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Ceremonial Shield "Laligjambun" from Fa Falley, North-
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fertility ceremonies to fertilize gardens, animals and
women.
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CAME, FEMALE CANNIBAL CULTURE HERO

Carol Kalmbacher

IKHTISAR

Ceritera tentang Came serta tarian-tarian dan nyanyian-nyanyian yang bersumber dari tokoh itu tersebar luas dan disukai di daerah pedalaman Sarmi dari sungai Tor sampai Mamberamo. Anak-anak sekolah dari daerah ini dilatih dan pernah mempertunjukkan tarian ini ketika anak-anak sekolah dasar dari seluruh Irian Jaya turut serta dalam perlombaan tari tradisional dari berbagai daerah di Jayapura.

Tiga kelompok bahasa di daerah ini yang menyanyikan dan menarik tentang Came adalah bahasa Berik, Isirawa dan Kwerba. Tujuan dari karangan ini adalah membandingkan ketiga versi yang lengkap dari ceritera Came, dengan mengemukakan masing-masing versi dari setiap kelompok bahasa-bahasa ini.

Yang mengherankan adalah bahwa ceritera-ceritera itu serupa. Tokoh utama dalam ceritera ini adalah seorang wanita kanibal yang bernama Came atau Jame. Diceritera-
kan bahwa ada seorang laki-laki yang terlebih dahulu pergi mengumpulkan buah-buahan dari kebun milik Came yang olehnya tidak dibunuh. Kemudian laki-laki itu diikuti oleh seorang yang bernama Muru atau Muli yang dibunuh Came. Setelah itu orang-orang kampung membalas dendam dan membunuh Came.

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0. INTRODUCTION

The story about Came and the dances and songs that she originated are common and well-loved in the interior region of Sarmi, from the Tor River to the Mamberamo. School children from this area practice and perform this dance when primary school children from all over Irian Jaya compete in the provincial capital of Jayapura, dancing different traditional dances.

Three of the language groups in this area that sing and dance Came are the Berik, Isirawa, and Kwerba. The purpose of this paper is to compare three full versions of the Came story, one from each of these groups. My work centers with the Isirawa among whom I have lived and worked since October 1973. Co-workers Peter Westrum and Jim DeVries have filled in data from the Berik and Kwerba groups, respectively.

Isirawa, also known as Saberi, is a group of about 2000 speakers located on the north coast of Irian Jaya between the sub-district town of Sarmi and the Apawar River (Figure 1). Isirawa is a non-Austronesian language and according to Voorhoeve (1975:38) is tentatively classified as a family-level isolate within the Dani-Kwerba stock. The Isirawa are bordered on the south side by the Kwerba language group. Linguistically this is a separate family, the Kwerba family, within the Dani-Kwerba stock (Voorhoeve 1975:37). The Kwerba language group, which also consists of approximately 2000 people, live in an area which stretches from the Tor River on the east to the Mamberamo River. The Berik, a group of 1000 speakers who live along the Tor River, also have regular contact with the Kwerba even though their languages are unrelated. Berik is classified in the Tor-Lakes Plains stock of the Trans-New Guinea phylum, part of the Tor family of languages (Voorhoeve 1975:38).
The staple food of all three groups is sago, supplemented by food hunted and gathered in the forests and swamps. Their small gardens consist mainly of tobacco and bananas with a few vegetables. The Berik are the most settled in villages, with larger gardens and more vegetables, while the Isirawa and the Kwerba are still semi-nomadic, the Kwerba being the most isolated. The subgroup of Kwerba locally known as Airmati is the one with whom some Isirawa intermarry. The cultures are similar in many respects.

1. ISIRAWA ORAL LITERATURE

The Isirawa have two basic types of narratives, which may be glossed as 'fact' versus 'fiction'. Fiction or folktales (nomirarara) are distinctive because of their special vocabulary used to refer to people and things.

The factual narratives (rarara) include the ethnographies, narratives that recount non-witnessed events which are believed to be real. The characters are named and are understood to be real people. The Isirawa ethnohistory narrator is a specialist and never tells folktales.

Creation Myths are classified as factual narratives and have a restricted audience. They can be heard only by married Isirawa men. Some myths which tell how that particular clan originated can only be heard by men, women, and children of that clan. Other myths can be heard by all men, women, and children. Came is one of these stories.

2. CAME DANCE

The Came story is often recited on a night when people are dancing the traditional dance called fatia in Isirawa. The Isirawa say they dance fatia because Came taught them and because they enjoy it. They feel that the best quality fatia songs are those composed by Came and called by his name! "All are in the Airmati language, but even the children know the meaning of the songs. The meaning of some of the songs is as follows:

'Who cut the leaves of my breadfruit tree?'
'I cut Muru at the breadfruit tree.'
'Pauire is coming along the foraava vine.'
'Pauire, look, here are heads of Kwerba people.'
'Sruiravi (Came's daughter's name) is my pork (my meat), Came's pork. I ate it.'" (Oguri 1982)

Oosterwal comments about Djame in The People of the Tor:

"The Djame complex is characteristic of the Western interior of Sarni. From the Kwerba area this cultural element also penetrated eastward, where via the Naidjbeedj primarily, it became a characteristic of the culture pattern of the Western Upper Tor territory also (Bora-Bora, Waf and Goeamam). Due to regular contact between the tribes, the Bora-Bora learned it from the Naidjbeedj and the Bogoeidja. They adopted the dances and also the songs, which are sung in the original (Kwerba) language. During festivities among the Waf and the Goeamam the Bora-Bora sang and danced the Siemar (dance consecrated to Djame) and so spread the Djame complex." (Oosterwal 1961:52-3)
3. CAME, AS TOLD IN THREE LANGUAGES

3.1 CAME: ISIRIWA VERSION (Ta) - told by Kriopas Numre

1 My name is Kriopas. I am going to tell you all about Came. Here is the story.
2 Came lived at Oterave. (Her father-in-law's name was also Oterave.
3 He is the earth). A man came to the Waim river. Sinanie (Came's husband
4 who was a turtle) was there. The man came and saw that breadfruit seeds
5 had been thrown down from the Aviliwa tree by a bird. He began gathering the
6 breadfruit seeds. He said "Wow, this is really good breadfruit. I will look
7 for the tree." Sinanie was swimming.
8 The man grabbed him and tied him up with vines that he had torn loose. Then
9 he carried Sinanie and set him down by the breadfruit tree. He began gathering breadfruit, wrapped them
10 up and put them in his bag. He gathered some from the lowest branch above
11 Sinanie. Then he went on home to Inkera wa.
12 He roasted the breadfruit. A friend said, "Friend, this is very good
13 breadfruit." This friend whose name was Muru continued, "Tell me where
14 you gathered these. Show me the place." The man said, "I will tell you about this breadfruit, but be careful.
15 When you go, you will see Sinanie.
16 When you see him, grab him. From there you will be able to see the bread-

18 fruit tree (by the Waim). Then go pick some."
19 Then Muru went on his way. He gathered some seeds under the Aviliwa
20 tree. Sinanie was swimming. He grabbed Sinanie. He tore off a piece of
21 vine and tied him up very tightly. Then he saw branches hanging down with
22 fruit--Came's breadfruit tree. He did as follows: He put down his bow and arrow. He set down Sinanie and
23 gathered breadfruit from the ground. Then he made a climbing loop. He
24 climbed up the breadfruit tree. A leaf fell off the tree and fluttered down to the sago grove. It happened that
25 Came was pounding sago. As she lifted the sago pounder the leaf fell right
26 in front of it. She said, "Who is picking my breadfruit? Whoever is picking
27 it, I will kill him today."
28 She laid down her sago pounder and picked up her machete and her heavy
29 string bag. Then she went to see what was happening. "Ah, it's a man that's
30 taking my breadfruit. Go ahead and pick, but don't take too much for who
31 will help you carry them? They're heavy!"
32 Then Muru came down out of the tree. Sinanie tried without success to
33 free himself for he was tied too tightly. The first man hadn't tied Sinanie
34 up so tightly so she didn't kill him.
When Muru came down the tree, 
36 Came slit his throat so his head 
fell backwards. Then she began 
composing 
37 songs. "Who picked fruit from 
Came's breadfruit tree? Muru did 
and today 
38 I killed him by the trunk of the 
tree." She continued composing 
and singing. 
39 His head had fallen back. She 
picked him up. Sinanie said, 
"Because I was 
tied up so tight you were killed 
today." That's the way it was. 
Sinanie 
40 then went on his way. Came put 
the man in her bag and brought 
him back to 
41 her house singing. 
42 Then what happened? Muru's 
friends waited and waited and 
waited 
in vain. They were at their 
village asking, "What do you 
think?" They saw 
a thief (bird) fly by carrying a 
string bag. The bag had pig 
tails on it. 
45 "Where is he going?" "He's going 
to the breadfruit tree at the 
Waim river." In the morning they 
went to look for Muru. They saw 
the place 
48 and said, "This is where he was 
killed. But where was he taken?"

49 Came was dancing. 
50 At the same time the men were decid- 
ing how to send out messengers for a 
meeting. 
51 She continued to dance. 
52 The men went out to call people 
together. They began preparing food 
for a feast. They prepared the tobac- 
copo. They cooked it all. Then all the 
preparations for the feast were 
completed. The messengers ran to 
Sarma, 
55 Kwarawa, Siiwaca, Soromaca, Soaciwa, 
Timetaaveca, Momokica, Kaaawaavecaca, 
56 Ankaara. Then they gathered there 
for war talk. 
57 Then the men went and surrounded 
Oterava. After surrounding it, they 
began looking for a way up but the 
trail was very steep. They tried to 
climb 
59 up but were unable to. "Oh my, how 
are we going to do this?" They tried 
climbing up on jungle vines but the 
cockatoo kept biting off the vines. 
61 Another bird also was biting off the 
vines. The Wararama and Niesovi 
birds 
62 were playing the conch trumpets. Two 
kinds of frogs played a counter 
melody. 
63 The tree kangaroo danced with the 
drum. They all sang and danced. The 
tree 
64 kangaroo and the Wararama bird sum- 
moned Came's friends because 
they were
surrounded (by people). The people were beginning to come by the vines to 
Came's yard and they could hear her singing. "Do you see that rainbow? I see the rainbow. My enemies are coming nearer. Today I will be killed. I can see it. Masipe (the sighting of this small bat is an omen that an enemy is coming) has brought the news of the battle."

She began singing again, "Do you hear the news of the battle?" Masipe the bat just landed on the ground. Came sang and then what did she say? She said to the cockatoo, "Don't keep cutting those vines, just let the men come."

Then the men dropped from the vines into her yard. They began attacking her with arrows. She took the arrows and kept breaking them off. She continued singing and composing songs while breaking off arrows that had entered her, by rubbing against a palm tree.

As night approached she heard the gurgling, rushing water of the Waim river. Now that is an omen of war. She said, "I have heard this omen about the battle. I have seen my enemies."

She continued dancing. She composed a song about the Waim. By this time because they had been shooting at her, her body was full of holes. She said "Give me a vine. I want to tie knots on it to show the number of men I have eaten." She made knots all the way from here to there and back. Then they cut her throat and her head fell her backwards. Her head kept on singing and talking. Her body was separated from her head. "Men have filled up my yard. Men have filled up my yard." She continued composing songs. She sang about fish, what kind was it? Oh yes, the turtle. "I have sunk in the water like a turtle. I play and splash about in the water like a turtle." She continued composing songs. One man picked up her head. Others cut up her body. Then they went to the headwaters of the Yantu river, to Iinkrawa. The tree kangaroo and Niesovi bird passed on the news. All of the animals--Came's children--ran away into the jungle. The men went to Iinkrawa.
Now if we had gotten her head we would have been very happy. We would know all the songs really well. It happened that the Kwerba people took her head. Even now they still talk about her head. Her head is still with the Kwerba at Monawa. It is up on a shelf. If people arrive at the village to visit, they ask her, "Should we kill these visitors or should we serve them food?" If she says, "Serve them food," then they serve them food. If she doesn't answer, wake up, or look down when they knock from below, then that day they kill the visitors. If she looks down and says, "Yes, feed them," and if she says, "Serve them sago," then they serve the visitors sago. But if they get no answer, they kill the visitors. The people at Monawa still have the head. They still have the head they took. It still exists. Matiinio (he used to be a chief and now he's an eagle) lived then and he and his people asked the head whether they should kill people or not. They took the head from here when the body and blood of Came were divided up. The songs of Came are still sung. The Monawa people took her head. Matiinio still lives (in the jungle).

Wherever they build a man's house, they move her head to it and put it in its place. At present Came's yard still exists. Does anyone still dance there at the place where the trunk of her body was put on a burial platform?

(Note: not all of her body was carried off, just head and limbs.) In that area there are no leaves that have fallen on the ground. People say that that area always looks really nice, like someone has newly swept it. Who sweeps it?

Came's breadfruit tree is dead now but its 'child' is still there. The old tree died where Came's machete hit the tree after going through Muru's neck.

The song that Came sang for war is one the Kwerba people still sing. They sing this while hiking through the jungle when they are on the warpath.
This is the story of Came.

That's all.

3.2 CAME: ALTERNATE ISIRAWA VERSION (Ib) - told by Alber Numre

Came had a breadfruit tree which produced very good fruit. When
Muru stole the fruit from her tree, Came killed him. She cooked his
body and danced fatia. She made sago pudding and danced fatia. She
ate the body danced fatia. Two birds blew the bamboo/conch shell
trumpets to accompany her dance. Pauire, Muru's mother's brother's
came in order to revenge Muru.
When her followers, the bees, tried to kill him,
she stopped them. She let all her followers, the birds and bees, fly
away and
she danced alone. Pauire and other Kwerba people shot her. She
shook off
the arrows and continued dancing. All through the night until dawn they
kept shooting at her but she just kept shaking off the arrows and kept
dancing and singing. At last she let them cut off her head. When they
cut it off, the head was still singing. They cut off her arms, they also

sang, so did her legs and jaw. The Kosanoweja tribe took the head. The
Tor tribes took her arms and legs. The Kwerba tribe took the lower jaw.
Each part of her kept on singing as they carried away the parts. Kwerba
people taught her songs and the dance to the Isirawa ancestors.

3.3 CAME: KWERBA VERSION - told by Yower Samokari

Good morning again. I will tell the story that goes with the Came song
as handed down by the ancestors on my mother's side. I already sang the story
about how Came ate Muru first.
A bachelor saw that the Waim River was very clear. He gathered some
poisonous vines and went to where there was a deep hole in the river and put
the vines in the water to kill the fish. There he saw a very large breadfruit
seed along side the river. He picked it up and went across the mouth of the
Kaakaramas (Angry) stream to take a short cut across a peninsula as he went
downstream.
He went down to the mouth of the Waca stream. From there he went up a little until he came to the large breadfruit tree that Came owned. He hung up the live turtle that he had captured at Kaakaramas stream by tying a vine around its neck and hanging it on a tree branch. He left his net bag and fish on the ground at the base of the tree. Then he climbed up the breadfruit tree. He cut off lots of breadfruit and the breadfruit fell to the ground.

He also cut a breadfruit leaf. The breadfruit leaf floated down to the place where Came was pounding sago. Came pulled out her machete and went to the breadfruit tree. She saw the man in the tree and shouted to him, "Was it your father that planted this tree?" The turtle shook himself loose from the tree branch and fell to the ground. He turned into a person. The turtleman put his arms around Came and held her tight so that she couldn't get away. Then he told bachelor to come down out of the tree. The man came down. The bachelor began to gather the breadfruit. (The turtle was actually Came's father.) Came and her father (turtle man) also gathered breadfruit.

The three of them went to the Otera village (Came's village) which was on top of a hill. They slept there until the following morning. Came filled the bachelor's net bag full of betel nuts. Some of the betel nuts were regular ones, others were of the intoxicating variety. The man returned to the Suaki village and distributed the betel nuts. Muru, who is also called Sasa, asked the young man where he had spent the night. "I spent the night down the Waim river," he said. On the following day they went hunting on a peninsula and got pigs, cassowaries, and kangaroos. They returned home again to Suaki in the evening. They divided the pig and cassowary meat up and gave it away. The old man Muru said, "Is there a betel nut in your net bag?" He took one out of his bag and gave it to Muru who chewed on the nut and split it. Muru then said, "My friend, where did you get this good type of betel nut?" The bachelor said, "These are the betel nuts that we usually gather." The old man said, "No, you are lying. These are a different type of betel nuts." The bachelor said, "These
are not a different type." The old man kept on questioning the bachelor. They slept in the village that night. The following morning, they went hunting.

The old man kept on questioning the bachelor. They saw a pig. The old man questioned the bachelor again. He questioned the bachelor until they began to return home again. The bachelor shot a plumed pigeon. He returned to Suaki and cooked the plumed pigeon. As he was eating he saw Muru returning from the jungle. As they were eating, the old man questioned the bachelor continuously.

The bachelor's insides were burned by hot sago. Then he told the old man to follow the Waim River downstream. The old man said, "That is what I was asking, why didn't you just tell me?" The following morning, Muru followed the Waim downstream. He cut across the peninsula by the Kaakaramas stream.

He cut off the turtle's head by the neck. From there he saw the breadfruit tree. He climbed Came's breadfruit tree and began to cut the breadfruit loose.

Came came with her machete. She cut up Muru. She carried Muru to Otera. She smoked Muru and ate him. The Waim people invited the Burmeso people, Kasonaweja people, and others along the Mambaramo River, and the peoples of the Apauwar basin. They came to shoot Came with bows and arrows. The Anggresso people, Airoran people, Isirawa people, they all came, none stayed home. Their villages were empty. They went down the Waim River. How were they going to attack Came's village of Otera, for it was high on a hill? They surrounded the hill, lots of people surrounded the hill. They chopped down a huge tree. Then they climbed up the tree to the village of Otera. Then they shot Came at the Otera village. They cut off her head and divided the body. Of the Apauwar people, Kasonaweja people, Burmeso people, Anggresso people, and Isirawa people, none of them were in their villages. They shot her at Otera. They shot her at Otera. They divided her up. The Kwerba people gave the head to the Burmeso people. Why did they give the head to the Burmeso people? They were stupid! The Burmeso people took the head to Suaki. The torso they left at Otera. The people carried the parts of the body to Suaki. They put the parts of Came's body
on the fire to roast. They put Came's head in a net bag and the head kept on singing. They put the head on the fire and it stopped singing. (Note: Another version has it that the head kept on singing and is probably still singing in the old Burmeso village.) They ate the body of Came and had a great feast. The people returned home to their various villages. The Burmeso people took the head home with them and they have kept it to this day. But we do not know where they are keeping Came's head. We do not know where Came's head is. I have told the story as it has been handed down to us from the ancestors.

I have spoken up to here. Good day.

Additional information from another Kwerba village, Muremare, located on the Mamberamo River, is as follows:

"The Djame dance is known in the whole hinterland of Sarmi and beyond. Djame is a mythical female cannibal who used to live in the village of Weree, 'one of the first two villages in the world.' A Soromadja from the village of Eebleyaaftsh finally killed her. The whole story is included in the songs that accompany the Djame dance." (Oosterwal 1967:173-4)

3.4 JAMi: BERIK VERSION - told by Musa Borom

1 In this particular village near the river's edge, people lived. Once
2 there was a person who went to search

for breadfruit and wanted to climb a tree. He went by canoe and when he was in the midst of the river, he caught a small turtle and also a small lizard. He placed the two in the canoe and when he neared the other side of the river he tied the canoe, just as Jami was finishing pounding sago. Then she took the pith to rinse it at the river's edge. The person climbed the breadfruit tree and began to pick several breadfruit until the last one at the very top was picked, but it fell to the ground and Jami heard this and called, "Who climbed the breadfruit tree?" as she ran and stood at the base of the breadfruit tree. She looked up to the top of the tree and saw something. "Where is the place for you to climb down or isn't there any way?" The person said, "I will climb down right there, there isn't any other way."

Now the lizard and the turtle had been placed in a bag and hung in the tree. The lizard and turtle in the bag came out. They grabbed Jami until
16 her strength left her. While they were holding her, the person climbed down
to the ground and then gathered up the breadfruit. When that was done, he
took some rattan to string them and he strung them all. He placed his bread-
fruit in the canoe, got in, pushed away from the bank, and went home. He
got further and further until he arrived at his home. The lizard
and turtle then let Jami go. They fell into the river and the breadfruit
pulled them along causing them to sink.
23 The person cooked his breadfruit until it was done. When it was done
cooking he then divided it among the people there who all ate freely.
25 He gave the breadfruit to his friends until it was all gone. Some of
his friends came to his house and asked, "Friend, where did you climb to get
breadfruit?" His friends who had eaten continued asking him this until
some sago he was eating burned him
and he said, "Friends, can you not wait
until I have finished eating sago, and
then ask me? Look, I burned myself
this hot sago. Listen to me, I will
tell you in the morning. You go by
canoe
and cross the river. When you get to
the other side you will see the bread-
fruit tree."
33 The next morning, a person named Muli crossed the river in his canoe. In
the middle of the river, he caught a lizard. He hit its neck until it cracked,
to the ground and carefully gathered up all of the breadfruit. He strung two pieces of rattan, one for himself and the other one for the turtle and lizard. Finally, the turtle and lizard were not able to hold her any longer, they let go and fell into the water. Jami took her machete and cut Muli's neck, which broke, and he died. She picked up his body and carried it to her house where she placed it on the floor. She then butchered it, made a wooden rack, and placed his body on it. She also made a fire to dry the flesh and wrapped up a long mixture of sago and flesh and placed it on the rack to dry. She slept until daylight and smoked his body on the rack. In the morning, she etched a design on his skull. While etching on his skull, Jami danced holding a drum.

Then the people who wanted to kill Jami arrived. They heard her dancing and planned to kill her. As they shot at her from side to side, she just dodged them. Arrows that she caught she threw away at the edge of the peninsula. Finally a left-handed man, in fact two left-handed men, shot Jami and she fell to the ground dead. In revenge they butchered her and smoked her flesh until it was dry. Then they divided the flesh along with pig flesh until it was all divided up. Last of all they held up her drum and a bamboo flute. Jami's song which she sang is the one which we sing even now. Jami and how she ate Muli is the song we continue to sing even now.

The end.

4. COMPARING THE TEXTS

The stories are amazingly similar. The main character is a female cannibal whose name is Came, Jame, or Jemi. (Isirawa have no voiced stops or affricates and in Kwerba he her name, whether Came or Jame, varies with the dialect.) There is a man who first goes and gathers fruit from her tree who isn't killed. He is followed by a man named Muru or Muli who is killed. The people seek revenge and kill Came.

The Isirawa and Kwerba both use the Waim River as a setting for the story. The Berik only mention a river and if asked, seem to feel that it is the Mambe-ramo.

The Isirawa (Ia 13-15) and Berik (B 23-27) describe roasting and sharing breadfruit picked from Came's tree. The Kwerba (K 26-38) tell about betelnut being passed out rather than breadfruit.

After eating the food, the Berik (B 28-30) and Kwerba (K 39-46) versions talk about the people or Muru continually asking for information about the location of the fruit tree until the man's stomach was 'burned with hot sago', which in Isirawa means that the person is very angry. This section is very similar to a part in another Isirawa myth called "Fire Story".
Background: An Airmati man had gone hunting pigs and came upon the village where Fire and her younger sister lived. After a stay there he went home with some meat and special betelnuts. His cousin has asked constantly about him while he was gone, and when he returned, this cousin continually questioned him about where he had been.

Finally the Airmati man gave his cousin that special betelnut and he bit into it. Biting into it he said, "Ah, where did you get this?" He took the bag and started biting into all the betelnuts but he couldn't find any like that special one. He chewed that one until the wad was really small. This cousin asked, "Give me another," The man answered, "I don't have anymore, I divided them all up." The Airmati man couldn't sleep because wherever he went his cousin came along asking him questions about that betelnut. He gave his cousin his bag of betelnut and told him to look for himself but the cousin couldn't find one like that special one. "What I want is that special one," he said. Day in and day out if the Airmati man went hunting his cousin followed him and on a drive (group of men driving out game) the man would keep asking, "Cousin, tell me." Just as he was about to shoot a pig the cousin asked "tell me" and he missed the pig. As he was about to shoot a cassowary the cousin asked again, then the man missed it. By now he was getting angry. At the house he ate hot sago pudding and his stomach got hot. He was quiet and his cousin asked him "What happened, did you catch something?" The Airmati man answered, "Friend, I ate some hot sago pudding and my stomach is hot."

....but he gave up and finally told the cousin where he got the betelnut. At the end of this story this greedy cousin is burned to death by fire.

The Isirawa (Ia 8-10, 20-21) and Kwerba (K 11-13, 21-24, 50) versions include a turtle who in Isirawa is thought to be Came's husband and in Kwerba is thought to be her father. The Berik (B 3-4, 14-16) include both a lizard and a turtle who apparently have no special relationship to Came. In all versions the manner the first man tied or restrained this turtle and/or lizard was useful in his escape from Came. Even though not explicitly stated, the Isirawa (Ia 39-40) implies that somehow the turtle did help the first man escape.

The Isirawa (Ia 39-40) explains that Muru tied the turtle too tight and that is why Muru was killed. In Kwerba (K 50) Muru killed the turtle after he caught him. Mulî (B 34-38) cracked the lizard's neck and put a wooden piece through the turtle's nose.

The Isirawa and Kwerba versions refer to the kind of plateau or steep hill that Came lives on (Ia 57-59, K 58-59). the Berik do not mention anything about it.

Because of her lofty location, the people needed a way up, therefore the Isirawa tried climbing up on vines (Ia 59-60) while the Kwerba chopped down a huge tree (K 60).

The Berik and the Isirawa go into more detail about the attack recounting how her body is filled with arrows (B 65-68, Ia 72-82) while the Kwerba just say that she was killed (K 61).

The Berik are specific about it being left-handed people that killed her (B 67-68). The alternate Isirawa version (Ib 5-8) and the song from a Came dance specify that the man's name was Pauire and that Pauire was Muru's
mother's brother's child. The Isirawa have a self reciprocal term for this person, anaaiwe. These two people have a very close relationship. If men or boys, they hunt and play together. If one catches anything, he shares it with his anaaiwe even going so far as dividing an egg.

The Berik and Kwerba versions discuss roasting and eating Came (B 67-69, K 68-72) while the Isirawa version only mentions dividing up the body parts. This is implied in Ia 87–92 and spoken at the end of the alternate version (Ib 11–15).

The Berik people remember her for the songs she taught them to sing (B 70–72) while both the Kwerba and the Isirawa feel a sense of loss at not receiving the head. The Isirawa feel that they would know all the dance songs (Ia 91–92) if they had received it but the Kwerba/Airmati group got it and still have it. The Kwerba claim that they gave it to a different group on the Mamberamo river (K 65–66) and feel a sense of loss of power because of this.

5. CAME, CEOME; SAME OR DIFFERENT

There is another mythological character in the area whose name is very similar to Came. She is called Ceome by the Isirawa and Jaume by the Berik, and Jeome (Djewme) by the Kwerba.

The Isirawa have dance songs called Ceome. They are quite similar musically to Came. Some feel that a man who lives in Kasonaweja, located on the Mamberamo River, had a dream in which Ceome sang. Most of the Isirawa do not know who she is (Oguri 1982). The storyteller who told the Came text in this article said that Ceome is Came after she died.

The Kwerba call this woman the ruler or goddess of the afterworld. Oosterwal (1963:7) quotes the following story about her.

A long time ago, in the very beginning, Djewme came to this place and brought her pigs with her. Before that time the people here knew only the cassowary. No one knows where Djewme came from. She is a very tall woman, even taller than Djam. Her skin is light in color, though not as completely white as the skins of Europeans. She has long, fair hair. When Djewme first came to the Mamberamo she built a village for the dead, a very big village. Since that time all of our dead, and also those of the Kaowerabedj, Soramadj, Kwerba, and other tribes (east of the Mamberamo) go to that village. When she had supplied the village of the dead, her own village, with sago and many, many pigs, she also brought pigs and other animals to living men. These immediately began shooting them and giving big feasts. They invited people from near and far to participate in the eating, dancing, and singing. All these people were in a very good humor because of the pigs and other animals but they made one big mistake. Djewme had told them not to dance and sing and laugh in the daytime, because they were eating her pigs. But the people did not listen, and they danced and sang while the bright sun was shining. Therefore Djewme left the land of the living and went to the village of the dead, where the sun does not shine. But she did not disappear forever. One day, she promised, she would return again with the warria (a class of important spirits of the dead), and the people here would have the same abundance of food and the same riches as are now found in the village of the dead. Never again would anybody fall ill, never again would anyone die, and the dead would come out of their graves.
The Berik version of Jaume is very different from the Kwerba Djewme and very similar to the Came stories, the only major difference being that its setting is in the area of the Tor River.

JAUME: BERIK VERSION - told by Niko Borom

There was once a person named Usafe who lived near the sago tracts. Whenever he finished cutting down a sago tree, he would pound it. There was also a pig belonging to Jaume whose name was Seba. The pig always ate the sago. Usafe had married two women. These two women often pounded sago in that place also. Everytime they pounded sago, the pig came and ate it. This continued for a long time: the pig would always eat the sago. Again and again the pig, Seba, would eat the sago.

The two women were angry with him (Usafe). The pig continued to eat sago and again they were angry. "Aren't you going to kill that pig? Don't you know how to kill a pig?", they said. So Aguisa (Usafe) went in the morning to hunt. He followed pig tracks until he came to Jaume's, who lived on a mountain top named Seba, yes, Jaume lived there. Aguisa (Usafe) followed the pig tracks 'til he came to Jaume's yard. There in the yard he shot the pig and it died. Jaume herself was surprised when the pig squealed. Then turning, Jaume saw the dead pig and asked, "Did you kill the pig?" (Usafe) answered, "I killed the pig." Jaume then stood up, picked up the pig from the ground, placed it on a platform, and cut it open. She then placed the pig on a smoking rack. She hung the water for boiling, and when done stirring sago, she divided out some chicken and they both ate. When Usafe was satisfied, he stopped eating. Jaume placed a sleeping hex on Usafe and Usafe felt sleepy and lay down. Jaume then got some betel nut and climbed a chalk tree. She tried to wake Usafe again and again, but he didn't wake up so Jaume cut another tree down, but still Usafe didn't wake up.

Jaume then took a machete and struck Usafe on the neck until he was dead. Then she took a basket and drained the blood into it. When she finished cutting Usafe up she placed him on a smoking rack. Then she smoked the pig and the person for a while.

The two women tried to wait until dark and at dusk his string bag dropped to the floor. The two women slept alone until morning when they followed pig tracks for a long way. At a river they found his bag and bow so they waited and looked toward the mountain. They called, "Aguisa, are you there?"

Jaume heard them and went down taking person fat and pig fat with her. In one hand she held person fat and in the other she held the pig fat and she called, "I'm here, here." The two women heard the reply and returned home crying. When they arrived home, many people had gathered there and they told about Usafe being dead. "Jaume killed Usafe with a machete" was the news they went to all the villages and people gathered. They slept until morning, then went out to kill Jaume. They shot arrows until night time and then they returned home. They slept until morning and started shooting again. Finally, two left-handed men shot and killed Jaume together. With an arrow in her, she slumped to the ground. Other persons shot and killed her. Then they divided up the human flesh and the pig flesh and gave it to others until it was all gone. Then everyone went back to their own village.

The end.

6. CONCLUSION

The story of Came substantiates various omens. One man said, "This story tells us why a certain bird tells
us when people are going to die." The Isirawa have always been afraid of rainbows. To them it means that an enemy is approaching (1a 66-68). Other omens of impending danger are the small bat masipe and hearing water running from a distant river.

In this area where women are prevented from participating in religious ceremonies, especially those involving the sacred or secret flutes, where they are not allowed to hear the creation stories and especially the real or proper name of the creators, it may be that this story is another example of antagonism between men and women. The men having an underlying fear that they'll be conquered by women can recite this story and be reminded that they were triumphant over this powerful woman.

The Djame complex reported by Oosterwal (1961:25,52) is still characteristic of the Western interior of Sarmi. The story and dance extend across at least three language boundaries with only a few variations. Although the song and dance that is called Came and the story about her is well loved in the Isirawa area. Came as a person is not admired. One friend told me "Someone who keeps asking for things, or telling people to do things for him and never rests... is like Came."
References.


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ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE:
A Mairasi View of the Spirit World

Lloyd Peckham

IKHTISAR


Manusia normal yang kelihatan mempunyai badan, jiwa, dua roh, suara, dan paling tidak memiliki nama. Setiap badan merupakan ciptaan baru dari makhluk yang tertinggi. Jiwa/napas berada di dalam hati, menciptakan pikiran-pikiran dan dalam leher/tenggorokan dan menggerakkan lidah untuk berbicara.

Ia tinggal di dalam salah satu roh sesudah mati. Roh yang lainnya itu dimakan oleh roh yang lain di dalam hutan yang mengakibatkan kematian itu. Suara/bahasa adalah bagian yang penting dari seseorang dan tinggal terus bersama-sama dengan roh yang hidup sesudah kematian badan. Nama sering dihubungkan dengan sifat seseorang atau keadaan-keadaan kelahiran.

Kepercayaan-kepercayaan Mairasi disampaikan melalui mite-mite, khususnya oleh pandai sihir. Orang-orang semacam ini memiliki hubungan khusus dengan roh-roh dan mereka mempunyai kekuatan dari makhluk tertinggi untuk memperbaiki peranan utama mereka.

Pemimpin-pemimpin Gereja Kristen menganggap kode moral dan kepercayaan-kepercayaan lain dari agama tradisional adalah bermanfaat. Tetapi mereka menganggap beberapa praktek penyembuhan tidak baik, terutama penyembuhan kepada roh-roh daripada Tuhan Allah.

0. Introduction
1. Cosmology
2. Human Beings
3. Mythology
4. Shamanism and Religious Practices
5. Interaction with Christianity
6. Conclusion

0. INTRODUCTION

The Mairasi people are the 2,000 - 3,000 people in the Kaimana and Wasior sub-districts (kecamatan) of southwestern Irian Jaya in the Paskaf district (kabupaten) who speak the non-Austronesian language by the same name. Irian Jaya is the easternmost province (propinsi) of Indonesia, occupying the western half of the island of New Guinea. The Mairasi area covers roughly 2,600 square kilometers (930 square miles) between the Arguni, Triton, and Wamadom Bays of the narrow "Bird's Neck" region (3 10' S - 3 55' S & 133 40' E - 134 20' E) Figure 1.

Mairasi means 'original'. Originally, the Mairasi people were inlanders. More recently, especially since the 1930's, many have moved to the coast. There are about 10 coastal settlements and 16 inland ones. The inland ones follow the more traditional pattern of small hamlets or garden houses. The coastal settlements follow the Indonesian pattern of parallel rows of houses in a relatively small area with gardens in the outlying area. Many people have one
or more garden houses in addition to their village house. These may be either inland or coastal. Subsistence agriculture, gathering, hunting, and fishing are the sources of food. Staple root crops are taro, sweet potato, and manioc. This part of the diet is supplemented with sago when the root crops are not producing well. Rice is not grown locally, but is brought in from larger towns for government employees or for feasts.

Money is used more for clothing, tools, bride price items, and radios or tape recorders than for food. It is obtained by the sale of bark from the maso 1 (Indonesian) tree, dried fish, dried shark fins, shells, sweet potatoes, chickens, and other products of agriculture or gathering. These are sold to merchants in the nearest commercial centers (Kaimana or Wasior).

The Mairasi area is generally tropical rain forest with some areas of mangrove swamp and some marshes. It is a limestone area with cliffy coastline dotted with rock islands. Inland is typical karst topography characterized by sinkholes, disappearing creeks, caverns, and relatively few surface streams or rivers. The two rivers of considerable size are the Wosimi, which flows into Wandamen Bay in the north and the Lenguru, which flows into Triton Bay near the village of Lobo on the south coast. The river near Lobo is important in that it provides an area where sago palms can grow, where there is fertile soil for gardening, and where there are mollusk-rich mudflats.

The kinship system is a combination of Hawaiian and Iroquois patterns (Peckham, Nancy 1982). Social organization has been undergoing change since the move from the inland areas to the coast.
Patrilineality is dominant. But some emphasis is placed on the mother’s side of the family, too—specifically her brothers.

Formal education, literacy, and Christianity were introduced by teacher-evangelists (guru injil) from the Moluccas in the 1930’s. The interaction of these factors will be discussed after the more traditional belief system is presented. The traditional belief system will be presented as it is currently believed in the parish (dega) of Lobo, which, of course has been influenced by Christianity. The pre-Christian form will also be presented when possible to infer it.

The present research was conducted under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics in co-operation with Universitas Cenderawasih of Abepura, Irian Jaya. Most of the data were collected in or near Lobo, the largest Mairasi village, (population 615/Nov. 1980), and the parish by the same name. The data include a corpus of eight hours of recorded texts in the Mairasi language. The goal of this paper is to present an initial survey of religious beliefs to form a basis for subsequent study.

1. COSMOLOGY

There are many living things in the Mairasi universe. Some of their categories are: sai 'birds', ambere 'snakes and lizards', uratu 'fish', iwo 'trees', tambere 'useful plants', awarirjas 'weeds', and ja'anogu 'persons/personified beings'.

It is the latter category, persons, which includes entities associated with the spirit world, i.e. spirits and souls. The Mairasi taxonomy of types of persons will be presented with its own categorizations (Figure 2).

In the cosmological taxonomy some basic dualisms show up as in Marind-Anim and other cultures of New Guinea (Baal 1971:244-250): warmanar 'in the open'/tangible vs. mesiar 'in hiding'/intangible; bias 'normal'/mortal vs. nesor 'immortal'; engsavo/enggvari 'above'/superior vs. avjar/awwar 'below'/inferior; and jauri 'sea'/salt water' vs. ari 'land' and fata 'fresh water'. Within these there may be other ways of stating the same dualism. The most representative member of a category, for example, may be chosen to set in opposition with its counterpart in the contrasting category. An example of this is the use of ja'anogu in its narrow sense 'mortal tangible person' to contrast with o'wei 'spirit', representing the whole 'open' vs. 'hidden' contrast which also involves other members of the respective sets.

These dualisms interact with each other (see Figure 3). An example of this interaction is in viewing the mortal vs. immortal dualism in terms of the tangible vs. intangible dualism. The category mortal has the normal mortal’s body as its tangible member and the mortal’s spirit as its intangible member, with death being the pivotal event that separates the two. Similarly, the category immortal has the immortal person’s body as its tangible member and a companion spirit as its intangible member. Hence, 'spirit of a mortal' (-rwei) is to 'mortal tangible person' (ja'anogu bias)
Figure 2. Cosmological Taxonomy.

![Cosmological Taxonomy diagram]

Figure 3. Interaction of Cosmological Dualisms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spirit of Mortal</th>
<th>Mortal</th>
<th>Interior (below)</th>
<th>Exterior (above)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Creature rutes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Companion spirits</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Personified places</td>
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<td>1. Supreme beings</td>
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<td>Masar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inanimate (hidden)</td>
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<td>Warmastic (open)</td>
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</table>
as 'companion spirit'/ 'spirit of an immortal' (awaroto) is to 'immortal tangible person' (ja’anogu neser). (See discussion of each category of the cosmology).

The primary sense of the word ja’anogu is a visible, normal mortal human being, i.e. 'person' in the usual sense. It can also mean friend or kinsman. It is also used without qualification for other extended senses. But, when clarification is needed, a qualification can be made using aorai 'like', i.e. 'person-like'. The category of persons can thus be divided into ordinary people on the one hand and spirits or shadows (-rwei) on the other.

Persons are either ja’anogu wereia warmanar 'persons whose life/wind is in the open' or ja’anogu wereia mesiar 'persons whose life/wind is in hiding'. The ones 'in the open' will be referred to as 'tangible' and the ones 'in hiding' as 'intangible'. Intangible ones can only be seen occasionally or by oro tonom 'ones who see things' (shamans). When visible, their appearance is like a shadow or film.

Tangible Persons (wereia warmanar)

Of the tangible persons, the basic distinction is one of mortality. Most are mortal. For that reason, the world we live in is aptly called Mavoro Nusu 'Maggot Island'. We inhabitants of Maggot Island eventually die and are eaten by maggots. Mortal being the unmarked category, no qualifier is needed with the term 'person' in this usual sense unless emphasis is being made on the distinction from immortal ones. In that case the qualifier biag 'normal' may be used. The first person to die was Joamba 'death side'. Those who die go to visit him. (For further discussion of death and spirits see the section on Human Beings.)

The category of mortal tangible persons generally refers to human beings that are seen daily. But it also includes a rarely-seen race of small people that live on a mountain near the village of Lomira. They are quiet folk who don't bother larger people unless they come into their mountain top territory. In that case the small people use a formidable tactic to deal with invaders— they tickle them to death. The tribe is called appropriately itit matu 'ones who tickle a lot' or 'the ticklers'.

The original kind of mortal tangible persons is ungumbambamo. These people are the topic of the oldest stories. Their spirits (-rwei) are still present. One named Umuru resides at Umuru Nambi, a peninsula by the same name near Lobo. He and other ungumbambamo can be malevolent.

Mortals may become immortal. One of the most important culture heroes Urere and his wife Jau Veii were given immortality by eating ginger root (iri) which the supreme being (Enggavitnani) gave them. This was given to them after he had mastered the things taught him by the spirits who rule animals, most notably the ruler of the snakes, the one who guards the ginger root of immortality by wrapping his coils around it. The association between snakes and immortality is also present in Dani mythology of Irian Jaya (Kamma 1978:122-123). Since then, Urere has chosen to remain hidden under I Vesii mountain until people become smarter and the supreme being can return to the earth.
His wife is still alive at Kuri (or Nabi) mountain inland from the northern end of Arguni Bay. She is famous throughout the Bird's Neck region. Mairasi people cannot go see her since they are linked patrilineally to people of the east, while she is of the west. Some Mairasi men once tried to go there. But earthquakes, floods, thunder, lightning, wind and rain stopped them. To them it was taboo (asa). But those for whom it is not taboo can go there and have told them about her. They report that she can change her appearance to that of a young or an old woman. She does not work sorcery (rasunggu) against people. Instead she sits and reads the supreme being's words.

Of the immortals, some of the best-known are the four brothers of Urere's mother. The kinship term Ureere uses for them is mem 'mother's brother'. One of them, Tenggoros, is in charge of pre-determining the time for each mortal to die. In his present form, Tenggoros can also fit into the category of intangible persons (see below).

Intangible Persons (woria mesiar)

There are many kinds of persons which have woria mesiar 'life in hiding', i.e. are intangible. The two basic types are spirits (o'wei) and those associated with the supreme being (Enggavoro). The word for spirits has we'ei 'night' as its root. This refers to their dwelling in darkness under the earth's surface. In contrast, the word for supreme being has enggavoro 'above' as its root. This refers to his dwelling above the realm of light and dark as we know it or to his supremacy in power.

Spirits (o'wei)

The spirits were created by the supreme being and must eventually answer to him. Some were created as spirits. Others became spirits after death or at the time of a major flood which is mentioned in some of the oldest stories. Four broad categories can be distinguished: spirits of mortals (-rvei), spirits of immortals/companion spirits (awaroto), creature rulers (sendanggari), and personified places (ana). Generally they are considered to be malevolent, but they can be helpful or their evil can be avoided if a person knows how to deal with them. The generic term is the one most commonly known and used. Some of the specific categories of spirits and names of individual members of those categories are not to be known or mentioned by women or children. Sickness or death is usually the context in which the generic term is mentioned by those who are not shamans.

A person may be suspected of being a spirit even though he or she has appeared as a normal person in the open for a long time. For example, in Lobo a certain woman was thought to be a spirit by some of the other people in the village. When it happened that a young child in the village died one day, the people in general thought that the death was the work of a spirit. One man who believed the woman to be that spirit took it upon himself to kill her with a spear secretly when she was in her garden. He was later found out and put in jail for five years. Her husband moved away and her children, now young adults, have been cared for by others.
Similarly, in a story about an encounter with some of the small people called 'the Ticklers' (tit matu), the person who met them asked whether they were persons (ja'anogu) or spirits (o'wein). That is, though they looked human, they were suspected of actually being spirits. Thus, a dichotomy, represented by the most characteristic members of the tangible vs. intangible persons, would be normal (mortal) humans vs. spirits.

**Spirits of Mortals (-rwein)**

The word -rwein can mean 'shadow' or 'spirit'. Its root, like that of the word for spirits in general (o'wein) is wein 'night'. This refers to their activeness at night and to their dwelling in darkness under the earth's surface. The hyphen indicates that it requires possessive prefixes (Peckham, Lloyd 1981). This is because it belongs to a particular mortal tangible person, to an animal, or, possibly, to a plant. Opinion varies as to whether or not plants have spirits. Some trees are considered to be persons, however. But animals and regular mortal tangible persons definitely do have spirits.

Generally, spirits are active only after the death of the person or animal. Spirits of both recent and remote dead are included in the term -rwein. It is in this form that the original kind of mortal tangible persons (unggumbambo) are still actively present. Shamans (oro tonom) are the exception in that they are mortal tangible persons whose spirits can travel while they remain alive, but asleep (For further discussion on spirits and shamans, see the sections on Human Beings and Shamanism).

**Companion Spirits/Spirits of Immortals (awaroeto)**

The term awaroeto means, literally, 'the ones in between'. It refers to their dwelling in between the layers of the earth's surface, i.e. in the underworld. All the other spirits (o'wein) live in the same place and can all be referred to by other terms that mean 'people of the underworld' (ias veve/avjar vete). Their activities and origin, not their dwelling place, distinguish them from the other spirits. For that reason the term 'companion spirits' will be used henceforth.

They are companion spirits in that they have a close relationship with shamans. They are referred to as a shaman's personal friends from the underworld or as his 'namesakes' (javisa). Each shaman has at least one companion spirit with whom he is in a close relationship. A shaman can call upon his personal companion spirit to fight with malevolent spirits who are trying to take away a person's spirit and cause his death.

Some companion spirits have a relationship as guardians of the spirits which rule creatures (see Figures 4, 5). They help the creature rulers find food, including the spirits of living mortals. In this sense they are malevolent. But they can be persuaded to seek food elsewhere if their personal shaman requests it.

Companion spirits are the intangible form of immortal tangible persons. One of these already referred to above is Tenggoros, one of the cross uncles (mem) of the culture hero Urere. He can
Figure 4. A Ruler of the Wild Dogs (1920)
(Drawn by Bent Warburg.)

Figure 5. The Chief Ruler of the Wild Flies
A Material View of the Spirit World (51)
be consulted to determine whether a sick person is about to die or not. The question is put to him as the back of the hand of the sick person is being cut in a bloodletting procedure.

Creature Rulers (sendanggari)

The term for creature rulers (sendanggari) may refer to regular mortals who are in a leadership position or who are rich. But its usage in relation to spirits denotes the rarely-seen ruler behind a visible animal or rock. They also rule the spirits of dead animals. When visible, they are in the form of the thing over which they rule, but are much larger. Some of them have human faces or other human parts. They can have children and they can die. They have a political hierarchy, the highest ones usually having personal names which are known by the shaman. Authority is generally according to priority, i.e. relative age. Thus, the most distant ancestor has the greatest authority. Similarly, the eldest member of a set of siblings has authority over his junior siblings. Genealogies of some of the creature rulers will be presented.3

Rocks and mountains have creature rulers (see Figure 6). Linguistically, rocks and mountains are classified as animate objects since their modifiers use the animate marker -g-. They used to be considered persons. Some Mairasi who have accepted Christianity feel that that may not be true. But they do maintain that there are spirits associated with them. Just as the rulers of other creatures may appear in a giant form of those creatures, the rulers of rocks are mountains.

Land animals have creature rulers (see Figures 4, 5, 7–9). It is with these rulers that the important culture hero Ûreõe studied. The ones mentioned in his story are the python (ituma) named Ûer Sangger, the giant wild dog (suao) named Ùer, the giant lizard (wusara) named Jambi, the fresh water eel (asava) named Wanasur, and the wild pig (bembe) named Mengari, Naõi, or Sisaõa. Other land animals have rulers, but are less well-known. Some of them have a companion spirit in human form who cares for them, as shown in Figures 4 and 5.

One of the types of creature rulers that is expressly feared and more commonly mentioned appears in the form of giant wild dogs (suao). These giant wild dogs are the cause of runny noses. They can also kill people. They are the intangible rulers of the wild dogs (awangs) of the forest. Only their headman Ùer has a human face.

Water animals have creature rulers called Ûambi or oso (see Figures 10–12). These fall into two categories by habitat. The distinction is between fresh water (fata) or land (ari) and sea (jauri). In both cases, the water is analogous to a roof over their dwelling place. They live in an unseen world below the water. Some shamans can go to their village and visit them. With those who are not shamans, however, the encounters are usually accidental and unfortunate.

The rulers of sea creatures may be in many shapes. As a group they are feared and avoided. Some are in the shape of coral reefs (sa'ari) that suddenly emerge and stop a boat. Others have iron hooks or tenacles with which they pull boats under
Figure 7. Genealogy of some of the rules of dogs and cats.

Figure 6. Genealogy of some of the rules of rocks and mountains.

Figure 5. Genealogy of some of the rules of lizards (amphibians).

Figure 4. Genealogy of some of the rules of snakes and eels.
Figure 10. Ruler of the Octopus (urusu umbi/oso)

[Sketch of a mermaid-like figure]

Figure 11. Ruler of the Fish (urusu umbi/aso)
[Sketch of a mermaid-like figure]
water. Those may be like octopi (urita) or various kinds of fish (uratu). They are referred to by a
personal name or by the word for the appearance they
take compounded with the word for rulers of water
creatures in general: e.g.

‘ruler of the fish’ uratu uambi fish water
creature ruler.

From accounts of encounters with these rulers of sea
creatures by mortals in boats, it is apparent that
they not only seek to damage the boat, but also to
eat its occupants.

Rulers of fresh water creatures have a dif-
ferent effect on those who inadvertently come upon
them. Two of these who live near Triton Bay are
named Tavtava and Teretava. Their names are re-
lated to the verb ‘to flow’ (tavajen), which is
usually used in collocation with ‘water’ (fata).
But in their case it refers to the flow of ‘strength’
(ueti). A report of an encounter with the one called
Teretava illustrates this general characteristic
of rulers of fresh water creatures:

Three men went pig hunting. One of their
hunting dogs chased a pig into the muddy edge
of a pond where Teretava lives. Both animals
stuck fast in the mud. One of the hunters tried
to pull the dog out. A force like electricity
flowed through the dog and into him so that he
was stuck, too. Another hunter tried to help
his companion who was stuck. The same force
flowed through his friend and immobilized him,
too. The third hunter was wary. He went away,
cooked some food, and came back to feed it to
them. They were nearly dead. They soon died.
That’s what happens when a fresh water creat-
ure ruler lives in an area.
Some of the young men who have been outside of their home area say that they met a person who told them those creature rulers are associated with places where there is gold. For that reason stories about them hold their interest. But they still avoid those places.

Some are not malevolent. The sea-dwelling ruler named Waro’o lives in a cove near a garden site called Sive Vesi. People who have lived there report that he is seen fairly often but that they are not afraid of him because he is harmless. He appears in the form of a huge manta ray with black back and white underside. Similarly, all whales and the largest of each type of water creature are creature rulers: persons rather than just the sea creature they resemble. Encounters with them do not necessarily result in injury.

Many of these rulers of water creatures were condemned to this status in judgment of derelict behavior. Some persons may have been created to be water creature rulers from the beginning. But many others were condemned to stay in the water because of things they did wrong. Two mermaids who live near Lomira and Warika on the Eastern shore of Triton Bay, for example, became mermaids because of their bad practice of constantly fighting. The immortal Urere condemned them to live in the ocean at the time he destroyed many other people with fire. They used to live as regular people near one of the lakes inland from Warika and Lomira. But now they live in the ocean with their top half human and their lower portions like fish. From wounds they received in their fighting they are named Torn Nose (Nambi Te'e) and Bad Eye (Nambutu Anggunu).

A Malraisi View of the Spirit World

Places (anasi)

At least two spirits have places (anasi) as their visible form rather than animals, rocks, or people. The two that are known to fit this category are the sky and the earth. Besides the general word used for these vast places in everyday speech, there are personal names which are known by some Malraisi men, as handed down through old stories. In the story of the origin of human beings these personal names are revealed. The sky (Toi or Toni) is the father of us all. The earth (Suere) is our mother. Although vast, they are persons. They were the first ones made by the supreme being. He made earth then heaven. The sky is far away and not very important in daily life. Earth, however, is right with us and drinks our blood when we die. A tinge of fear is mixed with respect in regard to the earth.

Intangible Persons Associated with the Supreme Being (Enggavoto)

The creator and ruler of all things is called Enggavoto, or Enggavotnani. Both of these names mean 'the above one' referring either to his dwelling place or to his supremacy. A similar name is Janav Enggwarai 'the old man on top' He is basically benevolent. But he will eventually come back to earth in a visible form and judge those who are evil. He is still in control of everything, even though he allows evil to continue now. He lives outside the realm of dark and light. Although he is generally thought to dwell in the sky (sinyavi), his location at any single moment cannot be determined. Some anav variri 'old stories' call the sky his head place (nangguyu nanasi) and the earth his foot place (naoro nanasi).
The supreme being used to be equated with the sun (tende). The names used were Janav Engg-wari 'the old man on top', Fututu, and Ungguru. When there was a solar eclipse, the ancestors used to put tobacco and betel nut on a plate to offer it to the sun. They would offer it, while playing gongs, until the sun began shining normally again. Both on the coast and in the inland areas this is still done. But the people in general have dropped the connection between the ritual and the belief that the sun is the supreme being. Nor do they recall beliefs or practices about the moon.

The supreme being gave a moral code which has been passed down orally for many generations. One rendering of it which was given to me recently is translated here:

"Do not steal. Do not hug another man's wife. Do not hug another man's unmarried daughter. If you want her, ask for her. Do not desire another man's possessions. Do not kill. Do not slander. Do not take oaths."

The fact that this was given by an elder of a Christian church obviously has some bearing on its content (discussed later in regard to the interaction between the Mairasi belief system and and Christianity). Other people give similar renderings of the moral code. The taking of oaths mentioned in the code will be discussed under Shamanism.

Associates (we'e) of the supreme being may assist him in creation or judgement, even though these responsibilities are primarily his. The one in charge of storms, Wer Amburuv, may use violent storms (werai) to execute judgement upon wrong-doers. Another of the supreme being's associates, Soansa, comes to mortals in the form of a small bird by the same name and warns them of the presence of malevolent spirits or other dangers.

The execution of judgement and some creative acts may also be done by people other than the supreme being and his associates. While judging people for sexual sins and other offenses, the culture hero Urere created the river that bears his name. Mortals in the open have also been given creative power in the form of a song called Jai. The men who know it well can call things into being. Some of the things which may be called into being in the song are: bark of the masoi tree, factories (pabrik), pandanus (imbono), plates (binggani), and bride price/wealth (vuri).

2. HUMAN BEINGS

Composition

The normal mortal tangible person has an -iambi 'body', -nen 'soul', -rei 'spirit', -jil 'voice', and a -qat 'name'. The hyphen on these terms indicates that they require possessive prefixes (Peckham, Lloyd 1981). Some people include clothing in the list, but they agree that it is not part of the person. The composition of a person is an area that is not universally discussed or agreed upon. The present discussion
is based upon the testimony of shamans, since they are accepted as the authorities.

The body results from the mixing of blood (isere) in its clear form (samusa) from both the mother and father. In the third month after conception the body begins to be formed—starting with the eyes. Gradually, the formation of the body moves down to the nose and on to the lower parts. By the sixth month the whole body is formed. Then it is born in the ninth month. The supreme being is the creator of the body within its mother. Each body is a new creation. After death it decomposes and is not inhabited again by a soul or spirit.

The word for soul (-nen) means 'breath'. The newly-formed body searches for a way out of its mother. When it succeeds in emerging, it receives its soul with its first breath. The soul comes from the supreme being. The soul is the part of a person which includes a person's opinions and thoughts. Its seat is in the heart (-tuatomo) — making it beat. It then moves up into the throat (onggoa). There it formulates thoughts and opinions (onggo). When it reaches the tongue, the result is speech.

The word for spirit (-rwei) means 'shadow'. Descriptively, it can be used to distinguish all kinds of intangible persons from tangible ones. But its specific sense as a part of mortal tangible persons is similar in that it refers to a person's activities when functioning like an intangible person. With most people, the spirit is active only after death. Shamans have a spirit that can also be active outside of the body when they are asleep. The supreme being is the source of the spirit. Since people who are not shamans do not have active spirits until they die, some of them are unsure about living people actually having a spirit. But the shamans' claim that living people do have a spirit is reflected linguistically in one of the verbs for 'to be pregnant' (nargwejar). It means 'to have a spirit inside', indicating that the prospective mother now bears another spirit. People have two spirits. One which if eaten by spirits, results in death, and the other lives on as a spirit. The latter may take the form of an animal in the forest, e.g. a wild pig. Spirits within a living person may be called 'the one inside his eye' (nambutu atwararnani).

Most people have a voice (-ij). The same word may mean 'sound' or 'language'. It is given to a person by the supreme being. A dumb person is one who was not given a voice by the supreme being. Speech is activated by the tongue in conjunction with the soul. Mairasi is the original language, spoken first by a woman named Wetavin, who was also the originator of a song called Bajeni (Peckham, Nancy 1981:61). A person's identity is closely related to his language. In the Urere myth, for example, Jau Vei or Masaer, was tired of travelling far from home with her husband Urere. Her boat would not take her home until she cried in her own language, Kuri (Uri). A song which she taught is sung in her own language by Mairasi people (Peckham, Nancy 1981: 63-64). The importance of voice or language is
also shown in recent accounts of ecstatic utterances in many languages when men get together in a ceremonial house (wasa) out in the forest. Speaking in languages which they do not normally know is their proof of contact with spirits.

Another important part of a person's identity is his name. It is more than a mere label. It is a summary statement of a person's character. In reference to the supreme being, it includes everything about him: his words and actions. The phrase Enggavotnani nagwat 'the supreme being's name' is sometimes used to mean 'the Bible' by those who equate the supreme beings of Mairasi and Christianity. The supreme being wants us to know his name. That means obeying what he says.

Traditional Mairasi names for people in myths and for contemporary living people often tell something about the person. The importance of a name to an individual may vary. One man in Lobo complained that his brother, 'The One Who Understands' has a better name than his own, 'Butcher Bird's Egg'. But some others do not seem to place much importance on theirs.

Any one person may have several names given to him at any time in his life. Most people receive at least one name at birth or soon thereafter. A wide range of kinsmen and friends can name a child, but especially those who were involved in the delivery of the child. Names may refer to events surrounding the birth, characteristics, places, or plants or animals.

There is also a practice of keeping names of deceased old people alive by giving a baby their name after their death. In one myth, one of Urere's sons is referred to by a name he acquired after his death. He could turn himself into a fresh water eel. While in that form, he was killed and eaten. For that reason he is called 'cooked while an eel' (Aeava Nare Wavjemi).

Death

Death is expected for most tangible persons, as was mentioned in the discussion of mortality and immortality. Joamba, the king of the dead, and Tenggoros, one of the mother's brothers (mem) of the immortal Urere, know the day of a person's death in advance. They have the spirits of a person's senior kinsmen, i.e. his parents, go get one spirit of that person as soon as a malevolent spirit from the forest eats his other spirit. Spirits have voices. But only if a person is about to die can he hear the voice of his parent's spirits as they come. They reach down into the body and get the spirit. The soul is inside the spirit they take. When they take it, it is small. But in five days it will grow up. Then it will return to the grave, look at it, and decide not to be in human form anymore. Then it may choose to live in an animal in the forest. Spirits of the dead are not harmful. But their coming is associated with death. For that reason people may be afraid of them.

A person's future after death is only vaguely known to those who are not shamans. Shamans tell of the spirits going to the place of the dead.
called ner neroaatu 'corpse home' (note similarity with Indonesian neraka 'hell') or Ivoro Toene 'Broken Fire'. The spirits wait there until the supreme being returns. His return depends upon all people becoming 'smart' (pintar; Malay). Urere, the immortal culture hero, was, it is said, tired of living with ignorant people. He, too, will come out from his hiding place under I Vesi Mountain. People who are now trees, rocks, animals, or spirits will be judged and there will be a final kingdom directly ruled by the supreme being. We will no longer be stupid (wanggum; literally, 'bees'wax'). The soul in our spirit can learn to read even if we were stupid before death.

A few mortuary practices shed more light on beliefs about the afterlife. The fact that mourning songs (tetura) are sung directly to the deceased about events of his life corresponds to the idea of his spirit not going far away immediately. When Tomas Oruw died around the age of 80 on July 15, 1980, his children and other close family members sang about fishing together, going to the garden, and other memories. They also sang about immediate happenings, like my arrival in the house of mourning.

In Lobo, a coastal village, there are many canoes and few boards. When a person dies he is usually buried in a portion of a ruined canoe of which the ends have been cut off. Boards are fashioned from pieces of the canoe to form the top and ends. No explanation of the purpose of the practise has been given to us. But an elder of the church mentioned the 'final journey by canoe' of an infant when praying at a funeral September 22, 1981. Eliade (1964:356) refers to "the 'boat of the spirits', which carries the souls of the dead to the beyond"

as a practice that occurs in Indonesia and Melanesia. Besides its function of providing a relatively quick way of making a coffin, the use of the canoe could be symbolic of the spirit's journey to the place of the dead. But no evidence of being escorted by a shaman to that place, as is reported on the island of Kalimantan (Borneo) has surfaced yet.

Food is also provided for the spirit's journey. After the last prayer and song at the grave-side service led by a church elder, a kinsman of the deceased quietly pours breastmilk onto the grave of an infant or hangs a basket (jav[i]) under the low thatch roof that covers the grave. In the basket is a small amount of raw taro or sweet potato and, sometimes a broken glass. A 'very old story' (unggumbambamo) explains that the new arrival in the place of the dead needs some food to eat and some to chop up into small pieces and plant in a garden. Then he will have food and not come back to the village. There is some disagreement as to the validity of this generally-known explanation, but the practice continues. If a women does not provide milk for her deceased infant, her breasts will swell up. Consequences for neglect of the other practice have not been given.

3.

MYTHOLOGY

Types of Stories

The content of Mairasi beliefs is presented in the stories which are still being passed down from generation to generation. The basic criteria for
classifying story types in Mairasi is age. The generic terms are variri 'words' / 'stories' and serita 'stories'. (N Mal) which are synonyms of each other. The specific categories are: anav sura variri/anav sidro variri 'very old stories', anav variri 'old stories', and anavsin variri 'new stories'. Within these categories there is variation as to the amount of faith put in a particular story, the potential audience, and the style, eg. whether spoken or sung.

Very Old Stories (anav sura variri). The very old stories are about the (original kind of) people (unggumbambamo). Since they are about those people, they may be called by the same name. Opinion varies as to their validity. But they are used to explain the origin of things and customs. They can be told to anyone and are used as bed-time stories. In Indonesian they are called ceritera dongeng, Somewhat akin to 'fairy tales'. An example is the story of a person named Neuv Tete and a big flood. The origin of the ocean, sea animals, and nationalities is presented in it.

Old Stories (anav variri). Among the old stories are some that may be heard by everyone. An example of this type is the one that is most famous to outsiders who have an interest in the Mairasi area: the story of the giant eagle (Famba). The following is a translation of the version given by Arnold Mufara in Mairasi (March 1979).

On this mountain of ours (Denan Siri- elevation 1,318 meter/4,285 feet) a giant eagle used to live. At that time, people could not go out there far into the ocean to fish. If they did, the eagle would swoop down, pick them up in their canoe, take them up to the mountain, and eat them.

That was the reason people could not go fishing or clam-digging. They were all afraid.

Then, finally, an Englishman came. He looked for bait. Then he found a dog and tied him up barking. When the eagle swooped down to get the dog, the Englishman shot him. Then he buried the eagle on the island called Pu Nus.

Then people could live happily. We multiplied until now we are many who live at Lobo.

If this had not happened, there could not have been many people here. But it is a good thing that the Englishman came and shot the eagle. We have been born again as a people.

That's all.

Visible evidence of the story's validity is in the grave of the Englishman (monument commemorating Fort Du Bus), bricks from his house, and the large bones of the eagle that were in a cave on a nearby island until recently. A similar story of a giant eagle that ate people is reported by Kamna (1978: 164-166) from Windesi, near the Wadamen Bay on the north coast (within 200 kilometers or 120 miles of Lobo).

Similarly, other old stories are backed up by visible evidence. But some have the additional evidence of the testimony of shamans. These have a limited audience. Women and children are excluded because the stories contain taboo (asa) information, especially names. Even the place and circumstances surrounding their telling are restricted. These
cannot be told near a cooking fire because a pregnant woman might cook there later. When she gives birth, the child will be mentally abnormal. They may be told day or night. The usual context is at a feast after successful hunting. Often this is in conjunction with a healing ceremony. The shamans, sometimes more than five at once, discuss the details of the stories quietly among themselves off to the side before telling them. Often one tells the story at the prompting and correction of several others.

**New Stories (anavasi variri).** New stories are being told every day about things that happen. This category generally refers to a recent reporting of event less than a year old. But it can apparently extend to include stories of events occurring at anytime within the story-teller’s life-time.

**Songs (sev)**

Prose is not the only way of passing information about beliefs. The Mairasi people make good use of song, too. In the context of story-telling, sometimes the story-teller starts singing, while tapping out the rhythm on the floor or anything that might be available. On one occasion, a man could not answer my question about the names of certain persons from the old stories until he had quietly sung a few lines of a song. Song may serve as a mnemonic device in the oral transmission of information.

Some of the festival songs have their roots in the old stories. In the context of festivals, therefore, women and children may hear vague references to stories which they can not normally hear in detail. The songs Jaura, Patatoji, and Uri which are reported by Nancy Peckham (1981:61-64) all relate back to one of the major myths, Urere. However they avoid using the names that are taboo for women or children.

**The Urere Myth**

One of the most important 'old stories' (anavari) is Urere. It tells of the formation of the only river that flows into Triton Bay. As was mentioned in the introduction, the river called Urere (Lengguru: on many maps) is important to the Mairasi people. The story of its formation is significant for that reason and for what it reveals about Mairasi beliefs. Therefore, it will be discussed as the example of a myth. It fits the description of a myth given by J. Van Baal: "A myth presents religious truth in story form. It has authority which others lack." "There is no clear-cut borderline between real life and mythical life. The world of myth is never far-off."

Urere has as confirmation of its truth the word of living shamans and some places that are visible to regular people, too. There are some rocks, some bones, some canals, and an ironwood stump. The major posts of Urere’s house have recently rotted away. With all this evidence, it is accepted as true and very important to the people around and inland from Triton Bay. It also corresponds in some points with a story told by the Irahutu people in Arguni Bay—the kinsmen of Urere’s
wife. Stories of the origin of people and other living things are considered to be much older than Urere. But the story of the giant eagle lambe, fits into the history just after the activities of Urere which are recorded in the story. That puts Urere before the first contact with Europeans, generally considered to be Portugesi 'Portuguese'.

**Pragmatics Behind the Telling of Urere.** There are parts of the Urere myth which are considered asa 'taboo' for women and children. For this reason it is usually told only among men somewhere away from women and children. The four renderings of the myth which I have recorded were told in four different places, some more ideal than the others.

On August 8, 1981, my parents, visiting from America, my wife, my child, and I were called 45 minutes' walk away from Lobo to a hamlet called Mundambar along the river called Urere. The stated purpose was for us to give a penicillin shot to a man with a bad boil on his leg. Two shamans (orotonom) an old man who still lives 7 days' walk inland at Taruata, and a younger man, who lives near the River at Mundambar, had been called to movunu a'ajan 'make/do medicine' for the sick man. As payment for their services, men had gone out to hunt. They got four wild pigs, two cassowaries, and some smaller marsupials. Sago was also prepared. The feast is their way of paying the shamans.

We hadn't known this feast was prepared. Just as we were leaving our house in Lobo, the one from Taruata who called us told us to bring a tape recorder. When we arrived, we found that the men were ready to tell stories. They say that Urere had told them to have a feast whenever someone needs healing or they need a change in weather (raining too much or too little). Stories are told at these times. However, that day our tape recorder was not working well. We feasted and gave a shot that day but I came back alone for the stories on the 13th. They requested that I not let others in Lobo know what I was doing.

The stories were told mid-morning at Mundambar on a bamboo platform about five feet off the ground in a large, wall-less house with no fire burning. Women and children were kept away. Some men came and went, but there were usually about ten men present: not nearly as many as had been there on the 8th. The orotonom 'seers' discussed the stories quietly together before telling them. When they were too sleepy, in the afternoon, we rested briefly, told some more stories, ate taro fixed by the women, and left for Lobo around 4:00 pm. (The shamans are the sick man's embis 'father-in-law' and his nevu 'brother-in-law': his wife's brother).

On August 14, 1981, the setting was after dark in a house in Lobo where two unmarried men live. The story-tellers were careful not to have a cooking fire going—nor any kind of light. They had come secretly at a pre-arranged time to let me know some of their stories. There were less than ten men. The story-tellers discussed briefly what they would say. Urere was the main story they wanted to tell, even though some of the same men had told it to me the day before. There was much discussion about needing a place further from women and children for telling stories. So we arranged to meet in twelve days.
On August 26, 1981, the setting was late morning in the forest between Lobo and the river Urepe. We went there individually or in pairs, meeting at a large strangler fig tree by the bay. Most of the time there were ten men, three of four of them shamans. A few church elders were there, too. Urepe was referred to by another name, Ininyambi 'the Frightener'.

On November 16, 1981, the setting was morning in a quiet study over 250 miles from Lobo with a shaman and younger man and myself. There were no Mairasi women or children. They felt free to talk. That is when it took the longest, an hour, to tell Urepe.

Synopsis of Urepe. Four tellings of Urepe have been recorded. The longest rendition took an hour to tell. A summary of main points, as selected by one of the Mairasi members of the audience follows:

Urepe was born in Uri (Kuri/Nabi; on many maps) the tallest mountain in upper Arguni Bay area. He grew up in Uri and then studied in Mirai, northwest of Lobo, with a large ituma 'python' named Elersanger. When he was 'smart/educated' (pintar) his body became like that of a python. Then he studied with Erer, the head of the 'giant wild dogs' (suao). Then he was smart and got the body of a giant wild dog, but with a human face like that of Erer. Then he studied with Wasara/Jambi a giant lizard (buaya darat; Malay) and became like him. Then he studied with and became like Wanunsur, the headman of the fresh water eels (asaua). Then he studied with Wenggani/Naimi/Sigiauta the headman of the wild pigs. When he looked like a pig he was considered done with his studies and became like a man again.

Then he moved to a place called Amibi, at the headwaters (angangguyu) of the river that is now called Urepe (Lengguru; on many maps). He started to build a village. He made a ditch around the place with a path in it. He finished the ditch and people increased.

Then he moved to Imbiar and made a ceremonial house (wasia). He made a big pig feast. (A meter-high pile of bones is still there.) Then he considered the activities there bad and left because they cooked big feasts as commanded by spirits and committed adultery in six-house villages (mas langguru).

Then he went to Manim Te'enyai, one of the villages in the area called Uri. There he killed his mother-in-law (embisi) because she ate his son when he was in the form of a fresh water eel. He took her spine and put it in his house in Manim Te'enyai. He cut down his fire platform and buried her bones there. But he kept the head in his hand and went down into the ground. He came up again at a mountain called Urda. He cut off branch of the masai tree. From it he hung her head. The land-sea breeze of the early morning knocked it down. It rolled to Sunuva.

He followed it and stayed in Sunuva. There he made a ship (apari; from Malay kapal) out of an eel called Genis (Figure 13). He had his servant go back and get his things. They made a six-house village. Tenggoroe, one of his mother's brothers, helped him make the ship. They called the ship Genis. He told his servant to get his mother's other brothers and other people together to sing.

There was an earthquake that lowered the ship into the ground and water flowed in.
He told his servant to hold a torch. They burnt everything on their right as they came down past the six-house village. He held a dog and a drum. People were killed. His mother's brother Tenggors ran and jumped onto the ship. Ureere told him to stand in the bow with a gun. They also had a flag on an ironwood tree for a pole. They fought with mountains. They passed through a mountain. Ureere's son Urouru 'cassowaria tree' died. They buried him in a place that can never flood over, even though it is low. He hid some of his things in a foursided basket (bir). It is now a rock. Everything to the right burned. There was no ocean. Trees burnt down, and that's why there's a lot of bamboo in that area and not so many big trees.

He got to Lobo. His wife went away crying. That's why people cry in the Kuri ('Uri') language. She went in another ship to Uri. The ship only took her when she began crying in Kuri.

Ureere went to Ember Nambi. Beyond there he made a village named 'little Kaimana' (Emana Naivo). But he wasn't satisfied. Ureere went into the ground. He came up again at another place. Then he went back under and came up at Mirai. He lives there now. He put up the flag again on the same ironwood tree he had cut down.

(His possessions in the basket became a stone. The rest of his possessions are in Mirai with him. He has a factory. The stump of the ironwood tree from which he made his flag-pole is still visible. The bones of his feast are still there.)
Several references have already been made to Urere, Teeggoros, Jau Vej, and to aspects of the story. More will be made in subsequent sections. But some points bear mentioning still. The beginnings of Mairasi shamanism are shown in Urere's studies and practises. His acts of judgement and creation show that the supreme being allowed him much freedom and power. His immortality is not specifically mentioned in this summary. But his dissatisfaction with the condition of mortals and his ability to dive back into the ground and get away are related to it. His possessions (rurugu) are mentioned. He still has many of these things with him.

4. SHAMANISM AND RELIGIOUS PRACTISES

Urere was the great shaman because of what he learned from others and received from the supreme being. He learned from his mother's brothers and from the spirits who rule various land animals. When he had shown his skill, he received a blessing from the supreme being in the form of immortality. Similarly, both study and blessing (karuna: Malay) from the supreme being are required if one is to become a shaman. The supreme being does give this blessing so that people can be healed.

Prospective shamans study in the presence of experienced ones at a feast where these things are taught (mangmangga). One place for learning is in a ceremonial house out in the forest. It and the practise of studying shamanism are linked back to Urere. Also in the ceremonial house the men can dance vigorously untilthey sweat and are struck by the power of spirits (o'wea bongnerivan) and begin to speak in other languages. This is described as being like wind coming into them from outside. Describing the presence of spirits as movements of the wind is very common (Tuza 1979:101). Those who have read of the coming of the Holy Spirit in the Biblical book of Acts chapter 2 equate it with that. But they say it is caused by spirits rather than by the Holy Spirit from the supreme being. This experience is called 'playing ceremonial house' (wasa werwerirjan). It still takes place occasionally inland. Both non-shamans and shamans can participate, if the ones who are not shamans are not too old (over forty or so).

Once a person has received the blessing from the supreme being and is linked to a companion spirit (awaroto), he can become involved in healing the sick. If he calls his companion spirit in time, his companion spirit can fight the spirits from the forest that are trying to eat a spirit of a person who is very sick. There are two other types of healing practices (movunu) he can use: blowing on the person after chewing ginger root (iriia) to divine the cause of the illness (jaovjorai) or the use of words to heal (duai). A ritual use of ginger root elsewhere in New Guinea is mentioned by Hogbin (1948:63). The duai category includes the use of words for killing others, sorcery (rasunggu: from Malay racun 'poison'). Sorcery is relatively new to the Mairasi people. Few of them know it. They trace its origin to people from the Moluccas and other Indonesian islands.

Healing ceremonies are usually carried out in the context of a feast. This is usually called,
simply, cooking (oro wavian). But it may be specified as cooking for spirits in general or a specific type of spirit: eg. ruler of wild dogs (auac). The food may be considered either the payment of the shaman or of the spirit involved.

A shaman can do some things without being noticed by others. The travels of his spirit while he sleeps can allow him to visit places hundreds of kilometers away without being seen. There he can learn things. Another thing he can do in secret is to call his companion spirit from the underworld. He can whistle inaudibly. Then he will go outside to talk with him. It is then that others can become involved in what he is doing because the companion spirit can speak audibly. This can happen only at night. But, to the companion spirit, it is light. Another way in which a shaman can do things secretly is by taking on the form of an animal, like Urere did. Within the past ten years or so, the only one in Lobo to have been known to do this was able to transform himself into a wild pig before he died. The old stories tell of people who were able to do this, too: eg. Urere's son who could turn into an eel. In his case and in that of a person who could become a cuscus (Indonesian Kuskus) (type of marsupial) in the story of a lake called Ja'amoro, they were eaten by people who thought they were regular animals.

Those who are not shamans may also learn some ways of healing or harming others that employ the services of intangible persons. These fall into the category 'medicine/healing practices' (movunu). The supreme being has made certain herbal remedies known to people. They are not classified by type of plant alone, but by the spirits who rule animals.

Some types of medicine are kept secret by a particular type of animal. Blood-letting may also be practiced by those who are not shamans, using sharp bamboo. This is commonly done near the site of pain, eg. on the forehead for a headache.

A common practice is the protection of personal possessions from theft. These are called prohibitions (gum). They function as "No Trespassing" signs to protect coconuts, nutmeg, shellbeds (of commercially-valuable shells) or other valuables. A woven palm frond, giant clam shell, carving of a crocodile's head, a small bottle of coconut oil, or many other things may serve as warning that something is being protected by intangible persons, eg. spirits. The potential offender knows he will get sick or die if he trespasses.

One of the major offenses that surfaced in an adultery case in Lobo September 10, 1981 was the use of one of these practises to make a man oblivious to the fact that another man was seeing his wife. Being the third offense of the same couple, the village leaders decided to bind them by a type of oath (oro asa orajan) which, if broken, would result in death within a few days. Some shaman know these oaths and some who are not shamans do too.

5. INTERACTION WITH CHRISTIANITY

Most Mairasi people date the coming of Christianity back to the arrival of the Moluccan Protestant Church teacher-evangelists (Guru Injil: Malay) who came around 1934. They encouraged Mairasi people to move down from the inland areas to the coast.
Elementary school education up to grade three and religious instruction became available in some villages, such as Lobo. The teachers were Moluccans. They taught and carried out their religious duties in the trade language, Malay. They did not learn Mairasi. Those who remember the first teachers say that the use of Mairasi and many other traditional practices were forbidden or discouraged. Some of the same prohibitions are in effect now as actual policies or as assumptions by the Mairasi people.

In actuality, contact with both Christianity and Islam began before the coming of the Moluccan teacher-evangelists. The Koi Wai people who live in the same area on islands and in some small gardens on the mainland, exposed the Mairasi people to Islam. The Raja of Namatota Island had influence over the Mairasi people. They brought him tribute (sembeni) and a few became followers of Islam. But most of the Mairasi people were still living inland, having limited contact with the Koi Wai people. They did have occasional trading of garden produce for preserved fish, however.

In 1828 the Dutch built Fort Du Bus near the present-day site of Lobo (Bachtiaar 1963:57-58). Word lists taken at that time indicate that contact was made with inland Mairasi people as well as with coastal Koi Wai people (Z.H. Triton). The Fort was abandoned after less than seven years because of malaria, scurvy, beri-beri, leeches, and an itching skin disease (Haneveld 1961:110). It is not clear how much, if any, religious instruction was passed on to the local people during those seven years. But it is possible that some basic concepts of Christianity had been heard by the Mairasi people from them or from other foreigners who came into the area in the hundred years before the coming of the teacher-evangelists.

The possibility of contact could have led to some of the similarities that exist in the Mairasi and Christian belief systems and practices. But we will not try to prove here which beliefs were originally Mairasi and which came later. Mairasi Christians point out the similarities in the moral codes as evidence of Ngagavotnami 'supreme being' being the same as God since he gave the same moral code before the teachers arrived (see earlier section COSMOLOGY: Supreme Being). They also point out the similarity of the ruler of the snakes with the Serpent mentioned in the Biblical book of Genesis chapter 3. The Mairasi flood stories, too, are equated with the story of Noah in Genesis chapter 7. All languages originating from one is also a point of similarity (Genesis 11:1-9).

Some beliefs which are part of both belief systems have been maintained and reinforced. God's sovereignty, as emphasized by both the Calvinistic Protestant Christianity and Islam to which the Mairasi people have been exposed, has blended with the traditional beliefs. This is especially evident in responses to the death of a family member. Both in the words imparted by the church elders in funeral services and in private conversations, it is common to hear statements about the supreme being having called the spirit of the deceased at the pre-arranged time. In this way, statements by church leaders echo the beliefs mentioned by shamans who
might not be active in the church. Similarly, there is an emphasis in both the church and in statements of Mairasi beliefs on a return of the supreme being in judgement and power, setting up a new kingdom. The Second Coming of Christ is routinely mentioned in prayers and sermons in the church. The basic thrust of many sermons given by the Mairasi elders of the church is that people have to be doing things of which Christ will approve when He comes.

Some beliefs and practices are clearly from Christianity. In some cases they are recognized as recent additions to the Mairasi beliefs: eg. a name for Jesus 'the Above One walks around' (Enggavot Osos). Some practises that came along with Christianity and have been assimilated as major community activities are the celebration of Christmas and New Year by eating together. Except for healing ceremonies, there had not been a strong pattern of feasts, according to many Mairasi people. Hence the use of a loan word from Malay or Portuguese (pesta) for parties or feasts.

Some major events from Christian history have been geographically assimilated. Some men claim to be the guardians of the places where Jesus died, was buried, and went by ladder or stairway back to Heaven. But the location of these places are closely guarded secrets. These places are inland from the northern part of Triton Bay.

On some points, changes from the way ancestors believed are clearly stated. Many of those who have been to school reject the belief that the sun is the same as the supreme being. They also reject the idea of trees and rocks being people. But they accept the teaching that there are spirits behind or in these things. There is an emphasis on verifiability of old stories. Young people who know the story Urere place importance on the evidences of its truth which remain to this day; e.g. animal bones where he had a feast, the stump of an ironwood tree which he chopped down, and the ditches he dug around a place where he was going to build a village. Stories which are verifiable, like Urere, are given prominence. Ones that lack visible evidence may be questioned.

Church elders have taken stands against practices which they consider to be against Christian teachings, whether the practices are old or new. The secrecy surrounding certain old stories has been spoken against by church leaders who do not believe them. Healing ceremonies with feasting are frequently opposed by some elders. They disapprove of bargaining with spirits. Some say that shamans make one person well by sending the spirits to make someone else sick. They also claim that there is fornication or adultery associated with some of these healing practices. Sexual sins are the point of disagreement with a kind of dance (seka) which the young people have been learning from other Indonesians. But there is not unanimity even among the elders on these issues.

6. CONCLUSION

Mairasi beliefs have been influenced by contact with other belief systems for over a century and by changes associated with the move to the coast where there is greater contact with non-Mairasi ways of life. But there is a core of beliefs about the com-
position of the human being and about the other inhabitants of the world which still explains much of what they experience. There are also stories which link them to their ancestors by being verifiable enough for them to still share some of the same beliefs. Any beliefs or practices which are less powerful or verifiable are likely to be rejected.

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2 One helpful discovery procedure was to gather from the recorded texts terms which referred to any kind of being. The list of terms was then cut up. Then Beni Waryengsi, a thirty-year-old Mairasi man who has been transcribing the texts and asking many questions about them with his elders, grouped them together into categories on a table. His categories revealed this taxonomy and the political hierarchy of these beings. Then a shaman was consulted to explain the groupings further.

3 These genealogies were done by Beni Waryengsi after studying the use of the symbols used in kinship charts.

4 Word lists taken by a member of the crew of the ships "Triton" and "Iris" listed words from inland and coastal villages eg. Kamakauna/Kamakawalir inland. Inland villages had vocabulary like present-day Mairasi and coastal villages had Koi Wai vocabulary.

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