

ANNEXE III

CARGOISTIC MOVEMENTS AND THE MULIA DANI

An extract from the doctoral dissertation by Douglas James Hayward : Christianity and the traditional beliefs of the Mulia Dani: An ethnography of religious belief amongst the western Dani of Irian Jaya, Indonesia. 1992.

In addressing the topic of cargoism among the Mulia Dani I shall have to take a slightly different approach than that of earlier chapters inasmuch as the cargoistic activities of the past several years have influenced not only the Mulia Dani but the entire Western Dani region. I shall therefore have to incorporate the activity of these movements as they affected the lives of the Dani living in several regions, but in my discussions I shall note in particular the role of the Mulia Dani in the total mosaic of these movements.

In using the term cargoism, or cargoistic worldview, I am drawing upon the tradition of Burrige (1960), Lawrence (1964), Harding (1967) and others who have described cargoism not just as particular historical happenings or sociological aberrations, but as a fundamental perception of life that pervades Melanesian thinking. This perception of life is characterized by a belief that events in this life, including wealth and well-being, are controlled by the supernatural, often identified by Melanesians as their ancestors. Furthermore, the proper performance of ritual and the establishment of harmonious relationships between living human beings and these powers are keys to procuring these cargoistic goals. While such perceptions are commonly found in cultures around the globe, in the Melanesian configuration access to manufactured goods has been understood to be possible by the proper performance of rituals and by appeals to the ancestors or to their substitutes (i.e. the ancestors/gods of affluent Westerners).

Such an understanding of cargoism best accommodates the data of the Dani experience in that the Dani are seeking to improve their way of life according to these perceptions believing they lost this better way of life in the early days of their history.

During the time of their contact with the Western world Dani cargoism has expressed itself in three distinct forms: as a religious movement; as a political statement; and as a socioeconomic reform movement. In each of these phases, as I shall show, the Dani are seeking (1) To process their own understanding of new Information. (2) To test its validity for themselves; and (3) To appropriate its benefits for their own wellbeing.

THE RELIGIOUS PHASE OF CARGOISM: THE WESTERN DANI CONVERSION TO CHRISTIANITY 1960-61

The first overt expression of cargoism following the arrival of the missionaries among the Western Dani was in the Ilaga Valley, as a direct consequence of a cargoistic movement among the Damal people who share the western section of the valley with the Dani, and who constitute approximately one fifth of the population of the Ilaga Valley.

The first two missionaries to take up residence in the Ilaga Valley came from the Wissel Lakes region and from Homeyo (both areas are west of the Ilaga). They brought with them Moni and Ekari workers from that region to assist with their first contacts. During their first seven months in the Ilaga Valley the two missionaries (one being assigned to work with the Western Dani and the other among the Damal) were primarily occupied with the task of constructing an airstrip and in learning the rudiments of the Damal and Dani languages. Every Sunday the missionaries stopped work on the airstrip and instead conducted church services. The missionaries spoke through interpreters using either an Indonesian to Damal translator, or a Moni to Dani translator.

This early preaching quickly stirred a renewed yearning among the Damal for finding what they call *hai*. *Hai*, is a somewhat mystical and vaguely defined concept among the Damal that John Ellenberger, a missionary linguistic, describes by saying:

“As used in the Damal/Amungme language, the term *hai* refers to: 1) a new order of glory and magical prosperity understood to be brought about by the ancestors; 2) having a quality of being super-human. or uncommon in character or durability: eternal; 3) a movement in search of the new order of glory and prosperity.” (1983:104).

This Damal longing for *hai* has a tradition that goes back possibly over a hundred years. Ellenberger has been able to chronicle a history of at least ten separate movements during the period 1870 - 1977 in search of *hai* (Flannery 1983:104-110).

Pertinent to the climate which pervaded the Damal community at the time of the arrival of the missionaries was the memory of one of these *hai* movements that had recently swept through the area. This particular movement was stimulated by the activities of a young man by the name of Moses Kelangin who had come into contact with the Roman Catholic mission during a journey to the coast with a trading party. Choosing to stay on the coast rather than return to the interior, he offered himself and his labor to a local school teacher in the Roman Catholic school in return for his patronage. Moses ultimately graduated from the teacher training school in 1953 and was appointed as a teacher to return to his own home area on the southern slopes of the Carstenz range (Echoud 1955: 198-202). Then in 1954 Father Kammerer from the Roman Catholic mission set out on a trip into the interior with the hope of establishing a mission post among the Dani in the Baliem Valley. Taking Moses Kelangin with him, Father Kammerer got as far as the Ilaga Valley, but did not succeed in reaching the Baliem. In the Ilaga Valley, though, Moses met large numbers of fellow Damal-speaking tribesmen who sparked a fresh missionary vision in Moses and, following the tour with Father Kammerer, Moses began a

preaching ministry on his own in 1955 which spread throughout the Damal areas. Moses' message during this time was to encourage his people to burn their fetishes and to prepare for the coming of *hai*. Instead of bringing *hai*, or even an opportunity for his converts to be baptized into the Catholic Church, Moses' ministry resulted in his being severely reprimanded by the priest for acting without authority and for trying to start his own prophetic movement. When the Protestant missionaries arrived in the Ilaga Valley just a year after these events, they entered an atmosphere already primed for a cargoist response which was soon forthcoming. The missionaries began to preach about heaven and the possibility of eternal life, and the Damal immediately interpreted what they were hearing as the fulfillment of their own quest for *hai*. Within nine months of the missionaries' arrival in the Ilaga Valley, the Damal announced their readiness to burn their fetishes (again) in order to bring about their anticipated *hai*.

The first fetish burning among the Damal was prompted by the arrival in the Ilaga Valley of a trading party from the Wissel Lakes led by Widiabi a recent convert to Christianity from the Ekagi tribe. Through the use of bilingual speakers Widiabi gave his testimony of conversion and encouraged the Damal to follow the example of other tribes throughout the Island in turning to the Christian religion. For several weeks during the months of April and May the Damal conferred over the implications of burning their fetishes and decided to conduct their first burning ceremony on May 26, 1957.

In spite of the cargoistic nature of the movement, the missionaries in the Ilaga Valley chose to encourage it, while at the same time directing it in respect to its Christian character and trying to discourage its non-Christian expectations in order to turn it into a fully Christian conversion movement. A primary focus during these formative days was, the destruction of fetishes which had been a part of their magical rites. Their destruction was being urged by the Damal, who claimed their continuing presence constituted a blockage on the way forward in their religious quest. The missionaries likewise agreed to support such a ritual, believing it was a necessary religiopsychological rite appropriate to such a dramatic change in religious affiliation. With this mutual understanding of what they were doing, the burnings began in May and continued for several months as other Damal villages joined the movement until it had spread throughout the Damal population in the Ilaga Valley.

While these fetish burnings were taking place among the Damal, the Dani tribesmen who also live in the Ilaga Valley were stirred to increased interest in these developments. As a matter of fact there was a natural link between the Damal and the Dani inasmuch as Den, who was a leader among the Damal, was the son-in-law of Opalalok, a leader among the Western Dani. Through his ties to Den and his own growing relationship with the missionaries Opalalok was able to spend considerable time learning about and questioning details of this new religion which was being taught and now beginning to spread in the Ilaga Valley.

In spite of the deep impression which the Damal fetish burnings had left on them, the Dani held back from making their own commitment to the new faith. apparently because they wanted to include in their negotiations other clansmen in the North Baliem region. The ties which run between the North Baliem and the Ilaga Valley

are deep, including kinship ties, trading relationships and political alliances. In order to not jeopardize these ties, the Dani wanted to be discrete in making their decision.

Discussions and negotiations regarding their response to the message of the Gospel went on for a full year during which time the missionary to the Ilaga Dani was on furlough in the United States. It was shortly after his return to the Ilaga Valley in 1958 that the Dani decided to proceed with their own fetish burnings and within one year the movement had spread to twenty-two settlements. By early 1960 this movement had drawn in most of the inhabitants of the Ilaga Valley.

Travel in and out of the Ilaga Valley during these years and during the time of the fetish burning ceremonies inevitably resulted in spreading the news of these events and their meaning to other Western Dani areas. Traders, people visiting kin-folk and, in some cases, self-appointed prophets spread the news of the Ilaga Valley movement throughout the Western Dani region. The word they spread was often a mixture of Christian Gospel, Dani myth and personal interpretation. The Damal had listened to the promises of the Christian Gospel from the perspective of their aspirations for *hai* but the Dani were hearing it from their aspirations for *nabelan-kabelan*.

As noted earlier, the Dani expression *nabelan-kabelan* means "my skin-your skin" and connotes the Dani belief in that happy time of life at the dawn of creation that has been lost due to the foolishness of man. According to the actual legend from which the term derives, this time of bliss was lost when the Dani in those mythological days were following the snake to discover its secret of immortality (presumably evidenced in the fact that it could shed its skin and thereby renew itself), but who allowed themselves to be distracted by the singing of a bird. As a result men do not have immortality, so at Dani funerals the dead are spoken of as "dead birds" and mourners decorate themselves in imitation of a bird by coating themselves with white mud.

When the missionaries arrived and began to preach about eternal life, heaven and the forgiveness of sins. The Dani immediately understood them to be offering a second chance for rediscovering the secret that had been lost to them in myth time. The word, which then spread out from the Ilaga Valley, was a message of immortality, often mixed with elaborate tales the return of long-dead ancestors who would bring wealth and joy in abundance.

Prophets for the movement traveled widely throughout other Dani regions; and while some were sincere bearers of what was happening, others were quite confused, and some, as "opportunists," sought personal enrichment in the form of gifts of pigs, cowrie shells and sometimes even new wives. In an attempt to stem the worst excesses of the movement, an invitation was sent by missionaries from other Dani areas to Gordon Larson, the Ilaga Valley missionary, and the Ilaga Dani, asking them to visit the other Western Dani areas in order to give first-hand reports on what was happening in the Ilaga Valley. Responding positively to this suggestion Rev. Larson, along with a large party of Ilaga Valley Dani, set out from the Ilaga Valley on January 22 1960, on a 46-day tour that took them on a circuit through several of the largest Western Dani centers, not including the

Mulia Valley. In virtually every place they visited, the Western Dani listened enthusiastically to their message and responded by affirming their own desire to follow the example of the Ilaga Valley Dani with a fetish burning.

This fetish burning stage of the movement encompassed almost every segment of the Western Dani tribe, having begun in December 1958 in the Ilaga Valley, it then spread throughout the Western Dani region especially during the year 1960, ultimately climaxing in the Mulia Valley where the population held back from burning their own fetishes until February 1961.

Fetish burnings, though, were only one aspect of the total movement. O'Brien and Ploeg were quite accurate in their observation that the aim of the movement was that of "attaining the European way of life in its entirety' (1964:289). As far as the Dani were concerned, the European way of life was the product of the Christian faith and only an exact replication of European ways and religious practices would bring success. In their attempts to put into practice the teachings of the missionaries, several waves of imitative rituals swept through a number of the areas as I have described in chapter seven.

This movement was a thoroughly bewildering experience for the missionaries, who had a most difficult time trying to understand it, let alone trying to maintain some semblance of control. In spite of their teachings, there were gross misconceptions which surfaced at odd times. On one such occasion a Dani family brought a dead relative to the missionaries so that he could be brought back to life, now that they had nabelan-kabelan (immortality). On another occasion in the Ilaga Valley observers fully believed that baptismal candidates would emerge from the baptismal waters having been restored to youthfulness and with their skin washed white like the missionaries. It was at times such as these that the missionaries realized that a great deal more teaching would be required to Christianize the movement, and as a result, the missions undertook a massive education program especially for the traditional "big men" whom they hoped to incorporate into the leadership of the new Christian religion. Ultimately the movement settled into a rapidly growing national church movement, which persists to the present.

In summarizing this religious phase of the Dani cargoistic movements, I note that all Dani activities were directed at incorporating the stunning realization that they and their immediate neighbors were not alone in the universe. With the arrival of the missionaries, and their strange teachings regarding spiritual knowledge, the Dani were confronted with compelling evidence for the existence of powers whose natures they did not even begin to comprehend. The missionaries were obviously different, but were they gods (the children of Mbok. as some thought), or were they men? Then, having determined that they were men, how did they have access to such wonderful technology as steel axes, food in cans, salt in bags, airplanes in the sky, and radios to talk to them? Were the ancestors of the missionaries more capable of responding to requests made to them, and if so, would it be better to pray to the missionaries' ancestors, or at least to learn how to properly pray to the ancestors by imitating the missionaries' ritual techniques?

In short, the Dani began a concerted attempt to discover the source of the missionaries' power, to identify its true nature, and then to put themselves into a position of being able to benefit from their access to this new (supernatural) power base. In the course of this activity, the Dani often misunderstood what was told to them, and when the missionaries corrected them, they willingly accepted such chastisements, in the hopes of getting the information straight.

In the process of discovering and identifying the source of the missionaries' power, the missionaries led the Dani into an understanding of Christianity as the spiritual foundations for their way of life, and this seemed wholly logical to the Dani. But problems have persisted for the Dani in that becoming Christians has not met their fullest aspirations. In their search for nabelan-kabelan, they wanted immortality and release from pain, sickness and death. Further, as I have already noted, having seen the marvels of the technology of the Western world, they wanted their religion to make it possible for them to attain "the European way of life in its entirety" (O'Brien and Ploeg 1964:289).

Their new faith, then, has been somewhat disappointing because it has not brought the Dani political power, nor has it brought them material well-being. This disappointment, in turn, has become the springboard for the emergence of still more cargoistic movements.

THE POLITICAL PHASE OF CARGOISM: THE REBEL MOVEMENT OF 1976 -1977

Following hard on the heels of the Dani conversion experiences were a number of political developments that would shortly affect them. In 1961 Indonesia began its policy of "Confrontation." during which the authorities applied military pressure upon the Dutch to leave what was then Dutch New Guinea. In 1961, under the auspices of the United Nations, the Dutch finally relinquished their claims to the region, and the Indonesians assumed administrative responsibilities in their place. For some Irianese this transfer of allegiance was not a happy choice, because they had been encouraged by the Dutch in the years prior to the transfer to believe they would be allowed to form an independent Papuan state. This was never implemented as a workable plan for political action, but it did stimulate aspirations especially among groups of the more urbanized and educated Irianese. For many of them, the arrival of the Indonesians signaled an end to their dreams and thus was born a number of separatistic movements whose primary activities were covert independence planning and guerrilla activities against the Indonesian government. For the most part, the activities of these movements were uncoordinated and lacking in effective organization: but because they appealed to a better future, they were able to draw considerable, albeit sporadic support that has kept them active for years.

For most of the highland Dani these developments were of little or no concern inasmuch as they had experienced so little contact with any form of government control. Indeed, at Mulia the only government official was a Coastal Papuan, who when he was caught having an affair with a Papuan nurse, was tied up by the Dani and threatened with a beating if he did not correct his adulterous behavior. This naiveté, though, was about to change; for in the anticipation of conducting a U.N.-monitored plebiscite (Act of Free Choice) in 1969, the

Indonesian authorities set about to extend their control over the interior, following in the footsteps of the missionaries.

The arrival of government authorities at each of these new (formerly missionary) outposts was inevitably accompanied by introductory speeches and promises for the future-promises that, law and order would prevail, that, there would be economic and social advancement and that through their schools Dani children would soon become professionals, government employees and salaried participants of the wider society in Indonesia.

As the Dani listened to these speeches, they had only one framework for understanding what was being promised to them, which was to draw upon their own familiar patterns of leadership and political alliances. From this perspective, the Dani understood that these government representatives were laying claim to the rights (and obligations) of being treated as "big men," which meant that in return for Dani support for the Indonesian government, the government would in turn bestow upon them all the privileges, advantages and wealth that were available to those who lived in the cities where the government was already firmly established.

With some degree of skepticism, but with a willingness to try, the Dani accepted these promises and transferred to the government representatives all of their expectations.

By 1976, though, the Dani were increasingly disillusioned with the progress of the government, through its officials, to meet their expectations. Justice, peace and tranquility simply had not been realized, nor had these officers been able to distribute with cavalier generosity (i.e. in the expected role model of a "big man") the wealth of the nation. True, the police and military had their weapons with which to enforce decisions, but all too often language barriers, cultural misunderstandings and insufficient care in their decisions had led to what the Dani considered, gross miscarriages of justice: and the enforced decisions of the authorities only further complicated the already complex web of relationships which bound Dani society together. Furthermore, with the arrival of the government, there was a significant shift in the focus of justice. In traditional Dani culture offenders were required to make some form of restitution to the person or group which had been offended, and the manner in which this was done was carefully arranged so as to further promote community harmony and amity. With the government now overseeing judicial matters, though, crime was seen as an offence against the state. As such, offenders were often physically punished: and when fines were levied, these were taken by the State. Under this new system crime became increasingly expensive as the price for offences rose steadily, and as wealth was leaving the community rather than being returned to its victims. This new system, then, compounded economic losses, fractured community amity, added personal humiliation, and created a rising resentment among many Dani that outsiders (i.e. non-Dani) were in control of the judicial processes.

Other economic pressures as well were mounting to destroy the people's high aspirations. During the transition years following the departure of the Dutch, Irian Jaya had its own currency and functioned as a separate economic region. After the Act of Free Choice, the government sought to end the province's special status by integrating it into the rest of Indonesia. Economic controls were gradually dropped and the economy

allowed to float to normal levels with the rest of the nation. Unfortunately these were the days of OPEC price rises and high inflation and the effect on the Irian Jaya economy was a 500% Inflation rate between the years of 1971-76. Added to this, the missions working in the interior discontinued their wholesale store operations, which had been responsible for a majority of the goods that flowed into the interior. Furthermore, they stopped their policy of subsidizing air cargo fares into the interior, and together, these decisions had the effect of doubling again the cost of goods wanted by the interior peoples.

With only limited access to money and goods anyway, this rapid rise in prices dismayed the Dani having been introduced to the benefits of store-bought goods, when they found that they were rapidly falling behind in their ability to purchase such goods, the Dani responded with protest that turned into anger and rage. Not understanding the reasons for the increase in prices, the Dani believed they were being denied access to the goods they wanted by the Indonesians, and they held the government responsible for their plight. One of the powerful promises of the leaders of the rebel movement was their promise to not only stop inflation but to roll back prices to their 1961 levels.

A further significant factor that led to the rebel movement of 1976-77 was the disillusionment which many of the Dani had toward their acculturation experience to date. In an attempt to bring progress and development to the highlands, overly enthusiastic government administrators often initiated programs of rapid (and at times forced) change. In some areas, villagers were moved into amalgamated villages, work projects were decreed, with penalties meted out to those who failed to participate, and controls were placed on a wide number of Dani activities. Inasmuch as many of these programs directly threatened the cohesiveness and Integrity of the community in terms of their traditional patterns of social organization and authority, the Dani responded with feelings of resentment and talk of resistance.

Resentment toward accelerated changes was felt most keenly by the Dani young people who enrolled in the school system. Most of these students spent what was, to them, a grueling six years in the anticipation that upon graduation from the sixth grade they would qualify for a salaried position with the government or at least be able to move into an apprenticeship program leading into a profession. Most of them either failed to pass their exams or were unable or unwilling to go on for further education, and each year increased numbers of disillusioned and unemployed Dani young people swelled the ranks of the disaffected.

As the time approached for the 1976 general elections for a new Indonesian parliament, government officials set about to prepare each of their areas for participation in these elections. The politically naive Dani watched these preparations, listened to the speeches and then went home to try to figure out the "real" meaning that lay behind all this activity. Drawing on information (and misinformation) they gleaned from their own young people who were in the cities attending school, and building upon the promises that were being made to them through their contacts with members of the separatist movements, they built up a very false set of ideas as to the purpose and function of the elections.

They came to believe that in the elections they could vote the Indonesian government out of power and instead could vote the Dutch back into authority. The Dutch in turn, they believed, would set up a benevolent tutelage and, once they had rolled back the costs of all store goods, would then proceed to install Irianese leadership at all levels of the new government. These men, of course, would ensure a just and fair society for all. The Dani attitude in all of this was totally consistent with, and indeed built upon their understanding that the affluence of Europeans in their midst (i.e. the missionaries) was the result of their moral goodness. As such, it seemed evident to them that the Europeans, in addition to knowing the secret of immortality, also knew the formula for social justice and economic well-being. These Dani aspirations were, of course, part of their longing for *nabelan-kabelan*, and having lost this once by a wrong choice (alliance) with the bird rather than the snake at the dawn of creation, the Dani did not want to make the wrong choice this time around.

As the time for the actual elections approached, it became increasingly clear that they were not going to be allowed to cast a ballot in favor of the Dutch. Instead their choice was going to be restricted to choosing purely Indonesian parties and candidates. Deciding to take the matter into their own hands by putting on a show of force, fighting broke out in the Mbogo and Baliem districts, which had been experiencing some of the most severe acculturation pressures. Anti-government demonstrations soon spread to other Dani areas, forcing the evacuation of all non-Irianese Indonesian civilians. Since the Dani possessed only spears and arrows, and no firearms, the outcome of the fighting was never much in doubt, but the government, in an attempt to avoid unnecessary deaths, was slow to commit their troops to the field, in the hopes that less drastic means could be found to bring the situation back under control.

In the meantime, the Dani fully believing they would be successful, set about to celebrate the imminent arrival of their new social order. Dances were held, pigs were killed, negotiations were begun as eager candidates jockeyed for positions of leadership and prestige in the new administration. It was a time when the imaginations of the Dani ran rampant in anticipation of what was shortly to come.

In the face of this challenge, the government had no option but to mount a military operation and was quickly able to secure the major administration centers and, from there, the population centers. This setback to the rebels, their families, and their sympathizers was not sufficient to daunt the Dani's still firm belief that if they could just hold out a bit longer in their jungle hideouts a sympathetic western government would soon come to their aid. As time went on, though, and the shortages of food started to bring on famine conditions including death from malnutrition, sickness and exposure, particularly among children and the elderly, increasing numbers of people chose to return to their homes in government-controlled areas.

This loss of support was a devastating blow to the leaders of the movement who continued to claim that success was just around the corner, but that without complete support for the movement victory would be impossible. In a desperate attempt to regain full support for the movement the rebel forces began to turn on their own people, killing scores of men, women and children who wanted to return to their homes. In one particularly vicious assault, the village, of Bilai in the Mbogo area was wiped out. This and similar atrocities finally broke

the back of popular support for the movement. The false claims of the leaders had brought out all of the worst aspects of human nature, had turned brother against brother, and sons against their fathers, totally destroying the unity, amity and justice which had been their goal in joining the movement.

Sickened at their own behavior and weakened by lack of food and medicine, the movement collapsed, as bands of stragglers made their way back to their homes. There they were required to reaffirm their willingness to live under the existing government, after which they were allowed to begin rebuilding their homes and gardens, a saddened and, if not wiser, at least less credulous people.

After all their suffering, the Dani had failed to build their "new society," peopled by "new men," that would ensure a lifestyle modeled on their cargoistic aspirations as expressed in *nabelan-kabelan* with Its promises not just of immortality, but an idyllic and enduring state of human existence.

In the midst of all this political activity, the Dani communities served by UFM missionaries, including Mulia, Ilu and Kwiyawagi, stood aloof from extensive participation in the anti-government rebel activities. In fact, their unwillingness to actively participate in the activities of the rebels led the Indonesian government to more conscientiously court the support and backing of the Mulia Dani by directing more development activities into the area. As a consequence, when the rebel movement finally collapsed, the Mulia Dani were spared much of the trauma experienced by the other Western Dani. And why didn't the Mulia Dani support the rebel movement? They were fearful of losing the expected benefits of a newly initiated community development project which I discuss next.

THE ECONOMIC PHASE OF CARGOISM: THE PERIOD OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS 1982-1992

During the 1976-77 rebellion that swept through the Dani region the Mulia-Ilu-Kwiyawagi area stood aloof from participation in the anti-government activities of their fellow clansmen. Throughout this area the UFM missionaries who serve in the region had begun early in 1976 to negotiate, in conjunction with World Vision International, for the initiation of a large-scale community development project. The goals of this project were to improve community health services, introduce new agricultural techniques and teach basic skills such as sewing, carpentry and small business administration. In the hope of stimulating small scale income-generating enterprises, the project would, during its five-year operation, end up with a pot and other kitchen utensils in every Dani home, the introduction of over 300 head of sheep for experimentation, the construction of 10 regional health clinics all connected to a centrally located hospital by a system of roads and the training of virtually scores of Dani young people in employable skills.

This project stimulated the joyful prospects of receiving what the Dani perceived to be a massive infusion of wealth. On the other hand, it also made them fearful of the prospects of losing all this wealth by joining the rebels and antagonizing the existing government. This fear became a powerful incentive for keeping the Mulia Dani out of any association with the rebels. Later when the rebel movement failed so disastrously, it only

further confirmed the rightness of their choice.

As with each of the previous movements, though, while the missionaries were explaining the nature and goals of the program the Dani interpreted this to mean the imminent arrival of a whole new level of enriched existence. Attempts by project staff to carefully circumvent such misunderstanding were only further evidence to the Dani that wonderful plans were afoot. Such supposed false modesty was, as far as the Dani were concerned, an attempt to down-play the real plans and final results as part of a deliberate attempt to later surprise everyone involved by the largesse of what was really being planned. Such behavior was characteristic of their own "big men." So, whenever project goals were presented, in spite of the stress on their modest accomplishments, the Dani would only nod in agreement and dream of what was to come.

As one example of just this kind of reaction, the project sponsors undertook to introduce an experimental sheep program. In introducing the idea, project representatives described the benefits of sheep compared with pigs. Sheep, they said, ate grass instead of potatoes, so the Dani wouldn't have to plant such large gardens, and since sheep wouldn't devastate a garden by rooting in it, it would not be necessary to build such extensive fences to protect their existing gardens. The Dani leaders were enthusiastic in their support of the experiment and, in fact, forced the project sponsors to double the number of sheep to be ordered. Returning to their villages with the news of the project, people in some areas decided to kill off all but a remnant of their pigs, stopped planting new gardens and began to tear down their garden fences for use as firewood.

Unfortunately, the sheep were not the wonder animal that the Dani anticipated and, either through inadequate care or even outright starvation, within one year of their arrival half of the flock had died off and the rest were in jeopardy. Furthermore, the Dani themselves by this time were going hungry because new gardens had not been planted.

In spite of these disappointments, though, the ever pragmatic Dani were still enthusiastically in favor of the project. From the perspective of their cargoistic expectations the project was a dismal failure, but it nevertheless had put wealth in their hands, it had made medical facilities easier to get to, they were learning more of the skills of the outside world and even their sickly sheep were beginning to make a comeback. All in all, the future still looked very bright.

For the aid agencies, in the meantime, the project was judged to be really quite successful. Most of the project goals had been met, living standards had improved and the success of the project was sufficient to warrant initiating additional projects in other areas. By this time, of course, requests for more projects were pouring in from other Dani areas as the news of the Yamo projects and its accomplishments were spread abroad. By 1982 projects had been initiated in virtually every Dani area by one or more of the aid agencies that had become active in the province.

In addition to the activities of these private relief agencies, the government also became involved in a series

of five-year projects that were now beginning to make their impact upon the average Dani villager. In the early years of its administration the government had been primarily interested in setting up the superstructure for its administrative needs by constructing offices, staff housing and the like. Having accomplished these goals, the government began to include in their five-year programs village development projects such as road construction, housing schemes, health clinics, drinking water systems and public schools.

The total effect of these development projects has been the nudging forward of the economic base of the Dani community and an improvement in their living standards. More significant, though, was the fact that through the projects the Dani discovered that somewhere out there in the world beyond their horizon there were organizations or foundations known as "proyek-proyek" by which they could be led into a better way of life.

As far as these projects were concerned, there seemed to be no limit as to what could be accomplished. Neither time nor technology seemed to be a problem in bringing in this new order of things, and once again the old *nabelan-kabelan* aspirations were transformed into a new set of ideals. The projects were going to transform Irian Jaya into an exact replica of affluent America, replete with roads and tunnels through the mountains, pigs that had huge udders numbering a dozen or more and even the availability of a special miracle chemical that when painted on rocks and stones would dissolve them into wonderfully fertile soil.

A significant feature underlying their thinking during this time was the belief that wealth and poverty are really a problem of proper distribution. The creation of wealth through appropriate planning and the application of resources and human efforts to production was simply never considered. The origin of wealth or of goods in general was not a matter of concern. The fact of the matter was, they knew that, the things they dreamed of were already available in massive quantities, whatever their source, and that what they, the Dani, had to do was to find a way to effect a fair and just distribution of those goods to themselves.

In the Mulia area the arrival of an Australian army short-take-off-and-landing transport aircraft, prompted a number of villagers to believe that direct flights from Australia to Mulia were possible. Several months later, then, a delegation arrived at the missionary's doorstep asking for assistance in the construction of several additional airfields in the area so that "project supplies could be flown directly from Australia and elsewhere to their own villages, thereby circumventing those areas through which present shipping passed and where supplies could be "lost."

Another significant factor that underlay Dani thinking was a belief that social relationships open the door to reciprocal assistance. They fully believed that, if they could establish obligatory bonds of friendship or even, fictive kinship ties with affluent individuals or agencies, then they could appeal to their humanitarian sensibilities to share their wealth with them.

Creating these bonds of obligation and establishing personal ties with the aid agencies and their representatives became the focus of a great deal of Dani activity. On the occasion of a visit by aid agency

officials it was common to sponsor a feast, often of massive proportions, in order to heap praise and appreciation upon them for their willingness to initiate this project while at the same time putting the aid agency under the moral bonds of reciprocity. On other occasions the Dani have voted (which is a non-Dani practice) by raising hands or clapping in order to indicate to an agency representative that they have chosen (or adopted) that particular aid agency as their very own.

In order to further foster these relationships and to prevent any possibility of diminishing their future prospects, the Dani have been diligent in meeting almost every requirement established by the aid agencies for their projects. In some respects, though, these requirements often prove to be frustrating, maybe even obstructive. As far as the average Dani is concerned once the relationship has been established there should be a smooth flow of goods demanding nothing other than for the Dani to make his needs known. They have not been able to appreciate why they have to demonstrate in a project proposal that the end result will be a state of greater self-sufficiency. Self-sufficiency achieved through hard work and personal endeavor is an approach that presumes the creation of wealth, whereas the Dani believe that distribution is the problem. So achieving project goals often proves to be frustrating for them. This frustration is already creating disaffection which could lead, in the not-too-distant future, to some new movement in search of their *nabelan-kabelan*, or more ominously it could provoke a reaction of violence or despair at the blockages they feel are keeping them from the fulfillment of their hopes.

In this still ongoing phase of Dani cargoism the leadership patterns of the movement are noteworthy inasmuch as project managers and those attracted to such a position have sought to work with community leaders from a seemingly genuine interest in promoting the well-being of the total community. For the most part these are not men who want to accrue power to themselves for their own sakes. Rather, they are men who already hold power and who want to be a part of the activities that constitute remaining as effective leaders in a changing community. In this respect they fit the role of a "new big man" rather than that of a starry-eyed visionary with prophetic revelations to share.

Another Interesting feature of this current phase of Dani cargoism is the prominent role of money management and the concern to adjust to a cash-oriented economy. (See especially Burrige 1969). In this respect income generation through business ventures or joint investment schemes still hold a great deal of mystique for the Dani. Unfortunately, enthusiasm for such plans has already soured, inasmuch as such schemes have failed quickly. The Dani still do not understand the capitalist system of business nor are they willing to accept the ethics of making a profit off of one another. They resent it deeply when someone adds to the price of an item an additional amount as profit. It would appear they are prepared to reimburse someone else for actual expenses in keeping with their traditional practice of (balanced) reciprocity, but to have to pay more than the other person paid, strikes them as being immoral. Further, if they participate in any kind of work program, they insist that any remuneration be divided equally among all participants. They will not work for a Dani managed enterprise that results in a larger portion of the income accruing to the benefit of any one person or "owner." On the other hand, the Dani do not object to raising prices for goods and services to outsiders who already have

wealth; so once again we are brought back to the fact that the Dani perceive of their problem as being one of distribution and equity. The "new Dani big men." then. are a unique combination of emerging entrepreneurs and traditional brokers seeking to establish contact with the mythical and magical sources of wealth. (See also Finney 1973).

CONCLUSION

These varieties of cargo activities, then, all stem from the desire of the Dani for a better way of life which they believe they lost at the beginning of time, but which they hope to recover again through ritual behavior and appropriate social alliances with affluent nations who already have an abundance of goods. While these activities have been presented in a historical perspective, today they continue to be expressed in a variety of new and ever changing ways indicating that the basic worldview assumptions of the Dani about the nature of wealth continues to be similar to what it has always been.