

## 6.2 The reason of the palang use and the depicting of palangs – common still today

As was stated before, the wearer of a palang or of another penis insert is considered a strong and distinguished personality gifted with virility and manliness. In their community these men are highly respected for their achievement – and admired by the women. They are eligible partners, much sought-after by girls and women as husbands – or as partners who can prevent unwanted pregnancy by means of the palang. These men are often community leaders or respected heads of a clan. Every child in the community knows about that and everybody in the village knows who bears a palang. And strangers can recognize them by their tattoo. However, the desire to gain these qualities is decreasing among the younger generation even in the most remote areas.



This is my **palang collection** (coll. Herwig Zahorka) which I gathered between 1994 and 1999. From above: The palangs no. 1 to no. 6 are designated to block the *urethra* during intercourse. They are “intercourse palangs”. No. 7 only is a “placeholder”. The rule below is in cm.

The palangs no. 1 to no. 4 are from Punan Aput men living in a very remote area on Kayanyot River, Apo Kayan, East Kalimantan. These are sophisticated made devices. One rounded end is removable so that the peg can be inserted into the perforation of the glans. Insertion and removal is practicable only with flaccid penis. During intercourse the round protuberances are spinning with the effect of enhancing the woman's pleasure of coitus. The man's perforation is a sacrifice in favor of the female gender. The Punan Aput call the palang *acing acat* (*acing* = wheel, *acat* = penis). They also know the name palang.

The next two primitive palangs of wood from above, no. 5 and no. 6, are from a Kenyah Uma Ma'ut man living at a tributary of the upper Bahau River, a remote area too. The shorter palang, possibly, is his placeholder because it was *in situ* when I met him and got it in the afternoon. The longer one he had stored in his bedroom. The Kenyah call the palang *adja*. The specific tattoo indicating that type of palang is often a small cross in midst of a circle. All tribes have an own name for their penis inserts. That proves that penis inserts have already a long history in Asia.

The small palang below, no. 7, is a placeholder from West Sumba. The material is most probably a part of a porcupine's spike.

Palang collection of Herwig Zahorka

I had the opportunity to shoot photos of the owner of intercourse palang no. 1 with his placeholder *in situ* and photos of the owner of the palangs no. 5 and 6 with palang no. 5 *in situ*.