insait i gat ol save bilong Porer long sait bilong ol samting bilong bus, na ol we long yusim. Dispela save i kamap long ol lain man husat save long Tokples Nekgini, long Mot 1 Distrik, long Raikos, long Papua Niugini (PNG) (Figure 1). Ol tumbuna bilong dispela lain kisim ol dispela save na ol i bin yusim ol plants¹ olsem mipela stori long dispela buk. Porer tok olsem: “Dispela save i bin kam long mipela na mipela holim na yusim i stap”.

This book is the product of an extended collaboration between Porer Nombo and James Leach which took place during 1995, 1999 and 2004. It contains information provided by Porer on the uses of certain plants from the hinterland of the Rai Coast in Papua New Guinea (PNG), particularly the area between the Seng and Yakai rivers in the Mot 1 District where speakers of the Nekgini language reside (Figure 1). Nekgini people and their ancestors gathered this knowledge and have used plants in the way we describe here. Porer explained that this knowledge has been handed down through the generations and is still used today.

1. Mipela yusim ‘plant’ long Tok Pisin long dispela buk tasol trutru nogat dispela wot long Tok Pisin. Planti save pinis long mining bilong en, olsem em save karapim olgeta samting em save kamap long graun, wara na diwai nabaut.

Porer yet em makim ol plants i stap insait long dispela buk. Dispela ol plants i gat bikpela wok long kastom bilong ol Nekgini. 'Kastom' em karamapim we bilong mekim ol man na meri kamap gut na stap wantaim long gutpela sindaun. Planti ol we bilong yusim plants long sait bilong pawa na masalai samting, i bin kam long ol tumbuna. Planti ol narapela plants mipela Nekgini save yusim, olsem long wokim haus o basket, tasol mipela no putim insait long dispela buk. Mipela lusim dispela bikos planti man save wokim kain samting olsem long PNG na stori bilong dispela stap pinis long ol narapela buk nabaut.

We bilong ol Nekgini kisim save na wokim samting em i narapela stret long we bilong ol waitman olsem yusim saiens na ol marasin bilong ol. Mipela bai stori moa long arakain pasin bilong mitupela lain na skelim 'intellectual property law', long baksait bilong buk, long 'Laspela hap long buk 1 na 2'.

Porer chose the plants to be included in the book based on his thoughts about which plants are most significant for Nekgini 'customary' uses. 'Customary' in this context (as translated from the Tok Pisin 'kastom') indicates processes and procedures which are deemed to be both specifically local in origin and application, and which harness powers and forces to the end of achieving viable and valuable forms of social life and person, as understood by Nekgini speakers. Many of these uses may seem esoteric or magical to English readers. It will be as well for readers to keep in mind that Nekgini distinctions between humans and environment, and between the practical and the decorative, for example, are different to those which underpin western scientific investigation and the technologies which emerge from it. This issue is discussed at some length, albeit in relation to the narrower issue of intellectual property, in Appendices 1 and 2.

Many plants which Nekgini speakers use for quotidian purposes such as house construction and basketry have been omitted. We decided that as the use of such plants and materials is widely known and practiced in contemporary PNG, they could be left out of this record.

As tingting long wokim dispela buk em i tupela. Namba wan as tingting em i olsem. Longtaim nau Porer em bin luksave pinis long we bilong moni na we bilong bisnis i kam, na em i gat wari olsem planti ol gutpela save bilong tumbuna bai lus. Em bin askim long wokim buk long holim strong ol save bilong tumbuna bilong ol man bai kam bihain. Namba tu as tingting em i olsem. Dispela wok em bilong soim ol manmeri long ol narapela kantri, olsem ol manmeri long PNG i gat bikpela save. Dispela save i stap insait long pasin kastom na pasin tumbuna. Em i samting bilong ol PNG, na ol mas apim gutnem bilong ol long kain gutpela samting. Mipela laikim olsem kastom na save bilong tumbuna bai stap longtaim. Ol manmeri long PNG mas sanap strong long stori bilong ol asples man. Long PNG, i gat planti kain kain kastom na save, na wan wan ples o wan wan tok ples bai gat ol narapela save na pasin. Mipela laik sapotim ol arakain kastom na kalsa, na helpim ol PNG kirapim tingting long ol save i stap long ol ples bilong ol yet. Bipo, i gat sampela wankain gutpela buk, olsem mipela tingim Saim Majnep na Ralph Bulmer (1977, 2007).

There are two reasons we decided to publish this book. Firstly, for many years, Porer and others in Reite have been concerned that new lifestyles based on business and the cash economy have resulted in a loss of interest in practices and knowledge from the past. Porer asked James to write a book which would preserve ancestral knowledge of plants for future generations. Secondly, the work demonstrates the deep and complex knowledge of just one language group in PNG in relation to plants. This knowledge is part of a wider whole known as 'kastom'. Papua New Guineans can and should be proud of their kastom. We hope to strengthen the use of such knowledge, and show that such understandings and practices should be treasured and utilised. There is a rich diversity of customs and knowledge in PNG, and we intend with this publication to generate interest in that diversity by documenting the practices of a particular place in some detail. A clear antecedent and inspiration are the two books published by Ian Saem Majnep and Ralph Bulmer: *Birds of my Kalam country/Mnmon Yad Kalam Yakt* (1977) and *Animals the Ancestors Hunted: An Account of the Wild Animals of the Kalam Area, Papua New Guinea* (2007).

James Leach kisim ol poto, tanim toktok bilong Porer, na mekim klia tok long ol kastom na pasin bilong ol man i save yusim Tokples Nekgini. James i bin stap wantaim ol man long Reite na Sarangama ples antap long tupela yia na em bin raitim sampela ol buk bilong mekim klia tok bilong kastom bilong ol dispela manmeri. Sampela narapela buk na pepa James bin raitim i stap long baksait bilong buk long 'Ol narapela buk na pepa bilong James Leach'.

Ol sapta bilong buk mipela bin stretim olsem: bungim wantaim ol plant mipela yusim olsem bilong painim pisin o kolim sik. James bin bungim ol samting bilong gaden na masalai long wanpela sapta, na em bin tok long putim ol plet, malo samting long wanpela hap tu. Mipela raitim buk long Tok Pisin na Tok Inglis wantaim olsem planti man insait long PNG, na ausait wantaim, bai inap long ridim. Mipela behainim we bilong raitim Tok Pisin i stap long wanpela buk ol i kolim *The Jacaranda Dictionary and Grammar of Melanesian Pidgin*, i kam long wanpela man, F. Mihailic long 1971. Mipela save olsem sampela Tok Pisin bilong en em i olupela liklik, tasol em i gutpela long behainim wanpela stail bilong mekim klia. Sampela Tok Pisin bilong ol Raikos i stap insait wantaim. Long wan wan hap long buk, mipela i no tanim tok stret long wanpela tok ples i go long narapela tok ples. Em bilong mekim em mas gutpela long ridim.

The photos were taken and the text co-authored by James Leach. James has lived for more than two years in Reite village and has written anthropological texts about Nekgini speakers' kinship, social organisation, ownership practices, arts and ritual. A full list of his writing on Reite to date is presented in the 'Select bibliography of writings on Reite by James Leach', at the end of the book.

The chapter divisions emerged from Porer's discovery of plants as we walked in the forest together, and his way of introducing the use of the particular plant by saying things such as: "this is for hunting birds" or "this is to make sickness cold". James suggested the collation of information on material culture, gardening, and spirits and love magic, into single chapters. Although the text is presented in both Tok Pisin and English, there are places where direct, word for word, translation has been eschewed in favour of a more readable text in one or the other language.² The Tok Pisin spelling and orthography is based on F. Mihailic's 1971, *Dictionary and Grammar of Melanesian Pidgin*, to give a standardised form for the written language. The authors are aware that at times this preference makes for a slightly outdated rendition of the language. There are also places where current Rai Coast convention has deliberately been used in the text.

2. As a consequence, the word 'plant' has been used in the Tok Pisin translated from English. Despite 'plant' not being a Tok Pisin word, familiarity with the term by Tok Pisin speakers is widespread and understood to be a general term for all things that grow on the earth, in water and on other plants.

Long painim nem long saiens bilong ol plant, James bin kisim planti gutpela helpim long ol man i gat save long dispela wok. Nem bilong ol i stap bihain. Tasol, James em i no save long dispela wok long painim ol nem long saiens. Em i wanpela storimasta (nau ol save tok anthropologist) na ol narapela man bin lukim poto tasol bilong painim nem bilong ol plant long saiens. Mipela no bin kisim ol koleksen bilong plant bilong painim nem; ol man wok long poto tasol. Em inap olsem long kain buk na stadi mipela laik wokim.

Mipela tok tenkyu long ol lain husat bin givim sampela helpim long sapatim stadi bilong James. Dispela ol lain i stap olsem: Economic and Social Research Council United Kingdom (UK) (1995 na 1999); King's College Cambridge (2004); Leverhulme Trust (1999 na 2004); Marilyn Strathern na Alan MacFarlane wantaim Department of Social Anthropology, University of Cambridge, UK.

As for the scientific identification of the plants, we have received excellent assistance from a number of experts who are gratefully acknowledged. It is important to make clear here that James is not trained in botany. As an anthropologist, ethnobotany has never been his primary interest, and botanical experts have had to work mainly from photographs when suggesting identifications. A full collection of botanical specimens has not been made as part of this study. Even what we have achieved in the way of identification has been very time-consuming and has had to suffice for the present purpose.

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I gat planti man bin helpim mipela long stretim wok bilong dispela buk na mipela laik tok tenkyu long ol long hia. Long Reite na Sarangama, Yamui na Sangumae Nombo, Katak Pulumamie, Pupiyana De'anae, Palota Konga, Takarok Yamui na Pinbin Sisau. Long Mosbi, Justin Tkachenko, na long Lae, Wayne Takeuchi, bilong Forest Research Institute, bin helpim James wantaim nem ol man bilong saiens save givim ol plants.

Long Ingran, Paul Sillitoe na Christin Kocher Schmid bin luksave long sampela plant long potu; Stephen Hugh-Jones, Françoise Barbira-Freedman na Tim Bayliss-Smith bin toktok wantaim James long we bilong wokim kain buk olsem, na Tim Whitmore bin helpim wantaim ol nem ol man bilong saiens givim ol samting long bus. Robin Hide givim planti gutpela skul long mipela, na strongim mipela long telimautim. Bruce Godfrey long University Printing Service long Cambridge bin wokim hat wok long stretim ol kala potu. Katharina Schneider na Katie Segal bin wokim bikpela wok long stretim buk. Long Resource Management in Asia-Pacific Program long Australian National University, John Burton bin helpim mipela stretim Tok Pisin na Mary Walta bin editim ol wok bilong mipela long pablisim buk. Fleur Rodgers na Rikrikiang save sapotim ol wok bilong mitupela na givim mipela gutpela tingting.

Mipela tok bikpela tenkyu long yupela olgeta.

In addition, we received invaluable assistance from the following people. On the Rai Coast, Yamui and Sangumae Nombo, Katak Pulumamie, Pupiyana De'anae, Palota Konga, Takarok Yamui and Pinbin Sisau. In Port Moresby, Justin Tkachenko assisted with the initial identification of some plants. Wayne Takeuchi from the Forest Research Institute in Lae was generous with his time providing scientific identification for many of the plants.

In the UK, Paul Sillitoe and Christin Kocher Schmid looked at some of the photographs; Stephen Hugh-Jones, Françoise Barbira-Freedman and Tim Bayliss-Smith advised James on what an economic botany of this kind might look like, and Tim Whitmore provided many scientific identifications. Robin Hide made many useful suggestions and encouraged the publication when it was likely to fall by the wayside. Bruce Godfrey in the University Printing Service at Cambridge has been very helpful, both with advice and time. Katharina Schneider and Katie Segal organised, designed, and edited the text at various stages. From the Resource Management in Asia-Pacific Program at The Australian National University, John Burton has assisted with Tok Pisin spelling and usage, and Mary Walta has edited the manuscript and organised its final production. Fleur Rodgers and Rikrikiang supported and encouraged us throughout the work.

We would like to thank all these people very much.

Hap bilong Tokples Nekgini

Ol liklik ples bilong ol lain Reite na Sarangama i stap namel long $146^{\circ}12'$ na $146^{\circ}17'$ is longitude na long $5^{\circ}38'$ na $5^{\circ}42'$ saut latitude (Figure 1). Ol i stap namel long 300–700 m antap long solwara. Long dispela hap long not sait long bikpela Maunten Finisterre (Plate 1) i gat tupela taim long yia. Taim bilong ren (taleo), em long Novemba inap i kam long April, na taim bilong san (rai) em long Mai inap i go long Oktoba.

Location of Nekgini lands

The hamlets that make up Reite lie between $146^{\circ}12'$ and $146^{\circ}17'$ east longitude and $5^{\circ}38'$ and $5^{\circ}42'$ south latitude (Figure 1). They range from 300–700 m above sea level. Here on the northern foothills of the Finisterre Mountains (Plate 1) there are two pronounced seasons. The wet season lasts from November until April and the dry season is between May and October.

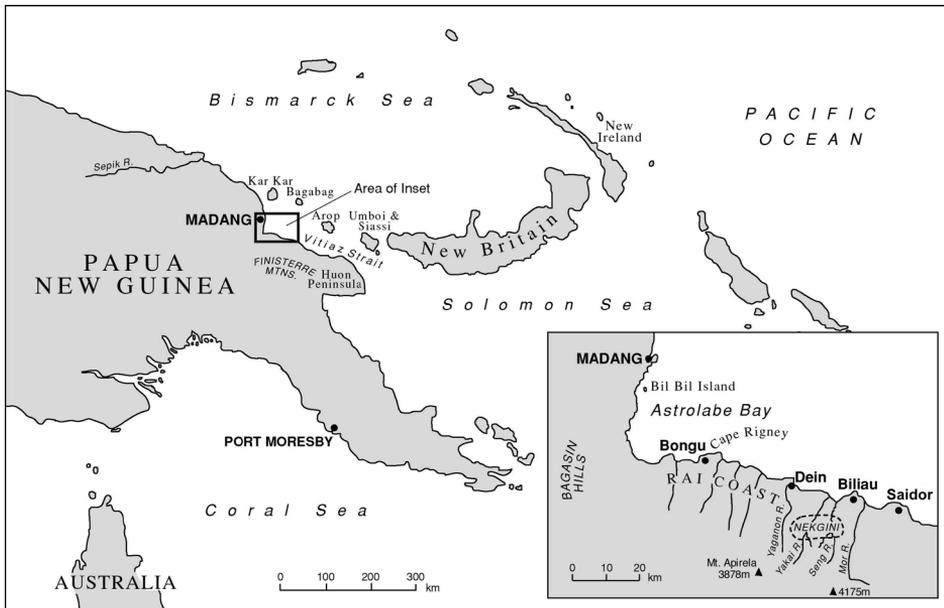


Figure 1: Mep i soim Papua Niugini na Raikos. Map of Papua New Guinea showing the Rai Coast area of collection.



**Plate 1: Graun bilong ol Reite na ol Finisterre Maunten long baksait, 2009.
Reite lands with the Finisterre Mountain Range in the background, 2009.**